

# St. Andrew's Society of Connecticut

## The Caledonian

Summer 2023



### From the Desk of the President:

Dear Fellow Society Members,

Hoping this finds you well.

We will have a Fall Meeting at Ashlar Village in 2023 instead of our usual Society picnic. Please see details inside. We need your time and your ideas to continue our Society mission of 'Good Works' and 'To Relieve the Distressed'. Our mission to spread Scottish culture and arts requires time.

December will see our 2024 dues mailing. That will include more information for the annual Robert Burns Celebration on Saturday, January 27, 2024.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Fall Meeting October 1, and at the annual meeting Sunday, December 3, as well as the Burns Event January 27, 2024. Please check our Society website [www.sasct.org](http://www.sasct.org) for event news and any required adjustments.

See you October 1 at the Fall Meeting.

Slàinte mhath!

*Pam*

Pamela Munro, President

**ZOOM link** to join the Fall Meeting remotely:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88080626939?pwd=T0djWmhSQkdsZE1idmxXTmpDMGkzUT09>

### Board of Managers

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Pamela Munro

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Vice President

Catherine Sutherland

Corresponding Secretary

Heather Gromko

#### MANAGERS

Melanie Gustin, Kevin McCall, Sandy Sanderson, Joey Sanderson, Bud Wyllie, Gayle Wyllie

#### 2023 Benevolence

The Society has donated \$500 to the Connecticut Fuel Bank.

#### 2023 Education Awards

SASCT supported The Connecticut Piping and Drumming Workshop as well as three awards for Scottish cultural study.



### Upcoming Scottish Events



**Glasgowlands Look Park** July 15 2023 Florence (Northampton), Massachusetts  
[www.glasgowlands.org/schedule-of-events.html](http://www.glasgowlands.org/schedule-of-events.html)

**Maine Highland Festival** August 19 2023 Thomas Point Beach Brunswick, Maine  
Saint Andrew's Society of Maine ([mainehighlandgames.org](http://mainehighlandgames.org))

**Loon Mountain Games** September 15-17 2023 Lincoln, New Hampshire  
[www.NHSCOT.org](http://www.NHSCOT.org)

**Scotland Games** October 8, 2023 Waldo House, 96 Waldo Road, Scotland, CT  
[www.Scotlandgames.org](http://www.Scotlandgames.org)

**Games in Scotland UK** [www.scotlandwelcomesyou.com/scottish-highland-games/](http://www.scotlandwelcomesyou.com/scottish-highland-games/)



## Fall Meeting

Sunday, October 1 from 2 to 5 pm

Ashlar Village 74 Cheshire Road Wallingford, CT 06492

The 2023 Fall Meeting will be at Ashlar Village in the private dining room. Members are asked to bring a dessert to share. The dining room is located in Bridgehouse. See directions below.

A Zoom link is provided below for those of you unable to attend in person.

FROM HARTFORD I-91 South to exit #17 (Wilbur Cross Parkway - Route 15 South) Take exit #64, at end of ramp there is a traffic light, turn left. Immediately at next traffic light, turn right onto Cheshire Road Ashlar Village Main Entrance is ½ mile on the right. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> stop sign, turn left and immediately right into the parking lot.

FROM THE SOUTH: Route 15 North to exit #64. At the end of the ramp, turn left (under the highway). At second traffic light, turn right onto Cheshire Road. Ashlar Village Main Entrance is ½ mile on the right. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> stop sign, turn left and immediately right into the parking lot.

*The main entrance will be in front of you "under the portico".*

**ZOOM** to join remotely:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88080626939?pwd=T0djWmhSQkdsZE1idmxXTmpDMGkzUT09>



