

A CHANGE IN PLANS

The Board had a refreshing moment of epiphany at their meeting on Thursday, March 27th:

Instead of having the ceilidh, a typically indoor event, in the spring when there's good weather, & the picnic, a by-definition outdoor event, in the summer when the weather is swelter-

ing, why not switch them?

So, they did.

The picnic will be later this spring and we will schedule the ceilidh for some indoor (spell that "a.i.r.-c.o.n.d.i.t.i.o.n.e.d.") venue in the summer. Watch for the details in following issues of *Grace Notes* and on

the website.

Debbie Sellsmanger is chairing the picnic and Member-at-large Mary Ann Lucas will handle the ceilidh. Both ladies encourage your participation and welcome any help.

IRELAND IN TENNESSEE – 3 FREE CONCERTS

Presented by the BIRDSONG HARP CENTER

Dr. Janet Harbison, founder of the Irish Harp Orchestra, 3 up and coming harpers from the orchestra and Michael Ohalmain, "Uilleann Pipe and Flute Champion", world renowned teacher, and former Chieftain will be in Tennessee April 14-19, 2008.

Sheila Mitchell-Hart, of the BIRDSONG HARP CENTER, along with students of the harp, flute, and pipes will join with the Irish to perform 3 fantastic concerts of Celtic music.

As well as the concerts, Dr. Harbison and the Irish will be conducting classes at Sheila's Music near Birdsong Resort in Benton County April 14-17

Concert dates are: Thursday, April 17 First Baptist Church, Camden, TN 7:00PM; Friday April 18 First Baptist Church, Highland Ave. Jackson, TN 7:00PM; Saturday April 19 Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Memphis, TN 7:00PM

Please mark your calendars for these memorable evenings of Irish Music in West Tennessee. A love offering will be taken at each concert for the Irish Harp Orchestra. Books and CD's will be available for sale.

For more information on the concerts or classes contact: Sheila Mitchell-Hart 731-584-7068 or check the website at www.birdsongharp-center.com

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SCOTTISH CONNECTION

Ah, Spring! When more & more outdoor activities, like baseball games, Scottish festivals, and camping, re-introduce us to that most necessary but noxious of innovations – the portable toilet. Maybe before we get our first whiff of the season, we should take a moment to appreciate the much-more-pleasant cousin, the flush toilet. Did you know the modern flush toilet has a **Scottish Connection?**

Enter Alexander Cummings, no relation to the famous governor of Colorado of the same name. Cummings was born in Edinburgh in 1733. He was a truly a modern scholar, known as a mechanic, a mathematician, and a watchmaker. His writings include volumes on watch and clock works, the effect of various carriage wheel rim shapes on roads (this, a century before the paving contributions of fellow Scot John Loudon McAdam), and the influences of gravity. In his later years he was named a magistrate and was inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society.

In his workshop on Bond Street in London he developed and patented the first ever flushing toilet (English patent #814) in 1775. As is reported in Wikipedia.com (where you can find much more information than you might ever wish on the subject), “In this design, the forerunner of the modern

toilet, some water remained in the bowl after each flush to stop sewer gases from leaking into the house and creating an unsavory odor.” Cummings named the entire mechanism “the S-trap” and it is still in use today.

If you want more details, read on: “His water-closet had a pan with a slide valve across the bottom. When the user arrived, the bowl contained a few inches of water held by the valve. Having finished [*Editor’s note: How do you like that euphemism?*], the user pulled a lever to slide the valve open and release the contents of the pan to the trap below and thence into the sewer. The same pull turned on the water to clean the pan, and the valve was then shut so that the pan contained some water for the next use.” (This also from Wikipedia.)

By the way, Yorkshireman Thomas Crapper didn’t invent or lend his name to anything, though

as plumber to both Edward VII & George V, he is credited with modifications for which he was awarded Royal Warrants for the cedarwood seats and cabinets housing the water closets in Sandringham House, then residence of the Prince of Wales. His popular links to the flush toilet were likely engendered by an unfortunate surname, general misinformation, and a 1969 satirical biography entitled *Flushed with Pride*. Incidentally, both Merriam-Webster’s and the Oxford English Dictionary record America in 1846 (when Thomas was 10 years old) as the first in-print appearance of the Old English word “crap” as a verb, though the use of the word in any form had “fallen out of use in Britain by the 1600.”

