

MINUTE of MEETING of the
ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held at the City Mills Hotel, PERTH,
at 11.15 a.m. on FRIDAY, 30th. JUNE,
1978.

PRESENT: Messrs. J.H. Barr, A.K. Powrie, P. Miller and J.R. McArthur, with R. David Hunter (the Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

Mr. J.H. Barr occupied the Chair.

APOLOGY: Mr. Blackmore intimated an apology on behalf of Mr. D.H. Lindsay.

The Secretary first briefly recalled the widespread disappointment experienced over the Association's 1977 Dinner, Whist Drive and Dance arrangements. He pointed out that both the number and sizes of older-generation parties taking part was diminishing each year, at the same time as younger-generation support was not being attracted to replace it. The Committee had already agreed not to forego a function in 1978 (for fear of being unable to revive it in subsequent years) and provisional bookings already existed in the Station Hotel, Perth and the Salutation Hotel, Perth for 22nd. December, 1978 and 10th. November, 1978 respectively.

In the following discussions it was unanimously agreed that a 1978 event must be held, that the venue must be changed from the Station Hotel, Perth and that the format of the function must be changed. Since the bulk of the support has always come from the Perth area it was agreed the function should continue to be held there. It was felt that escalating costs, as well as a general overall loss of "esprit de corps" within the trade, had been largely responsible for declining attendances over the years. The Committee agreed that an all-out effort to counter these factors must be made now. At the same time, special steps should be taken to attract the younger generation by modernising the proceedings, but taking care not to alienate valued traditional support.

The Committee agreed that a week-end "A.G.M. and function" arrangement should not follow directly after so bad a year as 1977, but that such a format should be kept in mind as a longer-term alternative. There was unanimous agreement that, to attract younger people, the usual whist activity should be discontinued, with the further advantage that this would permit an earlier start to dancing. This led on to suggestions that the usual set, formal, meal should give way to a Buffet, permitting a later starting time and avoiding opportunity for speeches.

The Secretary next explained that he had complied with a request from Mr. Willie Simpson that his Band be released from the usual provisional booking; this now leaves the way clear to make alternative arrangements, although he stressed that time was rapidly running against this. In reply, he stated that the Salutation Hotel could accommodate functions for up to two hundred people but that no December, 1978 booking was available there. He outlined, briefly, the hotel's facilities and his own office's last Dinner/Dance experience of them.

The Meeting felt it would be unwise to replace a Band entirely with a "disco" and decided that enquiries should be undertaken regarding a combined Band and Vocalist, a Band with a separate Cabaret, or a Band and separate comedian/compère and a lady vocalist/impersonator. It was agreed that entertainers should be restricted to not more than two separate ten-minute "spots" and that any additional-to-usual expenditure incurred in any of these respects should first concentrate on obtaining the best possible Band, with a cabaret and/or entertainers a secondary priority.

Mindful to put arrangements in hand with all possible speed at this late date, the Secretary was accordingly instructed as follows:-

- (1). To approach the Salutation Hotel, Perth for:-
 - (a) a Friday booking during the first six weeks of 1979 with:
 - (i) an 8 p.m. start;
 - (ii) a Buffet meal available between say 9 p.m. and 10 p.m.;
 - (iii) disco/band facility, alternately?;
 - (iv) two separate ten-minute cabaret/entertainer "spots";
 - (b) advice and introductions for suitable Bands, cabarets and entertainers;
 - (c) availability of, and concessionary cost quotations for, overnight accommodation;
 - (d) a room to be available for the President to entertain guests;

- (2). To circulate full details of the changed format and venue, in the most enthusiastic terms, to all Association Members as soon as these are available, together with an indication of (hopefully) lower-priced tickets and the concessionary overnight accommodation charges

After further short discussions it was agreed that determination of the official Guests List and arrangements for named-tables for parties should be deferred meantime and the Meeting then terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair.