

SCOT POURRI

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

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

Representing Canada



Congratulations to the Canadian dancers who performed this past summer at the world-renowned Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, Scotland, and the Basel Tattoo in Basel, Switzerland!
ScotDance Canada

Dean Castle & Country Park



The stunning Dean Castle & Country Park in the morning. Dean Castle, a historic treasure in Kilmarnock, recently reopened to the public in April 2022 after an extensive £5.2 million renovation. This 14th century castle, originally built by the Boyd family, has been meticulously restored to preserve its medieval charm while incorporating modern amenities. The castle has strong historical ties to William Wallace, as the Boyds were among his early supporters during Scotland's fight for independence.

Additionally, Dean Castle played a role in the Jacobite uprisings, with William Boyd, 4th Earl of Kilmarnock, joining the 1745 Jacobite Rising and ultimately being captured at the Battle of Culloden. Visitors can now explore the newly refurbished Keep, Palace, Gatehouse, and Courtyard, which house fascinating collections of arms, armour, and musical instruments. The renovation project, supported by East Ayrshire Council, Historic Environment Scotland and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, ensures that Dean Castle remains a vibrant part of the community. Entry is free, this is a castle to add to your visit list!
The Kilted Photographer Scotland

Lockerbie Remembered



Thank you for your feature on the Lockerbie tragedy (*Lockerbie Remembered*, *the Scottish Banner*, December, 2024).

This sad story continues to make headlines all these years later and it is refreshing to read that some positive connections have been made out of sheer grief and tragedy. The late 80's seem quite a while ago, but for some reason Lockerbie remains fresh in my mind and not so long ago. I applaud the families and friends who lost loved ones for making such poignant and special memorials and making sure those lost even nearly four decades on are not forgotten. It shows the great human spirit to read that strong connections have been made across both sides of the Atlantic out of this devastation.

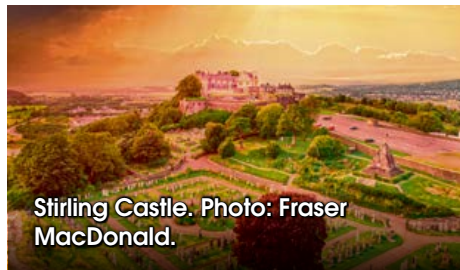
Thank you, Neil Drysdale, for this article and I hope those who personally lived through know so many of us still remember and care.
*Nigel Prescott
Atlanta, Georgia
USA*

Unknown Edinburgh



I am planning, finally, my very first trip to Scotland and will be definably staying in Edinburgh. Your article (*Unknown Edinburgh*, *the Scottish Banner*, November, 2024) had some great tips for our visit as we want to not just do the regular tourist thing, but visit some lesser-known spots. We are bringing our kids, aged 11 and 14, on what will be their very first overseas trip. They are beyond excited to go, and we are all looking forward to being in Scotland and finding out where my mother hails from. I have been waiting until my children were a bit older to remember Scotland and hopefully that excitement they have for their first trip continues when they get home and they find a new love for their vibrant Scottish culture. Each summer we often attend Highland Games and always have a great experience, something my mother did for me growing up.
*Annette Tremblay
Kingston, Ontario
Canada*

Stirling



Stirling Castle. Photo: Fraser MacDonald.

Thank you for the feature on Stirling (*the Scottish Banner*, *Stirling 900*, November, 2024), one of my favourite places to be in Scotland. I have been fortunate to visit the city several times and find it a convenient base to get to so many other parts of Scotland. The history in and around Stirling is amazing and it has a much quieter feel than Edinburgh or Glasgow. Not sure if I am allowed to say this but I think Stirling Castle is so much better than Edinburgh Castle...! Scotland continues to have such a draw for me as it not just the land of my ancestors but also a great place to connect with culture, nature and history.

I enjoy each issue of *the Scottish Banner* and look forward to reading more about Scotland as I am planning my next visit in 2026.
*Rebecca Macleod
Auckland, New Zealand*

Shellshocked

Over the past year or so, Kennedy Smith has published in *the Scottish Banner*, a number of poems in the Scots language.



He has now collected these (and others) into a book, *Blethers wi' Robin* which is available via Amazon. The picture shows the two protagonists admiring their work.

Shellshocked

*Whar's ma freend, is wee Rob fine?
Ah keeked awwhaur; couldna find.
When suddenly frae out a bind,
He tummelt his wilkies.
The bird, he glowered wi gleeks malign
An wirds no silkie.*

*The peerie-heidit passerine
Just took the huff; quite like a queen.
He telt us aw whar he had been
Aw nicht lang;
While rockets wi' their murderous scream
Went whee an bang.*

*Puir wee Robbie's fairly trekkled.
Singe marks on his feathers freckled.
Spots afore his eyes did speckle.
Nae gagglin' matter!
A fricht Rob had in awe the heckle
mak'n him crasser.*

*Ah couldna help but gie a lauch.
Rob just stared, liken ah wis daft.
He thought, "Mebbe he's gauen saft,"
A fair puzzle.
Then, dumfoondert, just flew aff,
Wi nae mair hustle.*

*So syne tak' heid tae whit ah say
An tak' guid care wi whit ye dae.
Puir wild things hae their ain life tae,
Ye ken.
So pit yer playthings oot the way,
Citizen!*

Readers may be interested in my recent publication in Amazon of a collection of these poems entitled: BLETHERS wi' ROBIN by Kennedy Smith Scotland

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

The Kelpies



The Kelpies lit up purple
Jamie Taylor Photography

Dunnottar Castle



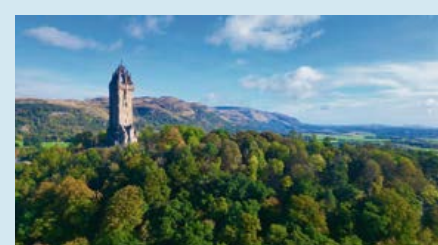
A double exposure of Dunnottar Castle and a Saltire sky.
TravellingScot Photography

MV Dayspring



The Corpach shipwreck (fishing boat *MV Dayspring*) resting on the shore of Loch Linnhe.
Colfin Captures

The National Wallace Monument



Stunning day at The National Wallace Monument in Stirling.
Robert Gibb

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