



# the Scottish Banner



Australasian Edition



Years Strong - 1976-2017 www.scottishbanner.com

*A' Bhratach Albannach*

Volume 40 Number 9 The world's largest international Scottish newspaper March 2017

## Dressed to Kilt

*returns to New York*

» Pg 16



*The Scottish Banner speaks to*

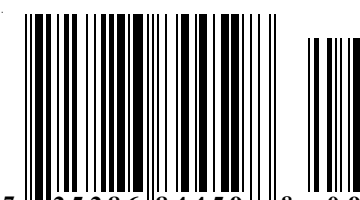
## Eddi Reader

» Pg 10

## In the errant footsteps of a King on the Fife Coastal Path

» Pg 29

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7 25286 84459 8 09

- International Bagpipe Day..... » Pg 3
- Scotland's forgotten poetry ... » Pg 14
- Golden silence in Bo'ness ..... » Pg 28
- The Scottish Banner speaks to Jimmy Barnes ..... » Pg 31

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The Banner Says...

The Scots and the Irish - *Close knit cousins*



by Valerie Cairney

Realising that this is our March issue, makes me remember that St. Patrick's Day will be with us again very soon. While this will mean a great deal of merriment and green frothy drinks for many people, it also brings to mind how close the Scots are to their Irish cousins. Geographically the two nations are within sight of each other for many miles of their rocky coastline - particularly on Northern Ireland's picturesque Causeway Coast.

The Mull of Kintyre is just twelve miles away from certain parts of County Antrim, which as we know, is in Ireland. This means that it is already close enough for some Scots workers in Ireland to row themselves back to their own church on Sunday morning - providing the water is suitably calm. They could also row themselves back again for work again the following morning. Indeed it is along this stretch of coastline that the two neighbours can and do share many common factors.

**The Giant's Causeway**

Sometimes called 'Ulster's stepping stones to Scotland', this giant and very famous causeway, is one of the world's great natural wonders. It is comprised of a mass of strangely shaped columns - which are spread out from the coast until they disappear beneath the cold turbulent waters of the North Channel. These strange mass of columns stretches their rocky fingers out to the sea, attracting thousands of visitors to its slippery surface. Folklore reigns supreme in these parts, and the Causeway comes with its own fascinating tales offering reasons for it's being.

The myth and legend behind the Giant's Causeway in County Antrim involves Irish warrior Finn McCool and the Scottish giant Benandonner. The legend of Finn MacCool states he had an ongoing rivalry with Scots Benandonner or the "Red Man". The two giants would yell insults to each other from across the seas between Ireland and Scotland. However things between the Scots and Irish were not all bad as Finn McCool had a girlfriend who lived in Fingal's Cave on the tiny Isle of Staffa in Scotland's Inner Hebrides. In order to make their visits together easier Finn

McCool conjured up the Causeway as stepping stones to enable visits between the two that much easier. I personally think it's a lovely story, and want with all my heart to believe it!

**Robert the Bruce and the spider**

Not far away from the general area where these two lived, is tiny Rathlin Island. Strange to tell, that here in this watery outpost, is a direct connection to Scottish Independence. For it is to Rathlin Island that King Robert the Bruce fled after his 1306 defeat by the English.

**Scots and Irish have been travelling across the sea for centuries and the link between the two has survived generations.**

It was while sitting in this cave on Rathlin, while he was totally alone and dejected, that Bruce watched a now famous spider. This creature has since become very famous, as it laboriously tried to climb yet repeatedly fell back again. Yet it would not give up. The wee spider finally, as Bruce watched, succeeded to climb on its slim silvery thread and eventually reached its objective. Right to the top and never gave up and achieved its mission.

**Bannockburn**

Today history relates the rest and tells of Bruce's future victory. Yet eventually it still took another eight years before Bruce could achieve his objective. It wasn't until 1314, that Bruce himself finally rode victorious from Bannockburn's bloody field, despite being outnumbered two-to-one and facing what was seen as the best army in the medieval world. The legacy of Robert the Bruce left

Scotland with a great sense of pride and nationhood and doesn't history unfold in some strange ways? And ideas often come to each one of us sometimes in the most surprising of circumstances. A warrior king had learned from a tiny Irish spider! King Robert was smart enough to remember that lessons can be learned from the most surprising sources.

**Immigration to Scotland**

Scots and Irish have been travelling across the sea for centuries and the link between the two has survived generations. Between 1841 and 1851 the Irish population of Scotland increased by 90%. Irish farmers relied on the potato crop, as they can be grown on a small piece of land. Between 1845 and 1848 a potato blight struck the harvest in Ireland and this resulted in the 'Great Famine'. Approximately two million people left Ireland to escape starvation with many coming to Scotland and ready to start a new life. Today the sharing of music, language, recipes and more make the Scots and Irish true Celtic cousins. During the month of March, it is often said that "Everybody wants to be Irish". Let's go one step further, let us say; "The Scots are closer to the Irish than anybody."

However this month also sees other members of our Celtic family celebrating with both the Welsh celebrating the life of their patron saint, St David, and the Welsh culture on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Saint Piran's Day is celebrated each year on 5<sup>th</sup> March in Cornwall so a great month of Celtic celebration lies ahead.

All of us here at the Scottish Banner wish all of our readers and friends a Happy St. Patrick's Day, celebrating our Celtic friends and even more importantly, family.

**Do you have links to another Celtic nation? Tell us your Celtic story and share with us your views by email, post or at www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us**



The Giant's Causeway.

Gracing our front cover: Miss World Scotland, Lucy Kerr, stops traffic in New York for Dressed to Kilt. Photo: JohnMaslinPhoto.com.

# International Bagpipe Day

Friday 10th  
March 2017

By: The National Piping Centre, Glasgow



The variety of bagpipes. Images courtesy of The National Piping Centre.



International Bagpipe Day is a day of celebration for The Great Highland Bagpipe, and all types of bagpipe, where people are encouraged to go out and play, find out more about piping across the globe and fall in love with pipe music.

First held in March 2012, it was inaugurated by The Bagpipe Society, an institution which was set up in 1986 to promote bagpipe revival across the world.

There are so many global events which celebrate the diversity in piping, and their development. Events like Festival Interceltique de Lorient, Celtic Connections and Piping Live! showcase the amazing diversity with different bagpipes from across the world, as well as different styles of music and performance. The World Pipe Band Championships held annually in Glasgow, also shows how the Great Highland Bagpipe has travelled, with pipe bands from the four



corners of the globe coming together to compete and share music. When the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo recently toured to Melbourne Australia, the music wowed the audiences and showed how the bagpipes continue to thrill audiences and resonate with people worldwide.

The National Piping Centre is delighted to welcome visitors fascinated by our instrument to our Museum of Piping which holds part of the National Museums Scotland's collection of artefacts. We hope that this affection continues for many years to come. So, on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March, we will be joining with pipers around the world, to play a tune in celebration of our fantastic instrument in all its forms from across the globe.

Do you love the pipes? Tell us what it is about this instrument that inspires you at: [www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us](http://www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us)

## Scottish Banner 40th Anniversary Edinburgh giveaway

Congratulations to our winner Scott Rodger of Mt Eliza, Victoria who has won our trip for 2 to Edinburgh, Scotland! We received thousands of entries and thank you to all who entered this fantastic competition and for helping us celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of printing *the Scottish Banner*.

A surprised Scott told *the Scottish Banner* he has not been home for 35 years and we wish Scott a great trip back.

Thanks also to our friends at Qatar Airways The Spires Suites, Mercat Tours and VisitScotland for helping make the prize possible!



**Celebrating 40 years of publication!**

## Burns violin's voice restored



Bachelors' Club in Tarbolton.

construction dating to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. It is made from pine, bird's-eye maple and plain cut sycamore. It has now been repaired and restored and has been restrung with gut strings as it would have originally. According to experts at the museum, around 1779 the adolescent Robert Burns began attending dancing lessons in Tarbolton.

### Form of rebellion

Curator Sean McGlashan said: "Burns wrote that he hoped dancing would 'give my manners a brush.' More likely, he realised dancing lessons were an excellent form of rebellion, as his father frowned upon such sinful behaviour. I feel it is important to play music of the period, particularly the music of Niel Gow who Burns met in 1787. The tone of the instrument has a sweetness which enhances the character of these great old tunes."

The violin is part of the National Trust for Scotland's collection at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway. The instrument was played at the Burns Big Birthday Bash at Burns Cottage and this was the first time in many years that people have heard the violin as Burns did in 1779.

A violin which Robert Burns is said to have danced to has sounded again this past Burns Night as it did in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the National Trust for Scotland had the piece restored to its original condition. The instrument is thought to have belonged to Burns' tutor William Gregg and accompanied Robert Burns' dance lessons at the Bachelors' Club in Tarbolton. Over the years, a series of repairs and modernisations, including the adding of a chin cup, had been made to the violin using modern style strings.

### Baroque violin

Last year, the National Trust for Scotland, the charity which conserves and promotes Scotland's heritage, arranged for David Rattray, the Kirkcaldy-based violin expert to restore the instrument to how it would have been in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Burns danced to it. The fiddle is a decorated baroque violin of provincial-type



**60th ANNUAL**

# GEELONG HIGHLAND GATHERING

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# SCOT POURRI



Send us your inquiries on life's little question marks. Ever wanted to know what happened to your old pal from home, how to make your favourite Scottish meal, or wondered about a certain bit of Scottish history? Pose your questions on Scottish related topics to our knowledgeable readership who just may be able to help. Our letters page is a very popular and active one and many readers have been assisted across the world by fellow passionate Scots. Please keep letters under 200 words and we reserve the right to edit content and length. Letters, photos and any other items posted to the Scottish Banner cannot be returned. We prefer letters to be emailed to your nearest office or please visit our online Scotpourri form at [www.scottishbanner.com](http://www.scottishbanner.com), alternatively you may post or fax your letters to us. Please ensure you include your full contact details, when emailing it is best to include your post address for those without internet access. This page belongs to our readers so please feel free to take part! Thanks to all our readers from around the world who have made this such a special page.

## The Palace of Holyroodhouse



Thank you very much for printing the article about the Wentworth Weeping Elms at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh in the November edition of the Scottish Banner (Rare trees found at the Palace of Holyroodhouse). I am very interested and fascinated and told my younger cousin and she said "awesome" and that sums it up nicely.

As my Grandfather and her Great Grandfather Alexander Duthie went to work as a qualified gardener at the Palace in January 1902, so he would have nursed these seedlings/saplings for the next 45 years, then his son George for the next 25 years-that was 70 years of family care for the trees. Grandfather became Head Gardener in 1915 and the family moved into Croft-an-Righ House which was divided into two sections with the Palace guide Mr Graham living there and Mr Reid before him. At that ere it all came under the jurisdiction of Ancient Monuments, Ministry of Works, George Street, Edinburgh.

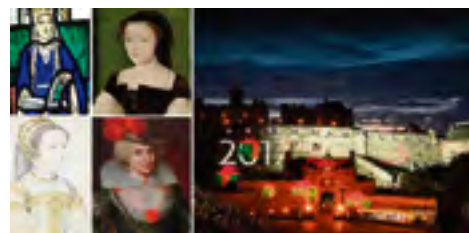
As a child during the second World War I spent many happy hours on the Palace grounds under supervision of course, but sadly I don't recall the trees. There was a weeping tree in the NE area which I'm sure was a willow, it almost touched the ground and was cold and darkish under the big canopy so I gave it a wide berth. I'd like to know where about in the grounds these trees were planted as they can grow to 100, they must have a big canopy and not too close to the buildings. None of them were planted on the northern side of the Palace because when the bomb hit the sundial area it would have been killed.

I enjoy the Banner and thank you once again for taking me down memory lane.

Marion L Cousins  
Chinchilla, Queensland  
Australia

**Ed note: Thank you Marion for sharing your story and interesting childhood with us.**

## Calling Duries to the Edinburgh Tattoo 2017 and 'The Duries & Four Scottish Queens' tour



L: Top: St Margaret, Mary of Guise, Bottom: Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Anne. R Edinburgh Castle

The Durie Family is to feature with the Bruce's - another Fife family - at the world-famous Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2017 in "A Splash of Tartan". Come and join us on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August. Each night the Chiefs of the Clans and Families featured will appear on the Castle esplanade, accompanied by Clan and Family members, with the VIP taking the salute. Aspects of the Families' part in Scotland's heritage will be presented and their tartans projected on to the Castle and Esplanade. The traditional Quaich ceremony will follow and then all to their seats and the 2017 Tattoo will begin. Special Durie focussed activities are planned for the weekend: 'The Duries and Four Scottish Queens' - a day tour to Fife and one in Edinburgh. We want as many Duries as possible there on Our Night - Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017! Seats are being held. And come on the day trips too.

For more information: see [www.duriefamily.co.uk](http://www.duriefamily.co.uk) or e-mail: [contact@duriefamily.co.uk](mailto:contact@duriefamily.co.uk)

Note: Not a Durie nor a Bruce? But want to take part in your Clan or Family's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2017 special night? Visit: [info@clanchiefs.org.uk](mailto:info@clanchiefs.org.uk) or the website [www.clanchiefs.org.uk](http://www.clanchiefs.org.uk)

## Dean Castle



Having read January's edition I observe the article with reference to Brodie Castle having undergoing a transformation and investment of £2,800,000. I thought you might like to be made aware of another castle undergoing the same transformation. Dean Castle in Kilmarnock, this castle is where I met my wife 56 years ago married there 1962 and resided for a few years prior to emigrating to Canada 1967, it is a romantic location and a jewel in the area! As castles go the Dean Castle is a very attractive castle of which encompasses a Palace and Keep. Has a history, Robert The Bruce gave the lands to Sir Robert Boyd for faithful service during the wars of independence.

Around 1350 it became the seat of the Boyd's. in 1745 Lord William Boyd supported the Jacobite rebellion for which he was executed for treason 1746. My wife's parents were custodians of the castle at which time was owned by the 9<sup>th</sup> Lord Howard De'Walden until 1974 when he gifted the castle to the town of Kilmarnock. This Lord De'Walden was very popular

with the people of Kilmarnock, each year during the Kilmarnock fair holidays he would enter a horse at the Ayr races. The people of Kilmarnock would hear about this and would place there monies on the horse which would most time be the winner thereby providing the Kilmarnock people with money for their holidays.

In 1735 the castle was heavily damaged by fire and in 1899 the 8<sup>th</sup> Lord De'Walden restored the castle. There are a collection of arms (swords) and coats of Armour also many fine pieces of historical musical instruments contained in the castle Keep.

Currently the castle is undergoing a major transformation to bring the castle and grounds back to its former glory thanks to a Scottish Heritage grant of several millions of pounds this is a work currently in progress that will take some two years to complete. It is my belief this would be of interest to the Scottish Banner readers and a castle worth visiting.

I hope you will find this castle to be worth your time to explore for a future issue, it also featured in an episode of the TV series *Outlander* during the filming last year!

Regards  
Bill Kelly  
Canada

**Ed note: Thanks Bill for sharing this piece of history with us and what a special place to get married.**

## Cairngorm Reindeer



The article about the reindeer herd in the Cairngorms brought back so many happy memories (*Rambling Scotland-Cairn Gorm and Britain's only reindeer herd, Scottish Banner, December, 2016*). I knew Mikel Utsi and his wife as well as visiting them at "Reindeer House" in the Cairngorms. I visited Mr Utsi many times at his home in the town of Jokmökk in northern Sweden and have happy memories of riding on a pulka pulled by reindeer thru the birch woods.

Thank you for the article.  
R.A Baillie  
Prospect Vale, Tasmania  
Australia

## Informative publication

Many thanks on producing such a high quality and very informative publication. Since my pen pal (ouch! dated term), Bruce Scotland donated a subscription to me some months ago I have learned so much about Scotland. This is despite me being an avid reader of both Scottish and national newspapers. The articles on Christmas and New Year tradition were superb. Keep up the good work.

Kind regards,  
Ron Scrimgeour  
Forfar, Angus  
Scotland

**Ed note: Thanks Ron for your note to us and we are always thrilled to hear such positive feedback from our Scottish based readers.**

## 78th Fraser Highlanders Pipe Band



Photo: Louise Gunn.

Attached is a photo of the 78th Fraser Highlanders Pipe Band performing at our St. Andrew's Day concert back in November. In the past, we staged the Burns Night to make a profit for equipping the soldiers but now that the band and the Tartan Guard are both financially self-supporting, we now stage the event to offer the great evening that folks expect from us.

