

**Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting of the Knitting & Crochet Guild held at
The Radcliffe Centre at the University of Warwick on Saturday 13th July 2019 at 11am.**

Saturday 13th July 2019

1. Welcome and Apologies

Marian Dye
Barbara Kolator
Sheila Metcalf
Lynne Madeley
Denise Musk
Angharad Thomas
Margaret Morrell
Anthea Winterburn
Merle Hesp
Marjorie Thomsett
Diane Barker
Dorothy Spruce
Dorothy Riley
46 members

2. Announcements

Welcome to the Guild of Machine Knitters who have joined us earlier this year.

3. Minutes of the 40th AGM on 7th July 2018

Copy of minutes available on the website
Accepting the minutes
Propose – Jean Farquharson
Second – Penny Ryan
Five abstained.
Minutes of the 40th AGM were accepted.
Matters arising - None

4. Reports and Accounts 2018-19

Janet gave a report on the Accounts to March 2019
Proposer – Linde Merrick
Seconder – Margaret Callaghan
Three Abstained
The Accounts were accepted

Retiring Board Directors

Three of our Board Directors are retiring at this AGM.

Tricia Basham who unfortunately cannot be physically with us today, has served on the Board since 2013 and is retiring from the Board today. Tricia has worked tirelessly for the Board, taking on many roles including Treasurer and Membership Secretary. At the same time Tricia acted as Chair in all but name, for several years, which was much appreciated by Board members. Her dedication and professionalism will be missed.

Maureen Wheeler was first elected onto the Board in 2013 and sadly she must therefore retire by rotation at this AGM. Maureen has served as the Board's important link with the Collections Team and, more recently, her sheer hard work in organising the move from Lee Mills to Britannia Mill has been absolutely outstanding. The board will greatly miss Maureen's expertise but I understand Maureen is going to continue giving her time at Britannia Mill where her knowledge of the collection is a great asset. Maureen was presented with a gift for all her hard work done on the Board.

Fiona Laden has served on the Board since 2016, and has been instrumental in strengthening the Guilds links with Local Yarn Shops. Fiona has also acted as the first point of contact with the Guild when anyone makes an enquiry by email; swiftly and efficiently directing their query to the best person to deal with it.

I am sure you will all want to join with me in showing our grateful and heartfelt thanks to all these retiring Directors with a round of applause.

5. Appointment of Directors

Janet Collins

Proposer – Rachel Lemon

Secunder – Jacqui Taylor

All accepted.

Jean Farquharson

Proposer – Maureen Wheeler

Secunder – Janet Collins

All accepted

Linda Curry

Proposer – Patty Jarvis

Secunder – Helen Karakashian

All accepted

Susannah Matthews

Proposer – Linde Zubairy

Secunder – Wendy Irvin

All accepted

Fiona Mannifield

Proposer – Jean Farquharson

Secunder – Barbara Smith

All accepted

Suzan Turner

Proposer – Janet Collins

Secunder – Alison Peck

All accepted

Julie Hulme

Proposer – Susan Shapland

Seconded – Rebecca Price
All accepted

Barbara Kolator
Proposer – Penny Ryan
Seconded – Emma Vining
All accepted

Alison Peck
Proposer – Janet Collins
Seconded – Maureen Wheeler
All accepted

Claire Griffel
Proposer – Claire Worrall
Seconded – Linde Merrick
All accepted

6. Appointment of Office Bearers

We received two nominations for office bearer.

Janet Collins – Stand as Chair until AGM 2020
Proposer – Jean Farquharson
Seconded – Mary Golden
All accepted

Suzan Turner – Stand as Treasurer until AGM 2020
Proposer – Judith Jones
Seconded – Marie Wright
All accepted

Barbara Kolator – Stand as Secretary until AGM 2020
Proposer – Susannah Matthews
Seconded – Marisa Alcock
All accepted

Alison Peck – Stand as Vice Chair until AGM 2020
Proposer – Janet Collins
Seconded – Fiona Mannifield
All accepted

7. Board report on 2018-19

Chairs Report

The Guild is run by volunteers, there is no paid staff. Thank you to all the volunteers who work tirelessly to keep the Guild going.

Treasurer's Report 2018-19

I'm pleased to report a solid financial year made possible by the goodwill of its members and the devoted volunteers.

We are hugely grateful for the support of our members and the work that our volunteers undertake, from the production of Slipknot, maintenance of our website, members databases and financial information, coordination of branch meetings and keeping in touch with local members, promoting the Guild at yarn shows around the country right through to our board members ensuring that all our legal, financial and organisational obligations are met.

I've highlighted a few points below, which will hopefully answer most questions in my absence.

