



The Tattler



Autumn 2020 Edition

Words from the President

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President	Henry Cairney
Vice President	Bill Fulton
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Canadian Directors:	Andy Harrower CD Colin Harris Brian Cumming
U S Directors:	George McClellan Mark Ferguson Paul Kennedy
Hon Presidents	May Crawley Jack Mann Jim Cunningham Jean Cunningham Ron Ballantyne Chrys Ballantyne

Contacts:

RBANA
10 Goldenrod Court SE
Medicine Hat AB
T1B 2S4

Editor:
Colin Harris
92 Avalon Rd
Winnipeg MB
R2M 2L5
amansaman@hotmail.ca

Webmaster
Mathew Hill
contact@rbana.com



The Robert Burns Association
of North America

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

Hi everyone,

Goodness, what a traumatic year we have had to date, and I hope this finds you all safe and well. I personally have been very busy with the Calgary BC, RBWF and RBANA Boards looking at various ways to keep everyone engaged in some manner or form under these difficult times. Unfortunately due to the uncertainties, and for everyone's health safety, the board has come to the difficult decision that there will not be an AGM/Conference planned for spring of 2021 and the event is now officially postponed. Unless there is a miraculous change in the Pandemic situation, it may be 2022 before we are finally allowed, and in a safe social condition to host such events,



But in saying that, we are planning to host a **"Virtual Members Meeting" on Saturday November 21st at 3:00 p.m. Alberta time** and would hope to have as many members as possible attend the event. Details, Agenda and registration information will be sent out by Mathew Hill our Secretary/Treasurer very soon, so please respond to Mathew when you receive the invite to allow us to control and manage the security of the Zoom call and avoid 'Zoom Bombers' from entering and disrupting the meeting. This is a lesson learned from the Tamfest Lectures where an intrusion incident occurred a few weeks ago.

As I dwell upon the coming months, I find Poetry has a weird way of highlighting life, depending on your interpretation of the words. I quote a small passage, not from Robert Burns, but from Shakespeare's "Now is the Winter of Our Discontent":

.....

*Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them:
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun*

....

But before I end, here is the last verse of

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Cairney's Corner continued

Robert Burns "Winter: A Dirge"

....

*Thou Power Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here firm I rest; they must be best,
Because they are Thy will!
Then all I want-O do thou grant
This one request of mine,
Since to enjoy Thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign.*

I wish all of you and your family and friends to be safe and well and look forward to seeing you online in November.

Best Regards and yours in Burns,
Henry Cairney
RBANA President

Editor's note:

Though not strictly Burns related, the man, was, like Robert Burns, an indelible icon of Scottish culture and history.

Scottish Icon and Actor Sean Connery Dead at 90

Scottish actor Sean Connery, the first actor to play James Bond on film and for many fans the best, has died. He was 90.

Producers Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli said they were "devastated by the news."

"He was and shall always be remembered as the original James Bond whose indelible entrance into cinema history began when he announced those unforgettable words — 'The name's Bond... James Bond,'" they said in a statement.

The producers said Connery's "gritty and witty portrayal of the sexy and charismatic secret agent" was largely responsible for the success of the series.

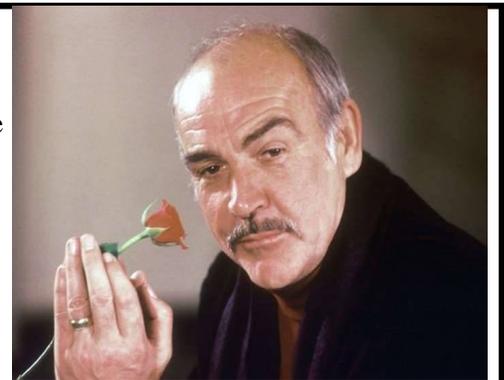
Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said she was "heartbroken" at the news.

"Our nation today mourns one of her best loved sons," she said.

In a varied career, Connery played James Bond seven times, starting with "Dr. No" in 1962. His portrayal defined the suave secret agent for a generation of fans.

He also had major roles in films including "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," "Highlander" and "The Hunt for Red October."

A proud Scot he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2000 for services to film drama.



The name was Connery, ...

Sean Connery

RBWF World Update

The RBWF changed its board on the 1st September 2020 where Brian Goldie stepped down into the Past President position, Marc Sherland, Henry Cairney and Alan Beck were installed as President, Senior Vice President and Junior Vice President, respectively.

It is an unusual year in many ways for the world in general with the COVID-19 pandemic taking a firm grip. Social distancing and laws in all countries have hampered the whole board in many ways. The Presidential team are unable to visit and socialize representing the Federation in any official manner, and only via 'Virtual' gatherings which has now become the normal for not only the RBWF, but the world in general.

Marc has introduced some new ideas for the Federation via his 'New Directions Paper' which has been approved by the board to look at where the RBWF is at present, and create a series of short and long term plans for our sustainable future. You will hear more of these initiatives as the year progresses. Marc stated:

As I stated in the inaugural speech I am determined that the world reach of this glorious organisation is revitalised through initiatives which are educational, which promote the heritage of Robert Burns, Scottish culture and the language. Of course, you



New President Marc Sherland flanked by JVP Alan Beck (l) and SVP Henry Cairney (r)

have a part to play in this because as a reader of this article you are already engaging with the programme we hope to bring to fruition. If you then become a member of the Federation, you will be

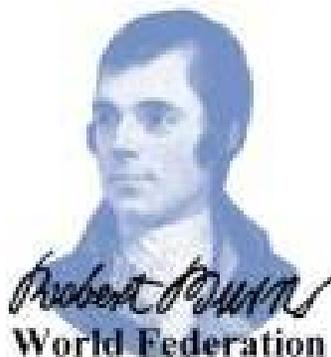
able to engage with the mechanics of the very democracy of the organisation.

