

The Ceilidh Re-visited

All who gathered on that roasting Saturday evening were of one mind: wasn't it a good thing that we'd switched the picnic and ceilidh this year so that we could be inside in the air conditioning for this event?

The venue, Cheney Parish Hall at Church of the Holy Communion, was elegant and spacious, and their A/C was blessedly sustaining. (Thanks to Marty Wooley who made the arrangements.) Tables were set in royal blue overset with crossed white streamers, a symbol recognized by all Scots. Plans called for a light supper pot-luck and, probably for that reason, it was a bit thin by our usual extravagant standards. Oh, well, it was too hot to eat much, much less to overeat, and a few of us could probably benefit from a few more light suppers.

The program opened with a few favorite tunes by pipers Nancy Chase, Rick Clausi, and George Malone. Next came the Scottish Country Dancers with two spirited dances & one strathspey, that most Scottish of dances and exactly the right pace for such sultry weather. Their participation dance attracted enough volunteers from the crowd to form two separate sets.

Following that, Sammy Rich performed a selection of waulking songs and mouth music. Mary Clausi's friend Rosemary Smith, a native Scot visiting from Louisiana with her husband Jim Smith, was motivated to demonstrate typical waulking movements during Sammy's songs, delightful pairing.

The Caledonian Chorale sang three party songs and a love song, accompanied by piano, guitar, mandolin, and penny whistle. Afterwards, ten folks from the audience joined in the debut of a new circle dance, at walking pace in deference to the weather.

Two new songs were introduced to the crowd: Scottish Gaelic words to the tune of "Mairie's Wedding" and a new set of lyrics to "Scotland the Brave" which President John Schultz suggested could solve the energy crisis by all the folks rolling over in their graves.

Interspersed between these acts a representative from each table read or sang a poem in MSSSI's first ever rat-satire composition. Each met the criteria for rat satires, having been composed on the spot and in verse. Extra points were credited for a satire target other than rats (tax collectors,

telemarketers, and in-laws were suggested) and for being set to music. All entries were spirited and entertaining and, apparently, effective because at the end of the evening nary a rat, cockroach, turtle, or weasel was seen in the hall. Won't the clerics, vestry, staff and parishioners of Holy Communion be pleased? (Find more on the rat satire and some of the entries elsewhere in this issue.)

The judges agreed that the satire from Joe and Debbie Sellmansbergers' table and sung by young Robert (to a tune suspiciously similar to "The Theme from Gilligan's Island"), accompanied by Joe on two plastic spoons, was the best.

What was perhaps the high point of the entertainment was unfortunately never performed due to emcee Mary Ann Lucas's having prematurely dismissed the crowd. John Schultz and his brave bride Kathy had prepared a novel parody of "Leezie Lindsey". Saturday's loss, however, will be our gain as the Schultzes have agreed to share their act at the August 11th monthly members meeting.

cont on page 2

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Ceilidh Revisited from pg 1

It was really great to see Joann and Charlie Jester at the ceilidh after a long spell and to meet new members Chris and Kathy Scruggs. The Scruggs had joined MSSI at this past Burns Nicht but had been unable to attend a club function since.

Pictures from the ceilidh are found on page 5.

Almost Heaven, West Tennessee

If you've visited the Farmers' market at the train station downtown recently, you may have thought you were in heaven from the dulcet harp music wafting on the summer air. You weren't in heaven, just hearing the heavenly music of our own Brenda Maguire. The market features various musicians each Saturday from 7am till 1 pm, and our Brenda took her place between 7 and 8 am, smart lass, before the heat could overwhelm her harp. Her next performance hasn't been set yet but will probably be in August. Watch the MSSI website for an announcement of that date.

Back Page Picture

The Picture on the back page is labeled Quiet at Loch Katrine and shows a lone walker resting after the short hike up Ben A'an to see the view of Loch Katrine - the heart of the Trossachs.

Our quest photographer, Alistair Reid, from Scotland whom we will introduce in the September Issue of Grace notes. His website is:

InCallander.co.uk

Check it out and look for more in later issues of the Grace Notes.

SCOTTISH CONNECTION

Many of us were introduced to the remarkable story of Helen Keller by the play or film *The Miracle Worker*. Did you know that this remarkable individual, who was not Scottish, nevertheless had a **Scottish Connection**?

Several, in fact. Young Helen lost her hearing and sight to a bout with fever at age seven. In pursuit of amelioration her parents took her to see the Scottish émigré Alexander Graham Bell, widely credited with the development of the telephone among other inventions. Bell, whose wife was deaf, had become a great champion of the welfare of those so afflicted and referred the Kellers to a prestigious school.

