

A COLLECTION OF THE BEST OF THE LION



Cuimhnichibh air na daoine bho'n d'thainig sibh
"Remember the people from whom you come."

Butte County Scottish Society Newsletter

2006 ~ 2009

GOLD RUSH STARTED BY DESCENDED SCOT

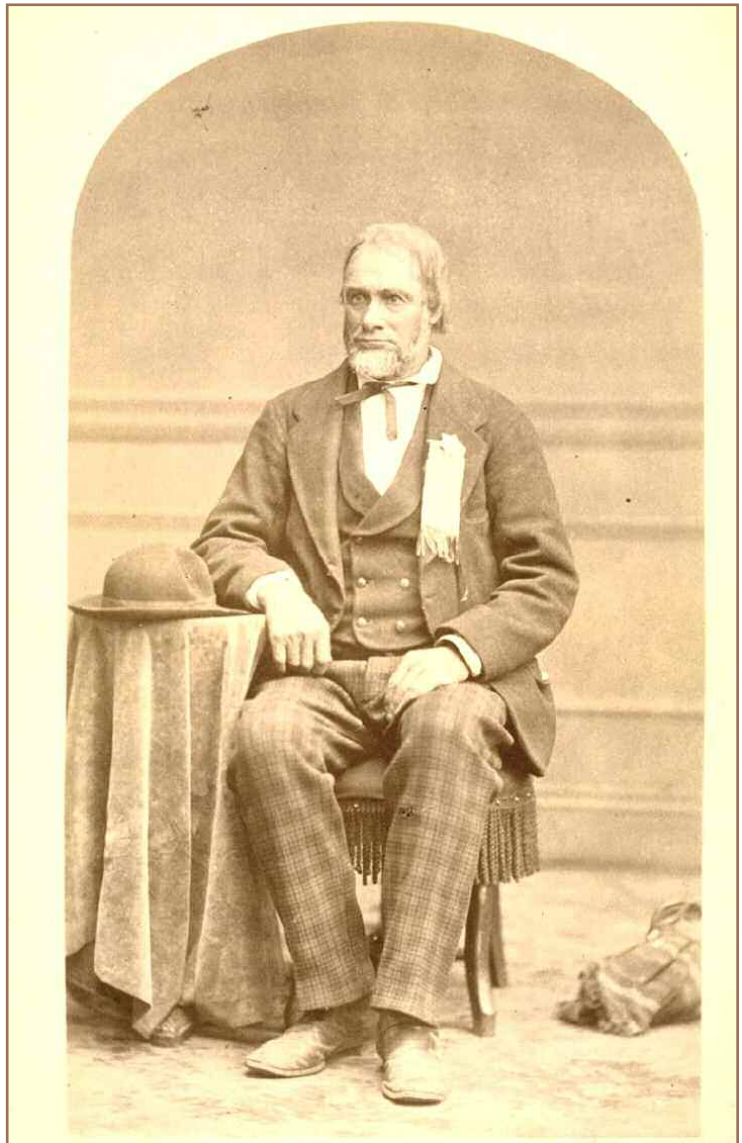
The California Gold Rush began as a result of a descended Scot's discovery of gold in 1847. James Wilson Marshall was born in 1810 in New Jersey. In 1845 he moved to California's Sacramento Valley where he found work with John Sutter at Sutter's Fort. By the end of the year he owned and operated a small farm of his own on Butte Creek but continued to work for Sutter as well.

Marshall joined Captain John Fremont's California Battalion following the Bear Flag Revolt and saw action in Southern California. In 1847 Marshall returned to his Butte Creek farm to find it had been virtually destroyed by ransackers. Then went back to work for John Sutter and was hired to construct two mills. The first was a grist mill located on the American River near Sutter's Fort. The second was a saw mill located on the South Fork of the American River in the Cullomah Valley. Sutter and Marshall were partners in this venture. Late on January 23, while working on the dredging tailrace for the mill, he found quartz rock in the river bed. The find made him think that gold might be present. The next morning he returned to the tailrace and found gold nuggets. Marshall reported his discovery to Sutter on January 28.

Sutter and Marshall tried to keep the discovery secret, but word leaked out from the mill and from the fort and there was very little that either Sutter or Marshall could do to stop it. Marshall completed the saw mill and continued to operate it as Cullomah quickly grew into a gold mining town. Marshall joined in the prospecting and found his share of placer gold, but never made a big strike. For a while he was hounded by people who believed that he had some sort of supernatural power that had led to his earlier discovery of gold. In 1853 he literally fled into the mountains to hide.

