



# The Spectator

The Quarterly Newsletter of Saint Andrew's Society of Williamsburg

Winter 2006/2007

## From the President

Lads and Lassies,

Our St. Andrew's Society of Williamsburg is an integral part of the Scottish Community in Williamsburg and throughout Virginia's Historic Triangle. It is difficult for me to realize that nearly forty years have passed since that day in the spring of 1968 that we met in the board room of the old Peninsula Bank to formally found the society. In the years that have followed we have grown in size, but more importantly, in being recognized as the voice of the Scottish community in our area.

Two thousand six was a watershed year for the society. Although we have had women as Honorary Members of the society for years, at the 2006 Annual General Meeting our membership voted to admit women to our organization as regular members for the first time. This action offers the potential of having couples join the society and gives added impetus to exploring how the society can promote Scottish heritage and culture to the greater community.

Unfortunately, over the years the society ran the risk of stagnating, of losing a sense of direction and vision. Your board has accepted the challenge and a commitment to an aggressive agenda that will reinvigorate and reenergize our beloved society. At the January Board meeting your directors began to explore changes that will insure that the society remains a vibrant organization. The key element is the increased involvement of the general membership in the planning and decision making process for our activities and events. Further, we are examining the addition of activities to increase



participation and improve camaraderie and solidarity among the membership. In future issues of the newsletter I will explain these exciting initiatives and our endeavors to energetically work toward achieving the plan. We are all dedicated to accomplish something of critical importance - that our Scottish identity and the heritage and culture of the Scots remain relevant to the generations that will succeed us.

Yours Aye,

Howard S. Topp  
*Clan Sutherland*

### **Christmas Luncheon**

On December 6, the St. Andrew's Society of Williamsburg gathered at the Pints and Pipes Pub for the Christmas Luncheon and a slide show from Jim and Joyce White on recent trips to Scotland. This was a very enjoyable gathering and attendance was way up. The Pints and Pies buffet meal of perfectly cooked roast beef, potatoes, veggies and hot apple pie with ice cream was truly mouth-watering. After the meal, Joyce White narrated a fascinating slide show about her trip to Argyll with Jim in 2004 and more recently, researching the mysterious historical presence of the Knights Templar in the area. They found Templar and Freemason stone carvings littering the countryside, and visited Rosslyn Chapel as well, a well-known center of Templar activity. This is an intriguing subject. For more info, see Joyce's article on the 2004 trip in the Summer 2004 Spectator (still on-line).



The Lassies,  
bless 'em!



**SAS fills up the Pints and Pipes for the Christmas Luncheon**





**Joyce White relates her adventures on the trail of the Knights Templar.**

### **Burns Night**

On January 20 Saint Andrew's Society of Williamsburg sponsored the Burns Night dinner at the Williamsburg Country Club. The gathering, a yearly celebration of the life and works of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns, was a rousing success. The evening included the presentation of the haggis, plenty of stirring bagpiping by Williamsburg Pipes and Drums, a hearty dinner, and toasts to the President, the Queen, the lassies, and the laddies. Lynette Fitch Brass gave a slide presentation on The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns. Ken Garrison was voted Scot of the Year as new members and new officers were welcomed. Three of the new members were women, following a recent decision to welcome the fair sex to the society. Outgoing President Taylor Fraser welcomed his successor Howard Topp. This was an outstandingly fun Burns Night. Thanks are due to Bob Davis and everyone else who helped organize it. This was a great start for 2007! Saint Andrew's

Society faces the new year with optimism and hope, and welcomes more new members.



