

EIKS AN ENS

The newsletter o the Scots Leid Associe

Nummer 19

Mairch 2020

Cursin ower Coronavirus

COLLOGUE on 30th Mey CANCELLED

Tae be rescheduled: we'll lat ye ken whit's up.

Fit tae div noo that this virus rax itsel athort the wurld? Aathin in Scotland is closit up, weel, near aathin, an aa ower tae, far as I can tell. So fit tae div noo? Weel, we're still apen fur business ye ken. We cannae sell ye ae cuppie o tae or coffee, but we hae a puckle o ither guid things. Hae a wee luikie on line at oor wabsteid, thare is ae host o CDs tae pass the time while yer clampit doun in the hous. Thare's ae braw CD by Tam Hubbard, 'Mither Ape', that shuid tickle yer fauncy, fur Tam is fell oreiginal. Syne thare are ither CDs by Stuart Paterson an Sheila Templeton that are amang the tapmaist Makars o the dey. Aa oor CDs wuid mak braw gifties tae cheer fowk up as ae wee surprise, forby burthdays an siclike. We hae gotten ae wheen o new memmers sin the turn o the year. Noo that wuid mak a walcome relief tae the shutdown boredom. Gie a frein a memmership an we'll post oot a Lallans til thaim by return. I jalouse the postal fowk wull wark awa fur a whilie yet, so dinnae be blate! Onywey, kep weel, tak care, an we luik forrard tae seein ye aa afore ower lang. Ach it's an ill trickit wund that blaws nae guid, mibbie ae wee giftie wuid cheer ane faw's dowie an aid oor Associe anaw.

George T. Watt,

SANGSCHAW 2020

Winners 2020

Poesie

1st Prize an Hugh MacDiarmid Tassie: David Bleiman, *The Trebblers' Tale*
Jynt rinners-up: Fiona-Jane Brown, *There's Aye Water Far the Stirkie Droons*
Robert Maxwell Duncan, *Trinitie*

Cutty Tales

1st Prize an Robert McLellan Tassie: Dorothy Lawrenson, *The Bonnie Fechter*
Rinner-up: Stephen Pacitti, *Mither's Samplers*

Owersettins

1st Prize an John MacPhail Law Tassie: Derrick McClure, *God's Hecht tae Mattha*
Rinner-up: John Erskine, *Catullus 101*

Mony thanks to aabody for takin pairt in the competeition.

Myndins

I mynd on the skyrie Tam Thooms
The forkies that bed in their thrapples
I mynd on the slidderly snails
An the bubbles that grew in the sapples

I mynd on an auld blaik tyke
A Scotty, pechin wi heat
In the sun, wi his mochy guff
An the grun, wi his slivers weet

I mynd on a peony rose
Like a Geisha rowed in silk
An a linn o Lily o Valley
Like spirks o fairies' milk

I mynd on granminnie's lap
The crooshie hyeuk eident there
Her kind een glentin like berries
An a treelip o lang grey hair

Sheena Blackhall

Homicide

It's 'God' we ken the killer's cry'd
that's fellin fowk the hail warld wide,
but maugre o wir speirins try'd
an that far ben,
the pruif we seek can no provide
nor motive ken

Hamish Scott

Jane Broun

Tales o a Grannie, nummer 2

Jane Broun wisnae a fantoosh dolly wi rosy chowks on her wallie gizz. She wis jist a 'ornar Jane' makkit o cloath. But a'll grant ye, she aye looked trig an weel turned oot. She wis ma wee sister Norma's best frien. Ruth an' Naomi hadnae a look in wi Norma an Jane – 'fither thou gangest therr I will gang and farivver thou bideest therr I will bide. Where the yin was, therr wis the ither. And neither of the twain, it seemed, could thole to be sindered.

Wan day, my auld Grannie, wha loved a cantrip an a lauch, says to me jist afore Norma came frae playin, 'Lets plank Jane Broun'. So ever willing to go along with any pliskie, I looked for a guid hidin place. Grannie, ever up for ill-duin, pointed to the clothes pulley that hung abune our heids in the leevin room of our 'room and kitchen'. 'Fling it up therr son'. So 'son' 'threw the doll up oan tap o the pulley. When Norma came in, shuir as fate, she started castin aboot for Jane Broun.

