Calgary Claver

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The last four months have proven to be very memorable and busy. My wife Janet and I travelled to Peebles, Scotland, representing the Calgary Burns Club at the Robert Burns World Federation Conference where we were pleased to see Ron Pratt and his wife Louise. The conference and Annual General Meeting saw Bobby Kane turn over the presidency and the gavel, to Ian McIntyre. The Robert Burns World Federation was a fantastic host and we enjoyed our time in Peebles and surrounding area. Ronnie O’Byrne, the Canadian Director of the RBWF, kindly drove us to Melrose on his way back to Edinburgh after the conference.

Willie Gibson, who presented the Immortal Memory at our last Dinner, graciously picked Janet and me up in Langholm where we were visiting the Armstrong lands and Gilnockie Tower. From there Willie drove us to the Globe in Dumfries.

Janet and I took advantage of our time in Scotland to immerse ourselves in Robert Burns’ history. We travelled to his birthplace in Alloway, the farm in Ellisland and of course the Globe Inn. The Burns Howff Club of Dumfries hosted us at the Globe Inn, with Gordon Johnston providing a personalized tour of the Inn, Jean Amour’s Statue, Burns’ House and his Mausoleum in St. Michael’s Churchyard.

Janet and I must also thank Jane Brown, past RBWF President and Globe Inn manager. Jane acted as tour guide and transport over a number of days, including a visit to Ellisland where curator Stuart Cochrane accompanied us around the property. I find that I am very fortunate to have seen these historic sites in the company of such knowledgeable people. The fellowship that was extended to my wife and me, will not be forgotten.

On our return from Scotland we soon reconnected with Ian McIntyre and his wife Moira. The Calgary Burns Club hosted a reception for Ian and Moira after which they continued on to the Jolly Beggars Dinner in Medicine Hat. I was also fortunate to attend the Dinner and wish to extend my thanks to Medicine Hat Burns Club, Ken Montgomery and Bill Cox for a tremendous evening.

This year saw the venue for statue production transition from Tony Grace’s residence to mine. I wish to thank Paul Armstrong and Jim McLaughlin for their assistance and patience in producing this year’s dinner statues, along with those club members who volunteered to complete the finishing prior to painting.

The Calgary Burns Club welcomed our newest Ordinary Member, Brian Cumming, in September, while at October’s members’ meeting we provided our best wishes to Life Member, Bob Ferrier and his wife Anne, as they relocate to the Okanagan Valley. We hope still to hear from and see Bob on occasion, possibly at the 2018 Dinner.

In closing I would like to thank Ron Pratt and the Calgary Burns Club Singers for their participation in this year’s Field of Crosses ceremony for Remembrance Day. That day and our participation mean a lot to me personally.

Trekker Armstrong
The Calgary Burns Club welcomed Ian and Moira McIntyre on their Canadian trip. I had the pleasure of hosting them both, and can only say that they were a delight to meet and socialize with. Ian sent the following write-up of his visit to Calgary.

Our much anticipated visit to Calgary and the Burns Club started on Sunday 17th September when Scott Mongomerie and his wife Sheri delivered us into the care of Henry and Shona Cairney. The rendezvous for the handover was the Tyrell Museum at Drumheller. This was our first experience of the Badlands and a lasting memory it has made.

Henry and Shona were first class hosts; she even let me sit up late with Henry to ensure he did not drink too much whisky!

They had a full and exciting programme for us. First off, we visited Lake Louise and Banff, followed by dinner with Sergeant at arms Brian Hodgson at his holiday home in Canmore, Banff, did not disappoint and was what I had expected of Canada- lakes, mountains, trees and rivers. We experienced our first Chinook en route to the Rockies.

We were treated to a small informal meet and greet barbeque on the Tuesday night, where we had a bit of a ceilidh. There were a few of the Choir there who were in fine form and sang several songs including ‘The Wild Rose of Alberta’, written by Henry, which should surely be the anthem for the Province! The guitar available had been sabotaged and I battered out more than usually tuneless tunes.

The following night we met with the Calgary Burns Club members and partners at the Danish Canadian Club. The welcome was quite incredible and I hope I managed a word or two with everyone present.

It never ceases to amaze me, the plethora of talent within this Burns Club. President Trekker made us feel most welcome and very much at home.

From a temperature of 30 degrees c when we arrived in Toronto to 2 degrees c in Calgary underlines the vastness and size of this wonderful country. A powdering of snow reminds us winter is just around the corner! A visit to ‘Head-Smashed-in Buffalo Jump’ is one of the highlights of our trip for Moira. She has a keen interest in the indigenous population of the country. The visitor centre is top value for money! As we found on every long journey with the Cairneys’, the crack and fun in the car made the time go quickly.

We all drove down to Medicine Hat for the Jolly Beggars Banquet. We were joined by Trekker, Jim and Ron and from the Edmonton Club, Cam Macdonell. A colourful and most enjoyable evening was punctuated by impressive recitations from Scots, Andy Harrower and Kenny McMillan. The serving wenches at the whisky bar were a delightful distraction!

The after party in Henry’s room was rudely interrupted by management at 2.30 am!!

We returned to the care of Henry and Shona the day before we were due to fly home. The farewell party was memorable, I think!

The kindness, generosity and hospitality shown by Henry and Shona and members of the Club were of the highest order. We were made to feel welcome wherever we went and we thank everyone one of you for that. Indeed, this has been our experience wherever we went in Alberta.

