



Friends of Scottish Rugby

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Honorary Life President Donald McNab - Tribute Dinner

Our Tribute Dinner on 22nd February to honour our Life President Donald McNab was a sell-out. 114 Friends and Distinguished guests gathered in the Caledonian Club for a marvellous evening and once again we were graced by HRH The Princess Royal.

The Club excelled in its presentation for the evening and the ambience, food and wines were first class and beyond. Much praise is due to Ian Campbell and his very professional team for such wonderful fayre.

Whilst in many respects twas a merry evening it was also touching and emotional. David Guild made a superb and witty speech about the "unique" Donald which was rightly loudly well received by one and all, including the Man himself.

Princess Anne also spoke warmly and her presence, awareness and conviviality were hugely appreciated. Donald's response was amusing, wise and appropriately sentimental..... hardly a dry eye in the house!

Various presentations took place including a Clan McNab Scottish silver brooch dating back to 1880 and a magnificent and personalised three litre bottle of Glenfarclas Cask Strength Malt donated by J & G Grant.

A Dundee collection in favour of Donald's chosen Charity, Royal Scottish Blind, raised a very generous £1,250.

And to cap it all, the assembled gathering stood to sing Happy Birthday to celebrate Donald's four score and three years!

As Jock Meikle rightly commented later "When will we see his likes again." Soon, I hope!



Donald wont be short of a wee dram

David Mackay

A personal message from Donald

It has been a long and enjoyable journey since Friends of Scottish Rugby was formed all these many years ago. There have been some remarkable successes and some sad failures along the way. To have 2 Prime Ministers and 8 senior politicians speak with us was amazing. To have 2 senior Ministers fail to attend an arranged lunch was very disappointing, but I suppose to have Alex Salmond and Donald Dewar to debate Scottish Independence was most gratifying.



Her Royal Highness signs the visitors' book

Many of our events were held in the Caledonian Club, to many our Scottish home, yet to be invited to hold lunches in members' boardrooms was rewarding. Successful though those lunches were our main fund raising event was the highly successful Gala dinner which we held once a year.

Over the years you the members, have stood by your committee, continued to dig deep into your pockets and support the aim of raising funds for Scottish rugby in its many forms.

From the 34 junior Scottish rugby clubs and the London Scottish Academy; to donating funds to worthy causes which in themselves were not entirely rugby orientated, yet were deeply Scottish centred. From the Dunblane school massacre, to the Solway Harvester fishing boat disaster; to Erskine Home for wounded Scottish soldiers, you happily made generous donations.

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As your Chairman for 17 years and now your Honorary Vice President following such extraordinary men as Sir Tommy Macpherson and Sir Willie Purves is an honour. To be further honoured at a dinner on my 83rd birthday in the presence of The Princess Royal with almost 120 members and guests attending, so well organised and carried through by your committee, was in itself more that I could have expected.

To have part of my life so warmly exposed during the dinner in a speech by David Guild; to receive a silver McNab Clan brooch from our president David Mackay; and have a 3 litre bottle of Glenfarclas bearing my photo presented to me was very moving.



The kind words from HRH The Princess Royal will remain with me, as indeed will the songs sung long into the night.

It was an extraordinary evening.

May I thank you the members and your guests for the support and friendship given to me over the years.

My apologies go to your secretaries, wives, and girlfriends, for the many, many times I have phoned to check that you would actually be attending events. To them really go my thanks.

Rugby may not be the first thing that ladies think about upon arising, but to me and to you the members it is an important factor in our very being. In some respects it makes life worth living, especially when Scotland win a match.

Again my thanks for your support and for your warm friendship. This will remain with me wherever my journey in the future takes me.

Donald McNab - Honorary Life President



Andrew Fox performed a very entertaining address to the haggis



*A fitting end...
Donald holds court on the 5th step*

I am sure that all members past and present will wish to join me in wishing Donald all the very best for the future.

Les Fordham

Photos courtesy of James Finlay

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