

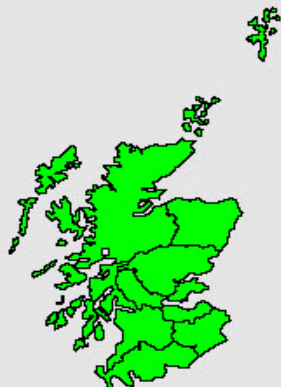


# THE Saltire

No 6

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

December 2011



## "Alba Gu Brath"

### COMMITTEE 2011-2012

#### Chieftain

Ken Suttie

#### Vice Chieftain

Jeff Crookes

#### Hon Secretary

Brian McMurdo

#### Hon Treasurer

Diana Paxman

#### Members

Susan Bogie

Cameron Dickson

Cheryl Hill

Doris LaValette

Reggie McNeill

Margaret Weir

#### Dance teacher

Dawn Cromb

#### Honorary Piper

John Sinclair

#### Email:

[enquiries@saintandrew.org.au](mailto:enquiries@saintandrew.org.au)

#### Website

<http://saintandrew.org.au>

## What a night it was!

If one of the signs of a great Ball is how quickly the evening passes, then this year St Andrew's Day Ball would be one of the best ever.

I've been to many of these events over the years and I have to say that this year's ranks among the most memorable.

The dance program was fun and varied, the food was excellent, the service from the Novotel Langley staff was great and the Perth Metro Pipe Band showed why it is the best pipe band in WA at the moment.

The traditional toasts presented by Mattie Turnbull and Darian Ferguson were informative and entertaining.

I felt it was just a great package and almost everyone I talked to agreed.

Most importantly, however, we had a group of guests who were out to enjoy themselves and it was the way they took up the challenge that made the evening disappear in a flash.

I need to congratulate the members of the Committee for their work in putting together the ingredients for such a great Ball, with a special mention for Jeff Crookes and Reggie McNeill .

You might be interested to know that for the last seven years I've been sending out St Andrew's Day greetings by email, on behalf of our members, to St Andrew Societies and other Scottish groups around the world.

This year I contacted 60 groups in Europe, the USA, Canada, South America, Asia, Africa and Australia with a fellowship message from the membership, and received 12 replies.

Ken Suttie  
Chieftain



### IN THIS ISSUE

**Page 3 — Parent St Andrew Society ceases to be**

Page 2 — Event News

Page 4 — Gylen Castle

Page 5 — Scottish news

Page 6 — Burns Supper Flyer



## Let's celebrate the life of the Bard



Scotland is a lucky country . . . It has two national days!

There's the official one, St Andrew's Day, which we've just celebrated at the St Andrew's Day Ball, and there's the unofficial one — but equally as popular — Robert Burns' birthday.

The Society will be remembering the life and work of Scotland's most famous son with our hugely popular Burns Supper.

(as in all good ceilidhs) to recite a Burns poem or sing a Burns song . . . we've had some excellent contributions in the past.

As always, it will be held on the date of Robert Burns' birthday, 25 January.

Also, the Heel n Toe will be on hand to play for our dancing pleasure.

And it will be our usual mixture of the traditional celebration and a mini-ceilidh.

The Burns Supper is always great fun, so to make sure you don't miss out on a seat (or a table), please rush in the application form at the end of this issue of The Saltire.

In the traditional part of the program, we'll have the toast to The Immortal Memory, the Address to the Haggis, the Toast Tae the Lassies and the Response Fae the Lassies.

The event will be held in the Argyll Room at the Parnelia Hilton Hotel, which has been the scene of a few superb Burns Suppers in the past.

Then we'll be inviting the gathered guests

## Having fun at the Ball



*The action was fast and furious at our annual celebration!*



*These ladies were obviously having a great time.*





# Parent St Andrew Society is no more

The St Andrew Day greeting the Society recently received from the original St Andrew Society, of Edinburgh, will be the last we shall get from that ancient organisation.

Members and friends will no doubt be saddened and surprised to hear that, after operating for more than 100 years, the parent St Andrew Society is no more.

The St Andrew Society has amalgamated with the Saltire Society, also based in Edinburgh.

The reason for this step was concern over the lack of volunteers joining the Society's Council and taking office, a situation that left the organisation in a vulnerable state, which could continue indefinitely.

The name vanishing will not seriously affect St Andrew Societies throughout the world.

The St Andrew Society's Kenneth Sinclair Stewart has become a member of the Saltire Society's International Committee and will retain responsibility for St Andrew and other Scottish societies in the UK and overseas.

"We are very sad that it has come to this, but without new blood coming forward to assist with the organisation of our Society, we had no choice but to wind it up, and in this way we do continue, as part of the Saltire Society," Mr Stewart said.

The Saltire Society which was formed in 1936, which makes it just a year older than our Saint Andrew Society of WA!

With aims and objectives similar to that of the St Andrew Society, the Saltire Society is a non-political body concerned with improving the quality of life in Scotland and restoring the country to its proper place as a creative force in Europe.

It seeks to preserve all that is best in Scottish tradition and culture, and to encourage new developments which can strengthen and enrich the country's cultural life.

It promotes excellence in many fields through a series of national awards.

The Saltire Society also seeks to revive the memory of famous Scots and to make the nation conscious of its heritage.

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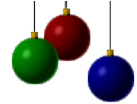
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## Gylen Castle



If you ever visit the west coast of Scotland, the chances are you will go to the picturesque town of Oban.

Before you rush onto the ferry to Mull, take a day to visit the Isle of Kerrera, on the southern tip of which stands the Castle of Gylen. You will be well rewarded!

The Kerrera ferry, which runs from a small jetty a couple of miles south of Oban, can carry one car.

