



# Calgary Claver



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope this finds you all safe and well and that you have had some semblance of summer activities. This has been a challenging year to say the least and still more to come! When I took over from Paul mid-year, I don't think any of us really realized in April the impact that COVID-19 Pandemic would have on us, but we do now!

Having to keep the club moving along with Special Resolutions in lieu of our normal AGM was one of the innovative measures taken in light of Social Distancing Rules, which the board is actively looking at to add to our bylaws for upcoming years. Having all our meetings for the past 6 months and for the future using Zoom technology helps us keep connected until some form of normality returns.

Since retiring in 2018 I have become more active in both the RBWF and RBANA along with the Calgary Burns Club, keeping our profile high in North America and the World. All organizations are facing the same challenges with declining numbers and keeping the members engaged through the Pandemic, and I look for your support to assist in keeping that at the forefront of our survival.

I will advise the club if anything changes during the winter with regards to social distancing and ability to start socializing again, but I am not optimistic in that subject. Stay safe and well with all your family and friends.

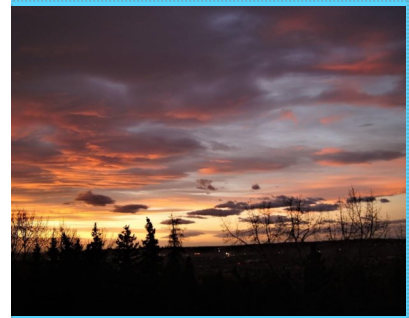
Fond regards,

Henry

Henry Cairney

President

Calgary Burns Club



1. Fall Sunset NW Calgary
2. Burns Mausoleum Dumfries
3. Field Of Crosses Calgary

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## BURNS POEM

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(Unconfirmed Date)

### **Tae the Weaver's gin ye go Poem (1788)**

My heart was ance as blithe and free  
As simmer days were lang;  
But a bonie, westlin weaver lad  
Has gart me change my sang.

Chorus.-To the weavers gin ye go, fair maids,  
To the weavers gin ye go;  
I rede you right, gang ne'er at night,  
To the weavers gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,  
To warp a plaiden wab;  
But the weary, weary warpin o't  
Has gart me sigh and sab.  
To the weavers, &c.

A bonie, westlin weaver lad  
Sat working at his loom;  
He took my heart as wi' a net,  
In every knot and thrum.  
To the weavers, &c.

I sat beside my warpin-wheel,  
And aye I ca'd it roun';  
But every shot and evey knock,  
My heart it gae a stoun.  
To the weavers, &c.

The moon was sinking in the west,  
Wi' visage pale and wan,  
As my bonie, westlin weaver lad  
Convoy'd me thro' the glen.  
To the weavers, &c.

But what was said, or what was done,  
Shame fa' me gin I tell;  
But Oh! I fear the kintra soon  
Will ken as weel's myself!  
To the weavers, &c.

## RBANA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (HENRY CAIRNEY)



Without beating up the 2020 year totally with respect to social distancing, RBANA, similar to many other organizations, has survived with the use of modern technology and internet meetings.

The RBANA board has a full complement as follows covering the whole of North America.

In Canada we are represented with our Canadian Directors Brian Cumming (Calgary BC), Colin Harris (Winnipeg BC) and Andy Harrower (Medicine Hat BC), Past President Ken Montgomery (Medicine Hat BC) and Secretary/Treasurer Mathew Hill (Medicine Hat BC).

From the USA they are Vice-President Bill Fulton (Virginia), George McClelland (Atlanta BC), Mark Ferguson (Atlanta BC) and Paul Kennedy (South Jersey BC).

It has been a challenging year for us all in many ways. The new board was installed in May 2020 and is actively working to increase numbers and also progress their heritage and identity through understanding their owned "Tangible Items" and their location. Paul Kennedy (archivist) is working with Bill Fulton are seeking help from the longer-standing members and through liaison with the University of South Carolina, which presently holds a number of our items.

We had one long standing member Dr Tony Grogan pass away in June of this year and we sent our condolences to his wife Renata and family.

RBANA is a tradition we should all support and keep going especially in these strange times and I appeal to any CBC member to assist in keeping it alive and well through joining as it is not an expensive membership.

Please all stay safe and well and I wish everyone the best through the expected difficult times coming over the next six months .

Henry Cairney,  
President, RBANA

## SINGERS 2021 TRIP UPDATE (HENRY CAIRNEY)

Unfortunately the Scotland trip 2021 had to be cancelled. It is extremely unfortunate but due to the unknown factors involved for the next year. The Kirkcudbright Tattoo organizers and Irvine Burns Club have extended an invitation to 2022 which will be reviewed based on known facts during 2021 and the Pandemic impact at the time. Many thanks to the organizing committee for their work to date, and the club members for their understanding in this matter. All funds raised have been refunded.

There will be further information on this situation in future editions.

## BURNS EPIGRAM Epigram On Rough Roads (1786)

I'm now arrived-thanks to the gods!-  
Thro' pathways rough and muddy,  
A certain sign that makin roads  
Is no this people's study:  
Altho' Im not wi' Scripture cram'd,  
I'm sure the Bible says  
That heedless sinners shall be damn'd,  
Unless they mend their ways.

## BURNS SONG Willie Brew'd a Peck O' Maut (1789)

O Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,  
And Rob and Allen cam to pree;  
Three blyther hearts, that lee-lang night,  
Ye wadna found in Christendie.

Chorus.-We are na fou, we're nae that fou,  
But just a drappie in our ee;  
The cock may crawl, the day may daw  
And aye we'll taste the barley bree.

Here are we met, three merry boys,  
Three merry boys I trow are we;  
And mony a night we've merry been,  
And mony mae we hope to be!  
We are na fou, &c.

