



The Falkland Society

Scottish Registered Charity SC01720

www.falklandsociety.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held in the Chapel Royal, Falkland Palace, 11 September 2019

Present

Peter Burman (Chair); John Smith (Deputy Chair); Gerardine Clark (Treasurer); Ross Burgess (Webmaster & Publisher) and about 30 other members.

Apologies

Fiona Lawrenson; Margaret Cardno, Angie Forsyth, Bill and Gilli Pagan.

Minutes of previous AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 13 June 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Report on the Year 2018–2019

The Chair, Dr Peter Burman, reported that we had had a very good series of lectures, ten in all, and these had all been either well or exceptionally well attended. He urged that we should endeavour to become a visibly 'growing society' and suggested that all who regularly attended lectures should make a point of inviting family members and friends to join them. 'Word of mouth' is the best way to spread news of events and so everyone who attends and enjoys the lectures is encouraged to tell their friends and neighbours and to bring them along whenever that is possible.

There is a connected-ness between history, heritage and archaeology which enables us to understand the parish of Falkland and Newton-of-Falkland in its wider physical and intellectual landscape and in diverse social, artistic, archaeological and historical contexts.

Asked for recollections of especially memorable evenings during 2018–19, mention was made of the lecture by Professor Dr Axel Klausmeier of the Berlin Wall Memorial Foundation; and of the lecture with musical demonstrations by Chris Bragg of the University of St Andrews's on the artistic and historically valuable organs in Fife: it was surprising how many special and unaltered instruments have survived in Fife, and one of them is the pipe organ in Falkland church.

The Chair regretted that it had not been possible to organise an outing this past year although Marietta Crichton Stuart had led a 'Great War tomb trek' in the cemetery.

Some members of the Society had taken part in the archaeological excavation on East Lomond Hill run by Dr Oliver O'Grady and Joe Fitzpatrick (who was present for the AGM). Oliver O'Grady and Joe Fitzpatrick would be presenting one of the sessions during the programme year 2019–2020, so that we could all become up-to-speed on the archaeological programme. A strong collaboration is being built up between the Falkland Stewardship Trust (represented by Joe Fitzpatrick) and Historic Environment Scotland's archaeological team.

The Chair expressed thanks to the office bearers and committee members; to the National Trust for Scotland at Falkland Palace; to the Vestry of the Parish Kirk of Falkland; to the Falkland Centre for Stewardship, and to all the speakers. He had made it his practice to invite the speakers to an early supper an hour before the lecture so that they would feel especially welcome in Falkland and so that he could give them warm support as lecturers before they give their talk or a lecture.

Financial Report

The Treasurer, Gerardine Clark, reported that the finances of the Society continued to be in a healthy state. Copies of the annual accounts for the year to 31 December 2018 were tabled and showed that the principal expenditures had been on the costs of meetings and for printing. Income from donations and publications had been healthy. The outcome was that we had a closing balance of £2,537.53.

Membership Matters

Gerardine Clark reported that we had 33 paid-up members, and a couple more people had requested application forms.

All those who join and give their email addresses are added to the online email list, in addition to those signing up via the website. The Chair confirmed that members' contact details are retained purely for informing or reminding members about the lectures or other events (such as the annual outing) and are not disclosed to third parties.

Annual subscriptions: Chair suggested that we continue for the time being with two options: (i) some members feel that they would like to express their commitment to membership by paying a subscription, minimum £5.00; (ii) others prefer to make a donation at the end of the meetings. Either or both are acceptable.

Some members regretted that there is no longer refreshment offered at the end of lectures. The Chair said that it would be possible to have refreshments at meetings which were in

the Craig Meeting Room at the church or at the Centre for Stewardship in the Stables. He was also planning to follow up his lecture on the architect Robert Weir Schultz with a party to celebrate the restoration of the Schultz Room in his house, Brunton House, where Listed Building Consent had enabled the 1970s plasterboard and artex ceiling panels to be removed revealing the plasterwork and dado panelling designed by Schultz beneath. The result is a very fine room of 1893, set within a Category A-listed house of c.1600.

Plans for the traditional annual visit

The Chair confirmed that there would be an expedition to Myres Castle; he had had a positive response from its owners, Amanda and Henry Barge, who have been very welcoming and enthusiastic. All that remains is to fix a mutually convenient date. Myres Castle is of great interest in itself, with building work of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries but also as being the childhood home of the architect Reginald Fairlie (1883-1952). We regard Fairlie as one of our 'Falkland architects' because he was the designer of the Crichton Stuart Memorial Chapel on the hill facing the Stables in the park of the Falkland Estate. He carried out much work for the University of St Andrews and was the architect of the Scottish National Library. Members would be notified once a date had been fixed. This could easily be followed by a half-day visit to see work by Reginald Fairlie in St Andrews.

Chair suggested that we ask Nic Boyes, who is to give the lecture on 15 April, to follow this up by guiding us round the Rosslyn Chapel (and if we had a whole-day programme we could also visit William Adam's house for the Dundas family at Gorebridge).

Plans for the next season's lecture series

Chair reported that Professor David Munro had accepted to speak about the Smith Anderson firm and its tenure of the Falkland Factory which was now a 9-acre site, most likely to be housing. Other talks already agreed will be given by Scott McIntosh (a local resident) on railway heritage; by Marietta Crichton Stuart on the Third Marquess of Bute; by Nic Boyes on the stone conservation of the Rosslyn Chapel; and on the current exhibition at the Perth Museum by one of the Curators.

Publications

Ross Burgess reported that he is making good progress with the editing of the fascinating excerpts culled by Tom Playfair from local papers and Falkland Estate Archives, on *Edwardian Falkland (1901–13)*. The book would have an Introduction placing the record in context, an explanation of the *dramatis personae*, footnotes and references. Ross has purchased a batch of ISBNs (International Standard Book Numbers) so that our future publications can be better referenced, with entries in the British Library catalogue. Copies will be given to the national libraries of the United Kingdom.

He reported also that discussions are ongoing about a major publication which would gather together the lectures given by Marietta Crichton Stuart to the Falkland Society and to the annual Craft Symposia organized by the Falkland Stewardship Trust.

Website

The webmaster, Ross Burgess, reported that the Society's website at www.falklandsociety.org.uk contains a full list of forthcoming events, a list of Society publications, and a form for people to sign up to the mailing list. The mailing list uses MailChimp, which allows anyone to unsubscribe at any time. At the time of the AGM there were 40 people on the mailing list, including 25 members.

Since the website was set up it had been viewed 454 times, with 1,388 visits to individual pages, by about 270 individual visitors. Over half the visitors were based in Scotland, the remainder being from the United States, other parts of the UK, and 14 other countries.

Possible future enhancements to the website could include a link to online book sales, and better integration with the separate site containing photographs of old Falkland.

The webmaster appealed for old photographs of Falkland for use on the website or in publications.

Re-election of office bearers and committee

The following offered themselves for re-election and were duly confirmed as elected:

- Chair: Dr Peter Burman
- Vice-Chair: John Smith
- Secretary: Fiona Lawrenson
- Treasurer: Gerardine Clark
- Webmaster: Ross Burgess

Other committee members were elected or re-elected as follows: Betty Gilchrist; Katy Jack; Tom Playfair.

A vote of thanks was proposed to the office-bearers and committee and carried unanimously.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and expressed the thanks of the Society to the National Trust for Scotland for allowing us to use the beautiful and historic Chapel Royal in the Palace for most of our meetings.

PETER BURMAN, 12 September 2019