



**Scottish Society of Ottawa  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
Minutes**

**Saturday, April 28, 2018 11:00 a.m.  
Heart and Crown Pub, Byward Market, Ottawa**

1. Call to Order, welcome, introductions, and Chair's remarks, George Brown

George welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was adjusted to reflect that Andrew Caddell, Executive Director would provide a summary of 2017-18 Directors and Event Planners Report, per suggestion from George Brown.

The revised agenda was approved by Jane Torrence, seconded by Elizabeth MacLeod. Unanimously approved.

3. Approval of 2017 SSO AGM Minutes

The minutes of the May 6, 2017 AGM were approved by Richard Flemming and Isobel Adams. Unanimously approved.

4. Board of Directors' Reports

- i. Chair, George Brown

George reflected that this was his first year as Chair of the SSO. When he was considering the position last spring, he was told that it would be easy because there were lots of volunteer and he was happy to report that he wasn't misinformed. George offered thanks to all Board, Grand Committee, Event Committee volunteers, and everyone who came to our events. He commented that there is great spirit among the community.

George also offered thanks to David Johnston and Donald MacDonald from Sons of Scotland Pipes and Drums for piping for us this morning as guests were arriving. He also offered special thanks to volunteers in attendance: Carol McPherson, Kilt Skate Ottawa Organizer; Emmett Hossack, whisky tasting Organizer, which raises funds for SSO on an annual basis; Charlie Inglis as Treasurer and Webmaster; Isobel Adams, Volunteer Director; Elizabeth McLeod, Membership Director; Allie and Chris Elms, Hogmanay Co-chairs, who did a great job on our signature event; Richard Fleming, who has been our operational guy since the beginning; to Board members Andrew Caddell, Executive Director; and Heather Theoret, Board Secretary. George also recognized David Brown, George's brother, who stepped up last year as Vice Chair



and helped with some marketing products. David is stepping down, but will remain involved and very supportive.

As a forward thinking organization, we have maintained an excellent relationship with the Scottish Government, who sponsored the kilt skate two years in a row. Chris Maskell, North American Representative for the Scottish Government, talks about the SSO as being the model Scottish cultural organization across the country. George commented that for this, we should be very proud.

In the coming year, we have plans to have an OttScot Festival as new expansion to our existing events. We plan to brand the month of January 2019 as OttScot Festival, kicking things off with Hogman-eh! 2018, moving on to the Kilt Skate and a grand Burns Supper, together with other connections and outreach to organizations to plan a variety of Scottish themed activities through the month. All will be packaged and marketed as OttScot Festival.

This past year has been a year of transition, as some new members took over from a group of volunteers who started the SSO. Some things needed to be cleaned up, and some delicate issues needed to be sorted out, which required high-level diplomatic service. George offered thanks to those who helped us through this challenging period.

George advised that there were some exciting, dynamic people who were stepping up to take on leadership roles including Perry McConnell and Simon McDonald. He closed, noting that he has had a lot of fun over the past year, looks forward to the future and a great Scottish festival and thanked everyone for their support.

ii. Executive Director, Andrew Caddell

Andrew offered thanks to other members of the Board, especially Heather, for her tirelessness and always being on point. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work with this dedicated and passionate group and was proud to have contributed. Andrew offered thanks to Allie and Chris Elms for their work on Hogman-eh!

A highlight from the past year was attending a reception at Earnsliffe, hosted by the Scottish Government and in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary, marking 150 years of friendship between Scotland and Canada. Lessons learned this past year included starting early on fundraising, and to develop ideas to gain exposure in a busy city.

We as a group, learned to be more like St. Andrew – generous and thoughtful. We also enjoyed many evenings of planning at Milestones at Lansdowne. We learned about the importance of maintenance of documents for historical records. One of Andrew's proudest contributions is preparation and maintenance of fundraising documents for future reference. He believed that the introduction of a branded OttScot Festival and continued growth of other events and activities would make us even stronger.



