



End of Year Saltire

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

As 2021 draws to a close we cannot help asking ourselves 'where has the year gone', (just as we do every year). Our Chieftain's Ceilidh, Winter 'Family' Ceilidh, Whisky Tasting and our St Andrew's Day Ball are now in the past. Although they may be over, they were a great success with overall attendance well up on previous years.

2021 will be a year most of us will remember for many reasons and words associated with it will not be forgotten in a hurry. Words like Covid, pandemic, lockdown, quarantine, border closures, vaccination, double vaccinated, booster shots, Delta and most recently, Omicron will enter our conversations often. As I pen this message, I cannot help thinking about the hardship many families have experienced this year, not being able to go 'home' to visit family and friends and acknowledge that while the community has supported each other during the COVID times, we are stronger for the bonds we form and hold. Let us hope we can have something positive to look forward to in 2022 and can, at some stage, travel to see and meet those we have been talking virtually with for the last twenty months.

The next three months are going to be a busy period not only for myself but the whole committee. We have already escalated our planning for the Burns Supper next month and our Annual General Meeting in February. Most of the 'important' issues for the Burns Supper are complete, we will now be focusing on the detail such as advertising the event, ticket sales, menu selection, setting a program and the finer details that go to making the night a success. Such events are not possible without the dedication and hard work of a good committee which I am delighted to have around me this year. Ticket sales for the Burns Supper will open to members first followed by sales to the public in late December. It is only early December, and we are already receiving enquiries from both members and non-members about tickets. If this is an indicator, then tickets are going to sell out fast. My advice to all members is book early to avoid disappointment.

I would like to acknowledge the work and pay tribute to the executive team (Mark, Eoin, and Ann) and the committee members (Darian, Alka, Kelly, Jacqui and Tom) for their outstanding contribution to the society this year. They have been instrumental in the Society growing and flourishing, and together with family and friends put in a huge effort to ensure every was successful and exceeded member's and guest's expectations. Membership this year has been exceptional and as I compose this Saltire, I am happy to report our membership is continuing to grow and in now close to 130.

Our 2022 Annual General Meeting will take place on Friday 18th February in the Irish Club, Subiaco. Details are now on our website. The Society cannot exist without members and the committee cannot function without the support of the members. I take this opportunity to ask that you help us continue to serve you by renewing your membership early in the new year. We have made it a lot easier to renew. You go onto our website, go to the 'Membership Renewal' under 'Contact Us' where you can fill in the 'on-line' form including your payment details and select the payment button. No need to go onto another platform and fill in bank details. Simple.

Finally, I would like to thank our Patron Lady Helen Liddell, the committee, and especially our members for your support during my first year as your Chieftain. I wish you, and all your family a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year whatever you may be doing and will see most of you at the pre-Burns Supper dance practice starting on 11th January in the Irish Club, Subiaco.

Oh! What a Night

St Andrew's Day Ball 2021

I was reminded very recently that the sign of a great Ball is how quickly the night passes. This year's Ball went in a flash and speaking to many members and guests on the night they all agreed, and acknowledged all the work the committee had done to make it one of the best ever.

The night commenced with a very warm and welcoming address from our very own Patron, Lady Helen Liddell, Baroness Liddell of Coatdyke, who set the tone and standard for the night. The array of photos that followed Lady Helen's opening address were a mixture of 'Scotland' at its very best and our members and guests enjoying themselves at one of our events earlier this year.

The food, drinks and service from the Pan Pacific hotel staff was excellent, the entertainment provided by the Western Australia Police Pipe Band (WAPOL) and the Perth Academy of Highland Dancing was exceptional and the Scottish Country dancing was varied and great fun with many people taking to the floor. It was great having WAPOL back performing for us again, their talents demonstrate why they are the No 1 pipe band in WA and one of the best not only here in Australia but in the world.

