

The Robert Burns World Federation Ltd

Executive Meeting

Venue: Camelon Labour Club, Falkirk

Date: Saturday 20th June 2015

MINUTES

1. **Sederunt:** Jean Abdulrahim, Enez Anderson, George Anderson, Kay Blair, Ray Connal, Anne Gaw, James Gibson, Willie Gibson, Brian Goldie, Betty Haining, Isa Hanley, Graham Hill, Peter Hughes, Joseph Hunter, John Irvine, Bobby Kane, Patricia Leslie, Jean MacMillan-Forster, Bob McDonald, Joe McGinty, Ian McIntyre, David Miller, Murdo Morrison, Helen Morrison, John Paterson, Jim Robertson, John Skilling, Margaret Skilling, Annie Small, David Smith, Margaret Stokes, Alison Tait, Bev Thomson, Jim Thomson, Chris Waddell, Margaretann Dougall (minutes)
2. **Apologies:** Allister Anderson, Margaret Anderson, Helena Anderson-Wright, Eddie Bonnar, Jane Brown, Richard Brown, Eric Budgell, Joe Campbell, John Caskie, Barbara Clayton, May Crawley, Bill Dawson, Mike Duguid, Cameron Goodall, George Grant, John Haining, David Hannah, Emma Harper, Murray Henderson, May Hyslop, Jane Jack, Gordon Jamieson, Karen Kane, Andy Kidd, Jack McChesney, May McGuffog, Alex Mackenzie, Frances Marshall, Angus Middleton, Margaret Morrall, Tom Morrall, Hazel Morrison, Ronnie O'Byrne, Wilson Ogilvie, James O'Lone, Lesley Richardson, Frank Sandeman, David Scott, Archie Shaw, Shona Shaw, Jim Shields, Bob Stewart, Les Strachan, Eva Stubbs, Jim Todd, Jim Weatherston, Walter Watson

Item		Action
3.	<p>Chairman's Remarks</p> <p>Welcome to Falkirk on behalf of Stirling, Clacks and Perthshire Association.</p> <p>Jim advised that Chief Executive Alison, is leaving the Federation and moving to a new post.</p> <p>He welcomed Beverley Thomson to the Federation as our new office administrator.</p> <p>Obituaries read out and a minute's silence took place.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Meeting</p> <p>Proposed – Jim Robertson, Seconded Jimmy Gibson</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None</p>	
6.	<p>Finance Update – Jim Thomson</p> <p>Explained the difference between the accounts and the budget information sheet i.e. grant funding which is restricted funds.</p> <p>The figures on the budget sheet are accurate. The differential is also caused by the accountant taking income received prior to May for Conference 2015 into this year's accounts figures.</p> <p>Last year we had a loss of £34,000 this year that loss is just under £4,000.</p>	

	<p>On the sheet there is also a provisional budget for 2015/16. The projected deficit is expected to be around £11,500.</p> <p>The take up for Conference this year is low – could incur a loss of £9,500 if this cannot be rectified.</p> <p>We have a grip on our finances now, we have a finance management committee that meets to ensure that the finances are kept under strict financial governance.</p> <p>The fiscal position in May of next year could be that we are in profit.</p> <p>If there is anyone who has financial education – there is an opportunity within the Federation for anyone who wishes to have input in this area.</p> <p>Any questions on Finance?</p> <p>Conference figures difference was questioned?</p> <p><i>we had sponsorship of approx. £14,000 for Conference 2014 which we do not have this year.</i></p> <p>There is also a difference in rent payments between this year and next – why is this?</p> <p><i>No rent will be paid on premises in our first year. However, utilities will increase. This is difficult to predict at the moment until we are in the building.</i></p> <p>We need to be pro-active in terms of revenue streams.</p> <p>Intend to keep membership rates as they are for this year.</p>	
7.	Reports	
7.1	<p>President</p> <p>Not as active since last meeting due to personal health problems.</p> <p>The March Board meeting decided that in order to streamline Board functions, that it would change the function of the Board. There are now only two full Board meetings including all Board members. The others are a reduced functioning Board. This will allow more long term financial planning.</p> <p>This is with a view to in the future moving to a Board of Directors with a specific business function within the Board.</p>	
7.2	<p>Chief Executive Events</p> <p>The Lasses Lunch 2015 on Sunday 10th May 2015 at the Fenwick Hotel, Ayrshire, was a resounding success (going on feedback). 138 ladies attended (and a couple of gentlemen). We were welcomed to East Ayrshire by Cllr Jim Todd, Provost of East Ayrshire (our Rock ‘n ‘ Roll Biker Provost who is a great supporter of the Burns</p>	

