



49

the Scottish Banner



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A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 48 Number 8

NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS

February 2025

Brothers bid to break World Record in Pacific Ocean

» Pg 12



Where trains once ran

» Pg 11



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7 25286 84459 8 02

What really divides the Highlands and Lowlands?» Pg 9
Scotland's Guide to Coorie» Pg 15
Scot launches bid to be first snowsports athlete with MND at Winter Paralympics» Pg 21
Modernising the Murrays» Pg 23



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The Banner Says...

The lost streets of Edinburgh



by Sean Cairney

Scotland's capital is regarded as one of the most beautiful cityscapes in the world, designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1995. The streets are full of history and Edinburgh is Scotland's most visited city. Today any visit to the city will see visitors year-round taking photos at every corner and using their GPS to navigate the winding cobble stone streets. However, one street just may not come up on anyone's map.

Libberton's Wynd

Libberton's Wynd ran from High Street in Lawnmarket down to Cowgate, just off the George IV Bridge and deep below where the National Library of Scotland now stands. This forgotten street was only rediscovered in the 1990s by library staff and is affectionately known as 'The Void'. As Edinburgh grew during the 1800s several streets were demolished to make way for the George IV Bridge, this included Libberton's Wynd.

The wynd itself was a very packed street with crowded tenements full of families and businesses and not much natural light available. Those who used to walk this road had to contend with what occurred on many streets, residents tossing their latrines out the window to the call of "Gardylo". It also housed some of the more interesting drinking establishments and was a favoured location for Robert Burns during his time in Edinburgh in the 1700s. The street, though considered unsafe at night, would have been full of life with silversmiths, grocers, barbers and more.

Libberton's Wynd was also a popular thoroughfare to reach Edinburgh's infamous gallows. Thousands of spectators would head to the nearby gallows and watch all kinds of people executed in a macabre public show, including that of the infamous body-snatcher and murderer William Burke which took place on 28th January 1829. The first reference to Libberton's Wynd can be traced back to the late 15th century, and the iconic street was demolished by 1835. In the 1990s staff from the National Library of Scotland opened up a hatch found behind a filing cabinet and discovered the remains of some of Libberton's Wynd and a piece of Edinburgh's history. 'The Void' is still not accessible to the public but the fact it has been discovered in modern times allows us to try and get a glimpse into what life was like in history.

Historic passageways

Anyone who has visited Edinburgh has no doubt walked the Royal Mile in the heart of the Old Town. Off the Royal Mile you will still today find closes, courts and wynds. So, what is the difference some might wonder? Most of the historic passageways which run off the Royal Mile are closes, and date back to Medieval times. The name was in connection to that they were often private property, with a gate and closed to the public and the 'closeness' of these narrow lanes being just a few feet or metre apart.

A wynd was a lane or alley leading off a major thoroughfare and open to the public. These passageways were wider, even able to accommodate horse and buggy, than closes and would wind and connect different parts of the town. Wynd's like Libberton's Wynd would have many people pass through it every day. Courts were narrow passages off the Royal Mile which open into a larger courtyard area and used for access generally by more than one building.

In this issue

Regular readers of *the Scottish Banner* may remember when we highlighted three Scottish brothers who not only broke a world record by rowing across

the Atlantic, they did it to help people have clean and safe drinking water. Ewan, Jamie and Lachlan Maclean will soon set off on a monumental row from South America to Sydney, Australia this year to again raise money for the cause close to their hearts. We will keep readers updated on this incredible journey and encourage anyone who can support their efforts to do so.

Have you ever wondered where the Highlands start in Scotland, or where the Lowlands end? The notion of Highlands or Lowlands goes beyond just geological features such as the Highland Boundary Fault but also entails social and agricultural history.

Many Scottish branch lines were lost in the 1960s as part of a major restructuring of the UK's nationalized railway system and also rising car ownership. Today some of those rail lines are being used for recreational purposes, giving them a new lease of life. Cyclists along with two and four legged walkers can enjoy these unique outdoor spaces and connect with nature and themselves.

Valentine's Day in Scotland

This month is also Valentine's Day, a day to celebrate love. It is believed that the remains of St Valentine's are found at the church of Blessed St John Duns Scotus in Glasgow. Each February 14th people gather at the Gorbals church, where his forearm is meant to be, and celebrate mass and love.

Scotland's reputation for romantic venues is already well known throughout the world. For one small Scottish village love has been part of its history for hundreds of years. Gretna Green in the Scottish Borders is famous around the world as the place for weddings. It is the first village over the Scottish border on the road from England to Glasgow. It is renowned for being the place where young English couples in particular eloped; as English law said they could not marry until they were 18 years old (or 21 without their parents' permission), whereas in Scotland marriage was allowed at 16. Thus, making the town Britain's ultimate wedding destination, and what's not to love about that. 🍀

Have you walked any of Edinburgh's historic streets? 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.



Gracing our front cover:
Jamie, Ewan and Lachlan
Maclean preparing to row
across the Pacific Ocean, raising
money for clean water projects.



The Kelpies Experience - *Climb into the mouth of the world's largest equine sculptures*

All images courtesy of Peter Sandground.



in Scotland's fascinating industrial history, awe-inspiring art and world class engineering. The experience involves ascending 25 metres to the mouth of Baron (the head up Kelpie in Falkirk) using a series of ladders, cable crossings, suspended platforms and nets before descending, by abseil, or quick flight, a thrilling option that gives the feeling of free falling before gently lowering you to the ground. The highlight of the climb is reaching the Kelpie's mouth and being rewarded with stunning panoramic views of the Forth & Clyde Canal, the nearby Helix parklands and on a clear day you might even catch a glimpse of the distant hills and the town of Falkirk.

A triumph of design and engineering

Since their launch, Helix Park has welcomed over seven million visitors from all over the world; The Kelpies play a huge role in contributing to a £85 million tourism spend in the Falkirk region annually. Scottish Canals' Chief Executive Officer John Paterson said: "We are incredibly excited to create this unique challenge. This is a truly amazing experience and will allow visitors from across the world to step inside our magnificent Kelpies and discover the secrets that lie inside all while experiencing a 25-metre aerial journey straight to the horse's mouth. Those who enjoy this epic experience will undoubtedly leave with a memory of a lifetime."

Scottish Canals commissioned internationally renowned artist and sculptor Andy Scott to create the awe-inspiring

Kelpies and he says he is looking forward to others getting to see his artwork from a different perspective. He said: "I believe the experience will give an even greater understanding of just what an incredible achievement these structures represent both as artworks and as iconic landmarks."

The Kelpies are a triumph of design and engineering. Each Kelpie weighs a massive 300 tonnes (the same weight as 350 Clydesdale Horses) and is constructed from more than 18,000 individual components.

For more details on how to book the experience log onto: www.Kelpies.co.uk



world's largest equine sculptures who stand 98 feet tall against the Falkirk skyline, are ready to share their secrets. The Kelpies Experience will challenge participants, of all ages to tackle a 25 metre aerial climb, taking them straight to the horse's mouth. The inspiring experience will also tell the fascinating story of the Clydesdale – the horse that powered the industrial revolution around the world.

As well as testing visitors on the specially-designed climb expert guides will share the history of Scotland's canals, the vital role played by the Clydesdale Horse and how this inspired internationally renowned sculptor Andy Scott. The Kelpies Experience is a premium, aerial visitor attraction while immersing participants

Scottish Canals have launched Scotland's newest visitor attraction – The Kelpies Experience. The canal custodians have partnered with Zone Events to bring participants a unique opportunity to climb safely to the top of the inside of The Kelpies. The Kelpies – the





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SCAN ME

SCOT POURRI

Send us your inquiries on life's little question marks.

Ever wanted to know what happened to your old pal from home, how to make your favourite Scottish meal, or wondered about a certain bit of Scottish history?

Representing Canada



Congratulations to the Canadian dancers who performed this past summer at the world-renowned Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, Scotland, and the Basel Tattoo in Basel, Switzerland!
ScotDance Canada



Dean Castle & Country Park



The stunning Dean Castle & Country Park in the morning. Dean Castle, a historic treasure in Kilmarnock, recently reopened to the public in April 2022 after an extensive £5.2 million renovation. This 14th century castle, originally built by the Boyd family, has been meticulously restored to preserve its medieval charm while incorporating modern amenities. The castle has strong historical ties to William Wallace, as the Boyds were among his early supporters during Scotland's fight for independence.

Additionally, Dean Castle played a role in the Jacobite uprisings, with William Boyd, 4th Earl of Kilmarnock, joining the 1745 Jacobite Rising and ultimately being captured at the Battle of Culloden. Visitors can now explore the newly refurbished Keep, Palace, Gatehouse, and Courtyard, which house fascinating collections of arms, armour, and musical instruments. The renovation project, supported by East Ayrshire Council, Historic Environment Scotland and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, ensures that Dean Castle remains a vibrant part of the community. Entry is free, this is a castle to add to your visit list!
The Kilted Photographer Scotland

Lockerbie Remembered



Thank you for your feature on the Lockerbie tragedy (*Lockerbie Remembered*, *the Scottish Banner*, December, 2024).

This sad story continues to make headlines all these years later and it is refreshing to read that some positive connections have been made out of sheer grief and tragedy. The late 80's seem quite a while ago, but for some reason Lockerbie remains fresh in my mind and not so long ago. I applaud the families and friends who lost loved ones for making such poignant and special memorials and making sure those lost even nearly four decades on are not forgotten. It shows the great human spirit to read that strong connections have been made across both sides of the Atlantic out of this devastation.

Thank you, Neil Drysdale, for this article and I hope those who personally lived through know so many of us still remember and care.
*Nigel Prescott
Atlanta, Georgia
USA*

Unknown Edinburgh



I am planning, finally, my very first trip to Scotland and will be definably staying in Edinburgh. Your article (*Unknown Edinburgh*, *the Scottish Banner*, November, 2024) had some great tips for our visit as we want to not just do the regular tourist thing, but visit some lesser-known spots. We are bringing our kids, aged 11 and 14, on what will be their very first overseas trip. They are beyond excited to go, and we are all looking forward to being in Scotland and finding out where my mother hails from. I have been waiting until my children were a bit older to remember Scotland and hopefully that excitement they have for their first trip continues when they get home and they find a new love for their vibrant Scottish culture. Each summer we often attend Highland Games and always have a great experience, something my mother did for me growing up.

*Annette Tremblay
Kingston, Ontario
Canada*

Stirling



Stirling Castle. Photo: Fraser MacDonald.

Thank you for the feature on Stirling (*the Scottish Banner*, Stirling 900, November, 2024), one of my favourite places to be in Scotland. I have been fortunate to visit the city several times and find it a convenient base to get to so many other parts of Scotland. The history in and around Stirling is amazing and it has a much quieter feel than Edinburgh or Glasgow. Not sure if I am allowed to say this but I think Stirling Castle is so much better than Edinburgh Castle...! Scotland continues to have such a draw for me as it not just the land of my ancestors but also a great place to connect with culture, nature and history.

I enjoy each issue of *the Scottish Banner* and look forward to reading more about Scotland as I am planning my next visit in 2026.
*Rebecca Macleod
Auckland, New Zealand*

Shellshocked

Over the past year or so, Kennedy Smith has published in *the Scottish Banner*, a number of poems in the Scots language.



He has now collected these (and others) into a book, *Blethers wi' Robin* which is available via Amazon. The picture shows the two protagonists admiring their work.

Shellshocked

*Whar's ma freend, is wee Rob fine?
Ah keeked awwhaur; couldna find.
When suddenly frae out a bind,
He tummlt his wilkies.
The bird, he glowered wi gleeks malign
An wirts no silkie.*

*The peerie-heidit passerine
Just took the huff; quite like a queen.
He telt us aw whar he had been
Aw nicht lang;
While rockets wi' their murderous scream
Went whee an bang.*

*Puir wee Robbie's fairly trekkled.
Singe marks on his feathers freckled.
Spots afore his eyes did speckle.
Nae gagglin' matter!
A fricht Rob had in awe the heckle
mak'n him crasser.*

*Ah couldna help but gie a lauch.
Rob just stared, liken ah wis daft.
He thought, "Mebbe he's gauen saft,"
A fair puzzle.
Then, dumfoondert, just flew aff,
Wi nae mair hustle.*

*So syne tak' heid tae whit ah say
An tak' guid care wi whit ye dae.
Puir wild things hae their ain life tae,
Ye ken.
So pit yer playthings oot the way,
Citizen!*

*Readers may be interested in my recent publication in Amazon of a collection of these poems entitled: BLETHERS wi' ROBIN by Kennedy Smith
Scotland*

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

The Kelpies



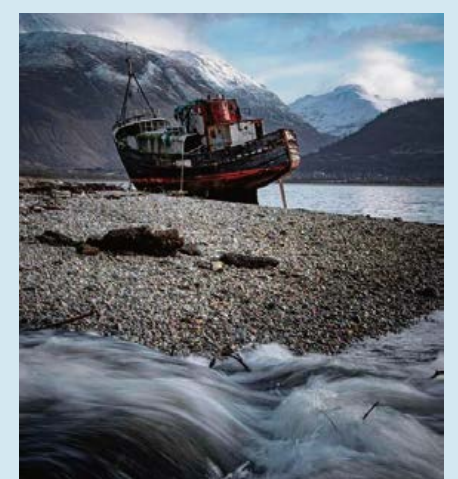
The Kelpies lit up purple
Jamie Taylor Photography

Dunnottar Castle



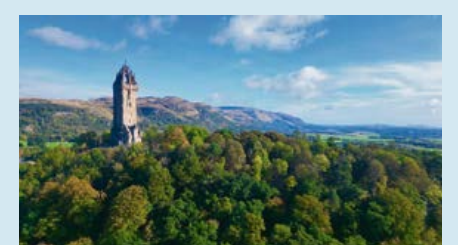
A double exposure of Dunnottar Castle and a Saltire sky.
TravellingScot Photography

MV Dayspring



The Corpach shipwreck (fishing boat *MV Dayspring*) resting on the shore of Loch Linnhe.
Colfin Captures

The National Wallace Monument



Stunning day at The National Wallace Monument in Stirling.
Robert Gibb

Discover how Scotland Made the World

– A hilarious and educational comedy tour



Photo: Blake Armstrong.

Get ready for an unforgettable evening filled with laughter, history, and cheeky insights as Bruce Fummey brings his critically acclaimed show, *Scotland Made the World*, to Australia and New Zealand. This is your chance to experience more jokes (and blush-worthy moments) than you've seen on his YouTube channel, all while

learning how Scotland shaped the globe. Bruce's comedic genius and quirky storytelling will have you laughing, blushing, and leaving the show with a newfound appreciation for Scotland's influence. Catch him in Perth, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

A tour born from an accidental adventure

What started as a father-son trip Down Under turned into an unexpected comedic triumph. In 2022, Bruce planned a journey to reconnect with his son and explore Australia and New Zealand. Along the way, his love for history and comedy merged, leading to a series of shows that captivated audiences across four countries and three continents. Pre-COVID, Bruce was both a tour guide and a stand-up comedian.

Bruce's passion for storytelling and quick wit make this more than a comedy show.

During the pandemic, he launched a YouTube channel that brought Scottish history to life for thousands of fans worldwide. Inspired by their enthusiasm, Bruce decided to take his stories on the road—and the response was overwhelming.

Why You Can't Miss This Show

- A Unique Blend of Comedy and History: Learn fascinating stories about Scotland's global influence while laughing until your sides hurt.

- Incredible Venues: From comedy clubs to unique spaces like a Thai restaurant in Sydney, each performance promises a memorable experience.
- Unmatched Energy: Bruce's passion for storytelling and quick wit make this more than a comedy show—it's an event.

Special Sydney Event – A Laugh and a Feast

Join Bruce for a one-of-a-kind standup comedy afternoon show in Sydney for only \$95 a ticket, featuring:

- A 5-course banquet at the Thai Rock Wetherill Park, Sunday afternoon 23rd February 1pm - 4pm.
- Your first house beer, wine or soft drink is included.
- An afternoon of pure Scottish humour, less history-based and focused on laughs! Suggested for those over 18's

Book a ticket to Wetherill Park Thai Rock here: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1324582

Tour dates and locations

Bruce kicks off the tour in Perth on January 29th and continues to Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and then Adelaide. Don't miss out tickets are selling fast—secure yours today and get ready for a night of laughs, learning, and Scottish charm. Let Bruce Fummey show you why *Scotland Made the World*!

For more information and to book tickets to Bruce's shows, visit www.brucefummey.co.uk

Tartan of the Month

New Lanark Trust Tartan

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).

This design is intended to represent the history of the New Lanark UNESCO World Heritage Site in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, reflecting upon the children and families who were schooled, housed and worked in its Georgian spinning mills built by the founders of New Lanark, David Dale and Robert Owen. Founded in 1785 with a focus on philanthropy, education and the welfare of the mill workers, New Lanark became a model for industrial communities that was to spread across the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. New Lanark was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001.

This tartan (SRT #14526) was designed by Lochcarron of Scotland and registered in October, 2024.

Bundanoon Highland Gathering



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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.

"We have unfortunately been unable to continue with preparations and necessary set-up for Edinburgh's Hogmanay outdoor events due to extreme weather and forecast conditions. Therefore, for safety reasons we, along with our event partners, have taken the difficult decision to cancel all outdoor events. We know that this will be hugely disappointing to all hoping to celebrate Hogmanay in Edinburgh and that people travel from around the world to be here at the home of Hogmanay."

