

The History of The Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit 1849-2024









Acknowledgements

Documenting the history of any organization as old as the Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit is a monumental task for any one person and can only be accomplished with the collective effort of many passionate and dedicated people. Such is the case with this history of the Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit commemorating its 175th Anniversary.

While I have spent many hours pouring over Society meeting records and documents, I still relied heavily on the collective contributions of other Society members whose previous work, contribution, and support I would like to acknowledge

Dennis Clements

Former member Fred Wessells

Salaina Crumb

Kellie Beveridge

Julie Bartoy

R. Ian Hunter

Dan Nelson

Scott David

Bob Giles

Cathy Hasse

David Martin

Ann Campbell

Lynette McLeod

Main Sources:

Society Meeting Minutes (1849-1904)

Society Records – Low & Burton Libraries

History of Detroit, Silas Farmer (1884)

Scots in Michigan, Alan Forrester (2003)

Detroit Public Library – Digital Collections

Detroit Historical Society - Digital Archives

Many thanks to Doug Reith, Michael Grabowski, and Bod Richardson for AV support for this entire lecture series And finally, I would also like to acknowledge the entire Library Committee whose hard work and support have made the 175th Anniversary Lecture Series a success.

Scots on the Move

- Political, religious, and economic turmoil in Britain beginning in the 17th century had a big impact on the Scottish population driving many to emigrate to avoid persecution and economic hardship.
- The Wars of Three Kingdoms between 1639 and 1653 pitted Covenanters of the Presbyterian Kirk against Catholics and supporters of the Royalist cause of the Stuart monarchy. While the wars in England were fought along gentlemanly lines, depredation and massacre were recurrent features of the conflict north of the border forcing many Scots to flee, while many of the vanquished were deported as prisoners of war.
- The Acts of Union of 1707, which united the Parliaments of Scotland and England, prompted more affluent Scots to leave due to loss of political influence and economic opportunity
- The failed Jacobite rebellions from 1689 to 1746 ushered in the collapse of the Highland clan system along
 with Highland culture. English reprisals in the aftermath of the 1745 rebellion led to executions,
 imprisonment, and seizure of estates of Jacobite sympathizers, leaving many of their families homeless and
 destitute.
- By the mid-18th century, increasing socio-economic pressures from famine, food shortages, private debt, bankruptcies, overpopulation, and industrialization necessitated the rise of commercial landlordism and subsequent dispossession of land and depopulation. This period known as the Highland Clearances lasted through much of the 19th century and is believed to have displaced as many as 150,000 Scots

Scottish Diaspora

- Concurrent to this turbulent period, was the rise of British colonialism. As early as the 15th century,
 Britain began to establish small trading posts and settlements in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. By the
 18th and 19th centuries, Britain had become the world's largest empire.
- The first documented Scottish settlement in North America was Nova Scotia (New Scotland) in 1629. James I issued a charter for the colony in 1621 to Sir William Alexander, but it took him until 1629 to successfully occupy the territory. The colony's charter made Nova Scotia part of mainland Scotland
- During the 18th and 19th centuries, it is estimated that between 1.5 and 2 million Scots emigrated from Scotland. Many Scots sought new opportunities within the colonies of North America (U.S. and Canada), Australia, and other parts of the vast British empire.
- In 1700 the population of Scots in the American colonies was around 7,500, or 3% of the population. By 1790 the number of Scots and Scots-Irish in the first US census grew to over 450,000 or 14% of the U.S. population.
- In the 2020 census, Americans who identified as being of Scottish descent totaled 5.2 million, outnumbering the number of native Scots in Scotland. The total number of Americans that can claim Scottish ancestry is estimated to be 20 to 25 million.
- Worldwide the Scottish diaspora is thought to be as high as 80 million

Scots in America

- The first wave of Scots immigrants came to America as early as 1680 as part of the British colonization efforts, particularly settling in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas
- As Britain's role in North America expanded, the Scottish presence grew with it. Primarily motivated by economic opportunity, the early migrants were largely merchants, skilled tradesmen, and farmers from the Scottish Lowlands. Physicians and educators were also prominent among the early migrants
- Many of the Scots were products of 18th century Scottish Enlightenment and became integral to the running of colonial government and to cultural life, especially in southern and mid-Atlantic states
- In the early 18th century, a second wave of protestant Scots-Irish (Ulster Scots) began immigrating to America for economic opportunity and to escape religious discrimination in Ireland. By 1860, 3 of 4 emigrants from the British Isles were of Scots or Scots Irish birth
- After the Highland Clearances in the 18th and 19th centuries, a third wave of Scots from the Highlands came. These immigrants were less affluent and settled primarily in the Appalachian region
- During the American Revolutionary War most of the Lowland and Ulster Scots supported the American Patriot cause, while, ironically, many of the Jacobite sympathizing Highland Scots remained loyal to the Hanoverian government and fought in the British Highland Regiments against their countrymen.
- As more and more Scots immigrated to the North America, they began to band together to support fellow immigrants, as well as to preserve their Scottish culture and heritage

The Birth of Saint Andrew's Societies

- Many of the early Lowland settlers in the American colonies became quite successful and felt an obligation to support their fellow Scots in need
- Over time, the assimilation efforts by Scottish immigrants became more organized and coalesced into formal societies. The earliest one was the Scots Charitable Society established in 1657 in Boston. It became the 'prototype' for future Saint Andrew's Societies
- The early Saint Andrew's Societies were founded by prominent Lowland Scots as charitable organizations to assist impoverished Scottish immigrants, as well as promote harmony among themselves. The first society was established in Charleston, South Carolina in 1729, followed by Savannah, Georgia in 1737, Philadelphia in 1747, and New York in 1756
- The early Saint Andrew's Societies were also active in the American Revolution. New York Society members included Philip Livingston, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Major General William Alexander (Lord Stirling), and Alexander Hamilton. Philadelphia society members raised over 15,000 € for the war effort and distributed 3 million rations to the army
- As the 19th century progressed, many of the Saint Andrew's societies evolved to adopt a dualpurpose mission of both benevolence and promotion of Scottish heritage, arts, and culture
- Today, due in part to the vast Scottish diaspora, there are over 200 Scottish heritage and benevolence societies worldwide, including Saint Andrew's, Caledonian, and Scottish societies with more than half in the U.S. alone.