It is the moon, I ken her horn,  
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie;  
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,  
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee!  
We are na fou, &c.

Wha last shall rise to gang awa,  
A cuckold, coward loun is he!  
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',  
He is the King amang us three.  
We are na fou, &c.

Robert Burns.

## OLD SCOTS PROVERB

*"If ye like the nut, crack it . "*

Translated means: Nothing is achieved  
without effort.

## BURNS WORLD (TONY GRACE)

The restrictions imposed to counteract COVID – 19 continue to have a massive impact on the Burns World across the Globe. Starting at home, the Calgary Burns Club has not had a regular meeting since March 2020. Using Special Resolutions you, the Members, approved the new Board of Directors which allowed the business of the Club to move forward. Since then the Board have met every month with the minutes being posted on the Website, to try to decide among other things how the St. Andrews and the Annual Dinner should be handled. As you know the St. Andrews event has been cancelled and just this month we have decided after input from Members, to cancel the January 2021 Dinner. Possible alternatives were to have been discussed at the October Get Together so hopefully something will have been agreed to. Communication with the Members has been through electronic messages and a couple of Zoom meetings, these last allowing discussion but not permitting any formal business to be transacted. It is hoped that the entertainment portion of these Get Togethers will remind members of the camaraderie they normally enjoy each month. The Board plans to continue using Zoom Get Togethers each month for the foreseeable future, and they will be held at our regular meeting time of the second Tuesday of each month.

Many Clubs here in Canada and America as well as in the UK have cancelled their usual January celebrations.

RBANA have been quiet but held a virtual AGM in May at which Henry Cairney took over as President from Ken Montgomery of the Medicine Hat Burns Club. Unfortunately the AGM which was to have been held in Atlanta was cancelled, as has been the 2021 AGM originally slated for Calgary. Plans for the event in 2021 are being discussed.

The World Federation is no different. All meetings are using Zoom – probably a boon to Henry Cairney in Calgary!! The September 2020 conference in Paisley was cancelled, but necessary business was conducted electronically with Past President Brian Goldie, and our Henry Cairney moving to Senior Vice President with Alan Beck taking over as Junior Vice President. In addition Trekker Armstrong is filling the role of Communications Convener. The Glynhill Hotel in Paisley has been provisionally booked for the Conference in September 2021, at which Henry Cairney will become the President –put this on your schedule for 2021!! The new Board of the Confederation is considering what changes it needs to make to prosper in the new world following COVID – 19.

More information is available through their respective websites – [www.rbwf.org.uk](http://www.rbwf.org.uk) and [www.rbana.com](http://www.rbana.com).

## 2021 DINNER (BRIAN CUMMING)

As 1st VP I would like to take the opportunity to update all on our 2021 Dinner.

Just 3 days after the 2020 Robert Burns Dinner ended, the first person, to have COVID-19, entered Canada, although this was not confirmed until later.

Blissfully unaware of the gathering storm clouds, an Request for Purchase (RFP) was sent out on February 7, 2020 to the Westin, Telus Convention Centre, and Hyatt. In early March, The Westin was picked to host the 2021 dinner.

A few weeks later, we were all in lockdown, working from home and conducting Club business and meetings via Zoom.

Fast forwarding to the present, we are currently in a possible second wave of the virus, wearing masks in public spaces, social distancing and not permitted to gather in larger groups. After many virtual meetings with the Westin, they determined that the ballroom could only hold 64 people, socially distanced, and that pipers and the Calgary Burns Club Singers could not perform.

After a member's survey where 51 % of those responding indicated they would attend a traditional Dinner with approximately 420 attendees, the club cancelled the 2021 Dinner. Initial survey results for a physical member only Dinner was 34/62 club members, but subsequently has dropped to 27/62 as some members who voted yes have changed their minds. This has been cancelled also as of this update.

As we have no idea what the COVID-19 situation will be in January 2021, I am also considering the possibility of having a Brow Well Dinner around July 21, 2021. (Brow Well is where Burns bathed in the river Severn as his doctor advised)

The Westin has confirmed it is not able to host a July 2021 dinner due to prior commitments.

Brian Cumming, 1<sup>st</sup> V.P. & 2021 Burns Supper Convener



2020 Dinner Photo  
(Distant Memory!)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Executive

President: Henry Cairney

1st VP: Brian Cumming

2nd VP: Charlie Malone

Secretary: Tony Grace

Treasurer: Paul Kane

#### Non-Executive

Past President: Paul Armstrong

Communications: Trekker Armstrong

Director At Large: Rob Pinkerton

Director At Large: David Currie

Director At Large: Kyle Scott

#### Ex-Officio

Entertainment: Jim Little/Maurice

MacAtamney

Steward: Don Humphreys

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS (PAUL ARMSTRONG)

The Calgary Burns Club current membership is as follows:

**Member Class No.**

Life Member—12, Ordinary Member—36, Associate Member—6,  
Associate Member (Out of Town) — 5, Honorary Member— 1.  
Total 60

It comes as no surprise to anyone that the world has changed since the middle of March. The Board has tried to soldier on and conduct the Club's business as well as it could under these trying circumstances and such is the case with membership.

We are extremely pleased to recognize Bill Gardner who celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 12, 2020. He was presented with a new Black Watch cap and a gift basket from the Club. Bill has found it difficult to attend meetings over the last year or so and has accepted the Board's offer to become an Honorary Member!

The last few months have been difficult for the Club, notwithstanding COVID-19, a number of Club members have experienced some health challenges. Bruce Gordon, Ian Denness and Henry Cairney have all undergone orthopedic surgery. Derek Larg continues with his regular dialysis, but he is back on the transplant list and hopefully his name will come up soon.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Maurice McAtamney who underwent open heart surgery this summer and has suffered the devastating complication of the loss of his eyesight. Maurice, with his usual optimism, is learning to deal with this adversity. We receive regular updates from Bud, a very good friend who visits daily.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Charlie Malone also recently underwent surgery and is recovering comfortably at home. When the Singers are able to reconvene, Charlie tells me he will be moving from the bass section to the tenors but could well be the group's first soprano!

