



From your Chairman,

Friday, June 6th, 1997

As we stand again right on the threshold of another Common Riding, I am happy to report that all our arrangements are well in hand. A real sense of anticipation has now gripped the Auld Toun as it usually does about now. The bunting is up, casting practice is almost complete and I have already met some of our members from overseas back in town for the big week.

This year we celebrate a unique event in the history of the Society: it will be the first occasion on which a grandson has been appointed Standard Bearer in the footsteps of both his father and his grandfather. We are delighted to welcome Marcus Waldie as our 1997 Standard-Bearer, following his father Donald (1976) and grandfather Walter (1958). It is also possible we will witness another unique occasion this year when Marcus's sister Hannah buses the Colonial Flag next Wednesday; this likely being the first time a sister has done so for her brother. Indeed the Bussin' Concert will be a real Waldie affair this year as Donald will be Guest Chairman creating a really unique evening. We are all looking forward to Wednesday immensely, as of course, we are to next Friday.

This will be the last year of my Chairmanship and it has been my delight and privilege to lead your Society for the past four years. It has been a particular privilege to have installed three great Standard Bearers in Ernie Hume, Duncan Stewart and Bill Rathie and I have no doubt Marcus will follow their lead. Thank you all for your support.

Finally, I hope that it will not be too long before those of you who were unable to be here with us at the Common Riding this year will again be able to return to Selkirk in this great month of June. Allow me to extend to every one of you the very best wishes of all of us in Selkirk.

Jim Henderson

Dear Jennie & Brett,

It was some winter we had — and it all came in November! Most of you will have heard or read all about it; the ice storm we had was something that none of us could ever remember having experienced before. We had snow travelling horizontal — we thought it was more like the Antarctic blizzards — and thunder and lightning at the same time. Power lines were brought down by the mile resulting in Selkirk and the Valleys being plunged into darkness.

In the town we were without power for fully twenty four hours, but some folks in Ettrick and Yarrow went over a week before temporary connections were made.

This was the first and last snowstorm of the winter, but gales persisted right through to March. April has been better, but fears were beginning to rise about the shortage of water after such a long dry spell. However the sun shone on Appointment Night, and Royal Burgh Standard Bearer elect Allan Wilson was chaired round the town in time-honoured manner with a huge enthusiastic following.

And so another Common Riding was launched and everything from then on was geared to Friday, the 13th day of June.

Since then all the usual symptoms have been in evidence. All the wee notices that appear annually in the Wee Paper, tickets on sale for Bussin' concerts and dinners (a scramble for the latter!) and every Wednesday evening the sound of "Up Wi' the Souters" as the Standard Bearers gather to practice the art of Casting the Colours.

The weather in May was mixed but we had a glorious night for the customary practice at "The Bield" for all the residents to view.

Our Standard Bearer had not then arrived (he was actually in flight at the time) but we managed to display our flag for the occasion.

And so, as ever, the Common Riding has been very much in our minds over the past six months and, of course, so have you Colonials as we wonder how many of you will be coming home. Yes, you who keep in touch with us are never forgotten.

Yours aye, *Jack Harper*

YOUR Membership Secretary



Ex-Baillie Tom Henderson presents Marcus Waldie with his Grandfather's memorial medal. The Back-drop is the very flag carried by Walter Waldie in 1958.

Selkirk Common Riding 1997

MANY years ago I worked beside Andy Emond in a Galashiels mill. Every Common Riding week, the canteen wifie used to greet us with: "Hail smilin' morn! It'll be pourin' rain!" — to which Andy would reply, "It'll no' maitter a demn".

By the law of averages, we must have a wet year now and again and this year it was 'now'; but I can assure Andy — now over there in Warrnambool, Australia — that it didnae maitter a demn, it went on with all the warmth and enthusiasm as of old — perhaps even with a little bit more.

Wednesday night saw the weather at its wettest, but fortunately for the Colonials, the marquee had already been erected for the ball and we were able to forgather therein. A record number of 57 names had been given in to us this year, but secretary Will Anderson and treasurer John Elliot had things well in hand and the Bussin' Concert was hailed as one of the best.

The Waldie family played their parts to perfection and the audience warmed to them. Provost Newlands, in his first year of office, was well received when he addressed the company with most appropriate words, and Burgh Standard Bearer, Allan Wilson, had a hero's accolade when he was presented with the Edinburgh Souters' medal.

There was a bumper crop of messages from members overseas, many latching onto the New Zealand idea of sending picture postcards, which make such colourful souvenirs. One from last year's Standard Bearer Bill Rathie and Lady Busser, Yani, was first to arrive.

At the reception afterwards, Standard Bearer Marcus Waldie was presented with his commemorative medal by senior citizen and former Baillie, Tom Henderson, a contemporary of Walter Waldie's, while Hannah received her Lady Busser's badge from the Chairman's wife, Irene Henderson.

Marcus followed both his father and his grandfather in choice of ribbon — claret with light blue lettering.

There was the usual mirth and song and the Waldies were supported by all the other Australians present in a rousing rendering of 'Waltzing Matilda'. Here, too, Provost Newlands delivered some well chosen words and rounded off with an appropriate J. B. Selkirk poem.

Another night of happy memories for all.

Among those home from the U.S.A. was the Royal Burgh Standard Bearer's Aunt Jessie, with her son, Brett Camerer.