



The Tattler



Summer 2022 Edition

President's Message

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President	Paul Kennedy
Vice President	Mark Ferguson
Secretary/Treasurer	Jamie Osborne
Past President	Henry Cairney
Canadian Directors:	Ken Montgomery Brian Cumming Charles H Cameron
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The Robert Burns Association
of North America

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

Greetings one and all,

Having recently accepted receipt of the President's gavel from outgoing President Henry Cairney, I found myself both honored to have been selected as your President, and humbled by the tremendous support you have all shown me. I also found myself more than a little intimidated by the daunting task of having to follow in the footsteps of Henry, and those who came before him. BIG SHOES INDEED! I promise however, that I will do my utmost to continue in the finest traditions of those who brought us this far. Thank you all for your support.

We know far too well the devastating impact COVID has had on our Association over the past few years, and I am awestruck at how the Association and our Clubs were able to carry on despite the incredible restrictions placed on us all. We have so much to be proud of. Despite COVID lockdowns and travel restrictions, under Henry's leadership, we were able to continue to meet regularly, plan and carry out our Annual General Meetings, albeit virtually, and still provide support to clubs and organizations across North America. As an organization, we maintained an important relationship with RBWF, including supporting efforts to further immortalizing Robert Burns with the formal awarding of his Coat of Arms. Well Done!

I am genuinely excited for RBANA as we enter another year of celebrating the life and works of our favorite Bard; excited largely in large part to Henry's vision while serving as President of both RBANA and RBWF, and the progress he made bringing the organizations more closely together. As a result, we can look forward to a closer collaboration with RBWF and even more great events between our Association and the World Federation. Events such as New York City's Tartan Day Parade which is scheduled for next April and hopefully will become

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President's Message (continued)

an annual event attended by members and clubs from both RBWF and RBANA, and RBWF's AGM tentatively scheduled to be held in Canada in 2023. It is my hope that together we can build on our successes and continue to find new and exciting ways to share our mutual love of Robert Burns with people and like-minded organizations across North America.

Of course, we could not have made it this far without the incredible dedication and hard work of so many of our members. And while it is always dangerous to try to thank all those who worked so hard to get us to where we are today, I would be remiss if I did not try.

Despite my inevitable failure to thank everyone, I do want to thank all those who continue to make RBANA a world class organization.

Thanks to Colin Harris, whose many years of writing, editing, and timely publication of our outstanding newsletter, *The Tattler*, will thankfully continue despite his decision to step away from his other responsibilities as one of our Canadian directors. Thank you also to Ronnie O'Byrne, for his years of dedicated service, who has also stepped aside. A special thanks again to both Ronnie and Colin for their efforts with the Jack Hume Poetry contest; the results of which are forthcoming. A huge thank you and fond farewell to Mathew Hill, outgoing Secretary and Treasurer. Thank you Colin, Ronnie and Mathew for all your hard work and dedication.

A very special thank you to outgoing Vice President Bill Fulton and a hearty welcome to our incoming Vice President Mark Ferguson. Wel-



come back and thanks to all of our Directors, who will continue to serve in those capacities for the next couple years, Ken Montgomery, Brian Cumming, Bill Fulton and George McClellan and welcome to our newest Secretary/Treasurer, Jamie Osbourne, and to our newest Directors, Phyl Smith, and Charles Cameron. A special Thanks to those individuals and clubs

that continue to plan our annual events: most recently Ronnie O'Byrne for his masterful presentation of this past year's Virtual AGM, and to Brian Cumming and the Calgary Burns Club for accepting the challenge for next year's AGM.

Thanks also to the efforts of both

Les Strachan and Ronnie O'Byrne in their work as RBANA's liaisons to RBWF. Thanks also to Ken Montgomery for his great ideas, suggestions, and innovative marketing strategies...don't stop! And finally, a very special and personal thanks to my friends Henry, and Bill Fulton for their friendship, guidance, and continuing mentorship.

I look forward to continuing to work with each one of you and hope that you will contact me if there is ever anything on your mind that you would like to discuss or have ideas or issues you would like to raise for consideration. I will do my best to support and promote your ideas.

