

Summary of minutes of the Board Meeting of the John Rae Society
Sunday 9th July 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
Tom Hunter
Neil Kermod
Mark Newton
David Reid
Xandra Shearer
Rachel Boak – Minute Secretary

Rachel Boak reported that there are ten new members since the last meeting in May (one from Orkney, five from Scotland, three from elsewhere in the UK, and one from overseas).

We will be holding two summer open days at the Hall of Clestrain on Sunday 23rd July and Sunday 3rd September using the same set-up as during the John Rae Festival in May, with merchandise, books, raffle and lottery tickets, and refreshments. Rachel will send out a call for help to Orkney JRS members and volunteers, specifying the jobs required. The JRS will also be at the Dounby Show on Thursday 10th August.

Andrew summarised the draft programme for John Rae's birthday weekend in September:

Friday 29th September – Dr Claire Warrior, Senior Exhibitions Curator from the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, will give an evening lecture at Stromness Town Hall. There will be refreshments and opportunities to buy raffle and lottery tickets.

Saturday 30th September – We will have the usual graveside commemorations for John Rae's birthday in the kirkyard of St Magnus Cathedral and a performance of the John Rae Reel by the Maureen Findlay School of Dance on Kirk Green. On Saturday afternoon we will be at the Hall of Clestrain for an open afternoon. On Saturday evening we will show the film *Passage* at the Orkney Theatre at Kirkwall Grammar School. The JRS lottery will be drawn that evening.

Sunday 1st October – We will be at the Hall of Clestrain for another open afternoon.

We are working on a planning application for a temporary visitor centre at the Hall of Clestrain. Meanwhile, interpretation boards have gone up on the current notice board at the Hall.

A survey of the condition of the timber at the Hall of Clestrain, and a report by a quantity surveyor, have now been completed, meaning we are in a better position to approach funders. Alan Manzie, who has worked on successful funding applications for other charitable organisations in Orkney, will be helping us with this.

The most urgent task is to remove the concrete pig pens from the basement of the Hall. We also hope to commission an archaeological survey of the immediate grounds to find out what evidence there is for paths, outbuildings and garden layout, and to rescue any stonework from the house.

The next Board meeting will take place at the end of August.