



# **The Caledonian Society of Oman**

## **CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF OMAN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30TH MARCH 2008 HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL**

### **CHIEFTAIN'S REPORT 2007-2008**

After completing my first year as Chieftain of the Caledonian Society of Oman I am delighted to report a healthy position for the Society with 162 families in our membership (45 up on last year), excellent attendances at each of our functions.

The two objectives for me with the Society were to raise the profile of the society and to introduce a few more events for the adults and to involve the children to a greater degree. This has been achieved by the introduction of the Scottish Food Night and the Kid's Ceilidhs. All of the above have been achieved successfully and it has given the society a new boost in the expat community.

The committee and I have teamed up to organize all of the events through the year and have managed to successfully breathe new life into the society and our functions. That is more than apparent with the many many compliments from people attending our events. Sandra and Tommy Durning sadly left the committee during the year and we thank them for their contribution over their years on the committee. Lorrie and Marjorie took on the role of membership secretaries.

### **Entertainment**

#### **Post-Summer Ceilidh**

Cyclone Gonu made a significant effect to our first event of the year's program in June 2007 but this was postponed until August and as it was, it turned out to be a very successful first event for the committee and myself.

This turned out to be the Post-Summer Ceilidh on August 2008 which was a very successful event with live Scottish band Laverock. Our Chieftain's Piper, John Chalmers, piped at the door while guests arrived. We had a great number of attendees on the night for a Ceilidh event of 260 people. We also had more dancing than usual some rather physical. The introduction of shorter speeches and a silent raffle made it all the better. With the proceeds from the event we were able to support 2 Omani charities and 1 Scottish charity.

Dar Al Atta 1000 RO, Royal Hospital children's ward 1000 RO and Alzheimer's Scotland 1000 RO. Peter, who led the Caledonian Society of Oman's Dance Demonstration Team performed some dances for the delight of the audience. Justin and Thomas, the InterContinental Hotel Conference and Banqueting have done a terrific job with their staff to give us a great meal and service.

#### **St Andrews Night**

The event was held at the Muscat InterContinental hotel gardens. The guests were greeted by the pipers of the Royal air force and Colin Fairbairn the bands director. The music was supplied by the Craigalachie Scottish Ceilidh Band from London. Three of their members were English and only 1 Scottish which made no difference to the excellent quality of music. We were also entertained by the excellent Royal Air Force of Oman Pipes and Drums. This is always an excellent booster for the evening with traditional Scottish pipe music. Our dance floor was even larger than last year and the materials and labour to build this and our Edinburgh Castle walls were kindly sponsored and constructed by Carillion Alawi. We pledged 2,000 RO to support two Scottish charities, Friends of Raeden and Children's Holiday Venture in Edinburgh both with 1000 RO. The evening was then topped off with dancing into the wee hours of the morning.

## **Kids Ceilidh**

We held the inaugural Kids Ceilidh on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, our first new event for the kids. This was held at the Crowne Plaza and about 80 kids and parents turned up and it was a great success. The music was from an iPod because the band had to return to UK for another function but never the less it was a great day for the kids and their parents.

## **Car Treasure Hunt**

We then had The Family Car Treasure Hunt which was held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Once again it was a great success with a large number of members and non-members attending. Everyone finished up, at the Dolphin Village poolside for a swim and BBQ buffet. The event followed the same format as last year and special thanks go to Maureen Coyle and Jane Coogan for spending their weekends navigating the streets of greater Muscat to gather clues and to Tony Coyle for providing refreshments for us half way through the day.

