



Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 32 Number 3

June 2026

Coming Events:



Games Member Ticket Mailing

The Annual Highlands Games are coming up June 27th and 28th. As a member, you will be mailed **two free adult gate entry tickets** next week!

If you have moved to a new address or moved out of state within the past year, please let the membership committee know. We can mail the tickets to your new address or mail them to someone you designate to receive them for you.

If you do not receive your tickets before the games, please contact the membership committee at membership@alaskanscottish.org

Tonda Scott, Membership Committee Chair

Tartan Tourney: New Date!



Saturday July 18th

10 a.m. start

Settlers Bay Golf Course

Sponsorships available!

Bagpipes wailing, drummers setting the rhythm, Highland Dancers twirling – this is not your average golf ambiance; this is a full-blown Scottish extravaganza! But wait, there's more – Scotch flowing, Scottish-themed games

throwing challenges at you left and right, and the tastiest cheats in any Golf Tourney - Butterscotch Mulligans.

Your day will be an unbridled rollercoaster of Scottish amusement, and we dare you to find anything more entertaining in the Alaskan golf scene!

Golfers and non-golfers alike are invited to the after-party (Scots call it a *Ceilidh*) like no other. Food that'll make your taste buds do the Highland Fling, live music that'll have you tapping your toes involuntarily, and fun prizes that will turn your day into a memorable celebration.

<https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/tartantourney>

Two New Special Events

We are so excited to bring a little extra magic to the games this year! To celebrate our amazing special guests, the ASC is hosting two exclusive events that will let you experience the very best of Scottish culture up close.



Tea With the Twins

A Very Special Highland Tea Party

You're cordially invited to a tea party with two of the most talented and beloved performers in our Highland Games family, Camille & Kennerly Kitt, The Harp Twins!

Join us inside the Tea Tent at the 2026 Alaska Scottish Highland Games for a one-of-a-kind hour with Camille and Kennerly, filled with laughter, sweet treats, and memories you'll cherish long after the last cup is poured. This is an experience you simply won't find anywhere else. Space is extremely limited to just 50 guests!

Sunday, June 28, 2026 10:00 – 11:00 am
The Tea Tent • Alaska Scottish Highland Games

Every guest receives:

- Tea & sweet treats
- A keepsake photo with Camille & Kennerly
- An autographed keepsake item from the twins

Bring the family, and get ready for a truly special Sunday morning tea time at the games!

\$20 per person - Only 50 tickets available

Tickets: [2026 Alaska Scottish Highland Games](#)

Does not include Games admission, games tickets must be purchased separately.

Chef Gary Dinner!

Get ready for an unforgettable night of food, music, and Scottish flair! Join us on **June 26 at 6:00 p.m.** for an exclusive culinary event featuring **Scotland's National Chef, Gary Maclean**, and a spectacular dinner prepared by **Chef Alex Papasavas**, the celebrated chef-owner of Turkey Red in Palmer. Chef Alex brings her signature creativity and skill to a menu inspired by Chef Gary's acclaimed cookbook *The Scottish Kitchen*.

Friday June 26 • 6:00 pm • Event Center at the Purple Gate, Alaska State Fairgrounds

What Your Ticket Includes

- Meet & mingle with Chef Gary Maclean
- A full Scottish-inspired dinner crafted by Chef Alex
- Live Celtic music
- Scotch cocktails included — mixed by Long Lam of Allocated-AK
- A dessert Scotch to finish the evening
- Access to Denali Brewing's cash bar with wine, beer, mead, and cider

Evening Menu

Surf & Turf • Braised beef shoulder with puff pastry rounds
• Hot smoked salmon

Salmon Salad Niçoise

Pearled Barley & Roasted Carrots with pickled shallots and dill vinaigrette (served cold)

Cauliflower Cheese

Rumbledethumps Traditional potato-and-cabbage dish

Cranachan Heavy cream with raspberries and toasted oats

Don't Wait — Seats Are Limited

This is a one-night-only experience, and tickets will go fast. Treat yourself to an extraordinary evening while supporting one of Alaska's most iconic summer traditions.