We mourn the recent loss of Jack Grant, a long-time member of the Club, whose wit and extensive knowledge of Robert Burns will be greatly missed!



Bill Gardner



Charlie Malone



Jack Grant

## THE CBC WEBSITE (PAUL ARMSTRONG)

The Calgary Burns Club website is alive and well. With the difficulties encountered with COVID-19 we have made every effort to keep the business of the Club updated and the minutes of all the Board meetings and the virtual Club gatherings can be found there.

We recently received a photo from Jim McLaughlin of the 1995 dinner. This was the year in which he was President and the Speaker that year was Jack Glenney. It still appears that we have some gaps in our group photos from years gone by. I don't know when the official group photo started but the earliest dated one that we have is 1979. There is another photo on the website which is undated and may be 1978 but we do not have one of the inaugural dinner in 1977. We are missing 1980 – 1983 inclusive, 1984 or 1985 (there is a photo, but it is not clear which year this was taken), 1987 and 1996. If anyone can help us out and has a photo from one or more of these years in their archives, we would greatly appreciate having a copy to add to the gallery.

Another interesting piece of history is that the inaugural dinner in 1977 was held at the Westin (the Calgary Inn in those days and the birthplace of Canada's national cocktail, the Caesar). It was held there until it moved to the Telus Convention Centre in 2007. This, of course, was because of the popularity, success and exponential growth of the event. The Dinner took place there until its return to the Westin this year.

If you have any difficulties with login, suggestions for the website or can fill any of the gaps please contact the webmaster at calgaryburnsclub@gmail.com.

Dr. C. P. Armstrong, Webmaster

## FUTURE EVENTS (TREKKER ARMSTRONG)

**\*Possible Virtual Burns Night  
Celebration in January\*  
T.B.A. Due to Covid-19 Pandemic**

# THE CARNIE GROUP (IAN DENNESS)



**JOHN CAMPBELL (4TH EARL AND 1ST MARQUESS OF BREADALBANE 1762-1834) PRESIDENT HIGHLAND SOCIETY 1786**

## Address Of Beelzebub

This poem, written in 1786, was provoked by the controversy over whether Highlanders should be encouraged to remain at home or emigrate. The Highland society in London 'learned from the Earl of Breadalbane (Broadalbane) that five hundred Highlanders had subscribed money to emigrate from the estates of Macdonald of Glengary to Canada'. It was decided that the noblemen and gentlemen would 'frustrate their design' in order to avoid the further loss of British subjects. In their opinion, the loss of such enormous numbers posed a threat to British security and an economic loss to the landlords, e.g. fishing, agriculture and industry and so, in June 1803 parliament swiftly passed the Passenger Vessels Act, which raised the cost of a passage to Canada and America under the guise of regulating the passenger vessels which crossed the Atlantic. The Act required improved conditions relating to hygiene, food and comfort for passengers travelling to North America. The truth of the Bill, drawn up by Scotland's lord advocate, Charles Hope, was revealed in a letter he wrote in 1804: [the Bill] 'certainly was intended, both by myself and the other gentlemen of the committee [of the Highland Society] appointed to enquire into the situation in the highlands, indirectly to prevent the effects of that pernicious spirit of discontent against their own country, and rage for emigrating to America, which had been raised among the people'. The Bill obviously worked for the Passenger Vessels Act led to an extension of the overcrowded townships and miserable living conditions of the Highlands. Of course, once the population no longer served as an economic commodity, the Clearances began and many more thousands were forced to emigrate. It is estimated that around 12,000 Highlanders emigrated between 1782 and 1803 with Thomas Telford reporting that the single 'most powerful' cause of emigrations was the mass conversion of land into sheep farms, of which the estates of MacDonald and Glengarry are singled out particularly in the Address of Beelzebub.

It is truly ironic that the very "gentlemen" then trying to prevent emigration, should a few years later, take up the cause with vengeance and perpetrate the forced exodus, known as the Highland Clearances.

Robert Burns prefaced the poem with this satirical wee verse:

'To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23rd of May last at the Shakespeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the Society were informed by Mr. M'Kenzie of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands of Mr. Macdonald of Glengary to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing-- -Liberty'.



**THOMAS TELFORD**

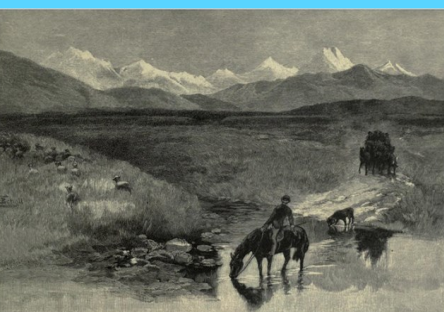
Long life, my Lord, an' health be yours,  
Unskaited by hunger'd Highland boors;  
Lord grant me nae duddie, desperate beggar,  
Wi' dirk, claymore, and rusty trigger,  
May twin auld Scotland o' a life  
She likes - as lambkins like a knife.

Faith you and Applecross were right  
To keep the Highland hounds in sight:  
I doubt na! they wad bid nae better,  
Than let them ance out owre the water,  
Then up among thae lakes and seas,  
They'll mak what rules and laws they please:  
Some daring Hancock, or a Franklin,  
May set their Highland bluid a-ranklin;  
Some Washington again may head them,  
Or some Montgomery, fearless, lead them,  
Till God knows what may be effected  
When by such heads and hearts directed,  
Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire  
May to Patrician rights aspire!

