

QUEEN'S GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION

QUEEN'S WOMEN GRADUATES.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 30 January 2016 in the Council Chamber.

Members assembled in the Canada Room at 10.15a.m. for refreshments and at 10.30 a.m. moved to the Council Chamber for the Annual General Meeting.

1. President's welcome and report

President Janet Leckey extended a warm welcome to all members present. A copy of her report had been tabled. Making reference to her report, Janet spoke of a year of 'high's and lows'. The highs were the events, talks and visits which took place on an almost monthly basis. The public speaking event in Q.U.B. yielded a strong team to go to Dublin. They collected the Ann Budd Trophy as worthy runners-up. The spring meeting to mark International Women's Day was a screening of a dvd entitled "Peace unveiled". The President of U.W.E. spoke of her personal experiences in Afghanistan and participants from a range of organisations engaged in a most worthwhile day. Two outings during the year to Antrim Castle Gardens and The Chester Beatty Library in Dublin proved popular. The annual Dinner in June was well attended and blessed with good weather. Several visits to Dublin for IrFUW events had been invaluable and enjoyable.

President Janet commended the work of her Committee and sub-committees and paid tribute to treasurer Paddy Skates and retiring secretary Jennifer Mussen. She also acknowledged the valuable assistance received from Feargus McCauley and members of Queen's Graduates' Association. She thanked the Development and Alumni Office for their encouragement faced as they are with changes in support levels.

2. Remembrances

The President asked those present to stand for a minute's silence in memory of three members who had passed away in 2016: Laura Morton, Maureen Blane and Immediate Past President June Meenagh-Smartt. Each member had made a significant contribution to Q.W.G.

June had reached out to the Fulbright Scholars, among many others, during her President's year.

3. Apologies.

Apologies were received from: Margaret Boyce, Irene Harper, Maire Ui Bhaoill, Dorothy Dunlop, Miranda Jemphrey, Janet Baillie, Elizabeth Miller, Sheelagh Benham, Irene Griffith.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2015

Copies of the Minutes were available in the room and had been published online along with all documents pertaining to the Meeting.

The Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Carolyn Forster and seconded by Rosemary Rainey.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters were raised.

6. Correspondence

The secretary had no correspondence.

7. Secretary's Report.

The Secretary's report had been available online and copies were circulated. The committee had met six times in 2015 and accomplished an active and interesting programme. Many members had undertaken additional tasks for example as Chairs of, or participants in, the work of the sub-committees. Others had roles related to U.W.E., IrFUW and the newly emergent G.W.I. which replaced the IFUW. Currently membership numbers are 86. The role of e-mail underlines the communications' network which ensures that most members are kept in touch with the news from all parts of the organisation. They can read the IrFUW News Letter, access the web-page and keep up to date with developments in Europe and Geneva. QWG events can be viewed across the University on the rolling plasma screens. In 2015 events had taken place in January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, and November – a truly busy year. In addition members joined with QGA members for a number of events. The secretary acknowledged the support received from the Alumni Office despite stringent budget cuts. Q.W.G. now shoulders responsibility for all communications with members, governed by the Data Protection Act.

8. Adoption of the Secretary's Report.

No issues were raised.

Adoption proposed by: Rosemary Rainey. Seconded by Honor Baird.

9. Finance Report

Copies of the report were given to each member by the Treasurer Paddy Skates. Explaining the state of finance for each event Paddy outlined the profit and loss situation. All events had been in profit except for the March event: 'Peace Unveiled'. However QGA had made a subvention of up to £300 to cover exceptional costs which had been incurred in the hire of the room in the McClay Library so in fact the event had not made a loss.

The year end total was +£156.03 and a small cash float was included.

However due to difficulties in bank transfers from outgoing Q.G.A. treasurer, Gary Lavery, to incoming treasurer, Eoin McMullan, three cheques were lost as the relevant accounts had closed. The total for 2015 was adjusted to: Balance £51.03

The Treasurer invited questions from the floor. The President congratulated Paddy on her 'good housekeeping'.

10. Adoption of Finance Report

The adoption of the Finance report: Proposed by Naomi Patrick and seconded by Dr Lavinia Boyce.

11. Other Reports

11.1 Public Speaking.

Anne Hunter traced the year's activities from the Q.W.G. final on 10th February 2015 to the IrFUW Finals in Trinity on 11 March. The winners of the team and individual sections at Queen's were from Friends School Lisburn. At the final in Dublin they performed exceptionally well, came second and arrived home with the Ann Budd Salver. The Public Speaking event is one of the highlights of the Women Graduates' year and members are urged to support it.

11.2 Scholarship Fund

Convenor Honor Baird spoke of the need for such awards in order to assist mature undergraduate women to achieve their degree. Many have other pressures and commitments and the award can do much good. This year there were three awardees. One candidate in 2009 achieved her first degree in 2009, a Masters in 2010, a PhD in 2014 and is now a lecturer in the Law Department. In answer to a question Honor explained that the awards are from the interest on capital. Any form of fundraising would be welcome. Thanks were extended to the Scholarship Committee for their hard work.

