

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held 11.15am at THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, LONDON on SUNDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2011.

1. Apologies for absence: Ed Evans, Valerie Flessati, Owen Hardwick, Bernadette King, Alastair Mackie, Vijay Mehta, John Morris, Ray Smith, Kathleen Walsh.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2010: these were accepted and approved.

3. Chairperson's report. This was presented by Sue Gilmurray and accompanied by slides illustrating some of the year's events (copies of the report were distributed and are available on request). Sue began her report by paying tribute to Susannah Yorke, MAW Vice-President, who died earlier in the year. Sue recalled Susannah's participation at last year's MAW tribute to Adrian Mitchell and also expressed gratitude for the support and inspiration given by Susannah.

4. Treasurer's report for the year ending 31 March 2011. This was presented by Andy Cheatle and a summary of the accounts was distributed. Expenditure for the year once again exceeded income, this time by £11,000. At this rate of expenditure, Andy pointed out, funds will last for only another three or four years. Of the reserves, £15,000 is ring-fenced for the planned film on climate change and conflict and £30,000 is unallocated.

The large drop in income for the year compared with the previous year (2010) had two main causes:

- in 2010 MAW received a grant of £15,000 from the Marmot Trust
- following a drive, also in 2010, to pursue unpaid subscriptions, over £7,000 was received. This included some back payments and some donations.

The committee is in the process of establishing a better system for the collection of subscriptions.

It is not always easy to match up income and expenditure in the course of one financial year. A notable example is the Peace History Conference where total income and total expenditure need to be viewed over a three year period and then can be seen to approximately balance. In the case of the planned DVD, funds (such as from the Marmot Trust) are raised in advance and then in subsequent years when payments become due, reserves will of course plummet.

The committee has plans to address the recurring deficit by putting more emphasis on fundraising; by trying to ensure that income balances expenditure for each project (while recognising that some events will involve a net loss but will be worthwhile in terms of educating/raising awareness/communicating); by applying for charitable status.

Questions were answered on travel and conference costs; on the conditions attached to the Marmot grant (it was given specifically for last year's quilt exhibition and accompanying events, and for the planned DVD); and on the recording of membership categories which are kept on the membership database.

5. Report on *Abolish War*. Lesley Docksey reported positive reactions from readers over the last year. She receives regular requests for permission to reproduce articles on other websites and also frequent requests for additional copies of *Abolish War* – these are always available. All this interest shows, said Lesley, that our readers are hungry for ideas on how war can be replaced. Lesley would be happy to receive written contributions giving suggestions of actions readers can take and how such actions can be implemented. She would also like to hear news from local groups on their activities.

Lesley is very aware of the cost of producing *Abolish War* and would like to do it as economically as possible. It is important to have enough copies to spread the word while not wasting money on producing

an excess. She would welcome guidance from the committee and others on this. Two ways of reducing costs would be: i. to make *Abolish War* shorter; ii. to produce only two issues a year instead of three, perhaps with a short newsletter posted on the website in between each main issue.

6. Presentation of the Arthur Hewlett Peace Award. This is the third year this award has been made to a local peace group which has done exceptional work with limited resources. The presentation is of £300 together with a year's affiliation to MAW and this year's recipient was Wrexham Peace and Justice Forum. Brian Heale cited some of the varied and imaginative campaigning activities and stalls undertaken by the group, one of which included lying across a zebra crossing in Wrexham. To celebrate the International Day of Peace on 21 September this year, they held a full day of events including a church service, a peace picnic and an exhibition in the local library. One of their members has been prosecuted for failing to comply with the requirements of the census conducted by Lockheed Martin. No members of Wrexham Peace and Justice Forum were able to be present so a letter and cheque will be forwarded to them by post.

7. Election of officers and members of the executive committee. The following nominations had been received:

Chair Will Pritchard
Vice-Chair Lesley Docksey
Treasurer Andy Cheatle
Membership Secretary Bernadette King

Recently serving members of the executive committee nominated and willing to continue:

Martha Jean Baker
Sue Dowell
Hilary Evans
Sue Gilmurray
Brian Heale
David Partridge
Sally Reynolds
Christine Titmus

Also nominated: David Knight, recently retired teacher from Skipton, active peace campaigner and organiser of MAW events, and a past Chair of National CND.

All the above were elected en bloc.

In addition, Ruth Underwood was co-opted to the committee to further MAW's work with music, perhaps by forging links with MANA. Lala Winkley, who has just completed her term on the committee, is to be co-opted to lead the plans for MAW activities on sport and peace in the Olympic year,

Robert Hinde and Bruce Kent indicated their willingness to continue as President and Vice-President respectively and it was suggested that the committee extend an invitation to a new Vice-President (who will also join Martin Bell and Colin Archer in this role).

Sue Gilmurray, outgoing Chair, and Tony Kempster, a former Chair who is stepping down from the committee this time, were thanked for their hard work and contributions to the work of MAW.

8. Looking ahead. Will Pritchard, the newly elected Chairperson, outlined his plans to improve what he sees as the underlying structural problems of MAW's management system. He believes that instead of the full committee trying to oversee the whole of MAW's work, a more efficient system would be achieved by the formation of sub-committees. He proposes six of these, all answerable to the main executive committee. They would be: Finance; *Abolish War* editorial board; Membership; Fundraising; External Relations and

Communications; Constitutional Revision. The planned DVD on climate change and conflict would be largely worked on by a select subcommittee, but with regular reporting to and oversight from the full committee.

Martin Birdseye remarked that a good management structure is vital. He would be willing to give some help with this but has just stepped down from the committee.

9. Any other business. The Chairperson had previously announced that this would be an opportunity for members to air their views, make suggestions and comments and ask questions.

The death was announced of Bob Russell, known to many members, who died this week of cancer.

Bruce Kent announced that Valerie has completed plans for a peace walk for the Olympics 2012. He also announced plans for a champagne celebration of Richard Cobden's birthday on 3 June and that Henry Richard's 200th birthday would be celebrated in Wales in April. He reminded members of the four short MAW movies available to borrow from him and also drew attention to the new sticker 'If war is the answer – it must be a stupid question' which is now available to buy.

Ruth Underwood distributed details of the forthcoming MANA (Musicians Against Nuclear Arms) concert on 24 November in which she will be performing.

Sue Gilmurray informed the meeting of the advertisements giving MAW's perspective on Remembrance which have appeared in *The Church Times* and *The Universe*. Copies of Robert Hinde's *Towards Ending War* have also been distributed.

Sally Reynolds, MAW's sales officer, encouraged members to take literature for stalls on a sale or return basis.

Lesley Docksey announced two books to be published by OUP at the beginning of 2012 which have been offered at a discounted price to MAW members. *The Glorious Art of Peace: from the Iliad to Iraq* by John Gittings and *Keeper of the Nuclear Conscience: the life and work of Joseph Rotblat* by Andrew Brown are both available at the special price of £18.99. Contact Lesley for details.

Gill Hurle queried the process of appointing a new Vice-President. The last invitation was agreed by the AGM whereas this year, the assumption is that it is the job of the executive committee. Dave Knight suggested that the committee be mandated to find a new Vice-President and this was generally agreed.

Lala Winkley spoke of the event planned for Trafalgar Square as part of the London 2012 Olympic truce and said that MAW should be present.

Hilary Evans
23 November 2011