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Volume 48 - Number 6

### \*Scottish Banner

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The Banner Says...

# Scotland's Winter Solstice: A celebration of dark and light



by Sean Cairney

o matter what part of the world you find yourself in during December, this month will bring an extra element of light with Christmas and Hogmanay celebrations across the world. If you are however in Scotland, North America or across the Northern Hemisphere you will be experiencing the darkest, and possibly coldest, days of the year with the winter solstice. The word solstice formed by combining the Latin words sol for 'sun' and sistere for 'to stand still' and marks the shortest day of light of the year when half of the Earth is tilted the farthest away from the sun. Meanwhile in the Southern Hemisphere the Earth is titled towards the sun, creating the longest day of the year with thoughts of white Christmas reserved for days at a white, and warm, beach.

### New beginnings

In Scotland though the winter solstice (taking place this year on Sunday December 21st at 15:03 GMT) brings not even eight hours of daylight and has for thousands of years been a day of celebration and ritual. Our Celtic ancestors were ruled by the seasons and the shortest day of the year was celebrated as a time of renewal with food, fire and friendship. It was thought that when the midwinter sun goes down it marks the death of the previous year and the rebirth and start of a new year and new beginnings (like crops).

One of Scotland's most famous historic sites during Winter Solstice must be the Maeshowe tomb in Orkney. For up to three weeks pre and post solstice, as the sun sets a ray of light shines through Maeshowe's low, narrow passageway to reach the back wall of its inner chamber. The light entering this 5,000-year-old burial cairn has given countless people hope that light will again return on what is the darkest day of the year. Experts today still are amazed how this was so accurately created and today this engineering marvel draws visitors from around the world.

Solstice also meant cattle were slaughtered as food could be quite scarce in the depth of winter in Scotland and could see people through until the spring harvest. This period of time was also used to repair tools, clothing and even relationships, as neighbours and family had to work together to get through a harsh and bleak winter season.

Our Celtic ancestors were ruled by the seasons and the shortest day of the year was celebrated as a time of renewal with food, fire and friendship.

### In this issue

I remember vividly hearing the news of the explosion of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie. This surreal and tragic event remains one of the world's worst terrorist attacks, which resulted in all 259 passengers and crew on board the Boeing 747 killed when the flight exploded just 38 minutes after take-off from London, with a further 11 Lockerbie residents on the ground losing their life as the plane exploded into their community. The scar for Lockerbie was profound and the impact from that disaster have rippled on for decades, our writer Neil Drysdale was one of the first journalists on the scene in 1988 and his contribution this month honours those victims and those who have worn the scars of grief for so long.

I dare say a few readers may be having a dram over the festive season to celebrate with family and friends. However, at one time in Scottish history this was not so straightforward as that is today. As the government wanted to tax 'the water of life' an illegal Scottish whisky trade developed, and smugglers carved out paths of the Scottish countryside to transport their whisky. This period became entrenched in Scottish folklore and song and in order to preserve historic events and we feature this month the story of the 'Battle of Corrymuckloch'.

Scotland is known for its amazing Hogmanay celebrations and without doubt Edinburgh is the 'Home of Hogmanay'. I have only been once on that night and know what an energy the night brings so many as Scotland's historic capital brings a program of tradition and modern rhythm to one of the world's best New Year celebrations.

### A sacred ritual of hope and promise

The winter solstice, known in Gaelic as grian-stad geamhraidh (sun-stop winter), has been a centuries old celebration of the renewal of season and cycle of life. Today the day is marked for most as a celebration the days will soon get longer, but for our ancestors it was a sacred ritual of hope and promise. Something even today we can all draw from. Several winter solstice customs have evolved to become Christmas traditions the world over such as decorating a tree, using mistletoe, gift giving, the use of light (fire) to create a festive flare and most importantly celebrating with those close to you.

Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and Hogmanay season filled with rays of light no matter where, or how, you are celebrating.

Do you follow any solstice or Scottish Christmas or Hogmanay traditions? Do you have any comments from the content in this month's edition? Share your story with us by email, post, social media or: #ScottishBanner, #TheBanner.

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You may also donate to the Scottish Banner via our website.

We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Gracing our front cover: Edinburgh's Hogmanay Torchlight Procession. Photo: Andy Catlin.



## Unique Bronze Age Hoard acquired for the nation



ne of the most significant hoards ever found in Scotland has been saved for the nation, having been acquired by National Museums Scotland. The Bronze Age Peebles Hoard was discovered in the Scottish Borders by a metal detectorist in 2020. It has since been painstakingly excavated, analysed and catalogued, revealing dozens of rare objects for the first time. Efforts are now underway to secure funding for the continued research and conservation of the hoard and to uncover the secrets of this one-of-a-kind discovery. Dating to 1000-800 BCE, the Peebles Hoard comprises over 500 unusual bronze and organic pieces and components that had

lain undisturbed for 3,000 years. It was allocated to National Museums Scotland under the Treasure Trove process, with an ex-gratia payment made to the detectorist who discovered it.

The hoard represents a complex set of material, some of which has no archaeological parallel anywhere in western Europe. This includes many unique artefacts, the use of which is yet to be discovered and could transform our understanding of life in Bronze Age Scotland. Larger and more recognisable objects within the hoard highlight Bronze Age Scotland's position as part of an international network of communities across the North Sea. Two rattle pendants, the first ever found in Scotland, are more commonly found in Denmark, northern Germany and northern Poland. These remarkable objects are created from interlinked bronze rings and pendant plates that would have hung from a horse or wooden vehicle and rattled as they moved.

### **Exceptional survivals**

Other exceptional survivals include a sword still in its wooden scabbard, as well as an array of small bronze buttons looped onto cords. The hoard also contains rare survivals of minute bronze pins, studs and bosses embedded in wood or leather. The remains of complex decorative straps, the purpose of which remains to be investigated, are preserved still mostly articulated after more than three millennia in the ground. This preservation offers a level of detail and insight not usually

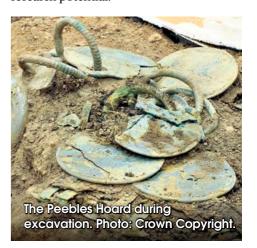
glimpsed for the Bronze Age. The hoard was found by metal-detectorist Mariusz Stępień in 2020, after he initially identified unusual bronze objects and reported the find to the Treasure Trove Unit. This allowed experts from National Museums Scotland and the Treasure Trove Unit to coordinate a complex retrieval process that involved removing the hoard from the ground in a single block and continue excavation and analysis of the find under laboratory conditions. The entire block of earth and Bronze Age material was CT scanned by μ-VIS X-ray Imaging Centre, University of Southampton, a partner institution of the National Research Facility for Lab-based X-ray Computed Tomography (NXCT). This captured crucial details of the internal structure and relationships between materials in their original context.

CT scanning also revealed that some of these objects were produced using 'lost-wax casting', a rare technique in Bronze Age Britain. This represents some of the earliest evidence of its use in Scotland. A meticulous excavation by archaeologists and conservators followed at the National Museums Collection Centre in Edinburgh, finally unearthing the fragile components of the hoard after more than 3,000 years hidden underground.

### **Utterly unique discovery**

Dr Matthew Knight, Senior Curator of Prehistory at National Museums Scotland, said: "The Peebles Hoard is exceptional, an utterly unique discovery that rewrites our understanding of both Bronze Age communities in Scotland and our prehistoric international connections. Thanks to the diligence of the finder, expertise of colleagues at the Treasure Trove Unit and National Museums Scotland, and the generosity of the team at the  $\mu$ -VIS X-ray Imaging Centre, University of Southampton, we have made significant progress. However, more funding is critical to continue our conservation and research, to preserve the hoard for future generations and uncover the stories of Scotland's ancient past."

The many unique survivals in the Peebles Hoard, most notably fragments of fragile organic material, require essential conservation to prevent further deterioration and to carry out critical research. To this end, National Museums Scotland is launching a fundraising campaign to support the urgent costs of conserving the hoard and unlocking its enormous research potential.



### Viking wind farm and subsea cable boosts UK clean energy from Shetland

n a ground-breaking achievement for clean energy in the UK, the Shetland Islands have been connected to the GB electricity grid for the first time. This milestone comes with the completion of two major projects: the Viking Wind Farm-which is set to become the UK's most productive onshore wind farm and a 260-kilometer subsea transmission link that will transport the generated electricity from Shetland to the mainland. The Viking Wind

Farm, developed by SSE Renewables, is a monumental step in the UK's journey toward a sustainable energy future. The subsea cable, a 260km high-voltage direct current (HVDC) link, will transport electricity between Shetland and the GB mainland for the first time. First Minister of Scotland, John Swinney, commented on the significance of the project, stating: "The completion of these projects is a significant step in unlocking the green energy potential of the

Shetland islands. These developments will not only aid us in our efforts to decarbonise our energy system, but help to stimulate sustainable economic growth in the local area. It is welcome that Scotland's onshore wind capacity continues to expand. This is a vital component of our mission to bring about a just transition to net zero." This connection will enable clean energy generated in the Shetland Islands to flow to the rest of the UK, providing a new source of renewable energy



and enhancing energy security. The link will also allow for energy to be supplied back to Shetland, ensuring a reliable supply of electricity for the islands.



# 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?

### State of the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games - Now and Forward



I am directing this notice to our Clans, Conveners, Campers, Patrons (all classes) and the attending public. Hurricane Helene (or Tropical Storm Helene by the time it arrived in Avery County) devastated the North Carolina High Country, both from disastrous flooding and high winds. Our beloved Avery County was hit especially hard, as you have no doubt noted in media reports.

Luckily, the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games (GMHG) came through very fortunately when compared with many in the county. That is not to say we came through unscathed. There is certainly work to be done to allow us to hold our 69<sup>th</sup> annual Games July 10-13, 2025, but I want to allay any concerns on the part of the public about our ability to hold our event. We will go on!

Having said that, we do need help to recover and so does our community. In summary, our impacts are assessed as follows: We have some trees down at MacRae Meadows and MacRowdy that have to be cut up and removed. We have \$10,000 of repair and replacement to the campground electrical system. We have \$5000 to \$10,000 of road repair at Gate 2 and the entry to the Chieftain parking area. Most importantly, Old Yonahlossee Road was left impassable for nearly the entire length. Old Yonahlossee Road is the path by which our shuttle buses access MacRae Meadows. The Road is privately owned by others, but we desperately need to contribute financially to the restoration

of the road to ensure the restoration is done before next July. The greatest and most expensive damage to the road is from severe washing. In many places Old Yonahlossee is a third of its former width and cannot accommodate school buses.

In recent years, the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games has seen our resources diminished by the costs of no Games in 2020 because of COVID, the tragic death in 2022 associated with the Bear, the cost in 2023 of removing over 90 trees on MacRae Meadows due to fungus and insect attack, and the 2024 failure of a major portion of our electrical system which required wholesale replacement. Each of these occurrences represented a significant, unbudgeted expenditure. In the aggregate, they represent over \$400,000 in out-of-pocket expense for GMHG.

We are now in the position of asking for donations to help with these extraordinary expenses associated with Helene. We hope that our subscribing Clan societies, Scottish societies, and supporting individuals will donate to GMHG as generously as you can. No donation is too small; any amount will help. We pledge to keep the donations separate from our operations funding, and we will donate any money remaining from the campaign to the Avery County Chamber of Commerce "Build Back Avery" fund. The Avery Chamber of Commerce account will be targeted 100% to Avery County recovery.

GMHG is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit and your donations will be tax deductible. Thank you very much for your consideration of this appeal.

Please click on this link for donations: https://secure.givelively.org/donate/ grandfather-mountain-highland-gamesinc/gmhg-helene-recovery

Stephen Quillin President, Grandfather Mountain Highland Games North Carolina, USA

### The Kelpies

Falkirk, Scotland



Rise and shine with Scotland's majestic Kelpies! Captured at sunrise, this breathtaking view showcases the towering sculptures with the iconic silhouette of The National Wallace Monument in the distance. Looming even further are the serene peaks of Stuc a'Chroin and Ben Vorlich, bathed in the soft morning glow. A perfect blend of art, history, and nature – Scotland's beauty never fails to inspire. Thomas Lamont The Kilted Photographer

### My monthly pick me up

Just a short note to tell you just how much I enjoy getting *the Scottish Banner*. It really is 'a pick me up' for me each and every month. It is wonderful to learn something in each issue about the land of my birth. When I get my *Scottish Banner* it is my time and I immerse myself in the land which I love so dearly. There is always something in each issue which grabs my interest and often I find myself researching about more or planning to visit that place on my next Scottish adventure.

Thank you to all the wonderful contributors of this fine publication, as I can tell they too love to share their love of Scotland with those of us spread across the world.

George H Gunn Hamilton, New Zealand

Ed note: Thank you George for your kind note and glad to hear the Scottish Banner is so well received, and yes our writers also love Scotland as much as we all do.

### **Family of Bruce International**



Family of Bruce International had their Annual General Meeting, June 11, 2024 at Broomhall, the home of their Chief, Lord Elgin, in Dunfermline. There were 74 members present. After that, there were 4 days of bus trips around several of Bruce historical sites, including Edinburgh Castle, Paisley Abbey, Bannockburn, St. Andrews and Clackmannan. The week ended with a grand dinner in the Great Hall at Stirling Castle, complete with a pipe band.

Polly Bruce Tilford National Secretary to Family of Bruce USA

### Meet the Buchanans World Premier



The October 2022 weekend of the inauguration of the Chief of the Name and Arms of Clan Buchanan was unique (Meet the Buchanans World Premier, the Scottish Banner, October, 2024). It brought ancient tradition and contemporary focus together to celebrate the occasion. It cemented ongoing relationships between neighbouring clans, the ancient Buchanan Society, the worldwide Clan Buchanan Society International, clan folk, and the Chief and the Chief's family. The first Clan Parliament in over 340 years established initial directions for the clan's development.

Clar Innis! Malcolm Buchanan Canberra, Australia www.theclanbuchanan.com

### FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA (100)

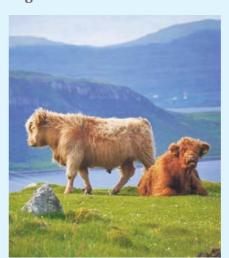
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### Isle of Skye



The Trotternish Ridge on the misty Isle is a huge landscape of chaotic but very dramatic scenery. Fly – Caledonia

### **Highland Coo**



It's a coo's life in Scotland. *Karen Snadden* 

### **Edinburgh**



A look down Princes Street in Edinburgh. Have you been? The Kilted Photographer Stirling Castle



Sunset over Stirling Castle JT Photography

Pose your questions on Scottish related topics to our knowledgeable readership who just may be able to help. Please keep letters under 300 words and we reserve the right to edit content and length. Letters can be emailed to info@scottishbsanner.com or online at www.scottishbanner.com/contact-us, alternatively you may post your letters to us (items posted to the Scottish Banner cannot be returned). Please ensure you include your full contact details should you require a reply. This page belongs to our readers so please feel free to take part!

### Sharing the stories and lessons of witch-hunting in Scotland



he University of Aberdeen is introducing people around the world to the history of witch-hunting and the witch trials in Scotland. With wide-brimmed hats, black cats, broomsticks and crooked noses, witches in popular culture are instantly recognisable a staple of Halloween events. But in previous centuries changes in attitudes and approaches to magic led to suspicion and accusations that spread through Scottish communities as paranoid hunts sought to root out those thought to derive powers from the Devil.

### Ripples of panic

The University has created an online short course 'Scottish Witch-Hunting and the Rise of a Protestant Culture 1590-1690' which provides an opportunity for anyone with a professional or personal interest in the history of Scottish witchcraft to take an in-depth look at Scottish attitudes and approaches to magic, the preternatural and the supernatural. Professor Bill Naphy, Emeritus Professor of History, said: "Witches may been seen by guisers today as a bit of fun but in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they were seen as conspirators trying to destroy society. This wasn't unique

to Scotland but the ripples of panic it caused were far reaching with Scotland's execution rate per head of population about five times the European average. It means this is a really important area for study, not just in understanding about witchcraft and the brutal investigations, trials and often executions of those accused but in piecing together the wider issues and changes facing society at this time."

The course explores the involvement of King James VI and I who in 1591 became convinced that a group of North Berwick witches tried to kill him and his wife when their vessel was caught in storms as they attempted to travel to Denmark. As a result he becomes the only reigning monarch to ever serve as a judge in a witch trial and writes a book about witchcraft titled Daemonologie. This originally circulates in manuscript form and Professor Naphy says it was 'clearly aimed at his sons so they will know when they become powerful how to find witches' but is published widely following a panic which begins in Aberdeen in January 1597.

### Crimes of dark magic

Professor Naphy explains: "The North Berwick witch trials of 1591 are notorious because of the sheer number of 'witches', widely agreed to be around 70 most of whom were women, executed in one hunt in a small Scottish town. But the lesser-known Aberdeen witch hunt in 1597 demonstrates how far panic swept across Scottish society, even prompting the demand for the publication of the King's book.

City leaders in Aberdeen became convinced that they had such a serious problem on their hands that they were able to secure a five-year commission to find and try all witches in the north-east. Once the idea took root that there was a witch plot or 'cell' the threshold for evidence necessary to prove guilt decreased and investigators become increasingly concerned with finding wider connections. In Aberdeen this saw accusations levied against the Leys family and at his trail Thomas Leys confessed, undoubtedly under coercion, to having led a coven of witches in a dance at the fish cross the previous Halloween - a satanic party right in front of the tollbooth."

