

Minutes of the 30th Annual General Meeting of The Quilter's Guild of the British Isles held at Brangwyn Hall, The Guildhall, Swansea, SA1 4EE on Saturday 28th March 2009 commencing at 9.20am

Present: Margaret Hughes (President) (MH)
Lesley Hurrell (Treasurer-Elect and Director) (LH)
Jan Williams (Director) (JW)
Marilyn Lovett (Director) (ML)

In attendance: Michael Greensmith (Company Secretary) (MG)
John Turner (Chief Executive Officer) (JT)
Margaret Boe (Trustee) (MB)
Anne Hardcastle (Trustee) (AH)
Gilly Rose (Trustee) (GR)
Kathleen Fisher (Trustee) (KF)
Vivien Finch (Trustee) (VF)
Wendy Greensmith (Director – Festival of Quilts) (WG)
Fiona Diaper (Museum Director) (FD)

1. President's Welcome

At the invitation of those present the President took the chair at the meeting and welcomed all those attending the 30th Annual General Meeting. The directors, officers, trustees and others in attendance at the meeting were introduced.

2. Apologies

The Chairman reported that apologies had been received from Maureen Fletcher, Debbie Evans and Jane Fellows.

3. Quorum

The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

4. Interim Measure re President and Treasurer

The Council decision appointing MH as President to fill the casual vacancy which arose following the resignation of Diana Goodison and the appointment of LH as Treasurer pending her election at this meeting, similarly to fill the casual vacancy, was reported to the meeting which unanimously approved the continuing in post as President of MH and until the formal business below the continuance in post of LH.

5. Minutes of the 29th AGM held on 12th April 2008

The minutes of the meeting were formally tabled and taken as read. The minutes were then signed by MH.

6. President's Report

MH then presented her report to the meeting, a copy of which is annexed.

7. Museum Director's Report

FD presented her report to the meeting, a copy of which is annexed hereto.

8. Festival of Quilts Limited Report

WG presented her report to the meeting in the form accompanying these minutes.

FORMAL BUSINESS

Tellers were formally appointed.

9. Council Reports

- 9.1 KF presented the Operations Division Report, a copy of which is annexed hereto.
- 9.2 JW presented the Membership Report in accordance with the copy annexed hereto.
- 9.3 ML presented the Marketing Report, a copy of which is annexed hereto.
- 9.4 MH proposed to the meeting the resolution that the reports be received and approved. This was seconded by Gina Wilson and was carried unanimously with no abstentions.
- 10. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts**
LH presented the Treasurer's Report, a copy of which is annexed hereto, together with the accounts for the financial period ending 31st December 2008.
- 11. Adoption of Accounts**
LH proposed that the accounts for the financial period ending 31st December 2008 be adopted. The resolution was seconded by Janice Gunner and carried unanimously with two abstentions.
- 12. Election of Members of the Council**
The following persons were proposed for election to the Council, respectively: LH as Treasurer; ML as Divisional Head – Marketing; Jan Rae as Divisional Head – Museum; KF as Divisional Head – Operations. The resolution was seconded by Jane Steward and carried unanimously with no abstentions.
- 13. Appointment of Auditor and Authorisation of Council to Determine Remuneration**
LH proposed the resolution that Wheawill and Sudworth who had previously indicated their willingness to be appointed as auditor for the year 2009 be so appointed and that the Council be authorised to approve their remuneration, which resolution was seconded by Barbara Diamond and was carried unanimously.
- This completed the formal business of the meeting.**
- 14. Chief Executive's Report**
JT presented his report to the meeting, a copy of which is annexed hereto.
- 15. Guild Patron – Kaffe Fassett**
MH introduced KF who addressed the members acknowledging his pleasure at being the Guild Patron. At the conclusion of his address MH expressed on behalf of all those present her appreciation.
- 16. Andrew Salmon**
MH introduced Andrew Salmon, the Managing Director of Creative Exhibitions Limited, who addressed members with regard to the forthcoming NEC event Festival of Quilts 2009 to be held between the 20th and 23rd August 2009. He explained the need for members to contact Creative Exhibitions Limited for information and to note the new rules and regulations with regard to the entry of competition quilts. He also noted that the purchase of group tickets for the event would result in a significant lowering of cost for members. At the conclusion of his address MH thanked AS for the time he had devoted to attending the AGM.
- 17. Presentations**
- 17.1 JW made the following presentations to named members for contribution to the activities to the Guild, namely:- Jane Steward – Region 1, Jan Godding – Region 2, Ann Bartlett – Region 3, Wendy Rankin – Region 7, Kim Shaw – Region 8, Betty Stacey – Region 9, Brenda Wroe – Region 10, Judy Fairless – Contemporary Quilt Group, Julia Gahagan – Miniature Quilt Group and Sarah Shelley – Traditional Quilt Group.