Tickets at [2026 Alaska Scottish Highland Games](#)

Cooking Demonstrations and Tastings

Chef Gary will be conducting cooking demonstrations at Hoskins Hall on both Games days. **Attendance is free, but you should register for his classes to guarantee your seat!** Many items will be available for tasting!

Scotland's Larder – Sea and Smoke

Saturday 27th 12:00 pm and Sunday 28th 1:30 pm

This is all about showcasing the very best Scottish produce, particularly from our waters and natural larder. Learn about the provenance, sustainability and traditional techniques like smoking.

- Cullen Skink
- Scallop with Black Pudding and Potato

The Burns Supper – Haggis Reinvented

Saturday 27th 2:30 pm and Sunday 28th 4:00 pm

Haggis, need we say more? Have you ever been curious about this truly Scottish dish, this fun and interactive demo takes a modern and accessible direction to the Haggis.

- Haggis Bon Bons with Whisky Mustard Sauce
- Haggis Pakora with Arran Mustard and Whisky Raita

The Sweet Scottish Kitchen - Oats, Berries, Whisky and Butter

Saturday 25th 5:00 pm and Sunday 26th 11:00 am

This demo focuses on traditional Scottish baking and desserts. A tasty way to end your day on Saturday or start your day on Sunday!

- Cranachan
- Ayrshire Shortbread
- Chocolate and Whisky Lava Cakes

Register for classes at [2026 Alaska Scottish Highland Games](#)



Gary Mclean: National Chef of Scotland

Main Stage Schedule of Events

The People's Paper contains the Complete Schedule for the 2026 ASHG! Available June 15!

Saturday

10 am Opening Ceremonies with Massed Bands
11 am Screaming Orphans
12:30 pm Harp Twin featuring the Wolfgang Twins

3:30 pm Screaming Orphans

5:00 pm Harp Twin featuring the Wolfgang Twins

Sunday

11:45 am Screaming Orphans

1:15 pm Harp Twin featuring the Wolfgang Twins

2:45 pm Screaming Orphans

4:15 pm Harp Twin featuring the Wolfgang Twins

5:15 pm Closing Ceremonies

(note: all performances are free as part of your Games admission ticket)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Calling all lads and lassies! Ready to do something EPIC at the [2026 Alaska Scottish Highland Games](#)?

Join the Alaskan Scottish Clan and become the heartbeat of this year's Highland Games! Our event thrives on the passion of our VOLUNTEERS, and with over 200 positions up for grabs, there is a perfect spot just for you (and your family and friends)!

Here are the perks when you join the clan:

The Commitment: Just a minimum of 3 hours of your time (though we'd love to have you all weekend!).

The Reward: A FREE 2-Day admission ticket to the games!

The Swag: An exclusive Volunteer T-Shirt!

Expect fun, amazing camaraderie, and a true Highland adventure. Whether you are helping out for a day or the whole weekend, your talents are invaluable to us!

Ready to join the Clan? It's easy! Claim your spot here: <https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/ashgvolunteers>

Piping and Drumming Competitions Return

Calling all solo pipers and drummers! We are so excited to announce that Individual Piping and Drumming competitions are BACK for the ASHG!

Competitions will run all weekend long on June 27 & 28. Don't miss your chance to compete, sign up now!

Register: <https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/ashgpipeanddrum>

Tug-o-War

ALERT: Only 1 Team Spot Left For The Tug-Of-War Championships!

Brace yourselves for the ultimate clash! Unleash your competitive spirit and rally your team for the Tug-O-War Championship at the heart-pounding Highland Games Tug-o-war! Can you put together a squad fierce enough to topple **Ficklin Const. LLC**, our reigning champions?

How to Gather Your Team:

Step 1: Nominate a "Team Captain" to lead your squad and pay the entry fee.

Step 2: Once the captain registers, your crew can join the roster as "Team Members" at no extra cost!

Bonus: The first six teams to register will receive exclusive competition shirts. With only ONE spot remaining, the time to act is now!

Sign up your team here:

<https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/ashgtow>

Scotch Tasting Details



The 2026 Scotch Tasting Lineup for the ASHG is HERE!

