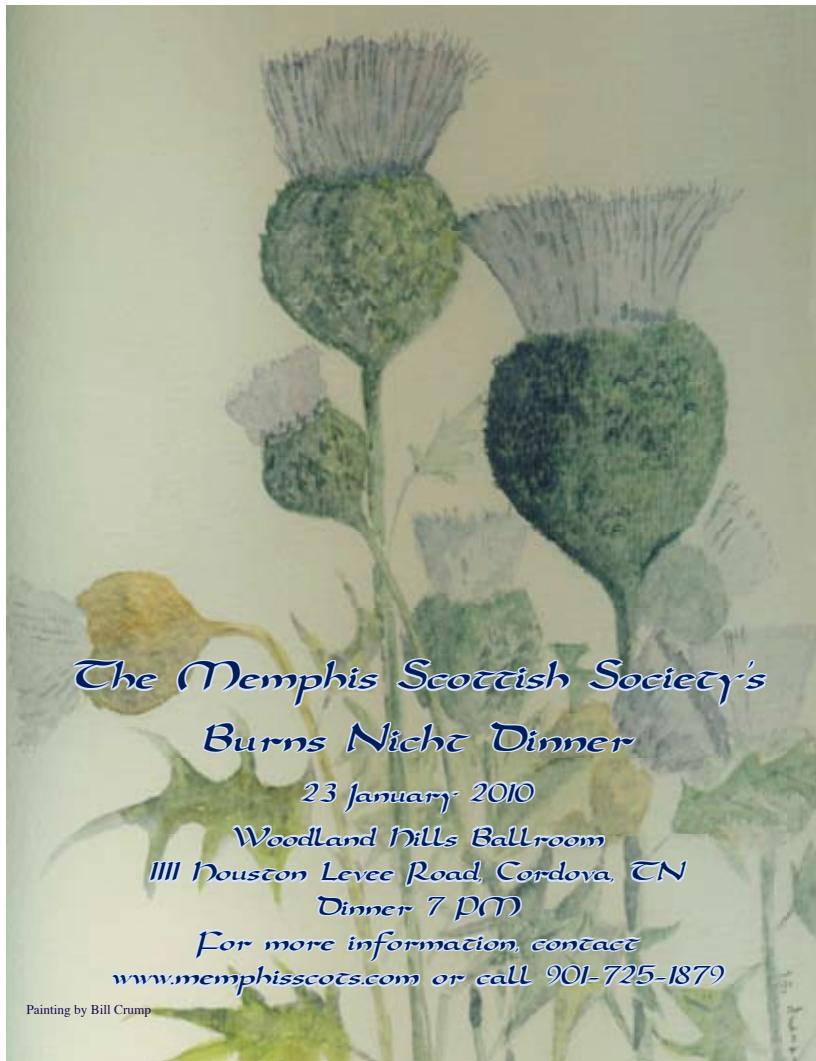


# GRACE NOTES

Vol. 26 No. 1



Jan 2010



By now, I am sure that you have bought your tickets and made your plans for the guests you are bringing to our annual celebration of humanity that we affectionately call Burns Nicht. Yes, it is in memory of our beloved bard, but even more so, a chance to recognize our fellow man and show appreciation for their place here on earth, however insignificant it may seem to us at the time. We never know when that insignificant other will turn out to be the most important person we know. So lift some one up, and bring them to this celebration, just as Burns' celebrated a mouse that he disturbed while plowing a field.

If you have not bought your tickets, you can now purchase them online through our website using Paypal, the defacto small business tool that allows us to accept credit cards and the user never has to divulge to us what those numbers are. Ahh, the convenience of modern technology.

Ed Miller will be here as the primary entertainment and should be reason enough to bring some one, not to mention Wolf River Pipes and Drums, haggis and all that good stuff!

Please bring any silent auction items to the meeting this Monday that you can. SRich

## Memphis Scottish Society Inc., Board

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No doubt almost everyone has made a New Year's resolution to improve our health by dieting, exercising, and changing life styles. For many of us, our motivating factor is to control our blood sugar or diabetes better. Did you know that the primary, the almost exclusive treatment for diabetes, insulin, has a **Scottish Connection?**

John James Rickard Macleod (September 6, 1876 – March 16, 1935) was a Scottish physician and physiologist, born at Clunie, Perth & Kinross, Scotland. During 1898 he received his medical degree from University of Aberdeen. He lectured in Physiology and Biochemistry at the London Hospital Medical School and later was appointed Professor of Physiology at universities in Leipzig, Cleveland, and Toronto. In 1928 he returned to the University of Aberdeen as Regius Professor of Physiology, where he remained until his death in 1935.

