



Colonial News 2013

Message from the Chairman

What a difference a year can make! After the rain of 2012, we welcomed the sun in 2013, and the Common Riding was a tremendous success. Returning exiles and overseas visitors numbered around 45 and it is clear that the pull of Selkirk in June is as great as ever. Our Standard Bearer and Lady Busser, following in the footsteps of great-grandfather Robert Anderson exactly 100 years later, were a credit to the Society and their family. They took many happy memories back to San Francisco and we hope to see them again.

I hope this newsletter finds you all in good health and I look forward to seeing some of you in 2014. The Society is grateful to Donald Waldie for his financial support in the production of this newsletter.

Lindsay Cockburn, Chairman, Selkirk Colonial Society

The returning exiles and overseas visitors



Letters from America – Nicola Miner

Call it willful ignorance or maybe blind hubris, but I had no idea what the role entailed when Robert first applied to be Colonial Standard Bearer for Selkirk's Common Riding. I imagined a nice trip to Scotland with a quick trip to a parade with bagpipes where Robert would wave a flag and march around his great grandfather "Honolulu Bob" Anderson's hometown, marking a private family centennial of this tradition.

Of course, after having been married to Robert for 14 years, I should not have been surprised that the role was much larger, and more significant. The history and customs, the songs and communal spirit of the Common Riding were humbling to us Americans. The connection between past and future, the rootedness to the land and of the craft guilds, the commemoration of perseverance in the face of defeat were celebrated with a seriousness and sincerity that never occurs in the United States. What I had initially thought would be a fun cultural event, turned into a profound lifetime experience that reshaped my understanding of myself, my heritage and my country. Not only was the ceremonial experience meaningful (though at times gruelling!), but the town and her folk were so warm and welcoming that Selkirk has become one of my favourite places. We hope – all 16 of us – to return to Selkirk sometime in the near future (when roses bloom again!) and once again enjoy the Common Riding as Exiles.

My four children are still telling everyone about their trip, showing their friends their photos and singing all the songs. Robert has shown everyone his casting highlights, demanding admiration with every completed twirl of the flag. And everyone is so proud to learn that their surname came from such a lovely town, with a long and honourable history. In the US we all come from somewhere else



(or at least almost all of us do) and the Andersons now have a real connection – through family, new friends and new experiences – to Selkirk, home of Honolulu Bob and countless Andersons before him. As for me, my grandfather came from the Isle of Skye and thanks to my trip to Selkirk, my mother and I are now planning our own trip to Scotland to see the town where he came from. Nothing as glamorous as being Lady Busser at a Common Riding, but I am hoping it will at the very least be a nice place to see.



Pictures – clockwise from top left

1. Bussin' of the Society flag
2. Rosalie presents the Lady Busser medal
3. Relaxing at the Reception
4. Lorraine presents flowers to Jean Thomson, wife of the late Jack, Colonial SB 1963



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A view from the Common Riding Trust 2013 – Jim Henderson

My Common Riding began on January 29th. The Common Riding Trust met and formally decided that there should be a Common Riding in 2013. No great surprise there. Detailed planning reaches a climax following Appointment Night.

This year there were concerns about safety aspects of the route of the Marches with remedial work on a culvert close to the Weavers' Well between Tibbie Tamson's and the Three Brethern Cairn being necessary. Other concerns this year have been the introduction of new Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) and the need to supplement our foot stewarding arrangements in the light of ever less police involvement.

A host of pre-Common Riding events began with Spurs Night at Galashiels in mid May. The climax of the preliminaries, however, for the Colonial Society, is undoubtedly our own Bussin' Concert and Overseas Visitors' Reception. A highlight of the Reception was the remarkable solo song by Standard Bearer Anderson's young daughter (Frances), and the return of the traditional practice whereby the Chairman invites returned exiles to say a few words about their feelings on having returned for the Common Riding.

Common Riding Day dawned without the rain which had been threatened all week. An early start at the ceremony at the War Memorial at 5.30 am and then the First Drum procession from the West Port at 6.00 am. Members of the Common Riding Trust welcome their guests and visiting dignitaries in the Victoria Hall, then we form up again in official mode to lead the Standard Bearer, Attendants and Burleymen along the High Street and thereafter, on the sound of the Second Drum, down the Green to the waterside.

