

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 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.

Robert Burns Club of Camperdown hosts Burns Clubs of the Pacific Rim



The fledgling Robert Burns Club of Camperdown hosted the Burns Clubs of the Pacific Rim for their annual conference from September 29th to October 1st. The conference was attended by President Royden Sommerville and his wife Lee from New Zealand and delegates from Australia. The Friday night dinner was held at Lake Edge cafe overlooking the shore line of Lake Purrumbete. Saturday morning was business and after lunch there was a tour of the property "Renny Hill" owned currently by Clark & Judy Roycroft.

That had been the property of the Taylor family who donated the Burns statue by John Greenshields to the town of Camperdown. A ceilidh was put on the Saturday night with The Likely Celts, Andy Richardson, Peter Daffy and local band Tuniversal. Sunday morning there was a tour of Stewart & Bev McArthur's property "Menningort" and finally to send our guests on the way a barbecue at John & Carolyn Menzies property Wuorong.

Cheers,
Chris Maguire
Camperdown, Victoria
Australia

Scottish Weather: Winter

We'll come again, perhaps at a different season. I'd like to taste a Scottish winter—just a little—just once. I'd like to be here among some villagers during a lighter snow, visit a pub with them and share a glass or two of The Famous Grouse, then walk out to an easy wind and the ground still bare in spots. I'd want to feel a few gritty flakes strike my skin, then watch them skid across an icy spot

with a soft, whispery, sleety sound, and hear in local tones that ancient word "skift" which my dad used when I was a child, and which hasn't come to mind in sixty years.

Twice a reunion, that moment—his soft Virginia voice in my ear and this harsh word from another forebear who brought with him a few clothes, an axe, and a crazy-quilt language patched together from a dozen lands. "A skift of snow," I think to myself, and look ahead to home and winter, to a cold day and a few grains of icy snow rasping across the frozen ground, when I can whisper in my father's voice, Now that's a skift of snow.

David Black
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Chief John MacArthur leads Clan on Edinburgh Tattoo opening night



Photo: Chief John MacArthur of that Ilk meeting HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, the Earl & Countess of Wessex with daughter Lady Louise Windsor. Photo courtesy of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Clan Arthur, along with Clan Murray, were invited to appear on the 4th August opening night of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Clan members from across the globe met at a pre-tattoo supper held at the New Club on Princes Street hosted by Clan Murray. Afterwards we walked from Princes Street to the castle where we assembled and were ushered into the Great Hall for a welcome prior to the event. We were then mustered into lines and given our marching instructions. The clans formed columns behind Chief John MacArthur of that Ilk, and Michael of Tullibardine, Chieftain of Clan Murray and we were led onto the castle esplanade by the Atholl Highlanders and their pipe band. The columns halted at a prearranged point awaiting the arrival of the guests of honour. Two limousines drove onto the esplanade and our clan heads were introduced to HRH Prince Edward of Wessex, his wife Sophie and their two children, and His Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco. The clan heads then shared a Gaelic toast with the two Princes. When the opening ceremony finished, the clan members found their seats in the stands while Chief John and his wife, Lorraine enjoyed the show in the luxury and prestigious company of the Royal Box. We were very lucky to see the Orchestre des Carabiniers du Prince au Monaco as they only performed at the Tattoo on this one night.

The following day Saturday, 5th of August, the International Clan Arthur Gathering was held at the very historically significant Masonic Lodge in Canongate off the Royal Mile. We toured the Temple, and heard the most impressive organ masterfully played by Malcolm McCrae, the Lodge organist. The building dates back to the 1700s and on the top floor it houses the historical painting of Robert Burns, exalted to a companion in the Holy Royal Arch Degree in May 1787. A special guest at this

function was Dr Joseph Morrow, King of Arms who sported a MacGregor tartan kilt, a clan that is close to his heart. Both the Lord Lyon and Chief John are Freemasons.

If you would like to know more about Clan Arthur, please contact carolmcarthur18@gmail.com
Carol McArthur Budlong
High Commissioner, MacArthur Society in Australia

Scottish Banner trip to Scotland winner



We are back from our whirlwind tour of Scotland! None of which would have been possible if not for *the Scottish Banner* and Qatar Airways. Who would have thought that simply entering a competition would be so rewarding? It was a truly amazing experience. "A dream come true" for my wife Helena and I.

We stayed in Glasgow for 4 nights to check out my home town and catch up with some of my relatives that I haven't seen in almost 36 years. It was great to explore such a vibrant city and sample all the culinary and liquid treats on offer. We hired a car at Glasgow Airport and headed to Gourrock. We caught the car ferry over to Dunoon and drove from there to Inveraray, then on to Oban where we stayed for the night.

The next day we drove to Glencoe, then on to Fort William. We stayed in Caol for 2 nights which allowed us the time to have a better look around the area. We went on the Jacobite Steam Train to Mallaig, via the Glenfinnan Viaduct and back again to Fort William. On our way out, we drove to Invergarry and to see Eilean Donan Castle on our way to stay on the Isle of Skye for the next 3 nights. We based ourselves in Portree which allowed us to explore the island from one end to the other. Some of the highlights were the Armadale Castle, Clan Donald Centre & the Museum of the Isles in the south. The Old Man of Storr, The Museum of Island Life & Flora MacDonald's Grave in the north.

From Skye we headed towards Drumnadrochit to see Urquhart Castle and the Loch Ness Centre & Exhibition on the way to Inverness, where we stayed for 2 nights. We went to Culloden and their Visitors Centre, then on to Elgin, Harlaw and Aberdeen for 2 nights. We went to Kincardineshire to see where my ancestors came from, before heading to Dunnottar Castle, Montrose, Arbroath, Dundee, Perth, then to Doune for the night. While there, we went to Doune Castle, Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument and then stayed in Falkirk for the next 2 nights. We went on the Falkirk Wheel and to see the Kelpies (day & night) Linlithgow Palace, Blackness Castle, Midhope Castle and around to Culross via the new Queensferry Crossing, which satisfied Helena's interest in seeing sites from *Outlander*.

The next day we dropped off the car at Edinburgh Airport (I had managed to clock

over 1000 miles in the 2 weeks we had the car), and from there we caught the tram into Edinburgh City Centre. Accommodation for our final 3 nights in Scotland was provided by The Spires Serviced Apartments Edinburgh, located on Hanover St. It's an ideal location for sightseeing around the city as it's so central to everything. On the 1st day in Edinburgh we took our complementary Rabbie's Tour around the old & new city. It was ideal for seeing the sights and provided us with a great way to decide which areas were most suitable for us to visit the following day. We went to Edinburgh Castle the following morning, then down to see Greyfriars Bobby and explore the city. That night we went on the Mercat Tours "Ghost & Ghouls Tour" (also a part of our prize). It was a great way to hear about the history around and under the streets of Edinburgh from our knowledgeable and entertaining guide Steve.

As you can see, we packed a heap of great experiences into our short trip around Scotland and when we left in the wee small hours of our final day, hauling our extra luggage to the tram to the airport, we realised just how lucky we were to have had such a fun adventure together. So I'd just like to say another huge thank you to everyone who made it possible.

Scott Rodger
Victoria, Australia

Ed note: Congratulations once again Scott and you sure packed in so much of Scotland. We are thrilled you had such a great experience.

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



Send your photos or letters via social media

Autumnal Glencoe at Loch Achtriochtan.



Carolynn Wilson
Scotland

Wallace Monument



Thanks *Scottish Banner*-what a great paper. Thought you may like this photo I took last time I was in Scotland.
Marcus MacLeod
Ashtonfield, New South Wales
Australia