



Heather & Thistle Society



Chieftain Dr. Robert Boyd

Volume 10, Issue 5

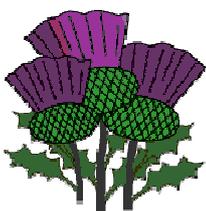
February, 2010
Newsletter Editor:
Jim Monteith

Officers:

Chieftain – Dr. Robert Boyd
SubChieftain – Rev. Melvyn Douglass
Sgt.-at-Arms – Mark Monroe
Secretary – Carmelita Orr
Treasurer – Dr. Walter May

Committee Chairs:

Sunshine-vacant
Membership-vacant
Past Chieftains-Cheryl May
Burns Supper- Ken Sorrels
Publicity-Melvyn Douglass
Programs-vacant



The Houston Scot

Chieftain's Letter,

The slate of office bearers that has been nominated for the coming year is shown in this Newsletter. Cheryl May is to be congratulated on having put together a team that when elected will serve Heather & Thistle well. You have heard me say that times are tough for societies like ours. One of the consequences is that a small group of people tend to have their work cut out to keep things going. It is particularly gratifying that for the coming year we have new people coming forward to serve as well as former office bearers returning after a well-earned break from service. This bodes well for H&T for 2010-11. Please be sure to come out to the March meeting to elect this slate and see the new office bearers sworn-in.

57th Burns Supper a Great Success!

After all the gloom and doom we experienced in the long preparation, the Society's 57th Annual Robert Burns Supper & Ball held in the Marriott Westchase on January 23 turned out to be a great success. As you all know, ticket sales were extremely slow this year until the last two weeks, when thanks to a last minute push by pall concerned the total attendance was brought very close to our committed target of 350. Our Treasurer will report on this in March, but H&T avoided what looked like being a huge financial hit and was able to make charitable donations after all. Congratulations to planning chairman Ken Sorrels and his committee and all who helped to make this possible. Congratulations also to Ted Hirtz and all the other performers on the night. It is very likely that, to be financially prudent, our 2011 Supper will be a smaller affair. The planning committee for next year's event is already engaged in researching alternative formats and venues. Any suggestions are most welcome. See our website for photos and a link to a YouTube video clip from this year's Burns Supper.

Great Fun at the Black Lab!

On the Sunday afternoon following the Burns Supper about 25 members met for a short ceremony to honor Robert Burns at our Bust in Hermann Park followed by a fun meeting in the Churchill Room at the Black Labrador Pub. The H&T Burns Club gave its annual performance, a Scottish Trivia Quiz was held and the evening was capped by some enthusiastic singing of Scottish songs. This format has proved very popular with members.

Monday March 29 - Election of Office Bearers and the FIRST EVER Scottish Karaoke!!

The next meeting of H&T will be on Monday, March 29 at 7:30 PM in the Churchill Room at The Black Labrador, 4100 Montrose. There will be a short business meeting to report on the 2009-10 year and the Burns Supper followed by the election and swearing-in of the new slate of office bearers for 2010-11. There will then be a Scottish Karaoke complete with a DJ. Judging by the success of the sing-along at the January meeting this should be a lot of fun. I encourage everyone to attend and bring some friends along.

Sunshine

Eileen Moore missed the Burns Supper because of a recent fall. We wish her all the best for a full recovery. Please send sunshine items to info@heatherandthistle.org.

Wilchester Elementary School International Day – March 11. Help needed.

H&T is running a table display about Scotland at Wilchester Elementary School, 13618 St. Mary's Lane, Houston, TX 77079 on Thursday, March 11 from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. We need volunteers to cover this and to provide suitable materials like books, maps, photographs, banknotes, coins and leaflets and all things Scottish. Please contact any office bearer or e-mail info@heatherandthistle.org.

New Webmaster Needed

Our webmaster Robin Mills has done a great job for the last three years in revitalizing and maintaining our website, all on a purely voluntary basis. Robin wants to step aside within the next few weeks, so we urgently need someone to take over the maintenance of the site. Please contact me if you would like to take this on or know someone who might.

