



Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 30 Number 5

May 2024

Coming Events:

Bike to Work Treat Station

Bike to Work on **Friday May 17th** to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, be active, and have fun! The Alaskan Scottish Club will host a treat station from **4-6pm** at **Taku Lake North parking lot** serving shortbread, tea (hot and cold options), and bottled water. Stop by to enjoy some refreshments and learn about upcoming events like the Alaska Scottish Highland Games and the Tartan Tourney. For more info on BTWD and to see a map of registered treat stations please visit:

<https://www.bikeanchorage.org/btwd2024>



AKPADS EVENTS:

Piping and Drumming Competitions 2024

The competition season has begun and registration forms are on the akpads website. Points and awards in these events combine into grand aggregate standings that are announced at the Alaskan Scottish Highland Games.

May 4th 10:00am

Trinity Lutheran Church in Palmer

June 1st 10:00am

Eagle River Town Square Park

June 29th/30th

Alaskan Scottish Highland Games



2024 Highland Games Clinics

Ever dreamt of mastering the throws at the Highland Games? This is your chance! Join us as we welcome Women's Highland Games professional and seasoned throws coach, Kristine Rothwell, for a weekend of Throwing Clinics.

Clinic Dates and Locations:

June 1st, Anchorage: 9 AM - 4 PM, Location TBD, Cost: \$40

June 2nd, Fairbanks: 9 AM - 4 PM, Location TBD, Cost: \$40

Whether you're a newbie eager to learn the basics or a veteran looking to refine your technique, our clinics cater to all skill levels. Both Juniors and Adults are welcome to participate.

🔑 Registration: Spots are limited, so don't miss out! Register now at

<https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2024ashgheavyevents>

Stay tuned for updates on our venue selections in Anchorage and Fairbanks, contingent upon snow melt conditions.

We can't wait to see you there – prepare to learn how to throw far and have fun!

Games Planning Committee Meeting Schedule



The 43rd Annual Alaska Scottish Highland Games will be on June 29 and 30 this year and the planning is underway! Become a part of the Planning Committee. From lead positions to minor roles, there is plenty of work to be done and we can always find something for you to do.

2024 Games meeting dates: May 2, 16, 30 - June 13, 20 at 6:00pm In-person at The Eureka Space 405 W 36th Ave in Anchorage and via Zoom: Meeting ID: 237 286 7941 <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2372867941>



Volunteer at the Games

Be part of something truly epic at this year's Highland Games! Our event thrives on the passion and dedication of our volunteers, who are the heartbeat of our clan.

With over 200 volunteer positions up for grabs and countless hours of fun and camaraderie, there's no shortage of ways to get involved! Whether you can spare a day or the whole weekend, your time and talents are invaluable to us.

In return for just a minimum of 3 hours of your time, you'll be rewarded with a 2-Day admission ticket to the games and a Volunteer T-Shirt!

We have Multiple Volunteer Teams you can join!

- Set-Up: Friday (6/28)
- Tear-Down: Monday (7/1)
- Alaskan Scottish Club Historical Tent
- Alaskan Scottish Club Membership Tent
- Shortbread Competition Judge

- Athletics
- Children's Games
- Gates
- Kilted Mile
- Merchandise Tents
- Midnight Sun Spurtle Challenge
- Scotch and Mead Tastings (Must Be 21+)
- Sponsor Tent (Must Be 21+)
- Volunteer Check-In
- Welsh Cakes Sales

Got questions? Drop us a message at volunteers@alaskanscottish.org.



Get Your Tickets NOW!

Save money and avoid waiting in line at the gate and get your 2024 Alaska Scottish Highland Games tickets early!

Buy Online Now:

<https://alaskanscottish.ticketspice.com/ashgtickets>

Games Activities for Everyone:

Prepare for Games Day

In addition to Highland Athletics, Piping and Drumming and Dance competitions which take years to prepare for, the ASHG provides numerous opportunities for contestants of all ages. The following articles give information on some of the competitions you will be able to enter this year. Get ready to bake shortbread, prepare an award-winning porridge, or host a clan booth representing your family heritage.

Midnight Sun Spurtle Competition

By Allison Fiscus

This past weekend at the Celtic Spring Festival in Anchorage, a spurtle class was given to demonstrate how to make the perfect Scottish porridge with a spurtle.

Participants received a spurtle and steel cut oats to perfect their Scottish porridge. This class was a perfect preparation for the **Midnight Sun Spurtle contest** at this year's Alaska Scottish Highland Games. The Midnight Sun Spurtle contest will be held on Saturday, June 29, 2024. Youth from 12-17 and up to 2 per team will begin at 11am and the adult competition will begin at noon.

