



the Scottish Banner



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A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 47 Number 4 NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS October 2023

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with Paul Murton

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Distributed monthly in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA. ISSN 2209-8364

Australia Post Print Approved PP:100004806

Published monthly by Scottish Banner Publications
PO Box 6220, Marrickville South, NSW, 2204, Australia

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Expiry

The Banner Says...

That's my uncle

Remembering John Cairney



by Sean Cairney

It has been a question I have been asked throughout my life, are you related to John Cairney and my reply has always proudly been "That's my uncle". John Cairney was the oldest of two boys growing up, quite happily, in the 1930s in an impoverished and now pulled-down tenement in the east end of Glasgow.

Robert Burns

Most may remember him for his association with Robert Burns, to this day many still consider John Cairney the leading exponent of Scotland's bard. He wrote and toured shows about Burns, wrote books on him and was one of the world's leading authorities of Burns. For me for some time I thought he was Robert Burns, I was of course much younger, but I did think for a time that was his job much like someone may be a doctor, chef or policeman. Few would mention John Cairney without soon mentioning Burns. I have vivid memories of him calling me up on stage to hold a haggis whilst he performed to his audience, something that was so completely embarrassing for a 12-year-old. I did however always take note of how he used his voice to command a room, from great bellowing tones to the most soft and intimate tone which had people sat on the edge of their seats to hear each softly spoken word, he was a true genius in live performance.

I recall as a boy every time he flew in from Scotland to see us (which generally involved a performance

by him both on stage or around dinner table), I was so excited, this is back in a time where you rarely received an overseas call as they were so expensive, and an international visitor was something to get excited about. I would always draw my uncle a welcome picture on my school paper, and I was always filled with excitement when he would tell me all the tales of his travels.

From working on film sets in far flung places to finishing off a script for a show touring Scotland, it all sounded so exotic to me as a child, and I was fascinated by him. For those who enjoy *the Scottish Banner* today might be also interested to know it was partly because of my uncle's performances in Canada that the seed was planted to start *the Banner*, we had tickets to sell and had to tell people! This of course was in a time of no internet and 47 years later *the Scottish Banner* still is enjoyed by readers across the world, a small part of his great legacy.

Thank you, Uncle John, for leaving the world with an outstanding lifetime of work.

That boy from Glasgow's east

Uncle John had a multi decade career in the arts. His acting resume included films such as *A Night to Remember*, *Cleopatra* and *Jason and the Argonauts*, as well as starring in the BBC 1960s show *This Man Craig*. His live performances took place all over the world and he really was a true global citizen. Uncle John penned several books, mostly on Scottish topics and well worth a read. His creative flow also was expressed through his art, many would think he was a late bloomer with paint, but he actually loved art from a young age, but fate would lead him to Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's very first acting program and art would come back into his life at a later stage.

However my uncle, that boy from Glasgow's east, was so much more. Firstly, for me, he was my uncle, whom I am half named after. Both my parents had just one sibling, both called John and I am lucky enough to be named after these two great men, as Sean is the Irish form of John. He was my father's big brother and such a very proud Glaswegian, the

city which he loved and like my father, carried with him wherever he was in the world. Uncle John was also passionate about his family, his craft, football and his spirituality. He was a true performer and anyone who even had dinner with him will know what I mean, my uncle had an incredible voice and language ability which he used to great skill.

A life well lived

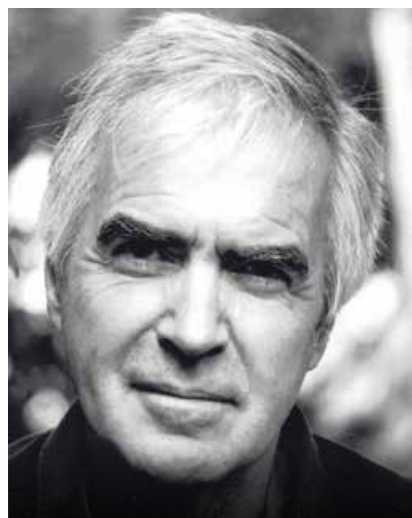
My Uncle John passed away in his beloved Glasgow last month at the age of 93. I was very fortunate to see my Uncle John a couple of times in Glasgow earlier this year. I could and would never not see him if I was in town. A few months later and the final time I spoke to him he sounded really good and told me how he still enjoyed his days in Glasgow. He was also a regular reader of the *Scottish Banner* and said what a wonderful publication it is and that I was doing a great job with it, this for me was the highest form of compliment, coming from a man who was the best wordsmith and mind our family has ever produced. He also told me his life was like a beautiful cake and he was at the stage of simply enjoying the icing of an incredible life, and a life very much well lived. Uncle John leaves behind his beloved wife Alannah, five children, nine grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

Thank you, Uncle John, for leaving the world with an outstanding lifetime of work. And as you take your final curtain call and exit the stage, I will continue to give you a standing ovation not just because of the gift you left us all with, but because quite simply... that's my uncle. 🍷

Do you have a favourite John Cairney performance or book? Did you ever see him live? Do you have any comments from the content in this month's edition? Share your story with us by email, post, social media or: #ScottishBanner, #TheBanner

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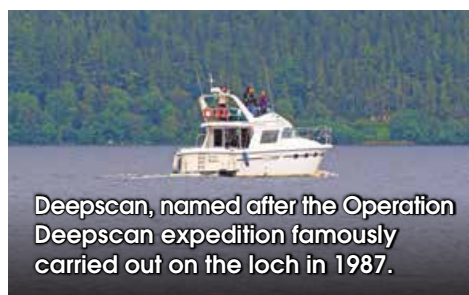
Gracing our front cover: World Champion Drum Major Paula Braiden. Photo courtesy of The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, Northern Ireland Branch.

Biggest search for Nessie in 50 years concludes with hydrophone capturing loud underwater noises and several potential sightings



Looking for Nessie.

Hundreds of volunteers and media participated in the largest surface area search of Loch Ness in 50 years in late August, with numerous potential sightings and strange noises heard from the depths of Loch Ness. Wild weather (nicknamed 'Nessie's revenge') did not put off hardy hunters who flocked along both sides of the 23-mile long loch to volunteer in the surface watch, alongside hundreds who participated online via webcams.



Deepscan, named after the Operation Deepscan expedition famously carried out on the loch in 1987.

Highlights from the weekend included:

- Four mysterious and previously unheard loud noises from the depths of the loch.
- Possible video footage of the monster with mysterious 'humps' filmed on the loch moving, before disappearing.
- An online volunteer captured a giant shadow just under the surface, moving, dipping out of sight, then returning and swimming across again.
- Multiple submissions of potential sightings via sighting form submissions including streaks in the water.

The mysterious monster

Nessie is clearly still capturing people's imagination and interest as much today as it did 90 years ago. The mysterious monster has become so popular worldwide that Continuum Attractions

(which runs award winning visitor attractions across the UK) has recently invested into the new Loch Ness Centre, giving visitors and enthusiasts the chance to take a tour and learn more about the history, view real artefacts, and see the scientific evidence. At the end of the experience guests are given the chance to debate the existence of Nessie.

Christie McLeod, who travelled to take part from Toronto, Canada, said, "I've been hunting the monster for nine years, but this is my first official hunt. I've previously hired my own boat, so this is great as it's organised by Loch Ness Exploration with support from the Loch Ness Centre. I've heard lots of stories from the locals, which all contradict each other. There are two types of people in the world, Nessie believers and non-believers, and I'm not interested in the latter. I have a spiritual connection to the Loch Ness monster and think there is a portal to another dimension in the loch."

Paul Nixon, General Manager of the Loch Ness Centre, said, "This excitement this weekend has proven that the ongoing hunt for the Loch Ness Monster is still very much alive and continues to draw and attract a global audience, from America, Canada, France, Italy, Japan and more. We all want the same thing, to see and find out what the Loch Ness monster is. We've been delighted to welcome so many people into the Loch Ness Centre for visitor centre tours and Deepscan boat trips across the weekend."



Legendary Nessie hunter Steve Fellham, Loch Ness Exploration's Alan McKenna, and author Roland Watson.

Alan McKenna, of Loch Ness Exploration, said, "I'd like to thank all the volunteers who have supported us over the weekend, both in person and online. It's been an exceptional weekend, with lots of potential sightings and huge interest from across the globe. We know the monster is elusive, so it is not surprising we don't have a concrete sighting, but we've all had lots of fun and proven the mystery lives on. As for what happens next, watch this space..."

To book your trip to The Loch Ness Centre or a cruise tour, please visit: lochness.com.



Tartan of the Month

The Clydesdale Horse 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 are courtesy of the Scottish Register of Tartans (SRT).

The design for this tartan was based on the Australian Heavy Horse tartan (SRT #10136) with changes intended to represent

the Clydesdale Horse breed and history. Its popularity as a work horse has spread worldwide and their distinctive colour of dark bay to chestnut with white markings on the face, body and legs represented in the tartan. Colours: brown and green are intended to represent agriculture; black represents the breed's role during war time pulling guns and heavy wagons; dark grey is for the area of the Clyde and light grey is for the road ways used for haulage.

This tartan was designed for those who love and support this breed and to continue the Scottish tradition of wearing tartan attire and kilts when exhibiting Clydesdales. This tartan (reference: 14008) was designed by Mr F And M Lawson/Crofters Weaving Mill and registered in August, 2023.

Illawarra
Scottish Fair
Sunday, October 15th, 2023

The Dandaloo Hotel Sports Ground
336 Kanahooka Road, Dapto
(Entry through Hotel carpark)

Gates open at 8.30 am

\$10 Adults, \$5 Children/Pensioners
Children 12 & Under Free
\$25 Family Ticket

* Pipe Band Contest - All grades incl. Juvenile, Quickstep, Mus. Selection, M S Reel, Select of Marches *

* Highland Muscle Heavy Events *

* Highland & Irish Dancing * Haggis Hurling *

* Side & Food Stalls (Scottish Food) * Children's Games *

* Massed Bands (approx 4.00 pm) *

Enquiries to Alison 0414 928 016 or James 0422 699 513

Presented by the Illawarra Pipe Band

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?

St Monans Church



St Monans Church from the harbour, exterior and interior. St Monans Church dates from 1369 and is situated in an isolated position to the west of the village on the very edge of the sea.

It is perched on a low rock, over a small valley with a burn. As seen from most directions it has the sea as a backdrop. The original graveyard surrounds the church, and a more modern cemetery stands further westwards on the upper slopes of the little hill. This contains the local war memorial.



Standing at the extreme west end of this the ruin of an earlier church can be viewed across fields, again perched on the sea edge. It is often said that St Monans is the church nearest the sea in the whole of Scotland, and this may well be the case, being only around 20 m from the edge. The church, one of the finest remaining from the Middle Ages in Scotland, was built by King David II Bruce (1329-71).

Tam Eadie
Scotland

The Beginning-Golf video

This is part of a seminar that I give to my students and anyone else that cares to watch the videos. My idea on how the game of golf began.

Video 1. How, where & when.
A PowerPoint video on "The Beginning"
<https://youtu.be/g670xn-yjZM>
Take care, keep safe and enjoy playing your golf,
Tom McCowan
Alicante, Spain

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo



Thank you for the wonderful article on this year's Edinburgh Tattoo (*Celebrating Stories The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2023, the Scottish Banner, August, 2023*). Reading this brought back so many happy memories of me attending the

Tattoo, I have been truly blessed to have gone four times over the years. The show never disappoints and is always filled with such spectacle, color and incredible music. I highly recommend anyone visiting Scotland in August to get some seats (hopefully on a dry night!) and take in an international show like no other, where of course pipe bands take a starring role. The lone piper playing across the historic city of Edinburgh is also something that really brings a tear to the eye.

I hope to get back to Scotland, and the Tattoo, in the next year or so. Until then thanks *Scottish Banner* for keeping my Scottish connection well and truly going strong.

Jen Stirling-Ricci
Trenton, New Jersey
USA

David John Fraser

Hello,
I just joined/liked your Facebook page, I hope it meets with your approval. I'm the daughter of David John Fraser, who this Facebook page was created in memory of. Not only do I want to keep my father's memory alive, but I also want to hear from any long lost relatives and I'm sure this will accomplish both.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Anna Fraser
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
Canada
www.facebook.com/davidjfrasersn

A Lament



Come lay the notes upon blades of grass which hide his mortal being...

bring to me the pibroch's pain to a soul is all consuming.

raise high the scream of man's desire to be the one immortal.....

to find that god was kind and called him through the portal.

Kit Duddy
kitspoems
Artwork
'Her Lament'
By Scottish Artist
John Trevorrow
Trevorrow Art
www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100012346999088

Morton Clan Coat of Arms

I am searching for my clans correct coat of arms. I'm a long descendent of the 13th Earl of Morton, which I believe the Morton Clan is derived from the Norman clan which emigrated to Scotland from Norway and possibly France. The coat of arms for my clan that I'm searching for has a particular shade of green and unfortunately that's the only lead I have with it. Is anyone able to help me find the correct coat of arms?

Ryan Morton
autome212@gmail.com

The World Pipe Band Championships



What an incredible event 'The World's' looks to be. Your August coverage (*Bathgate band is crowned 2023 World Pipe Band Champions*) really piqued my interest in attending this event. I absolutely love pipe bands and the power of massed bands at a Highland Games live is incredible to me. Pipe bands en masse is really something to behold, the sound, the visual and the emotion. To see so many international bands from around the world, which I could never see otherwise, is really something I have now decided to do. I was also happy to see a Scottish band win 'The World's' but of course hope to see Canada again at the top spot.

I am now making plans with my wife and possibly kids to go to the home of pipe bands.
Alex Stewart
Cambridge, Ontario
Canada

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Sent to our Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts-send us your photos or letters via social media (#ScottishBanner or #TheBanner):

Isle of Harris



The house on the hill, Isle of Harris.
Mik Coia

The Wallace Statue



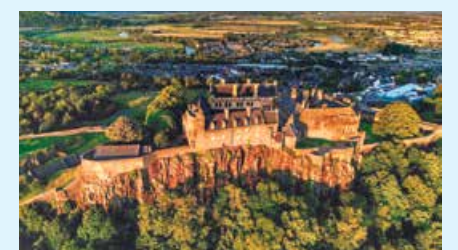
The Wallace Statue, The National Wallace Monument.
The Kilted Photographer

Ashton Lane



Walking the cobbled Ashton Lane in Glasgow's West End.
IG: eadietam

Stirling Castle



High above the mighty Stirling Castle.
Robert Gibb

Pose your questions on Scottish related topics to our knowledgeable readership who just may be able to help. Please keep letters under 300 words and we reserve the right to edit content and length. Letters can be emailed to info@scottishbanner.com or online at www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us, alternatively you may post your letters to us (items posted to the Scottish Banner cannot be returned). Please ensure you include your full contact details should you require a reply. This page belongs to our readers so please feel free to take part!

Crowds flock to finale of 2023 Cowal Gathering



World Juvenile Champion Eilidh Gammons from Helensburgh, World Junior Champion Olivia Burke from Nova Scotia and World Adult Champion Rebecca Thow from Belhelvie.