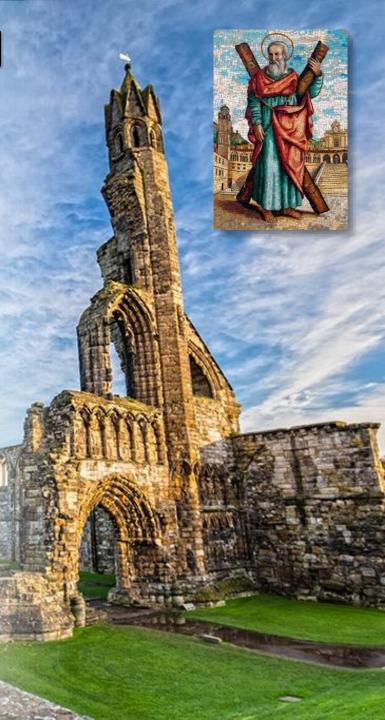






Saint Andrew: Patron Saint of Scotland

- Andrew, Patron Saint of Scotland and the society's namesake, was an apostle of Jesus and according to the New Testament, he was a fisherman and older brother of Simon Peter, also an apostle.
- Andrew was thought to have traveled great distances in order to spread the word of the Gospel, primarily in the area of modern Greece and Turkey
- One dubious legend builds upon his extensive travels, claiming that he actually came to Scotland and built a church in Fife.
- The more accepted legend recalls how it was after the death of Constantine I, sometime in the 4th century, that several of Andrew's relics were brought to Fife by St. Regulus (St. Rule) for safe keeping.
- Regulus was a native of Patras, Greece where Andrew was martyred by crucifixion upon a saltire cross in 60 AD. Regulus was instructed by an angel to take some of Saint Andrew's remains and go west by ship and wherever he shipwrecked he was to establish a church.
- St. Regulus' ship was driven ashore into the small coastal village of Kilrymont in Fife, which was renamed St. Andrews and became an important pilgrimage site for Christians. St. Andrews Cathedral was built from 1158 to 1318 to house the relics but was destroyed during the Scottish Reformation
- It is this link that explains why Andrew is now the Patron Saint of Scotland, and by extension, the namesake of the Saint Andrew's Society



Scots in Michigan

- The Scots that came to North America were also at the forefront of western migration. The first Scots in the Great Lakes region were not settlers, but rather primarily fur traders and soldiers
- For decades before and after 1700, when the French established Detroit, the region was a
 battleground for skirmishes among the French, British, and Native Americans. During that time,
 the region was attractive to explorers, trappers, and traders but not to settlers and their families.
- The skirmishes over the Michigan territory ended in 1760, when the French ceded the region to the British. The
 British did not cede the territory of Michigan to the United States until after the Revolutionary War in 1783;
 however, British control was not fully relinquished until the resolution of the War of 1812.
- From the mid 18th century, Scots were dominant in the establishment and management of the large fur trading companies such as the North West Company, the American Fur Company, and the Hudson's Bay Company, all of which operated in the Great Lakes region on both side of what is now the U.S. – Canadian border
- Although Scots were prominent in early Detroit, the city was not a Scottish enclave, and the only Scottish
 settlements in preindustrial Michigan seems to have been in the Thumb region Huron, Sanilac, St. Clair, and
 Macomb counties.
- Michigan became a State in 1837, which saw a rush of settlers from the east, with many English, Irish, and Scots farmers, traders, and merchants eager to stake a claim. Among these early arrivals looking to make their fortune in Michigan would be St. Andrew's Society of Detroit founder, William L. Barclay.

The Founder – William Barclay



- The first organizing meeting of the Saint Andrews Society on November 30, 1849, was called by William Barclay, who was born in 1808 in Ayrshire Scotland
- Barclay emigrated to America in 1832 and worked as a carpenter and machinist in Albany, NY from 1832 to 1834
- Around 1835 to 1836 he moved to Detroit Michigan and set up the Michigan Iron
 Foundry and Machine Shop on the corner of Lafayette and Shelby Streets
- Prior to his involvement in the St Andrews Society, he was the Detroit City Fire Chief from 1847 to 1849. Ironically, his business would largely be damaged by fire in 1848, resulting in losses of \$12,000 (\$500K in today's dollars)
- Barclay did not officially become a member of the Saint Andrew's Society until March 15, 1850. He would serve as Society Secretary in 1853 and became the 7th President of the Society in 1857. He would later serve as Society Marshall for an immense funeral procession held in Detroit for U. S. President Abraham Lincoln on April 25, 1865
- Barclay served as President of the Detroit Mechanics Society from 1851 to 1853, as well as serving as Alderman from the 6th Ward in 1853. He briefly served as Police Commissioner in 1862.
- Barclay was married twice and had nine children. He retired in 1863 and remained active in civic life until his death on January 22, 1885, at age 76
- His last residence was at the corner of present-day Grand River Ave and Farmer Street. The corner was
 named Barclay Place after him in 1876

The Founding

In early November 1849, an invitation was sent out by William Barclay to 40 or 50 prominent Detroit Scotchmen to attend a meeting at a local Detroit Hotel forly or Jefly Comments, for the purposer of

Charl 30 th Marmon 1849 conversed of an internation by the low

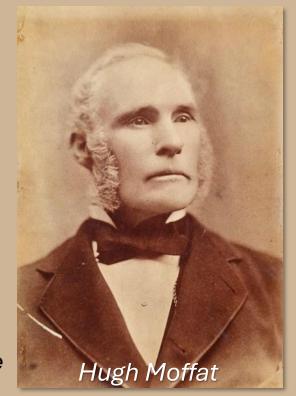
that of the It Author's Soundly of

Lof for that purpose and a Commeller

- The meeting was held on November 30, Saint Andrew's Day, 1849, at the Mansion House, a hotel on the west side of Griswold near Atwater. The proprietor was John the there and Some Atack appender Moore, one of the Scots present for the meeting. In her Buckay's stating the object?
- The purpose of the meeting was to consider the practicability of organizing a Saint Andrew's Society in Detroit, whose primary mission would be to provide for the relief be but our opinion on the delignotion of indigent and unfortunate fellow countrymen. Ebenezer Anderson was called to highly infair of it. With the view of airing on the domes chair the meeting, and James Black was appointed secretary pro tem of a Constitution for the propert livily.
- Also in attendance at this meeting, was Hugh Moffat, who was born in 1810 in Monnody submitted to the Orenting a Coldstream, Scotland, on the River Tweed. Mr. Moffat was also a successful ale, which being not by the Vinitary are business and civic leader and future president of the society. He would later be Thereofor appointed to draft a Constitute elected Mayor of Detroit from 1871 to 1875.
- stopet the same at a future secting . The main result of the meeting was to form a committee of 8 members to draft a ing quillimm were hand, no doing constitution: James Lyell, Ebenezer Anderson, Hugh Moffat, John Stuart, James Jack, Mat I Struck I chek taling taling Robert Linn, Alex Davidson, and George Kennedy
- The meeting was adjourned, and a second meeting was scheduled for the evening denning of the 21th Secundar motor thin to quest and received the Mapart of the Com of December 21st where the committee was to report their result

The Constitution

- With only three weeks to the next meeting, the committee set to work immediately in drafting a constitution.
- Luckily, they were not working from scratch as committee member George Kennedy had obtained a copy of the constitution from the Saint Andrew's Society of Buffalo, founded in 1835, from which the Detroit society's constitution would be modeled.
- The preamble of the constitution, written by Hugh Moffat, reads as follows: "For the relief of the indigent and unfortunate of our Countrymen, and for the promotion of harmony and good feeling amongst ourselves, we the undersigned Scotchmen and Descendants of Scotchmen, with Benevolence for our motto, do unite ourselves into a Society and agree to abide by the following Constitution of the St.



