



The Association of Talking Friends: Registered Charity no. 299656

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31/ 12/ 2009

The Trustees present their report on the activities of the Association for the year ending 31st/ 12mo / 2009.

Background

This Quaker charity exists to provide those who are visually impaired with audio access to Quaker periodicals and books at low cost. The Association was founded in 1988 under the care of Dorking and Horsham Monthly Meeting and responsibility for its care transferred to Warwickshire Monthly Meeting (WMM), now known as Central England Area Quaker Meeting (CEAQM), during 2007.

Members of CEAQM began recording in October 2007.

The objectives and rules of the Association are defined in its Constitution.

Trustees and Committee Members

The Constitution of the Association requires that there shall be not less than 3 Trustees:

- (b) Trustees shall be appointed by Dorking and Horsham Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), (or by any body to which its functions are transferred in whole or part from time to time), from amongst persons who are and remain Members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).
- (c) A Trustee shall automatically resign on ceasing to be a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).
- (d) Persons appointed as Trustees may retire at any time of their own volition or at the request of the Appointing Body for the time being.

The following served as trustees during 2009:

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Gill Coffin | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007 |
| David Grimshaw | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007 |
| John Lampen | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007 |

The following served as Committee members during 2009:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Anne Austin | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007 |
| Joe Coffin | appointed 10/ 5/ 2008 |
| Anne Fletcher | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007; Equipment Officer |
| Alan Johnson | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007; Clerk of Committee (Note1) |
| Victor Lobb | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007; Treasurer (Note1) |
| Linda Pegler | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007; Membership Secretary |
| Stella Roberts | appointed 10/ 5/ 2008 |
| William Waddilove | appointed 17/ 7/ 2007; Website Administrator |

Note 1: These Friends were appointed for three years. Other Committee members are appointed for one year, and may be re-appointed subject to their consent at the following AGM.

Eleanor Tew was unable to take up an appointment as our technical advisor as had been hoped.

Trustees meet with Committee members at least four times in each year.

Trustees and Committee members have a wide range of relevant qualifications and experience, and the Committee includes, as required by the Constitution, one member who is visually-impaired.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the Association is *'to relieve the blind, or the partially sighted, or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability which makes reading a strain, by the provision of equipment, materials and facilities all of whatsoever nature or description to provide for audible reproduction of printed or spoken material and music or tactile reading matter'*.

Members of Talking Friends may subscribe to any or all of *The Friend*, *Quaker Monthly*, *Friends Quarterly* and *Towards Wholeness*. All subscribers receive the cassette version of *Quaker News*. New subscribers also receive a copy of the cassette version of *Advices and Queries*.

Achievements

During 2009, the Association continued to record these publications on cassette tapes and to distribute tapes to subscribers using the Royal Mail 'free postage' concession.

There was a small reduction in the number of subscribers during 2009 and we ended the year with 39 members. The incidence of visual impairment increases with age, and so it is natural that most members are in the older age groups. We welcome new members, and hope that the service will be publicised and used more widely.

There are 11 teams with 25 readers being made up of 8 teams recording *The Friend*, a weekly publication, and 1 each reading *Friends Quarterly*, *Towards Wholeness* and *Quaker News*.

We have reflected on the priorities for Quakers in Britain in 2009- 2014 published in 'A Framework for Action', and have submitted our response.

In anticipation of the costs arising from the planned introduction of digital recording, we have increased the price of subscriptions to all the journals we record to 50% of the cost of the printed version. This is the first increase in price for several years.

We continue to publicise our service to members and attenders of the Religious Society of Friends in the UK through an updated publicity leaflet, attendance at Yearly Meeting Gathering and through our website: www.talkingfriends.org.uk

We have investigated newer technology for recording and distributing these audio publications. We have sought the views of our subscribers, one of our trustees has carried out a technical evaluation of the technical options, and we have carried out a trial recording of *The Friend* in a CD-based format.

We thank our volunteer readers for their continued commitment to this service, and we also wish to thank Friends at Quaker Life for copying and distributing the recorded materials on our behalf.

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Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31/ 12/ 2009

1 Results and Financial Position

Our continuing activities resulted in a small deficit of £46 in 2009 (2008: a surplus of £481) and so our total assets decreased from £6149 to £6103 during the year.

Within this total, at the year-end, the balance in the Nationwide Building Society account was £1511 and the balance in the Triodos Bank account was £4382.

The results in 2009 reflected the timing of subscriptions, a significant reduction in bank interest resulting from lower interest rates, and increased expenditure on materials and advertising. We are pleased to have received increased donations for our work. Administration costs have been reduced.

While the financial position of the charity remains healthy, we recognise that we are facing a decision on the possible transfer from a cassette-based recording system to digital technology and the costs and sources of funding for this are still to be established.

We continue to apply an annual depreciation of 30% to the reducing balance of the fixed assets.

