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Scotland's First Minister visits Scottish Studies at Guelph

Scotland's First Minister, the Right Honourable Jack McConnell MSP, paid a visit to the Scottish Studies Program at the University of Guelph on Friday 28th October 2005.

Accompanied by renowned historian Professor Tom Devine from the University of Aberdeen and genealogist Cameron Taylor from Orkney, the First Minister toured the internationally renowned Scottish Archival Collection at the University before giving a talk to Faculty, graduate students and Scottish Studies Foundation members.

McConnell thanked the University and all those who have kept the Scottish Studies Program going at Guelph for almost 40 years, keeping the Scots-Canadian connection alive and well.

In welcoming Mr. McConnell, Scottish Studies Chair, Professor Graeme Morton hailed his visit as the most complete acknowledgment of the importance of the Scottish Studies Program and its outreach activities to those of Scottish descent in Canada and to the people of Scotland. The First Minister's visit recognizes the work over two decades by the Scottish Studies Foundation, the University of Guelph and many private donors to successfully raise over \$2 million to endow North America's first Chair of Scottish Studies.

Mr. McConnell's talk focused on his vision for Scotland in the 21st century as a vibrant revitalized nation eager to attract new talent and adopt new ideas while still retaining the traditional values which have won it respect from all over the world.

"Scotland has done more to shape Canada than any other country in the world," he said.

"If anyone at home ever casts doubts on our ability to be a success they only have to look at Canada, one of the most successful nations in the world, to learn what Scots achieved there.

"But the success Scots have had in Canada has often been tinged with sadness for Canada's gain was Scotland's loss.

McConnell stressed that his job as First Minister and that of the Scottish Executive was to ensure that the conditions of life that

led to emigration in the past are never allowed to happen again.

I want a country where every person gets a chance to succeed, and if they fail at first they get another chance, and another, until they succeed.

"This week has marked the start of Scotland's campaign to reach out to the Scottish diaspora all over the world. There are five million Scots in Scotland, but 25 million of Scottish ancestry in the world, four million here in Canada. That's why we came here to send out our message.

"I would like you to tell others of Scotland's beautiful mountains, lochs and glens and history, castles, traditions and culture, the pride and spirit of our people. But tell them about Scotland as a land of opportunity too."

He said Scotland was creating a new diaspora - of people who had come to Scotland to advance their career and who could promote it elsewhere.

"Scotland's world-class universities have educated 100,000 students from overseas in just five years. Modern Scotland is less a geographical unit and more of an international network. There are around 50,000 non-Scots studying in Scotland right now. Our universities are world class. They are diverse and creative and they generate a wealth of ideas and energy.

"We must now work with those students to encourage them to stay in Scotland after they graduate and we have a strategy that will allow us to do exactly that before they graduate.

"We all know of the great Scottish achievements of the past - the steam engine, the bicycle, the pneumatic tire and all that. But we are moving on. We are not dwelling on the past. Scotland is a leader in finance,



*Jack McConnell reviews notes prior to giving his talk:
"Scotland-Canada: Our Common Heritage"*

in biochemistry, in medicine. We all know about Dolly the sheep. But I want us to think beyond that - I want Scotland to be the place that finds a cure for cancer. They are getting close to achieving this in Dundee and they've got real support from the Scottish Executive.

"But Scotland is suffering a declining population and we only have to look at the success of Canada to know that it is better to be an immigrant nation than an emigrant nation. And therefore we are putting the call out throughout the world that we can offer a good quality of life and a fresh start for those who want to come and contribute.

"Scotland is one of the world's oldest democracies but it has the world's youngest Parliament - only six years old. After 300 years of not having our own Parliament we are now taking a bold step but one that I am confident our people will rise to. For centuries Scots have been welcomed overseas. Now it is time for Scotland to be as welcoming in return."

Prior to coming to Guelph, McConnell was in New York and Ottawa. The previous night McConnell hosted a "Celebrate Scotland" reception for 400 guests from politics, business and many members of the Scottish Studies Foundation at Toronto's Liberty Grand complex, which featured performances by the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Scottish Ballet, a modern Scots-driven fashion show, and the electro-ceilidh band Croft No. Five.



P.O. Box 45069,
2482 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M4P 3E3
info@scottishstudies.ca
www.scottishstudies.ca

From the Chair

Dear Fellow Members,

I do hope you have had a pleasant summer.

