

Edinburgh Geological Society

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

7pm Wednesday 7th February 2018, Grant Institute

Present

Stuart Monro (Chair) and 33 members as listed in the attached Attendance Sheet

Apologies

Apologies were received from Neil Mackenzie, Anne Burgess and Anastasia Polymeni

Minutes of Previous Meeting 25th January 2017

The Minutes were accepted as a true record by all present

President's Report

Stuart Monro welcomed everyone, and as he handed over the Presidency of the Edinburgh Geological Society to Bob Gatliff he wanted to reflect upon the last two years of the Society. He was reminded of the phrase attributed to Sir Isaac Newton: "... if I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants". This Society was where it was today because of the efforts of many Members over the last 184 years. The contributions of those on Council and others were documented in the Annual Report and Proceedings, but he wished to highlight a few things:

No Society such as ours could afford to stay still, and our strap line "Promoting public interest in geology and in the advancement of geological knowledge" is something Council had taken very seriously during his term and that of his predecessor, Christine Thompson. We have a dynamic document which is a roadmap for delivering our Strategy, and we have been driven along that road with great success by Andrew Rushworth. We also have a "native guide" in the name of Angus Miller who has done a fantastic job as Promotion Secretary in exploring new territory. Angus would be reporting separately, but the President wished to mention two events: firstly, the Earthcache weekend which attracted an international audience and, secondly, the Public Lecture highlighting some of the ground-breaking research on Scotland's palaeontological record, especially the dinosaurs.

This year the Society again recognised the achievement of the student gaining top place in the Higher Environmental Science exam. The successful student this year came from the Community School of Auchterarder, and was presented with her prize by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science in the Parliament in November.

An excellent programme of ten lectures in the 2016-17 session continues during this winter till the end of March. We have all been impressed with how this programme has attracted an excellent

audience. This was due in large part to the work of Graham Leslie who, despite spending a significant amount of time in Singapore, has delivered such an excellent list of lectures.

Fellows' Night took advantage of the hospitality offered by the Lyell Centre, and combined presentations from Fellows with a social occasion. The President was grateful to Chris Lofthouse who put together the presentations and to Barbara Clarke and her team of helpers who organised the food and drink.

The summer excursion programme too was very successful with an extensive range of excursions on a day or evening basis, a long excursion to Skye and Raasay and a long weekend excursion to the Rhinns of Galloway. The President paid tribute to the many individuals involved in organising this programme with its many challenges, and was delighted that Ian Kearsley has agreed to be Excursions Secretary, and with the help of others will move the programme forward.

The Society's publications continue to flow, though some challenges are faced by the editors of the *Scottish Journal of Geology*, caused by the move of authors to more "high impact" journals. Some of our most popular publications are the excursion guides which appeal to a very wide audience. One of the continuing jewels in the EGS crown is *The Edinburgh Geologist* which is admirably edited by Phil Stone. He never fails to produce an edition in which all of us can find articles which are both informative and stimulating. The President was delighted to be able to present Phil with the Society's Clough Medal this year.

The Society continues to support and take an active interest in the work of the Lothian and Borders GeoConservation Group and Mike Browne as Assistant Secretary (GeoConservation) has kept Council updated on the expanding range of leaflets, promoting awareness of our geodiversity within the local communities.

The President reported that one of the biggest challenges facing Council during his term of office was to find office-bearers to take on key positions. He was delighted to report significant success in that Neil Mackenzie has taken over the role of Secretary from Andrew Rushworth who held the post on an interim basis. As he mentioned before, Ian Kearsley has agreed to be Excursions Secretary, a role which was vacant last year and Bruce Mair has agreed to succeed Barbara Clarke as Membership Secretary. The President paid tribute to Barbara for all her hard work in getting the membership records into good order and, indeed, to Bob Gatliff, his successor as President, who has achieved the challenging task of getting our Gift Aid claim into HMRC. The President also thanked ordinary member Gordon Lang for his enormous contribution in modernising and improving the EGS website, and was pleased to give him a gift from the Society of a miniature presentation curling stone of Ailsa Craig granite.

On the finance front we have undertaken an exercise to simplify our accounting system which will hopefully make the role of the Treasurer much easier. Christian Ranken is currently completing her Master's course in Earth Science and through to September 2018 will have a reduced workload, with some tasks being undertaken by Don Cameron and Andrew Rushworth. Don has also taken on the task of preparing the Annual Report and Proceedings.

In terms of Council membership, we say a fond farewell to Richard Smith who has been of immense help, particularly with the excursion programme. We will also be the poorer for not having the wise counsel of Christine Thompson, who has been a driving force in the Society for many years and has served in many roles. To acknowledge her contribution to the Society, the President had great pleasure in proposing her as a "Distinguished Fellow", and all members joined with the President in wishing her well and thanking her for her service to the Society.

In conclusion, the President expressed his gratitude for the support of all the Council members in the past year. All have contributed to the success of the Society and he wished Bob Gatliff as the incoming President and the new Council every success in the coming session. Finally, he acknowledged and thanked the Grant Institute and the Lyell Centre for their support in the past year. Particular thanks were due to the membership who support both the lecture and excursion programmes.

Treasurer's Report

Christian Ranken took members through the Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30th September 2017. She reported that this year Council had changed the accounting basis of the Society's accounts from accruals accounting to receipts and payments. This would simplify the management of the Society's finances and the preparation of its accounts, and still meets the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

One of our most important sources of income continues to be our Subscriptions; this year our membership has increased mainly due to the Promotional activities led by Angus Miller. Publications sales have also been very strong over the past year.

