

THE SCOTS CANADIAN

Issue XXIV

Newsletter of the Scottish Studies Society: ISSN No. 1491-2759

Spring 2006

Tartan Day event celebrates Foundation's 20th Anniversary

Once again, Casa Loma -- Toronto's famous Castle -- was the venue for this Year's Scottish Studies Society's Annual Tartan Day celebration. And what an event it was!

On an absolutely perfect early Spring evening, guests arriving at the castle were greeted by the stirring sounds of the Black Water Pipe Band led by Pipe Major David McDougall.

Then it was time for the cocktail reception in the elegance of Casa Loma's spectacular Conservatory with delicious treats supplied courtesy of Bill and Carol Hotchkiss of Mrs. Bridges British Bakery.

After that, guests were piped through to the "theatre" we created in Casa Loma's spectacular "Grand Hall" to join Canadian tenor Peter McCutcheon, piano accompanist Margaret Mikelait and Scottish Gaelic mezzo-soprano Cathy Ann MacPhee in a pre-

dinner concert featuring music from all over Scotland. What a wonderful setting for such magnificent voices and we are absolutely delighted that it inspired theatre producer David Warrack to add a new number (it's called *We are All Connected*) to his upcoming production of Rob Roy (see page 7).

Next, it was time for dinner amidst the luxurious surroundings of the "Library" built for Casa Loma's founder Sir Henry Mill Pellatt. The menu, translated into Gaelic, French and English (well Scots actually) was custom prepared to our specifications with Bill and Carol Hotchkiss supplying the haggis and dessert items. Andreas our chef from Gourmet Kitchens (he likes to be called Andy) lost a night's sleep trying to figure out how to present the "Clooty Dumpling" that was specially cooked for us by renowned Scottish Baker John Baird.

During the meal Nola Crewe (recently elected President of the Scottish Studies Society) presented our annual "Scot of the Year Award" to Hugh Boyle, chair and principal shareholder of Ottawa-based Zoom Airlines who, although normally based in Ottawa, flew back from London with his family especially for the event.

Shortly after arriving, Hugh had a bit of a shock when he discovered he had left his wallet and other important items in the taxi he used to get from his hotel to Casa Loma and so there was a bit of scurrying around trying to contact the taxi company and identify the cab involved. Fortunately, he was able to reach the driver and have the items returned before the night was out and in time for him to relax a bit more and enjoy the dancing which was next on the agenda. We were pleased to have "Bobby Brown and his Scottish Accent" provide dance music for the evening.

We were also delighted to have our old friend Professor Ted Cowan over from



Scottish Studies President David Hunter (left) with Hugh Boyle -- Scot of the Year 2006

Scotland for the event. Ted was head of the Scottish Studies Program at the University of Guelph for many years, leaving in 1993 to head up Glasgow University's History Department. Ted was pressed into service during dinner to provide a highly animated and heart-felt explanation of the Declaration of Arbroath and its role in the evolution of democracy.

We also had a record number of people over from Scotland including Linda Fabiani, Member of the Scottish Parliament and Ian Hughton, Member of the European Parliament who were guests of Alastair McIntyre, President of Electric Scotland.

We were especially pleased to welcome Michael Corish, recently appointed by Scottish Enterprise International as their Manager for Canada. Michael is enthusiastic about his new role and is anxious to facilitate relationships between business and industry in Canada and Scotland.



Michael Corish

Scots Wha Hae

*a desire to nurture and preserve
their heritage in Canada
are invited to join*



THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

*a charitable organization
dedicated to actively supporting the
Scottish Studies Program
at*

The University of Guelph

Charitable registration
No. 119253490 RR0001

Website: <http://www.scottishstudies.ca>

From the Chair

Dear Fellow Members,

I don't know about you, but for me this year seems to be flying by at an incredible rate. But what's even more incredible is that the Scottish Studies Foundation has now been in existence for 20 years.

The Annual Meeting of both the Scottish Studies Foundation and the Society was held on February 25 this year and as I know it was impossible for most of you to attend, I thought it would be a good idea to bring you up-to-date with the business side of our activity.

