



WAIPU CALEDONIAN SOCIETY INC.

Established 1871
Sir nam Beann's nam Gleann's nam Gaisgeach
Nemo Me Impune Lacessit

P O BOX 34, WAIPU, NORTHLAND, NEW ZEALAND

PATRON: BRIAN MCLEAN

CHIEF: PETER FERGUSON

SECRETARY: KELLY SANDFORD

Minutes of the Waipu Caledonian Society AGM

Held in the Celtic Barn Foyer on
Sunday, 23 August 2026, 1.30pm

Present:

1. Welcome

John Lang Welcomed everyone to the 2026 Waipu Caledonian Society Meeting.

2. Apologies:

Lorna Murray, Lynette Taylor, Brian McLean, Annie Everson-Dawn, Ted Hart, Paul Wickham, Gordon Walker, Don Ewen, Mark Forshaw, Gordon McKay, Sherri McKay, Gavin Jacobson.

Move: G. Brown

Second: H. Jacobson

3. Obituaries: John Lang asked everyone to stand for a moments silence to mark our respect to those that have passed since our last AGM.

Hector Ewen

4. Minutes from previous meeting held on 13 June 2025:

Sent out to all members prior to the meeting.

Taken as a true and correct record.

Moved: K.Sandford

Second: K.Couper

5. Matters Arising:

The name Ritchie was left out of apologies only read as Guy Kelly to add Ritchie

6. Correspondence:

None

7. Chief's Report: Ted Hart (see attached) – Read by Kelly Sandford in Ted absence.

Moved: K.Sandford

Seconded: B.McGregor

8. Financial Report – Steven McLean (See attached)

Steven presented his report.

Annual Report was sent to all members

Reviewer was Lexi McAulay

No Questions were asked.

Moved: S.McLean

Second: A.Ellis

9. Caledonian Trust Report – Annie Everson-Dawn (see attached) Read by Amanda Ellis in Annie’s Absence

Moved: A. Ellis
Second: G. Brown

10. Chairman’s Report – John Lang (see attached)

Moved: J. Lang
Second: K. Couper

11. Election of Committee and Officers:

Nomination forms were sent to all members, nominations were received and accepted by the Secretary before the required due date.

Due to the few nominations voting did not take place and all nominations were accepted. The committee and officers are as follows.

Patron	Brian McLean	Move: B. McGregor Second: J. Lang
Chief	Peter Ferguson	Move: T. Hart Second: J. Lang
Treasurer	Steven McLean	Move: L. Murray Second: A. Ellis
Secretary/Membership	Kelly Sandford	Move: L. Murray Second: S. McLean

Committee Members

Lorna Murray	Nominated by S. McLean, Seconded: A. Ellis
John Lang	Nominated by K. Sandford, Seconded: L. Murray
Gordon McKay	Nominated by K. Sandford, Seconded: J. Lang
Bain McGregor	Nominated by S. McLean, Seconded: T. Hart
Iain Mackay	Nominated by L. Murray, Seconded: K. Sandford
Laszlo Kotan	Nominated by T. Hart, Seconded: A. Ellis
Amanda Ellis	Nominated by L. Kotan, Seconded: T.Hart

All Attending Members Agreed with the Nomination

A Chairman will be elected at the next committee meeting

General Business

a. Entry Price

The WCS committee proposed that the gate entry and Helen McGregor remain the same and the ceilidh increased from \$25 to \$30.

Ken Couper spoke about the Ceilidh price. He felt that it was too cheap and wanted clarification on why it was just a \$5 increase. He felt it could go up \$10 as it is a popular event with attendance nearing it’s capacity it was an indication it was a great event, This was discussed at length the committee in attendance agreed that the Ceilidh didn’t generate a lot of profit after the expenses – Catering, entertainment and outside help.

This was taken to a members vote. In favour of increasing the Ceilidh from \$25 to \$35.

**MOTION: that the prices are as followed,
Highland Games Entry \$20 – Stays the same,
The Helen McGregor Memorial \$10 – Stays the same,
Evening Ceilidh – Currently at \$25 – Increase to \$35.**

Moved: K. Couper
Seconded: H. Jacobson
Motion was carried

b. Membership Currently at \$10 – The committee proposes this remain the same

MOTION: The membership fees of \$10 remains the same.

