



# 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.

## Wapol is Recruiting

The Western Australia Police Pipe Band (WAPOL) is now calling for expressions of interest for full time pipers and drummers for positions in 2009.

This year is set to be an exciting year for the band with a major studio album recording planned for mid-year, a number of concerts and high-profile performances on the calendar, and of course the performances the band does every week - schools, police graduations, formal events and more.

The band has just completed its successful Impact @ MPAC concert, recently played with Andre Rieu as part of his Stadium World Tour. In October he toured regional Western Australia and performed numerous times in the Kimberley & Pilbarra.

Expressions of interest are invited from pipers and drummers who are of a grade two standard or above, who are able to relocate to Perth, Australia, and who are interested in making sunny Western Australia their new home!

A six month contract as a Level 3 public servant is offered, however we are not, unfortunately, able to offer any relocation expenses.

For more information regarding this exciting opportunity and about the band please do not hesitate to contact the Officer in Charge, Sergeant Brett Bale - [brett.bale@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:brett.bale@police.wa.gov.au), +61 8 9370 7183 [www.wapol.com.au](http://www.wapol.com.au)

## Any Bankies out there?

I have been a subscriber since the 70's and I have wanted for so long to write and say how much I have enjoyed the paper. My surname is Aird, and I am asking for any history of my name.

I have never found any reference of an association with any Clan.

Black says in his book that I am from Ayrshire. Why he says that is a

mystery to me.

Aird or Ard in the Gaelic, means promontory or high promontory. Just check out any map of Lewis, or North or South Uist, in fact any of the Isles, and you will find all around the coast line the name Aird.

We all know that you do not need a to have Mac in front of your name to be a Scot.

Maybe we did not need to explain that we were the son of. By the way I'm a Bankie, and if there are any Bankies out there I would enjoy hearing from you.

Regards to all Jock Thampson's bairns.

Jimmy Aird

USA

Email: [airdnj@yahoo.com](mailto:airdnj@yahoo.com)

## Scots Gaelic Vocal Tutor

I hope you may be able to help. I am looking for a Scots Gaelic Vocal Tutor, preferably in southeastern North Carolina, but elsewhere in the US or in Scotland would. It would be helpful to know if there are any in other areas of the country. Can you share any information you may have on this matter?

Thank you.

Scott MacLean

[hiswayt@bellsouth.net](mailto:hiswayt@bellsouth.net)

## Rose Clan Tartan

Dear Mr. Surminski,

I read your letter in the "Banner", (March 2009). I am responding to your question regarding wearing the Rose tartan. Do it!!! I would be honored to call you a brother Scot.

First, a little background on myself. I have been wearing my kilt (Red Scott tartan) since 1970. I have been active in the Scottish community for years. My wife and I host the Clan Scott tent at 7 to 8 events a year. I am currently serving as the Deputy Chieftain for the Clan Scott Society.

Through the years I have been privileged to discuss questions such as yours with many knowledgeable people.

The conventional wisdom is that if you have Scottish roots

anywhere in your family, it is very acceptable to wear your family tartan, regardless of your last name. A kilt, for example is a manner of every day clothing. Any man can wear it in a comfortable fashion (women wear pleated skirts).

My dad's father was a Reeps (German), but his mum was a Scott. I have Scott and Campbell on my Mum's side. I wear my tartan (as does my wife, children, and grandchildren) with great pride.

'So you're going to wear the Kilt' by J. Charles Thompson, is an excellent book (in my opinion). This can answer many questions you might have. It is a fun read.

'So You're Going To Wear The Kilt' is a truly wonderful introduction to Scottish fashion. Mr. Thompson, the highly opinionated author, does a good job.

As I tell folks, there are only three kinds of people in this world "those who are Scots, those who want to be, and those with no ambition what so ever", LOL.

The Rose family has a terrific history and you should wear your tartan with pride.

Please feel free to contact me with any other questions you may have.

Yours aye,

Ronald R. Reeps

Clan Scott

Deputy Chieftain

Phone: (703) 669-4140

Cell: (703) 622-4554

Email: [Atlangrp@aol.com](mailto:Atlangrp@aol.com)

USA

## Scottish Tartans Authority

I'm moved to take your correspondent to task who penned the 'mostly' excellent piece on April's back page on the new Official Register of Tartan. The claim in the first paragraph that there has been no register of tartan is (inadvertently?) rewriting the history of the industry and the tartan world. The

You can view this month's and several past editions of Scotpourri online at [www.scottishbanner.com](http://www.scottishbanner.com) and see why this is one of the most popular pages!