This soon led to extensive witch hunts across not only the north-east but many parts of Scotland. "Thomas implicated a number of women that took the commissioners from Aberdeen to the tiny village of Lumphanan in their hunt for conspiratorial cells," Professor Naphy added. "In total 24 'witches' were executed in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, including a significant proportion of the adult female population of Lumphanan and this little known 1597 hunt triggered panic across many regions of Scotland that resulted in many more deaths through execution. This is an important period to highlight dangers of a moral panic and study of these events serves as a timely reminder that while today witches are seen as part of the fun of Halloween, we should not forget brutal treatment and execution of those accused of so-called crimes of dark magic."



## Scotland's Trade Fair Spring

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## **SCOTSPEAK**

Scotspeak is a selection of quotes which made headlines in Scotland last month on a variety of current Scottish affairs.



"The report supports our contention that this is the wrong application in the wrong place with the wrong decision by Stirling Council. It's more than a matter of protecting green fields: they are the location of the first day's combat at Bannockburn on 23 June 1314 and are not just historically and nationally significant but also form a core part of the setting and topography of the wider landscape that dictated the course of the battle. Many thousands of visitors each year come to the battlefield centre and the Rotunda to experience something of the fateful events that shaped our nation's destiny. There is no doubt that the proposals, should they go ahead, would be wholly disruptive and compromise vet another part of the historic battlefield. It's perhaps understandable why the applicant might want to play that down - but the Council's assessment should have picked that up. We have respectfully submitted the report to the Scottish Reporter and we hope that it provides helpful information as part of the review of Stirling Council's decision that is now underway."

Stuart Brooks, the National Trust for Scotland's Director of Conservation & Policy said a professional report commissioned

by Scotland's largest conservation charity reveals that a planning submission submitted to Stirling Council for a horsetrotting track on the site of the historic Bannockburn battlefield and the council's assessment of it are "fundamentally flawed." The proposed trotting track, car parking, fencing and buildings, in green fields adjacent to the battlefield centre and parkland managed and cared for by the Trust, would be directly visible from the Rotunda which acts as a national monument to commemorate the 1314 battle which changed the course of Scottish history. Stirling Council approved the application in July despite many objections and it was subsequently 'called in' by Scottish Ministers.

"Glenrothan is a poignant, funny and powerful story about the universal themes of family and heritage, set against the stunning backdrops of Scotland and steeped in the world of whisky. Brian is an undeniable talent, both behind and in front of the camera, and is joined by the exceptional Alan Cumming."

Protagonist Pictures CEO Dave Bishop said on Brian Cox's new feature directorial debut film Glenrothan. After 35 years in Chicago, Donal (Cumming) reluctantly returns to the Scottish Highlands to make amends with his estranged older brother, Sandy (Cox). Sandy needs Donal to take over the family's whisky distillery or he will be forced to sell and give up on the family's legacy. But their reunion forces the brothers to confront the past and the real reason Donal left Glenrothan.



"The Lewis chess pieces are much loved thanks in part to their iconic expressions and poses, however these are objects which were designed to be appreciated from all angles. After all, each player sees the backs of their own pieces. The carver has really gone to town on the throne backs in particular, with entwined tendrils and knotwork that are really sumptuous compared to the simpler fronts. I'm delighted that visitors to the National Museum of Scotland will now have the chance to get to know these charming characters in the round."

Dr Alice Blackwell, Senior Curator of Medieval Archaeology and History at National Museums Scotland said the iconic Lewis chess pieces can now be viewed from a very different angle thanks to a new display at the National Museum of Scotland. The chess pieces in National Museums Scotland's collection form part of a large hoard discovered in Lewis in the early  $19^{\mbox{th}}$ century. They offer fascinating insights into the growing popularity of chess in medieval Europe and the international connections of western Scotland during that period. The pieces were probably made around 1200 in Norway.

"Tourism is already a vitally important sector to the South of Scotland, with tourists and day trippers attracted by its many attractions, beauty spots and wonderful landscapes. I am pleased to confirm Scottish Government funding of £10 million to help deliver Destination Tweed. This is an ambitious programme which will not only protect and enhance the region's treasured natural assets but, in the River Tweed Trail, create a piece of infrastructure with which to capitalise on these assets, helping further grow, develop and showcase what the region has to offer."

Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes confirmed £10 million from the Scottish Government for the Destination Tweed programme through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth

Deal in the Scottish Borders. Whilst the overall programme is made up of 13 projects, the £10m from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal will directly support delivery of the River Tweed Trail project, which will create a 113-mile long walking and braided cycling route along the full length of the river from Moffat near the source of the Tweed to Berwick-upon-Tweed where the river meets the sea. The River Tweed is a Special Area of Conservation and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



"I grew up hearing tales of people thinking chocolate milk comes from brown cows, rather than cocoa and sugar. It's always stuck with me – why not make it a reality? Ayrshire cows are of course brown, so there is

some truth to it now: this chocolate milk certainly does come from brown cows and it doesn't cost the planet to drink it."

Bryce Cunningham, founder of organic dairy Mossgiel Farm, said the Ayrshire business intends to create a natural but also sustainable chocolate milk. Visitors to Mossgiel Farm, where poet Robert Burns penned some of his famous works, can taste the eco-friendly zero-waste Chocolate Milk on site.

"It was so exciting, it was like meeting our colleagues from the past. It was actually like them being there. It was like touching them. Like them being part of our team instead of just four of us being there, we were all there sharing what they had written because it was tangible, and you could see the style of their handwriting. You knew what they had done. You knew they had hidden it in such a place it wouldn't be found for a long, long time."

Corsewall Lighthouse keeper Barry Miller said as a bottle with a 132-year-old note was found inside the walls of the lighthouse in the south of Scotland. The letter was written using quill and ink, the dated September 4,1892 and references the names of lighthouse keeper and the engineers who installed a new type of light in the 100ft (30m) tower. Corsewall Lighthouse was built in 1817 by Robert Stevenson and is situated on the northern tip of the Rhinns of Galloway.

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### **SCOTWORD**

Here is a wee Scottish crossword for you to try! If you're stuck, answers can be found on page 22.

### CLUES ACROSS

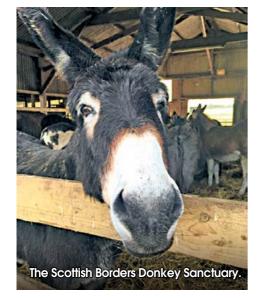
- 1) A short-billed duck (6).
- 4) She handles cows! (8).
- 10) It's a wrench in the US (7).
- 11) In Scotland they're glens (7).
- 12) Water flow (4).
- 13) Top Scots golfing hotel (10).
- 16) The kirk's second in command (6).
- 17) Town east of Bonar Bridge (7).
- 20) A starter for pipers (7).
- 21) A drop of water! (6).

- 24) District of Edinburgh (10).
- 25) Inner Hebridean island (4).
- 27) Put down in the sea (7).
- 29) Collectively named (7).
- 30) Close up for a punch up! (8).
- 31) Kirk office-bearer (6).

### **CLUES DOWN:**

- 1) They're found in steamiest (8).
- 2) Mountainous US games (11).
- 3) Possesses (4).
- 5) James Watt was one (8).

- 6) Town east of Irvine (10).
- 7) View this loch in wonder (3).
- 8) Leave off (6).
- 9) Row of plants! (5).
- 14) Waterway east of Glen Spiel (4, 7).
- 15) Fife new town (10).
- 18) Mary, Queen of Scots' fate (8).
- 19) Scottish get-togethers (8).
- 22) Made the Bruce try again (6).
- 23) Kirk congregation (5).
- 26) The true Highlander (4).
- 20 28) Old Scots measure (3).





reetings from Scotland! As I write, a rather mild, damp Scotland, although they tell us snow is on the way. I do hope so. A crisp white winter, even a sprinkling at Christmas, will help to brighten grey days. Yet vibrant colour comes with a visit to the world's longest piece of embroidered tapestry. The Great Tapestry of Scotland tells in thread the country's past and culture, from the ice age to the present.

# Lady MacGregor's Scotland

Lady MacGregor of MacGregor – otherwise known as British writer and broadcaster Fiona Armstrong - works for ITV news and current affairs. Fiona's husband is the Chief of Clan Gregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor. She is an active member of Clan Armstrong, so their lives are interwoven with all things tartan. The couple live in the Scottish Borderlands, although filming and writing takes Fiona all over Scotland.

It's been on view for a decade and, to my shame, I have only just managed to see it. The project kept a thousand volunteers from the Highlands to the Borderlands busy with their needles: creating 160 historical panels; sewing for a total of fifty thousand hours; using some 300 miles of wool. The work was unveiled in 2013 in Edinburgh, and it later went on show around the country. Today, though, it sits in its permanent home: a purpose-built centre in the Borders' town of Galashiels.

### Tells the story of Scotland by the people of Scotland

It is an apt place. Gala, as the locals call it, was once a key part of the Scottish textile industry. By the end of the nineteenth century, the place boasted twenty mills. And why not?! There were plenty of sheep around to provide wool, and lots of rain to help power the water wheels. By the early twentieth century, a third of the local workforce was spinning, weaving and dyeing in Galashiels; the place famous for tweed and tartan – and in particular, for production of a fetching heavy black and white cloth.

'Shepherd's Check' is one of the earliest tartans and it found favour a noted novelist. Sir Walter Scott regularly wore breeches made with this Scottish pattern – showing them off to English when he went to London. But back to the Great Tapestry. Words almost fail me. It is amazing, incredible! Here Scotland's past is recalled.

Battles, politics, plots, inventions, entertainment, sport – it is all mapped out in thread. From Walter Scott to whisky. From Bannockburn to Burns. And it's not just the great and the good that are remembered. Here royalty sits alongside the working class. Scottish philosophers feature alongside coal miners. Queen Victoria's passion for the Highlands is remembered – as is the work of a washerwoman in a Glasgow Steamie. This community artwork tells the story of Scotland by the people of Scotland, and if you come over here – and I really hope you do – you must put it on the to do list...

**Edinburgh's Christmas Market** 

Meanwhile another thing not to miss is Edinburgh's Christmas Market. This annual event started 25 years ago when dozens of families came over from Germany to sell their sausages, waffles, pretzels and crafts. Since then, the event has grown, so much so that it is difficult to come away with a full wallet! Scots love getting in the festive spirit, despite the fact that Christmas was banned here for 400 years. In days past the church had great power and Christmas seemed too frivolous, so in 1640 the Scottish Parliament passed a law making celebrating it illegal. Some decades on, and that ban was repealed, but there was still some frowning on folk enjoying themselves on 25<sup>th</sup> December.

Which probably helps to explain why Scots put more of an emphasis on New Year, or Hogmanay.

By: Lady Fiona

**MacGregor** 

When we think of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, we might also think of donkeys and I've been meeting a few of them at an animal centre south of Edinburgh. The Scottish Borders Donkey Sanctuary also known as 'donkey heaven' - is home to 127 donkeys, mules and ponies. Perhaps it's the cost-of-living crisis, but the place is caring for more of these cuddly creatures than ever before. Well, I say cuddly. Just be careful you don't get kicked or bitten – because, like all of us, a donkey can have an off day! These girls, however, were gentle souls which might have something to do with the bag full of carrots I took along when filming there recently.

It is all very Christmassy and I hope you enjoy yours... See you in 2025 when there will be more news from snowy, who knows, perhaps an even sunny Scotland!



### Clan MacNicol International Gathering, Isle of Skye 2024



**By: Mal Nicolson** 

t long last we have been able to hold a most enjoyable and long anticipated Clan Gathering, the last being in 2018. A great time was had by over 120 members from worldwide in October 2024. Members and family gathered on Skye for a friendly and enjoyable week, at first in great blue skies, but also with some Skye showers and a nice breeze towards the end of the week, assisting with the flying of the Chief's banner on the Clan Lands at Scorrybreac.

### Clan lands at Scorrybreac

Highlights of the Gathering included: the raising of the Chief's flag at Scorrybreac, unveiling of a stone seat for Clan stalwarts, Murray and Barbara Nicolson. Also, Clan meetings and guided walks on the Clan lands at Scorrybreac. An evening of entertainment from local artists and clan members, with casual dining at Gasta in Portree and a casual, informal ceilidh.

Many years ago, a ceilidh would be the word Scottish and Irish people would use for a social gathering and probably didn't always involve social dancing. There was a time in Scotland when it was forbidden to play Scottish traditional music, to wear a kilt or tartan and it could be punished by death. So, a ceilidh might have been a code word that the 'Authorities' didn't understand.

Our evening was such a time of poetry, dance, stories and songs, plus a nice chance for a good yarn and a few drams with family or friends. Going away brunch at Skeabost Hotel, followed by a most informative talk on the history and tales of St Columba's Isle, a gentle walk to explore St Columba's Isle and inspect the historic Nicolson's Aisle, with 29 Nicolson Chief's said to be buried there.

The next Gathering will be in 2026, somewhere in North America. For further information on Clan MacNicol see: www.clanmacnicol.org

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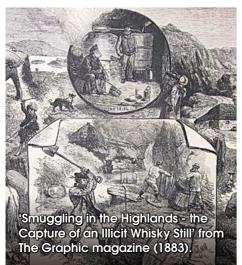
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# A whisky-fuelled Christmas bourach: the Battle of Corrymuckloch'



By: David C



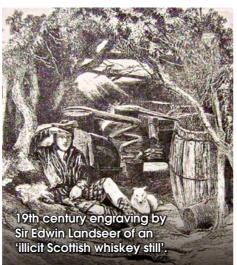
ew things bring a little warmth and comfort in the dark depths of a Scottish winter like a dram of whisky sipped by a crackling fire. When Hogmanay comes round, whisky shared in a quaich has brought people together for centuries. Some poor souls, however, nearly had to go without after a little incident which went down in the ballads as the 'Battle of Corrymuckloch'.

The early 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the mainstreaming of whisky as never before. Even King George IV learned to enjoy a dram following his visit to Edinburgh in 1822, allegedly even preferring the illicitly-produced whisky, commonly known as

The Kelpies

Rainbow Highland Coos

Eilean Donan Castle



'mountain dew' or 'moonlight', over the officially-certified 'Parliamentary' variety. This booming demand in the south led many in the Highlands to produce their own whisky in illegal stills, often engaging in cat-and-mouse games with the excisemen and dragoons who were dispatched into the countryside to track and charge them.

### Sma' Glen

Smugglers would make the journey to Lowland towns along the old drove roads and hill passes little-known or monitored by government officials. One of the main arteries for the movement of cattle and whisky was the Sma' Glen, a narrow pass

in Glen Almond used by travellers for centuries to reach the trysts, markets, and inns of Crieff, Falkirk, and beyond. On approach to the Sma' Glen is a broad expanse of bog, heather, hillocks, and hollows known as Corrymuckloch, which once hosted an inn notorious for its popularity among smugglers. It was here, a few days before Christmas in 1831, that a group of smugglers was intercepted. Laden with barrels containing potent and untaxed whisky, a group of around 20 men with carts were headed for the mouth of the Sma' Glen. Unbeknown to them, a troop of Royal Scots Greys, no less, had decided to seize the initiative by riding out from Perth to destroy any illicit stills they could find among the hidden places of Breadalbane. The two groups must have been astonished by their luck, or lack thereof, of running directly into each other along the road!

In a series of interviews in the 1950s, Donald Dow of Tomantianda, a native Gaelic-speaker, described the scene: "A kinsman of mine, Thomas Calmanach, of the Balnabodach family, was - how would you say - in charge of the convoy. He was ahead of them. He recognised the smell of cigar smoke, a thing not usual in the country at all, except for rich people. He suspected trouble and went back. There were fifteen carts laden with whisky. He made them unhitch the horses and tie them to the carts. He, himself, and his men went forward to meet the Scots Greys. Thomas Alasdair, was a tremendously big and powerful man. He was six feet and five inches tall, with bones in him like a horse's. He had a stick, an oak cudgel, and in the first attack he struck the officer, half killing him. He fell out of his saddle and Thomas grabbed his sword, then killed the Captain. He also killed another two or three, and the rest of them fled. They had horses and they escaped, and they got through with the whisky."

An anecdote from The Beauties of Upper Strathearn, published in 1870, tells of the fate of one of the participants. Years after the 'battle', an old drover on his way back north from Falkirk stopped at the scene of the scrap. When his companions asked what gave him pause, he revealed that he was one of the Scots Greys who had "so ingloriously fallen" that day. After recovering from his wounds, he was nonetheless unable to continue serving as a soldier and decided instead to "turn his sabre into a shepherd's crook". A little illicit hustling was nothing new for the inhabitants of the Breadalbane glens. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a population boom across much of the Highlands which was not matched by agricultural outputs, leaving many desperate for any scrap of food or income that they could get. Dougall McMillan of Amulree, Ontario (named after

Modern road running south

through Corrymuckloch.

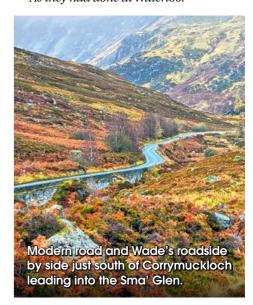
the settlement just north of Corrymuckloch) was descended from people who left or were cleared from Glen Quaich in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Interviewed in the 1930s, Dougall told how his grandfather decided to leave after a gamekeeper employed by the Earl of Breadalbane entered his home unannounced at the very moment that a poached deer was cooking over the fire!

Fleeing from the excisemen Fleeing from the excisemen was a fairly common motivation for emigrants to places like Canada. William Crerar, also of Ontario, told how his grandfather, John Crerar, was "a whisky smuggler all his life in the old country from the time he grew to manhood" who emigrated because "the excisemen were after him." To avoid apprehension, Crerar changed his surname - he was, in fact, a McIntosh. This was easily done in a period when there were very few ways to verify anyone's surname, and indeed when few enough people even had one. Many emigrants borrowed or invented surnames during the process of emigration, or had their names recorded incorrectly by customs officials who were either indifferent to their duties or unable to speak or understand Gaelic. This makes the genealogist's work much more complicated than it already is.

