

# GRACE NOTES

Newsletter of the Memphis Scottish Society, Inc.

Vol. 41 No. 1 • January 2025

## President's Letter

**M**erry Christmas and a Happy 2025 to all Memphis Scots!  
Now that the holidays are over, suddenly **Burns Night** is less than three weeks away:

- **Saturday, January 25th** at **Kirby Pines** with a ticket purchasing deadline of January 15th.
- **\$80** – Burns Night ticket / **\$150** includes **BOTH** the Patrons Reception **AND** Burns Night.
- When paying for Burns Night, choose your entree; beef or salmon.
- It's almost too late to mail a check...and paying **online** at [www.memphisscots.com](http://www.memphisscots.com) is recommended.

For any special concerns or questions about Burns Night, you may call or email JeanetteMartin901-351-5320 [jmar500@bellsouth.net](mailto:jmar500@bellsouth.net).

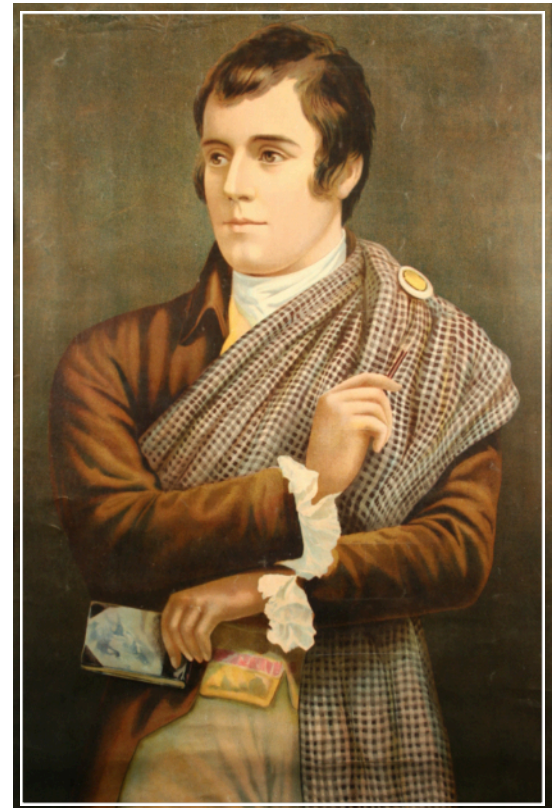
If you hope to mail a check anyway, please contact **Jeanette** first.

The Patrons Reception is a week earlier — January 18th — at **Holly Staggs'** home, which is at 528 N. Country Way, Cordova, TN 38018.

Please email or call Holly if attending the Patrons Reception at 901-215-4839 [2hollystaggs@gmail.com](mailto:2hollystaggs@gmail.com).

Please also remember the Silent Auction, which is a scholarship fundraiser each year at Burns Night.

Donations are still being accepted (last chance: membership meeting at Perkins Restaurant on January 20th), and — this year — we hope to speed up auction item payments by only accepting cash or checks for auction items.



~ Debbie Sellmansberger, President

## Memphis Scottish Society Inc., Board

### President

Debbie Sellmansberger  
901-465-4739

[president@memphisscots.com](mailto:president@memphisscots.com)

### Vice President

Geoffrey Meece  
901-235-7252

[vice-president@memphisscots.com](mailto:vice-president@memphisscots.com)

### Treasurer

Jeanette Martin  
901-351-5230

[treasurer@memphisscots.com](mailto:treasurer@memphisscots.com)

### Secretary

Rosanne Frank  
901-628-1948

[george.malone@memphisscots.com](mailto:george.malone@memphisscots.com)

