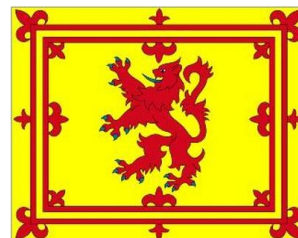




# The Caledonian

VOL. XXXVII NO. 3 NOVEMBER 2020



THE SCOTTISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE SOUTHERN TIER, INC.



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## FROM THE CHIEF: A 2020 RECAP

With a year like 2020, it is easy to focus on the negative. But, in reality, the virus only slowed us down. We made the best out of this historic year.

Our Burns Night Celebration on January 25th was almost a bust due to icy roads, but we turned it into a successful event. Soon after,

the world was hit by the Covid 19 Pandemic. In response, we began meeting virtually with Zoom. On August 22<sup>nd</sup> we caught a small break when Covid numbers slowed a bit, allowing us to hold our Summer Picnic where we awarded three scholarships:

Bruce Stewart Memorial Scholarship winner Amelia Thomas of Horseheads, Robert Burns Scholarship winner Collin Gaylord of Watkins Glen and the George Cunningham Scottish Essay Award McKenna Goltry of Corning-Painted Post. Once again congratulations to all.

We were not the only organization facing challenges. The Caledonian Highlanders Pipe and Drum Band saw only one event during the 2020 season - the Hammondsport 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade. However, they did do a community "pop up" event on Market Street in Corning.

This fall we formed the SASST Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of myself and board members Wendy Brooks and Blair Montgomery Sibley. The purpose of the committee is to focus on how to secure the future of the Society through new ideas and membership growth. We meet via Zoom every other week and hope to have a report ready for the membership by the first of the year.

At the November meeting it was also decided to put the Kirkin' of the Tartan event on hold and to hold the St. Andrews Dinner/Annual Meeting virtually as a Zoom meeting in order to protect all our members during this pandemic. Also at our November meeting, it was decided to postpone the Burns Night Celebration until it is safe to meet again in person.

With the new year just around the corner, 2021 brings a new President and hopefully a vaccine for this virus. Life will go on, maybe a wee bit different than before, but we will move forward to teach the younger generations about our

Scottish heritage and to provide scholarships to assist and encourage those who follow in our footsteps.

Remember to keep in touch via our Facebook Page and Website, and if any member has ideas for future events, whether virtual or in person, please contact a board member. We love to hear from you!

Best Regards,  
*Chief Timothy William Swan*

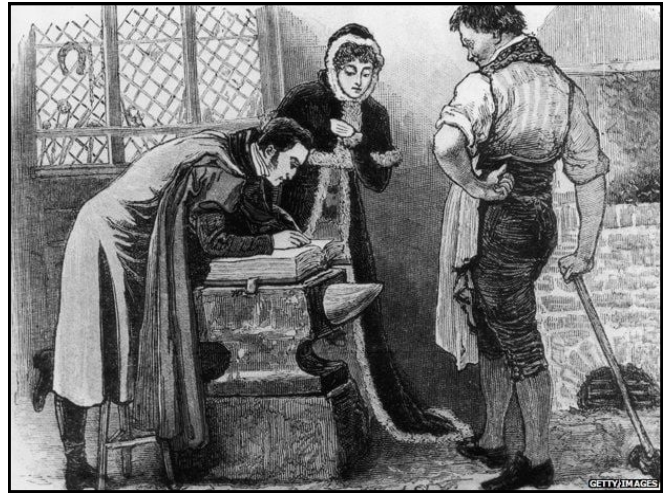
If you would like to join our Annual meeting by ZOOM, on Sunday, November 29, 3 PM: go to this link to sign in. We'd enjoy 'seeing' you!  
[shorturl.at/bgqvV](https://shorturl.at/bgqvV)

### THE PICNIC!

Our summer gathering, the annual scholarship picnic at Mossy Bank Park, was a good success considering the restraints we were facing with the Covid19 pandemic. (Our Barbara Cunningham had an interesting cure to offer, which sounded as if it were worth a shot!) It was a



beautiful day, and Chief Tim shared a variety of tunes on the pipes, and the food and fellowship offered a pleasant occasion for us all.



### RUNNING AWAY TO GRETNA GREEN . . .

In 1754, an English law stopped couples under 21 marrying without their parents' permission. But in Scotland it was permitted for girls from the age of 12, and for boys aged 14 or older. Moreover, anyone in Scotland could marry a couple by "declaration" meaning you could marry on the spot, in a simple 'marriage by declaration', or 'handfasting' ceremony, only requiring two witnesses and assurances from the couple that they were both free to marry. Young star-crossed lovers in England would elope and Gretna was the first town they would come to, two miles over the border. Enterprising blacksmiths set themselves up as "anvil priests", carrying out the ceremony in return for a drink or a few guineas. The hammering of the anvil soon became a notorious sound and romantically it is said that like the metals he forged, the Blacksmith would join couples together in the heat of the moment but bind them for eternity. One blacksmith wrote to the Times in 1843, specifying that he alone had performed around 3,500 marriages in the town over 25 years.

In 1940 the institution of "marriage by declaration" was outlawed in Scotland and in 1977 English couples could finally get married without parental consent at 18.

However, the tradition continues to this day where an estimated 5000 couples a year will choose to marry in the small Scottish village of Gretna Green. A Handfasting service is also offered as part of a marriage ceremony or just



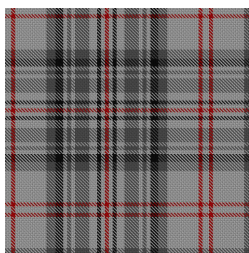
as a traditional blessing. Handfasting has been a part of wedding history in the UK since medieval times. Traditionally Handfasting was the way in which couples showed their commitment to each other, a declaration of their intent to marry. Back then, the couple's hands would be bound together with rope, ribbon, a sash or cord - so beginning the phrase... tying the knot. The now 'Famous'



Blacksmiths Shop still stands at the junction of five old coaching roads, known as 'Headless Cross' where business continues to thrive.

