



The Tattler

Autumn 2017 Edition

Words from the President

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The Robert Burns Association
of North America

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

Well, it's that time of year again. Those clubs who have taken the summer off are getting back into the swing, and plans are being finalized for the Big Night (to borrow from the Edmonton Burns Club).



As President, I having been far more mobile than I would normally have been, with four trips to Alberta (two within a week in January) After an extended trip to Scotland in September (and I mean extended by a day and a half due to technical issues and two full days in Glasgow airport) I look forward to two more trips to Alberta - Calgary once more, for their history making Burns Supper and my third visit to Medicine Hat, my last as President, and a final trip to Philadelphia, in April, when I hope to get up to New York City, and Boston, where my family has some roots.

Between those Alberta visits I will be paying the Haggis (produced locally) its proper due at the Winnipeg club's 111th supper, and playing host to Medicine Hat President Bill Cocks, who has agreed to propose the Immortal Memory.

Whatever your plans are for January, have a good time, and I genuinely hope to see you in Philadelphia.

Yours Aye
Colin Harris
President

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Philadelphia Gets Ready To Host RBANA Conference

The organizers of the 2018 RBANA Conference, April 20-22, are promising a wonderful weekend of music, camaraderie and all things Robert Burns in the very heart of the great city of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia.

The official weekend will start on Friday morning April 20, with the 2018 RBANA golf championship, with delegate and guest registration during the afternoon. Early arriving guests on Thursday will also find welcoming hospitality awaits you. Friday night will see a wonderful buffet dinner followed by the GRAND CEILIDH and CONCERT to set the weekend off to a rousing start.

Saturday morning the Annual General Meeting will be followed in the afternoon by two wonderful seminars on different aspects of the Bards life and then the Dr. Jim Connor Memorial Burns Quiz

Saturday evening's festivities will begin with a drinks reception followed by a formal Burns dinner which will also see the investiture of the new R.B.A. N. A. president.

The conference hotel for the weekend is The Courtyard Marriot in center city Philadelphia located at 21 N Juniper St. Listed on the National Register of historic Places, the Courtyard stands as a brilliant 15 story piece of history in the very heart of the city. The hotel has



large spacious rooms with complimentary Wi-Fi. Surrounded by restaurants, shopping and bars with city tours stopping half a block from the hotel. The hotel of course is full service with pool, exercise rooms, bar and restaurant. The Hotel is also within easy walking distance of all the Historical sites which make this city so special.

cial.

Conference room rates for a standard room is \$155 + taxes per night, these special room rates will also be offered 2 days prior to and 2 days after the conference, based on availability. Reservations can be made directly on line by following this link <https://aws.passkey.com/e/49277427> if calling be sure to mention The Robert Burns Association of North America. (RBANA)

1 800 321 2211 or 215 596 3200

Registration information will be sent to all clubs and members at the beginning of December 2017. Early registration is STRONGLY encouraged. At this time we expect to keep registration around \$200 per person.

Should you have any questions please contact;

Les Strachan; leslie546@aol.com

Or

Bill Fulton; fultonbill@verizon.net



A REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS

Clubs and Individuals

Your annual RBANA memberships are due January 1st.

Dues notices and information update forms will be sent out in the coming weeks.

A Visitor's Guide To Philadelphia

As well as being less than two hours, by train from Washington DC (an extra thirty minutes by car) and just 90 minutes from New York the city of Philadelphia itself offers a variety of authentic and top-notch attractions for visitors, including a number of art galleries and museums, and much more. Exploring the vibrant city takes some planning.

With so much to see, do and taste, it's challenging to know where to begin.

From the historic Liberty Bell to the iconic Philadelphia Museum of Art, here's a look at just some of the most popular and can't-miss attractions and museums that make Philadelphia a world-class city, most within thirty minutes of the conference hotel.



Reading Terminal Market - America's oldest farmers' market

This indoor foodie paradise is a one-stop shop for every-

thing from local produce and meats to artisanal cheeses and desserts. The public space, just a 3 minute walk from the hotel, also provides open seating where customers can enjoy meals from more than 80 vendors. While the market is open seven days a week, the Amish vendors, a huge draw for visitors and locals, sell their goods Tuesday through Saturday.

