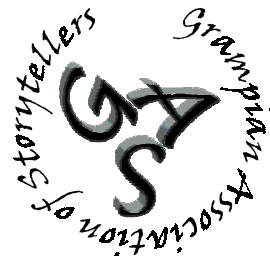


GASworks



Myths Legends Folklore Poetry Ballads Stories old & new

winter 2006

WELCOME READERS

A warm welcome to the first issue of GASworks. This publication is intended to be a supplement to GASlight and will focus on the creativity of GAS members.

We are taking a very broad view of the term creativity, material need not be wholly original (a nice adaptation of an old tale is fine) as long as it is entertaining we are happy to publish it! Essentially we are looking for anything that will appeal to the tastes of storytellers and story-lovers throughout the north east of Scotland so anything with a local flavour will no doubt go down well.

Although this issue includes mainly poetry we would be happy to publish any sort of story related material, prose, poetry or art, and if anybody out there fancies having a go at compiling a crossword that would be much appreciated!

As well as a variety of material we are looking to encourage contributions from a wide age group and work from school pupils is encouraged (please supply your age with your work). GASworks is an ideal way to start your literary career and although, at present, we cannot pay contributors seeing your work in print and having it read by a supportive audience will hopefully bring its own reward!

Any material for publication should be sent to: David Pattullo at 22 Station Road, Torphins, AB31 4JF or email to:

dppattullo@toucansurf.com

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
15 MAY 2006

MORTALITY

Mortality does not creep, it arrives!
It is a moment when, the road we travel,
Is shorter ahead, than that those years left behind.
It is a moment when, the time we rise,

Gets closer to the time we rest.
It is a moment when, what we thought we did, but yesterday,
Happen as only past week events.

Mortality is a time, when mistakes we made,
Seem clearer to our thoughts than successes gained.

It is a moment when, the world gets smaller,
And small things count, while big things seem insignificant.
When the road we travel, is that road that's gone,
On which we shared, and memories now recalled.
Mortality is an awakening; the dawn and dusk closer to each
combine.

Mortality is the 'what if', of life's intentions filled.
When words said, or actions done, our path did changes make.
It's when the place we were, comes back, on things we did.
For what we were just moments then, and time we fleeting spent,
Important as it rests indelibly, a little left behind.
It's when the now, is different from what we were just then.
Mortality is that 'time', realised as the gift of what life was sent.

William Mataba November 2005

STORYTELLING WEEKEND MONYMUSK 2005 Inspiration from the Lodestone...

A select wee group of storytellers and musicians came to the Sir Arthur Grant residential centre in Monymusk, in the shadow of a snow-speckled Bennachie for a weekend of pure magic. Led by Stanley Roberston, GAS's honorary president, we tuned in to the healing, inspiring forces of the earth's own magnet, the Lodestone. Stanley asked us to write a poem based on our experiences after going to the Harlaw monument where a Highland army under Donald Lord of the Isles fought a Lowland army under the Earl of Mar in 1411, the Maiden

Stone a Pictish symbol stone just on the road nearest to the Rowan Tree car park at Bennachie which has a legend attached to it of a woman who had a contest with the devil and failed to her cost and the most surprising of all, the statue of the Saracen Maiden, or Green Lady, or Persephone, whatever you like to call her, who resides across the road from the Maiden Stone. We scribbled furiously for an hour, and three were picked by Stanley as winners, but they were all of winning quality. Judge for yourself!

POEMS PRINTED OVERLEAF

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QUIZ TIME

Josh Banks (age 11)

1. What is the name of oldest yew in Scotland?
2. Which island does Clan MacLeod come from?
3. Who were the Gaels and where did they come from?
4. Who was the Scot that played James Bond?
5. In which year did the Battle of Bannockburn take place?
6. What was the capital of Scotland in the Middle Ages?
7. Who stole the Stone of Destiny?
8. Which island is famed for its whisky and birds?
9. What is the name of a manmade island on a loch?
10. What is Scotland's national flower?
11. What is the name of the castle on the banks of Loch Ness?
12. Which town is famous for the 3 W's and what do they stand for?
13. How tall is the mountain that has its own yeti?
14. What is Scotland's largest National Park?
15. What was the location for the film "Local Hero"?
16. Why do compasses go wonky in the Cuillins?
17. Where did Herge get his ideas for the book "The Black Isle"?
18. Where was Mary Queen of Scots imprisoned?
19. Where was the first university built?
20. How did St Machar know where to create his cathedral?
21. Where is the home of golf?
22. Who created the telephone?
23. Who invented the television?
24. What is "The Gift of the Prince"?
25. What island is "A Special Place of Scientific Interest" and a "World Heritage Site"?
26. What was the last battle fought on British soil?
27. Which firth is famous for its dolphins?
28. Which English general created roads and bridges all over Scotland?
29. What is the National Nature Reserve closest to Gairloch?
30. On which small island were white-tailed eagles reintroduced?

ANSWERS OVERLEAF

STORYTELLING WEEKEND MONYMUSK 2005 - POETRY COMPETITION

HARLAW

Maggie Fraser

They edge onto the field wi' nothing ' but
Whimperin' bairns, clingin tae their skirts.
There's no golden harvest time to fill their
belly,

Maybe if the stench of blood and guts
had not been so strong...

Maybe if the horror at the waste had not
been
So heart-breaking on top of the gnawing
hunger...

