

# *Stonehaven (Fatherland) Burns Club*



## *Constitution*

*(as amended at AGM on 22 May 2024)*

### **1. Name**

The Club shall be called the Stonehaven (Fatherland) Burns Club, hereinafter referred to as the Club.

### **2. Objectives**

- a. To perpetuate and promote the life and works of Robert Burns in Stonehaven and the Mearns.

- b. To hold an annual Burns Supper in the memory of Robert Burns and his ancestors in the Mearns.
- c. To proactively raise awareness of Robert Burns and his Mearns family connections at schools in the area.
- d. To engage in informal gatherings on a periodic basis to celebrate and enjoy the life and influence of Robert Burns through music, song, poetry, prose and anecdote.
- e. To provide accurate historical information to bona fide interested parties.
- f. To provide information to locations in the area which are frequented by visitors and local people.

### **3. Membership**

The membership of the Club shall comprise:

- 1. Ordinary Members
- 2. Junior Members
- 3. Honorary Members

Ordinary Membership of the Club shall be open to anyone, over 16 years of age, who expresses interest in furthering the objectives of the Club.

Junior membership shall be available to anyone under sixteen years of age at the date of the following Annual General Meeting.

Honorary membership may be bestowed on any ordinary member whose services to the Club, or to the local heritage of Robert Burns, has in the opinion of club members, been exceptional. Election to Honorary Membership may be

proposed, seconded and confirmed by the Committee, or by the decision of an Annual General Meeting.

Anyone ceasing to become a member of the Club for any reason shall forfeit all rights to, or claims against, the Club or its funds.

#### **4. Subscriptions**

The annual subscriptions for ordinary members and for junior members shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting. The rate of subscription so determined shall prevail until amended by a future Annual General Meeting. Honorary members shall be free from subscription, for lifetime, from the date of their election.

#### **5. Privileges**

All classes of membership shall be entitled to priority booking of tickets for themselves and one guest for the annual Club Supper. Priority reservation shall be available to members at least two weeks prior to tickets being offered to non members. Such priority reservations shall remain valid only if paid for in full prior to remaining tickets being offered to non members.

At the sole discretion of the Committee, members may be offered a discount on the purchase price of tickets for the annual Club Supper. Discount potential shall be without obligation and may vary from year to year dependent on projected costs and expenses. In no circumstances shall any discount exceed the currently prevailing membership subscription.

#### **6. Officebearers and Committee of Management**

The affairs of the Club shall be managed by a committee elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Club. The Committee shall consist of four office-bearers (a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer), plus a minimum of three Committee Members. Up to three additional Committee Members may be proposed and approved by the Annual General Meeting, or may be co-opted, at the discretion of the Committee.

The Treasurer shall not serve in any other capacity.

The Secretary shall primarily be responsible for communications and correspondence external to the Club and may be assisted in other secretarial activities by one of the Committee Members.

The election and eligibility of both office bearers and committee members shall, wherever possible, be staggered to avoid the election of an entirely new committee at any General Meeting.

### **7. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members**

Committee Members shall be elected by those ordinary and honorary members present at the Annual General Meeting. Nominees for election shall be proposed and seconded by ordinary members. Nominees for election shall be present at the meeting, or if not present, shall have indicated their willingness to accept nomination in writing to the Club Secretary, prior to the meeting.

Office Bearers shall then be appointed 'in camera' by and from within the newly elected committee and shall serve for a period of three years, following which they shall automatically resign, but may be proposed for re-election to the same or different office.

Elected Committee Members shall serve for a period of three years, following which they shall automatically resign but may be proposed for re-election. The election of any Committee Members co-opted by the Committee shall be ratified at the Annual General Meeting following their co-option and if so ratified, shall be deemed to have served one year of their three year tenure.

### **8. Committee Meetings**

The Committee shall meet for the dispatch of Club Business as it deems necessary, but in any event, at least quarterly. The Committee shall have the power to make decisions affecting the general administration of the Club and the promotion of Club objectives.

