



I blame my editor. Margaret Evans, this is all your fault. We were sitting on the Lowcountry Weekly porch during Water Festival and I mentioned that I was looking for a new historical fiction series to binge watch on Netflix. Almost immediately, Margaret said, “*Outlander*. Have you watched

Outlander?

yet? I bet you'll love it.”

“The one about time travel?” I asked. “Yes! It's about a nurse from World War II who travels back to Scotland about 200 years earlier. You WILL LOVE IT.” “Okay,” I said, “I'll check it out.” Not really convinced, one hot day the next week, I decided to take an afternoon nap with my kitty, Belle, and selected *Outlander* to fall asleep with. Twenty minutes later I sent Margaret a text with an emoji of a fish on a hook. I've been totally fascinated with all things Scottish ever since.

A number of years ago I spent quite a bit of time researching my family history in the North Carolina Archives. Consequently, I knew much about my Scottish heritage. I already owned a kilt, scarfs and pins from my clan, Lindsay. So, imagine when I realized that there was an official Scottish holiday that we could celebrate here in the Lowcountry, on January 25th, and just by chance it was on a Saturday night this year. I started secretly planning a Burns Night celebration immediately. Burns Night commemorates the birthday of the bard (poet) Robert Burns, who was born in 1759. It also celebrates Burns' contribution to Scottish culture. His best know work is Auld Lang Syne.

Slàinte Mhath!

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 04 February 2020 15:02

Vince and I hosted our first Burns Night last Saturday with some of our nearest and dearest friends. I must say, we do have the funnest group of chums. In the spirit of the evening, they all dressed in tartans and plaid, lots of kilts and lots of bare knees. Adventurous lads and lassies, they all tasted my rendition of Haggis – and liked it. Vince said the Selkirk Grace, LCW publisher, Jeff Evans, gave the Address to A Haggis and then stabbed the wee beastie. (*See us pictured above.*)

) Brad Ballington did his homework and gave a fabulous Toast to the Lassies and Louise Hodges responded with a Reply to the Laddies by writing a wonderful poem. Mike McFee tickled the ivories on our piano as we all sang Auld Lang Syne.

Since this is supposed to be a food column, I'd better get to the food part. Traditional Burns Nights are often seated dinners with many courses and lots of speeches. I wanted our gathering to be more of a party so I took some traditional Scottish dishes and turned them into hors d'oeuvres, canapes and cocktail party foods. Our non-traditional event featured a Scotch whisky cocktail called The Presbyterian, Rumbledethumps Canapes, Deconstructed Scotch Eggs with Highlander Mustard, Balmoral Bites, Goat Cheese and Bacon Toasts, Scottish Smoked Salmon Terrine with Highland Oat Crackers, Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Scotch Whisky Sauce, Lowcountry Haggis, Neeps and Tatties Salad, Bitter Greens with Grapes and Toasted Hazelnuts, and Selkirk Bannock Bread and Butter Pudding with Butterscotch Whisky Sauce for dessert. This issue, I'm sharing several recipes from our Bill of Fare. If you'd like to use some actual biadhan (that's Scottish for 'food') visit scottishgourmetusa.com. I purchased Haggis Sauce, Oat Crackers and Selkirk Bannocks from them and was very pleased.

Back to the title of my column, here's a wee bit of trivia for you to share with your friends The traditional Scottish Gaelic toast when raising a glass to say 'cheers' is Slàinte Mhath which is pronounced slan-ge-var. Aye! How fun is that?

“Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind? Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and auld lang syne? For auld lang syne, my jo, for auld lang syne, we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet, for auld lang syne.”

The Presbyterian (Featured Cocktail)

Slàinte Mhath!

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