SST Elections

The SST will elect a new slate of officers at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 2. Be sure to come out and vote, and let your voice be heard. It's IMPORTANT!

Up for election will be the one-year terms of the president, the vice president, the treasurer, the secretary, and the two-year terms of three (3) positions on the Board of Directors.

Candidates for President: John McGlynn (incumbent) and Tricia Young.
Candidates for Vice President: Skip Hunter and Terri Woodward.
Candidates for Treasurer: Jeanne Rider (incumbent) and Ruth Fraser.
Candidate for Secretary: Marcey Hunter.
Candidates for the Board of Directors: Stacy Apelt, Donna Looney (incumbent) and John Maxwell (incumbent)

Any member who is in good standing is eligible to run for office and vote at the Annual Meeting. A member in good standing is one whose membership is current and dues are paid to date. You may pay your dues at the March meeting.

Check out the candidate bios on the SST website at Tidewaterscots.org
Also, it’s not to late to run for office yourself. Interested? Contact Elections Chair George Phillips at gpphish@aol.com or 499-2841

VOTE!

Burns Night 2011

The St. Andrews Society of Tidewater hosted its annual Burns Night Supper at the Princess Anne Country Club, with 66 finely dressed Scotts lads and lassies present.

The evening started with great friends gathering for drinks and catching up on family and friends. The dinner was piped to order by piper Jeff Christman, and the haggis parade was led by Josiah Hunter, with the full honor guard in attendance.

The evening proceeded with Rob Lockwood’s presentation of the “Ode to a Haggis,” and other Burns recitations.

There were wonderful raffle prizes to be won, and a tasty dinner was enjoyed by all. Dr. Adam Potkay presented the address to the “Immortal Bard.”

Robert Lockwood, Jr., was honored as "Scot of the Year 2011.” The evening was finished off with more piping and the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

Plans are already underway for next year’s Burns Night Supper. It is a wonderful annual event that should not be missed.

Submitted by Stacy Apelt  Jeff Christman pipes in the haggis.

Continued on page 6
A Few Words from the President

Hello SST members,

We certainly have a busy spring ahead of us!

First will be the SST Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 2nd. I hope you will make every effort to come out, as we will be electing a slate of new officers and board members. It is important for everyone to participate to help keep our society vibrant and healthy. And remember – if you haven’t renewed your membership, you’ll need to do that in order to vote. (And of course you can do that on Wednesday prior to elections).

We will be participating in the 44th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade on Saturday, March 12. It is always a good time and a great party afterward. I’d like to encourage all red-blooded Scots to come join us. If you want to march, see page 10 of the Thistledown for details. We have our spot all set… all we need is you!

Our big event of the year will be our Tartan Day Ceilidh on Saturday, April 9. We have a great committee working hard to make this a very special event. You won’t want to miss it! Remember to get your tickets from me or any board member. I hope to see you there!

Recently, Anne Korff, a longtime SST member, asked if we would participate at an April 2nd Tartan Day event on the Peninsula, sponsored by the St. Andrews Society of Williamsburg. Of course we agreed. The Scottish Society of Tidewater is for all of Hampton Roads, but it’s very understandable that it’s difficult for our Peninsula friends to attend regular events on the South Side of Hampton Roads, and therefore it’s great to see this Tartan Day initiative on the Peninsula. I attended a recent planning meeting with Anne and some Peninsula friends. The event will include displays of Scottish dancing, clans, a fashion show, and anything else that’s appropriate to Scottish culture that anyone, clan, or group wishes to display. See the calendar of events on page 18 for specifics. If you would like to help (we need volunteers!), let me know. Also, Anne can be reached at acorff32@mycidco.com.

And let’s not forget about the Virginia International Tattoo! It’s always such a spectacular event. George Phillips has once again purchase a block of tickets for the performance on Saturday, April 30, and is selling them to SST members at a discounted price. You can purchase tickets at the March meeting, or contact George directly at Gpphish@aol.com or 499-2841.

I hope you will agree that we have had an exciting and productive year. We have had a steady increase in membership, our coffer is sound and healthy, we’ve had interesting and informative monthly programs, and our website and newsletter continue to promote our society and Scottish-American culture. I am proud and honored to serve as your president, and I look forward to serving in this capacity for another year.

Yours aye, John
Ceud Mile Failte!
"One Hundred Thousand Welcomes"

to New & Returning SST Members!

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Clan Buchanan

James & Susan Currie
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Clan Campbell

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Clans Ross & Henry
Scottish Society of Tidewater member Laurie MacPherson was contacted by her brother Hugh MacPherson in December regarding a new Scottish dance. The dance, the Kandahar Reel, had been created by members of the Scottish Black Watch Regiment while deployed in Afghanistan in 2009. Hugh, a retired officer of the Black Watch Regiment of Canada and retired Senior Pipe Major of the Canadian Armed Forces, was very intrigued by this dance and told Laurie he was interested in piping a group of dancers through it while down in Virginia in February for the annual Kilmarnock Burns Nicht. Laurie’s mission? To gather a group of four couples willing to learn the dance within a month and then perform it at the Kilmarnock Burns Nicht.

