

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held in the NRA Pavilion, Bisley on Friday 15th June 2007 from
5.30pm.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr J.F. Jackman
Vice Chairman of the General Council:	Prof A.R. Horrocks
Secretary General:	Mr G.W.J. Alger
Members:	57 Registered Members

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PROCEEDINGS

Attached hereto and initialled by the Chairman of the meeting as a record of the meeting is the report as published in the Journal.

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

a. **Election of Officers.**

- (1) **Re-election of the President.** The Chairman proposed on behalf of The Council that H.R.H. the Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB, AK, QSD, CD, PC, ADC(P) be re-elected as President.

The Resolution was approved.

- (2) **Election of Vice-Presidents.** The Chairman proposed on behalf of The Council that the existing Vice-Presidents with Mr Humfrey Malins CBE, MP be elected en bloc.

The Resolution was approved.

- b. **Reappointment of the Auditors.** The Chairman proposed on behalf of the Council the re-appointment of Baker Tilly in their new name.

That Baker Tilly UK Audit LLP be re-appointed as Auditors.

The Resolution was approved.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2006

The Statement of the Chairman, the Report of the Trustees and the Audited Accounts were received.

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH AND OPEN FORUM.

Attached at Annex.

Chairman

Annual General Meeting – 15 June 2007

Proceedings

Speech by John Jackman, Chairman

Good evening and thank you for coming.

I am joined by my Vice Chairman of the General Council, Richard Horrocks and, of course, by the Secretary General, Glynn Alger.

I am also pleased to welcome in attendance Rob Hamlin from Baker Tilly UK Audit LLP, our Auditors.

May I take the Notice of the Meeting which appeared on page 4 of the Spring Journal as read?

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 am very pleased to take this opportunity to inform you that His Royal Highness has told me that it is his intention to visit us in 2009 to share in the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the formation of the National Rifle Association.

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 Humfrey Malins CBE, MP.

Humfrey Malins has been a member of Parliament most of the time since 1983. A solicitor and part time Recorder, he is Joint Vice Chairman of the Conservative Party Legal Affairs Committee and also has had involvement with the Home Office as a junior minister and, for a while until recently, shadow minister for Home Affairs. Following election as the Member for Woking in 1997 he has supported the NRA, is a member of our General Council and has given practical support for us in Parliament. Moreover, he is committed to continuing membership of Parliament and to continuing to provide support for us when needed.

May I have your agreement?

Agreed. Thank you.

Next I turn to our Auditors. I am pleased to propose the re-appointment of Baker Tilly in their new name of Baker Tilly UK Audit LLP.

May I have your agreement?

Agreed. Thank you.

The Accounts.

The audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2006 have been circulated with the Agenda.

I want to express our particular thanks to our Treasurer, Mark Haszlakiewicz, for the time and skill which he has applied to ensure that our Financial Statements have achieved a high standard in this first year of the new reporting regulations. Part of these new regulations require that a Charity's Strategic Plans are disclosed together with statements of what has been achieved.

The Council, that is the Board of Trustees, has been preparing for these developments for some time with a gradual programme of policy making and review and I should also like to thank on your behalf the Vice Chairman of the Council, Julian Hartwell, who took over the leading role of this office on the Council some 18 months ago.

I do not propose to say more about the Financial Statements themselves as I have nothing to add at this time, but take questions.

I propose to take questions on the accounts, first, followed by the Report of the Trustees and then my Chairman's Statement. Following this I shall refer to my Review in the Summer Journal, make a short statement and then take questions in an Open Forum.

First, therefore, questions on pages 10 to 20 - the Accounts.

I have been given advance notice of one question, namely:

In fact the question relates to the whole Financial Statements. We have been asked how the profit of National Shooting Centre Limited of £176,000, as referred to in the second paragraph of page 8 referring, in turn, to the summary account in note 1 on page 14, reconciles with the Chairman's Statement towards the bottom of page 2 which states that the management achieved a break even result at Bisley, The National Shooting Centre.

The reason is that the Association operates and manages Bisley, the National Shooting Centre, as an entity within the company, National Shooting Centre Limited. As a large part of the Charity activities of the Association are carried out at Bisley, in particular the Annual Prize Meeting, as well as the Commercial activities, much of the commercial income and profit is spent on the Association's charitable activities which take place at Bisley, reducing the profit, last year, to almost breakeven, not least because of the need to repair the Butts at Bisley.

