

Oh, The Weather Outside was Frightful

“It’s blowing like Scottish weather,” was heard in the parking lot at Woodland Hills as I arrived for my first Burns Night. By departure time it was called “highland weather”. Watching trees bend through the tall windows, we were content in good company, sharing Tam’s lack of concern, “The storm without might rair and rustle, Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.” Event planners had surrounded us with atmosphere from the far north. If the fluttering lights had occurred during the reading of Tam O’ Shanter I’d have thought that planned too, but impending darkness during The Immortal Memory raised some concerns which were quickly put to rest as the room filled with warm candlelight summoned by behind the scenes magicians.

Hopefully those who deserve credit will be acknowledged elsewhere in the newsletter. If I start naming names there will be no end to it, and I’ll leave out deserving persons. Thanks to those who planned for months, created the environment on the day, kept things flowing along, and to all those who came to celebrate.

Feasting began with the patron’s reception—smoked salmon, Scotch eggs, pastries sweet and savory, a popular whisky tasting. I limited myself to a wee sip of Highland Park, my bias for the northern isles showing. Then over to the auction tables where an array of Scottish (mostly) items awaited the bidders, and bought my tickets for the raffle. I had to stop and touch the rifle; a carpenter’s daughter takes pleasure in a fine piece of wood. Off to find my seat at a table named *Up in the Morning Early* I was relieved to find a copy of the poem which did not instruct us to rise at dawn, but read “Up in the morning, no for me.” I was honored to meet and visit with the Hisky family, and with the talented and charming Ed Miller, and to chat with the always gracious Dr. Crump, MC for the evening.

Plates piled high with salad before us, we watched The Wolf River Pipes and Drums give a stirring performance. We sang the anthems with a hearty and soul felt effort. (If some country adopts a National Anthem with a range in which ordinary mortals can sing, I may move there.)

We followed tradition with the Selkirk Grace and the Presentation of and Address to the Haggis, diners divided into those who do Haggis and those who don’t. (I found it fairly tasty, and also enjoyed a sample of the vegetarian version.) Plates piled high with food arrived, looking more like a muckle supper feast than a winter dinner. Ed Miller began his first set trying to wake his overfed audience to join in the singing. We savored all types of Scottish songs—the tunes that make you want to dance, the ones that make you cry, and those that make you laugh. Through both sets and his presentation of *The Immortal Memory* Mr. Miller the folklorist added background to the music, reminded us of why we celebrate Robert Burns and of the diversity within Scotland which includes his home border country and Burns’ Scots dialect as much as the highlands, Gaelic, and tartans. We heard the adventures of Tam O’ Shanter, offered toasts to the lads and lassies, honored worthy members.

Why is Burns celebrated around the world each year? George Mackay Brown described what happened

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SCOTTISH CONNECTION

What genuine Scottish scion doesn't love a bargain? And what's one of the best places to find a bargain? The army-navy surplus store, of course. Did you know this most thrifty institution has a **Scottish Connection?**

Francis "Frank" Banner, born in Dundee in 1851, was brought to America as a 3-yr-old. His father began a business selling goods at Navy auction. A youthful Frank expanded the interest by gleaning scrap from the New York harbor. By the beginning of the Civil War Frank, now 17, had the running of the company when his father joined the Union Army. The end of the War saw our man expanding their wares by buying up the enormous federal surpluses. This was so successful a business plan, yielding a warehouse larger than permitted by city ordinance, that after the Spanish-American War, Bannerman's, as it had become know by then, was forced by the NYC charter to move outside the city limits.

Enter beautiful Pollepel Island in the upper Hudson River. Frank's son David came across it while canoeing. Frank purchased the island from the Cornish immigrant Taft family in 1900. Frank built not only storage for their massive inventory, but a family residence and "a simulated Scottish castle".

Bannerman's did some commerce in brick-&-mortar stores but more through their catalog, advertising it in the back of pulp magazines in the '30s & '40s. Bannerman's was also known for donating uniforms and militaria to live theaters to be converted into costumes, sets, and props. And in an ironic twist Bannerman's also gave back a goodly parcel of its goods to the government when it was needed for the next call to arms in the Great

World War I).

