

SCOTTISH ST. ANDREW SOCIETY OF GREATER ST. LOUIS



PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL

Dear Members,

The good news is the St. Louis summer is over, and it wasn't too hot this year, and the even better news is that our 1996-97 Society year is in full swing. It started like a Mid-West thunderstorm — fast paced and exciting. We had a family bike-ride along part of the Katy Trail, with sights of the Missouri River, and samplings of the growing wine industry.....



Then, regular members at the Players Club were astounded by the standard of golf seen on their fairways in early October — more so by the fact that the players were showing some knobby knees below their kilts! What a great day our first "Kilted Golf Tournament" turned out to be. I'm sure this will turn into an annual event.

Moreover, we had our first monthly meeting of the season at Young's — which was moved at the last minute due to the fire at Garavelli's. Thanks to Marilyn Geery for the "just-in time" changes — the fish and chips dinner was great. It was a super night with everyone having a chance to chat about their summer adventures. The members in attendance affirmed their approval of the new Board, under the procedural leadership of The Rev. Thom Hunter.

While we took the opportunity to thank the retiring Board for the outstanding work done in the previous year, I feel we need to acknowledge those contributions

Back in the Early Days

Chambered Cairn is a term related to the archaeological heritage of Scotland — not to be confused with a breed of dog!

Over the years, various types of "cairns" have been excavated at different sites throughout Scotland, or Alba as it was once known. Many of these sites seem to be related to the early "beaker people", and are thought to be some kind of tomb.

Confusion as to the purpose arises because certain conveniences are found throughout Scotland, today, with bodies incarcerated. Whether it's the weather or inability to unfasten the door is still under debate!

here. Our retiring President, Keith Parle, did a great job: with development of the Ceilidh, expansion of the Burns Dinner, and generation of a solid financial base for our charitable contributions. Keith was supported by a hard-working and enthusiastic Board. **Thank you to all who helped our Society develop so well in the past year.**

I'm looking forward to another exciting year! *aw ra best, Jim McLaren*

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Halloween Party including a professional clown

Spoeede School (on Spoeede Road, just north of Ladue)

Event

October 28th, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

We will have a competition for the "best" dressed (young and not so young)

T

the program for the rest of the year is shaping up:

November 16th, 7:00pm: St Andrew's Country Dance Evening
Dog Museum, Queeny Park (see attached reservations flier)

November 17th: Kirking o' the Tartan at St Peter's Church, Ladue Rd.
St Andrew Society members are welcome to join their Kirking.

December 16th, 6:30pm: Christmas Party
Country Day/MI School, Old Warson Rd.

January 25th: Burns Dinner, Adams Mark Hotel

February and March: Open. We welcome any ideas and suggestions.

April: Annual Ceilidh May: Picnic & Scottish BBQ June: Pool Party & Games

**We welcome
Ideas, Volunteers
Contact
Marilyn Geery
Tel: 314 227 2785**

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Scottish Country Dance Lessons by Highland Mist Scottish Country Dancers.

Great fun and all levels of previous experience (including none) welcome.

\$3:00/person. Gou-Jon Studio, St. Charles. For info, call Karen Chartrand, 314 978 3266

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Interested in volunteering or nominating someone from our Society to present the Immortal Memory at the Burns Dinner? Go ahead and let us know. The Board will be making a selection in the near future.

K

Katherine Gordon, a former member, has gone to Glasgow University to work on a Ph.D. dissertation on the topic of Scottish women poets who have tried to revive the Scots language and promote Scottish nationalism. If anyone wishes to contact her I have her address, or you can contact her father (in St. Louis) at bgordon@stlnet.com

