

**Minutes of the 6th AGM of the
Clan Donnachaidh Society
Guarantee Company**

Held at Killiecrankie Hall on Thursday 23 July 2009 at 2pm

1. Welcome by Andrew Duncan, Chairman. Thanks to Struan and those who travelled long distances to be there. We are sad to intimate the death of George Robertson McNeil, chairman of the London Branch, who died just after the Gathering last September. He will be sorely missed. Apologies from: Sir Sandy Reid, Jean Munro and Tim Duncan. Apologies had been received from 22 members and proxy forms.

2. The Meeting adopted the Minutes of the AGM 2008 proposed by Matthew Robertson and seconded by Betty Robertson.

3. Chairman's report: John P Robertson has been nominated for Council this year. He has given us enormous and professional help with our application to get planning permission to alter the clan garage and shop and we thank him very much. James Irvine Roberson has threatened to retire from editing the Clan Annual and he has now agreed to continue with the Annual and has been nominated to serve on Council.

Shop/Garage Conversion: The shop income has not proved to be as much as was hoped due to the costs in wages and the small size of the shop. The garage has lain empty for a while and the plan is to extend the shop by moving Jim Taylor's office, which is behind the shop counter, into the garage and freeing this area to be part of the shop.

This should double the size of the shop and increase the shop takings. The opening hours are also being extended in the winter months. John P Robertson drew up the plans and applied for planning permission, he has taken estimates from local builders and Council has accepted a quotation for the work to begin at the end of September when Jim is on holiday.

Subscription costs were doubled at the last AGM, because the subscriptions did not meet the costs of running the Society. Because some members take out 5 year dues, we won't fully benefit from the increase for a few years. This means we have lost some members.

Paul Murton filmed a TV programme about Clan Donnachaidh. James Irvine Robertson was interviewed and footage taken at Dunalastair graveyard and the Clan Centre. It should be on BBC2 TV in September, the date to be advised.

The Clan Website is now being managed by Cheryl Robertson.

4. Secretary's Report. The year has been dominated by the Homecoming Gathering 2009. We bought several passports and made a banner for the march in the parade down the Royal Mile in Edinburgh on Saturday night. We have a Clan tent booked at the Highland Games in Holyrood Park for two days and we thank Faith Elliot very much for being our sponsor and helping us pay for that.

We are expecting many visitors to the tent. The best looking tents are made by our American friends, who send me pictures of the tents they have at Highland Games in the States and I will try to do a similar task in

Edinburgh. Stephanie, Christy & John have all offered help on the day and I am sure we will have a great time.

The Website: It was decided at the last Council meeting that we would take up the offer of help from Cheryl Robertson. Cheryl is married to Bill who was our International Vice-Chairman and who retired last year. It was decided to amalgamate the two sites (the official site donnachaidh.com & donnachaidhinternational.com) and she has helped me with the online payment of clan subscriptions and the Clan Shop would benefit if people could order and pay for items through the web site. She purchased a program on our behalf and has learned how to put up a questionnaire so it can be filled in and sent back through the internet. I have just set up a paypal account and we hope that this will help people purchase items from the shop and pay for membership through this secure payment company.

My thanks go to all those who have helped me during the past year. To Jim Taylor and James Irvine Robertson who answers those awkward questions that come to me about historical events or ancestors, and members of the local branch who are busy selling raffle tickets or making the tea.

5. Financial Report:

The finances have been on a better footing this year after the increase in membership fees.

Society & Retail Account: The Shop sales were up this year and also subscriptions, but our heating bills, telephone and internet have gone up too. We pay less for insurance cover, thanks to Duncan Huie for finding us a new Insurance Broker.

Profit for the financial year is £5,929 which looks good but most of that was profit from the ICI shares we sold. They realised £9,500 which was very good as it was a cash take-over. We sold shares in January 2008 and there will be a big bill of £1,200 to pay in Corporation Tax at the end of this year.

Charitable Trust: Investment income is less, which is to be expected. One bond (M & G Chari Bond) in particular has lost half its value, but hopefully the value will rise again next year. The Appeal Fund (or Option 4) which Colin Liddell looks after has £9,500 in it and we will be spending that on the refurbishment of the garage and shop. There is also more money from donations this year to cover the cost of the work.

There is a Website fund: This money came to us in 2003 through the kindness of Colin Liddell. He suggested I write a letter requesting a grant from the Dunard Trust. We will be spending it this year setting up this new integrated website, buying new programs, and other expenses.

We have Summary of Results Accounts for everyone. There are also the detailed accounts which have to go to Companies House – because we are a Company limited by Guarantee - for the Society. Then we have the Charitable Trust which owns the land and buildings and these accounts we must submit to the Office of Scottish Charity Regulators (OSCR). The full accounts are difficult to read as they are not balance sheets but there are some for members and we can email you one if necessary. They will be put on the website for anyone to see.

