



ROUNDTABLE

Area 13 News

Issue 1

November 2008

Welcome to Area 13 North Scotland

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Welcome to the first Area 13 Newsletter for some time. I hope you enjoy reading it and please feel free to get back to me with any comments.

This newsletter was made to try and create stronger bonds amongst the 9 Round Tables in Area 13 North of Scotland. It's an attempt to share what works and what doesn't in the Area, and hopefully it will remind us all that the motto is FUN, FRIENDSHIP and not just FUNDRAISING.

It'll include areas like recruiting and activities. There's a chance to contribute to it and it's not a replacement for Area Meetings!!

So far I've enjoyed visiting Orkney, Thurso, Wick, Stornoway, Forres and my own table Elgin.



Chairman Kenny (left) with Thurso Tablers

Over the next few months I will get out to see Skye, Inverness and Nairn. Can I thank all the Tablers who went out their way to welcome me. It has been a great experience and hopefully when I'm out of the Chair

I will be back out on family holidays.

One of the reasons behind this newsletter is down to the fact that Tablers wanted a better communication tool with other Tables who at times feel isolated even though they may only be miles apart. The idea of meeting together is to increase the fun and friendship.

Pictures of my tour so far can be found on the Area 13 website.

Enjoy!

Kenny McKenna
(Area Chairman)



Kenny with the Orkney boys, Chairman Geoff Sellars and Trevor Flett

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Area Travel

Did you know?

Travel expenses are available for those attending Area Meetings.

For mainland Tables, Area pays mileage to those attending.

For Offshore Tables e.g. Stornoway, Orkney, Isle of Skye, you can claim travel expenses from National to attend each meeting, including air fare if appropriate.

This includes the Area Meeting at the Area Ball.

For expenses over £100 you'll have to inform the National Treasurer first.

Forms available from the National website.

Alternatively contact Area Secretary Willie at wmashie@aol.com

Area Capitulations

Touchy subject probably for some. I have to apologise to you all I should have kept my eye on the ball here and investigated sooner why there were issues amongst the separate tables. I think we should try to ensure that Caps, whether Area or National, should be discussed within the Table first of all and then if need be with the Table Chairman and the Area Chairman. Leaving things to the last minute causes stress where the actual issues can be resolved with so far simple solutions. Remember, your Capitulations include an amount for insurance. However, you should check what's covered on the National policy as some items are excluded. As befits the day and age we live in, there's also a requirement for Tables to undertake risk assessments. The documents can be found on the National website.

Area Meeting & Ball

The next Area Meeting will follow the Area Ball in February. At this time I'm trying to get an activity arranged for the late afternoon/early evening before the Ball. The meeting of course will be on the morning of the 14 February, a double brownie point chance if you're wanting to treat your better half.

The Area Ball is at the Mansfield Hotel in Elgin for the third year.



President Peter Manley will be in attendance and will also be at the Area Meeting on the Saturday. There's been a lot said on my travels around — why not say it to the man when he's with us?? We are trying to keep the ticket prices down so it may be less than last year. The meal starts at 7.30pm on the night and it's followed like last year with a ceilidh.

Message from Peter Manley, National President

Fellow Tablers,

We are approaching the half-way point through this Table year and I hope that it is going well for you. Having just returned from National Sporting Weekend in Nottingham I can assure you that the Table spirit is alive and kicking. I set out at the beginning of the year to promote a "Plus 1" ethos – a framework in which Tables can grow their numbers in a realistic and achievable way. Simply finish the year with one more member than you started with. As I travel the country I am pleased that many Tables have picked up on this and are making it work for themselves. One of the major issues we face at the moment is communications. Be it between Tables and Area or Area and National, e-mail whilst quick and easy to generate often goes unread or filed for later. We all need to recognise this and try and communicate more effectively. Please be open to information from National and Area as there are a lot of guys out there working hard on your behalf.

One of the key communication forums at the National level is the National Council meeting. We are finding it more and more difficult to get your National Councillors, elected at Area level, to attend these meetings, often Area do not even send a deputy. This is a pivotal role within Round Table and ensures that each Table and Area has a voice in our direction and forward strategy.

Over the past couple of years the role of Area has come into question more and more. Traditionally a communication and debating forum it is now becoming a more social and fellowship based arena. Whilst this is good news, it tends to mean that important matters are not being disseminated down to Table level, and conversely the opinion of the members is not being fed back to National. There are an increasing number of Areas that are now not functioning at full strength; missing key Exec posts such as Vice or in some cases even Chairman. This problem is set to worsen if the decline in membership numbers continues as per recent trends.

I am not addressing you with the answers; we do however need Tablers at all levels to understand the need for change, and we must plan for a future where there are less members and clubs – at least for the short term. I ask you to be open-minded and consider options such as merging Areas or even going towards a regional structure underpinned by cluster meetings. However it may work out, we need to act and formulate a 5 to 10 year plan that addresses this core problem.

