

Minutes of the 80th
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The Friends of the Royal Marsden, Chelsea
Thursday 23rd September 2021 Via Zoom**

**MINUTES OF THE EIGHTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of
FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL MARSDEN, CHELSEA**

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1. President's Welcome

Mrs Sandra Franklin extended a warm welcome and continued by saying this firstly our meeting is in the hands of technology and our IT whizz, Linda Wimble, Co-Chair has set everything up which has taken a lot of time but do bear with us. The meeting is being recorded. Would you please mute yourself? Thank you to members of hospital staff Marcus Thorman, Chief Financial Officer, Karl Munslow-Ong, Chief Operating Officer, Fiona Rolls, Occupational Therapist and to Tasha Crishlow, Chaplain and Mairhead Griffin, Chief Nurse both of whom joined the Trust a couple of weeks ago. We look forward to working with you. Also, to Katie Rockley who is putting on a piano concert for us and thank you so much for all your input on this. The Friends have always had a strong relationship with the Chaplaincy where we supply flowers and support special services. We also restored the Chapel to its former glory during my term of office as Chairman.

2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received

Although we meet electronically, we will need your participation with a show of hands for the formal matters which follow.

3. Minutes of the Seventy Ninth Annual General Meeting held on 9th May 2019

The Minutes of the Seventy Ninth Annual General Meeting held on 9th May 2019 have been emailed, circulated, and approved in 2021. There was no AGM in 2020 and for the 2019 Annual Report and Accounts. Mrs Franklin asked if she could sign them as correct. This was unanimously agreed.

4. Report by the Honorary Treasurer, Mrs Margaret Lalor

Fundamentally, the objective of the Friends is to assist in the provision of equipment, services and amenities to the Royal Marsden Hospital and its patients. Over the past 5 years, the Friends of The Royal Marsden at Chelsea have donated almost £850,000 to the hospital - an incredible achievement, especially for an organisation run almost entirely by volunteers. In 2020, we funded £116,000 towards our worthy cause. At the end of the year, we had charitable commitments of £115,000 which includes £100,000 that is to be spent specifically on gynae related equipment or facilities and was donated in 2019 and specified for this purpose. There is a comprehensive list of our charitable expenditure on page 19 of the Annual Report. I would like to point out though that, in addition to this, we also spent £17,000 completely refurbishing the Friends Shop.

To achieve our objectives, the Friends have five main revenue streams: Donations and Legacies, Subscriptions, the Café, the Shop and Shop Trolley, and Fundraising Events and Activities.

In 2020, as you will appreciate, Covid 19 did have a significant effect on our ability to work actively in a few of our revenue generating areas. In March 2020 the Shop closed for a few months, the Café closed and continues to remain closed, and fundraising was not really possible. Despite that in 2020, the net income from all revenue streams was over £157,000, a result with which the Friends and the Royal Marsden Hospital should be delighted. In addition, we were promised a further legacy of £50,000 subject to the sale of a property. There is a summary of the net income from the various revenue streams on page 20 of the Annual Report and there is further detail on page 30.

Net Income from Donations, Legacies and Subscriptions was £152,000 in 2020, thanks to the generosity of so many. I would also like to point out that, included in this figure, are donations from our collection tins, placed around the hospital and in local shops and businesses, money from the Co-Op Community Funding, and money from other giving schemes which contributed almost £11,000. This, given the closure of so many businesses and shops during the year, is quite something.

With regards to our Fundraising events and activities, our only fundraising event was the Young Friends Drinks Party held at the Garrick Club, both ticket sales and the very generous sponsorship from Travers Smith of £11,000 contributed to a profit from this event of almost £13.5 k. Unfortunately, no other planned events were able to proceed.

At least with the results of what work the volunteers were able to do during the year and the cash surplus we have available, the Friends were able to fund the purchase of £103,500 of hospital equipment and £12,000 of hospital and patient amenities. This included the provision of equipment that was of great assistance in covid times and café and shop supplies donated to staff. Linda and Emma will elaborate more on this area.

Finally, albeit to a much greater extent in non-covid times, it is not only our financial contribution that has such an impact. As important, if not more so, are the thousands of hours of service our volunteers provide in so many areas around the hospital that make such a difference to the Royal Marsden and its patients. In addition to operating the Café, the Shop and the Shop Trolley our dedicated volunteers run the hobbies trolley, maintain hospital flowers and the garden, assist in Horder ward and in the Outpatients department, meet and greet patients, distribute magazines around the hospital and provide second-hand books for sale, too- the list goes on! And in 2020 I know the volunteers were chafing at the bit to do whatever was possible in each one of these areas to whatever extent was possible, given all the restrictions.