Billed as one of Scotland's best days out the finale of the 2023 Cowal Gathering lived up to its reputation. Thousands of people from across the world gathered in Dunoon for one of the world's most spectacular Highland Gatherings with competitors, entertainers and spectators joining forces to make sure it was an event to remember.

Crowds watched as over a thousand competitors fought to secure some Cowal silverware. Dancers, pipers, heavy athletes and wrestlers were joined by entertainers including cyclists, axe throwers and musicians to ensure the Gathering's crowds were wowed from early morning until the end of the day. The standard of competition was world class, with every athlete and competitor giving their all to leave the Stadium as a Cowal Gathering winner.

One of the highlights of the Gathering's final day was, as always, the Cowal Pipe Band Championship. Section and grade winners in the Cowal Pipe Band champions were:

- Novice Juvenile B – Renfrewshire Schools
- Novice Juvenile A – Kilbarchan Pipe Band
- Grade 3 – Coalburn IOR
- Grade 3 MSR – Coalburn IOR
- Grade 2 – Coalburn IOR
- The champion Drum Major was Campbell Gillies of Rothesay and District Pipe Band.

World Highland Dancing Championships

Then came the biggest Highland Dancing competition in the world – the World Championship finals - with dancers from Australia, Canada and the USA pitting their skills against the best the UK has to offer. In the end, it was Eilidh Gammons from Helensburgh who emerged victorious in the World Juvenile finals, followed by Maria Monk of Bearsden and Alice Gill of Melbourne, Australia. The trophy for best Scottish Juvenile Dancer went to Eilidh Gammons and the best Overseas Juvenile Dancer was Alice Gill from Melbourne, Australia. In the World Junior championship, Olivia Burke of Nova Scotia held off the challenge of Lily Kelman from Inverness and Lauren Abrahart of Alberta. The best Scottish Junior Dancer was Lily Kelman of Inverness, and the trophy for the best Overseas Junior Dancer went to Olivia Burke from Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada. The Adult World champion was Rebecca Thow from Belhelvie, followed by Michelle Gordon from Huntly, with Cameron Walker from Denny in third. Fiona Tolley from Ontario took home the Mary McHarg Quaich for best Overseas Adult Dancer. The cup for best Scottish Adult Dancer went to Rebecca Thow.

In the International Heavy Athletics Team competition, Team Scotland were victorious with Team Germany coming runners up. In the overall individual heavy athletics, Craig Winslow from Scotland triumphed in the men's competition, with Daniel Carlin from Scotland in second and

Martin Kuhne from Germany third. In the women's event, Mhairi Porterfield from Scotland beat off the challenge of Christina Scheffaur from Austria (2nd) and Rachel Hunter from Scotland (3rd).

Speaking on behalf of the Cowal Gathering Board Fraser McCowan said this year's event will go down as the best in recent times and thanked the people of Dunoon and Cowal for their continued support, as well as the Gathering's sponsors, "On behalf of the Board of Cowal Gathering, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this year's event. Your hard work over, not only the last months, but years has helped ensure Cowal Gathering continue to grow and develop to be an event fit for the 21st century. We've welcomed spectators not just from Argyll and Scotland, but from all corners of the UK and, of course our international visitors who have travelled many thousands of miles, just to be with us. As well as our visitors here in the Stadium I'd like to also thank the thousands of people who joined us online through our livestream. We hope you enjoyed the competitions from wherever part of the world you were watching from. To our wonderful competitors, Cowal Gathering could not be what it is without you. This year's levels of performance have been simply breathtaking. I look forward to welcoming you back to the 2024 Cowal Gathering."

A full list of the results from the 2023 Cowal Gathering can be found at: www.cowalgathering.com

A Yarn to Spin – A public call for recollections



A mill worker weaving on a loom.

Did you work in Dundee's jute industry? If so, Verdant Works want to hear from you. Verdant Works in the Blackness area is one of the best-kept secrets in Dundee. The museum tells the story of Jute in Dundee and how this practical fabric was the fabric of the city for so long. The team at Verdant Works are delighted to announce a new oral history project: A Yarn to Spin.

The team at Verdant Works want to hear from those who worked in the industry and record their oral histories. These stories will help bring to life the first of the three "J's" Courier Country is known for. The team hope to hear from the jute workers of Dundee to preserve these stories through a series of articles, poetry, and song exploring different elements of the industry. These will be brought together under the title 'A Yarn to Spin'.

Dundee's jute industry

Every story helps us to learn more about the jute industry in Dundee, working life in the industry and the lives of those who were shaped by jute in the second half of the 20th century.

Mel Ruth Oakley, Collections Curator at the museum, says, "I am really excited to hear the stories of anyone who worked in the industry. It is an absolute pleasure to listen to the stories of mill workers. What was once every day is at risk of being lost to time. The aim of this project is to avoid that. It is always very special to hear from someone who isn't sure they have anything to tell me; it is usually these individuals who have the most interesting stories and can bring to life what it was like working in Dundee's jute industry."

If you worked in the Jute industry, contact the team at collections@dundeheritage.co.uk, 01382 236519 or Verdant Works, West Hendersons Wynd, Dundee, DD1 5BT. More information about Verdant Works can be found at www.verdantworks.co.uk.

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SCOTSPEAK

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

"This is an exciting moment for the new Perth Museum, which promises to be a jewel in the crown of Scotland's must-see attractions. I very much look forward to celebrating the opening of the museum and installation of the Stone of Scone in its new home when the museum opens to the public next year."

UK Government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord said as a major milestone in the development of Perth Museum took place as independent charity Culture Perth and Kinross were handed the keys to the building by the Council. Opening in 2024 Perth Museum will be the new home of the Stone of Destiny, also known as the Stone of Scone. Used for centuries to crown Scottish Kings and still used for Coronations, most recently for the Coronation of King Charles III in May, the Stone of Destiny will be free for everyone to visit. As well as being the new home of the Stone of Destiny, Perth Museum will explore the part the city and wider area has played in shaping Scotland's ancient roots and the creation of modern Scotland.

"These positive findings recognise the hard work carried out by our local care teams, who are incredibly proud of the work they do. Despite the considerable challenges faced across the health and social care system, our hard working and dedicated staff continue to achieve high standards of care. We are pleased that the Care Inspectorate has recognised the achievements and continued effort of teams across Falkirk."

Gail Woodcock, Head of Integration, Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership said as Falkirk has been named as the best place to grow old in Scotland if you need residential care, following analysis of Care Inspectorate, Scotland's care watchdog. Homes for the elderly in the town scored an average of 4.35 out of 6 in all categories reviewed by the Care Inspectorate higher than any other council area.



"I'm really quite excited about this and can't wait to see the spectacular Red Arrows in Stirling for the first time in nearly a decade. The iconic jets flying over our iconic Wallace Monument on its birthday weekend will make for some spectacular pictures. Given the speed the aircraft fly, this will be a quick but loud visit, so please plan your vantage point carefully and share your pictures widely – and keep your fingers crossed for good weather."

Stirling Council leader, Cllr Chris Kane said ahead of the Red Arrows (The Royal Air Force Aerobatic team) marking the 154th birthday of the National Wallace Monument with a dramatic flypast over Stirling. It was the first time the fabled Red Arrows flew over Stirling since Armed Forces Day in 2014 and the first time they have saluted the National Wallace Monument, which opened its doors to visitors on 11 September, 1869.



"I am very happy to be part of this project. Ginkgo Trees are very common in Japan. They are very hardy trees, but we weren't sure if the seeds would germinate relieved when the seedlings appeared. Hopefully, they will grow to be tall and strong enough to be planted out in Kelvingrove Park where the trees could live for at least 100 years and remind everyone of the importance of peace. I hope no one ever forgets what happened at Hiroshima."

Glasgow City Council Botanic Gardens staff member Hiro Shimai, from Japan, said that seeds from a tree which survived the atomic bomb in Hiroshima are being grown in Glasgow. Known as the survivor tree, it still grows in Hiroshima's famous Shukkeien Garden. The tiny saplings currently stand between 15 and 20 centimetres tall, and when bigger and sturdy enough, they will be planted out in Glasgow parks.



"We are also the effective custodians of the town centre and we want a successful East Kilbride as part of a successful South Lanarkshire. Without strategic intervention the town centre will continue to decline and fall further behind its neighbours. We therefore need to show ambition in order to realise the town's potential."

David Booth, executive director of community and enterprise at South Lanarkshire Council, said a bold vision has been unveiled for Scotland's first and biggest new town. The masterplan for East Kilbride town centre envisages radical changes, creating a new heart for the town with a mix of urban living, retail and civic areas. The masterplan will generate employment through short-term construction jobs and longer-term regeneration through town centre employment in retail and leisure, business rates, as well as more local spend as people return to shop and take part in other activities in East Kilbride.

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo -in cinemas October 14th-Reader giveaway



The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is returning to cinemas with its brand new 2023 show, a musical journey entitled 'Stories'. Set against the spectacular backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, the Tattoo Arena will play host to impressive cultural showcases including participants from Norway, USA, Australia, Trinidad and

Tobago and Switzerland. The Scottish Banner is pleased to offer 5 lucky readers a chance to watch the Tattoo on the big screen on Saturday, October 14th. Courtesy of the Cinema Live we have 5 double passes available, you can find your nearest cinema at: www.cinemalive.com/event/remt2023

To enter simply email: competitions@scottishbanner.com, enter via our website or post (sorry no telephone entries) our Sydney office, our full contacts can be found on page 2. Please ensure you include your full postal address and email/phone details. Winners will be notified directly, good luck!

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SCOTWORD

Here is a wee Scottish crossword for you to try!
If you're stuck, answers can be found on page 22.

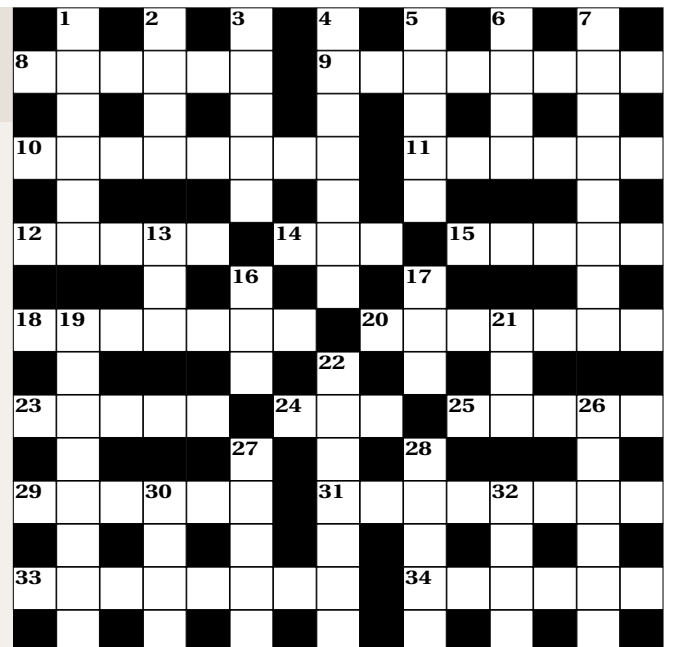
CLUES ACROSS

- 8) Bonnet accessory (6).
- 9) Often called the mayflower (8).
- 10 & 11 Across) The North-east admin area (8, 0).
- 11) See 10 Across.
- 12) Scots serving plate (5).
- 14) He'll know Scots! (3).
- 15) Scottish lakes (5).
- 18) Scots get-together (7).
- 20) Argyll peninsula (7).
- 23) Town near Elgin (5).
- 24) Of the same name (3).

- 25) Staggers through the dances (5).
- 29) The "bridle" town (6).
- 31) A Scots commotion (8).
- 33) Theatrical pose (8).
- 34) Rangers rivals (6).

CLUES DOWN

- 1) Town near mouth of River Findhorn (6).
- 2) Whisky measure (4).
- 3) Largest Outer Hebridean island (5).
- 4) Part of the pipes (7).
- 5) A Highland dancer needs it! (5).
- 6) Scots name for Hugh (4).
- 7) Village at head of Loch Long (8).
- 13) Old Scots measure (3).
- 16) Bustling activity (3).
- 17) Another whisky measure (3).
- 19) Border fishing town (8).
- 21) Driving aid (3).
- 22) Highland hose accessories (7).
- 26) Town near Glenrothes (6).
- 27) Freshwater fish (5).
- 28) An amazing lass! (5).
- 30) Glasgow's annual summer holiday (4).
- 32) It's capital is Tobermory (4).



The Braemar Royal Highland Gathering

Images courtesy of the Braemar Gathering Annual.



The 2023 Braemar Royal Highland Gathering began with a mixture of emotions last month as the President of the Braemar Royal Highland Society, Peter Fraser, opened the event while paying tribute to members who has passed during the previous year including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Patron of the Society for some seven decades and ardent supporter of the event. The morning saw many of the local events in dancing, athletics and heavy contests watched by crowds in rapidly filling stand as the Princess Royal and Duke of Fife Memorial Park basked in glorious sunshine. The stroke of noon saw the first of the massed pipe band displays enter the arena under the new Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Archway officially opened by King Charles, then the Duke of Rothesay, in his mother's absence from the 2022 Gathering.

By mid-afternoon, the packed stands were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Royal Party and there were cheers at the Royal courtage drove into the arena

stopping at the Royal Pavilion where King Charles, Queen Camilla, Princess Anne the Princess Royal and her husband Vice Admiral Timothy Laurence were greeted by the lord lieutenant of Aberdeenshire, the President and vice patrons of the Braemar Royal Highland Society. Commentator Dr Robert Lovie led the crowd in singing *God Save The King* before the Royal Party took their seats and Dr Lovie gave the traditional welcome address in which he noted the King's attendance at the Gathering began when he was merely six years old. He reminisced about years gone by, hailing the "heartfelt and enthusiastic" support the games have been graced with by Their Majesties as the usual hubbub of voices descended into a hush as he paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II.

After an emotional pause, he said: "The past 12 months have been momentous in so many ways and generated for us all such mixture of emotions. It was only a year ago that you very kindly cut the heather rope to open the Platinum Jubilee archway on

behalf of Her Majesty the Queen. In the immediate days that followed that happy occasion, we were then all so saddened by the loss of Queen Elizabeth who had been such a great supporter of these Highland Games throughout her life."

Close and enduring connection

Dr Lovie said they felt fortunate to have such a "close and enduring" connection with The King, adding his coronation kindled "great excitement and pride". Addressing King Charles and Queen Camilla, Mr Lovie added: "In a part of Scotland that you love so dearly, I – on behalf of everyone here – wish both Your Majesties a long, happy and glorious reign." His Majesty wore a kilt in the newly created King Charles III tartan, specially designed as a symbol of his strong support to the traditional Scottish outfit.

The unique design is based on the Balmoral tartan sett, which dates from around 1850 and continues to be worn by members of The Royal Family today.



The hush around the park during Dr Lovie's address then turned to loud cheers as the massed pipe bands once again entered the arena and dancers, athletes and tug-o'-war teams once again took centre stage. Aside from Dr Lovie's speech, the Braemar Gathering 2023 programme also had a page remembering The Queen. Organisers thanked the late monarch for being such an "enthusiastic supporter of the event" since she first attended at the age of seven with her grandparents. They added: "On special occasions, she was known to leave the 'comfort' of the pavilion to chat with officials and competitors in the games arena. Her enthusiasm and delight at being a part of the gathering was often obvious on the front page of Sunday newspapers following the event."