Greetings were received from many Scottish Societies around the world and a message from St Andrew Society of WA went out to over 60 Scottish Societies and Groups

The toasts were superb and presented well by Alistair Cowden (Scotland and St Andrew) and Nicola Morrison (The Land We Live In). Some of the words Alistair referred to in his speech brought back memories of the words my great aunt used way back when we were 'weans'. Nicola's speech was a great story about coming to and adapting to the Australia lifestyle. Personal stories or testimonials are always great to listen to.

Overall, it was a great night enjoyed by everyone I had the opportunity to speak with, and they did not want it to come to an end. Congratulations goes to all the committee, but appreciation and acknowledgement must go to our vice-chieftain, Mark Wimshurst, and his trusty lieutenant, Alka Jain, for all their hard work throughout the year and on the night.

Thanks also to Darian Ferguson for his role as MC, making sure all went to program and on time, and to Judy MacPherson on her debut role as Grand March co-ordinator.



A few photos from the 2021 St Andrew's Day Ball which will be up on our website very soon.

The Star O'Rabbie Burns



The Society will be celebrating the life and works of Scotland's most famous son with our very popular Burns Night Supper. As always, it will be held on the date of his birthday, 25th January, and will be our usual mixture of the traditional celebration with a ceilidh to follow.

In the formal part of the evening, we will have the 'Address to a Haggis' followed by 'The Immortal Memory' and finishing with the toast 'Tae the Lassies' and the reply 'Fae the Lassies'. There will also be a mix of Burns poems and song from our members and guests, and our reliable ceilidh band, Heel N' Toe, will be present to play for our enthusiastic dancers.

The event will be held in the Pan Pacific hotel which has been home for many of our events in the past. Tickets for members are now on sale through Trybooking and go on sale to non-members at the end of December.

Time to renew your Membership



Do not forget to renew your membership if you have not already done so. Membership is a yearly subscription which runs from AGM to AGM and would assist us greatly if this could be done before the end of January 2022. Members need to be financial to vote and stand for office at the Annual General Meeting. Your Membership Renewal Form is available on our new website. It is completed on-line, and there is now a link that allows you to pay without leaving the website. Simple.

Scottish Stramash Perth

Scottish Stramash Perth will be playing in the Irish Club on Thursday 16th December from 7.00pm until 9.00pm. The kitchen at the Irish Club is open again which is great news for anyone who wants to have a meal and a drink while listening to some good Scottish music and song. Should you miss out, they will be appearing at the Seasonal Brewing Co. in Maylands on December 29th from 7.00pm until 9.00pm which they are advertising as a Pre Hogmanay 'End of Year Event' with music, song and some dancing to round out the year.

If you want more information about Stramash, their music and venues go to

Facebook: Scottish Stramash

Email: scottishstramash@gmail.com



LOVE OUR MUSIC?

Players and non-players all welcome.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK:
Scottish Stramash

OR EMAIL:
scottishstramash@gmail.com

House of Tartan

The House of Tartan which started business in Perth back in 1995 has been under the proud ownership of Heather and Jim Anderson since 2007. Heather and Jim sold the business in late 2019 to Greg and Jennifer McAdam who have over 20 years' experience in supplying kilts and accessories.

The society have always had a connection with the House of Tartan and Greg and Jennifer appreciate that connection as it has allowed them to get to know us better. Having them at the pre-Ball dance practice was great for those that found it difficult to find time on a Saturday to go and visit the shop. Jennifer is always on hand to offer advice on Scottish attire. Whether it be a wedding, a Ball, or any other Scottish event visit <https://www.thehouseoftartan.com/> to view their website



We are pleased to announce that The House of Tartan will be attending our per-Burns dance practice. Jennifer and Greg will be in attendance to assist anyone who wishes to get measured up for a kilt to wear or need to buy accessories such as a shirt, bow tie, socks, sash, or the likes.

The History of Highland Dancing

Perhaps nothing captures the spirit of Scottish culture better than the sight of Highland dancing being performed at some Highland gathering in some far-flung corner of the world. This sophisticated form of national dancing has been spread by Scottish migrants across the world and competitions are now regularly organised in Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, and the United States. Whilst many dancers now entered into these competitions are female, the roots of these ritualistic dances lay with warriors imitating epic deeds from Scottish folklore.

