



CAPE TOWN CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

Established 1881 NPO Reg No 036-264

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2008

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Dear Member

We hope that Easter was a time of relaxation and renewal for all our members and their families. My recollection of this event in Scotland as a small child was climbing up to the top of the *brae* clutching a basket with a few brightly coloured hard boiled eggs, a bottle of lemonade and a few hot cross buns, and rolling the eggs down the *brae*. On the downward journey they encountered a few hard knocks, so, when we reached the bottom again it was easy to peel the cracked shell from the eggs and enjoy our sumptuous repast.

I don't recall when chocolate eggs and bunnies arrived but then that is not surprising. Perhaps some of you have similar memories? Let's hear!

CHECKING UP ON TARTAN

By Gordon Casely

Weel kent facts litter the story of tartan – that only a Scot may wear it; that every Scot has his or her own tartan; and that **Rob Roy** himself was clad in the time-

honoured sett now named after him. In fact, his tartan first appeared in **1819** under the name **Robin Hood**.

What is a certain fact is that the **21st century** business in tartan is booming. Few major occasions pass in Scotland without a sett or two being designed to mark the occasion. Last year 160 new tartans were recorded, representing people and organisations across a score of nations. There is now even a **St George** tartan for our friends across the border. This joins **Childers Universal** (a reversal of the MacIntosh) specifically for English men and women.

Should we worry about this apparent wholesale abandonment of tradition? Anything which popularises tartan and the wearing of the kilt is alright with me! – except, of course, **Jack McConnel's** infamous **New York Venture** in pinstripe pleats. Tartan is not stationary, nor has ever been; what's accepted as traditional by one generation moves on to become

classical, trendy or downright unacceptable in the next. Incidentally, there is now a beautiful tartan for **Irn Bru** (Iron Brew), our other national drink.

For our Welsh friends there's a good number of tartans to choose from – **Wales National, Pride of Wales, Welsh and St David's**; as well as one for every available surname. As for our Irish friends, there are tartans for each of the 32 counties from **Reynolds to O'Brien**.

There is a rub, however; it is the old tartans that carry the prestige. So those of us who claim the right to one of them may do so with pride, whilst enjoying the fact that the world knows a good thing when it sees it.

In honour of our **Chief and Lady President**, and the late **Past Chief, Neville Ross** we give you the motto of the **Clan Ross**: *Spem successus alit* (success nourishes hope) – **Lyon Register 1,208** (for the benefit of Keith Macfarlane)!

FROM THE CHIEF

Thank you, kind scribe, for your appropriately placed reference above to the Ross clan motto! When I am looking for some inspiration and encouragement I oft remind myself of these meaningful and powerful words.

We can often learn from others and there were two recent occasions earlier this year when I felt we could benefit at our functions by introducing what I had experienced. Let me elaborate.

The first was when we attended the Burns Night celebration staged by the Burns Supper Club which was held about 2 weeks after our own. As a prelude to the formal commencement of the evening all guests

were requested to gather outside Kelvin's front door and to follow the pipe band on a short march around the premises. The skirling of the pipes, the rat-tat-tat of the drums and the large procession of Scots with kilt and tartan immediately drew enormous attention and had many onlookers, drinks in hand, out on the front stoep and dangling from the windows to see what the commotion was about! It made all of us feel really proud that our presence was being announced with such pomp and ceremony. A great experience and certainly something I would like to introduce at an appropriate future function.

The second "experience" was when we attended the Cambrian Society's St David's dinner celebration on 1st March at Mowbray Golf Club. President Ian Jones who was also MC evening for the evening is a delightful character that keeps everyone amused throughout. After dinner when everyone was well oiled a competition was held to see which Welsh county was the best represented amongst those present. Don't ask me for the results but I thought this would also be a great idea for one of our evenings. It stirs up some pride and enthusiasm in peoples roots – whether by birth or descent. Some things can even be learnt from the Welsh – let's hope it is not rugby later this year!

Yours aye,
Peter

FUNCTIONS

Inadvertently the names of the entertainers and guest speaker at our **Burns' Supper** were left out in the previous newsletter. **Connie Garven**, ably accompanied by Honorary Padre and Chieftain **Myra Horn**, and Connie's sister **Mary Corewijn**, moved us all by the beautiful singing of well loved

songs and recital of poetry by the Bard. And despite his promises to the contrary, **John Scott** entertained and amused with his toast to the Immortal Memory.

