

SCOTTISH ST. ANDREW SOCIETY OF GREATER ST. LOUIS



PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL

Dear Members,

It's been a busy past few weeks all round and I'm sure you have been keeping up with the pace. For those of you who didn't make it to the Annual Ceilidh you can be certain that you missed a great night. We had a reasonable turnout, although down a bit from last year. However, the quality of the entertainment was as good as ever. It always amazes me what a very talented group this is. We had a real fun night in good old Scottish style. Many thanks to Marilyn Geery, Denise Duffy, and the entertainment committee for a well organized night.

The Scottish St. Andrew Society



The more observant will have noticed that the logo (on the left) is different from that shown last month. We had some comments about the proposed prototype and these have been incorporated. The final words in the banner are still to be determined — see later for your chance to pick what those might be. When completed we will have a graphics shop improve the overall quality.

The next event is the picnic/BBQ at Vlasis Park (see page 2 for details) and a lot of fun items have been planned. We are also going to try something new and

Back in the Early Days

Ever wonder where all the sheep came from? There's more than a few in Scotland, and the old "blackface" ewe does a great job of producing lambs while living on the moors. But how did that come about?

Many people travelled (or were sent) to Australia in the old days — maybe sheep were sent back in return? Or were these criters around much earlier — perhaps the Romans left them behind? Or could it be that sheep were bred to be surrgoate mothers to the declining wild haggis population! We'll probably never know the real story because sheep

hold the Annual General Meeting during the picnic, instead of having a special meeting. We will be presenting some modifications in the Constitution, and the Seal (logo), to the membership via poster boards. The new officers for our next annual session will also be proposed and elected. This is your opportunity to have a nice afternoon out and provide some input to the Society at the same time.

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Event

Picnic & Scottish BBQ **Sunday May 18th, 2:00-7:00pm**

To be held at Vlasis park in Ballwin
(Manchester and Holloway Road)

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN FOOD AND DRINKS
BBQ pits and the shelter have been reserved.

We will be having games and various picnic events
The Society AGM will be held at 4:00pm in the shelter.



**Many thanks to
Marilyn Geery and the
Entertainment Committee
for another great
program year**

T

here is only one more event for this session:

June 28, 3pm: Pool Party at the Duffy's House
[15810 Large Oak Road, Chesterfield, MO. Tel: 314 532

7587]

We will have our traditional break in July and August and start again

W

hat object made its last known appearance at a Daughters of the American Revolution tea in Belleville? It was a 700 year old Scottish snuff box, of course!

Reported to have been carved from a tree used as camouflage by none other than Sir William Wallace, the "Wallace Oak Snuff Box" has not been seen in public since that Belleville tea party in 1923. David Erskine, the Eleventh Earl of Buchan (1742-1829), was a supporter of American independence and gave the priceless box to George Washington as a symbolic present to the "Wallace of America".

Washington willed the box back to the Earl, but somehow it never made it back to Scotland. Instead it became the property of a U.S. Navy commander, who gave it to his fiancée, who then married someone else called Williams. The Williamses were the parents of Volney Williams, a pioneer settler of Belleville. The box was handed down from son to son over two generations and was displayed by Henry Williams at the tea party.

The Edinburgh Museum attempted to acquire the snuff box but Henry Williams would not sell it. Henry died in 1931 with no known descendants, and no will. The Belleville Daily Advocate indicates that he had four sisters but it is not known what became of them nor the snuff box.

So, if you find a box about 6 inches by 4 inches by 2 inches high, with a secret bottom for hiding papers, it might just be the missing Wallace Oak Snuff Box. The Museum and a few others are very keen to acquire this item.....but, would you sell it or keep it for your tea parties!

Whisky Galore

The “spirit of Scotland”, the “water of life”, “uisge beatha”, a “wee dram”, or “firewater” all refer to that great liquid product of Scotland, Scotch whisky. Made from the purest malt from the finest

Scottish barley, infused with peat fumes, extracted with crystal clear spring water and fermented with yeast strains that are centuries old. Then, left for many years to mature in oak casks — it’s no wonder Scotch is such a world beater.