Independence National Historical Park - The birthplace of American democracy

Part of the nation's most historic square mile, Independence National Historical Park tells the story of how American democracy came to be. Historic landmarks and attractions such as the Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall, The President's House and Franklin Court take visitors back to the time of the nation's Founding Fathers. Twenty minutes from the hotel.

The Liberty Bell Center - Dramatic home of the internationally known symbol of freedom

Moved to its current location across from Independence Hall in 2003, the



bell that was later named the Liberty Bell was originally cast in Great Britain and recast in 1753 in Philadelphia to adorn the State House. Used to call the Pennsylvania Assembly to meetings, it was soon adopted by abolitionists, suffragists, Civil Rights advocates, Native Americans, immigrants, war protestors and others as their symbol. The 44-pound clapper caused the Bell's crack on its first use, and though it has been recast twice, the imperfection remains today. Visitors can tour the Liberty Bell Center year-round.

Independence Hall & Carpenter's Hall - Birthplace of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

While historical attractions abound in Philly, Independence Hall, a fifteen minute walk from the hotel, has particular significance to the development of the nation. In

this building in 1776, the Founding Fathers came together to sign the Declaration of Independence. Eleven years later, representatives from a dozen states met here to lay the framework for the U.S. Constitution. Today, the building is the centerpiece of Independence National Historical Park, and guided tours are available to visitors year-round. Free, timed tickets are required and can be picked up at the Independence Visitor Center at 6th and Market Streets. Tours can sell out before noon, so visitors are encouraged to plan accordingly. When you're done (or while you're waiting for your tour time), head east on Chestnut St. to Carpenter's Hall, a beautifully restored building in the Georgian style where the First Continental Congress met in 1774.



Independence Visitor Center

Located on Independence Mall at 6th and Market Streets, the Independence Visitor Center is the perfect place to begin your visit to the Philadelphia region. The Visitor Center is just a stone's throw from some of Philadelphia's most popular attractions, including the Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall, the National Museum of American Jewish History and the National Constitution Center. Thanks to the Visitor Center's friendly and knowledgeable Visitor

A Visitor's Guide To Philadelphia (continued)

Services staff, you'll get a free comprehensive orientation to the culture, history, shopping and dining options available throughout the Greater Philadelphia region in an environment that is welcoming and convenient.

The Franklin Institute - One of the oldest and most beloved science museums in the country

The Franklin Institute demonstrates the science involved in disciplines ranging from sports to space. In addition to nationally traveling shows, the museum includes hands-on exhibitions, such as the highly interactive Your Brain; the Fels Planetarium; the Tuttleman IMAX Theater; and the Joel N. Bloom Observatory. The Giant Heart, a walk-through human corpuscle that would belong to someone 220 feet tall, was one of its first attractions and remains one of the most popular.

Philadelphia Museum of Art & Rodin Museum - Third-largest art museum in the country and a must-see attraction

The vast collections of Renaissance, American and impressionist masterpieces make the Philadelphia Museum of Art one of the most important art museums in the country. Its impressive holdings, acclaimed exhibitions, special programs and beautiful outdoor Sculpture Garden make it a cultural must-see. Just up the Benjamin Franklin Parkway is the Rodin Museum, housing one of the largest public collections of the master's works outside of Paris. The collection includes bronze casts of *The Thinker* and *The Gates of Hell*, a stunning marble copy of *The Kiss* and a cast of *The Burghers of Calais*.



The Betsy Ross House and Once Upon A Nation Benches - The birthplace of the American flag

The Betsy Ross House tells the story of a working-class Colonial

woman and a new nation's flag. Guests tour the home of the America's most famous flagmaker — an upholsterer by trade — and enjoy interactive programs, storytelling and activities. The Betsy Ross House is also one of ten places throughout Philadelphia's Historic District that you'll find Once Upon A Nation™ benches, featuring free, five-minute tales and secret stories told by uniformed, professional storytellers.

Elfreth's Alley

Elfreth's Alley, the oldest continuously occupied residen-

tial street in the U.S., is a quaint cobblestone alley located in Historic Philadelphia. While a modern city has sprung up around it, the Alley preserves three centuries of evolution through its old-fashioned flower boxes, shutters, Flemish bond brickwork and other architectural details. Two adjacent houses, built in 1755, are now a museum and are open to the public.

