



the Scottish Banner



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A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 42 Number 2 The world's largest international Scottish newspaper August 2018

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the Scottish Banner

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The Banner Says...

The gift of Scotland



by Sean Cairney

Most of us find a connection at some level with our ancestry, whether it be by birth or not, and that obviously holds true to those who read *the Scottish Banner*. I too was immersed in Scottish culture, heritage and tradition from a young age. Our family has earned a living from celebrating Scotland with others through ventures such as Scottish cultural events, restaurants, pubs and of course this publication for more than 40 years.

Jim Cairney

As we go to press with this issue I have reflected on my ancestry a bit more than usual as our family mourns the loss of my Father, Jim Cairney. Jim was born in Glasgow in 1931 and grew up in the shadows of his beloved Celtic Park. Dad and his older brother, celebrated actor, author and artist John Cairney, started in humble beginnings with their childhood home later torn down, but those Glasgow beginnings would shape them for life.

As a professional footballer and athlete my Father's talents took him beyond the city and country he loved so dear and across Britain, Canada and the USA.

Later in life Dad would go on to get into the pub and restaurant business and ran welcoming establishments with a uniquely



Jim Cairney as a young footballer.

Scottish theme and friendliness about them. Passing on the gift of Scotland to his three boys was important for my Father, who made sure we knew where he was from, and in turn where we are from.

So much Scottish influence

My Father was also instrumental in getting *the Scottish Banner* off the ground, he along with his wife Valerie had a unique idea back in the 1970's to start a publication for the ex-pat Scottish community.

The very first *Scottish Banner* offices were above a successful Scottish pub and restaurant they ran and whilst Valerie took the paper to where it got to, Jim was there in the early days to see it being born and nurtured. It was only earlier this year that Dad commented how proud he was *the Banner* was still going, as I am sure their 1976 business plan did not quite take the publication to 2018!

Passing on the gift of Scotland to his three boys was important for my Father, who made sure we knew where he was from, and in turn where we are from.

Most times when I would talk to Dad about Glasgow it was with a real sense of pride in a city he loved so much. So much so I knew regardless of where he lived or what he did, he never left Glasgow, he simply brought it with him. Today for me Glasgow is one of my three "home cities" in the world, three locations that the minute I am there they are familiar, have meaning to me and wrap me in complete comfort.

As a child having so much Scottish influence around me was simply part of growing up, with both of my parents running unique Scottish businesses, it was only later I came to realise what a gift it was to be brought up with such a strong Scottish sense of family, community and culture.

It may not have always been fun to get up at the crack of dawn to help at a Highland Games or serve up food at a Burns Supper when you are so young but it certainly shaped me. Not every child gets to be part of their ancient culture year

round and today I feel fortunate to carry on the legacy of my parents through *the Scottish Banner*.

In this issue

There is no country in the world that is more synonymous with the bagpipes than Scotland. They are of course a global instrument but Scotland will forever be the home of the bagpipes. This month the pipes and drums will be that much more on display with some major piping events and contests taking place. We get to speak to Roddy Macleod who is not only the Festival Director of Piping Live! and principal at The National Piping Centre in Glasgow, but a highly celebrated piper himself on the power of the pipes and why they are such a cultural asset to Scotland. We have also run with the pipe band theme this month with some additional piping features showing the power of the pipes reach.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh is one of Glasgow's great sons and the celebration around him in 2018 for the 150th anniversary of his birth shows the influence he has had to Glasgow with "Glasgow Style". As mentioned in last month's edition a tragic second fire has ripped through the Mackintosh masterpiece, the Glasgow School of Art. We have reached out to the School and have heard back that they have been inundated with offers of support and will liaise with *the Scottish Banner* in time as things settle to see if we or our readers can help support this landmark Glasgow building.

The eyes of the world have been on Britain's Royal Family this year with weddings and births as the next generation shape a modern day monarchy. Braemar Highland Gathering welcomes Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the family each year making it one of the most popular and internationally reported Highland Games in the world.

Home to Glasgow

Soon I will be leaving my home to honour my Father at a service and say goodbye to the man who left me with the gift of his homeland. A culture thrust upon me but one I proudly celebrate and feel incredibly lucky to have inherited.

Dad will never be forgotten by his family as he is being mourned across three continents and while we grieve we can also look with love and pride on a Glasgow boy who made his unique mark on the world.

Next year Dad will go home to Glasgow to have his ashes spread as he wished and I can't think of a more perfect place to honour the man who made me, celebrated me and gave me the gift of Scotland. 🍀



Gracing our front cover: *Playing your heart out at Piping Live!* Photo: Piping Live!

Dr Annie Lennox OBE installed as University Chancellor



Chancellor Lennox (centre) with Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Pamela Gillies and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

Royal Academician, singer songwriter, social activist and philanthropist Dr Annie Lennox OBE has been installed as the fifth Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University.

The University's first female Chancellor, Dr Lennox was joined by hundreds of guests including First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Chancellors of Oxford Brookes University, Dame Katherine Grainger, Edinburgh Napier, David Eustace, Salford, Professor Jackie Kay MBE, and of Glasgow University, Sir Kenneth Calman, and students and supporters of GCU at the event in the Saltire Centre.

Chancellor Lennox said: "I am humbled and awed beyond measure. As your Chancellor, I look forward to exploring

ways of communication and engagement so we can all be part of the solution to the challenges we face in the 21st Century. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to work with you in this aspirational way. I love Glasgow Caledonian University and the Common Good we stand for."

Common Good

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Pamela Gillies CBE FRSE, said: "Dr Lennox is in complete alignment with the University's moral compass and shares our deep and abiding commitment to the Common Good. Annie has a strong sense of purpose rooted in a deeply held set of values which fuel the extraordinary energy she quietly applies to promoting social

justice, unlocking the talent of others, empowering the powerless and helping the most vulnerable in our world. She is serious about helping to make a difference to the lives of others. Annie has more than realised her dreams in her contribution to the world of music and by her work to make the world a safer, healthier and more just place for everyone, but especially for women and girls. The University community feels deeply privileged to welcome Dr Lennox as our Chancellor."

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon told the audience: "It is a pleasure to be at an event that celebrates the contribution that Glasgow Caledonian University makes to the Common Good. Annie is someone I have admired since before I even went to university. In fact, when I appeared on Desert Island Discs, I chose *Sisters are Doin' It for Themselves*, which Annie sang with Aretha Franklin. So, this is a genuinely extraordinary moment for me. If you had told me back in 1985 when that song came out that I would one day stand here as Scotland's first female First Minister to welcome Annie as the first female Chancellor of one of Scotland's universities I would have been thrilled. She has been a role model to women around the world and I know she will be a role model for all students here at Glasgow Caledonian University." Professor Kay MBE, Scotland's Makar and a GCU Cultural Fellow and Honorary Graduate, read a specially commissioned poem and the Chancellor was installed by Rob Woodward, Chair of Court, the University's governing body.

Tartan of the Month *Runrig Tartan*

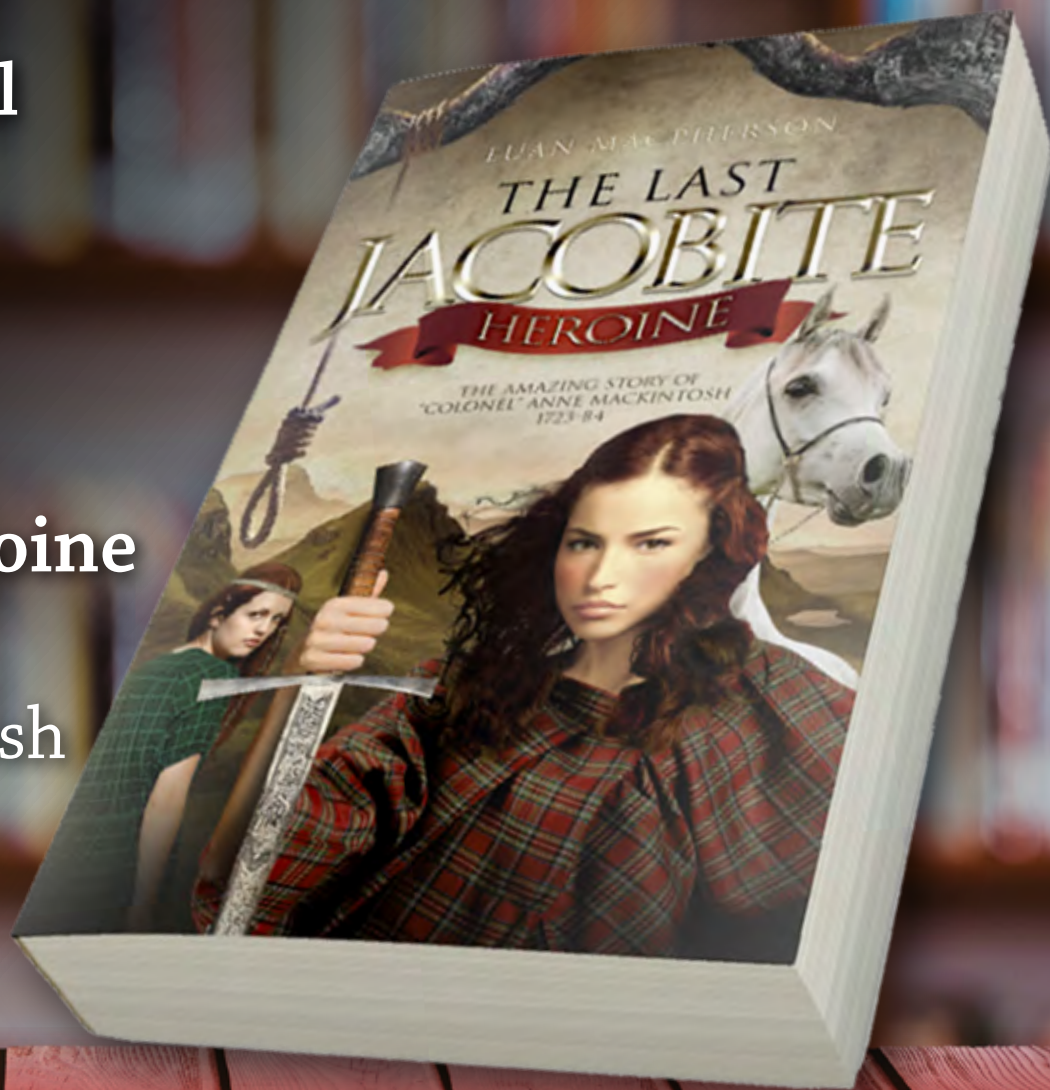


The Scottish Banner is pleased to be offering the Tartan of the Month series highlighting a variety of different, unique and colourful tartans from around the world which are registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans in Edinburgh. The Scottish Register of Tartans was established by an act of the Scottish Parliament in November 2008 and promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world. Text and image use is courtesy of the Scottish Register of Tartans.

Designed for the company Runrig Merchandising Ltd by Prickly Thistle Scotland. The tartan (Reference: 12046) design is for Runrig, a Scottish band formed in 1973, to commemorate their final tour in 2018 and to celebrate their 45 years of musical legacy. The colours selected have personal significance to the band.

From the author of **The Trial of Jack the Ripper** an exciting new novel, based on true events.

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SCOT POURRI

Send us your inquiries on life's little question marks.

Ever wanted to know what happened to your old pal from home, how to make your favourite Scottish meal, or wondered about a certain bit of Scottish history?

A Skirmish with Clan Midge

We evaded them for several days, from Glasgow north to Nairn, then south to Edinburgh, but on the morning we were set to leave for Ireland, they stormed us.

A squad of unkilted scouts in ninja black led them, swooping out of the bushes beside the tour bus and swirling about our heads. They smirked at us, took a sample or two,

then gave the come-on to the battalion in waiting, a million black-clad assassins by my count, and now a million bloody pricks in the skin as they came at us

with sgian dubhs, Highland daggers, and claymores, and a few, I swear, beat us with cudgels and cricket bats while off to the side a tiny sombreroed piper played "El Degüello"—

so many of them I could barely see the giant bus near at hand. But into that strong sanctuary we leapt, and Harry slammed the door and sped us down the drive toward Ireland.

As we headed cross-country to the Belfast ferry, we scratched our little wounds, passing glad we didn't miss this pesky bit of Highland life,

and began to compose the fabulous stories we would tell our children and friends back home, how one July morning we endured an ambushade

in this roughhewn land we so love to love, and one of us thinking that there was even some crude justice in here somewhere,

not begrudging the hungry natives this return of a few dilute drops of the Scottish blood our forebears took from this land those many years ago.

David Black
Louisa, Virginia
USA

Where do you think you are?

I refer to the recent article in *the Scottish Banner* (*Where do you think you are?* March, 2018) where famous towns have been related overseas by the early settlers. I grew up in Largs, Ayrshire where Sir Thompson Brisbane was born 23 July 1873 at Brisbane House. I also have fond memories of walking through the lovely Brisbane Glen where the grounds of Brisbane House sat.

Brisbane joined the army and served under Duke of Wellington and was subsequently sent to Australia where he became the Governor General of New South Wales. He then assigned John Oxley in 1823 to find another site for the convicts as Botany Bay (Sydney) was becoming crowded. A new site was found on the river. In 1824 Brisbane came to inspect and it was decided to name the river and township Brisbane. When Brisbane retired from the army he returned to Scotland 1826. After his wife's death he moved back to Largs where he died on 27 January, 1860 and was buried in the family Brisbane vault.

