



An Cirean Ceann Cinnidh

CLAN ROSS

Association
of Canada, Inc.

Founded 1960

David C. Ross of Ross, Chief

WINTER ISSUE

FEBRUARY 2005



2ND VP ANDREW ROSS THIBODEAU (LEFT), BROTHER JASON AND ONTARIO COMMISSIONER WENDY ROSS WELCOMED OVER 50 VISITORS TO THE CLAN ROSS BOOTH AT THE FERGUS HIGHLAND GAMES LAST SUMMER. (WE THOUGHT A PHOTO WITH SUNGLASSES AND SANDALS WOULD CHEER YOU UP AS WINTER DRAGS ON! – THE EDITORS)

CLAN ROSS

MOTTO: Spem successus alit (Success nourishes hope)
GAELIC NAME: Clann Aindrias (Clan Andrew)
CREST: A hand holding a garland of juniper, proper
BADGE: Juniper
PIPE MUSIC: The Earl of Ross's March
SEPTS: (according to Scottish Kith & Kin/Chief of Clan Ross)

Anderson	Denoon	Gear	MacCulloch	Taggart
Andison	Denune	Gillanders	MacLulich	Tullo
Andrew/s	Dingwall	Hagart	MacTaggart	Tulloch
Corbet/tt	Duthie	Haggart	MacTear	Tyre
Crow/e	Fair	MacAndrew	MacTier	Vass
Croy	Gair	MacCullie	MacTire	Wass

OFFICERS:

President:
 Denis Fletcher
Treas/Mbsp: Barb Fletcher
 66 Crestwood Crescent
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 1H6
 Phone: (204) 257-7511

Past President/Historian
 J. Donaldson Ross
 84 Brant Street East
 Orillia, Ontario L3V 1Z2
 Phone: (705) 326-3438
 Fax: (705) 325-6639
manbook@sympatico.ca

1st Vice-President:
 Donald R. Ross
 1234 Downing Street
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 2R7
 Phone: (204) 775-7631

2nd Vice-President:
 Andrew Ross Thibodeau
 910 Dearness Drive
 London, Ontario N6E 1N5
 Phone: (519) 680-7332
talk2andyt@aol.com

Secretary: Ian M. Ross
Newsletter (published quarterly):
 Ian & Jacquie Ross
 273 Stradford Street
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R2Y 2E1
 Phone: (204) 832-3773
 Fax: first call (204) 832-3773
imross@mts.net

Website:
<http://www.GreatClanRoss.org>
 Webmaster: J. Douglas Ross

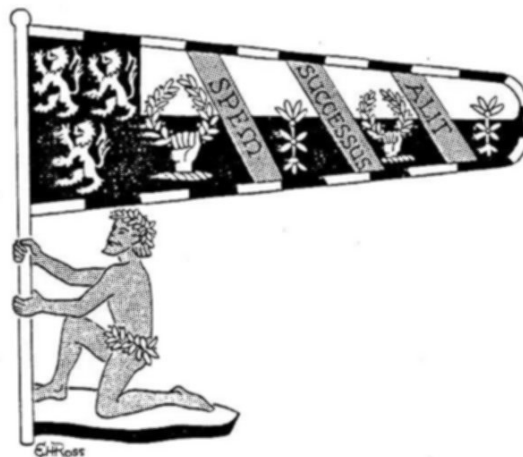
COMMISSIONERS:

Ontario:
 Wendy S.F. Ross
 74 Queenston Street
 St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 2Z2
 Phone: (905) 684-7758

Nova Scotia:
 Christopher Rayworth
 520 Tattenham Crescent
 Hammonds Plains, NS B4B 1V3
 Phone: (902) 832-9280
smore@ns.sympatico.ca

Manitoba:
 Christine Turnbull
 19 Abraham Bay
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R2P 1E9
 Phone: (204) 633-5888
mbtartan@escape.ca

British Columbia:
 Dorothy O'Donnell
 1415 Hamilton Road
 Victoria, BC V8R 2Y2
 Phone: (250) 595-5365
dmodonnell@shaw.ca



Standard of Chief David Campbell Ross of Shandwick

2005 MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW OVERDUE

If you forgot to respond to the invoice enclosed with your last newsletter, kindly forward your \$15.00 dues for 2005, cheque made payable to Clan Ross Association of Canada, to: Barb Fletcher, Membership Chair, 66 Crestwood Crescent, Winnipeg, MB. R2J 1H6. If your label is dated 2005 or higher, or says "Life", "Hon." Or "Comp", you owe nothing.

