

# 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?



## In Flanders Fields

By John McCrae, May 1915

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

The poem was written by a Canadian Medical Corps doctor, Major John McCrae, who was serving with a Field Artillery Brigade in Ypres. The death of one of his friends in May 1915, buried in the cemetery outside his dressing station, affected him severely and he wrote his poem as a way of expressing his anguish at the loss.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month in 1918, the guns of the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare during the First World War.

Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup> marks the 102<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Armistice which ended the First World War (1914–18).

Remember those who gave their lives in the two world wars and all who have died in combat since. Lest We forget.

### A message from Commander of Clan MacEwen



"If all goes according to plan, in June 2024 Clan MacEwen will have a Chief, for the first time since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. As Commander of the Clan I am required to seek out anyone who claims descent from our last Chief, Swene MacEwen (Swene was long considered to have died in the 1490s but his last certain communication - when he was in dire straits - was in 1433; his death probably occurred not long after that.) While it is surely unlikely that anyone will come forward with proof of descent, it is possible that someone considers him or herself a more suitable candidate for Chief than, well, than me. If this someone exists, please will they make themselves known to the Clan MacEwen Society as soon as possible so that we can get everything sorted before June 2024 which should witness one of the greatest days in the history of our wonderful, worldwide, talent-packed and in every way remarkable Clan, Clan MacEwen, 'The Clan That Plants Trees'. REVIRESCO!"

Commander of Clan MacEwen, Sir John R.H. McEwen Bt.  
[www.ClanMacEwen.com](http://www.ClanMacEwen.com)

### A lifetime's history

Epitaphs on graveyard headstones nowadays usually contain the name of the deceased, their relationship to family members and possibly half a dozen or so kind words to illustrate their qualities during life. But there is a headstone in the wee Perthshire village of Dunked that is quite unique as it more or less tells the entire life story of one of its inhabitants who lived to the ripe old age of 100 years. It is in memory of Margery Scott, who passed away on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1728 and reveals how much history can be witnessed in one lifetime. It reads as follows:

*Stop, passenger, until my life you read;  
The living may get knowledge from the dead.*

*Five times five years I liv'd a virgin life,  
Ten times five years I was a virtuous wife,  
Ten times five years a widow grave and chaste,  
Tir'd of the elements, I'm now at rest.*

*Betwixt my cradle and my grave were seen,  
Eight mighty kings of Scotland, and a queen.*

*Three commonwealths successively I saw;  
Ten times the subject rise against the law;  
And, which is worse than any civil war,  
A king arraign'd before the subjects' bar;  
Swarms of sectarians, hot with hellish rage,  
Cut off his royal head on open stage!*

*Twice did I see old prelacy pull'd down,  
And twice the cloak did sink beneath the gown,  
I saw the Stuart race thrust out; nay more,  
I saw our country sold for English ore;  
Our num'rous nobles, who have famous been,  
Sunk to the lowly number of sixteen.*

*Such desolations in my days have been;  
I have an end of all perfection seen.*

Craig Reilly  
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Ed note: Thank you Craig for sending this in, just proves why some of us just love reading headstones as you never know what you might find.**

### The Hebridean Baker



Thank you for a wonderful interview with the Hebridean Baker in the October issue of *the Banner*: I have been watching Coinneach's videos for much of the last year and absolutely love them and his calming energy and total love of Scotland. I am not much of a baker myself but have ordered his book in hopes I too can make a wee bit of Scotland in my kitchen. I love how Coinneach is so very relatable, he really comes across like a trusted old friend. Scotland has so many great ambassadors who do so much for this wonderful country.

I really enjoy all the stories and social media posts also from *the Scottish Banner*, so thank you to all that make this wonderful publication so enjoyable to read.

Jan Forbes-Taylor  
Arlington, Virginia  
USA

### Scottish paper banknotes



I was very disappointed to see that Scottish paper notes will not longer be accepted across Scotland (*Scottish paper £20 and £50 notes withdrawn from circulation, the Scottish Banner*, October, 2022). Like many over the 'Covid years' have been unable to return to Scotland and actually have a wee stash of them which I had hoped to use on my next visit. We are now looking to make the trip back for either 2023 or 2024 and like any good Scot would hate to throw away good money. Maybe my paper notes will be come a collectors item and be of more value than the amount printed on them?

I do enjoy my monthly *Scottish Banner*, it really does keep us up to date with so much and is read cover to cover by several people, and generations, of our household. Keep up the great work!

Chris Keady  
Wellington, New Zealand

**Ed note: Thanks for your letter Chris. Good news is Royal Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale and Bank of Scotland have all agreed that they will exchange their own paper £20 and £50 notes from non-customers up to the value of £250, provided that photographic I.D and you can 'update' your notes when you next get back.**

## FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



Sent to our Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts-send us your photos or letters via social media (#ScottishBanner or #TheBanner):

### Isle of Skye



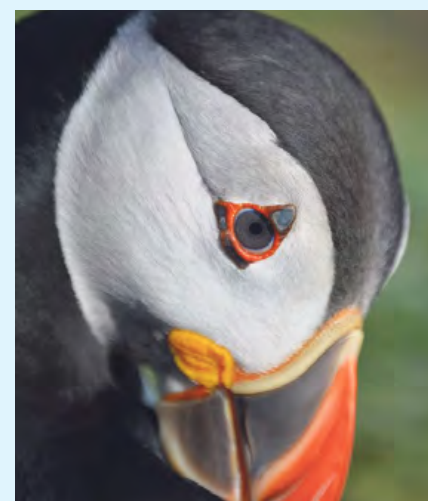
Sligachan Bridge through the arch on this iconic bridge on Skye.  
Ronald Stokes

### Edinburgh by night



Looking down Waterloo Place and Princes Street, Edinburgh.  
Paul Watt Photography

### Puffin



Puffins of Staffa.  
Debbie Neilson

### Bass Rock



Stunning day at Bass Rock.  
Mik Coia