



WALLACE 700 ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2008

WALLACE COMMEMORATION CEREMONY 2008.

THIS year's ceremony will again be held in September to allow the Primary school children time to rehearse for the 'Wallace Pageant'. The Wallace 700 Council have agreed to continue with the extended version of the Declaration of Arbroath which now includes a colourful enactment of this historic signing, prior to the extract being read. Tribute will be paid to one of Scotland's first and finest poets William Dunbar. Dunbar's epic poem 'Blyth Aberdeane' which captures the characters and grandeur of Aberdeen's welcome to Queen Margaret in 1511. Charles Barron has written the script for a short colourful comedy invoking Dunbar's description of our civic worthies of the day, and the "four and twenty maidens, of great beauty, all clad in green". All this to be enacted in front of HM Theatre with pupils from Robert Gordon's and St Margaret's schools providing "the maidens" and Walker Road Primary providing the "wee rascals". With Aberdeen City Council budgets under severe strain this year, we have been advised that it is unlikely that the same level of financial support will be forthcoming. This has severe implications for the viability of the Ceremony as the support in kind provided in the past ensured the provision of road closures, sound system and public seating, upon which the Ceremony depends. Wallace 700 members are currently investigating avenues of alternative funding. Should these not be forthcoming our grand plans for 2009, marking the nationwide celebrations for the "Year of the Homecoming" and the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, will have to be curtailed. One piece of good news is that the Reverend John Anderson our MC from the first Ceremony until 2005, when he retired to Montrose, will return to Aberdeen and give this year's Wallace Address. We are also delighted that Lord Provost Peter Stephen and Lord Aberdeen, Marquess of Aberdeen of Temair have both accepted our invitation to officiate at the Wreath laying part of the Ceremony.



CRAIG PIKE who has over the past three years directed the School Pageant has been stepped down due to business commitments. Craig will be missed and we thank him for all the support and commitment he gave to this important part of the Pageant.



The plinth of the Wallace statue is being damaged by skate boarding and our Council are in contact with the City Council to see what can be done to prevent any further damage. Large flower boxes have been placed at the base but this is only a temporary solution as they detract from the statue.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

*"Syne come thair four and tuintie maidinis ying,
All claid in greine, of mervelous bewtie.*

With hair detressit, as threids of gold did hing."

WILLIAM DUNBAR who was attached to the court of James IV became a dominant figure in the golden age of Scottish poetry. Little is known of his early life though it is believed he was a member of the family of the Earl of Dunbar and March, and received an M.A degree from St Andrews University in 1479, after this he became a Franciscan monk and travelled throughout England and France in the Kings service. In 1500 he was granted a pension of £10 by King James and in 1511 this was increased to £80 per annum. In 1501, Dunbar was in England, more than likely in connection with the arrangements for the marriage of King James IV and Margaret Tudor, which took place in 1503. In 1511 he accompanied Queen Margaret to Aberdeen, an event celebrated in his poem "Blyth Aberdeane". The above verse, taken from this poem, has inspired to include four and twenty maidens in this year's Wallace Commemoration and to dress them in long flowing green gowns. Dunbar's reputation amongst his successors was considerable and his versatility regarded as astonishing. He was at ease in Hymn, satire, morality and comedy and wrote with uncommon frankness and like other Scots poets after him - notably Robert Burns - he was a vigorously creative traditionalist.

Editor note "Oh for a guid auld Scots spell check"

CLAN WALLACE WORLD WIDE.

AT a board meeting in 2007 CWWW Directors unanimously agreed to award us the sum of £200 per annum, over the next 5 years, for use on projects which support our Ceremony. We are extremely grateful for the confidence shown in our organisation. The Council are investigating the practicalities of holding a competition, related to William Wallace. Prizes to be competed for by local primary schools. CWWW are also supporting other projects in Scotland such as the damaged yew tree at the Wallace monument, in Robroyston, Lanarkshire. and the purchase of a stone at the National trust Culloden visitors centre.



THE 2008 COMMEMORATION CEREMONY WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2008.

