

Watsonian President's Report – Open Meeting – 8 Feb 18

They say that 'time flies when you're enjoying yourself'. Well, when I sat down to write this report, I was somewhat surprised to realise that it was a year since I had taken over from Roy Mack as President. There are two aspects to that fact:

Firstly, Roy is a hard act to follow! There are few people associated with the school or the club over the past 48 years that have not met with, been supported by, or been made to laugh by Roy. Always committed and enthusiastic, we all hope he maintains his involvement with the Watsonian Club in the future. Thank you Roy.

The second aspect is that it has been an eventful and rewarding year, with plenty going on – more about that shortly.

I have a lot of people to thank, which I will do in the course of my report, but I would first like to mention Debs, my wife. Sadly Debs is not here this evening. With the Open Meeting today, Founder's Day tomorrow and our visiting French Veterans on Saturday, she felt three events was too much with her other commitments and could only do two. I was particularly disappointed to discover that she felt that tea with a group of French Rugby players and a talk from a distinguished and interesting former Ambassador put my report this evening into a distant third place! Perhaps next year.

It was a privilege to take over as Watsonian Club President in March 2017 and it has been a most rewarding experience so far. As you are aware, we have now moved to a two-year term for the President and Vice President with continuation into a second year subject to the same approval of Council as election.

APOLOGIES

Members were not invited to send apologies but I thought some of you would be interested that Lauchlin MacLean (a stalwart of the club) and Past President Douglas Buchanan sent their formal apologies.

BRANCHES

Dinners and lunches remain important to the Club and, since taking over, I have enjoyed Watsonian company in London, Yorkshire and, of course, here at Myreside. I am looking forward to linking with more branches during my tenure. Formats for these events evolve and we require to be flexible as we try to find the formulae that engage the highest number of members (Note the use of the word 'formulae' – 46 years after I completed three years of Latin, I've at last found an occasion to use it – thank goodness for a Watson's education!). The best organisations maintain a healthy respect for tradition whilst developing in an innovative way. My aim is to keep the Watsonian Club generally and particularly our social events in that bracket. I would like to record my personal thanks to all those who give up their time for our branches and who act as points of contact.

In UK we currently have branches or points of contact in Borders, South West England, Highland & Moray, Lancashire, London, Perth (women) and Yorkshire. Overseas we are in Australia (Sydney & Melbourne), Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa, South East Asia (Singapore), Spain and USA (East & West Coast).

The Principal and I have worked our way round most of those in UK, Melvyn is working his way round the overseas branches in the course of his duties flying the flag for the school. His engagement and visits to our branches, both at home and overseas, is much appreciated.

SPORTS SECTIONS

Our sports sections continue to do well. Many of us enjoy competing, or simply participating, in sports and activities under the Watsonian banner. Apart from the obvious benefits that sport and exercise bring, the sports sections are an excellent conduit for maintaining links between the school and former pupils, to the benefit of both. We are maintaining our bi-annual meetings with the sports sections and the school, with the aim of maintaining strong links and good communications. I have attended Awards Evenings for both the Football and the Rifle Clubs – the incredible array of trophies (National, Club and School) demonstrate the impressive talent we have.

Again, it would be dangerous to highlight individuals for fear of missing others out. One notable achievement is that of Sarah Wilson from the PE Department. Many will remember Sarah's outstanding contribution to the 2017 Dinner where we recognised her achievements including umpiring the bronze medal match at the Rio 2016 Olympics. Sarah has just been awarded the FiH 'Umpire of the Year' – an outstanding achievement. We wish her and David Sweetman all the best for the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast – for both Scotland's hockey umpires to be Watsonians is another outstanding achievement.

I have to be careful how I say this but we obviously produce good 'hookers' at Watson's. Stuart McNally is now a regular for Scotland Rugby, but it was also good to see that Lana Skeldon started on the bench for the Scotland Ladies XV v Wales this weekend as well. Emily Newlands is currently playing for Scotland Indoor Hockey team and we are hoping that Watsonians will be represented in both men's and women's hockey teams with Lucy Canmlin and Chris Grassick in contention. The hockey teams for Gold Coast 2018 teams are to be announced next week along with diving and one or two other sports – we are hoping that there may be one or two other athletes joining Zach Courtney who has been selected for weightlifting.

WATSONIAN COUNCIL

I would also like to record my thanks to the Watsonian Council. David Mieras has retired and was given a presentation prior to last year's open meeting as a demonstration of our appreciation for his many years sterling service. We miss Martin Macari's enthusiasm, common sense and humour following his passing last year. However, I've been delighted to welcome Tim Bunker (Class of 1974) and David Ferguson (Class of 1981) to Council. Both with strong Watson's connections, they have brought added value to our discussions. Finally, we have had excellent participation and input from our S6 representatives; Murray Tink and Julia Caldwell. Also thanks to my enthusiastic Vice President, Johnny Bacigalupo. Johnny cannot be here this evening but he has been most supportive and brought to council significant knowledge and experience of the Merchant Company, the Governing Council and the School.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Two events that stand out for me in the past year have been the Watsonian Dinner last March and the Sir Roger Young Tribute evening in the Music school. The former was not just notable for the good company, but also for the opportunity to showcase the talent of pupils and former pupils alike. The latter was a most appropriate event and our thanks go to another Watsonian stalwart, Rod Slater. His work for that event, the Highland & Moray Branch and other projects is much appreciated.

