

SCOTTISH WORKING PEOPLE'S HISTORY TRUST

Scottish Charity No. SC020357

Minutes of the 79th meeting of the Trust held on Tuesday 13th June 2023, at General Register House, Edinburgh

Present: Dorothy Kidd (DK, Secretary), Janet McBain (JMcB, Treasurer), Elizabeth Bryan (EB, Chair), Joyce Connon (JC), Hugh Hagan (HH), Cathlin Macaulay (CM), Alan Reid (AR), Sian Reynolds (SR), Oliver Taylor (OT), Douglas Telfer (DT).

- 1. Chairperson's remarks:** Elizabeth Bryan welcomed Trustees to the meeting, especially new Trustees Oliver Taylor (of National Museums Scotland) and Douglas Telfer (of Unite the Union) and welcomed back Cathlin Macaulay. She also thanked Hugh Hagan and the NRS for again hosting the meeting.

Thanks were recorded to Bernard Beagan for his service as Trustee. DL will write to him formally to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Trust. Both Bernard and Ian McGowan have agreed to become Patrons of SWPHT. **Action: DK**

- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Michael Allan, Bernard Beagan, Ailsa Hutton, Amina Shah, Martyn Wade.
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting:** Agreed.
- 4. Matters arising:** Richard Wilson's agent had responded and indicated that Richard Wilson no longer felt able to continue as a Patron of the Trust.
- 5. Ian MacDougall annual memorial meeting 2023 and 2024:** EB summarised the background to the Ian MacDougall memorial lecture and JMcB and SR reported on how good the lecture and questions had been, with Professor Jim Phillips devoting quite a bit of time explaining the use of oral history.

For the 2024 lecture EB suggested that Mark Mulhern and/or Caroline Milligan of the EERC might be available to talk about their work on preparing the Peeblesshire Textile Workers recollections for publication. A sub-committee meeting with NLS and SLHS representatives would be arranged later in the year to organise the 2024 lecture. **Action: EB/DK**

- 6. Secretary's report:** DK reported that she had finished updating the Trust's database of its oral history collections as far as she could from the information available to her and that it had been sent to the School of Scottish Studies. It was hoped that one of the people who had volunteered to undertake work for the Trust would be available to finish the work once access to the School's collections could again be facilitated. DK also reported that all of the untranscribed material sent to her by CM at the beginning of the Covid pandemic had now been transcribed, mostly by Giorgia Santageli. DK had recently met with Kirsty Stewart at the SSS to discuss how best to progress both the oral history collection database and transcription work. CM undertook to check what other Trust material might still require to be transcribed. Finally DK reported on the recent meeting she had had with Veronica Hartwich (VH), the Trust's researcher. VH had written introductions for all of the nine Onion Johnny interviews but required access to the SSS to see the collections and would be liaising with them. She would also aim to write introductions for and provide material for SCRAN entries for four Peeblesshire Textile Workers (two women and two men), in the hope that these could be uploaded to

SCRAN at about the same time as the book is ready.

Action: DK to liaise with CM/KS at the SSS and with VH

7. **Treasurer's report:** J McB presented the draft accounts which were agreed by the meeting. The decision not to apply for other funds until the Trust has spent more of its reserves was confirmed.
8. **Publications - Peeblesshire Textile Workers:** AR reported on the work he had been carrying out and summarised the report he had received from Mark Mulhern at the EERC. Caroline Milligan had completed a revised typescript from the original typescript's 250,000 words down to around 170,000. The book will appear as part of the EERC's regional Flashback series, still incorporating long interview extracts. Each section will start with a longer interview to set the scene, followed by shorter extracts as 'Other Voices'. AR explained that he and DK had expressed their concerns over the Q&A interview style being retained when other SWPHT publications had adopted a narrative format but that they were now happy with the revised version. DK had provided a glossary and an index was also to be prepared. Maps and aerial photographs, a list of the mills and of the interviewees will also be included.

Thanks were recorded to Mark Mulhern, Caroline Milligan, AR and DK.

Action: AR will confirm to Mark Mulhern that the Trust is happy with format and that the book can go for typesetting.

Publications – Onion Johnnies: AR announced the publication of a new edition of *Onion Johnnies* on 15th June with a print-run of 500-600, including 40 complimentary copies for the Trust. SR undertook to deliver a complimentary copy to the 'Maison des Johnnies et de l'Oignon' in Roscoff and J McB took one for the Franco-Scottish Society.

Action: AR will ask Birlinn for information on their sales strategy. CM will check what format the Onion Johnny interviews are held in at the School of Scottish Studies, ie: tapes /and transcriptions, language used in the interviews (in response to question from J McB).

9. **Policy documents update:** All the Trust's policy documents had now been updated and would shortly be uploaded to the website. **Action: DK**

10. **Newsletter 2023:** EB asked Trustees for suggestions for content, preferably by 15 September. She was going to include something on the planned Co-op Museum in West Calder and it was also agreed to include summaries and photographs of the new Trustees (200 words and a photograph please). Information on the current oral history project being undertaken with Peebles textile workers could also be made (this is a local history project, not a Trust one).

11. **AOB:** CM reported on the *A Carrying Stream* exhibition in Edinburgh University Library which highlights the oral history, song and music collections of the School of Scottish Studies. It is on until 30 September 2023. HH reported that he had been carrying out interviews with recently retired colleagues at the National Archives of Scotland.

Note: HH had been the Trust's first research worker and it was agreed that Hugh should be interviewed about his work.

Action: Trust to arrange to interview HH

OT offered to help keep the Trust website up-to-date. **Action:** DK to liaise with OT
And DT offered to Tweet on behalf of the Trust. **Action:** DK to liaise with DT

12. Date and place of next meeting: Tuesday 23 January 2024 at General Register House, at 2pm,
preceded by lunch at 12.30 for Trustees who would like to meet up

Action: DK to confirm to Hugh Hagan nearer the time

D Kidd, 10 August 2023