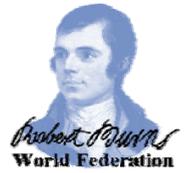




The Robert Burns World Federation Newsletter



Issue 9 May 2014

Probably the most important contribution the Federation makes to Scottish culture is the promotion of competitions among the younger generation which stimulate an early interest not only in the works of Robert Burns but in a wide range of Scottish literature, music and art.

This issue showcases the very best of young talent and provides the clearest possible evidence that the legacy of our National Bard is in safe hands for the future. The Schools Festivals reflect great credit on parents and teachers who willingly put in immense time and effort honing skills and encouraging participation. Equally encouraging is the participation of youngsters from overseas in similar competitions.

Editor

In this Issue: Page

- School Activities	1-3
- Alloway Burns Club in Action	3-4
- Burns in Berlin	4
- Team Spirit Aerospace Burns Supper	5
- Cape Town Burns Supper	5
- Whistle and Ellisland Farm Activities	6
- Greenock Burns Club Supper	6
- Referendum Rant	7
- Kay Blair Award	7
- Love, Life and Liberty Pageant Dumfries	8
- Pacific Rim AGM New Zealand	8
- Burns Boost to Rotary	9
- New Burns Trails	10
- Ravenscraig Burns Club Generous Donations	11
- Bendigo Schools Competition	11
- Burns An' A' That Festival	12

The Dumfries Volunteers

The wretch that would a tyrant own,
And the wretch, his true-sworn brother,
Who would set the mob above the throne,
May they be damn'd together!
Who will not sing *God save the King*
Shall hang as high's the steeple;
But while we sing *God save the King*,
We'll ne'er forget the People!

by Robert Burns

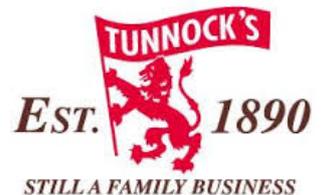
Schools Festivals



Proud winner of the title *Junior Burnsian* is Kirsty Duncan representing the Grampian Association.

From the left: Isa Hanley, RBWF Schools Convenor; Alison Tait, RBWF Chief Executive; Helen Moonie South Ayrshire Provost; Kirsty Duncan; RBWF President Jane Brown; and RBWF Senior Vice President Jim Thomson.

The renowned Uddingston-based company Tunnocks provides vital sponsorship for the schools competitions.



Registered Office: Dean Castle Country Park, Dower House,
Kilmarnock KA3 1XB Company Registration No 196895
Scottish Charity No SC029099 e-mail: admin@rbwf.org.uk
Tel 01563 572469 Website address: www.rbwf.org.uk

Newsletter Editor -Mike Duguid (Literature Convenor)

Email mike.duguid@dsl.pipex.com Tel: 01557 860040

To unsubscribe please email admin@rbwf.org.uk

Schools Festivals (cont'd)



This year's Secondary and Primary National Festivals were held in Prestwick Academy on Saturday 26th April and Saturday 10th May 2014 respectively, both very successful days at a wonderful venue. The performances at both events were of an incredibly high standard. The Festivals have grown over the years and the photograph above shows all the winners from Secondary Schools in the respective categories of Singing, Recitation, Instrumental Music and Bag piping.

During the interval the audience was treated to a selection of tunes from pupils of Prestwick Academy who are members of the world-renowned Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra. The photograph shows some of them listening to Provost Helen Moonie as she delivered a most eloquent speech about the great work done by the Federation in promoting Burns amongst the younger generation.



At the Primary School event she challenged pupils to name the Burns' poem from which the words "Ne'er Forget the People" was derived because these are the words which appear on the coat of arms (left) on the South Ayrshire Provost's chain of office. [You should have spotted it in *The Dumfries Volunteers* {sometimes known as *Does Haughty Gaul Invasion Threat?*} quoted on page 1 Ed]



The *Young Burnsian* for 2014 is piper Scott Figgins representing the Ayrshire Association of Burns Clubs seen here clutching his trophy with, L to R, Schools Convenor Isa Hanley, JVP Peter Hughes, Provost Helen Moonie and SVP Jim Thomson.

As *Young Burnsian* Scott will join *Junior Burnsian* Kirsty Duncan to perform at the prestigious Westsound Burns Supper in Glasgow in January 2015.