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HORORATA DOMAIN CANTERBURY

Fall into Scotland's great outdoors this autumn



A grey seal basks on the shore.

Scotland's landscapes are home to an incredible array of wildlife that can be found in all nooks, crannies and corners of the country. This autumn, there is no better time to start planning a feel-good break in the great outdoors. For those looking for a holiday where it is possible to bask in glorious autumnal colours, go animal-spotting, and experience all that nature has to offer, Scotland is the perfect place.

Autumn nights draw in

Northern Lights and stargazing-Scotland has some of the largest expanses of dark sky in Europe and while the country is famous for its beauty during day, the twilight hours create a new air of mystery. The autumn and winter months in Scotland offer the perfect conditions to watch the night sky so there is no better time to enjoy a stargazing holiday. Visitors might be lucky enough to see the Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis (or 'Mirrie Dancers' as they are known in Scotland). Some options for a break include:

Pennan, Aberdeenshire-Pennan is a tiny seaside village located by a stunning backdrop of Aberdeenshire cliffs (famous for being where a lot of the 1983 film *Local Hero* was made). When the days get shorter, and the nights get darker - that's when the magic happens. Millions of lights seem to dance across the sky and the stars illuminate the night in an array of colour.

Kirkcudbright, Dumfries and Galloway-Not only Britain's forest largest park, Galloway Forest Park was also the UK's first Dark Sky Park. Stretching across the southwest of Scotland, it is home to glens, lochs, hills and only a few buildings which means it has very little light pollution. On clear nights it is possible to observe thousands of stars, making it one of the best places to stargaze in Europe. In nearby Kirkcudbright (which is also home to the Dark Sky Planetarium), head into Galloway Forest Park to see the skies.



The Northern Lights.

North Uist, Outer Hebrides-With little light pollution, the Outer Hebrides is one of the best places to catch the Northern Lights. With the right weather conditions, each island can provide a mesmerising dancing display of the Aurora Borealis at the right time. Many astronomical sights can be seen through the naked eye including the Orion Nebula, the Milky Way and the Great Andromeda galaxy. During the winter it gets dark late afternoon, giving visitors a great opportunity to not only watch out for the Northern Lights but just look up and stargaze. Each year in February/March, there is a Dark Skies Festival which features theatre, live music, film, visual art, food, astronomy talks, and stargazing.

Orkney & Shetland-Looking for a real adventure? A stay in the northernmost regions of the British Isles to possibly witness the Aurora Borealis will feel like a world away. Stay at the Keeper's Cottage at Sumburgh Lighthouse. The Lighthouse is the oldest in Shetland, and perhaps the most well-known. Rising above the precipitous Sumburgh Head cliffs at the southernmost point of mainland Shetland, the Lighthouse is visible from land and sea for miles around. There's no doubt that Orkney is one of the best places in the UK to try and catch a glimpse of them, with low levels of light pollution and unobstructed views.

'Leaf-peeping'

Scotland is quite a special place to visit in the autumn as the beautiful reds and oranges of the season appear. 'Leaf-peeping' has become a trend of the last few years, with people travelling to destinations only to see the fall foliage. Scotland should be at the top of the list for leaf-peepers. Places to see include:

- The Hermitage, Dunkeld
- Roslin Glen, Midlothian
- Lochgilphead, Argyll & Bute
- Glenmore Forest, Cairngorms
- Crathes Castle, Aberdeenshire
- Binning Wood, East Lothian
- Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve, Lanarkshire

Wildlife spotting

Red Squirrels-Best spotted in the winter months of December - January when their vibrant reddish coats will stand out against the snow. Much smaller than their grey cousins, the fluffy red squirrel is an elusive addition to Scotland's forests and woodlands. The UK has around 160,000 red squirrels, and approximately 75% of



Curious locals.

them live in Scotland's woodlands, parks and gardens. To find these beautiful little mammals, visitors can keep an eye out for their red coat during a walk in Britain's largest forest park, Galloway Forest Park. Sightings are also common when following the Devilla Forest Red Squirrel Trail, as the Scots Pine trees are a perfect habitat for red squirrels. The Scottish Wildlife Trust is working with NatureScot, Scottish Forestry, RSPB Scotland, Scottish Land & Estates and the Red Squirrel Survival Trust to protect these adorable creatures by asking people to report sightings.

Red Deer-Red deer are best spotted during the autumn months of September - November. One of the most iconic animals associated with Scotland, the red deer is the UK's largest land mammal and can be spotted in almost every region in the country. These stunning animals can be seen in locations including the Isle of Arran, Isle of Jura, Lochaber, Torridon, Cairngorms National Park, and Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. Visitors can stop by Aberfeldy, Perthshire and visit the Red Deer Centre to get up close and personal with these large mammals and learn about their

unique traits. If after a more Christmas vibe, did you know the Cairngorms National Park is home to Britain's only free-ranging herd of reindeer?

Seals-Seals are best spotted during the autumn months of September - November but can also be spotted during the summer. Seals are very common inhabitants off the coastlines of Scotland. Visitors might be lucky enough in the autumn months to spot fluffy grey seal pups too. These adorable creatures can be spotted all across Scotland, but in particular in the Moray Firth, Firth of Tay, Ythan Estuary, and on the Isle of May. Basking Shark Scotland runs Seal and Lagoon tours throughout the year from Oban, Tobermory, or Isle of Mull, where visitors can swim in crystal clear water alongside seals. Basking Shark Scotland also runs various other tours to allow visitors the chance to enjoy the special wildlife in Scotland, including basking shark tours (of course!), snorkelling experiences, scuba diving trips, and more.

For more holiday inspiration and ideas, visit www.visitscotland.com



Pennan. Photo: Visit Aberdeenshire.



This Fife fishing port is known locally as Ainster. Photo: VisitScotland.

How well do you know Scotland? To test your knowledge we have assembled ten fun questions on its geography, history and culture—but if you get stumped, the solutions can be found underneath. Good luck!

- 1) Where in Scotland would you find an angle-nook?
- 2) When was the first steamship built on the Clyde? a) 1810, b) 1840 or c) 1880?
- 3) Which is farthest north — Glasgow or Edinburgh?
- 4) Stranraer, Canada, is named after Stranraer, Scotland — true or false?
- 5) Which Fife fishing port is known locally as Ainster?
- 6) What is the correct spelling — Dumbarton or Dunbarton?
- 7) Why is the Murray's clan tartan so significant?
- 8) Scot Dick McTaggart won a gold medal in the 1956 Olympic Games — in which sport?

- 9) The Scottish island of Kerrera lies opposite which mainland Argyll port and holiday resort?
- 10) Which Scots parish gave its name to a chemical element?

Answers

- 1) In an old house, it's a seat by a fireplace.
- 2) a) 1810.
- 3) Edinburgh.
- 4) True.
- 5) Anstruther.
- 6) The town is Dumbarton, which lies in Dunbartonshire.
- 7) It was the first named clan tartan in 1618.
- 8) Boxing.
- 9) Oban.
- 10) Strontian, in Argyll, where strontium was first found.

IN SCOTLAND TODAY

The Burrell Collection wins Museum of the Year 2023



The Burrell Collection was announced as Art Fund Museum of the Year 2023 at a ceremony at the British Museum in London and on the BBC. Duncan Dornan, Head of Museums and Collections for Glasgow Life, was presented with the £120,000 prize – the largest museum prize in the world – by the artist Sir Grayson Perry at a ceremony at the British Museum, London. The Burrell Collection in Pollok Country Park, Glasgow, houses the 9,000-object collection of Sir William and Constance Burrell. Managed by the charity Glasgow Life, it was officially reopened by King Charles in October 2022 following a major refurbishment and redisplay, which aimed to celebrate diversity through the museum's rich and varied collection and create the most accessible, inclusive and sustainable fine and decorative arts museum in the world.

Jenny Waldman, Art Fund director and chair of the judges for Art Fund Museum of the Year, said: "The Burrell Collection is extraordinary – a world-class collection displayed in an inspirational building, in harmony with the surrounding landscape of Pollok Country Park. Reopened in 2022, the sensitive renovation and collection redisplay invite exploration and delight, with innovative digital displays offering new ways of understanding the art and objects in the museum's light, welcoming spaces. All this was achieved with a strong shared purpose and with the involvement of local community groups in Glasgow. Huge congratulations to the talented team at the Burrell Collection for winning Art Fund Museum of the Year 2023 and to those who invest in supporting its important work. Thanks to them this museum is truly for everyone to enjoy." The Burrell Collection, located in Glasgow's Pollok Country Park, welcomed over 500,000 visitors in the year after its reopening and contributed an economic impact of £20m for Glasgow in its first six months. The redisplay was co-curated with a wide range of community groups to ensure the museum showcases diverse and inclusive perspectives, and the Burrell team also partnered with local schools and a range of diverse community groups to amplify their voices. Over 100 pieces of unique digital interpretation from immersive experiences to interactive games give context and meaning to the collection on a scale and to a quality previously unseen with decorative and fine art collections.

Significant progress on planning for interisland connectivity in Shetland



Shetland Islands Council's 'Shetland Short Crossings Project', aimed at connecting all main islands by either a tunnel or a new ferry, is now at an advanced planning stage. The Council has lobbied both the UK and Scottish Governments on the issue, sharing the document 'Shetland Forward' to support its aspirations on short crossings, and on maximising benefits from renewable energy projects. A meeting has now been secured with Alister Jack, MP, the Secretary of State for Scotland, to discuss interisland connectivity, and discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Government on the issue.

Shetland's inter-island ferry service is the social and economic backbone of the islands, with a fleet of 12 vessels sailing around 70,000 times a year to nine islands, carrying roughly 750,000 passengers. However, the fleet is, on average, over 30 years old - almost six years older than the average Caledonian MacBrayne vessel. A number of these vessels are already operating beyond their intended life, and are a major contributor to the islands' carbon emissions. The Shetland Short Crossings Project has been established as an umbrella to combine the advanced work being done on planning the replacement of every ferry with either a new vessel or a tunnel. There are currently four tunnels being planned - from the mainland to Yell; Yell to Unst; the mainland to Whalsay; and to Bressay. Various funding options are being scoped - liaison is ongoing with the UK Government to assist with the tunnels to the north isles which would connect the mainland with the SaxaVord Spaceport, and discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Government to assist with the tunnels on the east side. The Council's Political Leader, Cllr Emma Macdonald: "The importance of the interisland transport network to life in Shetland cannot be overestimated. It is the very definition of a lifeline service, and is the social and economic backbone of the islands. However, there are a handful of vessels which are already operating past their intended lifespan. If they are not replaced now, either by tunnels or new ferries, there is a material risk to lifeline services to Shetland's islands. We understand that any project to replace ageing ferries with new vessels, or with tunnels, cannot be expected to be solely the responsibility of central government. Just as our islands' incredible energy resources should be a shared benefit

between Shetland, Scotland and the UK, the transportation between those islands should be a shared cost. This is the fairness which lies at the centre of our partnership; Shetland, Scotland and the UK sharing costs, and sharing benefits. I have written to both First Minister Humza Yousaf MSP, and Alister Jack MP, the Secretary of State for Scotland, asking for a summit to discuss transport connectivity - as well as digital connectivity and community benefit from renewable energy – and I'm pleased to confirm Mr. Jack has agreed to meet with me on those issues. Our discussions continue with the Scottish Government and I look forward to hearing from them in due course."

His Majesty debuts the King Charles III Tartan



Image courtesy of the Braemar Gathering Annual.

His Majesty The King wore a kilt in the newly created King Charles III tartan while attending the Braemar Gathering on Saturday 2nd September. The green, blue and red tartan was designed by The Scottish Tartans Authority earlier this year to mark the occasion of the Coronation and in recognition of His Majesty's strong support in preserving the culture and traditions of Highland Dress and Scottish Tartans. The unique design presented to His Majesty, is based on the Balmoral tartan sett which dates from c.1850 and continues to be worn by The King and members of The Royal Family today. The new tartan has been officially registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans which is administered by the National Records of Scotland. The cloth, woven in 100% Scottish wool by Lochcarron of Scotland in Selkirk, includes a central triple stripe motif (one broad and two narrow) which is a feature of Royal tartans previously worn by His Majesty including the Duke of Rothesay, Duke of Rothesay Hunting and Lord of the Isles Hunting tartans. The colours have been matched to the natural dyes of 18th century tartan specimens in the collection of The Scottish Tartans Authority. John McLeish, Chair of The Scottish Tartans Authority, said: "Our iconic national cloth has a distinct style and evokes deep feelings of belonging, making it the best-known and best-loved fabric in the world. The King is an ambassador for tartan, Highland Dress, and the traditions of the Highlands. We are honoured that His Majesty has agreed that a new tartan should be created in his name. The King Charles III tartan now takes its place in the history books. It was a great privilege to be at Braemar today to witness His Majesty wearing the tartan for the first time"

Brave New Spirits application for new Campbeltown distillery approved



The Glasgow-based independent whisky bottler and blender Brave New Spirits have had their final planning application to Argyll & Bute council for a new single malt whisky distillery at the former RAF Machrihanish airbase in Campbeltown approved. The Witchburn Distillery, which will be located between Campbeltown Airport and Machrihanish Village, will use traditional distilling craftsmanship to produce unpeated, lightly peated and heavily peated malts. The new Net Zero carbon production distillery - which will produce 2 million litres of alcohol per year, will be powered by 100% green renewable energy sources and the latest in heat and energy recovery systems, making Witchburn one of the most environmentally friendly distilleries in Scotland. The distillery is planning to run 24/7, to ensure it keeps reusing as much heat and energy as possible. Witchburn takes its name from the word Witch: originally meaning folk healers, mostly 'wise women' using herbs and the power of imagination. Previously amongst the most respected people in village life. Burn: coming from the Scots Gaelic for a naturally occurring freshwater stream or very small river that flows into a larger river. Witchburn, which plans to create around 30 permanent new jobs in production, warehousing and distribution also plans to open a visitors' centre in the next few years.

Commenting on the news, joint owners of Brave New Spirits and the new Witchburn Distillery, Adam Hochul and Alexander Springensguth, said: "We are looking forward to becoming part of the community. Contributing to the already worldwide reputation of Campbeltown whisky. We could not find a better location to build our first still house. The distillery is a great addition to our existing portfolio of internationally recognized brands of Scotch whisky, but also an opportunity to give back to the outstanding community of Scottish whisky distillers. The whole design aims to produce a typical, complex and full-bodied Campbeltown malt. Our aim is to recreate a whisky like it has been produced many decades ago." Production at Witchburn Distillery will commence in the last quarter of 2024.

Kryal Castle event a spectacular success



Jousting at the Highland Spectacular.

On 19-20 August 2023, Clans gathered at a misty Kryal Castle, Ballarat to the haunting sound of a lone piper calling all to gather within its mighty walls. The call was so strong that around 4,500 people attended over the weekend and enjoyed the event, an outstanding success for an inaugural event. A sizeable proportion of those attending were from the large Scots diaspora residing near Ballarat and in the Central Highlands region of Victoria.