Laurie asked me if I would be willing to learn the dance in order to teach it to the rest of the group. Absolutely! Once I was on board to teach, Laurie lined up two other couples to dance the Kandahar Reel with her beau Robert Stokes, my husband Edward, herself, and me. Laurie’s good friend Catriona Roy Dunphy and husband Brad Dunphy immediately agreed to join our group. Cat grew up doing Scottish country dancing in Scotland, and she and Brad are always up for a Ceilidh, including the SST Tartan Day Ceilidhs in previous years. Finishing out our group of eight are SST board member Donna Looney, who loves Scottish country dancing, and her beau SST President John McGlynn, no stranger to Ceilidh growing up in Scotland himself.

I think all four couples felt a commitment to this dance not only because of strong Scottish heritage connections, but also because of strong military connections in the dance. In addition to Laurie’s brother serving in the Black Watch, her beau Robert is a retired US Army Captain. Brad Dunphy is active duty in the US Navy. I am a Navy brat; my father is a retired US Navy Captain. And Donna Looney is herself a retired US Navy Captain - and a trailblazing female officer at that.

The Kandahar Reel was created by two cousins, Capt. Andy Colquhoun and Lt. Rob Colquhoun, both of the Scottish Black Watch Regiment, who were deployed to Afghanistan together in 2009. (As a side note, Hugh told us that there has been a Colquhoun officer serving in the Scottish Black Watch regiment at all times since 1751!)

Laurie had already done a lot of legwork, so to speak, in posting videos on Facebook for us to watch of the dance being performed in Scotland by the Black Watch officers and their dates at a Black Watch Ball (A), by the Aberdeen RSCDS at Dance Scottish Week (B), and by the Corryvrechan group preparing to perform it in competition in Wales (C). I studied the videos in order to notate the dance myself so that we could get to work learning and practicing it immediately. I also added a few flourishes from my Highland dance and Ceilidh dance background to the choreography. There are several videos of the Kandahar Reel on Youtube if you are interested.

From the videos, I learned that a Kandahar Reel booklet was being sold in Scotland that had the history of the dance as well as the steps. The Colquhoun cousins who created the dance had requested that proceeds from the Kandahar Reel booklet go to ABF (Army Benevolent Fund) The Soldiers’ Charity Scotland. I was able to track down contact information for ABF The Soldiers’ Charity Scotland via the Scottish Black Watch Regiment website (http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk/index/index ),. I was also able to order a CD from...
the Black Watch website shop called The Black Watch Ball Featuring the Kandahar Reel. All proceeds from the CD go to support The Black Watch Heritage Appeal. Major Roy Robertson, Director of AFB The Soldiers’ Charity Scotland, wrote me an exceedingly gracious and helpful response. Through him, I was able to purchase a copy of the Kandahar Reel booklet and to get additional information on AFB The Soldiers’ Charity Scotland. This very worthy organization, as the booklet explains, “…gives lifelong support to serving and retired soldiers and their families in times of need…[and] supports those with disabilities or mental illness, ex-soldiers experiencing homelessness or unemployment, and older people.” Should anyone wish to contribute directly to AFB The Soldiers’ Charity Scotland, here is the address. Checks in American dollars are more than welcome, if anyone is wondering. AFB The Scottish Soldiers’ Charity, (Registered Scottish Charity No SC 039189) c/o Major Roy Robertson, The Castle, Edinburgh, Scotland EH1 2YT.

The more I learned about the dance, the more impressed I became. The Colquhoun cousins, experienced reelers (as opposed to country dancers), created the dance in honor of their fallen comrades, and the movements of the dance were meant to replicate the military operations conducted in Afghanistan by, as well as the ethics of, the Black Watch Regiment. For example, the most striking part of the Kandahar Reel would have to be the helicopter section. In this part of the dance, the eight dancers first form two pinwheels, which represent the double rotor blades of the Chinook helicopters the regiment relied on in Afghanistan. From this, four of the dancers then form a center pinwheel, representing the single rotor blades of the American Army Black Hawk helicopters also used in Afghanistan, while the outer two couples wait. The helicopter section is then finished off with another double rotor Chinook pinwheel. This part of the dance is really pretty intricate and required a lot of practice. For this section, I had our dancers keep their outer arms up as if dancing a Highland propel pivot from the Reel of Tulloch, and I invented (as far as I know!) a special four-way forearm grip that helps with centrifugal motion and also looks much better, in my opinion, than any of the usual linking methods for pinwheels.

