

GRACE NOTES

Vol. 22, No. 12

Dec. 2006

MSSI Annual Ho! Ho! Ho!

Mark your calendar for Monday, December 11: it's time for our annual Christmas Party! As is our custom, instead of a regular member meeting on the second Monday of December, we'll gather for a gala holiday fete at All-Saints Episcopal Church, 1508 South White Station Road, at 6:00 p.m.

As an opener we'll tuck into an elegant pot-luck. This is your opportunity to reveal your skill in the culinary arts: pick your favorite holiday or party dish and let your Scottish friends revel in it. Use the following as a guide (so we don't all show up with pigs-in-blankets) by last-name initial: A through F – desserts; G through L –

appetizers & salads; M – side dishes & vegetables; N through R – breads & relishes; S through W – entrees. And remember, you need not feel limited to these suggestions.

For entertainment, the Caledonia Chorale will sing and lead us in a sing-a-long. Additional music will be provided by several of our talented instrumental musicians. The panto (light-hearted theatrical play) was so well received at last year's party, we're going to have another: this year, it's "The Pie-Eyed Piper".

Did someone mention gifts? We certainly will have gifts! First, we will have big boxes in which you may deposit new, unwrapped Toys-for-Tots which the Marines amongst our membership will convey into the Corps' larger collection. (Don't be surprised if a well-known gent from the North Pole

shows up to help with this worthy endeavor!) We will also indulge in the annual Prove-You're-a-Real-Scot \$5 gift challenge: find a gender-appropriate gift to exchange (that is, ladies bring a lady's gift, men bring a manly present) **COSTING NO MORE THAN FIVE DOLLARS!**

There will be games (with prizes) and new this year, a holiday table decorating contest. Table covering, napkins, centerpiece, dishes and flatware, serving pieces, Great-Aunt Myrtle's cardinal salt & pepper set – whatever strikes your fancy. Let Emily Smith know that you want to enter the contest and she will set aside a table on which you can display your masterpiece.

Come prepared for a fun and festive evening – see you there!



YOUR MSSI BOARD

President

Ben Kemker..... 386-9909
ben.kemker@memphisscots.com

Vice President

Mary Ann Lucas..... 725-1879
maryann.lucas@memphisscots.com

Treasurer

John Simmons..... 272-9240
john.simmons@memphisscots.com

Secretary

Dena Warth..... 837-1413
dena.warth@memphisscots.com

Members at Large

Emily Smith..... 683-6416
emily.smith@memphisscots.com

Bud Hisky..... 683-3403
bud.hisky@memphisscots.com

John Schultz 754-2419
john.schultz@memphisscots.com

Burns Nicht 2007!

The best kept secret of the year can now be revealed: Burns Nicht 2007! Plans are well underway for celebrating the life and works of Scotland's beloved bard. Now the details:

What: Burns Nicht 2007.

When: Saturday, January 27th, gathering from 5:30 p.m., dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Woodland Hills Country Club

Who (will be the entertainment): Smithfield Fair.

How (much): \$50 Members (that is, those who have paid 2007 dues), \$60 non-Members, \$70 Patrons, \$100

Benefactors. A \$10 discount may be claimed by seniors. Patrons receive preferential seating and parking and start the evening off with a gala reception from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

The evening will include all the time-honored features: Toasts to the Lads & Lasses and to Burns himself; Wolf River Pipes & Drums; Scottish Country Dancers; SAMS color guard and national anthems; "Ode to a Haggis" presentation; a Burns grace; the Immortal Memory; recitations of Burns' poems; Order of Thistle and Order of Heather inductions; and

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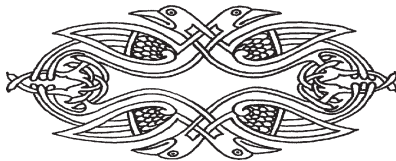
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the closing circle with "Auld Lang Syne". You'll want to be sure to come prepared with cash or check to indulge in the customary additional purchase items: cash bar (we are assured Drambuie will be available), silent auction, souvenir photographs, raffle tickets for both hand-made quilts and SAMS weapons. But don't let time get away from you: the deadline for purchasing tickets is Saturday, January 21, so quick, before you forget, send in your ticket request and payment to Burns Nicht, c/o Memphis Scottish Society; P. O. Box 241934; Memphis, TN 38124. For more info, call 725-1879.



