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Italian Town Rolls Out The Tartan And Parties

The town of Barga, located in the Tuscany region of Italy, hosted its annual Scottish weekend at the start of September. To the inhabitants of this medieval gem this event is more than just an excuse to party, it's about celebrating a linked heritage that dates back to the end of the 19th century.



Locals celebrating their connection

In an attempt to escape poverty and the lack of opportunities, many Italians from the region emigrated to Scotland, hoping to make a better life for themselves, much like the Scots who travelled to America for over two hundred years before them. Their influence can still be seen today, with a proliferation of fish and chip shops as well as ice cream parlors spread across the country.

Economic success allowed Bargas to return home to retire, often now having the ability to purchase property. Today, between 40 and 60% of residents have a Scottish relative. Despite two world wars the bond grew stronger, especially with travel becoming much easier over the years. Another reminder that Barga is not just another Italian town is their soccer stadium, named after Johnny Moscardini, the only Scot to have played for the Italian national team.



The festival, which drew a record 6,000 people this year, includes a fish and chip festival, while restaurants add a Scottish twist to their menus. Festivities also included a Highland games as well

as dancing, while pipe bands paraded through the streets.

With the town's newspaper, the Giornale di Barga reporting the event as "An explosion of Scotland on the hills of northern Tuscany," Barga is certainly somewhere to consider visiting should you find yourself in Italy next September.

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, October 11, 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- Honours of Scotland/Order of the Thistle
Information – Find out more about Scotland's very own crown jewels, and learn about the order of chivalry that dates back to 1687.

Sunday, November 8, 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- Mark of the Scot
Information – Christyn Elliott will be leading the program, which will include several readings. If you are interested in volunteering then you can get in touch with Christyn.

Saturday, December 13, 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- Christmas Party
Information – Details to be confirmed

There is no January meeting due to our Burns Night at the Southern Yacht Club in this month.

Our normal February meeting is being converted to a pb night/afternoon. Details of where and when will be made available when known.

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.

Festivals & Games

The **54th Stone Mountain Highland Games** return to Stone Mountain Park, GA, on October 16-18. This is generally considered the biggest Highland games in the US, so you might consider visiting this year. The event hosts a wide range of options for visitors: seminars and talks, piping and athletic competitions, live music, children's activities, ceilidh, and exhibit stands. Further information can also be found on their page, <https://www.smhg.org/>.

CelticFest Mississippi takes place at Bobby Cleveland Park, Brandon, MS, October 10-11. As always, there will be a wide range of events for attendees, including the heavy athletics, as well as whisky and mead tastings. The musical lineup also includes all-Scottish band Albannach. More information can be found at, <https://celticfestms.org/wp/>.

Events

Scottish Heritage Sunday takes place on Sunday 25th October, at St. Charles Ave Presbyterian Church. A gathering of pipes and drums will begin the day at 10:00am. All Caledonians are invited, and those in traditional Scottish attire are invited to join the procession, which starts at 10:30am, with the pipes and drums. If you plan on being part of the procession, please arrive no later than 10:15am.

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 by PayPal via our website, www.CaledonianSocietyofNewOrleans.com.

Checks can be either brought to the meeting or mailed to Christyn Elliott, PO Box 4, Bush, LA 70431.

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

CSO NO 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 of September was our picture of the Wallace Monument on the 4th. 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! mo chairdean! A bheil sibh deiseil airson Oidhche Shamhna? Am faca sibh samhnaire no dà. Is dòcha gun bi a' ghealach ri fhaicinn.

Translation: Welcome, my friends! Are you ready for Halloween? Will you see a guiser(trick or treater) or two? Perhaps the moon will be out.

As we are now in October, it feels appropriate to provide you with some Halloween related words. This is actually one of the oldest events in the Scottish calendar, which actually goes back over 2,000 years, while the name is also Scottish in origin. It would have been known as Hallows e'en, meaning 'Saints evening.'



What better way then, than to learn some Halloween words.

Bana-bhuidseach – Banna vood-shach - Witch

Sguab – Skoo-ab - Broom

Peapag – Pe-pak - Pumpkin

Taibhs – Tie-sh - Ghost

Eagalach – Eh-gal-och – Scary

Lòchran – Low-khran – Lantern

Èideadh – Age-jaych – Costume

Don't forget to check out these learning apps. There are others, so let me know what ones you are using.



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: Kilchurn Castle
Location: Loch Awe, Argyll & Bute
Year Built: Mid 15th Century
Clan Affiliation: Campbell



The name Kilchurn (pronounced Keel-khourn) comes from the Gaelic *Caol a' Chùirn*, which translates as "Narrowing of the Cairn". It was the Campbells of Glenorchy, a powerful clan at the time, who built the castle on an island in Loch Awe. Due to falling water levels, this has now become a peninsula.

A hall was added in the courtyard by Duncan Campbell, 2nd lord, shortly before he died at the Battle of Flodden in 1513. The next addition came from the 6th lord, Colin, who added corner turrets,

more sleeping chambers, as well as remodeling the parapet. He also had Taymouth Castle built as part of a campaign to strengthen their hold in Perthshire.

Another Duncan, now bearing the title 1st Baronet and known as Black Duncan on account of his shrewd and ruthless business deals, had various sections rebuilt in addition to enlarging the castle. Like his father before him, he also set about having more castles constructed as his wealth and power increased. Such was Duncan's standing that he was invited to the baptism of an intended future king of Scotland, and received jewels from Anne of Denmark, wife of James VI.