A spokesperson from event management company Unique Assembly said as the Edinburgh Hogmanay celebrations were cancelled. All outdoor events on 30 & 31 December were cancelled due to adverse weather conditions and the need to ensure public safety.



"When I first came to Arran to start work as an apprentice deer stalker and gamekeeper at 15 or 16 years old, I remember being astounded at the barren landscape. It had been destroyed completely and was devoid of trees through years of overgrazing and heath burning, which had decimated the tree

population. When I visited the glen, I noticed a little gem of a tree; it stood out as it was isolated and had survived despite the sheep and deer, and it's what got me interested in the whitebeam species. I was also inspired by the amazing work that has taken place at Mar Lodge Estate over the years, where the Trust has had a positive impact on the landscape by controlling the deer effectively. This has helped the trees recover and start regenerating naturally, which has led to a fantastic transformation up there."

Isle of Arran resident Henry Murdo said his passion for the rare Arran whitebeam have worked for years to help save the native tree species from extinction. Henry and his wife Margo have been working with the National Trust for Scotland to share their tree-growing and planting knowledge with the next generation of green-fingered enthusiasts, after previously doing their work in secret.



"Scotland's islands are hugely popular with visitors the world over and their inclusion in Rough Guides 25 best places to travel in 2025 is a further example of

their global appeal. Our islands' stunning scenery, rich history and unique wildlife and culture demand to be explored at a gentler pace so it's no surprise that they have been highlighted as one of the best for slow travel relaxation. This is in line with our own sustainable tourism strategy which is focused on growing the value of tourism rather than volume of visitors and encouraging visitors to take their time and immerse themselves in local culture and connect with nature."

Vicki Miller, Chief Executive of VisitScotland, said Scotland has been included in travel guide *Rough Guides* 25 best places to travel in 2025. Scottish Islands have been named in the 'Best places to travel for slow travel relaxation' category. *Rough Guides* describes the category as destinations for visitors "looking to take a 2025 vacation that makes it easy to slow down and simply be". Scottish Islands sit alongside Sicily, Barbados, Denmark and the French Riviera.

"Listing is a way of ensuring that the importance of Scotland's most historically, culturally and architecturally significant buildings is taken into account in decisions about their future. Barlinnie certainly holds a place in the national consciousness and is a rare and outstanding example of a purpose-built prison complex in Scotland, significant as the largest and most complete surviving example of its building type. We have not yet decided whether to list Barlinnie and we would encourage anyone with views on the building's significance or any information that may help inform our final decision to review our report and take part in our consultation."

Dara Parsons, Head of Designations at Historic Environment Scotland, said the agency is seeking views from the public on proposals to designate Scotland's largest and best-known prison as a Category A listed building. HMP Barlinnie, in the northeast of Glasgow, is the most complete surviving example of a 19th century prison in Scotland and is exceptionally important in the history of Scottish prison design and criminal justice. The proposed listing would cover the surviving parts of the earliest layout of the site developed between 1880 and 1908.



"Tourism is one of the most important sectors in the Stirling economy. We are still at the early stages, but we are committed to exploring the potential of the visitor levy scheme and this will involve full public consultation with residents, businesses and visitors throughout 2025."

Stirling Council Depute leader Councillor Gerry McGarvey, said Stirling Council has agreed to further explore the idea of a tourist tax on all overnight accommodation that would come into place from 2027. The Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024 was passed by the Scottish Parliament in May 2024 and is also being considered by a number of local authorities in Scotland, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Argyll and Bute and Highland Council.

"As an independent, family run business, we are extremely proud to carry the Royal Warrant which is a great honour. We feel is a true mark of recognition for our service and commitment to baking 'Scotland at its finest' for over a century. It is particularly poignant to receive the appointment following the very sad passing of my uncle, Sir Jim Walker recently. My uncle, my father Joe and my aunt Marjorie were extremely proud when Walker's was granted the Royal Warrant for the supply of shortbread and oatcakes to the late Queen Elizabeth II. I know how delighted they would have been by this Appointment from his Majesty King Charles III. This award is testament to their legacy."

Walker's managing director Nicky Walker said as the iconic shortbread maker was recently granted a Royal Warrant of Appointment for the supply of shortbread and oatcakes to the Royal Household. The Royal Warrant by King Charles III came in on the same week as the funeral of Sir Jim Walker, the Moray company's former managing director. Walker's beginnings go back to 1898 when Joseph Walker moved to Aberlour, took over the village bakery, and developed a recipe for shortbread which is enjoyed across the world today.

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SCOTWORD

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

CLUES ACROSS

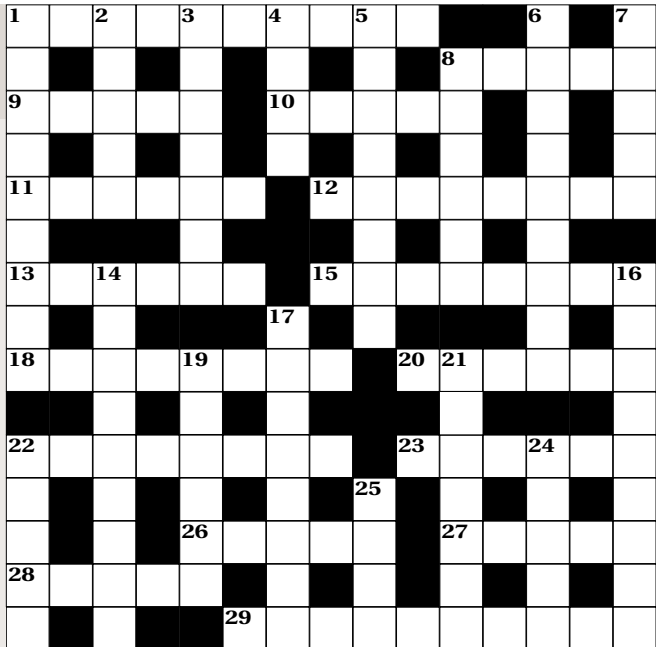
- Borders woollen town (10).
- Top male voice (5).
- Kirk office bearer (5).
- Additional part! (5).
- Heraldic plumes (6).
- Scattered the bed frame! (8).
- A salad plant (6).
- Highland gardens (8).
- Vied with (8).
- Stopped work in Scotland (6).
- Found in Skye & Lothian Region (8).

- S/he prepares issues (6).
- A running knot (5).
- Drive out (5).
- A wee dram! (5).
- A low wall in Fife! (10).

CLUES DOWN

- Village east of Perth (9).
- A serving scoop (5).
- Scottish valleys (7).
- On the rocks! (4).
- Capital regions (8).
- Highland capital (9).

- Doublet edging (5).
- Scot's potato (6).
- Bandleader up front (4, 5).
- Carpet town near Johnstone (9).
- Congratulatory steak! (4, 4).
- Fervent (6).
- Up to Hogmanay (3, 4).
- A knight's wage increase! (5).
- Feeling after 28 Across (5).
- Auld Nick! (4).





Snow scene from the MacGregor abode window.

Lady MacGregor's Scotland

By: Lady Fiona MacGregor



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

Greetings from Scotland where the snow has been falling fast. See the winter wonderland view from our window... Yes, it's pretty chilly and the log burners are going full blast. Which means extra work for the chief, having to bring in copious wheelbarrows of wood. There again, it is winter, and we have to put on extra layers. As they say here - and probably where you are - there's no such thing as bad weather. You're just wearing the wrong clothes...

Lockerbie



Lady Fiona and Victoria Cummock at the service at the church at Tundergarth.

And we needed some warmth just before Christmas as we remembered the chilling terrorist attack at nearby Lockerbie.

When an American airliner was blown out of the sky over this small south of Scotland town. It happened 36 years ago, but it's not something you can easily forget. Like other major disasters, we can probably all remember what we were doing when Pan Am Flight 103 fell from the sky. The date was 21st December 1988. 259 people in the air and 11 on the ground died. For myself, I can still recall the shock and horror; as a young TV reporter, being there with a camera crew; seeing first-hand how people coped; emergency services rallying; townsfolk coming together to support each other and victims' families. It was horrific. Yet that fateful night, and its aftermath, would also prove a lesson in heroism, commitment and humanity.

And so, once again, we looked back. I was there as Lord-Lieutenant as we gathered in sadness, in honour, and in memory. This time we met at Tundergarth church high above the town. Its surrounding fields were where the plane's nose cone came down, along with many passengers and crew. We remembered the victims, their faces shown on a screen. They came from all walks of life and were aged from two months to 82 years. The roll call was heartbreaking, and it lasted a long time. It was an emotional afternoon. Yet we also looked back with gratitude.

Police, fire, ambulance, army, mountain rescue, volunteers... Many of those who turned out to help in 1988 were there in the church, the service organised by the Pan Am Lockerbie Legacy Foundation. This group has been formed by an American lady whose husband, John, died in the atrocity. Since then, Victoria Cummock has devoted her life to trying to bring about change: campaigning for better airline safety and supporting several Lockerbie charities. Now she has plans to build a memorial museum at Tundergarth.

One like New York's Ground Zero. One that will remember and educate. Like others who lost loved ones, Victoria could not be blamed for being bitter. Instead, she maintains that the worst in humanity can also bring out the best in humanity. As she says, 'no-one dies unless they are forgotten.' She is one brave lady.

Robert Burns

On a happier note, I have just visited a very different museum. The Robert Burns Centre in Dumfries remembers Scotland's Bard and his connection to the town. In 1791 the poet moved there to work as an excise man, or tax collector.

This centre, sited in an eighteenth-century watermill, looks over the river to the so-called 'Song House of Scotland', the flat where he composed much of his work.

It charts his last years spent in the town's bustling streets and brings you closer to the great man. As you enter the restored mill you find a bench fashioned by wood that allegedly came from a fallen tree at Ellisland Farm, where he once lived and farmed. Among other treasures are early editions of poems and books from the Bard's library. One particular gem is the 'Burgess' ticket which gave him the Freedom of the Town. When Burns first visited Dumfries, he came as a tourist and was presented with it.

Here are artefacts from Burns clubs: a glorious punchbowl and glasses. Fascinating is a plaster cast of the poet's skull, made so scientists could study the lumps and bumps, to try to discover where his brilliance lay. Then there are the personal items; his sword, his travelling case and brooch, and, poignantly, his wife, Jean Armour's tiny wedding ring... It's the time of year to think of the legendary Robert Burns – and millions of enthusiasts round the world have been doing, or are about to do, just that.

Yes, by the time you read this, tonnes of haggis will have been addressed and eaten. Men will have been taught a wee lesson by the replies of lassies – and the great genius that was Robert Burns will have been celebrated. He was some man... Enjoy!

MELBOURNE HIGHLAND GAMES & CELTIC FESTIVAL

Sunday, 23rd March 2025 9am-5pm
Eastfield Park, Eastfield Rd, Croydon, Victoria

International Highland Games Federation
Brought to you by Highland Muscle
Competing in the IHGF sanction World Hammer Throwing
Championship & World Weight for Distance Championship
Pipe Bands
Scottish & Celtic Dancing
Clans & Community Groups
Celtic Folk Music, Celtic Displays & Exhibitions
Heilan Coos, Scottish terriers & other Celtic dog breeds
Taste the Highland fare
Whisky, Food & Retail Vendors



Tickets on Sale NOW
Adults: \$25 / Concessions: \$20 / Children under 16: FREE
www.melbournehighlandgames.org.au



International competitors to attend the Melbourne Highland Games and Celtic Festival

All images courtesy of the Melbourne Highland Games and Celtic Festival.



Another addition to this multicultural event will be a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Elder Wandin followed by the Smoking Ceremony drawing strength from the Land for our Scots Warriors, spectators and indigenous peoples in attendance.

Scottish and Celtic traditions

There will also be all the other expected attractions such as dancing, pipe bands, clan tents, community organisations, displays, food stalls and retail vendors.

There is something for everyone at this family-friendly (and dog-friendly) event. With an expected 7,000 attendees expected this year, the festival plays a pivotal role in preserving Scottish and Celtic traditions among the Victorian diaspora and fostering connections to ancestral roots for younger generations.



After nearly 60 consecutive years, the Games have demonstrated resilience against economic challenges, including a successful transition to an online format during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Games Committee are very grateful for the support of our Patron, The Right Honourable Simon Abney-Hastings, 15th Earl of Loudoun, and our Ambassador, The Honourable Mr Ted Baillieu AO. The Committee is pleased to welcome our Chieftain of the Day, Carol Davis, Chief's Commissioner and President of Clan MacLennan Australia, to preside over the event.

This event is made possible through the many sponsors, stallholders and supporters. The Games would especially like to thank Maroondah City Council and Bendigo Bank in Croydon and Ringwood East for their ongoing support to our Games. The committee hope to welcome you at this upcoming international event. Please come and join in for a wonderful day of celebration, culture, and friendship. Slàinte Mhath!

Tickets are available on the day or by pre-purchase through TryBooking: www.trybooking.com/CYEUA. For further information please visit the official website at: <https://melbournehighlandgames.org.au/whats-on>.



The Melbourne Highland Games and Celtic Festival (MHGCF) has been hosting this event in Maroondah for over 57 years and is a highlight of the Scottish Australian calendar. This day-long celebration showcases the best of Scottish and Celtic culture and heritage that echoes the original games that took place centuries ago in Scotland.

International Heavy Games Championships

This year's event on Sunday, 23rd of March 2025, will be MHGCF first truly international Games as they will be hosting the International Heavy Games

Championships. The competition will be held in partnership with Events Victoria and the International Highland Games Federation (IHGF) with the support of Highland Muscle in Australia. The Games will have up to sixty athletes and officials from Australia, North America, United Kingdom, Europe and Japan to compete in a traditional Scottish Heavy Games Competition.

With the international competition there will be a film crew filming this event live for their overseas audiences. The film crew will be here for the week leading up to the Games filming Maroondah and the surrounding districts and places of interest.

Scotland will take on Māori All Blacks as part of their 2025 summer tour



stage and provided a catalyst for them to shine at Scottish Gas Murrayfield in the autumn, with the likes of Max Williamson producing a stand-out performance against South Africa and Arron Reed also scoring two tries against Portugal.

Playing in New Zealand is always special

Scotland head coach Gregor Townsend said: "This year's summer tour was of great benefit, enabling us to deepen our player pool and test ourselves against challenging opposition. A number of the players that won their first caps on tour then played in the Autumn Nations Series and are challenging for places in our Six Nations squad. This tour represents an opportunity to take on two quality Test teams in the Pacific Islands, which is always a unique tour for our players to experience on and off the field. The Māori All Blacks game will set us up for the physical challenges we'll face later on the tour. We are excited about returning to a part of the world where rugby is central to their culture. Playing in New Zealand is always special, especially against a side with such deep rugby history as Māori All Blacks. It has been a while since we last visited New Zealand and it will be a brilliant way to start the tour."

Fixture details: Māori All Blacks v Scotland: Saturday 5 July 2025, Semenoff Stadium – Whangārei, kick-off 3.35pm local time.

The tour kicks off against Māori All Blacks on Saturday 5 July, and will be the first time the sides have met since 2000, when the hosts edged a narrow encounter 18-15 in New Plymouth.

It will be just the third match between the Māori All Blacks and Scotland with the other encounter coming at Murrayfield in Edinburgh in 1998. As per World Rugby's San Francisco calendar agreement which was decided in 2017, Scotland will then embark on a two test tour to the Pacific Islands with fixtures to be confirmed in due course.

Scotland's last summer tour, in the Americas, represented a valuable opportunity with 11 players making their debut. The matches gave more players the chance to impress on the international

Kilt Towels

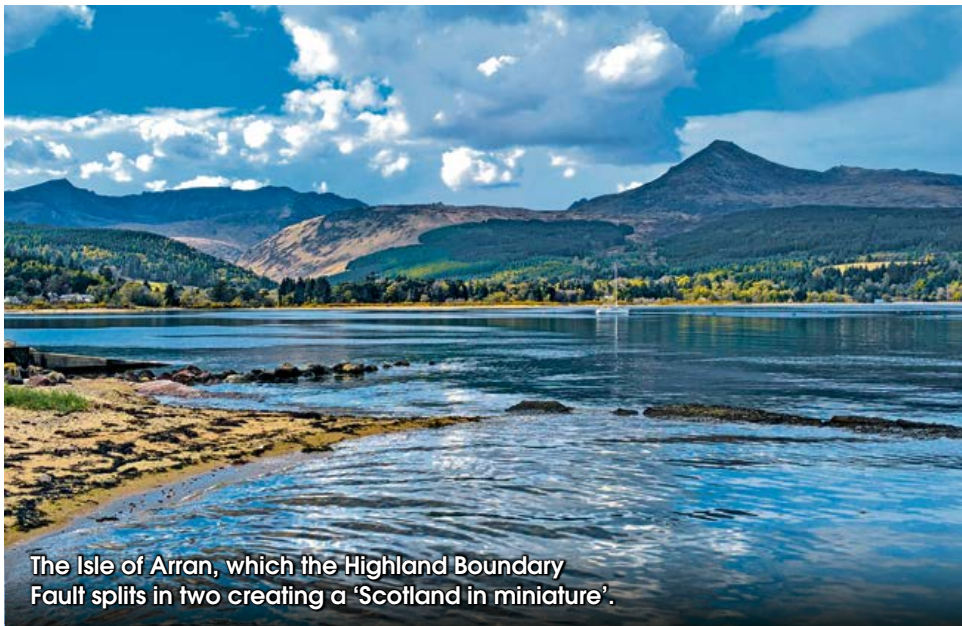
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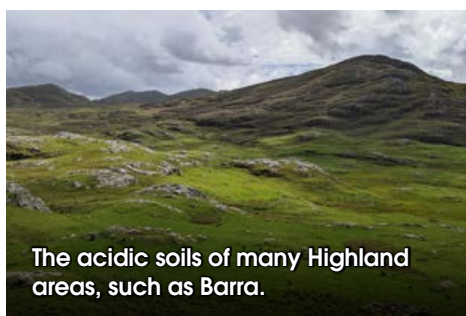
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What really divides the Highlands and Lowlands?

