

Great SCOT!

Look what's
going on...

Scottish Cultural Organization of the Triangle October 2009

Real Men Wear Kilts

It is hard to believe that we are now talking about the 12 Days of Christmas when fall just started a couple of days ago, but the good folks at The Carolina Inn are very well organized, and they have invited us to participate again this year.

I had a long discussion with Laurence Bezy over at The Inn regarding the cost of the evening and this year the cost has been reduced to \$39.00 per person, which will not include drinks, but a cash bar will be available throughout the dinner.

Folks, this is a great deal at this price, just to have dinner at The Carolina Inn with their excellent Cuisine and beautiful surroundings would be a bargain at this price, but of course you will have entertainment included (the speaker might not be worth much) but the rest of the entertainment will be great.

I hope many of you will support this worthwhile event, it does help to foster the Holiday Spirit when we can get together on such occasions, and we as SCOT members are grateful to The Carolina Inn for asking us to participate once more.

- Donald Ross



Real Men Wear Kilts Scottish Highland Dinner

Wednesday, December 9 at 7 pm

Reservations required

\$39 per person

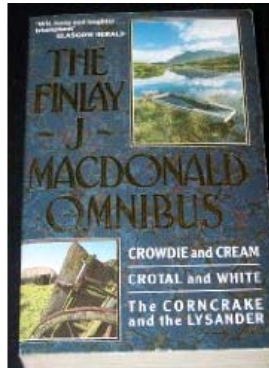
(does not include alcoholic beverages)

Join us for a Scottish Highland Dinner featuring bagpipes, highland dancing, and holiday tales from Donald Ross.

Enjoy a true Scottish Feast, featuring Chef Jimmy Reale's award-winning cuisine.

Cash bar will be open for the duration of the dinner.

The Scottish Bookshelf



The Findlay J. MacDonald *Omnibus*:

Crowdie and Cream

Crotal and White

The Corncrack and the Lysander

Purchased at a School of Highland Dance costume sale years ago, The Findlay J. MacDonald *Omnibus* caught my eye for several reasons. First, it was a sizable book that promised many hours of enjoyable reading, and secondly it piqued my interest because of its series of titles. What exactly is “Crowdie”?

(according to Wikipedia, “Crowdie is a Scottish cream cheese often eaten with oatcakes, and recommended before a ceilidh as it is said to alleviate the effects of whisky-drinking”) What is “Crotal” (a lichen that is used for dyeing wool) and what is a “Corncrack”? (a bird in the rail family found on farmland rather than in marshes where rails are usually found)

Originally published as three separate tales, the *Omnibus* is an autobiographical account of Findlay J. MacDonald’s childhood growing up on the Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides between WWI and WWII before leaving one island for another—MacDonald was educated on Harris, then Skye, and then the University of Glasgow. Shortly thereafter he started his career in radio where his radio talks were a regular delight, and he enjoyed a long and successful career as a BBC producer, and television director.

One of the main underlying currents of the *Omnibus* books is how change did come to the island and the way the local people coped with it. How socializing was changed by the introduction of the radio and the newspaper. How the advent of the car changed the patterns of the island life. One of the joys of Macdonald’s books is how some “new fangled things” were easily accepted and some were not.

If you and your family are stuck in recession mode right now, making do and doing without, reading the hilarious and often poignant stories of family life in the Outer Hebrides is just the thing. Not to be found at your local library, the *Omnibus* is widely available online in used condition, and you are most welcome to borrow my copy in the spirit of making do!

- D’Nise Hefner

International Ffest Recap

The theme of this year's Festival, language, was a fun one to do since many people are aware that the 'official' language is English (though there were a few who did not realize that what Scots speak is English, since they've not been able to cut through the brogue), but are totally unaware of its other languages. We had flash cards of the Highland Gaelic complete with the Gaelic word, English pronunciation, and the meaning. With the assistance of SCOT member, George Birrell, we also were able to make up flash cards of the Doric language, the language spoken around the city of Aberdeen, consisting of words such as lugs for ears, quines for girls, goonies for boys, gang for going, etc.

