

HSHC SPORRAN

www.HighlandSocietyofHarfordCounty.com

April 2026 — 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.



Our April 21 Gathering

Speaker Denny Lynch

Vandiver Inn

301 South Union Avenue, Havre de Grace, MD

6:00 pm - Cash Bar (in the pavillion) & Fellowship

7:00 pm - Dinner & Speaker

8:30-ish pm - adjourn

Reserve Your Space at:

<https://www.vandiverinn.com/tickets>

Password: "Highland"

\$40 + tax



Denny Lynch is a Baltimore City Schools retired educator who has a flair for telling engaging stories about the Celtic peoples. He weaves historical facts with the mythical nature of the people of Ireland and Scotland. He is a popular presenter.

Photographer Denny Lynch has been exhibiting his work in New York, Paris, and many parts of Ireland since the 1990s. Much of his work has focused on Irish history and culture. His photographs have become part of the permanent collections of the Museum of the City of New York and the New York Historical Society. Denny was the photographer for the book *Monuments to Heaven: Baltimore's Historic Houses of Worship*.

Meet new member

Nick Sullivan -

whose profile is on page 5

Please note an important change. We will not meet on the third Tuesday in May. (See p. 3 for more info.)

Saturday, May 9, 2026

An evening of fellowship, food, & Scottish tradition.

Social Hour: 6:00 pm

Dinner: around 6:30 pm

Location: Baldwin, Maryland, hosted at the barn of Steve Belkoff and Lisa Stewart

RSVP by April 12: swheeler68@gmail.com

Anyone wishing to contribute an article, news, a joke or humorous anecdote or other contributions, news, suggestions for articles send them to: 21901SJ@gmail.com or abowden@bcps.k12.md.us

Our March 2026 Gathering Complete with Scotch Tasting



Hey guys, when you take pictures of our gatherings and events, please send them on to me so I can include them in the Sporrán. THANKS
 --SJ
21901SJ@gmail.com





OUR MAY GATHERING - SATURDAY, MAY 9

RSVP BY APRIL 12 - swheeler68@gmail.com

Please note an important change. We will not meet on the third Tuesday in May. Instead, join us on Saturday, May 9, 2026, for an evening of fellowship, food, and Scottish tradition.

Location: in the barn at 5495 Lynch Lane, Baldwin MD 21013,

Hosted at Steve Belkoff and Lisa Stewart's barn

Social Hour: 6:00 PM -- Dinner: Around 6:30 PM

We are incredibly grateful to Steve Belkoff and Lisa Stewart for hosting us on their farm, where we will enjoy a fresh roasted lamb, a true highlight, and a wonderful way to celebrate the season. The event will be held in the barn so please wear appropriate shoes.

To round out the meal,

PLEASE BRING SIDES OR SALADS TO SHARE

If you are not a lamb eater please feel free to bring other proteins. This gathering will also serve as our annual spring picnic, marking the close of our official spring meeting schedule before we break for the summer months and having outings and supporting at local highland events and fairs/festivals.

After dinner, we will lift our spirits with a ceilidh, pronounced "KAY-lee," a lively and traditional Scottish social gathering filled with music, storytelling, and dancing. Ceilidhs were community celebrations in Scotland and Ireland where neighbors gathered to share songs, tales, and dances, strengthening bonds and passing down cultural traditions.

We are especially excited that students from Goucher College will join us to help teach the dances, making this a fun and welcoming experience for everyone, no prior experience needed.

This event further strengthens our community and celebrates something that is truly Scottish, bringing us together in the spirit of tradition, connection, and joy.

Please RSVP directly to Susan Wheeler by April 12 so we can provide an accurate headcount to Steve and Lisa for the lamb. When you RSVP let me know if you will be having lamb or passing on the lamb. (Thanks!) We really hope members and friends will join us. This is a special way to introduce potential new members to our society.

Thank you, and we hope you will join us for this memorable evening of community and celebration.

Warm regards, the HSHC Board

Laird's Letter



Greetings Fellow Highlanders,

As the days grow longer and the promise of spring settles in around us, I find myself reflecting on the strength of our fellowship and the traditions that continue to bind us together. Our March gathering at Vandiver was a perfect example of what makes this Society so special. We came together not only to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, but to share in good company, rich conversation, and a memorable tasting of four distinct Irish whiskeys. From the smooth character of Teeling Irish Whiskey Single Grain to the bold finish of Killowen Rum and Raisin 110, each pour brought its own story, much like each of you brings something unique to our community. Paired with excellent food and lively camaraderie, the evening was one that truly honored both heritage and friendship.