Macleod's main work was on carbohydrate metabolism, and his collaborative efforts led to the discovery of insulin & its use to treat diabetes. For this Macleod was awarded half of the 1923 Nobel Prize in Medicine.

So, next time you choose the righteous fruit over the sugary dessert or wipe the virtuous sweat from your brow, commend yourself, then remember Dr. Macleod, his discovery of insulin and its use for diabetes treatment, and their **Scottish Connection.**

## S C O T T I S H C O N N E C T I O N

Ed Miller has been hailed as "one of the finest singers to come out of the Scottish Folksong Revival" and as "one of Scotland's best singing exports." Originally from Edinburgh, he has for many years been based in Austin, TX where he gained graduate degrees in Folklore and Geography at the University of Texas. Ed is available for concerts, clubs, house concerts, festivals, Highland Games and Burns Suppers, as well as for lectures and workshops. Ed has 8 CD's of Scottish songs, His latest being songs of Robert Burns

## Ed Miller to entertain for Burns Nicht 2010



# GRACE NOTES



*Grace Notes* is the official publication of the Memphis Scottish Society, Inc. It is published monthly. Like the Society itself, the credo of *Grace Notes* is "to foster education and promote understanding of things Scottish."

If you have something of interest to readers of this newsletter, please submit a typewritten manuscript to the editorial staff. If the article or notice is very brief (30 words or fewer), e-mail or just use the telephone. *Grace Notes* will accept and publish good quality photographs.

The deadline for all submissions is the second week of each month preceding the month of publication. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with each submission, if you want the material returned.

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*to foster education and  
promote understanding of  
things Scottish*



## Gaelic New Year Customs

Long before the first of Edinburgh's world famous street parties got into swing, and fireworks covered the night skies, the Gaels had their own special way to celebrate the New Year...

Mise a-nochd a' tighinn gur n-ionnsaigh – I come to you tonight

A dh'ùrachadh dhuibh na Callainn, – To renew the Kalends,

Cha ruig mi leas bhith ga innse – I need not tell you

Bha i ann o linn mo sheanar. – That this was the way of it since the time of my grandfather.

Above is an excerpt from one of the many New Year verses which were commonplace among Gaelic-speaking communities in Scotland in the past. Oidhche Challainn is what the Gaels call New Year's Eve, with the term Callainn related to the word 'Calends' which was the first day of the month in the Roman calendar. New Year's Eve for the Gaels, as was the case for many other cultures, was a time of renewal and a time to protect oneself from misfortune and disease in the coming year. These customs associated with this time of year have now all but disappeared, customs which involved the 'balaich Challainn' or Hogmanay lads visiting each house in the village where they would recite a New Year Verse, or Duan Callainn. They would also be equipped with the 'caisean-uchd' or dewlap which was the breast-skin of a sheep, goat or deer wrapped around the end of stick. After the various rituals had been carried out to banish evil for the coming year, the Hogmanay lads would receive food and a dram from the household and then move on to the next house.

The Gaels were not alone in giving particular significance to the New Year, and there are many other

instances of cultures throughout the world banishing evil and seeking good fortune or renewal for the New Year. In Bohemia, they would burn or throw a straw figure into the water at New Year, the figure was a symbol of Death. In North America the Iroquois had a series of New Year customs, which included the men donning skins of wild animals and wearing terrifying masks, before moving from hut to hut making frightening noises. And there are many, many other New Year customs which we hear about. For thousands of years, people across the world have sought hope and renewal through mid-winter festivals which occur at the tipping point of the year, when in the midst of cold and darkness the day begins to lengthen once more and reminds us of distant but inevitable spring.

