



David Campbell, President

October 2017

President's Report

Dear St. Andrew's Society of San Francisco,

Normally I would like to lead off with cheerier news, but the passing of beloved Past President and Society Physician—William (Bill) Campbell Blair on September 21st is what's on my mind. Fortunately, I had the opportunity of visiting with Bill and his family prior to his passing, so I will keep firmly in mind the pleasure of that last remembrance. A moving tribute and memorial service in Bill's honor was held just today (Tuesday, October 10th) at the Menlo Presbyterian Church in



Bill Blair

President's Report, continued on page 2

The Noble Instrument

The Highland Bagpipe

by **Simon McKerrrell**

I recently sent in my entry for the Skye Gathering piping competitions. This is a wonderfully rich and, usually, very popular festival of Highland culture in Portree in the first part of August, held in conjunction with the Isle of Skye Highland Games. As ever, the tunes for the competition always focus on the repertoire of the MacCrimmon pipers, hereditary pipers to the MacLeods of Dunvegan, whose rich history dominates this rugged island off the northwest coast.



But what do we really know about them and their music? There is no piping dynasty more mythologized or drenched in lore than the MacCrimmons of Skye. We know they definitely existed and that they were the clan pipers to the MacLeods of Dunvegan during the period from around the late 16th to the end of the 18th century. Most of the information often repeated about the origins of the MacCrimmon family of pipers comes from [Angus MacKay's Account of the Hereditary Pipers](#), which was published in 1838 and has been often plagiarized over the last 200 years.

The other famous hereditary patrilineages in Scottish piping included: the Rankins, pipers to Maclean of Duart; the MacKays, pipers to McKenzie of Gairloch; the MacArthurs, pipers to MacDonald of the Isles; the MacIntyres, pipers to Menzies of Menzies; and the Cummings, pipers to the Grants.

The Noble Instrument, continued on page 4

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President's Report

Menlo Park. Many thanks to the many Society members who turned out to honor Bill at his service: James Robertson, Bruce McMillan, Casey McKibben, Bob Logan, and Kristian Mullins. To view Bill's obituary in the The Almanac please go to: www.almanac-news.com, (pg14).

With some urgency I would like to address the local firestorms ravaging our North Bay counties. Please bear in mind that we have many members of The St Andrew's Society who reside in the affected areas. Working from the hard copy of our Society Roster I have called the following members to inquire regarding their welfare: John Allison, Rodgers Broomhead, Bill Cummings Jr, Don Fraser, John Hess, John Kofford, John Matthew, Lynn Nichols, John Wilson, and Charles Youngson. I have not been able to speak with anyone directly, but have left voice mail messages whenever possible. If any of the aforementioned can let me or any of us know regarding your status, and/or if we can assist in any way—please do try to get in contact. Also, dear readers—if you know of anyone whom we've missed, or know of a status update yourselves, similarly please get in touch to relay your communication. We will keep you all in thought and prayer.

Last month was a busy one with respect to our partnerships in academia and industry: The University of Glasgow and Entrepreneurial Scotland (ES), in particular. Within the span of one week we hosted University of Glasgow VP of International Development Frances Shepherd; and ES Director Don Macleod & Chief Executive Sandy Kennedy. Both meetings were productive—as our collaboration and shared visions of what's possible continue to grow and evolve. In early October we were also invited to and attended a Glasgow alumni reception at the lovely Palace Hotel. On hand were Norman & Dianne Macleod, Susan Goodier, and myself to represent the Society.

Early Fall is a lovely time of year to take in a Highland Games or two. Kristian Mullins and I met up at the Dixon Scottish Highland Games (www.scotsindixon.org) on the last Saturday in September, and then afterwards enjoyed a steak dinner with a group of friends at Cattlemen's. Also, just this past weekend I made something of a short one-day road trip to Reno to experience the 27th Annual Reno Celtic Celebration (www.renoceltic.org). 2nd VP Allen Cary mentioned enthusiastically having attended the Big Trees Scottish Gathering and Games in Felton (www.bigtreescots.org).



