

Minutes of the 40th Annual General Meeting of the Knitting & Crochet Guild held at The Radcliffe Centre at the University of Warwick on Saturday 7th July 2018 at 11am.

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1. Welcome and Apologies

Katie Ashwood

Valerie Miller

Robert Rowley

44 members who sent in proxy votes

Members present numbered 78 the quorum for Guild AGM's is 40 – the meeting can proceed

2. Announcements

The board were sad to announce the death of 3 long standing members of the Guild, Annmarie Hedges, Adelaide Turner and Wendy Wilcock.

3. Minutes of the 39th AGM on 8th July 2017

Copy of minutes were circulated to those present in 2017 by email and were also available on the website

Propose – Janet Collins

Second – Jane Barton

Accepting the Minutes

Proposer – Elspeth May

Seconder – Jacqueline Candy

Minutes of the 39th AGM were accepted.

Matters arising - Maureen – At the last AGM it was suggested that aprons be purchased and be supplied to members. This had not happened so has been differed to 2019.

4. Reports and Accounts 2017-18

Jane Hirst, the Treasurer, reported on the Accounts to March 2018

Proposer – Linde Merrick

Seconder – Margaret Callaghan

Accounts Accepted

5. Appointment of Directors

Fiona Laden

Proposer – Anne Cartwright

Seconder – Susan Shapland

All accepted.

Gillian Oliver

Proposer – Judy Jones

Seconder – Penny Ryan

All accepted

Marian Dye
Proposer – Sue Cleaver
Secunder – Emma Vining
All accepted

6. Appoint of Office Bearers

We received no nominations for office bearers.

Jane Hirst – to stand as Treasurer until AGM 2019
Proposer – Penny Ryan
Secunder – Helen Jordan
All accepted

Jacqui Taylor – to stand as Secretary until AGM 2019
Proposer – Rita Taylor
Secunder – Linda Phillips
All accepted

Appointment of Chair – no nominations have been received. Lack of a Chair and Vice Chair for the Guild is a big concern for the Board.

7. Board Reports for 2017-18

Tricia Basham – Membership Report 2017-18

With the past 2 years showing significant growth we felt confident that a 20% increase in members and the possibility of reaching our budgeted target of 1,000 members by March 2018 seemed achievable. However, numbers were badly hit in May 2017 when only 28 of the 62 joiners in May 2016 still remained and we were playing catch up from then on. Thankfully by March 2018 we had managed to regain the status quo but only increasing numbers of paying members by just 1!

Our membership consists of paying members, reciprocal contacts i.e. knitting magazines, life members and admin contacts.

Detailed comparison follows:

	2016-17		2017-18
Members at 01.04.16	690	Members at 01.04.17	847
New Members	299	New Members	237
Members Re-joining	19	Members Re-joining	23
Members Lost	-158	Members Lost	-257
Other adjustments	-3	Other adjustments	-3
Members at 31.03.17	847	Members at 31.03.18	847
Numbers of paying Members at 31.03.17	814	Numbers of paying Members at 31.03.18	815
Peak Month for new joiners May 2016	62	Peak Month for new joiners October 2017	32

A considerable amount of time is spent reminding folks to pay their subscriptions. You will see on the envelope that brings your quarterly copy of Slipknot that your membership renewal date is shown in the bottom right hand corner. It's quick and easy to send out email reminders and PayPal invoices but you can see the numbers of 2nd reminders that need to be sent out by post. This as a precaution if someone changes their email address or the email and invoice fall foul of their spam filter, indeed some don't pay until they receive the final reminder saying they are being removed from the database.

	1 st Reminders	2 nd Reminders	Final Reminders
April 2017	39	29	14
May 2017	89	17	23
June 2017	54	40	14
July 2017	49	20	27
August 2017	83	20	12
September 2017	66	22	16
October 2017	70	18	14
November 2017	49	34	12
December 2017	67	22	23
January 2018	68	22	17
February 2018	63	16	10
March 2018	57	20	13

A small percentage pay their subs by standing order which is very easy to set up with your bank if you do your banking on line but if you'd like me to send you a mandate to complete let me know.