Today in the Highlands and Islands, people for the most part celebrate New Year in much the same way that the rest of Scotland does, with a village céilidh or some intrepid 'first-footing'. There is little mention of the New Year verses. However, in Stoneybridge in South Uist in the Western Isles, and perhaps in one or two other Hebridean communities, they still keep some of the old Callainn customs, as the following account from a villager reveals:

"Today the young boys from Stoneybridge still gather at a particular house on Hogmanay and then set off round the village with a sack or pillowcase. They then recite the Duan Callainn or New Year Verse, after which they receive some food for their bag, nowadays they are given sweets, crisps or cakes. However, they used to also carry a 'caisean', which was a stick wrapped in sheepskin and rags which would

be lit. When they would approach each house they would recite their Verse, and it would end with the words, 'open the door and let me in', upon which the woman of the house would admit them. The boy with the torch would pass it round the head of the woman of the house three times, and if the flame went out, it was seen as a portent of death! As you can imagine they don't keep this custom anymore! The boys would then be given food, bread or meal in those days, and they would bless the house as they left calling, 'God's blessing and those of Callaig'. At the end of the night everyone would gather in a designated house and the food would be divided between the boys, making sure that each household in the village got their own share."

Although the pillowcase, the sweets and the Verse are all that remains of Callainn traditions in Stoneybridge now, with no sign of the caisean-uchd, what they do is linked to customs which go back hundreds of years, and to beliefs which go back thousands of years. At one time you would hear the Duan Callainn or New Year's Verse in many Highland villages, with the New Year's Boys and their caisean-uchd doing the rounds.

No matter what you do this New Year, the team at [mygaelic.com](http://mygaelic.com) wishes you every happiness and success in 2010, and as some might say to you in Uist, 'Aois Cailleach Èirisgeigh!', which means the 'Age of the Old Woman of Eriskay!'. It is a toast which wishes you a long life, as long as that of the eponymous Eriskay woman!

Written by Alasdair Campbell - Special Thanks to Kathy Schultz for finding this gem.

## "Kirkin' of the Tartans"

In the past years, St. John's Episcopal Church, Central @ Greer, has had a number of services in which we celebrated the various professions and pastimes of our members. This year we will continue to celebrate our heritage as people of God with the 5th annual "Kirkin' O' the Tartans" on Sunday January 31, 2010 at the 10:30 AM Sunday service. The Wolf River Pipe and Drum Corp will join us for this festive occasion. This service has become one of most heavily attended service of the year, so come early. The Reverend Dr. Peter Marshall celebrated the first "Kirkin of the Tartans" on April 27, 1941. The event took place in Washington, DC, at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. At the time, Dr. Marshall -himself a native Scotsman, having been born in Glasgow - was pastor and presided at the first Kirkin' O' the Tartans in the U.S A. Dr. Marshall was named the very first Chaplain of the United States Senate --- a post he would hold for what proved to be the final three years of his life. One could say the tradition behind what is now known as "Kirkin' O' the Tartans" is neither very long, nor altogether Scottish. While Scottish traditions span many

centuries, this unique service is strictly American.

There were more non-Scots than Scots at the first "Kirkin'" in Washington, DC. This is itself a very Scottish thing since the Scots are a mix of peoples: Picts, Angles, and Scots from Ireland, Britons, and Scandinavians, to name a few.

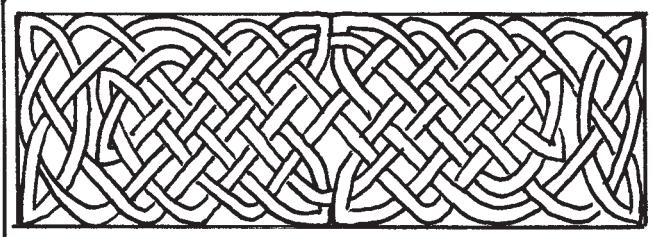
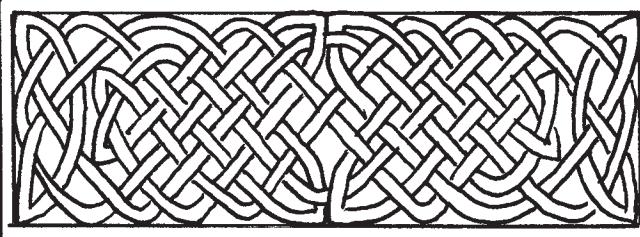
So, whether you think of yourself as Scottish or not, the variety of our ethnic origins is symbolic of the mix of peoples that make up Scotland and the USA. The church when occupied by people of different origins bespeaks our common standing before the one God in Whom "we live, and move, and have our being."