According to tradition, the old kings and clan chiefs used the Highland Games as a means to select their best men at arms, and the discipline required to perform the Highland dances allowed men to demonstrate their strength, stamina, and agility.

Although likely to date back to a much earlier period, the first documented evidence of intricate war-dances being performed to “the wailing music of bagpipes” was at the second marriage of Alexander III to his French bride Yolande de Dreux at Jedburgh in 1285.

It is also said that Scottish mercenaries performed a sword dance before the Swedish King John III at a banquet held at Stockholm Castle in 1573. The dance was apparently part of a plot to assassinate the king, the weapons necessary to complete the dastardly deed ‘just happened’ to be a natural prop for the festivities. Luckily for the king the signal was never given to implement the plan.

A reception given in honour of Anne of Denmark at Edinburgh in 1589 included a “Sword dance and Hieland Danses”, and in 1617 a sword dance was performed before James VI. Still later in 1633, the Incorporation of Skinners and Glovers of Perth performed their version of the sword dance for Charles I whilst floating on a raft in the middle of the River Tay.

It was after the Battle of Culloden in 1746 that the government in London attempted to purge the Highlands of all unlawful elements by seeking to crush the rebellious clan system. An Act of Parliament was passed which made the carrying of weapons and the wearing of kilts a penal offence. The Act was rigorously enforced. So much so it seems that by the time the Act was repealed in 1785, Highlanders had lost all enthusiasm for their tartan garb and lacked the main prop required to perform their sword dances.

The revival of Highland culture was greatly boosted when Queen Victoria discovered the road north and recognised first-hand, the magnificence of Scotland for herself. This revival saw the beginnings of the modern Highland games, with of course, Highland dancing forming an integral part.

Primarily to make judging easier however, the selection of dances being performed were gradually narrowed down over the years and decades that followed. The result of this was that many traditional dances simply got lost, as they were no longer required for competition purposes. In addition, over the years Highland dancing has moved from being an exclusively male pursuit, to one that today includes more than 95% of female dancers.

As far as competitive Highland dancing is concerned, until 1986 only four standard dances remained – The Sword Dance (Gille Chalum), The Seann Triubhas, The Highland Fling and The Reel of Tulloch. Like many other dance traditions Highland dancing has changed and evolved over the years, integrating elements that may have their roots set in centuries old tradition with elements that are much more modern.



Some of the legends associated with today's modern dances include.



The Sword Dance (Gille Chaluim – Gaelic for “the servant of Calum”) – One story said to originate from the times of Shakespeare’s Macbeth, recalls that when King Malcolm III (Canmore) of Scotland killed a fellow chieftain in battle, he celebrated by dancing over his own bloody claymore crossed with the sword of his enemy. Yet another story tells that a soldier would dance around and over crossed swords prior to battle; should his feet touch the blade during the dance however, then this was considered an ill omen for the following

day. Another and more practical explanation is that the dance was simply an exercise used to develop and hone the nibble footwork required to stay alive in sword play.

The Seann Triubhas – Gaelic for “old trousers” – Pronounced “shawn trevus”, the dance is romantically associated with the highlander’s disgust at having to wear the hated *Sassenach* trousers that they were forced to wear when the kilt was banned following the 1745 rebellion. The initial slow dance steps involve lots of leg shaking; symbolising attempts to shed the hated garments; the final faster steps demonstrating the joy of returning to the kilt when the ban ended in 1782.



The Highland Fling – One legend associates it as a warrior’s dance of triumph following a battle. It was supposedly danced over a small round shield, with a spike projecting from the centre, known as a Targe. Yet another legend links the dance to a young boy imitating the antics of a stag rearing and wheeling on a hillside; the curved arms and hands representing the stag’s antlers.

