

MINUTES of the 43rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the MELBOURNE CIVIC SOCIETY, at the Assembly Rooms, Melbourne, on Monday 27th March 2017 at 7.30pm.

Present: Officers: Dr. P. Grimley: Chairman, Mr. N. Wright: Vice-Chairman, Mrs P Adams: Secretary, Mr D. Calvert: Treasurer.
Committee members: Mr. M. Busfield, Mr. D. Clark, Mrs. B Simpson, Mrs C Sturges, Mr. B. Thomas, Mr I. Turner.

Also present: 34 members and 4 non-members

1. Welcome by the Chairman.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 43rd Annual General Meeting of Melbourne Civic Society.

2. Apologies. John and Thelma Sheppard, Brian and Pam Budd, Irene Brightmer

3. Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting

The Minutes were accepted as a true record.

Acceptance was proposed by Ian Turner and seconded by Neil Wright and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman began on a sombre note in announcing the death during the past year of Marjorie Calow and Celia Swainson. Celia and Marjorie had both served as Secretaries and Newsletter editors.

Ian Turner had stepped down as chair of the planning sub-committee and he was thanked for all his work over many years handling planning applications. Barry Thomas had taken over the role, just in time for a very busy year. The society had responded to 154 planning applications of which 7 were actively supported and objection was raised to 19. Two planning appeals had been attended. In all a very steep learning curve for Barry.

The two appeals were both for housing developments on Jawbone Lane. The first, for 60 houses across both sides of Jawbone Lane was rejected in May because the planning inspector considered that SDDC **did** have a sufficient 5-year housing supply. The second appeal for houses on the Bond Elm site was heard in October and a different inspector was persuaded that SDDC **did not** have a sufficient 5-year housing supply He allowed 34 houses. At both appeals strong objections were presented with arguments closely co-ordinated with other groups – Kings Newton Residents Association, Melbourne and Kings Newton Action Group and Melbourne Parish Council.

In the mid-1980s the King's Newton Holy Well was restored by the Civic Society and has been maintained by it ever since. This year the platform had partly collapsed and needs considerable, probably expensive, repair work. But the site is not owned by the Civic Society– the owner is remote and has been unresponsive to all contacts. In these circumstances the committee is reluctant to incur more significant expense. Legal advice is being taken on possible options to resolve the ownership situation before committing to the necessary repairs.

Attendance on the airport consultative committee continues. Discussions have started on the introduction of modern aircraft navigation technology at EMA – a sort of satnav in the sky. This could enable narrower departure routes, and may offer better routing of training flights.

Neil Wright had treated us to an eclectic mixture of talks at the monthly meetings including history, architecture and art, science, local and remote topics, and had found presentations which were in turn fascinating, informative and amusing. Regular attendees would recall some room issues – noisy band practices next door or low temperature. All these were

raised with MARs management and resolution of the heating problems had been assured. The committee did consider other meeting venues, but had decided to remain at MARs. There was a successful (and dry) midsummer event at Melbourne Hall in June, and a social evening in November, both with catering by Claire Sturges and Barbara Simpson. He finished with a word of thanks. The society's committee appeared to the Chairman to be an impressive, multi-talented group, working hard to make all the society's activities run smoothly. He thanked all committee members. And also of course, thanked all other members of the society who help in so many ways which included preparing rooms, printing posters and serving teas.

6. Secretary's Report

She reported a healthy membership of nearly 200. Subscription rates could remain the same for yet another year. Brian Budd was thanked for managing the membership.

Membership was paid to Civic Voice which represents civic societies on a national level. Melbourne Historical Research Group and Sharpes Pottery in Swadlincote were also supported. She stressed that links with the locality were important as it helped to bind a community together as well as raise the profile of the civic society.

A second litter pick of the year had just taken place and this time volunteers from Stanton and Kings Newton had taken part. Twenty-eight litter pickers were out in force on a remarkably sunny Saturday morning doing a clean sweep of a wide area and a mountain of rubbish was collected.

Close links with Melbourne Footpaths Group were maintained, as a fair few of civic society members were its driving force.

The Chairman had been fostering closer ties with the Parish Council. He attended the recent local Parish Meeting at which he explained the work done by the society. Our co-operation had been pledged with their working group set up to identify places where benches can be put. Paul had already been working closely with them on a planting project in the Old Burial Ground in Castle Street. This had been inspired by Christian Murray-Leslie, a civic society member who is a keen beekeeper. He had spearheaded a campaign for the planting of flowers with rich sources of pollen for bees in early Spring when it is in short supply. Snowdrops and bluebells were planted earlier on and recently primroses, anemones and cowslips had been added. This was in addition to the hazel bushes and alder buckthorn planted at the Holy Well. He was wished well in his endeavours and thanked for his hard work.

