



The Old Edinburgh Club

Minute of the 114th Annual General Meeting held online on 22 September 2021 at 7pm

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Right Honourable Frank Ross, the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh and Honorary Patron of The Old Edinburgh Club. He extended a warm welcome to all members and complimented the Club on its achievements during the past year, not least in maintaining activities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. He called on Club to play its part in “building back better” as the city recovers. Please see Appendix 1 for his address.

Our President, Peter Graham, thanked the Lord Provost for his welcome and encouraging words and confirmed that the Club would indeed respond to his challenge. He strongly hoped that we would be meeting in person in the City Chambers next year at our AGM.

2. Attendance

The following members were present at the AGM:

John Amooore, Douglas Baugh, Andrew M Bell, Lorraine Briggs, Bill Buchan, Toni Buchan, Anne Buddle, Ian Chisholm, Tristram Clarke, Dr M Collingwood, Sheila Collins, Christina Coltart, Margaret Cowan, Isobel Craigie, Graeme Cruickshank, Lord Cullen of Whitekirk, Elizabeth Cumming, Jenny Dawe, Ruby Dickson, Frances Dunn, Edward Duvall, Marjorie Duvall, Mike Falchikov, Dale Finlayson, Niall Finlayson, Joanne Fraser, Gina Gainey, Jim Gallacher, Caroline Gerard, Rosemary Gold, Colin Gow, Peter Graham, Catherine Hanley, Theresa Ingram, Ken Jobling, Derrick Johnstone, Patricia Jones, Peter Jones, Anne King, Joanne Lamb, Diana Leat, John Loudon, Paul Luxton, Alison Macdonald, Rosemary Mann, Dr John McAleese, Dr Neil McGillivray, Maurice McIlwrick, James McKay, Alan McKinney, Andrew McMillan, Alison Moodie, R J Morris, Debbie O'Connor, Jerry Ozaniec, Leonie Paterson, Sandra Purves, Elizabeth Ann Roads, Steven Robb, Iona Roberts, Richard Rodger, Graham Rule, Anne Runnalls, Jo Scott, Richard Scott, Wilson Smith, David Stewart, Patricia Storey, Ian Tully, Jill Turnbull, Colin Warwick, Maggie Wilson, Gordon Wyllie.

Apologies were received from:

Fiona Alexander, Patricia Andrew, Allan Baillie, Andrew A Boyd, Dr Iain Gordon Brown, Jennifer Calcott, Jim Clark, Dorothy Cockrell, Anne Drake, Tom Drake, Frances Fettes, Douglas Fettes, John Fleming, Leslie Hills, Susan Johnstone, Robert N Kennedy, James McKay, Alan McKinlay, Beryl McKinlay, Ian Moffett, Elizabeth Anne Norman, Ms E Owens, Susan Rodger, Richard Torrance, Russell Wanless.

3. Minute of the AGM held on 23 September 2020

Approved as an accurate record. (The minute is printed on pp 115-116 of Volume 16 of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, 2020.)

4. Items for inclusion under Other Competent Business

There were no additional items.

5. Annual Report and President's Review

As President, Peter Graham gave his thanks to members of the OEC Council, particularly for their contributions to promoting the Club and to planning our events programme, along with the efficient running of the club and good member relationships. He highlighted the latest edition of The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club under its new editor, Wilson Smith, as well the latest award of the Old Edinburgh Club student prize. He thanked previous Secretary, Dr John Amore, and welcomed Derrick Johnstone's contribution as Secretary in taking up the role part-way through the year.

Peter reflected on the need to encourage imaginative ways of promoting interest in Edinburgh history, like the tee signs at Swanston 9 hole golf course, and invited local history or community organisations in Edinburgh to collaborate with the Club in running local historical walks. This would build on the success of those run with the Liberton Association in summer 2021.

Peter also expressed appreciation of the legacy received by the Club from Miss Jean Butchart, who father was City Librarian between 1942 and 1953.

