



The Tattler



Words from the President

Winter 2018 Edition

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The Robert Burns Association
 of North America

Affiliated with the Robert Burns
 World Federation Ltd
 Kilmarnock, Scotland
 Club #1024

Greetings! With summer finishing off, the next big event in my Burns world was that organizing and attending the Medicine Hat Burns Club's 10th annual Jolly Beggar's Banquet Saturday, 29 September. It was a real pleasure to have RBWF President Bill Nolan fly over and attend as our honoured guest and Chieftain o' the Nicht. It was at this event where Medicine Hat Burns Club (MHBC) president Bill Cocks finished off his two-year term of office and passed the torch on to President Elect Andy Harrower. We were also pleased to see Scott Mathieson, President of the Edmonton Burns Club (EBC) attend along with EBC Past President Scott Montgomery and Trekker Armstrong, Past President of the Calgary Burns Club (CBC) attend representing Jimmy Hutchens, current CBC president who was vacationing in the Motherland.



Next, I had the privilege to attend a meeting of the Edmonton Burns Club in Edmonton on Thursday, 8 November. A very dedicated group, I was pleased to note that my grandfather, Kenneth Gordon Montgomery was a director of the EBC back in the early 1950's and where my grandfather, great grandfather and father all attended many annual EBC Burn's dinners back in the day, it was later when I attended with my father and four others brothers back in the early 1980's that I got hooked on Robert Burns and all things Scottish. Where I spoke on RBANA and who we are, I was also pleased to speak on behalf of the RBWF and clarify the many benefits that exist as a result of membership. One hot topic was the EBC's upcoming 100th anniversary in 2020. That plans to be a major event and I hope we can coordinate the dates the various Alberta Clubs hold their 2020 events so attendance at this historical event by other Alberta Burnsians may be significant.

On Saturday, 17 November I was off to Lethbridge to attend the 4th annual Lethbridge Jolly Beggars Banquet. Organized by MHBC Past President Mike Duffy, who now lives in Lethbridge, this year's Master of Ceremonies was MHBC member Jock Reid. Further where I again gave a presentation of RBANA and the RBWF. Additional entertainment was done by MHBC member Scott Stenbeck who attempted to lead the Cronies

In This Issue:	
President's Message	1
Fredericton Statue	3
Ken Goes To Edmonton	3
Medicine Hat Jolly Beggars	4
Federation Meets in Irvine	5
Top Non RBANA Entry	6
Niagara Falls 2019	7

Montgomery's Musings (continued)

attending with a sing a long of A Mans a Man and Mr. Duffy who delivered some Robert Service. This event was another great success.

Moving on, one thing on my bucket list was that of attending a St. Andrew's Day dinner in Winnipeg. Scheduled for Friday, 30 November I flew in Friday afternoon and checked into the historic Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg. This hotel would also be hosting the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg's big event. I also noted that where in 2020 the Edmonton Burns Club would be celebrating its 100th anniversary the Winnipeg organization would, in two years, be celebrating 150 years of existence.

Seating about 300 the honoured guest was Her Honour the Honourable Janice C. Filmon, C.M., O.M., Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, one of four Honorary Patrons of the Society. Unlike a traditional Burns dinner where the Immortal Memory is the focal point, at this event the primary presentation is "The day an' a' wha Honour it".

It was interesting to learn that until recently the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg was an all male institution, but that not long ago their bylaws were changed to clarify that membership was open to all 'persons'. Where this caused some controversy this organization moved on, and I noted many women to now be involved. In fact I learned that for the 150th anniversary, for the first time, a female will be president. Times are a changing and it is apparent that many Burns Clubs or related organizations have to adapt to changing times in order not just to survive but to be relevant.

I was also pleased to see the Winnipeg gang thinking outside the box with respect to entertainment. Where there were the traditional pipers and drummers, haggis, Highland dancers and Scottish song, the featured entertainment was a Canadian comedian whose act evolved around the use of bagpipes. Known as

'Johnny Bagpipes', a very funny guy, John Johnston as he is legally named first became known to me back in 2009 when the Medicine Hat Burns Club brought him in as the feature entertainer for their 250th Anniversary celebrations.

Excellent entertainment, great food and fantastic company! It was a short visit but a good one. Here again I had an opportunity to meet many of this Society's executive and had a chance to enlighten them about the benefits of involvement with RBANA and the RBWF. All in all, a very positive visit!

