

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?

Brisbane's Standing Stones



Here's a wee poem, one year on from the inauguration of the Celtic Nations monument 'Brisbane's Standing Stones' at

Auchenflower, we now have the inaugural Brisbane Celtic Festival there with the Standing Stones as the backdrop. The festival celebrates the cultural traditions of Scotland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Galicia, and Asturias, post covid it has been such a big effort to put these events together for the organisers, so looking forward to seeing my fellow Scots there for a blether. I hope you enjoy my wee poem paying tribute to our shared heritage through the stones.

*The Celtic Stones of Brisbane, in Bonnie Auchenflower
Reach toward the Southern Sky, with all their craggy power
Yet rooted in dear Mother Earth, like our stones of yesteryear
And carried as a vision, in our Elder's hearts so dear*

*A monument to our kith and kin, and their footsteps to this land
And in communion with her custodian sons, who walked her ancient sands
Emblazoned like the Southern Cross, beneath the stars came hither
Standing proud majestically, they're cast as cosmic mirror*

*A gathering place of song from heart, of dance, of pipe, of drums
Of ancient tales and customs, from Australia's Celtic sons
In homage to their father's toil, enduring bold attrition
And remembrance of their fortitude, their honour and traditions*

*So come along and close your eyes and let your troubles go
Feel their reverence, feel their love, feel their celestial flow
And slip into their dreamtime, their past eternal glory
The standing stones of Brisbane, and Australia's Celtic story*

Andy Heaney - Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Ed note: Thank you Andy for your poem on these great new monuments to Celtic Australians.

Alan Cumming



Thank you for the article on Alan Cumming (*Alan Cumming-Living the High Life, the Scottish Banner, October, 2024*). Alan is one of my favourite actors and

he is such a chameleon of an artist with so many roles, he is certainly not one to be stereotyped. I loved him in *The Traitors* and he was clearly a cut above those contestants and was great to see him in tartan finery accepting the Emmy this year. And though many will know him from the big and small screen I really think it his live shows that really show his talents. Alan appears to be one that has not conformed and made his own rules, which I love. He clearly loves, like so many of us, Scotland and is a great ambassador for the Scottish arts scene.

Scotland is the land of my ancestors, and I am so very proud to be a daughter of Scotia.

**Jan Muir
Boston, Massachusetts
USA**

The Kelpies



I really enjoyed reading your interview with Andy Scott (*Celebrating 10 years of The Kelpies, the Scottish Banner, August, 2024*) and his amazing creation of The Kelpies. I finally got to visit these

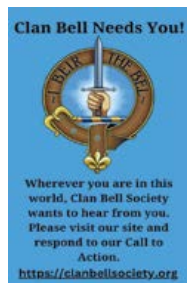
amazing structures this year and wow what an impact they have as you approach them.

I had seen countless pictures and videos of them but for me none did them justice until pulling up in my car to see them in all their might. I also enjoyed reading about some of Andy's other great works of art dotted around Scotland and will be sure to visit them on future trips. I am a bit of a traditionalist, but this modern art is so impressive and something future generations will undoubtedly enjoy. I am sure, and hope, Andy's work will also inspire other artists and local governments to take on such projects as no doubt they bring local pride and visitors, like me!

The Scotland has heritage and historic sites in spades and that is why many want to go there, but these modern icons are really a great asset to the tourist trail and congratulations to Mr Scott and the whole team behind The Kelpies.

**Jen Grant
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada**

Calling all Bells and Bell descendants-Your Clan needs you



Your voice is needed to demonstrate that Clan Bell is worthy of taking its rightful place among the many time-honored clans of Scotland. Clan Bell is referred to as an armigerous clan, or in simplest terms a clan without a current chief.

William "Redcloak" Bell, who died approximately 1628, is generally recognized as the last chief of our name. The chiefship of Clan Bell has remained dormant since then. To aid in the public's understanding of these matters, the Court of the Lord Lyon

published a Guidance Note pertaining to the chiefship of a clan or family. We encourage Bells everywhere to give this document a thorough read and familiarize themselves with the processes involved. In June 2019, a Bell Family Convention was held in Gretna Green, Scotland, to select a candidate for the position of commander. Having an individual named to this position is an important step for Clan Bell as it would help us remedy the dormancy of our clan chiefship. Unfortunately, that 2019 meeting did not produce a suitable outcome.

In his subsequent decision on the matter, the Lord Lyon opted not to name a commander and stated several reasons why he felt Clan Bell was not yet ready for this step, namely that insufficient canvassing was performed in relation to the appointment of a commander or who that commander should be. Only 16 votes were cast, with 13 of them coming from North America. As part of his decision, the Lord Lyon deferred selection of a commander for the Name of Bell for a period of three years. After that, the clan could resubmit its petition for consideration. Clan Bell Society began operations shortly after this with our launch in January 2020. Since that time we have been working to bring Bells together, raise the profile of our clan, and lay down a solid foundation upon which to build. Now entering our fourth year, we have taken great strides toward this end, but there is much work yet to be done.

While the prescribed three-year deferment has passed, holding another Bell Family Convention at this time would be premature. If Clan Bell wants to be successful in its next attempt, we simply must get the word out. In a recent meeting, the board members of Clan Bell Society discussed this topic and a plan was devised to better reach Bells all around the world. As part of our outreach efforts, we need to first establish majority agreement on the need for a commander. Once we have established agreement in significant numbers, we can move forward with the process of selecting a suitable candidate for the position of commander, and then submit this individual's credentials to the Court of the Lord Lyon for approval. A commander's duties would include identifying all viable candidates for the chiefship and aiding in the preparation of their petitions to the Court of the Lord Lyon, as well as representing Clan Bell's interests at the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs. If no viable candidate for chief can be identified within a prescribed period of time, there is a pathway for the commander to become chief, but this would also require approval from the Court of the Lord Lyon.

Wherever you are in this world, Clan Bell Society wants to hear from you. Kindly send us a note below with your name, general location, email address, and thoughts on this endeavor. Your voice matters and will go a long way toward achieving this goal.

**Please visit: www.clanbellsociety.org/call-to-action
Clan Bell Society
USA**

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

Edinburgh



The Royal Scots Greys Statue on Princes Street in Edinburgh, with the beautiful Assembly Hall building in the background.
J T Photography Scotland

The Leadhills and Wanlockhead Railway



The Leadhills and Wanlockhead Railway-This narrow gauge railway operates between Scotland's highest villages, Leadhills and Wanlockhead.
Derek A Grist

Rannoch Moor



A Rannoch Moor sunset...
eadietam

Crail Harbour



Colourful Crail Harbour, Fife.
Fly - Caledonia