



the Scottish Banner



Years Strong - 1976-2026 www.scottishbanner.com

A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 49 Number 9 NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS March 2026

Tartan on the Tarmac

» Pg 13



Celebrating the legacies and lives of trailblazing Scottish women

» Pg 5



- A 3,000-mile 'Tartan Trek' across USA» Pg 3
- Bannockburn House discovery brings Jacobite history to life» Pg 11
- The Isle of Gigha - The community owned island» Pg 21
- 007's Glasgow Gunsmith» Pg 23



Publisher
Scottish Banner Pty Ltd.

Editor
Sean Cairney

EDITORIAL STAFF

Eric Bryan
Brian Diamond
Neil Drysdale
Lady Fiona MacGregor
David McVey
The National Piping Centre
Jim Stoddart
Judy Vickers
David C. Weinczok

Contact:
The Scottish Banner
PO Box 6202
Marrickville South
NSW, 2204
Australia
Tel: (02) 9559-6348
info@scottishbanner.com

Follow us on social media



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

Australia Post Print Approved PP:100004806

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

The publisher reserves the right to reject, discontinue or omit any advertisement or to cancel any advertising contract for reasons satisfactory to the publisher, without notice, and without penalty to either party. All advertising and reading matter is subject to Publisher's approval. Right reserved to revise or reject advertising and reading material in accordance with standards acceptable to the Scottish Banner, without notice. The advertiser agrees that the publisher shall not be liable for damages arising out of errors in advertising beyond the amount of space paid for, whether such errors are due to negligence, copy right or otherwise. The publisher does not endorse the historical accuracy of the editorial stance of materials submitted for publication. The publisher reserves the right edit all submitted material prior to publication.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

Trouble getting the Scottish Banner each month? Use the subscription form below to subscribe, or you may contact our distributors for your nearest sales outlet.

AUSTRALIA: Wrapaway Distribution 02 9550 1622
NEW ZEALAND: Are Direct NZ 09 979 3018

The Scottish Banner

Uniting Scots Around the World for 49 Years!

THE SCOTTISH BANNER

Subscribe to the worlds largest international Scottish culture newspaper online or use below:

Australia: Print: 1 Year / \$60.00 AUD
Digital: 1 Year / \$25.00 AUD

Canada: Digital: \$19.95 CDN

New Zealand: Print: 1 Year / \$130.00 AUD
Digital: 1 Year / \$25.00 AUD

U.S.A.: Digital: 1 Year / \$19.95 USD

Overseas: Print: 1 Year Air Mail: AU \$175.00

Australia/New Zealand: T (+61) 02 9559-6348

www.scottishbanner.com/subscribe

Subscription are non-refundable.

Cheques, money orders, Visa and MasterCard accepted.

Scottish Banner Australia/New Zealand:
PO Box 6202, Marrickville South, NSW, 2204

Digital subscriptions must be requested via our website only.

Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel/Email:

1 Year New Subscription Renewal

Gift Subsc. From

Visa/MC

Expiry

The Banner Says...

Scotland's greatest man-made wonder



by Sean Cairney

The Forth Bridge stands as one of Scotland's greatest engineering achievements, a symbol of Victorian ambition and ingenuity. Spanning the Firth of Forth between Edinburgh and Fife, it was designed as a railway bridge to create a continuous East Coast route from London to Aberdeen. The story of this iconic bridge, however, begins centuries earlier. A ferry crossing between North and South Queensferry operated as far back as the 12th century, serving pilgrims travelling to St Andrews. By the 18th century, this ancient crossing was Scotland's busiest ferry route, linking the northeast with the capital.

Made from Girders

The arrival of the railway age prompted calls for a fixed crossing. Early attempts included a train ferry introduced in 1850 and a proposed suspension bridge designed by Sir Thomas Bouch in the 1870s. However, after the Tay Bridge disaster in Dundee in 1879, a bridge also designed by Bouch—confidence in suspension designs ceased and so did his design plans, and a new approach was required. Bouch sadly became a recluse and died the following year from stress at just age 58.

Engineers Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker proposed a revolutionary cantilever structure made of steel—the first major British structure to use the material. Made from Girders is the phrase often used, not just by Irn Bru, which highlights the massive, industrial scale of the structure, which used over 50,000 tonnes of steel. Construction began in 1882 and continued until 1889, involving thousands of workers and pioneering safety measures. The bridge opened on 4 March 1890, it was

immediately hailed as a marvel of modern engineering. At the time, its two 1,700-foot cantilever spans were the longest in the world, and its distinctive red silhouette quickly became iconic.

UNESCO World Heritage Site

Today, the Forth Bridge carries around 200 trains per day and remains a vital part of Scotland's transport network. The bridge still today looks incredible, and many would say better than anything that has come since. In 2015, it was designated a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Site, recognising its global significance and enduring influence on bridge engineering. It is one of seven Scottish sites recognised by UNESCO.

There are many jokes that have been told about the painting of the bridge being a never-ending job. For over a century, workers used traditional paint, and due to the harsh Scottish weather, by the time they reached the end of the 1.5-mile bridge, it was time to start over.

The Forth Bridge stands as one of Scotland's greatest engineering achievements.

A major restoration project, completed in 2011 involved stripping the bridge back to bare metal and applying a 3-layer, high-performance paint like that used on oil rigs. The modern techniques and paint used means the bridge will not require a full paint for at least 20 years, finally putting an end to the myth that 'painting the Forth Bridge' is a never-ending task.

In this issue

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo has just wrapped up some incredible performances in Australia and New Zealand. This event too is a Scottish icon and to get Highland dancers and pipe band members at the end of a runway at an international airport does not happen every day. I went to the Tattoo in Brisbane and still have the sound of the pipes and drums in my mind and loved every minute of it.

James Bond films blend of adventure, travel, glamour and gadgets. The world's most famous spy has many connections to Scotland and this month we highlight how a Glaswegian helped keep Mr Bond safe and also inspired one the franchises most loved characters.

This month is International Women's Day. We are delighted to share just some of the great Scottish women who have made their mark on the nation. I know there are so many incredible women who have helped shaped not just the nation but most of us and we are so happy to honour them this month.

Magnificent structure

The management plan for the Forth Bridge, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is currently being updated and people with an interest in the bridge and surrounding area have been invited to comment on the draft plan. UNESCO requires that all World Heritage Sites maintain a management plan to support the future management needs of a World Heritage Site, to coordinate the interests of associated organisations, groups and individuals, and to maximise the benefits and minimise any negative impacts from the World Heritage Site status.

The Forth Bridge's Management Plan is now ten years old and is being updated for the next decade. People are encouraged to have their say by completing an online questionnaire by 31 March 2026 at: www.fife.gov.uk/forthbridge

I have travelled across the Forth Bridge several times and always know it is something special to do. Last year I was fortunate to spend a beautiful evening having dinner next to the bridge and did have a hard time looking at my food as I took in this magnificent structure as the sunset over it. No wonder this bridge, which has stood the test of time, has been hailed as Scotland's greatest man-made wonder. Its legacy is not only structural but cultural—a testament to human ambition, resilience, innovation and Scotland's built heritage. 🇪🇸

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.

The Scottish Banner is more reliant than ever on our readers helping us to provide you with our unique content by buying a copy of our publication, regardless of if by print or digital subscription or at a retail outlet. You may also donate to the Scottish Banner via our website.

We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Gracing our front cover: Highland Dancer Sian Roach and BBC Pipe Major Freddie Bailey at Brisbane International Airport. Photo: Sarah Marshall.

A 3,000-mile 'Tartan Trek' across USA



A Scottish charity campaigner has begun an extraordinary 3,000-mile endurance challenge across the United States to raise funds and awareness for mental health support in Scotland. Craig Ferguson, a Paisley-based mental health advocate, will walk from Los Angeles to Boston, completing a full marathon every day for 104 consecutive days, aligned with the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026. Kicking off in February, this awe-inspiring pursuit will see Craig cover the equivalent of more than three thousand miles on foot, with the aim of reaching Boston in time for the Scottish national football team's opening World Cup match on 14 June.

He was inspired to undertake this journey following his own experience of mental health challenges, and in tribute to friends and loved ones in his life who have been affected. Through this effort,

he hopes to shine a spotlight on mental health, and to raise £1 million pounds of vital funding for Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH). Craig is no stranger to ambitious endurance fundraising. In 2024, he completed a remarkable 1,000-mile walk from Glasgow to Munich ahead of the UEFA European Football Championship 2024, passing through six countries and raising more than £70,000 for the Brothers in Arms men's mental health charity, before being greeted by cheering fans on arrival in Germany.

Training for the "Tartan Trek" has been intensive, with Craig covering between 100 and 120 kilometres each week, alongside gym sessions of up to four days a week, as he prepares to brave the elements. He will complete the entire walk wearing a kilt - a powerful symbol of his connection to Scotland which, Craig says, also gives him a strong sense of motivation and

personal empowerment. Craig hopes to be welcomed at the finish line by family and friends, as well as members of the Tartan Army, echoing the scenes in Munich where supporters gathered to celebrate the completion of his first endurance challenge in 2024. Like many Scottish football fans, he is also hoping to secure a ticket to watch his national team compete during the tournament.

Overcoming the challenge

When asked about the upcoming journey, Craig said: "I'd be naïve to think this is going to be a walk in the park. This challenge is three times the size of anything I've taken on before - physically and mentally - but that's exactly what makes it so special. For me, it's about pushing through, overcoming the challenge, and making it to the finish line in one piece. I chose to support SAMH because mental health causes are incredibly important to me, and I wanted to open up the conversation on a much bigger scale. We see the impact of mental health across Scotland and around the world, and SAMH are leading the way by breaking down barriers and making support accessible to all. I'm incredibly proud to be backing their life-changing work."

Billy Watson, Chief Executive at SAMH, said: "Craig's Tartan Trek captures exactly what SAMH stands for - courage, compassion and taking action when it matters most. Mental health challenges affect people in every community, and early support can make the difference between coping and crisis. The funds

raised through this challenge will help us continue to provide accessible, community-based mental health support across Scotland, including through initiatives like The Nook. We're incredibly grateful to Craig for taking on this remarkable challenge and for helping ensure that no one has to face mental health problems alone".

Funds raised through the "Tartan Trek" will support SAMH's nationwide services, which provide practical, emotional and social support to thousands of people experiencing mental health challenges each year. This includes adding to its national network of Nooks - welcoming, walk-in, barrier-free mental health support hubs available across Scotland.

Hazel McIlwraith, Director of Fundraising & Major Appeal at SAMH, added: "Craig's Tartan Trek is one of the most extraordinary fundraising challenges we've ever been part of. Walking more than 3,000 miles coast to coast across the United States - a marathon a day for over 100 days - is an incredible physical feat, but what truly matters is why he's doing it. Craig is using this challenge to shine a light on mental health, to show people that it's okay to ask for help, and to raise vital funds that will directly support our life-saving services across Scotland. We are immensely proud to support him on this journey and grateful for his honesty, courage and determination."

For more information on the Tartan Trek or to support Craig's journey, visit: www.thetartantrek.co.uk

The Scottish American Society of South Florida

SCOTTISH CELTIC MUSIC FESTIVAL

March 28th 2026 - 12:00pm - 10:00PM

Live Music Featuring

Seven Nations
Clovers Revenge
Gaelica
Blue Skye
Femme Celtique

Bergeron Rodeo Grounds
4201 SW 65th Way, Davie, FL

www.sassf.org #sofloscots








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?

Tom Weir



How wonderful to see an article about Tom Weir who I fondly remember. Tom was the real deal, a passionate outdoorsman and of Scotland. He did not appear bothered either way about fame but was passionate about the beauty of Scotland and respecting it.

I had several of his DVDs back in the day and remember seeing him on the television when I was back in Scotland when he did the popular show *Weir's Way*. That Glasgow lad not only got around Scotland but also the world and was a great ambassador for Scots.

I have not seen his name mentioned for many years and was delighted to be reminded of this great Scot and I hope to visit his statue at Balmaha one day. Anyone who knew Tom Weir would not be surprised to hear in his will he left money to environmental charities—a class act.

George Crossley
Moncton, New Brunswick
Canada

by Dougie Maclean in Butterstone, Dunkeld, Perthshire. Since reading your article, I will surely hope to try the ECML LNER train from Dundee to Edinburgh for the last leg of my time in Scotland this year as I am travelling on my own this year (no takers and scary for a single lady pensioner who is not going to drive).

Which brings me to my last point, it would be lovely if there was some type of *Scottish Banner* chat room for the Scotland diaspora to compare notes about travel to and in Scotland. Something like our own Trip Advisor but with opportunities to chat about anything and everything. Personally, I have spent years and years researching Scotland on my own (my Scots grandfather in Canada rarely talked about his birthplace, despite fighting with them in WWI and returning in 1958 for his own retirement trip) and I spent at least 10 years researching my retirement trip in 2024. Each time I go I end up painstakingly putting together an itinerary, booking accommodation, researching history and site information, etc. Anyway, just a thought.

All the best,
Leigh Olson
Ed note: Thanks for the suggestion Leigh and hope your travel planning goes well.

Family history



Goodness gracious me how incredible to see Wade King has such an incredible family history pieced together (*A family history of 42 generations, the Scottish Banner*, January, 2026). I am quite new to family research and feel like every time I get into a trail it goes cold. I am relying on the internet and am currently planning a trip to Scotland to do some research and visit some sites of our family—who have links to both Ayrshire and Perthshire. I know Scotland is well placed to help ancestors find information at libraries, graves etc. I am struggling to go back more than a few generations so to go back 42 is just incredible and what a great source of information to pass on to current and future generations of that family.

While I may never get that far I am having fun trying and learning so much. A friend who is also doing her family history which spans both Scotland and Ireland has warned me the more you dig the deeper the journey becomes. It really is so very fascinating. Love the *Banner* and keep up the great work.

Carol Lister
Spokane, Washington
USA

Geelong Highland Games & Celtic Festival



We are proud to honour and celebrate the rich heritage, traditions, and pride of Scottish and Celtic culture right here in our region. From the stirring sound of the pipes to the strength of the Highland Games and the beauty of Celtic music, dance, and community, our festival brings the spirit of Scotland to life. After 165 years of celebration, the historic Geelong Highland Gathering, one of Australia's oldest Scottish cultural events, concluded its long running chapter in 2023. Thanks to passionate community support and a shared commitment to preserving our cultural heritage, its legacy is now being revived.

Community passion, cultural pride, and a shared determination to preserve this tradition has sparked the restoration of the Games, leading to the formation of Geelong Highland Games & Celtic Festival Inc Committee.

In partnership with Golden Plains Shire Council and Golden Plains Soccer Club, we are proud to bring this cherished event back to life. The Geelong Highland Games & Celtic Festival will return on 24 October 2026 at Bannockburn revitalised, community-driven, and ready for a new generation of celebrations.

Follow us for updates, announcements, stories, and all the excitement as we build toward this historic return. Whether you have Scottish or Celtic roots, or simply love the culture, you're part of our clan now.

Kind regards
Michelle Thompson
Vice President - Geelong Highland Games & Celtic Festival
www.geelonghighlandgames.au
Australia

My next trip to Scotland



I read your very interesting interview with Gil Waugh (*Se G?idheal a th' annam-I am a Gael*) in the February edition. I'm sure he must know about it, but Acair Books on the Isle of Lewis may be very interested in publishing *The Sandalwood Series* and any of his other Gaelic works. I have forgotten the name of the founder of Acair but his daughter, Maeve Gillies, is now a famed jewellery designer who has moved back from the US and is now in Edinburgh. She designed a now famous piece for Chief Sulian Stone Eagle Herney of the Mi'kmaq tribe, Cape Breton Island, Canada who was one of many who successfully fought against mining on the Isle of Harris. Alastair McIntosh wrote about this in *Soil and Soul*. I was lucky enough to meet Maeve when we were in Edinburgh on my retirement trip of a lifetime in 2024. Her sister, Mairi Gillies, still lives on Lewis and gave a talk not too long ago at An Lanntair.

