

Convenor's Report on behalf of the Committee

I am delighted to report that yet again 2019 was a successful year for FOIL.

This success is, however, primarily due to your support - without our members attending the talks, carols and baking for the Drummond Cake Stall we would not be able to support the Library in this way.

The Committee expanded as Charles Crookshank and Shona McLaren joined us and as ever we had fun putting together the programme and sorting the logistics for the events. Everyone on the Committee works with huge enthusiasm which is why we are able to continue to successfully support the Library financially.

The Committee sub group led by Gillian Wade worked hard to entice interesting and diverse speakers to our Wednesday evening talks. The 2019 talks were, as usual, given by speakers of a high standard and were well attended. The year started with **Syd House** talking about **David Douglas** the great plant hunter, which was appropriate as the Governors embarked on their project to remove the rather uninteresting larch plantation on the left of the Library and replant with a diverse variety of trees. This is an ongoing project, the difference the removal of these trees has made to the views and light reaching the Library is significant. The Governors would be delighted to hear from anyone who wishes to **plant a tree** in memory of a loved one or to mark a special event, marriage, birth, wedding anniversary etc. Please do get in touch with the Keeper of the Books (Lara Haggarty) if this is something of interest.

One of the largest audiences we have managed to attract to a FOIL event was in October, **Donald Findlay QC** entertained us by examining the case of **Madeleine Smith, Did she or Did she not** murder her lover? Morrisons School kindly gave us use of their memorial hall, as we knew demand for tickets would be high. Over 200 people left this talk still debating her innocence or guilt.

We heard the story of the Tumbling Lassie, were fascinated by Facial Reconstruction, seduced by Strathearn Cheeses and entranced by the imagination and skill of the art of Sundials. We had two musical events in 2019; firstly, an **Operetta** composed by Alexander McCall Smith and Tom Cunningham putting the story of the Tumbling Lassie to music, together with another of their collaborations Fergus of Galloway, a wonderful combination of music, song and story. In December our annual **Christmas carol concert** in Innerpefferay chapel, directed by Joan Taylor was sold out by November, highlighting that this event is a popular way to start getting in the mood for Christmas. Huge thanks are due to Joan for her tireless efforts in arranging the concert, to the members of the choir for their superb performance and to the audience who braved a hurricane and joined us with family and friends.

The Committee is excited about the talks lined up for 2020 as they promise to appeal to a wide audience. The booking form is enclosed and I hope that many of you will book in advance for the whole season, thereby making the tasks of administration and planning easier for the committee.

We joined other charities fund raising at the **Drummond Castle Charity Fete**: the home-baking stall was well supported by members baking and it continues to be a good money-making venture for FOIL, we made £475 and sold a few more quiz sheets. Thanks are due in particular to Kirsty MacDonald for coordinating and planning the event and the committee for donating cakes and working behind the stall on the day.

The 2019 FOIL **Summer Quiz** was created and people entered in record numbers with lots of positive feedback about the enjoyment it provides. The prize winners were selected randomly from all the correct answers.

As a result of our activities in 2019, £6,250 was transferred to the Library. The Governors have advised us that these funds will be used to purchase a new laptop for the volunteers, a new printer for the Library to help with functionality and efficiency. Cascade lighting has been proposed with written text to waterfall down the outside of the Library building and better lighting outside the Library to enhance the Library and its features. Finally, more will be spent on Book Conservation.

The FOIL committee works closely with Lara and the Governors to support and preserve the Library. Those attending the talks continue to enjoy the upgrade to the Schoolroom, with an indoor toilet, handy kitchen and a more user friendly laptop and projector (no wires or stand to trip over!). The **official grand opening** of the Innerpeffray Heritage Trail and venue took place in September 2019, **Sally Magnusson** formally opened the trail and the day was filled with huge numbers discovering Innerpeffray for the first time, enjoying storytelling, Roman camps, entertainments and other activities. FOIL was responsible for the teas which proved very popular and kept FOIL Committee members (Kirsty and Shona) very busy all afternoon.

We are continuing to coordinate our events with the activities of the Governors and sharing information about both on the Library website and vice versa on our website. Please continue to support and attend events arranged by Lara and the Governors, just as you do the events arranged by FOIL. I want to formally thank Lara for her involvement with FOIL and help with our events from setting up the room/pc / projector to her readings and insights from books in the Library we very much appreciate her contribution.

As I mentioned last year our website needs regular updates and managing. We are extremely grateful to **Peter Parke** who has continued to look after the website for FOIL in 2019 and ensure that the information is up to date, useful for members and relevant.

I have mentioned previously the Committee's idea of a **FOIL Cookbook** and this is still very much a plan, thank you to everyone who has donated a recipe so far and please do keep them coming in. We anticipate that we will be 'publishing' a book with recipes in 2020 (I know I said this last year but I really do mean it!).

My final piece of news is that I have decided to step down from the Committee. I have been involved with the FOIL Committee since 2012 and have very much enjoyed being involved with this wonderful piece of history on my doorstep, I am looking forward to continuing as a keen FOIL Member. Before I go I would like to thank the Committee who I have really enjoyed getting to know and working with. They work tirelessly for the benefit of the FOIL/Library, Gillian Wade, Pamela Haggart, Alison Martin, Kirsty MacDonald, Shona McLaren, Charles Crookshank and John Mauchline. Joan Taylor has been a great friend and support and has nobly agreed to step into the position of Convenor. I believe that she will be an excellent Convenor; she is passionate and knowledgeable about Innerpefferay Library and FOIL, both are in very safe hands with her at the helm.

Very many thanks to you all from me; FOIL is very much a testament to its members.