

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Argyll Papers
Clàr-obrach na Coinneimh Bhliadhnail
na Càirdean Phàipearan Earra-Ghàidhael
14.00 GMT on Friday 6 Nov 2020
On Zoom

Minutes

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Attendees: Ambler, Holly; Anderson, Juli; Argyll, Eleanor; Beaton, Duncan; Bickford, Pamela Campbell; Black, Ronnie; Brown, Olive; Byrne, Kevin; Campbell, Levin; Campbell, Lynn; Campbell, Roderick; Campbell, Stewart; Campbell, Sue; Clayton, Sharon; Curtis, Mary; Dracup, Chris; Franklin, Glenda MacPhadden; Galliard, Ann; Galliard, Peter; Gowans, Linda; Hogbin, Dorothy; Hogbin, Peter; Irving, Bob; Irving, Faith; Leitch, Donald; McBryde, Margaret; MacCallum, Ethel; McCown, Thomas; MacDonald, Murdo; MacDonald, Myra; Mckellar, David; Mackenzie, George; McKinnon, Gordon; Mackinnon, Ishbel; McKinnon, Martha; Macleod, Jane; MacTaggart, Kenneth; Marrison, Elizabeth; Matola, Linda; Meek, Donald; Meek, Rachel; Moss, Michael; Muhn, Judy; Neil, Barb; Nicol, Hugh; Palamedes, Dena; Petre, James; Pinho, Chris de; Quick, Jim; Reid, Bob; Richardson, Gordon; Rosie, Alison; Ross, Mhairi; Smyth, Catriona; Stiùbhart, Dòmhnall Uilleam; White, Margaret

Apologies: Campbell, Diarmid, Campbell, Mary; Harrison, Katie; Jones, Andrew; Maskel, Jean; Palmer, Alison

2. Acceptance of the Report and Accounts submitted to OSCR on behalf of the Friends, approved by email in April/May 2020

There were no queries or matters arising from the report and accounts submitted to OSCR for 2018/19.

3. Update from the chair (Murdo MacDonald)

Only 6 months have passed since the last annual meeting of the Friends - as we agreed at the last annual meeting that the reporting year would be restructured to fit better with the submission of annual report and accounts to OSCR – the Office of the Charities Regulator in Scotland. The short reporting year and the additional challenges of Covid 19 will make this a brief report.

Our fourth annual meeting, scheduled for March 2020, had to be cancelled due to Covid 19, with the annual report and accounts for the year 2018-19 approved by members via email so they could be submitted to OSCR. We were disappointed to miss Donald Meek's talk on his research into his family croft on Tiree and thus are particularly delighted that he is willing and able to deliver that talk today via Zoom.

As with so many other planned activities, the annual outing to visit Kilberry Castle and the monument stones there also had to be postponed. We hope to re-schedule this visit for 2021, either post-pandemic or in a suitably Covid safe manner.

Duncan Beaton prepared the Whitsun newsletter, which was as informative and entertaining as ever. The next edition is well on its way and will be distributed before the end of November. We'd like to formally record our thanks to Duncan for his work – for which we continue to receive great feedback. As ever, contributions for future editions welcome. Send to friendsoftheargyllpapers@gmail.com and we'll forward onto Duncan.

Despite Covid, membership of the Friends has continued to grow. We now have approx. 118 members – which is great, but not many when compared to the more than 1000 followers on Facebook. If anyone has any bright ideas about how to turn these 'followers' into 'members' we'd be delighted to hear from you!¹

Remote and onsite volunteering by members of the Friends has been impossible during the Covid crisis but we hope that this work will be resumed in 2021.

During the last 6 months, we have still managed to spend Friends funds:

- Paying £1600 + vat for the conservation of the volume of Instructions to the Chamberlain of Mull, Morvern and Tiree.
- Paying £420 + vat for the conservation of the volume of the 1779 Census of the Argyll Estates.
- The Friends will also be covering the £300 costs of cleaning and digitising 7 reel to reel tapes which the Duchess found whilst spring-cleaning the Castle during Covid. Sadly, the tapes need to be conserved and digitised before we are even able to determine whether the content is worth preserving!

