



Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 29 Number 8

September 2023

Coming Events:

Final Trail Cleanup for 2023

Please join us on **September 23 at 9am** to walk the Campbell Creek trail and keep our section cleaned up. We meet at the parking lot at the trailhead off Dimond and Victor, next to the Fred Meyer gas station.

The club adopted a section of the trail a number of years ago, and we meet monthly in the summer to do a trail cleanup. Plus, you'll be spending some time outside in the fresh air with a friendly, lively group of people. Please bring a trash bag, dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes and gloves. Bring "trash grabbers" if you've got them. Club or Highland Games shirts and tartans are encouraged.



Help Needed!!

The ASC will be hosting a craft table and a photo booth from **2 – 7 on Saturday September 16th in Anchorage Town Square**. We will also have a booth to sell club merchandise. If you can spend a couple hours helping out, contact Christa at volunteers@alaskanscottish.org.

Volunteers are needed to help man a booth at the Pirate Cove, a family-friendly event leading up to the Pirate Pub Crawl (adults only) later in the evening. Held on the Saturday before International "Talk Like a Pirate" day, the Pirate Cove will include food, vendors, and activities for all ages.

Celtic New Year

Join the Celtic Community of Alaska for "The Night of the Hunter's Moon," their annual Celtic New Year (Samhain) celebration. The event will be held at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center (all ages are welcome!) on Saturday October 28th from 6:30 – 10 pm.

The night includes music, dance (including a fire dancer), games, the Old and New Year's fires, a children's costume contest and a silent auction. Autumn-themed dinners will be available for purchase from the Arctic Rose, including child-friendly meals.

Tickets available in October.

50th Anniversary Celebration!



Saint Andrew's Night and Christmas Ceilidh

Our 50th Anniversary celebration will kick off at Saint Andrew's Night, Thursday, November 30. This evening will be a cocktail party celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Scottish Club.

Details of venue and ticket price is still in the works.

Club Store Roll-out



merchandise.

The roll-out of the ASC's online store is scheduled for the new year – the Celtic New Year, that is. At the end of October, our new online storefront will be open. This will be the first chance to view and purchase our new Islay, the highland coo, merchandise. There will be member specials on select

December Special Thistle Issue

Input Needed!

In honor of the Club's 50th Anniversary, there will be a special issue of the Thistle to be produced. Please submit your pictures (please annotate with the year and identify the people in the picture) and memories of our Club activities through the years. All submissions, whether selected for publication or not, will be awarded a 50th anniversary commemorative gift. Submit to thistle@alaskanscottish.org.

Arrrg: Scottish Pirates

Pirates or Privateers?

By Christa Wallace

Privateers were private individuals commissioned by governments to carry out quasi-military activities. They would sail in privately owned armed ships, robbing merchant vessels and pillaging settlements belonging to a rival country. The most famous of all privateers is probably English Admiral, Francis Drake, who made a fortune plundering Spanish settlements in the Americas after being granted a privateering commission by Elizabeth I in 1572.

You could say a privateer was just a pirate with papers. The use of privateers allowed states to project maritime power beyond the capabilities of their regular navies, but there were trade-offs. Because privateering was generally a more lucrative occupation than military service, it tended to divert manpower and resources away from regular navies.

Privateers sometimes went beyond their commissions, attacking vessels that didn't belong to the targeted country. These extracurricular raiding and pillaging were indistinguishable from piracy. At other times, outlaw pirates would operate with the tacit encouragement of a government but without the written legal authorization given to privateers. In historical settings where these practices were common, the line between privateer and pirate was blurred.

Presented below are short descriptions of some of the more famous Scottish pirates...or privateers? You decide.

Andrew Barton

An early chronicle, dated 1511, records that Barton sailed under the Scottish Flag, attacking English and Portuguese vessels. He died during a sea battle aboard his vessel "the Lion". He is memorialized in the children's ballad "Henry Martyn".



William Kidd

Captain Kidd is one of the most celebrated pirates of the 17th century. He started out as a pirate hunter in 1685, but the French declared him a pirate in 1698, and the British executed him in 1701. His vessel, the *Quedagh*, was found in 2007, in the waters off the Dominican Republic. People still search for his "buried" treasure.