Kristian Mullins with past member John Casey—Dixon Highland Games



Closing ceremony—Dixon Highland Games

on Saturday of that same weekend. As mentioned briefly in last month's report—for my last Games of the year I will be traveling to Southern California over the weekend of October 14 & 15 to attend both the Seaside Highland Games in Ventura,



Closing ceremony—Reno Celtic Celebration

and also notably our Clan Campbell Society Annual General Meeting. I'm looking forward to visiting with my Campbell "cousins" again, and also seeing our Peninsula Scottish Fiddler friends—who I understand will be performing at the Games as well (www.seaside-games.com).

Regarding programming—returning briefly to last month's film night "Scotch and Popcorn: Scotland at the Movies" which was held at the firehouse on September 18th, and featured the film *The Stone of Destiny*. It was a fun evening, hopefully we'll do it again... maybe next year. Two other noteworthy items from September's meeting: Irene & Brian's news that they are expecting in November; and the unanimous vote in support of awarding University of Edinburgh scholarship applicant Benjamin Hunter with a \$6,000 scholarship. Congratulations to Irene & Brian, and Benjamin! Thanks also to the Board of Student Assistance for seeing through Ben's application and decision-making process.

At the upcoming monthly meeting on Monday, October 16th—we look forward to having the San Francisco **British Consul General Andrew Whittaker** join us as our Honored Guest and featured speaker. For CG Whittaker's biography—please see (www.gov.uk/government/people/andrew-whittaker).

Lastly, please mark your calendar for the Grace Cathedral Remembrance Service on Sunday, Nov. 12th and notably our Annual Banquet and Ball on Saturday, November 25th.

Yours in service,

David Campbell, President

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C: 415.225.9307



Big Trees Scottish Gathering and Highland Games Report

By Allan Cary

The morning of Saturday, Oct. 7th at Roaring Camp Railroad Park in Santa Cruz was a gorgeous day and a good 30 maybe even 40° cooler than the games in Pleasanton. The Big Trees Scots' Highland games is the small affair, but it was well attended. The Scottish heavy games are front and center surrounded by the Clan tents, vendors and the music venues. Unlike many Highland Games events where the games themselves are off in some remote corner, and these were visible from anywhere in the event venue. All the events were held in the central field; spectating was easy. The musical entertainment included our own Peninsula Scottish Fiddlers who brought a full contingent and played two long sets. Other entertainment included Peter Daltry, the Fire, Tempest, as well as dancers from the San Jose Scottish dancing school. There were not a lot of clans represented, but among them, the Blairs had a very nice tribute to Bill in their booth. There was even a sheep dog demonstration where the poor dog had to try to herd a bunch of ducks. Unlike sheep, ducks can fly and used this escape method rather adeptly. All in all it was a very enjoyable experience.



Peninsula Scottish Fiddlers



Scotland's First Female Rugby Referee

Hollie Davidson, who played half-back for the Murrayfield Wanderers rugby team in the BT Women's Premier League, has been named the first contracted female referee in the Scottish Rugby League. The 24 year old, who began playing rugby on her school team in Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, made her international refereeing debut earlier this year on the World Rugby HSBC Sevens Circuit. Tappe Henning, Scottish Rugby referee commissioner, explained that Hollie's groundbreaking appointment follows from an initiative begun at the start of the 2015–16 season: "As a result of our women and girls' referee development program, Hollie has learned her officiating on a number of national and international stages."

This article was first published in the Autumn 2017 edition of Scottish Life Magazine.



"You turn up, do the exact same thing as a guy, and leave. There's no extra limelight on you just because you're a female," explains Scotland's newest referee.

The Noble Instrument

In essence, the relationship of these hereditary pipers with their clans was typical of other professions, such as law, medicine and religion, in that the family performed a service for the chieftains and in return received land on the clan estates. That service consisted of playing the bagpipes in clan court and composing commemorative tunes, full of praise, for notable figures and events in the life of the clan (weddings, battles, deaths, births and the like). Pipers in the 17th and 18th centuries certainly had a much higher status in Gaelic court culture than we do today!

