



Edinburgh Festival Voluntary Guides Association

Established 1947

www.edinburghfestivalguides.org

Patron: The Lord Provost
of The City of Edinburgh

MINUTES OF THE 68th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The City Chambers, 23 March 2016

1 WELCOME FROM THE COMMITTEE

Kate Dick (Chairman) opened the AGM at 7.05pm to allow any latecomers to arrive. On behalf of the Committee Kate welcomed the attendees and thanked them for coming. She confirmed that the Lord Provost was scheduled to arrive at 8.15 and that usual buffet would be served at that time.

2 APOLOGIES

Thirty one (31) members were present. Apologies were received from twenty (20) members, many of whom sent their good wishes:- Jack Aitken, Jim Allen, Pat Crombie, Barbara Drummond, Herbert Dryden, Gordon Drysdale, Dorothy Ellen, Barbara Gibbons, Joyce Grainger, David Lennie, Robin Macgregor, Bob McCulloch, Rob McKillop, Laura McMurdo, Sandy Macpherson, Seonaid Martin, Gordon Stewart, Bill Richardson, Neil Shaw, Jan Wallace

3 MINUTES OF AGM 2014

All attendees confirmed that they had received a copy of the 2015 Minutes by either email or post. There were no comments. Acceptance of the 2105 Minutes was proposed by John Thompson and seconded by Liz Keeves.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Kate read her Annual report, a copy of which is given below.

Welcome to the 68th AGM of the EFVGA.

As in previous years, we are indebted to the Lord Provost and his staff for the use of the Pendolino Room for our walking tours and the European Room and Council Chamber for our evening talks. The latter proved to be very popular during 2015, each having 50-60 people attending.

The committee continue to strive to raise our profile by advertising more widely. Last year we decided to distribute some of our leaflets through EAE (Edinburgh Arts and Entertainment) which has a wide spread of venues where they are able to display our leaflets. Feedback from tourists appears to be favourable so we are going to continue with this distribution in 2016.

Kathleen Hart's financial report once again shows our bank balance remaining in a healthy state. Many thanks to Richard Richardson for auditing the accounts.

Our Christmas Soirée was re-located to the Netherbow Storytelling Centre due to renovations at Riddle's Court. This new venue was very well received by all who attended.

May I once again thank the committee for their help and enthusiasm during the past year and may I send best wishes to Colin Young, our past Deputy Chairman who, for family reasons, has emigrated to England and to Anne Runnalls and Fiona Beveridge both of whom are retiring at the AGM.

Best wishes to you all.

Kate Dick

Kate then explained that we intend to use Edinburgh Arts and Entertainment (EAE) again to distribute flyers but are considering a city-wide distribution rather than a city-centre distribution which we used last year.

5 TREASURER'S REPORT

A copy of the Accounts is given at the end of this report.

Treasurer Kathleen Hart reported that the accounts remain healthy despite a loss of £403.90 for the year ending 31 Dec 2015.

Kathleen then highlighted some of the entries.

Olive Morrison queried the reason for the loss. Kathleen explained that the main reasons were a fall in income from Walks and Talks and increased costs to supply leaflets to EAE and for their distribution.

To conclude her report Kathleen thanked Richard Richardson for auditing the accounts and presented a gift to Richard to record our appreciation.

Acceptance of the 2015 Report was proposed by Gladys Bain and seconded by Maureen McMillan.

6 COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Secretary George Laing intimated that, as no nominations for the vacant seats on the Committee had been received by Friday 18 March, the situation outlined in the Notice was confirmed. That is:-

For the Office Bearers:-

Although Kate Dick and Kathleen Hart have both served 6 years

Kate has agreed to remain Chairman for an additional year i.e. until 2017.

Kathleen has agreed to remain Treasurer for an additional year i.e. until 2017.

The position of Deputy Chair has been vacant since Colin Young's resignation in 2015 and

Christine Stevenson has agreed to become Deputy Chairman from 2016.

Richard Richardson will, and has, become Auditor from 2016.

For the Committee:-

Liz keeves completed her 3 year term in 2016 and has agreed to remain for a further 3 years.

Ann Runnalls has completed 6 years and Fiona Beveridge 3 years and both ladies have decided to resign. Colin of course resigned in 2015.

The 3 vacant positions will be taken by Val Baker, Sandy Cameron and Mike Lewis each of whom has given agreement.