Not sure where to begin to make Scottish Oatmeal? Head to the store and grab a package of Bob's Red Mill Steel Cut Oats and follow the recipe on the back of the bag. A secret...cook for 15 minutes and then cook for a few more minutes. You will see your oatmeal go from delicious to heavenly. Be sure and go to Alaska Scottish Highland Games and register for your spot in the contest. Spaces are limited. This contest has great prizes. You don't want to miss out!! See you at the games! Register at:

[2024 Midnight Sun Spurtle Contest \(regfox.com\)](https://regfox.com)



Calling All Clans!

Attention, Clans - Brace yourselves for the most exhilarating rendezvous of the year: The Gathering O' The Clans at the 2024 Alaska Scottish Highland Games!

After the gusty winds of the 2023 ASHG, we've reimagined the Gathering experience to elevate the excitement! A colossal Clan Hall, pulsating with the heartbeat of heritage and camaraderie! No more battling the elements alone - it's time to stand united under one grand roof, sharing tales and laughter with your fellow clan folk!

Let's transform the Clan Hall into a living tapestry of Scottish pride, a mosaic of tartans, echoing with the sounds of bagpipes and the cheers of kindred spirits!

So, gather your clansmen, rally your banners, and let the Highlands echo with the thunderous applause of the united clans! The Gathering O' The Clans awaits!

Register Today:

<https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/ashggotclans>

Shortbread Competition



Get ready for a culinary showdown at the Shortbread Competition, perhaps the tastiest competition at the Scottish Highland Games! This is your opportunity to showcase your baking prowess and culinary creativity in the midst of the other thrilling competitions. The Shortbread Competition awaits your entry!

The epicenter of the action, the Club Tent at the Center of Tartan Circle, will receive your entries, ensuring they're in the running for shortbread glory. You have until **11 a.m. on Sunday** to submit your entries.

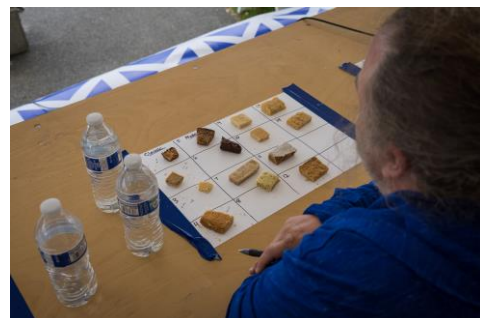
Choose your battlefield wisely – the competition features two categories, Traditional and Modern Shortbread, each judged separately. Bring three tantalizing pieces of each type, and don't hold back – the more, the merrier! Enter as many modern varieties as your culinary prowess allows.

For the purists, the Traditional Scottish shortbread category beckons, where a simple yet timeless recipe made with sugar, butter, flour, and a pinch of salt reigns supreme.

But if you're craving an extra dose of excitement, dive into the Modern/Flavored Scottish Shortbread category. Enrich your shortbread with ingredients like almond, cinnamon, cardamom, and an array of other tantalizing flavors. The possibilities are as vast as the Highland Games themselves.

And here's a tip for the savvy competitors – list the ingredients of your modern marvels to cater to any potential food allergies among our esteemed judges.

Don't miss the grand finale – judging will occur on the Culloden Memorial Stage in the Gathering O The Clans Area on Sunday at 3 pm. It's where shortbread dreams will be realized, and champions will be crowned. May the hills echo with the sweet victory of your culinary triumph!





Get ready to celebrate with ASC at the Colony Days Parade!

Over the last few years, the Alaskan Scottish Club has joined the fun at the Colony Days Parade! This year promises to be even more spectacular, we're excited to build our first-ever float and we need your help!

We are calling on our members to join hands in bringing this ambitious project to life. Volunteers are needed for various stages of the float-building process. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to learn and a desire to contribute to a community effort. This is a perfect opportunity for those looking to get involved in something unique and make new friends along the way.

Along with the float, we want to flood the street with Tartan in the parade, so we are looking for members to walk in the parade with us! Parade participants are encouraged to dress in Scottish attire. Whether it's donning a kilt, wearing a tartan sash, sporting an Alaskan Scottish Heritage Games (ASHG) shirt, or dressing in a full Scottish costume, every outfit will contribute to the festive spirit of the parade. It's a chance to celebrate Scottish ancestry and perhaps learn more about one's own heritage or simply partake in the joyous tradition. Athletes, Pipers, Drummers, Dancers, Strongman, we want everyone to participate!