Finally, at the close of 2020, and factoring in the charitable commitments of £115,000 previously mentioned, the Friends were holding a very healthy cash balance of £544,000. This ensures we are very well placed indeed to carry on the great work we do here at the Royal Marsden Hospital.

In closing, may I take this opportunity to firstly thank Teresa Dick who has joined the Volunteers at the Marsden this year and is supporting me hugely with book-keeping duties. And then of course to thank Linda Wimble, who worked so incredibly hard with me to produce this year's Annual Report and in particular the additional time put in by Linda to present the Report in the new size you will all have noticed this year.

5. Adoption of Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2020

The President, Sandra Franklin proposed the adoption of the Report & Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021. This was carried unanimously.

6. Confirmation of Membership to the Board of Trustees

The Committee have confirmed the re-election of the Trustees for next year Mrs Antoinette Pardo, Mrs Wendy de Capell Brooke, Mrs Marie Stacey, Mrs Margaret Lalor, Mrs June Torrance, Mrs Linda Wimble, Mrs Emma Rogers and myself Mrs Sandra Franklin. This was carried unanimously.

7. Confirmation of the Committee

The Committee have confirmed the re-election of the following members Mrs Blackwood, Mrs Bradshaw, Mrs Fiddian-Green, Mrs Franklin, Mrs Munday, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Wimble, Mrs Turner. Mrs Ashby, Mrs Laidlaw and Mrs Phipps nee Ducker were elected to the Committee in 2019 but due to no AGM in 2020 meant that they couldn't be ratified until 2021. Mrs Aragoni was co-opted onto the committee in 2019 and I now propose the formal election of Mrs. Aragoni to the committee. This was carried unanimously.

8. Confirmation of President

The Committee have confirmed Mrs Franklin as President

9. Confirmation of Co-Chairs

The Committee have confirmed Mrs Wimble and Mrs Rogers as Co-Chairs

10. Confirmation of Vice Chairman

The Committee have confirmed Mrs Blackwood as Vice Chairman

11. Report by the Co-Chairs

AGM CHAIRS' REPORT

Emma Rogers Co-Chair

Thank you for joining us on our 80th and first ever AGM on Zoom.

2019 has been the most extraordinary and challenging year for the Friends. Since 1935, including the war years, the Friends has never had a break in service and although volunteering in many departments was suspended during the pandemic, the charity remained operational throughout. So, here is OUR story of 2020.

January-February

The year got off to a great start. It was our 85th birthday year and plans were afoot to celebrate with a Gala evening of cocktails and canapes at Spencer House in the autumn while the Young Friends were busy organising and hosting an exclusive drinks party at The Garrick Club.

Our Gift Aid claims, Standing orders and Subscriptions had been simplified by the introduction of a new cloud-based non-profit management solution, the long awaited redesign of the shop had started and we had introduced QR codes to the redesigned collection tins. This small but meaningful change would mean that donations could be contactless. We didn't realise at the time

but in effect, this made our collection tins COVID proof, which was just as well because we had absolutely no idea what was about to hit us.

March-April

On 19th March, despite the heroic efforts of everyone to carry on despite the emerging pandemic, we took the difficult decision to close the office forthwith and cease volunteering for the safety not just of our volunteers but the patients and staff at the hospital. As we closed the office and gathered our thoughts, we made a commitment that we would do everything we could to make sure that we would emerge from the crisis in as good, if not better, shape as we went into it.

As the clock ticked, it was a last-minute scramble to get as much onto 'The Cloud' as possible to enable us to continue to run the charity remotely while things remained so uncertain. Our Annual Audit was stalled, the AGM cancelled, Camilla and Angie were furloughed, our revenue streams were decimated, and we had around £2,000 of perishable stock in the shop and cafe. Undeterred, three weeks after lockdown we managed to clear out and deliver all our stock to the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity pop up shop outlet for distribution to all RMH staff during lockdown. Relief all round as we donated stock which would otherwise have been totally wasted.

We were doing our best for the Charity but we quickly realised that we needed to keep in touch with you - our volunteers and members. And so, the first of our online newsletters, 'Friendly Chat' was published, giving you an insight into what was going on at the Friends in your absence.

May-June

Up until now, our monthly wish list from the hospital had become a thing of the past and while we could not make any purchases or donations, neither were we making any income. By June, things were more settled, and the hospital started to request funding for equipment and amenities.

