

Draft Minutes Monaro Folk Society Annual General Meeting 2017

Date: 21 September 2017, 7:18 pm

Location: The Irish Club, 6 Parkinson St Weston Creek

Chairperson: Geoff Kell – President

1. Apologies:

Julie Szabo, Roni Giacobetti, Adrian Giacobetti, Jacqui Rosier, Peter Gamble, Barbara Court, Lance Court, Margaret Anderson, Bob Anderson, Kirsty O’Connell, Ray Mulligan, Ann Lehmann , Tina Lynam, June Staunton, Roger Gifford, Christine Ridgway, Annette Colonna, Paul Carr, Gavin Holmes, Daryl Powell, Diana Powell, Eileen Newmarch, Linda Aunela, Juliette Robin.

2. Attendance Register.

1. Confirmation of quorum by Membership Secretary Declan O’Connell. 19 members present.

3. Welcome

4. Previous Minutes - AGM 15 September 2016

Minutes Accepted. Moved Ian Bull, Seconded Antonella Salpietro. Motion Carried.

5. Matters arising from 2016 AGM.

Nil. Item from 2016 regarding the proposal by Keith Sayers to run Dancing in the Park through February in 2017 now carried over to Agenda item for discussion at 2017 Meeting.

Bob Hodgson asked if the use of the Albert Hall for future Colonial Balls was in doubt, due to the increase in hire charges. Antonella Salpietro reported that that she has raised concerns over the changes in the Albert Hall hire conditions with the ACT Property Group and the ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr. Antonella has written to Chief Minister Barr seeking a review of the decision to change Albert Hall hire conditions and charges and a response is yet to be received. Antonella mentioned that as a result of her representations, there has been no increase in the cost of hire for the Albert Hall for the 2017 Colonial Ball.

Keith Sayers suggested that the Colonial Ball be subsidised given the healthy financial reserves of the MFS and the importance to continue the tradition of holding an annual Ball at the Albert Hall.

There was also a question raised regarding the MFS Membership of other community organisations. MFS Secretary is to follow up and report back to new committee. Consideration of Artsound, 2XXX, Friends of Albert Hall, PCUG.

6. Reports

a. **Treasurer's Report. (not clear why Treasurer's Report is included twice so have deleted the second item).**

Treasurer tabled report and provided commentary. Noting that the Westpac Account remained opened to capture any deposits made in error as the MFS have now moved banking to Beyond Bank.

The Society had increased income for 2016-2017 with a balance at 30 June 2016 of \$34,630. The result for the financial year 2016-2017 was a surplus of \$1,390. It was noted that timing is significant.

The high level of cash reserves of \$34,640 was noted by Keith Sayers. Geoff advised the AGM that with such high reserves members and sub-groups are invited to come forward with innovative initiatives, particularly those that might attract new members and young persons.

Report Accepted. Moved John Hewat Seconded Anne Mathas. Motion Carried.

b. **Auditor's Report.**

Following the resignation of Michael Poole as auditor a new auditor was engaged. This was accomplished through a volunteer from H&R Block.

The Auditor's Report was tabled.

Mark Simmons suggested that the Auditors be thanked for their services. The Treasurer is to write to H&R Block and Michael Poole to thank them.

Report Accepted. Moved Anne Mathas. Seconded John Hewat.

c. **Public Officer Report and Section 73 Report**

Report tabled by Antonella Salpietro.

Report Accepted.

Moved John Hewat, Seconded Keith Sayers. Motion Carried.

d. **Membership Report**

Declan O'Connell tabled the membership report and provided a summation of the key items in the report.

The MFS currently has 140 memberships (123 financial; 17 complimentary). Financial membership has decreased 16.89% since AGM time last year (from 148 to 123), following an 8.64% decrease in 2016 and a slight increase in 2015. There have been 11 new memberships since 1 April 2017 (there were 13 in the same period last year).

The Secretary was asked to check membership of other community organisations and cultural organisations. This list to include fees and donations. Examples are Artsound, 2XX and Friends of the Albert Hall. Geoff Kell advised he had paid for PCUG membership to maintain the mailing lists.

Report Accepted.

