



The Caledonian

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



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FROM THE CHIEF:

It's that time of year when the SASST Board reads over the Essays for our three Scholarships. High schools around the Twin Tiers submit their Scottish themed essays for a chance of receiving one of the \$500 Scholarships; the George Cunningham Scottish

Essay Award, the Stewart Memorial scholarship and the Robert Burns Scholarship. This year we have chosen Hailey Hubbard from Horseheads (Cunningham), Milo Miller from Elmira (Burns), and Kyle McEwen from Painted Post (Stewart). Great job to all the winners! And for those who didn't win this year try again next year.

On June 11 my family ventured to the Genesee Country Village and Museum for the second day of their Celtic Faire weekend. I was asked to play my bagpipes at the museum's churches. Although due to over booking of entertainment on the museum's part, I only played at one of the churches. I played a few of my three dozen hymns in the church yard at this well attended event. There were two pipe bands for each day. On Sunday it was the Buffalo Niagara Scotia Pipe and Drum Band and Feadán Or Pipe Band. A friend of mine, who is the Pipe Major for the Buffalo band ask me to play with his band. I was honored to be asked and had a blast playing. I also got a chance to see a former Caledonian Highlanders Piper perform with the Feadán Or band.

The Celtic Faire weekend was hugely successful. There was a good assortment of vendors selling shortbread, beer, Haggis, swords and knives, jewelry, kilts plus everything related to it. Celtic music and Scottish Highland games were a hit. There were also Scotch eggs but I understand that they were not very desirable.

I must say that the museum food was very expensive. I needed something quick before my performance so I purchased a hamburger, fries and a bottle of water for \$16!

And it took 45 minutes to get. So the moral of the story is pack a picnic lunch. They do allow you to bring your own.

Although there were a few small negative points to the event I would say that it has grown into a nice festival and you can't beat the Genesee Country Village and Museum for the host location.

We hope to see everyone at our annual picnic on June 22, at noon, in Bath at the Mossy Bank Park.

 Timothy W. Swan
Chief

FESTIVALS REVIEW:

Nedra McElroy

Well, as our revered Robert Burns said, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft a-gley." The plans that some of us made to attend the Finger Lakes Celtic Festival did just that, owing to the monsoon that took place on the appointed day. In an attempt to personify the Scottish disregard to foul weather, your editor, equipped with umbrella, made her way to Lincoln Hill Farms, outside of Canandaigua, and happily wandered amongst the clan booths, the vendors, the bands, the heavies, the food booths, the very damp spectators. The event was quite wonderful in spite of the precipitation, and I would heartily recommend your checking it out next year. The site is perfect, and lends itself beautifully to all the components of an inspirational festival. My only complaint was my inability to satisfy my craving for a Scotch Egg, as I could not find one. I could have tried the haggis nachos, but somehow, that did not appeal in any way!



I also checked out the Celtic Faire at the Genesee Country Museum, and enjoyed that event greatly as well—the pipes, the heavies, the clan booths, the vendors (why, one could even have purchased a kilt in any size, including children's,

but I digress.) My search for a Scotch egg ended badly, though—I found one, and \$9.72 later discovered it was totally inedible, very overcooked and rubbery. I was quite disappointed, but next year will try to keep in mind the advice offered by our chief: pack a lunch!

PICNIC

Once again, we will venture to Mossy Bank Park overlooking Bath for our annual Scholarship Awards Picnic at the Pond Pavilion. (And if you've never ventured through the park to the Overlook, you've missed one of the most spectacular views in the area!) We plan on gathering on Saturday, July 22nd, at 11:30 to eat at noon. The winners of this year's scholarships and their families are our guests. Members are asked to bring their table service and a dish to pass. We'll provide the hamburgers and hot dogs, lovingly prepared by the menfolk...and hopefully there will be some pipe music and telling of tales. Take Cameron Street, County Route 10, out of Bath, and there will be directional signs along the way. Contact Nedra (mscopyola@stny.rr.com or 607-776-6727) to let us know you are joining us! Do it now, while you're thinking about it!

CELTIC LEGEND

Found somewhere on the Internet...



