

# THE NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM CALEDONIAN SOCIETY



**The 98<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at Britannia Airport Hotel Newcastle on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 2:00pm**

**Nominations for the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and eight other Committee Members should reach the Secretary – Mrs Julie Crystal, 8 Fairville Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7UA – not later than 2:00pm Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April. Nomination forms are provided and must be signed by a proposer and seconder and the nominee, all of whom must be paid up members of the Society.**

## **AGENDA**

- 1 President's welcome**
- 2 Apologies for absence**
- 3 To approve AGM meeting Minutes held Friday 21 April 2023**
- 4 Matters arising**
- 5 To approve Secretary's Report for the year 2023**
- 6 To approve Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts for the year 2023**
- 7 Subscriptions**
- 8 Election of Officers and General Committee**  
**Appointment of Trustees**  
**Appointment of Auditor (Independent Examiner of Accounts)**
- 9 Appeals and Donations**
- 10 Any other business**

**Secretary: Mrs Julie Crystal, 8 Fairville Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7UA  
Tel: 0191 2663117 or 07759 679670**

## **Northumberland and Durham Caledonian Society**

### **97<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023 at 2.08 pm**

#### **1. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME**

**The President, David Stones welcomed everyone. There were 13 people present.**

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

**Apologies were received from 16 people.**

**A minutes silence was held for members we have lost this last year :- Charlie Diamond, James Dowson, Keith Stewart & Malcolm Thomson.**

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON Friday 29<sup>TH</sup> April 2022**

**Minutes of the previous AGM, having been displayed on the website and posted to members. The minutes were taken as read, approved, and signed by the President.**

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

**There were no Matters Arising.**

#### **5. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**Starting with the Spring Ball at Britannia Hotel, with dancing to Matthew MacLellan. It was held in May on this occasion as all events were delayed in getting started due to the ongoing pandemic where we needed to move the Burns Night to 26 February 2022, but with a good attendance and the next day event too as many members stayed overnight after the Ball. Ewan Galloway gave us great music for dancing.**

**John Caskie MBE entertained us for the Saturday afternoon event, with lovely singing, which followed our lunch of stovies.**

**In June we had a mid-week break to the Stair Arms Hotel in Pathhead, just outside Edinburgh. We had a three-course meal each evening followed by dancing to CDs.**

**A free day on the Tuesday with everyone off doing their own thing, made for an interesting dinner gathering with everyone wanting to know what we had all been doing.**

**On the Wednesday we had a free morning before returning for lunch at noon ready for music and dancing by Ewan Galloway. We also had many visitors joining us, so that helped to keep the price down and also added to a lovely atmosphere.**

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**September saw us back for our new season. Commencing with our President's tea dance at the Britannia Hotel, our regular events venue now. A lovely afternoon with everyone happy to see each other after the Summer recess. With a welcoming glass of bubbles on arrival we got the afternoon off with a sparkle. Our dance classes commenced too. We were once again using the British Legion Club in West Jesmond. Although this venue has now closed, I can assure you I am in the process of arranging the venue for our next season, so keep a lookout for your email advising of this information.**

**Our informal October dance again at Britannia, commenced with lunch followed by dancing to CDs. It was again an afternoon event which is felt appeals to a lot of people, although we appreciate we can't please all the people all of the time, but we do try!**

**November arrived and we had our St. Andrews Ball, Britannia as always was our venue. After a**

**welcome drink reception and 3-course meal our dancing was to Ewan Galloway. In December, we again had a mid-week dancing break at the Stair Arms, as everyone had enjoyed themselves at the last one, I was asked if we were having another one and so we did!. Three nights this time, again with Ewan Galloway playing for the Wednesday afternoon event, with other visitors joining us again. A great time was enjoyed by all! A wonderful start for the festive season.**

**In January, we had our Burns Night, we had all the traditions, the piper, address to the haggis, the speeches and even some songs by John Caskie MBE, who also gave the Immortal memory. Our music man on this occasion was William McRobert, who really did good research on our dance programme playing all the traditional tunes for all but 2 dances.**

**February came along and our next informal dance, we had a light lunch followed by tea and cake and dancing to cds. When it came to dancing, Kathleen Gordon was our leading lady, but so she too could enjoy her afternoon, I asked for volunteers to recap some dances, this worked well so if you would like to do a couple of recaps just let me know.**

**And so, here we are with the final dance of the season, the Spring Ball, with a 3-course meal followed by dancing to Matthew MacLellan a good evening to round off the season.**

**Acceptance of the Secretaries Report was proposed by Maureen Sheehan, seconded by Margaret Quick, and agreed.**

**Maureen Sheehan thanked the secretary for the introduction of separate vegetable tureens at functions.**

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT – see separate financial reports**

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**This year has been a steep learning curve for me starting with the 3-events-in-one Burns weekend. However, I have muddled through with the patient help of Ted Jay who has explained (and often “re-explained”) the finer points. His help has been invaluable.**

