

Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Minutes

**Present.** Cressida Coates (CC), Ian Balgowan (IB), Liz Ritchie (LR), Dennis Collie (DC) Gordon Ritchie (GR), Douglas Cusine (DCu), Clare Thomas (CT) Lindsey Petrie (LP)

**1 Welcome.** CC welcomed the Trustees to the first meeting of 2023 and wished everyone a Happy New Year..

**2 Apologies.** Graham McIntosh (GM), Mary Sutcliffe (MS) Andrew Newton (AN), Louise Coates (LC)

**3 Minutes of previous meetings.**

a) **Acceptance.** The previous minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were accepted.

b) **Matters arising.**

Action Point	Person	Report
Continue discussions on new gazebo	<b>Trustees</b>	Ongoing
Place contact list on file	<b>CC</b>	Ongoing
Draft press release	<b>GR</b>	Done- with other trustees for review
Contact a trustee concerning non-attendance	<b>CC</b>	Done-see Chair report
Host training session-fishing 30thNov	<b>IB</b>	Done
Contact FES over damp problems in kitchen	<b>CC</b>	Done-repairs ongoing
Take action on Fire Safety-risk assessment form	<b>Trustees/GR</b>	Ongoing

**4 Chair's report (CC)**

CC had called trustee Graham McIntosh (GM) and queried his non-attendance at recent meetings and asked if he wished to continue as an STA Trustee. He confirmed he did not wish to continue and so resigned with immediate effect. All Trustees were asked to ensure that GM was removed from the list of recipients for any future committee correspondence/emails.

With a Trustee space now available, it was suggested that volunteer Frances Watt be approached and asked if she would like to join the Committee. All present agreed and CC was to email her.

CC confirmed that FES had been contacted about the dampness in the ground floor kitchen area and they had carried out some repairs to the outside roof. Some members were sceptical if the repairs would be sufficient in the longer term but all agreed they took care of the immediate dampness problem. A plasterer has started repairs and would be back soon to complete the work.

Contact had been made with 2 potential new volunteers who had been in touch. LP knew one candidate as a fellow custodian at Dunnottar Castle. CC had written to them but was awaiting replies.

January rota was almost complete and CC thanked IB for volunteering to fill missing date - 21<sup>st</sup> January.

Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Minutes

**5 Treasurer's report (DC via email)**

The summary of financial activity for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 is as follows:

**Income**

Barrel Donations	140.71
Digital receipts	111.41
Cash Sales	437.50
	<b>£ 689.62</b>

**Expenditure**

Xmas volunteer party	130.00
Accountant	15.47
Model repairs – B Emslie	32.00
Stock-jewellery	150.00
	<b>£ 327.47</b>

**6 Secretary's report (AN via CC)**

The accounts for year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 were submitted to OSCR by the due date and sadly showed a small loss of £654. This was the first loss in STA history but could easily be explained by the reduced visitor numbers, and various lockdowns and regulations required during the Covid pandemic..

The footfall for December 2022 was 434 and overall for the 12 months to December was 13720. It should be noted the museum was closed completely for 2 months, operated 2 day opening for 4 months and operated only a 4 day opening for the remaining 6 months. Pre-Covid museum opening of 6 days per week has not yet been achieved.

**7 CAT and Grants (GR)**

GR had drafted and circulated a draft press release to committee members prior to the meeting. He asked that if they had not yet done so, to get comments to him asap.

GR/CC/AN met with various Council staff on 17<sup>th</sup> November but felt they did not get any further forward with the museum CAT application which has still not yet been validated despite being submitted in November 2021. The Council will require proof of Community Engagement before validation can be given. The Council confirmed that rent had been agreed with the restaurant upstairs but that the lease had not yet been signed off. Despite strong questioning, they said they were therefore not at liberty to give STA details of rent or lease status - despite the application and business plan being dependent on having such information.

It was noted that the Council wanted to go over the business plan again at some point. GR will liaise with LR, who prepared the original business plan that accompanied the application.

DCu expressed frustration, also felt by other members that nothing had moved forward after 14 months and thought that museum should now contact Council Area Manager Bruce Stewart about the delay and current situation.

Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Minutes

**7 CAT and Grants (GR) cont'd**

DC commented that the CAT process started more than 14 months ago as reference was made to the CAT process in STA minutes of February 2021.

LR said that she was friends with one of the local councillors, Sarah Dickinson, and it was agreed LR could mention STA application, delays and frustration to her. If any other committee members had access to the 3 other local councillors (Dawn Black, Wendy Agnew, and Bill Turner) they were encouraged to also let them know. CC suggested inviting all 4 Councillors to a meeting at the museum.

DC said that press release should emphasise that the £50,000 earmarked for Tolbooth use had not been spent up to now and that no major refurbishment of the building had taken place since 1963.

GR said that after receiving comments on the Press Release from other committee members he would redraft and pass it Mairi Eddie of KDP with a view to setting up a community drop-in session at the museum on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February from 12.30pm to 3.30pm.

**8 Events report (CT )**

CT had recently attended an event at Mackie Academy for S1 pupils and to which, other Stonehaven businesses and organisations had been invited. The pupils had been encouraged to ask questions about the successes and mistakes of running a venture in the local area. All agreed this was a good demonstration of the museum engaging with local community.

