



# *The Scottish Society of Louisville*

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Drummer Rick McKenzie, Robbin and Steve Goodin, Jeff Forbes, Judy Stubbs, Reverend Allan Wallace, Dianne Holland, Gary and Pat Schweitzer, Jim & Jeane Hughes, Anne Lewis, John & Jenny Dickson, Janice Beatty and piper Karen Brumley at St. Paul's Kirking.



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|---------------------------------|------------------------|
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*Inside This Issue*



Cover photo courtesy of SSL

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| <i>Board of Directors, Officers &amp; Commissioners, Table of Contents</i> | 2     |
| <i>President's Message</i>   | 3     |
| <i>2024 Burns' Night Cancelled</i>   | 3     |
| <i>Membership Minutes</i>  | 4—8   |
| <i>2024 SSL Programs</i>   | 9     |
| <i>Kirkings</i>  | 10-13 |
| <i>Sweet Remembrances: Paul Baker Whitty</i>                               | 14-15 |
| <i>December Calendar</i>   | 16    |
| <i>January Calendar</i>  | 17    |

**THE SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF LOUISVILLE**

Established in 1993 as a nonprofit organization to enrich the cultural lives of members in the Kentuckiana area.

The Society offers exposure to Scottish heritage and preserves, enhances and fosters pride in our Scottish ancestry.

The Society sponsors local and regional activities and is a nonsectarian organization with no religious or political affiliation.



## *President's Message*

Hello SSL and Clan Community,

As the December days rapidly rush toward the New Year with short chilly days and long cold nights, I am reminded of the past seasons of my life as well as the many seasons with the Scottish Society of Louisville. Many years ago, shortly after joining SSL, I was asked by a previous SSL president if I wanted to be a Commissioner. "What the heck is that" I asked? Answer - "Here is your binder", she replied. Hmmm - it was empty! What a positive learning experience through the years as I filled that binder and learned duties, procedures, functions, positions and various SSL functions. Overall, a well rounded education.

Recently, I was proud to be elected President of SSL and was determined to move the Society forward by introducing new ideas, streamlining some procedures, encouraging audience participation and interjecting some humor at meetings, and recruiting new, and I might add, younger members. These are all important to ensure the continued viability of SSL, especially since the average collective age of the membership is 73 years.

Yes, I am an Octogenarian and treading wearily into the twilight of my years. I have always strived to embrace the positive and work out the negative in all aspects of my professional life as well as with my SSL family. Technology has passed me by as well as youthful endeavors as I lack the stamina and energy required to continue in my present position as President. Therefore, as a great man once said, "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the one".

I want to thank one and all for the support and encouragement throughout the years and wish all a prosperous, healthy and blessed Christmas and New Year.

Dianne Holland, President



### **The SSL Board has cancelled the Burns' Night Gala in January, 2024**

In 2023, the work was done almost entirely by Board members. Most of us now have health issues that make it impossible for us to do all the work required. We had fewer attendees last year as well, and after expenses, made only \$175.

We hope that there will be more interest in putting on a Burns' Night Gala in the future.

### **Editor's Note:**

The SSL Board announces a slight rise in dues. A single membership will now be \$25, and family membership will be \$40, beginning in April 2024.

## *SSL Membership Minutes*

President Holland opened the business meeting at 7:00pm. Vice President Schweizer presented the president's flag to President Holland, and reminded us that each president is provided a flag with their clan's tartan during their tenure. President Holland thanked him, and continued with the business meeting.

President Holland welcomed all to our meeting, and introduced our visitor, Patricia Buck. Pres. Holland announced that there will be no Burns' Night Gala in 2024. There are just not enough volunteers to do all the work involved. Our average age is 72, and many of those who have helped with the gala in the past are unable to do so now. Also, the costs have risen considerably. She is hopeful that we can do a smaller Burns' Night in the future, and have some other small events for our members. Picnics, a Scotch tasting, and hopefully some new events as well.

President Holland talked about the living Scotland, and different ways this is celebrated. The SSL sometimes displays the Saltire and the rampant lion, which in the UK, is flown over the castle when the Queen/King is in residence. This is its only use in the UK. However much we all cherish our Scottish heritage, we are not bound by English law and may display the rampant lion as we wish. As a group, we stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

President Holland continued the meeting by announcing that dues have gone up, and are now \$25 for an individual and \$40 for a family membership, due in April. Any individuals who become new members in January, February, or March will have their dues prorated.