Thank you,

Paul Kennedy

President,

Robert Burns Association of North America

The Tattler encourages all clubs to submit news of club events or activities. As well, all members are reminded they are welcome to submit articles or essays on Burns or Burns related topics for publication. The deadline for submissions for the Autumn Edition is Saturday October 15. The Autumn edition will be published and distributed October 31.



The Robert Burns World Federation

CONFERENCE

Friday 9th – 11th September 2022

WelcometoDumfries

Venue 2022 – Cairndale Hotel

English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DF

Conference Programme

Friday 9th September 2022

- 11am** Walking Tour of Dumfries
- 1– 3pm** Conference Registration
Tea/Coffee on Arrival (inc. for Residential Guests)
- 2pm** Walking Tour of Dumfries
- 2pm** Lecture in Hotel (Details to be confirmed)
- 3:30pm** Tea/Coffee and Shortbread (inc. for Residential Guests)
- 4-5:30pm** AGM
- 7pm** Evening Dinner
Fabulous entertainment by The Calgary Choir & Local Talent

Saturday 10th September 2022

- 9-10am** Day Delegate Registration (inc. Tea/Coffee on arrival for Day Delegates)
- 10am** Walking Tour of Dumfries or Ellisland Farm Visit
- 12:30pm** Lunch served in hotel (inc. for Residential Guests and Day Delegates)
- 1:30pm** Walking Tour of Dumfries or Annandale Distillery Tour
- 2pm** Lecture in Hotel (Details to be confirmed)
- 4pm** Tea/Coffee and Scones served in hotel (inc. for Residential Guests and Day Delegates)
- 6pm** Drinks Reception and Saturday Gala Dinner
Seating plans will be on display. Formalities followed by the meal 6:30pm.
Evening entertainment by "Reel Stramash".

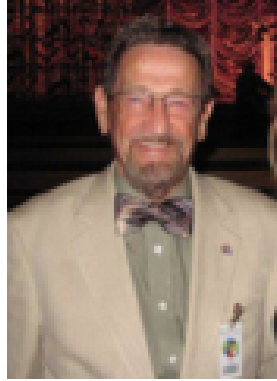
Sunday 11th September

- 11am** Service at St Michaels Church followed by Wreath laying at the Mausoleum

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

The Hume Poetry Competition Results

The 2022 Jack Hume Poetry Competition was well supported by RBANA Clubs and Members. The judging panel of Dr, Moira Hanson from Glasgow University, Willie Gibson and Member of RBWF, and last year's winner Jim Fletcher of Halifax BC, Nova Scotia - were impressed with the quality and breadth of works submitted. The adjudication was conducted blind, and results were coordinated inde-



pendently and confirmed by the adjudication panel and the RBANA coordinator. There was however a clear winner and second place result - as these two poems received almost 60% of the total votes cast. Congratulations to all involved and a big thanks to the adjudicators for their diligence and free time in helping out RBANA once again.

Here's the FINAL RESULTS.....

	<u>Poem Name</u>	<u>Submitted by</u>	<u>Club</u>
1 st Place	Holy Willie's Second Coming	Jim McLaughlin	Calgary Burns Club
2 nd Place	Twilight	Paul Kennedy Jr.	South Jersey Celtic Society
3 rd Equal	Remember Islay	Phyl Smith	St Andrew Society of Sarasota Florida
3 rd Equal	Inheritance of Genes	Ronnie O'Byrne	HPBC / Niagara Falls BC
5 th Equal	We (still) Hae A Dream	William Hardy	Caledonian Club of San Francisco
5 th Equal	Voices	Ronnie O'Byrne	HPBC / Niagara Falls BC
7 th Place	Scotland the New	Henry Cairney	Calgary Burns Club
8 th Place	Fore or Five	Les Strachan	RBANA Member & HPBC

