



The Saltire

Newsletter of the Saint Andrew's Society of Rhode Island
 Founded 1923, Incorporated 1998



Volume 93

2011

Issue 1

"A GUID NEW YEAR TAE YIN AN AW"

Happy New Year!

Inside this issue:



Culzean Castle

<i>Piper's Dram</i>	2
<i>Our Beloved Kiltmaker</i>	3
<i>Burns Supper</i>	4
<i>Burns Supper</i>	5
<i>The Westford Knight</i>	6
<i>Members Page</i>	7
<i>It's Haggis Time</i>	8

The Society ended the year with our Christmas Ceilidh. We had a wonderful evening, with a very good turn out, faces old and new.

The evening began with our famous "pot luck supper" and as always there was a great selection of traditional dishes and plenty to go around twice.

We were entertained by the "Mystic Voyagers" (member Roger Tremblay and his friends Bob and Lou), the St. Matthew's Choir under the direction of board member Br. Enoch John Valentine and member Jordan Cannady (half of the Dram Boys). The pleats were swinging as we kicked up our heels in a selection of Ceilidh dances – this was necessary after devouring the fabulous array of

desserts. Thank you all for your wonderful music.

Cindy McDonald and Tonya did a great job of assembling and donating baskets for the raffle and with the help of Larry they swept the hall selling tickets. Baskets were also donated by Nancy Muzzy and Shirley Loiselle.

The Society matched the raffle receipts and we sent a check for \$450 to the Johny Cake House Food Bank and \$114 to the SPCA.

Thank you for your continued support – without you the Society would not survive.

Wishing you all health and happiness for 2011.

Joyce

Upcoming Events

May 1st

Whisky Tasting

June 11th

Rhode Island Highland Festival, Richmond, RI



Piper's Dram

By: Rob Hanold

Many years ago, while walking along the mall in Washington DC during an international folk festival, I encountered a Slavic piper playing the most unusual set of pipes. The drone was flared in a much more conical shape. The bag was the skin of an entire small goat. Its anatomy was still recognizable, fur still intact, and no velvet covering to hide the goat's grimly musical afterlife. The chanter was even more limited than that of the Highland bagpipe; it played 7 notes, one short of a complete octave. So the Slav's repertoire was even more limited than a Scot's.



The Bohemian Bock is a classic Germanic/Slavic bagpipe.

The most amazing feature of the Slavic pipes was the bass drone. It was 4.5 feet long. It rose up from the bag to the piper's shoulder, then took a sharp angle and descended down the back of the piper until it ended with an upturned bell about a foot off the ground. Because of the length of the drone, and the expanding opening of the conical shape, the tone was deep and richly rustic. This instrument, like most bagpipes, obviously was meant to be played outdoors and was from a rural region where most people's time was spent out in the world.

My memory of this day was revived by a brochure from the Department of Musical Instruments of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. In the brochure are drawings and specifications of rare old bagpipes from many countries. The museum has pipes from India

(where bagpipes may have originated), as well as most European regions. There are pipes from Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Turkey, Russia, Greece, Slavonia and Dalmatia (regions of the former Yugoslavia), Egypt, Malta, and North Africa.

Many of the bagpipes have two chanters, allowing the piper to play harmony with one hand, melody with the other. The various designs and decorations are quite astounding and show the creativity and individuality of the makers. Given the standardization of Highland pipe manufacture, tuning, and interpretation of tunes by the British Army, I find these pipes that much more fascinating. I only wish that I could play some of them.

As the living conditions of mankind improved, instruments evolved; now they are almost entirely meant to be played indoors. When outdoor performance is required, we rely on electronics. A whole family of instruments is disappearing. People no longer 'meet at the crossroads', as the Irish say, to make music. Perhaps this is one reason why pipers always draw attention when they play outdoors. The public isn't accustomed to this sight apart from ceremonial occasions. I believe the pipes evoke a long hidden response to the joys of spontaneous music in nature.





OUR BELOVED KILTMAKER ELLA MACDONALD

By Joyce Dell



It is with great sadness that I have to pass along the news that Ella was killed in a car crash this past November in Scotland at the age of 78. Ella's car encountered a patch of ice at a culvert near Strathaven, Scotland.

