

Portmoak Community Woodlands News Feb'16

Our Burns Supper went extremely well and, as usual, contained lots of music and great entertainment. Tartan table runners and whisky miniatures, for every guest, set the scene in Portmoak Village Hall. Chloe Vlasto, 10, gave a beautiful Selkirk Grace while Kirsty Buchanan, 10, as Poozie Nancy, ably assisted the piper, Tom Brown.

Dr Bill Carr addressed and attacked the haggis with his usual gusto. His costume and weaponry are always a surprise. This time he chose the 'Siegfried' look from Gotterdammerung, complete with blonde plaits, and brandished a claymore. The haggis came out with its hands up.

We were extremely lucky to lure John Purser all the way from Skye to give his Immortal Memory. John is a composer, poet and crofter. He also wrote 'Scotland's Music' the definite book on Scotland's musical heritage. He spoke of Burns' comfortable use of the vernacular and how Yeats envied him, as the Irish poet searched for 'a common speech.'

He also reminded us of Burns deep knowledge of nature and because this was the community woodland Burns Supper gave us the appropriate song 'Now Westlin' Winds,' with its opening lines:-
'Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea;
Ye stately foxgloves fair to see;'

We were also very lucky to have, from much closer to home, the fabulous Tich Frier, who not only led the community singing but gave us some brilliant renditions of Burns' songs and even managed to bring Shakespeare into the celebrations.

The Portmoak Players (Lynne Hope, Krys Hawryszczuk, Louise Batchelor and Dave Batchelor) performed Burns songs in Haydn settings and pianist Wendy MacPhedran accompanied Cupar singer Jessie Pryde.

Elaine Carruthers performed an unforgettable Tam o'Shanter, bringing the whole epic tale vividly to life.

This is the only Burns Supper which makes a special feature of just one line from Tam o Shanter, 'Mosses, Waters, Slaps and Stiles.' It's our excuse to give a round up of the year in Portmoak Moss and Kilmagad Wood, which featured a wide range of activity from a public apple i.d. day to a fact-finding trip to Flanders Moss.

In keeping with the outdoor theme, Matt Hogg from Kinnesswood donated one of his beautifully crafted bird tables to the raffle. We were also very grateful to Ken Robertson Associates of Kinnesswood for the generous donations of whisky.

Now we're back to planning events for the year ahead and, as ever, welcome anyone who's interested to our informal meetings at 7.30pm every third Tuesday of the month in the Well Country Inn in Scotlandwell.