

The University of Birmingham Guild of Graduates and Alumni Association

Minutes of the One Hundred & Tenth Annual General Meeting held Saturday, 10 September 2016 in the Senate Chamber, University of Birmingham at 11:15 a.m.

The President, Sheila Oxspring, was in the Chair.

Present

A list of those present was collated by the Alumni Office and can be found in Appendix A to the minutes.

Claire O'Sullivan, Acting Director, Development and Alumni Relations was in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Nina Waddell, John Payne, Brian Guthrie, Fiona Wright, Colin Chapman, Mary Poste and Christine Tully

2. Minutes of the 109th AGM

These were approved as an accurate record of the proceedings of the 2015 AGM.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

3.1 The new Director of Development and Alumni Relations, Simon Lerwill, attended for the first part of the meeting and gave a short introductory talk. He told the meeting that he is an alumnus himself, graduating in Geography in 2002 and gave a résumé of his career since then. He outlined some of the forthcoming themes for possible fundraising following the end of the successful Circles of Influence campaign. These include Medical Research, Access to Education and Sports Scholarships, but explained that the role of DARO is not just about fundraising; the aim is also to widen engagement with staff, parents, the local community and also alumni and that there would be more events and communications and more opportunities for people to volunteer their help to the University and its students. He concluded by wishing everyone a happy and enjoyable day.

4. President's Report

The President gave her report. This was her first AGM as President and she gave an outline of the past year since she was elected, including the events she had attended in the role and also the arrangements made for GGAA nominations to the University Court and the processions at the degree congregations.

The President's full report is attached at Appendix B.

5. Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts

The Treasurer, David Rigby, presented the annual accounts to 31 August 2016, which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. The GGAA's assets comprise £4,371.23 at the bank and £26.50 in petty cash. The balance now includes the Bristol Branch funds remitted to GGAA after the closure of the branch (£370.04). The petty cash resulted from sales of leftover wine to Committee members. The only expenditure was for the AGM & Forum in 2015.

There were no questions for the Treasurer.

6. Report from the Development and Alumni Office

Claire O'Sullivan, of the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO), reported on some of the highlights of the previous year.

Below is a summary of Claire's report to the meeting:

- **EVENTS:** Alumni teams have welcomed over 2,000 alumni and another 2,000 guests to events on campus and across the globe
- **VOLUNTEERING:** We have hit our highest levels of volunteering, with more than 1,500 individuals giving over 10,000 hours of time. We are very grateful for the support which has a significant impact on the experience available to our students.
- **DONATIONS:** 5,000 supporters have collectively donated almost £4million to charitable projects at the University in the last year. More than £250,000 has been gifted to clinical trials in cancer immunotherapy research and another £200,000 to support work on maternal healthcare in Malawi.
- **LEGACY FUNDRAISING:** The University's programme was recognised by a national award from the Council for the Advancement and Support for Education. 330 alumni and friends are part of the Rowbotham Fellowship for those who have pledged to remember the University in their Will and were invited to attend the annual Baggs Happiness Lecture which was given by Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson in June 2016.
- **GLOBAL ALUMNI GATHERINGS:** In April 2016, we ran our first Global Alumni Gathering of multiple events across the globe, which brought together 103 alumni at 22 events in 13 countries. The gathering will be repeated in 2017 and we hope to have a greater UK presence.
- **DIGITAL OLD JOE:** Just before Easter 2016 the first fully online digital edition of Old Joe magazine launched which featured the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, 60 second videos with PhD researchers, some great work from our cancer immunology and immunotherapy teams. The most popular article was our campus romances story.
- **OLD JOE 2017:** The next printed edition of the magazine for alumni and friends will be circulated in October and features stories on the 20th anniversary of the University's formula student racing team, the healthy brain and alumna and academics Dr Kate Gooch's work into prison reform.
- **STUDENT EXPERIENCE:** In the National Student Survey (NSS) Birmingham students ranked the quality of our teaching at 89%, in the recent Quality Assurance Agency

(QAA) review the excellence and enhancement of our student learning opportunities was given a commendation, and in the most recent survey of graduate employability, 85% of our Class of 2015 graduates were in further study or graduate level roles within 6 months of graduation..