Back in 1986, the Scottish Studies Foundation was granted official Canadian charitable status specifically to encourage research, inside and outside universities, in Scottish culture -- history, literature, religion, art, law, etc., and to conduct research into Scottish migrations to North America; and also to publish historical studies and documents relating to Scottish culture and migrations.

Our present emphasis is aimed at raising the awareness of the Scottish heritage in Canada through various levels of education including the funding of academic scholarships in Scottish Studies in Canada and Scotland.

As you may know, the Foundation supports an office at the University of Guelph to handle enquiries regarding the University's Scottish Studies Program and we are active in raising funds to obtain additional materials for the University's rare book and manuscript collection.

Finally, the Foundation also funds the publishing of "The International Journal of Scottish Studies" and financially supports Canadian and Scottish-related conferences.

So much for our general objectives, however, to be more specific, the Foundation's current obligation is to honor its pledges to the University of Guelph - the pledges that were instrumental in establishing the Chair of Scottish Studies in 2004.



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I'd now like to explain a bit about our two organizations: the Foundation and the Society.

As already stated, the Foundation is a registered charity and accordingly, is constrained as to what it can or cannot do. On the other hand, the Society is free from these constraints and we use it to conduct various activities aimed at raising funds and, hear it not heaven, to allow us to have a wee bit of fun! However, we do have some rules pertaining to the Society that I'd like to mention:

- No membership fees or donations from members go from the Foundation to the Society.
- The Society must operate as a self-sufficient profit centre -- generating income from activities or by obtaining sponsorship money.
- The Society must transfer the money it makes to the Foundation.

Returning now to the Foundation and the business of our pledges to the University of Guelph, there were two pledges made.

The first was an initial pledge of \$750,000 made in May of 2002 and I am delighted to be able to tell you that as of January this year this pledge has been paid in full.

The second pledge was for \$250,000 and was made in July 2004 bringing the Foundation's total to \$1 million. This \$250,000 was able to finalize the funding for the endowment of the Chair and also gave the Foundation naming rights. (The official title is the Scottish Studies Foundation Chair in Scottish Studies.) We agreed to pay this particular pledge over 10 years i.e. \$25,000 per year and I am also pleased to let you know that as of January this year we have made two payments i.e. a total of \$50,000 towards this pledge. So we have only \$200,000 to go! If this seems a lot please don't despair! Fortunately, our total assets presently stand at approximately \$100,000 so we are still in pretty good shape.

Now none of this would have been possible without the support of you, our members, so you all owe yourselves a big round of applause for a magnificent accomplishment!

I'd now like to explain how our funds are raised. The Foundation raises funds from the following sources:

- Membership fees
- Donations from members (and a very big thank you to all of you who pitch in with donations each year. Regardless of the amount, every dollar helps!)
- Investment income
- Lotteries (Bingo and Nevada)

- Events usually put on by the Society (Current events are the Burns Night, Our Club, Tartan Day Dinner, Tall Ship Cruise etc.)

Our current obligations include the annual payment of \$25,000 per year for the pledge previously mentioned, as well as the funding of the Scottish Office at Guelph (about \$9,000 per year); the publication of the journal (International Review of Scottish Studies) and other miscellaneous expenses.

As is the case with all organizations, the financial side is not without some challenges and the Foundation is no exception!

One unique challenge we are working on is that associated with our lottery income. This is income obtained by running bingo sessions authorized by the City of Toronto. The funds generated by this activity are considerable and, thanks to the efforts of Maggie McEwan, Alan McKenzie and Robert Potts who look after this, a lot of hard work goes into making sure the sessions run smoothly. However, the actual use of funds obtained is quite restrictive so we are presently working on ways to maximize this opportunity while ensuring that we comply with the requirements of the City of Toronto and at the same time meet the objectives of the Foundation.

Another challenge we now face is an anticipated reduction in investment income as more of our funds move to the University of Guelph leaving less for the Foundation to invest.

Now none of this is gloom and doom! Our approach is that every challenge is just an opportunity in disguise!

Remember that 20 years ago we started with nothing and now have succeeded in establishing North America's first Chair in Scottish Studies.

