

Annual General Meeting – 16 June 2006

Proceedings

Speech by John Jackman, Chairman

Good evening and thank you for coming. I do apologise that the second reminder notice in the Journal gave a different time to that of the first and valid announcement in the Spring Journal.

I have given leave of absence to the Secretary General, Glynn Alger who is away on a family commitment today. I am most grateful to Charles Brooks who has agreed to stand in as Secretary to the meeting. He is supported by Elaine Buttle and Heather Webb who will keep the record of the meeting for Glynn upon his return.

I am pleased to introduce for the first time my two new Vice Chairmen, Julian Hartwell who is Vice Chairman of the Council and Richard Horrocks who is Vice Chairman of the General Council. I am also pleased to introduce and welcome in attendance Rob Hamlin from Baker Tilly, our Auditors.

On this occasion, rather than ask for the notice to be taken 'as read' I shall ask the Acting Secretary to read it out.

“The following notice was given on page 9 of the Spring Journal 2006 –

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 16 June at 17.30 in the NRA Pavilion.”

Thank you.

The first item is the re-election of the President. It is my honour and pleasure to propose the re-election of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. I readily make known my appreciation to his Royal Highness and his staff for their support of our affairs. May I have your agreement?

Agreed. Thank you.

I turn now to our Vice Presidents. It is with much sadness that I have to announce the death of three of our distinguished Vice Presidents since our last General Meeting, namely George Bramley of South Africa, Brian Hawkins of Kenya and Don Whiteman of New Zealand. Their obituaries appear in the Summer Journal. They will be greatly missed by the shooting fraternity. Would you please stand for a moment in their memory.

Agreed. Thank you.

On behalf of the Council it is my pleasure to propose the re-election of the current Vice Presidents as listed on the reverse of the Agenda plus Mr JF Hallam, a longstanding Vice President whose name was left off in error, together with John Kynoch and Ian Shirra-Gibb.

Both John Kynoch and Ian Shirra-Gibb have given sterling support to the Association for very many years in their chosen shooting disciplines which include, incidentally, the only two, of three – the other being centrefire pistol - of our shooting disciplines recognised by the ISSF. John was one of our sport's very few Olympic medallists winning bronze in 1972. As Deputy President and Chairman of the British Sporting Rifle Club he has built up and modernised the Running Target

facilities at Bisley and leads a thriving target shooting discipline. Ian took on the task of developing our 300 metre squad over 20 years ago it having been put on the map with many successes in World Target Shooting Sport by the late Malcolm Cooper. Although it is a minority sport in our terms his squad members have been very successful in European and World Games and have enhanced the Association's international reputation far above their weight. Much is due to Ian's enthusiasm, focussing on training and leadership and he, too, has led modernisation with electronic targets on the 300metre range at Bisley.

May I have your agreement?

Objections were raised to the re-election of Lt. Col. John Hoare.

It is the long-standing tradition of the NRA to re-elect Vice Presidents. Vice Presidents will have been put forward at some point in the past and elected in recognition of singular service to the NRA.

John Hoare is in dispute with the NSRA and various allegations have been made by the NSRA in relation to his conduct whilst employed by the NSRA. These are allegations and not proven. They are matters which do not concern the NRA. Accordingly, the Council, knowing of these allegations, found no reason to break tradition and refuse to put forward John Hoare for re-election. Does my response answer your concerns?

No? Then may I please first take a vote on all other proposals excluding Lieutenant Colonel John Hoare?

Agreed. Thank you.

May I please now ask you to vote for John Hoare?

Lt Col. JD Hoare was not re-elected, nem. con.

Thank you, that is decided.

Next I turn to our Auditors. The re-appointment of Baker Tilly has been proposed and seconded by Mrs Iris Bennett and Mrs Karen Robertson, respectively.

May I have your agreement?

Agreed. Thank you.

I now turn to the Special Business of the Meeting. On behalf of the Council I propose some amendments to the Rules. A full explanation is given in the letter attached which I hope I may take as read? Before I put the Resolutions to you, I report that I have received one question, namely exactly why the existing Rule 1 is being deleted. I have given an explanation already to those who have approached us with this question.

In summary, I refer you to the foot of page 9 of the Special Resolutions document and my explanation which I gave on behalf of the Council. I emphasise that the Objects of the NRA cannot be changed without the consent of the Members, the Privy Council and the Charity Commission. What the Council is required to do by the Charity Commission is to keep the current interpretation of the Objects up to date and state its strategy and objectives to enable this to be done. The latter is

reflected in the Trustees' Annual Report - this year on page 4 of the Financial Statements which we shall be reviewing shortly during this meeting. It is no more complicated, nor of greater implication than this.

Are there any other questions?