Toward the end of the 1860s Marshall invested his savings in the Grey Eagle mine a few miles east of Coloma at Kelsey. He also tried his hand on the lecture circuit. None of his business ventures were profitable, but in 1872 the California legislature awarded him a monthly pension of \$200 in recognition of his discovery of gold. The term of the pension was two years but it was renewed for another year at the rate of \$100 per month. Marshall

invested some of his money in the Grey Eagle mine and some in a blacksmith shop in Kelsey. He was found dead in his blacksmith shop on August 10, 1885 and was buried at Coloma. He was 75 years old.



James Wilson Marshall discovered gold in California in 1847

ABOUT SCOTLAND

Scotland (Alba in Scots Gaelic) is a nation in northwest Europe, and a constituent country of the United Kingdom. It occupies the northern third of the island of Great Britain and shares a land border to the south with England and is bounded by the North Sea on the east and the Atlantic Ocean on the west. Its capital city is Edinburgh. It is frequently referred to as “the best small country in the world”.



The Saltire flying over the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh

The Kingdom of Scotland was united in 843, by King Kenneth I of Scotland, and is thus one of the oldest existing countries in the world. Scotland was as an independent state until May 1, 1707, when the parliaments of Scotland and England passed the Act of Union which merged Scotland with England to create the Kingdom of Great Britain.

The flag of Scotland - the Saltire - is thought to be the oldest national flag still in use. The patron saint of Scotland is Saint Andrew, and Saint Andrew's Day is celebrated in the country on November 30. Scotland is home to some of the greatest inventions and discoveries of modern times. The television and the telephone are two of the most notable inventions. Scotland is also home to one of the most important breakthroughs in modern medicine - the discovery of penicillin. The natural logarithm, modern economics, and the popular sport of Golf all originated in Scotland.

THE ORIGIN OF TARTAN

The Celts for many thousands of years are known to have woven chequered or striped cloth and a few of these ancient samples have been found across Europe and Scandinavia. It is believed that the introduction of this form of weaving came to the West of Northern Britain with the Iron age Celtic Scots from Ireland in the 5th to 6th century B.C.

Early Romans talked of the Celtic tribes wearing bright striped clothing - there was no word at that time for chequered. One of the earliest examples of tartan found in Scotland dates back to the 3rd century A.D., where a small sample of woollen check known as the Falkirk tartan (now in the National Museum of Scotland) was found used as a stopper in an earthenware pot to protect a treasure trove of silver coins buried close to the Antonine Wall near Falkirk. It is a simple two coloured check or tartan which, was identified as the undyed brown and white of the native Soay Sheep. Colours were determined by local plants that could be used for dyes.

NATIONAL TARTAN DAY

From the founding of this country to present day, Americans of Scottish descent have played a vibrant and influential role in its development. In 1998, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution to recognize April 6 as National Tartan Day to honor the many contributions of Scottish Americans.

The date, April 6, commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320, which asserted Scotland's authority over English territorial claims. That declaration was a model for the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

Among prominent Scots found in U.S. history are founding statesman Alexander Hamilton; revolutionary Patrick Henry; pioneer Daniel Boone; inventors Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison; industrialist Andrew Carnegie; naturalist, explorer, and writer, John Muir; and author Washington Irving. At least 11 Presidents of the USA were of Scots ancestry including William McKinley, Andrew Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, James Polk, Lyndon Johnson and Ulysses Grant.



Museum installation of traditional weaver at the Tartan Weaving Mill & Exhibition in Edinburgh

MUSICAL ARCHES OF ROSSLYN CHAPEL

After 27 years of research, Stuart Mitchell, a composer, with his father Thomas Mitchell, a former Royal Air Force codebreaker, have deciphered a piece of Scottish music coded in the intricately carved arches of Rosslyn Chapel built over 500 years ago by William St. Clair in Rosslyn, Scotland.

Rosslyn Chapel is well known for the elaborate and mysterious carvings that cover the stone surfaces of the interior. But Stuart and Thomas were particularly interested in the unique cubes that are carved along the arches throughout the chapel.

Thomas Mitchell's studies in ancient music helped him to recognize the carvings as an ancient musical system called cymatics, in which patterns are formed by sound waves at specific pitches. The shapes appear when a note is used to vibrate a sheet of metal, or a sheet of glass covered in powder. Different frequencies produce patterns such as flowers, diamonds and hexagons. Thomas and Stuart have transcribed the music of the cubes and named it The Rosslyn Motet. Stuart and his father believe the tune was encrypted in the 15th century chapel outside Edinburgh because knowledge of music may have been considered heretical at the time

the chapel was built.

