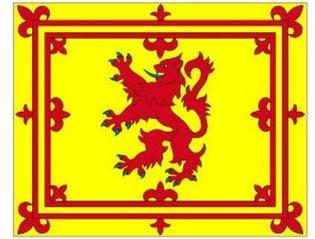




The Caledonian

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JUNE 2013



THE SCOTTISH AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE SOUTHERN TIER, INC.



2013 Officers & Board of Trustees

Chief: Blake Mayo

1433 State Route 244
Alfred Station NY 14803
bmayo@stny.rr.com

First VP: Bill Mackinnon Sitzman

110 Podunk Road
Trumansburg NY 14886
ibcengineering@juno.com

Secretary: Jan Kostolansky

7 Highland Drive
Corning NY 14830
jkostolansky1@stny.rr.com

Treasurer: Alastair Cormack

76 University Street
Alfred NY 14803
cormack@alfred.edu

Editors: Linda Ferris, lindaf14810@yahoo.com

Nedra McElroy, mscopyola@stny.rr.com

Editor Emeritus: Herb MacDonell

forensiclab@stny.rr.com

Pipe Major: Lee Adelsberg,

ladelsbe@stny.rr.com

Drum Major: Stuart Brown

TRUSTEES

Gilbert Ferris, gilf14810@yahoo.com

Susan Gould

Alan Hutchinson, ahutchinson@stny.rr.com

Brenda Knapp-Mason, celticgirl72@gmail.com

Rick Mason, rmason7@stny.rr.com

Visit our website at **www.SASST.org**

Webmaster: **Sean McElroy, info@sasst.org**

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

This news letter is going to be full of up coming events so I will not highlight them this time, instead I have been asked to tell you all about a project that I have been involved with.

As many of you know I am a firefighter. I do not talk about this much to the society in general however in this case there is an exception. Last September I was asked to join my friends in Lancaster Pennsylvania to climb with them. On September 7th of this year, I went to Lancaster to climb 110 stories. We climb 110 because that is how many stories the World Trade Center towers were. This year was the



first year that I have done this. I have been training for this since January and with the assistance of a 100 step staircase at Alfred University and a local gym, slowly got into shape to do the real climb. While doing the climb, I wore my structural firefighting gear including my air pack the total weight of the gear is about 100 pounds in addition to my own body weight.

We do this event to remember the 343 firefighters and 71 police officers that perished on 9-11 in New York City. I actually knew some folk that were in the towers when they came down, both firefighters and people who worked there. So, I really wanted to do this.

The other aspect of the climb is to assist the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation to raise money to support the families of firefighters who have died in the line of duty since 9-11. This organization helps to support the families of the 2 firefighters that were killed on Christmas eve in West Webster and also the families of the 19 firefighters that died in the forest fires out west this summer.

So I completed my climb. It was a challenge. I was mentally ready and physically fit. The challenge came from mother nature: the temperature was 70s when we started but the temperature quickly rose into the 80s with high humidity. We climbed what equaled 110 stories at a minor league baseball park so we climbed the staircases between the seats then

over to the next set of stairs and weaved our way around the stadium. We walked 5 complete circuits. On my last flight of stairs on my last circuit I ran up the stairs. I later watched others do the same. I was proud to do this and am planning to go to another event next year. They also hold this event in a state office building in Binghamton, but most likely I will go back to PA. If you have any questions about the event or how to donate I can help you with that. 9-11 has touched our lives in so many ways since and this is one way that might have a positive effect for some.

Slainte, Your Chief,

Blake

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Concert with Josh Condon
September 29, 2013, 3:00 PM



First Congregational
United Church of
Christ
171 West Pulteney
Corning, NY
Tickets \$10 available
at the door
Benefit our
scholarship fund



Linda Ferris presents Jenna with her check

(Turn south off Denison Parkway between the Post Office and the Sunoco Station onto Walnut, the Elks Club is on the next corner on the right.)

**Social time 5:30, Buffet Dinner 6:15
(Beef, Chicken, Pasta, Vegetarian choices)
Reserve by November 4 with Gil & Linda Ferris.**

**THE ANNUAL PICNIC
HONORING THE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

Our picnic at Harris Hill was very well attended, and a good time was had by all. Certainly, no one went home hungry!