Edward Gunn  
Captain-Lieutenant  
Fort St. Andrew's Garrison  
78th Fraser Highlanders  
Quebec City, Quebec  
Canada

## SENT TO OUR FACEBOOK OR TWITTER PAGES

(Send us your photos or letters via social media)

### Bannock



We had a 'Multicultural Morning Tea' at church this weekend. This was partly to celebrate the Chinese New Year, since we have a few members with Chinese heritage. Members were asked to bring some food representing their heritage. Others brought things like pavlova, and lamingtons. To represent my Scottish heritage, I baked this bannock. The recipe was from the Scottish Banner.  
Scott McPhee  
Melbourne, Victoria  
Australia

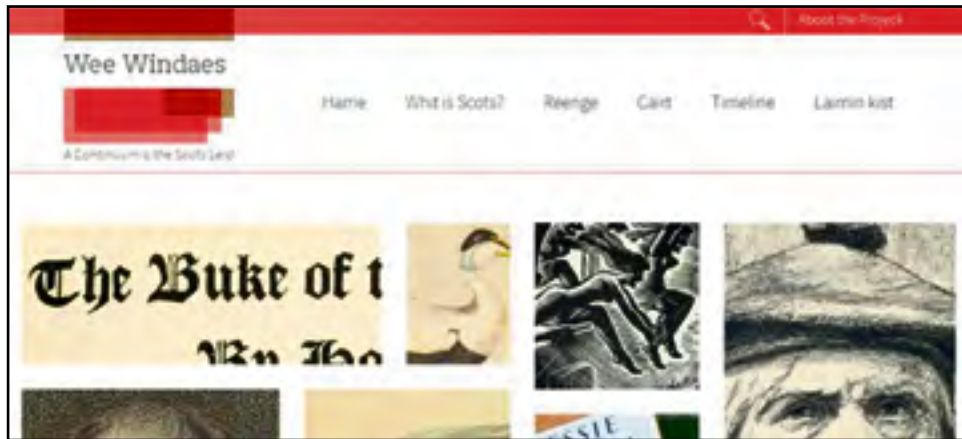
### Blackness Castle



Designed to look like a ship by Archibald Douglas who suffered by seasickness, wonderful Blackness Castle.  
Scotland Traveloholic  
Scotland

# Scots language website launches

## *Wee Windaes* throws new light on Scots language



The Scots language as it has been spoken, written and enjoyed down the centuries is revealed in a new project developed by the National Library of Scotland. Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Education, John Swinney, launched the new website that aims to raise awareness of the history, richness and cultural significance of Scots from its use as the language of the state in the Middle Ages to its appearance in 20<sup>th</sup> century novels and poetry.

The *Wee Windaes* website is based on a careful selection of Scots language material from the countless examples in the vast collections of the National Library. The oldest is a performance poem from the 1440s *The Buke of the Howlat*, through to the 20<sup>th</sup> century writings of novelist and playwright Jessie Kesson.

Examples of contemporary writing will be added as the site develops further.

### Essential element of our nation's culture and heritage

It shows the use of Scots in many different forms including song, folk tale, scripture, satire, drama, fiction and poetry. The site itself is written in Scots with an English version. Visitors to the site can listen to many examples of spoken Scots, as well as reading it in written form.

Mr Swinney said: "The Scots language is an essential element of our nation's culture and heritage and this Government is committed to promoting and preserving it in all its distinct regional and local variants, which are spoken by around 1.5 million people. I very much welcome the launch of the *Wee Windaes* website, which shines a light on the breadth of Scots influence on our rich

literary heritage throughout the centuries."

*Wee Windaes* has been developed by the Scots Scribe, Hamish MacDonald, who was appointed in 2015 by Creative Scotland to raise awareness of the language. He is based at the National Library, where he has collaborated with the Library's Learning Team on developing the site.

Hamish MacDonald said: "It is a privilege tae reenge among the byous National Library collections, whan ilka sairch leads tae some new an unexpectit discovery, shawin throu literature the depth an wunner o a treasured an irreplaceable tung."

### Cultural identity

As its name suggests, the site is based on a series of 'windaes' (windows), each containing a link to more information about the various texts, most of which are being made available online for the first time. More authors and texts will be added to the site throughout 2017.

The Library will also be participating in a research afternoon for staff and students at the University of Edinburgh to showcase the work being done to promote Scots language and literature. National Librarian Dr John Scally said: 'The Scots language is very much part of our cultural identity and we are keen to help it thrive. By using the website, people will be able to get a better understanding of how Scots has been used and how it has changed over five centuries.'

You can visit the site at: [www.wee-windaes.nls.uk](http://www.wee-windaes.nls.uk)

## Sunset Song winners



Congratulations to our winners from the *Sunset Song* DVD readers giveaway in the February issue, and the answer was Lewis Grassie Gibbon, who was the author of the original book *Sunset Song*.

We hope the following people enjoy the film:

- J Murray, Stoneville, WA
- J Macauley, Corio, VIC
- L Cameron, Hastings, NZ
- B Miles, Brisbane, QLD
- C Bruce, Jennings, NSW
- L Ross, Tanunda, SA
- F Howat, Drouin VIC
- S Brischke, Tinana, QLD
- G Weir, Morley, WA
- R Moore, Glenbrook, NSW



## Did you know?

- The unconventional Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute is one of the most remarkable neo-Gothic structures in the world.
- Mount Stuart, family seat of the Marquesses of Bute, contains the world's first indoor heated swimming pool. It was also the first house in Scotland to be lit by electricity, have

central heating, a telephone system and a Victorian passenger lift.

- Themes for astrology and astronomy grace the stunning vaulted ceiling of the marble hall. Look up and you will see 'the stars in their courses' mapped above you, as well as remarkable stained glass windows depicting the signs of the zodiac.
- Stella McCartney, the fashion designer and daughter of Sir Paul McCartney married at Mount Stuart House at a star studded event in 2003.
- Recently in the library it was discovered a unrecorded copy of William Shakespeare's *First Folio*, a collection 36 of Shakespeare's plays, worth millions of pounds was authenticated.

## Tartan of the Month - *St. Piran Cornish Flag*



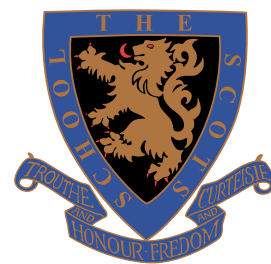
The Scottish Banner is pleased to be offering the Tartan of the Month series highlighting a variety of different, unique and colourful tartans from around the world which are

registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans in Edinburgh. The Scottish Register of Tartans was established by an act of the Scottish Parliament in November 2008 and promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world. Text and image use is courtesy of the Scottish Register of Tartans.

St Piran's Day (Cornish: Gool Peran) is the national day of our Celtic cousins in Cornwall, held on 5 March every year. This tartan was originally called the St Piran (The

Patron Saint of Cornwall) and was to be woven by Abi Armstrong Evans and marketed in conjunction with Donald Rawe of Padstow in 1983. There was a very complicated High Court parting of the ways however and Donald Rawe abandoned his claims to the rights of this tartan (which had been registered by Abi Armstrong Evans) and went on to design the St Piran Dress tartan (#1685, original Scottish Tartans Authority reference). To avoid confusion, Abi Evans then changed the name of this 'St Piran' to the 'Cornish Flag'. Still available from Abi Evans of Trevecca. This update at 21<sup>st</sup> Sept 2005. Free for anyone to weave (Abi Evans May 2006). The white cross on the black represents the flag of Cornwall and the symbol of St Piran, patron saint of the Cornish tin miners. The red represents the scarlet leg and beak of the Cornish chough, the national bird.

[www.scots.nsw.edu.au](http://www.scots.nsw.edu.au)



The Scots School

## HIGHLAND GATHERING

SUNDAY 19 MARCH 2017  
10am – 4pm

Stalls | NSW Pipe Band Competition  
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Academic Excellence • Individual Attention • Diverse Opportunities

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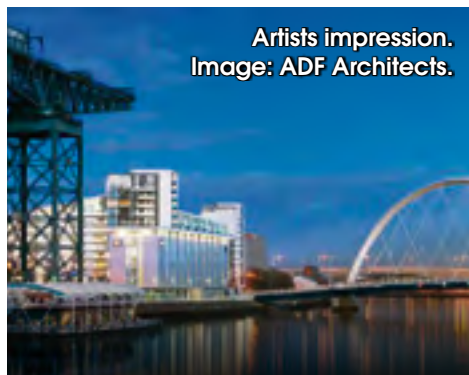
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# SCOTSPEAK

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

*"Galloway Forest Park was the first area in Europe to achieve dark sky park status and we are keen to share our experience and learn from others by being the first in Europe to host such a major conference. This is really good news for putting the south west of Scotland on the map as an international stargazing destination. All the partners involved will be working together to ensure the conference is a success and showcases Galloway as a great place to live, work and play. We're very excited about this major event and the potential spin offs it should create for the local economy."*

Forest Enterprise Scotland visitor services manager Keith Muir said as the south of Scotland will host the first ever dark sky park conference to be held in Europe. The event will take place in September in Gatehouse of Fleet in Dumfries and Galloway. The nearby Galloway Forest Park was the first area in Europe to achieve dark sky park status. Organisers said they hoped it would further help to cement south west Scotland's reputation as a premier destination for stargazing.



Artists impression. Image: ADF Architects.

*"The proposal also provides a return on investment for city council investment in the SECC and Hydro and adds to the attraction of this area of the city. The proposal will also increase the range of choice in quality and style of activity*

*along the river in full accordance with the objectives of the plan. It is also relevant that the proposal will increase the awareness and the attractiveness of the Finnieston Crane and with options for future lighting around the crane."*

A planning statement from Clydeside Restaurants Ltd said as plans have been submitted to have Glasgow's first floating restaurant adjacent to the Finnieston Crane and next to the Scottish Exhibition Centre and Hydro Arena. This area of Glasgow has seen a boom in hotel, restaurant, office and retail making it one of Glasgow's hippest spots.

*"What really makes our project different and new is the vast majority of our data is coming from Burns himself, through his letters, his journals and his commonplace books. What we have done is to build a methodology based on the modern clinical standards used in relation to mood disorders and we have identified 12 different areas across activity, behaviour and state of mind. From that, we can go through and track all of his correspondence and highlight points in his life which look interesting as he might be suffering from abnormal moods which might be clinically significant."*

PhD student Moira Hansen said as Scottish researchers are using modern psychiatry methods to assess if poet Robert Burns may have suffered from depression or been bipolar. Using his letters and personal accounts of his state of mind and well-being researchers have been studying if Burns had depressive periods or mania. Factors such as appearance, alcohol consumption and extra marital affairs have also been studied.

*"We've definitely had the highest ever proportion of sold out events this year. There is great momentum behind the festival now. The demand for some*



*shows way outstripped the tickets that were available. Celtic Connections is becoming a whole festival experience, especially at the weekend, when people are going to three or four shows. One of the many true joys of the festival is that within our tradition of Celtic music and international collaborations, we do not think about creative boundaries. Instead, we present on our stages some of the most brilliant musicians working today and explore the richness and diversity of the music we are celebrating. The journey we have been on through Celtic Connections this year has shown the power of live music to connect with individual lives and to resonate with the wider world in which we all live."*

Donald Shaw, artistic director of Celtic Connections said, as the annual music and culture festival in Glasgow wrapped up with excess of 100,000 people attending performances across the city. 80 per cent of performances at the 18-day festival, which takes place each January/February were completely sold out.

*"There is a real interest in this, especially from women of my age. I like to make a fuss of my swimmers because it is quite extreme so we've got a bagpiper who will lead the swimmers to the loch and some girls doing Highland dancing."*

50 year old distance swimmer Pauline Barker said in the lead up to Scotland's first ice swimming championships at Loch Lomond. The 1km swim requires the temperatures to be no more than 5C and swimmers cannot wear wet suits.

*"The magnetic activity of the sun ebbs and flows in predictable cycles, but there is also evidence that it is due to plummet, possibly by the largest amount for 300 years. If so, the northern lights phenomenon would become a natural show exclusive to the polar regions, due to a lack of solar wind forces that often make it visible at lower latitudes."*

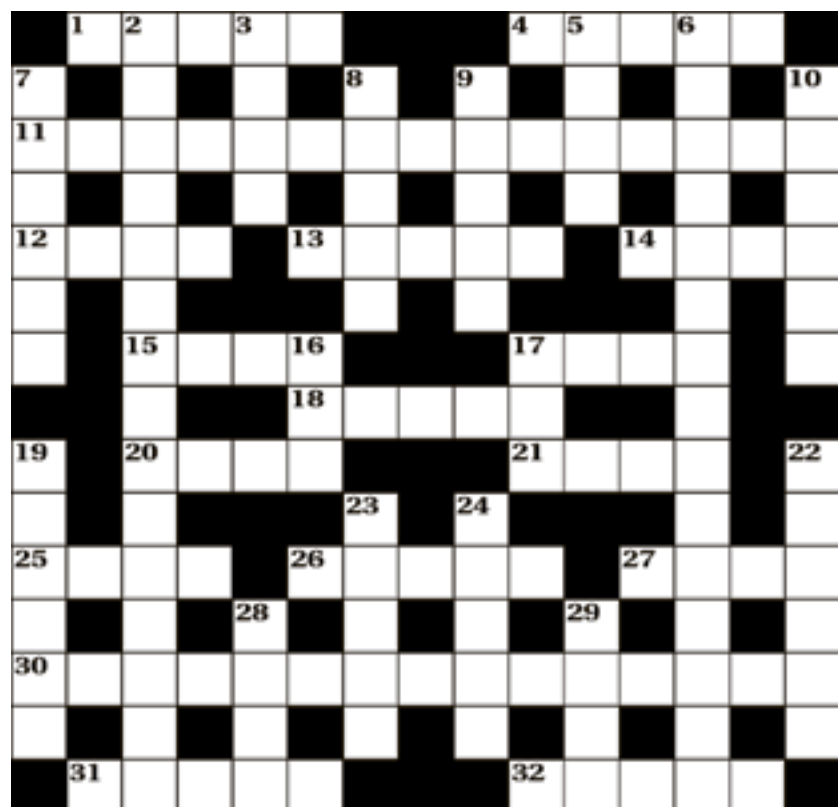
University of Reading researcher Dr Mathew Owens said that the breathtaking views of the Northern Lights could disappear from the Scottish skies within three decades as solar wind levels plummet. The Aurora Borealis, as the extraordinary light show is formally known, has traditionally been best observed within the UK in Scotland.

*"Scotland inspires and captivates the imagination of international visitors through our history, heritage and archaeology. Evidence of our history is edged in our landscape, from surviving Neolithic tombs and homes, to carved stones, to medieval castles, renaissance palaces and some of the finest surviving Georgian urban-planning anywhere in the world. With an estimated 50 million people worldwide claiming Scottish ancestry, attracting visitors to Scotland to experience our country's history is a growing and important market."*

Scottish Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said that Scotland's rich and dramatic history is proving a vital part of the Scottish tourism industry. A recent poll indicated that up to 32% of international visitors to Scotland want to engage with the nation's history whilst they visit.

## SCOTWORD

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



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1) Scotland's only venomous snake (5).
- 4) It goes wi' tatties (5).
- 11) Famous Scottish song (6, 1, 3, 5).
- 12) Related by blood (4).
- 13) Whisky measures (5).
- 14) Advantage on the border (4).
- 15) Mr. Breck! (4).
- 17) Useful at St. Andrews! (4).
- 18) Cathedral city on River Lossie (5).
- 20) Montrose is on what coast? (4).
- 21) Variable star (4).
- 25) Mormon territory (4).
- 26) They talk Scots! (5).
- 27) Get infected by a Scot (4).
- 30) Ghostly container! (6, 2, 7).
- 31) Scots kids (5).
- 32) A passageway to a tenement (5).

### CLUES DOWN

- 2) MacBeth's fortress (9, 6).
- 3) Old measures (4).
- 5) She's a flower (4).
- 6) Scottish lassies (10, 5).
- 7) A broad Scottish valley (6).
- 8) Dull to a Scot (5).
- 9) Suffer in Scots (5).
- 10) Wee islands (6).
- 16) It's the aim in soccer (3).
- 17) Small hotel (3).
- 19) Hallowe'en bangers (6).
- 22) Skilled worker (6).
- 23) Part of the Highland dress (5).
- 24) A hip one is handy! (5).
- 28) Highland family (4).
- 29) Spin round in Scots (4).

## Ringwood Highland Games Melbourne's only Highland Games



The 51<sup>st</sup> Ringwood Highland Games takes place this month in Melbourne and will feature a mini concert of displays of Scottish dancing and Scottish

fiddlers, prior to the Grand March of the Scottish Clans and Massed Bands for the Official Opening at 1:30 pm.

Sword play and classes in the use of swords, Scottish dance and pipe bands will take place on the oval. Lots of Scottish dog breeds participating in the Dog Flyball Competition, interstate Scottish stalls, whisky tasting and everything Scottish.

*The 2017 Ringwood Highland Games will take place at East Ringwood Sports Ground, Dublin Rd, East Ringwood on Sunday March 26th. For further details: Sue Macleod 03 9876 4140, [www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org](http://www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org) or visit the Facebook page.*

# The 153rd Turakina Highland Games

## New Zealand's longest running Highland Games



the more unusual Scottish food items on sale with Lorne sausage, haggis sandwiches and white sausage proving popular.

### Pipers compete

Competitors from all over the North Island and judges from as far north as Whangarei and as far south as Invercargill also enjoyed the conditions. Reid Maxwell, a drumming judge visiting from Vancouver, was especially happy to be away from the wintery conditions at home. The Ian Campbell trophy for winning overall A Grade solo piper was Stuart Easton (Palmerston North) and the Bevan Tasker Cup for winning overall A Grade solo drumming went to Douglas Bilsland (Palmerston North). Thirteen pipe bands took to the band circle in the afternoon. The Grade 4 pipe band competition was won by Scots College Pipe Band (Wellington), Grade 3 - Manawatu Scottish No2 Pipe Band (Palmerston North), Grade

2 - Wellington Red Hackle Pipe Band, Grade 1 - Manawatu Scottish No1 Pipe Band (Palmerston North). This year there were five Youth Bands, the winner in that grade was the Scots College Youth Pipe Band.

