

Issue 69  
December  
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# SOLAS Newsletter



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**Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for 2021**

Your New SOLAS President  
Lynne Alexander



Dear Members

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2020, Shirley passed the role of National President on to me, and I would like to thank Shirley for her service during the last two years which had additional challenges to say the least.

I was first introduced to SOLAS by Moira Shepherd and can quite easily say I wouldn't be where I am now without her starting this all off for me, so my thanks go to Moira.

That was eight years ago, and it didn't take long after gaining membership for me to decide to take on a more active role and join the Dundee committee. I then became Secretary for Dundee for a number of years before a place opened up on the General Council at which point, I was happy to take this up too. Without active members, like myself and the many who have gone before me, SOLAS simply wouldn't function and so I encourage anyone who feels they can contribute to join their local branch, and when opportunities arise, General Council too. Four meetings a year, of which two are remote via GoToMeeting, one in Perth and one the day after the annual dinner, is not a big ask and it's good to have new members on the committees who usually bring in new ideas too. It is likely that all meetings will of course be virtual until things change regarding distancing, but that is the plan going forwards. In the early days, when I didn't know what was involved, I just sat quiet and listened to others to get the jist of procedures and then when I felt more confident, I started to give my views and participate more.

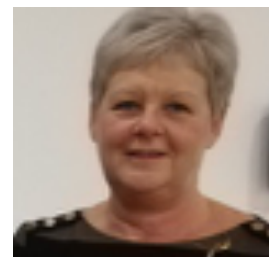
We were unable to hold our AGM and dinner in Dundee this year due to Covid and have postponed this until next year at which point, I look forward to welcoming you all to my local area. Instead, we held a virtual event which went ahead without issue (and without hangovers!) and I believe Dorothy has a picture of us in the newsletter below. Very different from our usual photos of everyone in their finest attire, but it was great to see the turnout given the situation.

All classes and CPD going forward are being held virtually until further notice and we hope to run a virtual seminar in March 2021 to kick this off, of which details will follow in due course.

All that remains is for me to wish everyone a lovely Christmas and I hope this New Year will bring better times for us all.

Kind regards  
Lynne Alexander

## Administrator's Report



I must admit when compiling our June Newsletter, I never envisaged that the Covid 19 fallout would dominate my December Report.

I am pleased to say that apart from the cancellation of our planned September seminar we have more or less managed to get back on track.

Both General Council and the Education Board managed, via "GoTo Meetings", to hold all their scheduled meetings and even managed to squeeze in a couple of extra ones. With all going well we are actively considering in future holding a proportion of our meetings on a virtual basis.

Courtesy of Go To Meetings The Executry Exam which should have happened on the 25th of March finally took place on the 28th of October. Results were very good with 22 Distinctions. On the same basis the Feeing Exam was held on the 23rd of September. Again, results held up with 15 students obtaining distinction. Normally students who complete the three modules receive their diplomas in October, of course as the classes and exams were delayed it will now be early in the New Year before these are awarded.

For the year 20/21 all classes and exams will continue to be carried out on a remote basis. The Cashroom course with 33 students commenced 2nd November and will end with the Feeing exam on the 23rd of June. Although we have managed to ensure that no classes or exams are cancelled, they will now be running at a slightly later date due to the knock-on effect from the delays experienced for year 19/20.

On behalf of the Education Board, I would like to thank all our students, lecturers, invigilators and examiners for both their commitment and flexibility demonstrated throughout the last few months. We as a Board were anxious at all times to ensure that there was no drop in our standard of course delivery/results. I do feel that with having the cooperation of all involved that this has been achieved

For the first time our AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> November was held on a virtual basis. Although the numbers signing in were slightly disappointing it was encouraging to see some newcomers. Please see a picture below. All going well our next AGM and Dinner will be held in Dundee in November 2021. On the other side of the coin, we had what must be said were exceptional numbers signing into a Seminar arranged by our Edinburgh Branch. Out of 90 invites 70+ joined in on the evening. The obvious advantage is that attendance can be opened up to other branches thus aiding CPD requirements.

With some sort of gathering restrictions still likely to be in place General Council have decided to cancel our Perth 2021 Spring Seminar. However, given our relative success utilising GoToMeetings we are actively discussing the possibility of the Law Society delivering their presentation virtually over say a two-hour period. If proceeding on this basis it would once again be geared for the middle of March with the usual invitations being sent out in advance to all members.

There has been a very good return of subs/CPDs. I would just mention that any received after the 31st December will incur a £10 late fee along with a 14-day letter.

