

West Blacket Association & Neighbourhood Watch

Annual General Meeting held on Monday 29 November 2004 at the Unionist Club, 5 Duncan Street.

Present: Maggie Barlas, Mary Bell, Irene Brown, Ian Carter, Brian Charlesworth, Mike & Dorothy Cloughley, Pam & Christie Duncan, Jackie Grant, Jane Griffiths, Evelynne & Ron Hill, David Hope, Inspector Brian Nisbet, Jane & Jeff Robinson, Colin Stevenson, Chris Theobald, Frank & Dorothy Thomas, Ann & Gordon Turner Thomson, Rosemary Wake.

Apologies: Elma Alexander & Mike Hunter, Sandra Carter.

The AGM followed on after a fascinating presentation by Dr Graeme D R Cruikshank on the International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art which took place in the Meadows in 1886. Because of the enforcing of Acts of Parliament stipulating that there be no permanent buildings on the Meadows there is very little on site as a reminder of this six-month long event. While Archivist for the Council Dr Cruikshank had researched the event and arranged an exhibition in Huntly House in 1986 to celebrate the Centenary of the International Exhibition.

Annual Report (Brian Charlesworth, Chairman)

The aims of the Association continue to be the monitoring of proposed changes within or close to the area and arranging community social events. During 2004 there have been very few planning matters requiring comment, but the speed camera on Minto Street, north of the pedestrian crossing, continues to be an irritation to neighbouring residents. A social event was held in Bartholomew House earlier in the year.

Proposals for Tramline 3 were the subject of public consultation during the year with alternative sections of route at certain locations. The preferred route is now being refined in preparation for submission to Parliament. The WBA is represented on the Newington Community Liaison Group, one of a number of such groups set up to provide local residents with an opportunity to express views as detailed proposals are developed. A WBA representative is required for the next meeting of the CLG on 14 December, as the Chairman is not available that day. The other ongoing group where WBA has been represented this year has been the Local Environment Forum for Sciennes, Newington and Prestonfield. This falls within the remit of the South Local Development Committee of the Council and provides an opportunity for local community organisations to discuss environmental issues with councillors and officials.

Treasurer's report (Evelynne Hill, Hon. Treasurer)

The report was tabled and approved. There was an increase in both households and members subscribing (65 members in 36 households) and income exceeded expenditure to add to the healthy bank balance. Outgoings covered membership of the Cockburn Association and production and distribution of newsletters.

Neighbourhood Watch (Jane Griffiths)

The NW Committee had invited Inspector Brian Nisbet to attend and address the meeting in view of previous concern about lack of Police support for the NW system during the last couple of years. Insp Nisbet attributed most of the problem to the reorganisation of Police services within the City - Operation Capital - which created a single Division, and also a centralised call centre. The intention had been to streamline arrangements and thereby improve service to the public. The reality had however proved quite unsatisfactory and the Chief Constable now accepted there to be a need for further revision. The new way of working is to be introduced in January 2005 and will involve Insp Nisbet having overall control of both 'regular' policing as well as 'community' policing. The Police acknowledge the need to restore support for NW but the intended way of supplying crime information in future is on a ward by ward basis. This is unfortunately less than ideal for West Blacket because 3 wards are involved. Insp. Nisbet did appreciate our difficulty, and that the information was used for display on public notice boards, but made the point that the final details of how the new system is to work have still to be agreed.

Election of Officers & Committee

There were no nominations for new representatives and the continuation of the current Committee & Officers was proposed by Ann Turner Thomson, seconded by Mike Cloughley and approved by the meeting;

Chairman:	Brian Charlesworth, 39 Minto Street, 662 1725
Hon. Secretary:	Mike Hunter, 40 Upper Gray Street, 667 1767
Hon. Treasurer:	Evelynne Hill, 37 Upper Gray Street 667 0675
Neighbourhood Watch:	Stella Pryde, Jane Griffiths
Committee:	Irene Brown, Ian Carter, Jackie Grant, Jeff Robinson, Chris Theobald.

Other Business

Potholes and other road problems, particularly in South & Upper Gray Street were raised. Also whether information packs for new residents might be produced.