



# Summer 2023

## NEWS



### From the President

I hope this email finds you well and enjoying the beautiful summer weather we've been blessed with. As we enter the season's final stretch, I'd like to provide an update and idea of what this newsletter contains.

Firstly, I am thrilled to announce that thanks to the efforts of SASOW and the help of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, we have been proudly named "Canada's Kilt Skate Capital" again. This is an incredible achievement for our organization and recognizes the hard work and dedication of everyone who participated and was involved.

Join us for our highly anticipated 152nd Celebration of St. Andrew's Day on November 25. This year, we have the privilege of having Dan McConnell, CEO of The North West Company, as our special guest who will toast the Day. We have made a few changes to the ticket price and venue to make the event more accessible, so be sure to mark your calendars and get your tickets early.

In the spirit of summer reading, I recommend a book that you will find captivating. Robert Lower's "Unsettled" is reviewed by SASOW member Alexandra Paul in this newsletter. It explores Lord Selkirk's Scottish Colonists and the Battle for Canada's West 1813-1816. It's a must-read for Scottish History buffs!

We have some treats for all the food and whisky enthusiasts out there. Past President Evelyn Mitchell kindly provided us with a delicious Black Bun recipe I'm sure you'll enjoy. Additionally, Will Christie has written an insightful article on Glengoyne whisky that will pique your interest. So, sit back, relax, and take your taste buds on a journey!

There is also a winning Burns poem from member Colin Harris and news about our summer picnic. Lastly, we always seek fresh content for our newsletter.

Thank you for your ongoing support and involvement in SASOW. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and continuing to create memorable experiences together.

We wish you a fantastic rest of your summer!  
Best regards,  
Pam Simmons, President



**152nd ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF ST. ANDREW'S DAY**

**NOVEMBER 25, 2023, 5 PM**  
**THE CABOTO CENTRE**

**TOAST TO THE DAY:**  
**DANIEL MCCONNELL, PRESIDENT/CEO**  
**THE NORTH WEST COMPANY**

SAVE THE DATE

SAVE THE DATE

Please mark your calendars and join us for the magnificent 152nd Celebration of St. Andrew's Day on Saturday, November 25, at the Caboto Centre. We've revamped our ticket prices this year to make it even more accessible for everyone to join the festivities. Tickets are \$125 for members and \$135 for non-members.

We are thrilled to announce that **Dan McConnell, the new CEO/President of The North West Company**, will be our special guest for this momentous occasion to give the Toast to the Day! Prepare for an evening filled with delightful Scottish entertainment and delectable dining. So don't miss out on this extraordinary event; reserve your tickets now at [standrewssocietywpg@gmail.com](mailto:standrewssocietywpg@gmail.com).



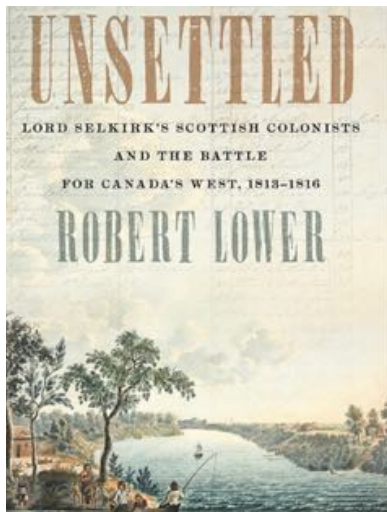
Matthew Eldridge was the Pop-Up Piper on July 1 welcoming runners and walkers at the base of the Provencher Bridge who were participating in the Running Room's Canada Day Run/Walk. To view the video: <https://vimeo.com/841641960>



## **Unsettled: Lord Selkirk's Scottish Colonists and the Battle for Canada's West 1813-181** by Robert Lower

Book Review by Alexandra Paul

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Sometimes a book surprises you. And sometimes history does, too. Manitoba's barely 150 years old but the story of this place goes back thousands of years.

Manitoba came into Canada as a province that the Metis expected would safeguard their culture and land rights. Someday, Louis Riel will get the recognition he deserves as the father of Manitoba in Canada's confederation.

