I sincerely hope you are all enjoying a summer full of sunshine – living in southern California that is not a difficult task. As a transplanted Brit I never tire of waking to see blue skies and warm weather, although we are in dire need of some of the wet stuff.

While the sun does shine in Britain the rain showers are never far off. In fact as I write Britain is experiencing very heavy rain and wind. My cousin in south Wales characterizes it as the “tail end of rubbishy weather from the US.”

Those of you who attended our annual garden party will not need to be reminded what a wonderful event it was. The venue changed this year – we thought it only fair to give Fran and Terry Buchanan a rest from the boisterous men in kilts – to The Sportsmen’s Lodge in Studio City. In addition to a capacity membership turn out we had the pleasure of welcoming U.K. Deputy Consul General Bernadette Greene. The event this year raised funds for Enable Scotland, a Scottish organization that campaigns for a better life for children and adults who have learning disabilities, and their families. Enable Scotland celebrates its 60th anniversary this year and sent us various items for our auction and opportunity drawing, including signed limited edition prints of two paintings by famed Scottish artist Avril Paton. Due to the generosity of the successful bidders the Society will be sending Enable Scotland a check for $2,500.

Following our Garden Party sixteen of our members gathered at the King’s Head in Studio City 27th July for the second of our informal luncheons. We plan to have these once a month, dates will be published on the Society website when arrangements are made. Marc Gibson is the coordinator and you may contact Marc by email — marcg@verizon.net — for more information.

As you are all aware 18th September will see Scots resident in Scotland go to the polls to cast their vote on whether to remain part of the United Kingdom or go it alone as an independent nation. It is a momentous decision and I know you will join with me in wishing voters the wisdom to make a decision that is best for Scotland and Scots who live there.

We have three major events yet to enjoy before the year is out: Seaside Highland Games, Kirkin’ of The Tartans, and our St. Andrew’s Day Dinner. Information on these events including dates and times are included elsewhere in this newsletter and on our website. Please join us at these outstanding events.

—a message from Ian J, Skone-Rees, FSA Scot, President.

In Gear

Morgan 3 Wheeler updated for 2014

Many of you will remember the first article in this column about Dr. John Benton’s Morgan motor cars. He owned two, one of which was the classic 3 wheeler from the 1930s. The iconic design of the...
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British pub par excellence, the King's Head, was the venue for our second informal lunch gathering. We plan to arrange these get togethers each month as an opportunity for members to meet informally and discuss the issues of the day. No advance payment is required, when the announcement is posted just let Marc Gibson know you will be attending, that way he can give the King's Head a count of the expected attendees. Order off the extensive menu, fish & chips, bangers & mash, or the time honoured Scotch egg; salads also available as well as a wide range of British beers. Join us!
The Scottish-American Connection

The Scots were a valuable addition to a developing world. Their past experience of working in the harsh conditions of rural Scotland, combined with their hard-working uncompromising upbringing, made them an ideal people to help build America in its formative years.

The Scottish emigrants of the 18th Century were an educated group due to the Scottish Reformation, which had stressed the need for education, so every Scot could read the Bible.

Education has always played an important part in Scottish society, and these Scots played a crucial role in the early development of the New World. Most headmasters of the schools in the new colonies south of New York were Scottish or of Scottish ancestry. These establishments were fundamental in the education of America’s future leaders; both Thomas Jefferson’s and John Rutledge’s tutors were Scottish immigrants.

In this continuing series of articles we will introduce Scots or persons of Scottish descent who have left their indelible mark on the American landscape – Ed.

Joanne Kathleen (J.K.) Rowling, OBE, 1965 –

Joanne Rowling was born in July 1965 at Yate General Hospital in England and grew up in Chepstow, Gwent where she went to Wyedean Comprehensive. Jo left Chepstow for Exeter University, where she earned a French and Classics degree, her course including one year in Paris. As a postgraduate she moved to London and worked as a researcher at Amnesty International among other jobs. She started writing the Harry Potter series during a delayed Manchester to London King’s Cross train journey, and during the next five years, outlined the plots for each book and began writing the first novel.

Jo then moved to northern Portugal, where she taught English as a foreign language. She married in October 1992 and gave birth to a daughter in 1993. When the marriage ended, she and Jessica returned to the UK to live in Edinburgh, where Harry Potter & the Sorcerer’s Stone was eventually completed. The book was first published by Bloomsbury Children’s Books in June 1997, under the name J.K. Rowling. The “K”, for Kathleen, her paternal grandmother’s name was added at her publisher’s request who thought that a woman’s name would not appeal to the target audience of young boys.

The Harry Potter series comprises seven books: the first Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone was published in 1997 and the seventh in the series Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows was published in 2007. All have achieved record sales, the fourth book in the series, Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire was published on 8th July 2000 with a record first print run of 1 million copies for the UK. It quickly broke all records for the greatest number of books sold on the first day of publication in the UK.

As well as being an OBE for services to children’s literature, J.K. Rowling is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees including the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord, France’s Légion d’Honneur, and the Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award, and she has been a Commencement Speaker at Harvard University USA. She supports a wide number of charitable causes through her charitable trust Volant, and is the founder of Lumos, a charity working to transform the lives of disadvantaged children.