So, next time you catch sight or whiff of the malodorous alternative, think wistfully of the flush toilet, its inventor Alexander Cummings, and its **Scottish Connection**.



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), just use the telephone. *Grace Notes* will accept and publish good quality photographs (preferably black and white; no Polaroids, please).

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*



Show yer colours!!!

Tartan Day (part of **Scotland Week**) celebrates the existing and historical links between [Scotland](#) and Scottish descendants in North America. In the [United States](#) there are over 30 million people who claim [Scots descent \[1\]](#). **Tartan Day** is held on [April 6](#), the anniversary of the date on which the [Declaration of Arbroath](#) was created in 1320.

In 1982, under the auspices of the New York Caledonian Club, New York State Governor Hugh Carey, and New York City Mayor Ed Koch declared July 1, 1982, as Tartan Day, a one-time celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Repeal of the Act of Proscription of 12 August 1747, forbidding Scots to wear the Tartan.

In Canada, the idea of a 'Scots Day', immediately renamed 'Tartan Day', to visibly promote recognition of Scottish heritage originated with the Federation of Scottish Clans in Nova Scotia [2] in 1986 [3]. Petitioned by Jean Watson, President of Clan Farquharson, first the legislature of Nova Scotia, in 1987, then consequently the legislatures of each of the other nine Canadian Provinces proclaimed April 6 as Tartan Day. Currently a private member's bill

is moving through the Canadian Parliament for national recognition of the day in Canada as well as a bill to declare the Maple Leaf Tartan the official tartan of Canada. [4]. An annual 'Gathering of the Clans' will take place each April 6 on Parliament Hill in Ottawa at 12 noon with pipes, drums, and dancing hosted by the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band, Canada's oldest civilian pipe band <http://www.sospb.com>

The idea was revived in the United States and since 1998, April 6 has been officially recognized by the United States Senate as a celebration of the contribution made by generations of Scots-Americans to the foundation and prosperity of modern America.

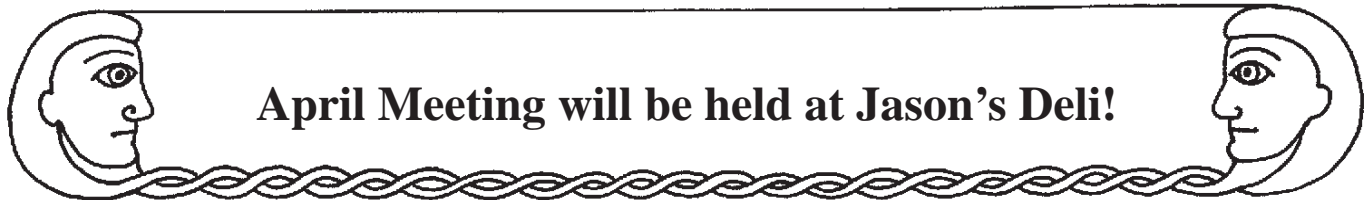
The date commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320, the first known formal Declaration of independence.

Tartan Day is now part of the North American calendar. Supporters of the event call it a signal of the strengthening Scots-Canadian/American relationship in the 21st century. The Tunes of Glory Parade in 2002 saw 10,000 pipers and drummers march through the streets of New York.

They were the centerpiece of the event where thousands of Americans celebrated their links to Scotland. One of Scotland's national treasures, William Wallace's sword, left Scotland for the first time in 700 years and was flown to New York for the Tartan Week celebrations of 2005.

In 2006 events were held in Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Kilmarnock, Stirling, Perth, Glasgow and Edinburgh. [5], [6]

Outside New York City, one of the largest Tartan Day celebrations in the United States takes place each year on the weekend closest to April 6 on the banks of the Missouri river in St. Charles, Mo. The Missouri Tartan Day Festival began in April 2000, after successful lobbying at the State Capital in Jefferson City, members of the St. Andrew and Celtic Societies of St. Louis, Kansas City, Jefferson City and Springfield, MO, gathered on the steps of the State Capitol Bldg. in Jefferson City to receive the first proclamation of Tartan Day in Missouri. This was for the year 2000 only.



April Meeting will be held at Jason's Deli!



