



# The Tattler



## The Jack Hume Heather & Thistle Poetry Competition Supplement 2021

As indicated in the main edition of the Tattler, the winning entry in the 2021 Jack Hume Heather & Thistle Poetry competition was written by Jim Fletcher of the Halifax Burns Club. The winning entry is printed inside.

On the pages following are the second place entry, written by previous winner Ronnie O'Byrne of the Halton Peel club, the third place entry written by RBANA President Henry Cairney, as well as the other considered entries.



Our thanks to all those who submitted entries this year and also to our judging panel: Last year's Hume winner Jim McLaughlin of the Calgary Burns Club, Willie Gibson, our RBWF representative, and particularly Prof Carol McGuirk of Florida Atlantic University.

# Winning Entry

## Jack Hume Heather & Thistle Poetry Competition

### Twenty-Twenty

(Reflections on "The Tree of Liberty", a poem ascribed to Robert Burns)

On winds o' time, their sails unfurled,  
Our peoples sought out more, man;  
Were borne in waves aroun' the warld –  
Or crashed upon this shore, man

Now here we stand in this fair land  
Before this fine auld tree, man:  
Recall the message which it fanned –  
The pow'r o' being free, man

This far-famed tree sae dear tae me  
Has lasted monie a year, man,  
Wi' branches spread frae sea tae sea  
And fruits tae bring us cheer, man

This tree, ance planted in the earth  
O' Thirteen Founding States, man,  
Gave a' a taste o' our ain worth  
As masters o' our fates, man

Her fruits were equal rights for a'  
An' kindness tae the poor, man;  
Free speech an' prayer made intae law;  
A welcome at our shore, man

She stood the pioneering days  
When neighbours kept her laws, man,  
And when our cities were a maze  
O' every creed and cause, man

# Second Place Entry

## Jack Hume Heather & Thistle Poetry Competition

### A Golfers Tale (In Scots)

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's Isle  
Where Sainted land links sea to soil  
The auld grey town was grey and dull  
As autumn's clouds drew darkened scowl  
Four men, that were na thrang at hame  
Forgather'd challenged tae play a game

The first twa lads had spring o' stride  
Nae hill constrained their youthful pride  
They'd been one up for maist the round  
But then had carved ane oot o' bounds  
Now on the last they stood all square  
Wae chance tae beat that "ither" pair

That "ither" pair were wise o' years  
Experienced men wae strokes tae spare  
They'd oft regale wae boring tales  
O' knocked down shots in howlin' gales  
How - they - could - play - the - chip and  
run  
Their boastful charms made partners squirm

The final hole Tom Morris famed  
For Auld Lang Syne in honour named  
Wae Swilken Bridge and Sinner Valley  
Whare Arnie walked wae Jack and Gary  
Whaes fairway sweeps up tae a green  
Whare bogies mair than pars are seen

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# Third Place Entry

## Jack Hume Heather & Thistle Poetry Competition

### Address Tae The Trifle

(Influenced by the Toast To The Haggis, after a challenge to write Toast  
Tae The Trifle)

Fair fa yer sweet and wondrous taste, cause a' thing willnae gang tae waste,  
When drappit doon on the table placed, bowl, cream, an' spoon,  
Yer worthy o' this sweetened grace, and be finished soon.

The puddin' bowl ye ower fill, yer smoothness it could mak me ill,  
Yer thousand sprinkles ye know the drill, its just like seed,  
The Drambuie vents lik fae the still, before we feed.

Her spoon is such a glorious sicht, it hovers ower wae murderous fricht,  
Plunging with a daggers micht, the wound a slice,  
Ma plate is full wae sweetness bricht, cauld, solid, nice!

So all around the table reach, tae snatch and pull the bowel stretch,  
Their puggies are sae swollen screech, like a dancin' bean,  
The wifie whae's about tae breach, should not be seen.

Is there that ower his cheesecake new, or crème brulee love me and you,  
Or chocolate cake that wid rise anew, tae ruin the dinner,  
We all wid smile wae righteous view, on the sinner!

Och look at him, scrapin' up his last, lickin' the bowl wae a tongue sae fast,  
Scoorin' and cleanin' the sugar mash, his spoon wae guile,  
Thro kitchen, lounge or lobby he'll thrash, but nae a smile.

But hark the hero o' the sweet, terra nova's just beneath his feet,  
Clasp tae his bony haund a cleat, he'll hae it twirling,  
And suits, an shirts, an skirts secrete, wae aw' the hurling.

Ye ladies wha mak this pudding rare, and spoon it oot wae loving care,  
Canada wants nae tasteless fare, in bowls that stifle,  
So, if ye grant her mair than air, gie her a Trifle! THE TRIFLE!

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## Edinburgh Twilight

Swaggering up the slope to Arthur's Seat, our Datsun  
whines and groans. Diminutive,  
it speaks its foreign mind, while the rough heat

of the last of summer hammers at it.  
"Ard-na-said", the height of the god Thunder,  
stuns the surround. We wend it bit by bit,

thinking of defense. Sheep nuzzle the low road, we ride  
the high, a sliver in greens. Beneath, toy houses dazzle  
in a row.