HELP WANTED –FINAL NOTICE!

- by Ian Ross Newsletter Co-editor

Last issue Jacquie and I noted we had been doing this newsletter for almost eleven years (over 11 years, now) and that we were looking to retire. We had also noted this in our report at the July/04 AGM. We invited enthusiastic clan members to submit their names to take over the job. There was NO response!

We're doing one more issue...May, 2005...and then we'll be through. So, please step forward.

Doing the newsletter involves accumulating materials and then dedicating your spare time during the course of a week to assemble and mail out an issue...once every three months. What an opportunity to increase your personal knowledge of "all things Scottish"! If you are an experienced writer, that's great. If not, who cares? All you really need is enthusiasm.

Give National President Denis Fletcher, or current editors Ian and Jacquie Ross, a call at the numbers listed on the inside front cover. Give it a whirl!

COMING EVENTS

March 5: Hamilton, ON. Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) monthly dance at YWCA, 75 MacNab Street South, 8:00 p.m. Contact Claire Collier (905) 648-2869.

March 11 – 17: Vancouver, BC Celtic Fest. Parades, music, stalls. Call (604) 524-1434.

April 2: Hamilton, ON. RSCDS 50th Anniversary Ball at Michelangelo Banquet Centre. Info (905) 522-2151.

April 2: Winnipeg, MB. St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg annual Tartan Ball in the Fort Garry Hotel's 7th floor Crystal Ballroom. Cocktails 6:00. Grand March and dinner 7:00 p.m. Tickets \$75.00 from Nancy Flook at (204) 668-7901.

April 30: Toronto, ON Toronto Police Service Tattoo & Pageant at Exhibition Place. 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$20.00. (416) 870-8000.

June 2-4: Halifax, NS. Celtic Feis of music, dance, art and storytelling in venues across the city. See: www.halifaxcelticfeis.ca.

June 3-5: Arlington, TX. Clan Ross – USA Annual General Meeting. Details on Clan Ross – USA website: www.RossClan.org/USA.htm.

July 2: Selkirk, MB. Manitoba Highland Gathering in Selkirk City Park. Piping, dancing, heavy games.

July 3: Winnipeg Beach, MB. Informal piping competition, "Bands on the Boardwalk".

REMEMBERING THE BARD

- By Ian Ross

The 8th Annual Clan Ross – Manitoba Chapter Burns Dinner went off famously at the Fort Garry Hotel, January 29th. Almost 70 people were in attendance to be welcomed at the door by Chapter President Roger Ross and his wife Mary and then to enjoy an evening of fun, visiting and remembrance of Scotland's most famous bard.

Roger Stagg provided a very meaningful Grace, immediately followed by Ian Ross' semi-violent Address to a Haggis. Our thanks to sword-bearer Gord McTaggart, piper Carl Warne and haggis-bearer Roger Ross. Angus MacIntosh, David Ross and Roger graciously obliged as "victims".

An excellent dinner, as only the Fort Garry provides, was enjoyed by all (except for cold "neeps!). Then followed excellent Highland dancing and the humorous singing of the Rusty Nails. The banter between singers and pianist had the crowd in stitches.

We were sorry to have Al Newton away due to illness, but look forward to his Flower of Scotland presentation next year. The Immortal Memory, delivered by Archie McNicol in purest Glaswegian, did an innovative comparison between the ballads of Burns and the modern songs of Lennon & McCartney. (*For those who could not hear Archie through the hotel's sound system, an abridged version appears at the end of this newsletter.*) The formal part of the evening concluded with Dr. Glen Lowther's delightful Toast to the Lassies, matched...and possibly topped...by the response from his wife Marge.

