

## MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING of 3<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST, 2013

This meeting was held at the home of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Judy and George Knoblock in the Saddlebrook Estates subdivision of Grayslake. Called to order shortly after 9:00 AM, those present were: Sandee Michaels, Judy Knoblock, Roger Higgs, Linda Robertson, Karen Glass, Maureen Brady, Dick Gilbert, Rollie Littlewood, John Bierlein and Al Munn.

**Secretary** Dick Gilbert reported that he had not received any of the minutes of past board meetings among the folders handed over by the previous secretary, Sue Curtis. Other current and past board members will see if any of these lost minutes might be reconstructed from their own records. Records will henceforth be kept electronically as well as on paper to avoid their loss.

**Treasurer** John Bierlein noted that we are now being charged \$3 per statement by our bank. The alternative is to switch to totally electronic banking. After some discussion of this, a motion by Maureen Brady to table further action on this subject, but not later than 12/31/13, was made and seconded and unanimously approved. John further reported that the financials were completely up to date except for check #1635, dated 18 May, sent to the office of Lisa Madigan. This has not yet been cashed or cleared.

**1<sup>st</sup> VP and Membership Chair** Judy Knoblock brought up the subject of when to notify the members of dues owed for 2014. Consensus was reached without a formal motion to put the renewal form out as part of the November newsletter. Rollie Littlewood will send reminders to those members who are already paid up for 2014 to that effect, said notice to be sent prior to the November newsletter.

**Historian** Maureen Brady brought up the idea of scanning the older newsletters, meaning all that do not already exist in electronic format, into a master file. This file could then be "burned" onto a CD for sale to members, and perhaps non-members for that matter, to raise a little cash. An alternative was proposed by Karen Glass to make such a file into a .pdf file for electronic transmission, skipping the effort of making the file into a salable disk. Discussion added the index into this file as a needed enhancement. Sandee, Maureen and Rollie will look into this further.

**Library** chair Marge Zook being not present, Maureen also delivered a brief report on her behalf. At Maureen's suggestion, and general board approval, we should plan on meeting at the McHenry library at 1:30 in the afternoon on 21 September 2013, after the general meeting and a lunch break, to catch up all of the remaining library tasks as yet uncompleted. This includes the stamping of recent additions to our library, cataloguing, filing and anything else that needs doing.

**Newsletter** Chair Karen Glass again asked for contribution of articles, and specifically targeting the November issue, asked for anecdotes regarding family Christmas traditions to include. These should, of course, be British traditions for those of us with a mixture in the family tree. Pictures and recipes would be better still.

To drive for more contributions, Maureen suggested that a separate table at the January round table meetings should have a form where members might put down a note or topic that can be fleshed out later into a submission for the newsletter. Karen wisely suggested that such a form should be no larger than a half-page to avoid intimidating potential submission authors.

**Webmaster** Rollie Littlewood brought up the National Genealogical Society newsletter contest. This would require us to submit sample issues, two consecutive issues, to be judged for an award. By consensus it was decided to do this, with Sandee and Rollie to pick which two issues would be submitted. Rollie also made the statement, actually the impassioned plea, that all facets of future program information be given to him as soon as possible. For purposes of the website, there is no such thing as too early.

In a related issue of communication, Maureen Brady asked that simplified brochures designed solely to attract attention from non-members be made available that could be distributed at the upcoming FGS convention in Fort Wayne, as well as her Family History Center in Crystal Lake and other locations as needed. Karen and Rollie utilized a printed copy of our current brochure obtained from Judy Knoblock and marked it up at the table. The idea was that this could be assembled and printed at Rollie's house the following day. This was the subject of a motion from Maureen, seconded and passed by acclamation.

## **New Business**

Dues for 2014 were briefly discussed by the board, and after consideration of our financial health Roger Higgs moved that the dues remain the same for the coming year. This was seconded and passed by acclamation.

