

Edinburgh Sutherland Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Edinburgh Sutherland Association held on Monday 30th June 2014 at the offices of Scott Brownrigg, 7 Castle St, Edinburgh.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Elise Sutherland, Shonagh and David Morrison, Hilary and Bob Mackay, Anne Simpson, David Scott, James Maclean, Stewart Chalmers and Jim and Val Logan.

Those present were Andrew Mackenzie, Matthew Williams, Steven Anderson, Rachel Haworth, Anne and Willie Macintosh, Sandra James, David Ellison, Christine Smith, Lorraine Smith, Bill Manson and Mairi Manson Zena Morrison.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM

The Minutes of the last AGM had been circulated prior to the meeting. Andrew Mackenzie, President, asked for concerns and questions. None were raised. The Minutes were duly proposed by Sandra James, seconded by Willie Macintosh

3 PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President's Remarks (AGM 2014)

"Organised by Steven, with assistance from Anne, our Christmas dinner was held at Channings Hotel in Edinburgh in December on account of its head chef, Karen Mackay, being from Dornoch. The 28 guests enjoyed a delicious three course meal, and there was much fun, laughter and a few songs as old friends caught up. With £5 of the ticket price going to the Association and a raffle for a bottle of Clynelish donated by Don Sutherland, the event raised £265. At the Christmas dinner we were able to celebrate another successful year. We also paid tribute to Sandra James, who stood down as President in June after five years in the role. She was presented with a small gift as a token of the Committee's gratitude.

We held our annual ceilidh in Loanhead, near Edinburgh, on 7 March. Around 80 people attended, with entertainment from William Duncan; Ellen Aitken; Andy Sanders; Jimmy Maclean; and me. The event raised £673. I am very grateful to Anne for all her work organising this event.

Over the last few months we have been holding the Great Edinburgh Sutherland Bake Off. We encouraged people Sutherland, Edinburgh and elsewhere to bake treats to sell to family and friends at home and/or at work to raise money for the Association. I am very grateful to Steven for coordinating this initiative, which has raised almost £1,000 and much of that has been raised without the Committee's involvement. Having said that, I did bake for the first time to support the idea. It is good to see new fundraising ideas being so successful.

This year saw the annual Christmas dinner and our ceilidh as normal, but in new venues. Such change is always a risk, but changes in format and venue produced positive results and an increase in revenue of almost £400. Plus, with new initiatives like the bake-off, we continue to grow.

I would also like to thank Steven for developing the new website and signing us up for Gift Aid. Being part of the Gift Aid system means that for every £10 donated we get an extra £2.50 from the UK Government. Steven will explain further later in the meeting.

I also understand we have inspired a new generation to engage in the Glasgow Sutherland Association. Rather than folding, that Association is engaged in a trial period where they try to sustain the charity by developing a Facebook page and new events. I have been liaising with them on this initiative.

Going forward, I want us to consider joint events with the Glasgow Sutherland. We should also consider joint events with other similar associations, such as the Edinburgh Caithness, the Edinburgh Argyll and Bothan Dun Eideann. We should also aim to have more fundraising events, such as more quiz nights or new events. However, we must engage more people in the committee and with the organisation of such work if we are to develop. We must also press ahead with our work on the archive, so we can write to landowners requesting support and consider a book on the Association in advance of our 150 anniversary in 2016.

I would like to thank everyone who assisted this year and for your continuing support.”

In addition Andrew has noted with sadness the passing of Roberta Ross Wylie, who at 100 years of age had been the Association’s oldest member. She will be much missed, but often thought of as Sandra James, her daughter and our Honorary Vice President, continues to be a prominent member of the Association.

4 TREASURER’S REPORT

The Report was tabled by Anne Macintosh who noted that money raised was at a similar level to last year with a current balance of £4,089, with most funds from the Great Edinburgh Sutherland Bake Off still to be received. The following was also noted:

- Loss of revenue from the 2013 quiz nights, which it was hoped might start again.
- A generous £100 donation from Sandra James on occasion of her mother’s 100th birthday.
- The accounts had been audited by Gordon Black, with the grateful thanks of the committee noted.

The Report was proposed by Andrew Mackenzie, seconded by Matthew Williams.

A follow-up discussion about Gift Aid was led by Steven Anderson who talked about ESA registration with MyDonate, a free online donation service run by BT which charges no commission for transactions (aside from a flat fee of 15p per card transaction). The site allows for links from the ESA website to the ESA MyDonate page with sub-pages created for each event run by ESA, or for individual donations. Steven talked through giving a donation via the site and outlined HMRC rules on gift aid. See attached note regarding Gift Aid and its use.

Matthew Williams noted that credit was due to Steven Anderson for his hard work on this, which will hope to raise higher revenue in the future. Bill Manson also gave thanks to Steven, noting that he had put in time and effort to investigate and implement this solution.

5 DONATIONS

Matthew Williams handed out the summary of applications for funding received this year through word-of-mouth, and a call for applicants in the Northern Times and via the ESA website and Facebook page.