He concluded by commending the Annual Report, which will now be submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator. The [Report can be downloaded](#) from the Club's website.

Please see Appendix 2 for the President's review.

6. Secretary's Report

Honorary Secretary, Derrick Johnstone reported on the success of the online events programme, including the Members' Evening in December 2020. Lectures resume in the Augustine United Church in October 2021, with a live-streaming option for members to watch from home.

He drew attention to the online publication of the OEC Bibliography of Edinburgh History during the year, and progress made by the Edinburgh Southside Graveyard Project in restoring gravestones, despite the constraints imposed by COVID-19. Work has begun on 'Edinburgh in Film', a project intended to capitalise on the Moving Image Archive of the National Library.

Derrick thanked Graham Rule for restoring the Club website after a hacker attack during the year and explained that the Club is looking to improve its website.

He summarised how the Club is managed and encouraged members to consider standing for the OEC Council in the future.

Please see Appendix 3 for the Secretary's report.

7. Treasurer's Report

Unfortunately, our Treasurer, Mike Harrison was unable to gain Wi-Fi access to give his report to the meeting. Secretary Derrick Johnstone stood in and made the following remarks on the Club's accounts contained in the Annual Report:

- The Club's finances are stable.
- While receipts are down on last year, this is attributable to the absence of income from Gift Aid. Last year, there was an accumulation in five years' payments, and we have yet to claim for 2020-21.
- We have seen a fourfold increase in sales of The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club.
- One notable reduction in expenditure, COVID-related, was on room hire, from nearly £1,000 to £0.

Club policy is to maintain £15,000 in reserves, a level more than capable of meeting the printing and distribution costs of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club. At the year end, there were unrestricted funds of £23,416 – more than 50% above this level.

The Club Constitution requires us to state our policy on subscriptions. We do not propose any change.

8. Re-election of our Independent Examiner, Stuart Lockhart

Approved

9. Editor's Report

The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club Editor, Dr Wilson Smith, presented his first report having assumed full responsibility after the retirement of Editor Emeritus, Professor Bob Morris. Wilson reported that copies of Volume 16 of the New Series were issued by post, a change from the traditional practice where members experience the frisson of receiving the latest Book at a Spring OEC lecture! Reception of this 2020 volume has been very positive, with favourable comments on the range and quality of contribution and the use of colour illustrations. He also conveyed his thanks to Bob and to members of the Book's Advisory Board.

Please see Appendix 4 for the Editor's Report.

10. Election of Office Bearers and Council

10.1 Office Bearers

The following Council officer bearers were willing to continue in office and their positions were approved.

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| Honorary President: | Lord Cullen of Whitekirk |
| Honorary Vice President: | Professor Robert J Morris |
| President: | Rev W Peter Graham |
| Vice President: | Dr Edward Duvall |
| Hon. Treasurer: | Mike Harrison |
| Hon. Secretary & Minutes Secretary: | Derrick Johnstone |
| Editor: | Dr Wilson Smith |

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| Membership Secretary: | Jerry Ozaniec |
| Programme Secretary: | Prof Richard Rodger |
| Publicity Officer: | Mrs Pat Jones |

10.2 Appointment of a second Vice President

The President proposed that Steven Robb be appointed as a second Vice President, in recognition of his contribution to the OEC Council over the past three years since he first joined as a Council member. This was seconded by Jerry Ozaniec and approved by the meeting.

10.3 Appointment of Council members

The President reminded the AGM that Council members other than the office-bearers are elected for a term of three years.

The following members were willing to continue in office (their date of election or co-option given in brackets):

Dr Diana Leat (September 2019)
Dr Neil MacGillivray (September 2019)
Ms Alison Macdonald (September 2019)
Dr John McAleese (November 2020)

Their continuation was approved by the meeting. No additional nominations were made before or at this point in the meeting.

11. Closing remarks

The President closed the meeting by thanking all members participating and looked forward to the resumption of in-person lectures at the Augustine United Church.