Everywhere was searched until she was gey near in tears, an at that, my mother thought that the joke had been ta'en ow'r faur, an said, 'The pair o ye'll brek that wean's temper, wi aa your nonsense. Lat her see whaur the doll is'. So Grannie and I pointed to the pulley on which Jane Broun hangit. The pulley was let doon, and Jane Broun gien back to the tear-begrruten six-year-old-mother's arms. Grannie was really a hamelie auld wumman but noo and then she likit a bit o daffin.

J. Walter McGinty

Besom

Whin Ah'm feart
Ah dowp doon amang the birks
an draw maucht fae thir solit shaunks,
et thir through-comin first efter the ice.

Gin Ah could mak speals,
Ah'd staun match among thim,
hidden an cured bi the soop o thir floorish.
We'd hove a hale widlan atween us,

titchin oor lid-tips lik faimlie,
mend the paulie sillerless an,
gin we failt, catch ablaze.
Scrub, Ah've bin cried, Witch.

Fit fur thrapplin wi
the bare hauns o a punler.
Weel they ken ma thrawn birk's baurk.
Its hertwid aneath.

Mhairi Owens

The Modren Prison System

The cells o wir excess
is sic an ill success
we dinna see thaim fyle
or ken we've got the jyle

Hamish Scott

Kith and Kin

Ye could mebbe get awa wi it
wi Auntie Maggie, or Cousin Wullie,
even ma ain guid sister Jessie at a pinch.
Thon cheeky lassie doon the street that aye
murders you at peevers should shairly
be considert. An there'd be nae haverin at aa
about yon Macdonald wha teaches mathematic.
But yer granny... noo that's anither matter.
Sae when it comes tae shovin people aff the bus,
ye'd better ca canny wi yer granny,
an dinny forget. fur the life o ye,
that she is, and aye his bin –
mebbes aye wull ever be –
yer mammy's only mammy.
Whether or no she's got a ticket
jist let the auld yin be ... OK?

J. Barrie Shepherd

Melancholiday

For May bank holiday

Activate the speerit o mirth
and stap the tap o meesery
we melancholics sip fae birth

And, for a time, houeever brief,
unlock the cheens o care and grief
that keep us tethered tae the earth

Bring furth, wi wit and frippery,
a temporary, sweet release
afore we mak our feenal peace

Kevin Connelly

Foodbank Fowk

I'm stammygastered at the fowk
that need oor foodbank.
It' no the yins ye'd think oan.
It' fowk wha hae joabs
but nae uphauled wages
or fowk wi thur livin loast
and nae prap ablaw them
tae gie them an oxter up.

I pour them a cuppa,
hae a blether, maybe the wan
bodie tae caw them bi name,
an ask efter their faimille.
They gan awa wi enuch
tae feed the bairns
fir the lave o the week.
They're made at hame here,
aye welcome.

Ann MacKinnon

Cloutie Dumplin

Andy Stewart's faither
taucht ma mither science in skale.
Low level o comprehension
hence no much sunk in, sae
dispite mony experiments
her nuclear bomb didnae explode fur
it didnae contain plutonium
or wires or the fuse.
Just self-raisin flouer,
bread crumbs, broon sugar,
bicarb, treacle, raisuns
an a hale lot o yon spices.
Nae fusion but confusion tho
her cloutie dumplin went mental
when scraped aaf yon ceilin.
Great muckle mess.

Alun Robert

Time Trevel

*Frae New an Selectit Scots Poems, forthcoming in Chapman wi
a Scottish Govt Scots Leid Publication Grant*

Noo hoo did yon happen, Ah spier ye?
When Ah cam in here it wis licht.
Shair, the win wis snell an ma snottery neb
wis sair in need o a dicht.

An it's ainlie the twae yills Ah've neckit
(mind, a whisky or twae seemed richt).
Sae hoo did yon happen, Ah'm speirin masel,
that Ah'm leavin the pub an it's nicht?

Stuart A. Paterson

On hearin Auld Lang Syne tae a different tune

Auld freen, yer new claes
are braw – for a meenit but,
A'm stammagastert. Syne

the unco casts the kent
in a new licht. Forby,
ye're dumfoonert an aw

at hoo A've chynged. A mind
the turn o phrase the auld yins
would yaise at pairtin:

A'll see ye when ye're better
dressed. This new rig-oot –
A could get yaised tae it.

