

Chair's Report

Alford Heritage Museum AGM 2024

Good evening and welcome to the 2024 AGM on a lovely warm dry evening. Firstly a bit of a report on what has been happening over the last 12 months. If you remember at last year's AGM we had some concept drawings for proposals for improvements to the museum, work has been going on to establish what these improvements might cost as well as the very necessary repairs we need to do to the fabric of the building, we expect to be talking to Historic Environment Scotland shortly about both the repairs and also the proposed improvements.

Because we cannot obtain any large sums of grant money until we have control of the building for a minimum 25 years, our current lease runs year to year, the trustees are still working towards a CAT which will be for the Mart building and the museum paddock. We had to carry out a repair to one of the beams above us here in the ring earlier in the year and have suffered from water coming into the schoolroom and farmhouse kitchen caused by a poor repair to the gutter above causing it to overflow into the building. That of course is the problem of working with a building that is nearly 120 years old, I often wonder what the design life was of the building, I think I can safely say it would have probably been less than half of what it has achieved so far.

As far as the contents of the museum are concerned we have changed last years New Performance Fordson Tractors for a pair of Nuffields and we also have a Ferguson Model A or as it is often known a Fergie Brown in the back shed next to the television which is showing a film made we believe by Barclay Ross and Huchinson which shows a demonstration of the said Ferguson model A, if you have not seen the film please do take a look as it is a very interesting piece of social history as well as being an interesting film on tractors if you are a tractor enthusiast.

The other extra display are the models of a threshing scene which is set up opposite the railway, these are just some of the models we were generously given by their makers Alan and Moira Morrison last year.

As part of our ongoing programme of changes and improvements to displays the ROC or War Room has been redisplayed as well as being catalogued. Whilst talking about cataloguing the Trustees have decided to go for museum accreditation and we will be working towards this over the next few years.

There have been quite a few minor additions to the collection, such as the sales ledgers from Keig shop and we are constantly trying to improve both the displays and also the signage that goes with it, to hopefully improve the visitor experience.

Last year we held a good range of events and we are doing that again this year, we have the annual tractor run on Sun 9th June and the first of 2 fairs on Sun 23rd June which will be our biggest fair yet in terms of stalls so we are hoping for lots of public support, with that in mind there are piles of posters for both the tractor run and fair on the front desk, can I ask anyone who has somewhere to put a poster up to please take one or more and put them up to publicise the events. We also have another Allan Taylor concert planned for Thu 25th July with a second fair on Sunday 1st September a repeat of the model exhibition day on Sun 15th

September and we finish the season with a Steam and Stationary engine day on Sunday 27th October.

Unfortunately, we are losing a very good volunteer in Lloyd Dixon who having finished University is off to start a job in Barrow in Furness unfortunately Lloyd is not here tonight as he is currently touring Europe. Sue Taylor one of our trustees is also standing down. I know we are all going to miss Sue as she very much ran the museum doing all the secretarial work and much more besides, she is however going to continue as a volunteer, we have a little thankyou here for Sue if she would like to come up and collect it.

Can I ask you all to bear with us as we all work without Sue's guidance as it will take us a bit of time to change how we work without someone effectively manning the museum office.

Can I now thank all the volunteers who help us be it manning the front desk when we are open or working behind the scenes because we could not do it without you.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees who all put in many hours of work for the good of the museum and of course all of the supporters be they Friends of the Museum or just general supporters for the interest you all show in the museum, I would also like to thank our sponsors who have put up money to help with the running of the museum, you will see all their names up on the sponsors board above the front desk.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who have come here tonight, I hope you have all enjoyed your evening and I look forward to seeing you at our events during the year.

Thomas Jackson, Chair