Treasurer's Note

We received a memorial gift from Charles R. Chandler in memory of Bill Halliday. John Simmons



Celticfest 2006

A natural outdoor amphitheatre with ample seating behind Casey Jones Village in Jackson, TN was the setting for their first Celticfest. Highlights of the festival were musicians, dancers, clan tents, and a large children's area. Perfect fall weather was a big boost. Make your plans to put this on your calendar next year. Kudos to our own Gary and Linda Wood of Celtic Moor in Jackson as the event organizers. Some of the more colorful people at the festival are pictured in our photo gallery.

On the following page are some even more colorful Irish Step Dancers under the tutelage of a stern taskmaster!

Does anyone recognize this last bunch? They are performing on a really nice sound stage complete with microphones and stage hands. It was awesome. Some said we sang good as well.

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.

Editorial Staff

Mary Ann Lucas - maryann.lucas@memphisscots.com Editor, (901-725-1879)
 Sammy Rich - sammy.rich@memphisscots.com Publisher, (901-272-7159)
 Gavin Anderson - gavin.anderson@memphisscots.com Circulation Editor, (901-682-5485)
 Melissa Gibson - melissa.gibson@memphisscots.com Line Editor, (901 299-3170)

Please address all correspondence to:

Grace Notes

The Memphis Scottish Society, Inc.
 gracenotes@memphisscots.com
 P. O. Box 241934
 Memphis, TN 38124-1934

to foster education
 and promote
 understanding of
 things Scottish





Christmas Cookies Recipe

Recommend trying this one!

Christmas Cookie ingredients:

1 cup water
1 tsp baking soda
1 cup sugar
1 tsp salt
1 cup of brown sugar - lemon juice
4 large eggs
1 cup nuts
2 cups dried fruit
1 bottle Jose Cuervo Tequila
(white or gold, your preference)

Sample the Cuervo to check its quality. Take out a large mixing bowl. Only the highest quality Cuervo will do; sample the Cuervo again making certain it is the highest quality. Pour one lever cup and drink.

Turn on the electric mixer...Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one tiskpoon of sugar...Beat again. At this point it's best to make sure the Cuervo is still OK, try another cup...just in case. After all, these are for Christmas. Turn off the mixerer thingy making sure fingers are away from the roundy beter thingamajigs. Break 2 leggs and add to the bowl. Grab the dried fruit with both hands, close your eyes and chuck the cup of fruit into the bowl. Pick the fruit up off the floor...Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers, just pry it loose with a drewscriver. Sample the Cuervo to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift two cups of salt, beaking thoda, or something. Whadda I carew, whadda you carew, who carews? Pour a double and check the Jose Cuervo, m-mm-mmmm. Now shift the lemon juice and strain the nuts. Add one table. Add a speatoon of sugar, ro somefink. Whatever you

can find. Greash the oven. Turn the shaking beat, shookie teet, the tin pan 360 degrees and try not to fall over. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Finall, throw the bowl through the window, finish the Cose Juervo and make sure to put the stove int the dishwasher.
CHERRY MISTMAS!!!!

St. Andrews Wool Blankets

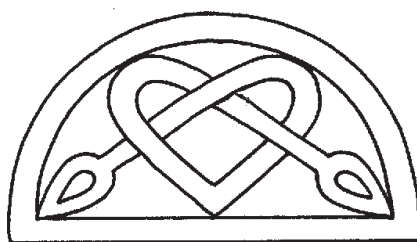
Sandy and Allen Simpson sent in this timely bit of news: "Found something that may interest other members...especially for Christmas! Sierra Trading Post, Item #91686, Johnstons of Elgin, 100% lambswool woven throw, St. Andrews Cross pattern, Regular price \$175.00, on Sale for \$49.95. Can be purchased through their website."