Another element of the dance that is meant to evoke the Black Watch ethos is that these pinwheels rotate 1.5 times in four bars. Usually, pinwheels only rotate one time in four bars, but Black Watch soldiers are meant to exceed the norm with their efforts. How the unit bonds and becomes a cohesive team is represented in the setting and turning movements at the very beginning of the dance. Teamwork is also represented when dancers offer a “helping hand” during various figures. Finally, when the top couple completes their “tour of duty,” they grab inside hands and run to the bottom of the set, meant to represent the Black Watch soldiers running off the Chinook helicopters after successfully completing a mission.

After a month of fun but productive weekly practices, we headed to Kilmarnock for their 12th annual Burns Nicht Dinner and Concert. We have long heard about how excellent the Kilmarnock Burns Nichts, so we were excited to finally be going! The Burns Nicht there is a fundraiser for the Kilmarnock and District Pipe Band. Laurie’s dear friends, Pipe Major Jack Fearing and his wife Sherri, organize the evening along with the many other very talented members of their family and pipe band. As it turns out, the Fearings used to live in Tidewater and were members of the SST as well as Tidewater Pipes and Drums.

We were amazed by the fantastic program that they had put together. Everyone was so gracious to us and made us feel so welcome. They even had Edward sing the Canadian national anthem (in Scots Gaelic, English, and French!) and John gave a fantastic “To the Lassies.” The Immortal Memory speech was excellent – erudite, interesting, and all about Burns. The pipe band displayed phenomenal showmanship. The Fearings’ daughters and their friends provided outstanding Highland dancing and Ceilidh music. Our Kilmarnock Reel was very well received, and they even had a collection for ABF Soldiers’ Charity Scotland plus included the address in their program. What a wonderful evening! Every year they have to turn people away, and now we know why. Long before it was over, we had decided we were definitely coming back again!

If anyone is curious to see the Kandahar Reel performed live, we will be debuting it locally at the SST Tartan Day Ceilidh on April 9th. We would also be interested in doing a Kandahar Reel workshop locally, perhaps later in April, if there is enough interest. We would use that opportunity to generate funds for ABF Soldiers’ Charity Scotland as well as our local veterans.

Please contact me if you would like to get on the e-mail list for any Kandahar Reel workshop details as they develop. lefitch@cox.net.
Rob Lockwood performs, “To a Haggis…”

From left, Skip Hunter, Donna Looney and Stacy Apelt.

St. Andrews Society President Charlie Stewart welcomes keynote speaker Dr. Adam Potkay.

Stacy Apelt as Master of Ceremonies.
The Scottish Society of Tidewater will be hosting our annual Tartan Day Ceilidh on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at the Church of the Ascension Community Center from 7PM - 11PM. Tickets are $20 for adults, $15 for active duty military and $12 for children under 12. Tickets may be purchased at the March Scottish Society meeting or by contacting Donna Looney, Tartan Day Committee Chairman (loontoon@msn.com), or Tricia Young, Tartan Day Committee Chairman (ynggal@aol.com).

The menu will consist of traditional Scottish fare and will likely include shepherd’s pie, curried chicken, meat pies, and neeps and tatties. And of course it wouldn’t be Tartan Day without haggis! Soft drinks, water, tea, coffee, and dessert will be included with the meal. Beer and wine may be purchased separately.

There will be plenty of music and dancing on hand so don't forget your dancing shoes! Attendees can expect special performances by area musicians and dancers. A Hampton Roads debut performance of the Kandahar Reel will also be performed. See page four for more details on that. There will also be door prizes, raffles, and much more. If you would like to donate a gift basket or some other door prize, contact Donna or Tricia.

Highland formal attire or American evening wear is suggested, but not required. We are very excited to include in the program a special recognition of our SST founding members. Several of them will be in attendance, so please come out and show them your appreciation. They have done so much to celebrate and promote Scottish-American culture in Hampton Roads and deserve to be honored in this way.

Tartan Day is a celebration of Scotland - its people, its heritage, its history, its culture and its amazing legacy to the world. In the United States, April 6, the date of the signing of the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath, has been established as National Tartan Day, to recognize 'The outstanding contribution and achievements made by Scottish Americans to the United States'.

From the April 6, 1320 signing of the Declaration of Arbroath, which would later become a model for the U.S. Declaration of Independence, to the immense contributions made by Scots and descendants of Scots to science, culture, sport, the economy and almost every other aspect of the modern world, Scotland has an incredible amount to be proud of.

Americans of Scottish descent have played a vibrant and influential role in the development of the United States. From the framers of the Declaration of Independence to the first man on the moon, Scottish-Americans have contributed mightily to the fields of the arts, science, politics, law, and more. Today, over eleven million Americans claim Scottish roots. These are the people and accomplishments that are honored on National Tartan Day, April 6th.

Sources:
www.scotlandstartanday.com
www.tartanday.org
At Your Service

MUSIC

Newport News Police Pipe & Drum Corps
Tom Crouch waylon23703@aol.com
http://newportnewspolicepipe.homestead.com

Pipers For Hire
Rob Lockwood piobmor@juno.com
http://www.roblockwood.com

Harper
Rita Hamilton celticharp@cox.net

Scottish Gaelic Song Performances
Edward Brash brash99@hotmail.com

Southside Ceilid(dh) Class &
Irish Ceilid Dancing
Lisa Hunt lhunt23@cox.net

MISC.