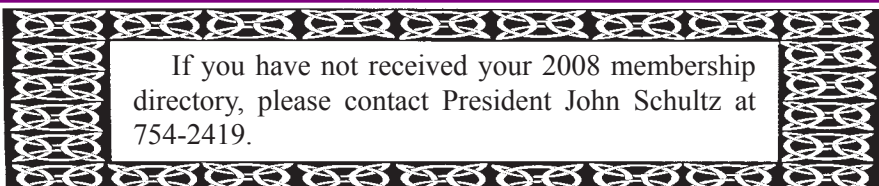
Much later, after Helen had graduated with honors from Radcliffe, she made a movie, learned several foreign languages, and traveled the

world. In 1913 Polly Thomson, a native of Glasgow, visited America and met Helen Keller, the first blind and deaf person she had ever known. A year later, Thomson became Keller's reader, secretary, and correspondent.

Also, Helen also had an honorary Doctor of Laws bestowed upon her by the University of Glasgow. And finally, Keller named the home of her latter years "Arcan Ridge" after a favorite spot in Scotland.

So, the next time you see a pleasing sight or hear an enjoyable sound, be grateful for your senses, then remember the extraordinary Helen Keller and her **Scottish Connection**.

(Thanks to Kathy Schultz for passing this information from *The History Club Newsletter* of The Illinois Saint Andrew Society.)



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



Last Bareknuckle Fight

Tucked back up off the edge of the asphalt where Richburg Road meets Sullivan-Kilrain road, there is an unimpressive brick marker erected to commemorate the events of July 8, 1889.

On that morning, trains began arriving from all directions to the little town of Richburg, then in Marion County, and the crowd made its way to Charlie Rich's home nearby. Even though Robert Lowry, the governor of Mississippi, had issued orders to Marion County Sheriff Walter Cowart and his deputy, Otho Magee, to prevent the gathering, the crowds were so large that little could be done.

At precisely 9:55 a.m. Jake Kilrain threw his straw hat into a roped off area and about a minute later John L. Sullivan tossed his snow white felt hat in beside it. The last great bare-knuckle fight in America was about to begin, and what happened that day changed the face of the sport forever.

According to manuscripts in the McCain Library and Archives at the

University of Southern Mississippi, the fight was refereed by John Fitzpatrick, who later became the mayor of New Orleans, and the timekeeper was William Barclay Masterson, also known as "Bat" Masterson in Dodge City, Kan.

After the first 34 rounds, both men were bloody and soaked in sweat. Someone suggested that they call the fight a draw, but neither man wanted that. Far too much effort had gone into arranging this match. Sullivan was the American heavyweight champion, having defeated Paddy Ryan in Mississippi City in 1882, but Kilrain was known for his stamina and had fought a 106-round draw with Jem Smith. The fight continued.

Some accounts say the fight lasted 72 rounds, others 75. It has been documented that the contest lasted two hours, 16 minutes, and 23 seconds, and at that last round, when Jake Kilrain stumbled out to the center of the ring, his trainer, Mike Donovan, threw in the sponge and the fight ended.

Written accounts of the end of the fight indicate that Kilrain wept like a child as John L. Sullivan was carried off on the shoulders of the crowd.

A study of this fight has to include what happened in the weeks following that hot July morning in 1889. Arrest warrants were issued for both men.

Governor Lowry was determined that no one would make a mockery of the laws of Mississippi.

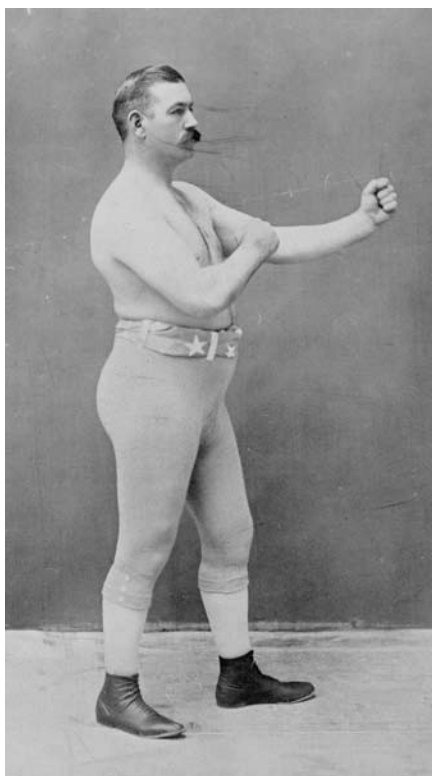
Sullivan was arrested in Nashville and returned to Purvis to stand trial. Kilrain was arrested in Baltimore. Sullivan was found guilty by a Purvis jury and ordered to spend 12 months in jail. His sentence was later overturned on appeal.