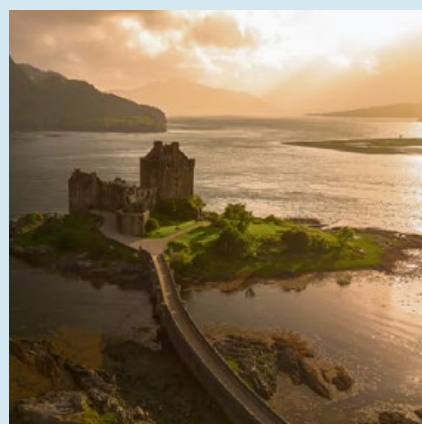
I also wanted to thank you for your article, *Your other Great Rail Journey (the Scottish Banner, February, 2026)*. I am just in the daunting process of cobbling together my next trip to Scotland from late September-early November. I want to tick off some things I missed on my last journey, one being the Wigtown Book Festival (very near also to where I will be visiting some of my relatives in Newton Stewart /Wigtown). My second 'must see' is Shades of Amber music festival hosted

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

Eilean Donan Castle



Golden hour at Eilean Donan Castle.
Jamie Taylor Photography

Loch Etive



Beauty and calm at Loch Etive.
Fly - Caledonia

Highland hideaway



Keeping warm in the Scottish Highlands.
Fiona McNicol

Scottish Highlands



Winter in the Scottish Highlands.
Mik Coia

Celebrating the legacies and lives of trailblazing Scottish women

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The National Trust for Scotland celebrates stories of prominent women from its past. The women have enhanced Scotland's rich heritage in art, conservation, estate management, forestry, horticulture, interior design and photography.

The National Trust for Scotland is celebrating the stories of the remarkable women associated with the special places in its care to mark International Women's Day on March 8. The pioneering women, who are strongly associated with the conservation charity's heritage places across the country, have been instrumental in the development of the historic properties, with the legacy of their achievements inspiring the work of the National Trust for Scotland to this day. The stories of the women from different walks of life have been shared as part of International Women's Day to celebrate their contributions to the social, economic, cultural, and political advancement of women.

Some of them are remembered for their work in different fields from art, conservation and estate management, forestry, horticulture and interior design to name a few. Their work has influenced and enhanced Scotland's rich cultural heritage that the National Trust for Scotland works hard to care for, share and protect, now and for future generations to enjoy.

Sarah Beattie, National Trust for Scotland Senior Curator, said: "We're delighted to celebrate International Women's Day by sharing the inspiring stories of some of the women associated with the special heritage places cared for by our charity. These women, from different backgrounds, have been influential in their respective fields and their achievements have helped challenge societal notions across the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries to leave lasting legacies that we work hard to conserve. It is thanks to the ongoing generosity of our members and supporters, that we're able to continue our work to care for, protect and share Scotland's nature, beauty and heritage for everyone."

Inspiring stories

Hannah Lorimer (1854 – 1947)

– Kellie Castle, Fife



Hannah's love of art grew from staying at Kellie Castle in Fife as a young woman, where she was inspired to compose music and create art, embroidery,

paintings and sculptures. Her creativity and curiosity led her to learn about plaster moulding from her family's renovation of the property, with her skills helping to secure the opportunity to complete the decorative plaster ceilings at Falkland Palace for the Marquess of Bute. While her brother (John Henry Lorimer) and nephew (Hew Lorimer) became famous for their artistic endeavours, Hannah was never considered a professional artist, but her legacy lives on through her work.

Miss Christian Dalrymple (1765 – 1839)

– Newhailes House & Garden, East Lothian



Christian inherited Newhailes estate as the eldest daughter of her father, Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, 3rd Baronet of Hailes, who died in 1792.

However, as a woman, Christian, was unable to inherit his baronetcy and focused her efforts to improve and manage the condition of the estate, repairing the library roof, improving the servants' accommodation and extending the stable block. As an early pioneer of conservation, Christian protected the grounds from industrialisation, helping to safeguard her legacy and the beautiful landscape at Newhailes for future generations.

Mary Irvine (1721 – 1779)

– Drum Castle, Aberdeenshire



A prominent figure from Scottish history, Mary helped her brother, Alexander Irvine, hide from Redcoats in a secret room at the castle following

the Battle of Culloden. Following his death in France after his exile, Mary dedicated her life to managing the estate at Drum where she established the Royal Forest of Drum, with remnants from the ancient oak woodland still surviving to this day. Mary was influential in creating and maintaining a working forest and negotiated a good price for oak timber with local shipbuilders. An advocate for conservation, Mary recognised the importance of the forest and the dual value it offered, expressing her thoughts on the trees, 'I think they must be profitable as well as pretty'. Mary was daughter of Alexander Irvine, 16th Laird of Drum Castle.

Mairi Sawyer (1879 – 1953)

– Inverewe Garden, Scottish Highlands



Having spent most of her life at Inverewe, it is no surprise that Mairi shared her father, Osgood Mackenzie's passion for

gardening. After his death in 1922, Mairi took over caring for the ambitious loch-side garden, containing plant species from across the globe, which was transformed from a barren wilderness in the Scottish Highlands into a coastline paradise that is a feast for the senses. Although hindered by labour shortages after the Second World War, Mairi was determined to make the garden a success and in the spirit of inclusion, opened the garden to paying visitors for the first time to share its unusual and exotic plants for everyone to enjoy.

Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (1864 – 1933)

– Hill House, Helensburgh and Mackintosh at the Willow, Glasgow



Having studied at the Glasgow School of Art in the late 19th century, it is here that Margaret met Charles Rennie Mackintosh, which was the catalyst for a life-long

artistic partnership that influenced interior design and architecture in the following years. Despite attracting attention on her own merit, the husband-and-wife duo worked collaboratively on many projects, so it is unclear how much she inspired his work, with both designers having contributed to the development of the 'Glasgow style' from 1890s to around 1914. Regarded as one of the most versatile, imaginative and successful artists working in Glasgow in the early 20th century, original examples of her work can be found inside the Hill House, in Helensburgh, as well as in the recreated interiors of the Mackintosh at the Willow tea rooms on Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street.

Text and images courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland. For more information on the National Trust for Scotland and the properties and stories above, please visit: www.nts.org.uk.

Agnes Toward (1886 – 1975)

– Tenement House, Glasgow



Mrs Agnes Toward and her daughter Miss Agnes Toward were the epitome of independent Glaswegian women in the 19th and 20th century. Mrs Toward had to provide for

her daughter following the death of her husband in 1889 and successfully ran two dressmaking shops in the city to provide a middle-class upbringing for Miss Toward. Despite societal pressure on women to marry and the notion of 'spinsterhood' that dictated how widowed and single women were viewed at this time, Mrs Toward led an independent life with her daughter, moving into the Tenement House in 1911. Miss Agnes Toward was afforded a good education due to her mother's work ethic, which led her to formal college qualifications that helped her secure and hold the job as a typist with Prentice, Service & Henderson, a role she held for almost 50 years. Unlike many of her colleagues who would have stopped working following marriage, Miss Toward never married and continued working until the age of 73.



Inveraray Castle. Photo: VisitScotland.

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

- 1) In which year was the Queen Elizabeth 2 (QE2) launched?, a) 1964, b) 1967 or c) 1969?
- 2) Where was Bonnie Prince Charlie born?
- 3) Inveraray Castle is the seat of which Duke?
- 4) Was Robert Burns an only child?
- 5) On which Scottish island is Talisker malt whisky distilled?
- 6) Which clan is traditionally Lord of the Isles?
- 7) If a Scot developed a 'keen', what would he be doing?

- 8) Which Scottish castle on north-east coast featured in Mel Gibson's 1990 film *Hamlet*?
- 9) Where in Scotland would you find the memorial statue to the Commandoes?
- 10) Which classical composer introduced bagpipe music into his compositions?

Answers

- 1) b) 1967 at the John Brown & Company shipyard in Clydebank, Scotland.
- 2) In Rome in 1720.
- 3) The Duke of Argyll, who is also the Chief of Clan Campbell.
- 4) Burns had three brothers and three sisters - he was the eldest of a family of seven!
- 5) The Isle of Skye.
- 6) The MacDonalDs.
- 7) Coughing.
- 8) Dunnottar Castle.
- 9) Near Spean Bridge.
- 10) Mendelssohn.

SCOTSPEAK

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



“This new phase is all about the wall-to-wall transformation of George Square, from the City Chambers to Queen Street Station and the surrounding streets. The new George Square will be on a par with the civic spaces in many major European cities, and that means the redesign of the surrounding area, as well as the Square itself. Anyone visiting the city centre should come and have a look at the new stone being laid outside the City Chambers and along from Queen Street Station and they’ll get a sense of what’s coming down the line in the months ahead.”

Cllr Angus Millar, Convener for City Centre Recovery at Glasgow City Council, said the transformation of Glasgow’s George Square is to take a major step forward with new stone surfaces being installed across its bordering streets. This new phase will ensure that the world-class look and feel of the new George Square extends across surrounding roads and pavements. When completed in August, the new George Square will be resurfaced in stone, include more greenery with raised lawns and informal play areas for children, sheltered seating and feature

lighting, as well as a generous paved area for events. The Square’s 11 bronze statues are currently being restored and will return to the Square in 2026.

“Beggars’ badges were introduced in the early 1400s in Britain as physical markers to identify beggars and permit their movement between areas. The implementation of Poor Laws marked a significant step in systematically addressing poverty. In both England and Scotland, the early Poor Laws established basic provisions for those in destitution. Badges like these allowed beggars in Scotland to travel while displaying a ‘Pass and Re-Pass’ badge as they sought alms.”

Colin Mackenzie, one of the volunteers at Hugh Miller’s Birthplace Cottage & Museum said after he discovered that an object previously thought to be a communion token is instead an 18th century beggar’s badge. Colin noticed it whilst examining the museum’s collection of communion tokens that one stood out amongst the rest. After some research, Colin discovered also that this badge was not local but instead was made for Nigg in Aberdeenshire, over 80 miles away.



“Alasdair Gray is one of Scotland’s most well-known cultural figures of the 20th and 21st centuries, and one the country’s most significant mural artists. Gray’s murals at the Ubiquitous Chip are rare examples of late 20th century public art, as well as important surviving examples of his work. Listing the site would ensure that the cultural significance of the building and its murals can be recognised and taken into account in any decisions about its future. We would encourage anyone who has views on our proposals or information that can help inform our decision to take part in the consultation.”

Dara Parsons, Head of Designations at Historic Environment Scotland (HES), said HES is seeking views on a proposal to list the Ubiquitous Chip in Glasgow’s west end at Category B. The Glasgow restaurant is famous for its links to the artistic and cultural community of the city’s west-end, and in particular Scottish author and artist Alasdair Gray. The Ubiquitous Chip was established in 1971 and moved to its current Ashton Lane premises in 1974, occupying a former stables and livery yard. The interior of the site includes two painted murals by Gray which are important examples of both his work, and of wider 20th century public art in Scotland.

“The Scottish folk music scene is small and primarily male-dominated, and participants felt many forms of sexual violence and harassment were normalised – rarely being formally acknowledged or met with meaningful consequences. Unfortunately, as a result some women left the scene entirely because they felt unsafe or unsupported. This is a sad state of affairs, resulting in a real loss of female talent.”

Professor Michele Burman, a co-author of a report on sexual violence and harassment in the Scottish folk music scene, commented. Four in five women musicians have experienced sexual violence and harassment while working or taking part in the Scottish folk music scene, according to new survey findings. The findings reveal that while the Scottish folk scene was described as welcoming, nurturing, and culturally important, for many women musicians’ positive experiences of music-making coexist with experiences of inequality, harm, and exclusion.



“We welcome this increase in funding that is allowing major work to start on this historic building. We are working to create an important community space in the heart of the Stobswell area, that will tell the story of Dundee’s transport heritage like never before while also providing spaces for exciting temporary exhibitions as well as spaces for the community to use. We will continue to fundraise for wider costs linked to finishes, landscaping, the creation of a new permanent exhibition and restoration of the 1920 section of the building. Subject to continuing fundraising success, we are working to open the new museum in the first half of 2027.”

Paul Jennings, executive director of Dundee Museum of Transport, said the journey to transform a historic tram depot in Dundee into the new home for the city’s Museum of Transport is moving up a gear following confirmation of a significant funding boost. Refurbishment work will now begin at the former Maryfield Tram Depot after it was announced that the project will now receive a total of 2.7M from the UK Government through Dundee’s Community Regeneration Partnership. The museum is currently based at temporary accommodation at Market Mews.

SCOTWORD

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

CLUES ACROSS

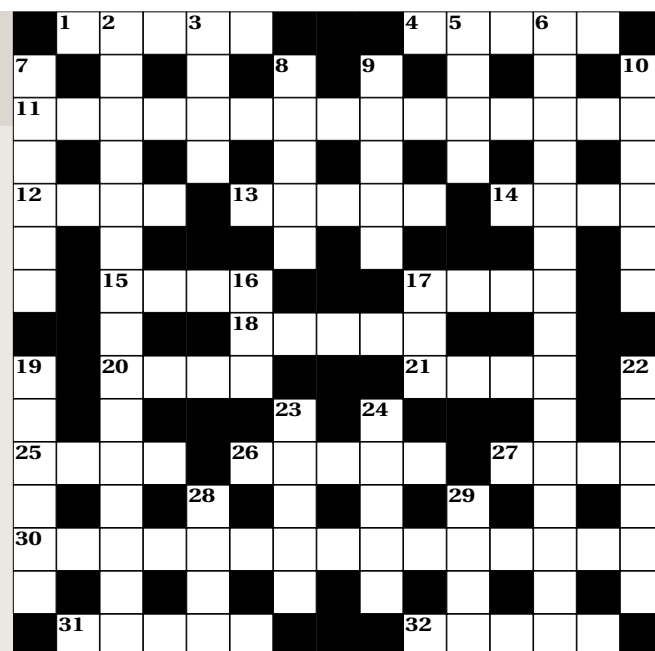
- 1) A Scots tell-tale(5).
- 4) Land by a riverbank (5).
- 11) Kintyre waterway (11, 4).
- 12) Accompanies haggis (4).
- 13) Underground basics! (5).
- 14) Bounce a ball in Scotland (4).
- 15) Its chief town is Tobermory (4).
- 17) Porridge essentials (4).
- 18) Grampian cathedral town (5).
- 20) Columba’s isle (4).
- 21) A pass between hills (4).

- 25) A reverberation! (4).
- 26) A top cape! (5).
- 27) Goes with a hoop! (4).
- 30) Ruined Grampian fortress (9, 6).
- 31) A Scots piedish (5).
- 32) Town on Largo Bay (5).

CLUES DOWN

- 2) Lothian heights (10, 5).
- 3) Taverns (4).
- 5) The Princess Royal (4).
- 6) National emblem (8, 7).
- 7) They’re baked on girdles (6).