Celtic Crossing Jam Sessions

One of our favorite firemen and pipers, David Corbett, has been recording the live Celtic music sessions at one of our favorite pubs, Celtic Crossing. He has sent some samples along for us to share, with this message: "Well, here's at least 3 tracks. Hopefully more tracks, and better quality in the future." You can listen to the music (with the charming ambient pub noise in the background) at

<http://www.birlsgonewild.com/podcasts/CelticCrossing/11142006/>

And yes, that 2nd track is "Star of the County Down", our editor's favorite Celtic tune.



News from Scotland

James Glennie was a History teacher at Inverurie Academy and a long time resident of the town. James was also past president of the Garioch Heritage Society. Sadly, James died at the end of October this year. He began writing poetry for fun and published a collection of his poetry around four years ago, although many of his poems were published in local newspapers and magazines. He has poems in the collection called "The Living Doric". He was a keen and active supporter of our local culture. He'll be a 'sair miss' to his many friends and would have been delighted to hear that his verse had elicited interest beyond our shores. *from Murray Shoolbraid*

CELTIC CHRISTMAS

Need help getting in the Christmas spirit? You might want to attend the **Celtic Christmas** service at **Evergreen Presbyterian Church** on Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30 p.m. Music by pipers and by Celtic World will be featured, along with favorite scriptures, prayers, and songs. At the service, Reverend Ken Letterman, senior minister and MSSI member, says, "Celtic attire is encouraged."



Flowers of the Forest

Condolences are extended to friends and family of Bill Halliday, MSSI Board member.

Condolences are also extended to friends and family of P.J. Smoot, wife of MSSI member, Jim Smoot.

SCOTTISH CONNECTION

It is December, and among the (overly) familiar music we will hear on car radios and store p.a. systems is “Joy to the World” by Isaac Watts. Did you know there was another Isaac Watts, who had a **Scottish Connection**?

This Isaac Watts was born in Aberdeen in 1817 and was trained as a stonemason. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1845. He settled on a farm in Iowa in 1855 but also plied his masonry skills in many public works. Additionally, he carried the mail in his community. Of his last days it was written, “Mr. Watts had for some time been slightly ailing, but continued up to the day before his death to carry the mail to and from the depot.” Not a bad epitaph.

But, back to that OTHER Isaac Watts, the famous one, did you know that he, too, had a **Scottish Connection**? With a name like Watts, he probably had a Scotsman somewhere in his family tree, but recent (admittedly superficial) research has failed to disclose it. However, in 1728 he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unsolicited Doctor of Divinity diploma. It is by virtue of this degree that he was known as “Dr. Watts” for the last twenty years of his life. Addressing how much Watts deserved this award, Samuel Johnson proclaimed, “Academical honours would have more value, if they were always bestowed with equal judgement.”

So, next time you hear “Joy to the World” or encounter your faithful mail carrier, remember that they both have a (somewhat oblique) **Scottish Connection**.

THE SCOTTISH DIRK

In all the rich variety of the world of knives, few are as distinctive as the Scottish dirk. It is still around today, but in its current form, the dirk is a massive piece of male jewelry worn as part of formal evening dress. Like many a Scot who wore it, however, the dirk had both humble and violent beginnings.

The first true dirks appeared in the early 1600s, evolving from the medieval ballock dagger. The ballock dagger was a stabbing weapon designed to pierce armor, with a heavy, sharply pointed blade and a handle in the form of an erect penis with the testicles – the “ballocks” – forming protective bulges between the handle and blade. In polite company the weapon was sometimes called a kidney dagger.

This early dirk was carried in a leather sheath, usually worn in the front center, with the point dangling between the wearer’s legs. It frequently had a single “by-knife” or utility knife with a 5 or 6 inch blade, carried in a pocket on the outside of the sheath. Along with a spoon, the by knife was the Highlander’s primary eating utensil.

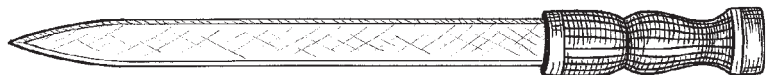
As the dirk continued to evolve, it became what today we would call a camp knife. Firearms made body armor obsolete, so there was no longer any need for the heavy, sharply tapered point. By 1700 a broader but thinner spear point more suited for general purpose cutting became the norm. The single by-knife was reduced to a size around a 4-inch blade and a matching two tined fork was incorporated into the sheath.

