

**Folk Camps Society Limited**  
**Minutes of AGM held at Wing Village Hall 1<sup>st</sup> December 2007**

1. **Present:** 53 governing members, 4 associate members.  
Apologies received from 41 governing members.

2. **Minutes of Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006** were approved.  
Proposed: Malcolm Bright    Seconded: Chris Munford.    Carried

3. **Matters arising:** none

4. **To appoint tellers for a ballot** - No ballot needed therefore no tellers required.

5. **To appoint 7 members to the Council of Management**

This year there were 7 nominations for 7 places so no election was needed. The chairman introduced to the meeting the 4 newest members of Council – Mike Barnard, Karl Stevens, Ren Thompson and Caroline Tracey.

6 **Adoption of report and accounts 2006/2007**

Proposed: Cecil French    Seconded: Andy Malleson    Carried unanimously.

7. **To appoint James de Frias as auditors**

Andy Malleson asked if a fee had been agreed for next year. Mic Spenceley, administration manager, responded that the fee will be roughly the same as this year, though an exact figure could not be given. There should be less work to do, as our procedures are now known to the company.

Proposed: Jon McNamara    Seconded: Faith Kemp    Carried

8. **Resolutions** - none

9. **Any other business**

**Advertising**

Derek Jones queried why **advertising** outlay was so low in the last year compared to the previous year. Mic Spenceley responded that the brochures had been reprinted last year, there are sufficient for the current year and therefore there had been less outlay on publicity.

Sue Malleson said people have been encouraged to recruit through word of mouth. The 'Mrs. Casey' mail shot brought in quite a few bookings. The article in The Guardian Unlimited had been good publicity and did not cost us anything.

Karl Stevens suggested that we should use Radio Britfolk as a means of reaching potential new campers. Jenni Pollard – has created a Folk Camp Myspace, there is also a presence on Facebook. Sue Malleson said that we can all help by promoting Folk Camps within other websites by putting links from folk club sites to Folk Camps.

Andy Malleson requested that a section be added to the booking form to indicate where new campers had found out about Folk Camps. Mic Spenceley responded that it would be difficult to find space to add this in!

Karl Stevens suggested that someone should design a Folk Camps web button that people can add to their own websites. Mic Spenceley agreed to investigate this.

Jon MacNamara suggested that online meetings can be done via BT's 'Meet Me' service. Paul Weir said that Skype can be also used for this. Barbara Pollard stated that face-to-face contact is much more personal and promotes the ethos of the

organisation. Several people agreed with this. Paul Weir said that Council conducts much of its business by email.

Claire Mycock pointed out that, with the new online booking form, more information can be incorporated. Jackie Mason spoke with reference to the worth of adverts in club publications - if it hadn't been for such an advert they wouldn't have come to a Folk Camp. An article written by Colin Hume still draws in a number of people.

Cecil French suggested that as we are going back to Cecil Sharp House for the 2008 Reunion we should advertise again in EFDSS publications.

### **Musicians workshop material**

Derek Jones – material for musician's workshops - he queried the variety of material and ways in which it is presented and suggested that there ought to be some sort of standardisation. He felt that guidelines should be given to the musicians on what is required.

He also queried the frequency of use of some staff. He stated that with regard to leaders and musicians – at one time only one camp was allowed per person per year and queried why this seems to have changed. Paul Weir responded that the Society often experiences difficulty in finding sufficient musicians and leaders.

Re; materials – the expectations of all are difficult to meet – can volunteer staff be expected to spend many unpaid hours preparing for a camp? Heather Tracey said that having had two parents working on camps she has seen the work involved; she felt that to standardise it would be too difficult and involve too much time and would make the music offered very boring. Liz Breuille stated that she appreciated the variety of the music offered.

Dan Mason said there are lots of ways of getting around not having pre-printed music. He suggested writing music by hand and sitting down and teaching by ear.

Jon MacNamara stated that a number of standard tunes have been put on the members website.

Derek Jones said that he thought the meeting had missed the point.

Jon MacNamara said that if music is sent to him he will be happy to add it to the resource on the members website.

Jackie Mason said that at Halsway Manor this year an excellent set of music was produced and people were able to photocopy. Jackie defended those who need/prefer to have written music.

Sally Mounter said that the information sent out to campers could have added that it is alright to bring recording equipment to camps.

Jackie Butler said that she would like to point out the amount of extra voluntary work involved for a musician in working out new tunes, etc as well as working at a full-time job. She said that we also have to allow for different styles.