The October minutes were proposed for approval, seconded, and approved by the membership.

President Holland then announced that she will resign in January of 2024. She needed to leave early, and turned the rest of the meeting over to Vice President Schweitzer.

VP Schweitzer reported that the auction went well. Richard Bolton was our auctioneer this year, and he did a fabulous job. The SSL made a tidy sum for the Heritage Fund this year. The next scholarship period begins in March.

Jack Bowling asked where the dinner/auction expenses are paid from, and VP Schweitzer told us that the Heritage Fund pays those expenses. Pat Schweitzer told us this has recently been updated in the MOO (Methods of Operation). The rest of the proceeds go to the Heritage Fund.

No decision has been made of when the dinner/auction will be held next year. Jenny Dickson suggested we wait until we have a larger turnout at a member meeting to decide. Jenny also reminded us that the next kirking will be held on November 30th.

Secretary Linda Wilson stated that she is resigning as secretary as of January 2024, and will be replaced by Judy Stubbs.

Treasurer Cheri Eskridge was absent, no report.

## *SSL Membership Minutes, cont.*

Newsletter Editor Linda Wilson reported that she will continue as the newsletter editor. She reminded those present to continue sending articles and photos to her for publication.

Regional Celtic Commissioner Jack Bowling explained that he did something different this past year at events. We have always helped visitors look for information about their Scottish heritage. This year volunteers took down contact information for visitors and emailed them the clan information that they found, along with information about the Scottish Society and how to become a member. Several have done so. Jack told us he sent information to the wrong person once (a typo in the email address), who wrote back and asked for information for himself because he was so interested.

Jenny Dickson asked if we can start taking SSL information to the kirkings, which was well received by the membership.

Programs and Education Commissioner Shannon Fauver was not present, but Robbin Goodin read her report. See list, page 9.

Membership Commissioner John Dickson has received five new members; Cindy Atchinson, Todd Early, Andrea Elgin, Beronica Poliriski, and Kamara Wilhite. They were voted on, and all were accepted as SSL members.

VP Schweitzer announced the break for refreshments and socializing, which we always enjoy.

Afterwards, VP Schweitzer talked about how important it has become to use social media to contact younger people. There was general discussion about how much we interact with each other and the public. We discussed the need to share our activities on a variety of social media, with our friends and the public, as much as we can.

At Large Member Pat Schweitzer spoke about the changes to the Constitution and By-Laws. Basically, the changes need to show we can now accept on-line payments by Paypal. There is also a dues change allowing members who join in January through March to be comped for those months. A motion was made to make the proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws, seconded and approved by the members present.





## SSL Presentation, Erika Rivertree

Pat Schweitzer introduced our speaker tonight, SSL member Erika Rivertree. She is a Virginia native but also has deep family roots in Kentucky, and has been a resident of Louisville since the 1990's.

She studied Cultural Anthropology and Celtic Studies at Northern Kentucky University and University of Louisville, did archaeology field school in Ireland, graduated the Community Ministry Program at Cherry Hill Seminary, is an ordained Priestess with Sacred Well Congregation, and a Druid of the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids.

Since birth, Erika has been immersed in her family's love of their Celtic heritage, going to Scottish games, listening to Scottish bagpipes, Irish folk music, her grandfather's storytelling, and learning traditional foodways from her grandmothers and aunties. She has devoted much of her life to Celtic Studies, especially Irish and Scottish cultural continuity here in the Diaspora.

### Hogmanay Customs

By Erika Rivertree

Hogmanay has evolved into the New Year's Eve celebration in Scotland. In Scotland, Hogmanay is officially a 3-day holiday, from December 31st to January 2nd. January 1st is called Ne'er Day, and January 2nd is a bank holiday in Scotland.

Scholars variously attribute the etymology of Hogmanay to Old French, Gaelic, or Norse. The word was first recorded in Latin in 1443 in Yorkshire, England as "hognonayse". The first textual appearance in the Scots language appears in 1604 as "hagmonay". Hogmanay came to be a standardized spelling.

Modern Hogmanay is a syncretism of different influences from different eras and cultures, celebrated in a uniquely Scottish way. Some theories on its origins include:

- \* Mary Queen of Scots brought New Year's celebrations to Scotland from France in the 16th century.
- \* The Scots adopted Viking celebrations of the Winter Solstice/Yule.
- \* Hogmanay is a continuance of pre-Christian Gaelic Samhain customs merged into Christian-era Winter holidays.

