



Volume 121 Issue 2 February 2023

NEXT GATHERING

Our next gathering is **Sunday, February 12th**, at 2:00 p.m. **Please note that we are back to our usual 2nd Sunday in February.** We will meet at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125. For those taking the freeway north, use the exit at NE 130th St in Seattle, turn left across the freeway, and turn right at the first light (1st Ave. NE.) The church is one block north, on the left.

There is no requirement that people attending be vaccinated and/or boosted. However, there still are some requirements: Everyone is asked to wear a mask except while eating and must sign in. The church has air purifiers that will be running. The gathering will be hybrid: in-person and on Zoom for those who truly cannot attend in person. The link for those who attend on Zoom is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjIxQT09>

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

As a follow up to the movie "I Know Where I'm Going" shown on the inaugural Scottish Movie Night, Bill McFadden will present pictures and information about the two major castles on the Isle of Mull, Moy and Duart, as well as other major places on the isle that were named in the movie.

The Super Bowl kicks off at 3:30 PST, so you won't miss much if you come to the Caledonian gathering!

ALL IN A SCOTTISH EVENING (AKA SCOTTISH MOVIE NIGHT)

Twelve people joined us on Zoom on Sunday evening, January 22nd, to watch the Scottish movie "I Know Where I'm Going."

The second Scottish Evening will be on Sunday, February 26th at 7:00 p.m., using our usual Zoom connection. (See link to the left.) The movie shown will be "**The 39 Steps**", 1959 British thriller film that is a color remake of the 1935 black & white Alfred Hitchcock film, and loosely based on the 1915 novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps* by John Buchan. This version features extensive location shooting in Scotland, including North and South Queensferry, Dunblane, Balquhitter, Alts Keith, and at the Falls of Dochart in Killin. The film also includes a large section at Waverley Station and at Princes Street Station, on the Forth Bridge, and on board a train hauled by an LNER Class A4.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie reported that she has sent cards to Stephanie Sprinkle, who suffered a stroke and is now at Columbia Lutheran Rehab; Tom Laing who fell on ice in December and has had surgery for a broken right femur; Carolyn Harris who is recovering from COVID, and Debbie McPhail who has entered hospice care.

If you know of a Caledonian who would be cheered by a card, let Bonnie Munro know. She can be reached by phone at 425-806-3734.

Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

FEBRUARY

3 Traditional Burns Supper, Seattle Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 1207 N. 152nd St., Shoreline, WA. 6:30 p.m. \$30. **RSVP by January 16th** at (206) 324-3330 or Secretary@seattle-scottishrite.org.

4 Tacoma Scots Pipe Band Burns Dinner, Tacoma Sportsman Club, 16409 Canyon Rd. E., Puyallup, WA. 5:00 p.m. \$50. Tickets from Brown Paper Pickets at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5650150. E-mail sheepgirl@msn.com or call 253-312-4567 for information or questions.

10 Masters of Scottish Arts Concert, Edmonds Center for the Arts, 410 4th Ave N. Edmonds, WA. 7:30 p.m. \$46. <https://celticarts.org/msa2023/> Tickets at EAC: (206) 275-3535.

12 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00pm. In-person & on Zoom. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE., Seattle, WA.

15 Concert by Four Visiting Winter School instructors. 7:00-9:00 pm. \$25. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 360-416-4934 <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/february15concert/>

26 Fourth Sunday Caledonian Scottish Movie Night. (See note above for information about the film.)

MARCH

4 William Wallace at 500: How the Nineteenth Century Reinvented the Scottish Hero. 7:00-9:00 pm. \$25. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 360-416-4934 <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/williamwallace/>

12 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00pm. In-person & on Zoom. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE., Seattle, WA.

MAY

27 RSCDS Vancouver (BC) 2023 Heather Ball. Scottish Cultural Center, 8886 Hudson Street, Vancouver, BC. \$120. <https://rscdsvancouver.org/events/heather-ball-2023/>

FACEBOOK

The Caledonians have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/seattlecaledonians/?ref=bookmarks>

Diana Smith frequently posts interesting articles and notices, so check back often. Be sure to "Like" the articles so they show up frequently on your Facebook stream.