Rowling has recently been vocal on the subject of Scottish Independence and has gone so far as to donate one million pounds to the Better Together Campaign. Rowling said she was particularly concerned about the impact on the economy and on funding for medical research in Scotland. She has donated millions to the fight against multiple sclerosis, the disease that killed her mother. Rowling said the referendum would be an historic moment for Scotland. “I just hope with all my heart that we never have cause to look back and feel that we made a historically bad mistake.”

She, and we, will not have much longer to wait to see how the residents of Scotland see their future, and I am sure all of us echo her wish that the electorate will be armed with the facts and have the wisdom to make the right decision for Scotland.
A Confident Country

As Scotland debates independence, haggis stands as a symbol of the past, and the future.

Associated Press extract - August 3, 2014

On Sept. 18, Scottish voters will decide whether to break up Britain by dissolving a 307-year-old union with England to become an independent country.

The independence debate has made Scots think deeply about the story Scotland tells itself. Do images of bagpipes, tartan and warrior heroes like William “Braveheart” Wallace still speak to a modern, multicultural society? Does Scotland need to shake off the yoke of its neighbor to the south, or is it comfortable clubbing together with England, Wales and Northern Ireland inside the United Kingdom?

The outcome will be decided partly by economic arguments: Would independence make individual Scots, and businesses like iconic Edinburgh haggis purveyor MacSween, better or worse off? But questions of identity and national image also loom large.

Polls have put the No side ahead throughout the campaign, but shown that as many as a million of the country’s 4 million voters are undecided. Recent polling suggests some of the undecideds are moving to the Yes camp — but not enough to ensure victory.

With six weeks until referendum day, Scotland is feeling confident. Glasgow, Scotland’s biggest city, recently buzzed with thousands of visitors to the Commonwealth Games sports tournament. There has been a very un-Scottish heat wave. And English athletes have been cheered almost as loudly as Scottish competitors — a welcome that has even surprised some Scots, steeped in rivalry with their neighbor.

Many Scots now seem happy to laugh at their national icons. The Games’ colorful opening ceremony featured dancing terriers — and a giant haggis.

Some Scottish viewers cringed at the parade of stereotypes, but others looked with a dash of pride at their icons — including the haggis MacSween calls “Scottish charcuterie at its finest,” a delicacy to stand alongside European treats such as salami or serrano ham.

The positive mood may give voters the confidence to vote yes to independence. Or it may encourage them to say no, happy to forge a distinct national identity within the United Kingdom.

“I think whatever the (referendum) result is, Scotland should enjoy the debate about itself,” MacSween said. “I think it shows that Scotland is in a more confident place that it can even have the debate.”
Morgan, from page 1

Morgan Three wheeler has been updated with 21st Century technology. The power train is a 1976cc ‘V-twin’ fuel injected engine mated to a Mazda 5 speed (and reverse) gearbox. This provides smooth ‘get in and drive’ convenience with the thrill of extreme performance.

Some things have not changed. Why change the shape when the Morgan Three wheeler still holds long distance speed records for one litre cars set in the 1930’s? The pronounced aluminium bullet hull and the exposed tubular chassis are accompanied by the aeroplane profile of the car’s sides. The shape is of a gentle yet powerful missile at the front leading to a beetle back tail at the rear.

From the design viewpoint, the focus was set on making the car as close to an aeroplane as possible, while retaining handy extra space for driver, passenger and a hold-all in the rear. The Morgan 3 Wheeler is designed for one purpose alone, to make driving fun. A leather padded cockpit complete with aircraft instrumentation adds to the sense of flying on the road. The car seems to respond as much to thought as physical input. With an estimated 140 Newton metres of torque the motor provides maximum power at minimum revs. When coupled with a weight of 525kgs the 21st century Morgan 3 Wheeler provides unrivalled power to weight for its on the road price. The time is right for Morgan to take a new look at the combination of acceleration, performance and economy. The time is right to drive a Morgan 3 Wheeler.

So how about it Dr. John, time to get a new one!

John and Barbara Grant Awards Program

The St. Andrew’s Society Los Angeles was established in 1930 and is a 501 (c) 3 organization whose mission is to promote Scottish history, traditions, and culture by developing educational and charitable undertakings that nurture relations between the Society, the people of Los Angeles and the greater community.

Recently the Society received a generous gift from the estate of Barbara Grant in memory of her husband John Grant, a past president of the Society. The Society wishes to honor the purpose of this gift by making funding opportunities available to worthy recipients in the form of matching grants.

The matching grants program will provide one-time financial assistance to individuals and organizations in the Southern California community who wish to further enhance their work in Scottish history, traditions and culture.

Full details of the Awards Program and instructions on how to apply are posted on the Society website, www.saintandrewsla.org, where application forms may be downloaded. Details are also available from committee chair Eileen Skone-Rees, eileensr@me.com.

Jobs on The Clyde

Hundreds of Scottish shipbuilding jobs have been “safeguarded” after the Ministry of Defence announced 12th August a new contract worth £348 million.

Three Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) for the Royal Navy will be built on the Clyde, helping secure more than 800 jobs, the UK Government has revealed.

Michael Fallon, the defence secretary, hinted the investment was conditional on Scots rejecting independence, saying: “UK warships are only built in UK shipyards.”

Want to Serve on a Committee?

As with all organizations our society relies on volunteers to help organize and plan events.

Our events require an attention to detail involving among other things, venue selection, invitations, and entertainment. The skills required for this work are varied and include creativity, public relations, and advertising. If you would like to be more involved in the Society by serving on a committee please contact one of the Board members, your contribution is needed.