The Society's Robert Burns Scholarship was given to **Jenna Cunningham**, a recent graduate of West Genesee High School in Camillus, New York. Jenna is the granddaughter of our first Chief, George Cunningham, and his wife Barbara. She will attend the University of Buffalo in the fall, to study Math and Music.

JENNA'S ESSAY:

My Scottish heritage has always proven a strong part of who I am. My grandpa, George Cunningham, was born in Scotland and moved to America in his late twenties, and was president of the Scottish American Society.

My family has always taken pride in our Scottish heritage. Each year, we go to the Scottish Games. At this festival, we hear bagpipe music, eat Scottish food such as meat pies, look at Scottish artwork, and watch the traditional Scottish games. I have also had the opportunity to participate in the Robert Burns dinner. I ate traditional Scottish food such as haggis, and was



Celtic Knotwork
presentation by Tom
Walker, Metalsmith
October 4, 2013
St. Thomas Episcopal
Church, Bath



Coffee & Dessert at 6:30, program at 7 PM
shopping opportunity after the program

It would be helpful if you would contact Linda & Gil Ferris if you are intending to join us at either of these activities so that refreshments can be provided as planned.

**ST. ANDREWS DINNER
AND
ANNUAL MEETING with ELECTION OF OFFICERS**
Saturday, November 9, 2013
Corning Elks Club
148 Walnut Street

exposed to the poems of Robert Burns, a truly talented poet. Furthermore, I had the privilege of singing "I Belong to Glasgow" with my sister and father at the dinner.

Although I have had many great Scottish-related experiences, nothing surpasses the experience I had during one summer. The summer before my sophomore year, I was privileged enough to go to England and Scotland to visit relatives and explore these countries with my family. We were able to drive all around the country, starting in Edinburgh, going up north to Inverness, next to Oban, and then travelling back down to Glasgow. The farther north we traveled, the stronger the Scottish brogue.

During our travels, I experienced many of the foods and traditions of these countries, many of which I was already familiar with because of my grandpa. We ate Scottish meat pies, bridies, haggis, and homemade scones. Every morning, we were treated to an "English Breakfast," which consisted of beans, black pudding, bangers (sausage), eggs, tea, toast, and marmalade.

We were also lucky enough to visit the Culloden Battlefield. Scotland's history is filled with battles and wars, fought in an attempt to gain their independence from England. My visit to Culloden Battlefield made me think of all the hardships my ancestors had to endure.

The highlight of my trip was when I visited my Scottish relatives. I was able to learn about their different viewpoints. Many of my relatives are socialists, and were curious about what we thought of President Bush. We also talked with them about their government and their healthcare system. In talking to them, I learned of some of the drawbacks of having universal healthcare, as well as some of the benefits.

I will be majoring in music in college and would love to study Celtic music. I also compose music, and have just begun a piece that has a Celtic influence. I am considering starting a Scottish Heritage club in college to celebrate my heritage with other people my age. Furthermore, one of my dreams is to attend Carnegie Mellon University. They have a very strong Scottish heritage there and celebrate it avidly. I am considering joining the Kiltie band and participate in other Scottish activities.

Traveling overseas and exploring England and Scotland broadened the way I think about the world. I was surprised to find that there were more similarities than differences between the different cultures. This experience has stimulated a desire in me to learn even more about Scottish heritage. I am truly grateful for being immersed in Scottish culture.

The Society also oversees the selection of a recipient for the Bruce Stewart Memo-

rial Scholarship which is presented by the family of the late beloved member of the SAS. This year, it was presented to Sydney Farmer, graduate of Hammondspport Central School. Sydney was Valedictorian of her class and will attend New York University in September, to major in global business studies.

SYDNEY'S ESSAY:

I have known that I had some Scottish ancestry since I was young, but it was not until my Aunt Debbi began to



Got kilt? Got Haggis?



Got Drink?



Got pipes?



A happy Sydney presented by Doug & Barb Stewart

trace our family genealogy that I really began to think about my heritage. My aunt's research reached all the way back to the 1300's and found that we are descendants of Malcolm Wallace, brother of Scottish hero William Wallace. As *Braveheart* has always been a favorite movie in our home, this piece of information really made me stop to think about what kind of people my ancestors were.

What does my Scottish heritage mean to me? I think that parts of family history can be passed down from generation to generation, not necessarily as first hand memories, but as traits and attitudes that naturally get passed down. Thinking about what kind of people we come from sheds light on why we are the way we are.