The “**International Scotch Whisky Festival**” will be held in Edinburgh, October 27 - November 2, 1997, with some special events in Speyside. The festival will include tastings (how many!), distillery events, exhibitions, and a chance to experiment by making your own blends. To go along with the food and drink, there will be a series of concerts and ceilidhs.

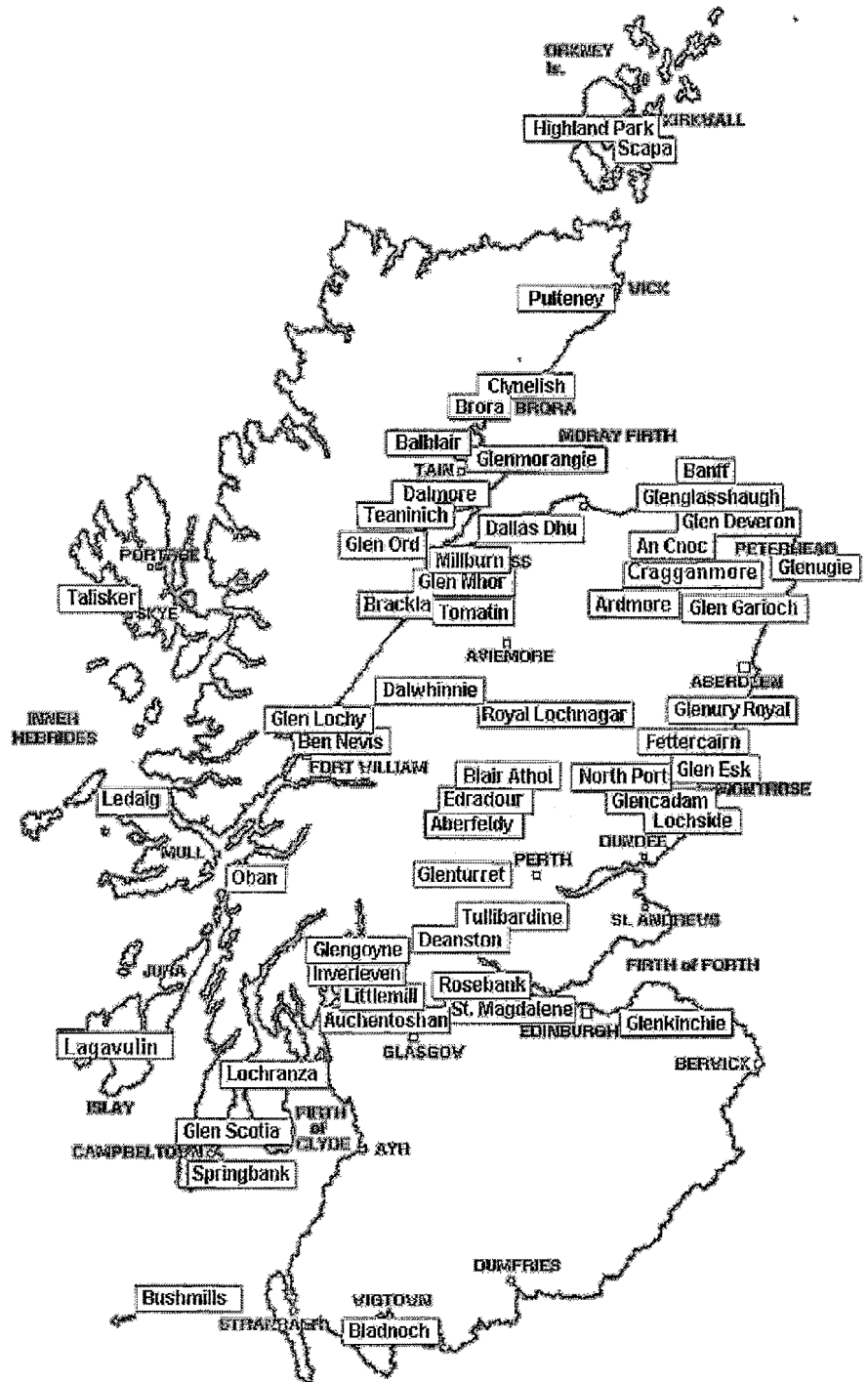
Information from:
011 +44 (1)31 556 9808 or
www.scotweb.co.uk/whisky/festival/

For those of you who participate in the modern ritual of “surfing the web” — a glass of single malt in one hand and a mouse in the other — there’s an active map of the main malt distilleries in Scotland at the address:

www.spirits.ch/whisky/scotch/malts/scotland.htm

In case you don’t have that opportunity, I’ve reproduced a copy of the map here. Most people know that Speyside is famous for malts, but it is interesting to see the widespread location of these distilleries, throughout Scotland. (the Bushmills in the bottom left is for that other island).

