

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of
THE CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY
held in The Tryst, Church of Scotland, Pitlochry
on Saturday 18th August 2018 @ 10.00am

- 1 **Members were welcomed**, especially those attending the AGM for the first time, by Gillespie Robertson, Chair. The Chief was in attendance on the podium with Council members and Clan Secretary Catriona Macaulay. Apologies for absence were received among others from Jean Robertson of Struan and from long-time attendee Linda Myers of the Mid-West Branch in USA, to both of whom the meeting sent best wishes for better health: and from Jenny Stark (Chair of Rannoch and Highland Branch)
- 2 **2017 AGM minutes** were approved and signed.
- 3 **Council Report by Chair.** The Chairman reminded the meeting that 2017 had been a challenging year and that the challenges were still with us. Nevertheless - echoing his remarks in this year's Annual - the Council felt that the good news outweighed the bad. Because of the loss of rental income from two tenants leaving the Clan centre, and the multiple costs, including professional fees, associated with the resulting changes, we had taken a financial hit of some £40,000 in 2017. This would be seen in the 2017 Accounts which the meeting would be asked to approve later. In the near term our finances would continue to be stretched; but a new long-term tenancy and other arrangements with House of Bruar, including significant improvements to our two buildings at House of Bruar's expense, were positive long-term elements. During the coming 12 months the Council would be focusing on future business plans to take advantage of any and all opportunities for improving both our finances and our Museum.
The major item of good news, after many months of complex negotiations, was the finalisation of the acquisition of Struan Kirk a few days earlier by the new Struan Kirk Trust. The likes of Oliver Cromwell and the Duke of Cumberland might have in the past destroyed such castles as Clan Donnachaidh's chiefs had owned, but the Kirk was and is the Clan's true spiritual home, and its preservation for future generations was hugely important. Approximately a quarter of the Trust's initial funding for the purchase and for estimated immediate/essential repair costs had been provided by the Clan Society and its fund drive with the branches, and the Society was expected to contribute towards future maintenance costs. It is essential that fund drives continue.
In general the Council felt that we had settled in well with our new status as a full Scottish Charity, with a Clan Secretary experienced in charity matters, a series of new sub-committees set up within the Council to address specific/major elements of our activities, and a new Policy and Procedures Manual all in place. The first item in the Manual spells out how we strive to behave towards both the outside world and each other. It adopts wording suggested by Christy Duncan Lange, our IVC: "To give more than we receive."
A very special event for the Society was the handover to us earlier in the week by the Trustees of the 51st Highland Division - a Division of the United Kingdom's armed forces

which had a heroic 20th century battle record but has long since disappeared through various mergers and rationalisations - their splendid Memorial statue of a piper which stands at the entrance to the Clan Centre at Bruar. It has been given to the Society for permanent safekeeping, together with funds to assist us in future maintenance. The handover reflected the gradual running down of the Trust as the last survivors of its great historical campaigns were dying out.

4 **Financial Report followed by Acceptance of Accounts** (copy documentation attached.)

The Chair and Clan Secretary presented a summary of the Society's formal Accounts for Calendar 2017 and spelled out the highlights. Acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Duncan Huie, seconded by Tim Duncan and agreed.

Andrew Duncan requested clarification on whether any Trustees/Members of Council other than the Clan Secretary receive any payment from the Society. The Chairman confirmed that applicable Charity law permits payments to Trustees only for specific services of value or for reimbursement of approved expenses incurred on behalf of the charity. All such approved payments are minuted and are recorded in the relevant year's Accounts.

Council were asked from the floor whether we could quantify any increase in the value of Clan Society's property as a result of the work done by House of Bruar. It was explained that accounting conventions require regular valuation of buildings, but this had not been done recently. The Chair undertook to ensure that revaluation would be carried out for our 2018 Accounts and this should give us guidance on the question. It is possible that valuation might be done by a suitably qualified Member as an in-kind contribution; otherwise the Clan will need to cover the cost.

5 **Nominations to Council**

All Council Members due to retire in rotation in 2018 had expressed willingness to continue, but Anne-Lise Robertson who was due to retire next year wished to stand down one year early: this was accepted reluctantly and Anne-Lise was warmly thanked for all her past work, and also that of her late husband. There were no new nominations.

Donald Reid and Jonn Duncan who had both been co-opted onto the Council in March 2018 were willing to continue, and the Council had expressed the unanimous wish that Donald accept the vacant position of Vice Chair which he was willing to do. Judy Harkin who had also been co-opted in March 2018 was unable to join Council permanently due to other commitments. All of the above Council moves were proposed by Christy Duncan Lange, seconded by Ron Hobson and agreed.