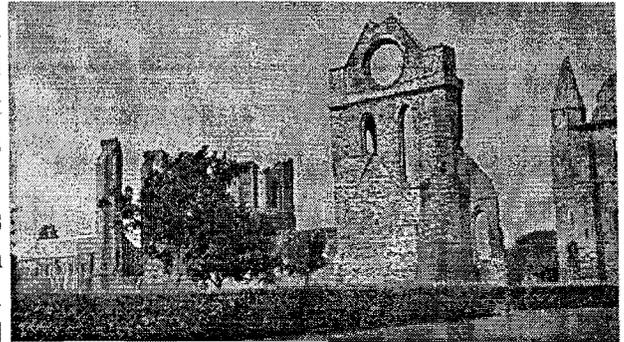
Arbroath

Just north of the Firth of Tay, and facing east into the North Sea, stands the historical fishing town of Arbroath. Outside the harbour lies a sandy beach, backed by red sandstone cliffs. Along these cliffs, there are several interesting caves and a peculiar rock-stack known as the "Pint Stoup." No doubt, centuries of blustery North Sea winds and tides played a role in shaping this landscape. To the south-east is the Bell Rock Lighthouse which, on many occasions, has provided a welcome beacon to the the active fishing fleet as it raced home ahead of some wild storm.

Arbroath is noted for its kippers, and a specialty called the "Arbroath smokie" which is a smoked haddock. The town also carries a proud history and has often been involved in the ancient affairs of Scotland. Such activities often center around the historical Arbroath Abbey. The Abbey was originally a Cluniac priory, founded by William the Lion in 1178. The Abbey flourished until after the Reformation, and began to fall into dis-repair in the late 1600's.

The south transept, which remains standing today, had a large rose window, called the "O" of Arbroath. It is said that this window was illuminated as a guide to ships at sea. It was in a chamber within the Abbey that the famous "Declaration of Arbroath" was drawn up and signed.

Also known as the "Declaration of Independence", this historical document urged the Pope to support the Scottish perspective, and to refute any English claims on Scotland. It was addressed to the Pope because he had not accepted Scotland as an independent nation — perhaps due to the excommunication of Robert the Bruce for killing John



Arbroath Abbey showing the "O"

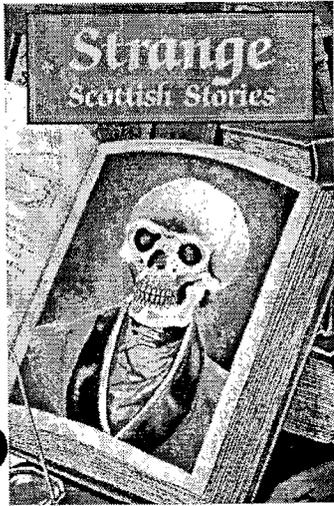
Comyn in a Dumfries Church, in 1306. (Comyn had formed an alliance with Edward of England). The Declaration, signed in 1320, bore the seal of 38 Scots Lords and while the Pope did not "pardon" Bruce, he accepted the case for Scottish independence.

Arbroath Abbey was once again the center of historical prominence in 1951. Recall that a group of young Scots "liberated" the Stone of Scone from beneath the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey, London. Some three months later, the Stone turned up on the High Altar of Arbroath Abbey.

Believe it or not, Scotland is very well represented on the "web." Some of you use it, some of you have heard about it, and some of you are confused as to what it is. Well, it's really very simple — think of it as a big network of answering machines. When someone calls they receive whatever message has been left by the controller of that site. Since computers are involved then the message at that site can be more than just a voice saying "you have reached the residence of wee jimmy, soory we can't come to the phone right now, but leave a" Instead, the message can be whole pages of text which the "caller" can see — so, some are junk, but many are quite interesting and contain the "links" to many other relevant pages (messages) on the same topic. In this manner a whole network of connections are built-up — hence, the name "web." We have created a site on the web which is dedicated to information about and links to things Scottish. This series of "message pages" includes one about our St. Andrew Society. If you have access then the internet address is <http://www.inverizon.com/scotlink>

The Fairies of Tomnahurich

Rising two hundred and fifty feet above the River Ness, a mile west of Inverness, lies the plateau shaped “*sithein dun*” or “fairy hillock” of Tomnahurich. The legends of that place are many, and include the peculiar fate of Farquhar Grant and Thomas Cumming who arrived in town to play their famous Strathspeys on their fiddles. Although well versed in the art, that frosty evening seemed different and the townsfolk walked past with obvious indifference. With growing frustration, the two musicians wandered over towards Castle Tolmie (which was pulled down in 1854 to make way for the current bridge over the Ness).