Race Street Pier - Relaxing waterfront respite in the heart of the city

Located in the shadow of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, Race Street Pier opened in 2011 and features two levels for recreation. The upper terrace, dubbed the Grand Sky Promenade, rises 12 feet toward the bridge and is paved with Trex, a sustainable, synthetic decking material made out of reclaimed plastic and wood. The promenade is connected to the lower terrace by a multi-tiered seating area, perfect for watching the tide roll in. Free yoga classes are available seven days a week in season.

City Hall and City Hall Tower - The largest municipal building in the country and the finest example of the Second Empire style



Located at the intersection of Market and Broad streets, three minutes from the hotel, City Hall has been Philadelphia's government headquarters for more than 100 years, and it's the largest municipal building in the country. For a bird's-eye view of the city, visitors head to the observation

deck, which sits just below the 37' bronze statue of William Penn that tops the building's clock tower. The building is open to the public from Monday to Friday, and visitors can take either a four-person tower tour or a two-hour public tour that highlights the art, architecture, the tower and history of the building.



The Rocky Statue and the Rocky Steps - Two of the most famous tourist attractions in Philadelphia

The Rocky Statue and the "Rocky Steps" — better known as the Art Museum Steps —

are two of the most popular attractions in Philadelphia. Visiting the statue, running up the steps and taking a pic-

A Visitor's Guide To Philadelphia (continued)

ture at the top is pretty much a must on your first visit to Philadelphia. It's a rite of passage.

Philadelphia CityPASS & Philadelphia Pass - Save on Philadelphia's most popular attractions

For some serious savings on Philadelphia's most popular attractions, tour-goers can snag a CityPASS ticket booklet, which includes admission to five Philly favorites, including Adventure Aquarium, The Franklin Institute and the Philadelphia Zoo. The pass is valid for nine consecutive days beginning with the date of first use. What's more, it allows holders to skip the main entrance ticket line at most attractions. For another option, check out Philadelphia Pass, granting you access to more than 40 city attractions and providing discounts and special offers at select shops and restaurants in the city.



Now Available:

The Kilmarnock Burns: A Census (South Carolina Scottish Literature Series) (Volume 3) Paperback

by [Allan Young](#) (Author), [Patrick Scott](#) (Author)

This study is the first modern attempt to track down how many copies of Robert Burns's first book still survive. Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786), has long been recognized as one of the world's great books. The 612 copies that were printed in the summer of 1786 by a local printer, John Wilson, in Kilmarnock, Scotland, sold out almost immediately and launched Burns's worldwide reputation as a poet. In time copies of the *Kilmarnock*, often splendidly rebound to indicate its importance and its growing monetary value, became prized by book collectors on both sides of the Atlantic. The study describes the present appearance of each of the surviving copies, including any inscriptions, and traces, as far as possible, their previous ownership and its significance. In addition, drawing on print and digital evidence for copies previously reported in exhibitions, auctions, bookseller catalogues, and newspapers, the study documents the larger story of public interest in Burns and Burns collecting from the early nineteenth-century to the present day. The book opens with an introduction, by Allan Young, telling how he became interested in the topic and approached the research, summarizing the findings, and listing the most important unlocated copies, which is followed by Patrick Scott's account of how the *Kilmarnock* was published and how it became a collector's item.

Details about the book:

Authors: Allan Young and Patrick Scott

Title: *The Kilmarnock Burns: A Census*

Series: South Carolina Scottish Literature Series, no. 3.

Publisher: Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Libraries, 2017.

Pp. xxxvi + 198. Paperback, \$24; £18. ISBN 978-1976245107

The book is not available for purchase directly from the library, only through Amazon, Amazon UK, CreateSpace, and several other online vendors, with wide variation in pricing and shipping charges

Medicine Hat Hosts Jolly Beggars Banquet

For those who don't know, the Medicine Hat Burns Club established the Jolly Beggars Banquet as a special event for Burn's keeners, prospective new members and those deemed worthy. Over the years interest in this event has grown and where attendance is limited to 37, as Burns was 37 when he died, the Club is getting expressions of interest of upwards of 50 to 60 men to attend each annual event. This makes guest selection very difficult, however that being said the Club has made a firm commitment that this event remains open to only 37. Also, this event is black tie, kilt or trews. Cronies attending do not wear uniforms, medals or decorations other than Burns Club or related insignia.

