

# 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?

## The Pride O' Luden Mains



Here is a Scots poem of mine which won the Allan Brownlee Quaich at Falkirk Writers Circle on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. At the meeting of Falkirk Writers Circle, the Allan Brownlee Quaich trophy was awarded by the Scottish poet Jim Carruth to Archibald Smith for his poem, *The Pride of Luden Mains*. Archie is better known for his short story books, *Tales of Bogles and Brownies*, and *A Cantraip of Tales* written under the name of Kennedy Smith.

### The Pride O' Luden Mains

By: Kennedy Smith

If ye gang doon by Luden's Lane  
Richt roon ahint Auld Jockie's hame,  
Just tak the pad ye wid ha' taen  
Doun by the brae  
An keep on gaun through glaur 'n rain  
Till Bottom Way.

For there you'll find, if ye tak tent,  
A smaw-bit mere the rains hae sent,  
A wee bit dub o' watter meant  
Fur slocken kye,  
Graced by a stane an' dark as Lent  
Placed there forbye.

And on this altar, aw in glory  
There wis a yin, so goes the story  
(And wha am I tae dout Red Rory?)  
A mass o' green;  
A muckle puddock sat in glory,  
Aw serene.

An' aw about a motley crew  
T'were Jessie, Maggs and - you know who!  
Plying their wares, some lassies do -  
Richt friendly lassies;  
Nae dout a day they'll come tae rue  
Ere this month passes.

The Laird - The Puddock - croaks and reigns  
An' roond about, his harem dames  
The mothers o' his tadpole bairns  
Wee shilpit froggies,  
Ken't as The Pride o' Luden Mains  
And feart by boggies.

Archie Smith  
Falkirk, Stirlingshire  
Scotland

**Ed note: Thanks Archie for sending us this and congratulations on your winning poem.**

Fire and Restoration: The castle has had its share of trials, including a devastating fire in 1715. However, it rose from the ashes through careful restoration efforts and remains an architectural marvel today. Dunnottar Castle stands not just as a symbol of Scotland's resilience but also as a testament to the enduring spirit of those who called it home. Explore the castle's hallowed halls and let history whisper its tales in your ear.

The Kilted Photographer  
Scotland

### Connect with Caledonia



I thoroughly enjoyed reading your November edition and was quite struck by the amazing front cover - showing such proud Scots honouring their traditions. I have read this issue from back to front and keep dipping into it for more. We Scots are spread across the globe, but we sometimes forget how amazing our culture really is, then I pick up a copy of *the Scottish Banner* and suddenly I become even more proud to be of Scottish blood! I absolutely love the Isle of Skye and really enjoyed the article on the Minginish Centenary Project taking place there, what a history which I was did not know about.

For those of us that live far from Scotland's shores it is a delight to connect with 'Caledonia' with *the Banner*, thank you for an excellent read!

Claire Duncan  
Christchurch, New Zealand

**Ed note: Thanks Claire for your kind comments and I am so glad to hear we help connect you to Scotland.**

### A life of pipes

My name is John Birkmyre Mills. I am 80 years old and was born in Dumbarton, 15 miles north of Glasgow. I played the pipes with a boy scout band, the Princess Louise Pipe Band, which was around since Queen Victoria's time, her daughter our patron. Dumbarton had two male pipe bands and one ladies pipe band. I went to the College of Piping in Glasgow and learned piobaireachd under Pipe Major D McLeod of Harris.

I played in the band from 1960-1966 when my grandfather sent me to Australia. My parents, sister and granny followed me two years later. My father was an English fisherman, who's boat was commandeered for Dunkirk. He was drafted into the navy and sent tout to Sydney as a labourer. I was three before he got home. I still play the pipes but don't run any hill races anymore. I bred Scottish Longhorn Cattle for twenty years and I still hunt deer. Queen Victoria sent the red deer to Queensland when she was told the animals here were slow moving.

John Mills  
Coffs Harbour, NSW  
Australia

PS: *The Cutty Sark* was built 500m from where I was born.

### Provan Hall



Thanks very much for publishing the article on Provan Hall (*Glasgow's Medieval Marvel*, *the Scottish Banner*, December, 2023). I absolutely love to learn of the so many incredible historic buildings Scotland has to offer. I get over to Scotland at least every other year and Glasgow is always on my list of places to visit, and I will be sure to make a trip to Provan Hall to soak up the history there, I must confess I was not aware of this historic building nor the story around it. It really is incredible buildings are still standing from hundreds of years ago, with so much modern construction likely never being able to match this feat. Scotland keeps surprising me and though I have likely visited over 15 times, it still is a place I can discover more each time. Sometimes I feel I have barely scratched the surface!

This is why *the Scottish Banner* is still such a valuable publication to those of us 'Scottishfiles', as it tells many people about the story of Scotland not found in mainstream media.

Wishing all the writers, staff and readers of *the Banner* worldwide 'A Guid New Year'.  
David Crowles  
Carmel, Indiana  
USA

**ED note: Enjoy your next visit to Scotland David and discovering Provan Hall.**

### Dunnottar Castle



Perched on the rugged cliffs of northeastern Scotland, Dunnottar Castle's history is a tapestry woven with courage, battles, and legendary tales.

Witness to Wars: Throughout the centuries, this fortress withstood sieges and attacks, most notably during the Scottish Wars of Independence. It was here that Sir William Wallace, the legendary Scottish knight, once laid siege to the castle, leaving an indelible mark on its storied past.

Royal Connections: The castle has also played host to royals, including Mary Queen of Scots. During her visit in 1562, she sought refuge within these walls after a stormy sea voyage, adding a royal chapter to Dunnottar's story.

Smugglers' Lair: In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Dunnottar became a haven for smugglers who took advantage of its hidden caves and treacherous coastline. It's said that contraband goods, including tea and brandy, were stashed away in the castle's secret chambers!

## FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

### The National Wallace Monument



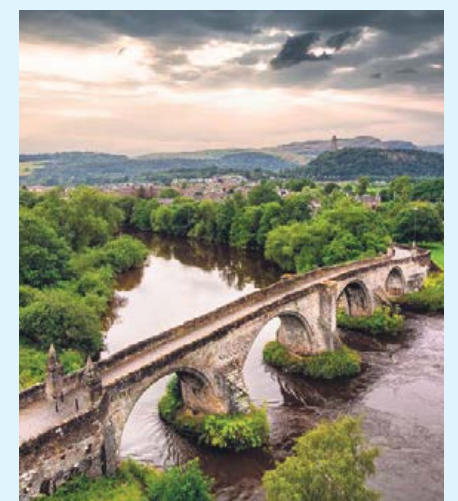
Perfect lighting at The National Wallace Monument, Stirling.  
The Kilted Photographer

### Glencoe



Stunning Glencoe.  
IG eadietam

### Stirling Old Bridge



High above the 15<sup>th</sup> century Stirling Old Bridge.  
IG @thecanonkid

### Isle of Lewis



Sea Stacks at Garry Beach, Tolsta, Isle of Lewis.  
Mik Coia