As we look ahead, our next gathering will be on April 21, 2026, and I encourage each of you to attend as we continue building momentum into the close of our spring season. During our last meeting, we shared that May will mark our final gathering before we break for the summer months. There will be no June gathering, and we intend to end the season in true Highland fashion, with music, laughter, and tradition through a ceilidh hosted by members Steve and Lisa. This time-honored celebration reminds us that our history is not just something we remember, but something we actively live each time we gather, dance, and share in community.

I also want to continue encouraging all of you to extend our fellowship beyond our scheduled meetings. Whether it is attending local events such as Havre de Grace's First Fridays or representing the Society at the Fair Hill Highland Games on May 16th. These moments allow us to strengthen our presence, welcome new members, and keep our traditions vibrant and visible. Our organization flourishes not only through formal gatherings, but through the connections we nurture in between them.

The Highland Society has always been rooted in history, but it is sustained by participation. Each conversation, each shared meal, each event attended adds to the fabric of who we are. I am grateful for the commitment and spirit each of you brings, and I look forward to seeing how we continue to grow together.

Treasurer's Report

Keith Reagan

Period: 1 March – 31 March 2026

OLD BALANCE	\$4,336.80
Expenses:	
Society subsidy of whiskey tasting flights	(\$59.95)
Income:	
Dues (2026)	\$75.00
Donation	\$50.00
February Raffle Receipts	\$140.00
NEW BALANCE	\$4,541.80

MEET NEW MEMBER

THOMAS NICHOLAS MITCHELL, Clan Innes



Nick Mitchell lives with his wife, Olivia, and their 3-year-old son Callum in Chevy Chase, MD, in Montgomery County. Callum is a Gaelic-inspired name meaning peace and hope, with the symbol bird the dove.

Originally from upstate New York, Nick has worked all over the world in the field of healthcare, subsets of natural products, supplements, pharmacy and pharmaceuticals. Nick has a BS in Chemistry from Gannon University in Erie, PA, and Executive MBA from Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA.

His professional career took him to India and China

for ten years. He met his wife in China. He loves to travel in the USA or abroad. He has visited 45 of states and over 50 countries! He has lived mostly East Coast, but also California.

Nick has been attending Scottish highland games since his childhood in the 1970s across upstate NY and all of New England. He had the chance to attend the Edinburgh Tattoo in the late 80s and became 100% hooked on “all things Scottish.”

Nick describes himself as a “recovering percussionist” who loves drums and pretty much everything about music.

Fun Fact: Nick grew up on a dairy farm and he is interested in getting back any way he can-even if he has to MOOve!

MEET KEITH REAGAN – TREASURER Clan Keith

Keith was born in Houston, Texas, but now lives in Bel Air with his wife, Joanna, who is also a member of HSHC. They have two children; a son who works for Northrop Grumman, and a daughter who is in medical school.

Keith holds a Master of Public Administration from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg and a Master of Science in Computer Education from the University of North Texas in Denton. Currently retired, he worked in Healthcare Administration and teaching science (Biology and Chemistry).

Keith served as an Army Medical Service Corps officer for 25 years in the Army Reserves.

Keith saw in the Aegis newspaper about the Society’s Robert Burns Night being held on January 15, 2019, and after attending he thought this would be a fun group to join. He has been in HSHC for seven years and served as Laird for two months and is currently our treasurer.

Keith is the handbell choir director of the five-octave Schulmerich handbell and handchime choir in his church, Christ Our King PC (USA). He and Joanna love to travel in the USA and abroad. In the last three years they have visited Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, and Scandinavia.

Fun Fact: Keith spent the six years between the ages of 1 and 7 living in Europe, the last 3 years of which was in London, and he returned to the U.S. speaking the “Queen’s English”.



MEET ANDREA BOWDEN - SECRETARY Clan MacMillan

Andrea was born in the small coal mining town of Lonaconing in Allegany County, Maryland. Her great-grandparents on both sides emigrated to the coal fields – her father’s ancestors from Scotland and her mother’s ancestors from Ireland. Growing up, both parents honored

their cultures – Scottish first footing, making finnan haddie and scones, attending ceildhs, doing Irish dance and making Irish recipes. Her mother was a teacher and her father, who died while she was in high school, was an accountant.

