



PBFSCO Exchange

December 2007

<http://www.pbsco.org>

Newsletter of the Pleasanton/Blairgowrie/Fergus Sister City Organization

Message from the President

PBFSCO Members and Friends

It hardly seems possible that 2008 is in our sights. That means that our Burns Supper is right around the corner. This year promises to be a bit different and entertaining as we present Burns from a woman's perspective. We are excited to have Amelia Blair Oliphant present the Address to the Haggis and the Immortal Memory and to have Isla St. Clair entertain us. Do you have your reservation yet? Do it now, don't miss out!

In late October, we had the privilege to host a reception for our good friend Phillip Nappi, Chairman of the Pleasanton Blairgowrie Rattray Fergus Twinning Association. Phillip delivered a DVD video made by the students at Blairgowrie High School. Kristina Cramer from Amador High School was also there to present the DVD video made by her Amador students. We had an opportunity to view both videos that showcase life in the two cities from the student perspective. The video exchange was the result of a year long effort by both high schools. A big thank you to Phillip and Maryalice Faltings for coordinating with the schools on our behalf.

We have reserved the display cases in the entry hallway of Pleasanton City Hall for the month of January. It has been a while since our last display, so it is time to provide an update to the Pleasanton community. Do you have items in your possession that you wish to lend to the display, e.g. photos, items from Blairgowrie or Fergus, memorabilia? If so, please contact Karen Burton-Lind at 846-1164. Items will be on display throughout January and will be returned in early February.

As previously mentioned, PBFSCO members and friends are planning a trip to Blairgowrie in 2008 to coincide with the Blairgowrie Highland Games on September 7th. We now have a core group of 20+ who have reserved the Jordanstone House for a week. Jordanstone House is on the outskirts of Blairgowrie and was once owned by Laurence's mother. This will be an ideal setting to host activities. At Phillip's reception, he announced that there will be a reception for PBFSCO at the Royal Hotel on Sunday evening after the Games. For those of you who are still considering the trip to Blairgowrie, Phillip highly recommends the Royal Hotel. It was recently renovated and

offers a very competitive rate of £75 per night for bed and breakfast for double occupancy. Visit the web site at www.theroyalhotel.org.uk for more information. Please mention PBFSCO.

Lastly, we are looking for a new editor/publisher of the PBFSCO Exchange newsletter. Past President Malcolm Carden has done a wonderful job as editor for the past three years, but he has new commitments in 2008 that make it a hardship to continue. Please let Malcolm or I know of your interest. We have a flexible publishing schedule of 6-9 times per year and are happy to work within your time schedule. Please give it your thoughtful consideration.

Until next time.

Steve Lind
President, PBFSCO

NOTE: Annual Dues for the 2007/08 year are now due!!! Complete the form at the end of the newsletter and send it in to Jean Purves with your check!!

Isla St. Clair to Sing at PBFSCO Burns Supper

For those of you who aren't familiar with Isla St. Clair's background, here is a bio on her, taken from Wikipedia, the online encyclopaedia:

Isla St Clair was born Isabella Margaret Dyce, in [Grangemouth](#), central Scotland, on 2 May 1952. Her mother Zetta sang in folk clubs and wrote songs. The family moved to Aberdeen, where by the age of 12 Isla had appeared on television in "My Kind of Folk". When her parents divorced,

Isla adopted her mother's maiden name, Sinclair, adapted slightly.

Although Isla St Clair fulfilled a childhood dream by becoming a groom in a holiday riding school, it was meeting Jeannie Robertson, and subsequently adopted much of her repertoire of traditional songs, that convinced her to become a professional singer. Another major influence was seeing The Corries. Hamish Henderson of the Scottish School of Studies hailed the young singer as the best of her generation and by 1971 Isla was voted Folk Singer of the Year by the New Musical Express. In the mid-70s, Isla presented a children's programme on Grampian tv called "Isla's Island". In 1978 St Clair became the assistant to game show host Larry Grayson in The Generation Game. Her Scottish accent was an accompaniment to Larry's camp ambivalence. In 1982, following the demise of The Generation Game, she was chosen to co-host the popular ITV Saturday morning kids' TV show The Saturday Show (ITV TV series) alongside Tommy Boyd. After two series she left in 1984 to concentrate on her music career.



In 1981 St Clair was contracted to appear in a series of programmes for BBC children's television, "The Song and The Story". This involved dressing up in historical costume and explaining the history of folk songs. She relished the opportunity to ride a horse again as the highwaywoman "Sovay". Maddy Prior of Steeleye Span was hired as a researcher, primarily for the songs, and was given a researcher's credit. The program won European television's "Prix Jeunesse".

For the next ten years Isla St Clair disappeared from the public eye while she raised a family.

