

GRACE NOTES

Vol. 24. No. 5

May 2008

Pack Your Basket!

What is so rare as a day in May? A picnic on a day in May and we're having one! So, liberate your picnic basket from whichever closet it has wintered over in and pack it up with all the things you like to have at a fun party outdoors*.

That will certainly include some favorite foods, since this is a potluck picnic. (Sounds like a tongue twister.) There will be grills available for hot dogs, hamburgers, and the like. As is our custom, tableware, the usual condiments, ice, and drinks will be provided—attendees bring the appetizers, entrees (with breads as required), sides/salads, and desserts.

If you've got an easy-up canopy, folding chair, portable table, hammock, or umbrella, this is the type of occasion you bought them for, so bring 'em. Got a fun party game? Bring that, too, invites chair Debbie Sellmansberger, even though she has arranged some delightful, insightful entertainment. To expand and re-enforce the topic presented at our April meeting, Debbie has invited some folks with muzzle-loaded weapons to come and demonstrate their firearms and invites any of us who have such & want to

show them off to do so also. (The picnic is WAY out of town where gunfire is permitted.) To support the topic which will be presented at our May meeting, Debbie has orchestrated (wink, wink, nudge, nudge) some local bluegrass musicians to come and share their distinctive music, and anyone who wishes is encouraged to bring along their instruments (bagpipes especially) and favorite bluegrass songs to j' in in.

*Where? At the Sellmansbergers's country estate in Pipertown. (See map below. Easy to get to, tho' it are a fur piece out there.) When? Satur-

day, May 17th from 11 am to 3 pm (or whenever we wake up from our postprandial naps.)

The 'do' will go on rain or shine, although we'll move it inside if it's inclement and yes, Joe, Debbie, & Robert have plenty of room for us all in their house.

Cain't hardly wait? Well, mark your calendar now and start planning what to bring, because this event is gonna be fun, fun, fun.



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SCOTTISH CONNECTION

When did you encounter your first fax machine? It was most likely within the last 50 years. Can you remember standing over the clattering machine watching the print head slide to and fro over the paper as the image grew before your very eyes? Did you know that the fax machine has been around over 150 years and has a **Scottish Connection**?

Alexander Bain, an Edinburgh clockmaker, obtained the first patent for a fax machine in 1843. *[Editor's note: Nope, that's not a typo – the date is 1843, before the American Civil war.]*

Bain was born in Watten, Caithness, Scotland, into a crofter's family of 13 children. He wasn't much of a scholar, so his father apprenticed him to a clockmaker in Wick. Upon the completion of his training, he moved to Edinburgh and then to London. There, he frequently attended lectures at many institutions, it being the height of the Industrial Revolution.

He set up his own shop in 1837, but early days were not prosperous. In an attempt to raise money to commercially develop his inventions, among them the first electric clock, he demonstrated them to Sir Charles Wheatstone, the editor of Mechanics Magazine, who told Bain to give up since "There's no future in them." However, three months later Wheatstone presented an electric clock to the Royal Society as his own invention. Unfortunately for him, Bain had already applied for a patent for that design. Wheatstone impeded Bain's patent, but eventually Parliament compelled Wheatstone's company to pay Bain

£10,000 and hire him as a manager. Wheatstone resigned.

Bain's inspiration for the fax was the back-and-forth motion of a clock pendulum in which he saw the potential of converting an image to a string of images by a line-by-line scanning mechanism.

Bain also invented a chemical telegraph which could transmit 282 words in 52 seconds compared to Morse's machine which yielded only 40 words per minute. Morse himself was angered by Bain's achievement and took some tentative steps toward blocking Bain's obtaining American patents, but Bain had learned well from Wheatstone's treachery, and Morse soon desisted.

Bain returned to Edinburgh for the latter years of his life. He is buried in Kirkintilloch. A pub in Wick, close to where Alexander Bain served his



apprenticeship, is now named after the inventor. Also, as a tribute to his inventions, the main British Telephone building in Glasgow is named Alexander Bain House.

So next time you send or get a fax, or even watch a clock pendulum, think of Alexander Bain's fax machine and its **Scottish Connection**.

- From various wikipedia.com articles

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



Scottish Pearls

Ever wonder why the Romans invaded Great Britain? Overwhelming imperialism? Possibly, but there were several more pragmatic reasons for the Caesars to show up just in time to get clobbered by Boedicia.

One of the most likely is the natural Scottish freshwater pearl. According to Iain Sime, Freshwater Advisory Officer of Scottish National Heritage, "Roman historian Suetonius refers to Julius Caesar's preference for British pearls as one of his main reasons for invading the country."