‘Now sir, if you hae friends enou,
   Though real friends I believe are few,
   Yet if yer catalogue be fou.
   I’se no’ insist,
   But if you want a friend that’s true.
   I’m on your list’. 
JOLLY BEGGARS 2017 (HENRY CAIRNEY)

Trekker Armstrong, Ron Pratt, Jim Hope Ross and I all travelled to Medicine Hat to attend “The Jolly Beggars” event on Saturday 23rd September. Needless to say, we had a wonderful time and we extend many thanks to Ken Montgomery and the Medicine Hat Burns Club.

We were invited to Ken’s house where we helped Ken reduce his whisky inventory. He enthusiastically thanked us and, I can only say it was our pleasure!

The entertainment was quite wonderful with a mix of song and verse from both MHBC members, Ian McIntyre playing guitar and singing some very entertaining songs, and finally the Calgary Singers present. Ken reverted back to his old profession and charged us all to leave sometime around midnight, I think!

Saturday and we were given a tour round Medicine Hat by President Bill Cox and Andy Harrower, which included the Council Chambers, the “Clay District Kiln’s”, the “Tepee” landmark, to name a few.

Saturday evening we attended the “Jolly Beggars Event” where we experienced their famous “Scotch Bar”, then were entertained by the members of MHBC and partook in a hearty burns supper meal. Finally we spent the rest of the evening with various entertainers getting “Unco Fu”.

We had a little quiet social back at the hotel to finish off the night with some of the ladies who accompanied us there.

2017 JOLLY BEGGARS PHOTOGRAPHS

The Four Presidents from Calgary, Medicine Hat, RBWF and Edmonton

CBC Singers Perform

“Poosie Nancy”

Poosie Nancie’s Bar

EPITAPH (BURNS 1784)
(ON A HENPECKED COUNTRY SQUIRE)

On A Henpecked Country Squire

As father Adam first was fool’d,
(A case that’s still too common.)
Here lies man a woman ruled,
The devil ruled the woman.

REPLY (BURNS 1786)
(VERSIFIED REPLY TO AN INVITATION)

Sir,

Yours this moment I unseal,
And faith I’m gay and hearty!
To tell the truth and shame the deil,
I am as fou as Bartie:
But Fooresday, sir, my promise leal,
Expect me o’ your partie,
If on a beastie I can speel,
Or hurl in a cartie.

Yours,
Robert Burns.
Mauchlin, Monday night, 10 o'clock.

FUTURE SPEAKERS

2018 Jane Brown Past President RBWF
2019 Peter Hughes Past President RBWF
2020 Andy Harrower Director RBWF
As I was a-wand’ring ae morning in spring,
I heard a young ploughman sae sweetly to sing;
And as he was singin’, thir words he did say,
There’s nae life like the ploughman’s in the month o’ sweet May.

The lav’rock in the morning she’ll rise frae her nest,
And mount i’ the air wi’ the dew on her breast,
And wi’ the merry ploughman she’ll whistle and sing,
And at night she’ll return to her nest back again.

Now westlin’ winds and slaught’ring guns
Bring Autumn’s pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs on whirring wings
Amang the blooming heather:
Now waving grain, wide o’er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer;
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
To muse upon my charmer.

But, Peggy dear, the ev’ning’s clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow,
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow:
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ev’ry happy creature.

We’ll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly;
I’ll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly:
Not vernal show’rs to budding flow’rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer!

The poem contains many verses, each of which contains the names and habits of the many bird species that are found in Scotland and the imagery created of birds busily preparing for their long migrations comes readily to mind. I have quoted the first two verses and the last verse here.

I had heard the song "Now Westlin’ Winds" sung and was familiar with the poem “Song Composed in August”, although I had not connected the two. I hadn’t heard the reference to “Peggy” before. And that got me wondering, and off on another tangent. Who, did I suppose, was the “Peggy” referred to? I immediately thought of Margaret (“Peggy”) Chalmers, but the dates didn’t jibe. If this poem were written in 1783, that was supposedly three years before Burns met Margaret Chalmers.

Then I recalled that when Jean Armour’s father had had a change of heart about having Burns as a son-in-law as Burns prospects appeared to be improving, Armour had coerced Jean to sign a complaint against Burns for leaving her with child, and that had resulted in a warrant being issued against Burns. Burns had countered that action by having a lawyer named Chalmers draw up a deed of trust to transfer all his property and profits into the custody of his brother Gilbert, who was to use the proceeds to bring up ‘Dear-bought Bess’ (i.e. Elisabeth Paton’s daughter). So that got me wondering if the connection to Margaret Chalmers was perhaps through this lawyer Chalmers. All of this was June/July 1786 as well.

I pursued this for awhile, but could find no other references to lawyer Chalmers nor any connection between him and Margaret. In fact, Margaret Chalmers, was the daughter of a small landowner/farmer. Her mother, interestingly enough, was a sister of Gavin Hamilton’s stepmother.

But this still left me with my original puzzle: Who was the “Peggy” referred to in the poem?

I thought of barmaid Peggy Cameron, but those thoughts were as brief as Burns’ time was with her. That tryst (if indeed there was one) started in Spring 1787 and Ms. Cameron’s writ that was issued in June had been dismissed by August.

