

YENTON ASSEMBLY ROOMS LTD

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 29TH OCTOBER 2016**

At: Yenton Assembly Rooms
73-75 Gravelly Hill North
Erdington
Birmingham
B23 6BJ

Present:

A total of 21 Brethren (Including Directors) attended the meeting. An Attendance Register can be found as Appendix A.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10:35am and welcomed everyone present.

1 Notice of Meeting

The Notice of the Meeting had been previously e-mailed to Lodge Secretaries and by virtue of the Brethren present they are deemed to have received the Notice of the Meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies have been received from the following:-

W. Bro. Michael J Price CBE
W. Bro. John Emms
W. Bro. Chris Grove MBE
W. Bro. Garry Barnard-Baker
W. Bro. Andy Hardy
W. Bro. David Hampson
W. Bro. Steve Martin
W. Bro. Mark Fleming
W. Bro. Martin Parrack
W. Bro. Bill Kerley
W. Bro. Robin Bradshaw
W. Bro. Bob Spence

3 Chairman's Opening Remarks

Over the last year the Rooms have moved forward, and during the Directors reports they will detail some of the many changes and improvements which have been made. I believe you have a good team of Directors working for the benefit of the Rooms, each having their own area of responsibility drawing from their individual skills.

There were now a total of 41 Orders meeting at the Rooms and we have previously welcomed Orion, Endurance, Corinthian, Mozart and Charity Chapter to Yenton. The Rooms diary is very busy, but there are some spaces available, but not on consistent days across the months.

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Dave Hill has received a recent enquiry from another Chapter wishing to relocate to Yenton.

We are aware that there are still Orders meeting The Apollo Hotel who will all have to relocate by the end of September 2017. If we are approached, we will endeavor to accommodate them, but they may have to consider changing their meeting dates.

The Rooms are moving away from private functions, particularly during the Masonic season, however the Rooms are available for Masonic related events or private events from established Masons. The Board are considering how best to use the Rooms during the closed season.

Each of the Directors will provide short report for their areas of responsibility later in the meeting.

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th October 2015 had been previously circulated.

There were no comments or amendments from the floor.

Following a show of hands, the Chairman declared them a true record of what there and then took place.

5 Matters Arising

There were no matters raised from the floor relating to the previous AGM Minutes.

6 Receive the Report of the Directors and the Accounts

Copies of the Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 30th June 2016 were issued with the AGM Minutes. These accounts have been subject to an Independent Review.

The Chairman reported that the accounts are now subject to the new accounting rules under FRS102 and we are in compliance with this requirement.

Brian Burton reported that there was a surplus made during the year of £12,000. This has been used to fund various projects which have been undertaken as will be detailed later. The Treasurer was keen to emphasize that it is a surplus and not a profit and all funds are re-invested for the benefit of the Brethren in the Rooms.

During the last year some £14,000 has been expended on repairs and maintenance and a further £7,000 on capital projects.

Cash at bank is currently £24,000.

The management accounts for the 3 months to 30th September 2016 show a deficit of £7,000, which is primarily due to the lack of income from the Orders during the closed season with only the rent for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire office accommodation and the mobile phone mast rental being received coupled with expenditure mainly refurbishing the kitchen.

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Capitation has now increased to £14.25 per Brethren. This represents a 2% increase from the previous year.

A further loan of £30,000 has been secured from The Heritage Fund to allow for major projects such as the new entrance and the recent changes in the kitchen and the Gents toilets.

John Matthews raised the question of whether the membership of YAR can provide materials at an advantaged price to help with the building of the new entrance. Kidderminster MC has built a new temple using donated materials. This question has not yet been asked but approaches will be made to the Brethren. Specification will be provided and competitive quotes sought.

There being no comments from the floor, the Treasurer proffered his thanks to Wilkes Tranter for financial guidance during the year and to David Evans and Co. for their work in reviewing the year end accounts.

The Chairman offered grateful thanks to W. Bro. Brian Burton for his work during the year. There being no further comment from the floor, the accounts as presented were duly proposed for acceptance by Bro. Carl Symonds and seconded by W. Bro. John Alder.

Following a show of hands the accounts for the year were unanimously approved.

7 Directors' Rotation

Under the Articles of the company, the following directors were appointed during the year and they are seeking re-election:

W. Bro. Steve Townsend
W. Bro. Garry Barnard-Baker
Bro. Carl Symonds

It was proposed and seconded that they all be re-elected.

Following a show of hands, the Chairman declared them duly re-elected with thanks.

