



49

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the Scottish Banner

A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 48 Number 7

NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS

January 2025

Visit Scotland 2025

» Pg 16

Annie Lennox

A diva of humanity

» Pg 12



7 25286 84459 8 01

Outer Hebrides voted Best of the World» Pg 3

Walking in the footsteps of your ancestors.....» Pg 13

The Aeronautical Abbot» Pg 14

"Castle bagging" with Robert Burns» Pg 21

2025 - A Year in Piping & Drumming» Pg 27



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Distributed monthly in Australia, Canada,
New Zealand and the USA. ISSN 2209-8364

Australia Post Print Approved PP:100004806

Published monthly by Scottish Banner Publications
PO Box 6220, Marrickville South, NSW, 2204, Australia

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The Banner Says...

I Belong to Glasgow



by Sean Cairney

As 2025 is now upon us not only do I wish all our readers and friends a very Happy New Year but also a very happy 850th birthday to Scotland's largest city, Glasgow. For some when they think of Glasgow they think of ship building, grit, working class and an accent that some struggle to understand. This is just part of a city that has evolved so much since I have known it, and was doing so long before I got to walk its streets. Glasgow is a city that does not keep still and evolves. Whilst some ship building still takes place on the River Clyde, the city's role as the pinnacle of shipbuilding excellence in the 20th century, or as it was known 'Clydebuilt', is now part of this city's social and economic past.

Glaschu

The word Glasgow derives from the Gaelic word Glaschu (pronounced Glas-a-hoo) meaning 'dear green place'. This is a term that has stuck with Glasgow for years as the city boasts nearly 100 parks and gardens. Another term the city has adopted is 'People make Glasgow'. All you have to do is meet some Glaswegians to understand why this is not just a marketing executives' creative inspiration, but fact. Glaswegians are full of character, passion, wit and humour. I have certainly found most from Glasgow take the city with them wherever they go. Some may have resettled across the oceans, but they create new lives as proud Scots and always the sons and daughters of Glasgow.

Although nearby Edinburgh gets many more visitors and is unmistakably beautiful, Glasgow has so much to offer the visitor. A wealth of world class and mostly free art galleries and museums are available across the city. Glasgow has a huge creative scene and was in fact the UK's very first and world's third city to be designated as a UNESCO City of Music.

Glasgow today is a city still full of determination and creativity. A city that this year will celebrate not only its glorious past but its exciting future. Starting this month 850 years of progress will be celebrated with events taking place throughout 2025. I hope we can share some of the program in future editions and I look forward to being in the 'dear green place' myself this month to learn more. The streets of Glasgow remain full of the past and present, I often say to people when in Glasgow look up as many buildings tell of a different Glasgow than the present and modern shopfronts. Glasgow itself is always looking up, and forward, and I look forward to celebrating with the city this year.

In this issue

It is not just Glasgow in the birthday mode, but an iconic Scot is also marking a milestone birthday. Annie Lennox has had a hugely successful music career for many decades and would be part of the soundtrack of many people's lives. Annie is in fact the only Scottish woman inducted in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. However, her catalogue of music success is just part of what makes her such a star. I am not one to gush over too many celebrities, but I do admire Annie Lennox quite a bit, she is a tireless activist and campaigner for human rights and social justice and has used her platform to help so many. Happy birthday Annie and thanks for all the great music and for being an all-round great human!

As we look at a new year perhaps you will make it your new year resolution to book that trip to Scotland?

We are highlighting just some of the many things happening this year and that 2025 trip to Scotland really has never looked so good, I know I will be there!

If you happen to be planning a trip to Scotland this year, there is a high chance it will be by air. This month we look back at a unique part of Scottish history when John Damian, also known as 'The Birdman of Stirling', attempted a flying experiment using wings made of feathers at Stirling Castle in 1507. And though not successful this is the first known flying attempt ever made in Scotland.

Electronic Travel Authorisation

A reminder to our readers who will be visiting Scotland/the UK this year. New for 2025 the UK government is phasing in a new travel scheme which starts this month. It will require people travelling to the UK without a visa to get an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA). From January visitors travelling from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA (not using a British passport) will require an ETA. An ETA costs £10 per applicant. It will allow multiple journeys and will be valid for two years or until the holder's passport expires – whichever is sooner.

Finally, Scotland's most famous poet Robert Burns was born on January 25, 1759, in Alloway, Ayrshire, at what is now Burns Cottage. The day of his birth is celebrated today throughout the world as Burns' Night, with Burns' Suppers taking place across the globe. Robert Burns was born into a poor farming family and died at the young age of just 37, but the universal appeal of his works continues in 2025. Have a look at our events page in case there is a Burns event near you and to those celebrating I wish you a wonderful time. 🍷

Have you visited Glasgow? What is your favourite thing about Glasgow? 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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We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Glasgow skyline. Photo: Glasgow Life.



Gracing our front cover: Uath Lochans is one of the many incredible places to visit in Scotland in 2025. Photo: VisitScotland/Kenny Lam.

Outer Hebrides voted Best of the World



The Hebridean Way.

The Outer Hebrides has been named as one of the Best of the World destinations for 2025 by travel authority *National Geographic*. It is the only UK destination to be included in the prestigious list, with recognition given to its breathtaking landscapes and unique heritage. *National Geographic* highlighted that BBC drama series *An t-Eilean (The Island)*, due to be broadcast in 2025, will shine a spotlight on the Outer Hebrides and singled out visitor experiences along the Hebridean Way, and the Hebridean Celtic Festival (HebCelt).

For decades, the Outer Hebrides has attracted visitors from every corner of the globe, who are drawn to its beautiful beaches and coastline, breathtaking

scenery and crystal-clear waters, unique Hebridean culture and Gaelic language, history and wildlife, welcoming locals, delicious local food and drink and its wide variety of outdoor pursuits.

Wild but captivating islands

The islands group is no stranger to global accolades, with West Beach on Berneray being included in 2024's list in *Lonely Planet's* list of 100 of the World's Most Incredible Beaches. They were also included in *Condé Nast Travellers 2024 Readers' Choice Awards* in the Best Islands in the UK category. Each year, *National Geographic* releases its Best of the World list, celebrating destinations and travel experiences that illuminate our beautiful world and the diversity of communities and

people within it. Selected and written by *Nat Geo Traveler* editors from around the world – in collaboration with *National Geographic* experts and expedition leaders – the annual list features both surprising, up-and-coming destinations as well as timeless locations that have something new to offer.

In response to the Outer Hebrides' inclusion in *National Geographic's Best of the World list 2025*, Business Minister Richard Lochhead said: "This is brilliant recognition for a destination which has a strong reputation with both domestic and overseas visitors. The Outer Hebrides has much to champion. From the iconic Barra beach landing to the stunning castles, Harris tweed and the blue seas that envelope Scotland's Long Island, there are many reasons to visit. Tourism plays a massive part in Scotland's economy, with the sector accounting for 7,000 island jobs in 2022. I hope that, as the only UK destination featured in this prestigious list, people at home and overseas choose Scotland as their next destination and enjoy the culture and adventure our nation possesses in abundance."

Vicki Miller, VisitScotland Chief Executive, said: "The Outer Hebrides is no stranger to international recognition and its appearance as the only UK destination in *National Geographic's Best of the World 2025* list is a testament to the islands' strong pull for visitors. These wild but captivating islands offer something for everyone – stunning scenery, unparalleled opportunities to see amazing wildlife, a rugged coastline, delicious food and drink with strong local provenance, and an

incredible historical and archaeological story to tell. Our communities, along with our natural and cultural heritage, are what make these islands so special."

Dramatic landscapes and Celtic heritage

Sarah Maclean, Chief Executive of Outer Hebrides Tourism, said: "We are delighted that National Geographic has recognised the Outer Hebrides as one of the best destinations in the world. It is such a special place – one of the few remaining places in the world where you will hear Scots Gaelic spoken among awe-inspiring landscape shaped by the power of nature. In 2025 we look forward to welcoming new and returning visitors to share, enjoy and respect the outstanding beauty and unique Hebridean of our islands."

National Geographic says of the Outer Hebrides: "The Oscar-nominated *Banshees of Inisherin* showcased Ireland's western isles. Now *An t-Eilean (The Island)*, a highly anticipated Scots Gaelic-language BBC drama series, will give Scotland's Outer Hebrides a starring role, highlighting its dramatic landscapes and Celtic heritage. Explore the ancient archipelago along the Hebridean Way, a nearly 200-mile walking and cycling route that traverses 10 islands, passing silvery beaches, whisky distilleries, wildflower-bedecked machair grasslands, and neolithic monuments like the 5,000-year-old Calanais Standing Stones. In July, the annual Hebridean Celtic Festival celebrates Gaelic language and music in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis."

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SCOT POURRI

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Perth Museum

I really wanted to tell you and your readers how much I enjoyed visiting the Perth Museum. After visiting Perth regularly and seeing the former City Hall lying empty and unused for 11 years, this year I was delighted to read in *the Scottish Banner* (*Perth Museum-At the centre of Scotland's story, the Scottish Banner*, July, 2024) of the transformation of the building into a Museum. This centrally located Museum has an outstanding collection of significant historical objects, highlighting the history and heritage of the area. But for me, the highlight of my visit this year was the Museum's centrepiece—the Stone of Destiny. It is in a special display room with amazing



lighting and photographic effects, giving the history of this unique Stone of Scone.

A “must see” if you are travelling in this area.

*Sue MacLeod OAM
Ringwood, Victoria
Australia*

Lockerbie Remembered



It brought back many memories when reading your December article *Lockerbie Remembered*. I recall that profoundly shocking day very well and still to this day am filled with sadness when thinking about it. I was not much older than some of those Syracuse University students who tragically perished. At that time I was also planning my own first European adventure and wondered if I should go. Our world seemed to lose some of its innocence on that day and the Scottish town of Lockerbie, which likely most around the world had never heard of, was forever changed and became infamous for all the wrong reasons. The iconic image of the cone of Pam Am 103 sitting on Scottish soil must be one of the most dramatic images from the 20th century. I am not looking forward to it, because we all of course know the outcome, but I will certainly be watching the new Lockerbie series the article mentions and will again reflect and remember all those innocent lives lost and changed both in the air and on the ground.

Congratulations on a fine publication.

*Mr Cameron Walker
Rochester, New York
USA*

Owed to the Haggis

As I sit on the veranda of my Australian home I have these flights of fancy and allow my thoughts to roam

To where I'm home amongst the heather when up a haggis pops its heid That's when the local gamie gets it in his shotgun bead

But that haggis its nae puddin' with its three legs no the same In fact I think its more human than just ordinary game

With its senses ever searching for any danger that's around It picks up that gamie's heartbeat where he lies there on the ground.

So it's up and off and runnin' round the hillside left and right Its three wee legs in unison man, what a wondrous sight.

And although it cannot turn around it has forward and reverse But when it's running backwards it's aye fallen on its erse.

But that haggis it's sae cunning that nae gamie's ever shot one. In fact, in all of history nae body's even caught one.

So on every Burns Night, when that trenchard in they carry With not haggis but a replica each twenty fifth of January.

*David Johns
Australia*

St Margaret's Day Kirkin' at St Stephen's Sydney



Sunday 17th November 2024 in Sydney saw St Stephen's Uniting Church in Sydney celebrate Remembrance Day plus Kirkin' of the Tartan with a Festival of St Margaret, the Patron Saint of Scotland. This saw seven Clan Banners paraded as a part of the Service, with the majority of the Congregation also adorned with tartan. The hymns and Service reflected the Scottish nature of the day. Susan Cooke read the Kirkin' Prayer and the Reading for St Margaret's Day was presented by David McLean. The Remembrance Day commemoration was followed by Piper Rob McLean playing the Scottish Lament, *Sleep Dearie Sleep*. Rob also performed a few tunes after the Service.

The congregation was swelled this day by many Clan McLean members, following their AGM and Dinner held the

previous evening in Sydney. This service was enjoyed by all those in attendance and it is hoped that this may become a regular annual event.

*Mal Nicolson
Clan MacNicol
Sydney, NSW
Australia*

Stirling 900

Thank you for the lovely article on Stirling in the November edition (*Celebrating Stirling 900, the Scottish Banner*, November, 2024). Our family came from Stirling on my father's side and even though dad left Scotland in his twenties, he was a lifetime proud Scot and especially of the city of Stirling. When we go to Scotland, we often base ourselves in Stirling as it is so convenient to reach so many other parts of the country. As shown in your article there are so many historical gems packed within a short distance in the city. There are also some wonderful restaurants and of course the people are super friendly. I also read in *the Banner* about the proposals to build near Stirling's historic and sacred site, Bannockburn Battlefield, I hope the council 'reads the room' right on this as so many in Scotland and us Scots abroad would be devastated if this ever happened.

Thank you to all the contributors to *the Scottish Banner*, I look forward to each edition.
*Gayle Smith
Port Credit, Ontario
Canada*



St Andrew's Day Ceilidh



Thanks for *the Scottish Banner* editions for our recent St. Andrew's Ceilidh. We had them on all the tables and there weren't all that many left when we were packing up at the end of the night!

The evening was a great success with 4 pipe bands showcasing plus 3 soloists, including a teenager who only picked up the pipes a few months ago. We had almost 200 attendees and we are always well supported by the Townsville Scottish Community and the Townsville Scottish Country Dancers who have everyone up on their feet stripping the willow etc.

*Amanda Stephenson
Secretary, RSL Memorial Pipes & Drums Townsville
Queensland, Australia*

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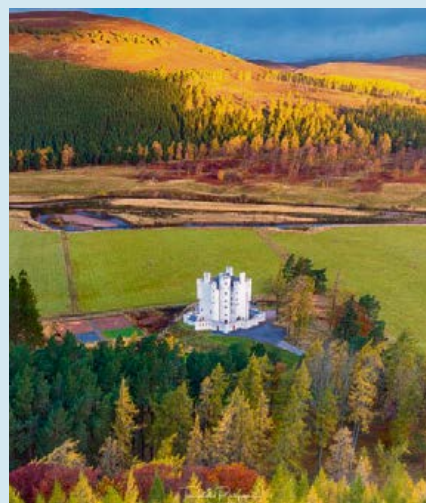
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SCOTSPEAK

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



Photo: Rob McDougall.

“As a luthier the workmanship seen in this instrument and its bespoke case is outstanding. Likely the oldest surviving Scottish cello, it remains in pure baroque condition, and demonstrates the craftsmanship of one of the best violin makers of the Aberdeen school.”

David Rattray, an instrument restorer, said the oldest surviving Scottish cello was brought back to life in a special performance at the University of Aberdeen. The instrument, which was played for the first time since the 18th century, was made by Aberdeen luthier Robert Duncan in 1756 was donated to the University of Aberdeen's Special Collections as part of a bequest by former student and later professor of Philosophy James Beattie (1735–1803).

“Our heritage doesn't just include the built environment we see around us, but is also made up of songs, recipes, stories and memories shared down through the ages.”

Claire Whitbread, Exhibitions Manager at Historic Environment Scotland, said as a new exhibition looking at how folklore is an intrinsic part of life in Scotland opened at Blackness Castle. *In the Land, of the People* explores how folklore is woven throughout Scotland, through its landscape, its history and its people and runs to March, 2025.

“While the contexts for singing are currently in decline, the music continues to be a soundscape to a way of life for many people. The purpose of this exhibition is

to explore how sacred singing was, and continues to be, integral to many aspects of community life, and to highlight the wealth of hymns, psalms and spiritual songs being sung in the region today.”

Dr Frances Wilkins, Senior Lecturer in Ethnomusicology, The Elphinstone Institute, said as a Gaelic song traditions exhibition arrived in Benbecula. To help safeguard the traditions Dr Wilkins has been compiling and recording Gaelic song traditions, including hymnody, Gaelic psalmody and spiritual bàrdachd, which are diminishing in Hebridean communities, to create an archive and bring the music to a wider audience. Locally composed Gaelic hymns, which are integral to church life in the southern Hebrides, are a particular focus in the exhibition.



“Castle of Light has truly become a jewel in Edinburgh's bustling winter schedule, and this year's celebration is particularly special as we mark the city's 900th anniversary.

This year's event is all about bringing people together to revel in the capital's incredible history as it comes to life on the castle walls. From uncovering the inspiring stories of Edinburgh's trailblazing women to soaking in the vibrant energy in Crown Square, Castle of Light showcases the incredible depth of Scotland's past while creating unforgettable memories for the present. It's a spectacular way to celebrate this milestone year with family and friends this festive season.”

Emma Bowie, regional visitor & community manager at Edinburgh Castle, said that this years Castle of Light is helping to mark the city's epic 900th anniversary with a showstopping celebration suitable for all ages. Electrifying Edinburgh's iconic skyline for a fifth fantastic year, Castle of Light pulled out all the stops with an immersive after-dark trail, transforming the historic castle grounds with all-new light and sound displays celebrating 900 years of history and setting the festive season ablaze.



“The Scottish Life Archive offers remarkable insight into all aspects of Scottish life, with 300 years of documentary and illustrative material. I am thrilled to have an opportunity to shine a light on this rich resource, and Scotland's fascinating rural history, through these magical festive photographs. Whether it's a quirky Santa Claus or a record-breaking snowy winter, I hope people enjoy sharing a little bit of Scottish rural history this Christmas.”

Dr Ailsa Hutton, Curator of Modern and Rural History at National Museums Scotland, said the National Museum of Rural Life has released a group of rare festive photographs, each over 100 years old, from the Scottish Life Archive. Featured here is Mr Henry Watson posed as a characterful Father Christmas in Burntisland in 1909, wearing a fake beard and long, fur- trimmed coat decorated with dolls and toy animals.

“For centuries, the phrase, ‘Glasgow made the Clyde, and the Clyde made Glasgow,’ has spoken to the city's intimate connection with the river, capturing its romanticised legacy. But today, for many, the Clyde feels like a shadow of its former self—a still and silent divider rather than a unifying force. The shipbuilding era days that once defined it is long gone, and much of its rich heritage has been dismantled and discarded. To me, it's a tragedy that the city has turned its back on the river and its history. So, when I heard about the plans to develop Govan Graving Docks – especially with the idea of it becoming a working dry dock again – I approached O'Donnell Brown (architects) and asked if I could tell this story. I knew it was a story worth documenting, not just for the site but for the city and the river's future.”