SIGNIFICANT OBITUARIES

It is always dangerous to list some names, risking offence to others, so my apologies in advance if I miss someone important out. I would appreciate it if you could please mention them in the course of the open discussion at the end of the meeting:

Sir Roger Young, Died 16 February 2017

Dr Catriona Collins (Cabin/Support for learning from 1965–94), Died 6 April 2017

George Strang (Former Biology teacher, 1980–1998), Died 25 March 2017

Leslie Mitchell (Former Vice Convenor of Merchant Co), Died 26 March 2017

Mike Barrie (Former President, Watsonian Rugby Club), Died 16 August 2017

Robin Morris (enthusiastic Watsonian participant), Died 4 February 2018)

Ian Geddes (former language teacher), Died 7 February 2018

REUNIONS

On a lighter and more positive note, seven reunions have taken place in the past year, attended by total of **347** former pupils – Class of 1997 had biggest turnout with 72 attendees. There have been 26 events (worldwide) with a total of **1,031** attendees.

SCHOOL

The relationship between the School and the Club is of great importance and we remain ready to support the school in any way we can. We continue to receive excellent support from the School and I would ask the principal to pass on that appreciation to his leadership team and the Governing Council. Current projects include the imminent Junior School Development Project (£7m) and the ongoing Campus Masterplan. The Principal will be available for questions at the end should members have issues of particular interest.

FINANCES

The funds for the Club are a healthy £ 38,285.08. New ways to utilise these funds are constantly under review at council.

BENEVOLENT FUND

Please continue to think about Watsonians who could benefit from this relatively modest Benevolent Fund. The Development Office is the first stop if you have any enquiries on this subject. I would like to thank Roger Smith, Alan Hartley and their small team for the good work that they quietly get on with.

REMEMBRANCE

2018 sees the five-year period of World War One commemorations coming to an end. Three events have been of particular significance to me. The addition of three names to the War Memorial, notably that of Daisy Coles, was a most appropriate event and the School Remembrance Day events once again demonstrated a balance between facts and personal stories. 2018 will see commemoration of two of our three VC winners, David McGregor and David McIntyre. We will endeavour to ensure that their Watsonian credentials are noted in any events.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

I would like to record my thanks to the team in the Development Office who continue to work hard in support of Watsonians worldwide, without them the President and Council simply could not function. Morven Skirving does an outstanding job keeping in touch with our disparate membership, always with great enthusiasm. It is, however, unfortunate to note that Lesley McKean has decided to take EARLY retirement later this year. Lesley will be sorely missed and has been a constant in the Development Office since its inception. We thank her for her commitment to the Watsonian Club.

INCORPORATION

I would like to note our appreciation to Keith Anderson and Adrian Bell for their advice in the planning of this item (Refer to Incorporation Note attached).

QUESTIONS

I would like to invite the Principal and Keith to join me, and invite you to ask any questions. Initially on Incorporation and then on any wider Watsonian or school matters

SUMMARY

My principal aim as President is to continue to develop ways of engaging with Watsonians around the world for the benefit of members and the school, and maximising the worldwide network of advice and support created by our thousands of former pupils.

Rob Heatly

President

Attachments:

1. Watsonian Club Incorporation Note
2. Watsonian Club Accounts 2016/17

WATSONIAN CLUB INCORPORATION – NOTE FOR THE OPEN MEETING – 8 FEBRUARY 2018

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

1. Incorporating the Watsonian Club as a legal entity to give clarity to the responsibilities of the Watsonian Council (as Directors of the Company).
2. Winding up the Myreside Club. In future, the School will run the Myreside Pavilion as a service to the Watsonian Club.
3. The Watsonian Club and the School will negotiate a Service Level Agreement to govern the service to be provided.
4. The School has registered the intellectual property associated with Watsonians to protect it from misuse.
5. Note that the Myreside Pavilion, along with the rest of GWC and its assets, is owned by the Merchant Company Education Board (MCEB). The School acts as agents for MCEB in dealings with the Watsonian Club.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

1. To safeguard The Watsonian Club's Office Bearers who currently have no protection from liability if something goes wrong in the Club, one of its sports sections or branches.
2. To safeguard the Club, the School and the MCEB from financial, regulatory and reputational risks associated with the actions of one of the branches or sections.
3. To ensure that the governance and operations of branches and sections are compliant with good practice in terms of Health and Safety, Data Protection and Child Protection and Safeguarding.
4. To ensure that there is a better basis for the future success of the Myreside Club by defining the service that will be provided as part of the School's business plan for the Pavilion.

WHAT WILL THE IMPACT OF THIS BE?

1. The Council will in future have a clearer role in overseeing the governance of the sections and branches and the risks inherent in the operation of the Club, its sections and branches will be better managed and understood.
2. Any organisation that uses the name "Watsonian" will have to meet agreed standards of Governance, Health and Safety, Data Protection and Child Protection. In reality there will be little or no change in how sections and branches currently run their business.
3. The School will run the Myreside Pavilion either directly or (as now) through a contractor on a business plan which will be designed to secure a high quality service, maximum access to the facilities and a sustainable revenue stream to reinvest in the building.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

1. After soliciting views at the Watsonian Club Open Meeting, the Myreside Club will consider the proposals.
2. The proposals will recommend the dissolution of the Myreside Club and explain what arrangements are to be made and the future use of facilities currently enjoyed in the Myreside Pavilion. Note that any dissolution of the Myreside Club will require an EGM to be called.
3. The Watsonian Council will then engage with the School to negotiate and formalise the Service Level Agreement for use of the facilities at the Myreside Club.

The Watsonian Club

Income & Expenditure Account For the Year Ending 31 July 2017

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Balance B/F		36,997.82
Income		
Murray International	1,296.29	
Baillie Gifford	287.19	
Bank Interest received	18.78	
Total Income		1,602.26
Expenditure		
Watsonian Dinner Payment		(315.00)
Balance C/F		38,285.08