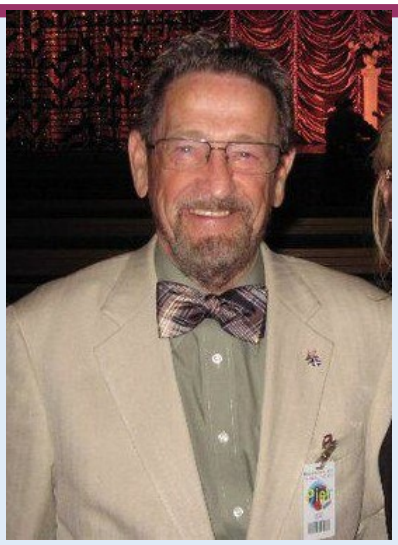
The Tattler



# THE 2025 JACK HUME HEATHER & THISTLE POETRY COMPETITION SUPPLEMENT

On the following pages are the entries in the 2025 Jack Hume, Heather and Thistle Poetry Competition.

Thank you to everyone who put on their poet's hats to create new works of art for the 10th Annual Jack Hume Poetry Competition. We received eight entries, for 2025, and the very worthy winner was Henry Cairney from Calgary Burns Club.

With Henry unable to attend the Atlanta Conference, Vice-President and Competition Convenor Brian Cumming had the honour of presenting the Jack Hume Trophy to Jamie Osborne in Henry's stead at the Gala Dinner on May 10th. Brian later ensured Henry got his due upon return to Calgary (right)

Henry's poem entitled ***"The Bonnie Banks of Nith"*** imagines a walk along the river bank with Robert and his beloved Jean.

Under the point system there were three entries that tied for second. They came from Phyl Smyth of Sarasota Florida with "***The Old Stones"***, Henry Cairney, with ***"The Poltergeist"*** and William Hardie of San Francisco with *"**Whit Eer Will Be Will Be"***.

Third place was awarded to ***"Robert Burns' Lasses"*** by RBWF Individual Member Arthur Cochrane Smith. You can enjoy reading all of the top placed entries along with all the other contenders in this supplement. Please join me in congratulating Henry Cairney for his win and giving the others our thanks for their valiant efforts.

Our thanks also go to the three members of the judging panel, Steve Newman, Temple University and RBANA Regional Director last year's winner Ronnie O'Byrne, Halton-Peel International Burns Club and Jim McLaughlin, Calgary Burns Club.

Looking forward to next year. We can anticipate another strong field. Why not put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard and create your own masterpiece!

# *1st Place*

**THE BONNIE BANKS O' NITH**

Down by the Bonie banks o' Nith,
My Jean and I did wander,
Alone the sparklin' stream flows with,
The sound that makes us fonder.

A gentle kiss upon her lips,
Closed een and trembling on her,
My love she o' so gently grips,
My hand in fervent wonder.

Our love is strong, and we will bond,
Eternal life forever,
Altho' the road has hills beyond,
Our passion shall not sever.

O' Rab you'll always be the lad,
When sometimes you will haver,
With fun and love and oft-times sad,
Your rhymes I'll lust with fervour.

To think our life on here will pass,
And some may not remember,
The bonnie banks o' Nith's green grass,
That started our loves ember.


Calgary Burns Club
Jiune 2025

# *Co-2nd Place*

**THE OLD STONES**

The old stones, worn and comforting
Keeping children warm
The castle walls, hostile and brave
Shielding from the storm

Reduced to ruin now, but once alive
Resplendent with Highland pride
Conspiring, defiant, ever vigilant
Liberty, a constant strife.

Bequeathing a legacy, a benefaction of pride
Bestowed from within the heart
Molding our nation, shaping our destiny
Casting the die apart.

So sad now, those old stones
Tumbling slowly to the ground
So sad, everything's gone now
Without even a sound.

Distant centuries and one cause
Not forgotten, but enduring
In the heart of true Scots
Forever constant, and unrelenting.

So sleep, eternal patriots, sleep on
Liberty will be restored
One stone atop one stone
Shielding, from the storm.


St Andrew Society of Sarasota
Jiune 2025

# *Co-2nd Place*

**The Poltergeist**

My memory's no whit it used tae be,
Ah'll lay things doon, nay mair tae see,
Forget the last thocts on ma mind,
And find ah'm in a heck o a bind.

I go tae work tae toil and strife,
All day ahm oot and leave the wife,
Tae carrie oan and keep the hoose,
In order, and as quiet as a moose.

But folks it is an awfy worry,
When you return, and have tae scurry,
Tae find yer seat that ye left last nicht,
Foond itself, moved and bricht.

In anither place, nae at the fire,
Bit a place of which my wife inspired,
And instead o sittin' oan the ground,
Ah spied the chair safe and sound.

But, I never gave her onny hassle,
I jist asked "dear is this ma castle",
Or a place thit ah must doss at hame,
While you apply the movin' game!

Oor family has asked a question,
Aboot ma wifes abject attention,
Tae shift a number o simple pleasures,
Intae a hunt o long lost treasures.

