



Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 30 Number 1

January 2024

Happy New Year

In Scot's Gaelic, Happy New Year is:

Bliadhna Mhath Ùr - Bleea-nah Va Oor

The following youtube video teaches the pronunciation:

[How To Say Happy New Year In Scottish Gaelic \(With Phonetics\) | Learn Scottish Gaelic \(youtube.com\)](#)

Coming Events:

AKPADS Folk Festival Event:

The Walters Medal Competition

Mini-band Competitions and Piobaireachd competition

Wednesday **January 24, 2024 6:30 pm**

Wendy Williamson Auditorium

Burns Night 2024

Saturday January 27

Lakefront Hotel, 6 pm – 10 pm



Come experience this traditional night of Scottish revelry as we celebrate the National Bard of Scotland, Robert Burns! There will be piping, poetry, haggis, men in kilts and the traditional humorous toasts to the lads and lassies. Choose from an entrée of tenderloin, salmon or haggis (everyone will get a taste of haggis as an appetizer) at this semi-formal sit-down dinner.

Cost is \$85/person (members), and \$95/person (nonmembers) so it's a good time to make sure your dues are paid! Discounted rooms will be available at the Lakefront, use code **2401SCOTTI**.

Speakers still needed for the lassie's toast (Nelson will be toasting the lassies, if that's any incentive!) Contact Sherri or Cathy if interested.

Auld Lang Syne

By Aliza Chasan, CBS News

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve, revelers across the globe will sing "Auld Lang Syne," a song about "old acquaintance be forgot" and, well, other lyrics people may not recall from the New Year's song.

The song's origins date back to an 18th-century Scottish ballad, with Auld Lang Syne eventually becoming a New Year's celebration staple. In this article, experts explain the song's lyrics, origin and staying power.

What does "auld lang syne" mean?

"'Auld Lang Syne' can be literally translated as 'Old Long Since,' but the literal English does not give a sense of what it means to a user of Scots, where it refers to a shared past underpinning the current relationships of a family, community or professional/social association," Professor Murray Pittock, a literary historian with the Centre for Robert Burns Studies at the University of Glasgow, told CBS News. "As such it is more evocative, nostalgic and communally unifying than any simple English equivalent."

What are the song's origins?

Today's song comes from a publication by Scottish poet Robert Burns. The poet was trying to preserve Scottish language and culture after Scotland and England formed the United Kingdom, according to Scotland's national tourist board. So he traveled the country and collected old Scots poetry and songs, including "Auld Lang Syne."

Continued on page 2

What is Hogmanay, and Why Do Scots Celebrate it?

Christmas Banned In Scotland

"By order of the Scottish Reformation Parliament, the celebration of the Popish Christmas is illegal and punishable by imprisonment." - Published 1640

What does this mean?

Imagine not being allowed Yule bread or mincemeat pies! No Christmas trees, no twinkling lights, no letters to Santa, no gifts.

What's a Scot to do?

Scots turn back to an even older tradition — Hogmanay

What's that you say?

Hogmanay is the Scots word for New Years!

Hogmanay is derived from the Norse and Gaelic traditions of Winter Solstice December 21st, then shifted a bit to accept the 1592 creation of the Gregorian calendar end of year on December 31st.

How to celebrate

Redding the House" for the New Year

According to traditions, this was a task that must be done, especially cleaning the old ashes from the fire. The whole purpose of this is make sure you start the year afresh, having a clean home, being organized and being ready to tackle the year ahead.

Light the New Year's Fire

The Vikings played a big part in shaping Scotland. Some of their traditions and customs influenced the people of Scotland and are still practiced today. The Vikings loved fire and starting long before their pre-Christian times, they used fire to ward off evil spirits and "burn the old year out". Cities in Scotland with lasting Viking influences, like Aberdeen, host fire festivals. You can simply burn a candle to chase away the darkness.

Ceilidhs

If you sing, then you should dance! The word Ceilidh is Scottish Gaelic and basically means party, or social event. Ceilidh is pronounced 'Kay-lee'. Ceilidh is also a term applied to traditional line dancing.

First Footing on Hogmanay

The custom of first footing goes back generations, the tradition says you should always bring a gift as the first footer. Common gifts were coal to represent warmth for the year ahead, black bun cake, Scottish Shortbread biscuit, salt or whisky to represent health, prosperity and a full belly for the following year.

Traditional New Year's Dinner in Scotland

Steak Pie, mashed potatoes and vegetables! Just Wow! What more needs to be said? Chunks of steak meat in a delicious gravy, flaky puff pastry, buttery mashed potatoes and a wholesome veg!

