

***History of  
The House of Scotland***

**Gary McMaster  
1996**



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# History of the House of Scotland

# Introduction

While this is a history of the *House of Scotland*, it has a lot to do with the history of the other Scottish organizations in San Diego, for the history of the House has been deeply intertwined with these other groups. As in all written histories, it is mostly a composition of people—for history is a story of people and they are what mold and compose it.

My only hope is that knowledge of the past will promote more pride in the present and help to build a strong future for the *House of Scotland*.

As in any organization, it was not only the lauded figures in the forefront or on the front page who held the *House of Scotland* together over these many years, making it what it is today, and enabling it to be handed off from generation to generation intact. It was all of the people who have had a vision of what the *House of Scotland* should and could be. All of the people, Scottish-born, American-born, or elsewhere-born, whose pride in Scotland and their Scottish Blood was measured by their dedication to a continuous dream for the *House of Scotland*. They chaired committees, baked shortbread and scones, brewed countless pots of tea, coordinated and ran innumerable public events, dinners, parties and trips; swept, patched and painted away for hours and hours; mounted and manned displays, helped thousands and thousands of curious visitors research their clan history and tartans, served enough tea and sweets to feed Hannibal's Legions and The Golden Horde combined, and kept up continuous conversation with the public to spur peoples' interest in their own Scottish heritage and imbue the uniqueness of it in others.

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# History of the House of Scotland

## 1930's—The Beginning

In 1935, San Diego City Fathers won their bid to host the *California Pacific International Exposition of 1935-1936*. They fought long and hard for the Exposition and it promised to focus the eyes of the world on San Diego. It would bring a great deal of prosperity to local merchants and industry. It would bring tourists from all over the world to this Southern California Mecca, drawn by the romance of the City's Spanish history. There were a great many impressive Spanish revival-style buildings in Balboa Park, which had been built for the Pan American Exposition of 1915, celebrating the completion of the Panama Canal and giving birth to Balboa Park with its impressive bridge entryway and California Tower. Although the twenty-year-old buildings were originally built as temporary structures, they were still in good shape. This infrastructure offered a head start for the new and exciting venture.

As part of the new exposition, a group of cottages was built and called the "Foreign Nations Haciendas." They were the result of the creative genius of John Drugan who envisioned their purpose as illustrating the customs, traditions and history of different nations. Originally, the British Commonwealth Society was formed by local Britons to host one cottage which would combine the cultures of England, Scotland and Wales.

After the successful completion of the exposition many of the structures were to be razed. Mr. Drugan waged a bitter struggle to save his beloved "Foreign Haciendas" from destruction. He formed a group which is now *The House of Pacific Relations, Inc.* (The word "pacific," in this context, used in its meaning of "making or tending to make peace"—not in reference to the Pacific Ocean.) Eventually, this group succeeded in raising the money and other support it needed to keep the cottages going as a tourist attraction and multi-national cultural entity for people to enjoy for many decades to come.

Over the next few years, some of the national cottage groups faded due to lack of membership involvement, and other groups were formed to replace them. The "Cottage of the British Empire" was one of the original cottages, and there were quite a few Scots who belonged to the cottage. A popular local group known as the "Scottish Cronies," who were well-known for their "Burns Night" celebrating the famous Scottish poet's birthday, were active in the cottage at that time. Soon there was a movement among the Scots in the British Empire Cottage to have their own Scottish Cottage, and they began working toward that goal.

All of the coordination and hard work came to fruition in 1938. The actual construction of this new cottage at the mouth of the horseshoe-shaped group of "haciendas" was completed. A fireplace was included as one of the features as the people involved in the planning and construction of the cottage "could not think of a Scottish cottage without one." Mrs. Winifred D. Chessman became "Chairman" of the new Scottish cottage. As word spread that the local Scots had their own gathering place in which they could take special pride, the membership grew.

In 1940, William P. "Pearce" Milligan, a Scot from Glasgow, took over as president of the Scottish cottage. He and his wife Catherine began a long and industrious role in the leadership of the fledgling organization. Pearce served as president of the organization off and on into the early Fifties. Their daughter Shelia is said to have been quite a good Scottish dancer, although she had received no formal training. She recalls those early days growing up at the House of Scotland. She says she remembers fourteen years of accompanying her mother to the cottage every week and watching her mother clean the cottage. It was enough to deter her from ever joining the cottage.

Pearce was a dedicated Mason and rose to the rank of Second Degree in that organization. He and Catherine ran a florist shop next to their home near Greenwood Memorial Park and Cemetery. Her uncle raised many of the flowers that they sold in their shop. As they got older their neighborhood became the scene of more crime and violence. He died of a heart attack when three men robbed and beat him and his wife at their shop, but they left a legacy of dedication, hard work and love of Scotland for our cottage.

### **1940's—Coming of the Bands**

Bagpipe bands entered the picture in 1938, when the Canadian Legion, (the Canadian counterpart of the American Legion, made up of Canadian veterans of World War I) mustered enough local pipers to start the "Canadian Legion Pipe Band," under the direction of Pipe Major Norm Raleigh. The members included John Rosenberger, Archie McKellar (hailing from the small Scottish Highland town of Ballachulish), Stewart Cruickshank, John Doig (a popular piper for many years who hailed originally from Glasgow), Charles Wilson, "Duckie" Holmes, Archie Trunbull (a piper from Glasgow who became the *House of Scotland* president in 1950), and James Eaton. The Legion had a meeting hall by the old park trolley station. It was across Park Boulevard from the East end of the Prado, where the beautiful Balboa Rose Gardens are now. The band held its practices in both of the corner buildings at the West end of the Prado. The building on the southwest corner was, for several years, the home of the small Museum of Modern Art. It was demolished in 1995 and its replacement was completed in 1996. The Spanish style building on the northwest corner was destroyed in the 1960's and is now the site of the San Diego Museum of Art's Sculpture Garden Cafe.

World War II saw a scarcity of pipers who were not called to duty. The *House of Scotland* itself was closed, along with all the other international cottages. The U.S. Navy took control of all of Balboa Park to train seamen. The cottages were used to house officers who were assigned to Balboa Navy Hospital across Park Boulevard. The entire park was a busy scene of sailors being marched about, to and from their training classes. Although the park and the cottages were off-limits, the *House of Scotland*, as well as the membership of many of the other cottages, kept up their regular meetings at members' homes.

