

EIKS AN ENS

The newsletter o the Scots Leid Associe

Nummer 6

May 2014

Spring Speik

COLLOQUE 2014 AGM

Setterday 7th June 2014

Sandeman Room, A.K. BELL LIBRARY, York Place, PERTH PH2 8EP

Independence an the Mither Tongue

- 9.45am** Registration & coffee
- 10.15am** **Derrick McClure:**
Independence o the mither tongue: breaking the kailyaird bounds
- 11.00am** **Michael Hance:**
Devolved Scots: progress of the language since 1997
- 11.45am** Break
- 12.00am** AGM
- 12.30pm** Lunch
- 14.00pm** **Robert Millar:**
National language revivals: successes and failures. Which is Scots?
- 14.45pm** **Timothy Neat:**
MacDiarmid, MacLean and Henderson: stauns Scotland whaur it did?
- 15.30pm** Break
- 13.45pm** **Discussion**
- 16.30pm** End

SANGSCHAW WITTINS

Neist Sangschaw wull hae place in 2015. Entry dates for submissions 31st Januar 2015 ti Sangschaw, c/o 6 Dryden Place, Edinburgh EH9 1RP. £5 ilk entry or three for £10, wi nem & address separate. Prose nae mair nor 3000 words, poems an drama nae mair nor 60 lines, owersettins as abune. 3 Tassies ti be awaridit: Hugh MacDiarmid for poesie, Robert McLellan for prose, an John MacPhail Law Tassie for owersettin; £100 ti winners an £50 ti rinners-up.

Gus

A didnae ken the cheil
 but A ken his faither weel,
 he plays the drums while we aa jig an reel,
 he plays the drums fu cantie
 while we strathspey or rantie
 keppin tae the beat that he snares oot.

He wis an airmy man
 an his son he done the same
 mairchin tae the drum he tuik the croon,
 he tuik the chyave richt regular
 o that he wirnae singular
 an like ower mony ithers peyd the cost.

The daungers he weel kent
 fan tae Afghanistan he went ,
 a sudjer tae the core he done his shift,
 an we dinnae gret ae tear
 tae the drum we gie a cheer
 fur the sudjer gaed his aa oot on the rift.

So his faither plays the drum
 an we jig an reel an birl
 we gie it laldy ivry time we tak the flair,
 fur sentiment is fail
 it's a get oot o the jyle
 fur fowk wioot the hert tae daunce or care.

Aye he mairched tae the drum
 nae questions asked by him,
 he pleyed his pairt an pleyed it till the end,
 but we maun speir awaa,
 we've nae excuse avaa,
 or else we haun oor freedom tae the wund.

A niver kent the cheil
 but A ken his faither weel,
 he plays the drum while we aa jig an reel,
 he plays the drums fu cantie
 while we strathspey or rantie,
 keppin tae the beat that he snares oot.

George T. Watt

Scots Doge / Dugs' Leid

Macbeth

ower mirk
 maist king
 unco croon
 whit murder
 sair sleep
 waukrife croon
 whit dabberlacks
 gey Macduff
 sair queen
 verra Birnam
 whit fecht
 ocht — sae Scotland!

sae carlin
 gey queen
 crivvens — skean
 maist bluid
 jings — the missus
 raither Banquo
 mony murder
 whit birth
 muckle deein
 fankle Dunsinane
 mony hamecomin

Rammy

whit mirkie
 ower flytin
 jings rammy
 whit heid
 sair hirplin
 sae Setterday

awfae bevvy
 mony nieve
 stammergaster bluid
 muckle ridd
 sic fecht

Caber Man

ower muscles
 guid thistles
 weel tartan
 whit wheechin
 mony weel hung
 awfae Scotland

gey caber
 donnert jaggy
 maist hielan fling
 raither kilt
 sae porridge

Frances Robson

'Doge': a popular form o verse featurin the inner thochts
 o Japanese Shibe dugs, fun on wabsteids.

Brass Buttons Will Nae Save Ye

The mice, as iver, were at war wi the weasels (near neebours ti the futtrets). 'Warse they are than cats, man, if ye aisk me,' was their byword — wi the same result as iver, that is, they were ay on the losing end o a fecht.