At the close of the formal business there was a presentation by Richard Hunter, former Edinburgh City Archivist, on ‘Why Archives Matter’. He illustrated his case with some dramatic examples where the contents of public archives have made telling contributions to society. There needs to be greater public understanding of the value of archives and appreciation of how they contribute distinctively alongside museums and libraries. Currently local archives sit alongside these services in Scottish Government policy as a poor relation, with no national policy framework and associated funding.

Appendix 1 Welcome by the Lord Provost

Lord Cullen, President Graham, Ladies and Gentlemen, in my role as Lord Provost of this great city, and as Honorary Patron of The Old Edinburgh Club, it gives me great pleasure to warmly welcome you all to the Annual General Meeting 2021. Whilst we cannot all be together, your work continues, and I would hope, as our city cautiously opens up, that we can meet each other soon.

From establishment in 1908, members of The Old Edinburgh Club continue to regularly undertake the enduring work of recording the vanishing evidence of Edinburgh's history, its buildings and its past people, from prehistoric times onwards – and now well into a second century of cooperation, I am delighted that the efforts of members and the Club are still going strong.

With each year, on behalf of the citizens of Edinburgh, I am delighted to put on record my sincerest thanks and gratitude to you all, for the continuing hard work that you do for our ancient Capital, and during such challenging times. And this is especially so at the moment, as we return to an emerging normality, where we are having to live, work, and travel in a different way, mindful of Covid mitigations.

Operating for such a long time is truly amazing in itself, but to keep up the work of recording the remarkable stories of our inhabitants and that of our proud built heritage is remarkable, and is testament to the enthusiasm, commitment and devotion of both former and current members.

In usual times, Edinburgh is a wonderful city to live, work, and visit, and with its outstanding natural and architectural heritage, we are indeed blessed by the considered high-quality design and build of our vintage and contemporary buildings.

It is of course vital that our heritage is recorded for posterity, and over the last year, the Club has maintained the lively meetings with leaders in their field through a series of blended lectures for the 2020/2021 year. Tonight, I understand that you will examine the importance of maintaining and resourcing our city's archives – from experience, I know the benefits of a comprehensive archive.

Last year, at this time, I talked about the turbulence our city had experienced; (i) from a city in receipt of many national and international accolades, embodying a colourful hive of social, cultural and economic growth, to, within a few months, (ii) a Capital characterised by silent, virtually empty streets, empty hotels and buildings, empty schools and workplaces, and covered in a somewhat sombre grey palette.

Having undergone one long lockdown, then, subsequently two more in November 2020, and January 2021 respectively, alongside an ebb-and-flow of differing restrictions for the past 18 months. Many have felt that the grey sombre, had coated our city for what seems like years, and we wondered whether things would lift to bring light back to our windows.

That last year-and-a-half has cast a long shadow across our communities, with many profoundly affected through the loss of loved ones, the strain of living in isolation, and the negative affect of being separated from close family and friends

and personal support networks. Our most vulnerable have perhaps been most profoundly affected, through compounded poverty and diminished prospects.

We have however, watched our communities coming together, more people giving their time for others, and above all, the profile of our NHS, our carers, our volunteers, and our enterprises becoming higher than ever.

Every single person giving their time, skills and commitment to help others, has been a vital part of Edinburgh's response, and a beacon of hope, endurance and self-sacrifice.

Now, as we begin, again, to cautiously open things back up, respecting safety measures, we can be imaginative and innovative as we think ahead, perhaps learning from our shared experiences and building upon elements that were seen as a success.

City partners, including the City of Edinburgh Council are coalescing around robust Adaptation and Renewal Plans, and we are already seeing these being implemented, with a partial resumption of our festivals, our key venues and destinations resuming, and people returning to roles in retail and the night-time economy.

However, we can build-back-better, with a strong sustainable approach, and this can be seen in the recent release of the Council's Climate Strategy and Edinburgh Economic Strategy currently subject to consultation.