The Scottish Auction followed with the prize table filled to overflowing through the efforts of coordinator Jacquie Ross, Denis Fletcher and the many generous donors. Following Auld Lang Syne, MC Don Ross ended the evening right on time, after guiding things smoothly throughout.

Many thanks for the hard work of the Dinner Committee: Denis Fletcher, Jacquie & Ian Ross, Eldon Ross and Len Perry. Treasurer Len Perry was pleased to report a profit of about \$260 on the evening, which will go towards Clan Ross projects. This fulfilled the Committee's pledge to Manitoba Chapter Members (who had to offset our overdraft last year) to ensure that future dinners operated at a profit. The slight rise in ticket prices, enhanced Scottish Auction, and careful budgeting have now put this issue behind us.

We look forward to seeing you all at the 9th Annual Burns Dinner, which is already booked for Saturday, January 28, 2006 at the Fort Garry.

HISTORICAL HOLIDAY IN EASTER ROSS

-received via e-mail from Jonny Shaw

I live in a very beautiful setting in the Scottish Highlands about one hour's drive from Inverness, in a house owned for almost 300 years by the Pitcalnie Rosses when head of the clan. I am looking for parties of Rosses (12 – 14) interested in basing themselves here for an historical holiday covering aspects of their family background. I can be contacted at: Amat, Ardgay, Ross, Scotland IV243BS or e-mail: AmatSalmon@aol.com. [Ed. Note: Ardgay is just opposite Bonar Bridge, where the rivers Oykel and Shin enter the Dornoch Firth.]



CEUD MILE FAILTE

A hundred thousand welcomes to new members:

James Southe	Covington, KY
Susan Ross	River Forest, IL
Don & Cheryl Ross	Miramichi, NB



Clan Ross

RED RIVER REUNION

- from info submitted by Roger Staggs

Lower Fort Garry, the first stone fort in Western Canada and for many years a focal point for the Hudson Bay Company, will celebrate its 175th anniversary in 2005/06. As part of these celebrations, from August 13-22, 2005, the Lower Fort Garry Volunteer Association is planning a reunion of descendants of Manitoba's original fur trade families who settled in the Red River Settlement, to celebrate their heritage and reestablish connections. Festivities will include bus tours, entertainment, meals and all sort of activities...including the collection of stories about these early HBC employees.

If you would like to participate...as a descendant or as a volunteer...contact: Barbara Gessner, Box 394, Selkirk, MB, Canada R1A 2B1, (204) 785-8577 or e-mail: rr.reunion@3web.net

TARTAN DAY, APRIL 6TH

- by the editors, using material from the Scottish Banner and Celtic Heritage magazine

On March 9, 1985, during a coffee-break at a meeting of the Federation of Scottish Clans in Nova Scotia, Jean Watson and Bill Crowell discussed how few young people were involved in Scottish associations in Canada. They decided that a special day to recognize the contributions of Scottish immigrants to Canada...made visible through the wearing of the kilt in places where it was not normally worn, i.e. to work...would give young folk pride in their Scottish heritage. A motion was passed to form a committee to establish such a day... Tartan Day. Jean was the sole volunteer, starting a ten-year odyssey.

But what date should be chosen? Being Nova Scotia, a day in winter would not be prudent for kilt wearing. It was also desirable to have the day kick off established spring and summer events. April 6, the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320 [a document proclaiming Scottish independence from England and petitioning Pope John XXII to recognize Robert the Bruce as King] was settled on.

Jean and her husband Andy began writing letters to provincial MLAs throughout Canada. They also contacted clan societies and Scottish organizations for their support. On April 6, 1986 the Nova Scotia provincial legislature became the first in the world to proclaim Tartan Day. The Ontario legislature followed on December 19, 1991. Other provinces (and some U.S. states) had been celebrating Tartan Day informally, or on an annual proclamation basis. Following Nova Scotia and Ontario's lead, they started to make it an official annual event. Manitoba, for example, after a couple of annual proclamations, officially amended the Manitoba Tartan Act on July 11, 1994 to recognize April 6 as Manitoba Tartan Day. As of 2003, it is officially recognized in every Canadian province.

This April 6th wear your kilt (or tartan tie or sash) to celebrate how our Scottish pioneer ancestors were instrumental in creating our Country, Canada.