So, well, the Medicine Hat gang did it again. The 2017 9th Annual Jolly Beggars Banquet in Medicine Hat is now being reported as being probably the best Jolly Beggars Banquet held to date. With respect to entertainment the Commander of the local British army training unit (BATUS) authorized the attendance of a quartet from the Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers that were temporarily here from the UK. What a coup!.

The Calgary Burns Club singers were also present who proudly gave their all and sang and danced unto the wee hours. Further, there was Club piper Mal-



colm Sissons, who was later matched up with Club Gaird & Chaplain, Rab Cowan, also a piper who also brought his pipes.

Next, we had Club VP and RBANA Canada director Andy Harrower performing A Mans a Man and later, Tam o' Shanter. Club president Bill Cocks did his thing and presented the Address to

the Haggis. A most memorable rendition of 'To a Mouse' was done by Andy Cowan, and then there was the meal. Starting with salmon with cream cheese, capers and onions, this was followed by cock o' leeky soup, then stacked haggis prepared by a chef from the British army. Next, rack o' lamb with a special mint sauce followed by a unique Scottish pie for desert. Dinner was then finished with home made Athol Brose.

The Jolly Beggars world famous Scotch bar also offered some very fine Scotch whiskies and the Immortal Memory done by our Chieftain o' the Nicht and RBWF President, Ian McIntyre was outstanding. The only dilemma is that next year will be very special, as it will be the 10th anniversary of the Jolly Beggars Banquet, and it will be a real challenge to make that event better. That being said there shall be no doubt the Medicine Hat Burns Club will pull it off.



Cocktail hour at the Cypress Club



Quartet from the Band of the Corps of the Royal Engineers entertain the attending cronies

Pictures from Medicine Hat Jolly Beggars



Poosie Nancy checks in the cronies as they arrive, and let them know who's boss. This years Poosie Nancy was Debbie Wilde, formerly travelling globe with the Woman's Royal Army Corps., Debbie, originally from Reading, Berkshire, England now serves at BATUS with Services Welfare.



The cronies line up at the world famous scotch bar and sample some of the finest Scotch whis-kies available.



Chieftain o' the Nicht, and RBWF President Ian McIntyre is presented with a special Western Canadian token as a memento of the attending Cronies respect, esteem and appreciation for his participation and for presenting the Im-mortal Memory.



After dinner the Cronies move into a full Ceilidh and here, with Edmonton Burns Club president cam McDonnell watching on, Club VP, and RBANA Canada director Andy Harrower does his rendition of 'Tam o' Shanter'.



Gathering of the presidents. Left to right, Ken Montgomery, VP, RBANA, Trekker Armstrong, Calgary Burns Club president, Bill Cocks, Medicine Hat Burns Club president, Ian McIntyre, RBWF president and Cam McDonnell, Edmonton Burns Club president.

Medicine Hat Hosts Jean Armour Dinner

Sponsored by the Medicine Hat Burns Club, the third annual Jean Armour Ladies Dinner was held at Medicine Hat's Cypress Club on Saturday, 30 September 2017. Where the men have their Jolly Beggars event this is followed one week later by this special dinner for the ladies. Like the men's function, this formal event is limited to no more than 37 lassies, and one difference between the two events is that the ladies can wear mess kit (uniform) and medals if applicable. Also, the ladies are waited on by male members of the Club. Probably the most notable difference is that the ladies prefer fine wines to fine Scotch. The first year the guest speaker was the



Honourable Sylvia Oishi, a provincial court judge. Last year it was Lieutenant Colonel Eleanor Haevens CD, a senior officer in the Canadian army. This year, as Medicine Hat is in the heart of cattle country, the guest speaker chosen was Ms. Nicole Neubauer, a well known local rancher who manages Neubauer Farms. A grand time was had by all and the ladies look forward to seeing what can be done last year.



Music was provided by Coulee Strings, with Seanachie on violin and viola, and her sister Bree on on cello.



Guests are welcomed on arrival. Here Brenda Montgomery, co-chair greets WO1 Louis Taylor (Royal Logistical Corps) and WO2 Joanne Stewart (Royal Military Police), both originally from Scotland and currently serving at the local British army training unit.



The ladies mingle before dinner



Dee Wagner & Brenda Montgomery

Pictures from Medicine Hat Jean Armour Dinner



The Lassies are served by club member Ted Clugston who is also the mayor of the City of Medicine Hat



Nichole Neubauer presents her formal address to the ladies attending. Here it is noted that the men attending now leave the room so the lassies can have their own special time.



