

**Minutes of the ROWLANDS CASTLE ASSOCIATION(RCA)  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2021 via Zoom

**Apologies for absence:** Lisa Walker, Barbara Openshaw, Rodney Duggua ,  
Yvonne Haggard

**Present:**Committee members: Helen Penfold (Chair), Martha Dombey  
(Treasurer), Sue Leonard (Secretary), June Halford (Vice Chair), Sue Morrison,  
Gordon Charlesworth, Chris Stinton, Caroline Hadley

President: Alan Drinkwater

Vice President: Alan Eyres

Guest Speakers: Ian Young and Geoff Jacobs

Members:58

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 2020**

These were available on the RCA website to be read in advance of the meeting.  
They were agreed as a true representation of the meeting. The minutes were  
signed by Sue Leonard on behalf of the Chair, Helen Penfold.

**Matters arising**

None

**Chair's report**

RCA Annual Report 2021

Thank you for joining us this evening on our first, and hopefully our only, zoom  
AGM. I am guessing that when Eugene Billam and his friends set up the RCA,  
forty years ago, he never imagined that the state of the country, and the IT  
possibilities, would mean that an AGM zoom would be either necessary or  
possible. Our thanks to Caroline Hadley, one of our newest committee  
members, who is running the zoom part of this meeting for us.

A year ago, none of us thought that we would still be in this lockdown  
situation, and normal life would still be on hold. It has been such a difficult  
time for so many, and by now many of us have had, or know people who have  
had covid, and some of us will have lost friends or family members to this  
horrid virus. Our thoughts are with all those who have lost loved ones.

Although it has been a terrible year for many, there have been positives too. The village has had a sense of community and we have been so grateful that Londis, the hardware store, the surgery, the pharmacist, our two garages and The Bumblebee café, as well as the other businesses, have all been there for us. Members of the WI have done a wonderful job in supporting their older, more vulnerable members, and many residents have looked out for neighbours and the elderly during the lockdowns and since. Members of St John's church set up the Corona help group in March last year. This was supported by the RCA, the Parish Council and Good Neighbours. We had over 100 volunteers, who were happy to help with shopping, posting parcels, walking dogs, or being a friendly presence at the end of the phone. A separate group of volunteers helped with delivering medicines for Nemesh at the pharmacy.

Good reasons to feel positive about being part of our village.

We support the preparation of the neighbourhood plan, under the leadership of Ian Young, which we believe will help to provide some resistance to heavy handed government attempts to over rule local planning. Ian and Geoff Jacobs will give a short talk about the plan, after the business part of this meeting.

The RCA runs the village website, Grapevine and the 'Village and Valley' magazine. Our thanks to Kelvin Schafli, who does a great job as editor, particularly in this difficult year. The spring issue of the magazine was only on line, as we felt we could not ask volunteers to deliver it. The summer issue was slim but very special, and a wonderful and emotional tribute to the village community, with articles written by residents and pictures of the VE day gathering and the beautiful snake of stones which had been made in front of Deerleap.

The advertising in the magazine covers its costs. Our thanks to Mark Dombey for managing the magazine's advertising and the RCA website.

Thank you too, to all our magazine deliverers. We really appreciate your help.

The Grapevine emails now reach 800 local residents and works well for communication in the village; I think it has been particularly useful during the pandemic for sending out important and relevant information, and helped residents to feel connected. Anyone can sign up, and send a message on Grapevine, so long as the grapevine moderator feel that the message is appropriate.

## Annual Events

Sadly, we have cancelled nearly all of our annual events.

Friday May 8th was intended to be a commemoration and celebration for the 75th anniversary of VE Day, but sadly, we had to cancel our many plans for the day. A few days before the 8th, I was rung by Steve Croney, the cornet player with the Blendworth Brassband, asking if he could play the Last Post, and the Reveille at the flagpole at 11am on the 8th. Lisa Walker, on behalf of the Parish Council, agreed to this and we sent out a simple grapevine message, saying it would take place. Over 100 residents met on the Green, all socially distanced, witnessing a solemn and poignant occasion for all of us who were there.

Being an optimist, I did think that the Fireworks might go ahead in November, but the rest of the committee sensibly said that we had to cancel it. It was fortunate that we had not made any plans for it, as the November lockdown would certainly have stopped it.

