

The Robert Burns World Federation Ltd

Executive Meeting

Venue: Liberton Lodge, Edinburgh

Date: 18th November 2017

MINUTES

- Sederunt:** Jean Abdulrahim, Enez Anderson, George Anderson, Helena Anderson-Wright, Ralf Balfour, Kay Blair, Eric Budgell, Ray Connal, Robin Dodyk, Mike Duguid, Brian Goldie, Joyce Goldie, Ann Hamilton, David Hannah, Peter T. Hughes, James Hunter, Gordon Jamieson, Beth Kerr, Patricia Leslie, Frances Marshall, Lesley McDonald, Bob McDonald, Joe McGinty, Ian McIntyre, David Miller, Murdo Morrison, Hazel Morrison, Helen Morrison, Bill Nolan, Jim Robertson, Janice Ross, Marc Sherland, Jim Shields, John Skilling, David Smith, Robert Stewart, Walter Watson, Beverley Thomson (minutes).
- Apologies:** Jane Brown, Bill Dawson, Beith Forrest, Jimmy Gibson, Willie Gibson, Isa Hanley, Brian Jackson, Bobby Kane, Moira McIntyre, Angus Middleton, Ronnie O'Byrne, James O'Lone, John Paterson, Patrick Scott, Margaret Skilling, Annie Small, Margaret Stokes, Les Strachan, Cllr Jim Todd, Chris Waddell

Item		Action
3.	Chairman's Remarks Welcome to you all and especially for those of you who have travelled long distances to be here today. It is great to see a few new faces today so please stand and introduce yourself. Ann Hamilton – from Ayr Burns Club and a guide at the Birthplace Museum. Lesley McDonald – Vice President, Allanton Jolly Beggars and member of Larkhall Burns Club. Janice Ross from Glasgow. Obituaries were read out as follows and a minute silence observed – Ian Gordon, Scottish Presidents Association and Willie J Wilson, Past president - Motherwell United Services B C	
4.	Minutes of Meeting Proposed – David Smith Seconded – George Anderson	
5.	Matters Arising No matters arising.	
6.	Finance Update – Jim Thomson Ian McIntyre – Jim Thomson is happy to stay at the moment as Finance Director but we will need a non-exec Finance Director and hope to give you an update on this soon. Conference made £1300 profit however there were only 82 paying delegates. The age profile caused concern however we are planning a profit too for Conference 2018.	

7.	Reports	
7.1	<p>President – Ian McIntyre</p> <p>Part of the reason for the loss mentioned in Jim’s report is the fact that we still have £1700 overdue in membership fees. Margaretann and the Directors will be checking to see if this is just that people have forgotten or if there is any negative aspect to the Federation that we need to address.</p> <p>Any questions? Brian Goldie wished to comment that a few months ago he had spoken with Jim Thomson and the Company regarding the bequest situation. He felt it is incumbent on the members to support the Federation on their deaths. He and Joyce have already taken steps to leave money in their wills. When you look at the number of obituaries – E.g. £1000/£500 from each we may not be looking at a loss today. Brian’s personal opinion is for members to consider the situation and do more for the Federation on our deaths and use every means possible to raise funds especially due to our charitable status.</p> <p>George Anderson re Conference – location may have been seen in part to the numbers dropping and also believes that costs need to be looked at. It can be expensive for 2 people for a short weekend in relation to what this could buy in other areas. Ian responded that before and after Conference 2018 we will be looking at costs.</p> <p>Bob Stewart re Bequests – I will support what Brian Goldie says re bequests. I really support this motion. Mike Duguid – how do we get this message out? Ian McIntyre – can we leave this with the Board to discuss further? Bill Nolan – I agree entirely and it is very commendable to go down this route. Regarding OSCR and the Articles of Association however, there are two professionals looking into this at the moment and they say that a couple of points are no longer valid with the 2006 Act so if we are doing this then we need to be bullet proof.</p> <p>Ian McIntyre’s Report: - Review of Canada – very busy trip with Moira taking in Edmonton, Calgary and Medicine Hat. A great enthusiasm was shown by all and there were some great ideas from all the Clubs. Great country, great folk and so glad we went.</p> <p>Further to this, I attended with Murdo Morrison the Kirkcudbright Food Festival. The Address to the Haggis competition showed great inclusion – an 11 year old boy; a young man with Downs Syndrome; men and women. 12 superb entrants and heartening to see. Thanks to Murdo Morrison for his eye to detail. Then to Lanarkshire Association – incredible show, Tam o’ Shanter – innovative and contemporary and nice to see the youngsters over from St Petersburg. There was then a visit by myself and Moira to Ayr Burns Club who had fallen from the fold – we had a lovely evening – the face to face contact proved to be really encouraging.</p>	
7.2	<p>Conference – report given by Ray Connal. Apologies from Jane Brown who is in New Zealand. Conference 2018 will be September 6-9 and follow the same format as 4 years ago. Hallmark Hotel Irvine. Jane will liaise with Bill Nolan. Bill Nolan confirmed that the installation dinner will be held in Greenwood Academy and that the Irvine Clubs are suggesting that on the Friday, Wellwood will be opened and that there will be tours and shuttle busses on the Friday and Saturday for people to absorb that part of the Conference. Also there will be stalls and exhibitions in the Foyer of the Hotel e.g. a silversmith wishes to come along. Professor Kirsteen McCue on the Saturday afternoon</p>	