In May 2007, they staged the first public performance of the medieval music they found hidden in the carvings. Stuart Mitchell has produced a recording of the Rosslyn Motet which is available for purchase. To hear an excerpt of the music and to see a video demonstrating cymatics visit www.rosslynmotet.com.

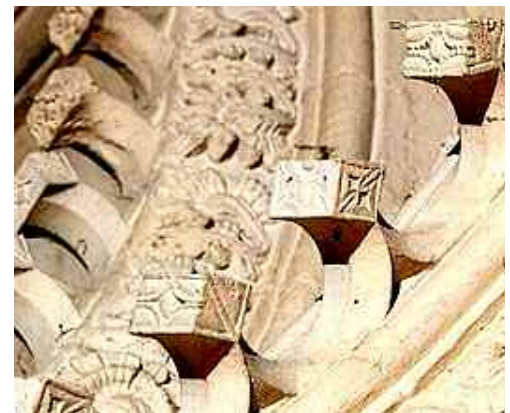


ABOVE: Rosslyn Chapel located near Edinburgh was built in the 15th century and is the subject of many legends, such as being the hiding place of a mysterious treasure of the Knights Templar.



LEFT: The ornate 500 year old stone arches are throughout the ceiling of Rosslyn Chapel.

BELOW: The cubes decorating the stone arches are carved with secret musical notations



ROBERT BURNS

Scotland's Favourite Son

Born in Alloway, Ayrshire, in 1759 to William Burness, a poor tenant farmer, and Agnes Broun, Robert Burns was the eldest of seven children. He spent his youth working his father's farm. In spite of his poverty he was extremely well read. This was due in large part to the insistence of his father, who employed a tutor for Robert and younger brother Gilbert. His interest in writing in Scottish was prompted by his mother who sang to her children in 'auld' Scots.

At age 15, Robert was the principal worker on the farm and this prompted him to start writing in an attempt to find "some kind of counterpoise for his circumstances." It was at this tender age that Burns penned his first verse, "My Handsome Nell", which was an ode to the other subjects that dominated his life, namely scotch and women.

When his father died in 1784, Robert and his brother became partners in the farm. However, Robert was more interested in the romantic nature of poetry than the arduous graft of ploughing and, having had some misadventures with the ladies (resulting in several illegitimate children, including twins to the woman who would become his wife, Jean Armour), he planned to escape to Jamaica and work as a bookkeeper on a plantation. From this he was dissuaded by a letter from the poet Thomas Blacklock, and at the suggestion of his brother published his poems in the volume, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* in June 1786. This edition was brought out by a local printer in Kilmarnock and contained much of his best work, including "The Twa Dogs", "Address to the Deil", "Hallowe'en", "The Cottar's Saturday Night", "To a Mouse", and "To a Mountain Daisy".

The success of the work was immediate. The poet's name rang over all Scotland, and he was induced to go to Edinburgh to superintend the issue of a new edition. There he was received as an equal by the brilliant circle of men of letters which the city then boasted – the philosopher Dugald Stewart, Lieutenant-General William Robertson, the Reverend Dr. Hugh Blair, etc., and was a guest at aristocratic tables, where he bore himself with unaffected dignity. Here also Walter Scott, then a boy of 15, saw him and describes him as of "manners rustic, not clownish. His countenance ...

more massive than it looks in any of the portraits ... a strong expression of shrewdness in his lineaments; the eye alone indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, and literally glowed when he spoke with feeling or interest."

Jean Armour's father allowed her to marry him, now that he was no longer a lowly wordsmith.

Alas, the trappings of fame did not bring fortune and he took up a job as an excise-man to supplement the meager income. While collecting taxes he continued to write, contributing songs to the likes of James Johnston's "Scot's Musical Museum" and George Thomson's "Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs." In all, more than 400 of Burns' songs are still in existence.

