



the Scottish Banner



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A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 48 Number 4

NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS

October 2024

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the Scottish Banner

Publisher
Scottish Banner Pty Ltd.

Editor
Sean Cairney

EDITORIAL STAFF
Eric Bryan
Brian Diamond
Nick Drainey
Neil Drysdale
Lady Fiona MacGregor
David McVey
The National Piping Centre
Jim Stoddart
Judy Vickers
David C. Weinczok

Contact:
The Scottish Banner
PO Box 6202
Marrickville South
NSW, 2204
Australia
Tel: (02) 9559-6348
info@scottishbanner.com

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The Banner Says...

Caring for Scotland's castles



by Sean Cairney

Think of Scotland and many will think of tartan, whisky and likely also castles. Those impending fortresses that scream of power, defence and history. The saying 'if these walls could talk' surely has no better place to be said than from inside a castle wall.

Scotland has castles dotted across the country, some are ruinous remains of the past and others are still incredible sights to be seen. Any visitor to Edinburgh cannot help but see the mighty Edinburgh Castle which sits atop an extinct volcano and dominates the city centre, it also has the title of Scotland's most-visited paid-for attraction. Whilst Castle Sween in Argyll is an imposing ruin and thought to be one of the oldest stone castles built in mainland Scotland, dating back to the 1100s.

Every castle has a story to tell

Scotland has had thousands of castles which date back centuries. Every castle has, an often bloody, story to tell and remain an incredibly important part of Scottish history and culture. Caring for these iconic seats of power is a challenge that Scotland takes seriously. The hard-fought battles of the past have taken on a new meaning as these heritage sites future proof these iconic, but expensive, places of the past for future generations to enjoy and learn from. Keeping the incredible original construction protected whilst balancing the needs of modern visitors must be a constant, but crucial, demand for those in their care. One of the organisations that care for many of Scotland's castles is the National

Trust for Scotland (NTS). This year marks 40 years since the NTS took stewardship of the 13th century Fyvie Castle in Aberdeenshire, and has recently begun conservation works to enhance the visitor experience.

Conservation project

The castle makes up a part of Scotland's Castle Trail in Aberdeenshire, the region known as 'Scotland's Castle Country'. Fyvie Castle is considered one of the finest examples of Scottish Baronial architecture in the country with an incredible history. The castle has served as a royal stronghold for King William 'The Lion' of Scotland, Robert the Bruce, and served as a home for the infant Charles I.

The saying 'if these walls could talk' surely has no better place to be said than from inside a castle wall.

Essential conservation works have also begun at the 15th century Kisimul Castle in the Outer Hebrides. Kisimul Castle was built on an island in Castlebay, on the Isle of Barra and is the seat of the MacNeils of Barra. The castle's unique location has caused logistical challenges with helicopters being used to transport some of the heavy equipment and materials to the site.

Earlier this year Craigievar Castle in Aberdeenshire reopened after a complex 18-month conservation project. One of the best-preserved examples of a tower house castle and often nicknamed 'Scotland's Cinderella Castle', Cragievar is famous for its iconic pink colour scheme, stunning 17th century plaster ceilings and original collections and is now able to again tell its fairytale history to visitors.

In this issue

Castles make up just part of a new drive which has been launched in Argyll which celebrates Gaelic culture. You do not need to speak the language to take in some amazing

spots on the coast of the Gaels which includes nature, history and celebrates Gaelic language.

I recently had the chance to see Scottish actor, writer and singer Alan Cumming live. The BAFTA, Emmy, Tony and Olivier Award winner transported the audience through both Scotland and his career in words and song. Alan is always on the move and his latest announced project sees him taking up the role as Artistic Director of the Pitlochry Festival Theatre from January 2025.

Dr. Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains was confirmed in August 2019 by the Lord Lyon King of Arms as Clan Chief of the Clan and Family Carruthers. The Carruthers are an ancient Scottish family from Annandale in the Scottish Borders and recently gathered at their ancestral lands to inaugurate their first chief in over 200 years.

Keeping these strongholds of the past alive today

Successful shows and films such as *Outlander* have also created a surge in people wanting to see where the past and fantasy intermingled on film. Locations of the hit TV series, which returns soon to television, include Doune Castle (Castle Leoch) and Midhope Castle (Lallybroch) and have seen a huge spike in visitor numbers due to the show. While every tourist on the road to Skye will no doubt stop at one of Scotland's most photographed castles, Eilean Donan Castle, which was in fact rebuilt in the 1930's after being in ruins for hundreds of years. This restoration has made the castle one of the top photo spots in the nation and shows what benefits keeping these strongholds of the past alive today.

I have been renovating my home for over 2 years and it forever feels like an ongoing project. I just cannot imagine what a forever project a historic castle must be, it is however the duty of Scotland to keep these sites protected for those who come after us to enjoy, celebrate and to be part of the future Scottish experience. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

Do you have a favourite Scottish castle? 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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We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Fyvie Castle. Photo: National Trust for Scotland.



Gracing our front cover: The Pierhouse Hotel, Argyll. Photo: Phil Wilkinson.

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SCOT POURRI

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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?

Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.2 Novice Juvenile B World Champions



Photo: Facebook.

Over 200 bands competed across 9 grades at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland. This year, 4 Victorian bands ventured over to Glasgow to share their music - Old Scotch Pipes and Drums (Grade 3B), Ambulance Victoria Pipes and Drums (Grade 4B), Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.1 (Novice Juvenile A), and Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.2 (Novice Juvenile B). Well done to all bands. To have so many bands play in the World's is simply fabulous and a reflection of the vibrant pipe band community in Victoria. A huge congratulations to Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.2 band who have been crowned Novice Juvenile B World Champions! A simply brilliant result.

Due to an administrative error all the results for Novice B were withdrawn from the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) website. As many will now be aware, the results announced for this grade on the day were subsequently deemed erroneous as they had been entered incorrectly. After an urgent review of all results, the RSPBA has just announced corrected results for Novice B and Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.2 were declared World Champions. And true champions they are. In their qualifying heat the band scored 1st from all four judges (1,1,1,1). In the final, they scored three 1st and a 2nd (1,1,2,1).

Of course, there will be tremendous excitement at Scotch College. I am sure there will now be huge celebrations for the boys, staff, tutors and band families. Pipe Bands Victoria certainly looks forward to acknowledging the band's World Championship success at a contest during the upcoming season.

Congratulations also to Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.1 band coming 3rd in Novice A, just pipped for 2nd place by 1 point by West Lothian Schools. The No.1 band's Drum Corps placed 1st at the European Championships (held in Perth) the week prior, coming 2nd at the World's. A fabulous result too. This is the 2nd year in a row that a World Championship title has come back to Victoria, with Haileybury (Grade 3B) and Scots School Albury (Grade 4B) winning their grades last year.

Again, well done to Scotch College Pipes and Drums - both No.2 and No.1 bands. We so look forward to hearing you play across the 2024-25 Victorian Contest Season.

My congratulations also to:

- Old Scotch Pipes and Drums placed 14th (out of 22) in Grade 3B, with a tied score for 12th and 13th preferred back to Ensemble. Well done Old Scotch!!
- Ambulance Victoria Pipes and Drums (Grade 4B) played in the qualifying heats on Saturday morning, but didn't quite make the finals. You did us proud. It's about being there.

You know we'd love to see you in the contest circle locally again!! (Hint: look at the new Grade 4B rule for "shared" players).

I extend my final congratulations to Australian bands:

- Grade 2: Pipe Band Club - 3rd
- Grade 3B: Brisbane Boys Old Collegians Pipe Band - 8th
- Grade 4B: New South Wales Highlanders played in the qualifying heats
- Novice A: Brisbane Boys College Pipe Band - 4th

Karen J Wallace
Chair, Pipe Bands Victoria
Australia

Ed note: Thank you for your great round up of Australian bands at the Worlds this year. Our September issue went to press before the administrative error was announced. The Scottish Banner joins you in congratulating not only Scotch College Pipes and Drums No.2 for their great result, but also all the international bands that travelled to Glasgow and represented their home nations so well.

and imposing battlements, Caerlaverock has been the scene of numerous historical sieges and battles, echoing the tumultuous history of the Scotland-England border.

Did you know? Caerlaverock was the stronghold of the Maxwell family and even withstood a siege by the mighty King Edward I of England in 1300. Despite its formidable defences, the castle eventually succumbed but still stands majestically today, surrounded by a nature reserve that is as peaceful as the castle's past was war-torn.

Thomas Lamont
The Kilted Photographer
Falkirk, Scotland

Caerlaverock Castle



Nestled in the southern reaches of Scotland, this unique triangular fortress has stood as a testament to medieval military architecture since the 13th century. With its moat, twin-towered gatehouse,

Halloween



Wi' fire banked up, nice and redd;
When aw the weans are washed and fed
And pit aw' tae cosy bed,
Save wee Jock.
He's jined the spirits o' the dead
This late o'clock.

As clouds across the moon did wander
Hoolets screamed their mournful render,
Spirits of the after-world did enter
Wee Jocky's life.
Spirits of all kinds and gender,
This Halloween strife.

Warlocks by their hunert came
An ghosties tae, jined in the game
Wi others yet of equal fame.
"Wa's like us!"
An' uninvited spirits came
By spectral bus.

Blackened ghouls wi' brownies came
And other yins o' equal fame
Joined wizards, bodachs wantin name.
A richt strawmash!
A vulgar mix in hellish vein,
Aw jined the bash.

"Fu fa ma crummocks," Jocky said.
"This hellum, bellum blows ma head.
A think a'll tak me back tae bed.
What think ye?"
Synne Jock he finished wi' the dead
In time fur tea.

Kennedy Smith
Scotland

Thank you

As past president of the Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia I wish to thank you for the wonderful job you do with *the Scottish Banner*. As *ceann tìghe* (chieftain) and *emeritus* representative for Clan Lamont's Chief, Peter Noel Lamont of that Ilk, on the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, I would also like to thank you.

Dr George Burden
Nova Scotia, Canada

Ed note: Thank you Dr Burden for your kind note of thanks, much appreciated from leaders of the international Scottish community.

The World Pipe Band Championships



Thank you *Scottish Banner* for the round up of the 2024 World Pipe Band Championships. It is always great to read about the day and see the results. Your September cover is also a brilliant choice and it is so

heartening to see our next generation keeping the culture and traditions alive. I feel it is so important to let our kids, and grandkids, know about the past of their bloodline. As we Scots moved around the globe we have given much to the world, including some of our customs. But regardless of how far back you go with it, if Scotland is in you it's in you!

I enjoy reading about all the news and events you offer and thank you again for this issue which celebrated the best in pipes and drums.

Yours aye,
George Buchanan
Melbourne, Florida
USA

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Crail



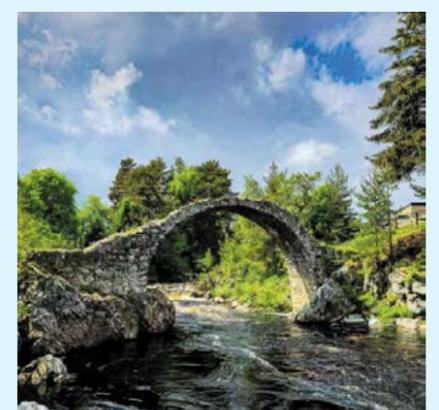
The historic fishing village of Crail in the East Neuk of Fife.
Fly - Caledonia

Isle of Lewis



Stunning day at Tiumpan Head, Isle of Lewis.
Mik Coia

Carrbridge Packhorse Bridge



Carrbridge Packhorse Bridge, also known as Coffin Bridge, is a bridge in the village of Carrbridge. The bridge was built in 1717 to allow funeral processions to reach Duthil Church by crossing the River Dulnain.
Eadietam

East Lothian



Lovely day at Bass Rock, from Berwick Law, in East Lothian.
Derek A Grist

Stonehenge origins search heats up as Orkney ruled out



The Altar Stone, seen here underneath two bigger Sarsen stones. Photo: Professor Nick Pearce, Aberystwyth University.

Scientists' search for the source of Stonehenge's iconic Altar Stone has intensified, with a new paper ruling out Orkney as where it came from. The new findings follow last month's news (*Scotland's link to Stonehenge, the Scottish Banner*, September, 2024) that the largest "bluestone" at the heart of Stonehenge came from the Orcadian Basin of north-eastern Scotland, and not from Wales as previously thought. Construction at Stonehenge began 5,000 years ago, with changes and additions to the ancient site happening over the next two millennia.

Although it is unclear when the Altar Stone arrived at Stonehenge, it may have been placed within the world-renowned central horseshoe of stones during the

second construction phase at around 2620 – 2480 BC. With many Neolithic monuments, and having the right geological features, Orkney seemed a likely candidate for the source of the Altar Stone.

North-east of Scotland

Published in the *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, the new research examined both the five exposed Neolithic-age stones at the Stones of Stenness and seven others at the Ring of Brodgar on mainland Orkney, similar in size and rock type to the Altar Stone. The research concludes that the six-tonne Altar Stone at the heart of the ancient site was not sourced from Mainland Orkney but elsewhere within north-eastern Scotland.

Professor Richard Bevins from Aberystwyth University, the lead author of the new study, has been investigating Stonehenge for the last 15 years. He said: "The mystery of where the stone came from is becoming clearer and clearer as we begin to rule out specific areas in north-east Scotland. This research is radically changing our thinking about the origins of the Altar Stone. It's thrilling to know that our chemical analysis and dating work is slowly unlocking this great mystery. The Altar Stone is anomalous in many ways to both the bluestones and the sarsens at Stonehenge. Whilst, at six tonnes, it is nowhere near the size of the sarsens, it is substantially larger than the bluestones, with which it has previously been classed. It lies in an unusual position at the monument, occupying a near central location and not within either the Bluestone Circle or the Bluestone Horseshoe. It is also grey-green sandstone, unlike all the other bluestone rock types. As an academic, I have been fascinated by Stonehenge for decades. I and my other colleagues in the team will continue to work to pin down where exactly in the north-east of Scotland the Altar Stone came from."

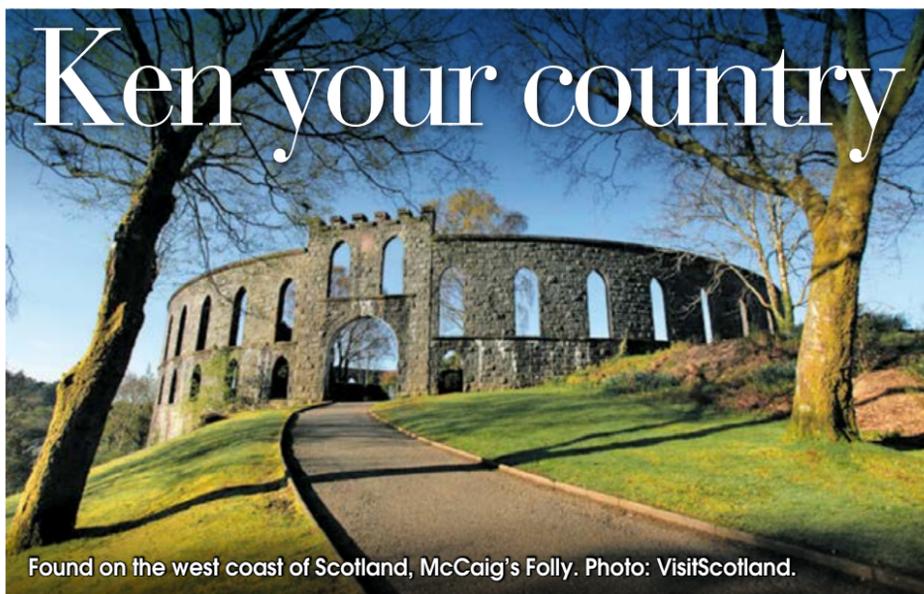
The new research adds to findings by Aberystwyth University and other UK and Australian scientists published last month in *Nature* that concluded that the Altar Stone came from north-eastern Scotland. In turn, this built on previous Aberystwyth University research that ruled out its Welsh origins and suggested that it should no longer be classified as a bluestone.