SCOTTISH HUMOUR

From Archie McNicol's "Immortal Memory":

A Scotsman and an Englishman were walking along a beach while on vacation in the Caribbean and discovered a dirty old bottle. When they wiped it off a genie appeared and offered them each a wish. True to his national trait, which means without thinking, the Englishman spoke first – "I'm a proud Englishman who is fed up of all of these Scots in England – they take all the good jobs and are running the country. I'd like you to build a huge wall around England with only the English inside" There was a flash and the genie said "It's done," turning to the Scot, "now what do you want?" The Scot says "tell me about this wall?" The genie answers: "It's a huge, thick wall. Nothing can get in or out, absolutely impermeable to everything." "Good" says the Scot. "Fill it with water"

* * *

Father: Why two pinches of salt on the bairn's parritch?

Mother: Whisht! ... birthday!

-Art Ross's favourite

* * *

From Doug Ross' collection:

Sign at a Scottish golf course: Members will refrain from picking up lost balls until they have stopped rolling.

Letter to the Editor: "Sir, if you print any more jokes about Scotsmen I shall cease borrowing your newspaper!"

An Englishman was hopelessly lost in the Highlands. He wandered about for a week until he stumbled upon a kilted inhabitant. "Thank heavens I've met you," he cried. "I've been lost for 7 days!" "Is there a reward out for you?" said the Scot. "No" said the Englishman. "Then you're still lost", was the reply.

Why are so many Scottish churches circular? So nobody can hide in the corners during the collection.

WORDS OF WISDOM

-by Eldon Ross

Words of Wisdom come easy. Common sense is hard to find.

If you turn down favours, none will be offered.

Listen to someone who has traveled the road. They know where the bumps are.

Be interested in people. They will be interested in you.

For real satisfaction, compete against yourself.

It's OK to blow your own horn, but don't deafen your friends.

If you think you are indispensable, walk through your local cemetery.

Make time for someone older. You will always have a friend.



A 1956 VISIT TO BALNAGOWAN CASTLE

-submitted by Art Ross, California

In 1956 my late wife and I were invited to Britain for the Centenary of the Victoria Cross. Fraser Kerr, Janet's father, had earned the Cross in World War 1 and she was the only surviving member of his immediate family. This was long before we could have managed such a trip privately and it was a memorable experience. While there we drove north to Ross and Cromarty to see where our forebearers had come from (Tain and Lairg and Paisley). We arrived late and since all else was closed asked at the police station where to begin next day. By happy chance an inspector Macpherson was visiting the station and had written a book about the region. He called Lady Ross and she invited us to Balnagowan for lunch next day. She was the widow of Sir Charles Ross. She was most welcoming and gracious and gave us a nice lunch. She showed us around the castle and later drove us around the part of the estate near the castle. There was a large separate garden with a solid wall to keep out deer and rabbits, where vegetables and flowers were grown. Elsewhere, the fields were divided by drystone walls. One of these was beginning to fall at one place. Lady Ross' comment "We repair the walls in the autumn. My neighbors call that "the back end of the year".

Lady Ross pointed out that succeeding generations of Rosses, when they had good fortune, spent money on the castle. There was a handsome formal garden, which had been paid for by a seafaring Ross. He had received a reward from the merchants of Bristol for clearing out a group of pirates from the neighborhood of Bristol Harbour. With the reward he imported a designer and workmen from Italy and established the "Italian garden" on a flat area below the castle. A later Ross ancestor also used Italian design to plan and apply ornamental plaster and a very rich looking wall-covering in the castle's reception rooms.

Lady Ross told us that Sir Charles had been educated at home and he apparently became a clever engineer. This was "home schooling" in a castle. His contribution to the castle was to electrify it in the very early 1900's, constructing a small dam and a generator using the stream that runs below the walls. This served the castle for years until the public electrical grid reached Balnagowan. He also invented the Ross Rifle, which was such a cause of contention in World War 1. It was in fact an excellent hunting rifle but totally unfit for military use. I have fired both the Ross and the Lee-Enfield. The Ross was a pleasure to use if a little scary at first because the bolt moved straight forward and back without the locking turn of the Enfield or Mauser action and one wondered if it might fail to lock and blow back in the shooter's face. Fortunately it did not. Its failing was that after 20 rounds of rapid fire in action it jammed and this cost many Canadian lives. Many snipers did prefer to retain the Ross Rifle.