The visit of the Federation Chief, Margaret Lake, and her husband/consort, Chris, was a truly splendid event, well arranged by the committee from both Societies and our thanks go to those of our and Pinelands' members who came out over Easter to pay homage to them and the committee. What a delightful couple and gracious ambassadors for Caledonianism. At the Celtic Evening we were delightfully entertained by **Taryn Behr** and her dancers performing Irish dancing, a mini pipe band under the able leadership of Pipe Major **Tony Reis** stirred the cockles of our hearts. **Tony Flint** had everyone singing many *Golden Oldies* along lustily. On Sunday, at the regular Easter Sunday service at Gardens Presbyterian Church, **Chris Lake**, ably accompanied by **Myra Horn**, sang an aria from *The Messiah* and **James Patrick** made us all think deeply by his sermon on tears, based on the account in St John of Jesus' appearance to Mary at the tomb. The lunch at Mowbray Golf Club was excellent as usual and afforded Margaret and Chris the opportunity to talk informally to our Council and several of our members.

Visit to the Söderland Museum

Date Saturday 26 April

Time 15:00

Address 102 Simonstown Road, c/o Hopkirk Way, Glencairn.

There is no charge and a glass of wine will be served at the end of the tour. This is a small private museum owned by **Rear Admiral Söderland** who has amassed an amazing collection of naval, historical and fun memorabilia. Those who have been privileged to see it have found it highly interesting and entertaining. If you like the

unusual – join us! For further details and to book please phone **Mieke Gordon at 021 782 5864.**

Tour of Groote Schuur Estate

Date Tuesday 17 June

Time 10:00 – 12:00

Cost R25

The tour of this historic and beautiful estate is most interesting, limited to 40 people and will be followed by tea and refreshments. To book, your full name and ID number will be required – also bring your ID along on the day. Please phone **Margaret Currie at 021 716 3674 or Narina Gilder at 021 531 1820.**

The AGM, whisky tasting, Chief's at Home and Kirkin', and St Andrew's Nicht are in the pipeline. Watch this space!

PINELANDS SOCIETY

Pub Night – 26 April. For further information and to book please telephone **Anne Miller at 021 591 1499 or Anne Stevenson 021554 0302.**

Should you require transport to functions, please telephone our Secretary, **Ian McWalter at 021 685 6000 (a/h)** to arrange this.

NEW MEMBER

We extend a warm welcome to **Joanne McCann.** We are happy indeed to have you as one of us. *Come ben the hoose and gie's yer crack.*

MEMBERS' NEWS

With sadness we report the passing of another **Past Chief** of our Society, **Neville Ross.** I well remember his ever ready smile, his unfailing hospitality, and his pride and pleasure in his Scottish blood. At his memorial service a photograph of him as a young sailor, a later photograph, and his

kilt, sporran and *skein dhu* were laid out to represent the man – a poignant touch. Neville was born in **Bakoven**, did service in the Navy as a young lad and became an electrical engineer. The abiding interests in his life were the Free Masons and the Caledonian Society, vegetable gardening and mountain walking. When we think of him we shall smile. Our heartfelt condolences go to **Rita**, his two daughters and their families.

There are a few members on the sick list who were not mentioned in the last newsletter which had been held over from February to March – so, with apologies, we send our love to **Phyllis Cruickshank and Eleanor Wiseman** in retrospect, hoping they are both now much improved.

Since then **Audrey Smith** has joined the ranks of the indisposed and had a spell in hospital. Again, we extend our best wishes for better health.

We will be happy to see all three ladies at the function for the Federation Chief and her consort.

We hear that **Paddy Leonard** keeps cheerful despite his health problems, and with St Patrick's Day in mind, we say: *Top of the mornin' to ye, Paddy!*

We say *bon voyage* to **Mary and Iain Moodie** who are off shortly for a two month overseas trip to visit family. We hope they put their recent unpleasant experiences behind them and have a wonderful time. *Haste ye back!*

Lady President of Pinelands Caledonian Society, Anne Miller, was admitted to hospital for further tests. We hope these are favourable, Anne, and our thoughts are with you and Shirley.

We request that you forward any change of details – address, telephone number, email or whatever – to our secretary, Ian McWalter. Remember also that we like to receive any news you wish to share with us, your extended family, so let's hear from you!

GREAT SCOTS!

We draw your attention to a new exhibition at the **National Museum of Scotland**, entitled the **Discoveries Gallery**.

The **Scotsman** conducted a National Poll to find the most popular Scottish inventors. Top of the list came **Sir Alexander Fleming** (1881 – 1955), who discovered penicillin – a major breakthrough in medicine which saved the lives of so many. His Nobel Medal and a penicillin sample are on view in the Gallery.

Dolly the Sheep, can be found serenely rotating in her glass tank. Another Scottish first (Ian Wilmot), she is the most popular exhibit in the museum.

A SMILE

In a London street two Highlanders stood looking at the imposing front of a large building. The corner stone bore the date in Roman characters *MCMIV*.

"Look at that, Jock," said Sandy proudly, "Ah don't know what clan he comes from, but he's got his name on one of the finest buildings in London. Ye canna keep oor boys doon, can ye?"

Lang may yer lum reek.

From your Chief, Lady President and Council,

And your scribe

