

## President's Message

**T**he Board are now laying plans to secure the long-term financial health of our Society. We approved a motion to increase the reserve from \$6000 to \$10,000 over the next 3 years. We will be considering fun ways of raising cash and look forward to hearing your ideas. Our attendance for the St Andrew's Dinner is similar to last year and I fear this might be the last time we will have this event in it's current form, since we've been losing money on it. The Board will be busy trying to identify an alternative which meets your needs, and celebrates our Patron Saint.

Our Halloween party was a great success (see next page), thanks to all who participated.

*Aw-ra-best, Keith*



## St. Andrew's Day: November 30th.

St. Andrew became patron saint of Scotland around 733 AD, and of the several stories on how that happened the following is true (well, official). The beautiful east coast town now called St. Andrews was originally a Culdee (Celtic) Church. A monk, later canonized as St. Rule, was shipwrecked in the bay while he was transporting the relics of Saint Andrew the Apostle from Patras. These relics, once caught in that North Sea storm, gave Scotland her patron saint, the town of St. Andrews a name and an historic religious significance, and formed the basis for our very own Society here in St. Louis, some 1250 years later.

*There'll likely no be ony fancy parade doontoon, but I've nae fear ye'll a' mind o' it in ye'r ain hoose.*

### Back in the early days...

**M**alcolm II had the great fortune to be King at a time when England was ruled by Ethelred the Unready. Thus Bernicia-Lothians and the Borders were easily captured.

Meanwhile Ethelred was so "unready" that the Danish king, Cnut, established himself on the English throne. The Scots, led by Malcom, along with their allies, the Galloway Britons, defeated Cnut at Carham on the Tweed in 1018. Scotia's border was now fixed at the Tweed for the first time. The same year the Galloway Britons king died and Malcolm had his grandson, Duncan, crowned as their new king. This land stretched to Lancashire, and Scotland was then larger than ever again.

### inside...

*Events Program*

*The Stone of Scone*

*Caledonia Corner*

*Toasts & Things*

*Other really good stuff!*

---

# Events Program. Come along and enjoy...

**H**alloween was celebrated in great style with a super turnout of wonderful costumes, and lots of fun. The generation gap was well covered with costumes ranging from an old Highland couple, to the Scottish version of Laurel and Hardy, to all kinds of wee folk, and a few "power rangers" thrown in. Two big bags of apples were well "dooked" and many a chin was going at the "treacle scones" like a queen bee after the honey. Scots airs were again provided by Winnie, our resident piano maestro. Thanks to the judges who had a difficult time deciding on the prize winners, and to Denise and helpers for all the work behind the scenes. Great job by all!

---

**We still need  
volunteers to  
help make this  
exciting program  
happen.**

**Please call:**

**D. Duffy 532-7587  
or  
P. Gowran 968-5429**

**November 19th : St Andrews Dance.** At Missouri Athletic Club.

Cocktails 6:00-7.00pm, Dinner 7:15pm, followed by the dance program.

**December 19th: Christmas Party.** At Country Day School.

**January 28th: The Burns Dinner.** At Missouri Athletic Club.

**February 27th:** Maureen Meikle: *historical review.* At Country Day School.

**March 27th: Monthly Meeting.** At Country Day School.

Including: "*The Clan Lindsay*" by Peter Geery.

"*Songs (and guitar) of Scotland*" by Alex Sutherland.

**April 29th: Ceilidh.** At Whispering Hills Club House.

**May 22nd: Monthly Meeting.** At Country Day School.

Including *Scottish Heritage with a Twist,*

Dr Tom Forrester, Dr Jim McLaren, Diana Ladendecker.

**June 26th: Picnic and Scottish BBQ.**

## Special Notes to Members

**M**embers of the Society send sincere condolences to Martha and Don Steinbrueck following the recent death of Don's mother. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

# The Stone of Scone

**L**ast month the first question in “wha wad ken” was the Stone of ?????. Scone (pronounced “scoon”) is the most important site in Scottish royal history, where kings were crowned while they sat on the sacred stone. It all began back in the 6th century when Scone was the capital of the ancient kingdom of the Picts. Later, this early settlement also became the holy center of the Culdees Church. The stone, also known as the Stone of Destiny, first showed up in the 9th century when Kenneth MacAlpin united the Scots and the Picts, and placed the “stone” at Scone. For 1000 years since, the kings and queens of Scotland have been crowned upon the Stone of Destiny, including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. For the first 500 years, the reddish-grey sandstone remained at Scone and served Scotland well as the recognized royal crowning place. What happened during the second 500 years, and where did this “stone” come from in any case?

