



# NEWS FROM THE HOUSE of SCOTLAND

“Sgeoil nan Taigh”: Scots-Gaelic for  
“News From The House”

Balboa Park, San Diego, California 92101

February 2012

## Highlights from the January Meeting:

The meeting was called to order by President Steve Knight.

**January celebrations:** Jim Scrimgeour's birthday is January 3. Claire Hoffmann celebrates her birthday on January 8. Dani McGruer has a birthday on January 17 and Dianne's birthday is January 20, although no celebration is planned.

**Thoughts and prayers:** Nancy Ross's brother, Bill, passed away suddenly just before the New Year. Karen Field has also lost a brother. Our sympathy is extended to both Nancy and Karen. A moment's silence was observed for those members of our military who are serving in harm's way.

**Pipe Band Report:** Monteen Solberg gave the Pipe Band report. She thanked those who attended the New Year's Day organ concert. She reports that the recording for the Band's CD is complete. Dr. Carol Williams has offered to play with the band at a "CD launch concert." The band is working on new music for the medley section of this year's competitions. The band is planning to compete at the Queen Mary Games, Costa Mesa, San Diego, and Pleasanton.

**Old Business:** President Steve Knight moderates.

**Hosting:** Heather Wilson reports that the hosting schedule is full through March. The HPR cottages will be closed on Earth Day, which is April 22.

**Upcoming Events:** The Queen Mary Scottish Festival is February 18 and 19, at the Queen Mary in Long Beach.

Tartan Day will be observed on Saturday, April 7.

**Ceilidh Band:** David McSwain reports the band is still practicing on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The band will be playing for Tartan Day.

**Housekeeping:** Everyone was reminded that we are no longer allowed to serve beverages in Styrofoam cups as of January 1, 2012. We were also reminded to let one of the trustees know when supplies are needed in the cottage.

**Other Old Business:** Our pub crawl is still in the planning stages with a prospective date of Saturday, March 10. Courtney Wilson is helping Dani McGruer with the plans. There is no definitive date set for the resumption of movie night.

**New Business:** President Steve Knight moderates.

**New Members:** John Field, Karen's husband, is joining us as a new member. Kim Miller and her son, Jacob Peirce, are prospective new members. Kim says that she has Scottish ancestry on both sides of her family.

**New TV:** Heather Wilson has agreed to help Cherie with the search for a flat screen TV to replace the TV we are now using.

**Other New Business:** A question was brought up by Cherie on whether we wanted to continue having our Christmas Party at Kings Inn or look for a new location. The question came up because of the confusion with member's room locations at last year's party. The members agreed that we would prefer to remain at Kings Inn.

President Steve Knight shared an email he had received from the Gillispie School in La Jolla, concerning the school's search for a group to demonstrate Scottish instruments and dancing. The event is scheduled for Friday, February 24, between 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. The information was passed on to the pipe band to see if they would be able to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 P.M.  
Respectfully submitted  
Dianne Schultz, Secretary

**Reminder:** Membership dues of \$7 are due! Dues can be paid at the February meeting or mailed to Cherie McGruer at 65 E. Shasta Street, Chula Vista, CA 91910. Thank you.



### Upcoming Events

**Feb. 12** HOS Meeting, 11:30 am  
**Feb. 18 & 19** Queen Mary  
Highland Games  
**Mar. 11** HOS Meeting, 11:30 am  
**Apr. 7** Tartan Day  
**Apr. 15** HOS Meeting, 11:30 AM

### Hosting

Feb. 5 Steve & Susan Knight  
Feb. 12 Mike, Holly, & Seamus Stewart  
Feb. 19 Don Stewart & Virginia Anderson  
Feb. 26 John & Kristi Keith  
Mar. 4 Joni Rossi & Doris Greeson  
Mar. 11 Andrew & Melissa Keith  
Mar. 18 Joni Rossi & Doris Greeson  
Mar. 25 OPEN

**If you can host, please call Heather at (215)  
421-8383 or send an email to:  
scottie1956@aol.com.**



## Athelstaneford: Birthplace of Scotland's Flag

The saltire, the oldest flag in the British Commonwealth, has its origins in a battle, which took place at Athelstaneford in East Lothian, some 20 miles east of Edinburgh. In the mid-eighth century at the site of the village, Saxon King Athelstan was at the head of a large army when he met a force of Scots/Picts led by King Angus.

