BANTRACHT NA TUAITHE
IRISH COUNTRYWOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

MINUTES AGM 2017

20th May 2017 Sheraton Hotel Athlone Co.Westmeath

Cathaoirleach: Marie O'Toole National President

ITEM 1
Welcome and Introductions

Cathaoirleach called the meeting to order.

Prayer and Verse of my Land – lead by Marie O'Toole, Marie welcomed the delegates to the AGM and opened the meeting.

Cathaoirleach then called on Gill Stanley, Westmeath Federation President, Gill welcomed delegates to Athlone. Westmeath were the host Federation in conjunction with Longford and Roscommon. Gill pointed out the fire exits and asked that all mobile phones be switched off.

The Cathoairleach welcomed the guests, Elizabeth Warden, Chairperson of the Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland and Margaret Mc Millan, Chair, European Area President of ACWW. The delegates applauded.

The Cathaoirleach then called Elizabeth Warden, Chairperson of the Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland. Elizabeth said she was delighted to be invited to the AGM, this would be her third and final time to attend. Elizabeth spoke about renewing friendships and that North and South had so much in common. Elizabeth also said that it was a time of uncertainty as they did not know what difference Brexit would make to future. Elizabeth continued to talk about the historic connections between the two organisations. One of the main events in their calendar is the Balmoral Show and it was great to hear all the Southern accidents and to have so many ICA ladies visiting the show. Elizabeth then presented Marie O'Toole with a copy of their new cookery book.

Quorum of Voting Delegates
Cathaoirleach called on Mairead O Carroll who confirmed that the quorum was reached as there were 109 voting delegates in attendance. Mairead spoke about the makeup of the procedures Committee, Ann O'Connell was co-opted onto the committee.

There are 5 motions going forward today.
Mairead thanked Mary O'Reilly, Secretary and also Mary O'Gorman as they were both now finished their 3 year term on the committee.

ITEM 2
Adoption of Standing Orders

Cathaoirleach called on Mairead O'Carroll Chair of the Procedures Committee to proceed with the Adoption of Standing Orders & Standing Orders report No 1.
Mairead explained the voting system, each voting delegate had received voting cards - Vote Green in Favour, Red against and Yellow abstention. Anne Cass seconded the adoption of Standing Orders and the adoption of Standing Orders Report No 1.

The delegates voted unanimously to accept the Standing Orders. There were no abstentions.
Mairead O'Carroll was the Scrutineer, the Tellers were Mary O'Gorman, Mary O'Reilly, Concepta McGettrick and Ann O'Connell. The Time Keeper was Bridgid Keane

ITEM 3
Introduction of the Nominees for Procedures Committee 2017-18

Mairead O'Carroll	Cork Federation
Bridgid Keane	Waterford Federation
Ann O'Connell	South Tipperary
Angela O'Byrne	Dublin Federation
Concepta McGettrick	Sligo Federation

As no further nominations were received, all of these nominees were deemed to be elected.

Introductions

Marie O'Toole introduced the Platform Party and National Executive Board members.

On the Platform

Ms Marie O'Toole	National President
Ms Shirley Power	National Secretary
Ms Mary McNamara	National Treasurer
Ms Susan Potts	Chair of the National Advisory Committee

National Executive Board

Ms Esther Cahill	Regional President South and East
Ms Dee Devereux	Regional President South and East
Ms Barbara Meer	Regional President Border Midlands and West
Ms Helen Rutter	Regional President Border Midlands and West
Ms Margot Hennessey	Carlow Federation President
Ms Anna Rose McCormack	Cavan Federation President
Ms Joanne Allen	Clare Federation President
Ms Liz O'Leary	Kerry Federation President
Ms Chris Kelly	Leitrim Federation President
Ms Mary Carthy	Longford Federation President
Ms Alice Rowley	Mayo Federation President
Ms Anne Devitt	South Tipperary Federation President & National PRO
Ms Deirdre Connery	Wexford Federation President

Welcome to National Advisory Committee members

Ms Margot Hennessy	Carlow Federation
Ms Anna Rose McCormack	Cavan Federation
Ms Joanne Allen	Clare Federation
Ms Deidre Hickey	Cork Federation
Ms Maureen Milligan	Donegal Federation
Ms Mary Melia	Dublin Federation
Ms Sharon Kelly	Galway Federation
Ms Liz O'Leary	Kerry Federation
Ms Nellie Dillon Forde	Kildare Federation
Ms. Maria Landy	Kilkenny Federation
Ms Anne Cass	Laois Federation
Ms Chris Kelly	Leitrim Federation
Ms Mary Moloney	Limerick Federation
Ms Mary Carthy	Longford Federation
Ms Susan Potts	Louth Federation
Ms Alice Rowley	Mayo Federation
Ms Olive Carolan	Meath Federation
Ms Lorna Soden	Monaghan Federation
Ms Maura Allen	Offaly Federation
Ms Monica Beegan	Roscommon Federation
Ms Anne Devitt	Tipperary South Federation
Ms Ann Clarke	Tipperary North Federation
Ms Kay Cunnane	Sligo Federation
Ms Noeline Power	Waterford Federation
Ms Gill Stanley	Westmeath Federation
Ms Deirdre Connery	Wexford Federation
Ms Madge Kenny	Wicklow Federation

Apologies Received:
Apologies were received from Camilla Hannon, Mamo McDonald, Kitty Harlin, Breda Raggett, Carmel Dawson, Monica Prendiville, Sally Ward and Liz Wall all Former National Presidents.