So here's a hand my trusty fere –
crossed hauns bring us aye nearer.
An when we turn oot,

A cannae see ye, but it's fine
A ken the feelin o yer haun in mine.

Dorothy Lawrenson

Vainisht

Weill Ah mynd the day. Deed, Ah'l mynd it till ma deein day. And aye the grue comes owre me.

It was in Septemmer, back in the Echties, a cauld day and owrecast. The clood was jist abune the taps in Glen Kinglass, and Ah was hauf-wey throu a twa-day ploy atween Brig-o-Orchy an Taynuilt.

Ah thocht Ah had the haill glen til masel, but Ah hadnae. Yon side o the watter, heich on the rig til the left, there stude a pairty o hillwaulkers. Hauf a dizzen o them at the least. Whit were they daein up there, an sae early in the morn? It's no like they were on a Munro or oniething. Ay, an whaur were they gaun?

Doun. Nae suiner had Ah spied them, than they set forth doun the brae towards me. An staired ti straigle. No surprizin, really. Jist human naitur. For there was nae path easier than onie ither, an they aa stappit oot at their ain pace.

Afore lang, the road doun the glen brocht me direckly in front o them, an frae then on Ah cudnae keep them in sicht withoot stoapin an keikin roun. Whilk Ah did several times, me be-in keen ti see whaur they wud go. Wud they tirn upstream or doun, or try an fuird the river? That wud be a lauch, watchin them aa get weit.

Whan furst Ah tirmed, Ah thocht 'That's funny. There's anerly sax. Was there no mair o them jist a meenit syne?' But mibbe Ah had miscoonted.

Neist, they were but five. Perhaps ane had wandered a bit agley. Ah leuked left an richt but there was nae sign o a bodie.

Again Ah tirmed, an spied anerly fower. Had the missin waulkers aa fund hidie-holes? Or a crunkle in the brae-side? Nane visible.

Thrie. 'his is jist no naitral,' says Ah til masel. 'Whatten for a ferlie is this?'

Twa. Nae mair nor Ah expeckit.

Ane. He was gey near the brae-fuit, the lang-leggit chiel wha had aye been til the fore.

'He'l come til yon tree,' says Ah. 'An that'l be the end o it.'

An sae it was.

For a meenit, Ah stude there dumfounert, dichtin ma een in amazement. Seiven hillwaulkers at the tap o the brae, and ane eftir tither . . . they vainisht.

Gordon Donaldson

Some Fowk Are Warse Aff Than Ithers

Frae Aesop's Fables for Modren Times

The lion, brave beastie, was ay at odds wi the fire-breather, Prometheus – ti his mind, he couldnae dae oniething richt ata. Prometheus had put the lion thegither, ye see, but the lion thocht the plan fair agley. Fair do's, he thocht, he was big and bonnie, his jaws were firm-set wi fine gnashers, and his paws wi great cleiking claws – and oorbye aathegither had gaen him byordinar strenth. He was prood ti think that his claws had set up a fine dividing-line atween him and the rest o the warld. Was he nae King o the Beasties, eftir aa? 'Ye couldnae hae daen much mair, I ken that man, but whit wey am I feart o *cocks*?' he askit the fire-breathing god, a bit puzzled and aa. 'It's nae ma fault, man; dinna blame me,' he rallied, 'it's your ain spirit that's fushionless, man!' Weel, the lion was mair than juist doun-herted at this reason, and kept groaning and waementing for days at his ain cooerdness, as he sa it – foondering awa ti deith worrying days and nichts, they say. Nou, juist as luck would hae it, juist as he was feeling richt sorry for himsel, he met an elephant – and had a bit o a newsie wi the giant. He couldnae help speiring his haibit o wiggling his huge lugs. 'Can ye nae keep still for a minutie, ye fidget?' he askit, 'it's a bit aff-putting, like, your lugs wiggling like that.' 'There's ay midgies about here deaving me,' he said, 'bechtan me ti deith and aa, ain o them in ma lug-hole and that's the deith o me,' he says. Nou this fair kittled oor lion up, and cheered his chops for the rest o the day. 'I nicht be feart o *a cock*,' he said, 'but he's *feart o a midgie*,' and went on his wey.

(The story, of course, depends *on the size o the cock*.)

W. S. Milne