

Hey Ca' Thro', by Robert Burns

I first heard Tony perform this song in the mid 1970s, on a radio broadcast, playing as a member of the Scottish band 'ALBA', along with Sean O'Rourke and Mike Ward. It was joyful, optimistic and energetic.

Burns's songs were included in many of Tony's set lists and recordings. He loved the Scots language and was a keen re-worker of songs and poetry, composing original music to accompany a poem or a song he had come across in an old volume or collection. Definitely a direct influence of his love of Burns.

His friend Billy Kay, the author, writer and presenter for radio and television wrote about Tony's "native feeling for the emotive power of the words, his sensitivity to the aching beauty of the airs."

The values that Burns displayed in his works are still as important today: inclusiveness, egalitarianism and a healthy disregard for the pompous and self-important.

The man o' independent mind

He looks and laughs at a' that

– John Cuffe
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