Since my last letter to you we have been kept busy, what with our Tall Ship Cruise, the Fall Colloquium and the Scottish First Minister's visit. I would therefore like to extend a very big thank you to all of you who came along to those events and to all of you outside of the Toronto/Guelph who continue to support our cause.

It was especially gratifying to learn how much the Scottish Executive (the devolved government in Scotland) knew about the Scottish Studies Foundation and the Scottish Studies program at the University of Guelph. It is significant that they took the trouble to visit us on their first visit to Canada and that we were given a mention in the 2-page spread they commissioned in the October 27 edition of the *Globe and Mail*. I am also delighted that the First Minister is now a Patron of the Foundation.

We were also delighted that the Scottish Executive arranged for Professor Tom Devine and genealogist Cameron Taylor to be with them at Guelph on October 28 to talk to Faculty, graduate students and Scottish Studies Foundation members.

Professor Devine is from the University of Aberdeen and is the author or editor of some two dozen books on such varied topics as emigration, famine, identity, Scottish transatlantic commercial links, urban history, the Scottish Highlands and rural social history. The *Scottish Nation* (1999) became an international best seller and for a time, even outsold the adventures of Harry Potter in Scotland. His latest major work, *Scotland's Empire* was published in 2003 and formed the basis of a six-part BBC2 series.

In his talk, "Scots Emigration to Canada: Some perspectives" Professor Devine described the enormous impact on the global development of the British Empire by Scots.

The Scots thoroughly and systematically colonized all areas of the British Empire from commerce to administration, soldiering to medicine, colonial education to the expansion of emigrant settlements. In

particular, they were instrumental in the transformation of the demographic profile of the North American colonies.

But the roots of Scots migration go back in time far beyond the 18th and 19th centuries. It is now becoming apparent that there has been a steady and consistent exodus of Scots from Scotland to other countries, northern and eastern European countries being favoured before the advent of Empire.

Research into this field is, however, being constrained by the linguistic limitations of researchers who must be able to conduct primary research in languages such as Old Norse, Swedish, Polish etc. -- a fascinating field indeed.

On the other hand, genealogist Cameron Taylor, who used to be the CEO of the Orkney Tourist Board but now one of Scotland's leading independent authorities on ancestral tourism gave a talk entitled: *Ancestral Connections and Genealogical Advice: The Orkneys and the Hudson Bay Company* in which he reviewed the long-standing connection between Orkney and Canada.

"I had been aware this connection, of course: there is hardly an Orcadian family that doesn't have relatives in Canada. But it was only when we initiated a Homecoming Celebration back in 1999 that the extent and the depth of the contacts became evident" explained Cameron.

The Hudson's Bay Company received its charter in 1670. But many of the adventurers involved in the success of the company were from Scotland seeking fame and fortune far from their native homeland. For one small corner of Scotland the connection with Canada, and with "The Bay", is especially important - in the 18th and 19th centuries the islands of Orkney, just off the northern tip of mainland Scotland, provided the main source of labour for the company.

Company managers found the Orkney men to be hard working, reliable and able to adapt to the harsh conditions of northern Canada. So when The Bay's ships called at the port of Stromness in Orkney, they took on board willing emigrants as well as provisions and water. Many men extended their contracts or settled permanently in Canada. Others returned home, inspiring younger men with their fireside tales.

After listening to the presentations, I couldn't help thinking that it was truly wonderful to see this level of academic activity being maintained in Canada. That it is possible at all is thanks to you, our members, who have given us your support. Thank you and best wishes for the coming year.

*Sincerely,
David Hunter*

Burns Night all set for January 20

As usual, Gordon Hepburn, our resident Burns aficionado, has his plans for our 2006 Burns night well under way. He is also planning to establish a Toronto Scottish Studies Burns Club of Toronto so please give him a call for more details.

Dear Scottish Studies Member,

Once again, at the invitation of the Granite Club, we are having a joint Burns Supper on Friday, January 20th, 2006. Scottish Studies members will be interested to learn that the Granite Club held its very first meeting of members some 130 years ago at the Rising Sun Hotel on Yonge Street - the occasion, a Robert Burns Supper and so it is appropriate and fitting that we foregather at the Granite Club to celebrate the birth of the "Bard"

We promise you an exciting evening of first-class entertainment - the pipes and drums of the famous 48th Highlanders, Sandy MacIntyre's fine Celtic band "Steeped in Tradition" to listen and dance to, the beautiful songs of Burns from the incomparable Danielle Bourre, and one of the highlights of the evening "The Address to the Haggis"; not forgetting the other renowned toasts, "The Immortal Memory" and "The Lassies". All in all, a night to treasure and remember.