The Colony Days Parade is scheduled to take place on **Saturday June 8** and the Alaskan Scottish Club float will gather before the parade kicks off.

Don't miss this chance to show your Scottish pride and community spirit. All are welcome to participate!

Interested in joining the fun? Let us know you are in! jeni@alaskanscottish.org or 907-602-0901

The Wallace Oak Project

By Christa Wallace

At our annual general meeting, Laurel Osbourne handed me a beautiful black sweatshirt and said she thought of me. I was stunned by her thoughtfulness. When I pulled the sweatshirt from the bag, it was proudly emblazoned with the image of the ~~Wallace Oak Project~~ with a poem about Wallace

on the back side. I have proudly worn it several times since. Each time I wear the sweatshirt, I'm asked about the project. So I thought I would share this with the club.

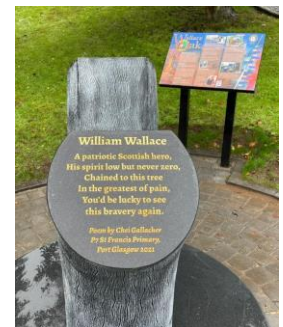


Some of you may know that William Wallace was the Guardian of Scotland, 1297 to 1305, during one of the wars of independence from England. The story of the Battle of

Stirling Bridge and Falkirk were brought to the big screen in the movie *Braveheart*. Wallace was captured in August of 1305. Prior to his trial and execution, Wallace was chained to an ancient oak in Port Glasgow (modern city name) awaiting British troops to haul him to London. Locals continued to refer to this oak tree, as the Wallace oak and the chain remained. This same tree stood until 1992, when a winter storm blew it over. The chain was found, and the stump was removed and preserved at Hunterston Castle (Glasgow).

In 2019, the Wallace Oak Project began. Through the project, the local community created a bronze memorial monument to replace the lost oak.

A humble thank you to the Laurel, who reconnected me with a story from the past. Christa Wallace



Whisky: Blends versus Single Malts

By Christa Wallace

To many of those who drink Scotch, the term blended, makes them stick up their noses and refuse. To others, blends offer a smoother flavor. Hopefully this article will change your mind and try the overwhelming diversity and richness of flavor Scotches have to offer.

Scotland is widely regarded as the greatest whisky-producing region in the world. Centuries of history, along with dedication to the craft of distillation, have created a culture of whisky production that produces some fabulous Scotch.

Single Malt Whisky

Single malt whisky is a legally protected term or category of spirit that must meet specific production requirements. First, the whisky must be produced in Scotland by a single distillery. The whisky must be produced completely from only malted barley and it can only be distilled in copper pot stills. Single malt whisky must also age

Although only three years of barrel maturation are required, single malt whiskies are usually aged for much longer periods, usually around 10–15 years. The types of barrels

used to age Scotch whisky can vary but are mostly oak barrels that were formerly used to age wine or other spirits. Ex-bourbon barrels are the most common, but distillers often use ex-rum, madeira or sherry casks. The liquid that was formerly in a cask imparts different flavors and aromas to the finished whisky.

Part of the appeal of any single malt whisky is its link to the Scottish landscape. Single malts are recognized as coming from five different major areas: The Highlands, Speyside, The Lowlands, Campbeltown, and Islay.

Some scotch-producing regions have a very specific flavor profile. For example Islay produces peated scotch, which means the malted barley is dried using heat from peat smoke which imparts the finished whisky with a rich, smoky flavor and aroma.

Blended Whisky

The most widely produced, exported, and consumed Scotch whiskies are blended, such as Johnnie Walker and Dewar's, produce blended whisky.

Blended whiskies are made by combining various single malts with grain whisky. Unlike single malt whisky, grain whisky can be produced from any type of cereal grain, usually corn or wheat with some malted barley added to aid the fermentation process.

Grain whiskies are distilled in a column still which produces a lighter spirit, very different from pot stills used in single malt. Column-distilled spirits are more efficient and affordable to produce, though perhaps they lack the aroma and flavor single malts are known for. Grain and single malts blended together produce the balanced flavor profile and can be produced in high production volume and always taste the same. Scotch is a £7 billion industry globally. Out of this total, £5 billion was generated in Scotland, provides 41,000 jobs, and represents 77% of Scottish exports (Scotch Whiskey Association, 2022).