Andrea attended the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now University) on scholarship and earned BA in Biology and Education. She was awarded an MS from Johns Hopkins University in Urban Education, MS from Hood College in Environmental Science, and a Ph.D. in Policy, Planning and Administration from the University of Maryland College Park.

A resident of Baltimore since college, Andrea was married to John Fontaine Jones, also a teacher, and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health administrator. He died in 1998. They had no children – but acted as mentors for countless students.

Andrea is a retired educator – 50 years in Baltimore City Schools as a science teacher, supervisor of science, math, and health, and school-based administrator. Currently, she coordinates student Service Learning and charitable giving through United Way for BCPS as a volunteer.

Andrea was invited to join HSHC by Ski and Angie Schiaffino in 2015. Andrea has served as co-editor of the Sporrans, “Mistress of Revels” -planning Outlander picnics, and other celebrations and now as secretary.

Andrea enjoys travel in USA and abroad and recently visited England and Scotland and did Road Scholar Workshops in Costa Rica, Mexico, Alaska and other states.

She is a volunteer at St. Francis of Assisi School that attained MD GREEN SCHOOL status in 2026 and she serves as Prefect of the Sodality. She enjoys reading gardening, outdoor pursuits and spending time at her mountain home in western Maryland.

Fun fact: Andrea has 10 indoor and 8 outdoor cats and sponsors a feral colony for SPCA.



Pysanky, Traditional Ukrainian Easter Eggs

by Lee Ann Anderson



Pysanky, traditional Ukrainian Easter eggs are rich in symbolism and cultural history. Created during Lent they are blessed and kept as protective talismans in homes, barns, or fields.

As a young girl I was given a pysanky egg by a family friend who was from the Ukraine. As an adult I took a class on “writing” pysanky. Each egg takes me 3-5 hours to make. I love the artistic beauty, tradition, and spirituality of the craft. Most eggs I create are made as gifts for family and friends in celebration of the Easter season.

Pysanky (singular: pysanka) are intricately decorated eggs that date back to pre-Christian Ukraine, where they were believed to bring fertility, protect livestock, and ensure a fruitful season. With the advent of Christianity, pysanky were incorporated into Easter celebrations, representing the resurrection of Christ and spiritual renewal. Folklore suggests they could ward off evil and symbolize the return of spring.

The word “pysanka” comes from the Ukrainian verb *pysaty*, meaning “to write,” reflecting the method of creating designs rather than simply painting them. Using a tool called a *kistka*, melted beeswax is applied to areas meant to resist dye. The egg is dipped in successive

colors, with wax applied between layers to preserve previous designs.

Once all layers are complete, the wax is melted off over a flame, revealing the intricate patterns.

Every element of a *pysanka* carries meaning. Colors and patterns are symbolic: Triangles represent the Holy Trinity, waves represent eternity, fish and nets

represent Christ. White represents purity, green is for rebirth, blue for health, black represents respect for the souls of the departed, and orange is for strength and endurance.

Ukrainians of the Carpathian Mountains believe that the fate of the world depends upon *pysanka*. As long as the egg decorating custom continues, the world will exist. If, for any reason, this custom is abandoned, evil—in the shape

of a horrible serpent who is forever chained to a cliff—will overrun the world. Each year the serpent sends out his minions to see how many *pysanky* have been created. If the number is low the serpent’s chains are loosened and he is free to wander the earth causing havoc and destruction. If, on the other hand, the number of *pysanky* has increased,

the chains are tightened and good triumphs over evil for yet another year.



[An Easter egg funny from Susan Buchanan](#)



THE VARIED STEWART TARTANS

by Lisa Stewart, Clan Stewart

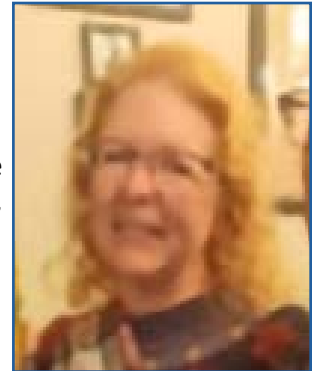
The Stewart tartan is connected with Scotland's 14th Century royal dynasty, the House of Stewart. The House of Stewart was founded by Walter Stewart, who married Princess Margery, daughter of King Robert the Bruce.