Kilts, Alterations
Christine Lawler vakilter@juno.com

Photography - British Isles
Manny Willis robinandmanny@cox.net

Photography - Scotland
Linda Lucas ljlucas@cox.net

Scottish Gaelic Lessons
Scots Gaelic Society of Tidewater
Marcey Hunter marcey9@cox.net

Travel in Scotland
Highland Ways
Arthur & Anne Korff 757-596-6063

Scotch Whisky Tasting
Mike Lawler william.lawler@verizon.net

Celtic Dance

Scottish Highland Dancing
Scottish Dance Theatre of Virginia
Eleanor Unger SDTOFVA@aol.com

Scottish Highland Dancing
Scottish Ceilidh (Social) Dancing, &
Scottish Step Dancing
Lynnette Fitch Brash l.fitch.brash@gmail.com

Longtime SST member and former SST Vice President John Wallace participated in the Central Florida Scottish Highland Games recently.
John lives in South Carolina, but maintains his membership with the SST.
John is the past president of the Clan Wallace Society Worldwide.
Will we see you at the Tartan Day Ceilidh, John? We hope so!
NEW SCOTTISH BOOKS AND AUDIOVISUALS
At the Virginia Beach Public Library

ADULT NON-FICTION BOOKS:


ADULT FICTION:


DVD:

The History of Scotland: the Complete Ten-Part Series. BBC Worldwide, 2010

Call for Applications:
Richard & Olive Baird Scholarship

It's that time again! The deadline to apply for the Scottish Society of Tidewater's Richard & Olive Baird Memorial Scholarship is fast approaching. All scholarship applications must be postmarked by March 1.

The Baird Scholarship provides financial support toward the study of Scottish culture. This includes, but is not limited to, Scottish music, dance, language, literature, history, genealogy, politics and religion. Only applications relevant to Scottish culture will be considered.

Applicants must be at least 12 years of age; there is no upper age limit. Preference will be given to residents of Hampton Roads, but all interested students are encouraged to apply.

If you would like to submit an application, please visit the SST website at www.tidewaterscots.org or contact Marcey & Skip Hunter at 480-4217 or marcey9@cox.net, jwhunter2@cox.net

REMINDER:
Membership Dues 2011

Annual membership dues for the Scottish Society of Tidewater need to be paid NOW. If you choose to receive the Thistle-down Newsletter electronically, family membership is $25, and individual membership is $15. If you choose to receive a hard copy of the newsletter via US Mail, family membership is $30, and individual membership is $20.

You should have received an application in the mail. If you did not, or if you’ve misplaced it, you can either download it from our website www.tidewaterscots.org, or contact Marcey Hunter.

You may mail your application and payment directly to Marcey Hunter, membership chair, or just bring it with you to the next meeting.

Marcey Hunter
301 E. Randall Ave., Norfolk, VA 23503
marcey9@cox.net 757-480-4217
Top o’ the mornin’ to ya! The SST will be marching in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade on Saturday, March 12. Don’t miss all the fun!

Marchers should gather at Northside Middle School (8720 Granby St) at 9:00 a.m., and the parade will step off at 10:00 a.m.

This is Norfolk’s 44th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade. There will be lots of pipe bands, Celtic dancers, music and Ocean View revelry. There’s a party at the Knights of Columbus Council 3548 immediately following the parade.

In addition, there will be a pre-parade “Nessie Make-Over Party,” to help our Nessie float to look her best. Contact John McGlynn if you would like to help at johnmcglynn@cox.net

If you need more information, visit the parade website at http://www.norfolkparade.com/.

Efforts to establish a Hampton Roads hurling team are underway

Do you or someone you know need a little excitement in your life? Some exercise? A little competition? Hurling may be for you!

A group of braw young lads, led by local Scots Gaelic student Brenden Sweeney, will get together for their first hurling practice on Sunday, March 6 at Thomas Eaton Middle School, 2108 Cunningham Drive, Hampton.

Practice starts at 1 pm.

No experience is necessary, though a fair amount of athletic skill is required. So far about half a dozen potential players are expected to attend the first practice, including Brenden and Skip Hunter.

What is hurling? Hurling is an outdoor team sport of ancient Gaelic origin, and played with sticks called hurleys and a ball called a sliotar. The game has prehistoric origins, has been played for at least 3,000 years and is thought to be the world’s fastest field team sport in terms of game play. It is one of Ireland’s native Gaelic games. It shares a common Gaelic root with the sport of shinty (camanachd) which is played predominantly in Scotland.

Interested? Contact Brenden Sweeney at hhrhurling@gmail.com. Also, check out Hampton Roads Hurling on Facebook!

Portsmouth Hogmanay Walk 2011

Members of the SST step off at this annual Hogmanay event in Olde Town Portsmouth.