Tartan of the Month – MacDonald of Sleat

For Past Chieftain Ted Hirtz to thank him for his moving musical Immortal Memory. Check out Ted's tartan at www.heatherandthistle.org.

Robert Boyd

Chieftain

**Heather and Thistle
Officer Slate for March
2010 - February 2011**

Chieftain – Dr. Melvyn Douglass

Sub-Chieftain - Linda Biddle

Sgt. At Arms – Richard Dixon

Secretary – Carol Robertson

Treasurer – Dr. Walter May

Election and swearing in of new officers will be held on Monday, March 29th, at 7:30pm at The Black Labrador Pub, in the Churchill Room. The address is 4100 Montrose, Houston.

**Heather and Thistle
Committee Chairs
for 2010-2011**

Sunshine – Irene Boyd

Membership – Jeanette Douglass

Past Chieftains – Jim Monteith

Burns Supper - Dr. Robert Boyd

Publicity – Dr. Melvyn Douglass

Programs – Vacant

Newsletter - Jim Monteith &

Robert Boyd

Webmaster – vacant

**Past Chieftains
Committee Members for
2010-2011**

Ed Biddle

Cheryl May

Ken Sorrels

Dr. Robert Boyd

Jim Monteith - Chairman

Territorial Titles of the Scottish Nobility

<u>Territorial Title</u>	<u>Family Name</u>
Duke of Albany	Stewart
Earl of Angus	Douglas
Duke of Argyll	Campbell
Earl of Arran	Hamilton
Duke of Atholl	Murray
Earl of Atholl	Stewart
Earl of Balcarres	Lindsay
Lord Balermino	Elphinstone
Lord Belhaven	Hamilton
Earl of Bothwell	Hepburn
Earl of Breadalbane	Campbell
Duke of Buccleuch	Scott
Earl of Bute	Stuart
Earl of Caithness	Sinclair
Earl of Cassillis	Kennedy
Duke of Chatelherault	Hamilton
Earl of Crawford	Lindsay
Earl of Cromarty	Mackenzie
Viscount Dundee	Graham
Earl of Eglinton	Montgomery
Earl of Errol	Hay
Lord Glamis	Lyon
Earl of Glencairn	Cunningham
Earl of Gowrie	Ruthven
Earl of Huntly	Gordon
Lord Innermeath	Stewart
Earl of Islay	Campbell
Duke of Lauderdale	Maitland
Earl of Lennox	Stewart
Earl of Leven	Leslie
Lord Lorne	Campbell
Earl of Lothian	Kerr
Earl of Loudon	Campbell
Lord Lovat	Fraser
Earl of Mar	Erskine
Earl of Marchmont	Hume
Earl Marischal	Keith
Earl of Melfort	Drummond
Earl of Melville	Leslie
Earl of Menteith	Graham
Lord Methven	Stewart
Duke of Montrose	Graham
Earl of Moray	Stewart
Earl of Morton	Douglas
Lord Ochiltree	Stewart
Earl of Perth	Drummond
Earl of Queensferry	Douglas
Earl of Rothes	Leslie
Duke of Roxburgh	Kerr
Earl of Seafield	Ogilvie
Earl of Seaforth	Mackenzie
Earl of Stair	Dalrymple
Earl of Sutherland	Gordon
Viscount Tarbat	Mackenzie
Earl of Tweeddale	Hay
Lord Yester	Hay

Vikings in Scotland

(From the Viking Answer Lady website)

Scotland was the site of the first recorded Viking raid when, in 793 AD, the monastery at Lindisfarne was sacked, with Iona and the Isle of Skye being attacked the next year. The Celtic impulse to hermitage and monasticism combined left a string of vulnerable churches and monastic communities on the coastlines, making for easy access for Viking raiders.

The archaeological evidence for the Vikings in Scotland is overwhelmingly rural. The Norse in Scotland, as elsewhere in the Norse Atlantic, came to settle, to live and farm in an environment that was very similar to that of their homes in Scandinavia. In 893 AD the Danes waged a major offensive in Scotland in which "the flower of the Pictish nobility was destroyed". This attack allowed Kenneth mac Alpin, king of Scottish Dalriada, to unify the remaining Scots and Pictish peoples. Thereafter, Halfdan broke away from the Great Danish Army to attack eastern Scotland. Viking raiders based in the Orkneys raided into Moray Firth. By 900 Vikings had captured the fortress of Dunottar, south of Aberdeen, while in the west hybrid Celto-Norse warbands mounted assault which contemporary chroniclers state were more bloodthirsty and damaging than even the Vikings themselves.

