



Embroiderers' Guild

sharing opportunities for discovery and creativity

Dear Members,

We hope this finds you well.

The Branch Committee met for the first-time last Friday (17th July 2020) by ZOOM. This was our first meeting since our last face to face meeting in March and we hope that this and the attached notes from Joy and Clare will provide you with an update on a number of areas, but most importantly how and when we are planning to resume our branch meetings under the current (and evolving) COVID-19 restrictions.

Future meeting planning and programme under COVID-19 restrictions

Clare has been in contact with Elm Ridge. They are currently working towards reopening the hall during September. We have therefore taken the decision to cancel our planned meeting at the beginning of September and aim to host our first face to face meeting in October. In terms of COVID restrictions, Elm Ridge will have to do a risk assessment and we will have to adhere to their guidance and restrictions, and we await receipt of these. Guild HQ have also produced guidance on resumption of meetings, and we will have to work with these too.

We are conscious that many of you are in either the vulnerable or shielded groups and that you may have concerns about coming back to face to face meetings. We are also aware of some of the more innovative work going on in other branches to keep some semblance of branch activities going. The Contact magazine has been sent out regularly via email and includes many examples of using internet facilities to support branch activities. For that reason, we have developed a short questionnaire to help us in planning for the next few months. You can return this to Sandra by either email or post (details on the questionnaire).

Joy has produced a summary of the changes to the programme and branch competitions (attached).

Branch website

Our new website has been 'built' and handed over to Gloria who is currently doing a sterling job trying to get to grips with the different technology and has started to upload documents and images. We'll keep you updated on progress on the website through the newsletter. Meanwhile if you have any pictures that you would be prepared to share on the branch Facebook page you can email the chairman on darlingtonchair@embroiderersguild.com. We would love to see what you have been doing during lockdown.

Membership and finances

Clare has produced a report about changes initiated by HQ and the decisions that the committee are proposing for the coming year (attached).

AGM

Our AGM would normally take place at the October meeting. We have received the following advice from HQ.

Any decision to hold or not to hold an AGM must be based on what is most appropriate for the safety of our members and the guidance from the government and their medical advisers. Any decision on an AGM does not need to be taken now, indeed it can be taken up to a month before the due date to enable the message to reach all branch members giving them a minimum of 21 days' notice. However, venue booking terms and conditions may require an earlier decision.

There is no requirement to hold an AGM. This is confirmed on the Charity Commission website. However, branch committees may like to record their decision not to hold an AGM in 2020 in the minutes of the next committee meeting. This can be an on-line or face-to-face meeting.

In the circumstances, committee position holders who have completed their term of office but are willing to do so can remain in post for another year without the need for a vote. If replacement committee members are needed, nominations can be sent by email or post to members not on email and votes can also be sent in electronically and by mail in return. Nominees and voters need to include their membership numbers along with their first and last names. Votes should be sent to a person who has no interest in the outcome of the vote.

In the interests of inclusion and continuity, branch committees might consider sending members the reports that would otherwise have been presented if an AGM had been held. This will allow for questions to be asked and clarifications given, if needed.

The Guild will still be required to compile Consolidated Accounts for the year 2019/20 so Year-End Returns will be requested in due course as usual, however, the branch accounts can be submitted without being adopted by the members. The normal Declarations will suffice. There is no need for accounts to be verified before submission but we do ask that branch accounts are submitted for certain by 31st October 2020 absolute latest.

The committee decided that it would be a challenge too far to hold an AGM at our first face to face meeting for six months, assuming that we are able to go ahead with this meeting, however we do propose that all branch officers will still produce a report for 2019/20 and these will be circulated to all members.

Regional update

Several members of the Regional committee, including the Chairman and Secretary have resigned. Email updates about this have been circulated, including a request for members to volunteer their time to the Regional committee. We understand that some new committee members have step forward, but await further information which will be circulated.

Best wishes,

Julia Goudge
Darlington Branch Chairman

Sandra Whiston
Darlington Branch Secretary