



Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 30 Number 11

December 2024

Nollaig Chridheil (Merry Christmas/Happy Christmas)

Coming Events:

3rd Annual Irish Holiday Market

We are excited to be participating once again in the 3rd annual Irish Holiday Market hosted by our friends at the Irish Club of Alaska. The event will be at the Nave in Spenard on Sunday Dec 8th from 12-4. We will have Welsh Cakes, Quirky Chocolates (Artisan Chocolate made in Scotland), Hogmanay Grams and other fun Scottish Gifts. Don't miss out on this fantastic Celtic Shopping extravaganza!



Holiday Welsh Cakes are coming!

Have you been craving Welsh Cakes, but your stash from the Highland Games is gone? Well, we are excited to let you know that we will be placing an order with The Welsh Baker for FRESH Welsh Cakes to sell at the **Colony Christmas Event on December 13-15** and the **Irish Holiday Market on December 8**.

The standard flavors will all be available, including: Classic/Plain, Cinnamon, Currant, Maple Pecan, Cranberry Orange, Lemon Poppy, Cherry Almond, Blueberry, Chocolate Chip, Wheat Free/Vegan Oatmeal Brown Sugar, and a Traditional Shortbread.

Special holiday flavors include: Wheat Free/Vegan Figgy Free/Vegan Pecan Pie, Space Cakes, Gingerbread Welsh Cake, Barabirith, Sweet Potato Pecan Praline, Banoffee Pie, Horchata, Sticky Toffee Pudding.

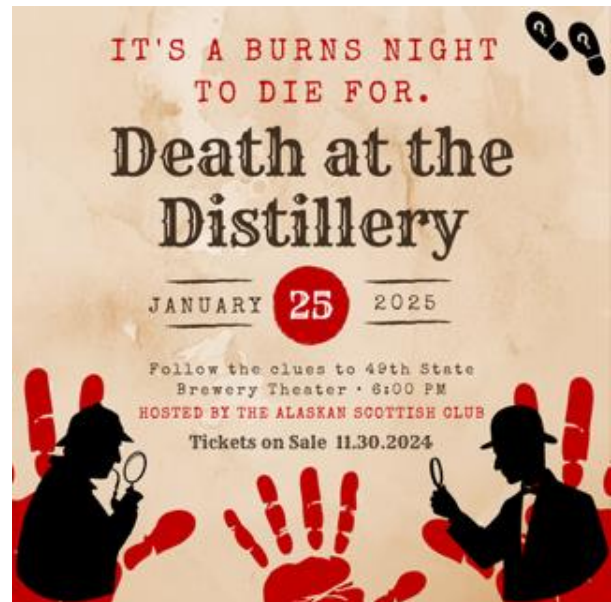
Hogmanay Grams

They're back! We are thrilled to be celebrating 5 years of sharing Hogmanay Grams with our community. The Gram's contents represent traditional first-footing gifts you might be presented with on Hogmanay in Scotland representing prosperity, flavor, long life, warmth, nourishment, and good cheer!

Grams can be shipped or picked up in Anchorage and Wasilla so you can make your own special First-Footing delivery. They are available for order at our Holiday events as well.

Order yours now at <https://alaskanscottish.square.site/>

Tickets on Sale Now:



Death At The Distillery: Burns Night Murder Mystery Dinner

By Sheri Borchert

A traditional Burns Night with a startling twist!

Step into a world of suspense, intrigue, and delicious dining! Our upcoming Murder Mystery Dinner promises an evening filled with thrills and laughter as you become part of a live, interactive whodunit.

In the quiet Scottish Island of Islayabout nothing ever happens. Life goes on, much as it has for countless years, springtime, tourist season, harvest, Hogmanay, Burns Night. Island life is tranquil and the islanders peaceable. At least they all *thought* they were.

This afternoon, the whisky baron of Glen Frick Whisky distillery, Toby Mory, was found in a vat full of his finest malt! And he wasn't treading water while he sampled the latest batch. Oh no! He was dead – murdered no less!

Not only has the news of his death rocked the island, but it now appears one of the more colorful local residents could be the person responsible for Toby Mory's untimely demise. The question is, which one is it?