When the war ended, the boys came home, and the Canadian Legion Band was started up again, but the Canadian Legion Post was suffering from a membership decline and would not last much longer. As the Legion organization was dismantled, an energetic band member, just out of the Army and bearing the very un-Scottish name of John Rosenberger decided to form another band. Although his name was German, John had a lot of Scots ancestry, especially on his father's side. He was Bandmaster for Helix High School's pipe band and a veteran of Army combat service in the European Theater. With the help of his father, Karl, and accomplished piper from whom John had learned to play, he got to work. He enlisted the help of friend Herb Fuller, who had just spent the war in combat in the South Pacific, and they talked others into joining them, including Stuart Cruickshank, Archie McKeller, John Doig, (whose daughter, Margaret, became a very popular and accomplished local Scottish dancer in the 1950's) John Guthrie and Charles Wilson. They formed their new band in 1946, under the expert direction of Charles Rosenberger. It was christened simply the "San Diego Pipe Band."

Obtaining new sponsorship patronage from the Cameron Clan Association two years later, they changed their name to the "Cameron Highlanders Pipe Band." The "Cameron Highlanders" rose Phoenix-like from the ashes of the Canadian Legion Band to become the most preeminent pipe band south of Los Angeles, where the "L.A. Scots" reigned supreme. The Camerons challenged and triumphed over tough competition to earn a high ranking throughout the State. They began holding their practice sessions behind the Spreckles Organ Pavilion, since the Navy still had hold on most of Balboa Park following the war. As Navy control relaxed, they began regular practice sessions in the original Electric Building, and then the Food and Beverage Building. The Electric Building was usually empty except when it was used for events like the annual "Home Show" or the Junior League rummage Sale. Years later, it housed the original Aerospace Museum, and was later burned to the ground by an arsonist. The building has since been completely rebuilt and is now home to the San Diego Historical Society, the San Diego History Museum, the Model Railroad Association and the Hall of Champions. The Food and Beverage Building, which was right across the street, was another empty hall which saw many a practice session for the Cameron Band and their Scottish dance group. It fell victim to decay and it too was rebuilt. It is now the Prado Building.

In 1949, a lady whose name is, to this day, synonymous with Scottish Highland Dancing, Beth Sutorious, began promoting the art in San Diego with great relish. She was the first teacher of Scottish dance here, with her famous Highland Dancing Association. Her dance academy flourished. Countless youngsters learned the beautiful and spirited dances from her, and many became very accomplished and won innumerable trophies and awards for their talent. Beth is still an honored member of the *House of Scotland*.

Although he did not become a member of the *House of Scotland* until 1953, whenever the "Scottish Cottage" needed a piper during the late 1940's, they would religiously call upon the fine talent of Pipe Major John Rosenberger.

## History of the House of Scotland

By the early 1950's membership in the House of Scotland began to seriously wane. "Pearce" Milligan, his wife Catherine, and a friend Elizabeth Buchan, who had been president of the cottage in 1948 and 1949, had to hold the cottage together by themselves. They worked hard, opening every Sunday, as the House of Pacific Relations threatened them constantly with eviction, or having to share the cottage with another country.

In 1953, after so many years running the cottage had just become too much. The responsibility of running the cottage now became the responsibility of the Cameron Clan and their "Cameron Highlanders." The Camerons moved in to run the cottage, and John Rosenberger became the temporary president in addition to all of his other responsibilities. The Camerons proceeded to improve the cottage, installing new carpeting, new drapes, and a piano donated by George Scott, owner of the Walker-Scott Department Store at 5th and Broadway. The same year, the Mayor declared an annual "Scottish Week" with the festivities beginning with a *House of Scotland* lawn program on the last weekend in October, and ending the following weekend with the Camerons' "Tartan Ball" at the landmark El Cortez Hotel. Mr. Scott convinced other prominent merchants into participating in the celebration, and all during the week pipers and Scottish dancers entertained the public at Walker-Scott and the J.C. Penney in North Park, as well other stores. All of the stores decorated their store windows with Tartan and Scottish-theme displays. A big event of pipe band music and highland dancing was presented in the Electric building by the Cameron Highlanders and their junior group the Cameron Cadets. Rosenberger's Helix High School pipers, the "Helix Highlanders" and Beth Sutorious' San Diego Highland Dancing Association also performed. The Scottish Week was a popular annual event in San Diego for the next ten years.

One year the Cameron Highlanders made a notable presence in a fine production of the popular musical, *Brigadoon*, at the Starlight Bowl in Balboa Park.

After Rosenberger's six months as interim president, John Anderson, a former Glaswegian who worked as a chauffeur in La Jolla, was elected president of the *House of Scotland*. He was followed in 1955 and 1956 by Kenneth MacKenzie, an engineer who was instrumental in the development and testing of a bathysphere, a deep sea observation chamber. In 1957 Mrs. Averill Robinson, who worked a great deal with the San Diego Highland Games, was elected the second woman president in the cottage's history.

In the early 1950's, a tall Scot named John Haywood began dreaming of the promise of America, and a new life. The son of a career Army Officer in Edinburgh, he had enlisted as a lad into the "Boy's Service" to fulfill his military obligation and to learn a trade. By the age of 18 he was not only a topnotch piper, but a feature performer of the "Highland Fling." His father had been Pipe Major of the Seaforth Highlanders, a celebrated Scottish Highland Regiment of Her Majesty's Army. John himself had followed his father into that great regiment, and proudly wore his Seaforth badge the rest of his life. John and his wife Jessie emigrated to San Diego to begin a new life. After arriving in the United States, John secured a job as a teller at the First National Bank. They joined the *House of Scotland* and John

also joined the Cameron Highlanders. John had strong feelings about what he considered too democratic a situation in the Camerons. The Cameron leadership treated all their members equally, but John didn't believe that those members who were under the age of 16 should be allowed to vote. A dispute developed and Haywood and Fuller left the band in 1953, the same year the Cameron Clan took over the reins of the *House of Scotland*. They formed their own group, known as The Gaelic Society Pipe Band.

