

THE FRIENDS OF STA JAMES' GARDENS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in the Concert Room of the Anglican Cathedral on Tuesday 16th March 2010.

PRESENT: Robin Riley	Chairman
David Garner	Vice Chairman
Emlyn Williams	Treasurer

and twelve Friends.

APOLOGIES were received from the Very Revd Justin Welby, Canon Anthony Hawley, Philip & Anne Lodge, Freda Travis, Anne Wolff.

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THE MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting held on 18th February 2009 were accepted as a true record.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Robin Riley thanked the Cathedral Chapter for its continued support and hospitality. He reported that the number of hours put in by volunteers has risen to approximately 1,640 over the past year.

Glendales continue to support the work carried out by volunteers and have developed a more sympathetic mowing regime.

Vandalism of new plantings remains a problem. Only two of the saplings planted in recent years have survived, but interestingly the planting of a cherry tree donated by Mr & Mrs J Backwell within a bed of nettles appears to be vandal proof.

January

The international flavour of the garden was reinforced by two Norwegian ladies in national dress being present for the planting of a Norwegian spruce on the Great North Bank.

February

Cowslips were generously donated and planted by Richard Scott.

March

The new mowing regime greatly improved the ground floor, the ramps and the Upper Duke Street frontage.

April

Trees were pruned, gravestones were moved to facilitate mowing and the Garden featured in the Observer newspaper's booklet 'Secret Britain'.

May

A successful visit to Amsterdam's ecological gardens was undertaken by Robin Riley, David Garner and Richard Scott. From this has evolved plans for a three day conference in Liverpool at which two of the Dutch gardeners will present their ideas

and work to an audience including representatives of the Eden Project and the Liverpool Parks Friends Group. The Council is keen to support this.

Discussions regarding the opening up of the Oratory were ongoing with the National Museums Liverpool, the National Trust, the two Cathedrals and LIPA. All parties were keen that the Oratory be used and open to the public. Currently the freehold is leased to the NML. The Friends in the meantime have cleared debris and cut back overgrowth in the grounds.

June

Following on from being rained off during 2008 Lodestar performed under cover in 2009. Hamlet together with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were well received. . Hopefully they will be back in the Garden in 2010.

August

Preparations were made to plant snowdrops as a memorial to the late Professor Tony Bradshaw. The bulbs were purchased from a number of suppliers and some have done better than others. Progress is being monitored carefully.

September

Tim Smit's inaugural Bradshaw Lecture at the Philharmonic Hall was much appreciated – as was supper thereafter. Snowdrop planting began on the following day and was phased in over the next two months.

November

The Garden achieved Grade 1 Listing by English Heritage. Glyn Marsden (City Conservation Officer) has been asked for advice on whether this has any implications for the Friends activities.

February 2010

Sven unearthed a buried obelisk. This is to be re-sited on the Great North Bank. Periwinkles donated by the Friends of Liverpool Cathedral were planted in the Garden.

Finally the Chairman thanked two people who have been instrumental in promoting the work of the Friends. Sven has worked tirelessly in rebuilding the Great North Bank and Lucy Nottingham as Trustee of the Tanner Trust has been very supportive. She has indicated that the Trust is very likely to be sympathetic to plans for renewal at and around the Spring.

He also reported that Professor Peter Thoday will present the Bradshaw Lecture on 30th September 2010. A venue has yet to be arranged and the meeting agreed that a attendees will be charged a modest fee..

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TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer tabled the accounts to the year end at 31st December 2009. These have been filed with the minutes of the meeting.

The balance in the account is currently £5,460 with £4,200 of this committed to projects commemorating the life and work of Tony Bradshaw.

The accounts were accepted and members agreed that Gary Wood of Business Accounting be re-appointed as independent accountant for the year 2010 to 2011.

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APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Robin Riley explained that no nominations for Officer posts had been received. He said that he as Chairman and Emlyn Williams as Treasurer were both willing to stand for a further year (4th) as allowed. This was accepted. He also asked that thought be given for new Officers in 2011. There is especial need for a Secretary.

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ADDRESS

Reverend Neil Short from St James Church in Upper Parliament Street gave a very interesting and informed talk regarding the history of the church and its graveyard and of plans for their regeneration and renewal. His enthusiasm, his encouragement of community involvement and his targeting of students and of people moving back into the Parish offered a fascinating yet realistic vision for the future.

The meeting closed at 8pm.