Andrew noted that most of his knowledge of Scotland came from his grandfather, from his father, and travelling there with his own sons, but he also learned a great deal of knowledge from the Scottish diaspora. Andrew acknowledged John Ivison and Senator Doug Finley who started the Scottish Society. Andrew closed by saying that we are part of 5 million Scots in Canada. By being members of this organization, we fulfill Burns' prediction: "It's coming yet for a' that, That Man to Man (and Woman to Woman), the world o'er, Shall brothers (and sisters) be for a' that."

Thank you and Slainte!

iii. Treasurer, Charles Inglis

Charlie provided a detailed financial summary of Hogman-eh! 2017, which raised just over \$60,000 this past year. There were many discussions on ways to cut back on the event as this amount was substantially lower than previous years. A silent auction was a new initiative and raised \$590. On-site donations were up this year, thanks to the volunteers who promoted this at Hogman-eh!. Expenses were cut back and we ended in a deficit of \$5700. In spite of the financial challenges and the extreme cold, the event was successful nonetheless.

The second big event was the Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate, now in its fourth year. This was the second year of sponsorship from the Scottish Government. The national event was organized by tiers, with Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto and Calgary receiving Tier 1 funding at \$2000 each, and three other cities at Tier 2 funding at \$500 each. Total expended was \$14,359.68 and all stayed within budget. The result was the return of \$640.32 to the Scottish Government which will happen next week. The Scottish Government warned us that we cannot count on them for future, so we will need to consider other sponsors.

Part of Hogman-eh! sponsorship money has not come to us from the Resolution Run. They had fewer participants this year, but are still very generous in donating to us. This remains as the one outstanding revenue. The whisky tasting event raised just over \$2000. Memberships raised and donations received were \$600. Our insurance policy costs \$2700 which is substantial. The bottom line is we have net assets of \$7255 in the bank. This is less than we have seen in the past, so sponsorship will be critical in the future.

We encountered a financial situation this year when the Ontario Government wanted us to paypack \$38,000 from Trillium funding received for Hogman-eh! 2016. Thankfully, this was averted with help from John Ivison.

A question from the floor was received on why the Ontario Government requested a return of grant funding. George responded that the amount of funding allotted was made with a prediction to get certain number of people in attendance. A snowstorm and unpredicted Canada150 celebrations on Parliament Hill had a major impact on our overall attendance and scope of the event.



Financial records were approved by Elizabeth MacLeod and seconded by Richard Fleming. Unanimously approved.

iv. Secretary, Heather Theoret

As secretary for the past six years, Heather noted that she was very excited to see the continual growth and increase in awareness about our society. This is a clear indication, not only that we are doing something right and being successful in our efforts, but that there is sincere interest from the community. From our six years of presenting Hogmanay for the Ottawa and beyond community, the national kilt skate, a Burns event, and having a presence at local highland games, we are increasing awareness about Scottish culture in the Ottawa area. This ties in directly to our mission to increase awareness of Scottish culture to as many Canadians as possible. Ottawa is a major festival community. As an official member of the Ottawa Festivals organization, we should be proud that we have put Hogmanay and the Scottish community on the map in the nation's capital.

As the first public contact point on the SSO website, Heather advised that she is regularly contacted by Scottish organizations, publishers, musicians, and the like, to share information about new book publications, upcoming performances, conferences, etc. Many of these organizations are local, but many are also from Scotland. This proves that we are making an impact with reach even beyond our national borders.

Through the year, we hold regular Executive, Grand Committee and Event Planning Group meetings. Heather provided a summary of our organizational structure, which includes our Executive Board, composed of the Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Director, Treasurer and Secretary. Our current Grand Committee is made up of the Executive members, a central Events Director, plus event directors for Hogmanay, Burns Supper, Kilt Skate, as well as Membership, Volunteer, Marketing & Communications, and Outreach Directors. There are several members-at-large who want to stay connected and offer their support to help where they are able. We appreciate the support to be able to carry out our many functions and to support our growing community of just over 700 members. Heather noted that if anyone in attendance was interested in getting more involved, and to join in Grand Committee meetings, to put their name forward after the meeting.

