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Thistle Epistle

March 2025



St Patricks's Day Parade

Congratulations to all those hardy Scots who turned out for the St Patrick's Day parade on March 15th! Last year it was 68 degrees; this year 38 degrees, with a wind chill factor which made it feel more like 28 degrees. In parts of the route the city streets act as a wind tunnel, and some of those carrying the banners felt they might take off like Mary Poppins.

Despite the forbidding conditions, St Andrews Society and its affiliates were well represented. As always, Angus Scott Pipe band together with the Spokane County Firefighters Pipe Band led the parade right after the Color Guard and Parade Marshal. The Highland Games and SAMS both were well represented, with their banners. And Kameron McLean was there with her armadillo and got her picture in the Spokesman-Review. Further along in the parade were the Shadle Park Pipes and Drums.

Not surprisingly, given the weather conditions, the numbers gathered along the parade route were lower than in past years, but still plenty came out and everyone was having fun.

Of course, it could have been worse. At least the rain which had been falling all morning had stopped by the time the parade started. Kenyon Fields recalls the 1997 parade:

“ The 1997 Parade took place in a snowstorm. Bill Thomas, Angus Scott's Pipe Major, went to see the Parade Marshal to ask if they could cancel. He found the poor man besieged by other participants who were on the same mission, and felt so sorry for him that he went back to the band without even asking to cancel.

The band did make it all the way along the parade route, past the few hardy spectators who had turned out to watch. The fun part was the wind behind the snow. I remember seeing a woman with two less-than happy-looking small children just outside the park tunnel. By the time we got through the parade we had squishy feet, and soaked wool tunics and plaids, but we had to continue straight on with gigs for the rest of the day until 9 pm. I know we smelled wonderfully! At our next practice,

my wife, Carrie, and I presented all the band members with badges that said: **I survived Patrickstorm '97!**"

Members' survey



Last year we sent out a survey to members to gauge how well we were serving their needs, and if there were anything we should be doing differently. In the last issue of the Thistle, sent in December 2024, we gave a brief analysis of the answers we received, and said that Council would be reviewing these in the new year.

The biggest take from the survey results was the interest in genealogy, and members tracing their Scottish roots. We were lucky in being able to address this issue immediately, when Saree Gregory, one of our members, volunteered to organize and lead a new genealogy group. The first meeting of the group was on March 2nd. It was well-attended, and Saree's article in this issue describes the outcome of the meeting and the plans for upcoming meetings.

Some of the other points brought up in the survey responses were:

Willingness of members to help with the Society or its affiliates?

- The president will contact those who said they were willing to become an officer or member of Council.
- We will identify the members who said they would be willing to organize and/or help with any of our affiliates, and pass the names on to the appropriate people, such as the Games Volunteer coordinator.

If members would like to help in any way, we would appreciate having them contact us via our email (found at the beginning of this newsletter) with what they would like to help with, and we will direct them to the appropriate person.

Special interests

Genealogy was the strongest interest coming out of the survey, and we have addressed this by the initiative to start a genealogy group.

What would members like to see the Society doing?

- Help with genealogical research
- see above

- Provide an agenda prior to Council meetings.

Any member may attend any of the meetings of Council. The dates and times of the meetings are included in the calendar section of the website.

If members have a particular topic they would like Council to address, they may email the Society prior to the meeting, and we will add it to the agenda.

We don't think it appropriate to send out the agenda to all members; however, if a member does wish to attend a Council meeting and notifies us ahead of time, we can send them an agenda.

- Kirkin' o' the Tartan
 - For several years we did this, at Barbara Bley's church of St David's. However, only a handful of members showed up, so it was discontinued.

- Resources for members to buy and sell Scottish items
 - We will be having a place to sell Scottish items that members bring at National Tartan Day. Bring your items with a note showing to whom they belong, the asking price, and where the proceeds of any sales should go.
 - We circulate to members information on sellers of Scottish merchandise that we receive or hear about.

