

**STORNOWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

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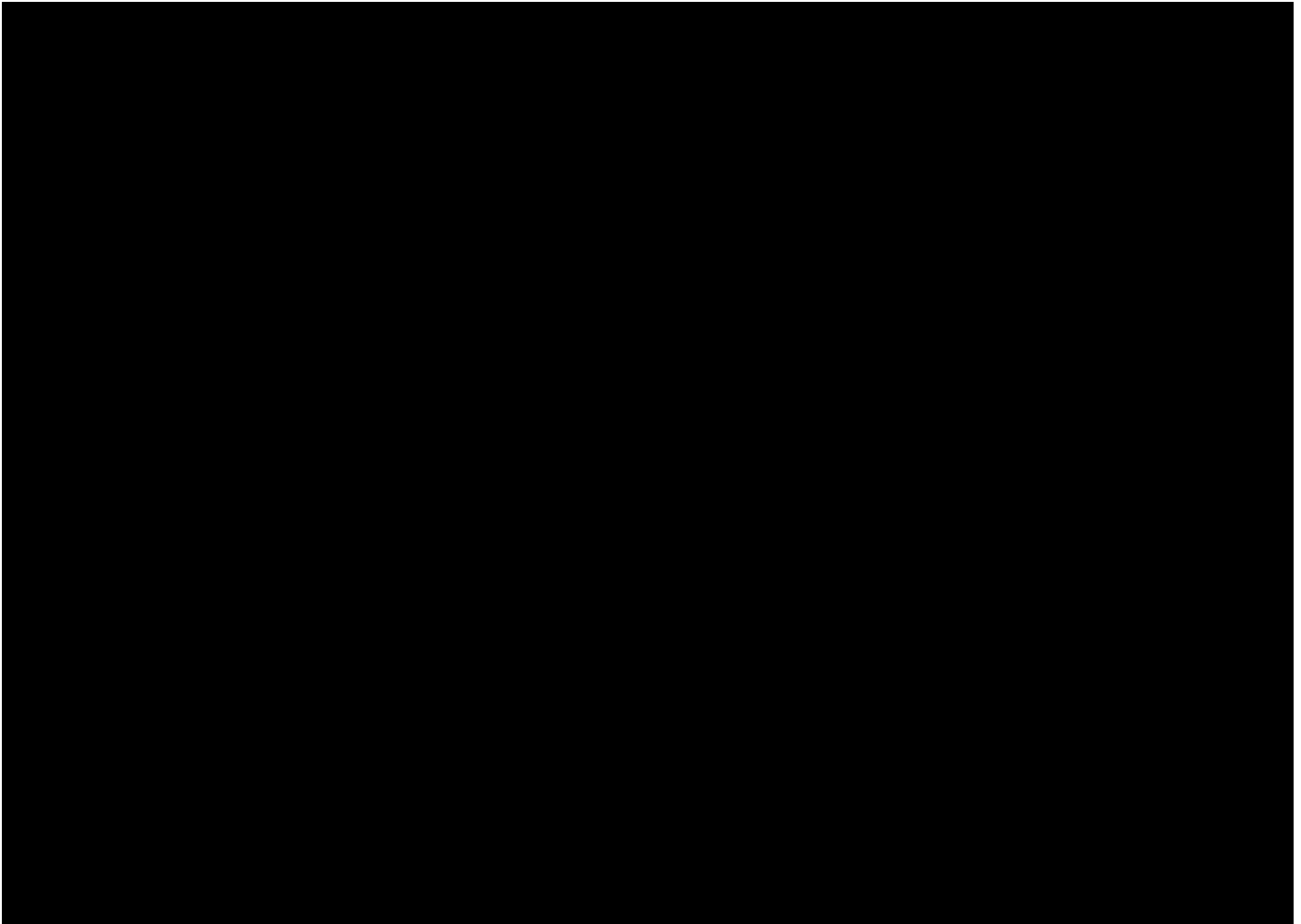
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STORNOWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Scottish Charity Number: SC023424



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Society is an unincorporated association and is operated under the terms of its constitution. The Society was formed in 1992 and was registered as a charity with effect from 7 March 1995.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The management of the Society is the responsibility of the office bearers and council members who are elected or re-elected under the terms of the constitution by the Society's members at the Annual General Meeting which is held in March each year. The Society's council members are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable purposes

The objects of the Society are to advance the education of the public about the history, heritage and culture of Stornoway and the Island of Lewis.

