

**Minutes of the Annual Members Meeting of the
Anstruther Improvements Association on
Thursday 20th September 2018 at 7pm in Dreel Halls**

Present

Ordinary Members:, Kate Anstruther, John Barker, Rosemary Bayliss, Jean Burrell, Robert Burrell, Morag Cameron, Kevin Dunion, Graham Ellery, Jennie Erdal, John Frew, Alan Gordon, Elizabeth Gordon, Jennifer Gordon, Christine Keay, Catherine Kellett, John Kellett, Margaret Kerr, Thomas Kerr, Mary Money, Trevor Money, Bill Motion, Andy Neil, Chris Oliver, Christine Palmer, Elizabeth Riches, Kate Shearer, Alan Stewart, Audrey Yeardley.

Other: Alistair Henig, Linda Henig, Jo Hilton, Evrig Jones, Catherine Oliver, Peter Urban,

1. Christine Palmer (CP) opened the AMM, welcomed the members and read out apologies from Arran Aird, Toby Anstruther, Glenn Jones, Lorna Jones, Chloe Milne and Roger Sedgley.
2. The minutes of the 2017 AMM were proposed by Bill Motion and seconded by Elizabeth Riches.
3. CP presented the President's Report (attached).
4. CP proposed to the ordinary members that the annual subscription for 2019 should remain fixed at £7.50 and this was approved unanimously.
5. Three existing Trustees had resigned in writing and two were putting themselves forward for re-election. They had completed and submitted nomination forms within the deadline laid out in the constitution. Both nominees were unanimously voted in as Trustees by the ordinary members present at the AMM. They are: Kate Anstruther and Roger Sedgley. The resigning Trustee was John Barker and CP thanked him for his service to the AIA, presented him with a gift and announced that he has agreed to become an Honorary Patron.
6. CP presented the independent financial examiner's report to the members.
7. As Joint Treasurer, CP presented the annual accounts to the members, who received them. She confirmed receipts in 2018 of £19,703 from events and donations compared with £20,495 in 2017 and £26,225 in restricted grants and donations compared with £22,960 in 2017. She also confirmed unrestricted payments of £14,741 on charitable activities compared with £13,822 in 2017 and £1,202 from the restricted fund compared with £18,345 in 2017. CP explained the difference between restricted and unrestricted funds and confirmed that in 2018 there was a surplus in unrestricted funds of £4,962 compared with £6,673 in 2017. This reduction in surplus was disappointing but the Joint Treasurers were hopeful that the surplus in 2018 would be greater.
8. The Treasurer proposed that Mark Robertson of Henderson Black be appointed as

independent financial examiner for the SCIO's accounts. This was approved by the ordinary members.

9. CP thanked the Trustees, the Honorary Patrons, the members, the volunteers, the funders and anyone who has attended or helped at events.

10. AOCB: Elizabeth Riches thanked CP for her work as President of the AIA.

Above minutes accepted as a true record

Signed: _____(Chair) Date: _____

President's Report

Outwardly 2017 was a year when the focus of the AIA was on delivering its usual programme of events and activities to entertain and educate the community. There was an interesting mix of speakers at Thursday night's Anster Nichts and the cinema now feels well-established, attracting a steady audience of familiar faces at the monthly screenings. We are lucky to have Roger Sedgley guiding us through an interesting and varied programme each season. Perhaps the most interesting experience this year was a gripping screening of a 1926 Soviet Western, *By The Law*, with RM Hubbert performing his own guitar score for the film, commissioned by HippFest. We have a super team of volunteers running the cinema each month, providing technical organisation and home baking, with additional help from volunteers who put out cinema signs and posters and deliver flyers each season, and we are hugely grateful for all this support.

This year saw the introduction of a new regular event, the Anster All Ages Café, an initiative to promote inter-generational mixing that is quietly growing in popularity and is much welcomed by some of Anstruther's young families. Other regular events included Candlemas in February, the buffet supper in June, Doors Open Day in September and Vintage Day in November. As always we are hugely grateful to Honorary Patron Christine Keay, who takes on the gargantuan task of organising Vintage Day for the AIA; this is a key fundraiser for the charity and fun day out for those who come along and support us. Stephen Marshall and Lucy Hine also held a fundraiser at Dreel Halls in December, an event which was both financially profitable for the AIA and a great night out for all. Less popular was our decision to combine the AIA's Christmas social with the All Ages Café, and we recognise that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" – in future years it will be business as usual!