Between 1639 and 1652, Scotland was involved in a series of conflicts known as the Wars of 3 Kingdoms, also the British Civil Wars, between England, Scotland, and Ireland (which were then still separate political entities). During this period, the Presbyterian Church in Scotland made celebrations of Christmas in Scotland illegal in 1640 because it was viewed as "too papist/Catholic". Christmas remained illegal until the Scottish Parliament repealed the ban in 1712. However, the Kirk continued to strongly discourage Christmas celebrations, and it was not until 1958 that it became an official public holiday in Scotland. It is within this context that older Christmas/Yule traditions shifted to Hogmanay, which then superseded Christmas as Scotland's most important Winter holiday.

## *SSL Presentation, Erika Rivertree, cont.*



Hogmanay itself is related to Christmas, Yule, and other Winter celebrations; however, these holidays were not just one day, but part of a broader festival season called the “Daft Days” in Scotland, akin to the 12 Days of Christmas in England and other European countries. The Daft Days go from Christmas until Handsel Monday (the 1st Monday after the 12th of January).

Different regions have their own local customs, but Hogmanay throughout Scotland includes torchlight processions and setting stuff on fire!

Hogmanay is particularly festive in Edinburgh, which has been more deeply influenced by English and wider European cosmopolitan culture than other parts of Scotland. In Edinburgh, the midnight hour of Hogmanay is called “The Bells” because of all the bell towers ringing.

Particular to Edinburgh is the tradition of The Long Dook: on Ne’er Day, hundreds of people dive into the freezing waters of the Firth of Forth at South Queensferry, often in fancy costumes.

In Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire, kilted men make 2 foot wide fireballs and swing them around wildly while making procession down High Street, and any remaining fireballs would be hurled into the sea.

The Highland town of Comrie would make processional torches from specially selected small birch trees. Particularly appropriate for Hogmanay, as birch in Gaelic tradition is a tree associated with new beginnings.

In the Outer Hebrides, the recitation of hero tales is part of new year’s eve customs.

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During Hogmanay ,tis custom to visit the homes of friends and neighbors and give gifts, especially for the custom of First Footing, which refers to the first person to cross the threshold and enter the home after midnight on Hogmanay. The worst luck came from a red-haired first-footer, and the best luck is said to be from a dark-haired man.

Traditional First-Footing gifts include coal, salt, shortbread, black bun, and whisky, each giving a specific “luck to the house”: coal for warmth and prosperity, salt to preserve good health, shortbread for hospitality, black bun for good food, and whisky for good cheer.





## SSL Presentation, cont.

Redding the House: as part of threshold time, turning-of-the year purification customs, to help banish the old year and welcome the new, the home would be deep cleaned, the old ash from the hearth would be taken out just before midnight, and front and back doors would be opened at midnight to “blow out the old and blow in the new”.

Saining: a Scots word meaning to bless, sanctify, or purify. Two Hogmanay saining customs are that of purifying with water and fire. The first is to drink water drawn from “a dead and living ford”, which is a river ford routinely crossed by the living and the dead, such as funeral processions. After drinking some of the water, the rest was sprinkled around the house, moving in a sunwise direction, as well as on any live-stock, to invite blessings of good health. After this, the house was then closed up and fumigated with juniper to cleanse and purify the home.

Some traditional Hogmanay foods and drinks include black bun (sort of a fruit cake loaf in a pastry shell), ankerstock (a spiced rye loaf), shortbread, meat pie (venison, mutton, or beef), het pint (hot spiced ale), wassail bowl (mulled wine), drinking sowans (tangy oat milk), and whippkull (a Shetland specialty attributed to Vikings).

A traditional Hogmanay toast is “Lang may yer lum reek”, which is Scots for “long may your chimney burn”, a blessing of good health & longevity.

Auld Lang Syne: this Hogmanay tune hails from an older folk tradition but was penned in its definitive form by Robert Burns in 1788 after hearing an old man singing it. Burns’ publisher set its modern melody in 1799, and it entered into American pop culture through Guy Lombardo and his band performing it during American New Year’s Eve celebrations beginning in the 1920’s.



**Happy Hogmanay!**





## 2024 SSL Programs

Jan 23 In-Person, Zoom, Burns Video by Dr. Purdie

Feb 27 In-Person, Zoom, Alan Hay presents on Castles, 6:00 pm

Mar 26 Elections, and Mindy McIntosh presents on tips about  
Grandfather Mountain's Highland Games

Apr 23 Install Officers, and Jill Baker presents on Horses in Scotland

May 28 Steve Shetter presents on Weapons

June 25 Dave Bush presents on Clan Formation

July 23 Cheri Daniels presents on a Tea Presentation

Aug 27 Allan Wallace presents on The History of Connections Between  
American Samuel Seabury and Scotland.