17.2 Certificants

The certificate for the enrolment of the most new members was awarded to Region 12 and for the retention of most members was awarded to Region 13.

- 17.3 The following persons were presented with the certificates of graduation as quilt judges by Janice Gunner (JG), namely:- Asun Cauhe, Christine Moran, Jean Meyers, Beryl Cadman, Fiona Brockie, Joanna O'Neill, Brenda Wroe, Grietje van der Veen, Josephine Rednall, Carol Clasper, Jan Hale, Judith Barker, Mary Parry, Trudy Steer, Lisbet Borggreen, Nancy Rampling, Verena Lenzlinger, Margaret Mullice, Wendy Singer, Mary Palmer, Tracey Pereira, Sheila Sandifer.

JG took the opportunity to thank the tutors Annette Morgan, Jenni Dobson and Barbara Weeks. She also informed the meeting that a new judging course was scheduled to commence in October 2009 with the details on the Guild website.

- 17.4 MH then informed the meeting that Maureen Fletcher was retiring as a director of Festival of Quilts Limited and took the opportunity to thank her for the substantial support to the Guild's activities over the period in which she had held office.

- 17.5 MH then presented honorary membership of the Guild to the following persons, namely: Kaffe Fassett, Andrew Salmon and John Turner.

18. Conclusion

There being no further business for the AGM the meeting concluded at 11.02am.

.....
CHAIRMAN

The President's Report to the AGM 2009

2008 has been a significant year for the Quilters' Guild, a year during which we have experienced high points in the development and achievements of the Guild and low points which have affected the governance of the Guild.

Our finest achievement was the opening of St Anthony's Hall as our quilt museum and gallery and the administrative centre of the Guild – finally we are together in one home, fulfilling a long-held ambition. Other high points were the successful recruitment of the staff and volunteers who are so essential to the operation of both the museum and the Guild. We staged two fantastic exhibitions in 2008 which have set a benchmark for the future and there was the innovative programme of events that has accompanied each exhibition.

The Guild was extremely fortunate when an anonymous benefactor gave £35,000 in May 2008 to set up a Travel and Education Scholarship for Guild members and students. The money was placed in a COIF deposit account whilst guidelines were agreed according to the donor's and the Guild's wishes. I am delighted to tell you that two new bursaries will be awarded later this year. Details of how to apply will be in the Summer edition of *The Quilter* and they will shortly be on the Guild web site. This fund allows us to continue with our remit as an educational charity.

I am very aware that the work begun in the regions by John Turner when he was Development Manager became sidelined when he took on the rôle of project management of the move to York. I apologise if you felt neglected but plans are now in place to begin this work again later in the year. Meanwhile, my thanks to each and everyone who has supported the Guild through what has been an amazing but anxious time; we could not have done it without you.

The Executive committee operated for several months with only four members, the President, a co-opted Treasurer and two Heads of Division one of whom was also co-opted, so not exactly the way to govern an organisation with rapidly growing responsibilities. Despite having a Museum Director and a Chief Executive Officer who, although they take responsibility for the daily management of staff, volunteers and the Guild, they actually have little power to take decisions without the agreement of the Executive committee and, in some instances, the whole Trustee body.