Throughout the evening, clues will emerge, secrets will be revealed, and everyone will have a chance to play detective.

Between courses of a delectable meal, you'll unravel riddles, interrogate suspects, and try to solve the case before the final reveal. Whether you're a sleuth at heart or just looking for a fun night out, this is an event you won't want to miss.

Details:

- **Date:** Saturday January 25, 2025
- **Time:** 6pm-9pm
- **Location:** 49th State Brewery Theater
- **Tickets:** \$90 (Scottish Club Members, \$100 for nonmembers)
- **Theme/Dress Code:** This is great opportunity to sport your family tartan

Get ready to laugh, strategize, and immerse yourself in a night of entertainment that will keep you guessing until the very end. Reserve your spot today—spaces are limited, and you don't want to be left out of this thrilling evening!

Who will crack the case? Maybe it'll be you!

Spurtle

The Midnight Sun Spurtle Contest has been a popular event at the Alaska Highland Games held in June at the Fairgrounds in Palmer. Palmer has gained international recognition with a Palmer resident, Georgia Barkwood, who competed in the Golden Spurtle Contest in October 2024 in Carrbridge, Scotland. A spurtle makes a perfect, fun, and useful Holiday gift. Scottish Spurtles can be found online and along with a bag of Steel Cut Oats is the perfect gift. My favorite way to cook steel cut oats is on the back of the Bob's Red Mill Brand. I like to turn a bowl of steel cut oats into a breakfast bowl. I add pecans, diced apples, golden raisins, flax seed, cinnamon, and vanilla to cook with the steel cut oats. This can all be added whole cooking. When cooked, I put them in a bowl and add a dollop of yogurt, milk, and a dusting of fresh ground nutmeg. Spurtles are a great gift any time of year. Always remember that in order to get the spurtle magic, use the spurtle in your right hand and stir clockwise to bring good luck to you now and in your future. And after you get a lot of spurtle and oats making practice, be sure and join the Midnight Sun Spurtle contest in 2025. The contest is fun, and great prizes proves this to be a fantastic piece of the Alaska Scottish Highland Games.



Online Store

Searching for the ideal holiday gift for your Scottish friends and family? Look no further! The ASC Online Store has a fantastic selection of unique Scottish gifts that are sure to delight. Whether you're looking for items from the Alaska Scottish Highland Games, charming Highland Coos, whimsical unicorns, or anything in between, you'll find something special for everyone! Find the store at:

<https://alaskanscottish.square.site/>

Save the Date:

Fur Rondy Frostbite Footrace

By Amberle Wright

The Clans of the Alaska Scottish Club are gearing up for a frosty adventure! Join us as Team Frosty Scots in the 2025 Frostbite Footrace in Anchorage, Alaska.

📅 When: February 2025 (Exact Date TBD)

📍 Where: Anchorage, AK

🎭 Costume Theme: Snowmen with tartans and kilts – a blend of frosty fun with Scottish flair!

Let's represent our heritage, spread some cheer, and have a snow-filled blast! Stay tuned for more details.

Get your tartans ready and your scarves wrapped – the Frosty Scots are here to race!

We've won the costume competition 3 years in a row – let's make it four! We plan to walk or run the 2 ½ K (one-lap) route, although team members are totally able to sign up to run the 5K and still be on the team!



Blackness Castle

Blackness Castle was once a royal castle of James II built in the 15th-century as a fortress on the south shore of the Firth of Forth protecting Edinburgh and Fife.

The castle had the most advanced artillery fortifications of its time in Scotland. However, a century later, Oliver Cromwell's Armies took the castle in 1650. The English converted into a prison and a garrison. The Castle held French prisoners of war during the series of conflicts of to include the Napoleonic Wars and the American Revolution.

In 1870 it became the central ammo depot for Scotland until the end of WWI. After WWII the castle was made into a historical monument. The castle has been used as a filming location in several productions, including *Hamlet* (1990), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlander* (2014 and 2015), and "Rise of the Clans".