The next autumn, Burns again found himself in that contemplative mood that always seems to drop in the Fall: He wrote:

(Continued on next page)
THE CARNIE GROUP (JIM HOPE ROSS CONTINUED)

The Fall of the Leaf (August 1788):
The lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill, 
Concealing the course of the dark-winding rill; 
How languid the scenes, late so sprightly, appear! 
As Autumn to Winter resigns the pale year. 

The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown, 
And all the gay foppery of summer is flown: 
Apart let me wander, apart let me muse, 
How quick Time is flying, how keen Fate pursues!

How long I have liv’d—but how much liv’d in vain, 
How little of life’s scanty span may remain, 
What aspects old Time in his progress has worn, 
What tis cruel Fate, in my bosom has torn. 

How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gain’d! 
And downward, how weaken’d, how darken’d, how pain’d! 
Life is not worth having with all it can give— 
For something beyond it poor man must live.

This poem truly fits the bill in terms of the sort of Autumn poetry I was initially looking for and expected to find that was penned by Burns. But it adds nothing to my revised request to determine who the Peggy is in the poem of that name.

Burns first met Margaret Thomson when he was studying at Kirkoswald school in the summer of 1775. Robert Burns met this “Peggy”, Peggy Thomson, frequently at Tarboth or Tarbolton Mill and they attended the same kirk. They developed a degree of intimacy even though she was engaged at the time. Burns said “Peggy was my Deity for six or eight months”. However, Thomas Orr, a fellow pupil at Kirkoswald, stated that he carried letters between Burns and Peggy in the summers of 1782 and 1783. Upon her marriage Burns wrote “I am very glad that Peggy is off my hands as I am at present embarrassed enough without her”... no doubt a reference to Elizabeth Paton’s pregnancy.

Thus it was that 10 years after they had gone to school together, in 1785, while he was making plans to emigrate to Jamaica, Burns presented Peggy with a copy of his poems, having composed a special inscription for her on the fly leaf, namely “To an old Sweetheart”:

“Once fondly lov’d, and still remember’d dear, 
Sweet early object of my youthful vows, 
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere, 
Friendship! ’tis all cold duty now allows. 
And when you read the simple, artless rhymes, 
One friendly sigh for him - he asks no more, 
Who, distant, burns in flaming, torrid climes, 
Or haply lies beneath th’Atlantic roar.

The poem "Composed in August" is, then, most likely to have been inspired by Peggy Thomson, probably when he met her again as Mrs. Neilsen. Thence, we have come full circle.

Just an interesting footnote:
I didn’t propose to go into any detail with respect to Burns’s relationship to Margaret “Peggy” Chalmers, but of all the women in Burns’ life, Peggy was perhaps the closest he came to an intellectual soul mate. She inspired at least two poems: ‘My Peggy’s Charms’ and ‘Where, Braving Angry Winter’s Storms’.

In October 1787, Burns went to Harvieston and spent eight happy days in Peggy Chalmers’ company. It was then that Burns proposed to her, but she refused him. Although she turned down his proposal of marriage he wrote to her from Ellisland saying “I have lived more of a real life with you in eight days than I can do with almost anybody I meet with in eight years”.

Two months later, when Burns was the rage of Edinburgh, Nancy McElhose determined to meet him. She did meet him on 4th December 1787 at a tea-party given in the house of a Miss Nimmo, a friend of – you guessed it - Margaret Chalmers.
GREAT SCOT!

Alexander Fleming (1881-1955)
Born Darvel, East Ayrshire.
Biologist, pharmacologist and botanist who discovered penicillin.
Later shared Nobel Prize in Medicine (1945) with Howard Florey and Ernst Boris Chain.

ENTERTAINMENT (STEPHEN NICHOL)

During the visit by the World Burns Federation President, Bobby Kane, Bobby had recommended that the club explore Scottish history beyond Rabbie Burns. This is worthwhile for two reasons:
1. It helps to understand how Rabbie Burns, his works and contemporary Scots are defined by their pasts
2. The study of Scottish history is an interesting and worthwhile undertaking.

The entertainment program for the 2017/2018 club year will look at events of Scottish history.

The September members meeting entertainment program included:
- Ian Denness presented on behalf of the Carnie group with a very well written piece on a Biography of Clarinda. He opened with some Winston Churchill and Robert Burns Witticisms.
- Calgary Burns Club Singers sang “Scots Wha Hae” followed by “Marching thru the Heather”
- Bill Laing recited a Burns Poem “Thou Glomy December”
- Paul Kane gave a recitation of “La Belle Dame sans Merci” by John Keats
- Stephen Nichol recited a poem called “Spring Fever”
- Jim Little gave his very funny rendition of “Eskimo Nell” unknown author in the style of Robert Service
- Derek Larg recited Burns’ “Address to a Toothache”
- Calgary Burns Club Singers sang, “I Hae A Wife O’ My Ain” and “The Auld Meal Mill”

The October members meeting entertainment program included:
- Stephen Nichol recited the first verse of Robert Service’s “The Cremation of Sam McGee” before going on to say that Sam had met with Service when he was writing the poem and had given his permission for his name to be used in the poem. Ironically Sam never was cremated but is buried in Bassano, Alberta.
- Jim McLaughlin on behalf of the Carnie Group presented his paper on Robert Burns, “Poet of Compassion and Sentiment”.
- The Singers then performed “The Loch Tay Boat Song”; “Bonnie Strathyre”; “Duncan Gray” and “A Wife O My Ain”.
- Bob Ferrier then gave us a solo, singing “There Was A Man”, to a standing ovation.
- The three entries to last year’s Quill contest were then recited by the writers;
  - Henry Cairney – “The Speeder Departs”
  - John Young – “Departure”
  - Jim Hutchens - “A Poet’s Thoughts on Emigration”
- The Singers finished their part of the entertainment with “This Land is Your Land”.
- Derek Larg, a very welcome attendee, concluded the entertainment by reading Burns’ “My Heart’s in the Highlands”.
- Stephen Nichol closed the entertainment portion by thanking all the entertainers
- Before the break, Anne Ferrier thanked the members for inviting her and said she had thoroughly enjoyed the entertainment.
- Gerry Wood then read a prayer on aging as Bob and Anne Ferrier left the meeting.

