

Shildon Heritage Alliance CIC - Save Our Stute Monthly Meeting

Weds 9th November 2022 at 7:15pm
The MacNay Room - Shildon Railway Institute

Attendees: J Raw (JR), D Reynolds (DR), K Ambrosini (KA), C White (CW), M Armstrong (MA), S Clarke (SC), D Clarke (DC)

Apologies: J Hackworth Young, H Johnson, P Harle, S Townsend

Review minutes/ actions carried forward

- **DR** gave an update on correspondence from Mitchell Kent confirming that the deadline for the Towns & Villages fund was not imminent and that there was time for the Institute to reconstitute with the fund being valid for 2 years and should the Institute be successful they would not have to have the work done in that timeline as long as the money was committed.
- A general agreement was made that future meetings could be put back by 15 minutes to 7:30pm to make it easier for members to attend on time.
- **CW** congratulated the group on their having brought the new library books from Darlington - it was agreed we'd discuss this as AOB

Financial update

- **SC** gave an update that there was £2,356.24 in the operating account with £2021.40 in the reserve account and some £200 petty cash yet to bank
- She also updated that the annual statement of accounts had now been lodged with Companies House
- **SC** asked for clearer details of contributions donated by the Tuesday night dancers and the members of the choir.

Volunteer hours update

- **DC** updated that few volunteer hours had been logged for October, or indeed since July, and urged the group to make time to log their hours
- **DR** noted that he had added a significant volume of volunteer hours that week as the Light at the End of the Shildon Tunnel project had concluded

Events

- **CW** gave an update on the Forge nights - that the next one would be on New Year's Day in the afternoon, though his partner in that venture Paul Strophair wanted to call it something different for that occasion.
- **CW** explained that further 'Live Lounge' nights had been scheduled for 19th November and 10th December. The first was Mark Hammond from the Shamrocks which would help promote the Irish night and the second was Bobby B which was seen as something for older members to enjoy.
- **DR** and **KA** gave an update on the planned Saturday event for New Shildon Remembrance with Trimdon Brass scheduled to attend - explaining that everything was now in order for that to go ahead. **SC** was nominated by the group to have the honour of placing the wreaths for the SHA CIC, and accepted the responsibility. **JR** suggested bringing his collection of WWI postcards from the front - which was gratefully accepted. **KA** explained the catering arrangements and explained that a raffle would be held to help to pay for the band.

- An update was given on the planned Christmas themed Coffee Morning and that it was intended to use that event to raise money for Quinn's Retreat. The group were pleased to support that cause.
- **JR** asked what had happened to the Christmas Fayre idea - and it was explained that it was cancelled due to a shortage of available volunteers.
- **DR** and **KA** gave an update on the Institute Members Christmas Party scheduled for the 9th December and outlined some of the added features planned for that event
- **CW** explained that another Ska Sunday had been scheduled for Sunday 11th December and explained details of the timing. **JR** offered to put some posters out in Bishop Auckland
- A brief discussion was had on the Institute's plan to have Legless 11 Bingo on the 16th December, which we hoped would go well
- **MA** explained to the group how the plans for the Shamrocks pre-Christmas Irish Night had progressed, and how best to promote now that posters were up.
- **KA** also noted that Roger Pounder had a 'music quiz' booked in for 23rd Dec
- A more general discussion was had as to how to promote the 'festive programme' for December with the merits of advertising in the Town Crier, the distribution of hand flyers and creation of posters with all the events being discussed. In the end it was proposed to go with a mix of social media marketing and posters that listed all the events that month.
- **Action CW/MA** to order posters
- **CW and MA** explained that the Institute's booking with The Scandals had been cancelled as only 24 tickets had been sold. There was a lot on in the town that night and the same band were on at the Civic Hall 2 weeks later. The band were fine about the cancellation.
- **CW** mentioned about the a-capella concert proposed by the folk music researcher Jennifer Reid on 21st November. Discussions were had as to whether to hold in the bar or lounge, with the hall being too big - but it was agreed it could be an interesting evening.