On both days the event was opened by the burly lads and lasses from Highland Muscle, who kept the crowd entertained with feats of strength including caber tossing, hammer throw and other exhibitions of superhuman strength.

This was followed on the Saturday by the official opening of the event by our Chief of the Day, Simon Abney-Hastings, the 15th Earl of Loudoun. Mayor of Ballarat Cr Des Hudson OAM also gave a rousing speech in support of the event. After the opening speeches, the packed arena was filled with the stirring sound of the massed pipes and drums. The massed bands included members from Ballarat Pipe Band, Golden City Pipe Band, Geelong RSL Pipe Band and Ballarat Grammar Pipe Band.

The castle walls were filled with lots of attractions

A very popular main arena performance was the Highland Dancing by the Victorian Scottish Union Highland Dancing with performers from Geelong Scottish Dance. The wee'uns stole everyone's heart with their amazing dancing. One of the unique aspects of the event were highly entertaining historical displays including, "Who is the real William Wallace?" with the crowd regaled by a hilarious blue wood covered imposter and the real 13th century knight! Following, was a joust in tribute to the wedding tournament of James the Second of Scotland and his marriage to Mary of Guelders in 1449. Many lances were broken and the crowd was mightily educated and entertained.

The castle walls were filled with lots of other attractions including Highland ponies, Highland cows and the magnificent Scottish Deerhounds and lots of fabulous vendors selling Scottish food and wares. Clans were represented by

tents including: Fraser, Sinclair, Donald, MacDonald of Yarraville, Edmonstone, MacPherson, MacKinnon and MacNicol with Chief John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac in attendance. As the dusk drew in, the audience enjoyed the individual band performances from all band participating in the massed bands performance. As evening fell the event was brought to a close, with the lone piper again scaling the parapets of castle and filling the air with the haunting sounds of the bagpipes which was signal for all the happy visitors to return home. As part of the action packed program, there were two Highland themed feasts held with haggis and delicious Scottish food served and a whisky tasting narrated by Kinglake Distillery. The hungry attendees were royally entertained by Auld Alliance, a two-piece band playing stirring Scots classics who also called a few enthusiastic patrons up to dance. By any measure the event was a huge success and will be return again next year.



Chief of Clan MacNicol, John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac with Andrew MacKinnon Australian Commissioner of the Clan MacKinnon Society and Artistic Director for the Kryal Castle Highland Spectacular and Malcolm Nicolson, Chieftain of Clan MacNicol and Lieutenant to the Chief.

The call has already gone for Clans to gather at Kryal Castle, Ballarat on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 of August 2024 for another Highland Spectacular. Tickets are on sale now at <https://checkout.roller.app/kryalcastle/products/highlanderspectacular?date=20240817#/> sessions. Feast tickets are also available.



Highland dancers.



Clan deerhound.

THE 2024 SCOTTISH CALENDAR RANGE

Enjoy these great Scottish calendars, a gift for loved ones or yourself! Titles can sell out before Christmas so please order early.

Scottish Maps Calendar 2024



This calendar features beautiful maps of Scotland. From the early representations of Scotland in the second century AD, through the first printed maps of the 16th century and the achievement of the Ordnance Survey in the 1920s and 1930s to the most recent satellite imagery. **\$25.00 plus \$13.50 postage.**

Hebridean Calendar 2024



Features distinctive full-colour paintings of the natural beauty of the Hebrides throughout the seasons. Mairi Hedderwick's drawings capture the unique character and diversity of Hebridean land and seascapes, from wind-swept moors and dramatic cliffs to rolling hills and secluded woods. **\$25.00 plus \$13.50 postage.**

Majestic Scotland Calendar 2024



Featuring Highland coos, castles, the Kelpies, lochs & much more. Enjoy a stunning Scottish view every month! Beautiful colours and practical calendar, lots of room for notes on 250 GSM paper, A4 wire bound, opening to A3. **\$19.95 plus \$6.00 postage (for up to 2 calendars).**

Highland Coos Calendar 2024



Why not grab yourself this beautiful Highland Coo calendar to hang on your wall all year round? This calendar features some gorgeous hairy coos from Scotland. Beautiful colours and practical calendar, lots of room for notes on 250 GSM paper, A4 wire bound, opening to A3. **\$19.95 plus \$6.00 postage (for up to 2 calendars).**

Kilty Pleasures 2024 16-month Calendar



Stock due by October, pre-order now available! Indulge in a little kilty pleasure with these handsome Highland hunks! Each month features a different luscious lad showing off his finely sculpted physique, and his favourite tartan, of course. Paired with tongue-in-cheek sayings about men in kilts, if these images don't get your heart racing, you may want to check your pulse! Spend the year with these hunky men and find yourself dreaming of Kilty Pleasures. **\$25.00 plus \$13.50 postage.

Outlander 2024 16-month Wall Calendar



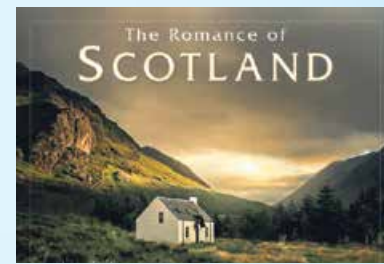
Stock due by October, pre-order now available! Follow Jamie and Claire as they fight for their family and home amidst the birth of America and the Revolutionary War. Spend the year with your favourite stars from *Outlander* — an alchemy of romance, time travel, and historical drama! **\$25.00 plus \$13.50 postage.

Outlander 2024 Boxed Daily Calendar



Stock due by October, pre-order now available! The *Outlander* series has become a phenomenon, loved by fans around the world. This daily calendar is filled with gorgeous photos and trivia from all six seasons. Perfect for any fan! **\$25.00 plus \$11.00 postage.

The Romance of Scotland 2024 16-Month Wall Calendar



Stock due by October, pre-order now available! Scotland is a magical place that tops the bucket list for so many travellers. Even if you've never been there, images of untamed landscapes and rugged beauty come to mind. This calendar showcases the beauty of Scotland in gorgeous full-colour photography which captures the breathtaking enchantment that is the very essence of Scotland. **\$25.00 plus \$13.50 postage.

Order direct from the Scottish Banner, post orders: PO Box, 6202, Marrickville South, NSW, 2204 Telephone orders: 02 9559 6348, Email: info@scottishbanner.com
Order online at: www.scottishbanner.com/product-category/calendars Payment can be made by cheque, money order, Visa, Mastercard, PayPal or EFT.

Drum Major Paula Braiden

A force to be reckoned with

The Scottish Banner speaks to Paula Braiden, Senior Drum Major and founder of The Force.



Paula leading the bands on parade.

Paula Braiden is the founder and visionary of The Force, Display Team of Champion Drum Majors. Born and raised in Northern Ireland, Paula is one of the most distinguished Drum Majors and instructors in the World.

Paula, you have a family history in pipe bands and took an interest in Drum Majoring at a very young age. Can you tell us more and how growing up in your family paved the way for you to make a life in the pipe band movement?

PB: My brother Darrell was a drummer and when my mother Eva and father William were young they were in a pipe band, so it was a very natural progression for us as a family to enter that kind of hobby. We were all very musical, so it was a guided way forward for us. When my brother became a drummer, he would head off for competitions and I would be left with my granny, who I got on with very well, and thought to myself there is something I must do to also get to these competitions. I always loved watching the Drum Majors and I wanted to give that a go. The Pipe Major at the time said I was very talented, and my arms were very flexible in the movements, so I got my very first Mace at aged seven. I used to parade up and down when the Drum Majors were doing their performances, even though I had no notion of what to

do, I pretended I did. The audience would have seen this wee kid that would have been so excited and enthusiastic about Drum Majoring. I then joined Alastair Patterson's Drum Major class and then later was taught by one of the top Drum Majors at that time in Alan McBride, who had approached my parents and told them I had great potential and offered to teach me on a one-to-one basis. I worked hard and people on the circuit began to know who I was at a very young age.

For those that do not actually know, can you tell us what exactly the role of a Drum Major is?

PB: The role of a Drum Major is essentially the person in command of the band, they would be in charge of marching discipline, giving commands such as where they march off and where the band goes. They will also often name the tunes a band will play. In a military Drum Major role, they are the highest rank in the band, other than the Pipe Major, and work like the conductor of the band. They will give their command and move their Mace

to the rhythm of the music, and even command the tempo of how the band plays the tune. Drum Majors really do play an important role, whilst they do not play an instrument, they do hold the rhythm to what is being played. So, the movement of the Mace is what ties the musicality of the performance. A Drum Major's movements are not to be looked at just from a visual and flamboyant perspective, they are there to keep the band musically correct and in time. A highly functioning Drum Major will be able to keep the band together, even though half of them is at the very back. For example, I am quite small, so my Mace must be high enough in the air for those at the back to see my movements, but I do have a loud voice so there is no fear that those at the back of the band don't hear that.

Paula you have won multiple World Championship titles as well as Scottish, British, Irish and European titles. How has competing amongst some of the best in the world shaped your passion and is there a title you are most proud of?

PB: Growing up I was taught by the best and had every best possible opportunity to succeed. For me starting at the age of seven through to my first World title at the age of fourteen, that was my steppingstone to making it. I was very young and around many top senior Drum Majors and could not wait to be that person.

A Drum Major's movements are not to be looked at just to be flamboyant, they are there to keep the band musically correct.

Because my first World title was at fourteen it was phenomenal for me, I then went on for two seasons undefeated in every championship and local contest and by the age of 18 I had a total of four World Championship titles. At that young age it was a lot of pressure, though I did not feel it at the time. The win that stands out the most for me was when I won the senior World title in 2012, prior to that for five years running I placed second at the World Championships (to a different winner every time). By then I was competing as an adult in a senior grade and all I wanted was a senior title. In 2012 I really dug deep and put in my best performance possible. Prior to that my last World title was 2001 so that eleven-year period was probably the toughest time in my career.



The precision of The Force.

So, the 2012 win was the most memorable for me because I remember how high I jumped and the tears coming, and though I tried to remain professional, the tears kept coming. When I collected my trophy even the officials were crying as they were all overwhelmed at the fact, I had finally done it. It really was the most triumphant I have ever felt with a win.

Being a female Drum Major on the international circuit surely must break some glass ceilings. How important has it been for you to be recognised in quite a male dominated network and what are your hopes for young girls coming up in the pipe band movement around the world?

PB: If I look back at the young girl I was, watching those senior Drum Majors there was probably only ever one female. So, my aim in my head was to be that one female as I grew up and be an example to future generations. For me being a female, it used to be predominately a male that has held the role, I am quite fortunate to have been so successful and the opportunity to lead massed pipes and drums. Leading a massed band onto a tattoo arena I really have to use my voice and you can hear the audiences surprise and cheers when they hear a female leading them. That inspires me more to hear that excitement, that a woman is leading the bands and the bands make me feel very welcome.

Over time I was invited to do an event in Switzerland and eventually a tour of Germany, at the time I did not understand the importance of being a woman in that position. I was so proud to lead the bands and that my younger self was doing what she had dreamed of. For me its about working hard, being patient and knowing what you want out of your passion. I am very passionate about what I do and everything I do I do to the highest of standard. For any young girl that wants to Drum Major competitively know that you have the talent and ability by putting in the hard work. It is now so accepted to be in that position and people get excited to see a female march out a huge band and give those commands, it really does get a huge amount of respect. Putting in that hard work can get you to a level where you are full of confidence to lead a band and perform in front of thousands of people. I have also taught several female champions who have gone on to win titles so there are definitely females coming up in the ranks behind me.



You have been a Drum Major teacher for over 20 years and helped produce five World Champion Drum Majors. What is the average age of your students and how important is it for you to pass on your knowledge to others around the world?

PB: I used to have my own teaching class called the PB Class of Drum Majors and taught from a beginner level right through to experienced level. My average age of pupils would of likely been around the fifteen to sixteen mark. The younger children would have come in at around seven, when they have the capacity to follow instructions and maintain that concentration. I have had adults and older people who want to explore it as they never had a chance earlier in life and may be looking to lead street parades or perform at band functions. I have had a seventy-year-old pupil so the ages can really differ. Predominately though I taught at a beginner level through to early twenties. To be the best competitor myself I always found that teaching was one of the best tools for me to stay at my best.

You are now involved with The Force, a display team of champion Drum Majors. Can you tell us more?

PB: The Force has been in the making for several years now and been operating at various international military tattoos and events around the World, such as Switzerland's Avenches Tattoo and Moscow's Spasskaya Tower Tattoo. However, it is only now that I have launched this talented group of champion Drum Majors as The Force. We are all



The next generation, Paula's children, Pippa and Finlay.

multiple championship title holders including World champions so whenever I offer mine and The Force's services to an event it is an elite team of World champions, I bring with me.

I produce and choreograph performances to any Tattoo/event theme which can be so synchronised you may think it is just one person. We build the structure of the performance around the event we attend and try and create something to give the audience a real spectacle. To see a standing ovation at the end of a performance is something I strive for every time. It could be choreography, production or even designing a flash mob style performance, which is a unique piece and involves multiple musical accompaniments as part of our choreographed performance, such as Pipers, Drummers, Guitarists, Vocalists, Flutists, Dancers etc. We try to create something very special and I get huge satisfaction seeing what was in my head all come together and enjoyed by thousands of people on the World stage. We have been involved with many collaborations over the years with various artists at music festivals to military tattoos, workshops or even working alongside some of the members from the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, we really do bring a wealth of experience, creativity and innovation to an event or Military Tattoo. The Force is a very unique offering to any event or Tattoo as there is nothing else quite like it on the international scene.

And finally, the pipe band movement offers an incredible fraternity and comradery to those at any age. Can you tell us what you feel is so special about it and what message do you have for someone who may be considering joining a band?

PB: It sounds really cliché, but it really is a global community and a place where everyone knows your name. I grew up in the pipe band world and it really is a big family that looks out and supports one another. For me, pipe band people have literally watched me grow up from the age of seven, now I am an RSPBA Drum Major adjudicator. People I thought were old when I was young, are actually old now, and have watched me through my career. Everyone looks out for one another, and the older ones become your uncles and your aunts. My best friends in life are the ones I have met as a Drum Major at



Paula aged 14, winning her first World Title.

the age of eight, so they have been with me now for thirty years. I have lifelong friends who are now family members because we met through the pipe bands, I met my husband Craig through the pipe bands as he is a piper. We are now instilling that onto our children, my son Finlay loves to pipe like his daddy and my daughter Pippa loves to Drum Major like her mummy. If we go to a pipe band event Finlay asks why we stop every two minutes to talk to people on the field and I have to explain this is what life is like in the pipe band world, everybody knows everyone and you meet lots of friends.

Being part of the pipe band scene has taught me self-belief, self-discipline and a passion for life and those fundamentals I feel are vital in being the best you can be as a person, not just a Drum Major.

The Force is a champion Drum Major Display Team who perform at various international musical military tattoos and events around the world. For more details see: www.theforce.events.



The Drum Major team.

