

# Gala Scottish Concert In Concord **Andover Libraries**

By Betsy Woodman  
Strathspey and Reel Society

"I looked down the row where I was sitting, and every foot was tapping." That's the typical reaction to the Strathspey and Reel Society of New Hampshire's annual Gala Concert. People sometimes end up dancing in the aisles. (A strathspey, by the way, is a Scottish dance with a characteristic snappy beat.)

Three years ago, I was in the audience and decided that the players looked as if they were having too much fun to miss. Recorder in hand, I went to the next meeting of SRSNH and have been playing with them ever since.

SRSNH, now in its 18th year, is dedicated to playing music of the Scottish musical tradition. It is open to instrumentalists of all abilities and ages. Members range from enthusiastic beginners to performers of professional caliber and from preteens to senior citizens.

SRSNH is a non-profit organization

which awards several music scholarships every year.

Its 17th Annual Gala Scottish Concert will be on Sunday, November 27 at 2:30 PM, in the Concord City Auditorium at 39 Green Street in Concord.

The guest star this year is Scottish pianist and composer Muriel Johnstone. Muriel is highly regarded for her arrangements of music for Scottish dance and for many stunning new compositions in the Scottish style. Dancers from Highland Dance Boston will also perform.

The SRSNH ensemble of fiddles, winds, harps, strings, and accordions will make this concert a great way to end the Thanksgiving weekend. Tickets are \$17, \$14, and \$12 and are available in advance (recommended) as well as at the box office the day of the performance. Call 286-8211, e-mail SRSNHgala@aol.com, or visit SRSNH.org for more information and a printable ticket order form.

By Ray Mitchell  
For the Beacon

Would you like to travel? Do you find it too expensive? Do you have no time? Well, consider this:

*There is no frigate like a book  
To take us lands away,  
Nor any coursers like a page  
Of prancing poetry.  
This traverse may the poorest take  
Without oppress of toll;  
How frugal is the chariot  
That bears a human soul!*

- Emily Dickinson

Our Andover libraries have resources that can take you where no airplane or boat will. Here are a few suggestions that will carry you off on a cool winter evening.

Peter Jenkin's *Walk Across America* or *Walk Across China* will take you to the towns and backroads of our nation or the Chinese mainland, half a world away.

Bill Bryson takes you to towns in *Small Town America* or to the Appalachian Trail in *A Walk in the Woods*.

A trip across the Atlantic is offered by M. Mallace in *As for Ireland*. It is a reference handbook for understanding the Emerald Isle.

You may even take a trip to a place that no longer exists. Travel with Sir Edmund Hillary up the Ganges to Tibet in *From Ocean to the Sky*. Or visit cities in Mexico that exist only as ruins today, but see what it would have been like to live there. Jeremy Sabloff offers vignettes of them in *The Cities of Ancient Mexico*.

These are just a few of the possibilities. If you don't know where you would like to travel, read *1,000 Places to See Before You Die* by Patricia Schultz. The brief descriptions will whet your appetite to explore further. Then look for a book that will carry you there on wings of imagination.

## New On The Shelf:

**Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash** by Elizabeth Royle

Reviewed by Matthew Power  
in *Discover* magazine, Sept. 2005

"Refuse reflects truth," contends William Rathje, an archaeologist at the University of Arizona who sifts through



garbage for clues to the modern human condition. Taking Rathje's dictum to heart, Elizabeth Royle sits down in her Brooklyn kitchen with a pair of rubber gloves, a pen, a scale,

and her 3-year-old daughter, Lucy, ready to record the contents of her trash can.

*Two plastic wrappers from magazines, she writes. Plastic from cheese, plastic from a bill of lading, 1 plastic box from fresh pasta, 1 Ziploc of slimy parsley ... 1-gallon plastic milk bottle ... apples, coffee grounds, onions, green pepper trimmings, pea pods, lots of grapes, spoiled cherry tomatoes.*

Where does all this garbage go? Like a latter-day Upton Sinclair, the muckraker who laid bare the American meatpacking industry in his 1906 novel, *The Jungle*, Royle sniffs out the fate of rubbish as it migrates from curbside to landfill and beyond. Tracking an average American's 4.3 daily pounds of waste—1.31 tons per year—is no easy task. Royle tags along beside trash collectors, clambers atop New York's vast closed landfill at Fresh Kills (which at one point released 2 percent of the world's methane), test-drives a car that runs on used french fry oil, and peers into the maw of the Prolerizer, a machine that can shred a car in a few seconds. At a waste-treatment plant, she examines the "scum concentrator" and gleefully skewers the euphemisms for the toxic sludge such plants produce: bioslurp, geoslime, nutricake, and humanure.

Finding a place for all this waste is just the start. Royle argues persuasively that our wanton consumption and disposal habits cause grave environmental and health crises. Asthma rates near waste-transfer stations, for example, are higher than elsewhere. And widely admired recycling programs may not be so healthy for the recyclers: As Royle points out, many leaded-glass computer monitors are shipped to countries such as China and India, where those who dismantle them—including children—are exposed to mercury, arsenic, dioxin, and other toxic chemicals.

What is to be done? Royle proposes safer product design and computer take-back programs and pines for the emergence of a new "ecological citizen," one who reduces waste and buys with an informed understanding of where items go when tossed out. Otherwise, she warns, we'll end up drowning in our own debris. *Copyright 2005 Buena Vista Magazines Reprinted with permission.*

## Franklin Opera House Presents *Hamlet*

William Shakespeare's immortal *Hamlet* will be performed at the Franklin Opera House on November 8 at 10 AM and 7 PM. Tickets are \$6 to \$14 and are available by phone at 934-1901, through the Franklin Opera House box office, at the Franklin Antique Market, and online at [FranklinOperaHouse.org](http://FranklinOperaHouse.org).

Political intrigue, family dysfunction, love and hate, jealousy and revenge – all swirl around Hamlet as he desperately seeks to restore order to a world spinning out of control.

Other upcoming events at the Franklin Opera House include: *Chicago*, a musical produced and presented by Franklin Footlight Theatre November 10 to 13 and November 17 to 20. Also coming to the Franklin Opera House are The Shaw Brothers' Holiday Concert on December 2 and Boston's favorite comedy club, Improv Asylum, on January 21, 2006. Check the Opera House's Web site at [FranklinOperaHouse.org](http://FranklinOperaHouse.org) or call the box office at 934-1901 for details.

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