The dram’s ready and the surf’s up!
Slante!



Caledonia Corner

Licensed to kill! That was the famous phrase that had generations watching his every move. Sean Connery, star of Hollywood and humble Scottish lad. Connery has given a recent interview to be aired this month in Britain. At great expense, we obtained some of the content....

Did you know that his first movie was a Disney children's fantasy called *Darby O'Gill and The Little People*. He is somewhat embarrassed by his not-very-well-done Irish role in that film (we all have to start somewhere). A working-class kid from Fountainbridge, he recalls flying across the Atlantic to make that first movie — he didn't know if he should take the meal on the plane in case he had to pay for it!

A few years later, at age 32, he worked with Ian Fleming and Noel Coward in making the movie that propelled him into stardom, *Dr No*. Despite the "James Bond" fame, Connery considers his best film to be *The Man Who Would Be King*. This movie has more than a passing crack at the English way, and Connery has always been against inherited privilege and corruption of power.

Is Connery a man of words or action? Or both? Words: he is very widely read in all types of literature. Action: he co-founded the Scottish International Educational trust, and in 1971 he donated his complete salary from *Diamonds are Forever* (\$1.25 million) to help bright young Scots who did not have the resources to further their education. Not bad for an apprentice carpenter who decided to shape his own future!



The Big Sheep Theme Park! That's right, there's a theme park with that title and among the attractions are sheep milking, sheep shearing, and some other sheep-related activities. Even more exciting is the prospect of sheep racing. Mr Rick Turner, who has turned his farm into the sheep theme park, has imported the big lanky "racing sheep" from Holland. Come afternoon milking time they are very happy to charge down the 220-yard race course and into the milking parlour where visitors can try their hand at pulling a pint of sheep's milk.

The sheep have knitted jockeys on their backs to make the experience all the more authentic. One day is set aside each summer for a Sheep Ascot when male visitors wear morning suits and the ladies can show off their frocks and best hats.

Apparently it was one of those pub-born ideas. But, before you laugh anymore, The Big Sheep has become one of those success stories, attracting 100,000 visitors a year.

...and if you think that it's really a silly idea then that's because the theme park is in Devon...but it should have been in Scotland! In Scotland they could have added neep (turnip) champin, dog whistlin', sheep cloning, haggis rides, and heather clippin'....could have been

Wha wad ken?

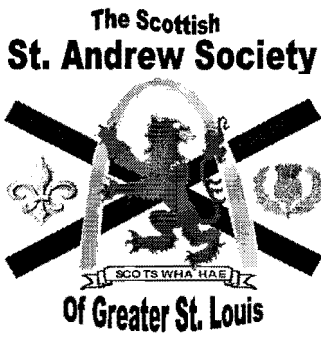
Since this is the last Thistle Times for the session (it's too hot to write in the St. Louis summer!), there will not be quiz.

Congratulations to Linda Lavie who won last time. Answers were:

1. Balmoral is the Queen's Scottish estate.
2. Battle of Prestonpans: September 21st, 1745.
3. Brewster invented the kaleidoscope.

Participation Opportunities

First there's a chance to input on what you think the motto of the Society should be. The final selection will appear on the banner below in the Seal for the Society. The example used in the prototype (shown on the left) is "Scots Wha Hae". However, you may think there are better choices, such as "St.



Louis Scots", or "Caledonia Rules", or "Lang Syne", or "Hame frae Hame", or "Wha's like us", or "St. Louis the Brave", or "Spirit of Scotland", or..... so let's be hearing from you. The rules are that it should be short (14 letters or less) otherwise it doesn't show up on a small scale, and we won't accept "bile ye'r hied". Apart from that it's open.
 Suggestions: _____

Name: _____

It's close to the end of our season of events and we welcome inputs to help plan a better next year.

