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| | <p>The cause of this anomaly is due to our financial year starting on 1 May and ending on 30 April each year and the figure given above will slowly reduce between now and the end of the financial year as deposits for 2016 Conference are collected and are entered into the accounts for 2015. In order to gain a full and proper evaluation of Conference in previous years a review of 3 financial years was required which is why individual Conference financial accounts were begun in 2014.</p> <p>The Budget Information Spreadsheet, available on request for members, is compiled at the start of each financial year by estimates based on the previous 3 years. As the year progresses this information is adjusted by the extraction of real time information from the company accounts in both income and expenditure. The process also includes the real position on event finances, such as Conference, and has proven to be a reasonably accurate tool for understanding the Federation financial position.</p> <p>The spreadsheet current year end position indicates an annual profit of just over £2,000 but this is entirely dependent on the income stream from Conference 2016 continuing and the pursuit of default subscriptions.</p> <p>In general terms I would reassure members that we are well removed from the position we were in only 2 years ago when losses exceeded £30,000 and all things being equal we are now on a pathway to living within our means. The only negative on our financial horizon at present is the fact that School sponsorship ends this year and unless another sponsor is found we will need to radically address our methods of operation as regards the Schools competition.</p> <p>Question re sponsor for schools – board are working on this. If there is no sponsor available we can still run the schools comp but in a different way.</p> <p>Question re any expenses in the office move. We will be rent free in the first year, the council are arranging the move for us. We require to make payments for domestic bills but we are not in a position at the moment to estimate these costs.</p> <p>Shutters on windows and disabled toilet facilities were discussed.</p> <p>Dramatic turnaround in finances in the past few years. Peter expressed his gratitude to Jim for his work with the finances.</p> | |
| 7. | Reports | |
| 7.1 | <p>President – Peter Hughes Many events and thank you for the very warm welcome he has received everywhere around the world.</p> | |
| 7.2 | <p>Conference – Jim Gibson Straightforward meeting as much the same as last year. The hotel are spending some money on the interior. We are still in the planning stage for some things. Friday night entertainment is going to change.</p> <p>The Ballroom will be the preferred venue for all dinners and meetings.</p> | |

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| | <p>Appeal for donations for raffles. The National Raffle will be drawn on the Saturday night also.</p> <p>Seminar on Saturday afternoon is Rab Wilson.</p> <p>We are trying out a different band this year for Saturday night.</p> <p>We are repeating the silent auction from last year as this proved very successful.</p> <p>Looking for venues for 2018 and 2019.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> | |
| 7.3 | <p>Literature – Mike Duguid Reviewed book by John Cairney.</p> <p>“The Tycoon and the Bard” – a review will be done for the newsletter.</p> <p>Chronicle – appeal from Bill for articles for the Chronicle.</p> <p>Any comments on the Chronicle to be passed to the office for Bill.</p> <p>Digitisation – scanned by DDSR. Other copies done by Solway. Work being done in the office to ensure that they are all correct prior to being put up on the website.</p> <p>Duplicate sponsors where discussed. Any problem with this – no concerns raised.</p> <p>The smaller Chronicles also are different as there were more than one per year. E.g. is someone sponsors 1993 do we put their name on all 3 or only on 1?</p> <p>Suggested that one sponsor for every edition i.e. 1993 Spring, Summer etc</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p>Peter has also expressed gratitude for Mike for the excellent work on the Newsletter and his hospitality at Gatehouse of Fleet Burns Supper.</p> | |
| 7.4 | <p>Archivist – Bill Dawson Nothing to report.</p> | |
| 7.5 | <p>Marketing – Murdo Morrison Very successful marketing meeting this morning.</p> <p>Robert Burns Tartan – They wish to come in alongside the Federation to market the Tartan.</p> <p>They will return to the marking committee and follow the new procedure.</p> <p>Radio Stations – lots of publicity, free of charge.</p> | |

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| | <p>Burns Book – Patrick O’Boyle. The book is in Irish Gaelic. Satisfactory launches in Glasgow and Edinburgh.</p> <p>Spring Festival in Kilmarnock – selling of raffle tickets and goods. Welcome to come along to help.</p> <p>Discounts – possibility of discounts for members with other organisations mentioned. This is to be expanded and clarified.</p> <p>University of Strathclyde – investigating marketing on behalf of the Federation.</p> <p>Eric Budgetell – spoke about lack of merchandising within the Federation and missing opportunities for sales.</p> <p>There is an unexplored market at Burns Suppers and Schools Comps. Eric obtained merchandise before the Burns Supper season to set up a shop. Total sales achieved was over £600. Time that the areas do their own bit in terms of merchandising the products available.</p> <p>We need to do some market research and have suitable products available for future events.</p> <p>Various products have been looked at this morning.</p> <p>Burns Brunch was discussed.</p> <p>Wha’s Like Us – CD. Very well received.</p> | |
| 7.6 | <p>Schools – Patricia Leslie</p> <p>Upcoming National Festivals – finalised arrangements for this coming Friday.</p> <p>Looking for volunteers on both days, Peter doing the presentation on the 7th, so someone required for 23rd April. New area entering this year and a sub-committee has been appointed to look at the format, arrangements.</p> | |
| 7.7 | <p>Heritage – Ian McIntyre</p> <p>Discussion around the monument at Ayr. National Trust Canada have donated £100,000 but it is still short of £150,000. The condition of the monument continues to deteriorate.</p> <p>Browell – jobs have gone out to tender and will be complete by July.</p> <p>Poosie Nancy’s – discussion around the accident at the building. The proprietor is hopeful of repairing the gable end</p> | |
| 7.8 | <p>Admin – to include 200 Club Draw Website</p> | |

