



Association of Friends of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent Court

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of members of the Association of Friends of PEDoK Court

held on **Wednesday 27th November 2019**

AT STISTED HALL at 7.30pm

In attendance: In attendance: Trustees Alan Garner, Clive Dunnico, Nigel Oldacre, David Badger, Graham Elvidge, Karine Oldacre and Graham Larke and Dr JW Reuther (Grand VP, RMBI) and four members: Dave Parrot, John and Jackie Berry-Richards and MC Black

The President, Alan Garner, welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Dr Reuther and the members of the association.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Trustees Andrew McLeod, Dennis May, Barry Stedman and Lloyd Harris, and members Eric Broadbent, FG Bird, Ken Birnie, Bob Needham, Gerald Smith, John Smoothy, Mick Leggat, David & Laura Brown, Margaret Paul, Brian Heasman, John Sallows, John Rowand, David Branch, Sir Neil Thorne and George Lambeth.

Minutes: The minutes of the AGM held on 28th November 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

There were no matters arising. The Chairman suggested that any conflicts of interest be recorded as and when they were declared.

Chairman's Report:

As Chairman of the Association of Friends of Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court I witness first-hand the dedicated work carried out by my fellow Trustees, the staff and other volunteers who give of their time in so many ways to create a most happy atmosphere in this wonderful Home here at Stisted.

Michelle Bladen, our former Home Manager, went on to pastures new on 25th October. She will be sorely missed by residents, staff and members of the Association. The new Home Manager, Agnieszka McDonald, will take up her duties in early January 2020. In the meantime Katrina Karolchyk (Deputy Home Manager) will oversee the Home to ensure its continuing smooth running and the continued support given to our residents and their families. The Trustees would like to record our thanks to Michelle for her dedication and hard work during her time with us.

We are very fortunate in having Nigel and Karine Oldacre who know each of the residents personally and spend a great deal of their time at the Home. Nigel is our Vice Chairman and Residents' Activity Organiser and Karine is our House Advisor, which is an office akin to that of Almoner. We owe a great deal of thanks to this dedicated and caring couple.

Karine will be including in her report the many activities our residents have enjoyed. I would like to mention that the Home continues to welcome children. The Trustees became aware in 2015, through a programme on Channel 4, of this type of activity in other homes and encouraged this to be done at Stisted. Consequently, Michelle contacted Louise Baxter, whose new Home had welcomed children. This led to the first group of children visiting the Home. In May 2019 the Residents welcomed children from the Bo Jingles Children's Group. These visits by children certainly brighten up our residents' lives and they joined in with the children making music, singing various nursery rhymes and even dancing with them.

You will be hearing the Reports from my fellow Trustees and I should like to thank them for their support and for the excellent contributions they make in the interests of the Home and its residents.

Publicity is most helpful to our cause and we have the advantage of having Barry Stedman, our Assistant Secretary, who expertly looks after our website, www.friendsofpedokc.org.uk in association with our Membership Secretary, Lloyd Harris. Barry has spent a lot of time in creating the Archives on our website, which contains numerous photos and a video tour which he has created of the Home.

The 20th Anniversary of the opening of Stisted Hall on 20th January 1999 by the MW the Grand Master, HRH the Duke of Kent, was celebrated on the 20th January 2019 with a Masquerade Ball at the Home. It had been arranged by our former Home Manager, Michelle Bladen. The event was attended by our President and other Trustees who were able to enjoy themselves with residents and guests.

The Association was founded as the result of much hard work and initial financial gifts by our President Alan Garner and our late Vice-President, Brian Procter. They, with others sowed the seeds and we continue to nurture their growth. Alan Garner continues to give much valuable support to our work. To him we owe our grateful thanks. The Trustees are happy to consider all requests for financial assistance for the benefit of the residents. It will be seen in the Accounts for the

year to 30th June 2019 that each month we paid, on average, around £1,500 to an Amenity Fund which enables residents to enjoy events within and outside the Home. Another £2,500 has been spent on residents' gifts throughout the year. The pond work and surrounding area improvements, which included a new bench for contemplation in the grounds, were completed just in time for this year's Summer Fete. The Association paid £17,500 for those works, which provide an improved environment for our Residents.