Seeing he was outnumbered, Angus prayed to St. Andrew, and just before the armies clashed, a saltire appeared, created by clouds, which formed a cross against the blue sky. Angus realized this represented the cross on which St. Andrew had been

crucified and took it as a sign that his forces would be victorious. With renewed heart, Angus and his men took to battle and a great victory followed.

The story of the encounter was recorded by Walter Bower (1385-1449), an Augustinian monk who wrote a history of Scotland called the *Scotichronicon*. Bower, who wrote his history while at the Augustinian monastery at Inchcolm, an island in the nearby Firth of Forth, was the first person to identify the place where the Scots and Saxons clashed.

Yet, later historians were to disagree with Bower's claim for the year of the battle, pointing out the monk gave this as 761, when, in fact, Athelstan wasn't born until 895 and didn't come to Scotland until the tenth century. It is known for certain, however, that Athelstan was on the losing side of a battle fought on the site of the village, most likely in 934. This claim is backed up by no less an authority than Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, Lord Lyon King of Arms (1893- 1971), who wrote: "Probably the history of Scotland may truly derive from the victory gained in East Lothian."

The saltire (a white x-shaped cross on a blue background) dates from 832 and is said to get its name from the medieval French for the shape of a stirrup. The battle between Athelstan and Angus was commemorated at Athelstaneford in 1965 by the unveiling of a memorial plaque and placement of the saltire, which flies proudly nearby. The plaque, sited within the grounds of Athelstaneford Church, reads:

"TRADITION SAYS THAT NEAR THIS PLACE IN TIMES REMOTE PICTISH AND SCOTTISH WARRIORS ABOUT TO DEFEAT AN ARMY OF NORTHUMRIANS, SAW AGAINST A BLUE SKY A GREAT WHITE CROSS LIKE SAINT ANDREW'S, AND IN ITS IMAGE MADE A BANNER WHICH BECAME THE FLAG OF SCOTLAND."

The original church in Athelstaneford was built in 1176 by Ada, wife of Henry Prince of Scotland and mother of William the Lion. This continued to serve the parish until 178 when the present church was erected. Memorials to those buried in the churchyard include one to farmer and songwriter Adam Skirving, born in the area in 1719.

It was Skirving who wrote “Hey! Johnny Cope,” the song about another East Lothian battle – the rout of the Hanoverian Army led by Sir John Cope by Jacobites at Prestonpans on September 21, 1745. Most Scots are familiar with the words of the chorus:

*“Hey! Johnny Cope are ye wakin’ yet?  
Or are your drums a-beatin’ yet?  
If ye were wakin’ I wad wait,  
Tae gang tae the coals in the morning.”*

Skirving’s song subsequently became a paean to the 1745 Uprising. Sir Walter Scott later said of its popularity: “Perhaps there is no lyric which contains to this day so familiar lines as those of Skirving.”

Skirving had a caustic sense of humor, and he delighted in pricking the pomposity of others. A Lieutenant Smith, an officer in Cape’s army, took offence at one of the stanzas of another ballad on the battle entitled “Tranent Muir,” in which the poet satirically wrote that the officer “never fought when he had room to flee, man.”

When Smith sent a letter challenging him to a duel, Skirving calmly read it and said to the courier: “Gang awa’ back and tell Mr. Smith that I dinna ha’ time to come to Haddington tae give him satisfaction. If he likes to come to Garleton, I’ll tak’ a look at him. If I think I’m fit to fecht him, I’ll fecht him; and if no’ I’ll just dae as he did, I’ll run awa’.”

Another example of Skirving’s wry wit occurred during a visit to Edinburgh, when he went to rent a field for his sheep while awaiting auction. The poet always dressed in homespun clothes that were almost threadbare, and when he took possession of the field, the sight of this shabby outfit caused the auctioneer to ask who was his security.