Sept 24 Megan Burnett presents on Female Poets

Oct 22 Lorna Bolton presents on Halloween

Nov 26 Dinner/Auction, this date is in question

Dec 24 No General Meeting



*Kirking with The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, held at St. Francis in the Fields, Episcopal Church, Prospect, KY, by Judy Stubbs*

The sanctuary was comfortably filled when the Processional began. Members of The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, from St. Francis in the Fields and other Episcopal Churches in our area, were in attendance. The familiar rise of the bagpipe melody, played by Karen Brumley, and the rhythmic and steady beat of the drum, by Rick McKenzie, brought us into the sanctuary, two by two, as they played a Scottish favorite, "Highland Cathedral." Our large flag stands were prominently placed so they could be seen at all times by members of The Scottish Society seated in the first pews.

We are grateful for the recognition of our ancestry as our Tartan flags were beautiful to behold. Members of The Brotherhood of St. Andrew sat directly behind us. During the service, Karen Brumley piped a solo performance of "Amazing Grace" standing directly in front of one of our flag stands, in the quiet dignity of the sanctuary, as the congregation sang.

Fr. Bob Coon, gave the 12 members present a heart-warming greeting and thanks for our participation. He, then, spoke about the importance of the Scottish Episcopal Church in the consecration of Samuel Seabury, to become the first Bishop in America in a section of his sermon. A Dedication and Blessing were offered for our Scottish heritage and our Tartans. This moment of reflection, and the visual sight of our Tartan flags, brought thoughts of gratitude for that historical moment when our ancestors participated in a significant event in the Episcopal Church. The inside of the back cover of the program leaflet contained a couple of articles about our Scottish heritage: "The Tradition of The Kirkin O' the Tartans" and "The Origins of The Kirkin'."

"Scotland the Brave" brought us to our feet, as we retrieved our family's Tartan flags, and walked to the rhythmic beat, two by two, in the sending Processional, into to the impressive Reception Hall.

The camaraderie among friends, members, staff and invited guests, was thrilling to hear and see as conversations lingered long into the evening in the reception area. Dalmore Single Barrel Scotch was offered, along with a scotch cocktail, and a non-alcohol beverage. The lines were long for the dram tasting! A large table of a variety of cheeses and crackers, and shrimp was spread out like a buffet-table presentation fit for a king. This reception was splendid. The refreshments were prepared and served by the women's association at St. Francis in the Fields.

We are especially grateful for the invitation to be there, and for next year, in a location to be determined. This evening event, on November the 30<sup>th</sup>, each year, circulates among a variety of Episcopal Churches in the Louisville area. In the past, we've been invited to attend The Brotherhood of St. Andrew meetings and the service in these Episcopal Churches: St. Luke's, St. James, St. Andrew's, at Christ Church Cathedral, as well as St. Francis in the Fields.

## *Kirking with The Brotherhood of St. Andrew at St. Francis in the Fields*



Participants included Dianne Holland, John & Jenny Dickson, Steve Goodin, Anne Lewis, Judy Stubbs, Jeff Forbes, Robert Forbes, Dan Johnson, Becky Montgomery. Men of The Brotherhood of St. Andrew at St. Francis in the Fields participated with us. We were accompanied in the Processionals by Piper Karen Brumley and Drummer Rick McKenzie.



## *Kirking at St. Paul's*

The Processional of the Tartans, into St. Paul's Episcopal Church, New Albany, IN, was stunningly beautiful with 14 colorful tartan clan flags held high at this Kirking service, among three spectacular floral arrangements! The Piper, Karen Brumley, Drummer, Rick McKenzie, and Organist Theresa Bauer began with the Prelude playing "Highland Cathedral" as the Scottish Society of Louisville members walked to the familiar music and rhythm. The two stands were appropriately placed end to end, making a visual impression of our presence, near the front of the sanctuary, magnificent. During the service, Karen and Rick's impressive performance of "Amazing Grace" captured our attention and purpose. At the time of the Kirkin' o' the Tartans, members rose, gathered our flags to face the congregation, and spread out across the front of the sanctuary, for the Dedication and Blessing. Then, Fr. Allan Wallace, (Scottish) asked the congregation to welcome and thank the members for our presence, with a rousing applause.