Income

Donations:

Both subscription income and gift aid increased with a 7.48% rise in member numbers and we were delighted to be awarded a £10,000 grant from the Heritage Fund to digitise part of our Collection. The project actually got underway in May this year and runs through to 30th April 2020, so income is showing in this year's accounts but expenditure will be made during 2019-20.

Charitable, other trading activities and other income

Sales record a drop from last year and those that were present at our 40th AGM will recall that 2018 was exceptional as we disposed of a number of sock machines then in our Collection.

The popularity of our Convention continues to rise as the income figures show but as you'll see this is in line with an increase in costs.

Donations to the Collection have increased over 55% a result of generous donations helping us to celebrate our Ruby anniversary and support for the move to Britannia Mill.

You'll also note that income for our 200 club has doubled as we are now able to take monies into the 200 club when new members sign up.

Expenditure

Convention:

As already mentioned, costs increased in line with income and increased attendance.

Premises

Under this heading are some one off costs, removal costs of £2,572 and legal costs for the abortive lease negotiations with the landlord for Lee Mills £1,331.

Maintenance & utility costs increased by £824, rent by £805 a rent-free period being amortised over the length of the 5-year lease and finally £385 depreciation against leasehold improvements is included for the brief period of occupation of Britannia Mill, in total these items resulted in an increase in costs of £5,917 from those shown in 2018.

Slipknot

Production costs increased in line with member numbers and the annual rise in postage costs.

Website

You will see that website costs have decreased entirely due to the full depreciation of the initial costs of our website which went live in July 2015.

Postage, printing and other membership costs

On off costs include £582 for the provision of our 40th anniversary pins and £68 of expenses incurred in the Gladys Jeskins sampler project. Increased member numbers and higher postage rates for sending out 40th anniversary pins to members on renewal led to higher than usual postage costs.

Board expenses

Have increased as more directors co-opted onto the board as a result of successful succession planning during the year. We can only ask that members give their time, we must ensure that no-one is deterred from offering their services as board member because of their economic circumstances.

Balance Sheet

The main change this year is the increase in tangible assets, we spent £11, 544 to make the premises at Britannia Mill suitable for the purposes of storing the collection and £788 of additional shelving. The leasehold improvements will be depreciated over the life of the lease, 5 years.

Membership Report 2018-19

We can report an increase in membership for the year to 31st March 2019 of 7.48% which after last year's static levels is a great relief. It's also good to note that membership retention has improved slightly but there is far more work to do in that area. If we can encourage volunteers to contact those who join during their first year then that I'm sure will help member retention.

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

Detailed comparison follows:

	2018-19		2017-18
Members at 01.04.18	847	Members at 01.04.17	847
New Members	259	New Members	237
Members Re-joining	19	Members Re-joining	23
Members Lost	-213	Members Lost	-257
Other adjustments	-2	Other adjustments	-3
Members at 31.03.18	909	Members at 31.03.18	847
Numbers of paying Members at 31.03.19	876	Numbers of paying Members at 31.03.18	815
Peak Month for new joiners March 2019	31	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 there are a considerable number 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. If you want to pay by standing order this is easy to setup with your bank especially if you bank online, if you do want a bank mandate form, there will be some available

for you to complete. Forward any forms to Fiona or if you bank online drop her an email at membership@kcguild.org.uk so she can update the database.

As I've mentioned in previous years retaining members for more than one year is a challenge for us all, the figures are improving slowly.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% increase in paying members during the year	33.81%	23.90%	00.12%	7.48%
% Members lost who only joined for one year	62.50%	72.78%	64.20%	56.34%

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, 46 who joined in the 1990s and 95 who joined in the 2000s the remaining 728 joining since 2010.

What do new members say when asked about how they find out about the Guild? Whilst 38% say they find us through the internet, 24% say from another Guild member, 19% and exhibition or show, 10% say a local group and 9% a magazine article. So, given that folk will have chatted to a Guild member on a show stand or a local group then we could say that 52% of new members joined after a conversation with an existing member.

The importance of our members engaging with others whether at branch meetings or on Guild stands at shows, passing on an edition of Slipknot to another crafter or chatting whilst you are knitting or crocheting on your way to work can't be underestimated and all helps to spread the word about our craft and the Guild. All I can say is thank you.