Kilt making for Ella was not just a business, but a way of life: apprenticing as a Kiltmaker at 14 years of age, later building a wonderful business with her husband Robert and after his passing, continuing the business with their son Todd and daughter Moira.

Ella made all the kilts for my family in Scotland and was a huge help when we were in the process of designing The State of Rhode Island Tartan. I took her the drawing of my design for her input and expertise on what it would look like when pleated. Peter sat with colored pencils in hand while Ella and I discussed the finer points of Highland dress and confirmed the balance of the sett. Ella agreed to hold the societies inventory at her store, made our kilts to order and the legacy began.

The tartan won the "Best Dressed Band" for the Roger Williams Pipes & Drums at their first competition at the Loon Mountain Games.

We visited with her each year when we went home to visit family and she always took the

time out of her busy day to help me with any questions and to have a chat to catch up.

Ella, we miss you – your kilts are your legacy – thank you.

"Continuing the Legacy"

Todd, Moira and their staff will continue to supply the excellent quality that we have become accustomed to. Their kilts are handmade to order in 100% 13oz worsted wool using 6000 hand stitches. They are a true work of art and any of our members who own one will attest to that fact. A proper kilt should last a lifetime, the way our kilts are made allows for an adjustment of eight inches in or out, and should grow or shrink with you. With care, these kilts become heirlooms to be passed on through generations.

The company's reputation is known far and wide and has brought in orders from many celebrities over the years including Scotty from *Star Trek*, and were commissioned to provide kilts for Princes William and Harry when they were young.

In recent years the kilt market has taken an unfortunate turn with so many companies cutting corners and many foreign companies making kilts from fabrics that are totally unsuitable and do not hold the pleats. Many kilts on the market these days are machine-made instead of handmade, many times taking on a different shape that can be very rigid. Kilts DO NOT have a hem – the selvage is the finished edge.

They are an investment – educate yourself before making this major purchase or better still contact the society at

joycedell@cox.net.



48th Annual Burns Supper and Dance a Success!







The Westford Knight



Member Nancy Wolfe with her daughter Wendy



Monument Inscription



Westford Knight chiseled on rock

Member Nancy Wolfe and her family recently visited the site of the Westford Knight – a carving on a glacial boulder located in Westford, MA.

The carving commemorates a fallen member of the party of Henry Sinclair, a Scottish Earl whom some believe to have made a voyage to the New World in 1398. It is claimed that the knight is Sir James Gunn, a member of Clan Gunn and a Knight Templar who reportedly traveled with Sinclair.

The Westford Knight story is also believed by some to have a link to Rosslyn Chapel, Scotland. Over one of the chapel windows (pictured below) there are clearly carvings of maize or corn. This has led many to believe that this knowledge came from the Sinclair's contact with North America years before Columbus. The vegetable was unknown in the British Isles at the time the chapel was constructed.





MEMBER'S PAGE



Flowers of the Forest

Irenee Fernand Blais – member Donald Blais’s father

Raymond A. Valentine – member Br. Enoch John Valentine’s father

Charlie Kenyon – former VP Roy McKechnie’s best friend

Betty Brannan – sister of the late Helen Brannan

Ella MacDonald – society kilt maker

Ruth Evarts Hanold – member Bob Hanold’s mother

Stephen Woodrow Mitchell – member Denice Mitchell’s father



Carrying on the Tradition.

Jena and Eriana enjoy the Tartan Bash.

Mother and baby both love haggis



CONGRATULATIONS NORM!

Clan MacInnes recently awarded its prestigious “Order of the Golden Bow” to our friend and society supporter Norman MacInnis at its 40th Annual Meeting during the 2010 Grandfather Mountain Games in N.C.

Norm served the International Association for eight years and prior to that he served as the North Atlantic Regional Commissioner. He will remain on the board as Director of History for the next four years.

TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR KILT

The society has made an arrangement with DELUXE CLEANERS, 2337 Diamond Hill Road, Cumberland – 401-334-4014. They have offered to clean our member’s kilts for \$8.75 – a bargain.