In response to further concerns expressed about the removal of Clause 1 there were queries about the original purposes. The Chairman reminded the Members present that the 'Objects' "in defence of the Realm" as stated in the 1890 Royal Charter read: "...we, being desirous of promoting and encouraging rifle shooting throughout our dominions..." with an original intent from 1859 that the purpose was for "giving permanence to Volunteer Corps, Naval and Military". The Chairman stated that he would arrange for the first public statement of the Chairman, Lord Elcho, in 1859, to be posted on the website.

Objections were raised that the Special Resolutions, enclosed with the Summer Journal, had arrived late and had thus invalidated the taking of the Resolutions at the AGM. The Chairman regretted that the Journal had not been sent out earlier, but, upon advice, declared that the notice was valid as it had been posted within time, according to the Rules, on 1st June. Those present concurred – two Members dissenting.

There were concerns expressed about the possible inadequate number of extra places on the General Council for all Shooting Discipline, Regional and Ex Officio members. There were concerns expressed about a Member being able to vote for only one of each Shooting Discipline or Region and a suggestion made that a charge be made for each Shooting Discipline chosen.

The Chairman said that the small increase in each category would give the Council, advised by the General Council, some flexibility as the Association is developed and, he said, it would be quite simple to revert with a Special Resolution to increase any number in a future year, if seen to be required.

It was observed that in Rule 7 (c) (iv) and (v) reference should have been made to 7 (c) (i) and not 7 (a) (i).

Subject to the amendment, may I now have your agreement to the Special Resolutions?

Agreed. Thank you.

The Accounts

The audited Financial Statements for the 15 month period ended 31st December 2005 have been circulated with the Agenda. I did produce an Interim Review which was published in the Spring Journal. I do not propose to say more as I have nothing to add at this time, but take questions. I do mention, however, that the Council reviewed the points made at the Spring General Meeting last year.

I propose to take questions on the accounts, first, followed by the Report of the Trustees and last my Chairman's Statement which provided an update to my Interim Review. Following this I shall review a number of matters taking some forward from my Statement and take questions in an Open Forum.

First, therefore, questions on pages 8 to 16, the Accounts.

I have been given advance notice of one question, namely, “Why do the 2004 items of expense for the Imperial Meeting on page 5 differ from the figure of expense in the audited accounts on page 12, note 2.?”

I want everyone to be quite clear on this. When I gave my interim report in the Spring Journal and the management account figures to 30th September I mentioned that some 2004 figures had been restated to be in line with internal analyses being used for 2005. This is also referred to towards the top of page 6 of the Financial Statements. The figures on page 5 of the Financial Statements are largely taken from the management accounts although the ‘bottom line’ does agree, of course, with the formal audited SORP accounts. For example, you will see that the net ‘deficit’ of £32,158 concurs with the figure towards the bottom right of page 8. In order to provide as informative an account as possible, figures for the management accounts for the prior year are restated. Ordinarily, the comparative figures of the formal audited SORP accounts (i.e. 2004 in this case) cannot be changed.

The main adjustment last year related to grossing up £100,894 of ammunition used in the Imperial Meeting and crediting it to Range Income where it better reflects the arrangements rather than netting it off in the Imperial Meeting figures as for many years past. This is one reason why Shooting Income is so much larger than 2004 – for those who spotted it.

I can now take further questions? *None.*

The Report of the Trustees? *None.*

The Statement of the Chairman? *None.*

Thank you.

I do hope that I can also take my Interim Review in the Spring Journal as ‘read’ and there are just a few developments which I should like to touch upon.

Governing Body

Glynn Alger joined us in April 2004 and embarked on a massive task on a broad front to establish and develop what we call our “Membership Services”. This includes most importantly our public relations with the Parliaments at Westminster and Edinburgh (so far), the Police, Media and the enhancement of our presence UK wide. With him we have made progress on all these fronts. I commend you to his articles in the Journal. He also writes articles for Target Sports on our behalf which reach many full-bore shooters who are not currently members.

Membership of the Association is a vital commitment for shooters to the National Governing Body to support the development of target shooting. It is appreciated that it calls for confidence that the subscriptions, life or annual, will be well spent. It is appreciated that members make this investment with little direct personal benefit, but this reflects that we are a Charity and, as a Charity, our subscriptions and donations carry the very important Gift Aid benefit in tax. Nevertheless, members, numerically, and subscription income are vital to ensure that we have the resource to provide our target shooting sport with a viable and successful future.

On the membership front and with various initiatives we have been increasing our individual membership and I give you a summary of the latest statistics:

As of 12th June we had 4,840 paid up members with more due to be recorded which compares with a total of 4,704 at the end of 2005. For the second year we shall increase our membership, net.