As I've mentioned in previous years retaining members for more than one year is a challenge for us all so whilst paying member numbers only just broke even we have seen a slight drop in the numbers who only stayed for a single year.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% increase in paying members during the year	33.81%	23.90%	00.12%
% Members lost who only joined for one year	62.50%	72.78%	64.20%

Once members have renewed they do tend to stay as members for a good number of years, we still have 40 members who joined in the 1980s, 52 who joined in the 1990s and 104 who joined in the 2000s the remaining 619 joining since 2010.

What do new members say when asked about how they find out about the Guild. Whilst nearly 31% say they find us through the internet, 20% say from another Guild member, 19% and exhibition or show, and just over 8% say a local group or a magazine article. Given that they probably talked to Guild members at shows and in the local groups mentioned as well, we could say about 47% of new members join because of publicity from existing Guild members. So, all I can say is thank you to you all.

Gillian Oliver – Governance and Legal Matters

To report on governance and legal matters, and in particular:

- Our lease at Lee Mills
- The Guild's Business Plan
- Some new policies which have been introduced this year
- The General Data Protection Regulation
- Easyfundraising

Lease renewal

Firstly our **lease renewal**: Our lease at Lee Mills expired on 31st December 2016. You may recall from my report at last year's AGM that the landlord's agents Carter Towler **had** tried to offer us a new lease at an increased rent from 1st January 2017. However, as they had not served the correct notices at that time, we were able to point out that they could not legally increase our rent. As a result, our rent remained at £3,950 per annum from 2011 (when it was first agreed at that level) until now.

I can now report that in April **this** year, the landlord's agents served Notice to formally terminate our tenancy at Lee Mills on 23rd October 2018, **at the same time offering us a new lease at a rent to be agreed by negotiation.**

Negotiations are now progressing to reach agreement on a rent that is fair to both parties. Under the Landlord & Tenant Act, the Guild has a right to a new lease on Unit 4 Lee Mills at open market rental value, and that is our preferred solution. However it is also sensible to use this opportunity to explore alternative options by looking at other suitable premises in the vicinity, just in case a better home for the Collection is available.

This brings me to the Guild's Business Plan

Our Business Plan objectives are published on the member's area of our website, and are regularly reviewed at Board meetings. During the last year some of the objectives which have been successfully achieved are:

- To raise the Guilds profile with the public in connection with our 40th Anniversary in 2018
- Make Slipknot available online in the members area of the website
- Increase our social media presence on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
- The Collections Team have also made progress in cataloguing, sorting, storing and researching the collection

New policies

Following completion of our Annual Return to the Charity Commission, it was felt that we should have policies in place to cover:

- Complaints Handling and
- Conflicts of Interest.

Policies have been drawn up and are available to read on the Guild's website

GDPR

In the run-up to the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), our Data protection procedures have also been reviewed recently.

The Guild has to keep membership data (such as members' names and addresses) for the purposes of:

- Establishing and maintaining membership
- and administering activities for members

We have carried out an audit of the data we hold, where it came from and who it can be shared with. We have reviewed and updated our Privacy Policy, and our data sharing agreement sets out how we delete personal data and how we respond to subject access requests. We have revised how we seek, record and manage consent and as a result, you will see that we have made some changes to our membership renewal forms. I am the Guild's data protection Officer so if you have any concerns at all on this matter please don't hesitate to have a word with me afterwards.

Easyfundraising

As a new initiative to raise funds we have registered the Guild on the charity fundraising website: **Easyfundraising.org.uk**

Thank you to all those members who have registered and supported the Guild so far. Basically it is just a matter of registering on the easyfundraising website and selecting the Knitting & Crochet Guild as your chosen charity to donate to. Then each time you shop online it's important to remember to enter your chosen retailer's website via the easyfundraising portal. Then, when you purchase something, the online retailer will donate a small percentage of what you spend to the Guild at no extra cost to you.