Schools Festivals (cont'd)



The Overall Team Trophy for Primary Schools went to pupils from the Renfrew & Inverclyde Burns Clubs Association. This trophy is awarded to the area team which has accumulated the most points across all four disciplines.

The team is shown having received its award from Jane Brown, President of the Robert Burns World Federation Ltd and Jim Thomson, RBWF Senior Vice President.

See website www.rbwf.org.uk for all the results. Thanks to James Miller the official photographer for the schools competitions.

St Petersburg School Winners

Two students from School 46 in St Petersburg have been invited to take part in the Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) 25TH Jul – 2ND Aug 2014. This was arranged by Festival Director Stewart Aitken through Federation member Helena Anderson Wright, who was delighted to meet them and see them perform during her visit to St Petersburg. Also visiting Scotland in September will be the winners of the Knowledge of Scotland competition listed below.



Knowledge of Scotland Winners 2014

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Anna Balakhova | School 46 | Wars of Scottish independence |
| 2. | Natalia Ermakova | School 238 | Robert Burns Farmer & Poet |
| 3. | Pavel Espovich | School 207 | Alexander Selkirk |

Art Competition Winners 2014

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Yana Sazhina | School 46 |
| 2. | Kseniya Trushkova | School 11 |
| 3. | Elizaveta Yashkina | Children's Community No 3 |

Alloway Burns Club Point the Way



At a Heritage Committee a year or so ago Walter Watson pressed the members to do what they could to maintain Burns-related memorials in their area. So, Alloway Burns Club undertook to promote remedial work to Highland Mary's Monument at Failford (left) and to the Trysting Thorn near to Millmannock Farm. Funds were raised from Burns Clubs in the Ayrshire Association of Burns Clubs and from South Ayrshire Council.

Clearing the two sites of brambles, hawthorn, gorse, etc was done by Alloway Burns Club members and friends. At Highland Mary's Monument 180 metres of iron fencing was

Alloway Burns Club (cont'd)

cleaned and painted and the sandstone edifice cleared of verbiage and algae. The Trysting Thorn compound was cleared of brambles and the tottering metal fence removed, shotblasted and painted before being remounted on a new level plinth. When Provost Moonie of South Ayrshire Council came to see the result it was pointed out that it was difficult to find so a second fund-raising effort ensued to get funds for appropriate signposts for the two sites.

Highland Mary's Monument was erected by The Burns Federation in 1921 with funds supplied by Harland & Wolfe, Greenock.

*"That sacred hour can I forget
Can I forget the Hallowed Grove
Where by the winding Ayr we met
To live one day of parting love."
Robert Burns*



The monument stands just above the spot on the Fail Water where Robert Burns and Highland Mary exchanged bibles over running water in a form of irregular marriage preparatory to their planned emigration to the West Indies.



This is adjacent to the 'Field of the Dead' where King Coilus, ie Coilus or Old King Cole died and may be buried under an ancient cairn by Coilsfield Mains farm. I do know Robert Burns saw Coila, his muse, as an ephemeral and beautiful woman, but that's poetic licence for you.

Statue of Coila outside the University of the West of Scotland by the river bank in Ayr. (*My wife is on a pedestal, but Coila is on the plinth*). Submitted by RBWF Past President John Skilling

[The second half of this article on the sterling work by the Alloway Burns Club will appear in next month's newsletter. Ed]

Burns Comes to Berlin



"We are planning a Burns Supper in Ahrensfelde," Jörg-Arno Zilch informed me towards the end of last year. "Do you think Bill Strachan would like to come and participate?"

That's how it all began! Jessie and I, along with Bill and Alma Strachan from Glencoe, flew to Berlin on Burns weekend - memorable for a number of reasons.

Although there have been many group and individual visits over the years since the Galston-Ahrensfelde Church Partnership was established in 1987 this was the first ever Ahrensfelde Burns Supper.

As always, we were greeted with open arms and well looked after.

The intense cold was our first impression - minus 15 degrees for our four days and our aircraft had to be de-iced for our return journey!

We took greetings from John McCracken, President of Kilmarnock No. 0 Burns Club along with cards and letters from the World Federation, Irvine and Ayrshire. And we transported the haggis as well - all the way from Galston!