Moved: I. Mackay
Seconded: B. McGregor
Motion was Carried

c. Life Member – No new Life at this AGM

d. The Assynt Quaich:

MOTION: The 31st December 2026 (154th) Assynt Quaich recipient be awarded to Brian McLean

Moved: The Waipu Caledonian Committee
Seconded G. Brown
Motion was Carried

e. Next Highland Games Date.

MOTION:

The date of the 155th Highland Games are to be held on the 31st of December 2027

Move: K. Sandford
Second: H. Jacobson
Motion was Carried.

f. Trust.

A trustee was required to resign from the Waipu Caledonian Trust, Don Ewen stepped down. The Waipu Caledonian committee agreed that Don Ewen be re-appointed as Trustee.

MOTION:

Don Ewen be reappointed as a Trustee.

Move: T. Hart
Seconded: G. Walker
Motion was Carried.

General Business

Ken Couper stood up and reported as the Mayor and a Waipu local. Ken acknowledged the hard work of the committee.

Ken also acknowledged the difficulties around making money. Ken spoke about his experience when he and his family travelled overseas and visited other highland games.

He noted that the Highland Games overseas whilst traditional were very much like a carnival. He acknowledged and respected Waipu for trying to keep the Waipu Highland games traditional but did continue by saying that there may become a time that to keep the day going we may have to go beyond tradition.

He discussed the limitations that the council have for funding, that they are having a good look at funding allocations.

Kelly thanked Ken and acknowledged that what he said about going beyond tradition was timely as our new event Co-Ordinator is thinking the same. Kelly gave the members a brief rundown of some proposed changes heading into the next games.

Heather Jacobson wanted to acknowledge that passing of Roland Thornhill, Roland was a Nova Scotian MP who did a lot with the twinning of Waipu and St Ann's on Cape Breton Island.

Meeting Closed

2.20pm

Chief's Report – 2026 AGM

It has been my privilege to be Chief for the last three years. However, it is now time to move on, and my wife and I have decided to go traveling in Australia for several months, so I must resign. I wish the new Chief success in the role.

After a challenging time at the previous Games due to inclement weather, the Games on 31 December 2025 were a great success. The change of date seems to have made little difference to the number of people attending, with gate numbers about the same as we have enjoyed over previous events.

The new park layout seemed to work well, and I have received many positive comments from both vendors and patrons. It is always challenging to make major changes, but the committee were brave and unanimous in adopting the new layout.

I am concerned that the number of Clans attending continues to drop. I visited most of the Clan tents on the day and they all told the same story; the young ones are not coming through to carry on the Clan traditions.

For the past three years I have travelled to the Hororata Games in November to assist with the heavyweight events, but also to talk to the athletes and convince them to compete at Waipu. I would strongly suggest that a representative of the WCS continues to do this as we need these people at our games. Imagine our event without the Heavies.

I would like to thank the committee for the support they have given me. Special thanks to Don Ewen for his sage advice and great historical knowledge which he shares willingly. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, Don is very unwell in hospital.

I wish the incoming committee great success and urge them to continue the great traditions of the Waipu Caledonian Society.

Financial Report.

The Waipu Caledonian Society Incorporated - Treasurer's Notes for the AGM

I am pleased to present the reviewed 2026 Annual Report.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the following people:

- John Draper – for great work over many years, keeping comprehensive working papers, and installing Xero Software.
- Don Ewen – for his support of me from Games Day onwards, including the extended period whilst I was overseas.
- Lexi MacAulay – for agreeing to act as reviewer, asking pertinent questions, and responding with speed in conducting her review.

In terms of financial results, the Society is very dependent on a successful Highland Games Day. It is pleasing to report that, while revenue from Games Day activities was down by \$5k from the prior year (\$77k v \$72k), good control over direct expenses resulted in a profit of \$16k. This profit compares with the small loss of \$93 incurred in 2025.

Other income, made up mainly of a grant from Whangarei District Council (\$32k for both years) and motor caravan parkers (\$22k for both years) were consistent for 2025 and 2026. We are extremely grateful for the financial support provided by the Whangarei District Council through their District Amenities Fund.

Expenses associated with operational management of the Caledonian Park were down from the 2025 year, from \$83k to \$68k; this decrease is primarily a result of the installation of the nova flow drainage pipe installation in 2025 (approx. \$30k). A donation was made to support 4 young local dancers to participate in a highland dancing competition in Scotland.

