



# Friends of Scottish Rugby

September 2017 Issue No. 16



## A Word from our President

I hope like the Mackays you managed to enjoy a pleasant summer, despite the record rainfall, at least in Scotland.

Anyway as ever time flies and the Autumn Equinox is already upon us. Next month's Internationals against Samoa, the All Blacks and Australia should prove both interesting and testing and it's good to have made full use of our Debentures and SRU Hospitality packages.

On the Club front the Scottish season has already produced some fascinating results and the new team at London Scottish seems to be getting to grips with the tough challenges on and off the field. We wish them well.

Next month also sees our first social event of the new season when we welcome Dee Bradbury, the new SRU President elect to lunch in the Caledonian Club. Dee is a very impressive character and of course will be the First Lady to take the top slot. Delighted to report that after a slow start we have a sell out.....thank goodness!

Still on the social front your committee has various plans for increased and perhaps rather different activity so please be on the lookout for emails from Secretary Les.

Finally Jane and I very much look forward to saying hello to many of you over the next few months.

**David Mackay**

## Donations - Leith and Stirling County RFC

We have made 2 donations to worthy clubs since the publication of our last Newsletter.

**Leith Rugby Club** is a small club which has operated in the heart of the Leith community since it was founded as Leith Academicals Rugby Football Club in 1921.

Leith itself has areas of material social deprivation and compares unfavourably with Edinburgh as a whole and extra-curricular sport provision has dwindled to virtually nothing, meaning that there is no great rugby tradition in the Leith area.

Leith Rugby Youth Development (LRYD) aims to change this situation.

**Stirling County RFC** have received donations from us for the past 2 years and it is proving to be well founded.

Their most significant growth has come in girls' rugby: from 12 girls in total just over two seasons ago, they now have 34 U18s and 28 U15s at the club and a recently started U12s section already has 12 at training. Mini to male Youth rugby has seen a 10% growth in players in the past 18 months. Wallace High school has gone from 3 teams to 4 teams in the boys with a full squad now at U15 girls where previously they had to join with other schools to make up a team.

For more information on these and other success stories, go to our website at "[www.f-s-r.org](http://www.f-s-r.org)"

**Les Fordham**

## **Anthony Foley**

Following the sad passing of Anthony Foley last year, Donald McNab wrote to the President of Munster to express our sympathy. We have received a letter in response from Gerry O'Shea thanking us for our thoughts.

## **Report on visit to Duns Rugby Club**

Further to our donation to Duns Rugby Club (see [www.f-s-r.org](http://www.f-s-r.org) "Successes" tab for more info), we were invited to join them for the celebrations.

On Saturday 26th August Duns RFC had a "Grand Opening Family Fun Day", to celebrate the opening of their new clubhouse facilities. Over 200 members and guests sat down to lunch, after which Rob Flockhart, President of the SRU, declared the new facilities open.

The new facilities are situated in the grounds of the Old Berwickshire High School, and consist of a large function area and bar, kitchen, community room, changing rooms, treatment room and rooms for officials. Rob Flockhart described the facilities at Duns as the model for how rugby clubs can thrive in their community, by opening their doors to all in the community.

Duns RFC had benefited from financial assistance from the SRU (£50K), Sports Scotland (£56k) as well as money raised by selling their old premises in the centre of the town, and assistance from Friends of Scottish Rugby, and many others. Much of the work on the new building had been carried out by club volunteers, over a period of five years.

Also on the same site as the rugby club are the local primary and secondary schools, the local swimming pool, the football club and the squash club.

The Club President described the vision that the club had five years ago, to produce a high quality facility, that they now have. This year they expect to be running two senior teams, as well as Youth, U16, Colts and mini rugby.

Following lunch, and in warm bright sunshine, the Duns 1st XV played an invitation Kelso 2nd XV and won 36-12. The future is looking good for Duns.

**Neil McNair**

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