Skirving gave the auctioneer an impish look and replied, “King George the Second.” When this retort was greeted with loud laughter, Skirving rummaged in the tail of his coat and produced a stocking leg, which was bulging with gold sovereigns. The crowd fell silent as he handed these to the auctioneer and added, “There’s jingling Geordie. He’s my security.”

However Skirving’s wit was out-matched one day in Haddington when, on seeing Reverend John Brown riding by on a horse which was lame, he called out,

“Mr. Brown, the legs of the lame are not equal.” The Reverend Brown completed the quotation from the book of Proverbs in his riposte: “So is a parable in the mouth of fools.”

Adam’s son, painter Archibald Skirving, was born at Athelstaneford in 1749. His father sent him to Rome, where he studied at the atelier of David, and stayed in the Eternal City for seven years. Later he moved to London where he created chalk and crayon portraits and painted miniatures in watercolor. He returned to Scotland at the start of 19<sup>th</sup> century and remained in the capital until his death in 1819.

Archibald is most famous for his portrait of Robert Burns, created in 1801, five years after the poet’s death. The portrait is thought by some to be a better likeness of Scotland’s national bard than that of Alexander Nasmyth (1758 – 1840), who painted his portrait of Burns from life.

In a letter to a friend in 1816, Sir Walter Scott wrote of the importance of Skirving’s portrait and expressed a desire for it to remain in Scotland. “Mr. Skirving of Edinburgh, an unrivalled artist as a painter in crayons, is going to London with the only good portrait of Burns. I think you will like to look at it, and perhaps you may be even disposed to purchase it, provided the artist’s intention of selling it holds good until he gets to London... If Skirving does sell it, which appears to me very problematical, I wish this unique representation of our great poet to fall into good hands.” Happily, Scott’s wish was realized – the portrait is now on display at the National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Athelstaneford has connections with poet Robert Blair and playwright John Home, who were both ministers in the village. Robert Blair (1699 – 1746), whose poems included “The Grave,” ministered to the parish and is buried in the churchyard.

Blair was succeeded as minister by John Home (1722 – 1808), who wrote two of the 18<sup>th</sup> century’s most celebrated works, *Agis*, and *The Tragedy of Douglas*. In 1746, a year before his ordination, Home fought on the Hanoverian side at the Battle of Falkirk. He was captured by the Jacobites and imprisoned at Doune Castle, from which he and several accomplices made a daring escape. Home cut blankets into strips and twisted them into stout ropes, then he and the others lowered themselves 70 feet and made their flight to freedom. Home was

never caught and a year later he entered into the ministry of Athelstaneford.

In 1787 Home's *Douglas* was performed at the Canongate Theatre in Edinburgh where it enjoyed great success. Sir Walter Scott later said, "It had no equal modern and scarcely a superior in ancient drama." The play was so well received that after the opening performance, an enthusiastic member of the audience called out: "Whaur's yer Willie Shakespeare noo?"

An earlier Scottish writer, poet David Lyndsay (1490 – 1555), author of the *Three Estates*, was born in Athelstaneford, as was soldier and later Field Marshal Sir John Hepburn (1598 – 1636), founder of the First Royal Scots Regiment.

Until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the village was little more than a hamlet adjoined by farming land. Athelstaneford owes its present development to Sir David Kinloch of Gilmerton, who built cottages to form its main street in a line east to west. By 1792 the village included the present church and a school. Shortly after completion, the parish minister was moved to write: "There are few places in Scotland that enjoy greater advantages than Athelstaneford, and none in which the people, in general, are more comfortable, contented or happy."

He could equally have added proudly that no other place in the land can claim to be the birthplace of the saltire – national flag of Scotland for more than a thousand years.

Written by: Robert B. McNeill

From: *The Highlander*, The Magazine of Scottish Heritage, Jan/Feb 2010



## Hearth of the Kitchen

### *Slow-Cooked Bread Pudding*

#### Ingredients:

- 4 whole wheat bagels, split and cut into 3/4" pieces
- 1 large tart apple, peeled and chopped
- ½ c. dried cranberries
- ¼ c. golden raisins
- 2 c. fat-free milk
- 1 c. egg substitute
- ½ c. sugar
- 2 Tbs. butter, melted
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract



#### Method:

1. In a 3-qt. slow cooker coated with cooking spray, combine the bagels, apple, cranberries, and raisins. In a large bowl, whisk the milk, egg substitute, sugar, butter, cinnamon, and vanilla. Pour over bagel mixture and stir to combine; gently press bagels down into milk mixture.
2. Cover and cook on low for 3-4 hours or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

**Nutrition facts:** 1 serving equals 231 calories, 3 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 9 mg cholesterol, 257 mg sodium, 45 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 8 g protein.