	<p>discussing Burns songs and music. Also some kind of hands-on workshop to give a practical skill e.g. the putting together of a newsletter.</p> <p>Any questions – no.</p>	
7.3	<p>Literature – Mike Duguid. We have just had one of the best meetings in years with 3 new members. Gordon Jamieson is back as well as new members Ann, Joyce and Janice. With the digitised chronicles – how do we get this known to schools? It is a fantastic resource – how do we get this to the wider world. Also to encourage articles for the newsletter and Chronicle. Bill Dawson keeps asking for member articles and Janice Ross might write for next year a life story of Burns and there is also an idea to write on Burns’ time in Irvine. Newsletter deadline is end of December. The Chronicle does need to be proof read and this will be fed back to Bill.</p> <p>Any questions – no.</p>	
7.4	<p>Archivist – Bill Dawson</p> <p>Nothing to report at the moment as we await the move to new premises.</p>	
7.5	<p>Marketing – Murdo Morrison. Delighted to hear of progress at the new premises and will suggest a wall inside displaying Burns flags etc. – would make a good talking point. Calendar – this should be repeated for 2019 but with more of a wow factor. Could also use lesser known places and locations related to Burns. Newsletter – would like to assist with this by seeking a full page sponsor. Estonia Issue – purely financial reasons for not assisting with this and this will be continued later. Canadian email regarding future visit – a lot are coming over prior to the Conference – no numbers as yet but we must prepare to make them welcome and return their hospitality 10 fold. Patron for RBWF – mixed feelings on this so if anyone has any suggestions then please let us know. New book – “The Concise Field Guide to the Haggis of Scotland” – lovely illustrations and quite upmarket. We will discuss the possibility of taking 6 copies sale or return.</p> <p>Any questions – no.</p> <p>Mike Duguid reminder – we also looked today at a new book – The Kilmarnock Burns – A Census. A very good and detailed account. There will be a copy in the new premises library but is available to buy on Amazon.</p> <p>Ian McIntyre – I was delighted to be asked to supply a foreword to a new book – Nip Nebs. This is aimed at 3-7 year olds – beautifully illustrated and we will get a supply for the shop. Author Susie Briggs whose mentor was Wilson Ogilvie and the story is Jack Frost.</p>	
7.6	<p>Schools – Isa Hanley. Report given by Bob Stewart. A very full meeting and welcomed 3 new members: Peter T. Hughes, Lesley McDonald and Beth Kerr and hope they will find it busy and enjoyable. Dates for the National Festivals 2018 are Saturday 21st April (Secondary), Saturday 12th May (Primary) at Denny High School. Brian Goldie, Helen Morrison and Isa Hanley visited last month and found it very suitable and staff very helpful. Thanks made to Brian Goldie – got funding for both Festivals so no cost to Federation. Choral Competition – Karen Kane has stood down from Convenor role and we are working to get someone to take this on. This will be in Denny High School too</p>	

