

Deacon Convener Report 2021

Well, I think have used all the superlatives available in my report last year to describe the pandemic. Who would have thought we would still be in the mist of this still? Many trades people have spoken to me with sympathy that I haven't been able to do what previous Deacon Convenors have. Yes, it has been very different, but things are slowly getting back to normal. And yet, I think I have been privileged to be part of the Trades at one of the most crucial times in our city's life.

We, the Nine Trades, have been there when Dundee charities, community groups and people have needed us most. I don't wish to steal our charity trustee's thunder; John Fyffe will speak more on the specifics later. There have been some considerable challenges along the way, especially when our income was reduced due to the mass exodus of students from Merry Halls. I am glad to say that, thanks to the efforts of Adam and his team, there is again nearly full occupancy.

So, what have I been doing? Well, I have spoken at the Bakers Trade AGM last week, welcoming the new Deacon, Karen Murray, our first Lady Deacon. A first for them and for us. I would have attended the Glasgow dinner and the Weavers had the Murray household not succumbed to covid. I attended the 375th Big Pie event at Irvine. It was a great night. I look forward to getting out to other Trades events, as you get started.

When I was speaking with the other Trades around Scotland, it does seem that attendances are running at about 50%. Many people are still anxious, and I fully understand that. Some may have just got out of the way of attending events.

I wish you - the Deacons, Boxmasters and Clerks - well, especially in your endeavours to get things moving again. Please include me if I can help.

Our Trustees have been exceptional through this time. It has been a privilege to work with them. During our discussions, we would sift through a range of differing options and opinions and always manage to always come to a common and consensual outcome. The motivation was to see the best for our city and those in need. We will need to replace some of that talent next May and I would ask you to nominate those from your own ranks who have served

and enhanced your Trade with exceptional qualities or have shown real promise for the future. Please think hard about that.

Steve Flack has kept us all updated with his exceptional newsletter and help on the website. Bruce Donaldson has done a power of work with education and we are delighted with John Fyffe's work with the charities. It has been good to glean information from them and liaise with them to get to the heart of projects. I have enjoyed the advice and help from many past Deacon Convenors; I thank you all for that.

As always, Mr Boxmaster, thank you for keeping me on the 'straight and narrow'.

This has been a strange time; the Trades has been there for our city. Former Deacon Convenor Petrie challenged us all in the Trades when he spoke at Deacon Karen's dinner. 'Do what you can to get this mighty Trade back, so we can carry on the great good from the past and find new ways to do it in the future.'

Thank you all for your support and help these past two years. I look forward to seeing some of you at the Bridie and the Kirking.