



XII Talk

Special Edition No 9

2nd April 2014

The Biggest Burns Supper In Inverclyde!



The Burns Supper on Saturday 1st March was a huge success. We had our biggest attendance yet at Inverclyde's biggest Burns Supper— almost 170 – and the Town Hall was looking absolutely spectacular. Tony Buckley's team, assisted by the Inverclyde Leisure staff, had the place beautifully set out and the whole spectacle was set off by the Lodge's old Square and Compasses having pride of place suspended above the stage in a

starry back drop (see above with Chair Bro Ian Ross PM getting the evening under way). This was reminiscent of years gone by when they always had that place at our big occasions. Sadly, they had been lost for a while, then returned to sit on the stage but this year their resurrection was complete. The illuminated square and compasses was donated to the Lodge by Bro Thos McIntyre WSW on 13th December 1938.

Our affiliate member Bro Alasdair Beaton IPM of Lodge The Gael No 609 piped in the the top table to the old 2/4 March written by John McColl in the early 1920s, The Clan McColl, and that got the evening under way in traditional style. Perhaps not so traditional was the Alarm received by Worshipful Junior Warden Bro Alan Glen from Inner Guard Bro Iain White. 'The haggis demands admission', he was told. This information was relayed to RWM Bro Alan Beck who immediately acceded. The beast was duly borne in by Bro Tony Buckley, our President of Stewards and the chef for the evening, and Bro Alasdair played

appropriate Burns tunes on the pipes. RWM Bro Alan himself addressed the haggis with great gusto. Drams were taken!



Piper Alasdair Beaton (IPM Lodge The Gael No 609) and Bro Allan Glen WJW No XII

It was great to have our affiliate member, and Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire West with us at the Top Table. We were grateful to him for so willingly agreeing to deliver the Grace before we had our meal and then doing so with great dignity. Regarding the food, I lost count of the number of people who commented on how wonderful the meal was and ICE (Inverclyde Catering and Events), and its proprietor Bro Tony Buckley, are to be congratulated for doing such a superb job.



Bro Jack Glenny PM (left) has a very impressive Burns CV. A Past President and Honorary President of the Greenock Burns Club (The Mother Club), Jack has spoken all over the world at Burns gatherings. We were very fortunate to have him deliver the Immortal Memory for us. He began in light

Jack in full flow

hearted fashion but that belied the insightful and well thought out message that was to follow. Bro Jack highlighted many of the facets of the life of Robert Burns. He spoke of the man's remarkable success, how well he was known and how well know his poems became. In questioning why this should be so, Bro Jack hypothesised that perhaps in his time, Burns had used the ideal medium for communication. Burns' background and upbringing were significant factors and forces in shaping the man that he became. The son of a farmer, Burns was a man of nature. He was also an intelligent and well-educated man. His father saw the value of education and saw to it that he learned at his own hands and at the hands of John Murdoch. Bro Jack spoke at some length about Burns' connection with freemasonry and his love of the Craft. It was clear that the three grand principles upon which the order is founded – brotherly love, relief and truth – were important aspects of Burns' character. In conclusion, Bro Jack referred to the Bard's discontent about the injustices of the world and how he used his weapon – the pen – to take these injustices on.

Bro Bobby Shaw had the company rocking in their chairs as he toasted The Lassies. His



hilarious speech touched upon his life in 'the Polis' and his involvement with Greenock in that connection, his youth in Glasgow and he poked fun at a number of us who were seated before him. Bro Bobby's speaking life has taken him far and wide - from Dunblane to Dunkeld and, like the Clyde, from Glasgow to Greenock! He was recently devastated when circumstances beyond his control led him to have to step back from a gig in Birkenhead. Maybe it'll be from Birkenhead to Beverley Hills soon! Not surprisingly Bobby's experience and expertise shone through his tremendous contribution to the enjoyment of the evening.

