

Chester Caledonian Association

Annual General Meeting

28th June 2015 at Chester Golf Club

Minutes

Present

David Murdoch, Harry Crook, Angus MacSween, Iain McAulay, Sandy McLennan, Paul Gordon, Scott Lindsay, Barrie Lawson, , Murray Brown, Ed Inglis, Rob Marrs, Ron Anderson, Stephen Bonsall, Jim Cleland, Alan Small, Miles Tutton, Hamish McIntyre, Frank Wood, Don Easton, Roy Murray, William Notman, Ian Gill, Jim Lester.

1. Golf Tournament

Ronald Anderson thanked Chester Golf Club for hosting the competition for the Storrar Trophy which he presented to this year's winner, Roy Murray.

2. Apologies

Robin Dunbar. Fraser Fowlie, Stuart Begbie, Bill McAulay, Magnus Macaskill, Bob Ferguson, Mike Martin, Stuart Gill, Gavin Gill, Gus Guthrie, Malcolm Murray, Rob Marrs

3. Minutes of the last AGM, Monday 2nd June 2014

These were agreed as a true and correct record and signed by the President.

Matters arising;

There were no matters arising

4. Secretaries' Reports

Events

Men's Supper

Once again we had a very enjoyable evening in Willington Hall and after being welcomed in their usual manner, we sat down to a superb meal with a menu that had been prepared with the usual humour and appropriate taste for our evening's entertainment.

Following on from last year's referendum debate Mike Martin took over as host in a question and answer session relating what the outcome of the referendum meant to each of us, and I'm pleased to say that the various topics from participants was very interesting (and amusing in some cases).

Once again, the attendance at 39 members and guests was not what we had hoped for and we must give this event some thought.

Thank you to Simon and his team and likewise to Mike for 'controlling' the evening.

St Andrew's Dinner and Ball

The ball was again promoted at the Doubletree Hilton and was an enjoyable evening but due to a poor attendance (79) it can't be said that this ball was a huge success. We had to pay for a minimum of 100 guests which left us in a very poor financial situation and it was only due to the raffle that we just, only just survived!

The Glen Craig dance band entertained us in their usual professional way but again it seems that the dance floor in the Doubletree will never be suitable for Scottish country dancing. Nevertheless we who attended had a very enjoyable night (I think!!) and again Mike Martin as MC did a superb job - thank you Mike.

I hope a change in venue for next year and some changes to the format will attract more people.

The Ceilidh

As last year we had a very entertaining evening at the Race Course and, as usual we had a delightful meal and got excellent attention from staff throughout the evening.

The entertainment at the Ceilidhs seems to get better year after year and I was impressed with our own talent that we must be the envy of other associations. Everyone who took part was exceptional in whatever role they played and a special thank you to Harry, our VP for producing great entertainment. Attendance 47.

Last, but by no means least it was a pleasure to work with such a great and enthusiastic President in David Murdoch.

Angus MacSween, Events Secretary.

Membership/ Mailing

We currently have 129 members- eight new members have joined in the current year, or are in the process of joining.

Three members have resigned as a result of moving from the area.

Importantly, we now have 97 members on the email distribution list; all new members are expected to have email. Some (31) still receive material by post. One member (former President) retains membership but doesn't wish mail at request of his family.

Importance of email:

I would like to reiterate the importance of the move to email for membership correspondence instigated by Scott. It has several benefits:

1. Ease of sending out details of events - it is effectively a single job.
2. Can access members with items of interest quickly, most important if we hold ad hoc or special events (eg. Proposed talks/debates evenings).
3. The savings are considerable (a table illustrating the savings made was distributed on the night)

The downside is some members change email addresses and don't inform us. This can be a pain but I can usually pick them up as failures are bounced back to me.

