

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.

A Guid New Year

A Scottish New Year poem.
A guid New Year tae an' a',
An' mony may ye see.
An' during a' the year tae come,
O happy may ye be.

An' may ye ne'er have cause tae mourn,
Tae cry or shed a tear.
Fra ane an' a' baith great an' sma'
A hearty guid New Year!
The Auld Yin Hisel.

Tae us whas like us!

Barbra Bartz
Florida, USA

Neil Oliver



Congratulations *Scottish Banner* on a brilliant November issue, simply full of great content from Scotland. I adore Neil Oliver and really enjoyed the interview you did which I must say is a real coup to get so congratulations. Neil Oliver really comes across as someone who has a great passion for history and Scotland. I also enjoyed the features you had around Remembrance Day and honouring Scottish soldiers achievements. When I get my *Banner* I tend to read at least three times and always find another great tid-bit of information and enjoyment before passing it on to a friend who also reads it from cover to cover.

This is such a wee gem of a paper that we ex-pat Scots are so very lucky to call our own-thank you *Scottish Banner!*

Chris MacDonald
Auckland, New Zealand

Ed note: Thank you Chris for your letter and we were thrilled to have Neil Oliver in our pages and so glad you (and your friend) are enjoying the paper so much.

Fergus Highland Games

In August, my wife Isobel and I visited our son in Burlington, Ontario. While there we attended the Highland Games in Fergus, Ontario and it was awesome. Gift shops, tea rooms, pies, fish and chips, lots of Scots singing the old songs, heavy events and of course a pipe band competition. It is supposed to be the biggest in Canada. Dianna Gaboldin was also there signing *Outlander* books and we had a wonderful time.

Also I would like to mention in regard to the previous information on pipe band competitions. The Scottish Pipe Band Competitions are held in Levensgrove Park in my home town of Dumbarton.

We love the paper.

Jack Melville
Dumbarton, Scotland

Ed note: Thank you Jack for your note and glad you got to experience the Fergus Highland Games, where the Scottish Banner launched 40 years ago!

The joy the Scottish Banner brings to my life

I wait with baited breath to receive my copy of *the Scottish Banner* each month, immediately put mundane things on hold, make a cup of tea and sit down and scan the pages to find the gems contained within. I find information to add to my knowledge bank, recipes to try and details to quote to my likeminded family members. There is usually one story or photo that induces an intake of breath and a dreamy feeling as I am transported back to the most beautiful place in the world.

I was going to end with "keep up the good work", but that is a given as you obviously do. So instead I will say "thank you" for the joy *the Scottish Banner* brings to my life.

Barbara J Wilson
Albion Park Rail, NSW
Australia

Ed note: Thank you Barbara for such a kind letter and we are so happy to hear this feedback.

Bannockburn

Just a wee note or two. Regarding the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn, I heard of an amusing story that is supposed to be true about the naming of Bannockburn Ontario, a hamlet located on Hwy #62, north of Belleville in centre Hastings County, Ontario. As the story goes there was a meeting called to name the community in the early part of the 20th century. Apparently a loud and raucous debate ensued and finally one fellow got up and said, "This reminds me of the Battle of Bannockburn" which brought the house down with gales of laughter and it was decided then and there to name the community Bannockburn.

On a recent story of Mary Queen of Scots, there is an historical error. Yes Mary was imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle, but escaped a year later, and then she fled to England, claiming sanctuary from Queen Elizabeth, who kept her imprisoned for 18 years. She was implicated in an RC plot to murder Queen Elizabeth, who had her executed. It is said she wore red petticoat to indicate she was martyr to her

faith. Also it is said when she placed her head on the block, a small dog escaped her petticoat. But worst of all, it took two whacks of the axe to cut off her head!

John A.D. McLean
Belleville, Ontario
Canada

Ed note: Thank you John for sharing this fascinating piece of history with the Scottish Banner.

The Lost Songs of St Kilda



Many many thanks to *the Scottish Banner* for the CD of St Kilda music (*The Lost Songs of St Kilda*) which arrived at Canberra this morning. The music is very different and absolutely beautiful. My wife and I already find it beautifully meditative.

Best wishes to all,
Graham and Margaret Cox
Canberra, ACT
Australia

The Burrell Collection



Thank you *Scottish Banner* for featuring the Burrell Collection in recent editions. I have spent many hours at this wonderful place and you are correct the city of Glasgow is very lucky to have such an amazing civic gift bestowed upon them. I had no idea the Burrell was closing for a refurb and cannot wait to visit again once it is open to see the extra pieces they have on display. Glasgow is a great city for the "culture vulture" and reading about it has brought back some great memories and put Glasgow back on my mind soon. Well done *Scottish Banner* as I had heard nothing of this from any other source and the paper continues to keep us Scots informed and appreciate our homeland.

Helen Reed
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

The Broons



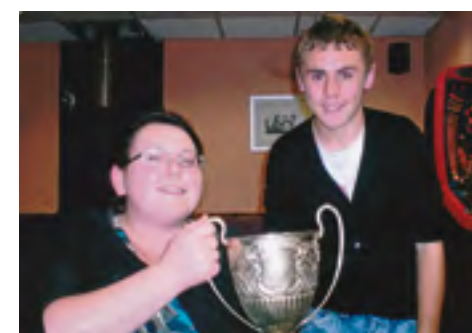
As I was reading my *Scottish Banner* which I enjoy, I came across an article in the *Scot Speak* page. I have a *Broons* and *Oor Wullie* book in mint condition, also a *Broons* book in average condition.

I wonder if they were of any value, if so anyone interested?
Ian Carruth
11/11-13 Primary School Court
Maroochydore, Queensland
4558, Australia

Burns Night

Dear Valerie,
How well I remember those Burns Nights in your restaurant in Canada. I occasionally had a minor part to play when 'Rabbie' would ask for a volunteer from the audience. We all have highlights in our lives, and I can tell you that these great times were some of mine. Your wee paper (not so wee anymore) goes from strength to strength and I am so proud to be a subscriber. Lang may YOUR lum reek Valerie, and enjoy your Burn's Nicht on the 25th! I'll ha'e a wee dram in our memory!
Baxter Henderson
Aspendale Gardens, Victoria
Australia

Shinty



Please find enclosed a photograph of Laura MacDonald of Tombo Crossing, Victoria, The Shinty Cup and the captain of the winning shinty team taken at Spean Bridge Commando Hotel in the autumn of 2008 in Scotland. Laura, then a nursing sister in London accompanied me to visit the graves of our ancestors who lay rest in the Kilmovale Churchyard. We spent some time with them and that night in the old family inn, we had an *Outlander* experience when the group of happy players, shinty supporters and families burst in holding the silver cup. We were invited to join the celebrations and were given a history of shinty plus a tasting of an ancient malt from The Shinty Cup and good wishes for the future.

N Casey
Glen Iris, Victoria
Australia

SENT TO OUR FACEBOOK OR TWITTER PAGES

(Send us your photos or letters via social media)



Loch na h-achlaise at sunrise last week and only -5.
Carolynn Wilson
Scotland



George Buchanan
West Peoria, IL
United States