This is what Dr. Marshall sought through the "Kirkin'", to unite not only members of his church but the country as a whole. While the US was not yet in WWII it was apparent to many that it would be forced upon it and unity must prevail. The United States then as now is a diverse lot. More religious, ethnic and racial groups as well as political views expressed exist in our borders than ever before in the history of our nation. Diversity can mean growth and perhaps the "Kirkin'" may be a way to bridge by finding our common dedication. The

heart of every "Kirkin' o' the Tartans" service is the Presentation of the Tartans of the Clan, Regiment and/or Region.... a constant symbol of the rededication of Scots folk everywhere to the service of our Heavenly Father. Yet, the "Kirkin' O' the Tartans" always serves as an exercise for all peoples, all faiths --- enhanced by such wonderful elements as the singing of the Psalms, the dignity, honor and sacrosanct of the Presentation, and the close bonds of fellowship shared by those who become a part of this very unique, extremely reverent, and positive ceremony.

Come and join us as we celebrate this wonderful heritage of our faith, worship of our common father in Heaven, celebrate life, and Christ's promise of life everlasting to all believers! Wear your plaids! If you don't have your plaid then let Margo in the church office know, as we have access to a limited number of various plaid banners. We will prepare your banner for you if available. For those who wish to process with their Tartan please gather in the Parish Hall at 10:00 AM. Our joyous service continues to grow each year so arrive early.

Yours in Christ,  
Seldon Murray



## Tasting the finest Usquebaugh!

The Royal and Loyal Order of the Kirk at St. John's Episcopal Church, Memphis, TN, held their 5th annual Scotch Malt Whisky Tasting Event on October 29, 2009. Seventy-five Scotch aficionados gathered for an evening of gourmet food and six delectable single cask single malts from the Scotch Malt Whisky Society. The evening began with the beautiful sounds of the Celtic harp and a glass of fine wine. All of the tables were decorated with red roses on white table clothes in remembrance of Robert Burns 250th birthday year. The placemats featured Edward Landseer's Monarch of the Glenn with the numbered snifters for the main event. The dinner consisted of four wild salmon flown in from Scotland. The salmon were smoked and beautifully prepared by Heart and Soul Catering. There were specially prepared items according to Scottish recipes such as: Scottish eggs with Bonnie Prince Charlie's Drunken Sauce, Bridies, lamb

rolls, rumble-de-tum, scones, fruits, Scottish cheeses, and fresh vegetables. Butterscotch tarts completed the menu.

The main event began with a trumpet fanfare by Dr. Geoff Ward. The Town crier read from a scroll inviting everyone to participate in a grand tasting of the finest "Usquebaugh". The bagpipes began the procession into the room followed by the Scottish guards carrying Scottish slaughter swords. They were followed by the bearers of the Usquebaugh. After the procession, the Town Crier announced the Scotches in order of age, from the eleven year old Springbank to 34 year old Glenn Moray. Then the fun really began as the Masters of ceremony, Seldon Murray and Butch Porter, began the discussion on each cask and its uniqueness. The process of making Single Malt was covered in some detail as everyone savored the finest single malts. Special attention was given to obtain water for the

tasting that had not been filtered or treated with chemicals in order to mimic the mineral waters of the Highlands.

The proceeds of this event are used to fund the Kirkin o' the Tarts at the church and also to help the Scottish Festival "Clanjamfry" held each fall at Evergreen Presbyterian Church. The proceeds of Clanjamfry are used to fund after school programs for children in need. Another aspect of this event is building community among various groups in our city. We have members of several denominations and temples involved for good fellowship.

In addition to an elegant evening, the Scotch Malt Whisky Tasting Event served several purposes. It provided information on Scotland and "the waters of life", promoted fellowship; and raised money for worthy causes.

By: Seldon Murray,  
Member, Scotch Malt Whisky  
Society of America, FSA Scot

## IRS Announces 2010 Standard Mileage Rates

**WASHINGTON** — The Internal Revenue Service today issued the 2010 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2010, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

50 cents per mile for business miles driven

16.5 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes

14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The new rates for business, medical and moving purposes are slightly lower than last year's. The mileage rates for 2010 reflect generally lower transportation costs compared to a year ago.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs as determined by the same

study. Independent contractor Runzheimer International conducted the study.

A taxpayer may not use the business standard mileage rate for a vehicle after using any depreciation method under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) or after claiming a Section 179 deduction for that vehicle. In addition, the business standard mileage rate cannot be used for any vehicle used for hire or for more than four vehicles used simultaneously.

## Skye leopard man changes his spot

**A man made famous for his leopard-spot tattoos has left his life in the wild for the comfort of a one-bedroom house.**

For the past 20 years, Tom Leppard, known as the Leopard Man of Skye, has lived in a remote bothy under a roof made from plastic sheeting.