The Provost's breakfast is a welcome break. At 9.00 promptly we form up again for the procession to the Toll where again, being in the front row brings with it the problem of leaving the rest of the procession behind in the exuberance of the occasion - vigilance is required! At the Toll, refreshments with Ex-Provosts Stillie and Thomson before the Standard Bearer is cheered in and the procession again forms up for the final mighty progress back to the Market Place. This is the greatest procession of the day and it is with pride



that members of the Trust, led by the Provost and followed by Ex-Standard Bearers on foot, lead the Royal Burgh Standard Bearer back into the Auld Toun for the Casting of the Colours.

The climactic events of this Common Riding again fulfilled all expectations. Every Standard Bearer, not least our own Robert Mailer, performed their ultimate duty with style and confidence. And then the Liltin' and the Silence. In those moments it is impossible not to reflect on the folk who have gone before us; to remember the courage and self-sacrifice that made these events possible and to recall the struggles and endurance of those who defended Selkirk and its traditions through the long years of our past.



Photos, clockwise from above left –

1. John and Lindsay at the Bussin'

2. Donald presents the Walter Waldie medal to the CSB

3. Jack Thomson, N. Rhodesia, casts the flag in 1963

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Selkirk snippets – Irene Henderson

Scout leader Graham Coulson was presented with the Silver Wolf, the highest honour in Scouting, in June at a gathering held in Selkirk Rugby Club. Selkirk Opera 'Oliver' also was a great success, involving many youngsters and giving them their first experience in the world of drama.

Scott's Selkirk took place on 1st December 2012, lasting only one day but still very successful. The Christmas Tree in the Market Place (a beauty this year!) was topped by a large silver star dedicated to the memory of Eleanor McCudden, the Scott's Selkirk stalwart who died suddenly in January 2012.

Hockey-Selkirk's Sarah Robertson was chosen for Team GB under-20 squad to play in Australian Youth Festival in January 2013. Morven Cawthorn was selected to represent Scotland under-16s in Europe. In the world of rugby John Rutherford is now the new President of Selkirk Rugby Club. The former president, Donald Macleod, is now the Scottish Rugby Union President. This year, Selkirk Sevens were won by the home team in an exciting final against Melrose.

In April Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme was unveiled. It's 10 years ago since the horrendous floods. Selkirk's last shoe shop closed at end of June with the retirement of Dilys Whillans. No decisions have been taken yet as to whether Selkirk Sheriff Court or Police Station will be closed.

The Queen's Bodyguard in Scotland, the Royal Company of Archers held their traditional shoot for Selkirk Silver Arrow in the Haining on Saturday, May 25th. Lochcarron of Scotland have launched the 2014 Ryder Cup tournament's official tartan at their Selkirk premises.

Abbotsford House, which has been closed for almost two years for renovation and refurbishment was re-opened by the Queen on July 3rd.



The first James Hogg Writer in Residence will live at the top of Ettrick Valley from 4th August. The James Hogg Exhibition has opened at the mothballed Ettrick School.

Flodden Memorial Garden, Selkirk's main contribution to the 500th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Flodden will be officially opened on September 7th. The South Marches are to be ridden as part of the commemorations on September 15th. Subsequently, a mixed dinner will be held in the Victoria Hall on September 20th, organized by Selkirk Ex-Standard Bearers Association. During the evening the Association will present Selkirk Common Riding Trust with a new Burgh Flag.



Visit our web site at -

www.selkirkcolonialsociety.com

Want to buy a DVD of this year's Selkirk Common Riding? Cost £10 incl postage. Contact the Society at -

secretary@selkirkcolonialsociety.com

Does the Society have your up to date address and email details? If in doubt, email the secretary at -

secretary@selkirkcolonialsociety.com

or write to the secretary at -
16 Hillview Crescent, Selkirk, TD7 4AZ

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Colonial Standard Bearer & Lady Busser 2013



Robert Mailer Anderson of San Francisco, USA, was the choice to be Colonial Society Standard Bearer for 2013.

Nicola Miner, his wife, was the Lady Busser.

Robert is a 7th generation Californian

He is the great-grandson of Robert Anderson (Honolulu Bob) who was the Colonial Standard Bearer in 1913.

The couples four children; Dashiell, Lucinda, Frances and Callum plus 10 relatives from across the water travelled to Selkirk for the Common Riding.