Then, during the first week of June we were told we could re-open the shop. Great news but how on earth were we to stock it given that the wholesaler deliveries were booked out for weeks in advance? Undaunted, after several car journeys to and from the wholesalers, the shelves were full, the store cupboard was replete, the shop interior was deep cleaned, the Perspex screens had been ordered, the distancing stickers were down, and we were ready to re-open our cash-free shop.

Volunteer seamstresses ran up face masks for us to sell and a request for Syringe driver bags was met with equal enthusiasm. It was all hands-on deck to get the stock made, packaged, and distributed.

Meanwhile, charity matters continued. We had our first ever Zoom Committee meeting, risk assessments were introduced for all returning volunteers, swab testing was being mooted, flu jabs were prioritised, and we were in regular contact with the Charities Commission ensuring that we were compliant with all Governance matters which had been turned on their head due to Covid.

Linda Wimble Co Chair

July-August

Although open, it was clear that the shop was looking very tired, and the refurbishment project was becoming increasingly urgent. Plans were flying backwards and forwards to the shopfitters and by the end of August we were all set to get started. The Committee had approved funds, the plans were finalised and after a meeting with CEO Dame Cally Palmer, we had secured full hospital

approval to proceed. All that remained was to get the timings right and to ensure that we were Covid proofed for the strip out and re-fit.

In the middle of this, the coffee machines in RDAC and Radiotherapy stopped working. For the benefit of patients and staff who otherwise would have no access to refreshments in the hospital, we needed to act quickly. It was the perfect opportunity to replace old, outdated machines with Covid friendly touch screen alternatives.

Meantime, the garden was suffering from Covid fatigue. The TLC normally given by our garden volunteer had become unsustainable during the months of lockdown and it was clear that we were going to have to take radical steps if it were to be returned to its former glory.

Meet & Greet was beginning to look like it could restart. The no-visitor policy in the hospital had created even greater hardship for patients and the sooner we could get at least a small cohort of our volunteers back, the better.

While we had started to get some income from the shop, we began to realise that Subscriptions had become more important than ever before and we wrote to, emailed and phoned as many of our members as we could, urging them to support us during this testing time. We had been fortunate to receive several generous legacies during the summer which would bridge the gap, but these would not materialise for some months, so countermeasures were essential.

September-October

Digital online meetings were proving to be invaluable. Not only could we hold Committee and Trustee Meetings by Zoom but we were also able to chat with our indefatigable Treasurer, Margaret, who was nothing short of incredible during COVID and who helped us steer our way through very muddy waters including guidance on the Charities Commission, our Auditors, the Objects & Rules of the Friends as well as Xero and Infoodle, our cloud-based software management systems.

By the end of October, the shop refurbishment was finished. It was a completely new look and in response to COVID we installed a coffee machine and started selling sandwiches. Things seemed to be getting back to some kind of normal and in October, our lovely secretary Camilla returned to work three days a week while Angie, Camilla's job share buddy, opted for early retirement.

We had weathered the storm in terms of holding the Charity together and our next target was to get the cafe reopened. Infection Prevention and Control was on our side but unfortunately, circumstances dictated that the risks were too high.

November-December

2,000 packs of Christmas Cards were delivered and with no visitors allowed in the hospital, we realised there was a lot of selling to do. Leaflets were printed, a telephone mail-order line was set up, volunteer distributors put themselves forward and we were off. The pace was relentless but hats off to everyone who helped. You were AMAZING.

As for Christmas day, sadly there was to be no pianist this year. However, the question remained right up to the wire as to whether we would be permitted to personally, on behalf of the Friends, distribute gifts to all in-patients on Christmas morning. We had packed 75 Lulu Bags with scarves, donated by a benefactor, each of which had to be individually wrapped in COVID proof bags and quarantined for 72 hours before delivery. On Christmas Eve, permission was granted and

accompanied by Acting Chief Nurse, Andy Dimech we were very honoured to be able to make the deliveries as planned.

By the end of December, we had contributed over £115k to the hospital in equipment, amenities and services including, amongst other things, large pieces of surgical equipment such as an Air Seal Surgical Smoke Evacuation System costing nearly £40k, a TIMS machine for Medical Imaging in Speech and Language Therapy costing almost £16k and replacement Covid proof furniture for Horder Ward.

As the New Year approached, we looked back on 2020 and acknowledged that it had been a roller coaster of a ride. There was never a dull moment and tough though it was for everyone, the Charity made it.

Emma Rogers Co Chair

Both Linda and I would like to make some thank yous. First and foremost, to our Treasurer Margaret Lalor who keeps us both on the straight and narrow. Margaret works tirelessly for the Friends and her attention to detail never ceases to amaze us.