By: David C Weinczok



The Isle of Arran, which the Highland Boundary Fault splits in two creating a 'Scotland in miniature'.

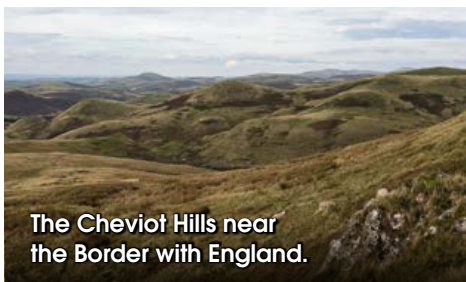


The acidic soils of many Highland areas, such as Barra.

The division between 'Highlands' and 'Lowlands' is so essential to most peoples' understanding of Scotland that we rarely dwell on what those terms really mean. It is tempting to focus on the cultural differences – the exuberance of Highland hospitality versus the alleged, relative coldness of Lowland city-dwellers; accusations from medieval Lowland scribes about the misdeeds of “wyld, wikked Heilan’ men” versus the derisive insults of Highlanders against “soft Southrons”; and the predominance of Gaelic in the Highlands and of Scots and English in the Lowlands.

Yet, what fundamentally makes the Highlands the Highlands and the Lowlands the Lowlands is far more primordial and elemental than all that. What really defines them, both in their own right and relative to the other, lay in the very land itself. A closer look leads to plenty of assumption-shattering surprises.

One of the best ways to understand the Highlands and Lowlands is to look at a map of Scotland which shows terrain features, such as an Ordnance Survey map or Google Maps on your phone or computer with terrain enabled. At first glance, what you see appears to confirm expectations: the Highlands are the hilly regions in the north, and the Lowlands are the flatter regions in the south. Simple, right? Not so fast. Look as far north as you can go on the Scottish mainland and you'll arrive in Caithness, where flat peatlands and fertile fields have nary a hill in sight. Now, look as far south as you can go to the Borders, where the



The Cheviot Hills near the Border with England.

Lammermuir and Cheviot Hills rise up as rugged and daunting to the traveller as most any Highland glen. Look to the west coast and then to the east. On the same latitude as the iconically-mountainous Isle of Skye are the mellow breadbaskets of Moray and Buchan, where – purely in terms of the landscape – you'd be forgiven for thinking you had somehow stumbled several hundred miles south into England.

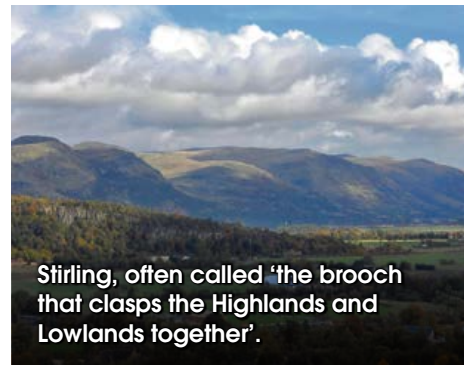
The Highland Boundary Fault

From a geological standpoint, there is a dividing line – the Highland Boundary Fault. This tectonic fault line runs from the Isle of Arran in the southwest to just shy of Stonehaven in the northeast. It's stunningly obvious on a map. Look north of Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, and Dundee, and the land to the north of those cities quickly rises up and crinkles with contour lines. But, as we've seen with the above examples, it's not as simple as everything north of that line being the Highlands and everything south of it being the Lowlands. There are Lowland-style landscapes within the Highlands and Highland-style landscapes within the Lowlands. Geologically, Highlands are generally in the north and the west, and Lowlands are generally in the south and the east. Just look at how the Cairngorms extend almost all the way to the sea in the east, only to cut back north and west leaving a Lowland-style fertile strip all along the coast.

Highlands and Lowlands are not just defined by where a parcel of land is located. Even more crucial is how that land is used, and what types of historical communities it fosters. Huge swathes of the Highlands have elevations higher than 1,000ft above sea level, the point at which crops are less capable of growing even in optimal conditions. Highland soils tend to be more acidic and thinner than Lowland soils, often barely covering the underlying stone which, in some areas, is the oldest exposed stone in the world, exposed by millennia of wind, rain, and glaciation. Wind and rain especially scour the higher grounds, creating conditions wholly unfavourable to most crops and even to many trees.

The nature of the soil

This, in turn, means that fewer intensive crops can be cultivated in Highland areas, which reduces the likelihood of abundance and therefore of stable surpluses and population growth. The nature of the



Stirling, often called 'the brooch that clasps the Highlands and Lowlands together'.

soil is why Highland societies from the Neolithic right up to today are more reliant on pastoralism – mostly with cattle, and in more recent centuries with sheep – than on agriculture, though there are of course localised exceptions.

Pastoral societies rarely develop large, concentrated population centres, and instead tend to have more spread-out, low-density settlements. The population of the Highlands was in fact equivalent to that of the Lowlands until the 18th century, but rather than clustering in towns and cities the Highlanders were in countless small farmsteads scattered all around the glen floors and lower slopes. The lone city in the Highlands, Inverness, is immediately next to the incredibly fertile region of Moray and could not have grown beyond a township without it. Otherwise, the Highlands have no cities and very few towns anything like even a mid-sized town in the Lowlands.

The kin-based clan system is a natural unit of social organisation in such conditions. Equivalents can be found among historical tribal groups in Scandinavia, indigenous America, and Afghanistan. In the Lowlands, by contrast, there is much more scope for interactions with people not from your immediate community and outwith your kin group. Such places tend to develop more complicated social hierarchies and relationships, with many strangers wittingly or unwittingly involved in the production of goods and development of institutions. In the Highlands, by contrast, a stranger was known as one on sight, such was the

tightness of the pastoral societies in the days before mass transport and globalisation.

Contrast this with the Lowlands, where pastoralism existed alongside widespread intensive agriculture capable of producing, in the good times at least, enough of a surplus to support specialist trades and urban growth. The relative predictability of agricultural yields and resultant capacity for growth could sustain booming populations (to a point) and serve as the basis for more decentralised forms of social power. This is part of the reason why feudalism became entrenched in the Lowlands while it largely failed to take root in the same way in the Highlands.

Understanding the Highlands and Lowlands

All these factors determining what the land is capable of supporting are far more important to understanding the Highlands and Lowlands than simply how far north, south, east, or west the land is. They are certainly more important for understanding the types of communities that grow within them. For the vast majority of history, a farmer in Aberdeenshire, for example, had much more in common with a fellow farmer in Midlothian or Ayrshire many miles to the south than with a Highlander much closer to home in the Cairngorms or Highland Perthshire. Someone from the Isle of Lewis would have instantly recognised the basic flow of life for a drover or crofter in Argyll or even the hillier regions of Dumfries & Galloway, while the ways of town-dwellers in Stirling or Peebles would have been quite alien.

So, what makes the Highlands and the Lowlands? Of course it's the people, the history, and the culture – but none of things would be what they are if the land beneath them all were different. In many ways, the stories of the Highlands and Lowlands were written many years before there were people to tell them.

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2025

Street Parade - 10am - Lachlan S

Riverina Highland Dancing Titles
Highland Muscle
Pipe Bands
Athletics
Stalls
Clans
Ceilidh with Auld Alliance

Hay Oval,
NSW

IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Historic manuscript available to the public for first time in 500 years

One of the most important histories of Scotland, which sheds new light on William Wallace and the Stone of Destiny, has found its permanent home at the University of St Andrews. It's being made available to the public for the first time in its 500-year history and has been given a new name.

The St Andrews Chronicles is a startling manuscript. It is largely a handwritten copy of John Mair's *History of Greater Britain* – one of the most influential and innovative histories of Scotland and England of the sixteenth century.

It also contains an earlier hand-copied pamphlet, chronicling Scotland's earlier history, including new information about William Wallace, the nation's time under Guardianship, and even the Stone of Destiny. Elizabeth Henderson, Rare Books Librarian at the University, said: "It's really important that a manuscript like this is held in a public institution like St Andrews where it can be cared for in perpetuity and also where it can be made accessible for research. It's a Scottish manuscript about the history of and origins of Scotland and it's been through a succession of Scottish owners since the 16th century, so there's a real resonance having it back in a Scottish institution. The first name listed as owner describes himself as a 'chaplain of Edinburgh'. However, some of the names listed as owners of the book potentially correlate to students in St Andrews who were studying in the early sixteenth century – indicating an even greater correlation with St Andrews than previously thought." The St Andrews Chronicles was acquired at auction by the University. Much of its journey is a mystery, but it was at Balcarres in the East Neuk of Fife near St Andrews in the 16th century. The book is the size of an iPad and joins the archive and rare book collection at the University of St Andrews. Built up over 600 years, the collection contains over 200,000 rare books and many medieval and early modern manuscripts. The collection supports teaching and research at the University and elsewhere.

Professor Dame Sally Mapstone, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University, said: "I am absolutely delighted that the manuscript has come back to Scotland and particularly to a place with which it has real associations. John Mair taught at our University in the 1520s. The manuscript was also owned during the later sixteenth century by John Lindsay of Balcarres, a notable Fife noble and secretary of state. The University continues to value its links with Balcarres. The manuscript is back in Scotland, where it can be readily displayed, and readily studied by a range of scholars and students. Its subject matter, of Scotland's chronicle history and the history of ideas, is also very much within my own research area, so I do hope to contribute to that. We understand our present so much better if we engage with, cherish, and interrogate

our past. This manuscript really helps us to do that." The small book is bound in stamped leather over wooden boards and originally would have been fastened with a clasp. The stamps include an unidentified beast and a hound chasing a hare. The text inside is neatly handwritten Latin script, with capitals and decorations added in red.

Notable scholar of the work, Professor Dauvit Broun from the University of Glasgow, said: "The contents of this home-made pamphlet include a chronicle for the years 1286 to 1327 which has a few bits of new information (for example, seven—not six—guardians were elected to rule Scotland after Alexander III's tragic death in 1286, as well as Wallace co-leading the attack on the sheriff of Lanark, rather than leading on his own: it also gives us the exact date—3 May 1297—of when this happened). It also has a copy of what is likely to be the earliest version of the legend about the Stone of Destiny." Now the St Andrews Chronicles is digitised and made available online for the first time, it will be on display at the Wardlaw Museum in 2025.

The first ever high-end Gaelic drama airs on BBC



As first look images are released by BBC as the crime drama *An t-Eilean (The Island)* premiered. *An t-Eilean (The Island)* was commissioned by Gaelic-language channel BBC ALBA. The four-part crime drama is the UK's first-ever high-end Gaelic drama series, which cost more than £1m per episode to make. The four-part thriller from BBC Alba centred around a murder investigation and a tense, twisting story of lies, loss and long-buried secrets, the murder mystery is set against the elemental backdrop of the Western Isles of Scotland.

An t-Eilean (The Island) combines Gaelic dialogue with English. First look images from this compelling crime series have also been released. Sorcha Groundsell (*His Dark Materials*, *Shetland*, *The Innocents*) leads the cast as Kat Crichton, a young Family Liaison Officer, assigned to investigate a brutal murder at a remote castle. Other cast featured in the first looks include Sagar Radia (*Industry*), as Kat's boss DCI Ahmed Halim, and Iain Macrae (*Bannan*), Sinéad MacInnes (*Outlander*), Meredith Brook (*Bannan*), Sam James Smith (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's *Faustus: That Damned Woman*), Elspeth Turner (*Riptide*) and newcomer Andrew MacInnes, as the wealthy but deeply dysfunctional Maclean family.

Caroline Stephenson, SVP, UK & Eire Sales at All3Media International, commented, "We're delighted to announce that this latest drama from the acclaimed team at Black Camel Pictures has secured a broadcast on BBC Four. For every partner involved in this project, the goal has always been to take Gaelic-language drama to an international audience, tapping into the proven success of minority-language premium drama on the global stage. We have every confidence this multi million budget production with its

gripping storyline full of complex characters, and the breathtaking Hebridean landscapes as a backdrop, *An t-Eilean (The Island)* will enthrall audiences."

Identity of WW1 North Sea wreck confirmed as Royal Navy cruiser



Royal Navy experts have confirmed the identity of a World War 1 wreck off the Scottish coast found in the summer as *HMS Hawke*. Before divers swam around the remains of the cruiser, no one had seen her since she was torpedoed by a German submarine on October 15 1914 while carrying out a patrol of the North Sea. The wreck was found by Lost in Waters Deep, a volunteer team of civilian researchers and divers who aim to find lost and forgotten shipwrecks around the UK and remember their crews. The team consulted both the war diary (log) of the U-boat which sank *Hawke*, as well as the corresponding logs of the nearest warships to the cruiser at the time, plus contemporary and present-day charts of the North Sea to help pinpoint the possible wreck site.

The ship was found in August about one kilometre away from an 'obstruction' marked on existing charts of the North Sea – and about ten kilometres from *Hawke's* location estimated by the UK Hydrographic Office in the early 1970s. When they found that 'obstruction' – 110 metres down (over 350ft) – the divers recorded tell-tale features of a WW1-era warship, while a side-scan sonar sweep of the wreck by the divers' mother ship *MV Clasina* suggested similar dimensions and layout to *HMS Hawke*. "The wreck is in remarkable condition for a vessel of this era, likely due to the depth and having never been dived before," said Steve Mortimer, one of the divers. "It's a fascinating site. You can look though the open scuttles and see artefacts just lying there on the deck. There's lots of Royal Navy crockery, including teacups, plates and bowls. It's a really remarkable time capsule." Three months later, having pored over the footage, photographs and scans gathered by the expedition – as an official war grave, nothing was recovered from the wreck – as well as contemporary records and plans, experts from the Royal Navy Historical Branch, National Museum of the Royal Navy, Salvage and Marine Organisation and Hydrographic Office have confirmed the sunken vessel is *HMS Hawke*.

The cruiser fell victim to U-boat ace Otto Weddigen and his submarine U-9 – fêted in their native Germany but notorious in Britain for sinking three Royal Navy cruisers in one hour in September 1914, killing more than 1,450 sailors and Royal Marines. *Hawke*, an Edgar-class protected cruiser, was more than 20 years old and had hit the headlines in 1911 when she collided with the White Star Liner *Olympic* – older sister of the *Titanic* – in the Solent, losing her bow in the process. When war broke out in August 1914, the veteran warship was assigned to enforcing the naval blockade of Germany – preventing shipping reaching or leaving North Sea ports – by patrolling between Scotland and Norway, until she was sighted by U-9 on October 15 about 130km (80 miles) east of Fraserburgh.

"It is great to hear that the Royal Navy has confirmed our discovery of *HMS Hawke*," said Kevin Heath, who runs Lost in Waters Deep. "A huge amount of effort went into the research behind this project, so we knew we were searching in the right area – but until divers go down and visually ID the wreck, you can never be 100 per cent sure. It was such a relief when the divers surfaced and reported they had found a wreck with guns; I knew it had to be *HMS Hawke*. To have the Navy confirm this means that the final resting place of those 526 souls is no longer 'lost' and the site can be protected for future generations."

Acclaimed Scottish actor and Succession star backs calls for Scotland to be first 'Rewilding Nation'

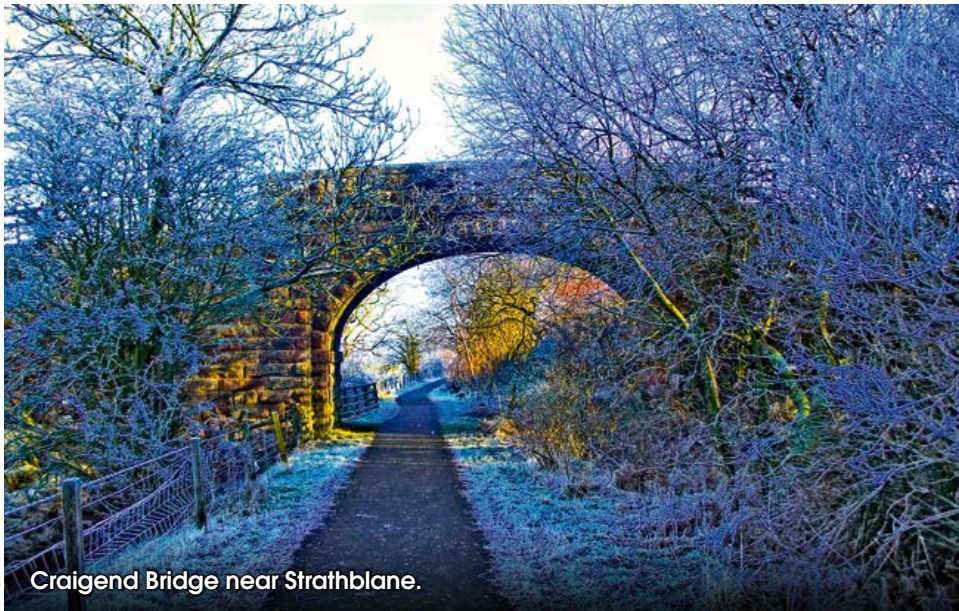


Acclaimed Scottish actor Brian Cox CBE has backed calls for Scotland to be declared the first 'Rewilding Nation' in the world, with nature restored across 30% of its land and seas. The star of *Succession* and *Shetland* is calling on people to support the Scottish Rewilding Alliance's Rewilding Nation Charter, which calls on the Scottish Government to commit to urgent action.