**Social Activities: All our activities have made small profits, with the exception of the Spring Ball which made a loss of £2.85.**

**Although the Pathead holidays show a loss of £25.00, this was for two events for lunches for the accordionist, and £19.00 was raised at the second event which was paid in too late to show in this year’s accounts.**

**Dance classes: Expenses for the class were less than in previous years using the smaller room at the West Jesmond Legion Club and a further reduction of £10 was made later by the new owner after a few weeks. Also, because this was in an upper room, it became too difficult to carry Gillian Stewart’s keyboard upstairs. This meant that we did not pay out Gillian’s usual expenses in the latter session.**

**Auditor: Sadly, Keith Stewart took ill soon after auditing our books and Gillian very generously would not accept his auditing fee.**

**Charitable Donations: We made donations to charities in memory of members who had contributed much to the Society. These included Keith Stewart, Charlie Diamond, Malcolm Thomson, and James Dowson. Unfortunately, it was quite a convoluted process in transferring my name to the TSB bank account and for some months, I had to ask Ted to do bank transfers. I confess that I completely forgot that we had agreed to donate £50 to CHAS (Children’s Hospices Across Scotland) and £50 to the Meningitis Research Foundation (our President’s charity of choice) and will need your approval to rectify this.**

**Although we did not charge annual subscriptions in 2022, some members who paid by Direct Debit, agreed to make this a donation to our charities.**

**The Shredder was bought for Ted to replace his which gave up when he was shredding an accumulation of old accounts etc. as I did not have space for them!**

**Committee: It was agreed at the last AGM to hold fewer Committee meetings (3 compared to 7) – again reducing costs – and recent ones have been held at the Britannia Hotel.**

**Investments: We received £89.50 from investments with J P Morgan. Unbelievably, they are still sending letters to Ted despite forms being completed months ago, and telephone calls confirming that they had notice of a change-of-**

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**address. Each month they have also sent forms for the Trustees to do with money-laundering, taxes and these are duplicated two weeks later. The total value of our shares is about £2,000 and I would like to simplify things by closing these down and transferring everything to one bank.**

**We also have shares in Santander which are held in Ted Jay's name, which are valued at about £190. I do not wish to transfer these into my name and would also like your permission to pay these into the TSB.**

**Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Jean Rudden, seconded by Pam Holton, and agreed.**

**Kath Gordon thanked Treasurer Pauline for her accurate and clear accounts.**

**Maurice Hallam questioned the timing for selling the JP Morgan fund. David pointed out that we will try our best to maximise the returns. The funds could be used to finance the centenary celebrations.**

**David asked members to vote on the proposal to sell both the shares and the JP Morgan fund**

**Proposer Margaret Quick                      Seconder Pam Holton**

**The majority of attendees agreed to sell.**

**David asked if the members would agree to pay double to both charities to redress the shortfall. After a show of hands the vote was an unanimous agreement.**

## **7. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

**David suggested that the Annual Subscription should continue to be set at £10 but, another year free for the following year. This was agreed unanimously**

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND GENERAL COMMITTEE**

**Vice President Jocelyn Stones addressed the attendees.**

**As you know I am due to be the next President.**

**I would like to say it has been great honour to have been Vice President twice, or as they say these days two times, and your President once for two and a half years.**

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**I was very fortunate to be able to take us through another important date in our history which was the 95<sup>th</sup> celebrations.**

**I therefore would like to forgo my Presidency to allow David to take the Society through probably the most important year of its history.**

**We are lucky that we have someone who is willing to be the new Vice President.**

**I would like to propose Julie Crystal as VP.**

**David asked for volunteers from the floor for both Vice President and committee members.**

**The following officers and Committee were elected unanimously:-**

	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
<b>President</b>	<b>Mr David Stones</b>	<b>Kath Gordon</b>	<b>Maureen Kennedyt</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Mrs Julie Crystal</b>	<b>Jean Rudden</b>	<b>Margaret Quick</b>
<b>General Secretary</b>	<b>Mrs Julie Crystal</b>	<b>Jean Rudden</b>	<b>Maureen Sheehan</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Mrs Pauline Hawdon</b>	<b>Pam Holton</b>	<b>Maurice Hallam</b>
<b>Past President</b>	<b>Mrs Jocelyn Stones</b>		
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Mr John Crystal</b>	<b>) Maurice Hallam</b>	<b>Pam Holton</b>
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Mrs Jean Rudden</b>	<b>)</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Mrs Jean Thomson</b>	<b>)</b>	

**At the last AGM we voted to trial the Britannia as an event location and trial afternoon events.**

**David outlined there would be no in house catering as there were not enough committee members to do it**

**David proposed that we continue to use the Britannia for our informal and daytime events. This is actually cost effective as we get the room free if we have a “meal” whereas we pay £60 for hall hire.**

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**Afternoon events are not conclusive and would like a vote to continue the trial for the next 12 months.**

