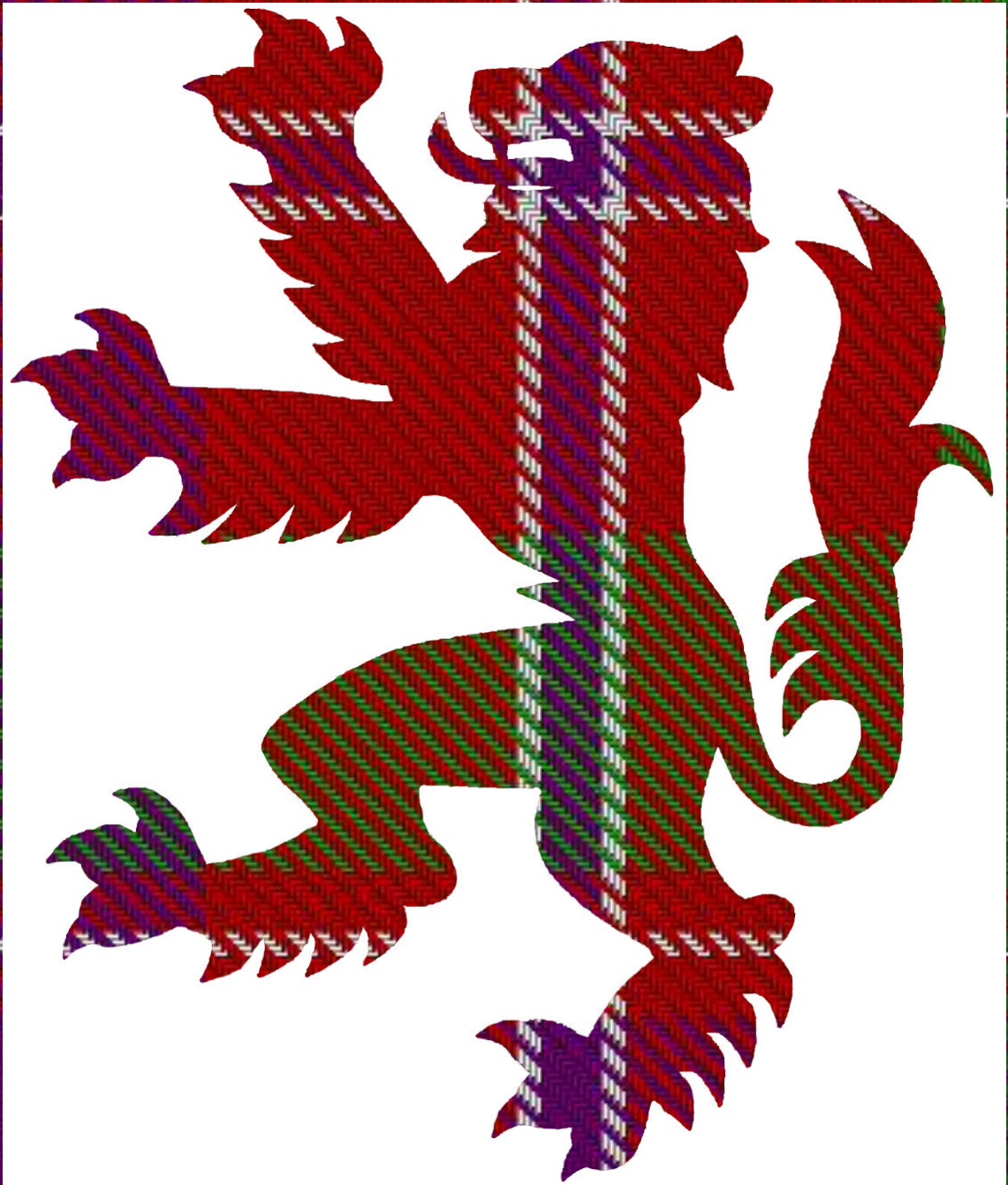


The Tartan Times
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Editor's Introduction

Youth/Movement

In addition to navigating a pandemic, climate change, the nematodes that are killing the beech trees at Pinewoods, and cultural shifts of many kinds, the Boston Branch is navigating generational change. In our last issue, we celebrated seventy-one years of Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, hearing mostly from long-time campers. In this issue, we seek to highlight how the next generation (or two) is discovering Scottish country dancing and embracing the SCD community.