This outpost of empire England kept; from its height  
our eyes can dot the town and count the places Mary  
of Scots wept.

Now we climb the crag, extinct volcano.  
Can one mild civilization survive?  
As the water of night begins to flow,

the earth sheds away from us like a husk.  
A cut-glass vase on the slate Firth of Forth,  
one North Sea oil rig sparkles in the dusk.

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## Remember The Many (SONG) (For All Soldiers in History)

The battle's won there's nothing more, but stare then move along,  
So many dead no more to walk, the lonely path so strong,  
The heather's red the steel lays there, it's work it has been done,  
And all because of King and power, and land that we stand on.

*(Chorus)*

*Lift up your glasses high, remember them all,  
Drink to your freedom won, with pride and stand tall,  
We thank all the brave souls, their struggle and their strife,  
As we live in their memory of their courageous life.*

Some made it back to haven's rest, relief to all the poor,  
And just as they had settled down, a de'il stormed the door,  
Their past and valour strength had waned, leaving none to resist,  
As the carnage still caught them all, in this hell evil twist.

*(Chorus)*

They clear the souls and cleanse the earth, so softly they do care,  
And let them rest in shallow graves, with gently spoken prayer,  
The birds no song to sing that day, and peace they all atone,  
Will come along in better times, our nation's not alone.

*(Chorus)*

How many times in years to come, will man repeat this act,  
Destruction death and vile crimes, needless its a fact,  
But feelings never matter when, power and riches call,  
A man to serve right or wrong, to give the world his all.

*(Chorus)*

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## Stibble Jack

Some tales we hear are aft' far stretched,  
Some tales are frae the gutter fetched,  
Ither stories poke yer ribs,  
While lyin' tongues can aft tell fibs,  
But this wee tale's as straight yer back  
The joyous tale o' Stibble Jack.

Stibble Jack ne'er looked kept clean,  
His hollow face was grey an' mean,  
His greasy shirt wae fraying cuffs,  
A 'baccy voice that aye smelt rough,  
His well scuffed shoes had thinnin' sole,  
The richt leaked thru' a one-inch hole,

His crumpled coat wae leeward tilt  
Was shoulder ticht wae buckled belt,  
He'd nightly toddled doon the "Star",  
Tae sit his arse up near the bar,  
Whare ale frayed towels wae tartan edge  
Soaked up spills frae trays o' dregs

Jack supped his pints wae patient pause,  
An' seldom talked o' life's ill cause,  
His repartee was ne'er revealed,  
He kept himself maist night's concealed,  
He'd scoop awa ne'er feint a budge,  
Then toddle hame to face his judge,

His fashious wife would gie him hell,  
She'd curse an' swear an' scream an' yell,  
She'd caw him names wid choke a deil,  
She'd kick an' stamp wae eldrich squeal.

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## The Auld Stane Cot (An Ode)

Ane hunner years  
 Yet in its place  
 A braw stane cot is found;  
 Ane hunner voices,  
 Braid and strang,  
 Still handsel its renown.

A Bard's retreat,  
 Nae gowk there be  
 Nae gomerel shaw his face,  
 On Alloway's brae,  
 Unco bonnie, douce,  
 A' Scots Rab Burns embrace.

Sae my freen  
 Upstanding be  
 A guid will waught to down;  
 Hae nae doot  
 That sonsie cot  
 Oor Bardie's memore crowns.

Twa hunner years  
 Will find it still  
 A manse for a' the race  
 O' men sincere,  
 Drouthy an' leerned,  
 Biding weel amang this place.

|           |   |                             |
|-----------|---|-----------------------------|
| A'        | - | All                         |
| Amang     | - | Among                       |
| Ane       | - | One                         |
| Auld      | - | Old                         |
| Bonnie    | - | Beautiful                   |
| Brae      | - | Hill                        |
| Braid     | - | Broad                       |
| Braw      | - | Fine, Beautiful             |
| Cot       | - | Cottage                     |
| Doot      | - | Doubt                       |
| Douce     | - | Pleasant                    |
| Drouthy   | - | Thirsty                     |
| Freen     | - | Friend                      |
| Gowk      | - | Simpleton                   |
| Gomerel   | - | Fool, Stupid Person         |
| Guid Will | - | Friendly                    |
| Hae       | - | Have                        |
| Handsel   | - | To Inaugurate With Ceremony |
| Hunner    | - | Hundred                     |
| Leerned   | - | Learned                     |
| Manse     | - | Mansion House               |
| Memore    | - | Memory                      |
| Nae       | - | No                          |
| O'        | - | Of                          |
| Oor       | - | Our                         |
| Sae       | - | So                          |
| Sonsie    | - | Pleasant                    |
| Stane     | - | Stone                       |
| Strang    | - | Strong                      |
| Twa       | - | Two                         |
| Unco      | - | Very, Exceedingly           |
| Weel      | - | Well                        |
| Waught    | - | Draught, Drink              |

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