8 Appointment of Accountants

The Chairman proposed that the existing accountants, David Evans and Co, be re-appointed as they have provided excellent work in their Independent Review of the year end accounts.

This was duly proposed by W. Bro. Ian Hart, seconded by W. Bro. John Matthews.

Following a show of hands, the Chairman declared that the accountants were duly re-appointed.

9 Directors' Reports

The Directors each gave a verbal report on their areas of responsibility:-

W. Bro. Steve Townsend – Infrastructure and Projects Report

W. Bro. Steve Townsend stated that work is going on all of the time and a great deal of it is not immediately visible to those attending the Rooms.

The Temple has been re-carpeted and we have the benefit of the use of the antique Howe Lodge Chairs which Yenton has purchased. The Dining Room has been redecorated and new carpets have been laid. We have purchased new, stronger, lighter folding tables which can now be set out in various configurations and these have been supplemented by newer more comfortable chairs.

In the kitchen a great deal of work has been done to achieve and hopefully maintain our 5 star food rating. A new 'header system' for the gas supply with an interlock to the extractors and remote isolation has been installed allowing us to comply with the latest regulations. The old cookers have now been disposed of and the existing ones relocated and cleaned. The extractor canopy and filters have been cleaned and are now working at full capacity. A slight issue of the operation of the extractors at full speed is being addressed with the implementation of a speed control unit.

On the first floor, the corridors have been repainted and re-carpeted. At the request of the Province, the large meeting room has been redecorated and now includes a new table and chairs. This has been achieved following a 50% contribution of the cost by the Province. This is a room which may be used for Committee Meetings, providing the new table is not marked by cases and that to that end a small table will be located for Secretaries to use.

A new CCTV system has been installed covering the car park and various areas within the building. The Province has also contributed towards this item.

The electronic gates have received major work including a brand new control system and driver.

W. Bro. Ian Hart asked if the amber gate opening light can be moved to a more visible position.

This will be done and a mirror fitted as well to allow sight from all possible locations.

It has been reported that the new gate keypad is difficult to read and type in the required code.

Alternatives to the current keypad are being examined including ones with backlit displays.

A broken walk in chiller room which had not been used for a few years has been dismantled and removed, creating valuable storage space for use by the Rooms.

Both the Ladies and Gents Toilets have now been refurbished. An issue with lighting in the Ladies and a heater for the Gents are being addressed.

New doors have been fitted into the current lobby area. All other doors are to be replaced with same style in due course.

For the new Orders moving into the Rooms, additional lockers have been fitted.

As it has been determined that there will be no new Provincial Temple, we have been successful in acquiring from stored equipment 100 blue chairs to replace the current ones in the Temple, (the old ones will be suitably disposed of as appropriate), a brand new set of Wardens columns, and 15 round aluminum tables that seat eight per table. These are lightweight and easier for the catering team to set up when required. A bid is being considered for a set of Tracing Boards.

The cost for replacement of the current Royal Arch Banners and 12 Tribes standards is circa £1,000. It had been agreed that Yenton would share the cost 50/50 with the Royal Arch Orders meeting at the Rooms. We are now considering obtaining the ones currently in use at The Apollo Hotel when they become available next year.

Steve Townsend asked for assistance from Lodge Members. There is a toilet area on the first floor which requires some attention. Painting and clearing items plus a replacement bowl, cistern and pan would create a toilet that can be used during Committee Meetings. Can anyone help with this project?

Yenton has paying tenants in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire occupying the converted flat. The windows in that area are in a very poor state and need replacement. We have received a competitive quote for £3,878 to replace all of them with suitable uPVC windows. This has been approved by the Board of Directors and these will be installed before the winter.

The revised entrance plans are on show and will be circulated to all Orders. There has been a delay to this project as it was determined that we need to seek planning approval for the structure. An Application for Planning has been submitted to Birmingham Council. The specification and tenders are to be drawn up and quotations are to be sought from appropriate suppliers. We will seek donations of materials where possible. The new design, which now extends further out and curves round into the car park complies with all building regulations, DDA and Equality Act requirements.

Future major projects will include the improvements to the front of the building to include re-plaster the surface and re-paint, the installation of new wooden doors, the installation of external lighting, not only on pathways, but to emphasise the building.

W. Bro. John Matthews asked about dimmable lights for the Temple as these seem to have changed.

The new LED lights which save energy require a different type of dimmer controller. This is being investigated. A demonstration of the Temple with the current lights dimmed and only the Banner light lit was undertaken as a suitable alternative for a Third Degree ceremony.