Our neighbour, the Braintree Golf Club takes great care of their grounds which provide a magnificent panoramic view for our residents. The entrance road to the Home passes through those grounds giving a most welcome scenic experience to our residents and visitors alike. The Club kindly allows us to hold the Annual Stisted Hall Charity Golf Classic and the after-proceedings on their premises. Our residents, too, are welcome to use the social facilities provided by the Club. We are very grateful to the Club for their hospitality and generosity.

The Mauchline House Garden continues to be a place of contentment for those residents who enter the twilight of their lives with dementia and it is a place of beauty where others, too, are able to enjoy a visit.

The Home always has a most happy atmosphere and the Association maintains a close relationship with the members of staff that do such wonderful work for the benefit of the residents. Each resident is made to feel that Stisted Hall is their own Home and that they are an integral part of one happy family. On Sunday 9th December 2018, the Residents' Christmas Party was held when the residents enjoyed festive fayre and entertainment. How quickly time goes by for they are now looking forward to this year's Christmas Party which is to take place on 8th December, where entertainment, fun and a Christmas Lunch will once again be enjoyed by them. Photographs of this and other events will appear on the Association's website in due course.

There is no place like Stisted Hall. There is no place like Home.

Treasurer's Report:

The accounts had been circulated and are appended to the minutes, and are also published on the association's website. The Treasurer briefly summarised the accounts, and noted that subscription income was down, but this was an issue being addressed by the Trustees. The fete had provided its usual useful contribution and 2019's event had proved even more profitable, which would be reflected in next year's accounts.

GE said that allowing for the £18,000 expenditure on the pond and the approx £1,500 monthly amenity fund, the deficit of around £20,000 had been expected. Other expenditure had been kept low and, as usual, the trustees took no expenses, he noted.

He said there continued to be 'sufficient funds', with assets of around £78,000, although some of this had been pre-allocated. Graham Larke proposed the accounts be approved, with a vote of thanks to the Treasurer. The proposal was seconded by MC Black and agreed.

Almoner's Report:

There are 40 residents at present in Stisted Hall, 23 who are in the main house and 17 in Mauchline House. Since our last AGM there have been 43 birthdays which include three 100th

birthdays and a total of 30 people who were 90 years of age or over. On their birthday each person was given a birthday card and gift from 'the Friends' to mark their special day.

There were 10 new residents who, soon after their arrival were given a bouquet of flowers or a lovely plant with a message of welcome to their new home in Stisted Hall.

Sadly there have been 16 deaths, the oldest person being Margaret Lambeth who was the great age of 101. Messages of sympathy and cards were sent to the next of kin and flowers or donations in their memory were given to their chosen charity. The charities include the RNLI, MIND, Great Leighs parish Churches, McMillan Cancer Support, the Alzheimers Society, BLISS, the British Heart Foundation, PEDoKC and dementia UK. Nigel and I try, if possible, to go to some of the funerals, which is always appreciated by the families.

On St Valentine's Day a box of chocolates was given to each person to make the day a bit special. On Easter Sunday an attractive pack of Easter Eggs was given to each resident from 'the Friends' to wish them a happy Easter.

On behalf of 'the Association of Friends' I shop for birthday cards and presents and wherever I go I am always on the 'look out' for attractive and suitable gifts.

Last year's Christmas party on 9th December was enjoyed by all the residents. Nicky and Neil from Clearer productions came again to entertain, Nicky with her singing and Neil playing the piano together with amusing quotations and verse in between songs and carols. Nicky's changes into a number of pretty evening dresses always delights as does her walking round and singing to individual residents. The entertainment was followed by giving out Christmas cards from 'the Friends' advising each person that £50 had been paid into their resident's fund to spend on something that they would like. All this was followed by a lunch of their choice and a glass or two of wine, all courtesy of the Association, which completed a happy and enjoyable day.

Nigel and I called in on Christmas day morning to wish everyone a happy Christmas and to drink their health with a glass of wine.

This year's Christmas party is on 8th December. The menu for the lunch has been chosen and Clearer Productions are once again coming to entertain as in previous years.

Residents' Activities Organiser's Report:

Coffee mornings continue to be poorly attended, despite only holding them every other month, with fewer residents as well as visitors (except for a few stalwarts). Alan Reynolds, after a few months break due to his wife's death, kindly returned to resume his singing to the delight of everyone present. At the October coffee morning Jeff Cripps presented a cheque for £800 to the Association of Friends as the proceeds from the annual Stisted Hall Golf Classic held in early June. Our thanks go to him for continuing to organise the event.

