

The Chanter

Nottingham Scottish Association Newsletter
October 2009

Two Lowlands Cinquains

Glasgow: sunlight after storm

Dark kirk
skail their steeped
shades in pools of troubled
fire: in restless streets, no time to
reflect

Polkemmet Epitaph

Whitna
wanchancy smash
Dinged doon bings, heid-frames, up-
-roars of steam and smoke intae green
Silence?

From the President

It hardly seems more than the blink of an eye since the last Chanter was published but, in that time, we've moved from the tail end of a damp summer into (at the time of writing) a spell of mellow autumn weather. The leaves are turning and a recent walk gave us some memorable colours.

For the Association, this is the time of year when our members, including Sue and me, return from holidays in exotic (or possibly less exotic) places and our weekly dances get into full swing. If you are, or have been, or wish to become a dancer, why not come and join us? You'll find a warm welcome and an enjoyable social activity - 7.30 on Thursday evenings at St Andrews with Castle Gate Church Hall, Chaucer Street– just turn up!

We have also enjoyed, courtesy of Bernice Young, a couple of delightful country walks and these will continue at regular(ish) intervals – the next one being on Friday, 13th November... Details from Bernice.

Also coming soon are our Hallowe'en Cèilidh on Saturday 31st October (of course) and the annual St. Andrew's Night Dinner and Dance on Saturday 28th November. This is followed by the St. Andrew's Day service on Sunday 29th November. Your council works hard to make these events happen and I hope you will be able to attend them.

Details of these are elsewhere in the Chanter and also on the web at www.nottinghamscottish.org.uk .

Andrew

In the next edition: all the usual items plus a new series, '*Heroes from History*', the first of which remembers David Park and a dramatic rescue in Ayrshire, sixty years after the event.

Homecoming 2009

Since January , celebrations have been held across Scotland and around the world to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns.

This year has been taken as an opportunity to mark the contribution made to our heritage by other great Scots, and by Saint Andrew's Day more than three hundred events will have been enjoyed by those at home in Scotland or welcomed as visitors.

So it is fitting that the annual meeting of the Robert Burns World Federation should be held in Edinburgh on the first week-end in September. The members and delegates stayed in the Holiday Inn at Corstorphine (next to the Zoo) but the reception, given by the Scottish Parliament, was held in the National Gallery at the foot of the Mound. Among the world-famous art treasures we were welcomed by Alex Salmond and entertained by songs and recitations whilst being supplied liberally with wine and food, presumably at the expense of the Scottish taxpayer. It was just as well that transport between the venue and the hotel was by coach!

After two hundred and fifty years you could be almost certain that nothing new could be discovered about Robert Burns. But earlier this year documents have been found which shed a little more light on him. At Glasgow University the Centre for Robert Burns Studies has embarked on an ambitious project, in conjunction with Oxford University Press, to produce a new multi-volume edition of his work which will bring together everything known about him. Such a massive undertaking will require several years of work, so many of us will have to make do with what we now have.

The inaugural dinner for the new President of the Burns Federation, Michael Duguid, was held in the grand reception suite at Murrayfield. Three hundred and sixty people sat down to enjoy the ceremony, the food and one another's company – followed by a little light exercise on the dance floor – before being taken back by coach to the hotel, some time after midnight.

On Sunday morning there was a service in the Canongate Kirk and the unveiling of a new bust of Burns to conclude a memorable gathering of Burns enthusiasts.

Dennis Willey

Scotch Fractions?

A hauf
'n' a hauf

Alexander Scott

Back Hame....

As someone who was born and spent his early years in Singapore, the term 'back hame' is at the very least ambiguous. Where, exactly, is 'my hame'? This wasn't a problem for my parents' generation – they knew very well where they belonged and it was the East Neuk and the Howe of Fife. The younger generation (sadly not quite so young by now!), my sisters and cousins were not brought up in Fife and are now fairly thoroughly spread across the world. Nevertheless, family stories and family history have regularly called us back to Fife and the links remain – our homes may be elsewhere, but Fife is 'our hame'.