Hag stones, also known as Holey Stones or Witch Stones, are stones that have a naturally occurring hole and are usually found near oceans and other bodies of water. They are said to be powerful protection talismans, and when worn or carried, they protect the bearer from curses, hexes, negative spirits, and harm. They have also been used to prevent nightmares, being strung on a bedpost or placed underneath pillows. It is also believed that if you peer through the hole of the stone that you can see the Dae Folk and otherworldly entities. If one broke, it is thought to have used its power to protect a life.

MORE SCOTTISH FOLKLORE ~ THE BLUE MEN OF THE MINCH

from [Flower of Scotland](#) FaceBook page



The blue men of the Minch, also known as storm kelpies (Scottish Gaelic: na fir ghorma) are mythological creatures inhabiting the stretch of water between the northern Outer Hebrides and mainland Scotland, looking for sailors to drown and stricken boats to sink. They appear to be localized to the Minch and surrounding areas to the north and as far east as Wick, unknown in other parts of Scotland and without counterparts in the rest of the world.

Apart from their blue color, the mythical creatures look much like humans, and are about the same size. They have the power to create storms, but when the weather is fine they float sleeping on or just below the surface of the water. The blue men swim with their torsos raised out of the sea, twisting and diving as porpoises do. They are able to speak, and when a group approaches a ship its chief may shout two lines of poetry to the master of the vessel and challenge him to complete the verse. If the skipper fails in that task then the blue men will attempt to capsize his ship.

Suggestions to explain the mythical blue men include that they may be a personification of the sea, or originate with the Picts, whose painted bodies may have given the impression of men raising themselves out of the water if they were seen crossing the sea in boats that might have resembled kayaks. The genesis of the blue men may alternatively lie with the North African slaves the Vikings took with them to Scotland, where they spent the winter months close to the Shiant Isles in the Minch.

ROBERT BURNS, the Mason

from [atlasobscura.com/places/robert-burns-masonic-apron](#)
Freemasons are notoriously good record keepers. So much so that The Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh can vouch for the very plain apron on display it says "almost certainly" once belonged to Robert Burns. You can ask to see their minute books for his signature to prove it.

Burns was an active member of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Scotland. One of his more well-

known works, "Auld Lang Syne," is said to be about the spirit of camaraderie and brotherhood that the secret society is founded on. You hear it on New Year's Eve and think of your friends, but according to this theory, Burns was thinking of his clan-destine fraternity of brothers.



Burns made quite the impact on the Scottish lodge—don't let his plain apron fool you. He joined one of the smaller lodges, Lodge St Andrew, No.179, on December 27, 1791, and last paid it a visit only three months before he died in 1796. The lodge was declared dormant within a decade after he passed.

FREEMASONRY IN SCOTLAND

from [atlasobscura.com/places/the-lodge-of-edinburgh](#)



Freemasonry, commonly referred to as Masonry, can be defined as a member-based charitable organization dedicated to the practice of exhibiting good deeds. They are also known for their secret celebrations. Membership is estimated to be around six million affiliates worldwide. In Scotland, there are somewhere around 32 lodges,

places where Freemasons gather for meetings and business.

Located along a cobblestone side street of the country's capital, The Lodge of Edinburgh is perhaps the first-ever established Masonic lodge. The origins of the lodge date back to the end of the 14th-century. An ancient guild of mostly stonemasons would gather at the chapel of St. Mary's in the Old Town. Here, they would discuss various aspects of their organization.

The former congregation met on Niddry Street just off the Royal Mile, but that building was demolished to make way for the South Bridge. Minutes taken from a meeting on July 31, 1599 at this address make this establishment one of the oldest meetings for this ancient institution.

The current lodge, named St Mary's Chapel after its previous meeting location, moved to Hill Street during the 1820s. Here, the Grand Lodge of Scotland lists this structure as number one on the list of lodges.





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>
<i>Tim Swan</i>	<i>2019 to</i>



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Address Service Requested



DATES TO REMEMBER:

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PICNIC

July 22, Mossy Bank Park, Bath NY

ST. ANDREWS DAY/ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Saturday, November 18, Location TBA

BURNS BIRTHDAY BASH

Saturday, January 27, 2024
Wings of Eagles Discovery Center