

INDEPENDENT ASSOCIATION OF HOBBYISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 11th Annual General Meeting held at The Rugby Club, Ambleside, on Saturday, 19th June 2010 at 11 am.

Present: 22 members.

Apologies for absence were received from Denis Kearns, Cliff and Jo Anthill, Ann Jackson, Len and Toni Browning, and Geoff Oman.

Chairman's Report:

The Acting Chairman, Steve Phillips, opened the meeting at 11 am, with thanks to Ed and Vera Watson for arranging the venue, and to Christine and David Lawson for their input into the organisation of the event.

He extended a warm welcome to four new members to the Hobby Club who attended the meeting, (i.e. Tony Flanders and Pam Gray from Wales, and Trevor and Clare Barden from Oxfordshire).

He made reference to the fact that he had been made a nominal chairman at the last AGM due to the fact that the Chair, David Jackson, was ill in hospital, fighting cancer from which he did not recover. David had been a keen member of the Hobby Club and had wished to remain the Chair for as long as possible. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and announced that he would be now standing down as a new Chair would have to be voted onto the committee.

Minutes of the last AGM:

Copies of the Minutes of the last AGM had been circulated to all members and it was agreed that these were accepted as a true record. Proposed by David Lawson, seconded by Lucy Cookson.

Treasurer's Report:

David Lawson had distributed his report and Notes to the Accounts for the period 01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010, plus the Income and Expense Statement, to all members via e-mail, together with a plea for all members to pay by Standing Order Mandate to facilitate the payment of annual fees without the necessity to chase up outstanding subscriptions, which was time-consuming and costly. He stressed the fact that this was a safe method to use and to dispel any myths to the contrary.

The balance was looking healthy since the figures had been published. Mike Woodhead did query the reconciled and loss, but figures were agreed upon and therefore it was concluded that Mike would advise Dave at a later date on procedures.

Discussion arose as to whether a large amount of money was needed to be kept in the account and whether any monies over and above the minimum needed to run the club could be spent to the advantage of club members who attend the rallies i.e. 2 nights free rally fees for those who use the club and attend the rallies, particularly the AGM. This would apply only to weekly bookings.

It was agreed that the figures should be regularly monitored so that funds did not fall below a reasonable figure. It was also agreed that the annual fee of £12 per year should remain to cover insurance, etc.

It was also suggested that a new marquee might be needed as the old one was damaged and would be costly to repair, which also led to the question as to who would be the caretaker for it as storage is a problem. The possibility of hiring a marquee for certain events was also discussed. Other ideas were put forward such as entertainment and a free weekend with a barbeque, those wishing to stay longer would pay for extra nights. Flyers could be sent out advertising future weekends if this was a success, this might encourage more members to participate. To be discussed later.

Membership Secretary's Report:

Christine Lawson confirmed that membership stood at 53 at present, having lost four through personal reasons. She had sent out 5 new introductory packs to encourage new members to join. The club is advertised in the MMM which is now being picked up. As new members come into the club the numbers will grow. The welcome packs have helped, although apart from two new couples, they have not turned up to the AGM. New members, Brian and Lyn have now resigned, since marrying in April. A card was sent to them for which a thank-you letter has been received. They had sold their van since attending the rally at Broadway as their circumstances had changed.

15 members have still not paid their annual subscription. An enormous amount of time and money is spent chasing these people – all for £12 per year. It was suggested that a discount could be offered to members who pay by Standing Order.

Trevor Barden proposed a discount per year for those who pay by Standing Order; this was seconded by Vera Watson. (£10 instead of £12)

It was pointed out that if a new member joins in the middle of the year they would have to pay the full cost which would be £37 including the £25 joining fee. In future years they would be entitled to the discount for early payment by Standing Order.

Newsletter Editor's Report:

Pat Miller said she had enjoyed producing the Hobby Club Newsletter over the past three years but now wanted to relinquish the task to someone new, who would have a different approach and a fresh slant on Hobby activities. She thanked all those who had supported her with articles, both serious and funny, and most of all for the kind remarks, plus a big 'thank you' to Ken Cookson for being on hand to sort out computer problems, and being able to 'post' the newsletter onto the website. She also thanked those members who had responded to the motorhome caption competition – all were excellent – which made the choice of winner very difficult. This was put to an independent vote and the result was a tie between Christine Lawson and Robert Young, and runner up Ken Cookson.

Technical Adviser's Report:

Eric Miller said that he dealt with queries as they arose but as most problems seemed to be of an electrical nature they were usually referred to David Lawson being the expert in that field. He felt that the main objective was to encourage some liaison with Hobby direct, referring to his meeting with Hobby UK at Dusseldorf. During discussions it was explained that the club would like to have a relationship with the main company and their agencies in this country. The two representatives from Hobby UK seemed very keen and enthusiastic but nothing more had come of it. Tony Charity had taken up the correspondence and had met up with them at the Birmingham Caravan & Camping Show. The outcome was that they would come along to the AGM for an open discussion in order to let us know what their plans were, but had not been able to do so due to their attendance at another show. It seems that Ambergate is still the main dealer, although there are now 16 agents and suppliers of Hobby vans. A visit to the factory still seems to be 'on the cards' but nothing has been arranged due to an absence of replies to correspondence in the past. There is a very strong Dutch Hobby Club, who have visited the factory and maybe it would be helpful to contact them for advice and exchange of views concerning Hobby.

Discussion followed during which it was felt that Ambergate were not particularly co-operative. It was suggested that business cards be printed and distributed to the main dealers. Peter Herberg, Hobby Motorhome Co-ordinator, was supposed to issue these cards but they had not materialised which was disappointing.

