

## The Robert Burns Club of San Diego

The Robert Burns Club of San Diego held its 34th Burns Supper at the Admiral Baker Golf Course Clubhouse in Mission Valley, San Diego on Saturday January 15, 2011. Over 120 members and guests attended and had a rousing good time.

Following a cocktail hour, the Club officers were piped into the Presidio Ballroom at 7 PM by Pipe Major Samantha Moudry. The company was welcomed by the Club President Archie McAllister who then handed over the rest of the evening to the MC and local TV personality, Pat Brown.

The Haggis was carried in by "Poosie Nancy"- {Emma Kelly} and dramatically Addressed by Michael Spurgeon, Past President. New Members, David McSwain, gave the Toast to the Lassies and Roberta Hartley replied with a Toast to the Laddies. Michael Brown, born in Scotland and new to San Diego & a New Member of the Burns Club, delivered the Immortal Memory.

A display of highland dancing was given by Highland Fusion Scottish Highland Dancers and The Helix Charter High School Bagpipe Band dazzled the company with their piping and marching. Every toe in the clubhouse kept time with the music and several members & guests stood and honored the pipers. The evening continued with dancing.

MC & TV personality Pat Brown on right.

Hailey Crowe centre, is a H.S. Student being mentored by the Robert Burns Club, with her father.

Tracy Hailey will be studying in Scotland next year for her Senior year of H.S.

The Crowe Family thoroughly enjoyed the Supper & the Mt. Helix Charter H.S. Pipe Band

This year special efforts were adopted to increase attendance. Discounts were offered to members and a PR effort achieved an article in the local press which boosted ticket sales.

Special Programs were created this year as keepsakes.

Members and businesses donating prizes to the Raffle received, by mail, a keepsake program with matching Thank You cards. Members were encouraged to obtain raffle contributions, which became a light hearted competition to ALL bring donations from restaurants, theaters, etc. Many are offering to contribute the same or more for next year!

A 600% increase in raffle ticket sales was achieved by selling "an arm's length" (OK, about 4, really) for \$20. Husbands & wives were each buying tickets! Participants were given the opportunity to place their tickets into a bowl directly in front of the prizes; personally selecting the prizes they wanted to win. It worked!

We introduced a unique process. The table number was all guests had to write on the back of the string of tickets, so the raffle process (drop in a bowl) & delivery (direct to the table #, while the 8-10 at that table looked at the #'s & identified the winner!) was quick!



The Mt. Helix Charter H.S. Pipe Band

Members of The Robert Burns Club of San Diego were also actively involved in two other Robert Burns Celebrations in San Diego on 25<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, & 31<sup>st</sup> Jan See page 2 of this report.

## **The Robert Burns Club of San Diego**

### **The US Marine Corps Recruit Depot**

The US Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) on January 31, 2011. The Robert Burns Club members and Board attended & helped with their Second Annual Burns Supper. Michael Spurgeon, Past President, provided the Address to the Haggis, while their Poosie Nancy was the chef in chef's top hat! Ciarraighli O'Brien, our Club Secretary, sang "The Star of Rabbie Burns."

Each MCRD Battalion identified their group with a specific Tartan & Kilt. One group went out on a limb with red Star Trek shirts and continually asked the Burns Club members (especially the women) to "Beam Me Up Scotty!"

Brigadier General Bailey, Commanding General of MCRD, presided over the evening.

Major Leonard Levine arranged the event.

The Pipe Band from Helix Charter High School Band again performed and the Marines utilized "one of their own," Captain Trevor Holmes, USMC, to pipe in their front table, and to support the rousing decision of the crowd when the presenter needed to conclude their presentation, immediately. It was just like the hook to pull a performer off the stage at the Apollo.

The Club Board of Directors all attended & participated in other Robert Burns Suppers with Club members:

The First Annual Supper on 25 January at Shakespeare's Pub in San Diego

An Evening Supper served 27 January at a local Bistro café, with haggis made by the owner