One avenue is ESCape Sessions at Pinewoods, younger sibling to Pinewoods Scottish Sessions. ESCape offers English, Scottish, and Contra dancing and has demonstrated a strong appeal to newer dancers. Emily Flesher's article recounts how the supportive teaching and community spirit at ESCape helped her dance with pleasure and pride. (An article in the winter issue of the *TT* by a member of this year's ESCape Committee will explore their efforts and success from the organizers' perspective.) Charismatic local teachers and weekly classes also play a key role in attracting younger dancers. Lydia McGinn reports her delight in finding the Wee Bluets class in Salem after graduating from college and relocating to Massachusetts.

With generational change in mind, Executive Committee and the co-Chairs eliminated the minimum age for Pinewoods Scottish Sessions and instituted a policy of "dancers of any age" at the discretion of the Co-Chairs. While a few unexpected challenges ensued, the key result was a vibrant cohort of self-described "Youths," whose energy was infectious and who contributed an clever musical parody to the Session II ceilidh ("What Shall We Do with a Drowsy Dancer?"). The Youths clearly discovered that "third space" that Adrian Velonis writes about in his article on the Youth Weekend Away program that he transferred from the UK to the USA. Adrian stresses the need for personal persuasion—an "elevator pitch" that can ignite interest in new dancers and (where necessary) alleviate any parental concerns. His article is a wonderful prelude to the Youth Weekend Away's first Boston happening, October 4-6 (see <https://rscds-youth.org/weekend-away/>).

Generational change means goodbyes as well as hellos. Young folk get new jobs and move on to dance in distant cities; Emma now dances in Washington, D.C. Beloved friends leave us altogether. Martin Mulligan's untimely death, just three months after his retirement, cut short the activities as dancer, teacher, and friend. On this sad news, many Branch members were moved to share memories of Martin. Robert McOwen collected them for us and for Martin's family. We include substantial excerpts here as yet more evidence of the affection and fellowship fostered by "moving together in time" - and to music.

It is also a reminder that the baton will be passed to the next generation. As far as we can tell, it will be in good hands.

Your Editors,
Linda McJannet & Nikki Lauranzano

Learning Scottish at ESCape

Emma Flesher

The first time I tried Scottish dancing was during ESCape week at Pinewoods in 2023. Before ESCape, I had been contra dancing for about six months, and I did my first Scottish dance on the first night at ESCape. My main memory of the dance itself is the overwhelming relief I felt when it was over. For me, it was not love at first sight, or rather, at first dance.

I wanted to learn Scottish dancing because the people who did it seemed to really love it. So, I attended the Scottish Technique class taught by Kat Dutton every day. This class was essential for me; I really needed someone to patiently guide me through the footwork and figures. By the end of the week, I had gotten through multiple dances with some level of success. After ESCape, I knew that Scottish would be something I'd continue to pursue. However, between summer travels, a broken toe in the autumn, and the holidays, I didn't return until February.

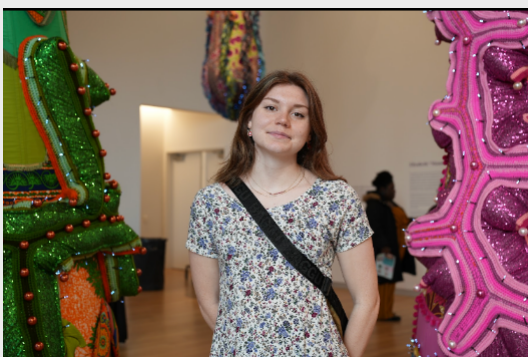
My friend Chloe Levine and I made a New Year's resolution to improve at SCD. We began attending Monday night dances, where the more experienced dancers were incredibly kind, patient, and friendly. Having Chloe as a friend and fellow dancer was such a gift; it kept me accountable and motivated.

Honestly, learning Scottish dancing was hard for me. I don't have a strong dance background and I didn't really dance at all until about two years ago. The steps, footwork, and figures were difficult, and in the beginning, I felt like I did everything wrong. Learning a new skill is always challenging, but I kept going to class and dancing. I wanted to improve. I knew I could do it; it was just a matter of putting in the hours.