Sime reported this statement in the context of research into historical references to the pearls in an effort to discern the pattern of their decline. Half of the world's population of the rare mussels which produce the pearls is in Scottish rivers. However, these mollusks have declined to the point that the identity of these rivers is "being kept secret to try to protect them." While pollution is thought the likeliest cause of the endangerment, illegal fishing persists in spite of fines of up to £5000 (\$9,980.49 on 4/10/08) for each mussel damaged and since 2004 this can be also be expanded to include a term in prison. Since the mussels have been given "full environmental protection since 1998" and their meat is non-edible anyway, those taking the rare mussels are immediately known to be poachers. And poachers have found themselves the targets of more and more private individuals since a crackdown dubbed "Operation Necklace 2000". Unfortunately, despite both public & private efforts,

the mussels "are now extinct or about to die out" from between 70% to 99% of the Scottish rivers where they once thrived, reduced from 160 rivers to less than a dozen.

The lives of the mussels are challenged by their very nature. They are the favorite food of returning sea trout and salmon, and it is estimated that of the 210 million offspring a female mussel may produce in her lifetime, "only two reach maturity."

With estimates of full extinction within fifteen years, the next efforts focus



on cutting off the market for Scottish freshwater pearls. Jewelers have been offered an opportunity to voluntarily register their freshwater pearl inventory and be issued licenses to continue dealing in pre-1998 pearls, the same terms under which products from other endangered species, like tortoise shell and ivory, are still legally traded. The next phase would include fines or jail for those jewelers not so registered and licensed found to be trading illegal

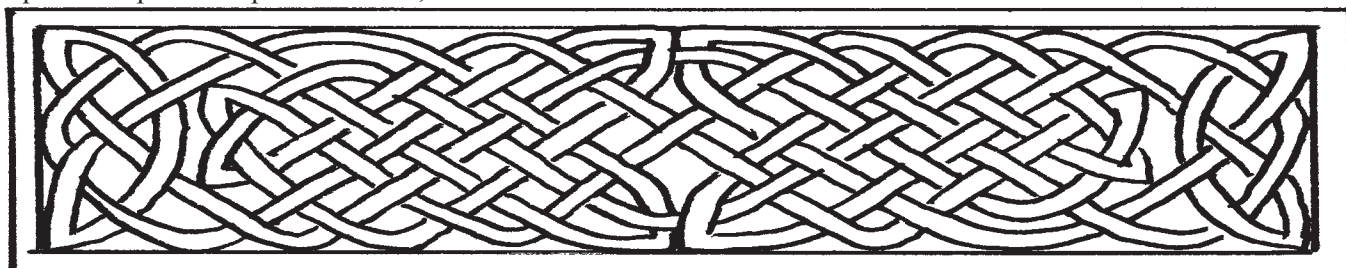
pearls. In spite of only this, in the first year after the voluntary steps were established, only two of the thousands of jewelers in Britain had applied.

Caesar's regard in 55 BCE was shared by Alexander I, the 12th century king of Scotland, who "was said to have the world's best collection of freshwater pearls." The largest pearl ever found in the British Isles, the Kellie Pearl, was found in Aberdeenshire and now adorns the Scottish crown.

Iain Sime's research supports the idea that the decline in Scottish mussels began as recently as the Victorian era's Industrial Revolution. Let's hope all the steps of conservancy are sufficient to reverse the threats toward these remarkable creatures which produce not only the irregular "Baroque" pearl, but also the more-highly-prized pear-shaped and perfectly round variety, in shades of pure white, ivory, and pink hues.

We can do more than just hope, though. Since the Scottish freshwater pearl will always be among the most treasured of gifts to bring back from a visit to the Auld Country and every year many of us make the journey, consider seriously a personal pledge to deal only in pre-1998 items.

Thanks to Kathy Schultz for passing along information which was used to put this article together from BBC, The (London) Independent, www.karip-earls.com, and Wikipedia.



Local Pipers Compete in Oklahoma City

Local pipers celebrate success following solo competition in Oklahoma City, OK. Members of the Northeast Caledonian Pipes and Drums of Jonesboro, traveled to Oklahoma City, OK to participate in the Oklahoma Piping Debate, a solo competition for pipers of all ages and all skill levels, with competitors from throughout the south.

Out of 5 events for Grade 4 Senior pipers, the trio brought back six top 5 placings. Each event is a separate type of tune or set of tunes, and included a Piobrach Ground, 2/4 march, 6/8 march, Slow March, and Strathspey/Reel combina-

tion. The judge was Pipe Major Jimmy Bell of Lyon College, Batesville, AR.

Danny Vaughn of Hoxie, received 2 first place prizes and overall best piper in the Grade 4 senior division.

David Corbett formerly of Alicia, now living in Marion, received a 3rd place and two 4th place finishes.

Robert Gill of Kennett, participated in his very first solo event and received the applause of the assembled audience.