So thanks again for all your support and I do hope you all have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,
David Hunter

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Scottish Studies Foundation requires volunteers for duty at City of Toronto Bingo sessions (usually two per month in the Keele/Lawrence area). Duties involve the selling of books of tickets and, on occasion, the payout of prize money. Volunteers will be reimbursed for travel expenses and will receive a small payment for services. For more information, please contact Maggie McEwan at 905-301-5475 or by e-mail at magmcewan@gmail.com

Tall Ship Cruise all set for September 3

500 Years of Scottish History now Online

The Scottish Studies Foundation invites you and your family and friends to join us on our 15th annual tall ship cruise on Sunday, September 3 aboard Canada's largest sailing ship, the Empire Sandy.

Singers, dancers and the sound of the pipes will accompany and entertain you with songs and music from Scotland and Canada. As you might expect, there will be lots of tartan in evidence!

We will cruise out on Lake Ontario where the views of the Toronto skyline are spectacular and the hustle and bustle of ships of all shapes and sizes is a delight to the eye. If ever there was a photo opportunity, this is it -- so be sure to bring your camera as it will be a day to remember! The CNE's spectacular Air Show is also on that day - an added bonus!

The Empire Sandy will be docked on the south side of Queens Quay West, directly opposite Lower Spadina Avenue, beside the Music Garden. Parking is readily available in the vicinity of Harbourfront but be sure to leave yourself time to find a spot. Public transportation is via the LRT (Light Rapid Transit streetcar) that originates from Union Station.

This is a unique opportunity for you to share the experience of a voyage on a tall ship under full sail and recapture the spirit of Canada's pioneers!

There are two sailings: 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Tickets purchased in advance are \$20 for adults and \$5 for children (15 and under) or \$25 and \$8 respectively if purchased on the day.

For more information please e-mail us or telephone David Hunter at 416-332-7353.



Our annual Tall Ship Cruise commemorates the historic voyage of pioneer ship "Hector" which arrived in Pictou, Nova Scotia in 1773. The Canadian Post Office (Canada Post) issued this eight-cent stamp in 1973 to mark the 200th anniversary of this event.

A landmark five-year project to publish 50 million historic documents spanning almost five centuries of Scottish history was completed yesterday.

The online treasure trove paints a vivid picture of life, from the Middle Ages to the reign of Queen Victoria.

Funded by the Scottish Executive, the project is one of the biggest historical archives on the web and culminated on April 21, 2006 with the publication of the 1841 census online. The original handwritten records, which have never before been available online, are published at www.scotlandpeople.gov.uk

The archive contains the most comprehensive online set of family history information for any country in the world. Dr Richard Callison, of Scotland's People, said: "The addition of the 1841 census records is the latest milestone in our five-year project to ensure millions of pages of Scottish history, which have been preserved for the nation by the General Register Office for Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland and the Court of the Lord Lyon can be accessed online.

"The records offer a truly amazing insight into Scotland's past and, as well as accessing the records of their ancestors, visitors can also view the entries of some of Scotland's most famous sons, such as Robert Burns, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Harry Lauder."

The site has proved popular with both the home population and exiles in the USA, Canada and Australia seeking basic information on their background or carrying out in-depth research on their family tree. Publication of the census marks the completion of the project to provide online access to millions of documents.

That census is invaluable to historians since it switched from being a dry record of population size, the numbers in certain occupations and the condition of the housing stock, to a much more detailed analysis of individuals and families, and the communities in which they lived. With a population of 2,620,184, some of the more peculiar jobs in 1841 included hedger, muslin sewer and warper.

St Kilda, which was still inhabited at the time of the 1841 census, was the only part of Scotland to be omitted from the records. It is not clear if the island was forgotten about or if the census regional manager could not face travelling to the most remote part of the British Isles.

