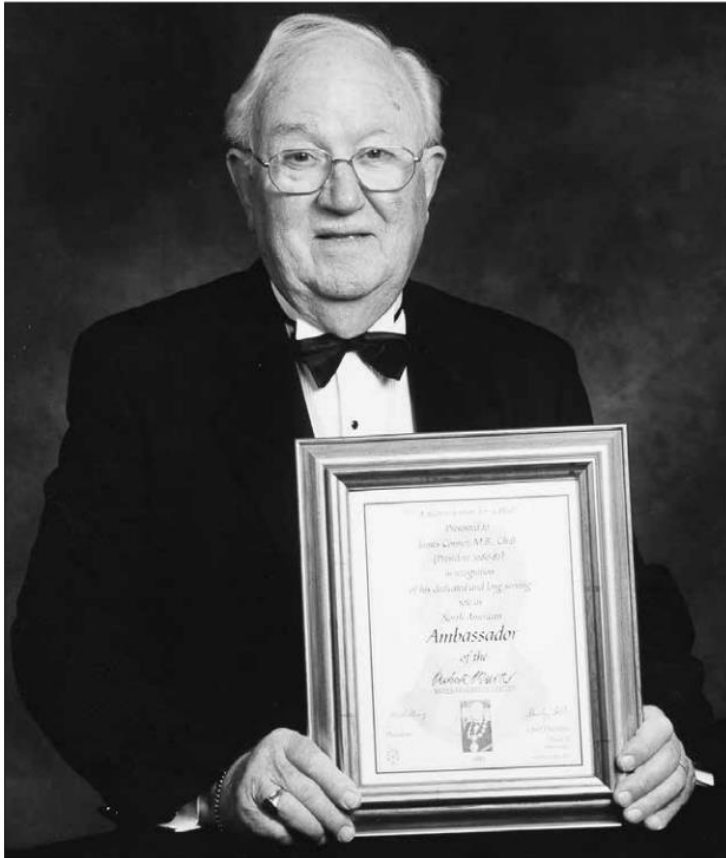


DR. JAMES CONNOR, M.B., Ch.B. (1918 ~ 2004) JIM Connor was born in Motherwell on 2nd July, 1918, and educated at Glencairn Public and Dalziel High schools in that town. He joined the Boys' Brigade in 1929 and eventually became an officer. In 1937 his family moved to Glasgow and the following year Jim enrolled at Anderson College of Medicine. He graduated from Glasgow University in 1943 and in the same year married Bunty. Sadly Jim lost Bunty two days after celebrating their Golden Wedding in 1993.



Their sons Allan and Jim junior were born in 1946 and 1952 respectively. Three years in general practice in Bridgeton were followed by a two year stint as a medical officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps. On demob, Captain Connor returned to general practice in Glasgow, in the Anderston district of the city. Twenty years later, however, the Connor family emigrated to Canada and settled in London, Ontario. Although he had been reared in a family that revered their Burns as much as the Bible, it was not until moving to Canada that Jim became involved with the Burns movement as such. Like so many other exiled Scots, however, he found the companionship of kindred spirits linked by their devotion to the Bard very congenial. Within two years of moving to Canada, therefore, he had joined the London (Ontario)

Burns Club. He held various offices in that club, including the presidency from 1974 onwards. Somehow he found time out of an extremely busy and demanding medical practice to work tirelessly to promote the Burns movement throughout North America. An accomplished speaker, he was in demand for the Immortal Memory. A born organiser and absolutely dedicated worker, Jim was the moving force behind the idea of holding the Burns conference outwith Britain for the first time. To most people, on both sides of the Atlantic, the notion of holding the Conference in Canada seemed plain daft and quite unworkable. It says much for the genius and the persistence of Dr Jim that the notion was not only accepted, but became an accomplished fact. Thus it was that in 1979 he became Chairman of the 92nd Annual Burns Conference, held that summer on the campus of London University.

He was deeply involved in the organisation and hosting of several other conferences of Burnsians in North America, and out of this came the decision in 1980 to form the North American Association of Federated Burnsians, of which he was President in 1982-84. In 1982-83 he was Chairman of the three-day Scottish Kavalkade, a multi-cultural event sponsored by the London (Ontario) Folk Arts Council. In 1982 he was appointed Canadian representative to

the Burns Federation and in his capacity as a member of the Executive he has travelled widely, not only all over Canada and the United States, but back and forth across the Atlantic. In 1984 he was elected Junior Vice President of the Burns Federation and became President for 1986-87. On the re-organisation of the Burns Federation becoming a Limited Company with the new title of the Robert Burns World Federation, Dr. Jim was appointed to the Board as a Director for Canada and with his wife Elma became Patrons. A loyal supporter of all projects organised by the Federation and in particular to the Schools Competitions who benefitted by his generous gifts. In recognition of the outstanding contribution in promoting the works of Robert Burns in North America, Dr. Connor was given the accolade of North American Ambassador of the Robert Burns World Federation at the Atlanta Conference, see photograph on previous page. Sadly after hearing of the passing of Dr. Jim and later after his funeral, Elma's daughter Linda died suddenly. Jim's passing is a severe loss to the world-wide Burns Movement and as editor of the Chronicle I will miss his support and advice. He was involved himself in editing various publications connected with the Bard. Together with Elma they published in 1997 "Chronicle of the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, Canada, 1996", a hardback book A4 size with over 400 pages, illustrated with photographs and cartoons of Jim and Elma. His quiet, affable manner concealed a very profound and far-ranging knowledge of Burns and his works. Few people alive today possess such an intimate knowledge of the Poet's songs and poetry, backed up by an extensive private collection of Burns literature and memorabilia. Our thoughts at this sad time go out to his wife Elma.

***(Courtesy of The Robert Burns World Federation 2004)***