The Reel of Tulloch (Ruidhle Thulaichean) – It was supposedly on one cold morning in the village of Tulloch in north-east Scotland, that many years ago the congregation were waiting for the minister to let them into the church. To keep warm the people began to stamp their feet and clap their hands, and when someone started to whistle a highland tune the whole developed into a lively dance. A set perhaps, later stolen by the cast of Fame! A more gruesome story however, links the dance to a game of football said to have been played by the men of Tulloch with the severed head of an enemy.

The Glen Cinema Fire, Paisley

The Glen Cinema disaster is considered one of the worst human disasters in Scotland's history. The building that housed the Glen Cinema still stands, and currently houses a furniture store.

The **Glen Cinema disaster** was caused by a smoking film canister at a cinema in Paisley, Scotland, on 31 December 1929. The resulting panic and crush killed 69 children and injured 40; the final death toll was 71.

The Glen Cinema was opened in 1901; it became known as 'The Glen' and 'The Royal Animated Pictures'. On the afternoon of 31 December 1929, during a children's matinee, the building was crowded with between 700 and 1,000 children, aged between infants to about 14-years-old, in attendance. The matinee was reportedly so attended due to parents wanting the house empty; due to the Hogmanay holiday which included cleaning the home for the upcoming new year. A freshly shown film was put in its metal can, in the spool room, where it began to issue thick black smoke. Nitrate film, as used at this time, can burn on its own without needing any supply of air.

When an assistant film operator spotted the smoke coming from a film container, he tried to smother the flammable film; but the container sprang open, and smoke and fumes entered the hall. Soon, smoke filled the auditorium that contained the children, and one survivor claimed that someone shouted "Fire" and the children began to run to the exits. Children ran downstairs so fast and in such numbers that they piled up behind the

escape door that led to Dyers Wynd. The door could not be opened, as it was designed to open inwards and was padlocked. Others were injured as people jumped from the balconies onto those sitting in the sections below to escape.

A policeman who arrived on the scene just after the fire started reported that the gates were padlocked; however, another witness confirmed that she had seen the manager, Charles Dorward unlock them. A policeman managed to break the padlock on one of the doors but could not easily open them as the doors opened inward and there were piles of bodies behind them, with people scrambling over to attempt to escape. Some children however, remained in their seats and were removed from the theatre by responding firefighters, others were rescued when firefighters smashed windows and pulled children from the theatre.

Seventy-one children died from the resulting crush of children attempting to escape the theatre with between thirty and forty children injured. Many of the casualties were recorded as having died from "asphyxia by crushing" or "traumatic asphyxia".

An inquiry was held in Edinburgh on 29 April 1930, during which it was revealed that the cinema had been inspected and pronounced safe by the Paisley fire brigade on the morning of the fire. The owner, James Graham, had, however, agreed that there were insufficient exits, but claimed he had repeatedly reminded Dorward, that the escape exits were not to be shut during matinee performances. The manager conceded that the exit gates had sometimes been locked to prevent children from entering the cinema without paying.

The conclusion of the inquiry was that the fire had been started by a short circuit when a metal box containing film stock had been placed on the top of a battery in the projection room. The tragedy had been made worse by the limited number of exits, insufficient attendants, and overcrowding.

The cinema manager was put on trial for culpable homicide but found not guilty.

A relief fund for the injured children and bereaved parents raised £5,300 (the equivalent of approximately £338,900 as of 2020): Paisley Town Council offered them a week's holiday at the seaside.

On 31 December 2009, to mark the eightieth anniversary of the tragedy, a memorial service was conducted by Philip Tartaglia, Bishop of Paisley, and his associates at the Cenotaph. Survivors congregated to remember the children who lost their lives on 31 December 1929. The wreaths were laid by one of the survivors, Emily Brown, who was five years old at the time of the incident. Since then, the memorial service has become an annual event.

Safety regulations were tightened in the wake of the disaster; many municipal authorities made inspections of cinemas compulsory. The Cinematograph Act 1909 was amended to ensure that cinemas had more exits, that doors opened outwards and that they were fitted with push bars. A limitation was also placed on the seating capacity of cinemas.

