# HSHC SPORRAN

www.HighlandSocietyofHarfordCounty.com

March 2025 — Alba Gu Brath — Scotland Forever

The Highland Society of Harford County was incorporated for the preservation of the spirit, lore, poetry, art, dress, welfare, and history of the Scottish people dedicated to the promotion of these traditions among those of Scottish ancestry within Harford County and its environs.



# Grit & Grace of Irish Women in America

## presented by

Cecilia Wright, President of the Board of Directors of the Irish Workers Railroad Museum, and Megan "Sammie" Samuels, Director of the Museum.

(See page 6)

#### at the Vandiver Inn

301 South Union Avenue, Havre de Grace, MD

6:30 - cash bar // 7:00 - dinner program follows

#### **Click Here** to

Choose your entree & prepay your meal
The password is HIGHLAND

(If you have any trouble or questions, you may call the Vandiver front desk at 410-939-5200 after 10:30 a.m. for help.)

## Inflation Boost

It was bound to happen sometime - the cost of everything is going up and so is the cost of our dinners and venues.

\$45/person

includes the wee dram for toasting, great food, gratuities, and programs.

Remember that the HSHC does not make a profit from the dinners - that's what the dues and raffles are for. Remember, too, that food at the Vandiver Inn and other local restaurants are top quality, served in a lovely setting by wait staff.



Irish Workers Railroad Museum 918-920 Lemmon St, Baltimore, MD 21223

## February Gathering Our Annual Whisky Tasting





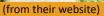














# Laird's Letter



Greetings Fellow Highlanders -

Our February meeting at the Vandiver Inn was declared a smashing success by all. It was a lovely setting, wonderfully catered by the Vandiver staff, and a really scrumptious meal of Scottish delights prepared by Susan Muldoon, Harford County Chef of the Year in 2022. We dined in a private banquet room with cocktail bar, and enjoyed a post-dinner sampling of excellent 12-year-old single malts. Tasting commentary was provided by John Moore, an Irishman and local representative of Brown-Forman Distilleries. All at a cost that even a Scotsman would not quibble over. What more can heaven offer?

**March Meeting** – In view of the success and popularity of our February meeting, your officers have decided to convene our March meeting at the Vandiver Inn once again. In observance of St. Patrick's Day and Women's History Month we will have two visitors from the Irish Workers Railway Museum speaking to us about the Grit and Grace of Irish Women in America. There is more information provided by Andrea Bowden elsewhere in this issue of the Sporran.

**April Meeting** – Your Laird and Laird Emeritus recently visited Mount Felix Vineyard to see if it might provide a suitable setting for a Highland Society meeting. We came away with a favorable impression and are considering it for our April meeting. This could fill the void caused by the recent closing of the Susky River Brewery, which we had been considering because of the enjoyable meeting we had there last September. Decision is not yet final.

**Future meetings & cost issue**. In our recent officers meeting we discussed using the Vandiver Inn on a more regular basis for future meetings and there was general agreement on doing so, but no firm decision made. Cost is a consideration. The cost was quite reasonable at our initial event last month, in my opinion, at \$38/ person total, including fee, tip and tax. Keith Reagan and I met and with John Muldoon, the owner, afterwards and he said they just about broke even with that and will have to charge more with future meetings, viz, about \$49/person bottom-line cost, including fee, tax and tip. This will be the cost at our March meeting. As a point of reference, we used to pay \$30/person at the Bayou Restaurant back before COVID. Considering all the price rises since then, I think \$49 is pretty much in line with that. We are going to have to start charging \$40 for any of our venues in any case, just to cover costs. I welcome your comments.

**HSHC Scottish Scholarship**. Repeating this note from last month - there is currently \$1441 in our treasury, accumulated years ago for the purpose of supporting scholarships or Scottish cultural activities, but has not been used. This was discussed at our officers meeting and Andrea Bowden was appointed as chairperson to form a committee and explore possible uses of the funds. If you have suitable suggestions, please let Andrea know.

## MINUTES OF OUR LAST GATHERING

for February 18, 2025

HSHC gathered at the lovely Vandiver Inn in Havre de Grace MD on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, for the annual WHISKY TASTING. There were 22 members and guests present. Fellowship began at 6:30 PM at the well-stocked bar. Sarah Autry circulated selling 50/50 raffle tickets.