WESS Schauf, age six, grandson of Scott MacGregor, and best friend Zoe, age five.

Members of the 76th McDonald Highland Regiment of Foot “occupy” the streets of Portsmouth.

A moving rendition of “Auld Lang Syne”

Several dancers from the Scottish Dance Theatre of Virginia participated this year. Looking good, lassies!
Many of you may remember that for several years, we had the pleasure of knowing a special young man named Jose Hernandez. Jose was fascinated with Scotland and the Loch Ness Monster, and, through the Make-a-Wish Foundation, he and his family travelled to Scotland, and the Scottish Society of Tidewater adopted Jose as our “Nessie Ambassador.” The Hernandez family attended several of our events, including the Tartan Day Ceilidh, and we all became very fond of them.

To help raise funds for the fight against childhood cancer, Jose’s father Javier started the “Yes Way, Jose!” team in conjunction with the St. Baldrick’s Foundation. St. Baldrick’s is a volunteer organization that is committed to finding a cure for childhood cancers.

Our own Scott MacGregor joined the efforts by volunteering to be a “Shavee,” (i.e., he was shaved bald!) to help raise money for “Yes Way, Jose!” Scott will be doing so again this year, and if you would like to help Scott in this effort, contact him at mcgregor@verizon.net.

Sadly, Jose lost his struggle against cancer in 2009. He was an extraordinary young man whose strength and bravery were inspirational, and we all miss him.

Here is an update from Jose’s father Javier:

“This year we are in the process of moving to NJ where the HQ of BASF are located and actually, we are now in the process of selling the house. The plan is to move before the summertime, and I will be sure to keep in touch. By the way, before we move, I am doing the last St. Baldrick’s event in the area, and just wanted to let you know and hope you can pass the voice within the Scottish community. The link to my page is the following and hope we will reach our goal this year.

http://www.stbaldricks.org/participants/mypage/participantid/421572

Give our regards to your family and all the Scottish friends. Thanks and all the best, Javier Hernandez”

In Jose’s memory, Edward Brash arranged for the establishment of the Jose Andres Hernandez Godoy Endowment Memorial Scholarship in Computer Engineering. Late last year, they received an unexpected donation from the parents of one of the Computer Engineering students in the amount of $5000.00, all of which was applied to the Jose Memorial Scholarship. In addition, this spring a long-time professor, in fact the founder of the Computer Engineering program, will retire. It is a tradition at CNU for many people to make donations in recognition of significant retirements, and the Department of Physics, Computer Science & Engineering, which Edward Chairs, has decided to target all of these donations to the Jose Andrés scholarship. It is quite possible that CNU may able to award the first Jose Andrés scholarship as early as next year!

If you would like to donate to the scholarship, contact Edward Brash at brash99@gmail.com.
Skip Hunter recently spent several weeks at Ft. Sam Houston in San Antonio. Skip helps to coordinate training for US Navy sailors who deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan in the Navy’s Individual Augmentee program. This trip was in conjunction with those efforts. While there, he visited the famed Alamo Memorial. The Battle of the Alamo (February 23 – March 6, 1836) was a pivotal event in the Texas Revolution. Following a 13-day siege, Mexican troops under President General Antonio López de Santa Anna launched an assault on the Alamo Mission near San Antonio de Béxar. All but two of the Texian defenders were killed. Many of the Texian defenders were of Scottish or Scots-Irish descent including Davey Crockett, Jim Bowie and William Travis. Four were native born Scots including bagpiper John MacGregor. As the end of the battle neared, and Texan defenders doomed fate all but certain, the attackers could hear them rowdily sing Green Grow the Rasher O, a version written by Robert Burns.

This and That...

- Don Fraser is home and resting comfortably after his recent stay in the hospital. He was being treated for pneumonia, and unfortunately contracted MRSA of the lung. It will be a long process of recovery, but Don has a good attitude and he’s blessed with a great caretaker, his wife Ruth. We hope to see that Don is feeling well enough to come to our annual meeting and/or our Tartan Day Ceilidh.
- SST member, artist, chain mail jewelry maker, and photographer Meredith Ross was seriously injured while at work at Blockbuster Video, where she is a manager, in early February. A truck drove through the glass store front windows and then hit her. Meredith suffered 14 broken ribs, a broken shoulder blade, broken vertebrae, and a fractured tailbone. She is currently in ICU at VB General and would welcome visitors. Meredith has retained her usual wry sense of humor and is posting on Facebook and sending e-mails from her hospital bed. She will be ok, but has a long recovery ahead of her. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.
- Congratulations to the SST’s newest grandparents, Tom & Lynette Crouch! Tom’s eldest daughter, Amanda Crouch Osborne, and her husband Sheldon welcomed daughter Peyton Elizabeth Osborne on Saturday, February 19. The baby weighed in at 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 20 inches long at birth, and both mother and child are doing well. Amanda is a 2009 graduate of Churchland High School and a current nursing program student at Tidewater Community College. Failte to Ms. Peyton, and congrats to Mama Amanda, Daddy Sheldon, Grandpa Tom, Grammy Lynie, Auntie Eadlyn, Auntie Eilidh, Uncle Tommy, and the rest of the extended Crouch clan!
- Vacation! Marcey & Skip Hunter are planning a trip to Cape Breton this fall to check out the week-long Celtic Colours Festival. John McGlynn and Donna Looney are busy planning for a trip to Scotland this summer. Do YOU have vacation plans you would like to let us know about?