Several members have already used the service and they have done a beautiful job!

Your kilt is an investment and the moths love nothing more than eating fine wool especially with the added attraction of food spills.





It's Haggis Time

By John and Betty MacLean

The time for haggis-making is here. The weather is cold and crisp -- that's the best time! No need to worry about spoilage. The meats and stock after cooking will cool and freeze with Mother Nature's refrigeration. The two kinds of oats and the onions have been ordered, weighed and measured. The seasonings gathered from here and there, carefully sorted out, pre-measured and mixed in to precise lots ready for the crew. The casings have been purchased from Medford Town. Hope they are of good quality this year --no weak spots! The string to tie off each "puddin'" -- mustn't forget that it too is pre-cut and ready to go.. The tying off -- very important! A day for the cooking of the many pounds of beef, hearts and liver is next, and another half day for grinding. Then arrange the assembly line: large table for the three meats and suet; smaller table for oats and seasonings; able in center for mixer, and double sink and counter for the sausage maker; hot meat stock on stove. 1:00 PM is set for crew to arrive. Aprons are donned, and at 1:30 "Operation Haggis" begins.

Step 1: Joyce, Betty and Carole measure the ingredients into mixing pans. Bethia pours in the necessary broth, and blending starts with the occasional assistance of mixers "du jour" (this year it was Warren and Bowman Halstead).

Step 2: This mix goes to Richmond and Peter for the final blending.

Step 3: Peter checks consistency, brings to John L. at sausage machine to stuff into casing. John M. sees that the right amount is fed into the casing to the exact weight. Bethia ties off the casing at the proper place. The right spacing is crucial, or the "puddin'" will burst as it swells in cooking.

These procedures continue until all the ingredients are used. Then comes the clean-up which takes considerable time and hot soapy water. Specks of haggis are guaranteed to appear in all manner of places for days. Cooking of haggis takes an additional day. Timing here is also critical, as a bursting haggis is an ugly mess! This process is not recommended for a fastidious cook. When the boiling is done (about eight hours total) and after the cool down comes the weighing and labeling, taking another wee while. Putting each "puddin'" carefully in the freezer completes the process. A report from haggis lovers that "this is the best haggis I've ever eaten" makes it all worthwhile.



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The Saltire

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Volume 93

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Issue II

Richmond Games 2011 "The Shortest Closing Ceremony"

Inside this issue:



Last man off the field.

"are you sure?". Oh! Do they really?", "but what if?" and many other deliberations regarding the occasion's curious dress code will, no doubt, be part of that potential first experience.

All being well, and no great wind rising, you're day will conclude devoid of any evidence to answer these inevitable questions.

For the regulars, old timers, and those on you're board and wonderful volunteers who set-up the tent, the actual games tend toward the mundane part of what is a pleasing, ongoing experience.

Ours is to have pleasure meeting good friends – even though those friendships may be founded upon three or four such meetings each year – of swapping good stories, briefly dwelling on the sad passing of dear people we know in common, perhaps time taken out for a libation or two.

Piper's Dram 2

Whisky Tasting 3

Polo 4

Essential Scotland 5

Tartan Picnic 6

Members Page 7

Richmond Games continued 8

The season of games began again for you're Board of Directors with the Richmond Games in Rhode Island.

For the curious or uninitiated this, the earliest of games within a reasonable commute, brings an almost tingling, childlike anticipation of what that first up-close encounter with a Highland Cow might bring, or some thoughts bordering on trepidation at the prospect of passing haggis across one's lips.

The music, the athletics, the traditions and talking of traditions,

But, then about noon, again it will start. New interest in the SASRI Tartan and all that we do, opportunities to share in our heritage and to search for visitors' "who's who" enquiries, providing to all comers where to go, what to see, options for travel, places for tea, where are the good woollen mills and the inevitable "do you know Mrs. McSomeone who lives three streets down from the bus station in Innerleathan?"

Then, before we know it: the end of the games.