Federation). Our guest speaker, rather appropriately, was Ayrshire Lass Fiona Hyslop MSP, Minister for Culture, Europe and External Affairs and she complemented the Burns Federation on all the good work we are doing as we drive the Federation forward. Our Piper was Scott Figgins, Young Burnsian 2014 and we were entertained by Jamie McGeechan (aka Little Fire) who gave us some contemporary versions of Burns songs. Thanks to all who supported this event.

Robert Burns the Musical

(The new improved version) is coming to the Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock, on Saturday 19th September 2015. I would encourage everyone to go along and support this event. It is an even better production than the original.

RBANA

Jane & I took greetings across the Atlantic to RBANA and I bring greetings in return from President Robert Boyd and the members of RBANA. Jane & I were made most welcome during our recent trip. We stayed with Tony and Sheila Grace, most gracious hosts, who ensured that we made the most of our stay in Calgary. We visited the Robert the Bruce statue, City Hall (and the memorials to police and fire-fighters who had fallen in the line of duty) and the Olympic Plaza park where we saw the Famous Five – five women suffragettes who changed history. We lunched in the revolving restaurant in the Calgary Tower then visited Fort Calgary. We also visited the stunning Lake Moraine and Lake Louise in the Rocky Mountains amongst several other things.

The conference itself was a huge success. This year it was held in the Carriage House Inn on MacLeod Trail SW in Calgary. Jane and I were invited to attend the Executive meeting on Friday afternoon before the informal evening reception and dinner. Entertainment was provided by a young group of fiddlers who put on an excellent show. On Saturday morning, Jane and I attended the RBANA AGM. After lunch, we took part in the quiz (where we won the booby prize!!), then enjoyed the seminars presented by Ronnie O'Byrne (Burns in Edinburgh), Bill Dawson (Tam o'Shanter timeline) and Professor Gerard Carruthers (Burns and the Referendum). At Saturday's formal dinner, I had the honour of giving the Toast to RBANA and Jane replied to the Toast to RBWF. Entertainment was provided by the Calgary Burns Club Choir, the Calgary Police pipe band and Scottish country dancers. On Sunday, the ecumenical service was held in the hotel and, once again, Rev. Debra Brewin-Wilson, took the service and also played the clarsach to accompany the singing. A special mention was made for Bill and Lesley Dawson who were celebrating their Ruby Wedding that day.

Sunday afternoon Tony and Sheila took us in to town to see the Lilac Festival and in the evening we had a BBQ with several RBANA members, Paul & Ann Armstrong, Jim & Joyce McLaughlin and Ian & Freda Denness at which Jane's performance of 'The Missus' was extremely well received. This is a newly written monologue by Tracy Harvey which Jane first performed at this year's Mauchline Holy Fair and, if you didn't get the chance to see it there, then I would encourage you to do so at the first opportunity.

Website

Several new events have been added recently – please check this regularly – we don't want you to miss out on anything.

Bill Dawson has been working hard getting Burns Works ready for publication on the website. To date he has finished the poems and I have uploaded most of these to the RBWF website. Next to be dealt with are Burns letters.

Webshop

No new additions since last meeting but we continue to look out for new offerings for our members and potential new customers.

Social Media

We now have 1063 followers on Twitter and 864 'likes' on Facebook (slightly up from last meeting) with regular interactions across the global network.

