

EIKS AN ENS

Nummer 16

The newsletter o the Scots Leid Associe

April 2019

April Appraisal

Annual Collogue and AGM of the Scots Language Society

Setterday June 1st

Radical Writing in Scots

**Speakers: Joy Hendry, William Hershaw, Derrick McClure and
Walter McGinty**

in **St Matthew's Church, Tay St, Perth PH1 5TF**

[See p. 5 for details](#)

SANGSCHAW 2019 WINNERS

Cutty Tale - 1st prize and Robert McLellan Tassie: *Nae Reid Flags Fleein*, Iain McGregor; runner-up: *Eden Road*, George T. Watt; highly commended: *The Watter Revolution*, Irene Howat; *Wechty Maitters*, Stephen Pacitti

Poesie - 1st prize and Hugh MacDiarmid Tassie: *Wrannie*, Irene Howat; runner-up: *To Susan Gibson Tough*, Sheila Templeton; highly commended: *Of Ane Raucle Makar*, A. C. Clarke; *Stane Circles*, George T. Watt

Owersettin - 1st prize and John MacPhail Law Tassie: *The Waal*, Derrick McClure; runner-up: *A Wild Goose its Lane*, Brian Holton; highly-commended: *The Cran an the Swan*, Donald Adamson; *Tuim Pock*, Brian Holton; *Deith is but a bend*, Hugh S. Pyper

WABMAISTER an **SECRETAR WANTIT!** Wad luik awfy guid on a CV, braw experience warkin wi an enthusiastic team, freinlie an helpfu.

Wabmaister wull be weel motivated, skeelie, can wark frae hame.

Secretar wad need ti attend meetins twa-three times a year on Thursday efternuins in Dundee ti tak meenits.

Pit your nem forrit at the Collogue, gin ye interestit.

Flour XIII

Tent weel baith auld an new,
thair fushion fend an feed:
the seed is in the flour,
the flour is in the seed

Hamish Scott

The dowie days

Aa thing is lanesum, droukit, cauld,
aa thing is thowless, hertless, auld,
aa thing is licht i sinnrie grays,
for aa maun thole the dowie days

Hamish Scott

Wully the Wildcat and Felis Catus *for ma sister*

Here's a tale o twa cats, ain wha liked ti bide in toun (a quine wha gaed bi the fancy name o Felis Catus) and ain wha liked the muntains and gorse (Wully the Wildcat was his name). Nou for some reason I canna faddom, the toun-cat (though surroonded bi a hantle o fowks) was awfa lanely and douncaist, and in want o a mate. She was luikin for a man—a real man—a tom mair like—and cudnae fin ain oniewhaur. Sae on she gied ti MATCHMIAOW.COM. Nou it juist sae haippened Wully lived oot in the wilds, in the back o beyond, and he, pur chiel, like Felis Catus, cudnae fin a mate oniewhaur himsel. But his fash had ither ruits than hers: he bade in the middle o naewhaur whaur nae fowks bade. He'd sent oot messages aa roond the carse and lochs, left them on trees, on stanes, on byways—ti nae effect ata. Nae a single response did he hae, nae frae one season ti the neist. Sae inti toun he gings ae day ti find some help in his favourite howff, whaur he fell in wi a librarian (an awfa drinker wha shuld hae been at wark) wha avised him ti 'get connected'. 'Have ye niver heard o the Internet, Wully, ye neepie-heid?' the toper asked. 'No, I hivnae', Wully said. Weel, ti schorten the tale (nae literally, thar was nae surgery involved, we're nae spickin Manx cats here) he was telt aa aboot MATCHMIAOW.COM and stumped up a fair fortune ti fin his helpmeet. It wasnae lang afore he was ticking aa the richt boxes:

- INTELLIGENT
- FEROCIOUS
- RESOURCEFUL
- PATIENT
- AGILE
- POWERFUL

— and up on the screen pops the name o a fine quine frae Dundee, whase profile read:

Slender, lovely, blue-eyed, blonde, sparkling (passions: shopping, historical fiction, jazz, dancing, biking, butterscotch brulée latte) ready to share life with a man loyal, kind, tender, unfettered, with a heart for a loving relationship. He should be well-furred, bushy-tailed, with a sense of social justice. Please write, with photo, etc.