11.3 Virginia Gildersleeve Foundation.

This charity undertakes worldwide projects which enable women and girls to become independent within their communities and establish autonomy for themselves. Using technology it is today possible to use Skype to view local situations and the organisation has moved from a group of individuals to being a team of operatives. Q.W.G. and IrFUW events generate funds through book sales and these are sent to the U.S.A. for distribution. Honor is stepping down from her work as a QWG Convenor.

11.4 Membership and Events Sub-Committee.

Chair Margaret Donaghey spoke of the range of achievements attributed to her committee: Lavinia Boyce and Helen Penge. Membership and recruitment tactics have involved the use of attractive Posters headed 'Join Us' which can be printed in a variety of sizes and are placed in many outlets such as Libraries, Schools of the University and public places. Most popular have been the post card sized version. Finance has come from Q.G.A. Thanks to staff in the McClay Library, the racks can be used and the plasma screens have been deployed to good use. The major event was the 'Peace Unveiled: Afghanistan'. A number of other organisations took part. This DVD allowed us to meet and hear from the UWE President Edith Lommerse who came at her own expense. Following the meeting, various events were organised by QWG and QGA. The DVD is now on loan to UCD and the Item on Bosnia has been screened in the Politics Department of QUB. A screening is proposed for 2016 of a programme about Liberia and the peacemaking role of women. Margaret announced she would be stepping down from this sub-committee.

11.5 Archives and Centenary Sub-committee

Janet Leckey spoke of the links with Ursula Mitchell, the Archivist in the McClay Library, who is most helpful when it comes to lodging QWG materials and allowing access on request. The planning for Centenary events has not progressed and needs thought as to how to meet the Challenge.

11.6 Irish Federation of University Women

The IrFUW secretary, Eileen Cooley, spoke from her report of the highlights of a busy year. The International Day in May in Dublin has become an annual fixture. Miranda Jemphrey, a member of QWG, gave an excellent presentation on her work in Southern Mali. Christal Moor spoke about the Hegg Hoffet Fund which helps Graduate women who have been

displaced by war or other emergencies. Five Council meetings were held in 2015 with Dr Marion Gibson of QWG as President. Communications have been a focus in 2015. There is now an e-Newsletter with five editions per year. The IrFUW website is a protected source of information for members and webmaster Heather Elliott encourages our use of it.

Graduate Women International communicates with us via a weekly Update and webinars. Workshops are organised by IrFUW and the annual weekend conference hosted in 2015 by DUWGA had as its theme: 'Women inspiring women across the generations'.

The annual public speaking final was a well attended event. A Memorial Mass for deceased graduates was held in Honan Chapel Cork in November. Each association in IrFUW holds its own enjoyable functions. The Triennial ends in May and, as President Marion comes to the end of her tenure, she is pleased to announce that G.W.I. President Catherine Bell will be present in Dublin on 21st May 2016. The revised Handbook will issue shortly.

11.7 University Women of Europe.

Margaret Donaghey E.R. gave her report against the backdrop of unrest in the European Federation. The Netherlands Association has resigned. Against this controversial backdrop there was a successful Conference in the Netherlands and several QWG members enjoyed the events and friendship offered. In 2016 the UWE Conference is to be held in Winchester from 24 – 27 June. The European Women do much lobbying and have developed international links and practical projects with other Associations. In answer to a question it was stated that UWE has no vote at the U.N. but rather has consultative status through Graduate Women International.

11.8 Graduate Women International

Q.W.G.'s C.I.R. Jennifer Mussen referred to the many changes which the organisation, previously known as The International Federation of University Women, had undergone in 2015. A new name and colourful branding have not diminished the vision and goals: that 100% of girls and women in the world achieve education beyond primary school. The Director, Daniele Castle, attended the weekend Conference in Dublin in May 2015 and her dynamism impressed the attendees. With all the changes, proposed and actual, there was a huge influx of information via e-mail. As your C.I.R. I passed on what was vital to the understanding of the changes. We also receive a weekly 'Update' with input from around the world. Interactive conferencing is a further development to encourage an exchange of ideas. Thanks were given to Mary O'Donoghue of U.C.D.W.G.A. who is the IrFUW CIR and who keeps the information coming.

The 32nd Triennial Conference will be held in Cape Town from 21st to 23rd August 2016.

www.graduatewomen.org

11.9 Women's Forum.

Paddy Skates presented the report on an active year in Women's Forum. Speakers included Diane Graham, Mary Delargy, Ann McCandless and Joanne Woods. Members attended a wide range of conferences, seminars and social functions. Responses were made to nine consultative papers ranging over concerns relating to local issues. Highlighting a future date Paddy spoke of the Friendship Lunch to be held on 9th April 2016 in Newforge. The guest speaker, Donna Trainor, would be announcing the winners of the Iris Colvin Awards. In closing she thanked the members for their support shown to her family during the year.