Less members appear to be lapsing their membership and new members are increasing. Including 56 Probationary members, there were 467 new members as at 12th June of whom some 60% come from outside the Greater London and South East Region – a good trend.

In terms of primary shooting disciplines, Target Rifle remains at about 50% overall, followed by Sporting Rifle (9%) and Gallery Rifle (8%), but new TR members are just 42% with other shooting disciplines individually little changed. Secondary shooting disciplines, where provided to us, are fairly well spread with Gallery Rifle predominant at 10% overall and 14% new members this year.

Remembering that every applicant for membership has to be ‘checked out’ this has been a considerable task and achievement. I give especial thanks to Heather Webb who has also had to contend with a new database, an office move, new insurance arrangements and difficulties with the launch of the new club arrangements to which I referred first in the Spring Journal. With dire lack of financial resources it should be noted that for a long period since 2001 she was Membership Secretary managing on her own with limited and irregular part-time support. With a leading role under Glynn and the initiatives he has introduced with the Membership Committee, she is now operating within a team to take us forward and much of the recent success in recruitment of members is down to her.

As for clubs, the standardised capitation fee has been largely welcomed and we are pleased that we have been able to establish an enhanced and less expensive insurance package coupled with a Range Pass certificate. The disappointment has been progress over the licensing of Clubs in the booking of MoD ranges. However, Glynn Alger is increasing his contact with the designated structures of the Ministry of Defence – Defence Estates and Landmarc - through the headquarters at Warminster and we have only recently received a restatement of commitment from the Commander in Chief to take matters forward as and when his staff and MoD arrangements permit. In turn the General has asked for help on certain ranges and for seeking to establish a more co-ordinated approach from clubs working together with us. We are being offered the opportunity to take over some of the ranges on a lease or similar basis, particularly where, through our membership, we can offer support to cadets, for example – very much in our interest in any event.

We have long relied on a club structure. Increasingly, clubs find it difficult to recruit members and to recruit volunteers to run them. This applies everywhere and yet there are plenty of young people and others taking an interest in target shooting sport. Personally, I envisage that there will be a change of approach as the years go on. We are not unique as a sport or organisation in the above respects. Increasingly I believe that people see their sport in individual terms – a concept of ‘turn up and shoot’ at a venue run as an entity, maybe privately owned or leased, e.g. by a consortium of members. The CPSA have a network of regional range facilities accredited, but not run by the CPSA. I can see this possibility for us in due time especially with increasing use of electronic targetry. In the meantime, there is a lot to be done.

Although lapsed for a few years until 2003, the Association has long had a facility for financial support to club development. The Council has now formulated that policy and the policy statement

is available to any club with development plans and requiring help upon application to the Secretary General

Open Day at Altcar

At Bisley, we are reaping the problems arising from success. Our April Open Day was the most successful on record with some 1,435 visitors registered. It relies enormously on volunteer support. It is cheering that over 220 volunteer members helped and, of course, they have received our personal thanks individually.

Undoubtedly, Altcar is one of the most important national ranges for target shooters. The concept of an Open Day at Altcar was a completely new risk venture for us. Led by David Young and supported by Glynn Alger there was a major breakthrough in achieving Home Office and Police support which not so long ago I was told might never happen. I attended myself and most interesting for me was to meet not only many club members, but also the county Firearms Officer and two police officers who came to witness the event. With Liverpool as a high gun and knife crime area there was obvious underlying concern, but the occasion clearly did much to improve our own knowledge and experience and allay police fears, we hope. With poor weather a disadvantage, there were only some 120 registered visitors and mostly from contacts through clubs, but the response in interest was relatively good for the 18 clubs, including clay target and small-bore. The most important outcomes were that there is enthusiasm to build on it and that the 18 clubs and the some 70 volunteers came together in a way which was special and of the co-operation which we look for in the future and to which I have referred above. We thank David Young, in particular, for launching this event. We have received letters which confirm a determination to develop this event.

Commonwealth Games

The tremendous success of target shooting athletes in Melbourne has done us good and raised our profile with the Media and public. There was interest in Parliament and new contacts have been made by MPs. I am sure you will join me in congratulating Glyn Barnet and Parag Patel on their gold medal success. Of course, the star of the Games was a target shooting athlete, Mick Gault with his now record 15 medals for an English athlete in the Commonwealth Games. He has clearly put target shooting sport 'in the frame'.

Following a recent visit to Bisley by the Managing Editor of the Daily Mail for a private and first ever shoot at 500 yards, he wrote to me with much enthusiasm. He also suggested that the time is ripe to employ a 'Max Clifford'. Seriously, he volunteered that an organisation in our position cannot afford professional help, but has prompted us, at his suggestion, to see whether there is potential for help from a member with PR skill to help us develop 'in-house' as a first step.