Number of Scottish households continue to increase



In 2023, there were an estimated 2.54 million households, 14% more than 20 years ago, according to figures published by National Records of Scotland (NRS). The 0.8% increase in the number of households between 2022 and 2023 represented the highest annual growth rate since 2008. Over the last twenty years the number of households increased in every council area. The largest percentage increases were in East Lothian (28%), Midlothian (27%) and Orkney Islands (26%). Census data for 2022 shows more than a third (37%) of households comprised one person living alone.

Sandy Taylor, Head of Household Statistics said: "These statistics show a continuation of the trends of rising numbers of households and more single person households. A total of 930,000 or one sixth of the population live alone. Scotland has the highest percentage of single person households in the UK. The ageing population is driving this growth as older people are more likely to live alone." Of the 2.72 million dwellings in Scotland in 2023, 92,500 (3%) were vacant and 24,000 (1%) were second homes.



Found on the west coast of Scotland, McCaig's Folly. Photo: VisitScotland.

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

- 1) What type of clothing was banned in Scotland in 1746?
- 2) Who created the famous detective Sherlock Holmes?
- 3) What is a clarsach?
- 4) In Scotland it's often known as a dunnock, what is it?
- 5) What was *The Kilmarnock Edition*?
- 6) Holyrood Palace is at one end of the Royal Mile. What building is at the opposite end?

- 7) In which west-coast town would you find McCaig's Folly?
- 8) What are the Five Sisters of entail?
- 9) In what year did the Edinburgh Festival start? a) 1947, b) 1949 or c) 1951?
- 10) Who wrote *The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie*?

Answers:

- 1) The kilt.
- 2) Edinburgh born Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.
- 3) A type of harp.
- 4) A hedge sparrow.
- 5) A collection of poems by Robert Burns.
- 6) Edinburgh Castle.
- 7) Oban.
- 8) Mountains in Glen Shiel.
- 9) a) 1947.
- 10) Muriel Spark.

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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.



Bronze Age jet necklace discovered at Balgay. Image © National Museums Scotland.

"We're delighted to be loaning this exceptional necklace and bracelet to The McManus. The painstaking work undertaken by National Museums Scotland researchers and conservators has been truly special and allows us to travel back in time and experience these important Bronze Age objects as they would have been seen thousands of years ago. Through collaboration with colleagues from Leisure & Culture Dundee, we can now explore the previously untold story of the Balgay burial. We're grateful for the generous support which allows National Museums Scotland to continue to share the National Collection with audiences across the country, bringing these remarkable moments in Scottish history to life in a tangible and inspiring way."

Matthew Knight, Senior Curator of Prehistory at National Museums Scotland, said as an early Bronze Age necklace and bracelet have been painstakingly restored by experts at National Museums Scotland. The jewellery will be seen in its original form for the first time in over 4000 years when it went on

display at The McManus: Dundee's Art Gallery & Museum in September. Forty-two jet beads and nine jet 'plates' were discovered in a Bronze Age burial at the former Balgay Estate, near Dundee in 1870. At the time, the Balgay Estate extended as far as the shoreline of the River Tay. For over a century the loose beads were thought to come from a single piece of jewellery, but recent research by Dr Alison Sheridan, Research Associate at National Museums Scotland, has revealed they belong to a matching necklace and bracelet set. In-depth analysis has allowed conservators to accurately recreate 66 unique missing beads and restring the jewellery in its original Bronze Age formation. Gentle wear on the larger plates shows the jewellery was frequently worn and treasured, most likely by a woman of status.

"The Montrose Letter is a unique survivor from the Battle of Justice Mills, providing a wonderfully tangible connection to this turbulent chapter in Aberdeen's history. I encourage everyone to come along to meet members of The Sealed Knot, the UK's oldest re-enactment society. They will be bringing history to life at Provost Skene's House, Aberdeen's oldest surviving townhouse, which dates from 1545. Visitors will be able to see the 380-year-old Montrose Letter and meet soldiers from the Royalist forces of the Marquis of Montrose and the Covenanter forces of Lord Burleigh."

Cllr Martin Greig, Aberdeen City Council's culture spokesperson, said as one of the most remarkable items kept by Aberdeen

City Archives, the Montrose Letter, went on display at Provost Skene's House to coincide with the 380th anniversary of the Battle of Justice Mills, sometimes known as the 'Battle of Aberdeen'. On 13 September 1644 over 100 Aberdonians suffered violent deaths when the town was ravaged by soldiers belonging to the Royalist army of James Graham, 1st Marquis of Montrose, the author of the letter. King Charles I's Royalists were locked in a struggle with the staunchly Protestant Covenanting forces of the Scottish government. Aberdeen was in Covenanting hands at the time. When Montrose's force arrived on the outskirts of the town the Council sent a 2,000-strong army to oppose them. Montrose then put pen-to-paper. His letter was written in a hurried scrawl and in it he threateningly demanded the surrender of the town. The Provost and his officials, who were gathered to write a response at a house on The Green, refused to surrender. The Battle of Justice Mills commenced and in the three days that followed, the Royalist forces mercilessly pursued and terrorised the town's inhabitants.



"The Open Book has been a way of opening our doors to the world and because of that the world has been coming to Wigtown, and they love it. I'll normally put a little notice up on Facebook, with a bit about the new guests, and just say 'Wigtown weave your magic', and it does."

Joyce Cochrane, of Wigtown's Old Bank Bookshop, said as Wigtown's charity-run Open Book Airbnb bookshop turned ten. The Airbnb has become an international sensation since welcoming its first holidaymakers in August 2014. Nearly 450 guests have enjoyed the chance to take time out of their lives to have the highly unusual experience of running their own bookshop in Scotland's National Book Town, in the far west of rural Galloway. Joyce meets and greets guests, shows them round the town, and then offers to put their pictures up on a local Facebook group.

"In 2025, the Orkney International Island Games will be the largest multi-sports event anywhere in Europe, providing a unique platform to showcase Orkney – from its natural beauty and welcoming people to its amazing products and future-facing businesses and industries."

Orkney 2025 Games Chair Gordon Deans said as Orkney gets ready to welcome over 2,000 competitors and officials from across the world as hosts of the International Island Games. Orkney will host the 20th International Island Games in its landmark 40th year since it first began, joining other host alumni, including Bermuda, Gotland, Gibraltar, and Guernsey. The Games, taking place from 12 to 18 July 2025, will bring together athletes from 24 island groups to compete in 12 sports: archery, athletics, badminton, cycling, football, golf, gymnastics, lawn bowls, sailing, squash, swimming, and triathlon.



"Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is really proud to be part of the Kilbeg community project, offering people of all ages, from all economic backgrounds, the opportunity to buy or rent a property or self-build plot at an affordable price, right next to our vibrant Gaelic campus community. This new development is the perfect place to share the Gaelic language and culture across generations and it aligns closely with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's mission to promote the language through immersion, world-class education, research and cultural opportunities."

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, Chairman Angus MacInnes said applications are open for 17 new homes in Sleat as Phase 2 of the Kilbeg development, the first new village in Skye in over 100 years, nears completion. Around 100 homes in total are expected to be built in Kilbeg over time. Given its proximity to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, it is expected that the development will attract Gaelic speakers or learners of all ages, though the homes will be open to all with a need to live or work in the area.

2024 US National Scottish Harp Championships



The Learned Kindred of Currie salutes the 2024 US National Scottish Harp Champion,

Rhiannon Ramsey-Brimberg. The event was held in September at the Ligonier Highland Games in Pennsylvania.

Learned Kindred of Currie is the Title Sponsor of the US National Scottish Harp Championship and this month The Learned Kindred of Currie is proud to sponsor the Scottish harp event at Scotland Connecticut Highland Festival & Games as well as the Young Adult Literature Prize at the Royal National Mòd in Scotland. Learned Kindred of Currie also supports events like The Pipes of Christmas, Tartan Day on Ellis Island and scholarships to young people around the world.

SCOTWORD

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

CLUES ACROSS

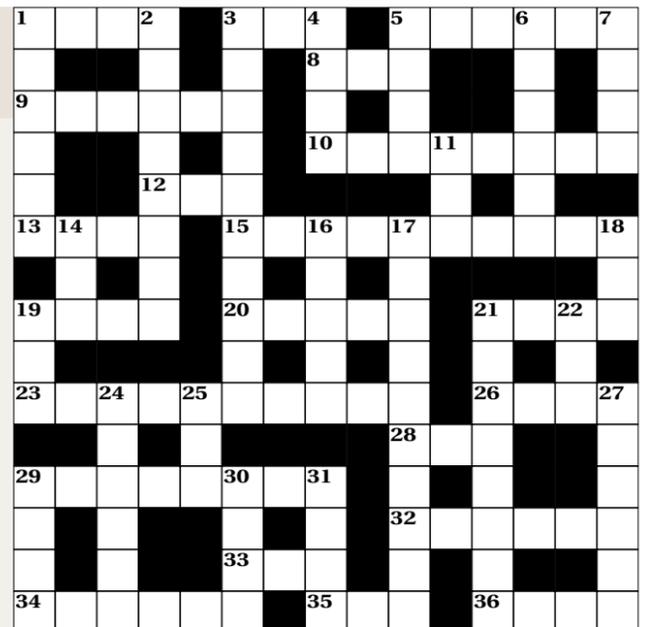
- 1) Scottish fuel (4).
- 3) A Scots bread roll (3).
- 5) Dark purple plum (6).
- 8) Whichever (3).
- 9) Pertaining to Scotland's "anthem" (6).
- 10) Scotland's top islands (8).
- 12) Distress call (3).
- 13) Over hasty (4).
- 15) A drinking hole! (10).
- 19) Tattie's partner (4).
- 20) A hopeful glow! (5).
- 21) Scotland's fastest river (4).
- 23) Old vessels (10).
- 26) Blairgowrie's beny (4).

- 28) A starter at St. Andrews (3).
- 29) Mrs Brown! (8).
- 32) A dram of about a gill (6).
- 33) Always in Scotland (3).
- 34) Annual festival (6).
- 35) Bottom of the class! (3).
- 36) Male red deer (4).

CLUES DOWN

- 1) Para Handy's craft (6).
- 2) Village (8).
- 3) January 25th (5,5).
- 4) Scottish conical hills (4).
- 5) Scots stone wall (4).
- 6) Wrench a joint (6).

- 7) Necessity (4).
- 11) Dancers point it (3).
- 14) Loch near Dalmally (3).
- 16) She's kin (5).
- 17) They give final reports (10).
- 18) Farmer's gathering! (3).
- 19) Scotch measure (3).
- 21) Requirement of a heavy! (8).
- 22) Printer's measures (3).
- 24) Perth's two measures! (6).
- 25) In the past (3).
- 27) Measure of 26 Across (6).
- 29) Scots valley (4).
- 30) At Hampden it's loud! (4).
- 31) Stretch of territory (4).



Lady MacGregor's Scotland

By: Lady Fiona MacGregor



Gathering of the Local Clans & Families in Annan.



The Sir Hugh Dowding Memorial in Moffat.

Lady MacGregor of MacGregor – otherwise known as British writer and broadcaster Fiona Armstrong - works for ITV news and current affairs. Fiona's husband is the Chief of Clan Gregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor. She is an active member of Clan Armstrong, so their lives are interwoven with all things tartan. The couple live in the Scottish Borderlands, although filming and writing takes Fiona all over Scotland.



a reputation for long life, with at least four venerable ladies all over the age of 100 being based there. It must be the water.

Because Moffat is a former spa town, one of just a handful in Scotland. In Victorian times they came from far and wide in search of the elixir of youth. To imbibe from sulphurous and saline springs that were thought to have healing properties. They found a quiet, quaint place. Moffat residents were described as 'particularly clean and decent,' whilst their language was 'among the best samples of English to be found in any Scottish village.'

Hero war pilots

And so, I find myself in this model town, mixing with the great and the good, at a ceremony to remember a famous son. Hugh Dowding was born in Moffat in 1882. He joined the royal air force and rose through the ranks in World War One.

By the time of the next war, he was Commander-in-Chief of 'Fighter Command', a team of squadrons formed to take on the Luftwaffe. These young pilots came into their own during the Battle of Britain when, day after day, they took to the skies to repel Nazi planes. It was a turning point in the conflict. These terrible months of combat in 1940 effectively ended the threat of German invasion. Sir Hugh Dowding, then Lord Dowding,

had earned his name as 'the architect of deliverance'. As Prime Minister Winston Churchill famously said of Battle of Britain pilots: 'never before has so much been owed by so many to so few'. So, there we were, in Moffat, laying wreaths at a specially designed memorial to the great man. As Lord-Lieutenant, I put mine down on behalf of The King. It was a moving ceremony.

Meanwhile, another hero pilot was being recognised here in the south of Scotland as I helped welcome a delegation from the Czech Republic who were visiting the Dumfries and Galloway Aviation Museum. The group which included the Czech Minister of Defence, were there to see a Spitfire which crashed into a Scottish loch during WW2. The little plane was on a training mission and was being flown by Frantisek Hekl who was serving with 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron, based at RAF Ayr. Some decades later volunteers from the museum pulled the wreckage from Loch Doon and restored the Spitfire. Hekl's body was never found, but there the Czech government has plans to put a memorial to him by the water.

Gathering of the Clans

Finally, Highland Games are generally more associated with just that – the Highlands. Yet congratulations must go

to the town of Annan which staged a very successful Borderland tartan day. This 'Gathering of the Clans' featured several clan chiefs and chieftains, among them south of Scotland families the Carruthers, Irvings and Hannays - and the Armstrongs, of course. Which is my maiden name, although I wore the MacGregor tartan for the day. There were pipe bands, there was re-enactment, and the Chieftain for the day was a local lad. Professor David Thomson was born in the south of Scotland. He went on to set up a worldwide research business. Yet he still finds time to help his home country. For a start, he has restored the Annan's reputation for making whisky.

The Annandale Distillery opened back in 1936 and was closed in 1918. David and his wife, Teresa, have bought and renovated the place which is now making award-winning spirits. They have restored The Globe Inn, Robert Burns' favourite 'howff' in Dumfries. David is a Burns' aficionado, an ambassador of the Robert Burns World Federation. The philanthropy continues. The couple have plans to develop a 'Burns' Quarter' in Dumfries. They have saved and restored the world's first savings bank museum and are busy restoring Comlongen Castle, a former Murray stronghold. A formidable couple – so watch this space!

Greetings from Scotland - a reasonably dry place at the moment, but as you will know if you are lucky enough to have been here, our weather can change in a flash... And least the lack of sun keeps us wrinkle-free, and it might also add to longevity. This month I hear of a number of centenarians living in a nearby small town. Moffat is ten miles to the north.

Tucked up in the hills, it is known for toffee, tourism and a tartan mill. It also has its fair share of rain – and now it is getting

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Get into the Spirit in Scotland

Scotch whisky is one of the world's favourite spirits, with a global reach to every continent. No trip to Scotland is complete without a distillery visit to learn how your favourite 'drams' are produced. As of May 2024, there were 151 operating Scotch whisky distilleries across Scotland, with more in the pipeline. *The Scottish Banner* has teamed up with VisitScotland, Scotland's national tourism organisation, to offer just a taste of what's in store for whisky lovers at some of the many distilleries old and new across the country's five whisky producing regions.