The SCOT booth which is usually the inside of a croft was transformed by Carolyn Graf and D'Nise and Bill Hefner into a one desk schoolroom complete with ink well, slate, and quills. The desk was the old type which was used not only in American schools in the 30's and 40's, but also in Scotland and it turns out Germany and Armenia. People were quite elated to see one of their old desks and bench. We had books of Gaelic for children and more than one child sat at the desk quietly looking at pictures and studying the words while their parents looked up family names and tartans in Dr. Phil Smith's reference books which were in the booth and listened to my spiel on the languages of Scotland and the intricacies of the pronunciation of Gaelic letters. I welcomed visitors to Scotland and asked them how their trip was. Most were glad to say that it had been quite short and comfortable as we were a very short walk from the main entrance to the Festival.

George Birrell did two presentations each day on different topics pertaining to language and the poetry of Robert Burns (see photo at right), patiently talking to people over the music from the stage which we were quite close to and the 'Biergarten' which was further away but quite well amplified. He spoke in the Doric language and also in Scots. His talks were very entertaining, informative, and well received by the various audiences. In addition to George's presentation and assistance, Alison Birrell, D'Nise and Bill Hefner, and Emily and John Sprague were in the booth talking to Festival attendees and looking up names for folks. The Festival was very enjoyable, the booth quite busy, and the food (Chinese) delicious, but I was truly thankful when Carolyn Graf arrived at 5:45 PM on Sunday with toolbox in hand and announced that she and her repo team, Cheryl and Dan Jones, had come to repossess our schoolhouse.

- Judith Lloyd

SCOT EVENTS of INTEREST

- Oct. 28 **NCSU Pipes and Drums Fall Concert.** Stewart Theatre, NCSU. \$10 general public, \$8 seniors. Traditional and contemporary highland pipes, Scottish smallpipes and snare drum solo. www.ncsu.edu/pipesanddrums. More on Page 3.
- Nov. 13 **Wake & District Tartan Ball.** Raleigh Sheraton Hotel. \$20 per person. Food and entertainment featuring the Wake & District Band, NC State Pipe Band, Jo Moore Highland Dancers, Raleigh Scottish Country Dancers, Inis Cairde Irish Dancers. For details, check out: <http://www.ncfop88.org/>
- Dec. 9 **Carolina Inn's Twelve Days of Christmas "Real Men Wear Kilts"** with Donald Ross, emcee, and local Scottish dancers. <http://www.carolinainn.com/events.htm>. Details on Page 1.
- Jan. 23 **Burns Dinner** at the Country Squire Inn in Warsaw, NC. For details contact Donald Ross at nondo@dockpoint.net or 919-841-5668
- Feb. 20 **SCOT Whisky Tasting.** Contact Craig Hill at chill@rti.org or 919-319-1280
- Feb. 27 **SCOT Family Ceilidh** at the Kirk of Kildaire, Cary. Free family ceilidh and pot luck supper. Bring your party piece to perform, learn a few group dances, sing some Scottish songs, say a poem, show off your new highland dances. Contact Pat Johnston at patriatj@aol.com or 919-614-3303
- Mar. 13 **St. Patrick's Day Parade with the SCOT Float.** Contact Carolyn Graf at cmcdgraf@aol.com or 919-846-1176, or Amy Mooney at danceramy@aol.com or 919-552-3419
- Mar. 27 **SCOT's 9th Annual Cary Indoor Highland Dance & Piping Competitions and Scottish Fiddling Workshop.** Resurrection Lutheran Church. Contact Pat Johnston at patriatj@aol.com or 919-614-3303 for dancing, John Sprague at esprague@nc.rr.com or 919-828-1269 for piping, and Amy Mooney at danceramy@aol.com or 919-552-3419 for fiddling



Ceud Mile Sailte!

