

# EIKS AN ENS

The newsletter o the Scots Leid Associe

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## SANGSCHAW 2021

### Winners 2021

#### Poesie

1<sup>st</sup> Prize an Hugh MacDiarmid Tassie: Alan Millar, *Wee weaver birdie*  
Jynt rinners-up: Rosa Alba Macdonald, *Trettind Day*; George T. Watt, *'Stille Nacht'*  
Ruisit: W.S. Milne, *The Desolate Shore*; George T. Watt, *Scriveit after the storming o Capitol Hill ...*;  
Susan Miller, *Yavins Yella*; Donald Adamson, *Learin the Leid*

#### Cutty Tales

1<sup>st</sup> Prize an Robert McLellan Tassie: Craig Aitchison, *Ower the Mairch*  
Rinner-up: Craig Aitchison, *The Set Texts*  
Ruisit: Tony Beekman, *Aye, Cooncillor*; Hamish Scott, *Warks*; Hamish Scott, *The Talesman*; George  
T. Watt, *Fingerprents*; Rosa Alba Macdonald, *Gaia's Knicht*; Charles P. Connor, *Dillemae*

#### Owersettins

1<sup>st</sup> Prize an John MacPhail Law Tassie: Derrick McClure, *A Blaik Wife Waiments her Guidman*  
Rinner-up: Donald Adamson, *Althild*  
Ruisit: Derrick McClure, *Balou in a Fremmit Kintra*; Brian Holton, *Wee Words*; Brian Holton, *The Hairst  
Wind*; George T. Watt, *The Buik o Sinera*; Robert Maxwell Duncan, *Prayer to Aphrodite*; A. C.  
Clarke, *Ane Fremmit Chiel*; Hugh Pyper, *Buried Alive*; Hugh Pyper, *The Book of Ecclesiastes*;  
Jerry Randalls, *Iago's Soliloquy*

**Mony thanks to aabody for takin pairt in the competeition.**

#### Thochts frae the Administrative Officer

Weel here we are; aince again the laverocks are makin the lift a joyous thrillin membrane ower wir heids an here ablo, wi'r still in Lockdoun! Hooiniver, naithin wull still the Scots tung, thou thay hae streived tae dae so fur fower hunner year. Oor associe is nearing its 50th anniversary an neist year *Lallans* 100 wull laun skelpit an prood in yer letter boxes. There are aye fowk faw claim Scots is aa but deid, it haes nae place in a modren society, pur keech! We hae twa new memmers: Ole Schüzler frae the university o Leipzig an Armel Dubois-Nayt frae the Université de Versailles Saint Quentin en Yvelines. Whiles I think oor freins in Europe care mair fur the Scots Leid than mony Scots! Hooiniver I'm pleased tae say yon is nae aathegither richt. Anither new memmer, faw bides in Michigan but is frae Embro ooriginally, screivit sayin, 'I found myself in a Zoom breakout room at the Stanza Poetry Festival with George T. Watt of the Society ... it began to dawn on me that since I was writing about an era of my life spent immersed in Scots, re-immersing myself in the language I grew up with might allow me to get closer to that time.' Screivin an raedin Scots apens maist fowks' minds tae anither wey o thinking. I'm nae a psychologist, so I dinnae ken fit wey that is, I juist ken that's the wey it is.

Last year we cauncelled oor Collogue due tae the restrictions o Lockdoun. This year we're howpfu it can gang aheid. Hooiniver, gin that's nae possible we wull haud an online Zoom spectacular. We'll kep ye informed.

**George T. Watt**

## 'Hae a good conceit o yersel'

Tales o a Grannie 6

Wan thing I got a lot o frae my Grannie was a sense o self. She wid often say things that made you feel guid about yersel. Tae gi ye twa examplars. There wis a prent o a faur kent paintin hangin in her leevin room. It kythed an auld seaman talkin tae twa wee boys sittin in front o him on a beach, whiles he was pintin oot tae the sea. The title, as I member, was 'Sir Walter Raleigh as a Boy and the Old Sea-dog'. Grannie said tae me, pintin at ain o the boys, 'That's you, son'. An at the time I think I believit her. On anither day passin thro George Square in Glesca, she lookit up at the statue o Sir Walter Scott on its fifty-odd-foot stance, and said, 'That's Walter up there, just like you'. And aince mair I was inclin't tae believe her. If she had dune nai mair she gaed me 'a guid conceit o masel'. But it wisnae aa the wan wey wi her. She could be quite stang in remarks tae, awmaist tae the point o gien hurt. Aince she said tae ma youngest uncle wha was daen gey weel in his joab as an electical engineer, an had just goat his 'Higher National' efter years at Nicht Schule: 'Jist remember ye'r still a common five-eicht.' A slichtly jaurin mindin that he wisnae tae get ony high fallootin ideas about himsel an tae mind whaur he cam frae, whitever poseetion he rose tae. Anither occasion wis when a cousin cam visitin on the Sunday nicht wi the new lassie he was winchin an wis promptly tellt 'Ye'r faur too young'. She sometimes cam oot aw guns bleezin whether ye likit it or no.