This book is not about that story.

*Unsettled: Lord Selkirk's Scottish Colonists and the Battle for Canada's West 1813-1816* is the story of the first European settlement in western Canada and its struggles.

Unlike the typical pioneer narrative, there was a lot more to the story than merely getting used to harsh conditions and an unfamiliar climate. Anyone who's a history buff will know the arc of the story, like the 1816 Battle of Seven Oaks that almost did the settlement in and the rival fur trade companies— yes that includes both the Hudson Bay Co and the Northwest Co. Neither wanted their commercial territory settled in the first place. They were battling a war over it.

Fewer will know about the Trumpian strategy of misinformation and trickery that stalked the settlers and the nascent Metis nation alike.

Details captured here will have you turning the pages more like a murder mystery and less like a history text. *Unsettled* tells the story of 200 Highlanders dispossessed in the Scottish Clearances who set sail for Hudson Bay as part of Lord Selkirk's settlement on the Red River in 1813.

They're led to believe they're headed to "empty" land waiting to be settled. Nothing could be further from the truth. The land of the Red River then, as now, is deceptively placid.

Beneath the surface run competing currents that make it just as hard to settle as the river that runs through it. This book is important for the Scottish settlers in Winnipeg because so many of them still see themselves as part of the diaspora from the Highlands. Our culture takes bloodlines and family stories and squeezes them into tubes of confusing timelines. Generation after generation of the same family names, the stories of Culloden that sound like they happened maybe 50 years ago, not three hundred years ago. You get it.

Back in 1813, settlers here were new. First Nations people, and initially the Metis, were about the only ones who treated them kindly.

They were among the first of the diaspora and they knew there was no going back. Some stayed and for their resilience we have a lot to be thankful for. Others didn't and their story is also told in a way we haven't seen much of before now. Both narratives are part of the truth of this province.

It's an engrossing read, engaging and at times almost comical in some of the author's turns of phrase. Author Robert Lower is a native of Winnipeg and as the book jacket says he has written, edited and directed films for over 40 years.

His eye into this little-known period of history puts flesh and bones on a largely overlooked group of people and the temper of their time in such a way that you feel like you are watching a TV series. In fact, I predict we'll see one based on *Unsettled*.

Lower's feel for the history of those first settlers is also informed by a personal story; his own ancestor was among the settlers on that voyage in 1813, a Samuel Lamont who was under contract to Lord Selkirk as a millwright for the tiny community these group was to join at the Red River settlement.

Lower's a natural storyteller. His tone, his voice and his narrative are relaxed and personal. He is also a discerning researcher. He reviewed volumes upon volumes of journals and historical notes, not to mention classics from both sides of the Atlantic.

He took the time and knew it was important to look at this period through the shifting telescope of different eras and different people. As examples, there's Donna Sutherland's Peguis, the Noble Friend, Jean Teillet's The North-West is Our Mother, the Story of Louis Riel's People, the Metis Nation, John Prebble's The Highland Clearances, all classics or soon to be classics. He's read his way through the biographies of the leading historical characters, various reports and at least one Royal Commission, not to mention online editions of history, like the incomparable Dictionary of Canadian Biography.

For all that, you have the feeling you're sitting at his kitchen table and he's regaling you with the heroes and villains in his family history and yours, too. His gift for imagery and for sketching out dramatic climaxes in a few bold lines keep your focus. He understands the personalities of the period, their foibles, their strengths and their relationships and by the time you put the book down, you, too, have a sense that you understand them, this place and these people, in a way you may never have before.

That suggests the book appeals to a local audience, and Lower's references throughout show he knows the byways of this place in only the way a local does but don't be fooled. The sweep of the story is just as appealing to a universal audience. The stuff of human struggle is here in spades.

The book is also important for the St. Andrews Society of Winnipeg because it is about the violent tumult that led up to the first treaty in western Canada. The Society makes a point of profiling the Peguis Selkirk Treaty of 1817 as the start of European settlement in this part of the country. It has been a hard sell.