Scottish filmmaker Chris Leslie said as a short film has been launched giving a unique insight into ambitious plans to transform the historic Govan Graving Docks on the River Clyde. *Rising Tides: Govan Graving Docks Rebirth* tells the story of how the site on the south bank of the River Clyde, which has lain derelict for nearly 40 years is to be transformed into a new community with 300 homes and a park with one of the docks used for shiprepair.

“The legacy of the Bay City Rollers needs to be remembered in Edinburgh. We've campaigned for plaques or statues to commemorate them. They put Edinburgh and Scotland on the map during the 1970s. A few years ago, a fan-funded plaque was revealed at Ryries Bar. Apart from that there is nothing in the city to remember the Edinburgh lads. Having the benches would let people who might not be fans know who the band were. It would also give fans, who still travel to Edinburgh specifically to see the Bay City Roller sights, a place to remember the band. I just think it is the right thing to do.”

Bay City Rollers fan Gail Shackley said fan groups are raising funds for two benches in Edinburgh's Princes St Gardens to commemorate the bands founding member Alan Longmuir and front man Les McKeown. The Rollers shot to global fame in the 1970s, selling a total of 120m records worldwide and causing 'tartanmania'. A bench in Princes St Gardens costs £5,045 which includes the bench, installation, plaque and twenty years of maintenance.

SCOTWORD

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

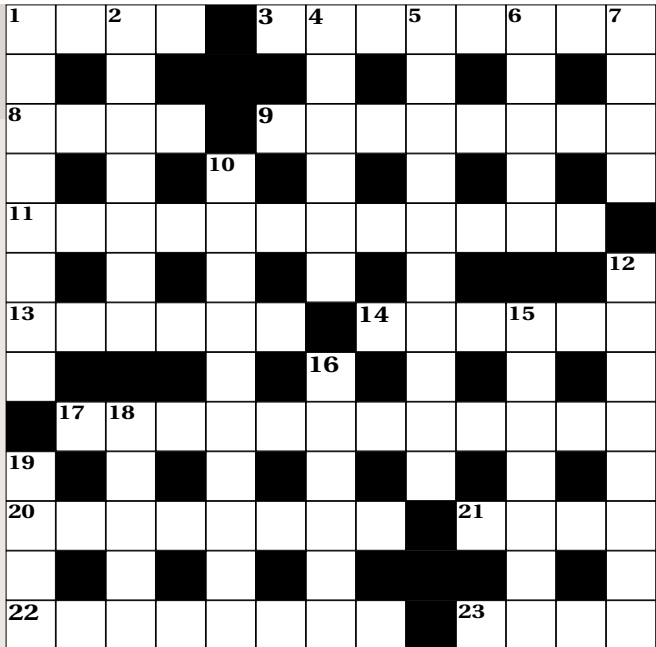
CLUES ACROSS

- 1) Marshes (4)
- 3) Adequately fitting (8)
- 8) Battle or Lochaber 4)
- 9) 'Smokie' town (8)
- 11) Central area of beauty (3, 9)
- 13) Her Majesty's signature (6)
- 17) Princess Margarets' birthplace(6, 6)
- 20) Acting wary (8)

- 21) Where Scots find work (4)
- 22) Wholesaler (8)
- 23) Enterprising space journey (4).

CLUES DOWN

- 1) David Livingstone's birthplace (8)
- 2) Glen - both ways! (4)
- 4) Hot substantial (6)
- 5) Road surface! (10)
- 6) Impetuous. (5)
- 7) Sound return (4)
- 10) Giant step in opening dance (5,5)
- 12) James Watt's birthplace (8)
- 15 Food provider (7)
- 16 Behind on board (6)
- 18) Hi-tech beam (5)
- 19 Was Mac the first Scot? (4)



Tam O' Thatcher-Thatching project at historic Burns building



Thatchers Jonathan Botterell and Jane Benwell.

Work is underway to re-thatch the roof of the historic Bachelors' Club, the site of Robert Burns' social club where in the late 1700s, he learned to dance, became a freemason, and created a debating society. The Grade A-listed building, cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, stands in the village of Tarbolton, South Ayrshire. While it plays an important role in telling the story of Robert Burns' life, it is also an excellent example of 17th century vernacular architecture. And as one of approximately 220 thatched buildings remaining in Scotland, it's vital that its history is respected and preserved in the conservation process.

The Trust's project is the first phase of work at the Bachelors' Club and involves re-thatching the entire building; reforming the ridge of the thatch in a more traditional timber board finish; rebuilding a brick chimney head in traditional stone; repairs to roof timbers; replacement of lead valleys and flashings with neighbouring properties; and repairs to stone skewes. A second phase planned for early 2025 will look

at the external elevations and internal finishes of the building. These major works are being carried out by a team of thatchers travelling from Yorkshire due to the skills shortage in this traditional trade across the UK. They will be supported by local joiners, stonemasons, and roof workers, and an archaeologist will have a watching brief during the works to record any findings of interest or importance.

Traditional trades

The conservation works were made possible by the Historic Environment Scotland Partnership Fund Grant, an ongoing partnership that enables the charity to not only carry out vital work but to support the continuation of traditional crafts and skills. To make the project as sustainable as possible, the reed for the thatching has been acquired from a Tayside RSPB reserve. Due to space challenges, it was originally stored at Culzean Castle and Country Park, another of the Trust's properties in the southwest, before it was moved to a farm near Tarbolton for the thatchers to collect each day. The spent reed will be taken back to the farm where it will be used for mulch, minimising any waste.

Laura Baillie, Building Conservation Surveyor at the National Trust for Scotland, said: "This is a really special project that has taken a huge amount of logistical coordination. From appointing skilled tradespeople, which is a challenge in itself with traditional trades like thatching, to sourcing the reed and appropriate materials, we have worked hard to ensure

we are preserving this 300-year-old building in a way that is both sustainable and true to its heritage. We've also included our Trust network and local communities by appointing local tradespeople where possible, and hopefully providing an element of upskilling as they observe the thatchers at work. And the local farm storing the reed and taking the spent reed for mulch belongs to a former stonemason apprentice at Culzean, so we owe a lot to the people around us who support projects like this."

An important site in the history of Burns

Caroline Smith, Operations Manager at Bachelors' Club, said: "This is such an important site in the history of Burns' life and an important 17th century building in its own right. With so few thatched buildings remaining in Scotland, this is vital conservation work for the Trust. This is the first phase of a larger project, with the next phase including repairs to the external and internal walls of the building, as well as carrying out thatch maintenance at Souter Johnnie's Cottage in Ayrshire, another historical link to Burns. We are dedicated to preserving these important buildings for everyone to enjoy for many years to come."

The ongoing works at both the Bachelors' Club and Souter Johnnie's Cottage require additional funding and support. This spring, the team will peel back the paint and plaster, repair the brick and stone below, and then the exterior of the buildings will be covered with harling,

a mixture of lime and aggregate to protect them. It will cost £330,000 to complete these works and the Trust requires £130,000 not currently covered by funding. Donations from generous supporters will directly assist the vital preservation of Burns' legacy at these iconic locations.

The Bachelors' Club is closed to the public while these works take place, with plans to reopen in 2025. People interested in learning more about Burns can visit the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, Ayr, which is open all year round.

For more information about the project, or to make a donation to these works, please visit: www.nts.org.uk/burnsappeal.



Bachelors' Club.



Thatcher Jane Benwell.

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Scholar appointed to exam Robert Burns and Freemasonry in landmark research project



Patrick Jamieson at the museum in The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland in Edinburgh. Photo: Martin Shields.

The University of Glasgow's Centre for Robert Burns Studies (CRBS) has appointed a PhD scholar for a groundbreaking research project examining Robert Burns's connections with Freemasonry. The celebrated Scottish poet was not only a prolific writer but also a dedicated Freemason throughout his adult life, serving as Senior Warden of Lodge St Andrew, Dumfries, until his death in 1796, with earlier powerful masonic connections also in Edinburgh and Ayrshire. His Masonic affiliations even influenced his work, including one of his most famous poems, *A Man's a Man for a' That*, which was notably performed at the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

This pioneering PhD research, funded by The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland, marks the first in-depth academic study of its kind, with unprecedented access to the Grand Lodge's archives. The doctorate will be supervised within the Centre for Robert Burns, the world-leading research unit at the University of Glasgow.

Patrick Jamieson, the new Burns and Freemasonry scholar, said: "It is an honour to have been awarded the Scottish Masonic Scholarship by the University of Glasgow, and to have been given the chance to undertake such necessary research. I am grateful to the Grand Lodge of Scotland for providing unprecedented access to masonic

records across the country, most of which date back to Enlightenment Scotland. Already, study of these records has provided information about a number of Burns's patrons which begins to corroborate previous theories about the role a masonic network might have played in facilitating his ascension to the status of 'Caledonia's Bard'. I look forward to delving deeper into the archives over the coming years and discovering new insights into this fascinating and understudied part of Burns's life and career."

Caledonia's bard

Professor Gerard Carruthers, Chair of Scottish Literature, said: "Robert Burns's career was often boosted by his Masonic networks. There is nothing sinister about this: Burns to begin with did not have a lot of power. Indeed, he did not even have a vote and Masonry provided the poet with access to an intelligent, highly cultured grouping that was objectively interested in him. This new scholarship will give us time for a deep and controlled dive into what Freemasonry brought to Burns."

Evidence of Burns's Masonic life is preserved at the Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh, where his original Masonic apron is displayed in the museum. The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland, founded in 1736 and headquartered in Edinburgh, with a global

presence, has provided full funding for this three-year scholarship, demonstrating their commitment to advancing understanding of Scotland's cultural heritage. The research will be conducted within the prestigious Centre for Robert Burns Studies, recipient of the Queen's Anniversary Prize in 2023, the highest national Honour awarded in UK further and higher education. The project aims to explore how Freemasonry's principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality influenced Burns's writing and his contribution to Scottish cultural nationalism.

Burns's Masonic journey began on July 4, 1781, when he was initiated as an Entered Apprentice in Lodge St David, Tarbolton at the age of 23. His rapid rise within the organisation saw him elected as Depute Master of Lodge St James at just 25, demonstrating the high regard in which he was held by his fellow Masons. The celebrated poet's Masonic life flourished alongside his literary career. It also provided Burns with crucial support and patronage. When his first Kilmarnock edition was published in 1786, 350 members of St John's Lodge, Kilmarnock subscribed to copies, providing crucial early support for his work.

His prominence in Masonic circles grew when the then Grand Master of Scotland, Francis Chateris, famously toasted him as 'Caledonia's bard' at an Edinburgh gathering in 1787.



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).

Glen Gelder sits at the heart of the Balmoral Estate, its lower slopes lying close to Balmoral Castle and its upper reaches providing spectacular views to the dark, north facing corries of Lochnagar. Since 1848, successive

Royal generations have enjoyed the wild and majestic splendour of Glen Gelder and the surrounding mountains, rivers and forests of Upper Deeside. At the request of His Majesty The King, The Scottish Tartans Authority designed this tartan using the specific shades of the King Charles III tartan.

These hues reflect the natural dyes of 18th century specimens so admired by His Majesty. The sett is based on a unique piece of rural Highland tartan discovered in Glen Affric and now in the collection of the Authority. Dating from c1500-1600 AD, this is the oldest surviving specimen of true tartan found in Scotland. The Balmoral Glen Gelder design provides a link to cloth that most likely originated in the reign of James V, Mary Queen of Scots or possibly James VI and I.

This tartan was designed by The Scottish Tartans Authority and registered in November, 2024.

Renowned St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival returns in March



St. Augustine, Florida was founded in 1565 by Celtic colonists from northern Spain, and on March 17 of 1600 and 1601 our colonial Irish vicar led St. Patrick celebrations here. America's oldest Celtic City welcomes back the St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival. The festival is North Florida's premier celebration of everything Celtic and offers music, athletics, food, and cultural activities. The festival kicks off Saturday March 8 with the world's oldest St. Patrick Parade (www.celticstaugustine.com/parade/), proudly marching through the streets of St. Augustine since 1601.

The St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival will be held on March 8 and March 9, 2025, at Francis Field in beautiful downtown St. Augustine, Florida, USA. Winner of nearly 20 "Best of" awards, the two-day festival features eight top International and U.S. Celtic bands (www.celticstaugustine.com/performer-bios/), including Albannach, Seven Nations, Syr, Dublin City Ramblers, and much more. See amazing feats of strength at the Highland Games, explore workshops,

lectures, food offerings, and activities for the wee ones. And enjoy a soft-opening Whiskey and Scotch seminar and tasting on Friday March 7.

"We started our first Celtic festival in 2011, but St. Augustine was founded in 1565 by Spanish Celts from our sister city, Aviles in Spain, and on March 17 of 1600 and 1601 colonial Irish vicar Ricardo Artur (Richard Arthur) led the New World's first St. Patrick celebrations here!" says Albert Syeles, Romanza-St. Augustine's President. "It's a testament to our community, loyal attendees, volunteers, businesses, our board, and a stellar selection of some of the best Celtic musicians in the world. The continued support has allowed us to make each year even better." The St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival is produced by Romanza-St. Augustine and is funded in part by St. Johns County Tourist Development Council and St. Johns Cultural Council.

Learn more at: www.celticstaugustine.com and follow along on Facebook@ CelticStAugustineMusicFest and Instagram@CelticFestStAug.

Dressed to Kilt 2025 returns to New York City



For the first time since before the pandemic the Dressed to Kilt (DTK) charity fashion show is returning to its New York City roots. Co-Founded by Sir Sean Connery and Dr. Geoffrey Scott Carroll in 2003, it is now the most prestigious, largest and exciting Scottish fashion show in the world. It is also one of the largest fashion shows in the world in terms of press and media generation and it is the highest profile Scottish event of New York City Tartan Day.

Country Couture – From the Scottish Highlands to Fifth Avenue

The show theme for 2025 will be “Country Couture – From the Scottish Highlands to Fifth Avenue”.

This will be a tribute to the fashion of the countryside and the great outdoors. The DTK runway becomes a stage for outdoor lifestyle fashion that encompasses hunting, hiking, riding, skiing, climbing, boating, etc. There is a ‘Country Chic’ look that is emerging, and this movement is bringing nature back into urban environments. This influence of the countryside in urban style (tweeds, tailoring, plaid, cashmere, leather and suede) is adding warmth and softness to the city silhouettes and attitudes.

Though the fashion runways of New York City are the home of Dressed to Kilt, this annual celebrity show has recently performed to sold-out standing room only audiences in a castle, a cathedral, Washington DC, an airplane hangar in Houston and most recently in Toronto, Canada. This years show will take place at the Church of Heavenly Rest, a beautiful cathedral on Fifth Avenue and 90th Street in front of Central Park. DTK has raised significant sums for Veteran’s causes throughout the years, earning acclaim and extensive recognition. Their partnership with the Navy SEAL Foundation has drawn renewed attention and admiration for their endeavors.

Tickets go on sale this month and for more details visit: www.dressedtokilt.com

Ken your country



How 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 famous mountain overlooks the Royal holiday home at Balmoral?
- 2) When was the Forth Road Bridge opened? a) 1960, b) 1962 or c) 1964?
- 3) On which Scottish island would you find Fingal’s Cave?
- 4) What is the most western point on the Scottish mainland?
- 5) Who was Highland Mary?
- 6) Edinburgh’s Royal Mile stretches between which two famous landmarks?
- 7) Who is chief of the Clan Campbell?
- 8) What is a clarsach?

- 9) In a Scottish pub, how much alcohol would you get for a gill?
- 10) Which four Hebridean islands go to make up what is known as the Small Isles?

Answers:

- 1) Lochnagar.
- 2) c) 1964.
- 3) On the Isle of Staffa.
- 4) Ardnamurchan Point lies at the tip of the Ardnamurchan Peninsula and is the most westerly land on the entire British mainland.
- 5) Mary Campbell from Dunoon, who was romantically associated with Robert Burns she died in childbirth.
- 6) Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse.
- 7) The Duke of Argyll.
- 8) A type of Highland harp.
- 9) A gill is approximately quarter of a pint.
- 10) Canna, Eigg, Muck and Rum.

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IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Arktos male polar bear from Highland Wildlife Park - the only place polar bears can be seen in Scotland today. Photo: RZSS.

Fishy fossil find points to possible polar bear ancestry for Scottish bears

New analysis of ancient bones and fossils found in a Highland cave has revealed them to be 'fishier than the average bear' and could even suggest polar bears once roamed Scotland. Advancements in the chemical study of bones and teeth have enabled experts at the University of Aberdeen and National Museums Scotland to reevaluate fossils collected at the Inchnadamph 'Bone Caves' in Sutherland. Analysis of samples uncovered evidence of fish in the diet of animals that, until now, had been identified as brown bears.

Working with University of Edinburgh Master's student Holland Taekema, and as part of a larger review on the history of bears in Scotland, the researchers compiled new stable isotope data – a technique for the reconstruction of human and animal diets in past populations. They found that for three samples belonging to bears which dated to around 30,000 to 50,000 years old, well before humans occupied the land, the diet was made up almost entirely of marine fish or other seafoods. This finding, say the researchers, who published their results in *Annales Zoologici Fennici*, is markedly different to the meat and plant-based diet typical of modern brown bears, or those found in the British Isles prior to their extinction in the last 1,000 years, and may even point to the presence of polar bears living in Scotland during the Last Ice Age.

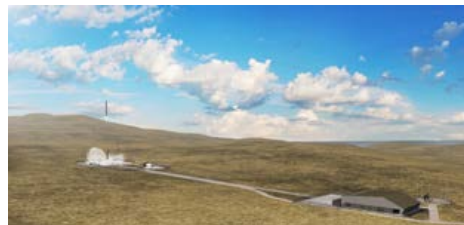
Professor Kate Britton, from the University of Aberdeen, said: "We have identified several samples which stick out like a sore thumb both from the diets of other bears living in Scotland thousands of years ago and from what we'd expect of today's brown bears. Instead of consuming the meat of land-based animals, plants, or even a little salmon, like contemporary brown bears, these bears appear to have lived almost exclusively on seafood. This is at odds with what we know about brown bear diets today, but also across the ages. Even modern grizzly bears, known to gorge seasonally on salmon in some places, don't show anything close to this level of seafood consumption in their diet. The diet is so unusual that we now need to either reevaluate what we know about brown bear feeding ecology or question whether these fossils are brown bears at all. Given they are fishier than the average bear, we now have work to do to understand why and to answer the question as to whether these are brown bears with a unique diet, or a different species or subspecies of brown bear, maybe even polar bears."