We are also having a new control system installed for the heating.

The future use of the stage area in the Temple was discussed. This will be cleared of the current items which include spare carpet underlay and will be used as a storage area.

The Rooms are now in a far better state following the redecoration work and we should remind all Orders that we are open for Ladies Nights. The Chairman will include this as an item in his next circular.

The Chairman proposed thanks to W. Bro. Steve Townsend for his tireless work and his detailed report.

W. Bro. Jon Creak – 400 Club & Maintenance Report

There is still capacity in the 400 Club and we need to sell more tickets to the Orders meeting here. If every Order purchased 5 tickets this would double the fund available to £4,000. Under lottery rules the minimum payout is 50% of the fund. Last year this amounted to £1,890 with a resulting £1,200 donation to the Rooms. There are still four winning payments to be made and W. Bro. Jon made enquiry of the outstanding winners of the Brethren present. The 400 Club will also be an item in the Chairman's circular to the Orders.

Maintenance Gangs are still required for the first Saturday of each month for approximately 2 hours. There is always a list of jobs to be undertaken, the details of which are posted on the notice board. A tidy up of the Car Park is the next on the list. One particular Brother has spent a large number of sessions ensuring that the fire escape had been properly stripped and repainted for which he is to be congratulated.

There was a reminder that there is a maintenance book in the Tyler's area for recording items which need attention.

W. Bros. John Alder & John Davis – Catering Report

The latest menu is now on the website together with order form templates in a Word format. There are also templates for table plans including various sprig, and triangle options. The Catering Directors are looking at the possibility of making on-line bookings for catering requirements.

CL Catering kindly provided staff free for the recent MacMillan Coffee Morning which raised over £1,000.

A new provider has been engaged by the CL Catering for laundering of the table cloths at a lower price. The charges of this are off-set against bar rental charges to the caterers.

W. Bro. Ian Hart asked if it was possible to have linen napkins for ladies events, his Lodge has self-undertaken this in the past.

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W. Bro. John Davis reported this would be possible but there will be an increase in costs and that they would need to approach the caterers directly. It was felt that for ordinary meetings the higher quality paper napkins now being used were appropriate.

W. Bro. John Alder confirmed that the waitress ratio of 1 to 16 diners seems to be working.

W. Bro. Tony Hinton noted that the time to clear each course and at the end of a meal could be improved by using a trolley to remove items from the Dining Room.

The caterers will be approached to discuss this.

It was pointed out that it is the DC's responsibility to keep things moving at Festive Boards and that they need to be more attentive to their running order and liaison with the catering staff on the night.

It was unanimously agreed that the caterers were "doing a really good job" and they should be congratulated on providing good food and service on a consistent basis at an affordable price. The catering directors will pass this message on to CL Catering.

W. Bro. Roger Worth - Health & Safety Report

The fire alarms and smoke detectors have all been serviced and are in full working order and we now have appropriate certification. Three non-functional detectors have been replaced to achieve this.

The fire exit signs have been repaired.

Fire extinguishers are to be included on the five year plan as they need to be refreshed by rotation.

The new support contract with Beta Fire is on a 12 month rolling contract basis and it is working well.

W. Bro. David Hill - Room Bookings

The diary is filling up with only odd dates now available. Some Orders are changing their availability to hold rehearsals on Sundays when the rooms are quiet.

As mentioned previously the use of the Rooms in the Summer needs to be considered by the directors.

Any other business

W. Bro. Alex Bowden asked about the maturity of the loans the various Orders had made to the Rooms and when they would likely to be repaid?

The Chairman stated that the repayments would be made as agreed when the original Heritage Fund loan had been repaid. The balance currently stood at £35,000 which is being repaid at £5,000 per annum.

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The Directors were asked to look into a procedure to be followed for an Order which had donated to the loan fund and is about to close and how the repayment would be dealt with under those circumstances. This matter will be considered at the next Directors' Meeting.

W. Bro. Steve Townsend stated that the Province is keen that the Museum items from Stirling Road are relocated across the various meeting rooms in the Province. The Province will cover insurance of the items. The issue at Yenton arranging suitable space to accommodate items and glass display cases will be discussed at the next Directors' Meeting.

W. Bro. Ian Hart asked for confirmation that the Smoking Cabin is to be relocated prior to the new entrance works. This was confirmed, but the new exact location was not!