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Summary of main activities

The year was dominated by the summer exhibition which commemorated 150 years of the RNLI, and we did this by highlighting the services provided around the island over the years by the Stornoway Lifeboat, with its iconic Lifeboat Guild, and Coastguard. The exhibition was the result of a productive and enjoyable partnership between SHS and our local lifeboat station. Feedback indicated that the visitor experience was appreciated by the services and visitors alike.

FINANCE

Over the year income received from donations at the exhibition and the Winter Series of Lectures was gratefully received. The Treasurer sought out grants covered in the financial statements and these included sums awarded by the Crown Estate Fund, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway Trust, Pentland Power, Lewis Wind Power, and CnES Councillors' Ward Fund. The latter award helped pay up computer upgrades and licences while the other grants helped with salaries and overheads. Membership has remained healthy. The support from the membership and the community is much appreciated by the committee during difficult economic times where we are having to increase our membership rates.

EXHIBITION

During the month of March and again during the summer months, the Society held an exhibition in our main office to commemorate 200 Years of the RNLI by displaying photographs, artefacts, models, mannequins, parchments, medals and family trees associated with Stornoway Lifeboat Station since 1887. Much work, especially from our ladies went into preparing for the event which was staffed by our committee, our members and RNLI members. With the new deep water harbour open, many interested and interesting visitors from all over the world paid us a visit. A total of 2,890 visitors were recorded.

EMPLOYEES

The Society, as an approved Gateway organisation, has been able to continue the employment of an Apprentice Archivist from 2022. Initially the employee was engaged for six months (25 hours per week) under the Government's Kickstart Scheme. Since then a donor provided money to engage the employee for a further six months. The Society has then sourced further income to keep the post filled and the Apprentice Archivist continues to make inroads into cataloguing the Society's files, photographs and artefacts. He has signed up to start a Modern Apprentice Scheme with Museum Galleries Scotland. This is a most welcome outcome for the post-holder and for the Society. The Society recruited a cleaner for the offices (1 hour per week) from the first week of January 2022. She works out of hours but the work is greatly appreciated.

DISPLAY & STORAGE SPACE

Our main book stock, cabinets, tables and many other items not required immediately, are located in Marybank Depot within an unused office in a heated portacabin. This followed discussions with CnES to find storage. This enabled the Society to hold the RNLI exhibition in the summer of 2024. The Society also has a collection stored in the Marybank Depository.

OFFICE

A "new" second-hand photocopier/printer has been networked to serve our five workstations. Office costs include £1,000 per annum for licenses and Adobe Software and there are also fees for our website, etc. Nevertheless, apart from the Apple Mac computer the four other Society computers are getting old and require replacing.

A "Doors Open Day" was held on 21st September in conjunction with a Scottish initiative.

A series of five talks by the Honorary Presiden [REDACTED] s now on You Tube. We thank [REDACTED] (interviewer) and [REDACTED] (camera/sound).

Two recording devi [REDACTED] d by [REDACTED] they have already been in action recording [REDACTED] memories. Three of the Society's committee undertook this invaluable work of recording oral his

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PUBLICATIONS

SY Gone By, the Society's bi-annual magazine continues to sell over 700 copies a year. Printed by Tradeprint in Dundee, costs of paper have risen considerably and postage has soared causing the Society to raise membership fees, which, with advertising, help to make the printing costs economical.

The most recent book, *A Considerable Town*, a monumental and superbly illustrated work about the built heritage of Stornoway has now sold half of the print run and is now in profitability.