Highlands

Mainland Scotland's most northerly distillery, 8 Doors Distillery located in John O'Groats opened in September 2022. The team here create whiskies from the very edge of Scotland that reflect the location and the local climate, and the distillery and visitor centre have been carefully designed to make the most of the amazing coastal views-www.8doorsdistillery.com. If you like stunning views with your whisky, then don't miss Scapa Distillery's amazing new Scapa Noust tasting room in the Orkney islands. Noust is Scots for a boat-shaped hollow, and the tasting room ceiling is shaped like an upturned boat. The cliff top location provides spectacular views over the vast natural harbour of Scapa Flow and the landscapes beyond-www.scapawhisky.com.

A visit to a Scottish island is always a magical experience, and if you follow the Hebridean Whisky Trail, you'll discover seven varied island distilleries including the newest addition: North Uist Distillery-www.hebrideanwhisky.com. Back on the mainland, Nc'Neen Distillery, named after the ancient Gaelic goddess Neachneohain, is located on the beautiful Morvern Peninsula. The distillery has a strong sustainability ethos – it's powered by 100% renewable energy, and only organic Scottish barley is used in the production of their smooth and elegant whiskies-www.ncnean.com.

Speyside



Speyside Cooperage.

The famous Malt Whisky Trail takes in Speyside's wealth of well-known distilleries and includes Speyside Cooperage where visitors can experience the precision and expertise required to produce Scotland's iconic casks-www.maltwhiskytrail.com, www.speysidecooperage.co.uk.

Although opened just a year ago, the team at Dunphail Distillery near Forres is committed to crafting their full-bodied whiskies using traditional distilling methods. Located in a former farm steading in stunning Moray countryside, Dunphail offers visitors the chance to learn how the methods of the past are shaping

the whiskies of the future, and to sample fine whiskies that have been specially selected for their Dunphail Distillery connections-www.dunphaildistillery.com. Lying at the heart of the Cairngorms National Park, Cairn Distillery opened in October 2022. Although their first whiskies won't be ready until the 2030s, they offer a range of CRN57° blended malts to give visitors a taste of what's coming. Distillery experiences are available, there's The Gathering for tasty food and refreshments, browse their shop, or just take a walk along the River Spey on their outdoor trails-www.thecairndistillery.com.

Islay



Ardnahoe Distillery, Photo: VisitScotland/Kenny Lam.

Islay's oldest licensed distillery is Bowmore Distillery, taking its name from the island's main town. Bowmore is a pioneering distillery, where the traditions, skills and expertise crafted in 1779 during the earliest days of Scotch whisky continue to be handed down. In one of the world's oldest Scotch maturation warehouses, Bowmore single malts have been meticulously matured and transformed for over 240 years-www.bowmore.com. In contrast, one of the newest distilleries on Islay is Ardnahoe Distillery – a family run business borne from decades of experience in the blending and bottling industry. The distillery takes its name from the Scots Gaelic for 'heights of the hollow', perfectly describing its setting, with views across to the Isle of Jura-www.ardnaoedistillery.com. Fèis Ìle - The Islay Festival - is an annual gathering of whisky and Islay fans from

across the globe. The event celebrates Islay, her culture and her spirit. The 2025 event will take place from 23rd to 31st May-www.feisile.co.uk

Lowland



Rosebank Distillery. Photo: Visit Falkirk.

The town of Falkirk is enjoying a whisky renaissance with the reopening of Rosebank Distillery, originally opened in 1840, and which recently restarted whisky production after a 30-year hiatus. This cherished distillery is well regarded by whisky connoisseurs and should be on the itinerary for any whisky lover coming to Scotland-www.rosebank.com. Leith was once an important whisky trading port, and the opening of the Port of

Leith Distillery in 2023 saw the return of the spirit to this historic part of Edinburgh. The UK's first vertical distillery, it sits adjacent to The Royal Yacht Britannia. Whisky will be created using a vertical production process, and visitors will enjoy bird's eye views from the chic top floor bar-www.leithdistillery.com.



Glengoyne Distillery, Photo: VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins.

Lying in a hidden glen at the foot of the Campsie Hills between Glasgow and Loch Lomond, Glengoyne Distillery has often been described as the most beautiful distillery in Scotland. Fully powered by renewable energy, Glengoyne offers visitors the unique opportunity to create your very own single malt in the Sample Room-www.glengoyne.com.

Campbeltown



Springbank Distillery, Campbeltown. Photo: VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins.

Established in 1828, Springbank is the oldest independent and family-owned distillery in Scotland and is the only distillery to carry out the entire whisky production process on its premises-www.springbank.scot. Springbank's sister distillery is Glengyle, reimagined in the early 21st century, and today producing Kilkerran single malt-www.kilkerran.scot. Glen Scotia Distillery has been producing distinctive single malts since 1832. The distillery maintains much of its original design, including the fermenters, stillhouse and warehouse. A dram of Glen Scotia offers a window through time to a traditional Campbeltown signature whisky-www.glenscotia.com. The Kintyre Peninsula is also home to Beinn an Tuirc Distillers, named after the nearby highest point in Kintyre, translating from Scots Gaelic as 'hill of the wild boar'. The distillery produces gin, vodka, rum and brandy, and you can even enjoy a stay at the distillery owners' home - Torrisdale Castle Estate-www.kintyregin.com.

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KINGS CASTLES AND “DURTY” WEE RASCALS

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



A Mysterious Medieval Keep

*Gloomy Winter's Now awa,
Saft the westlan breezes blaw
Mang the birks o Stanely Shaw'
The Mavis sings fu cheerie, O'
Gloomy winter's now awa,
Robert Tannahill, 1807.*



Stanley Castle.
Photo: Victor Nelson/ CC BY-SA 2.0.

Other than Crookston Castle, there were other medieval relics close to where I lived in Pollok. One of these medieval keeps or manor houses was fenced off from us children to prohibit access. It was obviously dangerous. Many years later with more knowledge of local history I thought it might have been the keep of Blackall about half a mile from Paisley. Nevertheless, I always believed the place we had discovered as twelve-year-olds lay out far west of the Hurllet. Blackall is thought to have been built by Walter Fitzalan who had accompanied the pious King David I to Scotland in 1141; he and his descendants were later destined to become the hereditary High Stewards and finally the Stewart or Stuart, Kings of Scotland. It was said to have been built not far from the south bank of the White Cart and near to Paisley and afterwards served the Stewarts as a hunting lodge. T.C.F. Brotchie, writing about Blackall in his rambles around Glasgow in the 1930's, mentions that its ruins were being used ignominiously as a byre by the farm of Blackall. My memory does not include any kind of farm buildings when we may have seen it in the late 1940's or early 1950's. But his fine little sketch made for an illustration in *The Borderlands of Glasgow*, in the 1920's or 1930's certainly looks very familiar.

I also thought about another possibility, that it might have been the fortalice of Rais Tower not Blackall Keep, but that is even more unlikely because it is said to have been almost totally destroyed and its stone re-cycled by enterprising masons from Barrhead long before my childhood. It once lay only about a mile from where I lived. It is first mentioned in the records

in 1250 and the Stewarts of Darnley were still in possession of it at the close of the fifteenth century. It later belonged to the Logans of Rais in the 17th century and eventually a family called Halrig. Brotchie says that as late as 1782 a great part of the tower was still standing with its battlements and cornices. Again, a little sketch of what Brotchie saw and used in his book shows us something much less than what my friends and I saw that summer day in childhood. Unless of course we were given a magical vision of what this fortalice had once been by the many spirits who undoubtedly once inhabited it.

Medieval Pollok

We of course climbed through and over the fence to view this ancient structure more closely no matter what or where it was. It had no roof, but the four walls were still standing, mainly whole. It was impressive and I made what I thought at the time was an exciting discovery.

Amongst the nettles and other weeds on the floor I found a large ruby. It looked like a cut gemstone. I immediately thought with childish enthusiasm that I had found a jewel that had fallen out of a queen's crown or perhaps a medieval treasure chest. I pocketed it and when I took it home to show my parents I thought that they would have got just as excited as me about such a find. They didn't. My father instead gave it a cursory test against the glass of the window and declared that it was coloured glass, a piece of costume jewellery. Maybe it was the gold colour on the back that gave the show away. I kept it nonetheless for a few years. It then got forgotten, was finally lost or thrown away or maybe ended up in the dust bag of my mother's Goblin vacuum cleaner. It has remained a mystery to me, how such an object, whatever its value, had ended up on the floor of a fenced-off medieval keep. I would still have liked to re-test it today to put my mind at rest.

Even so, some time ago, whilst back on holiday in Scotland, medieval Pollok came suddenly back into focus. I came across an old, tattered book of poems by Robert Tannahill, the weaver poet of Paisley, lying carelessly amongst the bric a brac and other books on a stall at 'The Barras' in Glasgow. I had become interested in Tannahill because he had written poems about some of the places I knew as a child, including Crookston Castle. But it was the small fading gold-leaf picture on the cover that first caught my eye for it looked like very much like Crookston Castle. It wasn't but nevertheless it seemed very familiar. I picked the book up and on closer inspection it turned out to be, Stanely Castle, a name that I was unfamiliar with. I opened the book to find that it not only contained Tannahill's poems and songs but some of his correspondence and a lot of biographical information as well. It was written by David Semple, F.S.A. in 1875 whose lithographic picture of himself and his words seemed to reach out to me immediately as an ex-patriot Scot back on holiday. *To the sons and daughters of Paisley, born and adopted, at home and*

abroad, this edition of Tannahill's poems and songs with notes and life of the author is respectfully dedicated by the editor, David Semple. I can neither claim to be a son of Paisley nor to have lived there in order to claim full adoption, but I was raised so close to the town and walked there so often with my friends as a child, that I can claim some affiliation, never mind some tenuous adoption. I lived on the extreme western edge of the Pollok housing scheme and much closer to the centre of Paisley than I did to central Glasgow.

The lands between Pollok and Paisley and towards the Glennifer Braes were our stomping grounds as children and it was only because Glasgow Corporation public transport all went east and north rather than west to Paisley that the town didn't figure more largely in our lives for entertainment such as cinemas and dance halls. Public transport didn't matter, of course, to young lads out walking and looking for adventure. We could and did travel west.

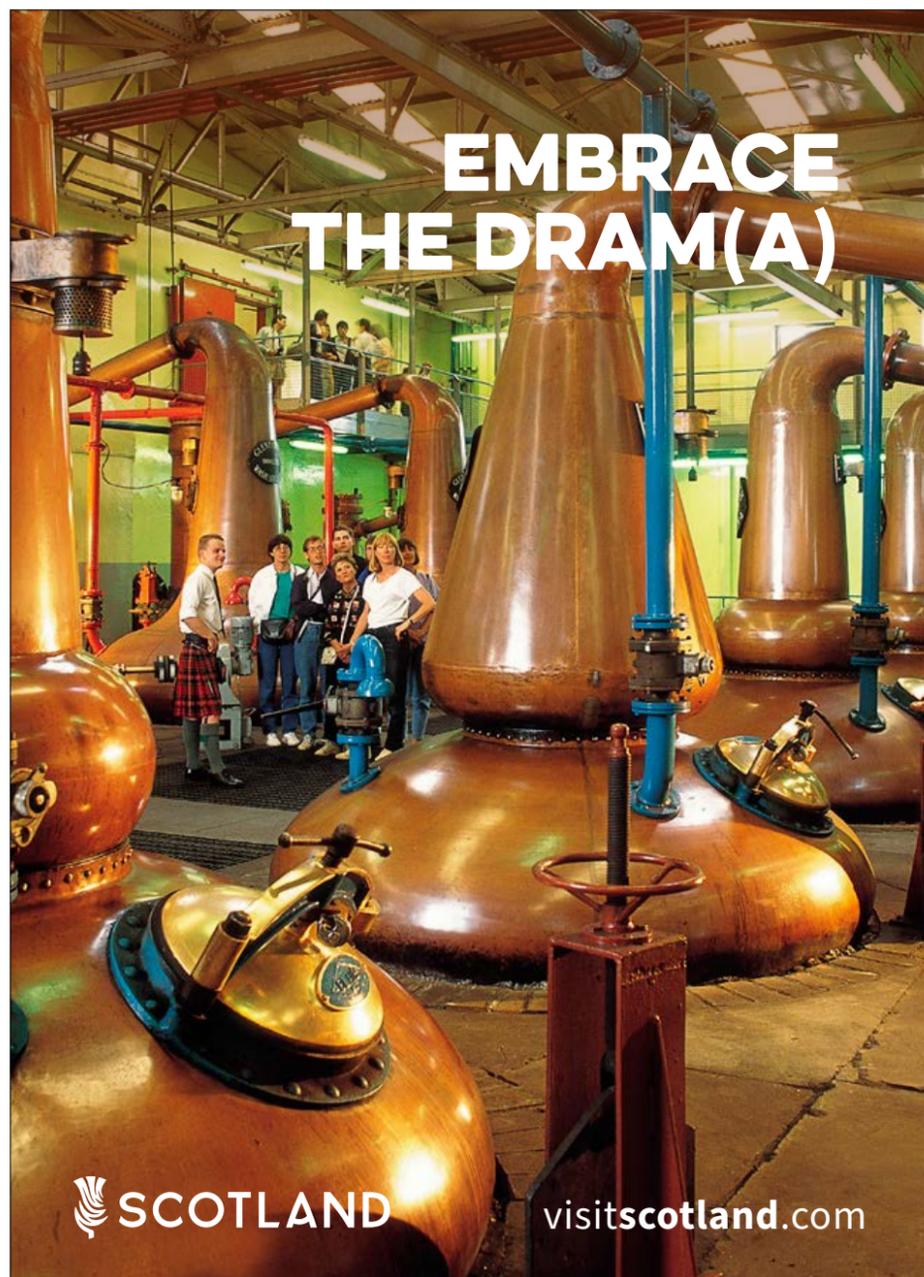
Stanely Castle

That said the old book just about fell open at a page that had a map entitled *Map of the Land of Tannahill, 1810*. No Pollok Housing Scheme existed then, of course, but there was Crookston Castle, Cardonald, Nitshill, the Hurllet, the River Cart, the Lavern Water, the Glennifer Braes and best of all Stanely Castle. A more modern version of the map might just

as well have been called *The Land of Jim Stoddart and His Pals, 1954*. For these environs of Paisley that Tannahill knew well and had written poems and songs about were the places of our boyhood explorations and I felt that I might at last have found my mystery medieval keep. Could it have been Stanely Castle? Was another spirit from the past trying to tell me something?

According to the editor, David Semple, in the middle of the 15th century, the Maxwell family built on their lands, lying between the town of Paisley and the Glennifer Braes, a strong baronial residence, a massive piece of masonry, 40 feet high which became known by the name of Stanely Castle. It was sold by the Maxwells in 1629 to Jean Hamilton, dowager of Robert, fourth Lord Ross, and continued in the Ross-Boyle family's possession until at least 1875, the time at which Semple was writing. He further tells us that the roof was taken off in 1714 when the "auld castle's turrets and the inside of the building were exposed to the inclemency of the weather". That's exactly how I remember our mysterious medieval keep on or about 1954 on venturing toward the Braes of Glennifer for day trips and camping and where Robert Tannahill in 1806 put these thoughts to verse.