This was the quine for him! 'Unfettered'—he'd always been that! (He wasnae quite sure about the 'brulée' bit, but he'd luik it up in a dictionary.) Sae aff he gings ti the photo shop (nae haein an iPhone) and hey presto!—in nae time ata he's sitting wi Felis in her local Starbucks... She was slender aaricht—an erotic explosion!

She was drinking her drink, and he was drinking something ca'ed a white chocolate mocha frappuccino (her recommendation) that tasted like rabbit pellets (aa he'd wanted was a cup o tea) as she telt him o her Salsa classes, Pilates and Yoga, and he was thinking, 'I hope she disnae want anither cup — I canna afford it'— and he was trying ti listen ti whit she was saying, something about 'the experience of union with nature', and whit was this nou, 'everything, it seems, that moves in nature is a symbol of something else... there is an immediacy which makes the natural world seem... so immensely personal. Don't you find it so?' Wully hadnae a clue whit she was yackin on aboot, and said, 'I jalouse, it's juist like at', and Felis said, 'I thought you'd agree. We're on the same wavelength after all.' 'Ye've nae munched the heid aff an eagle then?' was aa o Wully's response. 'Well, I don't think I could do that', Felis purred, 'that does, if you don't mind me saying so, seem a little... savage.' 'Savage? Hell's teeth, quine, it was delicious! It was fine!' 'I only like a modicum of meat', Felis added, changing the subject—'Do you own a cottage? I've always wanted to live in a cottage.' 'A cottage?' Wully quizzed. 'I hae a shieling, an auld hole dug oot bi a badger. It keeps oot the cauld winter nichts, ye'd be happit up warm, I can tell ye at.' 'It sounds charming, evocative, like... the limits of the world... like' (she was struggling nou)—'sleeping under a hedgerow'. 'Ye'll nae fin onie hedgerows roon ma wey', Wully said, 'ye'd be lucky to see a dyke!' The word seemed to offend her, sae he muived on quickly... 'Aye, it's fine and quiet... Luik, I'll hae ti tell ye this', he added, 'there's nae electricity whaur I bide, nae even a candle, or a fire. There's nithing like at. Fish and flesh are aa ma care. I get ma cluiks inti a moose aince in a while, hae a wink at it, then toss it in the air. Whit dae I hae for ma dennar? Rattons, rabbits, leverets, bawkies, mowdiewarps, shirrows, badrans, mooses, martiks, moppies, mup-mups, fuddies, cons, cutties, donies, futrats, lang lugs, schort lugs, wheasels, dirty-lochrag, lesarts, serpens, torties, edders, puddocks. In the stanneris I guddle for elvers (awfa fine on toast!), bandies, banstickles, gellytrochs, grilse, smout, whiting, parrs—troot frae the loch, saumon, reid gibbies, preenheids, powan, podlie. Have ye niver tried slattyvarrie, quine, blibbans and badderlocks? Ye've niver lived, quine, I can tell ye at! Lambs? Hae a hert. Niver, niver! A