- 8) Town on north side of River Forth (5).
- 9) East coast river-mouth (5).
- 10) Location near Wishaw (6).
- 16) Meadow land (3).
- 17) A choice to a Scot (3).
- 19) A Scotsman’s trousers (6).
- 22) For a Scot’s rubbish (6).
- 23) Scotch measures (5).
- 24) Scots supports! (5).
- 28) A Scots gradient (4).
- 29) Vegetable soup (4).





BELLINGHAM SCOTTISH GATHERING

Saturday, June 6, 2026

Marine Park • Blaine, WA, USA

Featuring the City of Bellingham
Open Highland Dancing Championship

A full day celebrating the sights
and sounds of Scotland

- Experience Pacific Northwest Beauty and Nature beside the Salish Sea. A stone's throw from the Peace Arch border crossing into Canada.
- **NEW:** Fabric & Fibers of Scotland Contest. Participants compete with items made from Scottish-origin textiles.
- Ride the festival ferry or the historic Plover to enjoy views of Semiahmoo Spit and majestic Mount Baker.

Made possible in part by Tourism Promotion Grants from the City of Blaine and Whatcom County.



ScottishDanceSociety.org



SCAN ME!



International Women's Day

Celebrating women in tourism in Scotland

Discover inspiring stories from Scottish trailblazers this International Women's Day.

Scotland is a land steeped in fascinating history and filled with magical tales and experiences for visitors to explore and enjoy. As the world celebrates International Women's Day on 8 March, it's a time to reflect on the stories and achievements of Scotland's well-known women, alongside the unsung heroines who influence the country we know today. From distinguished scientists and social reformers to trailblazing engineers and world-renowned artists and authors - Scotland has produced a plethora of formidable women.

The most famous and intriguing of all Scottish women, Mary Queen of Scots, was born in 1542 at Linlithgow Palace. She became the Queen of Scotland at only six days old. Explore The Mary Queen of Scots Visitor Centre in Jedburgh or visit a range of incredible sites across the country linked to Mary's eventful history.

Take inspiration not only from the women that have left their mark across Scottish history, but from the vibrant array of Scottish women forging new stories. Women showcasing ingenuity and leadership in tourism and empowering meaningful change across Scotland - the below are a brief example of Scotland's inspirational stories with women at the core.

Historical & Cultural Experiences



The Glasgow Women's Library-Glasgow Women's Library is no ordinary library. As well as a lending library, it holds a wonderful treasure trove of historical and contemporary artifacts and archive materials that celebrate the lives, histories and achievements of women. From Suffragette memorabilia and 1930s dress making patterns to rare 1970s Scottish Women's Liberation newsletters, it's all here. The only accredited museum in the UK dedicated to women's lives, histories and achievements, Glasgow Women's Library offers archives, exhibitions and events in the heart of the city's East End. The library runs a vibrant and diverse programme of events and activities available all year round. Including Women's Heritage Walks, book readings, exhibitions and so much more.



The Hill House – Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (Helensburgh, Argyll)-The Hill House in Helensburgh is widely recognised as the most iconic home designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Scotland's most famous architect. Commissioned by Glasgow book publisher Walter Blackie in 1902, up-and-coming architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh and artist Margaret Macdonald worked collaboratively to create the unique building, furniture and textiles. Mackintosh said of his wife: 'Margaret has genius, I have only talent'. She is now regarded as one of the most versatile, imaginative and successful artists working in Glasgow in the early 20th century.

Scotland has produced a plethora of formidable women.

Edinburgh International Festival – Nicola Benedetti first Scottish and female Director-The Edinburgh International Festival welcomes the finest performers in dance, opera, music and theatre from across the globe to Edinburgh for a spectacular three-week celebration every August. As well as being one of the most influential classical artists of today, Nicola Benedetti is both the first Scottish and the first female Festival Director since the Festival began in 1947.

Women-Led Tours Showcasing History, Culture, and Adventure



Black History Walking Tour of Edinburgh, Lisa Williams-Discover Edinburgh's deep links with Africa and

the Caribbean over the past 500 years in this guided walking tour. With a focus on the Caribbean and Edinburgh's role in the Transatlantic Slave System, hear the little-known stories of Edinburgh's many visitors and residents of African, African American and Caribbean heritage from the 16th century to the present day. The tour is led by Lisa Williams, an author, poet and founder of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association. She curates a range of events across Scotland to promote Caribbean culture and leads walking tours focusing on Edinburgh's black history.

Invisible Cities, Zakia Moulouai (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Scottish Borders)- Invisible Cities is a community interest company, set up by Zakia Moulouai, that trains people who have experienced homelessness to become walking tour guides of their own city. The organisation offers tours that are off the beaten track, personal and highlight real people, and raise awareness about social justice. As we approach International Women's Day, visitors can join Invisible Cities 'Real Women of Edinburgh' tour that uncovers stories about women's contribution to the city or 'The People of Glasgow' tour that explores the communities in Scotland's largest city.

Shetland with Laurie, Laurie Goodlad-Shetland with Laurie is a Scottish travel writer and tour guide itinerary planner with a passion for all things Shetland. Born to the islands, Laurie can trace her ancestry back hundreds of years and wants to share her deep connection to Shetland with its visitors, allowing them to feel a sense of belonging themselves. Laurie guides visitors through bespoke tours to help unlock the secrets of these fascinating islands.

Food and Drink Experiences by Female Founders



Cail Bruich, Lorna McNee (Glasgow)- One of two Michelin-starred restaurants in Glasgow, Cail Bruich aims to create truly memorable dining experiences, working closely with

producers and suppliers to offer guests the highest quality of food and drink. Head Chef Lorna McNee, protégé of the late chef Andrew Fairlie of Two Michelin-starred Restaurant Andrew Fairlie and the only female head chef of a Michelin-starred restaurant in Scotland, took up her first head chef role at Cail Bruich in August 2020. Lorna creates elegant plates of food that make the most of Scotland's seasonally changing ingredients prepared with respect and a lightness of touch.

Spirit & Spice, Ghillie Basan (Cairngorms National Park)-Ghillie Basan harnessed her intrepid spirit to build a highly distinctive, thriving business at her remote Highland home. She offers remarkable off-the-beaten-track experiences with food and drink at their core. At her business, visitors savour her unique style of food, Scottish spirits, and a real sense of outdoor adventure. Take part in a Whisky Food Safari and enjoy the flavours of the wild landscape while enjoying the stunning views.



Loch Levens Larder, Emma Niven (Kinross)-Nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of Kinross, Loch Leven's Larder is a family-run farm, restaurant, food hall and gift shop that celebrates the finest in local produce, craftsmanship, and honest farm-fresh foods. Loch Leven's Larder was founded by Emma Niven and her husband after they took over the family farm and recognised an opportunity to champion the community. The Larder uses as much local produce as possible, from vegetables grown in their own fields to produce from the many artisan makers in the surrounding area and the rest of Scotland.

Lussa Gin – Georgina, Sofie and Claire – (Isle of Jura, Argyll)-Located off Scotland's west coast, the long and narrow Isle of Jura is home to around 250 people and 6000 wild deer. It is also home to Lussa Gin - an award-winning gin made by three women with 15 botanicals from the island wilderness. Visitors to the remote distillery, 25 miles along the single-track road from the Jura ferry, will be treated to fine views along the way.



Nc'Neen Distillery, Annabel Thomas (Morvern Peninsula, Scottish Highlands)- Meet Annabel Thomas, founder and CEO of Nc'nean. Nc'nean is an organic whisky distillery nestled on the west coast of Scotland with a focus on sustainability. Nc'nean is one of the first female-founded distilleries in Scotland to be established in 200 years. They were also the first distillery in the UK to receive net zero verification, operating on 100% renewable energy.

Adventure & Outdoor Escapes



Wilderness Scotland-Starting in 2019, Wilderness Scotland decided to introduce an assortment of exciting, fully

guided women-only departures to create a space to enjoy the great outdoors. Wilderness Scotland's new trips have been devised to be even more inclusive to women who want to adventure in the wilderness. Whether a visitor wants to reduce competitiveness, feel confident in trying a new activity, take pride in their own abilities, avoid feeling self-conscious or simply become a part of the wilderness women's community, these women-only trips open up the wilderness to more women to travel the wilds of Scotland with the kind of solidarity, ease and atmosphere that perhaps doesn't come in a mixed group.

WanderWomen (Edinburgh, Scottish Borders, East Lothian)-Owned by Anna, WanderWomen Scotland facilitates award-winning, outstanding outdoor experiences for women in a unique mix of mindfulness and adventure. Anna created WanderWomen in 2018 to encourage women to have their space in the male-dominated adventure world. Her retreats include mindfulness walks, meditation, foraging, loch swimming, and more.

Wild Braemar, Annie Armstrong (Cairngorms National Park)-Owned by Annie Armstrong, Wild Braemar offers experiences including guided walks, wild swimming adventures, outdoor learning and creative workshops. Located in the heart of the stunning Cairngorms National Park, Wild Braemar aims to showcase the best of Scottish landscapes and natural spaces with experiences that are tailored to the visitor, providing unique opportunities to connect with nature.



Selkie Explorers, Celia Bull (Isle of Eigg)-Skippered by Celia Bull, an experienced yachtswoman who has sailed the world's oceans for over 20 years, Selkie Explorers offers female crewed sailing day and multiday trips of the Hebrides, St Kilda and Northern Isles aboard a yacht named *Selkie*.

Incredible Creators



Prickly Thistle, Clare Campbell (The Black Isle, Scottish Highlands)-Prickly Thistle is a luxury brand dedicated to Scotland's iconic cloth, tartan, made by women. The brand has taken their vision and created three unique tartan designs. These designs feature within all of the product ranges which have been manufactured exclusively within Scotland from only the highest quality raw materials.

Radical Weavers, Mari Breslin (Stirling)-Immerse oneself in craft courses where heritage and culture intertwine, offering a chance to learn the art of weaving and explore Scotland's textile history. Step into the enchanting world of weaving at the Radical Weavers independent charity studio nestled in the heart of Stirling. Experience one of the craft courses where heritage and culture intertwine, offering a unique opportunity to learn the art of weaving and delve into Scotland's rich textile history. Discover the joy of creating tartan-inspired treasures, a perfect gift experience beyond the ordinary.

Siobhan MacKenzie-Siobhan Mackenzie is a multi-award-winning Scottish fashion designer. Born and raised in The Black Isle in the Highlands of Scotland, her Highland heritage and Clan Mackenzie roots inspired her graduate collection and have remained a firm inspiration transcending throughout the brand. Five days after graduating with a First-Class BA Honours degree in Fashion Design & Production Siobhan launched her self-named label in 2014, aged 21. Whilst a student Siobhan undertook an internship with Scottish kilt-makers Glenisla, where she learnt the art of kilt making and thereafter began to experiment with new techniques. Her innovative design flair mixed with a Made in Scotland brand ethos reinvents the classics into a contemporary label inspired by Scotland. Clients have included Justin Bieber and Alan Cumming on the *Traitors*.

Text and images courtesy of VisitScotland. To plan your next trip to Scotland, see: www.visitscotland.com

SINGLE MALTS, BARRELS OF EXPERTISE



Search **VisitScotland**
to find out more



IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Photo: Port of Aberdeen.

Cruise tourism boosts Scotland's economy

New data published has highlighted for the first time the full benefits that cruise tourism brings to Scotland. The new report from Oxford Economics, commissioned by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), highlights the substantial economic value of cruise tourism to Scotland, underlining its role in supporting jobs, businesses, and communities across the country.

The study found that in 2023, cruise tourism generated £343 million in total economic output in Scotland and included benefits such as contributing £173 million to GDP and supporting 4,712 jobs across a wide range of sectors. The report comes as Scotland welcomed over 1 million visits from cruise guests in 2025.

Rob Mason, Chair, Cruise Scotland, said: "Cruise ships bring tourists from all over the world to Scotland. They visit coastal communities around the country that tourists rarely visit, bringing with them vast economic opportunities. With cruise calls being planned up to three years in advance, this provides added stability for the local businesses that rely on the cruise calls and helps us to maximise the benefits of cruise to Scotland."

This performance reflects Scotland's growing reputation as one of the world's best cruise destinations with a rich mix of heritage, landscapes, and hospitality.

Skye's Sleat Peninsula and Armadale sold



Armadale Estate Ltd, in partnership with the Clan Donald Lands Trust (CDLT), has announced the purchase of both Armadale Castle Estate and South Sleat Estate on the Sleat Peninsula, Isle of Skye by a Canadian family. The acquisition preserves the wider estate, including Armadale Castle and the Gardens, while supporting CDLT's planned transition of the Museum of the Isles to a new location in due course. As part of the agreed arrangements, CDLT will continue to occupy the current museum building for a sufficient period to ensure an orderly relocation. The Hutchison family and CDLT will work together to keep the museum open to visitors throughout 2026 at least, with CDLT retaining full responsibility for the collections and for planning the future move. Ranald Macdonald, Chair

of Trustees, CDLT said, "The Trust wishes the Hutchison family the very best for the years ahead and looks forward to working with them in a spirit of partnership. We see this as the start of a lasting friendship rooted in shared heritage and an enduring legacy, helping to shape a sustainable future for South Sleat and Armadale, and celebrating the Clan Donald story as it continues to inspire for generations to come."

As proud members of Clan Donald, the Hutchison family recognises the estate's unique cultural significance and intends to hold it for generations to come, safeguarding its importance to the wider clan and its value to the Isle of Skye. The family will maintain the historic lands as an integrated whole, honouring the estate's history, cultural traditions, and garden memorials, including commemorative trees. They look forward to engaging constructively with the Sleat community and acknowledging the interests of Clan Donald members, while supporting local employment and addressing concerns with care. Annelise Hutchison said, "We are pleased to be working closely with the Clan Donald Lands Trust during this important period of transition. It is a privilege to take on the responsibility of caring for these historic estates, and we are committed to ensuring that their heritage, landscape, and community remain at the heart of all future plans." A managed transition, undertaken with CDLT, will help ensure continuity and minimise disruption.

Armadale Estate Ltd will take an active role in estate operations, drawing on experience in real estate, forestry, tourism, and green energy. Following completion of the transaction, the family will develop plans for capital improvements and sustainable initiatives that enhance the estate while offering visitors an authentic experience of the Sleat Peninsula. Through long-term, generational stewardship, the Hutchison family aims to support the estate's crofting and agricultural activities while protecting the gardens and wider natural environment, helping to preserve the estate as an important landscape and to secure its future for generations to come.

World Cup bank holiday confirmed



Monday 15 June 2026 has officially been confirmed as a national bank holiday to mark Scotland's participation in the men's football World Cup finals.

The holiday was proposed by First Minister John Swinney to allow people, businesses and other organisations in Scotland to celebrate after the team's opening game against Haiti. His Majesty King Charles has approved the Royal Proclamation, confirming the bank holiday which will allow Scotland to celebrate

the first time the men's national team has participated in the tournament since 1998.

The First Minister said: "Scotland will be on the world stage this summer and I want as many people as possible to be able to celebrate that moment. Football means a great deal to many people in this country and it has been almost three decades since our men's national team played at the World Cup finals tournament. The joyous reaction when Steve Clarke and his players secured qualification demonstrated what it meant to end that long absence. We want to make the most of Scotland's participation in this global sporting event by ensuring people have the opportunity to come together and celebrate – no matter the outcome of the match. That is why I proposed making the Monday following our opening game in Boston a national bank holiday. I am very grateful to His Majesty King Charles for approving the proposal and I encourage employers around the country to work with staff to put in place suitable arrangements that will allow as many of them as possible to join in the celebrations."

Prince William and Princess Catherine visit the National Curling Academy in Stirling



Prince William at the National Curling Academy. Photo: Andrew Parsons/Kensington Palace.