To Jo Waller (acting Deputy chief nurse) has steered us through lockdown and the maze of our Wishlist, helping us to make difficult and complex decisions about the £100,000 gynae legacy which was left to us in 2019 and had to be put on hold during the early part of Covid. Thank you, Jo.

Thank you also to Mel Bowker, our amazing recruitment volunteer who has not only digitised all the various forms and paperwork required for new volunteers but has, along with our ever-patient secretary, who having been furloughed for much of the year, returned to the office and threw herself into helping our volunteers navigate their way through the new mandatory E-learning training which was launched during Covid.

Thanks also to Susie Blackwood and Cristiana Aragoni, the dynamic duo who keep our amazing shop stocked and looking fabulous. Their enthusiasm and the hours they spend making the shop the success it is cannot be underestimated.

Thanks must also go to the indomitable Sarah Phipps nee Ducker who runs Meet & Greet with such professionalism. All her volunteers are super competent, and Sarah runs her rota with military precision. To Marie Stacey for coming in throughout the pandemic, looking after all the pots around the hospital, giving cheer to the patients and making the hospital so much more welcoming. Another big thank you must go to Ruth Coles who has sat at home throughout lockdown making the most beautiful syringe driver bags for which staff and patients are so grateful. And finally, to Emily Woolgrove who heads up the Young Friends committee which, sponsored by Travers Smith, put on the wonderful evening at the Garrick at the beginning of 2020 and managed to raise close to £12,000, many, many thanks.

Linda Wimble Co Chair

We have been so grateful for the outstanding dedication, determination and resilience shown by those volunteers who came into the hospital during the Covid crisis, and we are profoundly grateful for their priceless contribution. The sadness is that so many of you wanted to help but simply couldn't as the Pandemic hit us all in so many ways.

We owe a huge debt of thanks to our wonderful committee and trustees who have always been there for us personally as well as for the Charity, offering help and advice when needed. And to those of you who have not been mentioned by name but who work tirelessly to support the Friends you are the backbone of the Charity and your contribution is priceless.

So finally, to our members, volunteers, supporters, fundraisers, donors and all the patients and staff at the hospital, we salute you for helping the Friends to be caring, giving and kind and we thank you for enabling us to give service to the amazing, wonderful Royal Marsden, Chelsea. Any questions?

12. Address by the President – Mrs Sandra Franklin

We meet today after another uncertain year but with the absolute certainty that we continue to applaud the NHS. The Friends have remained buoyant throughout and with the dedication of our volunteers were able to resume our services as soon as restrictions have allowed. The long relationship with our Patron and the encouragement of the hospital Chief Executive and Chairman contribute very much to helping this happen. It is a privilege to support the patients and staff and so encouraging to hear the many heartfelt comments of how the Friends help to make days and experiences better. I have always said it is nice to receive donations but that does not take the trolleys around, open the Shop, or make sandwiches. Giving a couple of hours of your time – an element of which we all have so little – really does help. Our currently dormant departments are ready to open as soon as the go ahead is given and all those who work in the Café and take trolleys around the wards are eager to be back on a rota. In the meantime, as you have heard, we continue to plan future fund-raising events which you all so enthusiastically support and enjoy. The Young Friends will hopefully transition in due course to the Friends, as did so many from the original Junior League founded by Brenda Moore a Committee Member, Chairman and President. Some of the Junior League are here today. Our Co-chair Emma Rogers and Linda Wimble, Vice Chair Susie Blackwood, Honorary Treasurer Margaret Lalor, Bookkeeper Teresa Dick. Our Volunteer Coordination Mel Bowker and our forceful Committee all approached their roles in a dynamic and professional way with Camilla Callander our secretary of many years ensuring the smooth running of the office. The Friends door is always open, and we are happy to hear from you with your ideas and comments. I really do look forward to the time when we can all meet in person but until then Thank You very much for being a member of the Friends of the Royal Marsden Chelsea. My Very Best Wishes to you all. Thank you. Sandra

Mairead Griffin Chief Nurse added that she is new to the organisation but wanted to thank everyone for the warm welcome and on behalf of the staff she really did want to thank all the members who gave so much to us. I know it's been difficult. We are working hard to get volunteers back on site safely. The plan is to get one visitor per patient back over the next six weeks and if that goes quite well, and we don't have any outbreaks on the wards we will gradually start opening other areas.

Sandra then ended the meeting by thanking everyone who attended.

Signed.....

Date