While polar bears are found today only in the circumpolar north, researchers say that as the climate cooled into the Last Glacial Maximum, the seasonal sea ice limit in the North Atlantic would have moved south, potentially enabling polar bears – which

are also great swimmers – to spread into more southerly areas than they are found in today. A similar theory was mooted back in the 1990s following the discovery of a bear's skull with some polar bear-like features, although no further evidence for polar bears in prehistoric Scotland has been found, and more modern archaeological techniques have since called the radiocarbon dating of that particular skull into question.

Dr Andrew Kitchener, Principal Curator of Vertebrates at National Museums Scotland, where the fossil bears are held, added: "When experiencing this habitat expansion, the polar bears may well have encountered the brown bears which inhabited Scotland at this time. As we know that polar bears and brown bears can successfully interbreed today where their ranges overlap, it presents interesting questions about the ancestry of bears that later roamed our islands."

Orbex to switch launch operations to SaxaVord Spaceport in Shetland



Spaceflight company Orbex is to focus its operations exclusively on developing small and medium sized space rockets after switching its launch operations to SaxaVord Spaceport in Shetland. The company has decided to pause construction of its own spaceport in Sutherland and will instead launch its first rockets from SaxaVord. The decision enables the company to direct more funding to the development of a new, medium-sized launch vehicle called Proxima. Orbex will retain its lease to build and operate its own spaceport at Sutherland in order to give it flexibility to increase launch capacity in the future.

Phil Chambers, CEO of Orbex, said: "Orbex is first and foremost a launch services specialist. Our primary goal is to support the European space industry by achieving a sustainable series of satellite launches into low Earth orbit. This is best achieved by focusing our resources and talents on developing launch vehicles and associated launch services. This decision will help us to reach first launch in 2025 and provides SaxaVord with another customer to further strengthen its commercial proposition. It's a win-win for UK and Scottish space."

Frank Strang, CEO of SaxaVord spaceport, said: "We're delighted to welcome Orbex to SaxaVord. Given the scale of their ambition and the evolution of their offer to include a medium-sized launch vehicle, it makes sense for Orbex to start operations from SaxaVord Spaceport, which is already licenced and in a position to support their upcoming launches. The UK's space industry is developing very quickly and requires the associated economies of scale and synergies to maintain its competitiveness for launch services from Europe."

Orbex is planning to increase the size of its manufacturing capability in Forres to ensure it can meet demand for its smaller vehicle, known as Prime. It will now also use the site to develop a new medium

launch vehicle, which will enable Orbex to send more and larger satellites into orbit. Phil Chambers added: "Medium-sized space rockets will play an important role in the European space industry in years to come. It is part of our strategic plan to offer the market a medium-sized launcher that will compete in Europe for larger payloads. Pausing the construction of our own spaceport enables us to now focus on developing this offering."

Scotland's oldest public museum gets grant for major development



The Hunterian at the University of Glasgow has been awarded a £249,000 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The funding will allow The Hunterian to carry out a crucial scoping project that will shape the future of its public-facing venues, the Hunterian Museum and Hunterian Art Gallery, which are significant parts of Glasgow's built heritage. The Hunterian Museum, housed in the University's Gilbert Scott building, has been open to the public since 1870. The Hunterian Art Gallery, in the William Whitfield building, was constructed between 1973 and 1981. The Hunterian is Scotland's oldest public museum, with collections spanning arts, sciences and humanities. Since it opened in 1807, The Hunterian has been an invaluable academic and community resource for learning and understanding. Today The Hunterian is committed to becoming a more meaningful place for more diverse audiences. Funding will allow The Hunterian to identify what is required to revitalise its ageing buildings, safeguard its important collections and serve the needs of its communities.

The project, titled 'Unlocking the Potential of The Hunterian: The Changing Museum', will enable The Hunterian to create a clear plan and set of activities to understand what is needed to achieve transformational change. As well as a comprehensive survey of the buildings, funded and carried out by the University of Glasgow, the project will also consider what happens inside the venues. Putting people at the heart of this work, 'Unlocking the Potential of The Hunterian' will take a participatory approach and build equitable relationships with stakeholders and communities, giving them a central role in defining what The Hunterian will be for the next generation. Through a programme of survey work, consultation, collaboration and co-production, The Hunterian will explore barriers to inclusion, opening up the collections to more diverse voices and working with them to develop future programmes and displays. Steph Scholten, Director of The Hunterian said: "We are delighted to receive this funding to undertake this crucial foundational work. When our vision is realised, our collections will be protected, displayed in revitalised, sustainable venues and will meet the needs of all of our visitors. We will work with our communities to give them a central role

in shaping the future of The Hunterian, creating spaces where people can think critically, and can come together to both challenge and find common ground."

At the project's conclusion, The Hunterian will better understand the needs of its audiences and the work required to safeguard and enhance its venues, including the safe and sustainable display of its collections. Completion of the project will allow The Hunterian to develop a future bid to fund the redevelopment work necessary to conserve and upgrade the buildings. 'Unlocking the Potential of The Hunterian: The Changing Museum' will run throughout 2025, and the findings will be made available in Spring 2026.

Vision for new coastal neighbourhood in the Scottish Capital



A masterplan to transform Seafeld in north-east Edinburgh into a new environmentally friendly neighbourhood, has been published by Edinburgh City Council. The masterplan will also connect its coastline to the surrounding communities in Leith, Portobello and Craighentenny. Currently, the area is primarily made up of car showrooms, trades, light industry as well as Lothian Buses' Marine Depot and the Council's Seafeld Household Waste Recycling Centre.

The draft 'Seafeld Place Brief' and 'Draft Seafeld Masterplan' have been produced to add detail to the allocation in the Council's local development plan, City Plan 2030, as one of 44 pieces of land across Edinburgh allocated as an 'Opportunity Site' for development. Planning Convener, Councillor James Dagleish said: "Our draft plan focuses on the creation of a new environmentally friendly neighbourhood at Seafeld to help address the city's housing emergency. Options for higher density flats, with the clear aim of 35% of homes on site being affordable, are being explored with stunning views across the Firth of Forth alongside excellent community facilities. We're estimating the site could potentially deliver as many as 2,700 homes with a range of other styles of housing such as colonies and townhouses. We'll also make sure there are opportunities for employment and community uses. Our bold vision to transform this area would open up the Seafeld section of Edinburgh's coastline creating an attractive and seamless promenade linking to the waterfront communities that already exist on either side. I'd like to thank the local people and businesses whose views have helped get us to this stage and I look forward to receiving further feedback from the upcoming consultation to help us finalise our plans." A new primary school, GP surgery and plenty of green space are also proposed for Seafeld as well as a Waterfront Park. Improved public transport, walking, cycling and wheeling routes linking to the wider area are also included. The provision of a heat network to help the city with its net zero target is planned.

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Annie Lennox - *A diva of humanity*



Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics.

said: "I feel very distressed about the kind of ravaging that has gone on in the centre of Aberdeen and I'm very upset about it."

Even as Eurythmics were preparing for global acclaim in the early 1980s, Annie found herself in her home city battling with depression and afraid to leave her own home. Which means that anybody who listens to *Sweet Dreams* and regards it as an uplifting anthem is wide off the mark. On the contrary, it was a cry for help with a catchy hook.

Agoraphobia

Eurythmics bandmate Dave Stewart was forced to spend time in hospital with a collapsed lung and Annie, seeking refuge from disappointing sales of the first Eurythmics album, travelled back to her roots and began to contemplate whether she could continue with her music career. She said: "I spent a great deal of time crying. I hit rock bottom. My self-esteem dropped to an all-time low and I was suffering from agoraphobia. I couldn't go outside the door. Whenever I did, I started having panic attacks, I would get palpitations and come out in cold sweats. It was horrible. In the end, you realise that you are devastatingly alone in the world. And no matter how much you want to get out of that sort of thing, it's hard to crack. It has to come entirely from within yourself and eventually you have to start thinking about your own self-preservation. (As for *Sweet Dreams*) It's basically me saying 'Look at the state of us. How can it get any worse?' It's about surviving. It's not a normal song so much as a weird mantra that goes round and round, but somehow it became our theme song."

That ambivalence has embodied Annie's career, but nobody can deny the creative vim and vigour and boundless energy which she has brought to her life on and off stage. She appeared at Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday concert in 1988; became a public supporter of Amnesty International and Greenpeace; recorded music to increase Aids awareness; and was fiercely critical of the war in Iraq in 2003. Five years later, she founded The Circle of Women, a private charitable organisation to raise funds for projects and backed the principle of an independent Scotland. Archbishop Desmond Tutu said of her: "She is one of those exemplary human beings who chose to put her success in her chosen career to work in order to benefit others." There were similar glowing words when she sang in front of Barack Obama. And when she pushed her horizons into boosting the lives of women in Malawi. She has cared passionately about equality and enhancing women's rights in countries where they were too often abused or disregarded.

And yet, her involvement in campaigning hasn't been merely reserved for international matters. When oil tycoon, Sir Ian Wood, proposed a "transformational" scheme in Aberdeen's Union Terrace Gardens in 2009, Annie wasn't impressed by the plans. And that's putting it mildly.

Casting her gaze over what was being advocated, she described it as "architectural vandalism." And she wasn't finished there. As she later wrote: "The heart of my home city of Aberdeen was simply torn down. It makes my heart sick and still does. What went in its place were these vile, concrete monstrosities. Don't get me wrong - I love modern architecture, but not when the historical is replaced by the goddam awful. Go to Florence, Paris or Rome. They don't have a problem living with antiquity."

Thrawn

In many respects, Annie is a contradictory character. A private person with a desire to fight for her beliefs in public; a Scot with an internationalist streak who often seems happier abroad; and somebody whose charismatic performances mask a deep shyness. So, it was hardly surprising she was stunned when she delved into her family background in the BBC programme *Who Do You Think You Are?* in 2012.

It emerged that her great-grandmother, Isabella McHardy, was hauled before the Kirk Session in 1852 after giving birth to an illegitimate child - Annie's great-grandfather, George Ferguson - which was

regarded as scandalous behaviour in the Victorian era. Her maternal grandparents, William Ferguson and Dora Paton, were a gamekeeper and a dairymaid; two different sides of the coin which flicked between Balmoral and Torry.

Ultimately, there's no definitive description which applies to Annie Lennox. As she once told the *Press & Journal*, she was grateful for the music tuition she received at school. But... "I had to leave Aberdeen in order to develop musically. Yet, if I hadn't had the chance to have the musical experiences I had as a child here, I don't think I would have gone on to be in Eurythmics in the first place."

There's a grand Scottish word for people such as her: *thrawn*. If the term is applied to a man, it's usually done admiringly. If it's a woman, then she must be difficult. Just don't use these words in Annie Lennox's company!



Annie Lennox has never been interested in sticking to bland platitudes or ignoring injustice. Ever since the teenager left Aberdeen High School for Girls in the 1960s and ventured to London with ambitions of orchestrating a successful music career, she has developed into one of Scotland's greatest pop stars and a tireless activist for multiple causes. The myriad hits speak to her versatility: the androgynous video which propelled her to global stardom as one half of Eurythmics with *Sweet Dreams*; and the powerful voice which joined forces with Aretha Franklin in *Sisters Are Doing It for Themselves*.

The Granite City

On her own, the title of her solo album, *Diva*, amplified the message that she was the mistress of her own destiny, whether rocking the charts with *Walking on Broken Glass* and *Why* or following it up with *Medusa* and *No More 'I Love You's'*. Annie has not enjoyed a comfortable relationship with Aberdeen, despite being its most famous musical daughter. On the contrary, the woman who was brought up in a two-room tenement in Hutcheon Street, has spoken out on many different issues. It hasn't always made her friends or provided cosy conversations. But the woman who celebrated her 70th birthday on Christmas Day remains one of life's rugged individualists.

In 1988, at the height of her success, Annie agreed to become a patron for Haddo House Hall Arts Trust. This should have been an ideal opportunity for her to indulge in a few upbeat statements about nurturing young people's potential. Yet, while there were positive noises about her new role, there was plenty of other stuff which testified to Annie's belief that the Granite City hadn't done itself any favours. As she



Did you know?

The Burning of the Clavie

Photo: VisitScotland.

- The traditional Burning of the Clavie takes place in Burghead, Moray.
- The festival dates back to 400AD, when the village was the capital of the ancient Pictish kingdom.
- The event takes place annually, as the townspeople of Burghead celebrate New Year twice - on January 1 and then again 10 days later.
- The Burning of the Clavie is a celebration of the ancient Scots Hogmanay, which fell on January 11 before the Gregorian calendar was introduced in Britain in the 18th century.
- The event involves lighting a 100kg barrel of tar which is then carried around the town. Tradition dictates that members of the 'Clavie Crew' must be natives of the town.
- The Clavie is then taken up Dorie Hill before being allowed to burn out and tumble down the hill.
- Locals then gather around the smoking remains as it is supposed to bring good luck for the year ahead.
- The Burning of the Clavie is held on 11 January each year, except when the 11th is a Sunday, in which case it takes place on the 10th.

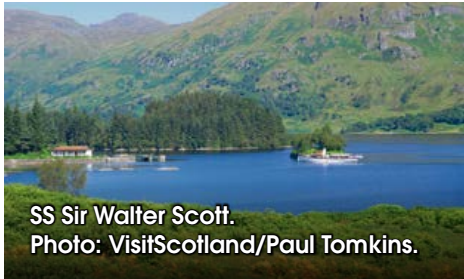
Walking in the footsteps of your ancestors



Open ledger at New Register House.
Photo: VisitScotland/Kenny Lam.



Blair Castle.
Photo: VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins.



SS Sir Walter Scott.
Photo: VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins.

An estimated 40 million people across the globe claim Scottish ancestry, many of whom come together to celebrate their shared Scottish heritage, including around St Andrew's Day and Burns Night. There's no better way, though, to feel truly connected with your Scottish roots than visiting Scotland. *The Scottish Banner* teamed up with VisitScotland to take a look at just some of the experiences ancestral visitors to Scotland can enjoy.

Connecting with Clan/Family names

A distinct element of Scottish history is that from the Highlands to the Lowlands there are sites and regions which are specifically associated to particular clan and family surnames. Scotland is famous around the world for its castles and historic properties, and many have clan/family links.

Some are atmospheric ruins, such as Dunnottar Castle, near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire (Keith), the moated, triangular shaped Caerlaverock Castle near Dumfries (Maxwell), or Dundonald Castle, Kilmarnock (links to Stuart, Wallace and Bruce families). Others are well preserved homes with stunning interiors, such as Blair Castle in Perthshire (Murray), Culzean Castle in Ayrshire (Kennedy) and the Castle of Mey in Caithness (Sinclair). These examples also offer well-appointed self-catering accommodation in the castle grounds or neighbouring estates.

Those with Stuart (Stewart) ancestry are spoiled for choice, since there are places across Scotland associated with the Stuart monarchs, such as Edinburgh and Stirling Castles, and the stunning Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute.

There are a number of dedicated clan history museums where you can explore the stories of a clan in more depth, such as the Clan MacPherson Museum, Newtonmore, the Clan Donnachaidh Museum (Robertson, Duncan and Reid) adjacent to House of Bruar in Pitlochry, Perthshire, and the Clan Cameron Museum in Spean Bridge, north of Fort William.

Scotland is globally famous for its stunning scenery and simply by visiting the areas associated with your clan and family names, you will enjoy the beauty of areas largely unchanged from what your ancestors would have known, such as Argyll (Campbell) and the North West Highlands (MacLennan). There are also many wonderful local museums telling the story of the area and those who lived there through the generations.

The northern isles of Orkney and Shetland are generally accepted to have operated outwith the clan/family model. However, those with Orkney or Shetland ancestry will find a wealth of history waiting to be discovered, including these islands' strong Viking heritage, at places such as Shetland Museum & Archives, and the Stromness Museum on the Orkney mainland, which is home to a rich source of information on the connections between Orkney and the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada.

Famous faces

Many ancestral visitors wish to explore sites related to famous Scots. The story of *Braveheart* hero Sir William Wallace is told at the National Wallace Monument overlooking the site of his famous victory 1297 victory at the Battle of Stirling Bridge. The nearby Battle of Bannockburn experience puts you at the heart of King Robert the Bruce's famous victory in 1314. You can also visit his burial place at Dunfermline Abbey in Fife, and Melrose Abbey in the Scottish Borders where his heart is interred.

Places linked to Scotland's national bard Robert Burns including the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, Ayrshire, The Globe Inn in Dumfries where you can arrange to visit the rooms where he lived and worked, and The Writers Museum in Edinburgh which celebrates the lives of three giants of Scottish Literature – Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir Walter Scott. Scott's beautiful home, Abbotsford, in the Scottish Borders, gives a fascinating insight into the life of the great author. The steamship *SS Sir Walter Scott* which bears his name offers scenic tours of Loch Katrine in the stunning Trossachs area, which was home to the famous folk hero Rob Roy MacGregor.

There are also many places across Scotland associated to Prince Charles Edward Stuart, known as Bonnie Prince Charlie, and perhaps none more so than Culloden near Inverness, which offers a powerfully emotive interpretation of how the 1745 Jacobite Rising came to a tragic end. Cairns across the battlefield bear the names of the clans who fought bravely for the Jacobite cause.

How Your Ancestors Lived

A number of attractions in Scotland provide fascinating insights into how your ancestors lived throughout the generations. Auchindrain Historic Township near Inveraray, Argyll and the Highland Folk Museum in Newtonmore are both fascinating open air museums capturing life in rural Scotland. The Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther, Fife tells the story of the fishing industry from earliest times to the present, while Aberdeen Maritime Museum explores the city's relationship with the sea through collections on the shipbuilding, fishing and oil industries.

