

SCOTTISH WORKING PEOPLE'S HISTORY TRUST

Scottish Charity No. SC020357

Minutes of the 73rd meeting of the Trust held on Tuesday 9th June 2020, via internet on Zoom during the Covid 19 pandemic crisis.

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

- 1. Chairperson's remarks:** Prof Reynolds reported the very sad death of Ian MacDougall at the beginning of April. She had been in touch with his wife, Sandra, who had asked her to thank Trustees for writing to her. They had also spoken of the large amount of material Ian had left which will require to be archived, either in the School of Scottish Studies (tapes) or in the National Library of Scotland (papers). Sandra may need help from the Trust for the task of sorting Ian's papers later on. There will be a commemorative celebration of Ian's life at a later date, when current social distancing restrictions have eased. There are obituaries for Ian in both The Herald (<https://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/18472924.obituary-dr-ian-macdougall-historian-recorded-voices-experiences-working-people/>) and The Scotsman (<https://www.scotsman.com/news/people/obituary-ian-macdougall-scottish-historian-special-interest-labour-movement-2847232>).

Prof Reynolds asked Elizabeth Bryan whether she had someone lined up to write an obituary for the Trust Newsletter. EB explained that she was hoping to use Ian's own words – from the interview he did for the Trust - as the substance of the Trust's obituary for Ian, with an introduction from one of the Trustees. It was agreed to discuss this at greater length at item 7 below.

SR went on to remind Trustees of her intention to stand down as Chairperson, but had very kindly agreed in the present Covid19-related circumstances to continue in post until our next meeting in January 2021.

- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Hugh Hagan, John Scally, Martyn Wade, Hilary Young.
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting:** agreed
- 4. Matters arising:** Alan Reid noted that, at item 4, it would be his intention to arrange distribution of the spare Librarians book through CILIPS, as soon as this can be arranged safely. This was agreed for the 8 remaining copies. AR confirmed that the book is pretty close to being out of print. **Action: AR**
- 5. Treasurer's report:** Janet McBain, who could hear the meeting but was only able to participate via email, had submitted the Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2020 in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the list of Trustees included in the report needed to be updated.

Action: DK, JMcB, SR

SR noted, on page 4: income for the year includes the various grants for our digitisation project; most funds are designated. The cost of insurance was also noted and, following a short discussion and advice from previous Treasurer Ian McGowan, it was agreed to continue to pay for insurance, keeping it under review annually. JMcB reminded the Trust that there was still an outstanding balance of £2400 to be paid to the School of Scottish Studies for digitising Trust recordings. Cathlin Macaulay

apologised for the delay in getting the correct account details for this payment from Edinburgh University's Finance Department and undertook to get it sorted as soon as possible. **Action: CM**

The accounts were then approved; Proposer: Ian McGowan, Seconder: Alan Reid

6. **Publications project:** A message from Mark Mulhern at the EERC had been circulated, explaining delays to the project were due to a family bereavement for the project's editor, Caroline Milligan, and some difficulties from working away from the office. Alan Reid confirmed that we will have to wait until the EERC is back up and running.
7. **Digital access project/Website/Ian MacDougall commemoration:** DK explained that Veronica Hartwich has been working on two projects on behalf of the Trust, both with SCRAN. One to upload the Trust's interview with Ian MacDougall, along with a summary of the work of the Trust; and the other on summaries for two of the Onion Jonnie interviews made by Ian MacDougall (she is working from the book, but will require access to transcripts from the School of Scottish Studies, as soon as this is again possible). As SCRAN staff had been furloughed the work had been halted for now. SR asked DK to remind Veronica Hartwich to submit an invoice for the work she has done so far as soon as possible. DK would also ask VH for an interim report on what she has done.

Action: DK

AR wondered whether it would be worth republishing Ian MacDougall's Flashback on the Onion Johnnies?

Action: DK to find out from Birlinn/NMSE

Website: DK confirmed that, now furloughed, she was hoping to spend more time on the Trust's website and asked Michael Allan whether he would be prepared to take on the role of the Trust's 'Tweeter'. MA kindly agreed to this.

Action: DK/MA

Ian MacDougall commemoration: SR reminded Trustees of EB's suggestion that our tribute to Ian should be in his own words. EB outlined her thoughts and it was also agreed to put something on the website linking to the published obituaries of Ian MacDougall and noting both the Trust's obituary in our Newsletter and the full interview with Ian on SCRAN.

SR went on to ask whether the Trust should formally commemorate Ian? CM suggested that we might be able to screen the Trust video of Ian's interview at the Scottish Labour History Society conference.

Action: DK to upload video version of the interview for all

SR suggested that we think of other possible ways to commemorate Ian. Suggestions put forward included a scholarship or a prize (with possible additional fundraising), publishing more of his interviews in order to carry on his work (eg: Borders Farm Workers). SR noted that quite a bit of editorial work might be required. It was agreed to explore this, although if it is likely to take a long time AR suggested that a preface to the forthcoming Peeblesshire Textile Workers book would be more immediate. **Action: AR to report back to EERC and suggest a special commemorative preface.**

SR went on to ask if Trustees felt we should do anything else. EB suggested that something to go along with the Trust's 30th anniversary celebrations in 2022 might be appropriate.

Action: SR/DK/JcB/All to explore further

Finally CM noted that all the recordings still in Ian's house could probably be digitally copied by the School of Scottish Studies.

8. **Policy development:** EB reminded the meeting that she, MA, HH and DK had been supposed to meet up to go over this. It was agreed that this would be progressed via Zoom (Volunteering Policy, Safeguarding Policy, GDPR Policy) **Action: EB/MA/HH/DK to organise a Monday meeting**

- 9. Friends of SWPHT:** DK apologised for not yet having sent out subscription reminders for this year and undertook to do so when the Newsletter is ready. She also asked for a volunteer to take on at least some of the work of running the Friends. AR reminded the meeting that we were to have a sub-committee to progress this and to do so via Zoom. **Action: DK/AR/JC/MA**
EB hoped that she would be able to pull the Newsletter together in a couple of weeks and all were reminded to submit material to EB as soon as possible. Items so far are: tribute to Ian, update on digital access project, information on banking of old, booklet about Dumfries Labour History trail, update on Peeblesshire Textile Workers project, 70th anniversary of School of Scottish Studies, 30th anniversary of Trust. Ian McGowan offered to look out what he might have relating to the history of the Trust. EB also noted that we need a good photograph of Ian for the Newsletter. DK offered to ask Sandra MacDougall. **Action: DK**
- 10. AOB** SR asked Bernard Beagan for his thoughts and he suggested that Ian MacDougall's *Catalogue of Labour Records in Scotland* (1978) might be brought to wider attention.
- 11. Date and place of next meeting:** Tuesday 12th January 2021 at a venue to confirmed nearer the time (possibly NLS Lawnmarket building). **Action: IM**

D Kidd
23 June 2020