

Minutes of Oriental Bird club 31st Annual General Meeting held at St John the Evangelist Community Hall, Cambridge on Saturday 5 September 2015

1. Apologies for absence

58 members were present. Apologies had been received from K Betton, J Gregory, Colin Heap, Tempe & Robert Mansfield and Sayam Chowdhury.

2. Approval of minutes of 30th Annual General Meeting

The minutes of 30th AGM held on 22 November 2014 were approved. Proposed by B Sykes, seconded by J Eaton and approved unanimously.

3. Matters arising

None

4. Treasurer's presentation of 2014 Accounts

Colin Humpage presented the 2014 accounts. Copies of the Trustees Annual report and Accounts for 2014 were distributed to members present and the report was also available on the Club's website. A summary of the income and expenditure for the year was given. The accounts show a surplus of £5,796 (2013 - deficit of £7,233).

The surplus of £5,796 was made up as follows: Accumulated Fund £1,668, Conservation Fund £1,109, Bertram Smythies Fund £2,899 and the Honorary Membership Fund £120.

The Club's net assets were £197,945. In summary, the Oriental Bird Club finances continued to be healthy. The Club's cash balances are invested in low risk short term deposits so funds may be accessed relatively quickly. A budget had been produced for 2015 and it was reported that actuals were pretty much in line with the predictions.

Finally, the Treasurer acknowledged the enormous debt of gratitude OBC owed to Graeme Spinks, stepping down from OBC Council this year, for keeping the finances and accounts of the Club in very good order. The Chairman thanked G Spinks, M Sykes and C Humpage for their input.

5. Approval of 2014 Accounts

Chris Gooddie proposed approval of the 2014 accounts, seconded by Brian Sykes and approved unanimously.

6. Election of Independent Examiner

It was recommended Frances Clark be re-elected to the role of Independent Examiner. Proposed by Colin Humpage, seconded by Steve Rowland and approved unanimously.

7. Chairman's review of 2015

Mike Edgecombe, Chairman began by thanking Graeme Spinks who was standing down from Council. Graeme had been the longest serving Council member of all time and had brought to Council a high level of expertise, professionalism and common sense. He has made a remarkable contribution to the Club and will be sadly missed.

Publications still remain the life blood and thanks go to the Publications Committee. The standard of *BirdingASIA* and *Forktail* remains high and the Club is very proud of both publications. It's a tough job and to retain high quality sometimes it is difficult to meet publication dates. Brian and Margaret Sykes, Nigel Collar, Simon Roddis and Tim Loseby should be congratulated on their achievements. BA22 was published early in the year and BA23 followed in June. It wasn't possible for Forktail 31 to be ready for Bird Fair, but it should be ready for distribution this autumn. Special thanks went to Rene Pop, John Eaton and Peter Creed for their continued valuable support. We continue to receive good service and competitive prices from our current printer. As always thoughts on content and style are welcomed regarding publications and other media.

OBI is a big success and has been high on Council's agenda this last year. OBI has been successfully moved to a UK Server which gives more control. Thanks were given to Abhijit Menon-Sen for his contributions to OBI over many years and to Krys Kazmerczak and to Richard Thomas. OBI currently has over 102,170 images of 2885 species contributed by more than 1,600 photographers and is just 27 species short of showcasing all the species in the Oriental region. Oriental Birding currently has 2,492 members, OBpix has 779, OBC Facebook now has over 7,500 followers and OBC Twitter followers are increasing thanks to the efforts of Simon Roddis.

Membership was slightly up on this time last year at 2,024, so it is great to see OBC flourishing and confident it will continue to do so. This year a bursary scheme (funded by individual Council members) has been introduced to encourage younger birders to become actively involved with the Club. It is considered OBC is one of the best value for money Clubs in the country, demonstrated by the high membership retention levels, largely down to the quality of publications. More members are renewing online and we urge more to renew in this way.

The last AGM in cooperation with BOC at the Natural History Museum celebrated 30 years of OBC. An audience of more than 120 heard excellent presentations by Per Alstrom, Debbie Pain, Pamela Rasmussen and Stuart Marsden.

Bird Fair saw a change this year with an electric supply to the stand and TV screen show-casing some of the magical birds of the Oriental region. OBC prize draw ticket sales raised £1,561 over the three days, which when added to postal sales made £2,416 for the OBC Conservation Fund. Thanks to The Bagh, LCE, Borneo Nature Tours, John and Jane Gregory, John Gray, John Beaufoy Publishing, Lynx Edicions for providing the prizes. Special thanks went to Giles and Renee Braithwaite, Tempe Mansfield and the other volunteers for all their hard work on the stand. Despite stiff competition Stuart Elsom won the Bird Brain competition and a £1,000 donation to the OBC Conservation Fund, so thanks to Stuart. The drinks reception after hours on the Saturday was attended by over 50 members and corporate supporters and thanks went to Tony and Celia Sawbridge and Jo Thomas and her team for organising the food.

As always our corporate sponsors are very important to the Club and we offer special thanks to AEC, Limosa, Birdquest, Sunbird, Rockjumper, Birding Ecotours and BirdtourAsia for their continuing support. We are also very grateful to individual members for very generous donations.

Dave Buckingham and the Conservation Committee have again done a sterling job administering the OBC's Conservation Fund offering grants to seven different countries including significant sums to Bhutan and the Philippines. Thanks went to everyone involved.

Thanks also went to the Club's overseas reps and volunteers including Bob Kennedy in the USA, Fon Intravooth and Phil Round in Thailand, Paul Leader in Hong Kong and Paul Thompson in Bangladesh, Nyein Chan in Myanmar, Rajveer and Diwakar in India, Deepal Warakagoda in Sri Lanka and the many other volunteers not mentioned here who together help make OBC run smoothly. As always OBC is looking for extra help, so the Chairman encouraged anyone who feels they can help to get in touch.

8. Election of 2016 Council

Council proposed the election of new Council Member Andy Mears to take on the role of Country Reps. Officer. Proposed by Chris Gooddie, seconded by Jo Thomas, and approved unanimously.

All Council members (as listed in the Agenda) offered their services for re-election, with the exception of Graeme Spinks who has stood down. Proposed by Pete Morris, seconded by John Eaton, and approved unanimously.

9. Any Other Business

There was no further business and the Chairman declared the 31st OBC AGM closed.

Jo Thomas, Secretary