

Snowmass Sun

Nobody Covers Snowmass Like The Sun

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FREE

THE RETURN OF THE *Colorado Scottish Festival*

The 53rd annual Colorado Scottish Festival is back in Snowmass for its second year Aug. 5 through 7

Erica Robbie
The Aspen Times

In the early 1960s, a few members of the St. Andrew Society of Colorado in Denver organized a little picnic as a way to celebrate their Scottish heritage.

Within a few years, what started as a small gathering with some bagpipe players and food evolved into something much greater.

By 1970, the popularity of the picnic manifested into a full-fledged Scottish festival with paid entry, according to John Thornton, a longtime member of the St. Andrew Society of Colorado.

FESTIVAL, 6



TOP: On Aug. 5 through 7, the Colorado Scottish Festival will take over Snowmass Base Village and the Snowmass mall. FAR LEFT: The St. Andrew Society of Colorado is a Denver-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and promote Scottish culture, tradition and history in Colorado. LEFT: The Scottish Festival started as a small picnic among St. Andrew Society of Colorado members in the early 1960s as a way to celebrate their Scottish culture.

SNOWMASS TOURISM/COURTESY PHOTOS

» IF YOU GO...

What: 53rd annual Colorado Scottish Festival
When: Aug. 5 to 7
Where: Snowmass Base Village and Snowmass mall
Cost: Free for general admission; \$130 for Thistle Club (VIP) ticket
For more information about the 2016 Colorado Scottish Festival, visit www.scottishgames.org.

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Snowmass Sun

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SNOWMASS TOURISM/COURTESY PHOTO

The festival will offer bagpipe and drumming competitions, athletic contests, Irish dancing, Celtic vendors and music and more.

FESTIVAL

From page 1

The St. Andrew Society of Colorado is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1963 with a mission to support and promote Scottish culture, tradition and history throughout the state.

The organization provides money to other Scottish groups across Colorado and scholarships to highland dancers, bagpipers and drummers to attend workshops and competitions in the U.S. and abroad.

The St. Andrew Society of Colorado's primary fundraising event is its Colorado Scottish Festival, which the volunteer group organizes and hosts every year.

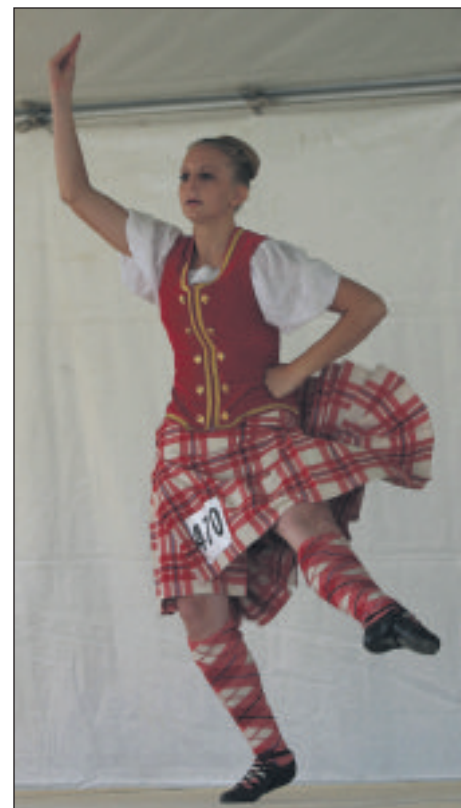
In its first several decades, the festival took place at Highlands Ranch in Douglas County, where it drew between 10,000 and 12,000 people each year, Thornton said.

After more than 50 years on the Front Range, the Scottish society decided it was time for a change of scenery.

Last summer, St. Andrew Society of Colorado relocated to Snowmass Village and hosted its first festival in the mountains.

Thornton, who has directed the festival for the past 25 years, called the transition to the Western Slope a "wonderful" decision.

"We love the mountains," he said. "It's an absolutely phenomenal setting — much better than a flat, open park."



SNOWMASS TOURISM/COURTESY PHOTO

The Scottish Festival is free and open to all.

Although the weekendlong festival scaled back in size and number of attendees when it moved to Snowmass, the change

in venue allows the Scottish society to reach a new audience, said Thornton's wife, Susan, who serves as the St. Andrew Society of Colorado's piping and drumming chairwoman.