The duck race continues to be the AIA's most high-profile event of the year, attracting hundreds of hopeful competitors for a fun, family morning out. We rely on a large group of volunteers from across our community coming together to help with this and are very grateful to them. These include a team working in the burn with the ducks and a team in Dreel Halls, organising a warm welcome for the prize giving, ably led by Honorary Patron Elizabeth Gordon. Alan Gordon is also to be thanked, as he washes and dries every duck and counts them all in!

The Anstruther Writing Awards had another successful year, with entries up again on last year. This year the focus was on the younger entrants, and we were able to partner with Anstruther Primary to see a significant rise in the number of entries in the primary category. We were lucky to have Andrew Greig, Jennie Erdal, Chae Strathie and Christina Banach judging the Awards again. For the third year running, Dreel Halls hosted an art exhibition as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival. For this project the AIA worked closely with Waid Academy's art department to organise an exhibition of art work produced by S3 pupils to celebrate the Festival. Scottish Association for Mental Health came along too, to offer advice and information on mental health and wellbeing, as well as a display of poetry exploring mental health issues. We are very grateful to Waid Academy for taking on this project so enthusiastically, and to our panel of judges, Keny Drew, Susan Forsyth and Kirsty Thomas. Kirsty also supports the AIA by designing our beautiful promotional material for Anster Cinema pro bono.

The AIA continued to support Anstruther's community-led programme of floral displays in the town. Many of the public spaces in Anstruther are managed year-round by volunteers in the community to provide displays of beautiful flowers and plants. The AIA contributes to this, led by Honorary Patron Elizabeth Gordon and supported by a group of volunteers. Elizabeth supports the AIA in so many ways – through the Community Kist she continues to provide funding, but also attends many of our events and can usually be found clearing up after them. We are very grateful.

In June the AIA organised teas at the Scotland's Gardens Scheme opening of Kellie Castle and Balcaskie. Our loyal members also rallied together in September to bake more cakes and scones when the AIA was invited by the Balcaskie Estate to provide Anster Teas at Bowhouse Food Weekend. This provided a great opportunity to raise both the profile of the organisation and some welcome funds, and many folk visited us to take afternoon tea from vintage bone china tea cups at the bustling event.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the committee has been focusing on the AIA's future and in particular the role of Dreel Halls. A revised business plan is now in place, guiding the organisation's activities and direction over the next five years. The internal renovation project for Dreel Halls was the main focus, and the year began with a set-back when the AIA was refused a grant from the Community Assets programme of the Big Lottery Fund. However, the committee has been working on this project for too long to be put off by this, and we are very grateful to Fife Historic Buildings Trust for pointing us in the direction of the Scottish Government's Regeneration Community Grant Fund. A successful Stage 1 application was submitted in the summer and in early December a Stage 2 application was made, with a response due in February 2018. The AIA has applied for match funding from Fife LEADER and if both applications are successful, we are hoping to start work in the building in the Autumn of 2018. It has been a long journey to get this far, but at last it feels like progress has been made.

The theme that runs through this report is the extraordinary input the AIA receives from members of the community. The AIA has no paid employees and runs entirely on volunteer power! From committee members to honorary patrons and members, from cinema volunteers to home bakers, from duck collectors in the Dreel to washing up experts in the kitchen, and the many other volunteer roles – the AIA could not continue without this help.

In 2017 we received financial and in-kind support from, among others, the Community Kist, Fisher & Donaldson, the Fagus Anstruther Memorial Trust, James Aird & Sons, Reni Timmermans and family and Fife Council. The AIA supported the 2016 Anstruther Christmas Tree project and funded leaflets for Anstruther's model solar system and an Anstruther walking tour in partnership with the Scottish Fisheries Museum.