Then starting with *Inheritance* in 1993, she produced several albums devoted to Scottish folk songs. In 1997 she had a series on BBC Radio 2, "Tatties and Herrin", devoted to songs from the North-East of Scotland. She has recorded many of the Child Ballads. In 2003 she released *My Generation*, a collection of children's songs, many of them remembered from her own time in the playground. Isla St Clair's most recent album is called *Looking Forward to the Past!*

In 2003 she appeared in, and co-produced, a documentary film called 'When the Pipers Play', about the Great Highland Bagpipe. The film was released by PBS Television in the United States and went on to win four film festival awards. Later that year she was asked to sing her mother's song 'Dunkirk - Lest We Forget' at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

In 2003 Isla St Clair was awarded an honorary degree as a Master of the University of Aberdeen for her life long contribution to the traditional music of Scotland.

Bagpipes a threat to the environment (and we're not talking noise pollution)

By MARC HORNE, The Scotsman

THEY were once outlawed for being used as seditious weapons of war. Now, bagpipes have been blasted as an environmental menace. Over-intensive logging means that the African wood used to make Scotland's national instrument faces being wiped out. Conservation groups are letting out skirls of protest, urging musicians and instrument manufacturers to make sure their pipes come from eco-friendly sources. As part of the campaign, Scots are being asked to fund the planting of "bagpipe trees" in a bid to atone for the environmental damage.

Traditionally the chanter on the bottom of Highland pipes, which is used to create the melody, was made from native woods such as bog oak. But Scottish mariners who travelled to Africa in the 18th century returned with supplies of African Blackwood, which proved to be far more resilient and produced a sweeter sound. Since then the species, known as Mpingo in Swahili, has been a staple component of most quality pipes.

Conservation group Fauna & Flora International (FFI) said urgent action is needed to prevent the species being lost.

"With its beauty, fine grain, durable structure and natural oils no other wood looks - or sounds - the same as African Blackwood," said its campaign co-ordinator Georgina Magin. But it has been heavily exploited for woodwind instruments like bagpipes and stocks are now seriously depleted. If woodlands and the valuable timbers they contain are managed unsustainably, species such as African Blackwood will become extinct. Already in northern Tanzania, where unsustainable logging occurs, Blackwood and other species are threatened with commercial extinction. This is a pivotal time for Blackwood, and musicians can play a crucial role in ensuring this unique timber remains available long into the future."

It is believed that as much as 70% of Blackwood trees in Tanzania have already been felled. The African-based Mpingo Conservation Project (MCP) is working with Tanzanian residents to create, own and manage sustainable supplies of the timber.

"When managed in this way communities, who previously received a pittance, can earn one hundred times more per log of Blackwood harvested from the forest," said spokesman Andrew Gordon-Maclean. "In this way, Blackwood, which is one of the most valuable hardwoods in the world, could provide an economic incentive to local people to protect and sustainably manage their neighbouring forests. The increased revenue will make a significant difference to rural livelihoods and help alleviate extreme poverty in some of the poorest communities in East Africa."

The MCP and FFI are hopeful that by 2009 sustainably certified Blackwood will be on the market.

"This will mean that musicians will be in no doubt that the wood in the instrument they are buying has been legally felled and a fair price has been paid to its local custodians," said Gordon-Maclean. "We would urge concerned pipers to demand their suppliers explain where they source their Blackwood so it is not at the expense of poor African farmers and the global environment."

In the meantime, people have been flocking to help reforest parts of Tanzania. Ethical present firm Good Gifts is urging people to plant bagpipe

trees. It is pledging to plant 21 Blackwood saplings for £15, 50 for £35 and 60 for £42.

Spokeswoman Kirsty Thomson said: "The response so far - particularly from Scotland - has been incredible.

"The gift of bagpipe trees is becoming an unlikely best-seller this Christmas. It is helping to rebuild forests, conserve water, reduce soil erosion, generate income and keep musicians skirling."

But pipe major and manufacturer David MacMurchie, who uses Blackwood, was less than impressed by the campaign.

"I for one am not going to be made to feel guilty by a bunch of misguided environmental do-gooders," he said. "I am sure that the communities in Africa use a hell of a lot more Blackwood than bagpipe manufacturers.

That's the spirit... fake Islays and regional whiskies to be made illegal

By MARTYN MCLAUGHLIN, The Scotsman

IMITATIONS of Scotch whisky which describe themselves as Highland, Lowland, Speyside, Campbeltown or Islay, are to be made illegal, it emerged yesterday. The steps to protect the industry against counterfeiting are being put in place by the Westminster government.