**A show of hands voted unanimously to use the Britannia and trial afternoon events.**

**The assistant treasurer post was lapsed as it was no longer needed now the treasured was fully ofay. Ted had asked to be released from his committee responsibilities and had been present with a bottle of gin as an acknowledgement of all his past service to the society.**

**Mr Alistair McWilliam had stood down as auditor leaving a vacancy. The committee had co-opted a new auditor Mrs Kathleen Gordon at the first committee meeting. (May 15<sup>th</sup>)**

**The following were overwhelmingly agreed:-**

		<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Mrs Jocelyn Stones</b>		
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Mr John Crystal</b>	<b>Pam Holton</b>	<b>Maureen Sheehan</b>
<b>Auditor</b>	<b>Mrs Kathleen Gordon</b>		
<b>Dance teacher</b>	<b>Mrs Kathleen Gordon</b>		
<b>Dance teacher</b>	<b>Mrs Sheila Trafford</b>		
<b>Pianist</b>	<b>Mrs Gillian Stewart</b>		

**Mrs Julie Crystal would ring Mr Michael Harper to see if he wished to continue as Piper and contact Gillian Stewart to see if she wished to continue as Honorary Pianist.**

**David had written a Thankyou Letter to Gillian Stewart thanking her for her long membership and dedication to her role as the Honorary which he read aloud to the members. As Gillian wasn't present he would sent the letter and £25 M&S voucher to Gillian by post.**

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## **9) APPEALS AND DONATIONS**

**As explained earlier last year's AGM voted for £50 to be donated to the Children's Hospice Association for Scotland, and £50 to the Meningitis Society.**

**We didn't actually pay-out to the charities.**

**We have rectified that now by donating double this year (£100 each) to redress the mistake.**

## **10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**David ran through the options suggested by him and the committee and then asked the members present to vote for their choices.**

**We need to do something for all our members even the ones that can't or don't attend our events.**

- a) Perhaps we could have a subsidised Afternoon High Tea with Recorded Music & some form of entertainment. Held centrally in Newcastle.**
- b) Inclusive for all attending members we could present every one with a small gift (approx. £10 at the Centenary Spring Ball.**
- c) For our Formal Events we could give a minimum of £5 off ticket price for members OR**
- d) Use the subsidy money to get Better bands for our events**  
**We have provisionally booked Marion Anderson for the 2024 Spring ball which is the actual anniversary event on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

**We could make a start this year with the St Andrews to test the waters.**

**If a success Burns 2024 and St Andrews 2024 would follow.**

**As you know we have planned a Mid-Week break up in Peebles at the Barony Castle.**

**We have also built in a day trip to Mellerstain House and gardens.**

- e) The day trip could be subsidised with a free entry or subsidise the coach price.**  
**Trouble is, not too many can afford the £525 per couple. Low take up will make it a low cost benefit. So if selected we will have to make the decision to run the subsidy nearer the date.**



## **Costs**

**It is difficult to estimate the cost of the subsidies as we are talking about 1 to 1.5 years in the future.**

**I would guess we would be looking at a minimum amount of £1000 for everything.**

## **Charities**

**I have had suggestion that we make an increased donation of £100 each to the charities this year.**

**I have also had a suggestion that we make a donation to the widow of the firemen killed in the Jenner's fire.**

## **Questions**

**Katherine Syron asked if people can still join the society.**

**Yes was the answer we don't turn people away.**

**The question was raised whether new people to the dance class had to be members**

**As the fees are zero David couldn't see they would have any reason not to join.**

**It was also clarified the centenary benefits are only for members who joined before 21 April 2023.**

**Vote on plans.  
right column.**

**Majority vote decisions are reflected in the**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>1 Subsidised Afternoon High Tea</b>                                       | <b>yes</b> |
| <b>2 Present Spring Ball attendees with a small gift up to £10</b>           | <b>yes</b> |
| <b>3 For our Formal Events we could give £5 off min ticket price</b>         | <b>yes</b> |
| <b>4 Use the subsidy to get Better bands for our events</b>                  | <b>no</b>  |
| <b>5 A subsidised day trip with a free entry or subsidise the coach.</b>     | <b>no</b>  |
| <b>6 Increased donation to £50 each for the Scottish charities.</b>          | <b>yes</b> |
| <b>7 A donation to the widow of the firemen killed in the Jenner's fire.</b> | <b>no</b>  |

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## **Questions**

**Members asked for better advertisement to promote centenary event. It was suggested perhaps Facebook be used. Also it was suggested that a wedding type “save this date” be sent out for the centenary ball.**

**Also the Barony Castle trip needs a reminder to be sent in an “all members bulletin”.**

**Pauline was asked to notify the two charities that the large donation this year is an exceptional payment to reflect the current situation.**

**David said he would like to present the fleshed out final options for the events at the next AGM.**

**Finally David thanked the committee for their support, the secretary, the treasurer and the VP.**

**But most of all David thanked all the members for their valuable support.**

**David presented Julie with the VP medal.**

**There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3.20 pm.**