A contemporary Hogmanay feast

Scotch broth - a hearty meat-based soup with root vegetables & barley

Cock-a-Leekie soup - chicken soup with leeks, celery, onion & barley

Roasted lamb or mutton

Tatties and Neeps (potatoes and turnip)

Cranachan - dessert made with oatmeal, raspberries and cream

Cloutie dumpling (a steamed pudding) *Some traditional Hogmanay foods:*

Haggis

Salted fish

Soup

Oat Farles or Oatcakes (served with cheese)

Shortbread

Cakes (Black Bun or Ankerstock)

And of course there would be plenty of whisky to wash it all down.

Christmas returned to the Scottish Calendar in 1958 as a public "bank" holiday; however, nowhere near as important as Hogmanay.

However you spend your Hogmanay and the bringing in of the New Year, we wish you and yours a happy and prosperous 2024 full of love, laughter.

In Scotland, they say: "lang may yer lum reek" (Long may your Chimney Smoke)

Auld Lange Syne, Continued from page 1

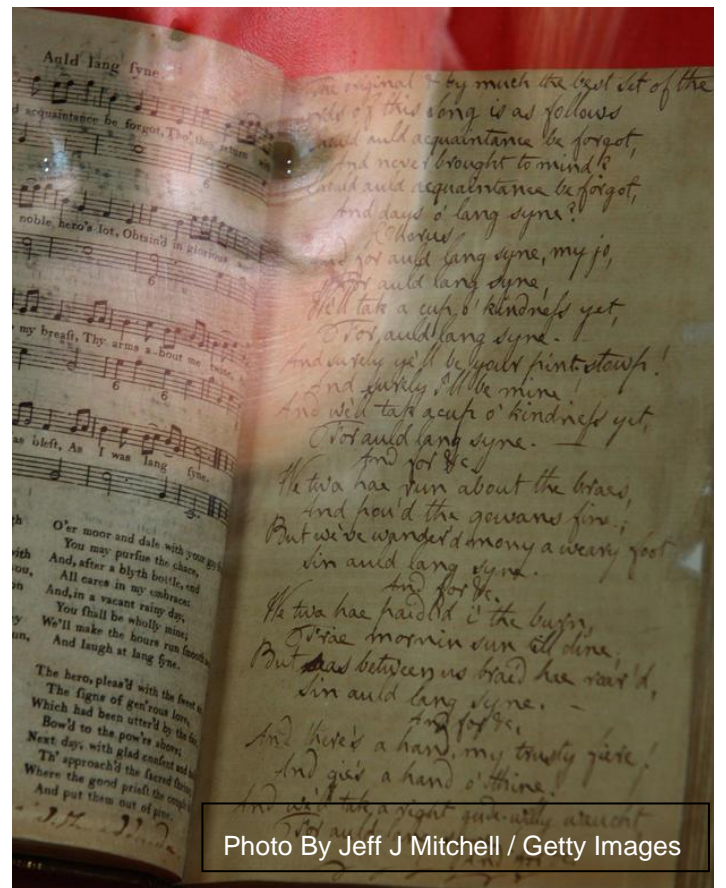


Photo By Jeff J Mitchell / Getty Images

Corrine Bowen, of Bonhams auctioneers views the Robert Burns manuscript and lyrics to Auld Lang Syne on Aug. 11, 2009 in Edinburgh, Scotland.

"Burns said in one of the letters on view that he listened to an old man singing the song and that it had never been in print or in manuscript until he wrote it down from that old man singing," Christine Nelson, who once curated an exhibition on the song at the Morgan Library in Manhattan, told CBS News in 2012.

The song Burns wrote down can be traced back to "Auld Kyndness Forgot," which was preserved in a manuscript from 1568, Pittock said.

Historians believe that Burns substantially re-wrote the words.

"He didn't make any secret of the fact that he was doing what he called 'mending' these old songs," Nelson said in her 2012 interview. "So that they could be, you know, given to the public for posterity."

His words were first published in 1796, according to the Library of Congress. Burns also sent a slightly revised version to a publisher in 1793, but that version was not published until 1799 — three years after Burns' death. The best known set of words for Auld Lang Syne are the ones published in 1799.

Why do we sing the song every New Year's Eve?

While the song has Scottish roots, its popularity in the U.S. is owed to a Canadian.

Bandleader Guy Lombardo popularized it after he and his Royal Canadian Big Band played it on a New Year's Eve broadcast in 1929. In 1965, Lombardo told Life magazine that he came from a part of western Ontario home to a large Scottish population. In that area, it was traditional for bands to end every dance with "Auld Lang Syne."



An undated photo of Guy Lombardo.

Photo by Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

"The main reason why Lombardo became identified as the Ghost of New Years Past, of New Years Present and of New Years Yet to Come, he says, 'is because Auld Lang Syne is our theme song — and was long before anyone ever heard us on the radio,'" Life Magazine reported.