Many clan tartans have several variations characterized by specific colors and historical importance. Some of the more well known for the Stewart clan are:

The Royal Stewart tartan-the best-known of the Stewart tartans. It was always regarded as the personal tartan of the Royal House of Scotland and is now considered to be the personal tartan of the British Monarch. Officially, this tartan is worn by pipers of the Black Watch, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, and the Scots Guards as well as a select few civilian groups with permission from the King. Historically, this tartan was not to be worn without the express permission of the British Monarch, except for Stewart clan members. It has now become a universal tartan which can be worn by anyone.



The Hunting Stewart tartan is more subdued and has a more earthy color pattern of greens, blues, and black to create camouflage suitable for hunting.



The Dress Stewart is a lighter variation with a white background, used for more formal occasions. This is the one that I wear as my tartan.



The Black Stewart has a black background instead of the Royal red and is popular for less formal attire.

According to the Scottish Register of Tartans, there are over 30 different historical clan/family types of Stewart tartan. I had no idea!

APRIL IS SCOTTISH AMERICAN MONTH and APRIL 6TH IS TARTAN DAY

by Dr. Andrea Bowden

April is designated in the United States as Scottish American Month and Tartan Day, observed on April 6 every year, commemorates the day that the Declaration of Arbroath (or the Scottish Declaration of Independence) was signed in 1320. The reason it's so important is that the American Declaration of Independence was actually modeled on the Declaration of Arbroath and a large proportion of the Founding Fathers were of Scottish descent (almost half of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and nine of the 13 governors of the newly established United States, were Scottish!)

Tartan Day originated in Canada in the mid-1980s, where just over 15% of the population is of Scottish descent. Shortly after the Canadian establishment of

Tartan Day, in 1998, the Coalition of Scottish Americans in the United States also successfully campaigned for April 6 to be commemorated as National Tartan Day to pay homage to the “the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States”.

From there it has spread all over the world and is mainly celebrated in Canada, America, Australia, and, strangely enough, Argentina, which has around 100 000 Scottish descendants, the largest community of that sort in a non-English speaking country. As for Scotland itself, Tartan Day only became an established national festival in 2004, almost 20 years after the day was founded in Canada.

DID YOU KNOW?

The name ‘Tartan Day’ refers to the woolen fabric woven in squares and crisscrossing lines, traditionally worn by members of the Scottish clans of old — if you're still confused, a modern-day equivalent to it is plaid.

Can you wear any tartan on National Tartan Day?

It is encouraged that people wear the tartan of their clan or country on this day, but if you don't have one, there are also four universal tartans: The Black Watch, The Hunting Stewart, The Caledonia, and The Jacobite.



Is National Tartan Day celebrated on April 6 globally?

No, in Australia this day is celebrated on July 1. They chose this day because it is the anniversary of the Repeal Proclamation of 1782, which declared the 1747 Act of Proscription invalid. This Act made it a punishable offense to wear a tartan and basically prevented the Scottish from practicing any customs typical to their country.

The tartan is unique to every clan and country. Some countries have their own tartans with specific designs and colors — The United States St. Andrews Tartan incorporates red, white and blue. Canada's tartan is called the Maple Leaf and incorporates red, green and yellow.



What's In a Clan Name?

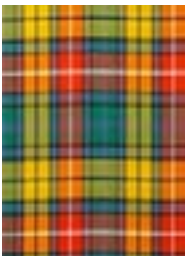
by SJ, from many internet sources

This is the first in a series of articles about the meaning of the clan names & tartans near and dear to the hearts of our Society members. Please send me any **brief** anecdotes or insights into your tartan to 21901SJ@gmail.com and I'll include it .



ANDERSON Melissa May - SJ - Steve & LeeAnn

It translates to "son of a manly person". Clan Anderson may not be as renowned for battles or territorial disputes as some other Scottish clans, but their contributions to intellectual life are impressive.