Recap of the January Caledonian Gathering

Forty persons were present for the Caledonian Burns Celebration on January 15th. They were joined by three additional persons on Zoom. The program was a celebration of Robert Burns, highlighted by the presentation of the haggis and Christian Skoorsmith's recitation of "Address to a Haggis". Pipe, fiddle, and piano music was provided by Kevin Ault and his wife, Melanie. Susan Oxley recited "To a Louse." Tom Lamb gave the toast to the lassies, and Joyce Stevenson gave the response from the lassies.



Kevin Skoorsmith giving "Address to the Haggis"
(Note Diana Smith participating by Zoom)



Music by Kevin & Melanie



Joyce Stevenson giving Response to the Laddies



Enjoying the program after a delicious potluck meal.

Reminder – It's time to Renew Your Annual Membership for 2023

Dues are \$45 for individuals and \$55 for couples/families. Checks should be made out to the **Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle** and marked for **2023 Membership**.

Many thanks for those who have already sent in their checks!

We want to keep our membership directory updated, so **please include your address, phone number(s), and e-mail address(es)** when you send your check.

Honors for Skye Richendrfer

The Minnesota Piobaireachd Society has announced that they are honoring Skye Richendrfer by launching the "Skye K. Richendrfer Memorial Challenge Cup." This event is held for Grade 4 amateur solo pipers coming to the "Winter Warm Up" being held at Macalester College on February Fourth. Skye was an alumnus of Macalester College, graduating in 1980, and served as the pipe-major of the Macalester College Pipe Band while he attended school. This is a very special honor in remembrance of Skye and the legacy he left to the piping community.

At the Celtic Arts Foundation AGM on January 13th, members voted to name the Great Hall at the Littlefield Celtic Center in Mount Vernon after Skye.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, information in Wikipedia and various websites pertaining to the topics.

Rare Robert Burns Book Discovered Being Used to Clean Razors

In the late 19th century, a rare first-edition copy of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* written by Robert Burns was found in a barber shop in Shrewsbury, a town in Shropshire, England. It was missing its first 50 pages, as the owner had torn them out and used them to clean razors.

Fortunately, John Murison, a seed merchant and Burns enthusiast, spotted the rare book in the barber shop and purchased it from the owner. This copy is kept in a special conservation box at the Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries in Fife, due to its fragile condition.

Only 612 copies of Burns' poems were printed, with just 84 believed to have survived. It was known as the Kilmarnock Edition, for the town where it was first published, in 1786.

Since February is often known as the month for lovers, the following section lists some of the traditions of a Scottish wedding.

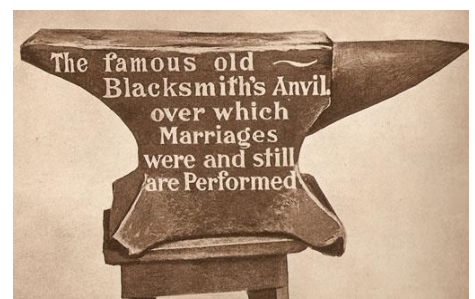
Scottish Wedding Customs

Gretna Green

Scotland has been helping lovers from around the world for hundreds of years. Location played a huge role in allowing the Scottish Borders town of Gretna Green to become Britain's wedding capital. In 1754, the English Parliament passed a law banning people under the age of twenty-one to get married without permission of their parents. However, the law did not apply in Scotland where a much more lenient age of sixteen was law. As a result, underage English couples flocked to Gretna Green, just over the border from Britain.

While English law had rules making it difficult to marry quickly, including that the wedding had to be by consent of the church and performed by a priest, Scottish law had for hundreds of years only required that couples join hands and declare their desire to be wedded in front of witnesses in a civil ceremony called "hand fasting."

What made Gretna Green especially unusual was that the no-frills wedding ceremony was typically performed by the blacksmith. In 1754, when English law raised the allowed age for marrying, the blacksmith in Gretna Green also doubled as the local priest. Eventually, there were so many weddings that he tired of changing his clothes before conducting a wedding, and solved the problem by having couples come



to his smithy, where he struck his hammer on the anvil to seal the wedding.