The Battle of Corrymuckloch may have faded into obscurity among the countless grander clashes of the past, but it is very much remembered in folk traditions.

Contemporary Scottish folk band Findlay Napier and the Bar Room Mountaineers immortalised it in a ballad, singing:

And ere the action it was ower
There fell a horseman on the plain
Quo Sandy unto Donald syne
"Ye've killed ane o the bearded men,"
But he gat up an left his horse
And aff tae Amulree he flew
Left the rest tae dae their best
As they had done at Waterloo.





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# A trip to the Outer Hebrides

By: Wade King



n June, 2024, Wade King (an occasional contributor to *the Scottish Banner*) and his wife Binny took a trip from Australia to Scotland. It was their sixth visit to the land of their heritage. On previous trips they had toured the Scottish mainland, the Inner Hebrides and the Orkney islands.

This time they toured the mainland and the Inner Hebrides again, but they included the Outer Hebrides in their itinerary. In their hired Land Rover Discovery, they drove from Inverness to Ullapool on the coast of Wester Ross, then went over the Minch from Ullapool on the CalMac ferry to Stornoway the main town on the island of Lewis. They walked around the town of Stornoway and then they drove around Lewis, where

they visited the impressive Lews Castle just out of Stornoway, the very windy Butt (northern tip) of Lewis with its lighthouse, the well-preserved two-thousand-year-old stone fortress of Doune Broch at Carlaway, the nearby Gearrannan Blackhouses and the Neolithic marvel of the Calanais Standing Stones. Then they went south to the island of Harris where they visited the Harris tweed shop at Tarbert and bought some tweed goods there. Then they drove to Luskentyre Beach, one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, and explored the wild beauty of its sandy expanse before taking another CalMac ferry over to the island of Berneray just south of Harris.

### Flora MacDonald

They travelled south over Berneray over a causeway to Otternish on the island of North Uist. They travelled across North Uist with its spectacular drowned landscape of peat bogs and lochans, and its string of beautiful beaches around its coast. Then they drove on down over another causeway to the island of Benbecula, where they based themselves for a few days at Balivanich.

From Benbecula they went further south to South Uist, the beautiful island where Flora MacDonald was born and spent her childhood. They visited the stone ruins of Flora's birthplace at Milton and saw where she met the Bonnie Prince when he was 'out in the heather' after Culloden. They also saw the beach on the east coast of Benbecula from which Flora took the Prince, disguised as her Irish

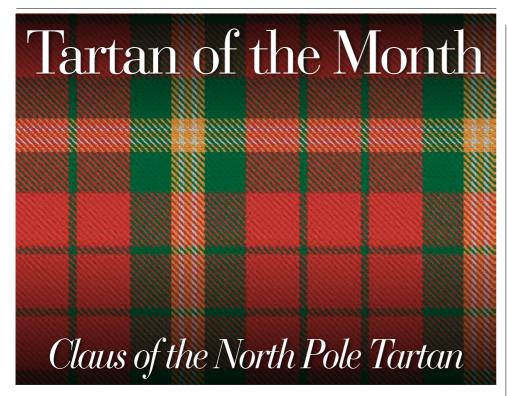
maid Betty Burke under the very noses of the hated English redcoats who were searching for him, over the sea to Skye. One day they drove down over a causeway from South Uist to the small island of Eriskay and visited the Prince's Strand, the sandy beach on the west coast of Eriskay where Prince Charlie first came ashore in Scotland in 1745. He came, of course, to raise the clans for the Jacobite rebellion that almost succeeded in restoring the Stuart monarchy but ended in disaster at the battle of Culloden in 1746. On Eriskay they also visited the A.M. Politician Hotel and restaurant, at the northern end of the Prince's Strand and very close to where the S.S. Politician ran aground on the skerries off the coast of Eriskay in 1941 with its cargo of whisky which gave rise to the book and film of Whisky Galore. They drove out to a headland overlooking the sparkling

sea and watched the waves rolling onto the rocks as in their minds they played the charming and haunting *Eriskay Love Lilt*.

### **Great natural beauty**

Then, after returning to Benbecula, they did as Flora MacDonald and the Bonnie Prince had done, and went from Benbecula over the sea to Skye. In their case they travelled not by small boat but by CalMac ferry. The islands of the Outer Hebrides are places of great natural beauty and are steeped in history, mystery and romance. They are well worth a visit by anyone interested in Scots landscape and culture, and especially by those with an interest in Scots history and the exciting story of Bonnie Prince Charlie's exploits after the battle of Culloden. For all that, they are attractive to all who like wild, lonely corners of the earth where travellers can lose themselves in nature at its finest expression.





The Scottish Banner is pleased to be offering the Tartan of the Month series highlighting a variety of different, unique and colourful tartans from around the world which are registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans in Edinburgh. The Scottish Register of Tartans was established by an act of the Scottish Parliament in November 2008 and promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world. Text and image use are courtesy of the Scottish Register of Tartans (SRT).

he Clan Claus Society was formed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2008, and this tartan introduced for Santa and his extended 'family'. Colours: red is the traditional colour for Santa Claus; green is for the evergreen holly and mistletoe which represent Christmas traditions; the three bands of yellow represent the three bags of gold that St Nicholas of Myra gave the three daughters of the merchant; the two bands of white are for purity and the snow of the North Pole.

This tartan was designed by Santa Bruce Arnold and registered in January, 2009. *The Scottish Banner* wishes you and your clan a very Merry Christmas!



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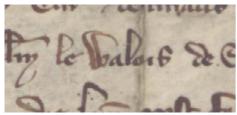


### Oban crowned Town of the Year

Oban has been named as Scotland's Town of the Year. It has lifted the title after judges in the Scotland Loves Local Awards heard how townsfolk have banded together to "reinvent" the picturesque Argyllshire community. The accolade comes amid a remarkable year in which the town has shone in the global spotlight, delivering a multi-million pound economic boost as a port in The Clipper Round The World Yacht Race – alongside the likes of Washington DC and Cape Town. It also recently played host to Scotland's Royal National Mod festival, a celebration of Gaelic culture which attracted in excess of 10,000 people. Town of the Year one of a series of prizes in the Scotland Loves Local Awards, organised by Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP) to recognise and reward the vision, dedication and determination which makes the nations places better places to live.

STP Chief Officer Kimberley Guthrie, who was also part of the award presentation, said: "Oban should wear its Town of the Year crown with pride. Its success is such a great example of amazing workmanship to deliver on the community's vision and ambition. This richly-deserved award recognises everything that goes on behind the scenes to make all of this possible." Much of the transformation seen in Oban in recent years has been credited with the town's Business Improvement District, BID4Oban, forging new links with businesses, organisations and people to make things happen since its launch in 2012. That teamwork has ranged from supporting festive lights and hanging baskets throughout the town and sponsoring Oban Pride Weekend to attracting small cruise ships to visit and playing a key part in the team attracting and supporting the Clipper visit. Other recent work has included that with Argyll and Bute Council on the revamp of the busy Gibraltar Street thoroughfare, as well as continual efforts to champion the town's vibrant independent businesses to locals and visitors alike.

Rare Wallace letter goes on display



A 700-year-old letter of recommendation from the King of France for William Wallace has gone on public display in a National Records of Scotland building in Edinburgh. The brief letter written in a form of Latin shorthand was sent to the king's agents in the court of Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. Wallace's mission in Europe is a mystery. King Phillipe IV asks the Pope to support the Scottish knight in "those things which he has to transact".

Head of medieval and early modern records at NRS, Alan Borthwick, said: "While Wallace is known to have been in France in 1300 it is not known why. Some have suggested he may have been seeking support to have the deposed Scottish king, John Balliol, restored to the throne. What is certain is that this is a rare document and a wonderful opportunity for the public to see it in person."

Wallace is most famous for leading the Scots in the defeat of the English army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge. By 1305 Wallace was back in Scotland where he was captured, taken to London and executed. Historians discovered the letter in the Tower of London in the 1830s. While no-one knows exactly how it got there experts think Wallace carried it with him. The fragile fragment is on loan to National Records of Scotland (NRS) from The National Archive.

Scottish comedic great Dr Janey Godley dies of cancer



Scottish comedian, actor and author Janey Godley has died from cancer in Glasgow at aged 63. Godlev announced in 2021 she had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer and had been declared cancer free in 2022. Sadly, the disease returned and the former Glasgow pub landlady was forced to cancel her Scottish live tour earlier this year due to health reasons. Godley toured both the UK and internationally for many years and was a regular on BBC radio and the comedy circuit. In 2023 she was honoured at the inaugural Sir Billy Connolly Spirit of Glasgow Award at the Glasgow International Comedy Festival and in her final days in hospice received an honorary degree from the University of Glasgow. Godley went viral during the 2020 covid lockdown in Scotland for her dubbed videos of Nicola Sturgeon's Covid briefings.

Dr Godley said on her social media when entering palliative care, "The chemo ran out of options and I just couldn't take any more of it - and the cancer has spread. So, it looks like this will be getting near the end of it - and it's really difficult to speak about this and say it to people. It is devastating news to know I'm facing end of life, but we all come to an end sometime. Thanks everybody for all your love, and know that I really, really appreciate the outpouring of love and the support that you've gave me."

The People's Story Museum set to reopen



The People's Story Museum will reopen to the public on Monday 2 December after a temporary closure. The Museum which offers an insight into the lives of Edinburgh's working-class people from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been temporarily closed due to staff shortages but will resume its regular seven-day schedule from Monday 2 December.

Edinburgh City Council is working on a new operating model for the Museums and Galleries service aimed at enhancing the experience for residents and visitors. increasing revenue, and focusing more on the city's historic collections. The service has faced increased budget pressures this year, which initially led to a proposal to close the People's Story Museum during the autumn and winter. However, based on public feedback, officers have been working to identify funding and resource which will facilitate the reopening of the museum. Culture and Communities Convener Val Walker, said: "After initially proposing a temporary winter closure for the museum, we listened closely to the community's passionate feedback, and I'm delighted to announce that we will reopen the museum on Monday 2 December. It's a special museum where all exhibits are inspired by the voices of Edinburgh's own people, drawn from oral histories and written accounts to share authentic stories. The collections showcase this with items such as Friendly Society regalia, banners, and materials representing Edinburgh's diverse communities. We look forward to welcoming visitors back through the museum's doors."

Civic leader now known as 'Lord Provost' to mark 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stirling



The convener of Stirling Council will now be permanently recognised by the title of 'Lord Provost' as a celebration of the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stirling. The civic convener will permanently be known as 'Lord Provost' in a move that celebrates the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stirling as a Royal Burgh. Previously known as Provost, the new title recognises and honours the milestone in the city's history, which was first bestowed Royal Burgh status by King David I in 1124. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Shona Robison, granted the new title on behalf of the Scottish Government following a request from Alan Simpson OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Stirling and Falkirk, and former Stirling MP Alyn Smith. The Lord Provost is Stirling Council's civic leader and represents the council and local communities at ceremonial and other events throughout the year.

The Lord Provost helps promote
Stirling and the surrounding area
locally, nationally and internationally.
The role of the Lord Provost is apolitical.
Lord Provost Elaine Watterson said: "This
is an honour for Stirling and is fitting as
the role of Provost dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup>
Century, when our city first became a
Royal Burgh. The Lord Provost may no
longer be responsible for collecting taxes on

behalf of the Sheriff of Stirling, but it's still an important civic and ceremonial position. I am privileged to be the latest in a long line of civic leaders and it is humbling to represent Stirling at events and community gatherings and engage with people from all walks of life. I have the utmost respect for our chain of office and I look forward to continuing to work on behalf of Stirling, as the Lord Provost, for our people and our communities and telling our great story."

Glenmorangie partnership returns 100,000 oysters to the Dornoch Firth near its Highland home



Glenmorangie Highland single malt Scotch whisky is marking 10 years of its pioneering environmental partnership to restore an extinct oyster reef, by returning its 100,000th oyster to the Dornoch Firth near its home. In 2014, the Distillery and its partners, Heriot-Watt University and the Marine Conservation Society, created the Dornoch Environmental Enhancement Project, known as DEEP, to pursue their dream of bringing oysters back to the Firth, in an environmental first. The aim was to regenerate the oyster reef in the Firth, which was fished to extinction over a century ago. The first few native European oysters (Ostrea edulis) were placed in the Firth off Glenmorangie's coast in 2017, building up to 100,000 today – with millions more to come.

All grown by DEEP's partner network of independent UK growers, this fledgling reef - one of the first in Europe - is beginning to flourish. Its success has already seen increased biodiversity, as other creatures use the growing reef to make it their home. Meanwhile, since oysters filter water as they feed, they act in tandem with Glenmorangie's Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant to help purify the Distillery's organic by-products of distillation by up to 98 per cent. DEEP's long-term ambition is to build up to four million oysters in the next five years. Spread over 40 hectares, these oysters will bring back a self-sustaining reef which once thrived in the Firth. Researchers believe their existence will also double biodiversity within ten years, transforming the seabed community.

Lead scientist Bill Sanderson, Professor of Marine Biodiversity at Heriot-Watt University's School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society said: "When we began DEEP 10 years ago, it was amongst the first Native European oyster restoration projects in existence, so we have been trailblazing all the way. Today, when I dive to the sites, I'm delighted to see six or seven-year-old oysters, as big as my hand, and fish living among them - visually demonstrating the biodiversity value of our work so far. Now we are starting to scale up, until we reach critical mass around four million oysters. There are very few examples of restoration at scale in the marine environment. We believe DEEP will be an exemplar for other restoration projects around the world."

# The Home of Hogmanay



ogmanay is the Scottish word for the last day of the year or New Year's Eve and is generally regarded as the most important Scottish holiday. Christmas was not celebrated as a festival and virtually banned in Scotland for around 400 years. And so it was, right up until the 1950s that many Scots worked over Christmas and celebrated their winter solstice holiday at

# Did you know? Edinburgh's Hogmanay

- Edinburgh's Hogmanay 2024-25 is Scotland's premier Winter Festival, presenting spectacular events which have positioned Edinburgh as one of the world's greatest New Year celebrations and rightful place as the 'Home of Hogmanay'.
- Since the inaugural event in 1993, Edinburgh's Hogmanay quickly grew into one of the world's leading New Year celebrations, and over three decades has welcomed millions of visitors and locals to party in Scotland's capital.
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay 2024/25 is a key part of Scotland's winter tourism calendar, generating over £48 million in economic benefit, with over 100,000 people anticipated to attend events in the city for the four-day celebrations
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay is one of Edinburgh's eleven major festivals, created in 1993, the festival quickly grew into a globally recognised event, attracting visitors from around the world to celebrate New Year in Edinburgh, the 'Home of Hogmanay'.
- Over 3.35 million revellers have experienced the world-famous Edinburgh's Hogmanay Street Party over the last 30 years.
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay continues to be a bucket list experience for people around the world looking to celebrate New Year in Scotland.
- The word Hogmanay came from various possible language origins such as Gaelic, Dutch and Flemish.

New Year, when family and friends would gather for a party and to exchange presents which came to be known as Hogmanay's. Edinburgh's Hogmanay Festival dates back to 1993 and has evolved to become one of the greatest outdoor celebrations of New Year's Eve in the world. Hogmanay is technically just one day but the Hogmanay celebration in Edinburgh (as well as in other places in Scotland) lasts for 3 or 4 days.

In any normal year, the big events include a torchlight procession, a massive outdoor street party, a live headline concert and fireworks, and free culture trail across the city - and of course immediately after midnight on New Year's Eve it is traditional for the thousands of revellers to join hands and sing Robert Burns' *Auld Lang Syne......*before continuing to party into the wee hours.

### **Torchlight Procession**

Edinburgh's Hogmanay have announced the return of the spectacular Torchlight Procession to kick off this year's Hogmanay celebrations. This family-friendly event is back to mark the start of New Year celebrations around the world on Sunday 29 December. A river of fire will weave its way through the capital's streets, with torches carried in aid of local and national charities. With up to 20,000 participants blazing a trail through the Old Town of Scotland's historic Capital, this event welcome's locals and tourists alike to a carnival atmosphere in the Meadows with live street theatre, fire performers, pipe bands and drummers, before the ceremonial Torchlight Procession embarks on its route through the Old Town, with a fiery finale underneath Edinburgh Castle. Passing famous Edinburgh landmarks including National Museum of Scotland, Greyfriars Kirkyard, the Tolbooth Kirk, the National Library of Scotland and much more, this spectacle is not to be missed.

Returning this year, the procession will be led by Shetland's South Mainland Up Helly Aa' Jarl Squad, who previously made history when they appointed the first ever female Jarl. Councillor Val Walker, City of Edinburgh Council Culture and Communities Convener said: "I'm delighted to see the Torchlight Procession returning to the streets of Edinburgh this year. It's a breathtaking sight as thousands make their way through our capital's historic streets, their torches lighting up the night— it's a moving symbol of unity



and hope for the year ahead. It is also raising vital funds for four wonderful charities. This highlight of the Hogmanay programme is always a favourite among residents and visitors alike, and I have no doubt it will be just as popular this year."

### Edinburgh's Hogmanay announces a stellar line-up of Scottish music for New Year festivities

The event has also revealed a stellar lineup of live music events taking place across Scotland's capital throughout 2024/2025's New Year festivities. This eclectic programme of events presents indie rock legends, contemporary Scottish bands and DJ's, alongside classical recitals and foot stompin' ceilidh chaos. Taking place from 30 December until New Year's Day, this feast of some of Scotland's best musicians will perform in landmark venues across the Capital. Featuring the spectacular St. Giles' Cathedral and Edinburgh's famous Assembly Rooms. For the first time, Edinburgh's Hogmanay will host live music events outside the city centre, branching out to Portobello Town Hall and Leith Arches on 1 January, welcoming in the New Year with some outstanding live music. Highlights include Edinburgh's own Idlewild who will headline a very special Night Afore Concert at the Assembly Rooms, Scottish music icons Texas will headline the Concert in the Gardens, a Candlelit Concert at St. Giles' Cathedral, and a free Family Ceilidh taking place in Portobello Town Hall.