The incredibly kind and patient experienced dancers made learning fun and easier. Also, talking to other new dancers was comforting, to share in the difficulties and successes. At the end of my first week at ESCape, I danced with Maxwell, another new Scottish dancer. We had both been attending the Technique class all week. We didn't do the dance perfectly, our footwork was far from flawless, but we successfully completed all the figures. In the end, I was so proud of us. We did the whole dance and had fun doing so!

This past year at ESCape was great! I felt much more confident dancing and asking questions. I met other new Scottish dancers and enjoyed swapping notes about what it was like to be new.

Even though I've since moved to D.C. and begun my new job at the Folger Shakespeare Library, I've already attended a Scottish dance in the D.C. area, in Arlington. The dancers there were incredibly welcoming, and I know I'll be back!



Emma Flesher is a 24-year-old professional based in Washington, D.C. She works at the Folger Shakespeare Library, supporting the Head Librarian. Outside of her work, Emma is an avid dancer, having enjoyed contra dancing for a year and a half, Scottish dancing for six months, and English dancing for about a year. When not dancing she enjoys a good book and a long run.

Sock-Slipping & Toe-Stepping

Lydia McGinn

I first heard about Hamilton College's Scottish Country Dancing Club from an e-mail my freshman year that promised it would "feel like being at a ball from the Keira Knightley version of *Pride and Prejudice*." The reality involved much more sock-slipping and toe-stepping than I remember seeing in the 2005 film. It was held in an upstairs all-purpose room in the gym instead of a formal estate, and the gender-roles were far less rigid. It was a completely joyful experience, and I couldn't wait to go back.

Throughout college, schedule conflicts and pandemic regulations meant I did not have as many chances to dance as I would have expected after that first meeting, but each time I was able to attend it was a wonderful way to meet people and come together. It was also the kind of workout where you're so busy having fun and thinking about where your feet go that you don't realize how much cardio you're doing until the final out-of-breath curtsy.

A year after graduating, having moved back to Massachusetts, I was unbelievably excited when I heard about the Wee Bluets Scottish Country Dancing group in Salem/Beverly. It had been long enough that I needed to re-learn most of the steps, but the group was incredibly welcoming to beginners. I loved the attitude that the group danced to be together, connect with cultural history and music, stay healthy, and above all to have fun! The live music added a whole other reason to keep returning each week.



*WeeBluets Salem Class of 2024
'Dress Up Night'*

Photo taken by Charles Liu

Dancing became a regular part of my routine, and I always looked forward to the chance to de-stress, learn something new, and dance! It was quite exciting the first time I realized I could dance Blue Bonnets without having to be pulled through the poussette by a more experience partner (though I am very grateful to the partners who have pulled me out of the way of many an on-coming promenade; I'm sure it will be necessary again).

I am so grateful to have found such a welcoming and joyful community of dancers, and I look forward to dancing with everyone again next fall!



Lydia McGinn is a preschool teacher on the North Shore. She holds a BA in Art History and French from Hamilton College. She's a big fan of board games, farmers' markets, hiking, and baking. She is a regular attendee at Wee Bluets dances in Beverly. What she lacks in skill on the dance floor she makes up for in sheer enthusiasm.

Yearn to Dance

Adrian Velonis

"The youths yearn to dance!" is pretty much my catchphrase now. I began Scottish country dancing as a student in the Delaware Valley in 2018; I was whisked away to Pinewoods not long after and fell in love with the tradition. Since then, I've had a lot of fun traveling to different cities to learn from teachers, listen to musicians, make new friends, and dance my heart out.

Everywhere I go, I see my generation searching for the same "third place" of a welcoming, closely-knit community that I found in SCD. There's latent energy there just waiting to be harnessed! Enabling more young people to discover (and return to) SCD is not only possible but inevitable - as long as we give them good opportunities to dance.

Two years ago I joined the RSCDS Youth Branch Committee with the dream to bring the group's fabled "Youth Weekends Away" across the pond to North America. These events, which take place in a different city every year, are designed to give young people up to 35 an opportunity to meet each other, form long-lasting friendships and connections in the SCD world...and work on their *pas de basque* a little. The Youth Branch also aims to highlight up-and-coming teachers and musicians.



