



Your 2024-26 Board Members

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Whisky Still Uncovered After Being Hidden For 200 Years

A recent archaeological dig in the highlands has found the site of an illegal whisky still in the Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve, once an area for many illicit distilleries in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This discovery brings the total number of known stills on the reserve to five, but this is the first site where they have found fragments of the actual copper still.



Fragment of copper still

The excavation by the National Trust for Scotland team, part of the Pioneering Spirit Project, also unearthed stonework, a hearth, a drain, and a timber post of the building, known as a bothy, used to house the operations. The passing of the 1788 Excise Act, banning the use of small stills, led to a game of cat and mouse between the illegal operators and the excise officers charged with cracking down on these activities. It is suspected that the copper still had been left behind during a hurried attempt to clear the site before a raid by officers.

The NTS head of archaeology, Derek Alexander, said "Distillers of illicit whisky would've travelled light and left little trace of their activity and, so, a find like this is especially rare and exciting... It gives us a glimpse into an activity that was once rife in the hills of Ben Lawers and which was seen by many as an act of community resistance." He also went on to explain how the site was picked as a result of it being well hidden



The team at work

in a gully of the Lawers Burn.

In previous years, other sites have been discovered, including the foundations of a small building that had housed a still, which was found by forestry workers in Glen Affric, near Cannich in the Highlands, in 2008. It was later recognized as a monument of national importance. The Pioneering Spirit Project has been running since 2020, in partnership with Glenlivet, and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Comedy Corner



MONTHLY MEETING

Attendees are welcome to bring along any snacks, finger foods, desserts, etc. A limited selection of soft drinks is also provided at all meetings, although you can bring your own if you prefer. If you can't bring a snack, bring a friend, although we'd like you to bring both!

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Venue – Jackson Avenue Evangelical Church,
(Audry Reich Hall-At rear of building)
2221 Chippewa St, New Orleans, 70130

Time – 2:00-4:00pm

Program- AGM/Scottish Sing-along

Information – AGM will include nomination of new officers for the 2026-2028 board. Only paid-up members are eligible to vote. Following the AGM, members will be led in a musical sing-along. Song sheets with lyrics will be available.

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Venue – The Bonds' Home,
49 Stilt St., New Orleans, 70124

Time – TBA

Program- End of Year Party

Information – The Bonds' open their doors for us as we celebrate the end of another season of the Society. We encourage attendees to please bring a favorite dish as this is a potluck event. Members are welcome to bring friends.

Member and Society News

If you have any member news to include in the newsletter, please contact me by email at shawfield27@gmail.com. No information is too small. We're happy to hear of our members' exploits.

Nominating Committee Gives Report

The following is the slate of officers for 2026-28, put forward by the nominating committee of Christyn Elliott (Chair), Rosemary Pic, and Glenn Raby

President: Wendy Grubb
Vice-President: Laurie McConnell
Secretary: Rosemary Pic
Treasurer: Christyn Elliott
Historian: Rick McConnell
Parliamentarian: Glenn Raby
Members at Large: Debora Hadeen, Dina Roudeze
Immediate Past Acting President: Virginia Urquhart

The slate will be approved at the meeting and the new officers will begin their terms at the September meeting.

NOTE: Wendy has agreed to remain as President since no one came forward, but it is with conditions. She will arrange and conduct the meetings only. The Board and Committees will be responsible for all other aspects of Society life. Please consider joining or heading a Committee for Burns Night, refreshments, membership and programs.

Festivals & Games

The 2nd **Georgia Mountain Scottish Festival** takes place in Hiawassee, on June 6th & 7th. The festival was previously known as the Blairsville Scottish Festival, and had been running for 20 years. The change in location led to a change in name, but everything else remains the same. Attendees will see the highland games as well as pipes and drums competitions. Children also have their own activities, while live music will keep everyone entertained. Weaponry displays and workshops will also be a feature. Anyone interested can get further details at <https://gamtnscottishfestival.org/>

Events

Scottish Country Dancing classes, hosted by Wendy Grubb, take place at Carrollton United Methodist Church. This is a great way to exercise your brain and your body. Classes run every Friday, unless otherwise stated, beginning at 7pm. Entrance is via Freret St. For more information call Wendy on 504-957-0251, or email at wgrubb52@gmail.com.

Have you ever considered learning to play the bagpipes? If so, now is your chance. Pipe band, **Kilts of Many Colours**, offers bagpipe lessons running every Monday, from 6-9 p.m., at Chafunkta

Brewing Company at 69069 Sky Brook Rd., Mandeville. Lessons are free.

Yearly Dues

The Society relies on dues and donations to continue to operate. Non-payment will result in a cancellation of membership, meaning you miss out on all advance notice for invitations and ticketed events, such as whisky tastings, Burns Supper, etc. Annual dues are just \$20 per person, and \$25 for a family. You can pay by check, cash, or online at our website, www.CaledonianSocietyofNewOrleans.com.