- The committee report was read by Mr. James Jack at the December 21st meeting at the Mansion House after which the constitution was submitted on motion and subsequently reviewed article by article. The main discussion point was the admission fee, which was finally agreed to be set at \$5, with quarterly dues of \$2.
- The constitution was approved and after paying the \$5 fee, each of the 18 members present signed the document, including Messrs. Moffat, Black, Anderson, Kennedy, Jack, and James Lyell, who was elected the first President of the Society, and would serve for two one-year terms.
- Hugh Moffat would later be elected as 2nd Vice President in 1850, and President (6th) of the society in 1856

Founding Members

- Only 18 participants from the November 30th meeting were present at the December 21st meeting where the first St. Andrew's Society Constitution was approved and signed. This group formed the original founding members of the society.
- Original signers of the constitution included the following names:
 - 1. James Lyell
 - 2. Ebeneezer Anderson
 - 3. James Black
 - 4. Andrew Reekie
 - 5. John Douglas
 - 6. John Coats
 - 7. John Moore
 - 8. Thomas Carswell
 - 9. George Kennedy

- 10. John Stewart
- 11. John Thomson
- 12. Alex Davidson
- 13. George McMillan
- 14. Hugh Moffat
- 15. Robert Linn
- 16. Mr. __Harvie*
- 17. James Jack*
- 18. Vincent J. Scott*

CONSTITUTION.

For the relief of the indigent and unfortunate of our countrymen, and for the promotion of harmony and good feeling amongst ourselves, we, the undersigned Scotchmen, and descendants of Scotchmen, with Benevolence for our motto, do unite ourselves into a Society, and agree to abide by the following Constitution:

ARTICLE I.

Name and Seal of the Society.

The name of the Society shall be the "ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY OF THE CITY OF DETROIT." A Seal shall be procured, on which shall be engraved he name of the Society, and the Arms of Scot

ARTICLE II.

Members and Honorary Members.
ciety will consist of Members at
rs. None shall be consider

• During the first year of the society, new members were required to sign the constitution. That quickly became impracticable, and the Society adopted a membership registry. Members in the above list with an (*), signed the constitution, but did not sign the later membership registry

The Executive Officers

- After the signing of the Constitution at the Mansion House, and with \$90 in the treasury, the 18 members present set about electing the first officers of the Society by secret ballot.
- The constitution had created six executive officer positions: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. The constitution also created five Manager (Trustee) positions to oversee membership, benevolence, and expenditures
- The duly elected members in the first St. Andrew's Society of Detroit elections included:

Executive Officers:

- President: James Lyell
- 1st Vice President: Robert Linn
- 2nd Vice President: John Thomson
- Treasurer: George Kennedy
- Secretary: James Black
- Asst. Secretary: Eb. Anderson

The Mansion House

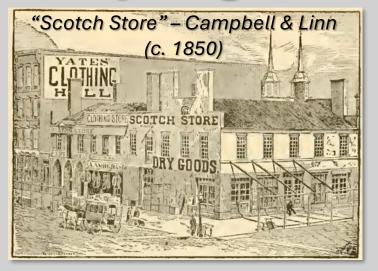


Managers:

- John Stuart
- John Coats
- John Moore
- John Douglas
- George McMillan

• William Barclay, who organized the first meeting on November 30th, was not present at this meeting, and so he was neither initiated as a member nor elected to office at the December 21st meeting. He would not be formally initiated into the society until the 4th meeting held on March 15th, 1850.

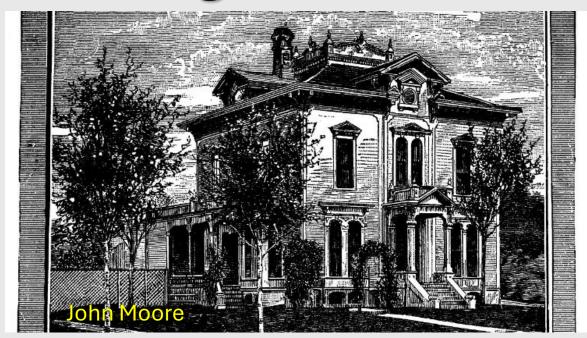
Early Regular Meetings



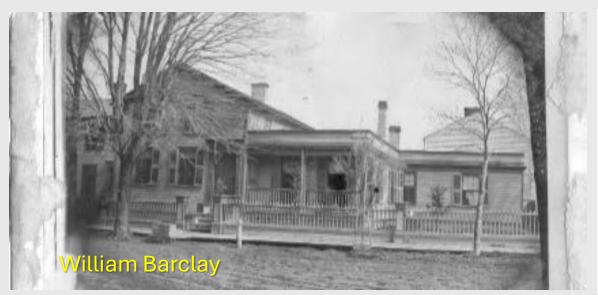
- The 3rd regular meeting was held on Valentine's Day, February 14th, 1850, and was held at a store owned by members Jack and Coats, with 13 of the original 18 members present. During this meeting, a committee was established to create By-Laws for the Society
- The early regular membership meetings of the society were nominally held on a quarterly basis. The agenda covered reading and approving minutes, electing new members and officers, treasurer report and paying of quarterly dues, reporting on benevolence activity, and other business matters.
- Finding meeting locations was sometimes a struggle and meetings might need to be rescheduled if a
 suitable venue could not be found in time. Meeting locations moved around and were held in various stores,
 offices, and warehouses, owned or run by members. In 1852, John Moore opened the Merchants' Exchange
 Hotel, located on SE corner of Griswold and Woodbridge, which hosted meetings for a time.
- Election of new members was done by secret ballot. By 1851 the balloting process used an anonymous "black ball" process similar to that used by the Freemasons, with a white ball signifying acceptance and a black ball signifying objections. Only one black ball was enough to disqualify a candidate for membership.
- Of the 40 to 50 Scotchmen that attended the first meeting, 35 would eventually become officially initiated into the society between 1849 and 1850, and thus constituted the founding members of the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit



Founding Member Homes (c. 1880)









The First Anniversary

- The first anniversary of the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit was held on November 30th,
 1850, at the home of George Kennedy.
- Members in attendance included: James Lyell, Robert Linn, George McMillan, James Jack, John Thomson, Eb. Anderson, William Barclay, George Kennedy, V.J. Scott, Ranald McDonald, Hugh Moffat, John Coats, John Moore, Alex Davidson, and James Black
- A special ad hoc meeting was called first to install the newly elected officers (from the regular meeting on November 14th) and to review the results of an audit of the Treasurer's and Secretary's books. The meeting was then adjourned to the supper room where the members were joined by a few invited friends.
- Mr. Lyell thanked the members for the honor of his re-election as President, and then
 congratulated the members on the "flourishing prospects of the society" and the
 usefulness of its mission
- Lyell then offered the first toast of the evening, honoring their Patron Saint, and "to devote
 a few fleeting hours to call back the associations of our fatherland, and to cement those
 feelings of good fellowship, which characterize the sons of Scotia in whatever clime their
 lot may be cast"
- Many more toasts followed, and as the "witching hour" of midnight approached, the
 President called for all to stand and join hands and singing Auld Lang Syne for the first time
 as a society.