Continued on page 8

Upcoming Events

TARTAN DAY PICNIC

Sunday, August 14th
 12.00 – 6.00 PM

SOCIETY TENT

at Scotland, CT
 Highland Games
 October 9th, 2011



Piper's Dram

By: Rob Hanold



My Argyle jacket has kept me warm and relatively dry in the worst of snowstorms at graveside ceremonies. It is made of special, heavy weight wool, and was quite expensive. But it is looking a bit tired lately, so Sally found a nice jacket made especially for pipers. The tailoring at shoulder and armpit is different, allowing much more movement, very nice when playing the pipes. The bag under the left arm makes for real discomfort when the armhole is cut too far down the side.

This particular jacket came with fancy buttons in front—two buttons joined by a chain, very snazzy. So Sally sent away for it. The dealer was an old, established Scottish import company located in the mountains of northern New England. The jacket arrived without the buttons. I called the company. The young man who answered had a lovely accent typical of the Carolinas. In fact, the Scottish import company has expanded over the years, opening branches in Nova Scotia as well as Carolina. When I

explained my problem, he said he didn't know how to solve the problem. The expansion certainly has affected service and customer satisfaction, as you will see.

After much nagging, I was put in contact with a woman who promised a quick solution. She took my name, address, etc. A few days later a large package arrived from Scotland. Inside was a 'Wallace' jacket and matching vest, size 42. I was amused to think that in a few years I might fit into the jacket. But I could hear my father's voice reminding me, "That's not yours." So I called the company. No one wanted to find the intended recipient. No one would take responsibility for the mix-up. I offered to send the jacket directly to the person at my expense. They declined. Since my buttons still hadn't arrived, I decided that my kindness was exhausted. I ended the conversation by reminding them that they knew where to find me.

After a month of waiting, my buttons finally arrived, but the import company never called back to retrieve the jacket. Somewhere in the great Scots Diaspora is a gentleman angrily awaiting a jacket and vest. The import shop probably reordered from the tailor rather than waste time sorting through a confusing nest of computer files: orders, returns, complaints, customs clearances, credits, and back-orders.

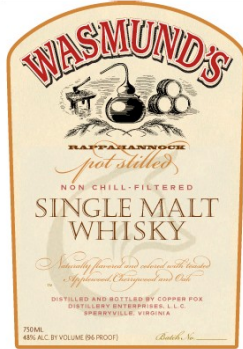
If my father sends another message, I will tell him that I did my best. He once was a lawyer, so I'll remind him of 'windfalls' and 'possession being nine points in the law'.

When I feel a little guilty for eating the occasional "full Irish" breakfast, the silver lining to my expanding girth is the Wallace jacket and vest, feeling neglected in the closet.



2011 SASRI WHISKY TASTING

By Peter Dell "Pourer Extraordinaire"



Again, this year, we experienced an interesting opportunity to taste a wide selection of "malts" - albeit, not to every taster's liking. The theme was for: as much of an international experience that both budget and availability would permit. Were there challenges - oh yes!

Our targeted malt from Canada could not be purchased due to a trade name and/or trademark litigation matter. Two possible choices from Australia may just have squeezed in to the budget, but not being on the US open market a minimum purchase of six bottles took them off the list. Oh - if we could have managed just one of those single pot, single barrel, single malts with the peat imported from Scotland.

Question: would these have been "Scotches" or "Austches"?

These two, as also another from New Zealand, shall be considered for future tastings and placed on the "SASRI MOST WANTED".

Many of the Japanese single malt tasting notes express very palatable to excellent nose, body and initial taste characteristics but, disappointingly, short-lived ongoing/after taste in the mouth. None of these made the list, especially when priced in the \$125 and \$150 range for a tasting experience too short lived.

There were many other possible selections studied and hunted in order to assemble a range of types and tastes for this year's annual gathering of SASRI malt lovers.

"Interesting" was indeed the apt expression for one such malt. Perhaps this one (above all others) generated the most discussion and varied opinions. It's tastes, overall qualities, being quite removed from anything tasted before and, most interesting, a cacophony of theories regarding the origin and possible nature of, and construction of it's aging barrels.

There were thoughts of these originating from Jack Daniels Bourbon casks purchased (or otherwise obtained) before they had the last remnants of their amber infusion steamed out prior to being cut in half for garden planters.

