



'The Vision'

The Robert Burns World Federation Newsletter



Issue 59 November 2022

Little did I think when I started the newsletter, back in January 2013, that it would still be going strong ten years later with a regular twelve pages of content from across the Burns world. I am truly grateful to all those who have contributed over the years and hope that you will continue to do so for the new editor. I should like to thank Margaretann Dougall in the Federation office for her diligent proof-reading which has helped ensure the high standard of the content. I have taken the liberty in this issue of reflecting on a couple of previous articles with themes which have offered me particular pleasure. I have always given priority to articles from outwith Scotland to ensure we are seen as a truly 'World' Federation helping to promote Burns's vision that 'Man to Man the World O'er Shall Brothers be for a' That. *Editor*

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Epistle to John Lapraik

What's a' your jargon o' your Schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
If honest Nature made you fools,
What sairs your grammars
Ye'd better taen up spades and shoos,
Or knapping-hammers

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then, tho' I drudge thro' dub and mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

Robert Burns – 1 April 1785

President's Message



Dear Friends of the Poet.

Welcome to another edition of the *Vision*: the Robert Burns World Federation newsletter which is read from Ayr to Arizona; from Dundee to Dunedin and most importantly (for me anyway) right here in Greenock.

I am delighted to be able to communicate with you through this medium and I would like to take this opportunity to thank *Vision* editor, Mike Duguid for all his hard work over the years in putting this publication together – thanks Mike: your dedication to the Burns cause has been, and still is, much appreciated!

It seems (he says, tempting fate) that the worst of the Covid pandemic is behind us – certainly in terms of the current strain – but we must be aware that new strains develop quickly and whilst we may be vaccinated multiple times, there are many amongst us who are still vulnerable and new strains are likely to require new vaccines.

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President's Message (Cont'd)

That being said – we're back! And what has been so appreciated, since things began to look a bit more like normal, is the return to meetings of our Burns clubs: I have attended quite a number and would like to share a few highlights.

The first highlight was the visit to Greenock Burns Club (The Mother Club) of The Rt Hon Lord Lyon King of Arms, Dr Joseph J Morrow CBE just three days after the funeral of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth – a world event in which Lyon played such an important part. For those of you who don't know, Dr Morrow is a very keen Burnsian indeed: he has delivered the Immortal Memory on a number of occasions and I was very proud when, as President of Greenock in 2019, I made him an honorary member of the Mother Club. To hear his first-hand accounts of that extraordinary 10 days in September was a privilege and the members were literally spellbound.

The second highlight was a trip to Glasgow City Chambers for the Lord Provost's reception to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Glasgow Haggis Club. RBWF Past-President and current Haggis Club President Marc Sherland organised this event in his usual, efficient manner and it was clear from the speeches that Burns's association with "The Metropolis of the West" are alive, well and very much valued by the city fathers (and since the Lord Provost is a lady ... mothers). There was some fine entertainment too from Alan Craig at the piano, tenor Ewan Russell (both Haggis Club members) and a certain mezzo-soprano, Mrs Polly Beck (Greenock Burns Club) of whom it has oft been said, "... is a fine wee chanter!" I also sang, but as always when on the same bill as Polly, mine is not the highlight!

The third highlight was a visit to Alberta, Canada where I attended both the Medicine Hat Jolly Beggars (where I was made Chieftain o' the Nicht and gave the Immortal Memory) and the Calgary Burns Club (where I was treated to a recital by the Calgary Burns Club Singers ... and then found myself singing four or five songs to the members). All in all, the trip was a roaring success and I thank the Albertan Burnsians (and especially Immediate Past-President Henry Cairney, his lovely wife Shona and their wee devil of a West Highland terrier, Brodie – my hosts) for their very kind hospitality. I also managed to get my official Presidential portrait taken in Calgary by exiled Scot Charlie Stephens (see attached). By the way, before leaving the subject of Alberta, I would also like to thank Ken and Brenda Montgomery for the fabulous party they threw for me, the night before the Jolly Beggars event. For those of you who haven't seen Ken's basement bar ... you don't know what you are missing!