Additional Entries

Hogmanay	Diane (Robert Kemp)	Caledonian Club Sarasota
A Scot Abroad	Henry Cairney	Calgary Burns Club
Today	Patricia (Pat) Moffitt	Robert Burns Society of Annapolis
Daur They Compare	Henry Cairney	Calgary Burns Club

Thank you and Congratulations to all those who participated. A special congratulations to the winner, Jim McLaughlin of the Calgary Burns Club. A very special thank you also to our esteemed panel of judges, Dr, Moira Hansen from Glasgow University, Willie Gibson and Member of RBWF, and last year's winner Jim Fletcher of Halifax BC, Nova Scotia for their diligence and hard work in their selection process. All entries will be published in the Hume Supplement which accompanies this issue of the Tattler.

The Burns Club of St. Louis & Another Burns Cottage... A True Tale

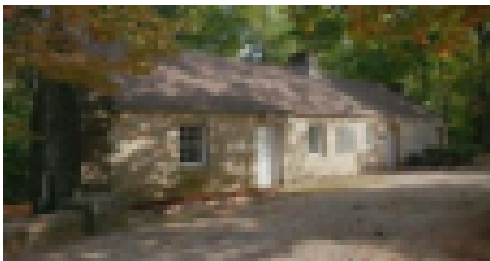
Burns cottage, depicted at right is situated just outside Ayr in a quaint place called Alloway, and that cottage was the birthplace of Robert Burns. It has been displayed the way the cottage was when Burns lived there and is a special historical place of pilgrimage for anyone interested in the Immortal Bard and his life and legacy. In short, for any Burn-sian, it's a must see.

It's not as well known that on 25 January 1896, the anniversary of Burns birth that year was also the centenary of his death, and it was at this time the founders of the Burns Club of Atlanta (Georgia, USA) held their inaugural meeting at the Aragon Hotel, and it was these gentlemen and others later involved who would pursue an interesting initiative.

This group of men met annually to celebrate Burns and in 1907 incorporated for the purposes of raising funds through issues bonds, the proceeds of which would be used to build a permanent clubhouse. That clubhouse would be a replica of the Burns cottage in Ayr.

Dr. Joseph Jacobs is acknowledged as the driving force and inspiration behind the Burns Club of Atlanta, but it must also be acknowledged that the successful construction of the Atlanta Burns Cottage that was later built was due to the significant efforts of many of the leading men of Atlanta.

The Atlanta cottage, (below) was built by the Burns Club of Atlanta and finished and opened in 1911, using measurements of the original cottage. The interior was adapted for club use with a meeting room replacing the barn and byre (cow barn).



To many this was and has been accepted to be the first replica of the Burns cottage ever constructed.

Well, now to our tale.

We now have to look at the Burns Club of St. Louis (Missouri).

Years in the planning, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, that would become better known as the 1904 World's Fair held in St. Louis, Missouri was supposed to outdo the Chicago-Columbian Exposition



that was held a decade earlier. On 30 April 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company President David R. Francis

officially opened the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, with the call, "Open ye gates. Swing wide ye portals." Millions of dollars had been spent to build the 1,200-acre fairgrounds and its nearly 1,500 buildings—a huge scale that ended up delaying the opening by a year.

The result was a model of successful execution on a vast scale. Between May and December of 1904 twenty million visitors were entertained on a 1,260 acre tract (twice the space taken by the Chicago fair). 1,500 buildings were constructed for this event representing 50 foreign countries and 43 of the then existing 45 US states. Over 6,000 performers and 1,500 exotic animals were put to work daily, and David Francis and his associates even resurrected the centerpiece of the Chicago fair, its colossal 264 foot tall Ferris Wheel, with cabins the size of boxcars.

There were palaces the size of several city blocks. The Palace of Agriculture was the largest of them all, covering 23 acres and containing a working dairy farm, cider mill, and an olive oil factory. There were also exhibits from 50 countries and 43 of the 45 US states. The mile-long Pike was an arcade full of musicians, rides, concessions, and dancers. Rising above it all was the giant Observation Wheel, as tall as a 25-story building.

