

# 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?

## Remembering Valerie Cairney

As soon as I opened the paper and saw the beautiful photo of Valerie- I guessed that this was a farewell. What an amazing lady she was- so inspirational, such energy and dedication to keeping all Scots in touch and fully informed of all things Scottish worldwide. What a vision she had in starting this wonderful and much-loved paper!

Val, my pal, the times we shared at Ringwood Highland Games were so special. Val invited me to come and stay and visit the Highland Games with her in the States. Sadly, I didn't manage to do this.

Val will always be remembered for her amazing ability to set up and continue publishing *the Scottish Banner* for so many years. With sincerest sympathy, Sue Macleod OAM North Ringwood, Victoria Australia

**Ed note: Thank you Sue for your kind note and to the many letters, emails and messages received from readers across the world. We simply cannot publish each one due to the volume received. We are so thankful to our kind readers for such an incredible outpouring of support.**



## Scotland's first oil rush

As a member of the St. Andrew's Society of Montréal, I have to privilege of reading your magazine which I enjoy very much.

Nick Drainey did a fine article (*Scotland's first oil boom, the Scottish Banner*, November, 2020) on the Scottish oil boom near West Calder which caught my eye. As it turns out, my recent family research led me to the mining community of Oat Bank, which no longer exists. It turns out that my Grandmother Esther Martin was born there in 1888, her father William being a shale oil miner. The family moved to Paisley later, perhaps because of a market downturn. Esther and my grandfather David Gold McAuslan immigrated to Montréal in 1920.

Coincidentally my brother David Alexander McAuslan did his PhD in Geology at the University of Edinburgh. He had teaching responsibilities for undergraduates and they visited the West Lothian mining sites on occasion. They 'skied' down the bings in work boots. My brother had no idea of his family connection to the area, but did tell me that the miners were no ordinary grunts, but highly skilled professionals. Yours aye, Peter McAuslan Sutton, Quebec Canada

## Heaven's Stairs

Steps seemed to have no risers and each was easy to mount, yet as each step was discovered my eyes would cast about.

Sound of the cast of heaven was ringing in my ears, and the angels playing the harp was smoothing all my fears.

Yet still my mind was turning backwards to the sound that pibroch made, as my earthly self was lowered slowly to my grave.

The stairs reached a turning a shelter for the forlorn, I took to standing waving to the country I was from.

Heaven lay before me as the angels sang their songs, my soul still called for the heaven, that country where I was born.... Scotland

Kit Duddy facebook.com/kitspoems

## Scottish comfort



First up to all the Cairney family and relatives I wish to pass on my deepest sympathies on the passing of Valerie, she made it possible for all of us Scots to keep in touch with our homeland no matter where in the world we were. R.I.P Valerie Cairney.

I proudly wish to send to you photographs of a comforter that a very close friend of mine, painstakingly and with a lot of patience and love, handmade. Shari is a young boilermaker/welder by trade and I once came across her in the workshop where we work and she was actually marking the cover on the floor in order to be able to have the exact measurements, she informed me that she was fabricating a steel frame for a job at work and because when I saw the initial diagram on the floor she had only just completed the rectangle and the diagonals I did not give it a second thought.

Then on my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday about 3 months later Shari presented me with the best present ever, to say the least, I was shocked when I uncovered the Scottish flag which is on one side whilst on the underside there is the Scottish thistles. Since then every time I put it on my bed, I remember my homeland and my parents who made a courageous decision to emigrate to Australia in 1970 with their 7 children.

Our family at the time was the largest family to emigrate and live in Whyalla, South Australia, since then my parents have passed away and myself and my brothers and sisters are scattered all over Australia, resulting in having free accommodation practically in every state in Australia (the Scotsman in me likes this).

I would love to see my the photos of my comforter if possible in *the Scottish Banner*, which in one way would thank my friend for her awesome present and as you can tell I am very proud to be Scottish born.

Willie Rouse Mandurah, Western Australia

## Ring of Brodgar



On our recent visit to the wonderful Ring of Brodgar my husband and I were transported back in time, imagining the scene when ancient people gathered there! I looked up and saw a woman wearing an AFL St. Kilda beanie. You are never too far from home!

Win Johnston Australia

## Kings, Castles & "Durty" Wee Rascals

Your article reminded me of my days living in Pollok our family moved from the Gorbals (Errol St ) to Meiklerig Crescent. It was great having front/back garden, I worked at Pollok Post Office as a telegram boy and got to know most of the area, including Cornalee Rd. I'm glad we moved to Pollok I got married to the girl next door 65 years ago and still going strong!!!

Anyway Jim a big thank you for bringing back some memories I enjoy reading *the Scottish Banner*, just your page is a wee bit special !!

Charlie Milligan Mt Martha, Victoria Australia

## Bagpipes

Hello, I am an illustrator from Madrid. Óscar Cañero Madrid, Spain



## Clan help

Greeting from Central Illinois USA. I am looking for any information in regards to a Clan for the surname(s) of the following: Waugh, Wauchope, Waughe, Walge, Wach, Walcht. From what I have found out on the internet the Waugh's are from the Roxburghshire area. I appreciate any information that can be passed along. My email address is waugh@gcctv.com Charlie Waugh Illinois, USA

## Clan MacDonald

I did a DNA test and I have origins from Scotland (Argyll & Bute and Orkney), Ireland and Norway (I think it corresponds to Orkney), then from my research I discovered DNA matches with McDonald's with the same origins as me, there is one with whom I share 10 DNA segments in total 50cM.

The only thing I know is that it comes from the maternal side, I never knew my maternal family.

Does that mean I'm a descendant of the MacDonald clan?

Regards, Vanessa Itey

## FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Send us your photos or letters via social media



### The Act of Proscription



In 1782, The Act of Proscription, is repealed and the kilt and wearing of tartans comes into more general use and ends the 35 year ban that resulted in countless Scots being sent to the colonies. *The Society of John De Graeme Scotland*

### Stirling Castle



A fine view from Stirling Castle. Robert Gibb Scotland

### Angus twilight



The summer sky alive in #Angus. Garry Chapman at GTC Photography Scotland

### The Kelpies



Show your support for the NHS. #nhsheroes #clapforNHS #clapforcarers and indeed #clapforallfrontlineworkers #clapforessentialworkers. *A View From My Camera Scotland*