The band hosted the Sgt Singleton Memorial Pipes and Drums on Sunday, April 6th, at their weekly practice on Southwest Drive, at the First Presbyterian Church

of Jonesboro. This was in preparation for the annual Arkansas Scottish Festival, held on the grounds of Lyon College, April 18-20. The two bands merged to participate in the 2 Massed Band performances. Members of the band also once again stood in solo competition on the pipes, bass drum and snare drum.

As always, the band encourages anyone interested in piping and drumming, pipe major, of any age or experience level to attend a weekly practice, or to hire the band. More information may be found online at www.neacaledonians.com.

Be sure to offer your congratulations



David Corbett



Danny Vaughn



Robert Gill

Pipers can be caught in many places. Here one leads out a curling competition!



2008 Memphis Feis

Feis - pronounced "Fesh"...

Irish Dance, Music, Arts & Crafts Competition at the Whispering Woods Conference Center located in Olive Branch, MS. Saturday May 24 and Sunday May 25.

Hundreds of Irish Dancers from around the nation will be competing.

Two non-dance competition categories open for public entry - Instrumental Solo and Arts/Crafts.

The Memphis Irish Arts Foundation wishes to encourage all CSWT members and guests to attend the festivities and/or join the non-dance competitions.

Spectator admission is free! To find out more about this great event, or how you may compete in this event, please visit <http://competeIrish>.



May Day Ceilidh with Celtic Society of West Tennessee

May Day Ceilidh
Saturday, May 3
4:00 pm

Gather your family and friends for this delightful evening of feasting and dancing. Celtic music will be provided by:

Appleton Family Band

Irish Harpers featuring **Sheila Mitchell-Hart**.

The Minstrels featuring Cara-Anne Phillips

Enjoy the experience of the Celtic May Pole dance and gather 'round the Bonfire as we celebrate the coming warmth & growth upon the land. Bring your lawn chairs/

blankets and join us for some great outdoor fun!

Location: Sculley's Golf Course

Address: 2162 Westover Rd located off of Hwy 70 West near McKellar Airport in Jackson, TN.

Admission Fee: Food or cold drinks for the Feast

For more info please email Dena Shewmaker at gendigg@msn.com or Aleeta Smith at cswt-talk@live.com

Please visit our website www.cswt.org <<http://www.cswt.org>>

Thank you for your interest! Hope to see you there.

Tidbits

The Board are undertaking the annual inventory of MSSI's supplies and equipment, so please be sure to return anything belonging to the club to any Board member by Sunday, June 1st.

Proud of your clan(s)? Would you tell about it in 5-10 minutes at one of our meetings? Contact VP Debbie Sellmansberger to schedule. Would you write about it in 100-150 words? Send it to Sammy Rich or Gavin Anderson for inclusion in an upcoming *Grace Notes* and on our website.

The Board has ordered new banners of MSSI, a weather-proof one for outdoor events like festivals or games and a "dressier" one for inside occasions like Kirkin's, meetings, and Burns' Nicht.

The Board also recognize the need for a display size and quality map of Scotland. If you have one you'd like to donate, contact Prez John Schultz, otherwise one will be purchased.

Your pics are needed. If you have a precious or favorite photograph of an MSSI event, MSSI members at an event of interest to the club, or trip to Scotland, forward it to Mary Lewis or Sammy Rich for inclusion on the website or in an upcoming *Grace Notes* issue.

MSSI needs a "sunshine" chairperson. This person would maintain get-well, congratulation, and sympathy cards and send them out as events require. A volunteer to John Schultz would keep him from having to draft, shanghai, or 'press someone into service. (He doesn't call himself McHun for nuthin'.)

Ever missed a member meeting or wondered what was discussed at a Board meeting you weren't able to attend? Secretary Mary Clausi sends all the minutes to Gavin Anderson who posts them on the website. Check out any you'd like there.

Did You Know?

MSSI member Monty Payne has a cousin he's very proud of and rightly so: she is Elizabeth Payne Rosen. Cousin Elizabeth has published a historical novel entitled *Hallam's War*. Elizabeth will be in town for a book event at Davis-Kidd on Thursday, June 5th at 6 pm. Here is a brief description of her book:

Hugh and Serena Hallam have made the decision to leave everything they knew in Charleston behind them, hoping to create a stable, productive home for themselves and their three children in the near-wilderness of West Tennessee. Though now war may loom on the horizon, life at Palmyra is good, for both themselves and—they believe—their slaves.

Hugh is convinced that reasonable men of good will with a tolerant respect for their countrymen might yet prevail against the increasingly tense atmosphere that is dividing the

two American cultures. Capable and practical, he is nevertheless considered by his neighbors to be an idealist, with progressive notions concerning the science of agriculture and the requirements of Southern commerce, an ambivalent attitude toward slavery, and a confidence about the way things should be done. But when events move their entire world toward destruction, Hugh's values are put to the test, with only his surpassing love for Serena and his belief in himself to possibly sustain him.