Anna May McHugh of Laois Federation and Pauline O'Callaghan of Cork Federation had also sent their apologies.

Former National Presidents were welcomed:
Ina Broughall, Eva Coyle, Anne Maria Dennison.

Announcements:
The National Secretary made the following Announcements:

1) Any voting delegates who have been assigned by their Guild to vote and have not yet received their voting cards should go to the back of the room to sign-in and collect them now.
2) Members were reminded that their ICA membership card is permanent card and it should be kept safely. Lost cards will be replaced only once. A charge will be incurrrdS for further replacements.
3) A reminder to all Guild & Federation treasurers that it is now time to collect and send in membership fees for the current year 2017-2018. All Annual reports should be forwarded to Central Office at the earliest convenience.
4) Members were invited to visit the Sales and Information table for various special offers including An Grianán produce in addition to the last remaining ICA books. Also on sale were copies of the latest short story competition booklets, badges and a selection of ICA constitutions and handbooks etc.
5) Members were encouraged to support the raffle and tickets are available from the raffle table during lunch for those that would like to but some.
6) Members were also encouraged to visit the Friends of An Grianán table where members could find out how to become a 'Friend'. Membership fees for friends are also being accepted.
7) If members have not yet booked for lunch and intended to have their lunch as part of the conference group, then please go to the lunch table just at the entrance where you entered the room and purchase your lunch option voucher so that the hotel will be able to cater for the correct numbers.

Votes of sympathy:
The Cathaoirleach called on Susan Potts, Chair of the NAC. Susan spoke about the members we had lost since our last AGM and that members also had their own bereavements. She extend sympathy to everyone who has been bereaved.
"Friendship isn't always easily described.
The Eskimos, they say, have a hundred different words for snow. Unfortunately, the English language isn't quite as innovative, though it has vast opportunities to differentiate meaning. Certainly, Love is one of those opportunities. And so, too, is Friendship.
Instead of different words, however, we're stuck with simple adjectives. Close friend, Best friend, Childhood friend, Intimate friend, Trusted friend, Beloved friend. But whether you use adjectives or different words, few could deny the nearly infinite meaning in such a simple word. Our friends, in a very real sense, reflect the choices we make in life."
The one word consistently used when you ask an ICA member about our association is the word Friend.
We will now take this time to reflect on our Family and our Friends that have passed away.

The Delegates stood in silence in remembrance of all who had died, their names were projected onto screens.

ITEM 4
Minutes of the AGM 2016

Marie O'Toole stated that the Minutes of AGM 2016 were circulated to all Guilds. No corrections and no queries were received. Marie O'Toole requested permission to sign minutes and asked the voting delegates for a show of cards.

The vote was unanimous and the Minutes were signed.

ITEM 5

Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising

ITEM 6

Report by National Treasurer Mary MacNamara

Cathaoirleach called on Mary MacNamara, National Treasurer read the Financial Report.

Financial Committee Overview

Meetings

- 9 meetings since our last AGM – well attended
- ICA Financial Priorities 2016
  - Adhere to budget spending plans
  - Produce monthly management accounts
  - Ensure a cost benefit analysis is carried out on projects
  - Ensure a speedy annual audit process

Overview 2016

- Income is down by €169,338
- Expenditure is down by €255,703
- Overall surplus of €151,564

Audit 2016 – Central Office

Overview – Central Office

- Surplus of €237,067
- No overdraft required – due to membership fee income and sundry income
- Budgeting allows for projects to be undertaken

	2016 €	**2015 €**	
Fee Income	490,464	447,603	+ 9.5%
Grants Income	9,000	9,000	0%
Sundry Income	17,467	45,377	- 61%
Staff Costs Exp	96,685	111,674	- 13%
General Exp	66,291	67,586	- 2%
Misc. Exp	38,380	38,525	- 0.4%
Office Exp	63,178	102,777	- 38.5%

Audit 2016 – An Grianán

Overview - An Grianán

- Deficit of € 85,503 for the year
- 2015 - € 35,918
- 2014 - € 26,461
- Income is not increasing – attendance/usage decreasing.

	2016 €	**2015 €**	
Fee Income	585,396	721,955	-18.9%
Rental	75,096	74,200	+1.2%
Bar & Shop	19,018	24,271	-22 %
Garden Centre	0	(15,822)	+/-%
Staff Costs	413,206	495,198	-16.5%
Admin	33,897	46,455	-27%

Property	98,808	124,597	-21%
Kitchen & Hse	165,555	196,014	-16%
Lectures	26,104	36,988	-29%
Depreciation	92,776	100,156	-7.36

Positive Outcomes

Central Office

- Working well and utilised for most meetings
- Membership fee met the costs of running ICA in 2016
- Expenditure is managed closely
- Performing well against budget, budget tracked monthly
- Quarterly Management accounts examined

An Grianán

- Monthly management accounts
- Tracked against budget

Negative Outcomes

Central Office

- Decrease in overall membership of 213, with 172 new members joining.