The fair would also introduce a huge audience to some relatively new inventions such as private automobiles, outdoor electric lighting, and the X-ray machine, as well as foods from across the United States and around the world. The exposition also had a focus on anthropological exhibits—with an approach that is shocking by today's standards: In some cases, organizers brought people from the Philippines, the Arctic, and elsewhere to the fairgrounds as set pieces among re-creations of their home environment or villages. After the fair closed, nearly all of its structures were demolished within a short time, leaving only a few footprints, ponds, and canals in Forest

Another Burns Cottage (Continued)

Park in St. Louis.

The exterior of most of the Fair's buildings—and much of the statuary found around the Fair—was built out of a material called staff, simply a mixture of plaster of Paris and hemp. It could be shaped, cut, and poured into molds. Staff formed a façade over frames of steel or pine lumber almost like a movie set piece, and it could be made to look like stone or granite, but was inexpensive and temporary, making it the perfect material to decorate a fair that would be open for less than a year.

Out of all the magnificent buildings that would be built, one would be most interesting. A simple structure that was sponsored by the Burns Club of St Louis was that being the first replica of Burns cottage (below).



In the introductory of a special book published by that club in 1908, the writer, William B. Stevens wrote

this about that effort,

On the Place of Nations, at the Universal Exposition of 1904, was reproduced, with fidelity to detail, the Burns Cottage. Representations of palaces, copies of public structures, imposing types of architecture of many lands were there. In the midst was the clay-walled, straw-thatched birth-place of him who "brought from heaven to man the message of the dignity of humanity." In the rooms of the cottage were installed reminders of Burns and his family, - furniture, implements of household and farm, books and pictures. But more than all of these in the interest manifested, was the collection of Burns manuscripts. Capacity of the cottage was taxed daily by the unending file of pilgrims to the shrine. No demarcation of nation or race bounded the attendance. Over the glass cases in which were spread the

songs and ballads and letters in the handwriting of Burns, men and women lingered and gazed. The fascination was as if they stood in the presence of the master of human emotions.

Once the World's Fair came to a close in December 1904 certain Fair attractions and structures were given new life. The concert organ inside the domed Festival Hall was the largest pipe organ ever built. It was transported to the Fair in 10 railroad cars. When the Fair ended, it was slated to move to the Kansas City Convention Center, but that deal fell through. Instead the organ was eventually shipped to Wanamaker's Department Store in Philadelphia, where it remains today (though the store is now a Macy's). The organ (below) is still playable, and its façade was re-gilded in 22-carat gold in 2019.



The most enduring question in the 117 plus years since the Fair that relates to physical structures that existed then is: "What ever happened to the Observation

Wheel?" The plan had been to dismantle that wheel when the Fair ended and ship it to Coney Island in New York, but that never happened. It appears that no one else wanted it, so the giant wheel was blown apart with dynamite and sold for scrap. The next problem became how to cart away its massive 70-ton axle—the largest piece of steel ever forged in the US.

The replica Burns cottage would be one of the many 1904 World's Fair structures not saved and which would physically disappear into history. It also appears there are very few photographs of that building or its interior that remain.

With respect to the impression that was left on the hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world who visited that Burns cottage, we must assume it was very positive, and greatly helped to influence and encourage many to know and appreciate Robert Burns. Finally, I believe this was a very special and costly effort initiated by the Burns Club of St. Louis, which no longer exists, that should not be forgotten.

Submitted by Ken Montgomery

Membership in Burns Clubs Should Not be for the Lazy



I have long held that if one petitions an organization for membership and is accepted by that organization then one's duty should extend beyond simply paying dues, occasionally attending the meetings, enjoying a good meal with friends then dozing

off through a speakers program. One should also be expected, or required, to contribute.