2023 Youth Weekend Away, Evening Ball, Bryn Mawr
Photo credit: LilianaRokit

Last year, in Philadelphia, the Youth Branch held its first North American Weekend Away featuring Boston-area musician Elizabeth Anderson and teacher Kat Dutton, among others. I'll admit I was nervous it would be a disaster: I feared that people wouldn't sign up, they wouldn't want to travel, it would be too expensive, a meteor would strike the dance hall, etc. I started by inviting the students at Bryn Mawr and Haverford. Hoping to recruit curious newbies from a variety of dance backgrounds, I scheduled the YWA not to conflict with nearby Scottish, English, and Contra events and promoted it everywhere I could. Online publicity was useful in getting the word out: we emailed dozens of teachers in nearby (and not-so-nearby) branches. However, I found that in-person (and personalized) persuasion was by far the most effective recruitment method.

That meant developing a memorable elevator pitch to deliver to potential attendees at a moment's notice - knowing my audience, anticipating their reservations, and making them feel both comfortable and excited about the Youth Weekend—sometimes having met them less than five minutes ago. (For some of the dancers, that also meant giving a pitch to skeptical parents!) The assistance of local teachers was invaluable in persuading their students, many of whom hadn't traveled for dances before, to take a chance on this new event. I couldn't do it alone!



In the end, more than 30 young dancers assembled for the workshop and at least a dozen more joined for the ball - plus folks of all ages - and they had a stellar time. Rave reviews all-around. We had to do it again!

I'm thrilled to say that we are! This October 4-6, the YWA comes to Boston, MA with teachers Keira Hartstein and Margaret MacKenzie. Registrations have been coming in quickly as young dancers have no doubt been excitedly texting each other, "Hey! Are you going to the Youth Weekend, too?!"

But it's an event for everyone: the evening ball on October 5 is open to all ages, featuring amazing musicians Susie Petrov (piano/accordion), Sarah Lynn (fiddle), Elizabeth Anderson (fiddle), Ben Anderson (cello), and Nate Silva (pipes). I hope you'll join us for the Ball - the more the merrier!

For details, please see <https://rscds-youth.org> or email info@rscds-youth.org.

This kind of event doesn't happen by accident. The Youth Branch Committee does plenty, but what really enables these events is support from the wider community. The Boston SDCEA generously provided a large grant to the Youth Branch to help with some of the organizing costs, along with grants from the International Branch and the Teacher's Association of Canada. In addition, the Boston Branch has assisted with venue-finding, publicity, and on-the-ground helpers. This generosity makes all the difference, whether it's money, time, or brainpower. The Youth Branch intends to continue fostering youth Scottish country dancing with Weekends Away in the US and Canada every year. I look forward to dancing with you all in Boston in October - until then, strathspey away!



Adrian Velonis (he/him) is based in Philadelphia, PA, where he helps run a local SCD class downtown. His favorite SCD step is the strathspey setting. He was the 2023 TAC Bob Blackie Scholar in Halifax, NS, and makes it a mission to dance at the local class of every city he visits. He has passed Unit 1 of the teaching certificate and claims to have plans to finish the rest of it eventually. In his spare time, Adrian plays the cello, tries to speak French, and volunteers with a local pedestrian/bike infrastructure and traffic safety advocacy group.

Memories of Martin Mulligan

Collected by Robert McOwen

Martin Mulligan passed away on April 29 in Newfoundland, Canada on April 29, 2024 after a three month battle with cancer. Many members of the Boston Branch fondly remember Martin from the 1980's when he was a graduate student in Biochemistry at Harvard and an active member of the Branch's Demonstration team; he also got his RSCDS teaching certificate at that time, under the direction of Evelyn Murray and Isolde Lamont.

After getting his PhD, Martin held a Research Associate position at the University of Chicago, and became an active member of the Chicago Branch, and its demonstration team. In 1988 he moved to Newfoundland as an Assistant Professor at Memorial University in St. John's. Martin continued involvement with Scottish country dance, and helped St. John's become a branch of the RSCDS in 1991. Many people have fond memories to share.