An Grianán

- Still had losses in 2016 - more radical action required

Challenges for 2017

- Increase the number of ICA members and Guilds
- Get More People to use An Grianán

External Grant Aid

Funder	**Purpose**
Dept. of Agriculture & Food	General Purposes €9,000
Further Education and Training Authority/ An tSeirbhis Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna S.O.L.A.S	Educational Activities €20,900

Sponsors

Gempak Ltd. Cake Baking
Aldi Brown Bread
Manor Farm Chicken Cookery Demonstrations

Fundraising

An Grianán Fund	13,301
Breast Cancer Research	7,238
Pennies for Friendship	3,288

Progress on Priorities

- Budget in place for Central Office and An Grianán
- Better analysis of costs/patterns of usage & detailed and monthly reporting
- Accounting in line with demands of funders
- All deadlines met in 2016
- Upgrade the facilities at An Grianán

Financial Priorities/Challenges for 2017

- Encourage greater support for the college
- Implement the cost saving measures to achieve a breakeven position by end of 2017
- Meet Monthly targets, and if not, take remedial action
- Increase the number of members in ICA
-

Membership Breakdown 2016/2017

- 9,243 Members - (down 213 on previous year)
- 172 New member joined since June 2015

Membership Incentives

- Encourage Guilds to increase membership.
  - 259 vouchers issued
  - Refund of €6,475
  - Encourage New Guilds
  - 8 new Guilds were set up
  - Refund of €3,100
  - This scheme will continue in 2017/18

Financial Year 2016

- Membership fees – membership fee remains at €50 – return fees promptly
- Charities Act requirements

Update on Current Financial Situation

- First Quarter to the End of April 2017
  - Central Office - Up on budget
  - An Grianán - Surplus of €2,012 for April.
    - Deficit of €37,611 for the 4 months
- Greater Use of An Grianán is necessary to make it viable.

There were no queries received on the accounts.

Mary advised that the ICA had now partnered with Nuture to offer counselling to members at a reduced rate. Nuture are renting rooms in the Hort College. Details of this service will be sent to members in the next mailing.

Questions and Answers on the Audited Accounts

Pat O'Looney queried the if deposits for Handcraft week formed part of the surplus in An Grianán, Mary MacNamara advised that the surplus was the actual surplus for that month and that any deposit paid for future bookings were accounted for in prepays by the Accountant.

ITEM 6

Adoption of the Audited Annual Accounts for the 12 months to December 2016

Mary MacNamara proposed the adoption of the Audited Annual Accounts 2016. Liz Brady, Westmeath Federation Treasurer seconded the adoption of that Report.
All voted in Favour, there were no abstentions.
Mairead O'Carroll confirmed the adoption of the Annual Accounts.

ITEM 7

Ratification of the appointment of CDM Accountants as ICA Auditors

Proposed by Mary MacNamara, Monica Beegan, Roscommon Federation President seconded the appointment. All in Favour.

ITEM 8

Report of the National Executive Board by Shirley Power National Secretary

Cathaoirleach called on Shirley Power, National Secretary to give the Annual Report of the National Executive Board 2016-17.
A copy of the Annual Report had been circulated to all Guilds in March 2017.

In addition to the information contained within the report, the following extended information was conveyed to the membership:

There was one change to the list of 27 Federation Presidents. This occurred in April when Mildred Keyes from Kildare Federation stepped down as President of Kildare at their Federation AGM as Mildred has relocated to Galway to be closer to her family. We thank Mildred for her input and commitment to the NAC and wish her well in her new endeavours. In her place, we welcome on board Nellie Dillon Forde as Interim President for the coming year and we wish Nellie every success.

Following discussion at the October Board Meeting, our National President appointed Anne Devitt from South Tipperary Federation as the National P.R.O. for the Association on the 19th November, 2016. We would encourage all Federation P.R.O.'s to maintain a contact with Anne and help Anne in ensuring that adequate publicity of our Association is achieved.

The chair of the Finance committee, Mary G. MacNamara proposes a change to the Finance Committee for this coming year and in addition to the four people outlined on the top of this slide, three additional members of the Board have agreed to come on Board the Finance Committee. The role of the Finance committee is crucial in the overseeing of the financial assets of the Association and it generally meets in advance of the National Executive Board Meetings to review and discuss all finances relating to both Central Office and An Grianán but at times additional meetings are required. Proposals and anomalies arising from the financial accounts are then brought to the National Executive Board for further discussion and decision making.

Following our Winter Conference in Westport, the National executive Board have taken on board the views of the members and are looking at new options for the development by the Handcraft committee of weeks similar to that of Handcraft week but with an identity of its own so that bookings are not confused. This week will be known as 'Hobbycraft' week. We thank the Handcraft Committee and all the teachers for their support in this regard and for their continued work throughout the year. Our National President, Marie O'Toole has joined the Handcraft Committee this year in representation of the Board.

The National Executive Board decided last summer that both the Website and the IT Systems in both Central Office and An Grianán required attention. We approached our current provider and costs were absorborant so we decided to look elsewhere to compare prices. We came in contact with Enclude who from the outset were very helpful in helping us decide what we needed from a **C**ustomer **R**elationship **M**anagement system. We have been working with Enclude on building both a database system for Central Office and a booking in system for An Grianán through Salesforce. We are currently entering in to the final stages of the project and we hope that over the summer months this year both systems will be fully operational.

As project lead on these projects, I must give full credit to the staff of Central Office and to Niamh in An Grianán for all the work and time they have given in support of the these projects. We hope that when both systems are operational, they will give us the flexibility we need to access membership data and be able to utilise our Association information to its full potential for the benefit of our organisation and members alike. We would like to assure members that no individual information about any member would ever be disclosed but that information will be only be used collectively for statistical data purposes. Our new systems will be cloud based and again full back-up and protection of data is assured. Our information will not sit in 'world cloud' but rather 'European Cloud' and in this regard all of the information is protected under EU legislation, is governed by EU law and ICA will have full back-up control of the information.

