

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE HIGHLANDERS MUSEUM AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
PETITIONERS
HELD AT CAMERON BARRACKS, INVERNESS
On Wednesday 12th March, 2014 at 16.00hrs**

(Final version of Museum's minutes)

Present	<p>Peter Grant Peterkin (PGP)</p> <p>Alex Graham (AG)</p> <p>Douglas Young (DY)</p> <p>Kirstin Mackay (KM)</p> <p>Kelvin Hunter (KH)</p> <p>Kenny Reid (KR)</p> <p>Lachlan Stewart (LS)</p> <p>Archie Mackinnon (AM)</p>	<p>Museum Chairman and Trustee</p> <p>Museum Board Member</p> <p>Museum Trustee and Board Member</p> <p>Museum Official</p> <p>Ex QO HLDR</p> <p>Ex QO HLDR</p> <p>Ex QO HLDR</p> <p>Ex QO HLDR</p>
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Item	Discussion and Decision	Action
1	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>Peter Grant Peterkin (PGP) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced representatives from the Highlanders Museum. Kelvin Hunter (KH) introduced the representatives from the petitioners. Douglas Young (DY) advised the meeting that a dictaphone was proposed to be used to record the meeting, to which there were no objections. KM and AM were present as note-takers.</p> <p>Along with the Agenda, there had been circulated a copy of the text of the online Petition, a copy of the Museum's Customer Service Agreement (CSA) with the Ministry of Defence dated 30 Aug & 8 Nov 2000, and a background note on the origins and usage of the museum name "The Highlanders' Museum (Queen's Own Highlanders Collection)".</p>	
2	<p><u>Museum Name</u></p> <p>KH advised the meeting that the name of the museum was the main point they would like to discuss at the meeting. KH advised that there were over 1700 names on the petition. KH maintained that the name of the Museum was not changed until the Redevelopment Project took place. DY stated the facts regarding the Museum name and alluded to the CSA agreed in 2000, which amongst other things clearly stipulates the Museum name as used today. DY also produced other evidence of the name change in a pre-redevelopment visitor guide to the Museum.</p> <p>KH advised that a restricted document of 4 SCOTS had mentioned the Museum as being the Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Museum. PGP advised that this was simply erroneous, and could not over-ride the other documents which had been produced or referred to, in particular the CSA.</p> <p>Kenny Reid (KR) referred to examples he had found of the use of the term "Queen's Own Highlanders Museum" after 2000. DY responded that the existence of such examples was not disputed, indeed that fact was</p>	

	<p>fully recognised in the circulated paper, but the point was that the correct name had appeared in actual use before the redevelopment project and had not been merely in a document stuck away in a drawer.</p> <p>PGP said if the Museum name was to change £40k of annual funding from the MoD would be withdrawn. The Museum would not be sustainable without this funding and the Museum would have to close. PGP explained that he had consulted Col Tony Figg of Army Heritage Branch and Brig Colin Sibun of AMOT regards changing the name. Both recommended that we should not consider a name change unless we wanted to lose funding. DY added that breaking the CSA agreement could also have implications regarding the Museum's related 50-year lease at a peppercorn rent from the Ministry of Defence.</p> <p>KH said that, in the event of the withdrawal of MOD funding as a consequence of changing the name, he was confident that the resulting annual shortfall would if necessary be made up by a collection from members of the regiment.</p> <p>Alex Graham (AG) stated his position on the name of the Museum and said he understood that the name of the Museum was very important to the petitioners and other Queen's Own Highlanders. However the stark reality of the situation was that if the name changed MoD funding would be lost and the Museum would not be sustainable. The collection would then be stored or dispersed and may never see the light of day again.</p> <p>DY asked the petitioners if they accepted that the legal name change of the Museum had occurred in the year 2000. The petitioners agreed but maintained that they, including KH who had been employed at the Museum, had been kept in the dark about the CSA and its implications, including the name, for 14 years.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Museum Objectives and Style of Display</u></p> <p>KH said all of the medals should be on display. DY advised that we did not have the space to put all of the medals out on display. DY said that the Museum staff are working on getting more of the medals out on display and had given funding priority to the purchase of an additional specialist display case to achieve this.</p> <p>Lachlan Stewart (LS) and KH commented that the virtual tour was not up to much and that the Museum looked sparse, when viewed on the virtual tour. LS confirmed that he had not visited the actual Museum since its redevelopment. KR assured DY that the petitioners had not been invited into the Museum when they delivered the Petition there on 7th February. The other petitioners' representatives did not dissent from this assurance. PGP advised that there had been many observations pre Redevelopment Project that there was too much on display. The items on display tell the stories of individuals rather than just being a collection of items.</p> <p>PGP agreed that some mistakes had been made with the interpretation of displays and that the Museum was changing the object labels to make them easier to read.</p>	