- Have informal meet-and-greets to introduce new members
 - The Society has its AGM and picnic as opportunities for members to come and meet others. We will try to do a better job advertising that these are fun events and should not be intimidating.
 - National Tartan Day on April 12th - see article in this issue - and the Highland Games on August 2nd are open to the public as well as to members, and are also good places to meet others with similar Scottish interests.

- Book Club
 - We are not sure who suggested this idea. If that person were willing to organize it, that would be great. Note that in the question on special interests half the respondents mentioned Scottish literature.

- Events for young families.
 - The picnic would be the best place for this: in our advertisements of the event, we should place more emphasis on the games for children - and others - that we have available.

Organization and structure

- Someone suggested biweekly meetings. Currently Council considers that the monthly meetings are sufficient. Of course, informal communication between Council members does continue between meetings.

Any other suggestions?

- Provide information on scholarships
 - There is information on the website, but it comes under the section "About". We should maybe give it its own section to make it more prominent.

- Expand the annual picnic with better ads and oriented to families with kids: see above

- More outreach in the Spokesman-Review and Inlander
 - We have in past years had articles about our various activities written up in the Spokesman-

Review, such as the Highland Games and Burns Night. If we can have reporters write articles about us that would be great. However, paid advertising is very expensive.

Scottish Genealogy Group



St. Andrews Society's new Genealogy Group is off to a great start! A big thank you to Saree Gregory for taking on the leadership of this group. Below is her overview of the group's first meeting, and initial plans for upcoming meetings.

Report on First Meeting

We held our first meeting on Wednesday evening, March 5, at the Spokane Valley Library. We had 11 attendees, and interest via email from others who weren't able to attend the meeting. In addition to snacking on shortbread, we spent most of the meeting sharing about our specific genealogy interests and challenges, and brainstorming about format and topics for future meetings. There were many excellent suggestions about topics for future meetings, and discussion about how to move forward relative to meeting times and locations.

In addition to sharing technical knowledge about researching overseas, ideas for meetings included learning about or visiting local archives, connecting with other genealogy groups (local, national, and international), meeting together to join Zoom technical sessions from elsewhere (like overseas genealogy conferences or training), and having guest presenters. We discussed setting up an online forum, such as a Facebook group, for group members to share information or ask questions. We also discussed ideas for changing up (i.e. rotating) the day, time, and location of meetings so that more people can attend; this could include special workshops or longer technical sessions.

Meeting Time and Location

After reviewing input from attendees at the first meeting, and emails from people who are interested but couldn't attend the first meeting, it looks like the best option is to continue meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at the Spokane Valley Library for the time being. This will provide consistency as we get up and running. Obviously, it's difficult to find a day and time that works for everyone, and we can always change things around as we go forward, especially to include longer workshops and technical sessions.

Coming Up

Below is our schedule through the summer. Meetings will be 6:00-7:00pm at the Spokane Valley Library. We already have presenters lined up!

April 2: Group member Cindy Bell will give a presentation about creating family history books using online tools. These are similar to the photo books that can be created on websites such as Shutterfly, but Cindy will show us how to create ones that incorporate family genealogy, history, and photos.

May 7: Member Quandaries & Discoveries (Q&D)

A sharing format where three group members make short presentations about a quandary they're in with their genealogy research, or a research tool or resource discovery they've made that might help others. Members will sign up for a spot ahead of time. If you'd like to do a Q&D, either at the May 7 meeting or another meeting, email me and I'll put you on the schedule!

June 4: Topics and presenters TBA

July 2: Mary Gilmore, past regent of the Esther Reed Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, will share a presentation, "Tracking Our Irish & Scottish Ancestors in the Revolutionary War".

August 6: Topics and presenters TBA

Saree Gregory

You can reach Saree at sasgenealogygroup@gmail.com with questions about the group.



Learning Gaelic by Jessica Bruner

After attending the 2023 Highland Games, my youngest got really excited about our Scottish heritage, begged for a kilt, and decided we needed to learn Scottish Gaelic. We found a YouTube video, learned a few words, and while I did find a free course online as well, we didn't get much beyond learning to say, "Good morning" (Madainn mhath) and "Good afternoon" (Feasgar math).

