



NOVEMBER 2018 RSCDS HAMILTON RANT



MacCrimmon Piping on the Isle of Skye

The beautiful Isle of Skye is a large mountainous island in the Inner Hebrides on the north-west coast of Scotland. For many years, access to the island was by ferry but there is now a bridge spanning the water channel making reaching the island much more convenient but far less interesting and romantic.

The mountain ranges on the island are the Red Cuillins and the Black Cuillins. They are a mountain climber's dream as they are very challenging with spectacular views from the summits. Gaelic is still spoken and the sign posts are bi-lingual.

MacLeod of MacLeod, who lives in Dunvegan Castle, is a major clan chief on the island, although there are several others.

For countless generations the MacCrimmons have been the hereditary pipers to the Macleod Clan chief. They have an outstanding record of being exceptional pipers and for many years held a Piping School at Borreraig where they trained many fine pipers from all over the Scottish Highlands.

The MacCrimmon piping dynasty is honoured in the form of a cairn built overlooking Loch Dunvegan, close to the site of the Piping School at Borreraig. The present hereditary piper is Iain Norman MacCrimmon from Calgary, Alberta and he is reputed to be the tenth hereditary piper to the MacLeod Clan chief of the modern era.

Dunvegan Castle is well worth a visit if you are on Skye as it is open to the public and you can see many of the historical and interesting items on display.

There are many Scottish dances associated with Skye including 'Dunvegan Castle', 'Isle of Skye' and 'The Cuillins of Skye'.



Black Cuillins Ridge



Sligachan Old Bridge



Walking Tours on the Isle of Skye



Dunvegan Castle

Tartan Tales

Clan MacLeod & MacCrimmon Clan Piper



Ian Norman MacCrimmon - Tenth Hereditary MacLeod Clan Piper

The Haunted City of Hamilton

Hallowe'en has come and gone along with all the goblins, fairies, witches and many other 'Trick or Treaters', but the *Ambitious City* has its own share of spectres who do not observe October 31st as a special day of the year.

Hamilton's ghostly apparitions are liable to show up at the most inopportune times and in the strangest places. The **Tivoli Theatre** on James Street North was home to the ghost of Mr. Ambrose Small who mysteriously disappeared in 1919. Many years later, in a disused part of the theatre, an old, worn steamer trunk was discovered in the basement in which there was a skeleton matching Ambrose Small's slight stature. When a forensic team from Toronto was summoned, the bones strangely disappeared before the team reached Hamilton. The Tivoli is no longer there, but Mr. Small had been seen wandering the building by countless people on many occasions, easily recognized by his bowler hat, 'Salvador Dali' moustache and his small build.

Located on Fennel on the Mountain is Isaac Buchanan's spectacular five gabled mansion, **Auchmar**, built in 1854. This property has many ghosts including a young girl who haunts the whole house and has been heard on many occasions, giggling and even speaking. This building is so scary that a film crew making a TV movie in the house refused to continue working there because of all the 'extras' that would appear on the set.

Hamilton Place, the downtown theatre, although a relatively new building, has its own ghost. The '*Lady in Red*' has been seen wandering down the aisles and on the stage by many patrons and staff. No-one seems to know who she is or where she came from. So beware, if you attend a show there be careful of the person sitting next to you.

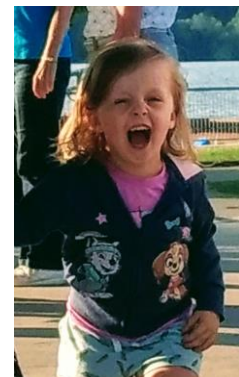
Skeptics reading this copy of the Hamilton Rant should wander down to the north end of the city to the old **Customs House** on Stuart Street, where they may become believers when they feel their clothing being tugged by a young boy who giggles at them or '*The Dark Lady*' who walks about the building. There are reportedly over 25 ghosts in this old property seen by countless members of the public.

There are many other eerie places in Hamilton where spectres are often seen, each with their own strange story, so if you are wandering along the streets and buildings of Hamilton, be very wary of strangers. They may not be as real as you imagine them to be.

Scottish Quiz

1. Who was 'Bonnie Dundee'?
2. Where did Robert the Bruce witness the spider trying to make its web?
3. What is the most northerly point on mainland Britain?
4. Which bird of prey breeds only in Scotland?
5. What is a Finnan Haddie?