Fr. Allan Wallace reminded us of the connection between Scotland and Samuel Seabury, after inquiring into how long St. Paul's has held a Kirking with us? It seems as though The Scottish Society of Louisville's first Kirking was held in 2005, when the Rector was Fr. Polk Culpepper, and the President of the Society was John Dickson.

Fr. Allan welcomed The Scottish Society of Louisville, and made wonderful connections between Scripture, Samuel Seabury's consecration in the Scottish Episcopal Church in Aberdeen, Scotland, and our members in attendance today. His Homily skillfully informed us of Samuel Seabury's calling, as a laborer for the Church, to be the First Bishop in North America. Fr. Allan highlighted how the fruits of Seabury's labors, to advocate for the Prayerbook of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, to be brought and used in American Episcopal Churches were successful. Our ancestors in Scotland were connected in this significant event. The Recessional was also accompanied by the music of the Piper and Drummer, moving us and the congregation into the Carriage House for a delicious luncheon of Scottish Food.

Marie O'Neil, her kitchen staff, and other members of the congregation provide a lavish luncheon of Scotch Eggs, Smoked Salmon, Angels on Horseback, Haggis, Vegetable Casseroles, Scottish Shortbread, and other well-known Scottish dishes, and desserts!

The connection between this congregation and the Society was a joyful reunion, filling the dining room to the brim with conversation and laughter. The sound of conversations among friends was a joy to behold.

During a moment of thanks from both Fr. Allan Wallace, and Kirking Organizer Judy Stubbs, the Society was profusely thanked for attending and notified that we're invited and welcomed back again next year on November 17, 2024; as our membership gratefully thanked this congregation for the cooking and preparation of this luncheon, and the invite for next year.

All are welcome to attend next year!

## Kirking at St. Paul's



Participants included Robbin Goodin, Steve Goodin, Janet Abell, John and Jenny Dickson, Pat Schweitzer, Gary Schweitzer, Dianne Holland, Jim and Jean Hughes, Anne Lewis, Bob Forbes, Jeff Forbes, piper Karen Brumley, drummer Rick McKenzie, and Fr. Allan Wallace .

## *Sweet Remembrances*

Paul Whitty was co-founder of The Scottish Society. Below is a slightly shortened copy of his obituary. Jeff Forbes sent word of his passing to the editor.

### **Paul Baker Whitty**



Paul Baker Whitty, of Louisville, KY, passed away at his home on the evening of October 21st, one day after his 72nd birthday. Paul was the sixth child of eight born to Richard and Martha Schuler Whitty on October 20, 1951. He was blessed to be in a loving family in an intergenerational household in the Highlands neighborhood attending St. Francis of Assisi, Trinity, and Atherton.

Paul is survived by his wife of 37 years, Mary Henderson Whitty (Jo). He and Jo loved their travels throughout England, Ireland, France, Scotland and Italy. Paul is also survived by his son Leland (Amy) and his daughter Norris (Corey); Grandsons Albert, John, Alec and Grey; sisters Mary Eleise Passafiume (John) and Martha Ruschival (Neil); brothers David (Karen) and John (Laura), and predeceased brothers, Richard, Bruce, Steven, Paul Heffner, and many devoted nieces and nephews.

He played football for Atherton in one of their most successful seasons and received a scholarship to play football at the University of Cincinnati. He received his B.A. in History from Spalding College, he was an English-Speaking Union Scholar at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, a M.L.S. in Library Science from the University of Southern California and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Louisville.