The Early Years

- The Scottish community in Detroit in the mid 19th century was a very strong and close-knit group. By the end of 1860, 98 members had been initiated.
- Industrialization brought economic opportunity to Detroit and with it, more Scots and other immigrants. There were more hotels in Detroit in 1860 than there were at the turn of the 21st Century, as well as numerous boarding houses available to house the new arrivals
- Most of the early members were tradesmen, merchants, and business owners. The list of member occupations reflected the mid-19th century economy and included a machinist, boilermaker, grocer, saloonkeeper, painter, ropemaker, pastor, blacksmith, stonemason, laborer, land dealer, bookkeeper, carpenter, wood dealer, banker, lawyer, and tailor.
- In 1861, with the Society growing, they rented a permanent space on the 3rd floor of the Merrill Block building at a cost of \$50/year
- The onset of the U.S. Civil in 1861 saw new membership in the society drop, as many Scots were called to serve in the Northern States war effort.
- During the height of the war, several meetings were cancelled due to a lack of a quorum, and the lease on the Merrill Block location was allowed to lapse, after which they moved to a space above the Banking Offices of V.J. Scott

Merrill Block Building
Jefferson and Woodward (1859)



Preparing for Growth



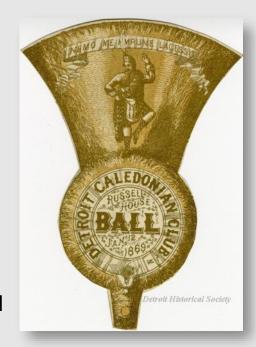
- The U.S. Civil War (1861-1865) took a physical, emotional, and financial toll on the many Scots who served in the Union Army. During the war and its aftermath, the society set about efforts to grow the society and deal with the increase in need within the Scottish diaspora.
- One of the first steps was to lower the cost of membership to make it more financially accessible. The original admission of \$5 plus quarterly dues of \$2 that was set in 1849, amounted to an initial first year cost of \$13. This is was a relatively large sum of money in the mid 19th century, equivalent to about \$500 in today's dollar.
- After the Civil War, the St. Andrew's Society Constitution was redrafted to lower the admission cost to \$2 with an annual membership fee of \$1 payable in quarterly installments. Adjusted for post war inflation, the new first year cost was reduced to about \$60 in today's dollars, effectively an 80% to 90% reduction.

1866 Constitution

- New membership requirements were also relaxed in 1857 requiring only the consent of 2/3 of the members present at any regular meeting. Applications had to be made in writing on the recommendation of 2 or more members.
- The war also took its toll spiritually and physically on the Scots, as long-term chronic physical and mental health concerns increased. To address this need, the society added a Physician and Chaplain as officers of the Society, to attend to 'sick, distressed, and maimed' Scots at the recommendation of the Board of Managers. Benevolence also started to include the offsetting of funeral costs of indigent Scots

Early Cultural Events

- In the early years the Society was primarily focused on benevolence, and the promotion of Scottish heritage and culture was not part of their stated objectives. The only official social/cultural event was the annual Saint Andrew's Day Celebration on November 30th.
- The early annual St Andrews Day celebrations were typically held in a hotel or public house and would consist of the "annual meeting", which involved installation of new officers and results of the annual audit, followed by dinner with toasts, speeches, and songs by officers and members. The evenings would be capped of with the singing of *Auld Lang Syne*
- In 1880, the Society decided to alter the Annual St. Andrews Day celebration to a concert, ball, and dinner, which would include women. The event was open to members & guests and was held at the Russell House Hotel. This basic format has continued until present day



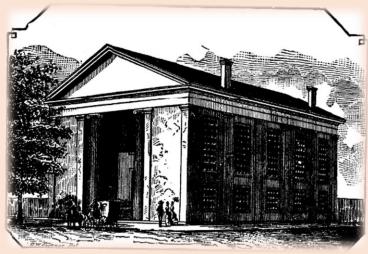
- By the mid 1860s, the Society started to form entertainment committees to put on Scottish games, concerts, and theater events open to the public to help raise money for the Society.
- Also, during this period, the Detroit Burns and Caledonian Clubs became active in the Detroit area and sponsored
 many public cultural events in the city. These clubs were kindred organizations to the Saint Andrews Society and
 shared meeting spaces and rent with the Society at various times. The Society also collaborated with both clubs on
 Burns Nights celebrations, concerts and balls, and Scottish games
- In August 1883, the Burns Club was fully integrated into the Society, including membership, furniture, and financial assets. In January 1884, the Society held its first official Burns Night Celebration
- By the 1890s the Constitution had been revised to include the objective to foster and encourage a love of Scotland, its literature, customs, and national games, and a Society Librarian and Bard were added as well

Highland Games - The Beginning

- According to Society lore, the St. Andrews Society of Detroit has been hosting Highland Games continuously since 1850; however, Society records indicate that the "1st annual Excursion and Pic Nik" hosted by the Society did not occur until July 12, 1865
- That morning upwards of 500 passengers boarded the steamship Windsor at Detroit and departed at 11:00 am bound for Ives Grove on Gross Ile, where the Society held its first public picnic and games. The event also featured a brass band, bagpipes and dancing.
- In May 1868, the Detroit Caledonian Club addressed the Society at their regular meeting and made a proposal to hold the picnic and games jointly that year and to split the cost and any profits. The Society agreed.
- The joint picnic and games were held in August on Belle Isle, and the event netted \$327.61 split between the two organizations. The Caledonians wound up donating \$36.20 of their proceeds towards the Society's benevolence
- The games would be held jointly with the Caledonians through at least the early 1880s and moved around to other venues including Slocum Island (Elizabeth Park Marina), Recreation Park, Association Park Hamtramck, and Sugar Island.
- It seems likely then that any early games of the 1850s and 60s were more informal social gatherings to bring member families and friends together for a midsummer picnic to celebrate their shared heritage through Scottish games, music, and dance.

First St. Andrews Hall (1867-1883)

- As the Society reduced barriers to entry in the aftermath of the Civil War, the society began to grow again, and as active membership once again approached 100, the society needed a larger and more suitable space.
- The society began searching for a permanent meeting place as early as 1851; however, it wasn't until 1867 when they leased a permanent space in a building on the southwest corner of Woodward Avenue and State Street.
- The building was formerly the Central Methodist Episcopal Church, which was originally erected in 1849 for a cost of \$11,000.
- In 1864 the building was sold for \$23,000, as the M.E. Church sought to expand and relocate to its present-day location at Adams and Woodward. The buyers repurposed the building for commercial use in 1866.
- The Society took over the third floor of the renovated building, which became St Andrew's Hall in 1867. The Detroit Caledonian and Burns Clubs also jointly rented space with the Society for a period in the late 1870s
- With a growing membership and permanent home, the society changed from quarterly meetings, to meeting on the first Monday of each month
- The Society used it as their meeting hall until 1883 when the building was demolished, after which they found themselves back at the Merrill Block



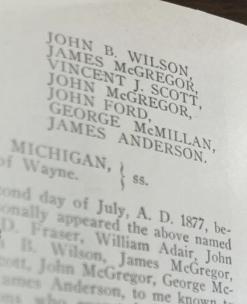
Central M.E. Church 1850



St. Andrews Hall 1867-1883

St. Andrew's, Inc.

