

**Ullapool Museum Trust Minutes of the Annual General Meeting,
held at 7pm on Thursday 7 November 2019 at Ullapool Village Hall**

Present: Members: Ellie Ing (Chair), Nigel Carr (treasurer), Alison Parsons (secretary), Alastair Cunningham, Jenny Cunningham, Ian Rettie, Mo McBeath, Gillian Stephens, Cathy Dagg, Kate Rettie, Margaret Maclean, Bruce Ing, Don Macleod, Jackie Macleod, Robbie MacKenzie, Alice Mikiety, Chrissy Boyd, Ann Urquhart, Oliver Gero, Fiona Gero, Penny Stewart, David Heaney, Anna Welti, Peter Newling, Joan Michael, Effie MacKenzie, Anne Campbell. In attendance: Helen Avenell and Siobhan Beatson

1. **Notice calling the meeting:** The Chair confirmed that notice of the meeting had been issued to all members of the Trust in accordance with the constitution.
2. **Apologies:** Catriona Martin, John Baldwin, Janet Urquhart.
3. **Minutes of the last AGM:** the minutes of the AGM held on 1 November 2018, having been previously circulated, were approved on the proposal of Joan Michael, seconded Alison Parsons.
4. **Directors' Report and Company Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2018:** A précis of the Directors' Report and Company Accounts had been previously circulated; the full version had been available on request and copies were available at the meeting. The Chair reminded members that these refer to the last financial year and therefore do not reflect this season's activities. Nigel Carr, as Treasurer, gave a brief overview of the accounts: income for the year totalled £50,101 against expenditure of £37,485 giving a surplus of £12,616. Admissions, donations and shop sales have all increased in the year to contribute to the surplus. In addition, our expenditure has gone down. Nigel offered thanks to Tim Wright for preparing the accounts and Heike Gehringer for her meticulous record keeping.
5. **Chair's report for the period since the last AGM:** Ellie Ing gave a verbal report – the text of which is appended at the end of the minutes.
6. **The appointment of a reporting accountant:** The Board recommended the continued appointment of Tim Wright, Chartered Accountant, as reporting accountant for the financial year: this was agreed by Members.
7. **Retirement and Election of Directors:** Catriona Martin retired due to ill health. Moira McBeath, Ian Rettie, Cathy Dagg and Gillian Stephen retired on rotation. Alastair Cunningham, Jenny Cunningham and Penny Stewart were elected to the board.

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance and interest. The meeting closed and was followed by a break for refreshments with a display regarding the Connecting Collections project and an opportunity to ask Helen Avenell questions. **Close of meeting**

Chair's report to the AGM:

In terms of the success of the Museum it has been a good year, but the sudden enforced retirement of our Chair, Catriona, in January, to a severe illness was a blow for us all. It was a time of sadness and concern for her health and we all miss the knowledge, experience and dedication that she has given to the Museum over the past years. This loss was compounded by Heike, our experienced, Administrator leaving in November. We were sad to see her go.

During the winter months we held a series of workshops for the local children and their families on historical topics. We are very grateful to our guest speakers and to Alice for organising these events.

We were presented with a picture to commemorate the conclusion of the WW1 Project - 'Through the eyes of the children of Lochbroom' undertaken by Ullapool High School. As in previous years, our volunteers

worked with the Transition year from the Primary School in researching and preparing information about the Men of Lochbroom who had been in the war.

As part of the New Year celebrations, Chrissy, Catriona, and Joan organised the opening of the Museum for seasonal activities. This was well attended and a great success. They will be doing this again on the 1st and anyone wishing to join them would be most welcome.

Siobhan, our new Administrator, started work in mid January. We had intended to employ an Outreach/Manager as well but unfortunately the expected funds were not forthcoming. Luckily for us, Siobhan was prepared to take on a limited amount of outreach work and so with the support of our part-time curator, Helen, some of our intended plans to reach out to other audiences were able to develop.

In February we were really cheered to learn that we had won the Queen's Award. This was an amazing boost coming on top of the Marsh Award for 2018 and emphasises the wonderful work all the volunteers do.