We continue to promote Club events, etc. via the Events Section of the RBWF website – check it regularly for updates.

Web shop/Sales

Sales still going at a steady pace and the reduction in the price of the scarfs and throws prior to Christmas has generated a number of sales.

Social Media

We now have 1183 followers on Twitter and 958 likes on Facebook. We are maintaining regular interactions across the global network with some very positive feedback being received.

Membership

Membership fees have started to come in but we are still awaiting a large number of renewals.

The school free membership offer has started well with 18 schools taking up the offer so far. We have been enclosing application forms with the schools certificates and we have been pleased with the response.

Premises

Progress on the new premises is continuing. A further meeting has taken place with the architect, regarding finalising décor and flooring etc. We have also had a meeting with regards to the data cabling and locations of data points. We are now at a point that all our requirements have been fully discussed with the council representatives and they are now awaiting final approval from those in charge of the budget to commence the works.

Schools

The schools ordering certificates this year has gone up by 20% which is an increase of 33 schools and 668 pupils so far. The total number of pupils involved in schools Burns Competitions this year has reached over 42,000.

Other

Spring Festival at Dean Castle Country Park.

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| | <p>National Raffle Update – to date we have had 351 tickets returned amounting to £1,755.</p> | |
| <p>7.9</p> | <p>Overseas</p> <p>Pacific Rim – Jim O’Lone Nothing to report</p> <p>Canada – Ronnie O’Byrne As usual there was a flurry of activity surrounding the Burns Supper Season across Canada.</p> <p>I personally attended 2 club suppers and 4 others where I represented the RBWF - with the principle being - the one hosted by the Medicine Hat Burns Club in Alberta. This club will be hosting the 2017 RBANA Conference. If their Supper and Jolly Beggars banquet are anything to go by – they will for sure produce a very fine event next April.</p> <p>There is not much in the way of any additional news right now on club activities - but I’m sure after the RBANA Conference in Texas in April there will be more to report – I will again be attending this conference and look forward to participating and representing RBWF.</p> <p>Regrettably I have to report that due to a clash of dates and a business commitment in Chicago in September - I will not be able to attend the RBWF Conference in Scotland – please pass on my apologies.</p> <p>I will however be in Scotland in July (yes golfing again) so hopefully at some point during my visit I will get an opportunity to drop into the RBWF Office to catch up.</p> <p>I have also accepted invitations from Perth BC and Falkirk BC to deliver the IM at their Suppers back in Scotland in January 2017.</p> <p>Respectfully Submitted</p> <p>Ronnie O’Byrne</p> <p>U.S.A. – Les Strachan Nothing to Report</p> | |
| <p>7.10</p> | <p>Association Representatives</p> <p>Ayrshire Association of Burns Clubs – Annie Small Sat 5th March – 95 contestants at schools comp.</p> <p>Choir at the Nationals.</p> | |

Fife Association of Burns Clubs – Frank Sandeman

Cupar, St Andrews and Bowhill Peoples Burns Clubs held their local annual school competitions again this year. And all reported that entrants were of a very high standard.

Fife Association of Burns Clubs held the Fife Schools Competition on 12th March in Auchmuty High School, Glenrothes. We were given a lot of help and support by school staff. This was our first time of funding and organising the competition ourselves as Fife Council Education Department had always done it previously. Entrant standards were extremely high but the number of entrants were lower than normal. This was partly due to the fact it was held on a Saturday this year rather than a school day. There were 130 plus entries. We were pleased that it all went extremely well but there was much controversy among parents and teachers over the combining of instrumental and bagpiping sections.

Glasgow Association of Burns Clubs – George Anderson

The year 2016 began with the annual wreath laying at Burns Statue in George Square. We gathered in the loggia of the City Chambers to be welcomed by President of the GDBA Enez Anderson. Representing the Federation in the absence of President Peter Hughes (on duty in Perth) was our Senior Vice President Bobby Kane.

Representing the City of Glasgow was the Deputy Lord Provost. Following the initial speeches of greeting, entertainment was provided by the choir from St John Paul the second primary school. It was then a procession to Burn's statue in George Square. After a further word of welcome, President Enez invited Club presidents and all those with wreaths to lay them at the foot of the statue. There then followed the Lament - Piper Douglas Melvin. After further songs from the choir, the President then briefly addressed the children on Burns, the Poet of Nature.

