

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?

Celebrating 100 years of marriage



In the picture are David and Gladys Ricklis, Mark and Rhonda Wardlaw, and Bill and Marianne Elliott. David Ricklis is a drum major “extraordinaire” in the Washington, DC region. Both he and his wife Gladys were celebrating 50 years of marriage. Mark Wardlaw is the president of the Clan Wardlaw Association and his wife, Rhonda, was co-founder of the Mid Atlantic Scots 4 Tots charity. Bill Elliott is past president of Clan Elliot USA and his

wife, Marianne, is heavily involved with the St. Andrews Society of Mid Maryland and Quilts of Valor. Both couples were celebrating 25 years of marriage.

*Mark Wardlaw
Clan Wardlaw Association
USA*

Ed note: Congratulations to all for reaching these milestones and thanks for all your efforts in fostering your Scottish community.

Save Gaelic at Aberdeen University

You may have seen but our University currently has a consultation which if goes through will cut the language department. This will mean the Gaelic as well as other language departments will be lost. This will obviously be damaging to Gaelic and provide far less opportunity for students to study or learn Gaelic within Scotland, especially at degree level. It would take away 25% of the universities you can study Gaelic at and damage the Gaelic community of the North-East greatly.

Would you help support the #saveuolanguages campaign and draw attention to this issue. We need as much pressure as possible on the University to reverse this decision!

*Tapadh leibh,
Jordan
Aberdeen University Celtic Society
Scotland*

Canadian Blood Services

Here is an important story for Scottish expats living in Canada. Those who lived in Scotland or elsewhere in the UK and in the Irish Republic during the mad cow outbreaks will now be able to donate blood, which began in December. The Canadian Blood Services have updated their eligibility criteria and are excited to welcome more new donors who wish to make all the difference for patients across Canada.

If you've lived or spent time in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland or France during the 'mad cow disease' outbreak of the 1980s and 1990s, you may now be eligible to donate blood, plasma and platelets in Canada.

I am a recipient and in return I volunteer with the Canadian Blood Services.

Thank you,
*Brendan Read
Canada*

The Celtic Nations Monument



Thank you for reporting on *The inauguration of the Celtic Nations Monument (the Scottish Banner, December, 2023)*. I am a regular visitor to Brisbane and will be sure to visit this monument for myself. Like likely many readers I have blood lines that are not just Scottish but a healthy dose of Irish, Welsh and English flowing through me. If I had to choose, I would identify most as Scottish but I am so proud of my Celtic DNA mosaic. We Celts moved across lands in our history and few likely can today say there are just simply Scots, Irish or Welsh. As an Australian it is a very nice touch to know the Brisbane Celtic Stones are configured in the shape of the Southern Cross. Perhaps other *Scottish Banner* readers who come to Brisbane may also make a stop at this new monument which celebrates us.

I get *the Scottish Banner* each and every month and love the news, history and general comradery each issue brings. I also always learn something new and that is what life is all about.

Best wishes for the year ahead to all the writers, staff and readers across the world.

*Janice Mackean
Noosa, Queensland
Australia*

Braemar Castle



Braemar Castle is a historical gem located near the village of Braemar in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Constructed in 1628 by John Erskine, the Earl of Mar, as a hunting lodge, the castle has witnessed several pivotal moments in Scottish history. Initially built to assert the Earl's dominance over the rising power of the Farquharson's, it was replaced by an older structure that succeeded the 11th century Kindrochit Castle, strategically located for historic crossings of the Grampian Mounth.

Throughout its history, Braemar Castle has played various roles—a hunting lodge, fortress, garrison, and family home. The castle was involved in the Jacobite risings, first burned down in 1689 by John Farquharson, the Black Colonel, to

prevent its use by Government troops, and later, after the Earl of Mar's forfeiture following the 1715 Jacobite rising, it was purchased by the Farquharson's and used to garrison Hanoverian troops. The Castle's architecture features a five-storey L-plan structure with a star-shaped curtain wall and three-storey angle turrets, reflecting its storied past.

The Farquharson clan reclaimed the castle in 1831, turning it into a family home and even hosting Queen Victoria in 1834. The castle underwent extensive renovations in 1896 and has been occupied intermittently by the Farquharson family since then. Since 2006, the castle has been leased to the local community and is run by local charity, Braemar Community, with extensive restoration efforts underway to preserve its historic fabric.

For those who appreciate the blend of natural beauty and historical intrigue, Braemar Castle and the surrounding Aberdeenshire countryside offer an authentic Scottish experience, complete with stories of the past and a community-driven present.

*The Kilted Photographer
Falkirk, Scotland*

Family tartan

I wonder if anyone could point me in the direction of how to find out what my ancestors family tartan would have been?

Sherrie Sheemaker

E-mail: sherrie.hatter@gmail.com

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

Castle Stalker



Stillness around Castle Stalker.
The Kilted Photographer

Edinburgh Castle



Front door views at Edinburgh Castle.
Derek A Grist

Heilan Coo's



IG: eadietam

Edge O' The World



Going back in time in the Hebrides.
Mik Coia