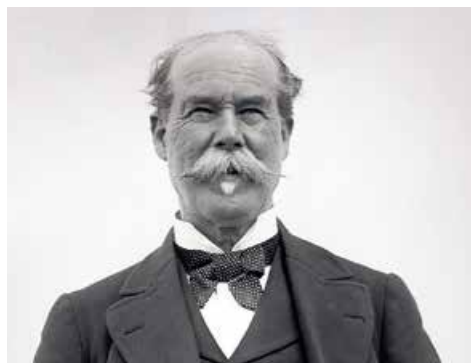
THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - Battle of Largs-Scots defeated the Vikings who were attempting to invade. **1263**

1 - Contract to construct the North Bridge, Edinburgh, signed. **1763**

2 - Birth of Sir William Ramsay, Scottish chemist who discovered helium, xenon, neon, argon, radon and krypton. **1852**



2 - Death of Sir Thomas Lipton, grocer, tea merchant and contestant for the Americas Cup. Lipton was born in Glasgow's deprived Gorbals area in 1848. **1931**

2 - The new paddle steamer *Waverley* was launched from A. & J. Inglis's yard on the Clyde. After providing services on the Firth of Clyde she has been preserved and still takes passengers "doon the watter" as the oldest sea-going paddle steamer in the world. **1947**

3 - Treaty of Berwick, freeing David II from imprisonment by the English. **1357**

3 - Last Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh before the Union with Westminster. **1706**

4 - Boys' Brigade founded in Glasgow by Sir William Alexander Smith. The first uniformed youth organisation in the world, from one small company of 35 boys it has grown into a worldwide organisation with companies in over 60 countries. **1883**

4 - The Northern Lighthouse Board decommissions its last Scottish lighthouse foghorn, at Skerryvore. **2005**

5 - Balloon flight by Italian aeronaut Vincenzo Lunardi from Heriot's School, Edinburgh to Ceres in Fife. **1785**

5 - The birth of Jock Stein, famous Scottish football manager. Stein was manager of Celtic between 1965 and 1978, during which time it was one of the most successful clubs in Europe, and in 1967 became the first British club to win the European Cup. He suffered a massive heart attack after watching Scotland draw 1-1 with Wales in a World cup qualifying match in Cardiff in 1985. **1922**

5 - The Glasgow Royal Concert Hall opens in Sauchiehall Street. **1990**

6 - Scot Ebenezer Henderson formed the first Congregational church in Sweden. He spent many years travelling throughout Scandinavia and Russia, giving out bibles translated into local languages. **1811**

7 - Birth of Charles McLaren, one of the founders of the *Scotsman* newspaper. **1782**

8 - Rev Henry Duncan, founder of the first savings bank, born in the Manse at Lochrutton. **1774**

9 - King James IV ratified the Charter incorporating the Surgeons and Barbers. **1506**

9 - Backwater Reservoir opened to supply the Dundee area. **1969**



9 - Scottish Parliament Building in Edinburgh, designed by Enric Miralles, is formally opened. **2004**

10 - Writer and geologist Hugh Miller born on the Black Isle, Cromarty. **1802**

11 - Letter from Wallace and Moray to the mayors of Lubeck and Hamburg saying that "The Kingdom of Scotland has, by God's Grace, recovered by battle from the power of the English". The Lubeck Letter was thought to have been destroyed during World War Two, but was found in a Lubeck Museum and is now on permanent loan to the Museum of Scotland. **1297**

11 - Ship *Great Michael* launched for King James IV. **1511**

11 - The British fleet, under the command of Admiral Adam Duncan (born in Forfar in 1731), defeated the Dutch off the village of Camperdown, Holland. **1797**

11 - Scotland's first First Minister Donald Dewar died suddenly at 63 after a fall on the steps of his official residence in Edinburgh. He was the first person to hold the position of First Minister following the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. **2000**

12 - Ramsay MacDonald, first Labour Prime Minister of UK, born in Lossiemouth. **1866**

12 - The birth of Magnus Magnusson, writer and broadcaster. Born in Iceland, Magnus moved to Scotland when only a baby. He made a career in journalism, finally achieving the post of Assistant Editor with *The Scotsman*. Magnusson died on January 7th 2007. **1929**

13 - Battle of Aberdeen, James Graham, 1st Marquess of Montrose, sacked the city. **1644**

13 - Birth of Allan Ramsay, painter and son of Allan Ramsay the poet. **1713**

14 - Second marriage of King Alexander III (to Yolanda de Dreux). **1285**

14 - Edward Bruce, brother of Robert the Bruce, killed in a battle near Dundalk, Ireland. **1318**

14 - Birth at St James' Palace, London of King James VII, second son of King Charles I and brother of King Charles II. **1633**

14 - The 50 pence decimal coin was first issued, replacing the ten shilling note. **1969**

14 - Introduction of plastic shopping bags charges in Scotland. The number of plastic bags handed out in stores was slashed by 80% - the equivalent of 650 million carriers - in the first year of Scotland's 5p charge. **2014**

14 - Robbie Coltrane, actor and comedian dies. Coltrane was known for decades on UK TV and international hit films such as Harry Potter, James Bond, and more. Coltrane was born in Rutherglen in 1950. **2022**



15 - Edinburgh's Balmoral Hotel opened its doors for the first time. The hotel was originally known as the North British. Acclaimed as one of the great railway hotels, it originally boasted 300 bedrooms and 52 bathrooms. It was later renamed The Balmoral—which means "majestic dwelling" in Gaelic. **1902**

15 - *HMS Hawke* was shot and sunk off the coast of Aberdeen by a German submarine. Launched in 1891 the ship was the sixth British warship to be named Hawke. 524 officers and men died, including the ship's captain, Hugh Williams, with only 70 survivors. **1914**

15 - Nicola Sturgeon succeeds Alex Salmond as leader of the Scottish National Party and First Minister of Scotland after she was the only candidate to put their name forward in the party's leadership election. Sturgeon is the first female, and longest serving, First Minister for Scotland. **2014**

16 - King James II born. **1430**



16 - Bridge to the Isle of Skye opened. Built as a private finance initiative, the bridge initially had the highest tolls in Europe which led to a decade of non-payment protests. The crossing became free in 2004 following protests from islanders and local businesses. **1995**

17 - Battle of Neville's Cross during which King David II was captured by the English. **1346**

17 - James "Paraffin" Young obtained a patent for the extraction of paraffin from shale, starting the chemical industry in West Lothian. **1850**

18 - The death of Margaret Tudor, English princess, sister of Henry VIII, wife of James IV, and mother of James V. It was through Margaret, a paternal great-grandmother (through Henry, Lord Darnley), and a maternal great-grandmother (through Mary, Queen of Scots), that James VI based his claim to the throne of England following the death of Queen Elizabeth I. **1541**

18 - Aberdeen-born Denis Law became the youngest footballer to play for Scotland. At the time playing for Huddersfield Town, he was 18 years and 7 months old when he played against Wales at Cardiff. Scotland won 3-0. He has recently been nominated Scotland's best player of the last 50 years by the SFA. **1958**

19 - The first public-hire sedan chairs became available in Edinburgh. A sedan was an enclosed chair for one person, carried on poles by two men. They reached the height of their popularity in the 18th century, when there were as many as 180 sedans for public hire in Edinburgh. **1687**

19 - Discovery of the Port an Eilean Mhòir boat burial, the UK mainland's first fully intact Viking ship burial site, at Ardnamurchan (the most westerly point on the island of Great Britain), is announced. **2011**

20 - Explosion at Clarkston Toll shopping centre, killing 12. **1971**

20 - Introduction of a minimum charge of 5p for single-use carrier bags in Scotland. **2014**



21 - Last tram car ran in Dundee. Trams ran in the city running for almost eight decades from 1877 to 1956. **1956**

21 - The Queen officially opened the Burrell Collection in Glasgow's Pollok Country Park. The museum's collection had been donated to the city nearly 40 years earlier by the shipping magnate Sir William Burrell. The Burrell Collection re-opened in 2022 after a multi-million-pound redevelopment. **1983**

22 - Foundation stones of main Post Office and National Museum of Scotland laid by Prince Albert in his last public engagement before his death. **1861**

23 - Treaty between King John Balliol of Scotland and King Philippe IV of France which promised mutual help against the English - the start of the "Auld Alliance". The Alliance, which was described in 1942 by Charles de Gaulle as 'the oldest alliance in the world' promised mutual help against the English, asserting that should either Scotland or France be invaded by England, the other country would invade English territory. **1295**

23 - Death of John Boyd Dunlop who re-invented the pneumatic tyre from the design of Robert W Thomson. **1921**

24 - Artist David Roberts born in Edinburgh. He died on 25 November 1864 whilst working on a painting at St Pauls Cathedral. **1796**

25 - Elvis Presley touched down at Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire, his only visit to Scotland. This was also the only time "The King" set foot on British soil. **1960**

26 - George III crowned, beginning a 60 year reign, one of the longest in British history. **1760**

26 - Poet Sorley MacLean born on the island of Raasay. Sorley MacLean was the greatest Gaelic poet of the 20th century. He died in 1996. **1911**

26 - Following the death of Donald Dewar, Henry McLeish is selected to be First Minister of Scotland by the Scottish Parliament, and is officially appointed by The Queen. **2000**

28 - Birth of Robert Liston in Linlithgow who was to carry out the first operation in Britain with the aid of an anaesthetic. **1794**

28 - Dr Henry Faulds, a Scots medical missionary working in Japan, published a letter in "Nature" which gave the first evidence that fingerprints could be used as proof of guilt or innocence in legal cases. **1880**

29 - James Boswell, biographer of Dr Johnson, born at Blair's Land, Parliament Square, Edinburgh. **1740**



30 - Caledonian Canal opened. The Caledonian Canal links the west of Scotland to the East, and makes it possible to navigate a canal boat journey coast to coast right through Scotland's Great Glen, between Fort William and Inverness. It is scenically spectacular along its whole length, surrounded as it is by Scotland's highest mountains and most beautiful scenery. **1822**

30 - First moving image on a television screen when John Logie Baird transmitted the image of a 15-year-old office boy in his London workshop. **1925**

30 - Glasgow born Scottish aviator Scottish aviator Jim Mollison died. Mollison became the RAF's youngest serving officer, the first person to fly solo east to west across the Atlantic and flew from Scotland to Australia in 8 days, 19 hours and 28 minutes. **1959**

31 - Pneumatic bicycle tyres were patented by inventor John Boyd Dunlop from Ayrshire. **1888**

31 - Hampden Park Stadium opened in Glasgow as the home of Queen's Park Football Club. The national stadium of Scotland bears the name of an English politician John Hampden and is actually the third venue to be called Hampden Park in Glasgow. **1903**

By: David McVey



The largest fruit in Scotland

The Pineapple is a little harder to find than most National Trust for Scotland (NTS) properties. The access road isn't actually that long, less than a kilometre from the A905 near Airth and no further from the nearest bus stop. But the signage is minimal and as you pass fields and woodland you'll wonder if you're on the wrong track, until you finally get there. Come to think of it, 'The Pineapple' is one of the more playful names for NTS properties. But it's a straightforward description of one of the most whimsical yet stunning buildings in Scotland.

I suppose most people with any connection to Scotland have seen photographs of The Pineapple (the name is sometimes lengthened to 'The Dunmore Pineapple') or perhaps have seen it on TV. Nothing can prepare you, though, for how impressive - or how big - it is in real life. It must surely be the largest representation of a fruit anywhere in Scotland, or perhaps anywhere else. If you were planning to create a giant fruit in stone, you'd generally steer clear of pineapples which are complicated and intricate objects. Some of the stonework on the building is delicate, subtle and takes the breath away. But why is there a giant pineapple in the Scottish countryside near the southern end of the Kincardine Bridge?

Dunmore

Christopher Columbus and his crew are generally assumed to have been the first Europeans to encounter pineapples, on the island of Guadalupe in the Caribbean. That was towards the end of the 15th century. Pineapples began to be imported to Europe, and became a delicacy, but only for the very wealthy. They couldn't be grown outdoors in the United Kingdom, for example, and it was expensive to import them. Experiments in growing pineapples in the UK began in the 17th century. I recently visited Oxford Botanic Garden (whose origins are 17th century) and saw pineapples growing there in a steamy glasshouse. There's a painting in the Royal Collection, which has been dated to the late 1670s, that shows Charles II being presented with a pineapple. The first pineapples are said to have been grown in Scotland in 1731.

In the 18th century the area around The Pineapple was the Dunmore Estate; the name 'Dunmore' is still common locally, if you check a map.

To the west, for example, is the extensive Dunmore Wood. The Pineapple was built on the instructions of John Murray, the 4th Earl of Dunmore. The building appeared in 1761, without the pineapple, and was intended as a kind of summerhouse in which the Earl could sit and enjoy views of his estate. Murray became Governor of Virginia - the last one before the American War of Independence - from 1771-75. Apparently, it was a custom in Virginia for returning sailors to leave a pineapple (a real one, mind) on their doorstep to indicate that they were at home and able to receive visitors. In 1777 the Earl did the same, in stone, ordering the pineapple bit of the building to be added; he was home, it said, and could receive callers. Incredibly, we don't know the name of the architect who designed and executed either the original building or The Pineapple.

250 years old and perhaps Scotland's most bonkers building, The Pineapple is something everyone should make an effort to go and see.

The detail is stunning - those lifelike stone pineapple leaves each have their own drain to draw away water and prevent damage through a build-up of ice. It's impressive enough to stand before the structure and examine it from ground level. To be lifted up in a cherrypicker and examine the work at close quarters would be incredible. Perhaps the NTS should consider this...Murray would later become Governor of the Bahamas. Soberingly, his role there involved importing slaves from Africa, so perhaps The Pineapple can also serve as a prompt to reflect on the less savoury aspects of Scotland's past.

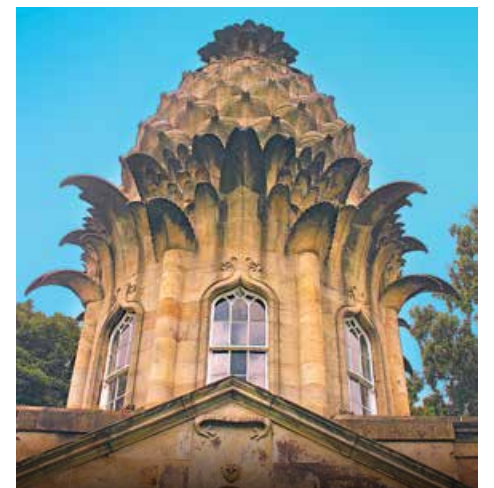
Impressive walled garden

The impressive walled garden that lies to the south is a great place from which to view The Pineapple and is now a green space with flowers, shrubs, trees and even a small orchard. For many years, however, it looked very different. Around the garden were glass-roofed hothouses in which exotic fruit - including, yes, pineapples - were grown for the Earl's plate.

