



The Falkland Society

Scottish Registered Charity SC01720

www.falklandsociety.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held online by Zoom at 7 p.m. on Wednesday 15 September 2021

Present

Peter Burman (Chair); John Smith (Depute Chair); Fiona Lawrenson (Secretary); Dionatas Vargas (Treasurer); Jake Bonnett, Ross Burgess, Betty Gilchrist, Tom Playfair and Marietta Crichton Stuart (committee members); and about 15 other members and supporters.

Apologies

Ninian Stuart, Carol Bailey, Angie Forsyth and Ann Scott.

Minutes of previous AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 9 September 2020 had been made available on the Society's website. Marietta Crichton Stuart proposed that they be approved as a true and accurate record, and this was seconded by John Smith and approved by those present.

Chair's Report on the year 2020-21: Dr Peter Burman

My first duty is to thank all members of the Society for their support. I also express my heartfelt thanks to those Committee members whom I have called upon for support and advice when issues have arisen. We had a substantial meeting of the whole Committee on 1 September.

General overview since the Annual General Meeting in September 2020

We have had ten monthly lectures since this time last year, all by Zoom. In July we had a memorable day's outing to the gardens of Wemyss Castle and to the Wemyss School of Needlework founded in 1877.

On 23 December 2020, Ross Burgess and I took delivery of 500 copies of our magnificent new book *Falkland and its People 1901–1913*. We are appreciative of the insightful pre-publication review by our distinguished member, Bill Pagan, excerpts from which are printed on the back cover. This book is a serious contribution to the history of Falkland during the Edwardian period. Many local people came to our front door to buy copies. We have placed copies with the independent bookshop in Cupar, the ancient library at Innerpefferay, Pillars of Hercules, and Fayre Earth; we have an arrangement with the Scottish Forum for Local History. We also hope to make use of PayPal to facilitate sales via the website. But the best engines for sales are most likely word of mouth. In any event, this is not a commercial publication. We had generous sponsorship, and we can afford to give some copies away. If anyone cares to suggest a library or school or other institution to which we could give a copy, knowing that it would be appreciated and used, then please let me know. It was an exciting moment when we received letters acknowledging that the copies required for the six copyright libraries of the UK and Ireland had been safely received.

Membership review

The Committee has agreed that it is perfectly acceptable to have a Financial Year coinciding with the Calendar Year and a 'Membership Year' running from mid-September AGM until the following September.

Review of the Constitution

The Committee has agreed that it is high time to review the somewhat inflexible Constitution of 1987/8. Marietta Crichton Stuart and Ross Burgess have been deputed to be a 'Task & Finish' Group to review the Constitution and advise how it might best be updated. The review should consider whether we should seek to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), a structure established by OSCR for just such small charities as ours, and whether the Constitution should enable us to hold property on behalf of the Community of Falkland.

Gift-Aid registration

This is one of our privileges as a small charity. The Committee has agreed that Ross Burgess and Dionatas Vargas should form a Task & Finish Group to implement Gift-Aid Registration.

Programme of lecture meetings and visits for 2022-23

The programme for 2021–22 is already complete and we are giving thought to how to publicize the whole series and plan ahead for 2022–23. Members might enjoy more than one outing in the coming year, e.g. the Japanese Garden near Dollar and the Drummond Castle gardens further west. Following this evening's lecture, members might like to have a special visit to Abbotsford.

Transfer of weaving and other artefacts from National Trust for Scotland

I want to thank NTS Head Curator, Antonia Laurence-Allen, for facilitating this change of ownership to the Falkland Society, and also Tom Playfair who has handed over his entitlement to a number of pieces. The artefacts have been placed in the parish church where they should be safe from harm for the time being. We have also been drawn into an admirable project called Flax & Linen in Fife led by Dr John Ennis.

Participation in local planning and Listed Building Consent matters

The Committee has endorsed actions taken by John Smith and myself to comment in detail from a strong local heritage perspective on applications notified by Fife Council. We believe that this is a worthwhile activity for the Society.

Request from Peter Coates, Chair of the Falkland Development Trust

Peter has asked us to participate in a Festival which would re-launch the Library and be something akin to a 'Book Festival'. We have agreed to do all that we can to help and support this initiative in October.

Kenny Lumsden proposed that the Chair's report be accepted and this was approved by those present.

Treasurer's Report: Dionatas Vargas

For the last financial year (ended 31 December 2020) the Society's receipts totalled £1,857 (including nearly £1,500 for sponsorship of the new book) and expenditure totalled £4,234 (including just over £4,000 for printing the book). The closing balance at the end of the year was £603. For the current financial year to date the receipts were £2,159 and expenditure £622, giving a current balance of £2,130.

We made a complaint to the bank for the very long time it had taken to get them to change the account details, and had received £370 in compensation. We now have online access to the bank account and hope soon to be signed up to PayPal.

Membership Report: Ross Burgess

There are now about 30 paid-up members for 2021–22, paying a minimum of £10 each. The form on the website will be updated to allow payment by bank transfer (BACS). We hope also to register for Gift Aid, which would further increase the revenue to the Society at no cost to the members.

Publishing and Web Report: Ross Burgess

Our latest publication, *Falkland and its People 1901–1913*, is now on sale from several outlets, or via the website. The Committee will be considering future publications, possibly including a revised second edition of *Falkland during the reign of Queen Victoria 1837–1900*, and a book about the First World War, in which Tom Playfair and Marietta Crichton Stuart could both be involved.

The Falkland Society's website at www.falklandsociety.org.uk contains information about the society, including coming events, the books, and how to sign up to receive the Newsletter, which currently goes to over 200 email addresses.

Additionally, the Historic Falkland website, www.historicfalkland.scot, maintained by the Society, contains a miscellany of items about Falkland's history, a year-by-year chronicle contributed by Jack Burgess, reproductions of pages of the *Big Book of Falkland*, and in particular a Wikipedia-style database or encyclopaedia of Falkland Historic Buildings. New information for this is warmly welcomed, and members can be signed up to edit the Wiki directly.

Election of Office-Bearers and Committee

The Depute Chair, John Smith, took over the chair for the first part of this item and proposed that Dr Peter Burman be re-elected as Chair. This was seconded by Tom Playfair and approved by the meeting.

Peter Burman resumed the chair, and proposed the re-election of the current office-bearers and committee, but with Ross Burgess as Secretary, replacing Fiona Lawrenson, who continues as a committee member, and the election of a new member, Kieran Allan.

This was seconded by Tom Playfair and approved by the meeting, so the following were duly declared to have been elected to serve for the year 2021–22.

- Chair: Dr Peter Burman
- Depute Chair: John Smith
- Secretary: Ross Burgess
- Treasurer: Dionatas Vargas
- Committee members:
 - Kieran Allan
 - Jake Bonnett
 - Fiona Lawrenson
 - Betty Gilchrist
 - Thomas Playfair
 - Marietta Crichton Stuart

The Chair closed the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and introduced our speaker for the evening, Kirsty Archer-Thompson, Collections and Interpretation Manager for the Abbotsford Trust.