Community service clubs like the Lions, Kiwanis, et al, require their members actual participation in physical labor, that can, in the end, wear 'em out taking on local projects that would never get off the ground without the free volunteer labor such projects require. That's all wonderful and certainly necessary. Burns clubs on the other hand are dedicated to preserving the works and memory of a single individual, a plowman farmer, a person of questionable moral character but undoubted intellectual genius, a product of a rural Scotland who sought to preserve his country's musical and historical heritage before it disappeared into the commonality of a United Kingdom. He exposed the hypocrisy of both church and state, challenged the right of leadership gifted as birthrights to a class he considered unworthy of that leadership. In doing so, he drew the knowing laughter of his fellow Scotsmen of all classes, to see the Scottish world as he saw it. He was a political radical and supported, albeit sometimes anonymously to avoid the penalties of retribution, the revolutionary changes in France and the American colony's.

Today, Burns is the only literary character of his era who is annually celebrated by dinners, both formal and informal wherever the Scottish diaspora assembles around the world. Toasts are made that are amusing and poignant, whisky is consumed and a national dish, Haggis, is served as per tradition simply because one man, Robert Burns wrote a small poem celebrating that otherwise awful dish.

What makes Burns so unique? I've read many biographies on Robert Burns, and they all seem to focus on the same thing; they give credit to Burns that elevates him above the common man. But he was a

common man; Not just a common man, he was a common laborer, a plowman with a gift for observation and who wasn't afraid to include his own foibles as rich fodder for the ink and page. He was a man of political principles that gushed forth through many of his works that often got him in trouble politically. I petitioned the Burns Club of Atlanta for membership in 1997, was interviewed and accepted, and have since often been invited to address the group as well as pipe for many of the club's functions. I wanted to be a part of this wonderful group, not an outsider and while I make no claims of being a great Burns scholar, I am an enthusiast who happens, through the eyes of my own experience, to recognize those small, trivial, but still interesting little details of the people that make up the Burns story and present them as subjects who contributed to the Burns story and how I see his life was molded.

So, I say, membership in a Burns club should not be for the lazy. I was motivated to explore the Burns story only after a good friend and fellow member, recklessly volunteered in 2009, to assume the arduous task as editor of the Burns Clubs of Atlanta Newsletter and who, when realizing the enormity of his task and in apparent desperation, asked for any contributions that members may wish to offer. Every first newsletter editor upon assuming those arduous tasks has similarly asked for help and so, acceding to his request wasn't difficult. I embarked then upon what has turned out to be a very pleasant but time consuming effort of research, writing and editing with the aim to specifically look for those many little cause and effect details that brings the real Robert Burns to life. I explored the characters who shaped Burns.

That Burns was a genius is beyond question, but his little piece of the world, Ayrshire, was far too limited for any normal man to have reaped the rich harvest of human experience reflected in his writings. For Burns, his daily struggle for life, his pursuit of his animal passions, his collisions with the Kirk, the ghost stories he heard from his mother and his mother's cousin, his real time education on personal responsibility, and his Masonic education, constitute the essential elements that molded his character. When combined with his natural ability as a communicator and his gift for prose in the broad Scots language as well as English, then we can begin to un-

Membership in Burns Clubs Should Not be for the Lazy (continued)

Understand the essential elements that we recognize today as the genius that christened him the Bard of Scotland, a legacy that remains to this day. What is the purpose of a Burns club if it's not to challenge its members to research the Bard and make that research available to the general public as well as the club's membership. The sociality of Burns clubs is what holds these groups together and the main draw for many who want to wear kilts and regalia and they'll probably never go any further than that. But Burns goes on year after year with dinners, poetry writing contests, recitation contests, ceilidhs and dancing. The Scottish story is well preserved with no little credit going to Robert Burns. Yes, it's easy to be a club member when nothing is required except annual dues.

George McClellan USA Director

Burns Chronicle – Appeal to Members

The successful launch of the Burns Chronicle as an Edinburgh University Press journal continues to demonstrate its place at the forefront of disseminating information on current Burns research and recent Burns-related publications.

