

STONEHAVEN FATHERLAND BURNS CLUB

AGM on Wednesday 22 May 2024 at Stonehaven Bowling Club

Attendees

Dave MacDonald
Margaret MacDonald
Paul McKay
Gwynne McKay
Garry Brindley
Bill Emslie
Irene Squires (Honorary Life Member)
Cathie Dawson
Paul Bentley
Donald Clarke
Martin Gardner
Jane Sanders

Apologies

John Cruickshank
Jane Cruickshank
Sarah Smith
Ken MacDonald
Marjorie MacDonald
Douglas Samways
Elaine Samways
Edith Stuart
Frank Smith
Sarah Dickinson
Andy Hall

Welcome to Members present

Dave

Minutes of 2023 AGM

Paper copy circulated and on screen

Matters arising

Storage for artefacts

There has as yet been no solution to finding permanent storage. Whilst a public display area for the best artefacts was preferable, Gwynne had purchased a large storage box in which to hold everything once such a safe place was found.

Donation

We had, as agreed, donated £200 to Montrose Burns Club for the Hillside Memorial which has been relocated to the opposite side of the road there. This £200 is to be repaid from the GMBA account to the SFBC account because the cheque was initially drawn from that account.

Glenbervie Mausoleum – some repointing needed. It is not a listed structure.

Clochnahill cairn – some tidying up needed.

QR codes at both these locations were being investigated but were not yet in place.

Burns Memorial Garden, Stonehaven

The garden has QR codes on pedestals allowing visitors to scan and hear Burns recitations and songs. Some visitors still perceive the garden as private, so improved signage is being pursued to confirm that visitors to the garden are welcome.

Allan Cairnduff has kindly clarified responsibilities for maintaining the garden: -

Benches - SFBC

Shrubs - Horizon

Hedges and Grass - Aberdeenshire Council

Schools involvement

Irene wished to see a return to greater involvement of the club in local schools as this is one of the aims in our constitution. She also expressed the hope that some schools would return to participating in the World Burns Federation competition.

It was explained to Irene that under circumstances arising last Autumn, the committee had agreed to shelve all normal commitments in that one Club year bar ensuring the success of the annual Supper. However, former president Douglas Samways had individually kept this important input going last year with his contacts in various primary schools.

At Douglas's request, Dave had reproduced a Russell Adams "Certificate of Merit" and had passed this to Douglas for his retention and later presentation by Douglas to Sarah Peterkin of Glenbervie Primary School and other schools winners.

Donald, who was heavily involved in the Langston Hughes Society in Joplin, Missouri, suggested activities which might encourage others especially children to participate eg Burns bookmarks, a sheet giving a brief history of Robert Burns or some colouring sheets.

Burns Supper 2025

The Supper in January had proven quite outstanding with the company visibly enjoying the food and the entertainment. The online seat-booking system worked well in 2024 and will be continued for next year's supper. Members will still be able to purchase tickets in the traditional way if they choose. As just a wee criticism of the event, the Aide Memoire required to be followed more closely to avoid omissions such as the piper's dram and the Top Table pre-drinks in the Snug Bar. A photographer was also considered essential. It was agreed that a Master of Ceremonies might be useful here.

Confirmed speakers:-

Professor Sir Geoff Palmer - Immortal Memory

Gordon Casely - Scotland Yet

Charlie Beaton - Holy Willie's Prayer (written confirmation awaited)

Rob Collins - Toast to the Lasses (written confirmation awaited)

Sheila Mann - Reply (written confirmation awaited)

Chairman's Report

Dave read out his written Report describing the events of the past year. He paid tribute to immediate past president Douglas Samways, who had resigned in September following many years of Club service including a Covid-interrupted latter term of four years as our President.

Treasurer's Report

Cathie gave her report, all backed up by PowerPoint slides.

Balance 1/11/2023 £2625.04

Balance 21/05/2024 £2485.15

GMBA Account £3355.53

The Adoption of Accounts was proposed by Gwynne, seconded by Garry and carried unanimously.

Proposed amendments to the Constitution

On a motion by Dave seconded by Gwynne and carried with one abstention, it was agreed that in future the Committee would be elected from the floor, following which it would then appoint the club officebearers 'in camera' and from within its own number, after the close of the meeting; also that office bearers would serve for a three-year term instead of two.

Election of Committee

The following were elected:-

	Proposer	Seconder
Dave MacDonald	Gwynne McKay	Garry Brindley
Garry Brindley	Dave MacDonald	Gwynne McKay
Jane Sanders	Garry Brindley	Paul McKay
Cathie Dawson	Garry Brindley	Gwynne McKay
Sarah Smith	Garry Brindley	Jane Sanders
Gwynne McKay	Cathie Dawson	Garry Brindley
Paul Bentley	Garry Brindley	Bill Emslie
Donald Clarke	Paul Bentley	Garry Brindley

AOCB

Feein' Market/Town Hall

Both Jane and Dave highlighted that although SFBC are not taking a stall at the Feein' Market, Margaret MacDonald is taking an art stall in the Town Hall where the RNLI are running a café. These stalls cost considerably less than the ones in the Square and SFBC could share Margaret's double-table stall to display promotional material, membership forms and the likes of the Treasure Map. It was agreed to go ahead with that.

Trail

Jane mentioned a discussion she had had with Henning Wagner of Mill of Benholm Trust. Like the SFBC they had talked about putting together a trail to encourage visitors to explore the Mearns and visit the historic meal mill they have just taken over and hope to restore. We had talked about places in the Mearns associated with Robert Burns' farming origins and a working meal mill might fit that scenario. There is a possibility that the groups could work together on a single trail.

Education

There is a commitment in the constitution to promote Burns works. It was agreed that a date be set to contact the schools in the area to properly re-establish our former long pre-pandemic involvement this year.

Burns Celebration Day

Garry spoke about Coldstream where an annual celebration takes place on the bridge over the River Tweed to mark Burns' start of his tour of Northern England. It was thought that if we selected a date in the summer, possibly September, we could similarly celebrate Burns' 1787 visit to Stonehaven, when there are more visitors around and the weather clement. Possibly use the Memorial Garden?

Subscriptions

Martin Gardner thought that our subscription is too modest and could be increased without deterring members. We have missed the boat for this year, but it could be discussed and decided at next year's AGM.

Accessibility

Helena Anderson Wright (Aberdeen Burns Club and long-term supporter of the SFBC) is visiting Stonehaven and the Burns Memorial Garden with a wheelchair user and had inquired about suitably accessible places for refreshments afterwards. The Fly Cup at the Bowling Club and the Waterfront Café were suggested.

Close of Meeting

There being no further public business, the meeting was closed with thanks to the Chair and to those attending.

Appointment of Officebearers (*'in camera' by new committee*)

		Proposer	Secunder
<u>President</u>	Dave MacDonald (one more year)	Donald Clarke	Garry Brindley
<u>Vice President</u>	Garry Brindley	Dave MacDonald	Gwynne McKay
<u>Treasurer</u>	Cathie Dawson	Jane Sanders	Paul Bentley
<u>Secretary</u>	Gwynne McKay	Cathie Dawson	Dave MacDonald