

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE DORNOCH HERITAGE SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
(DHSCIO)
HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER 2023**

- 1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:** Alison Davies, co-chairing with Andrew Senior, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. MEMBERS PRESENT:** Patricia Balloch, Anthea Bannatyne, John Barnes, Jerry Bishop (Treasurer), Joan Bishop, Patricia Blair, Hazel Cameron, Alison Davies (Co-Chair), Gordon Davies, Susan Findlay, Stuart Gardiner, Sue Gardiner, Lyn Hobson, William Irwin, Laura Kasim, Ann Kerr, Barry Kerr, Andy Kirby, Fiona MacDonald, Alasdair MacKay, Ian Mackay, John Mackay, Maureen C Mackay, WM Mackay, Heather Martin, Rose Matheson, Glen McGill, Fiona McKinlay, Jimmy Melville, Mario Moens, Graeme Muckhart, Brian Munro, George Munro, Heather Murray, Christine Murray, Patrick Murray, John Padbury, Kate Robinson, Andrew Senior (Co-Chair), Lorna Senior, Deborah Thomassen, Peter Wild, Sally Wild. In attendance: Lynne Mahoney (Historylinks Museum Curator).
- 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Jill Barnes, Mr & Mrs Bromage, Christine Callingham, Ann Coombs, Fiona and Neil Hampton, Richard Hickson, Annie MacDonald, Willie Morrison, Eilidh Paterson, Tony Rundle.
- 4. MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2022:** The minutes were proposed, seconded and accepted as a correct record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.
- 5. BOARD MEMBERSHIP:** Andrew Senior, Co-Chair, remarked that the last 12 months have seen seismic changes to the Board of Trustees. Elizabeth Oakes, who died in February 2023, will be sorely missed. She was a valued member of the museum, serving as both a volunteer, a committee member and a Trustee. Brian Munro moved to Inverness to enable his wife to be nearer Raigmore for treatment. Sadly, Brian's wife, Susan, died in August and condolences were extended to Brian who was in attendance. Tony Rundle has relocated to the south of England to be nearer his family. He had many roles and has left a very large gap which will be difficult to fill. To allow Jerry Bishop to take over the role of SCIO Treasurer, he has stepped down as Chair, handing over to Alison Davies and Andrew Senior who are sharing the role.

In accordance with the SCIO's constitution, Alison Davies and Andrew Senior retired as Elected Charity Trustees but were standing for re-election. Jerry Bishop was also standing for re-election. Two new Board members were proposed. Fiona McKinlay, a retired GP Practice Manager, and Richard Hickson, ex CEO of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum, were subsequently elected by the meeting, as were those standing for re-election.

The Board is looking for additional members. The meeting was advised that anyone interested should approach a member of the Board.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) Review of 22/23 Accounts. The meeting considered the audited accounts of the SCIO for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. Details of invested funds and the management of donations towards the Hub Extension were also discussed. It was agreed that the accounts be approved and adopted.
- b) The meeting was informed that the Board had recommended that Voluntary Groups Sutherland (VGS) should be reappointed to act as the Independent Examiner of the SCIO's accounts. This was agreed.
- c) The SCIO is now officially a Real Living Wage employer.
- d) With the aid of a grant, renewable heating was installed in the offices of the museum building with the aim of reducing electricity costs overall.
- e) A question over comparative membership numbers and subscriptions raised was asked from the floor. As he did not have the information to hand, Jerry Bishop advised that a response would be forthcoming.

7. RESOLUTION – TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION TO EITHER (i) £15 PER PERSON OR (ii) £20 PER PERSON: Alison Davies, Co-Chair, advised that membership fees had not risen for some 10 years and that the Board recommended an increase with effect from 2024. Those present were asked to vote for their preference which resulted in an agreed increase to £20 per annum. (26 votes for £20, 20 votes for £15)

8. HERITAGE HUB EXTENSION – PROJECT UPDATE: Alison Davies, Co-Chair, advised the meeting of the current position and thanked everyone for their support. Jerry Bishop then advised the meeting of the current financial position in respect of grants received and anticipated, and the receipt of appeal donations. A rigorous tendering process had led to the identification of a preferred contractor. It was agreed by the meeting that GMR Henderson of Wick would be appointed formally the following day. Work will commence on site on 6 November 2023 with the expectation that the extension will be ready for internal fittings in April. Formal opening will be later in the summer of 2024.

A question was raised from the floor regarding the stability of the contractor and insurances in place. Jerry Bishop confirmed that these had been rigorously checked.

9. REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES: Due to the shortage of time, the meeting was advised that written reports would be circulated to all members. Any questions arising should be directed to the Co-Chairs.

10. CLOSING REMARKS: Alison Davies, Co-Chair, concluded by thanking all of the SCIO's volunteers, the Curator, Museum Assistant and Outreach Worker. There being no further business, she thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

SCIO Trustees report 2022/2023

The board of trustees met 5 times in the last financial year (2022/2023) and the minutes of these meetings are available on the Historylinks website.