Do you have news to share? Please let Marcey know at 480-4217, or marcey9@cox.net
Scenes from the Philly Midwinter Celtic Music Festival
Submitted by Lynnette Fitch Brash

We were delighted to catch a set by the legendary Tannahill Weavers (above) after I finished teaching on Sunday. They sounded great with hot young piper Colin Melville (right) - he’s a really fantastic piper! Edward had a chat with him afterward about how he tunes to play with the other instruments.

WOW! This is the best line up of Hadrian's Wall (left) I have ever seen. They’ve come a LONG way since I used to see them on the Highland games circuit in the late '90s. Neil Emberg is the only remaining original member, but he has a fantastic female fiddler/singer/accordion player (Ashley MacLeod) and an equally fantastic guy mandolin & guitar player/singer (Ewen McIntosh) with him now. They do gorgeous harmonies with Neil, who has an amazing voice to begin with. Edward is a huge fan of Neil Emberg - a fellow Ontario boy! Edward really looks forward to sitting in with them at the session Neil runs every year during the Philly Midwinter.

We were fortunate to catch a set by the Paul McKenna Band (right), an excellent traditional band from Scotland, doing their last gig before returning home. It was their first time playing at the Philly Midwinter, and I really hope they come back again. What a great band - each member is extremely talented! My favorite song by them was a fantastic original tune written by Paul McKenna about the Darien scheme in Panama, whose failure led to Scotland being united under one crown with England. Boo hiss!
Best in Show!

Scottish deerhound Foxcliffe Hickory Wind is led in the ring during competition at the 135th Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. The dog won the hound division, February 14, 2011.

The Westminster dog show in New York City is the longest-running show of its kind in the United States.

This year's winner, a Scottish deerhound named Hickory, is the first of her breed to win the Best in Show award in the 135-year history of the annual event.

Hickory, a five-year-old Scottish deerhound, began her reign as America's top dog with a photo op on the observation deck atop New York's Empire State Building.

Dog breeders say Scottish deerhounds have quiet dignity and are ready to forgive injury and remember kindness. Handler Angela Lloyd had this word of praise for Hickory. “Hickory has a very large heart, and she shows it all the time,” she said.

Voanews.com, Feb. 17, 2011

On a light note…

A man was visiting a Glasgow hospital. He entered a ward full of patients with no obvious sign of injury or illness. He greeted one.

The patient replied:

Fair fa your honest sonsie face,
Great chieftain o the puddin race,
Aboon them a ye take yer place,
Painch, tripe or thairm,
As langs my airm.

The man was confused, so he just grinned and moved on to the next patient. The next patient responds:

Some hae meat an canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it,
But we hae meat an we can eat,
So let the Lord be thankit.

Even more confused, and his grin now rictus-like, the man moved onto the next patient, who immediately began to chant:

Wee sleekit, cowerin, timorous beasty,
O the panic in thy breasty,
Thou needna start awa sae hastie,
Wi bickering brattle

Now seriously troubled, the man turned to the accompanying doctor and asked, 'Is this a psychiatric ward?'

'No,' replied the doctor, 'this is the serious Burns unit.'
**The Virginia International Tattoo - Tickets on Sale**

The SST has purchased a block of tickets for the Saturday, April 30th performance of the Virginia International Tattoo. The show will be at the Norfolk Scope, and begins at 7:30 p.m.

The discounted cost is $29.75 per ticket for members.

To purchase your tickets, send your request, via e-mail, to George Phillips at gppish@aol.com. Tickets can also be purchased at the society March meeting.

Don’t miss this electrifying performance!

**Don’t miss exclusive preview of “Born Fighting” documentary**

The St. Andrews Society of Tidewater was selected to host an exclusive preview of the upcoming TV Documentary “Born Fighting,” closely based on the book by Virginia Senator Jim Webb. The documentary is a co-production between STV, UTV and Smithsonian Channel, with the three production teams following Senator Webb’s journey across Scotland, Ireland and America.

As some of us may remember, author James Webb was the Guest Speaker for the Tidewater St. Andrews Society St Andrews Night Dinner in 2005. Many of us were fortunate to hear him speak about the Scots-Irish in America and the Scots-Irish Culture that still runs strong today. Even better he signed lots of books! He of course later became a US Senator, and remains fiercely proud of his Scots-Irish roots.