Rally Co-ordinator's Report:

Angela Wood reported that all seemed to be running smoothly with no dates clashing and all rallies were advertised on the website.

General Secretary's Report:

Tony Charity reported on the DEFRA Redemption Certificates, which are now split between England, Scotland and Wales. The national England certificate lasts for three years, there being two and a half years left to run. He had copies of the English certificate if anyone wished to see it. The Insurance of £240 had been paid and was renewable in August this year. The club was still with the previous company but he could provide a back-up if the costs have escalated.

With reference to Peter Hercberg, he appeared to be very friendly when contacted by Tony Charity by telephone, and when he subsequently met up with him at the Birmingham Show. He supplied the names and addresses of 16 dealerships and accompanying reports, promising to get back to Tony about the distribution cards and also about visiting the factory where it is possible to stay overnight before going around the factory. First of all Tony needs to know IF any of you want to go and WHEN, as the factory is nowhere near Dusseldorf, it is much further north. He will get back to Hercberg when it has been decided how many would like to visit the factory - possibly after the Dusseldorf Show as most people from Hobby would be attending and not be at the factory itself. It was thought next year might be a better time to arrange this trip and he would e-mail all club members to ascertain how much interest there would be in going to Germany. Peter Hercberg would then be asked to set up the visit to the factory some time in 2011. In the meantime he had spoken to Ed Watson and liaised with a company to supply 2 vans to be on view for the club to see at the rally, with the promise that they would do what they could to help us - there are some good people out there!

Jan Charity said that Peter Hercberg had offered the possibility of a small table within their Hobby stand at any show to promote the Hobby Club. She felt it would be a good idea to have a table and talk to people about the club and maybe encourage new members. Both she and Christine would be willing to do this for the club. It was also suggested that cards could be supplied to Hobby club members to distribute to people at the shows.

Ken Cookson reminded club members that tee-shirts could be ordered online, and that 200 business cards could be printed for free, all you pay for is the postage. Banners at £30 for outdoor quality can also be purchased, as can stickers, car door magnets, etc. at little cost.

John Anderton mentioned that there was a Hobby dealer site near Lincoln who would be willing to have the club on their field.

Website Officer's Report:

Ken Cookson said he had nothing new to report but was anxious to know whether members had all seen the new web-site since the last AGM, as he had not received any comments as to whether it should be done any differently. He would like to make it easier to post photographs onto the Forum as the procedure is quite complicated and technical. He would be prepared to show anyone who was having difficulties. More money could always be spent on improving the website, such as installing videos, but it uses a lot of gigabytes and was there really a demand for this? (He had noticed Ed using his video camera recording the AGM). The costs worked out at around £80 per year for hosting the site. A video option would cost at least twice that amount and would use a lot of storage space. U-tube allows you to load videos but this is publicly available. If you want a secure site then you would have to pay for it. Maybe a couple of video clips might be useful, interesting and amusing, there is a potential for this, so it is open to suggestions.

Discussion followed as to the pros and cons such as personal photos being on view to the general public, although a video of people having fun on a nice day at a rally might be beneficial. There would be problems in finding suitable sites which would create problems regarding subscriptions taken via the website e.g. setting up a credit card facility such as PayPal, which might also be useful as an on-line facility for Hobby rallies. This would make extra work and some people preferred a more personal approach such as the telephone. Ken asked if it helped to attract new membership by having photos available on the website in the public domain, and it was agreed that a selection for new members to see could be published but others should remain private on a secure site. It was also suggested that under the 'Members' section of the website, instead of the full private address, only the area should be published. It was proposed that this should be changed in future. Ken pointed out that there is a 'sample' newsletter already on the website which the public can access. It would be beneficial to publish all newsletters on the website rather than having the cost of printing and postage. It was agreed that all newsletters should be on the website and not posted in the mail. Ken was congratulated on an excellent website which was easy to access.

Disciplinary Officer's Report:

Vera Watson said there was nothing to report.

Association Photographer's Report:

Ed Watson said that if anyone objected to having their photo taken to let him know. Regarding the taking of videos, he said it was possible to take videos of rallies and show them at the AGM for all to see. He asked if members still wanted him to do the club photo albums and everyone agreed to keep the albums and not object to photos being taken.

Election of Committee:

Chairman: Geoff Oman (willing to stand but absent from meeting)
Proposed by Steve Phillips
Seconded by Mary Phillips

General Secretary: Tony Charity to continue
Proposed by Steve Phillips
Seconded by Vera Watson

Membership Secretary: Christine Lawson to continue for another year
Proposed by Mary Phillips
Seconded by Tony Charity

Treasurer: David Lawson to continue
Proposed by Eric Miller
Seconded by Tony Flanders

Accounts Examiner: Jan Charity to continue

Rally Co-ordinator: Angela Wood
Proposed by Jan Charity
Seconded by Ed Watson

Association Photographer: Ed Watson to continue – for life

Website Officer: Ken Cookson Proposed by Tony Charity.
Seconded by Angela Wood.

Technical Officer: Trevor Barden Proposed by Jan Charity.

Newsletter Editor: Clare Barden Proposed by Trevor Barden.
Seconded by Jan Charity.

Thanks were extended to the past committee for all they had done and to Vera and Christine for the superb buffet lunch.

Any Other Business:

Jan Charity proposed that Chainbridge being the next rally venue would be an opportunity to try out the 2 nights free offer on a 7 day booking. A flyer would be sent out to advertise this incentive to all members, plus the same opportunity for the Forest of Dean rally in September.

Proposed by David Lawson, seconded by Trevor Barden.

The meeting closed at 13.10

P.M. Miller.