On behalf of the Association George thanked :-

Anne, Fiona and Colin (in absentia) for their hard work and commitment over the past few years.

Kate, Kathleen and Liz who have agreed to serve at least one more year and

Christine for agreeing to take on the role of deputy Chairman.

Finally George welcomed Val, Sandy and Mike to the Committee and indicated that, with the other members of the Committee, he looked forward to working with them over the coming months and years.

Finally George reminded the floor that all Office bearers at the table (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer) would come to the end of their terms in 2017

7 GUIDES

George reported as follows:-

We have had one resignation (Allan Macleod who, quite understandably, found it difficult to travel from Linlithgow for duty) leaving 55 active and 30 honorary guides and that no new guides were appointed on 2015.

We do however have around ten (10) guides under training and, of that, only 1 (one) is ready for a test.

Although we have had many people interested in becoming guides, quite a number feel they cannot cope with the training and drop out.

Again George then made a plea for attendees to persuade family, friends and colleagues to become trainee guides. The suggestion of advertising in libraries, which was raised last year and again this year, will be pursued.

8 ILLUSTRATED TALKS PROGRAMME 2016

George intimated that the 2016 programme of free illustrated talks to be held in the City Chambers is now fixed. Details are available on the website and were given in the March newsletter. The details are as follows:-

Friday 5 August Robin Barnes "Making Tracks"
Aspects of Edinburgh's first tram system, 1871 to 1956.

Thursday 11 August Mark Mclean "A Clearer Light"
Lord Hailes and The Enlightenment.

Monday 15 August Hamish Coghill "It's a Dog's Life"
Dog statues, dog cemeteries and tales of other dogs!

Tuesday 23 August Eric Melvin "The Royal Jaunt"
King George IV visit to Edinburgh in 1822,

9 AOCB

New Leaflets

Betty Milton raised the situation re. the design of new leaflets.

***Background** Betty has been liaising with Napier College and has arranged a competition for the students to design a new flyer for our **FREE August Royal Mile tours**. The winner will be awarded a prize. Eric Melvin will lead a small sub-committee to agree the wording. Thereafter the students will have a free hand re. colour, layout, type face etc.*

It was confirmed that, because we cannot at the stage meet the deadlines for EAE distribution, the flyers will not be used until August 2017.

We will consider producing similar flyers for our 'Out-of-Season' tours.

Elizabeth McLeod suggested advertising in free newspapers etc.

George confirmed that this had been done several times and as far as he is aware it has attracted not one customer. Although there is no cost involved it is a waste of effort.

Kate raised the following topics:-

9.1 Christmas Soirée

Kate confirmed that the 'entry charges' for the Christmas Soirée were rounded up to £100.00 and the sum donated to the Royal Mile Primary School.

9.2 EAE 2015 figs

George confirmed the charges for the 2015 EAE distribution as follows:-

A5 leaflets 2000 Essential Fringe Festival Venues costs £250.00

A5 leaflets 500 Enhanced Fringe Edinburgh Castle is free

Recycling is £15.00

Total £265.00 + vat £53.00 = **£318.00** for 2500 leaflets.

9.3 CITY CHAMBERS

Kate invited comments on the suitability of the Pendolino Room as our base and asked for thoughts and ideas as to from where we might operate in the future.

George confirmed that we are committed to the Pendolino Room for 2016.

The following comments were made:-

JOHN GORRIE

The City Chambers is not an ideal place from where to start because

- (a) It is too busy with too much noise and competition
- (b) The Pendolino Room is difficult to find
- (c) It is not a natural place from where to start a Royal Mile Tour

It is essential to be at the top of the Royal Mile, preferably on Castlehill Canonball House (our former base now operated by Contini) would be ideal The open area behind the railings would be a good place to have a stall but this is used for outside tables.

Suggest we approach Contini management.

MARTIN McMENIGALL

The area immediately outside the City Chambers is used by traders who rent their pitches and we are often verbally abused by them if they think we are encroaching on their space.

The Pendolino Room is too far away.

Suggest starting at the Alexander statue in the Quadrangle.

ANDREW BROOM

Supports Castle Hill.

Suggest we negotiate with the Hub and offer to pay for space.

GILL DAVIDSON

Use the Storytelling Centre and offer a choice of tours – up to the Castle or down to the Palace.