Seismic changes occurred in the board over the course of the year. Sadly, Elizabeth Oakes passed away in February which was a shock to us all. She had been a tremendous servant to the museum and the trustees board for many years and will be sorely missed. Then Brian Munro resigned from the board to move back to Inverness to be nearer Raigmore Hospital for his wife, Susan, to attend for regular treatment. We were saddened to hear that Susan subsequently passed away in August and we extend our condolences to Brian and his family.

And then, finally, Tony Rundle resigned from the board after many years of hard work to relocate closer to his family on the south coast leaving a very large gap to fill. As a result of this, in April, the structure of the board was altered to allow Jerry Bishop to take over as treasurer, and Alison Davies and Andrew Senior took over as co-chairs of the board of trustees. The trustees are joined in their meetings by Peter Wild (as chair of the DHS subcommittee) and by our museum curator, Lynne Mahoney who both sit in attendance. We have subsequently been joined by two new trustees, who are Fiona McKinlay and Richard Hickson

A lot of the discussions this year have taken place about the Heritage Hub project and the fundraising effort to bring the project to realization. But the board has also dealt with the energy savings project phase 1 (with insulation and ground source heating for the offices and archive store) supported by a grant from Museum Galleries Scotland.

We have also proceeded with a change in collection management software from Adlib to Plexus which is much more suitable for a museum of Historylinks' size, and we would like to express our thanks to Garve at Plexus for all his help and expertise in facilitating this.

At year end, membership stands at 257 of which 12 are honorary, 46 associate, and there are 199 full members defined as those within the IV25 postcode.

Looking forward the board has also developed links with Pinehurst (Tufts Archive) in North Carolina related to Donald Ross and we have secured a new loan agreement for the civic robes and chain of office which we hope will have a dedicated display space in the refurbished museum with the Royal Charter. We will also continue work on governance issues towards the re-accreditation of the museum.

Andrew Senior
October 2023

DHS Annual Report 12th October 2023

Our Film night started up again after Covid cancellations and Burns Supper returned with a memorable evening including an excellent rendition by Bill Shannon of *Holy Willie's Prayer*.

We ran our usual mix of talks and fund-raising events. As always, we would like to thank the Golf club for being so accommodating.

We sadly lost one of our diligent committee with the sad passing of Elizabeth Oaks in the spring and we have installed a garden trough at the Museum in her memory.

Other committee members, Brian Munro and Tony Rundle left the area and we owe a debt to their valued support over the years.

Since then, Heather Murray and Andrew Senior joined the Committee and Patricia Balloch left the committee and re-joined as she missed us so much.

The Dornoch Heritage Society is delighted to continue supporting the work of Historylinks in this very exciting time.

Peter Wild

INCOME ANALYSIS: to 31/3/2023

	2023	2022			
DONATIONS	£14,502	<i>£5,709</i>	Extension Project	£ 7,952	
			General	£ 1,967	
GRANTS	£14,610	<i>£37,484</i>	Highland Council (Revenue)	£ 6,272	
			MGS (Photo Equipment)	£ 716	
			MGS (Energy Saving Project)	£ 2,500	
			CoOp Community Fund (YCC)	£ 1,336	
			UHI (YCC)	£ 1,485	
			St Finnbarr's (YCC)	£ 1,000	
FUNDRAISING	£2,428	<i>£1,005</i>			
TRADING	£23,788	<i>£22,553</i>	Admissions	£ 15,765	<i>£14,016</i>
			Shop	£ 7,514	<i>£6,735</i>
			Other	£ 509	
FIT	£1,229	<i>£986</i>	Solar Panels		
GIFT AID	£3,057	<i>£1,993</i>			
OTHER	£2,355	<i>£26</i>			
TOTAL INCOME	£61,969	<i>£69,756</i>			

EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS: to 31/3/2023

	2023	2022		
FUNDRAISING	£684	<i>£0</i>		
TRADING	£3,877	<i>£2,504</i>	MUSEUM SHOP STOCK	
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	£47,895	<i>£47,373</i>	STAFF COSTS	£26,101
			PROJECTS	£6,616
			INSURANCE	£2,273
			ELECTRICITY *	£1,219
			REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	£1,467
			TELEPHONE & BROADBAND	£465
			WEBSITE (inc ARCHIVES)	£3,530
			WATER RATES	£1,041
GOVERNANCE	£70	<i>£75</i>	ACCOUNTS EXAMINER	
GRANTS & DONATIONS	£4,268	<i>£0</i>		
INVESTMENTS	£0	<i>£10,000</i>		

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£56,794

£59,952

CASH BALANCES: at 31/3/2023

9/10/23

Bank of Scotland	£10,520	Operating Account	<i>£13,874</i>
Clydesdale	£ 10,004	Heritage Society	<i>£8,995</i>
Virgin Money Charity Instant	£22,665	Extension Project	<i>£52,495</i>

TOTAL CASH AT BANK	£ 43,189		<i>£75,354</i>
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INVESTMENTS : at 31/3/2023

Current

Cambridge & Counties Bank	£ 10,660	Extension Project	<i>£10,660</i>
Hampshire Trust Bank (1)	£ 20,802	Extension Project	<i>£21,473</i>
Hampshire Trust Bank (2)	£ 10,103	Emergency Reserves	<i>£10,255</i>

TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£ 41,565		<i>£42,388</i>
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