At the time of writing this report, only 14 people had registered but those 14 people have together raised over £30 in the first few months. This means that if all the Guilds 800+ members got behind this initiative, we could potentially raise about £3,000 each year which would be a very worthwhile sum. I do urge you when you go home to take a couple of minutes to register on the easyfundraising website and give yourself a little reminder each time you shop online to go through easyfundraising. It would make a big difference for the Guild and would not cost you a penny.

I hope I have summarised the governance matters which have arisen in the last twelve months satisfactorily and if you have any questions I'll be happy to take them either now or after the meeting.

Marian Dye – Education Report

Marian gave a verbal update. Details are now on the website of yarn shops that offer workshops.

Fiona Laden – Shop Report and Newsletter

Yarn Shop Report

The initial response to this initiative resulted in 36 shops becoming members. Unfortunately around 1/3rd of these did not renew, some due to closure, but others did not respond with the reasons for this decision. Meanwhile a few other shops did join and in May we had 28 Yarn Shop members. Sadly however, in the last few weeks 3 of them have announced that they are closing due to the difficulties of operating in the retail sector; Alibaabaas in Scarborough; TAJ crafts in I.O.W which is converting to an online shop, and Remember When in Coleshill, although Kim will be running a monthly stall at a local market. It is worth noting that the current edition of Knit Now has highlighted the benefits of supporting local yarn shops and our Facebook page has also been tackling this thanks to Marian's recent postings.

Not yet confirmed officially but hopefully will be at the Convention, Jean Farquharson, who runs a yarn shop in Sittingbourne, has agreed to take over yarn shop liaison.

Newsletter

The first edition, sent out in April, received positive reports and the second is due out shortly after the Convention. There were one or two teething problems, some data sent in was lost after a computer malfunction and a few people had problems downloading at first, which we managed to resolve when they contacted us. Some people found it later in their spam files.

The biggest problem we are encountering is a lack of information being sent in. The idea of the newsletter is to enable all Guild members to be actively involved even if they cannot attend a local Branch. We need everyone to let us know what is happening in their local area in good time for us to advertise events. Issues will come out 2 weeks after the deadline which allows us to be very current. We also want to see what members are doing in order to inspire, admire and spread ideas. We can't produce the newsletter if we don't have copy to put in. Please help. Maybe Branch Co-ordinators could persuade one of their members to undertake to gather local information and forward it to us on behalf of the group and many members also attend various other craft groups. The information does not have to be Guild related. Because we are digital we are also able to include photos. We don't need long paragraphs, even if you can only send one sentence it is all valuable. Anec has spent considerable time setting this up, but we need everyone to contribute to make it work.

Maureen Wheeler – Collections Team Report

The Collections team have had another successful year. At each Board meeting a full report of our activities is submitted. This report is an overall summary of our year.

Volunteers:

The number of regular volunteers continues to increase. This year we have gained several volunteers and at times have had up to ten people working away on different aspects of the collection. Our BIG SORT OUT week in January was especially popular, with an opportunity to delve into the far corners of Lee Mills and recover items from yet unopened boxes. But more of this later. Sadly, our good friend and volunteer Wendy Wilcock passed away last September. Not only a volunteer at LM, she ran several knitting workshops in local schools. We miss her. We also said goodbye to Val, who is taking a break from volunteering. We toasted them both at our Christmas party which continues to be a must in the diary.

Barbara Smith and the pattern sorting team have continued to sort and order patterns assisted by anyone who comes along wanting a job. Pattern scanning is in full swing. Barbara has been especially busy this year dealing with requests for 1978 patterns and I'm sure is especially looking forward to the Show and Tell this evening.

Margaret Callaghan has moved onto sorting the shade cards after her success with the yarn samples. Her request for the shade cards in Slip Knot has resulted in a variety of packages arriving at LM. Many thanks if you have donated these.

Angharad Thomas, Alex Rudkin and myself have continued to work on the consolidation of the database with the index cards and contents of the boxes.

It's a good excuse to stay in the office on cold Winter days.