6 **IVC Report** (copy attached)

The Chair expressed the members' deep appreciation of the IVC's work and emphasised that she had received extraordinary support from her husband John.

7 **Secretary/Membership Report**

Catriona Macaulay spoke about the two new projects that she had instigated with Council support since the last AGM.

Donnachaidh Stones had been featured on the website and also in the Clan Secretary's Newsletter at the end of 2017 and in the 2017 Clan Annual. Feats of strength involving The Stones will form part of the Pitlochry Highland Games in 2019, and it is hoped there will be different categories with trophies won for each. A request for help and support in this project was made to enable it to move forward.

Clan Donnachaidh Award – launched by the Clan Secretary in the Scottish government's Year of Youth 2018, open to all school pupils in highland Perthshire. Nominations for the award can be made by school teachers, support workers, family members, friends and

neighbours. In less than 500 words each person making a nomination has to describe why they have made their choice. This project was given great support by the Highland Perthshire Education Committee. The 2018 winner was Calum Ryder of Pitlochry who was given his award, a Trophy and £100 cash, at his School prizegiving held in the Pitlochry Festival Theatre in June. Calum as part of his prize has also been invited to attend the 2018 Chief's Dinner.

The Chair expressed appreciation for the Secretary's initiatives and the hope that these and further new ideas for raising the Clan's and the Society's profile would attract new memberships and receive continued support from existing members.

It was intimated that Struan Kirk would have the Clan Society's annual service as its first event under its new ownership on Sunday 19th August 2018. There would also be a renewal of wedding vows between Clan Members Rikki and Jennifer Robertson before the church service.

- 8 **Clan Annual Report / Journey Home** read by Judy Harkin (copy attached). Appreciation was expressed to Judy for the excellent quality of the Annuals produced under her editorship – see also footnote below.

- 9 **DNA** – Tim Duncan gave a brief outline of continuing encouraging progress, with participants in the project now around 2,000 and an outstanding recent success being the identification of our first Chief's (Duncan Reamhar's) DNA.

10 **Affiliated Branch Reports**

Reports were presented orally or read out, all to great acclaim, by visiting Presidents/Chairmen or other representatives of the following branches: Arizona, Carolinas, Florida, Gulf Coast, London and Southern Counties, MidWest, New South Wales, North East, Northern California, Pacific N West, Rocky Mountains, Southern California, Spain, Upper MidWest, and West Canada. While a few branches were struggling to maintain or increase interest and memberships, the general tone was positive and encouraging.

11 **Subscriptions**

Brian Donaghy proposed that the UK annual membership subscription be increased by £5, with a similar flow-on increase to overseas members joining the parent Society. Discussion followed on the continuing and pressing need to bring in new members, and the view was expressed that increased subscriptions could be a deterrent, especially in the case of overseas members who had to pay local branch fees before considering a subscription to the parent Society. It was agreed that Council would take Brian's comments on board and consider the issue again next year.

12 **AOB**

The Chair asked the meeting to recognise the presence of our Honorary Vice President, distinguished Clan historian and previous Clan Annual Editor Dr Jean Munro, who has been an outstanding contributor to the Society's work over many decades.

Christy Lange requested that the Clan Council have an updated photo taken.

The Chair mentioned that as Life Membership is literally for life and some members live for a very long time, older members with Life membership might like to consider making a donation to the Society if they could afford to do so.

Intimations: Brian Donaghy intimated he had items which he would be selling after the AGM with proceeds to go to the Society.

NOTES: Our Articles of Association provide for the appointment of the Clan Annual Editor at the AGM. This item had to be omitted from the proceedings this year because discussions on this matter were still taking place in Council. Since the AGM, the role has

been filled by James Irvine Robertson, a previous Editor and a widely respected expert on Clan history, on the unanimous vote of Council members, with formal confirmation to be included in the Agenda for next year's AGM.

Our Articles also provide for the appointment or reappointment at each year's AGM of our Accountants/ Independent Financial Examiners. This item was inadvertently omitted from the AGM Agenda not only in 2018 but also in 2017 and possibly at previous AGMs, probably because Walton Kilgour have filled the role for so many years now. The Council has undertaken to ensure that the point will not be omitted again in future AGMs.

**Date of next AGM: Friday 13th September 2019 at The Tryst, Church of Scotland,
Pitlochry @ 12 noon**