



15th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PEOPLE OF NOTE INTERNATIONAL TOURING ASSOCIATION (PONITA)

Registered Charity no 1113893

Zoom meeting - Saturday 27th February 2021 from 2.00 – 4.00 pm

MINUTES

Present: PONITA members in attendance:

Nigel Siddall, Robert Burgess, Robin McDowell, Sue Morse, Judith Thomas, Laurinda Burnside, Jennifer Smith, John Smith, Hannah Blackshaw, Fenella Butler, Julia Townsend, Eric Booth, Mary Crowder, Wendy Brandle, Stuart Grant, Philip Barker, Giles Shorter, Sarah Shorter, Shena McCulloch, Fred Caswell, Robert Burgess, Dorothy Greaves, Eric Lewis, Leela Grant, Rhiannon Prys-Owen, Lyn Jones, Jeanie Copeland, .Sarah Brown, Christine Goldsworthy, John Gulson, Mary French, Marion Siddall, Jean Barrow, Alison Roberts, Phoebe Edmund ,Sarah Shorter, Giles Shorter, Wendy Brandal, Maggie Lowe, Helen Garson, Elizabeth Stenner, Jane Duncan, Cath Slade, Natalie Skidmore, Anne Rolfe, Peter Dalby, Pauline Emmett, Kate Illingworth, Nickomo, Rasullah, Evelyne Basquin- Howe, Philippa Clare More, Gay Herford.

Welcome: Rhiannon welcomed the members and a special welcome to Nickomo and Rasullah who we have not seen for over a year.

Appointment of Meeting Chair: Rhiannon proposed that Sue Morse be appointed to Chair the meeting and Jeanie Copeland seconded the proposal.

2. Introductions and Apologies- Patsy and Bill Braddick

3. Minutes of the 14th AGM held on 23rd November 2019

Minutes of the 14th AGM of PONITA were approved by all present as a correct record with no amendments.

Proposed: Sue Morse; Seconded: Rhiannon Prys-Owen.

NB All papers for the AGM are on the PONITA Website.

4. Chairs Annual Report – 23rd November 2019- 27th February 2021

Sue Morse presented the annual report (Appendix 1 attached to these minutes), outlining the successes of the year.

The PONITA year 2019- 2020 has been a strange one. Due to Covid-19 we have not been able to organise and take part in the usual volume of repeat events that have brought us all so much pleasure in the past.

We did hold a wonderful Carol Workshop led by Nickomo and Rassulah to support our return to the December St Mary Redcliffe Treefest and the allotment wassail in January.

However, due to Nickomo's very unfortunate sudden illness and the onset of Covid-19 lockdown in March, all further singing was curtailed.

This also led to our decision to postpone to 2021 the 20th anniversary celebratory singing weekend at Sharpham in Devon. You will now all know that we have had to completely cancel this event due to ongoing extreme restrictions.

We would all like to thank you for your support over the 5 years we have been committee members, the fun, laughter, singing, comradeship, true friendships and belonging that has made all of our endeavours such a pleasure.

It is with regret that we propose the dissolution of PONITA.

Please use the discussion session in the AGM to offer your views and possible wish to take PONITA forward- if no one comes forward to propose a future plan, PONITA will be wound down and the charitable status will cease.

5. Financial statement to year ended 31st August 2020

Robin McDowell Treasurer reported on the financial statement contained in the Treasurer's Report. **(Appendix 1)**

There have been few community activities this year and consequently no income. The Sharpham event was also cancelled and the deposit was returned. Robin is currently refunding all the members who paid some of their costs towards the event. There is a spreadsheet of all Sharpham payments and refunds if requested.

The 2019 budget was audited and there will need to be a payment made for the audit of this annual budget. There are no other outstanding payments, and the account is in credit to the sum of £1,143.55p

There were no questions on the report. The meeting agreed to accept the statement. Rhiannon Prys-Owen to sign off the budget.