And to heighten the enjoyment of those not familiar with traditional Scottish dancing, we are featuring two free two-hour dancing lessons in the Regency Ballroom at 10:00 a.m. on Saturdays, January 7th and 14th, so come along and enjoy the fun. Even if you are a competent dancer, your presence will be more than welcome to assist our instructor Georgina Finlay.

In January of 2005, because we were in the Regency Ballroom while the Grand Ballroom was being refurbished, we were limited to 200 guests and, regrettably, we had to disappoint more than we could accommodate. In 2006, we are back in the Grand Ballroom with increased capacity. Nevertheless with the rising popularity of this flavourful evening of fellowship, fluency, feasting, festivity and fun, we recommend early booking to avoid disappointment.

Do join us for a memorable evening honouring "The Bard".

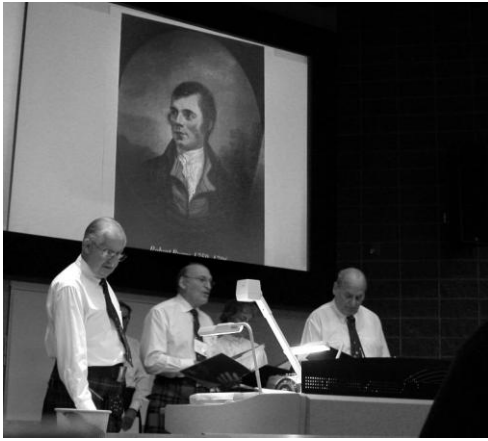
Yours Aye,

Gordon (Tel: 416-881-5780)

Tall Ship Cruise, September 4, 2005



Once again, the weather was kind to us on our 14th cruise out on the “Empire Sandy.” Dancers Kristy Duncan and Emma Nicholson got the entertainment off to a good start then, with music provided by Tommy King on the accordion and John Wakefield on the pipes, Bill Somerville used his powers of persuasion to get everyone singing.



← Members of the Halton/Peel Burns Society give a performance of Burns' work



Lunch in the Rosanski Hall →



← Dr. Cicely Watson seen chatting to Dr. David Stevenson prior to presenting him with the *Frank Watson Prize for the Best Book in Scottish History* published in 2003/2004.

Dr. Stevenson, Professor Emeritus of Scottish History at St. Andrews University delivers the Plenary Lecture based on his book *The Hunt for Rob Roy: The Man and the Myths* →



← As well as bringing everyone up to date with what's happening at Guelph, Dr. Graeme Morton presented his paper entitled *Jane Porter and the Scottish Chiefs – Romancing Wallace*.

→ Dr. Elizabeth Ewan delivers her lecture entitled *The First War of Scottish Independence*



← Atholl Stewart presents Ebby Ritchie with the Edward Stewart Graduate Scholarship in Scottish Studies. Ebby, from Crieff in Scotland, is in the second year of the PhD Program in Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph.

Jane Grier presents Jordan Diacur with the *Jane Nelson Stirling Cairns Grier Scholarship in Scottish Studies*. Jordan is from St Catherines in Ontario and is a 2nd year MA student in Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph. →



Fall Colloquium 2005

Mrs Bogan and her auld Scots songs

By David Hunter

Here's a thought. Imagine you were asked to do the unthinkable and not include Robert Burns on a list of those eligible to win a "Best-known Scots song writer of all time award." Who then would you put on your list and better still, who would be left to claim the prize? Now I'm sure most of you would be able to come up with the names of at least a half-dozen candidates but I'm willing to bet that Mrs. Bogan is not going to be one of them.

O Rowan Tree

This is one of Lady Nairne's best-loved songs often incorrectly attributed to Burns

O rowan tree, o rowan tree,
Thou't aye be dear to me,
Entwin'd thou art wi' mony ties,
O' hame and infancy.
Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring,
Thy flower's the simmer's pride
There was nae sic a bonnie tree,
In all the country side.
O rowan tree.

How fair wert thou in simmer time,
Wi' all thy clusters white.
Now rich and gay thy autumn dress,
Wi' berries red and bright
On thy fair stem were mony names
Which now nae mair I see.
But there engraven on my heart,
Forgot they ne'er can be.
O rowan tree.

