

LIBERTY CALL

The Highlands in *Paradise*

The Schiehallion Dancers from Ontario, Canada perform a highland dance at last weekend's Hawaiian Scottish Festival at Kapiolani Park.



Scottish, medieval enthusiasts enjoy annual Hawaiian Scottish Festival

Story and photos by J01 David Nagle
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It was your typical day in Waikiki. People sunbathed, splashed in the surf, went sailing, wailed "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes, danced a jig, dueled with medieval knights, ate haggis and tossed cabers across the green.

Did I mention we were still in Hawaii?

What seemed like half a world away was in fact what took place at Kapiolani Park last weekend. Oahu residents and Celtic enthusiasts enjoyed a taste of the highlands at the 18th annual Hawaiian Scottish Festival.

"The festival is a celebration of Scottish heritage and culture," said Bob McGregor of the Caledonian Society of Hawaii, an organization founded to further Scottish culture in Hawaii and preserve and teach about Scottish heritage.

McGregor, who served in the Navy from 1972-1976, added that Scottish influence in Hawaii extends back to 1778, when Scottish merchants bought whale oil from local suppliers.

The Scots were among the first western settlers in Hawaii. Today, some demographers claim that Hawaii has the largest per capita population of people with Scottish ancestry in the United States.

The festival featured highland dancing, music by the Celtic Pipes

and Drums of Hawaii, a haggis eating contest and highland games such as caber tossing.

People could trace their lineage back to one of the many clans represented at the festival or shop for tartans and other authentic Celtic merchandise. History buffs could learn more about Scottish history at the festival's cultural tent, or by talking to groups dedicated to teaching and practicing medieval culture, like the Musketeer Fencers or the Society for Creative Anachronism.

SCA members research and recreate the customs, combat and courtesies of the Middle Ages. Members study and practice "lost" arts, from calligraphy to creating chain mail armor.

"The SCA's purpose is to teach people what really happened back then, as opposed to many groups at renaissance fairs which are there for show," said Kathy Wojciechowski, a retired Air Force master sergeant who is known within the SCA as "Lady Alanna Altir-a-mor." SCA members choose names based on the time period and country they choose to specialize in.

Whether you're a modern-day clansman, medieval enthusiast, or just have a "passing fancy" for things Scottish, Hawaii offers a variety of ways to experience the rich culture of Scotland and the Middle Ages. To learn more, call the Caledonian Society of Hawaii at 672-9930, the Hawaiian Scottish Association at 235-7605 or the SCA at 841-5978.



A piper from the Celtic Pipes and Drums of Hawaii wails a tune during their performance at the Hawaiian Scottish Festival.



Festival-goers (above) chat with a medieval knight. The knight is a member of the Society of Creative Anachronism, an organization dedicated to teaching and practicing medieval culture.

Pat Stuart (right) spins lamb's wool and silk on an old-fashioned spinning wheel. She will use the spun yarn to make a shawl.



Famous Scotsmen

Charles MacIntosh
John Napier
William Ramsey
John Macadam

Alexander Graham Bell
John Logie Baird
John Paul Jones

patented the raincoat
invented the decimal point
discovered helium
invented tarmac road surfacing
invented the telephone
invented the television
founded the U.S. Navy