One hundred thousand welcomes to our newest SCOT members:

Linda Pastor	Raleigh, NC
Pat Andrews	Chapel Hill, NC
Janet McCauley	Chapel Hill, NC
Tom Funival	Raleigh, NC
Angela Phillips	Greensboro, NC
Selina Murdoch	Raleigh, NC
Sheena & Robert Gregory	Raleigh, NC
Janice Long	Chapel Hill, NC

We are delighted you have joined SCOT and look forward to seeing you at some of our upcoming SCOT events.

We hope that all our members share their "Great SCOT" newsletters with their friends and family, and encourage them to join SCOT so they can receive their own newsletters and discounted admissions to some events.

Fall Concert on Oct. 28

Highland pipes, Scottish small pipes, big bands playing traditional Scottish tunes, and smaller ensembles playing unusual modern tunes...the **NCSU Pipes and Drums Fall Concert** has it all! Adding variety will be dancers dancing and drummers drumming. The concert will take place in Stewart Theatre on the NC State campus on Wednesday, **October 28** beginning at 7 pm. The whole Scottish community is invited. Tickets are available through Ticket Master by calling 515-1100. For more information, contact John or Emily Sprague at 828-1269.



Pedro Columbus, the bonnie Scot, reaches the New World

Corbis

Genoa's favourite Scottish explorer

From Mr Mark Reynier.

Sir, Sean O'Murphy's letter (May 9) laments the "anglifying" of the Italian explorer Giovanni Caboto to John Cabot. The navigator moved from Italy to Bristol at the age of 40, and with a charter from King Henry VII, he undertook two expeditions, the first of which landed at Newfoundland, the second foundered at sea. Oddly a university in Rome, of all places, is named after John Cabot rather than Giovanni Caboto.

According to recent research in Genoese and Spanish archives by the

historian Alfonso Ensenat de Villalonga, Cabot's contemporary explorer was Pedro Scotto.

Peter the Scot was born to Scottish parents, shopkeepers in the port of Genoa. As a young man it appears he worked for a pirate, Vincenzo Columbus, and adopted his surname as a nom de guerre. In a chronicle of Catholic kings in the Spanish national library, the explorer is referred to as "Pedro Columbus". His name was anglicised to Christopher Columbus.

**Mark Reynier,
Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay, UK**

Country Dance

If you have just been waiting to start Scottish country dancing until a new Beginners Class started, now is your chance! A new class, taught by Pat Johnston, is starting on Monday nights at 6:30 pm in Cary in the gym at Resurrection Lutheran Church. This is the social dance of Scotland, done by everyone, from village halls to ballrooms.

Scottish country dancing is a great way to get aerobic exercise to exciting Celtic music. Partners are not necessary. The class is open to everyone from middle-school-age and up. There is no charge to attend these classes. Resurrection Lutheran Church is located at 100 Lochmere Drive, just off Kildaire Farm Road. We look forward to seeing you on Monday nights!

This letter to the editor appeared in the May 16, 2009 edition of the Financial Times.

The Gathering

It's hard to know where to start with The Gathering. I'm including a link that will definitely tell it better than I could, but I shall describe it as best I can: http://www.rampantscotland.com/diary/diary_gathering.htm

I was, like most others, very unsure of how well this was going to go. This Highland Games has been in the planning stages for over two years, and I had met Lord Jamie Sempill several times on his visits to promote it. The event was held in Holyrood Park, which is literally the yard of Holyrood Palace which is the official residence of the British royals when they are in Edinburgh.

30,000 people visited the games on a beautiful Saturday afternoon and about ½ again that many on a misty Sunday. There were entertainment venues everywhere including a children's center where they were crawling around on a huge map of Scotland looking for the answers to 8 questions. Once they had their answers their form was put into a drawing box for 250 pounds prize (approximately \$425.00 in U.S. dollars). What a great history and geography lesson!