The treaty came decades before Canada was born. School history books are just now talking about the Numbered Treaties which Canada signed in the name of the British Crown. First Nations, who held sovereignty then, (and many argue with justification they do now), are a major element in this story.

The Peguis-Selkirk Treaty signed by the Scottish lord in the name of the Crown is notable for not insisting the original people surrender their land. It only asked to share it. The settlers were allotted land for their use, much like a reserve.

On that point, don't skip the author's note at the start of Unsettled. It's your key to the lens of this early colonial period and Lower himself writes that the truth of it is still as important today as it was then.

"Though my story is told through the eyes of the Scots who lived it, I am fully sensible of the social, cultural, economic and physical crimes that the descendants of these settlers, right up to my own generation, have perpetrated on the original inhabitants of the Canadian prairies. . .," the author notes.

A political person might read this book and argue that the outline of events go to show why sharing the land was the best chance for the settlement if it was to survive.

Reading this book, I was amazed the settlement survived at all. Nothing in its first few years suggested it ever would.

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## SASOW Membership

Did you know that the St. Andrew's Society welcomes all persons interested in promoting and preserving Scottish culture and heritage to be members? We have both individual and family members.

More information is on the [membership page on our website](#). Fees are \$60 for individuals and \$75 for families. For more information contact Catherine Aastrom, Secretary/Membership Chair at [standrewssocietywpg@gmail.com](mailto:standrewssocietywpg@gmail.com).





## Winnipeg is the Great Canadian Kilt Skate Capital 2023



SASOW members l-R: Dwight MacAulay, Evelyn Mitchell, Jae Eadie, Rhoda Eadie, Pam Simmons



The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada led by Commanding Officer Jon Baker (on left).

The St Andrew's Society of Winnipeg was joined by a large contingent of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, dozens of veterans, and many first-time participants, including a family who had recently fled the war in Ukraine. And once again, on February 26, the Winnipeg organizers showed themselves very skilled at generating media interest – not only for the event itself but for its quest for bragging rights as the Kilt Skate Capital. One TV host even asked, "Why do you have to put [kilt skating] on your bucket list." We are pleased to announce Winnipeg as the 2023 Kilt Skate Capital of Canada for its perseverance, good humour and leadership.

One of the best things about the Great Canadian Kilt Skate (GCKS) is the vast differences in the communities and their approach to kilt skating events. Large or small, indoors or outdoors, new or established: each skate is unique and special. This is why it is so difficult to choose the GCKS Capital. And when you look at all the pictures and the smiles on people's faces, you cannot help but think everybody is a winner.

Various skate events provide examples of what is good and fun and what can contribute to an excellent kilt skate. The number and variety of kilted skaters – young, older, multi-cultural. The participation of pipers on and off the ice. Highland Dancers. Choirs. Snacks, warm drinks and nibbles. Flags and Scottish regalia. Music. Ceremonies. Community leader involvement. Media buzz leads to the event and TV and news coverage. Promotion of the Great Canadian Kilt Skate to the entire community, inviting everyone to join in. Overall, a fun vibe!

After a couple of years where community events were cancelled due to the Covid pandemic, the 2023 kilt skate season saw the resurgence of these features, and it was great to see the number and variety of kilt skates across Canada. Several exceptional events and special mention should be given to Antigonish, whose inaugural kilt skate was outstanding.

But this year, the laurels as the Kilt Skate Capital of Canada return to a city that has been part of the kilt skate family since the beginning. Over the years, Winnipeg has shown that it knows how to celebrate winter and Scottish culture with bare knees and ice. It was first declared the Kilt Skate Capital in 2021 for the enthusiastic way so many skaters participated in the Home Edition – the Covid version of the GCKS. Winnipeggers were so proud, and the kilt skate capital achievement was raised in the Manitoba legislature. In 2022 Winnipeg had another memorable kilt skate at The Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers despite the temperature of minus-thirty. This year, the balmy -5C weather smiled on the Winnipeg kilt skate held at the Riley Family Duck Pond at Assiniboine Park on Sunday, February 26.