In a separate trial Kilrain pleaded guilty and he too was sentenced to 12 months in jail. At that time there was a Mississippi law that allowed anyone to lease a convict from the state for a fixed sum.

Charlie Rich, owner of the Richburg sawmill and host of the fight, promptly "leased" Jake Kilrain for the fee and the drama was over.

Now the fight is just a memory, marked by a simple brick memorial on a quiet road. But if you stop there and stand outside in the July heat, you can almost hear the shouts of the crowd, almost smell the sweat and the blood and the whiskey. You can almost feel history come back to life.

This came to mind after last month's meeting of family history stories by the Tennessee Genealogical Society. Charlie Rich is one of my ancestors and is just a bit of the interesting history in my past. Don't you have one you would like to share with us? Sammy Rich.



August Members Meeting – Book Share Fair, come prepared

Debbie Sellmansberger, VP suggests that we have a "book-sharing" program where people bring their most prized and/or informative and/or fun and/or favorite celtic/Scottish-related book or books.

The meeting will be more "social",

and people can - if they wish - talk about their books to the entire group, or people can get up and browse other's books without any formal presentations. The sooner people know about this, the more successful the program will be.

10 More Things You Never Knew About Scotland

21 In 1818, while on a walking tour of Scotland, the English poet John Keats managed 600 miles in a month, always rising before dawn in order to complete 26 miles before noon. This walking tour included climbing Ben Nevis, the ascent of which he compared to “mounting 10 St Pauls without the convenience of a staircase”

22 The kilt did not originate in Scotland. It was worn by the ancient Egyptians and was part of the Assyrian soldier’s uniform. It was an Englishman Quaker Thomas Rawlinson, who introduced it to Scotland. During the early 18th century Rawlinson ran an iron smelting works in *Glengarry* and he wore Highland dress in the traditional manner from which he found it time consuming to disrobe. From this he developed a more easily detachable garment, which his workers soon adopted as they found it to be more practical. Iain MacDonnell, the Chief of Glengarry subsequently adopted it and many others soon followed.

23 Five thousand years ago nine stone huts were built as Skara Brae on the Orkney Islands. In the corner of each little hut was a tiny alcove with a hole in the ground connected to a plumbing system that washed away the wastes through a system of drains into the sea. These are almost certainly the oldest lavatories in the world.

24 In 1772 Scotland became the first country to make left-hand travel a national law, applying to all city traffic. Offenders were fined 20 shillings.

25 Around 250 BC, many years before the Romans came to Britain, beer was being brewed by the Picts in Scotland. The beverage was made from heather and had hallucinogenic properties.

26 St. Columba, the Irish missionary who brought Christianity to Scotland, is said to be the first person

to have encountered the Loch Ness monster. The story goes that in 565 AD he came across a group of Picts burying a man who had been killed by the monster while swimming. One of his followers dived into the loch to bring back a boat, and was attacked by the beast. Columba immediately made a sign of the cross and in the name of God commanded the monster to go. At this the monster fled as if terrified.

27 The invention of logarithms as an aid to calculation is attributed to a Scottish nobleman named John Napier (1550-1617). Napier is also credited with creating one of the earliest calculating machines, known as ‘Napier’s Bones’ and popularizing the use of the decimal point, though he only considered his mathematical studies to be a ‘mere hobby’

28 In 1823 the Scottish chemist Charles Macintosh (1766-1843) patented the waterproof cloth he used to make raincoats, after experimenting with waste rubber products in Glasgow’s new gas works. He was anxious to protect the secret of his new waterproof cloth so he chose Highland workers to work in his Glasgow factory as they only spoke Gaelic. His novel mackintoshes immediately proved to be a hit though at first the rubbery substance became brittle and stiff in extremely cold weather

29 John Henry Anderson (1814-74) was a Scottish conjuror, who became known as the Great Wizard of the North, a title he claimed had been bequeathed to him by Sir Walter Scott, the original Wizard of the North. He is credited with moving magic from fairground to the theatre when he opened his 5,000-seat City Theatre in Glasgow, and was also the originator of pulling of rabbits from his top hats, which he begun advertising in the 1840s

30 Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587) became the Queen of Scotland on the death of her father, James V when a mere six days old. Her devoted little Sky Terrier was her companion throughout her long imprisonment by the English Queen Elizabeth and was concealed in her skirts during her execution. It refused to be coaxed away from her body, wouldn’t eat afterwards and died from grief and starvation.