For nearly 200 years blacksmiths at Gretna Green continued to marry couples over the now famous Marriage Anvil.

The famous blacksmith's shop, the Old Smithy, is still in the village and still a wedding venue, although there now are several additional venues in Gretna Green where marriage ceremonies are performed over a blacksmith's anvil.

A Few Other Wedding Customs

Luckenbooth brooches originated in 16th century Edinburgh, where they were originally sold in the luckenbooths (locked booths), near St. Giles Cathedral on the Royal Mile, where



jewellery and trinkets used to be sold.

This heart-shaped love token is typically made of silver, although

wealthy persons may have had ones made with gold. Using motifs similar to those on the Claddagh ring, brooches may have a crown above one heart or two intertwined hearts.

One legend of the Luckenbooth brooch is that it was a symbol of love and devotion given by Mary Queen of Scots to Lord Darnley. Another legend is that it would help ward off witches.

In modern weddings the brooch is given by a groom to his bride as a token of both love and luck.

The tradition of a **Scottish bride standing to the left of the groom** started as a practicality when the groom might need his right hand free to use his sword to fight off anyone who may have objections to their union, including in-laws.



The **Quaich (loving cup) ceremony** is still found at Scottish weddings. The Quaich, Gaelic for cup, is often silver or pewter and has two handles. Each person to marry takes a drink from the Quaich filled with their favourite whisky or brandy. The sharing of the drink signifies both the union of two people and their families.

The **skirl of pipes** is often part of a traditional wedding ceremony. The piper accompanies the bride from her home until she meets her groom at the ceremony. Afterwards, the piper leads the newlyweds and the guests on to the wedding feast and afterward to the groom's car.



A **lucky silver horseshoe** is presented by a kilted page boy, usually about age three, to the

bride as she steps out of the church on the arm of her husband.

The **wedding scramble** has several variations. For one, the groom's father throws out a handful of coins when the bride leaves her home, then stands back as local children scramble to collect the treasure. In another variation, the groom throws the coins out the window of his car as he drives away with this bride after the ceremony. Either way, the gesture is believed to bring good fortune for the nuptial couple.

The phrase **tying the knot** originated in medieval Scotland when couples tied a knot during their hand fasting (wedding) ceremony as a symbol of their commitment and love for one another. Traditionally, they tied together their respective clans'



tartans. In modern Scottish weddings, couples present the objects to be tied and are instructed by the person conducting the wedding on how to tie their knot. Later, it is common for the tied knot to be framed and displayed in their home.

A **Penny Wedding** is a celebration where guests bring food for a potluck reception. It's perfect for couples who need to save money in order to splurge on a fancy cake.

White heather is traditionally included in a bride's bouquet as a token of good luck for the marriage.

In Scottish weddings, the bride may lead the **Wedding Walk** down the aisle toward the altar, led by a piper and escorted by the best man. The groom follows, escorted by the maid of honor. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the second part of the Wedding Walk takes places with the bride and groom leaving together, followed by the maid of honor and best man. To add an extra boost of

good luck, it's said the newlyweds should cross running water twice before departing the wedding venue.

Sources:

<https://Wedbuddy.com/Scottish-wedding-traditions>

"Scottish Banner"

www.visitscotland.com/about/scottish-weddings/traditions

Isle of Cumbrae Distillers

When most people think of a distillery in Scotland, they first think of whisky. However, Scotland boasts over 100 gin distilleries and now produces 70 percent of gin for the UK market.

The Isle of Cumbrae Distillery is quite unique. As well as being the newest having started during the COVID pandemic, it is one of the few all-female distilleries in Scotland. The vast majority of gin distillers in Scotland do not make their own alcohol, most using a central hub in England where alcohol is fermented and then brought into Scotland. Scottish gin makers are creative, using their own botanicals with the fermented alcohol.

