

Selkirk Colonial Society

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 11th April 2019 at 19.30 in the Conservative Club

1. **Welcome and apologies.**

The Chair welcomed 16 members to the meeting and completed the record of attendance with 9 apologies.

2. **Minutes from previous Meeting.**

Members agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7/3/19 were a true and accurate record of the meeting and the minutes were approved on the motion of Sheena Chappell, seconded by Muriel Arres.

3. **Matters Arising.**

A. *Criteria for Membership.*

Changes to the membership criteria were approved. See below/changes highlighted.

1. A Souter who has lived overseas for two years or more and has returned to live in Selkirk or
2. A descendant **or blood relative** of a Souter who meets the conditions in 1 above or
3. A Souter, descendant **or blood relative** of a Souter who has lived away from the town for a minimum of two years or
4. **A person from overseas who has moved to Selkirk and has lived in the town for a minimum of two years or**

B. *Donations to Good Causes.*

A discussion was held regarding the pre-meeting proposals received, and it was decided that further investigations were needed to ascertain the backgrounds of these local organisations/charities. This would be undertaken by the Chairman at the earliest convenience and outcomes would be sent to members for their consideration. *See Annex A for his report.*

C. *Remembrance Parade.*

A letter has been sent to and received by the British Legion Scotland. As yet, no response.

4. **Correspondence.**

There were no letters of correspondence received.

5. **Common Riding 2019.**

All the preparations are well in hand at this time

CSB arrives on the 1st June 2019.

At present, we know of 28 exiles returning.

Community Council Reception. 9th May 2019

Names to attend this function were: Aileen Firth, Jim Bunyan, Muriel Arres and Andy Moyes.

Gala Souters. 17th May 2019

Sandy Monks x2

Crafts Dinner. 7th June 2019

CSB x2, Peter Henderson, Jim Henderson, Jim Bunyan x2, Gerald Beggs and Chairman

6. Trust Report.

With no Trust meeting being held, there was nothing to report

7. Any Other Competent Business.

Scottish Borders Council have released a survey to ascertain peoples' views on; "Drinking in Public Places", with emphasis on particular events and times of the year. Members were invited to participate should they wish. Email : scotborderscitizenspace.com

With thanks to all who attended.

The meeting closed at 20.30.

11. Date of the next meeting AGM.

Thursday 30th May 2019 at 19.30 in the Conservative Club

Annex A - Details of possible "good cause" beneficiaries and recommendation

At the Society meeting on 11 April we debated how we could distribute our surplus funds, and I was tasked with making further enquiries of potential recipients.

Our first decision was to reject the suggestion that we could replace the benches situated either side of the main door to the Victoria Hall. An excellent idea however the cost was considered excessive. In total to purchase two benches which would mirror those obtained by Flodden 500, plus VAT, plus builder work to secure them, would be no less than £2500. Members thought that this was excessive, and even allowing for the possibility of support from Flodden 500, would leave the Society to find £2000. Much more than we had earned from CD and book sales and which would require us to take money from our reserves. When we consider that in 2020, assuming we do locate our regalia in the refurbished Haining House, we will require money for signage, etc, I think that we made the correct decision to "pass" on the benches. Should someone, in the future, take the initiative to replace the benches and seek support from casting associations, etc then we could make an appropriate donation.

Members then considered the various options put forward. These were –

1. Support for the children's CR picnic
2. Charitable donation to cancer research via Skip Houston's fund raiser

3. Support to the Parish Church who provide meals for the elderly as part of their “open door, food and friendship” initiative
4. Support for the Community Shed
5. Support for Stable Life

I was then tasked with making further enquiries as necessary.

Taking them in order –

1. CR Picnic – they require funds only for goody bags, printing programmes and first aid. I have asked if everything is covered or if there is a shortfall. Any money that they are left with after the picnic, goes to the CR Executive. Seems to me therefore, that unless the organisers have a shortfall for the items mentioned above, it would be pointless making a donation because it would just end with the Executive. No reason though why we could not cover any shortfall which is unlikely to be costly.
2. Cancer research – I made no enquiries. The need is self-evident. At the end of the day any money we donate would just end up in the “pot”. Whilst the need is justified, I have a doubt about the Society using funds for this. We are really looking for “community” groups and want to be seen to be thanking the people of Selkirk for their support. A donation to this excellent charity does not fit with “supporting the community”.
3. Parish Church – I met with the Rev Steele and established that they do in fact provide meals for community members, not just Church members, but any (mainly elderly) person who is in need of food and friendship, especially those who live alone. This is something that continues throughout the year. They did receive a grant from Church of Scotland to get things going but that was that, and they need to be self-funding, so any financial support would give the Parish Church a life-line. About 50 persons attend each day that food is offered (3 times a month plus a Christmas event), and the vast majority are not members of the Church. Most definitely a community service in my view and worthy of our support.
4. Community Shed (originally Men’s Shed) – met with one of the organisers and he explained the set-up. They started with a grant from Age Concern but that was a one-off. Now they have to be self-funding and this is done by taking on community projects, like making a bench, and receiving payment for costs plus an agreed donation. They have entered into partnership with the School and more or less taken over the role of teachers of botany, plus other educational subjects, and pupils get the benefit of experience from retired craftsmen, etc. There is even a drop-in area where non-craftsmen can socialise. Another community service which benefits both young and old and worthy of support. I should add that they have not yet been approached re taking over from the Council and planting flower beds, etc. They would be prepared to get involved but could not have the people to maintain, etc flower beds over a whole summer. They understand that 2020 is the year for change but all they hear is “gossip”.

5. Stable Life – I have made some enquiries about this and managed to understand where their funding requirements were, Basically, they do, and have previously, sought grants/funding from various sources, and have been reasonably successful. They are also seeking more grants for facilities to enable work with the horses to take place inside. A major capital investment is required and they are hopeful of again being successful with grant applications to cover much of the cost. There will naturally be a shortfall and fund-raising will be required. In addition, they have to continue with the day to day work. For example, new ponies are frequently required, amongst many other things, and funds are always needed just to keep the organisation turning over. Stable Life supports vulnerable young people, not necessarily from Selkirk, although many will be local, and some funding comes from Children in Need because of the work they do. The benefits to young people are extensive and again, in my mind, definitely something which fits with our support for community groups. The fact that Stable Life have managed to secure grants, etc, is really a red herring. They will continue to need funds just for day to day costs. One final thought, a pony could be obtained for just a few hundred pounds. They don't need fancy/shiny new ponies, they need solid, dependable, used ponies which can be used by children with needs. We could basically donate a pony!

My recommendation is therefore to support three of the causes listed above, namely –

1. Parish Church
2. Community Shed
3. Stable Life

I would suggest £333 each because all are deserving community groups which provide opportunities and support to the young and/or the elderly.

I would also suggest that we be prepared to offer the CR Picnic some money if there is a shortfall in their fundraising for programme printing, first aid and goody bags – highly unlikely because the Fleece is covering the goody bags. Bearing in mind that our agreed donation towards flowers, etc will not be required until 2020, we can make this offer to the CR Picnic at no extra cost to the Society.

Finally, I would propose no donation to the Cancer Research area.

Can you please advise by return your thoughts on my recommendation.

Ian