John Gow

Hanged for piracy in 1725, Gow inspired many an author. Daniel Defoe wrote a fictional account, *The Pirate Gow*. Sir Walter Scott used Gow as the model for Captain Cleveland in *The Pirate*, and Gilbert and Sullivan adapted his story for their comical operetta *The Pirates of Penzance*,



Peter Wallace



Possibly a legendary (i.e., fictional) character, Captain Peter Wallace (Willis) was said to be the first European to harbor inside the barrier reef along the coast of present-day Belize. His base of operations was said to be founded in 1638 near the mouth of the Belize River. Wallace captained the *Swallow*, out of Tortuga Island, and Swallow Cay off the coast of Belize City is said to have been named after his ship. His name in Spanish became "Wallix" and later "Valis" or

"Ballese" and was used as the name for the settlement at the mouth of the Belize River.

Alexander Dalzeel

Born in Scotland, and a known Jacobite, Dalzeel sailed as a French Privateer. His vessel, the *Agrippa*, flew the flag of James II. He was executed for treason and piracy.

Red Legs Greaves

Red legs is a reference to a social class of poor whites in Barbados, who had "Red Legs" resulting from the sunburn to which persons of Scottish and Irish heritage tend to be prone.



Greaves was found guilty of piracy and was sentenced to hang and then the Royal Royal Earthquake of 1692 hit. He survived and escaped, whereas, some 6000 died from the quake and tsunami.

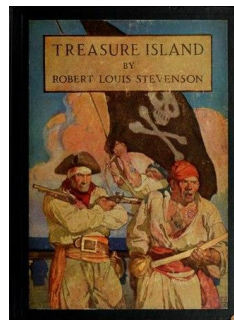
Thomas Sutton



While awaiting trial for piracy, he was known to have said:

"Heaven, you Fool, did you ever hear of any Pyrates going thither? Give me Hell, it's a merrier Place; I'll give Roberts a Salute of 13 Guns at Entrance."

Immortalized in History



Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island 1883

Since its publication, *Treasure Island* has had significant influence on depictions of pirates in popular culture, including elements such as deserted tropical islands, treasure maps marked with an "X", and one-legged seamen with parrots perched on their shoulders.

Whisky vs Whiskey

By Dylan Ettinger: [Whisky vs. whiskey: Why are there two different spellings? | Business Insider India](#)



Whiskey production can be traced back to Ireland in the early 15th century, with production in Scotland trailing closely. The initial difference in spelling came from small differences in the Gaelic dialects spoken in both places.

Over time the two distinct spellings became entrenched, and each region simultaneously developed its own unique styles. The major whiskey-producing nations — Ireland, Scotland, the United States, Canada, and Japan — had to adopt one spelling or the other.

"All of our whiskey traditions in America come from Ireland and Scotland," Houston says. In the early days of the United States, Scottish and Irish immigrants brought their distilling expertise with them and began to distill whiskey almost right away.

Because of the influence of both whiskey-producing traditions, at first, both spellings were used interchangeably in the US. Due to the influx of immigration from Ireland in the 1800s, "whiskey" became the most widely used spelling in the United States and is the primary spelling to this day. The Scottish spelling continued to be used in Canada due to closer ties to the United Kingdom at the time.

Scotland's influence also extends to Japan. Japan's first whisky distillery released its Scotch-inspired whisky in 1929, not long after Masataka Taketsuru returned from an apprenticeship in Scotland and co-founded the [Yamazaki Distillery](#). (see article below)

Rita Taketsuru

The Scotswoman who brought whisky to Japan

By Tiana Yamamoto, website: [Mother of Japanese Whisky - Rita Taketsuru - Whiskey While We Work](#)

"Behind every good man is a great woman," that's the saying, right, or something like that. However, we get the point of it all. Jessie Roberta Cowan, known as Rita Taketsuru, the mother of Japanese Whisky, was this great woman behind Masataka Taketsuru- the founder of Nikka Japanese Whisky and the first Japanese Whisky distiller.

Rita met Masataka in her native land of Scotland while Masataka was studying at University. Masataka stayed at Rita's family home while attending school and being an apprentice at three different distilleries.

During this time, Rita and Masataka fell deeply in love. Despite heavy opposition from both sides of the family, they married in Scotland in 1920. Soon after, Rita went with her husband back to Japan to live out his dream of distilling Whisky.