Following the Battle of Culloden, all weapons were forbidden to the Highlanders. Even the bagpipes were classed as a weapon of war. To be caught wearing a kilt or tartan in any form brought a harsh and automatic sentence. The English nevertheless bowed to the obvious because the Scots were a tough combative people and good fighters. So the dirk, kilt and targe lived on in the Highland regiments that began to be formed in the British army. In 1782 the English proscription against Highland weapons and dress was repealed.

Sir Walter Scott, in the early 1800s, through his novels romanticized the age of chivalry and the code of honor of the Highlander. By the dawn of the Victorian age, he and other writers had transformed the poverty-stricken Highland clansman into a romantic figure. Even today, males of the British royal family often wear kilts while in Scotland.

Like the kilt, the dirk is unique to Western culture. Although it comes in an infinite variety, it has always been instantly recognizable as a Scottish knife: it differs from other large sheath knives in that it has been in continuous use since early 1600s. Where else in Western society is it considered high fashion to stroll into a formal dinner dance wearing a knife with a 13 inch blade?

Exerpts from an article by Joe D. Huddleston, Military History magazine Dec 2006 Submitted by Bud Hisky



W K N O

Those nice folks at Channel 10 - WKNO have lined up several special programs in December that we Scots in particular will enjoy. Be sure to catch the following:

- "Celtic Woman - A New Journey" brings back those five delightful young Irish ladies with a new friend from New Zealand (though her forebears hailed from County Monaghan). This performance was recorded at historic Slane Castle on whose grounds are found the River Boyne and Tara. The special airs at 7 pm and 10:30 pm on Sunday, December 3; 9:00 pm on Friday, December 8; 1:30 am and 2:00 pm on Saturday, December 9.

- "Carrie's War" - "A sister and brother leave war-torn London to live with a troubled family in Wales, where they stumble on magical adventures." Airs at 8:00 pm and midnight on Sunday, December 17.

- "Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story" - This may not have anything Scottish or Celtic about it, but the actor depicted in the article about this special in WKNO's magazine bears an uncanny resemblance to our Bud Hisky and appears to be wearing a tam o'shanter and a tartan scarf. It's about "1,200 emigrants from England and Europe who became stranded on the high plains of Wyoming in late October 1856." (Maybe they don't know the difference in England and Britain?)

- and don't forget Tartan TV every Saturday at 11:00 am.

RESEARCH? RIGHT! SPIT IT OUT? SURE!

Just as we're all getting into the holiday spirit(s), Bill Crump shared the following from the Sunday, June 18, 2006 issue of THE TENNESSEAN in Nashville. It is the highest proof article we've run since the Scottish Connection on bourbon whiskey:

"Knoxville - In the interest of science, University of Tennessee students are studying Scotch whisky, and their efforts at education have produced a unique donation of 590 bottles of a single-grain scotch.

"Chemical engineering students in the special program learn about how the spirit was made and matured by using small samples of the scotch for analysis, calculations and computer modeling.

"The students, who must be 21 to participate, also get the chance to visit the Bruichladdich (pronounced brook-LAD-ee) distillery in Scotland to learn how to make scotch, said John Collier, head of the chemical engineering department.

"They're getting a lot of good chemical engineering experience from it. They run the extractors, the fermenters, the distillation systems," said Collier, who began leading the program in 2003.

"I just thought it sounded like a good idea to go make scotch for a lab credit, be able to see Scotland and see how the chemical engineering plays a role in traditions like whiskey-making," said senior Jennifer Allison, who returned from her distillery trip last week.

"Back in Knoxville, the students may earn more credit by experimenting with distillery samples. A graduate student is studying the interaction

of whiskey with the wooden cask in which it ages.

"The program prompted a donation of Scotch whisky worth \$67,850 - or \$115 a bottle - to the UT Foundation, the university's fundraising arm.

"Some of the whiskey is being used in chemical engineering research; the rest will be sold to help pay for more students to attend the distillery class.

"University officials hope the public doesn't get the wrong impression.

"The foundation board members had lawyers look over the deal before signing anything," foundation secretary Robert Harrill said.