It was then on to the Merchant's House for light refreshments, more from the choir, a vote of thanks from Secretary/Vice President Ken Dalgleish and the company ending the event with Auld Lang Syne.

On Sunday 24th January, the Association attended morning service in Glasgow Cathedral, by invitation of the Minister the Rev Dr. Laurence Whitley. President Enez read the first lesson and Secretary/Vice President Ken read the second lesson. There was a very good attendance of Burnsians to hear a splendid sermon preached by Dr Whitley.

The President attended the Bridgeton Burns Club dinner, their schools competition winners' concert, presented prizes at the Cumbernauld & District Burns Club schools competition and attended a concert for the winners of the Trades House of Glasgow Schools competition.

Sadly, she also attended the funeral of Tom Myles, where I delivered a eulogy, and a memorial service for Archie Shaw. Both were Past Presidents of the Glasgow & District Burns Association. At one time, Tom was a weel kent figure in the Federation.

GEORGE ANDERSON. P.P., HON PRES. RBWF. Glasgow rep. to RBWF.

Falkirk & District – Jim Hunter/Brian Goldie

Schools Competition has been very successful this year with the entrants rising from 16 to 48 schools.

There is a bowling tournament planned for the 2nd Sunday in September

There is an Area Recitals Comp planned for 25th June 2016 at Camelon Labour Club and entertainment will be provided.

Grampian Association of Burns Clubs – Helena Anderson-Wright
Wreath laying and Burns Supper.

230 entries to schools comp –very successful.

Burns Concert around 31st July.

Lanarkshire Association of Burns Clubs – Bobby Kane
Schools comp – very busy.

Finals are Wednesday.

Southern Scottish Counties Burns Association – Mike Duguid

The SSCBA held a very successful memorial service in St Michael's Church Dumfries on 25th January 2016 to commemorate the birthday of our National Bard, Robert Burns. Pupils from seven Primary Schools and two Secondary Schools attended and several of the children took part in the service.

A very successful SSCBA Schools competition was held in Dumfries Academy in February and the level of competence on display augers very well for the region's participation in the Federation's Festivals later in the year.

Ellisland Farm was the venue for a surprise party to bid happy retirement to the outgoing curator, Les Byers. Les has enjoyed a 28- year association with Ellisland having originally lived in the cottage in the grounds before taking over as curator around eighteen years ago. Good wishes were conveyed from a wide cross-section of people across the country who have enjoyed visits to the farm and been inspired by Les' knowledge and love for Burns. Such has been his popularity that over £1000 was collected as a retirement gift.

Dover & East Kent Scottish Society – John Paterson

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| | <p>The membership is very keen and the Scottish presence is very strong and honourable to Scotland.</p> <p>The ferry trips to France are very well attended.</p> <p>The management committee work very hard to maintain our Scottish connections.</p> <p>The St Andrews Night celebrations were a complete success with 100 people present.</p> <p>Future events include a Cruise across the channel and a visit to a local vineyard.</p> <p>Yorkshire District – David Hannah Information was provided regarding the upcoming Tartan Ball.</p> <p>The Crown Green Bowling Tournament will be held on the second Saturday in June along with the Inter-Society Quiz and AGM.</p> <p>This has been a sad year for the District with the folding of the Leeds Caledonian Society and the Scots Society of St Andrew, Hull.</p> | |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>Applications for Membership</p> <p>Individual Membership Mr William Fleming, Paisley Janice Ross, Glasgow Bill Nolan, Irvine</p> <p>Family Membership Mr & Mrs John and Catherine Malcolm, Erskine Mr & Mrs Sandy & Anne David, Kingskettle Mr & Mrs W Kerr, Alloway</p> <p>Club Membership Robert Burns Society of Austria</p> <p>Corporate Membership None</p> <p>School Membership Stracathro Primary School, Brechin Kilbowie Primary School, Clydebank Sanquhar Primary School, Sanquhar Ferryhill School, Aberdeen Girvan Academy, Girvan St Pius Primary School, Dundee Simpson Primary School, Bathgate St Lukes & St Matthews Primary School, Dundee Zalishchyky State Gimnasia, Zalishchyky State Secondary School # 606, St. Petersburg Howdenburn Primary School, Jedburgh</p> | |

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| | <p>Long Calderwood Primary, East Kilbride Dunbog Primary School, Dunbog, Fife Eddleston Primary School, Eddleston Letham Primary School, Cupar Hatton Cruden Primary School, Aberdeen Lauriston Primary School, Falkirk Newarthill Primary School, North Lanarkshire</p> <p>Re-Affiliation None</p> | |
| 9. | <p>AOCB Sponsorship – Schools: actively looking. In anyone knows anyone in business let us know and we can approach them.</p> <p>Raffle – Malt whiskey and wine required – if anyone has any offers please let Jane know.</p> | |
| 10. | <p>Date of next meetings: Board – 6th May 2016 Executive – 18th June 2016</p> | |

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