*Keen blaws the wind o'er the braes o' Glennifer,
The auld castle's turrets are covered wi' snaw;
How changed frae the time when I met wi' my lover
Among the brume bushes by Stanely Green Shaw.*



IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Glasgow bid for 2026 Commonwealth Games

Commonwealth Games Scotland (CGS) has secured support from Scottish and UK governments for its proposed plan for hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. In April, CGS revealed details of an innovative, cost-effective and sustainable concept for the Games without the need for significant public investment.

Since then, CGS has developed the concept with the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) and other stakeholders, including the Scottish and UK governments. A fundamental part and principle of the project is that it does not require - nor has CGS asked for - any underwriting from Scottish or UK governments. Unique to this opportunity, the Games will be funded by private income rather than the public purse, with the majority of costs covered by the CGF, using money secured in a compensation negotiation with the Victorian Government following their withdrawal as hosts in July 2023.

Scotland would be looking to secure £100 million from the Victorian government's money to secure the future of the Commonwealth Games. An additional multi-million-pound investment into upgrading public sporting facilities including maintaining Tollcross as a world-class venue and to ensure the future of Scotstoun as a world-class rugby and athletics venue. The inward investment to the Glasgow and Scottish economies of that magnitude will bring significant benefits, with an anticipated 500,000 tickets available to spectators and an estimated economic value add of over £150 million to the region. Chair of Commonwealth Games Scotland, Ian Reid CBE, said "The Games will undoubtedly look and feel different to the historic events of 10 years ago. However, the circumstances facing us are remarkably different – the 2026 Games hang in the balance and the UK finances are facing tough decisions. But the Games presents a real opportunity for Glasgow and Scotland, giving us the chance to bring wide-ranging benefits to the country and public purse. Scotland has been offered £100m+ of the Victorian Government's money to secure the future of the Commonwealth Games. That is £100m+ of inward investment at a time when there are critical works needed in the city; that investment alone would account for 5% of the overall inward investment into Scotland over the past year. We are confident of delivering a world-class sporting event to packed crowds in Glasgow, with some of the world's sporting stars providing inspirational moments for the millions

of spectators in Scotland, the UK and across the Commonwealth. Glasgow 2014 provided a catalyst for success for many Scottish athletes, including those who won medals at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games; 25 of the 34 Scots on Team GB have competed for Team Scotland at the Commonwealth Games, including six of the nine medallists. The same can be said for many of the Scottish athletes inspiring the nation at the Paralympic Games. For so many in Scottish sport, the Commonwealth Games is a pinnacle – a career highlight, loved by athletes, support staff and fans alike. The Commonwealth Games is the only opportunity for many athletes to compete under the Scottish flag and is a key development stage for our stars on their journey to international success. The Scottish high-performance system is largely designed around the Games, being the biggest stage for many of our sports. This is a unique opportunity for the people of Glasgow and Scotland to be at the centre of a bold vision for the Games."

Glasgow is currently the only city bidding to take on the Games, which have only been cancelled once before during World War II since its 1930 inception.

The Scottish Government has written to CGS to announce its support for their proposal to host the event in 2026. Health Secretary Neil Gray said: "In 2026 all eyes will once again be on Glasgow, and I have every confidence that Scotland's largest city will provide a fitting platform for some of the world's top athletes."

New shipbuilding facility named in honour of female World War II shipyard electrician



Janet Harvey (bottom right) during the Second World War.

The vast new ship build hall that will transform shipbuilding in Glasgow has officially been named the Janet Harvey Hall, after one of the many women who took on industrial jobs when the country needed them most during the Second World War. In 1940, at the age of 18, Janet Harvey joined the workforce to help the war effort as an electrician in the River Clyde's shipyards. Janet played a crucial role in the UK's war effort and was one of just a handful of women working as electricians alongside the 100,000 strong male workforce. At the age of 96, Janet was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Engineering from Glasgow Caledonian University in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Glasgow's shipyards during the war. Poignantly, Janet died on Armistice Day (11 November) in 2023 at the age of 101. The Janet Harvey Hall is currently under construction at BAE Systems' site in Govan. Naming the hall after Janet not only honours her contribution, but also the efforts of all the women who stepped up and became electricians, welders, engineers and platers when the call came. Jen Blee, Business Operations Director of BAE Systems'

Naval Ships business said: "It's fitting that a pioneer such as Janet will remain synonymous with our efforts to re-imagine complex shipbuilding on the upper Clyde. Today, women like Janet are much more commonplace in our yards than they once were and their numbers and impact continues to grow. We owe so much to generations past and will use the wisdom they gave us to create our own legacy for generations to come."

June Cofflet, Janet's niece, added: "Janet would have been absolutely delighted to have the ship build hall named after her. She was so very proud of the work she did during the war. She had great memories of her time working on the Clyde and felt that the work she did made a difference. As a family we are delighted that BAE Systems has chosen our aunt's name to go on the ship build hall, it is a real honour." The hall is a key element of the £300m transformation of BAE Systems' shipbuilding facilities in Glasgow.

Once complete, this vast facility will be large enough for two Type 26 frigates to be constructed side-by-side. It will consist of more than 6,000 tonnes of steel and 20,000m³ of concrete. Once complete, the hall will help enable efficient and safe shipbuilding for decades to come with future work unaffected by adverse weather. With two 100-tonne cranes and two 20-tonne cranes, the facility is designed to accommodate up to 500 workers per shift.

Celebrations for Dunfermline's peacocks and new Coat of Arms



A Dunfermline peacock.

The Lord Lyon with Provost Leishman.

Dunfermline marked a historic day on Wednesday 28 August 2024, with a civic reception at the Glen Pavilion. The event celebrated the unveiling of the city's new Coat of Arms and honoured Pittencrieff Park's peacocks with the Freedom of the City. The evening began with music from the Dunfermline Pipe Band welcoming guests. The Provost of Fife, officially opened the event, highlighting the significance of the day for the city. Provost Leishman said: "Today, we honour our heritage while embracing our future. The new Coat of Arms symbolises Dunfermline's rich history and forward-looking spirit. We're also immensely proud to grant Freedom of the City to our cherished peacocks. Pittencrieff Park and the City of Dunfermline have been synonymous with these beautiful birds for many years."

Dr. Joseph Morrow, the Lord Lyon, King of Arms, presented Dunfermline's new Coat of Arms, saying: "The Coat of Arms is a powerful emblem of identity and pride for Dunfermline. It reflects the city's enduring legacy and its aspirations for the future." Another highlight of the evening was the formal recognition of the Freedom of the City for Dunfermline's peacocks, presented earlier in the day to the volunteers at the Peacock Sanctuary in Pittencrieff Park. Suzi Ross, lead peafowl warden, welcomed the honour

and praised the volunteers: "The Freedom of the City has been something I have desired for a long time, and I am delighted that the birds have the recognition they deserve. They have been such a huge part of Dunfermline's heritage and are much beloved by the community. Our volunteers are extremely dedicated, and we could not do what we do without their support or the unwavering love and support from the community." Peacocks have been associated with Dunfermline since they were introduced in 1905 by philanthropist Henry Beveridge.

"Birthplace of Peter Pan" closes



Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust have announced the closure of the visitor centre in Dumfries. Known as the 'birthplace' of Peter Pan, Moat Brae, was the home of the National Centre for Children's Literature. Moat Brae is a historic Scottish home, was considered the true home of *Neverland*.

Moat Brae House was a site frequently visited by Peter Pan author JM Barrie during his time living in the town between 1873 and 1878. Barrie said he often visited Moat Brae and that the gardens were "enchanted lands" to him, going on to inspire the world of Peter Pan. The site was only reopened as a literary centre in 2019 following over a decade of dedicated work by local people, who had saved Moat Brae from demolition in 2009. The £7.5m regeneration project, which was opened to the public on 1 June 2019, was the culmination of 10 years' work by the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust to save, restore and develop the Category B Listed Moat Brae, which was built in 1832, into a magical world where reading, storytelling and learning through play are celebrated as an integral part of growing up in the belief that such activities improve the life quality of children of all abilities and backgrounds, contribute to social and cultural development and improve human interrelations. Moat Brae officials say it has become "necessary to close" due to running at a loss and lost funding, donor income and legacies as well as being heavily impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. In a statement Moat Brae said "It is with a heavy heart that we announce the imminent closure of the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust and Visitor Centre from Friday 23rd August 2024. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the staff, volunteers, members and many supporters of the Trust for their commitment in bringing the magic of books and storytelling to life for the thousands of visitors who have passed through the doors. Every possible effort and option have been explored by the Trustees and staff of the Moat Brae Peter Pan Trust, therefore it is with deep sadness that we announce the end of operations."

In closing their statement the Trust ended with, "Never say goodbye because saying goodbye means going away and going away means forgetting." – Peter Pan.



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Dál Riata healing



Gaelic's healing heritage gets put back on the map

Sgeir Bhuidhe Lighthouse.

All images courtesy of Phil Wilkinson.

A new drive has been launched to revive the ancient Gaelic healing properties in the heartland of the historic kingdom of Dál Riata – the coast of the Gaels - also known as Argyll and the Isles, on Scotland's west coast. The importance of connecting to nature to boost our wellbeing has been well documented through numerous studies in recent years, but the Gaels have known and embraced these healing properties for thousands of centuries, as recorded throughout history and through Gaelic language and place names.

More recently, the 2021 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey revealed that 70 per cent of those learning Gaelic believed it contributed to their wellbeing.

Ancient Dál Riata heartland

Now members of the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative have come together to ensure that visitors and locals alike can experience Dál Riata's ancient and unique naturally restorative properties for themselves. Launching the drive, Cathy Craig, CEO of the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative (wildaboutargyll.co.uk)

said: "With our breath-taking natural environment, exceptional fresh air, rich flora and fauna, and outstanding array of water sources - from the Atlantic Ocean and lochs to rivers and waterfalls - it is

easy to see why the Gaels would make our destination the capital of their ancient Dál Riata heartland. We've joined forces with our members in a bid to put these ancient restorative properties and our important Gaelic heritage back on the map. We would encourage visitors to follow in the footsteps of the ancient Gaels to really discover the wellbeing benefits that connecting with nature and Gaelic culture can bring. And with a wealth of truly blissful wellbeing experiences for visitors still to experience in Argyll and the Isles to this day, there are so many ways to do this. Argyll and the Isles is truly Scotland's Wellbeing Coast."

Gaelic can provide an extra layer to the authentic Scottish experience.

Open water swimming coach, Emma MacDonald agrees. Having been a visitor for over two decades she now calls Tobermory on the Isle of Mull home. Drawn by its outstanding natural beauty and the warmth of the local community, Emma moved to the island with her husband John, who is a native "Muileach" (the Gaelic name for people from Mull) and their two sons. In 2023 they launched Wild Hebridean Swimming providing wild swimming retreats on the Isles of Mull & Iona, where Saint Columba, who was highly regarded by the Gaels and the Picts, established a monastery that played a key role in the spread of Celtic Christianity throughout northern Britain.

On her retreats, Emma arranges for her swimmers to visit local Ardanish Weavers where they can see a traditional working loom. And new for 2024 is a visit by Cuigeal, a Sgioba Luaidh (a waulking group)

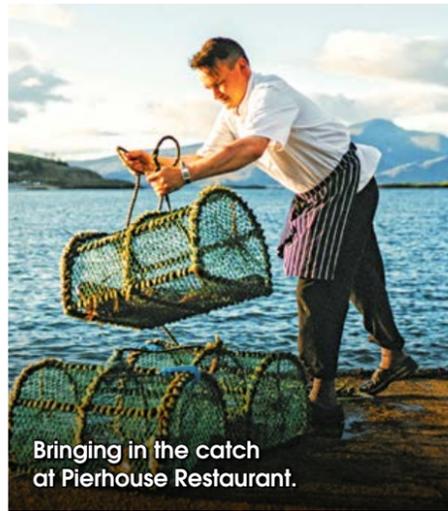
Did you know?

- Most of modern-Scotland once spoke Gaelic. It's still spoken today by around 60,000 Scots.
- Gaelic has been preserved through literature, arts and folklore from across the ages. It plays a vibrant role in the modern world. It features in the hugely popular TV series *Outlander*, as well as in other radio, television and theatre productions.
- There are three types of Gaelic language still spoken today: Scottish, Irish and Manx. These are grouped under the term Goidelic.
- Goidelic languages are also regarded as Celtic, an umbrella designation including another three tongues which can also happily be thought of as sisters to one another; Welsh, Cornish and Breton, often referred to as Brythonic languages.
- Celtic languages arrived in Britain from the Continent somewhere in the region of a couple of millennia ago. Although there is debate about whether Brythonic or Goidelic came across from Europe first, there is no doubt that Celtic languages represent the oldest spoken "vernaculars" in the British Isles.
- The people from whom the Gaelic language sprung are known as Gaels, and today they are indigenous to Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.
- The Gaelic language has been preserved through literature, arts and folklore from across the ages, despite over 400 years of suppression.
- It is still spoken in some areas of Argyll and the Isles, for example on the Isles of Tìrìdhe (Tiree) and Ìle (Islay) where it is still possible to hear the language in shops, community centres and at Gaelic cultural events.
- Gaelic culture and language is celebrated through events and festivals in Argyll and the Isles, including the Royal National Mod which takes place in Oban this year.
- The Gaelic community has supplied Scotland with many of the country's national icons, including the kilt, tartan, sporrán, bagpipes, ceilidhs and Highland games.
- VisitScotland research shows visitors are interested in Gaelic origins, areas spoken and heritage - four in five users who viewed Gaelic content on visitscotland.com were from outside the UK



Emma MacDonald, owner of Wild Hebridean Swimming.

consisting of members of Còisir Ghàidhlig an Eilein Mhuilich (the Isle of Mull Gaelic Choir), where guests are treated to a re-enactment of waulking, or 'fulling', the process by which tweed is shrunk in order to make it waterproof. This process was long and wearisome and was accompanied by singing many rhythmic songs to lessen the boredom. Speaking on the launch of the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative's drive today, Emma said: "I am delighted to be part of an initiative that raises the awareness of the Gaelic language and culture. As well as enjoying the landscape, people really appreciate seeing how people used to live and of course still do."



Bringing in the catch at Pierhouse Restaurant.

Drink from the Gaelic cultural well

Àdhamh Ó Broin, Gaelic Culture Officer for the Culture, Heritage & Arts Assembly, Argyll and the Isles (CHARTS) added: "In a world where people find themselves cut off from the rhythms of the natural world, it is increasingly important to return to the practices of our ancestors and to the land in which we experience symbiosis with nature. Argyll is choc-full of opportunity for this. Whether people have Gaelic roots or not, exposure to Gaelic language and culture allows people to think about and explore their own cultural legacy. Drawing from the ancestral well can bring enormous health benefits as we channel thousands of years of wisdom which has often become lost in the modern, western world. There is nothing quite like the feeling of bare feet on the living earth and Gaelic language in Argyll has been a descriptive tool of this relationship for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Come and visit, take off your socks and shoes, walk in sacred places that have

held spiritual resonance for centuries, invest your energy here and drink from the Gaelic cultural well."

The new 'maitheis' or wellbeing drive by The Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative also recognises the wide range of studies over the years (such as the Nord-Trondelag Health Study) that have evidenced the real difference that culture, museums, heritage sites, galleries and art workshops can make to boosting mental wellbeing.