PROJECTS

The recording of memorial inscriptions at New Sandwick Cemetery was completed by the Chairman in 2020 and we hope to make the information available to the public in due course. We are seeking funding to undertake this.

One of the Old Sandwick Cemetery booklets published over 20 years ago exhausted the stock and we have reprinted 100 copies.

Optical character recognition (OCR) was undertaken by the late Ian MacIennan on the book *Old Stornoway Revisited* by [REDACTED]. Work is required to collate this and reprint this book which sold out in 2002.

We are happy to report that all of the Journals and *Sy Gone By* magazines are now digitised.

Work continues in digitising our stock of old Valuation Rolls as the paper copies are now very fragile.

(All these projects are very time consuming as one can imagine!)

TRAINING AND SEMINARS

The Community Archives & Heritage Group, Heritage Network Forum, Archive Focus Group and a Digital Archive meeting were held during the year and attended by committee members.

SCHOOLS

The Archivist played a significant part in the publication of The Nicolson Institute History book. Due to pressures on the committee through exhibition preparation we were unable to participate in the Dileab Project about Lord Leverhulme.

WINTER SERIES OF LECTURES

In January we hosted [REDACTED] who set the RNLI Project off to a good start by delivering The History of the Stornoway Lifeboat Station. [REDACTED] delivered a lecture on the Gibson letters of over 1 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] gave a talk on the Harris Tweed Industry in March after the AGM. In October [REDACTED] covered the centenary of the Lewis War Memorial with the history of the building and plaques. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] talked with vigour and humour about Classic Cars in November.

OTHER TALKS

The Chairman gave a talk about the *Iolaire* to Paicr Historical Society. Over the year three talks were delivered to Befrienders by different committee members and the Society has also contributed to the monthly Sporting Memories group.

MUSEUM NAN EILEAN

The Society contributed on loan, five artefacts for display at the Museum which opened in 2016.

The Museum also requested for use *A Timeline for the Lews Castle and Seaforth Lodge* which had appeared in *SY Gone By*.

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DUN EISDEAN

With the closure of both Dun Berisay and Dun Eisdéan, and the opening of the new home Taigh Shìphoir, the connection that Dun Eisdéan had with the **SS Norge** tragedy in 1904 has effectively closed. In 2006 a bench was erected to commemorate a centenary visit by relatives of the victims and survivors of the sinking of the emigrant ship near Rockall. Dun Eisdéan was built close to Coulregreigh House where the survivors were treated in 1904. Sadly the bench collapsed last year but the Himalayan Birch tree (*Betula utilis jacquemontii*) planted at the time, has thrived. SHS liaised with the new developers of the former Dun Eisdéan who have replanted the tree not far from its original site. The tree remains in Stornoway as testimony to the people from Scandinavia, Russia, Poland and afar who had sought a new life in the Americas 120 years ago.

NAMING OF DEVELOPMENTS

The Society continues to be consulted regarding the names of new developments and streets.

OTHER BODIES

During 2024 the Society consulted with or was represented on the following bodies: Sustainable Communities Group, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway Library, Museum nan Eilean, Tasglann nan Eilean, Stornoway Trust, Harris Tweed Authority, UHI, Highlands & Islands Assessors, Sportscotland, Heritage Network Forum, 150th Anniversary of The Nicolson Institute, Point & Sandwick Trust, Stornoway Community Council, Iolaire Centre Group, and other historical societies.

PROPOSED IOLAIRE CENTRE

In 2024 the Society met with members of the proposed Iolaire Centre. This included *Event*, a design consultancy company. They wished to evaluate thoughts, ideas, perceptions on the proposals made to date towards the Centre. *Event* have previously designed the Titanic Centre in Belfast and the Burrell Collection building in Glasgow.

ANNIE JANE PROJECT

The Society helped to co-ordinate and oversee finances for the project. This event, choreographed by local singer [REDACTED], saw Scots and Irish singers, musicians and dancers (including local artistes) perform in the Hebrides and Ireland. Many of the *Annie Jane* victims were Irish.