Membership

The Direct Debit payment system for membership proved to be too costly. However, members can either transfer funds via online banking free of charge or contact the office to pay by card (although there will be a 5% surcharge for all card payments).

I am currently building a database of local companies who we intend to invite to Corporate Membership. We have a standard email which anyone can use and, if you would like a copy to target businesses in your local area then please contact the office.

Premises

Contact has been made from East Ayrshire Council regarding our new lease and we just await this being finalised, signed and a definite removal date arranged. Although our new premises have now been vacated, by the time the internal configuration has been adapted for our use, I would envisage a moving date at some point after conference.

200 Club

As you already know, we sold 202 shares this year and it is now time for the June draw to take place.

Thank You

This will be one of my last official duties as Chief Executive, as Jim already mentioned, I am leaving the Burns Federation on 10th July. Can I just take this opportunity to say a HUGE thank you to you all for making my job such a pleasant one. I have thoroughly enjoyed the past 4 and a half years with The Robert Burns World Federation – it has been an honour and a pleasure to work with such an amazing organisation and you, the wonderful volunteers who work so hard. The fellowship of Robert Burns is alive and well and exists within the Burns Federation set up to promote his life and works. It has been enormous fun working with Margaretann and I'm sure you will give her and Bev the same support afforded to me.

This was one of the hardest decisions I have ever had to make but I am going to work with a charity set up by my best friend which does sterling work supporting adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse. This may be the most difficult job I've ever taken on but I'm sure you can understand the necessity to keep Break the Silence going, particularly with all the recent press coverage.

	<p>I will continue to be a family member of the Burns Federation and to support the organisation wherever and whenever required. I'm also a member of both Kilmarnock Burns Clubs so you don't get rid of me completely!</p> <p>Many, many thanks, once again, for all your help and support through my years in office – I can't tell you how much I appreciate it. Thank you everyone.</p>	
7.3	<p>Conference – Jim Gibson Disappointing to note the numbers booked. Email out this week regarding an update regarding Conference.</p> <p>Programme is almost in place. Information was given regarding the programme outline. Still looking for pianist to come along on the Sunday morning.</p> <p>Silent auction will be run during the conference.</p>	
7.4	<p>Literature – Mike Duguid No report available due to Mike's absence.</p>	
7.5	<p>Editor – Bill Dawson I am busy finalising the content for the 2016 Burns Chronicle. I have about 70 pages of material submitted so far. (There are a number of articles promised which have not yet come to hand.) Can I take this opportunity to remind all those who have promised articles to send these to me within the next two weeks, i.e. by 4th July, otherwise it cannot be included. Clubs and Individuals are encouraged to submit articles on any suitable topic.</p>	
7.6	<p>Archivist – Bill Dawson I have recently been forwarded an old inventory and I will be examining this against current holdings. Detail examinations are delayed pending our removal to new offices.</p>	
7.7	<p>Website – See Chief Executive Report Included in Chief Exec report</p>	
7.8	<p>Marketing – Murdo Morrison Visiting Guest Speaker – John Irvine. Mr Irvine outlined the work being undertaken by the Forum and the ways and means in which RBWF could work with the Forum for mutual benefit. The Forum has a similar structure and is a membership based Charity. Opportunities existed for information about RBWF to be included in articles and this could be on a reciprocal basis with the Federation Newsletter. This matter to be referred to Mike Duguid, Editor of the Newsletter.</p> <p>Year of the Haggis The Address to a Haggis competition had been held in five locations and all resulted in local publicity for the Federation and Burns Clubs. The final was held on the same day as the Lasses Lunch and had been a successful event with an overall champion being declared (Mr Wullie Kirk of Fauldhouse and Crofthead Burns Club)</p> <p>Contact Directors To maintain communications throughout the Federation all Board Members have now been allocated a list of Clubs for whom they would be the Contact Director/ The Contact Director would be available for consultation on any matter of concern arising amongst the membership.</p>	