In the case of the MacCrimmons, we know also that they maintained a piping school at Boreraig in Skye where they taught outstanding young pipers from around Scotland. Their tuition course was of seven years' duration, which is where this saying comes from: "It takes seven years to make a piper." (In some accounts, "...and seven generations to make a perfect piper"!)

The best historical evidence we have points to the MacCrimmons as coming indigenously from the south of Harris in the Outer Hebrides in the late 15th century. The first piper to the MacLeods of Dunvegan was Iain Odhar MacCrimmon, who was the piper to Chief Alastair Crotach MacLeod in the late 15th and early 16th century. He established the school of piping at Boreraig.

Some sources suggest that the MacCrimmons inherited their genius for piping from the fairies, via the MacArthurs, who were pipers and armourers to the MacDonalds of Islay. The magic "black chanter" was gifted to a big MacArthur piper and herdsman, who passed the musical instrument on to the MacCrimmons. It was said that when the chanter was placed in the pipes of a MacCrimmon, his playing would exceed all others. The magic chanter remained in the family as a treasured heirloom.

Many tunes and stories have been passed down among pipers and many have been reproduced in books on Gaelic Scotland for more than 200 years (often without much regard for their veracity!). One of the best known with real historical evidence is the tune "Flame of wrath for squinting Patrick." This was a tune written by Donald Mor (literally, "big") MacCrimmon, whose brother Patrick Caogach ("blinking," or possibly "squinting") was killed by MacKenzies in Kintail. Donald went after them, and when they would not give up the murderer, he set fire to their houses. The tune commemorates this vicious feud.

However, probably the most famous MacCrimmon piper was Patrick Mòr MacCrimmon, who is said to have composed the piobaireachd "I got a kiss of the King's Hand" (c. 1651), as well as "Lament for John Garve MacLeod of Raasay" (c. 1648) and one of the finest pipe tunes ever composed, "The Lament for the Children."

The story behind "The Lament for the Children," told by Angus MacKay and which others have repeated, was that Patrick Mòr MacCrimmon was accompanied to church on a Sunday by his eight strapping sons, but within 12 months, seven had died (some suggest from smallpox). These tragic deaths became the

inspiration for the powerful "*Cumha na Cloinne* (The Lament for the Children)."

The composition is well known to all pipers, but the public may remember it being played so poignantly at the memorial service after the Dunblane Massacre in 1996. Donald MacDonald, who published the first collection of piobaireachd in 1820, claimed this tradition began when three young women went to bathe in a waterfall near Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel's house. When they did not return, a search party found all three drowned and lying at the bottom of the pool of water. "The Lament for the Children" was played at the funeral and now the tune is frequently played in such circumstances, and frequently at services for pipers. The composition mainly uses the top range of the bagpipe scale, sweeping majestically down to the low notes occasionally to bring an element of shock and creating a feeling of extreme melancholy. The tune was played at the funeral of the great piper John MacColl (composer of some of the greatest competition 2/4 marches) in 1943—and for many pipers since.

The MacCrimmons were undoubtedly fantastic pipers. They were great composers as well, although the exact number of tunes attributed to them fluctuates through time. But probably most importantly, their music is still being heard today.

If you make a trip to Skye in early August, you have the opportunity to hear some fantastic musicians performing MacCrimmon compositions at the piping competitions (and some of them even play them quite musically!). In my view, MacCrimmon tunes such as, "The Lament for the Children," "Lament for Patrick Og MacCrimmon," "MacLeod of MacLeod's Lament," "I got a kiss of the King's Hand," "Lament for Donald Ban MacCrimmon," and "Lament for Mary MacLeod" (among many others) represent some of the very finest music ever composed for the bagpipes.

I remember once the great Glasgow-born comedian-turned-actor Billy Connolly telling me that he only had one piping album. He loved listening to it, and his favourite tune was "The Lament for the Children." There are great versions of this and other MacCrimmon compositions available on [YouTube](#) and I encourage you to give them a listen.

