LS/FB/FC/21 AGM

RBLS FORFAR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
7th FEBUARY 2021 at 2PM

Silent Tribute: Rev Maggie Hunt.

Attendance: 16

Apologies for Absence: Sadie & Dave Gillespie, Jacqui Law, Stuart & Jenny Thom, Linda Wilkie, Barbara Adam.

Welcome: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the zoom meeting. There were 16 members attending.

Matters arising from 2020 AGM Minutes: No matters arose.

Minutes Were Certified as a True Account:

Proposed by: Andy Law - **Seconded by:** Barry Robbins - **Carried**: Yes

Chairman & Secretaries Report - Margaret Brown: The chairman stated she would be combining the two reports. (Report Attached).

Bookkeepers Report – Alison Ross: MB stated that unfortunately, Alison is ill and unable to provide accounts at this time. She reminded the members that Alison has had an uphill struggle since taking over as Bookkeeper from the previous bookkeeper in Oct/Nov 2019.

Alison is working hard and getting there, she did send a balance of accounts for the previous year for both the Branch and the Club in October to the relevant authorities as well as us. The trouble has been that although monies had gone through the bank, there was nothing paper-wise that Alison can 'match up'. She was not handed any cheque book stubs ect, hence she her catching up with things and going forward, Alison has said that she will have a Balance sheet by the next Committee meeting on the 1st March in which the Accounts will be ratified before sending forward to HQ and the Area Treasurer.

MB read out the latest Bank Statements as at 7 February 2021:

	2020/2021	**2019/2020**
Branch Current Account:	£3.216.12	£127.17
Branch Savings Account:	£2,251,63	N/A
Total:	£5.467.75	£127.17
Club Current Account:	£2.251.63	£1.754.07
Club Savings Account.	£1.887.82	N/A
Total:	£4.139.45	£1.754.07

MB stated that it is not a vast amount, but after all the refurbishments ect, you can see we are going the right way, and this is due to all the hard work from the Committee and Volunteers.

Proposed by: Andy Law - **Seconded by:** Barrie Robbins Carried: Yes

Property – Andy Law: MB thanked Andy for all the good work that he has been doing and for project managing the refurbishment of the men's toilet's ect. **Report Attached**

IT: **Radar (Michael Hayes):** MB introduced Radar and stated that he has been working behind the scenes during lockdown, on various aspects of IT. **Report Attached.**

Area Welfare – Peter Kerr: MB introduced Peter who is a Forfar Member and is also the Unforgotten Forces Co-ordinator. **Report Attached.**

Branch Welfare – Margaret Brown: To date there has been no uptake on welfare from any of our members or veterans. CB stated that in over 20 odd years, we have only had 3 requests for welfare support, and they were many years ago. Branch Padre advised that at this time, due to the pandemic, we wouldn't be able to visit any homes just now. Maggie Hunt said that she would like to help with any welfare cases if and when they arise and providing its safe to do so. Peter Kerr is also available for support and advice where necessary.

Catering - Dave & Sadie Gillespie: MB thanked Dave and Sadie for the amazing work they have done and are continuing to do. **Report attached.**

Sports – Andy Law: Report attached.

Bar Report – Chair: No report at this time but MB, as Bar Convenor, updated the meeting. Unfortunately, Jemima is caring for her parents at present who are quite frail. Her mother recently came out of hospital. MB praised Jemima (Bar Manager) and her staff, Jo and Gillian for their hard work and diligence, especially doing table service during Tier 2 & Tier 3 of the Pandemic. This allowed us to open the beer garden. As we have a public licence, the bar staff had a booking in system which ran well. The ladies walked miles, with their coats on, serving at tables. At the beginning, they took a few insults when the 'clients' wanted to walk to the toilets. They had to be reminded of the one-way system that was in operation. Also, a few insults when they were asked to leave due to the time curfew. It wasn't anything they couldn't handle. They worked extremely hard and at this time, only opening on Fridays, Saturday's and Sunday's was quite enough for them. Many thanks Ladies.