Welcoming the drive and encouraging more tourism businesses to celebrate Gaelic culture, VisitScotland Regional Director David Adams McGilp said: "We know our history and culture are among the main reasons people choose Scotland as a destination and the Gaelic language plays a distinct role in our heritage, identity and culture. Visitors are also looking to connect with local communities and immerse themselves in our culture to boost their wellbeing. Gaelic can provide an extra layer to the authentic Scottish experience and we



Sgeir Bhuidhe Lighthouse.



Castle Stalker.

would encourage businesses in Argyll & Isles to consider maximising the opportunities that Gaelic brings and adding an element of Gaelic language to their offering."

For more information about wellbeing experiences and connecting to Gaelic culture in Argyll and the Isles visit: www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk

Members of the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative offering visitors unique opportunities to boost their wellbeing or connect to nature or Gaelic culture or heritage include:

- The Royal National Mòd (11 to 19 October) – festival-goers can relax and unwind to the soothing sounds of Gaelic songs and voices at Scotland's premier Gaelic festival, which takes place in Oban again this year. Organised by An Comunn Gàidhealach (The Highland Association), which was founded in Oban in 1891, The Mod represents 'an annual opportunity for Gaels and non-Gaels to gather and renew old friendships as well as forging new ones'. The event features competitions across a range of disciplines, including music, song and dance, and performances from some of Scotland's top traditional musicians and Gaelic singers.
- Heathery Heights leads sustainable foraging adventures, guided walks and outdoor experiences across Argyll & the Isles - from the less frequented hills and stunning rugged coastal paths with the chance to see a wide range of birds and sea life to ancient historical sites; and A' choille-uisge Cheilteach (The Celtic Rain Forest). Due to its unique position on the Gulf Stream, Argyll is known for its special habitats of Atlantic temperate rainforest.
- Kilmartin Museum (Cille Mhàrtainn in Gaelic) – situated close to what was once the centre of Gaelic civilisation (Dunadd Fort - thought to be the capital of Dál Riata), Kilmartin Museum reopened in 2023 after a multimillion-pound

- refurbishment in one of Scotland's richest prehistoric landscapes. Kilmartin Museum houses a nationally significant collection, which includes some panels describing the ancient belief in the restorative power of nature.
- Historic Kilmun (Cille Mhunna in Gaelic) - Historic Kilmun is a small village located on the shores of the Holy Loch, just north of Dunoon on the beautiful Cowal Peninsula. Founded by Gaelic monk St Fintan Munnu, the village was a monastic community in the 7th century. It is surrounded by Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are rich in wildlife, including otters, eagles and ravens, bats, roe deer, red deer, red squirrels, pine-martens, seals, eider ducks and many other species. The perfect place to unwind.
- Auchindrain Historic Township - Sheltered in the hills of Mid Argyll lies a hidden gem, a sole survivor of a kind of rural settlement where many residents spoke Gaelic and worked the land together. Up until the 1800s most people in rural Scotland lived in places like Auchindrain. In 2012, part of a much-thumbed Gaelic Bible was found in Auchindrain, tucked into a gap in the wall above the kitchen sink along with some sheets of newspaper from 1937. Today visitors can reconnect with the site using guide tablets in many different languages including Gaelic and English.

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

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 Johnston, 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**

Alan Cumming - *Living the High Life*

By: Neil Drysdale



You certainly can't accuse Alan Cumming of being stuck in a rut. On the contrary, the Scot's CV is a thing of wonder; a bewildering variety of films, TV series, voiceovers, musical roles, cameos and compelling comic turns. He has been in a James Bond film - *Goldeneye* - and illuminated successful movie franchises such as *Spy Kids*. He has won a Tony award for starring on Broadway in *Cabaret*, gained Emmy and Golden Globe nominations for his work in the drama series *The Good Wife* and presents the American version of the hit show *The Traitors*. Some people approaching 60 - Alan reaches that milestone in January - might consider slowing down, but if anything, the opposite seems to be the case with this multi-faceted performer.

Never looking back

Currently he's making a film with Brian Cox, creating a stage version of the cult TV series *The High Life with Forbes Masson* and flitting between the United States and Scotland so often that he must have racked up plenty of frequent flier air miles. Anybody who lives a nighthawk existence and channel-hops around old TV programmes from the 1980s and 1990s will have caught up with Alan at some stage, whether in Scottish staples *Taggart* and *Take the High Road* or such eclectic offerings as *Rik Mayall Presents*, *Black Beauty*, *Blind Date* or *The Invasion of the Comic Tomatoes*.

So, one can understand why he "hated" being asked to name his favourite performances from a career which prides itself on never looking back. Yet, as he said: "I've played so many people and creatures and I also don't ever hang on to them, but am always moving on to the next person I am going to inhabit. It's actually more important the kind of experience that I have on a set. That's what I remember. Hopefully, it was a happy one, with kind people and it felt fun to come to work every day. But I suppose the characters from *The High Life* are in my mind again because we are working on a musical of the show for the National Theatre of Scotland and revisiting them has been such fun. I also really like Mr Floop from the *Spy Kids* movies. He touched the hearts

of so many kids who are now young adults and so many people approach me in such a different way if they have watched those films. I'm very much enjoying the character I play on the US *Traitors*. I know that I'm officially the host of the show, but I'm acting my socks off and I love being the castle daddy."

How vital the arts are to our lives

Alan isn't somebody to throw in the towel in arguing for his beliefs. He might be frustrated at how arts and culture organisations always seem to be an easy target for parties of all political persuasions whenever they need to trim their budgets. But that doesn't mean he won't keep championing the need for greater investment and for youngsters from all backgrounds to have access to opportunities. He said: "It's sad that the arts is the first area to be hit by cuts when we need to pull in the purse strings, but

is also the first area we turn to in times of crisis. Look at Covid, and how much we relied on artists and performers to entertain us, help raise money and try and make sense of what was happening to all of us. We constantly have to remind everyone how vital the arts are to our lives, and I find that really annoying. I guess because it's worth can't be quantified in spreadsheets, but rather through imagination and inspiration, people find it difficult to remember."

And yet, despite these concerns, Alan has hardly been busier and is continuing his transatlantic sojourns to be involved in a diverse range of new ventures. He explained: "Right now, I am making a film near Glasgow with Brian Cox. He's directing and we are playing brothers who have a family distillery. It's a lovely film about the way you can't run from your past, and how Scotland is a sort of siren, pulling you back home. I know

that's how it feels to me too. After that, I am doing some concerts in America and making another film in Scotland about the poet Jorge Luis Borges. The latter's the fellow who once memorably described the Falklands conflict as being "a fight between two bald men arguing over a comb".

It's the sort of witticism which you can imagine Alan delivering on stage. He's living his own *High Life* at the moment and there's no sign of him being grounded any time soon.





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IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN



Scotch broth

Ingredients:

- 1 kg/2 lbs. lamb (or mutton) trimmed of fat
- 1 large chopped onion
- 1 large chopped leek
- 85g/3oz. split peas
- 85g/3oz. pearl barley
- 3 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 medium swede, peeled and diced
- Water
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh parsley (for garnish)

Method:

Soak the peas and barley for an hour or so. Rinse under cold water and drain in a large pot. Sweat the onion in a little butter or oil to soften. Add the meat and cover with water. Bring to a boil and skim off the surface despoit. Add the presoaked barley and peas. Simmer for 30 minutes. Add the remaining vegetables. Continue simmering gently until just cooked. Remove the lamb bone, leave to cool. Take meat off the bone, chop it and return to the soap. Add parsley just before serving. Serve piping hot with bread or rolls.

Scotch toast

Ingredients:

- 4 heated oatcakes
- Fish paste
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp. of butter
- 1 pinch of cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsp. browned bread crumbs

Method:

Make sure oatcakes are hot. Melt butter in a pan and add 2 egg yolks, 1 egg white, fish paste and cayenne pepper. Mix until thick. Pile mixture on top of oatcakes. Sprinkle with browned bread crumbs and serve immediately.

Flank steak Dundee

Ingredients:

- 3.5kgs./8lbs. flank steak, in one piece cut very thin
- 8 slices of bacon
- ¼ cup of wheat germ
- Grated parmesan cheese
- Oregano
- 2 hard boiled eggs (chopped)
- Chopped parsley
- Garlic salt
- Salt and pepper
- Olive oil
- 1 can (15oz.) tamato sauce
- 1 cup water

Method:

Pound steak until very thin. Line the strips of bacon, then sprinkle them with wheat germ. Over wheat germ sprinkle grated cheese, a little oregano, then chopped eggs and parsley.

Season with garlic salt and salt and pepper. Roll up steak and tie with a string. Brown on all sides with some olive oil. Add tomato sauce and water, cover and simmer for 1-1 ½ hours, turning often. Makes 4 servings.

Rock cakes

Ingredients:

- 225g/8oz/ self-raising flour (plain flour can also work)
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp. mixed spice
- 115g/4 oz. margarine
- 85g/3 oz. caster sugar
- 85g/3 oz. dried fruit (raisin/current etc.)
- 1 egg
- A drop of milk

Method:

Sieve flour and salt in a bowl and rub in fat. Add sugar, fruit, spice, beaten egg and only enough milk to make a stiff dough. Place in required portions on greased baking sheets. Bake 220C/425F for 15-20 minutes and allow to rest.

Potato (Tattie) Scones



Ingredients:

- 225g/8oz. mash potato
- 3 tbsp. of melted butter
- 60g/2 ½ oz. sieved flour

½ tsp. of salt
You can add cheese also for added taste

Method:

Add the melted butter and the salt to the mashed potatoes, then mix in some of the flour slowly, ensuring the mixture does not become too dry (this will depend on the type of potato you use). Turn on to a well-floured flat surface and roll out very thinly. Prick all over with a fork and fire each side on a well-greased pan or griddle for 5 minutes each side.

Witches Brew Cider

- 4 cups of apple cider
- 2 cans of frozen lemonade concentrate (thawed)
- 2 cups of water
- 8 cinnamon sticks
- Lemon slices

Method:

Into a large saucepan pour cider, lemonade concentrate and water and stir. Over a medium heat bring cider to a simmer. Pour into cups and place a lemon and cinnamon stick in each glass.

Malibu

Ingredients:

- 1-part Malibu
- 1-part Irn Bru
- Strawberries

Method:

Pour half of a glass with Malibu and the other half with Scotland's iconic Irn Bru. Put a strawberry or two on the rim of the glass and enjoy!

The World Highland Dancing Championships



From left to right: Aisla Gocan-Wright, Rebecca Thow and Eilidh Gammons. Photo: Cowal Gathering.

Billed as one of Scotland's best days out the finale of the 130th Cowal Gathering lived up to its reputation. Thousands of people from across the world gathered in Dunoon for the final day of the world's most spectacular Highland Gathering with competitors, entertainers and spectators joining forces to make sure super Saturday was a day 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, stunt runners 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.

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 Aisla Gocan-Wright from London, Ontario who emerged victorious in the World Juvenile finals, followed by Rebecca Acob of Coldstream and Ellie Murgha of Townsville, Queensland. The trophy for best

Scottish Juvenile Dancer went to Cody Fong from Kirkcaldy and the best Overseas Juvenile Dancer was Aisla Gocan-Wright. In the World Junior championship, Eilidh Gammons of Helensburgh, defended her title and held off the challenge of Katjana Bruinsa from Leduc County and Maria Monk of Glasgow. The best Scottish Junior Dancer was Eilidh Gammons, and the trophy for the best Overseas Junior Dancer went to Katjana Bruinsma. The Adult World champion was Rebecca Thow from Aberdeen, followed by Marielle Lesperance from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, with Chloe McClean from Edinburgh in third. Marielle Lesperance is taking home the Mary McHarg Quaich for best Overseas Adult Dancer. The cup for best Scottish Adult Dancer went to Rebecca Thow.

Speaking on behalf of the Board of Cowal Gathering, Fraser McCowan said: "On behalf of the Gathering's organisers, I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make sure the 130th Cowal Gathering goes down in history as the best party in town! I'd also like to thank the thousands of people who have come out to support the Gathering over three days. We've welcomed spectators not just from Argyll and Bute and Scotland more generally but from right around the globe, and the feedback we've received has been overwhelmingly positive. Of course, we wouldn't have a Gathering at all without the wonderful competitors, who excelled themselves this year. Those of us lucky enough to have been here witnessed levels of performance never seen before. We all know how popular the traditional Highland Games events such as the piping, dancing and heavy athletics are, and of course they remain the main draw."

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Samhainn and the Scottish traditions of Hallowe'en

Discover some of the traditional ways Hallowe'en, or Samhainn, has been celebrated in Scotland.

By: Lucy Rodger

Scottish Samhainn traditions



A young boy and girl dooking for apples. © The Scotsman Publications Ltd. Licensed via Scran.



A group of children gather around a bonfire in 1960. © The Scotsman Publications Ltd. Licensed via Scran.

Traditionally a Celtic festival which divided the year between the light and the dark half, Samhainn, pronounced 'Sa-wayne', was the celebration of the end of the harvest and a time where the boundary between our world would become weaker allowing ancestors and fairies to roam. Samhainn in Scottish Gaelic, was celebrated on 1 November with the festivities starting the night before. The festival is known as Samhain in Irish and Sauin in Manx.

As religion changed in the British Isles with the arrival of Christianity, Samhainn was possibly purposefully assimilated in the 8th century when All Saints Day or All Hallows Day was moved from 13 May to 1 November. Hallowe'en became the name for the night before All Hallows Day and in Scottish Gaelic Halloween is called Oidhche Shamhna as an t-Samhain is the month of November.

Bonfires-The folklore leads to the belief that bonfires, or samhnagan ('sa-own-nag-in') in Gaelic, were lit as a form of protection from evil spirits that could be lurking on the night of Hallowe'en. The fire was meant to repel those with ill intentions and hold them at bay until the sun rose again. On the islands there were competitions between neighbours with each household trying to build the biggest fire. On the mainland it was common to put bonfires in prominent points on the landscape so that they could be seen from far away.

Turnip lanterns-We may now be more used to carving pumpkins for Hallowe'en, it was once turnips (or "tumshies" in Scots) that would have been carved with evil looking faces in order to scare off fairies and ghosts.

Candles were placed inside to illuminate the faces so they could be seen from far away.

Guising-Guising is the original form of trick or treating. Parents would disguise their children to deter the roaming fairies and spirits from stealing them. On a night of mischief the children could play tricks on friends and neighbours or they could go from house to house telling jokes in order to earn treats. Perhaps one of the most famous guisers in Stirling could be James V who liked to dress up and visit his subjects in the villages near Stirling Castle.

fire and if the nuts hissed then it would be turbulent however if the nuts quietly and evenly burned then it was a good match.

Pulling up stalks-This is a fortune telling method mentioned in Robert Burns' poem *Hallowe'en*. Those that wished to know the height and shape of their future partner waited until it was dark then with their eyes closed would pull a kale stalk from the ground. The shape and length of the stalk would answer their query. If your stalk had lots of soil in the roots that was an added bonus! It symbolised a wealthy partner.

Fuarag na Samhna-A tasty combination of toasted oats and whipped cream called Fuarag na Samhna was made on Samhainn. Tokens would be folded in to predict what the next year would bring. Each person would eat a spoonful of the fuarag and if they found a token then their future had been foretold. If you found a coin then you would receive money, a ring represented an engagement, a button meant you would lose money and a thimble would mean another year without finding love.

Oidhche Shamhna sona dhuibh uile! Happy Hallowe'en! How will you be celebrating this year?

Historic Environment Scotland is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment. For more details see: www.historicenvironment.scot

Divination



This is a froh stick or milk whisk. It would have been used to froth up milk when making fuarag. © The University of Aberdeen. Licensed via Scran.