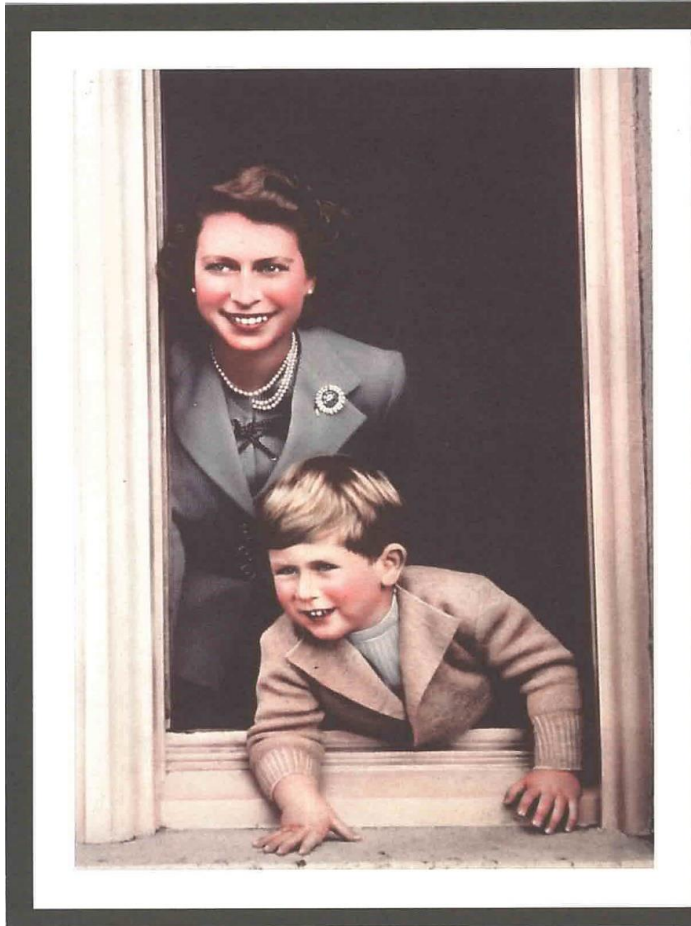
Of course, the greatest highlight for me took place before all of these events, and that was my installation as President of the Robert Burns World Federation. What a privilege for me – for anyone – to be installed into the office of this organisation: one which, over the last 130 years, has made it its mission to place Robert Burns to the fore and keep his memory immortal. I can assure you that the history of the organisation, its traditions and its values are not lost upon me and it is my promise to work as hard as I can to increase the RBWF's standing in Scotland and abroad.

So, all of that being said, please enjoy Mike's last-ever *Vision* – compiled and edited with the same loving care as every other previous edition and join me in a wee round of applause for all the skill, energy and experience which he has brought to it.

PS ... one last wee thing: have you ever attended a Burns Brunch? If not, I can thoroughly recommend getting in touch with Past-President Bobby Kane who organises a cracker in Fauldhouse. They begin by toasting the porridge and follow it with rolls and bacon; rolls and black pudding; rolls and egg, rolls and sausage ... in fact, rolls and anything that will fit in a roll! Then follow the speeches and then the full Burns dinner afterwards ... they almost needed a crane to get me out of my seat at the end of the day – thanks Bobby.

Alan D Beck RBWF President

A Message from His Majesty the King



It was so kind of you to send me such a wonderfully generous message following the death of my beloved mother. Your most thoughtful words are enormously comforting and I cannot tell

Charles

Actor Alan Cummings Plays Burns at the Edinburgh Festival

Created by Cummings and two choreographers, Steven Hoggett and Vicki Manderson, 'Burn' is a one-man dance-theater production in which Scottish actor Alan Cumming plays out the life story of Robert Burns. This was a daring decision by Cumming to employ dance as means of communication but reviews of the show suggest that it was a highly successful one.

Richard Purden in the *Edinburgh Reporter* states, 'The power of movement, choreography and music is a boon to the production. Immediately Burn sheds the shortbread tin and haggis image of Robbie by bringing the kick of his Scots language to life. There are of course more optimistic explosions of life celebrated through those momentous flourishes of Scots language and dialect which Cummings revels in while drawing us closer to 'The man o' independent mind'. When we think the show is over, Cummings dressed in black appears in front of the red curtain. With a glass of whiskey in hand, he delivers a few bars from Auld Lang Syne. It's a genuinely moving moment and a fitting reminder that art transcends this very human and contradictory character.'



[I am very grateful to Tommy Ga-Ken Wan for permission to use his superb image. Ed]

Exciting Developments at Ellisland Farm

Some of Scotland's leading architects and heritage experts are to develop a masterplan for Ellisland Farm, the only farmstead built by Burns himself. A consortium led by Delfinity Limited and including Oliver Chapman Architects will produce a £30k masterplan for The Robert Burns Ellisland Trust charity, which has run the site since 2020. It will consider the best way to approach the £500,000 of repairs needed and also restore and repurpose the farmstead.