The ghostly outline of those hothouses can still be seen on the walls that survive on either side of The Pineapple. The 4th Earl lived at Dunmore Tower elsewhere on the estate. In 1820 Dunmore Park, a new mansion, was built nearby for the 5th Earl. During the 20th century the estate declined, part of it was bought up by the Countess of Perth and both Dunmore Park and Dunmore Tower became empty and ruinous. The Murrays of Dunmore have lived in Tasmania since the 9th Earl moved there in 1941. Malcolm, the 12th Earl, visited The Pineapple in 1998 to plant a memorial tree. He remains active in many Australian Scots heritage organisations. I expect he reads *the Scottish Banner!*

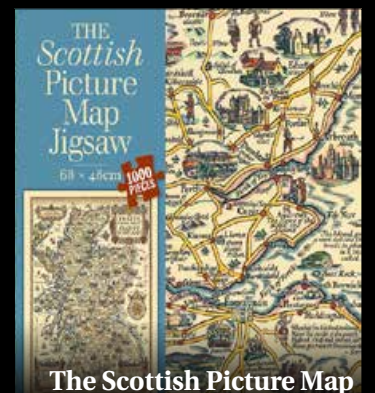
By the early 1970s, The Pineapple, the hothouses and other remaining buildings were in danger of collapse. The Countess of Perth donated the building and surrounding grounds to the NTS in 1974. The remains of the hothouses were swept away but The Pineapple and its adjacent buildings were restored by the NTS alongside The Landmark Trust who now lease the buildings from the NTS and rent them out as holiday accommodation; yes, you can stay at The Pineapple! Casual visitors can view The Pineapple, enjoy the walled gardens and walk in the surrounding woodland. The former curling pond is said to be a haunt of the rare great crested newt.

Around the site are some interpretative boards that outline the history of the building and the wider estate. I found the photographs of the walled garden with the hothouses up and running a fascinating comparison to the present day. 250 years old and perhaps Scotland's most bonkers building, The Pineapple is something everyone should make an effort to go and see.



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IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN



Halloween, celebrated on 31 October, is widely assumed to be a North American festival but it's actually an ancient Celtic pagan celebration. The term Halloween comes from All-hallow-even or All Hallows' Eve - the evening before All Hallows' Day, or All Saints' Day. The festival originated as a pagan ritual among the Celts in Ireland and Britain, who regarded 31 October as the last day of summer, November being associated with the death and slaughter of animals that provided meat for winter. In the old Norse religion, sacrifices were made to the elves, and food was blessed and stored for winter. Irish and Scottish immigrants carried Halloween festivities in the 19th century. This month we have some spooky recipes, enjoy if you dare!

Witches Brew

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 650g/23 oz. frozen petits pois/small green peas
- 750ml vegetable stock
- 6 rashers streaky bacon
- 1 tbsp. butter, optional

Method:

Heat the oil in a saucepan. Add the onion and gently cook over a medium heat for 5-6 minutes until softened but not coloured. Add the garlic and cook for a further min. Stir in three-quarters of the petit pois, then pour in the stock. Bring to the boil and simmer for 10-12 minutes. Meanwhile, grill the bacon until crisp. Allow to cool for a few minutes, then carefully transfer to a food processor and whizz until smooth. You might need to do this in two batches, depending on the size of your processor. Return the soup to the pan and add the remaining petit pois. Bring to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes or until the whole peas are tender. Season to taste, then stir in the butter, if using. Break the bacon into pieces and scatter over bowls or mugs of soup. The soup can be made up to a day ahead; just grill the bacon on the day.

Pumpkin risotto



Ingredients:

- For the pumpkin risotto:**
- 570ml/1 pint vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 12 fresh sage leaves, chopped finely
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 170g/6oz. Arborio (risotto) rice
- 250g/9oz. pumpkin or butternut squash, diced small
- 50g/2oz. butter
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- For the crispy sage:**
- 12-16 fresh sage leaves
- 2 tbsp. sunflower oil
- To garnish:**
- piece fresh Parmesan, or vegetarian Parmesan-style grating cheese (optional)

Method:

Heat the stock until almost boiling and then keep over a very low heat. In a separate heavy-based saucepan fry the onion in the oil over a low heat until soft but not browned. Add the chopped sage and cook for a couple more minutes. Add the rice and mix well for a few seconds to coat the grains with oil, then pour in one-third of the stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook until almost all the stock is absorbed. Add the pumpkin or squash and a little more stock, and continue to simmer gently until the stock is absorbed. From then on add more stock a little at a time, until the pumpkin is soft and the rice nicely al dente (has a

little bite to it). You may not need all the stock, but the texture should be loose and creamy. When the risotto is almost ready, heat the sunflower oil in a small pan and quickly fry the sage leaves until crispy - it only takes a matter of seconds. Stir the butter into the risotto, and season well with salt and pepper. Divide into 4 bowls and sprinkle a few crispy sage leaves over each portion. Bring the cheese and a grater to the table for your guests to serve themselves.

Wizard's hat pasties

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- small onion, finely chopped
- 250g/9 oz. pumpkin flesh (buy a large wedge and peel, or use leftovers from lantern-making), cut into small cubes of about 1cm
- 2 tsp tomato purée
- pinch grated nutmeg
- 75ml vegetable stock
- 375g/13 oz. pack ready-rolled puff pastry
- egg, beaten
- 50g/1.7 oz. cheddar, grated
- 2 tbsp. roasted pumpkin seeds (from a packet)

Method:

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, then add the onion and cook for 5 minutes until softened and lightly golden. Stir in the pumpkin and tomato purée. Season with nutmeg and salt and pepper to taste. Pour in the stock and bring to the boil before turning down to a simmer for 8-10 minutes. The pumpkin should be just tender and almost all of the liquid evaporated. Spoon into a bowl and set to one side to cool. Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Unroll the pastry and roll it out slightly thinner with a rolling pin. Cut out 8 diamond shapes approximately 10cm wide x 15cm long. Brush each pastry diamond with beaten egg. Stir the grated cheese into the cooled pumpkin mixture, then divide between the diamonds, placing the mix on the top half of each piece of pastry. Fold the bottom of the diamond over the filling, pressing the edges together firmly to make a well-sealed triangle. Brush all over with egg glaze and scatter over a few pumpkin seeds, in star or moon shapes if you like. Chill for 30 minutes, or overnight, covered with cling film, if you are making ahead. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and puffed.

Halloween biscuits

Ingredients:

- 100g/3½oz. unsalted butter, softened at room temperature
- 100g/3½oz. caster sugar
- 1 free-range egg, lightly beaten
- 275g/10oz. plain flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- To decorate:**
- 400g/14oz. icing sugar
- 3-4 tbsp. water
- 2-3 drops food colourings

Method:

Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper. Beat the butter and sugar together in a bowl until combined. Beat in the egg and vanilla extract, a little at a time, until well combined. Stir in the flour until the mixture comes together as a dough. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface to a thickness of 1cm/½in.

Using Halloween-style biscuit cutters, cut biscuits out of the dough and carefully place onto the baking tray. Bake the biscuits for 8-10 minutes, or until pale golden-brown. Set aside to harden for 5 minutes, then cool on a wire rack. For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a large mixing bowl and stir in enough water to create a smooth mixture. Stir in the food colouring. Carefully spread the icing onto the biscuits using a knife and set aside until the icing hardens.

Frozen banana ghosts

Ingredients:

- 200g/7 oz. bar white chocolate, broken into chunks
- 4 medium-large, ripe bananas
- 85g/3oz. desiccated coconut (you won't use it all)
- handful dark chocolate drops

Method:

In a small bowl, gently melt the chocolate either in the microwave - in short bursts on high or over a pan of simmering water (make sure the bowl isn't touching the water). Set aside for a moment while you get the bananas ready. Peel the bananas, cut in half, and push a lolly stick into the middle of each piece. Spread the coconut out in a shallow bowl. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment, and make sure there is room for the tray in the freezer. Using a pastry brush, coat a banana half in chocolate, letting excess drip away. Sprinkle with plenty of the coconut until coated, then set it on the prepared sheet. Now add two chocolate eyes and a mouth, and if you like, cut a few little eyebrows from the chocolate drops too. Freeze for 4 hours, and up to a week.

Bewitched

Ingredients:

- For the spiced pumpkin purée:**
- 1 medium-sized pumpkin, flesh scooped out and chopped, fibres removed; seeds removed, toasted and reserved for garnish
- 1 litre/1¾ pints freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 2 tsp. clear honey
- For the cocktail:**
- 35ml/1¼fl oz. whisky
- 1 tbsp. sour cherry liqueur
- 2 tsp. herb liqueur
- 3 tbsp. spiced pumpkin purée (see above)
- ice

To serve:

- pumpkin seeds, toasted
- pinch freshly grated nutmeg

Method:

For the spiced pumpkin purée, bring a small amount of water to a simmer in a pan. Suspend a steaming basket above the water (do not allow the base of the basket to touch the water). Add the chopped pumpkin and steam for 15-20 minutes, or until tender. Remove from the steaming basket and set aside to cool. When the pumpkin has cooled, transfer it to the bowl of a food processor. Add the orange juice, allspice and honey and blend until smooth and well combined. For the cocktail, pour the whisky, sour cherry liqueur, herb liqueur and pumpkin purée into a cocktail shaker. Add ice and shake well. To serve, strain the mixture into a flute glass. Garnish the surface of the cocktail with a few toasted pumpkin seeds. Dust with a little freshly grated nutmeg.

Scotch Eggs



Ingredients:

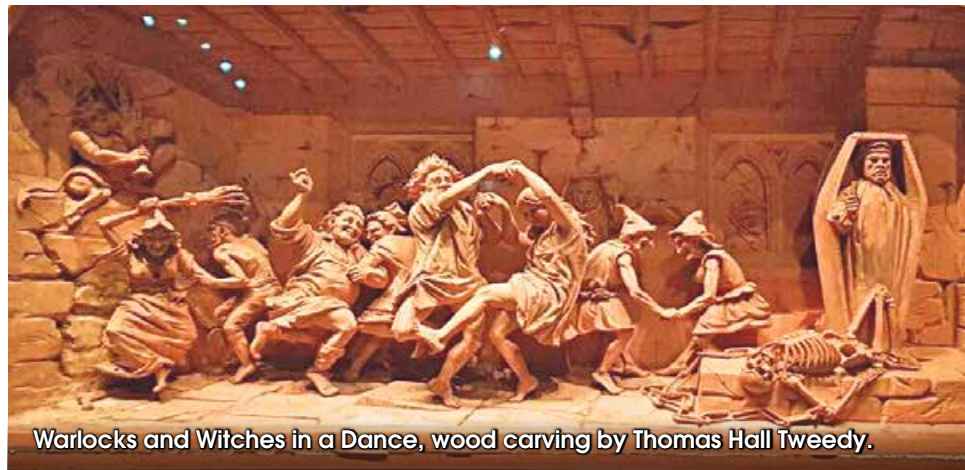
- 4 eggs, hard boiled and shelled
- 2 level teaspoonfuls seasoned flour
- Worcestershire sauce
- ½ lb/2.25 kgs. sausage meat or skinless sausages
- 1 egg, beaten
- Dry breadcrumbs
- Deep fat
- Parsley

Method:

Dust the eggs with the flour. Add a few drops of Worcestershire sauce to the sausage meat and divide into 4 portions. Form each into a flat cake and work round an egg, making sure there are no cracks in the sausage meat. Brush with the beaten egg and toss in the breadcrumbs. Heat the fat until it will brown a cube of bread in 40-50 seconds. (As the sausage meat is raw, it is essential that the frying should not be hurried unduly, so the fat must not be too hot). Fry the eggs for about 7 to 8 minutes. When they are golden brown, remove them from the fat and drain them on kitchen paper. Cut the eggs in half lengthways. Garnish with the parsley and serve hot with tomato sauce or cold with salad.

Halloween hidden secrets

From wood carvings and photographs to tales of ghostly goings-on, there are links to Hallowe'en – long celebrated in Scotland – at many of the National Trust for Scotland properties.



Warlocks and Witches in a Dance, wood carving by Thomas Hall Tweedy.

Robert Burns is at his best when dealing with the supernatural folklore of his native 18th century Scotland, and nowhere is this more apparent than in his narrative epic *Tam o' Shanter*. The 224-line poem is a reimagining of an old tale from Burns' youth about what happens to a farmer in the early hours riding past haunted Alloway Kirk. "There's a beautiful wood carving that Thomas Hall Tweedy made in 1860, called Warlocks and Witches in a Dance, that takes its name from a line in *Tam o' Shanter*", says Lauren McKenzie, Functions and Events Manager at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. "It's one of a set of four lime-wood carvings on display at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum that depicts the central scene in the poem where Tam reaches Kirk Alloway and is stopped in his tracks." Thomas Hall Tweedy based the piece on a contemporary engraving by artist John Faed. Both artworks capture the humour evident in *Tam o' Shanter*, as well as the more gruesome elements of the goings-on in the kirk.

Pumpkins galore



The pumpkins that you will see adorning the battlements of Castle Fraser at this time of year, in the orchard of Leith Hall, or that you'll find have been made into delicious soup in the cafe at Fyvie Castle, are actually grown on site.

"Our properties grow a range of varieties of pumpkins from year to year, from small eating and storing types to large ornamental varieties for pumpkin carving. Some years we have a bumper crop, but every year is different," says Garden and Designed Landscape Manager Chris Wardle.

Some of the varieties grown include Atlantic Giant which is perfect for carving, Summer Sunburst and Patty Pan Green Tint for ornamental use, and Turks Turban and Uchiki Kuri for soups and storing.

Black cat



David Brodie and Alfonso at Brodie Castle.

Black cats have long been associated with Hallowe'en but one dark feline, named Alfonso, was a friendly family pet at Brodie Castle in the early years of the 20th century. A black and white photographic print from the collection at Brodie Castle, dating to around 1909, shows a young David Brodie (aged around four years old) with Alfonso.

"The cat would have belonged to David's mother, Violet May Hope, who was a big animal lover, she had lots of cats throughout her life and was particularly fond of cats and dogs", says Jamie Barron, Visitor Experience Supervisor at Brodie Castle. "We have copies of the albums that Violet kept of her photographs, of which this is one. The albums are on display for visitors to flick through in the castle. It's rather sad because within a couple of years of the photograph being taken, David died of diphtheria." On tours of the castle, visitors are taken into is a bedroom where Violet, who married the 24th laird Ian Brodie, kept a collection of toads. Visitors hear all about Violet and her pets and the walls are adorned with photographs of Brodie pets from over the years.

Ghostly sightings



The strongroom at Culross Palace.

To protect the original floor tiles in the strongroom at Culross Palace it is cordoned off to visitors, who instead stand behind a rope to see into the place where George Bruce, the richest man in the area, kept his papers and valuables. Dating back to 1597, the narrow room has three-foot thick stone walls and had two heavy iron doors that could be bolted from the inside. It was also designed with a clever slanted entranceway to deter intruders and stop them from pulling out a sword.

Not surprisingly it was supposedly cannonball and fire-proof. Visitors might have to stand at the doorway, but that hasn't stopped some unusual ghostly goings-on being reported in the room over the years. Staff at the property remember a five-year-old girl who went under the rope, stood at the desk and was laughing and joking – with no one. "A guide came in and asked her who she was speaking to. She said, "The man with the hairy face and the funny white thing around his neck." She was taken to the portrait of George Bruce, and she started waving at him and smiling" says Linda Whiteford, Visitor Services Supervisor at Culross. "One of our guides went into the strong room to set up battery-operated candles, and the quills in a pewter pot on the desk were whirling round and round. She thought it was the draught from her jacket, so went out and came in again. It didn't make any difference."