We have just re-run the Optima Membership Survey in May this year and more recently we have engaged a study to understand more clearly the question "What is Round Table?" – the results of these two projects will be published on CD-ROM via Tabler Magazine and on our website. I ask that you take time to take a look and see how you fit into the bigger picture. We need your input to make a difference.

It's not about focusing on the past that is important right now, it's what we do with the information at hand and how we go forward from here that we will be judged upon.

Please feel free to contact me to share your thoughts and opinions.

Yours in Table

Peter Manley

Membership

The dedication of members in keeping the resource of Round Table in their Areas is something I genuinely respect. Nationwide the numbers are falling and I would urge people to look at the online Optima Survey and see it's a National rather than an Area issue. Perceptions are still that it's a middle class professional organisation and not for the general public. There's also a culture just now in general that folk don't want to mix so much. So how do we get round this issue? Any ideas would be great and perhaps we all could look at what we could do to ease the pressure on ourselves by sharing things with new members. I'm getting the feedback that Table at times equates to being really just

a charity thing where money is raised by the few and put out to the locals. The fact that the local communities think everything is hunky-dory is also an issue. But we don't want to look panicky as this will put off new members even more. I have looked at the idea of advertising with MFR radio which would take in the east side of the area so it would appeal to Skye, Stornoway or Orkney but the other Tables would be covered as well as all the towns along the way. The cost for 6 x 20 second Adverts for only 6 days is £700. It's a bit of a gamble, any feelings on it? Of course there's the good old posters being distributed to the separate companies in the Areas. The posters are free from Marchesi

House. They just need to be doctored. Places like fire stations, libraries, surgeries, barbers, supermarkets, garages and all trade places. Obviously if there's events that can push competition amongst the male population then fine. I would suggest that on reflection don't buy /adapt any trophies until its taking part. Any donation where possible get a photo in the local press. There's also a part in the weekly newspapers that will announce what your Table is up to on a weekly basis. Why not use it? We, in Elgin, are looking at a bonfire drawing competition for local children in the area where the prize is a chance to light this year's bonfire.



The first meeting of Area 13's newly formed 41 Club took place in May. It was held at the Stepping Stones Restaurant in Balivanich, Isle of Benbecula.

A sumptuous 7 course meal was served under the supervision of Robert Doig. Thanks Robert!! Present were members from many Tables, both past & present. Past National Presidents

Vaughan Harris and our very own Nick Lawton were in attendance. For details of the next meeting, or for further information, please contact Kevin Black at: blackies@lineone.net

Caption Competition



Win a ticket to the Area Ball

The challenge is to come up with the best caption!!

Pictured are Willie 'Mashie' Macleod (Stornoway), Keith Flett (Orkney) and Colin 'Tufty' Turnbull (Isle of Skye, now Bushey & Oxhey 691).

Entries to wmashie@aol.com

Closing date is 31 December 2008.

A "distinguished" panel of judges will then decide on a winner.

Area 13

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POINT OF INFORMATION

Remember and complete Risk Assessments for your Table events, otherwise you're not insured under the National Policy. Especially important in the coming months with seasonal events, e.g. bonfires, Santa floats. Also, some activities are not actually covered in the Policy so please check before you go ahead.

Area 13 Survey

General

What can Area do for you?

What can I do for Area?

Area Meetings

What is the best day for you to attend an Area Meeting? Fri/Sat/Sun

Where should meetings be held?

How often should we meet?

Newsletter

What do you think about the Newsletter?

What would you like included?

Any other comments?

Please reply to: secretary@area13.org

Spotlight on — Stornoway & District 1065

Formed: 1973

Meet: Cabarfeidh Hotel,
Stornoway,
1/3 Thu, 7 for 7.30pm

Chairman: Andy Turley

Members: 9 & 3 Honorary

Website:

www.stornowayroundtable.com

Forthcoming meeting:

07 Nov: Bonfire Night

Notable dates:

21 Nov: Wolfestone Concert

05 Dec: Christmas Dinner

31 Dec: Festive Fireworks

23 Jan: Burns Supper

08 Aug: Homecoming Carnival

Area Chairman Kenny McKenna badged new recruit Paul Duke when he recently visited Stornoway & District Round Table.

Paul, originally from Newtonmore, is an Editor at Studio Alba in Stornoway, where he works preparing Gaelic television programmes.



Area Chairman Kenny does the deed



An apprehensive Paul flanked by past Area Chairmen Callum 'Bear' Macleod & Willie 'Mashie' Macleod

Paul has recently been selected to play shinty for Scotland when they take on Ireland in October.

We wish Paul every success both on and off the field!!!