Old-timers recall the early years when there was a pond where the cement stage in the cottage green now stands. Every Sunday at least one adventurous child had to be fished out of the pond by his parents, much to the entertainment of the other visitors. There was a removable wooden stage which was set up on Sundays, in front of the House of France. The pond was filled in about 1954, and the present permanent stage was constructed on the site.

During the 1950's the *House of Scotland* participated in the House of Pacific Relations annual Fall Festival, and in the annual observance of the United Nations Week, which was highlighted by a big International Show staged at the Spreckles Organ Pavilion.

## **1950's—The Campbell Era**

Soon after the Gaelic Society Pipe Band began, a local car dealer with the very Scottish last name of Campbell offered to fund the band if they would agree to call themselves the Campbell Chevrolet Pipe Band. John Haywood continued on as Pipe Major, and bandsmen like Herb Fuller, Pat and Larry Dolan, Bill McLeod, Bryan Thomson, (who, with his wife currently owns the Bit o' Britain Restaurant in San Diego) Charles McMillan, Kenny Haywood, Andy Marshall, James Marshall, James Naismith, Nathaniel "Nat" Maltman (a Glasgow born and raised shipbuilder, who was for many years a youth soccer coach and *House of Scotland* trustee at age 82), Johnny Bullock who after a long and respected piping career, still plays and marches with the *House of Scotland* Pipe Band), Bill Denying, Gus Lang, Alan Handier, and many others would carry the band through the 1950's and 1960's, with a very close affiliation with the *House of Scotland*, performing for many of its events.

Herb Fuller's daughters, Susan and Nancy, and a lad by the name of Bruce Robinson (now an officer of the San Diego-Edinburgh Sister City Society) marched in front of the Band and danced at its performances while they were growing up. The "Campbells" began to alternate with the "Camerons" in *House of Scotland* events, and both would become regulars in all the local parades, and other events around the Southland.

In 1958, piper Charles McMillan was elected President of the *House of Scotland*. He was one of twelve children born to an Edinburgh plumber. He and his twin brother were enlisted by their father into the Boy's Brigade, where he learned to play the pipes. His family moved to Canada and in 1970, McMillan recalled watching tears come to his father's eyes as the Scottish

Coast faded away into the fog. He looked up and asked his father why he wept. His father looked down and said, "It's because we are leavin' poor Scotland without a fittin' plumber!" Young McMillan learned his father's trade and loved playing the clarinet in a local band with his friends. He later returned to Britain for fourteen years, playing professional soccer and ice hockey. He married Isabelle Tumelty and became a father. He never gave up piping, and his pipe band, the Canadian Argylls of Hamilton, Ontario, eventually won the Champion Cup of the British Isles. He moved his family to San Diego in 1955 because of the climate and joined John Haywood's band, soon becoming a Pipe Major.

The "House of Campbell" was beginning their reign in the *House of Scotland*. John Haywood and his wife, Jessie, became mainstays of the *House of Scotland* and John served as its president from 1959 through 1964. For many years, one of John Haywood's great joys was playing his pipes regularly at Fred and Micky Finn's popular Dixieland nightspot "Micky Finn's." It was located on the south side of University Avenue just east of the Highway 163 bridge, within easy walking distance from John and Jessie's home.

On November 4, 1961, the *House of Scotland* and the other international cottages were the setting for the Second Annual Mistletoe Mart, a fund-raising event for the Bayside Social Center, and dubbed "Christmas Around the World." It was sponsored by a group called "The Social Service Auxiliary," and featured handmade gift items and international entertainment. Piper Johnny Bullock and dancers from the San Diego Highland Dancers performed at the cottage for the visitors.

A sad note struck the hearts of everyone connected with the *House of Scotland* in 1965 when Kenneth "Kenny" Haywood, John's son, born in Edinburgh before his parents emigrated here, was suddenly killed. A terrific young piper in the Campbell Band and full of promise, he was a lad who proudly carried on the family military tradition by showing up in full Campbell regalia, pipes under his arm, to be sworn into the Marine Corps. Months later, as he was about to deploy to Vietnam, he was killed in a fateful air crash. The *House of Scotland* mourned deeply, and a plaque stands at the front of the *House of Scotland* as a monument to Kenny's youthful vitality and Scottish pride.

The Campbells were a popular band at the annual Del Mar Fair, and were invited by Walt Disney to perform in the Main Street Parade at Disneyland. Disney was said to love the pipes, and it should not be forgotten that Disney created an immense popularity for things Scottish in the 1950's with his motion pictures *Rob Roy*, *the Highland Rogue* and *Greyfriar's Bobby*. *Greyfriar's* so touched the hearts of Americans that they were soon over in Edinburgh donating a fitting headstone for Bobby's master. In those days, Disney had an International Day event every year, and Beth Sutorious' Highland Dance Association dancers were regular performers at that event. Campbell Drummer Nat Maltman recalls that Walt Disney was an appreciative host who even insisted that the band members have a part of the theme park which was not open to the general public, all to themselves.

One of the Campbell's annual events was participation in the 4th of July Parade in Coronado. One particular year, they had worked up a powerful thirst during the long hot march down Orange Avenue, and were in the process of nursing their parched throats back to normal at a local watering hole at which they had a yearly standing invitation, when a popular and rather randy member--who shall remain nameless to those who have not hear the story first hand--kept noticing the admiring gaze of two young lasses. He could just feel that "proverbial question" coming. Finally, they mustered the courage to ask what he was wearing beneath his kilt. The bandsman, having apparently quaffed enough spirit to quell any inhibitions he might have possessed, and being an obliging sort, unabashedly whipped up his kilt, thereby graphically answering their question. Holding his kilt apron over his face, he politely asked if they had seen enough. The girls were appeased, and when the howls subsided, the bar keep told the boys that all further drinks would be on the house!

The Campbells were a colorful and fun-loving group, and continued to delight audiences into the Sixties. Then the car dealership changed hands, with the new owner deciding against continuing sponsorship of the band. The band faltered briefly under the sponsorship of a La Mesa Restaurant called "Stuart's," then finally piped its last refrain.