Two Highland Dancing stages were busy all day and the traditional Scottish field events proved popular with all ages. Unfortunately the \$100 prize for tossing the 6m Edenmore Caber was again not presented this year. The Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles display with LAV's and military personal made an impressive entrance and had people looking over their equipment all day. The regiments Tug-of-war team were also the winners in the men's event. The balmy evening conditions were perfect for the ceilidh where the bar-b-que, live music and dancing were enjoyed in the large marquee.

**The Turakina Highland Games is held each January, for more details see: [www.turakinahighlandgames.co.nz](http://www.turakinahighlandgames.co.nz)**



The car park overflowed and cars lined the side of the State Highway and surrounding roads on the last Saturday in January as the village of Turakina was flooded with visitors keen to attend the 153<sup>rd</sup> Turakina Highland Games. Even the weather played its part as the high winds which had battered the Rangitikei dropped away and the sun came out. Many families had clearly decided to make the most of the summery day, the children's games and activities were busy and there was a continuous line at the ice cream van. The stalls attracted lots of eager shoppers and many took the opportunity to sample

### Facial reconstruction of Orkney's St Magnus



A graduate who studied in Forensic Art and Facial Identification at The University of Dundee has recreated the face of St Magnus, who was Earl of Orkney over 900 years ago. The reconstruction, created by forensic artist Hew Morrison, was based on photographs taken of St Magnus's skull in 1925. While the skull was not available for direct examination, Hew was able to analyse the photographs and use these to create a digital depiction of St Magnus's head. The photos are of what is believed to be the skull of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Norse earl and were discovered in a wooden box in one of the pillars of St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall. Hew said, "The photographs from 1925 were fortunately of good quality, but most importantly a scale ruler was photographed alongside these photographs, which allowed me to scale the skull up to size." As there were no samples of St Magnus's DNA available, Hew was unable to determine St Magnus's exact hair and eye colour. However, Hew used St Magnus's heritage to influence the colours he used. "Taking into regard St Magnus's Scandinavian ancestry," he said, "light-coloured hair and blue eyes were added to the face."

## SCOTTISH ACCESSORIES SHOPPE KILT HIRE



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# RINGWOOD HIGHLAND GAMES

SUNDAY MARCH 26<sup>th</sup> 2017

## CELEBRATES 51 YEARS



**At East Ringwood Sports Ground, Cnr Mt.Dandenong and Dublin Roads, East Ringwood.**

### EVENTS INCLUDE:

Pipe Bands Contest, two Highland dancing competitions, Clans Gathering, Interstate Scottish stalls, fun events with Haggis hurling and Caber toss, Dog's Flyball Competition, Swordplay, Animal farm, Scottish dog breeds, Massed Pipe Bands at 1.35 and 4 pm.

**\*\* MINI CONCERT at 1 pm, showcasing Scotland's music and dance \*\***

Lots of stalls selling a wide variety of food and drink, crafts, jewellery, gifts, whisky tasting, Scottish ales and everything Scottish!

**Spend a day in Scotland and come to the Ringwood Highland Games-a full day of non-stop entertainment.**

Admission: Adults, \$18, Concession, \$15, children \$8, Family \$40.  
 Info: Sue Macleod: 03 9876-4140, [sue.m.macleod@hotmail.com](mailto:sue.m.macleod@hotmail.com)  
[www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org.au](http://www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org.au)

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

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



It's a double Celtic month, in that we wish our Welsh cousins a Happy St. David's Day, the patron saint of Wales on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Also to our Irish cousins on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The world seems to know about St. Patrick's Day, patron saint of Ireland. For many decades the descendants of Irish immigrants on the streets of New York and Boston celebrated the day wearing green garb and drinking green beer. It is only recently that Dublin of all places realized that it might not be a bad idea to celebrate the day in a party manner too. What better way to draw tourists to the home of St. Patrick in off tourist season March. Now this column is mostly about Scottish

surnames and their origins so why are we deliberating on things Irish?

## Irish genes

History has shown us that the Irish of Ulster settled in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland some 1500 years ago. From this incoming the dominant language in Scotland was old Irish which evolved into Scots Gaelic. From this language surnames developed into many of the Clan names we know today. Any name preceded by the "mac" and there are lots of them show some remote tie to those early Irish invaders. One's DNA is another indicator of this same Irish ancestry, even if in the course of that same 1500 years there is a mix of Scandinavian, Strathclyde Welsh and Anglo Saxon ancestry introduced as well.

At the narrowest point Scotland and Ireland are only separated by 13 miles of sea. Therefore, even after Scotland became a distinct nation there was much to-ing and fro-ing across that same channel over the millennia which re-introduced some more Irish genes into the mix. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century many Irish workers were brought over to help with the annual harvests. Some of them chose to stay. Later in the century that was strong influx of economic refugees who came to Scotland and other parts

of Britain to escape the famine caused by the loss of the potato harvests of 1845 and 1847. As a result most lowland Scots will find that in their genealogy they will probably have an Irish granny somewhere in their ancestry. While they may acknowledge their Irish past most will look upon themselves as true Scots.

## Parrish

Back in May, we received an e mail from Ray Parry, Casio, NSW, Australia and in it he had an unusually long list of surnames from his family research that he wished me to address. I have offered my findings for about a third of them but have digressed to other subjects since. So now I am back on the trail and now wish to look at more on the list. The first surname is Parrish. One couldn't be blamed for assuming that it is from parish and ecclesiastic land area. However, the derivation is from Paris meaning the bearer was known as the Parisian or a person from Paris. Local dialect has added "Sh" to the name. It also may have evolved from the French form of the personal Patrick through the Latin Patricius. Included on the list are names that seem explanatory either as a descriptive name or an occupational name.

their daily bread. In the middle ages, the local tenants had no choice of which miller to use or to grind their own grain, since they were usually obligated to use the miller designated by their feudal lord. This obligation was known as "thrilling". Other surnames that evolved from milling are Mill or Milne for the place of the occupation.

## Duncan

Mr. Parry asked about some names that have a common element in that they are all affiliated with Clan Donnachaid. Not being familiar with Gaelic grammar but I am assuming this translate in Clan of the Duncans. I'm sure a member of the clan will steer me correctly.

This clan is better known as the Robertsons. The clan is descended from Duncan a descendant of Conan of Glenrochie, who was a younger brother of the Earl of Atholl. Duncan was in support of Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn. Duncan died in 1355 and was succeeded by Robert from whom the clan is more generically known. Now from Mr. Parry's list are two surnames that are associated with the clan, those being Duncan and Duncanson. In Gaelic the names translates as brown warrior.

The pronunciation of two words donn and dùn translate from Gaelic to brown and fort in English respectively. However, I believe the generally accepted meaning of the name is "brown warrior".

## Scotland and Ireland

Jan McKinnon of Auckland, NZ wrote to us about the surnames for members of her Scottish dance group, Scotland and Ireland. This request came in time for St. Patrick's Day and the March issue of *the Scottish Banner*.

Scotland as a surname is most common in the pre-1974 counties of Fife and Clackmannan. One obvious source is from a place known as Scotlandwell found in the parish of Portmoak in Kinross shire. However, the national nature of the name probably would have had a bearing on the surname. It is recorded as early as 1178 when it was written as surname for an individual in the Latin form as de Scotia. The name has been recorded as Scotland for person's surname down through the centuries.

Similarly for the surname Ireland. This is very much for a person who was Irish or had an Irish heritage. Again it has antiquity as a surname in Scotland with the earliest record being 1228. This record also had a Latin form of Ybernia (Hibernia). The name would be not from the same family throughout the centuries but as newcomers from Ireland, to Scotland, the name would have been an apt fit. One different source as the name Ireland in Orkney. The name was Anglicized to Ireland from the Old Norse Eyrr-land which translates as gravelly beach, so no connection to Ireland.

**Speaking of Ireland, a Happy Saint Patrick's Day. Enjoy your March and please keep those letters coming.**

**History has shown us that the Irish of Ulster settled in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland some 1500 years ago. From this incoming the dominant language in Scotland was old Irish which evolved into Scots Gaelic.**

## Little

Little as a surname on face value says that the bearer's ancestor was a small person or his neighbours were being ironic in that his stature was above average. The name could have been confused with the land name Liddell or Liddle from a place of the same name in Roxburghshire. There was also another place with same name in Cumberland. Similarly, the surname name Small is a descriptive some one of slender and short stature unless again the reverse was used in a jocular manner. Various spellings are attributed to the name, Smeal, Smale, Smeall, etc.

One more name in this series of miniscule names is Vaughan or Vaughn. It is a Welsh that originally was "bychan" which evolved to "Vychan" meaning small or little in Old Welsh.

## Miller

Miller is an old occupational name, for a person who grinds grains. He was an essential member of the community for the local people to be able enjoy

## T2 Trainspotting

### reader giveaway

**F**irst there was an opportunity...then there was a betrayal. Twenty years have gone by. Much has changed but just as much remains the same. Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) returns to the only place he can ever call home. They are waiting for him: Spud (Ewen Bremner), Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), and Begbie (Robert Carlyle). Other old friends are waiting too: sorrow, loss, joy, vengeance, hatred, friendship, love, longing, fear, regret, diamorphine, self-destruction and mortal danger, they are all lined up to welcome him, ready to join the dance. Over half of the scenes in T2 Trainspotting were filmed in location in Edinburgh.

*The Scottish Banner* is pleased to offer

5 lucky readers a double pass to see *T2 Trainspotting*, in cinemas now, courtesy of our friends at Sony Pictures. To win and tell us which Scottish city *T2 Trainspotting* was mainly filmed in. To enter simply email: competitions@scottishbanner.com, enter via our website, post or fax (sorry no telephone entries) our Sydney office, our full contacts can be found on page 2. Please ensure you include your full postal address and email/phone details. Winners will be notified directly, good luck!

**T2 Trainspotting**

**In Cinemas February 23**



# The 2017 New Zealand and South Pacific Pipe Band Championships marching into Nelson

Photos courtesy of Chris Conroy of C/J Photography.



Massed bands street march.



Massed bands display.

The 2017 New Zealand and South Pacific Pipe Band Championships will be held in Nelson on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> of March. The first New Zealand Pipe Band Championships were held in Dunedin in 1926 and they have been held annually since the Second World War, apart from 2011 when they were cancelled following the Canterbury Earthquakes. South

Pacific Championships are held in Australia and New Zealand on a three yearly rotation and this year's contest will be hosted by the Grade 2 Celtic Pipe Band at Trafalgar Park.

Currently forty-one bands are registered to compete, with thirteen in Grade 4B, nine in Grade 4A, nine in Grade 3, five in Grade 2 and five in the top Grade 1. In addition, nine bands are entered in the Juvenile Grade

in which competitors must be eighteen years of age or under. This equates to approximately 1000 band members and with supporters will result in over 2000 people coming to Nelson for the event.

### Marching and playing

Each band competes in two music events to determine the champion band in each grade, the set and medley. The set consists of playing a 2/4 march, a strathspey and a reel of the band's choosing, while the medley consists of a bracket of tunes, again of the band's choosing, of between five and eight minutes duration, depending on the grade. Music of different time signatures is heard in the medley, including slow airs, jigs and hornpipes. Each event is judged by two piping judges, one drumming judge and an ensemble (overall sound and integration) judge. Each band is ranked in order and the band with the lowest accumulated ranking wins the grade.

All the bands will also compete in a street march event through a set course in the Nelson CBD on the Saturday morning. As well as being judged by the music judges, each band is also judged by three drill judges who rank the band on their dressing, covering and deportment and their drill at two wheels (turns) along the course of the march. In addition, several bands will compete in a display event, in which the band performs a series of marching manoeuvres while playing, and there is a mace flourishing event in

which competing drum majors are judged on flourishing their mace whilst maintaining control of their band while the band is marching and playing.

### Live stream

As well as several New Zealand judges and three from Australia judging drumming, drill and ensemble the principal overseas adjudicator will be Pipe Major Robert Mathieson who between 1986 and 2010 was Pipe Major of the Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band based in Shotts, Scotland. During his tenure this famous band won thirty major championships. For the second time the championships will be streamed live on the internet by Brassbanned, similar to the very successful live stream of the World Pipe Band Championships held in Glasgow each year produced by BBC Scotland. At the end of the competition on the Saturday there will be a march past of all bands followed by a massed bands performance in which all the bands play together. After this there is a presentation of prizes and trophies awarded for various aspects of the competition which concludes the contest.

**For further details on The 2017 New Zealand and South Pacific Pipe Band Championships please see:**  
[www.celticpipeband-nelson.nz/pipe-band-nationals-nelson-2017](http://www.celticpipeband-nelson.nz/pipe-band-nationals-nelson-2017)

**For live streaming of the event see:**  
[www.brassbanned.com](http://www.brassbanned.com)



## BBC SCOTTISH HIGHLAND GATHERING

### SUNDAY 26 MARCH

#### LOCATION

BRISBANE BOYS' COLLEGE  
MISKIN OVAL  
TOOWONG (BRISBANE) QUEENSLAND 4066  
ENTRANCE OFF MOGGILL ROAD

### 11.00AM - 4.30PM

#### WHAT TO EXPECT

PIPE BANDS AND MASSED PIPE BANDS  
DRUM MAJORS  
SCOTTISH STALLS AND SCOTTISH CLANS  
FOOD OUTLETS

#### ENQUIRIES

STEVIE STANLEY VIA 0400 953 126 OR  
SSTANLEY@BBC.QLD.EDU.AU

 [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BRISBANE-BOYS-COLLEGE-SCOTTISH-HIGHLAND-GATHERING-1492478321017792/](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BRISBANE-BOYS-COLLEGE-SCOTTISH-HIGHLAND-GATHERING-1492478321017792/)





# The Scottish Banner speaks to Eddi Reader

**Scottish singer-songwriter Eddi Reader has had a musical career spanning more than three decades and has gone from busking on Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street to touring the world, which includes Australia this month. Eddi took the time to speak to the Scottish Banner's Sean Cairney on her musical journey and how important it has been for her to rediscover her true love for Scotland.**

**SC:** Eddi thank you for taking the time to speak to *the Scottish Banner*. You have just performed at Celtic Connections and about to embark on an Australian tour, can we begin by you telling us audiences what we can expect from your live shows and do you yourself have a highlight to perform during your shows?

**ER:** I am usually as surprised as anybody else what gets performed at a show. We don't tend to have a set list and we just kind of busk it really, I enjoy being in the moment with the audience. The highlight is always what is going to come out, what song we will create for the audience and I enjoy that process. I much prefer it to planning a set and maintaining a set performance list all the way through. I really like living in the moment so to speak. When we get on stage we tend to pluck a first number out of the air and really just go from there. When I was a little girl that was how the parties used to happen in the house. Whether it was my parents' house or my grandparents' house there would be a sing song and nobody had a set list. I am sort of applying that method on stage!

**SC:** Eddi, you came from a large family and life began in a Glasgow tenement. Can you tell us what your childhood was like and when your love for music developed?

**ER:** I remember being surrounded by adults and people that loved me. I never questioned that I had people around me, even though I may not have realised it when I was a teenager! My family have great use of humour and were very funny people. We were always laughing, and sometimes arguing, but it was always passionate. On my mother's side my grandmother was very gentle, soft and quiet and my dad's side was a bunch of rock'n rollers who went crazy on a Saturday, drinking, jiving and singing. I got a good balance from that. Music was always there because everybody loved singing. My Glasgow upbringing gave me a lot of strength and determination growing up. I am from a very poor, working class family. In our family nobody was better than anybody else but I was also encouraged, if you had an ability we were encouraged to go for it.

**SC:** Glasgow has a vibrant music scene and is a UNESCO City of Music. Eddi you have gone from busking on Sauchiehall Street to playing at the Royal Concert Hall for Celtic Connections. How has Glasgow helped shape your musical journey?

**ER:** To be honest when I was a teenager there wasn't much on offer for me. There was certainly a folk scene and I was

involved with that and went to the folk clubs. I played my acoustic guitar and learned songs which was so great as there was a strong oral tradition in that music. When I look back to the late 1970's there was a real differentiation from say the pop and folk scene. The folk scene was very underground at that time and nearly considered radical. That was a secret little scene which I loved. At home my family had the radio on with pop music.

As years went by I left Glasgow and went to France and London and missed out on the amazing music transition that has happened in Glasgow. I came home to Glasgow in 2001 and though I came back each year I never had really got a full appreciation to what the scene in Glasgow was actually like. It was when I came back to work on my Robert Burns album I realised the folk scene that I was involved in had suddenly resurged itself and became this blossoming thing with many young people involved. Celtic Connections is amazing and I love going there every year. People from all over the world show up in the audience and on stage. The music scene is so eclectic and everything really goes. The young people today have an entire musical palate to choose from which is fantastic. I have been told by someone it wasn't because you left the folk scene but the folk scene left you

because really in the 80's the folk scene has died and I moved into the pop world. So It is great to see it back so strong and vibrant.

**SC:** Scotland has a rich musical history dating very far back in history and as we have discussed the nation is making its own unique sound today. Have any Scottish artists inspired you and your music whether they be past or present?

**ER:** There is so much great stuff coming out of Scotland today from Julie Fowlis, The Churches, Kathleen MacInness, Capercaillie just to name a few. When I was younger Billy Connolly was where it was at. He was a folkie who was also telling jokes and connecting with people in a very natural way. Billy was also talking about "us". He inspired me because he made being us alright and made it funny to be us. He was the first alternative comedian was also a folkie so played folk music. Scotland is a very funny place and the folk clubs often had some great comedic talent. People on the street can be very funny as well, the working class humour is very attractive to me and I like leaning on that. When I think of Glasgow I think of people that are very wise, they ask the right questions when you meet them like what's your name, who do you support and do you like Elvis? And depending on your answers that's you becoming friends for life.

