

# 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?

## Invictus Games in Vancouver



The band of the Sons of Scotland from Ottawa, Canada, had the wonderful opportunity to invite pipers, drummers and guests from all across Canada, Scotland and Ireland to join them to play in the opening ceremonies of the Invictus Games held in Vancouver, British Columbia – and what a time they all had! The entire band of 333 players consisted of many bands from the Vancouver area, headed by Jack Lee and Reid Maxwell, and the performance went just superbly. Simple, striking and

so memorable not just to the audience, but to the bandmembers who were very moved by the occasion. Seeing the international teams and cheering them on was just the best. Members of the Sons of Scotland group hailed from Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Montreal, and further afield in Canada, and guest piper Craig Weir came in from Scotland and entertained at Donellan's Irish Pub, and Drum Major Brian Wilson, MBE, came from Ireland to help organize the show. We look forward to Invictus 2027 in Birmingham, England, and welcome everyone to visit our website for details on how you can take part, and support the band.

Thank you all,  
Bethany Bisailion  
Sons of Scotland Pipe Band  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
www.sospb.com

**Ed note: Congratulations to all involved and great to see the power of the piping fraternity on the world stage.**

## The Lost Streets of Edinburgh



I was interested in your *The Banner Says...* article *The Lost Streets of Edinburgh* in the February 2025 issue. My four times great-grandmother Elizabeth Donaldson (nee Bell) lived in Writers' Court in the High Street, Edinburgh in the 1840s. On the two pages of the 1841 census recording her residence, there were 48 people living in 10 households in that court. An online map shows its location opposite St Giles' Kirk, and in another diagram, it is shown as one of 12 closes between Bank and Cockburn Streets on the north side of the Royal Mile precinct. We visited the city in 2012 and 2014, but didn't see the sign for the entrance to Writers' Court.

It was once home to the library of the Writers' to HM Signet, and in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was the site of the manse of the great John Knox. Keep up your great newspaper articles!

Neil Harvie Thomas  
Belair, South  
Australia

## The Maclean Brothers

What an inspirational story you had feature in your February edition (*Brothers bid to break World Record in Pacific Ocean*, the *Scottish Banner*, February, 2025). These brothers clearly



not only share a special bond but have a great deal of compassion and humanity in them to be doing what they are doing and raising funds for clean water projects. What an adventure, what a cause and what great young Scots! Rowing across the Pacific cannot be for the faint hearted and I imagine there will be some tough days at sea. With all the 'influencers' and 'celebrities' out there these guys are the real deal, after already rowing the Atlantic and now this. They certainly warrant your cover and hope other media follow suit in highlighting this incredible mission.

I wish them all the best and hope they surpass all their goals, Scots around the world are cheering you on!

Greg Mackenzie  
Annapolis, Maryland  
USA

**Ed note: We agree Greg and will be keeping our readers up to date on their progress as they are truly doing something very special.**

Hats off to the Maclean Brothers on their epic journey rowing to Australia. These lads are really inspiring Scots who are doing something very few of us not only could do, but could even consider doing

There are so many Scots here in Australia that will no doubt be cheering them on and I hope our winter weather is kind to them and the crossing is without major challenges for them. I can only imagine what an incredible bond these brothers have to head out to sea just them, they will be relying on each other for physical, mental and moral support. I hope they are powered by all the determination, and Celtic music, they pack on board. Travel safe lads, Australia is waiting to welcome you!

Chris Donaldson  
Epping, NSW  
Australia

## Highland vs Lowlands



What a fascinating article (*What really divides the Highland and Lowlands?* *The Scottish Banner*, February 2025) about the Highland vs Lowlands. I have often wondered where the Highlands actually begin and have always felt it was where the dramatic scenery starts. I had actually not thought about the historical cultural differences found within Scotland. Scotland though small really has diverse parts to it and even today folk are different around the country, by accent, and how they interact. The communities dotted across Scotland certainly make up how people see these regions and it really is more than perhaps just a mountain range that changes what makes a place the Highlands.

Scotland is such a great country no matter where you visit, I am very fortunate to have been there seven times. Every visit is different and I learn new things every time, often about old things! I love going back and trying a new itinerary from the Highlands to the Islands, to the Borders and Central Belt. I am in fact plotting my next Scottish adventure and hope to return in 2026 or 2027. Thank you for so many great articles in *the Banner*.

Leslie Callaghan  
Port Credit, Ontario  
Canada

## Susie's "Michty Me" Cabbitch

*If ye gang doon by Drungan Pike  
An tak' a keek ower Jockie's Dyke,  
A sicht tae turn ye green, mair like,  
Real peely-wally!  
Fur there's a scene well worth the hike  
Or lengthy sally.*

*A muckle cabbitch big as aucht,  
'll greet yer een, as something saucht  
By giants, A hae nae dooght, hae foucht  
Tae mak thir broths.  
Wi flappen lugs an' luschious haugh  
Tae juicy stocks.*

*It was a cabbitch fit fur aw.  
A think a'll tak it tae the Shaw;  
Tae beat the others far awa  
Fur size competin'.  
"Ye'll tak aw prizes", said ma Maw  
"An' leave them greetin'."*

*But then as simmer sun sank low,  
A great white cloud as soft as snow  
Cam oot the East and settled low,  
A can confirm;  
The soond o' munchin intermezzo  
- Mony a kailworm!!*

*The gerdiners laughed real fit tae burst.  
The showing judges roared an' cursed.  
Cheeky craws themselves were worst,  
Convulsed in glee.  
The tattie bogle, unrehearsed,  
Was agony.*

*It goes to show; afore the day  
Tae coont yer chickens disna pay;  
For in a puff it's aw away -  
Ower the hill.  
Too late, too late tae rue the day  
And never will.*

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):

### Holy Loch



A lone tree by Holy Loch.  
Ronald Stokes

### Tall Ship Glenlee



The Tall Ship Glenlee at Glasgow's Riverside Museum.  
Mik Coia

### Edinburgh



The Scott Monument from Advocates Close, Edinburgh.  
Derk A Grist

### Heilan Coo



Hanging out with the bairn.  
ash.stow