- **CAMPUS:** A number of the University's new building projects have come, or are coming to fruition. The new University Library will be open to students on 19th September 2016, the Sports Centre situated on the Bristol Road will open to students and the public at the end of 2016 and the Sir Alan Walters building for Postgraduate Teaching in the Business School has opened.

The President thanked Claire for her report and the support she and her colleagues have provided to the Guild throughout the year.

7. Report of the Alumni Awards Administrator

Steven Gregory, GGAA Alumni Awards Administrator, presented his report which is attached as Appendix C. The award was divided equally between two recipients, Emily van de Koot and Chris Lewis. Chris Lewis has submitted a report on his experiences with an emergency medicine and mountain trauma team in rural Wales, and this is also attached as Appendix D. Emily's report concerning her work with refugees arriving in Greece from Turkey is awaited.

8. Election of Officers and Committee

The following were elected unopposed for the Offices indicated having been nominated in accordance with the GGAA Constitution.

President	Sheila Oxspring
Vice-President	Norma Broadbridge
Secretary	David Rigby
Alumni Awards Administrator	Steven Gregory
Committee	Lesley Payne, Janet Emery, Joe O'Meara, Nina Waddell, Maureen Edge, Steve Tomlinson.

The Committee may also co-opt three additional members and Anne O'Meara indicated at the meeting that she would be willing to be co-opted. New Committee members are always welcome and the President informed the meeting that anyone who would like to serve on the Committee and be considered for co-option should inform her as soon as possible.

9. Any Other Business

None.

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

The meeting was followed by a talk given by Professor David Adams, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Head of the College of Medical & Dental Sciences and Dean of Medicine. He is also Director of the National Institute of Health Research's (NIHR) Birmingham Liver Biomedical Research Unit and an alumnus of the University.

Appendix A - List of Members attending the 110th AGM

Rosalind M Adams	Sydney Richards
John D Ashwood	Stephen Rose
Dennis E Biggs	Jane Rose
Carol J Bill	Janice M Rowles
George B Bowater	Doreen Sachs
Norma Broadbridge	Russell J Sandford
Clement H Brown	John T Sharpe
Elizabeth A Brunton	Peter F Slade
James Burdon	Mary Thomas
Christine E Butterworth	Stuart G Thornborough
Theresa M Cook	Stephen J Tomlinson
Marcia C Davies	Bernard Walsh
Gladys M Edge	Geoffrey Witts
Geoffrey R Edwards	
Ivor R Edwards	
Anthony N Emery	
Janet C Emery	
Iain Forrest-Hay	
Sarah Gammage	
Jennifer A Goodwin	
Steven gregory	
Mary E Hale	
Alan S Hetherington	
Norman J Ireland	
Rosemary M Lambert	
Morton N Lane	
Arthur Lee	
Anne M O'Meara	
Joseph W O'Meara	
Sheila M Oxspring	
Lesley F Payne	
Christina C Phillips	
Michael D Phillips	
Stuart J Pierce	
David A Purser	
Jane Quinn	
Vicky Randon	
Patricia M Reader	
Jeffrey Reynalds	

Appendix B: President's Report 2016

First of all I would like to introduce myself. I'm Sheila Oxspring and I graduated in 1966 in Zoology and Comparative Physiology. I was elected President of GGAA this time last year, Sept 2015.

New Job

It is never easy starting a new job and I felt somewhat overawed at the start of my Presidency. Norma is not an easy act to follow. However Norma has been immensely supportive to me and thank you Norma for that. Thank you also to the rest of the committee who have been equally supportive. Thanks also to Claire, Anne-Marie and Simon and their teams at DARO- The Development and Alumni Relations Office, without whose support we would find it difficult to function effectively.

October - Court

One of the first issues to arise in the year was Nominations for Court. There are 10 GGAA representatives at Court, 9 of whom were to reach the end of their term of office on 31 July 2016, but who were eligible for re-election. It was decided that of the 10 GGAA representatives, 5 should be nominated by GGAA and 5 by DARO. So GGAA committee had to set about selecting 5 nominations. Not an easy task.