	<p>Membership The current statistics re membership of the Federation are in the following categories. Clubs 221 (£77 per Club) Schools- 64 (£20 per school) Individuals -273 (£42 per person) Corporate 7 (£150. each) Family 86 (£47)</p> <p>Discussion took place on the categories of membership and the recommendation was for status quo. There was however a need to re-vamp the current form being used to advise potential members about the benefits of RBWF Membership and also Gift Aid Foundation details. The layout should be changed to illustrate the benefits at the beginning of the advisory leaflet</p> <p>For possible consideration of the RBWF Board in view of the on-going need for income on a continuing basis there could be an opportunity for forming a category of members as Friends of the Federation. This Group could be tasked with a finance raising involvement as happens in a number of other organisations.</p> <p>Potential Contacts The Committee were advised that there was a publication containing a list of notable Scot ex pats (Global Scots) which could be a source for recruitment.</p> <p>Robert Burns Federation Newsletter A suggestion to be passed to the Editor was for the incorporation of a membership application form as part of the publication.</p> <p>Ayr Flower Show This prestigious annual event takes place on 7th, 8th and 9th August and this year the theme is for self-promotion of the stall holders.</p> <p>Volunteers are required to man the stall over the three day period and helpers are asked to contact Annie Small or Murdo Morrison.</p>	
7.9	<p>Schools – Isa Hanley</p> <p>Competitions now over. Hutcheson’s school proved to be a very good venue.</p> <p>The Jean Armour Burns Trust donated £1,000 to cover the rental for the school and they have very generously agreed to do this in the future.</p> <p>The Choral competition was organised solely by Karen Kane and was a great success.</p> <p>The subject for the essay competition still be confirmed.</p> <p>Thanks from Jim for all the hard work of the schools volunteers and emphasised the importance of the schools competition.</p>	
7.10	<p>Heritage – John Skilling Birth Place Museum</p> <p>Convener reported that a start has been made on upgrading the information descriptors which now appear in “gold on green” and are being changed to “black on white”.</p>	

Burns Cottage

A start has at last been made on refurbishment and the stonework has been taken back to the original limestone and painted "pinkish" which was thought to be the original colour. The works uncovered evidence of earlier extensions to the cottage including a "Burns Heid" panel when the building was used as a pub. It has been proposed to re-establish the original orchard in the adjacent field. Chickens in a coop have already been put in the field. Work was planned to start this year. It is believed that Souter Johnnies' Cottage at Kirkoswald would be re-thatched. Funding from various sources was being pursued.

Burns Monument

Convener reported that estimates for repairs were now £350K. The building had further deteriorated but a committee had been set up by NTS to raise funds. It was hoped to redo the internal stonework and to install interactive terminals to replace the existing distance arrows to remote locations. Visitors would be able to key in a location and an image of a Burns statue or other monument would appear. Work was planned to commence in 2016 if funding was in place.

Tablet to "Death & Dr. Hornbook"

Reported that the memorial tablet at Tarbolton has been renewed and it was intended to clear the ground at the large stone where Burns is said to have composed the poem while looking down on Willie's Mill. Noted that the small tablet denoting the site of Manson's Inn, Tarbolton, has also been renewed, the original having been obscured by overgrown foliage. Photographs are available and thanks due to Councillor John Allan.

Birnie Rhind Statue

Convener reported that he was still waiting on further information regarding the Burns Statue at Hamilton. It was thought still to be stored in a cellar in the council building.

Newcastle Statue

In spite of previous positive reports that the local council had plans to repair the statue, no further information was to hand. The statue was in several pieces in a builders' yard. Convener expressed doubts on a satisfactory outcome. The statue had been originally found by the late Fred Sinden.

Theatre Royal, Dumfries

D. Miller reported that the programme of major refurbishments was making progress although some problems due to the age of the building had been identified. It was optimistically hoped that the theatre would reopen in October for the Guild of Players' annual Christmas Pantomime. Some adjoining properties at the rear of the building had been acquired to extend the facilities and these also required major work but the end result would be satisfactory. The famous Burns Bust had been restored by Colin Hunter McQueen and is currently in storage until the theatre reopens. An approach had been made by the producer of "Robert Burns, the Musical" for a performance in due course.

