

Selkirk Colonial Society

Bulletin 1998



No. 4

Edited by Jack Harper, Membership Secretary

PROUD MOTHER AND SON



Mrs Anna Coracy and her son Billy prepare to act their respective parts at the Bussin' Concert. Anna looks a bit apprehensive but Billy is more confident - confidence which was clearly justified by the way he was to carry out all his duties.

Dear *Jennie*,

Owing to unforeseen difficulties in getting the photographs the Bulletin is running a bit behind time this year. However, the Common Riding is never out of date and the last one always fresh in the memory.

We had the mildest winter that anyone can remember. A mere scuff of snow and a couple of frosty mornings and that was about it. We just hope that the seasons are not reversed, as June 1st found us in dismal wet weather, the Ettrick, if not in flood, at a very high level and, of course, the Hawick folk sweating on what Friday would be like!

As it turned out the weather smiled on both Hawick and Selkirk, in our case it was a day of perfect sunshine from start to finish. We were extremely lucky because since then it has been unsettled. If summer we have had, it has been in instalments! This year brought a new phenomenon to the Colonial Society. Although the Standard Bearer elect did not arrive until a week before the Common Riding, he was in close contact with the chairman through the wonder of modern technology known as E-Mail, of which I plead complete ignorance - or should I say "illiteracy"? As you will read, Billy played his part with great credit.

Things are not too bright in Selkirk I am sorry to say. There have been redundancies in both the textile industry and the electronics. As I write the trades holiday fortnight is upon us and many will go off with apprehensions about what they will find when they return. We can but hope that the powers that be can root out the problem and get things stabilised again.

There was one minor change in the custom this year. The Silver Band held their Show Sunday performance in the Market Place instead of the Pringle Park. This was because of dwindling attendance in recent years but is only for this year in order to find out if it is more attractive to the folk. By the response I rather think this will be the norm in future years. I hope that the occasion will continue to be a meeting place for all returned Colonials.

My warmest good wishes to all of you overseas members and, to those of you whom we have not seen for a year or two, haste ye back! Thoughts are already turning to the end of the century in 2000; Why not make it a special year? There are no plans made as yet but your very presence could make it different, and if any of you have a suggestion to make, why not let us know? We will examine the possibilities.

A' the best tae ye a',
Yours aye,

Jack Harper

Jack Harper
Membership Secretary

From your Chairman.

July 24th, 1998



Six weeks have now passed since June 12th and as Selkirk prepares for the annual Trades Holidays, the Common Riding of 1998 has become another happy memory.

And it was a happy time; and it was a memorable Common Riding, not least for the Coracy family. As I write, I have been reading a letter just received from our 1998 Lady Bussier, Anna, in which she writes of the great time the family had this year and of how they plan an early return. Surely Billy was a great example to anyone who anticipates carrying our Standard in the future; his dedication and enthusiasm helped so much to make this yet another special year for the Society and his family can be justifiably proud of the way in which he has added another chapter to our record.

Each year it is a delight to meet again those old friends from Common Ridings past, just as it is to make the acquaintance of those who have made the pilgrimage to Selkirk for the very first time. This year has been no exception and I hope that all those who attended our various functions enjoyed them as much as I did.

As you will have gathered, your Society has seen fit to elect me Chairman for a second term and I am delighted to have been able to respond positively; at the same time, I am very conscious of the responsibility this places upon me and of the traditions we must strive to uphold. I will do the best I can in the knowledge that I can always rely on your support.

To those of you who were unable to be in Selkirk this year, it is our hope that you will have the opportunity to return home soon when you can be assured of a warm welcome. In the meantime, please allow me to extend the best wishes of all in Selkirk.

Jim Henderson

WHO'S WHO IN SELKIRK



JOHN and WILMA ELLIOT

John was brought up in Argyll but is of Selkirk stock. His father was from Bowhill and his granny a Wallace from Back Row. As a boy he came to Selkirk at every opportunity to stay with an aunt at Manorhill, and saw many Common Ridings. Well he remembers watching his father's cousin, Peter Wallace practising the casting of the shoemakers' flag.

John went straight from school into the R.A.F. and served in administration in Transport Command. He served in the Middle East and in the Far East.

After the war John transferred to Civil aviation, joining the staff at Turnhouse airport. He met Selkirk lass Wilma Crooks at a dance in the County Hotel and she became his wife shortly after. John's career took them to Libya, Saudi Arabia and to Holland as Station Officer.

The latter part of his working life was with American Express.

Since retirement to Selkirk in 1991 John and Wilma have both played an active role in the Colonial Society, John being the present treasurer and Wilma making arrangements for the Bussin' Concert.