

# 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](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. 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.

## Tartan Day in Canada

Canadians in Nova Scotia are set to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tartan Day. Started officially in 1986 by approximately 30 Scots at a meeting of the Federation for Scottish Clans & Culture it has now spread world-wide. Jean MacKaracher-Watson the only person working on the promotion committee one by one wrote to every Member of each Provincial Legislative Assembly telling them about the concept. Then researched in libraries getting names of Scottish groups in each province and writing to them asking for them to push the idea in their individual province. It was a huge task and her husband Andrew now deceased helped her with the typing and mailing using an old underwood typewriter with a broken return clip. No computer in those days. Thanks is extended to all who pushed to make this date happen in each province in Canada. The date was started to have a date that was not one that was brought from the old country. One that was felt young people would appreciate. Donald MacLean suggested using the date of the Declaration of Arbroath as Jean was charged with finding a spring date and so the date was chosen. No date in Scottish history could hold more profound meaning to Scots than April 6<sup>th</sup> when the Declaration was signed. Following it's passing in Ontario Jean was delighted to see interest peaking in the United States. With their huge population of Scots the date soon began to be celebrated and from there it spread worldwide. The Scots in Nova Scotia salute the rest of the world with their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and encourage all to wear the tartan and get out to the many events planned to honour the Scottish settlers who came to our lands and through faith in God, hard work and determination made a new home in a far country. With the changing world it is time for the Scots to gather from strength to strength and support our culture.

Jean MacKaracher-Watson  
Nova Scotia  
Canada

**Ed note: Thank you Jean, both you and Andrew have done an incredible thing for the Scottish community!**

## Auld Lang Syne

I really enjoyed the article in the January *Scottish Banner* on Robert Burns. His poems and songs are heard worldwide. Having lunch in a cafe in India several years ago, I was amazed to hear *Auld Lang Syne*, played on a sitar as background music! Last year whilst travelling in Japan, I was shopping in an IKEA type store in Kyoto, enjoying the music of the 60's as I browsed. That music suddenly ended and *Auld Lang Syne* was played. One of the shop attendants came to tell me the store was closing, so I made my way to the stairs and saw near the door, the six staff lined up hands in prayer pose. As I walked down the stairs, I sang *Auld Lang Syne*, and they all looked amazed and said "You Know this song?"

This Christmas just past, I was also amazed to hear the tune *Auld Lang Syne* adapted to a Christmas Carol! Wouldn't Robert Burns be amazed at how far his fame has spread and in so many ways!  
Sue MacLeod  
Australia

**Ed note: Thanks Sue for your letter and so great a bit of Scotland joins you on your world travels. If any other readers have experienced a bit of Scotland whilst travelling abroad please share it with us.**

## The Stewart Society St. Andrews Bursars



The Stewart Society of Edinburgh, Scotland, awards bursaries each year to students at St. Andrews and other universities. Pictured with those enrolled in 2016 are Council member Hon. Lord Stewart (seated second from left), St. Andrews University Vice Principal Professor Lorna Milne, and Society President Lachlan Stewart. Bursars include Amanda, Brooke, Catherine, Jane, Jennifer and Jennifer, Karyn, Molly, Rachel, Samantha, Sophie, Ewan, Ludovic, Peter, Thomas and Zachary Stewart, Sophie Stuart Menteth, and Grace MacDonald.  
Dr. Donald A. Smith  
Commissioner  
The Stewart Society (of Edinburgh, Scotland).

## Find a lost friend

Looking for my lost friend Alison Irvine, married name Flynn. I think that she emigrated to Canada. She had 3 sons Brett, Mark and Guy and also a daughter. She may be in Edmonton (Canada) as two of her sisters are there Nina and Marg. We were friends from Edinburgh Ainslie Park High School. Alison would be 74 on the 17<sup>th</sup> April this year. Wonder if you can help?  
Carol Fraser  
Australia  
Email: [carolcas48@yahoo.com.au](mailto:carolcas48@yahoo.com.au)

## Wearing my kilt

You asked in your paper, which I buy every month about Gretna Green experiences (*Scottish Banner*, February, 2016). I spent a week in Fort William and Gretna Green last year and having Scottish heritage I wore Highland dress for the first time. Having never worn it before, I had to get my nerve up to wear a kilt in public. The biggest surprise I got was the cat-calls and wolf whistles directed at me. I can't understand why there are shops everywhere selling Highland dress and yet you hardly see any men wearing kilts. I am going to Scotland again this year as it's my favourite country and my only complaint was the midges which left my face looking like a plate of sago pudding.