Although CPD hours will be required for 2020/21 no decision has yet been taken re the actual number. With virtual seminars being held I would urge you on an ongoing basis to record all qualifying hours. Please always make sure you use the most up to date version of the CPD form.

During November a diary was sent to all members who have asked to remain on our mailing list. Please let me know if you no longer wish to receive one.

With many members at present still working from home please ensure that I always have the benefit of your preferred mailing address. There have been instances of late where emails/mail have not reached their intended target.

Finally, I would just like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and let's all hope for a much brighter 2021.

Dorothy Nicholson

## AGM Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2020



This is a screen shot taken during the AGM of those who attended.



## Branch Reports

### **Aberdeen Branch Report 2020**

We hope all our members and families are keeping well.

Due to current Covid-19 regulations CPD meetings are now being offered by webinar. We are joining in with other branches, please try and join these meetings because CPD will be required at the end of the current session.

Our students have had a very trying year with the Executry exam being cancelled due to lockdown, only weeks before they were due to sit it. These students have now done their exam albeit remotely with 100% pass rate. Well done to all.

Carol Baxter has retired from General Council but I'm very pleased that Jenny Hiscox from Andersonbain has taken on the role.

At long last there seems to be a slight glimmer of hope that there might be light at the end of the tunnel, and we will be able to meet in person again.

Aberdeen Branch Secretary  
The Society of Law Accountants in Scotland



## **Dundee Branch Update**

Dundee Branch held a Committee meeting online on 23 November via go to meeting. Online CPD was discussed and there are wheels in motion for arranging for this so our members can meet their CPD requirement.

Last year's classes went well and with great results, even with the extended delay between the last class and the exam. We are especially pleased to see that the Dundee Executives exam had 4 Distinctions.

Shirley Mellon has stepped down from the Committee and Tracey McCardle has joined. The current Committee members are: -

Nikki Scott,	President and Secretary
Clare McLaren,	Treasurer
Natasha Mitchell,	Diploma and Syllabus Secretary
Lynne Alexander,	Minute Secretary
Heather Davidson,	Committee Member
Wendy Mitchell,	Committee Member
Ella Dunn,	Committee Member
Tracey McCardle,	Committee Member

Ella Dunn has intimated her retiral and will be coming off of the Committee in May.

It is hoped that we will be able to meet in person in May for the Branch AGM and we will update the members regarding this in due course.

We are in need of new Committee members and would request that anyone who has a desire to be on the Committee please contact Nikki Scott at [DundeeBranch@solas.org.uk](mailto:DundeeBranch@solas.org.uk) to let her know. All meetings are



currently being held online with the exception (hopefully) of the Branch AGM.

### Edinburgh Branch news

It has been a very strange year! Since the newsletter last year, Edinburgh has had only one Seminar – back in February, a talk was given by **Austen Burns** and **Gillian Wilson** from Gillespie Macandrew LLP who addressed us on ‘**Making the most of IHT allowances and bands**. Austen and Gillian, both Solicitors in Gillespie Macandrew’s Private Client team gave a very interesting talk on what IHT relief is available and explaining the circumstances when it comes into play which was well received by members. And we all went home as usual, expecting to return in March for another face-to-face seminar when we could shake hands, sit next to each other, see each other’s faces without masks and attend our places of work on a regular basis using public transport without rubber gloves and bottles of hand sanitiser...

The ongoing COVID restrictions meant the New Student’s Reception in August, the proposed afterwork CPD Seminar in September and the Graduation Ceremony in October were not able to go ahead either, but lectures and exams have resumed online. We are also pleased to welcome Catherine Waugh as a new member to the Edinburgh Branch and look forward to being able to welcome her face to face soon!

The Edinburgh branch cancelled the remaining seminars proposed until the summer break, and our AGM which had been scheduled for April. On 22nd July, we arranged for our AGM to take place on line, via Go To Meeting. The committee indicated their hope that the seminars would resume in November, but the continuing COVID restrictions meant that this was not in fact possible. However, the committee did decide to explore the possibility of an online seminar, and approached Alex White, an AML auditor with the Law Society who kindly agreed to be a guinea pig for an online seminar on 25<sup>th</sup> November and invite

members from the other branches. And I am glad to report, this was a great success! Over 90 links to the meeting were sent out, 76 people logged on and feedback has been very positive for continuing online seminars. Members appreciated the convenience of attending from their own desk/homes with no time spent commuting and they were pleased to resume CPD at last after the break of several months. Alex's talk on the **Society's supervisory approach, the TCSP thematic report and due diligence expectations** was well received by the members, it is always useful to find out about the reasons why we have to work in certain ways, and it was fascinating to hear about the considerations Alex and the rest of the team have to take into account. Alex has kindly agreed to join our bank of speakers and share his slides with those who attended.