After Lombardo's 1929 broadcast, "Auld Lang Syne" went on to become part of popular culture, playing in "Forrest Gump," "Sex and the City" and "When Harry Met Sally."

Harry and Sally even have a conversation about the song, trying to figure out its meaning.

"My whole life, I don't know what this song means," Harry, played by actor and comedian Billy Crystal, says in the 1989 movie. "I mean, 'should old acquaintance be forgot?' Does that mean that we should forget old acquaintances or does it mean that if we happen to forget them, we should remember them, which is not possible because we already forgot 'em?"

"Well, maybe it just means that we should remember that we forgot them or something," Meg Ryan's character Sally responds. "Anyway, it's about old friends."

The U.S. Embassy in Italy maybe explained it best in a blog post: "The lyrics of 'Auld Lang Syne' pose the question: How do we best remember the memories, friends and experiences of years before? The answer, Burns tells us, is to 'share a cup of kindness yet' as we journey into the new year."

AK Piping and Drumming Society News: The Walters Medal Competition

Mini-band Competitions and Piobaireachd competition

Wednesday January 24, 2024

Wendy Williamson Auditorium 6:30 pm

Back Issues of the Thistle

Ever wanted to check out old issues of the Thistle? Maybe to find that steak pie recipe from two years ago, or see who won the tug-o-war at last year's Games?

Back issues may be found at

<https://us11.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=6523ba4c42aca618e88eb6b99&id=f54a8e4ad1>

Irish Club Annual Meeting



How do you say "Happy New Year in Irish Gaelic?"

Athbhliain faoi shéan is faoi mhaise dhaoibh, a chairde.

"A prosperous and flourishing New Year to you all."

Pronounced: AH-BHLEE-in fwee HEH-un uss fwee WUSH-ih REEVE uh HHAWR-jih

Join the Irish Club of Alaska at 2 pm on Saturday, January 13th as we begin the new year with our Annual Meeting. This is your opportunity to participate in planning the activities and events for the next months. For more information, watch for these email updates or contact us at irishclubak@gmail.com

Contact Information for Alaska Pipe Bands:

<p>Crow Creek Pipes & Drums Practice every Monday, 6:00 p.m. First Congregational Church, 2610 E Northern lights Blvd. http://crowcreekpd.com/</p>	<p>Fairbanks Red Hackle Pipe Band P.O. 82782 Fairbanks, Alaska www.fairbanksredhacklepipeband.org</p>
<p>Alaska Celtic Pipes & Drums Lessons on Tuesdays - 6:30 pm - Mat-Su College; Lessons on Fridays - 5:30 pm - Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Chugiak: Band Practice to follow. Contact Richard Christiansen - 907-315-9838 www.alaskacelticpipesdrums.org</p>	<p>Anchorage Scottish Pipe Band Practices Monday, 6:00 to 8:00pm (Anchorage) and Thursday, 6:30 to 8:30pm (Eagle River) Lessons: Thursday, 6:00pm (Eagle River), or by appointment Contact: Tim Kincaid, 907-360-2585; Email: tim@terntech.com Find us on Facebook</p>
<p>Alaska Piping and Drumming Society Contact Teddy Krogh at krogh_teddy@hotmail.com</p>	<p>City of Juneau Pipe Band Juneau, Alaska www.cityofjuneaupipeband.org</p>

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Club Calendar

Scottish Club Board Meeting

January 15, 6pm
BP Energy Center

Walters Medal Competition

January 24, 2024 6:30 pm
Wendy Williamson Auditorium

Burns Night

January 27, 6 – 10pm
Lakefront Hotel, Anchorage

Annual General Meeting

Late Febr

Alaska Scottish Highland Games and Gathering of the Clans

June 29 – 30, 2024

Tartan Tourney

July 2024
Settler's Bay Golf Course

The Tundra Thistle, the newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club, is published approximately 11 times each year. Subscription is by membership to the Alaskan Scottish Club. Send articles for publication, membership info, and advertising rate inquiries to:

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Thanks to our contributors for the November: Cathy Steen, Christa Wallace, Dawn Berg,

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The Alaskan Scottish Club is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) entity and can accept cash and services. Cash donations are welcome at any time of the year. For those with corporate matching programs, we are eligible for those funds. You can contact the Board of Directors at the above address with questions. Facebook and Instagram contacts are:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlaskanScottish (Club page)

www.facebook.com/alaskashg (Highland Games page)

Instagram: www.instagram.com/alaskanscottish

NOTE: Thistle information gratefully received at all times. However, to make the monthly deadline, please submit by the 25th. Send to tundrathistle@alaskanscottish.org



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