I encourage all of you to spread the word about RBANA and let any who will listen, about who we are. I also encourage you to consider taking on an individual membership, as where Club membership is valued we don't just exist for Clubs and we need individual support. Next, RBANA's 2019 AGM will be in Niagara Falls. A great program is being planned and ask all our members to try and make the time and effort to be there. I guarantee that if it's your first ever RBANA AGM and you come, you will be hooked when you experience and see the talent and people we have involved. We need your support to grow and prosper so please consider attending.

Finally, as we are now into December it is time for reflection on all that has transpired the preceding year. It is a time to enjoy the festive season with family and friends. It is also time to gear up for the many Burns dinners that will be held in January. For all Club secretaries I want to get a report from each of you to see how you made out. I also want this information shared so we may all appreciate what is going on in our RBANA world.



Ken Montgomery at the St Andrew's Society of Winnipeg dinner, with Colin Harris, (above) and 114th President Jae Eadie (l) and 113th President Lawrence Prout (r)



That's it for now. See you next year.

Yours in Burns,
Ken Montgomery, President

Fredericton Burns Statue Returns to Public View

A remodelled statue of the Scottish poet Robert Burns was unveiled in early September in Fredericton NB. Plans are in place for it to be joined outside the Beaverbrook Gallery by a statue of gallery benefactor Lord Beaverbrook, currently located down the road.

Made of bronze and more than three metres tall on a granite pedestal, the Burns statue, first installed in 1906 was taken down in 2008 for repairs, and renovations to the Beaverbrook Gallery.

The statue's future was uncertain when the city announced, in 2010, to the dismay of Fredericton's Scottish Community, that it could not afford the \$80,000 in flood-proofing and other repairs, the statue needed.

Prominent New Brunswick Tycoon J.K. Irving and

his wife Jean donated the money to replace the statue, and Jean Irving was given the honour of pulling the tartan off Burns.



"It's our heritage, and J.K.'s heritage, and the children's heritage, some of them over here," said Jean Irving. "We thank you for this honour, that we can come and participate with you and enjoy this day." The City of Fredericton closed a section of Queen Street for a parade in Burns's honour.

Tom Smart, CEO and director of the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, is hoping the two statues will reinvent the Green outside the gallery and give it more of a "park-like feel" for the public.

"We see this as extending our reach into the park and engaging the community on a whole different level," he said. .

Ken Visits Edmonton Burns Club

As mentioned in his Page 1 remarks, on Thursday, 8 November, RBANA president Ken Montgomery was privileged to attend the November meeting of the Edmonton Burns Club (EBC) in Edmonton. It was clear that the members of this long-established Club are very proud of their organization and are also very excited about planning their 100th anniversary in 2020. Ken was pleased to bring fraternal greetings from not only RBANA but from Bill Nolan, the current president of the Robert Burns World Federation (RBWF). In Ken's address to the club he noted that he was born and raised in Edmonton, and his family has a historical

connection to the EBC, including that his grandfather was an EBC director back in the nineteen fifties, and where his grandfather, great-grandfather, and father attended many EBC annual Burns dinners, starting in 1953, Ken further noted that many years later his father and he and his four younger brothers attended many EBC dinners, and it was



by doing so that Ken's fondness for Burns was greatly inspired.

Medicine Hat Hosts Federation President at 10th Jolly Beggars

On September 29, the Medicine Hat Burns Club held its 10th Jolly Beggars Banquet. It is reported that a great time was had and so many commented that it was one of the few Burnsian events they attended that when the Chieftain o' the Nicht (this year Federation President Bill Nolan) did the Immortal Memory, you could hear a pin drop.

Says RBANA President Ken Montgomery: "I am very proud to be part of this effort, and its another reason to support that the RBWF is a 'WORLD' organization and not just a Scottish organization. Keep the faith!"



Back row (L-R), Scott Mathieson, President, Edmonton Burns Club, Ken Montgomery, president RBANA, Trekker Armstrong, Past President Calgary Burns Club, Front row (L-R), Bill Cocks, Past President, Medicine Hat Burns Club, Bill Nolan, President RBWF and Andy Harrower President, Medicine Hat Burns Club.



Ken Montgomery (RBANA) with President Bill Nolan (RBWFL)

**As Always,
Think Burns**

Federation Meets in Irvine

Over the first weekend in September, Robert Burns World Federation members enjoyed a hugely successful Annual Conference held, appropriately, in Irvine, home of the incoming President, Bill Nolan, (right, with Ian McIntyre) whose inauguration was the highlight of the weekend.