Curlers from Great Britain's Olympic and Paralympic teams – including graduates of the University of Stirling's coveted sports scholarship programme – have met Prince William and Princess Catherine. The athletes had the opportunity to meet the Duke and Duchess of Rothesay during a royal visit to the National Curling Academy at The Peak Leisure Centre, Stirling. Their Royal Highnesses spoke with the curlers and heard about their preparations for the Milano Cortina Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Italy – before taking the opportunity to step onto the ice and participate in a curling game themselves.

David Bond, Director of Performance Sport at the University of Stirling, said: "To have five of our recent sports scholars selected for the Winter Olympics and Paralympics is a significant achievement – and one of which our athletes should be incredibly proud. It was great the curlers had the opportunity to meet with The Prince and Princess of Wales earlier today – an exciting start to what promises to be a brilliant few weeks for the athletes. We wish Team GB all the best at the competitions – and will be sure to be cheering them on from here at Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence."

Curling traces its roots back to 16th century Scotland and has since become one of Team GB and Paralympics GB's most successful winter sports – winning

six Olympic medals and two Paralympic medals to date. The National Curling Academy opened in August 2017 in the run-up to the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang – giving British Curling athletes a world-class environment to train. Located just a short distance from the Academy, the University of Stirling – Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence – is a popular destination for curlers seeking to combine their sporting and academic ambitions. The University of Stirling was established in 1967 by Royal Charter. At Stirling, athletes have access to world-class facilities, including a 50-metre pool, unrivalled outdoor space, and state-of-the-art strength and conditioning suites.

In addition to its coaching and facilities, Stirling's International Sports Scholarship Programme – one of the largest high-performance programmes in the UK – offers athletes funding support, academic flexibility, equipment and kit. It has supported hundreds of athletes since its inception in 1981 – with many competing on the world stage, including at the Olympics and Commonwealth Games.

£2 bus fare cap underway in Shetland



Single adult and child bus fares in Shetland have been launched and are capped at £2 as part of a Scottish Government pilot. The Regional Bus Fare Cap Pilot is a 12-month initiative to make bus travel more attractive, affordable and simple to plan. The pilot is being introduced on a phased basis across the ZetTrans and HiTrans Regional Transport Partnership areas, starting in Shetland and with a phased roll out across the islands and highlands area to follow. Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Fiona Hyslop said: "I'm really pleased to see the bus fare cap pilot get underway in Shetland. This is a key Budget commitment, and was recommended by the Scottish Government's Fair Fares Review as another way to make public transport more available, accessible and affordable. Our public transport system is a key enabler for growth and opportunity, helping people and communities to connect to jobs, education, retail, public services, leisure, social and family networks. This pilot can have a really positive impact for people in Shetland, and across the Highlands and Islands as it is rolled out, and I look forward to seeing how it supports sustainable travel across these regions."

Buses provide a lifeline service to Shetland's many rural communities and essential access to work, healthcare, retail and leisure. The bus network also provides tourists with the opportunity to explore the many attractions that Shetland's unique environment has to offer.

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.



Lady MacGregor, Alasdair Hilleary and Sir Malcolm Macgregor of MacGregor.

Alasdair Hilleary

Alasdair Hilleary is a past President of the Inverness Scots Guards Association. A man of great action, he's been an army ski champion and is a keen shot. A rather eccentric Scot, he is more often than not found in a kilt - and he has fingers in many pies. Not least is the job of helping to organise the annual Skye Balls. Then there is his involvement with the exclusive Shuttlecock Club. The former involves two nights of energetic reeling on a west coast island. It is a firm tartan tradition and one that was started by a couple of clan chiefs in Victorian times.

This is a larger-than-life Highland character.

The latter goes back to the 1930s and is also prestigious. Indeed, the Shuttlecock has been called 'one of the great clubs a gentleman should join before he dies.' And die is perhaps an apt term here. Because membership of this upmarket group is reserved for those who are brave enough to travel to Switzerland to toboggan face-down the awesome ice track that is the Cresta Run. Those that do so and crash at the notorious Shuttlecock bend and survive are allowed to join. This Alasdair has done – and still does. But these days he must be careful.

Because age catches up with us all, and broken bones are not uncommon as competitors hurtle down a frozen channel at speeds of up to forty miles an hour and more. Alasdair needs to slow down slightly. For he cannot afford to damage his hands. Because his main job is as a cartoonist and illustrator.

Loon

Yes, this is the infamous 'Loon'. A Highlander who draws amusing sporting scenes; painting in watercolour and finishing with pen, ink and sometimes crayon. With dozens of exhibitions under his belt, Loon's work goes all over the world. Then there are the caricatures. We have one – you can see it here - it is of the Chief's father, the late Sir Gregor MacGregor of MacGregor. There in his red and black tartan, a rugged clan chief and enthusiastic angler, it sums him up.

Alasdair has had the nickname 'loon' since the age of five. As he says, 'some people think it comes from the word lunatic.' More likely is that the word stems from the Doric dialect of north-east Scotland. For example, in Aberdeen they talk about 'loons and quines' – lads and lasses. Loon can also mean a rascal, and the Loon we stay with has a mischievous side to him. This is a larger-than-life Highland character: a talented artist and countryman, adventurous, jolly and a great organiser.

Plus, he can cook. Well, he can he certainly make a decent fry-up. Now, that is something else. Because a full Scottish breakfast is well worth crossing the pond for. From the porridge – a recipe dating back to ancient settlers in the Outer Hebrides – to a plate piled high with fried eggs, bacon, sausage, black pudding or haggis, mushrooms, tomatoes tattie scones and toast. Such fare is not for the faint-hearted, or those on a diet. But it will set the visitor to Scotland up for the day, and after a late night - where heaven forbid, drink may have been taken – they tell me it is a real pick me up...



A caricature of the late Sir Gregor MacGregor of MacGregor.

Bannockburn House discovery brings Jacobite history to life



Bannockburn House. Photo courtesy of Bannockburn House Trust.

In a revelation that feels straight out of *Outlander*, researchers at Robert Gordon University have uncovered new evidence of an assassination attempt on Prince Charles Edward Stuart, better known as Bonnie Prince Charlie, during his stay at Bannockburn House in January 1746. The discovery of a lead ball consistent with an 18th century musket shot, found during conservation work on a historic bed in the room traditionally associated with the Prince, adds a dramatic twist to one of Scotland's most storied chapters.

Using cutting-edge X-ray technology, archaeological visualisation experts from Robert Gordon University identified a deformed lead projectile concealed within the bed's footboard—silent testimony

to a moment of violence that may have unfolded during the Jacobite siege of Stirling. "This is historical detective work at its finest," said Dr Catherine Bradley, Conservation Trustee at Bannockburn House. "For centuries, local tradition spoke of a shooting incident here. Now, fragments of that story are aligning with physical evidence. Every new detail takes us deeper into the intrigue of 1746."

The find follows last year's identification of a musket ball impact on the room's wall, suggesting not one but possibly multiple shots were fired. Researchers are now asking: How many attackers were involved? How did the Prince escape? Could there be truth to the whispered tales of a secret tunnel?

A living story

Professor Pritchard said: "This research improves our understanding of the Jacobite Rising and the dangers faced by Bonnie Prince Charlie. Our 3D isation technologies allow for the digital preservation of fragile objects and sites, creating records that support further research and public sharing. By capturing these assets accurately, we are both expanding our knowledge and guaranteeing their preservation for future study."

The Bannockburn House Trust, in partnership with Robert Gordon University, Johns Hopkins University, and Historic Environment Scotland, is leading the investigation. Researchers emphasise that the investigation remains ongoing. The emerging evidence does not yet conclusively define the nature of the incident, but it does expand the evidence base. Further analysis and archaeological digs are planned. Malcolm McEwan, Chair of the Trust, said: "This is what happens when community heritage meets world-class research. Bannockburn House is not just a building - it's a living story, and we're inviting the public to be part of its next chapter."

The discovery stemmed from a collaborative programme involving Historic Environment Scotland, Robert Gordon University, and Johns Hopkins University; which brings postgraduate students from the United States to Scotland to engage directly with historic buildings, conservation practice, and digital documentation as part of their training.

New travel policies for UK entry

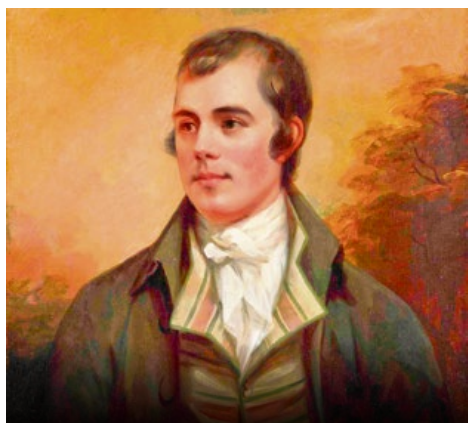
Travellers to the UK need to be up to date with the new policies now coming into effect. Visitors to the UK



need an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) if they do not need a visa for short stays of up to six months, or do not already have a UK immigration status. From 25 February 2026 eligible visitors without an ETA will not be able to board their transport and cannot legally travel to the UK. An ETA is a digital permission to travel – it is not a visa or a tax and does not permit entry into the UK – it authorises a person to travel to the UK. Non dual citizens of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA will now be required to apply online in advance for an ETA to visit the UK. An ETA currently costs £16 and permits multiple journeys to the UK for stays of up to six months at a time over two years or until the holder's passport expires – whichever is sooner.

British and Irish citizens do not need an ETA. However dual British citizens must have a valid British passport or certificate of entitlement when travelling to the UK. It is strongly advised that dual British citizens make sure they have a valid British passport or Certificate of Entitlement, to avoid problems like being denied boarding when travelling to the UK. From 25 February 2026, dual British citizens who cannot produce a valid British passport or certificate of entitlement will need to have additional identity checks and will not be able to go through UK passport control until their British nationality is verified. **Further guidance on ETAs, or renewing your UK passport, is available at: www.gov.uk**

'Once-in-a-lifetime discovery': Sir Henry Raeburn's missing portrait of poet Robert Burns is found after 220 years



A lost portrait of the famous Scottish poet, Robert Burns, by the renowned artist Sir Henry Raeburn has been found after over 200 years. The painting of Robert Burns was found during a house clearance in Surrey and consigned to auction in Wimbledon, London in March 2025. With a starting price of between £300–£500, the winning bid was £68,000. A triumph against all the odds, Dr William (Bill) Zachs, Director of Blackie House Library and Museum in Edinburgh and long-term Burns scholar and enthusiast, understood the potential significance of the painting and purchased the portrait believing it could be the elusive missing artwork. The painting has since been cleaned, and examined by experts, who confirm that it is, indeed, the lost Raeburn portrait.

Commissioned in 1803—at a fee of 20 guineas—by the publishers Cadell & Davies,

the painting was to be engraved for future editions of Burns's books, but, the painting has not been seen since. Its whereabouts remained a mystery for many decades.

In 1924 TCF Brothie, the Director of Glasgow Art Galleries and Museums, wrote that the painting's discovery would be 'an event bordering upon the sensational'. Lovers of Robert Burns and art experts alike have long debated the painting's location. This resulted in much press and journal coverage over the decades, as various portraits of Burns were attributed to Raeburn. However, all were dismissed and the painting remained lost until now.

Scotland's national poet

Robert Burns (1759–1796), Scotland's national poet, has had a lasting influence on literature, music and popular culture. His work continues to shape Scotland's cultural identity and resonates with audiences worldwide. The original 1787 portrait was painted by the Edinburgh-born artist Alexander Nasmyth as part of a marketing strategy for the second (Edinburgh) edition of Burns's breakthrough book, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. This painting, which is now recognised across the world, is part of Scotland's national art collection.

Despite Nasmyth's move away from portraiture towards landscape painting, he took the job, declining to accept a fee, as he became a friend of Burns. Following the publication of the second edition of his poems, in 1787, Burns became a social phenomenon.

The inclusion of an engraving of Nasmyth's portrait made the poet an instantly recognisable celebrity. Burns had already achieved fame by the end of his short life, having passed away at just 37 years old, but became a Scottish national icon in the 19th and 20th centuries. Such was his popularity that in 1802 the publishers Cadell & Davies decided to commission a new version of Nasmyth's original 1787 portrait for use in future publications. By this time Burns's close friend Alexander Cunningham was the custodian of the Nasmyth painting. He agreed to the proposal, advising that there was only one choice of artist, Henry Raeburn (1756–1823).

One of Scotland's most celebrated painters, Raeburn was a leading portraitist of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He is renowned for his powerful, direct style and iconic portraits of Scots. Over the years correspondence between Raeburn and Cadell & Davies, regarding both the commission and the delivery of the painting, has come to light. This proved the existence of the artwork, although with no clues as to where it ended up. One letter dated 22 February 1804 from Raeburn reads: 'Nothing could be more gratifying to me than the approbation you express of the copy I made'.

The painting has since been cleaned and examined, with several experts agreeing that this is the lost Raeburn portrait of Burns. The Raeburn attribution has been confirmed by: James Holloway, former Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; Dr Duncan Thomson,

former Keeper of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; Helen Smailes, Senior Curator of British Art at the National Galleries of Scotland; Lesley Stevenson, Senior Paintings Conservator at the National Galleries of Scotland; and Dr Bendor Grosvenor, art historian.

The discovery of the painting promises to add significantly to our appreciation of Scotland's greatest portrait painter, Sir Henry Raeburn. It also adds a new dimension to our understanding of the cultural afterlife of Nasmyth's 1787 portrait, already internationally famous as a symbol of Scottish national identity.

Dr Duncan Thomson, former Keeper of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery 1982–1997 and curator of the last major exhibition on Sir Henry Raeburn, National Galleries of Scotland, 1997, said: "The rediscovery of this portrait of Burns, after having disappeared for two hundred years, is of enormous significance, linking the poet with Scotland's greatest artist. Although Raeburn was working from an image made by another painter, the portrait has that wonderful freshness of observation that marks Raeburn's work at its best. It is more than likely that Raeburn had seen Burns in his heyday in Edinburgh a decade earlier, and had observed that glowing eye that had so impressed the young Walter Scott. The result is a portrait that speaks in an entirely new way of the warmth, the sensuality and the profound intelligence that we find in Burns's poetry."

Second phase of Major Works commences aboard RRS Discovery



Dundee Heritage Trust (DHT), the guardian of Captain Scott's pioneering Antarctic ship, the *Royal Research Ship Discovery* in Dundee, has announced the beginning of the second phase of a major repair and conservation project aboard the ship. This next phase, coinciding with the 125th anniversary of the Dundee-built polar research ship, will involve extensive repairs to the weather-beaten bulwark and stanchions, and create a fully supportive habitat for the vessel for the very first time. The works are expected to cost in excess of £2M and are generously supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Tay Cities Region Deal, the Northwood Charitable Trust, the Headley Trust, amongst others. Discovery Point and *RRS Discovery* will remain open as usual to visitors

throughout the works, a rare opportunity to observe both traditional shipwrighting skills and modern conservation methods in action, as tales are uncovered from within the ship's historic timbers.

The first phase of the major works project took place from 2023 to 2025 and focused on £1.4M of urgent structural repairs to the most vulnerable stern section of the ship. This included conserved areas of the ship's deck and stern, involving traditional shipwrighting methods such as caulking, steam bending, and blacking—endangered skills at risk of being lost to over 1,000 historic ships across the UK, including 6 operated as visitor attractions in Scotland. Through the project, these traditional techniques are being preserved, documented, and shared for future generations.