BUCHANAN – Jim Wasson - Ray & Susan
Meaning "house of the canon," from a place in Stirlingshire. Derived from a geographical locality. 'of Buchanan,' a parish in Stirlingshire. Clan Buchanan, a historic Stirlingshire Highland clan, is defined by stories of fierce loyalty to the Scottish Crown, the "King of Kippen" legend, and a 300-year dormancy of its chiefship, which ended in 2018. Renowned as "The Kings of Kippen" and skilled supporters of Robert the Bruce, the clan was notorious for its martial prowess and cultural contributions.



CAMPBELL - Joanne Mallick - Tom Ritter (our piper)

A dominant force in Scottish history, rose from humble origins to power through strategic loyalty to the Crown, particularly supporting Robert the Bruce. Known for its immense influence, the clan built a "Highland empire" centered at Inveraray Castle, often creating intense rivalries with neighboring clans like the MacDonalds. [The story behind Clan Campbell](#)



CAMPBELL OF ARGYLL - Bruce Burns

One of Scotland's most powerful and often feared clans, rose from humble beginnings to dominate the Highlands through strategic alliances, loyalty to the Crown, and military tenacity. Known as "the crooked mouths" (Clan Dubh), they famously controlled territory from Argyll to Breadalbane, driven by figures like Sir Colin Campbell and the powerful Dukes of Argyll based at Inveraray



GORDON - Todd Stockton Holdon

Historically one of the most powerful Scottish clans. The Gordon lands once spanned a large territory across the Highlands. Presently, Gordon is seated at Aboyne Castle, Aberdeenshire. The Chief of the clan is the Earl of Huntly, later the Marquess of Huntly. By the 16th century the Gordons were a powerful and influential clan. The 4th Earl of Huntly gained the nickname "Cock o' the North" for his lavish receptions, a name which is still used for the current clan chief. The Gordons were advisors to Mary of Guise when she ruled in the absence of Mary Queen of Scots.



The Scotch-Irish in Maryland; some Polks included.

by John Polk



Andrea wrote about the Scotch-Irish in last month's Sporrán. I would like to follow up, but focus on Maryland's key role in their settlement in the colonies. They came from Ulster in large numbers throughout the 1700s and settled in many places, but it all started in Maryland. The Ulster Scots, as they were called, emigrated for two reasons, economics and religion. They were very unhappy with the penal laws imposed by the Anglican hierarchy in Ireland, which discriminated against Catholics and Presbyterians alike. They were likewise unhappy with the "rack rents" that became a major burden on them as non-landowning farmers in the early 1700's.



The Scotch-Irish, as they became known here, had a major impact on our American heritage because they brought with them a love of freedom, self-reliance, and hatred of the British who had made their lives miserable in Ulster. They had a score to settle, and were avid supporters of American independence from the start, and were some of its fiercest fighters during the Revolution. I am proud to say that that my own family, Polks and Pollocks, were among the earliest arrivals and very much a part of this.

The Scotch-Irish emigration to the colonies is usually said to have begun around 1715. That is certainly when the long and continuous main wave commenced, and it began right in the tri-corner area of Cecil, New Castle, and Chester Counties so near to us. Why there? It all goes back to an earlier, mostly forgotten precursor wave of Scotch-Irish that settled on the lower eastern shore, Somerset County, Maryland, some 30 years earlier. This was important to the later main wave because it provided a beachhead for them in two ways: 1) a nucleus of Scotch-Irish families in the Cecil/New Castle County area which had resettled from Somerset about 1705; 2) a group of six Presbyterian churches, established on the Eastern Shore and organized into a Presbytery at New Castle in 1706. Wherever the Scotch-Irish settled in these early years, a Presbyterian Church, and usually a school, would be found. Princeton, the University of Delaware and the University of North Carolina all had Scotch-Irish Presbyterian roots.

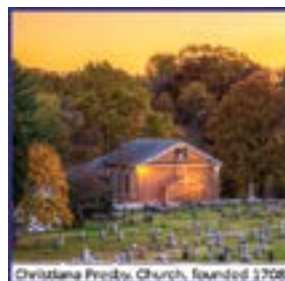
The earlier settlement in Somerset began with a letter sent to the Presbytery of the Laggan (Donegal) in

1680, asking that a "godly minister" be sent to supply the needs of the people of Somerset. It found a receptive audience. Although Maryland is usually considered a Catholic colony, it had passed its law of religious freedom in 1649 and was very tolerant. The transplanted Scots in Ulster had struggled through the Plantation, the Catholic uprising of 1641, the devastation of Ireland and invasion of Scotland by Cromwell, the restoration of Charles II, and faced the prospect of an outright Catholic restoration under James II, who ascended to the throne in 1685. Maryland's relatively benign governance and the possibility of land ownership beckoned strongly to them.