The idea of launching a gin brand on the Isle of Cumbrae grew from the desperate need of Millport Town Hall for repair. The Town Hall was built in the 1800s, but closed in 2015, becoming derelict and in need of £3.2 million to restore it.

Located off Scotland's Ayrshire coast, the Isle of Cumbrae is a short ferry trip from Largs. It is a most accessible island, but with a population of 1200 and being just ten miles around it is so small that it cannot sustain industry. It has few businesses and relies entirely on tourism for survival.



Millport

The Isle of Cumbrae Distillery started when five women from the UK, Canada, and the USA met at a bar and began chatting about ways to help raise funds to help save the historic building. A distillery

on the island seemed perfect for both supporting the local economy on the island and contributing toward the restoration of City Hall.

Perhaps naively, they thought it surely couldn't be that difficult! Quickly invested in the idea, they created a business plan and moved forward, obviously finding it a bit more difficult than they had expected.

The business was incorporated in October 2019, and then everything changed in March 2020 with the shutdown of businesses and travel with Covid. However, the ladies found this delay worked to their benefit, because they had time to learn the distilling process, figure out how to run a business, and learn about a very complex sales and marketing side that comes with the drinks industry. Despite the pandemic, they were able to run a crowd funding campaign that helped raise £25,000.



The Maura Gin label by artist Hope Blamire

While the value of the distillery for the island is an increase of visitors and tourism, logistics continue to be a challenge. Being on an island, they are dependent on weather and ferry schedules. The logistics of obtaining supplies, such as bottles, can be time-consuming and expensive. And, for getting their spirit to market there is only one ferry a week that handles dangerous goods.

James Chalmers, Inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp

James Chalmers (1782-1853) was a Scottish inventor who allegedly was the inventor of the adhesive postage stamp. Trained as a weaver, he later established himself as a bookseller, printer, and newspaper publisher in Dundee. He is known to have been the publisher of "The Caledonian" as early as 1822.

Chalmers was described as a slayer of the "dragons which retard progress", battling

repeatedly in the cause of Burgh reform, and fighting for the repeal of taxes on newspapers and newspaper advertisements, and the removal of the excise duty on paper.

His most burning enthusiasm was postal reform. From 1825 he campaigned for mail to be speeded up between Edinburgh and London. After several years, his efforts induced a time saving of nearly a day in each direction.



In 1837 he submitted a proposal for an adhesive postage stamp and cancelling device. He did not favor using an envelope for a letter, as each additional sheet incurred an additional charge. Instead, he proposed that a postage

stamp could seal a letter.

Honours of Scotland

The Honours of Scotland, consisting of a sword, crown, and scepter, have had a turbulent past. The three items were first used together during the coronation of Mary, Queen of Scots and last used



for the coronation of Charles II in 1651. They were hidden in 1651-60 to keep them from Oliver Cromwell's army.

With the Union of 1707, the

Scottish Honours were no longer to be used and Scots feared they would be melted down. Hastily, the treaty was amended to ensure that the Honours would stay in Scotland. As from then on the Honours of England would be used by the monarch, the Scottish Honours were locked away in an oak chest in the Crown Room of Edinburgh Castle and the doorway of the Crown Room was walled up. In time, people forgot the location.

By 1817, the future King George IV had become fascinated with the legend of the Scottish jewels

and their whereabouts. He commissioned a search party to find them. Sir Walter Scott is credited as being the one who rediscovered the Honours, although he was merely clerk of session for the commissioners who were authorized to break open the walled doorway of the Crown Room. (Scott had a propensity for re-writing, or at least augmenting, Scottish history.)

Along with the three items called the Scottish Honours found in the chest, a silver wand with a crystal ball was discovered. The object's intended role has been forgotten, and its presence among the regalia is still a mystery. These items, along with the Stewart Jewels, are on display in the Crown Room.

During the Second World War, the Honours were hidden in different parts of Edinburgh Castle in case of German invasion. The crown and Stewart Jewels were buried under the floor of a water closet, while the scepter, sword and wand were hidden inside a wall.



A fellowship founded in Seattle in 1902 to foster a love of Scotland, her people, and her heritage.

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