Anyone wishing to confirm their status can also email Bob Grubb at rgrubb6@gmail.com. Don't miss out, make sure you're up to date with your dues. If you are currently receiving our newsletter on our courtesy list, why not consider upgrading to become a member. The fees are low and you will receive news of all events and invitations, and receive advance booking opportunities.

Newsletter

CSoNO members receive this newsletter by e-mail or post. A complimentary e-mail newsletter is also sent to non-members who have expressed an interest, so if you know of someone who would like to be on this list, please send their information for inclusion in the courtesy e-mail group. All mass e-mails are sent to recipients' "bcc" for privacy.

Social Media

The Society has a website with many links and gallery pictures for everything Scottish! In case you haven't seen the site yet, all you need to do is go to <http://www.caledoniansocietyofneworleans.com/>.



The site also has a very useful resources page, where you will find almost everything you could think of needing. In addition to Facebook, we also have Instagram and TikTok accounts. You can find us by looking for "Caledonian Society of New Orleans."

Our most popular post in April, by far, was the upload of the pictures from our 2nd Annual Tartan Day Pub event, with over 360 views. In second place was a Happy Tartan Day post on the same day!

Why not let us know what type of posts you would like to see on our page? We want to engage with everyone, so please like, comment, and share our posts whenever you see them, that way we can reach more people.

Time For Gaelic

Fàilte mo chairdean! Ciamar a tha sibh an diugh? A bheil sibh gu math? Ciamar a tha a' Ghàidhlig agaibh? A bheil sibh ag iarriadh ag ionnsiochadh? Tha i sporsail! Slàinte a h-uile duine!
Translation: Welcome, my friends! How are you today? Are you well? How is your Gaelic? Are you excited learning Gaelic? It is fun! Cheers everybody!

How has your Gaelic come along this year? It's never easy learning a language, but your journey depends on how much time you put in. If you only have a few minutes, then just try and solidify the words you learn. Learn, repeat, and make them your own! With this in mind, I am going to provide you with some easy, useful words that you can use on a daily basis.



Halò, is mise...

Ha-low, iss mi-sha...

Hello, I am...(insert name)

Ciamar a tha thu?

Kee-mer a ha ooh?

How are you?

Tha mi gu math

Ha me goo ma

I am well

Dè tha dol?

Jay ha doll?

What's going on?

Chan eil moran

Kh-an yee-el maw-ran

Not much

Càit a bheil taigh-seinnse?

Catch a veel tie sheen-sha?

Where is a pub?

Don't forget to check out these learning apps.



Bluebird | Duolingo | Mango | uTalk

In addition to these apps, you can also find useful resources on the following sites,

<https://www.learnghaelic.net/>

<https://www.fluentin3months.com/scottish-gaelic/>

<https://go-gaelic.scot/>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/GaelicwithJason>

Castles Of Scotland

Name: Huntly Castle
Location: Huntly, Aberdeenshire
Year Built: 1410
Clan Affiliation: Gordon



What we see today is not the first castle to be built on this ground. The Fifes of Strathbogie had originally built a wooden structure with an earthen wall surrounding the perimeter, with the castle originally being called Strathbogie. This family had been staunch supporters of Robert the Bruce, and as a

result, Edward I had the earl executed in 1306. Their allegiance soon switched, but they had the misfortune of backing the English Crown when The Bruce secured victory at Bannockburn in 1314. The lands were forfeited, with Adam Gordon of Huntly, received the land rights.

The old structure was torn down in 1410--built in its place was a new stone tower and defensive wall. The Earl of Moray, a member of the notorious Black Douglas family, set fire to the castle during an attack in 1452. The Earl of Huntly, in response, assisted the Crown in bringing the Douglas clan to its knees, thus ending their presence in the Moray region.

Repairs led to improvements being made, with the damaged tower house being replaced with a much larger building. Huntly was also the scene of the wedding of Perkin Warbeck, a pretender to the English throne, to the daughter of the 2nd Earl of Huntly. The ceremony was even attended by King James IV, who also provided monetary gifts to the stonemasons working on the castle. He subsequently visited regularly on his annual pilgrimage to visit the site of Saint Duthac.

The 3rd Earl was granted a charter in 1506, allowing him to change the name from Strathbogie to Huntly, which also changed the town name to the same. George Gordo, the 4th Earl, was a man of great wealth and, coincidentally, I'm sure, was also Lord Chancellor of Scotland.

He funded extensive remodeling of Huntly, but soon after was killed during the Battle of Corriche, which saw the castle looted and damaged. His son was accused of treason the following year, and the castle was forfeited.

The land was returned a few years later, but the 6th Earl led an uprising against James VI, which saw the castle damaged, then refurbished again by the family. The various wars of the 1640's saw the Gordons face death and destruction, with them being executed in 1647. As a final insult, the English King Charles II stayed here en route to his coronation as King of Scotland.