Berlin (cont'd)

The town's new town hall was the venue and the tables had a truly Scottish flavour for the supper. A trombone band provided the music which included *Highland Cathedral* for the carrying-in of the haggis. Bill said the *Selkirk Grace*, addressed the haggis and entertained with *Holy Willie's Prayer* with Wolfgang Reichelt and Annette Gnilitza addressing and replying to the lasses. Jörg-Arno, who organised the whole event, gave an excellent illustrated immortal memory for the Bard and although, no doubt, much of what was being said was lost in translation all 80 who attended had a great night.

Team Spirit Charity Burns Supper



On a dark windy night in March in Prestwick around 300 Spirit AeroSystems employees, suppliers and customers were piped in to the Ayrshire Suite, Ayr Racecourse by employee Andy Fulton to join in the fun and festivities of the 2014 Team Spirit Charity Burns Supper.

Host and speaker Archie Gilbert (left), a keen Burnsian kicked off the evening with his animated rendition of an 'Address to a Haggis'. Never before has a haggis looked so frightened... Guests then enjoyed a delicious 5-course dinner.

The meal was followed by the 'Immortal Memory' delivered by John Glover (right), a former Head of Communications for the NHS in Dumfries, who related the life of Burns to the lives we all lead today.



Archie gave a hilarious rendition of 'A Toast Tae the Lasses' which kept the guests entertained and smiling. Jane Brown, the President of the Robert Burns World Federation, delivered a reply on behalf of the lassies and certainly gave the gents a run for their money!

The band 'Corra' provided excellent tunes to dance the night away with Scottish Ceilidh and contemporary dancing.

As well as having a lot of fun, the event was also raising money for charity. The Brain Tumour Charity was delighted that the evening raised around £15,000 to support their funds. The funds were raised through ticket sales, a raffle and an auction hosted by David Stewart, Commercial and Procurement Director and Spirit's very own auctioneer. Thanks must go to all the suppliers that donated prizes for the raffle and for all the guests who donated on the evening to make it a success in raising funds for a very worthwhile cause.

Cape Town Burns Supper Club



Donald Bett tells us,, "the Cape Town Burns Supper Club held its supper at the Kelvin Grove Club in Cape Town. This annual charity fundraiser is the premier Scottish social gathering in the City. This year we had 300 guests, and although slightly down on the previous year the gathering still ranks as one of the best attended in the world, at least according to the many Scottish guest speakers we have flown in

especially for the event over the years. The address to the haggis performed by whisky ambassador Alan Shuman, employing great skill in deploying a broadsword instead of a dirk to cut the haggis! Photo left Dr. Lititia Pool, Will Carter (chairman) and Micheil Armstrong, the Laird of Mungbyhurst.



The Whistle Competition

The Thornhill Burns Club is looking for competitors for the next 'Whistle' competition which will be held at Ellisland Farm on the 18th October 2014. The format of the evening is for each contestant to perform a short, usually amusing, 'warm-up' poem and then perform Burns' poem *The Whistle*. For a background on the poem's composition please see the November 2013 newsletter on the Federation website www.rbwf.org.uk

The evening starts promptly at 7pm and there will be a finger buffet and cup of tea/coffee during the evening. Tickets for guests are £6 each. The winner will hold the replica whistle for a year and be given a personalised bottle of whisky. Please pass the information on to your club members. Anyone wishing to enter should contact the Thornhill Burns Club secretary Doreen Moran on 01848 331519 or e-mail d_moran@btinternet.com.



Ellisland Farm News



In the threshing barn at Ellisland Farm on the 27th March, Dr Maureen Milton, on behalf of the Friends of Ellisland, presented a Powerpoint lecture of the time when Robert Burns lived and worked on the farm and the work that has since been done in improving the house and surrounding buildings making it an interesting attraction for visitors. Maureen, along with Susan Lammin, is producing a teacher's pack for schoolchildren visiting Ellisland. She was followed by Mr Tom Johnstone who delivered a lecture of the work and improvements started in 1998 at the farm by the volunteers of the Friends of Ellisland. There was an interval when light refreshments were served. Any club or group having an interest in Ellisland Farm and would like to have the lectures for their members please contact Dr Maureen Milton on 01387 727249.