Consequently, much thought and discussion has been given to this issue in recent months and it has been decided to recruit Heads of Division for the Museum and Guild administration or, as it is now called, Operations. This situation was further exacerbated when Di Goodison had to relinquish her rôle as President, so another reshuffle was inevitable, but with few people to reshuffle. Fortunately, one of our Trustees, Kathleen Fisher, agreed to be co-opted as Head of Operations; Lesley Hurrell, who intended to stand for election as Treasurer at this AGM, agreed to take on the rôle earlier as another co-option; and this left me to move into the President's post. As the saying goes some seek greatness, others have it thrust upon them – believe me, there has been a great deal of thrusting going on.

These points apart, I am confident that this coming year will see the Guild well established in York, supported fully by both members and our dedicated staff. We have an unrivalled opportunity to develop a unique museum and an organisation of which we can be justifiably proud. The people of York are very pleased with our presence, as was shown by the 700 of them who visited the free opening of the Museum during the annual open buildings weekend, or perhaps it was just the Yorkshire habit of wanting owt for nowt. Whatever the reason, we are certainly known to them now.

My report has largely centred on governance because, in my opinion, this is the key to success and it is now time for us to consider loosening the reins a little to allow our professionals to carry out the jobs to which they were recruited. This does not mean that volunteers are redundant, far from it. Your input is valuable, and essential, both in the regions and at Trustee level to set the strategies and future aims of the Guild, so if you see a vacancy that you can fill do not hesitate, do not think twice, just get from behind your sewing machine or quilting frame and volunteer.

Finally, my thanks to everybody who has contributed in any way to the success of the Guild. I would also like to wish Di Goodison well and hope she is in good health once again.

Margaret Hughes
Guild President

Museum Director's report to the AGM March 2009

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all staff, volunteers, trustees, committee members, visitors and fundraisers for their invaluable support in the opening year at the museum.

The move to York followed an extensive period of work by Trustees, and St Anthony's Committee to find a new home for the guild and its collection. When I addressed the AGM last year we had just moved into St Anthony's Hall. The builders were still on site, work was behind schedule, there were problems with communications and we were short-staffed. Despite all these teething problems the Quilt Museum and Gallery opened on time to the public on 7th June 2008 with its inaugural exhibition 'Quilts in Time; Journey from Bed to Wall, made possible by a generous grant from Arts Council England.

Guest Curator of 'Quilts in time' Helen Joseph chose to exhibit a mix of heritage pieces from the Guild collections and pieces by contemporary makers. An international exhibition from the Quilt Study Centre, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA 'Quilts in Common' displayed quilts quite literally 'from around the world and across the centuries' and the current touring exhibition from the Ruthin Crafts Centre, 'Migration' by Cefyn Burgess explores themes connected with the migration of Welsh people to America. In addition to the opening exhibition the Museum has exhibited pieces from the Guild collections; 'Patchwork for the parlour' featured Victorian fancy work and 'Warp, weft and the printers block' looks at the manufacture of cotton, silk, linen and wool in the 18th and 19th Centuries and its use in quilt making. In the nine months since opening we have welcomed 8487¹ paying visitors to the museum and hosted 48² events with support from Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Events have included lectures, demonstrations and practical courses. Feedback on the whole about the new museum has been extremely positive. Overall takings at 21st February total £75,273.15p approximately half of this figure is from sales in the Museum Shop. This first few months have been far more successful than predicted and this is down to the retail assistants on site and the hard work of Wendy Greensmith and the Trading Company who have sourced stock, placed orders, undertaken stock checks and had the unenviable task of liaising with the VAT inspector. A grant of £193,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Unfolding the quilts project' has enabled the Guild to employ two new staff in the autumn to develop and co-ordinate education and volunteer training and development projects over the next three years at the Museum. Fundraising for equipment and projects at the museum continues and I would like to express my thanks to everyone who participated in regional events, made bags or purchased tickets at the Bag Tombola or attended the illustrated talk by Guild Patron Kaffe Fassett last year. Watch out for 'Little Gems' at this year's Festival of Quilts. As York's newest attraction in 2008 the museum has featured within the local and regional press and specialist magazines at home and abroad. Coverage on BBC Woman's Hour in July boosted visitor figures throughout the summer. This year will we be working on projects to enable the growth and sustainability of the museum. At the core of our work is our role as a museum which is to acquire, preserve and provide public access now and for future generations to the quilt collections. A separate Trust is in the process of being set up to protect the collection in the event of the Quilters' Guild experiencing financial difficulties (e.g. the Guild will be prevented from selling the collection to fund any financial short falls). The new Museum Division and advisory panel has been formed and I would like to thank the volunteer committee members for their time, interest and commitment in assisting the new staff team to develop a successful museum. The Guild now employs 2 full time staff and 5 part time staff to work specifically for the museum. Our growing museum volunteer team currently totals 70 local people who are actively involved with exhibitions, collections care, education, and administration. An ongoing volunteer training programme is in place and later this year staff and volunteers will be attending Welcome Host training, nationally recognized training in customer care.