## 1960's—The Junior Band

The Campbells' passing in the late 1960's seemed to leave a void. Burgeoning San Diego was an appreciative audience for pipe bands. The Shriners had a pipe band, and some Cameron pipers like James Naismith, who had emigrated to the U.S. from Canada years earlier with his wife Irene and son Campbell, chose to join them. Some of the former Campbells also joined the band. Jim Naismith had been recruited by the Cameron Clan soon after he moved to San Diego. Formerly in the Boy's Brigade in his native Scotland, he hadn't played the pipes in years, but soon he was good enough for the band. His son Campbell eventually became a very accomplished piper under the tutelage of John Rosenberger.

In 1964, a Scottish emigre by the name of Alex Henderson seized the opportunity to start, under the auspices of the *House of Scotland*, and with the help of Campbell Naismith, who acted as Pipe Major, the *House of Scotland* Junior Pipe Band. It was a band strictly for teens. Alex is well known nowadays as the owner and operator of the Scottish Meat Pie Company, and can be seen with his crew serving his pie dinners to games-goers, and entertaining his friends, from his big red double-decker bus at highland games all over California.

The *House of Scotland* Junior Pipe Band flourished from 1964 to 1971. Alex managed the band with great fortitude, constantly raising money for uniforms and equipment for the young pipers. The plaid chosen for the bands uniforms was the Prince Charles Edward Stuart tartan. John Haywood organized and directed the piping and was the instructor for the majority of pipers. The Pipe Sergeant was Christine Woodward, and the Drum Ser-

geant was George MacMillan. Some of the pipers were John Morton, Alistair Henderson, Dennis Mikolich and Bruce Kleege. Drummers were Bill and Bart Meachum and Mark Weaver, with David Ramsay on the bass drum. Dancers Sheila Naismith and Nevin Kleege performed with the band. Their first public engagement was an exhibition at a “Cèilidh” at College Grove Shopping Center in 1966, where they were awarded a silver cup. The first official competition in which they participated was the Santa Monica Scottish Highland Games on June 25th, 1966. They won 1st Prize in the junior band competition with their winning march, “The Siege of Delhi.”

In the first few years, the band was constantly scheduling fund-raising performances with their dancers, and a great many public engagements. They performed at the opening of the Ocean Beach Pier and for the San Diego Junior Theater production of “The Witch’s Lullaby.” Disneyland appearances, parades, weddings and various international events were typical performances, as well as the annual *House of Scotland* lawn program.

In 1967, several Junior House of Scotland Band members and San Diego Scottish Highland dancers appeared in a pictorial article of the Los Angeles Scottish Games at which they had performed. This, in itself, would have been fine, but the magazine in which it appeared was a racy nudist “girlie” magazine. Apparently, no one had known about the article until the magazine was published. (Also, understandably, no member of the *House of Scotland* ever admitted to being the first person to read the magazine and discover the article.)

## **1970's—Like a Phoenix: The House Of Scotland Pipe Band**

In 1968, the band unfortunately underwent a drastic and traumatic breakup when about one-half of the band moved back to Scotland. This crippled the band considerably, but it was reformed in 1971 as a full pipe band. Some members of that band were amalgamated with members from the former Campbell Pipe Band and others, under Campbell Naismith, to form what has remained since, “The House of Scotland Pipe Band.” Some members in the 1970's and 1980's were Herb Fuller, Jim, Campbell and Shelia Naismith, Bill Bowie, Jim Hamilton, Ken and Jamie Isaac, Duncan Miller, Scott McIver, Tracey McPike, Joyce Bruce, Kurt Hoegar, Jean Bruce,

Sally MacIntyre, Carla Lassman, Geoff and Jerry Richardson, James Moore, and Scott MacKay. Dancers who performed with the band included Margo Naismith, Kay Hamilton, Kelly and Tracy Ciambone, Shawn Day, Carole Wyle, Noelle Brabant and Jennifer Celland. Now, the *House of Scotland* had a bonafide pipe band to carry its name through decades of triumphant competition and public performances all over the southwest.

In addition to running the band, Campbell Naismith would manage the *House of Scotland's* perpetual trophies and plaques which are coveted prizes for the best pipers, drummers and dancers at the annual San Diego Scottish Highland Games. Campbell was voted “Man of the Year” by the House

of Pacific Relations in 1974. John Rosenberger's wife, Yvonne, was voted "Woman of the Year" that same year for her work in the House of France.

In 1965, Elizabeth "Pearl" Butters was elected as president of the *House of Scotland*. An interesting last name. Herb Fuller says he researched it one time and it turned out the Butters were a very influential family in Scotland's history. Pearl was succeeded by Jessie Haywood, Pipe Major John Haywood's wife, who held the office during 1966.

The *House of Scotland Pipe Band* and the Cameron Highlanders Pipe Band would both perform for the *House of Scotland's* annual lawn programs in a "massed bands" presentation until the late 1980's. At that time, professional jealousy seemed to rear its ugly head between the two successful bands, and the Camerons began playing for the House of Ireland's annual lawn programs.

The Cameron Highlanders Pipe Band continues to this day. With John Rosenberger's son Charles, a piper considered among the very best, now at its helm, the enduring Camerons have become the oldest continuous bag-pipe band west of the Mississippi.

In April of 1970, Mayor Frank Curran presented a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of San Diego to the *House of Scotland* for their "contributions to social, educational and cultural life in the community."

## 1975—One Big Stick

The very first San Diego Scottish Highland Games had been held at Helix High School in 1955. The games became very popular, and flourished through most of the 1960's. Pipe bands, highland dancers and other groups from San Diego and the Los Angeles area would participate regularly. A lot of fun was always had, plenty of trophies were handed out to the winners, but there was not much prize money given out. By the late 1960's more and more participants were becoming interested in prize money for their talents, and the games went into hibernation.