Entertainment – Barry Robbins/Anna Wright. MB thanked Barry for all the work that he has put in so far although, none of it has come to fruition due to COVID-19 19. **Report Attached.**

Bingo – Ian Harris: No report. MB thanked Ian and his team for the continual support that they have given to both the Branch and the Club. In 2020, the money bought a new Chill Cabinet for the Bar and a 2nd Hand Glass Washer which is a God Send for the Bar Staff. MB also thanked all those that attend the Bingo sessions as without there attendance, there would be no donations.

Saturday Bingo/Funeral Teas: Christine Skinner: There was a report on the last minutes. Nothing else to report at this time.

Women's Section – Linda Wilkie: Linda was unable to attend the zoom meeting but provided a **report** which is **attached.**

Forfar Legion President, Charlie Brown, 'took the chair' and proceeded with the Election of Office Bearers.

Election of Office Bearers: Due to COVID-19 19, the Election of Office Bearers form was put in every envelope and was either Hand Delivered, Posted or emailed out to all our members. Apart from those attending the zoom meeting, only 2 other members, sent in their votes. So, apart from those 2 votes plus the members attending the meeting, the results are as follows:

President: Charlie Brown remains president as it is a 3-year tenure.

Honoury Life Vice President: Tommy Roache. Selected at the 2020 AGM.

Charlie Brown Proposed Doug Skinner as Honorary Life Vice President.

Fiona Gilillin Seconded the motion. Carried. Yes

Branch/Club Chairman: Margaret Brown.

Proposed by Fiona Nicholson – Seconded by Michael Hayes (Radar) - Carried. Yes

Branch/Club Vice Chairman: Andy Law.

Proposed by Barry Robbins – Seconded by Fiona Gilillin – Carried. Yes

Branch/Club Secretary: Margaret Brown.

Proposed by Barry Robbins – Seconded by Fiona Gilillin - Carried. Yes

MB then suggested that maybe Radar would like to be Secretary! Radar said he would like that. The president, Charlie Brown, then suggested that as MB had all the relevant Legion knowledge and experience and Radar is keen, has the IT ability that he become the Assistant Secretary! It was also agreed that Radar support Alison with the bookkeeping. The decisions were carried unanimously.

The President also suggested that our latest Committee member, Paul Feltham, who has shown great interest in supporting the Branch/Club, should also get the opportunity to assist with a post. Paul is interested in media so will assist Radar as necessary.

BRANCH/CLUB COMMITTEE:

President: Charlie Brown - **Honoury Life Vice Presidents**: Tommy Roache & Doug Skinner

Chairwoman: Margaret Brown

Vice Chairman: Andy Law

Treasurer: Radar (Michael Hayes) – **Bookkeeper**: Alison Ross

Secretary: Margaret Brown – **Assisted By**: Radar (Michael Hays)

IT: Radar (Michael Hays) – **Assisted By**: Paul Feltham

Property: Andy Law

Welfare: Margaret Brown – Rev Maggie Hunt

Sports: Andy Law

Catering: Dave & Sadie Gillespie

Bar Convenor: Barry Robbins

Entertainments: Barry Robbins and Anna Wright

Bingo: Ian Harris

Gardener: Charlie Brown

Steve Reid

Jacquie Law

Fiona Gilillin

A brief discussion on the forthcoming LS Centenary. TBD at the next normal meeting on Mon 8th March 2021

Nothing further to discuss, the meeting finished at 15.20.

Date of next AGM: Sunday 16 January 2022

Margaret Brown

Forfar Branch/Club Secretary

07530380545

CHAIRMAN/SECRETARIES REPORT:

Good afternoon everyone and thank you all so much for giving up some of your afternoon.

It has been one awful year with the Covid-19 Pandemic. I sincerely hope that everyone is well and safe?

Unfortunately, we have lost a quite a few members during the past year, none that I am aware of through COVID-19 though. Either way, our thoughts and prayers go out to all their families and friends. Although we have a Welfare system, no one has come forward and asked for any help! Please remember we are still here for support!

We started off 2020 on a really good footing with the diary filling up, especially with hall hires. Barry, the entertainments Convenor, had done a really good job in getting bands for every month. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be for 2020. Barry will tell you more in his report.

