

# **THE OLD EDINBURGH CLUB**

## **Founded 1908**

### **Minute of the ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CLUB held in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh on Wednesday 28 September 2016 at 7.00pm.**

The meeting was opened by Bailie Elaine Aitken, representing the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, who welcomed the Club and recalled her previous attendance at the AGM in 2014. Mrs Aitken referred to the city's magnificent architectural heritage and its increasing popularity as a tourist destination. She concluded by commending the role of organisations like the Club in helping to keep the history of Edinburgh alive.

The President, Mrs Elizabeth Roads, thanked Mrs Aitken for her welcome and address.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Alan Borthwick, Helen Borthwick, Miss Jennifer S Calcott, Lady Lucinda L Mackay, Nola Meikle, Mrs Iona Roberts, Bridget Stevens, Ian W Tough, Colin M Warwick, Gordon Wyllie

### **Minute of the AGM held on 23 September 2015**

The Minute of the one hundred and eighth AGM held on 23 September 2015 having been circulated was approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **Intimation of Items for Inclusion under Other Competent Business**

None were intimated.

### **Annual Report**

The President addressed the meeting.

"It is my pleasure once more to present the President's report for the year since the last AGM. And another excellent year it has been.

"We are again most grateful to the Lord Provost and Council of the City of Edinburgh for their hospitality tonight and for their support for the Club. We have gained much from this association and long may it continue. I am delighted that Bailie Elaine Aitken has joined us and unlike last time we met, at the Incorporation of Bonnetmakers' Dinner, neither of us is required to wear a funny hat.

"The Club enjoyed another very successful lecture series and the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club is full of excellent articles and we are most grateful to Bob Morris and James Hamilton for nurturing this important public face of the Club. Work is well in hand with the BOEC Volume 12 and information on earlier volumes, including access to most of the original series, is available on or via our website from Internet Archive. The Minutes of the Club from 1908-1936 are also available.

"The summer visits to The Royal Society of Edinburgh, Lauriston Castle and St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral were very popular and although I could not attend the visit to the Cathedral it is a building I know well and as with all the visits the guides were excellent and enthusiastic and kept us fascinated. These visits do much to show members places in Edinburgh, well known but perhaps not well visited. We are much indebted to John Stenton for taking on the organisation of these visits and also to Iain Gordon

Brown for enabling us to visit the Royal Society where we saw behind the scenes in a most illuminating way.

“Many will be pleased to have learnt that it seems likely that the Royal High is not going to be another hotel after all but, hopefully, will return to its educational function as the new location for St Mary’s Music School. If so we are lucky to have city fathers who care.

“Council has taken on much again this year. The work is enjoyable and rewarding and Council meetings far from tedious. I do encourage members to join us as vacancies arise and I am sorry that so few have volunteered to join Council or even help. All organisations face this problem but the club will not prosper unless the members offer their help – if not on Council then in some other way, perhaps by manning a table before meetings to sell the BOEC or even helping to stack chairs afterwards. If you can come on a Wednesday perhaps you can come a moment earlier or leave a moment later. Perhaps you are a computer boffin and could help Graham with that side of promotion. Everyone has a talent and we would like to share in those talents.

“Last year I mentioned that in 1915 there were 324 members and on 28<sup>th</sup> October of that year there was £425 on deposit and at present membership is below that figure although I hope that after today many will have renewed their membership. However we do not need to recruit more members and please do try and bring a friend along to a meeting or introduce them to the BOEC and perhaps that will be hooked on our city in the way we are.

“This is also a year of change. Alan McKinney has served the club diligently, cheerfully and wisely and the financial affairs would not be so clear and well-ordered but for him. He will be much missed by Council members and I would like everyone to thank him most sincerely for his devotion to the club – which I know will remain.

[At this point the President presented Mr McKinney with gifts for himself and Mrs McKinney.]

“Allan Simpson retired from office a little while ago but he remained on Council and we have benefited much from his prodigious knowledge of club affairs. I know he will still give us guidance when asked.

“John Stenton has arranged superb visits and Council is indebted to him for that and also for his wise and sensible contributions to our debates.

“Graham Rule has handled both the membership and the website and has now decided he must relinquish one – membership, at least he is staying on Council and finally but most sincerely we must thank Peter Graham for his super efficiency. He has been a great source of guidance to me and to council and is the best asset a Council could have.

“All that remains is for me to thank my other colleagues on Council for their tremendous support. We would not have a sound bank balance; an accessible roll of members; a superb and up to date website; a fascinating lecture and visit programme; and a journal of which other clubs are jealous if it were not for the behind the scenes work carried out by members of Council.