Other theories dwelled on the degree of skill required to judge exactly how many days the mash could have remained in a green pine tub before the resin seriously impacted it's taste or the general health of the tasters.

Yes! They were all single malts. They all contributed to the traditionally growing noise of interaction across and around the room, and this year actually between the extreme ends of the tasting table.

Yes! John again, rose to the occasion: met the challenge, overcame a number of sourcing hurdles and provided our tasters with a different and memorable experience in the old log cabin by the lake.

Our 2011 tasting list was:

Connemara (Ireland) McCarthy's (Oregon)
Milford (New Zealand) Tyrconnell (Ireland)
Wasmund's (Virginia) - The "Big discussion brew"
Yamazaki (Japan)

Overall, another much enjoyed and memorable occasion made even more so by the eclectic collage of SASRI members and their guests.





2011 Polo—Scotland vs. USA



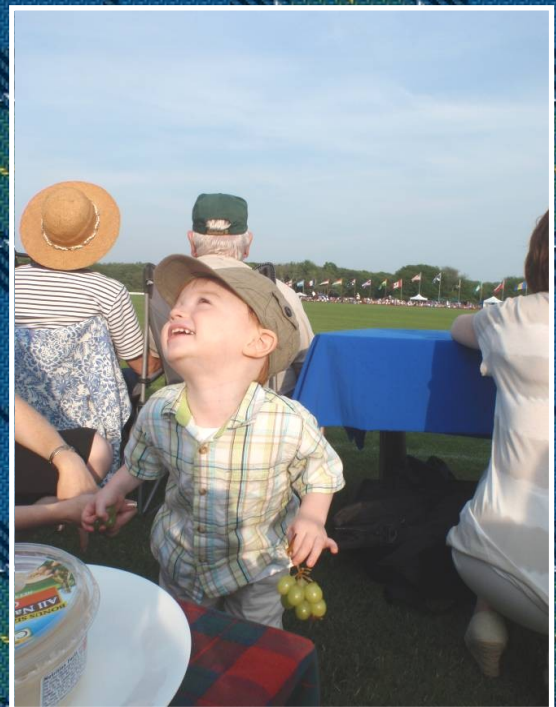
“A most welcome sponsor for this year.”



“Myrtle! I said the divots . . . the divots!”



“The best of the best for the day.”



Two hands full of grapes!
“Mum I am polite-See how I point my pinky!”

Essential Scotland

So many options: scenic splendour, castles, whisky, golf, ceilidhs and lots more, plus the call of the islands – all on a great Scottish menu of experiences. And look out for Highland Games in the summer – the essence of Highland traditions, taking place in many towns and villages from May to September.



1 ISLE OF ARRAN With a good range of activities including walking, golf and pony-trekking, Arran's description as 'Scotland in Miniature' refers to the contrasts between the mountainous north and the island's gentler south end.



2 CEILIDHS IN GLASGOW Óran Mór, meaning the 'great melody of life' or 'big song' is a cultural centre and meeting place in the Heart of Glasgow's West End and is worth checking for 'ceilidhs' (Scottish Music and Dance).



3 LOCH LOMOND AND TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK Scotland's first national park takes in 1865 sq km and includes Scotland's largest loch by surface area. Walking choice for all abilities.



4 EDINBURGH'S OLD TOWN Discover the legends of Edinburgh's Old Town – unbeatable for sheer atmosphere and a place of magic and mystery, where the alleys or 'closes' leading off the Royal Mile invite exploration.



5 GOLF AT ST ANDREWS St Andrews Links is the Home of Golf, where the game evolved. The six courses at the links are open to all, with bookable tee-times.



6 DOLPHINS IN THE MORAY FIRTH The bottle-nosed dolphins here are the largest of their kind in the world – thanks to the rich feeding grounds. Between Macduff and Cromarty, several operators offer boat trips.



7 SKARA BRAE, ORKNEY See Neolithic people's living spaces, complete with bed recesses and cupboards, all built in stone and surviving 5000 years, the oldest dwellings in Western Europe. Interpretative centre nearby.