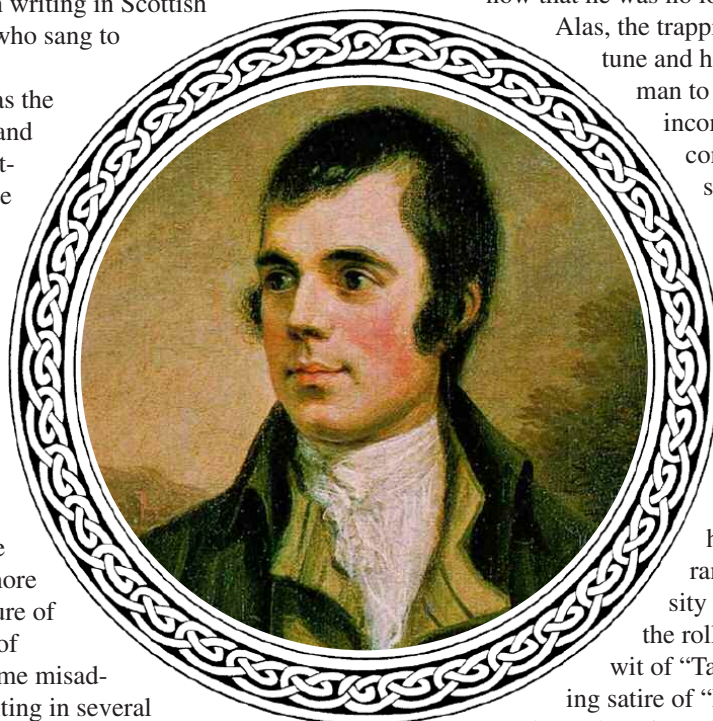
The genius of Burns is marked by spontaneity, directness, and sincerity, and his variety is marvellous, ranging from the tender intensity of some of his lyrics through the rollicking humour and blazing wit of "Tam o' Shanter" to the blistering satire of "Holy Willie's Prayer" and

"The Holy Fair." His life is a tragedy, and his character full of flaws. But he fought at tremendous odds, and as Thomas Carlyle in his great Essay says, "Granted the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged, the pilot is blameworthy ... but to know how blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs."

The last years of Burns' life were devoted to penning great poetic masterpieces such as "The Lea Rig", "Tam O'Shanter" and a "Red, Red Rose." He died aged 37 of heart disease exacerbated by the hard manual work he undertook when he was young. His death occurred on the same day that his wife Jean gave birth to his last son, Maxwell.

On the day of his burial more than 10,000 people came to watch and pay their respects. However, his popularity then was nothing compared to the heights it has reached since.

On the anniversary of his birth, Scots both at home and abroad celebrate Robert Burns with a supper, where they address the haggis, the ladies and whisky. A celebration which would undoubtedly make him proud.



THE WORDS OF ROBERT BURNS LIVE ON

The words and ideas of Robert Burns spread fast during his lifetime and his influence persists even now, more than 200 years later. All over the world, people sing "Auld Lang Syne" to bring in the new year. "My love is like a red, red rose" readily springs to mind when trying to recall a romantic verse. The phrase "cutty sark" from "Tam O' Shanter" has found many popular uses. These are only a few examples of how the words of Robert Burns are found in our everyday language.

The common phrase "clean as a whistle" was originally translated from the line "Her mutchkin stowp as toom's a whistle;" from Burns' poem "The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer." The title of John Steinbeck's book "Of Mice and Men" is taken directly from these lines of "To A Mouse", often used to illustrate themes of fate and futility:

The best-laid schemes o' mice an 'men
Gang aft agley,

Burns is well known for the passion and insight found in his poetry. He often expressed himself in Auld Scots, the language of the common folk of his day. Auld Scots might have been lost and forgotten had it not been for Burns' love of its evocative qualities and its deep roots in

Scottish culture. In Burns' time, it was thought better for the Scottish to speak "proper" English and Auld Scots was considered uncouth by many. But it was Burns who resurrected the beauty and dignity of Scotland's native speech, preserving it forever in song and poetry.

The words of Robert Burns have even had influence on the progress of humanity. Many who strive for social justice and equality in this world are inspired by Burns' song "A Man's A Man For A' That". He foretold of a better world in the last lines of that song:

It's coming yet for a' that,
That Man to Man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

In this line from "A Man's A Man For A' That", Burns reveals the esteem he held for the honest man; "The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor, Is king o' men for a' that." Burns' high regard for honest living and his celebration of the Human Spirit pervade his writing. He exalted the commonplace into songs of beauty and wit. The words of Robert Burns are just as resonate today as when he wrote them. In fact, it may be the future generations who will best understand what he truly had to tell us.