**Byron Adams addresses the haggis prior to dismembering it. This is an old Scottish ceremony. It is not considered polite to ask about the ingredients of the haggis. Suffice it to say that if there was anything good to eat in a Scottish household it was normally consumed prior to preparation of the haggis.**



**Paying the Piper: Saint Andrew's Society outgoing President Taylor Fraser presents pipe Major Kevin MacIntosh with a wee dram of spirits. Drinking is another old Scottish custom, but is not limited to wee drams.**



**Scottish lassie Lynette Fitch Brass commemorates Robert Burns' life with The Immortal Memory.**



**Newly installed Saint Andrew's Society of Williamsburg President Howard Topp addresses the gathering.**



**Burns Night guests wore their highland finery to honor Robert Burns**



**The lassies won't leave the man alone! Everywhere Wil Phillips goes, his groupies follow.**



**Jack Kane discovers that too much white wine has an unpredictable effect on the lassies. Jamie Griffin photo.**



## **To the Lassies and Laddies**

Newly installed SAS President Howard Topp recited this poem during Burns Night in honor of our darling lassies:

### **To the Lassies**

Lads, here's to our lasses  
 In pretty dress and tartan sashes.  
 Tonight, we gather in our own highland attire.  
 To honor lassies ... who set Burns a-fire

(Sotto voce aside:) And still tonight, they fan our flames!

They teach us etiquette; they teach us class,  
 For many of us, that's a challenge, alas.  
 They put up with our habits, and we have all sorts,  
 Such as control of the remote and our preoccupation with sports.

They want to talk and express what they're feeling,  
 Which baffles us and causes our senses to go reeling.  
 We are concerned with important things! hard to explain!  
 The trials and agonies of life! ... The Redskins lost again!

They provide us with a nicely ironed shirt,  
 a neatly pressed kilt for the trip to the kirk,  
 and freshly washed socks and shorts,  
 Ah, they really are such good sports!

And they're always there by our side,  
 Partners ... Not just along for the ride.  
 So, lads, if you please,  
 Don't get down on your knees.

But stand tall and raise your glasses,  
 and join with me in a toast to our bonnie Lasses!

(Pause) To the Lassies!

In return, Carolyn Topp responded with a tribute to the laddies:

**Response: A toast to the Laddies**

**A toast to the Laddies is fitting indeed.  
Oh they truly are a handsome breed.**

**See them here in their bright kilts and trews,  
Prince Charlies, plaids, and shiny skein dubhs.**

**Is there any doubt they've descended from noble men of yore?  
Like Rob Roy and The Bruce, they're brave to the core.**

**What's the source of this strength - Is it vitamins? Champagne?  
Nay - it must be pure Scotch that runs through their veins.**

**Nowhere could you find such men who excel  
At talking and eating and napping so well.**

**Their accomplishments merit much adoration  
But, what they're really best at ...is procrastination.**

**But let us not sell our laddies up short.  
They do noble deeds of many a sort**

**Like cooking, and cleaning and feeding the cat  
A man's a man for all that.**

**They put up with our moods, hair dos, our diet attempts,  
Why these men that we know are really fine gents.**

**So, Ladies...to husbands, uncles, grandpas, and dads.  
A hearty toast to St. Andrew's braw Scot's lads.**

**To the Lads!**

**The Scottish Banner Now On-line!**

Those of you who subscribe to The Scottish Banner have learned by now that the Banner is advertising a new and updated website at [www.scottishbanner.com](http://www.scottishbanner.com). It's worth a look. Your editor has found the Banner to be a reliable monthly source of news about Scotland.



**Howard Topp**

### **Our New President**

Howard Topp is no stranger to veteran members of St. Andrew's Society. This will be his fourth term as President, having served previous terms in 1975, 1984 and 1985. Howard was one of the founders of St. Andrew's Society of Williamsburg in 1968. He was also a founder of the Clan Sutherland Society of North America and the Williamsburg Scottish Festival. In addition, he was a charter member of the Scottish American Military Society. He served two terms as President of the Clan Sutherland Society of North America and seven terms as President of the Williamsburg Scottish Festival. Howard has been active in Scottish-American activities since college days at the University of Michigan in the late 1950's.

Howard received a BA in History from the University of Michigan and a MEd in Education Administration from the College of William & Mary. In addition, he is a graduate of the Army's Command & General Staff College as well as a number of professional development and transportation courses at the U.S. Army Transportation School.