Councillor Val Walker added: "Edinburgh's Hogmanay is once again set to be a spectacular celebration, with events taking place across the city from St. Giles' Cathedral and Assembly Rooms to Leith Arches and Portobello Town Hall. This diverse programme promises to be an unforgettable experience for residents and visitors alike, featuring live music, ceilidh dancing, and breathtaking views of the midnight fireworks over Edinburgh Castle. I'm excited to see Edinburgh continue to shine as the place to welcome in the New Year!"

### **Edinburgh's Winter Festival**

Edinburgh's Winter Festival is the home of Christmas and Hogmanay celebrations in Edinburgh. Edinburgh's Christmas this year runs for six weeks from the from November 2024 to 4 January 2025, and brings festivity to the heart of Edinburgh and beyond. With a newly expanded programme of events and attractions including Christmas Markets, Ice Skating, fairground rides, Christmas Tree maze, community events and more, Edinburgh's Christmas is the best way to celebrate the festive season with loved ones. The world-famous Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations bring

### Hogmanay traditions

- First footing The 'first foot' in the house after midnight is still very common in Scotland. To ensure good luck, a first footer should be a dark-haired man. Fair-haired first footers were not particularly welcome after the Viking invasions of ancient times. Traditional gifts include a lump of coal to lovingly place on the host's fire, along with shortbread, a black bun and whisky to toast to a Happy New Year. These days shortbread and whisky will suffice. Showing up empty handed is not only very rude but also bad luck!
- Redding the house Rather than a Spring clean, the Scots have a New Year's clean to welcome in the New Year. Starting the New Year with a dirty house is bad luck. When open fires were common, people would clear the ashes and lay a new fire for the New Year. Cleaning one's house also extends to clearing one's debts. An old Scottish superstition states that you should try to clear all your debts before the stroke of midnight.
- Bonfires and Fire Festivals- Scotland's fire festivals at Hogmanay and later in January may have pagan or Viking origins. The use of fire to purify and drive away evil spirits is an ancient idea. Fire is at the centre of Hogmanay celebrations in Stonehaven, Comrie and Biggar and has recently become an element in Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebration.
- The singing of *Auld Lang Syne* all over the world- People sing Robert Burns' version of this traditional Scottish air. How it became the New Year's song is something of a mystery. At Edinburgh's Hogmanay, people join hands for what is reputed to be the world's biggest *Auld Lang Syne*.
- The Saining of the House-This is a very old rural tradition that involved blessing the house and livestock with holy water from a local stream. Although it had nearly died out, in recent years it has experienced a revival. After the blessing with water, the woman of the house was supposed to go from room to room with a smouldering juniper branch, filling the house with purifying smoke.

Edinburgh into the New Year with a bang! Edinburgh welcomes revellers from across the globe for a four-day festival celebrating and ringing in the New Year with live music, spectacular fireworks, Street Parties, comedy and more.

For more information about Edinburgh's Winter Festival visit: www.edwinterfest.com



# Lockerbie remembered

By: Neil





A brand-new drama series based on the Lockerbie disaster of 1988 is soon to be released. This global event series is based on the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 and the search for justice by Dr Jim Swire and his wife Jane, who tragically lost their beloved daughter, Flora, in the devastating event. On 21<sup>st</sup> December 1988, 259 passengers and crew were killed when Pan Am Flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie 38 minutes after take-off, with a further 11 residents losing their life as the plane came down over the quiet, Scottish town. Neil Drysdale looks back on this tragic event and how the tragedy has shaped so many and created bonds across the world.

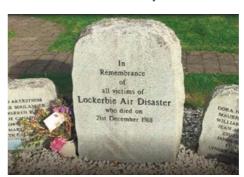
he words were all the more horrific for being spoken softly.
As one Lockerbie resident recalled: "There was this enormous crump.
And then there was a whoosh and, suddenly the whole sky turned orange, and there were flames hundreds of feet up into the air."

It was at just after 7pm on Wednesday, December 21 1988, when life changed irrevocably for the people of the little Scottish community and the passengers and crew of Pan Am flight 103 whose fates collided with devastating consequences. The following day, a combination of shock, horror and incomprehension permeated the townspeople, 11 of whom were among the 270 who died in the conflagration.

In these circumstances, one might imagine there would be controversy over Sky's decision to create a TV drama about the disaster. Yet, the five-part series, which is being screened in the from January 2, 2025, has the backing of most local people because it portrays the anguish of Dr Jim Swire and his wife Jane, who lost their daughter, Flora, and have been seeking answers for more than 35 years.

In the programme, he's played by Colin Firth, who won an Oscar for his role in *The King's Speech*, and the script is based on a book co-written by Dr Swire. It is moving, it is poignant - and angry about claims of repeated cover-ups by authorities on both sides of the Atlantic.

At the time, the overriding impression for any journalist arriving at the scene was of a community numb with grief and loss. One of the residents said simply after surveying the wreckage in Sherwood Crescent: "They were here one minute. Then they were gone." A decade later, I returned to Lockerbie and discovered that, although a veneer of normality had returned, allied to an impressive house rebuilding programme and the creation of new leisure facilities, the atrocity was still taking its toll. This is one thing which those unfamiliar with tragedy may struggle to fathom, but the ripples extended in every direction. Some people simply never recovered. And their names deserve to be remembered more than any bomb-maker.





### Dreadful human toll

In the decades since the atrocity occurred, just one man - Abdelbaset al-Megrahi was convicted at Kamp Zeist, a Scottish court which convened in the Netherlands in 2000. Al-Megrahi died from prostate cancer in 2012 after controversially being allowed to return home on compassionate grounds to Libya, but many people, including the relatives of some of the families who lost loved ones, were never wholly convinced he was a major figure in the conspiracy. The bereaved have different opinions and the majority are not experts in international diplomacy. What do they do recognise is the dreadful human toll of the outrage and how, while Pan Am went out of business, even as other air companies boasted of their exemplary safety record, the impact of those on the flight and in Lockerbie brought sustained agony.

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Kathleen Flannigan, 41, her husband, Thomas, 44, and their 10-year-old daughter, Joanne, were all killed instantly when an explosion ripped through their house at 16 Sherwood Crescent. Their bodies were never found; they had been atomised in the blast. Their 14-year-old son, Steven, witnessed a fireball engulfing his home from a neighbour's garage. Their other son, David, 19, was in Blackpool at the time and was forced to confront a scene straight from a Dore vision of hell. He later turned to alcohol and drugs and died from heart failure in Thailand in 1993, aged just 24.

Steven, meanwhile, despite seeking a fresh start in England, couldn't avoid being a prisoner of the past. He died in August, 2000, struck by a train in Wiltshire. A whole family had been devastated by what happened on that December night.

It is therefore hardly surprising that Lockerbie remains inextricably linked with something terrible, as do the likes of Dunblane, Sandy Hook, Aberfan, Virginia

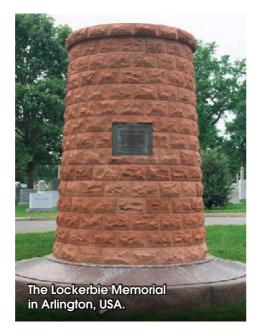


Tech... other places which were thrust into the spotlight because of disaster and catastrophe. But what has impressed many is the determination of most members of the community not to be frozen in time, not to remain vengefully obsessed towards those who perpetrated the attack. As one resident told me: "We had to start again and find things to do to take our minds off it. But there were so many young people killed (including 35 students from Syracuse University in New York) that we recognised others were a lot worse off than us. We knew their families would want to come here and try to make sense of what had happened. So, we made up our minds to be there for them in whatever way we could."

### **Shared solace**

This month, on the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary, wreaths will be laid at a memorial garden in Lockerbie and ceremonies will also be held at Syracuse University and Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The residents, including retired priest Patrick Keegans, who was in Lockerbie when it happened, will never forget, but he wants to look forward as well as back. As he said: "It doesn't go away, it stays with people, especially those who have lost family. But it's part of our life now. We don't live sad, miserable lives, but there's a constant undercurrent. The memories stay with me, they are part and parcel of who I am now."

At least, he was spared. So, too, was Kara Weipz, from New Jersey, who lost her 20-year-old brother, Rick Monetti, one of the Syracuse students. The motherof-three, who is president of the Victims of Pan Am Flight 103 group, shares Mr



Keegans' feelings of tristesse, but she is also proud of the links which have been created and nurtured between the United States and Scotland. She said: "We can't change things, we can't bring them back, but we can look at the fact that we have always honoured them in the way we live our lives and the things we do. Yes, the sadness takes many forms, but myself and others are also looking at what we have done in the last 30 years and how we have come together, enacted change, created our own family, and been there for one another."

William Paul, former chief reporter of *Scotland on Sunday*, was involved in the Lockerbie case from that first dreadful evening when the sky rained fire over town and countryside through to the drama of the guilty verdict in the special court in the Netherlands. He told me:



"I followed the Lockerbie investigation with all its twists and turns from first confirmation that a bomb had brought down the plane to the unlikely courtroom at the old Cold War base at Camp Zeist. Armoured glass separated the three robed judges and huddles of legal teams from families of the victims and of the accused in rows of cinema-style seating. A tale was told of international power politics and intrigue, of casual criminality and high statesmanship. But when the guilty verdict was pronounced, there was a strong feeling among observers that we had not uncovered the whole truth. It was almost a sense of disappointment, an acknowledgement that matters did not end there, that there was more to come."

The pain will never be extinguished. But relatives from both countries have spoken of how the bonds of love are stronger than hate and described how, even in their suffering, they have found a shared solace. They will not let terrorism win. And if the new drama offers them any breakthrough, it will have served its purpose.

Lockerbie: A Search for Truth premieres Thursday 2 January 2025 on Sky Atlantic and Now in the United Kingdom and Ireland, on Peacock in the United States and on Binge & Hubbl in Australia.



### Hororata Highland Games sets new records and celebrates community spirit





he 13<sup>th</sup> Hororata Highland Games, held on Saturday 9 November, welcomed an impressive turnout this year. The event featured 230 volunteers, 700 competitors, 140 stallholders, 23 clans, and over 10,000 visitors. This vibrant event once again demonstrated its importance as a major highlight of the Canterbury event calendar and solidified its reputation as an iconic festival. Chieftain Richard Lang, who has been involved since the festival's inception,



expressed his pride, stating, "I have witnessed the growth of the Hororata Highland Games into what can truly be described as a world-class festival in every aspect. It was humbling to see the joy this event brings to our community."

The sense of camaraderie and mutual support among competitors set the Games apart as participants not only aimed to excel but also encouraged their peers. The enthusiastic involvement of visitors of all ages contributed to a truly festive atmosphere.

The Oceania Heavyweight Championship was fiercely contested throughout the day and culminated in an exhilarating showdown at the Hororata Stones, where athletes raced against the clock to lift five stones weighing between 90 and 140 kg onto barrels. Australian Terry Sparkes emerged victorious, claiming the title for an impressive fourth consecutive year, narrowly beating Ashburton's Craig Manson. The Women's Championship yielded a record-breaking performance by Kelly Drummond, who claimed victory, while Connor O'Brien secured the Men's Championship with a commendable mention for local

competitor Ethan Burgess, who placed third in his debut in the heavy arena after being inspired by previous volunteer experiences.

### A festival like no other

The Hororata Highland Games is also renowned for being the largest gathering of pipe bands in New Zealand outside of the Nationals. This year, nineteen bands with 497 pipers and drummers participated in the Chieftain's Welcoming ceremony, delivering an emotional performance of *Amazing Grace*, led by Maggie McConnochie, moving many attendees to tears. Scottish musician Willie McArther further entertained the crowd with popular Celtic ballads during a lively sing-along.

Richard Lang emphasized the festival's significance for the community: "The Hororata Highland Games is a festival like



no other, fuelled by the passion of our volunteers. This event embodies a true sense of community and purpose. It serves as a foundation for our community to build our future, with profits directed toward the Hororata Hall project and supporting nineteen community groups involved in fundraising. The Hororata Community Trust is grateful for the support from our partners and suppliers who enable our community to stage the Games."

The Hororata Highland Games has become a cherished tradition, bringing together the community and visitors alike, and looks forward to another successful event next year.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Hororata Highland Games will take place on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. For more see: www.hororata.org.nz/highland-games





### THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

- 1 The first volume of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was published in Edinburgh, edited by William Smellie. **1768**
- 1 First lighthouse in Scotland opened (at Kinnaird Head, Fraserburgh). It was built by Thomas Smith and Robert Stevenson.  $1787\,$
- 1 English writer Jo (JK) Rowling moves to Edinburgh where she works on her first  ${\it Harry\,Potter}$  novel. 1993
- 1 Report of discovery of fossilised dinosaur footprints on the Isle of Skye.  $2015\,$
- 2 Mary Slessor, West African missionary, born in Aberdeen. Slessor was adopted by an African tribe, who called her "ma". 1848
- 3 Robert Louis Stevenson died in Samoa. The Edinburgh born author penned classics such as *Treasure Island* (1883), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and *Kidnapped* (1886). **189**4
- 2 First BBC radio broadcast in Gaelic, a religious address from Aberdeen.  $1923\,$



- **3** His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen opened and soon became the city's leading centre of entertainment. **1906**
- 4 King William I (Lion) died at Stirling and was succeeded by his son Alexander II.  $1214\,$
- 4 Treaty of London, releasing James I from his 18 years captivity in England. 1423
- 4 The first issue of children's comic \textit{The Dandy}, including the character Desperate Dan, is published by Dundee-based publisher D. C. Thomson & Co. 1937
- **5** King Francis II of France, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, died. **1560**
- 5 Subscriber trunk dialling (STD) is inaugurated on the U.K. telephone network when The Queen dials a call from Bristol to Edinburgh and speaks to the Lord Provost. This new system allowed for automatic dialling of long distance calls without the assistance of switchboard operators. 1958
- **5** Death of Sir Robert Watson-Watt, the Brechin-born inventor of radar. **1973**
- **6** King Alexander II crowned at Scone. Alexander died, aged 50, on 6 July 1249 and was buried at Melrose Abbey in the Scottish Borders. **1214**
- **6** The Battle of Dryfe Sands took place near Lockerbie, Scottish Borders, resulting in many casualties, it was a battle between the clans of Clan Maxwell and Clan Johnstone. Many were wounded by downward sword strokes known as "Lockerbie Licks". **1593**
- $\bf 6$  Charles Edward Stewart's entry into Derby. A reluctant Charles and his Jacobite army was forced to withdraw from Derby only two days later. 1745
- **6** The last 12 permanent residents leave the Island of Stroma. **1962**
- 7 The birth of Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, the Anglo-Scottish aristocrat and second husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary married Henry, her first cousin, on the 29 July 1565, to be the uncrowned "King Henry". Darnley was the second husband of Mary and father of King James VI of Scotland and James I of England. He was assassinated in February 1567 by person unknown, although Mary's third husband James, Lord Bothwell, was seriously implicated in the murder. 1545
- 8 Mary, Queen of Scots, born Linlithgow Palace. The only surviving child of James V and Mary of Guise, Mary ascended to the Scottish throne following her father's death when she was only six days old. Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle in England for her complicity in a plot to murder Queen Elizabeth I at the age of 44 years. 1542

- $\boldsymbol{9}$  King Malcolm IV, King of Scotland, died at Jedburgh Castle.  $\boldsymbol{1165}$
- 10 The death of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, the Lord President of the Court of Session. As a prominent Whig, like many Scots Forbes supported the Hanoverian cause and used his influence to dissuade a number of clans from joining the Jacobites. 1747
- 10 Designer and architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh died in London. Known for his 'Glasgow style' with works such as the House for an Art Lover, the Scotland Street School, and the Glasgow School of Art. 1928
- $10\,\text{-}\,\text{King}$  Edward VIII abdicated and King George VI acceded to the throne.  $1936\,$
- 11-David Brewster, inventor of the kaleidoscope born. 1781
- 11 New modernised trains are introduced on the Glasgow Subway as part of a £288m upgrade of the city's underground rail system. Glasgow has the third-oldest underground rail transit system in the world.  $2023\,$
- 12 Anne of Denmark, wife of King James VI, born. 1574



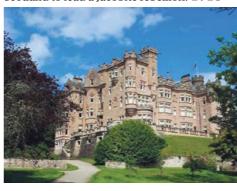
- 12 Work on construction of "Hull 534", the Cunard liner *RMS Queen Mary*, at John Brown & Company's shipyard at Clydebank is suspended due to the Great Depression. 1931
- 13 William Drummond, poet, born. Drummond was one of the first notable Scots poets to write exclusively in English after the Union of the Crowns in 1603. 1585
- 13 The death of Thomas Glover, an industrial pioneer in Japan. Born in Fraserburgh, he is considered a national hero in Japan. Fraser brought the first steam train to Japan, and created the shipyard in Nagasaki which would eventually form the Mitsubishi Corporation. 1911
- 13 New Lanark is designated as a World Heritage Site. The New Lanark cotton mills opened in 1786 and are one of six UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Scotland. 2001
- 14 James V died at Falkland Palace. Mary Queen of Scots succeeded him. 1542
- $14 \hbox{-} \hbox{Glasgow District Underground} \\ opened, powered by electricity. \ 1896$
- $14\,\text{-}\,\text{Will}$  Fyfe, comedian, died.  $1947\,$
- $14 \hbox{- University of Stirling instituted} \\ \text{by Royal charter. } 1967$
- 15 The Zoological Society of Glasgow was founded on this day. 1936
- 16 Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland. Cromwell was the only invader of Scotland to conquer the whole country. 1653
- 16 Thomas Blake Glover, founding father of Japan's industrialisation (including Mitsubishi) and Japanese Navy, born Fraserburgh. 1838
- 16 Scotland's largest airline, Flyglobespan, goes into administration. The airline flew routes from Scotland to Europe and North America. 2009
- 17 Marriage contract between James IV and Margaret Tudor signed by King James.
  1502
  17 Lord Kelvin, scientist and
- 17 Lord Kelvin, scientist ar inventor, died. 1907
- 17 Petrol rationing was imposed following the Suez crisis and the closure of the canal.  $1956\,$
- 18 Many Scottish historical records were lost when the ship *Elizabeth of Burntisland* sank off the English coast. The records had been taken to London by Oliver Cromwell and were being returned to Edinburgh. 1661

- 18 Society of Antiquaries founded and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1783, the Society's purpose is "to investigate both antiquities and natural and civil history in general, with the intention that the talents of humanity should be cultivated and that the study of natural and useful sciences should be promoted". 1780
- 18 Death penalty for murder was formally abolished in Britain. 1969



- 18 Inverness was awarded city status. It was one of three regions in the UK to become a city marking the new millennium and the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Prior to Inverness Dundee was the last Scottish town to receive the distinction in 1889. 2000
- 19 *The Scotsman* newspaper moves to new offices at North Bridge in Edinburgh, remaining there until 1999. 1904
- 20 First General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. 1560
- 20 Entertainer Andy Stewart was born in Glasgow. Stewart is perhaps best known for his STV show, *The White Heather Club*, which began in 1960, and his songs *Ye Canna Shuv Yer Granny Off A Bus* and *Donald Where's Yer Troosers*. He died in 1993. **1933**
- 20 Scottish advocate Margaret Kidd becomes the first British woman King's Counsel (senior lawyer) in Britain. 1948
- 20 Aberdeen beat European Cup Winners Hamburg 2-0 to become the first Scottish club to win the UEFA Super Cup. 1983
- 21 Robert Liston, who was born in Linlithgow in 1794, performed the first operation in a British hospital using anaesthetic (ether). 1846
- 21 A Pan Am 747 blew up and crashed at Lockerbie, Dumfries, killing 243 passengers, 16 crew and 11 Lockerbie residents.