### Flowers of the Forest

Ron Solan August 2022 Lisa Hunt February 2023

### *Some Websites of Interest*

Braemar Media videos [www.youtube.com/channel/UCJhyoxjlkGZAmuCF2Y3mLpA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJhyoxjlkGZAmuCF2Y3mLpA)  
Glasgow Live UK [news@glasgowlive.co.uk](mailto:news@glasgowlive.co.uk)  
Visit Scotland tourism [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)  
Scotlands People genealogy [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk)  
Scotland National Team [www.scottishfa.co.uk/scotland/](http://www.scottishfa.co.uk/scotland/)  
Scotland Welcomes You [scotlandwelcomesyou.com/scottish-highland-games/](http://scotlandwelcomesyou.com/scottish-highland-games/)  
Scotland TV [news.stv.tv](http://news.stv.tv)  
Scotland Magazine [www.scotlandmag.com](http://www.scotlandmag.com)  
The Scotsman [www.scotsman.com](http://www.scotsman.com)  
Glasgow Times [news@glasgowtimes.co.uk](mailto:news@glasgowtimes.co.uk)  
Scottish Banner [scottishbanner.com](http://scottishbanner.com)  
Scottish Government [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

**Facebook Pages** Being Scottish, All Things Scottish, Beautiful Scotland  
Some of the websites are also on Facebook as pages.

## Bannockburn Live! The 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn

By SASCT Board member Melanie Boyd Gustin .....

Several years ago, when looking into a second trip to Scotland, I discovered that an event celebrating the Battle of Bannockburn\* was to take place during the summer of 2014. How could I pass this up? 700 years ago! In the US, we have nothing so ancient to celebrate, and I didn't think I could quite gamble on being around for the *next* one in Scotland! So attending it became my goal. The two-day celebration was to take place in the fields behind the Bannockburn Visitor Centre, about two miles outside of Stirling, and just a quick five-minute bus ride from the city.



One of my ancestors, Robert Boyd, had been one of King Robert the Bruce's staunch supporters at this time. Because of this, Bruce had made him a commander in his army. All the Scottish clans were notified of the event, and the House of Boyd Society arranged for a Boyd tent to be part of the clan village at the site.

*\*For those new to the group or to their Scottish roots, the Battle of Bannockburn was where King Robert the Bruce, in 1314, defeated an English army under King Edward II. King Edward may have had more than 16,000 men; King Robert had about 6,000.*

Five of us signed up to man the tent. However, our House of Boyd historian from Australia was very committed to hunting for Boyds and never left the tent, coaxing timid folks over like a carnival barker and allowing the rest of us to explore, to absorb history, Scottish culture, and food (haggis, of course! But have you ever had a water buffalo burger?) What a gift!

Tents were in alphabetical order so we were located beside the Bruce tent. This was a real treat, since theirs was manned by reenactors dressed in period costume, a tent full of targes (round shields), a throne, weapons galore, but my favorite part – a woman with her pet pygmy owl perched on her shoulder!

The huge field behind the Centre was set up to accommodate us: many vendors hawking plastic swords and battle axes, tartans, food, whisky, and demonstrations of medieval methods of torture! (The one I witnessed was a tourist volunteer lying on the ground with an animal cage placed on her bare tummy. Inside the cage was a rat - not real of course! The narrator explained the torture, which really needed no explanation, as he slid the floor of the cage away to allow the rat access to the woman's tummy. (Ew!)



**Angled pikes held by densely packed warriors, forming a schiltron.**

There was a small stage for a storyteller, and a large stage for musicians. But the main show that the crowds came for was the "reenactment" of the Battle of Bannockburn. This required a large field

## Bannockburn Live! The 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn Continued

beyond where the clans and vendors were situated. In the distance was Stirling Castle, perfectly surrounded by the mists of time. A narrator told the story, and reenactors, some on horseback, demonstrated how effective the Scottish schiltron (sometimes called a hedgehog) could be against cavalry.

Just before the historical battle in 1314, an English warrior, Sir Henry de Bohun, spotted Bruce alone, separated somewhat from his schiltron, instructing his troops. De Bohun decided to take Bruce out even before the battle had begun, and charged him. Bruce saw the threat, turned and galloped toward de Bohun. He dodged de Bohun's lance handily and used his preferred weapon, the battle axe, to split de Bohun's skull in two (ruining his battle axe, which he was very annoyed about!). In the reenactment, the man playing the part of Sir Henry de Bohun, intentionally fell from his horse at this point, as part of the performance. His horse, suddenly seeing these prickly pikes of the schiltron, bolted in fear. He headed right for my corner of the field, eyes wild with panic. There was nothing but a single rope barricade between him and us. Thankfully, the men who had galloped after him caught up just before he launched himself!