8 THE KYLE LINE Scenic railway from Inverness to Skye – gateway of Kyle of Lochalsh. Exciting descent from Achnasheen down Glen Carron to the west coast. Superb coastal views between Stromeferry and Kyle.



9 TALISKER DISTILLERY, SKYE Tasting of the sea (some say) as well as having peaty, smoky overtones, enthusiasts class it midway between a light Highland and a heavier Islay malt in flavour. Talisker is Skye's only distillery.



10 EILEAN DONNAN CASTLE With its rugged backdrop, this restored Clan MacRae stronghold on a tiny island on Loch Duich is truly an icon of Scotland – but it has also appeared in James Bond films!

TARTAN DAY PICNIC 2011

Sunday August 14th

ANAWAN CLUB

Gorham Street

Rehoboth, MA

12.00 – 6.00 PM



Please RSVP no later than August 8th to allow us to plan for food and refreshments

joycedell@cox.net or call 401-334-2448

jfmuzzy@cox.net or call 401-732-2304

PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE, LAWN CHAIRS, FRIENDS & FAMILY

MEMBERS FREE - ADULT GUESTS \$10

The Society will provide the usual good stuff off the grill, soda,
tea and coffee for all!

CHILDREN'S GAMES, DANCING & MORE

Directions: From Providence take 195 to Rte. 44E to route 118 south –
left on Kelton St., right on Gorham Street - look out for the flag –

Club # 508-252-4615

Please note: NO WATER ACTIVITIES PERMITTED

Anawan Club nor the Society can be held liable for property damage
or personal injury pursuant to your attendance.

Member's Page

Flowers of the Forest

Yet another member passes – Bill Lang – a Past President of the St. Andrew's Society and member of the Burns Anniversary Committee

Get Well Wishes

Cathy Poirier
Bill Hayes
Rob Hanold
Betty MacLean
Virginia Butler

Upcoming Celtic Events

Maine Highland Games – August 20th
Quechee Scottish Festival in Quechee, VT – August 27th
Newport Irish Festival – September 5th
Loon Mountain Games, NH – September 16, 17 and 18th
St. Andrew's Society of CT Highland Festival, Goshon, CT – October 1st
Scotland CT Highland Games – October 9th



The Society is Delighted
to Welcome Our New
Members

Michael Costello
Ian and Karen Muir
Carol Graves
Kathy Weber
Stephen Venuti and
Dianne Wilkin
Patricia and Fernando
Pereira

Celtic Music Seisiún Anyone?

Attention fellow musicians: Looking for a few other Saint Andrew Society RI members who would be interested getting together on a regular basis to play traditional and contemporary Celtic tunes. I am a long-time amateur singer and guitarist with a love for Celtic (English, Irish & Scottish) airs, ballads and “pub” tunes. I have also recently taken up the tin-whistle, low-whistles and concertina. If you are interested please let me know. I can be reached at svenuti52@gmail.com.

Thanks, Stephen Venuti





Eriana—adorable in her tartan coat and hat at the games.

Continued from page 1

Time to reflect on the day, those that were helped, old members who came by, new members signed up – this year there were three.

Happy and tired (before we pack up the tent) comes the closing ceremonies.

Some are quite reasonable, many are too long and, unfortunately due to the passing of a huge, dark cloud, with high winds and great drops of wet sludge that came thundering down in mere seconds – the closing ceremonies came to an abrupt end.

In an instant, all caught in it were wet to the skin and the bands seemed to act as one – stopped playing, stopped marching and scattered off the field in all directions.

Time enough only to lift my camera and snap one shot of the last man off the field: Piper, Jackie MacLean.

Yes, I believe this was the shortest closing ceremony I have ever witnessed. Shame about the weather though.

Thanks to all those who came by to make this another busy “time-flying” day at the Games and if we do not see you at Loon or Scotland (CT) have a great summer and see you back at Richmond in 2012.

Drop by the tent – catch up and share you’re stories.

We will again, with you’re participation, be pleased to be there. Hats off to the Richmond Games committee for a job well done.

By Peter L. Dell

Board of Directors

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