Mark Simmons suggested that the membership form be amended to include bank details for direct deposits.

Moved John Hewat, Seconded Ian Bull. Motion Carried.

A vote of thanks to Declan was also carried.

Sub Group Reports.

e. **Bush Dance Group Report.**

Mark Simmons spoke to the tabled report.

Key points noted in bush dance group were declining attendances at weekend dances.

Changes made to earlier start times and lower admission charges have not led to increased attendance. Geoff Kell suggested the group look at targeted approaches to new participants such as Universities and schools.

Judy Gorman suggested to make better use of the printed media e.g. The Chronicle. Mark Simmons noted that it doesn't appear that advertising in the Chronicle attracts new people to the Saturday dances. Publicity will continue making use of the available resources but other avenues including social media need to be explored.

Children's Dances are very successful and now held every two months.

Moved John Hewat, Seconded Mark Simmons. Motion Carried.

f. **Canberra Contra Club**

Report received and highlights presented. The Wee Jasper Weekend continues to be popular. The annual return was in surplus. For the current period Robert Mahoney will be looking to target a younger demographic. Geoff is working with Robert on this proposal.

Moved John Hewat, Seconded Matthew Gibbins. Motion Carried.

g. **End of Month Dance Organising Team Report**

Antonella Salpietro, EOMDOT Convenor, reported to the meeting that dance attendance fluctuates and that the Team has been actively using a number of strategies to attract more attendees at events. The overall financial outcome for the Team has been a very small loss. This has been the result of a major promotional effort to reverse previous years' trend. . Increased costs, such as the hire of the Albert Hall for the Colonial Ball, may determine future years' sub-group's losses. Antonella indicated that she is investigating options to use the Albert Hall more efficiently and reduce costs.

Acceptance of Report Moved Antonella Salpietro, Seconded John Hewat. Motion Carried.

h. **English Country Dance Report**

Colin Towns presented his report reporting losses and declining numbers. Colin regularly reports on progress to the committee and is looking at working with

other callers and exploring opportunities to increase numbers such as running a theme over several weeks. The President has also been discussing ideas with Colin and other sub-groups.

Acceptance of Report Moved Antonella Salpietro, Seconded John Hewat. Motion Carried.

i. **Merry Muse Report**

Pierre Sibilant Spoke to the Merry Muse report in meeting papers. He highlighted good attendances and good interest in the blackboard performances. The event was attracting some younger attendees as performers and audience. Pierre indicated that Eileen Newmarch is looking for volunteers.

Acceptance of Report Moved Antonella Salpietro, Seconded John Hewat. Motion Carried.

j. **Musings Report**

Declan O'Connell reported that the continuing compilation and publication of the Monaro Musings is being managed by Tina Lynam. Declan indicated that Tina is acting as Editor and is seeking for volunteers to take up that role. Mark Simmons noted that the Musings costs had almost doubled. Given that the acting Editor was not present at the AGM, Geoff Kell speculated that possibly it was due to expenses incurred in the previous financial year and carried over .

A vote of acceptance of the report was moved by John Hewat and seconded by Declan O'Connell. Motion Carried.

k. **Equipment and PA Report**

Pierre Sibilant reported condition of Muse Public Address System along with anticipated maintenance and new purchases. The Bush Dance Group equipment is maintained and stored by David Wardle. David Wardle is certified to test and tag and will test and tag equipment used by MFS members at MFS events.

Geoff Kell is to prepare an Assets Register and upload it on the MFS members' site.

Acceptance of Report Moved Antonella Salpietro, Seconded John Hewat.

Motion Carried.

i. Set In Their Ways

The SITW report was tabled by Geoff Kell as Paul Carr was not present. It was noted that it didn't include either budget or financial report. The AGM requested clarification why there are no incomings or outgoings. An explanation was provided that members of the group contribute funds when required to hire premises; however, it appears that most of the time the Belconnen Markets outdoor stage is used when rehearsals are required for festivals and displays. It was agreed that the Secretary should ask clarification on revenues and expenses.

Acceptance of Report Moved, John Hewat, Seconded Geoff Kell. Motion Carried.

m. Tuesday Night Music Group

The report was presented by Moir Holmes. There had been a recent membership drive to get attendees at the Tuesday Session to Join MFS. Encouragement is to continue to those non-members attending the TNMG.