JUST
FOR
LAUGHS





The COM broke into the piggy bank to bring you another story from the *Roving Reporter*! Sticking with the topic, *“Where did YOU travel to, to dance Scottish this year??”*, the *Roving Reporter* reports on Hamilton dancers who travelled to the **Pawling New York workshop weekend**.

Kathleen Noble, Peter Playford, Scott & Cate Reid, J’ina Middleton and Sheila Richards travelled to the 55 Annual Pawling Workshop, May 11 to 13

Q: Where in NY State is the Pawling weekend held?

A: The workshop has recently moved to Berkshire Hills Camp in Copake NY.

Q: How long of a drive is it from Hamilton?

A: It took us about 7 ½ hours to get there.

Q: Did you all cozy up in one vehicle

A: No, we took 2 cars – Kathleen & Peter in one, Scott, Cate, J’ina and Sheila in the other.

Q: Is it a “camp” as in “tent camping and outhouses”?!

A: I can’t speak for everyone else, but I don’t *do camping*. Berkshire Hills Camp is a large gated community with a private lake and lots of wooded areas and trails. We stayed in clean, heated cottages.

Q: Did you have to cook your own food?

A: No, all meals were included. They were buffet style.

Q: Tell us more about the dance activities

A: There was a welcome dance and party Friday night. The workshop was Saturday with a dinner and ball that evening and an afternoon dance Sunday. Lots of dancing!

Q: Would you recommend this workshop weekend to Other Hamilton dancers that have never been? And why?

A: Yes, it’s one of my favourites. I’ve been going for 35 years! The people are warm and friendly and the quality of lessons and dancing is very good. There were about 110 dancers this year so you got to renew old friendships and make new ones. 3 teachers means different styles & concepts of teaching, which was nice.

Q: Off the record... usually “where Peter goes, a story follows”. Is there a “Peter Story” you can share?

A: LOL! Not if I want to stay friends with Peter...



The Hamilton Group at Pawling



All decked out for the Ball



These beautiful posters with the dance titles were on the walls instead of a program

REMEMBERING DANCING ON THE DOCK OF 2018



Never too young to start SC dancing!!



LOTS OF NEW FACES!
LOTS OF SMILES!
Beautiful weather, great scenery.
LOTS OF FRIENDS!
LOTS OF FUN!
Another successful
"Hamilton Branch
Dancing on the Dock"
month of August 2018!



Photos courtesy of our "unofficial" branch photographer, Diana McKenzie

The Health & Wellness Corner

Thanks to ads from Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Canadian Tire, we have come to associate the fall season with organizing and getting back into routines. The long, hot days of summer disrupted our routines and lured us outdoors with promises to tackle the *HONEY-DO* list in September – but here it is November!

Maybe your TO-DO list included: painting the kitchen, or purging closets, cleaning the garage, or hemming curtains...Oh. Yes. That's me. Replacing a leaky faucet, or fixing the doorbell...Oh. Another "me".

Maybe you promised yourself you'd join a yoga class, or a hiking or outdoor club, get back into bike riding, or go to the gym. For those WHO DIDN'T get back into the groove in September, here are some motivational catch phrases that might just help you to stop procrastinating and *JUST DO IT!*

Procrastinating...The act or habit of putting off to a future time; delay; dilatoriness

Strength shows, not only in the ability to persist, but in the ability to start over.

Challenge yourself to learn to do new things.

Life is a garden. It is an opportunity. You can grow weeds, you can grow roses, it all depends on you.

Give yourself permission.

Maybe you need to ask yourself, "Who am I?" Do you need to find the new YOU?

Count your accomplishments at the end of the day and congratulate yourself!

Don't put off your dreams – no one knows what tomorrow holds.

Find something that challenges and stimulates

Learn to appreciate what you have before time makes you appreciate what you had.

Make appointments for yourself, mark it on the calendar and **KEEP** them!

Put yourself first once in a while. Remember you are #1!

If the BIG PICTURE is overwhelming, divide it into steps and take one step at a time.

Complaining changes nothing! **TAKE ACTION!**

THE POWER OF CHOICE!
How you decide to live, is *a choice*.

Structure and routine may no longer be defined by your work. But it doesn't mean you don't need them in your life. Redefine your routine to match the **YOU** of today.

Set goals – they give you a road map to a destination.

What is your sense of purpose? What makes you get out of bed every morning?

Do something today that makes you feel fulfilled!

Step back. To see the picture clearly.

Lacking self-esteem? Think about what you are/were good at at work and apply the same skill sets to your real life today. Take charge.