The plan is funded by The Architectural Heritage Fund/Historic Environment Scotland, South of Scotland Enterprise and The Holywood Trust. Delfinity were appointed after a competitive tendering exercise. Once the masterplan is produced next March, the Trust will work up detailed plans to raise capital.



The project will also explore how to grow audiences and deliver creative learning at the place where Burns produced a quarter of his output - including Auld Lang Syne and Tam o' Shanter. The plan seeks to improve biodiversity and access, including by foot, bicycle and public transport. Ellisland has 170 acres of land, much of it still farmed, and the woodland which was originally planted for Burns's tenancy in 1788.

The Masterplan is the latest in a number of exciting developments at Ellisland. As outline in the last newsletter, the trust was recently shortlisted in the Scottish Game Awards after creating a "virtual

Ellisland" in the computer game Minecraft, which is played by millions of children and teenagers around the world. Explore Ellisland! allows players to read Burns poems and listen to recordings while learning more about his life at the farm.

The Robert Burns Ellisland Trust inherited a charity facing significant financial challenges in 2020 and have focussed on fundraising since then, led by their volunteer board and business development manager Joan McAlpine.

The trust is currently developing holiday accommodation to provide income to support the museum as they get no regular public funding. This has been made possible with support from South of Scotland Enterprise. Since 2020, they have been successfully fundraising and have increased their staff from one part-timer to three full-time equivalents - albeit all the posts are fixed term due to finite grant funding. A recent grant from Museum Galleries Scotland will support free school visits on a first come first served basis - places are available to schools until March 2023.



One of their most successful fund-raising approaches is to increase membership - and this comes with perks such as free access to the site and discounts on events. They have also been increasing their Burns Club associated members as well as corporate sponsorship. The Annandale Distillery and Globe Inn was unveiled as their first corporate sponsor earlier this year.

Joan McAlpine, Business Development Manager of The Robert Burns Ellisland Trust said:

"We are so excited about the masterplan and to work with such a talented team of experts to save the home of Auld Lang Syne for future generations. It should be recognised around the world as a place to celebrate Burns, nature and Scottish culture. We want more people, especially young people to be inspired the way Burns was inspired by this beautiful place. "We will engage with the wider Burns Community on our vision for the site which everyone loves so much."

Ellisland Farm Developments (Cont'd)

Caitlin MacLeod (left) joins us as Museum Development Officer. Caitlin has just completed a post graduate MSc in Museum Education at the University of Glasgow. She will develop our schools programme and help run the museum as well as take charge of our accreditation process. Her internship is also supported by Dumfries and Galloway Museums Service.



Sarah White is our part-time Operations Officer and Administrator. Sarah is studying for a Computer, IT and Design degree through the Open University. As well as ensuring the museum and trust operate smoothly, she will manage our new membership system.

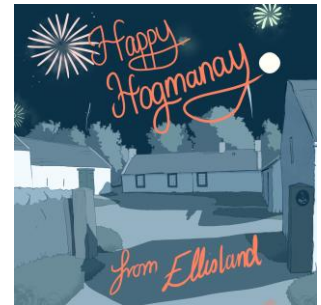


The Trust is also seeking someone with a financial background, preferably a qualified or retired accountant with a love of Burns, to join their board. To find out more or become a member of the Robert Burns's Ellisland Trust contact info@ellislandfarm.co.uk



This Winter we have a fabulous programme which starts with our annual Christmas youth concert on 10 December. This year, the award winning musician [Siobhan Miller](#) plays alongside some of the best young talent in Southern Scotland. You can order your tickets for the concert [here](#) or in person at the Midsteeple Box office in Dumfries.

Our other exciting events this Winter include Bringing in the Bells at the Home of Auld Lang Syne on Hogmanay. Don't miss this unique party in the Tam o Shanter barn. There will be musical entertainment and warming winter food. Next year we will have a Burns Brunch for families in January and a celebration of Jean Armour's birthday on 25 February with Robyn Stapleton. You can collect the tickets from the Midsteeple Box Office in Dumfries or go to [BUY TICKETS](#) for all the events We look forward to seeing you soon!



Larkhall Burns Club Makes a Show of Itself.