Martin in Harvard Yard, 1981

From Judy Reynolds Shaw: *For Roger and me, I remember many long conversations late into the night talking about the challenges and delights of dancing and teaching Scottish Country Dancing. Especially, however, I remember Martin and Vivien working with a group of experienced dancers to learn the group of three dances by Hugh Foss called The Belhaven Medley. The medley consisted of a reel (128 bars), a strathspey (96 bars) and a jig (136 bars). We started at Pinewoods meeting every day after classes during the week (don't remember the year). For a variety of reasons, however, we realized we weren't ready to perform by the end of Camp. Ever persistent Martin and Vivien started again with some of the same people and some new ones in January. We worked through the winter and spring. We continued again at Pinewoods and finally were ready to perform all three dances with two short breaks at the end of Camp - one year later!*

From Elaine Brunken: *I first met Martin at Pinewoods in 1996, and over the years we often taught together at weekends, slowly building a friendship. I taught in Newfoundland in the early 2000s, and afterwards he was a great tour guide. We had lots of cups of tea (always a china cup and saucer, it does taste better!), and a few gin and tonics, as he showed me around Newfoundland. The highlights for me were of course Cape Spear, and for a very different reason, the mischievous smirk (not a grin a definite smirk!) on his face when we arrived in the town of Dildo. I wish I could find the picture.*

Martin did the best allemande I have ever experienced, despite our height difference. His arm and body position made it effortless, easy and comfortable. His poussette was right up there as well! He was a lovely, understated dancer, teacher and fabulous partner.

I will miss getting postcards from his various travels with his tiny, neat writing. I will miss getting his Christmas Card. I will miss HIM!



*Ellie Briscoe, Martin Mulligan, Elaine Brunken
Mendico, Woodlands Camp*

From Vickery Trinkaus-Randall: Martin was the type of friend that you just picked up where you last stopped speaking. We loved our professions in science and teaching at universities and also bemoaned them! Perhaps more importantly we also shared a love of dancing and always tried to catch a dance.

The last time I saw Martin was fall 2019 when he came to the remembrance for Gregor. Before that, Gregor and I had visited Martin in NF in 2017 where he kindly put us up for several days. This was a special trip that Martin helped design as I was trying to find my family's house near Trinity Bay called Randell cove and Martin spent a lot of time looking at our family tree and trying to find the right cove!

From Margaret Lepley: I remember watching that Belhaven demo at Pinewoods with awe! When I started learning SCD back in the early 80's, Martin was one of multiple excellent local dancers who I looked to as role models. For me as a newbie, it felt like he'd been around Boston for a long time and that everyone knew him! And even when he no longer lived here it felt a bit like a homecoming when he re-appeared.



Martin with the Demo Team



*Martin Mulligan & Chris Gallagher
Pawling Weekend 2014*

From Chris Gallagher: I met Martin when he began teaching at Pinewoods. I thought he was quite handsome and the most gorgeous dancer. I was terribly intimidated by him. That didn't stop me from asking him to dance occasionally. I distinctly remember him groaning one evening and saying, "Oh no, it's Petronella." We just naturally became friends over the years and I was very fond of him. He always asked Robert Davidson to say hello to me when Robert would call him on his birthday while at Pinewoods. I was always touched by that. He made a special trip to attend Roger Shaw's Memorial Service. There just happened to be a dance in Salem that evening. I talked him into going. I believe we danced the first and last dance and the final waltz. Special memories of a very special man.

From Mike & Vivien (Benning) Fritz:

Most of us knew Martin through Scottish country dancing but that was not his only interest. He was an English country dancer, a lover of opera – going to live operas whenever he got the chance during his travels, and an orienteer. Like dancing, orienteering was something he did before coming to Boston. He loved to run through the woods with a map and compass. In 1990, Mike and I traveled around Alberta & Saskatchewan, Canada, for two weeks with Martin competing in all the events in the Asian Pacific Orienteering Championships including a memorable hike around Lake Louise.

In 1997, Canada celebrated the 500th anniversary of John Cabot landing in Bonavista, Newfoundland. Martin and I were within an arm's length of Queen Elizabeth II as she walked past an honor guard of 60 Newfoundland dogs. We had co-opted him to handle one of those 60 Newfs, our dog, Moose. Mike and I had driven from Seattle WA, with our two Newfs, to be at this event and to visit Martin. We had a great time with him as showed us around St. John's and played golf with Mike (another hobby no one knew about).

That was the last time we saw him, but not our last contact. He traveled every year, I think it was usually in connection with a professional conference, to some wonderful places in the world sending out postcards along the way. And, he had a very subtle sense of humor – just a couple of years ago we received a large box at Christmas...the contents? A large, lighted moose ornament for our yard! He was a good friend, a very good friend, and he is sorely missed.



