



Friends of Scottish Rugby

October 2015 Issue No. 9



What a night...

Way back in the early 19th Century, the poet John Keats famously described this season of the year as "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun....."

'Twas a truly glorious description of Autumn which of course also heralded our Annual Gala Dinner last week... and also described as glorious by many folk!

To those of you and your friends who generously supported the Landmark event an enormous thank you because you certainly helped our Master of Ceremonies James Fairbairn and his fellow stars, the Pinstripe Highlanders and our own Ian Robertson bring the house down!

To those of you who didn't manage to come, what a pity, but I very much hope, " we'll see your likes again!"

Finally from me will we ever forget that Quarter Final against Australia with the majority of the Nation supporting a fantastic effort by the Scottish Team...I doubt it and roll on the 6 Nations 2016.

David Mackay

Annual Gala Dinner—Against all odds!

It was always going to be a challenge - the planning started months ago, booking the entertainers, booking the hotel, enlisting the sound experts, getting invitation cards and brochures printed - the list goes on and on...

And in these times of austerity, what were the chances of getting prizes donated? Then what about getting everyone to come along, especially against a backdrop of the financial challenges associated with obtaining World Cup tickets.

Well, the clock ticked and time passed, the waiting was over and the big night came... and so did you!!

So it was that on October 15th in the magnificent surroundings of the Landmark Hotel, 170 of us sat down to dinner. The dining hall looked splendid, as did the guests. The address to the haggis was performed by Andrew Fox duly supported, as always, by the Pinstripe Highlanders.

And it truly was an exceptional performance, one that set our expectations for the rest of the evening - we were not to be disappointed!

The food was excellent and between courses we were treated to Airs on the Pipes by Neil Esslemont and an unforgettable rendition of *O sole mio* (or was that *Just one Cornetto!*) sung by Elliot Goldie with Sandra Smith on keyboard.



Andrew Fox with the Pinstripe Highlanders

It was time for our Master of Ceremonies, James Fairbairn, to get the evening underway.

Ed Crozier, President of the Scottish Rugby Union started the evening, giving us an enjoyable and amusing address, which included an insight into his support of tradition and the ethics associated with Rugby.

Then up to the podium stepped Ian "Robbo" Robertson to lead the Auction and Prize draw. We need not have worried about prize donations, they were there in plenty, as was Robbo's enthusiasm - he was certainly in fine form. It wasn't long before he had the guests bidding and out-bidding for the wonderful array of prizes that adorned the stage and his never ending repertoire of rugby stories had us all enthralled.

When the auction was over, we could only marvel at the unending generosity of those who support Friends of Scottish Rugby.

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The entertainers...

As if the evening hadn't been enjoyable enough, we were now moving to the finale. Elliot and Sandra led us through a number of well known songs such as Westering Home, The Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen and I belong to Glasgow, to name but a few. The entire room was on their feet singing and clapping and the atmosphere was euphoric.

Then, all too soon it was time for Auld Lang Syne, the night was over and we were on our way home ... or more likely to the bar!

Les Fordham



Photos by Ian MacLeod

New members...

The Gala Dinner is not only about bringing in funds, it is also an opportunity to bring in new Friends. Indeed, we had at least two guests showing interest and we await their applications with anticipation...

Speaking of new members, this would seem an ideal time to welcome those members who have joined since the last Gala Dinner, so to:

Bill Colquhoun
Duncan MacDiarmid
Ian Burrell
Austen Reid
Bryan McDonald
Lady Jean Macpherson
Ishbel Macpherson
Peter Cruickshank
John Mackay
Katie Mackay
Bryan Burrough
Keith Macrae
David Hastings
Douglas Fraser
Ian Johnstone

A very warm welcome to you all !

A Big, Big Thank-you

The organisers and committee would like to say a very special thanks to everyone who helped to make the night such a great success:

Prize Donors,

Prize winners

Table Hosts

The Entertainment team (Andrew Fox, Neil Esslemont, Elliot Goldie and Sandra Smith).

Ian Robertson

James Fairbairn

The Landmark Hotel

The Sound engineers...

But most of all to you for supporting us.

**Friends of Scottish Rugby thank our Sponsors
and Supporters for their generosity**

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