

Robert Burns Dinner, Ellijay, Ga.

The Gilmer (County, Ga.) Scotch Whisky Society (GSWS) held its third annual public Robert Burns dinner on Sunday, 25 Jan, 2016. Originally scheduled for Friday, 22nd, the event was necessarily rescheduled to Sunday the 25th, due to a rare weather event, a snow storm, accompanied by below freezing temperatures.

The date change also found us looking for another piper, not too difficult a task for North Georgia filled as it is with exponents of Celtic music. He was Mr. Richard Smith, PM of the Appalachian, St. Andrews, P&D. This year too, we included a Scottish Fiddler, **Mr. Keith Dunn**, a close friend and a member of the Burns Club of Atlanta, Ga. Noting a few dropouts because of the changes we entertained



45 guests at the dinner. The venue, as it has for the past two years, took place in the upstairs event room of the 1907 Restaurant and Bar, located in downtown Ellijay, Georgia. Mr. Sloop the proprietor is also a member of the GSWS and had been outfitted with a Black Watch tartan kilt, hose w/flash, sporran and vest for the occasion.



GSWS co-sponsor, Mr. John Rathbone, a very talented musician in his own right, acted as Master of Ceremonies and has become sufficiently knowledgeable about Robert Burns as to do a very great job at this task of carrying the program along.

George McClellan gave the “Address to the Haggis” and the Toast to the Immortal Memory. Other GSWS member presented the toasts to Queen, country, missing friends and our guests, leaving the rousing Toast to the Lassies to Mr. John Mahan, esq., and the Toast to the Laddies robustly given by his wife Sidney Mahan.

One GSWS member, of German descent has even gone so far as to have purchased himself a Black Watch kilt, hose and a bonnet believing he must be Scotch because that’s what it say’s on the label. An excellent, traditional dinner of Cock-a-leekie soup, roast beef, glazed carrots, tatties and neeps was served by the Restaurants new French Chef, who had some initial reservations about the plainness of Scottish fare, relegating all Scots to the level of barbarians of cuisine. Still, he did not disappoint. The haggis was prepared by Mrs. Edna McClellan, who possesses a handed down recipe long used by haggis makers to the Scottish community in North Georgia. It was wonderful.

The evening ended with the group assembled singing Auld Lang Syne followed by talking and enjoyment of adult beverages



The emblem graces the back of our dinner program



Setup of the Presentation Tables

George G. McClellan, FSA (Scot), Co-Founder GSWS, member Burns Club of Atlanta, Ga. and US Director, RBANA.