

CAPE TOWN CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

Established 1881 NPO Reg No 036-264

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2008

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Dear Member

The tinsel has been packed away, the tree has disappeared, the January sales are about to hit the headlines and Christmas is once again assigned to memory. We hope it was a grand one and the cost not too hard to handle.

With that said, here's wishing you a *Guid New Year* with a minimum of difficulties and an enormity of blessings.

ROBERT BURNS Since this is the anniversary of his birth when we remember, revere and pay homage to him, let's take a look at Burns. Rabbie, as he has become to be known, was a good man, a great poet and songwriter, and was immensely literate with an estimated vocabulary of 13 000 words. This at a time when in England ploughmen and shepherds were totally illiterate. While he lived he was a star and had culture been packaged and marketed as it is today, royalties from *Auld Lang Syne* alone would have made him a fortune. Things being as they were in his time, he died in comparative poverty.

Since his death his star has soared and today, after Shakespeare, he is the most translated of poets and the most loved. He came from all that is best in Scottish tradition. In the mid 1700s Scottish enlightenment made Edinburgh the shining light of the civilised world. Scotland was a world wide focal point of new ideas and opinions in science, medicine, philosophy, engineering, economics, politics, budding industrialism, banking and commercial concepts that helped to reshape the world.

Rabbie was an intellectual who believed in the power of reason. His reasoning, however, was subject to the heart, to the tug of ethical considerations. As he said:

*Nae treasures nor pleasures could make us happy lang,
The heart's aye, the part aye, that makes us right or wrang.*

He paid his dues to the ladies with the best love songs ever written. His God was kind and forgiving - gentle but righteous. He abhorred what was false, sympathised with the downtrodden and loved freedom for all. Indeed, he was human and had his fair share of faults, but this gave him insight and understanding of our human frailty. The world would surely be a better place if there were more like Rabbie.

FROM THE CHIEF

One of our major functions of the year looms on the horizon when we pay tribute to our Scottish bard. So whether or not we have seen you at our functions recently this is surely one you should not miss as it is indeed a celebration of his works!

As the year draws to a steady close it is a good time for Nicky and I to thank everyone for their support in this past year. Whether it was a slap on the back, a whispered comment or a note or card of encouragement received in the post, these have all meant very much to us. We look forward to seeing you in 2008! HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Yours aye,
Peter

FUNCTIONS

St Andrew's Nicht tested the waters of a new venue and it was found most pleasant. The Pipe Band entertained us with the stirring skirl of pipes and the usual toasts were given with aplomb. Gabriel Athiros entertained by reminding us of the links between Greece (his origin) and Scotland through our patron saint. And a dose of Scottish Leader whisky, donated by Frank Burt certainly kept the wheels of the evening oiled. The meal was delicious and again generous donations to the raffle served to offset some of the financial loss as cost to members was subsidised by your Society. Grateful thanks to Lance, Myra and Ian for different and excellent entertainment and to all involved in organising the event.

BURNS' NICHT

Date Saturday 26 January 2008

Venue Grill Room, Kelvin Grove

Time 19:00 for 19:30

Tickets R175

Now that Christmas is behind us let's join together in celebrating our national bard. The programme will be traditional - the Immortal Memory, Address to the Haggis, Burns' songs and poems, the skirl of the pipes and a traditional meal in true Kelvin style with haggis as starter, roast rack of lamb with port wine sauce, desert and coffee. This is not to be missed, so bring your friends and family along to share in the experience. To book, please telephone **Margaret Currie at 021 671 3674, Mary Moodie at 021 762 4710, Ian McWalter at 021 685 6000(a/h)** or use the enclosed booking form.

FORTHCOMING FUNCTIONS

As the year winds to a close your Council is engaged in planning events for your future entertainment and the following are being investigated: an outing to Suiderland Museum with tea and cake to follow; a tour of Groote Schuur Estate, again with refreshments to follow; a whisky tasting similar to the enjoyable one earlier this year; a games evening with the kindred societies, as was part of our annual calendar for many years. We shall keep you posted as to when and where. Watch this space!

PINELANDS SOCIETY

Burns' Nicht 19 January 2008. For further information and to book 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.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you all who completed and sent in the questionnaires enclosed with your newsletter earlier this year. If have not done so yet, your information and comments would still be much appreciated. However, the draw for the bottle of whisky has been made and **Frank McWalter** was the lucky winner. Congratulations, Frank!

BURSARIES

We draw your attention to the above and request that, should you be interested in applying for financial assistance with further education, please contact our Chief, Peter Ross.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Paddy Leonard, our Irish friend, although suffering from a severe illness, attended St Andrew's Nicht and is looking well and in good spirits. Our best wishes, Paddy.

Claire Horn is halfway through her recovery period, so we join her in hoping for a really good result.

Rita Scott tells us she is moving into Huis Luckhoff and that **Neville Ross** will be permanently in St Anthony's Care Home. We think of you both and wish you well.

Mary and Brian Fitzpatrick have attended the christening of both their little granddaughters. Congratulations to all concerned.

We send out best wishes to **Ian Aldcorn** who has fallen, broken an arm and leg and suffered internal injuries. We wish him and his wife, **Rosie**, well and a speedy recovery.

The only good news is of one of our long time members, **Edna Higgins** who is 88 and very busy icing

Christmas cakes - she has done 8 so far. Congratulations, Edna.

Welcome back home from France, **Bob and Margie Maich**. We would love to hear more about your trip when we see you!

Congratulations go to **Alistair Ross**, son of Peter and Nicky, who has successfully completed his B Compt degree. Next big hurdle is studying to become a Chartered Accountant like his dad!

I BEG TO DIFFER....SCOTLAND

by Alan Cochrane

Courtesy of Doug and Marlene Bonner

Scene: The last day of Creation. God is busy creating a wonderful land, full of handsome, inventive people, with fantastic mountainous scenery, and rivers and lochs full of fish. St Peter, who has been looking over his shoulder, asks, "Aren't you being a bit too generous with this country?!" At this the Creator smiles and replies "Yes, wait and see who I'm going to give them as neighbours!"

And so Scotland was born, like most small countries always viewed in comparison to the bigger, richer people next door. It has tended to see itself in such a light, perpetually matching itself against the big boy over the border and regarding him with a mixture of envy, condescension and almost constant irritation.

Scotland has generally come out of that comparison very well over the centuries. A hunger for knowledge combined with a congenitally disputatious nature and allied, in former times at least, with a first class education system, produced a country and people that have always punched way above their weight. (To be continued)

In closing, with a smile:

Scotland is the only country in Europe that the Romans couldn't conquer.

Sending you our best wishes for a happy, prosperous 2008 - and hoping to see you at our functions.

From your Chief, Lady President and Council,

And your scribe