She helps wae ma daughter dear,
Shes done that fur mony a year,
But ma family have some real concerns,
That perhaps the hoose seems tae turn around.

She'll luk et the hoose in a hurry,
And roond and roond she'll scurry,
Lik a tornado in a summer chase,
The contents will find a brand new place.

Until the folks appear at nicht,
And turn on the brilliant ceiling licht,
And realize their contents clear,
Have gone and bloody disappeared

So noo the chase is on,
Tae find the new location gone,
Retrieve their treasures and comfort things,
And settle doon tae a nichts sweet ring.

If ye think its ower ye urny sane,
This hide an seek's an awfy game,
And oan an oan it will sustain,
Till aw the things are back again.

The poltergeist is real my friends,
She is looking at the modern trends,
And only trying tae help ye oot,
Wae her helpin haunds an a handy cloot.

Ye widnae need tae let her loose,
If only ye hid kept yer hoose,
In a tidy state, wae awething in place,
She wid hae left, withoot a trace.

So if yer gonnie gie a job,
In hooses all aroond the globe,
My message here, its nae say nice,
Beware, the silent Poltergeist!


Calgary Burns Club
Jiune 2025

# *Co-2nd Place*

**WHIT EER WILL BE WILL BE**

Fir mony, life kin be sae hard,
Whit the future hods, we canna see.
Struggle or strive wi thine caird,
Ken whit eer will be will be!

See gurglin bairns aw nice an clene,
Wi neer a cair in aw the warld.
Jist wee aeples o adorin een,
Sic hope fir futures, yet unfurld!

See gigglin weans aff tae the skael,
Wi freens an ithirs yet tae meet!
Thir learnin' path, or road tae hell,
Lang syne tae mind, or tae forgit?

See gallus gangs o lads an lassies,
Aft feart, embraced an envied.
Sic trends in style an dresses,
Tae follow suit, or be excluded!

See grindin workers at thir coalface,
Whit eer be thir role in life,
Day-in, day-oot, ae relentless race,
Fir ae life o bliss, or wan o strife!

See gowdin agers fair an braw,
Thir lessons lernt, or loast fir ivir,
Fir thay hae seen an dun it aw
Yit hope fir future, still tae savir!

# *3rd Place*

**ROBERT BURNS' LASSES**

A long-long list of lasses passed thru Robert Burns' life
From one night stands with servant girls..... to Jean Armour his wife.
And in between were ladies with impressive pedigrees,
and some were very beautifu1,..... most everyone agrees.

When Rob was only fifteen..,..... Nel Kilpatrick caught his eye;
Then "charming fillette" Margaret Thompson,..... Burns gave her a try.
Wrote letters asking marriage to..... young Alison Begbie,.....
but she rejected Rob,..... he was depressed as he could be.

Once Robert's father, William, died,..... Rob got involved again.
This time with Lizzie Paton ..... servant girl, his mother's friend.
A daughter was produced and brought into the Burns household,.....
but mother Lizzie left the scen€2..... that's how the story's told.

Next up Jean Armour, "Mauchline Lass".... had found Rob's wondering eye...
Her parents were not pleased... when she was pregnant by this guy.
They ripped the marriage document,..... made her repent her sins,...
while all of this was happening she.... produced a set of twins.

An angered Rob,..... Jamaica bound, .....his farm and love life shattered,
meets Margaret Campbell... "Highland Mary"..... she's now the one who mattered.
Preparing to leave Scotland..... news received from Greenock said,.....
(though mystery surrounds the cause)..... that Highland Mary's dead.

Now Burns decides he'll stay in Scotland,..... moves to Edinburgh.
His poet reputation Browing,..... now who'll be his girl?
The women there a different sort,..... not farmers daughters they;
While Rob wants to get "down to business"..... they would rather play.

Beyond the drawing rooms of Edinburgh's classy women...
were the salty taverns of the "Mile".... where nice girls were forbidden.
Burns, in the city.... eighty-six..... and stayed 'till eighty-eight,....
was comfortable in either scene,..... just looking for a mate.

**Continued pg. 8**

Soon after his arrival?|,..... Burns finds Agnes McLehose.
Their relationship platonic.... far as anybody knows.
"Clarinda" and "Sylvander"..... names they chose for one another,
Expressed their feelings through love letters,..... sent to each the other.

Now enter Peggy Chalmers,..... Burns just loved this lassie so.
Rob even asked to marry her..... but Peggy told him.... "no."
He wrote a special love song for her called..... "My Peggy's Charms,".....
even though he would,.... no longer,.... hold her in his arms.

The servant girl to Agnes,..... Jennie Clow ..... was asked to take
a letter from Clarinda to Sylvander,..... goodness sake!
He seduced her on the spot..... and in her pregnancy,
issued a writ acknowledging..... Burns' paternity

Another servant girl..... Mav Cameron..... spent some time with Burns.
By June of eighty-seven..... she is pregnant..... Robbie learns.
She also served him with a writ..... in case he tried to flee,...
but May miscarried,..... thus the end,..... now this time Rob was free.