Though Frank's merchandise was all military, he considered himself peace-loving. He expressed in each catalog his hope that his collections of arms, now large and exclusive enough to have gained museum status, would become known as "The Museum of the Lost Arms". He was a devoted church and St. Andrew's Society member, founded the Caledonia Hospital, and opened the island, now known simply as "Bannerman's Island" (of course) to the boys club he led for camping in the summer.

Access to the island is severely limited these days because it has fallen into great decay during the last 30 years since it was donated to the state of New York after a devastating fire. A foundation is slowly funding restoration of the holdings, having held a tea on August 9, 2009, for example, and leading guided tours which avoid the more dangerous derelict structures. Hopes of restoring the fabulous gardens Frank's wife established are one of the foundation's hopes.

Incidentally, if Bannerman doesn't sound very Scottish, be assured that it is as Scottish as "Stewart", originally the stewards of the royal family. The Bannermans were the monarchs' flag bearers, since well before the time of Malcolm III or Alexander I.

(The Frank Bannerman family are sometimes given credit for gaining the name by having been descendants of the few MacDonalads to survive the Glencoe Massacre and thereby given the honor of carrying Clan MacDonald's colors and the honorary surname title of "Bannerman". Great story, but like some of the best, it has no factual basis, according to Clan Bannerman's website.)

So, next time you find yourself at the army-navy store, look around, enjoying all the great bargains and remember Frank Bannerman and his great idea's **Scottish Connection.**

*Thanks to Jim Lucas for passing along the idea for this **Scottish Connection.***



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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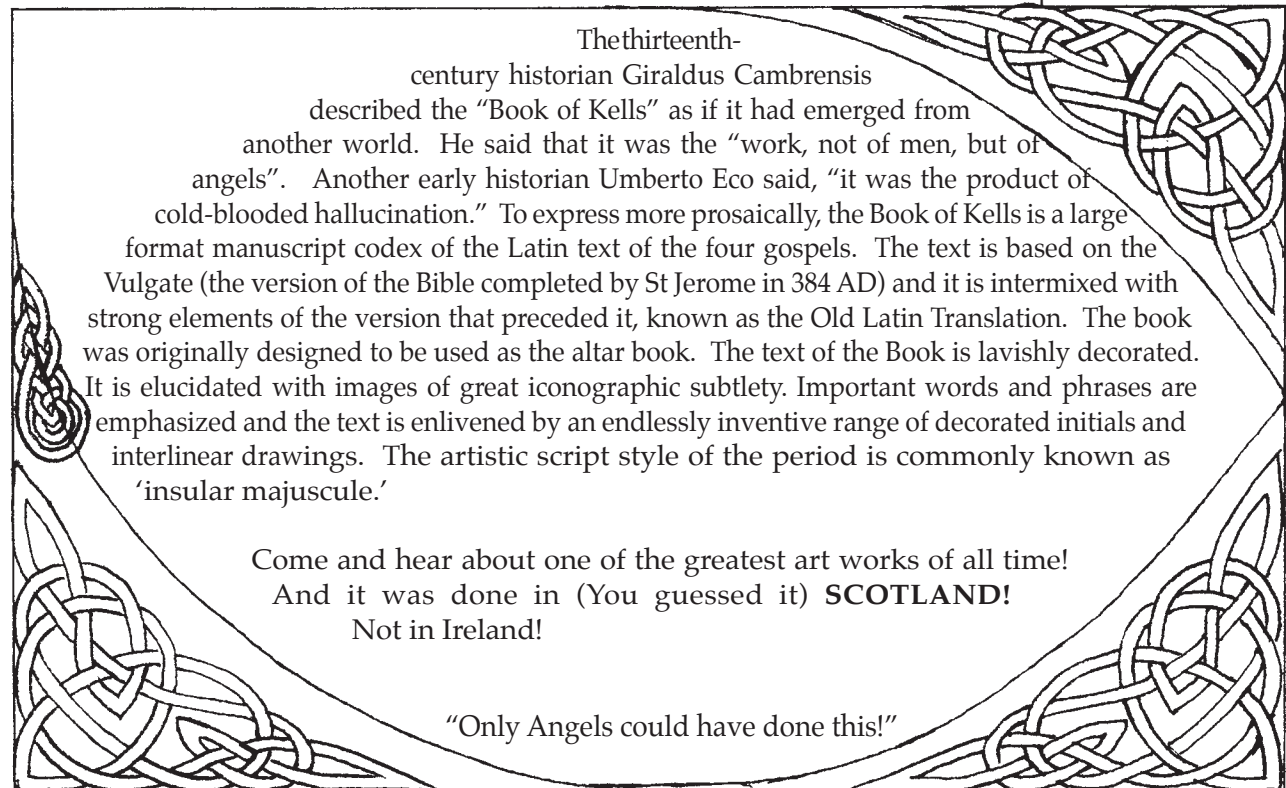
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*to foster education and
 promote understanding of
 things Scottish*