For me, memories of Fife go back to early childhood when we would visit my Granny in Cupar and what seemed like a host of assorted aunts, cousins and goodness knows who. Cupar is maybe less well known than St Andrews and some of the East Neuk fishing villages. Most people probably drive through it on their way to St Andrews. It is, however, a Royal Burgh – even if that no longer

has a legal meaning - of some antiquity having been granted that status around the end of the 13th century. It was also the county town of Fife until the 1975 local government re-organisation created the Fife Regional Council and took its headquarters to Glenrothes. Historically, Cupar has mostly led a quiet life, with its one real claim to fame being that it hosted under Alexander III an early meetings of the three estates (clergy, nobility and burgesses)– which evolved into the Scottish Parliament.



Cupar – the Merklat Cross and 'Granny Brown's House'

My Granny's house was (and still is, though she is long since departed) close to the centre of Cupar beside the Moat Hill – a green ridge winding through the centre of the town. No doubt it was a playground for my mother as it was for me. It is also close to the Bell-Baxter Academy, founded by Andrew Bell – more of him later – which my mother attended. She took pride all her life at having been Dux of her year. (In researching this article, I was pleased to see the title of Dux was still being awarded as recently as 2008!)

My next encounter with Fife came with my dispatch at the age of 9 from Singapore to boarding school in St Andrews. This was New Park School, now defunct, on Hepburn Gardens close to the edge of town – and well before the Bogward Estate sprawled over what was then farmland. As you can probably imagine, this came as something of a shock – and not just that ever-present East Wind. Fortunately, it didn't take too long to settle down and, looking back on it from these overcautious, Health and Safety driven days, we had a remarkable amount of freedom to explore the town and its surroundings – seemingly without any adult concern for our whereabouts!

Most people will link St Andrews with golf, the University, the Castle, the Cathedral and a long colourful and blood-stained history. For a small boy, I was much more interested in Janetta's Ice Cream - still going strong and highly recommended! The West and East Sands, the harbour and the Lade Braes were other playgrounds.

At that time, a trip to St Andrews was either made by train or involved ferry crossings of the Forth or Tay (the Forth and Tay Road bridges date back only to the mid-60s) so traffic was relatively light, which is difficult to believe if you drive through St Andrews now. This meant that we pupils were able to cycle into town – and into the surrounding countryside – at weekends. Had you been there, you would have seen us haring through the old gate to the town – the West Port – and along South Street past the old building of Madras College.

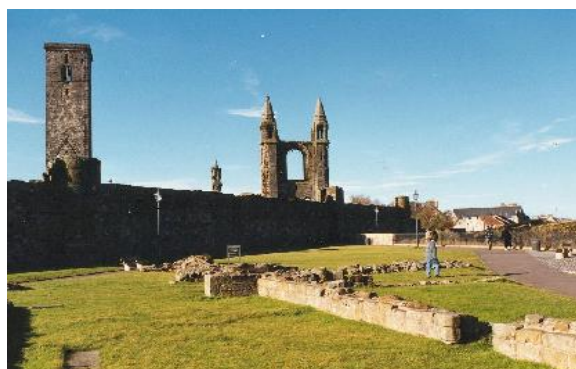
Madras College always held some fascination for me as it was my founded by Dr Andrew Bell, who was, to quote the Madras College website, 'a relative' of my great grandfather Andrew Bell Morrison. Madras was also the alma mater of several generations of Morrisons. Dr Bell was a prominent clergyman and academic who made a fortune in Madras - hence the name. While in Madras he had run a school using what he called the 'monitorial system'. Basically the older pupils were used to teach the younger, and that was the approach originally used in the schools he founded in Scotland. I sometimes wonder how that might work today...cheaper than using teachers, I suppose, which might endear it to the next government!

If we chose to walk into town from school our route went along the Lade Braes, following the

Kinness Burn through a steeply wooded valley with a real rural feel to it – still a favourite walk of mine and, indeed, many St Andrews citizens. The Kinness Burn eventually winds its way to the sea between the harbour and the East Sands.