In the early 1970's the current San Diego Scottish Highland Games were started. They were held in Balboa Stadium, behind San Diego High School at 12th and Russ Streets. The first secretary of those games was Edna Horlor, later to become a president of the *House of Scotland*. As secretary in 1975, she and her husband Bill were invited to Scotland to attend the Braemar Gathering, the foremost Highland games in the world. The event is held each September at Braemar, Scotland, which is in Royal Deeside, near Queen Victoria's beloved Balmoral Castle. The games are attended annually by Queen Elizabeth and her family, as it was by her royal predecessors. Edna and Bill got along famously with the Braemar committee. They were seated next to the Queen's box. The Braemar officials were very impressed with the fact that Edna Horlor held the position of Secretary of the San Diego Highland games. In Scotland, at that time, a female Game's Secretary was unheard of.

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Since the fledgling San Diego Highland Games were struggling to gain community recognition and support, Edna and Bill were thinking of ways in which to boost their credibility and attraction. Lightning struck when they presented the Braemar people with the idea of San Diego having an authentic Braemar Challenge caber to test the mettle of Scottish-American athletes in San Diego.

In the Cairngorm mountains of Scotland grow the majestic Larch trees, strong and straight. A conifer, the trunks of the Larch had long been hewn into cabers, the unique star of Scottish Highland Athletic Games.

It was finally decided that the Royal Braemar Gathering would indeed honor San Diego with the gift the Horlor's sought.

A fine larch tree was selected, felled by woodsmen, and hewn into a caber stretching nearly 20 feet in length and tipping the scales at over 180 pounds. Most cabers used in competition outside Scotland are fashioned of local materials, and are of lesser weight. The Challenge Caber was then wrapped in burlap and stored beneath the grandstand at Braemar for a whole year as tradition dictates! After the Spring thaw, the caber was unwrapped, inspected and deemed a worthy gift for America. It was then waterproofed and laid to dry.

British Airways agreed to fly the caber to San Diego at no charge in the belly of a Boeing 747. Unfortunately, however, cutbacks removed the 747's from service, and the replacement DC-10's could not accommodate such an unwieldy cargo. Several other attempts at donated transportation failed to materialize. Bill and Edna again used their powers of persuasion, and the membership of the *House of Scotland* agreed to pay ocean freight to San Diego.

From Greenock, Scotland, on the firth of Clyde, the caber crossed the Atlantic, passed through the Panama Canal and up to the Port of San Pedro, California. Then it was trucked down to the Horlor's home in Santee.

Members of the *House of Scotland* drove to San Pedro to sign for the caber when it came off the ship. When they arrived, they found, much to their chagrin, that longshoremen, unaware of what it was, were using the caber to roll large crates of cargo up and down the dock.

Braemar attached no particular rules as to who would be allowed to toss this caber. There was one rule, however, that could never be broken. A challenge caber can never be cut! Custom dictates that if a regular caber cannot be tossed, it can be cut down a bit each year until it can be tossed— but never this one. Some of the finest caber athletes tried tossing this huge caber, year after year. In fact, at least two hefty World Champions tried, but no one ever tossed it! Prize money was offered time and again, and always went unclaimed.

Edna and Bill Horlor had stored the huge caber in their home for a few years. Then they decided to donate it to the *House of Scotland* as a display. The city of San Diego was contacted, and obligingly agreed to install the large iron holders on the wall of the cottage. There were years when the San Diego Games were over, everyone went home and Edna and Bill were left

to lift the huge larchwood caber up to replace it in the rack by themselves. Bill Horlor says that while it was stored at his home, he hauled it out into his back yard for fun. After finally getting it up on end, he struggled for a while and managed to lift it, but when the heavy top end started to head for the roof of his house, he had to push it away and let it drop. “I could just see myself having to pay to have my roof repaired,” he now laughs “if that thing had fallen on it.”

There are only three more of these challenge cabers in existence, one in Tokyo, one in Australia, and one in Jakarta, Indonesia. Those others are said to have been obtained only after much official government maneuvering. But ours was obtained just by two dedicated San Diegans and dedicated *House of Scotland* members, and it is the most massive in the world—a true challenge!

The Challenge caber was retired for a while, then the *House of Scotland's* Jim Scrimgeour took it to the Games a few times during the early 1980's. It was not put into competition again until the San Diego Scottish Highland Games of 1996, at Rancho Santa Fe Park in San Marcos, California. President Gary McMaster, Vice-President Ted Wilson, and Kit Brainard, husband of secretary, Joni Brainard, were responsible for its entry. Gary McMaster corresponded with Mr. William Meston, Secretary of the Royal Braemar Gathering, on procedures, and coordinated with Mr. Ray Pearson, Chieftain of the San Diego Games. The Scottish-American Athletic Society was in charge of the athletic events, and supervised the competition. Ted and Kit loaded the caber on top of Ted's VW van and president McMaster followed the van to San Marcos to be there if it fell off. Ted and Gary carried the caber into the park and set up the *House of Scotland* tent and displays, with the Challenge Caber on stands in front of the tent. On Sunday, after all of the traditional caber turning was over, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of the Class A competition and the 1st place winner of the Class B competition got to attempt to turn the Braemar.

Thirteen attempts were made by the athletes. A great deal of very loud huffing and puffing was heard as the contestants brought all of their concentration to bear against this formidable rival, and two of them managed to lift, balance, run with, and flip the giant caber skyward. None were able, however, to turn the giant to a complete perpendicular position. It fell backward each time with a healthy “thud,” with the competitors running for cover. The \$500 in prize money offered by the *House of Scotland* remained unclaimed. (A big sigh of relief was said to have been heard from the treasurer John McColly.) All of the officers of the *House of Scotland* were pleased that the Braemar Caber once again was doing what it was made for, especially V. P Wilson, who initially suggested the idea. There had been apprehension that after sitting through so many hot Southern California summers, the caber might split, but it held up perfectly. Only a couple of new nicks were observed on the wide end when it was put back up in the cottage. There was a decided bow in the Caber, so when it was repositioned in its great iron racks in the cottage it was set with the bend up so that it might straighten in time. President Gary McMaster was able to take the first photos of the Caber in competition for the *House of Scotland* photo al-

bum. Mr. Meston of the Braemar Royal Highland Society was sent copies of the photos and informed of how the competition went.