Hebridean Hallowe'en



Through film and photography, the Hallowe'en traditions of South Uist were documented by Margaret Fay Shaw in the 1930s. Contained in the archive at Canna House, Shaw's images form a rare record of guisers in sheepskin garb with haystack wigs and rope scarves. It wasn't just at Hallowe'en when islanders believed there were spirits afoot. For hundreds of years a legend swirled around Canna about Coroghon Castle, also known as Coroghon Prison. "A painting of the castle by Richard Doyle featured in the book *Canna: The Story of a Hebridean Island* by Shaw's husband, the renowned Gaelic folklorist John Lorne Campbell. Doyle visited Canna in 1875 on the Viscount Sherbrooke's yacht," says Fiona Mackenzie, Canna House archivist and manager. "The story goes that Marion Macleod, the wife of Donald Macdonald of Clanranald, known as Dòmhnall Dubh na Cuthaige (Black Donald of the Cuckoo), had an affair. Macdonald was born in about 1625 and fought in Montrose's army in the Civil War. He married Marion in 1666. When Macdonald found out about the affair, he locked his wife up in the castle for the rest of her life. Supposedly on a calm moonlit night you can still hear her wailing and crying to be released. Personally, I think that might be the sound of the seals."

Text and images are courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland. For more information on the Trust or to help them protect Scotland's heritage see: www.nts.org.uk.

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Clan Baird Society Worldwide



Membership is open to those descended from Baird, Barde, Bard, Beard, Beaird, Brd, Bayard, Bardt, Barth and Biard or varied spellings of the name of Scottish origin.

In addition to the Society newsletter and the opportunity to associate with fellow clansman members may query the Society genealogist. **For information write:**

Clan Baird Commander
Richard Baird of Rickarton, Ury and Lochwood
Rickarton House, Stonehaven, Scotland.
Hereditary President of Clan Baird Society Worldwide

Debra J. Baird, Ph.D. FSA Scot, CBSW Convenor
Email: djbaird4@gmail.com
Website: clanbairdsocietyworldwide.co.uk



Clan Davidson Society in Australia Inc.

CHIEF: Grant Davidson of Davidston cordially invites to membership all who bear one of the Clan Names, and all who can trace their descent from an ancestor bearing one of these Names: Davidson; Davison; Dawson; Davis; Davie; Davey; Davy; Day; Dye; Dyson; Dawson; Dea; Deane; Deane; Deas; Deason; Dees; Dee; Dey; Daw; Dow; Dhai; Kay; Keay; Key; Keys; MacDade; MacDaid; MacDavid; MacDavett; MacDagnie; MacDagny; MacDhai; McKeddie. In addition we welcome into membership all who have a family association with the Clan Davidson. Applications may be made online: clandavidsonaus@gmail.com or contact the Hon. Secretary Mr Dennis Hill, J.P. P.O. Box 519 Baulkham Hills NSW 1755 dhill11@bigpond.net.au 0431 527 662

CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY

Membership invited to all who share the Sept names: Duncan, Robertson, Reid, etc.

UK: London & Southern Counties * Rannoch & Highlands
Canada: Ontario * Western Canada
Australia: New South Wales * Victoria * Queensland * Western Australia
New Zealand: New Zealand
EUROPE: Spain
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Visit our website to learn more about Clan Donnachaidh, our History & Traditions, the Clan Museum in Scotland, the DNA Project, the new Struan Kirk Appeal, & locate a Branch near you.
<http://www.donnachaidh.com/>
Facebook: [The Clan Donnachaidh Society](https://www.facebook.com/TheClanDonnachaidhSociety)
Email: ivc@donnachaidh.com



Clan Galbraith Society

Includes name variations such as Galbreath, Culbreath, Gilbraith etc.

DNA testing project, members only databases, Biennial gatherings, blog, Quarterly journal.

www.clangalbraith.org



CLAN BELL

Invites membership inquiries from persons named Bell (all spellings), their descendants and friends. Various resources available for genealogical research. Quarterly newsletter. Tents hosted at major Scottish games nationwide.

Website: www.ClanBell.org
Online membership: <https://clanbell.org/membership.html>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ClanBell>
Email: President@clanbell.org
Clan Bell North America
49 Greystone Lane NW
Cartersville, GA, 30121

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Qld Mr A. Neil Macdonald
SA Mr Michael Murphy
Vic Mr Norman A Macdonald
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secretary.clanDonaldaustralia@gmail.com
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Edmonstone Clan Society

Invites membership to anyone of the surname or variations: - Edmiston/e, Edmondston, Edmanson, Edmeston, Edmonson, Edmundson, etc. Chieftain Sir Archibald Edmonstone Bt of Duntreath

Contact: Mal Edmiston
3 Laguna Ave
Kirwan, Qld, 4817
61 (0)7 4755 4370
m.edmiston@bigpond.com

Clan Gregor Society

Established 1822, Edinburgh, Scotland
Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor
7th Baronet of Lanrick and Balgihidder,
24th Chief of Clan Gregor



Great Lakes,
New England,
Pacific North West,
Western U.S.
and Southeast Chapters
www.clangregor.org
For membership contact Keith MacGregor
PO Box 56, Redding Ridge, CT 06876
kmac16@optonline.net
Peter Lawrie, Secretary
6 The Esplanade, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 2EL Scotland



Family of Bruce International, Inc.

Family of Bruce International, Inc., the only such organization recognized by the hereditary chief of the Name of Bruce, The Rt. Hon. Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, is a non-profit organization established to create kinship amongst its family members and promote interest in the Family of Bruce and its history. Membership is open to persons who qualify by surname, by descent, or by recognized septs: Carlisle, Carruthers, Crosby, Randolph and Stenhouse.

Membership inquiries should be directed to:
Donald E. Bruce Polly A. (Bruce) Tilford, Secretary
President 5561 Earl Young Road
1051 Eagle Ridge Trail Bloomington, IN 47408
Stillwater, Minnesota 55082 www.familyofbruceinternational.org



Clan Donald Queensland

Commissioner: Neil Macdonald
Ph: 0412 090990
Email: clandonaldqld@optusnet.com.au
Web: www.clandonaldqld.org
ELIGIBILITY: Those with the name of MacDonald Macdonald McDonald McDonell, Donald, OR of one of the Septs of Clan Donald, OR with a connection through family lineage.
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Elliot Clan Society, U.S.A.

Jim Dougherty - Clan President welcomes membership of all who are connected with this great border family.

Direct inquires to: Marianne Elliott,
Membership Chair
Email: marianne@mmelliott.com

Website: www.elliotclan-usa.com



Clan Gregor Society Australasia

All MacGregors and Septs of our clan are invited to join the Clan Gregor Society Est 1822. If you live in Australia or New Zealand, please contact our clan representative:

Frank McGregor
PO Box 14 NORTH HOBART TAS 7002
Email: clangregorastralia@gmail.com
Web: www.clangregor.com
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President: Alistair Cameron
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secy.nationalclanameronaus@gmail.com
www.clan-cameron.org.au



Clan Donald U.S.A. Inc.

Clan Donald USA is a nationwide organization of over 2,000 families who trace their ancestry to any of the branches of Clann Domhnaill. We embrace all the MacDonalds and other surnames that are recognized as branches or adherents of the greatest of the Highland clans.

www.clanDonaldusa.org



Clan Farquharson Association Australia

Membership inquiries are invited from descendants of Farquharson and descendants of Sept family names. Please contact the association by mail to:

The Secretary: Clan Farquharson Association Australia
PO Box 585 Springwood, NSW 2777
or by Email to: finlaysb@bigpond.com
www.clanfarquharsonaus.weebly.com



American Clan Gregor Society

Est 1909 Membership inquiries welcomed from MacGregors of all spellings and Septs

Gregor Grier MacAdams MacNish Magruder McGehee Gregory King Peter Fletcher Gregg Lecky Black and many others
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Phone: 314-432-2842, registrar@acgsus.org
website: www.acgsus.org



CLAN CARRUTHERS SOCIETY -INTERNATIONAL-

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Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains
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CLAN DONALD VICTORIA
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Contact: secretary.clanDonaldVIC@gmail.com
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Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com
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Clan Hamilton Society

Hamiltons and those of Hamilton descent are cordially invited to join the society.

Inquiries to be sent to:
Sheri Lambert, Treasurer
P.O. Box 5399
Vernon Hills, IL 60061
visit our website:
www.clanhamilton.org



CHISHOLM Clan Chisholm Society of Australia Inc

Membership is invited from Clan Chisholm descendants of all spellings of the name (Chisholm, Chisolm, Chism, Chisum, Chisam, etc)
Contact: Kim Polley OAM
PO Box 84, Longford, Tasmania, 7301

Email: kim.polley13@gmail.com
www.clanchisholmsociety.org/public/AUSmembership.php



Clan Donnachaidh Society of New South Wales Inc., Australia

Duncan Robertson Reid
People who bear any of the above names or other Sept names of Clan Donnachaidh "The Children of Duncan" are invited to join in our activities by participating in the Scottish Gatherings held in NSW.

For information and membership application, contact Richard Harvey, Secretary
Email: c2100575@uon.edu.au



Clan Fraser Society of Australia

Invites all Frasers and Fraser septs to join our clan society.

All members receive a copy of our quarterly newsletter "Strawberry Leaves"
Membership enquiries to Don Chitts
Ph: (03) 9754 5120 donchitts@hotmail.com
Website: <http://clanfraseraustralia.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Pages/Clan-Fraser-Society-of-Australia/>
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For more information, please contact:
Australian Clan Hay convenor, Chris Hay McMor Fairbank
PO Box 70, Darrinallum, Victoria, 3325, Australia
E: clanhayaustralia@outlook.com
clanhayaustralia@facebook.com



Clan Hay

April Rich
28 Oxbow Drive
Willimantic, CT 06226
clanhaymembership@hotmail.com

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Information about the Clan and application for CMSA membership is available on the website or via the email address below.
Membership is open to MacLarens (all spellings), Septs, individuals and families with an association to the Clan.

<https://clanmaclarenau.org/>
clanmaclarenau@gmail.com



Clan Macnachten Association Worldwide

Descendants and Septs of the CLAN MACNAUGHTON are invited to join our Worldwide Association to learn and share our MacNaughton and Scottish heritage. For more info go to: clanmacnaughton.net or contact Mary Nivison Burton, Membership Secretary at: membersec@clanmacnaughton.net

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- Gather the Clan, as directed by our Chief, Alistair of Fordell

Contact: Jeff Henderson
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McAlpin/e

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Clan MacLaren

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MacPatrick MacRory

Mark A. McLaren, President
President@clanmaclarenna.org



Clan MacNeil Association of Australia

For all enquiries about the clan and membership contact: John McNeil
21 Coopers Avenue
Leabrook, South Australia 5068
Phone: 08 833 33990 Email: kisimul@chariot.net.au



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invites all MacNeils, regardless of surname spelling, to join us in celebrating our heritage!

website: ClanMacNeilUSA.us
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Chief and Patron
Alexander H.R. Irvine of Drum,
27th Baron and Laird of Drum, Chief of the Name
Mary Erwin, Chairman
155 Hattaway Road, Calhoun, LA, 71225
mary.erwin@clanirwin.org
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75182-3250
Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

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Visit our website: www.clanmaclellan.net



Clan MacNicol

Chief: John MacNeacail
of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac
Contact: Secretary Mal Nicolson
PO Box 243
GYMEA NSW 2227
www.clanmacnicol.org



Clan Lachlan Association

based in Castle Lachlan, Strathlachlan, Argyll, Scotland along with its branches worldwide welcomes interested persons from MacLachlans of all spellings & septs

Canada - Ken Godfrey ken.godfrey1@gmail.com
Australia - Douglas McLaughlin banddmcl@tpg.com.au
Britain, Ireland & Scotland - Tony MacEwen macewen45@sky.com
New Zealand - Helen Chegwini kiwihc@xtra.co.nz
USA - Kevin McLachlan kevinmclachlan@gmail.com



Clan MacInnes

Int'l Assn. of Clan MacInnes (Aonghais)

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Scott McInnes, Member Services: scott@macinnes.org or visit www.macinnes.org



Clan MacLeod Societies of Australia

Membership is open to MacLeods and Septs (of any variant spelling), and descendants. **Recognised Septs:**

Askey MacAndie MacClure
Beaton MacAskill MacCorkill MacWilliam
Bethune MacAulay MacCrimmon Norie
Caskie MacCabe MacGillechallum Norman
Harold MacCaig MacHaigh Tolmie
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- NSW, ACT & Qld - Peter Macleod 02 4397 3161
- Victoria & Tas - David Dickie 03 9337 4384
- South Australia - Alex McLeod 08 8327 0925
- Western Australia - Ruth MacLeod 08 9364 6334

• Email: peter.macleod@exemail.com.au



Clan Macpherson Association

Clan Macpherson welcomes enquiries from Macphersons and members of our Associated families. For information about local activities visit our web site www.clan-macpherson.org/branches

Africa: Derek Macpherson
African.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +265 999 512 620

Canada: Denise Lagundzin
Canada.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +1 519 507 4465

Europe: Will Tulling
Europe.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
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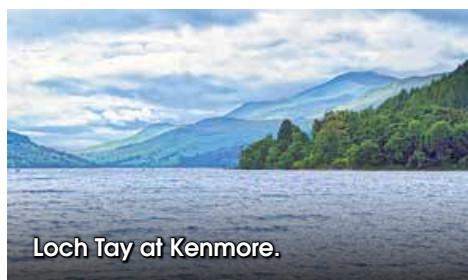
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Oddities from the archives

By: David C Weinczok



Dunagoil Bay.



Loch Tay at Kenmore.

The annals of Scottish history are filled with high drama, triumphs, tragedies, and countless great stories which echo through the ages. Social revolutions, grand set-piece battles, globe-spanning adventures, acts of heroism against all odds – it's all there, and we all have favourites we recount and revisit again and again. That said, history is the collective story of humanity, and for every epic event there are a thousand flukes, farces, and oddities which capture the often surreal and baffling nature of our earthly existence. Here, for your amusement, are just a few of the eyebrow-raising incidents I've encountered recently in archives and antiquarian sources.

A seismic agitation on Loch Tay

We don't often think of Scotland as being particularly affected by earthquakes. Floods and snowstorms are more our style. Yet, something strange happened on Loch Tay on 12 September 1784 which observers described as otherwise inexplicable "violent agitations". A letter from a Mr Fleming details the extent of the disturbance near Kenmore: "...the water was observed to retire about 5 yards within its ordinary boundary, and in 4 or 5 minutes to flow out again. In this manner it ebbed and flowed successively 3 or 4 times during the space of a quarter of an hour, when all at once the water rushed from the east and west in opposite currents ... in the form of a great wave." The water ebbed and flowed a while longer before settling back into normalcy. Loch Tay sits upon one fault line, the Loch Tay Fault, and very near another, the Highland Boundary Fault, whose murmurings could explain the sudden tides. Intriguingly, a report from 1789 tells how Loch Lomond experienced a similar phenomenon in 1755 at the very same time that a terrible earthquake levelled the Portuguese city of Lisbon.