Fast forward to February of this year, and my kids decided they wanted to download Duolingo and learn a language, and I decided to join in the fun, too. When I opened the app to choose a course, I discovered it offers Scottish Gaelic! Remembering my previously short-lived attempt to learn the language, I decided to give it another try. And now, here I am to share with you the resources I've since discovered in case you want to join me on this language learning journey!

If you've ever been curious to get in touch with the language of the Highlands and Islands, there's no better time than the present! On top of there being more online resources than ever before—many of which are free—you'll also enrich your own life, work out your brain, and gain a greater appreciation for the culture, past and present. Once you gain a working knowledge of the language, you can participate in online and in person events in Gaelic as well as having access to a long history of poems and stories, which are a significant part of Gaelic culture. In fact, the current national poet of Scotland writes poems in Gaelic!

Now, here are some resources:

Duolingo

Pros: This is an easy and highly accessible starting point. It's free to download and use, though the free version does show you an ad every time you finish a lesson. There is a paid version that gets rid of ads, but you get the same course whether you pay or not. It was developed several years ago with volunteers all over Scotland to bring the course to life. It has recordings of native speakers pronouncing words (not AI, as I understand some of Duolingo's other courses have) and gives you a good foundational vocabulary to get you started.

Cons: It moves fairly slowly, and it starts with food and animals and takes quite a while to get to vocabulary you might want to use sooner. And while it does have recordings of native speakers, it's only a single word or maybe a sentence at a time, slowly, and it doesn't give a good feeling for the rhythm of the language, which, from other resources, I understand is very important.

SpeakGaelic.scot

Pros: Another free course! This one follows the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is a recognized standard for language learning. This course is divided by levels to get you through the CEFR B2 level, which means you completing the course should get you to the point where you can function in the language, have conversations, and use it competently and independently. It makes use of a combination of interactive recordings, short videos of Gaelic interactions, as well as short videos to explain grammar basics. Each lesson is finished off with a quiz.

Cons: While this is a very well structured resource, I find the quizzes a little frustrating because they expect you to spell everything correctly, and Gaelic spelling is not very intuitive for an English speaker.

Speaking Our Language on LearnGaelic.scot

This one is my favorite so far. While it has a very similar name to the other website, they are very different. The LearnGaelic.scot website is a very useful resource for many things, including a very thorough pronunciation guide, a dictionary, and many other pages I have yet to explore. There's a Learners tab that has several courses, including Speaking Our Language, which is the one I have been using.

Pros: This is a video based course that was originally created in 1993 to be aired on TV to teach Gaelic in Scotland. It's been broken up into short clips, one per page in the lesson. Each page gives you vocabulary to look out for, complete with a button to push to hear the word or phrase spoken, and includes a transcript with a translation of each video. They're cute and fun (if a little dated) and give a good idea of how Gaelic sounds and is used in situations that seem plausible in real life. At the end of each lesson, there's a short review video followed by a short quiz. I find the quizzes for this course easier and less daunting than for the other one, and when you push the button to grade the quiz at the end, it says Well done! on each question you get right, and Bad luck! followed by the correct answer if you answer incorrectly, which feels nicer to me.

Coffee Break Scottish Gaelic podcast

This podcast has a native Gaelic speaker teaching a brand new Gaelic learner. The episodes are around 20-25 minutes, intended to fit into a lunch break or short period of time during your day.

Pros: The teacher says things normally, then slows them down to help differentiate the words and learn pronunciation for both her student in the studio as well as the students listening. They do a good amount of review and on the episode when you learn to say where you're from, they give more than just places in Scotland and Europe because they know they have listeners all over the world. I appreciated getting to learn to say, I'm from the United States in Gaelic, though I understand why the other courses don't include it. (Both the LearnGaelic and SpeakGaelic websites are based in Scotland for Scottish learners, and the Gaelic for United States is too complicated for Duolingo to introduce this early.)