  The Pan American jumbo jet bound for New York was blown out of the sky by a terrorist bomb and crashes onto the Scottish town of Lockerbie killing all 259 passengers and 11 people on the ground. 1988
- 22 James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender, son of James II, the deposed Catholic King of England, arrived at Peterhead in north-east Scotland to lead a Jacobite rebellion. 1715

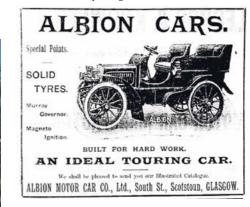


- 22 Pop star Madonna married movieproducer Guy Ritchie at Skibo Castle, putting Dornoch into the media spotlight. The couple has since divorced but helped create a Scottish wedding boom. 2000
- 23 Major outbreak of cholera in Scotland. 1831
- 23 Fife born accordionist Jimmy Shand died. Shand's recordings are famous throughout the world due to his distinctive playing style on the button accordion, and later on the BBC with *The White Heather Club.* 2000
- 24 King William I (Lion) crowned at Scone. 1165

- ${\color{red}24} \text{ Edinburgh Castle surrendered} \\ {\color{red}to Oliver Cromwell.} \ {\color{red}1650}$
- 24 General George Wade was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British army in Scotland after he had reported on the need for military roads in the country. 1724
- 25 Stone of Destiny removed from Westminster Abbey. Used as the coronation stone of the Scottish kings from the  $10^{th}$  century, the stone was removed by four Scottish university students whose story became a book and movie. The ringleader Ian Hamilton is a former contributor to the Scottish Banner.  $1950\,$



- 25 Christmas Day becomes a public holiday in Scotland. It was abolished in 1640. 1958
- 25 The Jacobite army reached Glasgow. The military campaign to return a Catholic Stewart king to the throne in place of the Hanoverian Protestant King William III. 1745
- 26 Alexander III, the King of Scots, was married to Margaret, the daughter of Henry III, King of England, in York.  $1251\,$
- 27 King Charles I, imprisoned at Carisbrooke Castle, reached an agreement with the Scots who offered military aid in exchange for a promise to establish Presbyterianism in England (but only for three years). 1647
- 27 Premiere of J M Barrie's play  $\it Peter\, Pan$  at the Duke of York Theatre, London. Barrie was born in Kirriemuir in 1860. 1904
- 28 James IV who liked to gamble played 'bylis' (similar to billiards) with a man described in records as "John Anderson that wantis the feit and handies". There's also a note mentioning that the king gave Anderson 14 shilling. 1501
- 28 Scotland's famous outlaw, Rob "Roy" MacGregor, died. He was immortalised in Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Rob Roy*. 1734
- 28 The Tay Bridge disaster occurred. 75 passengers were killed when the structure collapsed under a train during a storm. 1879
- 29 Charles Macintosh, who patented waterproof fabric, born in Glasgow. 1766
  29 William Ewart Gladstone, UK Prime
- Minister on four occasions, born 1809. **1809 30** Rangers' first match at their new Ibrox Stadium, with capacity of 75,000. It was a 3-1 victory over Hearts in the Inter-City League. **1899**



- 30 -The Albion Motor Company was established. At first the firm made motor cars and commercial vehicles, but from 1913 concentrated on the latter. 1899
- 31 Prince Charles Edward Stewart, The Young Pretender, was born in Rome. Known as "Bonnie Prince Charlie", after the Gaelic pronunciation of his name, he led the 1745 Jacobite attempt to overthrow the Hanoverian monarchy. Bonnie Prince Charlie or the Young Pretender, was the son of James, the Old Pretender. 1720
- **31** 72 killed at Glen Cinema Fire, Paisley. **1929**
- 31 The farthing coin (a quarter of an old penny) ceased to be legal tender. 1960

# Cairngorms tourism bosses launch winter campaign for UK's largest National Park



ourism bosses in the Cairngorms have joined forces to promote the UK's largest National Park as the ultimate winter travel destination for 2024. The latest data suggests that 2023 was a bumper year for tourism in the Cairngorms, with a particular increase in visitors choosing to explore in the quieter winter months. Led by Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP), over 370 tourism firms are now coming together to promote the Cairngorms National Park as the UK's 'original winter destination'.

Highland winter wonderland The Cairngorms National Park 'Where Winter Comes to Life!' campaign is showcasing over 1,700 square miles of Highland winter wonderland filled with seasonal magic, including the UK's only free ranging reindeer herd at Glenmore, Balmoral Castle & Estate at Crathie, Aviemore Ice Rink, Tomintoul & Glenlivet Dark Sky Park, Dalwhinnie Distillery, Landmark Forest Adventure Park at Carrbridge, Loch Insh Outdoor Centre at Kincraig and the Highland Wildlife Park. The CBP is working with tourism







businesses across the region to help extend the season and bring business to local visitor economies over the quieter winter months, with a focus on outdoor adventure, wildlife and nature, health and wellbeing, food and drink, culture and heritage.

The initiative is being geared towards promoting reasons to visit and explore the Cairngorms National Park from October to the end of March, showcasing areas that can accommodate visitors in the quieter season, as well as highlighting the long-established relationship between tourism, the great outdoors and wellbeing. The Grant Arms at Grantown on Spey and The Rowan Tree near Alvie are amongst the list of top accommodation providers who have already signed up to the campaign and will be staying open to visitors throughout the winter.

Visitors are being encouraged to enjoy everything from winter sports, stargazing and cycling, to guided wildlifespotting adventures and opportunities to catch a glimpse of the Northern Lights. Local expert guides will be on hand to offer a warm welcome to visitors, including opportunities to explore the natural history, landscape, heritage and traditions of the Cairngorms.

**Built on winter experiences** CBP is supported by the Cairngorms National Park Authority as a Chamber of Commerce and a Destination Marketing Organisation committed to promoting responsible and sustainable tourism. Craig Mills, CEO of Cairngorms Business Partnership, which is leading the official



Visit Cairngorms winter campaign, said: "The Cairngorms were built on winter experiences. Home to three of Scotland's ski centres, our very own reindeer herd and a 90-mile SnowRoads trail, we're the UK's original winter destination. We're also home to some of Scotland's most historic castles and distilleries, as well as popular family attractions, watersports, winter wildlife watching, and some incredible high and low level walking and cycling routes. Wintertime is when the Cairngorms are at their most magical. This winter, we're encouraging visitors to explore the UK's largest National Park and find out why the region really is 'Where Winter Comes to Life!"

Lisa Anderson, Marketing & Sales Manager for Landmark Forest Adventure Park, added: "Winter is a truly special time to visit the Cairngorms. Whether you're seeking adventure in the snow or a peaceful walk-through frost-covered forests, this season offers something unique for everyone. Our Ancient Forest Twi-LIGHTS is a magical way to experience the beauty of the pinewood forest, with twinkling lights and enchanting effects that create an unforgettable atmosphere. During the winter months, Landmark Forest Adventure Park offers a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities for visitors to enjoy."

The latest tourism economic impact research report for the Cairngorms National Park indicates steady growth in visitor numbers, spend and employment. There were an estimated 2.15 million tourism visits to the region in 2023, adding around £419m in value to the local tourism economy, and supporting over 5,400 fulltime equivalent jobs.

Duncan Freshwater, Managing Director of Loch Insh Outdoor Centre, commented: "Winter in the Cairngorms brings unique opportunities to engage with nature and experience a wide range of outdoor activities. Whether it's observing wildlife in their winter environment or participating in seasonal sports, this area becomes a prime destination for both adventure and nature enthusiasts. The newly installed, state-ofthe-art artificial ski slope on our site also allows guests to enjoy skiing regardless of weather conditions, adding a new level of accessibility and convenience to the winter sports experience. Our Boathouse Restaurant and accommodation also offer comfort and warmth after a day of winter activities. Visiting the Cairngorms in winter provides a chance to experience the park in a unique way, combining adventure, comfort, and convenience."

To plan your visit to The Cairngorms National Park this winter, go to www.visitcairngorms.com/winter

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Scotland Rampant Lion Lip Peak - Navy/Khaki



Saltire Flag

Scotland - Navy



Glasgow Scotland



Scotland Jersey Saltire



Lion Rampant Royal Stewart



Lion Rampant Black Watch Tartan Code: C3002E



Scotland Golf Saltire Crest-Navy Mesh



Saltire side Scotland text-Navv



Scotland Sports White Rampant Lion Light Blue Code: C3226E

Scotland Lion Rampant

Ski Hat-Roval Blue

Code: C3060E



Scotland Saltire Black Clan-with Royal Stewart



Scotland Jersey



Rampant Large Text-Grey Code: C3220E



Scotland-Navy Code: C3215E



Scotland Lion Rampant Ski Hat-Bottle Green Code: C3060E



Scotland Tartan **Bucket Hat** Price: \$25.00



Scotland Lion Rampant **Bucket Hat** Price: \$25.00

### IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN



### **Clootie Dumpling**

Particularly served at Hogmanay (New Year's Eve) The leftovers of this traditional pudding can also be eaten like a cake or fried with the breakfast bacon.

### **Ingredients:**

1 lb./450g. plain flour 6 oz. /150g. fresh breadcrumbs 8 oz./225g. sultanas 8 oz./225g. currants 4 oz./100g. raisins 4 oz./100g. chopped mixed peel 8 oz./225g. dark soft brown sugar 8 oz./225g. black treacle 8 oz./225g. shredded suet 2 tsp. ground cinnamon 2 tsp. ground ginger 2 tsp. ground mixed spice 1 tsp. baking-powder ½ tsp. salt 2 apples, grated 2 medium carrots, grated grated zest and juice of 1 lemon a little milk

### Method:

Mix all the ingredients well, and if necessary add a little milk to make a soft consistency.

Half-fill a large pan with water and bring to the boil. Put in a large piece of clean white cloth. Lift out and drain well, then spread the cloth on a flat surface. Flour lightly to form a seal. Put on pudding mixture and draw up edges. Tie with string and leave a little room for expansion. Put a plate upside down in the pan and place the dumpling on top. Bring to a simmer, cover and simmer for 3 hours. Unroll on to a plate and dry in low oven for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with caster sugar before serving hot, with cream if liked. Serves 8.

### Pigs in blankets Ingredients:

1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil 6 herby pork sausages, separated 6 spring onions, trimmed and halved 6 rashers smoked streaky bacon, halved

### Method:

Brush a large baking tray with the oil. Cut the sausages in half lengthways.

Take one sausage half and a halved spring onion and wrap in a piece of bacon. Place on the tray. Repeat with the remaining sausage halves, spring onion and bacon. Cover and chill in the fridge until ready to cook.

Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6. Bake the pigs in blankets for about 20 minutes, or until lightly browned and cooked through, turning after 10 minutes. Serve.

### Festive roast potatoes



### **Ingredients:**

10 large King Edward potatoes, peeled, cut into large chunks 50g/1%oz. lard, dripping or vegetable oil 2 pinches sea salt

### Method:

Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Simmer the potatoes in a large pan of salted boiling water for 4-5 minutes, or until the outside of the potatoes are beginning to soften.

Thoroughly drain the potatoes and briefly shake them around in the colander or pan to roughen up the edges.

Melt the lard in a deep flameproof roasting tray on a high heat and fry the potatoes on each side until they begin to brown

Sprinkle with salt, to taste, and roast for 30 minutes, or until starting to colour.

Turn the potatoes and return to the oven for a further 20-30 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp.

### Sage and onion stuffing

### **Ingredients:**

1 onion, peeled and finely chopped 1 tbsp vegetable oil 1 tbsp fresh sage, finely chopped 80g/3oz fresh white breadcrumbs salt and pepper 1 egg, beaten

### Method:

Sweat the onion in the oil, until soft but not coloured then Mix together the onion, sage and breadcrumbs and season well.

Add enough of the beaten egg to bind the mixture together and use to stuff meat or poultry or to roll into individual stuffing balls.

If making stuffing balls, cook in a roasting tin for 30 minutes.

### Christmas mince pies



### Ingredients:

225g/9oz. plain flour
2 tsp ground cinnamon
140g/5oz. chilled butter, cut into cubes
55g/2oz. ground almonds
25g caster sugar
1 egg, yolk only
55g/2oz. golden marzipan
170g/6oz vegetarian mincemeat
2 tbsp sherry
caster sugar, for sprinkling
cream, custard, or brandy butter, to serve

### Method:

Put the flour in a blender with the cinnamon. Add the butter and blitz to form fine breadcrumbs. Add the almonds, sugar, egg yolk and 2-3 tbsp of cold water and blitz to form a soft dough. Knead the dough briefly on a floured surface, then wrap in cling film and chill for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, chop the marzipan into small pieces. Stir into the mincemeat, along with the sherry.

Preheat the oven to 190C/170C Fan/Gas 5. Thinly roll out the pastry and cut out twelve 7.5cm/3in rounds. Place the rounds in a greased 12 hole tart tin. Divide the mincemeat between the pastry cases.

Cut out 12 stars and place one on top of each tart. Bake for 20 minutes until the pastry is golden and cooked through. Transfer to a wire rack and sprinkle with caster sugar. Serve with cream, custard or brandy butter.

### Black Bun



### **Ingredients:**

### For the pastry:

300g/10½oz. plain flour 75g/3oz. lard, cubed 75g/3oz. butter, cubed pinch salt ½ tsp baking powder 1 free-range egg, beaten, for glazing For the filling: 200g/7oz. plain flour

300g/10½oz. raisins 300g/10½oz. currants

½ tsp. ground ginger ½ tsp. ground cinnamon ½ tsp. ground allspice

½ tsp. mixed spice ½ tsp. ground black pepper

100g/3½oz. dark muscovado sugar 100g/3½oz. mixed peel, chopped ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 tbsp. whisky 1 free-range egg 3 tbsp buttermilk

# Aury mas

This month gather friends and family around and eat perhaps a bit more than you should, and celebrate Christmas and Hogmanay with a great range of food and drink. From our table to yours-Happy Holidays!

### **Method:**

For the pastry, sift the flour into a bowl and rub in the lard and butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the salt, baking powder and four tablespoons of cold water and mix to a soft dough. Turn out and knead into a ball. Wrap in cling film and leave to chill in the fridge while you make the filling.

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 (fan 160C).

For the filling, mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl.

Line a 900g/2lb loaf tin with baking parchment. On a lightly floured surface, roll out two thirds of the pastry to a rectangle large enough to line the tin. Drape into the tin and press up against the sides. Spoon the filling into the tin, pressing down to compress.

Roll out three quarters of the remaining pastry to a rectangle large enough to cover the tin. Dampen the edges of the pastry with water and press the pastry lid on top to seal. Trim the edges and crimp using the tines of a fork. Roll out the remaining pastry, along with any trimmings, and use to make a bow to decorate the top, then attach with a little water.

Glaze with beaten egg and bake for two hours. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin before turning out.

### Mulled wine

### **Ingredients:**

1 large orange 3 lemons 12 cloves

2 satsumas or clementine's 2 x 750ml. bottles red wine 2 cinnamon sticks

150g/5½oz. caster sugar (optional) brandy, to taste (optional)

### Method:

Carefully peel the zest very thinly from the orange and lemons using a vegetable peeler. Squeeze out the juice and reserve.