The Pier Walk and St Andrews Cathedral



If you had visited the harbour on any term-time Sunday morning over the last 100 years, you would have seen the Pier Walk, an old tradition of St Andrews University. Students walk down the hill in procession and along the pier and back wearing their bright red gowns. It is a spectacular sight. No doubt many students never do the walk – how many students actually see a Sunday morning? Sadly, at the moment, the pier is closed for renovation but the tradition was still upheld as recently as my daughter's time at the University.

Above the harbour stand the ruins of the cathedral – built over a 150 year period and dedicated in 1318 by King Robert 1 (the Bruce). It was not to last long. Battered by the weather, parts of it collapsed and a fiery sermon by John Knox inspired its congregation to destroy all traces of popery in 1559. Only the ruins remain, but they stand proud and grey above the North Sea and the town.

As for my family, most of our direct links with Fife are now gone. One small piece, however, remains. On the inner wall of the cathedral is a memorial to my direct ancestors back as far as my Great Great Grandfather. My place is booked there – not for a while yet I hope - and then St Andrews can truly be said to be 'my home'.

Andrew Morrison

Margaret Lorimer Donaldson, 1923-2009

Margaret was born in the East Neuk in 1923, attending Cellardyke Primary and Waid Academy, Anstruther, before her studies in Chemistry at St. Andrews were cut down to two years by the activities of a certain Herr Schickelgruber. She worked briefly for I.C.I. and rejoined them briefly after returning to complete her degree after the war, graduating with honours.

Her move to Boots brought her to Nottingham where she would spend the rest of her life, eventually, perhaps appropriately, leading a team in the development of Brufen, later Ibuprofen, by which so many of us have benefited during Summer School week and otherwise! She attended St. Andrew's with Castle Gate Church for sixty years and, as well as being the second Branch teacher to qualify for her full Certificate from Miss Milligan, spent what remained of her free time on walking, membership of the Hardy Plants Association and the University of the Third Age.

At her funeral on Thursday, 17th September the Branch, the Association, the Kirk and Boots were all well represented. We shall miss her.

Windows Recall

It has come to our attention that a few copies of the Scotland version of Windows 98 may have accidentally been shipped outside Scotland. If you have one of the Scotland editions you may need some help understanding the commands. The Scotland edition may be recognized by looking at the opening screen. It reads **WINDAES 98, Ye Ken**, with a background picture of William Wallace superimposed on a St. Andrews Cross. It is shipped with a Mel Gibson screen saver.

Also note:

the Recycle Bin is called	'The Bucket.'
My Computer is called	'Thon Computer Thingie.'
Dialup Networking is called	'Phone the Bhoys.'
Control Panel is known as	'the Dashboard.'
Hard Drive is referred to as	'the tractor.'
Floppies are referred to as '	thae wee plastic disc hings.'

Other features:

Instead of an error message you get a windae covered with a picture of a neep.

OK = 'at's fine' -	cancel = na na ma loon
reset = Och ye'd be as weel startin' again	
yes = Och aye	no = nae chance man
go to = go'n ower 'ere' -	back = back the wye
help = gis a haun' -	stop = pack it in
start = com on 'en' -	settings = sittins

programs = **stuff whit daes stuff**
documents = **stuff ah huv done afore**
find = **if ye'd bothered to pit it past in a safe place, ye widnae need to look for it noo**

Also note that Windaes 98 does not recognise capital letters or punctuation marks.

Some programs that are exclusive to Windaes 98:

Pencil an paper.....A word processor
Colourin book.....a Graphics program
Addin machine.....calculator
Andrex.....notepad
Jukebox.....CD player
Photies.....A graphics viewer
Tax records.....usually an empty file

We regret any inconvenience it may have caused if you received a copy of the Scotland edition. You may return it to Microsoft for a replacement version.

Overheard on the dance-floor:

“There seem to be rather a lot on this side%”
(Ever seen five people in a reel of three?)

“Just keep going round in little circles and the men will come to you%”
(A men's chain, or advice from a ladies' life coach?)