Laird John Polk, Clan Pollock, called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. The toast to King Charles III was given by Keith Reagan, Clan Keith. The toast to President Trump was given by David Ray, Clan McRay. The toast to Scotland was given by Jim Wasson, Clan Buchanan. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by John Polk. SJ Anderson offered grace. Birthdays and anniversaries were recognized,

John Muldoon, owner of Vandiver Inn welcomed members of the HSHC. One area of the room was festooned with banners advertising Scotch brands. Long tables were set so that members faced each other. Charcuterie boards were on the tables and attendees were served their pre-selected entrees of beef stew, lamb, mussels or a vegetarian option. The food was delicious and plentiful.

After dinner, John Polk introduced John Moore, representative of Brown-Foreman Distillers. Mr. Moore hails from County Monaghan, in Northern Ireland. He has a great deal of experience working in distilleries. He delivered a running narrative about Scotch whisky-making using an interesting PowerPoint. He showed a map of distilleries in Scotland and commented on some of them. Attendees were given a tray with three small cups of Scotch. A score sheet was distributed, and attendees rated color, flavor, sweetness, smokiness, and smoothness. They then ranked them 1, 2, 3 as to preference. The brands and prices were compared. There was a great deal of variation among observations and preferences.

Toward the end of the gathering John Muldoon introduced his wife, Susan, who is head chef a,nd her staff. They were warmly applauded by attendees. The 50/50 drawing was won by Susan Wheeler and the very special bottle of PINCH Scotch donated by SJ Anderson was won by Pam Pippin, who was also celebrating her birthday.

The gathering ended at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Andrea Bowden, Secretary

## MYSTERY OF THE POTATO BLIGHT THAT CAUSED THE IRISH FAMINE



In the mid-19th century, a microscopic invader swept across Ireland, leaving a trail of devastation in its wake. The potato blight, caused by the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora infestans*, triggered a famine that killed over a million people and forced millions more to flee. For over a century, scientists have debated where this deadly organism first emerged. Was it the rugged Andes, where potatoes were first domesticated? Or was it the highlands of Mexico, a region teeming with similar pathogens?

Now, a team of researchers claims to have settled the question. In one of the largest genetic studies of its kind, they have traced the origins of the potato blight to the Andes. The findings not only settle one of the darkest long-standing debates but also reveal a complex web of evolution, migration, and hybridization that shaped the history of one of the world's most infamous plant diseases.

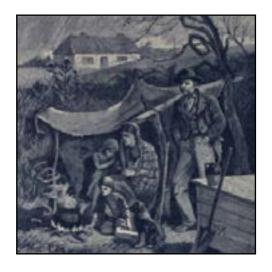
Even today, *Phytophthora infestans* continues to wreak havoc on potato and tomato crops worldwide, causing billions of dollars in losses each year. Learning where it originates could help scientists predict and combat future outbreaks.

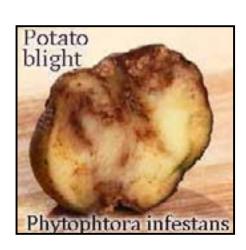
The team analyzed whole-genome sequences from *P. infestans* and six closely related species, including *P. andina* and *P. betacei*, which are found in South America, and *P. mirabilis* and *P. ipomoeae*, native to Mexico. They

also included historic samples of *P. infestans* collected during the Irish Potato Famine. The results were clear. The Mexican species, *P. mirabilis* and *P. ipomoeae*, formed distinct genetic groups, separate from *P. infestans*. In contrast, *P. infestans* was closely intertwined with the Andean species *P. andina* and *P. betacei*. These latter three species form a complex with indistinct boundaries. They're more like siblings than distant cousins. "This is how science works," said Jean Ristaino, a co-author of the study and a professor at North Carolina State University. "There's a hypothesis, people question it, test it, present data. But over time, the evidence is really weighted in favor of the Andes, because the DNA doesn't lie. The genetics show ancestry in that region.