### J. Walter McGinty

#### Learnin

The clessruim's whaur ye stert tae work, tae count an spell an read;  
the things they teach ye in ma schuil wid aamaist turn yer heid!

Ye huv tae ken yer alphabet – it's no just a,b,c,  
it's aa about initial sounds which really puzzle me.  
Ah ken that fox begins wi 'f' an answer when Ah can,  
but phone should stert wi 'f' ana aa, along wi fun an fan.  
It's no sae easy learnin sounds wi silent 'k' in knight,  
Ah jist begin tae understaun then 'w's' the stert o write.  
There's silent 'g' in front o gnome tae make it harder still  
Tae teach ye how tae ken yer sounds they pit ye through the mill!

Number work is jist as hard, Ah thocht Ah'd learn it quick.  
When teacher says '*It's stories of,*' Ah kent a few tae pick.  
Three has tae be aboot thon pigs; seiven – dwarfs, Ah ken them too.  
Ten must be bottles on a waa, Ah'll answer her richt noo.  
But that's no the stories that she means, Ah micht huv kent as much:  
it's lots o adds an pluses an tae me it's double Dutch!

'Ah canny fin ma hamework!' is heard in class maist days:  
'Ma ma forgot tae pit it in', but teacher quickly says ...  
'*Your mum forgot? Is that her fault? Whose homework was it then?*'  
Ah huv tae say it's me tae blame an get thon look again!

An when it's Gym, the teacher says, 'It's time to change for Gym.'  
'Huv we tae pit on shorts as weel?' The teacher's face luiks grim.  
'*How long have you been in this class? You know what you should wear!*'  
She niver really answers us an Ah don't think it's fair,  
cos when we go tae Drama it's in the hall as weel;  
an then we only change wir shoes – her rules are jist no real!

But Ah still love the clessruim, the teacher's no that bad.  
Ah dae ma work but hae a laugh at aa the fun we've had.  
An when Ah'm grown an ken it aa, Ah micht jist reminisce  
about ma time spent in thon school an think how guid it wis.

Greta Yorke

### Shrinkin Violet

Oor clippie the shrink  
oan *Stagecoach 73*  
that loops thru the toon centre  
west up tae *Ninewells*.  
Smart in dark jaiket an breeks  
black pumps frae *Schuh*  
aye peered ower bi-focals  
gowd rimmed oan a chain  
top coiffured oan days aff  
brushed clear o her lugs  
tae listen aboot troubles  
wi compassion o a medic  
noddin her heid  
gesticulatin wi erms  
smilin like a moggy  
in spring oan Dens Road  
profferin shedloads o wisdom  
like a pharma at *Boots*  
doon at the Overgate when  
dispensin wee tickets  
but rang aabody's bell  
tho kent when tae stoap  
tae help auld aff or oan  
like a RGN aware  
aboot athin roond toon:  
    politics  
    road works  
    the weather  
    gid boozers  
    specials at *The Cheesery*  
    exhibits at the *V&A*  
    flouers in bloom at *Glenesk Park*  
    length o waits fur oancology  
still gan oot o her way  
tae mak yer richt *fàilte*  
tho under the surface  
yon quine wis fell shy.  
Shrinkin violet o oor buses.  
    World famous in her wynd.  
    Fursooth we'll aa miss her.

**Alun Robert**

### Stuckies

Thay cry us a murmur,  
thou fitwey we dinnae ken,  
fur nae a cheep div we mak  
as we dance tae the wund.  
We swerve an birl,  
reel an turn  
roun stack an spyre an steeple,  
turnin the music o the air  
tae threi dimensions,  
juist fur the benefit o people.

**George T Watt**

### Duicks in a Raw

Stumped, I stare, an see a straggle  
O Canada geise, aa raggie-taggle,  
Wi plumage winter cannae bedraggle,  
    Flee or breed,  
    Aa driftin in a scattered gaggle  
    As they feed.