hornygoloch aince in a while, aye, an emmit or an attercap. Hiv ye niver tried a hairy grannie? Dinna blame ye. Thai gar ye bowk... Ma famyle?—I'm nae a fairm cat run wild, or onie thing like at. Anters rin in ma veins. Ma fowk streech aa the wey back ti Methusaleh! Langer than that. We've walked the moss for millions o years. I'm nae ain o thae peely-wallie craiteurs ye see walkin about the place wi itchy flech-collars strangling thair necks. Slaves, that's aa thai are. Thai'd nae thole a nicht on the braes, staring doun futrats and stoats. But thai got rid o the lynx, the wolf and the bear.' 'Who?' 'Men, o course! But thai'll nae stamp on ma heid! Thai'll nae ken ma politics! Search the Hielands as muckle as thai like, thai'll nae fin me on onie map! I'll fecht ti the deith for ma freedom! Scraitch thair een oot! ... A tabby? Whase gaan sroond ca'in me a tabby? Nou dinna get ma fur up. I've the gait o a tiger, the jaw o a boxer... Tell me, whit dae you dae come daan or gloaming?' 'My nails, I think,' was aa the quine's reply. Wully gied on: 'I rest in a thicket, pish on a stane, hide oot in log-piles and middens. Dogs? Dinna mention thaim!—rigwiddie, tap-thrawn, thrawart, thrawn-heided, widdewise, shuster-infested beasts at thai are! I hae thaim for breakfast! I've een like preens, gyroscopic lugs, niver seen a dentist (ye've awfa white teeth, lass), a spirit-livel for a brain, niver need a peill. I've niver seen a National Park!' Thar was an awfa quiet about the place nou. 'I've called a cab', Felis said, and that was that—Wully niver sa her again.

The stottin-fou drunk, the librarian, sa Wully in *The Corinthian*. 'Onie luck, Wully?' he asked. 'Na,' Wully said, 'the lass was mingin'.

W. S. Milne

Sair Pressed

Whit wi wark an aw
A wis sair pressed tae dae
ower much about it.

Whan yon mannie trashed the links,
ower a gowff course an hotel

Whan the lest Orang, Rhino and Elephant dee'd
hames brunt for oil,
bodies rived for pairts.

Whan the ice dwyned awa,
wi fuitprents o forfochen bears.

Cum tae think o it
A haenna seen a pairtick for a whiley.
It's an awfie fix,
Whan they're gaun the wey o Archaeopteryx,
Dodo, Auk an Corncrake!

Thir wis aye a hedger on a simmer's nicht.
Snoukin on the beck green.
Whaur nou?
Seendil as snaw at Yuil, Guisers an Ingaan

Johnnies

Eftir aw, Spring's comin!
The buirds still seing,
Just no ower mony,
An chiels gash about growthe!
Whan aw the gairden's causey stanes!
Gowks a-plenty!
Juist nane wi feathers!

Whit can A dae?
A hae ma ain lyfe!
Mebbe tomorrow, A'll dae somethin!
A'm sair pressed!

Jamie Purves

Fite Cuddies

See thaim noo, thay fite cuddies,
See hoo thay race heidlang,
Fame at the moo snotterin,
Ilk ane streivin tae tak the lead.

Bambazed, ma een cocht
In the aye changin fluidity
O the gallus herd, glaikit
Wi thair ane obsessive pooer.

On an on thay chairge
Strang an ire mair meisured,
Risin tae the wund goddess
Ridin barebek ower thair hurdies.

Callous she whups thaim,
Fite storm o breithless torment,
Till thay spen thirsels founert
Agin the jaggit skerries.

George T Watt

Dayset

The wund gets up an doun gaes the sun,
On the auld keep corbie tails are fykin;
The faughie lift's lown an hie abune,
White watters bullerin fair dementit.
A hielan carlin speaks oot an keckles,
A norlan chiel sings a sang as he gaes;
The Major-General chynges anither naigie,
Skelps oot bi nicht, weill-buskit bill in haun.

Brian Holton

Owerset frae the Chinese o Du Fu (AD 712-770)

Slaw Sarah

inspired by a tale telt tae me bi Stanley Robertson

Aince upon a time there wis a lazy slorach caad Sarah. She niver liftit a finger about the hoose, jist sprauchled oot afore the TV and watched Reality programmed styte. Meanwhyles her puir auld woman warssled awa wi the eerans, the washin, the scoorin an dichtin awa o stoor, growin mair an mair ill natured bi the meenit.

'Ye'll niver amount tae naethin!' she raged her dother. 'Ye'll turn intae a muckle midden o creash ane o thon days. Naebody'll iver gie ye hooseroom bar me, an I jist pit up wi ye cause I hae tae. Get yer bihoochie aff the sofie an ging tae the corner shoppie tae pit on ma lottery ticket.'