Roxburgh Castle and the bovine assault force

Roxburgh Castle in the Borders is now nearly vanished, but was once one of the mightiest castles in the realm. During the Wars of

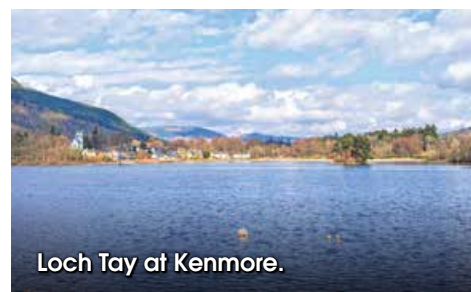
Independence, dauntless James 'the Black' Douglas was tasked by Robert the Bruce with taking it and knew, having very limited resources, that he'd need to be fiendishly clever to even stand a chance. His plan? Have his sixty gruff warriors do their best cow impressions. A deadly stretch of open ground lay between the Scots and the castle with its English garrison, and a herd of black cattle grazed it. These weren't the huge heifers we know today, but a much smaller, scrawnier breed. Douglas waited for the cover of night, ordered his men to drop down on all fours with their dark cloaks over their backs, and meander towards the castle gate. Whether they attempted to mimic the cattle's mooing is not specifically mentioned in the chronicles, to my great dismay.

Perhaps the guards had drunk a little too much that night, as the ploy worked without a hitch and Roxburgh was in Scottish hands by sunrise. Barbour's The Bruce even mentions how one guard, upon seeing the larger-than-usual herd wandering about, remarked that the farmer responsible for them would regret not keeping them penned up if the Douglas made off with them!

The day the bay turned orange

The spoils of shipwrecks are a boon to islanders, who have a talent for making thorough use of anything of value which washes ashore. Nineteenth century visitors to Barra, for example, often noted how women there were dressed in a patchwork of international finery thanks to the steady stream of wrecks off its shores. It must have made for quite the sight when, on the morning of 10 February 1900, a ship ran aground off the isle of Bute and spilled its 2,025 tons of Valencia oranges into Dunagoil Bay!

The newspaper *The Buteman* reported that the bay had a layer of oranges several inches thick, and that locals were illegally rounding them up by the cartload. After a few weeks, however, the oranges began to rot, so many farmers – who were more than likely sick of the sight of them by then – began feeding them to their cattle. In the months that followed, milk from the parish of Kingarth in the south of Bute was said to have a citrusy tang.



Loch Tay at Kenmore.



Dunagoil Bay.

The price of getting a head in life

At the height of the Viking Age, Sigurd, 1st Earl of Orkney, brought fire and sword to Scotland's northern shores. In the course of his wrath, he made a bitter enemy in the form of Maelbrigte, mormaer of Moray. The north would never be big enough for the two of them, so in 892 AD they arranged to fight a decisive battle to the death with forty men on each side.

Maelbrigte sported a distinct moniker, 'the Tusk', so-called because his bottom incisors sharply protruded from his lips. Let's just say that Chekhov had his gun, and Maelbrigte had his tusk! Sigurd did not think the Scots could be trusted, so he pre-empted any cheating with a little of his own and mounted two men on each horse. Even outnumbered two to one Maelbrigte's men put up a good fight, but the result was inevitable. Maelbrigte fell, Sigurd chopped off his head, and rode off to celebrate his victory with his grim trophy strapped to his horse. There being no true roads, it was a bumpy ride. Along the way, Maelbrigte's tusk secured its place in history and scratched Sigurd's leg, so slightly that the Viking didn't notice until it was too late.

An infection set in, and within days the scourge of the north was dead – and, having met such an ignominious end, quite unlikely to enter Valhalla.

Disruptive Doric dogs

The archetype of a Reformation-era kirk as a severely strict, solemn place largely holds true, and one can imagine the consequences for anyone who disrupted the fire and brimstone of a kirk session. Some members of the congregation, however, proved easier to silence than others. An early 17th century entry in the Records of the Kirk-Session and Presbytery of Aberdeen laments how the inhabitants of the burgh "bring with them their dogges to the parochie kirk on the Lord's day ... whair throw and be the barking and perturbation of these dogges, the people are aftin withdrawn from hearing of God's word, and often Divine service is interrupted." It was therefore issued that "no inhabitant whosoever within the same suffer thair dogges, whether they be mastives [mastiffs], cures [curs], or messens [lap dogs], to follow them heirefter to the parochie kirk of this burgh."



Dunagoil Bay.

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New Whisky Year Zero Commemoration to mark 200th anniversary of act that 'Laid the Foundations for the Scotch Whisky Industry' and the 'Whisky Capital of the World'

The Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative has launched a new Whisky Year Zero commemoration to mark this year's 200th anniversary of the 1823 Excise Act, which was published on 18 July 1823. The act, which sanctioned the distilling of whisky in return for a licence fee, played a key role in shaping Argyll and the Isles as Scotland's Whisky Coast – an area which encompasses four of Scotland's recognised whisky regions – Campbeltown, Islay, Highlands (Oban and Loch Lomond) and Islands (Jura and Tobermory).

'Whisky Capital of the World'

Recognising the significance of the year, particularly to Argyll's one-time 'Whisky Capital of the World', Whisky Year Zero celebrates the destination's distinct whisky heritage by showcasing the wide range of sites, festivals and experiences whisky lovers can experience in Argyll and the Isles until June 2024. This includes brand new distillery openings, such as the reopening of the historic Port Ellen Distillery on Islay, more than 35 years after it was closed and almost 200 years since it first opened in 1824 as one of the first distilleries to be licensed after the 1823 Excise Act.

The commemoration is being welcomed by leading historians and whisky aficionados, including Pro Vice Principal at the University of Glasgow Bradley Professor Murray Pittock; Master of the Quaich (the whisky industry's highest accolade) author Dr Nick Morgan; fellow Master of the Quaich acclaimed whisky writer Charles MacLean; and founder of World Whisky Day consultant Blair Bowman. Launching the commemoration Cathy Craig, CEO of the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative said: "We're delighted to launch Whisky Year Zero to celebrate the rich whisky, or uisge beatha, heritage that has shaped communities and culture throughout Argyll and the Isles. Known as Scotland's Whisky Coast due the high volume of world-class distilleries dotted along our coastline, there are so many ways in which visitors to the area can learn more about our significant whisky history and why our destination, with its abundance of fertile landscapes, produces some of Scotland's finest food and drink."

Explaining the importance of the commemoration, Professor Murray Pittock, Bradley Professor and Pro Vice Principal at the University of Glasgow said: "Understanding our past gives us confidence in our ability to shape the future, so it is vital that we continue to remember

key historical moments. Commemorations like Argyll & the Isles' Whisky Year Zero, that take the time to bring history to life, can play a central role in addressing this."

Throughout Whisky Year Zero, Glen Scotia, one of three distilleries remaining in Campbeltown, is offering immersive whisky experiences that take visitors behind the scenes and back in time, to discover more the history of their whisky, including how the Excise Act led to their hometown town being proclaimed the one-time Whisky Capital of the World.

Hannah Young, Visitor Centre Manager at Glen Scotia said: "Our historical distillery still maintains much of its original design dating from the 1830s, including our Dunnage Warehouse, so our celebrated heritage and history still influence the award-winning whisky produced here. The 1823 Excise Act played a key role in our formation and those who come on one of our distillery tours can learn all about the impact it made on our town."

Explaining the significance of the act on Argyll and the Isles, renowned Whisky Writer and Master of the Quaich Charles Maclean said: "The 1823 Excise Act laid the foundations for the Scotch whisky industry by fixing the method of Scotch whisky distillation as we know it today. The Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative is to be congratulated for celebrating this significant piece of legislation, which made it possible for Campbeltown to become 'the world whisky capital' in the late 19th century and for Islay to become the world's leading pilgrimage destination for whisky lovers today. Before the Act, distilling in the region was mainly illicit; today it is burgeoning."

Professor Pittock added: "The 1823 Excise or Wash Act led to a boom in the whisky industry. Local businesspeople and landowners saw vast opportunities in the market, and in Campbeltown developments supported by the Duke of Argyll saw the creation of some 30 distilleries in a town of around three thousand people - it was certainly, as it proclaimed, 'the Whisky Capital of the World' in per capita terms at least."

Reinforcing the scale of industry growth at that time, Dr Nick Morgan, Master of the Quaich, whisky aficionado and author of the book *Everything You Need to Know About Whisky (but are too afraid to ask)* said: "In 1821 there were eleven licensed distilleries in Argyll producing around 40,000 gallons of whisky a year. Only one, owned by John Beith, was in Campbeltown. By 1826, three years after the passing of the 1823 Excise Act, there were thirty-four distilleries in Argyll producing some two-hundred thousand gallons a year."

Uisge beatha

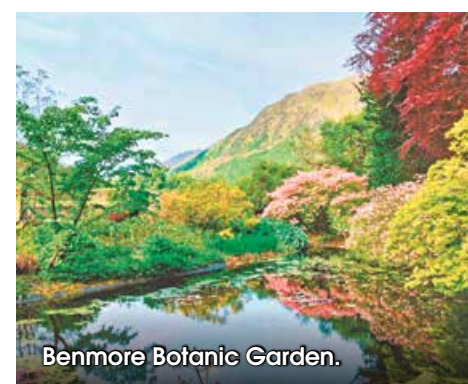
Though there are less distilleries than there once was in the area, whisky and now gin production is still a significant industry across Argyll and the Isles, as Whisky Year Zero highlights. The commemoration showcases 14 world-class whisky distilleries, a myriad of whisky experiences, festivals and distillery openings across the destination. Welcoming the celebration and explaining why Argyll and the Isles is such an important whisky destination, whisky enthusiast, founder of World Whisky Day and author of *The Pocket Guide to Whisky*, Blair Bowman said: "Uniquely for a Scottish destination, Argyll and the Isles encompasses four of Scotland's recognised whisky regions, earning it the title of Scotland's Whisky Coast. During Whisky Year Zero, I would encourage all visitors to celebrate by going on a distillery-hopping journey of discovery across Argyll and the Isles to explore the real impact Scotland's iconic uisge beatha or 'water of life' has had on culture and communities in the area, and what makes each of the whisky regions different. There is also something quite extraordinary about drinking a whisky in the same places where the whisky was made. It really enhances the experience. Each whisky is very unique, their flavours tell an important part of history too. Whisky is quite literally known in Scottish Gaelic as the Water of Life, uisge beatha, which is very apt. There is something magical about each and every sip. When you pick up a glass from Argyll and the Isles, you're not just picking up a drink, you're picking up a story of Scottish life too."

It tells you story of history, a story of culture and a story of craftsmanship – from the farmers producing barley to the unique distillation processes."

Emma Clark AITC Vice Chair, official Argyll & the Isles Food & Drink Ambassador and owner of Glenevedale Guesthouse on Islay (where they serve food platters on top of a reclaimed whisky barrel and even give guests the opportunity to enjoy local whisky in their porridge) agreed: "With our rich fertile lands and world-leading producers, we make and supply some of the very best food and drink, including whisky, right here in Argyll and the Isles. Whisky Year Zero provides the perfect excuse for visitors to go on a culinary journey of discovery to responsibly enjoy our sensational local produce, our unique land and waters, tantalising food trails, world class distilleries and vast amount of award-winning eateries to suit all tastes."

To find out more about Whisky Year Zero visit: www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk/whisky-year-zero





A grand tour of Cowal with Paul Murton



Paul Murton.

The enchanting Scottish landscape

The mean streets of Sun Hill and chaotic hospital wards of *Holby* were swapped a while back for a return to his roots. He describes himself on his Twitter profile as “a wanderer by trade who looks for lost horizons”. That wandering spirit has often got the better of him with countless hitch-hiking adventures across the length and breadth of Europe and numerous summits surmounted. Paul’s adventurousness has been channelled and manifested into an ever-growing list of BBC TV programmes and series about the enchanting Scottish landscape including *Scotland’s Clans*, *Grand Tours of Scotland*, *Grand Tours of the Scottish Islands*, *Grand Tours of Scotland’s Lochs* and *Grand Tours of Scotland’s Rivers*.

In every episode the affable Paul, with his trademark Tilley hat, effortlessly interweaves the Scottish legends, myths, people and landscapes into a rich tapestry that leaves the viewer enthralled. It’s a beguiling mixture of self-deprecation, humour and genuine interest. When it comes to his old stomping ground Paul has profiled Historic Kilmun, often described as the Rosslyn of the West, and the nearby Benmore Botanic Garden on his TV travels as well as the Lauder Monument. These are all landmarks that have a relevance that resonates far beyond their immediate geography.

Both Historic Kilmun and Benmore are popular stopping off points for coach tours with thousands of folk getting a fascinating fix of history and horticulture every year but there are so many other intriguing landmarks and people associated with this wee corner of Argyll including Ardentinnny Beach, Kilmun Arboretum, Puck’s Glen and the forested tracks and trails of Glenbranter. These spots and many more are encapsulated within the ECHO (East Cowal Heritage Outdoors) Trails and all have their own stories to tell.



Special place

Paul went on “I recall Historic Kilmun, then known as St Munns church. Every day the school bus that took me to Dunoon Grammar School would stop outside. The daughter of the minister would get on. It was fair to say she was a wee bit less religious than her father! Loch Eck, just a short trek from the stunning Benmore Garden with its golden gates, is a place that will always be special. There are so many myths associated with this body of water. Stories of kelpies and other creatures abound. Loch Eck also had a big part to play in Victorian times with the arrival of the paddle steamers. It is a body of water with a lot of tales to tell as well as incredible views in the watery stillness. The hills and mountains in this part of Cowal might not be the biggest on the west coast but their steep slopes create a feeling of encasement that is rarely matched. Back in the Victorian era there were many paddle steamers shuttling up and down the Clyde towards the Holy Loch and Dunoon. The entrepreneurs of Glasgow could leave their grand villas at 7am and be at their desks by nine. It’s a bit more tricky these days!”

There are effectively two routes into Dunoon and Cowal. There’s the passenger and car ferries from Gourock and then there’s the imposing and, occasionally unpassable, Rest and Be Thankful pass on the A83 between Arrochar and Cairndow.

“This part of the world does feel a bit like an island at times but there are so many reasons to visit and it is not just a gateway to the Highlands but a destination in its own right. It’s moulded and influenced me with its magical landscapes. I’d encourage folk to take in this special place on their own grand tours of Scotland!” concluded Paul.

That spirit of wander and wonder that Paul infuses into all of his TV projects found its genesis in the hills of Cowal and Dunoon. No wonder it was a happy childhood!

The Cowal peninsula plays host to two key annual events this Autumn with the Cowalfest (Oct 12-16) walking festival making a welcome return after a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic and the recent Cowal Open Studios (COS) artists’ network holding their ‘open studios weekend’ (Sep 22-25). To find out more about these two landmark weekends visit www.cowalopenstudios.co.uk and www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk/cowalfest where you can book your places on any of the scheduled Cowalfest walks and events.

