

SCOT POURRI

This month we offer a selection of some of the messages we have received from across the globe regarding the recent passing of Scottish Banner founder, publisher and editor-Valerie Cairney.



Remembering Valerie Cairney



Dear Sean,
With warm memories and sadness, I read your editorial comments honouring your mother, Val Cairney. I had the good fortune of knowing Val for some 35 years. I met her as “wannabe” contributor to *the Scottish Banner* in 1985. I was already a fan of *the Banner* since its inception a decade earlier. However, being accepted and getting to know Val through my column and attending some Scottish and British events with her, I realized what a tour de force she was. Not only a successful business woman, but a marketing ambassador for Scotland and all things Scottish to a receptive audience of expats. First in Canada, then the U.S. and later Australasia. Every month she brought so many Scots a “wee bit o’ hame”. I was pleased to have occasionally appeared with Val at Highland Games she attended here in Canada. It was obvious that she had a natural ease with people whether it was a having a wee “blether” with a subscriber or mingling with a clan chief, Scottish politician or a television celebrity. She was open to anyone or anything that promoted Scottish culture. Val kept Scotland alive for more than one generation and will be truly missed but not forgotten. I am glad to have known her and so very pleased to be able to have called her my friend.
Ron Dempsey Ontario, Canada

I am shocked to hear from you that Valerie had passed away. When I first joined *the Banner*, I made a phone call and thought that I was talking to a receptionist. I was taken aback when I mentioned that I used to watch John Cairney, (Robert Burns) on TV and the lady on the other end, said “John is my brother -in- law. I am Valerie Cairney “ I was stunned. Here I am talking the ‘Top Gun’ of *the Scottish Banner*. Needless to say, I am still a member. She was a lovely lady.
*Jack Melville
Winnipeg, Canada*

The Scottish diaspora community has lost a giant with the passing of Valerie Cairney, founder of *the Scottish Banner*. Though we never met, Valerie was kind enough to agree to guest on my podcast, *Under The Tartan Sky*, in its first month of existence back in 2015. I was unknown to her, the podcast was unknown then and had no audience to speak of, but I think she sensed that I shared a passion for Scotland, just as she did, and so was willing to help me get started.

It is our passion for Scotland, whether by blood or heartfelt affinity, that unites all who read the *Scottish Banner*. As the USA’s Global Ambassador for dotScot Registry, the online domain for Scots around the world, we are fortunate to have the paper continue, under her son Sean’s guidance and as Valerie’s legacy. What a wonderful gift she has given us all.

*Glen Moyer
Producer/Host Under The Tartan Sky
USA Global Ambassador for dotScot
Registry/dotScot Domains
USA*

Our community has lost a devoted advocate. RIP Valerie.

*Clan Currie Society - Learned Kindred of Currie
USA*

Great newspaper both here in Scotland and keeping overseas Scots well informed. Valerie was always pleasant and had time to chat when attending the Scotland Trade Fair in Glasgow.

*Coll Maclean
Scotland*



Val Cairney brought us so many heartwarming stories, recognition of performances and people, and helped so many people

with help finding their roots, their favorite recipes, and making friends. Her work stands the test of time, and is a wonderful legacy of a woman who cared so much about her ancestry, and helped those of us in the Celtic community learn more. *The Banner* is her legacy, and her warmth shines right through.

On a personal note, Val and her son Sean have so very kindly supported the pipe band’s work and helped us share our stories with their readership all over the world – and meeting her was like meeting a dear friend for the first time – and their work will continue, and we will always remember Val, a lady who cared, and shared. She was just fabulous!

*Bethany Bissaillon
Sons of Scotland Pipe Band
Ottawa, Canada*

Wonderful lady who dubbed me “Mother of Tartan Day” in her paper. We met in Toronto at Castle Loma when I received my award. She was so nice and bouncy personality. She’ll have the pipes playing in Heaven that is for sure.