Eileen Joyce
Australia

Calling all MacLellans

Any MacLellans out there? My Great Grand Daddy and Great Grandma immigrated to the US sometime in the late 1800s. My Grand Daddy was part of the kith in kin brought over. They settled near Birmingham, Alabama. They were naturalized as US citizens on 1 September 1914. Would love to hear from any MacLellans in the "ol country"!

Regards,
David W. McLellan
Georgia, USA
Email: dakotadave83@windstream.net

Having bags of fun

I have purchased a bag from the Scottish Banner, which my husband gave me for a gift for my birthday a few years ago. It is the Dialect Bag with some Scottish words and their meanings on it. It goes everywhere with me. I was in a local shopping centre one day when a man approached me and commented on the bag. He asked if he could get a photo of it, which I gave my consent. If I remember rightly he was Canadian.

Since then it has been photographed by a Maori, a Tahitian and a Tongan, and three Mormon missionaries.

I have been reading *the Scottish Banner* for about 20 years now and thoroughly enjoy it. Thank you for keeping me informed about Scotland and the countries of the world.

Keep up the good work.

Name withheld
Jennings, NSW
Australia

Ed note: Thanks for the note and so happy to hear your bag is touching so many people!

Alexander (Sandy) Hain

I thank you for *the Scottish Banner* which you sent me under an envelope as well as your note. I was sorry to learn of the various difficulties which you are now faced with.

I will not cancel this year, but I will not be renewing it next year as the gentleman I subscribed for passed away at the end of March. His name was Alexander (Sandy) Hain and he was a former pipe major of the Black Watch, 2nd Battalion. He read *the Banner* from cover to cover. As he came to the US in 1958 and taught the bagpipes to many of us, he will be greatly missed by the entire piping community, not only in the U.S., but in Scotland also.

I wish you the best of luck with the new format and hope that *the Banner* will continue to have much success in the future.

Sincerely,
Linda Regnaudin,
Akron, Ohio
USA

Ed note: Thank you for your note Linda and please pass on our condolences to Mr Hain's family and also thanks for his contribution to the piping community.

St. Andrew's Society of Montreal wants documents, photos, memorabilia for its archives



If you own anything, such as documents, certificates, or photos, that may interest the St. Andrew's Society of Montreal, historian and genealogist Gillian Leitch, who is responsible for the organization's archives, would like to hear from you at info@standrews.qc.ca.

In her blog post, Archives as Miracles, 2018, Dr. Leitch writes, "I dream of moments when someone goes through the garage, files, attic or whatever of a family member and finds a piece of the society's past and offers it to us."

Founded in 1835 by influential Scottish men in Montreal, the non-profit society was established with the stated aims of "regulating charity in a systematic manner" and "to advance the cause and welfare of Scotsmen and their descendants." *The St. Andrew's Society of Montreal* 1195B Sherbrooke St. West Montreal, Quebec H3A 1H9, Canada Telephone (514) 842-2030 Fax (514) 842-9848 info@standrews.qc.ca

A Scotchman's visit to Anzac Day

In 1973 my parents visited me for the first time since I left Glasgow in 1964. Anzac Day occurred during that time and my Dad was very interested as he served 5 years in the RAF during WW2. He managed to get a lift down to Melbourne (we are 40 kms away) with a pipe player who was in the parade. My Dad actually marched in the parade—I'm a not exactly sure under which banner but it was either something that related to Scotland or the ex-RAF, he felt it was a great honour. He was very impressed by the Shrine of Remembrance and the service there. After the service and having been separated from his 'lift', he just drifted along with the crowd and eventually he ended up at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the annual battle between Collingwood (black and white) and Essendon (red and black). Unfortunately he landed in the middle of a large contingent of Essendon supporters sporting his black and white airline bag! He told me later—yes he did survive—that it was like standing at the Celtic end of an 'Old Firm' Derby wearing a blue jersey—just not on. Anyway, as soon as he started talking—and he was very good at that—the atmosphere changed completely. They could not do enough for him—he was the most popular man in the group. They

bought him a drink, tried to explain the game to him, bought him a drink, wanted to know more about Scotland, bought him a drink etc. etc. He had a wonderful time and a great introduction to Australians and their 'culture'. Sometime after midnight he was finally 'dropped off' when I was just about to tear out the last shreds of my hair!! It was before the days of mobile phones, of course.

I told him the next day that I always enjoy the brief ceremony which occurs before the game. It is so well done. The toast, the bugle player, the NZ and Australian national anthems are great but the thing that really 'gets to me' is the one minute silence. I find it so uplifting and moving that, in a stadium with 90,000 plus people from two strongly opposing teams, all are upstanding and you could hear a pin drop. My dad agreed it was an emotional experience for him too.

In this day and age with all the awful stuff that goes on in this world, it actually inspires me to feel hope and hopefully peace and love for mankind.

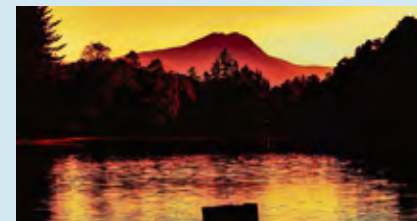
Anne Koomen
The Patch, Victoria
Australia

PS The 'lift' was my 'soon-to-be-ex-husband who did not actually 'drop' himself off. Suffice to say that the only thing I missed when he left was the bagpipes!!

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Send your photos or letters via social media

Golden Loch Ard



Golden Loch Ard.
Robert Gibb
Scotland

Buachaille Etive Mor



From my sunrise trip, taken about 530am, at Buachaille Etive Mor and River Coupall.
Carolynn Wilson
Ballachulish, Scotland

Ralston Memorial



Ralston Memorial, Glen Coe overlooking the Three Sisters.
GN Photography
Clydebank, Glasgow
Scotland

Inverness to host European Pipe Band Championships



Association (RSPBA), following a competitive tender won by LCC Live Event Services (LCC Live), which will deliver the event.

RSPBA's Chief Executive, Ian Embelton, said: "The RSPBA was extremely impressed with Piping Inverness' bid to host the European Pipe Band Championships over the next three years. It put forward an impressive case for the Championships to remain in the north of Scotland, this time in Inverness. We're looking forward to working with Piping Inverness to evolve the Championships over the next three years and welcome the very best pipers and drummers from around the world to Inverness."

Fantastic news for the Highlands

Welcoming the news that Inverness is to host this prestigious event, Provost and Leader of City of Inverness and Area Cllr Helen Carmichael, said: "This is fantastic news for the Highlands that the European Pipe Band Championships will be hosted in Inverness for the next three years. As one of the premiere competitions on the annual pipe band circuit it will be a privilege to welcome The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, competitors and band followers to Inverness. On behalf of City of Inverness Councillors and The Highland Council we are delighted that the competition will remain hosted in the north of Scotland, following on from the excellent achievements by the event in Forres."

She added: "Events of this nature are vital boosts to the economic vibrancy of the locations in which they are hosted, and Inverness is well placed to receive both competitors and the many visitors that will come to the event. The Championships add to the growing number of City Events which are all enhanced by our own Events and Festivals Programme, supported by the Inverness Common Good Fund. I very much look forward to attending the European Pipe Band Championships in 2019 in Inverness."

The European Pipe Band Championships have been held in Forres for the last six years. It's Chieftain and the Chairman of Piping At Forres, Alan James commented: "It has been an honour to be able to announce that the Championships will be moving just along the road to Inverness. This is great news for the Highlands that the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association has chosen to locate the European Pipe Band Championships in Inverness from 2019. This will continue to encourage the pipe bands from the Highlands and Islands as well as the North East to attend. We wish the new organisers all the best for the next three years and we look forward to attending and showing our support at the Championships in 2019."

More information regarding ticket sales and entries to the Championships will be released in due course. To stay up to date, please visit: Piping Inverness' Facebook page.

Inverness is set to be the new home of the European Pipe Band Championships for the next three consecutive years, with the competition to stay in north of Scotland. The announcement comes at the end of the 2018 European Pipe Band Championships, which took place on Saturday 30th June in Forres.

Remain in the north of Scotland

For the next three years, the European Pipe Band Championships, under the branding of Piping Inverness, will be held in Bught Park, in the heart of the

city. Saturday 29th June 2019 will mark the first of the three annual events, bringing hundreds of pipers and drummers and highland dancers to the popular park, which along with food and drink, traditional craft stalls and live entertainment, will make it a fun-filled family day out.

The Championships are expected to bring significant economic benefit to Inverness and the surrounding area over the next three years.

Piping Inverness was selected to host the European Pipe Band Championships by the Royal Scottish Pipe Band

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Edinboro celebrates Scotland at the 25th Highland Games



The Chelsea House Orchestra plays throughout and finishes with a Sunday morning concert at Edinboro United Methodist.

Fascinating events

The main festival events and games will be held throughout the day Saturday, Sept. 8, on the campus of Edinboro University, in and around McComb Fieldhouse, the Pogue Student Center, and Van Houten dining facilities. Highlights include a dramatic opening ceremony Saturday at noon, beer from several regional brewers, art exhibits and competitions, and many contests and games. "Get here by noon to see the opening ceremony. It's spectacular," said Tim Thompson, co-director and founder, of the festival that began 25 years ago in his graduate and undergraduate classes.

"The festival is full of fascinating events," said co-director Melissa Gibson, "From the 'high tea' to the bonfire and beyond, we celebrate the Scottish spirit of independence and thoughtfulness."

The festival once again hosts the National Scottish Fiddle Championships and the U.S. National Scottish Harp Championships on Saturday in the Pogue Student Center. An array of high-quality vendors will be on hand, selling clothing, jewelry, glassware and other goods. Scottish and American food vendors offer full dinners, sausage rolls, meat pies, shepherd's pie, chicken dinners, ice cream, kettle corn, desserts and more.

All events will be held rain or shine. Full festival information is available on the website at: www.edinboro.edu/events/highland-games

The 25th annual Edinboro Highland Games & Scottish Festival will be held Sept. 6-9 at the corner of Scot and Scotland Roads in Edinboro. The festival features the traditional heavy athletic events, Celtic vendors, national fiddle and harp championships, highland dance, pipe band and solo competitions, clan gatherings, kids' crafts and games, and traditional Scottish food. All festivities are free (donations welcome) except two

ticketed events –Friday's single-malt whisky tasting, and Saturday's ceilidh dinner.

Events are held on the Edinboro University campus and at various off-campus sites. Thursday includes Tea on the Hill at Scotland Yards Greenhouse and fun at Sprague Farm & Brew Works. Friday features harp music at Erie and Edinboro Presbyterian Churches, the single-malt whisky tasting, and the festival bonfire. Saturday is festival and games all day.



Davis & Elkins College establishes competitive pipe band



Davis & Elkins College and the West Virginia Highlanders of Davis & Elkins College are growing their tradition with the establishment of a competition bagpipe program that offers a scholarship opportunity to new and current students. Recruiting efforts are currently underway to form the West Virginia Highlanders of Davis & Elkins College Grade V. Students versed in playing the bagpipes can earn up to a \$5,000 scholarship per year based on audition performance. Members of Grade V will share the same MacLeod of Lewis Scottish tartan and perform in parades and other special events along with the West Virginia Highlanders of Davis & Elkins College. In addition, they will compete at regional Highland festivals and games, and learn more about piping and Scottish traditions.

The current 20-member Highlanders pipe and drum band has a long history with Davis & Elkins College and the Randolph

County community. Formed in October 1947 as the official band of the H.W. Daniels Post 29 American Legion, the Highlanders has continued many of its long held traditions of music and dress with roots in Scottish heritage. In 1990, the Highlanders began carrying a banner with their new affiliation and name – the West Virginia Highlanders of Davis & Elkins College. The band now represents the community and the College at various public events, and performs at multiple College functions, including commencement, Founders' Day and other special events. The band has performed in all 50 states and marched in the National Independence Day Parade on historic Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C.

Love for piping

Patrick McKay, an admission counselor at D&E and drummer in the Highlanders since 1997, came up with the idea

for forming a competition band after competing himself throughout the years. "I've noticed the competitors are getting younger," McKay said. "Every time I would see these young people out there pursuing their passion I would always think D&E would be the perfect environment for them to learn and practice and go on to compete."

The younger set of pipers and the more seasoned members of the Highlanders will complement one another by sharing techniques and experiences. The comradery and years of combined experience of the group was one thing that attracted Bryan LaFollette to attend Davis & Elkins College. A bagpipe student since the age of 10 and now a college junior, LaFollette was recently named the Highlanders' pipe master. "It's good to pursue your love for piping because it can take you a long way in life," LaFollette said. "At the core of everything, though, is your education, and D&E really stands out. We have great resources with professors who truly care and The Naylor Learning Center to keep you on track while you pursue your passion."

LaFollette and McKay agree that the new group of pipers will help the tradition of the West Virginia Highlanders of Davis & Elkins College live on in the community and throughout the nation.

For additional information on the Grade V scholarship, call the Davis & Elkins College Admission Office at 304-637-1325 or email admission@dewu.edu.

The Pipes are Calling the world to Glengarry



The Glengarry Highland Games are considered to be the largest piping and drumming event in the world in terms of separate events and competitors. Those events include solo piping and drumming, the Piobaireachd competitions and the pipe band competitions leading to the North American Pipe Band Championships being presented to the winning band on Saturday evening.

This year, 53 pipe bands will compete at Maxville with Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association judges Paul Brown and Donald MacPhee having the difficult task of selecting the best band. The Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Band Competitions will take place on Saturday, August 4, 2018. The much anticipated Massed Bands will be held at 1:00 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m. when results are announced and awards are presented.

The Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal (Canada) contests are held on Friday at the Anglican and United churches in Maxville. In addition, there are amateur piobaireachd competitions on Friday, as well as professional piobaireachd on Saturday on the main grounds. These competitions are the classical music of the pipes and offer an entirely different experience with the highland pipes.