### Members at Large

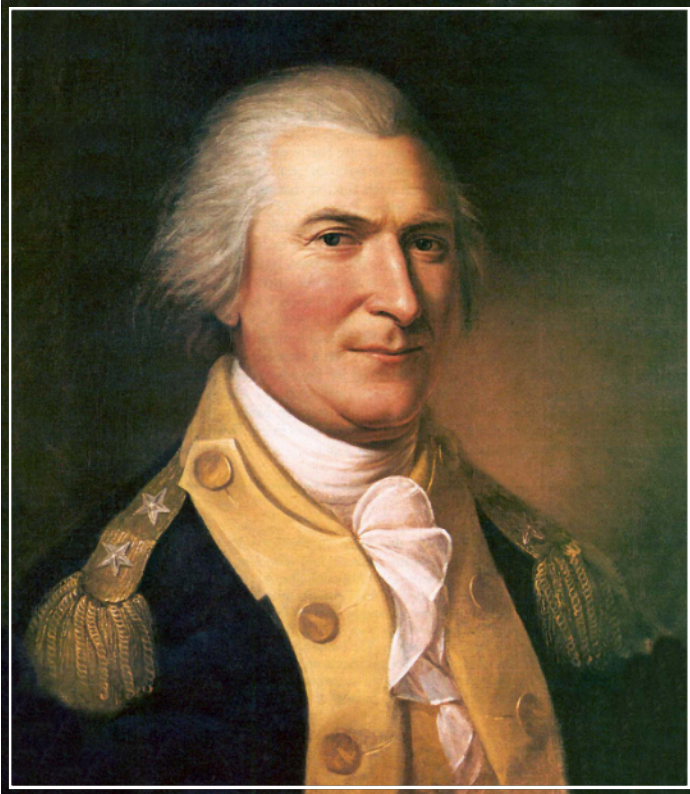
Chuck Kindrick  
901-496-0127

Sammy Rich  
901-496-2193

Holly Staggs  
901-215-4839

## Notice to Program Presenters:

John Schultz requests that 5-7 days before the meeting you e-mail a KeyNote or PowerPoint file to [jfschultz1948@yahoo.com](mailto:jfschultz1948@yahoo.com). This is to allow time to incorporate the presentation into a full meeting presentation and to check out any issues. Otherwise there won't be a projector.



ARTHUR ST. CLAIR

## Member Meeting

Topic is:

Arthur St. Clair: General, Governor, and President of the Continental Congress.

What some of the early Americans went through to make our country.

~ Jeanette Martin

## Scottish Word of the Day

### Dreich

A word that is commonly used to describe the Scottish weather has been named the "most iconic" Scots word. "Dreich" — meaning dull or gloomy — topped a poll to mark *Book Week Scotland*, led by the Scottish Book Trust. It beat off contenders including "glaikit", "scunnered" and "shoogle".

The charity said the first recorded use of the word "dreich" was in 1420, when it originally meant "enduring" or "slow, tedious".

A total of 1,895 votes were cast in the annual poll.



*Grace Notes* is the official publication of the Memphis Scottish Society, Inc. It is published monthly. Like the Society itself, the credo of *Grace Notes* is "to foster education and promote understanding of things Scottish."

If you have something of interest to readers of this newsletter, please submit it electronically to [gracenotes@memphisscots.com](mailto:gracenotes@memphisscots.com). *Grace Notes* will accept and publish good quality photographs.

The deadline for all submissions is the fourth week of each month preceding the month of publication. Due to time constraints, the editor cannot accept handwritten submissions.

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*to foster education  
and promote understanding  
of things Scottish*

Please address all postal correspondence to:

#### GRACE NOTES

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P.O. Box 383092  
Germantown, TN 38183

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Memphis Pipe Band**  
Mondays 6:00 - 9:30 pm  
Kenny Hiner, Pipe Major  
901-616-1564  
[info@MemphisPipeBand.com](mailto:info@MemphisPipeBand.com)  
[www.memphispipeband.com](http://www.memphispipeband.com)

**Phoenix Pipe Band**  
Douglas Dauson, Pipe Major  
[ddauson@gmail.com](mailto:ddauson@gmail.com)  
[www.phoenixpipeband.org](http://www.phoenixpipeband.org)

**Collierville Pipes and Drums**  
Kenny Hiner, Pipe Major  
901-616-1564  
[www.colliervillepipesanddrums.com](http://www.colliervillepipesanddrums.com)

**Memphis Scottish Country Dancers**  
Tuesdays 6:30 - 7:30 pm  
Riveroaks Reformed Presbyterian Church  
1665 S. Germantown Road  
Contact: John Schultz  
901-359-4900

**Memphis Scottish Society General Meeting**  
Third Monday of the month  
6 pm to eat, 7 pm for meeting  
Perkins Restaurant  
1340 S. Germantown Pkwy.

**Board Meeting**  
Last Monday of the month  
at 7:00 pm  
Via Zoom

## Skimming ... It's serious business!

The World Stone Skimming Championships take place every year on Easdale Island, Argyll, but the location, while stunning and unique, isn't universally popular with the more serious competitors.

As the competition takes place in a flooded quarry, the maximum possible skim is around 60 meters before the stone hits the famous "back wall". Competitors who manage to hit this in the qualifying heats go forward to the "Toss Off" where their combined skim distance over three throws decides the overall champion.

Serious skimmers can easily manage throws in excess of 60 meters and point out that Easdale's method of scoring does not adequately reward those with the greatest skill. However, Easdale is the original location of the first Championships and is unlikely to give up their ownership anytime soon.

Skimming, after all, is serious business!



## Auld Lang Syne

In the English-speaking world, the popular Scottish song, "Auld Lang Syne", is traditionally sung to bid farewell to the old year at the stroke of midnight on Hogmanay. It is also often heard at funerals, graduations, and as a farewell or ending to other occasions; for instance, many branches of the Scouting movement use it to close jamborees and other functions.

The text is a Scots-language poem written by Robert Burns in 1788, but based on an older Scottish folk song. In 1799, it was set to a traditional pentatonic tune, which has since become standard. "Auld Lang Syne" is listed as numbers 6294 and 13892 in the *Roud Folk Song Index*.