Found on *The Land Called Scotland* FaceBook page.

#### DID YOU KNOW:



Her Majesty The Queen personally owns a Scottish tartan. Named The Balmoral, it was designed by Prince Albert in 1853 and has been worn by every British monarch since Queen Victoria. It is made of distinctive grey with black and

red plaid to match the colours of the granite in Aberdeenshire, where the Balmoral estate is located. It is restricted to members of the Royal Family and The Queen's Piper.

Members of the Royal Family must get the approval of The Queen to wear it, although the Queen's Piper does not need permission. King George VI restricted the tartan being manufactured, purchased or being worn by the public without the approval of Buckingham Palace. Estate workers at Balmoral are also not permitted to wear the tartan, instead they wear the grey coloured Balmoral Tweed. Tartan was banned in Scotland following the Jacobite wars in 1745, but the ban was overturned by King George IV in 1822.

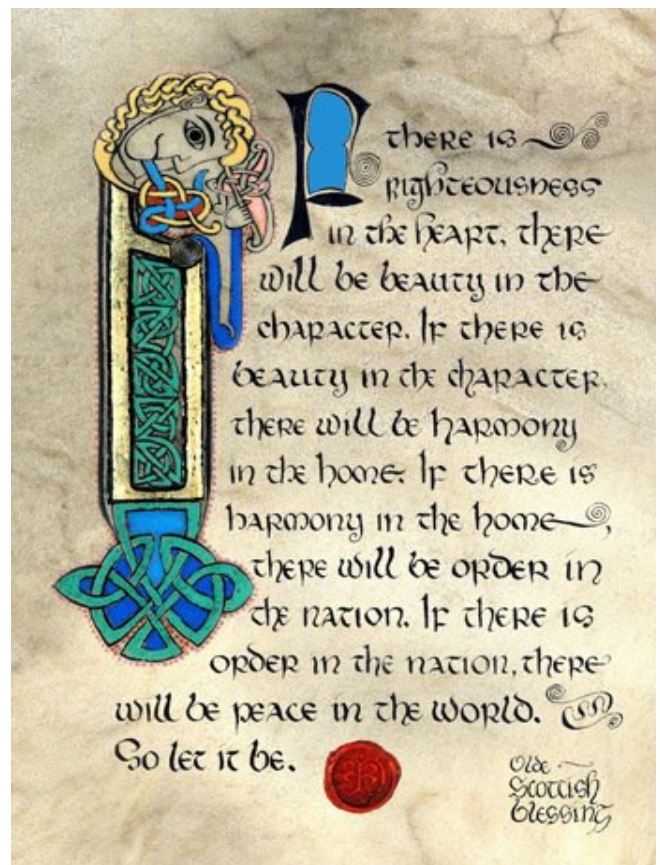
#### CLASSIFIED:

For Sale: Men's wool Kilt day jacket, made in Scotland, muted green. \$25. size 40 chest. Prince Charlie

jacket, sterling silver buttons, \$50, size 40 chest. Contact Barbara Cunningham at (607) 796-9614

#### ...found somewhere on FaceBook:

Ir ye Scottish? A um. Ye ken ur atrue Scot if ye can properly pronounce Ecclefechan, Sauchiehall Street, StEnoch, Auchtermuchty and Aufurfuksake. Yer used tae 4 seasons in wan day. Ye kinfaw aboot pished wioot spilling yer drink. Ye kin make hael sentences jist wiswear wurd. Ye ken irn bru is a hangover cure. Ye actually understawn this message and yur **PROUD TO BE SCOTTISH!**



#### PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES!

Look at your mailing label. If it says "lifetime," or "benefactor", "fellow", or "comp," you are current in your membership and will remain so. If there is a year above your name, and it is not 2020 or later, you are in arrears. If you are not current with your dues (Single \$10, Family \$15, Patron \$25, Benefactor \$50 or more, Life \$250), please remit to Nedra McElroy, 4 Lackawanna Ave., Bath NY 14810 straight away.

Members whose dues have not been paid will be removed from the Society mailing list!

Thank you for your attention to this important matter!

By the same token, if your e-mail or telephone or mailing address has changed, please keep us in the loop. Tell Nedra, keeper of the database.





## Past Chiefs of the Scottish-American Society of the Southern Tier, Inc.

<i>George Cunningham</i>	<i>1973 to 1985</i>
<i>Don Campbell</i>	<i>1985 to 1991</i>
<i>Doug Colborn</i>	<i>1991 to 2000</i>
<i>Donald Flatt</i>	<i>2000 to 2003</i>
<i>Tom McIntyre</i>	<i>2003 to 2009</i>
<i>Blake Mayo</i>	<i>2009 to 2015</i>
<i>Gil Ferris</i>	<i>2015 to 2017</i>
<i>Rick Mason</i>	<i>2017 to 2019</i>



Nedra McElroy  
4 Lackawanna Avenue  
Bath NY 14810-1650

Address Service Requested



**FURTHER SOCIETY  
EVENTS HAVE BEEN  
PUT ON HOLD DUE  
TO THE PANDEMIC.**

**Tune in to Zoom on  
line for our annual  
meeting on Sunday,  
November 29 at 3  
PM here:**

**[shorturl.at/bgqvV](https://shorturl.at/bgqvV)**