The ICA has been a member of COFACE (The Confederation of Family & Community Organisations of the European Union) now since the early 70's. If you recall, I asked your permission this time last year to spend the year assessing our involvement within the COAFACE structure. My observation following that assessment is that fantastic work is and continues to be carried out by COFACE and that the profile of COFACE at EU level within Brussels has certainly increased since the appointment of their new Director, Liz Gosme last year. Liz has played a major part in the development and progression of COFACE mobilisation in the public network. I would still question, however, our involvement at such a high level of the organisation as I don't feel that we are in a position to utilize the information to its full potential. We do not have the manpower to provide the expertise and commitment required to, in turn; push their policy drives and directives at Government levels here in Ireland.

I did, however, propose to the Finance Committee that we maintain our full membership to COFACE for the coming year as next April, COFACE will celebrate their 60th Anniversary and given that we have been involved fully since the 1970's, we are one of their longest serving members. Following on from there, I would not propose to remove ourselves fully from COFACE but I would suggest that we reduce our membership level from full Administrative Council membership to General Assembly membership, which would also reduce our membership fee by half. Should our Association position develop in the years following, we can always upgrade our membership again. I have indicated to COFACE that this may be a consideration of the Board next year and although disappointed, they are happy that we will remain involved and feel that still have common goals to work on collectively in moving forward.

We are fully compliant with CRA requirements and we will continue to work with the CRA in ensuring that we maintain continuous overall compliance. In relation to the Governance Code, the Board are still not in a position to sign up for the Governance Code as we do not fulfil the required standards relating to policy and procedures. There is a huge volume of work that needs to be carried out and the Board have recently agreed to allow a member of staff work some additional hours to assist me in moving this element of the Governance Code requirement forward. It is not only for the Governance code that we need to complete this work but so that, we, as an organisation can promote a code of good practice within our business structure. I firmly believe that we have a responsibility to provide and follow a code of good practice both for the organisation and for our employees and for me this is the basis on which good practice is determined and will help us in determining a confidence in our practices to both our external customers and you, the membership, alike. As I said, there is a huge amount of work involved but completion is achievable and attainable which is the most important thing so hopefully the next couple of months will see great strides in this project.

As we all know, after 34 years of dedicated service, Ann Flanagan retired as our Manager at An Grianán in the spring of 2016. We thank Ann for commitment to the facility during her employment and we wish her every happiness in her retirement. Niamh Donegan was appointed as Interim Manager on 29th August, 2016. Niamh came to us with great experience within the hospitality sector and her presence at An Grianán has proved very positive thus far with both the members and staff alike. We extend to her a warm ICA welcome.

The Year ahead - As I mentioned earlier there is a lot of work to be completed in relation to achieving compliance to the Governance Code standard. I hope that the coming months will see us well on our way to ensuring that our Association will be in a position to adopt the code. We envisage that this will make for better work practices within the Association and as result provide a stronger and more transparent platform from which we work.

The strategic plan determined by the Association in 2012 has not seen a full review since its hand-over in 2012. The current Board will be meeting in the coming weeks to commence work on assessing, reviewing and moving forward on what we feel are achievable plans for the Associations in current times with a view to determining a clear perspective of what is expected so that realistic and achievable improvements can and will hopefully be made for the long-term benefit of ICA and our members in terms of future planning.

We thank you for your support and encouragement to date and we look forward with confidence to the year ahead.

Shirley thanked the membership for their attention and on behalf of the Officers and Board presented her report for adoption by the membership. She announced that Questions and Answers on the Annual Report would be taken under the Questions & Answers in the afternoon session.

ITEM 9

Adoption of the National Executive Board Report

Cathaoirleach proposed the Adoption of the Annual Report of the National Executive Board. Cathaoirleach then called on the members present to second the report.
The members voted unanimously in Favour and the report was adopted.

ITEM 10

The Report from the National Advisory Committee 2016-17

Cathaoirleach called on Susan Potts, Chair of the NAC to give the Report from the National Advisory

Committee 2016-17.
Susan addressed, Madam President, Former National Presidents Regional Presidents, National Officers and Fellow Members.
Since May 14th 2016 the National Advisory committee on your behalf have had an extensive calendar of events and a very busy year. While supporting and representing our individual Federations at many local ICA events, members of the NAC have attended national events and competitions. Along with their Federation duties Members of the NAC have represented our association, networked on its behalf, participated in a wide number of forums and have been involved in focus groups and workshops some of which have been …….

- The mobile phone and broadband task force
- Realising our rural potential – an action plan for rural development
- The 121 Digital programme - A free scheme to educate in I.T skills
- The Rural water programme
- The All Island Dialogue on Brexit in Royal Hospital Kilmainham and Dublin Castle
- Age Actions "Towards a fair state pension for women Pensioners"
- The 7th world congress on Women's Mental Health hosted by the NWCI
- The Macra Na Feirme achievement awards
- The 16th Annual Civil Society Forum on Human Rights – hosted by Dept of Foreign Affairs
- The Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022
- Go for Life Games

This is just a taste of what we have been up to. While some links to these events have been posted, we also intend to post them to our website and mailings going forward.

In October we attended the Federation Officers training in An Grianán and found the workshop format of this very productive and as a direct consequence of this is we now have a workshop element to our NAC meetings, this involves Federation Presidents forming Regional groups for discussion, with each of the 4 Regional Presidents giving a report afterwards. This has been very well received; it's opened up dialogue, shared ideas and given solutions to problems. Following the most recent NAC meeting of January 29th, Regional President Barbara Meer invited Federation Presidents to a meeting on March 4th, this to further expand on discussions we previously had. This meeting tackled many issues and grew lots of ideas.

