

The Selkirk Colonial Society

Bulletin 1996



No.2

Edited by Jack Harper, Membership Secretary.

From your Chairman,

Friday, May 24th, 1996

As I write on this bright and sunny but rather chilly Friday morning, almost exactly three weeks before our Standard Bearers will Cast their Colours in the Market Square at the climax of the 1996 Common Riding, that eager sense of anticipation which builds up in Selkirk every year is already at work. The Spurs Night at Galashiels is past; other preliminary functions take place every weekend now; the resident Standard Bearers' practices are well in hand and exiles are beginning to return home.

Our preparations for the Bussins' Concert, the Overseas Visitors' Reception and the Foy are almost complete and your Society is now looking forward to the arrival in Selkirk of our Standard Bearer for 1996, Bill Rathie. Bill will be returning home from Indonesia together with his Lady Bussier Ibu Yani, on her first visit to Selkirk. We also look forward to the arrival from Madagascar of our Guest Chairman, Standard Bearer of 1988, Brian Nixon and his wife Irene. At the last count, Will Anderson tells me of some thirty or so exiles returning this year. No doubt there will be more and they can all be assured of a warm welcome.

I hope that it will not be too long before all of you who will be unable to be with us this year in person will be able to get back to Selkirk for another Common Riding and that you will at least be able to be with Standard Bearer Rathie in spirit on June 14th. In the meantime, I can extend to you all the very best wishes of us all in Selkirk.

Jim Henderson

Dear *Jessie*,

After Common Riding 1995, we had one of the finest summers most of us can remember. The sun shone on and on, day after day and the evenings were balmy and long.

The colonials kept turning up too. Within a month I had met three ex-Colonials Standard Bearers — two of them with their Lady Bussiers — quite casually in the street as if it were the normal thing! Pleasant moments indeed.

I later had a visit from Rex Donaldson's widow, Elizabeth, with her husband, Ken Stewart. Ken seemed to be thoroughly enjoying his first visit to Selkirk and sampling Elizabeth's native air. They were accompanied by Rex's sister Betty and her husband who live in Eastbourne. It was a happy visit with many memories being exchanged. They were all going on to tour Scotland.

Add to that a telephone call from Detroit and another from New Zealand and you have proof that the Colonial Society does not function only at the Common Riding. Early this year I met a lady member from the U.S.A. who promptly paid her subscription!

Many thanks to all of you.

A sadder occasion was meeting up with Swinton Galbraith back in Selkirk for his father's funeral. Bob died on the eve of a planned visit to Tasmania. Swinton's ties with Selkirk, however, will not be broken as he assures me that he is keeping ownership of the family home in Hill Street.

My thanks go out to all of you who have taken time to write or send a card. That is what makes it all worth while. I am sure that often a name will come to mind and you wonder, "whatever happened to him?". Well, one of us here might just have the answer. Many of you will probably receive copies of the Weekend Advertiser and see the old school photographs which they print from time to time. We like to scrutinise them for faces we remember and scratch our heads for names we have forgotten. Likewise it is the past that binds us all together now.

Yours aye,

Jack Harper

Membership Secretary

Expecting you present next year !!

It all started here!



The Original Flag

Our Senior Citizen in Ontario, Adam Houston, has been busy in the field of research. His home in Burlington is not far from Hespeler, the town where the Selkirk Colonial Society was founded and now a district in the city of Cambridge.

Adam has been in touch with the city archivist and has fully informed him about Selkirk's connection with Hespeler. His main thought was to try to trace any possible descendants of founder members. However, by a great stroke of luck the archivist came across the photograph which was taken in 1911 of the original flag before it was sent over to Selkirk to be cast at the Common Riding that year.

Adam got prints organised and so we are able to reproduce the picture above. So far we have been able to identify only one of the men: James Hyslop (holding the corner) cast the same flag in 1912 — the second to do so. We know the names of the others and have been able to inform the archivist of the approximate date when it was published in the Canadian press, so we hope we may yet gather the full story.

Meanwhile, Adam has been able to contact the grandson of James Hyslop, although he (Hyslop) does not appear to know much about his grandfather's roots in Selkirk. We are much indebted to Adam and Agnes for uncovering those links with the past. That is what it is all about, is it not?

And Another Flag . . .

Our collection of flags has been enhanced by that of New Zealand, donated by the Imrie family and dedicated to the memory of their father Bob who emigrated late in life after working as engineer in Yarrow Mill and serving on the Town Council as Dean of Guild. This will be displayed at the reception along with the flags of Canada, U.S.A., Australia and also that of Ontario, where the Society was founded.