Management, governance, collections and visitor care are all features of the national minimum standard for museums across the UK known as 'Accreditation', formally known as Registration. The Quilt Museum and Gallery applied for Accredited status at the end of 2008 and we expect to know the outcome by the summer. Future exhibitions to look forward later this year include Pearls, Pearls, Pearls the 30th Anniversary Exhibition of the Guild, Traditional Whole cloth, Seeing Red and exhibition by Edge Contemporary Textile Artists. A full complimentary programme of events and activities for all ages has been drawn up by our education officer. The museum staff and myself are working hard to develop a museum which you can be proud of! I hope that this is the first of many successful and happy years at our new premises in York. I look forward to your continued to support and hope that you will spread the word about the Europe's only museum dedicated to patchwork and quilting, the Quilt Museum and Gallery.

Fiona Diaper, Museum Director

¹ up to 21st February 09

² up to 21st February 09

Report to the 2009 AGM from the Trading Company – Festival of Quilts Limited

As stated in the report last year, there are now four sections to the trading company – advertising in *The Guild* magazine, sales to the regions, conference and the museum shop.

The advertising in *The Quilter* magazine has been ‘encouraged’ by Carmen Walton and needs much less attention with debt collection, etc. A VAT inspection is allowing publication of the magazine to be invoiced through the trading company which will enable the VAT to be reclaimed on the printing. Every little helps!

Sales to the regions have been steady and equate with figures for 2007, although show sales have decreased quite considerably. I would suggest that this is due in the most part to the fantastic sales produced by the ‘Kath’s Kubes’ – unfortunately no longer available. In the last report, it was mentioned that invitations to take a free stand at a show would be passed to the region concerned. This was to be supported by ‘sale or return’ of goods where the region would benefit from the profit. I have to correct the term ‘sale or return’ and substitute ‘loan or return’ as the goods are not invoiced until they are sold or returned by the region.

This, I understand, was very successful at a craft show in Manchester and my thanks to the organiser of that Guild stand.

The Conference in 2008 was the most successful yet with 491 members attending, including of course, the conference team and executive. The figure for this conference in Swansea, at the time of writing this report, was 344. I understand from the Conference Officer, Hilary Kennerley, that we should just break even. Hilary has worked extremely hard during the period from the last conference in Cambridge, to arrange venues through to and including 2012. The dates and venues are on the leaflet provided by Hilary and will be published in *The Quilter* for those who are not attending this AGM or who lose the information!!

You will notice that Conference is the term used throughout this report. To clarify this, the AGM is the responsibility of The Guild and the profit making section is the Conference which includes the lectures, workshops and Gala dinner. This division was approved by the VAT inspector.

The success of the Cambridge conference has contributed greatly to the profit which will be paid to The Guild. It should be remembered that Conference can also create a deficit if insufficient members attend, so please make a note of these dates and venues. Next year will be Southport from 26th – 28th March, followed by Exeter from the 8th to 10th April 2011 and last but not least Dundee 23rd to 26th March 2012.

The museum shop, fully open since June last year, has proved popular with tourists and locals alike. Books seem to be the main attraction but other items have and are being introduced regularly. The two loans, one for the shop fitting and the other for initial stock purchase have both been repaid.

Also repaid to The Guild, has been the remaining £5,000 of original loan made to the Trading Company when it was formed. Once again, I would emphasize that The Guild and Trading Company work as one – even more so since the move to York and I thank every member of the Executive and Trustees who have made this possible.