## More 1970's—The Trophies

The President of the *House of Scotland* in 1970 was Harold Stuart, a former Navy Lieutenant Commander who was one of the few survivors when his Cruiser was sunk during World War II. He limited the keys to the cottage and could be found at the Park every single Sunday, rain or shine, opening the cottage for the hosts. He went on to become a president of the House of Pacific Relations, and in later years was a *House of Scotland* trustee. His first two years as president were followed by the election of Scottish-born Andrew Marshall. The following year, Stuart took over again for another year, followed by two terms by Irene Naismith, wife of piper James Naismith. The Naismith Targe, a perpetual trophy established by Irene in memory of her husband Jim just after his death, is a much coveted prize for piping at the San Diego Highland Games. Jim had come over to the *House of Scotland Pipe Band* from the Shriners' Pipe Band at the urging of his son Campbell, then Pipe Major of the *House of Scotland Pipe Band*.

In 1976, Betty Craig, who was active in the Daughters of Scotia, an auxiliary of the Cameron Clan, began serving three terms as President. She was followed by Geoff Richardson, who served for one year.

In the 1970's, the *House of Scotland* administered the award of a large perpetual silver loving cup provided by British Overseas Airways Corporation for caber turning. We still administer the award of the esteemed Kenneth Haywood Memorial Cup for the Best Aggregate Amateur Piper at the San Diego Highland Games, established in memory of the beloved young piper and son of John and Jessie Haywood. The *House of Scotland* also administers the large *House of Scotland* perpetual plaque for Best Drummer of the Day and the *House of Scotland* Award for the Best Sword Dance at the San Diego Highland Games. The winners names are inscribed on these trophies each year, and normally the trophies themselves are returned for display in the *House of Scotland*, while the winner keeps a specially made smaller "keeper" trophy or plaque. These awards are awarded in person to the winners by the president of the *House of Scotland* in the public awards ceremony at the Games. If any of the perpetual trophies are taken home, the coordinators of the various events at the Games ensure that they are brought back the following year.

Until now, all too little has been said about all the wonderful and popular Scottish Dance groups which have flourished during the history of the *House of Scotland*. Beth Sutorious' has truly been the "Grand Dame" of Scottish Dance in San Diego. Bruce Robertson, a popular young student of hers who preformed at countless *House of Scotland* events with the pipe band in the 1950's and '60's, recalls that Beth's huge dance school was enormously popular. It was so well run and full of so many excellent dancers that it was constantly called upon to provide entertainment for not only events all over San Diego, but all over Los Angeles as well.

In the 1970's With Campbell Naismith as Pipe Major of the *House of Scotland Pipe Band*, his wife Margo became teacher to the dancers who performed with the band. Chrissy Ambler gradually took over from Beth in later years and developed dancers for the Cameron Highlanders Pipe Band, and other teachers of Highland Dance and Scottish Country Dance flourished. Although originally Highland Dancing was done mostly by boys in Scotland, boys have traditionally had little encouragement to dance in the United States, so most pupils are girls. Of course, the Scottish Army Regiments still are well known for their young soldiers who perform the Sword Dance, and all the "Jocks" are very proud of this very fine tradition.

In 1980, James McNish, a member of the U.S. Navy, was elected President of the *House of Scotland*. Many years later, a friend of McNish recalled that when McNish was sworn in he was given a bottle of "McNish Whisky" as a present to christen his term, and he had a bit of trouble finding his chair when he went to sit back down (some scamp had apparently moved it).

Nineteen eighty-one saw Edna Horlor, the former San Diego Highland Games Secretary, begin two consecutive terms as President. During her second year in office, the *House of Scotland* was awarded membership in the Commonwealth Club of San Diego. Bob Maxton served the *House of Scotland* as its president in 1983 followed by another term for Edna Horlor.

## **1980's—Christmas on the Prado**

Nineteen eighty-four saw the beginning of the annual celebration of "Christmas on the Prado" in Balboa Park. The *House of Scotland Pipe Band* began opening and hosting the *House of Scotland* for the three day and evening event, offering huge throngs of visitors a wide array of Scottish foods and drinks. Pipe Major Campbell Naismith continued to manage and lead the *House of Scotland Pipe Band* through the 1980's as he had done since 1964. Earning a great deal of respect for the Band, they were proclaimed the "Official Band of the House of Pacific Relations," and were selected to play for Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II when she visited Balboa Park during her official visit to San Diego.

Benjamin Hess was elected as president of the *House of Scotland* in 1985, and the next year the House of Pacific Relations Annual Food Fair was begun. The *House of Scotland* began setting up a tent on the green to sell Scottish meat pies, and an array of mouth-watering Scottish-style desserts provided by members.

## **1990's—A Time of Change**

The late 1980's into the early 1990's saw many changes to the *House of Scotland*. Under President Louisa Lawson, an English war bride whose father was Scottish-born, many improvements were made. She held office for nine years from 1986 through 1994. A refrigerator was added to the cottage, as well as new carpeting and curtains. A microwave oven was donated, re-

paired and put into operation. Iron bars were installed on all the windows and doors to keep the cottage safe since it had been burglarized a couple of times in the past. The *House of Scotland* was the second cottage to install a TV/VCR for the public. Many Scottish travelogues and other Scottish video tapes were copied by Greg and Ramona Weir for showing to our many visitors on Sundays. The main display case was repaired and filled with Scottish items and a display on the distilling of Scotch was added in another case. All the pictures were replaced with new frames, and new ones added. The serving counter was made more attractive, and there was much painting and repairing going on. With other improvements, the *House of Scotland* took on a very upscale look, thanks to support by the membership and painstaking work by trustee Gary McMaster. The bathroom was completely remodeled by John McColly and Ian Sinclair.

President Lawson allowed "Bydand Forever," a reenactment group which portrays Victorian Era Scottish soldiers of the Gordon Highlanders Regiment, to set up a display during the *House of Scotland* lawn program. In successive years, they would be allowed to take on the added role of Color Guard for the lawn program.

In 1991, after 27 years as the "guiding light" of the *House of Scotland Pipe Band*, Campbell Naismith felt it was time to step down, and Dr. Bill Graham assumed the role of Pipe Major. Campbell chose to join the illustrious "L.A. Scots" Pipe Band to continue playing in competition.