“I have enjoyed my time on Council enormously, especially the last three years when I have been privileged to serve as President and I am not just saying that as it is an honour to lead this happy body. The time has flown by and it with sadness that I now bow out. I can, however, assure my successors that my commitment to the club will not waver and I am happy to help when required. I still have some ideas I would like to finish.”



## **Secretary's Report**

On behalf of the Club the Secretary, the Rev W P Graham, thanked Mrs Roads for her continuing leadership of the Club in the past year and for her comprehensive report.

In submitting his report Mr Graham indicated that following the President's full and all-encompassing report of the year's activities there was very little to be added.

After referring to the ongoing work of the Council, the Secretary highlighted matters considered by the Council in the past year:

- The Dean of Guild Papers Project
- Edinburgh Southside Graveyard Project.
- Edinburgh World Heritage Trust and its plans for the former Tron Kirk
- Inch House
- Risk assessment in regard to incapacity of office bearers

The Secretary concluded by thanking the members of Council for their diligent participation in its meetings.

## **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer, Mr Alan McKinney, spoke to the Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2016, which had been circulated on the web.

Mr McKinney reminded those present that the members of the Council are the Trustees of the Club and as such seek to fulfil their responsibilities diligently and in accordance with the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. While expressing pleasure in reporting that the finances of the Old Edinburgh Club remained healthy and that the Club could meet its obligations and aspirations, Mr McKinney drew attention to the issue of membership and in particular the decline in the number of members since an increase in the subscription was introduced in 2014/15. This increase had been intended to cover the cost of publishing the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club annually and had allowed for a possible loss of 10% in members. Unfortunately, over the intervening period and particularly including the renewals for 2016/17 the loss of members has been considerably in excess of that 10% forecast. This had happened despite various efforts which had been made to raise the profile of the Club. He indicated that unless there was an increase in membership the benefits of the increase in subscription rates would be largely negated. The Treasurer encouraged those present to assist with the recruitment of new members

- by taking a spare application form to give to someone who might be interested
- by inviting a neighbour or a friend to the Winter Lecture Programme
- by offering someone membership for their Birthday or Christmas
- by drawing the Council's attention to activities where the OEC could seek to promote its membership.

In closing Mr McKinney expressed his thanks to the Club and in particular to Presidents – past and present – as well as Council members for their friendship and support over the past ten years.

The Accounts were received.

## **Editor's Report**

Professor Robert Morris, Editor, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, gave in the Editor's Report.

He intimated that volume twelve of the new series of the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* would be published early in 2017, but that the longer-term intention was still to achieve publication on an annual basis. The Editor thanked all contributors, James Hamilton as Deputy Editor and the Council for its support. He appealed for members to draw to his attention books worthy reviewing for inclusion in the *Book* and invited any potential contributors to contact the Editors.

## **Election of Office Bearers and Council**

The following nominations were submitted on behalf of the Council:

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| President:                             | Dr Margaret P Collingwood TD                                |
| Vice-President                         | <i>No nomination</i>  |
| Hon. Treasurer:                        | Mr James Hamilton   |
| Hon. Secretary &<br>Minutes Secretary: | Rev W Peter Graham  |
| Editor:                                | Professor Robert J Morris                                   |
| Membership<br>Secretary:               | Mr Jerry Ozaniec  |
| Programme Secretary:                   | Professor Richard G Rodger                                  |
| Publicity Officer:                     | Mrs Pat Jones   |
| Council Members:                       | Dr Edward Duvall,<br>Ms Gillian Ferguson,<br>Mr Graham Rule |

The President asked if there were any nominations from the floor, but there were none.

All of the above were duly elected, the office-bearers to serve for one year and the Council members for three years, along with Ms Anne Brockington who was elected as a Council member in 2015, as the Council for 2016-2017.

It was agreed that Mr James Hamilton, having been appointed as Treasurer, be authorised to operate all bank accounts held in the name of the Old Edinburgh Club. It was further agreed that the Secretary should continue as a signatory to cheques drawn on the Club's accounts and that Mrs Pat A Jones should replace Dr Allen Simpson as a signatory.

Mrs Roads invested the incoming President with the badge of office. Dr Margaret Collingwood took the chair, thanked Elizabeth for her service to the Club, as Secretary and then as President, and presented her with a token of the Club's appreciation for all that she had done.

There being no further competent business, the President thanked the City Council for their hospitality and declared the 109<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Old Edinburgh Club closed.

Following the close of formal business, Professor Robert J Morris addressed the Club on "Does Edinburgh Castle have a twentieth century history?" and was thanked by the

President, before the members enjoyed the hospitality of the City of Edinburgh Council.