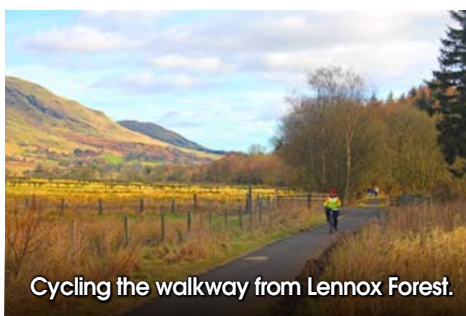
In a letter published in *The Guardian*, the Dundee-born actor, 78, laments Scotland's nature loss, saying that "Scotland is a beautiful country – but all is not what it seems. Scotland is one of the planet's most nature-depleted countries. Centuries of over-exploiting the country's natural resources have left us with somewhere that looks beautiful but is dwindling day-by-day." But Cox, considered one of the world's finest stage actors, says there is hope, and points to the growing movement for nature recovery in Scotland. "Scots are modest, so shouting about our achievements doesn't come naturally. But we should be proud of our rewilding progress. We now have more than 150 rewilding projects across the country. Hundreds of people working to put things right again. Thousands more who know that rewilding can transform Scotland's future for the better," he said. He continued: "My appeal to readers is to stand with your fellow Scots and support the Rewilding Nation Charter – urging the Scottish Government to declare Scotland the world's first Rewilding Nation, together with urgent action to make it so." Steve Micklewright, Co-Convenor of the c and Chief Executive of Trees for Life, said: "We are hugely grateful to Brian Cox for adding his voice to this vision of hope. Rewilding 30% of Scotland can be achieved by restoring habitats including peatlands, native woodlands, wetlands, rivers and seas, while maintaining and benefitting productive farmland. This would help tackle the nature and climate emergencies, while creating a wealth of benefits for people including jobs, health, sustainable food, clean air and water, re-peopling, and thriving communities."

The Rewilding Nation campaign has drawn widespread support from people and organisations across Scotland. It also received public backing from Hollywood A-lister Leonardo DiCaprio in April last year and more recently Scottish sea shanty singer Nathan Evans.

Where Trains Once Ran



Craigend Bridge near Strathblane.



Cycling the walkway from Lennox Forest.

From the 1830s to the early 1900s, railways were built across Scotland at an astonishing rate. Some served industry, others carried commuters or long-distance travellers while others were specifically aimed at tourists. Many survive while many others have gone.

However, some of those aimed at tourists still attract them, even where trains no longer run. The Blane Valley Railway and its extension, the Aberfoyle Branch, were designed to provide scenic journeys from Glasgow to the southern edge of The Trossachs, countryside that appealed especially to readers of Sir Walter Scott's novels. As early as 1848, a branch line came off at Lenzie on the main Glasgow - Edinburgh route, and pushed through Kirkintilloch to Lennox town on the southern slopes of the Campsie Fells. It was extended as the Blane Valley Railway through Strathblane to Killearn in 1867.

Eventually, in 1882, the route was complete through to Aberfoyle. Aberfoyle remains a tourist honeypot, though, sadly, few visitors today have read any Scott. Both *Waverley* and, especially, *Rob Roy* had links to the Aberfoyle area. Visitors used to flock to the Baillie Nicol Jarvie Hotel in the village, named after a character in *Rob Roy*. It's now been converted to flats, but a caricature of Jarvie can still be seen on the gable end.

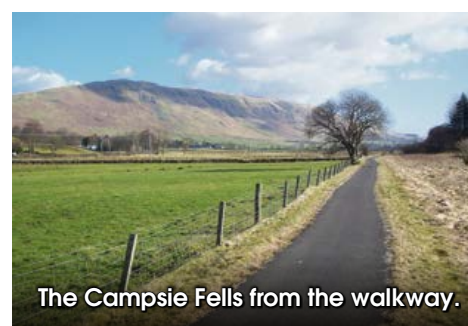
Changing onto a branch line

Motor road transport was the death knell of the railway. Beyond Kirkintilloch, all passenger services stopped in 1951. By 1966 the whole system had gone. Slowly, however, the potential for gentler forms of travel began to be recognised. Paths for walkers, cyclists and horse riders were developed on the former trackbed. Today you can walk, ride or cycle from Aberfoyle to Buchlyvie, crossing the famous Flanders Moss, using the former railway. The West Highland Way long distance footpath runs along another stretch of the route, in the

scenic valley of Strath Blane. And then, running from Strathblane village to Lenzie, there is the Strathkelvin Railway Walkway. Lenzie Station remains open, so that when you alight from a train there, intent on walking or cycling to Strathblane, there's still a sense of changing onto a branch line.

Old railways make great paths. The gradients are easy and even on the urban stretch through Kirkintilloch there are trees and greenery. Two miles on, at Milton of Campsie, local volunteers have transformed the platforms of the former station into an attractive public space with seating and sculptures and floral displays. The route continues roughly westward, following the Glazert Water upstream, with the Campsie Fells occasionally seen through trees to the north.

Beyond Lennox town the route runs through the grounds of the former Lennox Castle estate. Lennox Castle, actually an 1840s mansion, is now a ruin but Celtic Football Club's main training facility occupies part of the grounds. A branch track runs off right along the banks of the Glazert to Campsie Glen, where the burn tumbles out of the hills in a series of wooded waterfalls. It was a real holiday spot in days gone by and hundreds of people would disgorge from Campsie Glen Station (actually nearly a mile's walk from the glen) on summer Saturdays. The main route continues through the Lennox Forest, but when it emerges from the trees the views become breathtaking. At last, the Campsie Fells are seen at their most spectacular. As a local resident I often cycle out this way and I still have to stop here and look and marvel. I like to think it's the equal of any view in the Highlands or Lake District. And I can never stop myself from wondering what it must have been like to travel here by train. Of course, we shouldn't romanticise rail travel in the steam era. A choking cloud of smoke would have accompanied every train, and passengers would emerge under a fine coat of dust!



The Campsie Fells from the walkway.

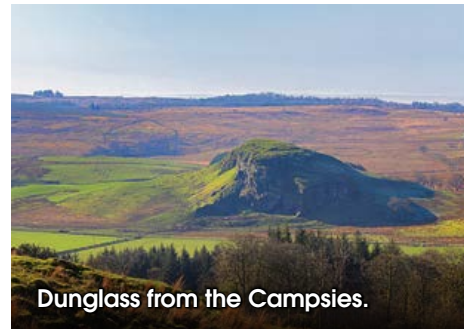


Dunglass.

Very much still there

A highlight on the final run to Strathblane is a stone bridge that carries the access road to Craigend Farm over a small burn as well as the railway, with a separate arch for each. It's a beautiful structure, still doing its job 65 years after the last train ran underneath it.

The obvious wooded gorge visible to the north on the Campsie slopes is the Ballagan Glen, which is a Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve for the window it opens on the geology of the Campsies. To the south of the railway is the curious little lump of Dunglass, a volcanic plug (for the Campsies were volcanos back in geological time!).



Dunglass from the Campsies.

Notice that some of its crags are formed of columnar basalt, like Fingal's Cave or the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland.

As you enter Strathblane the line has been built over, so a path takes you up to the A891 near Strathblane Kirk. The Kirkhouse Inn, at the junction of the A891 and A81 will welcome you as will Milne and Byrne's Coffee House further along the A81; but there's plenty more to do here. The Campsie Fells beckon, and there are other paths to try - the John Muir Way, which follows the Strathkelvin Walkway from Kirkintilloch, continues west while the Pipe Track leads you along the western flank of the Campsies. The West Highland Way and Mugdock Country Park aren't far away either. If you've had enough, there are buses back to Glasgow from here. They stop at Milngavie Station, and after experiencing the work of Victorian railway builders, you may want to alight there and continue your journey to Glasgow on a surviving railway.

The Blane Valley Railway has long gone, yet for locals and visitors alike it's very much still there.



Strathblane Kirk, where the path from the Railway Walkway emerges.

est. 1992

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Scots brothers bid to break World Record in Pacific Ocean

Arriving in Antigua after finishing the the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge.



A trio of world record-breaking brothers from Edinburgh are targeting more than £1m for charity and two more world records as they attempt to become the first team to row the entire Pacific Ocean non-stop and unsupported. This year, the Maclean brothers will look to break the record for the fastest human-powered

crossing of the full Pacific Ocean when they set off on a 14,000km journey from Lima in Peru to Sydney in Australia. The epic journey is expected to take around four months. What's more, Ewan, Lachlan and Jamie Maclean are hoping to take on the challenge, named the Rare Whisky 101 Pacific Row, in a boat they've helped to build themselves.

Intrepid rowers

The musical trio, who will each bring an instrument on board, broke three world records in January 2020 when they became the first three brothers to row any ocean, and the youngest and fastest trio to row across the Atlantic Ocean, doing so in just 35 days. The intrepid rowers expect to face some of the same issues that plagued their Atlantic crossing, including storms, sickness, technical challenges, sleep deprivation and sheer exhaustion, but on a bigger scale. The primary purpose of the adventure is to raise money to provide clean water to developing countries through the charity they set up last year with their famous father, Charlie Maclean MBE, one of the world's leading whisky experts. The Maclean Foundation,

which was devised during long days and nights rowing the Atlantic Ocean, has already helped build four clean water bore holes serving 800 people in rural Madagascar.

The Maclean brothers will look to break the record for the fastest human-powered crossing of the full Pacific Ocean.

All in all, through the brothers' charity efforts, including the more than £200,000 raised during their last row, they've helped to provide clean water to 3,800 people in need. And there's potential for so many more people to be helped; with the boys' fundraising target set at £1m for this expedition, the effort could transform the lives of tens of thousands of people.

Youngest brother Lachlan (26) said: "Clean water is the most basic human necessity on the planet, yet 10% of people worldwide don't have access to it. We're doing something to change that. I have visited Madagascar and had not only seen but experienced the horrible impact waterborne diseases can have. The more we talked uninterrupted with the clarity of being on the ocean, the more we realised this is what we wanted to do."





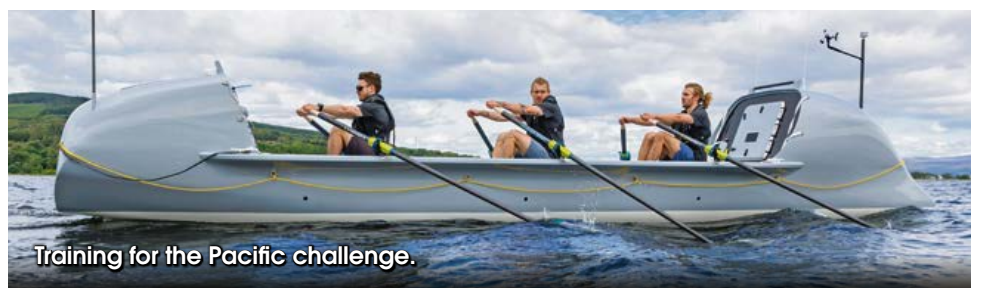
Lightest and strongest ocean rowing boat ever made

The brothers have been back and forth to Amsterdam in recent months supporting fellow ocean rower Mark Slatts, who has also broken world records crossing the Atlantic, in building what they have described as the “lightest and strongest ocean rowing boat ever made”. At just 280 kg, it's only slightly heavier than the three brothers themselves and a quarter of the weight of the boat they spent 35 days in from December 2019. “It's made from carbon fibre and a true first of its kind”, said Ewan, a 32-year-old design engineer who lives in Bristol and works at Dyson. “We believe it's the lightest and strongest ocean rowing boat ever made. Being involved in that process — from design through to construction, sanding and painting — was an incredible experience. So much can go wrong when you're at sea, so it was important for us to understand every single inch of the boat. We already feel like we're at one with the boat, and we'll have plenty more time to get to know it.

Jamie (30) who builds outdoor saunas when he's not rowing across oceans, added: “We've been thinking about doing this since we were on the ocean during our Atlantic crossing, but it's been over the last year that we've committed and fully immersed ourselves in this challenge, planning every detail. There's no going back now. Spending 120 days at sea was unthinkable before our first row, but making it through 35 days made it achievable. We knew we had some more in us once we arrived in Antigua. It's just taken us a little while to get going again. Ocean rowing is a growing sport, but it's a relatively new one so a lot of what we'll face is hard to predict. Unlike our last row, this will be completely unsupported, so of course there are different challenges. What if one of us goes overboard? All three of us have a history of sleepwalking so we'll all be on high alert. We might need to install seat belts! But we're more excited than we are scared. We have the opportunity to do something nobody has ever done before while helping the many people who are in a position nobody should be in. And we get to do that.”



Jamie playing the pipes in Madagascar.



Training for the Pacific challenge.

Bagpipes

The brothers expect to spend at least 2,880 hours with only each other for company, rowing shifts of two hours on, one hour off (with six hours each off in the evening). Last time, they had to spend more than 20 days without music for motivation as salt water corroded their iPhone charging cables. Jamie, who'll bring his bagpipes on board, added: “While losing use of our

phones gave us the headspace to think bigger and create plans for both this challenge and The Maclean Foundation, this time, we'll bring 25 charging cables with us just in case.”

The trio are now looking for sponsors to support their charity efforts. To find out more about the charity, or to donate, visit: www.themacleanfoundation.org. Also visit: www.themacleanbrothers.com

The Beat of the Celts: Melbourne Celtic Festival and its National Tour



Skerryvore.

This St Patrick's Day, ditch the crowded bars—the Melbourne Celtic Festival is where the real action is. Set at the iconic Mission to Seafarers in Flinders Street, this festival is your gateway to an invigorating world of Celtic music, culture, and good vibes. Whether you're into high-energy tunes or just want to experience something fresh, this is the event for you. And it doesn't stop there. In March 2024, the festival hits the road for a national tour, bringing a dynamic lineup to venues across Victoria, NSW, and Queensland. Presented by individual arts venues and Promac Productions Australia, the tour is spreading Celtic music far and wide.

A lineup you can't miss

The Melbourne Celtic Festival lineup is stacked with talent. Here's a glimpse of who's taking the stage:

- **Skerryvore** – These guys are legends. Three-time winners of Scotland's 'Live Act of the Year' award, they're bringing their high-octane sound straight to Melbourne.
- **Austral** – Melbourne's own folk powerhouse. AFMA 'Folk Band of the Year' blend genres and deliver high-energy performances that get everyone on their feet.
- **Chloe Matharu** – Think ethereal vibes with a touch of storytelling genius. A harpist and singer-songwriter, Chloe's music is inspired by her time as a Merchant Navy officer. Her newly released second album, *Sailors and Rolling Stones* has just won Celtic Music Radio's Album of the Year 2024!

- **Apolline** – Representing the next generation of Celtic music, this female trio adds a modern twist to traditional sounds. They've already snagged AFMA's 'Youth Artist of the Year.'

Can't make it to Melbourne? No stress. The festival's national tour is hitting regional hubs, so you can catch the buzz in your own backyard. Whether you're a die-hard Celtic fan or just looking for something new, these shows will blow your mind.

Tickets are on sale now, and they're going fast. Don't miss your chance to be part of the action.

Don't miss your chance to be part of the action. Head to www.melbournecelticfestival.com.au and lock in your plans now.

Scotland's Live Act of the Year - Skerryvore Australian Tour 2025

Three-time winners of Scotland's "Live Act of the Year" award, Skerryvore, will embark on an Australian tour in February and March 2025, presented by Port Fairy Folk Festival. In addition to their eagerly anticipated performances at the Port Fairy Folk Festival, Skerryvore will bring their high-energy live show to fans across Australia, making this tour a must-see event. This exclusive partnership with Port Fairy Folk Festival marks a unique opportunity for audiences to experience Skerryvore in both festival and standalone concert settings. Skerryvore are one of their country's leading forces in a thriving live music scene, having reinvented and reignited Scottish roots music with a modern alt-pop flavour that has connected with an ever-expanding multicultural global audience. They're like no-one else. Epic of melody, intimate of feeling and plugged into the roots of Scotland but blasting out to the world. Folk Radio UK described the band claimed: “Skerryvore have crafted a world beating fusion, which takes pride in their heritage and above all else is a pure joy to listen to.” At the forefront of a movement that has reinvented and reignited a traditional Scottish

scene for a modern, multicultural audience, the band have brought their high energy performances to audiences across the globe. With a mix of bagpipes, fiddles, accordions, and whistles, alongside guitar and vocals, underpinned by driving bass, drums and keys, Skerryvore represent the best in contemporary Scottish traditional music.