City partners, public bodies, business and enterprises, third sector and communities are invited to get behind these plans to ensure a focussed, coordinated and 'green' recovery across all of our key sectors and communities.

I know that the Old Edinburgh Club will want to contribute to the City's recovery, as best it can, helping to restore our built heritage and international reputation to its former status.

I know that all partners in the City will welcome your valuable input, helping us, as we work together to return to our former market-leading status.

I wish our great city and the Old Edinburgh Club a safe, secure, healthy and more productive year ahead.

Thank you.

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## **Appendix 2      President's Report to OEC AGM**

In submitting the Annual Report for 2020-2021 I wish to place on record my thanks to the Club Council and the contributions its members have made to the governance and administration of the Club. Since last year's AGM there have been some changes in the Council. In December we co-opted as a Council member Dr John McAleese. Just before the end of that month Dr John Amore resigned as Secretary. We are grateful to him for his diligence in carrying out his duties and for his services to the Club in his role as Secretary. Following an appeal to the membership, Mr Derrick Johnstone responded positively, and the Council was happy to appoint him as Secretary. As well as carrying out the normal duties of

Secretary, Derrick has used his considerable IT skills to put in place a booking system for the summer walks, to elicit your views on the format of our future meetings, to engage with the Club's website, and to revise the appearance of the Annual Report.

As I said last year, it is always invidious to single out some for praise while seemingly ignoring others. However, since some office bearers do not report directly to the AGM, I mention four of them:

- Jerry Ozaniec looks after our membership lists, hosts the questions at our online gatherings, and ensures that there is a daily contribution from the Club on Facebook.
- Although not an office bearer, Alison Macdonald should be mentioned at this point, since it is she who looks after the Club's Twitter account. Both Twitter and Facebook have far more people looking at them than will ever be members of the Club or attend its lectures, so social media provide a very useful means of communicating with a wider audience in pursuit of our purpose of promoting interest in the history of Edinburgh in all its aspects.
- Each year our Programme Secretary, Richard Rodger, succeeds in giving us interesting and varied series of speakers. In the past year in the comfort of our homes we have been taken to different parts of our city; we have heard about two great figures of 19th century Edinburgh: Lord Cockburn and John Ritchie Findlay; we have learned about the intricacies of Government financial policy in the 19th century and considered the question, 'Who runs Edinburgh?'
- Our Publicity Officer, Pat Jones, although for a time liberated from setting up the equipment at our monthly lectures, has continued to find ways of publicising our programme and to promote the Club. Perhaps at next year's AGM we shall once again be able to take away bundles of leaflets to publicise our activities.
- And there is our Vice-President, Dr Ted Duvall. In the summer Ted analysed the results of the survey about future meetings and has guided the Council in its further consideration of how we should meet in the coming session.

Last year I was able to report that the initial award of the Old Edinburgh Club Prize, for a piece of work on local history in a master's graduate dissertation, had been made to Charlotte Bowers. As you will have seen, her prize-winning work has now been published in volume 16 of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club. We hope that in due course the next recipient, Maximillian Knight, will appear in print with his work on "Edinburgh's Slavery Connection".

The Book is of course the Club's principal publication and for many is the Club. We congratulate Dr Wilson Smith on the publication of the first volume under his editorship. Wilson himself will be reporting later in this meeting, but since he cannot thank himself for what he has done, and is doing in preparation for the next volume, on behalf of the Club I offer our sincere thanks.

Traditionally, Annual Meetings look back over the past twelve months. What the Club has achieved in that time is described in the Annual Report and the Secretary will be referring to some of these achievements and the various ongoing projects initiated by the Club.

Allow me to be anecdotal. I sometimes golf on a short, 9-hole course, suitable for youngsters as well as those of us who sometimes lack the time or energy to play a full round. Very recently new signs were required on the teeing grounds, and it was decided to put on each new sign a sentence or two about local historical connections. It is hoped that this will catch the attention of some of the many children who play there and encourage them to find out more about the history of the area. Here's an imaginative way of trying to bring local history alive.