Maureen Fletcher is retiring as a Director this year and although not attending today, we wish to thank her for her sterling work on behalf of the Trading Company.

Wendy Greensmith
Financial Director
Festival of Quilts Limited

Operations Division Report for The AGM of QGBI 28/03/09

This has been a busy year for the Operations Division of The Guild with a huge workload resulting from the move to York. We are constantly trying to provide a better and more efficient service to our members. The most critical areas are as follows:

Administration

Our move to York has provided the opportunity to review documentation in the office and an Office Handbook and a Museum Handbook have been prepared. Our administration is now in the hands of Carol Bowden who has settled in at St Anthony's and is now the face of The Guild as far as first contact is concerned. During the coming year we plan to bring our finance back in house and this will mean a further increase in staff which should improve The Guild's capability to respond to members' queries. We also have a Commercial Manager, Catherine Candlin, in post who is investigating ways in which The Guild can generate commercial opportunities for income growth for the future. We have recently been able to add an additional room to our lease at York. It will be used for storage in the short term looking to a need in the future to hold stock for both the Museum shop and for mail order and internet sales.

IT

As a result of our move to York The Guild has updated its IT equipment and telephone facilities. We have very recently added another two telephone lines to cover the increased number of staff and hope that this will mean very few people are transferred to the answering service during office hours.

The Quilter Review has been completed and a report was included in the March issue of *The Quilter*. The response was very good and we hope that members will see many of their comments translated into changes in the magazine. As many people pointed out it is impossible to please all the people all the time. Constructive comment will always be welcome.

Form Redesign

The task of creating a coherent index for The Guild's many forms and standardising their format is ongoing. In general, new versions will filter into the system gradually but if members are in doubt about the version of a form which they are using they should contact Carol Bowden in Head Office to check. Feedback on this process is also welcome.

Gift Aid

The Gift Aid audit by HMRC which started in 2007 has been concluded. A thorough review of previous Gift Aid declarations has allowed existing Gift Aid forms for subscriptions to be collated and filed in preparation for making a claim for Gift Aid on subscriptions for 2007 and 2008 which should provide a significant amount of income in 2009. It is very important to The Guild that those members who pay tax on income from salaries, pensions or investments support us by completing a Gift Aid declaration. The most popular misconception has been that a spouse or partner could complete a form on behalf of a member. This is not acceptable and if you are unsure whether your declaration would be affected by this or have any other questions please contact Carol Bowden at Head Office.

Web Site

The appearance and content of The Guild's web site is currently under review. The Executive are aware that there are major difficulties at present in keeping the information up to date and comments that the pages are not particularly attractive are acknowledged. It is our intention to take steps to make simple improvements in the short term and to look at a better solution for the longer term.

Kathleen Fisher
Head Of Operations Division

Membership Report For AGM 2009

After the AGM last year the new Guild year started with a reshuffle, The Quilter, AGM/Conference moved divisions and membership gained YQ, Education, International and Quilt Judging, still retaining the National Organiser for Regions and Specialist Groups, it was a bit like a cabinet reshuffle, but, without the press coverage. Margaret Boe, Trustee, kindly agreed to liaise with the YQ & Education Officers then report back to me at divisional meetings, it's taken a while, but, we all seem to be working well as a team.

This last year has been a very interesting time for The Guild with our move to York, unfortunately, this did result in some frustrating problems with the membership processing, computer down time, dd's not being claimed, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the members for their patience during this time and also to thank the Regions for keeping the communication open locally with their members, we do apologise to all who did experience any problems. There was also some confusion last year with the membership cards being sent with the renewal letters, this will not be happening this coming year, when your money is received by Resources for Associations they will then send out your new card.