Howard retired in 2001. He is a retired civil servant and Army officer, with a total service of more than forty years in the field of Army transportation. He served twenty-eight years in the active Army and Army Reserve, retiring as a Transportation Corps lieutenant colonel and culminated his civilian service at the Army Transportation School. At the latter, he was a Course Manager and Senior Instructor for a series of courses on force projection, strategic deployment, and mobilization procedures. In 2001 he was selected as “A Distinguished Member of the Regiment” by the Transportation Corps Regimental Association and awarded the “Ancient Military Order of St. Christopher” in recognition of that service.

Mr. Topp is married to Carolyn Ann Gill Topp, formerly of Beaumont, Texas. The couple has three children, Eric M. Topp and wife Susan, of State College, PA; Heather L. Fritz (Derek) of St. Augustine, FL, Andrew S. Topp (Stacie) of Raleigh, NC, and six Grandchildren. He enjoys restoring and enjoying vintage automobiles, particularly his: 1957 Austin-Healey 100-6 sports car and '71 Pontiac Lemans Sport convertible. He has owned the Pontiac since he purchased it as a new car. His other hobbies are playing guitar and enjoying his grandchildren

### **Caledonian Foundation**

SAS member Byron Adams, who is a trustee of the Caledonian Foundation, advises us that the Foundation wishes to publicize its activities and is looking for new members. The organization is focused on promoting all aspects of Scottish culture. Please take a look at their website which is well organized and very informative: <http://www.caledonianfoundationusa.org/>



The Caledonian Foundation USA was incorporated under New York State law on March 15, 1976, as a nonprofit organization for the purpose of building support in the United States for Scottish Opera and the Theatre Royal in Glasgow.

Broadly stated, its purpose is to preserve and strengthen the traditional bonds between Scotland, Canada, and the United States. Its specific purpose, as stated in its charter, is "...to preserve and promote the music, arts and culture of Scotland, to educate the public in this regard, to disseminate information about Scottish music and performers in the United States and Scotland, and to furnish financial support for (a) opera houses, theatre and concert halls, music schools and centers, for the performance of music in Scotland; (b) Scottish music companies and singers in the United States and Scotland; and (c)

Scottish students studying music in the United States and American students studying music in Scotland."

The Foundation has supported, through the dissemination of information and through grants, the following Scottish Opera and the Theatre Royal in Glasgow, Balnain House in Inverness, the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, The College of Piping and Celtic Performing Arts, Prince Edward Island, Canada, North Lands Creative Glass - Lybster, Scotland.

All persons who are interested in Scotland, its culture and its heritage, are invited to become contributors to the Foundation. Contributors receive "Caledonian News," advance information regarding trips to Scotland; are invited to special events in this country and abroad; and receive preferred rates and preferred seating at Scottish Opera and at other performances and special events.

All contributions are fully tax-deductible and are applied directly to the Foundation's projects. The board of trustees and advisory council are all volunteers. The Foundation is a nonprofit corporation and has been ruled to be exempt from Federal Income Tax under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **John Paul Jones Cottage**

And here's another worthy cause: John Paul Jones, the Scottish-born American Naval hero who carved his name into history with his courage and determination. Jones once said "I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast, for I intend to go in harm's way." In 1779 while commanding the Bonhomme Richard in the midst of a bloody fight with the British man'o' war Serapis, Jones was asked if he intended to surrender and he responded "I have not yet begun to fight!" He fought on to victory and later became known as the Father of the American Navy. Jones' history is fascinating and is briefly summarized in

<http://www.jpj.demon.co.uk/jpjlife.htm> This is the website of the John Paul Jones Cottage, his birthplace in the Arbigland Estate, southwest Scotland. It has been restored and turned into a small museum in honor of Jones, but this historical cottage is running low on funds and needs donations. The trustees write: 'In order to protect this achievement for the future the trustees are now seeking to establish funds which will guarantee an income to offset the annual running costs and ensure the long term preservation of the cottage. These annual financial commitments are modest but unfortunately they presently exceed the income derived from visitors and other fundraising activities.'

Please see the above site for details on how to donate to the cottage.