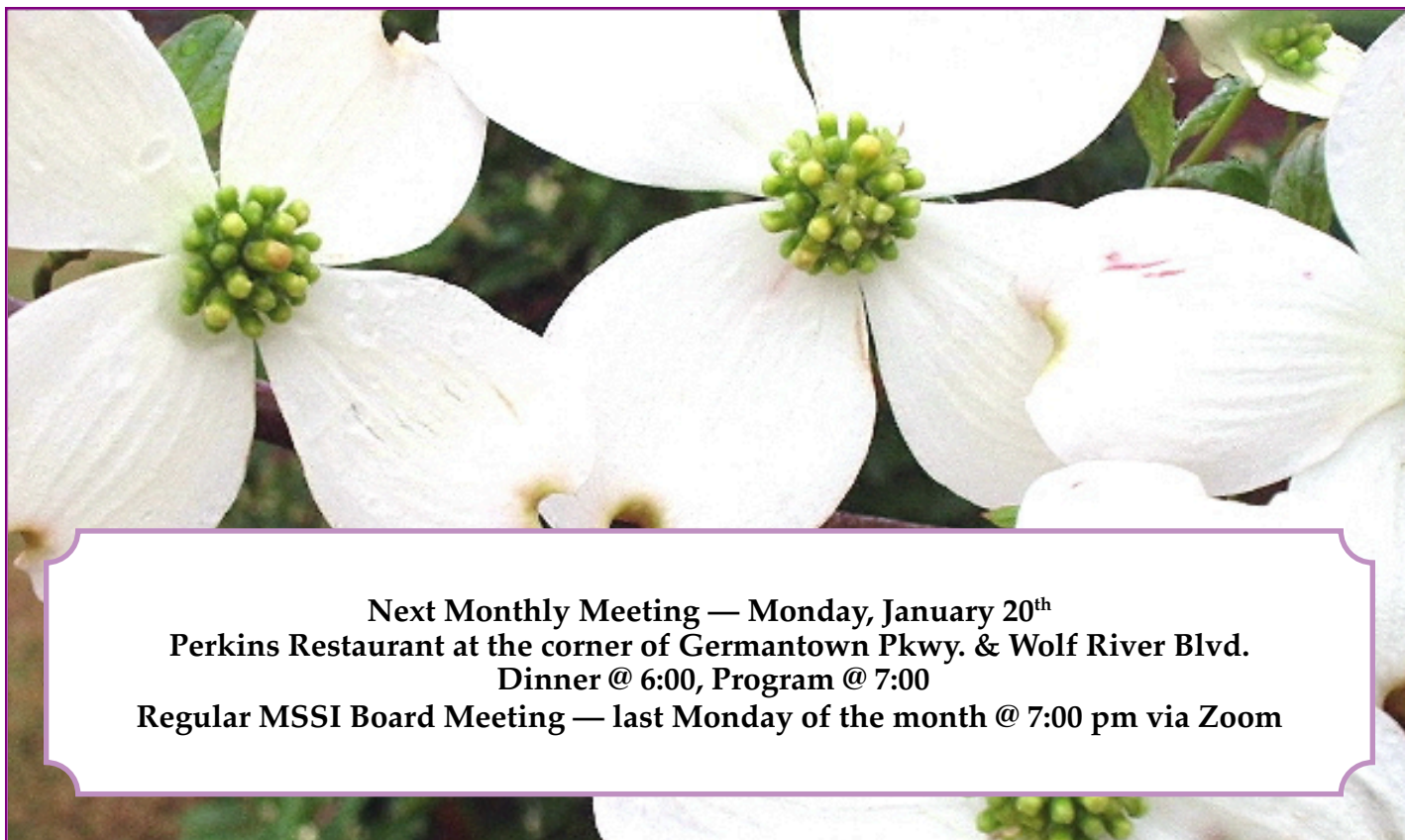
The poem's Scots title may be translated into English as "old long since" or, less literally, "long long ago", "days gone by", "times long past" or "old times". Consequently, "for auld lang syne", as it appears in the first line of the chorus, might be loosely translated as "for the sake of old times".

The phrase "Auld Lang Syne" is also used in similar poems by Robert Ayton (1570–1638), Allan Ramsay (1686–1757), and James Watson (1711), as well as older folk songs predating Burns.

In modern times, Matthew Fitt uses the phrase "in the days of auld lang syne" as the equivalent of "once upon a time" in his retelling of fairy tales in the Scots language.

Come prepared to join hands around the circle at the end of Burns Night as we sing:

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
and never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
and auld lang syne?*



**Next Monthly Meeting — Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>  
Perkins Restaurant at the corner of Germantown Pkwy. & Wolf River Blvd.  
Dinner @ 6:00, Program @ 7:00  
Regular MSSSI Board Meeting — last Monday of the month @ 7:00 pm via Zoom**



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