Burns Mausoleum, Dumfries

D. Miller reported on the commemoration to mark the bi centenary of the laying of the foundation stone in June 1815. The day opened with a service at St. Michaels Church

attended by many Burnsians including the president and junior vice president of the RBWF. At the ceremony at the Mausoleum, officials from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Dumfriesshire, performed the re dedication with great dignity and the company processed to Burns Statue, led by a pipe band and stewarded by members of Dumfries Burns Howff Club, before dispersal for lunch. The event was organized by Dumfries Burns Club and was a good day.

Highland Mary's Memorial

Convener reported that the renovations at Greenock had been completed but he had no information on a date for the proposed re dedication ceremony.

List of Burns Memorials

Convener reported that two additional items had arisen, a sandstone statue at Portpatrick, Wigtownshire, dated 1929, erected by Portpatrick Burns Club, and located at the local bowling club and submitted a photograph. D. Smith reported that the statue had been badly damaged by a storm in the 80's when the hillside overlooking the bowling club had collapsed. The statue had been restored by members of Dumfries Burns Howff Club in the months following. Noted that the statue required repainting. Convener stated that it was believed that a memorial plaque was located on the seafront at Prestonpans. G. Jamieson would be asked to investigate.

Falkirk Memorial

B. Goldie reported that the matter had been raised at a council subcommittee and would be discussed at a full council meeting. It was proposed to approach the Scottish Government for financial help but local fundraising would continue meantime and the project was ongoing. An educational workshop was a possibility at a building in the Dock Park.

Mauchline Mural

Convener reported that Mauchline Burns Club had installed a mural adjacent to Poesie Nancies commemorating the "Roaring Game" of curling and to mark the link with Mauchline Curling stones. Noted that Mauchline Holy Fair was a success under the new management.

Jedburgh Plaque

M. Blair reported a plaque at Jedburgh at the Town House near the inn visited by Burns during his Border Tour.

Kirkcudbright Lamp

I. McIntyre reported a 1996 Bi Centenary Lamp at the Harbour Square, Kirkcudbright, placed by Kirkcudbright Burns Club. This now needs repair and he had approached the Community Council.

Others

Other unlisted memorials included the Wauchope Cairn near Hawick, a granite cairn at Hardin's Mill marking the start of Burns' Border tour, the bust of James Thomson, erected by Hawick Burns Club behind their premises. M. Blair referred to the

	<p>interpretation board near Coldstream Bridge, installed by Coldstream Burns Club to mark the crossing of the Tweed by Burns. D. Miller queried the inclusion of the wooden bust of Burns found recently at Dumfries House, Cumnock.</p> <p>Brow Well D. Miller reported that a project had been launched by Solway Firth Partnership, entitled "Bringing Burns back to the Brow Well". This was a scheme for environmental improvements at the well to include, drainage, flood prevention, landscaping together with seats and an interpretation panel for visitors. The budget was £40K and some funding had been forthcoming from Dumfries & Galloway Council and Solway Heritage but there was a shortfall and local Burns Clubs had been asked for donations. There had been a good response and the sum raised to date was £30K. The scheme would go ahead although it may be cut back if the funding fell short of the £40K budget. It was hoped that work would start in 2016. Convener stated that the improvements should include road direction signage for visitors.</p> <p>General President J. Thomson joined the meeting and a general discussion ensued. It was reported that the new premises at John Dickie Street, Kilmarnock had now been vacated but some alterations were required before the RBWF could move in. Monument – significant donations received for the restoration.</p> <p>Chris Waddell provided an update on what is happening within the museum.</p>	
<p>7.11</p>	<p>Overseas</p> <p>Pacific Rim – Jim O’Lone Just a short report from the Pacific Rim. I finally managed to contact David Porteous (President of the Robert Burns Society of South Australia) regarding reaffiliation to the RBWF. As you probably know, the Robert Burns Society of South Australia has been suspended for a period of 12 months to see if interest can be resuscitated. At the moment they will not be reaffiliating to the RBWF. The club will be holding informal meetings for the next few months to discuss the future of the club. A meeting was held on Tuesday 28th April. I will be contacting David in the next few days to see what the outcome was of the meeting. All seems well at Bendigo and Melbourne. Hopefully the AGM/ Conference will be held in Melbourne this year (still to be confirmed).</p> <p>Canada – Ronnie O’Byrne Most of the clubs that host meetings are only just kicking off their summer season again - now that the weather is getting a bit warmer.</p> <p>We expect to see a few Bard BQs – golf events - and club activity reports as we go through the summer monthsbut there won’t be much to report on from Canada until after the RBANA Conference late in May.</p>	