The food was all Scottish, of course, and the vendors were overwhelmed, running out of several things (such as water) by mid-afternoon. They had an area where Scottish specialties and produce were being sold, much like the old open market. There was a DNA project tent, Scottish heritage and genealogy tent, tours tents (including the one which had arranged everything for my stay in various parts of Scotland), whiskey tasting, Scottish country dancing audience participation, and many others. There were free seminars going on just off-site on both days, including one with Diana Gabaldon, author of *The Highlander* series.

People had brought blankets and chairs and were lounging about all over talking or watching the entertainment. In the main arena there was a huge screen set up so that everyone could see what was happening on the fields. There were heavy athletics competitions, some by invitation only, massed bands from Canada, Belgium, and Scotland, to name just a few. The Highland dancing competitions also ran from amateur to national competitors. The clan village tents were sparkling white and a magnificent spectacle in



themselves. It was surprising to note that the clan tents were being run largely by Americans and Australians. At highland games in Scotland, clans do not set up tents.

An enjoyment unplanned by The Gathering committee was climbing the great hills just outside the park. Those who made it to the top were rewarded with a breathtaking view of Edinburgh and the Firth of Forth.

I met many people whom I knew from the states. Prince Charles (who is the Duke of Rothesay when he is in Scotland) was the patron of the games. He and Camilla did a short walk about (more like a walk through), greeting chiefs and kinsmen. I managed to squeeze in and get a few pictures since I recognized one of the kinsmen in the front row and slipped in beside him as

they came through the line.

Saturday evening was the highlight of the entire gathering—the march of the clans up the Royal Mile from Holyrood Palace to Edinburgh Castle. I was a part of the audience and then joined in near the top to become a participant. Each clan, in alphabetical order, carrying a small placard with the clan name on it, banners flying, chiefs at their head marched in perfect timing and order up the road with tens of thousands of onlookers cheering. Between every 10 to 12 clans was a pipe band marching and playing. People were standing on buildings and sitting on walls and statues, hanging out windows, waving flags, calling out, and waving. Clan members were laughing, talking, and waving back. It was a very magical and rousing time for everyone.

At the games there were many inquiries at the information tent from people not able to find their clans. Clan Henderson volunteered to handle the inquiries, so on Sunday I spent most of my time assisting them. I was very surprised at the number of Scots who do not know their affiliation. So there I was in Scotland helping Scots find their clans!

The Gathering was extremely well run (right down to the volunteers handing out bottled water to each person who had made the climb up the Royal Mile) and a great deal of fun. It was definitely something I shall always remember.

It was so well received that the Scots are clamoring to do it again in 4 years – a Scottish Olympics.

- Judith Lloyd



The view of Edinburgh from Judith Lloyd's hotel room window. Read in the next newsletter about her experience at the Chieftain's Conference at The Gathering.

Volunteer of the Year

Each year SCOT honors as our Volunteer of the Year a person who has shown outstanding dedication to our SCOT mission. This year we are especially pleased to give this award to **Cheryl McDougal**, who has served as Secretary of our Scottish Cultural Organization of the Triangle since its inception.

Cheryl has done a wonderful job recording the actions of our Board of Directors as well as notifying the SCOT membership via email of all our upcoming activities. She has also helped keep the membership rolls current and was responsible for sending out notices for membership renewals. In addition to these regular responsibilities, Cheryl and husband, Chuck, were on hand for many of our SCOT events either as organizers or as valued participants. Due to family commitments, Cheryl has stepped down from the minute-taking chores of Secretary, but has agreed to continue to coordinate email notices of upcoming events.

SCOT

215 SE Maynard Road
Cary, NC 27511
www.scot.us

The Scottish Cultural Organization of the Triangle (S.C.O.T.) is a non-profit organization dedicated to informing and educating the public about the history, culture, and heritage of Scotland and the Scottish people.