Mr R Dixon  
Fremantle, Western Australia

## Castles & "Durty" Wee Rascals

What a delight to read Jim Stoddart's story about growing up without doctors (*Clegs and Skelves, Castles & "Durty" Wee Rascals*, *Scottish Banner*, February, 2016.). I grew up in Paisley during the war also, so I know what you are talking about. One incident happened when we were here, our son Jack was about seven and while watching TV he was playing with a stick. When I called him for dinner he jumped and the stick went down his throat, we took him to hospital where they cauterized the throat and the doctor said he would need to operate the following week. However he was soon very ill and the lump in his throat looked like a red tomato. I told my husband I am making poultice, my son said it felt good and I made another. Well after four poultice's it burst and all the poison came out. The doctor was amazed and asked me who showed you this? I said my granny in Scotland and he said that thanks to granny it is as clean as a whistle and has saved you \$500.00!

We thoroughly enjoy your articles, keep them coming and stay of good health. By the way my husband was in the Royal Navy and from Aberdeen.

Thank you for the memories.  
Margaret Kinnaird  
Willoughby, Ohio  
USA

**Ed note: Thanks for your letter Margaret and glad you, like so many, enjoy Jim's articles. Just shows you should always listen to your granny!**

## Galbraith's Stores

I wonder if anyone remembers Galbraith's of Paisley? They had a chain of supermarkets on the West Coast of Scotland. Also they had their own in-house bakery. Every morning a van would arrive at the store I worked at in West Blackhall St. Greenock, and deliver freshly baked goods. On a Friday the van would stay at West Blackhall St. store to deliver orders of groceries door to door. I was lucky enough to help with the deliveries and the driver always had something for us to eat. Usually bridies or mutton pies. Christmas was best, as everyone would have "something" for your Christmas. I would often go home with a few pounds, after sharing with the driver.  
Robert Bradshaw

## Celtic Saints



In your March edition of *the Scottish Banner* reference was made to the Celtic Saints David and Patrick representing Wales and Ireland. There is also St Piran of Cornwall, whose celebration day it 5<sup>th</sup> March. His story is that a pagan band of Irishmen chained St Piran to a millstone and threw him off a cliff because they were jealous of his influence over the people. The sea bore him to the coast of Cornwall where he landed at Perranporth. St Piran built a chapel at the site of his landing, possibly the oldest place of Christian worship still existing. The shifting sand have buried and revealed the church but unfortunately the ruins cannot be seen today as it has been buried again to preserve it. The Cornish flag of a white cross on a black background is known as St Piran's Cross.

Thea Adams

**Ed note: Thank you Thea for sharing this with us as we hate to miss out any of our amazing Celtic cousins!**

## Brodie Castle



I am a auld Brodie loon, the photo of Brodie Castle in the February *Scottish Banner* (Ten Scottish sites to top 10,000 steps) brought back many happy memories. I left Dyke School, late 1940's on a Friday afternoon and come Monday morning I started as an apprentice gardener at Brodie Gardens which was a 3 year apprenticeship. Leslie Forbes was head gardener, a very knowledgeable man, even if he was a Buckie supporter! During this period Brodie was famous for its daffodils, till this day bulbs raised in Brodie are still selling well today. When I started work, my first job in the morning was to take veggies up to the cook in the castle, OK in summer, but in winter picking Brussel sprouts covered in frost was not very fine! The Brodie of Brodie were great people to work for and very easy to talk to. Another great talking point was the Brodie football team, the pitch was right beside Brodie railway station. Aye lots of laugh and fun, now just memories.

I came to Australia as a £10 Pom and landed in December 1959. I married a bonnie Queensland lass and had four braw kids. So I and the Mrs have a lot to be thankful for.  
Bob Duncan  
Barcaldine, Queensland  
Australia