Nae sage North now, nor sager Sackville,  
To watch and premier o'er the pack vile,  
An' whare will ye get Howes and Clintons  
To bring them to a right repentance  
To cove the rebel generation,  
An' save the honour o' the nation?  
They, an' be damn'd! what right hae they  
To meat, or sleep, or light o' day?  
Far less - to riches, pow'r, or freedom,  
But what your lordship likes to gie them?

But hear, my lord! Glengarry, hear!  
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear;  
Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,  
I canna say but they do gaylies:  
They lay aside a' tender mercies,  
An' tirl the hallions to the birses;  
Yet while they're only poind't and herriet,  
They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit:  
But smash them! crash them a' to spails,  
An' rot the dyvors i' the jails!  
The young dogs, swinge them to the labour;  
Let wark an' hunger mak them sober!  
The hizzies, if they're aughtlins fawsont,  
Let them in Drurv-lane be lesson'd!  
An' if the wives an' dirty brats  
Come thiggin at your doors an' yetts,  
Flaffin wi' duds, an' grey wi' beas',  
Frightin away your deuks an' geese;  
Get out a horsewhip or a jowler,  
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,  
An' gar the tatter'd gypsies pack  
Wi' a' their bastards on their back!

Go on, my Lord! I lang to meet you,  
An' in my house at hame to greet you;  
Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle,  
The benmost neuk beside the ingle,  
At my right han' assigned your seat,  
'Tween Herod's hip an' Polvcrate:  
Or if you on your station tarrow,  
Between Almagro and Pizarro,  
A seat, I'm sure ye're well deservin't;  
An' till ye come - your humble servant,



**THE MCKENZIE PLAINS (APPLECROSS)**

## THE CARNIE GROUP (CONTINUED)

Written by: Beelzebub in Hell, on 1st June, Anno Mundi 5790.

The tone of this poem is clear. Beelzebub writes to congratulate the lords responsible for their actions against the audacity of the 'rebel generation'. What right have they 'To meat, or sleep, or light o'day/ far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom/ But what your lordships PLEASE TO GIE THEM?'

Burns' can be seen to highlight the attitude towards the Highlands in lines 37/38 'Yet, while they're only poin'd, and herriet/They'll keep their stubborn Highlan spirit', Yet while they are only distrained and robbed, They will keep their stubborn Highland spirit.

The social injustice of the piece is encapsulated in lines 51/52 'An' gar the tatter'd gipseys pack/Wi' a' their bastarts on their back!'. And make the tattered gypsies pack (leave) With all their bastards on their back! Burns' thus assigns the sovereign right of man to choose his habitation and destiny.

I was also intrigued by the date Burns assigned to the poem. According to the Burns' Encyclopedia it conforms to the calculation of Archbishop Ussher of Armagh, who on the basis of the description of how Earth was founded in Genesis 5 -25, had calculated the Earth's creation by the Almighty as 4004 BC. AM or Anno Mundi (year of the Earth), Burns' date of 5790AM then gives the correct date of composition as 1786.

Further words on the Highland Society:

The Society was founded in 1778 by Highland gentlemen resident in London with "the view of establishing and supporting schools in the Highlands and in the Northern parts of Great Britain, for relieving distressed Highlanders at a distance from their native homes, for preserving the antiquities and rescuing from oblivion the valuable remains of Celtic literature, and for promoting the improvement and general welfare of the Northern parts of Great Britain".

Interestingly, in 1782, the Society was instrumental in securing the repeal of the statutory proscription of tartans introduced after the Jacobite rising of 1745. In its early days it was active in the investigations into the authenticity of the poems supposedly by Ossian, which it had also helped to publish.

Prepared for the Carnie Group by Ian Denness

## COMMUNICATIONS (TREKKER ARMSTRONG)

Effort this year was made by members to maintain the fellowship of the Club, during COVID-19, through use of email and Zoom Virtual meetings. We did experience some email issues with distribution of large video files that resulted in the Club emails being suspended by TELUS and Shaw e-mail servers. This ultimately was resolved. The Board is exploring alternative methods of distribution including leveraging the Club's own YouTube channel. Stand by for further notice. In the meantime, we will refrain from sending large file attachments (e.g > 15 mb).

The Calgary Burns Club has its own Zoom subscription for Board, member and other committee meetings. The Club Communication Convener manages this account, distributing meeting information and technically hosting the session. Please contact the Convener should you wish to schedule a Zoom meeting for club purposes. We appreciate everyone's understanding and contribution to development of our Zoom meeting guidelines and protocols. It has been a learning process and striving for continuous improvement.

The Club maintains a generic email address (calgaryburnsclub@gmail.com) as well as a Contact Form on the website. We received submissions to both sources, and these were forwarded to the appropriate person for action.

Members can send items, that may be of interest to the Club, to this generic email address for the Communications Convener to distribute. The Communication Convener reserves the right to decide the appropriateness of these and if there is any question they will be forwarded to the President for a decision.

A Calgary Burns Club email distribution list is maintained electronically whose source is from our Membership list. Please ensure that the appropriate email is recorded on the published club website Membership list, so as to receive the Club communication. We received regular information from RBWF and RBANA. Emails, as appropriate, are forwarded to the Club distribution list.

Trekker Armstrong  
Communications Convener



**BEELEZUB (ANOTHER NAME FOR SATAN)**



**THE HIGHLAND CLEARANCES**



**GENERAL SIMON FRASER  
(1ST PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY)**

## JIM MCLAUGHLIN (HENRY CAIRNEY)

Jim McLaughlin has been a member of the Calgary Burns club for 30 years which included becoming President of the club in 1995. The following is Jim's story.