- In the 1870s, the Michigan State Legislature passed its first General Incorporation law that allowed businesses and non-profit organizations to incorporate without the need for a special act of the state legislature.
- Robert Laidlaw, initiated June 11, 1876 (member 242), was the Society's first attorney
 and Notary Public. He recognized the advantages of incorporating the Society under
 the new law and in 1877 worked with a committee headed by First VP John Pettie to file
 the appropriate articles of association with the State of Michigan
- At the regular monthly meeting of the St. Andrew's Society on May 7th, 1877, a motion
 was made by Andrew Wanlass and seconded by James McHugh to appoint no less
 than 10 members, as required by law, to sign the articles of association on their own
 behalf, and on behalf of all members of the Society
- The select members included President William Adair, A.D. Fraser, John Moore, John Wilson, James McGregor, V.J. Scott, John McGregor, John Ford, George McMillan, and James Anderson.
- The articles of association were officially signed by the 10 members and signed and notarized by Robert Laidlaw on July 2, 1877. The term of the incorporation was only 30 years, so the Society had to re-incorporate in 1907 and then again in 1937.
- At the time of incorporation, there were exactly 100 active members



OBERT LAIDLAW,
Notary Public,
Wayne County, Michigan.

freely and for the pur-

Burns Night Celebrations



- The Burns Club was active in the Detroit area from around the mid-1860s and they were largely responsible for hosting Burns Night Celebrations at that time
- In December 1879, representatives of the Burns Club approached the Society with a proposal to amalgamate the two societies due to financial pressures. Saint Andrew's Society had also received a similar overture from the Caledonian Club. A committee was formed to confer with the other societies, but no progress was made, and the proposals were tabled in early 1880.
- The Saint Andrews Society did agree to collaborate with the Burns Club for the January 1880 celebration using amateur entertainment to defray costs; however, the Society committee in charge failed to secure a venue, and the Society formed yet another committee to patch things up with the disgruntled Burns Club
- The Society was not involved with Burns Night Celebration again until January 1884, after the Burns Club was officially amalgamated with the Society in 1883. The first celebration was a men-only banquet, but subsequent celebrations included a concert and ball that included the "lasses"
- By 1890s the Burns Night concerts rivaled the Saint Andrews Day festival in terms of popularity and attendance, which continued well into the 20th century.
- In more recent years, Burns Night has been celebrated with a more traditional Burns Supper, which includes
 traditional Haggis dinner, recitation of Burns poetry and songs, Immortal Memory address, and toasts to the
 haggis, Lassies, and Laddies, and closing with Auld Lang Syne

Gie Us a Wee Dram

- Alcohol was major part of the U.S. diet in the 18th and early part of the 19th century, but by the 1820s the
 temperance movement started to take hold in response to widespread concerns about the negative effects of
 alcohol on individuals, families, and society. The era was marked by high rates of alcohol consumption, leading
 to social problems such as domestic violence, poverty, and decreased productivity
- The temperance movement continued to gain traction through mid-century particularly among religious groups and women's organizations. Eventually politicians were compelled to act, and the City of Detroit passed the Prohibitory Law in February 1855, which made the traffic in liquor entirely illegal.
- Scots in Detroit took the impending Prohibition by planning a banquet that would long be remembered. Twelve
 toasts were given and the affair concluded at 3 a.m. with all participants joining in the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."
 The Daily Advertiser used four columns in reporting the event
- The law went into effect on May 15 and nearly all the saloons in Detroit closed; however, the law was largely ignored, and by June 27 the saloons had all reopened.
- Despite the setback, temperance movement continued to grow, and by the 1870s Detroit started increasing
 taxes on liquor and restricting sales on Sunday, and as result, the Society began to restrict alcohol at their events.
 By the 1880s, liquor sales and the number of saloons operating in Detroit were on a steady decline.
- In the planning of the 1883 Anniversary event, some of the "worthy agitators" in the Society enquired if they were going to have Scotch whisky on the tables. This raised quite an "interesting discussion" and finally after remarks by the Society chaplain, it was decided they would be "re-united in coffee".

The Lost Years (1885-1892)

- At a regular meeting of the Society in April of 1894, it was reported by previous Librarian, Mr. J.F. McKinlay, that the 2nd meeting minute book covering the eight-year period between 1885 through 1892 was missing
- The book had been entrusted to McKinlay's assistant David Bell, who kept the book but did not report the loss of the book for at least three months
- McKinlay stated if he had been informed earlier and proper exertions made, the book might have been recovered. A committee was formed to confer with Mr. Bell, but the book was never located



- This missing eight-year period in the records included the expansion of social and cultural events, with the addition of a library and librarian position.
- The collaboration between the Caledonian Club and Saint Andrews Society also appears to have ended during this period suggesting the Caledonians may have also been absorbed into the Society as the Burns Club did in 1883. By the 1890s the games were singularly associated with the Saint Andrews Society
- The Society also vacated the Merrill Block for a second time and moved to a location at 12 Woodward Ave., which was an 8-story building that housed the offices of what would later become the Detroit United Railway

Growing Pains

- The turn of the 20th century saw the burgeoning auto industry take hold in Detroit. Henry Ford built his first car in June 1896 and by June 1903 he incorporated the Ford Motor Company. Ten years later, Ford would revolutionize the industry with the first moving assembly line at the Highland Park Ford Plant
- The automotive and related industries brought thousands of men and their families to this area. Many of the men were of Scottish descent and would later join the Society.
- In 1901, the Society was forced to vacate their Hall at 12 Woodward Ave., and after an unsuccessful attempt
 to purchase a building, they ended up taking on a lease of a small building at 95 W Fort St.
- In the 51 years from the founding in 1849 until the end of the century, 618 members were initiated with an average of 12 new members per year. The five-year period from 1900 to 1905 saw an increase of 382 new members, or an average of 76 per year, a 533% increase over the previous 50 years.
- Until 1900, virtually all members lived within the narrow confines of the city of Detroit; however, expanding
 industry and the introduction of electric commuter trains in 1901 saw the population shifting from the city to
 the suburbs. In 1904 the Society initiated James Glen (member 904) of Grosse Point, the first member to
 reside outside the city of Detroit.
- Detroit's industrial expansion quickly surpassed its former boundaries, with more and more new members
 residing miles from the city center at all point of the compass. By April 1906, 1,213 men had been initiated
 into the Society, almost double the number at the turn of the Century. Membership meetings went from once
 a month to the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month
- That same year, the Society took its first steps towards building their own hall

"Hame o' Oor Ain"