There is a coloured board at the jetty on the mainland, which you flip around and after a wee while the ferryman notices and comes across to get you!

However, you are better crossing on foot and walking to the castle, which is dramatically situated on a cliff top, looking south across the island studded Firth of Lorn to Jura and Colonsay.

It is believed that the castle, which is a fairly simple tower, was built by Duncan MacDougall of Dunollie, 16th Chief of MacDougall, and was completed in 1582.

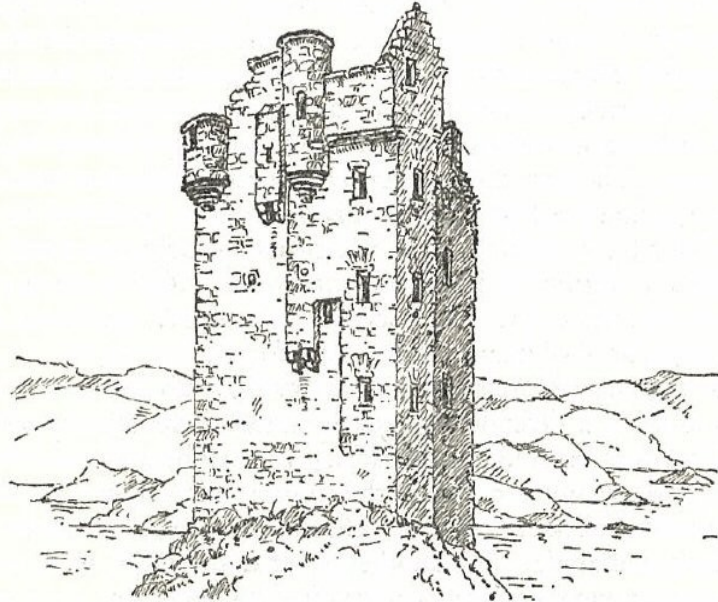
It was only lived in for 65 of the next 400 years.

In 1647, with the Covenanting Wars raging in Scotland, a Royalist garrison at Gylen came under siege from forces sent by General Leslie.

It is not known how long the siege lasted, but although Gylen is said to have had a natural spring in its outer bailey, the siege eventually ended due to a lack of water – not a common situation in Western Scotland!

It can be assumed that the attackers got into the less well defended outer bailey, cutting off the defenders in the tower from their water supply.

The story goes that the Covenanters threatened all in the castle with hanging if they didn't surrender.



The garrison did eventually surrender, but perhaps not quickly enough for the Covenanters, who apparently hung them anyway!

The only person spared was young John MacDougall, 18th Chief of the Clan, who was still a child. The castle was then burned and has remained empty ever since.

During the sack of Gylen, an item of great significance was taken by the attackers – the Brooch of Lorn, the MacDougall's most important talisman, which had been snatched from the cloak of Robert Bruce during his defeat at the Battle of Dalrigh, near Dalmally, in 1306.

With the MacDougalls on one side in the Covenanting Wars and their more powerful neighbours, the Campbells, on the other, the brooch was moved from Dunollie Castle for safekeeping, believing that it would be safer at Gylen than on the mainland.

With the fall of Gylen, the Brooch became the spoil of the Campbells of Inverawe – who kept it for nearly two centuries, the Duke of Argyll eventually returning it in a ceremony at Inverary Castle in 1822.

**By Richard Paxman**



## Capital's Hogmanay to go live on internet

The eyes of the world will be on Edinburgh, the home of Hogmanay, as it launches 2012 with a fantastic line-up for the street party, said to be the best in the 19-year history of the event.

And, for the first time, Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations are to be broadcast live on the internet, as part of a drive to raise the international profile of the event.

Organisers will make their own program, which will include footage of bands performing and the midnight fireworks from Edinburgh Castle.

The hour-long program (from 11:30pm to 12:30am) will be streamed live via the official Hogmanay website.

It will be available free to anyone who registers on the site.

A string of bands has been added to the line-up for the street party, which will have an 80,000 capacity for the third year in a row.



The line-up of world-class bands and artists will add to the unforgettable carnival atmosphere of the event, with revellers from all over the globe descending on the city, and there will be an impressive fireworks display over Edinburgh Castle.

## Viking boat burial site found in the Highlands

Archaeologists have discovered a Viking boat burial site in the Highlands.

Said to be one of the most important Norse graves excavated in Britain, the site on the west coast Ardnamurchan peninsula is the first intact boat burial to be found in the UK.

The five metre-long grave, thought to be 1000 years old, held the remains of a high-profile Viking, who was buried in his ship with an axe, a sword, a knife and a spear.

A shield boss and bronze ring-pin, a whetstone from Norway, a ring-pin from Ireland and pottery were also buried with the Viking.

Dozens of pieces of iron also found on the site have still to be identified.

The research project that found the boat is looking at social change on the peninsula, from farmers 6000 years ago to the Highland Clearances of the 18th and 19th century.

## Society email address

You can now contact the Committee by email ([enquiries@saintandrew.org.au](mailto:enquiries@saintandrew.org.au)) with queries or feedback.

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# **The Saint Andrew Society of WA**

## **BURNS SUPPER**



**WEDNESDAY 25 JANUARY 2012**

7.00pm for pre-dinner drinks (complimentary beer, wine and soft drinks)  
Program starts at 7.30pm

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Cheques should be made payable to "The Saint Andrew Society of WA" and should be returned along with this completed form before **14 January** to: [The Treasurer, The Saint Andrew Society of WA, Midland BC, PO Box 1212, Midland DC WA 6936](#)

Or pay by EFT to St Andrew Society of WA -- CBA: BSB: 066 105 A/C No: 901144

**Please remember to include your name.**