MSSI Monthly Program February - Seldon Murray - The Book of Kells

"Sheer Madness!" - "Cold-blooded Hallucinations!" - "One of the Worlds Most Complex Art Works!"



Sean McCabe Feb 16th

Don't miss a rare chance to hear one of the pillars of Celtic music performing in Celtic music's natural environment: a pub. Hosted by our friends at Celtic Crossing, 903 S. Cooper, Sean McCabe, lead vocal of The McCabes, one of America's best loved Irish bands, will be appearing for one night only (aw, nutz) on Tuesday, February 16th at 7:00 pm. For more info, check out mccabesband.com.

The Bruce Trilogy

Do any of us have access to a comfortably large room that would be willing to host a viewing of the new 3 DVD set titled "The Bruce Trilogy-Scotland's Warrior King," by Deepwater Productions?

Here is the real and engaging story of a man born for greatness,

National Geographic Jan 2010

Make sure you get your hands on the January 2010 issue of *National Geographic*. From pages 54 to 77 you will find a most stirring collection of pictures and text on the "Edge of the World", that is, Scotland's Hebrides. Featured are Skye, Lewis, St. Kilda, Oban, Berneray, Rona, and Staffa.

Of course, *National Geographic* itself has a strong **Scottish Connection**, but that's a tale for another time & place.

becoming one of Scotland's greatest Kings and one of the most famous warriors of his generation as he stepped forward to fulfill his destiny.

You will be intrigued with the brutal politics of this time and fascinated by how the Balliols, the Comyns and the Bruces manoeuvred for position in the

Website of interest

Kathy Schultz passes these sites on that may be of interest to you. Thanks Kathy.

BBC helps you to learn Gaelic!

http://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/foghlam/beag_air_bheag/

I came across this about the history of Drambuie:

<http://www.barnonedrinks.com/tips/dictionary/d/drambuie-liqueur-417.html>

race to be King of the ancient Kingdom of Scotland, where King Edward 1 known as "the Hammer of the Scots" exercised ultimate and ruthless power in the absence of any real Scottish leader. Approximate time 2hrs. 35 mins. NTSC format. Lets talk about it if you do.

Sammy Rich

Chase House Concerts!!

Andrew McKnight first & then Martyn Joseph

Thursday Feb 11, 2010 - light supper at 6 pm, concert at 7 pm
(You need to eat somewhere! Come and join us!)

Chez Chase out East: 450 River View Road, Memphis 38120

RSVP: ChaseNan@AOL.com, or office phone (901) 287-4150

Suggested artist donation for entry: \$15

Andrew McKnight...It begins with a dramatic a cappella vocal, followed by a crisp and concise interlude of flatpicked guitar. Then the warm and supple tenor voice settles in to work, delivering literate and cinematic vignettes of rural Americans and their struggles in memorable melodies and compelling twists of phrase. The between song banter is as much of the show as the music, with humorous anecdotes and a theatrical flair for storytelling weaving the words and music into a memorable performance. Such is a typical ANDREW McKNIGHT concert experience.