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THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - Alexander Selkirk, a sailor from Lower Largo, Fife, rescued after four years on the island of Juan Fernandez, 400 miles off the coast of Chile; his story inspired Daniel Defoe to write *Robinson Crusoe*. **1708**

2 - Feast and legal Quarter Day of Candlemass.

2 - James I married Lady Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, in London. **1424**

2 - Battle of Inverlochy, one of the Duke of Montrose's victories over the Covenanters, killing 1,300. **1645**

2 - Birth of James Chalmers in Arbroath - he devised the adhesive postage stamp. **1782**

3 - General Monck's regiment entered London, having marched from Coldstream in the borders. The regiment kept order during the period of the restoration of Charles II. It continued as a standing regiment of the British Army, becoming known as the Coldstream Guards. **1660**

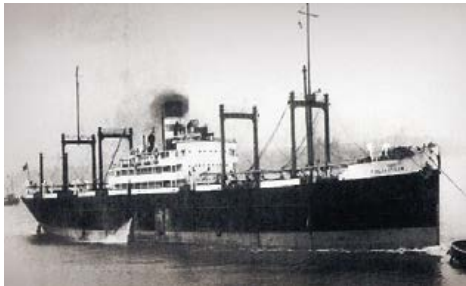
4 - Charles II proclaimed king in Edinburgh - but not in England. **1649**

4 - Prince James Francis Stuart, the Old Pretender, left Scotland after a stay of only three weeks, effectively bringing the first Jacobite Uprising to an end. **1716**

4 - Honours of Scotland put on display in Edinburgh Castle after being rediscovered by Sir Walter Scott. The jewels consist of a sword, crown and sceptre. The three items were first used together during the coronation of Mary, Queen of Scots and last used for the coronation of Charles II in 1651. During the Second World War, they were hidden in different parts of Edinburgh Castle in case of German invasion. **1818**

5 - John Witherspoon, clergyman, writer, President of Princeton University 1768-94, signatory to American Declaration of Independence 1776, born in Gifford, East Lothian. **1723**

5 - John Boyd Dunlop, who patented the first practical pneumatic tyre, born Ayrshire. **1846**



5 - *SS Politician* ran aground on Eriskay in the Outer Hebrides during gale worse winds, creating the basis for Sir Compton Mackenzie's novel *Whisky Galore*. **1941**

6 - Queen Anne, last of the Stuart monarchs, born. **1665**

6 - King Charles II, the "merry monarch" died. His last words to his brother James were "Don't let poor Nellie starve" - a reference to his favourite mistress, Nell Gwynne. **1685**

6 - Representation of the people Act received Royal assent, granting votes to women over the age of 30. **1918**

6 - King George VI dies and Queen Elizabeth II becomes the UK's longest serving monarch. **1952**

7 - Battle at Glenfruin when the MacGregors slaughtered a number of Colquhoun's - the origins of the banning of the MacGregor name. **1603**

7 - The Old Pretender's Jacobite army disbanded at Aberdeen, ending the 1715 uprising. Thirty years later his son, Charles, would try again to recapture the throne for the Stuarts. **1716**

7 - 12,000 players and spectators descended on the frozen Lake of Menteith for Scotland's only outdoor curling tournament, known as the Bonspiel or the Grand Match. **1979**



7 - Ness Viaduct at Inverness is washed away by floods, isolating the rail system to the far north for more than two years. The central parapet and two 73ft spans of the 127-year-old Ness Viaduct washed away into the River Ness. **1989**

8 - A contingent of a thousand Scots, commanded by the brothers John and William Stuart, headed to the relief of the beleaguered French garrison at Orleans. The expedition ended in disaster when the force was defeated by the English at Rouvray Saint Denis and both Stuarts were killed. **1429**

8 - Mary Queen of Scots beheaded at Fotheringay Castle after nearly 20 years of imprisonment. At the time of her death, Mary was 44 and had outlived three husbands. **1587**

9 - Gordon McQueen, 25-year-old Scotland central defender, becomes Britain's first £500,000 footballer in a transfer from Leeds United to Manchester United. **1978**

9 - John Noble, co-founder of Loch Fyne Oysters and Loch Fyne Restaurants died. It began as an umbrella and a trestle table and then transferred to a cowshed. Soon the venture became a restaurant, and then evolved into a chain of oyster bars. **2002**

10 - Robert the Bruce murdered John 'Red' Comyn in Dumfries. Bruce met Red Comyn at the old Greyfriars Church and killed him at the high altar and Bruce began his bid for the throne. **1306**

10 - Lord Darnley, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, assassinated. **1567**

10 - Death of Lord Joseph Lister, pioneer of surgery and antiseptic at the University of Glasgow and Glasgow and Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. **1912**

11 - Author and politician John Buchan died in Canada. John Buchan's appointment as Governor General of Canada was announced in 1935. **1940**

11 - Tolls are removed from the Erskine Bridge, the Tay Road Bridge, and the Forth Road Bridge. These bridges were the last three remaining toll bridges in Scotland. **2008**

12 - George Heriot, goldsmith to King James VI and founder of Heriot's School, died. The school was originally founded as Heriot's Hospital, Edinburgh. He is thought to be the inspiration for the character, Georgie Heriot, in Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Fortunes of Nigel*. **1624**

12 - Rev Henry Duncan, founder of the world-wide savings bank movement, died near Ruthwell. **1846**

13 - Kenneth MacAlpin, King of Dalriada and the Picts, died at Forteviot. **858**

13 - Massacre of 38 of the Clan Macdonald by government order at Glencoe. The government forces went up and down the glen killing anyone under the age of 70, including women and children. **1692**

13 - Scottish Youth Hostel Association formed. Now rebranded to Hostelling Scotland, the not-for-profit charity, has today over 60 youth and affiliate hostels around Scotland. **1931**

14 - Mary Queen of Scots meets Lord Darnley for the first time. They married in July 1565. **1565**

14 - Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone (Patent 174461). Two hours after it was lodged, his rival, Elisha Gray, applied for a similar patent. Bell's was granted. **1876**



14 - Dolly the sheep died. Dolly was a female domestic sheep, and the first cloned mammal (at the Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh) ever to be created from an adult cell, her birth was of huge excitement both to the scientific world and to the public. **2003**

15 - The Caledonian Railway company opened. The Caledonian Railway ran trains from London to Glasgow and was in fierce competition with the Edinburgh based North British Railway. **1848**

15 - Decimal currency introduced, abandoning 12 pennies to a shilling and 20 shillings to a pound. **1971**

15 - Nicola Sturgeon announces her resignation as First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party after eight years in the role. Sturgeon is Scotland's longest serving First Minister. **2023**

16 - Government forces under Lord Loudon attempted to capture Prince Charles Edward Stewart at Moy Hall. **1746**

16 - Scottish actor, author and artist John Cairney was born in Glasgow. Best known for his one-man shows on Robert Burns, Cairney also starred in BBC's *This Man Craig* and films *A Night to Remember*, *Cleopatra* and *Jason and the Argonauts*. John Cairney died in 2023 and was due to be honoured in the New Year Honours list for 2024. **1930**

16 - Scottish crime and science fiction writer Iain Banks was born in Dunfermline, Fife. He was named one of The 50 greatest British writers since 1945 and sadly Banks died from cancer on June 9, 2013. **1954**

17 - King James V passed a law which recognised Scotland's gipsies. **1540**

17 - James Renwick, last Covenanter to be executed. **1688**

17 - Release of Bill Forsyth's Scottish cult film *Local Hero*. The film is about an American oil company representative who is sent to the fictional village of Ferness on the west coast of Scotland to purchase the town and surrounding property for his company. **1983**

18 - Glasgow's Queen Street train station opened. Originally called Glasgow Dundas Street the station was built by Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway to link the thriving city of Glasgow to the nation's capital. The station and line took four years to build. A £120m redevelopment recently took place to see the station into the future. **1842**

19 - James Douglas retook Roxburgh Castle and razed it to the ground. The Black Douglas, as he was known, and sixty men gained access to the castle by climbing the castle walls using hooked scaling ladders. **1314**

19 - Ronald Belford "Bon" Scott died in London. Born in Forfar in Angus, Scotland, Scott spent his early years in Kirriemuir before moving to Australia. Scott was the lead vocalist and lyricist of the hard rock band AC/DC from 1974 until his death in 1980. **1980**

20 - King James I murdered in Perth by a group led by Sir Robert Graham. **1437**

20 - Orkney and Shetland annexed from Norway. **1472**

20 - Gordon Brown, former UK Prime Minister (2007-2010), born in Giffnock, Renfrewshire. **1951**

21 - Intercity railway between Glasgow and Edinburgh opened by Queen Victoria. **1842**



21 - Eric Liddell, *Chariots of Fire* athlete, winner of 1924 Olympics 400 metres, died in Japanese internment camp in China. **1945**

22 - David II died at Edinburgh Castle. **1371**

22 - King Robert II crowned. **1371**

23 - Battle of Roslin in which a Scots army of 8,000, led by Sir Simon Fraser, Sinclair of Rosslyn and the Red Comyn, surprised an English army of 30,000 led by Sir John Seagrave and defeated them. **1303**

23 - James Herriot (pen name of James Alfred Wight), author of *All Creatures Great and Small*, died aged 78. **1995**

24 - Steam train, the *Flying Scotsman* went into service with London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), on the London (King's Cross) to Edinburgh route. The train was the first and the first to reach speeds of 100 mph. **1923**

24 - Scottish footballer Denis Law who played for Manchester United and Scotland, born in Aberdeen. **1940**

25 - Bishop Henry Wardlaw established St Andrews as a university although it was not officially inaugurated until 4 February 1414 when a Bull of Foundation was promulgated by Pope Benedict XIII. **1412**

26 - Philip van der Straten, a Fleming, was granted Scots naturalisation and set up a factory in Kelso, thus starting the Border woollen industry. **1672**

26 - Robert Watson Watt demonstrated radar for the first time. **1935**

26 - Entertainer and singer/song writer Sir Harry Lauder died. Lauder had become the highest-paid performer in the world and was the first British artist to sell a million records. **1950**

27 - Battle of Ancrum Moor in which Scottish forces, led by Earl of Douglas, defeated an English army twice their size. **1545**

28 - Second National Covenant signed in Greyfriars Churchyard. The document was a direct response to Charles I's attempts to introduce a Book of Common Prayer across the whole of Britain, as Presbyterians were incensed that the General Assembly had not been consulted. **1638**

29 - Patrick Hamilton was burned at St Andrews for the crime of heresy. Hamilton is regarded as the first Protestant martyr in Scotland. After studying in Europe, where he came into contact with the ideas of Martin Luther, Hamilton began to preach Protestant ideas in Scotland, leading to his arrest. Hamilton was sentenced to be burned at the stake but, horrifically, his inexperienced executioners underestimated how much kindling would be needed, and the fire petered out with Hamilton badly burned but alive. In all it took six hours for the flames to consume Hamilton. **1528**



29 - The famous Glasgow theatre, The Pavilion, celebrated its opening performance. **1904**

Scotland's Guide to Coorie: *How to find that warm, fuzzy feeling on the chilliest of days*

There's nothing like getting cosy in front of a fireplace with a good book (or maybe even a dram of whisky) after bracing the elements in Scotland's spectacular nature. This warm, fuzzy feeling is such a key part of Scottish life in the colder months of autumn and winter that the Scots even have their own word for it – Coorie. Luckily, there are plenty of ways for visitors to Scotland during winter to join in – from enjoying a bowl of Cullen Skink (a hearty Scottish fish soup) after a walk in the hills to feeling the heat in one of Scotland's many wild saunas after taking an icy dip in the sea.

Night time wonders in Scotland's First Dark Sky Sanctuary



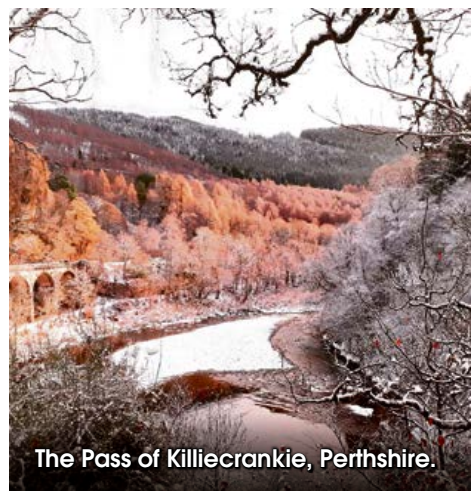
The Isle of Rum, Scotland's first International Dark Sky Sanctuary. Photo: Steven Gray Cosmos Planetarium.

When the sun goes down in Scotland the show is far from over, as the country boasts many places with little to no light pollution, making it one of the best destinations for stargazing and even a chance to spot the Northern Lights.

The Isle of Rum, a small island off the west coast with only 40 full-time residents, has been named Scotland's first Dark Sky Sanctuary by the International Dark-Sky Association, alongside only one other location in Europe and 20 worldwide. The locals' commitment to preserving the dark skies on their island not only means that visitors can enjoy some of the most spectacular views of the cosmos, but also helps to protect many nocturnal species of wildlife on Rum, including the Manx shearwater, a rare seabird which thrives in the dark.

Stargazers are spoilt for choice in Scotland – from the Galloway Forest Park in the South to Shetland in the far North.

The healing power of nature



The Pass of Killiecrankie, Perthshire.

Forest bathing – mindfully engaging with the sights, sounds and sensations of the natural environment, helps instil a sense of calm and relaxation. For visitors looking for a wellbeing experience like no other, Scotland's magical forests and woodlands provide the perfect setting for an immersive 'bath' to rejuvenate the mind, body and soul. Scotland has an abundance of

serene locations to choose from, where visitors have an opportunity to wrap up warm, be at one with nature and embrace the restorative benefits.

Dell Woods, Abernethy Nature Reserve - Cairngorms National Park

Dell Woods is part of Abernethy Forest, the largest remnant of the ancient native pinewoods that once covered the foothills of the Cairngorms. Alive with the chatter of birds and with a fresh hint of Scots pine resin in the air, it is a perfect location for nature lovers to unwind. Nearby, RSPB Loch Garten's Nature Centre is a must-visit. At dusk, the arrival of Wild Greylag and Pink-footed Geese on the loch is an exhilarating display in autumn and winter.

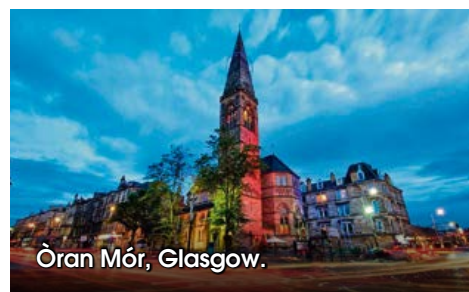
The Pass of Killiecrankie, Perthshire Perthshire, known as 'Scotland's Big Tree Country', is home to acres of the country's most spectacular trees and woodlands. Three miles north of Pitlochry, The Pass of Killiecrankie is a wooded gorge where the river Garry flows beneath a beautiful array of tree-lined slopes. The site has a Visitor Centre, and a 1.5 km path leading to a picturesque green footbridge, offering visitors a tranquil and scenic experience, particularly in autumn.

Glentool, Galloway Forest Park

At the heart of Galloway Forest Park, Glentool is an ideal spot to breathe and just "be" in nature. The rushing waters of Buchan Burn and the Waters of Minnoch lead mindful visitors through the woods to some stunning views of the Galloway Hills.

Guided forest bathing experiences and other activities to help visitors reconnect with nature can be booked with Way of the Wild. For anyone seeking a few more thrills in order to switch off, Glentool is also one of the world-famous 7stanes mountain bike centres, with a range of trails for novice and experienced riders.

Cosy corners in Scotland's cities



Òran Mór, Glasgow.

From quaint tearooms with garden views to browsing books around an open log fire, visitors in any of Scotland's eight cities never need to look far for a place to coorie in.

Edinburgh – The Beach House, located on the promenade at Portobello beach, offers stunning sea views and simple, delicious, where possible organic, locally sourced food. It's the perfect place to stop for a cuppa after a walk along the sandy beach or some cold water therapy.

Glasgow – Òran Mór (Gaelic for "Big Song"), a welcoming pub housed in a former church, right next to the beautiful Glasgow Botanic Gardens, makes a great pit stop on a chilly day. Visitors can grab a drink or bite in this charming space, take in the Robert Burns-inspired paintings by Scottish artist Nichol Wheatley and enjoy the live music sets (on offer six nights a week).

Aberdeen – Foodstory Café in the centre of Aberdeen is an independent cafe, built out of recycled materials, serving veggie/plant-based food – from delicious bowls of porridge to hearty soups and a mouth-watering cake selection. For maximum cosiness they have introduced weekly knitting nights.

Inverness – Leakey's, Scotland's largest second-hand bookshop, is a booklover's dream. It's located in a former Gaelic church – the pulpit and stained-glass windows can still be seen – and houses thousands of books on a huge range of subjects, all stacked and piled around a log-burning hearth.

Dundee – Just a stone's throw from the V&A Dundee and the city's waterfront, Blend Coffee Lounge awaits with great coffee and pastries, twinkling fairy lights and comfy couches to sink into. On the last Wednesday of every month, the café is hosting a community cinema night.