Led by guest speaker Darrin Maddux and generously supported by RNDC of Alaska and [Allocated - AK](#), these sessions are a journey through the legendary Edrington portfolio.

Choose your journey below!

The Powerhouse Sessions

Saturday June 27 1:30 pm and Sunday June 28 1:30 pm

This guided tasting journeys through the Scottish botanical precision of No.3 London Dry Gin before diving into a powerhouse selection of whiskies, including; [The Glenrothes](#) Whisky Maker's Cut and the rugged Highland Park Cask Strength Heather. The event's centerpiece is a side-by-side exploration of [The Macallan](#)'s higher strength expressions, including; The Macallan 12 Year 110PR along with the Classic Cut 2024 and 2025 expressions

The Refined & Rare Session

Saturday, June 27 @ 4:00 PM

This guided tasting journeys through the Scottish botanical precision of No.3 London Dry Gin before diving into a refined selection of aged whiskies, including the elegant Glenrothes 15 Year and the balanced peat of Highland Park 15 Year. The event's centerpiece is a curated exploration of The Macallan's mastery, featuring the 15 Year Double Cask alongside the highly sought-after Harmony Editions: Vibrant Oak (2024) and Phoenix Tea (2025).

The High-End Prestige Session

Saturday, June 27 @ 5:30 PM

This guided tasting journeys through an elite selection of aged whiskies, headlined by the prestigious Glenrothes 18 Year and the iconic, smoky sophistication of the Highland Park 18 Year. The event's centerpiece is a curated exploration of The Macallan's most revered expressions, featuring the 18 Year Sherry Oak, the 18 Year Double Cask, and the exquisite Rare Cask. To conclude this remarkable flight, guests will experience the pinnacle of refine age: the Glenrothes 25 Year.

The Best Part?

Taste something you love? Our friends at [Allocated - AK](#) will be on-site to help you facilitate bottle pre-orders during the event so you can bring the Highland spirit home!

Tickets go fast and seats are limited!

<https://alaskanscottish.ticketspice.com/ashgtickets>

ASHG Kickoff Concert at Palmer Ale House

Friday June 26 7:00 pm

It's time to kick off the Alaska Scottish Highland Games Weekend in style at the 4th Annual ASHG Kick-Off Community Concert !

Once again, The Palmer Alehouse has teamed up with the ASHG and the Alaskan Scottish Club to bring you a night packed with high-energy Celtic music, wild dancing, amazing food, and local craft beer under the summer sky- trust us, you don't want to miss this one.

Live on Stage:

Screaming Orphans

Harp Twins featuring Wolfgang Twins

Come hungry, come thirsty, and come ready to dance! With great food, cold brews, and some of the most electrifying performers on the Celtic music scene, this night is guaranteed to kick off your Highland Games weekend with a bang!

FREE and family-friendly – bring your crew and let's make some noise, Palmer!

Screaming Orphans



Screaming Orphans are the four Diver sisters - Joan, Angela, Gráinne and Marie Thérèse - with the good fortune to have been raised in the magic of Bundoran in County Donegal, Ireland.

"The sisters all master their varied instruments and vocals with such passion, precision and excellence. No wonder, collectively, they go down a storm wherever they play live." - *Americana UK*

Screaming Orphans will be performing at the Alehouse on Friday evening, as well as at the ASHG on both Saturday and Sunday.

<https://screamingorphans.com>

The Harp Twins featuring the Wolfgang Twins



Check out their latest releases at [Nordic Celtic Harp Duo | Harp Twins](#)

This is a FREE all-ages show. Attendees under 21 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



JUNE 27TH & 28TH

3 HOURS OF YOUR TIME

=

2-DAY TICKET TO THE ASHG & VOLUNTEER T-SHIRT

REGISTER TODAY!

<https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/ashgvolunteers>



Golf: The Scottish Connection

By Dr. Christa Wallace, EdD

Golf and whiskey are old inventions dating back half a millennium. The legend is that Scottish fishermen would routinely anchor just offshore, drink copious amounts of whiskey, and hit stones found near the shoreline with their oars to see who could hit their stones the furthest. Whoever hit their stone the farthest won the game. This long-standing legend evolved into golf. Even more strange for modern golfers to envision, early golf balls were made of leather stuffed with wet goose feathers and painted white.