Tantallon Castle, property of the Earls of Fife, likewise defends the Firth of Forth since the 14th century. The Earls of Fife, also known as the Earls of Douglas claimed the

chieftain in 1358. The Douglas clan and the Stewarts weave claim to the castle. Several septs of the clan created the Red and Black Douglas. The claims weave into the Earls of Angus, Lennox, and Albany.



It became a royal fortress for James V of Scotland during the English Reformation, though it changed hands multiple times during the Scottish Reformation and was besieged and damaged in 1651. The worst insult to the castle's history was when the 12th Earl of Angus (2nd Marquess of Douglas) sold the property to pay his gambling debts. The castle's last hurrah was during WWII, preparations for Normandy were practiced here using aluminum foil and bombers and radar to fake the Germans into believing there were forces staged there for storming Demark not the French beaches of Normandy.

Membership Update

The holiday season is upon us and the membership committee wants to thank all our members for their support of our great organization and being a part of our Scottish Club Clan. We've had a lot of events this past year and plan to continue and offer more events this coming year so stay tuned.

The holiday season has been used in the past when some members renewed their membership in December or January. So that means many memberships will be expiring in the next few months. If you are one of those members, you may want to renew your membership soon. Letters and/or emails may be sent to you to also give you a reminder.

When you renew online, there is now an option where you can renew your membership annually with an automatic deduction from your account. Just insert a mark into the check box to make that option. If you do not want to make that option, you do not have to mark that box. The following is info on the link and other options that can be used for renewing a membership.

To renew your membership, you can do one of the following:

1. Go online to www.alaskanscottish.org and click on the link for membership.
2. Mail a check to the Alaskan Scottish Club office, PO Box 244416, Anchorage, AK 99524.

3. Call the ASC Office at 907-602-0901 and provide payment and demographic information.

4. Visit the Scottish Club booth at any event we are at and pay in person.

Don't hesitate to contact me at the email below, any of the board members or the Executive Director if you have any questions. All board members are listed on the contacts page of the website.

Tonda Scott membership@alaskanscottish.org
907-947-3146



Kilts or Crowns?

St Andrew's Night Was a Blast!

By David Wallace

The Alaskan Scottish Club hosted another successful St. Andrew's Night event at the King Street Brewery. Over 60 club members attended, and were treated to entertainment including the knobby knees competition (Dan Henderson won, Dixine Schiavi judged), Kilts or Crowns (our version of a heads and tails competition – Nelson Alger won!), and a Scottish-themed silent auction. This year's door prize was a ticket to 2025's Burn's Night Murder Mystery dinner. The




lucky attending club member was El Wallace. The highlight of the evening was a solo piping performance by Sam Wood.

We look forward to seeing all of you at upcoming club events. Slainte.

Nelson wins Kilts and Crowns

Contact Information for Alaska Pipe Bands:	
<p>Crow Creek Pipes & Drums Practice every Monday, 6:00 p.m. First Congregational Church, 2610 E Northern lights Blvd Piping and Drumming lessons Tuesday 6-7pm Contact Chris Walker at awalker@mtaonline.net for further information. http://crowcreekpd.com/</p>	<p>Fairbanks Red Hackle Pipe Band P.O. 82782 Fairbanks, Alaska www.fairbanksredhacklepipeband.org</p>
<p>Alaska Celtic Pipes & Drums Lessons Tuesdays - 6:30 pm - Mat-Su College; Lessons Fridays - 5:30 pm - Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Chugiak: Band Practice to follow. Contact Richard Christiansen - 907-315-9838 www.alaskacelticpipesdrums.org</p>	<p>Anchorage Scottish Pipe Band Practices Monday, 6:00 to 8:00pm (Anchorage) and Thursday, 6:30 to 8:30pm (Eagle River) Lessons: Thursdays, 6:00pm (Eagle River), or by appointment Contact: Tim Kincaid, 907-360-2585; Email: tim@ternotech.com Find us on Facebook</p>
<p>Alaska Piping and Drumming Society</p>	<p>City of Juneau Pipe Band Juneau, Alaska www.cityofjuneaupipeband.org</p>