An aye ane watched – as at their pantry  
The others scrounged, a single sentry  
    Heid up for predatory entry  
    Wi unblinking ee:  
Ae honk fur ony Tod seen gentry  
    An aff they'd flee.

As on their way they mutter an dawdle  
Frae clump tae clump o girse they waddle,  
It seemed to me they micht be model  
    Fur fit I'm daein –  
The flock? ma thochts aye wander, addled.  
    The sentry shooin?

The Muse – or Burns hisselt, terse Robbie,  
    Faw'd say, "Gin this is but a hobby,  
    It maks nae difference gin ye'r sloppy,"  
    Syne adds, imperious,  
    "but gin ye want mare than puir copy,  
    Ye'd best be serious.

"Yon geise yer thochts? Ye maun be dreiving  
Wi stick an shout or some conneiving  
To gar thaim gaither or ye'r just jiving  
    Wi hocus-pocus  
An suin they're aff in flicht or diving –  
    So much fur focus!

"Sae, wake up, man! Instead o scratching  
Yer muzzy heid, ye shuid be watching  
Tae tak they thochts an hae thaim hatching  
    Yer wurd in form  
Or, like they geise, aa ye'll be catching's  
    A frozen wurm."

**Timothy W Boyd**

### Airt

Dinnae weep for Airt, guid fiers  
Thon chiel will ayeweys thrive  
A derfy weed thit pokes throu cracks  
tae feed on misery or joy  
in plague an faimin, feck an foy  
fae gowden hairsts or smeukin wracks  
Lat airtists hae yer tears

**Kevin Connelly**

### The Foggie Bee

An owersettin o *The Blue-Tailed Fly* (American minstrel song)

Whan I wis ying I yaised tae stan  
An ser ma maister wi his scan  
An pass the jaur o barley bree  
An dicht awa the foggie bee.

#### Chorus

*Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Ma maister's gane awa.*

Whan he'd ride oot afore the dusk  
I'd follae him wi a sauchen flisk  
The powny it wad lowp ajee  
Whan nippit bi the foggie bee

#### Chorus

Ae day he rade oot ower the ferm  
An mony foggies roun did swairm  
Ane chaunced tae stang him on the knee  
The deevil tak the foggie bee.

#### Chorus

The powny rin, he lowped an funged  
Intil the sheuch ma maister bunged  
He dee'd, the sherrif said, "Dear me,  
The vairdict is the foggie bee!"

#### Chorus

They yirdit him 'neth a rodden tree  
His epitaph is thare tae see  
"Ablu this stane I fain maun be  
A veictim o the foggie bee."

*Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Jamie cowps cogs an I'll no fash  
Ma maister's gane awa.  
The maister's gane awa.*

**David C. Purdie**

### Heather

Up amang the heather  
At the back o Bennachie  
A bumbee stang me  
Weel abune the knee

I wish I'd climmed up Morven  
Or Mortlich near the Dee  
An worn a pair o leggins  
Tae prevent catastrophe

**Sheena Blackhall**

### Lips

A smirk cam fae hir lips,  
hir smirk becam a kiss  
A smirk cam for hir kiss,  
hir smirk becam hir lips

Hir lips thus telt the tale

O hou we cam tae jyne,  
an hou luve cam sae fine  
O hou luve cam tae dwine,  
an hou we cam tae twine

**Hamish Scott**

### Fairy Thummles

Fairy thummels\* blae an bonnie  
Win can shoogle, they're sae thin  
Sounless bells on stalks o green  
Welcome foggy bummers in

Fairy thummles in the meenlicht  
Dae they dance aneth the stars?  
Silken, secret in the widlan  
Flora's deintie avatars

**Sheena Blackhall**

\* bluebells

### A Bird in the Haund

*Frae Aesop's Fables for Modren Times*

The lion had his ee on a leveret wha was soond asleep bi the roadside – 'I'll hae that for ma breakfast,' thocht he, whan a deer springs up and aff he lowps ti catch him instead, but weel, this deer was faster than the wind and juist as elusive ti catch, the lion couldnae match him ata, sae the hunt he gies up, the chase, and back-tracks fast ti fin auld floppy lugs has waukened up ana and buggered aff.

This could be simplified *thus*:- There's a penny! And there's a heap o gowd! (Aye, richt!)

**W. S. Milne**