On Monday April 4th the St. Andrews Society of Tidewater will host a special Pre-Screening of the two hour documentary “Born Fighting” at the Virginia Beach Central Library at 7:00pm. The Screening will be free and open to the Public, but will be of particular interest to the Scottish and Irish Society Members.

**Eastern Shore “Kirkin’ O’ the Tartans Scheduled**

Sunday, March 6 @ 11:00 AM

Kirkin’ of the Tartans
Epworth United Methodist Church 4158 Seaside Road
Exmore, VA 23350
Featuring the Blessing of the Tartans
The Music of Glasgow Kiss And The Epworth Chancel Choir
Come early if you wish to participate in the processional...

For more information:   Rev. Ray McGarr 757-442-6391
The Gaelic Corner
Sir Iain Noble, champion of Gaelic, Skye and Scotland, dies at 75

A merchant banker who co-founded the Edinburgh-based bank Noble Grossart in 1969, he was also a noted Scottish Gaelic activist who used his position as a landowner on the Isle of Skye to support the development of the language by founding the Gaelic medium college, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, in 1972 in Sleat.

It is understood that Sir Iain had been ill for several years.

Born in Berlin in 1935, the son of a British diplomat, he attended Eton and then Oxford before going into merchant banking.

After being bought out from the bank he had founded, Noble Grossart, he used the proceeds to buy the MacDonald Estates in Skye and went on to develop many businesses on the island and elsewhere. He established a boutique bank, the Noble Group, to help finance his ventures, including Hotel Eilean Iarmain and the whisky company Praban na Linne.

Ben Thomson, the recently-retired chairman of Noble Group, said that Sir Iain had a deep-seated belief that Scotland was capable of creating its own successful businesses. "He was always looking to see how he could help develop a sector or develop something new based in Scotland.

"He was an inspiration to many about how you could develop Scottish companies. He was a great ideas man; he had lots of them, and threw himself into them all enthusiastically. Some of them were 50 years ahead of their time and still haven't come to see the light of day.

"He believed entirely in Scotland empowering itself ... that Scotland (would) thrive under its own steam."

Mr Thomson said that while Sir Iain had created a legacy of his own in the business world, it was in promoting Gaelic as a language that he would best be remembered.

He was directly responsible for the introduction of the first Gaelic road signs in Scotland.

Prof Norman Gillies, who was director of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig for 25 years, said that Sir Iain had continued to take an interest in the college up to the end of his life.

"I think he was the man who made the link between social-linguistic and economic development. He not only theorised this idea but practically implemented it, not only with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, but with his own estate as well. "I think that's the sort of contribution he's made in Gaelic development.

"He was instrumental in building a confidence in the supporting culture. That, I think, was an important factor - giving people confidence in their own culture, which in the past centuries, had been bashed about a bit.

And he was coming, as it were, from the outside and saying, 'look, see what you've got. Be proud of it. Do something with it'."

Not afraid to court controversy, Sir Iain spoke out against over-reliance on tourism on Skye, stating in one speech that he would glad to see it decline on the island.

Prof Gillies said that in taking up causes such as Gaelic road signs at time when there was little official support for them, Sir Iain had done much to help the language.

"He wasn't making himself popular by taking on people who were pretty entrenched in their views of the language," Prof Gillies said.

"It is that promoting and proselytising at a very difficult stage that is his legacy, because from that people gained confidence and made things happen because of the sort of example he led."
Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 2
SST Annual Meeting
Annual Meeting & Elections
7 pm social, 7:30 pm meeting
Ascension Community Center
4853 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach VA
Please bring something tasty to share.

March 5
Finnegans Wake
Sponsored by the Irish Society of Tidewater
6:30 pm at the Church of the Ascension on Princess Anne Road near the intersection of Baxter Road.
Enjoy an authentic Irish meal of Corned Beef & Cabbage, and Irish Soda bread.
Tickets MUST be purchased in advance.
Contact Mike Bromley for ticket information at thebrom@verizon.net 471-2007

March 6
Kirkin' of the Tartans
Epworth United Methodist Church, 11 am
4158 Seaside Road, Exmore, VA 23350
Featuring the Blessing of the Tartans
The Music of Glasgow Kiss and
The Epworth Chancel Choir
Come early if you wish to participate in the proces-sional... For more information: Rev. Ray McGarr
757-442-6391

March 12
Ocean View St. Patrick’s Day Parade
Step off at Northside Middle School, 10 am
Please join the SST as we march in the parade to show our Scottish spirit!
Interested? Contact John McGlynn at johnmcglynn@cox.net or 714-1671
http://www.norfolkparade.com/

March 26
John & Cindy Kays and Friends
Celtic Tunes and Songs of the Sea
Sponsored by the Tidewater Friends of Folk Music
Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library
4100 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach
7:00 pm, General Admission $16
Seniors & Military $13, TFFM Members $12

March 30
Celtic Woman
Ted Constant Convocation Center
4320 Hampton Blvd., Norfolk
7:30 pm, (888) 326-9849

