

**Summary of minutes of the Board Meeting of the John Rae Society
Tuesday 14th March 2017 at the Pomona Inn, Finstown
Starting at 7.30pm**

Present:

Andrew Appleby – President
Norman Shearer – in the Chair
Anna Elmy – Hon. Secretary
Fiona Lettice – Hon. Treasurer

Jim Chalmers
Mark Newton
Xandra Shearer
Bill Spence
Rachel Boak – Minute Secretary

Rachel Boak presented her first report as Membership Secretary. There are four new members since the last meeting in January (two from overseas) and a total of 170 members. The membership year starts again on 6th April at the higher rates. We hope numbers will stay the same and increase, especially with the publicity and events surrounding the John Rae Festival and the open weekend at the Hall in May. We would be delighted to see any local or visiting members at the Festival and membership forms will be available at all the events for those wishing to join the John Rae Society.

The main part of the meeting was taken up with a presentation of the model, discussions and conclusions from the Hall of Clestrain workshop led by Tom Hunter, Historic Environment Officer for Orkney Islands Council, on 28th January 2017 at Orphir Community School (see web summary of the workshop: <http://www.johnraesociety.com/2-page-article/73-planning-day>). The structural appraisal report by Steve Wood of David Narro Associates from January and the immediate repairs he has identified were also discussed and the Trustees were invited to ask questions about the Hall project.

At the end of the discussion, the Trustees present gave their approval for the Hall working group to progress to the next stage of the project proposals which is to make the model and our ideas available to John Rae Society members and interested members of the public at the Hall of Clestrain open weekend on 6th and 7th May during our John Rae Festival. We will also be arranging for visits by a timber specialist to comment on the state of the roof timbers and floors, and by a quantity surveyor to quote for the immediate repairs and safety measures necessary to stop the Hall from deteriorating further.

Ahead of the Festival in May, we are holding a coffee morning in the supper room at the Town Hall in Kirkwall on Saturday 8th April to publicise the Festival events and to appeal for volunteers. It would be great to see anyone interested in helping over the Festival weekend at the coffee morning where you can chat to us about what is involved over tea, coffee and cake.

We were excited to find out about a forthcoming exhibition, *Death in the Ice: The Shocking Story of Franklin's Final Expedition*, at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. The exhibition opens on 14th July 2017 and runs until 7th January 2018. It has been developed by the Canadian Museum of History, in partnership with Parks Canada and the National Maritime Museum, and in collaboration with the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Heritage Trust. We hope to find out more about how the John Rae Society can be involved in the exhibition and to get to London to see it once it opens. Find out more at www.rmg.co.uk/see-do/franklin-death-in-the-ice

The next Board meeting will take place in May.