The curator of Ellisland Farm, Les Byers wishes to retire sometime in the near future so here is a wonderful opportunity for someone to take over this exciting curatorial role which Les have fulfilled so well over many years. If anyone wishes to apply for the position please contact Mr George Gourlay of G.M. Thomson & Co. 35 Buccleuch Street Dumfries DG1 2AB Tel no 01387 254424

Greenock Burns Club Burns Supper



'Greenock Burns Club (The Mother Club) held their 212th annual celebration on 25th January 2014 in the Tontine Hotel Greenock. Members were delighted to hear the immortal memory proposed by Jane Brown President of the Robert Burns World Federation. In keeping with tradition at the Mother Club, the person proposing the immortal memory is made Honorary President for the coming year and an honorary member of the club. Jane follows in the footsteps of many distinguished people in accepting this honour.' For a full report on the supper and other activities of the club please see the 'news' section of their website: www.greenockburnsclub.com

The Referendum Rant

The forthcoming referendum on 18 September 2014, on the future of the Union and Scotland, has released an avalanche of words. We have been bombarded from both sides with historical, economic, political and all sorts of opinions and even a few arguments. Most of these “bombardments” have been spoken or in prose but still the polls tell us that 40% of the electorate has still not decided whether or how they will vote. Could verse change that?

What would someone like Robert Burns have written if he had been alive today? In *Twa Dogs* and *The Brigs of Ayr*, Burns famously presented both sides of the case with wit and clarity. Would he have done the same today, or would he have settled on one side and argued for that with his characteristic passion and conviction? Would he have let loose with abandoned, ranting rhetoric, or offered a poem for readers to thoughtfully consider the virtues of independence or of remaining in the United Kingdom? Who knows, but the “Referendum Rant” is designed to encourage those who have feelings, from fanatical even to those of boredom, on the subject of “constitutional change” to express themselves in verse, and perhaps change the future of Scotland.



The “Referendum Rant” is open to all over the age of 16. All entries are to be made online to: thereferendumrant@hjlockhart.co.uk. There is no fee for entry and the closing date is provisionally Friday 15 August 2014. The rules, including prizes and judging, are on the sponsor’s website <http://www.first-scottish.co.uk/> and also available by E mailing thereferendumrant@hjlockhart.co.uk.

The sponsor and organiser is the charity, First Scottish (previously First Scottish Film Features) which was established in 1995 with the main aim of supporting artistic creation and recently sponsored the Reboot of *Tam o’Shanter*, attracting nearly 80 poems from all over the world, almost certainly a record for a poetry competition.

For further information please contact Hugh Lockhart, trustee of First Scottish on hugh@hjlockhart.co.uk or call 0131 556 3743 [Image **The Lewis Chessman’s Dilemma** by Mengran Tie]

Community Service Award - Kay Blair



Councillor Lesley McDonald was delighted to be able to advise me about the Community Service Award having been awarded to Kay Blair, a great lover of Burns. She is currently President of Larkhall Burns Club and Secretary of the Lanarkshire Association of Burns Clubs. She is a member of the schools committee of Robert Burns World Federation and organises the local Schools’ Competition.

As a member of the St Petersburg Forum Kay attended Piskarev Memorial Cemetery in St Petersburg this year and laid a wreath and presented a letter from the Provost of South Lanarkshire to the Citizens of St Petersburg in remembrance of the 70th anniversary of those who died in the 900-day siege of Leningrad.

As is usual with these things months elapse before nominees are advised they are to receive an award, it was in Kay’s case all the more poignant as her letter arrived the day after her mother-in-law Nellie Waddell sadly passed away (as reported in last month’s newsletter).

Kay and her son Sandy and daughter-in-law Hazel were able to join Councillor McDonald on Friday 4 April 2014 for a lunch and presentation of a crystal plaque together with a signed certificate from Provost Eileen Logan. Photograph from L to R: Councillor Lesley McDonald, Kay and Provost Eileen Logan

Love, Life and Liberty Pageant in Dumfries

A pageant entitled *Love, Life and Liberty* based on the life of Robert Burns will be staged in Dumfries town centre on 19th and 20th July 2014.



The script was written by celebrated Scottish actor John Cairney who made a career out of playing Robert Burns; he is also considered to be a world authority on the life of Burns.

Performances will once again take place on seven outdoor stages throughout Dumfries town centre and will involve a cavalcade of singers, dancers, musicians and actors leading the audience along the very streets where Robert Burns once tread.

Former star of the 2012 show Gavin Paul (left) will also be directing this summer's event.

Gavin has a number of television appearances under his belt including popular Scottish crime drama *Taggart*.