Collections Report

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

Along with our usual activities: recruiting volunteers, caring for the fabric of the building at LM, providing items for and attending Trunk Shows, Open days, Yarn Shows, receiving items into the collection, hosting placements for students from the University of Huddersfield etc have been two other major events that have drawn on the many talents and skills of our volunteers. These are;

Slide 1

- Heritage Fund Award (formerly Heritage Lottery Fund)
- Moving the Collection

Slide 2

- Heritage Fund Award

THE PROJECT APPLICATION – August 2019

Officially titled 'Digitisation of the Knitting & Crochet Guild Collection highlights and the creation of a digital resource'.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund grant will enable a part of the Collection to be put on line where it can be accessed from anywhere in the world. In the process of this, the team of volunteers who care for the Collection will receive training about the Collection, its value and how best to care for it, to enhance the skills they already have. In doing this, the '100 best' items will be identified and selected for digitisation, itself a task similar to that of isolating the tip of an iceberg! The project has become 'The KCG Collection in 100 objects' and these will reflect the composition of the Collection.

Slide 3

THE AWARD - Notification of our success December 2019

Made possible thanks to National Lottery players, the grant of £10,000 will enable the Knitting & Crochet Guild (KCG) Collection to become known to bigger audiences, especially those who are not able to visit the Collection in person.

Slide 4

May 2019- April 2020 The Project timeline

An overall plan has been drawn up setting the actions in the bid alongside a time line.

Many thanks to Angharad Thomas who is leading this initiative and supported by volunteers at the Collection

Slide 5

Moving the Collection

- Preparing for the move
- Moving Day
- Our new home

Slide 6 Xmas party

Some background information on the move.

December 18th 2018 Volunteers informed about the move

Slide 7 Snow

January 11th All volunteers wishing to help invited to a planning meeting. The time plan provided by Gillian discussed, resources/contacts shared. Plan of action put in place.

Packing up

Boxes/ crates sourced

Offers of help with dismantling shelving

JM offered charity days help from her husband's company in Sheffield to move furniture, shelving and set up in BM

Local handyman employed to dismantle shelving along with vols' husbands.

Extra hours put in by vols

Surplus items disposed of

Quotes obtained from moving companies. Company employed.

Moving Days - 3

Vols stationed in both venues. In constant contact

Long days

Day 1 Shelving, furniture, some boxes moved. Some shelving erected.

Day 2 Furniture moved shelving erected.

Delivery of shelving from Ikea shelving erected. Boxes in situ

Day 3 Specialist movers remove items from LM

Day 4 consolidation by Vols

PP presentation on 'The Move'

Legal and Governance matters

- Our old lease at Lee Mills, Scholes, Holmfirth
- The search for new premises
- Our new lease at Britannia Mill, Slaithwaite
- Charities Commission
- Companies House
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
- GDPR
- Easyfundraising
- Conclusion

Our old lease at Lee Mills, Scholes, Holmfirth

Members may recall that just before last year's AGM, the landlord of Lee Mills served a Notice on the Guild terminating our tenancy with effect from 23rd October 2018. The Notice stated they would be willing to agree a new lease, subject to agreement of the rent.

Following the AGM, our representative opened discussions with the landlord and their agents, but it soon became clear that the landlord's opinion of the rental value of our unit was far in excess of our own. Lee Mills is predominantly occupied by engineering type businesses, and the buildings are more suited to that type of use. The landlord was keen to develop that engineering potential, and unfortunately the Guild's occupation, for storage of the Collection, did not fit in with those aspirations.

Under the Landlord & Tenant Act, the Guild still had a right to a new lease on Unit 4 Lee Mills at open market rental value, but we would have had to defend that right at Court, and we took the view that the Guild's limited resources could be put to better use.

The search for new premises

We therefore instructed a local firm of solicitors to serve a counter-notice to protect the Guild's position and 'buy some time' to allow us to look for new premises.

The latest edition of Slipknot contains an article describing the search for suitable accommodation. To cut a long story short, we were very lucky to find the space at Britannia Mill, Slaithwaite. It was not officially 'on the market', but, through a chance phone-call to another mill-owner who had no availability, we were put in touch with the owner of Britannia Mill.

After considering many other properties, Britannia Mill came out top of the list. We arranged for contractors to carry out the work that was needed to make the premises fit for our requirements, and agreed terms for a new five year lease at a rent which is within the Guild's means.

Once we had secured our lease at Britannia Mill, our lawyers were instructed to notify the Lee Mills landlords that we would move out by 12th March 2019. Due to the efficiency of our Lee Mills team, the move was actually completed ahead of schedule and the keys were duly handed back on time. I am pleased to report that as a result of the action the Board has taken on the Guild's behalf, our rent at Lee Mills remained at the same level with no increase for over eight years from 1 January 2011 until 12 March 2019. We were also able to leave Lee Mills without paying for any dilapidations, thanks to the kind gesture of the next-door engineering company who have now expanded into our old unit.