Barry Watson suggested that there should be access to a photocopier on camp.

Brian Bull wanted to put forward a different angle; that there is overuse of musical notation – traditional music is more than playing notes on a page; there is a place for written music, but playing is so much more. There are limitations to the type of approach that attempts to standardise how everything is played. Style, playing for dancing, etc. is so much more than this. If we are true to our constitution of promoting folk dance and song then we should be including this in our approach.

Cecil French asked what advice is given to new musicians on what to pre-arrange and reproduce in terms of music. Paul Weir said that we have fantastic musical talent and despite everyone's increasingly diverse particular requests and requirements they continue to do a great job.

Sue Malleson pointed out that those with Internet access can look at the Management manuals for themselves. Jenni Pollard was concerned that she will be staffing next year but hadn't heard of Management Manuals. Brian Bull assured her that they are sent out to all new staff.

### **Food at Halsway Manor**

Derek Jones brought up the subject of the food at Halsway Manor stating that problems over quality have been on-going for the last three years. Derek knew that Council had addressed this with the Halsway Manor Trustees and had received a response, which he had already seen. Faith Kemp said her real complaint would be about packed lunches. She would rather pay less and buy lunch out. Claire Mycock said that the food at Halsway was substandard to what we would expect at a camp. Jackie Mason stated that 18 years ago packed lunches were very bad, therefore they have improved. The big problem for her was vegetarian meals; they were very nondescript. Cecil French said that Halsway does have a problem in keeping a chef, therefore there is lack of consistency.

Mic Spenceley said that a letter was sent to the Halsway Manor Trustees on 14<sup>th</sup> Aug in which it was pointed out that this was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running of complaints. They responded stating that there were problems getting a chef, the manager was on holiday, the assistant manager was ill etc. A further letter was sent from FCS pointing out how much we spend with them (approx £19,000 per annum) and asking how they intended to address the problems. The response from Halsway had been very general and non-committal. Council members had spoken informally with one or two people who are Halsway Trustees – they acknowledged that they had a problem, but do not seem to know how to resolve it. The Society had also considered offering to take our own catering team in there, though it is unlikely that Halsway would agree to this.

Mick Green felt that their response was rude and dismissive. Sue Malleson stated that Council was also looking at alternative venues in anticipation of having to drop Halsway Manor. Any suggestions regarding residential centres should be communicated to Council.

It was suggested that we opt to have light lunches rather than a packed lunch, others suggested no lunch option. Families would prefer something provided, as having to get lunch for a family is difficult.

Paul Weir pointed out that Halsway charges Folk Camps almost full retail price so there is very little margin to make it worthwhile for Folk Camps.

Carole Bull asked if we have to guarantee a certain number? Mic Spenceley stated that we need 40 adults to qualify for a 5% discount.

Mic Spenceley and Brian Bull had had a meeting with the manager a year ago, requesting improvement in the catering. This had been promised but the problem still did not seem to have been addressed.

Cecil French pointed out that the packed lunches are identical to those at Symonds Yat. However, at Symonds Yat there is more choice at evening meal.

Paul Weir stated that Folk Camps has enjoyed a long and happy association with Halsway: we hope that it will continue, but we do have to consider the situation. Derek Jones said that the problem is the evening meal. Barbara Pollard said that breakfasts are good; she can't understand why there is such a difference with the evening meal. Paul Weir said that the Halsway Trustees are not grasping the nettle at the moment; but all members' comments will be passed on to the Halsway Trustees.

### **Links with EFDSS**

Sally Mounter asked if, as it is our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2008, we are going to re-establish some links with EFDSS – they are becoming a younger organisation now and it seems a shame not to foster this.

Faith Kemp pointed out that originally, to be a governing member of FCS, you also had to be a member of EFDSS. Paul Weir said that he was the person who originally initiated the break with EFDSS in the 1970s with the intention of broadening the governing membership of Folk Camps. There was discussion about when we should actually celebrate various anniversaries.

### **Thanks**

Paul Weir concluded that three members of Council were retiring after 6 years service – Chris Butler, Ann Tracey and Brian Pollard – a vote of thanks was given to them and also to contractors Mic Spenceley, Brian Bull and Barry Moule for all their work throughout the year. Brian Bull thanked Paul for his work as Chairman stating that he has done a good job. Andy Malleson expressed thanks to the rest of the Council.

The chairman also expressed thanks to John and Faith Kemp for once again running 'Kemps Kitchen' throughout the day.

The meeting closed at 4.12 pm