Alan Scherr (pictured) and Larkhall President, Marc Sherland, visited the local Co-op in Union Street, Larkhall, where the manager Frank, had given permission for the club to mount a recruitment campaign within the shop. Placed near to the checkouts, it should be seen by shoppers as they purchase their daily or weekly shop and the exhibition runs from Monday 14th November until the following Monday 21st. Of especial note the Club members will be on hand on Saturday 19th November from 10am - 1pm to talk to the public and encourage them to consider membership.

Eric Budgell, club member, said, *"This is a new initiative for the club and we hope that if it works well, we may repeat it again and hope it may inspire other clubs to consider doing something similar."*

The exhibition, which features photographs from past activities of the club, as well as explaining the kinds of programme which makes the club such a friendly and encouraging place to be. It also highlights the work involved in the Club's Schools Competitions. It all looks very attractive, and it is hoped local members will pop in to the Coop to check the table with membership forms and bookmarks. Encourage your friends and neighbours to go along and take a look.

Federation Ambassador Receives the Edinburgh Award 2022

We are very pleased to report that the Federation's first ever Ambassador, appointed in 2020, Sir Geoff Palmer, Professor Emeritus and Chancellor of Heriot-Watt University, received the Edinburgh Award 2022, on Monday 14th November.

Impressions of Sir Geoff's hands have been cast in clay ready to be carved into stone. The handprints will be gilded and laid outside the City Chambers next to the prints of previous Edinburgh Award recipients including Alexander McCall Smith, Doddie Weir, Ann Budge, Sir Chris Hoy and Elizabeth Blackadder.



Sir Geoff has a long association with the work of Robert Burns and was a worthy recipient of the role of Ambassador, which was made in the presidential year of Marc Sherland. Marc said of Geoff, " *He is such a good human being who embodies all the key attributes that make for a special recipient of the role. Already he has given the Federation a lecture on his experiences of learning about Robert Burns and we know he references Robert Burns whenever he can.*"

Sir Geoff was knighted in the 2014 New Year's Honours for services to human rights, science, and charity. In 2018, he was appointed Jamaica's first Honorary Consul in Scotland and is the 2020 recipient of the Jamaican national honour, the Order of Distinction (Commander Class).

Sir Geoff's name will be inscribed onto the Edinburgh Award honour panel in the City Chambers and he will be presented with an engraved Loving Cup by the Lord Provost at a ceremony next month.

Camperdown Burns Festival

Perhaps the event which has given me the greatest personal joy has been the emergence of the Camperdown Burns Festival. Successive issues of the newsletter have tracked the blossoming of the event from a humble couple of days into a week-long celebration of Burns and all things Scottish. There is even a horse race named in the poet's honour and, very aptly, it is for fillies!

As the article in the Carlisle Gazette from 2012 reported, a former Australian MP and Burns scholar, Gordon Ashley, discovered that the oldest statue of Burns was located in the botanical gardens in Camperdown in Victoria Australia. Unfortunately, due to weathering and some acts of vandalism, the condition of the statue had significantly deteriorated.

During the period between his discovery in 2008 and the unveiling in 2012, the statue had been painstakingly restored and relocated to the Corangamite Shire Council HQ building. In order to mark this historic event, a Burns Festival weekend was created. In addition, interest in local history concerning early Scottish settlers led to the publication of several booklets and eventually a book entitled 'Scotland to Australia Felix.' [ISBN: 9780992317805] The title Australia Felix (Latin for "fortunate Australia" or "happy Australia") was an early name given by Thomas Mitchell to lush pasture in parts of western Victoria he explored in 1836 on his third expedition.

New lease of life for Burns statue...now Down Under!

THE oldest known statue of Robbie Burns has been unveiled in Australia after a much-needed facelift. Remarkably, it is the only Burns' statue to have been based on the very first portrait of the poet, which was painted by Peter Taylor over breakfast sittings in Edinburgh in December 1786.

What is the connection to Carlisle, you may well ask. Well, the statue was in fact carved by celebrated Carlisle sculptor John Greenshields in 1830.

Both the statue and painting were later featured in the Burns centennial exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1859.

In March 1883 the statue arrived in Camperdown, Australia, from Scotland where it was gifted to the public park by its owner, William Andrew Taylor Jnr.

In December of that year it was lifted onto a rubble-stone pedestal in a small section of the park that, some years later, officially became the Camperdown Botanic Gardens.