Are there further questions on the accounts section, please? - *None.*

The Report of the Trustees – *None.*

The Statement of the Chairman – *None.*

Thank you.

I do hope that I can also take my Review in the Summer Journal as 'read' and there are just a few points which I should like to touch upon.

Our Future

Recently, I was asked by a leading international target rifle shooter if I really do believe that we “have a future for regeneration, particularly outside of Bisley?” I do, there is much to go for:

- i. A large number of cadets and of members of the public appear to have a latent interest in, or desire to try, target shooting.
- ii. NRA/NATSS governed target shooting sport is being increasingly seen by Government as a force for good in encouraging healthy sporting pursuit with respect for firearms. Only three weeks ago the Sunday Telegraph carried an encouraging article by the Minister of Sport, to this effect, advocating target shooting to be promoted for the school curriculum.

However, having said this, I do believe that we are not alone in facing a considerable period of change. NRA traditional target rifle shooting sportsmen are inherently conservative and traditional, but society is changing faster. If our traditional target shooting is to be maintained and flourish anew there must be some acceptance of adjustment to the ways it is managed and progressed.

Reliance on traditional ways of management by hard working volunteers will need to adjust. We are not alone in this – volunteer organisers are increasingly difficult to recruit in all voluntary organisations. Increasingly, as I have said before, society looks to employed management. Participants increasingly want to pay and play.

We must also consider cost. Target shooting needs to be ‘open to all’. We must revisit the idea of a lower cost standard target rifle, for example.

In the case of NRA/Bisley we must increasingly rely on our employed, professional management led by our Secretary General in the case of the NRA and our Managing Director in the case of Bisley. Your Council has been working towards a satisfactory achievement of this goal, whilst maintaining governance and overall control through the Council – itself re-constituted in 2003 to ensure that it has the right skills and experience.

Away from Bisley we have a new challenge and one which we should work on with our, hopefully, future partners, the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association and the National Small-Bore Rifle Association, NATSS.

Today, I want to focus on what I believe are the important issues for our future:

My constant theme over the last 6 years has been the importance of control of finance, improvement of reputation and the pursuit of membership, i.e. the encouragement of more people to take up or try the sport. These remain the important considerations of your Council.

Of vital importance now, to achieve our aims, are the three main projects upon which your Council is concentrating and which feature in the briefing to recruit a new Chairman of the Association (possibly, if not probably from outside our current membership) in September, when I retire in accordance with our Rules:

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- expansion of activities throughout the United Kingdom.

- merger with the two other UK Governing Bodies of Target Shooting Sport (clay target and small-bore).
- development of the Association's Freehold at Bisley through the National Shooting Centre Ltd under its own and separate Board.

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All these ambitions are interrelated in reality. From a merger with the CPSA and NSRA will come much greater overall strength and influence. The funds which will be derived from a successful income earning development of Bisley will further help our UK expansion and provision of ranges (in which small-bore and clay target could well be and will hope to be involved and share with us, as is being discussed by the NATSS Steering Group).

I am very pleased, therefore, that NATSS has achieved Government funding to facilitate a merger, that our President and Patron have indicated their support and interest and that the survey of NRA members by the Secretary General in the Spring Journal has, thus far, indicated support of 307 members to just 17 opposed. The numbers responding were a little disappointing, but based on those who did, there were remarkably some 70 different names suggested although “National Association of Target Shooting Sport” just predominated with 161 votes for and 134 against!

Elsewhere the Secretary General has again highlighted the practical Public Relations disadvantages of our present and historic name. A couple of years ago the Council determined that we should change our name. The majority of the General Council supported this and positive responses were received from our President and the Charity Commission, for example. In September 2005 it was suggested at the General Council meeting that National Target Shooting Association should be adopted and this received 35 ‘votes’ in the recent survey coming second among the additional suggestions.

However, the Council is not currently taking a change of name forward as it is considered that it will be part of the consideration in negotiating the terms of our proposed merger. In passing, just 11 members responded in favour of our current name, National Rifle Association.

Informed opinion expressed to us is that both “target” and “shooting” should feature in our future name, when determined. However, the future name is not the major consideration at this point while the Council will keep it under review.