- Discussions on building a new hall started in 1894; however, initial efforts to secure a permanent hall didn't start until 1898, when President John Donaldson wanting a *hame o'oor ain*, created a Building Fund seeded with \$300 from entertainment profits
- By 1901, the Society was faced with having to find a new meeting hall. A building committee supported by then Trustee Donaldson, tried unsuccessfully to purchase a building but time constraints on the current lease forced them into leasing a building at 95 W Fort Street
- By 1905, a new building committee was formed to study the prospects of building a new hall. In 1906, the committee recommended the purchase of land on Congress Street between Beaubien and Brush Streets on which to erect a new building.
- There were three small lots that were purchased, with two existing buildings on the site. The addresses were 111, 113, and 115 Congress Street East. The new building would end up with a physical address of 111 then later changed to 431 East Congress St
- To augment the Society's building fund, \$25,000 in stock certificates were issued at \$5 a share in early 1906. These stocks did not pay dividends but did pay 5% interest per annum. Shares were purchased by members and friends of the Society. The Dewars Distillery purchased 10 shares in May 1906. An \$8,000 conventional mortgage was also taken on in 1907 to cover remaining costs.
- Construction of the new hall began in 1907 and the total cost for the land and building was estimated at over \$40,000. Ten years later in 1917 the valuation of the property was \$90,000 with a total indebtedness of \$28,000. It would take 30 years to pay off the debt





95 W Fort Street

St. Andrew's Hall (1908-1994)

- Groundbreaking for the new building was held on June 22, 1907, and the cornerstone was laid six weeks later on August 3rd.
- Construction was brick and sandstone exterior with Romanesque Revival architecture, popular in the late 19th century. The architect on the project was Donaldson & Meier.
- The first meeting would be held on January 18, 1908, at which time 1411 men had been initiated into the Society
- The original St. Andrew's Hall featured a large auditorium and ballroom that could hold over 1000, a library, reading room, second floor meeting space, billiard room, and bowling alley in the basement. By the 1920s the bowling alley was replaced by an indoor curling rink.
- The facility was frequently rented out to various social, labor, and political organizations for large meetings and events as a source of income to pay off the building related debt.
- Finally, the Society had found a permanent home in a good area of downtown that would serve all their meeting and social event needs. The Hall served as St. Andrew's Society's home for nearly three generations until it was sold in 1994





St. Andrew's Hall

B. P. F.

- In 1899, the constitution of St. Andrews Society was revised to list 3 distinct objectives:
 - 1. To relieve the indigent and unfortunate of our countrymen
 - 2. To foster and encourage a love of Scotland, its literature, customs, and national games
 - 3. To promote the friendly and social relations of its members
- By early 1900s, the society adopted the symbol of St. Andrew and Saltire Cross to emphasize the role of benevolence but also incorporated the motto Benevolence, Patriotism, and Fraternity as shorthand for the societies three objectives, abbreviated to B P F
- This new symbol, designed by the building architects, was made as a cast relief and incorporated into the apex of the stone arch over the entrance to newly constructed St. Andrews Hall in 1907
- The deeper understanding of B P F is described as follows:
 - **Benevolence** "to seek the well-being or comfort of others, to alleviate suffering and promote happiness among brother Scots"
 - **Patriotism** "which while fostering and encouraging a love of Scotland, its literature, customs, and national games, also aims to elevate the morals and social standing of its members and make them true citizens and patriotic supporters of the constitution and this great Republic"
 - **Fraternity** "the cultivation of that sympathy and affection which should characterize the brotherly relations, to furnish our brothers such enjoyments as will tend to a healthy development of everything noble in their character, and to throw around them an influence which will point to higher aspirations and nobler lives"



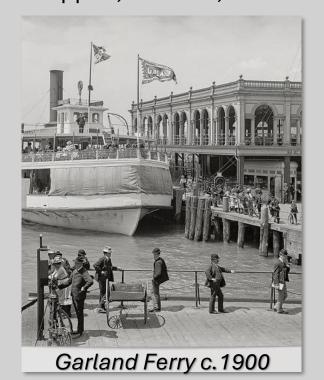




Highland Games – 20th Century

- By the end of the 19th century, the Saint Andrew's Society was holding large public Picnic and games on Bois Blanc Island (Bob-Lo Island), just above the mouth of the Detroit River on the Ontario side.
- The first games in which detailed records were kept were held on August 17, 1905, at Bois Blanc Park, chaired by Henry Gordon
- The Society engaged the services of three ferry companies to ferry 1583 adults and 242 children to the Island on 5 steamers: Pleasure, Promise, Sappho, Garland, and Fortune.





- Financial report for the games showed a revenue of \$1073 versus expenses of \$626 for a net profit of \$449. Largest expense was for boat rental at \$436
- Bob-Lo Island became the primary home of the games until the 1970s, although other venues were used such as Sugar Island (1910), Tashmoo Park (1934), Putin-Bay (1936), and University of Detroit Stadium (1950)
- In the late 1970s the games moved to Historic Fort Wayne, located on the riverfront in SW Detroit. The games remained there until 1991. In 1992 the games were moved to the Edsel & Eleanor Ford House in Gross Pointe Shores
- The games remained at the Ford house until 1996, when the attendance reached 12,000 forcing a new venue. The Society then moved to Greenmead Historical Village in Livonia, which is the current home of the games.

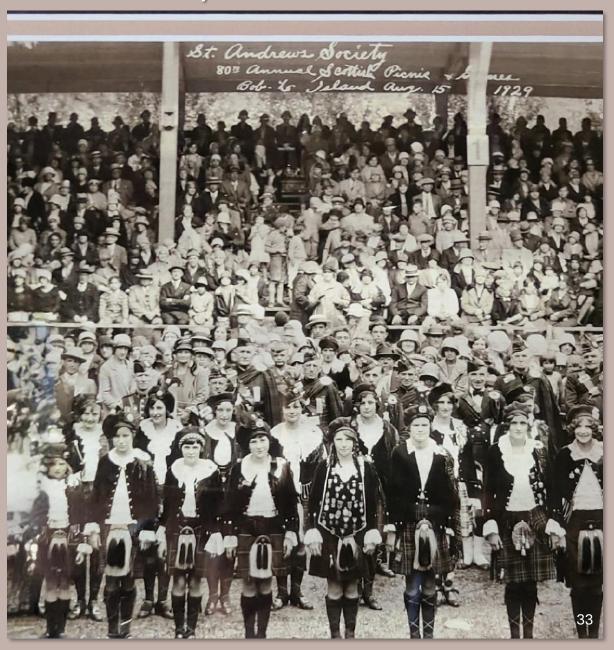


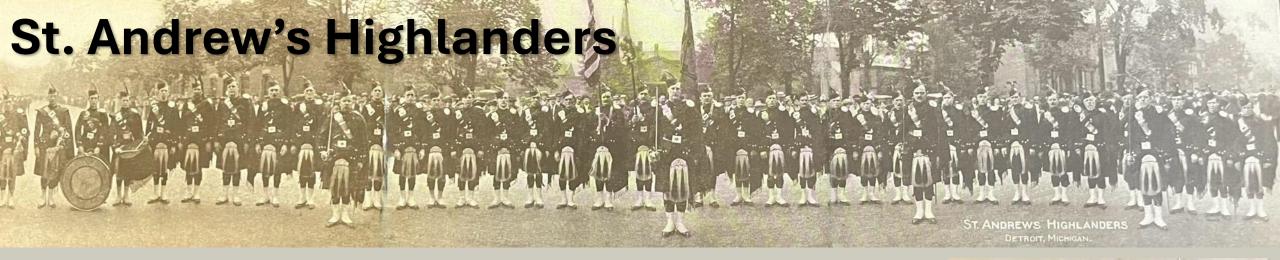


Scottish Games – 1927-1929 (Bob-Lo Island)









- In 1907 eleven enthusiastic members organized the St. Andrew's Drill club, which later became known as the St. Andrew's Highlanders. This was a kilted regimental style drill team that achieved recognition in both the U.S. and Canada.
- All that was required to join was to be a member in good standing of the Society and to submit a written application with two member recommendations. Cost of uniforms was \$25 for tunic, kilt, and hose, and \$1.25 for the cap
- St. Andrews' Highlanders of Detroit

 Delroit, Mich., John 1910.