Marc, Henry and Alan took an oath when they were installed which was:

I give my oath that I will uphold the honour of the Robert Burns World Federation by word and deed and will endeavour throughout my term in office to promote, educate and celebrate the life and works of Robert Burns, the Scots Language and our culture of universal brother and sisterhood.

The RBWF values the relationship between ourselves and all associated organisations the world over, and in particular RBANA where we have close ties to them and their member clubs. We wish everyone a safe and healthy future in an ever-changing world.

Submitted by:
Henry Cairney
Senior Vice President RBWF
President RBANA



Virtual Members Meeting Called For November 21

As mentioned in his President's Message, President Henry Cairney and the Board have called a meeting of the general membership of RBANA to be held November 21, 2020.

As with everything during these unusual times the meeting will be held "virtually" over the Zoom platform.

The meeting will convene at 3:00 p.m. Mountain Standard (Calgary) Time.

A formal invitation will be sent out by Secretary Mathew Hill in the coming days. As detailed by Henry it is important to register with Mathew in order to participate. Hope to see as many of you as possible on the call.

New Burns Selection to be Published in New Year

Black & White Publishing, a Leith based independent publishing house, has acquired *Burns for Every Day of the Year* from Robert Burns expert Dr Pauline Mackay.

Burns for Every Day of the Year will offer readers 366 poems, described as "glimpses into the genius and literary legacy of this remarkable bard". Each day's choice will reflect the season, link past and present, and highlight the life of Burns, says the publisher. Mackay will also include introductions to each poem, in both Scots and English.

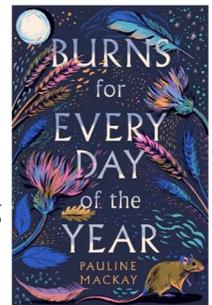
Alison McBride, publishing director, acquired world rights direct from the author. The title will be published in January 2021.

Mackay commented: "There is such variety in the life and writing of Robert Burns, and this has sus-

tained his timeless and universal popularity. Lord Byron summed it up perfectly, hitting the nail on the head as only another poet could:

'What an antithetical mind: tenderness, roughness; delicacy, coarseness; sentiment, sensuality; soaring and grovelling; dirt and deity... all mixed up in that one compound of inspired clay!' Complicated and brilliant, Burns resists being put in a box, so appreciating his words each day bring us as close to a fully dimensional idea of him as we might ever get."

Mackay is a lecturer in Robert Burns Studies at the University of Glasgow and hosts the podcast series #TaeTheBar".



RBANA Director Wins Virtual "Tam The Glorious" Competition During Tam Fest

The RBWF sponsored Tam Fest 'Tam O' Shanter' poem oration competition was held on Saturday 10th October and was hosted by the newly installed RBWF President Marc Sherland. There were 3 strong competitors who took part from both North America, Ron Pratt and Jim Osborne from Calgary, and RBANA Canadian Director Andy Harrower of the Medicine Hat Burns Club and 2 from the UK. The judges who were Polly Beck, a Speech & Drama Specialist; Jackie Higgins, Senior Vice President of the Dumfries Ladies Burns Club, who, in normal times, host a similar competition in the Globe Inn; and RBANA President, and RBWF Senior Vice President Henry Cairney had an extremely hard task in picking a winner, but they chose our own Andy

Harrower, as the overall winner, with David Brown from Greenock Burns Club a very close second.

Andy will receive a Certificate as the winner.

Congratulations Andy you did RBANA proud!

TO SEE THE RECORDED COMPETITION GO TO

<http://www.rbwf.org.uk/tamfest-2020-the-rbwf/>



RBANA Luminaries Featured in Podcast

The New Cumnock Burns Club presents a "podcast" "My Life With Robert Burns" which is accessible on YouTube. They have presented, to date, 17 episodes, each featuring a different guest. Three of those guests are very familiar to all RBANA members: President Henry Cairney, RBWF Canadian Director Ronnie O'Byrne, and RBANA Canadian Director Andy Harrower. Other guests have included past Federation Presidents Angus Middleton and Jane Brown.



To view any of the episodes just search for New Cumnock Burns Club on YouTube.





RBANA salutes and pays tribute to all current and past members of our Armed Forces, and remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

LEST WE FORGET

The Song of Death

Farewell, thou fair day, thou green earth, and ye skies,
Now gay with the broad setting sun;
Farewell, loves and friendships, ye dear tender ties,
Our race of existence is run!
Thou grim King of Terrors; thou Life's gloomy foe!
Go, frighten the coward and slave;
Go, teach them to tremble, fell tyrant! but know
No terrors hast thou to the brave!

Thou strik'st the dull peasant-he sinks in the dark,
Nor saves e'en the wreck of a name;
Thou strik'st the young hero-a glorious mark;
He falls in the blaze of his fame!
In the field of proud honour-our swords in our hands,
Our King and our country to save;
While victory shines on Life's last ebbing sands, -
O! who would not die with the brave!

A Mother's Lament For the Death of Her Son

Fate gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart;
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.

By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonour'd laid;
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravish'd young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.

Death, oft I've feared thy fatal blow.
Now, fond, I bare my breast;
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

Though not written by Burns, this poem, penned on the battlefield at Ypres by a Canadian physician, and grandson of Scottish immigrants, is so tied to Remembrance/Veterans Day it seemed appropriate to include.

In Flanders Fields

Lt Col John McCrae MD

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



Stay Safe
&
Think Burns