For a real Scottish experience and a taste of some of the world's best competitions, the Glengarry Highland Games is the place to be on August 3rd and 4th in Maxville, Ontario.

For more details see: www.glengarryhighlandgames.com

SCOTSPEAK

Scotspeak is a selection of quotes which made headlines in Scotland last month on a variety of current Scottish affairs.

"The Battle of Culloden was a significant event in Scotland's national story. The proposed residential development would affect this sensitive part of the battlefield's open character and consequently have a significant adverse impact upon the battlefield's key characteristics. We therefore object to the application."

A representative from Historic Environment Scotland said as a third development has been put forward to Highland Council to build on the historic battlefield lands located just outside Inverness.



"The whole world is descending on our village to see the bridge. It's a fantastic thing for tourism in Scotland but we need to make the experience more relaxed for visitors coming to Glenfinnan. It's getting to the point that it's getting dangerous, and emergency vehicles cannot get up the road."

Glenfinnan Community Council chairman Duncan Gibson said as the roads around the 21 arch Glenfinnan Viaduct, otherwise known as the "Harry Potter Bridge", is under severe parking and traffic management congestion. The famous bridge is located at Loch Shiel, Inverness-shire and receives nearly 350,000 visitors a year and local roads can no longer accommodate the volume of tourists.

"The successful removal of non-native mink from the Hebrides is a significant achievement, and is the result of the sustained commitment and effort of all

the staff involved. I am delighted that we are already seeing positive results, bringing the return of the seabirds and wading birds which the islands are world-famous for. This will provide a real boost for nature tourism in the Hebrides."

Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Roseanna Cunningham said as terns, waders, divers and ducks are 'flocking back' to their native Outer Hebrides, following the success of a complex and challenging 17-year programme to eradicate the American mink and its devastating effect on native wildlife. The introduction of mink in Scotland has been directly connected to the fur farming industry established in the 1950s. In the Outer Hebrides fur farms on the Isle of Lewis went out of business in the 1960's and feral populations quickly became established.

"Alan was one of the most gentle, generous and kind-hearted people I have ever known. He touched the lives of everyone he met with a smile that made them feel special. The original Bay City Roller may have gone but his legacy will live on through his music."

Writer Liam Rudden said as Edinburgh born musician Alan Longmuir of the Bay City Rollers fame died. Longmuir passed away at the age of 70 and was part of the "Rollermania" phenomenon on the 1970's.



"This building is concrete evidence of the new Dundee. A city that is getting fairer, more resilient and where there

are opportunities for all of our young people. The opening of the new railway station is a move towards creating a strong and sustainable city economy that will raise the quality of life and improve the environment. It is a great building that will present our best face to first time and repeat visitors."

Dundee Lord Provost Ian Borthwick said as the new £38 million Dundee Railway Station opened in July. The building hosts a new passenger concourse and ticketing facilities, as well as a café/restaurant and retail space and a new 120 bedroom hotel above the new concourse.

"It is a very rare object and only a few have been found in Scotland, mainly on monastic or at least religious sites. These gaming boards are not something everyone would have had access to It's really, really difficult to say what we have. I can't call it at the moment. There are also remains of a wooden building and I have sent off samples of charcoal but we won't know for another three months what the date will be. This has been a fantastic dig and people have been so enthusiastic. We don't know yet what we have but looking for it is fun. If we don't have the site of the monastery, then we will continue to look for it."

Archaeologist Ali Cameron said as a Pictish board game was found on an excavation site in Aberdeenshire. The Iron Age relic may date back to the 5th to 9th century and have links to a monastery or abbey from that period.

"It's always fantastic to see Scotland be the first. Team Scotland is coming together to overcome the loss of biodiversity, and I'm proud our country is leading the way in publishing our progress on nature targets. But there is no room for complacency, and it is not the sole responsibility of a single

sector or industry to tackle biodiversity loss. With 2020 fast approaching, now is the time for a 'natural' conversation on Scotland's future and how we meet – and even exceed – these ambitious targets for nature. It's great to see progress being made, but more action is required. We can't reverse climate change but, working together, we can protect our country's incredible natural resources for future generations."

Mike Cantlay, Chair of Scottish Natural Heritage, said that Scotland is leading the way in progress towards meeting international nature targets. In Scotland, the nation is on track to meet seven environmental targets, with a further twelve needing further action to reduce key pressures on nature arising from pollution, land-use change, the spread of invasive species and climate change.

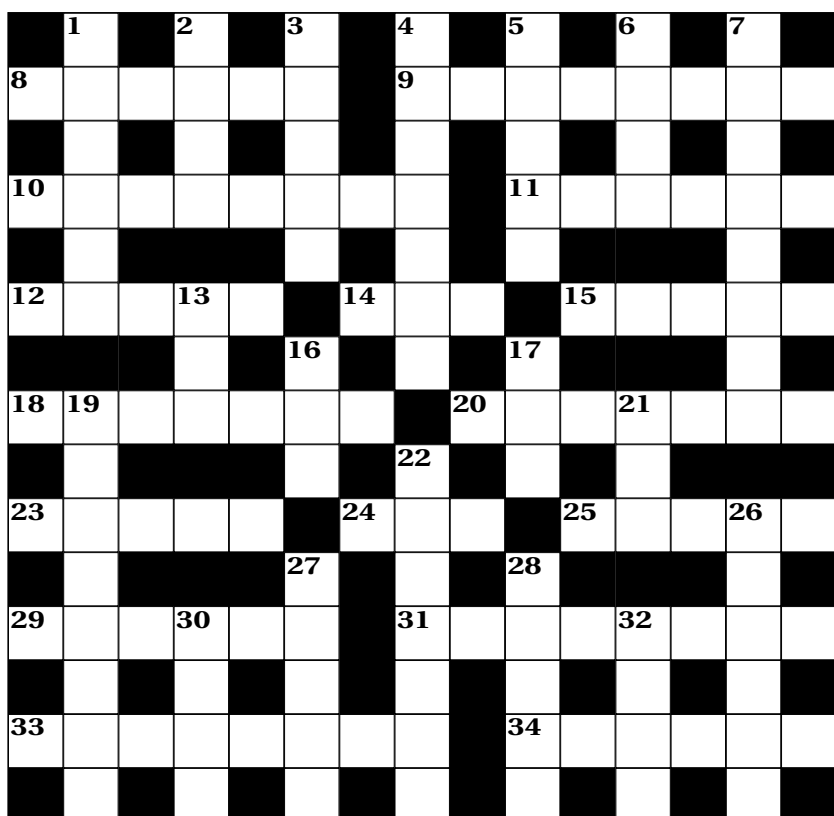


"As Scotland enjoys 'taps off' weather, the weatherproof membrane from our roof is quite literally melting. The structural integrity of the roof is completely sound, but we are left with a bit of an unsightly black goo on the roof. When we return to typical Glasgow colder climes, we shall set about cleaning it."

Sharon Lyons from Glasgow Science Centre said as part of the "weatherproof" membrane on Centre's roof melted and dripped black down the building. The temperature hit 31.9C in Glasgow, which was Scotland's hottest day in 23 years.

SCOTWORD

Here is a fun crossword for you to try with a few of the answers to be found in Scotland! If you are in doubt, you may need a wee peek at a Scots dictionary or a map. Or, if you are really stuck, the answers can be found on page 24!



CLUES ACROSS

- 1) Scotsmen's shirts (5)
- 4) Upper edge of ship's side (6)
- 8) Kirk divider (5)
- 9) Impart knowledge (9)
- 11) Powerful whirlpool (9)
- 12) Most westerly Island of Inner Hebrides (5)
- 13) It's the pits! (9)
- 16) Precious stones (5)
- 18) Clay pigment (5)
- 19) Many inhabit the Hebrides (9)
- 21) Under the doctor (5/23)
- 23) Highlander's weapon (9)
- 26) He looks after the reserves (9)
- 27) Representation (5)
- 28) Nation across the Channel (6)
- 29) The untrue image of the Scot

CLUES DOWN

- 1) Found over the Border (9)
- 2) Smokes in Scotland (5)
- 3) Agitate in old Scots (5)
- 4) Object of games entrants (4, 5)
- 5) Go to bed in it (9)
- 6) Participate in (5)
- 7) Dark Scot on the road (6)
- 10) Scots vegetables(5)
- 14) Recognised by secret signs (9)
- 15) Auld Reekie (8)
- 17) He's Sandy for short (9)
- 18) Wise young flier (5)
- 20) An Australian lady (6)
- 22) Shout of approval (5)
- 24) The end of a Scots thread (5)
- 25) Young wool suppliers (5)

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By: Judy Vickers

Mackintosh 150

Celebrating one of Glasgow's great sons



The restored tearooms on Sauchiehall Street.



Exterior of the restored tea rooms.

2018 sees the city of Glasgow, and Scotland itself, celebrate one of its greatest sons-Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Glasgow Style is synonymous with the artist, architect and designer whose work is celebrated across the city to this day as an important cultural asset as Judy Vickers explains.

In his lifetime, like so many artists, he was underappreciated at home. Charles Rennie Mackintosh, whose characteristic designs now seem almost synonymous with Glasgow, the city of his birth, was eventually forced to move to London in a bid to revive his career.

But the body of work he left behind in Scotland, thanks to a small handful of patrons, grew in popularity over the years and 2018 is seeing a whole series of celebrations being held to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth.

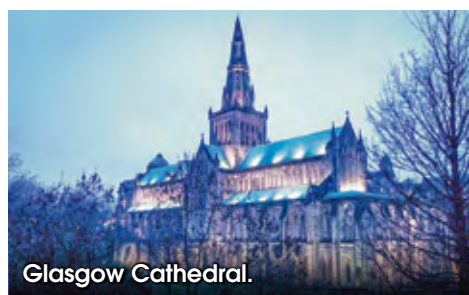
Exhibitions, events, seminars and tours are being staged across Scotland to mark the legacy and creative genius of a man who has become one of Glasgow's greatest cultural icons.

Born in Glasgow on 7 June 1868, Charles Rennie Mackintosh went on to be regarded as one of the most creative figures of the 20th century and a leading figure in both the Scottish Arts and Crafts Movement and European Art Nouveau.

The Glasgow Style

An architect, designer and artist, Mackintosh left a legacy of magnificent work and is considered one of the principal exponents of the Glasgow Style.

Apprenticed as an architect, Mackintosh enrolled for evening classes at the Glasgow School of Art, opening his eyes to greater possibilities in design. He, his wife, Margaret MacDonald, her sister Frances and Herbert MacNair, who all met at the Glasgow School of Art, became known as "The Glasgow Four", and were prominent members of the "Glasgow School" movement.



Glasgow Cathedral.

By the 1890s, he was arguing that architects should have greater artistic freedom and he himself was designing furniture, metalwork and posters as well as buildings.

His masterpiece was the Glasgow School of Art, completed in periods between 1897 and 1909, and recently devastated by fire, while The Hill House in Helensburgh was created in 1904. His work was hugely popular abroad, in Germany, Austria, Italy and Russia where he was invited to exhibit but less so in Scotland itself.

Glasgow businesswoman Catherine Cranston was one of his main supporters – his designs for the interiors of her four tearooms, between 1896 and 1917, saw him create the high-backed chairs, the wall decorations, light fittings and even the cutlery. But few others would give him commissions which allowed him the freedom of "total design" that he craved. The Scotland Street School in 1906 was his last public commission in Scotland and in 1914 he moved to London, then to the south of France. He died in London in December 1928.

But in the years since his death, his work has grown in popularity. By 1996, his popularity was such that his House of an Art Lover, a design which was never built in his lifetime, was created in Glasgow, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York held a major exhibition of his work and his distinctive rose design began to appear on everything from bags to bedding, and particular jewellery.

Mackintosh's heritage and legacy

When the Glasgow School of Art building – now known as the Mackintosh building – which he designed was ravaged by fire in 2014, a massive multi-million pound restoration programme was begun – sadly now hampered by a second fire in June this year.

So the anniversary of the year of his birth is being seen as a great opportunity to recognise Mackintosh's heritage and legacy.

One of the key events was the opening last month (July) of Miss Cranston's original Willow Tea Rooms in Sauchiehall

Street in Glasgow after a major restoration by the Willow Tea Rooms Trust.

Established in 2014 as a charity, the trust has restored the building to Mackintosh's original 1903 design. It has also created a new, adjacent exhibition and visitor centre, which will celebrate the achievements of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh and Miss Cranston, as well as providing an information point/centre for visitors, which will be hosted by the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society.

One of the centrepieces of the new V&A museum in Dundee when it opens in September will be Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Oak Room. It was last used as a tea room in the early 1950s and was rescued from destruction in 1971 by Glasgow Museums. The disassembled interior has been in Glasgow City Council's museum collections ever since but the £1.3m project, supported by Art Fund, the Scottish Government and the National Lottery, will see this interior from Miss Cranston's Ingram Street Tearooms become the highlight of the V&A's Scottish Design Galleries.

Philip Long, director of V&A Dundee, said: "The project to conserve and restore an entire interior by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, unseen for nearly 50 years, has been one of the most exciting parts of creating V&A Dundee.

"As a designer, architect and artist, Mackintosh is of worldwide significance. He has been an inspiration to very many designers from the moment his work was first seen through to today, including the architect of V&A Dundee, Kengo Kuma.

"When we set about developing galleries for the new museum telling the story of Scotland's design history, it was vital Mackintosh was represented in a major way."