Newly appointed co-producer Ali Donowho summed up the event by saying "Robert Burns was inspired by the ladies of Dumfries to write some of the most famous love songs and poetry in the world, we should take pride in that and I hope *Life, Love & Liberty* can help to remind people about Robert Burns and his Dumfries connection." For full details see the website:

<http://www.aburnspageant.co.uk/>



New York Calendonia Club



The latest edition of the New York Caledonian Club Newsletter, *An-t-Albannach* has been published.

Simply go to www.nycaledonian.org/newsletter.php to download it and archived editions.

Read all about the club's involvement with the Annual Tartan Day Parade and its Burns Supper on January 25th at the Three West Club.

Pacific Rim Association AGM - a First for New Zealand

The Robert Burns Association of the Pacific Rim will hold their AGM in Dunedin on Wednesday 3rd September as part of a Scottish Festival from Saturday 30th August until Saturday 6th September. This will be the first time the AGM has been held in New Zealand. The festival programme is expected to include a mayoral reception, Scottish country dancing, piping, highland dancing, demonstrations of highland games events, a tour of Scottish Dunedin, a Scottish referendum debate, a poetry competition on Dunedin's Scottish heritage, a haggis ceremony and a ceilidh. Hopefully there will be a viewing of the Charles Hardie painting on the meeting of Burns and Scott (reported in the March Newsletter). This is currently being displayed as part of a temporary exhibition of Dunedin's Scottish heritage at Toitu Otago Settlers Museum (above). All with an interest in things Scottish will be most welcome. A new biography of [Burns, Thomas](#) appears in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. The nephew of Robert Burns, he was first Chancellor of the University of Otago and as a minister he founded the Presbytery of Otago in 1854.



Burns Boost to Rotary



Gryffe Valley Rotary held its annual Burns Supper at the River Inn, Houston, Renfrewshire. The sell-out event was hugely enjoyed by all and raised some £4000 for the club's work in supporting young people in our community, such as sailing facilities admired by Princess Anne (below).

Following an excellent meal of traditional Burns fare, the company was treated to a tremendous evening of entertainment. First up was Graham McLachlan who delivered a memorable Immortal Memory. Graham is a member of the prestigious Robert Burns Guild of Speakers, a select body limited by number to 37 (Burns' age when he died) who are all dedicated to sustaining and promoting good standards of speaking at Robert Burns events. He spoke of Burns varied love life and many offspring, as illustrated in many of his poems, and he highlighted his early promotion of women's rights. He talked of Burns as a Scottish patriot who clearly held some less than favourable views on the English! A fine example of the standards set by the Guild.

Retired solicitor Bill Miller gave a thoughtful and humorous Toast to the Lassies and Liz Donaghy stepped in at short notice to deliver a pithy and amusing response. Lady Annabel Goldie had been due to give the Reply from the Lassies but unfortunately she had taken ill a couple of days earlier. All present joined President Mike Farley in wishing her a speedy recovery.

Other highlights from the evening included a steady hand on the tiller by President Mike Farley, an outstanding rendition of Tam O'Shanter by the inimitable Jim Ferguson, a stirring Address to the Haggis from member Ronald Aitchison, the pipes of John Langan, and a number of Burns songs sung beautifully by Audrey McKirdy with Fiona Menzies as her accompanist. To cap it all, the Vote of Thanks from Vice President Angus Matheson was delivered in Scots in the Burns poetic idiom to considerable acclaim! See www.gryffevalley-rotary.org.uk for further details.



Burns and the South West – New Trails

For those planning a trip to Scotland in the next wee while, three new visitor trails have been created to take visitors on a journey to discover more about Robert Burns and his poetry. The first trail, *Following Burns*, is a three-day itinerary that reveals Robert Burns' life through the places he lived and the people he knew. The second, *Naturally Burns* is a two-day trail of light walking in Ayrshire taking you into Burns Country to explore the very land that inspired our poet. Lastly, *Actively Burns* is a fun four-day itinerary that includes cycling, walking and horse riding.



The trails, brought together under the banner of 'Burns and the South West', are the result of a collaboration between Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team, Dumfries and Galloway Council and VisitScotland.

Nat Edwards, Director of Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and Vice-Chair of the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group said: "If you really want to get to know Scotland – you could do no better than walking in the footsteps of her national Bard. The landscape, heritage, language and music of Robert Burns' South West has still got as much power to take your breath away as it did in Burns' time and this project is a great chance to introduce it to a whole new generation of visitors." A web presence at www.burns-southwest.com has been created to complement the trails.