Cons: As it's a podcast, you don't get to see the words written out. They do advertise their course on their website, but it's paid, and I'm happy with the free courses I've found. I don't think this course goes as far as either the SpeakGaelic or LearnGaelic courses do either.

Classes with Slighe nan Gàidheal

I can't speak directly to the pros and cons of these classes, as I haven't taken them, but I wanted to be sure to include them for anyone who prefers a more structured approach. These are online classes over Zoom offered from Slighe nan Gàidheal in Seattle. This is one of the largest Scottish Gaelic language learning groups in the US, and certainly the largest in the Western US. They have classes for all levels, including drop in options for intermediate to advanced learners to practice and improve their skills. While those types of groups are beyond my current ability, I like knowing where to find them for when the time comes. This group also has a Gaelic choir as well as regular classes about culture and history and a Gaelic language festival. This year's is happening via Zoom April 25-26! <https://www.slighe.org/winter-2025>

Personally, I'm finding that I enjoy using a combination of the Speaking Our Language course supplemented with Duolingo for additional practice. I also sometimes listen to the Coffee Break Gaelic podcast when I'm in the car or folding laundry. The video and audio input help me to hear how people actually use the language, expanding my ability to combine words and phrases that I've learned, and the vocabulary review in Duolingo really helps me to remember words that I first learned in one of the other sources.

It's a fun language, a rich part of my own heritage, and I hope you'll join me in learning it!

Note from the Editor

If you are interested in learning Gaelic along with Jessica, email the Society at the address shown on Page 1 and we'll see if we can get a group going.



National Tartan Day

National Tartan Day is coming up next month on Saturday 12th April, and the Society will be celebrating it again with a full-day event at the Shadle Library, 2111 W. Wellesley Ave, Spokane WA 99205.

The proposed schedule is as follows:

- 11:00 Pipe in the Colors - Scottish American Military Society
- 11:10 Read proclamation of National Tartan Day
- 11:20 Angus Scott Pipe Band and Highland Dance
- 11:35 Declaration of Arbroath - the history behind the famous Scottish declaration of independence from England, and quotes from the document
- 11:50 History of tartans, with Charlie Bond
- 12:10 Scottish food - presented by Torah Tea , the new Scottish-themed restaurant in Spokane Valley
- 12:30 Break
- 12:55 Announcements of upcoming events
- 1:00 Burns poetry with Bruce Ridley
- 1:25 Spokane Scottish Country Dancers
- 1:35 Slideshow of Sutherland. Last year we talked about the Norwegian rule over parts of northern Scotland for over 600 years. Now we will see what that country looked like.
- 1:55 Break
- 2:15 Finding your Scottish ancestors through genealogy, with Saree Gregory
- 2:30 Tartan weaving, with the Spokane Weavers
- 2:45 Gaelic language, with Jessica Bruner
- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Scots in the Pacific Northwest talk. The outsize influence of people of Scottish descent in the development of our region and the whole western side of the continent.
- 3:55 Retirement of the Colors - SAMS

There will be several tables, with exhibits relating to Scottish culture, including:

- Spokane Highland Games Association table, with information about the Games in August, and also with Scottish items for sale (See Page 2 for details)
- Angus Scott Pipe Band table
- Spokane weavers table
- Antique Scottish weapons table, with Howard Hansen
- Genealogy table - find your clan and tartan
- Gaelic table with information about resources for studying the Gaelic language

We will also have a complimentary tea and coffee stand.

The event is free, and open to members of the public.



Annual General Meeting

OK, I know that the very expression “Annual General Meeting” conjures up visions of dry-as-dust events with steely-eyed officers and much pounding of gavels - but ours is different! It is as much a social event as a formal event (held in a pub!) - though as a registered non-profit we do of course have to spend a bit of time on the business part of the meeting. It is a good time to come and meet other members of the Society in a relaxed atmosphere, as well as hear first-hand what the Society is doing.

It will be held in the back room of O’Doherty’s Irish Grille, 525 W Spokane Falls Blvd, WA 99201, on Sunday April 27th.