We are guided by our official Articles and Bylaws and have implemented policies and procedures and produced reports such as the ones being presented today, all of which keep us directed and accountable.

The longer the organizations exists, and with consistent dedicated work from our volunteers, and support from the community, the more successful we will be in achieving our mission to spread Scottish culture. This does put a bit of pressure on our team of dedicated volunteers – but like true Scots, we're up for the challenge. Heather offered sincere thank you to all our volunteers for continually stepping up to the task!



5. SSO Governance, George Brown

i. Elections, remaining one year for 2017 – 2019 term

George reported that there are two vacancies on the Executive Board including the Vice Chair and Executive Director. Two people have stepped forward. The Board had numerous discussions with these candidates to ensure awareness of roles and expectations.

George announced Simon McDonald as a candidate for Vice Chair.

Moved by Richard Fleming, Isobel Adams. Unanimously approved.

George presented Perry McConnell as a candidate for the Executive Director position.

Moved by Andrew Caddell, seconded by Simon McDonald. Unanimously approved.

George asked each of the new volunteers to share a bit of information about themselves.

Simon McDonald indicated that he is proudly Scottish, serves as National Outreach Chair, Clan Donald Canada; Chairman of Clan Donald Festivals; Director of Glengarry Fencibles Trust (Bishop's House); Commanding Officer ACFC Army Cadets; Officer In Charge, Alexandria Army Cadets. Simon's vision as Vice-Chair of the SSO is to help grow the SSO, and to make our events such as Hogman-eh! bigger and better than ever.

Perry McConnell shared that he was President of the Glengarry Highland Games for two years on 2003-2004, he is Official Recorder of the Shriners, has many years of community event experience, and he has both Scottish and Irish ancestry. He is very excited and looking forward to working with the SSO.

**Grand Committee:**

George shared that Grand Committee positions would be handled at the Board level.

**Communications Director**

Jane Torrance and Doug Johnson expressed interest in the Communications Director position.

George noted that we did not receive official candidate interest for the Events Director position, but with the introduction of the OttScot Festival, this position could be evolved to an OttScot Festival Director. Richard Fleming put his name forward for this position. George explained that Richard sits on the board of Ottawa Festivals, so has good understanding of existing festivals and can build on outreach to this community to make our festival a success.

The nomination was put forward by Simon McDonald, seconded by Elizabeth McLeod. Carried.



## Hogmanay Director

Simon McDonald put his name forward for this position.

George advised that the Board would formally appoint Grand Committee candidates at a later date.

### 6. 2017-18 Directors and Event Planners Report review

Andrew provided highlights of our signature event, Hogman-eh!, as well as the Kilt Skate, and Burns Supper, as submitted in the Directors' reports. The bands (Searson, The Urban Highlanders, Ecosse and the American Rogues) as well as Arnprior McNab Pipes and Drums were fantastic. The passing of torch to carry on the excitement built up over the past year by Ottawa's 150th anniversary celebrations from Ottawa 2017 to the SSO, as a representative of Ottawa Festivals, was a highlight. The ceremony started at City Hall with a torch being lit from the large Ottawa 2017 flame in front of City Hall, passed from Guy Laflamme, Executive Director, Ottawa 2017, to Mayor Jim Watson's torch and then to Andrew's torch, representing the SSO. A runner from the Running Room carried the torch along the Rideau Canal to the Aberdeen Pavilion – a tremendous feat in -30 degree weather. At the Aberdeen, the torch was passed to a relay of highland dancers from Sherry's School of Highland Dance who were piped to the stage by a piper from the Arnprior McNab Pipes and Drums. It was received on the main stage by George Brown, Andrew and Sherry Sharpe and passed to Carole Ann Piccinin, Executive Director, and Richard Fleming, Board representative, Ottawa Festivals. This was a highlight of the evening.