The cabin, on a stretch of shoreline near Kyleakin, had no electricity or furniture and he had to canoe three miles for his weekly shopping.

Mr Leppard, 73, said: "I'm getting too old for that kind of life."

The London-born pensioner said he was slowly adjusting to his new life in Broadford, on Skye.

"It's certainly very strange being surrounded by four walls and a roof but I'll get used to it," he said.

"I'm getting bits of furniture together all the time and I'm getting used to sleeping in a bed at night - it's certainly more comfortable than I'm used to and electricity is very convenient."

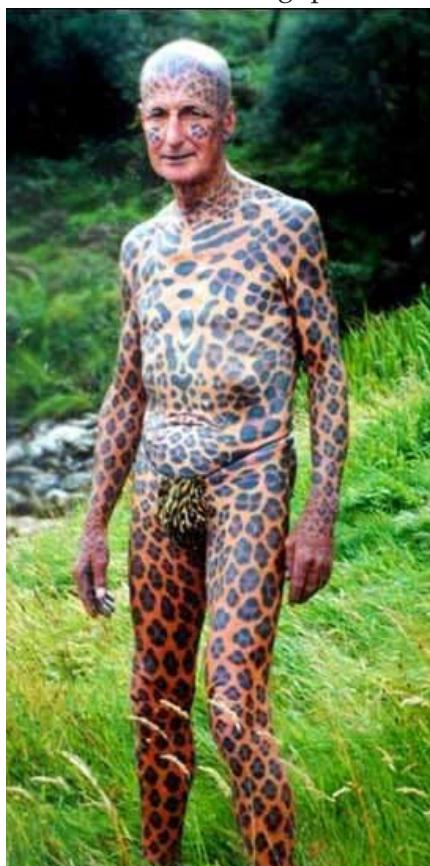
**"When you're covered in leopard tattoos you certainly get noticed - I became a bit of a tourist attraction on Skye"**

tourist attraction on Skye "

Tom Leppard

Mr Leppard, who spent £5,500 covering his body in leopard-like spots, was the world's most tattooed man - a crown he held until recently.

In his crumbling previous



home, he cooked on a gas stove and slept on a bed made from blocks of polystyrene and foam.

He said: "I had to canoe to Kyle once a week for shopping and it was getting too hard for me - I was one big wave away from disaster. It's a pretty nasty stretch of water."

He described how a friend with a boat offered to take him off a few weeks ago.

"I just decided there and then to go," he said, "I packed what kit I could into black bin liners and that was it."

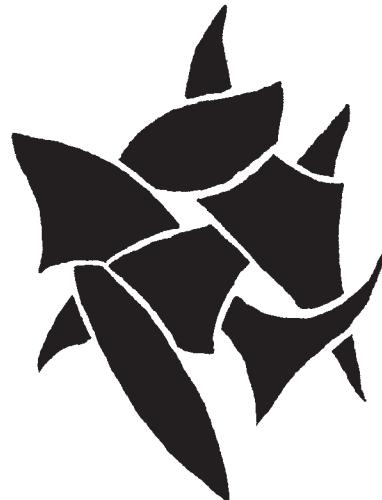
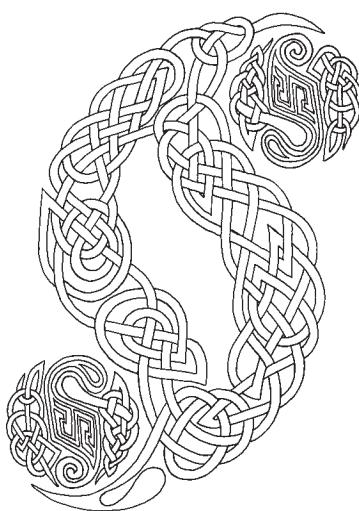
The ex-special forces soldier said he had no regrets about his hermit lifestyle.

He said: "I've loved every minute and when you're covered in leopard tattoos you certainly get noticed - I became a bit of a tourist attraction on Skye."

However, Mr Leppard said his bothy days were behind him and he was looking forward to relaxing a bit more

"Everyone's been very friendly since I moved in and I'll just settle for the quiet life now," he added.