Stephen Deuchar, director of Art Fund, said: "The Oak Room is one of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's greatest achievements – his vision is reflected in every piece and detail of this spectacular interior – and Art Fund is thrilled to be able to support its conservation as it is painstakingly reconstructed, ready to go on display for the first time since the 1970s. We are certain it will be the star attraction of the new V&A Dundee and enjoyed by visitors from across Scotland and beyond."

Fabric of Glasgow

Other events include the opening this summer of a new Mackintosh interpretation centre at The Mackintosh House, a meticulous re-assemblage of the principal interiors of Mackintosh and his wife's Glasgow home, at the Hunterian, University of Glasgow, and 40-minute tours of The Lighthouse in Mitchell Lane in Glasgow every Saturday throughout the year. Among the centre's special Mackintosh 150 programming will be an ongoing series of archive film footage exploring aspects of Mackintosh's architecture and the city of Glasgow, through screening events and exhibitions.

The Glasgow Art Club on Bath Street, which contains interior features designed



Charles Rennie Mackintosh
Photo: Annan Photographs.

by Charles Rennie Mackintosh when he was only 25 years old, including the recently recreated Mackintosh Frieze. This stencilled artwork, painted in 1893, was Mackintosh's first major public work and the centrepiece of the club's Gallery. Guided tours will run from the beginning of October until mid-December

The Hill House in Helensburgh is due to reopen to the public in December this year after a rescue operation by the National Trust for Scotland and the annual Mackintosh Festival will take place throughout October 2018 across a range of venues. From walks, workshops and exhibitions to performances and talks, events are designed for all ages and to appeal to those who are new to Mackintosh, as well as established aficionados. The full programme is due to be launched later this month.

Glasgow Cathedral will hold an exhibition from October 22 to November 3, detailing Mackintosh's connections with the church and the Mackintosh Club in Helensburgh, designed in 1894 by the man himself, is holding a 150 Roses exhibition until the end of the year.

Stuart Robertson, director of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, said: "So many people have come together to mark 150th anniversary celebrations and we look forward to the citizens of Glasgow, as well as national and international visitors to the city, joining us in celebrating the genius of Mackintosh."

Councillor David McDonald, the chairman of Glasgow Life, said: "The legacy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh is part of the very fabric of Glasgow and his buildings, art and design are of international importance."

More information at:
www.glasgowmackintosh.com/events



150 Roses exhibition at the Mackintosh Club.



Moira Malcolm, Director of Rainbow Glass Studio, holds a replica glass lamp created for the Oak Room in V&A Dundee. Photo: Michael McGurk.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Have a name that has you stumped? Scottish Banner readers can send in their name queries direct to Ron via the Scottish Banner via our website at www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us, by post or email: info@scottishbanner.com. Ron will do his best to help you with your name query and may just add that extra piece to your genealogy puzzle.



The Scott Monument in Edinburgh will be celebrating on August 15th. Photo: VisitScotland.

August is a rich with events in Scottish history and it was difficult just to name a few. So all I could do was to pick out some that I thought were significant and hope you agree. August 6th, 1881 was the birth date of Sir Alexander Fleming known as the discoverer of penicillin. He was born Lochfield near Darvel, Ayrshire. Penicillin was a medical breakthrough that saved millions of lives by introducing antibacterial material as a cure for infection. King James IV of Scotland married Margaret Tudor on August 8th 1503. Margaret was the sister of Henry VIII of England. Because of this marriage, their great grandson James VI of Scotland and James I of England became the first monarch of Scotland and England later to become the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Those of you interested in names must have come across some that stand out in your mind. These are always a few that I have intrigued me. Why some names can be distinctive is possibly because of the sound, others because of the spelling or because it sounds foreign to the usual Scottish tongue.

John Logie Baird the inventor of the first practical television was born on August 13th, 1888 at Helensburgh. In Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott was born on 15 August 1771, he became a great gift to Scottish literature as an author, poet and historian.

Moisson

As mentioned in the last month's issue of *the Scottish Banner*, Mr Ray Parry of Lismore, NSW, Australia had sent in another list of interesting surnames for us to explore. We managed to address most of them last

month but left a few to look at this month.

First of the remaining names is Moisson. It is a relatively rare name especially for Scotland. In a quick search in familysearch.org, I found this spelling only in southern England and none in Scotland. Moisson in this form appears to be from the French pet form for sparrow.

In Scotland the closest was Mosson and Musson. Mosson seems to be a diminutive of a diminutive. This being from Molly, a pet form of Mary. While Musson maybe from the Muston, village names in England. Lastly, there was a Gilbert Mosyn of Roxburghshire listed in the Ragman Roll of 1296. With dialect changes and spelling fluidity over the centuries all or any could be the origin of this name.

MacDermid

MacDermid is one of those Gaelic surnames with a myriad of spellings, MacDermot, MacDarmid, MacDearmid etc. and sometimes McKermid.

In Scotland this name has a long history in the area of Glen Lyon area of Perthshire. They are also associated with Clan Campbell. The name obviously means son of Dairmid and translates as son of the free man. The name is widely known in Ireland under three separate houses of the name.

Feind

The last of the name on Mr. Parry's list is the surname Feind. Every so often, I am bereft of resources for a name and this is one of them. I did find records of the name in Scotland but nothing that would indicate an origin. However, the name does bear similar appearance to a name I know, that being Fiennes, Fynes or Fines. This name is a place from a place in Pas de Calais in France.

Swankie

Another tough one was sent in from May MacDonald of South Salisbury, South Australia. Mrs. McDonald originated from Arbroath on the east coast of Scotland. She is interested a name that well known in the fishing communities of the area and that name is the unusual sounding name, Swankie. Mrs. McDonald's grandson hopes that it has some Viking connection. I regret that I cannot confirm or deny that it is a Viking name. I can find very little on this name except that it is listed on a list of names that may have Flemish origins <http://flemish.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2016/03/04/scottish-families-with-possible-flemish-origins-a-summary/>. In conclusion, there is a Swankie tartan registered with The Scottish Register of Tartans. It was registered in 1998. Swankie is listed in Webster's Dictionary of 1913 as a clever and active young fellow.

I hope this is some help.

Geekie

Those of you interested in names must have come across some that stand out in your mind. These are always a few that I have intrigued me. Why some names can be distinctive is possibly because of the sound, others because of the spelling

or because it sounds foreign to the usual Scottish tongue.

One such name is Geekie, Geggie, or Geikie and is a place name from the lands of Gagie in the parish of Murroes, earliest record of the name in Scotland is 1453, the name does have a different sound, which is more like an exotic bird call. I say this with no disrespect to bearers of the name.

Similarly the name Gouk, which does have a reference to a bird is interesting. In fact, is from the Scandinavian name for cuckoo.

Yetts

If I were more of a linguist I could probably explain more aptly why so many names with consonants that are not used for the same item today. For example, the name Yetts, Yeats and Yates all pertain to someone living near a gate, due to changes in the language, these names have come down to us by their ancient sound because of antique grammar or spelling, which may be open to debate by today's standard, another example is the name Yell, which appears to be a form of Joel, or possibly from the Isle of Zell in the Shetlands. The "Y" being interchanged is easy to understand for we noticed this in other European languages, where the spelling of words with the letter "J" but is pronounced like a "Y" sound. However, the old Scots seems to be unique

in the manner they interchange the letters "Y" and "Z". This is seen in the name Yuill and Zuill. Christmas or Yule tide is the supposed origin of this name.

Trip to Scotland

Although I look forward to a wonderful August with all the flowers in bloom in the garden. This time of year we are able to sit on the deck and listen the cicadas buzzing away like some loggers saw. For such a disjointed sound it somehow peaceful to listen to it, a rare feature in an insect.

As lovely as August can be, my mind is more to looking forward to the autumn for my upcoming trip to Scotland. As well as seeing some long-time friends and some extended family, I am looking forward to being a tourist. I am hoping to visit areas that have escaped me in past visits. Somethings on the itinerary is a trip to Islay, where I just may partake of a peaty malt, just to be neighbourly. Revisits to the Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies are a must. I have visited them on previous visits but a more detailed visit is in order. A trip to the Mitchell Library to check their resources for family history and other features that Glasgow has to offer. It has been 4 years since my last trip to Scotland and I never tire of them. What about you? "Is no time yer wurr awa hame?"

Back to the present, enjoy your August and keep those letters coming.

NOVA SCOTIA HARP FESTIVAL

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September 28, 29, 30 2018
Queen of Harps
Ann Heymann





ANN HEYMANN
Queen of Harps



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KINGS CASTLES AND "DURTY" WEE RASCALS

Australian Jim Stoddart was born in a Glasgow Tenement and raised in a Glasgow Housing Scheme 1943-1965. Jim will be taking readers on a trip down memory lane, of a time and place that will never be the same again, and hopes even if only a few people in the Scot's Diaspora have a dormant folk memory awakened, then he shall be more than delighted.



The seaside town of Redcar.

Dandelion & Burdock

When Rosebury Topping puts on a hat, Let Cleveland then beware of that.

A weather proverb from the North Riding of Yorkshire. East Lothian children say "When Traprain puts on his hat, The Lothian Lads may look at that."

To a small child it can often be the little things that are different in the environment that catch the eye and ear. Apart from the distinctive Rosebury Topping in that area, I noticed that in Stockton the buses were blue, in Middlesborough cream and maroon. The red brick English terrace houses had back lanes with cobble stones that pinged and rang musically when you jumped or stamped your feet on them. My Aunt Chris and Uncle Bob lived in one of these and it was like going up to a lighthouse going around the steep narrow staircase to the two upstairs bedrooms. The house had an outside toilet in a tiny yard and at the end of their short street was an abattoir with the air filled with all of the attendant smells, noises and sights of live animals going off to be slaughtered. The corner shop sold Dandelion and Burdock, a carbonated drink that at the time was almost unheard of in Glasgow's Irnbru and American cream soda culture. The fish and chip shops sold cod, not Glasgow's favoured haddock with the thumb print of Jesus upon it. Cod fish, a bottom feeding scavenger fish, was often looked down upon by those of us from Scotland. Although I must admit fresh cod tastes just as good.

Stockton High Street

Speech was of course different. When a boy said "Away Jim" it didn't mean go away and get lost, it meant instead "come along with us to play cricket". The accents were Durham, Yorkshire and occasional Geordie. Stockton High Street was the widest in England and had a lively market on Wednesdays and Saturdays selling fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, poultry and other goods. I couldn't count how many 'bargain' fancy shopping bags my mother and her Baxter sisters must have bought over the years on Stockton market days. Off the high street, near the church, was the cattle market with incomprehensible auctioneers shouting out the prices and auction lots. There was the sight of cattle, sheep and pigs being prodded up into their pens and trucks. There was an air of business and excitement on market days and I loved all of it for it was different.

The High Street boasted a church which contained some of the timber from Captain Cook's ship, the Endeavour. This was Cook country, close to Whitby and Great Ayton and as a child I visited Cook's old schoolhouse and

looked upon the plaque and the ground where Cook's cottage had once stood. It never crossed my mind that one day I might look upon that missing cottage, transported stone by stone and now standing in the City of Melbourne, twelve thousand miles away in Australia.

Billingham, where my Crawford relatives lived, also had its claim to fame. In the 1950's, it enjoyed the rich revenues from I.C.I and had built one of the first combined shopping, entertainment and recreational complexes in Britain, the Billingham Forum. It pioneered a concept later adopted by other towns and cities throughout Europe but eventually its own complex was left far behind as other towns and cities learned from and added value to the Billingham Forum concept. My Aunt Ella and Uncle Harry and my cousins Kath, Ron and Harry lived in a nice semi-detached at 39 Malvern Road, very close to the Billingham Forum. When we went down to Teesside for a 'proper' holiday rather than for a short family visit, my dad would buy gold railway passes for us to use. These allowed us to travel every day to different places using the train.

Canny Scot

We spent days at Redcar, Seaton Carew, Saltburn, Whitby, Scarborough and Hartlepool. My Great Aunt Nell lived in Hartlepool, having married my Great Uncle Tom. You could not have found two more different people. Uncle Tom was an affable, cheerful, popular and worldly man, a handsome man whose good looks were spoiled a little by a strawberry skin blemish on his face, a source of fascination to us children. He had been in the Royal Navy and had served on HMS Victory in his younger days. He had been a champion boxer, a great yodeller, an accomplished singer and a bit of a larrikin and funnyman.

Aunt Nell, on the other hand, was a nervous, little sparrow of a woman. She had been in domestic service as a young woman, working for a Doctor Haddow, as a housekeeper, in Ibrox. They had no children by their marriage. When we went to visit her, she would leave the lights off even as the evening drew in and it became obvious that it was becoming quite dark in her front room. No sooner had we arrived at her house and had sat down for a short time when she would suddenly be getting us up again and suggesting "You'll all want to go for a walk then?" Off we would all go to the breakwater and catch up with my Uncle Harry who had quite sensibly decided beforehand that he would go spinning for mackerel while we visited Aunt Nell.

She would also say things like "Well you won't want a cup of tea, you won't want to be staying long, and you'll need to get away

soon." On the face of it, it may sound as if she was living out the role of the "canny Scot". But that was not what it was about. It seemed to be a kind of nervous reaction and we never actually felt unwelcome. Nor did we ever feel that she didn't appreciate our visits, even though Great Aunt Nell's walks invariably took us, conveniently, to a bus stop so that we could catch a bus and get home early.

We children always thought her eccentricity was a great laugh and would get fits of the giggles at her antics. We would be shushed by our mothers and sent out to play. My Aunts and my Mother visited her regularly all of their lives and she lived on as a widow in a retirement home until she was ninety-seven, still whispering quietly that she didn't like the English, even though she had been married to one, and a very nice one at that, for most of her life and was being visited by some other good ones, quite regularly.