Hallam's War is the saga of one man's struggle to defend his family, his neighbors and his honor, and of the moral compromises forced upon an otherwise good man caught in a maelstrom that leaves him no acceptable choices. A man of remarkable resilience, resourcefulness and contradictions, Hugh must learn to face his own conscience with as much courage

as he displays at Shiloh. Ultimately, Hugh and Serena confront the reality surrounding their relationships with their neighbors and with their slaves. If neither of them is completely transformed, each takes a step toward a new understanding.

Elizabeth Payne Rosen's near-epic debut is thoughtful, authentic and carefully researched. From Nashville and Memphis to Richmond, Charleston and Washington D.C., and across the bloody battlefields of Shiloh and Bull Run, Rosen brings vividly to life a heart-rending tale that resonates with deep personal grief shot through with moments of beauty and joy. In the end, there is hope for reconciliation among us all, even in the face of all the struggles that lie ahead.

National Library of Scotland News

On Friday 4 April, Scotland's oldest dated printed book was exactly 500 years old. Produced in Edinburgh, the only known copy of 'The Complaint of the Black Knight' is in the National Library. In digital form it is now part of a web feature we have launched to celebrate the 500th anniversary of printing in Scotland. 'The Spread of Scottish Printing' covers the period 1508-1900, and includes 33 items digitised from our collections. Each item represents the first printing press in the first 33 Scottish printing towns

Read more on the news page: <http://www.nls.uk/news/> 'The Spread of Scottish Printing' is online at <http://www.nls.uk/printing/>

Comics, graphic novels and local heroes

In the 21st century, printers produce work far beyond anything their counterparts in 1508 could ever have imagined. Today's graphic novels present their own challenges, and Scottish writers and artists are making their mark there too. We examine the development of comics and graphic novels in our new exhibition - 'Local heroes: The art of the graphic novel'. We look at everything from the first comic strip (1827) to Japanese manga, taking in the likes of 'The Broons', Dan Dare and Batman along the way.

See the news page for details: <http://www.nls.uk/news/>

Songs to sing about A' Adam's Bairns, Scotland's history and the slave trade, modern issues relating to racism and religion

These are among themes covered in a folk music concert in the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, on 17 April. 'A' Adam's Bairns' presents top-line Scottish folk singers and musicians performing contemporary arrangements of manuscript music from NLS collections. The songs also feature on a CD which will be sent out with a resource pack to every Scottish school.

For further information, go to <http://www.nls.uk/events/a-adams-bairns.html>

Thanks to Carmen Wright of Gordon Wright Booksellers for alerting us of this information.

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

Saturday, May 3

CSWT - May Ceilidh
See page 5

Monday, May 12

Monthly Meeting Jason's Deli
Poplar and Highland. For
directions call 757-4200 or go to

memphisscots.com.

6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Program: "Bluegrass
Music's Scottish Connection"

Saturday, May 17

MSSI Picnic
Sellmansberger Home

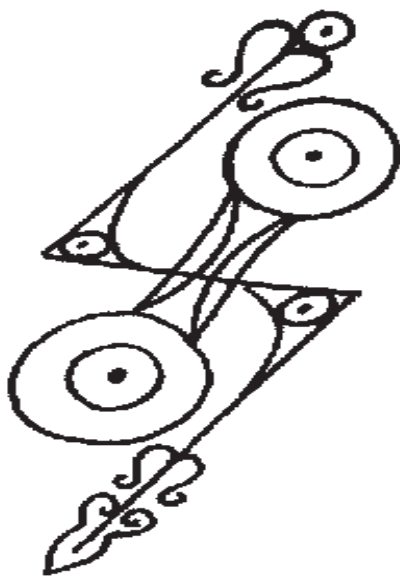
Sat. - Sun, May 24 - 25

Memphis Feis

Whispering Woods
Conference Center
Olive Branch, MS

Thursday, May 29

Board Meeting: Perkins at



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

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.



May 15 Words and Music

Uncover musical connections with Stevenson, Yeats, Scott and other literary figures, in the company of Bonnie Rideout, Loreena McKennitt, Battlefield Band and Jean Redpath.

May 22 Passing the Torch

Glimpse the future of Celtic music in recordings from some fine artists paired with a few of the masters who have inspired them, such as North Carolina native Andrew Magill and the great Chicago fiddler Liz Carroll. She described Andrew's first album as "an awesome debut."

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Next Monthly Meeting - May 12th
Jason's Deli, Poplar @ Highland
Dinner at 6:00, Program @ 7:00 will be **"Bluegrass Music's Scottish Connection"**
Board Meeting, Monday, May 29th at 5:30, Perkins @ 1340 S. Germantown Rd.

GRACE NOTES

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