**Songs and stories of our past connects us with the land and is in our DNA. I really began to see the value of Scotland's cultural identity when I came home.**

**SC:** Whether it be poetry or music Scots know how to tell a story and embrace tradition. How important is it for you to tell a story through your music and in a live performance does this enhance your connection with the audience?

**ER:** I found a long time ago when I listened to other folk musicians that telling a story before a song really helps to bring people in. It does not have to be a long story but is a wonderful tool to connect with the audience and them with you. Telling people about the song can change someone's perception as they may hear it a very different way. When I get a song explained to me before a performance I feel much more intimate with the story. I find it as an absolute rule that if you include the audience, then they include you and you become part of their landscape. The only way to do that is to talk to them and explain what you are doing and why. It changes a song when you get a little clue about it.

**SC:** Your seventh studio album was entitled *Songs of Robert Burns* and the album really re-introduced a new generation to the words and music of Burns. As a Scot how important was it for to present the bards work with both the respect and also the contemporary emotion you did?

**ER:** Well anything I choose I respect and fall in love with. That goes from Fairground Attraction to the Burns collection of music. The reason I chose them was I had some connection to the songs. Many of the songs I had heard either in folk clubs or simply growing up. *Ae Fond Kiss* I first heard at Kilmarnock Folk Club in the late 1970's and it has stayed with me forever. Some songs I first heard when I was living in London. I had decided I wanted to go home and leave London. I had brought my kids up in London but there was still a transient quality to life there and I noticed people did not make close attachments in London. I did not like that or the aggression I noticed in London. I felt I would be better off back in Scotland as would my kids. It was a sticky transition for my kids but they settled and found a whole new life in Scotland.

When I began to look to do the album I thought I would reconnect with Scottish musicians and do some traditional Scottish songs, as a tribute to Scotland. What I discovered was a lot of the songs were Robert Burns songs. Then I was asked to do a Robert Burns concert with an orchestra at Celtic Connections in Glasgow and then something seemed to happen to my body when I sang *Green Grow the Rashes O* and really felt the orchestra behind me and something shifted in my head. I just knew it was magical and had to do more of it and we sold out at Royal Concert Hall for Celtic Connections. When the album came out we weren't sure if only Scots would buy it or if it would get any British press interest but people fell in love with the Burns record who have nothing to do with Scotland and that makes my heart soar.

**SC:** Eddi you have said when you fell in love with Robert Burns that you also fell back in love with Scotland and Scottish culture. Can you tell us what you mean by this and how important being Scottish is for your life today?

**ER:** I was falling in love with the idea of home, with the music of Burns, Scottish culture and a Scottish man! I always longed to go back home but I left Scotland because I was an adventurer and wanted

to see places with my music. For a girl with a guitar back then I wanted to see the world and have an adventure and it took me a long time to come back home. When I had my children people started dying on me like my father and uncles and I thought this is crazy I want to be home. I don't want to be a ghost in London and be people who don't have that family connection. I went home and when the kids went to school and brought back songs to sing that were theirs and even with their London accents they were connecting to Scottish music. I could not believe how they felt, they connected to the music and owned these Scottish songs and they became theirs. Songs about the streets we are living on and they never got that in London. Scotland like all countries needs a sense of their own culture and language, to have people get a sense of belonging and also understand our history. Songs and stories of our past connects us with the land and is in our DNA. I really began to see the value of Scotland's cultural identity when I came home.

**SC:** And finally Eddi you have said that you find learning more about Scottish and Gaelic culture and pre-history and history fascinating, can you tell us more and has this grown more since returning home?

**ER:** Doing the songs is great because you get taken on a journey with the music, it is like a little train ride going somewhere else. With the aspects of music you can find all kinds of things and learn about things like love, poverty, social history and how people used to be. People got sick, the elderly were not properly taken care of, young people died in the throes of youth. There is so much wisdom in our music. When I was growing up I didn't get much family history but when I came home to Scotland I started a family archive and my great uncle left a diary which I have been able to use and he wrote in the 1930's and 40's. My great uncle was a great brain and knew so much about Scottish history and it's amazing but brutal reality. From wars and secret societies that tried to interrupt Scotland flourishing. He also connects



a great deal to Ireland and our historical links with Ireland. It has been really juicy for me because there is so much Scottish history I never learned in school and today it is like a magnet to me and I want to know why I don't know it.

For example there is a mythical creature known in Ireland as Cuculain and if you go to the main post office in Dublin there is a statue to him. It is said in the myth that Cuculain learned how to fight in the land of the shadows and taught by a woman called Skaigh. The Isle of Skye means the land of shadows and Skaigh means the woman of Skye. So it turns out the Irish hero was taught how to fight by a Scots woman from Skye and many Scots don't know that, but the Irish do. That is what being back in

Scotland has been for me, getting to know our history. Through my great uncles diary he is telling me what his grandfather told him and even his great grandfather, this passing of the stories was interrupted in my family because of the wars and losing some of my family. One other fascinating piece of my family history through the diary I learned about 10 years after making my Burns album was my great grandfather Charles Reader sung Robert Burns songs all over Scotland, this information was recorded in 1930 and I only read about it in 2011 and I felt my ancient past was screaming out to me saying "hello, we love and you are one of us".

**Eddi Reader tours Australia in March for dates and details see: [www.eddireader.co.uk](http://www.eddireader.co.uk)**

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Robert Burns Mausoleum at St Michael's Church.

# Lady MacGregor's Scotland

By: Lady Fiona MacGregor

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



Greetings from Scotland where things have turned a bit colder. We could grumble about it. Well, we do grumble about it. Good, bad, or indifferent, the weather is one of the main topics of conversation here.

No matter, the snowdrops are up, putting bobbing heads above the frost parapet. Our bulbs are well-established and great swathes of white blanket the grass around the house. I try to stop naughty dogs from running through them. It is not always a success, but these hardy blooms seem to bounce back.

## Robert Burns

Flowers are not the only things flourishing. As the Queen's personal representative in this part of Scotland, the invitations to attend civic and charity events are coming in. Not least is a request for the Lord Lieutenant to attend a service in Dumfries to remember the birthday of Robert Burns.

Dumfries is where Scotland's national poet lived and worked. It is also where he wrote some of his finest poetry. Burns was a bon-viveur, a well-kent face in local hostelries. Yet, in between the tax-collecting and the carousing, there was time to craft memorable lines. One of my favourites is 'the best-laid schemes o' mice

an' men. Gang aft a-gley.' So very true...

Burns was buried in Dumfries, by St Michael's Church. And it was here we gathered to mark his life. The great and the good were there in force. A dozen presidents of Scottish Burns Clubs arrived to pay homage, their clanking chains of office gleaming in the candlelight. Local school children read poetry and sang songs. It amazes me how even the tiniest tot will have a go at reciting *To a Mouse*. We then went outside to lay thistle wreaths at the great man's mausoleum.

Later that week, I also attended a Burns supper. Yes, they are still going on here. It was an entertaining night: the speakers inspirational, the songs moving. The only slight problem was the great chieftain of the pudding race. The haggis came swimming in whisky. Which made me worry about driving home. It would not be a problem. As any Burns supper aficionado knows, these tartan events go on until the wee small hours and by that time a dram will surely have passed through the system.

## Stewart Heritage

Burns wrote a poem called *You're Welcome Willie Stewart* and this month a fabulous new book lands on my lap. *Stewart Heritage* is a weighty tome. It offers 300 pages of detail on this very Scottish of families, tracing the line from its origins in Brittany to the present

day. As you might expect, there is a lot of blue-blood around. Indeed, Stewart DNA appears to indicate that half the Stewart men descend from Scottish royal family

However you spell it - 'Stuart', 'Steuart', 'Stewart' - this work tells of 'love, courage, power, tragedy and enterprise.' There are the famous faces: the legendary Mary Queen of Scots; the Hollywood actor, Brigadier General James Stewart; the British rock star, Rod Stewart and Martha Stewart, American businesswoman, writer and TV host.

## Dumfries is where Scotland's national poet lived and worked. It is also where he wrote some of his finest poetry

Then there are the lesser known folk: Allan Stewart was an Edwardian artist. The nineteenth century's Rear Admiral Charles Stewart had a distinguished career in the American navy. Charles Stewart was a Canadian pioneer farmer who entered politics. Another Charles Stewart was Chief Judge for the US court of appeals. Edith Stewart, Lady Londonderry, was an English political hostess and a fighter for women's rights. Professor George Rippey Stewart

was an American historian and novelist.

Musicians, botanists and ship merchants bear the name. There are Stewart places - among them the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Canada has the Stewart Historical Museum and the Stewart Museum. Canada also has a Stewart River in the Yukon Valley. There is the Stewart Mountain Dam in Arizona, named after an old Stewart ranch. Stewart Island is the third largest in New Zealand. And don't forget America's Stewart International Airport.

The book has been put together by an industrial chemist and businessman, and a Perthshire aristocrat whose family owns Grantully Castle. Dr Charles Kinder Bradbury got together with Henry Stuart Fotheringham - and the resulting work is something to treasure. I talk to Henry about the effort involved. 'Sourcing all the photographs and maps was a labour of love. But we are really pleased with the end result and hope it gives a detailed story of the Stewart name.' Henry is a keen historian. He is also an antiques expert and a leading authority on Scotland's goldsmiths, silversmiths and jewellers. He is a past President of the Stewart Society. They must be celebrating this latest gem to the family story...

**Follow the MacGregor clan chief, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor, Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, on twitter.com/theclanchiefs**



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# Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows

## *Celebrating 250 years of Edinburgh New Town*

Edinburgh's New Town, a centrepiece of the city's UNESCO World Heritage area, is 250 years old in 2017. To celebrate this milestone in Edinburgh's history, and as a signature event in Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017, an atmospheric lumière experience will bring the city's Georgian past and its residents back to life right alongside their present-day counterparts. Every evening between 5:30pm and 8:30pm until 26 March a trail through the heart of the New Town will highlight its beautiful architecture and immerse you in history. Follow the linkboys on your trail through Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows, and experience the Edinburgh of over 200 years ago.

Beginning at the centre of St Andrew Square, projections onto the Melville Monument will tell the story of the New Town's origins and take you on a journey through detailed plans of the city's streets, highlighting key buildings in the Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows trail. Turn to 24 and 25 St Andrew Square and see the building come to life, bathed in light and filled with the shadows of former residents. Follow the trail to explore the New Town as you've never seen it before, alongside the people who walked the streets over 200 years ago, as you follow the trail of Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows.

### Dundas House



Originally a private mansion commissioned by MP Sir Lawrence Dundas (1712 – 1781), construction of Dundas House finished in 1774 with the building eventually being acquired by The Royal Bank of Scotland 1825 who have owned it ever since. Attention will be drawn to the building's distinct neo-classical architectural features across its frontage. As you move around the square, residents and buildings will be resurrected in light, with illustrations based on real Edinburgh residents located at 36 St Andrew Square, Registered Office of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

### General Register House



Intended as a purpose-built archival facility, General Register House is a

significant building in Edinburgh's history, and one of the few buildings to be mandated by the plan, there being very little prescription on land use.

Construction finished in 1789, making it the first custom-built public record repository in Britain. Today it also holds the distinction of being the world's oldest purpose-built archive building still in use as well as having been the site of Britain's first hot-air balloon ascent, by James Tytler.

Its place on the Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows trail and its illumination highlight the innovative planning the New Town brought to city-building at 2 Princes St.

### Assembly Rooms



The Assembly Rooms, built on a site donated by the Town Council, was completed in January 1787 for the Caledonian Hunt Ball and provided a place for social functions in the New Town, bringing with it a distinct shift of focus for the city's wealthy and elite from the Old Town onto the New. The Assembly Rooms located at 54 George St has played host to guests including Charles Dickens, Seamus Heaney, J K Rowling, as well as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. As you wander the trail, follow the linkboy and catch a glimpses of the hubbub inside one of Georgian Edinburgh's favourite venues, with guests flocking to and fro.

### Sir Walter Scott's Home



Scottish literary giant Sir Walter Scott lived in the beautiful and spacious three-storey Georgian townhouse at 39 North Castle Street with his family for the majority of his married life. Glance into the residence's ground-level bay windows and you'll see Sir Walter at work in his home, kept company by a faithful companion.

### Bute House & Georgian House



Leading Scottish Architect Robert Adam designed Charlotte Square. Though alterations to his plans were made after his death, elements of the square remained faithful to his design. Bute House (home of Scotland's First Minister) and its neighbours are central to Charlotte Square's north side, and an example of Adam's original design at 5-7 Charlotte Square. The frontages of the house and its neighbours together create the illusion of an unbroken palatial façade; Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows will see Bute House and its neighbours illuminated, highlighting the beauty and detail of Adam's architectural vision. Georgian House has been restored to preserve an example of a typical Edinburgh New Town House of

the late 18th century with period furniture and decoration. Visit Georgian House to complete your journey in the past of Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows.

### Scotland's fascinating stories

Manuela Calchini, VisitScotland Regional Partnerships Director said: "2017 is the year to delve into the past and discover Scotland's fascinating stories through a range of exciting experiences and events in celebration of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. Scotland's history & heritage is defined by its people, both past & present, so it is fitting that Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows will commemorate the 250th anniversary of James Craig's plan for the New Town, and indeed many of the wonderfully elegant buildings that still continue to hold a place in the heart of both locals and visitors to Edinburgh." Using lighting in inventive, creative ways, this event reveals and celebrates the story of Edinburgh's New Town and these buildings with a rich history to tell are brought to life over the winter evenings, highlighting their architectural features and telling the story of the people who lived there in Georgian times.

Full information about Edinburgh's Georgian Shadows is available at: [www.edinburgh.org/shadows](http://www.edinburgh.org/shadows)

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By: Angus Whitson

# Scotland's forgotten poetry

When I was growing up in the north-east of Scotland town and port of Montrose I occasionally drove with my father to a viewpoint at the top of Garvock Hill overlooking the neighbouring Kincardineshire village of Laurencekirk and the broad, fertile plain of Strathmore which stretches from Stonehaven to Perth. On a clear day, he would tell me, you can see the church spires of Perth to the west and those of Aberdeen to the east. And there he read me the poetry of Violet Jacob.

That was my introduction to Scottish vernacular poetry - the poetry of the farmer and the ploughman, the fisherman, the shepherd and the soldier, the country minister, the lawyer and the doctor written, more often than not, in their distinct district idiom.

Robert Burns is the archetypal Scottish vernacular poet. He was a professional poet, one of the few lucky ones of his generation to make a living from his poetry - a story teller and a composer of songs at a time when spontaneous home-made entertainment was central to family life.

Taking an arbitrary timeframe, a torrent of vernacular poetry was written during the period 1750 to 1950. Some of it is quite dreadful, much of it is highly entertaining and tells rattling good stories and some would reduce you to tears with the intensity of its sentiment.

The best of it, in my view, is the equal of anything Robert Burns wrote - the problem is tracking it down. Why should it be that only a handful of the makars in the century following Burns' death in 1796 are remembered today?

Of an evening, after the exertions of their daytime job, the amateur or hobby poets sat down by the soft light of an oil lamp, or the guttering flame of the doup (stump) of a candle or even the smoky illumination of a rush wick cruise lamp lit with fish oil, to commit to paper the ideas and the lines that had been ringing through their heads all day.

## Educated men and women

It is clear that many of the recreational poets were intelligent, educated men and women. They had the words to express themselves and the mentality to find expression through their verse. They had

benefitted from the Kirk's insistence after the Scottish Reformation that it should be a national priority to have a school in every parish to ensure that everyone, rich and poor alike, could read the Bible which, of course, is written in English.

What truly is admirable is that their creativity was not stifled by the rigid social system that denied them the opportunities to make more of their talents. There was a receptive market for locally composed poetry which was published locally but, lacking the benefits of modern marketing networks, denied the poet a wider audience.

**English, not Scottish, literature was taught in schools. Scots was provincial, inferior, for conversation only round the family table and it failed to meet accepted standards.**

Robert Burns, the Ploughman Poet, might well have suffered a similar fate had the Kilmarnock Edition of his Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, not received flattering reviews. By great good fortune he was taken up by the Edinburgh establishment as a literary and social phenomenon and became the darling of their social gatherings. Of his generation, only Sir Walter Scott, and James Hogg, The Ettrick Shepherd, received such enduring recognition.

Vernacular poetry was not confined to the "working man". Gifted female poets such as Lady Carolina Nairne (born 1766) deserve to be better known today. Her best known songs and poems - *The Hundred Pipers*, *Charlie is My Darling*, *The Rowan Tree*, *The Laird o' Cockpen*, *Caller Herrin'* - are remembered by a diminishing readership, but their authorship is largely unknown. How many readers know that one version of *Auld Lang Syne* is attributed to her?

Lady John Scott (died 1900) who wrote

*Annie Laurie* and a number of rousing Jacobite ballads and poems is no better remembered. Likewise Galloway poet Alexander Anderson (born 1845) who wrote under the pseudonym Surfaceman, has fallen into undeserved obscurity.

The problem, simply, was that it had become accepted wisdom in Scotland that if you wanted to get on in life you spoke standard English. Vernacular Scots was regarded as a provincial language, unsuited to the wider world of commerce, law and politics.