Tam O' Shanter and Auld Alloway Kirk

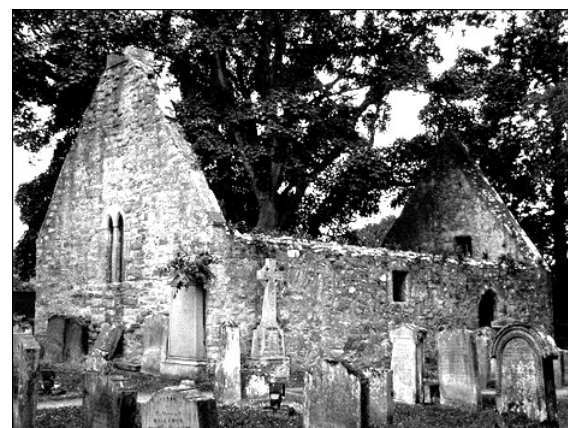
Regarded as one of the greatest poems ever written, Robert Burns' "Tam O' Shanter" was based on local folklore from Ayrshire on the southwest coast of Scotland where Burns lived. Burns' friend, Captain Francis Grose traveled about to find sites to be included in his book "Antiquities of Scotland." Burns asked Captain Grose to include the nearby Alloway Kirk in his work as Burns was quite fond of the old kirk and he even had his father buried there.

As the place was said to be haunted, Captain Grose requested of Burns to write a ghost story to accompany the drawing of Alloway Kirk in his book. The result was the memorable tale of "Tam O' Shanter."

All the places in this poem can be visited today. Alloway Kirk stands as an ancient ruin much as it did in Burns' day. Also, the bridge over the River Doon where Tam made his escape, exists today just as it did when Burns wrote of it in 1790. Burns' tale of "Tam O' Shanter" includes details from several stories told in his time of the old haunted kirk. Today, his tale stands as the epitome of the hapless traveler who encounters the supernatural and lives to tell the story.



Above: Alloway Kirk in 1790 as illustrated in Captain Grose's book "Antiquities of Scotland."



Right: Alloway Kirk as it appears today where Tam O' Shanter is said to have witnessed the dance of witches. Robert Burns had his father, William Burns, buried here in 1784.

2009 MARKS 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF SCOTLAND'S BARD

2009 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns who was born January 25, 1759 amidst a blast of icy wind in a humble cottage in Alloway. This important anniversary celebrating the birth of Scotland's Favourite Son is the inspiration behind Scotland's year of Homecoming. Many events are planned throughout the coming year attracting visitors from around the world. One of the signature events will be Gathering 2009 to be held in July in Edinburgh. It promises to be the largest gathering of the clans in history.

Of course, the center of attention for many Burns fans will be the village of Alloway on the River Doon where he was born. Alloway is located in southwest Scotland close to Ayr. Near the cottage in the heart of the village where Robert Burns was born, you'll find the old bridge over the River Doon, also known as the Brig O' Doon. Near the bridge is the Auld Alloway Kirk where Tam O' Shanter was enthralled by a dance of witches and then fled for his life over the auld Brig O' Doon in Burns' famous poem "Tam O' Shanter".

Adjacent to the Burns cottage is a museum where you can find original manuscripts in the poet's own hand. There is a nineteenth century memorial to Burns designed by Thomas Hamilton at the foot of the village next to the Auld Kirk. Robert Burns' father, William Burns, is buried in the



This cottage in Alloway, Scotland is where Robert Burns was born

Auld Kirk. At night, green lights are illuminated over the Auld Kirk, adding to its ghostly appearance.

The National Trust for Scotland has work underway to start a major redevelopment of Burns National Heritage Park involving the redevelopment of the whole site and building the new Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, which will open in 2010. The museum will be dedicated to celebrating the immense talent of Scotland's greatest writer and will house the most important Burns collection in the world.



ABOVE: Auld Alloway Kirk featured in Robert Burns' poem "Tam O' Shanter"



LEFT: Tam O' Shanter flees across the Brig o' Doon

BELOW: The old Brig O' Doon as it stands today



RIGHT: Alloway's memorial to Robert Burns



PLEASANTON GAMES ALWAYS A TREAT

Each year, on Labor Day weekend, the Caledonian Club of San Francisco sponsors one of the largest Highland Games on earth in Pleasanton, California. This world renowned event has been going on for over 140 years.

Though most people who come back have their favorite events that they don't want to miss, there is so much to see and do at the games that you can go year after year and see new things. You can visit your clan tent; see pipe bands, fiddlers, harpists, dancers; watch the many athletic events; see the birds of prey; watch the sheep dog trials; see a game of shinty; or check out the wares of the many vendors. These games are always enjoyable. For more info go to www.caledonian.org



Above: This caber is 127 lbs and 19 feet long.
Left: Brian & Megan Grandfield



Athletes throw 52 lbs in the air in the weight for height event.



Highland dancers exhibit their skills at the closing ceremonies.



In this throw Mindy Pockowski set a new world record in weight for height.



