



AFA Secretary's Report Annual General Meeting 2018

In March 2017, we already knew that AFA's year was going to be a busy one, a tough one. It always is when there is a major event to organise and we were a willing crew, ready to put the effort into it. Our experience in 2016 gave us a background of recent success. I especially remember the creativity of the Census advertising campaign and the good result coming from that.

From a secretary's viewpoint, the year moved along from month to month in the usual way, with the addition of reports from the GAC Committee about speakers and performers, who was coming and who declined, what the arrangements were to make sure things worked well. Things changed when ticket sales proved slow. More energy and effort, which had already been large anyway, was channelled in the direction of sales. After the decision to cancel the Convention was forced upon us, then came the arduous and heartbreaking tasks of undoing the arrangements.

Given such an unhappy situation I was naturally curious about what I would see in the actions of the people dealing with it. For sure there were instances of tension and angst as must be expected, though even at those times, the focus was on dealing with the reality at hand and taking care that proper processes were followed. In the actions of GAC and Management Committee members I saw examples of support, generosity and consideration shown for one another. I saw dedication, tenacity and teamwork to ensure, at each stage, that the best available outcome would result. I was quite impressed. These great efforts did have a cost to people's energy levels though.

In concluding, I want to acknowledge the core of the Committee, who have stayed on since then and continue working hard despite the fatigue from recent efforts. I also think of those who have been Committee members for some years and who did really good things for AFA until unwelcome changes in their lives caused them to relinquish their positions. Then there are AFA's active members who have contributed so well to the life of our forums, social media and Communications Team. Very important to us this year, have been the many members and non-members who clearly understood what we were going through with the distress and disappointment over the Convention and who were so generous with financial and moral support. Without you all, AFA would not have made it through to this point.

Having got through to here, where exactly are we?

The real issue now is our human resources. For AFA to continue we need to have enough people on the Committee to keep things functioning: people with the energy and sense of co-operation to complete the tasks in a timely and proper manner.

Does the AFA still have what it takes?

The answer to that will emerge at this AGM.