The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 stipulated that English should be the language of education which effectively excluded Scottish in all its various district dialects from the school curriculum. One writer suggested that it was a good idea to "propagate their (the Scots) language as inferior". Still today, English is the international language of business and politics.

## Great War poets

The First World War produced a wealth of poetry written in Scottish vernacular but, a hundred years on, little of it is read or even known. A slate memorial slab in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey is inscribed with the names of sixteen of the Great War poets. With one exception they are English.

Charles Hamilton Sorley, the one Scot, left Scotland at the age of six and received all his education in England. His poetry shows little influence of his Scottish contemporaries that one might have expected had he remained in his country of birth.

The majority of the Great War poets commemorated in Poets' Corner were officers. In the context of the inflexible social backdrop of the times, the war poems of officers attracted exposure and approval as much because the poets were socially acceptable officers, as for the poetry's unquestioned quality. They wrote in timeless Standard English, making them accessible to the wider British reading public generally.

By contrast, much of Scottish vernacular Great War poetry was afflicted by the unfair assumption that it reflected the sentimentalised kailyaird writing of the last decades of the nineteenth century. The reality is that it never was

kailyaird, but its vernacular vocabulary certainly had the effect of restricting its readership to vernacular speakers and those familiar with the idiom.

Scottish poets such as WD Cocker and Joseph Lee, Dundee's forgotten war poet, Ewart Alan Mackintosh, Charles Murray, JB Salmond who became editor of *The Scots Magazine*, and Hugh MacDiarmid all wrote predominantly in their vernacular. At the time they were ranked alongside the best of the English war poets and their work does not deserve to have fallen into obscurity.

## Scotland's indigenous poetry

A further obstacle was that after the end of the First World War and up until even the 1950s, it became a general tenet of Scottish education that, whatever was spoken in the playground or outside school in the family, within the classroom vernacular speech was banned.

Within the classroom, other than Robert Burns, John Buchan, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses* and rare exceptions such as Charles Murray's *The Whistle*, and *The Boy in The Train* by M.C.S., which were set as competition pieces to recite, Scottish schoolchildren had little or no formal introduction to their own poetry.

English, not Scottish, literature was taught in schools. Scots was provincial, inferior, for conversation only round the family table and it failed to meet accepted standards. It was generally felt that "proper" English better prepared a child to make his or her way in the world and prosper.

After so many years in eclipse it would be good to think that Scotland's indigenous poetry could stage a comeback. There is so much pleasure to be had from reading it. I know of efforts to repopularise Dundee's Joseph Lee and one of the north-east's finest vernacular poets, Violet Jacob, who died in 1946. It is but a modest start.

I have been building up my own library of vernacular poetry from all over Scotland. I am currently writing a book linking poems to stories from my Saturday countryside column, *Man with Two Dogs*, which appears in the Dundee-published newspaper *The Courier*.

It occurs to me that *Scottish Banner* readers may have collections of vernacular poetry inherited from forebears who left Scotland to seek new lives. I would be interested in hearing about such collections as they are all part of the fabric of our national identity. Every one of them is important. I can be contacted on [angus@writehand.co.uk](mailto:angus@writehand.co.uk)

**For more content check out my blog at [manwithtwodogs.com](http://manwithtwodogs.com)**



# Pipe Major Frank R. Fraser OAM



Pipe Major Frank R. Fraser OAM.



Frank with the Combined RSL Centenary of ANZAC Pipes and Drums.

Edinburgh Military Tattoo both in Scotland and also in Sydney, travelling to France for the centenary celebrations of the ANZAC battles and teaching many young and up and coming Australian pipers their craft.

### Dedication to the Australian pipe band movement

Franks said: "Over my career with pipe bands, encouraging and endeavouring to improve a pipe band as well as raising ab-initio pipers to become confident band pipers, has been my most enjoyable experience. I am hoping that, although my skills as a great piper are limited, my enthusiasm to always encourage others to further their own skills in bands and become pipers of note, will be my legacy. I am waiting for the day that I will be challenged for the position that I have held over many years and will joyfully relinquish it to a piper that I have raised through his own piping achievements. I thank the community for their support of pipe bands in general but my most sincere thanks for those that nominated me for

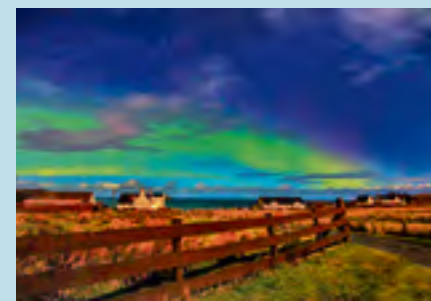
the award for the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for something that has always given me great fulfilment."

*The Scottish Banner* would like to congratulate Frank R Fraser OAM for all his dedication to the Australian pipe band movement and also for being one of the few people in Australia to be honoured with an OAM for their services to the pipe band community.



Frank playing in France in honour of the fallen ANZAC soldiers in July 2016.

## Crofters memorial planned for Skye



The Staffin Trust has secured funding from Creative Scotland to investigate creating a permanent memorial to recognise the crofters' uprising in Staffin in the 1870s in the face of landlord oppression which, coupled with similar protests elsewhere in the west Highlands, eventually led to a historic law offering more protection for crofters. The Trust's directors and development officer are working with the Skye and Lochalsh arts organisation ATLAS to develop an attractive and eye-catching memorial which would serve as a fitting tribute. No location for the Staffin Crofters' Memorial has yet been decided. The final decision will be taken in full consultation with the Staffin community.

In 1877 in the Trotternish Peninsula of north east Skye, crofters were in dispute with landowners due to high rents, their lack of rights to land, and the prospect of eviction to make way for large-scale farming operations. After years of unrest, and following the 1883 Napier Commission recommendations, the Crofters' Act was finally passed in 1886.

## Strongman competition for the 2017 Scots School Bathurst Highland Gathering



The annual Highland Gathering of The Scots School Bathurst will be held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2017 from 10am - 4pm. This iconic day brings a taste of Scotland to Bathurst. Watch Pipe Bands from across NSW compete, Highland Dancing displays, an equestrian event and a Strongman Competition.

The Strongman Competition is a new event with up to 15 professional athletes (both male and female) competing in a full heavy events competition. Events will include Caber Toss, Weight for Distance, Stones on Round Table and Weight over Bar. The competition will start at 11am.

There is a variety of food on offer including a barbecue with great sausage and steak sandwiches, Devonshire Teas, Cake Stall and, a crowd favourite, lamb and beef rolls. There will be shaded

seating available for you to enjoy all of the lovely food on site.

The school runs a trash and treasure stall, book stall, plant stall and a chocolate toss which is a lot of fun. There are also many other commercial stalls on the day some of which include candles, jewellery and Celtic inspired stalls. Of course it wouldn't be a Highland Gathering without the Scottish stalls that sell merchandise including kilts, band equipment, belt buckles and tartan scarves.

There is also plenty on offer for the children including a jumping castle, horizontal bungee and a treasure hunt. School tours will also occur throughout the day. Come and have a great day with the whole family.

For more information visit [www.scots.nsw.edu.au](http://www.scots.nsw.edu.au) or call the School on 63312766.



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# Dressed to Kilt

## returns to New York

*Scottish fashion, culture and a nod to military heroes*

Photos courtesy of Dressed to Kilt/ Getty Runway Images and JohnMaslinPhoto.com.

Lucy Kerr, Miss World Scotland 2016/17.



On the runway.



Piping in the fashion.

of the Denver Broncos; former Navy Seal and star of CBS' *The Hunted*, Andy Stumpf; former *Bachelor* contestant Olivia Caridi; and *Real Housewives of New Jersey* Star, Delores Catania.

**Considered the largest and most prestigious Scottish fashion event in the world, Dressed to Kilt once again lured celebrities and world-class athletes from both sides of the Atlantic.**

**R**eturning from a two-year hiatus, Dressed to Kilt came back with a bang to kick off New York Fashion Week 2017 on January 27, 2017. Considered the largest and most prestigious Scottish fashion event in the world, Dressed to Kilt once again lured celebrities and world-class athletes from both sides of the Atlantic including *Real Housewives of New York* cast members Luann D'Agostino, Dorinda Medley, Sonja Morgan, Carole Radziwill and Ramona Singer. Other celeb guests included Miss Scotland, Lucy Kerr; Mr. Scotland, Tristan Cameron-Harper; Model and America's Next Top Model Alum, Renee Bhagwandeem; NFL Superbowl Champion, Brandon Marshall

**Scotland's hottest designers**  
Dressed to Kilt transported guests to Scotland for an evening in the castle-like Grand Hall of the High Line Hotel in Chelsea where guests decked in their finest kilts, ball gowns and black tie garb began the evening with Scottish highland dancing following by a full fashion show featuring some of Scotland's hottest designers modeled by a mix of celebrities, professional models and military heroes. Former Navy Seal Andy Stumpf walked the finale with Navy Seal Foundation CEO Robin King. The fashion show showcased the latest designs from Johnstons of Elgin and Siobhan Mackenzie, the Top Young Scottish Designer of 2016.



Special honour was paid to both US Medal of Honor recipient, Captain Florent Grobert, U.S. Army, and UK Victoria Cross recipient, Lance Sergeant Johnson Gideon Beharry VC – The Princess's Royal Regiment and the Navy Seal Foundation revealed their own Scottish tartan pattern which was unveiled at the event on the runway in a custom gown designed by top Scottish designer, Siobhan Mackenzie.

**Special relationship**

After the show guests were treated to whiskey tastings from Usquaebach Scotch Whisky, delectable bites and more Scottish and contemporary dancing in the High Line Hotel's gorgeous old-world setting complete with stags and a Scottish bagpiper.

The evening was a celebration of the "special relationship" that has existed between the USA and the UK for over 100 years and raised funds for the Navy Seal Foundation. Cisco Co-founder Sandy Lerner sought to shed light on an additional cause by auctioning off an antique Scottish Wildcat Pin to raise money for the Scottish Wildcat Foundation aimed at helping to save the feline creatures, of which only 35 are left. Dressed to Kilt has raised significant funds for wounded veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan over the past decade, and this year's proceeds will benefit the Navy SEAL Foundation. The Foundation is committed to America's elite warriors, supporting U.S. Navy SEALs, their community and providing critical support to their families.

*For more information on the Dressed Kilt please see: [www.dressedtokilt.com](http://www.dressedtokilt.com).*



Tartan unites.



Celtic inspiration.



Teeing off.



Mr. Scotland,  
Tristan Cameron-Harper.



The Real Housewives of  
New York's Sonja Morgan.

IN SCOTLAND TODAY



## Last paddle steamer built in Britain to come back to life

The last paddle steamer to be built in Britain may soon have a new lease of life and sail again across Scotland's Loch Lomond. A £5.5 million project to restore the Maid of the Loch, Loch Lomond's Paddle Steamer, to steam operation once more has launched and hopes the steamer may again be plying the water in 2018. Maid of the Loch was built in 1953-the same year as the Queen's coronation- and was withdrawn from service in 1981, having carried over 3 million passengers. She has been owned by several different companies but has remained tied up at Balloch ever since. By 1992 the Maid had been vandalised and damaged and was in danger of sinking.

When The Maid was built on the Clyde she was immediately dismantled to be shipped in railway wagon-sized chunks to Loch Lomond. It was a technique called up and down, usually used to send ships across the globe for local assembly. Conservation expert Jim Mitchell said that this has made restoration easier. "We have been extremely lucky in that lots of the builders' drawings have survived," he explained. "So we have things like pipework layout drawings so we can put all the copper pipe back in the engine room pretty much as it was, because we have the great gift of those drawings." The Loch Lomond Steamship Company, a charity registered in Scotland, were given the ship - free of charge - and have owned her since 1996. They hope to return the Maid to steam operation on Loch Lomond by late next summer.

### Discovery of lost Dark Age kingdom In Galloway



A laser scan image of the Pictish symbols carved at Trusty's Hill, comprising a z-rod-and-double-disc symbol on the left and a dragon-pierced-by-a-sword symbol on the right © DGNHAS / CDDV.

Archaeological research led by GUARD Archaeology has just been published which

reveals the location of a hitherto lost early medieval kingdom that was once pre-eminent in Scotland and Northern England. The kingdom of Rheged is probably the most elusive of all the sixth century kingdoms of Dark Age Britain. Despite contributing a rich source of some of the earliest medieval poetry to be composed in Britain - the poetry of Taliesin who extolled the prowess of its king, Urien of Rheged - and fragments of early medieval historical records of Urien's dominance in southern Scotland and northern England, the actual location of Rheged has long been shrouded in mystery.

While many historians have assumed it was centred around Carlisle and Cumbria, no evidence has ever been found to back this up. However, new archaeological evidence from the excavation of Trusty's Hill Fort at Gatehouse of Fleet in Dumfries and Galloway now challenges this assumption. "What drew us to Trusty's Hill were Pictish symbols carved on to bedrock here, which are unique in this region and far to the south of where Pictish carvings are normally found," said Ronan Toolis of GUARD Archaeology, who led the excavation which involved the participation of over 60 volunteers. "The Galloway Picts Project was launched in 2012 to recover evidence for the archaeological context of these carvings but far from validating the existence of 'Galloway Picts', the archaeological context revealed by our excavation instead suggests the carvings relate to a royal stronghold and place of inauguration for the local Britons of Galloway around AD 600. Examined in the context of contemporary sites across Scotland and northern England, the archaeological evidence suggests that Galloway may have been the heart of the lost Dark Age kingdom of Rheged, a kingdom that was in the late sixth century pre-eminent amongst the kingdoms of the north."

The excavation revealed in the decades around AD 600, the summit of the hill was fortified with a timber-laced stone rampart. Around the same time supplementary defences and enclosures were added to its lower-lying slopes transforming Trusty's Hill into a nucleated fort, a type of fort in Scotland that has been recognised by archaeologists as high status settlements of the early medieval period. The excavation also found the remains of a workshop that was producing high status metalwork of gold, silver, bronze

and iron. The royal household here was also part of a trade network that linked western Britain with Ireland and Continental Europe. In fact, research now shows that over the late sixth and early seventh centuries AD Gaulish merchants were making a beeline for the Galloway coast, ignoring Cumbria entirely. The excavation revealed that one of the reasons for this may have been to acquire materials like copper and lead. Isotope analysis of a lead ingot found during the excavation of Trusty's Hill was found to have originated in the Leadhills of south-west Scotland, demonstrating that this mineral source was being mined and used to make leaded bronze objects at this time.

### World's first Gaelic Wikipedian appointed



The Gaelic language is to be promoted through one of the world's most popular websites thanks to a new role based at the National Library of Scotland. Dr Susan Ross, who learned Gaelic as a teenager and has since gained a doctorate in Gaelic studies, has been appointed the world's first Gaelic Wikipedian. The year-long post will see her working with the Gaelic community across Scotland to improve and create resources on Uicipeid, the Scottish Gaelic Wikipedia. Wikipedia is the world's most popular online encyclopaedia of which Uicipeid forms one part. It has been in existence since 2004 and currently has more than 14,000 pages of information in Gaelic. Dr Ross will work with the existing community of users to identify priorities for development and encourage new users to begin contributing.

Over the coming year Dr Ross will collaborate with Gaelic speakers, community groups and organisations to improve Uicipeid content by offering training and edit-a-thons. The work will also seek to promote use of the extensive Gaelic resources held by the National Library of Scotland, many of which can be accessed online. Dr Ross, who has been contributing to Uicipeid since 2010, said: 'Contributing to Gaelic Wikipedia builds a 21<sup>st</sup> century information source where knowledge, in Gaelic, about both the Gaelic world and the wider world, can be stored and shared. It is a great opportunity for Gaelic speakers to exercise reading and writing skills in a creative, informal, collaborative environment and I'm excited about the possibilities to get more people involved.' The initiative is a partnership between the National Library of Scotland and Wikimedia UK, the charity that supports and promotes the free online encyclopaedia. The National Library has some of the best collections of Gaelic material anywhere in the world and has been working hard in recent years to make much of this material as available online. This material demonstrates the key role played by Gaelic in Scottish history and culture.

### Prehistory of Great Britain celebrated with Royal Mail Special Stamps



The Royal Mail has released of eight stamps featuring some of the most inspiring objects and atmospheric sites of British prehistory. The stamps explore how people lived in prehistoric times and depict famous iconic sites as well as some of the most exceptional artefacts from around the UK. The stamps present a timeline of prehistory, from a glimpse of ancient ritual of 11,000 years ago, to the Iron Age of around 300 BC. They indicate a huge degree of organisation in ambitious building projects, and sophistication in exquisite metal working. Philip Parker, Stamp Strategy Manager, Royal Mail, said; "The UK has an incredibly rich heritage of prehistoric sites and exceptional artefacts. These new stamps explore some of these treasures and give us a glimpse of everyday life in prehistoric Britain, from the culture of ancient ritual and music making to sophisticated metalworking and the building of huge hill forts."

Scotland is represented in the series which also includes locations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Skara Brae Village in Orkney has its very own stamp in the series. Fierce storms in 1850 stripped away sand dunes on Orkney's west coast to reveal traces of stone-walled houses. Subsequent excavations uncovered ten structures arranged on either side of a subterranean alleyway. The full extent of the settlement is not known, but middens containing domestic waste from centuries of occupation surrounded the houses. There was evidence that some houses had been replaced and the village remodelled during its long history. Each house is roughly square in plan with a single entrance, a central hearth, a dresser opposite the door and bed-boxes and storage facilities to either side. Some have small cells built into the thick walls, perhaps privies or stores. The inhabitants used beautifully decorated Grooved Ware pottery and had a rich material culture of worked stone and bone.