Duncan Macniven, registrar general for Scotland, said: "Our work will not end here

SCOTTISH STUDIES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
and
THE SCOTTISH STUDIES
FOUNDATION

Present

2006 FALL COLLOQUIUM

Saturday 30th September 2006
Rozanski Hall
University of Guelph
Registration from 9am

Speakers will include:

Dr. Marjorie Harper
(Aberdeen University, Scotland)
"Scottish Migration to Canada"

Dr. Mark Elliott
(St Andrew's University, Scotland)
"Early Church history in Scotland"

Elizabeth Ritchie
(Winner of the Inaugural Edward
Stewart Graduate Scholarship
in Scottish Studies, University of
Guelph)
"Community in Highland Scotland"

Also

Book Sales, Displays, Music, Dance,
Lunch and Refreshments
throughout the day

For more information and advance
registration, please contact:
Scottish Studies, University of Guelph

Tel: 519-824-4120, ext. 53209
Fax: 519-766-9516
Email: scottish@uoguelph.ca

as, later this year, we intend to add to the website images of the old parish records of Scotland."

The Scotland's People resource includes a number of free features, including a surname search, where visitors can see how many entries there are under their name in the indexes. It also includes links to other related sites which, for example, can assist with the deciphering of archaic handwritten documents. This is often not straightforward as, in the 16th and 17th centuries, clerks who compiled the registers of testaments wrote mainly in a form of handwriting known as Secretary Hand, which used many letters different from the ones we know today.

Scottish Studies Department News

Dr. Graeme Morton provides us with this summary of what's been happening with Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph over the last few months

Adrienne MacIntosh and Cathryn Spence (second-year Master's degree students in the History department's Scottish Studies program) had their research work profiled in the January newsletter of the St. Andrews Society of Toronto as a result of presentations they made to the Society in October 2005. These presentations were by way of thanks for the funding they received for a research trip to Scotland in May of 2005.

On January 16th Cathryn joined Andrew Bonnell (MA 2005) in a presentation of Dr. Graeme Morton's book, *William Wallace: The Man, The Myth, The Legend* at Scarborough's Masonic Caledonia Lodge during its annual Robbie Burns Day dinner and meeting.

The Granite Club of Toronto was the venue for the Scottish Studies Foundation's Burns Supper on January 20th with Graeme Morton giving the *Toast to the Lassies*. The following night, he recited the *Immortal Memory* to Burns at the Officer's Mess for the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada, Hamilton. Dr. Morton certainly is a busy man and takes every opportunity to represent the Scottish Studies Foundation and the Scottish Studies Department.

St. James the Apostle Anglican Church, in downtown Guelph, held its first Robbie Burns Day dinner on January 25th. The entire Scottish Studies staff was on hand to help the congregation celebrate in traditional Scottish style. Dr. Morton welcomed the diners and gave the *Address to the Haggis*, and after dinner, he presented the *Immortal Memory* to Burns. Adrienne MacIntosh presented *The Twa Lands* which was a



Dr. Graeme Morton

speech honouring the ties between Scotland and Canada. The *Toasts to the Lassies and the Laddies* by Colin Graham and Cathryn Spence brought the house down (and the evening to an end) with their humorous renditions.

On February 20th Dr. Graeme Morton read the citation as the University of Guelph bestowed the degree of *Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa* upon Michael MacMillan. Dr. MacMillan is executive chairman of Alliance Atlantis Communications and a previous *Scot of the Year*. His specialty broadcasting, film development and distribution company, promotes Canadian film and television, at home and abroad. The Alliance Atlantis group is the only Canadian organization to have won Oscars, Emmys and Golden Globe awards.

Michael is an advocate and major donor, supporting the Scottish Studies program at the University of Guelph and championing the founding of the Chair of Scottish Studies. With the other recipients of honorary degrees, Mr. MacMillan participated in the inaugural President's Dialogue on Wednesday, February 22, 2006. (This event can be reviewed as a broadcast or podcast at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/president/dialogue>

Faculty and graduate students from the Scottish Studies Program held a successful trial video seminar with Edinburgh University's Master's program on February 27.

On March 3 Eileen Yeo, professor of Social and Cultural History and Director of the Strathclyde Centre in gender studies,

presented a paper on *Tea for Two and Rival Town halls in the Second City of the Empire 1880-1914*.

On March 8, 2006, with much press coverage there was an official launch, at the Scottish Parliament, of the book, *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*. Co-edited by Dr. Elizabeth Ewan (University of Guelph, History/Scottish Studies). Congratulations to Elizabeth for a landmark publication!