Mark your calendars!

Our upcoming social events are many and coming fast, and you don’t want to miss any of them. Besides our regular monthly members meeting on the 2nd Monday of each month, here are the dates you’ll want to reserve:

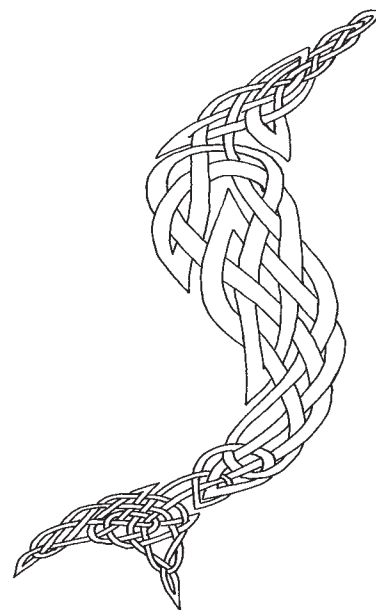
September 19 through 21 – Clanjamfry, Evergreen Presbyterian Church clanjamfrymemphis.org

October 25, 5 pm to 9 pm – Samhein (Halloween) Party St. Columba’s,

November 29, 2 pm to 4:30 pm – St. Andrew’s Day Tea

December 8, 6 pm – Xmas party

January 24 – Burn’s Night



MSSI Ceilidh 2008 Pictures



The pipers gave a blow. The dancers gave us a show. The singers did a few songs and the evening was enjoyed by all. Mary Ann orchestrated and taught us all new lyrics to Scotland the Brave and it seemed a good evening in a really cool hall.



Rat Satire

from Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Monday, January 24th, 1853

“There are people still in the west of the county of Clare who pretend to possess a form of satire for the banishment of rats. One man, Thomas Keane, land surveyor, now living near Kilkee, told me, about the year 1820, that he had thus banished one or more destructive rats from his mill and house at Belahaglass, near Dunlicky Castle, on the Kilkee coast. It must be remembered, that the rat satire was always composed in rhyme, and in the most obscure and occult phraseology of the Irish language. Having myself a small inkling of the rhyming propensity, I tried my hand at a satire of rats, in the house of a friend at Kilkee, in the year 1820, but I fear the words I made use of were too hard for the vermin to understand, or that I had not the true inspiration, as, certainly, they paid not the slightest regard to the notice to quit which I then gave them.”

So thus stated, and Mary Ann prodded the members and guests to come up with their own submissions of Rat satire, not limited to Rats, and here are the submissions.

AUTHOR – anonymous, will you step forward and own up to this delightful piece?

In the land where Bobbie lies,
they’ve a cure to ban the flies
Near the brin on Burns lost moor,
they’ve cursed the flies and they come no more.

So fie(?) on those winged pests
and a curse upon their nuptial nests.
For when the bagpipes sing its mournful song,
all the flies are forever gone!

AUTHOR – Scruggs/Zavodny Clan

Drosophilus, oh most of us hae
often missed wi’ swinging swat;
I cannae catch ye
I always miss ye.
Oh wee drosophilus take leave of us,
I dinna kin where to send ye,
but through yonder open winda.

Give up ye wee fly – surrender nigh
Forever I swing my sporrán
until ye fly, DIE!

AUTHOR – Cagle

Ye roachies to the sewer go –
back from whence you came
Or to the Jones’ house also with us
its’ all the same.

Their food is better, don’t you
know, their cellar’s dark and dank-
ing
And ev’ry corner’s awfly greasy
with rotting food so standing.

AUTHOR – Aaron Thomas

Ye rats, ye rats, ye fat ugly rats,
If you don’t go hide in the ground below
I will fetch me cat, me hungry, hun-
gry cat.