We also managed to secure an 'Armed Forces Covenant Grant' of £22.200 in order to get the male toilets refurbished, which, for those who have seen them, must agree that they look amazing! The grant was established in Nov 2019, but due to ongoing work, the Contractor couldn't start until the spring 2020. COVID-19 appeared, and work had to be put on hold. Jim Donaldson, the contractor, started work with a vengeance and did an outstanding job.

We also managed to sort out a few other things, but I will leave that to Andy, our property manager to tell you about them in his report.

It has cost a small fortune in paying out for PPE and other associated items as well.

From 23 March, like all other hospitality places, Forfar Legion closed its doors until September. The bills were still arriving and was 'saved' by receiving a Small Business Grant from the Government of £10.000. It was well received, especially as the Refurbishment was estimated at £22.200, unfortunately, we didn't take into consideration, the £4.500 VAT plus the other very important safety issues that arose with things that required to be done. This took us way over our budget and things were looking really dire. We had thought about taking out a bank loan to see us through, however, we were extremely fortunate to have 2 very generous members who loaned us £7.000 between them, a £2.000 and a £5.000 interest free loan's, respectively. We are hoping to repay both loans by the summer. Both members wish to remain anonymous. On behalf of Forfar Legion, I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart, as the loans got us out of a hole. Many thanks again to both of them.

The Legion opened again near the end of September. Fortunately, we have 3 amazing bar staff that have done an amazing job doing table service, In all weathers, in the beer garden. Jemima (Bar Manager), Jo and Gillian. Being 1 of only a few businesses that were able to operate due to having a beer garden, the 3 days that we were open, Fri's, Sat's & Sun's, went like a fair. We were making more money on those 3 days than we were before the whole weeks before the Pandemic. The other good thing that was significant, was that we now have approx. 30 new members. As we have a public bar licence, people from other pubs were booking and coming in. Most didn't realise that we had a beer garden and some, hadn't even been in the Legion before.

We need you, the membership, to help by telling your friends and family about us and letting them know that although our main interest, from the Branch is Welfare, Comradeship and Remembrance, and that will never, we also have a Club side of things, which is very important too.

The Club is the business and has to make money in order to support the Branch. This is done by the Club paying rent to the Branch (£600 a month) and from membership fees.

Forfar has the cheapest membership fees in Angus. That being £17 for members 65 and over and £23 for under 65's. The other Legion Clubs in Angus go up to £28. Montrose Branch members £28 regardless of age. Next year, I personally think that we should up Forfar's membership by £1 to help with our finances. But that will be up to the next committee and I hope it won't put the existing membership off as we hope to have many exciting things happen this year.

However, we hope to offset this by introducing a membership card for the bar, in time. This is ongoing and we require the expert help of one of newest members and committee member, Radar, to get this off the ground. His technology is second to none. Radar will be introduced in a short while and he can tell you all that he can offer, although he has done a lot behind the scenes since he has joined.

Although we have been limited in what we can do, the one thing that we have also been doing, when we were allowed to be open that is, is catering. Dave and Sadie Gillespie's Monday Community Breakfast, £3 per person, has gone down a storm. Having over 40 people attending throughout the morning (still socially distancing ect). More and more people are getting to know about it. The public come in through the front door and exit out the back door. Everyone is safe.

Sadie, Dave and the amazing volunteers that are now helping them on a Monday, do an outstanding job. Just as well D & S enjoy what they are do. They even organised a 2 Course Christmas Dinner. 36 members attended, suitably suited and booted and sat down for their meal, surrounded by our huge xmas tree and decorated hall, to a tasty, hot Christmas dinner. Our sincere thanks go out to them and our amazing volunteers and the vast amount of money that they have made for us.

Just as well attended, is the 3 weekly veterans' breakfast, cooked by Charlie Brown, along with his numerous helpers in the kitchen. Front of house is just the same, volunteers who make sure the people get a good hot breakfast for their £5.

Some of the 'catering' volunteers, Jacqui, Fiona and Samantha, have also done an amazing job deep cleaning the legion on various occasions and refreshing all the paintwork throughout the legion.