The Regions have had another very busy year, having read the reports sent by the Co-ordinators. It amazes me how we manage to fit it all all: there was a Fabric Fun Day in Region 5, with so much happening it's too much to mention in my allotted time.. A popular event in some regions is to hold an annual group leader day where 2 members from the groups are invited along to share ideas and activities arranged within their groups. Region 13 celebrated Liverpool being the European Capital of Culture by holding an exhibition for 4 1/2 days in a city centre church, which was so popular they've been asked to hold another in 2 years time. There's also been a general programme of speakers, workshops, garden parties, I feel tired just thinking of it all. The CQ group held an exhibition of members Thin Blue Line quilts and continues this year with the popular journal quilts. The Traditional group continues with their suitcase collection 'In The Pink' and the miniatures follow with their handbag collection. BQSG doesn't sit still either a successful seminar at Beamish, celebrating the groups 10th anniversary was a huge success, with a research day, for beginners, at St Anthony's in February, there are study days and seminars booked for this coming year. I almost forgot, the Button Up Quilts enjoyed by all last year at the Festival of Quilts, thanks to the organisational skills of Fay Allwood, her team and of course the groups for making this colourful display. During the year you've also found time to raise money towards St Anthony's which has been greatly received and I know you have plans to continue with this in the coming year. For those who have already visited our wonderful museum you will have seen the banners made by the Regions and Specialist Groups, these are a fitting tribute to the diverse countryside, monuments, bridges, traditions and folklore within the various counties and Isles. On the whole I think you can all congratulate yourselves on being so busy.

Our International Officer has been busy with various shows being organised within the European Quilt Community, including the exhibition of work enjoyed by all at the Festival of Quilts. There are 22 members who have completed the quilt judging course, congratulations to all, there is another planned to start in October this year, with a refresher course planned for November.

You will see during this weekend the table with information on the Annual Quilting Day, it was felt that we should celebrate the opening of St Anthony's each year on the first Saturday in June. This was such a momentous moment in our Guild history and it is hoped that each year we will encourage new quilters into this wonderful craft. A big thank you to Val Shields for co-ordinating this on behalf of the Executive, Val has lots of ideas, so please feel free to speak to her during the weekend - as it's June, we could hope for garden parties, mind you this is Britain so fingers crossed for good weather this year.

A final "thank you" goes to all Committee members who are completing their term of office, the Executive and Trustees appreciate all your commitment and hard work. Without the members there wouldn't be a Guild, without the volunteers there wouldn't be the wonderful programme of events, - here's to another enjoyable year.

Jan Williams Head of Membership Division

Marketing Report for AGM 2009 – Swansea

I was co-opted as Head of Marketing from Barbara Diamond last year and would like to thank her for all her endeavours during her time in office. I have been very grateful for all the help that Bobby Maxwell (Festival of Quilts), Hilary Kennerley (Conference Officer) and Miriam Butler (Exhibitions) have given me. Also to Wendy Greensmith, who has given her own report on the trading company.

Festival of Quilts

Last year the overseas element increased to 14%. Overall there was an increase of 8%, bringing the number of attendees to a staggering 29,475. So we are very lucky to be involved with this amazing event. Some people bemoaned the fact that there were not many British YQ entries, in fact, only 30%. We can hardly hold those outside of the British Isles responsible for that. We need to encourage those of YQ age to enter. All the YQ workshops were well attended, so there are definitely lots of youngsters “having a go”. Various changes have been made to the categories for the Festival of Quilts for 2009. If you have not already received details of these and are intending to enter a quilt, do check up on these. It is your entries that make up a big part of the show and do not forget those YQs you know!

Conference

As you can appreciate, conferences do not just happen by waving a magic wand. Thanks to Hilary Kennerley and the local conference team, we are able to enjoy a lovely weekend away. Hilary still does not have a relief. She is willing to work with someone for the next conference in order to help them. Moves are already being made to reduce the work of this post, as more will be done by the commercial manager and St Anthony's. It is envisaged that this will be more of a liaison role. Plans are already under way for the next 3 years, so it will not be a case of starting from scratch.

Exhibitions

Miriam Butler and her team have ensured that your quilts are well stewarded at the Festival of Quilts. Some of your quilts have helped provide exhibitions like Sutton Hoo in Norfolk

This weekend you are all able cast your vote for the quilt to represent the British Isles in the “Excellence in Europe” exhibition for the Festival of Quilts this year.