125 years of Discovery

The announcement of the next phase of conservation work comes as the *RRS Discovery* approaches its 125th anniversary on March 21st. The *Royal Research Ship (RRS) Discovery* was built in Dundee and launched in 1901. It was the first ship in the world purpose built for scientific research in ice-packed Antarctica, providing the ideal vessel for the first official British exploration of the region since the voyage of James Clark Ross sixty years earlier (1839–1843). The 1901 expedition launched the careers of some of the leading figures in what was to become known as the 'Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration', including Robert Falcon Scott (who led the expedition), Ernest Shackleton, Edward Wilson, Frank Wild, Tom Crean and William Lashly. The *RRS Discovery* is the sole surviving UK ship from the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration, which lasted between the end of the 19th century and the Shackleton–Rowett Expedition of 1921–1922.

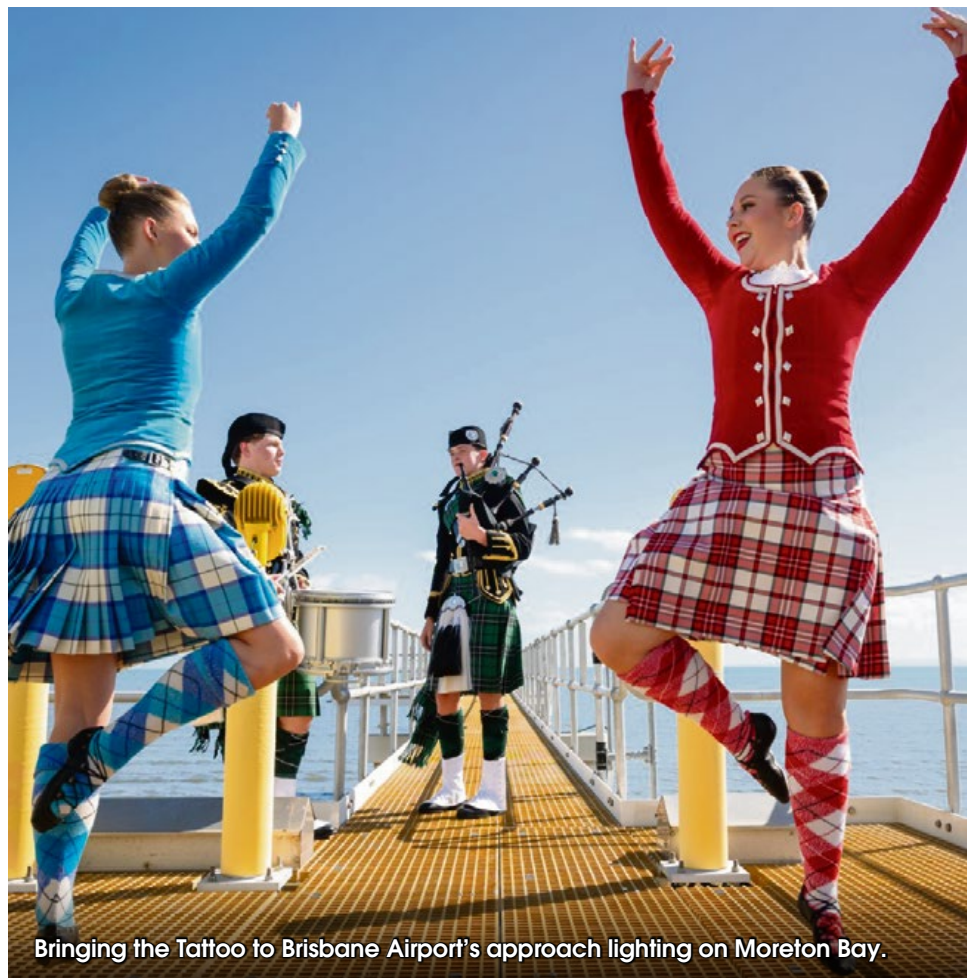
The expedition carried out scientific research and geographical exploration in what was then largely an untouched continent. It was seen as a trailblazer for later ventures and a landmark in British Antarctic exploration history, with many notable discoveries including the Cape Crozier emperor penguin colony; snow-free dry valleys in the western mountains; the Antarctic plateau (upon which the South Pole is located); evidence that the Ice Barrier was a floating ice shelf; and the discovery of many new marine species.

Following further Antarctic expeditions in 1925 and 1929, as well as an extended period as a Sea Scout training ship based in London between 1931–1979, *RRS Discovery* returned to Dundee in 1986, where it has resided as a multi-award-winning visitor attraction operated by Dundee Heritage Trust, attracting over 80,000 visitors a year.

Returned to its home city by Dundee Heritage Trust in 1986, *RRS Discovery* is today at the geographic, economic and cultural heart of Dundee, explored by tens of thousands of visitors from across the globe each year. Part of the UK's National Historic Fleet, she is officially recognised as one of the UK's most important historic ships. Formed in 1985 with a mission to preserve the ship for future generations, the Trust also has responsibility for Discovery Point, an Accredited museum and one of the region's most popular visitor attractions telling the story of Discovery and her groundbreaking scientific expeditions. The current project aboard the ship is a part of the Trust's wider transformation project at DiscoveryPoint, which hopes to transform the museum for the next generation.

Emma Halford-Forbes, Heritage Director at Dundee Heritage Trust said: "We're thrilled to be moving on to the next phase of works aboard the internationally significant *RRS Discovery*. We've formed an excellent team, who have guided us through the first phase of works and shared so much knowledge and skill with our team and volunteers. We're delighted to be working with them for the next two years."

Tartan on the Tarmac as the Tattoo takes over Brisbane



Bringing the Tattoo to Brisbane Airport's approach lighting on Moreton Bay.

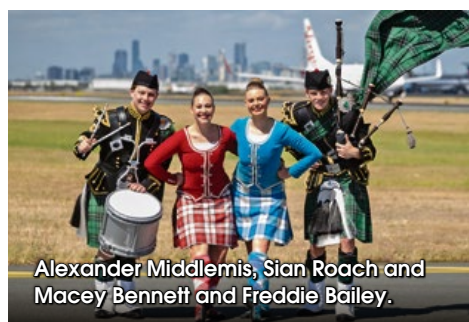
More than 1,000 performers from 13 countries descended on the city of Brisbane for The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, exclusively at Suncorp Stadium to celebrate the iconic event's 75th anniversary milestone. International arrivals included more than 800 musicians who flew into Brisbane from across the world, as well as over 38,000 Tattoo fans from interstate and overseas, with the expected economic impact an estimated \$39 million to Queensland.

A living canvas of music, movement, ceremony and precision

Freddie Bailey, Pipe Major at Brisbane Boys College Pipe Band and Alexander Middlemis on drums, with Highland Dancers, Macey Bennett and Sian Roach, and Alan Lane, Artistic Director of the Tattoo put tartan on the tarmac at the Brisbane international Airport to welcome fellow performers and interstate and international fans.

In a record-breaking Australian first, the world-renowned Tattoo presented four consecutive nights at Suncorp Stadium, the first time any act has delivered four back-to-back performances at the iconic venue. Representing Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, Tonga the United Kingdom, the United States and more, the cast created one of the most globally diverse line-ups ever assembled for an international Tattoo production.

Ahead of opening night performers arrived in Brisbane to undertake four days of intensive, full-scale rehearsals, transforming



Alexander Middlemis, Sian Roach and Macey Bennett and Freddie Bailey.

Suncorp Stadium into a living canvas of music, movement, ceremony, and precision. These final rehearsals brought together military bands, cultural groups, dancers, drummers, and pipers, many performing together for the very first time, to deliver a seamless, emotionally charged production under the stars.

More than 30 bands and cultural groups performed in *The Heroes Who Made Us*, including UK Military Bands from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, The Combined Military Bands of the Australian Defence Force, Queensland Police Pipe Band, Western Australia Police Pipe Band, Australia's Federation Guard, His Majesty the King of Norway's Guard Band and Drill Team, Japan Air Self-Defence Force Central Band, His Majesty's Armed Forces The Royal Corps of Musicians Tonga, Top Secret Drum Corps, United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Brisbane Boys' College Pipe Band, alongside performers from



Alan Lane, Creative Director of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, with cast members.



Photo: Josh Woning

New Zealand and beyond. Renowned for stirring music, military precision, cultural displays, and dramatic performances set against the backdrop of Edinburgh Castle,

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is a global phenomenon, drawing over 230,000 spectators annually in Scotland and over 100 million more worldwide through international broadcasts. Hundreds of thousands have flocked to previous Australian editions of the Tattoo in Sydney (2005, 2010, 2019) and Melbourne (2016).

Unique in global performance

For many involved, the Brisbane performances carry deep personal meaning. Among the cast were members of a fourth-generation Scottish family, who prepared to share this emotional milestone together on Australian soil, a living reflection of the heritage, pride, and continuity the Tattoo represents. Alan Lane, Creative Director of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, said ahead of opening night: "With the energy and excitement building. Each day sees the arrival of more of the creative team and cast from around the world. Transforming over 1,000 cast members into one seamless production in just a few days is the challenge of the Tattoo.

A challenge that makes the Tattoo unique in global performance. Performing four consecutive nights at Suncorp Stadium is something no artist has done before. I can't wait for Australian audiences to see the Show we've prepared for them."

Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner added: "We're thrilled to host the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Brisbane for the very first time. This spectacular, world-class event will draw visitors from across the country, deliver a big boost for local businesses, and shine a global spotlight on Brisbane as Australia's lifestyle capital."

Brisbane Airport CEO, Gert-Jan de Graaff said: "We're proud to play our part in bringing The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo to Brisbane and it's fair to say we've never seen this much tartan on our tarmac. As the city's gateway, Brisbane Airport plays a vital role in welcoming performers and supporting the logistics that make world-class cultural events possible."

Returning to Australia for the first time since 2019, the Brisbane season represents one of the Tattoo's most ambitious international stadium productions to date. Cutting-edge lighting, immersive sound design, and large-scale visual effects elevated the performance, blending the timeless traditions of the British Armed Forces with modern storytelling and world-class production innovation. The Tattoo then travelled to Auckland's Eden Park for its New Zealand run.

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo will take place in Edinburgh August 7-29th.
For details see: www.edintattoo.co.uk



Highland Dancers Sian Roach and Macey Bennett at Brisbane International Airport.

THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - The Advocate's Library (known as the National Library of Scotland since 1925) opened by its founder, Sir George Mackenzie, the Lord Advocate in Edinburgh. **1682**

1 - Actor David Niven was born, roles included *The Pink Panther* and *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Niven had claimed several times that he was born in Kirriemuir, but according to his birth certificate, was born in London. **1910**

1 - Scots voted in favour of Devolution, but failed to reach the required 40% of the population in favour of implementing it - due to 36% of the electorate not voting. **1979**

1 - Authorities confirm the first case of the global COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland, the index case of coronavirus being a traveller having returned from Italy. **2020**

2 - King Robert II born in Paisley, the first monarch of the House of Stewart. He was the son of Marjorie Bruce, daughter of Robert the Bruce, and Walter, High Steward of Scotland. Robert acted as regent three times during the reign of his uncle, David II, and acceded to the throne in 1371. He died in 1390 and was succeeded by his son Robert III. **1316**

3 - Robert Adam, architect, died. Among his many works were Culzean Castle, Fort George, The Town House, Inveraray and Glasgow Trades Hall. **1792**

3 - Alexander Graham Bell born Edinburgh. Bell was scientist, inventor, engineer, and innovator who is credited with patenting the first practical telephone and died in Nova Scotia, Canada in 1922. **1847**

4 - Forth Rail Bridge opened by Prince of Wales. The bridge spans the Firth of the River Forth to link Fife to Edinburgh by railway, was the world's earliest great multi-span cantilever bridge, and remains one of the longest. It is considered a symbol of Scotland, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. **1890**

4 - Jim Clark, Formula 1 World motor racing champion, born Fife. **1936**

5 - King David II born. **1323**

5 - Flora Macdonald, who helped to save Prince Charles Edward Stewart during his flight after the defeat at the Battle of Culloden, died in Kingsburgh, Skye (in the same bed in which Bonnie Prince Charlie had slept during his escape). **1790**



5 - *The Maid of the Loch* paddle steamer was launched, she was built in Glasgow and was the largest ever vessel to be built for an inland waterway in Britain, this was also the last of a series of steamers to sail on Loch Lomond, dating back to 1818. **1953**

6 - King James II decreed in an Act of Parliament that there should be regular target practice and military parades and that "football and golf be utterly cried down and not used". This was the first time that the games had been mentioned in Scottish documents. **1457**

6 - Scotland's first radio broadcast took place. The broadcast took place from Rex House, 202 Bath Street in Glasgow. By the summer of 1924, stations had opened in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and, by the eve of the Second World War, over 90% of the Scottish population were served by BBC transmitters. **1923**

7 - The world's first golf club was founded in Edinburgh. The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers held their first meeting on Leith Links and petitioned the Edinburgh Council to provide a silver club for competition. **1744**

8 - Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows* born in Edinburgh. **1859**

8 - The *Oor Wullie* cartoon strip first appeared in the *Sunday Post*. **1936**

8 - The creators of *Wirdle*, a Shetland dialect version of the *Wordle* game, announce the game's withdrawal following legal threats from *The New York Times*, owners of the original game. **2024**

9 - David Rizzio, Mary Queen of Scotland's secretary, murdered by Lord Ruthven in the Palace of Holyrood. **1566**

9 - *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith published. **1776**

9 - Scottish faith healer John Alexander Dowie died in Illinois, USA. Edinburgh born Downie believed in the power of prayer only for curing ailments and banned followers from eating certain food, drinking and smoking. **1907**

10 - St Kessog, the Irish missionary in the Lennox area and southern Perthshire, was killed. Kessog was Scotland's patron saint before Andrew, and his name was used as a battle cry by the Scots. Son of the king of Cashel in Ireland, St Kessog is said to have worked miracles, even as a child. **560**

10 - Birth of James Herriot, author of *All Creatures Great and Small*. **1916**

11 - The birth of Binkie Stuart, the child film actress, in Kilmarnock. Born Elizabeth Alison Fraser, she was hailed as Britain's answer to Shirley Temple and enjoyed huge fame as a child star. **1932**

11 - Sir Alexander Fleming, discoverer of penicillin, died. **1955**

12 - The last salmon was caught in the River Kelvin. The salmon population in the river had been in decline due to the rise of industrial pollution in the area. However, in February 1999, after £43 million of investment, salmon again spawned in the river and anglers were allowed back. **1852**

12 - Miner's strike at Polmaise Colliery. It is the first mine in Scotland to witness a walkout of its workers. **1984**

13 - Death of poet and historian John Barbour, author of *The Bruce* recounting the history of King Robert I. **1395**

13/15 - Blitz of Clydebank by German Luftwaffe. **1941**

14 - The birth of Scottish lawyer, Dame Margaret Kidd. Not only was Kidd Scotland's first woman advocate, but she was also the first woman King's Counsel in Britain and the first woman to plead before the House of Lords. **1900**

14 - First television programmes broadcast in Scotland. 2024 marks Stirling's 900th anniversary as a Royal Burgh. **1952**

14 - Stirling is granted city status in the United Kingdom by the Queen to mark her Golden Jubilee. **2002**

15 - Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh founded Advocate's Library "equipped with works written by lawyers". **1689**



15 - The end of two nights of heavy German bombing of Clydebank. The Clydebank Blitz, as it became known, destroyed a third of the buildings of Clydebank, leaving 35,000 people homeless. A thousand German bombers were used in the raid and the devastation of the town was so complete that only eight buildings remained entirely unscathed after the bombing. To further compound Clydebank's misery, only two enemy planes were shot down. **1941**