Many writers and non-pipers can hear in tunes like these real emotion, and for me, performing a tune such as "The Lament for the Children," which is about 18 minutes long, is probably the greatest challenge in piping. As a musical instrument, the bagpipes are not known for their ability to express pathos, grief or sorrow, but in these tunes, emotions are at the heart of the performance.

Simon McKerrell is Head of Music at Newcastle University with research interests focused on Scottish traditional music. He is also a piper with the Spirit of Scotland pipe band and has won many solo piping prizes and taught throughout the world.

The article was first published in the Autumn 2017 edition of Scottish Life magazine.

*The St. Andrew's Society of San Francisco
cordially invites you to join in celebrating it's*

154th Annual

Banquet & Ball

November 25th, 2017

Marines' Memorial Club
609 Sutter St.
San Francisco, CA

Reception: 6:00 PM
(No Host Bar)

Dinner, Evening Program
and Dancing: 7:00 PM



Formal or Highland Dress
Recommended

Please visit our website for more
details and ticket information.

www.saintandrewssocietysf.org



Robert Burns
(1759–1796)

*The St. Andrew's Society
of San Francisco*

Burns Supper

Saturday, January 20th, 2018

Save the date for the annual commemoration of the
anniversary of the birth of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns
with a traditional Burns Night Supper.

at

The Family

545 Powell St., San Francisco

6:00 PM: No Host Cocktails

7:00 PM: Dinner & Entertainment

Formal Attire Encouraged

For enquiries contact Allen Cary (2nd VP) at:
2ndVP@saintandrewssocietysf.org

Tickets will be available through the Society's website,
saintandrewssociety.org, beginning in December.



Dear Society Members:

Hello. I am writing to let you know that the Scottish National lacrosse team will be in the Bay area from October 13th through the 22nd for training and competition as we prepare to the 2018 World Championships in Israel.

Below is a link to our website with information on the California Trip. I thought your members may want to come and see a game or engage the team in some way.

<https://www.scotlandlacrosse.com>

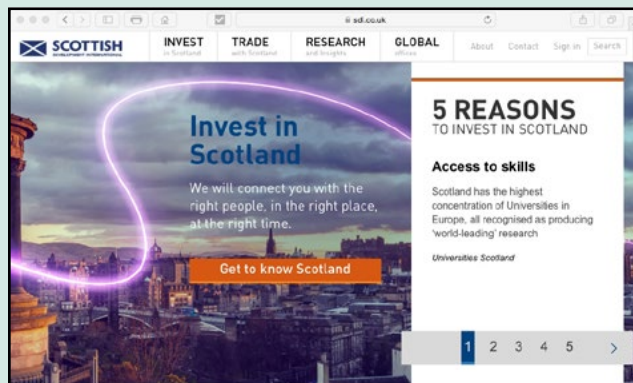
All of our training and games are open to the public.

Thanks,

Brian T Silcott
Head Coach Scotland Lacrosse

Scottish Development International

(SDI) helps companies succeed in business in Scotland. SDI is the international arm of Scotland's enterprise agencies. Offering financial incentives and other assistance to help establish and grow businesses in Scotland and worldwide.



For information on the latest news on foreign direct investment to Scotland, Scottish company news, events, and general good news stories visit <https://www.sdi.co.uk>.