Southwestern Scotland was devastated by Ólafr and Augísl from Ireland: in 870 they successfully besieged Dumbarton, leaving with a heavy cargo of slaves and looted goods, an attack which is recorded in both the Irish and Welsh annals. Some scholars believe that this was an abortive attempt to set up a center of commerce to rival Viking Dublin.

The densest settlements of Vikings occurred around Caithness, with Strathoykel as the southern frontier. Current archaeological investigations are turning up exciting finds around Caithness, and at the site at the Udal in North Uist.

Just as things were looking bleakest for the Scots, King Constantine mac Aed (900-943 AD) arose and was able to beat back Vikings and Anglo-Scandinavians from Northumbria and the Danelaw alike. Apparently Constantine used every tool of diplomacy, including intermarriages through outright red-handed war in his effort to keep his lands and to hold back the Viking tide, and even expanded his kingdom southwards when the Vikings weakened his Anglo-Saxon neighbors to the south. In the process of doing so the ethnically diverse Scottish peoples began for the first time to have a national identity.

By the mid 10th century, the Viking victories were few and far apart. The Scots successfully destroyed a Viking summer raiding party, after which the name "Somerled" or "Sorley" came to be popular in commemoration of the victory.

On Christmas 986, a vicious Viking raid resulted in the deaths of 15 monks on Iona, however a year later the men of Dalriada took vengeance on the Viking raider-chieftain Godfrey mac Harald, known as *ri Innse Gall* ("king of the Islands of the Foreigners").

In the North, the men of Moray continued to stand fast against raiders from the Orkneys, until the Earl of Orkney, Jarl Sigurðr *digr* ("the stout") Hlodvisson was killed in 1014 at the Battle of Clontarf, marking the end of the Viking Age in the Celtic World.



Don't forget the next Heather and Thistle Society meeting will be on March 29, 2010 at 7:30pm at The Black Labrador Pub in the Churchill Room located at 4100 Montrose, Houston, Tx.

Heather & Thistle Society Statement And Membership Information

The Heather and Thistle Society was founded in 1953 by Scots living in Houston who wished to “cultivate an interest in and fond recollections of Scotland, its history and traditions, its literature and ideals, its minstrelsy and song, its customs and amusements, and to provide opportunities for good fellowship and social contact through typically Scottish functions, so that the blessing of our Scottish culture may never die in our new homeland”.

The Heather and Thistle Society will meet numerous times during the year from September through June. The Executive Committee will be meeting regularly to handle the business matters of the Society. Member meetings will now be in the form of social events held at different venues around Houston. The annual Christmas Party meeting will be held at the St. Thomas Episcopal School in the Ingram Room at 4900 Jackwood, Houston, Texas 77096. Our annual general membership will be held in March, when officers of the Society are elected.

The Heather and Thistle Society has for 57 years held a grand annual Robert Burn’s Supper and Ball in late January of each year. We are an organization that promotes our Scottish heritage, in various ways.

The Heather and Thistle Society’s monthly newsletter, “The Houston Scot” is published from September through June. Original articles, information about Scottish or related events are welcome and should be sent to the editor, Jim Monteith, at 15703 Mound Road, Hockley, Texas 77447 or 936-931-2588.

Membership in the Heather and Thistle Society is open to all with an interest in Scottish heritage and culture. Annual dues are \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family membership. Applications for membership may be obtained from our website or contact Dr. Walter May at 713-983-8866.

<http://heatherandthistle.org/documents/membership.doc>

Dues are due at the beginning of the fiscal year, March 1. Completed applications and membership fees should be mailed to:

**Dr. Walter May
6143 Sienna Arbor Lane
Houston, Texas 77041-6038**

The Heather and Thistle Society
Newsletter Editor
15703 Mound Road
Hockley, Texas 77447