History of the sport!

Formalizing the Game

- Scotland defined the format and regulations of modern golf.
- By 1502, the ban was lifted, and King James IV became the world's first golfing monarch.
- The first recorded evidence of golf was in 1552 at St. Andrews, Fife.
- The Archbishop of St. Andrews decreed in 1553 that the local populace had the right to play golf on the links at St. Andrews.
- Mary, Queen of Scots, played her first "recorded" round of golf in 1567.
- Pioneering the Game: Mary, Queen of Scots, was a well-known golfer during the 16th century, playing the sport in both France and her home country.
- Origin of the "Caddie" is attributed to Mary's time in the French royal court; military cadets carried her golf clubs. When she brought this practice back to Scotland, the term eventually evolved into the word "caddy".
- The first recorded international golf match was in 1682 between the Duke of York and John Paterstone of Scotland, who defeated two English noblemen in a match played on the links of Leith.
- The Rules of Golf: The Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers (playing at Leith Links) drafted the first 13 written rules of the sport in 1744.
- The 18-Hole Standard: St Andrews is credited with establishing the standard 18-hole round.
- In 1754, golfers at St. Andrews purchased a Silver Cup for an open championship played on the Old Course.
- The first codified Rules of Golf are published by the St. Andrews.

The Evolution of Golf Culture

Clubhouse Culture: As golf exploded in popularity in the 19th century, whiskey became the drink of choice for gentlemen on the links. By the 20th century, a well-stocked bar serving single malts was an essential staple of any respectable Scottish golf clubhouse.

The Legend of the 18-Hole Round

The connection between golf and the number of holes is one of sport's most charming tales. Legend holds that a bottle of Scotch contains exactly 18 shots. Golfers would take a shot after every hole, and when the bottle was empty, the round of golf had to conclude. While the 18-hole round was actually formalized at St Andrews by reducing a previous 22-hole layout, the whisky legend remains a beloved part of both histories.

Scots and the American Revolution

By Dr. Christa Wallace EdD

As we approach our 250th remembrance of the American Revolution this July, it is important to examine the foundations of the freedom we sought. One of those bedrocks is found in Scotland. Scots fought in the American Revolution on both sides, and were major thought leaders of the Revolutionary era. Last month's Thistle discussed the Declaration of Arbroath, and it's influence on America's Declaration of Independence.

Here are some of the events that led up to the large populations of Scots in the Americas at the time of the Revolution, and may shine some light on their attitudes towards the British government.

Post-Culloden Actions

After decades of fighting to have a Stuart reclaim the throne, the crushing defeat of the Jacobite clans at the Battle of Culloden on April 16, 1746, the British government enacted harsh measures to destroy the traditional clan system, paving the way for decades of mass evictions and cultural erasure. The year 1746 marks the brutal catalyst for the Highland Clearances.

In military retribution, British troops, led by the Duke of Cumberland, swept through the Highlands, burning homes, seizing cattle, and killing suspected Jacobites. The Parliament pushed even further with acts designed to suppress. They issued the Disarming Acts, the Heritable Jurisdictions Acts, and the Dress Act of 1746. These acts made wearing tartan, carrying weapons, and speaking Gaelic heavily restricted or illegal.

The Trials and Sentencing

Approximately 3,500 Jacobite prisoners were captured. Hundreds of these rebels were deported as indentured laborers to North American and Caribbean colonies, while others were executed or banished. To decide who would stand trial, prisoners underwent a lottery system in which every 20th man was selected. Around 120 common soldiers

and 4 peerage leaders were executed. The most infamous was Lord Lovat, Simon Fraser “The Old Fox.” For those who stood trial, death sentences were often commuted to transportation, where they were indentured to plantations for life. Records indicate about 936 prisoners were sent to the colonies, with nearly 1,000 having their death sentences commuted to deportation. 222 prisoners chose banishment, while others were exchanged for British prisoners of war held in France. The deported men were shipped across the Atlantic to be sold to the highest bidder on plantations. Many were sent to islands like Jamaica, Barbados, and Antigua, where conditions on the sugar plantations were notoriously deadly. A significant number of Jacobites were shipped to the Carolinas, Virginia, and New York. (data provided by The National Trust of Scotland)

Clan Chieftains were stripped of their military and judicial powers. Clan chiefs were stripped of traditional rights over their clansmen. Some Chieftains were stripped of their lands. 11 estates were forfeited and administered by the government as punishment for prominent chieftains who had taken up the Jacobite cause. Clan chiefs rapidly evolved from patriarchs into capitalist landlords. Others sought a gentrified lifestyle in London, seeking to maximize estate profits.