Board of Directors:

George Birrell
Carolyn Graf
D'Nise Hefner
Craig Hill
Patricia Johnston

Cheryl Jones
Judith Lloyd
Donald Ross
John Sprague

Tastes of Scotland



Coconut Macaroons

Last month, at our board meeting, Cheryl Jones brought some delicious Coconut Macaroons. I wondered if there was a Scottish connection so I did some research.

The English name for coconut, first mentioned in English print, comes from the Spanish and Portuguese word *coco*, which means "monkey face." The coconut palm trees are native to Malaysia, Polynesia and southern Asia but are now found in semi-tropical areas around the world. Their light fibrous husks allow them to float easily on ocean currents which may have encouraged their propagation to other areas.

Probably a sweet version of a coconut cookie was developed in its native land but the origin of macaroons dates to 18th century Europe. Said to have been created in Italian monasteries, macaroons were made with egg whites and flavored with almonds. The word comes from the word for "paste" since almond paste was a main ingredient. The tasty treats were brought to France and eventually made their way to England and Scotland. One source credits the Scottish with adding coconut to the previously almond flavored dessert. So, as with many other things, the Scots took the recipe and made it their own.

Food history is often difficult to document and many similar recipes exist in many different places. No matter the origin, this recipe is so good and so easy, it needs to be shared. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

1/2 cup sweetened flaked coconut
1/3 cup sugar
3 Tablespoons flour
1/8 tsp salt
2 egg whites lightly beaten
1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Combine coconut, sugar, flour, and salt in a bowl. Stir in the egg whites and almond extract and mix well. Drop by teaspoonful onto a lightly greased cookie sheet and bake at 325° for 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove at once to cooling rack. These can be frozen or stored in an airtight container but they probably won't last long enough to store!

- Carolyn McDonald Graf

Poem and Commentary

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

By Robert Burns

Oh wert thou in the cauld blast,
 On yonder lea,¹ on yonder lea;
 My plaidie² to the angry airt,³
 I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee:
 Or did misfortune's bitter storms
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
 Thy bield⁴ should be my bosom,
 To share it a', to share it a',

Or were I in the wildest waste,
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
 The desert were a Paradise,
 If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
 Or were I monarch of the globe,
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign;
 The brightest jewel in my crown
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

¹ pasture, ² cloak, ³ place/wind, ⁴ shelter

This poem of dark and somber background is to the enduring admiration for a good, young woman, a form of

pure love. Burns' poem is thanking this good lassie for being helpful to the Burns family and kind and uplifting to him, as he was dying.

Eighteen-year-old Jessie Lewars lived across the street from the Burns family in Dumfries, with her brother, whom Burns considered a very bright, free-thinking man, and before he died, their father, under whom Burns had worked in the Excise Service.

At this difficult and tragic time, Jean, Burns' wife, was pregnant with their eighth child and looking after their large family as the life energy was seeping out of Burns and as he contemplated a difficult and penurious life ahead for Jean and his family.

Every day, Jessie Lewars, this kind neighbor, came cheerily across the street to help Jean with her workload in these difficult times and to chat cheekily with Burns and play songs on the harpsichord for him, in Scots words, "kittling him up." She entranced him and uplifted his mind, making him think of his youth and days of vigor, a bright light in his every day of despair.

He thanked her with this poetic token of admiration for her kindness and help by conjuring meaningful word images of how he would protect and place the good Jessie had he strength in his body, and so, she will be anonymously remembered forever, a Good Samaritan.

- George Birrell

We welcome your contributions to this quarterly newsletter! Please forward news of any achievements, births, marriages, or graduations to Amy Mooney (danceramy@aol.com) to be included. If you have an article, story, artwork, or bit of Scottish lore to share, please submit it to Jane Dunbar (thedunbars@mindspring.com).

S.C.O.T.

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