Jim was born in Glasgow, Scotland, stating *"Less than a year before Hitler went to Hell, but I take no credit for that. What I most remember of his legacy is the post-war deprivations that I suppose had less impact on kids like me – other than the rationing of sweets - but it was particularly tough on our parents."*

*"My Dad died of TB when I was just two-and-a-half, leaving my poor Mum with two little kids to raise, myself and my older sister. Fortunately, she inherited a good-going men's and ladies hairdressing business from my father and worked very hard to support the family, including my Granny, who lived with us and mostly looked after us two kids. We weren't especially well off, but comfortable. My sister and I were a bit of a handful for Granny (especially me), so we were both shipped off to boarding school when we turned eight. It was like boot camp, but we were treated kindly enough by the standards of the day, and I still have fond memories of those nine years in Dumfries where I became quite fascinated by a former resident of the town, one Robert Burns."*

Jim completed his secondary schooling at the High School of Glasgow, and then attended the University of Strathclyde for his degree in Business and Economics. On leaving University, he started his first job as a trainee Systems Analyst with the Aero-Engine Division of Rolls Royce in Glasgow.

Jim continues, *"In November 1969 I married the loveliest wee lass in Glasgow - or maybe even Scotland – and who I've managed to hold on to for over fifty years now. Two days after the wedding Joyce and I hopped on a plane for Canada, though we were so broke we had to borrow the money for the flight from the Canadian taxpayer. We put up in a fancy \$50-a-night hotel in downtown Toronto for a couple of days, then switched to the Have-a-Nap Motel for \$9; that was so we could keep eating. Within three weeks we both had a job, me with the Ontario Department of Justice and Joyce with the Bank of Montreal."*

Jim and Joyce then spent seven years in Toronto which was, *"Interrupted in the middle by a six-month return to Scotland, the thousand dollars cure they used to call it. Before leaving we had promised our parents we would re-patriate after a couple of years. But we were loving it so much in Canada (such a change from 1960's Glasgow) that we waited for four years before reluctantly making good on our promise to go back, accompanied by our nine-month-old first child, Andrew. That was the Fall of 1973."*

Scotland was a shock to Jim and Joyce on their return, *"It was like a tale out of Edgar Allan Poe! The miners had just gone on strike. Winter was coming on – a stinker as it turned out – and life was worse than this lockdown we're experiencing now. I didn't look for a job as I was spending a few months as an external student at Strathclyde University again to finish off a BSc. degree from the London School of Economics. But things were so miserable that we said 'sorry' to our folks and scurried back to Toronto. We'd have swum back if we'd had to. Fortunately, I got my old job back."*

In 1976 Jim spotted an advert for a large new Police College which had opened in Aylmer, Ontario, and they were advertising for a Chief Administrator. He then took the opportunity to make a career change, from Systems into administration, so he applied and was offered the position and moved to rural Ontario. *"We spent four years there; I loved the job, and the novelty of small-town living was a nice change. I even got elected as a town councillor. But Joyce wasn't so enamoured, and I felt after four years that it was time to expand my career horizons."*



**Jim And Joyce**



**The University of Strathclyde**



**Toronto in the 1960's**



**Aylmer Police College**



## JIM MCLAUGHLIN (CONTINUED)

Their next move brought Jim and Joyce to Calgary where he took up the position as the Senior Manager of The Court of Queen's Bench. *"I'd had a lot of exposure to the courts in Ontario, and had cut my teeth at management in Aylmer, so I tossed my hat in the ring and was appointed to the position. It was a huge challenge and a great learning experience under a boss – the Regional Director of Court Operations – who was a terrific mentor. A year later, he was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister (in Edmonton) responsible for all of the court operations in Alberta, which left his job in Calgary open. We had worked really well together, so he made sure I got his old position."*

The promotion gave Jim much more responsibility which involved managing the courts and related support services for the Judicial District of Calgary, and, for several years, all of southern Alberta.

*"I loved my job, often describing it (tongue-in-cheek) as the best in Alberta...well, most of the time. I enjoyed working with the senior judiciary – most of whom I respected and admired – but keeping them happy was 'a challenge'. However, I survived."*

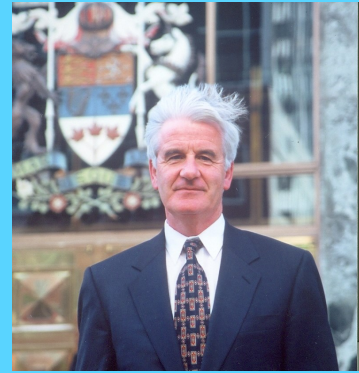
Prior to Jim retiring in July 2004, his last challenging assignment was to act as user project manager for the construction of the new courthouse in Calgary. *"That wasn't much fun, constantly dodging bullets from the different levels of court over which should get the biggest or best slice of the pie. But I got through that too until my retirement."*

Jim continues; *"Along the way, Joyce and I somehow acquired two more sons, making three in total...boy, oh boy, oh boy, what fun! Joyce qualified as a professional accountant, and after working for several years in the oil patch, ended up as Manager of Corporate Accounting at Shaw Communications. When I announced to her that I was planning on pulling the pin, I offered her the generous concession that she could keep on working, being as how I was sufficiently emancipated not to object to being a kept man. That was the first time in our marriage that she came close to hitting me. So, we both sailed off 'in a beautiful pea-green boat' into a blissful retirement earning us pejoratives such as blood-sucking baby boomers, and lazy cotton-heads, but also Mexican Snowbirds. Life is good, but now short. And maybe shorter if we don't manage to keep dodging the Covid thingy!"*

Jim joined the Calgary Burns Club in 1990 sponsored by club piper, John Whitelock and has been Secretary, Club President and is still currently the bard of the Club. He is an active member of both the singers and the Carnie Group furthering the cultural side of the club and has been with them since their inception.