I can't thank the Committee and the Volunteers enough. I'm sure that you, the volunteers, all know, or should know how much your support and commitment is appreciated. I do know that the volunteers also get something out of helping, apart from a free breakfast, they like helping the members and the community. Thank you all again, we couldn't manage without you and hope you all come back when we are allowed to open again.

The Legion President, Charlie Brown, is often complimented on his work in the Memorial Garden. It is our pride and pleasure to keep it looking so good. We were hoping to have a fence/wall around the garden instead of the 'fencing' but it costs too much. About 10 years ago, Mick McKeown, got estimates for the wall, it appears that £10,000 was quoted. We couldn't afford that, and any funding and future funding should be directed to the internal side of the Legion, such as new doors and a new kitchen dishwasher. These will be for the new committee to sort out but watch this space for more fundraising once we open. Well done to Charlie who really enjoys his job. I say he has his eyes, but it should be we, for the Beer Garden. I've been looking for funding for this. The beer garden requires a complete

overhaul, new all-round fencing, flooring, decking ect. Also, to make it more accessible to the disabled community.

The committee have still managed quite a few meetings this year. The Legion may be closed but work is definitely still going on behind the scenes.

There are so many people to thank for their support and hard work, not just during 2020 but which has been ongoing. Christine Skinner for her funeral teas. Sadie and Dave have also supported Christine by doing some whilst Christine was incapacitated.

Also, Christine started up a once-a-month Saturday Bingo which went down very well until it was stopped in its tracks by the Pandemic. Christine hopes to re-establish the Sat Bingo this year.

Kate Nelson, not just our cleaner but another staunch fundraiser. Kates knitting of poppies, dolls of various sorts, has been amazing. Thank you, Kate.

Christine and Kate also contribute by selling raffle tickets, knitted items etc, taking door money for Veterans Breakfast and the Coffee Mornings.

Dodd Nelson has also contributed by providing fantastic bottles of spirits such as Rum and Whisky. Both to make money from the nips and for the main bottle of Pussers Rum which was raffled and made a £100.

Ian Harris, our resident Bingo Caller and organiser who constantly provides donations to us. One such donation provided a new Drinks Chiller and a 2nd hand Glass washer for the bar. Thank you, Ian, your volunteers and your bingo players. It is very much appreciated.

Volunteers, Members and friends who have donated raffle prizes and the members who have donated money. Ranging from sending in their membership fees and rounding them off to offer a donation and to the 2 anonymous gentlemen who both contributed £500 each. We can't thank you enough. Everyone's generosity has been amazing.

I apologise if I have missed anyone out. Every day is like Groundhog Day at the moment. Each day merging into the next.

One last thing. We are trying to get as many email addresses for our members as possible. This way we can send you any updates that we have and inform you of what is happening. You pay your membership so it's only fair that you know what's going on.

If you don't already know, this year the Royal British Legion Scotland, The Royal British Legion and Poppy Scotland, are all commemorating 100 years.

We in Forfar, who also claim that we are the oldest, existing branch, will certainly commemorate this huge event. Hopefully in the spring. More details to follow.

Once again, Huge, sincere thanks to everyone who is a member, who volunteers, in which ever capacity, for all your support. We wouldn't exist without you.

Many, many thanks.

Margaret Brown

PROPERTY REPORT.

Towards the end of the first lockdown, refurbishment of the gent's toilets started. We received a £22,000 Grant from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund with which we totally refurbished our Male toilets and partially refurbished the Ladies toilets. All went well until it came to the gents' floor. It took weeks to dry out before the non-slip covering could be laid.

Work was also done behind the bar, fitting a new sink, replacing the sink drainpipes and fitting in of a Glasses Washer. A small part of the bar floor and shelf support had to be replaced due to water damage. A door has been fitted to secure the dry storage area. We also had a 5-year electrical check done on the whole of the building. All electrical equipment has been PAT tested.

Two repairs were carried out on the flat roof coverings. A damaged area has been repaired on the lower roof at a small cost. The other repair was locating a long-standing water leak into the bar during heavy rain. This was traced to a nail head breaching the covering at the end of a drain gully on the top roof. This has been repaired under warranty. Redecoration has been carried out in the Foyer, Hall and bar areas. Thanks to all those involved.