November - House of Lords Reception

This was a lovely occasion hosted by our Chancellor, Lord Bilimoria and Professor Sir David Eastwood. The event was held in a beautiful setting in a room at the House of Lords, overlooking the Thames. This particular year we were celebrating the highly successful Circles of Influence Fund Raising Campaign which raised £193.4 million exceeding the target set of £160 million. Many donors had been invited to this year's reception.

The reception was preceded by an optional tour, which I took, both chambers - the House of Lords and House of Commons. This was truly interesting and enjoyable. Several GGAA committee members also attended the reception so it was good to be amongst friends. It was also a good opportunity to make new contacts with other GGAA members.

December and July Processing

GGAA representatives again processed at the December and July Degree Congregation Ceremonies. These are most enjoyable occasions and involve the GGAA representatives performing the important role of leading out the new graduates. Many thanks to all of you who processed at both of these ceremonies.

December - Carol Service and DARO Reception 7th December 2015.

Norma and I represented GGAA at the Annual Carol service in the Great Hall, which was a magnificent occasion and was extremely well attended. Following the Carol Service was a DARO reception, of mulled wine and mince pies. Very nice mince pies and mulled wine. Company wasn't bad either.

March - Annual Meeting – 10th March 2016

I was invited to attend this early evening meeting, in the Bramall Music Building, which followed the meeting of court. There was a reception drink of tea/coffee, followed by the meeting itself and ending in drinks and canapés during which there was an opportunity to

network.

3 very interesting presentations were given, one by the Chancellor, Lord Bilimoria, one by the Vice Chancellor, Sir David Eastwood and one by a British Consul to America based in Chicago. We also had 3 short video presentations on the Birmingham Institute for Forest Research; Discovery of Gravitational Waves at Birmingham University; Biomedical Research at Birmingham University.

Midland Branch Meetings

I have attended 2 of the Midland Branch meetings, a committee meeting and a Gilbert and Sullivan evening. Regrettably pressure of other commitments has prevented me from attending more of these meetings and interesting outings.

GGAA Section of the Alumni Website

The GGAA committee are currently reconstructing the GGAA section of the Alumni website. We are hoping to make this site more user friendly and that you will see a new look to before too long. Not easy to get into the GGAA section and we would like to improve this.

Planning for today

One final function of GGAA committee is to plan for today. So I do hope that everyone will enjoy the day and find that everything runs smoothly.

Thank you for joining us and I hope that you have a most enjoyable day. Congratulations to those of you who are celebrating your 40th, 45th, 50th and Golden anniversaries.

Appendix C – Report of Alumni Award Administrator

The panel met on Tuesday 15th March to consider applications for the various classes of Student Development Bursaries for 2016. There were a total of 54 applications to consider, including a request for a sum in excess of £5,000 to fund 5 weeks teaching French to children in Morocco and Ecuador, and another for a sum in excess of £4,000 to spend six weeks working on the conservation of reefs in Honduras: some £2,300 of which was for 'general living expenses'.

The examples given represent the higher, and perhaps more fanciful, end of the range and, like many of the other proposals, related to what may be described as 'ready-made' packages provided by one or another commercial organisations. While these may be beneficial for the participant to varying degrees, the primary aim seemed likely to be that of financial gain for the organising body. Some proposals, however, did show a little more originality: involving more personal effort on the part of the applicant with regard to the planning of the project as well as appearing to be a little more realistic with regard to costing. Of these, two in particular stood out as candidates for the Alumni Travel Award:

- Emily Van de Koot, in Year 2 of a physics and astronomy course, requested £850 to fund a three week visit to Greece to assist in a programme providing food, clothing, and other aid to refugees arriving from Turkey.
- Christopher Lewis, a medical and dental student in Year 4 of his studies, asked for £600 to fund a four week placement with an emergency medicine and mountain trauma team in rural Wales during which he would work shifts in the emergency department, take part in activities with the ambulance service, and undertake mountain rescue training.