At present, the brand, Scotch, is protected as a geographical product, but the regional variations and the different types of whisky are not. The tightened legislation would supersede the Scotch Whisky Act 1988 and the Scotch Whisky Order 1990, and allow certain designations of Scotch whisky to be added to an EU list of Geographical Indications, which members of the World Trade Organisation would be obliged to protect.

Hilary Benn, the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Secretary, yesterday announced a consultation will take place on bringing in stricter definitions of Scotch whisky in UK law. Such a move could help support action against counterfeiting in the industry, which has exports worth more than £2 billion a year to the Scottish economy, and employs around 40,000 people.

The consultation will take place later this year, and new laws could be in place by the spring. If

ratified, and applied in international trade agreements, it would mean products such as Islay whisky would enjoy the same protection under European trade law as Champagne, Parma ham, and Roquefort cheese.

The new legislation aims to curb increasing incidences of foreign distillers attempting to pass off inferior products as authentically Scottish, such as Highland Gold Finest Whisky, which is produced in Surinam and the Netherlands, and Islay Whisky Cream, which is distilled in Italy.

The need for revised regulation in the area has long been called for by the Scotch Whisky Association.

Mr Benn said: "This consultation exercise will take us another step closer to strengthening the UK legislation that the Scotch Whisky Association have been telling us they need to help them protect Scotch whisky in export markets. The proposed legislation will make special provisions relating to Scotch whisky. The proposals will define tightly the descriptions applied to Scotch whisky - for example 'single malt' or 'blended grain'. They will also tightly define its geographical provenance - such as Highland or Islay - and ensure that if the product uses the name of a distillery then it must also come from that distillery."

The proposed regulations will define five different categories of Scotch whisky - single malt, single grain, blended, blended malt and blended grain. They also set out five geographical areas - Highland, Lowland, Speyside, Campbeltown and Islay - with whiskies only being allowed to be labelled as coming from these if they have been made entirely in the region.

In addition, the regulations will require all Scotch whisky to be wholly matured in Scotland and will prohibit the export of single malt Scotch whisky unless it has been bottled and labelled.

Des Browne, the Scottish Secretary, said: "This is another example of the UK government working in a reserved area to protect one of Scotland's most important exports. Scotch whisky exports are worth over £2 billion to the Scottish economy each year and the industry needs this proposed legislation to help maintain that figure and defend its high-value product from imitation in some overseas markets.

"The Scotch Whisky Association has welcomed our commitment to do this and the UK

government has been both committed and responsive to the industry's needs."

DEFRA will consult on legislative proposals later this year.

Replacement Newsletter Editor Needed

By Malcolm Carden

No, the old one isn't worn out, but I have taken on various new commitments this year (I'm just a guy who can't say no), including becoming a Trustee of the Caledonian Club and a Board Member of the California Revels, the organization that puts on concerts of traditional songs and dances at Christmas and other times of the year, and I need someone else to take over the production of this newsletter. It isn't really difficult to do, it's more of an assembly job than anything else, and usually takes me a couple of hours at the most. It can be done with anyone with a basic knowledge of Word and .pdf files. So, if you are interested in taking over this important role for the Club, please drop me a line at mcarden@ix.netcom.com, and I will be delighted to send you the instructions.

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SCOTTISH HUMOUR

A couple walked along the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond. It was a beautiful cloudless day. A perfect day for love and romance.

" See those birds skimming across the water, flapping their wings hundred times a minute ? " she asked.

" Aye, " he answered softly.

" And do you see they have their beaks together ? "

" Aye, " he said.

" Let's do that, " she implored.

" Goodness, " he said breathlessly, " I'm afraid I can't flap my arms that fast."

PBFSCO CALENDAR 2007/08

January 26, 2008 - PBFSCO Burns Supper, Crowne Plaza Hotel.

PBFSCO 2007/08 Board of Directors

President	Steve Lind
Vice President	Peggy Gibson
Treasurer	Susan Spiegel
Secretary	Kathleen Tollworthy
Membership	Jean Purves
Past President	Malcolm Carden

Board Members:
Karen Burton-Lind
John Morrison
Dan Dawson
Ridge Douglass

Newsletter Editor Malcolm Carden

Membership Dues for 2007/08 are now Due!!!

Here are just a few of the benefits of membership:

- Cultural learning experiences
- Celtic genealogical resources
- Social activities & events
- Good comradeship
- Newsletter
- Discount for certain Club activities
- Best Annual Burns Supper in the Bay Area!

Membership Application/Renewal

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Clan, if any: _____

Level of Membership required:

Corporate (\$50) _____

Family (\$20) _____

Individual (\$15) _____

Newsletter only (\$10) _____

Send form with check made out to PBFSCO to Jean Purves, 7844 Medinah Court, Pleasanton, CA 94588. Any questions? Call Jean at (925)462 8490.

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