

THE FIELD & HUNTER BALMORAL MACNAB CHALLENGE

The successful Macnabbers braved the snow and headed to London for the inaugural Macnab Challenge dinner and an encounter with *The Field's* fearsome French 75s. Photographs by **Lucinda Marland**



LAST autumn *The Field* and Hunter Balmoral invited readers to discard urban ennui and take to the heather in search of the elusive Macnab, in the spirit of Buchan's minor classic.

The Macnab Challenge embraced both the Real Macnab (the purloining of a salmon or stag from an alerted laird) and the Classic, the harvesting of grouse, salmon and stag in a day. Sadly, none did the wicked deed, so the solid gold cuff-links remained unclaimed.

However, six of the Classic Macnabbers were on hand to receive their cuff-links from Hunter Boot's chairman Peter Mullen at the inaugural Macnab Challenge dinner at Boisdale's of Bishopsgate. These were an exclusive design - a sterling silver salmon with sapphire eye and a deer slot - made by Mark Rossi at Right-and-Left. The wonderfully



1 Cuff-links for the Macnabbers
2 Tom Voyce and Christina Brown
3 Peter Taylor
4 Peter Mullen
5 Jackie Weller
6 John Davies

Scottish environs thronged with spirited accounts of derring-do, persistence and luck on the hill.

Of the 12 Macnabbers, six had bagged their prize on the Gannochy estate, including Dean Hemmings, Daniel Riddle, Stuart Hudson and John Davies. The latter bagged his on the Twelfth having fallen foul of a Gannochy rule: catch a salmon before breakfast and it's all systems go for a Macnab. Their two American companions were, sadly, unable to join as they were ensconced in Georgia.

Marc Sale, another Macnabber, came straight off a plane from Argentina. And Jackie Weller, our only female Macnabber (and the most glamorous) arrived with a bevy of supporters. Claire Zambuni bought with her a gaggle of Covert Girls and an international flavour was added by a clutch of charming Swedes.

The Editor gave a rousing speech, proposed the traditional gillies' toast and was joined in his vote of thanks by an impromptu contribution from a guest intent on fostering the Blitz spirit. Special tribute was paid to another guest, David Lacon, who had poached a Macnab 30 years ago.

As the snow continued to fall, guests braced themselves for the trek home with *The Field's* French 75 cocktails. This potent stiffener was favoured by the Royal Flying Corps, its kick likened to shellfire from the French 75mm howitzer. So fortified, some guests made it back to the Shires before others reached Fulham, some of the London contingent having been "lost on voyage".

Readers who'd like to take part next year should register on the Macnab Challenge website at www.macnabchallenge.co.uk.



7 Marc Sale and Jonathan Young
8 Claire Saunders
9 Chris Dewbury
10 Claire Zambuni and Tessa Ferguson
11 David Lacon
12 French 75s
13 Ranald Macdonald
14 Stephen Noble
15 Sam Mahoney
16 Daniel Walter
17 Daniel Riddle
18 Caroline Mahoney
19 Dean Hemmings
20 Paul Carlbom
21 Stuart Hudson
22 Tim Weller