Ravenscraig Burns Club Generosity



Ravenscraig Burns Club shared the success – and proceeds – of another ‘full house’ Burns Supper by presenting three cheques to support three ventures closely linked to its location and its history.

The committee decided again to split the proceeds – with £1,000 going to the Scottish Steelworkers’ Memorial Fund and £1,000 to be shared equally between Robert Burns World Federation and Lanarkshire Association of Burns’ Clubs (LABC).

Club treasurer Tommy Brennan said: “We felt we wanted to take this opportunity again to contribute to the erection of a Memorial Statue at Ravenscraig to pay tribute to the many men who died in Scottish

steelworks. We were also keen to continue our support for two Burns-related organisations with whom we have had a long and rewarding association. Members and patrons of the Ravenscraig Burns Supper, take pride in supporting these two organisations because they help keep alive the Burns’ tradition, not only in Lanarkshire but worldwide. Being able to make this sort of contribution is a source of great pride at the club.”

Jane Brown, President of the Robert Burns World Federation, said: “We are delighted to receive this cheque which will help to continue our work to promote the works of Burns and Scottish literature throughout Scotland – thank you very much.”

Patricia Leslie, LABC president, said: “We are delighted to receive this cheque – it will go a long way to help the organisation of the schools’ competition across Lanarkshire. We truly believe that it’s the youth of today who will carry on the name of Burns long after we’re gone – it’s important that these kids take part. They may not realise it at the time what’s being built for their future.” [Photo L to R: Patricia, Tommy & Jane]

Centenary Celebrations for Uddingston Masonic Burns Club

On Sat 1st February 2014 Uddingston Masonic Burns Club held its 100th Annual Burns Supper. The club was constituted in July 1914 and Federated in August, a few days after the start of WW1. They have had an annual Burns Supper ever since. President of the club Arthur Burns (second left) was chairman for the evening and 150 members and guests enjoyed a great night. The Robert Burns World Federation was well represented with Senior Vice President Jim Thomson (far right) in attendance along with Past Presidents of Federation George and Enez Anderson.



Federation 200 Club Results

December: Quarterly Draw: 1st Mr Colin Harris; Monthly Draw: 1st Mrs Irene Miller; 2nd Mr Brian Keenan

January Monthly Draw: 1st Mr Colin Blair; 2nd Mrs Irene Henry

February Monthly Draw: 1st Mr David Baird; 2nd Mrs Corinne Buivenga

March: Quarterly Draw: 1st Mr Willie Gibson Monthly Draw: 1st Mrs James Boyd; 2nd Mr George Smith

Seniors Burns Lunch at Tranent



The Tranent 25 Burns Club held a special Burns lunch for their Senior Members on 4th April within Rannoch House. This lunch is now an annual event and had previously been held in the Brig Inn. The lunch was well attended with seven members over 80 years attending, and 28 other members. The lodge provided a wonderful lunch of traditional fare. Entertainment was provided by members and guests. Robie Rob gave an interesting and informative Immortal Memory, Malcolm Henderson provided songs and music with his guitar, Bert Cunningham, Ian Wightman and Gordon Jamieson recited Burns poems. Robert Hooker, Bob Anderson and Jim Dodd's provided music on keyboard, fiddle and accordion. Johnnie Hepburn gave an enjoyable parody on Tam o' Shanter and

Tom Millar thanked the caterers and all the artists. Jim Jamieson the President of the 25 club thanked everyone for attending. The lunch ended with the company singing Auld Lang Syne.

Bendigo – Burns Shines Down Under



Six students received awards and certificates from the Robert Burns World Federation after entering an essay-writing competition based on the line from the poem *The Cotter's Saturday Night* 'an honest man's the noblest work of God.'

Photo L to R: Meagan Baker, Lisa Chesters, the winner Rebecca Kellett, Kara Azzopardi, Bonnie Pearson, Kirsty Evans and Georgina Schroen.

Federal member for Bendigo Lisa Chesters presented students with medals and certificates, and said it was wonderful to see them participating in writing competitions which would stand them in good stead for further studies.

Bendigo Burns Society President Jim Millar (left) said the standard was very high and demonstrated not only a good understanding of the poem, but also of the message Burns wanted to get across.