Stick the cloves into the satsumas. Pour the wine, 1.2 litres/2 pints of

Pour the wine, 1.2 litres/2 pints of cold water, and the citrus peel and juices into a large, heavy-based saucepan. Add the clove-studded satsumas and cinnamon sticks. Bring the mixture just to the boil, then reduce the heat until the mixture is simmering, cover the pan with the lid, and continue to simmer for about 1 hour. Stir in the sugar gradually during cooking, until the mulled wine is sweetened to your liking (you may not need all of the sugar).

Strain the mulled wine and serve hot in cups.

# A community's spirit and dedication celebrated at official opening of Lewis monument to commemorate 100 years of resettlement





Community has always been at the heart of the Galson township – from fighting for their land 100 years ago to now being part of a community-owned estate.

he power of community has been celebrated and commemorated with the opening of a monument in the north of the Isle of Lewis on a community-owned estate, 100 years after a community worked together and resettled on their land after it was cleared to make way for a sheep farm. 'na Dorsan', which is the Scottish Gaelic for the doors, was unveiled in South Galson, Isle of Lewis on Friday 1<sup>St</sup> November and marks 100 years of transformation, whilst commemorating some of the township's significant historical events.



In 1924, Galson's story underwent a profound transformation as 52 families found new homes in Melbost, South Galson, and North Galson. People, hailing from Dell, Borve, Shader, Carloway, Fivepenny Ness and further afield, were able to make their home in Galson, but not without significant confrontations by some; in 1863 the community of Galson was cleared to make room for a sheep farm and in 1888, Galson Farm was raided by a large group, resulting in the arrest, and transfer to court in Edinburgh of four men; Malcolm Smith, Malcolm Saunders, Malcolm Maciver and John Nicolson. Fast forward to 2007, the entire estate passed into community ownership, to be managed by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galson Estate Trust) on behalf of the community.

Significant historical documents
Juliette Desportes, the historian who
consulted on the accompanying exhibition,
shared: "I was delighted to contribute to this
project and help capture the voices of those
who have bravely fought for the right to live
on and off the land. While the story of the
clearances for sheep and subsequent land
raids is a well-known one, the events which

took place in Galson have somehow been largely ignored by historians. It is wonderful to see such an important historical episode come to light and be celebrated in this way, 100 years after the township's resettlement."

The exhibition details Galson's fight for land and those involved in the project called on significant historical documents to learn more about the challenges, including original mortgage documents and deeds for croft houses, including those of Seonaid Ruairidh 'an Mhàrtainn and Murchadh 'an Bhàin Dòmhnallach, two of the people to be resettled in 1924, and the grandparents of Agnes Rennie, the current Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Board Chairperson.

On reflecting on moving to Galson in 1924, Seonaid Ruairidh 'an Mhàrtainn, who was born in Shader in 1898 and died in 1995, recalled to Agnes, who also lives in Galson: "O yes, we liked it. It was lovely right enough. It was green and clean. Nothing was ploughed except for the land around the tack... Each family had their own sheep when they came to Gabhsann. What they had they brought with them. They brought all their possessions as they were not coming on a temporary basis. They were here to stay."

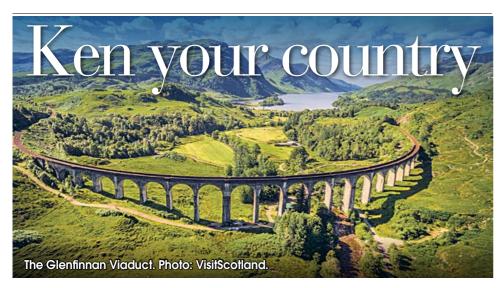
### The heart of this community

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, which operates to ensure that the community of Galson Estate benefit from community ownership, and manage all estate business, whilst also overseeing a range of projects, to support and develop the area, commissioned the monument, and accompanying exhibition.

Designed by celebrated artists Will Maclean and Marian Leven, who also designed other island monuments including the Iolaire and Sùileachan, na Dorsan was unveiled in the opening ceremony, which featured musical and poetry contributions from community members, including a young piper from the Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band and primary school pupils who had written poems to celebrate the day. Marian Leven, artist, commented: "Our idea was to create a monument which reflected the re-establishment of Galson township, using the symbolism of the doorway to represent the homes and the welcome which are the heart of this community. It has been a source of pride and satisfaction to see the concept of na Dorsan coming to fruition."

Janet Macleod, Cultural Engagement Officer, Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, added: "I would encourage anyone, whether you are a member of the local community or a visitor to the area, to visit the monument and exhibition to learn more about the history of Galson and to reflect on the historical and cultural importance of this project. I am very grateful to have been part of the team coordinating this project, and I have gained a far greater appreciation of the challenges faced by those who were cleared from the area and what they went through for us to be in the position that we find ourselves in now, living and working in a thriving community owned and managed estate."

For more information about na Dorsan and the work of Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, which manages the community-owned 56,000 acre Galson Estate, please visit www.galsontrust.com.



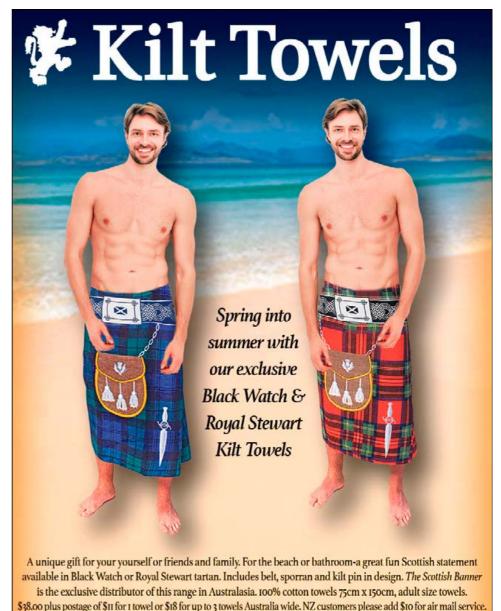
ow well do you know Scotland?
To test your knowledge, we have assembled ten fun questions on its geography, history and culture.
So, get your map of Scotland out and start, but if you get stumped, the solutions can be found underneath. Good luck!

- 1) Which historic Scottish region was called Linlithgowshire until 1925?
- 2) In Scottish folklore when should a woman not comb her hair at night?
- 3) Christmas only became a holiday in Scotland in which year?
- 4) Which village, three miles east of Inverness, has a name which means 'back of the small pond' in Scottish Gaelic?
- 5) What year was the Grade A listed Glenfinnan Viaduct completed?
- 6) Skara Brae is a stone-built Neolithic settlement found on the largest island of which archipelago??
- 7) Where did actor Ewan McGregor grow up?
- 8) What does the ken in "Ken Your Country" mean?

- 9) Which Scottish star had a tattoo which read "Scotland Forever"?
- 10) How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Scottish Gaelic?

Answers:

- 1) West Lothian.
- 2) If she had a father, brother or husband at sea, she would not comb her hair for fear that the hairs would find him in the dark and entangle their boat.
- 3) 1958. Prior to this date it was a regular working day.
- 4) Culloden.
- 5) It was completed in 1901 by Sir Robert McAlpine and was one of the last major constructions of the Victorian railway revolution. The build cost was £18,904 over £2m in today's money.
- 6) Orkney.
- 7) Creiff, Perthshire.
- 8) Know.
- 9) Sir Sean Connery was inked with his love of Scotland at the age of 16 when he enrolled in the Royal Navy.
- 10) Nollaig Chridheil.



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Welcome to our "Clansified" listing of Scottish Clans, Societies and Clubs. If you would like to add your Clan please contact our office for full details. Our contacts are located on page 2. If you are contacting your Clan be sure to tell them you saw them in the Scottish Banner and please support these great community organisations.

### Clan Baird Society Worldwide



from Baird, Barde, Bard, Beard, Beaird, Brd, Bayard, Bardt, Barth and Biard or varied spellings of the name of Scottish origin

In addition to the Society newsletter and the opportunity to associate with fellow clansman members may query the Society geneologist. For information write:

Clan Baird Commander Richard Baird of Rickarton, Ury and Lochwood Rickarton House, Stonehaven, Scotland Hereditary President of Clan Baird Society Worldwide

Debra J. Baird, Ph.D. FSA Scot, CBSW Convenor Email: djbaird4@gmail.com Website: clanbairdsocietyworldwide.co.uk



### CLAN CARRUTHERS SOCIETY -INTERNATIONAL-

HEREDITARY CHIEF AND SOCIETY PATRON Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains Chief of the Name and Arms of Carruthers

Cordially invites all Carruthers and their descendants to join us in preserving our Clan and Family heritage.

Clan Carruthers Society - International officially representing Carruthers worldwide

> www.clancarrutherssociety.org clancarrutherssociety@gmail.com

### CLAN DONALD in VICTORIA

Proudly affiliated with Clan Donald Australia, Victorian Scottish Union and Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group. Represented at all major Highland gatherings in Victoria.

### CLAN DONALD VICTORIA

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Hon Chief: Mr Lindsay McDonald Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com

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### **Clan Fraser Society** of Australia

and Fraser septs to join our clan society.

All members receive a copy of our quarterly newsletter "Strawberry Leaves" Membership enquiries to Don Chitts Ph: (03) 9754 5120 donchitts@hotmail.com Website: http://clanfraseraustralia.org Facebook:https://www.facebook.com/ Pages/Clan-Fraser-Society-of-Australia/

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Invites membership inquiries from persons named Bell (all spellings), their descendants and friends. Various resources available for genealogical research. Quarterly newsletter. Tents hosted at major Scottish games nationwide.

### Website: www.ClanBell.org

Online membership: https://clanbell.org/membership.html Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ClanBell Email: President@clanbell.org Clan Bell North America

49 Greystone Lane NW Cartersville, GA, 30121



### CHISHOLM

Clan Chisholm **Society of Australia Inc** 

Membership is invited from Clan Chisholm descendants of all spellings of the name (Chisholm, Chisolm, Chism, Chisum, Chisam, etc) Contact: Kim Polley OAM PO Box 84, Longford, Tasmania, 7301

Email: kim.polley13@gmail.com www.clanchisholmsociety.org/ public/AUSmembership.php



### Clan Donnachaidh **Society of New South Wales Inc., Australia**

### **Duncan Robertson Reid**

People who bear any of the above names or other Sept names of Clan Donnachaidh "The Children of Duncan" are invited to join in our activities by participating in the Scottish Gatherings held in NSW.

For information and membership application, contact Richard Harvey, Secretary Email: lh100@tpg.com.au



Includes name variations such as Galbreath, Culbreath, Gilbraith etc.

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www.clangalbraith.org

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### **CLAN GREGOR SOCIETY**

Est: 1822 in Edinburgh Scotland

Patron: Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor Bt Membership enquiries for USA: usa@clangregor.com

Rest of the World: membership@clangregor.com

Web: www.clangregor.com

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### www.blairsociety.org



Family of Bruce International, Inc., the only such organization recognized by the hereditary chief of the Name of Bruce, The Rt. Hon. Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, is a non-profit organization established to create kinship amongst its family members and promote interest in the Family of Bruce and its history. Membership is open to persons who qualify by surname, by decent, or by recognized septs: Carlisle, Carruthers, Crosby, Randolph and Stenhouse

Membership inquiries should be directed to:

Donald E. Bruce 1051 Eagle Ridge Trail

Polly A. (Bruce) Tilford. Secretary 5561 Earl Young Road Bloomington, IN 47408 Stillwater, Minnesota 55082 www.familyofbruceinternational.org



### Clan Davidson Society in Australia Inc.

CHIEF Grant Davidson of Davidston cordially invites to membership all who bear one of the Clan Names, and all who can trace their descent from an ancestor bearing the name Davidson or one of the Septs shown on the member application form available from the Clan's Facebook Group link or by contacting the Hon. Secretary:

Dennis Hill. PO Box 519 Baulkham Hills NSW 1755 E:dhill1@bigpond.net.au, P: 0431 527 662



Invites membership to anyone of the surname or variations:- Edmiston/e, Edmondston, Edmanson, Edmeston, Edmonson, Edmundson, etc. Chieftain Sir Archibald Edmonstone Bt of Duntreath

> **Contact: Mal Edmiston** 3 Laguna Ave Kirwan, Qld, 4817 61 (0)7 4755 4370 m.edmiston@bigpond.com

### **Clan Gregor Society** Australasia

All MacGregors and Septs of our clan are invited to join the Clan Gregor Society Est 1822 If you live in Australia or New Zealand, please contact our clan representative: Frank McGregor PO Box 14 NORTH HOBART TAS 7002

Email: clangregoraustralia@gmail.com Web: www.clangregor.com

"Royal is our Race"



ARE YOU A BURNETT, BURNET, BURNETTE, BARNET, BARNETT, BARNETTE, BERNIT, BERNAT, BURNAP, BURNAT, MACBURNET, OR OTHER SPELLING VARIATION; MARRIED TO A BURNETT, OR A

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We are a family of many names, come & join your family!



### Elliot Clan Society, U.S.A.

Jim Dougherty - Clan President welcomes membership of all who are connected with this great border family.

Direct inquires to: Marianne Elliott, Membership Chair Email: marianne@mmelliott.com

Website: www.elliotclan-usa.com



**Est 1909** 

welcomed from MacGregors of all spellings and Septs

Gregor Grier MacAdams MacNish Magruder McGehee Gregory King Peter Fletcher Gregg Lecky Black and many others

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Phone: 314-432-2842, registrar@acgsus.org website: www.acgsus.org



### **National** Clan Cameron Australia Inc.

Celebrates those who trace their ancestry to Clan Cameron or are connected to the Clan through marriage or partnership or are from families acknowledged as Septs of Clan Cameron.

> President: Alistair Cameron Secretary: Terry Cameron

secv.nationalclancameronaus@gmail.com www.clan-cameron.org.au



Ph: 0412 090990 Email: clandonaldqld@optusnet.com.au Web: www.clandonaldqld.org ELIGIBILITY: Those with the name of MacDonald Macdonald McDonald McDonell, Donald, OR of one of the Septs of Clan Donald. OR with a connection through family lineage. There is no joy without Clan Donald



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Hamiltons and those of Hamilton descent are cordially invited to join the society. Inquiries to be sent to: Sheri Lambert, Treasurer P.O. Box 5399 Vernon Hills, IL 60061 visit our website:

www.clanhamilton.org

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name variants, descendants and supporters. Clan Hay looking for new members to



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For more information, please contact: Australian Clan Hay convenor, Chris Hay McMor Fairbank PO Box 70, Darrinallum, Victoria, 3325, Australia E: clanhayAustralia@outlook.com

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- Foster Scottish culture and activities Promote Scottish festivals and games
   Assist in genealogical research
   Foster fellowship among kith and kin
- Promote the history of Scotland
   Promote charitable and educational activities via a scholarship fund
   Gather the Clan, as directed by our Ch
- Alistair of Fordell

Jeff Henderson jeffh@bigpond.com 0439 330 012



### www.clanhendersonsociety.com



Commander: Michael T. McAlpin

### DISCOVER YOUR HERITAGE!

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All spellings and from all Septs Secretary.clanmackenzie@gmail.com www.clanmackenzienz.org



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CLAN MACNAUGHTON are invited to join our Worldwide Association to learn and share our Naughton and Scottish heritage. For more info go to: clanmacnaughton.net or contact Mary Nivison Burton, Membership Secretary at: membersec@clanmacnaughton.net

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A History of the Clan Macnachtan Paperback available through





### Clan Hope of Craighall Society

INTERNATIONAL & AUSTRALIA President & Commissioner: Steph

UNITED STATES of AMERICA
High Commissioner: Richard Rex Hope
highcommissionerusa@clanhope.org
Membership Chair: Cynthia Hope Henderson
membership@clanhope.org
www.clanhope.org

Commissioner: Scott Hale commissionercanada@clanhope.org www.clanhope.org

SCOTLAND

Commissioner: Colin Douglas Hope w.clanhope.org

f https://www.facebook.



### MacDougalls, MacDowalls, & ALL Associated Families

YOU are invited to join CMSNA! We would love to share Scottish heritage and traditions with YOU!

Learn MORE at www.MacDougall.org



Clan MacLaren Society of Australia Information about the Clan and application for CMSA

membership is available on the website or via the email address below

Membership is open to MacLarens (all spellings), Septs, individuals and families with an association to the Clan.

https://clanmaclarenau.org/ clanmaclarenau@gmail.com



### **Clan MacNeil Association** of Australia

For all enquiries about the clan and membership contact: John McNeil

21 Coopers Avenue, Leabrook, South Australia 5068 Phone: 08 833 33990

Email: malcolmjmcneil@outlook.com



**Rupert Irving of Bonshaw** Chief of the Name and Arms and 20th Clan Chief

Cordially invites all Border Irvings & Irvines and variations of the Name to join in preserving our Clan and Family history!

**DISCOVER YOUR HERITAGE!** 

www.clanirving.com

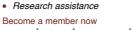


Invites anyone interested in our Clan and its ancestral heritage to contact us. Various Clan names include McPhee, MacFee, Macfie, McAfee, Fee, Phee, McDuffy, Duffy, McCathie and many more

For more information please email: colonsay@bigpond.net.au, visit us at facebook.com/clanmacfieaustralia or our website:https://clanmacfie.com.au



- Newsletters
- Extensive Clan Genealogy & Books
- Videoed talks linked from Genealogy page
- Highland Games
- DNA Project
- Research assistance



www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com/join

www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com



### CLAN MACNEIL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

invites all MacNeils, regardless of surname spelling, to join us in celebrating our heritage!

website: ClanMacNeilUSA.us Find us on Facebook, Twiter, & Instagram @ClanMacNeilUSA













### Clan Irwin Association

### **Chief and Patron**

Alexander H.R Irvine of Drum 27th Baron and Laird of Drum, Chief of the Name Mary Erwin, Chairman 155 Hattaway Road, Calhoun, LA, 71225 mary.erwin@clanirwin.org

www.clanirwin.org

IRWIN • IRVINE • IRVIN • IRVING • ERWIN And the many other spellings of the Name



**CLAN LAMONT SOCIETY AUSTRALIA** invites membership from Sept names refer to Web Site www.clanlamontaustralia.com

Clan Chief Peter Lamont of that Ilk resides in Sydney Australia

For all enquires about the Clan and Membership contact

President Ian McLucas.

mobile 0448 778 799



### Clan MacLellan

Treasurer 2610 Kuykendall Dr. Arlington, TX 76001-6726



Invites all MacLellans and their descendants regardless of surname spelling to join in preserving our heritage. Various family names are MacLellan(d), McClellan(d), McLellan(d) and Gilliland.

