

**St. Andrews Society of NW Michigan**  
**“Northern Thistle”**  
**March 2015**



**Coming Up! Sun, April 12 – Potluck, Traverse Hills Clubhouse. Doors open @ 5:30; potluck @ 6. Country Dancing, Scottish book sale, live music and Scottish humor in a *very* comfortable setting! ☺**

**Saturday, June 27 – Gaylord Highland Games**

**AND then . . . Sunday, August 23 – SAS Annual Picnic & Family Highland Games, Silver Lake Recreation Area; 1-4 pm**

It may be more than 3000 miles to Scotland, but there are ways of feeling closer to the old country and experience some of the things that make it so special. So, to think Scottish, here are five things to remind you of Scotland.

1. Grand Traverse Pipes and Drums. You don't need to be told how good they are or what awards they've won; if you live in Northern Michigan you already know. Definitely a treasure. Check out more information at [www.grandtraversepipesanddrums.org](http://www.grandtraversepipesanddrums.org)
2. Traditional Music. I never knew how many opportunities there would be to hear some wonderful traditional Celtic music in Northern Michigan when we moved up north. Whether Scottish, Irish or American groups playing the music, you're sure to hear fine musicians who will get your toes tapping, hands clapping, and out of your seat. If you like Bluegrass, remember where it came from--it's based on Appalachian music that migrated from Scotland and Ireland. We have attended concerts from Cheboygan to Harbor Springs, Northport to Elberta, and Traverse City to Mount Pleasant.

For short notice of events, check out Northern Express. Better yet, get on the email list from [www.MyNorthTickets.com](http://www.MyNorthTickets.com) And watch for announcements from Seamus Shinnars (Connemara Concerts) who promotes a lot of great concerts.



3. The quality of music from the Celtic lands is matched by the quality of the spirits and the beers. When I migrated to this country, it was difficult to get a good beer, and periodic trips were made to Canada for Newcastle Brown Ale. Happily those days are gone and all the craft breweries are producing great brews. The variety is tremendous – not just the heavier, delicately sweet beers from the old countries. And the bars that serve the quality beers are more likely to be places where you can hear good music.

4. Scotland has a lot of industrial areas and cities but it has much more wide open and undeveloped land.

It's good to get out in the country, in the hills or by the lochs, and Northern Michigan provides great opportunities, whether for picnics by a lake or on a beach, a hike through the woods or over the hills. So once the weather gets a wee bit better, get outside and enjoy yourselves. And Lake Michigan in summer is warmer than the ocean waters off the Scottish coast.

5. You have listened to music, had a beer, hiked through the woods and it is time for some food. Can you get anything closely Scottish? Let's ask a different question, since the quality of Scottish cuisine has often been put alongside English cuisine in not being exactly exciting. First, how about a Cornish pastie at Cousin Jenny's in Traverse City? You may find other places to buy pasties on your travels. Now, there's not much more genuinely Scottish than Fish and Chips, and most restaurants can meet your needs, especially on a Friday evening. Try Scalawags for a nice variety. Next option is to go up to Little Traverse Inn on M-22 just north of Maple City. Innkeeper Graeme Laesk may be wearing his kilt and might even sing a Scottish song. He has a menu with several very good Scottish dishes.

Lastly, but not inexpensively, the Thistle Pub at Crystal Mountain has very nice food served in a Scottish décor pub. The real treat there is the traditional Scottish music that is piped into the bathrooms. And to end, if you are really feeling Scottish, top your meal with a nice sweet dessert, whether pie or cake.

Then you will know you are really being Scottish.

Alan McColl, Cadillac

**From the Lyman Williams Collection of Bagpipe Jokes:** How can you tell if a bagpipe is out of tune? Someone is blowing into it. 😊

## GRAND TRAVERSE PIPES & DRUMS SCHEDULE:

Saturday, May 9 – Mesick Mushroom Festival Parade

Sunday, May 17 – NMC Barbecue

Sunday, June 14 – Mackinac Island Lilac Festival

Thursday, August 6 – Outdoor concert at the GT Pavilions

**Something of Interest:** The Detroit Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will host a 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary dance on Nov 21 in Troy. Need to come down to visit people or Christmas shop? Jot the date—it's the Saturday *before* Thanksgiving. A swell *Scottish* evening is guaranteed. After a sit-down dinner with haggis, there will be Highland Dancers, bagpipes, Scottish Country Dancing, *and* ceilidh dances for everyone. (The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary drew 141 people!) Coincidentally, the annual Scottish Sunday service at Detroit's historic Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church is the next morning.

### 2015 Officers & Committees:

<b>President</b>	<b>Jim Mills</b>	<a href="mailto:jmills@mhc.net">jmills@mhc.net</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Alan McColl</b>	<a href="mailto:amccoll@charter.net">amccoll@charter.net</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Clyde Buchanan</b>	<a href="mailto:bag1piper@gmail.com">bag1piper@gmail.com</a>
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The SASNM is a non-profit organization. Membership is \$20 per household. Please send checks to PO Box 2303, Traverse City 49685.