

# SCOTTISH WORKING PEOPLE'S HISTORY TRUST

Scottish Charity No. SC020357

## Minutes of the 72nd meeting of the Trust held at the Register House, Edinburgh on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Present: Sian Reynolds (Chair), Dorothy Kidd (DK, Secretary), Janet McBain (JMcB, Treasurer), Michael Allan (MA), Bernard Beagan (BB), Joyce Connon (JC), Hugh Hagan (HH), Cathlin Macaulay (CM), Ian McGowan (IM), Alan Reid (AR).

- 1. Chairperson's remarks:** SR welcomed everyone to the meeting including Michael Allan\* who had agreed to become a member of the Trust, proposed by Dorothy Kidd and seconded by Bernard Beagan. MA left the room while the election took place. He was duly elected with the unanimous approval of the Trustees.
- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Elizabeth Bryan, David Fletcher (Patron) and Martyn Wade.
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting:** agreed
- 4. Matters arising:** Item 9 - AR reported that no requests had been received for the 11 remaining copies of the Librarians' book. It was agreed to present one to the School of Scottish Studies and to put one aside for the use of research worker Veronica Hartwich. The remainder to be offered to Libraries that may not have been able to purchase a copy.
- 5. Treasurer's report:** JMcB presented the six-monthly financial statement and reported that little expense had been incurred over the past six months, the biggest being Employer's Liability Insurance. It was agreed to look at this payment again when it is due in October and confirm whether or not the Trust is still due to pay it. The Trust has lost interest income of c. £5.00/month as the TSB insisted that we change to a different account which pays no interest. CM apologised for the initial difficulties in making a donation to Edinburgh University for the digitising of Ian MacDougall's interviews. These have now been resolved and the donation will be made shortly. **Action: CM and JMcB**  
SR noted that the Trust is very grateful to Janet McBain for her very enterprising fundraising which has so far raised over a third of the money required for the Trust's digital access project and will enable us to start work.
- 6. Publications project:** SR invited AR to update the Trust on the progress of our latest publication of Ian MacDougall's interviews conducted for the Trust. AR reminded the Trust that this is a joint project with Edinburgh University's EERC entitled *Peebleshire Textile Workers*. The EERC commissioned Caroline Milligan to edit the book in summer 2019, with an edited typescript expected by the end of October 2020 and publishing proposed for the spring of 2021. Mark Mulhern of the EERC had recently confirmed to AR that the work was on target. SR explained for our new Trust member that the EERC will cover publication costs and that the Trust has not had to fund-raise for this publication. It was agreed to consider asking the EERC to report on progress in time for the Trust's June meeting. **Action: AR/EERC**

SR went on to read a letter from Ian MacDougall regarding his work on his interviews with Borders farm workers. Ian has almost finished the transcription work and reminded the Trust that if publisher Birlinn is interested they will be looking for a subvention. Ian went on to ask if the Trust would be

interested in raising the funds required. SR explained that she doubted the Trust was in a position to offer the c. £10,000 that Birlinn has expected in the past. CM then suggested that Luath Press might be worth approaching, especially as they have very good distribution networks. SR and JMcB reminded Trustees that there are still several more occupational groups to be worked on and published.

- 7. Digital access project/Website:** SR reminded Trustees that we have 15 occupational sets of interviews and it had been agreed to develop an online publication, in partnership with SCRAN, which will feature two interviews from each occupational group, together with contextual material and links to the archive of the Trust's collections held in the School of Scottish Studies. Around £17,000 will be required to cover all groups, but the sums raised so far thanks to JMcB's efforts will enable us to start work on six groups (Leith Dockworkers, Librarians, Penicuik Paper mill workers, Gunpowder mill workers, Bondagers and Onion Johnnies). JMcB updated the Trust on the latest donation, from the Franco-Scottish Society, towards the work on the Onion Johnnies interviews. There was some discussion on whether any of these interviews need to be translated into English and CM agreed to check exactly what the School of Scottish Studies holds. **Action: CM**  
It was agreed that no further active fund-raising work would be carried out until work has started.
- 8. Policy development:** SR read out EB's email apologising for not being able to attend the meeting. It was agreed that Michael Allan, Hugh Hagan and Dorothy Kidd would volunteer to assist EB in finalising work on a Volunteer Policy, Protection of Vulnerable Groups, Risk Assessment and Data Protection policies etc. **Action: EB, MA, HH, DK**  
IM noted that he believed the Trust's insurance covered both Trustees and any employees. JMcB would check on this and report back. **Action: JMcB**
- 9. Friends of SWPHT:** AR suggested that a sub-committee be formed to generate ideas to revive the Friends. MA, JC and CM all also volunteered and DK is to convene a meeting to progress this. **Action: DK**  
DK reminded Trustees to send any items of news for the next Newsletter to EB, by the end of March if possible. SR also offered to write a piece on the Onion Johnnies project. **Action: All**
- 10. AOB** Sian Reynolds thanked the National Records of Scotland and Hugh Hagan for hosting the meeting. She also intimated her intention to retire as Chair of the Trust during 2020-2021, so a new Chair is to be sought to take up duties sometime in 2021.
- 11. Date and place of next meeting:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at the National Library of Scotland's Lawnmarket building, Edinburgh. IM kindly offered to check whether the room was available. **Action: IM**

D Kidd  
17 February 2020