Future events

- **CW** expressed some frustration at the cost of bringing Melting Pot back to the Stute which seems to stem from them not having their own p.a. system. The cost this time would be £1250 instead of the £800 we paid last time. It was agreed to be too much of a risk under a cost of living crisis, and suggested we consider it again in the future.
- **JR** raised that fact that he'd had a discussion with Anthony Coulls who was enthusiastic about the idea of combining next year's Rail Heritage Exhibition with a display of steam traction engines and static engines under the headline "Steam at the Stute". He explained that as organisers we'd need to absorb the cost of about £500 worth of premium coal to fuel the traction engines. **JR** relayed that Paul Harle thought he might be able to do something with the car park to make it more presentable for the occasion. It was felt that such an event would attract a far wider audience than the static exhibition in the hall alone. It was suggested that perhaps the County Councillors could be approached for some contribution from their AAP Neighbourhood funds. The group agreed to support and run the event.
- **Action:** a steering group for the event to be formed to progress Steam at the Stute.
- **CW** raised the question of whether we should attempt another Chuffed to Bits Beer Festival. A discussion was held on where we had erred previously (too short notice, too hastily planned, advertised only to Shildon etc). It was felt that with the connections we now had we could make a better job of it if we planned again. A decision was made to have a session to look into the feasibility of a second festival perhaps involving Andrew at the George Samuel Brewery and Paul Sobs Dobson from Durham CAMRA.

Correspondence from Mike Amos

- **DR** read out the email from Mike Amos explaining that the Durham Amateur Football Trust planned to have an exhibition in June 2023 to celebrate 100 years of the mains stand at Shildon AFC, and whether the Institute might be willing to co-operate.
- **SC** raised that we needed to know more about the proposed exhibition and what the needs would be
- **DR** felt it could be a great opportunity to prepare and launch the small end room upstairs as a gallery for rotating displays.
- **DC** felt that the committee of the Institute should be consulted as it was the town not the Institute's football club (though the two are not rivals).
- **MA and SC** raised that the Committee were subsequently consulted and were in favour of SHA CIC picking this up
- **CW and MA** were concerned over the duration and that the hall is regularly in use so could not be used, and noted also that the bar was the wrong place.
- There were concerns that the upstairs room might not be accessible enough for older visitors to access - however we do want to bring those spaces back into use and it would depend upon what needs the exhibition had.
- **Action DR** to arrange meeting with Mike Amos to discuss.

Heritage compass update

- **DR** explained that he had now attended the last of the Heritage Compass seminars and explained that he would circulate notes and presentations to the group
- **DR** expressed that what he had learned, and will share, on Governance for CIOs made him further sure that the Institute were correct to be looking into the CBO model, as he did not feel that many of the Institute Committee were equipped or showed enough commitment to meet the rigours required of a CIO governing body. He said that with heavy heart but felt that many (not all) on the committee had demonstrated little will to upskill since our intervention in 2019. They had not come 'on the journey' but were happy to sit back, do little, and let others do the work of change.
- **DR** also mentioned that our time with our Heritage Compass mentor would end at the end of the year so sessions with Cath Hume would need to be held before Christmas in order to get the benefit.

Shildon Institute Singers - project review

- **DR** - passed round a post-project report and breakdown of costs. He proceeded to give a debrief to the others about how the Light at the End of the Shildon Tunnel project had gone and shared feedback from choir participants with the group. He explained that this had also been shared with Rosie. He explained that the project had fully consumed the grant from Create North and was grateful for their support. He also praised the Choir's willingness to test themselves with the project.
- It was discussed that with the members Christmas Party being on 9th December and starting at 6pm it would be difficult to accommodate the singers that evening.
- **Action DR** to communicate to the Singers that we'd not meet on 9th December (but that singers were welcome to attend the party if members)

AOB

- **DR** raised the matter of the Library. He expressed gratitude to the Friends of the Darlington Railway Museum for donating the Whitfield collection of books and that what we have now should be the Whitfield Library in the MacNay Room (the latter in honour of Thomas MacNay who wrote the Institute's first constitution in 1833).
- **DR** questioned whether we could now proceed to complete the aesthetics of the room - replace the carpets and get the ceiling painted - so that it could be made available.

- **DC** suggested that it would be good to commit funds to do this as it would reduce the tax that would become payable at the end of the financial year.
- **Action DR** to ask Darren Blood for a quote to paint the ceiling and window frames
- **Action DR** to get a quote for replacement carpet.
- **DR** also stressed the need to catalogue the books before we make them available for people to access, and also raised the need to collect the cabinets that the Friends of the Darlington Railway Museum were also offering, asking for some help on an upcoming Tuesday which was the only day of the week the Museum could be open. The deadline was the end of the year after which the Museum would be closed for redevelopment.

Next meeting Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 7:30pm