Historical records also point to the Andes. "In 1845, when this blight hit Europe and the U.S., people were immediately trying to figure out where it came from," Ristaino added during an interview with The Guardian. "There were reports that the disease had occurred and was known among the indigenous Andean Indians who grew potatoes."

According to the genetic analysis, the common ancestor of *P. infestans* and its Andean relatives diverged from the Mexican species around 5,000 years ago. Over time, *P. infestans* spread from the Andes to other parts of the world, including Mexico and Europe, thanks to increased overseas trade and globalization.







## PREVIEW OF MARCH 18, 2025, HSHC PROGRAM

in honor of Women's History Month and Irish History Month

by Dr. Andrea Bowden

Our presenters will be Cecilia Wright, President of the Board of Directors of the Irish Workers Railroad Museum and Megan "Sammie" Samuels, Director of the Museum, who will speak on "Grit and Grace - the Story of Irish Women in America". They will explain the reasons women left Ireland and emigrated to America, how they

struggled to overcome discriminatory hiring practices, derogatory stereotypes, and poor living conditions. Sammy and Cecelia will explore their lasting legacy and highlight some notable women of Irish descent such as Mother Jones and her influence on labor unions and fair treatment of all workers.

The Irish Railroad Workers Museum focuses on the Irish immigrants who arrived in the years of the Great Hunger, also known as the Potato Famine and

walks you through the home and life of James and Sarah Feeley. At the Museum learn about the crisis they faced in Ireland, treacherous journey across the Atlantic and development of a new way of life in a vibrant, thriving city.

The homes of Lemmon Street in southwest Baltimore were built in 1848 and were specifically built for immigrant families who could establish homes and live closely to their workplaces, shopping districts, church, and schools nearby. Many worked in the Baltimore and

Ohio Railroad's Mount Clare Shops and worshipped at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church two blocks away. Continue reading and dive deeper into the amazing neighborhood where the Irish Immigrants lived, worked, shopped and worshiped.

The Irish Railroad Workers Museum is located at 918-920 Lemmon Street, Baltimore MD 21223. Mailing address P.O. Box 20627 Baltimore, MD 21223

410-347-4747 <u>info@irishshrine.org</u> for information and fascinating articles of all aspects of Irish life in the Baltimore area.



## HSHC GOES TO RIVERDANCE

by Dr. Andrea Bowden

Ten Highland Society members and guests enjoyed the 30th Anniversary performance of Riverdance at the American Musical Theater on February 26, 2025. The performance began with a video history of Riverdance featuring performances all over the world in the last 30 years. The live program was high energy Irish step dancing with twenty dancers. The traditional dance

is characterized by stiff upper body and precise movements of the feet. This style was popular in Ireland where dancing in small spaces restricted arm movements. Modern step dancing adds acrobatic movements and elaborate costumes.



It is accompanied by fiddle, tin whistle, recorder, and a variety of drums-all of which had solo parts as well. A modern addition, according to David Ray, is that there are small microphones in the shoes of each dancer making the tapping sounds very audible. The 30th anniversary program also featured more solo ballads and dances of other countries-Spain, Russia and American Tap.

In one number reminiscent of West Side Story, an Irish gang challenges an African American gang and they compete in intricate tapping. Overall, the program was a quite enjoyable! The thunderous applause of the packed theater was evidence that the entire audience approved of the performance.

## HOW IS YOUR LATIN?

Compiled by Dr. Andrea Bowden from History Snob

We frequently use Latin phrases, but what do they really mean? Match the common Latin phrase with its meaning. Just give the letter.