Bobby making a point

Our readers, Bro John Hutcheson and Bro Sandy Reddy both recited epic narrative poems. Bro John's was 'Tam O' Shanter' by Burns. Bro Sandy's was 'Kilcreggan' by the late Davie Bowie, a local writer of humorous tales in rhyme. Whilst the latter was largely unknown to the audience it was just as much appreciated as the more traditional content delivered so expertly by Bro John.



John (left) and Sandy (right)



When we join the craft, helping those less fortunate than ourselves is given great emphasis. The charitable aspect of the Burns Supper is very important and we are grateful to all of those who supported us by generous donations before, or during, the evening.



All the raffles and auctions got a great turn. Our auctioneer, Bro Paul Galbraith did his usual great job and he was ably assisted by Bros Jim McGregor and Alistair Glenny PM. We had 2 gallon bottles of whisky on offer, a day's golf for 4 at Turnberry, a painting of Robert Burns, 8 tickets for the forthcoming Cajun barbeque at Fort Matilda, lunch for 4 at the Dormy House, Gleneagles, a voucher for Robert Alexander (Butchers), Allan Beck to sing for you, hospitality for 4 at a Morton home match at Cappielow and Directors' Box hospitality for 2 at a Rangers home match at Ibrox. In the final analysis over £4000 was raised for the charities on the evening and the work will continue throughout the year.

mugging

The charities that will benefit are Inverclyde Kidney Patients' Association, Soldiers off the Street, Scotland, Marcus Humphrey House, The Little Sisters of the Poor and Children in Poverty Inverclyde. RWM Bro Alan Beck nominated the first four charities, whilst the fifth



was the choice of Provost Robert Moran. Bro Cllr David Wilson, Deputy Provost of Inverclyde, represented the Provost at the Burns Supper and amused us all with his tales which loosely fitted the programme description 'Deputy Provost's Remarks'!

The Deputy Provost entertains

The musical entertainment was simply out of this world. We are all well aware of RWM Bro Alan's professionalism as a singer and we had the joy of hearing him sing not just Burns, but other Scottish songs too. His 'Tartan' medley got the evening off to a rousing start and set the scene for the whole event. Talking about professionalism, how lucky we were that Alan

had Craig Dunsmore accompany him again. As I watch Craig's fingers dance over the keyboard it fills me with wonder and he and Bro Alan are a great duo. Their efforts were complemented in 'These are my mountains' (and indeed The National Anthem) by Jamie Stables on trumpet and Andy McAlees on drums. Greenock's got talent, for sure! The musicians added a great deal to the quality of the evening by their expert playing.



... and it's 'Hey for the Tartan' ...

Andy, Jamie and Craig – the fantastic band



Before the evening was rounded off by the company singing 'The Star o' Rabbie Burns' and 'Auld Lang Syne' in rousing fashion, Bro Bob Bain IPM paid the wages of appreciation in a very warm and sincere Vote of Thanks. Never an easy task, Bob carried it off with aplomb. A particular 'Thank you' is due to Past Master Bro Ian Ross who Chaired the evening so expertly for us. He kept the whole thing moving along whilst injecting his own inimitable humour at appropriate points in the proceedings.



Bob pays the wages of appreciation

As the Bard himself had it in 'The Twa Dogs', 'An' each took aff his several way, resolv'd to meet some ither day'. Well in our case, the **date for your diary** is

No XII Burns Supper 2015 – Saturday 28th February

The Town Hall, Greenock at 630 for 7pm



Back Row From Left: Bros John Hutcheson, Sandy Reddy, Iain White, Bob Bain and Alasdair Beaton

Front Row: Bros Deputy Provost David Wilson, Ian M Ross, Bobby Shaw, Jack Glenly, Alan Beck RWM and Jim Livingstone RWPGM

The usual suspects ... Bros Iain White, Iain Gordon, Alan Beck, Bobby Shaw and John Hutcheson



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Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII
The Saloon of the Town Hall, Greenock
Regular Meetings – 7.30pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays – September to April

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From darkness, light