Their diet was based on domesticated crops, wild plants, fish, seabirds and the products from sheep, goats, pigs and cattle. The stamps provide a timeline across thousands of years - from a glimpse of a mesolithic ritual of 11,000 years ago, to exquisite metalworking of the Iron Age from 300 BC and also feature the Battersea shield; the Star Carr headdress; Grime's Graves flint mines; Avebury stone circles; the Mold Cape (Wales); the Drumbrack horns (Northern Ireland) and Maiden Castle hill fort. Skara Brae, forms part of the UNESCO World Heritage site known as the Heart of Neolithic Orkney.

# THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

*Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past*

**1** - The Advocate's Library (known as the National Library of Scotland since 1925) opened by its founder, Sir George Mackenzie, the Lord Advocate. **1682**

**1** - Scots voted in favour of Devolution, but failed to reach the required 40% of the population in favour of implementing it - due to 36% of the electorate not voting. **1979**

**1** - Actor David Niven was born, roles included *The Pink Panther* and *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Niven had claimed several times that he was born in Kirriemuir, but according to his birth certificate, was born in London. **1910**

**2** - King Robert II born in Paisley, the first monarch of the House of Stewart. He was the son of Marjorie Bruce, daughter of Robert the Bruce, and Walter, High Steward of Scotland. Robert acted as regent three times during the reign of his uncle, David II, and acceded to the throne in 1371. He died in 1390 and was succeeded by his son Robert III. **1316**

**3** - Robert Adam, architect, died. Among his many works were Culzean Castle, Fort George, The Town House, Inveraray and Glasgow Trades Hall. **1792**

**3** - Alexander Graham Bell born Edinburgh. Bell was scientist, inventor, engineer, and innovator who is credited with patenting the first practical telephone and died in Nova Scotia, Canada in 1922. **1847**

**4** - Sir Henry Raeburn, renowned for painting the portraits of many of the citizens of Edinburgh, born. **1756**



**4** - Forth Rail Bridge opened by Prince of Wales. **1890**

**4** - Jim Clark, Formula I World motor racing champion, born Fife. **1936**

**5** - King David II born. **1323**

**5** - Flora Macdonald, who helped to save Prince Charles Edward Stewart during his flight after the defeat at the Battle of Culloden, died in Kingsburgh, Skye (in the same bed in which Bonnie Prince Charlie had slept during his escape). **1790**



**5** - The Maid of the Loch paddle steamer was launched, she was built in Glasgow and was the largest ever vessel to be built for an inland waterway in Britain, this was also the last of a series of steamers to sail on Loch Lomond, dating back to 1818. **1953**

**6** - King James II decreed in an Act of Parliament that there should be regular target practice and military parades and that "football and golf be utterly cried down and not used". This was the first time that the games had been mentioned in Scottish documents. **1457**

**6** - Scotland's first radio broadcast took place. The broadcast took place from Rex House, 202 Bath Street in Glasgow. By the summer of 1924, stations had opened in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and, by the eve of the Second World War, over 90% of the Scottish population were served by BBC transmitters. **1923**

**7** - Sculptor and artist Sir Eduardo Paolozzi born in Leith, the eldest son of Italian immigrants. **1924**

**7** - The world's first golf club was founded in Edinburgh. The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers held their first meeting on Leith Links and petitioned the Edinburgh Council to provide a silver club for competition. **1744**

**8** - Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows* born in Edinburgh. **1859**

**8** - The *Oor Wullie* cartoon strip first appeared in *the Sunday Post*. **1936**

**9** - David Rizzio, Mary Queen of Scotland's secretary, murdered by Lord Ruthven in the Palace of Holyrood. **1566**

**9** - *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith published. **1776**

**10** - Birth of James Herriot, author of *All Creatures Great and Small*. **1916**

**10** - St Kessog, the Irish missionary in the Lennox area and southern Perthshire, was killed. Kessog was Scotland's patron saint before Andrew, and his name was used as a battle cry by the Scots. Son of the king of Cashel in Ireland, St Kessog is said to have worked miracles, even as a child. **560**

**11** - Sir Alexander Fleming, discoverer of penicillin, died. **1955**

**11** - The birth of Binkie Stuart, the child film actress, in Kilmarnock. Born Elizabeth Alison Fraser, she was hailed as Britain's answer to Shirley Temple and enjoyed huge fame as a child star. **1932**

**12** - The last salmon was caught in the River Kelvin. The salmon population in the river had been in decline due to the rise of industrial pollution in the area. However, in February 1999, after £43 million of investment, salmon again spawned in the river and anglers were allowed back. **1852**

**13** - Death of poet and historian John Barbour, author of "The Bruce" recounting the history of King Robert I. **1395**



**13/15** - Blitz of Clydebank by German Luftwaffe. **1941**

**14** - First television programmes broadcast in Scotland. **1952**

**14** - The birth of Scottish lawyer, Dame Margaret Kidd. Not only was Kidd Scotland's first woman advocate, but she was also the first woman King's Counsel in Britain and the first woman to plead before the House of Lords. **1900**

**15** - Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh founded Advocates' Library "equipped with works written by lawyers". **1689**

**15** - The end of two nights of heavy German bombing of Clydebank. The Clydebank Blitz, as it became known, destroyed a third of the buildings of Clydebank, leaving 35,000 people homeless. A thousand German bombers were used in the raid and the devastation of the town was so complete that only eight buildings remained entirely unscathed after the bombing. To further compound Clydebank's misery, only two enemy planes were shot down. **1941**

**16** - King Robert the Bruce convened his first parliament, at St Andrews. **1309**

**16** - Death of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, chief of the Fraser clan. He developed the Commando force in the British army and was active in the Dieppe Raid (1942) and the D-Day landings (1944). **1995**

**17** - Treaty of Edinburgh between King Robert I and Edward III which recognised Scotland's independence, ending the 30 years of Wars of Independence. **1328**

**17** - Scotland won Rugby "Grand Slam" at Murrayfield Stadium- the first time in 59 years. **1984**

**18** - Earl of Leven raises a Border regiment to hold Edinburgh against the Jacobites. It later becomes the King's Own Scottish Borderers. In 2006, the Kings Own Scottish Borderers Regiment was amalgamated with the Royal Scots to form the Royal Scots Borderers, which became the 1st Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland. **1689**

**19** - King Alexander III died after crossing the river Forth to Fife at Queensferry. **1286**

**19** - David Livingstone, missionary and explorer, born Blantyre. **1813**

**20** - King Malcolm IV born. **1141**

**21** - National Gallery of Scotland opened in Edinburgh. **1859**



**21** - Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh opened, becoming the home of Scottish rugby. Scotland marked the occasion by beating England 14-11 and winning their first Grand Slam. Unfortunately, the Scottish rugby team have only managed to repeat this success twice more, in 1984 and 1990. **1925**

**22** - Neil Gow, first of a famous family of Fiddle players and composers, born at Inver, near Dunkeld, Perthshire. **1727**

**22** - Last fully public hanging in Scotland - that of Joseph Bell at Perth. **1868**

**23** - The Free Church of Scotland settlement at New Edinburgh, New Zealand was founded under Rev Thomas Burns, a nephew of the poet Robert Burns. The settlement later became Dunedin, one of the largest towns in the country, and one which still retains a distinctive Scottish character. **1848**

**23** - Roddy McMillan, the Scottish stage and TV actor, was born. His credits include the TV series, *The View From Daniel Pike*, and the play, *The Revellers*. However, he will be most fondly remembered for his portrayal of Para Handy, the captain of the *Vital Spark* in the much loved television series of the 1960s. **1923**

**24** - Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland on the death of Queen Elizabeth I and the succession of King James VI of Scotland. **1603**

**24** - An estimated one million people watched the Queen Mary leave the Clyde for the first time. However, the sailing did not quite go to plan: despite extensive dredging having taken place, the liner ran aground twice on the way to Gourock. **1936**

**25** - King Robert I ("The Bruce") crowned at Scone. Bruce was crowned by Bishop William de Lamberton in front of the banner of the kings of Scotland, wearing royal robes which had been hidden from the English. **1306**

**25** - The Commercial Bank of Scotland was founded in Edinburgh by John Pitcairn, Lord Cockburn and others. **1810**

**26** - Car driving tests introduced for the first time. **1934**

**27** - King Robert II crowned at Scone. **1371**

**27** - Scottish chemist Sir James Dewar, inventor of the Dewar Flask, which later became known as the Thermos flask, died. **1923**

**27** - King James VI died at Theobalds Park, Hertfordshire and buried at Westminster Abbey. Succeeded by his son, King Charles I. **1625**

**27** - David Coulthard, Grand Prix racing driver born in Twynholm, Dumfries and Galloway. **1971**

**28** - King Robert the Bruce captured Berwick on Tweed. **1318**



**28** - The Scots Guards Regiment was formed when King Charles I issued a commission to the Marquess of Argyll, Chief of Clan Campbell, authorizing him to raise in Scotland a regiment of 1,500 men. The King's 'Lyfe Guard of Foot' became the Scots Guards. **1642**

**29** - Longannet, Scotland's last deep coal mine, closed, ending centuries of mining tradition. The Fife mine was put into liquidation after being flooded on the 23rd, when a dam separating old workings from new seams under the river Forth collapsed. **2002**

**29** - The Royal Society of Edinburgh incorporated by charter. **1783**

**30** - King James I captured by English near Flamborough Head on his way to France. **1406**

**30** - Edward I of England sacked the Scottish town of Berwick. The English army destroyed the town and decimated the population of around 15,000. This act was retaliation for the widespread carnage perpetrated in the north of England, and what Edward considered to be the treacherous stab in the back of the Scottish-French alliance. Berwick was rebuilt by Northumbrians, and the Scottish-English border forever after remained north of this town. **1296**

**31** - Scottish Regalia (crown, sceptre and sword) saved from invading army of Oliver Cromwell by James Granger, minister at Kinneff, Aberdeenshire, after they had been smuggled from Dunnottar Castle which was under siege. **1652**

**31** - General Patrick Gordon was born. Gordon led a remarkable life. Upon leaving Scotland, he entered the Russian army as a major and soon rose to become a close advisor to Russian Tsar, Peter the Great. Gordon rose to the rank of General-in-Chief and was made an admiral of the Russian navy. **1635**







# 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.



## An Angel in Plantation

Plantation might be difficult for the reader to find on a modern Glasgow map for it was an old district within the ancient Burgh of Govan. Kinning Park and Govan were still suburban burghs in their own right and were only annexed to the City of Glasgow as late as 1905. The Paisley Road Toll was at the fork in the roadways taking people from Glasgow to either Paisley or Renfrew and had existed from time immemorial. It was there that the golden angel statue stood high up on Ogg's building, looking towards the city, with the Plantation District stretching out behind her, wedge-shaped, like a big piece of cheese. It seemed to me as a child that her shoulders and wings were shielding and protecting those of us who were lucky enough to live behind her, and in her shadow.

## Picturesque landscape

Plantation had for a long time been a busy hub of activity, a place of commerce and industry, yet only as far back as the youthful years of my Great Grandparents the lands of

Plantation and its environs were still mainly open fields and hedgerows, dotted with the mansions and estates of rich Glasgow merchants. Contemporary writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century described a rural and picturesque landscape, with the old Plantation House mansion embowered in ash, elm and oak forming a charming centerpiece to idyllic country scenes as people set out for a Sunday afternoon stroll between the City, Plantation and old Govan. The village of Govan, itself, even as late as 1850 was still being described as a straggling congregation of thatched houses surrounded by elegant villas with cozy garden plots, screened by hedge-rows and trees, inhabited “by well-to-do citizens who could afford to combine the pleasures and profits of the city with the charms of rural retirement”.

## Tenements

Twenty years later, things had changed dramatically and writers were speaking of the march of commerce and the speculative builder having “swept away the handiwork

of nature leaving a sorry substitute,” that is of industry and tenements. It was into this version of Plantation that my relatives were born, raised, married in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the first half of the next. Rich men and their dynasties were the owners of the estates and lands of Plantation. My relatives only rented their tenement homes there but with so many of them having been born and raised there, it was the blood, sweat and tears of families like mine that was to give industrial Govan its soul. The centre of Glasgow reflected the wealth that industrialization had created, the well paved roads and fine statues financed by public subscription gave evidence of that but away from the main streets were the blackened factories, the slag heaps, the cramped streets and closes and the overcrowded tenements.

## Victorian Glasgow

My maternal grandmother inherited her parents' family bible. It was destined to become an important source of the dates of family births and deaths and provides us with a humbling insight into tenement life in Victorian Glasgow. For some families, like mine, life was a risky business, fraught with uncertainty and tragedy. My maternal great grandfather, Robert Robertson, a steamship fireman and his wife Elizabeth Robertson (née Kerr) had five children and their simple record of births and deaths in their family bible quietly tells something of working class life and gently tells of untold tragedy as the record of the short lives of three of those five indicate. As the family bible records,

Janet, (Jennet) my grandmother's, younger sister, was her only sibling to survive beyond infancy and into adulthood.

I know very little about my maternal great grandparents and can only muse upon how they coped with these multiple tragedies but I did know my grandmother. She was a gentle, religious and caring woman until her own death, in 1958, aged 80, in the end having out-lived her younger sister. I didn't appreciate then what she must have had to bear in her own childhood and youth seeing her little brother and sisters taken to untimely deaths in Victorian Glasgow, or for that matter the tragedies she had to bear in the future as a mother herself. The echoes of some of her sibling's names and her own deceased children's names were passed down through the family in the years to come. Perhaps these names inherited by her descendants helped a little to console her.

My parents and my uncles and aunts always talked about having come from Plantation, rather than Govan proper. The very name Plantation suggested something quite different from the tenement streetscape, familiar to me in the 1940's. I became intrigued by the name as a child. It conjured up images of cotton fields from the 'Song of the South' with Brer' Rabbit in the briar patch, Ol' Brer' Fox chasing him, and Uncle Remus with his bluebirds and zippity - do - das, and even Tom Sawyer lazily sailing an old raft down the Mississippi River. As it turns out I was not entirely wrong, but the plantations that gave rise to the name lay in the West Indies and not in the deep south of the United States.

Andrew McKinnon Presents



# Scotland The Brave

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**PERTH**  
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Sydney Opera House  
26 August

**BRISBANE**  
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By: David McVey

# Scotland's magical station names



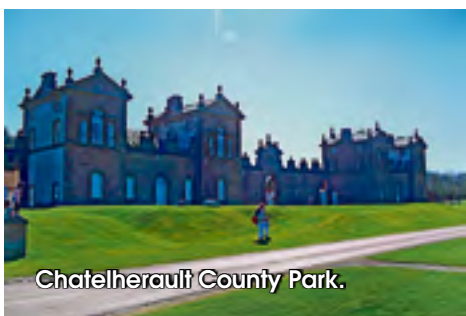
**Y**e change at Perth for Pittenweem,' says the Bairn, playing at being a railway guard, in a classic *The Broons* cartoon strip. In fact, even before Pittenweem disappeared from Scotland's railway map, it'd be odd to change at Perth to get there, wherever you were travelling from. Yet there's a pleasing sound to it; 'Perth for Pittenweem'. And Scotland's railway stations, with names that are magical and forbidding, funny and beautiful as well as sometimes just plain daft, can still provide a little poetry to ease your journey.

A few years ago, there was an announcer at the cavernous Glasgow Central Station who spoke with a strong Australian accent. She did well, but supposing she had been posted to Inverness instead, and her first task had been to announce the next train to Kyle of Lochalsh and reel off the intermediate stops? Here we go; Beaully  
Muir of Ord  
Conon  
Dingwall  
Garve  
No problems so far. Next, though...  
Lochluichart  
Achanalt  
Achnasheen  
Achnashellach...

## Whiff of the exotic

Things get a little easier afterwards (Strathcarron, Attadale...) but that's a forbidding piece of throaty Gaelic verse. And there are other examples elsewhere on Scotland's railways; think of Drumfrochar, Garelochhead, Auchinleck and one even I'd struggle with, Gilshochill.

Of course, these names are very Scottish but other stations have names with a whiff of the exotic. Your train to Balloch on Loch Lomondside, for example, will call at the grandly-named Alexandria. Unlike its namesake in Egypt, this Alexandria was never visited by Alexander the Great; it was named after Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Smollett, a member of a prominent local family who was killed at the Battle of Alkmaar in 1799. I've often thought it would be great to buy and keep a ticket from here to a station not far south of the border in Cumbria;



Alexandria to Aspatia. You can imagine Hercule Poirot revealing the identity of the murderer in the lounge car of that train.

Fort Matilda is the stop just before the terminus at Gourrock on the line from Glasgow Central. It sounds like a place that might feature in one of Bernard Cornwell's Sharpe novels. There was a fort here, built in 1814 to protect the approaches to Glasgow from the French and it subsequently went through a number of military uses, but it's now long-demolished. Only the evocative name remains.

For two of the most intriguing and exotic-sounding Scottish station names we must travel towards Larkhall in Lanarkshire. Now, even its most devoted natives would admit that Larkhall isn't very glamorous. However, go there by train, and on the way you'll be transported first to rural France and then to Regency England.

