

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, 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.

Abel Family Association

Calling on all Abels and their decedents. We have just established a Family Association and we are calling for members. Our aim is to bring together all Abels of Scottish heritage, from all corners of the globe. Reconnect or make new connections, to all branches of our family. We want to create a real sense of community where events or reunions can be planned, we can share family historical information, or even just keep in touch. Membership is free and open to all Abels, (all variations of the spelling), and our extended family members by marriage or other union. There is a quarterly newsletter, a billboard on the site for members to post broadcasts, upcoming events page (Highland Games/ Gatherings, who is attending etc.), and also an events report page where members can give reports on events they attended. Please go to www.abelfamilyassociation.com and sign up on the "Membership" page, it literally only takes about 1 min to sign up. For any further information, please contact:
The Secretary
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Kariong, NSW
2250, Australia
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Sawney Bean's Cannibal Clan

Who can believe it's nearly Halloween already? Mind you with our Scottish Banner reaching the grand old age of 40 (congrats to all the team) it just reminds us how quick time goes, we must be getting auld, ne'r mind anyone up fur a scary auld, ne'r mind anyone up fur a scary story, one of my favourites is of the 48 strong Ayrshire cannibal clan lead by the infamous 'Sawney' Bean in the 16th century, if you've not heard of them before I'd like to share a wee poem I wrote about it.

Sawney Bean's Cannibal Clan

By: Andrew Heaney
Could it be? It cannae be right, in Scotland's depths of time, that Sawney

Bean and his incestuous clan, could commit such barbarous crimes. From thair devilish layer beneath the ground, in a cave with a foaming mouth. They'd plan tae rob, kill, and cannibalise, from this fiendish cavernous house.

And there wiz many a man was daft enough, tae travel Ayrshire's moonlit lanes. Aye you'd think they must be aff thair heids, and think they had nae brains And by the midnight hour, you'd be right, this I kid ye not. For they'd be dead, wi heids cut aff, and thair brains be in the pot!

Such a ravenous clan, wi' hardly a care, and cannibalous appetite. With this lust for flesh and robbery, they'd stalk thair prey by night. Stalking in the misty shadows, like a pack of rabid wolves. They'd swarm like ghosts from hells dark gates, upon these travelling fools.

Slashing and biting in ambush, in a lust for blood so vicious. And strip and tear so mercilessly, and rip pour souls tae pieces. Travellers would just seem tae disappear, and ne'r be seen nae more. But noo and again an arm or leg, would wash up on the shore.

The Ayrshire folk wanted justice, for in fear they just could nae cope. And many a innocent Innkeeper, would end up hanging from a rope. But on and on they disappeared, till they bit off more than they could chew. When they ambushed a soldier and his wife, and his sword the soldier drew.

Twas "all hallows night" and he fought in fear, as he flayed his sword about. As the cannibals tore and mauled his wife, pulling her entrails out! But as he fought so hard outnumber, the locals came charging on down And like vermin the cannibals scattered, and headed to thair cave underground.

The game was up for Sawney's clan, as the soldier's wife lay dead. And the locals with thair pitch forks, bayed for Sawney's head. When the magistrates told the King, he came with four hundred men. And they hunted with the locals, tae find the Sawneys clan's ghoulish den.

Where could they be, where do they hide, just where the hell did they go? And then by chance they found thair cave, when the tide was running so low. They fought thair way right through the cave, and captured Sawney's clan. And bore witness to unbelievable horror sight, seldom seen by man!

As thair torch lights flickered nervously, in this cave of dread. It illuminated hooks on walls, impaled with victims heads. A vision of depravity, that only hell could apparel. Wi' chunks of flesh, and arms and legs, pickled in salt barrels!

When Sawney's clan were brought and tried, and one and all condemned. They were shown no mercy like their victims, and they met a torturous end. And this is where the story ends, could it be myth or just Scots banter?