HAVE A CHUCKLE (VARIOUS)

A Scottish priest is driving home, when he comes upon a dead pig lying on the road. So he calls the police to inform them. A cocky sergeant answers the call. “Did ye read him his last rites?” smirks the sergeant. “Naw.” Replies the priest. “I thocht I would inform his next of kin first!”

A Scots boy came home from school and told his mother he had been given a part in the school play. “Wonderful,” says the mother, “What part is it?” The boy says “I play the part of the Scottish husband!” The mother scowls and says: "Go back and tell your teacher you want a speaking part."

In the middle of foggy night in the North-west Atlantic.....two lights are heading directly for one another... and on the radio an American voice is heard saying “We suggest you alter course by 10 degrees to port”. Back comes the reply "We suggest YOU alter course by 10 degrees to port!" Then the American voice says “This is the battleship USS Missouri leading the American Atlantic battle fleet. You had better alter course by 10 degrees to port.” Back comes the reply “This is the Outer Hebrides lighthouse, but it’s your call, Jimmy”.

In Alford, Aberdeenshire, a small boy was one of the contestants at a children’s cookery contest. The judge made a great show of tasting his iced cakes and saying how delicious they were. He glowed with pride. Then the judge asked how he had managed to get such a lovely gloss on the icing. “I lick them” he replied.
The following is an original work submitted by John Boyd and Sandy Paterson, where they have responded to the Burns Poetic satire of a lady. I have enclosed the original Burns work for your comparison.

WILLIE WASTLE (A RESPONSE TO ROBERT BURNS)


Ye’ll ha’e heard o’ the wife o’ Willie the Wabster, Whom rascally Burns so glibly maligned. Will’s a cousin o’ mine and I thought I should meet her – So I’wards Lincumdoddie my steps I inclined.

Eastward I ventured by coach and by foot, And lastly a track took me down by the Tweed. And there was the cottage – t’was sparkling and shining, And out came sweet singing that made my heart bleed.

As nearer I drew to that Music’s warm spell, Willie appeared with his arms spread out wide. Next aromas divine had me sniffin’ and slaverin’ And out came the lassie and stood by his side.

She wasnae a Helen but her voice was of silver, A bad hip frae her childhood threw her off line. But the meal that we sat to was manna from Heaven, Both Willie and I – we were kings for a time.

Good ale of her brewing, and salmon poached perfect, Sweet butter and bread, honey, berries and cream. Chery chatter and whisky and off to bed cosily, And then through the wall began life’s oldest scene.

Low voices giggling, chuckling and teasing, Till satisfied groans I finally heard. A right fitting end to a day of contentment, That wife to Willie was richly deserved.

Plain though she was, in all else gey clever, Oft Beauty’s pal Vanity aye gang the’gether. And slip with the Seasons when kissing is done. Here was a lass who’d make a’ days a pleasure.

Human failings and blemishes soon come to light For beauty’s aye often just one single measure - Man! Sic a wife as our Willie had married, I’d bust a few thousand o’ buttons for her!

Copyright John Boyd 2017 (Edmonton Burns Club) with tweaking by Sandy Paterson (Calgary Burns Club)
Robert Burns World Federation

Federation News

The annual Conference was held in Peebles, Scotland on the second week-end of September, with Trekker Armstrong and Ron Pratt representing the Club. Ian McIntyre was installed as the new President, and his first visit was to Canada with stops in Ontario, Edmonton, Calgary and Medicine Hat. The Club held a reception for Ian and his wife Moira before they travelled on to Medicine Hat to attend the Jolly Beggar’s Banquet along with several members of the Club.

Next Year’s Conference will be in Irvine, Ayrshire on the second week-end in September. Irvine Burns Club is a very interesting Club which owns its own property – (Wellwood House) – which contains a Burns Museum with many Burns artifacts, including a Kilmarnock edition, as well as six Burns original manuscripts for that edition, some of which I’m sure will be on display. It promises to be a great time!!

Burns Chronicle

For a couple of years now the Robert Burns World Federation has been working on a project to put all copies of the Burns Chronicle online. The Chronicle is an annual publication of the Federation containing a wide variety of articles on the many aspects of Robert Burns, his life and his works. There was also a section containing news of all and any of the Burns Clubs around the world. The first volume was published in 1892 and thereafter each year until 1991. At that point a different format was adopted, with a much smaller version appearing three times a year. This was an attempt to have the content more up-to-date as well as to provide communication to the Clubs on a more frequent basis. With the advent of the three-times yearly Newsletter, the Chronicle reverted in 2014 to its original format and frequency of once per year.

