

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL VOLUNTARY GUIDES ASSOCIATION

71st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Edinburgh City Chambers

Wednesday 20th March 2019

1. WELCOME FROM THE COMMITTEE

Christine Stevenson (Chair) opened the AGM at 7.05 and welcomed the attendees on behalf of the Committee. She intimated that Lord Provost Frank Ross would not be able to attend but that he would be represented by the Deputy Lord Provost Joan Griffiths. She would be joining the meeting at 8.15pm and the usual buffet would be served. (In fact it was learned at the end of the AGM that Councillor Griffiths had broken her arm and would be unable to attend. Her place was taken by Bailie Lezley- Marion Cameron).

2. APOLOGIES

Twenty-five (25) members were present .
Apologies had been received from 18 Guides.

Vic Aitken, Anne Runnals, Laura McMurdo, Murray Carmichael, Fiona Brownlee, Gordon Mcleod, George Porteous, Fiona Beveridge, Herbert Dryden, Kathleen Bowron, Seonaid Martin, Darrin Green, Rosalind Cook, Bill Thomson, Barbara Gibbons, Peter Hamilton and Dorota Ciesielska.

3. MINUTES OF 2018 AGM

There were two points raised;

- (i) A previous Minute had misspelled Elspeth Mclean's name. This had been corrected
- (ii) Martin McMenigall sought clarification on the point raised by him under AOCB regarding the creation of a 'Reserve List'.

Acceptance on the amended Minute was proposed by Gill Davidson and seconded by John Gorrie

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2018

Christine started her report by confirming that our August numbers had fallen again despite steps being taken to raise our profile and with the introduction of high-viz jackets and badged umbrellas. A well-attended special meeting had been held at the Braid Bowling Club on 25th November. The meeting had been very positive with several interesting suggestions being made. A summary paper had been circulated and would be discussed under Item 6 on the Agenda. She thanked Mike Lewis for his careful and informative analysis of the walks' information. Christine also thanked Mike for the excellent Newsletter that he had edited and issued to Guides. Thanks were also extended

to Maureen McMillan for her work in organising the 'Out of Season' walks and the successful August Talks' Programme. Two Educational Visits had been organised by Val Baker – the Assembly Hall and a guided walk round the walls of Edinburgh led by Arran Johnston suitably attired in period costume. Two further walks were in the pipeline. Thanks were expressed to Val for the programme which was much appreciated. A new departure for the Association had been an enjoyable Summer Soiree which had been held in June at the Gardener's House at the Botanic. Thanks were expressed to Richard, Bernard, Val, Maureen and Gladys who had helped make the evening such a success. Christine concluded by thanking the Guides for their continuing support.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT 2018

Richard distributed an Income and Expenditure sheet for the year ended 31st December. He highlighted the deficit for the year of £953 due in part to the drop in 'out of season' numbers; the investment in badged jackets and umbrellas and increased expenditure on publicity in the Festival Fringe Brochure – an additional cost that would not be repeated for 2019. Richard was confident; our bank balance remained healthy and "there was no need for alarm".

There were no questions or comments from attendees on the tabled Accounts. Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Maureen McMillan and seconded by Martin McMenigall.

Christine concluded by thanking Richard for his work as the Association's Treasurer.

6. THE BRAID MEETING (25th November 2018)

Eric spoke to the summary paper previously circulated. The meeting was well attended with 25 Guides present and had been very positive in its discussions. A summary paper had been discussed by the Committee at its meeting on 28th January and decisions taken which had been circulated to Guides. Eric highlighted 6 key points arising from these discussions

- (i) That out of season walks would be charged at £5 per head but with some discretion depending on the composition of the group.
- (ii) Discussion with the Festival Fringe Society had established that we could if we wish base ourselves on a suitable spot in the High Street. However the majority view of the Committee had been to remain in the City Chambers' Courtyard but to increase our visibility outside on the High Street. Guides would be encouraged to wear the badged jackets and to use the umbrellas for visual publicity.
- (iii) Given the crush now being experienced on the High Street, it had been agreed that Guides should have a choice as to which route they would walk with their group. Suggested options were the Canongate, an Old & New Town walk and Greyfriars and the Grassmarket. A Training Walk for the Old and New Town route would be offered.
- (iv) Guides had suggested additional routes such as Leith and the Walls of Edinburgh. These could be considered for future 'out of season' walks.