16 - King Robert the Bruce convened his first parliament, at St Andrews. **1309**

16 - Death of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, chief of the Fraser clan. He developed the Commando force in the British army and was active in the Dieppe Raid (1942) and the D-Day landings (1944). **1995**

16 - Scientists identify a gene variant that is known to increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer, and trace it to people with Orkney Island heritage, more specifically those with ancestry on the island of Westray. **2023**

17 - Treaty of Edinburgh between King Robert I and Edward III which recognised Scotland's independence, ending the 30 years of Wars of Independence. **1328**

17 - Scotland won Rugby "Grand Slam" at Murrayfield Stadium - the first time in 59 years. **1984**

18 - Earl of Leven raises a Border regiment to hold Edinburgh against the Jacobites. It later becomes the King's Own Scottish Borderers. In 2006, the Kings Own Scottish Borderers Regiment was amalgamated with the Royal Scots to form the Royal Scots Borderers, which became the 1st Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland. **1689**



18 - BBC Scotland announces its flagship soap, *River City*, will end in autumn 2026 after 24 years on air. It has been broadcast on BBC One Scotland since September 2002. **2025**

19 - King Alexander III died after crossing the river Forth to Fife at Queensferry. **1286**

19 - David Livingstone, missionary and explorer, born Blantyre. **1813**

20 - King Malcolm IV born. **1141**



21 - National Gallery of Scotland opened in Edinburgh. It is located on The Mound in the heart of the capital. **1859**

21 - Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh opened, becoming the home of Scottish rugby. Scotland marked the occasion by beating England 14-11 and winning their first Grand Slam. Unfortunately, the Scottish rugby team have only managed to repeat this success twice more, in 1984 and 1990. **1925**

22 - Neil Gow, first of a famous family of fiddle players and composers, born at Inver, near Dunkeld, Perthshire. **1727**

22 - Last fully public hanging in Scotland - that of Joseph Bell in Perth. **1868**

23 - The Free Church of Scotland settlement at New Edinburgh, New Zealand was founded under Rev Thomas Burns, a nephew of the poet Robert Burns. The settlement later became Dunedin, one of the largest towns in the country, and one which still retains a distinctive Scottish character. **1848**

23, Roddy McMillan, the Scottish stage and TV actor, was born. His credits include the TV series, *The View From Daniel Pike*, and the play, *The Revellers*. However, he will be most fondly remembered for his portrayal of Para Handy, the captain of the *Vital Spark* in the much-loved television series of the 1960s. **1923**

24 - Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland on the death of Queen Elizabeth I and the succession of King James VI of Scotland. **1603**

24 - An estimated one million people watched the *Queen Mary* leave the Clyde for the first time. However, the sailing did not quite go to plan: despite extensive dredging having taken place, the liner ran aground twice on the way to Gourrock. **1936**

25 - King Robert I ("The Bruce") crowned at Scone. Bruce was crowned by Bishop William de Lamberton in front of the banner of the kings of Scotland, wearing royal robes which had been hidden from the English. **1306**

25 - The Commercial Bank of Scotland was founded in Edinburgh by John Pitcairn, Lord Cockburn and others. **1810**

26 - Car driving tests introduced for the first time. **1934**

27 - King Robert II crowned at Scone. **1371**

27 - King James VI died at Theobalds Park, Hertfordshire and buried at Westminster Abbey. Succeeded by his son, King Charles I. **1625**

27 - Scottish chemist Sir James Dewar, inventor of the Dewar Flask, which later became known as the Thermos flask, died. **1923**



27 - David Coulthard, Grand Prix racing driver born in Twynholm, Dumfries and Galloway. He competed in Formula 1 from 1994 to 2008. David remains a central figure in the sport as a lead analyst for Channel 4 and an ambassador for Red Bull Racing. **1971**

27 - Humza Yousaf is elected as the Leader of the Scottish National Party and subsequently, First Minister of Scotland. He is the youngest holder of the position in history at just 37 years of age upon entry to office, the first from an ethnic minority background, the first Muslim to hold the office and the first First Minister with facial hair. **2023**

27 - VisitScotland announces that its 25 information centres will close over the next two years. The organisation said most visitors now used online resources and specialists for research and bookings. **2024**

28 - King Robert the Bruce captured Berwick on Tweed. **1318**

28 - The Scots Guards Regiment was formed when King Charles I issued a commission to the Marquess of Argyll, Chief of Clan Campbell, authorizing him to raise in Scotland a regiment of 1,500 men. The King's 'Lyfe Guard of Foot' became the Scots Guards. **1642**

28 - The Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, a bill to legalise assisted dying in Scotland and drafted by Liberal Democrat MSP Liam McArthur, is introduced into the Scottish Parliament. **2024**

29 - The Royal Society of Edinburgh incorporated by charter. **1783**

29 - Longannet, Scotland's last deep coal mine, closed, ending centuries of mining tradition. The Fife mine was put into liquidation after being flooded on the 23rd, when a dam separating old workings from new seams under the river Forth collapsed. **2002**

30 - Edward I of England sacked the Scottish town of Berwick. The English army destroyed the town and decimated the population of around 15,000. This act was retaliation for the widespread carnage perpetrated in the north of England, and what Edward considered to be the treacherous stab in the back of the Scottish-French alliance. Berwick was rebuilt by Northumbrians, and the Scottish-English border forever after remained north of this town. **1296**

30 - King James I captured by English near Flamborough Head on his way to France. **1406**

31 - General Patrick Gordon was born. Gordon led a remarkable life. Upon leaving Scotland, he entered the Russian army as a major and soon rose to become a close advisor to Russian Tsar, Peter the Great. Gordon rose to the rank of General-in-Chief and was made an admiral of the Russian navy. **1635**

31 - Scottish Regalia (crown, sceptre and sword) saved from invading army of Oliver Cromwell by James Granger, minister at Kinneff, Aberdeenshire, after they had been smuggled from Dunnottar Castle which was under siege. **1652**



31 - Buchanan Galleries shopping mall opened to the public in Glasgow city centre, part of Glasgow's Style Mile shopping precinct. A major redevelopment of the Galleries is set to begin in 2026. **1999**

48th ANNUAL

SAVANNAH SCOTTISH GAMES AND CELTIC FESTIVAL

MAY 2, 2026

Bynuh's Field at Historic
Bethesda Academy,
on the beautiful banks of
the internationally-famous
Moon River
Savannah, GA USA

Entertainment Lineup

- ▶ Seven Nations ▶ Colin Grant-Adams
- ▶ Swamptooth ▶ Lochlann

CALLING ALL PIPE BANDS!
Grades 3, 4, 5 Competition

CLAN TENT SPACE with 2 Tickets Packages
Starting at \$70.00



TITLE SPONSOR

*Stewart Sells
the Lowcountry*

Daniel Ravenel 

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY



 @SavannahScottishGames

@Savannah_Scottish_Games



Early Bird Ticket Special Ending April 6th
\$25 Adults / \$15 Youth 11-17 / \$5 Children 5-10 / Under 5 FREE

PURCHASE TICKETS AND LEARN MORE at SavannahScottishGames.com

IN THE CELTIC KITCHEN



Irish colcannon

Ingredients:

500g/1lb2oz. floury potatoes, cooked
250g/9oz. cabbage, shredded and lightly steamed
2 tbsp cream (optional)
salt and black pepper
1 large or 2 small onions, sliced thinly
a little bacon fat, beef dripping or other oil, for frying

Method:

Sieve or mash the potatoes and mix with the cabbage and cream. Season well with salt and pepper.
Fry the onion in the fat over a moderate heat until it is soft and beginning to brown.
Using a spatula, press half the potato and cabbage mixture in an even layer on to the onion and fry for 4-5 minutes until it is well browned and crispy underneath.
Cut the mixture into 4 quarters with the spatula or palette knife and

turn them over carefully so that the crispy bit is uppermost. Press the remaining potato and cabbage mixture on to the first layer and after a few more minutes, cut and turn again.

When the bottom is again browned, you will have a crispy top too, a crispy bottom, and a crispy layer in the middle.

Leek and potato soup

Ingredients:

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, sliced
225g/8oz. potatoes, cubed
2 medium leeks, sliced
1.2 litres/2 pints vegetable stock
150ml/5fl oz. double cream or crème fraîche
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method:

Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onions, potatoes and leeks. Cook for 3-4 minutes until starting to soften.

Add the vegetable stock and bring to the boil. Season well and simmer until the vegetables are tender.

Whizz with a hand blender or in a blender until smooth. Reheat in a clean pan, stir in the cream or crème fraîche, heat through and serve.

Welsh Bara Brith



Ingredients:

450g/1lb. dried mixed fruit
250g/9oz. brown sugar
300ml/½ pint warm black tea
2 tsp. mixed spice
450g/1lb. self-raising flour
1 free-range egg, beaten

Method:

In a large bowl soak the fruit and sugar in strained tea and leave overnight.

Next day preheat the oven to 170C/325F/Gas 3. Line a 900g/2lb loaf tin with baking parchment.

Mix the remaining ingredients into the fruit mixture and beat well.

Pour the mixture into the loaf tin and bake the oven and bake for 1½ hours or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

Ulster Champ

Ingredients:

750g/1½ lbs freshly cooked hot mashed potatoes
4 tablespoons melted butter
10 spring onions/scallions (or 2 leeks), cooked in ½ cup/120ml milk
salt and pepper

Method:

Cook the chopped spring onions, green part as well as white, in the milk; drain but reserve the milk. Mash the hot potatoes, season to taste and then add the spring onion. Beat well together and add enough of the reserved hot milk to make

We celebrate our Celtic cousins of Cornwall, Wales and Ireland who will be celebrating St David's, St Piran's and St Patrick's Day this month. People in Wales and those of Welsh origin celebrate the life of their patron saint, St David, and the Welsh culture on March 1st. Saint Piran's Day is celebrated each year on 5th March as the day of Cornwall. The Irish Saint Patrick will be celebrated across the world on March 17th by the Irish community. As our Welsh cousins would say, Iechyd da or good health!

the dish creamy and smooth. Put into a deep warmed dish, make a well in the centre and pour the hot melted butter into it. The dry potato is dipped into the well of butter when serving.

Cornish Heavy (Hewva) Cake



Ingredients:

500g/1lb 1oz. Self-raising flour
250g/9oz Butter
360g/13oz. Mixed dried fruit
180g/6oz. Sugar
100ml/3.5 fl oz. Milk

Method:

Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F. Line a medium, square cake tin.

Rub the butter into the flour until it's the texture of fine breadcrumbs. Add the sugar and fruit and mix well. Add the milk and mix to a soft, stiff dough.

Press into the cake tin, pushing down firmly in the corners. Score the top of the cake with a sharp knife, making criss-cross diagonal lines.

Place in the middle of the preheated oven and bake for 35-40 minutes, or until golden brown and a skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean.

Remove from the oven and while still warm, brush with milk and give a generous sprinkling of granulated sugar. Allow to cool and cut generous slices.

Welsh Dragon Cocktail

Ingredients:

25ml/1 oz. vodka
50ml/2 oz. melon liqueur
25ml/1 oz. peach schnapps
50ml/2 oz. orange juice
75ml/2.5 oz. pineapple juice
75ml/2.5 oz of cranberry juice
15ml/0.5 oz. of grenadine
Crushed ice

Method:

Add your vodka, melon liqueur and pineapple juice to a glass filled with the crushed ice. In a mixing glass, put the Grenadine, peach schnapps, orange juice and cranberry and stir. Pour the mixture over the reverse of a twisted mixing spoon into the glass to create a layered effect of the Welsh flag.

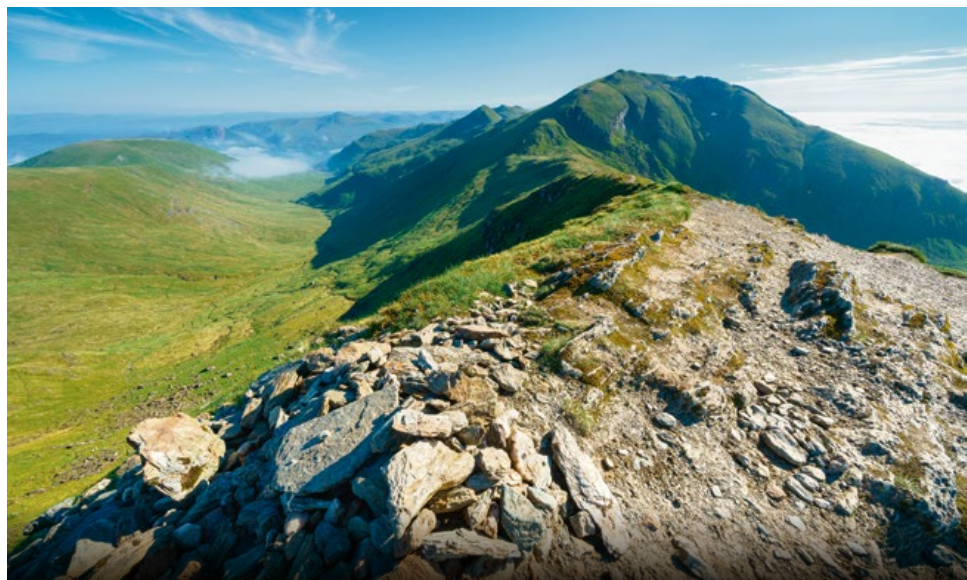
Tartan of the Month

International Association of Women Police (IAWP) 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 tartan was designed for the International Association of Women Police (IAWP). Black - a colour common to many police forces around the world - along with the colours of the 62nd annual conference of the International Association of Women Police, came together to form the tartan celebrating the event in 2025.
The founding date of the IAWP is woven into the design with 19 threads in the small black squares and 15 threads in the purple. The conference year is marked with 25 green threads. This tartan (reference: 15027) was designed by Brian Wilton and registered in September, 2025.

National Trust for Scotland's American Friends Raise \$75,000 for Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve



Funds will support vital conservation work at Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve—protecting rare alpine habitats, native wildlife, and the long-term health of one of Scotland's most important mountain landscapes.

The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA (NTSUSA) has met a challenge set by the Connecticut-based Jeniam Foundation, resulting in a gift of \$75,000 to the National Trust for Scotland in recognition of the 75th anniversary of its acquisition of Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve. The gift comprises individual donations from more than 70 NTSUSA supporters across the United States, which were matched by the Jeniam Foundation.

The National Trust for Scotland purchased Ben Lawers in 1950 to protect its rare population of arctic-alpine plants, the

largest in the United Kingdom. Since then, the Trust has embarked on a long-term program to understand the pressures affecting species and habitats by monitoring changes to the 11,000-acre landscape.

These insights have helped reverse nature loss over the past 75 years. Successes on Ben Lawers include forty years of regular footpath maintenance, allowing open access to the landscape for more than 40,000 annual visitors. Updated wayfinding and interpretation highlight the significance of the cultural landscape (which dates back thousands of years) as well as the biodiverse natural habitat.



The Trust also has purchased grazing rights at market rate to enable the natural regeneration of the countryside, using GPS collars to create virtual fences, and pioneered the restoration of montane scrub, planting more than 400,000 montane willows.

Scotland's natural beauty

In September, the Jeniam Foundation issued a challenge to NTSUSA, the American friend's group of the National Trust for Scotland, offering to match all donations to Ben Lawers dollar-for-dollar up to \$30,000. With this important leverage, NTSUSA sent an appeal to its members that was met with tremendous enthusiasm. In just two months, the Jeniam Foundation's match was met and exceeded.