Jim added; *"A high point was attending as part of the official guest choir at the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2009. What a thrill that was!"*

*"I hope to continue to enjoy the friendships and the camaraderie of the fine body of fellows who make up The Calgary Burns Club and '...brithers be for a' that'."*



**Jim outside the Calgary Court of Queens Bench**



**President Jim in 1995 with Jack Glenny Guest Speaker**



**Early CBC Singers Rose and Crown**



**Edinburgh Tattoo 2009**

# CALGARY BURNS CLUB SINGERS (PAUL ARMSTRONG)

## The Story Continues

In the fall of 2009, Ron Pratt assumed the leadership of the Singers from Ron Budd. There were some changes and the new catch phrase became, "I will take that under consideration!". The group began practising at the Kensington Legion and there was the addition of several new members and particularly the recruitment of Henry Cairney, an accomplished keyboardist and performer in his own right. Henry quickly became the arranger and music producer for the group.

### Events

Ron Pratt continued the practice, begun by Ron Budd, of performing at events in and around the Calgary area. The very first, however in the early days of the group, was a visit to Club Patron, Grant MacEwan, to celebrate his birthday on the initiative of Ron Budd. The Singers perform at many events, over 35 in 2018!

The busiest time of the year for the group falls from November to the end of February and it has performed at the Spruce Meadows Christmas Market, hospital wards, hospices, seniors' residences as well as Highland Games and many community and club organizations. Often this requires only a few of the over 20 members. Of particular note are performances at the Field of Crosses every November and the Water Valley Celtic Festival in June. They even made it to Water Valley in 2013 when a major flood hit Calgary. It was a smaller contingent than had been expected as many of the group from the south part of the city could not get across town. The Singers perform regularly at Club meetings and other Club events including the annual dinner in January for which they begin practising in November. They were featured in the program when RBANA held its conferences in Calgary in 2003 and 2015. The Singers also performed at the opening ceremonies of ScotDance Canada in June 2018 and in February 2019 as part of the Calgary ProArts Concert Series. They have also performed twice at the Big Rock Christmas Concert in Okotoks in 2013 and, most recently, in December 2019.

Unfortunately, this all changed in March of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic took over the world!

### The Skits

Over the years the group has had fun performing a number of songs at various events in the form of skits which have been, for the most part, very successful. The first was 'T Was the Scots with several performances of Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut, the Kilmarnock Bunnet/Bonnet, the Welly Boot Song and The Laird O' Cockpen, but, then there was the Lum Hat!

### The CDs

The group that was once described as "not talented enough to be a choir" has produced seven CDs, most feature a blend of Burns' songs as well as traditional Scottish music with some Canadian and original content as well. All the CDs, with the exception of a Christmas one that was recorded in the Langdon Oddfellows Hall, were recorded in the rehearsal room at the Jack Singer Concert Hall.

Ron Budd felt that the group should record some of the songs they were singing and planning for the first CD, "T Was The Scots" featuring Robert Ferrier, started in 1999. Bob had no formal musical training but possessed a wonderful voice. It was recorded in 2000 but it was not released until 2001 and each Club member who attended the Dinner that year received a copy. By this time the group had enlisted the aid of sound engineer, Jason Wright, and his company Dark Matter Productions to record, edit, mix and master the recordings. Jason and his company have done the same for all but one of the CDs and handle the sound requirements for the annual dinner.

CD 2, "Scots Wha Hae" was recorded in 2003. In 2006 the Singers' 3rd CD, "Bring On The Whisky", was released with 23 members involved. The title track of this CD was written by Ron Budd and anyone who attends the annual dinner will recognize it as it is sung at every one. There was a hiatus of 7 years between CD 3 and 4 partly because of the visit to the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2009.

CD 4, "The Thistle of Scotland", came into being under the direction of Ron Pratt as did all the subsequent ones. Three years later CD 5, "O Rowan Tree" was recorded and CD 6, "Ay Waukin' O", was recorded in 2019. For the last 3 CDs the music and arrangements were all done by Henry Cairney, with Bill Laing and Tony Grace assisting with the artwork and text. In the summer of 2018, the Singers recorded a Christmas Album, and this was produced by the group entirely "in house" with the recording, editing, mixing and mastering by Henry, with Bill Laing and Tony Grace assisting with the artwork and text.

## BURNS POEM

### Whistle O'er The Lave O't (1789)

First when Maggie was my care,  
Heav'n, I thought, was in her air,  
Now we're married-speir nae mair,  
But whistle o'er the lave o't!

Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,  
Sweet and harmless as a child-  
Wiser men than me's beguill'd;  
Whistle o'er the lave o't!

How we live, my Meg and me,  
How we love, and how we gree,  
I care na by how few may see-  
Whistle o'er the lave o't!

Wha I wish were maggot's meat,  
Dish'd up in her winding-sheet,  
I could write-but Meg maun see't-  
Whistle o'er the lave o't!

## OLD SCOTS PROVERB

*"The nearer the bane the sweeter!"*

Roughly translated means: The  
sweetest flesh is near the bones .

## BURNS POEM

Crowdie Ever Mair  
1795

O that I had ne'er been married,  
I wad never had nae care,  
Now I've gotten wife an' weans,  
An' they cry "Crowdie" evermair.

Chorus-Ance crowdie, twice crowdie,  
Three times crowdie in a day  
Gin ye crowdie ony mair,  
Ye'll crowdie a' my meal away.

Waefu' Want and Hunger fley me,  
Glowrin' by the hallan en';  
Sair I fecht them at the door,  
But aye I'm eerie they come ben.  
Ance crowdie, &c.

## CALGARY BURNS CLUB SINGERS (CONTINUED)

The Singers now have a total complement of around two dozen members, but it is very rare to have more than half at any event. The leaders, both past and present, have worked tirelessly to keep the group going.