### Bona fortuna!

LATIN PHRASE	MEANING
Ad Lib	(A)Meaning "remember that you must die," memento mori isn't exactly a pleasant expression, though its purpose is to serve as a reminder of our mortality in this world.
Carpe Diem	(B) After a swift, victorious battle in which he defeated King Pharnaces II of Pontus in 47 BCE, Julius Caesar reportedly declared, Veni, vidi, vici —"I came, I saw, I conquered."
Bona Fide	(C) Meaning "nourishing mother," your alma mater refers to the educational institution you graduated from, though it wasn't used in this way until the 18th century. The shift makes sense, given that these institutions foster intellectual growth in the same way a mother nurtures her child.
Memento Mori	(D) If you have proof that you weren't at the scene of a crime, you have an alibi. In Latin, the direct translation is simply "elsewhere," though its meaning has since morphed into something more specific, and typically only used in legal situations.
Veni, Vidi, Vici	(E) This common phrase translates as "other I." According to its first use by Roman philosopher Cicero, the expression meant "close friend" or "second self." It's now a term used by psychologists to indicate dissociative personality disorder, where one might have a split, alternative version of themselves.
Alma Mater	(F) Meaning "seize the day" or "enjoy life to the fullest while you can." you've likely come across the phrase carpe diem fairly often.
Alibi	(G) The literal translation of the verb cavere —"to be on guard." It's still used in a similar way even now to signal a word of caution.
Per Annum	(H) The literal translation of bona fide is "in good faith," and is estimated to have been first used in the mid-17th century. In the beginning, it was adopted as an adverb and kept close to its original meaning, though it later was used as an adjective as well.
Alter Ego	(I)Though we often abbreviate it to "etc." In Latin, its literal meaning is "and other things," with its first usage dating back to the 15th century.
Caveat	(J) Meaning "great work," a magnum opus is an artist's most famous creative piece or greatest achievement, whether that work is a novel, song, painting, or game. In other words, it's their masterpiece.
Et Cetera	(K) Short for "ad libitum"—which translates to "as much as one likes" or "to one's pleasure"—this is a phrase we typically use to describe when something is improvised, such as in a musical performance.
Magnum Opus	(L) The literal translation of non sequitur is "it does not follow." Its first use appeared in the 16th century, in logic proofs where the conclusion did not follow the premises.

Non Sequitur	(M) It means "something (in exchange) for something." For example, if someone asks you to do them a favor, you might ask for one back— quid pro quo. However, when this phrase was first adopted in the 16th century by apothecaries (modern-day pharmacists), it was used to denote substituting one medicine for another.
Pro Bono	(N) Requiem æternam dona eis (literal translation: "Rest eternal grant them") is the first line sung in the Mass for the Dead in Latin liturgy, which is why requiem is typically defined as simply "rest," or used to refer to a worship service honoring the souls who have passed.
Quid Pro Quo	(O) Meaning "the state in which," we often now use status quo to refer to the current existing state of something, such as the condition of a company.
Requiem	(P) It translates to "of fact," or "in reality," and is used to describe the actual affairs of something, even if it isn't technically legal or officially recognized. For example, someone could become the de facto head of government, even though it's informal.
Per Se	(Q) It is used as a placeholder text in graphic design, publishing, and digital spaces. The original text was derived from Roman philosopher Cicero's De finibus bonorum et malorum ("On the Ends of Good and Evil") in 45 BCE, though was later scrambled and made incoherent.
Status Quo	(R) Shortened from pro bono publico ("for the public good"), pro bono is typically used in legal contexts or services where someone does work free of charge.
Lorem Ipsum	(S) Per is a common Latin preposition, Meaning "by itself," it's typically used in English to avoid generalization and talk about something intrinsically (ex. "It's not that I don't like English per se, it's just difficult to grasp").
De Facto	(T) It simply means "per year." Per diem ("per day") and per capita ("per heads") are also frequently used in English. Per annum and per diem are often seen when discussing salary and were coined as early as the 16th century, while per capita, used to compare something in relation to the population (ex. number of jobs per capita), dates back to the late 17th century.



But Sweety, it's important to learn Latin: All your friends' names have Latin roots...

## HOW IS YOUR LATIN? **ANSWERS**

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## How did you do????

Dr. John Polk

**Period: 1 – 28 February 2025** 

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\$3.00
\$172.00
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\$455.00
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\$165.00
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# WEE **NEWS** BITS FROM LAND

compiled by

Dr. Andrea Bowden

#### SCOTTISH HIGHLAND BULL ON LOOSE IN CONNECTICUT'S RURAL

HILL COUNTRY ABC NEWS

A Scottish Highland bull is the talk of the town in the rural hills of western Connecticut, where it has been roaming for over a month in the frigid winter weather after escaping from its confines.