The Friends continue to build and maintain links with the Clan Campbell Society North America (CCSNA) and Australia. Duncan Beaton and Diarmid Campbell are our main points of contact with the Clan Campbell Education Foundation (CCEF), and frequent contributors to the CCSNA journal and newsletters. CCEF continue to prepare their plan to fund-raise on behalf of the Argyll Papers and we look forward to this project developing.

The planned project in partnership with the Tiree and Coll Gaelic Partnership, *Tìr Ìseal nan Òran* (Tiree: the low land of song), was unable to go ahead as planned during 2020. We are working on revised plans to deliver this project in 2021 or 2022. Further details will follow when we have them.

Thank you all for your continued support and enthusiasm – it is much appreciated, particularly during these difficult times. Stay safe and well.

4. Statement of accounts by the treasurer and approval (Alison Diamond pp. Jean Maskell)

The accounts (which had been distributed in advance of the meeting) were approved by those present. There were no questions. See appendix 1 for the accounts.

5. Update from the archivist (Alison Diamond)

Covid 19 has had a major impact on work in the archives as you might expect. I was furloughed from March through to mid-July, since when I have worked an average of 2 days a week (half-time).

¹ Dena Palamedes suggested making more Friends activities available online eg. via Zoom to ensure that international members receive more in return for their support.

My priorities on half-time remain the preservation of the collection – cleaning, maintaining the environment and so on – and responding to prioritised enquiries from Argyll Estates. I also started on the backlog of enquiries – and my apologies if you have been waiting a long time for a reply! I am working through these chronologically in order of receipt.

I returned to work to find a large pile of ‘donations’ or ‘accessions’ to the archive, a result of spring-cleaning in the Castle and other Estate offices. A mixed blessing, including some interesting papers, pictures, place-settings and even some frogging and epaulettes.

I will be working reduced hours for the next six months and this will obviously impact on what I am able to achieve. There is no date as yet for opening the archive to researchers and volunteers, although the risk assessments have all been done! Managing remote volunteers, as a time-consuming process (imaging, sharing images and checking transcripts), will continue to be impacted in a major way.

I still intend that the Red Tape Project (sponsor the repair of a volume) and the Adopt a Charter project (sponsor the repair of a charter and its seal) will go ahead, but preparations for these projects will take time so they will be delayed. There will also be an impact on the re-planning and re-scheduling of the Tìree project, due to both limits on my time and impacts on funding, both already awarded and new. The project plan remains as exciting and relevant as ever though, so I hope very much that we will still be able to deliver it.

I hope that by the next annual meeting, I will have more exciting news and a list of achievements to share. In the meantime, stay safe and well.

6. Invitation to join the Friends’ committee

Dena Palamedes, Judy Muhn, Pamela Campbell Bickford and Domhnall Stiùbhart expressed an interest in joining the committee. With many thanks to the new volunteers, AD will follow this up using sub-committees/co-option as best suits.

7. Forthcoming events

We are in the process of devising a seminar series to take place online (via Zoom) over the winter months. There will be a variety of speakers and topics drawing on research in the Argyll Papers, with attendance free to members but ticketed for non-members. Further information will follow.

8. Any other business

No other business was raised.

Appendix 1: Accounts 2019/20

Annual Accounts to 31/08/2020

Opening balance (1)	01/09/2019	2474.63	
Opening balance (2)	01/09/2019	2930.43	
Petty cash		2.46	5407.52

Receipts

Tiree project RESTRICTED FUNDS		9882.88	
Membership and donations		3073.96	
Gift Aid		249.52	
Interest		4.18	13150.54
			<u>18558.06</u>

Expenditure

Charity Checkout commission and fees		140.79	
Annual fee		238.8	
Banner		225.6	
Website		57.59	
Trustee expenses		129.6	
Highland HighLife (paid twice in error, refunded Oct 2019)		-672	
Balance of Friends trip		45.05	
Postage		76.34	241.77

As at 31 August 2020

			18,318.75
Closing balance (1)			3135.08
Closing balance (2)			15178.75
Petty cash			4.92
			<u>18,318.75</u>