Blends and single malts can be savored neat, but blended scotch is the more common choice for cocktails like a Rob Roy or Bobby Burns due to its more consistent flavor profile.

A Rob Roy: 1 1/2 ounces of Scotch Whisky, 5/6 ounces of Sweet Vermouth, Dash Angostura Bitters.

Rusty Nail: Use 4 parts Scotch to 1 part Drambuie.

Bobby Burns: 1 ounce blended scotch whisky, 1 ounce sweet vermouth, 1/2 ounce Benedictine, top with lemon peel.

Or perhaps

Penicillin: 2 ounces blended scotch, 3/4 ounce lemon juice, freshly squeezed, 3/4 ounce honey-ginger syrup, 1/4 ounce Islay single malt scotch, Garnish: candied ginger (I wonder what it cures?)

Although they are made differently, blended and single malt whiskies are both vital to the craft and industry of Scotch whisky production. The two styles play an essential role in showcasing the incredibly variety of flavors that make Scotch one of the most prized spirits in the world.



Image: Liquor.com / Laura Sant

Tartan Tourney

ATTENTION ALL GOLFERS: Registration is now open for the ASC's 3rd Annual Tartan Tourney, Saturday July 27th at Settlers Bay Golf Course!




The Tartan Tourney isn't just a golf tournament; it's a Scottish spectacle that will redefine your expectations of golfing entertainment in Alaska! Can you handle the excitement? Join us and find out!

Current Alaskan Scottish Club members receive a discount on their registration, request your coupon code via email at tartantourney@alaskanscottish.org to Don't Miss out, register today: <https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/tartantourney>

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>

Scottish Club Supporters/Club Contacts

<p>MAPPING SOLUTIONS</p>  <p>Custom maps and graphics (907) 561-4627 Mapmakers.com</p>	<div data-bbox="911 810 1516 1094" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p align="center">AMANDA KERR SUZUKI VIOLIN & FIDDLE STUDIO Weekly Private Lessons and Group Classes for Age 3 and up Variety of fiddle styles!</p> <p align="center"><i>Register NOW online for Spring Semester Jan. 14th - May 21st</i></p> <p>Complete information available on the website: www.amandakerrmusic.com</p> <p align="right"><small>Amanda Kerr holds State, Regional, and National titles for Fiddling and is teacher-certified in the Suzuki Method (Every Child Can, Suzuki Principles in Action, Violin Units 1 & 2), and Music Mind Games.</small></p> </div>
 <p>RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Go online to www.alaskanscottish.org and click the membership link.</p> <p>Mail a check to ASC, PO Box 244416, Anchorage, AK 99524.</p> <p>Call 907-602-0901 and provide payment information.</p> <p>Visit the ASC booth community events to pay in person.</p>	<p align="center">Club Scholarship Program</p> <p>The Alaskan Scottish Club Education Assistance Program offers individual grants up to \$500 per applicant for schools or workshops and up to \$1,500 for a post-secondary educational institution. See the club's website for more information and to access the application https://alaskanscottish.org/club-membership/</p> <p>If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Committee chair, Christa Wallace at Volunteers@alaskanscottish.org</p> <p align="center">Back Issues of the Thistle</p> <p>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:</p> <p align="center">https://us11.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=6523ba4c42aca618e88eb6b99&id=f54a8e4ad1</p>
<p align="center">Gaming Permit</p> <p>The ASC possesses an Alaska Gaming Permit. This Permit allows the club to hold our fundraising raffles and auctions. The ASC is allowed to use our permit to sponsor raffles for other Non-Profits for their events and fundraisers. If you are in need of a gaming permit for an upcoming event please let us know.</p>	 <p>The Club can earn airline miles at the same time you earn your own! The Easy Biz program allows the club to earn 1 mile for every dollar spent on the base fare portion of ticket purchases made online through the EasyBiz® website. Simply sign in to EasyBiz for your travel purchases and each purchase will automatically be credited to the Club's account along with your own! Interested in signing up? Send Jeni an email and she will get you on our account! jeni@alaskanscottish.org</p>

Club Calendar

Scottish Club Board Meeting

May 20, 6 pm
Blood Bank of Alaska Board Room

Throwing Clinics

June 1 – Anchorage
June 2 – Fairbanks
Registration details on page 1

Colony Days Parade

June 8
Palmer

Alaska Scottish Highland Games and Gathering of the Clans

June 29 – 30, All day
Alaska State Fairgrounds, Palmer

Tartan Tourney

July 27
Settler's Bay Golf Course

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

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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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)



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