Retreats

The first retreat was held at St Anthony's with Philippa Naylor, which was fully attended. The next retreat with Janice Gunner has a waiting list and one with Lynne Edwards will be the weekend of 7th August. Keep checking *The Quilter*, your regional newsletters and the website for more information on what is happening..

Volunteers

Now you may think that those of us sitting here are cut off from the rest of The Guild and that it is a “you and us” situation. Actually, The Guild is everyone – you are one of us and we are one of you. If you are or have been a Guild volunteer, would you like to raise your hand. As you can all see, there are many that we have to be grateful to over the years for providing many of our quilting needs, one way or another. Because Guild rules state that there is a limited term of office, we are always looking for more volunteers to replace those finishing. The saying that many hands make light work, definitely applies. Therefore I will be at the back of the hall at the end of the morning, so that I can gather the names of those of you who would like to join this merry band of volunteers, or perhaps be prepared to do another term. The Guild needs all of you! Several years ago, Hilary Kennerley took a few fat quarters to the end of the conference stating “this is how much extra we might have to pay for conferences in the future.” Hilary tells me, that the cost would probably be 3 times as much without the work of the volunteers. Much the same applies to the regions. If we do not have enough volunteers, we might have to get more paid staff and that would definitely put the subscriptions up big time and mean quite a lot of fat quarters.

Marilyn Lovett
Head of Marketing Division

Treasurer's Report for AGM 2009

Sadly, our President resigned on ill-health grounds in December 2008. Having already volunteered my services as Treasurer from this AGM, I was asked to take on the role early to replace Margaret Hughes who had kindly agreed to step into the President's position. The past 3 months have been 'interesting' and required a sharp learning curve; it just shows what can happen when you stick your head above the parapet!

In 2008 the a large proportion of total Guild income was derived from Membership subscriptions. This represents a very positive result compared with 2007 and I would like to thank Guild members and the Trustee body for maintaining membership numbers so well during the year. However, membership fees continue to be our only source of guaranteed income, so it is important to continue our efforts to recruit new members and retain existing members during the forthcoming year.

Regional activities have played a large part in promoting membership of The Guild and also generated income of £136,364. All regions are solvent and should be congratulated for their enthusiasm and financial prudence.

The Specialist Groups continue to organise their own finances using additional membership fees and Gift Aid credits. All groups are solvent at the year end.

The HMRC inspection into Gift Aid has now been concluded and given rise to a total liability of £11,983. It has been agreed with HMRC that this liability can be settled by way of set-off against outstanding claims for 2007 and 2008. We are confident that The Guild will come out with a positive balance. My thanks go to Margaret Hughes and Kathleen Fisher for their hard work in bringing this matter to a satisfactory conclusion. It is still important to recognise the significant part that Gift Aid plays in The Guild's annual income so if you have not yet completed a Gift Aid form, and are eligible to do so, please obtain one from The Guild table and fill it in before leaving the conference.

In 2008 the long hoped-for permanent home for The Guild and its Heritage Collection became a reality. This has not come about without significant effort and use of Guild reserves. But, thanks to careful financial management by the Trustees combined with donations of £44,338 from individuals and The Regions, the project has come in under budget. Thank you everyone for your generosity and hard work.

Now we must consolidate and build upon the achievements to date, so it is important that we continue to keep a careful watch on budgets and, I hope, continue fundraising efforts. To get you in the spirit I am setting you all a challenge. I am asking every member to raise £30 in this our 30th Anniversary year. I've already started raising my £30 by cutting down on my chocolate intake and putting the money I would have spent in a tin which is filling up fast – see how easy it can be done and, hopefully, how thin I'm getting! Just imagine what we could achieve if every one of our members undertook my challenge!

Seriously though, donations and legacies continue to form a vital part of our funding and we cannot thank you enough for every penny that you provide. You only need to look at St Anthony's to see how much can be achieved. Please continue to think of The Guild if you are minded to donate to charity during 2009 – every little helps! (Now where have I heard that before?)

The Arts Council and HLF grants announced last year have and will play a large part in supporting The Guild during our first years at St Anthony's.