The cottage

John Paul Jones, American Hero

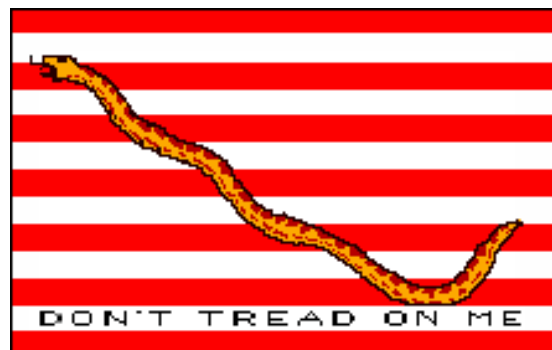


Photo credit: [www.navysna.org](http://www.navysna.org)

## **The English Are At It Again**

Good Lord, what's next? First they abolish all Scotland's historical regiments, and now the UK Government is forcing Scottish soldiers in the one surviving regiment to share kilts! Next thing you know, they'll be making the troops wear underwear. Hopefully they won't have to share the underwear. Here's the article, courtesy of Howard Topp.

### **Scottish Troops Must Share Scarce Kilts (AP News)**

By Ben McConville, Mon Dec 18, 2:08 PM

LONDON - Great Scot! A shortage of ceremonial kilts could leave thousands of soldiers without a stitch of plaid to wear as they parade to the skirl of the bagpipes. Military officials said Monday that more than 5,000 Scottish soldiers are having to share their kilts because defense chiefs have not finalized a contract to buy enough of the garments to go around. The men, who face regular tours of duty in south Iraq and Afghanistan, have just 320 kilts, or one for every 15 soldiers. Combat troops wore the traditional Highland garb in battle as late as World War I, but now the plaid kilts are used in ceremonial uniform. New kilts are needed for all Scottish soldiers following the August 2006 merger of centuries-old regiments into a single Royal Regiment of Scotland.



**Scottish troops in Ceremonial uniform (AP photo)**

## The Royal Regiment of Scotland



And what about this new 'Royal Regiment of Scotland' which became active on March 28, 2006? What are the facts? Here's information on that subject taken directly from 'answers.com.' Our thanks to the source.

**'The Royal Regiment of Scotland'** is the senior line infantry regiment and only Scottish regiment of the British Army infantry. It consists of five regular battalions, each formerly an individual regiment (with the exception of one battalion, which will be a merger of two regiments), and two battalions of the Territorial Army. However, it is expected that each battalion will be allowed to maintain its former regimental pipes and drums to carry on their regimental traditions.

As part of restructuring in the British Army, the Royal Regiment of Scotland's creation was announced by the Secretary of State for Defence Geoff Hoon in the House of Commons on 16 December 2004, after the merger of several regiments was outlined in a defence white paper several months earlier.

The regiment consists of a total of five battalions: one of these was formed by the amalgamation of the Royal Scots and King's Own Scottish Borderers, while the others are each formed from one of the remaining Scottish regiments. Of all of the new regiments formed following the announcement of 16 December 2004, the Royal Regiment of Scotland is the only one where the former regimental titles have been retained with the new battalion designations as subtitles .... There is however a common badge for regimental staff, but distinctions such as the historical badges and hackles will be retained by the battalions.

The creation of large regiments through the merger of long established units has affected most of the British Army over the past thirty years. The process has until now impacted mainly on English, Welsh and Northern Irish regiments. The creation of the Royal Regiment of Scotland has encountered



considerable opposition amongst both former soldiers and Scottish nationalist groups. It has been argued that the establishment of large regiments elsewhere in the British Army has quickly led to a loss of separate identity amongst the constituent battalions as personnel are posted back and forward. The new regiment is a kilted one and there are concerns that the much older Lowland units (who wore trews) will effectively disappear into a Highland ethos. The Ministry of Defence case that change was necessary to enhance professional efficiency, to improve conditions of service and to resolve recruiting and retention problems among some Scottish units appears to have been accepted by the majority of serving personnel. The insistence in some quarters that the Scottish regiments must be treated as a special case has not won wide support amongst the army at large.