Here Jock Reid another club member carefully sets a plate. In his real life Jock, from Glasgow is a major with the Royal Artillery



The 2017 Jean Armour Lassies



Burns Braille Book Gifted to Irvine Burns Club

A blind Kilwinning woman has kindly gifted her rare collection of Robert Burns braille books to the Irvine Burns Club.

The unique donation which contains seven volumes of the national poet's work, was given to the Irvine club by Ms Joan Muir, who has been blind since she was three-years-old.

Joan, along with representatives from Irvine Burns Club travelled to Glasgow University, during National Braille Week (October 9 to 15), to present the books to the Centre for Robert Burns Studies, where they will be on permanent loan.

Ms Muir had received a great deal of pleasure out of the books which she originally bought in 1970 that her wishes were for them to be used as well as being preserved.

Joan Muir said: "I have gained so much from these works of Robert Burns and thoroughly enjoyed owning them for all these years.

"Although the books are almost 50 years old, the braille dots are still sharp and are easily read by a blind person. It contains all of Burns' poetry as well as many of his letters.

"I don't know how many folks still have copies of the Burns' Braille books from that era but I imagine that, like me, they will not be that young.

"I have felt for some time that I didn't want such a wonderful collection to be lost which is why I contacted Irvine Burns Club looking for a safe place for it to be kept.



Joan Muir examines the books with Irvine Club President Allen Paterson

"I am delighted that it will now be looked after in perpetuity by the University which will allow others to study and read these Burns poems and letters which are part of our Scottish literary heritage."

The books were originally printed by the Edinburgh-based Scottish Braille Press in the early part of the last century using zinc plates and hydraulic presses, however, as this system is no longer used, the original plates, made in 1913, will probably have been destroyed.

Previously braille books in this during that period were usually printed to an individual order using the original zinc sheets and subsequently are very rare today.

Bill Nolan, Irvine Burns Club secretary, who accepted Mrs Muir's gift originally, said: "We were very touched by Joan's special and almost unique gift.

"However, when we considered it, we felt that, rather than storing it in our own library at the Wellwood Burns Centre in Irvine, the collection should be offered in perpetuity to the University's Centre for Robert Burns Studies.

"We saw that as a perfect fit in linking conservation with the spread of knowledge.

"We hope that this will ensure that other Braille users will have the opportunity to enjoy these complete works of Scotland's national bard and we would like



L to R Professor, Gerard Carruthers; Centre for Robert Burns Studies, Joan Muir, Allen Paterson; President, Irvine Burns Club, Bill Nolan; Secretary, Irvine Burns Club & SVP RBWF, Professor Roibeard O'Maolalagh; College of Arts, Glasgow University

to thank Joan for her generosity and support."

The book came to the University through its friendship with the Irvine Burns Club who were first offered and accepted the rare publication from Joan Muir.

Professor Roibeard O'Maolalagh, vice principal and head of the College of Arts at Glasgow University, who accepted the col-

Burns in Braille continued

lection on behalf of the institution, said: "The Burns books are a wonderful piece of Braille history which helped to introduce Burns to a new audience in the early 20th century.

"It is amazing to think that this collection would have allowed the blind or partially sighted to read

the wonderful words of Burns for themselves for the first time.

"We would like to thank Joan and Irvine Burns Club for this generous gift and we will ensure it is kept safe for further generations to study and read."

Vandals Strike Burns Mausoleum Arrest Made

It is was sadness we learned a vandal, or vandals targeted the burial place of Robert Burns in Dumfries.

The mausoleum in St Michael's churchyard was one of a number of places left daubed in paint.

Police Scotland said the incident occurred at about 01:45 in the morning of September 18.

A number of gravestones, the church doors and the mausoleum were covered with graffiti.

PC Christopher Trosh said: "This appears to be a case of wanton vandalism on what after all is a sacred place.

"We have information that a person was in the



churchyard at around 01:43 this morning, spending some time there.

The church's minister, Rev Maurice Bond, said it was "very sad" that the building and graves had been targeted.

"It is a terrible thing that this has happened," he said.

"Of course Burns' mausoleum - a national monument - has also been desecrated.

"We don't feel anger so much as sadness."

Fortunately, we are able to report that within a week, a 17-year-old had been

arrested in connection with the attack.

Think
Burns