Since its removal into safekeeping in mid-2009, the statue has been restored to its former glory with stone from Drumhead Quarry near Denny, thanks to Mr Ashley's strong advocacy, the National Trust of Australia's support, the British Geological Survey's technical advice and commitment from the Shire of Corangamite Council in Victoria.

The statue was unveiled by Victorian State Premier Ted Baillieu in the presence of Belinda 'Tresler', a descendant of Robert Burns' sister, Isabella, and Mary Greenshields, a descendant of one of John Greenshields' brothers.

A letter to Corangamite Shire Mayor Matt Makin, from Carlisle Parish Historical Society chairwoman, Christine Warren, expressing gratitude at the statue's restoration and relocation was read out at the ceremony.

The statue is now located behind armour-plated windows in the Corangamite Council's new civic centre where it has been mounted on a turntable facing the main entrance during office hours and outside at night when it is also floodlit.

Christine Warren said: "With help from Gordon Ashley, we have followed the progress of the restoration of this important statue of Robert Burns with admiration and delight."

"Admiration that somewhere so far away from Carlisle has succeeded in preserving such an important statue and has taken such trouble to restore it with matching stone sourced in Scotland."

"Delight also that the Parish of Carlisle and its sculptor will be become more widely known throughout the world, thanks to visitors to Camperdown."

"Carlisle Parish Historical Society thanks the people of Corangamite Shire for their efforts and hopes we can forge links in the future."

John Greenshields was born in 1794 in Lesmahagow, moving to Carlisle in his infancy. He briefly worked with celebrated Carlisle sculptor Robert Forrest before setting up independently near Threepwood Quarry (close to Dobbies' Sandyholm Garden Centre).

Greenshields was commissioned to create a life-size statue of Sir Walter Scott in 1831. It was finished in early 1834 and has stood in Parliament Hall, Edinburgh, since the 1850s.

Greenshields' statue of Robert Burns was commissioned by William Taylor, a Leith magistrate and soap manufacturer. His only son, William Andrew Taylor, who first settled in Camperdown in 1876, shipped the statue to his new home in Victoria's Western District in late 1882.

ROSS THOMSON

Unveiling ceremony...attended by Victorian Premier and other VIP guests

In safe keeping...the Burns statue

Carlisle Gazette 16.2.12.

Camperdown Burns Festival (Cont'd)



I was fortunate enough to be invited to the festival in 2013 and spent a most enjoyable few days at the home of Carolyn and Dr John Menzies. I was delighted when John agreed to become the Robert Burns World Federation's Director for Burns clubs and other Scottish Associations in the Pacific Rim. They could not have been more hospitable and the festival itself was a joy from start to finish. Luckily, my wife Pat and I were able to host John and Carolyn during their visit to Scotland a couple of years later.

One of the most rewarding events for me was a concert given in the courthouse by Festival stalwarts Don Grieve and Angela Preiss during which I introduced the songs and told their background story and their relevance to Burns as the great song collector.



In 2014 the international guest was Robert Burns World Federation President Jane Brown. Corangamite Shire Council community relations coordinator Rory Neeson said the festival had been a huge success, with higher-than-expected numbers. Rory described Jane as "the highlight of the weekend." "She was a drawcard," he said, "She was really entertaining and was great with the crowd."

Anyone who knows Jane will not be surprised about this accolade such is her passion for the works and, particularly, the fascinating life of Scotland's national bard.
[Photo, Jane gives Burns ae fond kiss]

In a similar vein, it has been great to witness the Killie Burns Summer Festival in Kilmarnock develop into an increasingly successful event

It's Time to Buy or Renew Your Shares in the RBWF 200 Club

The 200 Club is a well-established method of fundraising for RBWF. We have up to 200 members each owning a share in the club at a cost of £15. For 10 months of the year there is draw of 2 numbers; these are a first prize and a second prize. In addition, every 3 months we have a quarterly prize. This allows £1500 additional funds for the Federation and £1500 to pay out to our winning Shareholders. We still have a few numbers left for the 200 Club Shares for 2022 – 2023. If you would like to purchase a share for our monthly draw, please follow the link [200-Club-Information-Application-Template-2022-2023.pdf \(rbwf.org.uk\)](https://rbwf.org.uk/200-Club-Information-Application-Template-2022-2023.pdf) If you have already purchased a share, we thank you very much indeed and wish you luck.

Burns Thriving in Ukraine School

Another topic which has featured regularly is the overseas schools' competitions and, in particular, those from Ukraine and Russia.