"Some people laughed, but no one asked any questions about it. Once we said the chemical engineering students would be using the scotch for their research, no one had any problems about it at all," he said.

"Some of the research must involve tasting, right?

"When you taste it, you don't have to drink it. You can put it in your mouth and spit it out," Collier said. "They (the students) don't all like scotch, but they like the fact that it is something in their discipline."

"The donor says he's not much of a scotch drinker, either.

"Tom Neal, a Tennessee alumnus from Castalian Springs, bought the 31-year-old single-grain scotch from the now-defunct Strathmore distillery in Glasgow as an investment, but decided to donate it after learning of UT's distillery field trips.

"Neal's single-grain scotch is stored at Bruichladdich, which produces single-malt scotch. Both scotches are made from barley and are unblended."

-by Elizabeth A. Davis, Associated Press

Calendar of Events

Mondays

Caledonia Chorale 7:00 p.m.-Church of the Holy Communion, Walnut Grove at Perkins, 272-7159 for info.

Thursdays

Wolf River Pipes & Drums, 6:30-9:30 at St. Luke's Lutheran; G'town Pkwy. 753-9494 for more info.

Fridays

Dancing: 7:30 til 10:00 p.m. - Idlewild Pres.; 1750 Union Ave, West entrance.

1st, 3rd & 5th Friday

Contra Dancing. 278-1216.

2nd & 4th Friday

Scottish Country Dancing. 274-1889

December 5

Board Meeting at Shoneys Sycamore View at Summer.- 5:30 pm.

December 11

Regular monthly meeting:

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

All Saints Episcopal
1508 S. Whitestation

6:00 pm dinner

7:00 pm Party

Annual Christmas Party.

A RIDDLE

Hichty, tichty, paradichty,
Cled a' in green.
The king couldna read it,
Nae mair could the queen.
They sent for the Wyss Men
Oot o' the East.
They said it had horns,
But wisna a beast.

Scottish/ Celtic RadioMusic

Sundays, 12 noon

"Delta Celtica"
Cassie Tobin, host
WEVL-FM 89.9

Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

"The Thistle and Shamrock"
WKNO-FM 91.1

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.

"Strands of the Celtic Knot"
Robert Campbell, host
WEVL-FM 89.9

Sundays, 6:00 p.m.

"The Thistle & Shamrock,"
WMAV-FM 90.3



Dec 10 | The Singing Kettle

Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise have created Britain's most successful children's singing group, the Singing Kettle. Fiona Ritchie met the couple in their home village of Kingskettle to learn about their music - new songs and others passed down through generations of Scottish children - and to enjoy hearing the stories behind such classics as "The Train to Glasgow."

Dec 17 | Celtic Dance

Inspired in part by the success of theatrical shows featuring traditional dance styles, Celtic instrumentalists are today increasingly keen to re-connect their music with dancers. Hear the rhythms of the Scottish Stepdance Company, the Cherish the Ladies stepdancers, The Occasionals country dance band, and the step-driven score of Bill Whelan's "Riverdance."

Dec 24 | Season's Greetings from The Thistle & Shamrock

Our seasonal music, greetings, and readings will beam light and life into your holiday gatherings.

Dec 31 | Fiona's First Foot

The most revered of the ancient Scottish Hogmanay (New Year's Eve) pagan rituals dates back to Viking days and involves visiting the homes of neighbors and friends soon after the bells at midnight. To bring most luck to the household, a first footer should be a tall dark stranger, bearing gifts of Scotch whisky, a lump of coal, and rich fruit cake or shortbread. Fiona talks you through the traditions of the celebration, glass in hand, with gifts of music to set your new year off on the right footing.

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**On a cold and rainy
night the WKNO Art
Auction phones were
staffed by some of
MSSI's finest!
Great exposure!**

**Next Regular Monthly Meeting -Dec. 11th - Christmas Party Potluck
All Saints Episcopal, 1508 S. White Station; Dinner at 6:00
Board Meeting, Tuesday, Dec. 5th at 6:30 Shoneys at Summer and Sycamore View**

GRACE NOTES

The Memphis Scottish Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 241934
Memphis, TN 38124-1934