In January, together with Alan & Pat Garner, Dennis & Ann May, George & Claire Lambeth, Karine & I went to a Masquerade Ball at Stisted Hall to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the official opening of PEDoKC. It was a happy occasion with everyone dressed up to the nines.

Recruiting volunteer drivers is a continuing problem but a

number of possible solutions are under discussion. George Lambeth together with Dennis & Ann May are the only remaining volunteer drivers.

In August Karine & I attended an amusing and entertaining Panto with members of the staff making up the cast. Well done to Ann May for all her hard work. Also in August, during Staycation Fortnight, a BBQ was held in the Mauchline House garden, instead of the usual coffee morning. Alan Reynolds entertained us whilst Dennis May & Daryl (Katrina's husband) did the cooking and Ann May & Katrina dealt with the vital aspects of drinks etc. The raffle on this occasion made £110.

Four working parties have taken place in the grounds during the year, with a number of regulars. We normally start off in the Mauchline House garden, which needs more attention, before venturing out into the rest of the grounds. The 'Friends' have donated a number of perennial plants for the garden, as well as Geraniums and Calibracoa, for the large pots and raised troughs respectively, which brightens up and enhances the whole area for the residents to enjoy. Thanks are due to all those volunteers who come along; their reward being a break for a bacon roll and a beverage as well as a chance to chat and engage in some banter.

The pond is now virtually complete with a water feature and will soon be stocked with fish. A net will be placed over the water to stop the voracious/hungry herons from taking out the stock.

The walled garden has been leased to the Gowers who have a regular plant stall at the Annual Summer Fete. It has only taken 2.5 years for this to happen from the original enquiry. What hope for Brexit?! Progress on clearing the site is slow but it is hoped to have the area in production in 2020. The South part of the garden is being left untouched (as part of the agreement) on the advice of the Essex Wildlife Trust.

Karine and I try to attend residents' meetings whenever we can and this proves a useful forum to exchange news and views.

Finally, the 2 Christmas trees, donated by 'The Friends', have just arrived, ready to be decorated.

The Chairman offered a vote of thanks to Nigel and Karine for the tremendous amount of work and time they put into making the residents' lives happier.

Home Manager's Report:

Environment, equipment and projects;

The ongoing refurbishment and upgrade of the pond has finally come to an end, the pond has been completely renovated, cleaned out and now fish have finally set up home in it. The pond has plants around and is lit and looks very effective in the surroundings.

Several new beds were purchased and every room has a hospital bed in it, which enables those residents who are unable to get up independently can do so with the aid of the raising of the bed and repositioning of residents.

Main house has had a lovely new carpet laid on the upper floors and we are looking for the ground floor to be completed soon.

We have been granted money to refurbish the communal toilets in both sides of the home, also to proceed with decorating the corridors which are in urgent need of repair and decoration. The authorisation has been granted from head office to refurbish

resident's rooms and bathrooms following further investment, which had been on hold for some months.

Mauchline lounge was redecorated and new soft furnishings were bought, this is now much brighter.

Refurbishment and upgrade of the outside rear path around the home and rear of stable block has been approved we are waiting for funding in the new financial year, for this project to begin.

Laundry was redecorated and has more working space in it and two new Miele washing machines were purchased.

Staffing

We said goodbye to Michelle after just over four years of service and recently becoming a mother to little Imogen. Lucy left the role of activities organiser and was duly replaced by Dani who has excelled in this role to get the best out of the residents in engaging in activities and trips out.

Mystral Powell has taken the position of Dementia Lead that was vacated by Jacqui, this is a role that Mysty is very enthusiastic about and has grown in confidence over the last year in this position supporting a team looking after the residents in Mauchline house.

Mark is our catering manager who took over from Julie and there is a good team on the catering side of things.

We have continued to see carers go but new ones have come, but not as quickly, unfortunately it is difficult to recruit with new homes being built and the enticement of different facilities, so we have been relying on agency to support our staff in this time. I am pleased to say that the night team are almost fully staffed. We continue to interview prospective staff when they enquire or come into the home.

Occupancy

Over the last year we have lost several of our residents that have been here for a long time. For some residents who came here they unfortunately were not here with us for any length of time for us to get to know them as well as we would have liked. At present we have 6 vacant beds in main house and 3 vacant beds in Mauchline house. Jade always has enquiries about the home and is often taking prospective families on show rounds.