This single volume dictionary presents the lives of individual Scottish women from earliest times to the present. Drawing on new scholarship and a wide network of professional and amateur historians, it will throw light on the experience of Scottish women from every class and category and amongst the worldwide Scottish Diaspora.

Details are as follows:

The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women, Elizabeth L. Ewan (ed.), Sue Innes (ed.), Sian Reynolds (ed.), Rose Pipes (ed.) Published by Edinburgh University Press. ISBN: 0748617132

£60.00; hardback, 15% discount for online orders <http://www.eup.ed.ac.uk/>

New SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellow coming to Scottish Studies in August 2006



Dr. Karly Kehoe (pictured above) was born in Peterborough, Ontario, but grew up in Nova Scotia, where she completed a BA (Hons) at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, before undertaking a PhD in History at the University of Glasgow. Her thesis, *Special Daughters of Rome: Glasgow and its Roman Catholic Sisters, 1847-1913*, considers the impact that religious women had on the development of Catholic female education in the city.

The project she will undertake for her postdoctoral fellowship will be a comparative study of the recruitment of women of religion to Edinburgh and Glasgow. It will examine how their presence is linked to Irish migration, Scottish Catholicism and national identity, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Her other research interests include social welfare in Britain and Ireland, Irish migration to Upper Canada, cultural constructions and Empire. We are delighted that Dr. Karly Kehoe has chosen Guelph as her home for the next phase of her research career.

Clearances Village Lives Again

Canadian descendents of pioneers from Glengarry in Scotland will be delighted to learn that the sound of voices will once again fill a lost village brought back to life after being forgotten for half a century - long after its 300-strong population was displaced in the 18th century during the Highland Clearances.

Located west of Loch Ness in Glen Garry, the village was known as Daingean and was decimated in 1785, when sheep were introduced to the area by landowner MacDonnell of Glengarry. Some 55 households were given eviction notices and many families emigrated and settled in Glengarry County, Ontario.

A few shepherds and gamekeepers lived on in the village for about another 100 years until they, too, drifted away, leaving the village's fate to the forces of nature. Then Ardochy estate, as it became, was divided and sold in the 1940s. The land was eventually acquired by the Forestry Commission, which proceeded to establish Glengarry Forest. Over the years, the remains of the village buildings became hidden from view as trees, moss, lichens, grass and other vegetation slowly swallowed them up.

Daingean lay forgotten for half a century until 1999, when forester Allan MacKenzie discovered it while surveying for a harvesting and replanting program. "Nobody mentioned it to me. Anyone in the Forestry Commission who would have known about it had long since gone. No-one had been in there for decades.

"Suddenly this building appeared in front of me, all covered in moss. The atmosphere generated by this witness to a bygone era in the silence and semi-darkness of the forest



Before going to ruin, the houses in the lost village would have looked something like this typical Highland croft.

was amazing. It made the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. Then over time we found more buildings and ruins.

"Local people would have once known about the village but would have found it increasingly difficult to pinpoint its exact whereabouts. Even nineteenth-century maps were of little use. The village was so small it didn't appear on them, although the general area of 20 or so square miles was always referred to as Daingean. It turns out that there are Iron Age artifacts on the site so people obviously lived here for several centuries. It's a very exciting discovery."

Realizing the heritage value of the discovery, the commission decided to protect the remains from further damage and not to replant trees on the site. Then, local people, with the help of the commission, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Highland Council, raised the funds needed to create *Daingean Trail* a heritage footpath around the remains of the village.

Toronto Burns Club gets off to a good start

By Gordon Hepburn

With the full support and backing of the Scottish Studies Foundation we launched a long overdue Burns Club of Toronto, affiliated with the Robert Burns World Federation in Scotland and the Robert Burns Association of North America.

So far we have had four highly successful, entertaining and enlightening meetings on the first Wednesday evening of each month, two at the Arts & Letters Club of Toronto and two at our initial location – the Duke of York Pub in Toronto. Both venues have easy access by subway and have parking nearby.