The NAC are eager to develop the brand that is ICA, we are eager to grow our membership and maintain the membership we already have. To this end we are putting in place some new events to further the profile of ICA, a "National Recruitment Day" in October and a "Yarnbomb" event in each Federation to celebrate "International Women's Day" which is held every year on March 8th. Preparations for these have already begun.

On behalf of the NAC I would like to thank you all for your attention today and I give you my promise of hard work and diligence going forward.
Thank you very much.

ITEM 11
Voting – Constitutional Amendments

Cathaoirleach called on Mairead O'Carroll, Chair of Procedures Committee.

Motion No: 1
Read by Esther Cahill was proposed by Mourneabbey Guild, Cork Federation and ratified by the Procedures Committee.

This motion pertains to:
Page: 29 Section X - Finance, Income and Property.
Subsection 83 Membership Fees (b)

Original text:
The annual membership subscription is determined by the National Executive Board guided by the financial

policy and requirements of the Association, and may be set for a period of no more than three years without review. Notice of the annual subscription amount shall be communicated to all Guilds prior to 1 March each year.

Recommendation

The annual membership subscription is determined by the National Executive Board guided by the financial policy and requirements of the Association, and may be set for a period of no more than three years without review. Notice of the annual subscription amount shall be communicated to all Guilds prior to 1st October each year. To allow for membership to be paid in line with all other government bodies and accounting practices, the membership year will run from 1st January to 31st December each year.

Mairead O'Carroll, Chair of Procedures called on the National Treasurer, Mary MacNamara to explain how this would work going forward. Mary explained that the annual membership fee from 31st May 2018 to Dec 31st 2018 would be €25 (half year) thereafter the Annual Membership would run from the 1st January to the 31st Dec each year (full year).

The motion was seconded by Deirdre Hickey Cork Federation President.
No other members came forward to speak on this motion
Voting Delegates voted: In Favour: 105, Against: 7, Abstentions: 1.

Mairead O'Carroll announced the motion was passed.

Motion No: 2

Read by Noeline Power. Proposed by Tramore Guild, Waterford Federation and ratified by the Procedures Committee.
Seconded by Margaret Kennedy

This motion pertains to:
Page: 17 Section VI - Annual General Meeting.
Subsection 46 Annual General Meeting (e)
Original text:
The Annual General Meeting shall be held in May each year.
Recommendation
The Annual General Meeting shall be held in May of each year and be held in Dublin each year.

Toke Stevens, Mulranny Guild, Mayo Federation –Spoke against, as prices are more reasonable outside Dublin.
Mary Melia, Portmarnock Guild, Dublin Federation - Against because of cost.
Hazel Glennon, Borris in Ossory Guild, Laois Federation - In Favour, as people who have free travel find it is easier to travel to Dublin on public transport.
Nellie Dillon, Clane Guild, Kildare Federation – Against, Dublin is too expensive
Susan Reynolds, Louth Village Guild, Louth Federation- Against in part and suggested every second year AGM could be held in Dublin.
Sheila Commerford, Tory Hill Guild, Kilkenny Federation – Against, it should move around the county.
Mairead O'Carroll called on the delegates to vote.
Voting: 17: In Favour. No: As there was an overwhelming show of cards for the no vote, Mairead O'Carroll declared the motion was not passed.

Motion No: 3

Proposed by Mary Darcy, Ballyfad Guild, Wexford Federation and ratified by the Procedures Committee. Anne O'Connor Seconded.

Page: 15 Section V - Federations.
Subsection 39 Term of Office (a)

Original Text:
The term of office of each Federation Officer and member of the Federation committee is three years.

Recommendation
The term of office of each Federation Officer and member of the Federation committee is three years. However, to facilitate the continuity of the business of the Association, one Officer will remain on the committee in another role, eg. Vice-President, Craft Promoter etc., having been voted in for a three year term.

Sheila Comerford, Tory Hill Guild, Kilkenny Federation - Sought clarification as to the number of years in a role.
Angela O'Byrne, Tallaght Guild, Dublin Federation, not in Favour, they should stay on for 1 extra year only.
Mary McGrail, Westport Guild, Mayo Federation, the term of 1 year was the original wording how can you turn around and make a different decision now. She looked for clarification as to the duration, was it an extra year or three years.
Mary Fitzgerald, Oulart Guild, Wexford Federation, spoke in Favour of remaining on after term of office ended as this would ensure continuity.
Alice Rowley, Meelick Guild, Co Mayo, read the wording of the Recommendation as "stay on as a committee member for 1 year".
Norah McDermot, from her seat said her Guild had voted on the wording that they would remain on for 3 years her Guild did not vote on 1 year time period.

Motion was withdrawn due to lack of clarity, Mairead O'Carroll asked for a show of cards from the voting delegates, all voted In Favour of withdrawing the motion.

Motion No: 4
Proposed by Ballyfad Guild, Wexford Federation, and the National Executive Board and ratified by the Procedures Committee.
Marie O'Toole proposed the motion on behalf of the NEB, it was seconded by Mary Darcy of Ballyfad Guild.

This motion pertains to:
Page: 26 Section VIII - National Advisory Committee.
Subsection 73 Structure of the National Advisory Committee (f)
Original Text
The outgoing National President for the period of one year immediately following the completion of her term of office as National President (where applicable)
Recommendation
(**a**)**To remove/delete the words (where applicable)**
(b)The outgoing National President for a period of one year immediately following the completion of her term of office as National President will also be on the Board for one year as a non-voting/non-executive member.