**For 1000 years,  
king and queens  
have been  
crowned on the  
Stone of Destiny**

The origins prior to the 9th century are perhaps as much legend as fact, but the story tells of the stone that Jacob laid his head on and dreamed of angels ascending to heaven. Somehow this stone was transported to Ireland and used as a coronation stone there, before eventually finding its way to Scone. Today, the stone at Scone Palace is a replica of the original because, in 1296, King Edward I seized the original and carried it off to Westminster Abbey in London - where it remains beneath the Coronation Chair. Thus, all Kings and Queens of Great Britain have been, and continue to be, crowned upon the original Stone of Destiny. Or do they really?

There is a tale back in Scotland that the monks of Scone Abbey would never have allowed such a precious item of Scottish heritage to fall into English hands. So, they had cut a piece of sandstone from the nearby River Tay and allowed Edward I to carry that off to Westminster. Is this what lies below the royal Coronation Chair today?! To confuse matters even more, in recent history, a group of students from Glasgow University stole the stone (original or otherwise) from Westminster as a support gesture during the revival of the Scottish Nationalist Party. During this incident the 200 pound stone fell and broke into two pieces. Undaunted, the students managed to transport the stone back to Motherwell where a local stonemason sympathised with their predicament. He repaired the broken stone and made three replicas. One of those stones lies at Scone Palace today, one lies back at Westminster, and no one is really sure if the original is either of these or if it lies in some other place - awaiting the future Destiny of Scotland!

*If you have any information as to the whereabouts of this property, the Coronation Stone, a.k.a. the Stone of Scone, a.k.a. the Stone of Destiny, then you are required to inform the appropriate authorities immediately. Even if you have a proven direct line to the House of Stuart, or even MacAlpin, you cannot sit on the stone and claim succession over the current House of Hanover. Or can you?!*

Lord Mansfield, whose ancestor saved the life of King James VI, opens Scone Palace to the public every summer - be sure to visit this historic site, filled with Scottish heritage, next time you are in Scotland. *Try sitting on the Stone!*

**..he repaired the  
broken stone  
and made three  
replicas....**

# CALEDONIA CORNER

**S**cientists recently announced that some Scottish rocks (not the Stone of Destiny!) are 3.3 billion years old. Only moonrocks have been dated older, at 4.5 billion years. The rocks were taken from the cliffs of Gruinard Bay, close to Loch Ewe in Ross and Cromarty. This region is recognized by geologists as being among the birthplaces of all land-masses. The recent work proves that Scotland was formed in early geological time, along with Greenland, Western Australia and parts of the Antarctic. Potentially, Scotland was part of a large land mass originally situated where North America is now. Meanwhile, English scientists are frantically trying to prove that England was not a bubbling mass of gas and primordial swamp while Scotland was already well formed: no success so far!

**A**n Aberdonian living in Croydon became friendly with an air pilot. In due course he ventured to enquire what it would cost to get a flight with him to Paris. The pilot named a handsome sum, but knowing his friend's weakness, suggested that he would give him and his wife a free flight if he promised to remain silent during the journey. The proposal was accepted and off they flew. At the end of the journey, the pilot congratulated Sandy on having "won" a free flight by remaining silent for such a long time - especially during the looping the loop over the Channel. "Man", said Sandy, "It was a deeficult job especially when you looped thon loop, an' the wife fell oot o' the machine!"

## Wha wad ken?

**F**irst to answer all three wins one of the Society flag pins.

1. Dashing White \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Who was Winnie Ewing.
3. Name the Scottish actor who appeared in James Bond movies.

All replies to Jim McLaren  
2214 Stoneridge Terr Ct,  
Chesterfield, MO 63017  
or phone: (314) 532-5986

Sorry, no one made all 3 this month.

1. The Stone of SCONE.
2. Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle
3. Besides "Nessie" in Loch Ness:  
"Morag" in Loch Morar.

Please send in any interesting questions, with your name / phone number.

## PEAT who?

**P**eat is undecomposed organic (plant) matter which accumulates at the surface. (Coal is compressed organic matter that accumulates underground). Due to acidic soil, high moisture and poor drainage, over 10% of Scotland is covered with peat. Innovative as they are, the Scots have turned this unattractive natural resource into a thriving industry. In the early days, peat was the major source of fuel for cottage fires - and if you've ever sat in a "black-hoose" with the tears running down your face, you'll understand the benefits of natural gas and artificial logs!

Over the years, peat has been used for salt evaporation, fish curing, lime burning, charcoal making, metal working and the extraction of paraffin wax. Peat is also a super soil conditioner, and you've probably used it in your garden. However, without question, the greatest gift that peat has brought is the special malt whiskies, still made from pure Scottish barley malted over pure Scottish peat.

---

..ever sat in a  
"black-hoose"  
with tears  
running down...