Not to mention, "(Snowmass) is more like being in Scotland," said Susan Thornton, who has played the bagpipes in the Scottish Festival for more than 20 years.

Other festival performers, like pipe band major Lise Nelson, also expressed their delight at the festival's move to the mountains.

"The first thing that comes to mind is we will not be competing in 102-degree heat," Nelson said. "When you are encased in wool from your toes to your head, that gets to be really important."

"Plus, Snowmass is so gorgeous, it's a pleasure to play there."

The 2015 Colorado Scottish Festival, which took place in the soccer and baseball fields in Snowmass, attracted approximately 2,000 people, said Snowmass Tourism groups and events manager Dave Elkan.

But this year's festival will occupy Snowmass' commercial core, Base Village and mall, Elkan said, adding that he expects more attendees this time around.

What's also new this summer is that the festival is free for all to attend and enjoy.

Unlike last year's festival, which required purchasing tickets for admission, the only fees associated with the 2016 Scottish Festival are for whiskey tastings and VIP admission.

The slew of free activities that are scheduled to take place throughout the festival weekend includes bagpipe and drumming competitions, Irish dancing, Celtic vendors and music, a genealogy station and, of course, a series of Scottish athletic games. (See sidebar for a schedule of events.)

"It's really fun to pull off a world-class event with only a few volunteers," John Thornton said,



SNOWMASS TOURISM/COURTESY PHOTO

The 2015 Scottish Festival in Snowmass, which took place in the soccer and baseball fields, attracted about 2,000 attendees, according to Snowmass Tourism groups and events manager Dave Elkan.

adding that the St. Andrew Society of Colorado has been home to the largest all-volunteer Scottish festival in the U.S. for several years.

While the nonprofit's mission is to promote Scottish culture, it is an inclusive organization that is open to all.

The Colorado Scottish Festival not only encourages attendees of all nationalities, but it also is composed of participants who represent different nationalities, Susan Thornton said.

"We want everybody to come and have a good time," she said.

"(The St. Andrew Society of Colorado) put their heart and soul into this event every year," Elkan said. "It's an iconic, long-lasting, well-run festival with amazing talent and an incredible cultural event for someone to get to experience here."

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SNOWMASS TOURISM/COURTESY PHOTO

The St. Andrew Society of Colorado has hosted the Scottish Festival since its inception in 1963.

Schedule of events

AUG. 5

- ▶ Piping competition, 5:30 p.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Thistle Club VIP reception (ticketed event), 5:30 p.m. at Ice Age Discovery Center
- ▶ Hot piping and drumming contest, 8 p.m. at Base Village

AUG. 6

- ▶ Solo piping and drumming, 8:30 to 11 a.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Whiskey tasting (ticketed event), 10 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. at Ricard Brasserie & Liquor Bar at Base Village
- ▶ Midday ceremonies, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Children's athletic events, 12 to 1 p.m. at Snowmass mall
- ▶ "Bonnie Knees" contest, 1:30 to 2 p.m. at Snowmass mall
- ▶ Pipe band competitions, 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Free concert featuring the Titan Terrors, 6:15 to 8:30 p.m. on Fanny Hill

AUG. 7

- ▶ Solo piping and drumming, 8:30 to 11 a.m. at Base Village
- ▶ "Kirkin' o' the Tartans" and blessing of the animals, 9 a.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Whiskey tasting (ticketed event), 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Ricard Brasserie & Liquor Bar at Base Village
- ▶ Midday ceremonies, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Base Village
- ▶ Children's athletic events, 12 to 1 p.m. at Snowmass mall
- ▶ Pipe band competitions, 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Base Village

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The Town of **SNOWMASS** Village

Snowmass Village Education Grant Committee

TOSV now Accepting Applications for the Education Grant Committee

The Town is seeking applicants to serve on a committee tasked with appropriating the funds raised from a potential new property tax that will be dedicated to education. The 5 member committee will be selected by the Town Council and placed on the November ballot.

INTERESTED?

Additional information is available at tosv.com
Applications Due by 8:00am Thursday, August 4th


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