The Society incurred a deficit in 2016-17 of £7,977. Part of this deficit (£4,194) is due to the payments made to the Promotion Secretary, which Council decided could be funded from the Society's Reserves. The other main reason for the deficit is a shortfall of over £2,500 in receipts of Gift Aid tax relief from HMRC; Bob Gatliff has worked hard with HMRC to get this repayment for us in the near future. Other increased costs in the year were due to equipment hire for lectures and transport for excursions, and Council is taking action to address these.

The deficit on receipts and payments was largely offset by gains in the value of the Society's investments over the past year of 7.4%, which is larger than the rise in the FTSE All Share Index of 7.1%. such that total Reserves declined only slightly, from £133,086 to £132,084. The Council's policy is that it should maintain a minimum level of Unrestricted Reserves of £35,000 to guard against financial risks, and the current level comfortably exceeds that at £93,491. Indeed Council has determined that it can readily continue to fund the Promotion Secretary costs from its Reserves for the time being.

Within the total funds of £132,084 are two Restricted Funds, the Clough and Mykura Funds which make up the remaining £38,593 of the Reserves.

A number of Grants were approved during the year, to a total of £3,939. These included funds for the publication of leaflets for Geoheritage Fife, West Lothian Council and the Lothian and Borders Geoconservation Group. Grants were also given to The Friends of Hugh Miller for a Conference on "Updating Hugh Miller's Legacy", the Scottish Geodiversity Forum for a re-launch of the Scottish Geodiversity Charter and to St Andrews University Geobus for a geology field camp for 30 school pupils.

The Treasurer concluded by stating that our closing finances are healthy.

Report on Promotional Activities 2018

Angus Miller described a range of activities that promote the Society and encouraged public interest in geology, and welcomed volunteers to get in touch with him if they wished to get involved, without necessarily having to be a member of any “committee”:

Science Festival: Deep Time Walks 5, 6, 7th April. In association with the Deep Time Walk app six walks are being organised in Holyrood Park. The walk is exactly 4.6 km long, one metre for each million years of Earth history. Two science communicators will guide the group. Accompanying volunteers can promote the Society, distribute leaflets and provide input on local geology.

Earth Day/Fossil Day at Dynamic Earth Sunday 22nd April. Volunteers are needed to run a stall about local fossils and distribute leaflets.

edinburghgeolsoc.org Our new website needs a team of people willing to keep it up-to-date and develop new content, for example about James Hutton. All are welcome at a planning meeting on **Tuesday 6th March, 6.30 pm**, Methodist Church Halls, 25 Nicolson Square EH8 9BX

Lothian and Borders GeoConservation Volunteer Group. This active and informal group meets monthly in winter to plan leaflets and events. We have an opportunity to apply for grant funding for a new booklet and are looking for a new volunteer to help with this administrative task. No geological knowledge is required! Next meetings are **Wednesdays 28th February and 28th March, 10.30 am** at Morningside Library.

Introductory Excursions. As part of this year’s excursion programme (distributed to all members in early March) we are planning two introductory excursions to Holyrood Park and Siccar Point. These half-day excursions will be informal, sociable events that encourage recently joined members to find out more about the Society’s activities. They are also a good opportunity for long-standing members to get involved in supporting the excursions programme.

Longer Term Promotional Activities. The Promotion Group are also starting work on longer term projects to promote public interest in local geology. These include developing posters and supporting educational material for teachers and pupils and working with partners to reinstate geological interpretation boards. East Lothian council have agreed to work with EGS to prepare a new interpretation board at Barns Ness and the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust is keen to use EGS expertise for new interpretation boards at Calton Hill.

Election of Council Members

Nominations to Council had been published on the website. None of the posts had more than one nominee so no vote was required and the list of Council members below was accepted unanimously

President	Robert Gatliff
Vice-President	Tom Challands
Vice-President	Emrys Phillips
Immediate Past President	Stuart Monro
Honorary Secretary	Neil Mackenzie
Assistant Secretary (Annual Report)	Don Cameron
Assistant Secretary (Minutes)	Richard Buxton
Honorary Treasurer	Christian Ranken*
Membership Secretary	Bruce Mair
Lectures Secretary	Graham Leslie
Excursions Secretary	Ian Kearsley
Assistant Secretary (Excursion Bookings)	Alison Tymon
Assistant Secretary (Planning & Finance)	Andrew Rushworth
Assistant Secretary (Geoconservation)	Mike Browne
Assistant Secretary (Clough Awards)	Graham Leslie
Assistant Secretary (Publications)	David Stephenson
Publications Sales Officer	Don Cameron
Archivist	Christine Thompson**
Ordinary Member	Con Gillen
Ordinary Member	Barbara Clarke
Ordinary Member	Chris Lofthouse
Ordinary Member	Anastasia Polymeni
Ordinary Member	<i>Vacant</i>
Ordinary Member	<i>Vacant</i>
Scientific Editor	Maarten Krabbendam
Scientific Editor	Tom Challands
Independent Examiner	J Cordery (Gibson McKerrell Brown)

*Christian Ranken will take a reduced workload through to September 2018, during which Don Cameron and Andrew Rushworth will cover certain aspects of the Treasurer's role.

**Christine Thompson will be stepping down from Council

Any Other Business

There being no further business Stuart Monro handed over the Presidency to Bob Gatliff at 7.30 pm, who then introduced the evening's speaker, Hannah Watkins from Aberdeen University and Clough Award winner, who gave a lecture entitled "**Predicting Strain and Fracture Patterns in a Fold-Thrust Belt in North-West Scotland**".