

CRAIL FESTIVAL SOCIETY

Minutes of Annual Meeting held on Monday 9 November 2015 at 8.00pm in the British Legion Hall

PRESENT

Committee Members: Geoff Robinson (Chairman), Ian Mooney (Deputy Chairman), Susan Aird (Secretary), Ian Robertson (Treasurer), Helen Byres

Trustees: Ron Emslie

Art Exhibition: Arthur Nuttall

Others: Pat Barker, Diana Brown, Ian Brown, David Fraser, Iain Inglis, Jack Jarvis, Evelyn Michie, Margaret Mooney, Margaret Robinson, Catriona Shepherd, Valencia Sowry, Andrea Tilney, Derek Walker and Auriol Wood

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jenny Gowans, Graham Guthrie, John Hurst, David Jerdan, Tony Kingsbury and Ronald Sandford

2. Chairman's Report

Geoff Robinson reported:

Festival highlights included Illyria's amazing five-cast performance of "Taming of the Shrew" in the grounds of Crail House – they milked every ounce of humour from Shakespeare's script and no-one in the audience will ever hear reference to Pisa again without a laugh; it was a cool evening and the Jazz Picnic took place in the same venue, when it was positively cold - I don't know how Grace Black, in her flimsy summer attire, managed to sing so warmly, but the colourful array of gazebos for both *al fresco* events was a delight to behold and provided a measure of shelter.

Charlotte Rowan, the gifted young violinist who impressed us all in 2014, returned to give another wonderful recital – a year more experienced and self-assured but retaining her youthful freshness in truly virtuoso performances: she deserves to go far in the difficult profession she has entered. Another young Scottish musician to appear, with her trio, was Robyn Stapleton, BBC Scotland's Young Traditional Musician of 2014, who, like Charlotte, filled Most Holy Trinity Church with wonderful music, rapturously received by a full house.

The variety of other musical events included concerts by Christine Bovill, who will be returning with a different programme in 2016; An Evening with Fife Opera, featured some stunning soloists; the one-man blues band, Mike Whellans, echoed a previous successful appearance at Crail Folk Club; a return visit by the popular ABBA tribute group Swede Dreamz had everyone dancing and "thanking them for their music" in the Community Hall;

the Family Ceilidh was an equally successful dancing event; in association with St Andrews University, as part of their Organ Week, Henry Fairs gave an inspired and inspiring organ recital in Crail Parish Church, featuring works chosen to bring out the strengths and beauty of that particular organ – Henry was to give recitals in Tokyo and Berlin, two other places on the international circuit, during the following week; and Barbara Dickson with Nick Holland rounded off the Festival with a truly wonderful evening of songs from her repertoire. That was a sell-out event along with so many others that we had to close the Box Office well before the end of the Festival because there were no more tickets to sell.

In addition to the annual Craft Fair, other events for grownups included a comedy evening with Vladimir McTavish (Paul Sneddon) prior to his various acts at the Edinburgh Fringe; a Literary Lunchtime Discussion with two authors who write about crime in St Andrews, Shirley McKay and T.F. (Frank) Muir – watch out for an appearance by Val McDermid at the 2016 Festival; a ceramic workshop; and a Quiz Night, back by popular demand.

Crail Festival continues to be noted for its wide range of events for children: “Singalong-a-Frozen” was a packed afternoon at the movies; Fairytales and Fables at the Library – will this be a casualty of Council cuts? – and Fancy Dress Fun with Funbox were enjoyed by the very young; workshops on art, dance, and ceramics were as popular as always; as were the hardy annual fossil hunt, rockpool guddle and sandcastle, crabbing and putting competitions. The winner of that last event was awarded a trophy in memory of Sheriff Graham Cox, who was a great supporter of the Festival. There was also, of course, a competition for adults but the competitions are only a small part of what has become a most successful venture transforming the Crail Putting Green to even more than its former glory. With the help of Crail Golfing Society, and especially from Colin McKay, we are able to carry out routine maintenance throughout the year. This enabled us to open the Putting Green for the whole of the school summer holidays, during which an amazing 4,200 rounds were played. A vast army of volunteers ensured this could happen and we were all delighted that the venture was recognised in the Beautiful Fife Awards as an impressive example of a community project. We have again received grant aid from the Helen Main Trust that will enable us to continue the winter treatments. The project has been, of course, masterminded (*is that correctly gender specific?*) by Jenny Gowans, who continues to help the Festival in so many ways, even after retiring from the Committee and vacating the Chair last year.