Two Presbyterian ministers, Francis Makemie and William Trail, both from Donegal, responded to the invitation. Makemie was newly ordained but Trail had been in a major conflict with the Anglican hierarchy in Dublin, fined and imprisoned for more than a year. They sailed for Somerset in 1683 and set up the first Presbyterian churches in America, at Rehobeth and Manokin (Princess Anne). Makemie is regarded as the founder of the Presbyterian Church in America. With them came a large following of Ulster Scots, mostly from Donegal and by 1690 some hundreds of families settled in Somerset, including Robert Polk with wife and children, the first members of my family in America.



In early 1700, certainly by 1706, a group of these settlers decided, for whatever reason, to relocate up the bay to Cecil County in the Fair Hill area. This included the Alexanders, McKnights, Pattons, Wallaces, Gillespies, McClures. The nearby Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church was founded in 1708. These families and the Presbyterian network created by Makemie were in place to welcome, lead, and enliven the new immigrants when the main wave began arriving around 1715. In this way, the subsequent Scotch-Irish impact on the





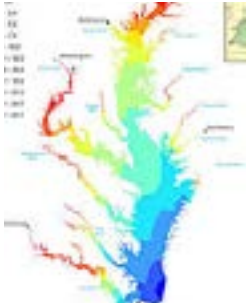


American frontier as it pushed on, through Pennsylvania, down the great wagon road into the valley of Virginia and the Carolinas, and afterwards west beyond the Appalachians, can trace its roots to the precursor arrival of the Laggan Presbyterians some thirty years earlier in Somerset. My own direct ancestor, William Polk, arrived about this time, purchasing land in Cecil County in 1727. His great-grandson, James K. Polk was born in North Carolina in 1795.



MARYLAND TRIVIA — MARCH ANSWERS

by Dr. Andrea Bowden

MD SYMBOLS	MD ANIMALS	MD PLANTS	MD HISTORY	CHESAPEAKE BAY
What is the state motto and seal?	What is Callinectes sapidus	What is eelgrass?	When and what is Maryland Day?	Length, width and depth?
Motto: "Fatti maschii, parole femine & quot; is an Italian proverb adopted by George Calvert, 1st Baron Baltimore. "Manly deeds, womanly words". Since 2017 "Strong deeds, gentle words". , Seal: Features a farmer (representing agriculture/land stewardship) and a fisherman (representing fishing/industry) supporting a shield In the center is the family crest of the Calvert family.	Scientific name of the BLUE CRAB. Crabs are omnivores & scavengers. Males (jimmies) and females (sooks) have different shaped abdomens. They molt 25 times (soft crabs) as they grow. 85% of blue crabs used as food in the US come from the Chesapeake Bay.	Is a vital SAV submerged aquatic vegetation plant that grows mid to lower Bay that provides critical habitat for developing crabs, fish, and other animals and food for waterfowl. It is declining because of sedimentation and toxic chemicals.	Maryland Day is March 25th. It commemorates the landing of the Calverts on St. Clement's Island in southern MD in 1634. It is celebrated with many events and by dressing in state colors of red, white, gold, and black.	Chesapeake Bay is about 200 miles long, 3 miles wide at the Bay Bridge, and 30 miles wide at its mouth where it enters the Atlantic Ocean. The average depth is 21 feet so light can penetrate to the bottom. Its maximum depth is 125 feet in mid-Bay. It is the largest estuary in the United States.
				

MARYLAND TRIVIA — APRIL

by Dr. Andrea Bowden

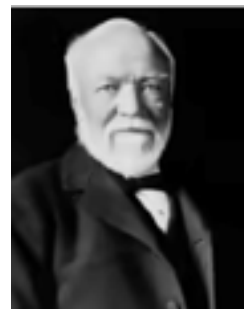
MD SYMBOLS	MD ANIMALS	MD PLANTS	MD HISTORY	CHESAPEAKE BAY
What are the state sports?	What is the state insect?	What is the state whiskey?	When is the state dance?	What is its largest island?