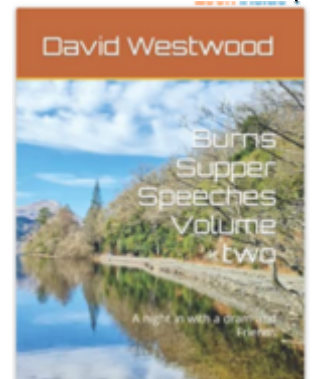
As the journal of the RBWF the editorial team are keen that the Federation membership continue to be as involved in contributing content as they always have been. Articles to be considered for publication can be sent using the "Submit an Article" on the journal's EUP webpage at <https://euppublishing.com/loi/burns>

We would also like to invite members interested in being added to our list of potential book reviewers to get in touch. If this interests you, drop an email to Reviews Editor Dr Moira Hansen at moira.hansen@glasgow.ac.uk including your name and any particular areas of interest or expertise you have. Moira is also always happy to receive suggestions of publications for review, whether upcoming releases or older texts which may not have been covered previously by the Chronicle.

Three articles in the latest issue of the RBWF newsletter The Vision might be of particular interest to RBANA members. We reprint them here with the kind permission of Editor Mike Duguid

A New Volume of Burns Supper Speeches

Those who know David Westwood's Burns Supper Speeches: A Night in with a Dram and Friends (2021) will be interested in his follow-up collection, Burns Supper Speeches, Volume Two, published on June 20 this year. Included are thirty-three varied speeches: twelve Immortal Memories, four toasts to the Lassies, eight replies to the Lassies and nine other toasts, poems and parodies, along with an introduction and conclusion. Contributors include Thomas Keith, Ronnie O'Byrne, Moira Hansen, George McClelland (and Mrs McClelland) and other well-kent names. It is now available on Amazon at Paperback at \$14.00 (ASIN number B0B4MBFRF5) David is a past president of Airdrie Burns Club and has written several books on Burns in the Robert Burns: A Night in with a Dram and Friends series.



Time to Buy or Renew Your Shares in the RBWF 200+ Club

The 200+ Club is a well established method of fundraising for RBWF. Shares in the club cost £15 per Annum. For 10 months of the year there is a draw of two numbers; these are a first and second prize. In addition every 3 months there is a quarterly prize. This allows £1500 additional funds for the Federation and £1500 to pay out to our winning shareholders. The more tickets sold the greater the proceeds for the Federation and there is now capacity for 300 members which would generate £2250. Shares are available through the RBWF website, or contact admin@rbwf.org.uk.

200 Club Quarterly Results

April Monthly 1st Prize £53.10
April Monthly 2nd Prize £26.55

Dr Robert Dinwiddie
Alloway Burns Club

May Monthly 1st Prize £53.10
May Monthly 2nd Prize £26.55

Clumber Burns Club
Colin Harris

June Quarterly prize of £132.75
June Monthly 1st Prize £53.10
June Monthly 2nd Prize £26.55

Prestwick Burns Club
Peter Stuart
Ron Pratt



Think Burns

Winnipeg Honours Burns

The Winnipeg Robert Burns Club returned to the Manitoba Legislature on Sunday, July 24 for it's annual Memorial Service and wreath laying. With contributions from Club Piper Kirby McRae (right) and readings from several members, Chaplain



and outgoing President Joyce Allen delivered a eulogy (left) and two wreaths were laid at the base of Manitoba's Burns Statue. Club Member Linda Hiebert, deputizing for Vice President Janet Thompson lay the club wreath, Canadian Director Charles Cameron lay the wreath on behalf of RBANA.



Prior to the ceremony, former Canadian Director, and club Recoding Secretary, Colin Harris presented Charles with the RBANA Canadian Director badge of office. Following the event, members dined at Prairie's Edge in the city's historic Kildonan Park



Winnipeg St Andrew's Society Holds Picnic

Winnipeg's St Andrew's Society, a RBANA member held, what it hopes to be an annual, Summer family picnic. The scene was the city's historic Fraser's Grove Park, named for one of the original homesteaders in the area, part of the Selkirk Settlers. Over thirty



members of the community came out, including Lads and Lassies from the Winnipeg Branch of Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) who both entertained, and led participation dances. There was also participation from a Pop-Up Piper, a young member of the Lord Selkirk Robert Fraser Memorial Pipe Band.