The Art Exhibition, the Festival’s original *raison d’être*, again featured a high standard of works, of both art and craft. The way they were hung or otherwise displayed was attractive, and again Waid Academy’s senior pupils took the opportunity to exhibit their impressive portfolios. New this year was Crail Primary School’s display of art works on the walls leading into the exhibition.

The Festival Society’s principal remit is “to encourage the study, practice and knowledge of the performing and community arts.” We believe that the 2015 Festival ran true to that remit and it was good to observe that although there was one fewer event than in 2014, total attendance was slightly increased. As a non-profit making organisation we were true to that too, although the events almost covered themselves by ticket sales. Additional revenue from sponsorship and donations allowed us to purchase additional portable sound equipment, more gazebos and especially panels, mirrors and lights that have greatly improved our dressing-room facilities in the Community Hall. Ian Robertson will report more fully on the Society’s finances.

I would like to give special mention to the following:

- The Trustees for their continuing support.
- Ian Mooney (Deputy Chairman), Susan Aird (Secretary), and all other members of the Committee for their total commitment to ensuring the Festival's success.
- Graham Guthrie, in his first year as a Committee member, for raising an amazing £3,700 from Sponsors in what remains a depressed economic climate.
- The Friends of the Festival and all the Sponsors, who provide the additional income that allows us to keep the Festival afloat.
- Tony Kingsbury, now a Trustee, continues to make a major contribution in using his extensive contacts to book many of the artistes for our events.
- The Festival Tech Team who rise to every new challenge. This year David Fraser was the main man, supported by Dennis Gowans and Tom Hall. (Given David's commitment to the Crail Rowing Club's participation in the World Championships, to be held in Ireland during the 2016 Festival, we are delighted that Tom will play a bigger role in the Tech Team next year.)
- Arthur Nuttall and Kay Thomson who led the team that organised the Art Exhibition.
- The Crail community and volunteers for their invaluable support – not just during the events themselves but also in the preparations and clearing up afterwards – I'm referring particularly here to the erecting and taking down of our growing stock of gazebos.
- Pat Barker, for organising the volunteers and acting as the ever-present "Bag Lady", ensuring that the artistes receive adequate refreshment and nourishment. She will be away for the whole of the 2016 Festival so we'll be looking for someone new to take on that role.

A number of other changes will be taking place. Moira Kay is retiring from the Committee after her three years membership, especially looking after our social media presence and organising and running our extensive programme of children's events – this is particularly onerous during the Festival itself, when there can be as many as three back-to-back events in one day. Gordon Green has resigned from the Committee – unfortunately he was unable to play as full a part in the Festival as intended, having been involved in what I can only describe as a Rory McIlroy type of incident; not his golf, but playing football! Helen Byres will continue to organise the Street Market but from the side-lines, as it were. Finally, but by no means least, Ian Robertson wishes to be relieved of his accountancy duties. We still seek a replacement but it is timely to record our great appreciation of his diligent bookkeeping and fastidious preparation and presentation of the accounts. To all those leaving the Committee go our warm thanks for what you have achieved and the hope that you will continue to be involved, as so many of your predecessors still are.

While working with a very small Committee we have been fortunate in being able to call on the willing assistance of former members. I've already referred to the indefatigable Jenny Gowans. Iain Inglis has continued to manage the website, which has included the process of creating and selling tickets for the events. Circumstances now necessitate him giving up that role. We are therefore entering into an agreement with the Byre theatre to take over our ticketing and Box Office arrangements – don't worry, there'll still be a Box Office in the Town Hall during the Festival, with a requirement for volunteer helpers. And our continuing need to maintain the website and a social media presence has led us to organise a series of workshops, led by Susan McNaughton, for Committee members and others to become

more familiar with what contributing to these internet activities involves. (There is now a Wi-Fi hub in the Town Hall that we have provided.)

I am delighted to be able to welcome new Committee members Evelyn Michie and Valencia Sowrey and look forward to their contributions to our deliberations.