There is much information contained in the past (and current) editions of the Chronicle, and it was felt that a new and easier access to this was needed to allow all members of the Federation – and others – to take advantage of this information. David Duguid, a past President of the Federation, undertook the task of putting all past editions online. To scan each volume and convert to digital format costs fifty pounds sterling and the Federation has appealed to all Clubs and Members to consider sponsoring the conversion of one edition. This approach has proved successful, with over seventy per cent of the editions sponsored and available free of charge on the Federation’s website. The Calgary Burns Club has sponsored the 1977 edition marking the year of its first Burns Dinner. In addition two Club Members have individually sponsored an edition each.

All Club Members are encouraged to sign on to the Federation’s website and look at the list of Chronicles under the Resources section. There truly are some fascinating articles there.

Robert Burns Association of North America

This Association will hold its 2018 Conference in Philadelphia on April 20-22, 2018, and be organized by Leslie Strachan, who delivered the immortal Memory to our Club in 2015. Philadelphia offers a number of tourist attractions – the Liberty Bell for one – and is also the city where a number of editions of Burns works were published in the States – the first one being in 1788, a scant two years after the Kilmarnock edition.

RBANA normally holds its Conference on alternate years in Canada and the States, which would mean the 2019 conference would be in Canada. Attempts are being made to have the Conference either in Halifax or Ontario and hopefully we should know shortly.
MEMBERSHIP NEWS (HENRY CAIRNEY)

Jim Hope Ross lost his mum Roxy May on September 28th. The club extends their deepest sympathy to Jim and all the family.

Since the last Claver submission there have been changes in Membership and we currently have 13 Life, 37 Full and 11 Associate Members.

We said fond adieus’ to Bob and Anne Ferrier who moved over to B.C in October, and on behalf of the club we wish them all the best in their new home.

I presented the first “Calgary Burns Club Handbook” to Brian Cumming and copies are now available for members.

ANNUAL BURNS SUPPER 2018 (JIM HUTCHENS)

As we approach the end of the year and January being just around the corner, preparations are well underway for our 42nd Annual Burns Dinner to be held at The Calgary Telus Convention Centre on January 19, 2018.

We are excited to have joining us, Jane Brown, who is one of the most preeminent Burns Speakers in Scotland, present what will surely be a memorable, humorous and entertaining Immortal Memory. Jane is the former landlady of the famous Globe Inn in Dumfries where Robert Burns was a frequent guest and I am certain we will hear more on this subject among many others during her presentation.

As always there is a host of Club members participating both on stage and behind the scenes to make this coming event a success.

Once again we are pleased to have The Calgary Police Service Pipe Band joining us for what will be one of the highlights of the evening.

As we look forward to welcoming our guests, we thank them all in advance for their continued support in what we feel is a very special evening of Scottish culture and, of course, the celebration of the life, times and works of Scotland’s National Bard, Robert Burns.

If you’ve not already done so, I urge you all to get your ticket requests in as soon as possible as we are seeing a good take up at present.

THE CBC SINGERS (RON PRATT)

After a recess for the months of July and August, we resumed our practices at the new Kensington Legion in September and so far so good. Although a bit more restricted space wise, we are managing fine and there also seems to be better acoustics, at least according to some attendees.

During November we were again honoured to participate in a Sunrise Ceremony on Saturday the 4th and the Remembrance Day Ceremony at The Field Of Crosses. We also provided entertainment at the Care West facility at Beddington Towne Centre. Our program, lasting an hour and ten minutes, was very well received. A number of singers also presented a few numbers at the post funeral reception for Mrs. Hope-Ross.

We are saddened at the loss of Bob Ferrier who has relocated to the interior of British Columbia. Bob was another original member of the singers and the power and richness of his voice will be sorely missed. We are, however, fortunate with the addition of some new blood such that our present complement is now 25 in total.

We have a busy couple of months ahead with at least five concerts in December and then on to hectic January.
GERRY WOOD ‘LAUREATE’

(JAMIE OSBORNE/HENRY CAIRNEY)

Once again our very own Life Member Gerry Wood has hit the headlines and became one of the latest Laureates to the Calgary Business Hall Of Fame. On behalf of the Board of Directors and all club members, we congratulate Gerry on receiving such a well-deserved great honour.

Gerry joined the Calgary Burns Club in 1977 and has been a great supporter of the club since his joining. He has built a great respect in the business and charity areas in Calgary over many years. Well done Gerry. The full article is below.

Gerry first began his career in Scotland at his father’s Ford Dealership where he was involved in converting vehicles to hand-controls for disabled drivers.

In 1969 Gerry headed west and began work for Maclin Ford as a Sales Representative and then spent five years as the New Vehicles Sales Manager. In 1979 Gerry purchased a small GM Dealership in Vulcan, AB and by 1983, Gerry bought Southridge Mercury Lincoln which is now Woodridge Ford Lincoln.

Over the past 36 years, Gerry has grown the business to include six dealerships city-wide, a Collision Centre facility and other business enterprises. The Wood Automotive Group has pioneered and fine-tuned customer marketing initiatives, the concept of vehicle leasing and cost effective, excellent service, and fostering life-long relationships.

The Wood Automotive Group now employs over 600 individuals providing outstanding employment opportunities in the Calgary area.

As a recognized leader in the Canadian Automotive Sector, Gerry has accepted many key appointments with local, provincial and national associations. As a member of several executive bodies, he represents Canadian automotive dealers to both manufacturers and governments.