Additional inquiries can be made by emailing:

Justine Kelly
VP, Technology & Advanced Engineering – Americas SDI
Justine.Kelly@scotent.co.uk



To whom it may concern,

We are running an archaeological field school in the Scottish Highlands in June next year. Participants will be involved in researching, surveying and recording a series of historical and archaeological sites associated with the Jacobite rebellions and Highland Clearances of 18th Century Scotland. Training will be provided in archaeological recording practices including historical analyses, map regression, archaeological field survey, technical drawing, photography, building recording and GIS. I have attached [full details of the field school](#) and an [application form](#) and would appreciate if you could forward this to your archaeology department mailing list or anyone you think may find it useful. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me, you can find more information on our organisation at www.harparchaeology.co.uk. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes – Ian Hill



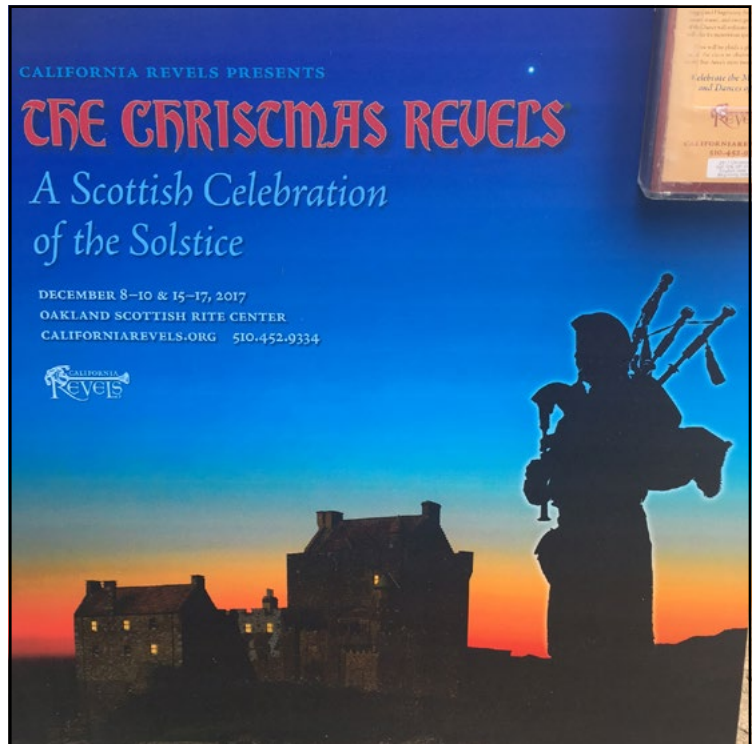


With the skirling of pipes and the swirling of kilts, the 2017 Christmas Revels celebrates the turning of the year in Scottish style.

Join us this December in the land of Robbie Burns as we pass the shortest day in song, dance, and spirited folk tales. Be there for haggis and Hogmanay, first-footing, wool-waulking, mouth music, and even guising! Of course the Lord of the Dance will welcome you, and Abbots Bromley will cast its mysterious spell.

There will be plaids a-plenty, as Scots of all ages gather the clans to observe the return of the sun in the Bay Area's most treasured holiday tradition. You'll find us in the Oakland Scottish Rite Theatre from December 8th through 17th.

For more information: Go to our **website** or visit us on **Facebook**.



WIN A 7-DAY CHICAGO ADVENTURE! ENTER ONLINE AT RLS BIRTHDAY RAFFLE! CLICK TO [HERE](#) ENTER ONLINE!

ENTER TODAY!

**RLS
BIRTHDAY
RAFFLE**

Benefiting the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum

**GRAND PRIZE
Chicago Adventure**

Prize Includes:

7 day stay in private, 2 bedroom apartment overlooking Lake Shore East Park & 2 VIP Chicago City passes with access to The Field Museum 360 Chicago Art Institute of Chicago and much, much more...

Winner drawn November 13th!

**Enter online or at the
Robert Louis Stevenson Museum**



Ticket Prices

1 for \$100

or

3 for \$250

or

5 for \$400



Winner will be drawn on November 13th and announced on Social Media!

