

**LOUIS MCGUFFIE VC COMMEMORATION WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 21 MARCH 2016
AT 7.30PM IN WIGTOWN COUNTY BUILDINGS**

PRESENT

Nick Walker, Convenor	Wigtown CC
Archie Dryburgh	Wigtown CC
Jim McColm	Elected Member
John McDowall	Wigtown CC
Mike Morley	Wigtown resident
Robin Richmond	Wigtown CC

APOLOGIES

Willie McCartney	Wigtown CC
Alistair Geddes	Elected Member
Matt Kitson	Wigtown CC
Graham Nicol	Elected Member
Wilma McKeown	Area Framework Team
Fiona Ritchie	Area Framework Team

1. Sederunt and Apologies

Six members of the Working Group present. Six apologies received.

2. Notes of Meeting on 21 September 2015

Agreed.

Matters Arising:

2.1 VC Commemoration date – Louis McGuffie’s VC Centennial date is 28.9.2018. All commemorations so far have been held on the centennial date. Agreed to inaugurate the memorial on 28.9.2018 unless impracticable to do so.

2.2 Paving Slab Durability – Archie Dryburgh confirmed that the paving stone could tolerate pedestrian traffic but would not stand up to motorised traffic such as heavy equipment involved in marquee installation and removal, as would affect the main entrance into the town gardens.

2.3 Ironmongery – Nick Walker confirmed despite several prompts he had received no further information, drawings or estimates from Steve Dowling.

3. Update and reconsideration of site

3.1 New bus shelter installed appears bigger and bulkier than expected, and is located to overlap gateway into town gardens. This adversely affects the appearance of the gateway and makes a naming archway challenging to design and install. The book festival main marquee could obstruct access to the proposed site of the paving stone. The layout of the area with the altered bus stop, especially at book festival time, is likely too congested to handle the inauguration event which is expected to attract several hundred people.

3.2 Can the bus shelter be exchanged and/or moved per original Community Council understanding? Comm. Council has contacted Douglas Kirkpatrick, Swestrans, about this. Cllr Dryburgh and Cllr McColm to pursue this issue.

3.3 Alternative location, second choice in public consultation, is gateway into town gardens opposite County Buildings, with paving stone in pavement.

3.4 Discussed possible approaches to this new site, including archway or erecting “Louis McGuffie VC Gardens” name in riser of stone steps inside gates, between flagpoles.

3.5 Flag pole mechanism requires and stairway require repair.

3.6 Agreed to begin working on new option pending outcome of bus shelter discussions.

4. Memorial Proposals

4.1 Nick Walker indicated that without feedback from Steve Dowling, he had contacted Jack Sloan, sculptor, who has produced gateways elsewhere in Scotland (such as for Robert Louis Stevenson) including locally (in Whithorn).

4.2 Jack Sloan’s opinion is that the main town gardens entrance would not work well with the bus shelter, but he could develop design ideas for the County Buildings entrance to the town gardens, perhaps reflecting details of the County Buildings and including VC and KOSB design references.

4.3 Agreed Nick Walker to ask Jack Sloan to produce initial ideas, and invite to next meeting.

5. Further Consultation

5.1 Agreed to develop more design detail and finalise bus shelter decisions before next working group meeting, and aim to consult with public and interested parties from mid-August 2016, with a view to having a final plan to gather funding for by October 2016.

5.2 Design info. to be shared with planning officers as soon as available.

6. Publications / Documents

6.1 Jack Hunter has offered a written up version of his talk on the times of Louis McGuffie from the 2015 Book Festival. Mike Morley has information on McGuffie and family, and he has contacts who have written about the military context. David McNally has relevant information from Belgium. Jim McColm has contemporary information from the school and the football club.

6.2 Agreed a book could be produced covering these issues.

6.3 School could be involved in some elements of research and preparation. Assoc. of Wigtown Booksellers might consider publishing.

6.4 Mike Morley to lead on book development.

7. Inauguration

7.1 Preliminary contact to be made with Book Festival Company (Nick Walker) and appropriate regiments (Archie Dryburgh).

7.2 Interaction with book festival will be essential giving coincidence of timing of centenary.

7.3 Guard of Honour and military pipes & drums would need notice.

7.4 Details of Act of Inauguration, Church service, Civic Reception, etc. to be completed January/February 2018.

8. Action Plan

8.1 Update family – Nick Walker.

8.2 Other actions per above minutes.

9. **Next Meeting** – Agreed to hold next meeting on Tuesday 31st May 2016 at 7.30 pm. Fiona to book the Visitors Room or Supper Room, County Buildings.