"Ben Lawers is a special place in part because it was the first property the National Trust for Scotland purchased specifically for nature conservation," said Kirstin Bridier, executive director of The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA. "The Trust not only cares for castles and country houses but also protects nearly 200,000 acres of wild countryside across Scotland. The success of this fundraising appeal demonstrates that

Americans are interested in conserving Scotland's natural beauty as well as its cultural heritage for the benefit of future generations."

NTSUSA's \$75,000 grant to the National Trust for Scotland not only marks the 75th anniversary of the Trust's acquisition of the landscape, but also recognizes the recent retirement of Helen Cole, who worked on the mountain as property manager and senior ranger for 35 years.

Ben Lawers is located north of Loch Tay in the Scottish Highlands. It is the 10th highest Munro (mountain over 3,000 feet) in Scotland. The National Trust for Scotland is that country's largest independent conservation charity. In addition to wild landscapes like Ben Lawers, the Trust looks after ancient houses, battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, and all the communities, plants and animals which depend upon them.

In the US, The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA has raised nearly \$12 million for the Trust's conservation priorities since its founding in 2000.



Scottish Tartans Museum

and Heritage Center

- A Must See - America's Only Scottish Tartans Museum!
- Cradled in the Stunning Nantahala National Forest
- Devoted Team of Scottish Culture Ambassadors
- Impressive Scots Heritage Resource Center
- Hundreds of Unique Historical Exhibits
- Bountiful Gift and Apparel Shop







86 E. Main St. • Franklin, NC
(828) 524-7472 • scottishtartansmuseum.org

Calling the Clans

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

Clan Baird Society Worldwide



Membership is open to those descended from Baird, Barde, Bard, Beard, Beaird, Brd, Bayard, Bardt, Barth and Biard or varied spellings of the name of Scottish origin.

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

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

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



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

HOUSE OF BURNETT INTERNATIONAL, INC.
THE WORLDWIDE BURNETT SOCIETY
www.houseofburnett.org

Clan Donald Australia

"Under the patronage of the High Council of the chiefs of Clan Donald"

High Commissioner John Angus Currie

State Commissioners

NSW John A Currie
SA Michael Murphy
Vic Norman A Macdonald
WA Pamela McDonald

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

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

Clan Farquharson



CLAN BELL

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

Website: www.ClanBell.org
Online membership: <https://clanbell.org/membership.html>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ClanBell>
Email: President@clanbell.org
Clan Bell North America
49 Greystone Lane NW
Cartersville, GA, 30121



National Clan Cameron Australia Inc.

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

President: Alistair Cameron
Secretary: Terry Cameron
secy.nationalclancameronaus@gmail.com
www.clan-cameron.au



Clan Donald U.S.A. Inc.

Clan Donald USA is a nationwide organization of over 1,200 families who trace their ancestry to any of the branches of Clann Domhnaill. We embrace all of the MacDonalds, no matter how spelled, and other surnames that are recognized as branches or adherents of the greatest of the Highland Clans.

Clandonaldusa.org



WWW.CLAN-FORBES.ORG

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

Instagram: [@CLANFORBESSOCIETY](https://www.instagram.com/CLANFORBESSOCIETY)

SIGN UP FOR A FREE NEWSLETTER!

For more information:
Membership@Clan-Forbes.org

The Blair Society for Genealogical Research



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

www.blairsociety.org



Arms of the Chief
Peter Carruthers of Holmains Society Patron
CLAN CARRUTHERS SOCIETY (INTERNATIONAL)
Royal Charter to Holmains (1755)
Official home of Carruthers
www.clancarruthersociety.org
michaelcarruthers100@gmail.com



Clan Donnachaidh Society of New South Wales Inc., Australia

Duncan Robertson Reid

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

For information and membership application, contact Richard Harvey, Secretary
Email: Ih100@tpg.com.au



Clan Fraser Society of Australia

Invites all Frasers and Fraser septs to join our clan society. All Members receive a copy of our quarterly newsletter "Strawberry Leaves" Membership enquiries can be made via the Clan Fraser website: clanfraseraustralia.org
Email: clanfraseraustralia1@gmail.com
Or you can contact our Commissioner Don Chitts on Ph: (03) 9754 5120
For the latest Clan Fraser news and events go to our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064819413911>

Family of Bruce International, Inc.

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

Membership inquiries should be directed to:
Donald E. Bruce, President
bruce1051@comcast.net
1051 Eagle Ridge Trail
Stillwater, Minnesota 55082
Rachel Bruce, Secretary
roebuce1@gmail.com
1652 Glencoe St.
Denver, Colorado, 80220
www.familyofbruceinternational.org



CHISHOLM Clan Chisholm Society of Australia Inc

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

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

CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY

Membership open to all who share the Sept names Robertson, Duncan, Reid (and others) and anyone who has an interest in Clan Donnachaidh, its clanslands, history and heritage.

Visit our website for more information on the Society, our Clan Museum and Struan Kirk in Scotland, our DNA project, and to locate a branch near you.



Website: www.donnachaidh.com

E-mail: admin@donnachaidh.com

Facebook: Official Clan Donnachaidh page (Robertsons, Reids, Duncans and others)

Clan Galbraith Society

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

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

www.clangalbraith.org



50+ Septs including Gibson, Watson, Harper, Leny, Macaslan, Mackinlay, Spittell & Yule

www.theclanbuchanan.com
facebook: [theclanbuchanan](https://www.facebook.com/theclanbuchanan)



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

contact@curriekindred.com
www.learnedkindredofcurrie.com

Edmonstone Clan Society

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

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

CLAN GREGOR SOCIETY

Est: 1822 in Edinburgh Scotland

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

Rest of the World:
membership@clangregor.com

Web: www.clangregor.com

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



Clan Buchanan Oceania



Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands

Secretary Heather Watt
Email heverwatt@gmail.com
Phone +61 438 965 200

www.theclanbuchanan.com/oceania
facebook: [buchananclan](https://www.facebook.com/buchananclan)



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

Elliot Clan Society, U.S.A.

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

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

Website: www.elliotclan-usa.com

Clan Gregor Society Australasia

All MacGregors and Septs of our clan are invited to join the Clan Gregor Society Est 1822 If you live in Australia or New Zealand, please contact our clan representative:

Frank McGregor
PO Box 14 NORTH HOBART TAS 7002
Email: clangregoraustalasia@gmail.com
Web: www.clangregor.com

"Royal is our Race"



American Clan Gregor Society

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

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

Contact our registrar: **Jeanne P. Lehr**
11 Ballas Crt.
St. Louis, MO 63131-3038
Phone: 314-432-2842, registrar@acgsus.org
website: www.acgsus.org



Clan Little Society, Inc.

Welcoming Little/Lyttle/Lytle and the like.

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

www.clanlittlesociety.org
Registered in the State of Georgia, USA
Proud Member of COSCA



Clan MacKenzie Society of New Zealand

We welcome all MacKenzies
All spellings and from all Septs.
jwmck900@gmail.com
www.clanmackenzienz.org




Clan MacNicol

Chief: **John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scurrybreac**
Contact: Secretary Mal Nicolson
55 Arcadia Ave
GYMEA BAY NSW 2227
www.clanmacnicol.org



Clan Hamilton Society

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



McAlpin/e

and variant spellings

Commander: **Michael T. McAlpin**

DISCOVER YOUR HERITAGE!
Contact: membership.macalpein@gmail.com
Website: <https://macalpein.com/>



MacLaren

Clan Labhran

Clan MacLaren Society of Australia

Information about the Clan and application for CMSA membership is available on the website or via the email address below.
Membership is open to MacLarens (all spellings), Septs, individuals and families with an association to the Clan.
<https://clanmaclarenau.org/>
clanmaclarenau@gmail.com



Clan 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	Australia. Pam Rhemrov Australian.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +61 407 789 924
Canada. Denise Lagundzin Canada.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +1 519 507 4465	England & Wales. William Macpherson EandW.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +44 7877 363 507
Europe. Bodo Bernd Schmitz Europe.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +0152 538 19 355	New Zealand. Tony McPherson NewZealand.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +64 274 587 812
Scotland & Northern Ireland. Moray G Cattaneach 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/>



Clan Hay

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

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

www.clanhay.com




Clan MacDougall Society of North America

MacDougalls, MacDowalls, & ALL Associated Families

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

Learn MORE at www.MacDougall.org



Clan MacLaren

MacLaren MacLaurin Lawrence
Lawson Low[e]
Low[e]ry Law[e] Patterson
MacPatrick MacRory

Mark A. McLaren, President
President@clanmaclarenna.org



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: clanmacraeaustnzn@gmail.com

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



CLAN HOPE of Craighall Society

INTERNATIONAL & AUSTRALIA
President & Commissioner: Stephen J. Hope
president@clanhope.org
www.clanhope.org

UNITED STATES of AMERICA
High Commissioner: Richard Rex Hope
highcommissionerusa@clanhope.org

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

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

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



Macfie Clan Society of Australia

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

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



Clan MacLellan

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

Email: treasurer@clanmaclellan.net

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

Visit our website: www.clanmaclellan.net



Clan MacRae Society of North America

Granted Arms in 2008

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

www.macrae.org
Need more info? Contact:
Dean McCraw, President
912-596-8624
dean.mccraw1@gmail.com




Clan Irving

Arms of the Chief
Rupert Irving of Bonshaw
(Hereditary Chief and Patron, 20th of his line)

Official home of this proud Border Reiver Clan

IRVING

Cordially invites all **Irving/Irvines** and other spellings of the name to join us in preserving our rich Border history and heritage.

www.clanirving.com



Clan MacInnes

Int'l Assn. of Clan MacInnes (Aonghais)

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

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



Clan MacLennan worldwide

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

Become a member now
www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com/join

www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com



Clan Maitland Society


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

North America: Rosemary Maitland Thom
rthomnvrprdcn@aol.com www.clanmaitlandna.org

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

New Zealand: Judette Maitland judette@xtra.co.nz
33 Disley Street, Highbury, Wellington 6012. NZ

We welcome all with Maitland, Lauderdale, Maitlen and similar name spelling. See the entire list and your family history at: www.clanmaitland.org.uk



Clan Irwin Association

Chief and Patron
Alexander H.R Irvine of Drum,
27th Baron and Laird of Drum, Chief of the Name

www.clanirwin.org
IRWIN • IRVINE • IRVIN • IRVING • ERWIN
We welcome all: no matter the spelling.



Clan Mackenzie Society in Australia

Inviting all Mackenzies to join us in celebrating our heritage.

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



Clan MacLeod Societies of Australia

Membership is open to MacLeods and Septs (of any variant spelling) and descendants. **Septs:** Askey, Beaton, Bethune, Caskie, Harold, Lewis, MacAndie, MacAskill, MacAulay, MacCabe, MacCaig, MacCaskey, MacClure, MacCorkill, MacCrimmon, MacGillechallum, MacHaigh, MacRaild, MacWilliam, Norie, Norman, Tolmie, Williamson

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

• Email: peter.macleod@exemail.com.au



Clan Morrison Society of North America

Morrison

Clann MhicGillemoire: Morrison + Gilmore + Brieve

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


www.clanmorrison.net

Clan Muirhead Society

 A NON-PROF. CORP.
 Muirhead, Muirhede, Morehead, Moorhead
 and all Variant Names
www.clanmuirhead.com
 Rev. Ref. Chev. Raymond L. Morehead, GOTJ, FSA Scot,
 Chief Officer Elect Clan Muirhead Society
 Email- raymondktj@msn.com or raymond@clanmuirhead.com

Clan Ross America
 Representing the great Highland Clan of Ross since 1976.

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

Clan Wardlaw Association

 Founded 2004
 Worldwide organization for all Wardlaws or related families. We invite you to join us.
 Email: clanwardlaw2004@gmail.com
'Wardlaw ivermair!'
www.clanwardlaw.com
Wardlaw Tartan and Ancestry Books

The Scottish Australian Heritage Council

 Membership is welcome from all of Scottish descent.
 For information please contact
members@scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

www.scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

CLAN MUNRO ASSOCIATION
 AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND


 We would be pleased to welcome as a member, anyone interested in their Clan heritage with the names; Munro, Monro, Monroe and the septs, Foulis, MacCulloch, Dingwall, MacLulich and Vass.
 BECOME A MEMBER, VISIT
www.clanmunroassociation.org.au
 memberships@clanmunroassociation.org.au

Clan Sinclair Australia

 Membership and inquiries from all Sinclairs, Sinclair Septs and Sinclair descendants.
 For further info contact
 President: El-Myrrh Sinclair-Drever 0477 426 587
 Secretary : Liane Sinclair 0410 045 263
 E: info@clansinclairaustralia.com
www.clansinclairaustralia.com

Scottish Associations and Societies

 THE AMERICAN-SCOTTISH FOUNDATION, INC.
 Through our platform of projects and events ASF helps share and strengthen the heritage and cultural message of Scotland's past and future. A bridge between the United States and Scotland.
www.americanscottishfoundation.org
 The American-Scottish Foundation

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

 The Society of St. Andrew of Scotland (Queensland) Limited
 ABN 30 093 578 860
 Invites membership of all people of Scottish descent or association
 The Secretary, P.O. Box 352, Mt Gravatt, QLD 4122
www.standrewsociety.com

Discover Your Nesbitt/Nisbet Ancestry

ibydeit.org
nesbittnisbet.org.uk

Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

 Contact: M Williams, Secretary
clansutherlandsocietyaustralia@gmail.com
<http://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus>
 Facebook: Clan Sutherland Society in Australia

Caledonian Society of WA Inc.

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

Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group
 Supporting the Scottish Community in Victoria
 Suite 87, 139 Cardigan St
 Carlton Vic 3053
 Email: resource_centre@scotsfoaus.org.au
 Website: <https://scotsfoaus.org.au>
 Facebook: [Facebook.com/ScotsOfVictoria](https://www.facebook.com/ScotsOfVictoria)

OLIPHANT CLAN & FAMILY ASSOCIATION of North America

 The only home for all Clan Oliphant in the Americas.
 Oliphant - Olyphant - Oliphint
 Olifant - Olifent and all descended
ClanOliphantMembership@gmail.com
www.OliphantOfNorthAmerica.org

Clan Sutherland Society of North America Inc.


 The Society cordially invites membership of all Sutherlands (however the name is spelled) and historically associated families: Cheyne, Duffus, Gray, Frederith and Mowat.
 Email: Secretary@ClanSutherland.org
 Website: www.ClanSutherland.org

Hunter Valley Scots Club Inc

 Promotes and supports all forms of Scottish culture in Newcastle, Hunter Valley and surrounding areas.
 Members and interested people are welcome to attend activities such as Burns Night, Caledonian Night, St Andrew's Day, and other social functions.
 Web: hvscots.org Email: hunterscots@gmail.com
 P.O. Box 34, Kotara NSW 2289

St Andrew Society of W.A.

 Promoting Scottish dancing, singing, literature & other cultural activities.
 For further information contact:
secretary@saintandrew.org.au
<https://saintandrew.org.au/>
Celebrating All Things Scottish

Clan Pollock

 Among the most ancient families of Scotland. If you are a descendant of Pollock, Pollok, Pook, Polk, Polke, Paulk, Poalke, Poulk, Poolke, Pogue - you are cordially invited to contact:
A. D. Pollock, Jr.
 PO Box 404
 Greenville, KY 42345
 e-mail: apollockis@comcast.net

YOUNG
 Youngs of Scotland in Australia

 Invites all those of the name of Young, or descended of a Young, to join our international collective organisation.
 Convenor: Ian J Young AM FSAScot
membership@youngsofscotland.com
www.youngsofscotland.com

The Robert Burns Club of Melbourne Inc.