Local residents have reported sporadic sightings, including a few over the past week, said Lee Sohl, the animal control officer in Kent. It was recently seen just over the town line in New Milford. The owner, Jo Ann Joray, said there have been people out looking for the bull, but they haven't been able to catch it. Scottish Highland cattle are known as a hardy breed that can live outside all year, according to the Highland Cattle Society in Scotland. That's good for the Connecticut bull because temperatures have been below freezing for several days.

## MEET HAMISH-THE SCOTTISH YOUNG SCOTTSH BULL in the NASNVILLE ZOO Axios



Hamish the 7-month-old Scottish Highland calf has become a media star since the Nashville Zoo released video clips of him zooming around his snow.

released video clips of him zooming around his snow-covered enclosure. Highland cows are the oldest registered breed of cattle, according to the zoo. When they're fully grown, cows weigh 900-1,300 pounds and bulls weigh 1,500-2,000 pounds.

#### EDINBURG ZOO WELCOMS CAPYBARAS The SCOTSMAN

Two 7-month-old capybaras are now in residence at the Edinburg Zoo. The largest rodents in the world, capybaras are native to central and south America. Darren McGarry, head of living collections at RZSS, said, "It is so exciting to have capybara at the zoo for the first time in over 15 years. Our two young females are getting used to their new home and are already showing the keepers their inquisitive little personalities. We hope visitors will still be able to spot them while they're staying inside



for the first few days." The semi-aquatic mammals are strong swimmers, having adapted to live in bodies of water found in forests, seasonally flooded savannas, and wetlands. Capybaras grow to two feet in length and weigh from 75-150 pounds. They are herbivorous and eat a wide range of plants. They are generally docile, except during mating season.

## LANGUAGE EXPERTS NAME 'DISTINCTIVE' SCOTTISH REGIONAL ACCENT THE WORLD'S HARDEST TO MASTER The Daily Record

Scotland is home to a variety of distinctive accents that have long puzzled visitors, with each region boasting its own unique dialect. But among them all, the Shetland accent has been ranked the toughest to master.

A study published in January 2024 by language learning platform Preply found that the Shetland dialect is the hardest in the world to replicate convincingly. Its distinct twang, influenced by Old Norse due to the islands' Viking heritage, makes it particularly challenging for non-natives to perfect. Many viewers may recognize the Shetland accent from the hit BBC crime drama Shetland. However, locals have pointed out that Steven Robertson, who plays Sandy Wilson and was born and raised in Shetland, is the only cast member whose

## FAMOUS ANIMAL STATUES IN SCOTLAND EVERYONE SHOULD SEE

from NEWSBREAK

Humans have been constructing animal statues for thousands of years. It is a way for us to convey our deep bond with the animal kingdom and the debt of gratitude that we owe to our fellow creatures. Animal statues have been made out of a wide range of materials and can be small enough to sit on a city street or so huge that they can be seen from miles away. In our slideshow, you can explore some of the most well known statues in the world and learn more about the animals that inspired them.

#### The Kelpies, Scotland

Located at Helix Park, between Falkirk and Grangemouth in Scotland, the Kelpies are the largest equine sculptures in the world. They are 100ft tall and weigh more than 300 tonnes each and were the creation of artist Andy Scott. The statues are modelled on two real Clydesdale horses called Duke and Baron. Clydesdales were originally bred for farming and agriculture. These days, they are used as carriage and show horses.



#### Greyfriars Bobbie, Edinburgh Scotland

This cute little dog spent 14 years guarding the grave of his owner until he himself died in January 1872. The story has been told in several books and films and the statue stands at the corner of Edinburgh's Candlemaker Row . Greyfriars Bobby is either a Skye terrier or a Dandie Dinmont terrier. Skye terriers are one of the oldest terrier breeds and have a reputation for being intensely loyal. Dandie Dinmont terriers are very vocal and loyal to their owners.