Just as their fingers were numbing with the cold air, and constant selection of their intricate notes, an old man appeared and said, “ your music misses our good folks now, but we are in want of your music. So, follow me if you want to earn some money tonight”! Our weary pair could not resist the prospect and tried to keep pace with their strange guide. Soon they were out of town, and ascending the grassy hill.

“Faster noo” quipped the old man, “we’re awaiting your talents”. Panting to keep up, the two men suddenly found themselves crossing through a dark, shadowy place towards a bright light that seemed to come from within the hillside itself.

Then, in an instant, they were in the middle of a glamorous hall filled with crystal tables, garnished with gold, liquors, and fruits of all kinds among sparkling diamonds. But a moment passed as they viewed this splendid scene, when hundreds of small figures appeared before them. “Farquhar o’ Freshie and Tom-an-Torran, eat drink and be merry”, said a cheerful voice, “but hurry, we need you to satisfy our wants”! Wantful from their earlier tributes the pair took heartily of the “free” feast.

“Let the dancing begin” was the cry heard from their diminutive but large audience. So, feeling a need to repay such a wonderful dinner, our musicians struck up their fiddles and let fly with their best strathspey airs. The assembled hundreds were ecstatic and danced with nimbleness, and complex patterns, that our musicians had never seen before across the breadth of Scotland. On and on it went, in and out weaved the small, graceful dancers. Time seemed to pass rapidly, but the pair kept up their rapid fiddle-work until it seemed that their fingers had a life of their own, plied by the abundant supply of liquors.

Then, suddenly, the “wee folk” were gone and there stood the old man, who said, “Come, I will see you to the door, and pay you for a good nights’ work”. Our musicians felt strange, now that the fast moving action was over, and slowly packed up their fiddles and followed the old man out. At the door, he handed each a whole purse of gold. Astounded, Tom looked up to say something, but the old man was gone and they found themselves standing in the middle of the dark hillside! “What a night”, said Farquhar. “Aye”, said Tom.

Slowly, they wound their way down the dark hillside towards the shadows of Inverness. As they reached the town, the sun was just appearing over the eastern horizon. Early risers were just taking to the streets, and the musicians stared at them in dis-belief — they were dressed so strangely! Soon, it became evident that the buildings and streets were somehow different from their memories. Similar, but slightly different!

In frustration, our musicians made their way to their home village, just outside of Inverness. As they arrived, they saw many strangers, and the folks they knew so well seemed to have moved. In the midst of confusion, they decided to go to the Church — surely, they would be on familiar ground there. Well, the Church looked like it had been expanded a bit, however, it was still there. As our two muscians stood in that doorway, being stared at by the people in the pews, because of their antique dress and old-world appearance, there was a mighty thunder-clap and, in clear view of the congregation, our pair crumbled into piles of dust!

Caledonia Corner

Nicknames have always been common in Scotland. However, some recent examples are surfacing which stretch the imagination:

Some of you will remember the romantic Kyle of Lochalsh ferry — it's now been replaced by a bridge over to the Isle of Skye. Well, over there on Skye is a fish merchant, one Dan Corrigan, who goes by the nickname of Napoleon. Apparently, he refuses to pay the toll on the new bridge and, consequently, is barred from crossing to the mainland — like the old emperor he is exiled on the island!

And in the village of Ballater, among a number of local nicknames, there is a report that a local window cleaner has a Scottish father and an Arabian mother....

.....he goes by the name of "Sheik ma Shammy"

Dance Caledonia had a successful summer bringing many medals and a few trophies back to St. Louis, from participation in 10 Highland Games, the Denver "regionals", and the Houston "nationals". Catriona Harrison and Erin English (1996 Trophy Queen) progressed to higher categories, while Genevieve Harrison, Katie Dixon, Beth Schlanker, and Jennifer Hash danced well in the "open" and

"premier" categories. Kimberly Campbell and Annie Glasgow have traded their pumps for college books. Cathie McCallum passed her dance teacher's exam, but has also taken up drumming with the Invera'an pipeband.