Visit our website: www.clanmaclellan.net



### Clan MacNicol

Chief: John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac Contact: Secretary Mal Nicolson 55 Arcadia Ave GYMEA BAY NSW 2227

**Clan Macpherson** 

**Association** 

www.clanmacnicol.org



### Clan MacInnes Int'l Assn. of Clan MacInnes (Aonghais)

Worldwide, we welcome descendants of all spelling variations, including (Mc)Angus, (Mc)Canse, Mc)Ginnis, (Mc)Guenis, (Mc)Inch, (Mc)Innes, (Mc)Innis, (Mc)Kinnis, (Mc)Masters, (Mc)Neish, (Mc)Ninch, and more.

Scott Mcinnis, Member Services: scott@macinnes.org or visit www.macinnes.org

## Clan MacLeod

and descendants Sents: Askey Beaton, Bethune, Caskie, Harold, Lewis, MacAndie, MacAskill, MacAulay, MacCabe, MacCaig, MacCaskey, MacClure, MacCorkill, MacCrimmon, MacGillechallum, MacHaigh, MacRaild, MacWilliam, Norie, Norman, Tolmie, Williamson

NSW, ACT & Qld - Peter Macleod 02 4397 3161 Victoria & Tas - Rhonda McLeod 0411 227 330 South Australia - Alex McLeod 08 8327 0925 Western Australia - Ruth MacLeod 08 9364 6334

• Email: peter.macleod@exemail.com.au



e.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org +0152 538 19 355 Scotland & Northern Ireland, Moray G Cattanach USA, Dave McPherson SandNl.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +44 7810 860 528

Australia. Pam Rhemrev England & Wales. William Macpherso EandW.Chairman@clan-macpherson.o phone +44 7877 363 507

lew Zealand. Tony McPherson NewZealand.Chairman@clan-macpher phone +64 274 587 812

UnitedStates.Chairman@o phone +1 408 781 5199

The Clan Macpherson Museum is located in Newtonmore, Inverness Shire PH20 1DE





### The Clan MacRae **Society of Australia** and New Zealand

If your surname is MacRae, or you are descended from a person having the surname MacRae (any spelling) or that of a Sept of the Clan then you are eligible to join our Society.

Australian Contact: Roslyn MacRae 0412 291 054 email: clanmacraeaustnz@gmail.com

> NZ Contact: Sue Tregoweth email: sue.treg1@gmail.com



Chief: lan Maitland, The Earl of Lauderdale! We are all related! Contact your local society North America: Rosemary Maitland Thom rthomnvprdcan@aol.com www.clanmaitlandna.org

Australia: Amanda Maitland clanmaitlandaustralia@gmail.com 12 Settlers Way, Westleigh, NSW, 2120

New Zealand: Judette Maitland judette@xtra.co.nz 33 Disley Street, Highbury, Wellington 6012. NZ We welcome all with Maitland, Lauderdale, Maitlen and similar name spelling. See the entire list and your family history at: www.clanmaitland.org.uk

Clan Muirhead

Society

and all Variant Names

Ret. Chev. Raymond L. Morehead, GOTJ, FSA Scot,

www.clanmuirhead.com

Chief Officer Elect Clan Muirhead Society

Email- raymondktj@msn.com or raymond@clanmuirhead.com

ClanOliphantMembership@gmail.com

www.OliphantOfNorthAmerica.ora

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Oliphant - Olyphant - Oliphint

Olifant -Olifent

and all descended

**OLIPHANT CLAN** 

descendant of Pollock, Pollok, Pook, Polk, Polke, Paulk, Poalke, Poulk, Poolke, Pogue - you are cordially invited to contact:

> PO Box 404 Greenville, KY 42345



A. D. Pollock, Jr.

e-mail: apollockis@comcast.net



## Clan Ross

for information contact Commander Des Ross (By appointment David Ross Bt Chief of Clan Ross and Balnagowan)

We would be pleased to hear from anyone with Ross Clan heritage and interest.

Contact: Commander Des Ross at lonepiper.ross@gmail.com M 0403 830 853

### YOUNG Youngs of Scotland in Australia

Invites membership from all those with the name of Young or ancestral ties to the name.

Convenor: Ian J Young AM FSAScot E: membership@clanyoungaustralia.com.au

www.facebook.com/groups/youngsofaustralia/ https://clanyoungsociety.com/australia

### Scottish Gaelic Society of Victoria

Founded in 1905

www.scottishgaelicvictoria.com

Scottish Gaelic Language Classes Wednesdays 7:00 - 8:30 pm during school terms

at Kathleen Syme Community Centre, 251 Faraday St. Carlton and on Zoom.

### Scottish Gaelic Choir of Victoria

Tuesdays 7:00 - 9:00 pm during school terms at Kathleen Syme Community Centre, 251 Faraday St, Carlton and on Zoom.

Enquires: scottishgaelicvictoria@gmail.com



### Clan Wardlaw Association

Worldwide organization for all Wardlaws or related families. We invite you to join us. Email: clanwardlaw2004@gmail.com

### 'Wardlaw ivermair!'

www.clanwardlaw.com Wardlaw Tartan and Ancestry Books

**Scottish Associations and Societies** 



### **Caledonian Society** of WA Inc.

**Promotes Scottish Culture and Traditions** in Perth, Western Australia For further details contact John: 0427 990 754 Email: caledoniansocietyofwa@gmail.com

www.caledoniansocietyofwainc.com



The Society of St. Andrew of Scotland (Queensland) Limited

ABN 30 093 578 860 Invites membership of all people of Scottish descent or association The Secretary, P.O. Box 352, Mt Gravatt, QLD 4122



Email: resource\_centre@scotsofaus.org.au Website: https://scotsofaus.org.au Facebook: Facebook.com/ScotsofVictoria

### CLAN MUNRO ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND



We would be pleased to welcome as a member, anyone interested in their Clan heritage with the names: Munro, Monro, Monroe and the septs, Foulis, MacCulloch, Dingwall, MacLullich and

BECOME A MEMBER, VISIT www.clanmunroassociation.org.au

memberships@clanmunroassociation.org.au

### Clan Ross America



Michael Ross, President Nancy Ross-Anderson, VP Membership 18865 Cooper Street, Apple Valley, CA92308 membership@clanross.org info@clanross.org

www.clanross.org



### **Hunter Valley**

Promotes and supports all forms of Scottish culture in Newcastle, Hunter Valley and surrounding areas. Members and interested people are welcome to attend activities such as Burns Night, Caledonian Night, St Andrew's Day, and other social functions.

Web: hvscots.org Email: hunterscots@gmail.com P.O. Box 34, Kotara NSW 2289

### St Andrew Society of W.A.



Promoting Scottish dancing, singing, literature & other cultural activities. For further information contact:

secretary@saintandrew.org.au https://saintandrew.org.au/

**Celebrating All Things Scottish** 

Membership cordially invited from those who are connected with this great Clan, i.e., Morrison, Morison, Gilmour, Gilmer, Gilmore, Murrison or descendants of eligible name.

www.clanmorrison.net



### Clan Sinclair Australia

Membership and inquiries from all Sinclairs. Sinclair Septs and Sinclair descendants.

For further info contact President: WayneSinclair 0417 146 174 Secretary: Liane Sinclair 0410 045 263 E: clansinclairaustralia@hotmail.com

www.clansinclairaustralia.com

### The Robert Burns Club 🗿 of Melbourne Inc.



- > Promotes interest in the works, life and milieu of the Scottish Poet Robert Burns
- > Celebrates Scottish Culture
- > Conducts Annual Burn Supper, Poetry Afternoon & Pleasant Sunday Afternoon

For Membership Information contact: Secretary: Noel Wright (03) 8333 0973 Email: noelwright@netspace.net.au



Victorian Scottish **Deritage** Cultural Soundation

email: info@vshcf.com.au website: https://www.vshcf.com.au/

### **Discover Your** Nesbitt/Nisbet Ancestry



ibydeit.org nesbittnisbet.org.uk



### Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

Contact: M Williams, Secretary

clansutherlandsocietyaustralia@gmail.com http://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus Facebook: Clan Sutherland Society in Australia

### The Scottish Australian Heritage Council



Membership is welcome from all of Scottish descent.

For information please contact members@scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

Find us on Facebook

### Víctorian Scottish Union Inc

Umbrella group representing the interest of Scottish Clans and Societies in Victoria. Affiliated Clans & Societies

Brunswick Scottish Society Clan Donald Victoria Clan Grant Clan Hay Clan Macdonald of Yarraville Clan Sinclair Geelong Scottish Dance

Glenbrae Celtic Dancers Maryborough Highland Society Scottish Country Dance Society of Victoria Robert Burns Scottish Festival Camperdown The Robert Burns Club of Melbourn Warrnambool & District Caledonian Society Warrnambool Highland Dance

Chief : Mr Grant McKinna President Norman Macdonald Secretary Jan Macdonald

Contact details: Email: secretary@victorianscottishunion.com Mobile 0438 584 930 Address: PO Box 116, Cobden, Victoria 3266 www.victorianscottishunion.com

### Fife piper takes Glenfiddich Piping Championship title for second year running



ecorated piper Callum
Beamount, from Guardbridge in
Fife, made history in Perthshire
in October when he was
crowned overall winner at the esteemed
Glenfiddich Piping Championship at Blair
Castle for the second year running. For the
first time in the event's storied history,
ten first-place qualifiers were invited to
vie for the prestigious title, with the 51<sup>st</sup>
annual event proving to be an electrifying
showcase of piping talent and prestige.
All competitors were seasoned veterans
of the competition, each having played

at the event at least once before, and performed exceptionally in front of a sold out audience in Blair Castle's Victorian Ballroom and to hundreds via an online livestream.

### Premier competition in solo bagpiping

The Glenfiddich Piping Championship was founded in 1974 and is the premier competition in solo bagpiping, showcasing top pipers from around the globe. The event, organised by The National Piping Centre, Scotland's centre for excellence in piping and drumming, funded by the William Grant Foundation, and held annually at Blair Castle, is a celebration of piping excellence, tradition and expertise. For more than five decades, it has inspired the world's finest exponents of Ceòl Mòr or Piobaireachd (the great music) and Ceòl Beag or light music (the little music).

This year's competition saw Callum Beamount lift the trophy for the second time, making it back to back overall title wins in 2023 and 2024 for the Fife piper. Inveraray's Stuart Liddell took second place and Nick Hudson, from Texas, was third overall.

Callum Beaumont was also named the March, Strathspey and Reel (MSR) competition winner, with Stuart Liddell taking first in the Piobaireachd. Ian Duncan was awarded the Balvenie Medal for services to piping. This was the 40<sup>th</sup> presentation of this medal, which was first presented in 1984. Ian was awarded the medal for his service in Perthshire, where he has taught, led the Vale of Atholl Pipe Band and worked tirelessly to nurture the next generation of pipers for many years.

### The pinnacle of solo piping competitions

Overall winner Callum Beaumont said: "Between getting married in the summer and taking this title, this has been the best year of my life. To come out overall winner has really topped off an amazing year personally and professionally."

The National Piping Centre's Director of Piping, Finlay MacDonald, said: "It's a testament to the depth of talent and dedication in the piping world that we had ten exceptional first-place qualifiers this year and Callum Beaumont is a very worthy winner, impressively securing the title for the second consecutive year. The Glenfiddich Piping Championship remains the pinnacle of solo piping competitions, representing the very best in piping talent from around the world. We thank everyone who has supported this Championship over the past 51 years."

The Glenfiddich Piping Championship will return on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at Blair Castle. Tickets will be available from summer 2025. Visit: www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/glenfiddich.

### Kilts, collies and cabers-It's the 73<sup>rd</sup> Daylesford Highland Gathering

Saturday in December, when the sound of hundreds of bagpipes will herald the start of the Daylesford Highland Gathering. For 73 years, Daylesford has embraced a day of Scottish culture - beginning with a huge pipe band street march in Vincent Street at 9am with over 250 bagpipes and drums. A full day of events at Victoria Park follows and includes; the Victorian Highland Dance championships and the Pipe Band Contest including the marching of the Massed bands.

This year sees the return of the Highland Heavy Games. Back for the first time in 30 years! The games will include the Victorian championship light and heavy hammer throw, the Caber toss, Stone Put and more. Make friends with a Highland Collie, sample some fine whiskey or haggis and tatties, browse the market stalls and make a day of it.

Gather the clan, get your kilt on and head to the Daylesford Highland Gathering Saturday, December 7. For more details see: www.daylesfordhighland.com.



# Glenfiddich Piping Championship competitors.

### Barlinnie prisoner photographs bring Scots eye-to-eye with our past



Ictures of inmates in Glasgow's
Barlinnie Prison in Victorian times
can now be found on family
history website Scotland's People.
Two thousand rare images have been added
to the site along with 180,000 records
containing details of people entering the
prison between 1882 and 1899.

There are 180,000 register entries in total, with some people jailed more than once. Researchers can see digitised copies of the original registration books. Only some prisoners were captured on camera. The photographs show imprisoned people on the day of their release. Most served sentences of only a few days for petty offences. The harsh social conditions of the time are evident in the photographs. John Porter features three times as an inmate all by age 18. Porter was charged with "being a rogue and a vagabond" at a time when homeless people were imprisoned for minor offences. HMP Barlinnie was built to replace eight small prisons across Glasgow

city and the west of Scotland. Glasgow's rapid population growth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century meant these existing custodial facilities were increasingly rundown and overcrowded.

### **Big hoose**

Barlinnie opened in Glasgow in 1882 and had a reputation as a tough prison. Inmates carried out hard labour, breaking rocks from a local quarry. Punishments for misbehaviour were harsh. It soon developed a reputation as a tough prison, and across the years prisoners have nicknamed it 'BarHell' and the 'Big hoose'. Archivist Jessica Evershed of National Records of Scotland, which runs the Scotland's People website, said: "Prison records are an excellent resource for social history research. You may even track down your own relatives in these records, and - in some cases find a photograph of your ancestor. These photographs are a fantastic resource for researchers. The Scotland's

People website now allows you to put faces to names in a way that isn't possible for other records. While Barlinnie prison did hold some people convicted of serious crimes, most prisoners were serving short sentences. The most common entries are for petty offences such as minor thefts and drunkenness."

From 1946 onwards, Barlinnie General Prison served as a place of execution and the prison's purpose-built hanging shed was used on 10 occasions between 1946 and 1960. New thinking around punishment and rehabilitation in the 1970s saw the introduction of an experimental therapeutic facility designed to reform the most violent and disruptive inmates. The Barlinnie Special Unit (BSU), was in operation between 1973 to 1994 and sparked worldwide interest. Those committed to the BSU did not wear prison uniforms and had some input on how the unit should be managed. Despite some highprofile success stories, such as the sculptor



Barlinnie Prison inmates working outside the jail. © Newsquest (Herald & Times).

and writer Jimmy Boyle, the unit was closed due to the loss of confidence from government ministers and prison officials. The prison was progressively modernised between 1997-2004, with flush toilets being added to cells, and finally ending the practice of 'slopping out'.

### Glasgow's main prison

After 142 years as Glasgow's main prison, the story of HMP Barlinnie is close to ending. The prison now holds 500 more prisoners than it was designed for, and is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain. In 2020, HMP Barlinnie was deemed unfit for purpose and a new purpose-built prison - HMP Glasgow – is scheduled to open in 2027.

The release on Scotland's People of the admission registers of HMP Barlinnie, and its associated photograph album of prisoners, will give researchers a fascinating insight into the people behind the prison's imposing walls.



John Porter, 18 years old, 1885. No fixed abode. Crown copyright, National Records of Scotland.



Thomas Hynes, age 24. Convicted of theft and served nine months in prison. Crown copyright, National Records of Scotland.

### WHAT'S ON - SCOTTISH EVENTS

Enjoy Australia and New Zealand's top Scottish event listings in the Scottish Banner. Please check direct with event contacts for the most up to date information. You can also see our latest updates (including events listed across Scotland and North America) or add your event at: www.scottishbanner.com/events

### Australia

### **DECEMBER 2024**

#### **Daylesford Highland Gathering** 7, Daylesford, VIC

This Gathering includes a captivating Street March in the Main Street of Daylesford and a full days Drumming, Piping and Dancing at Victoria Park, also a variety of Scottish Clans and clubs, stalls and more. The end of the day is heralded spectacularly with the Massed Bands, which is a spine-tingling experience. Info: www.daylesfordhighland.com

### Currambine Christmas Ceilidh

### 7, Currambine, WA

Join for Gallus Ceilidh Band for an excellent evening of fun, top quality music and superb ceilidh dancing at Currambine Community Hall. Info:www.gallusperth.com

### Robbie Burns Night, Adelaide Lodge & St Andrew's Lodge 14, Port Adelaide, SA

Celebrate the festive season with Scottish flair at Adelaide Lodge & St Andrew's Lodge Robbie Burns Night. This is Adelaide Lodge's 180<sup>th</sup>Christmas Party, there will be traditional favourites and plenty of merriment at Port Adelaide Masonic Centre 142-150 Commercial Rd. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1293165

#### Pipes of Christmas Concert 20-31.Virtual event

Bringing together musicians, soloists, and performers for a stirring celebration of the Christmas season and the Celtic spirit. International concert highlights-watch from anywhere in the world. Info: www.pipesofchristmas.com

### Claymores Celtic Christmas 21, Melbourne, VIC

Celtic rockers Claymore's annual A Celtic Christmas is back by popular demand, guests include one of Melbourne's finest Irish bands Saoirse and the world class Glenbrae Celtic Dancers, at MEMO Music Hall,

88 Acland St, St Kilda. Info: www.claymore.org

### Happy Christmas

#### 25, Nationwide

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers, followers and friends a very Merry Christmas!