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## SASOW Picnic & PPBAM Jam



We had a blast at the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg's picnic on June 4 in Bruce Park! Despite the warm weather, we managed to find a cool and shady spot for picnicking and dancing. The PPBAM wowed us with their fantastic solo competition for pipes and drums. To top it off, a group of Pipers led by Cameron Dawson paraded through our picnic area.

We thank Peter Heavysege, SASOW's first vice president and his committee for organizing such a great event and to everyone who came out to enjoy it.

Special thanks to the amazing PPBAM group for providing the perfect Scottish music ambiance and the Lads and Lassies for the country dance presentation and lessons. We hope to see you all again next year!

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## SASOW CEILIDH



SASOW hosted a memorable and family-friendly Ceilidh on April 14th at the Corydon Community Centre, leaving attendees of all ages thoroughly entertained. The event started with a rousing performance by the Flying Haggis Band, whose music had everyone on their feet. Additionally, the Winnipeg Police Pipe Band made a special appearance, adding extra excitement to the Scottish celebration of Tartan Day.

For those eager to learn some traditional dance steps, the Lads and Lassies were on hand to provide dancing lessons. As the night progressed, everyone indulged in a delightful spread of social food and drinks, ensuring no one went hungry. A Hint of Heather's booth delighted attendees looking for Celtic memorabilia and jewelry.

One of the night's highlights was witnessing young Luke Jakilazek, the youngest family member showcasing his newfound Scottish moves alongside the talented highland dancers. Another unforgettable moment came when Dr. Jim Christie delivered a captivating and dramatic Toast to the Haggis, leaving the young audience spellbound.

Overall, the Ceilidh at Corydon Community Centre was a resounding success. It brought together people of all ages, creating an atmosphere filled with joy and appreciation for Scottish culture. The organizers deserve commendation for creating an unforgettable event that will be remembered fondly by all who attended. Thank you, Peter Heavysege, Dwight MacAulay, Pam Simmons, Colin Harris, Chris Lawson, Evelyn Mitchell, Jae and Rhoda Eadie, and David Cherrett and Sandra Campbell for your help.



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## SASOW Trust Grants

The St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg considers awarding financial grants to individuals or organizations for initiatives that further the objectives of the Society, which include but are not limited to:

- a) Preservation and promotion of Scottish culture and heritage within Manitoba for all Manitobans,
- b) Increased understanding by the Manitoba public of the Scots' role in the origin and development of Manitoba, and
- c) Positive presentation to the world of Manitoba's Scottish culture and heritage

Grants recipients are recommended to the SASOW Trust Fund. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the following groups/individuals received grants: Queens Own Camerons; Manitoba Highland Dancers; Scot Dance Manitoba; Granite Curling Club for the Caledonian Curling Event; Flying Haggis (Ceilidh); Winnipeg Police Pipe Band (Ceilidh); Lads & Lassies; Manitoba Highland Dance Association; Kids in Kilts Dance School; Prairie Thistle Dance and Matthew Owen-Hunt (Rose Bowl).



Congratulations to Matthew Owen-Hunt for receiving his well-deserved \$500 grant from SASOW and SASOW Trust to participate in the mass pipes and drums at the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena. L-R Matthew Hunt, Evelyn Mitchell, Chair of SASOW Trust Fund, Pam Simmons, SASOW President

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## The Great Scotch & Whisky Draw



Let's make SASOW's Great Scotch & Whisky Raffle an outstanding success in celebrating our shared Scottish heritage!

SASOW's Great Scotch & Whisky Raffle is now happening earlier this fall! We are thrilled to announce the launch of our annual event, where members from our amazing Scottish community generously donate their favourite scotch or whisky bottles to help us raise funds for the SASOW Trust. With these funds, we can give grants to Scottish organizations and individuals in Manitoba, promoting and preserving Scottish culture and heritage.