Forgive yourself

"Own the feeling"

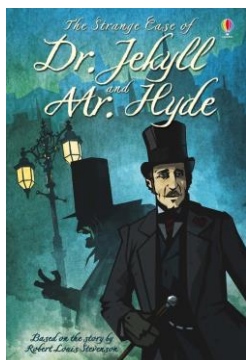
A WEE BIT OF SCOTTISH FOLKLORE

William Brodie was a fine upstanding and highly respected gentleman, who was an excellent cabinet-maker and was president of his Tradesman's Guild, enabling him to be called a Deacon. Because of his high position in the Guild he was entitled to be a member of Edinburgh City Council and thus make important decisions affecting the city. Both his grandfathers were prominent and wealthy Edinburgh lawyers and his father was a prosperous businessman. It would be fair to say that this gentleman had been born with all the benefits of talent, wealth and position.

However, beneath this veneer of good breeding and riches, was another kind of person. A man who was an appalling monster. As a cabinet-maker he had access to many wealthy people's homes and he was able to make impressions of their house keys which meant that he could revisit their houses at a later date to rob them. This state of affairs was thought to have lasted for over ten years and his thieving success brought him into partnerships with other criminals and as their crimes became more and more successful they became more confident and audacious. Eventually, after a botched armed robbery one of his accomplices turned informer and the game was up. Brodie was captured and stood trial in Edinburgh where he was found guilty. Elegantly dressed in the finest of clothes and a powdered wig, and at the age of 47, he was hanged in front of the largest crowd Edinburgh had ever seen. The year was 1788.

On the Royal Mile, not too far from the Castle is the Deacon Brodie pub, you can sip a glass of your favourite tipple and read more about this disreputable character.

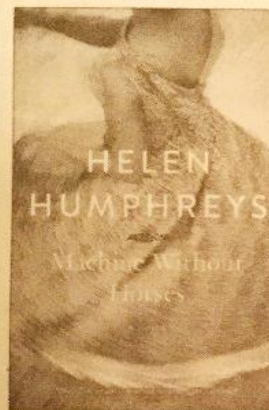
Robert Louis Stevenson, another son of Edinburgh, is thought to have used Deacon Brodie as the source for his famous novel 'Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde'



BOOK REVIEW (Historical Fiction)

Machine Without Horses
By Helen Humphreys
HarperCollins, 288 pages, \$29.99

In 2001, the New York Times ran an obituary for Megan Boyd, an 86-year-old Scottish woman who'd spent 60 years of her life tying fishing flies. Reading the



piece, anyone would be intrigued. Here was a woman who was at the top of an extremely niche field, who'd won fans all over the world, including Prince Charles, and who's sole hobby was Scottish dancing. An

eccentric who worked around the clock and defied the norms of her time, dressing every day in a man's shirt and tie, she was awarded the British Empire Medal, but declined to go and meet the Queen since, as she told the monarch, she had nobody to look after her dog that day.

Acclaimed Kingston, Ont., author Helen Humphreys read that same obituary, and it has now inspired one of the best — and most wonderfully experimental — historical fiction titles of the year. Walking the line between memoir and fiction, Humphreys spends the first half of "Machine Without Horses," named for a Scottish dance, mulling over the creative process as she gets to know Boyd, and the second half of the book reimagining her life in a small village, in a cottage that had no electricity until 1985. Humphreys, who has previously won the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, is an extraordinary writer. Truly spectacular.

Upcoming Events

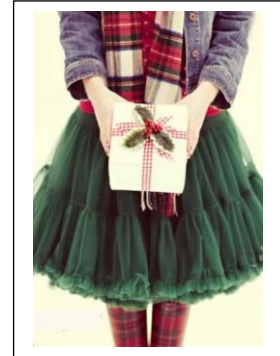
For more information on all events listed below, please go to the Hamilton Branch website at: www.rscdshamilton.org. **Events**
Our branch website contains programs, information and registrations for all Hamilton events, as well as website links for other area branches and events.
OR... print this page and put it on your fridge door!

