

LOCKERBIE ANNANDALE SPEAKERS

ANNANDALE Speakers held their third meeting of the season at Lockerbie Bowling Club on 31st October. **President Sandy Grant** wasted little time in welcoming the gathering and handed control of the meeting to **Alistair Stevenson** who introduced each of the evening's speakers with his take on John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Nonsense- oops, Commons, of course, Bercow is not everybody's favourite person.

Our first speaker was **Joe Glass** with the title of "Round the Bend". Joe began with a list of nick-names given to some of his former police colleagues, whose level of sanity may have suggested that they were "round the bend". However, Joe then introduced the history of Alexander Cummings born in 1731, who became a watch and instrument maker. His talents were employed by the likes of the Earl of Bute and the Duke of Argyll before he moved to London in 1763. Here he expanded into the area of instruments to measure latitude and longitude, as well as inventing the microtome. Joe unravelled his story in his usual clear manner, coupled with some humour, as well as some amazing technical terminology. Finally, Joe ended with a description of Cummings role in developing the U-bend, something we all take for granted in flushing toilets.

Next to the rostrum was **David Bell** with a title made especially for David's interest in rugby, "Some Scrum", enabling David to give an overview on current Rugby World Cup status. David has an easy relaxed style of speaking. He was in his element, questioning why such a contest was held in an area renowned for typhoons, during typhoon season. We were taken back to previous cup winners, and were reminded of the absence of South Africa from the international sports scene as they pursued their apartheid policy, before they were readmitted and won the subsequent World Cup.

Our next speaker was **Philip Kenyon** who approached the rostrum with enthusiasm delivering a talk on the subject of "Dead end". We were teased a little by Philip talking about his holiday in his campervan; hinting at a dead end he had encountered. However, he then switched to the subject of David Caskey, author of "Tartan Pimpernel". Caskey was an ordained minister posted to the Scottish Kirk in Paris in 1935. He used his pulpit to warn of the evil of Hitler and the Nazis. Caskey fled to Marseilles and helped set up an escape route for Allied service personnel. The story was excellently presented, told with sincerity and interest.

David Logan, fresh from his Spanish cycling holiday, took charge as Topics Master with a series of diverse questions for each of his victims: **David Hudson, Ken Morland, Michael Dickie, Brian Shaw, Alan Collins, John Cannon, Ian Sloan, Godfrey Newham and Ronnie Callander** who dealt smoothly with the various questions, The Topics Session was expanded as unfortunately the next speaker failed to turn up.

It was then the turn of **John Kerr** at the rostrum with the title of "Thick as two short planks". John used the title to tell the story of his early school experiences, demonstrating a great memory of his former primary school teachers and their traits,

some more pleasant than others. His story was told with his usual blend of humour and modesty and he recalled an age long since past which many of his audience had experienced. A fascinating story which ran well over time but this had the benefit of bringing us back to our targeted time frame.

Our final speaker was **John Reid** dealing with the title of “Boarded up”. John took us into the world of saunas. This fascinating story was told with John’s usual blend of seriousness, touches of humour, coupled with clear evidence of some depth of research, creating a very interesting talk. He exuded great style in handling a particular tongue twister which could have spelt disaster for him. The history of saunas, as developed by the Finns over 2000 years was intriguing and may suggest John spends a little too much time in saunas, but he rounded his story very neatly as he returned to the original title.

Timekeeper for the evening was **George Gilhooly**, who proposed his vote of thanks to the three other performers of the evening, **Mr Speaker (Alistair Stevenson)**, **Mr Topics Master (David Logan**, fresh from his cycling holiday in Spain) and **Mr Critic (Bruce Edensor)**.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 14th November at Lockerbie Bowling Club at 7.30 p.m.