Rob Marrs, Membership Secretary

Burns Night Dinner

The Burns Night Dinner held on 31st January 2015 was once again a resounding success with 212 members and guests in attendance at the Pavilion Suite, Chester Racecourse. We were treated to an excellent Immortal Memory by Mr Robert Lovie and musical entertainment of the highest standard. Paul Anderson gave us his customary superb fiddle renditions of a quality and expression which cannot be surpassed anywhere in Scotland. Paul is now an honorary member of the Association and sees our dinner as one of the highlights of his social year. This year for the first time we heard songs from Richard Morrison who continues with the high standards set by his father Peter Morrison on radio and TV in the 1970s. Richard has taken the family name to new heights and is a highly acclaimed international opera singer, having performed with many of the World's major opera companies and orchestras. His rich baritone voice was ideally suited to the songs of Robert Burns, very ably accompanied by Ian Hastie on piano. He has accepted our invitation to sing again for us next year. Dugie Gemmill gave a fine rendition of that challenging poem, and hence not often heard, 'Death and Doctor Hornbook'. The standard of toasts and replies was excellent and thanks are due to all speakers with particular praises to Iain Macaulay for 'The Land We Live In' and 'The Visitors', and to His Honour Judge Roger Dutton for 'The Land O' Cakes' and 'The Association'. Councillor Herbert Manley, Sheriff of Chester, delivered a carefully worded reply for the Visitors.

A particular highlight was Ian Gill's magnificent address to the Haggis following piping in with the excellent playing of Fraser Fowlie. It was

especially fitting that Ian should address the haggis in this his first year as Honorary Life President and it was much appreciated by all.

The catering and organisation from the racecourse staff was highly commendable and they were thanked by letter for the excellent quality of the meal - the 8 hour slow cooked Welsh Beef was exquisite - and for their efficient and considerate service and general organisation.

No Burns Night could be successful without a good Toastmaster and Sandy McLennan carried out that duty with his characteristic humorous eloquence combined with superb time control to steer a very full programme to a smooth finish 7 minutes before the target end time of 11.45pm.

I would like to thank everyone who assisted me with the organisation of the event, particularly Jim Lester who mastered the idiosyncrasies of a newly acquired seating plan computer programme, and to President David Murdoch for production of the flyer giving background to Dugie's recitation, words and instructions for 'Scotland Yet' and the successful sales plug for new member applications. Thanks also to those who came to help with setting up the room for the event, to Frank and Pat Wood for providing Richard Morrison with overnight accommodation, Ian and Sheila Gill for accommodating Paul Anderson and Robert Lovie, and to both Frank and Ian for providing transport from airport and station, to rehearsals and to the dinner itself for our 3 distinguished guests.

Scott Lindsay, Hon Burns Night Secretary

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for Financial Year ending 30th April 2015

For accounts see appendix 1

I am pleased to report another successful financial year for the Association, where three of the four events recorded good profits, and this, along with the funds from the Annual Raffle, allows the Association's Committee to again make a recommendation to make significant donations to both local and Scottish charities.

Despite slightly reduced numbers in attendance, the Men's Supper created a profit of £204.00, and our thanks go to the Begbies at Willington Hall for their continued favourable terms afforded to the Association. The St Andrews' Ball unfortunately continued the recent trend of falling numbers, which is a great shame given the significant effort of the committee in hosting such a prestigious and hugely enjoyable event. Including the proceeds from the raffle, the Ball made an overall loss of £103.50. The Burns' Night continues to be the best attended, and biggest income generator of the events, with a surplus of £1,488.53 recorded this year.

The Ceilidh, again showed off the best that the Association has to offer, and contributed a surplus of £242.50.

Further explanation is required for the Charitable Donation figure in the accounts. There was a payment made in the year 2012/13 to The National Burns Memorial Homes for £250, however, the cheque was never cashed. Despite repeated attempts to contact the charity there was no reply, so the payment allotted to them for 2013/14 at last year's AGM was withheld, and the £250 from the previous year written back into the accounts as an exceptional gain. After the charitable donations a small overall loss of £153.04 was recorded in the year.

It is with some sadness that I am standing down from my position as Treasurer due to work and family commitments, however, I leave the purse strings of the Association in safe hands, and I want to thank all members of the committee who I have had the pleasure of working with for their hard work and efforts on behalf of the Association, as well as their friendship over the last five years.

Paul Gordon, Honorary Treasurer

6. President's Address

I have to start this report 2014 to 2015 with a thank you to Dr Ian Gill for his outstanding contribution to Chester Caledonian. Those of you who attended the Men's Supper in October will be aware that the Association recognized this with a presentation of a painting and bottle of something special. I take great pleasure in personally confirming that the whisky was indeed special, a really fine malt. It was only when I started trying to sort out the secretarial duties that I realised the monumental amount of work that Ian put in.

So the problem was - how do you replace the irreplaceable? As a testimony to that, the post of "Secretary" has been divided into four. This has worked well and, as we have already heard tonight, we have Jim Lester as the General Secretary, Rob Mars as the membership secretary, Scott Lindsay in charge of the Burns night and Angus McSween looking after the other events. I would like to thank all four secretaries for their support and hard work that is reflected in the success of this year's functions.