Nou they werenae sappy-heidit, these mice, and they decided ti ca a public-meeting ti settle the maitter aince and for aa. Eftir a stramash o disagreement, and a thusand opinions (aa different), they elected a nummer o generals frae the body o their commonweal for defence. Nou, one moosie luiks muckle like anither, even ti moosies themsels it seems, sae ti distinguish their kin frae the common run o the moose-ilk the generals aathegither made horns oot o auld odd little bittie pieces o stuff and stuck them on their heids — saying, they'd rout the weasels like that. Oniewey, battle was jined (somewhaur in the erse-end o beyond, I dinna ken whaur) and the mice were troonced guid and proper, mind, and belaboured, and abaindoned, and dang doun, ower-harlt, and discomfited, and gaen ower, and thrawn doun, sae that they could hairdly mak their wey hame ti their faimilies and freends, them that were left that is, for there werenae monie left in the hinner-end. Aince there, they scamperit doun thir holes, and were safe aince mair ti peep their whiskers oot nou and then, and tak a breith o air. But nae the generals (na, nae them), for the holes were ower-little for their horns ti fit in, and they were aa killit and roasted for dennar that nicht — Ah, shame!

(Far-fetched, ye nicht say? Whan did the generals iver leave their holes? Nae in onie war I've iver heard o, freend.)

W. S. Milne

Burd-alane

A can hear i the lift
The lither hum o an airie
bi haun an sauntersum
up hie, unseen, i the cairry

O for sic a day burd-alane

Laverock

Stravaigin hamelt parks
A hear a laverock sing on hie
an think that's niver a skylark
while Scotland, Scotland be

Flour

A sawed yer seed i mirksum yird
tae seek the licht an finn the wurd;
whit better can a makar dae
than mak a flour sae?

Hou thrawn we treat makars

Hou thrawn we treat makars,
gin srievers or bard,
we prent thaim in softback
but kist thaim in hard

Hamish Scott

Sobs o May

Fer chrise sake
fer chrise
sake
cries the kitiwaik

an greivin
A ca oot the saim

fer noo ma luv lies
sleepin
an ma endearments
wull na
wauken
hir tae me agin

bit still in grief
A wait hir wauken
an in grief
ca oot hir naim

Alexander Lang

Wulf an Eadwacer

owerset frae Auld Inglis

Weel-luckit oor men-fowk wid rackon thairsels
If he cam wae an airmy tae fecht,
But that's no whit it's like ...

Wae Wulf oan yin island an me oan anither,
The gullion aroond us that hauds us siccar,
This haurdenin island whase men drouth fur bluid
If he cam wae an airmy tae fecht,
But that's no whit it's like ...

Wae faur awa howps ah dwyned fur my Wulf
Oan days whaur it raint an Ah gret like a bairn,
An the fechter wha'd wan me wid cam wae his airms,
The pleisur an pyne he'd bring!
Wulf, my Wulf! This seekrif ae mine,
The hert-sores Ah cairry, the hunger inby
Nae fare but your comin can stanch.
O hearken, Eadwacer! The wouf that has stowen
Oor young in the firthlands is hid,
An breuken apairt whit scarcelins haed staitit,
The unfeenisht sang o oor luve.

Thomas Clark

Mither's Day

'Come forrit an stand in a raw,
an the lave, pit your hands thegither;
on your hint legs an gie them a clap,
ilkane's a star, she's a mither.'

What o puir Belle, sat blate in her pew,
she never gied birth, an she isna bonny.
There aye in her kitchen kail an a crust,
she'll dandle a bairn, an burp her wi ony.

In pictur hats, lea heedless ahint
auld Mistress Provan, an brok like hersel.
Thon graceless sumph o a minister! –
in your hert gaun forrit, Belle.

Peter Cameron

Heid Hazards

A spydir is an arthropod
A boady, heid an laigs
She'll crall intae yer lugs at nicht
An start tae lay her aigs.