Numbers continue to increase for this groups making it increasingly difficult to host at members' residences. This has led to the use of the Irish Club.

Acceptance of Report Moved Geoff Kell, Seconded John Hewat. Motion Carried.

n. Irish Set Dancing Annual Report

The ISD continues to run on Wednesday Nights at the Turner Baptist Church with beginners sessions and mini-ceilis at the end of each term. 10 classes cost \$70 or \$8 per session. The first two classes for new dancers are free. The ISD have a pull up banner for promotional activities. The ISD performed at the Turning Wave Festival. While the October Weekend ran at a loss, that was compensated by the healthy surplus of the Wednesday classes. The overall financial outcome was a surplus.

The possibility of getting the CIT involved with the Wednesday ISD was discussed. The Ginninderra CIT charges students \$110 for accredited courses that could be delivered by the ISD with the MFS getting \$60 for a 10 week course.

Acceptance of Report Moved John Hewat, Seconded Christine Britton. Motion

Carried.

Action: Christine Britton to follow up with CIT Ginninderra.

o. Other Reports

No reports tabled.

p. President's Report

Geoff highlighted events and new initiatives for the year.

The MFS Marquee and evening Muse concerts were a success at the National Folk Festival over Easter. The evening blackboard attracted very good acts and interest.

The Kids' dances which run prior to MFS dance events in school holiday have seen increasing numbers now that they are held regularly.

The new website is now up and running and being tested with the old site to be decommissioned as soon as can be arranged following testing.

Acceptance of Report Moved Antonella Salpietro, Seconded Anne Mathas.
Motion Carried.

8. Election of New Officers for Committee

8.1 Appointment of Returning Officer

Colin Towns was appointed as Returning Officer.

President	Geoff Kell
Vice President	Vacant
Treasurer	Tina Lynam
Secretary	Ian Bull
Public Officer	Antonella Salpietro
Committee Members	John Hewat, Anne Mathas, Matthew Gibbins.

9. Membership Fees. Geoff Kell proposed that a discount be offered to MFS members who elect to receive the Musings newsletter in electronic format and explained the economic advantages for the MFS.

Moir Holms proposed a motion regarding changes to MFS Membership fees for 2018-2019. Motion seconded by Mark Simmons.

Motion "That the membership fee structure be changed to include a discount of \$10 for members electing to receive the newsletter in electronic format".

Moir Holmes presented the motion and highlighted advantages. Declan O'Connell spoke against the motion and presented relevant considerations. . The discussion that followed included the presentation of concerns over equity matters and in particular in regard to those members unable to access the Musings electronically or experiencing certain types of visual impairment that discourage the use of electronic resources. It was noted that the MFS is not in need of additional revenue, the trend was in any case moving towards electing to receive the electronic copy, and the administration could be more complicated. It was suggested that the issue of decreased revenue would be balanced by lower costs for the production of the printed version and posting. This will need to be modelled by the incoming committee.

The Motion was carried on a vote of hands.

10. Special Business

"That the society create a new committee to run Dancing in the Park though the month of February 2018 and appoint thereto a convenor and one or two members."

Keith Sayers spoke first to the motion from a prepared statement. Several issues related to precedents, public demand and benefits were highlighted and discussed.

It was noted that;

- after Australia Day the grounds are usually damaged and repairs being carried out make it suboptimal or prohibitive holding an event there;
- the MFS has the principle of not holding two events concurrently;
- fees may be introduced by the ACT govt for the use of Stage 88.

The meeting sentiment was that it would be advisable to hold it on another day than Monday, possibly during the weekend, because there could be more chances of attracting passersby.

The motion was carried and Keith Sayers appointed Convenor of the sub-committee and he indicated that he would prepare a submission to the MFS Committee for approval and budget.

Keith Sayers can be contacted by volunteers by email. keith@keithsayers.id.au

Motion Proposed by Keith Sayers, seconded Matthew Gibbins.

Motion Carried. Quorum checked and confirmed at vote.
Meeting Closed at 10:51 pm

Ian Bull MFS Secretary