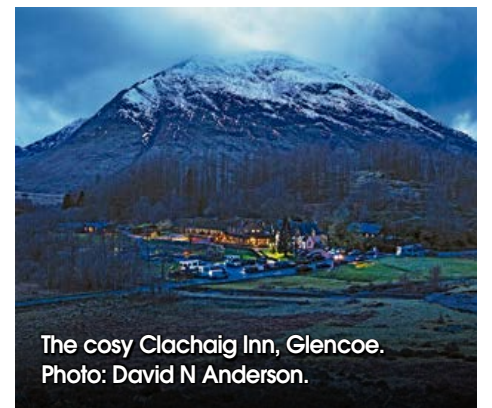
Perth – Branklyn Garden is a haven of peace and tranquillity within walking distance of Perth City Centre. The tearoom is situated in the part of the main house that was once the library and overlooks the garden.

For top cosiness levels, the freshly baked scones paired with a fine tea or the freshly ground National Trust for Scotland coffee blend, all served from their collection of beautiful china, are the perfect choice. Bonus points: the teapots are kept warm by patterned tea cosies handcrafted by one of their very talented team members.

Stirling – Visitors curious enough to search the winding back streets at the base of the castle hill in Stirling's historic Old Town will be rewarded with excellent coffee and sweet treats at Unorthodox Roasters. And afterwards, next door, Europa Music, Scotland's largest vinyl record store, will beckon them in for a browse.

Dunfermline – Prost Coffee is all about taking the time to slow down and celebrate the little things. It is located in the beautiful ground floor of 16th century Abbot House, fondly known as the 'pink hoose', and within its walled garden. Visitors will be in for a treat with coffee from Scottish roasting company Gatehouse Coffee Roasters, homemade cakes, wholesome toasties and tasty soup.

More events to look forward to in the coming months: www.visitscotland.com/things-to-do/events



The cosy Clachaig Inn, Glencoe. Photo: David N Anderson.

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After all the food and fun of the holiday's one would think February is a quiet month, however with Valentine's Day (Feb. 14th) it certainly is going to be a tasty month!



O my luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June,
My luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.
As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I,
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.
From 'A Red, Red Rose' - Robert Burns [1794]



Oysters Kilpatrick

Ingredients:

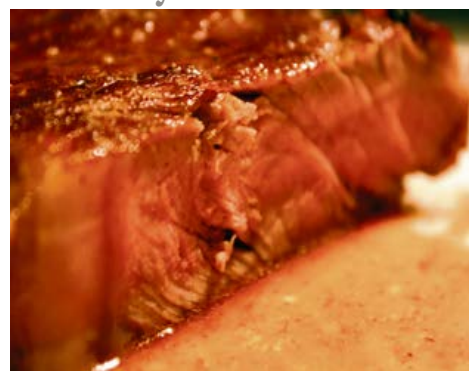
3 bacon rashers, finely chopped
2 tbsp. fresh breadcrumbs
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
4 tbsp. double cream
12 oysters, ask your seafood specialist to open them for you
lemon wedges, to serve

IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN

Method:

Heat a frying pan and add the bacon. Fry gently in its own fat until browned, then add the breadcrumbs and brown them briefly. Mix the Worcestershire sauce with the cream and divide it between the oysters, season well and then top each with some of the bacon and breadcrumb mixture. Grill until brown and crisp and serve with lemon wedges. Ready in 10 mins.

Steak in Pepper & Whisky Sauce



Ingredients:

2 fillet Steaks
1 oz./25g Butter
half small finely chopped onion
1 tsp. of Worcester sauce
½ oz./15 g finely chopped mushrooms
3 tbsp. of whisky
2 tsp. green or black peppercorns
1 tbsp. cream

Method:

Season the steaks with a little salt and pepper. Melt the butter in a pan and fry the steaks on both sides until cooked (according to

your own personal taste). Remove from frying pan and keep warm. Gently fry the mushrooms & onion in the steak juice for about 3-4 minutes. Add the whisky, peppercorns and Worcester sauce.

Return the steaks to the heat and bring the sauce to the boil. Add the cream. Add further seasoning if required. Serve with fresh vegetables and new potatoes.

Beef and onion pie with cheese crust



Ingredients:

For the pastry:

225g/8oz. plain flour, plus extra for dusting
75g/2¾oz. chilled butter, cut into cubes, plus extra for greasing
pinch salt
75g/2¾oz. mature Lancashire cheese, or similar mature crumbly cheese, grated
4 tbsp. water
1 free-range egg yolk
For the filling
1-2 tbsp. vegetable oil
250g/9oz. beef mince
1 onion, peeled, chopped
1 carrot, peeled, finely chopped
1 celery stalk, trimmed, finely chopped
1 tbsp. tomato purée
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
splash bitter ale
1 free-range egg, beaten

Method:

For the pastry, blend the flour, butter cubes and salt in a food processor until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the cheese, water and egg yolk and continue to blend until the mixture comes together as a dough. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knead lightly for 3-4 minutes, or until smooth and elastic. Wrap the dough in cling film and chill in the fridge for at least one hour. Meanwhile, for the filling, heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the beef mince, in batches if necessary, and fry for 6-8 minutes, turning once, or until browned all over. Remove from the pan and set aside (keep warm). Repeat the process with the remaining batches of beef mince. Add the onion, carrot and celery to the pan used to fry the mince. Fry for 3-4 minutes, stirring well, until softened. Return the mince to the pan and stir in the tomato purée, Worcestershire sauce and bitter ale.

Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook, stirring regularly, for 8-10 minutes, or until the majority of the liquid has evaporated. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Grease a 20cm-25cm/8-10in pie plate with butter. When the dough has chilled,

divide it in half. Roll out one half onto a lightly floured work surface until slightly larger than the pie plate. Carefully line the pie plate with the pastry, pressing it into the edges of the plate. Spoon the filling into the pie case. Roll the remaining dough out onto a lightly floured work surface until it is slightly larger than the pie dish. Brush the rim of the pie case with a little of the egg wash.

Place the pastry disc on top of the pie and press the edges together. Brush the pie lid all over with the remaining beaten egg. Prick the pastry all over several times with a fork. Bake the pie in the oven for 35-40 minutes, or until the pastry is crisp and pale golden-brown. Serve with mashed potatoes and brown sauce.

Valentine cupcakes

Ingredients:

For the cakes:

125g/4oz. unsalted butter, softened
125g/4oz. caster sugar
2 free-range eggs
125g/4oz. self-raising flour
150g/5oz. raspberries
6 passion fruit, sieved pulp only
a little milk, to loosen the mixture as necessary

For the icing:

500g/1lb 1½oz. icing sugar
160g/5½oz. butter
1 vanilla pod, seeds only
2-3 drops pink liquid food colouring
50ml/1¾oz. milk
hundreds and thousands

Method:

For the cakes, preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Sit 12 paper cases in a muffin tray.

Beat the butter and sugar in a bowl until pale and creamy. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat until well combined.

Fold the flour, raspberries and passion fruit pulp into the mixture until almost smooth. If the mixture looks too stiff, add a little milk, as necessary.

Divide the mixture among the paper cases then bake for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool in the tin for 10 minutes. Turn the cakes out onto a wire rack and set aside until completely cooled.

For the icing, using an electric whisk, cream the icing sugar and butter together until light and fluffy. Whisk in the vanilla pod seeds and food colouring. Gradually whisk in enough milk to form a smooth paste.

Spoon the icing into a piping bag with a large star-shaped nozzle and pipe the icing over the cake. Sprinkle over the hundreds and thousands.

Sweethearts whisky cocktail

Ingredients:

1 thick slice orange peel
1 maraschino cherry, with stem
1 tsp sugar syrup (also sold as gomme syrup)
2-3 drops whisky bitters
ice cubes, as necessary
50ml/2fl oz scotch (or bourbon)
twist of lemon peel, to garnish

Method:

Take the orange peel and squeeze it with your fingers. Rub the peel around the insides of a whisky tumbler, then place into the glass. Add the cherry, sugar syrup and bitters, along with three ice cubes. Add half of the scotch or bourbon and stir for about ten seconds. Add more ice and the remaining scotch and stir again for 10-15 seconds. To serve, garnish with lemon peel.

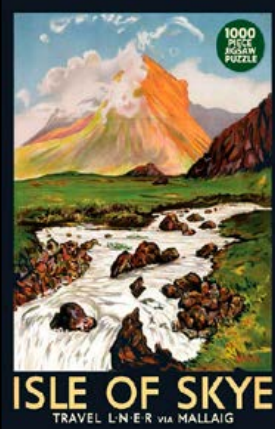
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Untold stories of Glencoe: *Archaeology digs reveal poignant artefacts from the past*



Excavations of the kailyard, looking up Glencoe. Photo: Derek Alexander.

Tucked away in the dramatic Highland landscape of Glencoe lies a treasure trove of untold stories, hidden for centuries beneath the earth. Now, with the support of the National Trust for Scotland, a team of archaeologists and students from the University of Glasgow, along with a variety of volunteers, have spent a second year digging in Glencoe. They aim to grow our understanding of this crucial chapter of Scottish history and the years leading up to the Massacre of Glencoe in 1692.

An estimated 38 members and associates of Clan MacDonald of Glencoe were killed on 13 February 1692, including Clan Chief Alasdair Ruadh “MacIain” MacDonald and his wife. In late January 1692, two companies or approximately 120 men from

the Earl of Argyll’s Regiment of Foot arrived in Glencoe from Invergarry and were hosted by the residents of the Glen for two weeks before the grim order was given to ‘put all to the sword under 70’. The MacDonald Clan of Glencoe took part in the first Jacobite rising of 1689; this resulted in the clan being targeted in the 1692 Massacre of Glencoe.

Arhnacon

Through archaeological excavations at the abandoned township of Arhnacon, the researchers have unearthed a wealth of artefacts that provide a rare glimpse into everyday life in 17th century Glencoe, including German and French pottery, decorated knife handles, loom weights for weaving, shoe buckles and broken tobacco pipes. On the night of the massacre, the



Alexander McClure holds a 17th century plate fragment he has just discovered. Photo: Derek Alexander.

MacDonalds of Glencoe Clan Chief’s cousin - the tacksman of Achnacon or MacDonald of Achnacon - was hosting a party with guests including his brother MacDonald of Achtriochtan. They drank and gambled into the early hours, until the party was interrupted at 5am, as a volley of shots from government troops tore through the windows and doors, killing many inside. The recent archaeological excavations uncovered MacDonald of Achnacon’s turf-walled house and among the finds was a scatter of 17th century bronze coins, potentially the proceeds of the fateful night’s gambling, lost as the massacre began.

MacDonald of Achnacon, unlike his brother, survived and was taken outside to be shot by the government soldiers. However, as they prepared to fire, he tore off his plaid cloak, threw this over his attackers, and fled off into the winter morning darkness. While excavating just outside this house structure, two volunteers on the 2024 dig found a bent plaid pin and two pieces of lead musket balls; the team think these could be the traces of MacDonald of Achnacon’s escape.

Human stories

Dr Edward Stewart, Excavations Co-Director, who has just finished his PhD at the University of Glasgow, says that these humble artefacts provide a poignant glimpse into the human stories behind these grand historical events. He explained: “By exploring these dwellings and the archaeology of Glencoe, we are able to build a richer understanding, not only of the tragic events of the 1692 Massacre, but also the everyday lives of those who lived and worked in Glencoe in the 17th and 18th centuries. Recent discoveries – both in Achnacon recently and the Summerhouse of MacIain in 2023 – allow us to connect with the people who once called this glen ‘home’ in a profoundly personal way. We’re not just uncovering the grand events of history, but the individual human stories that were so painfully disrupted. These help to give intimate insights into the lives and livelihoods, diets, beliefs and experiences of those who lived in this landscape over 300 years ago.”

Alongside the relics found within the ruins of a 17th century dwelling, the team’s landscape surveys have helped to paint a picture of the deep, generations-long relationship between the inhabitants of Achnacon and their environment. This connection to the land only heightens the devastating impact the massacre and subsequent clearances would have had on the local community, say the archaeology team.

Professor Michael Given, Professor of Landscape Archaeology and Co-Director of the University of Glasgow’s archaeological project in Glencoe, said: “It’s abundantly clear that the people of Achnacon were totally dependent on this land.

Understanding that relationship allows us to empathise more fully with the trauma they endured when their world was so violently upended.”

Bringing these lost voices back to life

According to Derek Alexander, Head of Archaeology at the National Trust for Scotland, the conservation charity who care for the Glencoe National Nature Reserve, the remains of the 17th and 18th century townships in Glencoe are often subtle, with materials potentially recycled for later buildings, dykes and sheepfolds.

Mr Alexander, Excavations Co-Director, added: “The better-preserved historic sites lie further into the glen away from the modern village at the lochside. Achnacon township displays the remains of four or five buildings, a kailyard or small kitchen garden and traces of rig cultivation. It lies within sight of the replica turf house constructed a few years ago at the National Trust for Scotland visitor centre and can be reached along the length of a newly-built walking and cycle track, the Glencoe Greenway. Step by step we are gaining a better understanding of where and how people lived in the glen and enabling visitors today to engage in new ways with the landscape.”

As the Glencoe Archaeology Project continues its work in the years ahead, the team is committed to bringing these lost voices back to life. Through ongoing excavations, landscape studies, and public engagement events, they hope to shed new light on a history that has long been overshadowed by the events of 1692. Dr Stewart said: “These artefacts may be small and unassuming, but they represent the very real human experiences that unfolded here. The archaeology team feel it is our responsibility to ensure these stories are told, and their legacy is not forgotten.”

In June 2025 excavations will resume at the settlement of Achnacon to uncover more of this township’s lost stories.

You can follow the University of Glasgow Glencoe Excavation blog for updates and to hear more about the excavations and surveys the team have worked on:
<https://glencoeandrannochenvirons.wordpress.com>

Chief of Clan Grant to attend Bundanoon Highland Gathering



The Grant 1714 tartan.

The Grant 1714 tartan

Inspired by two 18th century paintings of the Grant Champion and Piper by the artist Richard Waitt, he has reintroduced the Grant 1714 tartan, one of the earliest tartans on record. The Grant 1714 is one of the earliest tartans on record and has recently been reintroduced and authorised by Sir Michael Grant of Grant. In July 1704, Alexander Grant, the eldest son of Ludovick, Chief of Grant, instructed his tenants and clansmen to be prepared to muster in Heighland Coates trewes and short hose of tartaine of red and Greine sett broad springed.” This directive was recorded in the Court Book of the Regality of Grant. Whilst there is no surviving remnant of this Strathspey red and green tartan, there are strong clues as to the specific sett (pattern) of the time.

In 1714, Richard Waitt—an artist who travelled the highlands, accepted a commission from the Laird of Grant to paint life-sized portraits of William Cumming, the Laird’s Piper, and Alister Mohr Grant, the Laird’s Champion. Both portraits depict highlanders in ceremonial tartans of red and green, which were almost certainly woven by the same weaver. Described by Waitt on his invoice as *advivum pinxit* (Latin for “painted to life”), they were large scale and presented exactly as he saw them. The new tartan has been registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans and Design Registry in the name of the present Chief, Lord Strathspey, 34th Chief of Grant.

Bundanoon Highland Gathering takes place in the NSW Southern Highlands, Saturday April 5th. For details see: www.brigadoon.org.au.

The President and Committee of the Bundanoon Highland Gathering are delighted to announce that Lord Strathspey has accepted their offer to be the Chieftain of the Day in 2025. Sir Michael Grant of Grant, Lord Strathspey, 34th Chief of Clan Grant was born in Edinburgh in 1953. A Chartered Surveyor by profession, Sir Michael has enjoyed a career in Project Development, Asset Management, Sales and Lettings. He has travelled extensively, working on projects throughout Europe, the USA, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Now retired, Sir Michael’s interests span a wide range of subjects including property, design, architecture and art.

As a person who likes to travel and connect with people, Sir Michael’s vision is to “Think Global” when it comes to building and growing the Clan Grant community. His wish is to promote the Clan traditions throughout the world, strengthening bonds and preserving the Clan Grant history – for this generation and the next. As the Chief of Clan Grant, Sir Michael takes particular pride in the Clan Grant history.

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Clan Baird Society Worldwide



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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
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Contact: secretary.clandonaldvic@gmail.com

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Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com

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CLAN BELL

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Online membership: <https://clanbell.org/membership.html>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ClanBell>
Email: President@clanbell.org
Clan Bell North America
49 Greystone Lane NW
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CHISHOLM

Clan Chisholm Society of Australia Inc

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Contact: Kim Polley OAM
PO Box 84, Longford, Tasmania, 7301
Email: kim.polley13@gmail.com
www.clanchisholmsociety.org/public/AUSmembership.php



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



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Membership enquiries to Don Chitts
Ph: (03) 9754 5120 donchitts@hotmail.com
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Canada: Ontario * Western Canada
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Africa: South Africa
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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/>
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Email: ivc@donnachaidh.com




Clan Galbraith Society

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

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www.clangalbraith.org



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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



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



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Membership enquiries for USA: usa@clangregor.com

Rest of the World:
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Web: www.clangregor.com

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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
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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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secy.nationalclancameronaus@gmail.com
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Clan Donald Queensland


Commissioner: Neil Macdonald
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Email: clandonaldqld@optusnet.com.au
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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
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Secretary: clanmackenzie@gmail.com

www.clanmackenzienz.org



Clan MacKenzie



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

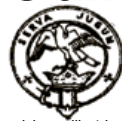
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For more information, please contact:
Australian Clan Hay convenor, Chris Hay McMor Fairbank
PO Box 70, Darrinallum, Victoria, 3325, Australia
E: clanhayaustralia@outlook.com

[clanHayAustralia@Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/clanHayAustralia)

McAlpin/e

and variant spellings

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Contact: membership.macaipen@gmail.com

Website: <https://macaipen.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



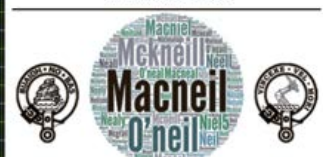
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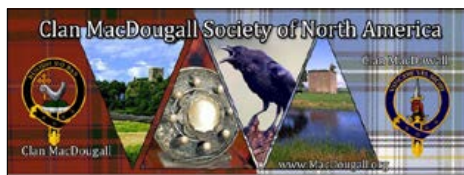
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Arlington, TX

76001-6726

Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

Invites all MacLellans and their descendants regardless of surname spelling to join in preserving our heritage.