Lady Ross related that her husband had had the foresight to incorporate his holdings in an American corporation. In this way he was able to lessen death duties. (I had the impression that he had served as consul in Philadelphia but I did not try to confirm this). In one of the back rooms of the castle we walked in on several young men using adding machines, precursors of computers. Lady Ross explained that they were checking the returns from a number of shooting and fishing hotels on the estate west from Balnagowan. Returning to Canada I found an advertisement for the hotels asking US\$1000.00 per week with guaranteed results. Note that \$1000 in 1956 is the equivalent of much more today.

Three years ago I visited the Highlands again and found that Lady Ross was even today much missed because she took a genuine interest in local affairs and local people and maintained ancient records that often helped resolve disputes. The castle gates were always open in her time. The current owner is from another culture and does not keep up the practice.



SPEM SUCCESSUS ALIT? (PART I OF II)

[Ed. Note: Clan member Campbell Ross has written about his delvings into the correct translation of the Ross motto. In Part I he appears to come to a dead end. Next issue, in Part II, he makes an interesting discovery supporting his view. If you are a Latin or history scholar with a view on this, contact Campbell at: 10105 - 94 Avenue, Grande Prairie, AB T8V 0K7 or e-mail: caross@telusplanet.net].

The question mark is the whole point. For a long time I had thought there might be something wrong with the official translation of the Ross Clan motto as "Success nourishes hope"? It seemed to me to be topsy turvy and put the cart before the horse in terms of life experience. Would a motto of "Hope nourishes success" not make more sense and be more uplifting; would the Latin not also support that translation as "Hope nourishes success"? Was it possible that some mistake had been made by some clerk long ago? And then followed the other questions. How was the motto selected in the first place? Who was responsible for the official translation? Where could one go to find out?

If I was going to try to reverse at least two centuries of orthodoxy, I would have to start with the office of the Lord Lyon himself, the official in charge of all matters relating to Scottish heraldry. So, on January 21, 2001, the quest began, with a letter to the Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh. The response was prompt, thoughtful and courteous; the first of several I would receive from Mrs. C. G. W. Roads, MVO (Member of the Victorian Order, awarded for services to the sovereign), Lyon Clerk and Keeper of the Records.

I have your letter of 21 January and note all you write. While I appreciate that the Motto is a little strange to our modern hearing, that is the case with many, many Mottos. While I am not a Latin scholar, I rather think that for the Motto to be translated as "Hope nourishes success", the word 'Hope' would have to be 'spes' rather than 'spem'. You might, however, find it helpful to write to the Chief of Clan Ross, David Ross of Ross and Balnagowan, to see whether his interpretation of the Motto in any way assists you.

And so I did write to him. And received no reply.

There the matter rested for almost three years, until in October, 2004, I wrote once more to Mrs. C.G.W.Roads, still in the position of Lyon Clerk, this time to ask for advice on the process by which clan coats of arms were formulated and registered. Again a prompt reply, with some clarification of the ownership of the motto, but without guidance on a direction to follow on its origins.

I should first of all point out that the Motto is not the Motto for Clan Ross but the motto of the Chief, which is used in association with his Crest as a Clan Crest badge. The Ross of Balnagowan Motto, which is the Chiefly Motto, has been known for some considerable time, and is, as you say, translated in all reference works as "Success nourishes hope". I am afraid that my Latin is now much rustier than it used to be but I am fairly sure that this must be the correct translation taking into account the tenses used. I may, however, be wrong about this. I am afraid that we would not now know why this particular Motto was chosen as it has been in existence for such a considerable time.

I decided to write once more to the clan chief, David Ross of Ross and Balnagowan. Again, no reply. I was on my own.