Each of these schemes seemed to involve activities which would likely take the applicant out of their comfort zone in pursuance of a genuinely worthwhile activity of benefit to both the applicant and the wider community in a manner likely to reflect positively on the University. Both candidates were well supported with excellent references from their academic tutors. Therefore each was awarded £500 of the total £1,000 available from the alumni fund.

On Wednesday 15th June, I attended the University of Birmingham's Student Achievement Celebration Event which was held in the University's Great Hall, Aston Webb, to mark various award schemes held during the year. There I was able to meet and chat with a number of those awarded Student Development Scholarships, each of whom seemed genuinely grateful for the funds awarded and excited at the prospect of fulfilling their Individual projects. Unfortunately, neither Ms Van de Koot nor Mr Lewis were present at that event. However, I have received a short report from Mr Lewis regarding the outcome of his project, which he seems to have found most rewarding, and in which he expresses his thanks for the funds awarded. I expect a similar report from Ms Van de Koot which I will forward to the GGAA secretary upon receipt.

Steven Gregory Alumni Awards Administrator

Appendix D - Report from Christopher Lewis, recipient of an alumni travel award



Emergency and pre-hospital medicine in the mountains

Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital, Snowdonia, 1st - 28th August 2016

Christopher Lewis, College of Medical and Dental Sciences, University of Birmingham

For four weeks during August, I undertook an emergency and pre-hospital medicine placement at Ysbyty Gwynedd hospital in Bangor, North Wales. This busy hospital, the largest in the region, serves a widely dispersed rural population. It receives a higher-than-average burden of trauma due to its proximity to the mountains, its picturesque, winding roads which prove attractive to motorcyclists, and its extensive farmland - associated with farming and industrial injuries. With extended transfer times to specialist facilities (the nearest tertiary centres are across the border in England in Liverpool, Manchester and Stoke), the scope of pre-hospital care is beyond that required in the West Midlands and the hospital is renowned for the quality of the training it offers in this field.



I joined the emergency department team for day, evening and overnight shifts, working the equivalent rota of a junior doctor but with added ambulance shifts. My objectives were to experience emergency and pre-hospital medicine in a rural setting, increase my confidence in approaching and managing medical emergencies, and to gain some insight and appreciation of the challenges faced while working in a district hospital remote from specialist centres. I also hoped to develop and practise some of the climbing and technical rope skills which may aid me in future work as a mountain rescue volunteer and expedition doctor, and to explore North Wales as a potential place to relocate for my initial training as a junior doctor.

During my placement, I spent the majority of my time on the 'shop floor' in the emergency department, clerking and examining new patients, presenting my findings to a senior doctor and discussion and enacting a management plan. I was exposed to emergency presentations of all guises, from straightforward to baffling, and developed a systematic approach to formulating a plan and excluding differential diagnoses. This would

often involve taking venous or arterial blood samples, analysing urine samples and ordering and reviewing X-rays and other imaging scans. The results of these investigations would lead to a referral to the relevant medical or surgical specialty - or reassuring and discharging the patient with medicines and/or advice.

In the minor trauma area, I was also hands-on and had many opportunities to develop my practical skills. I refined my suturing technique by closing superficial wounds, learned how to relocate shoulder and elbow dislocations, and assisted in manipulating and realigning fractures (pulling broken bones back into place - profoundly uncomfortable, even with good pain relief, but essential for proper healing to take place). I also performed my first 'ring block' - the injection of local anaesthetic into both sides of a finger. The patient in question had dropped a large pig trough on her finger and the last centimetre of her middle finger had been lost, with bone visible through the open wound. She was visibly relieved after the numbing injection - a sure sign it had worked.

I was also involved in a number of major trauma incidents, including a young gentleman who had been stabbed with a screwdriver after intervening in an assault, and a number of motorcycle incidents. Perhaps the most memorable was a critically ill patient who had been attacked and trampled by a herd of cows when taking his dog for a walk one evening, sustaining life-threatening injuries to his chest and abdomen - not a mechanism of injury typically seen in inner-city Birmingham! For these patients, I assisted by scribing for the trauma team - noting the precise timings of each observation and intervention of the multidisciplinary group of specialists.

