

What is Byron's Night and, how is it celebrated?

Commemorating the birthday of the Scottish poet Robert Burns (1759 -1796), Burns' Night is a patriotic festival celebrated on 25 January, wherever Scots gather together.

First commemorated by the 'Burns Clubs' soon after the poet's death, the evening begins with traditional food, often with a menu written in the poet's 'Lallans' (Lowlands Scots) dialect, and sometimes in rhyme.

This may include such delicacies as

- 'Powsowdie' (sheep's head broth);
- 'Cabbie-daw'. (dried cod with horseradish and egg sauce) and
- Finnan toasties' (smoked haddock).

But pride of place goes to the

haggis

(minced mutton, - offal, oatmeal and spices boiled in a sheep's stomach!)

These meals are eaten by the members of Byron Club in the Globe Inn, Dumfries, on 25th January (the poet's birthday).

The Globe Inn was Robert Burns' favourite inn, established in 1610 and still open today.

The building itself has changed little since the time of the poet.

The meal ends with multifarious toasts, followed by patriotic and sentimental speeches, Scottish dancing and performances of Burns' narrative poems, and, concluding with everybody linking arms and singing the most famous of them, all, 'Auld Lang Syne'.

The words of

'Auld Lang syne'

which means literally old long since, or 'long ago', are:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot, And never brought to mind.?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot, And days of auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear, For auld lang syne,

We'll take a cup of kindness yet For auld lang syne!

And here's a hand my trusty friend,

and give a hand of thyne.

We'll take a cup of kindness yet,

for auld lang syne.

Roughly, the verses mean:

Should old friends be forgotten, and never brought to mind (remembered)?

Should old friends be forgotten, and days of long ago?

For (the sake of) long ago, my dear, for (the sake of) long ago, We'll drink a toast for the sake of long ago!

to commemorate = megemlékezik, megünnepel, emléket állít

broth zöldséges húsleves

cod = tőkehal

haddock = foltos tőkehal

haggish = kb. disznósajt

mutton = birkahús

offal = törmelék

oatmeal = zabliszt

multifarious = különböző, sokféle

narrative = elbeszélő

to conclude = befejeződik

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