Since permanently leaving his corporate environmental engineering career in 1996, award-winning folk and Americana artist Andrew McKnight's musical journey has traced half a million miles of blue highways, and earned him a wealth of critical acclaim and enthusiastic fans for his captivating performances and five CDs. He usually tours solo, but also performs frequently with founding Nitty Gritty Dirt Band member Les Thompson fronting their genre-bending quartet Beyond Borders. In addition to his music, he is an insightful essay-

ist and poet, a gifted workshop leader, and a warm and thoughtful interviewer.

Whether solo or with Beyond Borders, the foundation is always his captivating storytelling and stellar songcraft; his "Good Things Matter" is a past Winner of the Great American Song Contest. Andrew's writing often encompasses his passion for community and causes such as preserving American landscapes and heritage. The Shenandoah Valley-based artist often shares his talents for a variety of worthy causes, such as a community radio station in Massachusetts, an at-risk youth mentoring program in California, and a food bank in suburban Seattle.

"With a voice reminiscent of Don McLean, McKnight traverses from old-time Appalachian tunes to contemporary folk and blues, all backed up by his dead-on guitar playing" (The Boston Globe)

"The skillful songwriter's interest in history is revealed in songs such as the Civil War ballad "The Road to Appomattox" and the soldier's elegy "Wind Whispers Your Name."...he avoids stridency by crafting vignettes told from the point of view of those in pain and keeps dourness at bay ... He



Andrew McKnight

also works in true folkie tradition, updating lyrics to classic material such as "Worried Man Blues" or reworking Robert Johnson's "Crossroads" to place himself *mano-a-devil*." (The Washington Post)

"Full of great positive energy, Andrew took the stage and immediately had the crowd riveted... a gifted story teller, Andrew did not hesitate to share some of his insights and stories with the crowd. For the second set opener, Andrew sang a gospel a cappella song as he entered the barn. With the crowd clapping along with him, I have to say it was an experience that none of us will forget....Needless to say, everyone left inspired and grinning ear to ear. We can't wait until Andrew returns to play in the Barn again!" (Eric Behlmer, host, Barn Concerts, Gilroy CA)

For Andrew's videos, music, essays, poetry, and more: <http://www.andrewmcknight.net>

Facebook users: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Andrew-McKnight/16254192997>

Or see him now in these concert clips:

"Dancing in the Rain" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzYyTA7Ake8>

"Crossroads (Revisited)" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHCYmtfhUc4>

"The Road to Appomattox" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wNNVikqOoI>

DO NOT MISS THIS MAGNIFICENT MUSICIAN

Martyn Joseph, this awesome and Unique Welsh singer-songwriter

Tuesday Feb 16, 2010 - light supper at 6 pm, concert at 7 pm
(You need to eat somewhere! Come and join us!)

Chez Chase out East: 450 River View Road, Memphis 38120

RSVP: ChaseNan@AOL.com, or office phone (901) 287-4150

Suggested artist donation for entry: \$20

The promo for his UK tour this Spring, after Folk Alliance in Memphis, follows:

Just when you think you've got a handle on singer song-writers, along comes Martyn Joseph to blow the myth away..... There's nothing predictable about a Joseph gig – only that it could make you laugh, cry, get you thinking, leave you reeling.

An acoustic artist with an electrifying spontaneity, this colossally gifted and gracious Welshman has five Top 50 hits to his name (including Dolphins Make Me Cry and Please Sir) and has been in demand on both sides of the Atlantic for over two decades. Touring both solo and with the likes of Ani DiFranco, Art Garfunkel and Jools Holland he has won fans everywhere with his uncanny melting pot of material which ranges from rock to blues, jazz, Americana and even, "funk folk"!

A mean guitar player with a powerful voice, Bob Harris has praised the "outstanding lyrical intelligence" of his songs while he

was voted Best Male Artist in the BBC Welsh Music Awards.