Plans were underway for a visit to Scotland in 2021 to attend the Kirkcudbright Tattoo and other events but, unfortunately, COVID changed this as well. Reluctantly the group decided in August of 2020 to cancel the trip because of the multitude of uncertainties that the group faced in planning this trip. There is a spark of hope, however, in that they are exploring the possibility of resurrecting the trip in 2022!

The Calgary Burns Club Singers live on thanks to the dedication of all the singers and their leaders!

The Singers await the time when they can gather again as a group to do what they enjoy, practice and sing wherever and whenever they can!

## CBC SINGERS (RON PRATT)

Why do we sing? There has been a lot of research into the benefits of singing whether individually or as part of a group. I sing because it makes me feel good. The music is uplifting and provides enjoyment to me and makes me feel good both physically and mentally. When singing for others, it is wonderful to see the effect it has on them. Most of our audiences are around our age range and they, like us, do not have the hearing, memory and sight of our younger years. Nevertheless, it makes me feel good to see them singing along, tapping their feet and smiling in obvious delight. There is no doubt that the singers are providing a very positive experience for our audiences.

We are also keeping alive Scottish song and music. There is no doubt that the number of singers and musicians providing Scottish song today and indeed for a considerable number of years, is extremely low compared to our parents and grandparents times.

After a program at Valley Ridge in the Northwest, a young fellow motioned me over to him. He told me his grandfather, who was sitting next to him, was in charge of a Ukrainian choir for 40 years or more. The old fellow was beaming, grabbed my hand and said "thank you, thank you." He then said, "**Keep up the tradition**". That is definitely what we are doing. And hopefully will get back to doing that before too long.

A couple of snippets from the past.

The late Bob Young was always joking about getting a talking part. He finally got his wish with the second verse of the Dundee Weavers which is on our first CD "Twas The Scots.

Lake Bonavista – This venue is one of the many which hire us year after year. We started about 10 years ago with the same day in January each year. It is always a good evening starting with the address to the Haggis and then giving them an hour or more of songs. When we concluded our set in 2018 with "We'll meet again", they all stood up, some with difficulty, and joined hands linking up with each end of our group. This was truly a magical ending. The event co-ordinator said she had never seen anything like that before.

Bob Ferrier singing Parnassus Hill at the RBWF conference in Peebles was wonderful. As soon as Bob finished singing, Jane Brown was kneeling at his feet asking him to marry her.

The Finale at the Tattoo in 2009 was a never to forget experience. Singing our hearts out and when the massed pipes marched up the esplanade towards us, the hair really stood on end. The march out behind the massed bands and in front of the massed pipe bands was a wonderful end to every performance.

Respectfully.....Ron Pratt

## BURNS SONG Yon Wild, Mossy Mountains (1786)

Yon wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide,  
That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,  
Where the grouse lead their coveys thro' the heather to feed,  
And the shepherd tends his flock as he pipes on his reed.

Not Gowrie's rich valley, nor Forth's sunny shores,  
To me hae the charms o'yon wild, mossy moors;  
For there, by a lanely, sequestered stream,  
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Amang thae wild mountains shall still be my path,  
Ilk stream foaming down its ain green, narrow strath;  
For there, wi' my lassie, the day lang I rove,  
While o'er us unheeded flie the swift hours o'love.

She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair;  
O' nice education but sma' is her share;  
Her parentage humble as humble can be;  
But I lo'e the dear lassie because she lo'es me.

To Beauty what man but maun yield him a prize,  
In her armour of glances, and blushes, and sighs?  
And when wit and refinement hae polish'd her darts,  
They dazzle our een, as they flie to our hearts.

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the fond-sparkling e'e,  
Has lustre outshining the diamond to me;  
And the heart beating love as I'm clasp'd in her arms,  
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!

Robert Burns.

## WILLIE NICHOL PART 2 (1744 – 1797), (STEPHEN NICHOL)

### (Continued from the Spring Edition 2020)

When Burns arrived on his first visit to Edinburgh, an announcement was made in a City newspaper-of-the -day, inviting students who had attended Willie Nicol's classes from 1774 through 1778 to dine together on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1786.

These dates, 1774 through 1778, correspond with the time Robert Burns went from 15 to 19 years old and the Burns family was at Mount Oliphant until 1777 when they moved to Lochlea. It is documented that Robert obtained his early education from his father, William Burnes, who along with several other parents also organised a school in Alloway where Robert and others were taught by John Murdoch (1747-1824). This ended in 1768 when Murdoch left the Alloway area. By the time that Robert Burns made his first trip to Edinburgh, he and Willie Nicol had an established acquaintance and this had most likely come about as that result of Nicol providing tutoring services to Burns previously.

Between 1768 and 1775 Burns' education continued intermittently being at times 'home-schooled', attending Dalrymple Parish School (1772-1773) and with itinerant tutors. The date for Nicol's class reunion suggests that he was involved in tutoring Burns in the final years of Robert's formal schooling. The dates of various known events in the lives of the Burns' family and Nicol indicate his involvement in short-term tutoring arrangements both before and after becoming a teaching master in Edinburgh. Nicol obtained the position of Latin master at Edinburgh High School in 1774.

There exists a record of Willie Nicol becoming a Freemason at St Peter's Lodge in Montrose which is approximately 100km northeast of Edinburgh. It is possible that he had obtained short-term tutoring arrangements that had required him to travel to Montrose.

Involvement with Robert during the Burns family's time at Mount Oliphant is further supported by the dates and places of events and the marriage of Nicol to Margaret Johnson and the births of their two sons. These events covered the period of 1769 to 1777 and they indicate that Willie Nicol most likely was the 'itinerant tutor' referred to in the summary of Robert Burns' education.