	<p>on Saturday 17th March. After discussion, “Rosebud by my early Walk” now agreed will be “Duncan Grey”. The main theme of meeting was running of Festivals in future to recognise the Constitution and must think about including Scottish song and word as well as Burns. Feedback fairly positive and 6 people in a sub group to come up with suggestions for a Festival of both Scots and Burns. This will not happen in 2018 – to get our thoughts on this matter – maybe in 4 or 5 years.</p> <p>A query was raised over the certificates – these used to be from Solway and were very good quality but the ones coming from Head Office were curved up and caused problems when presenting. Head Office asked to make in the same gauge as Solway. Ian McIntyre – thanks to the Schools Committee – a healthy debate with some anxiety of the direction of travel but looking forward to seeing what the working group come up with. Look at all avenues and will look forward to feedback.</p> <p>Mike Duguid asked if we still produce the schools pack. We do still have a large stock of these in the office.</p>	
<p>7.7</p>	<p>Heritage – David Miller. Discussion around statues and monuments. Gordon Jamieson said the Dalkeith monument has been refurbished and re-located. A wonderful monument worth a visit. Ayr – Leglen Wood – landslip on River Ayr affects the public walk. This has not been raised with anyone but do not want to underestimate. The Cairn is perfectly safe but a lot of beech trees which can raise problems. We should monitor this as a Federation and a report might be made to the Board in future. There could be trees down in future but there have been no reports received from the Council – just a slight warning for the future. Good news regarding the Burns Monument at Alloway. National Trust for Scotland will start work in January 2018 and now that it is published in the press, we shall be watching and John Skilling will monitor this. Hamilton Paul grave – congratulations to Walter Watson and Brian Goldie for their hard work and this has been funded by David Keenley of Chicago – hats off to Brian for this. There is a picture in the Chronicle of the gravestone. Black Bull in Moffat – this has now re-opened. Window – David Smith will find out where it is. Globe Inn, Dumfries is up for sale. This could impact the Howff Club as this is our home. Burns Statue in Dumfries – the Council are taking care of cleaning the statue. Regarding vandalism of Burns Mausoleum – this is deplorable but a local painter has removed the paint and cleaned it up. Burns Statue at the Embankment in London – the plaque is unable to be read and the Burns Club of London are maintaining this. Durham Miners Association Banner – brought along by John Skilling. Carluke Statue – this is the 4th oldest statue – was built by Forrest in 1840. Good news and we will write to congratulate on finding this. John Skilling brought lots of news cuttings of negative press but we as a Federation are doing things and thankful to all who pass information.</p> <p>Ian McIntyre – bring options to the Board regarding Leglen Wood. Also perhaps do a report for the newsletter regarding the negativity in press.</p> <p>Murdo Morrison – a replica window produced by the Federation? There was a second one.</p>	

	<p>Helena Anderson Wright – where was the statue discovered? Peter T. Hughes – in a private home where the man had died. Peter was invited to see it and it was purchased by the Carluke Historical Society and now safely in storage. Helena – a great story.</p> <p>Marc Sherland – in the Gorbals there are 2 statues – Shakespeare and Burns. There is a refurbishment due – we should ask what the plans are and what intent is there. Marc will send information to David Miller.</p> <p>Lesley McDonald – tentative at the moment but St Mary’s Aisle – Philadelphia Lockhart. Publication said Robert Burns had an affair with her but this has now been pointed out as wrong to the publisher. Would like a plaque in the Aisle to promote the story and will keep us posted.</p>	
<p>7.8</p>	<p>Admin – to include 200 Club Draw</p> <p>Great feedback was received after Conference, with only a couple of concerns regarding telephones in bedrooms (lack of them), which was flagged up to the hotel.</p> <p>Some progress has been made since September on the premises, which contractors now in place and are currently on week 3 of a 6 week contract! I do expect this to run over a bit, but we are hoping to be in a position to move into the premises in early 2018. Ian and I, along with Linda, our IT consultant went out for a site visit last week and are happy with the progress being made.</p> <p>October has been busy in the office with planning for the start of the in-school competitions and the annual Chronicle and membership renewal mailings. We have now sent out the email to all schools and have received the certificates from the printer.</p>	
<p>7.9</p>	<p>Membership – Marc Sherland. Re-iterated membership decline. Taskforce meeting last week and we have here our new form. Bright and cheerful – not to be aimed at Clubs – need individual members for economic marketing strategy. Encourage Club members to be individual members. Part of what we tried to do is suggest a giving-back that can be done. Seek to attend events when most effective – there are not enough members in the 25-45 bracket. Please take copies away today but ensure you note the address details being for the new premises.</p> <p>Any questions? Brian Goldie – any advance to all-male clubs to form ladies clubs? Marc – we should look at this, yes. Difficult to rule on but we can be encouraging for female branches. Bill Nolan – 2 Irvine clubs are totally separate. Marc Sherland – some clubs are still using their Federation numbers but not been affiliated for years so will be approaching them. Helena Anderson Wright – golf clubs? Have we approached them? Yes, golf and bowling etc. Enez Anderson – we find that at Burns Suppers they will ask us to speak but won’t join. Helena Anderson Wright – Rotary Clubs too. Marc Sherland</p>	

