

## **Burns at 250:** a report by Ron & Chrys Ballantyne of the Halton Peel Burns Club

The Conference was held at the Thomas Cooper Library at the University of South Carolina. The official title of the conference was 'Burns at 250: Contemporaries, Contexts and Cultural Forms'. The speakers were drawn from North American and Scottish Universities and there were also several presentations by non-academics.

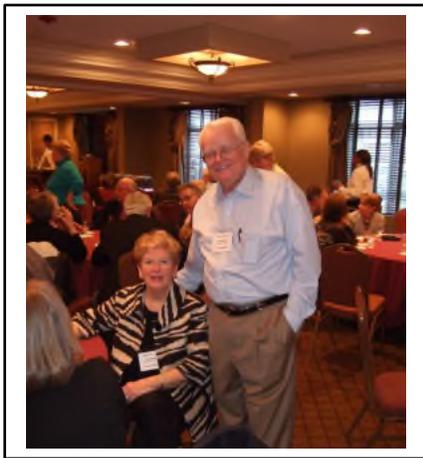
Some papers were also presented by graduate students from South Carolina, Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities.

Pauline Grey of Glasgow University, seen here, delivering her presentation on Burns and the Literary Subculture.



The exceptional G. Ross Roy book collection relating to Robert Burns, one of the largest in the world was on display. Also displayed was a hand written manuscript of the latest Seamus Heaney poem, 'A Birl for Burns,' written for Burns night 2008 and signed for G Ross Roy in 2009.

The subjects ranged from the new catalogue of the G. Ross Roy Collection, through Burns influence on Irish poetry, Burns in Spain, Burns music, Burns and the media, to Burns and Whiskey and Burns 'Subversive' activity: a fascinating range of subjects.



The Conference was well organized by Professor Patrick Scott of the University of South Carolina Professor Cowan of the University of Glasgow opened the proceedings with the W. Ormiston Roy lecture on "The 'Doonhame' creation of Burns"

On Friday evening we were all invited to a reception provided by Frank & Susan Shaw of the Atlanta Burns Club, seen here at the reception, then on to a concert given by Jean Redpath the well known Scots Songstress

The formal proceedings closed on Saturday with a session on Tam o' Shanter, followed by a greeting from Bill Dawson the President of the Robert Burns World Federation.

On Saturday Evening there was a Burns Dinner for all attendees where an Immortal Memory was delivered by Bill Dawson dressed in all white highland dress, seen here with Chrys Ballantyne the Vice President of the Robert Burns Association of North America



The closing event was a presentation of the Order of the Palmetto (the highest civilian honour from the State of South Carolina) to G. Ross Roy, seen here acknowledging the award, for his contributions to the University and the community.