The President, whom failing the Vice President, whom failing a member appointed by those present, shall chair all Committee meetings. At all

committee meetings, two officebearers and two committee members shall form a quorum. In the event of any ballot, the chairperson shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberate vote.

### **9. Glenbervie Burns Memorials Sub-Committee**

This Sub-Committee shall exist under the umbrella and direction of the Club to continue the excellent work formerly undertaken by the Glenbervie Burns Memorials Association. Its members will be fully co-opted to the Club committee and its remit shall be the care, upkeep and maintenance of Burns memorials in the Kincardineshire and Mearns areas. This shall include in the first instance, the Gravestones in Glenbervie Churchyard, the Cairn on the A90 at Clochnahill, the tablet previously affixed to the Boar's Head Hotel (formerly the Gardenston Arms Hotel), Laurencekirk, and various frames and other artefacts on display or retention at the Grassic Gibbon Centre and elsewhere; also any other artefacts relating to the Poet and his family which may from time to time come to light. It shall meet as and when necessary under the direction of the Club President and shall actively assist the Club in pursuing a permanent secure place of public display for some or all of these artefacts.

### **10. General Meetings**

The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held in or about the month of March each year for the following purposes:

- a. To receive from the Committee, the Annual Report, the Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts for the preceding year.
- b. To elect office bearers and committee members, as determined by the Rules of this constitution.

- c. To consider and resolve upon any motion of which intimation has been given in the notice convening the meeting, or which is proposed and seconded as legitimate business by such meeting.

The Committee shall have the power, at their discretion, to call Special General Meetings, and shall be required to call a Special General Meeting within fourteen days of receipt of a written request signed by at least twelve members, to do so. The business of Special General Meetings shall be restricted to that detailed in any notice calling such a meeting.

No Special General Meeting may be convened within less than seven days notification to Club members. For Special General Meetings, such notifications shall include details of the business to be discussed. The Committee shall, at their discretion, take steps to ensure that such notice is communicated to members. At all general meetings thirty percent of registered members shall form a quorum.

## **10. Finance**

All expenditure or distribution of Club funds shall be subject to the approval of the Committee. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining comprehensive records of all such expenditure and distribution.

The separate capital of the former Glenbervie Burns Memorials Association shall remain ring-fenced for the aims and objectives of that Association, now the remit of the Glenbervie Burns Memorials Sub-Committee of the Club.

The Committee shall arrange for audit of all such financial records and for making an audited financial statement of Club funds available to all members at an Annual General Meeting.

## **11. Alteration of Constitution**

The terms of this Constitution may be revised only by the majority decision of ordinary and honorary members present at an Annual General Meeting, or a Special General Meeting called specifically for that purpose.

## **12. Dissolution of Club**

Dissolution of the Club may be approved only by a General Meeting called for that purpose. In the event of dissolution of the Club no office bearer, committee members or club member shall have any right to benefit in any way whatsoever from the funds or properties at the time belonging to the Club, save in reimbursement of any fees or expensed due for services previously approved in accordance with this Constitution.

The Committee shall be responsible to ensure correct settlement of all outstanding creditors at the time of dissolution and shall present a fully audited financial statement recording all remaining Club funds, property and artefacts. The General Meeting called to approve dissolution shall determine the most appropriate manner via which to distribute such funds, property and artefacts consistent with the objectives specified in this Constitution. Such determination may consider:

- a. Electing Trustees to manage the remaining funds in trust, for a period to be determined, with a view to financing potential resurrection of the Club.
- b. Donating funds to a local organisation(s) with objectives similar to those of the Club, with a view to furthering appreciation of Robert Burns heritage in the Mearns.
- c. Donating funds to Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum on the condition that they be used to maintain an exhibition dedicated to Robert Burns and his local heritage.
- d. Donating the funds to Stonehaven Schools to be used for furthering the appreciation and understanding of the works of Robert Burns.
- e. Donating funds to the World Burns Federation to promote awareness of Robert Burns heritage in the Mearns.

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