The amalgamation remains an emotional one however because of the symbolic loss of the individual regiments' history and status. An organization called Save the Scottish Regiments was created to campaign against the plan, and the influential newspaper *The Scotsman* also opposed it.'

**For further information please see <http://www.answers.com/topic/the-royal-regiment-of-scotland>**

### **The Scottish Regiments, by Patrick Mileham**



As noted before, this is a truly fascinating book. Today we look at the Gordon Highlanders. They were formed in 1881 when the 75<sup>th</sup> Stirlingshire Regiment and the 92<sup>nd</sup> Gordon Highlanders were amalgamated and became the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions.

The 75<sup>th</sup> was formed in 1787 at Stirling and served in India gallantly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mysore Wars. Further bloody adventures followed against revolting Indian forces with the 75<sup>th</sup> participating in astonishing bayonet charges and, at one point, losing half its numbers in casualties. The 75<sup>th</sup> later served in South

Africa and returned to India for the Mutiny, where it underwent hair-raising adventures against the mutineers.

The 92<sup>nd</sup> was formed in 1794 by the Duke of Gordon. It fought in Holland and in 1800 landed in Egypt to successfully battle the French. It later fought in Denmark and then engaged the French again in Spain. In 1815 the 92<sup>nd</sup> marched with Wellington against Napoleon, and a gallant charge by the 92<sup>nd</sup> contributed to the general French retreat at Waterloo. In 1878 the 92<sup>nd</sup> captured Kabul. In 1881 they suffered a serious defeat by Boer sharpshooters in South Africa.

After amalgamation in 1881 the Gordon Highlanders fought in Egypt, the Sudan, the Northwest Frontier and South Africa. Mr. Mileham gives great detail on the campaigns they fought and the gallantry displayed in this series of colonial wars. In 1914 the Gordon Highlanders marched into the cauldron of World War I, participating in seemingly never-ending attacks against the German enemy.

The 'war to end all wars' led not to world peace but to World War II. In 1939 the Gordon Highlanders joined the British Expeditionary Force in France and soon faced retreat, evacuation to Dunkirk and surrender as the Germans rapidly conquered Europe. Further Gordon units were overrun by the Japanese during the attack on Singapore and forced to surrender. The Gordons struck back in 1942 during the Battle of El Alamein in North Africa, where Rommel's advance was first checked. Gordon units also participated in the invasion of Europe at Normandy on June 4, 1944, and carried on until the Third Reich surrendered unconditionally.

The Scottish Regiments is highly recommended. The book's website: [www.spellmount.com](http://www.spellmount.com)

**A Gordon Highlander on picket duty during the Second Afghan War of 1878-80 (right). From *The Scottish Regiments*.**





**July 1916: Gordon Highlanders preparing to march into Hell during the Somme Offensive. Source: The Scottish Regiments.**



# Saint Andrew's Society of Williamsburg

## Application for Membership

PO Box 533, Williamsburg VA 23187

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Schools/Colleges: \_\_\_\_\_

Business or Profession: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and Ages of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Years at Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Legacy Application? Yes or No \_\_\_\_\_

(A Legacy member is the son/grandson or daughter/granddaughter of an active member in good standing or of a deceased former member, who is age eighteen through twenty-one. Admission fees are waived for Legacy Members; however annual dues are required.)

If Yes, Father/Mother or Grandfather/Grandmother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Membership in Other Professional or Social Organizations: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Scottish Family Connections (documentation not required): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any Visits to Scotland – Frequency and Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

General Scottish Interests – (History, Literature, Arts etc): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clan Association(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Membership in Clan Organization or Other Scottish Society: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What tartan(s) do you wear? \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

To the best of our knowledge, the above applicant is of sound character and is entirely suitable to membership in the Society. Applicant will actively participate in the functions of the Society as circumstances allow and will perform conscientiously any duties undertaken.

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Checklist**

Initiation and First Year's Dues (\$60.00) \_\_\_\_\_

Small Photograph suitable for digitization \_\_\_\_\_

Current local address and telephone number included \_\_\_\_\_

Verification of Legacy Member Eligibility \_\_\_\_\_