 Being a member in good standing of St. Andrews'

 Society. I hereby make application for membership in the

 St. Andrews' Highlanders and agree to abide by and obey

 all the laws, rules and orders of said body.

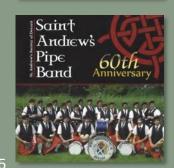
 Recommended by

 Same Andrews Johnson Selburg On Selburg
- Like many large volunteer organizations, the Highlander's had their problems with irregular participation, financial arrears, and alcohol abuse among their members. This came to a head in 1911, when the President of the Highlanders issued a letter to all members prohibiting participation by their more problematic members.
- After World War I, the Highlanders added a a 30-member Pipe Band, many of which were veterans from the war.
- The Highlanders organized their own social events and played a prominent role in the Games and various Society and civic events and parades around Detroit, as well as throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- Highlanders went into decline after WWII, and a pipe band would not be reconstituted until the 1950's

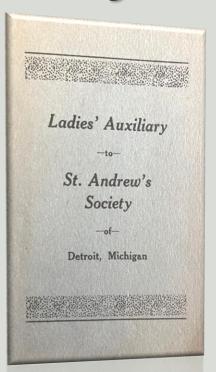


- In 1952, Walter Steward Rose, a professional piper, began teaching Highland bagpipe to the sons of Society members. Within a few years, there were enough players to form a band
- The band went on to make a mark on the the band competition world, winning many prizes, including solo contests by individual members
- Walter passed away in 1966 and the senior piper, John Goodenow, assumed the duties of Pipe Major, and the band had continued success under his leadership
- In the early 1970s, then Pipe Sergeant, Dave Martin, succeeded John as Pipe Major. Dave had begun playing the Highland bagpipe with Walter in 1954 and has been a band member ever since. Dave remains Pipe Major to this day, as well as holding the elected position of Society Piper
- The band released a CD in 2014 to mark their 60th Anniversary and members continue to compete both as a band and in solo competitions. The pipe band performs at functions around the Detroit Metro area, as well as at St. Andrew's Society of Detroit Events.





'Dearly Lov'd the Lasses, O'



- For the first 138 years, the Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit did not allow women into the membership, but that did not mean women were not important to the success of the society in those early years
- By the end of the 19th century, wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters were becoming increasingly important to the mission of the society; whether it was in helping to coordinate society events, organizing fundraising, or supporting the benevolence work, especially in the assistance of Scots widows and orphans.
- In 1903, past society President John Donaldson wrote to fellow members of the noble work of the ladies: "...In them we have a bulwark of strength. With them we have our social enjoyments. They take hold of our schemes for the advancement of our society with power, and work with a will, and invariably lead theses schemes to success..."
- In 1910 the Ladies' Auxiliary to St. Andrew's Society of Detroit was officially organized. Membership was open to Mothers, Wives, Daughters, and Sisters of members in good standing. Initiation fee was \$0.50, with \$2 annual dues paid quarterly. The Auxiliary society established its own constitution and elected officers
- **Three Objectives**: 1) To relieve the distressed and unfortunate of our country women; 2) To promote friendships and social relations among its members; and 3) To be a helping hand to St. Andrew's Society
- Ladies' auxiliary societies were common in the early 1900's, typically associating with larger male-dominated fraternal, religious, or labor groups. These societies allowed women to support and participate in the goals and mission of these organizations from a more socially accepted, gender specific role

Breaking Barriers

- Three years after the ratification of the 19th amendment, the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.) was initially proposed in Congress in 1923 to secure full equality for woman. It was not passed until 1972 but failed to achieve ratification by 38 states by the arbitrary 1982 deadline
- Undaunted, future Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg helped to persuade the Supreme Court in the 70's and 80's to extend the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to prohibit unequal treatment based on sex
- The legal and social developments led to the redrafting of the Society Constitution in June of 1985 to allow woman to join the Saint Andrew's Society; however, it would not be until 1987 before the first woman applied for membership
- That year Florence Margaret Michie Stahl (member 2938) of Gross Pointe Farms was the first woman whose application for membership was approved. Florence was born on the Isle of Skye, as were her parents
- She did not stop there and in September 1996, Florence Stahl became the first female president of the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit.
- Several woman have since followed: Jo Pattison (1999-2000); Margaret (Peg) Dunlop (2001-2003), Jody Kleeman (2004-2005), and Emma Velasco (2018-2022)
- Today woman form the backbone of the Society representing over half of the regular members and volunteers, and 48% of the Society's Officers, Trustees, and Committee Chairs.

Hameless Agin

- Racial tensions in Detroit in the 1960s due to discrimination of black residents in housing, education, employment, and services brought about a turbulent period that culminated with the race riots of 1967.
- This event significantly increased the pace of white exodus from the city to the suburbs, leading to economic desolation in Detroit. From 1966 to 1969, 215,000 white residents left the city, or roughly 13% of its population.
- As population declined, so did membership in the society as members became more and more hesitant to travel to the city for meetings and events. This trend continued through the 1970s and 80s.



- With the hall in disuse, the venue was permanently rented out for concerts starting in the 1980s. By 1990, Saint Andrew's Hall had become famous for bringing trendsetting music to Detroit. The hall was eventually sold to the concert promoters in 1994. Live Nation Entertainment is the current owner of the facility
- Without a meeting hall, the Society once again had to seek out alternate venues for meetings and events.
 Regular business meetings were held in the Commonwealth Club in Warren, or the White Heather Club in
 Ferndale, a Scottish social club (closed in 2007). The Society also rented an office in Southfield, which was
 used for smaller meetings, such as Board of Trustees
- The Society's fortunes, however, would change again in 2005 when the Executive Board received an unexpected notification from an attorney named Stuart Sherman

An Unexpected Gift

- In 2005, the Society received notice from Stuart Sherman, attorney for the late Jane Alt Kilgour, who had died on May 14, 2005, that Jane had left a residuary bequest to the Society of \$1.8M for building a new educational and cultural center promoting the Scottish experience in America. The bequest in honor of her late husband, Glasgow native and former Society member, Thomas Kilgour
- Unfortunately, Jane's daughter, Ann Hogan, challenged the will and the whole matter ended up in probate in Tuscola County
- The case wound up in court on October 10, 2005, where the presiding judge, Wallace Kent, heard arguments from both attorneys. Ann Hogan eventually acknowledged the validity of the will, and the case was settled by an order of the court on January 30, 2006