6. Future of PONITA. (Attached paper Appendix 2)

Sue presented the 3 options to the members and this was followed by a lengthy discussion on the future of PON and PONITA. Many members contributed to the discussion and raised the following points:

- PONITA will not exist without the PON choir so do we need to know how many people would want to stay as a member of a PON choir?
- We need to consider the location of the choir, are people happy with one location in Southville or do we need another location to meet the needs of all members?
- There are different models of how a choir functions e.g. a leader sets up and manages the choir as a business; a choir sets up a committee that recruits, sets up employment contract with the leader and hiring a venue; a choir hires a leader and venue on a session basis when required.
- There were suggestions of possible leaders by John and Jenny Smith. Rasullah suggested that we contact Ali and Dee to research who may be available.
- Do we need the dissolution of PONITA as a charity as it can become a cumbersome process with little real benefit? We can continue with the current Trustees until November 2021 and have time to consider this issue.
- We would need to manage the finances of any new choir and is it possible to continue with the current Co-op Bank account?

It was agreed that we could not make decision on any of these issues at this meeting and it was suggested that we form a working group, mandated to take this forward and consider the future of

PON. It was also agreed that we undertake a Doodle Poll to ascertain how many members we would want to form a new choir and the location.

The following members agreed to form a working party: John Gulson, Philippa Hawkins; Philip Barker, Eric Lewis; Eric Booth; Nigel Siddall; Rhiannon Prys-Owen; Robin McDowell and the actions were:

- To undertake a Doodle Poll week commencing 1st March
- To convene a meeting of the working group to take place within the first two weeks of March to formulate the purpose and remit of the group and prioritize future actions.
- To convene a Members meeting to feedback the outcomes of the working party by the end of March.

6. Election of Executive Committee and Honorary Officers.

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The following nominations, with proposers and seconders, to stand for the Executive Committee were then received:

Nominee	Proposer	Secunder
Robin McDowell (Treasurer)	Robert Burgess	Nigel Siddall
Rhiannon Prys-Owen (Secretary)	Suzanne Morse	Jeanie Copeland
Dorothy Greaves	Rhiannon Prys-Owen	

The above individuals all confirmed acceptance of their nominations and were unanimously elected unopposed.

7. Concluding Remarks: Throughout the meeting several members expressed thanks to the PONITA Committee for their work over the last few years. We have sung and participated in the true spirit of a Community Choir- in support of charities, and Music and Choir festivals and whatever happens in the future, we move on with many happy memories.

On behalf of all the members we say a special 'Thank-You' to Nickomo and Rasullah who over the last twenty years have given many people, who may not have thought they had a voice, the opportunity to find that voice and to meet new people, socialise and benefit from the pleasure that singing in a choir brings to all of us.

We wish them well in their retirement and hope to hold a special event to celebrate their achievements in July or August – restrictions permitting.

The meeting ended at 3.15p.m.

Appendix 1; Financial Statement

Appendix 2: Briefing paper:

The future of POINTA

At the forthcoming AGM the current committee will propose to the membership that we consider the future of PONITA as a registered charity and it either:

1. ceases to operate in its current form and the charity behind the choir is wound up.
2. is wound up and PONITA continues as an informal group.

3. continues with a newly elected Committee.

Our reasons for submitting these proposals are as follows:

- At the forthcoming AGM most of the current committee members of PONITA are not standing for re-election. As a charity PONITA needs at least five trustees (i.e. committee members); without these the charity is not permitted to operate. It also needs three of those trustees to act as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.
- There is continuing uncertainty as to if, and when PON will resume meeting as a choir in 2021. Due to the severity of the pandemic, there will be continuing risks until all members are vaccinated.
- PON may well be a substantially smaller-sized group, as there will no longer be a Clifton group, with the choir meeting at Southville only.
- This in turn could reduce the number of members likely to be regularly performing or attending PONITA events to below 20.
- It looks non-viable or sustainable to continue as a Charity on this basis - ie. have sufficient income to cover meeting venues, insurance, website and audit costs, and volunteers to join the committee / organise activities.
- If the charity is wound up there is nothing to stop members of the choir arranging events workshops, singing get-togethers, social events, and even public performances, as PONITA has done over the years.
- We acknowledge that this has been an exceedingly difficult year for Nickomo and Rasullha. However there has been very little communication recently on the long term future of PON and how to attract more members.