In summary, the Statement of Financial Performance for 2026 shows a net surplus of \$6k in comparison with the deficit of \$18k in 2025.

The Statement of Financial Position shows bank balances of \$87k at year end – this compares with \$72k for 2025.

There are limitations with comparing actual results only with the prior year. In order to provide another comparative, we have prepared a budget, month by month, for the 2027 financial year end. This affords the Committee with more up to date analysis and will lead to stronger financial control over the activities of the Society. The budget for the full 2027 year outlines a surplus of \$12k – as of July 2026 we were significantly ahead of both budget and 2025; but this will change!

I am happy to respond to any questions.

WAIPU CALEDONIAN CHARITABLE TRUST

AGM HELD ON 21ST MAY 2026

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

As Chair of the Waipu Caledonian Charitable Trust, the following is my annual report for the 2026 AGM.

A lot has been happening leading up to the present, welcoming new ideas, embracing change and thinking outside the square. Listening to others with new suggestions and willing to implement those proposals with enthusiasm is important.

On the 29th March 2026 Laurel Rodgers, Barn Manager, retired. On the 15th April a farewell event was held with invited guests to acknowledge and thank Laurel for her commitment and dedication to the role of Barn Manager.

As from the beginning of April our new Barn Facilitators, Brent Rice and Brenda Christian took up the position and have made great inroads. They are keen to develop the growth of the Waipu Celtic Barn and have made innovative suggestions.

Regarding Brent and Brenda's employment as the Barn Facilitators, they specified that they are only prepared to carry out the role for a couple of months and in their contract have requested they be replaced in mid-May or after, when they have set in place new procedures. However, after being in the role for six weeks they are prepared to extend this period at least to the end of the year.

As you know, Gavin Carroll, our past Treasurer resigned and we welcome his replacement, Amy Osborne, who is also our current Secretary. However, the role of Treasurer is a fulfilling one and the Secretary's position will be advertised forthwith. Already Amy has proved her worth with diligence and being on top of the Trust finances.

At the beginning of the year the Barn floor was refurbished, with a very professional result. We have been given specific instructions on how to manage upkeep of the floor and this advice is invaluable for sustained maintenance.

In April we increased charges for general hiring of the Barn and for the sports bodies who use the Barn on a weekly basis. There were no objections.

Recently, we have placed advertisements in Junction Magazine for March, May and July publications and already we have had three responses for weddings. Also, an advertisement was placed in the latest NZ Herald Wedding supplement in May and I feel confident that this will attract attention as the publication went out to 600,000 destinations. These advertisements are important for attracting prospective weddings and despite the ads being a quarter of a page, there is a lot of content included, with photos. As a result we have three weddings booked.

Thank you to all the Trustees and to Amy for working positively with me – we all get on well and that is important. Also thank you to the Caledonian Society who's input is important and valued.

Annie Everson-Dawn

Chairperson

Chairman Report

Good evening, everyone, and welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Waipu Caledonian Society.

It's always encouraging to see so many members here tonight—particularly those who have come in the hope that the meeting might finish before supper. I can assure you, your optimism is noted.

It has been another busy year for the Society. We have celebrated Scottish culture, supported our community, enjoyed good fellowship, and demonstrated once again that no gathering of Scots is complete without opinions on the weather, the piping, and the correct way to make tea.

I would like to thank our committee for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. Volunteering is a noble tradition, especially when it involves organising events, balancing budgets, and attending meetings where the biscuits are sometimes the highlight.

Our thanks also go to all those who have helped with our activities, contributed their time, provided entertainment, prepared food, or simply turned up and made things happen. Organisations such as ours rely entirely on willing volunteers—and, occasionally, on people who were standing too close when jobs were being allocated.

The Society remains an important part of the Waipu community. We preserve our Scottish heritage, but we also welcome everyone who enjoys good company, music, dancing, tradition, and the occasional argument over whether something is genuinely Scottish.

Looking ahead, I hope we can continue to build on the Society's strengths, encourage new members, and maintain our enthusiasm—while keeping expenses under control and meetings within the natural human attention span.

Thank you all for your support during the year. I look forward to another successful year ahead.

And now, in keeping with tradition, I believe we should proceed to the part of the evening where everyone agrees—provided the motion is not too expensive.

Thank you.