



Cape Town Caledonian Society

Established 1881 Reg. No 036-264-NPO

OCTOBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

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Dear Members,

Thank you all the members who have responded regarding your email addresses, birthdays and anniversaries, and to those of you who are sending your scribe your details and news!

Please excuse the late distribution of this newsletter! We are aware that we sailing very close to the date of the next function – the chief’s at home this coming Sunday – but the number of the other future functions needed more detail to make this a newsworthy newsletter! Your scribe has also been on a 3 week birding holiday and had just returned. Alas some of the delegated duties of sorting the newsletter took longer than expected! Should rather have entrusted the function to a woman!

THIS MONTH WE FOCUS ON THAT UNIQUE SCOTTISH GARMENT – *THE SPORRAN*

A sporrán is a pouch (Scottish Gaelic for a ‘purse’). Now a decorative part of Highland dress, it was originally an everyday practical item. Made of leather or fur, it usually has varying levels of elaborate silver or other ornamentation,

especially on the clasp or hanger. It is worn on a chain or belt around the waist, allowing the sporran to lie below the waist of the person wearing a kilt.

Since the traditional kilt does not have pockets, the sporran serves as a wallet and container of other necessary personal items (such as a hip-flask or nowadays even a cellphone!). Essentially it has survived the common European medieval belt-pouch, superseded elsewhere as clothing came to have pockets, but continuing in the Scottish Highlands because of the lack of these accessories in traditional dress.

The sporran also served to protect a person's decency. This was originally because the ancient 'great plaid' (Gaelic breacan an fheilidh), consisting of a long draped cloth had a gap at the front. This created "problems" as given that the kilt is traditionally worn without undergarments. Historically, the sporran was used to carry a day's rations. Some believed it served as armour for the groin.

The sporran hangs just below the belt buckle; and much effort is made to match their style and design. The belt buckle can be very ornate, and contain similar motifs to the sporran cantle and the sgian dubh (ceremonial knife). When driving in a car, dancing, playing drums, or engaging in any activity where a heavy pouch might encumber the wearer, the sporran can be turned around the waist to let it hang on the hip in a more casual position. (*Reference: Wikipedia*)

FROM THE CHIEF

Well, it has taken a while but I am delighted to inform that we now have a new honorary padre – **Revd David Gray** of the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Meadowridge. I had an interesting and cordial chat with him over a cup of tea last week. At some point I discreetly made him aware that I had a sgian dubh hidden in my clothing. Without further ado he immediately agreed to come on board!

David was born in Aberdeen and came to South Africa with his parents when he was a young laddie of 9 years old. His father was a minister at Pinelands Presbyterian Church for many years. I would like to extend a warm welcome to David and thank him on behalf of all of us for agreeing to assume this position in our Society. I am sure that you will meet him at one of our future functions.

The response to the Glenmorangie whisky tasting by both the Society's and Kelvin Grove members was so good that we decided to cater for those on the waiting list by having a repeat of the first tasting a few weeks later.

Thanks to all those who came out in support to enjoy a dram or two. I am always amused at how a quiet group of people can convert within a single hour to a rowdy bunch swinging from the chandeliers. What a joy!

While I was regrettably unable to attend Congress this year (held on the weekend of 11 October), I look forward to finding out more about how things went from those who went – including Rose and Duncan.

I am pleased to say that your new Council, in spite of its small size, is starting to get its wheels in motion especially with some of our bigger annual events lying ahead of us. We look forward to the continued support of our members in the year ahead.

Yours aye, Peter

MEMBERS NEWS

Nicky visited Phyllis Cruickshank, for her 90th birthday and took her flowers on behalf of the Society. She was looking very well and was looking forward to her 90th Birthday celebrations with family and friends. Her luncheon party at the Mowbray Golf Club was attended by some of us and a great time was had by all. Phyllis was in fine fettle and kept her family and guests well entertained on this special occasion. Congratulations Phyllis!

Congratulations as well to Gunther and Isobel Reuels on the birth of a new granddaughter, and daughter to Louise. Margeret Currie remembers Louise and her twin sister Fiona at the Caledonian functions, helping in the kitchen or carrying the badges for Chief's at home, when they were younger.

Peter and Beth Odendaal attended the World Pipe Band Championship in Glasgow last year. There were 240 pipe bands competing, what a wonderful experience to have been there. Perhaps we can borrow their DVD for our next Video/DVD evening!

Craig the youngest son of Peter and Nicky has just turned 21 years old on the 23rd September. The theme was Mexican and gringos and their girls had a sweenging time in their ponchos and sombreros. And as for the tacos and tortillas...Mama Mia!

Birthdays – September and October

Happy Birthday to the members who have had and are still having birthdays:

September: Lance Wiseman 5th, Bob Ritchie and Helen Johnston 6th, Richard Young 9th, Patrick Leonard 17th, Phyllis Cruickshank 24th.

October: Peter Boyd, Nicky Ross 14th, Judy Lucas 16th, Catherine de Vries 23rd and Peter Ross 30th.

FUTURE FUCNTIONS

Chiefs at Home – Sunday 26 October (this coming weekend!) High Tea at Peter and Nicky’s house – 3 Welgelee Road, Constantia Hills – at 15hoo. Cost R 20 each. Please call Colleen Rennie on 021 762 3253 as soon as possible!

Kirkin’ of the Chief – 09h00 on Sunday 16th November at the Trinity Presbyterian Church, 22 Newton Drive, Meadowridge. Please bring a plat of eats to share after the service. Presiding Minister: Honorary Padre Revd David Gray.

St. Andrew’s Nicht

Date: Saturday 6 December

Time: 19:00 for 19:30

Venue: Rondebosch Golf Club

Tickets: R95 per person

An important event in our calendar in celebration of the life of our Patron Saint, St Andrew. A two course meal will ne served and a cash bar will be available. To book, please telephone Colleen or Stuart Rennie on 021 7623253. Kindly also complete the enclosed booking form.

Burn’s Nicht

Date: Saturday 24 January 2009

Venue: Grill Room, Kelvin Grove, Newlands

More details of this function in our next newsletter

Pensioner’s Lunch

Date: Sometime in February 2009

More details of this function in our next newsletter

FROM DOWN UNDER: Old men may walk slow but they think fast

An elderly man in Queensland had owned a large property for several years. He had a dam in one of the lower paddocks where he had planted mango and avocado trees. The dam had been made suitable for swimming when it was built and he also had some picnic tables placed there in the shade of the fruit trees.

One evening the old farmer decided to go to the dam to look it over, as he hasn’t been there for a while. He grabbed a ten litre bucket to bring back some fruit. As he neared the dam, he heard voices shouting and laughing in glee. As he came closer he saw it was a group of young woman skinny-dipping in his dam. He made the woman aware of his presence and they all retreated to the deep end.

One of the woman shouted to him, ‘We’re not coming out until you leave!’ the old man frowned, ‘I didn’t come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the dam naked.’ Holding the bucket up he said, ‘I’m here to feed the crocodile.’

Moral: Old men may walk slow, but they still think fast!

From your Chief, Lady President and Council
And your scribe