The entertainment has been varied and diverse, primarily Ceilidh style, with recitations, stories and songs of Robert Burns (two of our committee members have great tenor voices), piping interludes, squeezebox medleys and singalongs. We usually round off the evening with a couple of Ceilidh dances – or even three or four! At our last meeting before summer recess we were graced by Stephanie Hutka, a beautiful and talented 16-year old who had everyone hopping to her wonderful fiddle music.

Our next session will start on Wednesday, September 6 at the Duke of York and we warmly welcome new

members. If you want to try before joining, come along for a couple of meetings. It's only \$5 admission at the door and when you join, it's a mere \$20 for family membership or \$15 for a single. And what's more, for paid-up members we have cut a deal with Zoom Airlines who will offer a 15% discount on flights to the UK until May 31, 2007

So for more information please contact membership secretary Gordon Hepburn at 905-881-5780

Nova Scotia town of Pictou to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of its Hector Festival

The Hector Festival began in 1987 in conjunction with the International Gathering of the Clans celebration. The past 20 years have seen amazing growth in the Hector Festival with thousands of visitors and residents attending a five-day festival celebrating Nova Scotia's Celtic music and heritage.

Pictou was the landing site of the first wave of Scottish settlers to Nova Scotia and the Hector Festival celebrates the accomplishments of these early pioneers.

In 1773 the first wave of Scottish settlers rowed ashore from the ship "Hector." They brought with them their heritage and culture. The Hector Festival, celebrating its 20th Anniversary in 2006, keeps this spirit alive with five days and nights packed with entertainment, displays, workshops and demonstrations. The Hector Festival will run from August 9 to 13 and promises a warm New Scotland welcome to all!

A highlight of the festival will be the re-enactment of the settlers landing. Close to 200 men, women and children, all dressed in period costume, will be part of the spectacle and a "living village" will be set up as a landing area for the settlers where visitors will be able to interact with the re-enactors.

Today, the Town of Pictou continues to work towards the enhancement of their tourism assets within Pictou County. The waterfront in Pictou is home to the deCoste Entertainment Centre and the Ship Hector Heritage Quay. Both facilities play an integral role in the celebration of the first Scottish settlers to Nova Scotia and mark its significant place in history. The Hector Festival celebrates the landing on an annual basis and also celebrates the birthplace of New Scotland.

Tartan Day Dinner 2006



The Black Water Pipe Band



Hugh Boyle and family



Harry Ferguson and Prof. Ted Cowan



Gay Evans and Alastair Gillespie



Canadian Tenor
Peter McCutcheon



Scottish Gaelic Mezzo-suprano
Cathy Ann MacPhee



Hugh Boyle receives the Scot of the Year
Award (a specially engraved quaich)
from Nola Crewe



Phillip Crawley,
CEO and Publisher,
The Globe and Mail



Hugh Boyle with J. Douglas Ross
(winner of a trip to Scotland)

Canadian Rob Roy to premiere at Edinburgh Festival

It's only been two years since Canadian Producer/Composer David Warrack last set foot in Scotland, but in that short space of time not only has he composed the music, written the lyrics and selected the cast of an all-Canadian production of Rob Roy, but he has been able to clinch a deal to have the show open at this year's Edinburgh Festival.

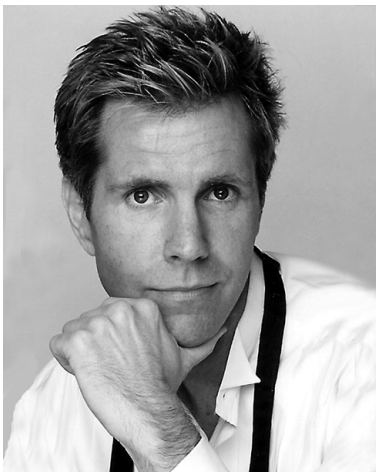
His inspiration came about when he went over to visit his daughter, then an exchange student at Edinburgh University. The visit involved a trip to the northeast (his ancestors originally hailed from Aberdeen) but on the return journey he headed west and south to the Trossachs and Rob Roy country. Slowly but surely he became intrigued with the romance and notoriety surrounding one of Scotland's best-loved characters.

Driving through the mist, with the grandeur of the Highlands as a backdrop, words, music and images of a time long since passed began to unfold in his mind and the idea that they could form the basis for a new musical production grew stronger as the miles rolled by.