Donations: Last year the Culloden Stone was purchased as a donation to the new Culloden Centre. It cost £960 and this was paid for by donations. In 2009 we are supporting the new Museum in St. Andrews University by sponsoring a silver arrow and medal which the Poet Chief won in 1687.

There was a question about our rental income and the secretary explained that the building which used to house the clan museum was rented out to a clan member and this brought in an income for the Charitable Trust.

Acceptance of the Financial Statements: Proposed by Carol Gascoigne Pees, Seconded by Alan Robertson.

6. Membership Report and Shop Report – Jim Taylor reported that after the increase in subscriptions at last year's AGM we have lost a substantial number of overseas members – 300 paid in 2008 and have not paid in 2009. To set against that loss we have had 75 new

members, one 5-year and 1 updated to life membership. The total membership is 1,200 members.

We kept the shop open during the winter and although we were not very busy it kept the till working. The takings this year have been irregular, one day good and the following day bad. The shop income is more than last year, but only a small increase. Nettie Robertson, the shop assistant, who works on Jim's days off, has had to retire due to ill health. She has worked in the shop since 2004 and we send her good wishes on her retirement.

We have obtained planning permission from Perth & Kinross Council to extend the shop and convert the garage into Jim's office and a store room. This extension nearly doubles the shop space and we will be able to add various lines to our sales and should increase turnover substantially.

7. Museum Report – Donald Reid

A new exhibit recently acquired is the mace which belonged to Col. Robertson of Lude, and there is a photograph of Hamish Robertson holding the mace in the poster display unit. On loan we have Johnny Cope's travelling fiddle, found in his coach, captured after the Battle of Prestonpans. We thank Anne-Lise Robertson for the loan of this artefact. The display cabinets, which were built last year, now house the textiles in the drawers underneath.

The Secretary “braved” IKEA to purchase a new glass display cabinet and we have on display the Page’s Livery worn by Sir Edward Reid aged 10 at The Coronation of 1911. There is also a small sword and 3-cornered hat in the same display. Donald thanked the secretary for her work in connection with the museum.

There is also an exhibition at Blair Castle organised by Sylvia Robertson of the Rannoch & Highland Branch, which contains information about the Clan in connection with the Homecoming year. The 3 local clans each have a display, the Stewarts, Murrays and Donnachaidh.

8. Clan Annual Report: James Irvine Robertson had produced a questionnaire asking members what they thought of the Clan Annual and if they would like to receive it by email. The vast majority of respondents preferred to receive a printed magazine. Many said they would like more photographs and these were requested from those attending the Gathering. If anyone would like to visit Garth Castle the owner, Neil Rose, would be pleased to open it by application to J.I.R.

9. Affiliated Branches Reports: There were reports submitted by the following Branches: London; Rannoch & Highland; North California; South California: Florida; Western Australia; Midwest; Kentucky; Canada.

Thanks were expressed to them for attending the meeting.

Florida was commended for having the most youth members and it was recommended to offer the youth certificate to encourage young people to join up.

10. Any Other Business:

Christy Lange from Florida asked if there was a branch in Nova Scotia as she plans to go to the Gathering there in 2011. There is no branch just now but one could be formed if contacts could be made.

The Clan Shop has copies of the Struan Kirkyard booklet, all funds going to Struan Kirk.

Clan Shop merchandise should be looked at carefully as more expensive items gain more profit than smaller items.

11. Intimations

Stephanie Robertson put in a request for photographs for her newsletter she sends out by email.

There was interest in commissioning a poly cotton in a Clan tartan. It has been decided to commission one first and then see whether there was sufficient interest to commission others. (The first choice among those present at the AGM was Modern Robertson Hunting in a smaller sett.)

Tim Duncan sent his apologies and best wishes were sent to him. The DNA meeting will be held as usual in Westlands at 2pm on Friday.

The Secretary made announcements concerning the forthcoming events; the Clan Service at Struan Church on Friday taken by the Clan Chaplain, Rev. Jim Reid.

The Dinner is at 7.15 pm in Fishers Hotel. The piper will be in attendance to play for us.

There are 3 spare “passports” for sale for the Gathering in Holyrood Park.

There will be a short Council Meeting to elect a Chairman, Vice Chairmen and Executive Committee held immediately after the AGM.

14. Date of Annual General Meeting in 2010: Friday, 10th September 2010 at 2pm in Killiecrankie Hall.

Struan thanked the Council for all their hard work and the members of the local branch for their help at the meeting and for everyone who came.