	<p>– will look for a taskforce to get membership pop-ups and we have 10,000 forms printed.</p> <p>Ian McIntyre – praise to Marc. The driving force behind the forms which are really eye catching but hold off now until the New Year.</p> <p>Ian McIntyre – can I also mention that we have received a donation of £460 from the Calgary Burns Club. A very kind gesture.</p> <p>Marc Sherland – can it please also be noted that from now on the Overseas Directors will be changed to International.</p>	
<p>7.9</p>	<p>Overseas</p> <p>Pacific Rim – Jim O’Lone No report</p> <p>Canada – Ronnie O’Byrne No report</p> <p>U.S.A. – Les Strachan No report</p>	
<p>7.10</p>	<p>Association Representatives</p> <p>Ayrshire Association of Burns Clubs – Ray Connal Ray apologised for missing out any events from the list but the clubs have been very busy including the “Lapraik Champion of Champions Competition” hosted by New Cumnock BC. The organisers feel the competition has now run its course in the current format but will help anyone who wishes to take it on by offering help and advice. The Holy Fair in Mauchline – funding a major problem but congratulations to the organising committee on efforts to keep it going. Alloway BC hosted St. Petersburg children and their production of Tam o’ Shanter.</p> <p>Fife Association of Burns Clubs – Bob Stewart Schools competition – funding has not been an issue however it is difficult to get people to run the competitions. The Treasurer/Sec/ President stood down at AGM so effectively no Fife Association. Competition on Saturday 18th March now cancelled but if anyone is willing to come and help the booking could be re-vamped. Brian Goldie asked if help could come from other areas. Bill Nolan asked if they have approached Universities or Colleges and suggested contacting Prof. Robert Crawford at St Andrews. Bob Stewart – a possibility that could be pursued. Ian McIntyre asked to be kept apprised of what is happening.</p> <p>Glasgow Association of Burns Clubs – Marc Sherland for George Anderson 2 new affiliated Clubs – Partick and Paisley. Now 10 clubs and 1 kindred society (Centre for Robert Burns Studies) – next meeting takes place next Tuesday. Recent project with the Conservatoire “Aye Can” for 12-17 year olds. 11 people on the course with 100% positive evaluations. This will be done again next year. Mention of St Petersburg school</p>	

	<p>visit- exceptionally successful. George Square wreath laying 27/01/2018 and Glasgow Cathedral Service 28/01/2017</p> <p>Falkirk & District – Brian Goldie for Jim Hunter Schools competition 22/02/2018. Falkirk Council and Wheatsheaf and Falkirk Burns Clubs providing funding towards National Finals. Thanks to Helena who is doing the photographs.</p> <p>Dumfries and Galloway – Mike Duguid St Michael’s Service – 25/01/2018 and Dumfries & Galloway Schools Competition 16/02/2018</p> <p>Edinburgh District – Gordon Jamieson Report given re the visit of Russian students and teachers and their Tam o’ Shanter production. Schools competition at St George’s school 03/03/2018</p> <p>Grampian Association of Burns Clubs – Helena Anderson-Wright Schools competition 03/03/2018, Annual Dinner 10/02/2018, 30th July to 5th August is the International Festival where the association fund a project for one week relating to a part of Burns life or historical event. The show is on the 4/5 August,</p> <p>Lanarkshire Association of Burns Clubs – Kay Blair Hosted St Petersburg Forum – thanks to Helen Morrison and Elizabeth Clark. A civic reception and visit to the heritage centre. Schools competitions as follows: Allanton JB 27/02/2018, Larkhall BC 13/03/2018, Lanarkshire Association 27/03/2018.</p> <p>Yorkshire District – David Hannah Tartan Ball – 28/04/2018. Bowling competition – details to follow.</p>	
8.	<p>Applications for Membership</p> <p>Individual Membership – Mr Douglas McClure, Stranraer; Mr Arthur Smith, Michigan</p> <p>Family Membership - none</p> <p>Club Membership - none</p> <p>Corporate Membership - none</p> <p>School Membership – Secondary School of Sosonka, Ukraine</p> <p>Re-Affiliation - none</p>	
9.	<p>AOCB – no</p> <p>Ian closed the meeting by thanking those present for their commitment to the Federation.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of next meeting: Executive – Saturday 24th March 2018 - venue tbc</p>	