Scottish Club Supporters/Club Contacts

<p>MAPPING SOLUTIONS</p>  <p>Custom maps and graphics (907) 561-4627 Mapmakers.com</p>	<p>AMANDA KERR SUZUKI VIOLIN & FIDDLE STUDIO Weekly Private Lessons and Group Classes for Age 3 and up Variety of fiddle styles!</p>  <p>Register NOW online for Spring Semester Jan. 14th - May 21st</p> <p>Complete information available on the website: www.amandakerrmusic.com</p> <p><small>Amanda Kerr holds State, Regional, and National titles for Fiddling and is teacher-certified in the Suzuki Method (Every Child Can, Suzuki Principles in Action, Violin Units 1 & 2), and Music Mind Games.</small></p>
<p>RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP</p>  <p>Go</p> <p>online to www.alaskanscottish.org and click the membership link.</p> <p>Mail a check to ASC, PO Box 244416, Anchorage, AK 99524.</p> <p>Call 907-602-0901 and provide payment information.</p> <p>Visit the ASC booth community events to pay in person.</p>	<p>Club Scholarship Program</p> <p>The Alaskan Scottish Club Education Assistance Program offers individual grants up to \$500 per applicant for schools or workshops and up to \$1,500 for a post-secondary educational institution. See the club's website for more information and to access the application https://alaskanscottish.org/club-membership/</p> <p>If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Committee chair, Christa Wallace at Volunteers@alaskanscottish.org</p> <p>Back Issues of the Thistle</p> <p>Ever wanted to check out old issues of the Thistle? Maybe to find that steak pie recipe from two years ago, or see who won the tug-o-war at last year's Games? Back issues may be found at: https://us11.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=6523ba4c42aca618e88eb6b99&id=f54a8e4ad1</p>
<p>Gaming Permit</p> <p>The ASC possesses an Alaska Gaming Permit. This Permit allows the club to hold our fundraising raffles and auctions. The ASC is allowed to use our permit to sponsor raffles for other Non-Profits for their events and fundraisers. If you are in need of a gaming permit for an upcoming event please let us know.</p>	<p>Alaska EasyBiz</p> <p>The Club can earn airline miles at the same time you earn your own! The Easy Biz program allows the club to earn 1 mile for every dollar spent on the base fare portion of ticket purchases made online through the EasyBiz® website. Simply sign in to EasyBiz for your travel purchases and each purchase will automatically be credited to the Club's account along with your own! Interested in signing up? Send Jeni an email and she will get you on our account! jeni@alaskanscottish.org</p>

Club Calendar

<p>Scottish Club Board Meeting December 16, 6 pm Nelson's House</p>
<p>Irish Holiday Market December 8 12 – 4 The Nave in Spenard</p>
<p>Colony Christmas December 13 – 15 Palmer</p>
<p>Burns Night January 25, 2025 49th State Theater</p>
<p>Alaska Scottish Highland Games June 28 and 29, 2025 Alaska State Fairgrounds, Palmer</p>
<p>Tartan Tourney July 26, 2025 Settler's Bay Golf Course</p>

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Thanks to our contributors for the November issue: Cathy Steen, Jeni McDaniel, Sherri Borchert, Georgia Barkwood, Christa Wallace, David Wallace.

Alaskan Scottish Club Board of Directors

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Nelson Alger, Secretary	secretary@alaskanscottish.org
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Executive Director: Jeni McDaniel, jeni@alaskanscottish.org
Cell: 907-602-0901

Board Members Emeritus: Robert J. Dickson, Rod Finkle, Tim Kincaid

The Alaskan Scottish Club is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) entity and can accept cash and services. Cash donations are welcome at any time of the year. For those with corporate matching programs, we are eligible for those funds. You can contact the Board of Directors at the above address with questions. Facebook and Instagram contacts are:
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlaskanScottish (Club page)
www.facebook.com/alaskashg (Highland Games page)
Instagram: www.instagram.com/alaskanscottish

NOTE: Thistle information gratefully received at all times. However, to make the monthly deadline, please submit by the 25th. Send to tundrathistle@alaskanscottish.org



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