BETTY MILTON

Start at the City Chambers and shout to attract attention to our tours. It was though that very few guides would be willing to do this

BERNARD HEAVIE

Work in pairs with the banner to create more of an obstacle to passers-by.

FIONA BROWNLEE

Consider tickets.

Kate confirmed that we had considered ticketing earlier this year and rejected the idea because of inconvenience to our customers in collecting tickets

ANN DEWAR

Rebrand ourselves as 'Friends of the City' and advertise at the airport.

MAUREEN McMILLAN

We are now in competition with around 17/18 tour companies who are essentially full-time professionals and some of which offer free tours throughout the year.

SANDY CAMERON

We have the authority of the City Council. Can we use that fact?

10 CLOSE AGM

Kate closed the AGM at 8.15.

George thanked:-

Our resident Door Keeper Gladys Bain who ensured that everyone signed in to enable an accurate count of attendees

Our resident photographer Murray Carmichael who took photographs of the evening. These will be published in due course.

Our Man with the Mic Bernard Heavie who ensured that everyone could hear what was being said during Item 9 discussions.

11 CIVIC RECEPTION

The Lord Provost arrived at 8.15 prompt and was welcomed by George, Kate and Kathleen and introduced to Christine as our new Vice Chairman. He was accompanied by a City Officer carrying a spear and a tankard!

In his address from the lectern the Lord Provost said, as always, how grateful he was, on behalf of the City, for the time and effort given by our guides in promoting Edinburgh to visitors from all over the world. "Without the Festival Guides, the Festival would not be the same and our presence is intrinsic to a capital city." The Lord Provost remarked that the first Festival in 1947 was a cultural reaction to World War II.

The SPEAR

The Lord Provost explained that the spear was a gift from the Maori nation of New Zealand. He had been on an official tour to places such as Melbourne, Wellington and Dunedin. The latter he said was somewhat familiar with Corstorphine, Princes St., George St., Queen St. among the names he noticed.

The Spear was presented during a traditional Maori Welcome in the West Park Stadium which seats 60,000. There were 30,000 present to watch the Lord Provost face a Haka ALONE. Some 200 warriors emerged from a realistic scale replica of Edinburgh Castle. He was advised by a Maori Elder that he must face up to the warriors, he must not flinch, he must not retreat, he must not react in any way and above all he must not lose eye contact with the Haka leader. The penalty for any of these sins is DEATH by SPEAR. This is apparently what happened to settlers in the early days of colonisation.

The Lord Provost obviously obeyed the instructions as he is here tonight

George replied, on behalf of the guides, by thanking the Lord Provost for attending and for granting us use of the room with a generous buffet. He admitted he was somewhat perturbed by the spear and Davy Crockett at the Alamo came to mind.

The Lord Provost then joined the guides to enjoy the wine and buffet and people left for home at various times during the evening.

George Laing

Honorary Secretary
Edinburgh Festival Voluntary Guides Association
27 March 2016

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL VOLUNTARY GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Receipts and Payment Account
for the year ending 31st December 2015

2014

RECEIPTS	£	£	
Walks and talks		1295 60	1679 84
Donations		<u>85 00</u>	<u>00 00</u>
		1380 60	1679 84
PAYMENTS			
Rent for meetings	100 00		100 00
Postage	84 84		76 27
Stationery	26 98		13 50
Fringe advertisement	295 20		301 20
Leaflets	252 00		175 00
E.A.E. Leaflet distribution	318 00		00 00
Royal mile business association	50 00		00 00
Donations	155 00		100 00
Presentations	46 50		00 00
Book tokens	100 00		100 00
Netherbow social evening	291 92		00 00
Website	43 08		71 84
Riddles Court 2013/4	00 00		588 80
Riddles Court catering 2014	21 00		83 81
History Festival	00 00		40 00
Sundries	00 00		<u>27 87</u>
		1784 50	1678 29
Loss/surplus		<u>403 90</u>	<u>1 55</u>
Statement of funds			
Bank of Scotland as at			
31st December 2014		<u>3228 18</u>	<u>3226 63</u>
Bank of Scotland as at			
31st December 2015		<u>2824 28</u>	<u>3228 18</u>

AUDITORS REPORT

I have examined the books and records of the Association and have to report
that the Receipts and Payments Account gives a true and fair view of the
year's transactions and that the statement of funds is correct

EDINBURGH
1st March 2016

Richard Richardson