Nut Burning-On the bonfires that were lit on the night of Samhainn couples could question whether their relationship would last. Each would place a nut on the

Tartan of the Month



Thunderbird 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).

This military tartan was created as part of the RCAF (Royal Canadian Air Force) centenary celebrations. The colours are based on the heraldic crest of 426 Squadron, the dress uniform of the RCAF and includes Pacific Sunset gold, as a nod to the West Coast home of the mythical Thunderbird, the Squadron icon.

This tartan (reference: 14297) was designed by CWO Glen Slauenwhite and registered in May, 2024.

SCOTI CREATIONS



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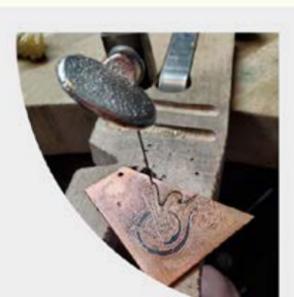
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Clan Baird Society Worldwide



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

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HEREDITARY CHIEF AND SOCIETY PATRON
Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains
Chief of the Name and Arms of Carruthers

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CLAN DONALD VICTORIA

President: Mr Norman A. Macdonald

Contact: secretary.clandonaldvic@gmail.com

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Hon Chief: Mr Lindsay McDonald

Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com

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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

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: lh100@tpg.com.au

Clan Fraser Society of Australia

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

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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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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

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 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 the name Davidson or one of the Septs shown on the member application form available from the Clan's Facebook Group link
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/360160657504253/>
or by contacting the Hon. Secretary:

Dennis Hill, PO Box 519
Baulkham Hills NSW 1755
E: dhill1@bigpond.net.au, P: 0431 527 662

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Contact: Mal Edmiston
3 Laguna Ave
Kirwan, Qld, 4817
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m.edmiston@bigpond.com

CLAN GREGOR SOCIETY

Est: 1822 in Edinburgh Scotland

Patron: Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor Bt
Membership enquiries for USA: usa@clangregor.com

Rest of the World:
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Web: www.clangregor.com

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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: clangregoraustalia@gmail.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



CLAN LAMONT SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

invites membership from Sept names refer to Web Site www.clanlamontaustralia.com

Clan Chief Peter Lamont of that Ilk resides in Sydney Australia.

For all enquires about the Clan and Membership contact :-

President Ian McLucas.
Email ianandbevmclucas@bigpond.com
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Scott McInnis, Member Services: scott@macinnes.org or visit www.macinnes.org



Clan MacLellan

Kevin S Gates
Treasurer
2610 Kuykendall Dr.
Arlington, TX
76001-6726
Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

Invites all MacLellans and their descendants regardless of surname spelling to join in preserving our heritage. Various family names are MacLellan(d), McClellan(d), McLellan(d) and Gilliland.
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- NSW, ACT & Qld - Peter MacLeod 02 4397 3161
- Victoria & Tas - Rhonda MacLeod 0411 227 330
- South Australia - Alex MacLeod 08 8327 0925
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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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<https://clanmaclarenau.org/>
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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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For more information please email: colonsay@bigpond.net.au, visit us at facebook.com/clanmacfieaustralia or our website: <https://clanmacfie.com.au>



Clan MacLaren

MacLaren MacLaurin Lawrence
Lawson Low[e]
Low[e]ry Law[e] Patterson
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: malcolmjmcneil@outlook.com



Clan Irwin Association

Chief and Patron
Alexander H.R Irvine of Drum,
27th Baron and Laird of Drum, Chief of the Name
Mary Erwin, Chairman
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 Contact: Secretary Mal Nicolson
 55 Arcadia Ave
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AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND



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Founded 2004

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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

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 phone +44 7877 363 507

New Zealand: Tony McPherson
 NewZealand.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
 phone +64 274 587 812

USA: Dave McPherson
 UnitedStates.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
 phone +1 408 781 5199

The **Clan Macpherson Museum** is located in Newtonmore, Inverness Shire PH20 1DE, at the junction of the A86 and B9150 It is open from 1st April to 31st October. Ph + 44 1540 673 332. See <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/museum/>



Membership cordially invited from those who are connected with this great Clan, i.e., Morrison, Morison, Gilmour, Gilmer, Gilmore, Murrison or descendants of eligible name.

www.clanmorrison.net



Clan Sinclair Australia

Membership and inquiries from all Sinclairs, Sinclair Septs and Sinclair descendants.

For further info contact

President: Wayne Sinclair 0417 146 174

Secretary: Liane Sinclair 0410 045 263

E: clansinclairaustralia@hotmail.com

www.clansinclairaustralia.com



The Clan MacRae Society of Australia and New Zealand

If your surname is MacRae, or you are descended from a person having the surname MacRae (any spelling) or that of a Sept of the Clan then you are eligible to join our Society.

Australian Contact: Roslyn MacRae 0412 291 054
 email: clanmacraeausnz@gmail.com

NZ Contact: Sue Tregoweth
 email: sue.treg1@gmail.com

Discover Your Nesbitt/Nisbet Ancestry



ibydeit.org
nesbittnisbet.org.uk



Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

Contact: M Williams, Secretary

clansutherlandsocietyaustralia@gmail.com

<http://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus>

Facebook: Clan Sutherland Society in Australia



Caledonian Society of WA Inc.

Promotes Scottish Culture and Traditions in Perth, Western Australia

For further details contact John: 0427 990 754

Email: caledoniansocietyofwa@gmail.com

www.caledoniansocietyofwainc.com



Clan MacRae Society of North America

Granted Arms in 2008

We invite MacRaes of all spelling variations and their descendants to join our Clan MacRae Society. Learn your Scottish MacRae history and family lineage!

www.macrae.org

Need more info? Contact:

Bruce McRae, President

720-793-7530

brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com

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ClanOliphantMembership@gmail.com

www.OliphantOfNorthAmerica.org



Clan Sutherland Society of North America Inc.

The Society cordially invites membership of all Sutherlands (however the name is spelled) and historically associated families: Cheyne, Duffus, Gray, Frederith and Mowat.

Email: Secretary@ClanSutherland.org

Website: www.ClanSutherland.org



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Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada



Clan Maitland Society

Chief: Ian Maitland, The Earl of Lauderdale! We are all related! Contact your local society

North America: Rosemary Maitland Thom
rthomnvrpcan@aol.com www.clanmaitlandna.org

Australia: Amanda Maitland
clanmaitlandaustralia@gmail.com
 12 Settlers Way, Westleigh, NSW, 2120

New Zealand: Judette Maitland judette@xtra.co.nz
 33 Disley Street, Highbury, Wellington 6012. NZ

We welcome all with Maitland, Lauderdale, Maitlen and similar name spelling. See the entire list and your family history at: www.clanmaitland.org.uk



Clan Pollock

Among the most ancient families of Scotland. If you are a descendant of Pollock, Pollok, Pook, Polk, Polke, Paulk, Poalke, Poulk, Poolke, Pogue - you are cordially invited to contact:

A. D. Pollock, Jr.

PO Box 404

Greenville, KY 42345

e-mail: apollockis@comcast.net



YOUNG

Youngs of Scotland in Australia

Invites membership from all those with the name of Young or ancestral ties to the name.

Convenor: Ian J Young AM FSAScot

E: membership@clanyoungaustalia.com.au

www.facebook.com/groups/youngsofaustralia/

<https://clanyoungsociety.com/australia>

The Scottish Australian Heritage Council



Membership is welcome from all of Scottish descent.

For information please contact members@scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

Find us on Facebook

www.scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

Clan Muirhead Society



A NON-PROF. CORP.

Muirhead, Muirbode, Morehead, Moorhead

and all Variant Names

www.clanmuirhead.com

Rev. Ret. Chev. Raymond L. Morehead, GOTT, FSA Scot,

Chief Officer Elect Clan Muirhead Society

Email: raymondktj@msn.com or raymond@clanmuirhead.com



Clan Ross in Australia

for information contact Commander Des Ross

(By appointment David Ross Bt Chief of Clan Ross and Balnagowan)

We would be pleased to hear from anyone with Ross Clan heritage and interest.

Contact: Commander Des Ross at

lonepiper.ross@gmail.com M 0403 830 853

YOUNGS OF SCOTLAND



Membership inquiries:

Ms. Laura Young,

33 McKeen Street,

Jarvis, Ontario,

Canada NOA 1J0

4scottishthistles@gmail.com

Scottish Heritage USA, Inc.

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Inauguration of the Chief of a Scottish Border Clan

By: George Carruthers



Dr Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains .

Even with the heavy rains and a change in venue due to flooding, history was made in Annan, Dumfriesshire on the 24th August, 2024 on what was to be a fine but windy day. The Annan Festival and Gathering of the Clans, was well attended and a great success.

The Festival consisted of a parade of the chiefs greeted by Fiona Armstrong, Lady MacGregor, Lord Lieutenant of Dumfries, performances by the Teviotdale Steel Bonnets and the Time Bandits covering Reiver history and weaponry. There were highland games, piping and dancing and a performance by the Scottish tribal group Clanadonia. Clan tents were available offering information on the history and genealogy of the respective clans and families present. The final part of the programme was the inauguration of the Chief of Carruthers. The last stage of the process initiated in 2007 by the Clan Shennachie, Dr George Carruthers, FSA Scot, was about to be completed. A petition was presented to the Lord Lyon in 2017 to bear the chiefly arms of Carruthers, first registered along with all other Scottish arms in 1672 by the petitioner's ancestor. As such in 2019 and after 210 years of dormancy and analysis of the documents and

proofs accompanying the petition, Dr Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains was confirmed Chief of the Name and Arms of Carruthers.

Ancestral lands

The inauguration on our ancestral lands to name him Chief, began with a procession led by the Convenor, Mr Michael Carruthers carrying the Society banner. He was followed by those Chiefs and Commanders in attendance, the Shennachie and his banner, the Chief's Household, the Inauguration Chaplain, the Lord Lyon's representative and the Chief and his heir with their banner.

They were welcomed to the stage area by Dr George Haig, Advisor to the Chief, who handed the proceedings over to the Shennachie. He welcomed the Chief onto the stage and explained the importance of a confirmed chief to the official status of Carruthers as a Scottish clan and family. The Lord Lyon's representative Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw, Albany Herald Extraordinary presented the Chief's Letters Patent from the Lord Lyon on behalf of the Sovereign. He spoke of the Chief's lineage being 22nd of his line, his legal right to bear the chiefly arms, the 1587 Act of the Suppression of Unruly Clans in which Carruthers are named and reiterated the importance that a Chief brings to the official recognition of any clan, both in Scotland and overseas. Sir Crispin Agnew finished with his best wishes and congratulations.

The presentation was followed by the Shennachie presenting the Chief with his symbols of office: A family bible, embossed with his arms, a Balmoral bonnet with the three eagle feathers of a chief,

a gold ring with his arms upon it and finally a Cromach. Proudly wearing his three feathers, oaths were taken. Firstly, an oath by the Chief to his clan to preserve, protect and defend the name of Carruthers to the best of his ability. Secondly an oath of fealty and loyalty to the Chief by the Shennachie on behalf of all the elders and stewards of Carruthers. Finally, the oath from the clan to the Chief, who loudly pledged fealty and loyalty and a willingness to honour the traditions of their name.

Ancient custom

Following ancient custom and in line with the Chief's faith, the Inauguration Chaplain, the Reverend John Pickles, minister of the Church of Scotland for the parishes Annan, Brydekirk, Dalton and Hightae, gave readings from Psalms and the Gospel of St Luke.

The Reverend led all present in prayers and according to ancient tradition as a member of the kirk, gave his blessing to the Chief and then to all those gathered. The other Chiefs present were invited to give greetings. The Chiefs of Clan Irving; Rupert Irving of Bonshaw, Hunter; Madam Pauline Hunter of Hunterston, Hanney; Dr David Hanney of Kirkdale, MacArthur; John MacArthur of that Ilk and the Commander of Clan McEwen; Sir John

McEwen of Marchmont and Bardrochat gave their warm best wishes and Ross McEwen Esq, FSA Scot gave greetings from the Buchanan Chief; Michael Buchanan of Buchanan.

The Chief himself gave a heartfelt response to all greetings, all those from both the UK and overseas who had attended and to Annan the History Town Committee mainly Graeme MacGregor and Neil Carruthers for helping make it happen. He also thanked those who had worked in the background and supported him through his journey, namely George and Michael Carruthers and finally to his family, for their continued love and encouragement. The Shennachie closed the proceedings, by declaring Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains, Chief of Carruthers and commented on the fact that this was a culmination of a great many years of hard work and effort, and that by ensuring the legal process to have a Chief named was followed to the letter, today marked the final piece in a very long and arduous process.

The celebration continued at the Annan Distillery with speakers, an inauguration dinner, appointments by the Chief and a ceilidh. He apologised to the latecomers, who sadly couldn't attend.



Madam Judith Carruthers of Holmains with the Chief's cousin, Cecilia Mitchell Carruthers.



The Shennachie, the Albany Herald Extraordinary and the Chief. Presentation of the Letters Patent.

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WHAT'S ON - SCOTTISH EVENTS

Enjoy North America's top Scottish event listings in the Scottish Banner. Please check directly with event contacts for the most up to date information. You can also see our latest updates (including events listed across Scotland and Australasia) or add your event at: www.scottishbanner.com/events

Canada

OCTOBER 2024

Welcome Tea Dance 5, Hamilton, ON

RSCDS Hamilton invites you to their Welcome Tea Dance. A Beginner-friendly programme, including some ultra-easy, super-fun ceilidh dances. Live music by Scotch & Soda, 2-5 pm at MacNab Presbyterian Church, 116 MacNab St S. Info: www.rscdshamilton.org

Celtic Colours International Festival 11-19, Cape Breton, NS

A unique celebration of Cape Breton Island's living traditional culture. For nine days in October, you'll discover hundreds of events and activities taking place in communities across the Island. Info: www.celtic-colours.com

Taste of Scotland-Whisky Tasting Night 18, Montréal, QC

The St. Andrew's Society of Montreal invite those interested in fine whisky to their annual whisky event. This ever-popular event will allow guests to sample over 25 different brands of whisky and enjoy a buffet featuring a variety of delectable Scottish dishes at The Canadian Grenadier Guards, Officers Mess, 4171 Avenue De l'Esplanade. Info: www.standrews.qc.ca/taste-of-scotland.html

RSCDS Calgary Branch One Day Workshop 19, Calgary, AB

The Calgary Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society organizes and runs classes, dances and other social events and is committed to helping develop Scottish Dance and Music for future generations. Info: www.rscdscalgary.org

Scotch On The Rocks 20-24, Hortonville, NS

Four ½ day Scottish country dance classes at Intermediate-Advanced level, a Scottish ceilidh & a dance with live music in Nova Scotia. Info: 902 542-5320 or johnduncankeppie@gmail.com.

