



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 on line Scotpourri form at <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.

Susan Boyle

I first heard of Susan Boyle through the "Scottish Banner" and have been a fan since I first viewed her on YouTube-what a lady! My daughter got me her fabulous CD for Christmas and she really is a great soul.

In the March edition I have read about her intruder in her West Lothian home and feel she should move-when you have that level of success who knows who may come knocking at your door. I was appalled to read she has been dubbed "The Hairy Angel", she is a fantastic woman in and out and they can call her what they like, tell me another artist who has had such a wave of popularity worldwide like that in this century?

Go SuBo Go!

Janet McIver
Phoenix,
Arizona
USA

Craigievar Castle

I was out in the shops last week and suddenly stopped in my tracks when I saw the gorgeous image of Craigievar Castle on the cover of the "Scottish Banner" (March 2010).

This castle has always held interest for me and it is fantastic news that it has been refurbished and will open to the public this year.

My husband and I are off to Scotland this July and will be sure to visit this fantastic landmark and wee gem of Scottish history.

I am glad to hear Scotland recognises the importance (to all of us) that they preserve these fantastic buildings of history.

I have been told it is in fact this castle that Walt Disney moulded his Disney Castle on? I hear he was also blown away by it and it became the inspiration to the now iconic Disney Castle we see on Disney logos and theme parks, anyone know if this really is the case? Maybe a reader can help us?

Thanks "Scottish Banner" for a great job!

Helen Matthews
Wellington,
New Zealand

The Scots Thistle

Thank you for taking the time to answer my query on the Scots Thistle. It is indeed wonderful to think folk do this when they can be very busy, so it was most appreciated and I would like you to know that I also received a lot of other letters replying in the same vein.

Thank you again

Bessie Kelso
Parkdale, Victoria
Australia

Brings Scots From Far and Wide in Contact

I was very much surprised and delighted to receive the e-mail from Bessie Kelso thanking me for the information regarding why the thistle is the flower of Scotland. Also I want to thank you for taking the time to send it to me. I do love my Banner and the fact that it brings Scots from far and wide in contact with each other. I will write Bessie and thank her.

Who knows we may end up being pen pals.

Again I thank you and your staff.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Stevens
USA

Gracing our front cover: The Caledonian MacBrayne ferry to the Island of Raasay

Glasgow's Citizen Theatre

I was pleasantly surprised to see an article on the Citizen's Theatre in the 'Scottish Banner', what great memories it brought to me. I remember seeing shows there as a kid and while it was not London's West End or New York's Broadway they were great nights out and always entertaining. It really makes me happy to know the tradition is still going strong in Glasgow and the theatre has not been knocked down for flats and is still serving the arts community so well.

Well done Citizens Theatre!

Craig McPherson
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

The Edinburgh Military Tattoo Sydney

We went to Sydney for the Edinburgh Military Tattoo and thoroughly enjoyed it! What a great achievement for all involved and though there was a wee shower it did not dampen our spirits or the many of those around us who loved each and every act. Well done as well to all the Aussie pipers, drummers and dancers-we really can put on a world class show!

I am amazed how many people were there and how Scotland did shine-thanks also for the Banner for the follow up report as it brought back great memories.

Now I want the DVD to watch it again (and again!).

Don Campbell
Perth,
Western Australia

Ed note: The Sydney Edinburgh Military Tattoo is now available on DVD. Please see inside this issue on how you can order your own copy of this fantastic event. Thank you Don.

Sympathies to Family of Clan Chief McNeil

Our Clan Chief Ian Roderick Macneil of Barra died in Edinburgh on Tuesday evening 16th February. His funeral was held next Wednesday 24th February at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Castlebay, Isle of Barra. Our deepest sympathy is expressed to his wife Nancy, children and grandchildren. John McNeil President Clan MacNeil Association of Australia Clan MacNeil World Gathering Isle of Barra 2 - 5th August 2010 For information contact John McNeil T: 08 8338 3858 or email kisimul@chariot.net.au

Flower of Scotland

In regard to the article about the Commonwealth Games athletes choice of anthem, it was obviously an overwhelming vote in favour of "Flower of Scotland". This, I feel, does not do justice in honouring an athlete's accomplishment in getting to the podium.

I understand it is a popular song, but I feel it a poor choice to praise outstanding achievement.

The words "when will I see your likes again" sounds like a plea for something lost, not an accolade for outstanding performance.

I would suggest a better for Scotland's winners would be "Cock o' the North" or better still "Scotland the Brave".

Played by a pipe band, brass band or any kind of band, "Scotland the Brave" gets your heart pumping, your feet stomping, and willing you to sing it for all the world to hear.

"Flower of Scotland" to my mind is better suited to melancholy, such as at the end of a night at the pub and folks are looking for some sort of resurrection.

Perhaps I've been away from Scotland too long to know the popularity of the song as it must have come to light after I emigrated in 1953. It does nothing to stir my Scottish blood.

On the other hand, I hear "Scotland the Brave" then I stand tall and proud - sing out loud- and cheer for Scotland.

No other song can come close to this tune to stir the soul and raise the blood in the veins of a true Scot.

Norman Mitchell
USA

Ross Family, Carnoustie

I am still searching for any information regarding my ancestors. The Ross Family resided in Carnoustie, Scotland prior to migrating to Australia in September 1914. James and Maryann Ross and children Kenneth, Andrew, James, Phyllis and Florence. Would be very grateful for any information to assist with my family research.

Thank you.

Enid Cox
Australia
Email: enid_cox@yahoo.com.au

Scots Romantic? Yes!

I got the Scottish Banner as I was visiting my sister-in-law in Michigan. She has been getting it for a long time so I get it and love it. When I am finished with it I pass it on to my minister.

Now why I am writing. It is about your question about "Are Scots Romantic?" My husband and I were married in the Barney Church on High Street, Glasgow in 1950 so we will have been married for 60 years on June 30th. We still are in love and treasure each other. He still buys me flowers every week and we do everything together.

Mrs. Joseph Macmillan
Diamond Head, MS
USA

Looking For Family

Seeking descendants of James (Jim) Mirk and his wife Priscilla, who lived for awhile in Palmerston North, Wellington, NZ.

Jim was killed in Flanders, October 12, 1917, World War I. He was with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) of the army.

Jim's father, George Mirk, of Stirlingshire, Scotland and my great-grandmother were first cousins and they kept in close touch. But that was many years ago. I have a photo of Jim taken in 1900 in Newcastle, NSW.

I understand Jim and Priscilla had several children. I would be interested and grateful in hearing from their descendants.

Thank you.

Victoria Adamson
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e-mail: eileantraigh@yahoo.ca

Avid Reader

I have been an avid reader for many years ordering and purchasing from my local newsagent firstly in Ipswich and secondly from Burpengary here in Queensland. I have also been included in Ron Dempsey's article What's in a Name several years ago.

Yours Aye

Glenn Colin Cleighton-Hills BA (Scot) JP. Burpengary,
Queensland
Australia

Keep those letters coming! We enjoy them - and so do other readers!