The Butts Appeal

Finally, on a more detailed matter I want to draw attention to the Butts Appeal. The Council was very encouraged at the response of members and others in donating to the cost of repairing the Butts at Bisley following the exceptional storm of 13th August 2006. Altogether, with Charity Gift Aid, some £25,000 has been collected to date. We intended to do the work on shoring up the Century Range Butts with a shelf to reduce the chances of recurrence and to reduce future maintenance costs in future in February this year, but the weather was far too wet to do it then. The work is now scheduled for the Autumn to minimise disruption. At the same time, a widening of the 1,200 yards firing point on Stickledown is planned.

The Appeal will be closed on 31st July. If any members have not yet subscribed to the Appeal, which will help NRA funds greatly, I invite members to do so before 31st July. Donations can be made by cheque or electronically via the website. All donors will be recognised.

Thanks

As I close I want to take the opportunity to thank Michael Blythe, our Financial Manager, who has just retired. Michael was employed initially part time in 1990 to help put matters in order following a period of loss of financial control. A short profile is in the Summer Journal and I refer you to it, but I want to add that Michael's steady hand in keeping the actual accounts in good order during the difficult years of the late 1990s and his ready support to our new approach and constitution since 2002 have benefited the Association enormously. I am pleased that Michael will retain an interest in our affairs and announce, today, that the Council has accorded him honorary life membership. *Applause.*

In April we welcomed Bruce Pollard, also a Chartered Accountant, to take over.

Thank you.

I now open the meeting for questions and shall be happy to take questions on my Review in the Summer Journal and on my comments today.

Questions:

Arthur Clarke

Asked if it was intended to repair the clock tower.

Managing Director NSC

Stated that quotes had been received to repair the clock and to re-clad the building. Funding was in the NSC budget for this purpose and the work would be carried out as soon as possible.

Arthur Clarke

Asked for permission on behalf of the Bisley 'V' Club to ask for donations so that the garden around the clock tower could be rebuilt and maintained.

Chairman

Stated that he would have the support of the National Rifle Association..

John Woodard

Questioned the requirement to wear eye protection when taking part in gallery rifle shoots.

Paul Monaghan – Chairman of the Shooting Committee

Stated that this issue was currently under review with the Shooting Committee.

David Mumford

Expressed concern at the intention to rename the Imperial Meeting as the British Open Full-bore Rifle Championships as not all firearms in use during the meeting were in effect full-bore.

Chairman

Stated that the Imperial was being renamed to promote the event not just internally, but externally to the public, politicians and potential sponsors. The current title of the event meant nothing to those outside the Association thus causing a problem in marketing terms because it does not describe what the Imperial Meeting is all about. Internally the Chairman accepted that the event is likely to be referred to colloquially for generations as the Imperial Meeting.

David Hossack

Disagreed with renaming the Imperial Meeting on the basis of tradition.

Robin Pizer

Stated that the introduction of the Real Estate Policy, the requirement to achieve 'Market Rents' and regular rent reviews could make it difficult for the clubs at Bisley to meet potentially increasing rents. He further made the point that the introduction of break clauses in leases, permitting the Association to end a club's lease with 6 months notice could be counter-productive, not encouraging clubs to invest in their properties.

Chairman

Stated the objective of the new policy was to be open about how leases and rents were handled. In relation to clubs they have and will continue to be treated differently to individual lets to a private tenant, because it is an objective of the Association to support and promote shooting. Supporting clubs was a way of achieving this. Commenting on the break clause in leases it was made clear that this requirement in a lease had been long-standing and was not new. He stated that in the unlikely event that this clause was ever instituted clubs and individuals would be compensated.

Maurice Ayling

Questioned the quality of ammunition, particularly relating to the MoD/NRA Agreement.

Chairman

Stated the quality of the ammunition was checked each year to ensure it meets required standards.

Paul Monaghan – Chairman Shooting Committee

Explained that we were tied into the agreement with the MoD who supplied RG as standard under the package deal. If this changed in 2008 when the deal ends the NRA were already examining alternative suppliers to ensure quality ammunition.

John Woodward

Asked if the AGM could be held on a more convenient time and date.

Chairman

Reminded everyone that they had a second opportunity to give their views at the Umbrella Tent Meeting during the Imperial Meeting.

The Meeting Ended.