Like every great story, though, it wasn't all rainbows and unicorns. Masataka was to make Whisky for Settsu Shuzo, who invested in Masataka to learn in Scotland. This relationship dissolved because of the effects of WWI. Masataka then met Tori San, owner of Kotobukiya, what is now known as Suntory. Tori persuaded Masataka to help build and oversee the first whisky distillation plant in Japan. Masataka would put his dreams on hold for ten years.



Dreams no longer on hold

In 1934 Masataka and Rita opened the original Nikka distillation plant in Yochi, a small province on the northwest side of the country. Yochi reminded Masataka of Scotland and the ideal climate to produce his Japanese Whisky.

Through this whole time, Rita stood by Masataka as moral support and played a vital role in giving Nikka Whisky a fighting chance. Rita fully embraced Japanese culture. Becoming fluent in the language and only speaking Japanese. She became quite a good cook of the cuisine and followed Japanese traditions. Rita also helped out financially to get them through rough times. She taught English and piano lessons. Through these teaching connections, they got investors into the Nikka company. Rita played a vital role in the success of Nikka. During WWII, however, she faced significant opposition. She was often accused of being a spy for the British government. They had their home searched because they had an antenna. Some even say their adopted daughter turned on her slightly because Ritta was British. Even though this, Ritta stood the course with Masataka. Their Whisky grew more because of the war and trade restrictions. Factory workers did try to defend Rita throughout the war.

Rita passed away at the age of 63 in 1961. Her legacy as the mother of Japanese Whisky lives on in Yochi. They have even named the main road there Rita Road.

Recipe of the Month:

Braised Venison & Red Wine Stew

By Chef Gary Mclean

I am a huge fan of braised food. Anything long and slow and jam-packed with flavour works for me every time. The working muscles in animals develop loads of flavour, due to the fact that they are always moving. They need a little care and attention, and a little more time to cook, as they tend to be tougher. The important part of this recipe is to make sure that you have a nice hot pan and you caramelize the meat well before adding any wine or stock. Loads of flavour is developed at this stage in the dish.

Makes 4 portions

Ingredients:

500g (1lb 2oz) venison haunch, trimmed and diced

25g (1oz) butter

2 shallots, diced

100g (3½oz) carrot, diced

½ leek, diced

50g (2oz) silver skin baby onions

3 sticks celery, peeled and diced

3 cloves garlic, crushed

25g (1oz) plain flour

25g (1oz) tomato purée

120ml (4fl oz) red wine

300ml (10fl oz) beef stock

3 sprigs thyme, fresh

25ml (1fl oz) good oil Salt and pepper

Instructions:

1. For this you will require a saucepan with a lid, suitable for the oven. If you do not have one, you can follow the recipe using a pot and then transfer everything into a casserole dish and pop it in the oven. It will also work in the slow cooker.

2. Heat a teaspoon of oil the pan.

3. Season the meat and add to the hot pan. Make sure you do not add too much meat at a time, as you need to keep the pan hot throughout the browning stages. Colour evenly for 4 to 5 minutes, then remove the meat from the pan and place to one side.

4. If necessary, add a splash more oil to the pan and then add the butter and slowly start to sweat the shallot, carrot, leek, baby onions and celery.

5. Once softened, add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Now add the flour and tomato purée and cook for a minute.

6. Add the wine and reduce until fully evaporated, then add stock and the thyme.

7. Finally add the meat back into the pan and bring to a simmer.

8. Place the lid on the pot and put it into the oven at 150°C (300°F) for 1 to 2 hours or until the meat is tender.



September
16th
Saturday
2023
7pm to
Midnight

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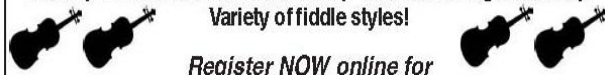

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DIMOND & NORTHERN LIGHTS



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@ternotech.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

September 18, 6:00 pm
BP Energy Center

Trail Cleanup

September 16th, 9:00 am
See page 1 for details

Anchorage Pirate Cove

Saturday, September 16th 2 – 7 pm
Free and Child friendly
Anchorage Town Square
Pub Crawl starts from Town Square at 7 pm
(also free)

Samhain Fire Festival (CCA)

October 28, 6:00 – 10:00 pm
Anchorage Senior Activities Center

St. Andrew's Night and Christmas Ceilidh

Thursday, November 30
Details next month!

NOTE: Thistle information gratefully received at all times. However, to make the monthly deadline, please submit by the 25th. Send to Cathy at csteen@gci.net.

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