Our new lease at Britannia Mill, Slaithwaite

At Britannia Mill, we now have a new five year lease at a rent which is within our budget. This gives the Guild better-suited newly-renovated accommodation, and a much-needed period of stability, in which to focus on the exciting projects ahead, such as the Heritage Lottery funded digitisation of the Collection.

Moving on to Governance matters:

Charities Commission

I can confirm that our annual return to the Charities Commission has recently been completed including the uploading of accounts.

Companies House

Similarly our annual return to Companies House has been completed.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

The Guild is a member of the NCVO which is a very useful resource giving support and guidance to small charities like ours. We receive regular updates on topics such as finance, insurance, health and safety and other matters which help us keep up-to-date with current issues affecting charities.

GDPR

The Guild continues to monitor and review its administration procedures to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

I am the Guild's data protection Officer so if you have any concerns at all on this matter please don't hesitate to contact me.

Easyfundraising

Thank you to all those members who have registered and supported the Guild so far on Easyfundraising.org.uk. It is simply a matter of registering on the easyfundraising website and selecting the Knitting & Crochet Guild as your chosen charity. Then each time you shop online, remember to access your chosen retailer's website via the easyfundraising site. Then, when you purchase something, your 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 31 people have registered, but those 31 people have together raised approximately £150 for the Guild. This means that if all the Guild's members had got behind this initiative, we could potentially have raised about £3,870 by now, and more as each year goes by. We do hope that more members will register on the easyfundraising website. It is a fantastically easy way to raise funds for the Guild and does not cost you a penny.

Conclusion

I hope this report summarises the legal and governance matters which have arisen during the last year satisfactorily. I would personally like to express my huge thanks to the Board, Collections team, members, husbands, partners and volunteers for their dedication, hard work and support, throughout the last twelve months which have been extremely challenging but ultimately successful.

Website Report 2018-19

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.

Our website results in many new members signing up (approx. 33%) so it's an important recruiting tool and whilst a good deal of what we have on our website comes from the objects of our charity to advance public knowledge and appreciation of the crafts of knitting & crochet it's good to see that the "learning" pages continue to prove popular.

I've gathered a tiny selection of the data that is available and compared 2018-19 with the previous year.

Audience Overview	2018-19	2017-18
Numbers visiting website	68,113	54,912
Returning users	8,307 (11.0%)	6,919 (11.3%)
New users	67,454	54,268
Number of Sessions	83,432	67,538
Number of Pages Viewed	145,776	127,019
Busiest Day	29/09/2018 750 pages viewed by 484 users	29/12/2017 593 pages viewed by 257 users
Language	English GB 57.54% English USA 31.12%	English GB 63.77% English USA 27.78%
Device	Desktop 37.29% Mobile 39.24% Tablet 23.47%	Desktop 39.26% Mobile 33.96% Tablet 26.77%

A pleasing increase in the numbers visiting the website in 2018-19.

The busiest day in the past year was 29th September 2018 which was the Sunday of Yarndale.

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? One can drill down the complete list of pages and see their ranking, but I've chosen the top 10 to review and compared both years.

A fairly consistent ranking over both years; and as you can see in each year machine knitting has been the 2nd most visited page. Hopefully this section of the website can be developed further now we have so much former GMK talent in our midst. Membership logins is now up to No 8 from No 11 in 2017-18, hopefully a sign that more members are using the facility.

2018-19

Ranking) Webpage	No of Page Views
1) Home Page	12,779
2) Machine Knitting	12,275
3) Lace Knitting for Beginners	9,265
4) Courses & Workshops	6,170
5) Local Groups	5,043
6) Learn to Crochet	4,967
7) KCG Branches	4,736
8) Membership/Login	3,026
9) Membership/Join	2,792
10) History of Handknitting	2,760

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	4,481
5) Lace Knitting for Beginners	4,291
6) KCG Branches	4,220
7) History of Handknitting	3,046
8) Events – Nottingham Yarn Expo	2,905
9) Membership/Join	2,715
10) Learn to Crochet	2,524

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

8. Future of the Guild

Future of the Guild is in our hands. It is what we make it and down to the members to make it what it will be. Louisa Harding suggested Chair should survey the membership. A survey will be drawn up in due course of what you want from the Guild etc.

1040 members

Branch coordinator who are the face of the Guild

Post holders who are unsung heroes of the Guild. Do lots of work voluntarily.

Board of Directors – jobs that the Board needs to do.

Thank you to the Board for the amount of work that they have put in.

Exhibit at a lot of shows, what we get out of them. Ask the local members to help out at the shows.

200 Club

Lesley Robinson - £20

Laura Miller - £20

Fiona Laden - £50

9. AOB

None

Meeting closed at 12.54 pm.