As most of you know we celebrated the winning of the award in June when the Lord Lieutenant, Janet Bowen, came to present our certificate and crystal. Kate Rettie and Don Macleod, who have given so much to the museum, went to the Queen's garden party at Holyrood as our representatives. I would like to thank Alice and Kate for joining me at the assessment for the award and to Jan Dawson for nominating us, and to Gemma Middleton and Kevin Peach for commending us.

We opened our doors in April, knowing that we had much to do to continue our improvements, but in the sure knowledge that the redisplay was proving very popular as it combines a greater view of the Church's history alongside the social history of Ullapool.

During the year Siobhan and Helen have run activities to encourage our local children to enjoy our Museum and have a sense of being part of it. There was a very successful 'Take over day' for Primary 6 pupils and during the holidays there was an hour a week set aside for the children to explore and experience the museum.

As of last year we were once again working in partnership with the Harbour Trust - meeting and greeting cruise passengers. Some groups were able to listen to talks about the village's history from Joan and Chrissy and others tramped the streets with Joan on her famous walks. We even had a virtual walk one day when the weather was appalling! The original recording carried out for the Museum was converted for an audio walk but for next year there will be an updated version written by Joan and spoken by Effie and others – we hope!

Our documentary project is near to completion and we now have a new structure for the future cataloguing system. Many of our objects, photos and some oral histories can now be seen on e-hive, a data base system, so that even if our objects cannot be displayed (due to lack of space) anyone can view them. We are gradually adding to the collection, accessioning and collating the information as we do so. The 'we' included Alastair, some reception staff and 4 Duke of Edinburgh pupils from the High School who have contributed so much time to 'uploading' information, taking photos of our objects and transcribing oral history. All this was done under the excellent guidance of Jo.

Our largest store has been converted into two to accommodate larger objects thus freeing up more space in the Curator's store and providing a separate space to store books to sell in our trailer. Don and Ian have done an amazing job partitioning this area. There are doors and partitions to be proud of!

Our local funding group, organised through Kate and Jackie have had a very busy year. There has been the 'Soup and Sandwich' programme, our Winter sale, the Christmas fair, Pier Day, Vintage Day, the Book Festival, MS fundraising Day and the Flower show. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in these activities from soup to cake makers. We are a very friendly group so if anyone fancies joining us...we'd love to see you. There are many activities to choose from cooking, waitressing or even washing up!

Lastly, but not the least, we owe much to our reception volunteers who not only allow us to keep the doors open but provide a great range of information to our visitors as well keeping an eye on the building during their sessions. They are our front line! Thank you to Robbie, Effie, Debbie, Pauline, Amanda, Nigel, Ali, Jennie, Margaret, Chrissy, Tania, Sandra, Penny and Alice.

We are so grateful to Robbie, Ann and Pauline who between them cover the genealogy research that visitors ask of us. This involves many hours of painstaking work but brings in income, as well as adding to our local knowledge of the people who lived here in the past.

As you have now gathered so much of our work is voluntarily based, so if you would like to join us do come and chat about it. Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank our staff Siobhan, Helen, James, Katie and John for their hard work. Helen and Siobhan have just added to our Certificate collection in becoming runners up for awards- Helen for Volunteer Community Projects display and Siobhan for the Highland and Island Tourism and Hospitality Hero. So many congratulations to them. I would also like to thank my fellow Board members who do far more than just attend meetings....all of them play a very active role in the running of the Museum and are of course volunteers.

As a Board we have been examining how we can use our assets to make us more efficient in creating funds. We have the difficult task of balancing the demands of running what amounts to a small business with the need to maintain our building and serve the public and community as a museum. We are very grateful for the continuing financial support from the Harbour Trust, the Local Authority, members' donations and our local funding events supported by the community. These monies help us to keep afloat.

New partners that we are working with are Clachan Church, Kids in Museums, Ewens's guide. We are in the process of planning further activities and will be publishing these in our Christmas newsletter.

Finally, there is one idea that we would like to put to you - and this is that we should **explore** the possibility of opening on a Sunday or part Sunday. This would involve discussions with the Church to revoke our previous agreement, our volunteers past and present and the community. We would like to be in a position to invite people to the Museum and thus boost our funds, but there is no guarantee that it would be financially viable and therefore requires careful thought and research.

Thank you

Ellie Ing, chair of the board of trustees