HAMILTON BRANCH

FALL CLASSES END AFTER CLASS WEEK OF DECEMBER 10TH
SPRING CLASSES BEGIN WEEK OF JANUARY 7, 2019

Event: Hamilton Branch Christmas Dance

When: **Saturday, December 1, 2018**
Time: 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm
Where: MacNab Presbyterian Church, 116 MacNab Street, S. Hamilton
Cost: \$30.00 RSCDS Members/ Non-Members \$35.00
Music: Laird Brown and Donny Wood
For tickets: Avail in class or through Diana McKenzie



Event: Betwixt & Between Tea Dance

The annual Hamilton/St. Catharines/Grimsby afternoon tea Dance

When: **Saturday, February 2, 2019 – 1:30 to 4:30**
Where: Livingston Activity Centre, Grimsby, Ontario
Music by: Don Bartlett
For tickets: Avail in class

Event: Friday Evening Social Dances will resume in February

When: **Friday, February 22, 2019**
Time: 7:30 to 9:30 pm
Where: Erskine Presbyterian Church, 19 Pearl St N, Hamilton
Cost: \$5.00 at the door

WHITE COCKADE SOCIAL DANCES

Event: Whitecockade Auld Year's Dance

When: **Saturday, December 29, 2018**
Time: 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm
Where: MacNab Presbyterian Church, 116 MacNab Street, S. Hamilton
Cost: \$10.00
For tickets: Advance tickets needed for this dance. Avail in class or through Alexis Hayes

Event: Whitecockade Monthly Dance

When: **Saturday, January 19, 2019**
Time: 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm
Where: MacNab Presbyterian Church, 116 MacNab Street, S. Hamilton
Cost: \$5.00/members, \$10.00/non-members at the door

<https://whitecockade.webs.com/>

Upcoming Events

IN THE SURROUNDING AREA

TORONTO

Event: **Shiftin' Bobbins with Alma Smith**

When: Sunday, December 9, 2018

Where: Grace Church on the Hill, Parish Hall, 300 Russell Hill Road, Toronto

Time: 2:00 to 4:00

Cost: \$5.00

More Info: <https://shiftinbobbins.webs.com>

ST. CATHARINES/HAMILTON/GRIMSBY

Event: **Betwixt & Between Tea Dance**

When: Saturday, February 2, 2019

Time: 1:30 to 4:30

Where: Livingston Activity Centre, Grimsby, Ontario

Music by: Don Bartlett

More Info: <http://www.rscdsstcatharines.ca/upcoming-events>

<https://www.rscdshamilton.org/events>

TORONTO

Event: **The 56th Tartan Ball**

When: Saturday, February 16, 2019

Where: The Old Mill Toronto, 21 Old Mill Road, Toronto (Bruléé Ballroom)

More Info: http://www.dancescottish.ca/tartan_ball.html

This is the new home for the Tartan Ball. There is an attached Boutique Hotel/Inn.

www.oldmilltoronto.com

Upcoming Events



YOUR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS DANCE PLANNER

HAMILTON	Saturday, December 1, 2018	https://www.rscdshamilton.org/events
TORONTO	Saturday, December 1, 2018	http://www.dancescottish.ca/Whats-On-Near.html
ST. CATHARINES	Saturday, December 8, 2018	http://www.rscdsstcatharines.ca/upcoming-events
KITCHENER/WATERLOO	Saturday, December 15, 2018	http://www.rscds.kitchener.on.ca/index.php/home/home-new/9-events
LONDON	Saturday, December 15, 2018	http://www.rscdslondoncanada.org/events/events.html

AULD YEAR'S DANCE

WHITE COCKADE	Saturday, December 29, 2018	https://whitecockade.webs.com
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HOGMANNAY

LONDON	Monday, December 31, 2018	http://www.rscdslondoncanada.org/events/events.html
TORONTO	Monday, December 31, 2018	http://www.dancescottish.ca/Whats-On-Near.html

DANCE PLANNER FOR ROBBIE BURNS CELEBRATIONS

OTTAWA	Saturday, January 19, 2019	www.eventbrite.ca/e/gala-burns-supper-ceilidh-tickets-47145805373
LONDON	Friday, January 25, 2019	http://www.rscdslondoncanada.org/events/events.html
OAKVILLE	Saturday, January 26, 2019	http://www.oscdg.ca/events.html
BUFFALO	Saturday, January 26, 2019	http://www.rscdsbuffalo.com/burns.html



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR RANT COMMITTEE

Thank you to those who sent pictures for this edition of the Rant; they make reading it more personal – and more fun. As always, we appreciate all your comments and input. The next Rant will be published in January 2019.

Sincerely,
Your Rant Committee
John Walton (Editor) & Lynn Taplay (Design and layout)

Quiz Answers

1. John Graham of Claverhouse
2. The Isle of Arran
3. Dunnet Head
4. The Osprey
5. Smoked haddock or kipper