Where my ancestors lived speaks volumes about the type of people they were. Scotland's rugged terrain is both beautiful and unforgiving. They must have really appreciated their land to want to stay in a place that can be so harsh. One can imagine a healthy respect for nature and a higher power presenting such a beautiful and challenging place to live.

Scottish history tells us about the clans that set aside their differences to fight for their freedom. The Picts and Scoti united to fight the Norse invaders. Also, freedom from English domination was a unifying cause that illustrated the Scottish need to be free.

Scottish culture is far more than men in the Highlands playing the bagpipes and wearing kilts. The importance of family unity, education, literature, and history show people of heart and substance. To have Scottish ancestors means that my family comes from people who were tough in body as well as spirit. They had a respect for their land as well as God. They were people who cherished their freedom, loved their families with all their heart, and stood tall. That explains a lot about my family.

Please remember that information about

these scholarships, including an application, is available on our website at www.sasst.org. Applications are welcome at any time.

ALLEGANY GAMES



A WEE BIT OF HUMOR

Angus called in to see his friend Donald to find he was stripping the wallpaper from the walls. Rather obviously, he remarked "You're decorating, I see." to which Donald replied "Naw. I'm moving house."

PARTY, PARTY, PARTY

by Nedra McElroy

Our Society made a showing with a booth at 4 Celtic Festivals during the summer. (That's not counting other festivals taken in by our members on an individual basis...)

ITHACA GAMES



First off, we supported Belmont's first Allegany County Celtic Festival, which was a great success considering that it was their 'maiden voyage' in offering such an event. The field was interesting in that there were 3 separate arenas for the games, with men and women competing concurrently at each. (And the women set a new record for the sheep toss!) There were pipes, athletes, good food, and many other interesting vendors as well. I particularly enjoyed the Society for Creative Anachronism's antics, as they were located next to our spot.

Then came the Ithaca Scottish Games and Celtic Festival, an established event which is always a pleasure to attend, offering a good variety of activities, games, vendors, and entertainment to pursue. The shopping was superb--ask Jan Kostolanski about that! Well, I came home a bit lighter also, it was a wonderful opportunity for Christmas shopping.

I was unable to take in the Dundee Scottish Festival, but can safely say that those who did attend proclaimed it good fun...and, I don't think anybody got rained on this year, as opposed to the deluge of 2012...

The most recent festival, the Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games at Olcott Beach, NY, was attended by Brenda and Marty Knapp-Mason, with our booth.

I think thanks are due to those dedicated souls who pitched in to put up our canopy and to mind the booth. Offhand, these people include Blake and Alexis Mayo, Gil & Linda Ferris, Bill and Martha Sitzman, Carl Johengen & Brad Benson, Brenda & Marty Knapp-Mason, and Jan Kostolanski.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please be advised that if you are not current with your dues (Single \$10, Family \$15, Patron \$25, Benefactor \$50 or more, Life \$250) please remit them to Alistair Cormack straight away! We're trying to update our records...

AND ANOTHER THING...

Have you moved? Changed to a cell phone? Please let us know so we can continue sending you The Caledonian and call you about SAS activities.

Tell Linda Ferris, lindaf14810@yahoo.com, (607) 776-7101 or
Nedra McElroy, mscopyola@stny.rr.com, (607) 776-6727

Past Chiefs of the Scottish American Society of the Southern Tier



George Cunningham December 1973 to December 1985
Don Campbell December 1985 to December 1991
Doug Coburn December 1991 to December 2000
Donald Flatt December 2000 to December 2003
Tom McIntyre December 2003 to December 2009
Blake Mayo December 2009



Nedra McElroy
4 Lackawanna Avenue
Bath NY 14810-1650

Address Service Requested



DATES TO REMEMBER

Sept. 29: Josh Condon in Concert First Congregational United Church of Christ, Painted Post

Oct. 4: Celtic Knotwork presentation by Tom Walker, Metalsmith, dessert and coffee and shopping opportunity. Food at 6:30 and program at 7, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Bath

Nov. 9: St. Andrews Dinner, Corning Elks' Club

January 25, 2014 BURNS DINNER, Corning Radisson

ALL THESE EVENTS AND MORE ALWAYS AT HAND ON OUR WEBSITE:

<http://www.sasst.org/events.html>

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