



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 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.

Clan MacNeil

I was delighted to read in the October edition of the *Scottish Banner* a reference to the name MacNeil in Ron Dempsey's column. A number of people have drawn my attention to the article and we appreciate being given prominence in the article. We are always interested to find ways of reaching out to families who may be interested in making contact with us and particularly where they want to join our clan association.

In the past year there have been a number of important events for the clan. Firstly the death of our Chief, Ian Roderick Macneil in February and the appointment of a new chief, his eldest son Roderick (Rory) Wilson Macneil of Barra. Rory and his wife Sau Ming live in Edinburgh as well as in the family home on Barra. There was also a biannual Clan Gathering on Barra in August. Over the past 12 months several members of our clan and myself have researched and collected information on the McNeill families who lived in Argyll during the period of 1400 to 1800 AD. This has been an interesting journey as the DNA of the Argyll families is different to that of the Barra families. The next to be researched is families of Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre and Ireland.

Yours aye,
John McNeil
Clan MacNeil Assoc. Of Australia
Linden Park, South Australia.

2011-The Year Of The Light

As a former crew member on Swedish ships plying the English Channel with calls into coastal ports on the east coast, I was interested in the article, "2011 The Year of the Light".

Certainly Bell Rock Lighthouse is a masterpiece of engineering.

It may interest your readers that there is a book available titled, "The Lighthouse Stevenson's" authored by Bella Bathurst and has a wonderful account of the history of lighthouses being designed and built by the Stevenson family.

The Lighthouse Stevenson's, as they became known, were also responsible for a slew of inventions both in construction and optics and for an extraordinary series in architecture, design and mechanics.

As well as lighthouses, they built harbours, roads, railways, docks and canals all over Scotland and beyond.

I wish the Arbroath area & Partnership's Year of the Light Steering Committee's all the best for their celebrations.

Tony Tapper
Australia

'Scottish Banner' Events

I stumbled on your site as I was doing a search for Burns Nights and was amazed at how many you have listed-well done for providing so much information on your web site for the Scottish community to access! I know have a Burns Night to attend and looking at your list other events as the year goes on.

I shall raise a dram to the Banner at my Burns Celebration!

Yours aye,
John Moore
Chicago, IL
USA

Ed note: Thanks John for your kind comments, our events are constantly being updated online so check back often, you can of course always find an updated print version in any issue of the *Scottish Banner*. Event organisers remember to send us your event information via our web site.

The Scottish Kitchen

I have made the Chocolate and Whisky dessert, the directions for the dessert has it made right in the dessert bowls. I have also made the Neeps & Tatties soup and the Sausage Toad in a Hole, both are really good.

Thanks for the recipes.
Bob Shiell
Canada

What Is Worn Under The Kilt?

When my Dad was a young man in Winnipeg Manitoba he joined the Cameron Highlanders as a reservist during the 1930's. I saw a picture of him in his kilt & asked him what he wore under his kilt & his reply "The pride of Scotland" - I must have been 8 or 9 when I asked him that: more than 60 years ago but your article in the January issue of the Banner reminded me of "the pride of Scotland"

Aye yours,
Donna Portree
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

SS Caledonian Monarch

In your August 2010 edition of the *Scottish Banner* you published my letter seeking information on my friend Roderick MacDonald Smith (a Canadian) who was lost at sea on the *SS Caledonian Monarch* in 1941.

I recently received a letter from a Mrs. May Simpson of Glasgow who had received a copy of the Canadian edition from a friend, relating to her search for information regarding the *Caledonian Monarch*. Mrs. Simpson sends her thanks to the *Scottish Banner* as it has opened up so much of the unknown to her. Fortunately I knew her father well. I have subsequently written Mrs. Simpson detailing the voyage to the Argentine and the circumstances regarding the torpedoing and sinking of the *SS Caledonian Monarch* and the loss of all 48 crew.

Joe Maxwell
Ingleside, NSW
Australia

The "City of Adelaide"

I have been an ardent reader of the *Scottish Banner* over the years. When reading about The City of Adelaide (December 2010) possibly returning to Adelaide, it states between 1923 to 1989 it was berthed in Glasgow, I think from 1923 till after the second World War around the mid 1950's it was berthed in the great harbour of Greenock (not far from where I lived). To the east of the James Watt Docks, before the war I am sure it was used by RNVR when it was taken to Glasgow, they removed the sails to allow it to sail under the Jamaica Bridge.