From: *Taste of Home, Healthy Cooking*, Feb/Mar 2012

#### House Officers

President:	Steve Knight	(760) 741-3909
1st VP:	Danielle McGruer	(619) 884-3928
2nd VP:	Heather Wilson	(215) 421-8383
Secretary:	Dianne Schultz	(760) 717-5108
Treasurer:	Cherie McGruer	(619) 425-3454
Trustees:	Graham McGruer	(619) 425-3454
	David McSwain	(619) 528-1940
	James Logan	(619) 252-3780

# Pub Crawl

March 10, 2012

Starting at

**Maloney's Tavern 5:30 - 7pm**

\$2 bud light/Coors light pints, \$3 wells,

1/2 priced chicken tenders, wings and nachos, \$5 Jamesons, 1/2 priced car bombs, single malts will be \$7 and import beers will be \$6.50

**Patricks 7pm- 8:30ish**

\$5 - Glenfiddich and Glenlivet, \$12 MacCallan, \$5 Irish car bombs, \$5 Guinness, harp drafts,\$3 Bud light drafts, \$2.50 Sam Adams Ultra \$6 Irish flag, 2.50 peppermint schnapps, Special HOS Drink Available

**Dublin Square 8:30 ish - whenever**

Live entertainmnet 9pm

Paddy's Pig Celtic band

Upbeat and fun dancing

\$5 Special HOS drink available

15% off entire order

End the night with a toast

After party at hotel

Breakfast place yet to come, info will be available at the Feb. HOS meeting along with hotel info.

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## Casino Night

Vista Masonic Lodge  
761 Eucalyptus Ave.  
Vista, CA



March 31, 2012 ~ 7 pm – 11 pm

Come and join in some high-rolling, high-action fun!

Play Black Jack, Craps, and Roulette; win tickets for a chance to win the bucket prizes.

**Theme: Wear Green, the color of money!**

We are looking for table sponsors. You or your business can sponsor a full table for \$200 or a partial table for either \$50 or \$100.

We are also looking for donors for bucket prizes and opportunity drawings.

Advance ticket sales are \$15 and will be available through March 23.  
Tickets at the door will be \$20.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail in ticket orders to: North County Scots, P O Box 1953, Vista, CA 92085-1953

THANK YOU!

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# San Diego Tartan Day

There's a wee bit o' Scot in everyone!



Eighth Annual Tartan Day/San Diego Festival  
Balboa Park, International Cottages  
San Diego, CA

Saturday, April 7, 2012

11:00 AM – 4:00 PM FREE ADMISSION

The San Diego Tartan Day Steering Committee invites you to join a celebration of Scottish heritage – and tartans, the national fabric and symbol of Scotland.

And you can find your own tartan too, at the  
Scottish Clan & Tartan Information Center

Explore displays by many Scottish organizations from all over  
Southern California, including individual Scottish clans

Eat traditional Scottish fare, including the world's best bangers, and mouthwatering home  
baked desserts, all at reasonable prices

Enjoy music and dance from 11:00 – 4:00 PM featuring some of  
southern California's most exciting Scottish entertainers:

House of Scotland Ceilidh Band  
House of Scotland Pipe Band  
San Diego School of Highland Dancing

For more information, contact [info@tartandaysd.com](mailto:info@tartandaysd.com)  
or call (619) 425-3454

Thanks to these wonderful Scottish organizations:

House of Scotland

St. Andrew Society of San Diego

San Diego Burns Club

North County Scots

42<sup>nd</sup> Black Watch Highland Society

Clans of the Highlands

San Diego Scottish Highland Games

Scottish Clan & Tartan Information Center

San Diego School of Highland Dance

SD-Edinburgh Sister City Society

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