The society continued to brighten up the roads into Melbourne by planting more daffodils on Station Road and Cockshut Lane.

The Annual Exhibition at the Melbourne Arts Festival helps to keep the society in the public eye. Ian and Barry put together a display of old photographs from the society's archive which always attract interest. The society has a substantial archive collection which has been well looked after and documented by Ian for many years now. There were plans in place to scan the whole collection to ensure a safe and permanent storage. It would also enable it to be accessible to the general public on the website. Martin Keay and Barry Thomas would manage this project. Barry continued to manage the website and Facebook page. Martin's publishing skills are put to good use in the attractive quarterly Newsletter.

She echoed the chairman's gratitude to all who play their part in making Melbourne Civic Society such a successful organisation. This included all the loyal members and those who attended the monthly meetings.

7. Treasurer's Report

It had been another satisfactory year for the Society. It was difficult to compare figures from year to year as activities were varied and one-off. Normal revenue items were similar in line with rising prices generally. No new publications had been produced so sales figures were down but some still produced a substantial income as costs had already been covered. The first run of Walks Book 2 had sold out and had been reprinted after revision and this had added substantially to expenditure.

The Special Reserve Funds account funds were being used and will reduce quicker in present conditions with such low interest rates. It was the wish of the testator that both

capital and interest should be used to beautify Melbourne with trees and flowers. The Midsummer Evening made a good surplus because of catering done in-house. He was happy that the Society had a sound financial position and could meet its commitments in the foreseeable future. The funding of any future substantial projects would be properly investigated by the committee and funding secured before any commitment.

Acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Malcolm Taylor and seconded by Claire Sturges.

8. 2016/17 Civic Society Award

The award is given for the most outstanding example of new building, renovation or landscape conversion completed in Melbourne or Kings Newton during the last twelve months. The following criteria apply: quality of design, standard of workmanship, impact on the street scene and conservation ideals.

Judging took place on March 16th.

The panel consisted of: -

Mrs. Amanda Harmer	Visiting Architect
Councillor Mrs. Margaret Sharp	Chair of Melbourne Parish Council
Dr. Paul Grimley	Chair of Melbourne Civic Society
Mr. Neil Wright	Civic Award Organizer
Dr. Paul Sturges	Civic Society Members' Representative
Mr. Barry Thomas	Chair of MCS planning sub-committee

There were 6 nominations for the Award this year.

**The Sports Park Pavilion,
Broadstone Holt, Bog Lane
The Packhorse, Kings Newton
25 Packhorse Road
14 Church Street
4 Victoria Mews**

A range of views was expressed as to the extent that the nominees met the criteria. Comments were generally positive, although there were reservations about all the properties and, therefore, it was decided that the main award would be withheld this year. However The Packhorse and 14, Church Street were **highly commended** while the Sports Centre was **commended**.

Judging comments included the following:-

The Olde Packhorse; the renovations to this key building along with the extensive planting to the rear have enhanced this corner of King's Newton.

14 Church Street; this building, which has been in the same family for many years, has been restored by the exposure of the original stone features, replacement of the timber elements and coloured glass.

The Sports Park Pavilion; the competent design of this much needed building has been lifted by the curved roof edge and balcony features.

9. Election of Officers and Committee Members

The following were nominated, proposed, seconded and approved for election to the Committee as Officers:-

Paul Grimley: Chairman, Neil Wright: Vice Chairman, Pam Adams: Secretary, Dave Calvert: Treasurer

The following were nominated, proposed, seconded and approved for election as committee members:-

Brian Budd, Malcolm Busfield, David Clark, Martin Keay, Lydia Hepenstal, John Sheppard, Barry Thomas and Ian Turner.

The Chairman pointed out that two longstanding officers were not standing for re-election this year. Claire Sturges and Barbara Simpson were thanked for their loyal service on the committee. They promised however to continue catering for social occasions.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions arising from the meeting.

There were no questions raised and the Chairman closed the AGM at 7.55 p.m.

The Annual General meeting was followed by a talk by Julian Onions on "Galaxies: One Giga Year at a Time"

A full report would appear in the July Newsletter.