Weel Sarah gaed tae corner shoppie, bit jist cause her pyoke o toffee wis feenished, an on the wey thonner she got an unca begeck. At the post box ootside the shoppie, a wee wee manie lowpit oot on her. Fit a fleg she got!

'Ye'r Sarah, are ye nae?' the wee aiblich speired.

'Fit's it tae ye?' cam the repon.

'Ah weel, I've cam tae dae ye a bit o gweed. Ye see, I'm a fey,' he telt her. 'An gin ye cam hame wi me an bide wi me fur seeven years an a day, ye'll get a winnerfu bumbazement at the eyn o't, ay, a richt stammygaster! Bi ma calculations thon'll be yer echteenth birthday.'

'Fit's the catch?' speired Sarah.

'Nae pain, nae gain,' the mannikie telt her. 'Ye maun be ma skiffie an bidie in, bit at the eyn o thon darg, ye'll be free, wyce and wealthy.'

Sarah thocht this ower. She nicht live till she wis echtly or mair. Seeven years didnae soun ower lang, seein's eftir thon she'd hae siller eneuch tae turn back intae a slorach. She rippit up her mither's lottery nummers an gaed hame wi the wee fey mannie.

His hoose wis a sottar an a hauf. A grumphie wad makk less soss. Frae early ilkie mornin till the meen wis lang in the lift, puir Sarah trauchelt awa scoorin an dichtin, washin an bakin, swypin an polishin till aa her young luiks wis awa.

Her hauns wis wrinkled an roch, her broo wis wizzent, her chikks wis sunken, an her teeth rattled in her shriven gums. Bit aye she warssled on, thinkin o the great begeck at the eyn o this scunneration.

Weel, the years won by, an it cam tae her echteenth birthday, the day that the wee fey mannie hid promised tae set her free.

'Far's ma winnerfu begeck?' she speired. 'Far's ma siller, ma braw claes, ma wealth, ma wyceness?'

'Och, ma quine,' the wee mannie telt her. 'Dae ye nae ken a lee fin ye hear it? An onywey...ye'r echteen noo. Dae ye nae think yer ower auld tae believe in feys?'

Sheena Blackhall

Mary Queen o Scots' Fareweel tae France

Owerset frae French by Gisbert Freiherr von Vinke, set tae music by Robert Schumann

I'm weerin awa.

Fare ye weel ma hert-gled France,
maist lief an lichtsme land,
ma bairnheid's beild,
Fare ye weel! Ma land, lang syne cantie days.
Iss ship convoys me fae pleasure.

Still an on, it taks bit hauf o me:
ae pairt'll foriver belang tae yase,
ma blithe land, an aw it speers o ye –
is aye kep in mind o me!
Fareweel.

Mary Johnston

Fly

Wary. Shifty eyed.
Nerves jumping.
He caas it paranoid.
Blood pumping.
But he's no,
He's just fly.
He'll rob ye blind.
Lift yir stuff oan the road by.
Gray skin shrink wrapped
Owre jutting bones.
Shoots cats wi his slug gun.
Steals folks phones.
Slippy. Ay sweating.
Jangling.
Sells yir stuff oan.

Tracy Harvey

St Matthew's Church, Tay St, Perth PH1 5TF

Radical Writing in Scots

- 10.00 a.m. Registration and coffee.
- 10.30 a.m. Walter McGinty: "Rab the Radical".
- 11.15 a.m. Willie Hershaw: "Joe Corrie's Bairns".
- 12 noon Sangschaw: announcement of prizes and readings of winning entries.
- 12.45 p.m. Lunch break.
- 2 p.m. AGM of Scots Language Society.
- 2.30 p.m. Joy Hendry: "Ma Language is Disgraceful!!!" Tom Leonard's Radical Re-writing of Scots
- 3.15 p.m. Derrick McClure: "The Foursom Reel".
- 4 p.m. Coffee and general discussion.
- 4.30 p.m. Close of colloque

The cost of £20 will include forenoon and afternoon coffee and a sandwich lunch.

Contact George Watt – georgetwatt@hotmail.com – or Elaine Morton – failte@go-plus.net or book online at www.lallans.co.uk