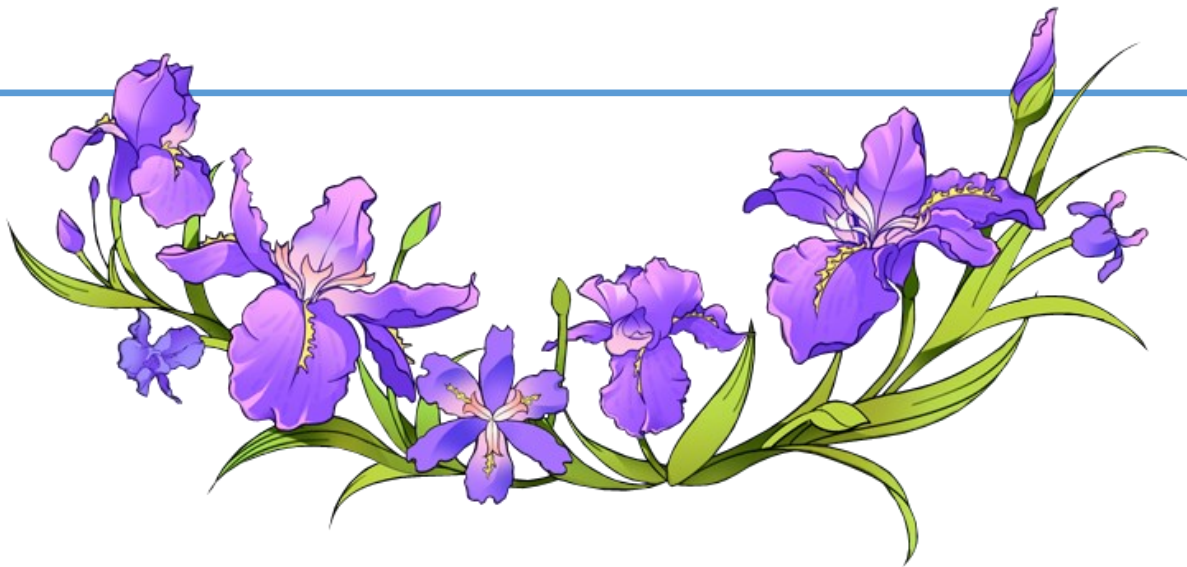
Paul worked at several of the larger law firms in Louisville but finished his career concentrating on zoning and land use. He served as Counsel to the Louisville Metro Planning Commission and the Louisville Building Industry Association and many developers. He especially enjoyed working with the Metro Council and his fellow Jefferson County Attorneys.

Paul served on several boards including the Frazier History Museum, The English-Speaking Union and The Prospect Latin School. He authored "The Irish in Louisville" for the Louisville Encyclopedia. **He was a co-founder of the Irish Family Fest and The Scottish Society.** He served as President of the Fr. Abram J. Ryan Division of The Ancient Order of Hibernians and Governor of the Kentucky Society of Colonial Wars and was President of the Kentucky Branch of the English-Speaking Union.

Paul was a member of the color guards of the Colonial Wars and Sons of the American Revolution Thruston Chapter as well as a snare drummer in the Louisville Pipe Band with which he competed in the 2000 World Pipe Band Championship in Glasgow, Scotland. He performed the music of the British Isles with Drowsy Maggie and Galloglas.




He loved to play and sing for his family, especially at his brother Dick's Rough River farm. He wrote and co-produced "Francesco son et Lumiere" a pageant on the life of St Francis of Assisi.

Visitation was on Friday, October 27th at Pearson's, 149 Breckenridge Ln, Louisville, KY 40207. His Funeral Mass was celebrated at Saint Agnes Catholic Church on Saturday, October 28th. Please send any memorial gifts to Sons of the American Revolution 809 W Main St, Louisville, KY 40202 or the English-Speaking Union.



# December 2023

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

|  |   |                         |    |   |               |    |
|--|---|-------------------------|----|---|---------------|----|
|  |   |                         |    |   | 1             | 2  |
| 3  | 4   | 5                       | 6  | 7<br> | 8<br>7th-15th | 9  |
| 10   | 11  | 12<br>SSL Board Meeting | 13 | 14  | 15            | 16 |
| 17   | 18  | 19                      | 20 | 21  | 22            | 23 |
| 24   | 25<br> | 26                      | 27 | 28  | 29            | 30 |
| 31<br>Happy Hogmanay!<br> |   |                         |    |   |               |    |

December Birthdays: William Mathews 5th, Donna Ulmer 5th,  
Eleanor Yovich 8th, Louise Coomer 14th,  
Denise Kurzinger 21st, Mick Anderson 29th





# January 2024

| Sun  | Mon                  | Tue   | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|----------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|  | 1<br>Happy Hogmanay! | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   |
| 7  | 8                    | 9<br>SSL Board Meeting<br>    | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  |
| 14   | 15                   | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  |
| 21   | 22                   | 23<br>SSL Member Meeting<br> | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27  |
| 28   | 29                   | 30  | 31  |     |     |     |

January Birthdays: Jennifer Reidel 5th, Erika Rivertree 5th, Jean Hughes 11th, Angie Bowling 12th, Lynne Cole 17th, Heather Baxter 18th, Larry Savill 18th, Jim Hughes 24th, & Dr. Karen Robinson 30th

