

AGM of the Friends of the York Art Gallery (by Zoom) – 26 March at 10am

Apologies were received from Moira Fulton, Reyahn King, Margaret and Anthony May, Louise Wheatley, and John Roe.

In the absence of John Roe, the minutes were taken by Ron Clayton.

1. The Chair, Charles Martindale, having ascertained that the meeting was quorate, welcomed the attendees. He spoke of the past year's challenges; of the crucial contribution the Friends had made to the Gallery's survival and prosperity; of Ukraine's struggle to preserve its identity and culture; and of the birth of a boy to the Senior Curator.

2. The minutes of the AGM of 27 March 2021 were approved as a true and sufficient record of that meeting.

3. The President of the Friends of the York Art Gallery, Peter Miller, addressed the meeting. He looked forward to a future free of Zoom meetings. He made mention of the draconian measures imposed on the YMT by current circumstances. He reviewed several striking and successful Gallery exhibitions, to many of which the Friends had contributed significantly. He paid tribute to the work of the retiring Chair of the YMT, Reyahn King, and wished her well in Scotland. He welcomed our Acting Senior Curator, Morgan Feely. He congratulated the Friends' committee on sustaining and developing the Friends' activities. He looked forward to the unveiling of the Laura Knight painting – our most generous and substantial contribution to the Gallery's holdings. He observed that the art book sale was proving to be particularly profitable; that Free Entry was welcome; and that we owed a special debt of gratitude to the work and co-operativeness of the Gallery's staff.

4. a) John Roe was elected as a committee member, and appointed as our Secretary. Warm thanks were accorded to the retiring Secretary, Benjamin Hilliam, for his role in modernising our traditional procedures.

b) Anne McLean was re-elected as a committee member; particular mention was made of her indispensable technical skills.

c) Jeanne Neuchterlein and Ron Clayton were re-elected as committee members.

d) Helena Cox (who introduced herself and sketched her past and present activities) was elected as a committee member.

All were elected/ re-elected *nem. con.*

5. The Treasurer – Paul McLean, another valuable moderniser of our methods – reported (from South Africa) on the state of our accounts:

Income – 2021: £43,594 (2020: £21,816)

The surplus - £14,453 – mainly due to profits from Events - has been transferred to Reserves.

Grants: £13, 420 – acquisitions; conservation; bursary.

Reserves: £199,459

6. The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 were approved, *nem. con.*

7. The appointment of an Independent Examiner was approved, *nem. con.*

8. Morgan Feely, the Acting Senior Curator, was welcomed by the Chair. He introduced himself and spoke of his and the Gallery's gratitude for the Friends' support. He surveyed the Gallery's recent and current events and exhibitions, and looked forward – as did we – to forthcoming exhibitions of 'Treasures from the Store' and 'Sin.' Some of those 'Treasures', he noted, might require conservation, and the Friends might expect a request for a contribution thereto. He reported that there was a 'pause on acquisitions' for the present while the YMT reviewed its policy in that field. He acknowledged that the YMT's current priorities were such that the refurbishment of the Burton gallery and the staircase-area was a project that was almost wholly dependent on the Friends' commitment to it.

9. Rhyann Arthur, the FYAG MA Research Scholar at the University of York, gave a presentation in which she outlined her intellectually ambitious and wide-ranging programme of research.

10. We noted the death of Nigel Forbes Adam, the husband of a previous Chair Malise Forbes Adam, and a long-term Friend and supporter of this charity.

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