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Clan MacNicol

Chief: John MacNeacail
of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac

Contact: Secretary Mal Nicolson

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GYMEA BAY NSW 2227

www.clanmacnicol.org



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For more information please email:

colonsay@bigpond.net.au, visit us at
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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

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/>

Australia. Pam Rhenrov
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
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Clan Irwin Association

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Scott Mcinnis, Member Services: scott@macinnes.org

or visit www.macinnes.org

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Societies of Australia

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● 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



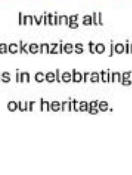
CLAN LAMONT SOCIETY AUSTRALIA invites membership from Sept names refer to Web Site www.clanlamontaustralia.com

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

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Clan Maitland Society

Chief: Ian Maitland, The Earl of Lauderdale!
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North America: Rosemary Maitland Thom
rthomnvpdrdca@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

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Clan Ross in Australia

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

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Enquires: scottishgaelicvictoria@gmail.com

Clan Muirhead Society

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www.clanmuirhead.com
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Clan Sinclair Australia

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


Hunter Valley Scots Club Inc

Promotes and supports all forms of Scottish culture in Newcastle, Hunter Valley and surrounding areas.

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Email: resource_centre@scotsofaustralia.org.au
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Contact: M Williams, Secretary

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 Secretary: Melissa Ventre - 0405 182 458
 Email: rbcmelb@gmail.com

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Scot launches bid to be first snowsports athlete with MND at Winter Paralympics



A history-making Scots dad diagnosed with motor neuron disease (MND) at just 30 years old wants to become the first snowsport athlete with the condition ever to compete at the Paralympic Games. Davy Zyw, now 37, a former competitive snowboarder, has set his sights on the Winter Paralympic Games in Milan in 2026, and cleared a major hurdle this month when medics gave him the green light to compete – provided he qualifies through a tightly contested Parasport World Cup series. If successful in qualifying, Zyw would become the first Paralympian with MND ever to compete in snowsports – and the first Paralympic athlete with the disease from the UK in any sport. Rower Nick Scandone competed in the Paralympics in 2008 with MND, while curler Cathy Cummins, who was diagnosed in 2005, was an alternate on the US team in Sochi 2014. However, nobody has competed in the Winter Olympics with MND.

The first person with MND ever to compete at international level

Zyw – who harboured ambitions of becoming a full-time professional – was sponsored by major snowsports brands in his teens and early twenties, competing at international age group level before a

serious knee injury forced him to focus on a career outside of sport. In October, wine buyer Zyw made history by becoming the first person with MND ever to compete at international level parasport snowsports when won two silver medals in the banked slalom at the FIS Para Snowboard event in Dubai. His best times were just 0.3 seconds behind experienced para snowboarders, including Slovakia's Adam Kropka – a clear sign Zyw is good enough to compete at the top level. The Edinburgh-man followed that up with 12th place at the second event in Holland recently, competing against the previous Paralympic champions from Beijing 2022. He still must earn enough points over the coming season to reach the FIS Para Snowboard World Cup series. From there, he needs a top 15 to qualify for Milan.

Davy, who will be cheered on by his wife Yvette and three-year-old son, Aleksander, said: "It'd be unbelievable to make it – I get goosebumps thinking about it. At this stage, it's almost impossible to imagine myself there. The standard of competition is incredibly high, many of my fellow para athletes are full time snowboarders so I'm taking nothing for granted, but to be able to compete at this level is really encouraging. I need to get faster and tighten my technique for the next races, but feel I'm making progress every time I step in."

Truly inspiring group of athletes

The Edinburgh dad was diagnosed with MND in 2018, and has since dedicated huge amounts of time and effort to raising more than £1m for MND causes including My Name's Doddie Foundation through gruelling endurance challenges – including

cycling 264 miles across the notorious 'High Five' route in the Scottish Highlands in 2022, and riding from Edinburgh to Rome earlier this year. Zyw will compete in the Upper Limb category, against para athletes with a range of disabilities affecting their limbs, including amputees. Zyw's MND predominantly impacts his hands and arms at present, but will eventually move to other parts of his body. Despite all his fundraising, he believes qualifying for the Winter Paralympics could be his toughest challenge yet, but is determined to give it his all, not only for himself, but to raise further awareness of MND and help the cause and community. He said: "To qualify for the Winter Paralympics would be phenomenal – it feels a long way off despite the hurdles I've already cleared. I thought I was going to be dead within two years when I was diagnosed in 2018, and here I am gearing up for a winter of snowboard racing – I feel incredibly lucky. I am dreaming big and taking the opportunities in front of me, and hope I'm good enough to qualify. Above all I'm going to enjoy the journey and hope to raise awareness along the way. Perhaps, unusually for a para athletes, I'm thrilled that I'm eligible. At one point, I wasn't even sure I'd be able to compete as there wasn't a category for MND, or neurological conditions. When they told me I'd at least be able to try was an incredible feeling. The nature of MND means I'm only going to get weaker and more adversely affected as the disease progresses. I have full range of movement in some areas, some muscles are totally gone, and others are in the grey zone. It puts me in a position where I know that even if I get there, I'll be performing at a lower level

versus some other athletes, and yet I'm more able bodied than others – but that doesn't deter me. Everyone competing in parasport has had huge challenges to overcome by just being on their snowboards, it is a truly inspiring group of athletes to compete with."

Defied all the odds

The next steps are six competitions across Europe, with rounds in Finland, Austria, and Germany. Another challenge will be funding the bid, as until Zyw qualifies for the World Cup series, it is entirely self-funded. So far his efforts are supported by his twin brother Tommy, but believes it will cost at least £15,000 to attend the races he needs. He has set up a Just Giving page to help him get to the events required to qualify. He added: "Tommy has been an incredible support, as he always has been, and we're looking for potential sponsors to help achieve this goal. I'll give it my all to make it to Milan. It's ironic that having MND may now offer a route to fulfill my childhood dream, to compete at snowboarding on the world stage. It's hard not to get emotional about that. I can't believe this cruel disease has taken me back to my roots and love of the mountain. But this is a chance to put MND in the global spotlight at one of the biggest sporting events in the world. I have to do it for everybody living with MND."

You can support Davy by donating on his Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/crowdfundingdavyzyw. To help raise funds for MND research, take part in My Name's Doddie Foundation's biggest annual fundraiser, Doddie Aid, which began on January 1st 2025 at: www.doddieaid.com.

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Australia

FEBRUARY 2025

Burns’ Night Supper & Ceilidh 1, Argenton, NSW

Join the Hunter Valley Scots to celebrate the Bard with Scottish food, music and tradition. Featuring Highlander Celtic Rock Band at Club Macquarie. Info: www.hvscots.org

Burns Supper 1, Townsville, QLD

Join the Townsville Scottish Community in celebrating the Bard with a traditional Burns Supper. Info: Marie Gibson mlg7@optusnet.com.au or 0413 456 542.

Robert Burns Club of Melbourne Burns Supper 1, Melbourne, VIC

Hosted by the Robert Burns Club of Melbourne with an Address to the Haggis, 3 Course Meal (includes Haggis), Immortal Memory, Toast to the Lassies, Highland Dancers and bagpipes at Altona R.S.L, Gunners Functon Room, 31 Sargood St, Altona VIC 3018, 6pm for a 6.30pm start, \$75pp. Bookings: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1340236. Info: Email: rbcmelb@gmail.com or call Secretary Melissa Ventre on 0405 182 458.

Canberra Burns Club Robert Burns Supper 2025 1, Kambah, ACT

Celebrate the life of Robert Burns, including music by Strathmannan, the Burns Club Pipe Band, as well as guest speakers throughout the night. Also a complimentary food and whisky tasting at the Canberra Burns Club, 28 Kett St. Info: www.burnsclub.com.au/event/robert-burns-supper-2025

Robbie Burns Night 1, St Ives, NSW

The Robbie Burns Supper is an evening that includes a 3 course dinner, bagpipes, whisky tasting, traditional speeches and entertainment. Start at 5:30 pm then Piping in the Haggis at 6:30 pm at The St Ives Club, 100 Killeaton St. Info: admin@stivesbowls.com

Ryde Masonic Burns Supper 1, Ryde, NSW

Lodge’s Horace Thompson Ryde and Pennant Hills are hosting a traditional Burns Night full of haggis, scotch, and fellowship at the Ryde Masonic Centre, 142 Blaxland Rd. Info: <https://events.humanitix.com/burnsnight2025>

Atherton Tablelands Caledonian Society – Robbie Burns Night 1, Atherton, QLD

Join us as we raise a toast to the immortal words of Burns. Immerse yourself in a tradition that transcends time and discover the extraordinary talent that defines Scotland. It’s a place where the past and the present come together and create a celebration that resonates with the spirit of Scotland at Atherton International Club. Info: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1337475

Caledonian Society of WA Ceilidh

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

Bruce Fummey-Scotland Made the World Australian Tour 1-March 23, Various locations

Laughs galore and quirky observations as Bruce Fummey explains how Scotland Made the World. This show will deliver more jokes than you'd get from the YouTube videos, and some might even make you blush, but you'll still leave having learned about Scotland's role in the world while you laughed. Shows in Perth, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. Info: www.brucefummey.co.uk/shows.aspx

Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard 8, July 27, Adelaide, SA

The Galloway Hoard is the richest find of rare and unique Viking-age objects ever made in Britain or Ireland. Adelaide is the first stop on a world tour of the exhibition, *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard*, and it will be the very first time this precious collection of objects has ever travelled outside the United Kingdom. One of Europe's most important archaeological finds of the century will be showcased in a landmark exhibition at the South Australian Museum. Info: www.samuseum.sa.gov.au

Bruce Fummey Laugh and Feast Special Event 23, Wetherill Park, NSW

Join Bruce for a one-of-a-kind standup comedy afternoon show in Sydney. \$95 a ticket, featuring: A 5-course banquet at the Thai Rock Wetherill Park, 1pm – 4pm. Your first house beer, wine or soft drink is included. An afternoon of pure Scottish humour, less history-based and focused on laughs! Suggested for those over 18’s. Info and tickets: www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1324582

World Gaelic Week

24-March 2, Nationwide
Celebrating Scottish Gaelic across the globe, and aims to raise the profile of Gaelic through community initiatives, schools’ engagement, projects and events. Info: www.seachdainnagaidhlig.scot

Skerryvore Australian Tour 2025 26-March 16, Various venues

Three-time winners of Scotland’s “Live Act of the Year” award, Skerryvore, will embark on an Australian tour in February and March. With a mix of bagpipes, fiddles, accordions, and whistles, alongside guitar and vocals, underpinned by driving bass, drums and keys, Skerryvore represent the best in contemporary Scottish traditional music. Info: www.skerryvore.com/tour

MARCH 2025

Ballarat Grammar School Twilight Pipe Band Contest 1, Ballarat, VIC

After a huge success in 2024, the “twilight contest” is back, brought to us by Ballarat Grammar School. Info: www.pipebandsaustralia.com.au/victoria

International Bagpipe Day 10, Nationwide

Listen or play some pipes today! This is a day initiated by The Bagpipe Society to celebrate the world's many bagpipes and piping traditions and what is known the world over as the sound of Scotland!

Melbourne Celtic Festival National Tour 13-30, Various locations

The Melbourne Celtic festival hits the road for a national tour, bringing a dynamic lineup of Celtic entertainment to venues across Victoria, NSW, and Queensland. Info: www.melbournecelticfestival.com.au

Scots on The Rocks’ Chaotic Ceilidh 15, Sydney, NSW

Scots on The Rocks Chaotic Ceilidhs are filled with energetic dances that (almost) anyone can do. At Abraham Mott Hall, 15A Argyle Place, Millers Point. Info: Robert: 0435 154 433 or www.sotr.org.au/chaos

Melbourne Celtic Festival 17, Melbourne, VIC

Expect traditional dance performances, workshops, and Celtic-inspired food and drinks that’ll keep you fuelled for the fun. Featuring from Scotland Skerryvore and Chloe Matharu, along with top local Celtic artists at the iconic Mission to Seafarers in Flinders Street. Info: www.melbournecelticfestival.com.au

Melbourne Highland Games & Celtic Festival 23, Croydon, VIC

Metropolitan Melbourne’s only Scottish festival with pipe bands, Clans, entertainment, Celtic dancers and more at Eastfield Park. The Games are hosting the 2025 International Heavy Games with Scottish heavy event competitors and judges coming from around Australia and overseas. Info: www.melbournehighlandgames.org.au

Learn Scottish Country Dancing with Scots on The Rocks 25-29, Sydney, NSW

This course is for new dancers who wish to learn steps and basic dance formations that are the building blocks of Scottish Country dancing. You will be introduced to Jigs and Reels and will learn a series of lively, beginner friendly dances, at Glebe Town Hall, 160 St Johns Rd. Info: www.trybooking.com/CVQCZ

2025 Haileybury Pipe Band Contest 29, Keysborough, VIC

Pipe Bands Victoria is delighted to continue their partnership with Haileybury, one of Australia’s leading schools, announcing the 2025 Pipe Band contest at Haileybury. Info: www.pipebandsaustralia.com.au/victoria

New Zealand

FEBRUARY 2025

Tauranga Burns Night 1, Tauranga

Celebrate Robert Burns with whisky, Scottish food, poetry, music and more at Tauranga Club, 72 Devonport Rd. Info: <https://events.humanitix.com/burns-night>

Thistle & The Shamrock

1-14, Various venues

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

Pipes in the Park 2025

2, Nelson

The City of Nelson Highland Pipe Band brings you Pipes in the Park again for another year at Fairfield House Meadow. The Celtic music and dance extravaganza includes the full Pipe Band, as well as soloists, dancers and more, with a Celtic flavour. Info: www.facebook.com/cityofnelsonband

Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo

8, Paeroa

Heavyweight Field events, Highland dancing, massed pipe bands, Clan village, pipe band contest and evening tattoo performance at the Paeroa Domain. Info: www.paeroahighlandgames.co.nz

Ashburton Festival of Pipe Band Music

16, Ashburton

Come along to the Royal Lawn (opposite the playground, Ashburton Domain) to hear pipe bands play an assortment of Scottish music; marches, strathspeys, reels, and medley selections. The local pipe band will be playing, along with bands that may visit from North Canterbury through to South Canterbury. Info: Peter MacLean: petermaclean@xtra.co.nz.

