



Berkhamsted Strathspey & Reel Club



A Tartan for 2022

A competition for members to celebrate the club's Platinum Anniversary

What better way to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the club's founding than to create and register with the Scottish Tartan Authority (STA) our very own tartan and this competition is your opportunity to be part of the process of designing it. What we want you to do is come up with a brief that a professional tartan designer can use as the basis for our tartan. The 'winner' will be the brief our panel of judges thinks best reflects the history and context of the club.

Behind every tartan lies a story that makes up the 'rationale' for its design: why it has particular colours; why there are different numbers of lines and bands of different thicknesses; and so on.

So, what should be the story behind our tartan? Why should it have the colours you suggest? What aspects of the club's history and context might be used to define the number and/or the thickness of lines or bands. Here, for example, are some reasons behind other tartans:

- colours chosen from a medal worn by father
- green & gold for an Australian Bride + blue & white for a Scottish Groom
- a thin blue line for each of a family's two young boys

So, put on your thinking cap and submit an entry; who knows, it could be you that goes down in the history of the club as the inspiration behind our tartan.

Submitting your entry

To submit an entry you need to be a current paid-up member or honorary life member of the club.

Entries should be submitted to Club Secretary, Ann Dodd, no later than 31 December 2019

They should be on a single side of A4 and, ideally, submitted attached to an email giving your name and contact details. Your name should not be on the entry sheet itself.

If submitting your entry as hard copy, give your name and contact details on a separate sheet of paper.

Club members may submit a maximum of three separate entries

Judging the competition

There will be three judges: The Club President - Marjorie Brown; Club member - Malcolm Ferris Lay (a Board Member of the STA); Honorary Life Member and founding member of the club - George Bateson.

Entries will be judged anonymously and **solely** on the basis of the rationale for the tartan, even if you choose to submit a mock-up of what you think the tartan might look like, based on your rationale.

The winning rationale will be announced at 2020 AGM and then submitted to a professional tartan designer, whose role will be to come up with a design acceptable to both the STA and the committee. The winner of the rationale competition will also be involved in the final choice of the tartan's design.

A Helping Hand

The Scottish Tartan Authority website (<http://www.tartansauthority.com>) contains a huge amount of information on tartans, in particular, before getting started, you should read their section on 'Designing your Tartan' under their 'Tartan Today' tab. Here are a few excerpts to whet your appetite.

How many colours?

A new tartan can start with either a blank canvas or an existing traditional tartan that has some significance for the new one, or is one that the designer finds pleasing. Six colours are the conventional maximum for a tartan but there are many very attractive ones that have only two, so don't feel obliged to use six to take up your 'quota.'

How wide should the lines and bands be?

There are a few technicalities to take on board with tartan designing - we've spoken of the conventional six-colour maximum. Another one is to make all the thread counts even - tartan designs are formulated and recorded using the simple method of counting the threads - 4 red . . . 24 green . . . 2 black etc. [It's the thread count that determines how wide a line is or how deep a band].

What's a 'sett'?

The pattern is called the 'sett' and its size is important when it comes to weaving. The conventional size is about 4 to 6 inches for skirts, kilts, vests etc. and smaller for neckties - about 2 inches. But like all rules, they can be broken but you need to talk with the weaver before you ask for anything too outlandish. Aim to have around 250 threads in your sett and you can't go far wrong.

Also on the STA website, under the 'Tartan' tab, you'll find their 'Croft Weaver' Tartan Designer App, which you may want to play around with to see what your rationale might give rise to.