Nametags came up for discussion, with concern expressed that repeatedly hand writing stick-on nametags was somewhat wasteful. In discussion, the point was made that, in particular, board members should be readily identifiable so that visitors, as well as members, would know to whom they should address their interests and concerns. Maureen will make up permanent nametags for the board members, with lanyards.

The Nominating Committee needed to be formed for our annual elections. Dick Gilbert volunteered to chair this, Roger Higgs put his name in for a seat, and Richard Michaels was volunteered by wife Sandee in absentia. Sandee's concept is that the announcement at the September meeting that nominations are being considered is soon enough for the committee to begin their work, but the committee respectfully disagrees with waiting that long.

Board vacancies anticipated are President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Membership, Treasurer and Director. For the record, Maureen Brady will volunteer to become our next President and Al Munn has volunteered to continue in the Director position.

Program speakers for 2014 were discussed at some length. Lists were provided by Maureen, by Roger and by Sandee Michaels of potential speakers. In terms of format, the board concurred that the January meeting should retain a round table format, with the addition of a table where members might jot down newsletter ideas. Also, the May (or possibly September) meeting should be more of a seminar, with two speaker topics and a lunch break in the middle. The ladies of the church were to be employed to provide the lunch.

The speakers which were agreed upon are:

Bess Schulmeister  
Ellie Carlson  
Kathryn Hogan  
Craig Pfannkuche  
Ginger Frere  
Judy Rockwell  
Terri O'Connell

Rollie Littlewood will (re-)contact Kathryn Hogan, and has been authorized to offer her an actual contract for her services. Maureen Brady will contact Bess Schulmeister. Sandee is responsible for contacting the rest, and has been enjoined by the board to set a deadline for the prospective speakers to respond, so that the process doesn't drag on too long and so that the speakers are confirmed. (Editorial note: This needs to be done in writing for those without a contract). The schedule of speakers needs to appear in the November issue, which means that the process must be complete before the October deadline to put the issue together.

Maureen Brady brought up the initial idea of considering what we want to do for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BIGWILL Society, even though that is still 4 years in the future. The point that she made is that we should start now to collect anecdotes, memories and observations from those who founded the Society while we can. (Editorial note: Perhaps we can access some of the late Robert Kelly's contributions to the Manx Society for this purpose)

Based on a private discussion between Rollie Littlewood and Dick Gilbert, the idea of assembling a simplified Policy & Procedures manual was brought up. Rollie and Maureen have some experience with this, and the earlier attempt that Roger recalled with a 95-page monster of a manual that was terminated some years ago serves us as a cautionary tale. Complexity is not required here, because our mission is very simple and politics doesn't exist among us.

A "welcome" letter was brought up by Maureen, in the sense that it puts forth exactly what is available to members in our Society. How this differs from our current brochure, which is intended to put a sign-up form in the hands of potential members, was discussed. This was also

related to the handout that Karen was to prepare by excerpting existing material and Rollie was to put out at Fort Wayne at the FGS convention.

Maureen also brought up the need to get more members involved in simply being on committees, all of which currently have a chairperson but no other members. Sandee applauded this direction and all agreed that this was a good idea, but no concrete suggestions were brought up at this time. (Editorial note: Perhaps this is at the initiative of the various committee chairs?)

Judy, Maureen and Roger all spoke on the importance of ensuring that all visitors be personally welcomed and made as comfortable as possible at our general meetings. But not so comfortable that they shouldn't stand up and tell us who they are, of course. The nametags discussed earlier will be helpful in identifying board members to new and current folk.

The last concept put forth, again by Maureen Brady, was that she had observed that more than one local organization with a primary concern for British Isles ancestry was unaware that BIGWILL existed and therefore what our purpose was. Groups such as the Irish-American Society of Chicago, for example. Again, no concrete direction was agreed upon to rectify this situation at this time, so this must be brought up again at our next meeting or before.

Richard A. Gilbert  
Secretary