This year, we aim to gather 20 exceptional bottles for the raffle, and we need your support to create an extraordinary selection of Scotch and whisky. If you're unsure about which bottle to donate, don't worry! We have a curated list available and would happily share it with you.

**To contribute and help us fund worthy Scottish projects**, please contact Pam Simmons, President, at 204-230-6002 or email [presidentsasow@gmail.com](mailto:presidentsasow@gmail.com). Your generous contribution will help us create an unforgettable raffle experience while supporting the Scottish community in Manitoba.

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## Robert Burns Poetry Contest and Colin Harris' 3rd Place Poem

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### When Spring Returns

When Spring returns, wi' gentle breeze  
And buds adorn the trees wi' ease  
The world awakens fae its sleep  
And nature's secrets stairt tae seep

The birds sing oot wi' joyful sound  
And blooms emerge fae the ground  
The grasses sway in playful glee  
As rabbits hop and dance wi' glee

The sun shines bricht, the air is mild  
And all aroond, a feeling wild  
Of hope and promise fills the air  
As life awakens everywhere

Oh, Spring, you are a wondrous thing  
With all the joy and love you bring  
Your gentle touch renews the earth  
And fills oor hearts wi' endless mirth

So let us cherish ilka day  
That Spring brings forth in its ain way  
For soon enough, it will be gaen  
And we'll await tis sweet return.

Colin Harris

The Robert Burns Association of North America (RBANA), of which SASOW is a member, holds an annual poetry writing competition for the Jack Hume Heather & Thistle trophy, named for its donor, the late Jack Hume, a founding member of the Heather & Thistle Society of Houston.

For the first time, this year's competition included three entries from Winnipeg, two from SASOW Director, and former RBANA President Colin Harris.

The winning entry, as judged by a three-person panel (two representatives of the Robert Burns World Federation and last year's winner from Calgary), was a first-time entrant from Atlanta. One of Colin's entries, the entry from another Winnipegger, and a Winnipeg Robert Burns Club member, tied for third place, with a third entry from another RBANA member and a previous winner from Niagara Falls.

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### Black Bun Recipe



What is Black Bun?

Black Bun is a rich fruit cake that contains a variety of dried fruits, including raisins, sultanas, currants, warming spices, and flaked almonds. For some, the cake has a similar taste and texture to a Christmas cake. But it has one huge difference. Interested in the recipe? Go to:

<https://scottishscran.com/black-bun/>

## Glengoyne by Will Christie



Just north of Glasgow, you'll encounter the Glengoyne Distillery. Having a unique claim to fame as a Highland distillery with Lowland aging, its stills are north of the Highland Line, while its aging warehouse lies across the road, just south of the line. Named after the Glengoyne Burn that supplies water for distillation, Glengoyne has made its presence known in our Manitoba Liquor Marts and should be on any uiscephiles† Distillery bingo list!

Legally in continuous operation since 1833, the area was well known for hiding illicit stills. Initially known as Burnfoot and owned by George Connell, it was sold to the Lang Brothers of Glasgow in 1876 and renamed Glen Guin, apparently due to miscommunication; it was formally renamed to Glengoyne around the turn of the 20th century. Ownership is now held by Ian Macleod Distillers, making it an integrated distiller, blender, and bottler. In 1984 a Royal Warrant was awarded to Glengoyne for supplying whisky to the Queen Mother.

Glengoyne lays claim to having the slowest stills in Scotland, and coupled with using Golden Promise barley (a low yield but high-quality grain) and only air-drying the malt (no peat nor charcoal are used), they use these to produce a more traditional style of scotch. Their picturesque location has been used in several specialty packages for their bottles painted by Jolomo, or John Lowrie Morrison OBE, a renowned Scottish painter.

The 15-year-old is matured in first-fill bourbon and sherry casks, imparting a naturally dark colour. The nose is rich, with initial aromas of sultanas and warm toast; you can smell sweet berry jam and medium oak. On the tongue, the sherry delivers toffee and raisins like sweet buns minus the cinnamon. A pleasant steam lingers.

† Uiscephile/uisgephile: whisky lover

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