Redcar

Redcar was always one of my favourite places. It was still then a typical, bustling English seaside resort in the summer months. In those days it had at least half a dozen candy rock shops sited along the esplanade, which not only sold rock but made it before our very eyes. I loved watching the arms of the big machines working like food mixers pulling and stretching the soft toffee back and forward, back and forward. The action of the machines was a bit like my own arm action when my mother asked me to hold out my arms; put a skein of wool between them and I moved them back and forward whilst she

wound the wool into a ball to get it ready to be knitted into a warm winter jumper.

The mysteries of how the rock maker got the name 'Redcar' into the wee half-inch stalks and the words 'Present from Redcar' into the fat one inch stalks of rock became apparent. The rock maker rolled and twisted skinny red tubes of candy into the bigger ones. We could see it all happening before our eyes in the rock shops of Redcar. There were, of course, the delightful smells of peppermint, spearmint, cinnamon, licorice, pineapple and strawberry wafting out onto the street and always small pieces of rock, lying on the counter, to sample. How could we resist such temptations?

The shops had their 'kiss me quick' hats and the other souvenir paraphernalia of an English seaside resort. There were Punch and Judy shows to entertain us with the gory story of murder and deception and we always interacted with the puppet victims, to warn them about Punch to no avail. There were laughing sailor machines, in the amusement arcades and for a penny we could wind the mechanical handle to flick the bundle of pictures rapidly through to see, in black and white animation, what the butler saw. Not much by today's standards; only a shy, generously proportioned Edwardian lady, stripping out of her corsets and stays to expose herself but always a little discrete and very coyly looking toward us, the would-be butlers. For many years Redcar even had a massive ship beached on the sandbanks only a short distance from the shore. Redcar was an exciting place for a small boy to visit for a holiday.

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Lady MacGregor's Scotland By: Lady Fiona MacGregor



Sir Malcolm MacGregor and Lady Fiona in Norway.



Lady MacGregor of MacGregor – otherwise known as British broadcaster Fiona Armstrong. Fiona is currently news reading for the BBC, but she also leaves the studio to report on all matters Scottish. Fiona lives in Scotland with her husband, Chief of Clan MacGregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor, and is also an active member of Clan Armstrong, so their lives are interwoven with all things tartan. The couple have moved from the borderlands to the lowlands, home is now a white tower house between Perth and Dundee, although filming and writing takes Fiona all over Scotland.

blissful rest for me, with nothing to do, apart from read my book and watch the wonderful world go by.

Norway is an incredibly beautiful place. It has winding fjords, cascading waterfalls and spectacular gorges. Here the men and women are tall and striking and the children are blonde and beautiful. Despite this once being a war-like race, today they is a rather laid-back nation. Nothing like their unruly Viking ancestors.

Scotland is only a few hundred miles from Norway. It is just a hop across the North Sea - and because we are so close, the links between the two countries go back centuries. Orkney and Shetland once belonged to Norway. Indeed, Shetland is closer to Norway than it is to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh, and many Shetlanders still view Norway as the 'motherland'.

Norse influence

Today this Norse influence makes itself felt in the island's culture and heritage. Place names are in Norse, and a Scandinavian type of house is seen on the island, with painted timber sides and a turf roof. During the annual 'Up Helly Aa' fire festival, a Viking ship is burnt in the capital, Lerwick and the tune, the 'The Norseman's Home', is sung. Locals wear sheepskin and armour and carry axes to remember the Viking rule of a thousand years before.

Shetland is not the only link to Norway. During World War Two Norway was one of the first countries to be invaded by Germany and some of its troops fled to Scotland to try to regroup. From here, they could continue the fight against the Nazis.

Scotland is only a few hundred miles from Norway. It is just a hop across the North Sea - and because we are so close, the links between the two countries go back centuries.

By 1941 there were a thousand Norwegian soldiers based at a barracks near Dumfries. That same year a Scottish Norwegian Society was founded locally – and, even today, the flag of Norway can be raised over the town to remember the connection.

Sailors from the Norwegian navy also came to Scotland – and they brought with them a large dog. Bamse was a St Bernard and this gentle giant of the canine world distinguished himself by saving the lives of two seamen stationed on Tayside.

Bamse was noted for his ability to calm fighting seamen – and for being able to guide drunken crew safely back to their ships from Dundee pubs. Today a statue stands on the dockside at Montrose, on the Scottish east coast. Bamse is looking across the North Sea, towards his homeland.

On our trip to Norway we cannot help but make comparisons to home. For there is much to connect us. For a start, Scotland and Norway have similar populations. Norway has an amazing coastline - and so do we. It has spectacularly scenic railway rides – and so do we. We both share the same sea. We both have oil - and we have a coastline and rivers and mountains to die for. Importantly, we seem to get on OK. Indeed, the last time we went to war was over the Hebrides – and that was a long time ago, way back in the thirteenth century.

But where we differ is this: in Norway you search hard to find a scrap of litter. Which, although it pains me to say, is not the case here in Scotland. Then the Norwegians are a fish-eating nation and are very health-conscious. Indeed, they are obsessive about keeping fit. Whilst we were there we saw a pair of skis or a push-bike outside almost every home.

No, to be more like Norway we will have to stop dropping litter. We must eat more herring and we must take up running and rafting....

Leap #intotheunknown at the 2018 Edinburgh Festival Fringe



The official 2018 Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme has been launched, inviting performers and audiences from across the globe to leap into the unknown and embark on their very own Fringe adventure. This year's programme covers a wide range of themes and includes new venues, well-known names, upcoming talent, international work, and the 10th anniversary of the Made in Scotland showcase. With 3,548 shows covering theatre, dance, circus, physical theatre, comedy, music, musicals and opera, cabaret and variety, children's shows, free shows, exhibitions, events and spoken word, there is something for all tastes and interests.

2018 will also see the relaunch of the Virgin Money Street Events on the High Street and Mound Precinct, 20 years after the Fringe Society first took over responsibility for the area. Highlights include brand new, fully accessible stages, spectacular entrance archways, specially programmed showcases, and hundreds of brightly coloured pigeons, all designed to provide a more welcoming, high quality introduction to the world of the Fringe.

A leap into the unknown

Launching the 2018 Fringe Programme, Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, said: "On behalf of the artists, producers and venues that make the Fringe happen, I

am thrilled to reveal the 2018 Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme. This year's programme contains an eclectic mix of creative endeavour from across the globe that will move, challenge and, of course, entertain. This year we are encouraging everyone who comes to the Fringe to take a leap into the unknown. Whether this is your first or your 50th time visiting the Fringe as a performer or audience member, this is a place where new discoveries wait around every corner. There is no other festival in the world that offers such a broad or diverse range of cultural experiences. The Fringe is a festival that empowers its audiences to create their own adventure.

"Last year we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Fringe, but we also used it as a time to reflect, question, recalibrate and look to the future. Alongside this year's programme, the Fringe Society has produced a blueprint of ambitions that will guide our activities in the run up to our 75th anniversary in 2022, to ensure the continued success of this amazing festival for everyone involved.

"The Fringe Blueprint identifies new approaches to ensure anyone can participate, regardless of their background. From driving down the cost of attendance to engaging young people in the arts and reaching out to underrepresented groups in Edinburgh and further afield, we want the Fringe to be the greatest festival on earth at which to perform, run a venue, develop a career, see shows and discover talent.

"We look forward to audiences and artists from around the world joining us to take a leap into the unknown at the 2018 Edinburgh Festival Fringe."

Something for everyone

Every year thousands of performers take to hundreds of stages in August all over Edinburgh to present shows for every taste. From big names in the world of entertainment to unknown artists looking to build their careers, the festival caters for everyone and includes theatre, comedy, dance, physical theatre, circus, cabaret, children's shows, musicals, opera, music, spoken word, exhibitions and events.

Cllr Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener, City of Edinburgh Council, said: "It is impossible to imagine Edinburgh without its festival offering each year; all the razzmatazz and colour on the Royal Mile and general buzz and excitement that the Fringe and other summer festivals bring to our city every summer. Building on the wonderful 70th anniversary celebrations last year, this year's Fringe programme once again offers something for everyone, regardless of their age, taste or background, and I particularly welcome the Blueprint as a means of boosting participation, particularly amongst young people. We know from our People's Survey that over three-quarters of Edinburgh residents have enjoyed a festival show in the last two years and, if the breadth and depth of this programme is anything to go by, I'm sure local residents will continue to delight in everything the Fringe has to offer."

For further details see: www.edfringe.com

Strong pipe band links between Australia and South-East Asia



Scots School Albury.

The 11th Singapore South-East Asian Pipe Band Championships took place again highlighted the strong connection between Australia and countries in the region. Two Australian bands were among 10 bands competing this year - Perth Highland and Scots School Albury which was announced winners of both the Grade 4 and Juvenile championships. A number of expat

Australians were also part of other bands including Hong Kong which won Grade 3. The Singapore Pipe Band Association headed by president Alan Wallace, who commutes regularly between Perth and Singapore, has seen the championships become established as a major annual gathering for bands in the region.

Pipe Bands Australia

Australia's Principal Ensemble Nat Russell, who has been associated with the championships since inception, was awarded life membership of the association during the presentation ceremony. He adjudicated piping this year and was joined on the panel by Andrew Womersley (ensemble) and Alan Wallace for drumming with Scott Nicolson (Vice-Principal Piping - Victoria) also on the panel for the solos. The championships are run under the contest regulations of Pipe Bands Australia (PBA) and Nat has played a vital role in guiding the musical aspects of the championships.



A Boys' Brigade piper.

The links between Australia and the region also includes regular visits by accredited PBA College members to conduct examinations in piping and drumming. In November, Principal Piping Brett Tidswell and Principal Drumming Dean Hall will be in Singapore to conduct a workshop for the Boys' Brigade and adjudicate its annual competition. The brigade has

more than 200 boys playing pipes and drums in 20 of its companies.

An invitation has been extended to all bands in the South-East Asian region to visit Australia in coming years and to compete at the PBA diamond jubilee year 2020 Australian Pipe Band Championships.

For information on Pipe Bands Australia see: www.pipebandsaustralia.com.au



Part of the massed band.



Alan Wallace.



Nat Russell with his life membership medallion.



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The piping world comes to Glasgow



part of the Partner Programme for the Year of Young People 2018. The Year of Young People 2018 provides a platform to promote and celebrate the talents, achievements and contributions of Scotland's incredible young people.

Piping is a quintessential part of Scotland's identity

In recent years, over 225 bands have travelled from all over the world, bringing around 8000 pipers and drummers to compete in eight grades for the world title. Entries for this year's event are open and the final list of participants will be confirmed six weeks before the championships.

Ian Embelton, Chief Executive of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association said: "The World Pipe Band Championships has an association with Glasgow which stretches back 70 years. We expect the majority of competitors in 2018 will be under the age of 25 meaning the future of the bands they play in and the competitions themselves are in excellent hands. Every band that competes will already have spent weeks and months working towards their performance at Glasgow Green in pursuit of the ultimate prize, to become World Champions. The competition will be fierce and the performances world-class which makes The Worlds a truly special occasion".

Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland's Director of Events, said: "Piping is a quintessential part of Scotland's identity

and EventScotland is delighted to be continuing its long-standing support of the World Pipe Band Championships to showcase the best pipers and drummers from around the world. It's particularly exciting to have so many young people taking part and showing off their musical talents, especially as we celebrate Scotland's Year of Young People 2018."

Piping Live!

Piping Live! is a week-long celebration of bagpipes and traditional music, taking place between 13 – 19 August. It brings over 40,000 music fans to Glasgow and sees over 150 events take place in various

venues across the city. Ticketed events include firm favourites, The Masters Solo Piping Competition Lowland and Borders Pipers' Society and International Quartet Competition 2018, plus much more. Listen to some of the best live acts for free at the festival Street Café, there will be Pipe Idol, emerging artists, sponsor showcases and much more. Each event will showcase the world's most talented musicians in modern trad music.

Glasgow will host the World Pipe Band Championships until 2021. For more details see: www.theworlds.co.uk Keep updated on ticket information for Piping Live! at: www.pipinglive.co.uk

The city of Glasgow will host pipe bands and piping enthusiasts from across the globe this month at Piping Live! and the World Pipe Band Championships. The World Pipe Band Championships are the pinnacle of competitive Pipe Band competition and are organised on behalf of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association by the City of Glasgow. The current World Champions are Scotland's Inveraray and District Pipe Band. The first ever World Pipe Band Championships were held in Edinburgh in 1947. The event was first held in Glasgow in 1948 and has been staged in the city continuously since 1986. So far over 140 bands have already declared they will take part at the competition, which also includes Highland dancing events and more. The World Pipe Band Championships is



The Edinburgh International Festival lights up the capital



Virgin Money Fireworks Concert. Photo: Edinburgh International Festival.

The 2018 International Festival season bursts into life with a spectacular free outdoor digital performance celebrating Scotland's Year of Young People and reflecting on the centenary of the end of the Great War.

Inspired by themes of communication including telegrams sent by young soldiers in 1918, *Five Telegrams* weaves a newly commissioned orchestral score, projected digital artworks and live participation together to consider themes of machines and codes, censorship, propaganda and reconciliation – ideas that resonate powerfully in contemporary life.

Working closely with 59 Productions, Scottish composer Anna Meredith has

crafted a new work for orchestra based on material found in the Imperial War Museum. Meredith is a composer, producer and performer whose genre-defying works span the worlds of classical, pop and electronic music.