Talking of the Men's supper, Willington Hall did us proud yet again. Simon Begbie and his team provided an excellent meal in a superb ambience with Mike Martin sorting out the post-referendum debate. Let's not forget about Ian's amusing address regarding his thoughts on Chester Caledonian.

I'm afraid the attendance at the St Andrews Ball reflected the declining popularity of this event. This is a pity because the Nicol McLaren band is quite outstanding. The committee has been looking into possible solutions to make the event more attractive starting with a change of venue. This November, the ball will be at Chester Town Hall.

There were no such problems with the Burns night, an event that remains the most popular in Association Calendar. I thought this year's was outstanding with the music of Paul Anderson and Richard Morrison and an excellent Immortal Memory from Robert Lovie. The Pavillion Suite at the Racecourse was once again an outstanding venue.

And there was the Ceilidh at the Racecourse Leverhulme Suite. Our incoming President did a fine job on that event and I would venture to suggest that this years was one of the most eclectic ever with an amazing variety of material. How many of you have heard a poem about a farmer's aphrodisiac toenails? - I kid you not. Please apply to Sheila Gill for further details.

One of the highlights of the President's year is to represent the Association at the Chester City club's annual dinner. Well, I say highlight but in fact the event is a bit of a strain. It is not easy for the Associations representative to remain in a vertical position when faced with veritable tsunami of fine wine and whisky - but I succeeded and even managed to find my taxi.

My thanks go out to all members of the committee who have worked hard over the year. None more so than Ian McCauley who, despite a recent life-threatening illness, contributed massively to the meetings. I would like to thank our outgoing treasurer, Paul Gordon for many years of sterling service and Barrie Lawson who is retiring as web site organiser. Special thanks also to Angus for hosting the meetings. Apart from the appointed committee, I would like to thank all members of the Association whose contributions have been instrumental to the success of the year.

And what of the future? I would like to offer my best wishes to Harry for a successful year.

The St Andrews Ball this year will be in Chester Town Hall and that should be interesting. The Lord Lyon of Scotland is the principal speaker at the Burns Night. We have several new functions in the pipe-line to include families e.g. a river cruise a day at the races and regular talks in Chester venues.

I have tried to update the history of the association and would be grateful if anyone could send me any relevant material be it factual or anecdotal.

Gentlemen, I consider it a privilege to have been President of Chester Caledonian Association.

Thank you all.

David Murdoch

7. Election of Office Bearers and Committee

Mr Harry Crook was unanimously elected as President. Proposed by Rob Marris and seconded by Sandy McLennan.

Mr Crook paid tribute to the work done by the outgoing President, David Murdoch and hoped to continue the work of promoting and developing the Association.

The following office bearers and committee members were confirmed

Vice President - Murray Brown

Proposed by Ian Gill and seconded by Rob Marris

Treasurer - John Graham

Proposed by David Murdoch and seconded by Paul Gordon

General Secretary - Jim Lester

Events - Angus MacSween

Burns Night - Scott Lindsay

Communications - Rob Marris

All above proposed by Frank Wood and seconded by Miles Tutton

Web Site - Rob Marris Jnr/David Murdoch

Past President - David Murdoch

Bob Ferguson - retires 2018

Ed Inglis - retires 2018

Mike Martin - retires 2018

Ian McAulay - retires 2018

Robin Dunbar - retires 2017

Sandy McLennan - retires 2017

8. Charitable Donations

The following were agreed as the charitable donations for 2014/15;

Tall Ship's Youth Trust (President's choice)	600
Scottish War Blinded	300
Erskine	300
St Andrew's Church	300
Hope House Children's Hospice	300
Claire House Children's Hospice	300
North West Cancer Research	300
Neuro Therapy Centre	300
Total	2700

9. Programme for 2015/16

The following dates have been agreed for the events for 2015/16

Men's Supper at Willington Hall 16th October 2015

St Andrew's Dinner and Ball at Chester Town Hall 28th November 2015

**St Andrew's Church service at St Andrew's United Reformed Church,
Handbridge 29th November 2015**

Burns Dinner at Chester Racecourse 30th January 2016

Ceilidh at Chester Racecourse Friday 4th March 2016

The President gave a brief outline of a joint event with Chester City Club which he was organising. It is a race day at Chester Racecourse on Saturday 2nd August and will be open to all members, their families and guests. Further details will be circulated as soon as possible.