WEE NEWS BITS FROM SCOT- LAND

ANDREW CARNEGIE -THE BILLIONAIRE WHO SPENT 90% OF HIS FORTUNE BUILDING LIBRARIES

from Times Entertainment

Andrew Carnegie was born in 1835 in Dunfermline, Scotland, to a poor hand weaver and his family that was replaced by automated weaving machines. Young Andrew emigrated to America in 1848. He settled near Pittsburgh and educated himself in the private library of James Anderson. Carnegie resolved to help others become educated. He became a telegraph operator, machinist, and entrepreneur- eventually founding Carnegie Steel, a multi-million dollar company. By 1901 he was one of the wealthiest men in America.



After a merger and forming US Steel in 1889, Carnegie focused his attention on philanthropy. He wrote The Gospel of Wealth in which he asserted that the rich had a moral obligation to help the poor. He built 1700 public libraries in the United States, 660 in the UK and Ireland, and hundreds more all over the world. Communities had to commit to maintaining the libraries and to give free access to the poor so that working class people could become educated. He gave away \$350 million to build libraries. "There is not such a cradle of democracy upon this earth as the public library."



EXPERIENCE THE WONDERS OF SCOTLAND'S LOCHS, GLENS, CASTLES, AND MORE ON A RAIL ADVENTURE ACROSS EDINBURGH AND THE HIGHLANDS

from Vacations by Rail

Majestic lochs and glens await on this Scottish escape as we explore Edinburgh and cross the Highlands. Traveling on the scenic West Highland and Kyle rail lines, we discover historic castles, sail along glistening lochs, and stay in vibrant cities. Admire the iconic Glenfinnan Viaduct on the world-famous Jacobite Steam train journey through the breathtaking Scottish Highlands. Wander the rainbow streets of delightful Tobermory and stand at the foot of Neptune's Staircase. Scotland's beauty and culture pave the way for a range of amazing experiences and memories. This eight-night adventure is not to be missed. (\$3,700)



CAPTURE SCOTLAND IN THE SMOKIES

from Blount County News



Attend the 44th Annual ScotsDance Championships and Highland Games in Townsend, Tennessee on May 16 and 17, 2006. Billed as a "homecoming" and "cultural event" for the many Scots- Irish of Appalachia, the festival draws thousands each year. Enjoy Scottish food, Mountain hospitality, and thrilling events. Tickets are \$175 for all weekend events. Book early for the best accommodations.

KING CHARLES III COASTAL WALKING PATH from the Guardian

The path, designed to allow walking the entire coast of England for the first time, was renamed in honor of King Charles III in 2023. While officially launched in March 2026, some sections have been developed over time, with final stretches opening to provide a fully connected route. It is the world's longest managed coastal walking route at approximately 2,700 miles. The continuous trail spans the entire English coast, connecting beaches, cliffs, and towns. The opening included a 2-kilometer walk by His Majesty at the Seven Sisters in East Sussex.



Key Details About the Path:

- **Launch Event:** King Charles inaugurated the path at Seven Sisters Country Park, also opening the new Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve.

- **Scale:**

The route spans 2,689 to 2,700 miles, creating a continuous path around the English coast.

- **Access:**

It provides unprecedented public access, including 1,000 miles of new access and improved infrastructure.

- **Route Features:**

The path links coastal towns, estuaries, and natural landmarks, encouraging exploration of the entire coastline.

- **Development:**

CORRECTION: In my March article on the Scots-Irish in America, I inadvertently omitted James K. Polk, 11th President, who had ancestors in Maryland. Apologies to John Polk, Laird Emeritus, and his kin. -- Andrea Bowden

MINUTES OF OUR LAST GATHERING

Dr. Andrea Bowden

MARCH 17, 2026

The Highland Society of Harford County met on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at the Vandiver Inn in Harve de Grace. There were 19 members and guests present to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Laird, Susan Wheeler, Clan Shaw, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.



The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Keith Reagan, Clan Keith. The Toast to the Office of the President was given by Susan Wheeler, Clan Shaw. The Toast to the King was given by John Polk, Clan Pollack, and the Toast to Scotland was given by Jim Wasson, Clan Buchanan. Andrea Bowden, Clan MacMillian, gave the traditional Irish Blessing as grace and added a humorous one as well. Brian Nesbit, Clan Nesbit, also offered grace. Milestones: John Polk's daughter celebrated her birthday, as did Brian Nesbit. Pam Pippin welcomed her first granddaughter.