## Chatelherault

Your train leaves Hamilton Central (Hamilton's two stations are mundanely named 'West' and 'Central' - poor show, Hamilton) and the next stop is Chatelherault. Local folk render the name something like 'Shattly Row'. It's a handy station for Chatelherault Country Park, centred round the eponymous building that was created as the Duke of Hamilton's hunting lodge in 1723-4 by William Adam. It was convenient for the duke's seat, Hamilton Palace, which was demolished in the 1920s when badly affected by subsidence from coal mining. Chatelherault itself is magnificent enough, and has been beautifully restored as a visitor centre. Its name comes from a French dukedom also held by the Hamiltons.

Back on the train, the next stop is Merryton, one pesky additional 'r' away from sharing its name with the fictional village featured in *Pride and Prejudice*. I don't know if large gangs of Jane Austen enthusiasts in period costume climb off trains here in homage to their heroine - but I hope so.

## Company named

Singer Station in Clydebank has nothing to do with performing or karaoke, but is named after the vast Clydebank Singer Sewing Machine factory that used to be alongside, but which has now been swept away. As well as this public station, there were also six private platforms served by works trains every day until 1963. Another Scottish station that still boasts a company name is IBM on the Glasgow Central - Wemyss Bay line. There's no longer an IBM presence at the industrial site it serves (they once employed 5,500 people there) and the station is one of very few in Scotland whose usage is declining.

The 1960s Beeching railway cuts removed many stations with intriguing names, Hoy, Dava, Joppa and Salzcraggie, but there are still many off-the-wall delights. The odder-sounding names can be fun to form into poems. Here's one I made earlier; Bowling, Drem  
Morar and Stow  
Busby, Beasdale  
Whifflet, Kingsknowe.

You can add more verses using Breich, Croy, Rannoch, Troon, Tain, Largs or any number of other wonderful station names that you pass through on your next visit to Scotland. You can also try spotting Scottish station names that mirror international one's (Australian readers get no points for 'Perth' though; way too obvious).

## Railway name lore

There is, of course, railway name lore far beyond Scotland. I often travel from Glasgow Central to Edinburgh using the CrossCountry trains that continue to distant English termini like Plymouth and Penzance. The very long list of stops in the

far southwest has a real touch of poetic magic, as if King Arthur and his Knights might appear on the train at some point; Liskeard  
Lostwithiel  
Par  
St Austell  
Truro  
Redruth  
St Erth

You can taste the music of these names when you stand on the concourse at Glasgow Central or Edinburgh Waverley and read the departure board. You may need a lot of willpower to prevent yourself from just climbing aboard...



## Did you know?

Gaelic names first appeared on Scottish station signs in 1996. These were largely confined to stations on Highland lines, although they also feature at Glasgow Queen Street, Dumbarton Central, Dalmuir, Partick and Largs.

For the 2014 Commonwealth Games stations were renamed with a fun, sport inspired names such as Falkirk High (Falkirk Higher, Dingwall (Ding!Ding!Wall), Longniddry (Longerniddry), Musselburgh (Muscleburgh), Polmont (Polevault) and Springburn (Sprintburn).

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IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN



# Leek soup

**Ingredients:**

**For the vegetable stock:**

1 carrot, grated  
1 onion, grated  
2 sticks celery, grated  
2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped  
salt and pepper  
stalks from a small bunch of parsley

**For the leek soup:**

olive oil  
1 onion, finely chopped  
200g/7oz floury potatoes, peeled and chopped into cubes  
350g/12oz celeriac, peeled and chopped  
1 sprig thyme, leaves only  
4 leeks, finely sliced  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 small bunch chives, finely chopped

**Method:**

To make the stock, put the grated carrot, onion, celery and garlic into a large heatproof bowl. Add a pinch of salt and pepper and pour over 1 litre/1¾ pints of boiling water. Set aside to steep for 10-15 minutes while you prepare the soup. Heat a large heavy-based saucepan or casserole dish over a medium heat. Add a dash of oil and, once hot, add the onion, potatoes, celeriac and thyme leaves. Cook over a medium heat for 10 minutes, or until the vegetables have softened. Strain the stock through a sieve into the pan of celeriac. Simmer gently for 10-15 minutes until the celeriac is nearly tender. Add the leeks, cover the pan and cook for a further 5-7 minutes, or until the leeks are wilted and tender but still bright green. Remove from the heat and blend in batches until really smooth. (Blend for a minute or longer for a really velvety texture.) The soup can be stored in the fridge or frozen at this stage. Transfer the blended soup to a clean pan. Reheat the soup if necessary, taste and season with salt and pepper to taste. To serve, spoon into bowls and garnish with chopped chives.

## Irish beef stew



**Ingredients:**

1½kg/3lb 5oz. stewing beef, cut into cubes  
175g/6oz streaky bacon  
3 tbsp. olive oil  
12 baby onions, peeled

18 button mushrooms, left whole  
3 carrots, cut into quarters or 12 baby carrots, scrubbed and left whole  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 tbsp. chopped thyme  
2 tbsp. chopped parsley  
10 cloves of garlic, crushed and grated  
425ml/15fl oz. red wine  
425ml/15fl oz. chicken or beef stock  
For the roux  
50g/2oz butter  
50g/1¾oz flour  
champ, to serve

**Method:**

Brown the beef and bacon in the olive oil in a hot casserole or heavy saucepan. Remove the meat and toss in the onions, mushrooms and carrots, one ingredient at a time, seasoning each time. Place these back in the casserole, along with the herbs and garlic. Cover with red wine and stock and simmer for one hour or until the meat and vegetables are cooked. To make the roux, in a separate pan melt the butter, add the flour and cook for two minutes. When the stew is cooked, remove the meat and vegetables. Bring the remaining liquid to the boil and add one tbsp. of roux. Whisk the mixture until the roux is broken up and the juices have thickened, allowing to boil. Replace the meat and vegetables, and taste for seasoning. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve with champ.

## Classic Cornish pasty



**Ingredients:**

**For the pastry:**

500g/1lb 1oz. strong bread flour  
120g/4oz. vegetable shortening or suet  
1 tsp. salt  
25g/1oz. margarine or butter  
175ml/6fl oz. cold water  
1 free-range egg, beaten with a little salt (for glazing)

**For the filling:**

350g/12oz. good-quality beef skirt, rump steak or braising steak  
350g/12oz. waxy potatoes  
200g/7oz. swede  
175g/6oz. onions  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
knob of butter or margarine

**Method:**

Tip the flour into the bowl and add the

*This month we celebrate our Celtic cousins of Cornwall, Wales and Ireland who will be celebrating St David's, St Piran's and St Patrick's Day. People in Wales and those of Welsh origin celebrate the life of their patron saint, St David, and the Welsh culture on March 1st. Saint Piran's Day is celebrated each year on 5th March as the day of Cornwall. The Irish Saint Patrick will be celebrated across the world on March 17th by the Irish community, a toast for St Patrick's Day, "May the roof above us never fall in, and may we friends beneath it never fall out."*

shortening, a pinch of salt, the margarine or butter and all of the water.

Use a spoon to gently combine the ingredients. Then use your hands to crush everything together, bringing the ingredients together as a fairly dry dough.

Turn out the dough onto a clean work surface (there's no need to put flour or oil onto the surface because it's a tight rather than sticky dough).

Knead the dough to combine the ingredients properly. Use the heel of your hand to stretch the dough. Roll it back up into a ball, then turn it, stretch and roll it up again. Repeat this process for about 5-6 minutes. The dough will start to become smooth as the shortening breaks down. If the dough feels grainy, keep working it until it's smooth and glossy. Don't be afraid to be rough – you'll need to use lots of pressure and work the dough vigorously to get the best results.

When the dough is smooth, wrap it in cling film and put it in the fridge to rest for 30-60 minutes.

While the dough is resting, peel and cut the potato, swede and onion into cubes about 1cm/½in square. Cut the beef into similar sized chunks. Put all four ingredients into a bowl and mix. Season well with salt and some freshly ground black pepper, then put the filling to one side until the dough is ready.

Lightly grease a baking tray with margarine (or butter) and line with baking or silicone paper (not greaseproof).

Preheat the oven to 170C (150C fan assisted)/325F/Gas 3.

Once the dough has had time to relax, take it out of the fridge. The margarine or butter will have chilled, giving you a tight dough. Divide the dough into four equal-sized pieces. Shape each piece into a ball and use a rolling pin to roll each ball into a disc roughly 25cm/10in wide (roughly the same size as a dinner plate).

Spoon a quarter of the filling onto each disc. Spread the filling on one half of the disc, leaving the other half clear. Put a knob of butter or margarine on top of the filling.

Carefully fold the pastry over, join the edges and push with your fingers to seal. Crimp the edge to make sure the filling is held inside – either by using a fork, or by making small twists along the sealed edge. Traditionally Cornish pasties have around 20 crimps. When you've crimped along the edge, fold the end corners underneath.

Put the pasties onto the baking tray and brush the top of each pasty with the egg and salt mixture. Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for about 45 minutes or until the pasties are golden-brown. If your pasties aren't browning, increase the oven temperature by 10C/25F for the last 10 minutes of cooking time.

## Irish soda bread

**Ingredients:**

170g/6oz. self-raising wholemeal flour  
170g/6oz. plain flour  
½ tsp. salt  
½ tsp. bicarbonate of soda  
290ml/½ pint buttermilk

**Method:**

Preheat the oven to 400F/200C/Gas 6. Tip the flours, salt and bicarbonate of soda into a large mixing bowl and stir. Make a well in the centre and pour in the buttermilk, mixing quickly with a large fork to form a soft dough. (Depending upon the absorbency of the flour, you may need to add a little milk if the dough seems too stiff but it should not be too wet or sticky.) Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead briefly. Form into a round and flatten the dough slightly before placing on a lightly floured baking sheet. Cut a cross on the top and bake for about 30 minutes or until the loaf sounds hollow when tapped. Cool on a wire rack.

## Welsh cakes

**Ingredients:**

225g/8oz. self-raising flour, sieved  
110g/4oz. (preferably Welsh) salted butter  
1 egg  
handful of sultanas  
milk, if needed  
85g/3oz. caster sugar  
extra butter, for greasing

**Method:**

Rub the fat into the sieved flour to make breadcrumbs. Add the sugar, dried fruit and then the egg. Mix to combine, then form a ball of dough, using a splash of milk if needed. Roll out the pastry until it is a 5mm/¼in thick and cut into rounds with a 7.5-10cm/3-4in fluted cutter.

You now need a bakestone or a heavy iron griddle. Rub it with butter and wipe the excess away. Put it on to a direct heat and wait until it heats up, place the Welsh cakes on the griddle, turning once. They need to be caramel brown before turning although some people I know like them almost burnt.

Remove from the pan and dust with caster sugar while still warm. Some people leave out the dried fruit, and split them when cool and sandwich them together with jam.

## Irish coffee



**Ingredients:**

A good measure of Irish whiskey  
1 tsp. brown raw cane sugar  
1 heaped tbsp. whipped cream  
hot strong coffee to fill the glass

**Method:**

Use warmed coffee glasses and add the whiskey. Add the sugar and dissolve in the whiskey. Add the coffee and stir well. Float the whipped cream on top and serve.

By: Nick Drainey

# The seeds of genetic diversity

Saxifraga hirculus field work at Fealar Estate.

## Safeguarding the future of Scotland's native trees

**The UK National Tree Seed Project has been established to allow environmental groups to compile a national tree seed collection for long term conservation and safeguard the genetic diversity of the UK's native trees. Scotland is playing its part to facilitate research to better understand and manage the native trees, regardless of the weather, as Nick Drainey explains.**

Walking across the high plateau of the Cairngorms or over boggy marshland can be difficult even in good weather. But when a gale is nearly knocking you off your feet, the task can become nearly impossible, especially when you are trying to collect tiny, rare seeds from the plants that grow across Scotland. But scientists from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) are going out and doing exactly that in a bid to help preserve the nation's rare plants and trees.

The seeds of Scottish species they collect go into the UK National Tree Seed Project and the UK Flora Project. Both projects aim to protect British plants and are coordinated across the UK nations by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew's Millennium Seed Bank (MSB), with funding from players of People's Postcode Lottery.

### Diversity of British native plant species

With the co-operation and support of landowners and volunteers, the projects are working to increase the diversity of British native plant species that are collected, seed banked and then made available for wider use. Collected seeds are processed and stored at the MSB, which already stores seed from over 30,000 plant species from across the globe.

The collections will serve as insurance in case species are lost from the landscape. But they also provide seed material for current research needs, such as testing for disease resistance and to increase our understanding of the biology and ecology of British plants. Seeds collected from trees form the UK's first national collection of this type.

RBGE staff and volunteers have been searching for natural, non-planted plant populations to ensure that all collected seeds are local origin and genetically diverse. The first collections started in June last year with elm trees, and finished seasonally with holly in December. As the first seeds emerge in spring the seed collectors are getting back to work. So far, RBGE staff and volunteers have worked together to ensure that more than 200,000 seeds have been collected.

Dr Aline Finger, conservation geneticist and RBGE project co-ordinator, explained: "RBGE has a wealth of experience working with rare Scottish plants and the partnership with the MSB is a perfect opportunity to strengthen our conservation efforts by storing seeds for future needs. We are particularly

excited in managing to find seeds from extremely rare species such as the Marsh Saxifrage. This plant rarely sets seed because of the effect of overgrazing, and it is therefore a great success to have its seeds stored safely at the MSB for future conservation work."

### Scottish weather

Last year, RBGE scientists collected seeds from 14 trees and 29 conservation priority herbs this year, to help deliver. By the end of this year all tree collecting will have been completed but the work will continue next year as many herb seeds still need to be found.

Dr Markus Ruhsam, RBGE plant molecular ecologist, added: "It can be quite challenging to collect seeds in adverse

conditions the Scottish weather is likely to throw at you. Although we were lucky most of the time in terms of weather and midges, I particularly remember trying to find a small alpine plant in gale force winds gusting to more than 60 mph at 1300 metres on top of Ben Macdui in the Cairngorms. Even if I had been able to locate the plants I wouldn't have been able to collect any seeds, as the seed bags would have been instantly shredded or blown out of my hand."

The UK National Tree Seed Project launched in May 2013 with the aim of securing genetically diverse collections of UK native trees and shrubs. The species target list takes into account factors such as the species conservation status, its prevalence in



Collecting blueberries at New Lanark with Dr Markus Ruhsam.

the landscape and vulnerability to pests and diseases. The target species include many trees which underpin the UK's wider plant and animal diversity, as well as supporting the woodland industry, tourism and recreation, such as ash, juniper, Scots pine, alder, beech, silver birch and yew.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is a leading international research organisation delivering knowledge, education and plant conservation action in more than 50 countries around the world. In Scotland, its four Gardens at Edinburgh, Benmore, Dawyck and Logan attract nearly a million visitors each year. Its mission is "To explore, conserve and explain the world of plants for a better future".

Meanwhile, The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2003 and celebrated its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. Wakehurst is home to Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, the largest wild plant seed bank in the world. Clare Trivedi, UK National Tree Seed Project Co-ordinator at Kew Gardens, added: "Building up our seed collection of the nation's favourite and most important tree species is a vital step in combating the multiplying pests and diseases which threaten to alter our landscape dramatically. We are delighted that RBGE is supporting this project to help us ensure that seeds from across the UK are collected and conserved."

### Species targeted in the project include:

- Common juniper (*Juniperus communis*): This evergreen species is one of only three native conifers in Britain and is at risk from the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora austrocedrae*.
- Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*): The national tree for Scotland is increasingly at risk from pests and diseases including *Dothistroma* needle blight, pinewood nematode, pine processionary moth, and the pine tree lappet moth.
- Common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*): Threatened by ash dieback (*Chalara fraxinea*), which first came to the public's attention in spring 2012. This fungus kills the leaves and bark tissue, causes shoot death, cankers, crown dieback and ultimately the demise of the entire tree. Ash is also at potential risk from the emerald ash borer beetle.
- Common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*): This water-loving species, typically found in wet woodlands or alongside streams and rivers, is at risk from the pathogen *Phytophthora alni*.
- Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and downy birch (*Betula pubescens*): The silver birch is a genuine native, growing in the UK since the end of the Ice Age. Its papery-white bark distinguishes it from the downy birch, which has reddish bark that turns grey with age.

**Chief of Name and Arms of Currie**

**- Call for Representers -**

### Family Convention to be held at the Trades Hall of Glasgow, Scotland on 15 August 2017 at 2:00 PM

The Clan Currie Society seeks to facilitate the formal recognition of a Chief of Name and Arms of Currie by the Lord Lyon King of Arms. Having an armigerous Chief, Currie would then be constituted and regarded as a learned family in its own right.

The Convention will be held under the supervision of Liam Devlin, Unicorn Pursuivant, as the appointed Supervising Officer and representative of the Lord Lyon.

Those wishing to be considered as interim Commander, chosen at a Family Convention as above, should request fuller information from the Chaplain of the Clan Currie Society, the Revd. Dr. David A. Currie: [currieconvention@gmail.com](mailto:currieconvention@gmail.com)

By: Judy Vickers

# Golden silence in Bo'ness

## Scotland's only festival dedicated to silent cinema

Live music accompanies all the films. All images: Alex Hewitt.