12 Adoption of Reports.

The reports listed as items 11.1 to 11.9 were adopted.

Proposed : Marion Gibson

Seconded: Doreen Tennis.

13 Project '100'.

Please see the BENISHYAKA report for 2015

Marion Gibson outlined the history of the Project dating from 2007. A sum of £22,000 was raised to assist with the provision of second level education to twenty two young people in Rwanda. The link then was with Shirley Randell and the Rwanda Association of University Women (RAUW). Thirteen young people have achieved success in a range of occupations and four have still to complete their finals. There have been drawbacks, including those related to funding issues and tracking of some students. The currencies involved led to complex transfers. With all fees paid there remains a surplus of £11,000 and its distribution is to be confirmed. One proposal is to offer scholarships to undergraduates to assist in their level three studies.

Members present were requested not to refer to the awardees by name.

14 President's concluding remarks

The President referred to this as a sad part of the day for her. She thanked her committee for their commitment and for the support for a range of great events given by the members. She said it felt as though the sun had shone all year!

In wishing incoming President Oonagh Ferrity every success, Janet said the chain was in safe hands. She looked forward to seeing members in Winchester for the U.W.E. Conference.

15 Confirmation of Office Bearers.2016

President Oonagh, following her own rule of 'stand up, speak up and shut up,' paid tribute to her predecessor and the outgoing committee. It had been an amazing year of fun and interesting events in calmer seas. A special tribute was paid to former President June Meenagh- Smartt.

Committee vacancies numbered three. Three nominations had been received:

1. Angela Kelly
2. Joan Thompson
3. Isobel Benson

Office bearers – 2016.

President	Oonagh Ferrity
Vice President	Angela Kelly
Secretary and C.I.R.	Carolyn Forster
Finance	Paddy Skates
Events Committee	Dr Lavinia Boyce Helen Penge
Scholarships	Honor Baird
Public Speaking	Anne Hunter – co-opted

Members: Dr Elizabeth Miller, Naomi Patrick, RuthWaddell, JoanThompson, Isobel Benson.

President Oonagh spoke of building on a firm foundation and her theme of ‘Continuing relevancy’ would apply to graduates and undergraduates through IrFUW, U.W.E. and G.W.I. In Project ‘100’ we showed that together we are stronger: ‘we are women and we can do’. She spoke of organising many events from ‘Ebola’ to Public Speaking. There will be a meeting in U.C.D. on 12 March , spring visits to The Boyne Valley, and a tour of the City Cemetery followed in June by the Annual Dinner where one of the guests would be the International President of G.W.I.- Katherine Bell. Attending the U.W.E. Conference in Winchester and the G.W.I. Triennial in August in Cape Town marked our international involvement.

16 Any other business

16.1 There will be an IrFUW International event on 21st May in Dublin, when Marion Gibson will hand over the Presidency of IrFUW to Mary Morrissey of D.U.W.G.A. at the Triennial meeting. G,W.I. President Catherine Bell is the keynote speaker.

16.2 Q.W.G. will provide the C.I.R. for IrFUW as the revised rota comes into play.

16.3 Funding. This is a major issue for IrFUW. Based on current funding there will be only sufficient to reach 2019.

RESOLUTION

The following resolution was proposed:

That Q.W.G. members are asked to pay £20 per annum . This represents a rise of £5 per annum. To be enacted in the fee collection in December 2016.

Vote: by hand count: 27 in favour. 3 against. no abstentions.

The resolution was passed.

16.4 IrFUW Conference 2017. The President said Q.W.G. would host the annual Conference in October 2017.

17 . Date of next Annual General Meeting.

ATTENDEES

Nancy Watters	Doreen Tennis	Rosemary Rainey	Isobel Benson
Kathleen Rodgers	Naomi Patrick	Honor Baird	Irene Miskimmon
Margaret Refsum	Maureen Scott	Geraldine Carville	Eileen Cooley
Eileen Asquith	Marion Gibson	Hilary Bracefield	Eileen Millar
Margaret Donaghey	Paddy Skates	Helen Penge	Rev Rosie Morton
Ruth Waddell	Carolyn Forster	Joan Thompson	Anne Hunter
Jenny Campbell	Lavinia Boyce	Angela Kelly	Oonagh Ferrity
Janet Leckey	Jennifer Mussen		

SIGNED.....DATE.....2017

The speaker, Mr David Anderson M.B.E., M.V.O., recently retired from Hillsborough Castle after 30 years in the hospitality industry, addressed the members before lunch. Based on his varied experiences with hosting members of the Royal family, many leaders including President George Bush, Prime Ministers, Secretaries of State and Ambassadors from many countries, David gave fascinating and often humorous insights into the social and political history of Government House as it was when he arrived in 1984 to the present day. After Janet Leckey thanked David, all adjourned to a delicious buffet lunch in the Canada Room.