There were no speakers.
Votes: In Favour: 105, Against: 0, Abstentions: 6
The Motion was carried.

Motion No 5

Regional Areas and Regional Presidents, proposed by the National Executive Board and ratified by the Procedures Committee.

Proposer Marie O'Toole Seconded by Joanne Allen, Clare Federation

The country is currently divided into two regions:
(1) South and East

(2) Borders Midlands and West

These regions were implemented, on advice when the new Constitution came into force.
For a trial period from 2018-2021 the National Executive Board propose that each Regional President take responsibility for one of the following areas:

(1) The North East comprising of counties Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, Longford, Meath, Dublin and Westmeath.
(2) The South East comprising of counties Wexford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wicklow, Laois, Kildare and Offaly.
(3) The South West comprising of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Clare, Tipperary North, Tipperary South and Waterford.
(4) The North West comprising of Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Letrim and Donegal

A map of the proposed new regions was projected on screen.

Each Regional President has no more than 7 Federations nor less than 6 making it (hopefully) more representative and easier for her to visit all Federations in her area.

Dee Deveraux, Our Lady's Island Guild, Wexford Federation - In Favour: as a Regional President would be easier to organize and attend events without having to travel long distances.
Toka Stevens, Mulranny Guild, Mayo Federation: In Favour and sought clarification that these new regions would start with the elections in 2018. This was confirmed

Votes: In Favour: 107, Against: 0, Abstentions: 2. The Motion was carried.

Marie O'Toole thanked the Procedures Committee and said that Questions and answers would be deferred to the end of the afternoon session.

ITEM 12
Marie then invited Dorothy Laity and Emma (Assistance Dog) Castlepollard Guild, Westmeath Federation to address the delegates. Dorothy spoke about the charity Dogs for Disabled, this charity provides Assistance Dogs for adults with disabilities. Dorothy explained about the positive impact these dogs have on peoples quality of life also that funds for this charity were stretched at this time, she then requested that the Guilds would support this charity if at all possible.

Break for Lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION

ITEM 1
Welcome Back by Marie O'Toole
Marie called upon Margaret McMillan European Area President of ACWW.

Margaret McMillan, European Area President of ACWW spoke about the long association of the ICA and ACWW and that this organisation connects members in 74 different countries.
2017 is the 40th anniversary of ACWW.
Margaret continued to talk about the many development projects they were involved in from planting to piggeries from sewing machines to sunflowers. The ACWW have sponsored other projects such as wells and women's shelters in Georgia. Margaret thanked the ICA for their generosity over the years and looked forward their continuing support.

Cathaoirleach, Marie O'Toole, called on Susan Potts, Chair of the NAC to chair the remainder of the meeting.

ITEM 2
Marie O'Toole, National President's Address

Fellow Officers, Former National Presidents, Guests and Fellow Members

Today I would like to talk to you about recruitment.
When Ernest Shackleton placed an advertisement in the London Times, recruiting a crew to sail with him on his 1907 exploration of the South Pole it read "Wanted Men for hazardous journey, Low Wages, Bitter Cold, Long Hours in complete darkness, Safe return doubtful, Honour and recognition in the event of success" — he was inundated with requests from men all eager to join him.

What are we in the ICA offering — no hazardous journey, warm and safe surroundings, safe return home, hopefully, also recognition in the event of success and most importantly fellowship and friendship, so why are we not being inundated with requests to join our Association?

Are we offering friendship — are new members made welcome, do we assign someone to look after them and introduce them to existing members?
It's very daunting for any prospective member to attend a Guild on their own. Obviously existing members will have all forged friendships over the years and it's sometimes difficult for them to embrace change and have someone new arrive on their doorstep.

I cannot understand why people who relocate to a new area, and this is happening on an ongoing basis, women leaving the city and relocating to the country for a better quality of life for their families, do not join. We should be targeting these ladies as joining the ICA is an ideal way to break into a community. I'm passionate about ICA and cannot believe that all women don't want to join our great Association.

On my travels around the country to various events, the number of women who say to me that they didn't know there was an ICA not only in their area but on their doorstep.
I carry with me at all times a list of the Federations and their Guilds which makes it easy for me to pinpoint their nearest Guild.

The other side of the argument could be that if Guilds or Federations are not active in their communities then prospective members wouldn't know they exist, so the onus is on you the Guild and Federation Presidents to publicise every event you are hosting. I'm well aware that most of you are engaged in community activities such as Meals on Wheels, Citizens Advise, working on a voluntary basis in your local Charity Shop, etc. You are all so generous with your time and effort in collecting money for various charities, however, you need to have this publicised in your local newspapers and on local radio. You only have to look at the number of Calico Dolls that were made by you, our members, the blankets knitted for Syrian refugees, the shoes collected for Jacket off my Back and much more. This was all down to your generosity so please let everyone know what you are doing.

You also need to be active in your Guilds, no one wants to attend a talking shop, where the members sit around drinking tea and are doing nothing. We have to offer new and existing members something that will make them leave their homes and come out to a Guild, whether it's arts, crafts, interesting speakers, etc. and the only way you will keep your members coming back is to offer them something that they want to do.

The other side of the coin is when you have a new member is not to push her into taking a position on Committee, this happens in a lot of Guilds, the new member is only in the door and suddenly she's asked to take the role of President/Secretary/Treasurer as no one else wants the position. Please give them time to settle in as a member and learn how we work or else you will frighten them off.