#### Happy Hogmanay 31. Nationwide

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers and friends a very Happy Hogmanay and best wishes for a happy and healthy 2025!

### Caledonian Society of WA Hogmanay Ceilidh 31, Inglewood, WA

Music by the Heel n Toe Ceilidh Band. Come and enjoy a really fun night out at Bob Daniels Community Centre, 895 Beaufort St. All ages welcome. Info: John: 0427 990 754 or www.caledoniansocietyofwainc.com

### Hogmanay Hootenanny 2024

### 31, Trevallyn, TAS

Prepare to kick off the New Year in true Scottish style at Tasmania's most electrifying Hogmanay Ceilidh! This year, we're going bigger and better, ensuring an evening filled with energetic dances, traditional music, and unforgettable merriment at Max Fry Memorial Hall, 60 Gorge Rd. Info: www. trybooking.com/events/landing/1242805

### Hogmanay Ceilidh 31, Home Hill, QLD

A Celtic themed party celebrating New Years Eve with live band Sneaky Beats at Burdekin Memorial Hall, 77 Ninth Ave. Info:www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1292617

### **JANUARY 2025**

### Maryborough Highland Gathering

1, Maryborough, VIC

The first Highland Gathering for 2025 in the world, the program has something for everyone. A piped band street parade, all-day athletics, highland dancing on two stages all day, Highland Games and traditional strongmen event. Info: www.highlandsociety.com.au/highland-gathering

### Scotword answers from page 6

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Across:	Down:		
1 Wigeon	1 Wash tubs		
4 Milk Maid	2 Grandfather		
10 Spanner	3 Owns		
11 Valleys	5 Inventor		
12 Tide	6 Kilmarnock		
13 Gleneagles	7 Awe		
16 Beadle	8 Desist		
17 Dornoch	9 Drill		
20 Chanter	14 Loch Cluanie		
21 Icicle	15 Glenrothes		
24 Portobello	18 Beheaded		
25 Mull	19 Ceilidhs		
27 Ditched	22 Spider		
29 Clanned	23 Flock		
30 Ringside	26 Gael		
31 Elders	28 Tun		

### Scottish Weekender

### 17-19, Glenworth Valley, NSW

Join Mary Kiani & 200+ friends for a fantastic Scottish festival gathering in the stunning Glenworth Valley/Peats Ridge (just outside of Sydney). A fully charged 'Ceilidh' Live band and caller will feature, along with Pipes and Drums and of course live vocals by Scottish superstar. Mary Kiani. Info: www.scottishweekender.com.au

### **Burns Night in Sydney**

### 23-25, Sydney, NSW

A celebration of Scottish drinks, food and traditions at The Fox Hole, 117 Harrington St, The Rocks. Info: www.thefoxhole.com.au/burns-week

### Society of St Andrew of Scotland Burns Supper 24, Brisbane, QLD

Join the Society of St Andrew of Scotland (Queensland) for a traditional celebration of the life and works of Scotland's national bard over an evening filled with piping and song, fine dining, toasts, fun and friendship at the United Service Club Queensland, 183 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill. Info: www.ssaqld.tidyhq.com

### Happy Burns Night 25, Nationwide

Celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Scottish poet Robert Burns. The tradition of the Burns Night Supper was first held in 1801 by the

### poet's friends, five years after his death. St Andrew's Society of WA Burns Supper

### 25, Perth, WA

Join the St Andrew's Society of WA in celebrating Rabbie Burns at the Hyatt Regency Perth. The night will include their honorary piper, Burns' poems, all the traditional speeches and a whisky toast to himself. Music by the Heel n' Toe Ceilidh Band. Tickets will go on sale through the website end of October. Info: www.saintandrew.org.au

### Bribie Island Golf Club Burns Supper

Burns Night is a time to enjoy Scottish traditions and celebrate the renowned poet Robert Burns with a classic combination of haggis, neeps, tatties, some reciting of poetry, and maybe even a warming dram. It's also an opportunity to celebrate Scotland's enduring legacy of creativity at Bribie Island Golf Club. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1282762

#### 51ACU Swan Regiment Burns Supper Fundraiser 25, Bullcreek, WA

An unforgettable evening at the 51ACU Swan Regiment Burns Supper fundraiser, where the spirit of Scotland comes alive. Indulge in a delicious feast featuring haggis, neeps, and tatties, followed by a delightful traditional dessert. Experience the lively rhythms of highland dancing and the stirring sounds of the pipes & drums, all while immersing yourself in the rich tapestry of Scottish poetry and culture at the RAAFA Club, Air Force Memorial Estate, 2 Bullcreek Dr. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1304362

### Burns Night 2025 - RACV Club

### 25, Melbourne, VIC

Dust off your kilt, your sporran, and your tartan for a celebration of famous Scots poet, Robert Burns, in collaboration with the Melbourne Tartan Festival. Enjoy a full program of events, including music from the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club. poetry, and dancing, finishing with a lively ceilidh at RACV City Club, Level 17, 501 Bourke St. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1320243

### Hunter Valley Scots Club 2025 Burns Supper 25, Argenton, NSW

A night of Scottish music and dance celebrating Robert Burns, with pipe bands, Scottish dance and more at Club Macquarie, 458 Lake Rd. Info: www.trybooking.com/CXAYD

### **Listen to Scottish** Radio S.A.



Tuesdays: 12:30pm - 1:30pm **Saturdays: 5:00pm – 6:00pm** 

**5EBI 103.1 fm** 

**Digital EBI World:** WWW.5ebi.com.au

### Robbie Burns Night

### 26, Tenterfield, NSW

Come and join the Tenterfield Highlanders for a frolicking night of all things Scottish. From piping in the Haggis Robbie Burns famous Address to the Haggis and a nip of Whisky, to a feast of the traditional neeps and tatties. At The Barn at Glenrock Gardens, 84 Robinsons Lane. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1317413

### **New Zealand**

### **DECEMBER 2024**

### Scottish Fiddle Club

### 6, Auckland

Celtic music group meeting at St Lukes Church, 130 Remuera Rd, Remuera. Info: 021 473 402 or learnScotsfiddle@gmail.com

### Thistles: Scottish Genealogy Special Interest Group 10, Whangaparaoa, Auckland

Calling all Scots: the HBC Genealogy Branch of NZ Society of Genealogists introduces: Thistles. This Scottish, special interest, genealogy group will meet at Whangaparaoa Library, 9 Main St, Whangaparaoa to listen to speakers and discuss Scottish history topics. Come along and give it laldy! Info: Garry Phillips 021-902-715 or garryphillips2010@gmail.com.

### Wellington Gaelic Club Ceilidh

### 14, Wellington

A ceilidh is held in the City of Wellington Pipe Band Hall, corner Stoke and Hanson Street Newtown, from 8.00pm - 12.00am. We are a very family-oriented organisation and we encourage participation by all ages and encourage the opportunity for you to wear some tartan. Info: http://wellington-gaelic-club-communn-gaidhealach-wellington.weebly.com

#### Pipes of Christmas Concert 20-31. Virtual event

Bringing together musicians, soloists, and performers for a stirring celebration of the Christmas season and the Celtic spirit. International concert highlights-watch from anywhere in the world. Info: www.pipesofchristmas.com

### Happy Christmas

### 25, Nationwide

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers, followers and friends a very Merry Christmas!

### RSCDS NZ Branch Wellington Summer School 2024/25 28-January 5, Wellington

Join RSCDS NZ at Scots College, Strathmore, Wellington for a packed programme of Scottish country dance classes, socials and formals. Info:www.nzsummerschool2024.nz

### Happy Hogmanay

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers and friends a very Happy Hogmanay and best wishes for a happy and healthy 2025!

### Waipu Highland Games

### 31, Waipu

New date for 2024. With pipe bands, solos, Highland dance, athletics, Clans and more at Caledonian Park. Info: www.waipuhighlandgames.co.nz

#### **Wellington Region Hogmanay** 31, Wellington

### Scottish country dance event as part of NZ Branch

Summer School being held at Scots College, Strathmore Park. Info:www.wellingtonscd. org.nz/event/wellington-hogmanay

### **JANUARY 2025**

### Royal New Zealand Pipe Bands' Association Summer School 8-12, Wellington

Scots College in Wellington will play host to RNZPBA's annual gathering of pipers and drummers from across New Zealand, Australia and the world. Info:www.rnzpba.com

### Thistle & The Shamrock 13-February 14, Nationwide

### Experience the best of Irish and Scottish music

with Thistle & The Shamrock. A lively and heartwarming concert with talented fiddler, accordionist, and singers who bring to life rich musical traditions and cultural heritage. Info: www. operatunity.co.nz/thistle-and-the-shamrock

### Happy Burns Night 25. Nationwide

Celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Scottish poet Robert Burns. The tradition of the Burns Night Supper was first held in 1801 by the poet's friends, five years after his death.

### 160<sup>th</sup> Turakina Highland Games

### 25, Turakina

A Scottish festival for all the family. All the events you would expect; Highland & National Dancing, pipe bands, solo drumming and solo piping. This year featuring the New Zealand Open Solo Piping competitions at Turakina Domain, Cameron Rd. Info: www.turakinahighlandgames.co.nz

### Arrowtown Burns Supper & Ceilidh

### 25, Arrowtown

A night of entertainment, drinks. dinner and dancing and Scottish tradition at Arrowtown Anthenaeum Hall, 33 Buckingham St. Info: www.facebook.com/burnssupperandceilidhdance

### Robbie Burns Night

### 25,Wellington

Join the celebrations at the Thistle Inn, Wellington's only Scottish pub, for a lively celebration of Robbie Burns, Immerse vourself in a Scottish experience with a specially crafted Scottish-themed set menu, the Dunwofflin Ceilidh Band, poetry and more at 3 Mulgrave St, Thorndon. Info: www.thistleinn.co.nz

### Burns Night 2025 – Edinburgh and Dunedin 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Kick your heels up to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dunedin and Edinburgh's sister city relationship while also celebrating the birthday of esteemed poet Robert Burns at Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, 31 Queens Garden. An evening of traditional Scottish food and a dram, Scottish sword dancing, poetry  $readings \ and \ Burns \ songs. \ In fo: www.to it uosm.$ com/whats-on/events/burns-night-2025

### **Scotland**

### **DECEMBER 2024**

### St Giles and the larger Burgh Churches in Scotland: 900 Years of Development

### 5. Edinburgh

St Giles is well known and also celebrates 900 years of existence. It is one of several large churches that developed in, or close to, the centres of Royal Burghs, and this talk describes their development as an illustration of the development of royal burghs. It will focus primarily of St Giles which has a few unique characteristics, at City Art Centre. Info: www. edinburghmuseums.org.uk/Venues/City-Art-Centre

### Hoolie in the Hydro

### 7. Glasgow

This momentous musical showcase of Scottish traditional music will return to the OVO Hydro. Info: www.ovohydro.com

### Phil Cunningham's Christmas Songbook 16, Inverness

One of the masters of Scottish contemporary folk is joined by a selection of special guests for a showcase of modern and traditional Christmas music, at Eden Court, Info: www.philcunningham.com

### Pipes of Christmas Concert

### 20-31.Virtual event

Bringing together musicians, soloists, and performers for a stirring celebration of the Christmas season and the Celtic spirit. International concert highlights-watch from anywhere in the world. Info: www.pipesofchristmas.com

### **Happy Christmas**

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers, followers and friends a very Merry Christmas!

### Edinburgh's Hogmanay

#### 29-January 1, Edinburgh Join revellers from around the globe at incredible events

featuring spectacular live music concert, unforgettable fireworks, Street Party extravaganzas and free New Year's Day family events. Info: www.edinburghshogmanay.com

### Scottish Fiddle Orchestra Hogmanay Concert 30, Edinburgh

Join in the fun and enjoy the party atmosphere of a traditional Scottish Hogmanay at the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra's annual festive concert. Full of well-known tunes with a few surprises, there will be singing, piping and plenty of fiddling as we toast the old year and bring in the new at Usher Hall. Info: www.usherhall.co.uk

### Happy Hogmanay

### 31. Nationwide

The Scottish Banner wishes all our readers, advertisers and friends a very Happy Hogmanay and best wishes for a happy and healthy 2025!

### **Oban Hogmanay Party**

Bring in the bells with family and friends at The View, Oban's largest town centre venue. Enjoy Oban's from their popular DJ. Info: www.obanview.com

### The Hogmanay Ceilidh

### 31, Glasgow

There is no better way to end the year than with a traditional ceilidh in the heart of Glasgow, and why not do it in style by coming along to The Ferry on the banks of the River Clyde on the eve of the New Year. The Coila Ceilidh Band will descend on Glasgow and provide a night not to be forgotten. Info: www.the-ferry.co.uk

### Stonehaven Fireballs

### 31. Stonehaven

The Fireball Ceremony is Stonehaven's unique way to welcome in the New Year and greet friends and neighbours. As the midnight chimes ring out on December 31<sup>St</sup>, approximately 40 men and women parade up and down the  $\stackrel{\cdot}{\mbox{High}}$  Street swinging fiercely flaming balls around their heads. Info: www.stonehavenfireballs.com

# Skipinnish celebrate the Skipinnish Oak being crowned UK's Tree of the Year

By: Neil Drysdale







hey are one of Scotland's most popular music groups who are celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

And now, a majestic oak in Lochaber which bears their Skipinnish name has been voted Britain's favourite tree in a survey carried out by the Woodland Trust.

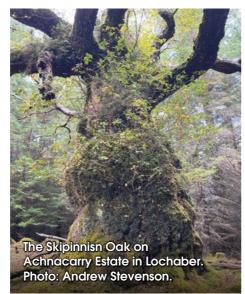
The news completes what has been a remarkable period for band duo, Angus MacPhail and Andrew Stevenson - and gives them the opportunity to write a special song which they will unveil when they perform in front of an expected 15,000 fans at the OVO Hydro in Glasgow next September. Mr Stevenson said: "We are absolutely delighted that the Skipinnish Oak has come out on top in this national poll, because is an ancient tree that is very much loved by the local community and the many tourists who come to visit it. It has seen many historic and landmark events, but this will be its first award for its beauty and history, and shows the affection people have for it. We hope it will



make it a double and, as the UK's entry, go on to lift the European title (which will be announced early in the New Year)."

The music landscape is flourishing Skipinnish, themselves, have enjoyed a terrific year with packed concerts at Edinburgh Castle and in Inverness. It's a far cry from the early days when the duo were performing in any Highland pub they could find which was looking for live music offerings. Mr MacPhail told the Scottish Banner: "Back in the early 2000s, when we were still in our fledgling years, Runrig and Capercaillie were the only trad bands who could attract crowds of 2,000 or 3,000 and that had been the case for many years. But things have changed and very much for the better. Now, you have six or seven different groups who are in that same sphere and the circuit is in great health with folk from all ages and backgrounds. Much of that growth is down to the pioneering work of two groups in particular, so it was a huge honour that Malcolm Jones of Runrig and Karen Matheson of Capercaillie joined us as guests of our anniversary celebrations, since we have been fans of their music for many years."

With more than 20 trad festivals taking place across the country in 2025, including the internationally-renowned Celtic Connections, the Orkney Folk Festival, Edinburgh Tradfest, Shetland Folk Festival, Stonehaven Folk Festival, Ceolas and HebCelt – which has partnered with Isle of Harris Distillery in allowing up-and-coming artists to perform – the music landscape is flourishing.





### A virtuous circle

Mr MacPhail said: "It's happening across all ages and a very significant part of the expansion was the development of Gaelic Medium Education, which has given so much confidence to youngsters and allowed them to flourish in their own culture. It's a virtuous circle, the cumulative impact of a lot of hard work which has been done by a huge spread of organisations and individuals in the Highlands and beyond. I grew up listening to this music and so did so many others. Yet now, there are so many platforms on which to perform and the number of festivals has helped us all. And many young people are tapping into the phenomenon, which is great for the future."

As a proud native of Tiree, he relished playing traditional music wherever there was an audience while forming a rare symbiosis with his Lochaber-born colleague. Who would have guessed, 25 years ago, that they would now be linked not only by their musicianship and songwriting ability, but by a magnificent oak tree from more than a millennium ago?

### Did you know?

- The Skipinnish Oak, on Lochaber's Achnacarry Estate, is a well-known natural feature in the local area and has a very commanding presence within a conifer plantation which surrounds it.
- Up until 2009 the oak has been previously undocumented and unnamed. The name was given to the tree by experts partly because of Skipinnish co-founder Andrew Stevenson who is from the area and has known the tree from his days as a young boy growing up locally. The day after a Skipinnish gig, piper Andrew guided a group of Scottish woodland experts to the tree. The enthusiasts were so taken by its pedigree as an ancient Highland oak that the experts named it after the award-winning band.
- The Skipinnish Oak was up against 11 other UK oaks. The Tree of the Year competition is run by the Woodland Trust to celebrate the contribution trees make to our lives and the planet. The winner will go on to represent the UK in the Europe Tree of the Year competition.

# THE 2025 SCOTTISH CALENDAR RANGE

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**Majestic Scotland** 

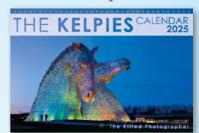


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