We had to cancel the The Children's Christmas Party

The RCA quiz was held on zoom, and our thanks to Caroline for running the zoom part and to Kevin and Sue Connell for writing and asking the questions. It worked very well and I think everyone enjoyed it, although we missed the good company and the fish and chips and all those raffle prizes. The money raised went to the Rowans, and the RCA matched the money from the quizzers.

Litter picking.

There was a litter pick on July 4th. Lots of residents turned out to help - which was great. We think everyone was so desperate to get out and to see people, even if it meant picking up litter. Thank you to everyone who came.

## RCA Donations

The RCA gives money that we have raised, to local organisations and groups, who are in need of funds. Without the fireworks, we have no significant income, so we need to be more cautious about donating money until we can hold the fireworks again.

However, we had already committed to helping

St John's school, St Hubert's church, The Parish Hall, The doctors' surgery, The R C heritage centre, The gardening club, The Parish council and The scouts, all before last year's AGM, and we gave money to the tennis club in March. We gave £500.00 to St John's school PTA, after their Scarecrow trail in October, which so many of us had enjoyed around the village.

We gave £1,000 to the Rowans in May, even though we did not have the usual Mayday BBQ. Some of this came from the saved printing costs when the magazine was only online. We also gave £620.00 to the Rowans after the quiz night.

During 2020, we gave £5,810 in donations, and this year we have already given £200 to the tree planting project in Stansted forest.

We are always open to requests for funding for good causes in the village

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I hope that this summary of our activity over the last year is helpful, and shows how we try to fulfil the RCA aims of conserving the character of the village, providing a channel of communication and enhancing the life of the village.

We do need new members on the committee. It isn't too much commitment, and being on the committee is a great way of feeling part of the village. Please contact me or Sue Leonard if you would like to join us.

Thank you

### **Treasurer's report**

The RCA financial year ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

The accounts were audited by Toni Langford

Receipts for the year £3707.71

Payments for the year £8042.33

Balance in the bank at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 £13,711.95

Balance in the bank at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 £9,377.33

Petty cash £165

## **Election of officers**

This part of the AGM was presented by Alan Drinkwater. Alan thanked the committee for their work in this difficult year.

The election went as follows:

Chair- Helen Penfold voted as Chair, unanimous

Vice Chair- June Halford, unanimous

Treasurer- Martha Dombey voted as Treasurer, unanimous

Secretary- Sue Leonard voted as Secretary, unanimous

Both Helen and Martha would like to step down if replacements can be found.

## **Election of committee**

The remaining Committee members were announced by Alan Drinkwater, all of whom were also voted in unanimously- Sue Morrison, Gordon Charlesworth, Mary Sinclair.

New members Caroline Hadley, Chris Stinton and Yvonne Haggard.

## **Retirement of RCA President**

Alan Drinkwater has been President for 20 years. Alan has seen his role as supporting and encouraging the committee . He has provided a broader view of things. He has been grateful for the opportunity to be the President.

Helen thanked Alan for presiding over the election of the committee nominations and for being President. He has kept an eye on things and offered impartial advice and support.

The RCA presented Alan with a present and a Lime tree is going to be planted on the Recreation Ground with a plaque subject to the RCPCs approval as sole trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity.

## **Welcome to new RCA President**

Helen welcomed Alan Eyres as the new RCA President. Alan has been Vice President for many years. Alan is an active member of the village. He has been on the Village fair committee, RCA and Heritage Centre. Alan thanked the committee for their work in the past difficult year.

He ended by quoting Captain Sir Tom Moore. "Tomorrow is going to be a better day".

### **Any other business**

Helen Proposed changes to constitution

We would like to make slight changes to the 'Rules of the RCA' which is our constitution.

We propose that the current words in paragraph 3, relating to the term served by the president, should be changed to say

'A new president will be invited to stand for five years initially, at which time the situation will be reviewed on both sides, and the term possibly extended for a further three years, which could be again repeated, if both sides are in agreement. The president can step down at any time, and in exceptional circumstances, he/she can be asked to step down by the committee.'

We wish to remove the statement at the end of paragraph 7 which says '(Previously nominations for the committee can be made from the floor at the AGM'.)

Paragraph 6 should include 'vice chairman ' for completeness.  
These changes were agreed and the constitution will be changed.

RCA need a new Vice President. Please contact the RCA if you would like to be considered.

**A short talk** by Ian Young and Geoff Jacobs on The Neighbourhood Plan. Ideas taken from the floor.

Helen thanked Ian and Geoff for their presentation.

Meeting ended at 8.05pm