Newfoundland Workshop

From Evelyn Murray:

Martin Mulligan took his Preliminary and Full Teaching Certificates under Isolde and myself as joint tutors. The Boston Branch would have been the host both times. He was a very good student (obviously), passing first time for both exams.

Whilst dancing in the Branch classes he was a very popular and active member. He also danced with the demo team



Martin and Suzie, April 2002

From Suzie Kinsman:

When Martin moved from Chicago to Newfoundland in 1988, I drove across country with him to Boston. He and the Quarries were the Chicago teachers when I started dancing (couldn't ask for a better beginning!), and he was my first demo partner (I very much appreciated his firm/subtle encouragement). A kind friend, and a wonderful "just the right size" dance partner; he will be missed by so many.

From Mel Briscoe:

Martin and I were two of the "Munchkins" on the Branch demo team in the early 1980s. We had great fun together, sharing a similar sense of humor even though we sometime got dirty looks from Marianne Taylor. Dancing Belhaven was a highlight of that period; he was unrelenting his goal of seeing it done to perfection. We never got there, of course, but the journey was enjoyable.

Martin moved on to Chicago and then Newfoundland, but we got to teach together at some away weekends and renewed our friendship within seconds.

I wrote "Many Happy Returns" for his departure from Chicago and debuted it at the Chicago weekend....pointing out that that day was also Ellie's birthday, so it all had a lot of double meaning. A remarkable man; he will be missed.



*Ellie Briscoe & Mel Briscoe,
Elaine Brunken & Martin Mulligan &
Mendico, Woodlands Camp*

From Pat MacPherson:

I am writing from Pinewoods on the last morning of July 4th weekend. I am sharing Headington with Virginia VanScoy and Margaret Lepley! One cocktail hour we were reminiscing about our Scottish friends and often course, Martin's name came up. I remember him as an extraordinarily kind person, always cheerful, and because he was about my height, a wonderful partner with whom to dance, especially in an allemande, or two-hand turn. I was so impressed when he came to Roger Shaw's memorial service, all the way from Newfoundland, to Massachusetts - and when we exclaimed "Martin's here!" when he entered the church (and so inappropriately for us to exclaim so loudly - and when I say, "we" I am hiding the fact that it was ME that said it - in the quiet before the service), he said, of course, he came, as if anyone would make that long trek, because "It's Roger!!!".

I, of course, remember Martin and perhaps Vivian Benning?, leading us in Bellhaven. So well prepared, and so patient with everyone - I can just imagine he was a similarly excellent teacher to his students in St. Johns. At Martin's memorial service there, his colleagues said that when Martin was ill and knowing he would soon die, he set up scholarship funds for future students at the university. I thought, how like Martin to do that. We (Margaret, Virginia, and I) all remember Martin with great affection and sadness that he died.

Kudos For Ed Pearlman

In November, Ed Pearlman, virtuoso fiddler, teacher, and prolific writer about Scottish music and Scottish culture, will be inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame for his outstanding contributions to the preservation and richness of Scottish music.

Debuted at the Scots Trad Music Awards in December, 2005, the Hall of Fame adds members annually and honors “musicians and industry people who, by their dedication and hard work, have supported and influenced the development of Scottish traditional music during their lives”

Ed founded the Boston Scottish Fiddle club in 1981 and was its director until 1999. His columns for the magazine *Scottish Life* from 1996 to 2020 were collected and published as *MusicScapes of Scotland*, and, in the Spring, 2024, issue of the *Tartan Times*, Ed shared his knowledge of the history of Scottish music from “Prehistory to the Pandemic” in a masterful 600 words!

<https://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/hall-of-fame/edward-pearlman>

Congratulations to Ed for an honor well deserved! We are lucky to have such stars in our SCD community!