LEWIS CHEMICAL WORKS

SSEN Transmission, upon consultation, received feedback from a range of stakeholders, including the landowner, the Stornoway Trust, elected members, Marybank and Maryhill Community Association, the Stornoway Historical Society, the Stornoway Angling Association, local crofters and other local community interest groups and members. Our Archivist helped to ensure that the proposed site of a HVDC Connector Station and Sub Station at Creed North was abandoned and the site of the Lewis Chemical Works was saved from this project. Another site has been pursued by SSEN.

ENQUIRIES BY EMAIL/LETTER, ETC

We dealt with 78 mail inquiries (115 in 2023), plus 19 (15) on Facebook. Several of these involve research and follow ups. Facebook likes in 2024 came to 97 (122). Facebook followers have gone up to 3,420 (3,172) and visitors have reduced to 13,597 (13,905).

The Chair has dealt with 30 (20) enquiries sent directly to him. These enquiries do not include enquiries from other Comunn Eachdraidh, from CnES staff or the above bodies. No charge is made for this service.

There has been a continuing media use of the Society for research purposes and for photograph acquisition. The Society charges £20 each for the first four copies and £15 per additional copy. The Archivist deals with these requests. The above figures do not record these enquiries. Neither do they cover all dealings with management, contractors, etc.

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WEBSITE

The website is currently being updated. It first went live 22 years ago this year. It has continued to deliver to the world with 25,824 hits (22,224). There were 80,156 page views (no comparable figure available). Site visitors are now able to purchase membership and publications online through a PayPal and Credit Card feature.

YOU TUBE

Lectures appear on You Tube and these have received favourable comments from all over the world. You Tube channel subscribers in the year amounted to 570 (457) with 17,587 video views (11,372).

FACEBOOK

Facebook followers number 3,420 (3,172) and Facebook page visitors were 13,597 (13,905)

COMMITTEE

The committee worked hard behind the scenes to deliver our Exhibition and *SY Gone By*. Many of the committee members have turned out regularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays to research and work on the exhibition.

[REDACTED] joined the committee in May 2024. It was deemed appropriate to reduce the committee by two places in compliance with the Society's Constitution which stipulates conditions pertaining to the committee numbers, so no further appointments were made.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership has been sustained throughout another difficult year. Considerable work was undertaken by the Membership Secretary to set up and manage membership records on Excel; and a mail merge for labels for the delivery of *SY Gone By* addresses has helped administration considerably. As at December there was a total of 269 individual and family memberships. This was an increase of 8 on the previous year.

ARCHIVES

The archive continues to grow considerably. At the end of 2024 the number of items catalogued exceeded 12,000.

REMEMBRANCE

A Society wreath is laid at the Lewis War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Summary of main achievements

During the year, the Society continued to be instrumental in raising awareness of the general public to the need to preserve all aspects of the town's early and most recent history. The Society actively participated in the presentation of information on the town through exhibitions, public lectures and publications. The Society also continued to maintain, preserve and add to its collection and archive.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

The Society finances remain relatively strong and membership has remained healthy. The support from the membership and the community is much appreciated by the committee during difficult economic times.

As a result of the surplus of £14,726 for the year (2023 - deficit of £3,765) unrestricted funds have increased to £8,351 (2023 - £5,657) and restricted funds have increased to £15,627 (2023 - £3,595).

The trustees consider that the level of free reserves in unrestricted funds held at 31 December 2024 is sufficient to meet the Society's ongoing operational requirements and enable the charity to continue with its activities for the forthcoming year.

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Reserves policy

The general fund represents unrestricted funds from past operating results not yet utilised. It also represents the free reserves of the charity. The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the charity and consider that three months operating expenditure, which equates to £9,000, should be held in unrestricted reserves. This would allow the charity to continue to operate in the event of an interruption in its income streams and the unrestricted reserves held at 31 December 2024 is in line with this target. Funds are also raised for specific projects as required.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the trustee.