For more information visit: stevensonmuseum.org

Gaelic USA

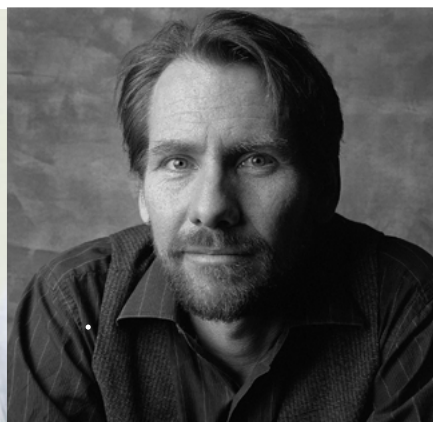
Scottish Gaelic Foundation of the USA / Ur-ras Gàidhlig nan Stàitean Aonaichte is a 501c3 tax exempt public charity

working to reclaim and revitalize the language and heritage of the Scottish Highlands in America, and to build bridges between communities of all sorts, including academia.

Mission: GaelicUSA fosters greater appreciation of the diversity in American culture by recovering and celebrating Scottish Gaelic language and history, and coordinating with and strengthening today's Gaelic community in the United States. We welcome anyone with an interest in participating in Scottish Gaelic culture and heritage.

For more information please visit the website at gaelicusa.org and read our **latest newsletter**.





ARE YOU READY FOR A MAGICAL WEEKEND?

**RSCDS San Francisco
Asilomar Weekend 2017**
Pacific Grove, CA, USA



November 17-19, 2017



“Magnificent!”

**“Absolutely fantastic & the best dancing weekend
I have ever encountered.”**



Join dancers from near & far for an unforgettable weekend of Scottish country dancing at Asilomar. Featuring teachers ~ Fred DeMarse, Chandi McCracken, Mary Murray, Sue Porter & Gary Thomas, with music by Hood, Wink & Swagger, Laura Risk & Nicholas Williams.

Accepting applications from April 1, 2017

Questions? Contact Asilomar Weekend Chair, Patti Cobb at pkcobb23@gmail.com
More details & to apply, visit us at:

asilomar.rscds-sf.org

Meeting & Events Schedule

| Date | Event / Topic | Location / Notes |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 2017 | | |
| Mon. Oct. 16 | Member Meeting (British CG Andrew Whittaker) | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Sun. Nov. 12 | Remembrance Service..... | Grace Cathedral, SF |
| Mon. Nov. 20 | Member Meeting (Peninsula Scottish Fiddlers—TBD) | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Nov. 25 | 155th Annual St. Andrew's Banquet & Ball | Marines' Club, SF |
| Mon. Dec. 18 | No Meeting due to December 31st. Hogmanay Celebration | |
| Sun. Dec. 31 | Hogmanay Celebration | 1088 Green St., SF |
| 2018 | | |
| Mon. Jan. 15 | Member Meeting | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Sat. Jan. 20 | Annual Burns Supper | The Family, SF |
| Mon. Feb. 19 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Mon. Mar. 18 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Sat. April 7 | Tartan Day Scottish Faire at Ardenwood | Fremont, CA |
| Mon. April 16 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Sun. April 22 | John Muir Day / Earth Day celebration..... | NPS - Martinez, CA |
| Mon. May 21 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Mon. June 18 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |
| Sat. July 14 | Summer Ceilidh at Encinal Yacht Club | Alameda, CA |
| Mon. July 16 | No Meeting (Summer Recess) | |
| Mon. Aug. 20 | No Meeting (Summer Recess) | |
| Sept. 1-2 | Caledonian Club's 153rd Highland Games & Gathering | Pleasanton, CA |
| Mon. Sept. 17 | Member Meeting (speaker/topic TBD)..... | 1088 Green St., SF |

About Us

The Saint Andrew's Society of San Francisco

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gmail.com

Membership Meetings

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the month, at 7:30 P.M. Light supper served before the meeting. (Free valet parking is provided for members' meetings. MUNI: one block east of Hyde St. cable car).

Officers of the Society

David Campbell,
President
Francesca McCrossan,
First VP
Allen Cary, Second VP
Ian Baird, Treasurer
Jean Allen, Secretary
Susan Goodier,
Executive Administrator
Roger Weed, Librarian
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Irené Waldman, Bard
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**The Saint Andrew's Society
of San Francisco**
1088 Green Street
San Francisco, CA 94133-3604

Recipient