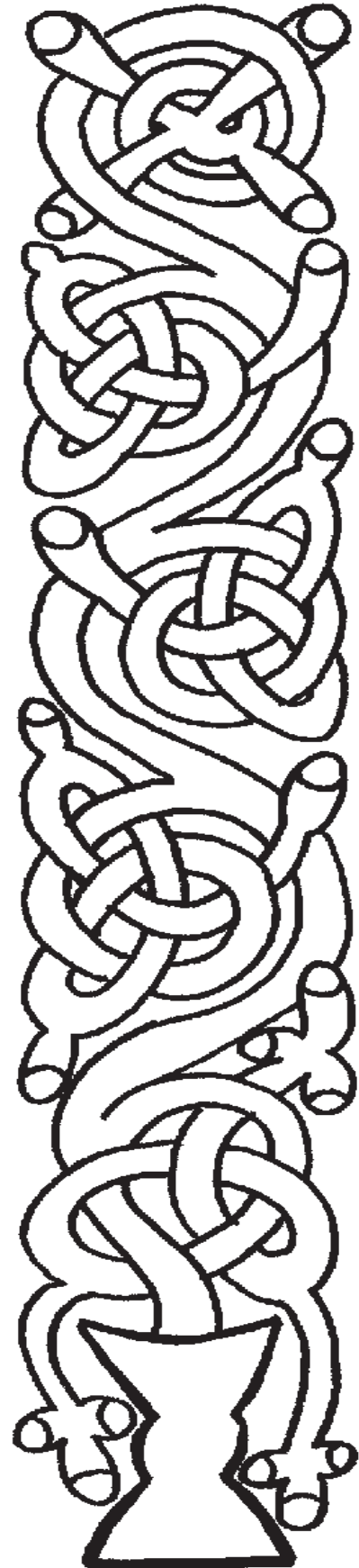
AUTHOR – Sellmansberger Clan,
Tune – Gilligans Island theme

If I war a turtle,
I wouldn’t tread this pond
War big Joe goes to hurtle
His blastin’ steel wand.

I’d mosey down the road
to the pond in the wood
war turtle can abide
an’ eat all the fish they could.

So leave from the pond,
By bullet or by foot
‘fore ol’ Joe’s rifle
Causes your caput!

Thanks for the participation and
submissions for this fun mental
exercise.



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
2nd, & 4th Friday
Scottish Country Dancing.
274-1889

7:00 pm
Program: "Book Share Fair"
by two members of the MSSI

Monday, August 11

Monthly Meeting Jason's Deli
Poplar and Highland. For
directions call 757-4200 or go to
memphiscots.com.
6:00 pm Dinner

Thursday, August 28

Board Meeting at 5:30 at Perkins
on Germantown Parkway/

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



August 7: Celtic Spirit

Hear songs of praise from the traditions of Celtic psalm singing and American gospel united and recorded live in Scotland's biggest Cathedral, along with other Celtic music that moves the soul with William Jackson, Eileen Ivers and Maire Brennan.

August 14: The Strathspey King

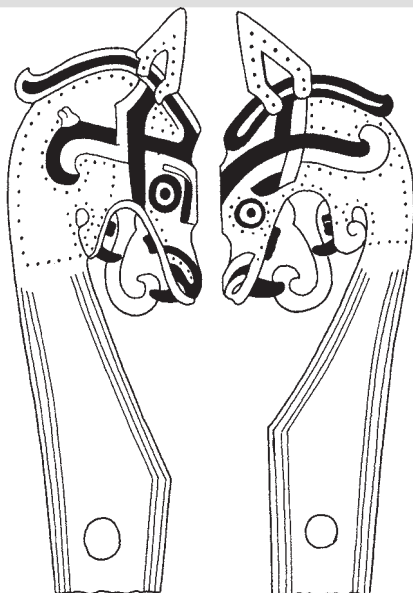
Fiddler and composer James Scott Skinner (1843-1927) wrote a huge number of tunes and many of these are now classics for today's players. Learn more about this larger than life Victorian character – the self-styled "Strathspey King" – and hear his music played by Battlefield Band, Natalie MacMaster and by Skinner himself, recorded on cylinder in the early 20th century.

August 21: Heart and Soul Part 1

Across the Celtic traditions, contemporary innovations, New World variations and cross-cultural collaborations, the international appeal of Celtic music far exceeds its core audiences. Follow the music from pub to performing arts center as we distil the essence of what we have come to call "Celtic," and get to the heart and soul of its universal appeal.

August 28: Heart and Soul Part 2

Join Fiona Ritchie as she seeks to uncover the appeal of so-called "Celtic" music, and to discover its essential spirit across varied landscapes and languages.



Quiet at Loch Katrine



Next Monthly Meeting - August 11th
Jason's Deli, Poplar @ Highland
Dinner at 6:00, Program @ 7:00 will be **"Book Share Fair"**
Board Meeting, Monday, August 28th at 5:30, Perkins @ 1340 S. Germantown Rd.

GRACE NOTES

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