

**Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association (STA)**  
**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024**  
**Tolbooth Museum**  
**Agenda**

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting
  - a) acceptance
  - b) matters arising
- 4 Chair's report
- 5 Treasurer's report
- 6 Secretary's report
- 7 CAT and Grants - update
- 8 Events report
- 9 Collections report
- 10 Curator's report
- 11 Shop report
- 12 Clock Tower report
- 13 AOCB
- 14 Future date

**Minutes**

**Present.** Cressida Coates (CC), Liz Ritchie (LR), Gordon Ritchie (GR), Andrew Newton (AN), Lindsay Petrie (LP), Ian Balgowan (IB), Mary Sutcliffe (MS), Clare Thomas (CT)

**1 Welcome.**

CC welcomed the Trustees to the May 2024 meeting.

**2 Apologies.** Dennis Collie (DC), Douglas Cusine (DCu), Louise Coates (LC)

**3 Minutes of previous meetings.**

- a) **Acceptance.** The previous minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were accepted.
- b) **Matters arising.**

**Summary of Action Points**

Summary of Action Points	Person	Report
Register for Doors Open Days	<b>AN</b>	Done
Contact Andy Wightman	<b>GR</b>	See CAT and Grants
Review Burgh records	<b>DCu</b>	Completed
Arrange tripartite meeting with Tim Stephen	<b>CC</b>	One meeting concerning repairs was arranged but the Council then cancelled and asked for a re-schedule. The committee felt that it was important that DC would be able to attend so a preferred date in the first week of June will be offered to the Council
Contact owner of ship's bell	<b>IB</b>	IB is still trying to contact the potential donors.

## **Action Points**

CC to continue dialogue with Tim Stephen over repair meeting

IB to contact owner of ship's bell

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

STA has two new volunteers – Aileen Phillips and Mollie Mennie.

CC and DCu attended a Volunteer Fair in Fetteresso Church Hall and one individual expressed a firm interest in becoming a museum volunteer. Apart from this one expression of interest recruitment was disappointing and CC felt that the Hall was the wrong location due to it's out of the way location. The organisers (KDP) hope to launch another Fair in September, hopefully at a more practical location.

## **5 Treasurer's report (DC) (Via email)**

DC is away on holiday at the moment but before his departure he provided an update on finances for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Figures for April and May will be reported at the June meeting.

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>	
Arduthie T'room book sales	£117.00	Sharper Imaging	£209.99
Cash Sales	104.50	<b>Total</b>	<b>£209.99</b>
E Sales & Donations	140.08		
Barrel donations	186.61		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£548.19</b>		

## **6 Secretary's report (AN)**

The six monthly Fire Alarm check was undertaken on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

Approximately 30 Norwegians, accompanied by Visit Scotland staff, visited the museum on 24<sup>th</sup> April. The purpose of the visit was to have a better understanding of how volunteering work operates in Scotland. The visitors were impressed by STA's achievements and greatly appreciated IB's guiding walk of the marine sculptures on the Boardwalk.

A grant of £28,128 to pave the Inner Courtyard has been secured from the Coastal Community Challenge Fund; the one condition is that STA will have to demonstrate ownership. Negotiations continue with the Council.

Amberley, a publishing company, have indicated that they are keen to commission authors to write about local history although it seems that financial rewards to the authors are very limited as Amberley has to cover the costs of printing and marketing and still make a profit. Details have been passed to Jane Cruickshank (Bellman News) who may know of interested local historians.

## **7 CAT and Grants (GR)**

The CAT request was discussed at the Area meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March and because there was disagreement on the terms suggested by the Council and the Area Committee the CAT now has to go before the Business Service Committee (BSC). The next meeting of the latter is 13<sup>th</sup> June but the agenda will not be known until wb. 3<sup>rd</sup> June. If the CAT does not make the June meeting the next BSC meeting is September.

GR has been in touch with Andy Wightman, an acknowledged expert on Common Good, and Andy's assessment of STA's situation was *'interesting and challenging with the prospect of some legal pitfalls'*. His advice was to play down the Common Good aspect for the moment.

DCu obtained some useful information from the Burgh records but it is still not clear when the Tolbooth was legally acquired by Aberdeenshire Council or its predecessors.

