

Lord Provost's Burns Supper – raising money for OneCity Trust

The Rt Hon Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh Frank Ross held his 2018 Burns Supper in January at Prestonfield House.

This year the dinner raised over £30,000 in ticket sales and donations. It was a sell-out and you would be well advised to get in quick for next year's event.

The Lord Provost, Frank Ross, said: "Since becoming Lord Provost and Patron of the OneCity Trust, it has been my mission to use my position to bring the city together to help tackle social exclusion in Edinburgh.

"Scotland's great capital has much to be proud of, but there are many people who do not have access to the privileges living in a city like Edinburgh brings. Be it homelessness, prejudice or poverty, the OneCity Trust helps to fight such exclusion and bridge the gap.

"I'm thrilled my first Burns Supper has already raised so much money and that we have broken the £30,000 mark.

"My thanks to my own staff for organising the event, the staff of Prestonfield House, each guest who attended and every single person who donated and made the night such a resounding success. Fare thee weel and do come again next year!"

The event was a fundraiser for the Lord Provost's own charity the OneCity Trust and we had made a short film for the event featuring some of the recipients of grants during the year.

[OneCityTrust 2018](#) from [The Edinburgh Reporter On Vimeo](#) on [Vimeo](#).

In the past twelve months through sponsors, donations and fundraising, the OneCity Trust has been able to pay over £100,000 in grants to local projects. This was partly achieved through the Lord Provost's inaugural Burns Supper, held last year raising over £33,000 for the trust.

The OneCity Trust was established in 2003 and fights inequality and exclusion in Edinburgh. The Lord Provost is passionate about the need for all citizens of Scotland's capital city to be included in its success and opportunities by funding projects which actively bring people together from across divides, with long term social inclusion benefits.

The black tie gathering is now firmly in the civic diary following its reincarnation last year, and part of that is due to the quality of the entertainment. On the evening we were entertained by a wide variety of speakers, singers and party animals!

Allan Wilson is a Selkirk native who charmed us all with his singing last year, and was in even better voice this year. A Man's a Man for A That was a fine way to set the proceedings off.

The haggis was piped in by the Lord Provost's piper Louise Marshall and most robustly addressed by Cameron Goodall who is the host of The Scottish Show at Prestonfield. Goodall joined the army to play percussion at the tender age of 16, and is now a mainstay of the entertainment that the hotel provides. He gave the haggis little chance of survival!

Shabir Beg of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society delivered the Selkirk Grace ahead of the meal which we all enjoyed.

The repast was exquisitely presented and prepared by James Thomson's chefs who had clearly gone the extra mile for the charity. Borders pheasant with haggis was followed by Aberdeen Angus Scotch beef and cranachan rounded off by some Scottish tablet.

Professor David Purdie is an Ayrshire man, an after dinner speaker of considerable note and a highly esteemed Burns aficionado.

He is also the official custodian of the manuscript of Auld Lang Syne which is placed in the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Ayrshire. Professor Purdie delivered an utterly outstanding Immortal Memory, with many references to Edinburgh where Burns spent some time.

A philosopher to trade he is currently working on the next edition of The Burns Encyclopaedia and is also an expert on Sir Walter Scott and David Hume. His sardonic wit was much enjoyed by the audience.

Grant Stott was on fine form wearing his bespoke Ralph Lauren tartan jacket, although he admitted to being exhausted after his seven week Panto run at the King's.

Grant held the audience in the palm of his hand particularly with his own Burns take on Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody. (Yes it had to be seen and heard to be believed!) He proposed the Toast to the Lassies which was replied to by Deidre Brock MP. Deidre is the first woman to have held the parliamentary seat and was well able to stick up for us all. She is a former Depute Lord Provost and professional actor which all adds up to someone who can not only hold feet to the fire in Westminster, but also be extremely entertaining at social events.

The evening finished off with a Vote of Thanks by eminent crime author Ian Rankin who hosted a table at the event, and Philip Henderson FGPT who is one of the City officers was Master of Ceremonies for the evening. As the only member of the Professional Toastmasters Guild who lives in Scotland he was indeed well qualified to do so.