The 5th Baronet, through political deals, began the conversion of Kilchurn, in 1693, into barracks which could house 200 men. After having played on both sides for two decades, he found his castle was under government rule after fighting in the second Jacobite uprising. He was placed under house arrest on his return and died one year later.

The Campbells attempted to sell the land and castle to the government in 1740, after the family moved to Taymouth castle, but received no interest, even though government troops used the castle as a barracks during the final Jacobite uprising.

Kilchurn was hit by lightning in 1760, before the building was deroofed in 1770, in an effort to make it truly uninhabitable, thereby avoiding the need to pay high taxes at the time. It has remained a ruin to this day, now being in the care of Historic Environment Scotland.

It is rumored that the castle is haunted and also has its very own monster in the loch. In addition to this, it is believed that the first lord, and builder of the castle, Colin Campbell, had returned from the crusades, after having a dream, to find his wife about to marry his neighbor, who had told her Colin had died in battle. Thinking nobody would believe it was him in his disheveled state, he disguised himself as a beggar, and was invited to the wedding as an act of charity. Asking his unaware wife for a drink, he drank the glass before dropping the good luck ring she had given him into it. She immediately declared the lord of the castle had returned, and his neighbor made a quick exit!

Distilleries Of Scotland

Name: Glen Scotia
Location: Campbeltown, Kintyre
Whisky Region: Campbeltown
Whisky Type: Single Malt



Built in 1832, Glen Scotia has witnessed the best and worst of the whisky industry for almost two hundred years. Within three years of founding, there were almost 30 distilleries operating in this small but important region of Scotland, yet today, Glen Scotia is only one of three distilleries left operating here.

In 1919, the Galbraith family, who had owned the property since its founding, sold Scotia to West Highland Malt Distillers, who had purchased six local distilleries in an attempt to prevent the loss of whisky production in the region following the whisky bust in the late 19th century and the effects of WWI. The venture proved a failure with five of the six having closed, and with Glen Scotia on the verge of the same fate, in 1924, it was sold to Duncan MacCallum, who had founded the Glen Nevis distillery.

The site was closed in 1928, as a result of MacCallum's bankruptcy which came about as the result of a business deal that had turned out to be a scam. His life savings gone, he drowned himself in Campbell Loch, which had been created specifically to provide the water for the distillery. Had he done this deal due to the big loss of revenue from the Prohibition laws in America at the time?

Bloch Brothers acquired the business from MacCallum's estate in 1933, adding the Glen part of the name, but production stopped in 1942, with the effects of WWII being felt across the country. Several acquisitions & mergers took place over the next two decades, but a downturn in the 1980's hit resulting in another closure.

The distillery reopened in 1989, under Gibson International, before the doors were closed again in 1994, during the sale to Glen Catrine Bonded Warehouse Ltd. It operated intermittently for the next five years before full-time production returned. The brand was moved to the parent company, Loch Lomond Group, who began investing in the site, releasing a 12-yr-old in 2005. The company has increased the portfolio, which now includes a 10, 16, 18, and 21-yr-old malts.

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. Which king ruled Scotland from 1040 to his death in battle in 1057? ***Macbeth***
2. Which comic song written by Andy Stewart is about a Scotsman who wears a kilt rather than trousers? ***Donald Where's Yoor Troosers?***
3. What color is the flag of Scotland? ***Blue & White***
4. The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is held in which month each year? ***August***
5. What was the name of the rock that the ancient kings of Scotland sat on to be crowned? ***The Stone of Destiny***

And now for this month's questions.

1. Which loch is actually the deepest freshwater body of water in the British Isles?
2. From where do the smoked haddock known as 'smokies' come from?
3. Where did the poet Robert Burns intend on migrating to in 1786?
4. In which town did William Wallace start his campaign against the English?
5. A statue of which Wild West hero was erected in the east end of Glasgow in 2006?

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?

White Chocolate & Pecan Shortbread

Is there anything more Scottish than shortbread? Is there anything more Southern than pecans? This recipe gives you the best of both worlds, with white chocolate mixed in for good measure!



Ingredients:

250g plain flour (plus more for dusting)
75g cornflour
115g soft dark brown sugar
250g unsalted butter, cut in small cubes
100g pecans, roasted and chopped
100g caramelised white chocolate, chopped into chunks to finish
200g caramelised white chocolate, melted
100g pecans, roasted and chopped

Method:

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Weigh plain flour, cornflour and sugar into your bowl and mix to combine. Add butter and, picking up little handfuls of the mix, rub between thumb and fingers until it looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in pecans and caramelised white chocolate

chunks until the dough starts to come together.

Bring the dough together into a ball with your hands and lay on a lightly floured surface. Flatten into a fat disc and sprinkle flour over the top, then roll it out to about a centimeter thick. Swirl your cutter in the flour on your work surface then cut out eight rounds.

Pop cut-out biscuits on the lined baking sheets with a little space between them. Pop the baking sheets in the fridge for 20 mins (or freezer for 10 mins). Bake the chilled biscuits for 25-30 mins. When ready they'll be a deep golden brown, like the colour of a digestive biscuit.

Leave the biscuits to cool on trays. Melt remaining white chocolate in microwave on low, or in a heatproof bowl over just-simmering water. When cool, dip half the biscuits in the melted chocolate and scatter the pecans over the chocolate before it sets. Either pop them in the fridge or leave in a cool place until chocolate hardens.

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)