April 2
Peninsula Tartan Day Event
“What It Means To Be Scottish in Hampton Roads”
Walnut Hills Baptist Church,
1014 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg
12 noon to 4 pm, Free admission.
Displays, presentations, fashion show.
For more information, contact Anne Korff at 757-596-6063 or acorff32@mycidco.com

April 4
Exclusive Screening “Born Fighting” documentary
Virginia Beach Central Library
7pm, free & open to the public

April 6
SST Monthly Meeting
NOTE: THERE IS NO MONTHLY MEETING OF THE SST IN LIEU OF THE TARTAN DAY CEILIDH

April 9
SST Tartan Day Ceilidh
Ascension Community Center
4853 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach VA
MORE

April 15, 16 & 17
Loch Norman Highland Games
Rural Hill, NC
http://www.ruralhillscottishfestivals.org/

April 30
Virginia International Tattoo
7:30 pm, Norfolk Scope
Discounted tickets for SST members are $29.75.
Interested? Contact George Phillips at gpphish@aol.com or 499-2841

May 4
SST Monthly Meeting
7 pm social, 7:30 pm meeting
Ascension Community Center
4853 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach VA
Please bring something tasty to share.
Program: TBD
A Taste of Whisky

Enjoying the Uisege Beatha, the “Water of Life”

Various & Sundry Whisky News

Bordeaux-aged whisky from Dalmore

Whyte & Mackay’s Dalmore distillery is releasing a second limited edition whisky to help raise funds to restore a famous Scottish castle.

Dalmore Castle Leod is named after the spiritual home of the Mackenzie clan, and the whisky follows the launch of the Dalmore Mackenzie expression last year, which raised £20,000 for the castle and other clan projects.

Only 5,000 bottles of Dalmore Castle Leod have been produced, with a UK rrp of £100.

The whisky is finished in casks from a top Bordeaux wine chateau.

Master blender Richard Paterson said: “Having spent its initial maturation in American white oak and Spanish sherry wood, the whisky retains the Dalmore house style of marmalade, vanilla and spice.

“But its final 18 months in Bordeaux wood adds an extra level of pure luxury, as well as a sensual finish of kiwi, sweet pear and sweet mango.”

The Mackenzie family once owned the Dalmore distillery and the clan symbol of the royal stag appears on its bottles, along with the clan’s motto, “I shine, not burn”.

Get purer whisky taste with a water filter

Like a little water with that whisky? Many people, including golden-nosed experts, do. A splash can lift the aroma, breaking up what your chemistry teacher called ester chains and freeing up volatile compounds. But you paid how much for that single malt? Why sullying it with chlorinated tap water?

Enter the Mavea. Filter jugs have been around for 40 years, pioneered by the Brita company of Germany. In 2000, Brita sold the brand in North and South America to Clorox. Now the same German firm is launching a fresh competitive assault on the market here with a new-generation pitcher. More stylish than Brita jugs, it reduces all the bad stuff, including chlorine and heavy metals, just like other pitchers.

That makes the water not only cleaner but taste softer, like the Scottish water used to make great whisky. And it features a proprietary filter with a micro screen to reduce black-particle release, an unsightly disadvantage with other filters. Your dram will look as pure as it tastes. Mavea Elemaris pitchers are available in black, white and red and in two sizes, five-glass and nine-glass, $34.99 and $39.99. Sold at Pepper Mill in Toronto and other kitchenware stores across the country.

The Macallan launches online photography competition

Speyside single malt has launched its first Macallan Masterclass photography competition following the recent visual interpretation of the journey of The Macallan’s exceptional oak casks through Albert Watson’s edition of The Masters of Photography.

The competition will invite the public to upload their images celebrating the theme of ‘great journeys’ from travels or special moments that show the passage of time from one stage to another.

The competition follows the latest work undertaken by Watson in partnership with The Macallan single malt whisky earlier this month, which saw him visually document the journey of the oak casks from the forests of Spain through to Speyside.

The ten top visual stories voted for by the public will be judged by Watson, with prizes going to the first, second, third highest voted pictures and also a highly commended entry will also be awarded.

Entries for the competition can be done through the dedicated website at mastersofphotography.com

Slainte!
Scottish Society of Tidewater, Inc.
c/o Marcey Hunter
301 E. Randall Ave.
Norfolk, VA 23503

www.tidewaterscots.org

“Did somebody lose a cat?”

http://www.tarzans-treeservice.com/

Jeff Kuti, owner & SST member

CALL FOR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Want to contribute to the newsletter? I am looking for a few good ideas. Some suggestions:

♦ History/Re-enactments
♦ Book and/or music reviews
♦ Photos, both old and new (do you have a vintage SST photo to share? We would love to see it!)
♦ Gathering & Games information
  ♦ Poetry/Fiction
  ♦ Recipes

Please e-mail Marcey at marcey9@cox.net

Remember: This is YOUR newsletter!