In the March 2016 edition, I reported on the establishment of a Burns Museum in the Secondary School of Ploske in Ukraine. The pupils there regularly take part in the



Ukraine Burns Museum (Cont')

Federation's Overseas competitions. They forged a relationship with the pupils from Bantaskin Primary School in Falkirk who sent over hand-made cards. They also received several presents from different Burnsians: David Hyslop, Jim Thomson, Isa Hanley, Brian Goldie and, Priscilla Kucik, President of Milwaukee Burns Club in America. Linda Todd, Scottish artist, kindly sent over her painting "The Bard". They received the Burns Chronicle from their sponsor New Cumnock Burns Club. Their comment was, "we want to say the words of gratitude to all Burnsians who do their best for our Robert Burns Museum."

Teacher Taya Khryplyva is the inspiration behind this wonderful museum. By studying Burns's poetry pupils also help make the link to their own National Poet, Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

St Petersburg Forum's 'Knowledge of Scotland' winners



I also reported regularly on students from St Petersburg and had the chance to meet several of them during their visits to Scotland. The photograph was taken in September/October 2019 and show three winners of the 'Knowledge of Scotland' competition together with local youngsters from Dumfries. Photo in Globe Inn (L to R) Accordionist Lee McQueen, young piper Gregor Grierson, Alexander Savinskiy, piper Callum Watson, Taisia Tiukhina, Daria Leus and Burns Young Ambassador Rose Byers.

The sightseeing included Alloway, Bannockburn, Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, Glasgow, Dumfries, Portavadie and west coast. They also had a day at Linwood High School.

They were a credit to their parents, their schools and St Petersburg. Audiences had to be reminded that they are Russian and English is for them is a foreign language.

Rose also featured in an article about her trip to St Petersburg in 2020.

"We went to the 'How Well Do You Know Scotland Competition' where pupils of my age competed to get the chance to go to Scotland as their prize. We met the three winners afterwards and they are now coming to our house for dinner when they visit Scotland. At night time our group split up and we each went to a Russian family for dinner. I went to a girl called Sofia, who was my age, and went with her family and my mum to a super Georgian restaurant.

It was really emotional and sad when we had to say goodbye to all of our friends. Our flights were good on the way back but when I arrived home I burst into tears; I was so sad that our great week was over. I literally feel changed because of that trip. It taught me so much and I met so many lovely people."



Rose Byers has been an incredible ambassador for Burns, for Ellisland Farm and for the Federation in general and has featured in several articles in the Newsletter. She is a true inspiration for other young people.

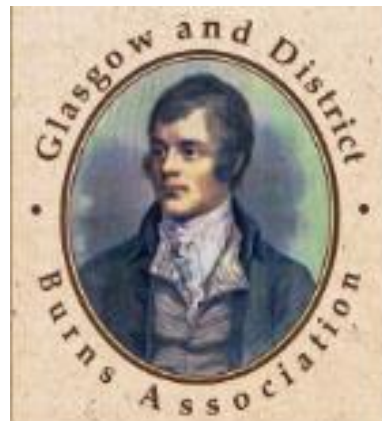
[Sadly, Burns himself would have been heartbroken about the situation in Ukraine seeing his vision that "Man to Man the World O'er Shall Brithers be for a' That" is no closer in coming to fruition than it was during his lifetime. Hopefully these young people can be the catalyst of change to rectify that situation. Ed]

Glasgow and District Burns Club Attend Thanksgiving Service

A Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving for Her Late Majesty the Queen was held at the Glasgow Cathedral on Sunday 16 October 2022.

Marc Sherland, Andrew McCormick together with Geoff & Maggie Depledge had the honour of representing the Glasgow and District Burns Association and were joined by Neil McNair RBWF senior vice president and wife Audrey.

The service was led by the Minister of Glasgow Cathedral the Rev. Mark Johnstone (he is the chaplain of the GDBA) together with other denominational local church leaders. Mark's sermon, as usual, was inspirational and linked Jesus' washing the feet of the disciples, the master washing the servant's feet, to the Queen's service to and love of her people.



