



## A word from our President

**I** though it was wonderful to be back in the Caledonian Club socialising and relaxing with friends again after such a long absence.

I also thought that our AGM was well supported and how encouraging it was to announce nine new members and a net overall increase on the previous year.

There were many highlights during the evening but wasn't it so gratifying to have a visit from HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal and her husband Vice Admiral Sir Tim. They were relaxed, warm and friendly and despite all the worries about "traffic lights" etc everything seemed to go well at the Meet Reception.

The evening, of course, was largely dedicated to our Founder, the one and only Donald McNab. And, my goodness wasn't he rightly toasted well and often! Now we have broken the ice so to speak, your Committee is investigating other possible opportunities for social gatherings in the Club. Meanwhile I think everyone who attended on 6th July will join me in saying a very big Thank You to Club Staff and Management for a wonderful evening. I suspect the bar takings may have reached record levels!!

Summer seems to have returned to Scotland now but wherever you are, do enjoy the sunshine. Hope to see you all again soon.

Yours aye,

**David Mackay**

## Friends of Scottish Rugby Annual Dinner

**O**n Tuesday 6th July Her Royal Highness the Princess Anne attended a reception at the club held by the Friends of Scottish Rugby immediately prior to the Friend's Annual Dinner held in tribute to Donald McNab. Accompanied by Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence, they both spoke individually to all the sixty attendees, in the Morrison Room.

After HRH The Princess Anne and Sir Timothy left the reception, the Friends of Scottish Rugby and their guests, led by three pipers among them Club member Ralph Potter, adjourned to dinner in the Johnnie Walker room. President David Mackay welcomed everyone back having not met since March 2020. Club Member Neil McNair gave the Selkirk Grace. The Address to the Haggis was given in his inimitable style by Club Member Joe Hendry, who reminded anyone who did not know that the anniversary of Burns death was coming up on the 21<sup>st</sup> July (Robert Burns 25th January 1759 – 21<sup>st</sup> July 1796)

*(continued overleaf)*



(left to right) Ian Burrell, Sir Tim Laurence, David Mackay, Les Fordham and HRH Princess Anne

All dinner photos courtesy - John Nicholls Photography

Everyone enjoyed the Cockburn of Dingwall haggis, followed by roast loin of Elwy lamb rounded off with glazed lemon tart, coffee and of course Orkney tablet.



Douglas Hutchison and Alan Laing gave the eulogy to Donald McNab

The Loyal Toast was given by Club Vice President David Guild.

Alan Laing and Douglas Hutchinson gave the eulogy for Club member the late Donald McNab, founder and supporter of so many things including Friends of Scottish Rugby and the Club's Number 9 Society. Donald passed away in December 2020 after a very full, varied and exciting life. Among the interesting anecdotes was that Donald claimed his father did not know that having dispatched Donald's mother home to enable her to give birth to Donald in Scotland, he was actually born in Greenwich

During the Korean war Donald, who was with the Black Watch, was wounded twice and was awarded the Purple Heart, the United States highest award for gallantry. When the Americans at the time discovered that Donald was a "Brit", the award was stripped from him, only to be restored in 2004.

The guest speaker Mr Colin Rigby Vice President of the Scottish Rugby Union outlined the strategy that the governing body will be following for the next three years. A £6.5million package for the community game covering the next five years was announced including loans and support from the Scottish Government. Women's rugby and also "wellbeing" are two other key components of the current strategy.



Guest Speaker - Colin Rigby (SRU)

Due to Covid and the associated restrictions, the recipients of this year's Trophies were unable to be present. David Mackay gave some startlingly good statistics about previous trophy previous recipients. Friends of Scottish Rugby are clearly incredibly good at picking winners early in their careers.

Ishbel Macpherson gave a rousing Vote of Thanks, invoking the words of her late father, Sir Tommy MacPherson.

The formalities completed in the Johnnie Walker Room, many members and guests retired to the bar to continue the jollity and hoping to meet again at the Autumn Dinner with no Covid restrictions.

**Neil McNair**



John Grant of Glenfarcلاس kindly provided special miniatures with Donald's photo for our Haggis starter



## London Scottish Colts

**W**hilst it's been a strange season, the guys have stuck at it, trained hard and finished well, and it's thanks to FoSR that they have had that chance.

After all the training the team finally got to play rugby again in the last few weeks of the season. Having had straight wins in each match before the break they continued where they left off, knocking off local rivals from around the area including fellow exiles London Welsh and London Irish. However, the games were still progressive contact not full contact games, as the coaching staff worked hard to sharpen up their contact skills gradually. Eventually they were rewarded and our final game was full contact, with a full complement of ref and assistant ref's miked up – a first for the guys – no chance of getting away with an offside in this match, and the guys responded well. Not surprisingly they ran out winners and ended this strange season unbeaten.

So we'll be saying goodbye to those for whom this was the last year of age grade rugby, they know how much they have improved since joining the Colts set-up, and certainly know how to play attractive, 15-man rugby, at pace. Good luck to those that are trialling for clubs, and we hope to see them join those from previous seasons who are now linked with some of the premiership clubs. For all of this year's graduates we look forward to seeing them back in the coming years, in their breaks from university or wherever they are heading, and we look forward to seeing them link up with other former Colts to play the odd-game of U21 rugby in the future.

Whilst in some ways it's sad for the guys that they didn't have the season they trained for, they still ended it on a high, and put everything they could into it when the opportunities arose. For Emma (a new coach this season) the final match was the first time she saw the guys in a full game, and she can look back on that and the well wishes of the guys as she heads off to Tokyo as part of the GB sevens side. For the rest of us, after a short break, we will be back with pre-season training from August and raring to go again next season.

**Ian Hannah**

**Convener London Scottish Colts**

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