10 Chairman's Report

The Directors were pleased to be able to show the revised drawings for the new entrance. This has had to be extended and curved round to enable adherence to the DDA and Equality Act Regulations. A formal submission to Birmingham City Council has been made and we await the outcome.

This revised design will cost more than originally budgeted and the architect is preparing a specification to enable us to obtain three competitive quotes which we will review and possibly 'cost down' if too expensive.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to W. Bro. Richard Johnson for his help and assistance with the plans for the new entrance.

Plans are starting to be made for the 2107 Tercentenary Celebrations. As well as the publicised Mfest, we will be holding a formal dinner at the Rooms which will be a Black Tie dinner to be held on the 4th November 2017 with a guest Speaker and live entertainment. We hope to be able to display via DVD what has been happening at the various events in London.

We need everyone's input into the Tercentenary events, so please contact the Chairman in the first instance with ideas.

The Rooms are very keen to engage more with the local community. A very successful coffee morning in aid of the Macmillan Cancer charity started this interaction. We are looking at setting up an exhibition at the Erdington library on Freemasonry. W. Bro. Gary Barnard-Baker and the Chairman have a scheduled meeting with the local Council to discuss how we can enhance the exposure of Freemasonry and the Rooms in the community.

A sponsor for the Six-ways roundabout in Erdington might help to advertise the Rooms.

As you have heard, the various projects are achieving improvements to the Rooms. The kitchen refurbishment entailed an investment of over £5,500 and the gents toilets near to £8,000. As long as we have funds available, we will continue to work through new projects to everyone's benefit.

The Chairman has been notified that some items of equipment are missing from the Rooms. This includes a Chapter Charter which is a sizable item and of no use to anyone other than the Chapter itself.

W. Bro. Ian Hart commented that one of the reasons that this is occurring is that there are now various people in Orders assisting in packing away after meetings and that the Orders should have one person responsible for the final storage of items.

Bro. Carl Symonds stated that we should create a list of the room's standard laid out items to be made available in the Tyler's area. There is a need for an Amnesty Day for the return of misplaced items.

The Chairman will include this item in his next circular.

With the help of W. Bro. Richard Johnson we will develop a 5 year maintenance and refurbishment plan to enable us to prepare for work and the associated expenditure. This will include a refreshment of the front of the building with re-plastering and painting and new entrance doors. We would also like to install lighting to make the building stand out as part of our exposure to the community.

The Chairman reported that W. Bro. Brian Burton is to retire next season as the Treasurer of the Rooms. He proposed thanks from the Directors and Brethren for the work Bro. Brian had undertaken over the years. We now need to identify a replacement for Brian of a suitable or higher standard. Terms of Reference for the role are being created and will be circulated. If any Order knows of one of their members with the suitable skills please ask them to approach the Chairman in the first instance.

The Chairman thanked Bro. Carl Symonds for taking the Minutes at today's meeting.

The Chairman then gave his personal thanks to all of the Directors for their excellent work during the last year.

W. Bro. John Matthews proposed a vote of thanks to the Directors for the work that they are doing for the benefit of the Rooms and those that meet here.

11. Next AGM Meeting

The next AGM will be held on Saturday 28th October 2017.

The meeting closed at 12:05am.

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Stephen Tranter
Chairman

Appendix A

Register of Attendance AGM 29th October 2016

Directors:-

W. Bro. Steve Tranter (Chairman)	Integrity 4563
W. Bro. John Alder	Integrity 4563
W. Bro. Brian Burton	Stability 8667
W. Bro. Jon Creak	Walmley St John 6504
W. Bro. John Davis	Stability 8667
W. Bro. David Hill	Equity 5554
Bro. Carl Symonds	Integrity 4563
W. Bro. Steve Townsend	Stability 8667
W. Bro. Roger Worth	Stability 8667

Members:-

W. Bro. Alec Bowden	Thornhill 7137
W. Bro. Peter Bowden	Thornhill 7137
W. Bro. David Caudle	Mozart 3735
W. Bro. Bryan Farmer	Yenton Chapter 3484
W. Bro. Ian Hart <i>J.P.</i>	Friendship 5909
W. Bro. John Hayward	Faith & Hope 4772
W. Bro. Anthony Hinton	Yenton 3484
W. Bro. John Matthews	Queeselet St James 6887
W. Bro. Tony Newby	Yenton MMM 719
W. Bro. M Noy	Perseverance 4622
W. Bro. Mike Serzeniewski	Queenslet St James 6887
W. Bro. John Stockhall	Assembly 5747