Rejigged Festival 24-26, Halifax, NS

With musicians and dancers from all over the Celtic diaspora at The Stage at St. Andrew's Church. Info: www.rejiggedfestival.com

Scottish Country Dancing Social 27, Ottawa, ON

Join the Ardrae Country Dancers of Ottawa for a fun and friendly Tartan/Plaid themed fall social at Churchill Seniors Recreation Centre, 345 Richmond Rd. Info: www.ardrae.org

NOVEMBER 2024

Scottish Country Dance-Tea Dance 8, Kitchener, ON

Kitchener-Waterloo RSCDS Branch invites you join them for our Afternoon Fall Tea Dance. At St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 137 Queen Street South. Info: www.rscds.kitchener.on.ca

St. Andrew's Charity Ball 16, Toronto, ON

The St. Andrew's Charity Ball is a celebration of Scottish-Canadian culture. Attendees have been enjoying this elegant evening of music, dance and cuisine for over 100 years, at The Fairmont Royal York, 100 Front St. West. Info: https://standrewstoronto.ca/sast_event/charity-ball

St. Andrew's Charity Ball 22, Montréal, QC

Join the St. Andrew's Society of Montreal for one of the most prestigious and time-honoured events in Montreal's social calendar. Don't miss this gala evening of dining, dancing and Scottish pageantry, at Marriott Château Champlain Hotel, 1050 de la Gauchetière West. Info: www.standrewsball.com

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society-Dance Around the World 23, Nationwide

Taking dancers on a journey from Scotland around the world and back, the programme features 12 dances with connections to six continents through devisers, themes and locations, before bringing everyone together with The Homecoming Dance. Dance Around the World will mark one year since the RSCDS Centenary and on this day we want to fill the internet with photos, videos and stories of Scottish dancing (#DanceScottish). Info: <https://rscds.org/blog/dance-around-world>

2024 PPBSO Awards Gala 23, Hamilton, ON

The Pipers and Pipe Band Society of Ontario Champion Supreme Awad Gala. Includes Solo and pipe band performances and Celtic music at Scottish Rite. Info: www.pipebandsontario.org

Happy St Andrew's Day 30, Nationwide

Saint Andrew's Day is Scotland's official national day. Celebrate St Andrew's Day (or in Scottish Gaelic 'Là Naomh Anndrais'), Scotland's patron saint!

St. Andrew's Fall Mixer 30, Toronto, ON

Come raise a glass with the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto to celebrate Scotland's national day. The room will be filled with foot-stomping tunes from both sides of the Atlantic, at The Rivoli, 332 Queen Street West. Info: https://standrewstoronto.ca/sast_event/fall-mixer

St. Andrew's Ball Vancouver 30, Vancouver, BC

Join the St. Andrew's & Caledonian Society of Vancouver for a festive evening filled with Scottish tradition, music, and dancing at the Scottish Cultural Centre. Info: <https://st-andrews-caledonian-society-of-van.square.site>

SASOW Celebration of St. Andrew's Day 30, Winnipeg, MB

Join the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg in a celebration of St Andrew's Day at Centro Caboto Centre. Info: www.standrewssocietywinnipeg.com

USA

OCTOBER 2024

2024 Scottish Athletics Masters World Championships 4-6, Green Cove Springs, FL

The Foundation for Scottish Athletics (FSA) is honored to host the 2024 Masters World Championship for the Scottish Masters' Athletics International at Clay County Fairgrounds. Info: www.2024mwc.com

Scotland County Highland Games 4-6, Laurinburg, NC

Scottish entertainment, performances and more at the North Carolina Rural Heritage Center, 13043 X-Way Rd. Info: www.carolina-highlandgames.com

Rocket City Scottish Festival & Highland Games 5, Huntsville, AL

Alabama's official gathering of the clans. With Clans, dancing pipe bands, Highland Games at Sharon Johnston Park. Info: www.rocketcityscotfest.org

Tyler ScotFest 5, Tyler, TX

Witness true tests of strength and skill in the Highland Games. Cheer for your favorite Scottish performers, discover the rich traditions of Clan history and explore the beautiful South Spring Baptist Church campus as you enjoy this unique celebration of Scottish heritage. Info: www.tylerscotfest.org

Harpers Ferry Highland Games 5, Harpers Ferry WV, United States

Celtic music, events and more at Sam Micheals Park, 235 Sam Michael's Lane. Info: www.hfccc.org

Aztec Highland Games & Celtic Festival 5-6, Aztec, NM

The Four Corners region's premier event celebrating Celtic culture at Riverside Park. Info: www.aztechighlandgames.com

McMinnville Scottish Festival 5-6, McMinnville OR

A weekend of music, Clans, heritage, dancing and more at the Yamhill County Fairgrounds. Info: www.celticheritage.org/mac-scottish-festival

Oklahoma Highland Gathering 11-13, Choctaw OK

A celebration of Scottish and Celtic culture at Choctaw Creek Park. Info: www.unitedscotsok.com/festival

CelticFest Mississippi 11-13, Brandon, MS

Traditional Irish & Scottish Festival in Central Mississippi since 1991, at 1112 North Shore Parkway. Info: www.celticfestms.org

Indianapolis Scottish Highland Games & Festival 12, Indianapolis, IN

A celebration of Scotland at the Marion County Fairgrounds, 7300 E Troy Ave. Info: www.indyscotgamesandfest.com

Houston Highland Games 12, Humble, TX

Athletics, piping, clans, Celtic vendors and more at Humble Civic Center & Arena Complex, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy. Info: www.houstonhighlandgames.com

Radford Highlanders Festival 12, Radford, VA

Includes heavyweight games; sheepherding; live entertainment; clans and more at Radford University. Info: www.radford.edu/content/festival/home.html

Seaside Highland Games 12-13, Ventura, CA

A celebration of Scotland in Southern California at Ventura County Fairgrounds. Info: www.seasidehighlandgames.org

ScotsFest-Arkansas Scottish Festival 18-20, Batesville, AR

Every year Arkansas' oldest city, Batesville, plays host to one of America's most popular Scottish festivals. Pipers, drummers, dancers, athletes, Scottish clans, and vendors travel from all corners of the country to attend the event at Lyon College. Info: www.arscottishfest.com

Stone Mountain Highland Games and Scottish Festival 18-20, Stone Mountain, GA

Stone Mountain will be featuring colorful pipe bands, Scottish Athletics, Piping and Drumming competitions, Highland dancers competing, Country Dancing, Scottish Harping and Fiddling, Scottish foods and drink, clan tents and more. Info: www.smhg.org

Springfield Area Highland Games and Celtic Festival 19, New Berlin IL

Piping, dancing, Clans and more at Sangamon County Fairgrounds., New date. Info: www.centralillinoiscelts.com

Crystal Coast Highland Games 19, Beaufort, NC

Pipe bands, Highland dance, vendors, clans and more at Gallants Channel 293 West Beaufort Rd. Info: www.crystalcoasthighlandgames.com

NOVEMBER 2024

The Wallace Award 1, New York, NY

The American-Scottish Foundation introduced the Wallace Award in 1970 to recognize the extraordinary diversity of contribution that Scots have made to the world – and, in particular, to recognize one or more living citizens or residents of the United States of Scottish descent for their individual contributions to the well being of this country. Held at the University Club and also includes the Young Scot Awards. Info: www.americanscottishfoundation.com

Tucson Celtic Festival And Scottish Highland Games 1-3, Tucson, AZ

A weekend of Celtic entertainment and events at Rillito Raceway Park, 4502 N. First Ave. Info: www.tucsoncelticfestival.org

Asilomar Weekend 1-3, Pacific Grove, CA

A magical weekend of Scottish country dancing. Asilomar Conference Grounds promises you an unforgettable weekend dancing in beautiful Merrill Hall, classes with world-class teachers and outstanding musicians. Info: <https://sfasilomardance.wixsite.com/asilomarweekend>

Charleston Scottish Games 2, Charleston, SC

The second oldest event of its kind in the southeast, immersing visitors in Scottish heritage and history, at Riverfront Park, 1061 Everglades Ave. Info: www.charlestonscottishgames.com

Austin Celtic Festival 2-3, Austin, TX

A celebration of Celtic culture with entertainment, retail, and performances at Pioneer Farms, 10621 Pioneer Farms Dr. Info: www.austincelticfestival.com

Salado Scottish Gathering and Highland Games 8-10, Salado, TX

Three days of Scottish celebration, entertainment and events, including the largest gathering of Scottish Clan tents in Texas, at Thomas Arnold Elementary School, 575 Salado School Rd. Info: www.saladomuseum.org/scottish-gathering-and-highland-games

Mississippi Scottish Highland Games and Celtic Music Festival 9-10, Gulfport, MS

Annual Celtic music festival and Scottish Highland Games on the Mississippi Gulf Coast at Harrison County Fairgrounds. Info: www.mshighlandsandislands.com

The Highland Echoes Show 16, New Bern NC

Scottish Highland dance with innovative choreography, original Celtic music that sounds like Riverdance met Outlander, and a show so culturally rich it leaves audiences searching for their Scottish clans at Orringer Auditorium at Craven Community College, 800 College Ct. Info: www.HighlandEchoes.com/tour

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society-Dance Around the World 23, Nationwide

Taking dancers on a journey from Scotland around the world and back, the programme features 12 dances with connections to six continents through devisers, themes and locations, before bringing everyone together with The Homecoming Dance. Dance Around the World will mark one year since the RSCDS Centenary and on this day we want to fill the internet with photos, videos and stories of Scottish dancing (#DanceScottish). Info: <https://rscds.org/blog/dance-around-world>

Dunedin Celtic Music & Craft Beer Festival 23, Dunedin, FL

An annual event outdoor festival featuring multiple musical acts. Each year the main stage features regional, national, and international Celtic music artists along with the City of Dunedin Pipe Band. Info: www.dunedinsafoundation.com/celtic-music-craft-beer-festival

Happy St Andrew's Day 30, Nationwide

Saint Andrew's Day is Scotland's official national day. Celebrate St Andrew's Day (or in Scottish Gaelic 'Là Naomh Anndrais'), Scotland's patron saint!

The Highland Echoes Highland Holidays Show 30, Boone, NC

An evening filled with the exhilarating sounds of live musicians, the captivating strength of Highland dancers, and the stirring melodies of the Highland bagpipes. Celebrate Hogmanay and discover the ancient customs that have lit up Scottish winters for centuries with this Scottish yuletide spectacular. Info: www.highlandechoes.com/tour

Scotland

OCTOBER 2024

Clan MacNicol 2024 International Gathering 3-6, Portree, Isle of Skye

Clan Chief, John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac along with Clan Chieftains have decided it's time to return to the land of their forebears and reconnect with their worldwide family. New Chieftain, Donnie Nicolson will be hosting the events such as talks, walks and a ceilidh. Info: www.clanmacnicol.org

The Enchanted Forest 3-November 3, Pitlochry

Set your imagination alight with dazzling visuals and innovative design, all choreographed against an original music score, while you explore the stunning autumn woodland setting of Forestry & Land Scotland's Faskally Wood near Pitlochry. Info: www.enchantedforest.org.uk

Leith Comedy Festival 4-6, Leith

This annual weekend is packed with various comedy events across Leith in Edinburgh, including stand-up shows, workshops and a quiz. Info: www.leithcomedyfest.com

Golden Spurtle World Porridge Making Championship 5, Carrbridge

The Golden Spurtle is awarded to the contestant who makes, in the judges view, the best bowl of porridge. Past competitors have come from all corners of the world including New Zealand, Australia, America, Canada, Africa and across Europe. The event takes place in Carrbridge village hall and is live streamed to the world over Facebook. Info: www.goldenspurtle.com

The Royal National Mòd 2024 11-19, Oban

Oban welcomes back Gaeldom's premiere musical and cultural event for the 17th time in 2024, continuing its legacy on the West Coast. The event promotes Gaelic language and culture through music, song, dance, drama, literature, and the arts. Info: www.ancomunn.co.uk

Borderlands Whisky Festival 12, Lockerbie

The best whisky producers from the Borderlands and beyond. Info: www.borderlandswiskyfestival.com

Scottish International Storytelling Festival 18-31, Edinburgh

An annual celebration of storytelling and one of the most admired storytelling events in the world and the largest of its kind. Info: www.sisf.org.uk

Perth All -Scotland Accordion & Fiddle Festival 25-26, Perth

Run every year since 1950, the Perth Accordion & Fiddle Festival features competitions, concerts and ceilidhs - opening with a welcome dance on Friday night. Info: www.perthaccordionfestival.co.uk

Loch and Land Festival 25-November 3, Loch Ness

A new festival around Inverness and Loch Ness to celebrate the abundant natural beauty and multitude of outdoor activities that the destination has to offer. From climbing, yoga, archery, sea kayaking, whitewater sledging, fly fishing and axe throwing, to tours, cruises, litter picks, speaker events, wood carving and wild swimming, there's something for everyone. Info: www.visitinvernesslochness.com/loch-and-land-festival

Stitched-Scotland's Embroidered Art 25-January 18, Edinburgh

Dovecot Studios will present a major new exhibition of Scotland's textile treasures, many of which have never been on public display. Curated in partnership with the National Trust for Scotland, the exhibition will be the first time these textiles are presented together as significant works of art in their own right. 'Stitched: Scotland's Embroidered Art' will explore 200 years of the domestic interior in Scotland, examining the art and design of embroidery from the National Trust for Scotland's extraordinary collection of textiles. Info: www.dovecotstudios.com

Glenfiddich Piping Championship 26, Blair Atholl, Perthshire

The Glenfiddich Piping Championship was established in 1974 to inspire the world's finest individual pipers and to seek the best overall exponents of ceòl mòr or piobaireachd (the great music) and ceòl beag or light music (the little music). Each year, 10 competitors qualify to play at Blair Castle, through placing in one of a series of qualifying events. Info: www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/play/competitions/glenfiddich-solo-piping-championships

The National Piping Centre Adult Seasonal Piping Gathering 28-31, Glasgow

The National Piping Centre is bringing you a fantastic, four-day Adult Gathering for pipers aged 18+ at The National Piping Centre, Glasgow. This school has been designed to give a fantastic social learning experience with World Class instructors. Info: www.thepipingcentre.co.uk

Samhuinn Fire Festival 31, Edinburgh

Edinburgh's spectacular Winter celebration returns with a live parade to celebrate the ancient ritual of Samhuinn, putting a fiery twist on Halloween night. Info: www.beltane.org

Scotword answers from page 6

Across:	Down:
1 Peat	1 Puffer
3 Bap	2 Township
5 Damson	3 Burnsnight
8 Any	4 Paps
9 Flower	5 Dyke
10 Shetland	6 Sprain
12 SOS	7 Need
13 Rash	11 Toe
15 Nineteenth	14 Awe
19 Neep	16 Niece
20 Gleam	17 Tombstones
21 Spey	18 Hay
23 Privateers	19 Nip
26 Rasp	21 Strength
28 Tee	22 Ems
29 Victoria	24 Inches
32 Noggin	25 Ago
33 Aye	27 Punnet
34 Easter	29 Vale
35 Ass	30 Roar
36 Hart	31 Area

Rum named as Scotland's first International Dark Sky Sanctuary



Rum house with starry skies.
Photo: ©Steven Gray Cosmos Planetarium.

The Isle of Rum has been designated as Scotland's first International Dark Sky Sanctuary by DarkSky International. The designation recognises the efforts of the Isle of Rum Community Trust and NatureScot to protect and promote the island's special starry skies and nocturnal environment, as well as acknowledging its scientific and cultural importance. While Scotland has five designated International Dark Sky Places, the Inner Hebridean island is the first area to be designated as a Sanctuary following stricter night sky quality criteria to reflect its remote location and naturally dark night skies. There are just 20 other International Dark Sky Sanctuaries worldwide, with only one other in Europe – Ynys Enlli or Bardsey Island in Wales. Over the past few years, Rum's small population has been working to ensure

that all lighting on the island is dark sky-friendly, as well as hosting astrological and educational events for the community, the local school, and visitors.

Importance of dark skies

Amber Harrison, the Dark Sky Places Program Manager, said: "This certification represents the hard work and dedication of advocates, residents, and community officials who recognize the value of Rum's natural and cultural resources and are dedicated to safeguarding them against human impacts into the future. Rum is home to a significant breeding population of Manx shearwaters and these efforts will ensure that their habitat is protected for years to come."