There will be a social hour from 4:00 pm, followed by the business meeting at 5:00 pm.

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Establishment of quorum
3. Approval of minutes of the last AGM, held on April 14th, 2024
4. Treasurer’s report
Financials for the year 2024-5
Budget for the year 2025-6
5. Membership report
6. President’s Review
Review of the past year
Plans for the upcoming year
7. Election of officers
Two positions are up for election:
 - Vice-President
 - Treasurer

Nominations have been received for Caleb McDougall for Vice-President and Peter Guthrie for Treasurer. Caleb has been the Vice-President for much of the past year, having been appointed to fill the vacancy resulting from Barbara Bley’s resignation, so this would be his first elected term as Vice-President. This would be Peter’s second term as Treasurer.

Nominations may be made by any member for these positions, providing the nominee is a member of the Society and is willing to be nominated. Such nominations may be made in advance by email to the Secretary at inlandnwscots@gmail.com, or be made at the meeting.

The other two officers are at the end of the first year of their term - Kenyon Fields' second term as President, and Anna Guthrie's first term as Secretary.

8. Affiliate reports

Highland Games

Angus Scott

Lake City Highland Dance

Spokane Scottish Country Dancers

SAMS

9. Topics from the membership

Any member may bring up questions, concerns or suggestions.

10. Adjournment

We hope you will be able to attend. If you can't make it, you can send in a proxy either by email or by US mail to our addresses which are shown at the head of this issue. You may also give your proxy to someone who is in attendance for presentation to the Secretary. The proxy may name a specific person who may cast your vote, or it may be given to the Secretary to cast as she sees fit. The proxy may be either for a specific motion arising at the meeting, or it may be general, which covers all motions arising at the meeting.

OK, enough of that official stuff! Now for something much more interesting:

TONGUE-TIED TARTANIST

Unscramble this word. BAPAECRIDIHPO

This word describes a distinct and ancient form of music from Scotland as much or than half a millennium ago. Before the adoption of what is now referred to as modern notation/staffed music, these sophisticated tunes were taught through singing for generations upon generations. So unique and highly technical were the embellishments and phrasing used in the continuously progressing form of music, that it was given its own notational language, not found anywhere else in the world.



This form of music in the bagpiping world has been referred to as, “the ultimate Piper’s challenge”. The range of time it takes to complete some of these centuries-old pieces take anywhere from just a few minutes, up to nearly 30 to complete the entire score. When a piper takes on the quest of playing these elaborate scores, they commit to a lifetime of study. Miles of manuscripts have been penned to unravel the nuances of this legendary form of music.

Below is a link to the performance of the current world champion, Stuart Liddell MBE, playing the tune, “The Unjust Incarceration”. This piece is said to commemorate the imprisonment of Neil Vass, 8th Chief of the Strathnaver MacKays on Bass Rock. In 1427, James I, called a “parliament” at Inverness, where some 40 clan Chiefs were arrested immediately, many of whom were executed on the spot. Iain Dall MacKay, student to legendary Pdraig Og MacCrimmon, composed this tune some 200 years after the tragic event.

I’ll leave you with some final considerations. Behind each of these sonorous and majestic compositions are audible reminders of the mindsets of those who crafted them. Bliss, tragedy, duty, anger, love. All condensed into music designed to stir the soul. Enjoy the music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8a5FHj5-WbE>

References: “The History & Structure of Ceol Mor”. Auth, A.J. Haddow

Seth England

President, Angus Scott Pipe Band



Scottish politics

After the commotions of the past year or so, there doesn't seem a lot to report.

Perhaps the most interesting is that so many of the Scottish National Party stalwarts over the past quarter-century or so are leaving politics and no longer standing for election to the Scottish Parliament. Most notable are:

- Nicola Sturgeon, who was First Minister for many years;
- Humza Yousaf, who succeeded Sturgeon, but only lasted a year before being voted out, with John Swinney succeeding him;
- Finance Minister Shona Robinson;
- Business Minister Richard Lochhead;
- Former minister Joe Fitzpatrick.