In 1746, Government troops were stationed here during the last Jacobite rebellion, before the now abandoned castle was used as a resource for stone for the nearby town. Historic Environment Scotland

took over ownership from the Gordons in 1923, and immediately cleared the site, as it had become a dumping ground for all kinds of waste. The castle is open to the public and can be visited most days of the year.

Distilleries Of Scotland

Name: Glen Moray
Location: Elgin, Moray
Whisky Region: Speyside
Whisky Type: Single Malt
Website: www.glenmoray.com



Glen Moray originally started out as the West Elgin Brewery, producing local ales since 1830. It was not until 1897, that the nearby owners of Aberlour distillery took over and converted the property into a two-still distillery. Unfortunately, most of their time was spent at Aberlour, which saw Glen Moray fall into ruin, and following the whisky slump it closed in 1910.

Macdonald & Muir, owners of Glenmorangie, purchased the site in 1920, and whisky started flowing again. Production continued, with a stoppage of only one year in 1932. Then in 1958, a huge reconstruction saw the stills double in number, the addition of a large saladin box used to malt barley, and the conversion from coal to oil use.

Glen Moray moved to working seven days a week in 1987, resulting in over 2 million liters being produced in a year. The company changed its name to The Glenmorangie Company in 1996, and just three years later the first wood-finished whiskies were launched - a Chardonnay white wine cask finish and a Chenin Blanc white wine finish – now considered as pioneering single malts.

Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessey then buys the brand in 2004, but just four years later they sell to current

owner La Martiniquaise, an international wine and spirits group, known for purchasing “millionaire brands,” products which sell over a million cases annually.

In 2014, they launch their Classic Collection, followed quickly by their Heritage and Curiosity Collections, all providing their own unique flavors. The visitor center offers tours as well as whisky tastings, with a gift shop for those who want to bring back a liquid memory!

Just For Fun

Are our Scottish trivia questions making y’all more knowledgeable? I certainly hope so! How did you do with our last set of teasers?

1. How many islands make up the Orkney Islands?
Seventy
2. What sort of lift is the famous rotating Falkirk Wheel?
Boat lift
3. What is the longest river in Scotland? *River Tay*
4. In 1839 what sport did the 'Eglinton Tournament' involve?
Jousting
5. Where was William Wallace finally defeated by the English?
Falkirk

Now we have this month’s questions.

1. At the Highland Games, in the tossing the caber event what type of tree is a caber usually made from?
2. Which cluster of houses making up Northern Europe’s best-preserved Neolithic village has been called the 'Scottish Pompeii'?
3. What is the name of Scotland's highest mountain?
4. On which Scottish Island did George Orwell write his novel 1984?
5. What famous whisky, known and consumed worldwide, is produced in Ayrshire?

I’m Fixin’ To

When you live in Louisiana you know that a favorite topic here is either eating, talking about eating, or talking about eating while eating, and not necessarily talking about what you’re eating! So why not talk about the next dish that you’ll be making, like this one below?

Macaroon Bars



What can be more Scottish than a macaroon bar? It's a sweet, tablet-like candy, but made with potato! What more do I need to say? LOL

Every child in Scotland grew up on this delicious yet inexpensive treat. Relive the childhood of many people with this unique candy.

Ingredients:

600g Icing (Powdered) Sugar

60g Mashed Potato

120g Quality Dark Chocolate

125g Dessiccated Coconut

Method:

Make the fondant for the macaroon by putting the mashed potato into a mixer or food processor. Then add $\frac{3}{4}$ of the icing sugar and slowly mix. Gradually add the remaining icing sugar until you have a dough type consistency.

Break up the chocolate and melt slowly in a bowl over a pan of hot water. Then toast your coconut on a baking tray under the broiler.

Once the potato and icing sugar mix is ready, it should be a pastry type consistency and easy to roll out. Add more sugar if you need to. Roll it out until around an inch thick, and cut into whatever shapes you prefer.

You can then choose to either dip the cut shapes into the chocolate or use a pastry brush and carefully coat the fondant with the chocolate, based on how much chocolate you want, although too much may suppress the other ingredients.

Before the chocolate sets, dip the shapes into the toasted coconut, or sprinkle the coconut on top. Allow the bars to set on a cooling rack, then store in a lidded container - or enjoy immediately!

We hope you have enjoyed this month's newsletter. Our aim is to educate and entertain, as well as keep our members informed and up-to-date on all things Scottish.

If you have any news or items you would like included in the newsletter, then you can contact me at shawfield27@gmail.com. It can be anything at all, but should have a Scottish element, or be related to a member. If there are other items you would like to see in the newsletter, then please let me know.

Tioraidh an-dràsta!

(Chee-ree an draa-sta)

(Bye just now)

