

Minutes of Grants Annual General Meeting held 11th March 2021 online via Zoom at 6:00pm

1. President's Opening Remarks

The President, Tim Woods, opened the AGM by thanking the committee of whom Alex Massey, Artin Basirov, Caroline Lewis, Hugo Moss and Safira Lewis were present. Tim also thanked the Development Office for helping to facilitate the Old Grantites' first online AGM.

Others present included: Simon Rodway, Peter Cole, Jonathan Carey, Simon Mundy, Paul Hooper, Nick Service, Robin Hillyard, Jessica Chichester, Mark Drake, Gareth Jones, Christopher Sanguinetti, and Nick Fair.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from George Bitar and Clifford Woodroffe.

3. Death of members

There were no deaths reported by the Development Office, but at the end of the meeting Jonathan Carey brought to the attention of the Club that Marcus Adams had passed away. A moment of silence will be included for him at the next AGM.

4. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the AGM held on 13th January 2020 were presented and approved but the year of the meeting was not stated on the minutes – this has now been amended.

5. Housemaster's Report

Nick Fair reported on this strangest of years in the history of Grants. The school having been closed for a good six months of the last year with the majority of teaching being carried out online, except for the Play term of 2020. School was due to commence again the Monday after this meeting on the 15th March.

During the nationwide lockdowns teaching took place online, and Nick Fair spoke about how this highlighted the resilience, enthusiasm and a love of school and the house that the students had.

Grants came second in the inter-house general knowledge competition on Zoom.

During the lockdown from January to March there was a Grants baking competition. This was judged over Zoom and Nick showed the meeting a picture of a cake that was skilfully decorated to resemble the front of Grants in the snow.

The 2020 Play term had been a strange affair, with many of the usual rituals of school life such as Abbey, Latin Prayers, concerts and station impacted by Covid restrictions. Nick is hopeful that the school is now starting to return to normal and he said he could see pupils out in yard from his window as he spoke. Nick informed the meeting that the school is aiming for a full return for the 2021 Play term.

Nick ended his report by thanking the Old Grantite Club and Committee for the offer to purchase a table tennis table for the house. This has yet to be purchased, but Nick said he thought the table would be more important than ever while there are still restrictions around the school.

The President, Tim Woods introduced questions from the Club to the Housemaster, and it was suggested by Simon Mundy that it would be interesting to try and document pupil's stories about school life under Covid. Paul Hooper suggested that the Grantite Review could be revived for this purpose, and that it would be valuable for the archives and both Simon and Paul offered to help create this document.

6. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

7. Chairman's Report

The Chairman began her report by thanking everyone who had logged into the meeting. With 17 in attendance it was a record for a Grants' AGM and this was attributed to the accessibility and relative ease that Zoom facilitated, as opposed to people travelling into central London. The Chairman said the Committee would try and repeat these online meetings in future to encourage Old Grantite participation from further afield to continue.

The Chairman also thanked the President and the rest of the Committee for their support over the past year and the Development Office for all their assistance.

Events that had been discussed for 2020 were obviously affected by the pandemic. It wasn't possible to have the usual Leaver's Tea in the 2020 Election term. Similarly, the new Rugman Travel Award was not introduced as it wasn't a good year for international travel. Hopefully this will be possible in the near future when travel is less restricted.

The Chairman re-stated the aims of the Club as being to support the house as well as maintain links with and encourage participation by alumni. As such it is good for the Club to make its presence known to the house through gifts such as the table tennis table and events for leavers, as well as the Rugman Travel Award.

At the last AGM the Committee had begun discussing and making plans for a 2021 Centenary Dinner for the Club. Due to the circumstances an alternate date was put forward, and by some good fortune the Club could be argued to have two founding years, 1921 and 1926. This was due to the Moth Club that would become the Old Grantite Club being founded in 1921, but becoming more recognisably the Old Grantite Club in 1926. When restrictions are lifted we will look to organise 'in person' events but perhaps plan a centenary event for 2026, the Chairman said we may be able to plan a smaller event later this year, even if it was just informal drinks in London. The Chairman invited volunteers to join the committee and play a part in planning these events.

The Chairman thanked everyone in attendance and expressed her delight that so many people had logged in, with members of the club from as far afield as Canada joining in and she asked for suggestions for other online club events that could be held in the future.

8. Adoption of Accounts

Alex Massey took the meeting through the accounts. As no events have taken place since the last AGM they were almost entirely unchanged, save for a few pence accrued in interest from the savings account. The next payment will be for the table tennis table that is being gifted to the house. The current balance is £9,442.39 in the savings account and £200 in the current account.

9. Appointment of Officers and Committee Members

Nick Service was proposed for the Committee by Artin Basirov, and this was seconded by the President, Tim Woods. As per the Old Grantite Club rules that a third of the committee retire in rotation, Hugo Moss and Artin Basirov both offered to retire. Hugo Moss was proposed for re-election by Tim Woods, and this was seconded by Caroline Lewis. Artin Basirov was proposed for re-election by Tim Woods and seconded by Caroline Lewis.

All other Committee members were willing to remain in post.

10. Appointment of Hon. Auditor

Artin Basirov was once again proposed as Hon. Auditor for the following year by Tim Woods and this was seconded by Caroline Lewis.

11. Any other business

As part of a wider group discussion, the various benefits of meeting online were discussed, in that Old Grantites who hadn't attended events for many years were able to reunite virtually again. Despite the government promises of easing restrictions, many members hoped that more future meetings would be held online, or at least integrated in some way with future meetings in order to facilitate those who couldn't make it into London. Those in attendance said they would encourage their contemporaries to attend future online meetings.

Jonathan Carey brought to the attention of the Committee that Marcus Adams had sadly passed away in the past year. This hadn't been reported to the Committee by the Development Office and a moment of silence would be included for him in the next AGM. The President and Chairman both said they would bring this up with the Development Office to find out why this hadn't been reported.

The Chairman asked for suggestions for online events, suggesting a quiz or a speaker, a speaker was a popular suggestion and particularly if the gathering was for a specific year group.

The President brought the meeting to a close at 6:50pm

Post meeting note

The committee agreed to fund an updated version of the Grants history from 1986 to present day. An initial budget of £1,000 was agreed.