Anne Jackson-Baker has added books to the library as they have been donated and has sold surplus books. She has brought lots of books here and doesn't intend to take them back, so we hope you will be able to find a home for them.

A big thank you on behalf of the Board to all the volunteers who turn up in an array of warm clothing week after week to share the highs and lows of life at Lee Mills. Without such dedication, the collection could not be available to us as members and to the wider crafting community.

Our display, highlighting the work of volunteers created by Julia Halliwell has toured the country at shows and trunk shows in 2017-18. This year we have decided to make our 1978 knitting contributions the focus of our Anniversary display. More of this later. The boards are empty at present, but not for long...

Adding to the Collection

We took delivery of the Tessa Lorant collection last year and have now accessioned this and where possible linked samples and artefacts to her publications. We also received a large collection from Barbara Shapeero which arrived on pallets from Scotland one morning. This too, has been accessioned. It is hoped these items, along with a donation from a City and Guilds project will form part of a study collection. If members are thinking of donating items we ask you to get in touch to discuss this.

Barbara Smith, the Publications Curator, continues to receive parcels of patterns, including a recent donation from Stoke on Trent Museum, who could no longer store these items.

Education

The team have continued our relationship with the University of Huddersfield. We have had single visits from students to look at the collection and several students on termly placements who have been helping with the cataloguing process.

Barbara Smith had an article published in the October 2017 edition of Piecework. An abstract by Angharad, Ruth Gilbert and Barbara Smith entitled 'The Knitting and Crochet Guild Collection - a Unique Resource' has been accepted for the In the Loop Conference. There could not be a more fitting description.

We have received several visitors from the knitting world including Roslyn Chapman from Glasgow University and Carol Christiansen from the Shetland Museum. They all came to look at items from our traditional knitting collection. Julia Marsh, one of our volunteers, wrote an interesting blog about their visit. Barbara Smith regularly highlights items from the collection in her blog and our students have also used this media to increase our profile. Katie Ashwood, our Board representative, can be contacted if you wish to find out more about the Guild and social media.

We also hosted a visit from Denise, our new Slip Knot editor, accompanied by Elspeth May who came along to view the collection and meet volunteers.

Trunk Shows and Workshops and Exhibitions

Last year Barbara Smith and I gave a short talk about hosting a trunk show and asked you to get in touch. Well you did.

We have provided items for Leighton Buzzard, Cheshire, Lincoln, Birmingham, Leeds and Huddersfield branches. A most enterprising series of shows was organised by Linde Merrick and Jane Barton, where items travelled to branches and groups along the Thames valley. The items in that box certainly had a good airing.

Barbara hosted two trunk shows in September in Harrogate for a USA group on a knitting holiday in the UK. Angharad Thomas and Anne Jackson Baker attended the Knit for Peace event in London last November. Items were sent to be exhibited at Kathy's Knits in Edinburgh, to celebrate our 40th anniversary.

We also exhibited at Yarndale, Ally Pally, Harrogate, Manchester Antiques Textile Fair and Spring into Wool in Leeds, where we have been asked to return with our yarn winding enterprise.

An increasing amount of time is now being allocated to packing up and sending out collections requested by branches and groups. It's a good test for our storage system. Getting the collection into the public eye is so important to raise the awareness of our Guild. As part of this process, the Board have approved our Heritage Lottery Fund bid as part of the 'Sharing Heritage' funding to photograph and digitise items from the collection and publish on social media. This is to be submitted shortly.

Disposal of surplus

The amount of surplus has continued to reduce, with very little now remaining.

Over the year, we have continued to sell items at shows where permitted and sold items at Hebden Bridge Rag market, a market selling yarn, haberdashery, fabrics etc and a great place to de stash.

As Part of the Big Sort Out we sold the two Adel Rootstein mannequins that have been artistically poised on the back wall at Lee Mills for several years. They were bought by a collector from Darwin, in Lancashire, who turned up with a white van, promptly dismantled our ladies and took them to the dark side. The empty wall is a reminder of our lost friends.

Several sock machines and parts have been disposed of too enthusiasts in the sock machine world, with a couple retained for demonstration use.