Maybe if the sounds of the dying, wailing
and
Moaning hadn't added to their feelings
of hopelessness and helplessness

They might have gathered more of
anything and everything
That could be exchanged, for
Something useful. But No!

The only things to be gleaned here were
the endless

Tears o' women looking for their ain kith
and kin

The men they loved.

The fathers' o the bairns they hadn't lost

THE MAIDEN STONE

Rachel Smillie

We stand, a small crowd, at the roadside
Beside the stone

The ancient story in our ears
The traveller wisdom in our hearts

Young Mary's ring, a worm tunnelling
beneath our feet

Her bracelet, an adder, fast slithering
through the heather

We feel the weight of encounters with
the De'il - the shudder of a memory

And Stanley, his message
Lovingly insinuating its way into our
breathing

Into our sight, our music, our stories
As the light plays on snow on Bennachie

Our gaze turns within
And we touch the Lodestone

THE SANG O' THE SARACEN MAID

Craig Smillie

I hae left the lands o the Orient
And traivelled the world wide
Tae find the faither o my bairn
And rest there by his side

We found him in the desert sand
Sair woundit fae the fray
I took him tae my faither's tent
To tend him mony's the day

His wounds wi silk I bandaged roon
Wi ointments rich and rare
I washed them daily wi my tears
And dried them wi my hair

My hips were girded wi tinkling coins
My briests wi the jasmine flower
When we lay in a silken desert tent
For mony's a loving hour

And the crescent moon filled the desert sky
Like the crest on a Saracen shield
And the stars o the east sang "Bismillah!"
Ower the lovers' silken bield

But I left the palms and the desert sands
For the pines o Bennachie
For the sake o the luvie o a Templar lad
Who has cruelly dealt wi me

Now I shiver in the blast o the cauld, cauld
wind

At the back o' Bennachie
And I greet at the grave o my bonnie,
bonnie bairn
Wha ne'er again I'll see

So sing the song o Persephone
Wha traivelled this world wide
What set her bearings for the north
With the lodestone o love as her guide

And when the simmer comes tae the
Garioch-oh
Of an evening you may sense
A zephyr blaw ower Bennachie
Carrying the fragrance o Frankincense

(For asylum seekers and traivellers o aa
sorts) **1st PRIZE WINNER**

DISCOVERY

Grace Banks

Cawin crows, whistlin' wind
We're all cosily cocooned
The inward journey onward goes
The light of love's red heart
Our lodestone

Alone – yet together, we're movin' on
Through pain and laughter
The mist of tears, the deepest joy,
All framed in the glow of
Our Lodestone

Golden light on tree and snow
The Mither Tap shines whitely
Oor ever step – she's been in sight
And through blizzard, wind, sunshine,
still – stands
Our Lodestone

Stories told, or yet to unfold
We'll meet in Nature's vortex
Through eye to eye and heart to heart
Together – yet alone
Our Lodestone

THE MAIDEN STONE

Carrie Keys

Maidenstone, Maidenstone,
Strong of stature, soul of gold,
Stands alone all through the ages
Limb of Earth, of story told.

Maiden mild, maiden mild
Heart of warmth and fingers skilled
She was tempted by the Devil
Heart held fast, with pride she filled

Maid of fire, Maid of fire,
Tempted, tricked, to her own true,
She would not leave her convictions
But her skill, she would fain prove

Maid consumed, maid consumed,
All a-flurry, none could match
But for her true lover's voice, now –
None could beat her, none distract.

Maidenstone, maidenstone
Devil stalked her; she was trapped
Devil couldn't have her – none would
To stone he turned her; but not ash

Limb of Earth, Limb of Earth
Bold and upright, known to men
Alone she could not foil the Devil
Now joined to Earth, our minds she bends.

MORE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE
MONYMUSK EVENT IN THE NEXT ISSUE,
OR READ THEM NOW AT:
[http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/storyquine/
gas_poetry.htm](http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/storyquine/gas_poetry.htm)

QUIZ ANSWERS 1. The Forthingall Yew. 2. This clan comes from Skye. 3. The Gaels came from the west. 4. Sean Connery. 5. The battle took place from the 23rd to the 24th of June, 1314. 6. In the Middle Ages, Perth was the capital of Scotland. 7. It was stolen two times. Once by King Edward II and another by Scottish "Patriots." 8. Islay is famed for its whisky and birds. 9. Its name is a crannog. 10. Thistle. 11. Urquhart Castle. 12. Whisky, walking and wildlife are Tomintoul's 3W's. 13. Ben Macdui is 1309m high. 14. Scotland's largest is Glen More. 15. It was filmed on location in Pennan. 16. There is a rock type that mixes up magnetism there. 17. He got his ideas from the Isle of Arran. 18. Both at Loch Leven and Inchmaholme. 19. It was built at St Andrews. 20. He found the shape of a crook in the River Don. 21. St Andrews. 22. Alexander Graham Bell. That's where we get the expression "Give me a bell." 23. Mr John Logie Baird invented this machine. 24. "The Gift" is whisky. 25. St Kilda, a wind beaten island 40 miles off the coast of the Western Isles. 26. The last battle fought was Culloden. 27. The Moray Firth is famous for them. 28. General Wade. There are lots of bridges named after him. 29. Beinn Eighe is that particular NNR. 30. They were re-introduced to the small isle of Rhum and are now growing in population.