He is highly active in the Calgary and Okotoks communities. Some of Gerry’s involvements entail organizations such as the Calgary Stampede Corporate Hospitality Committee, Canadian Down Syndrome Society, United Way, Inclusion Alberta, Calgary Burns Club, Mustard Seed, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and The Salvation Army. The Woodridge Charity Golf Tournament celebrated its 30th and final year in 2015 and with the tireless efforts and hard work of his wife Elaine, has raised almost 4 million dollars in funding towards the building of the PREP School and programs for individuals with Down syndrome. Gerry has furthered his commitment to supporting children’s charity as a major sponsor of the Shaw Charity Classic Golf Tournament and the creation of the Wood Automotive Group Kid Hero of the Month Award in support of KidSport and Comrie’s Sports Equipment Bank.

GERRY’S GENEROUS FAMILY

Gerry and his family also hit the headlines with a very generous donation to the Salvation Army.

Calgary businesses, led by presenting sponsor Wood Automotive Group and gold sponsor Remington Development Corporation, have contributed $118,000 in sponsorships for the Hope in the City event. Additionally, Mr Gerry Wood and his family made a one million dollar donation for a Salvation Army capital project to be finalized at a later date.

“The Wood family are great friends and valued partners of The Salvation Army,” stated Captain W. Mark Stanley. “Their generosity and desire to help their community is incredible and their capital donation will have a significant impact on the work we are able to do in the Calgary area.”

FAMOUS QUOTE

Admiral Ludwig von Reuter observing the German Fleet sinking in Scapa Flow on 21st June 1919 was quoted as saying “IDIOTS I said SUBTLE retreat”, NOT “SCUTTLE the fleet”!

GREAT SCOT!

Sir Walter Scott (1771 – 1832)
Born in Edinburgh, Scott was a historical novelist, playwright, and poet associated with the romantic era. Notable works include Ivanhoe, Rob Roy, The Lady of the Lake, and Waverley. Scott was also a member of the Highland Society and President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

BRIEF NEWS

• The “Quill” poetry competition for 2017 was won by Jim Hutchens
• Scottish Haggis is to be imported to Canada for the first time in 40 years
• Videos and double CD’s of the 2017 Annual Dinner are now available from Maurice McAtamney
• Statue production still needs volunteers
Kilbirnie derived its name from the monk to whom it was originally dedicated in the 7th century; the Celtic Kil, pronounced Kil, signifying a church, being prefixed to the name of the monk who is believed to have been either Saint Brendan of Clonfert, renowned for his legendary travels, or Saint Birinus, who was thought to have moved on to missionary work in Wessex.

The original Kil was more than likely built with turf and wood and the first reference to a stone church was not until 1127 AD. There was no town of Kilbirnie but merely a community of peasant farmers in the feudal estates of the Crawfords of Place Castle and the Cunninghams of Glengarnock Castle. The Cunningham Aisle was added in 1597 and the Crawford Gallery and Aisle were added in 1642.

In 1705 armorial bearings were added by the 1st Viscount Garnock (John Crawford). These arms are those of families through marriages on both his mother’s and father’s side. It is interesting to note that both sides include the arms of the Earls of Glencairn, the ancestors of James Cunningham, 14th Earl of Glencairn, who was to become the major patron of Robert Burns.

Fairs played an important role in parishes across the country. Kilbirnie was no exception and for many years prior to Burns and at least 100 years after him the Horse Fair was the largest in the west of Scotland with several hundred horses being traded each year. The fair was apparently called St. Brandane’s Day and was held annually on May 15th. It is referenced as far back as 1600 by Timothy Prott in his “Mercat tounes and faieres at parish churches in Cuninghame” where he says “Kill-burnney toune has one St. Brandane’s day on 16 of May”. This celebration included a Horse Fair and it is generally believed that Burns visited the Horse Fair in 1785 where he purchased a horse from a dealer called William Kirkwood of the Baillieston farm, which is still there today on the northern edge of the town of Kilbirnie – see the above sketch depicting the event which was held close to the kirk. Some of the people whose names appear on the headstones in the photo above may even have been present that day.

In 1786 William Pitt’s government introduced a number of taxes in order to replenish the country’s coffers which had been severely depleted by the American War. Robert Burns’ reaction to this was to write “The Inventory” on February 22 1786 at Mossgiel farm. In this work, which lists its assets, he mentions the horse bought at the horse fair as “A damn’d red-wud Kilburnie blastie” which translates as “A damn’d stark mad Kilbirnie pest”.

The Roseberry Burns Club of Kilbirnie founded in 1905 and the Garnock Burns Club of Kilbirnie founded around 1890 were recently involved in a project to commemorate Burns’ visit to the horse fair by erecting a memorial of the occasion. Conceived by Colin Hunter McQueen, historian and writer and honorary member of the Roseberry Burns Club, the memorial stone (above) with plaque (right), located in the church yard of the Kilbirnie Auld Kirk was unveiled on June 3, 2017 in the presence of 200 attendees.

GREAT SCOT!

Robert the Bruce (1274 – 1329)
Born north of Girvan in Ayrshire.
King of Scots (1309-1329).
Leader of the revolt against English rule during wars of Scottish independence.

GREAT SCOT!