Having created three previous epic opening performances, 59 Productions are well known to International Festival audiences. Over the past decade they have used innovative new technologies to reimagine concert performance, theatre, opera and exhibitions. *Five Telegrams* will be led by Richard Slaney, who was responsible for the hugely successful *The Harmonium Project* at the 2015 International Festival.

Five Telegrams is an historic partnership that will see two great festivals working closely together. The project will open both the International Festival outside the Usher Hall on 3 August and the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. This joint production marks the first time the International Festival and the Proms have worked together in this way. With additional contributions from young people in Edinburgh and working in partnership with Edinburgh College of Art, and as part of 14-18 NOW, the UK's arts programme for the First World War centenary, *Five Telegrams* is a truly collaborative event.

One of the biggest fireworks concerts in the world

The spectacular *Virgin Money Fireworks Concert* brings together unforgettable orchestral classics from Edinburgh's own Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and awe-inspiring fireworks, specially choreographed by international fireworks artists Pyrovision to enhance your musical experience – all set against the magnificent, historic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle.

Join the city of Edinburgh for this joyous celebration of summer festivals, inspirational music and breathtaking fireworks – marking the resplendent conclusion to the 2018 Edinburgh International Festival. Conducted by Clark Rundell, the Scottish Chamber

Orchestra celebrates the centenary of the birth of Leonard Bernstein with a specially chosen selection of his foot-tapping, flamboyant music – with very special guest artists.

After the interval, join the Orchestra for a mind-expanding journey into deepest space, with music from Gustav Holst's visionary *The Planets* – from the overwhelming power of 'Mars' to the eerie beauty of 'Venus'; from the seething energy of 'Saturn' to the majestic grandeur of 'Jupiter'. All accompanied by a jaw-dropping display of fireworks from the Edinburgh Castle ramparts.

Over 100,000 fireworks launched from Edinburgh's imposing Castle make this one of the biggest fireworks concerts in the world. Around a quarter of a million people gather across the city and beyond to share in this annual grand International Festival finale.

Details: www.eif.co.uk



Five Telegrams at Usher Hall. Photo: Edinburgh International Festival.

Full steam ahead this summer



The Flying Scotsman recently crossed the Forth Rail Bridge. Passengers on the Black Five locomotive this summer will have the opportunity to travel from the Fife Coast to the Scottish Borders. Photo: Tony Marsh/VisitScotland.

A steam train experience that features Scotland's latest World Heritage Site and newest railway line returns to the timetable again this summer. Passengers on the Scottish Railway Preservation Society's (SRPS) Railtours steam special will have the opportunity to take in views of the new Queensferry Crossing as they cross the iconic Forth Rail Bridge from the Fife Coast to the Scottish Borders. SRPS ran four Fife Coast to Scottish Borders trips in August 2017, each of which was sold out carrying a total of 1,600 people.

This year the Black Five steam locomotive will again travel along the Borders Railway when it makes its return to the route that takes in two of Scotland's Great Scenic Rail Routes for a second year. Passengers will be able to board the steam train in Linlithgow before travelling over the Forth Rail Bridge

and round the Fife coast before heading south on the Borders Railway to Tweedbank every Sunday in August.

VisitScotland expects the steam experience to provide an important boost to the local economy in the Scottish Borders after it attracted thousands of visitors to the region last year and benefited local businesses and visitor attractions. As part of the Borders Railway Blueprint partnership, the national tourism organisation seeks to maximise benefits from the new Borders Railway.

Step back in time

VisitScotland Regional Leadership Director, Paula Ward, said: "The steam train special from Fife, through Edinburgh and travelling down the Borders Railway to Tweedbank last year proved a runaway success with

many of the days completely selling out. It really is a fantastic opportunity to step back in time and enjoy a relaxing day out to the Scottish Borders, taking in the spectacular scenery and discover two of Scotland's great scenic rail journeys. Without a doubt, passengers are in for an unforgettable day out – they can sit back and relax and take in the picturesque beauty of the Fife coast, the iconic Edinburgh Waverley station, with plenty to see and do when they arrive in the Scottish Borders – all topped off with quality local food and drink. The return of the steam train experience provides an important boost to the local economy and continues to shine the spotlight on the quality of tourism offering in these regions."

The special steam excursions will operate on every Sunday in August. They depart from Linlithgow and cross the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Forth Rail Bridge, before travelling onto Kinghorn, Burntisland and Aberdour. After stopping at Dalgety Bay, the journey continues south over the Bridge once again to Edinburgh then along the 31-mile route of the Borders Railway to Galashiels and Tweedbank.

Passengers will be able to enjoy more than two hours in the Borders before the return journey, with additional trips to Melrose, Galashiels, Abbotsford House and local restaurants also available.

Plenty to see and do

Scottish Borders Council's Executive Member for Business and Economic

Development, Councillor Mark Rowley, added: "We are delighted to work alongside SRPS and our Borders Railway Blueprint partners to bring back the steam train experience in 2018 after a hugely successful 2017. The fact that all four trips were sold out – bringing 1,600 people to the Scottish Borders – was testament to the offering by SRPS, which included spending the afternoon in our wonderful area with plenty to see and do, and quality local food and drink available. I am sure that the 2018 steam train days out will be another fantastic occasion on one of Scotland's great scenic rail journeys."

SRPS Railtours is a trading subsidiary of The Scottish Railway Preservation Society, charity which owns and maintains former British Rail coaches. The tours are organised and staffed by unpaid volunteers with proceeds from the railtours going to the charity to be used to restore rolling stock and locomotives of historical value.

The Black Five locomotive was designed by Sir William Stanier for the London, Midland & Scottish railway and a total of 842 were built between 1934 and 1951. The return journey will be diesel-hauled from Tweedbank to Newcraighall, where the train will be turned on Niddrie triangle so that it can be steam-hauled for the remainder of the return journey.

The trains will be operated by West Coast Railways.

The Northern Meeting Piping Competition

Hailed as being the "Premier Solo Piping Contest in the World," The Northern Meeting Piping Competition attracts pipers from across the globe. Join piping enthusiasts at Eden Court Theatre on August 30 & 31st to listen in awe as over 100 solo pipers compete in eight different classes.

Held since 1841, solo pipers from as far afield as the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Europe and the British Isles flock to the Highland capital to take part in this most prestigious piping competition.



Highest standard of solo piping

Spectators will witness the highest standard of solo piping and events include the classic Piobaireachd, March, Strathspey and Reel and Hornpipes and Jigs all musical experiences which no doubt will leave you with shivers down your spine and a thirst for more.

In Scotland's Year of Young People, the competition are also delighted to be welcoming a number of junior competitors. Held over two days, the Northern Meeting is the ultimate way to celebrate the finest piping the world has to offer.

The sunning riverside setting of Eden Court, set in the heart of Inverness, and with stunning views of the River Ness, it is also one of the most idyllically located venues in the country.

For more details and tickets see: www.eden-court.co.uk



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WHOLESALE AVAILABLE

The Sound of Scotland

Photos courtesy of Piping Live!

The Scottish Banner speaks to Roddy MacLeod, MBE

Roddy MacLeod is one of the world's top pipers, Festival Director of Piping Live! and principal at The National Piping Centre in Glasgow. Roddy took time to speak to the Scottish Banner's Sean Cairney on this year Piping Live!, the power of the bagpipes, and why it is never too late to join a pipe band.



father was keen that my older brothers learn the pipes before I did and I used to go along to their lessons and was very keen to learn the chanter from the age of 5 or 6. When I got to the age of 10 I started to get regular lessons and it went from there. I have always loved the sound of the pipes and the music and the pipes mean a great deal to me. Pipes have given me a great connection with people throughout my life and I have made some great friendships with people who were similarly learning the pipes like me. Piping has given me the opportunity to travel and do lots of exciting things throughout my life. Of course it has also given me employment for the past 20 years in terms of my work here at the National Piping Centre.

SC: Roddy thank you for taking the time to speak to *the Scottish Banner*. You are considered one of the world's top pipers and bagpipes clearly run through your blood. Can you tell us what got you interested in the pipes to begin with and what Scotland's iconic instrument, the Great Highland Bagpipe, means to you?

RM: My interest in the pipes goes back as far as I can remember because my family background is a Hebridean background. My father's side of the family is from the Isle of Lewis and my mother's is from Benbecula, so there was always an interest in Gaelic music and island music. My

SC: This month is a big month for piping, with world's biggest celebration of piping at Piping Live! Can you tell us a bit about this year's Piping Live! and how the idea to hold Piping Live! came to be?

RM: Basically in the summertime in Glasgow the World Pipe Band Championships attract a great deal of overseas visitors to the city. We used to put a series of piping recitals at the National Piping Centre in the lead up to the World's and also run summer schools for people to learn the pipes. Strathclyde University would host a lot of the bands visiting for the Worlds and host an event at the Lord

Todd Building for pipers. Also the Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band held an annual pipe band concert. So started to think that if we harness all these events and this information together under one brochure it would be helpful to those people coming to Glasgow and wanting to see everything that was taking place in the city piping wise. We then looked to go further and create a festival and we ran with an idea I presented that we create an international piping festival, meaning not just Scottish bagpipes, but bagpipes from all over the

world. Whichever countries have a bagpipe we would try and represent them at some point in the festival so that we were creating a much broader cultural event for the city, and really is how it came to be.

This year's Piping Live! we hope, as we do every year, will be bigger than previous years. We had about 40,000 visitors last year at 150 events and we hope to match this again. Events such as a Masters Solo Piping event, featuring the best solo pipers in the world. A quartets competition which is always



The Red Hot Chilli Pipers at Piping Live!



popular which features a number of the world's top pipe bands, including the current World Champions the Inverary & District Pipe Band, the previous World Champions Field Marshal Montgomery and also Canada's Simon Fraser University, in addition to other bands from around the world. We have some fantastic performers throughout the week with so many things happening from album and book launches and even a play about piping. All the details can of course be found on our website.

SC: The city of Glasgow has a vibrant music scene covering all genres and is in fact a UNESCO City of Music. How important do you feel this is for not only Piping Live! and the World Pipe Band Championships but the piping scene in general?

RM: At this point I don't feel we have really tapped into that. Glasgow greatly values music and we do get support from the city marketing board for both Piping Live! and the World Pipe Band Championships. Being a UNESCO City of Music definitely does bring business and music to Glasgow and the city certainly supports our endeavours to showcase piping here.

SC: You come from a Gaelic speaking family, how important is it for you today to keep the traditions of Scottish music alive?

RM: It is very important to me. I feel that Gaelic music is in my blood and I grew up listening to Gaelic singers such as Calum Kennedy and the Lewis Folk, Donald McRae and many others. It is always in me and I have always enjoyed Gaelic music. It is important for me to present the traditions as I love the music so much and it's the music I listen to.

SC: You are also the principal of The National Piping Centre in Glasgow. Can you tell us more about the Piping Centre and how the international community can take part on what is on offer there?

RM: There are so many things to say about the National Piping Centre, we have been here for 22 years now and it has grown exponentially since as a business. Today we collaborate with The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to run a degree, Masters and PhD program. We are always very excited to welcome students from abroad to these courses. We also run summer schools at home and also in other

countries such as Italy, Germany and two in America in Virginia and San Diego. We have a eLearning web portal that people can use for learning. While this is not face to face learning it is something people who are remote from us can use and we also do Skype lessons as well.

People come from all over the world to the Piping Centre, from over 60 countries so far, which is hard to beat.

We have also expanded with the College of Piping here in Glasgow being incorporated with the National Piping Centre, so we now operate from two locations which has been a very exciting development and given us more space and more opportunity.

SC: This month The National Piping Centre will also host the Silver Chanter competition, can you tell us more?

RM: The Silver Chanter was always held at Dunvegan Castle and was an idea of Dame Flora MacLeod of Clan MacLeod. It was a way of bringing the top pipers in the country

Continued on page 19



IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Historic steamship finds permanent home

The historic Scots steamship *TS Queen Mary* has been berthed permanently on the Clyde, at Glasgow Science Centre. The steamship was rescued from scrap by a group of trustees last year and is currently undergoing a multi-million pound refurbishment. Situated beside the Millennium Bridge she will be a stone's throw from the SSE Hydro and SECC complexes, and right in the heart of Glasgow's media village.

Friends of *TS Queen Mary*, the charity behind the rescue and restoration project, estimates the vessel will welcome 150,000 visitors and students each year once restored.

The charity has raised £1.3 million in cash and in-kind donations, leaving just under £700,000 left to fully fund the restoration. The charity hopes to reopen the ship as a heritage destination, education and business centre in spring next year.

Nicola Sturgeon, MSP for Glasgow Southside, said: "I'm absolutely delighted to see the *TS Queen Mary* find a permanent berth at the Glasgow Science Centre. The restoration will bring a major benefit not only in the form of visitors but in giving students unique hands-on experience. It's a very fitting addition to the Clyde and I look forward to visiting over the years to come."

Dr Stephen Breslin, chief executive of Glasgow Science Centre, said: "We are delighted to welcome the *TS Queen Mary* as our permanent new neighbour along the riverside. Shipbuilding is an intrinsic part of Glasgow's heritage and we are excited to be working with Friends of the Queen Mary to celebrate and engage people with the social and engineering history of this iconic vessel and shipbuilding on the Clyde. As well being a unique visitor attraction and events space, the ship will also be a platform for inspiring new generations of future engineers and mariners."

Trustee Iain Sim said, during his speech: "People often ask what the legacy of *Queen Mary* has been. We believe that the legacy of *Queen Mary* is yet to be".