Activities

There continues to be a selection of activities to try and accommodate all the tastes of the residents, which we would not be able to do without the continued support of the Association of Friends which we cannot thank you enough, for all that you do to enable the residents to get the best out of their time here.

Over the last year eight of our residents have celebrated their 90th birthdays and three celebrated their 100th birthdays.

In January 2019 we celebrated the 20th anniversary of Prince Edward being officially opened with a masquerade ball, residents, families and friends alike had a wonderful evening, everyone dressed up in their finest regalia.

Dani has been supporting the residents throughout the course of the year with their individual wish lists. Residents all have their own scrap books to record the events they have taken part in, so that they can reminisce with friends, family and staff.

Some of the wish list experiences have been afternoon teas to various locations. A visit to the animal sanctuary at Redwings, a visit to Colchester Zoo, one of our residents had an experience of horse riding but not actually riding along but they had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

The curry club at lunch times has been well attended, especially earlier in the year, this will restart in the New Year and hopefully newer residents will join in. Mersea Island was visited by a couple of groups in the summer and several walks along Maldon promenade with picnics took place.

Dementia week took place in May with the Punch and Judy show taking prime slot and was enjoyed by all in Mauchline garden

1960s day with music and dancing where staff took to the dance floor with residents.

Our annual staycation took place in August, with sports day, beach day, ice-cream van in attendance, dog show and Party Pets came for the day with snakes, lizards, spiders and skunks. Most of the residents enjoyed this more than the staff. The week experience was rounded off by the bbq that was well attended.

We had a canal trip in September, kindly paid for by Saffron Walden Lodge. We had a fantastic day on the canal at Harlow, with a picnic lunch, the residents loved the experience and we are having another trip for Christmas on the 20th December.

We continue to enjoy having the local mother and toddler group and Fred's Academy, a local amateur dramatic group.

Residents continue to go out in small groups to the local nurseries for cups of tea and cake, shopping trips out to Freeport and a few race nights have been arranged to keep everyone entertained.

Forthcoming events

Party season is almost upon us. The Christmas bazaar takes place on Saturday 30th November from 2-4pm. 5th December the children from Stisted school come and sing festive carols with us all. 22nd Fred's academy pantomime takes place, the theme is Snow White. 8th December is the annual Christmas party from the Association of Friends, with Clearer Productions performing. Christmas Bazaar takes place this Saturday 30th November

Inspection and Quality surveys

We have had internal audits over the last year which have all been positive , but we have not yet been inspected from the external agent of the CQC which was due back in the Spring.

The resident and staff surveys have also been carried out this last year, which again have been positive for the home.

Once again I would like to say a very big thank you on behalf of the residents and staff here at Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court for all the hard work and support you give in making this all possible for our residents, which enables them to live happy and well.

Elections:

Graham Larke proposed and Alan Garner seconded that Clive Dunnico be re-elected Chairman. Agreed.

Clive Dunnico proposed and MC Black seconded that the Trustees be re-elected en bloc. Agreed.

All Trustees present signed the appropriate Declaration.

Appointment of Auditors: Clive Dunnico proposed Wilkins Kennedy LLP of 1 Nelson Street, Southend-on-Sea to act as the Auditors of the accounts for the next financial year. This was seconded by David Badger and agreed.

AOB: The chairman reported on events surrounding the discovery of an old map of the original Stisted Hall and estate in an auction catalogue dated 1893. Association stalwart and great supporter MC Black took the map, had it professionally restored and repaired and conserved in a frame. He gave a short report on his actions and then formally presented the framed map to the home so it can be hung in a prominent position. The chairman proposed a vote of thanks to MC Black for his generosity.

Dr John Reuther gave an update on the activities of the RMBI during the year, along with plans for renovation and development of the various homes, including two major projects: Lord Harris home in Singleton, Reading, built in the 1960s and needing TLC; and the search for a new home to be sited in the West Midlands.

Graham Elvidge thanked the staff at the home, and Nigel and Karine, for their caring attention and help to his late mother.

It was suggested that perhaps the AGM could be held earlier in the day next year, so that it finishes in daylight, which might enable more association members to attend.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm. The next AGM will be held at Stisted Hall on Wednesday 27th November 2019.

SIGNED DATE