But brave the man on midnight walk, in the land of Tam O'Shanter.

Andy Heaney
Formally Glasgow
Brisbane, Queensland
Australia

Scottish Banner 40th Anniversary



On behalf of the High Commissioner Clan Donald Australia, Mr Lachlan Macdonald, the State Commissioners, delegates and members I extend our congratulations on 40 years of

service to the Scottish Community worldwide. *The Scottish Banner* provides the community with necessary and important information on the events, clan connections and stories and reports from around the world affecting the Scots. May *the Scottish Banner* enjoy many more years in service.

Yours sincerely,
J. Macdonald
Hon Secretary
Clan Donald Australia

Happy 40th!

I have been a long time reader of *the Scottish Banner*, having "inherited" the paper from my Scottish parents. Each month there is always something in it that fascinates me. I was so proud of *the Banner* when I opened up my July issue and saw all the world leaders giving a nod to "our Banner"! I am so glad you received this and it is so well deserved. What an accomplishment 40 years of monthly publication is and the paper just gets better and better. I love the new style layout and the mix of writers you now have from around the world.

Valerie and her team make so many around the world stand that bit taller each month knowing we are all Scots.

Gayle Simpson
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

The Musselburgh Riding of the Marches



I just thought I had to drop you a quick letter as I was reading *the Scottish Banner* about The Riding of the Marches (*Scotland's Ancient Festival- The Musselburgh Riding of the Marches, Scottish Banner, July, 2016*). It brought back wonderful memories for me. I was back in Scotland with 3 of my 5 kids staying in Preston Pans at the time with my parents on holiday in 1974. At the same time one sister was there from London, another from Lincoln, England, both with one child each and another sister living in Scotland with two children and last but not least my sister from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada with her 4 daughters. We were all at the street parade, you can just imagine the looks we got with 11 children with different accents all calling my mother "grannie". By the way thank you for *the Scottish Banner*, which I love and have been

reading for about 15 years. I am off back to Edinburgh in October for holiday.

Agnes Munro (nee Edmond)
Kyneton, Victoria
Australia

Ed note: Thanks Agnes for the letter and how wonderful you have experienced this once every 21 year event. We hope you have a great trip back to Scotland this month.

Castles & "Durdy" Wee Rascals- Only authors write books

Firstly may I say thank you for Jim Stoddart's column *Castles & "Durdy" Wee Rascals* in the Scottish Banner. My maternal grandmother came from Glasgow many years ago and although she didn't speak that often about her home area, many of your stories about your early years in Glasgow somehow ring true of the days gone by when living with my grandparents here in Australia. As a child I enjoyed playing games outdoors with my brothers in dirt tracks. At the end of the day my grandmother would scold us "Durdy wee midens!" So your headline rang true for me. Unfortunately our family does not have and Kings or Castles to speak of. As the self-appointed family historian I try and gather stories of past family members, unfortunately not everyone is prepared to share their information so large gaps in stories can be found and I get a bit fed up trying to put things in perspective. Some time ago my daughter asked me to write down some family tales I was telling her about. Once I started to jot down some of these silly tales, I realised no one would be interested in such a boring everyday family doing everyday things. So I tossed aside this writing idea. Until I read your recent piece in the July 40th Anniversary edition of the Scottish Banner (*Castles & "Durdy" Wee Rascals- Only authors write books*) We all have a story to tell don't we? So I will try again to put pen to paper, even if it is only for grandchildren, it will be enough for me. Thank you again for your regular stories and I look forward to reading *the Scottish Banner* for many years more to come.

Pamela Davidson
Bethania, Queensland
Australia

POSTED TO THE SCOTTISH BANNER FACEBOOK PAGE

World Photography Day-Glencoe



On August 21st it was World Photography Day here's a wee snapshot around Glencoe over the last 2 days of sunshine, plenty more pics to come once I've sorted through them.
Scotland Up Close
Carolynn Wilson
Scotland