Marc Sherland, Glasgow & District Burns Association, (below, right, with Senior Vice President Brian Goldie) was voted in as the new Junior Vice President.



An important aspect of the conference was the presence of delegates from the USA, Canada, Australia and Norway reinforcing the international appeal of our National Bard which deserves to be actively nurtured to ensure his legacy continues to flourish abroad.

In addition to the AGM, two splendid dinners, a seminar,

a ceilidh and an uplifting church service, the main event was the inauguration of the new President of the Federation, Bill Nolan, from Irvine.

The weekend witnessed a wonderful collaboration between the Federation's conference committee, Irvine Burns Club, Irvine Lasses Burns Club and North Ayrshire Council all working extremely hard to provide an exciting and most enjoyable event. The Irvine Town Hall and Leisure Centre, 'The Portal,' proved an excellent venue for the Inaugural Dinner with superb catering being provided by the North Ayrshire Catering Services. The Town Hall was also the Thursday night venue for a reception for overseas members, hosted by the Provost.

Also honoured at the dinner was Jim Thomson (right) who was awarded the accolade of Honorary President of the Robert Burns World Federation, for his outstanding contribution to streamlining the Federation's finances and steering the organisation through an extremely challenging financial situation.



One sad aspect of the conference was the departure of the Administration Manager Margaretann Dougall (below) after a hugely successful 5

years tenure in the post. With the last couple of years involving long commuting journeys to Kilmarnock, Margaretann understandably would like to be nearer her home and family and had reluctantly offered her resignation. Outgoing President Ian McIntyre spoke for the whole conference when he praised Margaretann for her dedication, integrity, professionalism and, above all, her unfailing and uplifting sense of humour even through the most challenging times. She will be very much missed.

The good news, however, is that Beverley Thomson, the current administration assistant, has agreed to step up to the vacant post thus providing a welcome degree of continuity, expertise and another cheery voice at the end of the phone.

At the seminar on Saturday afternoon Professor Murray Pittock, Vice Principal and Bradley Chair of English Literature at the University of Glasgow, outlined a Scottish Government backed research study, led by the University, to assess the economic value of Robert Burns to Scotland.

The data-gathering phase will be essential, and Prof. Pittock enlisted the help of Burns Clubs and individual members in completing a questionnaire on the financial impact of Burns Suppers and other events associated with the Poet.

In a second presentation Senior Researcher Moira Hansen, a PhD student at the University of Glasgow, posed the question "Was Robert Burns bipolar?" (See Tattler Winter 2017) Using a variety of



Federation (Continued)

techniques from today's medical world she has been conducting an in-depth study of Burns's changing state of mind as revealed in his writings and by some of his very open and honest self-assessments in letters.

The provisional results from her fascinating study suggest Burns demonstrated distinct phases of hypomania and opposite periods of low, depressive, mental state which would almost certainly categorise him today as being Type 2 on the bi-polar spectrum.

The conference was rounded off on Sunday morning with a wonderful service of worship in the Irvine Old Parish Church led by Rev Neil Urquhart, attended by several of the civic organisations of the town.

Following the service there was an opportunity to attend a wreath laying ceremony at the Burns statue before the skies opened up.



Moira Hansen with
RBANA Secretary-
Treasurer Matthew
Hill and President
Ken Montgomery

***Reminder to all members.
It is renewal time again.
You will have received your
renewal notice from Matthew.
Prompt payment will be most
appreciated.***

RBANA Prepares For Niagara Falls 2019

THE 39th AGM and CONFERENCE of THE ROBERT BURNS ASSOCIATION of NORTH AMERICA

**HILTON NIAGARA FALLS/ FALLSVIEW HOTEL,
NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO, CANADA.**

MAY 3rd, 4th & 5th, 2019.