Robert Burns Tourist Guides

At a recent Board meeting there was a discussion on the possibilities of having Members of the Robert Burns World Federation taking part, **on a part time paid basis**, as trained Robert Burns Tourist Guides.

A Robert Burns Tourist Guide would be allocated to a specific location where they would explain the particular Robert Burns association with that location.

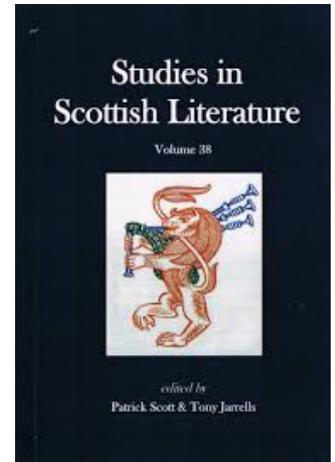
As this is a new territory for the Federation and before extending an invitation to non-Federation Members the Board decided that Members should be informed and a response requested. If there is sufficient interest then the project will be developed and a two day (weekend) training course can be set up, depending on funding being sourced.

Anyone who is in a Burns Club or an individual Federation Member can apply to be put on this initial list. There is no age limit. Potential candidates for these self-employed, part-time, positions are asked to e-mail their contact details and a brief summary of what area they would like to work in to Marketing Director Murdo Morrison murdomorrison13@blueyonder.co.uk with their full contact details and also why they wish to be considered.

Burns Studies Available Online

All volumes of the journal *Studies in Scottish Literature* (SSL) are now freely available on the Web at: <http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/>. There are 39 volumes available, with over 800 articles and a total of over 7000 pages, published over a period of fifty years (1963-2013). *SSL* is also still published in hard copy, as a print-on-demand paperback, available from such on-line vendors as Amazon and Amazon UK.

Given the interests of *SSL*'s long time editor, G. Ross Roy, it is not perhaps surprising that the journal has published a lot of Burns-related articles and reviews--at least 120 items--forty-plus in the two special Burns volumes (vols 30 and 37), and another seventy in regular issues. Over the past 18 months, these identifiable Burns items have had over 10,700 full-text article downloads. The most popular Burns articles in *SSL* have been Peter Zenzinger's article on Ramsay and Burns (vol. 30), Derrick McClure's study of Burns in Gaelic translation (vol. 33), Corey Andrews on Burns's poem "Halloween" and Kirsteen McCue on the air for Burns's "Red, red, rose" (both in vol. 37), the Chinese scholar Yang De-you writing on Burns's Russian translator Samuel Marshak (vol. 22), and Jeff Ritchie writing on Burns and Wordsworth (vol. 30). Perhaps surprisingly the top countries for using *SSL* on line, after the US and UK, include not only Canada, Australia and New Zealand, but Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, India, and Turkey.



Burns An' a' That Festival!



The annual Burns an' a' that! Festival will be celebrating its 13th anniversary and Scotland's Year of Homecoming with some special events over 4 days and 3 locations (23-26 May 2014).

The festival kicks off with Festival Friday 23 of May in Ayr town centre where there will be various events and activities going on around town and a chance to find out more about the weekend ahead. Saturday and Sunday (24 – 25 May) sees the return of Weekend in the Park with a fantastic line up of free live music, arts and attractions, food and drink, fairground and much more and the festival concludes with a brand new day – Alloway Monday at the Robert Burns Birthplace museum in the bard's birthplace.

Tributes to Burns on Festival Friday include a special Burns Street Art Gallery from Ayrshire College students in Ayr High Street accompanied by Leezie Lundie's Landmarks tour. Look out for the Tam o' Shoppers Trail too – will Tam get his messages safely over the keystone of the Auld Brig and manage to hold on to his chips 'n' cheese?!

Over the Weekend in the Park and hidden in the woodland enjoy a special Burns in Pencil Trail by artist Ian McNicol. Bring along some paper and a pencil and make your own little hand-made, illustrated 'Burns Poem' booklet to take home. Enjoy Memory's Journey by artist Paul Holmes, an outdoor sound sculpture in celebration of Auld Lang Syne and end the evening with Keara Murphy : Mice and Women, an extremely funny, modern, feminist parallel on the Robert Burns poem, To A Mouse.



Alloway Monday plays host to a whole day of events including Burns Meets the American Songbook, Ye Banks & Braes Tour and Burns – The Words and Music. A tribute to Burns ... an' a' that!

www.burnsfestival.com