Midge burger on the menu in Argyll

A restaurateur outside of Oban has launch unique summer menu for customers which includes a Midge burger. Summer

is peak season for the he Highland midge, or *Culicoides Impunctatus*, and considered similar to the mosquito. Dinners can choose to have their burgers covered in midges for extra protein and a truly Scottish experience. David Keat, who owns the Brander Lodge Hotel said: "If you are angry and you want to get your own back on the midges, you can eat them for a change, instead of them eating you. We just thought that, with ants and grasshoppers on menus across the world, Scotland has a ready supply of protein-filled midges, because of our location we have an ample supply of the wee blighters. There is a huge plague of midges this year so there are plenty at our disposal." Scotland is facing a record bug season due recent weather conditions and midges will be in full supply.

Profits and passenger numbers up on Edinburgh trams



A winning combination of rising customer numbers, 99 per cent reliability and industry-leading customer service has seen Edinburgh Trams exceed all financial expectations, recording a pre-tax operating profit of £1.6m. Results published show revenue grew by 24 per cent in 2017, and the total number of customer journeys was up by 19 per cent to 6.6 million. The figures reflect the growing popularity of the city's tramway and massively exceed forecasts in the City Council's original business model, which predicted a profit of £333,000 for 2017.

Lea Harrison, Edinburgh Trams' Managing Director, commented: "In 2016 we returned our first operating profit a year ahead of schedule and, in 2017, financial performance has continued to exceed expectations. The

introduction of a new timetable at the start of the year played a major part in this success, with a 23 per cent increase in services encouraging more people to take the tram when visiting the city for business or pleasure. We've also worked hard to reduce journey times, with a trip between Edinburgh Airport and the city centre taking less than 35 minutes.

"Alongside these operational improvements we've continued our commitment to providing the best possible service to our customers, rolling out a series of successful initiatives. These include the introduction of a contactless payment system and running additional trams when the city hosts major events. This passenger-focussed approach has seen Edinburgh Trams named as Operator of the Year at the prestigious Global Light Rail Awards and receive numerous accolades for excellence in customer service. We're delighted at the support we've received from the travelling public, which is reflected in these financial results, and we'll continue our efforts to further improve the customer experience."

A planned extension to Leith of the tram service is now under consideration.

5G network to be trialed in Glasgow



Vodafone has chosen Glasgow as one of seven UK cities (including London, Liverpool and Manchester) to test new 5G applications, including virtual and augmented reality in factories, hospitals and offices.

The upcoming trials, between October and December 2018, will ensure Vodafone is ready for the commercial launch of full 5G, which is expected to arrive early in 2020 to coincide with a wide choice of compatible phones and devices. The trials

are part of a wider plan called Gigabit UK, which aims to provide everyone in the UK with speeds of one gigabit per second or more, no matter where they are.

Glasgow is a natural fit for exploring the future of 5G, given the work by the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) on the network. The SELFNET project, led by UWS researchers, promises to deliver dramatic improvements to quality of user experience, reliability and security – unlocking a wealth of new possibilities like remote surgery, driverless cars and smooth mobile HD streaming.

Nick Jeffery, Vodafone UK chief executive, said: "We want to make 5G and new fibre broadband services available to consumers and business throughout the UK, delivering a Gigabit society for all. We will also be bringing ultra-fast 4G to several hundred sites in hard to reach rural areas this year, building on our position as the network that offers the best voice coverage in the UK."

5G could be as much as 100 times faster than 4G, offering speeds fast enough to download an HD movie in seconds.

Gaelic makes a splash in Fort William

In a Scottish first swimming lessons are being offered in Gaelic. The Lochaber Leisure Centre in Fort William has introduced Gaelic swim lessons, in addition to its established English lesson programs. Gary Davidson, manager of Lochaber Leisure Centre, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for Gaelic speaking Leisure Centre users, especially as Bun-Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar is now established in the area, and Gaelic is being used in the community within other sporting activities, including shinty, football, and outdoor educational activities. We are pleased to be able to offer the lessons through Gaelic as this will enhance the linguistic skills of Gaelic learners and the young Gaelic speakers."

The centre also offers Gaelic language sport instructions in football and shinty. The Gaelic swim classes are taking place across the summer and already showing strong bookings.

Grave problems on Mull

Residents on Mull are facing a grave shortage with cemeteries not securing people a grave until they die. Pre-purchasing grave space on Mull has now been banned as the situation has become a major issue for islanders. Mull undertaker Billy McClymont said: "You can't buy a lair on Mull unless you are dead. It's pretty bad, they are not allowing people to buy them. Tobermory is down to nine lairs now, for a town the size of Tobermory, with 800-900 people, to only have nine graves available is pretty severe, you could use them in a couple of months, what then? You want to be buried in one part of Mull, you don't want to be buried miles away, you want to be buried in the cemetery where your family are. They need to make provision and build a new cemetery in Tobermory. Death is not free, they charge people almost £700 just to open and close a lair, and to buy a lair is nearly £800."

The local authorities are now looking at options of expanding current cemetery lots.

Continued from page 17

to Skye, originally to participate in the Skye Highland Games, and also has always been a celebration of the compositions of the MacCrimmon pipers who were the hereditary pipers to the Clan MacLeod.

Sadly things have changed in Skye and Skye Piping Society are no longer able to fund the event on the island due to rising costs in using Dunvegan Castle and no longer have the support of the Clan Macleod, which as a MacLeod I am disappointed to hear. So they approached the National Piping Centre to see if we may be able to take the event on in order to keep it going as it has been running for over 50 years. We certainly did not want to see the vent disappear from the piping calendar and it is such an important event with great tradition. We have agreed to take it on here in Glasgow at the National

Piping Centre and from next year it will be integrated into the Piping Live! program.

SC: Teaching the pipes and drums is so important and passing on piping music and culture. What message do you have for someone, regardless of age, wanting to get involved with the pipe band community?

RM: My message is to do it. It is never too late to get involved and start learning. Learning music is about enjoyment, you don't have to be the greatest piper or drummer in the world to enjoy what you are learning. And of course getting involved and make friends and all that goes with a pipe band in terms of days out or at competitions. The week to week interaction is of course very good for people and it nice to have that community involvement.

SC: Roddy there are few instruments that can stir the soul like the bagpipes. Can you tell us what it is about the power of the bagpipes that you think give them such a global following?

RM: That is difficult to say, but I think the bagpipes is an instrument that has a certain volume and pitch and of course the drone. That seems to attract many people, it is not for everyone, but fortunately many people really enjoy the sound and the music that goes with it.

It is a powerful instrument and when someone is playing the bagpipes it is not something you can easily ignore. In Scotland when the pipes are played at certain occasions such as weddings or funerals you can be sure there will be a few tearful eyes because people find it such an emotive instrument.

SC: And finally Roddy the pipe band movement is such a special one of friendship which connects people across the world. What does the piping fraternity mean to you and what are your hopes for the pipe band movement not only in Scotland, but across the world?

RM: It is a special fraternity because there are no class boundaries, piping crosses all divides. In my experience you join a pipe band and you could find you would have accountants, teachers, plumbers, painters or doctors and it does not matter what you do or who you are, you are connected to each other by the enjoyment of playing the music. That is one of the greatest things I feel about piping and pipe bands. When you are in that band it becomes an extended family and for many people a great support mechanism for them. I have had so much fun whenever I have been in bands and really enjoyed it. I hope the pipe band movement continues to thrive and it is great to see more and more young people in Scotland getting involved in pipe bands which is wonderful. It is also great to see the friendships and opportunities that derive from pipe bands and I can only hope the pipe band fraternity continue to thrive.

Piping Live! takes place in Glasgow this month from August 13th - 19th August and the Masters Solo Piping Championship and the Lunchtime Recitals will be available each day for free on the website. For more details see: www.pipinglive.co.uk

For further information on The National Piping Centre see: www.thepipingcentre.co.uk



International science team use DNA methods to search for Nessie

A team of international scientists have just finished combing the cold and dark waters of Loch Ness using DNA collection methods to search for evidence of “monster” activity. The group of scientists from France, Australia, Denmark, Britain, New Zealand and the USA hope some DNA evidence remains in the icy waters which could support if Nessie really did exist, they will also record and catalogue DNA of existing fish and plant life found in the loch. Professor Neil Gemmell of the University of Otago in New Zealand said : “This DNA can be captured, sequenced and then used to identify that creature by comparing the sequence obtained to large databases of known genetic sequences from hundreds of thousands of different organisms. While the prospect of looking for evidence of the Loch Ness monster is the hook to this project, there is an extraordinary amount of new knowledge that we will gain from the work about organisms that inhabit Loch Ness- the UK’s largest freshwater body.”

The groups findings are expected to be released in January.

Did you know? John O’Groats



- John O’Groats, is named after a 16th century Dutch immigrant called Jan de Groot. Jan de Groot obtained a grant for the ferry from the Scottish mainland to Orkney from James IV, King of Scots, in 1496.
- The John O’ Groats House Hotel was built on or near the site of Jan de Groot’s house and was established in 1875.
- Dunnet Head, just outside John O’Groats the mostly northerly point of mainland Britain.
- The expression “from Land’s End to John O’Groats” covers a distance of about 870 miles or 1,400 km and refers to “from end to end of Great Britain.”
- Cycling from Land’s End to John O’Groats, the furthest possible distance in the British Isles, is a classic challenge that many dream of. Starting at Land’s End on the south - westerly tip of England the trips finishes (or starts) in John O’Groats.
- In 2017 a skateboarder cruised his way from John O’Groats to Land’s End in a bid to earn his place in the record books. Jon Holder, from Reepham, Norfolk, completed the 1,025 - mile trip in 16 days-five days faster than the previous world record.
- John O’Groats is the gateway to the Orkney Islands. With a crossing that’s only 40 minutes. On a clear day the Orkney Islands can be seen (only 8 miles away).
- The most popular photo on John O’Groats is the landmark “Journey’s End” signpost which was installed in 1964.

Possible take off on Skye



A feasibility study is now underway looking at the possibility of re-launching scheduled air services to the Isle of Skye. Skye business groups, the Highland Council and Scottish airline Loganair and looking at the economic benefits of service from Glasgow to Broadford, which last saw air service in 1988. Highland Council’s Isle of Skye and Raasay committee chairman John Gordon, said: “The reintroduction of scheduled flights to Skye would be an enormous boost to our local economy. People want to come and visit our beautiful area and we want to make it as easy as possible for them to access all that we have to offer. The proposed trial looks like a really viable option.” The current travel time is approximately four hours and it is hoped a new service may be possible by 2020.

Clan Guthrie - U.S.A. Inc MEMBERSHIP INVITED Clan Guthrie - U.S.A., Inc. Membership Chair Larry Guthrie clanguthrieinfo@aol.com www.clanguthrie.org

Clan MacAlpine Society 3061 Harbor Blvd, Ventura CA, 93001 USA Earl Dale McAlpine - President email: earlmacalpine@yahoo.com

Clan Mackintosh Membership in Clan Mackintosh of North America is available to all persons bearing the name of any of the clans or septs of Clan Mackintosh. Associate memberships are also available to those interested in the clan.

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Clan MacLellan John B. McClellan, Jr. Treasurer 6409 Knollwood Drive McKinney, TX 75070-6032 Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

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Clan MacNeil Association OF AUSTRALIA For all enquiries about the clan and membership contact. John McNeil 21 Laurel Avenue, Linden Park, SA 5065 Email: ksimul@chariot.net.au

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Tattoo to celebrate human potential for 'The Sky's the Limit' in 2018



New Zealand Army Band.



Humans' greatest endeavours will be celebrated at this month's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, inspired by Scotland's Year of Young People, the Tattoo has also unveiled 2018's theme 'The Sky's the Limit'. In a year that will be led by The Royal Air Force (RAF), which is marking its 100-year anniversary during 2018, the show will celebrate the breaking of barriers and human potential being infinite.

Taking place against the iconic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle to a live audience of 220,000, the military extravaganza will return for 24 performances during August with a 100-minute showcase of music, dance and technical wizardry, including some of the world's finest military bands and performers. Organisers have confirmed that fan favourites, the Massed Pipes and Drums – drawn from across the Armed Forces, Canada and Australia, Switzerland's Top Secret Drum Corps, The Central Band of the Czech Armed Forces, the Royal Air Force and the Highland Dancers will both return to set the Esplanade alight.

Brigadier David Allfrey, Chief Executive and Producer of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, said: "Scotland's "Year of Young People" offers a fabulous opportunity to help inspire the up-and-coming generations to reach for the sky. This year too, we are delighted to support The Royal Air Force in celebrating their 100th anniversary and they will be the lead Service at the Tattoo. With these two ingredients, under our own theme of The Sky's The Limit, we can explore gravity, the history of manned flight - even into space - and explore the power of human potential in the round. We are looking forward to exploring all manner of creative possibilities and collaborations in the

production, in the international cast, in the music, in the lighting and projection and in special effects. There are some exciting prospects and some of them out of this world! It is all about unleashing human potential, not just in the Show but in life generally. We are so proud to have sold out for the last consecutive nineteen years, and are constantly working to deliver innovative new dimensions in the Show. And, while we always stay true to the core, with Massed Pipes and Drums, the Massed Military Bands, our Dance Company, Hjaltibonhoga and some sensational international contributions, the Show is new each year and there will always be a twist."

International expansion programme

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo revealed its intent to continue the company's growth, reaching ever-larger audiences at home and abroad through an ambitious international expansion programme including doubling turn-over to £20million by 2025.

Having already staged hugely popular shows in Australia and New Zealand in the last 15 years, the Tattoo aims to

significantly develop its operations to unleash its own potential by securing overseas tours in China, Australia and Canada from 2019 onwards.