**ROOM RATE: \$169.00 (CAN) +TAXES. SINGLE OR DOUBLE OC-
CUPANCY. your stay can be extended before and after the conference at
the same rate.**

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE PER PERSON:- \$225.00
(Canadian)
OR \$185.00 (US)**

ROOMS MUST BE BOOKED DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL

To reserve rooms on-line for this conference use the Link

<http://group.hilton.com/RobertBurnsAssocNA>

Or call Reservations at 1-866-873-9829

**When calling request “The Robert Burns Association of North America
Group”.**

**If necessary your room can be cancelled 48 hours prior to the confer-
ence.**

**FOR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORMS OR ANY OTHER EN-
QUIRES OR ASSISTANCE CONTACT: Ron Ballantyne, by conference
e-mail RBANA2019@gmail.com
or by telephone 905-637-0980**

**ROBERT BURNS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA
39th. ANNUAL CONFERENCE,
HILTON NIAGARA FALLS/ FALLSVIEW HOTEL,
NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO, CANADA.
MAY 3rd, 4th & 5th, 2019.**

REGISTRATION FORM

ATTENDEES:

NAMES 1) _____

2) _____

ADDRESS: _____

CLUB: _____

TEL. & EMAIL _____

ANY SPECIAL NEEDS? (Diet. Mobility etc) _____

REGISTRATION FEE: \$225.00 (CAN) per person. OR \$185.00 (US)

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

MAKE CHEQUES AND MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO "RBANA 2019"

Or if by PayPal send to btsenr@cogeco.ca {check procedure on next page}.

FINAL DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS APRIL 13th.2019,

PLEASE NOTE: hotel bookings after April RBANA2019@gmail.com

SATURDAY FORMAL DINNER: CHOICE OF MEAL please indicate preference

CHICKEN: _____

SALMON: _____

GOLF: THERE WILL BE A GOLF MATCH, FOR THE RBANA TROPHY, ON FRIDAY MORNING May 3rd.

PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU PLAN TO PLAY GOLF

GOLF: Yes [] No []

SEND COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM WITH CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER TO:

MR. RON BALLANTYNE
3214 SPRUCE AVENUE
BURLINGTON, ONTARIO,
CANADA L7N 1J2

If paying by PayPal
Save this form, fill it out & email it to:-
RBANA2019@gmail.com

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The special room

\$169.00 (CAN) + TAXES, SINGLE OR DOUBLE OCCUPANCY,

For your information the total room cost is:-

Room rate \$169 +13% HST= \$21.97+Tourism Improvement Fee 9.9%= \$16.73 + Eco Charge \$3.00 = \$210.83

PLEASE BOOK YOUR ROOM EARLY.

THE FINAL DATE FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS IS April 2nd 2019

Again this year, a R.B.A.N.A Conference Committee is organizing the Conference. There is no Club involved. We therefore need you to respond as early as possible so that we know the number who plan to attend. Members look for a “destination” location as this is one of the major tourist sites in North America.

Based on previous attendance at our conferences we have reserved 30 rooms. However Niagara Falls is a major tourist attraction and weekends are the busiest days. When our reserved block of rooms are filled we cannot guarantee the same room rate or if other rooms will be available. To avoid disappointment please book early. If you have any difficulties please contact Ron Ballantyne.

We have not included breakfast with the room rates, The Hotel were reluctant to include that economically. The Hotel however will provide a 20% discount voucher for any of their in-house restaurants.

There are a number of restaurants within walking distance of the hotel, including:- the KEG, Starbucks, Tim Hortons , Perkins, Applebees, the Casino Café & others..

There is free parking a short walk behind the Hotel, If required covered parking is available at the hotel for a cost of \$10.00 per day.

For those arriving by air, the closest airports to Niagara Falls Canada are, Niagara Falls New York, Buffalo, New York, Hamilton, Ontario and Toronto, Ontario. Shuttle service is available from these airports to Niagara Falls. Shared limousine service is available by calling (905) 374-8111 or reserve on-line at <https://www.niagaraairbus.com/>

If you require any further information or assistance please contact Ron Ballantyne Telephone 905-637-0980 or email to RBANA2019@gmail.com

Instructions for paying by PayPal:-

- ◆ Go to :- www.paypal.com. And set up an account if you do not have one. Click on “PERSONAL”.
- ◆ Select “Send Money” then “Internationally”. (There is no charge for domestic transfers) For recipient’s address enter btsengr@cogeco.ca Select to “Family or Friends”
- ◆ For "purpose" select "other"
- ◆ Enter your own address for “sender” Enter the amount of payment in Canadian Dollars Proceed to next page and agree to pay all Fees. Click on “Send” & the transfer is made to the Treasurer’s account. It will then be transferred to the RBANA account. Transfers to our bank account typically takes 3 to 4 business days.