

Highland Society of London

Treasurer's Report

24th November 2015

The Society's financial year ended on 30th September, and it would be my intention to present the full accounts for the year at the General Court in March. However, I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight the increase in donations that we have generated in the past few years (partly due to the introduction of the Justgiving site), and the resulting increase in the charitable awards we have been able to make.

For the most recent 12 months, our available income was £24,000 – which was £5,000 higher than the previous year (which, itself, was £2,000 higher than the year before); so, in the course of two years, we have increased our available income by nearly 50%. At the same time, we have maintained our administrative costs at around £4,000 per year, which means that we granted almost £20,000 in total awards last year (up from £13,000 two years ago).

The majority of this increase in income comes from voluntary donations – whether through the Justgiving site, the raffle organised at this event last year, the collection at Sir Tommy Macpherson's memorial and specific donations by individuals or organisations previously thanked by the President. Of course, this sets the bar higher for the coming year – so I would encourage all of you to consider visiting the Justgiving site (which is also accessible from our website) and making a donation.

In terms of granting awards, our focus continues to be on piping – we spent approximately £9,000 on ongoing prizes at the Argyllshire Gathering, Northern Meeting, Skye Gathering and Scottish Piping Society of London; and are making one-off grants to the Duncan Macleod Memorial competition on Lewis, and to the Argyll Piping Trust primary schools' scheme (as part of a highly successful fund-raising project led by the son of one of our Members).

We then allocated approximately £6,000 to other activities promoting Highland culture – including the Royal National Mod, for Gaelic singing; the Glenfinnan Gathering and the Queen Victoria School, for Highland Dancing; the Royal Scottish Academy, An Ealdhain Arts Trust and post-graduate student Shaun Fraser, for art; and Musica Scotica and the University of the Highlands Islands, for writing and publishing-related projects.

Finally, we spent the remainder on broader welfare projects – including our ongoing support for the war widows previously funded by the Baroness Von Wilczek charity; the Highland Hospice in Inverness; the West Coast Communities Growth Trust; and a one-off donation to the bicentenary of the Royal Caledonian Education Trust – which is the successor of the Royal Caledonian Asylum, a project originally set-up by Members of this Society in 1815 to provide educational support to the children of Scotsmen serving in the Armed Forces.

Hopefully, this gives you a good overview of the wide range of awards and activities we supported in the last 12 months – some ongoing, some new and some one-off. If anyone wants further information on any of these projects, please do ask me – and we will aim to provide more detail of all of these awards on the web-site, going forward. Once again, if you are using the website, do click on the link to our Justgiving site and make a donation, so that we can increase this list even further next year!

Thank you.