



Riyadh's
Caledonian
Society
celebrate
Burns
Night

Burns Night is defined as the annual celebratory tribute to the life, works and spirit of the great Scottish poet, Robert Burns (1759-1796). Celebrated on, or about, the Bard's birthday, January 25th, Burns Suppers range from stentoriously formal gatherings of aesthetes and scholars to uproariously informal rave-ups of drunkards and louts. (None of that going on here...Ed) Most Burns Suppers fall in the middle of this range, and adhere, more or less, to some sort of time honoured form which includes the eating of a traditional Scottish meal, and the recitation of works by, about, and in the spirit of the Bard.

To the uninitiated, much of the recitation is incomprehensible so for the benefit of those who have survived many a supper evening; yet are still left with a sense of confusion; I'm pleased to set out a translation of the immortal "Address to the Haggis". (And before you kilted warriors declare war on an Englishman for daring to undermine the true originality of the bards word - It's available on the internet in German and Japanese as well!)

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the pudding-race!
Aboon them a' yet tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy o'a grace
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin was help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin', rich!

Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive
Deil tak the hindmost! on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
Bethankit! hums.

Is there that owre his French ragout
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassee wad make her spew
Wi' perfect scunner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckles as wither'd rash,
His spindle shank, a guid whip-lash;
His nieve a nit;
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread.
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whistle;
An' legs an' arms, an' hands will sned,
Like taps o' trissle.

Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer
Gie her a haggis!

All hail your honest rounded face,
Great chieftain of the pudding race;
Above them all you take your place,
Beef, tripe, or lamb:
You're worthy of a grace
As long as my arm.

The groaning trencher there you fill,
Your sides are like a distant hill
Your pin would help to mend a mill
In time of need,
While through your pores the dews distil,
Like amber bead.

His knife the rustic goodman wipes,
To cut you through with all his might,
Revealing your gushing entrails bright,
Like any ditch;
And then, what a glorious sight,
Warm, welcome, rich.

Then plate for plate they stretch and strive,
Devil take the hindmost, on they drive,
Till all the bloated stomachs by and by,
Are tight as drums.
The rustic goodman with a sigh,
His thanks he hums.

Let them that o'er his French ragout,
Or hotchpotch fit only for a sow,
Or fricassee that'll make you spew,
And with no wonder;
Look down with sneering scornful view,
On such a dinner.

Poor devil, see him eat his trash,
As feckless as a withered rush,
His spindly legs and good whip-lash,
His little feet
Through floods or over fields to dash,
O how unfit.

But, mark the rustic, haggis-fed;
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Grasp in his ample hands a flail
He'll make it whistle,
Stout legs and arms that never fail,
Proud as the thistle.

You powers that make mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill of fare.
Old Scotland wants no stinking ware,
That slops in dishes;
But if you grant her grateful prayer,
Give her a haggis.



Alison Pyper & Ian Ewart



Gwen & Doug Mackie



That well-known Scottish couple:
Basil & Heather Shukry display their tartan



Brian Mercer who performed
the Tam O'Shanter
with Mary MacLaughlan



Graham Bull
Addressed the Haggis
in style!

What is a Haggis?
The wild haggis is a tubular beast which has one set of legs shorter than the other so it can run around hillsides. The wild haggis hides in the short purple heather that covers the Highland hillsides and can be very difficult to trap. (which is probably why it is seldom found in shops, except as a fluffy toy - Ed.)

For more information on joining The Caledonian Society contact: RGBB Members
Ian Ewart
2934404
Jim Milne
477 2228
Doug Mackie
293 3450
or Membership Secretary: Mary MacLaughlan
442 6119