He finally marries Jean,..... moves to the farm at Ellisland.
Good fortune strikes,..... Rob's now appointed..... as an Exciseman.
Jean produces two more sons..... then almost as a lark,
Robbie has a daughter with..... Globe barmaid,.... Anna Park.

ln February ninety-one..... Rob falls..... and break's his arm;
deems Ellisland a failure,..... he'll no longer.... work the farm.
He'll move the family down to Dumfries,..... all the kids and Jean...
A promotion in the Excise,..... much more money .....it will mean.

Another Lady enters Burns' life..... Ma...rie Riddell.
She claimed to be a poet,.... they both hit it off quite well;
until one night at Friars Carse,..... Rob took to rowdy drinking.
No longer welcome in her home,..... what could he have been thinking?

Another Jean..... infactuated .....Burns beyond belief,
inspiring many love songs,.... he re-christened her... "Chlo... rees."
Yet faithful wife, Jean,.... had more babies..... totaling nine lives
And 'twas quoted saying....."Oor Rab.... should hae had..... twa wives!"

**Continued pg. 9**

Those long, harsh years of farmir8,..... Burns' body paid a price.
By summer ninety-six..... he'd make the final sacrifice.
Yet even on his deathbed,..... Robbie fell in love a-GAIN.....
with household helper Jessy Lewers,..... despite his constant pain.

So in the year of ninety-six,..... July the twenty-first,
poet Robert Burns has died,..... his soul at last dispersed.
He lived..... it seemed..... a thousand years,..... but only thirty-seven.
He's now with all his lassie friends..... forever up in heaven.


Individual Member, RBWF
June 2025

# *Other Entries*

## The Terrible Tarantula

Hey, in old Mexico, I'm a gringo I know,
But when there I can share, my worries and care,
Cause booze all the time, is mixed with some lime,
This concoctions sweeter, they call margarita.

Cockroaches are 'Bugs' which look like brown 'Lugs',
Crawl all round their feet, which isnae a treat,
But they just flip them ower, on their backs fur an hour,
Until they peg oot, or if lucky, the'll scoot.

There are beesties so big, that they look like a wig,
Crawling the flair with a bite that is sair,
The locals they dance, as if in a trance,
Their feet fairly swinging, to miss out the stinging.

With eight een they stare, and climb oan a chair,
Then tickle yer thigh, wae their hair rubbing by,
And maybe they'll land, a wee bite oan yer hand,
Or dance to the music, in time with the band.

The name o' the dance, which isnae fae France,
Tarantella they dae, through the night and the day,
Swirlin' and twirlin', their bodies are birlin',
Like a guid eightsome reel, when ye throw girls tae squeal.

The "Arachnia's" sprightly, so don't take this lightly,
Its up on the top, of the table, chins drop,
Everyone Sweating, some clearly fretting,
There is nae escape, there eye's all agape,

This dark apparition, is set oan a mission,
Tae scare a' the toon, an' pit people doon,
But up the bartender, is swingin' a mender,
Tae fell the foul beast, and all the noise ceased.

The mallet he moved, and a' the crowd Ooo'd,
'Cause something was missing, noo a' the crowd's hissing,
And Winsie was beltin', its legs fairly meltin',
Richt oot the front door, ne'er seen no more. .

# *Other Entries*

**SOME PARTY, SAME RESULT**

Did we aw no say?
“Nae Scotland, nae party”!
Wir kilts we did wear,
An stridin oan air,
Did the Tartan Army,
March tae Allemange!

The powr o the fitba,
Doth touch ane an aw!
The pride o oor nation,
Wis this generation.
Ae dream, we could see,
Ae result, it could be!

The Tartan Army did roar,
Stirrd up a guid splore.
But, frae hope cam despair,
Three gemes, nothin mair
Ae sad sicht tae see,
Oh dear god, deary me!

Tae the next opportunity,
Tae claim oor destiny!
Cause jist like afore,
Wir gan back fir more!
An pray we may see,
Oor lads wi the gree!


*San Francisco Caledonian Club*
*Jiune 2025*

# *Other Entries*

**A TWILIGHT WALK WITH ROBERT BURNS**

Come, Let us take a walk in the evening fair.
Along the river banks of Ayr.
Robert Burns will be our guide.
He views the lovely scene with pride.

After a day of toil and grime,
He's happy to walk at eventide.
The sunset view is so romantic.
His mood is not at all platonic.

He sees a lovely lassie there.
She is so sweet and fair.
He dashes home and sits right down
to capture the magic (with quite a flare.)

The soft brown hair that curls around her face,
The lovely arms that long for his embrace.
He reaches out in a fantasy of love
and scoops her up to be his own true love.

He signs his name to the letter written
to the lass of Ballochmyle, and folds it lovingly.
His heart is racing to post this letter,
(Swift as a bird in flight.)
He posts the letter and whispers, "Good Night".