Bisley, The National Shooting Centre

It is now just over a year since the formal arrangements were finalised for the management of Bisley under the framework of the National Shooting Centre Limited (commonly known as NSC). In many ways, this exercise could not be completed until we could adequately resource our Governing Body, itself managed by Glynn Alger as Secretary General responsible to the Council, the Board of Trustees. The Company manages all the Association Charity (such as competitive events and property) and commercial activities at Bisley under the control of the Board of Directors of NSC – i.e. not the Council. Sometimes I refer to it as NSC/Bisley or Bisley/NSC.

Essentially it is everything that is operated at Bisley, bar the “Membership Services” and the training unit.

We must always remember that Bisley is a significant asset of the Association worth conservatively £5m even with the shooting objective restriction and we look to its commercial and increasing shooting activity success in providing a profit return for the development of the whole NRA organisation.

Recently I had an informal meeting with the executive directors and senior staff to review the workings of the Agreement. I was very aware that the new concept of management represented change and especially cultural change. I sought to deal with all the concerns put to me frankly and fairly.

This is not least because for over 100 years Bisley has been seen as almost one and the same as the NRA itself, whereas the NRA’s role is really UK wide. So often I have heard that the NRA has been Bisley centric. This was probably less important many years ago when there were a large number of ranges around the country at which shooters could practice with little formality and little input from the Governing Body was required. All this has had to change.

It was pointed out to me that there are still many members who do not understand the change and need for change. It is only with time and greater visibility of what the Governing Body achieves that this will be fully understood. It is however, very important that increasingly Governing Body matters are addressed to Glynn Alger and his staff to deal with rather than to the staff of NSC to minimise distraction and maximise efficiency of service in due course. At last we have a new telephone system and I hope that this helps.

Nevertheless, there are capital expenditure improvement plans for Bisley/NSC this year of some £100,000 including the investment in electronic targetry out of monies generated by Bisley/NSC.

At long last we are installing some electronic targets on Century and Stickledown. Our Running Target and 300m colleagues are already using electronic targets and the Huddersfield Rifle Club has had them installed for a couple of years with considerable success after ironing out initial teething problems. The potential benefits are enormous and I am sure that we should all wish the project success.

Once again, we should thank the Directors and Non-Executive Directors of NSC for all they have been doing to develop Bisley/NSC.

One National Governing Body for Target Shooting Sport.

In conclusion I refer you to the announcement in the Secretary General’s Report in the Journal and say that the three bodies are meeting again on 27th June following which an informal meeting and reception has been arranged for our staffs. Our staffs have been given an assurance that we do not envisage any loss of employment opportunities and, of course, our staff at Bisley/NSC would have a larger direct membership/customer base. I should be able to say more at the Bisley General Meeting.

Thank you.

Questions

Robert Aitken

Expressed great concern about the inability to book, problems with the booking of ranges in Scotland, problems with Landmarc and communications between/with the various authorities..

Roger Mason

Reported on the formation of the Bisley Residents' Group to represent views and contribute to future policy considerations for the development and use of the Camp. **Tony Benham**, as a caravaner with a club at Bisley, expressed concern about the formation of this body and said that he hoped that the NRA would look after its members. **Roger Mason** confirmed that there would be no subscription at this stage, but that he is looking for donations for setting up costs.

Chairman

Whilst confirming that the NRA does have a common interest with its members, welcomed the initiative as being in line with Jeremy Staples' existing intent to have forums for meeting residents.

Stephen Lakin

Was concerned that insurance policy documents had not yet been received following to the new Range Pass scheme which he welcomed. **The Chairman** affirmed that he had looked into the issues and that matters are in order – documents should be issued shortly.

Jim Hallam

Wished that the new post of Regional manager had been advertised with members, that there should be regional championships in all major shooting disciplines and that there should be a co-ordinating calendar of major events to avoid unnecessary clashes. He also drew attention to the acronym of the proposed new single Governing Body (National Association of Target Shooting Sports.)

Paul Charlton

Asked if Minutes of Meetings could be posted on the website rather than reviewed in the office as heretofore.

Arthur Clarke

Made a plea for donations (of £5 and more) to help provide new barrels for 15 young shooters – “cadets are vital to the future”.

Carol Painting

Made a plea for other than RG ammunition at the end of the current contract for supply.

Chairman

Explained that the “Package Deal” with the MoD comes to an end after the Bisley Meeting 2007 and that it is hoped that Heads of Terms will be reached by the end of this year for new arrangements. The quality of ammunition will be a key factor.

Chris Law

Expressed thanks and appreciation to the Chairman and the Council for their unpaid time, the considerable reduction in borrowings and direction for the successful future of the NRA.

Applause.