



# THE ST. ANDREW SOCIETY OF SÃO PAULO

## **Martin Bernard Foley**

Born in Greenock, Scotland, Martin did his schooling at St Columba's High and went on to take a degree in Pure science at Glasgow University. After working with ICI for two years he went to Notre Dame College, Glasgow, on a one-year teacher training course. Having taught in Greenock and Glasgow for a few years, he decided to move to a country where he could play tennis all year round, and Brazil was his lucky choice. He arrived at St. Paul's São Paulo in 1975 and stayed until 1991. He moved on to Lima and then to Trujillo, where he became Dean of Fleming College, and then Director General del Compleco Interamericano.

While Martin was President, the annual Picnic was held traditionally on 1 May and normally around 500 paying adults and 1,000 children, including those from orphanages, turned out. Companies in the 80's were very generous in donating products and literally tons of prizes were received for the very successful raffle. Martin, in typical Scots tradition, was *careful with the cash* but never mean and during his presidency the committee gave great value for money. The events were cheap and allowed families to turn out in droves, while still giving generous amounts to charity via the money raised through the raffle. While Martin was President in 1980, he invited Colin Pritchard onto the Committee as treasurer – Colin has never left!

Martin inaugurated the Simpson Nisbet Trophy to honour Simpson Nisbet who had been President of Linhas Corrente, the company, which, for many years had been a great supporter of the Society, through people like Matt Blair and Normal Munro. After a series of sporting and social events, squash, darts, tennis and snooker which were tied, the final event, a football match was arranged against the St George's Society and unfortunately the Scots lost 2 - 0 so the Trophy was "theirs"! After Scottish country dance classes, organised by Sandy and Kathy Roberts, there was Ladies Night with 269 people dressed to the nine's, not a few drank a similar number (one over the eight) and a splendid time was had in the Mansão França.

There followed the "bastion of chauvinism", when 100 males were allowed to go to the Annual Banquet at the Hilton Hotel and the "official" singsong was still shaking the rafters at 3.30am. 50 people turned up to commemorate the birth of the National Bard and this was the last event of Martin's year.

Martin agreed to become President for a second spell in 1987 after the sudden death of the President elect, Keith Rae. He is remembered also for his thoughtfulness to the Brazilians and at one remarkable Ladies Night in the baronial hall of the Hípica in Brooklin, he gave a speech first in English then in Portuguese! He may be the only President who translated a speech in the history of the Society! During Martin's term of office, the first lady committee member was re-elected to the committee and he ran the Norman Munro Cup that year, which was an experience not to be forgotten, with a Mensa member playing bridge for the Scots – apparently, he lost!

While working in São Paulo, Martin married the Paulista, Stela Villela, who worked for many years for the Cultura Inglesa. They have two daughters, Claudia and Carolina.

Currently back in São Paulo, Martin is teaching English, mathematics and chemistry privately, through his company Quality English, which for a true Scotsman is pure marketing. He completed an adventure novel on South America.