We sat aneath thy spreading shade,
The bairnies round thee ran
They pu'd thy bonnie berries red
And necklaces they strang.
My mither, oh, I see her still,
She smil'd our sports to see,
Wi' little Jeannie on her lap,
Wi' Jamie at her knee.
O rowan tree.

O, there arose my father's pray'r
In holy evening's calm,
How sweet was then my mither's voice
In the martyr's psalm
Now a' are gane! we meet nae mair
Aneath the rowan tree,
But hallowed thoughts around thee twine
O' hame and infancy,
O rowan tree

On the other hand, if you were asked to concentrate on some of the best-known songs and set aside the name of their composers I'm sure the situation would be quite different. I mean, who could conceive of a line up of traditional Scottish songs that does not include *Will ye no come back again?* Who would fail to be moved by its haunting words and music? So even the most unsentimental of us would have to face the fact that this song by itself would guarantee that Mrs. Bogan's name gets put on the short list.

OK. I sense by now that most of you have probably twigged to the fact that there is some teasing going on here. "Out with it!" I hear you say. "Just who is this Mrs. Bogan?"

All right, I'll come clean. Mrs. Bogan was the nom-de-plume of one Carolina Oliphant, born to the manor of Gask in Perthshire, Scotland. Later on, after her marriage to Major William Murray Nairne she became known as Lady Nairne but, what's in a name? A song by composed by any other name sounds just as sweet!

Now Carolina, the common denominator in her trio of appellations is the feminine equivalent of Carl or Charles. Thus Carolina was named after Charles, and not because it was a name that ran in the family. No, she was named after Bonnie Prince Charlie himself -- whom her father, a staunch Jacobite greatly admired.

It's hardly surprising then that Bonnie Prince Charlie features in many of her songs *Will ye no come back again?* being her way of saying cheerio to him.

In her late teens, Carolina persuaded her brother Lawrence to purchase the works of Robert Burns and became fascinated with his poetry and his skill at replacing the words of traditional Scots melodies thereby transforming them from the mundane to the memorable.

Once married, she moved near Edinburgh and began her career as a composer in secret, even to her husband. Remember, at that time it was considered totally out of the question for a lady of her station to even consider "the queer trade of song writing."

Eventually her works were published in the *Scottish Minstrel* but under the pseudonym of a Mrs. Bogan of Bogan. Donning an old brown cloak and with a heavy veil, she would deliver her work to her publisher Mr. Purdie, who, if he recognized her at all, certainly kept it to himself.

Soon the popularity of her work took hold and it was not long before her audience could detect the same direct simplicity and poetic feeling expressed by Robert Burns himself. It is strange indeed that two individuals whose stations in life were at opposite ends of the social spectrum should have achieved



Carolina Oliphant, Baroness Nairne, 1766 – 1845 with her son William Murray Nairne, later 6th Lord Nairne, 1808 - 1837. From a portrait by Sir John Watson Gordon.

immortality in the common bond of music and song.

Now, thanks to Burns, his home town of Ayr is known the world over, but what of Gask, the birthplace of Lady Nairne? Well, somewhat surprisingly this obscure location (also known as Findo Gask) has recently been identified as having significant historical importance.

It is located on the Gask Ridge, which stretches over a distance of 10 miles between Perth and Crieff in the heart of Strath Earn, Perth and Kinross.

The Romans used the ridge to build a frontier, a direct ancestor of Hadrian's Wall, although some forty years older, dating to the 70's or 80's AD. Originally consisting of a group of forts and watchtowers, it begins at Glenbank, just to the north of Dunblane and ends at Bertha, just upstream of Perth on the Tay. Its purpose was to control the main route between southern Scotland and the north, where the A9 road runs today.

A similar Roman frontier in Germany, which was once thought to have been built slightly earlier on, has recently been re-dated to the period 105-115 AD, and this means that the Gask frontier can now lay claim to being Rome's earliest fortified land frontier and the prototype for the vast chain of similar systems which was eventually to stretch much of the way around the Roman Empire.

So who knows what's next? Perhaps the day will come when, not only will we have Burns Suppers, but Nairne's Suppers as well, with tourists flocking to Gask in honour of Scotland's "first lady" of poetry and song.

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Room 235, MacKinnon Building
University of Guelph, Guelph, ON,
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Toronto, ON M4P 3E3
info@scottishstudies.ca