The story of Scottish military regiments can be explored at the National War Museum and the Royal Scots Regimental Museum at Edinburgh Castle, The Highlanders' Museum at Fort George near Inverness, the Gordon Highlanders Museum in Aberdeen, the Black Watch Castle and Museum in Perth, and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum at Stirling Castle

During the 19th century, domestic service was the biggest single employer for women and the second largest employer of all workers. Attractions such as Georgian House in Edinburgh, the House of Dun near Montrose in Angus, and Traquair House in the Scottish Borders are some examples of the places where you can experience what life was like 'below stairs'. Textile production was and continues to be an important industry in Scotland. Exhibitions on the history of this industry can be enjoyed at the Weavers Cottage in Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire, Verdant Works in Dundee, New Lanark World Heritage Site, and Borders Textile Towerhouse in Hawick. Visit The Harris Tweed® Story Room at Stornoway Town Hall in the Outer Hebrides to explore the history of this iconic cloth, while www.harristweed.org/ traildetails places where you can see it being woven.

Genealogy

Scotland is acknowledged to have some of the world's finest archive records, and for those looking to build their family tree, there are various resources available.

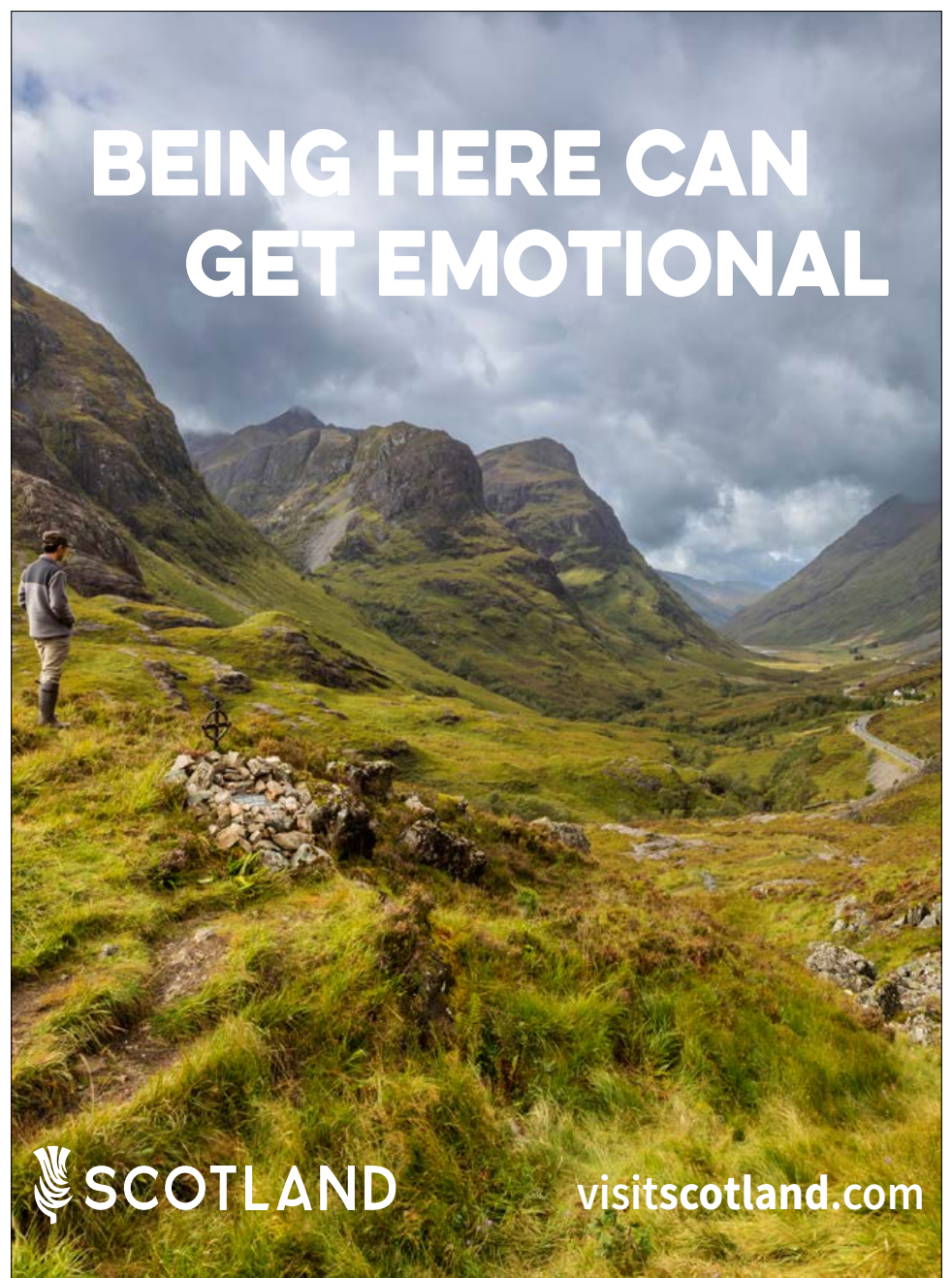
At ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh - part of National Records of Scotland - you can book space to explore the extensive archives. Other larger family history hubs are the Burns Monument Centre in Kilmarnock, Clackmannanshire Family History Centre in Alloa, Heritage Hub in Hawick, Highland Archive Service Family History Centre in Inverness, and the Family History at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

There are other small family history centres around Scotland which can be most helpful in uncovering local records, but many of these are largely volunteer-run, so it's advisable to research these beforehand, and book an appointment as far in advance as possible of your planned visit.

The expert help of professional genealogists can be invaluable, and by going to visitscotland.com and searching 'genealogists', you will find a range of providers who have experience in helping those with Scottish ancestry uncover their roots.

There are also a number of tour operators in Scotland who can assist with helping you trace your Scottish roots and design your perfect tour around your findings, or even simply develop an itinerary around the clan/family names within your family story. These include Mary's Meanders, Scottish Clans and Castles, Robbies Mac Tours and Kilted Piper Tours.

These are just a few ideas to inspire your ancestral experience in Scotland, but you'll find a wealth of further information at www.visitscotland.com/ancestry



The Aeronautical Abbot



Stirling Castle. Finlay McWalter, CC BY-SA 3.0.



A battery of cannon at Stirling Castle. Guenter Wieschendahl, public domain.

To have flown or not to have flown: the modern reassessment

John Read, in *Humour and Humanism in Chemistry* (1947), praised Damian's courage and determination, and celebrated what he considered possibly "the first serious flying experiment ever made in Scotland, if not, indeed, in the whole history of experimental flight." Read regarded Damian as versatile and ingenious. In a 2008 article in *The Times*, Charlene Sweeney reported on reassessments of Damian's experiment. She cited Charles McKean, professor of Scottish architectural history, who reinvestigated the matter. McKean studied 16th century maps and reached his own conclusions. The professor noted that the alchemist would have had the most advantageous uplift by jumping from the castle's highest spot on its western ramparts. McKean declared that anyone falling from this position would be killed, a point easily realised by looking down from the castle's western parapet. McKean also called into question Dunbar's assertion that Damian landed in a midden. Because the royal gardens were at the foot of the launch site – hardly the location for a midden, which would have been situated some distance from the castle – McKean cast further doubt on the claim that Damian crashed almost instantly.

In his examination of a 1702 map of the town (though drawn nearly 200 years after the event), the professor found that the midden closest to Stirling Castle was half a mile distant, on the other side of where the Smith Art Gallery is now situated. McKean affirmed that if Damian landed or crashed into a midden on that same site, then he flew successfully for half a mile, a fantastic achievement in 1507. McKean concluded that if the results of his investigation are accurate, then no one at that time, including Leonardo da Vinci, had accomplished what King James IV's resident alchemist had succeeded in doing. McKean averred that William Dunbar's derision of Damian's exploit could have derived from resentment of the alchemist's privileged position at court.

The professor also stated that the satirised variation of Damian's adventure was utilised by Protestant historians in an effort to discredit Scotland's Renaissance in comparison to that of continental Europe's. Sweeney also quoted Scottish historian Craig Muir, who commented that if Damian failed in his attempt, a belief popularly held to for five centuries, how then did he survive a fall of about 246 feet, with only a broken femur? (Though the wings could have slowed Damian's fall so that he suffered the injury but wasn't killed, the question of the location of the midden and the castle gardens throws doubt on this scenario.) Muir pointed to the obvious

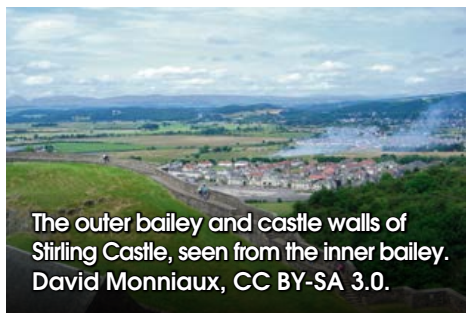
experiments advanced, so his laboratory's expense account grew. Damian required silver, gold and mercury -- the primary components of the philosopher's stone – as well as royal-funded continental research excursions. Also in the accounts books was a large quantity of whisky, considered special to alchemists for its marriage of the elements fire and water. The King's friendship with and indulgence of the alchemist – including appointing Damian the Abbot of Tongland in 1504 – may have created friction at court, and made him the target of William Dunbar's pen.

In 1507, John Damian, fitted with wings made from eagle and poultry feathers, leaped from the walls of Stirling Castle.

To the skies

There are two main accounts of Damian's aerial experiment. In the contemporary 'The Fenyet Freir of Tungland' ('The False Friar of Tongland'), William Dunbar gave Damian a Turkish heritage; described his supposed failures in medicine, alchemy and religion; denounced him as a charlatan; and claimed he attempted to fly to Turkey using feathered wings. Dunbar had the aeronautical abbot attacked and plucked by birds, which sent him crashing miserably into a midden, where he hid in the muck for three days from the carrion fowl circling overhead.

Scottish Roman Catholic bishop John Lesley, born twenty years after the event, recorded that apparently Damian's failure to discover the philosopher's stone led to him falling out of favour at court. Lesley claimed that Damian's research into mechanical flight, resulting in his spectacular trial, was a bid to salvage his reputation. Lesley reported Damian asserted that he could reach France faster than a group of Scottish ambassadors, by air travel, and announced his departure day. On the date in question, fitted with a pair of wings made of feathers, Lesley told that Damian leaped from Stirling Castle's topmost position. He recounted that the abbot's time airborne was limited, and that Damian broke his thighbone in either a crash or crash-landing.



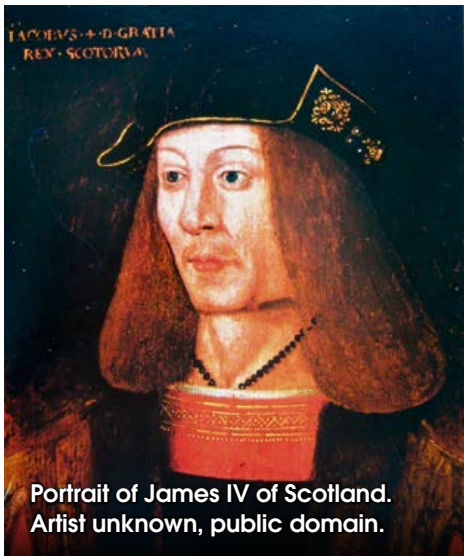
The outer bailey and castle walls of Stirling Castle, seen from the inner bailey. David Monniaux, CC BY-SA 3.0.

By: Eric Bryan

In 1507, John Damian, fitted with wings made from eagle and poultry feathers, leaped from the walls of Stirling Castle. Believed to have been an Italian alchemist and medicine man, Damian (AKA 'Damien') was also referred to as 'the French leich' by court poet William Dunbar, and in the archives of the Scottish exchequer. This moniker would have referred to Damian's practice as a doctor or healer, but Dunbar perhaps intended a double meaning, which accused Damian of draining King James IV's coffers.

The scientist-sovereign and the continental conjuror

James IV was a Renaissance king, an enthusiast of science and medicine, and had an amateur's understanding of surgery. But James' interests extended beyond these pursuits to alchemy, and the quest for the philosopher's stone. This mystical substance was believed to have the capacity to convert base metals into gold. It was also thought that when blended with wine the material would create the quintessence, or the elixir of life, a powerful cure-all for many diseases and ailments. With these dizzying dreams in mind, James IV welcomed John Damian to court. Damian established a laboratory – perhaps the first in Scotland – in Stirling Castle circa 1500. As Damian's



Portrait of James IV of Scotland. Artist unknown, public domain.

Glasgow Gliders



National Museum of Scotland, Percy Pilcher's Hawk glider, in atrium of Science and Technology galleries "Making It" section. Paul Hudson, CC BY.

While a lecturer at Glasgow University, Percy Pilcher (born 1866) built a hang-glider he named 'The Bat', which he flew successfully from a hill above the Firth of Clyde, near Cardross, in 1895. Pilcher based his ideas on those of German hang-glider pioneer Otto Lilienthal, but used a tow-rope launch system. Pilcher had several assistants: his sister Ella; his cousin, Miss Dorothy Pilcher; and Dorothy's mother were among them. Miss Dorothy acted as the occasional test-pilot, while her mother sometimes manned the two-rope. Because the Bat proved unwieldy, Pilcher set to work on an upgraded machine, 'The Beetle'. This large, heavy, flat-winged glider was even more difficult to control, so the inventor reverted to his Bat. However, Pilcher soon moved on to his next development, 'The Gull'. This glider, at 55 pounds, was lighter than the Beetle. But with 300 square feet of surface area, the Gull was delicate and unmanageable in anything stronger than a light breeze.

For his subsequent project, Pilcher returned to his Beetle design and refined that further into an improved, sturdily-built glider, 'The Hawk'. The aeronaut had a number of successful flights with the Hawk, including a distance record of about 250 yards. Amidst these triumphs Pilcher set his sights on motorised flight, investigating various new, tiny combustion engines which might be fitted to the Hawk. At this time, Pilcher may also have started work on a powered tri-plane craft. However, while demonstrating some glides with his Hawk in rainy weather in 1899, one of the tail's guy wires snapped and the machine crashed. Like John Damian, Pilcher broke his thighbone. But Pilcher never recovered consciousness, and died two days later. The Hawk has been preserved in the collections of National Museums Scotland, at the Museum of Flight in East Lothian.

solution, which is that Damian's wings were functional, and that he might have been the first person to fly. As Diane Maclean pointed out in a 2006 *Scotsman* article, Damian's experiment coincided with da Vinci's studies on flight, which culminated in the latter's *Codex on the Flight of Birds* (completed perhaps in 1505, the work included sketches of proposed flying machines). Because Damian was travelling in Europe in 1502, there is the possibility he may then have learned of da Vinci's studies. Mankind's first victorious voyage into the skies might have been Damian's feathered leap from Stirling Castle.



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Visit Scotland 2025

*Are you looking to travel to Scotland in 2025?
Here you will find a list from VisitScotland of new
attractions, events, and celebrations for the year ahead!*

From unveiling a reimagined landmark castle, to Scotland's largest city celebrating a historic anniversary, to endless epic waves and adventure awaiting at Scotland's first surfing resort...2025 looks to be another standout year. Offering awe-inspiring landscapes, a vibrant culinary scene, soul-stirring experiences, and a warm, welcoming spirit, Scotland is the ultimate destination to reinvigorate the soul.

Whether a nature enthusiast, lover of luxury, foodie or music aficionado, Scotland offers year-round allure and should be at the top of everybody's travel list. The selection below is just a handful of Scotland's brand-new range of visitor attractions, distilleries, events, and anniversaries to look forward to in the year ahead.

Key 2025 events and attractions



The Inverness Castle Experience, Inverness, opening in 2025 - The Inverness Castle Experience will be a new visitor attraction in the centre of Inverness, celebrating the 'spirit of the Highlands' through its stories of past, present and future. The existing castle buildings and esplanade gardens are being transformed from their original use as the home of Inverness' prison and courts into a celebration of what makes the Highlands of Scotland a special place to live, work and visit. Visitors will be able to take a journey through the gardens, the two towers and new restaurant, bars and shop to experience stories about the Highlands and its landscape, culture, heritage, and people. The visitor journey will be guided by a seanchaidh – storyteller – who will help to reveal stories which celebrate the spirit of the Highlands.

Celebrate Glasgow's 850th anniversary - Glasgow, UNESCO City of Music, celebrates its 850th anniversary in 2025, making it an ideal time to explore this dynamic city. With a range of events and activities to come to mark the occasion and as a city renowned for its rich culture, delicious food and drink, striking architecture, world-class events, exciting visitor attractions and welcoming atmosphere, Glasgow guarantees a memorable visit. Find out more in the Glasgow spotlight section below.

Paisley Museum, Renfrewshire, opening in 2025 - Paisley Museum was founded as a place of learning at the heart of the

town, and the building and collections have a remarkable history. After a significant £45-million-pound investment, the museum is being transformed to become one of the main offerings in Paisley alongside wider heritage products such as, Paisley Art Centre, Paisley Library and Paisley Townhall. The museum will showcase Paisley's world-changing stories to new audiences and will sit at the heart of the community – a place for everyone to learn, discover, create, and connect.

Lost Shore Surf Resort, Edinburgh - The Lost Shore Surf Resort arrived in Scotland in autumn 2024, when it proudly became Europe's largest inland surfing destination. Based in Edinburgh, this world-class facility brings an iconic sport to a new inland home. Capable of generating up to 1,000 waves per hour, the state-of-the-art surf lake is set within a 60-acre country park, offering luxury accommodation, a food market, shopping, and a wellness spa.

Tall Ships, Aberdeen - Aberdeen has a rich history with the Tall Ships Races, hosting the incredible fleet in 1991 and 1997, and will be welcoming back The Tall Ships Races July 19-22nd 2025. Hundreds of thousands of people will descend on the city for four days of celebrating, sharing culture, and international friendships at Europe's largest free family event.

Orkney 2025 Island Games - The Orkney 2025 International Island Games will take place from 12 – 18 July 2025. Orkney will have the privilege of hosting the Games in its landmark 40th year since it all began. This week-long event will see athletes from up to 24 island groups from across the world compete in 13 exciting sports, including archery, athletics, badminton, cycling, football, golf, gymnastics, swimming, and triathlon.