WALLACE 700

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE eighth Annual General Meeting was held in the Queens Cross Church Lounge and was well attended. The business was dealt with efficiently, with all office bearers re-elected. One new member, the Reverend Stephen Taylor, minister of the Kirk of St. Nicholas Uniting, was warmly welcomed to the Council by our Convenor Dr. Henry Sefton. The Reverend Taylor has given the Benediction to close the last two ceremonies. A resignation was reluctantly accepted from Ron Ferrari who has been unable to attend recent meetings through ill health. Ron has been a regular attendee and a willing worker particularly in raising funds, and his cheerful presence will be missed. Thereafter we had some very enjoyable light refreshments served by the Members after which Gordon Caseley gave us a talk on "Heraldry made simple". At the end of the talk David Irvine of Drum demonstrated the Clan Irvine's Pinsel. The Pinsell is allotted only to Chiefs or very special Chieftain-Barons for practical use and only upon the specific authority of the Lord Lyon King of Arms. Above is a photograph of the Clan Chiefs Standard, held by David Irvine and Gordon Caseley. The standard, a narrow tapering flag is granted by the Lord Lyon, only to those who have a following such as a Clan Chief as it is classified as a "Headquarters Flag".



DECLARATION OF ARBROATH.

THE Declaration of Arbroath was a declaration of Scottish Independence, set out to confirm Scotland's status as an independent sovereign state. It was written in the form of a letter submitted to Pope John XXII at the papal court in Avignon, France, by Sir Adam Gordon, in the spring of 1320. The letter is the sole survivor of three written at the time, one written by King Robert Bruce and the other by four Scottish Bishops. Nothing is known of their contents. Written in Latin, it is believed to have been drafted by Bernard de Linton, Abbot of the Arbroath Abbey, who was Chancellor of Scotland at that time. Though the document was dated 6th April 1320, there is no evidence of any meeting being held in Arbroath at that time and is assumed that it was discussed at Newbattle Abbey, Midlothian in March that year. The month in between could well have been taken up in gathering the seals of the eight Earls and forty one Scottish Nobles which were appended to the document. The Declaration made a number of points:-

- Scotland had always been Independent.
- Edward 1 of England had unjustly attacked Scotland.
- Robert Bruce had delivered Scotland from that peril.
- The Independence of Scotland was the prerogative of the Scots people, rather than the King.



The document received International acclaim and it is said that it had considerable influence on those who drafted the American Declaration of Independence.. It is interesting to note that the American document was signed on the 6th day of April, a date now known as Tartan day in the U.S.A.

Though the Declaration had no direct link with Sir William Wallace, the Wallace 700 Association include the reading in the Ceremony as it is believed that it is close to his ideals and principles.

ABERDEEN HIGHLAND GAMES AT HAZELHEAD ON SUNDAY 8TH JUNE 2008.

LOOK out for the Wallace publicity stand at the Aberdeen Highland Games on Sunday 8th June. The stall will be manned all day and we welcome visitors, please pay us a visit.

This year's meeting dates were set for:-

- **Monday 31st March**
- **Monday 28th April**
- **Monday 26th May**
- **Monday 16th June**
- **Monday 18th August**

The final "Redd up" meeting will be held on Monday 29th September, and the A.G.M is fixed for 20th October. All Council meetings will be held in Ian Smith's offices at 18 Queens Road at 7 pm. The A.G.M will be in Queens Cross Church and further details will be given nearer the time.

The Wallace Association is a non-political Charitable body registered Charity No. SCO034208 which exists to advance the education of the public about the life of William Wallace. As a charity we are dependant on subscriptions and donations to enable us to continue with our annual Wallace Commemoration Ceremony. Please make sure you have paid your subscription for this year and at the same time why not make it Direct Debit and then you don't have to rely on your memory. Subscriptions are reasonably priced at £10 per individual and £12 per family. To make a Direct Debit please contact John Mackay, 6 Cairn Walk, Cults, Aberdeen, AB15 9TF. Contact can also be made through the web site www.wallace700.org, provided by Iain Smith Solicitors LLP.