



## **BORDER UNION AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY** (Company Limited by Guarantee)

Minute of the **Annual General Meeting** held virtually via Zoom at noon on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### **Chairman : His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe**

The Chairman welcomed everyone on the occasion of the 207th Annual General Meeting of the Society.

### **Present:**

49 members registered for Zoom details as follows, of these, 39 attendees logged in.

Mr A Armstrong, Mr T Arnott, Mr G Baird, Mr A Baird, Mrs L Beck, Mrs S Beck, Mr E Brewis, Mr L Brown, Mr E Castel, Mr GH Chisolm (Company Accountant), Mr J Clark, Miss M Clark, Mr S Craig, Mrs J Dickson, Mr G Dodds, Mr H Dodds, Mr P Douglas, Mr I Fleming, Mr J Fleming, Mr P Fleming, Mr A Forster, Mr S Fuller- Shapcott, Mr I Hepburn, Mr A Hodge, Mr C Hogg, Mr T Jackson, Mr A Johnson, Lord Joicey, Mr J Lamont, Mrs J Mallinson, Mrs M McCowan, Mr C McGregor, Mrs V Mutch, Mr D Neill, Mrs C Nelson, Mr W Pate, Mr N Ramsay, Mr K Redpath, Mr C Robertson, Rev A Rodwell, Mr D Stephen, Mr C Stewart, Mrs L Stewart, Mr J Thomson, Dr M Thomson, Mr N Thomson, Mr N Thomson (Caverton), Mr J Tweedie, Mr R Walker, Mrs J Wilson, Mr R Wilson, Mr D Withall.

### **Apologies:**

Mr D Armstrong, Mr C Badenoch, Mr D Barrie, Mrs M Bradbury, Mr C Kennedy, Mr J Pringle, Mrs F Simpson, Mr H Trotter, Mr A Wemyss.

**Minute of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 13th December 2019:** Having been circulated prior to the Meeting to those present at the Meeting the Minute was proposed for adoption by Mr Gareth Baird and seconded by Mr Peter Douglas.

**Matters arising from the Minute:** None.

### **Annual Accounts and Report:**

The Chairman of the Society Mr Ian Fleming gave his report for the year to the meeting (attached Appendix 1) There were no questions from the floor on the Annual Report or Accounts which were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts were proposed by Mr Ian Fleming and seconded by Mr Angus Armstrong.

### **Election of Office Bearers for the Year:**

Mr Angus Armstrong proposed the following are elected as President and Vice Presidents for 2021, this was seconded by Mr Charles Stewart.

- 1) President: His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe
- 2) Vice Presidents: His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, The Most Hon. Marquis of Lothian, The Right Hon Lord Joicey, The Hon. G Maitland-Carew, *Mr James Clark, Mr Tom Arnott, Mr William Potts, Mr Harry Dodds, Mr William Stewart and Mr Ted Thomson*
- 3) Farmer Vice Presidents: Mr Keith Redpath proposed the re-election of Mr David Neill and Mr Graeme Murray and this was seconded by Mr David Armstrong.
- 4) Honorary Chaplain Rev Anna Rodwell; Honorary Veterinary Surgeons Galedin Veterinary; Auditors Rennie Welch; Solicitors Lindsays. Re-election of these positions was proposed by Mr Alistair Hodge and seconded by Mr Colin McGregor.
- 5) Three Trustees (Board of Management) Mr Andrew Foster proposed re-election of Mr Angus Armstrong, Mr Douglas Stephen and Mr Charlie Stewart, this was seconded by Mr Michael Brewis.

### **Show Directors**

The directors who were due to retire in 2020 have agreed to stand on for 2021. As additional support John Mitchell has also kindly agreed to join the committee.

### **Annual Subscription Fees**

The recommendation by the Trustees is that membership fees remain unchanged for 2021:-

Individual Membership - £37

Family Membership - £84

Life Membership - £700

This motion was proposed by Mr Douglas Stephen and seconded by Mrs Caroline Nelson.

### **Any other Competent Business**

Report on behalf of the Trustees was given by the Chair of the Trustees Mr Angus Armstrong (attached Appendix 2)

No other business was raised.

Mr Peter Douglas, Vice Chair of the Society thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.20pm.

## **Appendix 1 Chairman of Society Report**

CHAIRMANS REPORT Your Grace, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you all for battling with the technology to attend this year's Border Union AGM. This certainly a first for the society, although virtual platforms have been vital in the running of the Border Union over the last year. I understand that this is not everyone's cup of tea so I would like to thank you for attending and contributing to these, both today and over the last few months.

I am sure that this may be one of the shortest Chairman's reports in society's history. Firstly I would like to welcome His Grace Charles the 11th Duke of Roxburghe. Charlie has taken over the presidency from his late father in interesting times, but we are glad to have you on board and look forward to working with you. I think that this maybe only the second time ever that we have been unable to hold neither our shows nor a ram sale.