Mayor Maureen O'Connor awarded the *House of Scotland* a "Special Commendation" in April of 1992 for hosting visitors to San Diego's "America's Cup" celebrations.

In 1993, the *House of Scotland* was host to Mr. Charles Kennedy, President of the World Federation of Burns Clubs. He was visiting San Diego from his home in Cardenden, Fife, Scotland. The Burns Club World headquarters is in Kilmarnock, Scotland. In August of 1995, under the Presidency of Oban, Scotland, born Ian Sinclair, Vice-President John McGruer arranged a history-making tour of Scotland for members of the *House of Scotland*. It began in Edinburgh with a personal audience with Sir Norman Irons, Lord Provost (Mayor) of Edinburgh. Members got to sign the Official City Guest Book alongside signatures of American Presidents and other high-ranking dignitaries from around the world. President Sinclair presented the Lord Provost and his wife with a color copy of Gary McMaster's pen and ink of the *House of Scotland*, framed with a group photograph of *House of Scotland* members posed in front of the Cottage. He also presented an official proclamation from Susan Golding, Mayor of San Diego. Sir Norman, in return, presented President Sinclair with a beautiful silver whiskey flask embossed with the gold seal of the City of Edinburgh, now on display in the cottage.

The coach tour lasted two weeks, and took members all over Scotland on an unforgettable experience. A few days after members returned to San Diego, the Lord Provost and his lovely wife returned the visit by dropping by the *House of Scotland* during his official San Diego tour. They were hosted by President Sinclair and his wife Jessie. As president, and as vice-president

before that, Ian Sinclair offered many opportunities for *House of Scotland* members to get together and have fun, by arranging bus tours to Laughlin, Nevada, and Knott's Berry Farm, an evening at the San Diego Symphony, and other fun events.

Over the years, members of the *House of Scotland* have often represented the organization by marching with their Irish cousins in the annual San Diego St. Patrick's Day Parade and other city parades. Often, they were called upon to provide displays or just members in ethnic dress for various civic events sponsored by colleges, grade schools, Convention and Tourist Bureau, or by various business and civic groups.

When Gary McMaster was elected President in 1996, he set as a priority the consolidating of the comprehensive history of the *House of Scotland* from many sources. All the existing items in the archives of the San Diego Historical Society had to be examined. The older members of the House had to be interviewed. Many photograph albums had to be gone through so that photographs could be copied. The writing, re-writing, and editing had to be done, with constant additions and changes being made. The photos and records were brought into the house to be used in the written history and saved in *House of Scotland* files to be created in the Historical Society archives. This will allow records and information on the *House of Scotland*, to be separate from the existing House of Pacific Relations records, and to be better controlled and maintained.

Another priority of President McMaster was to compile, for the benefit of the public, a directory of Scottish-type business and services available in San Diego County. When all of those Sunday visitors to the cottage come in asking "Where can I buy a kilt?", or "Who do I talk to about hiring a piper or Scottish dancer for my wedding?", or "Is there anywhere in San Diego where I can get haggis?", or "Is there a British pub where we can have lunch while we are in town?", the host or hostess has all of that information readily available right there in the cottage all of the time. All of this is being done to serve the members and the public, and to maintain the *House of Scotland* at the level where it should be, as the center for Scottish culture and information in Southern California— and keeping it there for many more decades to come!

Bill Graham, after a successful reign as Pipe Major of the *House of Scotland Pipe Band* passed the role to Merri Miles at the end of 1966, but remained as a piper in the band and continued to perform solo at many civic events as well.

August of 1996 saw the first annual *House of Scotland* Picnic, held on the lawn in front of the cottage on a Saturday afternoon. It proved a great success, with grilled bangers and lots of other good food brought by members. A raffle was held. Everyone had a great time and President McMaster planned another one for the following year.

Nineteen ninety-seven saw the introduction of a series of potluck suppers at the cottage when members gathered to screen movies with a Scottish theme. The first movie screened was *Whisky Galore*, a movie about a Scottish town gone dry because of wartime rationing, that had the good fortune

to have a ship load of whisky run aground on a nearby shoal. Other movies were screened every two months. Nineteen ninety-seven also saw Gary McMaster serve his second term as president, with Theodore "Ted" Wilson as Vice-President, Joni Brainard as Secretary, Deborah Hill as Treasurer, and Joan McColly as Editor of the Newsletter. Gwenda Measel performed duties as Hosting Chairperson. Officers and members manned displays at local school multi-cultural events, and a large impressive display at the San Diego Highland Games in June as they had the year before. The Braemar Challenge Caber was entered into competition again but was not successfully turned. A large food tent was set up for the annual House of Pacific Relations Ethnic Food Fair, and although the date conflicted with the Costa Mesa Highland Games, we had a fine turn out of volunteers and the event turned out to be a very prosperous one, with 200 of our Scottish Meat pie dinners selling out by 1 pm.

In July, the Scottish sister group of the San Diego- Edinburgh Sister City Society came to San Diego for the annual Sister Cities Convention, which was held at the Town & Country Hotel in Mission Valley. They brought with them an exact replica of the Greyfriar's Bobby, made famous in the Disney movie of the same name in the 1950's, and presented it to Mayor Susan Golding in her office. The statue is to be set up in a local San Diego park. A plan was discussed to have a statue made of the famous San Diego dog "Bum" and to have a copy of that statute sent to Edinburgh. At the presentation in the Mayor's office, *House of Scotland* president Gary McMaster also presented the Mayor with a copy of the book *Greyfriar's Bobby: The True Story*, which he had just brought back from Edinburgh. He also donated a copy of the book to our cottage as a reference book. During the opening ceremonies of the Sister Cities Conference at the Spreckles Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park, and at some of the other associated events, four young girls from Edinburgh, who were all premier Scottish dancers, performed Highland dances. After the opening ceremonies, Chrissy Ambler, President of the San Diego-Edinburgh Sister City Society, brought the girls to the *House of Scotland* for a visit and photo session, and President McMaster invited the adult representatives from Edinburgh down as well. Bob and Carol Yaremko hosted the party that evening and a good time was had by all.