It was berthed and used as a RNVR Officers Club till it had a fire on board, I also believe it was at one time a prison ship. I have a photo of my Grandfather, taken about 1932, with the Carrick behind him (the Carrick was the name we all knew it as-H.M.S Carrick).

S.P McIntosh
Christie Downs
South Australia

Prominent MacArthur Pipers

This is a correction of Ron Dempsey who in the current issue of the *Scottish Banner* misstates that "The last male heir of [the prominent Clan MacArthur pipers of Clan MacDonald of Sleat] died in 1780." The truth is that the most recent famous Clan MacArthur piper of Clan MacDonald of Sleat was John MacArthur II who composed "The Highland Society of Scotland's Salute" (piobaireachd) in 1790 and died that year, know in his life as "the only surviving Professor of the ancient College of Dunvegan." Charles MacArthur II who died after 1805 was piper for Lady Margaret MacDonald's husband Alexander Montgomerie, Earl of Eglinton. Archibald MacArthur died in 1834, once serving as the piper to Reginald MacDonald laird of Ulva and Staffa. Alexander MacArthur, another MacDonald piper, died after 1800 after emigrating to America.

Robert Burns, USA
Sent via Facebook

The Reach of the 'Scottish Banner'

Where do I start? I recently enjoyed a Skype conversation with a friend in Clydebank, Scotland, and shall attempt to relay the story as I recall it being told to me—not a story but fact.

I have been subscribing to "The Banner" for a number of years, and when finished with them mail them (every 2 or 3 months) to this friend in Clydebank. When talking this past time he related this fantastic tale to me. —upon skimming over the "Mailbag" as one tend to do—not always devouring each and every letter—he happened upon the name of a ship which he was familiar with, that had gone down during the War, when crossing the Atlantic. He was familiar with this ship as his Uncle had served on it, so he continued to read the whole article. I am not privy to the whole letter, and cannot recall it, but as soon as he read the letter he called his cousin (who also lives in Clydebank and whom I consider a friend as well) and took the Banner straight over to her. The letter had been written by a gentleman in Australia looking for anyone who might have recollections or served on this particular ship. It seems this Australian gentleman was ill in a Brazilian (I think) hospital and was unable to make the journey back to the U.K. and the ship was torpedoed and went down (I don't think anyone survived) At any rate, it turns out my friend's cousin's father was serving on this ship and she was born after the sinking of the ship, so she never knew her father and I understand the Mother was somewhat reluctant to even talk about him.

She is now keeping in touch with the family in Australia, and apparently learning about her Father

I have said all along, The Banner is a wonderful magazine, and having read quite a number of issues over the years, and of many folk who pass them on to friends, yes, even to Scotland, how come you don't publish there? I understand there might be further tales re this that hopefully will come to light in The Banner. I certainly thought it worth the telling—strange—how one glance down a column could lead to such an outcome—from Canada to Scotland to Australia and back, and a lady married with grown children and grandchildren, is able to learn about a Father she never knew. I Think It Is Awsome !!!!!!!

Dorothy J. Davidson
Chatham, Ontario
Canada

Bell Rock Lighthouse

I had to write and tell you how thrilled I was to open my January edition of The Banner and read the article on the Bell Rock lighthouse.

You mention David Taylor who is the editor of the website www.bellrock.org.uk David who lives in Edinburgh is married to my cousin.

This is a very informative website about the lighthouse and anyone going into the home page of this site can see a beautiful oil painting of the lighthouse which was painted by David's wife Nessie.

David was so pleased when the lighthouse was featured on the TV show "Seven Wonders Of The Industrial World" I think I will have to send him my January copy of the Banner. I'm sure it will please him a great deal to read your article and to know that his website will now be known on the other side of the world.

I await the Banner arriving every month as it gives me great pleasure to read.

Jessie Nicol
Russell Island, Queensland
Australia

Well Done!

Just bought a copy of the "Banner" in Noosa Heads, Australia. Quality publication. Well done to all involved.

John Daly, Queensland
Australia
Message sent via Facebook