One wonders if they are just burnt out, having been involved in politics for so long, or if, given the Labor Party resurgence in Scotland, they have given up hope of hanging on to power.

Sir Keir Starmer, the UK Prime Minister, aims to make substantial cuts to welfare payments. In this he is supported by Anas Salwar, leader of the Labour Party in Scotland: which might cut into the Labour Party's lead in the polls.



Highland Games

The Spokane Highland Games Association held their Annual General Meeting in January. As has been reported in previous issues, they are looking for people to step up into the leadership roles: if no-one steps up to lead and organize the Games, Spokane and its Scottish community will lose a major cultural event which is extremely popular with those who do go to it.

At the meeting, John Blunt, who has been for many years the Chair of the Piping and Drumming committee, stepped up to replace Wendi Johnson as Games Chair. Wendi was elected as Vice-Chair to replace Cheryl McLean. Catherine and Clint Hill remained as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, though both would welcome it if someone were to volunteer as their replacements. The Games does have a good group of committee chairs for the various aspects of the Games. Most are of long-standing, though we are happy to welcome some new people such as Hoku Beebe, who has taken over publicity and the website.

Most of you will remember that the last Games, though very successful from the point of view of the events we were able to put on and the wide range of cultural and musical aspects we were able to showcase, was marked by low attendance compared to previous years, which resulted in a significant financial shortfall. We remain continually surprised by people in our community who had no idea that Spokane had a Scottish Highland Games. We would encourage members to spread the word as widely as possible; everyone who does attend has a great time!



Angus Scott Pipe Band

Angus Scott Pipe Band approaches another busy point in the year (some might argue the busiest...!) We look forward to St. Patrick's Day with optimism knowing warmer days are coming and the music is fun with lots of heavy playing. Multiple venues, plenty of driving, lots of tuning, but always fun.

Recently, ASPB performed at Burns Night where the evening was rich in Scottish culture. We are always proud to enhance the evening with a full pipe band performance. The event takes a heavy amount of coordination, and at the center of it is the St. Andrews Society. It's plenty of work to get done in the background and St. Andrews Society manages to make it look much easier than it is. ASPB takes their glengarries off to the efforts.

Looking forward, as mentioned earlier, we prepare for St. Patrick's Day in both the parade and the rounds of multiple venues afterward. Following that, we focus on our long-standing university graduation performances. These songs aren't as advanced as some of the others, but the musicians' technical breather is countered by long wait periods that keep the band in place for quite a while. Performance challenges may present themselves, but the band shines for our gracious hosts.

Peak season for ASPB will be undoubtedly the summer months. We have the Spokane Highland Games as well as the Bitterroot Celtic Games in Montana this year. The band is working on new music for the season to take to both locations. It's plenty to absorb and fine-tune. Musicians have their work cut out for them, but I am confident they will meet and exceed the challenge head-on. Be sure to make it to this year's Highland Games.

Member spotlight. Meet Joe Trudeau. Joe has been in the Angus Scott Pipe Band since the 1990s! He is a stellar performer with a track record of consistency and high-level performance. When he isn't squeezing into socks that are too tight, or performing solo dance tunes on short notice, he spends his time working well north of Spokane teaching music full time for school. Joe is also a service member and above all, cares after a large family. With so many distinct obligations to which he is dutifully dedicated and responsible, he earned himself a spotlight here. Thank you, Joe, for your commitment and follow through.

Angus Scott Pipe Band is a community band. We are always looking for new members to teach and bring into the fold. The instruments that pipe bands play take plenty of time to learn and mold into that all too familiar pipe band sound. If you know someone who is interested in pipes and drums, or is interested themselves in learning these spectacular instruments, please have them reach out to me or the band manager through our email for coordinating a meet up and discussion about the adventure of piping or drumming.

Lastly, thank you to the band members for their seemingly inexhaustible talent and effort. ASPB truly is the place to be.