The City indicated that the cottages would be refurbished in the fall and President McMaster and Vice-President Wilson scraped and spot-painted the outside of the cottage to ensure it would appear immaculate until the repairs could be completed. President McMaster also landscaped around the cottage with bedding plants.

On a sad note, John McGruer, former *House of Scotland* Vice-President, passed away, and Joan McColly, an accomplished harpist, penned a lovely song in his honor. Harold Stuart, former President of the *House of Scotland* also passed away in 1997. His funeral was held at Fort Rosecrans with full honors, with President McMaster representing the *House of Scotland*, and former president Bob Maxton, who had worked with Mr. Stuart, played the bagpipes.

When President McMaster received military orders to move north to Paso Robles in September 1997, Vice-President Wilson took over the reigns of

the organization for the remainder of the year. The annual lawn program was a success as a record crowd showed up on a warm October afternoon to sample Scottish Meat Pies and to be entertained by the *House of Scotland Pipe Band*, Bydand Forever, Margo Campbell's highland dancers, Bob Burns, Ted Banks and Patric Petree. The annual election of officers in November saw Ted Wilson elected president, Joni Brainard, Vice-President, Carole Yaremko, Secretary and James Scrimgeour, Treasurer. Merri Miles, the pipe band's pipe major, was elected member of the year, reflecting the success of the pipe band, which, under her leadership, won every competition it entered for the year, including the Western Regional Championship.

## History of the House of Scotland

## Afterword

Oh, I know, I know. You're probably asking "Gary, if you were going to spend all this time and effort on something, why didn't you do something which could make you some money?" Well, I asked myself that a couple of times. Originally, it was my idea to put together a 2 or 3 page history hand-out that could be given to new members. But the more I got into it, the more I realized that sixty years of history could not be encapsulated into such a brief format. Furthermore, it just wouldn't be justice to let all of this history escape forever. And since all of this time had gone by and no one had composed anything before for the benefit of the entire organization, I figured it was high time that it be done. When I was a teenager, the *House of Scotland* sparked the interest of my older brother and I in our Scottish heritage, and I guess I figured that it was about time to try and pay it back.

Even more importantly, I guess, I figured we had better get a lot of the good deeds and accomplishments of the *House of Scotland's* members down on paper before it got away from us and faded into the past, unnoticed. I hope that this is only the beginning, and that our written history is continually carried forward on a regular basis, documenting all of the wonderful things members will accomplish in the future.

Gary McMaster

# History of the House of Scotland

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The San Diego Historical Society  
The San Diego Union Tribune

# History of the House of Scotland

## **Appendix A**

### **Presidents of The House of Scotland**

1938	Mrs. Winifred D. Chessman
1939-1947	Wm. Pearce Milligan
1948-1949	Elizabeth Buchan
1950	Archibald Turnbull
1951-1952	Wm. Pearce Milligan
1953	John Rosenberger
1954	John Anderson
1955-1956	Kenneth Mackenzie
1957	Mrs. Averill M. Robinson
1958	Charles Mcmillan
1959-1964	John Haywood
1965	Elizabeth (Pearl) Butters
1966	Jessie Haywood
1967	Mrs. A. Anderson
1968-1969	John Byrce
1970-1971	Harold Stuart
1972	Andrew Marshall
1973	Harold Stuart
1974-1975	Irene Naismith
1976-1978	Betty Craig
1979	Geoff Richardson
1980	James McNish
1981-1982	Edna Horlor
1983	Bob Maxton
1984	Edna Horlor
1985-1994	Louisa Lawson
1995	Ian Sinclair
1996-1997	Gary McMaster
1997	Ted Wilson

# History of the House of Scotland

## **Appendix B**

### **Kenneth John Haywood Memorial Cup**

## **Grand Aggregate Amateur Piping**

### **San Diego Scottish Highland Games**

1974	Lane Bittick
1975	Tim Huntley
1976	Lane Bittick
1977	Lane Bittick
1978	(Not Awarded)
1979	Eric Rigler
1980	Eric Rigler
1981	Argyle Watterston
1982	Frank Gordon
1983	Frank Gordon
1984	Frank Gordon
1985	Kevin Weed
1986	Kevin Weed
1987	Colt Carter
1988	Colt Carter
1989	Alan Weidlich
1990	Alan Weidlich
1991	Charles Micka
1992	Charles Micka
1993	Charles Micka
1994	Ian Rawlinson
1995	Ian Rawlinson
1996	Decker Forrest
1997	Robert Hackney



## **Appendix C**

# **House of Scotland Award for Best Drummer of the Day**

## **San Diego Scottish Highland Games**

1982	Robert Rez
1983	George McMillan
1984	Mary Cappercauld
1985	Duncan Millar
1986	Jon Carter
1987	Robert Rez
1988	Kennith Kimery
1989	Hamish Yule
1990	Kennith Kimery
1991	Jay Pennington
1992	Jay Pennington
1993	Hamish Yule
1994	David Ambler
1995	Duncan Millar
1996	Eli Fugate
1997	Anjulia Kapur

# History of the House of Scotland

## **Appendix D**

# **House of Scotland Amateur Perpetual Trophy for Best Sword Dance**

### **San Diego Scottish Highland Games**

1964	Carolee Meacham
1965	Nan McColl
1966	Nan McColl
1967	Margo Milligan
1968	Nan McColl
1969	Margo McColl
1970	Margo Milligan
1971	Nan Nccoll
1972	Kim Cameron
1973	Kristine Stotts
1974	Lisa Sprague
1975	Kristie Ross
1976	Fiona Nash
1977	Cathy McColl
1978	Kay Shofner
1979	Fiona Nash
1980-82	Not Awarded
1983	Maureen Stephen
1984	Harry Farrar
1985	Janeen Hynd
1986	Laura Carruthers
1987	Stephanie Cruickshank
1988	Tara Christensen
1989	Erin Prinn
1990	Brooke Lingle
1991	Vanessa Rez
1992	Melissa Webster
1993	Melissa Webster
1994	Melissa Webster
1995	Melissa Webster
1996	Melissa Webster
1997	Jennifer Miller