The first full year of Museum operation is not yet complete so it is not possible to accurately report on attendance fees and shop sales. Nevertheless, figures to date are broadly in line with those expected. The Trading Company has reported another successful year and returned a profit which it will be passing on to The Guild as in previous years. In the forthcoming year the Trading Company will be investing further in the Museum shop with the installation of a new till and stock control system, which will assist with monitoring, reporting and development of commercial income streams.

Now that our permanent office accommodation is fully established the time is right to begin bringing our finance and membership functions back in-house. This will commence with the return of Financial Administration during 2009. Membership will remain with KSAM (formerly RFA) for the foreseeable future.

In common with all organisations, we face unpredictable times and there is little certainty of income in this straitened economic climate. In order to ensure our viability for the forthcoming year the Council have taken the decision to increase subscriptions to £35.

Finally, I would like to propose that The Guild accounts for 2008 be adopted and that Wheawill and Sudworth be appointed The Guild accountants for 2009.

Lesley Hurrell
Treasurer

CEO's Report for AGM 2009

This has been a challenging year for The Guild, its staff, volunteers and Trustees. The move of The Guild from Halifax to York, the recruitment of new staff, the establishment of a major museum and maintaining an effective service to members at the same time has proved testing and stressful to all concerned.

I promised you at last year's AGM that despite the pitfalls and delays, we would open the Museum on time, on budget and with a superb exhibition, we did. It is of great credit that we have achieved a relatively smooth transition and are now on the brink of moving The Guild forward into an exciting new chapter in its history. It is important to remember that the move to St Anthony's was not an end in itself but a stepping stone towards our Mission Statement, which I remind you is; to promote excellence in the art and status of quilting and, through education, to extend knowledge and understanding of its heritage. I warned at the last AGM that the effort and time put into the Museum must not undermine or disguise the work that needs to be done with The Guild and the Regions in particular. The Strategic Plan for 2009 which was published in the winter edition of *The Quilter* shows the commitment the Trustees have to the development of The Guild and the integration of the regions into the very heart of The Museum and its work.

We will provide permanent exhibition space for the Regions and Specialist groups. We will provide space in *The Quilter* for a 'Region or Group in the Spotlight' feature. We will build strong links between Headquarters and the Regions which are mutually supportive and I personally will visit each and every region over the course of the next year to ensure this takes place.

There are many new initiatives which we have in the pipeline, for example the work we do with Young Quilters has been analysed and assessed. It is clear that we are not providing the appropriate mechanisms to enthuse young people into becoming involved with The Guild as our educational charity remit requires us to do, we do not even seem to be talking the same language as them, or using their communication systems! As a consequence we are in the process of putting together a completely new package of ideas, projects and products which we hope will inspire them as Quilters of the future. At the moment we have 100 YQs, this time next year I hope to see 500 and 750 the year after. Again we need the Regions to help us achieve these targets.

Another, more difficult and perhaps controversial initiative is that of examining whether we should offer the opportunity for the hundreds of Quilt groups throughout the land to become affiliated to The Guild. I am aware that there are 100,000 active Quilters in this country of which 6500 are members of The Guild, that means 93,500 are not!

Thousands of them are members of small local groups I have been asked many times why these groups cannot affiliate/ally/ have a relationship of some kind with The Guild and I am now examining what the possibilities and the pitfalls may be, along with senior Guild Members. We intend to produce a paper for the Trustees to vote on by November of this year. In my visits to the Regions I will be taking local soundings to get your opinion. If you have strong feelings either way please let me know.

In recent times we have tried to sell the Guild to potential members by stating the benefits of membership. This is fair enough but there is another, perhaps more important aspect. We should try to convince potential members that their financial support will enable The Guild to realise its mission to enthusiastically promote the Art and Craft of Patchwork and Quilting; that they can help to preserve the understanding of the heritage of Quilting; that they can help conserve and expand our collection for future generations; and that they can help, educate and inspire and younger people in the Craft. We should not be defensive about The Guild; we have a dynamic, forward looking organisation of which we should all be proud.

Finally I believe it was President Kennedy who said, 'Ask not what your country can do for you', but 'what I can do for my country' I should like to ask the same question of our members.

'Ask not what The Guild can do for you.' but, 'What can I do for The Guild'.

John Turner
Chief Executive Officer