We were treated to the personal experiences of people who had met the Queen. Lessons were read by the Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren and John Swinney, Depute First Minister. Hymns were rousing and well sung it was all in all an enjoyable and fitting tribute to her Late Majesty. [Geoff Depledge President DGBA]

Civic Reception for the 150th Anniversary of the Glasgow Haggis Club

Tuesday 11th October was the first meeting of the Glasgow Haggis Club in its new season, but to celebrate the Club's 150th year we were honoured to be given a Civic Reception. Sixty or so club members, their partners and guests, were in attendance



We were welcomed to a drink's reception prior to dinner in the Grand Banqueting Hall at Glasgow City Chambers at which the Lord Dean of Guild, May Storrie and the Deacon Convenor of the Glasgow Trades, Bruce Reidford were also in attendance.

Baillie Jim Cavanagh welcomed the members to the magnificent City Chambers, a splendid place to spend an evening in celebration of our 150th anniversary. He acknowledged that we were there to celebrate the work of a club that is even older than the building itself.

He reminded us that in 1932 the then Lord Provost invited the Haggis Club to the City Chambers for a reception.

He spoke of the club's long history and its remarkable contribution to Glasgow, to keeping the legacy of the Bard alive, to its involvement with young people and its contribution to charity.

He concluded in thanking the club for all that it does, saying "The Glasgow Haggis Club is a truly committed and inspirational club. The city is in debt to people like you, the people who make Glasgow and continue to help it Flourish."

After President Marc Sherland had responded, we were treated to a magnificent dinner with drinks served at the table. The evening concluded with songs by Euan Russel, Alan Beck, President of the Robert Burns World Federation and his wife Polly, led on the piano by Alan Craig our talented Musical Director. We thank them for their magnificent contribution in rounding off a fabulous evening.

Free Highlight Talks at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum



Wednesday 7th December: In 'Man of the East or West' Moira Gemmell, Retired Teacher and Volunteer Guide, explores and considers the influences and experiences that shaped the life and work of Scotland's National Bard, Robert Burns.

Wednesday 18th January: Alan Riach explores Robert Burns in the Context of Scottish Literature in a talk entitled: 'A Fixed Fulcrum and Unwobbling Pivot.' Alan Riach, Professor of Scottish Literature at Glasgow University, Poet, Author and Columnist, discusses the significance for and place in

Scottish Literature of Scotland's National Bard, Robert Burns. Alan Riach's most recently published book is entitled *Scottish Literature: An Introduction*.

Sunday 29th January: In 'Legendary Ayrshire' Dane Love, author, teacher and publisher explores the folklore and customs of the county of Ayrshire, taking us to places of significance in past centuries, some mostly forgotten. These virtual visits to locations of interest are added to with traditional tales of ghosts and hauntings, fairies and witches, as well as the ancient festival of Beltane, still long revered even after Reformation ministers deemed it as un-Christian.

Seats for these events can be booked in advance and for free on Eventbrite or by contacting the Museum. Any unreserved seats will be allocated on the day on a first come first served basis.

Where to Find Information About the Life and Works Robert Burns

I am often asked about where to look for sources of information about the Life and Works of Burns. One obvious source is the digitised Burns Chronicles on the RBWF website which appears under the 'Resources' tab. <https://rbwf.org.uk/digitised-chronicles/> Under the same tab there is access to an index of Chronicles to help locate specific articles.

The most comprehensive guide entitled 'Robert Burns & 18th Century Scotland: Rapid Burns Reference: Writings, Life, Places' is available at <https://guides.library.sc.edu/RobertBurns> It was produced at the University of South Carolina by eminent Burns scholar Patrick Scott. As editor I have been indebted to Patrick for his unfailing support during all my time as Convenor of the Literature Committee and as editor of the Newsletter.

Clicking on any of the headings below opens up a page on an invaluable array of source material.

- [Rapid Burns Reference: Writings, Life, Places](#)
- [Roy Collection](#)
- [Burns Manuscripts](#)
- [Burns Editions](#)
- [Burns's Songs](#)
- [Burns Biographical Resources](#)
- [Burns Criticism](#)
- [Other Burns Links](#)

Friendship Tiles

Text on the Friendship Tile is chosen by the purchaser (there is a limit of 16 characters on each of 3 lines). Each tile costs £30, plus postage and packaging, should the purchaser choose to have the tile posted to them. **Only £30-**



The Robert Burns World Federation is still raising funds to secure and develop a range of services within our Kilmarnock

Headquarters as part of our Outreach and Education programmes. One option available is to contribute in the sale of 'Friendship Tiles' - these are ceramic tiles which can be purchased for a Club, Association or an Individual. This is also a great way to commemorate someone or something of note.