A delicious Irish dinner was coordinated by Ashley Boyd, General Manager of Vandiver Inn. Shared Boards: Dubliner Cheddar, Corned Beef, Green Vegetable Dip, Carrots, Cucumbers, Pickles, Mustard, Mini Pretzels and Rye Crackers
Choice of Bowls: Shepard's Pie of Lamb and Veggies, Topped with Mashed Potatoes or Roasted Vegetable topped with mashed potatoes, and dessert: Irish Whiskey Bread Pudding.

After dinner Thomas Mitchell, Clan Innes, was inducted into the Highland Society by Susan Wheeler, Laird. He lives in Chevy Chase and has been interested in "all things Scottish" since childhood living in New York State. Watch for this profile in the April Sporrán.

Susan announced that the April 21st HSHC Gathering will be held at Vandiver Inn and would feature Celtic storyteller, Denny Lynch, who was suggested by Brian Nesbit. The Gathering in May will be very special. It will be held on Saturday, May 9th and will be a cèilidh (Scottish Dance celebration) combined with potluck dinner at the farm of Steve Belkff and Lisa Stewart. The featured food will be roasted lamb! This gathering will also serve as the HSHC annual picnic.

Susan reviewed future festivals/events:

- 16 May – Fair Hill Scottish Games (Fair Hill, Cecil County)
- July and August – HSHC outings TBD
- 21-22 August- Harford County Celtic Festival
- 6 September – Covenanter Highland Games (Quarryville PA)
- 13-15 November – Maryland Irish Festival (Timonium)
- First Friday, Havre de Grace, Bel Air, Elkton - May, June, August, October

The program for the evening was a short overview of Irish Whiskey by HSHC Officers accompanied by a PowerPoint of distilleries in Ireland by John Polk, Laird Emeritus:

Susan Wheeler - DUBLIN INK

Brian Nesbit- WRITER'S TEAS

Kallie Lyons - KILLOWEN RUM & RASIN

Keith Reagan - TEELING GRAIN

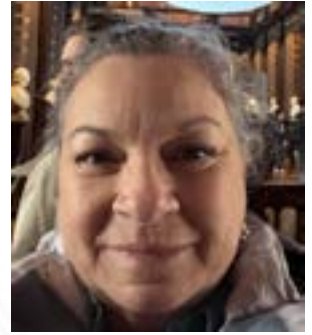
Members and guests enjoyed sampling the whiskies and compared their favorites.

The raffle on March 17th was Irish memorabilia – jewelry, coasters, souvenirs. Winners chose their own prizes.

The gathering adjourned at 8: 35 PM.

Scottish Recipe of the Month

from A Feast of Scotland, cookbook by Janet Warren



Irish Fish Pie

contributed by Susan Wheeler

At Hogmany I traveled to Dublin, Ireland, with my nephew, Sean, and neighbor Allison to see her son, a graduate of Morgan University play pro basketball for an Irish team. We enjoyed fish pie in a pub near where we were staying. Yes, we drank Guinness, too! Back in the “states”, Andrea found a recipe that recreated the delicious dish.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 medium potatoes-peeled, chopped
- ½ cup butter-divided
- 1 medium mild onion-chopped
- 1 ¼ cup grated cheddar cheese (Dubliner is good)
(or combination of Gruyere and cheddar)
- 1 ¼ cups light cream
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon horseradish (or Tulkoff sauce-not as strong and made in Baltimore)
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 ½ pounds of fish -cut into chunks (combination of salmon and pollack or whiting is good)
- ½ pound shrimp – peeled and deveined

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F
- Peel and cube potatoes. Boil until tender, drain
- In a large skillet, cook onion until soft in half of the butter
- Add cheeses, mustard, horseradish, lemon juice and cream
- Cook gently until the cheese melts and sauce thickens
- Peel and devein shrimp and remove skin from fish
- Place raw fish and shrimp in large (3 ½ qt), greased baking dish
- Pour sauce over fish, stir to distribute
- Mash cooked potatoes with remaining butter
- Spread mashed potatoes over fish, add salt and pepper
- Bake 50 minutes. (brown top under broiler if you wish)

Notes:

- Traditional British fish pie has a pastry crust and peas, Irish fish pie does not.
- Adding spinach and topping with green onions are optional.