Future aspirations include the establishment of a Dark Sky Tower in Kinloch village with telescopes available to

all to view the night sky and views of the island's dramatic mountain ridges. An all-sky camera and weather station in the village is also planned to provide round-the-clock online viewing worldwide. A year-round program of astronomy events and informative signs around the island will be put in place to educate visitors and locals alike on the importance of dark skies both for human health and for nature. Alex Mumford, who led the Dark Sky bid while visitor services manager on the Isle of Rum, said: "We are thrilled to become Scotland's first Dark Sky Sanctuary and relish the prospect of the impact we can have far and wide. It has been a long process and a lot of hard work has gone into this and we hope to provide inspiration around the world for other small communities to do the same. The work now begins to put our exciting plans into motion and we cannot wait."

Nationally important natural heritage

Fliss Fraser, a director for the Isle of Rum Community Trust, said: "As a small Scottish island with a resident population of 40, we are really proud to have achieved Dark Sky Sanctuary status. Along with all the benefits for our natural heritage, we hope to encourage visitors to enjoy our dark skies as part of our ongoing sustainable approach to tourism."

Most of Rum is designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR), recognizing its internationally and nationally important natural heritage. Rum National Nature Reserve is managed by NatureScot as a

special place for wildlife and people. In spring and summer, the island's mountain tops are home to one of the world's largest breeding colonies of Manx shearwater.

More than 120,000 pairs descend on Rum each year, representing around 25% of the world's breeding population. Lesley Watt, NatureScot's NNR manager for Rum, said: "Dark skies are vital for many species to thrive, and this is especially so for Rum's population of Manx shearwater. Along with many birds, light pollution can have a really negative impact on these amazing seabirds, particularly for fledglings who are active at night and are attracted to artificial light. When it is time for the Manx shearwater fledglings to leave Rum and make their first flight out to sea, light pollution can disorient them causing them to crash on land and never reach the sea or their destination. This designation is excellent news as by protecting our night skies we can ensure the island remains a safe haven for these birds and the many other species that make Rum so special."



Manx shearwater, Rum National Nature Reserve.
Photo: ©Laurie Campbell/NatureScot.

22ND ANNUAL
SCOTTISH NORTH AMERICAN
 COMMUNITY CONFERENCE
 DECEMBER 6-7, 2024
 ALEXANDRIA, VA

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Friday: The Lord Sempill • Sir John McEwan

Saturday: Rt. Hon. Henry Baird McLeish, *Former First Minister of Scotland*









Meet the Buchanans World Premier



The Buchanan family.

Meat the Buchanans, a feature documentary from BAFTA award-winning producer Barbara Orton, has made its world premiere at the Tartan Film Festival in Los Angeles. For 300 years the Clan Buchanan has been without a chief.

That is, until now... Historical fact and historical fantasy collide in *Meet the Buchanans*, which observes the coming inauguration of millionaire Scottish landowner Mike Buchanan as the newly confirmed Clan Buchanan Highland Chief, along with his wife Lady Paula and their teenage family. Join the family in real *Outlander* style as the Buchanans attract tartan-mad enthusiasts from around the world. We meet characters

For 300 years the Clan Buchanan has been without a chief.

drawn to Scotland by kinship, connection, and the excitement of the Clan's first chief in over three hundred years - from two American sisters who wear the Buchanan tartan proudly, to Mexican Pedro Buchanan.

Cemented its place in Scottish history

The driving force behind his claim to the title, Mike's determined wife Paula planned the inaugural three-day bonanza and ceremonial regalia on their magnificent Highland estate in 2022. She is now the chief architect of his 'coronation' (well, much of it, if an ancient source can't be found). Following in the footsteps of famous Buchanan house guest, the nineteenth-century Scottish writer Walter Scott - ceremony and ritual are being freely invented. This unique event took place at Cambusmore, Callander, the modern seat of Clan Buchanan and the chief's ancestral home.

The ceremony cemented its place in Scottish history as the first for many hundreds of years, and the new chief swore an oath to protect and champion the Buchanan Clan. A hidden world of British wealth and privilege unfolds as the family uncover and invent fresh entitlements of the new role: revealing not only whether they can pull off this event, but also how history is made (up). *Meet the Buchanans* raises important questions around identity, historical values and traditions, belonging, and the place of Clans in the modern world.

The newly-completed feature-length version began its festival circuit in August with the world premiere at the Tartan Film Festival in Los Angeles, organized by the St. Andrew's Society of Los Angeles. A shorter version of the film was originally commissioned by BBC Scotland. The feature version which premiered at the Tartan Film Festival is supported by Screen Scotland. The film premier took place at Lumiere Cinema in Beverly Hills and was followed by a Q&A with the Clan Chief, Lady Buchanan, and producer and director Barbara Orton, hosted by BBC Correspondent Sandro Monetti. Following the week of the premiere, the film was screened at the Pleasanton Highland Games hosted by the San Francisco Caledonian Club where Mike was the Honored Clan Chief.

A Clan story that's not stuck in the past

Barbara Orton, producer and co-director, says: "Now the feature version is finished, I can't wait for festival and cinema audiences to see it and witness a contemporary view of Scotland, in a story about Clans originating in the modern world. It's a Clan story that's not stuck in the past." Anthony Arnello, Events Director of the Tartan Film Festival added: "So often in America, people are fixated on dreams of discovering a long-lost connection to Robert the Bruce or a hope that they might in fact become a Clan Chief by some forgotten cousin. This film brings that fantasy to life, taking the viewer into the fold of becoming a Chieftain and along the way finding meaning, creating tradition, and building a legacy."

Clan Chiefs must be approved by the Lord Lyon King of Arms. The Lord Lyon has full judicial powers to enforce use of heraldry and coats of arms in Scotland through the Lyon Court, the last surviving 'Court of Chivalry' in the world. As well as those with the surname Buchanan, clansfolk also include those with Scottish roots and surnames such as Bohannon, Coleman, Colman, Cormack, Dewar, Dove, Dow, Gibb, Gibbon, Gibb, Gibson, Gilbert, Gilbertson, Harper, Masters, Masterson, Morris, Richardson, Rush, Rusk, Walter, Walters, Wasson, Waters, Watson, Watt, Watters, and Weir. In the modern day, these are known as affiliated families but were previously known as septs of the clan.

The Scottish North American Community Conference 2024



The 22nd The Scottish North American Community Conference takes place December 6 - 7, 2024 over the weekend of the Scottish Christmas Walk in Alexandria Virginia. This unique event is taking place both online and in person. The Conference will center around: *Scottish Roots and Fruits: The Power of Connection*. Keynote Speakers Include: Friday: The Lord Sempill, Sir John McEwan and Saturday: Rt. Hon. Henry Baird McLeish, Former First Minister of Scotland. The Conference, organized by founders The Chicago Scots and American Scottish Foundation, together with the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto, Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (COSCA), The Scottish Studies Foundation at the University of Guelph, Ontario, The St Andrews Society of Detroit, St. Andrew's Society of Toronto and the Scottish American Women's Society (SAWS). The 2024 program is currently in development. Please visit the website for updates to speakers and panels.

Reserve now for Early Bird Tickets! Daily or weekend tickets are available on line at SNACC website: www.scottishleadershipconference.com



The Buchanan with Lady Paula.



The Buchanan sons with Malcolm Buchanan, Australia.



An eagle display at the inauguration.

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Left at The Wellgate - *The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith*



Mary's passport photo, 1911.

Jamie Lees, an Amherstburg, Ontario resident and co-owner of Jank Words & Pictures, has curated a unique historical exhibition titled: *Left at The Wellgate: The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith* at the Central Dundee Library in Scotland. On now the exhibition delves into the enigmatic story of Jamie's great grandmother, Mary Petrie Smith, who, on September 14, 1911, left her two young sons in their pram outside a pub in The Wellgate, before leaving for Canada (her journey spanned several Canadian cities, including Montreal, Perth, Kingston, and Collingwood, where she rebuilt her life). Through a meticulous collection of artifacts, documents, photographs, and personal stories, Jamie presents an emotionally charged and historically rich narrative.

Dedicated to her great grandmother, the exhibition *Left at The Wellgate: The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith* allows Mary to finally share her side of the story that remained secret; untold for 113 years. Jamie's journey to uncover the truth behind this family

mystery has profoundly affected her, leading her from deep sorrow to a sense of peace as she felt her great grandmother's spirit guiding her throughout the process. The exhibition invites visitors to explore various possibilities of what really happened that dark day in 1911 and what drove Mary to make such a drastic decision, encouraging them to form their own opinions based on the artifacts, documents, and personal stories presented. Jamie Lees said: "*Left at The Wellgate: The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith* has been an emotional journey of discovery and connection for me. It is a privilege to share my great grandmother's story with the people of Dundee and to highlight the resilience and strength of women like her."

Understanding of the historical landscape

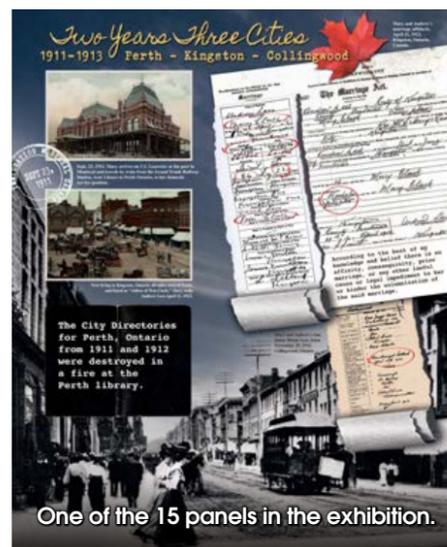
Collaborating with The Wellgate Project and leveraging her expertise in visual storytelling with her husband, Jamie brings a deeply personal yet universally resonant experience to the audience. Frank D'Angelo, co-owner at Jank Words & Pictures, praises her dedication to preserving and sharing this heritage thoughtfully with a broader audience, fostering a stronger cultural connection between Canada and Scotland. In addition to the exhibition, there will be a series of related talks by guest speakers and interactive events to further engage the community with the historical themes and the stories presented.

Dr. Erin Farley, Project Lead and Library & Information Officer, Central Library, Dundee, Scotland, where the exhibition will take place, notes, "We've collaborated with Jamie in Canada from Scotland to create an

immersive experience that sheds light on the social and cultural context of early 20th century Dundee. This exhibition not only honours Mary Petrie Smith's legacy but also enriches our understanding of the historical landscape in which she lived."

The public are invited in celebrating this remarkable transatlantic connection and discover the compelling story of *Left at The Wellgate: The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith*, a story that peels back the layers of the life of a complex woman—abandoner, immigrant, bigamist, survivor, enigma. A paradoxical maternal path that shaped a family's history.

***Left at The Wellgate: The Untold Story of Mary Petrie Smith* runs to October 14, 2024 at the Central Library, The Wellgate, Dundee. For more information, please contact Jamie Lees at jamie@jank.ca or visit The Wellgate Project's website at www.leisureandculturedundee.com/event/33287.**



One of the 15 panels in the exhibition.

The 2024 Salado Scottish Gathering and Highland Games



The 63rd Scottish Gathering and Highland Games held in Salado, Texas, is the oldest Scottish festival in Texas and hosts the largest gathering of Scottish Clans in the state. The landmark event has been sponsored continuously by the Salado Museum since 1961 with all proceeds benefitting the museum, a nonprofit organization (www.saladomuseum.org).

Heralding all things Scottish, the 3-day event (November 8-10) highlights bagpipe band, Highland dance and heavy athletics competitions and features a Clan Village with some 40 Scots Clans represented. Weekend activities also include performances by Celtic musicians, Bonnies Knees and Shortbread contests, and a multi-vendor Celtic marketplace.

Events begin Friday afternoon with an educational presentation on Scottish music history in the museum. A special Calling of the Clans torchlight ceremony takes place that evening on the banks of nearby Salado Creek. Festival grounds open Saturday morning with opening ceremonies held at noon that include a Bands and Clans Parade through the streets of Salado and a massed bands presentation on the grounds.

Sunday activities begin with the Kirkin' o' the Tartan and include pipe band and dance performances, live Celtic music, and a Dog Costume Contest. The Wee Scots Gift Shop is open all three days in the Salado Museum.

For more information on the Salado Scottish Gathering and Highland Games see: www.saladoscottishfestival.com

Key moment in church history goes online



The National Covenant, a protest against Charles I's religious reforms in Scotland.

The moment the Church of Scotland defied King Charles I is among a vast number of historical documents now available to view on the ScotlandsPeople website. As part of a wider release of almost 4,000 volumes of church court records, National Records of Scotland (NRS) has added papers from the church's governing court, the General Assembly, for the first time. This includes the minutes of the meeting held in Glasgow in November 1638 when delegates representing Scotland rejected the monarch's rules for worship.

NRS archivist Jessica Evershed said: "The 1638 meeting of the General Assembly is a turning point in Scottish history. It sees the ministers disobey the King to remove the bishops and the new common prayer book he had introduced. As part of the wider Covenants' movement, this led to 50 years of war and upheaval. This is just one item among the church court records available on ScotlandsPeople. The latest release includes approximately 300,000 digitised

images of mostly handwritten historical records dating from the 1500s to 1900. These records are a treasure trove for professional historians and amateurs working on their family tree. The records of local church courts contain details of parish work such as grants for the poor, mediating family disputes, payments for services and issuing punishments for minor offences."

A unique window into the history of Scotland

Reverend Fiona Smith, Principal Clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said: "I am delighted that National Records of Scotland are making further Church of Scotland records available in a digitised format, providing a unique window into the history of Scotland itself, as well as aspects of daily life in our parishes, unfolding over the course of hundreds of years. We hope it will allow many more people to access these meticulously written documents, which tell the stories of local communities from across Scotland."

ScotlandsPeople is run by National Records of Scotland. It offers access to a wide range of official records including births, deaths, marriages and census records from the 16th century to modern times. Modern records are restricted but older records can be searched free of charge and viewed online on payment of a fee. Church court records are among those available to search and view free of charge at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk.

Sons of Scotland Pipe Band perform in Scotland and Ireland



Belfast International Tattoo.

By: PM Bethany Bisailion

The Sons of Scotland Pipe Band from Ottawa, Canada assembled another great group of musicians, dancers, and friends that joined them on their 20th trip to Scotland in August and it was just terrific. With daily practices in Edinburgh and guest players from Liverpool, Australia, France and across Ontario and Quebec, the band had a great time preparing for the World Pipe Band Championships where they had a great play. The band performed at shows at Edinburgh City Chambers for Lord Provost Robert Aldridge, at the Palace of HolyroodHouse – where MC Matt Taylor set a new standard for audience experience engagement, then onto Tennent's Brewery in Glasgow, and the final stop at Glencoe where the mist covered the mountains added to the atmosphere, but we played on.

More great trip opportunities

The band's international Drum Major Brian Wilson invited the pipe band to travel to Ireland just 10 days later, so PM

Bethany Bisailion and guest players from Ontario and Quebec made the trip to play in the 10th annual Belfast International Tattoo at the SSE Arena. As part of a pipe band of 100+ and alongside many other musicians and dancers, the band was honoured to receive this opportunity and truly enjoyed visiting Belfast.

With more great trip opportunities ahead of us, including playing at the Invictus Games in Vancouver in 2025, the band welcomes players to visit their website and see how they can join in and be part of their great travels.

For more details on the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band, or to get in touch, please visit: www.sospb.com.



World Pipe Band Championships.