Coming Events

Saturday 31 October 2009: Hallowe'en Ceilidh

St Andrews with Castlegate, 7.30 - 11.00

A seasonal mix of dance, music and games with a Hallowe'en flavour.
Information and tickets (£5) from Bernice Young (Tel: 0115 9637228)

Friday, 13th November : Ramble

Contact Bernice Young for details (Tel: 0115 9637228)

Saturday 28 November 2009: St Andrews Night

Dinner and Dance

Nottingham Masonic Hall

The annual St Andrews Night Dinner and Dance is one of the highlights of the year. Details and an application form for tickets are enclosed with this edition of the chanter. Please come and bring your friends - why not book a table?

Sunday 29 November 2009: St Andrews Day Service

St Andrews by Castle Gate, 11.00 a.m.

All welcome.

Saturday 23 January 2010: Burns Night Dinner

Nottingham Masonic Hall

Details to follow in the next Chanter - but please book in your diary now!

They Are The Champions - So Sew What?

A First Place – A Third Place – and a Reserve Certificate. Southwell Ploughing Match and Agricultural Show was the venue and early on Saturday morning Bernice Young, Isobel Logan and Jeanne Dall set up their exhibits in the handicraft tent. Our ladies had entered their work in the 'Sewn Item' section. There was a wide variety of work on display in different sections. Two hours later when the judges had completed their task, the girls returned and were delighted to find certificates attached to their work.

Bernice got a well deserved 'First' with a sewn picture of her house at Linby. The picture was designed and sewn by Bernice from a series of photographs laid side by side to create a panoramic view of the house and garden. Jeanne was delighted with her 'Third Place' certificate with her first-ever entry. Jeanne's large cross-stitch was an 'oriental garden sampler' which took nearly five years to complete. Isobel was in a slightly different section and was equally delighted with a 'Reserve Certificate' for her quilted cushion cover.

Well done, ladies!

(Rumour has it that they are entering the ploughing section next year, so we had all better scatter)

WALK 5th Oct 09

Monday 5th October was a fine day for weather, a great day for a walk and especially a grand day for an unveiling. All this started at "Tommywoods" (my home if there is anyone who doesn't know that) with seventeen members and friends in attendance. I'd had an impulse buy, something I've never done in my life before (except at Tesco's) but I saw and fell in love with Obadiah II. Of course **he** wasn't actually created at that time; it was the original recycled metal sculpture horse exhibited at Moorgreen how that had

blown me away. Mine is smaller & cheaper than the original.

Starting the unveiling at 10 a.m., Bucks Fizz was served & we drank toast to Obadiah II. Why 'The Second' ? Obadiah was the sulptor!

That completed, sixteen of us started the five mile walk, up the yellow brick road" (a disused railway) towards and through ewstead village, crossing the Robin Hood line at Annesley and into Annesley Woods. A circuit of the woods took us into Newstead Village and the Miners' Welfare Café where our lunch had been pre-ordered. This little cafe served good food at very competitive prices. After this comfort stop we returned to Tommywoods via the 'yellow brick road'. On arrival Obadiah II was found to have a visitor, a 2'6" Indian complete with tomahawk. It was obvious that the joker was the one who chickened out of the walk...

The walks were started to encourage people to come and join us from outside the association and hopefully enjoy our company enough to join us in other functions we put on and become a member/associate member. This walk already has four new people from outside the Association booked in on the Halloween Night on 31st Oct. Please come and meet them.

The next walk will be on Friday 13th November, an easy date to remember. Whatever the weather I hope to see you there, please let me know. Telephone 0115 9637228.

Bernice Young

Scottish Country Dance Dates

Saturday, 21st November – RSCDS Nottingham is holding a 'walkthrough' social dance at Burton Joyce Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. The aim is to introduce beginners and improvers to a selection of straightforward dances which crop up in the local repertoire but experienced dancers will be most welcome too!. Further details from David.

Friday, 27th November – Caledonian Society of Lincoln, annual social dance at the Village Hall, Skellingthorpe, Lincs., to the music of **George Meikle**. Tickets and further details from Marion Rance on 01522 804 799

Calling all makars..

Does nobody in the association write music, devise dances, write poetry or short stories, or sketch? All such contributions to 'The Chanter' would be welcome – and that includes further writing on 'My Hame' which has made such a promising start with articles from Bill Dall and Andrew.