Scottish Tartans Society were the first in the field almost thirty years ago to establish the Register of all Publicly Known Tartans.

In 1996 the Scottish Tartans Authority took over their mantle with its International Tartan Index and established what is now the largest such database in existence, which quickly became the industry standard - as it remains to this day.

Indeed the new register administered by the National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh owes its existence to the STA register from which almost 100% of its tartans were imported. In addition to that contribution, the STA handed over its previous registration role to the new Register.

Best wishes

Brian Wilton

Director, Scottish Tartans

Authority

Crief, Perthshire

Scotland

[www.tartansauthority.com](http://www.tartansauthority.com)

Ed note: Thank you for taking the time to advise of this error as we are well aware of the excellent work of Scottish Tartans Authority.

## Tracing your Scottish roots - your story

Do you have a good story to tell about visiting Scotland to trace your family tree? The editor of [www.scotland.org](http://www.scotland.org), the official gateway site for Scotland, is keen to hear from Americans, Canadians or Australians who would be willing to share their story, particularly anyone who may have plans to revisit Scotland during Homecoming year. What resources did you use to trace your Scottish roots? Were there any surprises in your family history? Have you made contact with any family still living in Scotland? The site will be running an ancestry theme during May and June and will feature these personal stories. If you would be willing to help, please email [info@scotland.org](mailto:info@scotland.org).

## Meet the Chief

Thank you 'Scottish Banner' for the new series "Meet the Chief".

Not only was it great to read this month (April 2009), about my Chief, but I am really also enjoying learning about the other Chiefs. Quite often you get bits and pieces about other Clan histories, but not often do you get to learn about the person who heads a Clan. You tend to forget that the Chief's can have such different lives, and in fact lives outside their Clan work, such as family, employment, and hobbies.

I hope this great form of publicity also helps some Clan's attract new members as it so easy to join a Clan and get involved.

I really look forward to reading more about other Chiefs (and maybe some outside Scotland?). Keep up the good work at the 'Scottish Banner', it is always read and always passed on to more Scottish friends each month.

Yours Aye,

Colin MacGregor

Vancouver,

British Columbia, Canada

Ed note: Thank you for your kind words Colin, should any Clan wish their Chief to participate in our *Meet the Chief* series please contact the 'Scottish Banner'.

## Donkin Family

Hello, I have a question regarding the origin of our surname, Donkin. It is usually associated with the Scottish surname Duncan; however, very few Donkins actually live in Scotland. Instead, they seem to be concentrated in the Northumberland area. Examination of telephone listings of such towns as Hartlepool and Sunderland, discloses that Donkin is a very prevalent surname in the area. My grandfather was born in Durham about 1870, immigrated to Canada, thence to Cleveland, Ohio. He considered himself Scottish (definitely not

English!), and is reputed to have owned a kilt.

I note that the Northumberland family of General Sir Rufane Shaw Donkin, who established and named Port Elizabeth, is believed to have descended from a Duncan family, probably Duncan of Mott in southwest Scotland.

Is there an historic reason for the change in spelling, and the concentration of Donkins in the Northumberland area?

Thank you for your consideration,

Thomas R. Donkin

Ann Arbor, MI, USA,

[trdonkin@comcast.net](mailto:trdonkin@comcast.net)

## Clan Donald Western Australia

Calling all people with Clan Links with a view to forming a Society in Western Australia. All who are interested are invited to contact:

Pamela MacDonald

Perth, Western Australia

email:

[culloden@aapt.net.au](mailto:culloden@aapt.net.au)

or phone : 0411862529/ 08

9243 4274.

## Tough Decision

Forty two years ago, my husband and I had a dilemma.

The problem was that my husband and I had the choice of two entirely different life styles. Each one offering us wonderful opportunities.

My husband was a singer and an engineer. In the course of three weeks he had two job offers. The first was because he had been successful in an audition with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, England. He was offered a spot in the Main Chorus. The other was that of Chief Engineer in a boiler maker's firm in Ontario, Canada. The later offer came through his brother who worked with the firm. It was a difficult decision to make but we decided that life in London was not the place for our young son, and so we flew across the pond to a new life. Everything worked out well. On my last visit to London I visited the Royal Opera House, and wondered what life as the wife of an opera singer might have been like.

Betty Leigh,

Cambridge, Ont. Canada