

## Shetland Society of Wellington – President’s Report for the year ending June 30, 2020.

As preparation for this report, I’ve been looking again at the report to last year’s AGM. What a difference!

This year, we can report on only two face to face events – our Christmas Tree celebration in December and our Picnic in March.

Other than that – COVID-19 and a series of cancelled events!

Thanks to those who helped with the Christmas Tree celebration – making Christmas decorations appealed to the kids, the face painting to a few more, but the chance to talk and catch up and share a supper appealed to all.

In February we were back at Kaitoke Regional Park – lots of fun and games for those who came, but there weren’t so many of us.

Then in March the global pandemic reached us in NZ. We moved into a series of Response Levels, and we tapped into a magnificent sense that we are indeed a team of 5 million – willing to cooperate, to follow the rules, and to endure personal limitations so that the whole country remains as safe as possible.

For us, like every other group around NZ, it meant a move to meeting via video-conference – we took out a subscription to Zoom, and we became familiar with how to mute and un-mute, and learnt to bear with looking at ourselves on the screen! My warmest thanks to our committee, who were thoughtful and sensible in their working through of the various issues – and always keeping top of mind the wellbeing of our members.

The result was that we have not proceeded with a range of activities:

- Our Shetland Viking Dance evening – at Chilton St James School Hall
- The Magic of Shetland event – with various members sharing information about favourite visitor stops in Shetland
- A Foy with a focus on the Sea
- Now our Anniversary Luncheon

The good news is that all of these events can be picked up again once we move into a Level 1 or Level 0 situation.

We are sorry to report that two people in leadership roles are standing down. Gay Hay, along with husband John, was an excellent Newsletter Editor, and we are so grateful for the great work she did over several editions. Thank you Gay and John. We will miss your work, but understand your need to focus on other priorities.

After seven years on our Committee, the last as our Vice President, Jo Lewthwaite has also decided it’s time to move on to other things. Jo has been a regular and conscientious contributor to the Society, and we now look on her as our resident expert on Family History and Genealogy. Thank you Jo – and we are pleased you will still be available to help us with the interesting work on Family History.

A small group of Mary Wood, Gay Hay, and Ruth Mainland is keeping in touch with the Shetland Amenity Trust about our Society’s Centenary Gift towards the Watermill – linked to the Crofthouse Museum in Shetland. They report recently that the Trust will erect a plaque at the Museum gate –

acknowledging the link with New Zealanders and our Society, and our Centenary contribution to the Watermill.

Work on our Centenary year – 2022 – is progressing well. It looks like the mural at Island Bay is going ahead. Sam Moncur has completed a series of interviews looking at how people in NZ are keeping up their links with Shetland. We are making plans for a fabric competition, and have made bookings for a weekend of activities in September 2022. We continue to gather family stories – if you have one, please let us know – we want to collect more.

Thanks as always to our Committee – Secretary Margaret Pitt who has settled in well to her new position, Treasurer Irene Mclachlan, Librarian Jane Haskell, Bookings and Hospitality convenor Jane Dowson, and committee members Gibby Inkster, Elizabeth Woolcott, Robin Falconer, Sarah Best, and Don Staples.

Let's hope we actually get to meet one another this coming year – fingers crossed for our Sir Robert Stout celebration and lecture on October 18!

Peter Glensor

President.