The Royal Yacht Britannia, Leith - The Royal Yacht Britannia in Edinburgh will be opening a new Visitor Centre and Shop in 2025. The Visitor Centre will incorporate never seen before images and films, setting the scene for the Royal Yacht's rich history. The Gift Shop will be a cornucopia of Royal and heritage gifts, as well as unique treasures inspired by *Britannia*. Discover luxury homewares, jewellery, chinaware and stunning accessories.

Outer Hebrides Voted Best in the World - Each year, National Geographic releases its Best of the World list, celebrating destinations and travel experiences that illuminate our beautiful world and the diversity of communities and people within it. The Outer Hebrides has been named as the only UK destination on the 2025 list with recognition given to its breathtaking landscapes and unique heritage. For decades, the Outer Hebrides has attracted visitors from every corner of the globe, who are drawn to its beautiful beaches and coastline.

Offering breathtaking scenery, crystal-clear waters, unique Hebridean culture and Gaelic language, history and wildlife, welcoming locals, delicious local food and drink and its wide variety of outdoor pursuits.

Distillery News



There are nearly 150 active distilleries spread across Scotland, which are split into five whisky producing regions: Campbeltown, Highlands, Islay, Lowlands, and Speyside. Each region boasts their own unique flavours in their whiskies, all of which reflect the landscape and surrounding area, and many distilleries are making moves to conduct new and innovative sustainable practices. In 2025, visitors can look forward to a variety of new distilleries and visitor centres opening their doors, including the first whisky distillery in Shetland, making the following well-known proverb a reality... *today's rain is tomorrow's whisky*.

The Lerwick Distillery, Shetland - Introducing Shetland's first whisky distillery! The Lerwick Distillery opened its gift shop on Market Street in autumn 2024, offering a variety of items and local products. Full distillery operations are planned to follow, with single malt whisky production set to begin next year. While the single malt matures—a process that takes a minimum of three years and one day—the distillery will produce a unique Shetland blended whisky using select casks sourced from the Scottish mainland. The team at Lerwick Distillery aims to complete the full distillery space by 2025, with tours and tastings anticipated to launch alongside the single malt release in future years.

Highland Park Distillery, Orkney - The Orkney based 200-year-old distillery, Highland Park, crafts whisky with heathered peat for a subtly smoky flavour that's as unique as the place it's made. The distillery has been closed for the past year as a major programme of environmental upgrades, aimed at reducing the distillery's carbon emissions by 20%, is carried out. The ambitious project will see a series of significant developments, including a new heat recovery system which will save more than 1000 tonnes of CO₂ every year. Visitors will be welcomed back to this innovative distillery in 2025.

Edinburgh Gin Distillery, Edinburgh - The Arches on East Market Street, in the heart of Scotland's capital city, will soon be home to

the highly anticipated Edinburgh Gin state-of-the-art Distillery and Visitor Experience. The opening will mark the relocation of their existing distilleries from Rutland Street and Leith, uniting the essence of the brand under one roof. The meticulously designed brand home promises immersive experiences that will transport visitors on a journey filled with wonder.

Arbikie Distillery Sustainable Experience, Angus - As Arbikie continues its journey to be one of the world's most sustainable distilleries, this new experience tells the story of Arbikie's origins as a 400-year-old farming business. Visitors will learn about the growing of all ingredients on-site, the creation of the world's first carbon-negative gin and vodka, Nadar, and Arbikie's progress to becoming the world's first green hydrogen-powered distillery.

Eden Mill Distillery, St Andrews - After lying still for over 150 years, Eden Mill brings the art of distilling back to this historical area in the form of a new distillery experience and a range of premium single malt whiskies and gins. The front wall of the building will feature large glass windows providing beautiful views out over the estuary and the iconic St Andrews skyline. All their electricity will be 100% renewable, coming from either the solar farm belonging to the University of St Andrews or other renewable energy sources. Additionally, the CO₂ produced during the fermentation process will be captured for the University to use.

Glencadam Distillery Visitor Centre, Angus - Glencadam Distillery is developing a new visitor centre and VIP suite at its site in Brechin, Angus. As one of Scotland's oldest distilleries, dating back to 1825, the new visitor centre will pay homage to its rich heritage with a dedicated exhibition space showcasing the history of the East Highland distillery and its surroundings. The visitor centre will also house a retail space and tasting rooms, as well as a whisky lounge, café and function suite for corporate hospitality and private hire. It is expected the new visitor centre will open its doors to visitors and locals alike in summer 2025.

Ardgowan Distillery Inverclyde - A new state-of-the-art distillery and visitor centre on the Ardgowan Estate, just a 45-minute drive from Glasgow city centre, is nearing completion with whisky production set to begin in 2025. Using extensive heat recovery at each stage of the production process as well as CO₂ capture from fermentation, the distillery will eventually become carbon negative.

Biggar Gin Distillery Tours, South Lanarkshire - The Stillhouse, home of the range of Biggar Spirits, located at the foot of the Tinto Hills in the Southern Uplands will be offering behind the scenes tours to showcase how the distillery still uses traditional distilling techniques that stretch back hundreds of years to handcraft their award-winning spirits. Tours last approximately 90 minutes, and guests will receive a perfect serve of one of the Biggar Spirits on arrival.

Spotlight on... Glasgow



2025 will be a big year for Glasgow as the city celebrates its 850th birthday, the perfect excuse to make 2025 the year to visit. For 850 years, Glasgow has continued to shine with its never-ending cultural programmes, stunning architecture, and friendly residents, evolving into the vibrant city known and loved around the world today. The city entices visitors through its many museums and visitor attractions, countless concerts each week, street markets and lively events. People travel from all over the world to visit the likes of the Gallery of Modern Art, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and The Burrell Collection. Glasgow is made even more colourful by the ever-growing presence of greenery, such as Glasgow Green, Pollok Country Park, Glasgow Botanic Gardens and more. Visitors can have the best of both worlds; a lively and bustling city break and an escape into nature, all in one trip to Glasgow.

Looking for an innovative, varied, and award-winning food scene? Glasgow has it covered. From offering Michelin star experiences to maintaining its place as one of the world's most vegan and vegetarian friendly locations, Glasgow is well known as a city for foodies. In fact, Michelin has announced that its world-famous guide to Britain's best restaurants is to be unveiled in Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery in 2025. Glasgow is also famous for being a creative and cultural city, with art galleries galore, famous architecture, and history as a UNESCO City of Music. So, it is only natural for the arts to bleed into the food scene. Restaurant and bar, The Last Bookstore, has recently opened to provide a book lover's paradise in the centre of Glasgow. The bar's walls are lined with over 8,000 books and a stunning book arch for the perfect photo op, and the cocktail menu is inspired by literary heroes, such as Ernest Hemingway, Dorothy Parker, and Jack Kerouac. Music lovers should run, not walk, to Glasgow's newest jazz cafe, Basement Jazz Cafe, to enjoy the city's lively nightlife to the soundtrack of live music, showcasing the best up-and-coming jazz musicians from Glasgow and beyond.

Events, Exhibitions & Experiences



With atmospheric crowds, iconic venues and picture-perfect backdrops, Scotland plays host to world leading sporting events as well as music and cultural festivals. Edinburgh is the world's leading festival city with amazing events taking place year-round, including the world-renowned Edinburgh Festival Fringe. In 2025, visitors can choose from small local events to large

international crowds, see below to find out what's in store.

Big Burns Supper, Dumfries-For those with a thirst for adventure and an appetite for the extraordinary, Big Burns Supper 2025 is offering one of the most unique and immersive celebrations of Scottish tradition ever seen: the Underwater Burns Supper. This bold and playful reinterpretation of the classic Burns Supper will take place at the depths of Dumfries, bringing together professional performers to deliver a dining experience that promises to be like no other.

But the creativity doesn't stop there. This year's line-up offers a variety of quirky twists on the Burns Supper tradition, including the Burns Supper on a Bus, a roving feast where attendees can enjoy haggis, neeps, and tatties while touring the streets of Dumfries on a vintage red bus. For families, the Family Burns Supper presents a more relaxed, kid-friendly version of the event, allowing everyone to enjoy a slice of Scottish culture.

Celtic Connections, Glasgow - Glasgow's annual folk, roots and world music festival, Celtic Connections, celebrates its connections to cultures across the globe. From 16 January to 2 February 2025, over 2,100 musicians from around the world bring the city to life for eighteen days. During this time, there are concerts, ceilidhs, talks, art exhibitions, workshops and free events for visitors and locals alike to enjoy.

Granite City Festival Weekender - Aberdeen is gearing up for an unforgettable weekend as the very first Granite City Festival Weekender 2025 takes over Hazlehead Park for three days of music, entertainment, and family fun. From Friday, June 27, to Sunday, June 29, the festival will deliver a diverse lineup catering to fans of house and techno, dance music, and family-friendly activities. With three unique stages and a dedicated VIP area, the event is poised to become the ultimate music experience in the northeast of Scotland, with an estimated 10,000 attendees expected over the weekend.

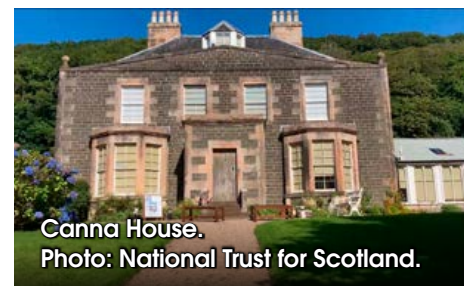
FyneFest, Cairndow, Argyll - The first FyneFest took place in 2010, with around 300 people joining the Fyne Ales team in the Brewery Tap courtyard for a wee party to kick-off the Summer. Over the following years, FyneFest evolved and grew, expanding to three days and into the fields of Glen Fyne, welcoming more people, offering more diverse beers, showcasing more live music, and sharing more outstanding food. But at its core, the spirit of FyneFest never changed. Tickets for the 2025 festival are available now: FyneFest 2025 | 30 May - 1 June 2025.

Midlothian Snowsports Centre - New Alpine Coaster, Edinburgh-Scotland's first Alpine Coaster, opened in September 2024 at Midlothian Snowsports Centre, offers a thrilling winter experience. As the longest in the UK, it reaches speeds of up to 28 mph, promising adrenaline-filled fun for all ages. With stunning views and year-round access, it's the ultimate family-friendly attraction this winter.

The Wee Waddle, Edinburgh Zoo, **Edinburgh** - Edinburgh Zoo is set to bring back a reimagined version of the penguin parade after the event was postponed for more than four years. The world-famous parade, which first began as an accident in 1950 when some of the penguins escaped their enclosure, was initially brought to

an end during the Covid-19 pandemic, before being postponed again due to the rise of avian flu. Now visitors can once again watch the gentoo, rockhopper and king penguin colony take a stroll along the walkway next to Penguins Rock as they explore a new area outside of their usual habitat. The Wee Waddle is included in Edinburgh Zoo tickets and will take place Thursdays to Sundays at 2:15pm.

Tours and workshops



In 2025, Scotland welcomes brand new tours and workshops, spanning from culinary masterclasses to sport and wellness tours, explorations of clans and heritage, historical immersion, and more. Each activity provides visitors with the chance to experience authentic Scotland and all it has to offer.

The Hickory Golf Workshop, The Kingdom of Fife - Scotland is the home of golf, and this workshop celebrates this rich history through the creation and restoration of hickory golf clubs, just as they were crafted in the early days of the sport. Participants can learn how these clubs were made and gain an appreciation for the timeless skills involved. Attendees not only witness the creation of hickory golf clubs but also get hands-on experience in restoring and finishing their own club, which they can take home as a memento of their time spent in Scotland.

Brora Heritage Centre, Highlands - Brora Heritage Centre offers a quality introduction to the unique, rich and fascinating industrial heritage, in the parish of Clyne. Brora is home to the most northerly and remote coal mine in the UK. In Summer 2025, Brora Heritage Centre will transform into a £5million heritage centre and museum thanks to the redevelopment of a derelict C-listed building which was gifted to the organisation in 2018, safeguarding the future of heritage in the village for residents and visitors for years to come. Sustainability, community involvement and the promotion of responsible tourism are all key elements of this redevelopment.

Canna House, Isle of Canna, Inner Hebrides - Canna House was built in 1863 and offers visitors a glimpse into the house and the island's history. Within the sturdy Victorian walls is a substantial cultural archive of Gaelic folk songs and tales, Celtic and Norse Studies, philology, music, literature and Scottish history, as well as the furnishings, artworks and personal belongings of previous owners. The house has been closed to the public for some time due to the need for building conservation. The current project activity is focusing on the conservation of Canna House, collections management, and collections review, and aims to reopen to the public in spring 2025.

Scotland The Big Picture: Wild Perthshire - Scotland The Big Picture aims to champion rewilding in Scotland and allow others to discover rewilding on their immersive and guided Rewilding Journeys.

In 2025, visitors can participate in the Wild Perthshire trip, to explore Perthshire's beautiful wild places, where increasingly, rewilding is creating a more dynamic and ecologically rich environment. Along the way, meet the inspiring people behind pioneering rewilding projects, witness landscapes of hope and seek out enriching encounters with wild animals.

Anniversaries



75th Anniversary of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, celebrating with their milestone show, *The Heroes Who Made Us*, 1 - 23 August 2025.

30th anniversary of the famous movie, Rob Roy (1995), based on the 18th century Scottish Highlander. Film fans can celebrate by walking the famous Rob Roy Way which opened in May 2002, and takes walkers from Drymen, a village which was once a popular stopping place for cattle drovers, to Pitlochry, deemed to be situated in one of the most beautiful valleys in Central Scotland.

45th anniversary of the release of Gregory's Girl (1980), an award-winning Scottish coming-of-age movie that celebrates all the awkwardness and joy of first love.

50th anniversary of the release of Monty Python & the Holy Grail (1975), a comedy based on King Arthur's legendary hunt for the Holy Grail. Fans of the movie can visit Doune Castle on a visit to Scotland in 2025, a striking gatehouse in Stirlingshire that was used in the filming of the movie.

200th anniversary of the birth of the modern railway, a development that changed Britain and the world forever. Railway 200 celebrates the past, present and future of rail.

Old Petty at Cabot Highlands, Inverness - Cabot Collection has announced that Old Petty, the much-anticipated Tom Doak designed golf course at Cabot Highlands in Inverness, will officially open for preview play from 1 August - 30 September 2025. Old Petty joins Cabot Highlands' renowned Castle Stuart golf course, ranked among The Top 100 Courses in the World by *Golf Magazine*. The grand opening of Old Petty will be in Spring 2026, with bookings to be announced in 2025.

Glasgow Commonwealth Games, Glasgow 2026 - It has been announced that the 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place in Glasgow from Thursday 23 July to Sunday 2 August 2026. Scotland has proven experience in hosting major events and looks forward to delivering the Commonwealth Games as well as co-hosting the 2028 European Football Championship at Hampden Park.

The Scottish Crannog Centre New Crannog, Perthshire - The Scottish Crannog Centre re-opened in spring 2024 in Perthshire to showcase Iron Age Scotland. In 2025/26, the museum aims to complete their over-water Crannog on Loch Tay.

For holiday information on Scotland go to www.visitscotland.com

THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - King James V married Magdalene of France. **1537**

1 - First celebration of New Year in Scotland on this date (was March 25th till then). **1600**

1 - Charles II crowned at Scone, the last coronation on Scottish soil. **1651**

1 - The constitution is drafted for the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, making it the oldest in Britain. **1783**

1 - A Scottish Region of British Railways begins to operate as a result of nationalisation of rail transport in Great Britain under the Transport Act 1947. **1948**



1 - The west coast shipping services of David MacBrayne are merged with those of the Caledonian Steam Packet Company as Caledonian MacBrayne. CalMac, is the major operator of passenger and vehicle ferries, and ferry services, between the mainland of Scotland and 22 of the major islands on Scotland's west coast. **1973**

1 - The United Nations examines claims of ownership of the Scottish island of Rockall (an uninhabited extinct volcano), after a request from Denmark, which has sovereignty over the neighbouring Faroes. The 1972 Island of Rockall Act, passed by parliament in Westminster, formally declared it to be part of Inverness-shire, though it is closest to North Uist in the Outer Hebrides. **2011**

2 - The Traverse Theatre opens in Edinburgh. The Traverse has embraced a spirit of innovation and risk-taking that has launched the careers of many of Scotland's best-known writers. **1963**

2 - Ibrox Park disaster, 66 supporters killed on stairway 13. The disaster led to the rebuilding of Ibrox Park as an all-seater stadium. **1971**

3 - General George Monck dies, he was Oliver Cromwell's Military Governor in Scotland. General Monck persuaded the British parliament to restore Charles II to the throne and was crowned King at Westminster Abbey on 23 April 1661. **1670**

4 - The death of George Cathcart. Cathcart was a doctor from Edinburgh who instigated the annual series of concerts now known as the Proms, short for promenade concert. **1951**

5 - 89,000-tonne Liberian-registered *Braer* oil tanker, carrying 84,500 tonnes of crude oil, hit rocks on Shetland Isles in heavy seas. **1993**

6 - A.J. Cronin, author of *Keys of the Kingdom* and creator of the British television series *Dr Finlay's Casebook* died. **1981**



7 - Glasgow University founded at the request of James II and Bishop Turnbull. **1451**

8 - King Alexander I crowned. **1107**

8 - The first newspaper in Scotland was published. *Mercurius Caledonius* offered coverage of "the Affairs now in Agitation in Scotland, with a Survey of Foreign Intelligence." It ceased publication on 28 March after only nine issues. **1661**

8 - Earl of Stair, held responsible for the massacre of Glencoe, died. **1707**

8 - Rationing of sugar, bacon and butter introduced. **1940**

9 - The Diocese of Glasgow was elevated to an Archdiocese by Pope Innocent VII. **1492**

9 - Income tax introduced for the first time. **1799**

9 - The first women's golf tournament took place in Scotland, at Musselburgh. **1811**

9 - Liner *Queen Elizabeth*, launched at John Brown's shipyard, Clydebank, in 1938, caught fire and sank in Hong Kong where it was to serve as a floating marine university. **1972**