The massed bands parade before the grandstands at the closing ceremonies

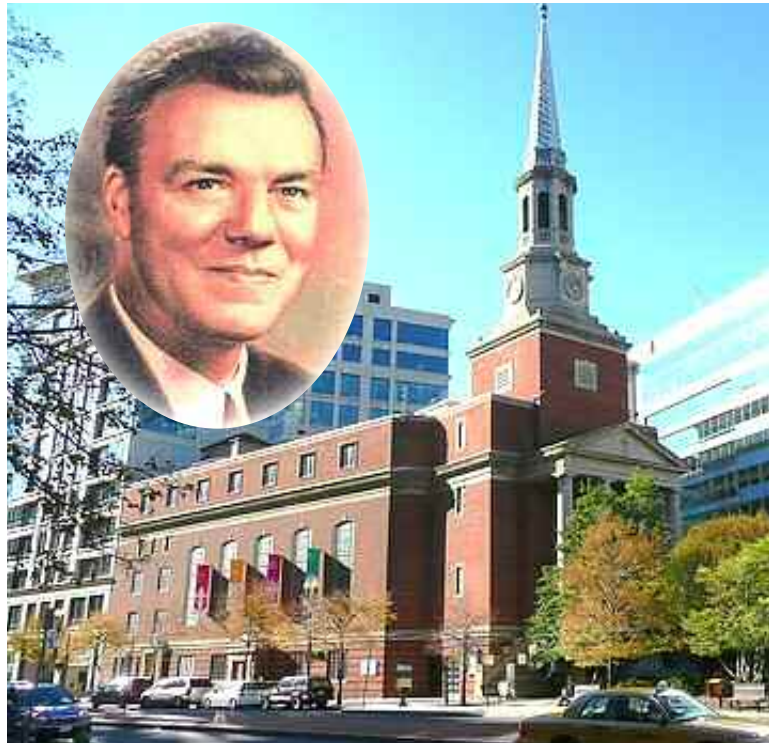
KIRKING TRADITION TOOK ROOT IN AMERICA OVER 60 YEARS AGO

The Kirkin' o' the Tartan' is a traditional church ceremony to honor and bless the Clans of Scotland including Clan Dia or 'Family of God' which includes all people. Legends abound about the ancient origins of 'The Kirking o' the Tartan' ceremony. It is believed the custom began in Scotland when the clans were called to war and assembled at the Kirk (church) for roll call and a blessing before engaging in battle. It has also been linked to the 1748 Act of Proscription, when the wearing of tartan was banned and Highlanders hid pieces of tartan cloth about their person and brought them to church to be secretly blessed at a particular point in the service.

There are links too with the The Cameronians, a regiment raised in 1689 from proscribed Presbyterians in Scotland known as the Covenanters. The Covenanters posted armed look-outs during their mainly outdoor services to warn of approaching government forces coming to break up the meeting and arrest the worshippers, since participation could result in imprisonment, torture or even execution. The Cameronian Regiment remembered these times by going to church parade armed, and posted sentries on the four corners of the church. The minister could not start the service until an officer shouted the all-clear.

What is known for certain about today's Kirkin' o' the Tartan ceremony, is that it was started by Rev. Peter Marshall, originally from Coatbridge in Scotland (old Covenanter territory), pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC and chaplain to the US Senate. He was proud of his ancestral homeland and was a member of the St. Andrew's Society of Washington DC. On April 27, 1941, Reverend Marshall gave a sermon entitled 'The Kirkin

o' the Tartans' and thus a legend was born and Kirplings began to be held in the Presbyterian churches across the USA. Later, The Kirkin' of the Tartan ceremony began to be held in churches in other denominations, but did not gain wide popularity until the 70's. Today the Kirkin' o' the Tartan is not limited to Presbyterian Churches, but is often found in many Protestant services as well as Roman Catholic services.



Reverend Peter Marshall and the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC, site of the first Kirking o' the Tartan in America

*At a Kirking in
Corning for Saint
Andrew's Day 2006
pictured left to right:
Jim McKasson, Ray
McElwain, Rev.
Maryly Adair, Bill
Casper, Ken Clark,
Don Button, Gary
Kennedy, Don Grand-
field, Gary Herbolt,
Paul Bissett*



SAINT ANDREW, PATRON SAINT OF SCOTLAND

Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland and Saint Andrew's Day or Feast of Saint Andrew is celebrated on the 30th of November each year. In Scotland, this is also an official flag day when every building with a flagpole flies the Flag of Scotland (The Saltire).