## **Burns Supper**

Our next event of the year was our Burns Supper on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008. This was another superb evening which was enjoyed by everyone yet again at the Muscat InterContinental hotel. The Scottish music was provided by Skalder, a ceilidh band all the way from Orkney. The evening was started by Bill Henry with his address to the haggis, supplied by the Gulf chef training group (NHI). Bill also delivered an excellent rendition of Tam O Shanter with power point slides for the deaf and non-Scottish amongst us. John Hall, all the way from Ayrshire, gave us a very good Immortal Memory and his recitals from different poems were excellent. The Toast to the lassies was given by Andy Wood an Englishman no less but this turned out to be an excellent toast to our better halves. The return was given by Hannah Loudon which really finished the men off for the night with her very accurate description of men. The speeches were enjoyed by everybody on the night and I found it interesting that everybody kept quiet and actually listened during every speech which shows me that the audience on the evening appreciated the banter. The food once again was superb and the service second to none. The backdrop painting of Burns was out of this world and all done by hand, if I had enough room in my house that's where it would be now! We raised over 2000 RO on the evening for charity and we auctioned a painted camel for the first time and raised another 500 RO for charity. This was a great surprise to us all on the night and was a great addition to our charity fund. We gave away 5000 RO to various charities: The National Association of Cancer Awareness, 1000 RO; ARC (Animal Rescue Centre) 1000 RO and another 1500 to the Oman Association for the Disabled. For UK we gave 1500 RO to the Anthony Nolan Trust for Leukaemia. This was in memory of my very good friend, Mr Henry Lamond who battled for a number of years with leukaemia and won and after being free of the symptoms for a further 15 years, he was subsequently killed in a freak car accident on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2008.

On the Friday 25 Jan we had the band set up at the Crowne Plaza for the Kid's ceilidh where 100 people attended the afternoon's dancing. Another great few hours of fun for the kids with loads to eat and drink as well.

## **CALEDONIAN SOCIETY GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP 2007**

14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2008

Over 40 of Muscat's keenest desert golfers enrolled to participate in the 2007 WATG/CALSOC Golf Championship at Ghallah Wentworth Golf Club which was held over into this year due to inclement weather and clashes with other items on the Society's busy calendar.

The nine hole Individual Stableford (full handicap) format attracted entries from throughout the golfing community with our own contingent of CALSOC players adding another dimension to the competition.

The enthusiastic groups set off (shot-gun) at 3.15pm using both front and back nines, and with play moving smoothly throughout the afternoon all were well ensconced at the bar quenching their thirst by 6.00pm.

The scores were quickly collated with the help of the club captain Mr. Ron Johnson and the results were as follows:-

#### WATG/CALSOC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

First Place                      Abdullah Mohammed (20pts)  
Second Place                    Parish (count-back) (19pts)

#### WATG/CALSOC MEMBERS CHAMPIONSHIP

First Place                      Corin Lewsey            (11pts)  
Second Place                    Kevin Petrie            (7 pts)

#### NEAREST THE PIN

Front Nine                      Mohd. Kawwar  
Back Nine                        Krish Menon

#### MOST GOLF

Men                                Andy Ingles            (! pts)  
Ladies                             Jackie Mubarak        (! pts)

#### TWO CLUBS (generously donated by the sponsor)

48 balls                         Mohd. Kawwar

Those who didn't have such a good day on the 'browns' were left licking their lips as Mr. Colin Wild (WATG) and Mr. Bill Henry (Vice Chieftain) presented the handsome prizes to the winners.

Then it was into the buffet and onto the dance floor for a couple of rounds of Gay Gordons and a few other popular Scottish tunes.

The ever popular Charity Raffle brought in RO 135 / -, with the lucky winner receiving a personal DVD player. The music and dancing continued interspersed with numerous spot draws and give-away prizes.

The WATG – 'What Could It Mean?' – Competition attracted a number of interesting entries. Most notably:-

'Withered Auld Trembling Genitalia'  
and  
'Women are Terrible Golfers'

But the sponsor decided to keep the peace by awarding the winning entry to:-

'Women Are Terrific Golfers'

Ghala Wentworth Golf Club, Captain, Committee, Members and Staff again proved to be generous, welcoming hosts of this increasingly popular competition.

Above all however the Society is indebted to M/s Wimberly Allison Tong and Goo for their very generous sponsorship and ongoing support of this event.

We look forward to seeing you all in September for the 2008 event and to giving Abd. Mohammed and Corin the chance to defend their Championships.

We all thank Tony Coyle for arranging the event again this year. As usual it was a great day.

### **Scottish Food Night**

This is the first time we have held this event and we had 120 people attending. We were treated to an excellent selection of Scottish food which was supplied by the Intercon chef. We were also entertained with a quiz and DJ until late in the evening. Feedback was very positive on this new event and we may consider holding another night after Ramadan is finished in 2008.