A few glitches occurred at the event in that the bar closed a bit early causing problems for guests looking for a drink to do a new year's toast. Also, with an earlier start to fundraising, we will raise more money and be able to put on a good show. Andrew saw lots of good will and support for Hogman-eh!. People came from Toronto, from the west coast, and from the U.S.A. to celebrate a New Year's Eve Scottish style. Andrew offered his thanks again to all volunteers who helped.

The 4th Annual Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate national event was the most successful yet, thanks to the work of many volunteers and \$15,000 Scottish Government sponsorship. There were seven skates this year, one more than in 2016, including Montreal, Alexandria (North Glengarry), Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Calgary. Andrew offered thanks for the work of Don Cummer and Sue MacGregor who lead the outreach and organization of the national events. Each skate in the various cities was organized by volunteers from local Scottish groups, including Carol MacPherson who organized a great skate event in Ottawa. The overall attendance was the best it's been in four years. Toronto saw about 200 people come out in kilts, tartans and skates at Nathan Phillips Square. In Ottawa, Mayor Jim Watson, Catherine McKenna, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and MP, Ottawa-Centre, Jack MacLaren, Member of Provincial Parliament, Carleton-Mississippi Mills, as well as Chris Maskell, Head of Scottish Affairs for the British Consulate joined just over 100 skaters. There was great



local, national and international media coverage, including stories carried in *The Scottish Banner* and *The Scotsman* in Scotland. The Scottish Government sees the kilt skate event as an excellent example of the kind of initiative that it wants to support to promote a vibrant, forward-looking, exciting Scotland.

An MOU was drafted for each city, as well as with the SSO and the Scottish Government, and the SSO and the national organizers. It was an arduous but worthwhile endeavour as guidelines, criteria for funding and expectations are now written down and signed off.

As many of you know, there are several very good Burns suppers in Ottawa. While the SSO has plans to present a larger event in the future, this past January, a group of about 40 SSO members celebrated at the Highlander Pub Burns Supper gathering.

#### 7. 2018-19 SSO Events and Activities Planning

George commented that in addition to the above events described by Andrew, Isobel organized a couple of volunteer gatherings. Pub nights and cultural events were ideas for future events.

#### 8. Other Business

Richard Fleming suggested a nominating committee for future election decisions. George thanked Richard and advised that the Board would take that under advisement.

George asked Heather to bring forward one final item, as it was her idea and initiative. Heather commented that the SSO is successful due to the pride and love that our volunteers and members have for Scotland and Scottish culture. The pride and affiliation comes from the heart, whether the connection is direct first generation, or from a long ancestral line. As culture and music are such a big part of what we do, Heather thought that a theme song for the SSO would be appropriate. She reached out to Dougie MacLean, author and composer of the song "Caledonia", which is basically a love song to Scotland, written when he was feeling homesick. A request was made to obtain his approval to adopt "Caledonia" as our theme song. Dougie's agent (who is also his wife) responded with comments that our Society's mission was a good one, and provided approval to go forward.

Heather put forward a motion to approve "Caledonia" as the SSO's theme song. The motion was moved by George Brown, seconded by Al Gullen, and unanimously approved by all in attendance.

A link to the YouTube video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wP8A9rtg0il>) would be posted on our website, and on social media channels with a notice to members sharing this exciting news.



Departing volunteers including Allie and Chris Elm and Andrew Caddell were formally thanked with Scottish themed gift baskets.

A draw for a series of donated door prizes took place to close off the meeting. Brenda Givens won a gift basket of Maggie's Shortbread, and Richard Fleming, Paul Henry and Emily Kehoe each won a one-year subscription to Celtic Life Magazine.

## 9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.