We thank Quaker Life for continuing to copy and distribute the recorded material to our subscribers at no cost to our charity.

2 Financial Administration

We maintain our cash book in the format recommended to treasurers of Quaker organisations, which enables a monthly reconciliation of receipts and payments as recorded against statements issued by the Nationwide Building Society Business Investor Account.

Our bank account signatories remain as Anne Fletcher, Alan Johnson, Victor Lobb and Linda Pegler. Any one of the signatories is able to sign cheques up to the value of £100.00; two signatures are required for payments above this amount. The treasurer provides a financial report at our Committee meetings during the year.

3 Examination of the Accounts

These accounts for 2009 have been independently examined by Peter Ullathorne and his examiner's statement is included on Page 5 of the Trustees' report.

Prepared by: Victor Lobb, Treasurer

28/ 1/ 2010

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Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2009

| | Notes: | 2009 | 2008 |
|---|--------|-------------|-------------|
| | | £ | £ |
| <u>Incoming Resources</u> | | | |
| Subscriptions | 1 | 745 | 890 |
| Donations: Individuals | | 90 | 49 |
| Donations: Quaker Meetings | | 145 | 130 |
| Sales (recorded books) | | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | | 35 | 0 |
| Bank Interest: current account | | 1 | 34 |
| Bank Interest: deposit account | | 26 | 145 |
| | | | |
| Total Incoming Resources | | 1042 | 1247 |
| <u>Outgoing Resources</u> | | | |
| Cassettes, wallets and labels | | 260 | 194 |
| Equipment purchase (by donation) | | 80 | - |
| Equipment servicing | | 0 | 6 |
| Administration (post and printing) & AGM | | 224 | 282 |
| Travel expenses | | - | - |
| TNF membership and Insurance | | 141 | 125 |
| Advertising | | 293 | 30 |
| Other publicity | | - | - |
| | | | |
| | | 998 | 637 |
| Depreciation: equipment | 2 | 90 | 129 |
| | | | |
| Total Resources expended | | 1088 | 766 |
| | | | |
| Net incoming (outgoing) resources | | -46 | 481 |
| | | | |
| Balance brought forward at 1st January | | 6149 | 5668 |
| | | | |
| Balance carried forward at 31st December | | 6103 | 6149 |
| Held as: | | | |
| Triodos Deposit Account | | 4382 | 4356 |
| Nationwide Current Account | | 1511 | 1492 |
| Cash in hand | | 0 | 0 |
| Fixed Assets | 2 | 211 | 301 |
| | | | |
| Plus: debtors at 31/12/2009 | | 0 | 0 |
| Less: creditors at 31/12/2009 | | 0 | 0 |
| | | | |
| Total assets at 31st December 2009 | | 6103 | 6149 |

Talking Friends charity 299656
Notes to the Financial Statement for 2009

2009

2008

1 The majority of subscriptions fall due in January. Subscriptions are shown as income in the year in which they are received.

2 Fixed Assets

| | | | |
|---|------|--|------|
| Value at 1 January | 301 | | 430 |
| Add: Equipment purchased | - | | - |
| Subtotal | £301 | | £430 |
| Less: Depreciation at 30% of reducing balance | 90 | | 129 |
| Net Book Value at 31 December | £211 | | £301 |

Examiners Report to the Trustees of Talking Friends
Registered Charity No 299656

I have examined the financial statements of Talking Friends (Charity Registration Number 299656) in accordance with the regulations under Part VI of the Charities Act 1993 and with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting by Charities. In my opinion the accounting records of the charity have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993, and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2009 accord with these records. All information and explanations to which I am entitled in connection with this examination have been afforded to me and no matter has come to my attention which requires further report under the regulations.

Signed
Peter Ullathorne

DATE 2010

The Future

1 Context

Producing Quaker published materials in alternative formats is an important way of honouring Britain Yearly Meeting's commitment to equality. Our audio-publications for people with a visual impairment are mostly written by and for Quakers, but have a wider appeal.

Our recordings are made on 'compact cassette' tapes, which was the standard format used by organisations offering 'talking books'. This 1960's technology is being replaced by newer, digital media.

2 Transfer to new technology

We are planning to introduce MAGIX Audio Cleaning Lab editing software to record and edit publications in a digital format on re-usable memory sticks. The list price of Audio Cleaning Lab software is £29.99 per single-user copy.

We have asked our subscribers for their views on, and their access to, newer audio technology such as CD players and the internet, and their preferences for such systems. Their response has been mostly welcome, but we shall produce a master cassette tape from the digital recording, for copying to those who continue to prefer to receive cassette tapes.

These recorded CDs or re-usable memory sticks can be sent to our subscribers through the free postage system.

We believe that this proposal will minimise the investment required in new equipment.

Examiner of our Accounts

We thank our Examiner, Peter Ullathorne, a member of CEAQM, for examining our 2009 accounts. He has indicated his willingness to accept reappointment as examiner of our accounts for a further year.