Finally, just to say that the programme for 2016 is all but complete and we can promise Craill another rich Festival with a mix of familiar and new events for young and old. We are changing the format of the final night from a concert performance to a dancing event – Buddy Holly and the Cricketers will be the entertainers. (A separate handout of copy going into the Byre’s brochure will give you an indication of the scope of the 2016 programme.)

Thank you.

3. Art Exhibition Report

The 2015 Art Exhibition Team were delighted once again to be able to feature the works of many local artists, in a wide variety of media, from oils to acrylics, watercolours and collages – the works were very well received by locals and visitors alike at the exhibition and many were sold.

It was a pleasure to exhibit the craft works, from Irene Marshall’s jewellery to the glass art of Keny Drew, Leslie Riley’s felt craft, Kay Thomson’s pottery and Mary Webster’s textile art. The presentation of the works was superb.

ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS, PAYMENTS AND SALES			
	2013 £	2014 £	2015 £
Hanging Fees	107.00	206.00	180.00
Paintings	2157.00	2367.00	2532.00
Cards	175.50	362.00	205.00
Craft	910.00	1886.50	970.00
Donations	256.85	279.38	260.00
Receipts Total:	3606.35	5100.88	4147.00
Payments to Artists	2756.14	3923.18	3780.00
Framed Sold	14	20	17
Unframed Sold	28	16	35
Card Sales	112	207	118

The partnership with Waid Academy has been hugely successful and it was wonderful to exhibit the inspiring work of some of their young and very talented art students. Another very welcome addition to the 2015 Art Festival was the involvement of Crail Primary School who provided artwork which was exhibited on the walls in the hallway and stairs leading up to the exhibition.

Our sincere thanks go to all the artists and crafters and to Waid Academy Art Department and Crail Primary School for helping make the 2015 Art Exhibition such a success. We have thoroughly enjoyed participating in Crail Festival this year and working with the Crail Festival Committee. We look forward to the 2016 Festival and Art Exhibition.

Thank you all!

The Art Exhibition Team

4. Treasurer's Report (Year Ended 30 September 2015)

The Treasurer's Report and Adoption of accounts for year ended 30 September 2015 was presented by ***Ian Robertson***:

At the year-end 30th September 2015, the funds of the Society stood at £24,968.32 compared to last year's £23,797.93, after adjusting for the £10,000 exceptional receipt received from *The Helen Main Trust*, the capital expenditure for which the funds were granted now having been spent. This balance is considered comfortably adequate to ensure sustainability of the Festival.

The financial outcome of the individual events is given in the analyses but, to summarise, events generated income of £24,083 (2014 - £23,037) and direct costs totalled £24,309 (2014 - £24,856), giving a small shortfall from events of £226; this compares favourably to last year's shortfall of £1,819.

Attendance at priced events this year, not including the Putting Green, of 1,660 was up on the previous year's 1,515. There was one fewer event this year. In addition, the Putting Green saw an amazing increase of 1,497 rounds, a total of 4,216 compared to last year's 2,719, and all the maintenance costs were covered by the ticket revenue with a small surplus.

Gross income from the Art Exhibition was a bit down on last year at £4,010 (2014 - £4,615) generating £3,363 for the contributing artists (2014 - £3,923).

Once again we were well supported by Friends of the Festival who donated £725 and income from sponsors was a very healthy and creditable £3,750.

Capital Expenditure included £6,000 for the ride-on mower for the putting green, £1,076 for partitions and a full length mirror for the performers' changing area in the Community Hall, £755 for a 12-channel mixer and parts for the PA system and £255 for three gazebos.

There were no questions and the Accounts were adopted.

5. **2016 Committee**

- a) **Chairman:** Geoff Robinson, assisted by Ian Mooney as Deputy Chairman
- b) **Secretary:** Susan Aird
- c) **Treasurer:** Tbc
- d) **Continuing Members:** Graham Guthrie and Ronald Sandford
- e) **Retiring Members:** Helen Byres, Gordon Green and Moira Kay
- f) **New Members:** Evelyn Michie and Valencia Sowry

6. **A.O.C.B.**

Auriol Wood advised that the Art Group now have a good stock of materials and equipment should this be required for any events.

Ron Emslie (Trustee) congratulated and thanked the Committee for another excellent Festival.

Ian Mooney expressed on behalf of everyone his thanks to Geoff on leading the Committee with such youthful enthusiasm.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

***Susan Aird
Secretary***