Story from BBC NEWS:



# Calendar of Events

**Mondays**

*Caledonia Chorale* 7 pm  
Holy Communion Episcopal,  
Walnut Grove at Perkins,  
725-1879

**Thursdays**

*Sgt. Singleton Pipes & Drums*  
6:30-8:30 at Bethel Pentecostal  
Church, Stage Road-Bartlett;  
call 386-2052 for info.

*Wolf River Pipes & Drums*,  
7:00-9:30 St. Luke's Lutheran;  
2000 N. Germantown Pkwy.  
753-9494 for info.

**Fridays**

*Contra Dancing*: 7:30-10 pm,  
Idlewild Pres; 1750 Union Ave  
West Entrance - 274-1889  
2<sup>nd</sup>, & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday:  
*Scottish Country Dancing*

**Sundays** -NEAC *Pipes and Drums* - 1:30-4:00 @ First Presb. Church; SW Dr Jonesboro, AR exit 45

## Scottish - Celtic RadioShows

**Sundays, 6-7 p.m.**  
"The Thistle and Shamrock"  
WKNO-FM 91.1

**Saturdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**  
"Strands of the Celtic Knot" Robert Campbell, host  
WEVL-FM 89.9

**Sun and Mon 6 p.m. and Fridays, 7 p.m.**  
"The Thistle & Shamrock,"  
WMAV-FM 90.3

**Thursday, January 7**

2010 Burns Nicht Committee  
Cordova Branch  
Memphis/Shelby County  
Library 5:30 - 7:00

**Monday, January 11**

MSSI Monthly Meeting  
Jason's Deli  
For directions call 757-4200 or  
[memphiscots.com](http://memphiscots.com).  
6 pm Dinner.  
7 pm Program: *First Burns Nichts* - Sheena Rose

**Thursday, January 14**

*Burns Nicht Committee* at 5:45  
St. Lukes Lutheran  
2000 N Gtown Pkwy

**Saturday, January 23**

*Burns Nicht*  
Woodland Hills CC

**Thursday, January 28**

*MSSI Board Meeting*  
5:45 - St. Lukes Lutheran  
2000 N Gtown Pkwy

**Sunday, January 31**

"*Kirkin' of the Tartans*"  
10:30 - St. John's Episcopal  
Central @ Greer.  
10:00 - Procession of Tartans

**01/09: New Year, New Voices**

Open your heart to fresh sounds from some unforgettable voices and discover why Celtic singers and songs have such international appeal. Listen for Pauline Scanlon, Bodega, Cara Dillon, Loreena McKennitt.

**01/16: John Doyle**-Guitar master, singer, producer John Doyle is one of the most versatile artists in Irish music. Find out about his signature rhythmic guitar style, how he develops his irresistible arrangements and his life as a transplanted Dubliner in the mountains of North Carolina.

**01/23: Berry Pickers, Song-Makers** - They camped across the land performing seasonal farm labor and repair work for

the settled community. Along the way they picked up songs and stories and became a great source of traditional balladry and storytelling. We hear the music of the travelling folk of Scotland and Ireland this week.

**01/30: Eternal Burns** -Join us in marking the annual celebration of the birth of the Scotland's National Bard with an hour of musical innovation and tradition inspired by Burns' legacy.

**02/04: What's New?** - The new releases come thick and fast to our radio show mailboxes in the U.S. and Scotland. This week we catch up on the latest music from your favorites and discover the new artists to win deserved airtime with their debut releases.

## MSSI 2010

It is only natural for us to think of December as the end of the year and January the start of a new year, but as a member of the Scottish Society, it doesn't really feel like the end of the year until after Burns Nicht. But as I think on this, I think perhaps I have it wrong. Yes, December is the end of the year and Burns Nicht is the end of one term for a board and the start of another, but the difference is huge. Burns Nicht is not a time for dwelling on the past, pardon to the Bard's Immortal Memory, but instead is a grand time to celebrate our humanity, warts and all, for really it is all that we have to gie a shout out to. So please take the time this year to do that and let's use this upcoming Burns Nicht as the springboard to another successful year with the Memphis Scottish Society. Sammy Rich

Meeting - Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>-St Jason's Deli, Poplar and Highland,  
Dinner-6:00 Program @ 7:00 Sheena Rose - First Burns Nicht  
Board Meeting and Burns Nicht Committee -- January 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> @ 5:45 St Luke's Lutheran  
2000 N. Germantown Parkway  
January 23rd, MSSI Burns Nicht, Woodland Hills CC



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