The Evolution of the Clearances

What began as political and military retaliation in 1746 evolved into a systematic economic transformation over the following century: Lands were repurposed. Gone were the traditional tenant farmers (crofters). Tens of thousands of Highlanders were forcibly evicted from lands their families had occupied for generations. Entire townships were burned to prevent families from returning. They were removed and replaced with large-scale sheep farming (specifically Cheviot sheep), which was far more lucrative. These displaced families were either relocated to barren coastal fringes to work in kelp harvesting and fishing or forced to emigrate to destinations like Canada, the United States, and Australia.

An (in)famous example of the clearance policy can be seen on the Sutherland estates. A comprehensive series of clearances eventually relocated nearly 15,000 people. Their land in the interior was converted to sheep walks, which brought high commercial returns, and a new parallel crofting economy was established on the coastal fringes. The scale of these clearances was staggering; not only in the cost and number of people involved, but also in the methods used to evict. The speedy and often violent process of clearance was often met with stiff resistance. (National Trust of Scotland)

Post-rising Jacobite immigration to America

After the Jacobite Rising of 1745, some Highlanders fled to the Thirteen Colonies in the late 1740s, with Jacobite immigrants settling in New York and North Carolina. Highland Jacobites kept their political beliefs to themselves.

However, they still played a vibrant part in colonial culture by engaging with political and legal issues, spreading Scottish culture, and participating in the military. It is estimated that by the 1750s, there were likely at least 20,000 Scottish immigrants in the Thirteen Colonies.

The American Revolution

Given that the Jacobites had attempted to overthrow the British monarchy, you might expect them to have supported the Patriot cause in America. However, the majority of American Scots were Loyalists. Most Scots were new to the colonies and wanted a stable system of government. Jacobites were Monarchists; the idea of a republic wasn't seen as stable or well-known.

To gather support, King George III repealed the Dress Act of 1746, for example, allowing Highlanders to wear kilts and other traditional garments once again. As a result, most Scottish soldiers in America fought on the British side, such as Allan Maclean, who participated in the Jacobite Rising of 1745. He went on to become a British Army general who fought in the French and Indian War, before leading the 84th Regiment of Foot (Royal Highland Emigrants) against the Continental Army at the Battle of Quebec in 1775. However, there are also notable examples of Scots who fought for the Patriot cause, such as John Paul Jones.

Games Registrations OPEN NOW

for both the Alaska Scottish Highland Games (ASHG) & Midnight Sun Scottish Highland Games (MSSHG)!

Sponsor Registration

Heavy Events Registrations

Gathering O' the Clans

Alaskan Scottish Strongman

Tug-O-War Championships

ASHG Tug-O-War

MSSHG Tug-O-War

Tickets, Camping & Fan-Favorite Competitions

Event Tickets, including Scotch and Mead Tasting

Camping Registration

Volunteer Registration

Midnight Sun Spurtle Challenge

Haggis Eating Contest

Beard, Braids & Mustache Contest

Find all links on Alaskanscottish.org, then click on the Games you're interested in.