According to the Gospels, Andrew was a fisherman



Stained glass window in St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Corning, California

from Galilee, the brother of Simon Peter and the first disciple of Jesus. After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, Andrew traveled widely in Greece and Asia Minor, preaching and making converts to the new Christian religion. Eventually he fell foul of the Roman authorities and was crucified in southern Greece. Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross at his own request, because he deemed himself unworthy to be crucified on the same type cross on which Christ had been crucified. The X-shaped cross is now known as Saint Andrew's Cross or Saltire.

It is believed that around 350 AD relics of Saint Andrew were brought to the monastery of Kilrymont in Fife, Scotland, which later became St. Andrews. The relics were said to include three fingers of the saint's right hand, a part of one of his arms, one kneecap, and one of his teeth. St Andrews became a popular pilgrimage destination after miracles were attributed to the saint.

One legend says that in 832 AD an army of Scots led by King Angus was facing an army from the kingdom of Northumbria. The Scottish king prayed to St Andrew for help, and the saltire of St Andrew appeared above them against the background of a clear blue sky. This encouraged the

Scots and the battle was duly fought and won. This also explains the origin of the white cross against the blue background on Scotland's national flag (reputedly the oldest national flag in Europe).

In the Wars of Independence, fought by Scotland in the 13th and 14th centuries, the Scots used the story as part of the diplomatic battle to persuade the papacy to recognise Scotland as an independent kingdom. Pope Boniface, in a papal bull of 1299, demanded that Edward I of England end the war against Scotland. The pope reminded Edward how Scotland "was converted, and won to the unity of the Christian faith, by the venerable relics of the blessed Apostle Andrew, with a great outpouring of the divine power".

Along with the customary observances and celebrations, it is interesting to note an old folk superstition connected to Saint Andrew's Day. Around midnight on Nov. 29, the day before St Andrew's Day, it was traditional for girls to pray to St. Andrew for a husband. They would make a wish and look for a sign that they had been heard. A girl wishing to marry could throw a shoe at a door. If the toe of the shoe pointed in the direction of the exit, then she would marry and leave her parents' house within a year. A girl could also peel a whole apple without breaking the peel and throw the peel over the shoulder. If the peel formed a letter of the alphabet, then this suggested the name of her future groom.

Saint Andrew remains deeply embedded in the national identity of Scotland. And as it is believed that Saint Andrew has brought many blessings to Scotland, Scots will always revere Saint Andrew as their patron saint.



Stockbridge Pipe Band on their annual march in Edinburgh on Saint Andrew's Day

BCSS SUPPORTS CULLODEN MEMORIAL

The Butte County Scottish Society has made a donation to The National Trust for Scotland in support of the Culloden Battlefield Memorial Project. The donation of \$100 went toward the conservation of the historical site of the battlefield and the completion of the new Culloden Visitor Center which officially opened in April. In recognition of our donation, the name of our Scottish society will be inscribed on the ceiling of the new visitor center.

The site of this historic battle is on Culloden Moor near Inverness, Scotland. The Jacobite army, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, was defeated here by the Government army of the Duke of Cumberland in 1746 and ended the Jacobite efforts to restore the rule of the Stuart kings to Great Britain. Scots fought on both sides of this conflict that was the last hand to hand battle fought on British soil.

The battlefield has been restored to its original condition on the day of the battle and the new visitor center features state of the art interactive exhibits that convey how this battle that lasted only one hour changed the way of life of the Highlands and Islands

forever.

The interactive exhibition follows the progress of the Jacobite army on their campaign, and offers a unique insight into what life was like in Scotland at the time of the Battle. Visitors are taken to the very heart of the conflict in a 360° immersion film, and shadow real-life characters through the years of the Jacobite rebellion and find out what happened to them in the often brutal aftermath of the Battle.

For more information go to:
www.nts.org.uk/Culloden/Home/



RIGHT: The ceiling of the Culloden Battlefield visitor center where "Butte County Scottish Society" is inscribed with the names of donors.

BELOW: The new Culloden Battlefield visitor center with state of the art interactive exhibits



HOGMANAY

A Fresh Start

In Scotland, New Year's Eve is known as 'Hogmanay'. The last day of the year was traditionally regarded as a time of preparation. Business would be concluded to let the new year start afresh and houses were thoroughly cleaned (known as 'redding'). Fireplaces in particular had to be swept out and in a variation on reading tea-leaves, the ashes of the last fire of the old year were believed to show what lay ahead in the new year.

All over the world Ceilidhs are organized and anyone who can play an accordion, fiddle, bagpipe or drum are drafted into someone's party. Scotsmen get their 'Cerry oot' (sack of goodies) organized and set off into the night 'first footing'.