	<p>U.S.A. – Les Strachan No Report</p>	
<p>7.12</p>	<p>Association Representatives</p> <p>Ayrshire Association of Burns Clubs – forwarded by Annie Small after meeting On the 19th July there will be a wreath laying at Alloway at 12.15 followed by a short service and wreath laying at Burns Statue Square Ayr. On the 26th July there will be a wreath laying at Kilmarnock Cross 1.30 for 2 pm</p> <p>Borders Association</p> <p>Edinburgh & District Association of Burns Clubs Fife Association of Burns Clubs</p> <p>Glasgow Association of Burns Clubs Glasgow were pleased to host the schools competitions and glad that everything was found to be of satisfaction. We were also advised that the Glasgow President may have to step down, due to ill health.</p> <p>Grampian Association of Burns Clubs</p> <p>Lanarkshire Association of Burns Clubs Wreath Laying at Covington Mains on 5th July 2015, Tinto hotel for catering. First Monday in October – inter-club night – hosted by Kilbryde Burns Club National Haggis Champion – Will Kirk</p> <p>Renfrewshire Association of Burns Clubs</p> <p>Southern Scottish Counties Burns Association – Re-dedication of foundation stone to take place. Brow Well ceremony will take place on 22nd July.</p> <p>Stirling and Clackmannanshire Association Rep has been in touch with MSP with regards to involvement in schools comp.</p> <p>Yorkshire Association of Burns Clubs – Jim Robertson The Yorkshire District held their Tartan Ball at the Holiday Inn, Barnsley on Saturday 18th April. This was well attended by the various Societies in the area. We were pleased to welcome as our guests the Senior Vice President Dr Peter Hughes. Also CEO Alison, Margaretann Dougall and their husbands. The same venue is booked for next year’s Tartan Ball and is being held on Saturday 30th April 2016. The cost of the rooms is the same as this year at £50.</p>	

	<p>We held our Bowls, AGM and Quiz Finals last Saturday 13th June. The host Society this year was Wakefield Caledonian Society, and the event was held in West Bretton near Wakefield. The day was attended by around 60 members. The winners of the bowls were Wakefield with Bradford runners up. The quiz was won by Bradford and runners up Wakefield.</p> <p>Sorry to report that Leeds Caledonian Society and the Hull Society have ceased to exist.</p>	
8.	<p>Applications for Membership</p> <p>Individual Membership Archie Gilbert, Carluke Linda Graham, Ardrossan Andrew Raeburn, East Lothian</p> <p>Family Membership Mr & Mrs Goodsir, Larbert</p> <p>Club Membership None</p> <p>Corporate Membership None</p> <p>School None</p> <p>Re-Affiliation None</p>	
9.	<p>AOCB Pilot of Youth Burns Club – aiming at 16-35 years. There are a few interested and will be piloted at the Birthplace Museum.</p> <p>Raffle took place</p> <p>Peter thanked Jim for all his hard work with the accounts.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of next meetings: Board – Friday 4th September, Peebles Hydro Executive – Saturday 21st November, Lodge Liberton</p>	