

## Phyl Smith - Biography

*Writer, poet, amateur Scottish historian, and Robert Burns speaker and devotee.*



As a child growing up in Scotland, I always looked forward to story time. Now, you might think that I am referring to reading or listening to one of the popular children's books of that time, but you'd be wrong. My book of choice was always a facsimile copy of 'Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect', Robert Burns' first edition of his work, printed in Kilmarnock in 1786, and my father's most treasured literary possession.

I started by learning the pronunciation of the words on the page, practicing the Ayrshire dialect, and, as time went on, learning the meaning of the words. Later, I found answers to many of life's perplexities within those pages. When my father gifted me his treasured Burns book, I took it with me wherever I travelled in the world; a British Embassy sponsored Burns Supper in West Africa and speaking engagements at Burns Suppers for The Caledonian Club of San Francisco, The St Andrew's Society of Sacramento, and over the years, at many other Burns Suppers in California, Nevada, and Florida. I also founded the Sierra Nevada Celtic Society and planned and organized many Burns Suppers during my tenure as Society President.

I enjoy writing and performing my own speeches in celebration of the life of Robert Burns, particularly The Immortal Memory which I intersperse with stanzas from Burns' poetry.

### **Phyl Smith**

St Andrew Society of Sarasota, Florida, USA (SASS)

SASS Historian and Secretary of The Robert Burns Club

Robert Burns Association of North America (RBANA) – Member: Academy of Speakers



[imascot4ever@hotmail.com](mailto:imascot4ever@hotmail.com)

775-830-9543

*But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard, In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard. R.B.*