	<p>KH felt that the Blue Hackle rooms were a wasteful use of the available space. LS had suggestions as to how income from such facilities could be maximised.</p> <p>While there were clear differences in philosophy about what should be the style of the museum, there was insufficient time to discuss fully the Petitioners' criticisms of the Museum for being like a "Visitor Centre" or an "Officers Mess". Also not discussed was a related criticism of the display of pipe banners, which had been similarly displayed in the pre-redevelopment Museum.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Acquisitions and Disposals Policy</u></p> <p>PGP explained the Museum's Disposals Policy to the petitioners. The main driver of disposal was that the Museum did not have the space or resources properly to store and conserve surplus items which could be found homes elsewhere.</p> <p>The petitioners said that the selling of items through eBay was in bad taste. PGP explained that such channels had been used for certain items in order to maximise income for the Museum.</p> <p>The Silver Sale had been well publicised to the Regimental Family and gave them the opportunity to have first refusal on the items selected for sale. Those items not bought by the Regimental family were then sent to Bonhams to be included in their Scottish sale. DY said that the selection of surplus items for disposal had been in accordance with the Museum's adopted policies and national and international standards. Examples were given of previous disposals of surplus items in 1962 and 1979.</p> <p>PGP advised that the proceeds of the silver sale (£100k) had been deposited into the Museum funds.</p> <p>KH raised the issue of a Black Watch lighter that had been sold and said that correct procedure had not been followed. PGP advised that the lighter which was received by the Museum in 2004 was not accessioned into the collection at that time and there were no details of who had donated the item. It was later discovered that the lighter had been off loaded onto the Museum by the Highlanders' Sergeants Mess as surplus to requirements.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>The petitioners felt that communication over the past 14 years has been extremely poor. PGP acknowledged the importance of communication and that it could always be improved. He added that he had gone out to many of the Association meetings and talked about the Museum Redevelopment Project and also the name of the Museum.</p> <p>LS felt that PGP's note published on Cabarfeidh.com was full of assertions and not facts. PGP asked LS to point out the assertions and he would gladly back them up with facts.</p> <p>It was also acknowledged that there had been mistakes made on Social Media.</p> <p>PGP asked that all concerned stay polite and respectful in all future</p>	

	<p>communications. PGP also asked that the petitioners refrained from doing things that put additional pressure on the already stretched Museum staff.</p> <p>DY added his thanks to the Petitioners' representatives and his appreciation of the open manner in which both sides had conducted the discussion. While the Museum representatives had been unable to accept the Petitioners' main demands he hoped that the meeting had at least helped to improve understanding around the table.</p>	
	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Whilst the petitioners acknowledged the legal name change of the Museum in 2000 they said they would continue to campaign to have the name changed back, despite appreciating the financial implications.</p>	

Note: Despite the meeting continuing beyond the allotted period, Agenda Item 5, Research assistance charging policy, was not discussed due to shortage of time. Most Scottish regimental museums do not refund the basic fee after unsuccessful searches.

Final version notes added 16.03.2014:

1. The text in bold in item 3 of the above minutes has been added after consideration of comments received from the petitioners' representatives after the initial publication of the Museum's minutes. Certain other comments have been received and responded to without any change being made to the minutes, which remain the Museum's minutes of the meeting and not "as agreed".

2. The petitioners' representatives have now indicated that contrary to these minutes and their statement at the meeting that they had been "kept in the dark" for 14 years about the existence and implications of the Customer Service Agreement (CSA), they do NOT accept that the legal or official name of the Museum has since 2000 been "The Highlanders' Museum (Queen's Own Highlanders Collection). They have not explained how they reconcile that position with the CSA and other documents.