#### Soldier Bear Statue

The soldier bear is called Wojtek and he is a part of both Polish and Scottish military history. He was adopted by a cub and formed a strong bond with the Polish soldiers. Close ties were forged between Poland and Scotland during World War II and the statue is located in Princes St. Gardens in Edinburgh, Scotland. Wojtek was a Syrian brown bear, which is a subspecies of the Eurasian brown bear. They usually live in wooded and mountainous areas and can eat up to 90 pounds of food a day

## SCOTLAND'S UNDERWATER DISCOVERY: THE WORLD A WAITS HOW IT WILL BE RECOVERED

**ECONEWS** 

The concept of progress has evolved radically in recent years. It is no longer just about higher profit margins, but now necessarily involves the decarbonization of global economies. This is the commitment of a team of scientists from Scotland who have found an underwater treasure that could finally eliminate diesel fuel from shipping. This is a major challenge and is an area of intense research. Reducing the use of diesel, a fossil fuel, will reduce Co2 emissions. Some proj-



ects, such as the hydrogen-diesel hybrid boat developed in the US, are promising, but this technology is far from being implemented on a large scale. A more viable solution could be the one developed by Glasgow-based Oasis Marine, which consists of a series of buoys connected to floating offshore wind farms. This system would allow a supply chain to be established to exploit the underwater treasure trove of clean, renewable energy for ships. The ingenious system consists of a series of buoys that provide a floating surface for the installation of wind turbines and solar panels. These systems allow hydrogen to be produced from electrolysis and stored as a gas in tanks capable of withstanding the harsh climatic conditions of this environment, tapping into a

previously untapped underwater treasure trove. In this way, transport vessels could refuel at the nearest buoy whenever needed, finally creating a safer and more accessible solution than other hydrogen storage systems such as ammonia or high-pressure tanks. The technology was tested at the Kelvin Hydrodynamic Laboratory in Glasgow and is fully certified for implementation. In addition, these systems could be connected to other renewable energy infrastructures such as the floating wind power plants that are already spread around the world.

## KING CHARLES AND QUEEN CAMILLA HOST CELEBRITY DINNER

**US WEEKLY** 

King Charles III and Queen Camilla hosted Stanley Tucci, David and Victoria Beckman, Helen Mirren and Maria Grazia Lambertini, the Italian Ambassador to the UK.for dinner on February 7, 2025 at their Highgrove House estate The menu for the evening was created by chef Francesco Mazzei and inspired by Tucci, a renowned foodie, according to a Buckingham Palace press release

## Scottish Recipe of the Month

## **Scottish Macaroon Bars**

https://www.christinascucina.com/scottish-macaroon-bars-and-idaho-potato/

(This sounds a LOT like Irish Potatoes to me! --SJ)



### **Ingredients**

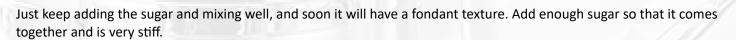
4 oz potato boiled, peeled and mashed
1 lb confectioner's sugar (more or less as needed)
12 oz chocolate milk or dark, for dipping
4 oz finely shredded coconut for coating (divided in half)

#### **Directions**

#### Make the center:

Boil the unpeeled potato until ready. Drain, peel and mash the potato and allow to cool completely.

Begin adding some powdered sugar, about half a cup at a time. Don't fret if the mixture becomes gooey, because it will.



#### Shape the Scottish macaroon bars:

At this point, you can roll the macaroon mixture into small balls and flatten them, or for the traditional style, shape it into a rectangle on the sheet and then place in the freezer.

Prepare the coconut, by placing it on a cookie sheet in a preheated oven for 5 minutes.

Stir the coconut and continue to monitor closely as it will turn brown very quickly.

Remove from the oven when it's a nice brown color; cool and mix with an equal amount of untoasted coconut.

Place in a plate which will be a good size for dipping the macaroons. If you made a rectangle shape of macaroons, cut them into your preferred size and shape.

Keep in the freezer until ready to dip.

When you are ready to finish the macaroons, melt the chocolate.

Once the chocolate has hardened, there is no need to freeze or refrigerate the Scottish Macaroon bars.

Keep in a cool, dry place, preferably in a tin, and consume within 7 to 10 days

(the last part shouldn't be a problem)! I hope you enjoyed my recipe for Scottish macaroon bars. Dip the centers

Dip each piece into the chocolate, and immediately coat with the combination of shredded coconut.

Place on a tray to set.