Overhead coverings and heating were deployed in the bear garden for the enjoyment of the bar patrons during cold nights during tier three lockdown.

SPORTS REPORT.

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and its restrictions all Area Sports had to be postponed.
Local Sports – We have two domino teams and a pool team competing in the local leagues. Domino A team finished top of the B league and should be promoted when the leagues can continue. All other league competitions were unable to come to a conclusion due to the virus restrictions.

GAMING – The Simms Gaming Machine had been running at a loss for some time when taking in the cost of the gaming license. Another machine has been sourced with a split of profits agreed with the vender. Although this is an older machine there is little overall cost to the club.

Andy Law

Property and sports convener

CATERING REPORT

Since January and up to December2020 (including our 6-month absence due to COVID-19 19), the café and any other catering that we have done has allowed us to give the Club £2,572.64.

Apologies for not making the zoom meeting.

We are happy to continue on the Branch/Club Committee to carry on Fundraising for the Club.

Thank you, **Sadie and David**.

ENTERTAINMENTS REPORT

As to date no entertainment has gone ahead due to COVID-19. The band's booked Jan and Feb 2021 have been cancelled and no cancelation fee is due.

We will take each month as it comes, we have a band booked in each month till the end of the year including Hogmanay. Any of the bands that need to be cancelled due to COVID-19___0 there will be no fee to do so. The bands are as follows 2021:

13th March- Abba Rivals

10th April- China Blue

8th May- Rita Riot

26th June- Ganked

17th July- Echo Beach

14th August- free for rebooking band

18th September- Freddy Mercury

9th October- free for rebooking band

20th November- Rat Pack

31st December- Echo Beach

Kids Christmas party will be the 5th December.

The new Social Prize Bingo will start one Tuesday each month when the club reopens (dates in the diary) Just want to point out it’s not the current club bingo this is separate, it's a new social prize bingo for the social side of the club.

If all goes well in spring there will be a spring fayre 9th May, summer fayre 18th July and a Christmas fayre 21st November.

Darts, pool and dominos games day will be organized, and a date will be confirmed when the club reopens, this will be an open games day for members and the general public.

Once the club reopens Ark will carry on with their speak out meetings which dates are in the diary.

We are planning a members and guest night which will be paid for by the social fund i.e., buffet and band. Giving something back to the members so they know that being a member is appreciated and not forgotten about. Hoping to have cheap drinks but will talk to the committee regarding this, this is a great opportunity to get new members. Also, I Barry Robbins put myself forward to be bar convenor.

Told MB that if Ian (Thursday Bingo) no longer wants to do bingo or needs help etc BR and AW will step in.

That's everything covered for the time being.

BARRY ROBBINS AND ANNA WRIGHT

FORFAR WOMEN'S SECTION

I hope this finds everyone safe and well. This has been a year that I don't think we will ever forget.

Not much to report as we have had no meetings since the beginning of March 2020.

We will resume again as soon as it is safe to do so. But I don't think it is going to be any time soon.

The majority of us are in the age bracket that have to take care.

Sadly, in April 2020 Annie Douglas passed away. She was our previous chairwoman who had that position for thirty plus years.

We will miss her as she was a big part of the women's section.

I just had a call this week to let me know May Balfour a member for many years sadly had died.

She had a big celebration about a year and a half ago, she reached her

100th birthday.

She also met the Count and Countess of Forfar around the same time.

Both women were full of life they loved to join in no matter what it was.

Hope we will get together soon.

Linda Wilkie

Chair/secretary

IT REPORT

I don't have that much to report today as some things are 'work in progress' but once completed we should be able to operate much more smoothly. Completed so far, QR Codes for Track and Trace (for use with mobile phones). Still working on the following:

- Forfar Legion Web Page
- Membership Excel Sheet
- Updating 2 Legion Lap-Tops. 1 for use in bar, 1 for use in the hall for T & T.
- BT Wifi Channel will be changed so that we get a stronger link.
- Andy Law will add an extension from the Router to the Epos Till.

'Radar' Hayes