Another way, which some of us enjoyed at the end of July and the beginning of August, is to engage in historical walks. We are grateful to my predecessor, Dr Margaret Collingwood, for setting up these walks and conducting us through the streets and back streets of Liberton. There is almost unlimited scope for this type of activity, whatever part of our city is visited. It may be to learn more of the growth and development of an area, or to look at a series of buildings; it may focus on the residents of famous figures or on the locations of particular industries. I am sure there was once a tour of the sites of former breweries!

I see this as a way of involving more of our members in suggesting possible walks and visits and being willing to organise them. Those who belong to a Local History Society or Group may have something to offer.

I do not venture to say anything about the Club's finances. However, I am pleased to inform you that the Club has received a legacy of £10,000 for the estate of the late Miss Jean Butchart, who died on 1 April 2020 aged 100. Her father, Robert Butchart, was Edinburgh City Librarian from 1942 until 1953, and had a considerable collection of 'Prints and Drawings of Edinburgh'. He wrote about these for the Book under the title "Drawings of Old Edinburgh". In October 1982, Miss Butchart presented her father's personal collection to Edinburgh Central Library. The Club is grateful to her for her support over the years. There are no restrictions on the use of this legacy and your Council will consider carefully how best it may be used to further the objectives of the Club.

With these remarks I have pleasure in submitting the Annual Report for 2020-2021 and inviting you to receive it.

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Appendix 3 Secretary's Report

What a year, indeed what an 18 months from the first chills in our spines from the threat of COVID-19.

We've responded by going online, and we know from our recent survey of your preferences for future meetings that you have welcomed this, even if you have missed the regular gatherings. Thank you for giving such helpful feedback.

Wilson Smith will shortly report on progress with the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, while I now run through our other activities.

I'll briefly touch on four aspects: events, projects, promotion and the Club itself.

Events

In 2020-21 we ran a slightly curtailed programme, with six lectures and no summer visits. Talks notably included Clarisse Godard Desmarest presenting live

from Paris on the architectural patron and benefactor, John Ritchie Findlay. The numbers in our online audiences have been very healthy, with several attracting over 100 members.

We also had a successful Member's Evening in December: 'Reminiscences: Photographs as Reminders of Edinburgh History' featuring members Gina Gainey, Toni Buchan and Leonie Paterson.

We are returning to the Augustine United Church on George IV Bridge from our October meeting onwards, kicking off on 13 October with Professor Roger Jeffrey talking about 'India in Edinburgh, from the 1750s to the Present'. The events programme to March next year is now up on our website. Membership cards will be available from our October meeting onwards.

We are very fortunate to have the use of AUC's new video equipment which allows live streaming of events, so that you can watch at home or on the move should you wish. Several Council members are being trained to use the kit, but please bear with us as we become accustomed to it.

Projects

During the year we published the online OEC Bibliography of Edinburgh History, the first comprehensive listing which serves as a 'go to' place to explore the wealth of what's been written about the history of Edinburgh.

It has been prepared by Dr Malcom Noble. It contains over 2,000 items (books, chapters, journal articles, and dissertations), across 12 themes: social, cultural, economic, architectural, etc. You can access the Bibliography via our website.

The Edinburgh Southside Graveyard Project continues to benefit from funds granted by the Club for its work restoring headstones which have been laid flat for safety reasons.

It works with the City of Edinburgh Council by providing constructive opportunities to participants on the Community Payback Programme. Recent work has been constrained by COVID-19 though in conjunction with the Grange Association, some 227 headstones have been rebuilt and inscriptions made readable once more.

The OEC Prize at the University of Edinburgh was awarded in its second year to postgraduate Maximilian Knight, for his highly topical thesis, 'Edinburgh's Slavery Connection: The British Linen Company and the Plantation Colonies (1727-1833)'.

