

# The Burns Club of Atlanta

The Burns Club of Atlanta, established in 1896, held its 121<sup>st</sup> celebration of the Jan. 25, 1759, birth of Robert Burns at the historic Robert Burns Cottage in Atlanta, GA, USA, on Jan. 23, 2015, with a gathering of about 90 members and their guests.



The master of ceremonies for the evening was Burns Club of Atlanta **President William E. Tucker**.

He welcomed the guests and members then introduced Former Burns Club of Atlanta President **Richard Graham** who addressed the haggis. The address was presented with the usual pomp and ceremony. Former



Burns Club of Atlanta President **Henry Frantz** was the piper and **Charles Bogle** acted as a guard escort.



Toasts for the evening were offered by various members and guests. The toast to the President of the United States was given by the Honorable Shane Stephens, Consul General of Ireland. The Toast to the Queen was given by William H. Pettys II. The toast to our national was delivered by Robert E. Pierson Jr. The toast to the Armed Services was given by the honorable Jeremy Pilmore-Bedford, Consul General of the United Kingdom. For the first time in the club's history, a toast to the Burns Club of Atlanta itself was offered. The toast was given by former Burns Club of Atlanta President Thomas R. Todd Jr.

The Toast to the Lassies was delivered by Lee Landenberger and the reply by his wife, Debra DeWitt, suggested that because of the large number of female family members and pets dominating their house that he perhaps suffers from "Estrogen-induced Stockholm Syndrome."



The Immortal Memory was delivered by **Leslie Strachan**, USA director for the Robert Burns World Federation. Mr. Strachan, who was born in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, began speaking publicly about Burns in the early 1980s. He has lived in the United States since the mid 1970s. He is a member of the Robert Burns Association of North America. He lives in Bedford, Virginia. During the informal portion of the evening, after the scheduled events, Mr. Strachan donned a nightshirt and, with candle and Bible in hand, delivered a mesmerizing performance of *Holy Willie's Prayer*.

The word from the Bard, *Such a Parcel of Rogues*, as delivered by Former Burns Club President Eddie Morgan, could well have been a reflection upon the current American Presidential candidates. Or not.

The formal portion of the evening ended as the guests and members held hands and sung a hearty *Auld Lang Syne*.