The tiles are on display at our Kilmarnock Headquarters as shown. The text on the tile will be chosen by the purchaser (there is a limit of 16 characters in each of 3 lines). Each tile will cost £30, there will be an additional charge of postage to anyone wishing the tile to be sent instead to themselves. Pay through your bank by BACS transfer: Sort Code 80-08-

53: Use Reference **TILE**: Account No 00856523 or by cheque payable to 'The Robert Burns World Federation Ltd' Email admin@rbwf.org.uk

Order forms can be obtained from Kilmarnock HQ or follow the link below:
www.rbwf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/RBWF-Tile-Form.pdf

A Night to Remember for Murdo Morrison

On 8th November the Allanton Jolly Beggars Burns club held a very special evening as club members and fellow Burnsians gathered to deliver a surprise to a very special person: club president, revered Burnsian, past president of the Robert Burns World Federation, and all-round great guy – Murdo Morrison!



For once, the “the best laid schemes of mice and men” actually came to fruition, as Murdo was clearly surprised, and equally delighted as the evening unfolded. Peter Pringle, RBWF junior vice president led the programme of recitations, songs, and tributes. The current RBWF president Alan Beck was in attendance, and hugely contributed to the event with his singing which included serenading Murdo with a powerful solo and offering a very personal tribute to him.

Club secretary Helen Morrison gave her own tribute to Murdo, which included a brief history of his life and beginnings in the world of Burns, and listing just some of his involvements and initiatives over many years. Among Helen's sentiments expressed so eloquently, she said: “My outstanding memory of Murdo, is how he always celebrated the positive side of people enriching their lives and enabling them to fulfil their potential.”

[From an article, kindly forwarded by Helen Morrison, which appeared in the Allanton Jolly Beggars Burns Club's *Bulletin*]



**The Robert Burns World Federation Ltd
presents the Brian Whittingham Trophy
Habbie Competition
(on the theme of 'Politics')**

"We educate, promote and celebrate Scotland's heritage, language and culture through the life and works of Robert Burns" RBWF

Final Submission date : 23:59 GMT Wednesday 30th November 2022

Robert Burns chose to compose many of his best known poems in the Habbie Stanza, sometimes known as the 'Burns Stanza'. 'To a Mouse', 'To a Haggis' & 'Tam Samson's Elegy' were all composed in this verse form.

Entry fee is £5 per poem, 3 poems for £10

Prizes : 1st £50 2nd £25 3rd £15

Prizewinners' poems may be featured in the RBWF newsletter 'The Vision'.

The Adjudicators will be **announced on the Federation website www.rbwf.org.uk**

- **Rules of Entry :** The poem must be set out on a 'word or pages' document in single line spacing and having good margins.
- The theme is 'Politics'.
- Poems must be in the Habbie Stanza and should have between 4 and 8 verses.
- Email your entry to admin@rbwf.org.uk and give your name, address, phone number, email address, poem's title/s in the body text of the email.
- Your name must not appear on the 'word or pages' document.
- **All fees due must accompany the poem.** BACs payment may be made to Sort Code 80-08-53 Account 00856523 in the name of Robert Burns World Federation Ltd Ref : HAB COM
- Cheques should be payable to 'Robert Burns World Federation Ltd' and posted to the Brian Whittingham Trophy, Habbie Competition, RBWF Headquarters, 3A John Diddle Street, Kilmarnock, KA1 1HW.
- You may submit as many entries as you wish with the appropriate fee for each entry.
- The competition is open to anyone over 16 years.
- Entries must be the work of the entrant and must never have been published, self-published or published on any website, nor currently be entered for any other competition.
- Experienced readers may assist the named adjudicators in identifying a long-list. The judges' decision is final and no individual correspondence can be entered into.
- No competitor can win more than one prize.
- Copyright of each entry remains with the author, however it is a condition of entry that the prize winners give permission for their poem to be featured in the RBWF Newsletter.
- Prizewinners will be notified in an email by the **Robert Burns World Federation Ltd**.
- An event may be held to present the prizewinners and for those persons to read their winning entry.

CLOSING DATE : for receipt of entries : Poems must be received no later than midnight on the closing date St Andrew's Day Wednesday 30th November 2022 at 23:59 GMT. Email : admin@rbwf.org.uk This date is final and no late entries will be accepted, however early submissions are welcomed.

Why not join the Robert Burns World Federation? Details from : admin@rbwf.org.uk