Watching the hand-to-hand fighting in this battle got the kids very excited. After the show, they wandered the grounds "killing and maiming" with their foam swords as they went, including one of our Boyds standing innocently inside our tent!

The music was one piece I wasn't going to miss. I saw Dougie MacLean for the first time and fell in love! I also thoroughly enjoyed Treacherous Orchestra (many are members of the Scottish Symphony Orchestra as well), and the tribal band Soar Patrol. This last group is made up of members of the Clanranald Trust reenactors, who were no doubt in the Bannockburn battle performance. But they are also professional battle reenactors who have appeared in movies like *Outlaw King*, *Braveheart*, *Game of Thrones*, *Robin Hood*, *Kingdom of Heaven*, and the series *Outlander*. They are using the proceeds of their movie appearances to build an educational medieval village called Duncarron, which we visited the day after Bannockburn, and where I failed miserably at shooting a longbow! It has expanded over the last 8 years and is definitely worth a visit.



For visitors to Stirling who want a taste of history, I do recommend the Bannockburn Visitor Centre, which has incorporated high tech in its displays. It houses a room full of medieval weaponry that, although mounted to its display counter, can still be handled. A short film in this same room is shown on all walls, putting you smack in the middle of the battle. It has a room where the battle is explained using a landscape created in miniature on a large table, and the manipulation of tiny troops. There are now seats for the audience on a raised platform above and surrounding this landscape table. Much easier on the feet! It has a movie theater showing a quick animated movie poking a bit of fun of Edward II. The Centre has a café and gift shop as well. When my son and his wife visited last summer at the end of the day, they were encouraged by staff to dress in period costume provided by the Centre and were allowed to hold and pose with the weapons. I don't know if that's typical or just an example of my son's power of persuasion!

This was a once-in-a-lifetime event that I was thrilled to be a part of. And since then, in my Livingston ancestry research, I've discovered that I just might be a descendant of

Robert the Bruce! I encourage anyone planning a trip to Scotland to include the Bannockburn Visitor Centre as part of your exploration of the Stirling area.





## Helping Your Society

Hi SASCT Members,

We hope that you are enjoying a great summer and are planning to go to many Highland Games and Gatherings. These events are where we can connect or reconnect with the history, customs, and activities of our ancestral homeland, both past and present.

There are many opportunities to hear Highland and Celtic bands including the extremely popular Rock band, "The Red-Hot Chili Pipers" who will be performing at the New Hampshire Games later this summer. Right here in Connecticut, we have the extremely active St. Edmund's Pipe and Drums from Enders Island in the Stonington area. There are many bands in Connecticut; some as listed below. Watch for their activities. Many have free instrumental lessons.



While you enjoy attending these activities, have you ever thought about the people that plan, organize and volunteer to work these events? It could be your participation that makes our Society more vibrant and active. How do you do this? Please send your ideas of things that interest you and ways you would like to get involved.

At present, the Society sponsors our very well received Burn's Night Dinner in January, as well as speakers and entertainment at meetings, benevolence donations and education awards. What else would you like to see us do and how would you like to get more involved?

No thought or idea is too farfetched. It is time to "think outside the box!"

Please send your comments to: [Catsut52@aol.com](mailto:Catsut52@aol.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours aye,

Cathy Sutherland, Vice-President and Sandy Sanderson, Board Member

### Some Connecticut Pipe Bands

Litchfield Hills Pipe Band    Talcott Mountain Highlanders  
Manchester Pipe Band    Connecticut Firefighters Pipes and Drums  
Police Pipes and Drums of Waterbury    Celtic Cross Pipe and Drum  
Portland and District Pipers    St. Edmund's Pipe and Drums  
Fairfield Gaelic Pipe Band    Mystic Highland Pipe Band  
New Haven County Firefighters Emerald Society Pipe Band



### Save the Dates

Fall meeting October 1  
Annual meeting December 3  
Burns Event January 27, 2024

Connect with **St. Andrew's Society of Connecticut**

[www.sasct.org](http://www.sasct.org)



Join our group on Facebook for faster news