

Meeting of Members of March & District Museum Society and Representatives of March Town Council held at March Museum at 7.30pm Monday 28 November 2022

MINUTES

1. Attendance

Gordon Thorpe (Chairman)

John Gowing

Nigel Denchfield (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Ruth Johnson

Councillor Mark Purser

Clive Lemmon (outgoing Town Clerk)

Sarah Lemmon (Town Clerk)

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Susan Edgoose, Linda Gill, Irene Bates and David Bates.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

- a) The Museum's activities had been seriously curtailed during Covid-19, but, encouragingly, momentum had continued to gather during 2022; activities were recovering well with increased numbers of visitors, including primary schools. There are already a large number of talks in the diary for 2023. The Museum had hosted a stand at the first MAFF event in September and this had helped to raise awareness about the Museum as being both a valuable asset and resource for the town.
- b) Maintenance work is ongoing to ensure that the Museum, a listed building, is kept in first-class order. Works are required imminently to address heating and a leak in the roof. Quotes had been obtained for LED lighting to be installed. Escalating heating costs will be a concern for the Museum going forward.
- c) The Museum and Council financial years have different end dates, the Museum being 30 September and the Council being 31 March. It was noted that within the Council financial year, the Museum had currently drawn down £1,659.24 of their

“repairs and renewals” grant. This leaves a balance of £4,340.76 available to claim prior to 31 March 2022. Any balancing invoice would need to be received by March Town Council by the end of February 2023 to be processed in the final cheque run of the year on 20 March 2023.

- d) It had previously been ascertained that Cambridgeshire County Council owns the trees outside the Museum (lorry park side), and it was noted that a planning application had been lodged by them on 15 October 2021 (F/YR21/1220/TRCA) to undertake remedial works thereto. These works have been completed satisfactorily. The contractor has undertaken to review the state of the trees every 2 years.
- e) The museum lease has been extended by March Town Council to 13 May 2042. The museum should request a further extension in 2035.
- f) Following receipt of a letter from Zurich Municipal in November 2021, CL suggested at the meeting on 22 November 2021 that the Museum should get an up-to-date valuation of the premises. This would need to reflect the full cost of reinstatement following a total loss.

The current insurance value is c£811,265.

An up-to-date valuation is recommended to be carried out soonest, it being essential to ensure that the full value of the building is paid out in the event of a claim (the valuation will cover the building itself, full replacement value thereof, site clearance and professional fees (but does not take into account the value of the land)).

SL will advise the Chairman of the Valuer used by the March Town Council for the Town Hall (also a listed building).

If such a valuation is undertaken, a copy of the results should be forwarded to SL so that she can inform Zurich of the revised figures.

5. Chairman’s Report

The Chairman formally welcomed the Council representatives and thanked them for their continued support.

The written Chairman’s Report of November 2022, which contained details of the previous year’s activities, and various other information sheets (including the July 2022 Newsletter), were presented to the meeting (See Appendix 1).

It has been a busy year for the Museum, with some welcome acquisitions and increased contact with primary schools. It was essential to try and recruit more stewards to ensure the museum could continue to be adequately staffed with 2 stewards per morning and afternoon session. It is intended that there will be more targeted talks in 2023 to grow the museum community.

Of particular interest to the Museum and town of March is the proposed celebration of the life of Stewart Adams in Boots in 2023; Adams, a former student of March Grammar School and graduate of the University of Nottingham, discovered Ibruprofen in its current form and would have turned 100 in April 2023. Recognised by Boots plc for his achievements and his work during the 1980s resulting in Ibruprofen's move from a prescription-only drug to over-the-counter sales, the Museum consider it fitting that Adams is recognised and honoured locally as a remarkable and generous local changemaker.

The Chairman also extended thanks to the Museum Committee and volunteers.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Chairman presented the Treasurer's Report and latest set of accounts and these are attached to the minutes as Appendix 2.

The fixed grant requested from March Town Council for the forthcoming year was £11,000.00 and the request for commitment to repairs and renewals was £6,000.00. This is a £500.00 increase in fixed grant to accommodate rising costs.

The Town Clerk notified the Committee that he would advise them of the Council's decision as soon as the Council's budgets had been finalised in January 2023.

7. Any Other Business

- a) Maintenance has been ongoing throughout the year and, as with all old listed buildings, there can be no foreseeable end in sight.
- b) SL advised that the March Library was looking to re-home a piece of artwork created by local children as part of a Summer Festival project that commemorated Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. Was this something that the Museum might display? SL to forward further details to the Chairman for further consideration.
- c) The Councillors present and the Town Clerk, on behalf of March Town Council, thanked the Museum Committee for all their continued efforts, enthusiasm and professionalism, and wished them every success for the future. They also

commended the Chairman, Treasurer and all other Officers and volunteers for continuing to take the Museum forward in an extremely positive manner and providing an undoubted asset for the town.

- d) The Chairman presented retired/outgoing Town Clerk, Clive Lemmon, with a gift to thank him for his years of service and wished him a very happy retirement.
- e) It was hoped by all persons present that 2023 would eventually see the complete demise of Covid-19 and a return to full normality.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on Monday 27 November 2023 at the Museum at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

..... Chairman

.....2023

Appendix 1 – Chairman’s Report
Appendix 2 – Treasurer’s Report