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859 – 1930) Born Edinburgh, Doyle was an author of historical novels and plays. Most famous for his short stories about the detective – Sherlock Holmes, such as The Hound of the Baskervilles (1902) and Sign of Four (1890).
The Calgary Burns Club received its charter from the Robert Burns World Federation in June of 1976 and planning immediately began for the Inaugural Dinner to be held on the Bard’s birthday January 25, 1977, at the Calgary Inn. The minutes of the Executive Committee of the fall of 1976 reveal that Graham Underwood proposed that each table have, as its centrepiece, a statue of Robert Burns. He just happened to have such a statue from which a mould could be made and the statues created from this. The origin of it is a mystery that will remain in the mists of time. The statue in question was a miniature replica of the statue of Robert Burns that was created by the London sculptor, George Anderson Lawson, and unveiled in Ayr on July 8, 1891.

The minutes also reveal that Jack Whyte volunteered to have a mould made, presumably by Studio West in Cochrane, and our “Rab” was born! This mould is part of the Club’s archives and hopefully will be on display when we procure a new showcase.

A number of Club members have been involved in the statue’s production over the years and this is where the history becomes a little hazy, at least in the early days. It is my understanding that Graham Underwood, Wally Hunter, Jack Whyte and Tommy Miller were involved in the production of the early ones. Jim Osborne made them for a couple of years but became frustrated with the high breakage rate. Bill Robinson was involved in their production using his knowledge of plaster techniques.

As we all know the weakest part of the statue is the ankles. Realizing this, Bob Ferrier was the first to reinforce the legs of the statues with metal in the early 1980s and this practice continues today although we now place two pieces of wire and this seems to improve the strength of the ankles even more.

In 1989 the Club was in receipt of a box of dental mould material and a limited number of statues were made from it which, although producing a statue that required less work to finish, proved to be too costly to be a viable option for the Club. Ed Riach was involved with their production then and he also created a vibrating platform to use while pouring the statues. The early statues were unpainted as far as I can tell. When they were first painted, as they are today, is not clear. This was a good thing because they could sure make a mess of a nice black Prince Charlie!

In 1996 the Executive committee recommended to the membership that the Club present the City with a bronze copy of the statue to commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of Robert Burns. Joe Dundas undertook this initiative and Studio West was commissioned to make the statue and it seems likely that two were made; one became the President’s statue and is held by the Club President and the second was presented to the City in January of 1997 by, then president, Bill MacLachlan and holds a place of honour in the Grant MacEwan library.

We also know that Jim Currie, aided by other members, was involved in their production until his wife became tired of the dust that he created while he was making them and he passed the job on to Joe Dundas. For 10 years Joe produced the statues in his garage. He poured, finished and painted them with the help of Graham Underwood for a short time until he passed away and then by himself.

Joe deserves special recognition as this is a momentous task!

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**GREAT SCOT!**

David Hume (1711 – 1776)

Born Edinburgh. Hume was an economist, diplomat and influential Enlightenment philosopher. He promoted a radical philosophical empiricism.
In 2010 Joe handed the mantle to an unsuspecting threesome of Tony Grace, Jim McLaughlin and Paul Armstrong. The statues were poured in Jim’s garage in Douglasdale and then, we think, he sold his house and moved into a condo just to get out of doing this. Little did Sheila Grace know what was happening when the production moved to her garage 2 years later. Sheila, a good sport to the end, tolerated the project until this year when the production moved to Trekker Armstrong’s garage. Trekker joined the team in 2016.

A number of Club members have been involved in the production of the statues over the last few years and need to be recognized. They are Derek Larg, Jim Hope-Ross, Stephen Campbell, Jamie Osborne, Bill MacLachlan and John Young. This year some new faces joined the ranks of the “finishers” including Bill Lawson, Stephen Nichol, Don Humphreys, Ken Carr and Brian Cumming. The statues require repair of defects created in the production process and sanding in preparation for painting.

In the final stage of their production the statues receive 3 coats of white enamel paint before they are ready to be placed on the table at the annual Burns Supper. For the last 7 years this has been done between Christmas and New Year at the University of Calgary’s Art Department paint booth under the expert guidance of Professor Bill Laing aided by the author. Following this, and once they are dry, the statues are carefully wrapped and boxed by Bill in preparation for transport to the venue for the dinner. In all, each statue takes about 2 - 3 hours to produce from the initial pour to final placement on the tables at the dinner.

Enough statues are produced each year to provide for the number of tables that are expected at the dinner with a bit of a cushion to cover breakage and other unforeseen circumstances (usually 80 - 120). The intention is that one guest at the table will take Rab home and that person will be determined by the other guests at the table. It has been the custom for the last many years to present the Dinner Speaker with one of the statues in recognition of his/her presentation of the Immortal Memory. It is not clear if this has been the case since the first dinner. We have also, on occasion, given a statue to a visiting dignitary and the Club has presented one of our statues to the Medicine Hat Burns Club in recognition of the bond between our two clubs and as a token of gratitude for their gift of the trencher that we use each year to carry the haggis at our events.

We welcome volunteers to help in all phases of the statue production but particularly the job of finishing the statues in preparation for painting. This is a unique feature of our dinner and it is only with your help that we can continue it.

