

## **JSAS Tartan**

The statement at the beginning of this potted history of the Java St. Andrew Society tartan is correct as far as I was able to confirm when searching through the Internet of other St. Andrew Societies' histories.

It all began at a meeting of the Highland Gathering Committee in the summer of 2000 when the principal item on the agenda was the preparation of a week of Scottish events to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the Gathering due to take place in the summer of 2001. After this meeting I had the idea that having our own tartan would be a "first" for our Society and a unique way to promote the Highland Gathering and our local Scottish cultural events. I contacted other Chieftains to get their reaction to this idea and this resulted in a meeting of all the Chieftains to discuss my proposal where it was unanimously agreed the idea was well worth pursuing. I was given the task to implement it with the instruction that the design of the tartan should be centred on the blue/white of the Scottish Saltire and the red/white of the Indonesian national flag. Fortunately at this meeting we learned that Mark Manderson had a relative in Edinburgh who sold kilts and other items of Scottish dress and he was delegated to contact his cousin and pass on the contact information to me.

This he duly did and thus began an intensive email dialogue between myself and Neil Manderson, the owner of Ecossais Ltd. to have sample designs made and sent to me.

Neil reacted very promptly to my request for both dress and hunting designs in accordance with the colour combinations I gave him and I received about 12 cards on which designs samples were displayed of both dress and hunting tartans. At a follow up meeting of the Chieftains it was decided to initially focus on the dress tartan as the designs more clearly demonstrated our objective of combining the national colours of Scotland and Indonesia, our host country. After much debate (what else would you expect from a meeting of Chieftains), a design was selected and our decision forwarded to Neil Manderson, together with an order for enough material to make 8 kilts and 8 sashes for the ladies dance team.

We were up and running, only to encounter our first hurdle! Who did we know who could measure all the Chieftains for their new kilts? Frantic correspondence to Neil and he sent us instructions how measurements were to be taken, together with the advice that we should use Mark to measure as he had some experience in doing this. So Mark it was and he did a very good job of it too, considering the various waist and posterior sizes he had to contend with!

Yours truly then had another “brainwave”! What better timing and venue to launch our new tartan than at the St. Andrew’s Ball in November. All the Chieftains could wear their new kilts for the haggis ceremony and the ladies dance team their new JSAS tartan sashes. A pageant never before seen at a St. Andrew’s Ball in Jakarta! The next hurdle then loomed. How were we to get the kilts and excess material here without being held up in customs? The current Chieftain, Rab Speirs, came to our rescue and offered to go to Edinburgh during a visit to Scotland, pick up the kilts and have them hand carried back to Jakarta. Bit of a risk, but he succeeded and delivered all the kilts and remnants to me for distribution to the other Chieftains. One of the lady dancers took the new tartan material I had ordered for sashes and had 8 made up locally from her own sample, so all was in place for the launch at the Ball – or so I thought! It was only when I was trying on my own JSAS kilt that I suddenly realised I had not had flashes made to match the kilts. Panic, this was about 2 days before the Ball. Again Lady Luck was with me. The woman who works at our house is married to a tailor so I used the remnants I still had, gave her a sample of flashes, and asked her to have 8 sets made. She delivered these to me the day of the Ball and I made sure the other Chieftains had them in time for the evening’s ceremonies.

Neil Manderson obviously got caught up in the romance of the situation because, not only did he make sure the tartans were properly registered with the official authorities in Scotland, but he flew out to Jakarta with his assistant for the Silver Jubilee Highland Gathering. He did some business while he was here too - taking orders for JSAS kilts from attendees at the Highland Gathering Silver Jubilee weekend.

Bernie McCready  
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