Club Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Location	Details
Every month				
3rd Monday	6:00 p.m.	Scottish Club Board Meeting	Blood Bank of Alaska Board Room	Open to Club members
June				
2	6:00 p.m.	MSSHG Planning Meeting	Mushers Hall, 925 Farmers Loop Rd, Fairbanks	Also on zoom*
9	6:00 p.m.	ASHG Planning Meeting	Eureka Space, 405 W. 36 th	Also on zoom*
27-28	All day	Alaska Scottish Highland Games	AK State Fairgrounds, Palmer	Registrations open
July				
4	All day	Kachemak Bay Highland Games	Karen Hornaday	Coastal games with a Celtic twist
18	10 am start	Tartan Tourney	Settler's Bay Golf Course	Register online at www.alaskascottish.org
August				
15	All day	Midnight Sun Scottish Highland Games	AK Dog Musher's Assoc. Musher's Hall, Fairbanks	Celebrate under the midnight sun
October				
24	6 p.m.	Samhain Celebration	Anchorage Senior Activities Center	Celtic New Year Party by Celtic Community of Alaska
November				
21		Celtic Holiday Market	Odd Man Rush, Eagle River	
21		St. Andrew's Night	Odd Man Rush, Eagle River	An evening celebrating Scotland's Patron Saint
December				
All Month		Order your Hogmanay Grams	On-line ordering	Curated box of treats meant to simulate First Footing Gifts
January				
23	6 p.m.	Robert Burns Night	49 th State Auditorium	

*Zoom Link (Same for All Meetings): <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84068169436> Meeting ID: 840 6816 9436

Contact Information for Alaska Pipe Bands:

Last Frontier Pipes and Drums

Pipe Major: Jenni Stewart

Practices: Mondays, First Congregational Church

2610 E. Northern Lights

Contact - Chris Walker at: aewalker@mtaonline.net

Find us on Facebook

Fairbanks Red Hackle Pipe Band

P.O. 82782

Fairbanks, Alaska

www.fairbanksredhacklepipeband.org

Alaska Celtic Pipes & Drums

Lessons Tuesdays - 6:30 pm - Mat-Su College;

Lessons Fridays - 5:30 pm - Our Redeemer Lutheran

Church, Chugiak: Band Practice to follow.

Contact Richard Christiansen - 907-315-9838

www.alaskacelticpipesdrums.org

City of Juneau Pipe Band

Juneau, Alaska

www.cityofjuneaupipeband.org

Scottish Club Supporters/Club Contacts

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www.amandakerrmusic.com

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Club Information

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Go online to www.alaskanscottish.org and click the membership link, Mail a check to ASC, PO Box 244416, Anchorage, AK 99524 or Call 907-602-0901 and provide payment information.

Educational Assistance Program

The Alaskan Scottish Club Education Assistance Program offers individual grants up to \$500 per applicant for schools or workshops and up to \$1,500 for a post-secondary educational institution. See the club's website for more information and to access the application <https://alaskanscottish.org/club-membership/>

If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Committee chair, Christa Wallace at Volunteers@alaskanscottish.org

Back Issues of the Thistle

Ever wanted to check out old issues of the Thistle? Maybe to find that steak pie recipe from two years ago, or see who won the tug-o-war at last year's Games? Back issues may be found on our website under the "About us" tab.

Gaming Permit

The ASC possesses an Alaska Gaming Permit. This Permit allows the club to hold our fundraising raffles and auctions. The ASC is allowed to use our permit to sponsor raffles for other Non-Profits for their events and fundraisers. If you are in need of a gaming permit for an upcoming event please let us know.

Support the Club through EZBiz



The Club can earn airline miles at the same time you earn your own! The Easy Biz program allows the club to earn 1 mile for every dollar spent on the base fare portion of ticket purchases made online through the EasyBiz® website. Simply sign in to EasyBiz for your travel purchases and each purchase will automatically be credited to the Club's account along with your own! Interested in signing up? Send Jeni an email and she will get you on our account! jeni@alaskanscottish.org

Club Contact Information

The Tundra Thistle, the newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club, is published approximately 4 times each year. Subscription is by membership to the Alaskan Scottish Club. Send articles for publication, membership info, and advertising rate inquiries to:

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Alaskan Scottish Club

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The Alaskan Scottish Club is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) entity and can accept cash and services. Cash donations are welcome at any time of the year. For those with corporate matching programs, we are eligible for those funds.

You can contact the Board of Directors at the above address with questions. Facebook and Instagram contacts:
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlaskanScottish (Club page) www.facebook.com/alaskashg (Highland Games page)

Instagram: www.instagram.com/alaskanscottish