



Friends of Scottish Rugby

March 2017 Issue No. 15



A Word from our President

Well, it wasn't standing room only at our AGM on 23rd March but it was certainly well attended and the Members were generally very supportive of the efforts and commitment by your Committee.

It was good to announce that Neil McNair had agreed to join the team and his experience and energy is already making an impact!

Despite the fact that we had not held a Gala Dinner our finances are quite healthy allowing us to continue to make sensible donations to Scottish Rugby Clubs as well as continuing to support London Scottish via an innovative short term loan which we plan to reinvest in due course in bursaries for young Scottish qualified players. To that end Rod Lynch gave Members a valuable insight regarding London Scottish's planned future strategy (See page 3 for details).

Your Committee has several options in mind to help generate further funds in the year ahead and we hope to be able to announce more details shortly.

Our Chief Guest, ex Scotland Captain and double Lion, Andy Nicol entertained us after Dinner with a superb speech which was rightly accorded a very hearty standing ovation. In the Dundee Collection we were able to amass an impressive sum in favour of Andy's nominated Charity CHAS.

Afterwards many members returned to the Bar to continue socialising with Andy and other guests.

All in all there seemed little doubt that there was a strong sense of bonhomie in the air!

As ever many thanks for your invaluable support."

David Mackay

AGM Dinner report

More than 50 members and their guests sat down to our dinner on Thursday 23rd March. There were many new, and some younger faces amongst the diners, and I am pleased to say a number of ladies were also present.

After welcoming all present, our President David Mackay invited Ian Black to say Grace, which he did with a highly appropriate "Rugby Grace". A Grace I know I have not heard before.

The haggis was piped in by that stalwart piper from London Scottish FC, Ralph Potter accompanied by Mike McGlashan from the Pinstripe Highlanders. Jock Meikle gave his own unique Address to the Haggis, written by Jock: "Great Chieftain of the Oval Ball Game". Followed by "The Reply from the Haggis", written by Jimmie Mason, President of the Burns Club of London in 1975.

The Tommy McPherson Quaiche was presented to Tom Galbraith who collected it on behalf of Ally Miller, by Lochy McPherson, in the presence of his grandmother, Lady Jean MacPherson.

The Sir William Purves Quaiche was presented to Magnus Bradbury by Willie himself.

The principal guest and speaker was Andy Nicol, BBC presenter, British Lion, and 23 times capped for Scotland.

AGM Dinner report (continued...)

Despite being a proud Dundonian, Andy gave us plenty of laughs with some of his anecdotes about Dundee and Dundonians. He then led us through a tour de force of Scottish rugby from the amateur times through to the professional era. The room was full of laughter at Andy's self-deprecating Scottish humour as he described in detail the behaviour, opinions and quirks of the many great players he had the honour to play with. My personal favourite tour story was about his sharing of a hotel room with the Grand Slam Captain, David Sole!

Andy Nicol is definitely one of the best after dinner rugby speakers, possibly, dare I say so, the best?

A Dundee Collection was held to raise money for Andy's nominated Charity - CHAS, a charity that provides hospice services in Scotland for children and young people. Douglas Hutchinson kindly donated a bottle of Caledonian Club malt whisky as a prize to encourage donations. This was won by Nigel Hamilton who promptly auctioned it to raise even more for CHAS.

The evening concluded with Adam Brodie giving the Vote of Thanks. Following the formal proceedings a large number of the members and their guests pursued Andy to the Members Bar of the Caledonian Club, where the evening continued till the sma' hours.

Neil McNair



Donations

On behalf of the Members, this year the committee made donations to:

London Scottish Academy, Greenock Wanderers RFC, Dundee - Royal Blind, Dundee - Scotscore, Cartha Queens Park RFC, Kingussie High School and Dundee - Columba 1400.

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