First footing is the most widespread custom of Hogmanay which starts immediately after midnight. This involves being the first person to cross the threshold of a friend or neighbor in the new year. First-foots bring symbolic gifts to 'handsel' the house: coal for the fire, to ensure that the house would be warm and safe, and shortbread or black bun (a type of fruit cake) to symbolize that the household would never go hungry that year.

Singing of Auld Lang Syne and new year resolutions are also a Scottish tradition of Hogmanay. New year resolutions hark back to the notion at the core of many Hogmanay traditions of old: making a new start. We hope that your new year is getting off to a wonderful start. We wish you happiness and well-being and are looking forward to seeing you in 2008.

Swinging fireballs is a Hogmanay tradition in Stonehaven, Kin-cardineshire.

Balls of chicken wire with tar, paper and other flammable stuff are set on fire and swung around by a rope while walking from the harbor to the Sheriff court and back to the harbor where the flaming balls are tossed into the water.



Hogmanay (or New Year's Eve) is celebrated with fireworks in Edinburgh

HOGMANAY BROSE

From Clan Chef Isolde Grandfield

There was always oatmeal in the kitchen press in Scotland. There was always whisky on hand to be brought out on an instant's notice when it was discreetly deemed proper to serve. In the old days, the two went together on New Year's Eve, which in Scotland is called Hogmanay.

Scottish oatmeal then was inexpensive. For this recipe, the kind of oatmeal you want can be procured in a specialty store or imported foods store. The whisky in the old days was easily come by. The honey was plentiful from the heather covered hills of the north, and the water had a special purity of its own.

1 cup Scottish oatmeal
3 cups water
1/2 cup honey
Scotch whisky

Soak the oatmeal in the water for an hour. Strain. Discard the oatmeal and retain the liquid. Add the honey and stir. Pour into empty decanter and then fill to the top with whisky. The decanter should hold about 1 quart. Shake well before serving on Hogmanay.

BAGPIPES IN OUR HISTORY

by Jim McKasson

After the 1745 Jacobite uprising in Scotland, anyone caught with a set of bagpipes could be executed. The English regarded them as a weapon of war because they had the power to stir the soul of a nation. Perhaps no other instrument inspires more contradictory responses than the beloved and despised pipes. With a single, forceful volume, the bagpipe demands attention, and for some it is torture and for others they find the traditional pipe music of Scotland close to divine. The pipes are the only instrument with its own verb in the English language: only a bagpipe can 'skirl.'

A bagpipe has four reeds and are very easy to play out of tune. A solo piper with a tin ear can produce a hideous sound that will raise the dead and make them upset at the same time. A solo piper can tune to himself and the sound can be well received, but when you get two or more pipers together, that's a different story.

Ironically, the bagpipe, the most Scottish of things, was imported from elsewhere and is now played everywhere. The invention of the bagpipe occurred in the Middle East thousands of years ago. A type of bagpipe, with a double reed has been found in the tombs of Egypt. It is believed that the Roman soldiers in the Middle East adopted the bagpipe and exported it throughout the Roman empire. There is a theory that the pipes probably traveled to Britain during the Roman occupation of the island which ended in the fifth century. The bagpipes were played in festivals and with its sweet sound were suited for dancing. Only in Scotland and Ireland were the bagpipes considered an instrument of war.

The Great Highland bagpipe uses four sets of reeds, one reed differs from the other three in that it is a double reed and is in the chanter. Meaning that two pieces of reed material, tied together, vibrate against each other as air passes between the blades. The Chanter is the part of the pipes where the various notes come from. The pipes standing upright are called drones and they give off two tones, one bass and two tinnings, and when properly adjusted, give off one steady tone. The chanter has nine notes to be played. With these nine notes there are hundreds of tunes that can be played. Every chanter has its own personality and sound. A solo piper can tune to himself and sound good. Two or more pipers together become a challenge and it takes a very talented individual to tune them the same.

All the pipers of a pipe band will use the same chanter, reeds and bags and the pipe major will then start to adjust them, down to the point of putting black tape over a chanter hole to change the note. He also has to take into consideration the piper himself. Is he a heavy blower or a wet blower for instance. These all affect the reeds. It can take over an hour just to get everyone in tune and then when you set the pipes down for awhile you have to start all over again.

The last pipe band I played with, the pipe major had us play for half an hour and then tune the pipes, then tune us up again just before we competed and then we played

right up to the time we formed in line. We shut down and then started up again with the competition set without a break so we would stay in tune.



Jim McKasson is an accomplished piper with many years experience. You can always count on hearing Jim pipe at BCSS events.

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