--The Editors

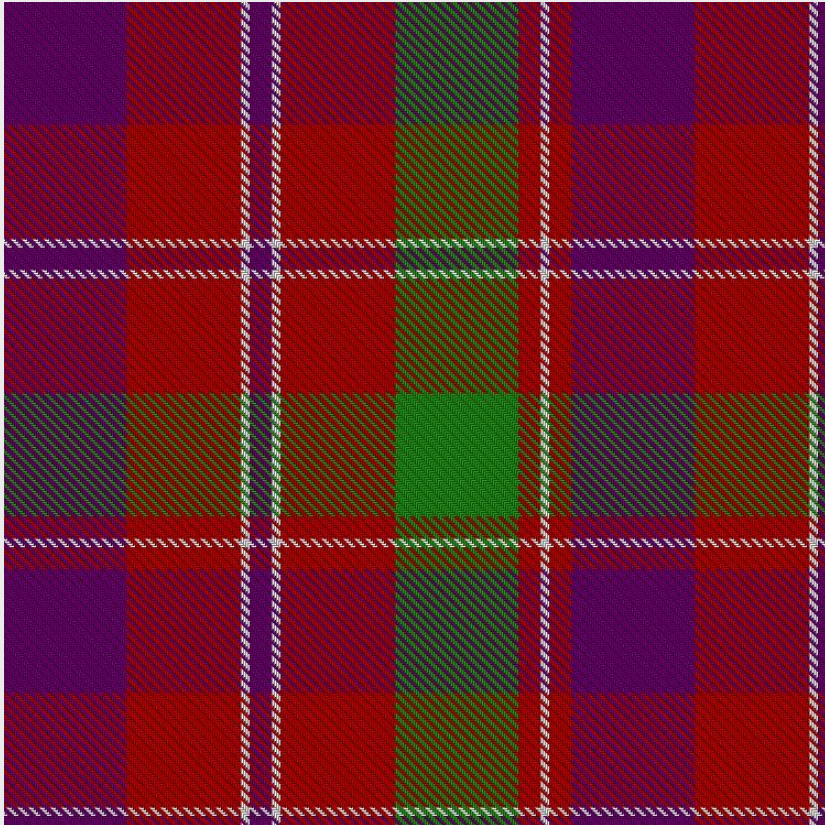


This Times' Tartan

Glenfinnan

Registered by Lt.Col Ian Cameron Taylor
STA Ref# 6243

Full Name Glenfinnan (MacDonald of Glenalladale) or
MacDonald of Glenalladale [Glenfinnan]



A remnant piece of this tartan was discovered in 1968 by Ranald S.J.MacDonald. The fabric's owner was by an elderly priest who claimed to be a descendant of Captain John MacDonald of Glenaladale, son of Major Alexander MacDonald, historically, said to be one of Bonnie Prince Charlie's staunchest supporters.

Lieutenant Colonel Ian Cameron Taylor organized the weaving and coordinated with the National Trust at Glenfinnan.

Stay Tuned!

A quick preview! Unless otherwise directed, consult the calendar on the website for time, place, and other details:

<https://rscdsboston.org/event-calendar.html>

Upcoming Events

Sept 20 - 22: New Hampshire Highland Games, Loon Mountain, NH.
<https://nhscot.org/>

Sept. 20 - 22: Scottish Weekend, Longwood Gardens, PA
(40 miles from Philadelphia) <http://scottishweekend.org/>

Oct. 4 - 6: Youth Weekend Away, Boston/Cambridge, all events open to people under 35, Ball Saturday night open to all.
<https://rscds-youth.org/weekend-away/>

Oct. 19: Brunswick Fall Party, Brunswick, ME
See branch calendar for address, times, directions -
<https://rscdsboston.org/event-calendar.html>

Oct. 25 - 27: Albany Fall Frolic, Albany, NY (party Friday, workshops, potluck, Ball Saturday, Brunch and more dancing Sunday)
<https://albanyrscds.org/>

Oct. 26: Fairlee Autumn Social, Fairlee, VT
See branch calendar for address, times, directions, and crib notes -
<https://rscdsboston.org/event-calendar.html>

Nov. 8 - 10: Argyle Weekend, Washington, DC area
<http://www.argyle-weekend.org/>

Nov. 24: A Celebration of Scottish Music and Dance: Concert and Ceilidh, Somerville, MA. <https://rscdsboston.org/event-fall-concert.html>

~Reminder~

Branch membership **renewal** is coming up soon!

The membership year begins **Oct. 1!**

If you'd like to join, go to <https://rscdsboston.org/member-membership.html>

Branch membership also includes membership with the RSCDS.