

SCOTTISH WORKING PEOPLE'S HISTORY TRUST

Scottish Charity No. SC020357

Minutes of the 76th meeting of the Trust held on Tuesday 11th January 2022, via internet on Zoom during the Covid 19 pandemic crisis.

Present:, Dorothy Kidd (DK, Secretary), Janet McBain (JMcB, Treasurer), Bernard Beagan (BB), Elizabeth Bryan (EB, Chair), Ian McGowan (IM), Alan Reid (AR), Sian Reynolds (SR).

- 1. Chairperson's remarks:** Elizabeth Bryan welcomed Trustees to the meeting, the first in 13 years when Sian Reynolds had not been in the Chair. The Trustees joined Elizabeth in wishing to record their heartfelt thanks to Professor Reynolds for her work on behalf of the Trust.
EB hoped that the Trust would finally be able to meet in person at our June 2022 meeting, perhaps preceded by lunch together to celebrate the achievements over the past thirteen years.
SR thanked Elizabeth for agreeing to take over as Chair of the Trust.
- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Michael Allan, Joyce Connon, Hugh Hagan, Cathlin Macaulay, Martyn Wade.
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting:** Agreed, subject to correction to the date of the next meeting.
- 4. Matters arising:** EB thanks DK for chairing the Anniversary meeting held on 30th November 2021. It had been a successful meeting, with very good contributions from both seasoned and much younger academics and with a good turnout for an NLS online event.
- 5. Winding up of the Friends of SWPHT:** J McB formally proposed that the Friends of SWPHT be wound up, seconded by SR.
- 6. Report on Anniversary meeting:** EB confirmed that the inaugural Ian MacDougall annual memorial lecture is to be held at the National Library of Scotland on Thursday 7th April 2022. This will be a joint event between NLS, SWPHT and the Scottish Labour History Society (SLHS). A formal proposal for this is making its way through the NLS bureaucracy. The two NLS Curators involved, Heidi Egginton and Alison Metcalfe, have suggested that we put together a working group to meet up annually to plan the lectures. This year there has been quite a bit of discussion also with Sandra MacDougall who is anxious that the 2022 event should be in-person. Suggested speakers are: Profs Lynn Abrams, Calum Brown, Tom Devine and Arthur McIvor. The new National Librarian, Amina Shah, had also been suggested to be asked to chair and introduce the event.
- 7. Secretary's report:** DK reported that she had contacted Richard Wilson's management company to explain the winding up of the Friends and invite him to become a patron of the Trust. Two volunteers had also come forward and DK will contact them to suggest the types of work they might be interested in undertaking (see below). She also confirmed that the latest Trust Newsletter had been sent to all former Friends (now supporters) and that they were all aware the Friends was being wound up and the bank account closed. Several had already made donations directly to the Trust. **Action: DK**
- 8. Treasurer's report:** JMcB had submitted a report in writing in advance of the meeting. She noted that no royalties had been received from book sales; the only expenditure had been for

Employer's Liability insurance which has been pared down to the minimum. Funds stand at just over £14,000. Given this amount, JMcB felt that it would be good for the Trust to spend some of our money. She had established from the NLS Scotland's Sounds staff that, once they have finished the 'Unlocking our Sound Heritage' project they will be offering digital copying of oral history collections at a reasonable rate. So far, the School of Scottish Studies has undertaken digitisation work on behalf of the Trust but this is something we could look at, once we have a clear view of what the Trust's collections consist of and the proportion of them that still required to be digitised. |

J McB had also looked into what HLF might fund. Unfortunately, even for quite small grants, there are considerable conditions attached, so it might be wiser to wait until we can submit an application for a collection project – possibly community-driven. One of the questions raised at the November conference was around the categories of workers that have not yet been interviewed and it might be good to put together a funding proposal around this. Janet concluded that, with the donations the Trust is receiving from former Friends/Supporters, the financial position is good.

EB thanked Janet and asked Trustees to confirm that they are happy to leave things as they are for now, which was agreed.

- 9. Publications projects:** AR reported on the Peeblesshire Textile Workers volume: Caroline Milligan has been working on memories of Ian MacDougall from various people who worked with him and was also working on a bibliography of his publications. The deadline for the book is now June 2022, but as it needs to be fitted into the NMS publications programme it may be well into 2023 before it is published. EB suggested that it would be ideal if publication could tie in with the 2023 Ian MacDougall memorial lecture.

Volunteers to look over the text were sought by Birlinn and DK offered to ask former textile specialist colleagues at NMS and also Mark Watson at HES. **Action: DK**

SR suggested that an honorarium should be offered to anyone who has undertaken a lot of work for this and AR agreed to ask Susan Reid about this.

DK offered to help with any picture research required and BB will send AR a photograph of his Textile Workers union badge. **Action: DK/BB**

EB asked AR to pass on the Trust's thanks to the EERC.

- 10. Digital access project/Website:** DK explained that she had not been able to meet up with Veronica Hartwich to discuss how the digital access project via SCRAN could be progressed further but was planning to do so in March. So far, in addition to the audio clips of the two shipyard workers already on SCRAN, VH has continued work on preparing audio clips of interviews with Onion Johnnies for SCRAN. Other occupational groups also need to be worked on. **Action: DK**

DK asked Trustees to remind her to update some of the pages on the SWPHT website if she has not done so in the next few weeks. **Action: DK.**

11. Policy documents development: EB explained that it had not been possible for the sub-committee (EB/HH/MA/DK) to meet in person to finalise the Trust's policy documents. This will now take place during February or March. **Action: EB/DK**

12. AOB: Trustees discussed how volunteers might help the Trust - by creating a list of the interviews held at the School of Scottish Studies, including copyright status and whether or not digital copies and transcriptions exist; and by undertaking picture research for the Peeblesshire Textile workers book. It was agreed that volunteers would be offered reimbursement of reasonable expenses. **Action: DK to contact volunteers**

BB noted that documents relating to the Scottish Farm Workers Union had recently been discovered in Aberdeenshire and were currently held by Unite The Union (contact: James Maxwell).

JMcB reported that Michael Moss, former Glasgow University Archivist, had died in early 2021. An online conference in his memory will be held from 27-28 April 2022 (see: https://businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/news/2022/01/basc_csuronference_2022). She also commended Daniel Gray's book: 'A Life of Industry – The Photographs of John R Hume' (2021) HES.

13. Date and place of next meeting: The next meeting of the Trust will be held on Tuesday 7th June 2022, we hope both in person and preceded by lunch at the Guildford Arms, beside HM General Register House in Edinburgh. **Action: DK to confirm to Hugh Hagan nearer the time.**

D Kidd, 17 February 2022