---

# CALEDONIA CORNER

**G**aelic (*Gaidhlig*) is an ancient Celtic language of Scotland, with origins around 500 AD in the western Scottish region once known as Dalriada - ruled at the time by Fergus mac Eirc. Scots Gaelic, together with Irish and Manx had a common root in Gadelic which is a branch of the Indo-European family of languages. Interestingly, Welsh, Breton and Cornish had a slightly different common ancestor in Brittonic. From these early times, Gaelic grew and spread throughout Scotia, and was clearly the dominant language between the 10th and 13th centuries. That influence remains today, in the Scottish culture, in the modern Scots tongue, and in many place-names. *Argyll* is the "coastland of the Gaels", *Dunkeld* is the "fort of the Caledonians", and whisky derives from *uisge beatha*.

Scots Gaelic has never really died, rather it has been eroded away over time. In the 10th century the influence of Norse colonists in the north resulted in a dilution of the mainstream Gaelic. Later, in the 12th century, English trade in the south led to Inglis (later called Scots) becoming the main language. It's somewhat remarkable that although Scots Gaelic was declining by the 13th century, there is a high probability that any Scot today had a Gaelic speaking great-grandparent! Perhaps a sign of the significant under-lying influence of a strong and beautiful language.

Today, the Scottish school system does not require that Gaelic be taught to children, and most native speakers are in the older portion of the population. Also, Gaelic is more common in the western Highlands and Isles. Just over 80,000 Scots (1.7% of the population) use Gaelic. Despite the lack of use in commerce, Scots Law, or in schools, the Gaelic as a spoken second language has seen some revival in recent times. Whether or not this renewed interest takes widespread hold in Scotland remains to be seen. However, there is no dispute about the significant place of Gaelic in the Scottish culture: the dances, the tunes, the places, the words, and the pride....

Some examples of Scots Gaelic: the old name for the capital city is Dunedin which can be seen in *Dun Eideann* - Edinburgh. Many places have part Gaelic roots, as in *inbhir* = mouth of a river = *Inverness*; *creag* = rock = *Craig*-house; *srath* = valley = *Strathclyde*; *druim* = ridge = *Drumadrochit*; *dun* = fort = *Dunblane*; *taigh* = house = *Tighnabruaich*; *caol* = straits = *Kyle* of *Lochalsh*.

*Slainte mhor* (slan-chuh vor): Good health, Cheers! *Mar sin leibh*: Good-bye.

**N**ot only in Scotland is there a resurgence of interest in the Gaelic language, in the US *An Comunn Gaidhealach America* is a volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the Scottish Gaelic language and culture. ACGA provides for interest in Gaelic literature, music and art as well as the spoken language.

If you are interesting in learning more about the Gaelic Society of America, please contact the St Andrew Society member, Duncan Macpherson, 314-227-3100

**Scots Gaelic has never really died, rather it has been eroded away over time...**

# TOASTS & THINGS

## **B**eing our own St Andrew's anniversary:

Again St Andrew's day is come, Unfurl your banners, beat the drum,  
Let a' your Highland bagpipes bum, St Andrew's come frae Scotland.

When Abercromby held command, And fighting, fell on Egypt's strand,  
Ye bravely bore the burnin' sand, And fought like sons of Scotland.

The ruthless foe, on bluidy wark, Intent, dealt death to many a Turk,  
But found mair metal in the dirk, O' highland lads frae Scotland.

Your country's saviour wore the plaid, And often bared his battle blade,  
And many a foeman lowly laid, Upon the muirs o' Scotland.

Let Caledonians mark the flame, That animated ance his frame;  
That soul nae tyrant e'er could tame, Could weep for poor auld Scotland.

Then blush nae, should the startin' tear, Drop for the man we a' revere,  
For Wallace is a name that's dear, To ilka son o' Scotland.

Then let us a' with heart and hand, Still aid our lov'd, our native land,  
Till wisdom ilka mind expand, That breathes the air o' Scotland.

---

**Happy  
St Andrew's  
Day**

---

## Thank you for your participation and help...

**K**now anyone who'd like to join the Society? Ask them to call:  
*Peter Geery at (314) 227-2785(H) or (314) 891-3300(W).*

**If you have not already done so, then send your dues to Peter.**

**E**njoy reading our newsletter, the Thistle Times? We need you to continue  
sending in stories or jokes or even printed material of interest. Suggestions  
and ideas are also welcome — we want to do the best job possible for everyone!  
*Jim McLaren, 2214 Stoneridge Terrace Court, Chesterfield, MO 63017*  
*or call (314) 532-5986.*

*Many thanks to those who've already sent me some excellent material.*

Articles in this edition were based on material kindly given to me by:

Jack Abercrombie, Annabel Blackiston, Peggy Flynn, Peter Geery,  
The Rev Thom Hunter, and Duncan Macpherson.

---

**You're making  
a difference...**

---