

## SECRETARY'S REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 1976

Madam President, and Fellow Members,

It is exactly one year ago tonight that the Irvine Lasses Burns Club was formed when 27 lasses gathered together in this Hall for the Inaugural Meeting. Since that time our membership has steadily increased to 55 with a fair number of visitors throughout the year. The average attendance at each meeting has been 35.

Our programme for the year has been varied, and informative; among our speakers we have had Mr John Thomson, Secretary of the Burns Federation, whose subject was 'The Portraits of Burns'. Mr Sam Gaw gave an illustrated talk on 'Burns in Irvine', Mrs Enez Logan spoke on local Burnsians formed a panel for 'a matter of opinion'; while in April one of our own members, Jane Fraser gave a talk on cultural heritage of Scotland.

In June our meeting was held at the Irvine Burns Club and in September a bus run was made to the Cottage/Museum at Alloway, the Club Meeting taking place at the Village Hall Alloway. In March and August we held members nights, which showed us what some of our lasses could do. In December we celebrated St Andrews Night, when we had Mr Same Gaw to give the toast to Scotia, while Mr Frank Bryson gave several humorous readings. Lesley Fraser and Nan Whyte provided a pleasant interlude which combined Lesley's readings with Nan's violin accompaniment.

Although we were unable to have a hot meal in the Community Wing, we had a 'good doon sitter', thanks to the organisation of a buffet supper by Dee Dunhom, every member bringing a contribution to the feast. At the end of the evening our Grand Draw was made the balance of the cost for our Club President's Commemorative Badge. Earlier in the year. The town council of Irvine had given us £50 towards the Badge, so we can now be assured that we have sufficient money in hand for this purchase.

When our club was first formed there were people who refused to take us seriously, but as the year progressed it was heartening to realise that we were earning respect from other Clubs. In April we were invited to attend the Special Meeting of local Burns Clubs in the Masonic Temple. During this meeting, Lesley and Nan demonstrated their combined talents, bringing high praise from their audience.

In July we were asked at very short notice (two days in fact) to compete in the local Inter-Burns Clubs Quiz to be held in the Cross Keys Hotel, Irvine. Four lasses did take part, and narrowly beat the Irvine Burns Club into second place – again it showed the gentlemen present that we really did know our Burns, and were not just frivolous members of a Burns Club.

In July, several of our members attended the service in Leglen Wood, commemorating the death of Robbie Burns, while recently we took part in 217<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service at the Old Parish Church, Irvine. Later in the day, a wreath was laid by our President. All these invitations show our acceptance by the all male clubs, which is, as I said before, heartening.

The last event in the calendar of the Club's first year was the recent Inaugural Supper at the Eglinton Arms Hotel, when 95 people joined together for a very happy evening. Mr Don Whyte was our special guest. and gave us an unforgettable first 'Immortal Memory'.

Altogether we can be quietly be proud of our twelve months progress. It is hoped we have learned from our mistakes, and can go forward to an even brighter New Year.

In conclusion, thanks are due to each and every lass who by her encouragement and support has made our success possible.

I am sure that Robbie is proud of us.

Rosalind Keyte

5/2/76