In an effort to engage with senior Mackie pupils (S5/S6) LP said she would contact History Dept (in first instance) and see if any of their pupils might be interested in volunteering at museum and pupils could use this as perhaps their community volunteering role for Duke of Edinburgh award or as something for use in their university application personal statements.

As a follow up to an event CT attended last year, the museum had been asked to help with either student placement or perhaps with case study research for students. CT would draft a response and pass to CC for review.

Globus tours had confirmed that they would be returning to museum in 2023 with visits starting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and continuing until 1<sup>st</sup> October. They would visit every Sunday at approx 17.50 and also on several Wednesdays. CT had agreed that visits would continue to be £25 per trip and this was agreed as appropriate as museum often does well from shop sales on these Tour visits.

Mannequin for Queens Jubilee had now been removed and CT/MS thought that it should now be dressed as an oil worker for 2023. If any other committee members have any other suggestions they should get in touch with CT/MS.

**9 Collection Report (GR)**

A flood at office accommodation in town had led to several old copies of Mearns Leader newspapers from 1930's and heritage postcards being badly damaged by rainwater.

GR had found a small stock of slightly damaged books – Stonehaven of Old Vol 2 – which might be suitable to give to local schools.

A display panel for Dunnottar Castle still had to be completed.

## Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### Minutes

GR has 6 copies of Archie Watt's book - Highways and Byways of Stonehaven – available for any committee members who require a copy.

The storage cupboard next to the viewing area in the North Room had been tidied and cleared by GR but more tidying was required.

A date would be set soon for collection group to meet and carry out further work on displays..

#### **10 Curator's report (LC)**

LC and LP were to connect soon via Zoom and go over the database and details of curator role with a view to LP taking on more of the role.

#### **11 Shop report (LR)**

Shop sales in December had been brisk with a few items such as the sea salt tins selling out.

Hogmanay visitor numbers and shop sales had seen the museum exceptionally busy on 31<sup>st</sup>.

Stocks of George Swapp book – Street Names – were low but GR confirmed he had 70 copies which he would bring down to the museum. No decision was thought necessary to reprint the book at the moment - as 500 copies would cost £1069.

#### **12 Clock Tower report (AN)**

DCu reported that information from Fireball Assoc indicated that the electric at the tower was operable for their use on Hogmanay. It had been thought that an electrical fault had been the reason for continued tower closure.

CC reported that tower was to be reviewed by Council in late 2022 and she would check and see what the outcome of the visit was.

DCu said that he would be happy to tidy and clean inside of tower in preparation for any proposed re-opening.

#### **13 AOCB.**

John Cruickshank of Horizon Group had written to enquire if museum would be willing to showcase, for the summer, the gold award trophy received from Beautiful Scotland. All agreed to the request. A suggestion was made to display the trophy in same cabinet as Queens Award for Voluntary Service. CC will contact the Horizon Group.

Jane Cruickshank of the Bellman mentioned to CC our earlier summer courtyard events etc and suggested that any future events could be advertised with the Bellman. Events coordinators to note.

IB and DCu mentioned the water leak next to the War Memorial cabinet. IB had had some minor repairs carried out but it was agreed we should continue to monitor that area for future water damage.

LR mentioned it was the upcoming 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the large migration of peoples from Kincardineshire to New Brunswick in Canada – ka Scotch Colony. Local genealogist Lorraine Stewart will be presenting an online talk on the subject on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January. LP suggested this might be of interest to all volunteers and LR was asked to forward details and links to CC for distribution to others.

Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association  
 Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
 Minutes

IB thought it would be very appropriate to have a presentation ceremony to mark the retirement of Jim Bruce from the museum and committee. His contributions to the museum were both unique and irreplaceable. Suggestions made included presenting him with a special scroll and asking the Bellman to run an article. CC would look in to a scroll and arrange a presentation.

**14 Date of future meeting**

Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 7.30pm

Summary of Action Points	Person
Continue discussion on new gazebo	<b>Trustees</b>
Place contact list into file at museum	<b>CC</b>
Take action on Fire Safety-risk assessment form	<b>Trustees/GR</b>
Ensure GM removed from future correspondence recipient lists	<b>Trustees</b>
Contact Frances Watt about Trustee role	<b>CC</b>
Draft press release 11.1.23 – review and comments to GR asap	<b>Trustees</b>
Finalise press release & send to Mairi Eddie of KDP	<b>GR</b>
Review business plan & discuss CAT business plan with Council	<b>GR/LR</b>
Communicate details of CAT proposals to local councillors – informally	<b>Trustees/LR</b>
Contact History Dept of Mackie Acad.- re senior pupils volunteering	<b>LP</b>
Draft a response to Museum Study Research and send to CC for review	<b>CT</b>
Mannequin – suggestions for next display to CT/MS	<b>Trustees</b>
Display panel of Dunnottar Castle to be prepared	<b>GR</b>
Set date for next meeting of Collections Group	<b>GR</b>
Discuss take over of curator role	<b>LC/LP</b>
Deliver copies of G Swapp book to museum	<b>GR</b>
Get update report of outcome of clock tower visit by Council	<b>CC</b>
Contact Horizon Group about displaying their trophy	<b>CC</b>
Monitor for any water leak next to War Memorial cabinet	<b>DCu/IB</b>
Send link of online talk by Lorraine Stewart for distribution to volunteers	<b>LR/CC</b>
Presentation to J Bruce – organise scroll, presentation ceremony, press	<b>CC</b>

Liz Ritchie  
 12.01.23  
 E & OE