Date: 31 March 2025

STORNOWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total funds £	31.12.23 Total funds £
Receipts				
Donations	670	-	670	235
Grants	1,470	32,000	33,470	39,790
Subscriptions	3,966	-	3,966	2,975
Gross receipts from other charitable activities	11,744	-	11,744	20,169
Income from investments other than land and buildings	27	-	27	33
Total receipts	<u>17,877</u>	<u>32,000</u>	<u>49,877</u>	<u>63,202</u>
Payments				
Payments relating directly to charitable activities	13,956	19,968	33,924	66,044
Governance costs:				
Accountancy fees	672	-	672	420
Payroll fees	375	-	375	323
Legal and professional fees	180	-	180	180
Total payments	<u>15,183</u>	<u>19,968</u>	<u>35,151</u>	<u>66,967</u>
Net (payments) receipts	2,694	12,032	14,726	(3,765)
Transfers to (from) funds	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) for year	<u>2,694</u>	<u>12,032</u>	<u>14,726</u>	<u>(3,765)</u>

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**STATEMENT OF BALANCES
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total funds £	31.12.23 Total funds £
Bank and cash in hand				
Opening balances	5,657	3,595	9,252	13,017
Surplus/(deficit) for year	2,694	12,032	14,726	(3,765)
Closing balances	8,351	15,627	23,978	9,252
Reserves				
General fund	8,351	-	8,351	5,657
Restricted funds	-	15,627	15,627	3,595
Closing balances	8,351	15,627	23,978	9,252

Approved by the Trustees on 31 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

[Redacted Signature Area]

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total £	31.12.23 Total £
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Membership grant	350	-	350	-
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Ward Priority Fund	1,120	-	1,120	2,400
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Crown Estate Funding	-	24,000	24,000	24,000
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Bord na Gaidhlig grant	-	-	-	8,000
The Stornoway Trust - Wind Farm Grant Scheme	-	7,000	7,000	-
LWP Sponsorship Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
Point and Sandwick Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Bakkafrost Scotland	-	-	-	390
	1,470	32,000	33,470	39,790

2. Gross receipts from other charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total £	31.12.23 Total £
Newsletter and publications	5,801	-	5,801	12,407
Lectures and exhibitions	4,654	-	4,654	4,837
Images and photographs	310	-	310	780
Consultancy work	-	-	-	1,182
Employment Allowance	854	-	854	854
Other income	125	-	125	109
	11,744	-	11,744	20,169

3. Income from investments other than land and buildings

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total £	31.12.23 Total £
Bank account interest	27	-	27	33

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4. Payments relating directly to charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.24 Total £	31.12.23 Total £
Newsletter and publications	4,616	-	4,616	13,247
Exhibitions and events	24	117	141	25,219
Projects	-	3,478	3,478	4,405
Wages	-	16,102	16,102	16,154
Pensions	-	271	271	271
Premises costs	5,578	-	5,578	3,864
Repairs and renewals	428	-	428	689
Equipment	215	-	215	435
Cleaning expenses	631	-	631	550
Insurance	603	-	603	370
Postages, printing and stationery	770	-	770	526
Website expenses	144	-	144	120
Donations	720	-	720	-
Sundry expenses	25	-	25	103
Bank charges	199	-	199	88
Interest payable	3	-	3	3
	<u><u>13,956</u></u>	<u><u>19,968</u></u>	<u><u>33,924</u></u>	<u><u>66,044</u></u>

5. Trustees remuneration and expenses

The trustees did not receive any remuneration or expenses during the year.

6. Nature and purpose of funds

General fund

The general fund represents unrestricted funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charitable objects.

Restricted funds

This represents funds received from public funding agencies and trusts for a specified purpose.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF STORNOWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages seven to ten.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity's trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations
- have not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



CIB Services
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Date: 2 June 2025