9 - Author and *Scottish Banner* columnist Nigel Tranter died. Tranter published more than 130 novels and biographies during his 60-year-long career, most covering famous Scots and their place in the country's history. **2000**

10 - First Minister Humza Yousaf confirms those in Scotland convicted because of the Post Office scandal will be cleared following a similar announcement at Westminster for England and Wales. The British Post Office scandal involved the Post Office pursuing thousands of innocent subpostmasters for apparent financial shortfalls caused by faults in the post office accounting software system. **2024**

11 - John A MacDonald, first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, born at 20 Brunswick Street in Glasgow. **1815**

11 - The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association was created. This independently funded service was responsible for Scotland's blood and blood products. The National Blood Transfusion Service in England and Wales was not set up until the 26 September 1946. **1940**

12 - John Buchan, author (*39 Steps* etc) and diplomat (Governor General of Canada, 1935/1940) died. **1940**

13 - Death of St Mungo, patron saint of Glasgow (and also known as St Kentigern) and is buried at his church in Glas-gu which later becomes Glasgow. **603**

13 - Mary Slessor, missionary in West Africa and known to many as "Ma", died in Calabar. **1915**



14 - Skye Terrier Greyfriars Bobby died after staying by his master's grave for 14 years. The terrier belonged to Edinburgh policeman John Gray who died of tuberculosis in 1858. His gravestone reads: "Let his loyalty and devotion be a lesson to us all". A statue of Bobby is now one of the most popular in Edinburgh. **1872**

14 - Alexander Graham Bell demonstrated his telephone to Queen Victoria. She made the first call in the British Isles from her residence on the Isle of Wight. **1878**

15 - Neil M Gunn, author of *The Silver Darlings* and many other books and short stories, died. **1973**

15 - The Great Glasgow storm leaves 20 dead across central Scotland including 9 in Glasgow. The hurricane was described as Central Scotland's worst natural disaster since records began and the worst gale in the United Kingdom. **1968**

15 - Strathclyde Regional Council applies for 250,000 summary warrants against residents refusing to pay the highly controversial "Poll Tax", introduced in Scotland in 1989. **1990**

16 - Treaty of Union of Scottish and Westminster Parliaments ratified. **1707**

16 - Retreating Jacobite army defeated Hanoverian forces at Battle of Falkirk. **1746**



17 - Duddingston Curling Society became formally organised, one of the earliest in the history of curling - though Kilsyth lays claim to a date of 1716. Curling dates back to the sixteenth century in Scotland, with Scots taking the sport across the world where it still flourishes. **1795**

17 - Author Compton Mackenzie (*Whisky Galore* etc) born. *Whisky Galore* is based on a real-life true story. In the middle of war time rationing, the *SS Politician* ran aground with a cargo of 264,000 bottles of malt whisky. **1883**

18 - Death of Sir John Pringle, President of the Royal Society from 1772-1778 and physician to King George III. Sometimes called the "father of modern military medicine", the Scottish-born physician focused on the need to adopt a clean medical environment for the treatment of wounded soldiers. He also coined the term "influenza". **1782**

18 - The launch of the Scottish Labour Party. The inaugural meeting of the breakaway party was held in Glasgow. It was formed as a result of the dissatisfaction several Labour MPs felt with their party over its stance on devolution for Scotland. **1976**

18 - Raasay House on Raasay off Skye was badly damaged in a fire. The building was undergoing a £4m restoration project. The former stately home had been run as an activity centre since 1984 and was being restored for that purpose again. The sprawling 258-year-old mansion once belonged to the Clan MacLeod. **2009**

19 - A Scottish army under the Earl of Leven crossed the river Tweed into England. It remained in England for three years playing an important part in the Civil War. **1644**

19 - Birth of James Watt, mathematical instrument maker, developed the steam engine, invented the condenser and copying machine. **1736**

20 - The chemist Thomas Graham, was born. Graham is famous for discovering the diffusion rate of gasses, which is known as "Graham's Law". He is also called the "father of colloid chemistry", and was the author of, *Elements of Chemistry*. **1805**

20 - Benny Lynch crowned world flyweight champion. Recognised as probably the greatest boxer Scotland has produced, Lynch enjoyed a meteoric rise to the top of the sport. **1937**

21 - Sweetheart Abbey, near Dumfries, founded by Devorguilla, mother of John Balliol. **1290**

22 - Poet George Gordon Byron (later Lord Byron) born. He moved to Aberdeen at the age of four and attended Aberdeen Grammar School. The title was inherited from an uncle. **1788**

23 - James Stewart, the Regent Moray on the abdication of Mary Queen of Scots, murdered in Linlithgow, triggering civil war. **1570**

24 - Birth of Publius Aelius Hadrianus, who built Hadrian's Wall to cut off Scotland from the rest of Britain. **76**



24 - First train over Forth Rail Bridge. The bridge is considered as a symbol of Scotland and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. **1890**

25 - Robert Burns born Alloway. Burns Night is celebrated around the world on this night. **1759**

25 - First Minister Alex Salmond launches a consultation on the SNP Government's proposals for a referendum on Scottish independence. The referendum on Scottish independence was held on 18 September 2014 saw Scotland vote to remain part of the United Kingdom, with 55% voting against the proposal for Scotland to become an independent country and 45% voting in favour. **2012**



26 - One o'clock gun fired for the first time from Edinburgh Castle. The gun was created to complement a time ball on Nelson's Monument which was not reliable during Edinburgh foggy days. **1861**

26 - Kirkpatrick MacMillan, inventor of the bicycle, died. The thought of patenting his invention or trying to make any money out of it never crossed MacMillan's mind, but others saw its potential, and soon copies began to appear. However, Macmillan was quite unconcerned with the fuss his invention had prompted, preferring to enjoy the quiet country life he was used to. **1878**

26 - The 1st Glasgow Scout troop was registered, the first to be formed. **1908**

27 - *Glasgow Herald* newspaper first published. It is the longest continuously published daily newspaper in Britain. Today the paper is simply called *The Herald*. **1783**

27 - First public demonstration of TV by John Logie Baird. **1926**

28 - William Burke, murderer and body snatcher of "Burke and Hare" fame, executed. The duo was accused of killing 16 people over the course of 12 months, in order to sell their cadavers as "subjects" for dissection. **1829**

29 - The first adoption of GMT by Scotland. The subject has been the source of controversy ever since. **1848**

29 - Earl Haig, Commander in Chief of British forces 1915-18, founder of the British Legion, died. **1928**

29 - Members for Scottish Parliament (MSPs) vote 64-54 to back calls for a second Scottish independence referendum. **2020**

30 - King Charles I executed. His execution caused a change of sides by most of the Scots who had previously supported the Parliamentarians in the English Civil War as, for all his faults, Charles was still a Scottish Stuart king. **1649**

31 - Lachlan MacQuarie, the "Father of Australia" born Ulva. Lachlan Macquarie was the governor of the colony of New South Wales from 1810 to 1821. **1761**

31 - Charles Edward Stewart, "Bonnie Prince Charlie" died in Rome. **1788**

31 - 270 Royal Navy servicemen were killed whilst on practice missions with other Royal Navy vessels in the Firth of Forth. **1918**

31 - *Princess Victoria*, Stranraer-Larne ferry, sank in a storm with the loss of 133 lives; 44 were rescued. **1953**

31 - The Scottish Court in the Netherlands convicts a Libyan and acquits another for their part in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 which crashed in Lockerbie in 1988. Lamin Khalifah Fhimah (aged 44) is cleared, but Abdelbaset al-Megrahi is found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment (in Scotland) with a recommended minimum term of twenty years. Megrahi was released from prison on compassionate grounds in 2009; as doctors reported he had terminal prostate cancer, and he died on 20 May 2012, aged sixty. **2001**

Raise a Toast to Scotland with Burns Night



It's not only Hogmanay (December 31st) that gives Scots an excuse for a party; Burns Night (January 25th) is traditionally the time each year when Scotland's Bard, Robert Burns, is celebrated on the anniversary of his birth. Scotland is host to many events to mark the occasion, from music as well as a traditional ceilidh. Revellers can top the night off with a plate of haggis, neeps and tatties and a dram of whisky.

After enjoying the food, Scotland fans can then follow in the Bard's footsteps across Scotland, including his birthplace, Alloway in Ayrshire – home to the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum – and Dumfries, which is home to places such as Ellisland Farm (built by Robert Burns as his home in 1788) and the Globe Inn pub (established in 1610 and regularly frequented by Burns and home to some fascinating memorabilia).

Burns travels

Locations with a Burns connection are fascinating and certainly worth visiting on a trip to Scotland, including the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, South Ayrshire. There is also an opportunity to visit the home of Souter Johnnie, who was immortalised in a famous Burns poem, in Kirkoswald. Other Burns attractions in Ayrshire include the Bachelors' Club in Tarbolton, the 17th century thatched cottage where Burns established his debating club, and the Burns House Museum in Mauchline where Robert Burns lived and worked between 1784 and 1788. Burns enthusiasts, or anyone simply interested in seeing a beautiful corner of Scotland, can take a trip to Dumfries & Galloway. Burns' former home Ellisland Farm is now a museum where some of his original writings and possessions are on display.

A welcome sight for those in search of warmth and comfort (and perhaps a whisky), the Globe Inn in Dumfries is notable in that it is one of the country's oldest hostels and used to be frequented by Burns himself. It is rumoured that anyone who dares sit in Burns' old chair (which is still at the bar) is challenged to recite a line of his poetry and buy everyone a drink at the bar. Whilst in Dumfries, visitors can also spend an afternoon at Burns' final home, Robert Burns House, on the aptly named Burns Street. Discover the famous Kilmarnock and Edinburgh editions of Burns' work and take a look around the study where he wrote some of his best-loved poems.

The Burns Mausoleum, the final resting place for Burns, his widow Jean, and five of their children, is also only a short walk away in St Michael's Kirkyard.

Robert Burns' connections with Scotland's capital have long been celebrated. On 28 November 1786 when Robert Burns arrived in Edinburgh its gates were flung open to him. He stayed on Baxter's Close in a house which has been demolished and is now Deacon Brodie's Tavern on the Royal Mile. "Also based on the city's Royal Mile, the Writers' Museum has a permanent Robert Burns collection which is recognised to have national significance. Displayed in the museum is a collection of portraits of Burns along with the writing desk from his Dumfries home " at which he wrote some of his best-known work. Whilst in Edinburgh, fans of Burns will be able to see one of the most famous portraits at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery - Alexander Nasmyth's portrait of Robert Burns.

Hosting a Burns Supper

Along with haggis, neeps (turnips) and tatties (potatoes), here are the instructions for a perfect gathering on 25 January. To start – everyone gathers, the host says a few words, everyone sits and the *Selkirk Grace* is said. The meal – the starter is served, the haggis is piped in (by a piper in a kilt naturally), the host performs *Address to a Haggis*, everyone toasts the haggis and the main meal is served, followed by dessert (cranachan is a great option.) After the meal, the first Burns recital is performed, the *Immortal Memory* (the main tribute speech to Burns) is given, the second Burns recital is performed, and then there's a *Toast to the Lassies*, followed by a *Reply to the Toast to the Lassies*, before the final Burns recital is performed. To end the night – the host gives a vote of thanks, everyone stands and sings *Auld Lang Syne*, crossing their arms and joining hands at the line 'And there's a hand, my trusty fere!'

See our events page for a list of Burns Suppers taking place in both January and February. Ever wanted to host a Burns supper but not sure how? For VisitScotland's full Burns Night guide check out www.visitscotland.com/things-to-do/events/burns-night/events-guide. For access to the Burns works indicated, see www.robertburns.org.

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The Burns Supper on January 25th is an institution of Scottish life: a night to celebrate the life and works of the national Bard. Suppers can range from an informal gathering of friends to a huge, formal dinner full of pomp and circumstance, enjoy!



Cullen skink

Ingredients:

For the stock:

75g/2½oz butter

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

2 leeks, roughly chopped

2 onions, peeled, roughly chopped

2 fennel bulbs, roughly chopped

250ml/9fl oz. white wine

500g/17½oz smoked haddock

750ml/1-pint 7fl oz. water

For the soup:

75g/2½oz butter

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

2 leeks, finely chopped

2 shallots, peeled, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed

300g/10½oz. potatoes, peeled, chopped

500ml/17½fl oz. double cream

1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh parsley

pinch freshly grated nutmeg

Method:

For the stock, heat the butter and vegetable oil in a large pan and gently fry the leeks, onions and fennel for 3-4 minutes, or until softened. Add the white wine to the pan and bring to the boil. Add the smoked haddock, pour in the water and bring back to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes, skimming off any scum that rises to the surface, until the haddock is cooked through. Strain the haddock, reserving the cooking stock. Chop the haddock into bite-sized pieces. For the soup, heat the butter with the vegetable oil and fry the leeks, shallots and garlic for 3-4 minutes, or until softened. Add the potatoes and the chopped smoked haddock to the pan.

Add the reserved cooking stock and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Stir in the cream and briefly blend the soup with a stick blender. Serve the soup with crusty bread and a sprinkling of freshly grated nutmeg.

Smoked salmon pâté

Ingredients:

255g/9oz. smoked salmon

110g/4oz. cream cheese

2 tbsp. double cream

½ lemon, juice only

2 tbsp. chopped chives (plus some extra chives to sprinkle over the top)

pinch of sugar

salt and freshly ground pepper

Method:

Pop all the ingredients into a blender and pulse until it has a consistency that you desire. Plenty of pepper is good but go easy on the salt, as the smoked salmon will be salty already. You can substitute lime and coriander instead of lemon and chives.

Haggis, clapshot and whisky sauce

Ingredients:

500g/1lb 2oz haggis

For the clapshot:

500g/1lb 2oz floury potatoes, such as Maris Piper or King Edward, peeled, chopped

500g/1lb 2oz swede (yellow turnip), peeled, chopped

50g/2oz butter

75ml/2¾fl oz. double cream

sea salt and freshly ground white pepper

1 tbsp. chopped fresh chives

For the whisky sauce:

500ml/17fl oz. double cream

2 tsp wholegrain mustard

1 tbsp. Dijon mustard

2 tsp whisky

sea salt and freshly ground white pepper

1 tbsp. chopped fresh chives

½ lemon, juice only

Method:

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Wrap the haggis tightly in aluminium foil and place onto a baking tray. Bake in the oven for 45 minutes to one hour, or until cooked through. Meanwhile, for the clapshot, boil the potatoes and swede in separate saucepans of salted water for 15-18 minutes, or until tender. Drain well. Add the drained swede to the drained potatoes and mash thoroughly. Add the butter and cream and mash again until smooth and well combined. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground white pepper. Stir in the tablespoon of chives. Set aside and keep warm.

For the whisky sauce, heat the double cream in a pan over a medium heat. Add the wholegrain mustard, Dijon mustard and whisky and stir to combine. Increase the heat until the mixture is simmering and continue to cook for 1-2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground white pepper. Stir in the tablespoon of chives, then whisk in the lemon juice. To serve, divide the clapshot equally among four serving plates. Place a spoonful of steamed haggis alongside each. Spoon over the warm whisky sauce.

Cloutie pudding

Ingredients:

225g (8oz) plain flour, plus 25g (1oz) for sprinkling

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp mixed spice

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp ground ginger

¼tsp sea salt

175g/6oz caster sugar, plus 1 tbsp. for sprinkling

100g/4oz shredded suet

100g/4oz sultanas

75g/3oz currants

75g/3oz chopped stoned dates

50g/2oz Muscatel raisins

1 apple or carrot, coarsely grated

1 tbsp. black treacle

1 medium farm-fresh egg

150ml/5fl oz. buttermilk

225g/8oz clotted cream

Method:

Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda, spices and salt into a bowl and stir in the sugar, suet, dried fruits, and the grated carrot or apple. Mix the black treacle with the egg and some of the buttermilk and mix into the dry ingredients to give soft mixture with a cake-like dropping consistency. Dip a large piece of muslin, an old pillowcase, a pudding cloth or a tea towel into boiling water, remove it and squeeze out the excess water. Lay it out on a surface and sprinkle a 30cm/12in circle in the centre with the 25g/1oz of flour and the 1 tbsp. of caster sugar. Spoon pudding mixture on top and tie securely with string, leaving a little room for the pudding to expand.

Rest a large heatproof trivet or container in the base of a large pan so that the pudding is not in direct contact with the heat. Place the pudding on the trivet/container, knotted side up. Pour in enough water almost to cover the pudding, cover with a tight-fitting lid and simmer gently for 3-4 hours. Take a peek every now and then and then to check the water level and top it up if necessary. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Lift the pudding out of the pan and dip it briefly in a bowl of cold water (to ensure that the outside of the pudding does not stick to an ovenproof serving plate). Then remove the cloth and place the pudding on an ovenproof dish/plate. Slide it into the oven and leave it for 15 minutes until the outside of the pudding has dried off. Serve in chunky wedges with scoops of clotted cream and perhaps a small glass of whisky.

Shortbread-January 6th is National Shortbread Day



Ingredients:

125g/4oz butter

55g/2oz caster sugar, plus extra to finish

180g/6oz plain flour

Method:

Heat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5. Beat the butter and the sugar together until smooth. Stir in the flour to get a smooth paste. Turn on to a work surface and gently roll out until the paste is 1cm/½in thick.

Cut into rounds or fingers and place onto a baking tray. Sprinkle with caster sugar and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, or until pale golden-brown. Set aside to cool on a wire rack.

Major boost to saving the some of Auld Lang Syne



The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded us a substantial grant to help save Ellisland for future generations. The development stage award of £489,207 is a key step in securing the future of the farm where Burns wrote the international anthem to friendship, *Auld Lang Syne*. The grant offer supports a project called: *Saving the Home of Auld Lang Syne*. It marks a major step towards restoring the threatened buildings and the surrounding landscape, which have been maintained for decades by hard working volunteers.

Saving Ellisland will cost more than £7 million, and the Heritage Fund award will enable Ellisland to launch a major international fund-raising campaign to deliver our vision, as well as commissioning work from conservation architects and curators. Ellisland Farm was built by Robert Burns in 1788 for his young wife Jean Armour and their family. Burns was especially creative at Ellisland, writing a quarter of his songs and poems including *Auld Lang Syne* and *Tam o Shanter*.