Actually, not entirely on my own. I enlisted the help of our college library reference staff, who identified some possible websites and print sources that might be accessed through inter-library loan. The first website to which I sent a request for advice on sources that might help me find out more about how clan mottoes were selected was that of The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. No reply was received. The second was The Heraldry Society of Scotland. I received a prompt response from the webmaster, Younger of Cowdendownes, who forwarded my inquiry to a Donald Draper Campbell "as his knowledge in this field is second to none." That was December 5, 2004, and no further word has been received, despite two follow-up inquiries in January 2005.

NEWS FROM ONTARIO

Past-President J. Don Ross of Orillia has completed a re-write of two sections of the history of the Clan Ross Association of Canada: its founding in 1961 and its initial growth during the 1960's accompanied by the writing of the definitive clan history "The Great Clan Ross". Work is underway on a section about the 70's onwards. Upon completion, this interesting history will be serialized in the newsletter.

Don also advises that he and Commissioner Wendy now have three good ideas for national projects to be based on Ontario. Descriptions are forthcoming.

THE IMMORTAL MEMORY

- Part 1 of 2. An abridged version of Archie McNicol's novel presentation at the Clan Ross – MB Burns Dinner, comparing Burns with The Beatles

Is it appropriate for a McNicol to speak at a Clan Ross Burns Supper? Well, our Clans have no serious long-standing disputes. We were both large Highland Clans and in fact we were neighbours. However, unlike the Great Clan Ross which has achieved that great 21st Century symbol of its own Webpage, the McNicols have not fared quite so well. In fact, and I quote, "of the ancient races... dignified with the title of Great Clans, only one, the MacNicols may be said to have fallen entirely to pieces in the course of time."

This particular McNicol, who when he looks in the mirror feels as though he is also falling to pieces over time, was in fact formally introduced to the works of Robert Burns by a Ross – at the age of 11 my teacher was Mrs. Cameron or, prior to her marriage, Miss Helen Ross. Unlike my subsequent introduction to the works of Shakespeare, Dickens and even Scott, where great chunks of their writing were dissected and analysed for their deeper meaning leaving me cold to these classics even to this day, Mrs. Cameron read and, more importantly, explained Burns to us.

One of the challenges with delivering an Immortal Memory is to be novel, however when thinking about this problem it struck me that, in fact, everything is cyclical and this holds as true for the creative/artistic endeavours as any other sphere of life. Let me explain.

In the mid—late 18th Century a fresh faced young poet burst onto the scene and took the country by storm. He came out of an unfashionable provincial town, went to the cultural hub and indeed he went on tour across the country. He was proclaimed as Scotia's Bard and there were offers to go further afield to further his career. His style of writing wasn't new, Ramsay had been there before, but there was something about this young poet that struck a chord and that everyone liked. Tragically his career was cut short by a premature death.

Two centuries later, in the mid—late 20th Century four fresh faced young singer/songwriters burst onto the scene and took the country by storm. They came out of an unfashionable provincial city, went to the cultural hub and indeed they went on tour across the country. They were proclaimed as the Fab Four and there were offers to go further afield to further their careers. Their style of music wasn't new, Berry and Dylan had been there before, but there was something about these young musicians that struck a chord and that everyone liked. Tragically their collaborative career was cut short for several reasons.

I'm a self-confessed admirer of both Robert Burns and The Beatles. While I'd never for a moment suggest that Lennon and McCartney could match the literary ability of Burns, the similarities both in the writings and in the sentiments portrayed are striking. I quote

*Born a poor young country boy, Mother Nature's son, All day long I'm sitting singing songs for everyone
Find me in my field of grass, Mother Nature's son, Swaying daises sing a lazy song beneath the sun*

I suspect that Lennon and McCartney did not have Robert Burns in mind when they wrote Mother Nature's Son, but how more apt could these words be?

Lennon and McCartney were no country boys – I've seen their houses in Liverpool and they are as rural as River Heights. Burns was a country boy, a farmer firstly at Mossgiel with his brother and then at Ellisland on his own. Rural Ayrshire was undergoing significant changes at this time – particularly with regard to agricultural life. There were dramatic advances in drainage, diversification in, and improved management of, crops and in animal husbandry. Smout in his History of the Scottish People suggests that the Scots farmers improved so much during this period that "... the farming system in many parts of Scotland became the envy of Europe".