Work has begun on a new project, Edinburgh in Film, to capitalise on the Moving Image Archive of the National Library of Scotland, with members producing short reviews of films and clips about Edinburgh. These will appear on our website and provide another route into exploring Edinburgh's past, albeit the more recent past.

Promoting the Club online

We have built the numbers of our followers on Facebook and Twitter, with over 2,000 followers on Facebook and 1,400 on Twitter. We use these to promote our events along with topical historical news and stories of local interest.

We are reviewing our website to strengthen what it offers you as members and in promoting the Club more widely.



We thank Graham Rule for his past management of the site and for rebuilding its contents following a security hack in late 2020.

Membership and management of the Club

Membership has held steady, with 374 members at the year-end.

The Club is managed by a Council (see agenda item 10) drawn from our membership under Peter's leadership as President. We serve as charity trustees, responsible for steering the Club, overseeing its finances and maintaining the governance standards expected by the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator.

In the past year our Council met seven times, reviewing finance, membership, events and publicity, and developing new ideas.

I would like to close by saying, first, thank you to my fellow Council members for helping me settle into the Secretary role part-way through the year when I took over from Dr John Amore.

And finally, please do think about putting yourself forward to join the Council in future. There's work to be done in carrying the Club forward and we welcome new ideas.

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### **Appendix 4 Editor's Report, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club**

Production and dispatch of the sixteenth volume of the New Series of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club was completed on 26 February 2021, with members receiving their copies by mail direct from our printers McAllisters in Glasgow. As with so many aspects of life over the last year and a half this change in the usual arrangements was made in response to the Covid situation, allowing the Book's distribution without the delays and uncertainties inevitably experienced in the lockdown of Spring 2020. Delivery exclusively by mail also meant that the appearance of the latest volume was not tied to a particular meeting in the Club's calendar, conducted virtually this year in any case. However, members no longer had the chance to experience what Bob Morris, now our Editor Emeritus, memorably described as one of the rewarding moments of the Club year: 'the silence that descends on the meeting as the Book is examined'. In this respect, amongst others, we may look forward to resuming the traditions of the Club when circumstances permit.

Reception of BOEC16 has been very positive, with favourable comments on the range and quality of contributions. Once again the variety of visual imagery sourced by our contributors to illustrate their articles adds greatly to the Book's visual appeal and continues to justify fully the Club's investment in colour reproduction.

Our contents range in period from education in art and medicine in Enlightenment Edinburgh in Joe Rock's Academy of St Luke, to the twenty-first century restitution of a Princes Street landmark in Roger Emmerson's article on R.W. Forsyth's Globe. Geographical range is provided by Aonghus Mackechnie and Clarisse Demarest Godard's examination of the significance of Lord Rosebery (of course, one of the Club's founding members) for architectural conservation in Edinburgh, its

surroundings and in wider Scotland. The Book's interest in the city's built environment is exemplified by James Hamilton in his article on the architecture of the Signet Library, while our concern for Edinburgh's public emblems is continued by Patricia R. Andrew and Iain Gordon Brown's contribution on the Council Officers and the City Guard.

Charlotte Bowers's article on the early history of the Edinburgh Blood Transfusion Service is a development of her MSc thesis, the inaugural winner of the Old Edinburgh Club Prize. We look forward to working with future recipients of the Prize.

Finally, volume 16 reports on two projects supported by the Club. Alan McKinney gives a progress report on the Edinburgh Southern Graveyards Project, while Malcolm Noble outlines the principles underlying his work on the OEC Bibliography of Edinburgh History which promises to develop into an essential tool for historians of the city.

On a personal note, as a new editor I have to confess to a feeling of relief in seeing through the successful completion of my first volume of the Book. But of course this outcome has depended on the help and support of many hands. My thanks go to Bob Morris for his unfailing advice and guidance, to the Book's Advisory Board, to the members of OEC Council and most importantly to our contributors, whose work ensures that the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club remains the authoritative source for all aspects of Edinburgh history.