Check out the slideshow on the website!

https://www.calgaryburnsclub.com/the-production-of-the-burns-statue.html

Author’s Note: Mark Twain may or may not have said, “Never let the facts get in the way of a good story”. This is the situation here. The information contained in this article was gleaned from a wide variety of sources and may or may not be accurate. Please treat this like a Wikipedia article and let me know if you have any corrections to it or can add detail that I have missed. I think that this is an important part of the Club history and I would like to preserve as much as we can. I did not have any pictures of the earlier “artisans” and if anyone can provide some of them making statues I would gladly add them to the piece and the slideshow of the creation of Rabbie.
FAMOUS QUOTE

“If there were no bad people, there would be no good lawyers”!
CHARLES DICKENS

BURNS POEM (1793)
ON POLITICS

In Politics if thou wouldst mix,
And mean thy fortunes be;
Bear this in mind—be deaf and blind,
Let great folk hear and see.

GREAT SCOT!

**Eric Liddell** (1902-1945)
Born in China to Scottish parents. Represented Scotland at Rugby Union and GB athletics. Olympic gold medallist at 400m (1924). Dropped out of 100m due to religious beliefs. Life made into film ‘Chariots of Fire’

Robert Burns Crossword 2

Across

3 Willie brewed it!
7 A Scottish cat!
11 More than one Scottish ewe!
14 The lad frae Kyle wae three “R’s”.
15 Scottish reef!
16 Robert the Bruce burnt them!
18 Scary place fae Tam’s journey!

Down

1 Not a scottish bad!
2 The basis of oor dram!
4 World’s curling stone source.
5 Pen name address tae the Earl of Breadalbane
6 A Scottish peddler.
8 The young Chevalier
9 Watery food referred tae in “The Haggis”!
10 Rabbies shoemaker friend!
12 Haggis Carrier!
13 Not with your wife! Sounds like and old Cuckoo!
17 Orcadian’s call it their “Puggie”
THE MISSING BAGPIPES FROM WW1 (IAN DENNESS)

Background:

For four hundred years or more, Highland regiments advanced and attacked to the sound of the bagpipes. The effects of the pipes on friend or foe are legendary crossing all cultural, geographic, economic and historical barriers. The original purpose of the pipes in battle however, was to signal tactical movements to the troops, in the same way as a bugle was used in the cavalry to relay orders from officers to soldiers during battle.

In the Great War, pipers climbed out of the trenches, unarmed, to face machine guns and shells. In fact you could say the bagpipe is the only musical instrument deemed a weapon of war because it inspired its troops in battle and instilled terror into the enemy.

Believe it or not the pipes have been used all over the world, from the capture of Quebec on the Plains of Abraham, at Ft. Ticonderoga during the American Revolutionary war of 1775, the Boer War in South Africa and both World Wars. There are actually references to Davie Crockett being heartened by the piping of John MacGregor at the battle of the Alamo.

It is estimated over 500 pipers died during WWI, but this story will focus on just one:

Piper James Cleland Richardson

The Scottish-born Canadian soldier, James Cleland Richardson. Piper James Richardson VC of the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, was one of only two pipers awarded a Victoria Cross during the First World War,

Richardson was born in Bellshill, near Glasgow in 1895, but later moved to Vancouver and then Chilliwack. He volunteered for the army in 1914 and was a Piper in the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. The Seaforths went to France in 1915 as part of the 16th (Canadian Scottish) Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force.

During the Battle of the Ancre Heights on 8 October 1916 at Regina Trench, in the Somme, the company was having problems advancing towards the German line through all the barbed wire and intense artillery fire so that the advance had stalled.

The citation on Richardson’s award reads, “At this critical point, Richardson volunteered to pipe again. “Wull I gie them wund (wind)?” he asked the company sergeant-major, who agreed so “For some 10 minutes, fully exposed he strode up and down outside the wire playing his pipes with the greatest coolness. The effect was instantaneous. Inspired by his splendid example the obstacle was overcome and the position captured.”

Later, during the battle, Richardson was detailed to bring back a wounded soldier and some prisoners, but realized he had left behind his pipes, which were near the German trenches so he returned to retrieve them, despite being warned of the danger. He was never seen again. Richardson’s remains were eventually found in 1920 and he lies in the Adanac military cemetery on the Somme battlefield. However, what happened to Richardson’s pipes remained a mystery until 2002.

For almost 90 years nothing was heard about them, most people believing them to have been lost in the mud of the Somme.

Then in 2002, a Pipe Major in the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary’s) responded to an Internet posting. What he found was that Ardvreck school, in Crieff, had in their possession a set of bagpipes belonging to an unknown piper, but with the unique Lennox tartan on them. The Lennox tartan being the same tartan used by the pipers of the 16th (Canadian Scottish) Battalion. Evidently, a British Army Chaplain had found the pipes in 1917 and brought them back home after the war. They remained unidentified for decades and served as a painful reminder of an unknown piper from the Great War. They were eventually traced to Richardson and brought back to Victoria, where on 8 November 2006, the bagpipes were officially repatriated when troops from The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary’s) placed them at the BC Legislature as a reminder of a generation’s valour.

Great Scot!

Thank you to all contributors.

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

henry.cairney7@shaw.ca

Deadline for the April edition of the Calgary Claver is:

**MARCH 23rd 2018**

Editors 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 author’s directly for any clarification.

Scots Word’s

Jalouse: “Guess”
Jobbery: “Squint”
Morra: “Tomorrow”
Pugged: “Tired”
Rammy: “Noisy Fight”
Snell: “Very Cold Weather”
Spurtle: “Wooden Spoon”
Stank: “Drain”
Stooshie: “Commotion”
Thrapple: “Throat”

BURNS CROSSWORD (SOLUTION)

Robert Burns Crossword 2

ACROSS

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DOWN

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