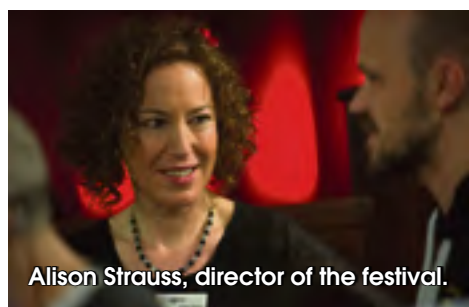
**Bo'ness is a coastal town on the south bank of the Firth of Forth known for its major port and the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, as well as being home to one of Scotland's oldest purposebuilt cinemas, the Hippodrome in Bo'ness, which is also home to the country's only silent film festival. The town has silently been adding to the allure of Hollywood for over a hundred years and this month all ears will again be on Bo'ness as Judy Vickers explains.**

It was a brilliant business idea – film folk out in all their finery for the biggest day in the town's calendar, then charge them a penny a week later to come and see if they can spot themselves on the big screen. Cinema pioneer and entrepreneur Louis Dickson started filming Bo'ness Children's Fair Day – then the Miner's Day Gala – in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. His screenings, a week after the July event, proved so popular that by 1912 he was able to take the massive gamble of building a cinema to screen them in.

But with hindsight it was definitely one worth taking – more than 100 years on, the cinema he built in Bo'ness, the former whaling town on the banks of the Forth, is the oldest surviving purpose-built cinema in Scotland. And he would be tickled to know that not only do audiences still flock to his creation but that it still screens his Fair Day films, as part of its annual silent film festival.

### Community

"It is one of the highlights. It's always a delight to be able to show them to new audiences," says Alison Strauss, director of the festival, the only one dedicated to silent film in Scotland, which runs this



Alison Strauss, director of the festival.

year from March 22 to 26. Dickson clearly loved cinema and style – his house was called Hollywood and he drove around the town in his Rolls Royce. But he also cherished being part of a community, never expanding his business into a chain like many of his contemporaries, and running the cinema himself until 1946, a love the community was able to pay back many years after his death in 1962. The cinema, seating 1004 over two levels and designed by local architect Matthew Steele, showed its last film in 1975. It survived another five years as a bingo hall before being abandoned and left to fall into dereliction. But the grade-A listed building was given a new lease of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when it reopened its doors as a cinema after a three-year £2.15 million renovation – which even saw the Art Deco toilet signs restored.

Now locals and visitors alike flock to the Falkirk Council-owned cinema for showings of classics and art-house movies as well as mainstream blockbusters. Features such as the Saturday morning Jeely Jar specials, with two tickets for the price of one on children's films in exchange for a clean jam jar, reflect its history – in its heyday the cinema gave kids a free ticket for an empty jeely jar. Nowhere is that past more evident, though, than in the annual silent film festival which takes place every March. "Some silent film festivals are almost like academic conferences, a bit fusty, but we wanted this to be about the joy of cinema," says Alison. Little wonder, then, that the first showing to sell out is the annual Laurel and Hardy triple bill. "I love Laurel and Hardy. Lots of people know

them from the sound era but they started in silent films and there is just nothing better than a silent Laurel and Hardy with live musical accompaniment," says Alison.

### Live music

This year the comedy duo's triple bill is *Putting Pants On Philip*, in which Stan arrives to stay with Uncle Ollie wearing a kilt, *The Finishing Touch* and *Battle of the Century*, which features a massive pie fight. All will be accompanied, as all the films in the festival are, by live music. For while the screen itself may be silent, the auditorium at the round corner cinema, with its star-painted ceiling and curved balcony, is full of sound. Live musicians – as many as 32 squeezed into the bijou 105-year-old cinema – heighten the tension of melodramas or provide the musical punchlines to slapstick by reacting instantly to the action.

**Nowhere is that past more evident, though, than in the annual silent film festival which takes place every March.**

"There is an incredible three-way thing with the audience, the music and the screen. There's a synergy that happens that's just amazing," says Alison. This year, several original scores performed live will complement films from around the world, a two-fold reflection of the movie world of the time; usually there was no set soundtrack so the music would alter from cinema to cinema, depending on the talents and repertory of the resident pianist; and film-making was far more international as a quick language change on the intertitles meant the film was good to go in another country.

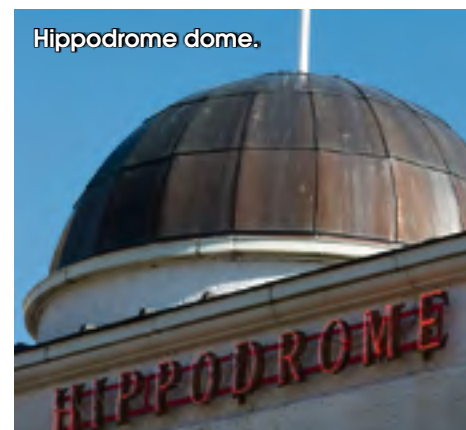
### Cinema history

There is even a movie from the 1950s which wasn't originally a silent film at all. *Together* paints a picture of the isolated world of a pair of deaf dockers, starring the late Eduardo Paolozzi, the Scottish acclaimed pop art pioneer. And while it originally had a soundtrack, there is no dialogue between the two main characters. Alison admits it's a gamble as purists may well not be happy.

So for the audience – which has included descendants of original usherettes and projectionists, a 91-year-old who watched silent movies at the cinema the first time around and many



Interior of hippodrome.



Hippodrome dome.

who remember Dickson, who died aged 84 in 1962 – there are plenty of crowd-pleasers, not least the tradition of dressing-up 20s-style for the Friday showing.

But there are also less familiar offerings such as the original *Chicago*, made in 1924, more than 70 years before the Richard Gere version; *Hands of Orlac*, a 20s German horror about a concert pianist who is given a hand transplant after an accident – but the hands' previous owner, a murderer, still has a terrible influence over them; and *The Grub Stake*, a gold-prospecting tale written, performed and directed by Canadian film-maker Nell Shipman. "Which does make it sound like a vanity project, but she was an amazing woman who has just been completely written out of cinema history," says Alison. Something that's never likely to happen to the Hippodrome.

**For more details on the Hippodrome Silent Film Festival 2017 see: [www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org/venues/hippodrome/silent-cinema](http://www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org/venues/hippodrome/silent-cinema)**



Dressed up for the hippodrome silent film festival.



Exterior of Hippodrome.

By: David C. Weinczok



The Fife coast near Seafield.

# In the errant footsteps of a King on the Fife Coastal Path

**The Fife Coastal Path links the Forth and Tay Estuaries and runs through the varied landscapes of Fife. This beautiful stretch of coastline takes in picture perfect fishing villages, dramatic shores as well as some of Scotland's most picturesque coastal scenery and the home of golf, St Andrews. The Fife Coastal Path is also where King Alexander III took his fateful tumble on March 18th 1286 and changed Scottish history as David C. Weinczok explains.**

The history of Scotland has been radically and repeatedly altered on countless occasions through a tragic mix of well-intended passions and outrageous misfortune. James II died ironically when one of the cannons he was so fond of introducing into Scottish armies exploded at the siege of Roxburgh Castle. His grandson, James IV, sought to recreate Scotland's past battlefield glories by charging headlong into the fray at Flodden, a valiant act which got himself and countless more predictably killed. Yet perhaps the most purely misfortunate case is remembered on Fife's Coastal Path, along the treacherous cliffs lining the Forth near Burntisland. There on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1286, fuelled by a feast and impatient to rendezvous with his new French wife Yolande, king Alexander III took a late night tumble off a cliff and plunged Scotland into the Wars of Independence.

## The Fife Coastal Path

The Fife Coastal Path is a 117-mile (183km) footpath covering the entirety of Fife's

coast. Along the way it takes in some of the Lowlands' most beautiful yet least known scenery, from quintessential Scottish fishing villages to cliff-top castles and beguiling beaches. Established in 2002 it is increasingly attracting tourists, history and heritage enthusiasts, athletes, campers and families, though in my experience it's still quiet enough to enjoy some splendid isolation along the way.

It hit me quite suddenly one day during a bit of 'castle hunting' on the stretch of the Path between Dalgety Bay and Kirkcaldy that I was walking along one of the most fateful trails in Scotland. Alexander's fall changed everything for Scotland, and I found myself wondering along the way if I was standing at the very spot of his demise (such thoughts also prompted me to check that my footing was sure a little more often than usual – I may be fascinated by the past but I'm in no hurry to repeat it).

## A Royal Tumble

For those unfamiliar with the story, it's a hair-puller; if sense had prevailed over passion at any of a number of points, it

all could have been different. By 1283 all of Alexander's children by his first wife, Margaret, a daughter of England's king Henry III, had died. The year 1285 saw him again married, this time to the apparently beautiful and certainly youthful French princess Yolande of Dreux. No doubt spurred on by only the noblest of intentions, he departed Edinburgh Castle for the crossing at Queensferry to meet his bride at Kinghorn on the opposite side of the Forth.

While I avoid using the phrase 'it was a dark and stormy night' at nearly all costs, in this case it's entirely apt. Undeterred by the lashing rain and the protests of his nobles, he and his small party reached the ferryman. In a wonderful example of the ancient Scottish proclivity to speak plain sense to the powerful, the ferryman allegedly told his king that while he thought the crossing to be a thoroughly terrible idea, 'it would be a great honour to share the fate of your father's son.'

Arriving at Inverkeithing in the pitch black of a medieval night and accompanied by only three esquires, the king began the trot towards Kinghorn. He

had already pushed his luck, and it finally gave way. Somewhere near Burntisland the king became isolated as his horse struggled to find a path (I like to think he could have played 'Marco Polo' with his esquires, but alas Marco did not return to the west for another nine years). Whether due to fright, fate or a simple falter the king and his horse plummeted to their doom on the rocks below, where they were found the following morning. The ensuing succession crisis ended with Edward I's direct intervention and invasion in 1296, and the rest is truly history.

## One for the bucket list

This is but one of the dramas that unfolded along what would become the Fife Coastal Path, in particular the southwest stretch of it, with several written in stone along the way. A drama of a very different sort continues at the remarkable ruin of Seafield Tower, a fifteen-minute walk from the likely site of Alexander's downfall. Here the 16<sup>th</sup> century tower, a stout construction with walls five feet thick and impressive views across the Forth to Edinburgh, is ceaselessly fighting a centuries old war with the elements. Further along the Path past Kirkcaldy stands MacDuff's Tower, and yes, it's 'that' MacDuff of MacBeth fame. Though a modest tower much in ruin, combined with the breathtaking Wemyss Caves immediately below which contain enigmatic Pictish carvings it makes for one of Fife's, if not one of Scotland's, most intriguing and unexpected heritage sites.

Living in Edinburgh myself, with the site of Alexander's fall within squinted view across the Forth, the Fife Coastal Path is always a tempting prospect for a quick and easy day trip. Anyone visiting Scotland would also do well to remember it in their itineraries. For while many prioritise grand royal palaces and Highland glens during their stay here, let it not be forgotten that perhaps the single most haphazard and game-changing event in Scotland's history occurred in no such place, but rather along an inconspicuous path above the cold waters of the Forth in Fife.

**David C Weinczok is a heritage professional, presenter and adoptive Scot based in Edinburgh. Twitter: @TheCastleHunter**



Seafield Tower.

# Remarkable Mary Queen of Scots history goes to display in Edinburgh

Images courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.



Mary Queen of Scots.

the end of a life that has been immortalised in novels, film, poetry, drama and song down the centuries. For preservation reasons, the letter is rarely allowed to be displayed and the last time it was on show at the National Library was in 2009.

**The 430-year-old handwritten letter is one of the most powerful documents in Scottish history, written by arguably its most famous and controversial figure.**

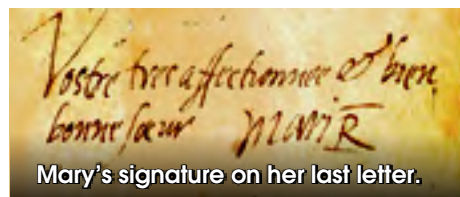
### Execution day

This letter was written at two o'clock in the morning on Wednesday 8 February 1587 as Mary prepared to meet her death at Fotheringhay Castle in Northamptonshire. Writing to Henri III, King of France – the brother of her first husband - she says: "I am to be executed like a criminal at eight in the morning." Her "crime", as she makes clear in the letter, was her loyalty to her Catholic faith which, together with her claim to the English throne, made her a considerable threat to her cousin, Elizabeth I of England. In the letter she also expresses concern for the servants she will leave behind who had served her so loyally during her 19-year imprisonment in England. Towards the end of the letter, she beseeches King Henri to have "prayers offered

to God for a queen who has borne the title Most Christian, and who dies a Catholic, stripped of all her possessions." She was only 44 on her execution day. Although born in Linlithgow Palace, Mary spent the early part of her life in France and was given a French education. This is reflected in her last letter which was written in French.

### Historical significance

The Library has some 26 million physical items in its collection but few surpass the historical significance of the Mary Queen of Scots letter. Other collection material relating to Mary Queen of Scots was also on display including a letter she wrote to her mother during her childhood years in France; a letter signed by Mary and her second husband Lord Darnley; and a pardon issued by Mary in 1549 with her Great Seal attached. "The life of Mary Queen of Scots has fascinated people of all ages for generations. She is one of Scotland's most famous monarchs," said National Librarian Dr John Scally. "The National Library is pleased to provide this opportunity to see the last letter she ever wrote only hours before her execution. This is a rare chance to see a remarkable piece of Scottish history."



Mary's signature on her last letter.

## Conservationists highlight Celtic Rainforest



Two conservation charities have joined forces to share the secrets of one of the UK's richest and most mysterious habitats – the Celtic Rainforest. The National Trust for Scotland, the charity that conserves and promotes Scotland's heritage and Plantlife Scotland, the organisation that is speaking up for our wild flowers, plants and fungi, have held events at Balmacara in Wester Ross which will explore the flora that thrives in the damp, ancient forests of Scotland. Events including guided walks and storytelling are planned for the launch of a new Plantlife Scotland leaflet exploring this important plant area have recently taken place. National Trust for Scotland ranger at Balmacara estate, Gavin Skipper said: "You do not have to travel to Brazil to experience a rainforest. There are amazing examples of the Celtic Rainforest on Scotland's West Coast. They are teeming with life and just as fascinating. We hope that this initiative highlights these beautiful habitats to more people and encourages them out to explore."

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# The Scottish Banner speaks to Jimmy Barnes

Glasgow born Jimmy Barnes has had a musical career spanning four decades both as a solo artist and with Cold Chisel. Jimmy is now also an author and will be soon donning his kilt for the upcoming Bundanoon Highland Gathering in the NSW Southern Highlands. Jimmy took the time to speak to the Scottish Banner's Sean Cairney on his Scottish background, his love of the bagpipes and a new Scottish children's book being released.



Photo: Stephanie Barnes.

violence and a lot of drinking. I think that was my family though, not Scotland. I try to get back every year. I am hoping to take the whole family back maybe for a Christmas and New Year and have a clan meeting!

**SC:** You have made your life here in Australia and today you are one of the nation's musical treasures. Do you think your Scottish roots, work ethic or determination has helped the Glasgow boy become the international musician and now author we all love today?

**JB:** I feel very Scottish. I think that I get my determination and my stamina from my Scottish roots.

**SC:** Scotland has a strong musical tradition and music is obviously in your blood, though some may be surprised to hear you were in a pipe band. Recently you began to relearn the pipes, can you tell us how about your piping history and might we see you playing anytime soon?

**JB:** The pipes have been something that I have loved forever. I am so happy to be learning again.

**SC:** Jimmy many *Scottish Banner* readers are thrilled you will be the Chieftain of the upcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Bundanoon Highland Gathering. Despite all your amazing success how important is for you to hold on to your Scottish culture and

do you ever normally get the chance to attend Scottish festivals or events?

**JB:** It is very important to me. I have been out to Bundanoon for the gathering a few times and I am thrilled to be asked to be Chieftain.

**SC:** As a Scot how do you think it will feel for you as Chieftain to be at Bundanoon is Brigadoon and look out a see so many thousands of everyday Australians celebrating their connection to Scotland?

**JB:** I will be a proud Scotsman and I will be a proud Australian. To be celebrating both cultures coming together is amazing.

**SC:** You are about to put out a children's book with a definite Scottish twist called *Och Aye the G'Nu*. Can you tell us about the book and how this project came about?

**JB:** The books are a project that I wrote originally for my grandchildren. I make up stories for them all the time.

**SC:** Thanks Jimmy and we look forward to seeing you at Bundanoon is Brigadoon on April 1st!

**JB:** Thanks!

*Jimmy Barnes is currently touring in March and April with the Working Class Boy: An Evening of Stories & Songs show. Jimmy's new children's book, Och Aye the G'Nu is released on 31 March. The companion CD featuring The Wiggles will be released by ABC Music on 1 April. For details see: [www.jimmybarnes.com](http://www.jimmybarnes.com).*



# Scotland the Brave returns to Australia

In response to overwhelming popular demand, *Scotland The Brave* makes a triumphant return to the Australian stage. This smash hit celebration of the best of traditional Scottish music, song and dance

opens its national tour in Adelaide on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of March. Music lovers will be able to hear all of their favourite tunes such as *Amazing Grace, Highland Cathedral, The Gael, Ye Banks and Braes, Auld Lang Syne* and many

others. This spectacular production features over 100 singers, dancers and musicians and has become a bestselling DVD for ABC Classics.

*Scotland The Brave* will be staged in Melbourne on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June and the

2<sup>nd</sup> of July, in Perth on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, in Sydney on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August and in Brisbane on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October.

Visit [www.scotlandthebrave.com.au](http://www.scotlandthebrave.com.au) for bookings and further details.



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