The following groups were successful in their application for funding:

Lucie Treacher, Dornoch, £300 for costumes to enable this young composer to present a new Sutherland-centred opera at the Tete-a-Tete opera festival at Central St Martins in London.

Alice MacDonald, £100 to assist in transport costs for 10 children from Melvich, Bettyhill and Skerryr to take part in the Feis in Thurso.

Marion Macdougall, Tongue, £260 for additional equipment for the Kyle Centre, a community hub, in Tongue.

Kim Tewnton, Dornoch, £270 for the Allsorts Dornoch: Holiday and Afterschool Club to part-fund their annual Woodland Quest for children aged 4-12.

Glenda Cairncross, Scourie, £260 toward outdoor furniture for the Scourie Sports Pavilion.

Clive Grewcock, Golspie, £260 toward the running of Feis Chataibh, the week-long Feis based in Golspie.

Sheilah Cunningham, Scourie, £300 to help keep participation fees affordable for children participating in Feis an Iar Thuath in Scourie.

It was decided not to fund a request for assistance with the costs of relaying the drains for the Sports Field in Kinlochbervie. The cost was estimated to be much higher than any amount that ESA could give. It was noted that we should write a letter of support however, and offer to send note of that support to any interested funding bodies. An application from Dornoch to assist in printing of local cultural/historical leaflets aimed at visitors and tourists was also turned-down as it was felt not to be as pressing as other local causes.

It was agreed that Matthew Williams would write to all of the applicants to advise them of the success or failure of their applications. It was also decided that the letter should ask for feedback on the effectiveness of the donation. If photos were available for use on the website these should be requested along with links from applicant websites/social media to ESA's online presence. It was also suggested that where relevant a certificate of award could be displayed to further raise awareness of ESA and its work.

6 FUNCTIONS 2014/15

For the Christmas dinner it was decided that Channings should be investigated as the event was so successful last year. Steven Anderson noted that Chef, Karen Higgins, had subsequently returned to Sutherland and taken up a position at the Burghfield. It was also decided to look at other options via ESA contacts particularly via Andy Rees.

The annual ceilidh had been provisionally booked for 20th February 2015, along with the Dave Husband Band. The Loanhead venue had proven very popular and so it was approved that the provisional booking should be confirmed.

Suggestions were made for a Sutherland ceilidh to be held again, possibly in April or May of 2015 – Rogart, Drumbeg, Strathnaver, Clashmore (Dornoch), and Tongue were all discussed as possible options. Steven Anderson was to investigate the possibility of Rogart in the first instance.

Willie Macintosh followed-up Anne Macintosh's earlier remarks by calling for the return of the successful pub quiz nights. Matthew Williams suggested that perhaps instead of a bi-monthly quiz there should be two larger quiz events in autumn and spring, again at the Canon's Gait with dates to be confirmed.

Steven Anderson suggested a day for a big appeal for donations both online and by post to simply ask people to donate, whilst pointing out the good work of the organisation. He suggested that an annual push would allow people to donate whilst not having to do too much additional work.

There was a related discussion of a grand draw and it was decided that this should be investigated before the New Year so that tickets could be sold from January with winners drawn in December 2015. Andrew Mackenzie, Steven Anderson and Rachel Haworth will investigate further.

As part of a fundraising push, and perhaps linked to the archive (see AOCB) it was thought that it would be beneficial to investigate and form links to Sutherland related organisations overseas. This might again feed into the request for donations.

7 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

It was agreed that the following would remain in their current positions:

President – Andrew Mackenzie

Vice-President – Willie Macintosh

Secretary – Matthew Williams

Treasurer – Anne Macintosh

Committee Members:

Steven Anderson and Rachel Haworth opted to remain on the committee.

Elise Sutherland stood down due to other commitments.

Christine Smith joined the committee, nominated by Willie Macintosh, seconded by Sandra James.

Lorraine Smith also joined the committee, nominated by Willie Macintosh, seconded by Anne Macintosh.

It was noted that Gordon Black would happily remain as Honorary Auditor.

8 BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

It was agreed that in addition to Anne McIntosh and Sandra James, Andrew Mackenzie, Steven Anderson and Lorraine Smith would be signatories in respect of the bank account.

9 AOCB

Rachel Haworth presented a summary of her investigation of the ESA Archives to date. She noted that there was broadly speaking a wealth of information from the 1880s to the 1920s, with more patchy archives thereafter. Whilst the archives are in a fine condition Rachel has some storage concerns and will find out current best practice from the National Archives. She also noted that it's possible to be part of the Register of National Archives without handing over the actual papers. Through this system people can make enquiries about papers via the National Archives which will then be referred to the responsible individual within ESA.

There followed some discussion about the legacy of the archives, including previous Honorary Members, and those who made generous contributions in the past. It was thought that this could be a valuable link to the 150th Anniversary in 2016 and a potential source of new donations.

Andrew Mackenzie thought that subject to further interrogation a book, or similar print, might be produced to make the archive and organisation more widely known.

A brief conversation was had regarding the whereabouts of the Golf and Curling Cups, with further enquiries to be made of ex-Presidents and older members.

Andrew Mackenzie thanked everyone for attending and brought the meeting to a close.