



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.

Ibrox Disaster, 1902

This letter is regarding the April 2011 *This Month In Scottish History*, April 5th 1902, Disaster at English/Scottish football match at Ibrox Stadium.

When this disaster happened my granddad, Robert Burnett, owned the bar under the stadium, most of the people that were hurt or killed landed in his bar. My granddad ended up with a broken arm, broken legs and other injuries. Robert was classed as a Spirit Salesman and he also owned a Bar in Paisley, which he also lost. He moved the family to the small town of Newburgh in Fife, returning as a Corn Miller.

As a young boy his first job was milling corn for Scotch whisky in Fettercairn, on the Whisky Trail. My Dad said his father would not talk about the disaster as it was too traumatic. Thanks to the Scottish Banner I found out the date, which no one in the family really knew for sure. Most of my old friends think the Ibrox disaster was in the 1960's but that was the second tragedy there.

My dad's name was James Burnett born Paisley, 1898 and my name is James Burnett born Newburgh, 1930. I immigrated to Vancouver, B.C. March 1st, 1955, along with my wife and son.

Thank you,
James Burnett
New Westminster, British Columbia
Canada

Vale Alasdair Gillies

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Alasdair Gillies in the October issue of the *Scottish Banner*. Alasdair was one of the piping movements greats and what a tragedy his life ended and at such an early age. With so many great pipers across the world, it is not often that a piper can stand out to such international acclaim. Many in not only the piping world but the broader community will miss Alasdair's contribution to the pipes and his expertise will no doubt be missed my future generations of pipers.

We salute this great piper and ambassador of Scotland.

Hugh and Margaret McKinlay
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada

Getting In Touch

I enjoy reading the *Scottish Banner* and have been a reader for years.

I would love to get in touch with my cousins, Roy and Ann Tomkins, Walker Road, Aberdeen, it's been a long time since we met.

Robert Tait
21/164 High St
Southport, Queensland
Australia

Scots, The Manliest Men

Of course the Scots are the world's manliest men (October 2011 *Scottish Banner*)! I loved the front cover and enjoyed the article however I knew that already and only needed to ask my husband and 3 boys-all who wear kilts and stop all when they do. There is not many national dress that measures up like a kilt and we are so proud to be Scottish! From going to highland games, wearing kilts, visiting Scotland and of course reading our *Scottish Banner*, we love our heritage. Kilts really are the icing on the cake to a great and proud history and heritage the Scots can call their own, no matter where they live.

All the best to all the *Scottish Banner* readers across the world and remember wear your kilt every chance you get as it's your birth right!

Denise Williamson
Chicago, Illinois
USA

The Beat Of The Drum

I loved the cover of your September 2011 issue, I am big fan of pipe bands and love the pipes but have a real soft spot for those drummers. It is an amazing



Cover photo September 2011

experience to be so close to a pipe band on the march and as the pipers move forward the bang of the drum sees them off. There is a real tribal and military feel to a drum beat when a band walks off the field and kept in march form to the single beat lead off. Often people think immediately of pipers when thinking of pipe bands or Scottish music but our drummer boys and girls are such an important part to the unique sight and sounds that is a pipe band.

Well done drummers, pipers and Scottish Banner!
Yvonne Mackenzie
New York, NY
USA

The Forgotten Children

In the October issue of the *Scottish Banner* there was an article by Valerie Cairney about The Forgotten Children, as she met one of them on a visit to Australia.

The story of those children is quite harrowing and has been the subject of at least two television programmes here. Also the children sent to Canada were similarly ill-treated. However David Hill, I understand, is not a Scot but English and he with his mother and brothers were among the migrants brought out under this scheme. After a time the family settled down in their own home, and David went on to Melbourne University and later became Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

June Laws
Little Mountain, Queensland
Australia

Keep your letters coming on life's little question marks. This page is also available each month on our website www.scottishbanner.com where you can also send in your comments or queries direct.

The Wallace Sword

Regarding the Wallace Sword (October 2011 Scotpourri), Inspector MacGregor was my Uncle. The sword had been removed from its display area and passed out through the arrow slots in the spiral stair case on the end of a long rope to people waiting below on the ground. Students were involved. A replica now stands in a locked case. Sadly my Uncle passed away 7th October 2008 in Stirling Royal Infirmary.

Thank you for a great newspaper, it's the best.
Frederick MacGregor Findlay
Acacia Ridge, Queensland
Australia

James MacKenzie

Here is the true account of what happened to James Mackenzie (July 2011 Scotpourri by Bill Montgomery) as written by Jack Lundie in the book *Friday-The Greatest Dog Story*. Probably was the greatest dog story of all time surrounds the sheep dog Friday owned by the Highlander James Mackenzie from whom the Country and Collie Club takes their name. Friday was credited with performing spectacular feats for his master, it was said that the dog actually did the sheep stealing on his own. When Mackenzie was captured he was in possession of one thousand sheep belonging to the Levels Station and it was said when the dog was taken from the court room, Mackenzie broke down as he wanted the dog to be his companion in prison.

Mackenzie himself became a legendary figure and few people had access to the facts and Friday is believed to have lived to a ripe old life on the Levels Station. Mackenzie after his capture escaped several times, it is possible Mackenzie was an innocent party to the sheep stealing.

Good work *Scottish Banner*.
Raymond White
Ex St Andrews
Christchurch, New Zealand

Trying To Understand

I am a couple of weeks shy of my 52nd birthday. I was, at about age 12, adopted hence, my last name of Rayeski. My father, Rayeski passed in 2002, a fine man whom I greatly respected, admired and, loved. However, in the past year I have felt a need, a desire, to know who I really am and began searching for my "roots" which, has led me to my birth surname of Munroe.

I am in contact with a large portion of my birth family. As a result of my relative infancy to Scottish history and heritage, I may be opening a very large can of worms, as we say here in the States. But I am perplexed. I have naturally studied the history of my own country and therefore understand the concept of exploration and conquering and expansion. But I see a vast difference between this and, the "occupation" I perceive of Scotland by England. So I must ask. Why is Scotland not a free and independent nation?

Why have the sacrifices of so many, led by the likes of such giant patriots as Sir William Wallace and King Robert the Bruce, been over thrown and wasted by allowing the continued occupation. I simply do not understand why, after such victories, has Scotland been invaded, as I see it, again and reoccupied by England? Do the Scottish people not want to be a free an independent nation, as they have been in the past? I am not trying to stir up a hornets nest and I expect there may well be more than one view of this condition but I am bothered by this situation, being an American, and hope to understand.

I wish to proclaim my Scottish heritage proudly, but I have no desire, quite frankly, to be British. I hope I can come away from this with a much clear understanding of this practice of what I see as two countries living under one rule. I see no correlation between the US framework of one country with many states and two seemingly different countries under one rule.

Thank you again for any education anyone is able to provide.
Keith Rayeski-Munroe
New Hampshire, USA