Scottish Place Names

Not as simple to pronounce as you'd think

If you've visited Scotland, ordered a Scotch, or looked at our wonderful country on a map you'll know that it has some strange and wonderful place names.

Though it may come easy to people who have grown up near them, others might not find it so simple to read some of these names aloud.

From Milngavie to Ecclefechan, these Scottish place names are pronounced very differently from how they look when you see them written down.

And it's not just visiting tourists who get it wrong, we've all fallen victim at some point.

So, to make it easier for us all - here's a handy guide on how to pronounce some of the most difficult Scottish place names and to start you off it's not Edinboro but **Edinburra** and **Glass-go** not Glasscow.

Milngavie

Let's just get this belter out of the way, when visiting Glasgow this place is pronounced **Mull-guy** – not Mill-in-gavie.

Ecclefechan

Another cracker – this small village located in Dumfries and Galloway is famous for its tarts.

It's pronounced **Eck-el-feck-han** .

The name is said to come from the Gaelic ' *Eaglais Fheichein* ' which is believed to mean 'Little Church'.

Culzean

Many people know this Ayrshire town due to its famous castle and it may be tempting to pronounce it 'Cul-zeen' but it is in fact pronounced **Kull-ane** .

Culross

This little Fife village will be familiar to Outlander fans as it doubles as the fictional town of Cranesmuir in the hit show, however, to sound like a local – and to get to actually where you want to go – it's pronounced '**Coo-riss**'.

Wemyss Bay

This wee village on the southwest coast is hugely popular but if you're visiting or are meeting someone from there it is pronounced '**Weems Bay**' not 'Wee-miss Bay'.

Chatelherault

This popular country park and house near Hamilton is pronounced **Chat-le-row** .

Auchtermuchty

Another picturesque town in Fife, the name for this town comes for the Gaelic word meaning 'upland of the wild boar' and is pronounced **Aw-ch(as in loch)-ter-muck-tay** .

Hawick

This famous town in the Borders isn't pronounced Haw-wick but instead **Hoy-k**.

Kirkcudbright

This harbour town in Dumfries and Galloway is one that many people trip up over, ignore the 'bright' and pronounce it **Kirk-coo-bray**.

Strathaven

Don't make the mistake of adding too many syllables here, it's **Stray-ven** not Strath-hay-ven.



Islay

The wonderful west coast island is known for its incredible peated whiskies (and not so peated whiskies) but many fall down when pronouncing it 'Iss-lay' it is in fact pronounced '**aye-luh**'.

Ae

Ae – pronounced **eh** – is a village in Dumfries and Galloway that just so happens to have the shortest place name in the UK.

Garioch

Best known for the whisky Glen Garioch, this place is pronounced '**Gee-ree**' not 'Gay-ree-ok'

Kilconquhar

Another Fife village that has a hard to pronounce name, hint it's pronounced **Kin-uck-ar**.

Freuchie

Located close to Falkland in Fife, it's pronounced **Froo-kay** not Froochee.

Auchenshuggle

This unbelievably Scottish name is pronounced **Och(as in loch)-en-shoogle** .

Ballachulish

This pretty little village near Glencoe is pronounced **Baall-a-hoolish**.

Drymen

This famous Stirling village is pronounced '**drimin**' not 'dry-men'.

Findochty

This fishing village in Moray is another pitfall for those not in the know - it's pronounced **Fin-eck-tay**.

Anstruther

Found in the East Neuk of Fife, this little fishing village is one of the best places to get fish and chips in Scotland. To pronounce it like a local you would say **Ainster** .

Anniversaries in Scottish History

December

December 1, 1787 - First lighthouse in Scotland opened (at Kinnaird Head, Fraserburgh). It was built by Thomas Smith and Robert Stevenson.

December 8, 1542 - Mary, Queen of Scots, born Linlithgow Palace. Her father, on his deathbed said "It cam wi' ane lass; it will pas wi' ane lass" - a reference to the Stuart line starting when Marjorie Bruce, daughter of King Robert the Bruce, married Walter, High Steward of Scotland.

