

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?

International Clan Sinclair Gathering



Malcolm Earl of Caithness and Wayne Sinclair, President Clan Sinclair Australia at Castle Girnigoe.



International members of Clan Sinclair.

Clan Chief Malcolm, Earl of Caithness and John Viscount of Thurso organised a Gathering of the Clan in Thurso, Scotland in July. Twenty-two members of Clan Sinclair Australia travelled to join Sinclair's from UK, USA, Canada, Italy, Norway and Romania to celebrate the Clan. Over three days we attended

a garden party, the Halkirk Highland Games, Church service, a visit to Sinclair Castle Girnigoe, AGM and formal farewell dinner. It was a great opportunity to connect with old and new friends.

Liane Sinclair

Secretary Clan Sinclair Australia

Sons of Scotland Pipe Band



The Sons of Scotland Pipe Band of Ottawa took its annual trip to Scotland in August, and they had a terrific time. With players from all across Canada, Australia and Uruguay, the band played at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, at three shows in Edinburgh, and two concerts in Stirling. Pipefest was a great fundraising effort in Princes Street Gardens, and playing alongside the Brazilian Pipes and Drums a great show!

Many of their attendees enjoyed lots of visiting and enjoying shows, and going to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo was a highlight – we had two competitors with us participating in the Tattoo, and its 75th anniversary was so memorable. We had great weather, we had a lot of fun as a group, and came away with wonderful memories. We welcome you to join us in future trips – go to our website at www.sospb.com for all the details!

*Pipe Major Bethany Bisailion
Sons of Scotland Pipe Band
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada*

Hunter Valley, New South Wales

Seeing the Hunter Valley Highland Games advert in the August edition of *the Scottish Banner* reminded me of the early settlement of the region, and in particular a family of MacDougalls. Recruited in London by Governor King they were amongst the very first free settlers to come to New South Wales. They arrived in Port Jackson on board the Barwell and were given considerable areas of land and

convicts to assist them. Originally from Kelso in the Borders Region, they were brought out to provide skills and balance in an otherwise convict/military colony.

Their initial holdings were in an area north of Parramatta and called them Baulkham Hills after the low hills behind their native Kelso. Subsequent properties were in the Castle Hill area, extending quickly to the Windsor and Hunter regions. Having a large family typical of the day subsequent generations spread far and wide, establishing many further properties in the early days of the colony.

Despite all of this, little is known of them, other than what appeared in the newspapers of the day. They must have made some impact because at one stage they were known as Australia's Royal Family.

My wife is a descendant of the Kelso MacDougall lot and has quite a story around her 3x great grandmother. The latter's father was a senior officer in Napoleon's army and was captured by the British at the battle of Corunna (Spain) in 1809. As a prisoner of war, he was transferred to Portland and as was the custom of the day was well looked after. Subsequently, he was paroled to work with the MacDougall family in Kelso. As it happened Bartholemi Bonnet sired a child, Anne MacDougall Bonnet. In due course she married and amongst her children was one who in turn married Albert Edwin Elworthy Lee Tucker, a successful businessman and Minister in the Victorian Parliament. One of his grandchildren was the famed artist, Albert Tucker.

Now back to the Royal Family bit! One of Albert senior's descendants did in fact marry into several real royal families, this time of an earlier Scotland and of later European countries. Most of these now live in Australia!

Ron Layton

*Crafers
South Australia*

Ed note: Thank you Ron for this interesting piece of history.

The Border Reivers



What a fascinating article on the Border Reivers (*The 500-year-old curse of the Border Reivers, the Scottish Banner*, August, 2025). Our family has links to the Borders area and have often heard of these lawless people. Border Reivers were ruthless raiders—burning homes, stealing cattle, kidnapping rivals, and defying law across Scotland's wild frontier lands. I have never however heard of the 1069-word curse put on them, what a fascinating history Scotland has!

These were brutal times and how folk lived is something none of us can really truly imagine. I am so very proud of my Scottish ancestry, even with all the dark and chequered past it unravels to us today.

The Scottish Banner offers us of Scottish descent a great insight into where we came from, keep up the great work.

Chris Maxwell

*Columbia, Maryland
USA*

World Pipe Band Championships



Congratulations to all the bands that travelled to Scotland for the World Pipe Band Championships. The event had some great talent on the field and I really enjoyed watching the performances via the Livestream service. It was so great to see so many countries involved and I would be making a great understatement by saying this is on my bucket list. To see the spectacle of so many band's men and women from across the world competing in friendship is an incredible thing. The pipe band fraternity is a very special one and I have no doubt some great connections are made at such an international event.

I love visiting Glasgow as well so will make sure I get to the 'World's' myself one day, to celebrate the music, bands and my heritage.

John Wilson

*Summerville, South Carolina
USA*

Ed note: I hope you get that off your bucket list soon John!

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

Heilan Coo



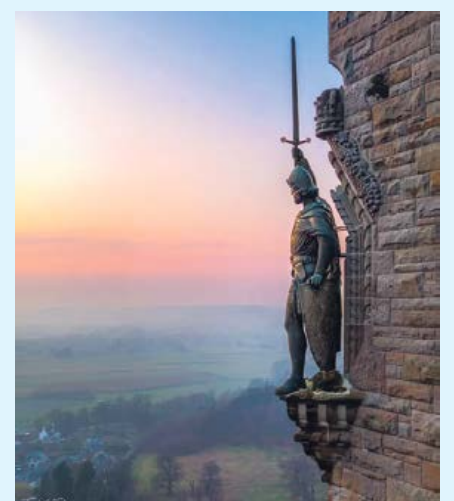
Just waiting for the weekend...
Derek A Grist

The Mirror Man



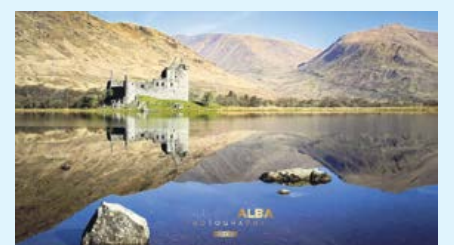
Lovely light on the Loch Earn sculpture Still – known locally as The Mirror Man.
Mik Coia

The National Wallace Monument, Stirling



Sir William Wallace taking in the sunset.
The Kilted Photographer

Kilchurn Castle



Kilchurn Castle resting on the shores of Loch Awe.
Soul of Alba Photography

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