Sandra Brown, Director of Dance Caledonia and principal instructor, has done a wonderful job in keeping Highland dancing alive in the St. Louis area. She is a native of Scotland, and former professional dancer — one of the two McKinnon sisters who performed throughout the U.K., Europe and the U.S.A. Sandra recently told us, "It always seems such a short time between when our pupils first start to learn and when they leave for college. We need new recruits to keep the group alive, and carry on the traditions of our Scottish heritage."

Over the years, Dance Caledonia has brought much pleasure to our Society, through exhibitions at our various events. If you know of anyone who might be interested in learning Highland dancing, please contact Sandra. There is no (lower) age limit and no need to compete unless willing. Sandra is a super, and very well qualified teacher, and her group offers an unique opportunity for our children to participate in the Scottish art of Highland dance.

There is no prerequisite to be Scottish, anyone interested is welcome at Dance Caledonia.

For information, call Sandra Brown: 314 227 9375

Wha wad ken?

First to answer all three wins a Society flag pin.

1. What's the Feast of All Saints better known as today?
2. What year was the Battle of Stirling Bridge?
3. Where is the Glenkinchie distillery?
(rough location, but not just "in Scotland")

All replies to Jim McLaren:

Phone: (314) 532 5986

Fast e-mail: mclaren@inverizon.com

Snail mail: 2214 Stoneridge Terrace Ct,
Chesterfield, MO 63017.

Answers will be here in the next issue.

Looking forward to hearing from you: answers or interesting questions welcome.

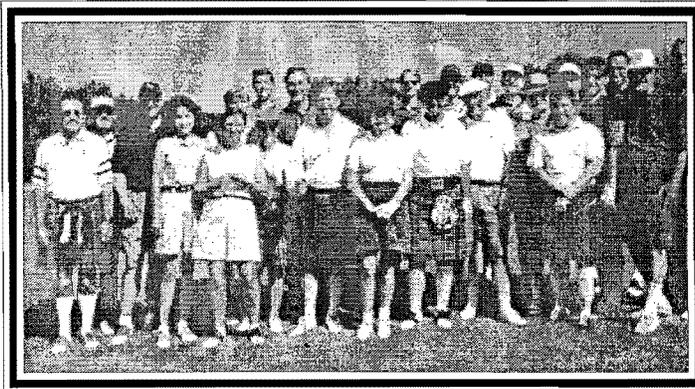
TOASTS & THINGS

Borders school children taking music lessons have recently dropped by over a third. Perhaps this is not surprising since the local authority has dramatically decreased the budget for arts teaching in the schools. In reaction to the situation, Jock Houston, of the education committee, recently reported that, "teachers are up to high doe over the issue!"

*He that dare sit in St Swithin's Chair
When the Nighthag wings the troubled air,
Questions three, when he speaks the spell,
He must ask and she must tell*

Sir Walter Scott

Have a happy Halloween!



The St Andrew Society First Annual Kilted Golf Tournament

**They came, they saw,
and they conquered!**

With great skill, cunning and raw willpower, 24 of our members and friends pursued the wee ba' around the dangerous terrain of the Players Club. The locals were not sure if this was "Bannockburn" come to St. Louis, or a live re-run of "Braveheart", as blood-curling whoops of delight were heard around the course.

YOUR DUES ARE DUE

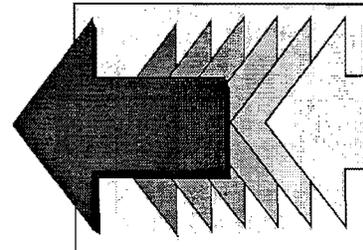
If you haven't already paid, please send those in for 1996-97.

Family = \$25 (Senior \$16); Single = \$15 (Senior = \$10)

Know anyone interested in joining, send us their number.

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

831 Westrun Dr., Ballwin, MO 63011



Thank you for your participation and help...

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ope 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>