

## MUSSELBURGH CONSERVATION SOCIETY

### MINUTE OF VIRTUAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Collated from e-mails up to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

**1) Zooming practice:** Thanks go to AC who arranged a trial run of the procedure on 21<sup>st</sup> September to familiarise as many as possible with the process, using a short lecture by BT entitled "A Walk Through Inveresk". BT is also thanked for his contribution which proved to be very interesting (the lecture could be used should a speaker fail to attend). The trial proved to be useful in preparing the Committee. However, it did show the need for a proper "dress rehearsal" and this would be arranged between AMA and AC before 8<sup>th</sup> October.

**2) Treasurer's Report:** Ben Wood completed the audit on Friday 11th September and he agreed the figures circulated by AMA to the Committee at the last meeting. The balance on hand at the bank showed £2678.93 and there was a loss recorded for the year of £226.95. This loss can be attributed to the reduction of around 20 members compared to last year and to the gifts and donations given during the year. The Society is still in a sound financial position and is ready to survive the covid-19 problems as they arise. Ben Wood received a gift purchased by AMA.

**3 Planning Report:** AS advised he had submitted an objection to a proposed alteration to a property in Albert Terrace (ref. 20/00816/LBC). The basis of the objection was the proposed design does not preserve or enhance the special architectural character of this listed building or of the Musselburgh Conservation area. The form and proportion of the proposed glass doors are out of keeping with the character of the existing rear elevation and the alteration to the existing window upsets the relationship with the windows above and the balance of the existing elevation. He advised, also, there is an online consultation about the proposed new Wallyford High School but needs more time to study the proposal.

**4) Membership Report:** GMcD advise that, to date (21<sup>st</sup> September), he had received 56 subscriptions and £135 in donations. With some well-known names still to pay, AMA expected the final income to be close to covering our reduced expenditure for 2020-2021.

**5) Information Board at Queen Mary's Mount:** AC reported that Buccleuch Estates have now closed many of the paths used and created by mountain bikers, by half burying substantial sections of large diameter tree trunks at crossing points. This includes all the tracks that encroach on the ancient monument. When they have shown that this is effective (to HES), they will re-open their car park (at the former 'Carberry Candles' site). Then they will discuss the replacement of signage with us. Meanwhile, AC finished and made available two geolocated walks, on the 'Echoes' platform, for Queen Mary's Mount – one for walkers coming down from the top of the hill (access from the Crossgatehall to Elphinstone road), and one for those starting from the lower slopes (Carberry itself, or the 'Carberry Candles' point). These Walks were included in the programme for the on-line ELC Local History Fortnight.

**6) Plaque for Mussel:** AMA and AS met on 10<sup>th</sup> September with Stuart Baxter and Lesley from ELC to discuss the siting of the plaque. This was agreed to be set at an advantageous position which would be seen by all when visiting the Mussel. ELC will arrange a photo-shoot in the near future when the plaque will be presented to the Designer by Finlay Lockie, our Patron. Despite social distancing rules, it is hoped as many of the Committee will attend. It was noted the welds on the Mussel were starting to show rust and ELC would speak with the Designer to, perhaps, have this corrected before the presentation. The plaque would be inset in concrete into the ground and would lie flat with the surface. AMA received an e-mail from the Brunton Marketing Manager requesting information for a press release. Thanks to AS and AC the history of the Society's plaque award and how the winner was selected was outlined. AMA sent both to allow a selection of what was required.

**7) Lord Cameron's Presentation:** The presentation took place at Lord Cameron's home when GK made an apt and amusing speech before presenting the gift to Lord Cameron, who made an appropriate response. Following this, an excellent article regarding Lord Cameron's retiral appeared in the Musselburgh Courier, the content being contributed by Lord Cameron and AS. Avril Campbell of the Courier requested a follow-up to cover the appointment of our new Patron and AMA has contacted him with a request for some remarks plus details of the work done to restore Northfield House.

**8) AGM:** AMA had included in the letter to the members that the AGM would not take place due to the Covid-19 situation. Instead a report by the Chairman and Treasurer along with other necessary business would be sent in a formal report by AMA after the 8<sup>th</sup> October. This report would be circulated to the Committee before being sent out by e-mail by GMcD.

**9) Public Liability Insurance:** AMA had contacted the insurance brokers after the suggestion at the last Committee meeting. The brokers did not recommend that all of the policy should be cancelled but agreed a reduction of some £30+ which has been taken. This will be paid directly into the Society's account. Whether or not this policy is renewed in February 2021 is a matter for discussion and reliant upon government restrictions.

**10) Use of the church hall:** AMA had made contact with the Church re the use of the hall and has been given an assurance that it will continue to be available on the second Thursday of each month from October 2020 until April 2021 and further years. AMA advised Geoff Mason of our offer of £100 to be paid as a good will gesture to the church funds when monies had come in from subscriptions and this was greatly appreciated. AMA suggested this payment be made in the new year.

**11) E-mail from Lord Cameron:** Verbatim. "Dear Alan, May I congratulate you and the Committee on your inspired choice for the new Patron of the Society – I was recently looking at a copy of the East Lothian Courier with a fascinating article about his renovation of Northfield House and his move to Drummole. I look forward to hearing more from him in the coming session. Incidentally the print that you so generously gave me, now hangs proudly above my work space and sets off a drawing that I have of our former home in Ullapool." (GMcD given due credit for recommending FL)

**12) Any Other Business:** None

**13) Date for next Meeting:** TBA by AMA