Although we've done previous surveys on the Burns Dinner to improve the night, this is your chance to provide feedback on other events. In the past year we've had a significant increase in membership without a increase in attendance at regular events — we need help to understand what events would be attractive to you. **Please put a mark below:** (remember that these all cost money to run and, more importantly, it requires a lot of volunteer time to organize, so we need to know what's good and what should be changed)

1. Thistle Times.
 It's great ___ It's OK ___ I don't like the style ___ I don't like the content ___ Stop sending it! ___
 Comments: _____

2. Ceilidh.
 It's great ___ It's OK ___ Change the location ___ Change the content ___ What's a Ceilidh? ___
 Comments: _____

3. St. Andrews Dance.
 It's great ___ It's OK ___ Prefer a dinner ___ Bad time of year ___ Who's St. Andrew? ___
 Comments: _____

4. Picnic/BBQ.
 It's great ___ It's OK ___ Too busy ___ Need better games ___ Real Scots don't BBQ! ___
 Comments: _____

5. Other events.
 We like them ___ They're OK ___ Too busy ___ Change the content ___ What other events? ___
 Comments: _____

6. Here's why I joined and what you need to do to make the Society more interesting:

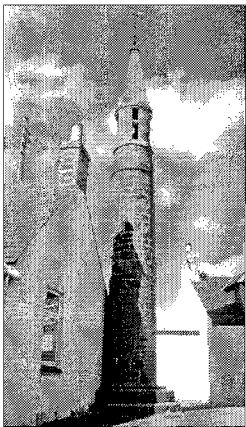
Copy or tear off this page and send to: Jim McLaren, 2214 Stoneridge Terr Ct, Chesterfield, MO 63017

70 ASYS & 74 NGS

Having a Harris Tweed “jaikit” is a big deal. Right up there with carbon fiber skate-boards: both are expensive and fashionable, although with different generations! Harris Tweed is the traditional hand-woven fabric, originating from the Hebrides that is world-renowned. While the wool may come from anywhere in Scotland (though a good deal is local), the processes of dying, spinning and finishing must all take place in the Outer Hebrides. If all of these don't happen in the islands, the product is not entitled to be called Harris Tweed.

It is still very much a cottage industry with weavers throughout Lewis and Harris working from home. Many of these weavers are pleased to show visitors around their looms and can sell their products directly to you. Indeed a visit to individual weavers cottages is an essential part of a visit to the Western Isles.

As you tour around the islands you will frequently hear the 'click-clack' of the looms, and see the woven tweeds lying at the gates waiting to be collected by the mill lorries (trucks) for finishing and dispatch to the far corners of the globe. In a world of new and amazing fabrics, Harris Tweed remains unique. Made in Scotland with first-class quality, and world appeal.



Well, what's this skinny tower doing attached to a building?

You're right, it wasn't the last stronghold of the Wallace or Bruce!

In fact, at one time these types of towers were common in many commercial areas. This example is in the town of Drumlithie, and is the weavers' bell tower.

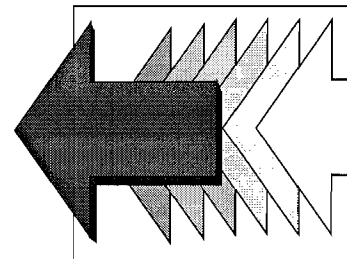
The main purpose of these towers was to “announce” to the mill employees, the start and end of each working day. The bell was also rung on wedding days to let the bride know when to leave for the Church.

At the last count we had a total of over 180 memberships.

(which translates to over 474 people in the Society)

Know anyone interested in joining, send us their number.

Dues & Leads To: Peter Geery, (314) 227 2785.



We'll be back after the summer months...



Hope you all enjoyed reading our very own newsletter, the Thistle Times.

Comments, and new material to the Editor:

Jim McLaren, 2214 Stoneridge Terrace Court, Chesterfield, MO 63017

or call (314) 532-5986, or e-mail: mclaren@inverizon.com.

Website address is <http://www.inverizon.com/scotlink>