

Howff Club News

The newsletter of the Dumfries Burns Howff Club

APRIL 2011

Our president looks back on memorable evenings

New events mark Neil's year

The past year has gone by quickly and I'm delighted to have had the privilege of presiding over some excellent evenings at the Globe Inn and while at the Moreig Hotel.

There have been several memorable moments such as the address by John Caskie to Jean Armour at her statue and then later that day by John Young from Dumbarton during the Jean Armour Supper.

My year got off to a pleasurable start at the beginning of summer when a group of members and friends visited Jennings brewery and then Whitehaven when unusually warm sunny weather gave us the opportunity to join an informative walking tour of what was England's busiest port.

There was a welcome return and what I hope will be an addition to the club's programme of events when we sat down in the Globe Inn for the alternative fish supper. It was a real fun night with lots of Howff club favourites.

During the summer the Edinburgh and District Association of Burns Clubs hosted its inaugural recitation competition in which Gordon Johnston, club librarian, represented us.

We were entertained in the Burns monument on Calton Hill before being welcomed by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in the city chambers. Later in the year, I once again represented the Howff Club in Edinburgh at the St Andrews day service in St Giles Cathedral. Normally

FROM ME TO YOU: President Neil Johnston presents Sir Neil McIntosh with a gift on St Andrews night.



the Robert Burns fraternity has a large contingency but three feet of snow had stopped a lot of people travelling to this lively and splendid event.

The Howff Club has probably provided more Robert Burns World Federation presidents than any other club and it was another highlight of my year to see our very own David Baird invested at my first RBWF conference in September.

On November 1, due to remedial work on the Globe Inn, our Halloween supper was held in the Moreig Hotel and while it was comfortable it just wasn't hame. None the less we did have an excellent evening with superb entertainment, which included a return visit from Liam Stewart and Andy Kain.

I was delighted that talented Bobby Jess, a new club member, recited Tam o' Shanter.

It is a pleasure to listen to our young people reciting and interpreting the works of our Bard and the schools competition was of a high standard. It bodes well for the future of the Burns movement.

The St Andrew's dinner had Sir Neil McIntosh delivering a memorable address to Auld Scotia and Willie Horn and Chris Rollie ensured that this was an evening to remember.

As January arrived the plans for the Anniversary Dinner were changing and I owe a big thanks to Harry Hutchison and Donald Urquhart for standing in at the last moment. It turned out to be a night to remember and it is difficult to single out anything specific that made the evening so memorable.

My ambition was that everyone would have an enjoyable year. I think the club activities and functions achieved this aim. As President of the Howff Club it has been busy and I thank David Smith for his enormous help. I wish Frank and future presidents to enjoy this role with the continued support of everyone.

STOP PRESS



IT'S MY ROUND: Neil receives a "symbolic bottle" from Bruichladdich Distillery's Duncan McGillvray after winning a 32-litre cask, duty paid.



PHOTO CALL: members and distinguished guests meet in the Howff clubrooms at the Globe Inn before this year's Anniversary Dinner.

On the presidential path



Another year in the Howff Club approaches and I am about to assume the role of President. Time flies, it hardly seems any time at all since, much to my surprise, I was appointed Junior Vice President of the Club.

"God knows I'm no the thing I should be

Nor am I even the thing I could be"

I joined the Howff Club in 1980 having been proposed for membership by

Jim Scott. I have always been proud to be a member of the club and I look forward to what it know will be a busy presidential year and to following in the footsteps of so many distinguished presidents.

I would like to make it an objective of my year to involve as many members as possible in the activities of the club. Apart from the main functions there are a number of other worthwhile events that I would encourage members to attend. For example, our winter lec-

tures have been delivered by many distinguished speakers. In the past year they have included Professor David Purdie, Simon Thorp from the Heather Trust, Malcolm Creedon from Solway Offset, Denis Chanarin from Loch Arthur Community, Marion Aitken and our own John Clark with poems and pictures from Oz.

I look forward to representing the club at as many functions as possible and trust you will all have an enjoyable year.

DIARY DATES from David Smith

May 19, Thursday – Club Bowling Night, Dock Park, 7pm.

July 4, Monday – Jean Armour Dinner, Globe Inn, 7pm following the wreath-laying ceremony at Jean Armour statue.

July 20, Wednesday – Brow Well Service, Ruthwell, at 7pm.

July 14, Thursday – Club Treasure Hunt, from Globe Inn, 7pm

September 15, Sunday – Bowling match with Dumbar-ton Burns Club at Dumfries. Other events and outings are in preparation and details will be announced.

The AGM will be held on April

28 and will include reports on the proposed renovations to the clubroom and ante-room.

The facsimile window panes with inscriptions by Burns will be on display later.

Howff Club Email Express

was launched last summer and is issued occasionally and now established. It's a good way of getting news and information out quickly. If you don't have internet access but your children or

grandchildren are agreeable and have an email address, send their address to the secretary at david.smith78@virgin.net

There are still some of club ties available for sale, navy and maroon at £10.

If you have any photographs of club events or personalities, send them to me for the archive on our website. They will be returned.

The website carries photographs and reports of all the functions and activities, as well as the President's Blog. Catch up by visiting www.burnshowffclub.org



RED NOSE DAY: members enjoy Christmas lunch in the clubrooms.