Once back in Edinburgh, David followed up by taking advantage of the Scottish National Library, spending the balance of his vacation immersed in the life and times of Rob Roy's 18th century world.

On his return to Canada, David buckled down to writing in earnest and in a few month's time had an initial draft ready which allowed him to present a workshop version of the show. When glowing reviews came back, he realized he was onto something big and continued working away at the logistics of getting the show launched.

At first, the idea of a launch at the



David Rogers will play Rob Roy

Edinburgh Festival seemed a bit of a stretch, but by coincidence, he had learned that in 2004 Canadian-born composer Robert Farnon has just completed a new symphony dedicated to the City of Edinburgh, having been captivated by the city during the Edinburgh Festival. Farnon's symphony was due to premiere in Edinburgh in 2005 and so David got in touch with Robert to find out how he might go about getting Rob Roy launched there.

Through Farnon, he was put in touch with renowned Scottish arts impresario Richard Demarco whose enthusiasm and drive for supporting and promoting Scottish arts has made him one of the most influential figures in the Scottish arts world.

Demarco's reputation as a leading exhibition and theatre director began when he helped found the Traverse Theatre in the city in 1963. Now in his 76th year he has spent more than fifty years as an artist, gallery and theatre director, teacher and art patron. It is no small honour, therefore, that Demarco readily endorsed Rob Roy and freed up one extremely valuable Festival week at the Roxy Art Centre for its debut.

As you might imagine with all of this going on, the business of actually selecting a suitable cast was uppermost in David's mind. An all-Canadian production was what he envisaged and with his intimate knowledge of the Canadian music scene he had some key roles earmarked for certain individuals if they could only be made available.

In the end, the role of Rob Roy went to David Rogers, an absolutely brilliant performer who has probably played more performances of *Phantom of the Opera* than anyone else in North America.

Susan Gilmour will play Mary MacGregor, Rob Roy's wife. Susan has had an amazing career and is perhaps best known for her role as Fantine in *Les Miserables*. In fact, Cameron MacIntosh (the *Phantom's* original producer) has always claimed Susan to be his favourite "Fantine."

Other key roles that have been filled so far include Alexander Stewart (Rob's best friend) to be played by George Masswohl who, from the Festival Theatre in Stratford to the City Centre in Manhattan, has spent his career performing in some of the best theatres in the United States and Canada. George's memorable performances as Sweeney Todd will not soon be forgotten. Also, David Dunbar has been selected to play the Duke of Cumberland. David recently won the Best Actor Award in Chicago for *Camelot* and is every bit as good an actor as he is a singer.

One unique role that has been created is that of the "Bard." Created specifically for



David Warrack and Michael Danso

jazz singer Michael Danso, the role is essentially that of a narrator who is able to fill in the gaps as well as providing an opportunity to juxtapose a contemporary viewpoint on what would otherwise be a purely historical piece.

Scottish-born and Toronto-based, Michael Danso comes from a show business family. His mother, Pinkie MacKenzie sang with all the top big bands when they toured Scotland, and Michael first sang onstage in Glasgow with her at the age of five, with The Bertie King Band. By age 9, Michael was touring with his own group of girls, under the name Wee Maxie and his Lassies and at age 10, he was spotted by Ella Fitzgerald and recognized as a child prodigy.

Of course if you are wondering what type of reaction a Canadian production of something so quintessentially Scottish is going to have in Scotland you are not alone! David had similar concerns that his cast might be seen as Canadian upstarts poaching on Scots territory! Deep down, however, he feels that this is one way for Scots-Canadians to give back to the place they ultimately originate from and so far the reaction has been nothing but positive from the Scottish side.

Perhaps a more fundamental question is why, in 2006, write about events that occurred back in the 1700s? Well, to quote David speaking of Rob Roy... "Here's a guy in the middle of his life when everything seems just hunky-dory. Then all of a sudden, everything gets turned upside down – everything goes wrong. How do you deal with that? How do you maintain any semblance of honour when there's not a lot of honour around you? A lot of people have to deal with that today so in that sense it's a timeless story." ■

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