Flowers of the Forest

Ralph B. Moffat, a long time member of MSSJ and Clan Moffatt Society, died March 25th. Memorials may be sent to the Methodist Foundation - Cardiac Rehab Memorial Fund, Methodist Healthcare Foundation, PO Box 42048, Memphis, TN 38174. Condolences to his wife Emily and the rest of his family.

New York Choir of Men and Boys to Visit

On Friday, April 25, at 7:30 pm, the Choir of Men and Boys from Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in New York City will present a recital at Saint John's. This is a wonderful opportunity for both the church and the community to experience this ensemble.

There will be 20 boys and 12 men singing for this program under the direction of John Scott. Mr. Scott has been at Saint Thomas for four years. Before this appointment, he was the organist and choirmaster at Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, England. Saint Thomas has a choir school for

the boys. Currently there are 32 boys enrolled in the school, which features daily choir rehearsals and music lessons for the boys.

The cost for this recital is \$20.00 per person. I urge you to contact me about reserving a seat for this special event as we expect to have a full house for the recital. To experience this choir, as I have on numerous Occasions, is both musically and spiritually uplifting.

The Memphis Boychoir will have the opportunity to sing in a master class setting with Mr. Scott during

the Saint Thomas visit. We do need your help for housing the 20 boys who will be visiting. The boys need to go to families in pairs. The boys may share a room, but each boy must have his own bed. We need 10 families to help with this responsibility. The choir arrives on Wednesday, April 23, and leaves Memphis on Saturday morning, April 26. Please contact me if you can help us with this housing need.

Geoff Ward
Organist and Choirmaster

Back Page Information and Request

Did you love the pictures on this page and the back page of this issue of the *Grace Notes*? (By the way, it is a picture of Callendish below and the Isle of Skye on the back page.) Wouldn't

you like to share some of your photographs from your travels in Scotland? Please send your photos (in any format) to Sammy Rich at rich_samuels@bellsouth.net. We want to include this

pictures in both the *Grace Notes* and then for the silent auction at the next Burns Night.



Calendar of Events

Mondays

Caledonia Chorale 7 pm
Church of the Holy Communion,
Walnut Grove at Perkins,
272-7159

Thursdays

Sgt.W.K.Singleton Pipes & Drums
6:30-8:30 at Bethel Pentecostal
Church, Stage Road in Bartlett;
call 386-2052 for info.
Wolf River Pipes & Drums,
6:30-9:30 at St. Luke's Lutheran;
Germantown Parkway. 753-9494

Fridays

Dancing: 7:30-10 pm, Idlewild
Presbyterian; 1750 Union Ave,
West Entrance
1st, 3rd & 5th Friday
Scottish Country Dancing.
274-1889

Monday, April 14

Monthly Meeting at Jasons. For
directions call 757-4200 or go to
memphisscots.com.
6:00 pm Dinner (**reservations
helpful but are not required.**)

7:00 pm Program: Brad Randle
on Flintlock Muzzle Loading
Guns.

April 19, 20

Arkansas Scottish Festival
Batesville, AR

Thursday, April 29

Board Meeting: Perkins at
1340 S. G'town Rd.5:30 pm.

Scottish/Celtic RadioMusic

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



(From April 3, 2008): Songs of Robert Burns

Hear a variety of artists in the intoxicating embrace of the Scottish bard's songs, including Rod Paterson, Dougie MacLean and Eddi Reader.

(April 10, 2008): Thistlepod Follow-up Hear the full tracks of some of the recent previews and debuts from our popular podcast.

(April 17): More Thistlepod Follow-up

Hear more of the full tracks of some of the recent previews and debuts from our popular podcast.

(April 24): 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.

(May 1): Raise Your Voice

Solo singing is revered in traditional circles, but layers of harmony and massed voices create stunning arrangements of traditional and folk song. Add your voice to the choruses with choirs from Scotland and Brittany and some of your favorite bands in fuller voice.

(May 8): 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.





Next Monthly Meeting - April 14th - Monthly Meeting (reservations helpful but notrequired for dinner), 757-4200 or online www.memphisscots.com - Jason's Deli at Poplar and Highland Dinner at 6:00, Program @ 7:00 will be Brad Randle on Flintlock Muzzle Loading Guns. Board Meeting, Monday, April 29th at 5:30, Perkins @ 1340 S. Germantown Rd.

GRACE  TES

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