

Scottish Ceilidh to Feature Pipin' of the Haggis
by Rosemarie Howard
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The Irish have just celebrated St. Patrick's Day--at least the Irish everywhere, but in Ireland. For the fourteenth consecutive year the Scotsmen of the Wasatch Front have a chance to honor their ancestral traditions at a Ceilidh (pronounced "kay-lee") to be held Saturday, March 24 at 7 p.m. in the Payson City Center (439 West 100 South). However, Scottish bloodlines are not a requirement to participate in the event. Tickets are required to attend and may still be obtained by phoning Colleen at 465-2933.

One of the highlights of the evening will be the Pipin' of the Haggis. The haggis, a traditional Scottish dish, has its own presentation ceremony complete with a guard carrying a sword, a bagpiper, and a prayer to the haggis.

You may be wondering what a haggis is. Indeed! You may be sorry you asked. The haggis, a bird with vestigial wings like the ostrich, is a legendary animal found only in Scotland. The creature has only three legs, each a different length, making it relatively easy to catch if you can get it on to a flat plain. They can then only run round in circles.

Considered a great delicacy in Scotland (ranking right up there with the snipe in the United States), the haggis is served with tattles and neeps (potatoes and turnips).

The culinary dish called haggis is traditionally made from this animal. But since sightings are rare and captured birds even rarer, the following ingredients are normally used: the stomach bag of a sheep, along with one of the smaller bags called the King's hood are washed thoroughly. Into the stomach bag is stuffed pre-cooked minced lights (lungs), grated liver, minced heart, minced king's hood, beef suet, finely ground oats (not the instant kind), salt and a good shaking of black pepper. This mixture is boiled in the stomach bag for at least three hours.

According to instructions found at the internet site: electricscotland.com, the haggis should be served on a platter without garnish or sauce but served with mashed turnip and mashed potatoes seasoned with salt and pepper and mashed with a little butter. (This same website provides more detailed instructions for preparing haggis should it sound tempting.)

For those of you turning a little green, relax. The haggis served at the Payson ceilidh will be made of 100 percent U.S. grade A beef, and will be an optional dish. The catered dinner, for which there is a charge of \$14 a person, will consist of very palatable roast beef, potatoes and gravy, salads, and other such common fare.

Along with the catered dinner, the evening's program will include the announcement of a new chieftain, and a program featuring the Heather Broch Dancers and the White Peaks Pipe Band. Social dancing will be led by the Salt Lake Country Dancers. The members of the three groups come from all over the Wasatch Front.

Door prizes will be offered. Among the prizes are a carved wooden bowl donated by Ken Morgan, two trips to Wendover (one provided by Rainbow Peppermill Casino and the other by State Line Silversmith Hotel), and gift certificates donated by Payson Sports and Trophy. Olsen's Greenhouse is providing flowers for the event.

The ceilidh is but a prelude to the 18th annual Scottish Festival to be held July 7.