- (v) Following the Braid meeting and Committee follow-up, invitations to participate in an EFVGA walk had been extended to the Council and to CEC Libraries' staff. Replies were awaited. Guides were encouraged to suggest a walk to any organisations with which they had contact such as Probus Clubs and Local History Societies. Guides were also encouraged to try to recruit new Guides from their circle of family and friends.
- (vi) The committee had agreed that the suggestion that we should consider starting our afternoon August walks later than 2.00pm, perhaps delaying until 4.00pm was put to the meeting. There was some support for this. Mike reminded the meeting that in terms of our planned published publicity it was too late to make any changes for 2019 but that a later start would be considered by the Committee for 2020.

John Gorrie suggested that a similar meeting as had been held at Braid should be organised for 2019. This will be considered by the Committee after this year's Festival.

7. COMMITTEE AND OFFICE BEARERS

Christine announced the following changes to the committee and to the office bearers:

Vice chairman: Bernard Heavie
Nominated by: Christine Stevenson
Seconded by: Val Baker
Secretary: Eric Melvin
Nominated by: Christine Stevenson
Seconded by: Val Baker
Committee member: Jim Eunson
Nominated by: Mike Lewis
Seconded by: Bernard Heavie

Christine felt that the committee had been operating under-strength and that other Guides may be approached to join the committee.

8. GUIDES

Christine reported the deaths of three Guides – Liz Keeves, Andy Downie and Jean Thompson. Letters of condolence had been sent. Margaret Marr and Neil Shaw, both former committee members, had been made Honorary Guides. Frances McDevitt and Dorota Ciesielska had successfully completed their training. However there were at present no Guides in training. Guides were again encouraged to use their contacts to encourage new recruits.

9. ILLUSTRATED TALKS PROGRAMME 2019

Maureen reported there will be 4 talks as usual this year and details will appear on our website.

1. The first talk is on **Friday 2 August** and the subject is **the Battle of Dunbar 1650**. The speaker will be **Arran Johnston** who has previously given two extremely entertaining talks to us on battles (Prestonpans and Pinkie Cleugh).

2. The second talk is on **Thursday 8 August** and the subject is **The Porteous Riots 1736**. The speaker will be **Eric Melvin**. We look forward to a graphic account of the tumultuous events that took place in Edinburgh
3. The third talk is on **Wednesday 14 August** and the subject is **Volcanoes and Ice: the making of Edinburgh's landscape**. The talk is given by **Dr Angus Miller** who is a geologist, runs Geowalks, guided tours and trips exploring the geology of Scotland. He also teaches at Edinburgh University.
4. The fourth talk is on **Tuesday 20 August** and the subject is **the Role of Women in Scottish history**. The speaker will be **Rosemary Goring**, Literary Editor of the 'Herald'. Rosemary will be talking about her new book '*Scotland: Her Story*'. Scotland's history has been told many times, but never exclusively by its women. From the saintly but severe medieval Queen Margaret to today's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, '*Scotland: Her Story*' encompasses women from all stations of class and fame and notoriety. The book offers a tantalising view of what happened to these women.

10. SOCIAL EVENTS 2019

Bernard confirmed that we will be holding another Summer Soiree at the Botanics. The event will be on 24th June and partners will be welcome to attend as well.

11. AOCB

There were no items raised under AOCB

CLOSE

Christine again thanked the Committee office bearers and those Guides who had attended the AGM. She closed the meeting at 8.05.

CIVIC RECEPTION

Christine welcomed Bailie Lezley-Marion Cameron to the meeting. In her address to the attendees, Bailie Cameron thanked the Guides for their hard work on behalf of the City. In answer to a question, Bailie Cameron explained the meaning of the title 'Bailie'.

Bailie Cameron then presented a badges to our new Guide – Frances McDevitt

Christine thanked Bailie Cameron for her kind words of appreciation and encouragement. She then thanked the City of Edinburgh Council for allowing us the use of the European Room and for providing us with such generous hospitality. Bailie Cameron then joined the Guides to enjoy the buffet provided.

Eric Melvin
Acting Secretary
Edinburgh Festival Voluntary Guides association
22nd March 2019.