Willie Nicol planned to purchase a farm property called Lagganpark in Glencairn Parish and consisting of 284 acres. It came with a dwelling house which would be later remodelled and enlarged. The date on the conveyance was 11 January 1788 and the consideration was 1,500 pounds. The purchase came after Nicol had spent his summers in Moffat for several years. He had been able to amass 1,500 pounds from his teaching position at the High School and income derived from translations of their theses for medical students. He had established a considerable reputation for his knowledge of Latin. A small dowry from his second wife, Janet Cairns contributed to the final purchase price of 1,700 pounds. A move into Lagganpark would put Nicol closer to his first wife and sons, Robert and Thomas, but there is no evidence he was providing support, although he probably had an interest in how that family's lives were evolving.

Lagganpark was 7 miles (11km) northwest of Ellisland and Nicol sought Burns' advice on his selection of the property and this enabled their maintaining a connection.

References: James Marshall "A Winter with Robert Burns"(1786-1787)

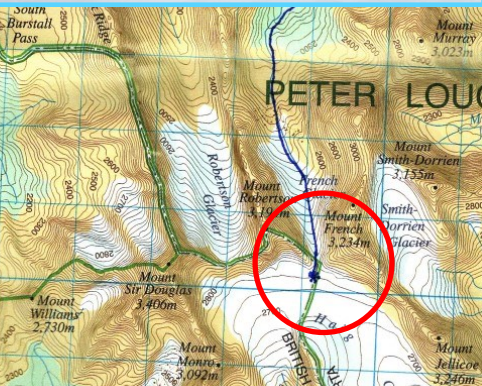
Rev. Dr. James King Hewison "Wille Nicol" (1924)

Wikipedia "Robert Burns" (2020)

Scotland's Church Records of Marriages and Births available online via "IGI Batch Numbers, Scotland"

**Contributed by Stephen H. Nichol 2020**

**(Part 3 will be continued in the Spring 2021 edition)**



Stephen Nichol on a hike to French Glacier, Kananaksis Country.



### A Word from Down Under

(Submitted by Bob Nichol of Hikutaia, New Zealand; brother of Calgary Burns Club member, Stephen Nichol)

"It's a five minute walk from my house to the pub.

It's a thirty five minute walk from the pub to my house.

The difference is staggering!"

## BURNS WORDSEARCH 2 (HENRY CAIRNEY)

### FUTURE SPEAKERS

2021 Ronnie O'Byrne Director RBWF  
 2022 Ian McIntyre Past President RBWF  
 2023 T.B.A.

### BURNS ELEGY

Elegy On Willie Nicol's Mare.(1790)

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,  
 As ever trod on airn;  
 But now she's floating down the Nith,  
 And past the mouth o' Cairn.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,  
 An' rode thro' thick and thin;  
 But now she's floating down the Nith,  
 And wanting even the skin.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,  
 And ance she bore a priest;  
 But now she's floating down the Nith,  
 For Solway fish a feast.

N	V	G	D	Y	U	P	Y	I	Y	T	E	L	H	Z	B	J	D	R	S
Y	P	I	F	F	V	B	M	Y	A	U	C	I	R	C	Q	T	W	S	M
G	N	E	X	R	T	A	U	M	M	K	J	O	A	L	C	T	C	P	H
Z	P	V	H	A	S	Y	O	B	E	P	B	I	E	A	A	S	M	R	P
R	V	O	N	O	U	S	R	L	E	H	P	T	D	Q	T	S	B	E	E
D	Y	L	N	V	H	L	Q	U	V	Z	T	A	A	D	T	I	J	T	D
B	L	R	Y	A	N	W	D	E	F	E	L	X	R	L	G	K	W	A	S
O	Y	B	N	I	Q	M	M	L	R	M	R	E	F	E	N	D	D	W	U
G	U	T	L	N	E	Z	L	W	A	I	K	S	E	I	L	N	F	N	H
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I	B	V	V	T	A	L	O	L	A	D	S	M	Q	F	P	X	Q	A	D
T	R	E	D	R	O	S	E	G	P	X	L	U	E	T	A	R	G	T	M
F	C	H	N	F	K	C	T	G	H	G	A	V	O	N	S	X	P	B	A
V	S	T	A	N	Z	A	F	L	G	M	T	T	H	M	T	B	I	C	R
J	M	F	V	C	K	I	C	H	E	Q	T	M	X	I	B	B	K	Z	Y

### IN THE NEXT EDITON

- 1) Profile of Tony Grace (Past President and Secretary)

#### \*APPRECIATION\*

I would like to give thanks to both Ron Budd and Ian Denness for their work in proof reading and feedback with this edition of the Claver. Ron and Ian have been very vigilant in ensuring the grammatical quality is kept to a high standard.

Henry Cairney

**AFTONWATER**

**AULDLANGSYNE**

**AULDNICK**

**BEELEZEBUB**

**BIELD**

**EGLINTON**

**EPITAPH**

**FONDKISS**

**HAGGIS**

**HIGHLANDMARY**

**KIRK**

**LAMENT**

**LETTER**

**LOVE**

**MASONRY**

**MOUSE**

**REDROSE**

**STANZA**

**TAMOSHANTER**

**WASTLE**

## BURNS WORDSEARCH 2 (SOLUTION)



### HALLOWEEN VERSE

(Traditional Rhyme submitted by  
Henry Cairney)

No last night, but the night before,  
Three wee witches came tae ma door,  
Wan wae a fiddle, wan wae a drum,  
An' wan wae a pancake stuck tae her bum!!

### CALGARY CLAVER

Thank you to all contributors.

If you have anything with a Robert Burns, or Scottish cultural interest you would like included in the newsletter, please e-mail Henry Cairney at:

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Deadline for the Autumn  
edition of the Calgary Claver is:

**\*\*March 30th 2021\*\***

### Editor's Note

The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editor, BOD or the Calgary Burns Club at large. Feel free to contact the authors directly for any clarification.