In contrast, as a farmer Burns was the envy of no-one – the reasons were numerous – the lack of ideal land, failing health, extended trips to Edinburgh, plus Jean Armour, Mary Campbell, Tibbie Stein, Ellison Begbie, Mary Morrison,

Annie Rankin, Deborah Davies, Nannie Fleming and of course Clarinda McLehose (amongst others), and the resulting army of children, all negatively impacted on his ability as a farmer. (Burns embodied the saying that there are two things a Scot likes naked – one of which is single malt and the other is...)

Burns lack of success as a farmer was also due in part to his voracious literary output, and it included some memorable pieces related to life on the farm such as *To a Mouse*, *My Father was a Farmer*, *The Ploughman* and *The Shepherd's Wife*. However if you were to read one then read "*The Cotter's Saturday Night*". Quite simply it is a wonderful description of the homelife of a hired farm hand in the mid-late 18th Century. This was life in a stone walled, earth floored, timber roofed, thatched cottage. Life was hard but Burns suggests that such hard toil has its own sense of satisfaction:

*The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene; The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been; Ah! Tho' his worth unknown, far happier there I ween!*

He also describes the sense of family closeness and happiness, and their social interaction, even in these harsh circumstances:

*But now the supper crowns their simple board, The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford, That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood;
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood.*

Thus describing the fare – the milk from their hawkie, or cow, from 'yont the hallan or quite literally through the wall and the porridge from the two pecks of oatmeal which, paid in kind, formed the major part of the weekly wage. Oatmeal was the staple diet. It reminds me of the Englishman who remarked that in Scotland men eat oats but in England they feed it to their horses. The rapid response was "That's why English horses and Scottish men are the finest in the world". I believe that that Burns was describing for posterity and, importantly, celebrating his fellow farmer – it is impossible not to feel a sense of empathy with and respect for the Cotter. As both a historical record and an artistic work "*The Cotter's Saturday Night*" has, as Peter Esselmont suggests, no rival in Scottish literature.

What would you think if I sang out of tune, would you stand up and walk out on me?

Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song, and I'll try not to sing out of key.

Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends. Mm, I get high with a little help from my friends.

Mm, gonna try with a little help from my friends.

Lennon and McCartney wrote this in 1967 for their Sgt. Pepper's Album, which remains probably the finest pop album ever recorded. This, in my opinion, is their celebration of friendship. This is a theme which mirrors one of Burns'. His descriptions of convivial gatherings are legendary – they are vivid and lifelike. The classic of course is in *Tam O' Shanter*

"Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely, Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;

And at his elbow, Souter Johnny, His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony:

Tam lo'ed him like a very brither; They had been fou for weeks thegither.

This last line "*They had been fou for weeks thegither*" and Lennon and McCartneys "*Mm, I get high with a little help from my friends.*" are particularly noteworthy. In Burns case we are talking about whisky. He wrote:

Let other poets raise a fracas 'bout vines, an' wines, an' drucken Bacchus,

An' crabbit names an' stories wrack us, An' grate our lug:

I sing the juice Scotch bear can mak us, In glass or jug.

I love the quote that "Burns has been held up as a worshipper of Bacchus, the god of drinking, and has been glorified as the patron Saint of Public Houses". However Burns friendships went far beyond drinking buddies, he wrote some fine, and I think heartfelt, pieces about his friendships, for example in his "*Epistle to Davie*" he wrote

"Fate still had blessed me with a friend, In every care and ill."

Or in his "*Epitaph for Gavin Hamilton*"

"with such as he – where'er he be, May I be saved or damned"

Or in "*To William Simpson*"

"Count on a friend in faith an' practice in Robert Burns"

Burns and The Beatles shared that great joy in life of friendship and both were legendary for their excesses where drink was concerned. The similarity, however, ceases with Lennon and McCartney's experiments which led to:

"Picture yourself in a boat on a river with tangerine trees and marmalade skies

Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly, a girl with kaleidoscope eyes"

From *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* or abbreviated to LSD.

... Part 2, the conclusion of Archie's presentation, will appear in the next newsletter.