December 10, 1868 - Artist, architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh born.

December 11, 1781 - David Brewster, inventor of the kaleidoscope born.

December 18, 1661 - Many Scottish historical records were lost when the ship Elizabeth of Burntisland sank off the English coast. The records had been taken to London by Oliver Cromwell and were being returned to Edinburgh.

December 21, 1846 - Robert Liston, who was born in Linlithgow in 1794, performed the first operation in a British hospital using anaesthetic (ether).

December 25, 1950 - Stone of Destiny removed from Westminster Abbey.

December 28, 1734 - Rob Roy McGregor died.

December 28, 1906 - Rail disaster at Elliott Junction, near Arbroath, killing 22. Snow had caused a signal to droop, indicating the line was clear and a southbound express train, travelling tender-first, ran into a derailed goods train.

December 30, 1915 - Cruiser "Natal" exploded in Cromarty harbour, killing 405.

January

January 1, 1600 - First celebration of New Year in Scotland on this date (March 25 till then).

January 1, 1919 - The naval yacht *lolaire* struck a reef on approaching Stornoway Harbour at 2am. Despite being only 20 yards from shore, 205 out of 260 Lewis men and 24 crew died as the overloaded boat sank.

January 2, 1971 - Ibrox Park disaster, 66 supporters killed on stairway 13.

January 4 - Handsel Monday, traditionally the day on which gifts were exchanged in Scotland.

January 8, 1661 - The first newspaper in Scotland was published. "Mercurius Caledonius" offered coverage of "the Affairs now in Agitation in Scotland, with a Survey of Foreign Intelligence." It ceased publication on 28 March after only nine issues.

January 9, 1811 - The first women's golf tournament took place in Scotland, at Musselburgh.

January 14, 1872 - Greyfriars Bobby died after staying by his master's grave for 14 years.

January 16, 1707 - Treaty of Union of Scottish and Westminster Parliaments ratified.

January 19, 1736 - Birth of James Watt, mathematical instrument maker, developed the steam engine, invented the condenser and copying machine.

January 20, 1937 - Benny Lynch crowned world flyweight champion.

February

February 1, 1708 - Alexander Selkirk, a sailor from Lower Largo, Fife, rescued after four years on the island of Juan Fernandez, 400 miles off the coast of Chile; his story inspired Daniel Defoe to write "Robinson Crusoe".

February 4, 1716 - Prince James Francis Stuart, the Old Pretender, left Scotland after a stay of only three weeks, effectively bringing the first Jacobite Uprising to an end.

February 4, 1941 - SS "Politician" ran aground on Eriskay in the Outer Hebrides, creating the basis for Sir Compton Mackenzie's novel "Whisky Galore".

February 5, 1846 - John Boyd Dunlop, who patented the first practical pneumatic tyre, born Ayrshire.

February 7, 1603 - Battle at Glenfruin when the MacGregors slaughtered a number of Colquhouns - the origins of the banning of the MacGregor name.

February 8, 1587 - Mary Queen of Scots beheaded at Fotheringay Castle.

February 10, 1306 - Robert the Bruce murdered Red Comyn.

February 11, 1895 - Coldest temperature ever recorded in Scotland, -27.2C at Braemar.

February 13, 1692 - Massacre of 38 of the Clan Macdonald by government order at Glencoe.

February 14, 1876 - Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone (Patent 174461). Two hours after it was lodged, his rival, Elisha Gray, applied for a similar patent. Bell's was granted.

February 15, 1971 - Decimal currency introduced, abandoning 12 pennies to a shilling and 20 shillings to a pound.

February 20, 1472 - Orkney and Shetland annexed from Norway.

February 26, 1672 - Philip van der Straten, a Fleming, was granted Scots naturalisation and set up a factory in Kelso, thus starting the Border woollen industry.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at our Burns Supper in the Pan Pacific on Tuesday 25th January 2022 and at the dance practice nights in the Irish Club on 11th and 18th January 2022.

Sláinte

Reggie McNeill

Chieftain

St Andrew Society of W.A.