David Murdoch said that he was organising a series of evening pub talks in Chester for members and their guests. Again, further details to follow.

The possibility of a River Cruise on the Dee was discussed but it was felt that there was insufficient time to organise the event and it should be considered for next year.

Dr Ian Gill welcomed these additional initiatives and he hoped they would be supported by the members.

10. AOCB

The following nominations for new members were agreed

David Kennedy - Proposed by Rob Marrs and seconded by Angus McSween

Damian Murphy - Proposed by Harry Crook and seconded by Miles Tutton

Anthony Nelson - Proposed by Harry Crook and seconded by Paul Gordon

Appendix 1 Accounts

CHESTER CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION				
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH APRIL 2014				
			2012/13	2013/14
Opening Bank Balance			£5,342.68	£5,991.17
INCOME				
St. Andrew's Ball & Raffle (Note 1)			£488.65	£384.45
Burns' Dinner (Note 2)			£1,659.84	£1,637.06
Men's Supper (Note 3)			£418.00	£253.00
Ceilidh (Note 4)			£95.50	£229.44
Annual Sub, Joining Fees and Tie Sales			£1,182.50	£1,077.50
Interest & Miscellaneous Income			£78.00	£15.50
Total Income			£3,922.49	£3,596.95
EXPENDITURE				
Charitable Donations			£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Postage & Miscellaneous Costs			£274.00	£215.20
Total Expenditure			£3,274.00	£3,215.20
Surplus/Deficit for the Year			£648.49	£381.75
Closing Bank Balance			£5,991.17	£6372.92

CHESTER CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH APRIL 2015

	2013/14	2014/15
Opening Bank Balance	£5,991.17	£6,372.92
INCOME		
St. Andrew's Ball & Raffle (Note 1)	£384.45	-£103.50
Burns' Dinner (Note 2)	£1,637.06	£1,448.53
Men's Supper (Note 3)	£253.00	£204.00
Ceilidh (Note 4)	£229.44	£242.50
Annual Sub, Joining Fees and Tie Sales	£1,077.50	£1,107.50
Interest & Miscellaneous Income	£15.50	£92.00
Total Income	£3,596.95	£2,991.03
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable Donations	£3,000.00	£2,450.00 *
Postage & Miscellaneous Costs	£215.20	£694.07
Total Expenditure	£3,215.20	£3,144.07
Surplus/Deficit for the Year	£381.75	-£153.04

Closing Bank Balance

£6372.92

£6219.88

<u>Note 1</u>									
ST. ANDREW'S BALL							2012/13		2013/14
INCOME									
Sale of Tickets							£4,850.00		£4,700.00
Raffle							£1,177.50		£881.00
Total Income							£6,027.50		£5,581.00
EXPENDITURE									
Venue							£3,917.90		£3,658.80
Haggis							£187.35		£186.45
Band							£808.00		£895.00
Flowers & Decoration							£75.00		£77.00
Printing & Misc							£550.60		£379.30
Total Expenses							£5,538.85		£5,196.55
Profit/Loss							£488.65		£384.45
<u>Note 2</u>									
BURNS' SUPPER							2012/13		2013/14
INCOME									
Sale of Tickets							£9,350.00		£10,300.00
EXPENDITURE									
Venue							£5,730.59		£6,558.10
Haggis							£350.80		£309.85
Mr Davies/Mr Paterson							£500.00		£700.00
Mr Anderson							£500.00		£500.00
Speaker/Artist Expenses							£212.32		£287.41
Printing & Misc							£396.45		£307.58
Total Expenses							£7,690.16		£8,662.94
Profit/Loss							£1,659.84		£1,637.06
<u>Note 3</u>									
MEN'S SUPPER							2012/13		2013/14
INCOME									
Sale of Tickets & Raffle							£1,166.00		£1,428.00
EXPENDITURE									
Venue							£748.00		£1,175.00
Profit/Loss							£418.00		£253.00
<u>Note 4</u>									
CEILIDH							2012/13		2013/14
INCOME									
Sale of Tickets & Raffle							£1,034.00		£1,513.44
EXPENDITURE									
Venue							£838.50		£1,254.00
Performer Expenses							£100.00		£30.00
Total Expenses							£938.50		£1,284.00
Profit/Loss							£95.50		£229.44