Dr. David Hopes, acting chair of the Robert Burns Ellisland Trust thanked, everyone who played the national

lottery and said the grant was potentially transformational: “We are hugely excited by this announcement. Time is running out to conserve this most authentic, most beautiful, and most important home of Robert Burns. But with the goodwill and support of our local community, our members, partners, and stakeholders, we can deliver on our vision to make Ellisland ‘The Place to Fall in Love with Burns.’

Sweet poetic ground

Since taking over the site in 2020, the Robert Burns Ellisland Trust has worked hard to develop new income streams and raise awareness of its immense importance. It became an accredited museum last year, was praised for recreating the site in the Minecraft computer game, and has given employment to several young people. This new investment from The National Lottery Heritage Fund marks a turning point in that journey.

Joan McAlpine, Robert Burns Ellisland Trust Project Director, was responsible for preparing and submitting the successful National Lottery Heritage Fund application and said she was delighted at the outcome. “The place where Burns wrote *Auld Lang Syne* is one of Scotland’s most important and at-risk historic sites. Burns chose Ellisland for its poetic inspiration, and we are honoured to carry forward his vision by developing creative residencies to inspire new generations. We are deeply grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for kick-starting our project.”

A painting depicting a man in a top hat and military-style coat riding a white horse, holding a sword. Another rider on a dark horse is visible in the background. The scene is set in a dark, rocky landscape.




Linlithgow Palace.



Dunfermline Abbey at sunset.

View of Stirling Castle from below.

View of the medieval castle at Crookston.



View of Clackmannann Tower.

The Scottish Banner • January 2025 • Page 21

Calling the Clans

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



Membership is open to those descended 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 genealogist. **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



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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.
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CLAN DONALD VICTORIA

President: Mr Norman A. Macdonald

Contact: secretary.clandonaldivic@gmail.com

Formed in 1934, with membership from many MacDonald, McDonald and Macdonald families living in Victoria. Membership available, with dance classes for Scottish Country Dance most Friday evenings in Gardenvale.

CLAN MACDONALD YARRAVILLE

Hon Chief: Mr Lindsay McDonald

Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com

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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

Clan Fraser Society of Australia



Invites all Frasers

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/](https://www.facebook.com/Pages/Clan-Fraser-Society-of-Australia/)

[Pages/Clan-Fraser-Society-of-Australia/](https://www.facebook.com/Pages/Clan-Fraser-Society-of-Australia/)

482236358590288

The Blair Society for Genealogical Research



Collect, preserve, and disseminate genealogical and historical knowledge and information concerning the Family of BLAIR in its various lines of descent and in all parts of the world.

www.blairsociety.org



Learned Kindred of Currie

A leading Scottish non-profit cultural and educational organization dedicated to preserving and promoting Scottish and Highland heritage and the arts through a wide variety of programs.

contact@curriekindred.com
www.learnedkindredofcurrie.com

CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY

Membership invited to all who share the Sept names:

Duncan, Robertson, Reid, etc.

UK: London & Southern Counties * Rannoch & Highlands

Canada: Ontario * Western Canada

Australia: New South Wales * Victoria * Queensland * Western Australia

New Zealand: New Zealand

Europe: Spain

Africa: South Africa

USA: Arizona * Carolinas * Florida * Gulf Coast * Mid-Atlantic * New

Mexico * Mid-West * Northeast * Northern California * Pacific Northwest *

Rocky Mountains * South * Southern California * Texas * Upper Mid-West



Visit our website to learn more about Clan Donnachaidh, our History & Traditions, the Clan Museum in Scotland, the DNA Project, the new Struan Kirk Appeal, & locate a Branch near you.

<http://www.donnachaidh.com/>

Facebook: [The Clan Donnachaidh Society](https://www.facebook.com/TheClanDonnachaidhSociety)

Email: ivc@donnachaidh.com

Clan Galbraith Society

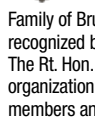


Includes name variations such as Galbreath, Culbreath, Gilbraith etc.

DNA testing project, members only databases, Biennial gatherings, blog, Quarterly journal.

www.clangalbraith.org

Family of Bruce International, Inc.



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 Polly A. (Bruce) Tilford, Secretary
President 5561 Earl Young Road
1051 Eagle Ridge Trail Bloomington, IN 47408
Stillwater, Minnesota 55082 www.familyofbruceinternational.org

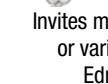
Clan Davidson Society in Australia Inc.



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 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/360160657504253/> or by contacting the Hon. Secretary:

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

Edmonstone Clan Society



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

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

6 The Esplanade
Broughty Ferry
DUNDEE, DD5 2EL
Scotland UK



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HOUSE OF BURNETT INTERNATIONAL, INC.

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www.houseofburnett.org

Clan Donald Australia

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Qld A. Neil Macdonald
SA Michael Murphy
Vic Norman A Macdonald
WA Pamela McDonald

clandonald.com.au
clandonaldnsw.au@gmail.com

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

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: clangregoraustalia@gmail.com
Web: www.clangregor.com
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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

secy.nationalclancameronaus@gmail.com

www.clan-cameron.org.au

Clan Donald U.S.A. Inc.



Clan Donald USA is a nationwide organization of over 2,000 families who trace their ancestry to any of the branches of Clann Domhnaill. We embrace all the MacDonalds and other surnames that are recognized as branches or adherents of the greatest of the Highland clans.

www.clandonaldusa.org



American Clan Gregor Society



Est 1909 Membership inquiries welcomed from MacGregors of all spellings and Septs

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

Contact our registrar: **Jeanne P. Lehr**
11 Ballas Crt.

St. Louis, MO 63131-3038

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

Clan Hamilton Society

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



Clan Little Society, Inc.

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- Hosting tents at Scottish games
- Connecting our families
- Maintaining our genealogy and DNA

www.clanlittlesociety.org

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Clan MacKenzie Society of New Zealand

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All spellings and from all Septs

Secretary: clanmackenzie@gmail.com

www.clanmackenzienz.org



Clan MacKenzie



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Clan Hay

April Rich
28 Oxbow Drive
Willimantic, CT 06226
clanhaymembership@hotmail.com

The American Branch of the First Family of Scotland welcomes inquires from descendants of: Hay(s); Haye(s); Hayne(s); Hey(s); Alderston; Arml; Ayer(s); Constable; Con(n); De La Haye; Delgatie; Delgatie; D' Ay(e); Dellah'aY; Errol(l); Garrad; Garrow; Gifford; Hawson; Haygood; Hayter; Hayward; Haywood; Haynie; Hayden; Hayfield; Hayne(s); Leask(e); Leith; Lester; MacGaradh; Peebles; Peeples; Peoples; Turriff; Tweeddale; Yester

www.clanhay.com

McAlpin/e

and variant spellings

Commander: Michael T. McAlpin

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Contact: membership.macailpein@gmail.com

Website: <https://macailpein.com/>



MacLaren

Clan Labhran

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 Macnachten Association Worldwide

Descendants and Septs of the CLAN MACNAUGHTON are invited to join our Worldwide Association to learn and share our MacNaughton 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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Clan Hope of Craighall Society

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www.clanhope.org

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highcommissionerusa@clanhope.org
Membership Chair: Cynthia Hope Henderson
membership@clanhope.org
www.clanhope.org

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

SCOTLAND
Commissioner: Colin Douglas Hope
commissioner4scotland@clanhope.org
www.clanhope.org

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ClanHopeofCraighall>



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Lawson Low[e]
Low[e]ry Law[e] Patterson
MacPatrick MacRory

Mark A. McLaren, President
President@clanmaclarenna.org



CLAN MACNEIL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

invites all MacNeils, regardless of
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website: ClanMacNeilUSA.us
Find us on Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram
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HEREDITARY CHIEF
AND PATRON

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



Macfie Clan Society of Australia

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](https://www.facebook.com/clanmacfieaustralia) or our
website: <https://clanmacfie.com.au>

Clan MacLellan

Kevin S Gates
Treasurer
2610 Kuykendall Dr.
Arlington, TX
76001-6726

Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

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
www.clanmacnicol.org



Clan Irwin Association

Chief and Patron

Alexander H.R Irvine of Drum,
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www.clanirwin.org

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Int'l Assn. of Clan MacInnes
(Aonghais)

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or visit www.macinnes.org

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Clan Macpherson Association

Clan Macpherson welcomes enquiries from Macphersons and members of our Associated families.
For information about local activities visit our web site www.clan-macpherson.org/branches

Africa. Derek Macpherson
African.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +265 999 512 620

Canada. Denise Lagundzin
Canada.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +1 519 507 4465

Europe. Bodo Bernd Schmitz
Europe.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +0152 538 19 355

Scotland & Northern Ireland. Moray G Cattanach
SandNI.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +44 7810 860 528

Australia. Pam Rhemrov
Australian.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +61 407 789 924

England & Wales. William Macpherson
EandW.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +44 7877 363 507

New Zealand. Tony McPherson
NewZealand.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +64 274 587 812

USA. Dave McPherson
UnitedStates.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org
phone +1 408 781 5199

The **Clan Macpherson Museum** is located in Newtonmore, Inverness Shire PH20 1DE,
at the junction of the A86 and B9150 It is open from 1st April to 31st October.
Ph + 44 1540 673 332. See <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/museum/>



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.
Email ianandbevmclucas@bigpond.com

mobile 0448 778 799

Clan Mackenzie Society in Australia



Inviting all
Mackenzies to join
us in celebrating
our heritage.



Visit our website for further information
www.clanmackenzie.org.au

Clan MacLeod Societies of Australia

Membership is open to MacLeods
and Septs (of any variant spelling)
and descendants. **Septs:** 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



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: clanmacraeausnz@gmail.com

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

Clan MacRae Society of North America
Granted Arms in 2008

We invite MacRaes of all spelling variations and their descendants to join our Clan MacRae Society. Learn your Scottish MacRae history and family lineage!

www.macrae.org
Need more info? Contact:
Bruce McRae, *President*
720-793-7530
brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com

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Email: Secretary@ClanSutherland.org
Website: www.ClanSutherland.org

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 Burns Supper, Poetry Afternoon & Pleasant Sunday Afternoon

For Membership Information contact:
Secretary: Melissa Ventre - 0405 182 458
Email: rbcmeb@gmail.com

Clan Maitland Society

Chief: Ian Maitland, The Earl of Lauderdale!
We are all related! Contact your local society

North America: Rosemary Maitland Thom
rthomnvrpcan@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 Pollock

Among the most ancient families of Scotland. If you are a descendant of Pollock, Pollok, Pook, Polk, Polke, Paulk, Poalke, Poulk, Poolke, Pogue - you are cordially invited to contact:

A. D. Pollock, Jr.
PO Box 404
Greenville, KY 42345
e-mail: apollockis@comcast.net

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@clanyoungaustalia.com.au
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https://clanyoungsociety.com/australia

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Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada

Clan Morrison Society of North America

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www.clanmorrison.net

Clan Ross in Australia

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

YOUNGS OF SCOTLAND

Membership inquiries:
Ms. Laura Young,
33 McKeen Street,
Jarvis, Ontario,
Canada N0A 1J0

4scottishthistles@gmail.com

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

www.scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

Clan Muirhead Society

A NON-PROF. CORP.

Muirhead, Muirhede, Morehead, Moorhead and all Variant Names

www.clanmuirhead.com

Rev. Ret. Chev. Raymond L. Morehead, COTJ, FSA Scot,
Chief Officer Elect Clan Muirhead Society
Email: raymondktj@msn.com or raymond@clanmuirhead.com

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

www.clanross.org

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BECOME A MEMBER, CONTACT RAY MUNRO
munro.ray@hotmail.com
0410 663 760

Clan Sinclair Australia

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

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

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Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

Contact: M Williams, Secretary

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

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

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WHAT’S ON - SCOTTISH EVENTS

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

Canada

JANUARY 2025

A Celebration of Robbie Burns with Blackthorn 18, Coquitlam, BC

Join Place des Arts for their annual celebration of Scotland's National Bard, Robbie Burns! Fiddler, Rosie Carver, with Celtic band Blackthorn and a special guest piper feature the musical traditions of Scotland with a special focus on Burns' songs and poems at Place des Arts, 1120 Brunette Ave. Info: www.placedesarts.ca

Robbie Burns Festival 23, Calgary, AB

Break out the haggis and the scotch and celebrate Robbie Burns Day at Market Wines- University District, 4109 University Avenue Northwest. Info: www.eventbrite.ca/e/robbie-burns-festival-tickets-1050892707377

St. Andrew's Society of Montreal Burns Supper 2025 23, Montréal, QC

The Society's annual event that celebrates Robert Burns who came to fame as a poet when he was 27 years old. Share a wee dram with friends, enjoy a traditional Scottish meal at L'Espace Canal at Restaurant L'Ambroisie, 4020 Saint Ambroise St. Info: www.standrews.qc.ca/burns-supper.html

The St. Andrew's Society Burns Supper 24, Toronto, ON

A traditional Burns Dinner in conjunction with the University Club of Toronto. The event follows the time-honoured format with the Address to a Haggis, The Immortal Memory and Toasts to the Lassies and Laddies. Info: www.standrewstoronto.ca/sast_event/rabbie-burns-dinner

Calgary Burns Club Burns Supper 24, Calgary, AB

Join the Calgary Burns Club for a night of Scottish tradition and celebration. Info: www.calgaryburnsclub.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.

The Vancouver Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Burns Supper 25, Vancouver, BC

This annual celebration of the life and poetry of Robert Burns includes a traditional Scottish meal, entertainment, dancing to the wonderful music of Kilbirnie Station and a dance program to suit everyone at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson St. Info: www.rscdsvancouver.org

NES Robert Burns 2025 25, Calgary, AB

Celebrate the life and poetry of the great Scottish bard, Robbie Burns, in 2025 with a night of haggis, whisky, and traditional music, at Fairmont Palliser. Info: www.eventbrite.com/e/nes-robert-burns-2025-tickets-1028871100157

Robbie Burns Dinner & Dance 25, Cornwall, ON

Join the 2403 SD&G Highlanders RC Army CC for an evening of Scottish tradition and a kilt fundraiser at the Royal Canadian Legion. Info: www.2403armycadets.com

Robbie Burns Supper 25, Westport, ON

Celebrating one of Scotland's most famous bards. Experience piping in the haggis and an Ode to the Lassies. Enjoy a traditional buffet style Robbie Burns Supper with Haggis, Roast Beef, all the Trimmings and more! Music by Seventh Town is a Canadian acoustic Celtic folk band. Info: www.coveinn.com/event/robbie-burns-supper

Freddy Kilt Skate 25, Fredericton, NB

Don your kilt and hit the ice at Officers' Square Provincial Heritage Place and honour Robbie Burns' birthday. Hot chocolate, shortbread cookies, and haggis burgers will also be waiting for you at the Fredericton Region Museum. Info: www.eventbrite.ca/e/2025-second-annual-freddy-kilt-skate-tickets-1047037676877

Robbie Burns Supper 25, Toronto, ON

A traditional Burns Supper of aged Roast Beef with all the trimmings-Haggis, Neaps & Tatties. The Kiwanis Club of East York welcomes all folks of Scottish heritage, and those who wish they were, at 1100 Millwood Rd. Info: www.eventbrite.ca/e/robbie-burns-supper-2025-tickets-1084808584679

Robert Burns Dinner 25, Moncton, NB

Join the Greater Moncton Scottish Association for a traditional Robert Burns Dinner - a night of Scottish culture, food, and kinship at the Dan Bohan Family Centre, 5 Fatima Dr, Riverview. Info: www.greatermonctonscots.org

Kamloops 136th Annual Robbie Burns Dinner 25, Kamloops, BC

A fun-filled evening at the Columbo Lodge, complete with a traditional Scottish roast beef dinner and performances from the award-winning Kamloops Pipe Band and Highland dancers. Info: www.kamloopshighlandgames.org

Robbie Burns Dinner & Trivia Night 25, Kingston, ON

A night with the Rob Roy Pipe Band and Highland Dancers full of delicious food (including haggis of course), exciting prizes, and great trivia at Rideau Acres Banquet. Info: www.robroykingston.com

Penticton Scottish Festival Robrt Burns Night 25, Penticton, BC

Join the Penticton Scottish Festival at the Penticton Lakeside Resort, 21 Lakeshore Drive W, for an evening of poetry, music, dancing, and cheer. Info: www.pentictonscottishfestival.ca/robbie-burns-2023

Great Canadian Kilt Skate Montreal 2025 25, Montreal, QC

Celebrate Scottish culture and heritage in true Canadian fashion at Verdun Auditorium, 4110 Boulevard LaSalle. Info: www.standrews.qc.ca/kilt-skate.html

FEBRUARY 2025

Robbie Burns Dinner & Dance 1, Flagstaff County, AB

Join the Flagstaff Scottish Club in celebrating Robert Burns with food, music and more. Info: www.flagstaffscottishclub.com/robbieburns

Robbie Burns Pub Night 1, Edmonton, AB

Join the Edmonton Scottish Society for an evening filled with Scottish tradition, entertainment, and community spirit. Includes performances from McKinnon School of Highland Dance. Info: www.edmontonscottishsociety.org

Glengarry Kilt Skate 2025 8, Maxville, ON

Everyone is invited to skate in their kilted attire 11:30 pm to 2 pm at the Maxville and District Sports Complex, 25 Fair St for the Great Canadian Kilt Skate - North Glengarry Edition. Info: www.kiltskate.com

Love to Dance Workshop and Dance 22, Vancouver, BC

Scottish country dance event at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson St. Info: www.scottishculturalcentre.com

USA

JANUARY 2025

Robert Burns Supper 11, Rancho Santa Fe, CA

Celebrate the Bard with the San Diego Scottish Highland Games and Gathering of the Clans. Entertainment provided by students and masters of traditional pipe & drum instruments, and Highland Dance at Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club, 17025 Avenidas De Arcadia's. Info: <https://sdhighlandgames.org/robert-burns-supper>

Florida Keys Celtic Festival 11-12, Marathon, FL

A weekend of Celtic entertainers, athletics, dancing, music and more at Marathon Community Park, MM49 US Hwy 1 Ocean Side. Info: www.floridakeyscecticfestival.com

Winter Storm Weekend 16-19, Kansas City, MO

The Pipes and Drums event-World-Class Concerts, Competitions, and Master Classes. Info: www.mhaf.org

The 30th Annual ASF Burns Night Gala Celebration 17, New York, NY

Celebrate Scotland's National Bard, Robert Burns. Hosted by the American Scottish Foundation and University Club, New York. Info: www.americanscottishfoundation.com

47th Central Florida Scottish Highland Games 18-19, Winter Springs, FL

Experience traditional Highland athletics, dance, art, music, culture and food at Central Winds Park. Info: www.flascot.com

Burns Night Dinner 24, Huntersville, NC

Celebrate the life and works of the legendary Scottish poet, Robert Burns, in this lively event filled with Scottish traditions and culture. A celebration of Scottish heritage and culture at Historic Rural Hill, 4431 Neck Rd. Info: www.ruralhill.net

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.