The year started off well with the long service lunch with over 80 people attending to see 14 recipients from the Scottish Borders and Northumberland receive awards. A great day was had by all that attended. Another bright spot in spring was the dog show being nominated for a PAWSCAR award for Championship Show of the year at Crufts. Several BEC let's occurred in the Hall in February and March. Then the world was hit with COVID-19. I think at first, we all thought that we might not be seriously effected in our quiet corner of southern Scotland and things would return to normal fairly quickly. How wrong that would be. We soon had to review all the society's activities.

On 18 March the SBC confirmed the cancellation of our annual school's day. A great disappointment to all at a BUAS as well as 1300 primary 5 kids Before the month of March was out the Dog show and Border Union show where also cancelled, very much in line with other events through the country. After many discussions with the industry about holding the ram sale it was also decided that it would not be possible to safely hold the sales with potentially such large numbers gathering in one place. The lack of activity on site led to us, first putting staff on furlough and then having to make many positions in the society redundant as we could no longer afford to keep them in place.

These were not easy decisions to make and on behalf of everybody at the Border Union I would like to thank them for their efforts throughout their time with us. This, as I am sure that you are aware from our communications earlier in the year included our Executive Director as well as other staff throughout the organisation. We are currently left with Verity Mutch part time in the office and Steve Jack working a few hours a week keeping the site tidy while the rest of his hours have been furloughed. Hopefully as vaccinations are rolled out and the virus starts to abate, the society will be allowed to hold ever increasingly larger events in the Show field, thus allowing us to grow the business again.

The fact that the Society had to cancel all our core events as well as a large amount of the lets booked from March onwards has led to us posting a poor set of accounts which has been circulated to you all. We have tried to reduce as many costs as possible, but many of these had already been put in place before the crisis hit. Several Grants have been applied for and success has been had in some, which has helped income.

Let us look forward to a relaxation of restrictions and a busier show field with our annual show returning even if it may need to be in a simpler form. I am sure that we all can anticipate the hustle and bustle of the ram sale next September.

The support of you as members over the last year has been vital and will continue to be so, as we hopefully return to some sort of normality in activity but the effects of the last year will take longer to recover from and we need to work as one to get there. We hope to roll out a donation scheme in the new year where members and friends of the society can either physically donate produce such as tonne of wheat, the sale of lambs or those of you not directly involved in the agricultural industry could kindly give the equivalent value of these products. We will be in touch about this in the early new year, hopefully you can help.

I would like to thank everybody that has been able to help or advise me through these difficult times. This includes my directors, committee members, staff and Angus and his fellow Trustees. This concludes my annual report.

## **Appendix 2 Chair of the Trustees**

At last year's AGM the outgoing Chair of the Trustees, the late Rob Dick, said a few words before handing the baton onto myself.

So when Rob passed the role of Trustee Chair on to me we had no idea of what lay ahead in 2020 with the imminent arrival of Covid-19, and that poor Rob himself would become one of its earliest victims. I'm sure I speak for us all when I pass on our condolences to the Dick family and all other Society members where family and friends have been so directly impacted by this awful virus.

Ian Fleming the Society Chair has summed up the last 12 months well in his annual report, so I see little point in covering the same ground.

I will however just add a couple of points in support of Ian's report –

1. 2020 will have been one of the most difficult years in the long history of this society, and very probably the most difficult. To have had no activity in Springwood since mid-March is unheard of, probably even in the war years.
2. However, and irrespective of this inactivity, there has been an awful lot to do and a huge amount of time put in by a number of volunteers. This would include Ian himself and many other Directors and Trustees. For all their efforts I think the BUAS is incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated people willing to support it.
3. Now looking ahead to 2021 and beyond. Ian has already suggested that 2021 will see some form of core activity return during the year, albeit this activity is likely to be in an abbreviated form, and we all believe that this return is essential for the survival of the BUAS as we know it.

To deliver this activity we do need to gradually rebuild the resource within BUAS, but we must do so in a very careful and in a measured way, ensuring that overheads are kept tightly controlled.

And to manage the above we may well be more reliant on an element of volunteer help – more so now than has been the norm during recent years - which will mean we need more direct help from elements of the membership including some of yourselves.

Lastly I'd like to mention the Bursary Fund and you should all have received Lord James Joicey's report with your AGM pack. James is a great custodian of this fund and we are extremely grateful to James for the time he puts into this. As he highlights in his report, the fund is there to support young people who require support for a study or learning opportunity that they want to pursue, so please encourage anyone looking for such support to make an application.

2021 will dawn a new year, a new season and a new opportunity, and the BUAS can pick itself up and flourish once again.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for taking time to join us today.

Gus Armstrong