Now I'll come to the serial committee member, this is the lady who has been on the committee since Adam was a lad and constitution or no constitution, she's not coming off, she doesn't do anything as she's done it all before and she wants to be there on committee to hear first-hand what's being planned. She will invariably pour cold water on anything different that's suggested. . It's great to try something new and if it doesn't work, there's no harm, better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all, maybe I'm mixing that up with love, better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all!!! But I'm sure you'll understand where I'm coming from.

Guild and Federation Presidents come into office with such enthusiasm; however, in order to change things for the better they need the support of their fellow members.

The one thing I hear on occasion is that we never hear what's going on at National level. We go to a lot of trouble and expense to compile and send out a monthly newsletter to keep you all updated, the onus is on your Guild/Federation Secretary to read that newsletter at your business meeting. Likewise, if anything urgent and interesting is sent to us that we feel you should know, an email is sent to Federation Presidents to convey it to her members. If you don't read your emails you are missing out.

You will all by now have had your AGMs and there will be a lot of new committee members in situ, it's the life blood of all Guilds to have a change and new ideas In order to progress. To carry out your role efficiently, you must attend committee meetings. It's also imperative that you attend Federation Meetings, there are only about four of these a year and this is where you will meet other members, where you learn what activities other Guilds are engaged in and maybe pick up a few ideas along the way.

Next year I go out of Office as will all of our Officers and I would encourage as many of you as possible to consider putting your name forward for a position, that's if you fit the criteria as outlined in our Constitution. It's very worthwhile, obviously hard work and commitment is a prerequisite. It's not just a case of attending meetings; and going to events, you would never believe that so much work goes on in the background in order to keep the ICA flag flying. We don't always enjoy the work; sometimes there are difficult decisions to be made, there's plenty of debate and discussion in order to reach a consensus and that's what it's all about, however, everything we do is for the good of our Association.

I would like to advise that we plan on having a National Recruitment drive in the autumn, this will be organised by our Recruitment Committee, details will be sent out to your Federation Presidents and we hope it will be a huge success. If at any time you need any material for recruitment events please don't hesitate to contact your Federation President or Regional President.

The Board has given serious thought to the subject of continuation throughout the organisation. They issued a motion to this end, i.e. the President would remain on the Board in a supportive capacity for one year. We also feel continuation from Board to Board is important, in this respect we have decided to employ an Operations Manager in Central Office, on a temporary contract. This will be revised at the end of the term

In conclusion I would like to thank my fellow officers for all their excellent work today and over the past year. Also to the Chairs of various Committees, Procedures, Handcraft and Competitions. To the Board and National Advisory Committee to the staff at Central Office, Anna, Colette and Yvonne, to Niamh, the Manager at An Grianán and her staff.
A special thanks to you our members for your continued support and friendship and for being here today.

ITEM 3
Report from the Competitions Committee, Wexford Federation

Susan Potts calls on Deirdre Connery Chair of the Competitions Committee to present her report. Deirdre spoke of the work of the Competitions Committee through the year.

Competition Results 2016/2017

Comórtas Gael Linn – Scéal -

1. Kathleen Leahy, Mainistir na Feile Guild, Limerick Federation
2. Hilda Roche, Ashford Guild, Wicklow Federation

Inter-Federation Cup for Art – Photography –
Black and White photograph – "Two Happy Faces"

1. Susanna Braswell, Wicklow Town Guild
2. Susanna Braswell, Wicklow Town Guild, Wicklow
3. Niamh Headon, Ballymore Eustace Guild, Kildare

Colour Photograph Title: "A Street Scene"

1. Stephanie McDonald, Ashford Guild, Wicklow
2. Breda Buckley, Goleen Guild, Cork
3. Joint place: Truda Houston, Sligo Town Guild, Sligo and Marie Smyth, Dollymount Guild, Dublin

Overall Winner of Inter-Federation Cup for Art: **Susanna Braswell, Wicklow Town Guild, Wicklow**

Baumann Cup for Art – Oil painting – "Through my window" -

1. Anne Edwards, Ballyconnell Guild, Carlow Federation
2. Paula O'Reilly, Moynalty Guild, Meath Federation
3. Mary Timmons, Ballyconnell Guild, Carlow Federation

ICA Trophy for Reporting 2017

1. Marian Donnelly, Camross Guild, Wexford
2. Mary Devereux, Cushinstown Guild, Wexford

Betty Manning Trophy - Guild Year Book

1. Ballingeary Guild, South Tipperary
2. Bonniconlon Guild, Mayo
3. Ballyconnell Guild, Carlow

Contest Committee Competition – 4 Christmas Tree Decorations -

1. Carol Lynch, Muff Guild, Donegal
2. Helen Carolan, Dun Laoghaire Guild, Dublin
3. Pauline Murray, Edenderry Guild, Offaly

Muriel Gahan Rosebowl, Hand knitted Adult Poncho/Cape/Wrap -

1. Kate Graham, Blackrock Guild, Dublin Federation.
2. May Cheevers, Longford Town Guild, Longford Federation.
3. Ethel Patterson, Raphoe Guild, Donegal Federation.

Inter Federation Cup for Crafts – Machined Applique Table Runner -

1. Marguerite Cleary, Blackrock Guild, Dublin Federation,
2. Eleanor Carleton, Clones Guild, Monaghan Federation,
3. Carol McKay, Drumboylan Guild, Roscommon Federation.

ITEM 4

Handcraft Teacher's Memorial Trophy -

Josephine Helly, Chair of the Handcraft Committee to be called to present the Handcraft Teacher's Memorial Trophy.