Like his acclaimed most recent album that subtly deconstructs some of his best-loved numbers (a 4*MOJO album of the month), Joseph has "evolved" into a consistently mesmerising performer. Shades of Springsteen, Knopfler and Dave Matthews there may be - but Joseph is unique and no two shows are ever the same.

He has an enviable high level connectivity with his audience whether it's an arts centre in his native Wales or a 5,000 strong crowd at the Royal Albert Hall. His gigs are like taking a rollercoaster ride with a chameleon as he dips and dives between mighty and meek songs, railing against the broken promise playground of global leaders, throwing in some wry humour, holding tight to common man anthems and then "disarming" for unexpectedly fragile love songs that can knock you sideways.

It might be just another evening when you go in to a Martyn Joseph concert – but it certainly won't be when you come out..... New album Evolved



Martyn Joseph

"A courageously sparse, stripped down and entirely solo work" – MOJO

"Written with craft; performed with passion" – Financial Times
"As honest as music can get" – Classic Rock

"Britain's best kept secret...a challenging songwriter and compelling live performer – MOJO
"Songs of social commentary as much as love, with a rootsy sensibility" – Time Out
"A depth, resonance and emotional punch which belies comparison" – Q

"One of the most charismatic and electrifying performers in Britain today" – Tom Robinson, BBC 6

www.martynjoseph.com

cont from pg 1.

after Burns first book of verse was published,

"Scotland has suddenly a new hero, who reminded Scots of their past glories, and put strength and joy back into their threatened language, and at the same time appealed to the stir-

rings in the human heart: the notion of the dignity of all men and women, even to poorest and the humblest. The vision went deeper, until all of creation was involved: the mouse and the mountain daisy are made of the same dust as men" (*The Orcadian*, Jan., 25, 1990)

Some of that vision circled round the room as we joined hands to sing *Auld Lang Syne*. Thanks to Karen English for this refreshing essay of her first BN experience!

Haggis Helper(s)

Due to an eleventh-hour surge of Burns Nicht ticket sales, John Schultz, this year's haggis chairman (dubbed "Haggis Tsar"), suddenly found himself several pounds short of the "great chieftain of the puddin' race". Wha could he call? Why, Chef Bobby at Celtic Crossing!

Following the recipe he developed and premiered at last year's Tartan Day celebration (on April 6th), Bobby made a few harried/hurried phone calls (it seems that he

didn't have any sheep stomach on hand), and burning the midnight oil, this dedicated and talented chef prepared enough (and then some) for all to share in the culinary high point of the evening. Sammy Rich turned his van into a haggis-mobile, and the crew at Woodland Hills served it up, along with a veggie haggis from Jackie Garner.

Little knowing the drama behind the scenes, Burns Nicht guests applied themselves to dispatch the goodies in short order. One was

especially pleased: Ed Miller, our 2010 entertainer, who has eaten haggis from Singapore to Stockholm, said it was the best he'd ever had. That's quite an endorsement, Chef Bobby!

Thanks also to DJ Naylor, Celtic Crossing's affable publican, and David Corbett, who both figured materially in working out the order. Make plans now to support Celtic Crossing in their observation of Scotland's Independence Day on April 6, 2010.

Silent Auction Wrap

Sunday the 24th of January. Well, I came home, crawled in bed, slept six hrs and even made it to church on Sunday, had lunch, then crawled back in bed (on the couch) and slept through more than half of two pretty good football games. About midway through the second game I ventured out to my car and proceeded to unload equipment and Silent Auction stuff to try and get my hands around our Silent Auction at BN 2010.

I will not get into the details completely because all of the

transactions have not been completed as of yet. But the quick story is, we offered 68 items for sale and sold at or above our minimum asking price all but six items.

According to my figures, hopefully, I haven't fat fingered any numbers, we raised a bit over \$3,000 for the silent auction which puts us right where we were last year with the Silent Auction. So a great big hoorah should go out to the silent auction committee for a job well done. Sue Malone, Mary Clausi, Melissa Gibson,

Robert Rich, Sammy Rich, Joe Sellmansberger, David Corbett, Steve Martin, and his photographer friend Michael Baldrige and a few others that helped us wrap up at the end of the evening.

