



THE HIGHLAND GEOLOGICAL **SOCIETY**

Scottish Charity No. SC004427

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **held at Millburn Academy, Inverness, on Wednesday 26th February 2014**

CHAIRPERSON Peter Christie took the chair at 19:35 and welcomed all those present.

1. APOLOGIES were received from Tamara Beck-Slinn, Anne Burgess, Rhona Fraser, John Hawco, Andy Leggatt, Eddie Lynch, Leslie Martin, Andy Moffat, Bill Peppé, Ann Sime, Don Stewart and Janet Trythall.
2. THE MINUTES of the AGM held on Wednesday 27th February 2013 had been distributed to members prior to the meeting; their acceptance was proposed by Peter Reynolds and seconded by John Adamson and were duly signed as correct. There were no matters arising.
3. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT
The Chairperson spoke to his report, which had been also been distributed previously. He informed members that Joan Paterson had contacted him regarding the books donated by Murray and that these would be added to the library collection as soon as practicable.

He noted that several of our stalwart members have died over the last 12 months, in particular our President, Sinclair Ross. Many of Sinclair's books will also be added to the society's library and he was delighted that Sinclair's outstanding thin-section collection will go to the Hunterian museum in Glasgow. He also noted that sorting through Sinclair's bequest is likely to keep a number of people occupied for much of the coming year.

There were no matters arising.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT
The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts for the previous year, noting that these represented 'receipts and payments', in accordance with current charity legislation. The membership figures reflect that 10 individual members and 1 family member opted to pay their 2014 subscriptions early in response to the new membership form being sent out towards the end of last year, which will appear to skew the figures in next year's accounts.

The Chairman noted that the list of attendees at meetings and fieldtrips would be used to provide further evidence of income in future accounts.

There were no matters arising.

Ann informed the meeting that she is standing down as Treasurer so that these are the last set of accounts that she will present. She noted that, over the last 25 years, she had filled various roles on the committee and was the only founding member still in the society more than 30 years later. She gave a brief account of the society's activities over that period and noted that for many years the newsletters provided the only written record of the society's meetings and events. She also informed the group that she will continue to work on the library collection and on Sinclair's notes, with a view to making much of the information (including his amazing notebook) available to members.

Peter thanked Ann for her considerable efforts over the years, noting that in addition to her being an OU student at the time that the society was set up, she was also working extremely hard in her professional life.

5. ELECTION IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RULES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SOCIETY.

Documentation showing proposed changes to Rules A.7 and B.2 (d) of the society was circulated prior to the meeting. These changes were approved unanimously; their acceptance was proposed by Alan Thompson and seconded by Peter Reynolds.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

As noted last year, Peter Christie reiterated that he was standing down as Chair and that Alan Thompson had volunteered to take on the role. Consequently Peter proposed that Alan become the new Chairman and this was seconded by John Adamson.

Peter Reynolds proposed that Alison Wright continue as Hon. Secretary and this was seconded by Anne Cockroft.

As noted above, Ann Reynolds stepped down as Treasurer and Peter Christie intimated that he had a successor in mind. As this arrangement has not yet been formalised, the committee was given approval in principle to find a replacement for Ann and that members would be kept informed of progress. Ann is happy to remain on the committee and will be available to ensure a smooth transition.

The role of website manager is being filled by Andy Leggatt and his formal nomination in this post was proposed by Ann Reynolds and seconded by Alan Thompson.

The remaining members of the committee (John Adamson, Anne Cockroft, Eddie Lynch and Ann Reynolds) were re-elected en bloc, with the motion proposed by Alan Thompson and seconded by Peter Reynolds.

Peter Christie proposed that Rhona Fraser should also join the committee; Rhona is a possible candidate for Treasurer and has useful experience as a council member for the Edinburgh Geological Society. This proposal was seconded by Dave Longstaff.

Peter Christie stated that this increases the number of committee members, but given that the workload of the society has gone up in line with increased charity legislation, this is not inappropriate and noted that the Rules of the Society do not limit the number of committee members.

7. AOCB

(i) Dave Longstaff asked about advertising arrangements for the society. Peter Christie noted that, up until about 2000, he distributed posters through the library system and that fieldtrip reports were sent to local newspapers, but, given that these were not often published, the effort involved became onerous and the practice was discontinued. Ann pointed out that meetings are now announced on the website and, from memory, could not remember any new member coming forward because they'd seen one of our talks advertised in the paper or library. Peter said that our meeting details are sent to other geological societies for inclusion in their newsletters. This included the OUGS and new OU geology students are also made aware of the society through the on-line forum. The Inverness Field Club and Moray Society also receive our meeting details and promote talks of potential interest to their members. It was noted that links with Inverness College (now part of UHI) have lapsed since the untimely death of Elspeth Reid in 2003 and that this avenue may warrant further investigation.

Davie Milne asked about using Moray Firth Radio to promote our activities. Ann said that in the past we had used their community noticeboard feature but again the society was only mentioned very occasionally. Peter noted that our details are held by 'Spotlight', a free monthly advertising leaflet that is widely distributed in the area, but that we had yet to appear in print. The local authority also has a listing for us on their community database, HI-Life, but was not aware of any approach made by anyone who had come across us on-line, other than through our own website.

Dave Longstaff asked if we ever let people know that we are descending on an area for a fieldtrip in advance as this might encourage interest. Alison thought that many prospective leaders might be put off by this approach as it made planning much harder; Peter and Ann reminded the group of an excursion to Rosemarkie where over 30 people turned up on the day and the difficulties that had created.

It was agreed that how the society publicises itself is an important consideration and that the new committee would discuss this further.

(ii) Peter Reynolds requested that we formally record our thanks to Peter Christie for 16 years hard work as Chairman and for his wider efforts on behalf of the society over the decades.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 20:25.

The floor was then given to Peter Christie for a short talk about Jurassic fossils from two German museums at Dotternhausen and Tübingen. Peter had visited the collections (one held at a cement factory and the other at the local university) whilst on holiday and had been captivated by the excellent preservation of crinoids, ichthyosaurs and ammonites in the region.

If you missed the AGM, there is information about the Dotternhausen collection at <http://www.holcim-sued.de/werkforum-fossilienmuseum.html> and you can take a virtual tour of the collection in Tübingen University: <http://www.paleo.uni-tuebingen.de/index.php?id=72&L=1>