Thomas Kilgour c.1940 (1911-1994)

- Mike West, architect and former Society President recommended purchasing and renovating an existing building rather than purchasing land and constructing a new hall; however, this needed approval from probate court since it deviated from the specific condition of the will. The deviation was subsequently granted by the court
- The next hurdle was the Society's existing charitable organization designation would have resulted in \$786,468 being paid in estate taxes. The Society membership approved changing the designation to a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, which was subsequently approved by the IRS
- A closed Mountain Jack's restaurant at the corner of Rochester Road and Stephenson in Troy was purchased and the Kilgour Centre renovations were started in September 2009

Oor New Hame – Kilgour Scottish Centre



- The Board of Trustees formed a building committee composed of members Andy Munro, Scott David, Michael West, George Boyd, and Michael Gordon, who was project lead architect
- Gordon was familiar with the original building plans of the restaurant and was able to incorporate much of the original structure in the renovation
- Four stone fireplaces and high beamed ceilings were kept while enlarging the main banquet room and adding meeting rooms.
- Large oak double doors with a stained-glass transom fitted above had been saved from the old Detroit hall and installed at the front entrance.
- Construction was completed in 2010 and the ribbon cutting ceremony and dedication were held on Friday,
 October 8, 2010
- Today the Kilgour Scottish Centre is home to the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit where Society meetings and Scottish cultural events are held. The Kilgour can also be rented for private events.
- The Kilgour also houses the Charles S. Low Library, which is one of the largest private libraries in the country, dedicated to preserving Scottish history, customs, music, and literature, as well as promoting genealogical studies.

The Society Library

- The Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit did not add a formal library and librarian until sometime after 1885 and after they had moved into the space at 12 Woodward Ave.
- In the meeting records from 1849 to 1884, there is no mention of a library. The first mention is not until October 1893 when the Society elected Andrew Gray as Librarian; however, records from the eight-year period between 1885 and 1892 were lost, so it is not known exactly when the position was added.
- The Society clearly did operate a library at the 12 Woodward and 95 W Fort Street locations as there
 are several mentions in the meeting records along with the donation of books being recorded,
 including some early editions of Charles Dickens' work.
- When the Society moved into the Congress Street hall in 1907, a library and reading room were included in the original plan. When the Society moved out, about 65 books were kept, some dating back to the 19th century

FICTION

- In 2010, the family of deceased member, Marv Campbell, donated 250 books to the library from his private collection. In addition, the family of Charles S. Low donated 165 books along with a generous financial donation that supported building bookshelves.
- After the Kilgour opened, a committee was formed headed by Dennis Clements to design the layout
 of a new library and oversee renovation. The committee also worked to sort and catalogue the book
 collection. In May 2011 the library was dedicated as the Charles S. Low Memorial Library and
 opened to Membership

Saving Robert Burns

- The painting of Robert Burns that hangs in the Kilgour was painted by Glasgow-born, Detroit based artist Robert Hopkin (1832-1909) in 1902. The 9 x 10 painting is thought to be the world's largest portrait of Scotland's National Poet
- The painting was a gift to the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit in 1903 and hung on the west wall of the second level Society room at St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit
- The painting portrays Burns as a "Plowman Poet", and the pose is modeled after the 1828 painting *Roberts Burns* by Scottish painter Alexander Nasmyth.
- The background has symbols relating to his early occupation as a farmer, along with scenes from his birthplace in Alloway, which later found their way into his epic poem *Tam o'Shanter* (haunted Kirk and Brig o'Doon)
- When the hall was sold the painting was removed to be preserved in a new location, but many years of cigar and cigarette smoke, and later acts of vandalism, left the canvas darkened, tattered, and torn in about forty pieces
- The project to fund and accurately restore the painting started in 2011, and only reached about half it's goal by 2016, when long time Society member Charles "Chuck" Forbes agreed to complete the funding if we used Viktor Ashmyanets for the job, a restoration artist working on Forbes' downtown theater projects
- On January 17, 2017, the painting left the Kilgour and spent the next two years at Forbes' Colony Club building behind Fox Theater. The restored painting was finally returned in January 2019 to its new home in the Kilgour Centre.





Benevolence

- Benevolence is the Raison d'être for the Saint Andrew's Society, and it is the reason why 175 years ago this
 month 35 prominent Scotsmen from Detroit got together and agreed to organize this Society
- Early benevolence through the turn of the 20th century mainly involved providing financial relief to indigent Scots at the recommendation of a 5-member Board of Managers. Relief was usually limited to \$5 to \$10
- In the lead up to the Civil War, the Society began providing relief to indigent Scots families by offsetting the
 cost of funerals for family members by providing free burial plots in a "Scotch Burial Ground".
- The Society entered into an agreement with the Presbyterian Church, who purchased 168 plots in Elmwood Cemetery on the Society's behalf. A committee was formed consisting of 2 church members and 3 Society members to determine eligibility of the benevolence. It would take 100 years before all 168 plots were filled.
- As the 20th Century progressed through two World Wars and the Great Depression, needs increased, and benevolence shifted from supporting individuals to supporting charities both in the US and in Scotland.
- Today the Society supports over 70 charities providing services for adults, children, and veterans dealing with homelessness, food and clothing insecurity, domestic violence, chronic illness and disability, and mental health/PTSD, along with animal welfare and conservation efforts.
- The Society also provides financial aid through the Kincaid Scottish Arts Scholarship to students and instructors studying and teaching the Scottish Arts. Modest grants are available to pipers, drummers, Highland dancers, harpists, and fiddlers to further their interests and hone their skills.

Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit Charities & Benevolences (2022-2024)



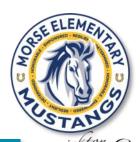






















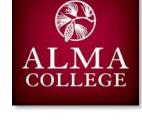






























Concluding Remarks









- For 175 years, the Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit has stood as a pillar of compassion and community strength, dedicated to uplifting those in need, fostering unity, and preserving the history and culture of our Scottish forebears, who scarified much to build a better life in America
- Since its founding in 1849, the society has been driven by the values of benevolence, patriotism, and fellowship, helping generations to overcome challenges and building community through our shared Scottish heritage
- Through Civil and World Wars, social transformations, and a rapidly changing world, St. Andrew's Society has
 remained steadfast, adapting to the needs of the community while preserving a deep commitment to its mission
- With programs addressing everything from educational grants and social services to cultural enrichment and fellow Scot support, the Saint Andrew's Society of Detroit has made a lasting impact on countless lives
- As we celebrate this historic milestone, we honor the legacy of all who came before us, whose generosity, vision, and unwavering commitment help us guide the Society forward in these changing and uncertain times
- We look to the future with gratitude and optimism, eager to build on our shared heritage and expand our community reach, driven by the belief that a compassionate and inclusive society uplifts everyone.
- Thank you to all who have been a part of the Saint Andrew's Society journey here's to the next 175 years!



End