RNZPBA Canterbury Centre Contest

22-23, Christchurch

Pipe band contest held over two days, at the beautiful Riccarton House, 16 Kahu Rd, Riccarton. Info: kim.robertson@outlook.co.nz

Auckland Centre Pipe Band Contest 23, Auckland

Pipe band competition at Waikaraka Park, Captain Springs Rd, Onehunga. Info: auckland.centre@rnzpba.com

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DramFest

28-March 2, Christchurch

Exhibitors representing distilleries, producers and independent bottlers from Scotland, Japan, Ireland and around the whisky world. Info: www.dramfest.co.nz

MARCH 2025

Pipes in the Park 1, Wellington

A celebration of Scotland in the heart of Wellington, featuring pipe bands, entertainment and more. Info: www.facebook.com/pipesintheparkWGTN

Queenstown Pipe Band Championships 1, Queenstown

Pipe band competition held the weekend prior to the National championships in Invercargill, at Queenstown Recreational Ground, 1 Memorial Ground. Info: otago.centre@rnzpba.com

Bruce Fummey-Scotland Made the World New Zealand Tour

2-15, Various locations

Laughs galore and quirky observations as Bruce Fummey explains how Scotland Made the World. This show will deliver more jokes than you'd get from the YouTube videos, and some might even make you blush, but you'll still leave having learned about Scotland's role in the world while you laughed. Shows in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. Info: www.brucefummey.co.uk/shows.aspx

2025 New Zealand Pipe Band Championships 7-8, Invercargill

The event is great spectacle for the Southland community to come and enjoy the call of the pipes, the beat of the drums and the swirl of the tartans. Last time around 7,000 people either participated or attended the event. The event will be livestreamed and watched by a global audience. At the Cricket Grounds, Queens Park. Info: www.invercargillpipeband.org.nz

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Talisk Live

18, Auckland

Scotland’s Talisk are one of the best live acts in the UK and on the festival circuit right now, producing raucous crowd energy and stadium-sized sound with a mere concertina, fiddle and guitar. at the Spiegeltent, Aotea Square. Info: www.aaf.co.nz/whats-on/talisk

Clan Mackenzie Society NZ Gathering & AGM 28, Palmerston North

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the clan’s formation in New Zealand. Info: www.clanmackenzienz.org

Scotland

FEBRUARY 2025

Gaelic Tunes Session with John Carmichael 1, Glasgow

John Carmichael on accordion will lead this Mixed Instrument Session, focussing on Gaelic tunes repertoire. Popular melodies you might recognise but have never had the chance to learn and play in a group environment at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Info: www.glasgowlife.org.uk/event/1/gaelic-tunes-session-with-john-carmichael

Ceòlas @ 30

1, Glasgow

This special night promises to be an island cèilidh of epic proportions, with a stellar line-up of musical guests joining us - from South Uist & through the Hebrides, to Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia at the Old Fruitmarket. Info: www.glasgowlife.org.uk/whats-on/glasgow-life-tickets

Men's and Women's Scottish Curling

Championships 2025

2, Dumfries

Among the competitors are some of the top-ranking world teams from across Scotland, so it's set to be an exciting week of world-class curling ay Dumfries Ice Bowl. Info: www.scottishcurling.org

Scottish Colourists and Their Contemporaries

7-June 28, Edinburgh

A breakthrough exhibition which for the first time brings together the Scots, Irish, English and Welsh artists, along with their cutting-edge Continental peers, who collectively forged a new language of colour at the turn of the 20th century, at Dovecot Studios. Info: www.dovecotstudios.com

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Winter School

16-21, Pitlochry

Winter School attracts around 150 dancers from the UK, continental Europe, North America and Australasia. Attendees enjoy a 4-star stay in the Atholl Palace Hotel, with a range of classes, social dances, tours and of course, the famous ball at Blair Castle. Info: www.rscds.org/events/winter-school-2025

Granite Noir

20-23, Aberdeen

Inspired by the incredible popularity of crime fiction in all its forms and of course, the wonderful Aberdeen backdrop which is steeped in history, atmospheric, quirky and a strong sense of place. Info: www.aberdeenperformingarts.com

Scottish Fiddle Orchestra with the RAF Central Scotland Pipes and Drums

22, Perth

All tuned up and ready to go, the Orchestra can't wait to take to the stage again in Perth Concert Hall and are delighted to be joined once more by the RAF Central Scotland Pipes and Drums, ably led by Pipe Major Ian Hughes. Info: www.perththeatreandconcerthall.com

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Glasgow Film Festival

26-March 9, Glasgow

The diverse programme celebrates cinema from around the world, as well as showcasing new talent and the best of Scottish film. Info: www.glasgowfilmfest.org

Scotword answers from page 6	
Across:	Down:
1 Galashiels	1 Glencarse
8 Tenor	2 Ladle
9 Elder	3 Straths
10 Extra	4 Iced
11 Crests	5 Lothians
12 Littered	6 Inverness
13 Radish	7 Braid
15 Inverewe	8 Tattie
18 Emulated	14 Drum Major
20 Lowsed	16 Elderslie
22 Armadale	17 Well done
23 Editor	19 Ardent
26 Noose	21 Old year
27 Expel	22 Arise
28 Short	24 Tipsy
29 Cellardyke	25 Deil

Modernising the Murrays



Blair Castle, ancestral home of the Dukes of Atholl, Chiefs of the Clan Murray.
Photo: Frazer Photography.

Is your surname Murray? Born a Murray? Married to a Murray? Is there a Murray in your family tree? All those people bearing the name Murray, or one of the surnames (septs) associated with the Murray Clan, are invited to join the Murray Clan Society in Scotland and the UK. The Murray Clan septs include Balneaves, Dinsmore, Dunbar, Dunsmore, Fleming, Moray, Murrie, Neaves, Piper, Pyper, Smail, Smale, Small, Smeal, and Spalding, and variations of these surnames.

One of the great families of Scotland

The Murrays are one of the great families of Scotland. As soldiers and statesmen, ambassadors and lawmakers, they have been close to the heart of Scottish affairs for centuries. The progenitor (ancestor) of the Murrays, Freskin de Moravia, or Freskyn, was a 12th century Flemish nobleman who was granted land in the area east of what is now Inverness. This region came to be known as Moray (Murray). The Dukes of Atholl at Blair Castle in Perthshire and the Earls of Mansfield at Scone Palace in Perth are both descended from Freskin.

The Murray Clan has the exceptional honour of counting among its number a real live saint. Saint Gilbert de Moravia, Bishop of Caithness from 1223 to 1245 and the founder of Dornoch Cathedral, came from the Freskyn family. St. Gilbert of Dornoch was recognised as 'one of the noblest and wisest ecclesiastics the medieval church produced' and the last Scotsman canonised by the Roman Catholic Church. Gilbert died in his palace at Scrabster on 1st April 1245, his feast day. "Clan Societies have existed since the seventeenth century. They provide invaluable machinery for a clan-fund, repository for records and treasures, and virtually form the Civil Service of the clan" - Agnes Mure Mackenzie - 1949.

The Murray Clan Society was instituted by the 13th Lord Elibank, Alastair Erskine-Murray, at the inaugural meeting which took place on the night of Wednesday 17th January 1962 at the Royal Overseas League, 100 Princes Street in Edinburgh, to promote social links among people bearing the name Murray and to stimulate interest in the history, culture, and traditions of the Murray Clan and in the work of those who have borne the name Murray. The Murray Clan Society has now been revived as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) by Keith Murray-Hetherington FSA Scot, in whose own veins runs the blood of the Murrays.

The Head Trustee (Chairman) belongs to a family that has intermarried with the Murrays for many years, and he is a Murray through his mother, who first sparked his deep interest in the Murray Clan and his long-standing connection with the Murray Clan Society. In October 1981, he became a life member of the Murray Clan Society during the International Gathering of the Clans in Edinburgh at the young age of 17 years and served as Convenor between 1987-1990. He designed and matriculated the Society's Coat of Arms with Lord Lyon King of Arms.

Forward With Fortune

Two of the main charitable objects of the rejuvenated Murray Clan Society are (1) to further the education of members of the clan and septs who show promise, and (2) to provide financial assistance to those of the clan and the septs recognised by the Society who are in need. Students who are Murrays (or with mothers who were Murrays), who are pursuing particular interests or studies in Scotland and the UK, may be able to take advantage of the Society's scholarship which will each year award a bursary (educational grant).

Keith told *the Scottish Banner*: "I decided to revive the Murray Clan Society, after it lay dormant for so long during many years



Keith Murray-Hetherington, FSA Scot.

of inactivity, for future generations to enjoy and learn about the Murray Clan's rich history. My vision is to attract family groups - young and old - to join a modernised, dynamic society, and to provide a focal point for all members of the Clan from all walks of life - wherever they may be and whatever their background. I simply want to ensure the survival of the Society by attracting younger Murrays to carry forward to a new era the legacy of the most excellent men and women who laid the foundation, thus fulfilling the official motto which adorns the Murray Clan Society's coat of arms: "Forward With Fortune".

Associate Membership and Life Membership of the Murray Clan Society is available for anyone with an interest in the history, culture, and traditions of the Murray Clan or who simply wants to stay in touch helping them feel closer to their ancestors. Student Membership

is available for those studying and registered on an academic course; and Family Membership for a family including spouse and children under 18 years. The modernised Murray Clan Society has already recruited Murrays from Scotland, England, Wales, and South Africa.

Keith explained: "Thriving transatlantic clan societies have set a wonderful example to their overseas cousins and they are understandably disappointed that for some years they have had no counterpart or point of reference in their spiritual homeland. They see the Murray Clan Society in Scotland as the trunk of the tree from which the branches spring. Members in other parts of the world look to the "Home Society" as the centre of our worldwide clan. We also maintain a very cordial relationship with our sister society Murray Clan Societies in North America; New Zealand; and Australia".

The people serving on the board - the charity trustees - bring a wide range of skills and experience and there is a good balance of ages. The 15th Lord Elibank, Robert Francis Alan Erskine-Murray, is patron of the Murray Clan Society, thus continuing his family's long-established association with the Society since his ancestor, the 13th Lord Elibank, founded the Society.

For more information, contact themurrayclansociety@hotmail.com or go to the Society's website www.clanmurray.spanglefish.org which has a great deal of information about the history of the Murrays and other items linked to Murray families.



Murray Clan Coat of Arms.

THE 2025 SCOTTISH CALENDAR RANGE

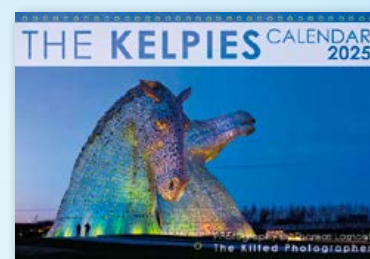
Enjoy these great Scottish calendars, a gift for loved ones or yourself!
Start 2025 with some of Scotland on your wall!

Majestic Scotland



Featuring castles, lochs, The Kelpies, Highland Coos and more - a celebration of the beauty and diversity of Scotland.

The Kelpies



Standing 30 metres tall The Kelpies pay homage to the Clydesdale horses that worked in Scotland. One of Scotland's most photographed pieces of art.

Highland coos



This calendar features some gorgeous hairy coos from Scotland. Full of hair, horns and cuteness!

The National Wallace Monument



This calendar features one of Stirling's and Scotland's most iconic sites, commemorating the nation's national hero - Sir William Wallace.

Calendars: \$24.95 Postage: 1 for \$4.50, 2 for \$7.50, 3 or more: \$11.30

All 2025 calendars feature beautiful colour images and a practical calendar with lots of room for notes. A4 wire bound, opening to A3, and made in Scotland.

Limited supply, order early to avoid disappointment. A great gift idea for loved ones or yourself!

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St. Gilbert de Moravia stained glass window in the south wall at Dornoch Cathedral.



Duffus Castle, constructed by Freskin de Moravia.

Introducing the Planet Earth Tartan

By: Rosalind F.B. Jones



The first length of Planet Earth Tartan woven by D. C. Dalgliesh of Selkirk, Scotland. Just 69 large setts to be presented to the world's top environmentalists.

Just imagine this, Mother Earth now has her very own tartan. Yes, I did say Mother Earth. And soon she'll own a kilt too! Tailored for a Scottish Eco-School dancer it won't fit Mother Earth's ample proportions, but it's hoped that her kilt could 'circle the world' delivering her tartan's vital messages inherent in every pleat. In one glorious swirl, to the skirl of Scottish Eco-School pipers it messages 'SOS': Save my Biodiversity! One Earth for All. Stop killing me!

The Blue Marble

Keep Scotland Beautiful, the Scottish Government's environmental charity has administered Scottish Eco-Schools for 30 years using the international programme owned by the Foundation

for Environmental Education. On its 30th anniversary a live streamed assembly from Stirling High School launched a series of challenges to children and young people right across Scotland and those attending also witnessed the launch of the Scottish International Eco-Schools Planet Earth Tartan. A six-metre length woven by D.C. Dalgliesh of Selkirk came with the warp ends of the tartan for a special reason – because Planet Earth tartan, and its threads, will soon be spread all around the world.

The tartan symbolises the physical features of Earth as seen from Space. Planet Earth is a sphere of dense rock 12756 kilometres in diameter surrounded by layers of atmospheric gases up to 97 kilometres thick. Oceans cover 70.8% of its crust and reflect deep blue. Land mass covers 29.2%, of which half reflects green vegetation, one third reflects white ice, and one sixth golden sand. The lowest layer of the pale blue atmosphere, the troposphere, is where water vapour forms clouds and moves in lines, or swirls, as weather systems. NASA Apollo 17 astronauts, looking from the blackness of space, called Earth 'The Blue Marble'. The design uses Earth's colours in proportion, squaring spherical Earth into a tartan sett but with one important exception. The pale blue representing our thin atmosphere also forms a delicate cross, descending from pole to pole with slim arms reaching east and west across the equator. Not to scale, black represents Space where Earth alone is the only living planet. The Planet Earth tartan is to be a visual reminder to

us all to cut our own emissions and to protect our world from the extremes of Climate Change and Wildlife Extinctions. It is designed to raise awareness about the plight of our planet and to generate a caring and sharing attitude for Earth, nature, and each other, globally. As an innovative map of Earth, it is iconic.

Tartan code

Scottish tartans, like bar and QR codes, have always delivered important messages. Historically tartans declared membership of a clan. Today they can represent a club, country, or corporation. The Scottish and International Eco Schools Planet Earth tartan delivers a very important message. In tartan code it says... This is where we ALL live. Animals, plants, humanity, our children and grandchildren. The pale blue cross is a stark warning. It symbolises the protection life on Earth has from our fragile atmosphere, corrupted by human emissions of carbon from industrial and domestic activity, and now generating extreme weather, rising temperatures, melting ice sheets and glaciers, raising fires, raining floods, giving rise to famines.

Boldly, the Planet Earth Tartan, aims to be a wake-up call. To remind each of us to cut carbon emissions to ensure survival of Earth's atmosphere and biodiversity, and to safeguard the futures of our descendants. A total of sixty-nine setts from this unique length will be presented to International Environmental organisations and special individuals in recognition of their pioneering work. Sir David Attenborough

was awarded the first sett. Keep Scotland Beautiful and The Foundation for Environmental Education the second and third. Others will follow and all will be invited to contribute a short account of their work, plus their web details. The warp threads will be shared between hundreds of Eco Schools established in 73 countries throughout the world. Planet Earth tartan of a smaller sett size will be made into kilts for Scottish Eco School children to dance, sing, and broadcast 'Eco News'. Remaining setts will be framed and sent to environmental writers, innovators, film makers, inventors, and other individuals already responding to Earth's desperate SOS.

The message of the Planet Earth Tartan (and Mother Earth's) is that we must all be aware of what is happening to our beautiful, unique, but finite planet. And that we must care, be fair, and share. Protected by Intellectual Property Office Registration certification and The Scottish Register of Tartans it is hoped that this unique tartan will raise awareness about our Earth and atmosphere.



The tartan mimics Earth's physical features and colours as seen from space.

Hat's off to Scotland!

Hats off to Scotland! Cover Yer Heid with this great range of Scottish baseball and beanie hats.

All hats one size fits all adult and are \$20.00 plus \$11.30 postage. To order see us online or the coupon on page 6. Many more styles are available online at www.scottishbanner.com/shop. Go on, wear your Scottish pride on yer heid!



Scotland Rampant Lion Lip Peak - Navy/Khaki Code: C3238E



Saltire Flag Scotland - Navy Code: C3238E



Glasgow Scotland Code: C3032E



Scotland Jersey Saltire Code: C3218E



Lion Rampant Royal Stewart Tartan Code: C3002ER



Lion Rampant Black Watch Tartan Code: C3002E



Scotland Golf Saltire Crest-Navy Mesh Code: GC702E



Saltire side Scotland text-Navy Code: C3096E



Scotland Sports White Rampant Lion Light Blue Code: C3226E



Scotland Saltire Black Clan-with Royal Stewart accent Code: SCS6



Scotland Jersey Rampant Large Text-Grey Code: C3220E



Lion Rampant Scotland-Navy Code: C3215E



Scotland Lion Rampant Ski Hat-Royal Blue Code: C3060E



Scotland Lion Rampant Ski Hat-Bottle Green Code: C3060E



Scotland Tartan Bucket Hat Price: \$25.00



Scotland Lion Rampant Bucket Hat Price: \$25.00

Ken your country



The North Coast 500. Photo: VisitScotland.

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) What is the North Coast 500?
- 2) Spanning the River Clyde from Pacific Quay on the north side to Govan on the south side, the Clyde Arc is a bridge built across the river. What name do most Glaswegians call the bridge?
- 3) In Scots what does Coorie mean?
- 4) Name the three ingredients required to produce Scotch whisky?
- 5) Which Scottish city is known as the Granite City?
- 6) Whose dying words were, "So little done. So much to do"?
- 7) What famous Scot was the first person to ever appear on a bottle of Coca Cola?

- 8) Which town in the Scottish Borders is the knitwear company Pringle based in?
- 9) On which waterway would you find 'Neptunes Staircase'?
- 10) What is the largest island in Scotland?

Answers

- 1) A 500-mile-long tourist route around Scotland's Northern Highlands. Also known as the NC500, it was devised in 2015 as a Tourist Route that takes in much of the Northern Highlands.
- 2) The Squinty Bridge. Clyde Arc opened in September 2006 and is referred to by most Glaswegians as the Squinty Bridge. The reason for this is that it crosses the river diagonally.
- 3) To snuggle or cuddle. Think warm woollen blankets, roaring fires, and steaming cups of tea – or something a little stronger!
- 4) Barley, water and yeast.
- 5) Aberdeen. Granite buildings are everywhere, ranging from the grandest of monuments to the humblest of tenements. The North East of Scotland's geological base is granite.
- 6) Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh.
- 7) In 2009 Robert Burns became the first person to appear on a commemorative Coca-Cola bottle.
- 8) Hawick, the largest of the Border towns. The original Pringle factory was set up in Hawick in 1815 by Robert Pringle.
- 9) Neptune's Staircase is a dramatic flight of eight locks on the Caledonian Canal.
- 10) Lewis and Harris is the largest island in Scotland, with an area of 841 square miles or 2,178 square kilometres.