

# 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?

## Robert Burns Statue - Fund Raising Effort



I include an article on an evening held at the Caledonian Ground Dunedin in September 1885 as a fund raiser for the proposed construction of the Robbie Burns Statue. It may be nice for your readers to gain an insight into the fact that people could still enjoy a fun occasion even in those far far distant days. Unfortunately, as a fundraiser the evening proved a total disaster.

The following is an extract from *Cabers and Ceilidhs the 150 Year History of the Caledonian Society of Otago* published in 2012:

In 1879 the idea of a Statue of Robert Burns for Dunedin was first mooted. It was widely expected that the Caledonian Society would take the lead in the movement but no-one approached the Society and the Society didn't volunteer. The Caledonian Ground however was involved with one of the fund raising efforts. This was a Grand Fete by Electric Light which took place in the Evening of Friday September 25<sup>th</sup> 1885.

It turned out to be a total fiasco. For a start the weather was atrocious with a cold wind howling across the ground. Then it was found that the new-fangled Electric Light wasn't the success that had been anticipated. The first item on the

programme was a Highland Fling which, according to the *Otago Daily Times* was not watched with any great amount of interest for the all sufficient reason that it was Danced in the Dark.

Next came a Bicycle Race of which the Spectators saw about as much as they did of the Dancing. After the Race the Light burned brightly for a while and the Footballers who were to play in the Match English vs Scotch entered the arena. The Light then went out. The game itself was shrouded in darkness and the result is shrouded in mystery. The crowd swarmed over the ground and everything was disorder. A number of young folk danced on the green to the inspiring strains of the Bagpipes while other more frolicsome spirits secured a long rope and chased one of our worthy City Fathers in the vain attempt to entangle him in its coils. The rope used for the tug of war was then seized by the crowd but the Committee interfered. After some rough pulling about the Police were called to their assistance and the crowd gradually dispersed.

The Statute Committee later wrote to the Caledonian Society enclosing a statement of the proceeds of the Fete which, in fact, resulted in a loss. The Society gave a 10 Pound donation.

Scottish activities here have ground to a complete halt and when "normal service" will resume is still anyone's guess.

*John Stinson  
Christchurch, New Zealand*

**Ed note:** Thank you for sharing this and what a wonderful city Dunedin is, and wonderful to see Mr Burns still proudly watching over The Octagon.

Cameron Highlanders. If anyone is interested in the history of the regiment they can go to their Facebook page - New York 79<sup>th</sup> Highlanders (Cameron) C o. D.



*Jon Evans  
USA*



### Support the Scottish Banner

If people who follow *the Scottish Banner* are serious about enjoying all things Scottish and in particular, what is happening in Australia and around the world, please support *the Scottish Banner*. Like all print media, they need our support to get through this difficult period. It is the best Scottish newspaper in the world by a long margin.

Let's keep it this way by becoming a subscriber.

Thank you in advance.  
*Frank McGregor  
Hobart, Tasmania  
Australia*

**Ed note:** Thank you very much for the kind comment Frank. Times are challenging and a way people can help us is by purchasing their own copy (print or digital) by subscription or at retail points or encouraging friends and family to do so. Following us on social media also is a great help!

### Skye surfing



My friend I have been loving enjoying most single malts for 50 years and I grew up surfing in New Zealand and spending 9 of first 24 years at Waipu and competed at the Highland Games there for 20 years. There is one thing I have never seen that I would like to and that is surfing on the coast of the Isle of Skye. That would really be a great day for surfing.

Friends of mine were surfing ice floes calving off Canada but that is an easy game, off Skye in winter is man's game. Summer is good for the Jessies.  
*Philip Ballnz  
Auckland, New Zealand*

### Loved Scotland

I was so fortunate to spend about two weeks in your beautiful country of Scotland in the 70s. Spent time in Ft. William (could live there), Glen Coe, Inverness, Edinburgh. Absolutely loved it. Wish I could come back, but alas, it probably won't happen!

*Mark Tegtman  
Colorado, USA*

**Ed note:** Mark as Sean Connery said, never say never!

### Glasgow's Poet Laureate poem for Coronavirus

Glasgow's Poet Laureate has written a new poem for the city, reflecting on the impact of the coronavirus crisis. The Long Bench by Jim Carruth is a quietly evocative exploration of the emotions being felt across the community during these extraordinary times. Partly inspired by the parks for which Glasgow is famous, it touches on the poet's own feelings of temporary exile from the city where he works in the NHS, and on the universal experience of being separated from friends, family and neighbours.

Carruth, who has been Poet Laureate for Glasgow since 2014, wrote the poem while observing social distancing.

### The Long Bench

*For the times ahead  
when we will be  
as if at either end  
of the long bench  
where distance kept  
is love's measure  
and death dances  
the space between  
when words alone  
are not enough  
and queued memories  
reach out to touch  
let longing be a store  
of nut and seed  
that grows each day  
in strange hibernation  
readying for its end -  
the sharing of the feast.*

*Jim Carruth  
Glasgow, Scotland*

### The 79<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders

I have a connection to the New York 79<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders an American Civil War Regiment through my great - great uncle General Sherman who was their commanding general. Here I am wearing a replica of the uniform of the New York 79<sup>th</sup>

## FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

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### The Royal Mile



Worth venturing into some of the close's on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.  
*ShutterBug Shots  
Scotland*

### Peek a Moo



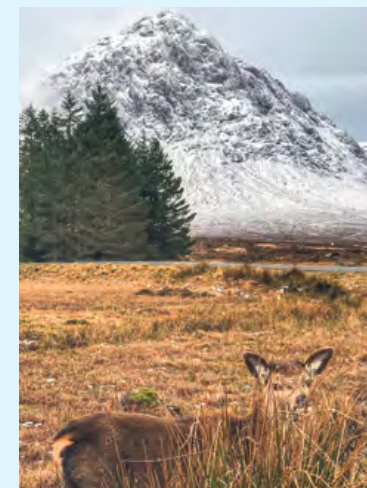
One of my old favourites, Peek a Moo at Stirling Castle.  
*Charles McGuigan  
Scotland*

### Loch Achray



You do realise, on reflection, that Scotland is utterly beautiful. Protect her.  
*Gary Chittick  
Scotland*

### Glencoe locals



Hello from Glencoe.  
*Robert Gibb  
Scotland*