The committee of the Edinburgh Branch hope to have another online seminar on 20th January 2021 and anticipate that this will be opened up nationally so watch this space!

If you would be interested in joining the Edinburgh Branch committee, please let me know. The duties are not arduous, and we appreciate the new ideas that come along with the new faces. I would be happy to give you more details, just email [Edinburgh.Branch@solas.org.uk](mailto:Edinburgh.Branch@solas.org.uk).

Tracey O'Brien

Edinburgh Branch Secretary



## **SOLAS Glasgow Branch**

### **Branch CPD Meetings**

All meetings are held (unless otherwise stated in writing) at The Royal Faculty of Procurators, 12 Nelson Mandela Square, Glasgow, G2 1BT.

Any friends/colleagues of Members are welcome to attend our CPD meetings which are free.

The planned syllabus for 2021 is as follows:

- Tue. 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2021 John Kerrigan, Blackadders –  
Update on Changes to our Laws of Succession
- Tue. 9<sup>th</sup> Mar 2021 Janet Blackstock, Faculty Auditor - Feeing
- Tue. 20<sup>th</sup> Apr 2021 Simon Allison, Blackadders - Employment Law
- Tue. 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Alastair Stewart, NatWest - Fraud Prevention
- Tue. 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 2021 Sharon Brownlee, Law Society - AML and Cashroom

The Committee has discussed future CPD events and social distancing. It may be that CPD events will be held online in future by webinar, until we can return to normality.

Glasgow Branch currently has 205 Members. We want ALL our Members to get the very best of their membership. If the dates or CPD topics don't suit you, please let us know. If you would like something covered in CPD the Committee will do it's very best to allocate speaker.

Please ensure your contact details are up to date to keep informed of all Branch News and Updates. Please contact [GlasgowBranch@solas.org.uk](mailto:GlasgowBranch@solas.org.uk) to inform us of any changes.

Did you know that SOLAS has social media.....we are on twitter and Facebook.

Please follow us and watch this space to see updates on Branch News, CPD and Events.

 The Society of Law Accountants in Scotland

 @SOLASmembership

## **We Want You**

Would you like to join the Glasgow Branch Committee?

This is a fantastic way to be part of SOLAS and contribute to an organisation which is run by you the Members. Get something back from your membership and get involved with a network of like-minded colleagues.

We hold 4 online Committee meetings per year and host 8 Events per year.

As part of the Committee, you help the branch to organise CPD Events, AGM, Graduation Ceremony, Student Meet and Greet etc.

If you are enthusiastic and have new ideas of how to introduce exciting changes to the Branch and SOLAS please join or team.

We want our Members to get the very best of their membership and would like to introduce Social Events/Nights etc. for Members to attend, network and meet up with friends and colleges however we need you, our Members, to get involved.

If anyone is interested in joining the committee, or has any new suggestions for the branch please contact us at [GlasgowBranch@solas.org.uk](mailto:GlasgowBranch@solas.org.uk)

The Glasgow Branch Committee is still dedicated and is continuing to meet and discuss what's best for our members and the Branch.

We hope to see everyone soon.

Inverness Branch

No Report

**SOLAS Office Bearers**

**Lynne Alexander, President**  
**MHA Henderson Logie**  
**Dundee**

**Natalie Cooke, Vice-President**  
**The Law Society of Scotland**

**Lindsay Murray, General Secretary**  
**Brodies LLP**  
**Edinburgh**  
**Tel: 0131 656 0018**

**Gillian Gray, General Treasurer**  
**The Law Society of Scotland**  
**Tel: 07538155811.**

**General Council Members****Aberdeen**

**Blair Chalmers, Andersonbain**  
**Joyce Forbes, The Law Practice**  
**Jenny Hiscox, Andersonbain**

**Dundee**

**Heather Davidson, Rollos Law LLP**  
**Nikki Scott, Blackadders**

**Edinburgh**

**Gillian Forsyth, Murray Beith Murray**

**Glasgow**

**Carrie McQueen**  
**Noreen Hope, Milne Craig**  
**David Hamilton, Hamilton Mullan**

**Inverness**

**Lisa McIntyre, Macleod & MacCallum**

**Branch Secretaries****Aberdeen**

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**Dundee**

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