*Jean Watson
Nova Scotia, Canada*

Dear Sean,
We are so sorry to hear of your mother’s passing. A great lady with a great initiative and love of Scottish heritage and culture. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and the family.
*Malcolm Buchanan
Scottish Australian Heritage Council
Canberra, Australia*

On behalf of the Chief, President, executive committee, affiliated and associate members of the Victorian Scottish Union, I extend our deepest condolences to Sean and *the Scottish Banner* family on the loss of Valerie, mother, colleague and dear friend.
*Jan Macdonald, Secretary
Victorian Scottish Union
Australia*

Rest in peace Valerie. Valerie and *the Scottish Banner* had been very influential in my personal Scottish heritage. I’m very grateful to her, and she will be dearly missed.
*Gary Henderson
Niagara Falls, New York
USA*

So sorry for your loss. On behalf of the Scottish American Society of Dunedin and my work with the Dunedin Highland Games, I offer our sincere condolences. She leaves quite a legacy in Florida.
*Joan Brennan McHale
Florida, USA*

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of Valerie Cairney, a great lady and mother of *the Scottish Banner* publisher and editor Sean Cairney. Valerie, along with husband Jim, came up with the idea of a Scottish publication in the 1970s. Under Valerie’s stewardship, and now that of son Sean, *the Scottish Banner* has helped to bring together the global Scottish community with her love of Scottish heritage and culture.

Clan Cameron in Australia wishes Sean and the family our sincere condolences.
Clan Cameron in Australia

Our condolences to all at *the Scottish Banner* and her family.
*Cobourg Highland Games
Cobourg, Ontario
Canada*

Sincere Sympathies to all. I remember the very first *Scottish Banner* and what a legacy Val has left for many to enjoy. RIP.
*Anne McDonald
Canada*



I received the latest edition of *the Scottish Banner* earlier today thank you and, like many, I was very sad to learn

of the passing of your mother, Valerie Cairney. Knowing the impact that Valerie had on many such as myself who only met your mother in passing circumstances on one occasion, I can only express my deep condolences to you and other members of the family on the very sad news of the death of your mother. I met your mother briefly during her visit for ‘Bundanoon is Brigadoon’ in 2011.
*Stewart Campbell
Canberra, Australia*

Valerie’s legacy is quite something for us to cherish. For many years *the Scottish Banner* was one of the only ways for Scots to reach ex-pats and the fact it still is a leader in expat Scottish affairs is a credit to Valerie, over four decades later. Valerie was a trail blazer in many ways, especially as a woman in publishing in the 1970’s and making it so far. Scotland owes Val so much for all she has done, and I hope she knows the impact she has had on so many.
*Carol MacPherson
Glasgow, Scotland*

Sorry to hear of Val’s passing. She did a story about my radio show (*A Little Breath of Scotland*) in the very first edition of *the Scottish Banner*. Had many happy times broadcasting from the original British Show’s in Toronto.
*Denis Snowdon
Ontario, Canada*

Such sad news to hear about the passing of Val Cairney. I enjoyed her warmth and passion for Scotland and this fine publication. I was not lucky enough to have met Val but felt I knew her over the years as she shared her views and life with us. I am so sure she put in so much hard work to keep the paper growing and offering us, her readers, a little bit of not only home but a great sense of community. I hope leaders of the Scottish community not only here in New Zealand but also across the ex-pat world give her the much deserved nod she has earned, as she has kept the Scottish fires burning in thousands of people and likely benefitted many Scottish organisations by doing so.
*Ron Bruce
Wellington, New Zealand*

On behalf of the committee we would like to pass our sincere condolences to the family of Valerie Cairney, founder, editor and publisher of *the Scottish Banner*. Valerie was a past Chieftain of our gathering and will be sorely missed in the Scottish community.
*Bundanoon Highland Gathering Inc.
Australia*

Very sad news about the passing of a giant in the global Scottish cultural movement. She was a great friend to the Federation. Deepest condolences to the Cairney family at this time.
*Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia, Canada*

Sending love and light to Valerie’s family, and to all who love her. She has built a solid legacy that will continue to have a ripple effect around the world for years to come. Xx
Karen Piccirillo

Right with you and your family, Sean! Your Mom was an amazing and inspiring woman! What a massive legacy she has left behind!
*Tyler Fry
Houston, Texas
USA*