1. Mary Birney, Minaun Guild, Waterford

Breda McDonald Trophy – Hobby -

Breda Banville calls on Breda McDonald to present the Breda McDonald Trophy.

1. Margaret Mason , Knockraha Guild, Cork
2. Mary O'Gorman, Maynooth Guild, Kildare
3. Nancy Ryan, Nenagh Guild, North Tipperary

ITEM 5

Roll Call of Federations

Carlow	Kerry	Mayo	South Tipperary
Cavan	Kildare	Meath	Waterford
Clare	Kilkenny	Monaghan	Westmeath
Cork	Laois	Offaly	Wexford
Donegal	Leitrim	Roscommon	Wicklow
Dublin	Limerick	Sligo	
Galway	Longford Louth	North Tipperary	

ITEM 6
Overview by Manager of An Grianán Niamh Donegan

As Niamh Donegan Manager of An Grianán was called away to a family emergency Joanne Allen presented the An Grianán Report as Chair of the Development and Promotion of An Grianán Committee. Susan Potts called on Joanne who said that she would paraphrase Niamh's report.

Joanne stated that Niamh spoke of the challenges she faced in An Grianán, the flood, the staffing changes and also the work needed to update the facilities and her vision for the future. Niamh felt that things were beginning to improve in An Grianán. An Grianán are currently engaging in negotiations with a possible tenant for the Garden Centre and hopes that the Garden Centre will re-open again by late summer. Niamh hopes to introduce new initiatives in the kitchen in the hope of moving forward in the culinary sense at An Grianán and part of this project would be to use and source local and seasonal food for the menus in An Grianán. Bookings are coming in nicely for the remainder of 2017 and for 2018 also, which is great. An Grianán welcomed new groups like the Mothers Union Conference, the Young Labour Conference, Retired Nurses group and a Vintage Car Rally to the facility this year and hopes to improve on conferencing events going forward as these now form a large part of our business income. There is already one conference booked for 2019 and hopefully before long, this will be added to. An Grianán has introduced various new courses and Federations and Guilds are delighted with these additional offerings.
Joanne thanked the staff of An Grianán for their great work and support throughout the year and also to the members of ICA who have supported An Grianán through their visits and their generosity towards the facility. It is the support of both that enables the management to enhance An Grianán and ensure it remains a viable part of our Association in to the future.
Joanne finished by noting that as Chair of the Promotion & Development of An Grianán Committee and as part of the Board, that the Board looked forward to working with Niamh and the Staff at An Grianán in strategic planning for the future of An Grianán.
Joanne thanked the membership for their attention.

ITEM 7
Susan Potts announced the Raffle results.

ITEM 8
Questions and Answers
Question 1 - Colette Spillane, Castlegregory Guild, Kerry Federation
The AGM and Conferences should travel to all areas but every 5th one should be held in An Grianán to support it in the quitter months.
Marie O'Toole responded stating that in 2014 the AGM was held in An Grianán, only 75 attended as it is too difficult to get to. Other meetings such as election rallies would continue to be held there.

Question 2 - Nellie Dillon, Clane Guild, Kildare Federation
Because of her interest in ACWW she brought a booklet from 1954 which spoke of a Mrs Murphy from Delgany attending an ACWW conference in Queensland Canada.

Question 3 - Angela O'Byrne, Tallaght Guild
Praised Marie O'Toole on her speech. She felt the Information Officers were sadly missed and would like to see them again in Dublin Federation.

Question 4 - Rosario Fitzsimons, Donaghpatrick Guild, Co Meath
An Grianán should be targeting groups such as the Active Retirement to attend An Grianán.
Rosario went on to say that there are active Information Officers in Meath Federation.
ICA Diary, could this go back to the soft cover with the flap on the inside?

Marie O'Toole responded,
The diary would be looked into but this would depend on cost.
There is an Active Retirement event in the RDS next week, both Niamh Donegan and Marie would be attending to promote An Grianán.
Also Active Retirement and the Men's Sheds Tallaght are going to An Grianán for a taster of what is on offer.

Question 5 - Mary McGreal, Westport Guild, Mayo Federation
We need younger people in the organization and not just ones with free travel.
Marie O'Toole responded saying that they were trying and that Guilds with young members need to look after them.

Question 6 - Dee Devereaux, Our Lady's Island Guild, Wexford Federation
We need a lift in An Grianán to make it accessible.
Marie O'Toole responded stating that the building is a listed building so there are restrictions, they have spoken to Louth County Council and were not permitted to install a lift. However people with mobility problems can request a room on the ground floor. The Kellogg Hall has now been made accessible and there is also an accessible toilet.

Question 7 - Maura McManus, Gleann Guild, Sligo Federation
She wanted to second what Mary McGreal said. We need to market the ICA to a whole new generation of women. The ICA should set aside staff and funding to help people set up new Guilds in their areas.

Question 8 - Susan Reynolds, Louth Village Guild, Louth Federation
An announcement was made requesting that members of Louth Federation who had travelled on the Federation Bus had to leave due to unexpected circumstances.

Question 9 - Mary Fitzgerald, Oulart Guild, Wexford Federation
Bridgetown College TY Guild is now in its 3rd year and they are very enthusiastic and willing to take on new roles in the Guild as required.

Marie O'Toole responded stating that there was a reduction in fees for members aged 16 to 19 years and that it was lovely to finish on such a positive note.

ITEM 10
The National President called on Barbara Meer, Regional President of Border, Midlands and West to give the vote of thanks. Barbara thanked the host Federations.
Shirley Power reminded all voting delegates to return their voting traffic lights on exit.

The meeting closed.