I give you all of the above and the information below to let you know exactly how these monies get put to use. So for your information these are the recipients of Scholarships or Grants from the Memphis Scottish Society. Sammy Rich

MSSI Scholarship Recipients 2009

Derek Reed; Lyon College Piping and Drumming School; June 2009; \$550.00
 Laura Darley; North American Academy of Piping and Drumming; July 2009; \$520.00
 Jasmine Gill; North American Academy of Piping and Drumming; July 2009; \$520.00
 Dannie Vaughan; North American Academy of Piping and Drumming; July 2009; \$520.00
 Kenneth Hiner; Grandfather Mountain Piping and Drumming School; July 2009; \$520.00
 David Corbett; Evergreen Presbyterian Clanjamfry Music Competition; September 2009; \$1,000.00
 (\$250 for each of two (2) Judges: Barry Conway and Michael Crawley + \$500.00 for other expenses)
 Evergreen Presbyterian; Clanjamfry Support; November 2009?; \$500.00

For a total Scholarship/Grant support of \$4130.00 WOW!

It must be time for another fundraiser. Allen Simpson, Chair Scholarship Committee 2009.

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
2nd, & 4th Friday:
Scottish Country Dancing

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

Monday, February 8

MSSI Monthly Meeting
Jason's Deli-Poplar/Highland
6 pm Dinner--7 pm Program:
The Book of Kells - see pg 3.
Seldon Murray

Thursday, February 4

Burns Nicht Committee at 5:45
Cordova Public Library

Thursday, February 25

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

Sunday, February 7

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

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

February 6: 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.



February 11: Alison Brown and Garry West

Get the insider's perspective on the music business from the co-founders of an independent record label and hear how banjo player Alison Brown has pushed her instrument into new musical territory to secure an international following from fans of jazz, bluegrass, and new acoustic music.

February 18: New Gaelic Voices

Explore the branches of contemporary song sprouting from the roots of ancient vocal traditions with Alyth McCormack, Nuala Kennedy and Julie Fowlis.

February 25: Welsh Roots

Check out some of the emerging roots music from Wales with established and emerging artists, including master of the Welsh triple harp Robin Huw Bowen and singer songwriter Meic Stevens.

March 4: Fiddle Styles

Sample the tasty fiddle flavors of music from Celtic roots with Catriona Macdonald, Pete Clark and Celtic Fiddle Festival.

MSSI February 2010

This month is one of the few months of the year that we kinda sorta take a wee break from each other and catch our breath after another busy and exciting Burns Nicht. Yes, we still have a Burns Nicht Wrap meeting, our regularly scheduled monthly meeting and last but not least, our new board will convene and begin again with this years slate of activities and programs.

I must take a moment and apologize to our new board for not recognizing you all at Burns Nicht. I realized it the next day

as I thought back through the evening and realized that I had already committed my first *faux pas* of the year. Not that it really matters to any of you individually, but that it does matter that the people in attendance did not get to see who is going to be responsible for running the show this year. I will try to do better.

I am confident that we as an organization can continue to provide valuable scholarships and grants to students and institutions that are helping to promote education and understanding of all things Scottish.

I certainly did not realize the depth of this little spot in the world when I first began collecting the music of Scotland and that is just one aspect of the many that we strive to promote, educate and understand.

Wow! for the music opportunities this month at Nancy Chases and at Celtic Crossing, Why can't there be two of me? On March 21, The Battlefield Band returns, stay tuned for more information.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to participate in the many opportunities we present. Sammy Rich

Meeting - Monday, February 8th - St Jason's Deli, Poplar and Highland,
Dinner-6:00 Program @ 7:00 Seldon Murray - The Book of Kells
Burns Nicht Committee -- February 4th @ 5:45 Cordova Public Library
Board Meeting -- February 26th @ St Luke's Lutheran, 2000 N. Germantown Parkway

GRACE NOTES

The Memphis Scottish Society, Inc.

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