Wee ne'erries like tae eat fowk's brains
They'll aiblins cha thir toes
Ye'd baitur chaik yer hungkerchiff
Ilk time ye blaw yer nose.

George C. Robertson

A Tallie Sauvit

'Shoot him!'

'Sur,' Ah says, pittin ma rifle til ma shouder.

Ah ploutered aboot wi the back-sight an speirit 'Thrie hunner yairds, Sur?' tho the fleein PoW hadnae rin onieething like hauf as faur.

'Give me the rifle, corporal,' cried the officer, an warslt it oot o ma grup.

'Dinnae kill him, Sur, or ye'll regret it aa yer days'.

But he pat a roond up the spowt, an there cam a murtherous glint til his ee. Ah kennt Ah had ti dae somethin, an gey quick.

'Ah'll fetch him back masel,' says I, an breinged awa efter the Tallie, gaun like Jesse Owens.

Nou, in ma younger days, Ah hae rin fuit-races wi the Harriers, aye, an for the battalion an aa, but nane o thaim was as desperate as this: a rale maitter o life an daith.

Aa Ah heard o the furst shot was the bullet whusslin past ma lug: owre close for comfort. But Ah heard the blaff o the saicont ane; it was a bit wide o the mark. Mibbe jist a warnin. Mibbe no.

Whit a wey ti go, tho. Shot in the back bi yer ain officer, an wi yer ain *bundook* an aa.

The Tallie stertit ti jink aboot. There was a big roond patch o white claith tacked til the back o his greatcoat, an he maun hae kenned whit that luiked like.

Me, Ah jist made straucht for the yett; it was the anerlie wey oot o the pairk. An it was there that Ah caught up wi him, as he tried ti sklim owre. Sittin athort the yett, he bou'd his heid; he kennt he was bate.

Ah stude there bare-heidit (for Ah'd tint ma side-cap oan the wey), an for some raison Ah raxed oot ma airms. Christ. Like, as if Ah needed ti mak a better tairget o masel.

'Come doun, son. Afore yon mad bastert drills holes in the pair o us'.

Nae repone.

'It's a gey lang soum frae Fife til Italy'.

Still nae repone.

'Ye'll no win hame til yer *mamma mia* that wey'.

That did the trick. Up cam his heid, an he lat oot a muckle great sab that pat me in mind o the dool o aa the warld. An why no? He was jist a young laddie, peynin for his hame, seik o leevin ahint the wire.

(We fund ma cap. It was liggan neist a thrissle).

The officer was lauchin as he haunded me ma rifle. But there was a hint o sleeekitness aboot him.

'Well done, corporal. Take that man back to the camp, jildi. And corporal, report to the guardroom. I'm putting you on a charge'.

When it cam throu, the chairge was jist this: failin ti bring back the twa spent cairtridges. Hou's that for justice, eh? No that Ah minded. Ten days jankers wasnae owre sair ti thole. Leastweys, Ah dinnae hae a deid Tallie oan ma conscience. An the officer? Weill, he transferred suin efter til a front-line battalion, whaur his murtherin ee nicht hae been o some uiss.

Gordon Donaldson

One Guid Turn

A moose ran ower the body o a sleeping lion, and stirred his whiskers aneuch ti wauken the giant, sae he grabbit the moose wi a mind ti eat him ('He'll mak a richt fine *hors d'oeuvre*, or something foreign,' he thocht), but the moose wheegled and pippit that much, saying he'd gie him a present if he let him aff, the lion thocht better o it – a richt fine comedy this, he thocht, and juist lauched, saying, 'Aff ye ging, moosie, aff ye ging,' and he bolted for his hole and safety in hiding. Nou it was nae lang eftir this, as it turnit oot, this same lion was traipped bi hunters and tied bi a rope ti a tree. He was maening, and grunting, and puffing, and peching that lood, the moose heard him, and gnawed stracht through his tether. 'Aye, you lauched the ither day,' said the moose, 'but I'm a man o ma wurd, and ma bond is ma kindness.'

Nou, was that are richt-fine moosie, or whit?

W. S. Milne