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A world showcase event selling out in Edinburgh every year, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo prides itself on delivering under the three guiding pillars of: Military Entertainment, Influence and Social Contribution. Supporting the latter, the organisation

has donated over £10m to charity over the years and since 2016 has committed to donating £1m every year going forward.

In building on its current international success, the Tattoo remains committed to sustaining its power and authenticity at home and abroad by supporting the development of our national talent - across a broad range of performer groups including the military - and by attracting, showcasing and supporting the best military and folkloric performers from across the globe.

The ambition to attract a global audience across multiple channels of 1 billion by 2025 - a tenfold increase - is a step change for the organisation whose annual Edinburgh show is hugely popular but is bound by the physical size of the Edinburgh Castle esplanade (8,800 seats per show).

The Tattoo sells 220,000 tickets for its Edinburgh show each August, generating £77 million annually for the UK economy with a further £30 million value added in full-time employment. The 2016 performances in Australia and New Zealand generated over 240,000 tickets sales and the shows delivered a combined estimate of £50 million gross economic impacts to the cities of Melbourne and Wellington.

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo takes place 3-25th August at Edinburgh Castle. For more details see: www.edintattoo.co.uk



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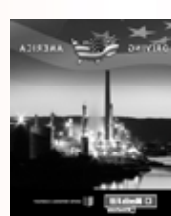
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Playing to tradition - *Celtic musical instruments*

Text courtesy of: www.Scotland.org Image by VisitScotland / Kenny Lam.



The history of Celtic music goes back thousands of years, it is a music style rich in history. However, the genre has been subject to an impressive revival in modern times. Evidence can be found in places like Festival Interceltique de Lorient, which is one of a large number of festivals that take place across the Celtic regions. Lorient is joined by festivals like Celtic Connections and HebCelt in Scotland, as well as others throughout Ireland, Spain, Isle of Man, Portugal, Canada, the USA and Australia.

Unique sound

Celtic music also has a strong presence outside of these dedicated festivals. Many Celtic acts can be found at traditional music festivals like Rudolstadt Roots Folk Weltmusik Festival, where Celtic music mixes with other traditional music styles from around the world. As well as this, more high profile acts such as Capercaillie and Runrig have achieved massive success in the mainstream music industry. This shows just how universal Celtic music is, captivating the ears and hearts of such a broad range of music fans.

Much of this is down to the unique sound of traditional Celtic musical instruments. Whether it's the airy rasp of the wooden flute or the high-pitched skirl of the bagpipes, Celtic music is best known by its instruments. However, though everyone is familiar with the sound of an instrument like the bagpipes, you may not know that there are actually several different kinds.

Amazingly, some Celtic regions have individual national versions adapted to suit their own unique sound. For example, the Scottish highland pipes are the loudest, and most commonly played in large pipe bands. However, in Ireland, the

quieter uilleann pipes are more popular, in Brittany they favour the binou and in the Spanish Celtic regions of Asturias and Galicia, the local bagpipe is the gaita!

Activities for beginners and experts

Thankfully, if you've ever wanted to tell your Bodhrán from your Bombarde, there is a range of great ways to learn to play Celtic instruments. Fèis Rois is one example of this and over time has become renowned for being a teaching festival. The festival welcomes beginners

Fèis Rois Inbich is 'The Adult Fèis', which offers a range of classes from absolute beginner to the most advanced of musicians. Described by many previous participants as 'the best weekend of the year', the Adult Fèis is an annual three-day festival offering first-class tuition in traditional music, song, dance, Gaelic language and culture in the beautiful setting of Ullapool.

If playing isn't your thing

If playing an instrument isn't your thing, there are still great ways to learn more about Celtic instruments. Scotland is

home to some wonderful museums and exhibitions that offer excellent opportunities to immerse yourself in the history of Celtic music.

The National Piping Centre in Glasgow offers guided tours with your very own bagpiping host. The centre also plays host to the Museum of Piping, which charts the history of the bagpipes, one of Scotland's best known icons. The museum holds 300 years of piping heritage, including artefacts from the rich collections of National Museums of Scotland. This is the most authoritative display of its kind anywhere in the world.

The exhibition also features bagpipes from Lowland Scotland and other parts of the British Isles, as well as from mainland Europe. Additionally, it also includes displays on bagpipe manufacture and the printing of pipe music. A fascinating film on the history, culture and music of the bagpipe completes the museum's extensive exhibition.

Music is at the heart of Scottish life, and traditional Celtic music plays an important role in this. Whether it is learning a few new tricks for the instrument you have played for years, or just picking an instrument up for the first time, there are options available to everyone musically inclined. On top of this, there are still plenty of engrossing exhibitions to please musicians and non-musicians alike.

Whether it's the airy rasp of the wooden flute or the high-pitched skirl of the bagpipes, Celtic music is best known by its instruments.

and experts alike and celebrates the music and song culture connected with the Gaelic language. Over the course of the last 30 years, it has continued to grow and welcome more new musicians. As a result, the work of Fèis Rois now takes place year-round, with an extensive programme of music tuition in Local Authorities across Scotland.

Fèis Rois now has three dedicated festivals covering different age ranges and skill levels:

Fèis Rois Oigridh, also known as 'The Junior Fèis' covers the youngest age group, focusing on children between the ages of 9 and 12. In the lively five-day event, children choose three different classes to take part in each day which are led by tutors who are experienced, professional musicians, skilled in working with young people.

Fèis Rois nan Deugairean or, 'The Senior Fèis', focuses on high school students between the ages of 12 and 18. The event is based in Ullapool with participants using the week-long event to learn new skills and gain confidence. Emphasis is placed on group work, with everyone coming together to perform at one of the highlights of the entire Fèis Rois calendar, the Autumn Residential.

Worldwide appeal for Piping At Forres

By: Claire Doughty



Sandy Dalziel (centre) brought his Australian band to Piping At Forres.

The Scottish born pipe major of an Australian band returned home bringing his musicians with him to compete in Piping At Forres. Sandy Dalziel who was stationed at RAF Kinloss emigrated to Warwick in Queensland in 2005 when he left the airbase situated near to the Moray town of Forres. However, the 53-year-old came home to the town on June 30 to take part in Piping At Forres, the European Pipe Band Championships bringing his 25-strong entourage with him. Sandy leads the Scots PGC College Pipe Band which consists of 60 pipers and drummers aged 8-18-years-old.

Sandy whose wife Elaine hails from the town said it was important for them to return particularly as it was the last time Piping At Forres took place. Speaking before the event, he said: "Since we left in 2005, we have only been back once. This is our first time at Piping At Forres. We always had a plan to come at some point but it was fitting to be here at the last one. Bringing these young people here is pretty monumental. I am originally from Stranraer and the pipe band I played with there, the Lochryan Pipe Band

are competing here too. They loaned us two young players and in return, I got the chance to play with them again. Being here, in Forres, near RAF Kinloss where I was based, in the town I met my wife, with my original pipe band, somehow completes the circle."

He added: "We have been touring around Scotland and the band played in Princes Street Gardens earlier this week, which was a real experience for them. We have had a great chance to explore, experience and enjoy."

Elaine, Sandy's wife said she was glad to be back for a visit: "We were treated to a homecoming party with a BBQ and I have met three new great nieces and nephews for the first time. It's a bit strange being back. Warwick is very similar in size to Forres and the community there works in the same way as Forres. It's been great being able to catch up with my family and some old friends."

Inveraray & District Pipe Band celebrated their win for the second year in a row at the European Pipe Band Championships which was held in Forres in Moray for the final time on June 30th following a six-year run.



Fèis Rois learning Celtic tradition.



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By: Nick Drainey



Braemar



Competition dancers.



Leading heavy Scott Rider.

Scotland's Royal Gathering

Braemar's premier cultural and sporting event is the Braemar Gathering which takes place on the first Saturday of September every year. Amongst the colour, strength, music and friendship is a visit by Her Majesty the Queen and members of the Royal Family, making this Gathering one of the most famous Scottish cultural events the world as Nick Drainey explains.



Her Majesty The Queen and HRH The Princess Royal receiving white heather posies from Ciaran Johnston (11) and River Hall (11) both members of the Braemar Royal Highland Society.



Leading heavy Kyle Randalls.

On the first Saturday of September, Jim Wood is up at 5.30am, making sure 12 months of planning has come together for the Braemar Gathering, a celebration of skill and strength enjoyed by locals, tourists and royalty.

Mr Wood, the Gathering Secretary, must make sure the Princess Royal and Duke of Fife Memorial Park is completely up to scratch.

Among the hundreds of items on his year-round "to do" list is ordering marquees, bins and toilets, organising beer and food tents, selling tickets, editing the programme and having it printed, advertising, acquiring permission for road closures, inviting honoured guests and organising around 250 stewards, made up from members of the Braemar Royal



Secretary Jim Wood assisting Her Majesty with the presentation of trophies.

Highland Society. To be nominated to be an ordinary member of the revered organisation you must be born in Braemar or have lived there for two years and their work on the day is vital to ensure a smooth running of all the events.

The Royal Family

Perhaps the biggest attraction away from the games is the presence of the Royal Family with the Queen, as Patron of the Society, being an annual visitor. Despite the presence of Royal Protection Officers Mr Wood says it is treated as a “family engagement” rather than an official Royal visit. However, that does not mean security and regular liaison with the emergency services is not essential. He says: “We will go over our plans and anything that can potentially go wrong and how we will respond to it.”

But rain and wind are factors that can't be controlled and in the week before Mr Wood says he starts “weather watching”. However, a Gathering has never been cancelled because of the Highland climate.

Tradition and community

So why does Mr Wood take on this highly pressured, voluntary role? He says: “The tradition and community is something I feel quite strongly about and if people don't step forward to do these things then that is where they tend to trail away. There is a pride that comes with it as well in terms of putting on an event that is known the world over and a pride in doing the job well.”

Scott Rider, a former English Commonwealth Games shot putter has gone on to become a star of the Highland Games circuit in the “Heavy” events, including the famous tossing of the caber.

He says: “I think Braemar is the premier games in Scotland. The venue itself is great and the crowds are probably the best you get - a lot of that is to do with the fact that the Queen is there which gives the games something extra. You are doing something which has been going on for a couple of hundred years and that's quite special as well.

Perhaps the biggest attraction away from the games is the presence of the Royal Family with the Queen, as Patron of the Society, being an annual visitor.

“It is not actually an easy games to compete at because you get a lot of overseas throwers (from North America, Australia, New Zealand and Europe) who come because they want to throw at Braemar, it is a bit of a pilgrimage. So, it can be a big field which means you might only get two throws per event which makes it hard to win.”

The Braemar Challenge Caber

Although competitors can take home hundreds of pounds in prize money, the 39-year-old PE teacher from Dartford in Kent, who was also once part of the British Olympic bobsleigh team, says he takes part in Highland Games as a hobby, often sleeping in his car as he travels around 5,000 miles a year to compete.



The wrestling competition no longer takes place.

He says: “The big event at Braemar is the caber, I think they time it for the Queen to make sure it is going on when she comes. The Braemar Challenge Caber is considered the biggest and hardest to toss in Scotland. It really depends on the day; if the ground is dry it is difficult to turn.”

The Gathering's press secretary Craig Nisbet deals with media interest from around the world with up to 100 press accreditations issued each year. He says: “Also, many Royal documentaries at some point include the Gathering and on occasion the Gathering will be featured outside Braemar such as at the opening ceremony for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and Her Majesty's birthday 90th celebrations at Windsor. These events obviously reach multi-million audiences around the world.”

Global footprint

Those attending the games have a global footprint with high demand for seats from North America and Australia, as well as Germany, France and Belgium.

The Gathering's Secretary Mr Wood says the presence of so many visitors is great for the local economy with rooms in hotels and B&Bs booked up for miles around.

He says: “There is a very international feel to it. A lot of people will book accommodation the day after the Gathering for the next year and it is sold out almost as soon as it is up for grabs. That is as far down as Kirkmichael and Kirriemuir in the south and Ballater and Aboyne to the east – it is not just Braemar which benefits from the visitors. It brings quite a bit of revenue to north Tayside, Perth and Kinross and west Aberdeenshire.”

The Braemar Royal Highland Society began in 1815 as the Braemar Wright Society to provide a fund for widows and orphans and to help the sick and superannuated members. It is still today a Friendly Society and vies with Scottish Widows for the title of the oldest surviving in Scotland.

Royal interest

Press secretary Craig Nisbet says the origins were far different from the Gathering we see now: “Its main source of income was buying up meal and grains when they were plentiful in supply and selling them at a profit when there was a poor year.”

In 1832 the Society donated £5 prize money for athletic competitions at the annual Gathering which has grown into the event we see today. Many of the Heavy competitions such as putting stones, throwing hammers and wrestling (no longer held) were forerunners of the modern Olympics.

In 1848 Queen Victoria attended the Gathering at Invercauld House and so began a Royal interest and attendance which continues to this day with the current Queen and has added greatly to international interest. Mr Nisbet says: “Obviously the involvement of Her Majesty and other members of the Royal Family is a major attraction of the event. This is especially so for foreign visitors who will not see Her Majesty involved in any public events in London at this time of the year so they head north to Deeside which provides an overall tourism boost for the area.”

The Braemar Gathering will take place on September 1st, for details see: www.braemargathering.org



Massed bands.



Braemar Gathering early 1960s - The games field before two of the open grandstands were constructed.



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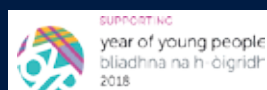
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