One band, one sound

www.aspband.com

<https://www.instagram.com/angusscottpipeband/>

<https://www.facebook.com/angusscottpb>

aspbpipesanddrums@gmail.com

P/M Seth England

President, ASPBA



Highland dance

The 2025 Highland Dance season is coming into full-swing with competitions, performances, and annual examinations for studios all over the country. This month, Lake City Highland Dancers celebrated St. Patrick's Day with performances in Spokane, Post Falls, and Coeur d'Alene, and participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Coeur d'Alene. Our dancers had a fantastic time swinging through the downtown area and we were voted best of the parade!

Our students have been very successful at recent competitions not only in the Inland Northwest, but also in Pennsylvania, Florida, and even Canada. Two of our Regional Champions, Bethany and Talie, who also performed at Robert Burns Night this year, travelled across the country for a special choreography competition where Talie won 4th in a very tough group. Bethany not only won her group but was also awarded the Junior Scholarship! Following the event, the sisters travelled down to Florida where they dominated multiple competitions alongside the founder of LCHD, Miss Kasey, who now lives in Florida.

Some upcoming competitions for LCHD dancers include competitions in Kimberly and Lethbridge (Canada), and of course, the Regional Championships this May in Portland. We will be training hard to hopefully continue our winning streaks into the months to come.

This weekend, the end of March, we will be welcoming a judge from Canada for our annual examinations. Most Highland Dance studios participate in a form of annual adjudication, sometimes called medal testing, where all dancers are tested to a set standard for the level they are entered in. Dancers receive a written evaluation of their dancing, and a certificate and medal if they pass. When a dancer reaches a specific type of exam, the testing gets a little more intense, as the dancer not only hope to pass their exam but also be nominated to attend the BATD Scholarships (British Association Teachers of Dance). In Hawaii last year and this year in Florida, the Scholarships are a prestigious event that only dancers who receive a nomination during medal testing can compete at. LCHD has two dancers training for nominations this year.

If you want to see traditional Scottish Highland Dancing performed by National-level dancers all the way to wee Scots at 4 and 5 years old, we invite you to attend the **LCHD Spring Showcase on May 31st**. Featuring traditional Scottish dances like the Sword Dance, special choreographies

including a Titanic-themed routine, and a fundraiser raffle, this is one of our biggest events of the year. The showcase will be located at **3639 West Prairie Ave, Hayden, ID** and tickets are \$8 (\$5 if purchased online) to support our studio and rental costs. **Doors open at 2pm and the show will begin at approximately 2:30pm.** For more information and discounted tickets, visit www.lakecityhighlanddance.com.



Scottish American Military Society (SAMS)

On Friday, 8th November, 2024, SAMS Post 1955 participated in a Veterans Day assembly at Evergreen Elementary School. SAMS member, Mike Gill has a son who attends that school. Mike contacted the school's music director and arranged for us to post the colors during opening ceremonies. Our color guard included Mike Brownlee, Color Sgt.; Ed Wattawa, Post Commander; Mike Gill; Darrell Wallace; Sam Stitt, and Seth England, piper. We stayed for the entire event, which included video presentations honoring all veterans, as well as the fallen. The most impressive part of the ceremony was the choir performance. The choir was made up of children from all the elementary grades who sang patriotic songs in honor of veterans. These children obviously practiced hard for this event, and I'm sure it was very rewarding for them. We plan to make this an annual event for our post. Thank you, Mike Gill, for coordinating this event.

On Saturday, 9th November, 2024, and Sunday, 10th November, 2024, Post 1955 participated during the Fall Folk Festival at Spokane Community College. We shared a table with the St. Andrews Society. Members present included Ed Wattawa, Mike Brownlee, Mark Loe, Wanda Loe, Sam Stitt, and Mike Gill. Sam designed and displayed a new banner for our post at the table.

The above information, including videos and photos can be found on the SAMS Post 1955 Facebook page.

SAMS welcomes new members who are veterans of one of the US military services, and who are of Scottish descent. If you are interested you could contact them on Facebook, above, or by emailing the St Andrews Society at our address shown at the top of this issue, and we will be sure to pass the information along.