In all emergencies, the basic theory is to identify (and correct) any life-threatening abnormalities in the order in which they may cause death fastest. As such, the team's first priority was to ensure a patent airway, followed by assessment of the patient's ventilatory and cardiovascular systems. Once stabilised, a full head-to-toe assessment would be undertaken before the patient was whisked off to the CT scanner for imaging. Watching a team of highly skilled and experienced doctors and nurses from emergency medicine, anaesthetics, intensive care and orthopaedics seamlessly working together was a privilege and reinforced to me the importance of adopting a systematic approach in order to function effectively in stressful and demanding situations.



Welcome BBQ / Air Ambulance fundraiser at Caernarfon Airport, author highlighted with arrow. Image courtesy of: http://www.mountainmedicine.co.uk/Mountain_Medicine_Bangor/ED_Blog/Entries/2016/8/3_Entry_3_files/IMG_0567.jpg

Unfortunately, I was unable to join the mountain rescue services on training exercise. However, I did have the opportunity to visit the regional HeliMed base for a fundraising evening, and met some of the staff involved in retrieval work. I learned that their caseload is very mixed: patients who arrived in the emergency department by helicopter suffered from anything from trauma through to panic attack. In fact, the acute management of mental illness is increasingly being recognised as an important facet of pre-hospital care and the challenges

presented by managing psychologically unwell patients in complex environments demand a unique skill set which I had previously not considered. Unlike its portrayal in the media, I have learned that the vast majority of pre-hospital work is not dramatic or glamorous - but certainly demanding in other ways.

This was confirmed by the time I spent working with the local ambulance service and on rapid response vehicles, where I saw and treated patients in their own homes, nursing homes, and on the roadside. Paramedics are skilled clinicians in their own right, but the pre-hospital environment also demands practitioners to use their initiative, improvise and have well-honed non-technical abilities. Many of the cases

posed logistical and interpersonal challenges: extricating an elderly lady who had fallen out of bed and become trapped between the edge of her bed and the bedside cabinet, managing a crowd of onlookers around a patient who had collapsed outside a fish and chip shop, and dealing with a disturbed gentleman who was threatening to end his own life. Again, the importance of recognising and managing mental illness in the pre-hospital setting was apparent. I also recognised the importance of learning the local language - much of the population of North Wales still speaks Welsh, and I noticed that healthcare staff (paramedics, nurses and doctors alike) who greeted patients in the local tongue found it much easier to build rapport. I resolved to pick up a few words myself and worked hard to improve my pronunciation of local place names, although I never quite got the hang of Llanfairpwllgwyngyll... On days off, a number of good weather windows allowed me to explore the surrounds and I quickly found climbing partners who were willing to show me a sample of the local crags. We completed a number of sport and trad routes in different areas, and the local indoor centre provided entertainment during downpours. I learned the theory and had some exposure to technical climbing skills, including placing gear, building anchors and self-rescue techniques in addition to practising the fundamentals of tying in and belaying. In order to join mountain rescue teams, proficiency in climbing and rope work is essential and the recreational experience I gained will be beneficial if I apply to volunteer alongside my clinical commitments in the future, as well as in any expedition medicine jobs.

My month at Ysbyty Gwynedd was incredibly useful and enjoyable. Professionally, I have come away with a renewed excitement about pursuing a career in pre-hospital emergency medicine, and an increased confidence in my clinical skills and acumen. On a personal level, I have experienced the benefits of working in a rural setting and dispelled some of the reservations I previously held about living in North Wales. In the current political climate, undertaking my training as a junior doctor outside of England is increasingly appealing and I have been reassured that working in Wales would be a positive alternative. I am very grateful for the University of Birmingham scholarship which facilitated this excellent opportunity by contributing towards my registration, accommodation and travel costs. Diolch!



Jumping between Adam and Eve - a rite of passage at the summit of Tryfan, following an excellent day of multi-pitch trad climbing on the East Face.