

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE DORNOCH HERITAGE
SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (DHSCIO),
HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2022**

1. PRESENT: Jerry Bishop (Chair), Jill Barnes, John Barnes, Joan Bishop, John Chambers, Anne Coombs, Alison Davies, Wilf Hadley, Fiona Macdonald, Alasdair MacKay, Willie MacKay, Lynne Mahoney, Fiona McKinlay, Jimmy Melville, Graeme Muckart, Brian Munro, Heather Murray, Patrick Murray, Elizabeth Oakes, Eilidh Paterson, Kate Robinson, Tony Rundle, Andrew Senior, Lorna Senior, Caroline Seymour, William Sutherland and Peter Wild.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Anthea Bannatyne, Ken & Mary Bromage, Gordon Davies, Jennifer & Willie Morrison, Gwen Muir, Judi Sutherland and Sally Wild.

3. MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2021: It was agreed that the minutes be accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

4. TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22: The Chair of the Board reported on the SCIO's activities during the Financial Year (FY) 2021/22, stating that the year had, again, been challenging, due to the pandemic. However, the Museum had been able to re-open as often as regulations permitted. He stated that ~

- a) The SCIO's Board had met regularly, via video conferencing,
- b) Work was well underway with the Museum's re-accreditation process,
- c) There had been increases in earned income and Gift Aid,
- d) Membership of the charity had increased,
- e) A number of craft workshops had introduced a new audience to the Museum,
- f) Several hundred new records had been added to the Archives, with an increase in the number of archiving volunteers,
- g) Front-of-house volunteers had been welcomed back to the Museum, following the lockdown,
- h) Maintenance of the charity's Facebook page, and the on-line archive continued,
- i) The Young Curators Club had raised funds for the Extension Project, curated an exhibition for the Museum's 2022 season, and continue to meet on a regular basis.

5. REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES:

Museum Sub-committee: The Chair, Alison Davies, reported that ~

- a) The 10-member sub-committee meets every second month, overseeing the work of the Museum, and providing advice and support for the curator,
- b) The meeting's agenda includes consideration of a large number of potential acquisitions, and a full report from the curator,
- c) The Museum's various policies had been up-dated, as part of the Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) re-accreditation process,
- d) Karen Buchanan (Gairloch Museum) continued to offer assistance as part of the MGS accreditation mentoring team,
- e) She wished to pay tribute to the archiving team, the front-of-house and other volunteers, and particularly to the Curator and Museum Assistant.

Dornoch Heritage Society Sub-committee: The Chair, Peter Wild, reported that ~

- a) Despite the Society's season starting well with talks by Anne Mary Paterson (Lairds in Waiting) and Ian Leith (Treasures of the Wick Heritage Society), both the December Film Night and the Burns Supper had to be cancelled, due to Covid restrictions,
- b) Members enjoyed a February presentation by Lynne Mahoney, about the life of John Matheson, and also a talk about Telford's Churches by Alastair Armistead,
- c) A lunch had been held at the Royal Golf Hotel in March, which had raised funds for the Museum's extension project;
- d) The delayed Film Evening had eventually been held in April 2022,

- e) The usual stand promoting the Society and Historylinks Museum had been taken at the Sutherland Show,
- f) He was indebted to members of the DHS sub-committee, and also to the Royal Dornoch Golf Club for the use of its facilities,
- g) The current membership of the SCIO was 254, with 199 local members.

6. FINANCE:

- a) Review of 2021/22 Accounts: The meeting considered the accounts of the SCIO for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. Members also noted details of invested funds. It was **agreed** that the accounts be noted and approved.
- b) Appointment of Independent Examiner: The meeting was informed that the Board had recommended that Voluntary Groups Sutherland (VGS) continues to act as the Independent Examiner of the SCIO's accounts. **Agreed**
- c) Annual Subscriptions: In accordance with the Board's recommendation, it was **agreed** that the level of members' subscriptions remain at £10 per person.

7. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES: The meeting was advised that Alison Davies, Brian Munro, Tony Rundle and Andrew Senior were standing for re-election, and Jerry Bishop and Elizabeth Oakes were, in accordance with the SCIO's constitution, retiring but standing for re-election. It was **agreed** that the above named be re-elected nem-con.

8. CHANGES TO THE SCIO'S CONSTITUTION: The Chair advised the meeting that changes made to the constitution in 2018 had been, largely, in order to comply with Scottish Land Fund requirements. These no longer applied, and it was suggested that the proposed changes would improve the operation of the charity, and would not have any adverse effect on future applications for funding.

It was **proposed** that ~

Clause 7.3.2. Ratio of local members The words 'At all times, at least three-quarters of the members of the organisation are members of the Community' be amended to read 'At all times, at least two-thirds of the members of the organisation are members of the Community'.

Clause 40.1. Maximum number of Trustees The words 'Up to six individual persons elected as Charity Trustees by the Ordinary, Associate and Honorary Members' be amended to read 'up to ten individual persons elected as Charity Trustees by the Ordinary, Associate and Honorary Members'.

Clause 42.3. Trustee's term of office The words 'A retiring Elected Charity Trustee shall be eligible for re-election after one term of office, but no Charity Trustee can serve more than two consecutive terms of office, without at least one year out of office before being eligible again' be amended to read 'A retiring Elected Charity Trustee shall be eligible for re-election'.

It was **agreed** that the proposed changes be made to the SCIO's constitution.

9. ELECTION OF HONORARY MEMBERS: The Chair stated that the Board had agreed that three persons should be elected as Honorary Members, and he provided the meeting with brief details of their connection with the DSCIO. It was **agreed** that Harriet Schnell, James Schnell and Chris Murray be elected as Honorary Members.

10. PROJECT UP-DATES: The Chair reported that ~

- a) Arrangements were in hand to move the archiving software from Adlib to a more local server, with associated improvements in accessibility,
- b) Progress was being made in achieving radical energy-saving changes at the Museum, in accordance with recommendations made by a recent energy audit,
- c) The construction costs of the proposed extension to the Museum had risen sharply since August 2022, and he gave details of the present funding position. A member asked if there would be any financial benefit in the Museum becoming VAT-registered, and was advised

that, after taking professional advice, the Chair and Treasurer had concluded that there would not.

11. DONALD MACKAY: Lynne Mahoney (Curator) referred to various artefacts which the Museum had been holding, relating to Donald Mackay's service in the First World War. Contact with his wider family had generated some considerable research, and Historylinks was applying to the National Fund for Acquisitions for the purchase of relevant medals, documents and letters.

12. CLOSING REMARKS: The Chair concluded by thanking all the SCIO's volunteers, and the Curator and Museum Assistant. There being no further business, he thanked members for their attendance, and closed the meeting.