Robert Burns Supper 25, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Join the Scottish American Society of South Florida in celebration of Robert Burns with a Scottish dinner, Immortal Memory, toasts, Scottish and social dancing at Tropical Acres Steakhouse, 2500 Griffin Rd. Info: www.sassf.org

95th Annual St. Andrew's Society of Los Angeles Robert Burns Supper 25, Los Angeles, CA

Pull out your finest evening gowns, kilts, and black-tie dress for an evening of elegance and Scottish Sophistication at The Four Seasons Los Angeles at Beverly Hills. A night sure to be a night filled with Scottish tradition, distinguished guests, delicious food, and great company. Info: www.saintandrewsla.org

Robbie Burns Supper 25, Pittsburgh, PA

A night of Scottish tradition, haggis feasting, whisky toasting and poetry at Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center, 3579 Masonic Way. Info: www.eventbrite.com/e/second-annual-robbie-burns-supper-tickets-1039347746087

The Jaffa Highlanders 15th Annual Robert Burns Supper 25, Altoona, PA

Come for great food, music, comedy, poetry, libations, fun, and frivolity. Come celebrate the life of the bard, Robert Burns, and enjoy the chance to be a part of this splendid evening. Musical entertainment following dinner by The Irish Pretenders at The Casino at Lakemont Park. Info: www.jaffashriners.org/highlanders

Scottish Society of Louisville Burns Supper 25, Louisville, KY

Once again it is time to set your sights on celebrating our Scottish heritage and traditions with a tribute to one of Scotland's most favorite and revered sons, the poet Robert Burns at Woodhaven Country Club, 7200 Woodhaven Rd. Info: www.scotsoflou.com

ASCI 2025 Robert Burns Night Supper 25, Asheville, NC

After an over 40 year career of weekly Celtic roots music radio broadcast including NPR's Thistle and Shamrock, Asheville Sister Cities is excited that Fiona Ritchie will be traveling from Scotland to join us in-person to celebrate Burns Night and the bard of Scotland's 266th birthday, at Biltmore DoubleTree Hotel, 115 Hendersonville Rd. Info: <https://ashevillesistercities.org/event/2025-robert-burns-night-supper>

Chicago Scots Burns Supper 2025 31, Lake Forest, IL

Back by popular demand Chicago Scots is pleased to partner with Gorton Center and the History Center of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff to host an authentic Burns Supper for everyone who is Scottish by birth, by heritage or simply by inclination. Info: www.chicagoscots.org/events

FEBRUARY 2025

Suncoast Highland Games & Celtic Festival 1, Sarasota, FL

A celebration of Scotland with pipe bands, Clans, entertainment and more. Info: www.suncoastscots.com

Robert Burns Dinner 1, Solon, IA

Join the Hawkeye Area Grand Gaelic Isles Society and celebrate and learn about Scottish culture and tradition with food, ceremony, and dancing at Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca. Info: www.haggis-iowa.com

South Jersey Celtic Society Robert Burns Supper 1, Eastampton NJ, United States

An evening of poetry, singing, pipers, dinner, haggis, and more at O'Connor's American Bar & Grille, 1383 Monmouth Rd. Info: www.sjceltic.org/BurnsTickets.html

Burns Supper 2025 1, Cumberland, MD

Join the Cumberland Knights of St. Andrew for our 19th Annual Burns Supper celebrating the life and poetry of Bro. Robert “Rabbie” Burns, at The Historic Masonic Temple, 15 Greene St. Info: www.cumberlandscottishrite.org

Hudson Highlands Pipe Band Robert Burns Supper 2025 1, Philipstown, NY

A lively celebration of Scottish culture with traditional music, food, and poetry at the Hudson Highlands Pipe Band Robert Burns at The Garrison, 2015 U.S. 9. Info: www.eventbrite.com/e/hudson-highlands-pipe-band-robert-burns-supper-2025-tickets-1076235733049

Masters of Scottish Arts Concert 7, Edmonds, WA

Hear piping, drumming and fiddling as the sounds of Scotland are performed by recognized masters of the music. Some of the Scottish music world's accomplished players gather on a single stage for an unforgettable night of Celtic celebration at Edmonds Center for the Arts, 410 Fourth Avenue North. Info: www.edmondscenterforthearts.org/events/detail/787/masters-of-scottish-arts-concert

Tallahassee Highland Games 8-9, Tallahassee, FL

Experience the Tallahassee Highland Games and National Caber Championship along with the thrilling Stones of Strength events. Celebrate Scottish heritage at Apalachee Regional Park, 7550 Apalachee Pkwy. Info: www.tallyhighlandgames.com

Mount Dora Scottish Highland Festival 14-16, Mount Dora, FL

Filled with bagpipes, Highland athletics, Celtic music, dancing, a vibrant tartan parade, and thrilling Pipes and Drums performances. Info: www.mountdorascot.com

Panama City Beach Scottish Festival 28-March 1, Panama City Beach, FL

The largest and longest running Scottish Festival in Northwest Florida. Scotland comes to the beach at Frank Brown Park, 16200 Panama City Beach Pkwy. Info: www.pcbscottishfestival.com

Scotland

JANUARY 2025

The Burning of the Clavie 11, Burghead, Moray

A pagan fire festival unique to Burghead, which greets the New Year. The significance of the 11th January dates back to the 1750's, when the Julian calendar was reformed in Britain. Every 11th January the flaming Clavie (a barrel full of staves) is carried round the town followed by a large crowd. Info: www.burghead.com/clavie

Celtic Connections 16-February 2, Glasgow

The UK's premier celebration of Celtic music, with performances, workshops and events at various venues across Glasgow. Info: www.celticconnections.com

Big Burns Supper 17-February 3, Dumfries

Scotland's biggest Burns Night celebration and Winter Fringe Festival which takes place in venues across Dumfries each January, including the Spiegeltent and the show Le Haggis. Info: www.bigburnssupper.com

Scotland's Trade Fair Spring 19-21, Glasgow

Brimming with suppliers from far and wide, showcasing the finest Scotland, and the UK has to offer, this is the place to source those 2025 gifts, homewares, crafts, textiles, jewellery, fine food and drinks. Trade only event at the SEC. Info: www.scotlandstradefairs.com

The Royal Yacht Britannia Burns Supper 24-25, Leith

To celebrate the birth of our national bard, Robert Burns, enjoy a traditional Burns Supper aboard The Royal Yacht Britannia. Info: <https://shop.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk/collections/events>

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.

Celebrating Burns 25, Edinburgh

Robert Burns, undoubtedly one of Scotland's literary greats, but what exactly was he on about? Come along to Edinburgh Castle to find out more about the bard and some of his works. Info: www.edinburghcastle.scot

Scottish National Whisky Festival 25, Glasgow

A definitive whisky and cultural experience, this festival brings together a line-up of some of the best exhibitors from across the whisky industry, with hundreds of whiskies and other spirits available to sample over each session at SWG3, Studio Warehouse, 100 Eastvale Place. Info: www.swg3.tv

Burns An' A' That 25, Stirling

In 1787 Robert Burns visited Stirling Castle, after which he returned to his hotel where he etched the now famous Stirling Lines. Join us at the castle that inspired these works to celebrate burns an' a' that, why not have a go at addressing the haggis. Info: www.stirlingcastle.scot

Up Helly Aa 2025 28, Lerwick, Shetland

One of Scotland's most unique winter festivals. The Up Helly Aa fire festivals are amongst the biggest annual celebrations in Shetland. Inspired by Shetland's Viking past, communities across the islands come together for a night of guizing (dressing up), burning torches through the streets and dancing the night away to traditional Shetland music. Info: www.uphellyaa.org

Scotword answers from page 6	
Across:	Down:
1 Bogs	1 Blantyre
3 Suitable	2 Glenelg
8 Axes	4 Unrest
9 Arbroath	5 Tarmacadam
11 The Trossaches	6 Brash
13 Regina	10 Grand
14 Dancer	March
16 Ada	12 Greenock
17 Glamis Castle	15 Caterer
20 Discreet	16 Astern
21 Broo	18 Laser
22 Merchant	19 Adam
23 Trek	

2025 – A Year in Piping & Drumming

By: The National Piping Centre



on the 25th January. From the 8th –12th January, the Royal New Zealand Pipe Band Association will host its summer school in Wellington for young musicians. This Summer School is the perfect opportunity to learn from world class tutors, and it showcases some of the best talent New Zealand has to offer.

On 22nd February the National Piping Centre Junior Piping Championship returns, one of a host of fantastic contest for young pipers aged Under 18 across the country every year. It aims to encourage all young players to compete, with chanter competitions through to Piobaireachd events.

In Australia, Ballarat Grammar School in Victoria will host its annual twilight pipe band contest on 1st March. Back over the Tasman Sea, the New Zealand Pipe Band Championships will take place in Queens Park in Invercargill with over 50 bands registered to take part in a huge two days of contest on 7th – 8th March. On 22nd March, the adult solo piping season kicks off in Scotland with the Duncan Johnstone Memorial Competition which is held at The National Piping Centre and managed by the Competing Pipers' Association for B and C graded pipers. April 26th will see the Virginia International Tattoo host the American Pipe Band Championship in Norfolk, Virginia. This traditional Scottish contest features the largest gathering of the best pipe bands in the Eastern United States adjudicated by an international panel of judges. On 17th May the Victorian Pipe Band Championships take place in Maryborough, Australia.

Scottish summer

As we move into the Scottish summer (keeping everything crossed for some sunshine!) the piping season begins in earnest with a huge range of Highland Games across the country, all of which feature some kind of piping with pipe bands, solo piping and ceilidhs across Scotland. This year's World Pipe Band Championships has been announced as the 15th and 16th August. Keep up with all the pipe band news at www.rspba.org

Piping Live! returns in full force to the streets of Glasgow in the run up to the World's once again as Glasgow hosts the world's biggest week of piping! This year, we are celebrating the 22nd edition of our festival running from 11th – 17th August, which attracts performers and audiences from across the world. In 2024, we welcomed performers from Sweden, Ireland, and Galicia in Spain performing on their own styles of bagpipes, as well as Scottish Pipe Bands from Australia, USA and Canada as well as from across Scotland. We can't wait for this year's festival – keep up with what's happening and register for email updates at www.pipinglive.co.uk

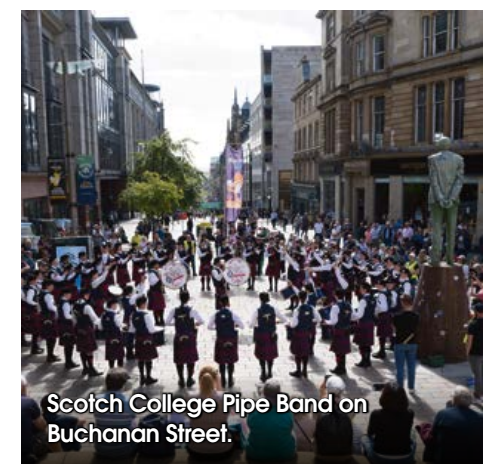
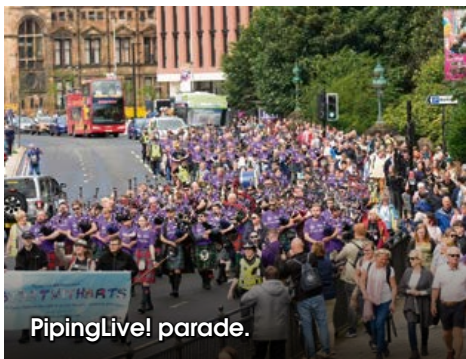
The first weekend of August in Maxville, Ontario the Glengarry Highland Games will again host the North American Pipe Band Championships. At the end of August, the piping world turns its focus to top level solo competition, with the Argyllshire Gathering taking place in Oban on 27th and 28th August, and the Northern Meeting in Inverness happening on 11th–12th September. These see the world's best solo performers gather to compete for the most prestigious solo piping prizes, as well as a chance to qualify for the Glenfiddich Piping Championship. The Glenfiddich Piping Championship takes place at the end of October each year, and in 2025 will celebrate its 52nd event on Saturday 25th October. 10 competitors will gather at Blair Castle to compete in Piobaireachd and March, Strathspey and Reel disciplines to be crowned champion. Tickets to join us in person at Blair Castle or to watch through the livestream will go on sale around mid-July through the National Piping Centre website.

But October isn't all about solo piping, as on Saturday 18th October, the World Solo Drumming Championship takes place, here in Glasgow, with the best drummers gathering to compete of several rounds to be crowned the best. It was a year of double celebration for Inveraray & District as their Lead Drummer Steven McWhirter was crowned champion for the 12th time at 2024's championship. This will be a hotly contested event in 2025, that's for sure! The Glenfiddich Piping Championship marks the end of

the 2025 season, only for the 2026 season to start shortly after in London with the Scottish Piping Society of London's annual competition, which celebrates its 87th year in 2025. Also, in the USA and Canada there are a number of piping events through November, with the An Crios Gréine - Sun Belt Invitational Solo Piping Competition taking place in Florida and the George Sherriff Memorial Invitational for amateur players taking place in Hamilton, Ontario. Dates for these events will be confirmed later this year.

So, if you are travelling this year, come and hear piping in Scotland – or look out for it around the world!

You can find out more about all The National Piping Centre's projects at www.thepipingcentre.co.uk or get the latest news and results from the piping world at www.bagpipe.news which will give you details of events happening across the globe.



Last year was a fantastic year of events across the piping and drumming world, with packed out audiences watching great performances across the breadth of the traditional music world. We are already looking ahead to 2025 and what it holds.

The first piping and drumming event of the new year happens in the Southern Hemisphere, with New Zealand's Waipu Highland Games, which takes place on 31st December to start the new year in style! The National Piping Centre's home city of Glasgow comes alive at the darkest time of year, as the UK's premier celebration of Celtic music, Celtic Connections presents a full 17-day programme from 16th January – 2nd February celebrating 32 years of world music. Piping and drumming features across the programme, in so many forms from emerging talent on the Danny Kyle stage through to headlining traditional music concerts from Brighde Chaimbeul, Assynt, Imar, and Malin Lewis, as well as a concert by 2024 world champions Inveraray and District Pipe Band and the Finlay MacDonald Band. Head over to the website now find out more – www.celticconnections.com.

As well as Celtic Connections, solo pipers are heading to Kansas City once again this January as Winter Storm, organized by MHAf, returns from 16th –19th January. The Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers also returns in January, with an in-person event in Glasgow on 11th January. This league has an overall and online-only titles so you can compete as an amateur solo player from anywhere in the world. The latest online event saw competitors from Hong Kong to Hawai'i join the event! If you are an amateur player and would like to find out more go to www.theclasp.co.uk.

With summer in full swing in the Southern Hemisphere there is a plethora of pipe band events, solo competitions and more. After the Waipu Highland Games, comes the 160th Turakina Highland Games

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Scotland's new winter light show in the Cairngorms



lights will illuminate the pinewood forest, bringing a festive glow and creating a truly magical atmosphere. Our 'Red Squirrel Trail' will take visitors up into the treetops for a unique view of the stunning illuminated forest. With nearly 10,000 visitors expected, we're excited to welcome people of all ages from across Scotland and the rest of the UK to this unforgettable experience". Lisa added: "Winter is a truly special time to visit the Cairngorms National Park. Whether you're seeking outdoor adventure or a peaceful walk-through frost-covered forests, this season offers something unique for everyone. During the winter months, Landmark Forest Adventure Park offers a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities for visitors to enjoy."

National Park 'Where Winter Comes to Life!' campaign is showcasing over 1,700 square miles of Highland winter wonderland filled with seasonal magic, including Landmark Forest Adventure Park at Carrbridge. 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.

For more information on 'Ancient Forest Twi-LIGHTS' at Landmark Forest Adventure Park, go to www.landmarkpark.co.uk/attraction/ancient-forest-twilights



themselves in the enchanting ancient pinewood forest, illuminated by over 50,000 lights and effects. Special features include a UV light tunnel and a 'Red Squirrel Trail', a treetop journey that takes visitors eight meters up into the forest canopy for stunning views of the illuminated woodland below.

A festive glow

Landmark Forest Adventure Park is part of the new Visit Cairngorms winter campaign, which is promoting the UK's largest National Park as the ultimate winter travel destination for 2024. Lisa Anderson, Marketing and Sales Manager at Landmark Forest Adventure Park, said: "We're thrilled to announce our new 'Ancient Forest Twi-LIGHTS' experience for 2024/5. Over 50,000

The ultimate winter travel destination

The event incorporates the original Treetop Trail, built nearly 30 years ago and now expanded for improved accessibility, including buggy and wheelchair access. Landmark Forest Adventure Park was named 'Best Visitor Attraction' 2024 at the Highlands & Islands Thistle Awards (HITA) in 2024.

Landmark Forest Adventure Park is part of the Visit Cairngorms winter campaign, which is promoting the UK's largest National Park as the ultimate winter travel destination. 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'. The Cairngorms



A new winter light show experience will be bringing a festive glow to the award-winning Landmark Forest Adventure Park at Carrbridge near Inverness in the Scottish Highlands (on now until 19th February 2025). The 'Ancient Forest Twi-LIGHTS' experience will allow visitors to follow a one kilometre woodland trail and immerse



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