

CAPE TOWN CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2007

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Dear Member

Well, here comes Easter - hot cross buns, chocolate eggs and the Western Cape Highland Gathering - don't forget!

How quickly this first portion of the year has gone. It feels that it was just a few days ago we were totally occupied by the joys of Christmas. Robert Burns says it so well:

*Pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, the bloom is spread.*

ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK (final episode)

By Bill MacDonald

In **1817** the banks became the subject of legislation and management were prohibited from making profit. This was done with a view to promoting the growth of the banks as it was held that thrift among depositors would then be encouraged if they could see that no one was making money out of their endeavours; certainly a principle that has been lost along the way!

By **1820** over three million pounds had been deposited. Henry's advice on how to start a bank was sought from people worldwide. In **1844** there were 577 Savings Banks in Britain with one million people holding deposits of over thirty million pounds. In **1835** an Association of Banks had been formed, eventually becoming TSB (Trustee Savings Bank) and by **1949** one thousand offices handling 5.5 million accounts. In Edinburgh the headquarters of the enterprise, known as **Henry Duncan House**, was erected.

Henry Duncan was a man of ceaseless energy and diverse interests. He can lay claim to having been an antiquarian, an artist, a geologist and a publisher, apart from his calling as a preacher and, of course, a banker.

It was said of him - *When looking for a man out of Scotland's past to serve as an object lesson for her present it would be someone like Henry Duncan.* An apt epitaph.

FROM THE CHIEF

Every now and then one attends an event which one knows will be firmly lodged in the memory cells for a long time. One such recent event for us was St Patrick's dinner dance at the Mount Nelson Hotel to which Nicky and I were kindly invited by Chris and Margaret Mahon of the Irish SA Association. This was held on Friday 16 March. Sitting at the top table – numbered number 13! – we were in great company with Chris and Margaret, the Irish ambassador to SA and his wife, the Irish Finance Minister and his wife and representatives of the Cambrians. Everything including the entertainment (Dancetrax), food, music (Shenanigans), and speeches were superb. Significant mention was made of the extent of the Irish diaspora (and for those illiterates amongst you – like me - who may need to check on this lovely Greek derived word, this means: “A dispersion of a people from their original homeland and the community formed by such a people”). As someone of Scots descent I could not help but think which of the British tribes have been and continue to be the most effective in this regard outside their original homeland. Mmmmm, time to reflect.

Sorry to interrupt your thoughts but something which should do a lot for Scottish diaspora right here in the Mother City is the Western Cape Highland Gathering on 7 April – see full details below. This will be an opportunity to celebrate true

Scottish culture – the skirling of the pipes and the swirling of the kilts - and if you happen to have some Irish in you, there will, in addition to the Highland dancing, also be a number of Irish dancing events. An interesting array of crafters will also be there selling their wares. Cape Town and Pinelands Caledonian Societies have been working hard over the past few months in organizing this event so please do show your support. This is an event which only comes our way once every third year as it rotates to Port Elizabeth and East London as well. So if you miss this one you will have to wait for three years and may be forced in 2010 to decide between the Highland Games or the World Cup Soccer. Should be a no-brainer!

Yours aye,
Peter

FUNCTIONS

Despite the heavy rain the **mystery afternoon on the 3rd March** went off well. The fun, laughter, singing, the pipes and music - all by artists of high calibre - was greatly enjoyed. The mystery has now been revealed! Many thanks to all who were involved, **especially function convenor Hon Padre Myra Horn who stole the show!**

IRISH NIGHT

Date Saturday 31 March 2007

Venue Pinelands Catholic Church Hall, **Union Avenue, Pinelands**

Time 19:00 for 19:30

Cost R35

You are guaranteed an evening of non-stop entertainment in the Irish way - dancing, music, singing, etc. Please bring your own snacks, drinks and glasses. Tea and coffee will be served. Profits from this joint venture with Pinelands Caledonian Society will go to the Western Cape Highland Gathering. To book please telephone **Lady President Nicky Ross at 021 712 2506**.

PIPE BAND RECITAL

Date Friday 6 April 2007

Venue St MARY'S Chapel, Hope Street, **Gardens**

Time 19:30 - 21:00

Cost R25

There will be a recital by the Pipe Bands - an opportunity for them to warm up for the battle the following day. This is well worth a visit. Boerewors rolls, **soft drinks** and beer will be served.

WESTERN CAPE HIGHLAND GATHERING

Date **Saturday** 7 April 2007

Venue Playing fields of Wynberg Boys' High School*

Time All day

Entry free, programmes R10 and parking R10 per car.

*A hall is available in case of rain.

So much hard work and preparation has gone into this event! Now we need you to come out with your family and friends to make it a success. It will be a day of non-stop entertainment and competition - Pipe Bands, Scottish and Irish Dancing, **entertainment for the children**, etc. There will be stalls with a variety of food and liquid refreshment for all tastes and various stalls with goods for sale. Cape Town Caledonian Society will be running a stall and organising a raffle. We appeal to your generosity to come to the fore in the form of donations of cash or goods for the stall or the Hamper of liquor that will be raffled for WCHG funds. If you feel you would like to contribute in some way please telephone our **Lady President Nicky Ross at 021 712 2506 or Ian McWalter at 021 685 6000 (a/h)**. See you there.

PINELANDS SOCIETY

Irish Evening - see details above. **Variety Evening** 21 April. For information please telephone **Anne Miller at 021 591 1499**.

Should you require transport to functions please telephone our Secretary, **Ian McWalter, at 021 685 6000 (a/h)** to arrange this.

MEMBERS' NEWS

We see from the obituary column in the newspaper (thank you Mieke) that **John MacLeod, 29th Chief of the Clan MacLeod**, died in London on 12 February. We extend our sympathies to the MacLeod Society. You may recall his visit to Cape Town in 2004 when he made contact with his family connections in South Africa and Swaziland.

Stuart and Colleen Rennie have been strangers to us for too long. We were sad to learn that Stuart had a week in hospital during the very hot weather. Although he had officially retired he had been requested to return to his duties for the first term of the year. We trust he is much improved and he enjoyed the visit to their little grandson who has just celebrated his first birthday. *Haste ye back!*

We are sad to hear that **Paddy Leonard** requires the use of crutches at present and send him our best wishes for

better health.

Will Carter underwent surgery recently and merits our concern. We hope you are more comfortable, Will, and soon back to normal.

It is our very great pleasure to congratulate the **Port Elizabeth Society** on their **125th Anniversary** to be celebrated on 21 April. *Lang may yer lum reek.*

WIT AND WISDOM

A good loser is still a loser.

History is made by weak men as well as strong

Theory is useless without action

FROM THE BOOK OF THE SCOTTISH ANECDOTE

By Hislop

....And so ye see, auld Pittoddles, when his third wife dee'd, he got mairrit upon the Laird o' Blathershins' aughteenth dochter, that was sister to Jemima, that was mairrit till Tam Flumexer, that was first and second cousins to the Pittodleses, whose brither became laird afterwards, an' mairrit Blathershins' Baubie - an' that way Jemima in a way her ain niece an' her ain aunty, an', as we used to say, her guid-brither was mairrit toe his ain grannie.

Phew! I think only the Irish could beat the Scots at getting tied in knots with an explanation!!!

A SMILE

A farmer's wife, who was rather niggardly with her whisky, was giving her shepherd a drink. As she handed him his drink she remarked on it being extra special whisky, being fourteen years old. "Well, mistress," replied the shepherd regarding his glass sorrowfully, "It's verra wee for its age!"

From you Chief, Lady President and Council

Keep right on to the end of the road

And your scribe