CC had received an email from Tim Stephen (Area Manager) asking whether STA wished to pay 50% of the cost of a valuation of the Tolbooth restaurant. CC reminded Tim that at a meeting in March he had stated that the Council would cover the full cost of any valuation.

### **8. Events report (CT/MS)**

The arrangements for Globus visits are working favourable with a donation of £30 per visit.

On 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> the museum hosted two visits from P2 Arduthie Primary and subsequently received a complimentary letter from the teachers. As a consequence Arduthie Primary has requested a visit from three P1 classes. Kirstie Reid (volunteer and ex teacher) has offered to produce work sheets/guidance notes for both teachers and pupils for future visits.

MS has arranged that Amy Brown (another volunteer) will run a Creative Writing course in the museum on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August from 10.00 to 12.30. It will be restricted to 10 participants.

CT/MS are now arranging forthcoming events which may include – Pauline Cordiner (story telling), Corn Dollies making, Weavers, Jack MacPherson, mackerel smoking, Folk Festival (Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July), Magic show etc.

### **9 Collection Report (GR)**

GR has been side tracked by other issues but is continuing to work on the re-furbished photos from Sharper Images. He would appreciate any help in cataloguing and preparing the images for display panels.

### **10 Curator's report (LP/CC)**

The museum is hosting a placement for a student from UoA. Autumn is studying for her Masters and will spend 20 days (Tuesdays and Thursdays) for the next 10 weeks at the museum. Initially Autumn will review the detectorist coin collection with the view of improving the display. However, she will also review other aspects of the museum's artefacts and is happy to give a presentation to the committee near the end of her placement.

The museum has received a couple of comments from visually impaired visitors that they have difficulty reading the text accompanying some of the displays. The committee agree this is not an easy problem to solve. LP will seek advice from Autumn.

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

A large stock was purchased in the spring but certain items are already being depleted. More Sea Salt Tins (and Pigs?) are required and will be re-ordered. IB mentioned that he had run out of the large plates that are offered for sale in the display cabinet.

Kirstie Reid is putting a couple of the donated Hummel figures for sale on social media with the hope of achieving a better price than if sold in the museum.

Amy Brown has offered to re-arrange the shop display. Amy has a background of working in a family gift shop chain and her offer has been gratefully received.

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

Nothing to report

## **13 AOCB.**

DCu raised three points via email.

*John Duncan plaque.* The former school dentist, Rosalind Russel, suggested this. JD was a self-taught botanist of international renown. He was born in Cowie Court which was behind the Tolbooth and only the shed now remains. Rosalind bought the book about him after reading an article in *Stanehyve*. She told me that she would be prepared to pay for such a plaque, but I advised her that the Museum would have funds for this, if approved. The committee considered the proposal but had difficulty in understanding where the plaque would be located as the shed mentioned is now on private property. However, the committee agreed that there was merit in reproducing DCu's article on John Duncan, published in the Bellman, in a future edition of *Stanehyve Times*. In addition there is the possibility of producing a panel in the museum dedicated to the memory of John Duncan.

*Signage.* There is a pole on the Bervie Braes which is at the top of the path leading from Castle Street. It is used by lots of people, e.g. those coming from the Castle or War Memorial. We could put a sign on the pole (there are no other signs there at present). The committee agreed to action this suggestion

*Monday closure.* We close on Tuesdays, but this seems to be based on what the Council did previously. However, a number of cafes etc. do not open on a Monday, e.g. the Villa and Bucket and Spade. We could consider closing on Mondays, but I do not have the relevant footfall figures. The committee voted to maintain the *status quo* citing the fact that it was beneficial to be always open on a Monday especial when long weekends were in operation.

*Carron Restaurant.* GR replied to a request seeking background material on the Carron restaurant.

### **Action Points.**

**GR/LR** to consider ways in which to commemorate John Duncan's career.

**AN** to action a sign on Bervie Braes

## **14 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Andrew Newton**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**Secretary**

**Stonehaven Tolbooth Association (Tolbooth Museum)**

**A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC043279)**

### **Summary of Action Points**

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Arrange tripartite meeting with Tim Stephen	<b>CC</b>
Contact owner of ship's bell	<b>IB</b>
Consider ways in which to commemorate John Duncan's career	<b>GR/LR</b>
Action a sign on Bervie Braes	<b>AN</b>