## Event Numbers

A summary of this year's attendance at our main events for comparison with the previous 3 years is as follows:

	<b>Ceilidh</b>	<b>Treasure Hunt</b>	<b>St Andrew's Ball</b>	<b>Burns Night</b>
2004-05	254	85 adults/48 children	372	187
2005-06	257	67 adults/45 children	364	214
2005-07	264	57 adults/37 children	441	245
2007-08	260	80 people	400	260

## Charitable Donations

One of the main goals of the Society is to provide support to charities in both Oman and Scotland. I am pleased to announce that this Society year, we have donated a record 12,000 RO, up on last year's 8,100 RO. Our donations paid in 2007/8 correspond to roughly 15,600 UK pounds, which is a great achievement and a tribute to the generosity of our members, guests and sponsors.

As I have mentioned earlier, we have enjoyed some great support for our functions and this has meant a lot to our charitable work. Our raffle takings this year at each of the major functions, for comparison with the previous four years, are as follows:

	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8
	RO	RO	RO	RO	RO
Summer Ceilidh	600	680	1,120	1,322	1,745
St Andrew's Ball	860	1,165	1,613	2,592	2,622
Golf Tournament	-	-	107	385	135
Burns Supper	800	760	1,083	1,344	2,290
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,260</b>	<b>2,605</b>	<b>3,923</b>	<b>5,643</b>	<b>6,792</b>

We were also able to obtain increased cash sponsorship for events (8,225 RO compared to 7,135 RO last year). With the raffle proceeds and sponsorship together with some funds brought forward in the bank, the Society was able this year to give charitable donations totalling 12,000 RO, half to Omani and half to Scottish charities, as follows:

	RO
<b>At Summer Ceilidh:</b>	
Dar Al Atta	1000 (from brought forward funds)
Royal Hospital Children's Ward	1000
Alzheimer Scotland	1000
<b>At St Andrews Ball</b>	
Friends of Raeden	1000
Children Holiday Venture	1000
<b>At Burns Supper</b>	
National Association of Cancer Awareness	1000
Animal Rescue Centre	1000
Anthony Nolan Trust	1500
Oman Association for Disabled (1)	1500
<b>and subsequently:</b>	
British Scholarships for Oman	500
Chest, Heart & Stroke, Scotland	1500
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,000</b>

We have also committed to a further 3000 RO of donations to be paid at the 2008 Ceilidh:

Oman Association for Disabled (2)	1500
Leprosy Patients at Rustaq	1500

## **Sponsors**

We are as always indebted to our sponsors and the success of our events would not be possible without the support and generosity of these companies. With their support, these companies help to keep our ticket prices low and encourage people to spend money on our raffles. Major sponsors at our events this year have included:

Carillion Alawi; African & Eastern; Wood Group; Mohsin Haider Darwish – MHD; AXA Insurance; Cameron Services Middle East; Shell Representative Office Oman; Muna Noor; CGG Veritas; PricewaterhouseCoopers; Grace Construction Products; Dalma Energy & Company; National Hospitality Institute; Silvertch Dubai, Omasco, NDSC Oman, Inchcape shipping, Cansco, Crowne Plaza Oman and Dubai, DHL, desert discovery, Reflections Al Madina gallery, The highland House of Frazer, Muscat Pharmacy, Sabco Art. DHL Global shipping, Essance spa, global scuba, Shangri la, BTS Oman, Douglas OHI, Kaya Clinic, Allied Irish Offshore,

We are also grateful to a number of other organisations who donated some great raffle prizes at our events.

## **Web site.**

In 2007 we put together with the help from Rosie a new web site for the society. This has grown as each event take place and it giving our members a more up to date look into what is coming up with event and past event.

## **Final Words**

I would like to thank all of the committee for their continual support. They all kindly gave their time and energy to help out.

I would also like to thank the staff at the InterContinental Hotel for working with us on our main events this past year and also the Crowne Plaza for helping us host the kids Ceilidh. We have a very close relationship with the hotels and they have continually delivered a top class service to give us special nights' for the attendees.

I also wish to thank all of our members and non members for their support at our event. Without this continual support the events would not take place and we would be able to help the charities we support.

2008 will bring more challenges and more opportunities to have fun and raise money for charities. In 2009 we have the once in a life time chance to host the 250th anniversary of Rabbe Burns' birthday. This will be the event of 2009 for sure and we have a lot of planning to take care of for this. We also plan to have highland games at some stage of the next year. That will take in more of the local community to make this a success so this will be a major challenge.

Regards  
Gary S Manners  
Chieftain  
(2007 – 2009)