The surplus books on sale here today are a result of the library restructuring by Anne

Next steps

To catalogue the shade cards, to complete our cataloguing review, increase our awareness on social media, submit our Heritage Lottery funding application and to plan for succession at LM.

8. AOB

The Board were thanked for all their hard work.

Meeting closed at 12.39 pm.

Appendix to the AGM Minutes

Tricia Basham - Website Report 2017-18

The amount of information we can glean from Google Analytics is vast and to spend any time looking at the data is to disappear down the proverbial rabbit hole.

Still, our website results in many new members signing up and with very little feedback or suggestions from members themselves we have to rely on Google to see what is actually happening.

So, I've gathered a tiny selection of the data that is available and compared 2017-18 with the previous year.

Audience Overview	2016-17	2017-18
Numbers visiting website	44,912	54,912
Returning users	43,779 (11.5%)	53,823 (11.3%)
Number of Sessions	55,351	67,538
Busiest Day	06/05/2016 2227 pages viewed by 526 users	29/12/2017 593 pages viewed by 257 users
Language	English GB 53.01% English USA 29.75%	English GB 63.77% English USA 27.78%
Device	Desktop 49.01% Mobile 23.98% Tablet 27.01%	Desktop 38.67% Mobile 33.00% Tablet 28.33%

A pleasing increase in the numbers visiting the website in 2017-18.

It's interesting to note that the busiest day spike in 2016 was the day of Kate Davies blogpost about her visit to Lee Mills and you'll have already seen the impact that had on member numbers. I'm sure our busiest day for 2017 can be put down to the after-Christmas lull in festivities.

It's important to note the increase in the use of mobile devices to access our website and this trend continues.

When folks did come to our website which pages did they view...again one can drill down the complete list of pages and see their ranking, but I've chosen a handful to review and compared both years.

A fairly consistent ranking over both years and I must admit that the interest in our Machine Knitting page came as a surprise. I think the drop in numbers going to the home page is an indication that folks are far more precise in their searches and go immediately to what they are investigating.

2016-17

Ranking) Webpage	No of Page Views
1) Home Page	20,507
2) KCG Branches	5,159
3) Machine Knitting	4,200
4) Courses & Workshops	4,154
5) Local Groups	3,571
6) Membership/ Join	3,386
9 Membership/Login	2,501

2017-18

Ranking) Webpage	No of Page Views
1) Home Page	13,006
2) Machine Knitting	8,260
3) Courses & Workshops	4,928
4) Local Groups	4,291
5) Lace Knitting for Beginners	4,220
6) Membership/ Join	2,715
9 Membership/Login	2,279

So, do please go and look at the website and your feedback is welcome via email to webmaster@kcguild.org.uk

Katie Ashwood – Social Media

I run the Guild's Instagram and Twitter accounts. I can be contacted on socialmedia@kcguild.org.uk. Feel free to send me information and photos of Guild events, local group meetings, shows etc. I will then share them across our social media channels.

I have increased the Guild's presence on social media and hope to continue to grow our followers. This is important to spread the news about who we are and the importance of what we do and could also lead to us gaining new members. It also gets our name out there in the yarn world where we need to be visible.

Twitter

The Guild is on Twitter @KCGCollection. This account was started by the Collections team. I have access to it and plan to broaden the use of the account.

We have 294 followers.

If posting Guild related tweets on your own account please tag us or use the hashtag #KCGuild so that I can find and retweet them.

Instagram

The Guild is on Instagram as @kcguild. Many thanks to Barbara and Angharad at the Collection for regularly providing photographs for me to use.

We have 413 followers.

If posting guild related pictures please use the hashtag #kcguild or #kcgcollection so that I can find them.

Facebook

The Facebook group is used regularly and has an admin team to keep it in good working order. Thank you to them.

We have 3906 members.

Pinterest

The Guild is on Pinterest as KCG Collection. I should have access to the account shortly and plan on broadening the use of it.

We have 130 followers but have over 1000 monthly views.