 > Promotes interest in the works, life and milieu of the Scottish Poet Robert Burns
 > Celebrates Scottish Culture
 > Conducts Annual Burns Supper, Poetry Afternoon & Pleasant Sunday Afternoon
 For Membership Information contact:
 Secretary: Melissa Ventre - 0405 182 458
 Email: secretary@robertburnsclubmelbourne.org.au

Victorian Scottish Heritage Cultural Foundation

 Pipe Band Support
 Highland Dance Awards
 Scottish Gaelic Scholarship
 Literature & Performing Arts
 Schools Scottish Music Prizes
 Scottish Festivals & Exhibitions
 Highland Games • Young Fiddler Awards
 email: info@vshcf.com.au
 website: <https://www.vshcf.com.au/>

Clan Ross in Australia

 for information contact Commander Des Ross
 (By appointment David Ross Bt Chief of Clan Ross and Balnagowan)
 We would be pleased to hear from anyone with Ross Clan heritage and interest.
 Contact: Commander Des Ross at
lonepiper.ross@gmail.com M 0403 830 853

YOUNGS OF SCOTLAND

 Membership inquiries:
 Ms. Laura Young,
 33 McKeen Street,
 Jarvis, Ontario,
 Canada N0A 1J0
4scottishthistles@gmail.com

Scots Canada

 Join our 90+ members in celebrating your Scottish Heritage while promoting your growth and success
 Find out more and how to belong at
scotscanada.com
 Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada

Victorian Scottish Union Inc
 Established 1905
 Umbrella group representing the interest of Scottish Clans and Societies in Victoria.
 Affiliated Clans & Societies
 Brunswick Scottish Society
 Clan Donald Victoria
 Clan Grant
 Clan Hay
 Clan Macdonald of Yarraville
 Clan Sinclair
 Geelong Scottish Dance
 Glenbrae Celtic Dancers
 Maryborough Highland Society
 Scottish Country Dance Society of Victoria
 Robert Burns Scottish Festival Camperdown
 The Robert Burns Club of Melbourne
 Warrambool & District Caledonian Society
 Warrambool Highland Dance
 Chief : Mr Grant McKinna
 President Norman Macdonald
 Secretary Jan Macdonald
 Contact details:
 Email: secretary@victorianscottishunion.com
 Mobile 0438 584 930
 Address: PO Box 116, Cobden, Victoria 3266
www.victorianscottishunion.com

The Isle of Gigha - *The community owned island*



Isle of Gigha - Twin Beaches by Brian Turner, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.



Looking over the Sound of Gigha by Paakman01, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

By: Judy Vickers

Independence Days around the world often mean fireworks, military parades and other exuberant traditional festivities. On the tiny Scottish island of Gigha, however, the celebrations are rather less headline-grabbing – yet no less significant. The population of just under 200 mark Gigha Day - their “independence day”, the day the islanders succeeded in purchasing the Hebridean island in a community buyout in 2002 – on March 15.

“For the first few years, it was quite a big day,” explains Ian Wilson, vice chairman of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust, which manages the island. “Now at 1pm that day the school kids read a poem, we raise the flag and everyone goes back to the hotel. It’s not like July 4th!” Low key the celebrations may be now, but the community buyout was a landmark event when the islanders bought Gigha from its last private landlord for £4m.

The Hebrides

Just seven miles long by a mile and half wide, Gigha is the most southerly of the Hebrides, with stunning white beaches, above average sunshine and amazing views from its west coast across to the islands of Islay and Jura. But before 2002, when the buyout was completed, those beautiful natural assets weren’t enough to keep the population afloat – the number of residents on the island had dropped to below 100 and the primary school was in danger of closing. Now, the population has nearly doubled, sub-standard housing has been renovated, and a host of projects have proliferated over the last 24 years. These include the creation of 9km of paths, complete with of interpretation boards and information boards, forming loops around the island, allowing visitors and locals alike to explore away from the main north-south road, and a campsite for visitors.

It’s not been an easy ride – “I would say to anywhere else considering it do it as a last resort not a first” says Ian. But he admits: “There are certainly lots of things on the island that wouldn’t be here with a private landlord.” The island’s history with

humans stretches back thousands of years to the Mesolithic era. When the sea roads were the super highways of their day, Irish settlers arrived, and the Gaelic language and culture flourished here. For 2,000 years Gigha was a heartland for the language with the 1921 census showing the island as 75 per cent Gaelic-speaking.

Gigha also has a tradition of harp playing, mainly through the Galbraith family, one of three surnames associated with the island; the others being MacNeill and MacDonald, two clans who fought over the land here. The Norse took over in the 9th century, and the island became part of the Viking southern Kingdom of the Isles until the end of the 13th century when King Haakon IV was defeated at the Battle of Largs – his mighty fleet assembled just off Gigha. But there was little peace for the inhabitants of the fertile island under Scottish rule. Until the late 19th century the island was mainly held by the MacNeills but there were various murderous ups and downs including in 1530, when Ailean nan Sop (or Alan of the Straw, due to his habit of setting light to buildings using straw as kindling) slaughtered several inhabitants and later that century when the Macleans of Duart descended, killing hundreds on Islay and Gigha.

The biggest community buyout in the UK

The MacNeills sold the island for £49,000 to one James Williams Scarlett in 1865 and after that, the island had a succession of owners which coincided with a slide in population from a peak of 600 in the 18th century to below 100 when the island was put up for sale in 2001. Many of those who left in the 18th century boarded ships for the US, joining those from surrounding islands to settle in the Cape Fear area in North Carolina. Once quite isolated - before the first steamships started passing by in 1877, people rowed or sailed across the three miles to the mainland and the island only got its first pier in 1895 – now there is a regular car ferry which takes just 20 minutes from the mainland.



The Boat House restaurant, Gigha by M J Richardson, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.



Grob Bagh Beach, Isle of Gigha by Brian Turner, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

The community voted yes in 2002 on plans to try for a buyout and only 17 days after the ballot the £4 million was raised, the funds coming from the lottery-backed Scottish Land Fund, which gave its biggest grant ever of £3.5 million, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which provided £500,000, which was double its previous biggest grant.

It was a landmark decision – the biggest community buyout in the UK at the time with the island’s owner, Derek Holt, having turned down three private offers to allow the community sale to go ahead. There was a small catch - £1 million had to be repaid but a huge fundraising effort by the islanders, with ceilidhs, quizzes, sponsored rows around the island and the sale of the main property, Achamore House, saw that money raised. It hasn’t all been plain sailing – at one point finances were said to be on a “knife’s edge” and there have been highly public fallouts among islanders on the way forward. But there have been some unqualified successes – the sub-standard housing has

been renovated thanks to funds from the “dancing ladies”, wind turbines bought by the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust.

Gigha’s profile was further boosted in 2021 when it became the setting for a reality TV drama called *Murder Island*, written by famous crime author Ian Rankin, while in recent years the island has been gaining a reputation as a Dark Skies location. A site in the quiet north of the island has been named as a Dark Sky Discovery Site by the UK Dark Sky Discovery Partnership. On cloudless dark nights the Milky Way is clearly visible from here and the group behind the initiative, Dark Skies Gigha, holds several stargazing events over the year including a party to mark the Perseids meteor shower each August. Ian says: “It’s a welcoming island, you only have to be here for ten minutes, and you feel you are at home. People come looking for a better quality of life and they find it on Gigha. It’s a fantastic place to live – I can’t explain it, it just gets you.”



Flag irises on Gigha by M J Richardson, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Historic Scottish ship removed from Honolulu Harbour



Photo: jimmyweee.

The Hawai’i Department of Transportation (HDOT) and contractor Shipwright LLC have completed the ocean disposal of the 147-year-old vessel *Falls of Clyde*.

The disposal site is approximately 25 miles south of Honolulu Harbor. The ship, which had been built in Port Glasgow in 1878, had been moored as a museum ship in Honolulu since the 1960s. *Falls of Clyde* was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1989 as the world’s only surviving four-masted fully-rigged ship. Local community group the Friends of Falls of Clyde conducted a small send-off ceremony for the vessel ahead of the vessel’s removal from the port.

HDOT continues to work with this organization to memorialize the vessel in a permanent display that will feature key artifacts including the vessel’s name board, wheel and bell. Other artifacts removed from the vessel have been transferred to the National Park Service and will be displayed at the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park. Some of the rigging tools from *Falls of Clyde* will be used for the maintenance of the Balclutha, a three-masted square-rigged Scottish-built ship moored at the park. The ship had fallen into disrepair and was damaged by a hurricane in the 1980s. Campaigners for the ship have spent over a decade trying to bring the ship back to Scotland and restored.

WHAT'S ON - SCOTTISH EVENTS

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

Canada

MARCH 2026

St Patrick's Day Ceilidh 2026 13, Vancouver, BC

Kick off your St Patrick's weekend at the biggest Ceilidh west of the Rockies hosted by Blackthorn, Vancouver's longest-running Celtic Band and White Spot Pipe Band, O'Brien Irish Dance and Shot of Scotch Vancouver Company at Hellenic Community Centre, 4500 Arbutus St. Info: www.blackthornband.com

Vancouver Ceilidh 2026 27, Vancouver, BC

Ceilidh dancing at the Scottish Cultural Centre. Bring friends and family, ages 9-90! No experience or partner or kilt required. Soft shoes and light/layered clothing suggested – you will be active! Info: www.vancouverceilidh.org

BC Pipers' Jack Lee Amateur Invitational Piping Competition 28, Vancouver, BC

The inaugural competition will take place at the Seaforth Armory. The event will provide a high-profile platform for amateur pipers, inspire future generations, and strengthen the cultural fabric of piping both locally and internationally. Info: www.bcpipers.org

Scottish Country Dancing West End Workshop (Toronto) 28, Etobicoke, ON

Must pre-register. Two teachers, one from overseas, will teach two classes each at Humberwood Community Centre, 850 Humberwood Blvd. Two levels of ability are accommodated. Lunch is provided after the classes. Then an afternoon tea dance with tea and treats following. See more info on website. For all of the above \$85./adult and \$50/youth. To attend tea dance only \$20. Info: www.dancescottish.ca

Tartans and Tunes 28, Flagstaff County, AB

A Celtic evening of entertainment to celebrate Tartan Day. All ages are welcome to this free event. With a lineup of entertainers with featured performances from the Battle River Pipes and Drums. Put on your tartans and join the Flagstaff Scottish Club. Info: www.flagstaffscottishclub.com

APRIL 2026

93rd BC Pipers' Association Annual Gathering 3-4, Vancouver, BC

Events include all Solo Piping, Snare and Tenor Drumming competitions, Pipe Band competition, BCPA awards ceremony and "After Hours" Ceilidh at North Delta Secondary School, 11447 82 Ave, Delta. Info: www.bcpipers.org

Scotword answers from page 6

Across:	Down:
1 Clype	2 Lammermuir Hills
4 Carse	3 Pubs
11 Campbeltown Loch	5 Anne
12 Neep	6 Scottish Thistle
13 Roots	7 Scones
14 Stot	8 Alloa
15 Mull	9 Forth
17 Oats	10 Shotts
18 Elgin	16 Lea
20 Iona	17 Ony
21 Yett	19 Breeks
25 Echo	22 Midden
26 Wrath	23 Drams
27 Gird	24 Stays
30 Kildrummy Castle	28 Brae
31 Ashet	29 Kale
32 Leven	

Tartan Day 2026 6, Nationwide

An annual celebration of Scottish culture, heritage and recognises the incredible contributions Scottish immigrants have made to their new lands. A celebration of Scottish heritage on April 6, the date on which the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in 1320, and started by a *Scottish Banner* reader!

National Tartan Day 2026 12, Ottawa, ON

Join the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band, Canada's oldest civilian pipe band, at Parliament Hill for Tartan Day celebrations. Info: www.sospb.com

RSCDS Hamilton Spring Ball 25, Hamilton, ON

Join the RSCDS Hamilton Branch for an evening of Scottish dance and friendship at Scottish Rite, 4 Queen St S. Info: www.rscdshamilton.org

USA

MARCH 2026

Panama City Beach Scottish Festival 6-7, Panama City Beach, FL

The largest and longest-running Scottish festival in Florida's Panhandle with Highland games, live music, Scottish clans, dancers, food, vendors, and more—for two unforgettable days of culture, community, and Celtic pride. Info: www.pcbscottishfestival.com

Calaveras Celtic Faire 6-8, Angels Camp, CA

A weekend of Celtic events at Calaveras County Fairgrounds, 2465 Gunclub Rd. Info: www.calaverascelticfaire.com

St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival 14-15, St Augustine, FL

A weekend of Celtic music, friendship and fun, with a great array of entertainment and events at Francis Field, 29 W. Castillo Dr. Info: www.celticstaugustine.com

Sherman Celtic Festival and Highland Games 21-22, Sherman, TX

Immerse yourself in the vibrant world of Celtic culture, featuring live music, Scottish dancing, majestic Irish Wolfhounds, thrilling Viking village battles, sheep herding demonstrations, Highland cows, authentic Celtic food, and a wide array of unique vendors. Info: www.shermancelticfest.com

Tartan Day South 26-29, Cayce, SC

Honors the Celtic culture and heritage in South Carolina's Midlands region. The traditions of the United Kingdom – Ireland, Scotland and England are showcased at the Historic Columbia Speedway. Info: www.tartandaysouth.com

Hawaiian Scottish Association Grand Scotch Tour 28, Honolulu, HI

An unforgettable evening celebrating fine Scotch, good food, cigars, and great company at Scottish Rite Cathedral, 1611 Kewalo St. This special tasting event is a fundraiser benefiting the Hawaiian Scottish Festival & Highland Games – April 2027. Info: www.hawaiianscottishassociation.com

Scottish Celtic Music Festival 28, Davie FL

A day of Scottish entertainment and celebration presented by the Scottish American Society of South Florida at Bergeron Rodeo Grounds, 4201 Rodeo Way. Info: www.sassf.org

Sedalia Center Celtic Festival & Highland Games 28, Big Island, VA

Highland Athletics, Pipes & Drums, Scotch Tasting & Seminar, Scottish Country Dancing, Gaelic Language Classes & more at Sedalia Center. Info: www.sedaliacenter.org/celtic-festival-highland-games

San Antonio Highland Games 28-29, Helotes, TX

A Celtic filled weekend at Helotes Festival Grounds, 12210 Leslie Rd. Info: www.sahga.org

New Mexico Renaissance Celtic Festival 28-April 5, Edgewood, NM

Where history, fantasy, and celebration intertwine at the Wildlife West Nature Park, now spanning two weekends March 28–29 & April 4–5. Info: www.nmrenewcelfest.com

Sedalia Center Celtic Festival & Highland Games 28, Big Island, VA

Highland Athletics, Pipes & Drums, Scotch Tasting & Seminar, Scottish Country Dancing, Gaelic Language Classes & more at Sedalia Center. Info: www.sedaliacenter.org/celtic-festival-highland-games

2026 Robert Burns Night Supper 28, Asheville, NC

All are welcome to join this Asheville Sister Cities charity fundraiser to belatedly celebrate the 267th birthday of the Bard of Scotland at Biltmore DoubleTree Hotel. Entertainment: piper Alex Stewart; Celtic trio StrathSpan with fiddler Nora Garver, cellist Julia Weatherford, and piper Cathleen Nixon; and dancers from the Asheville Carpenter Academy of Irish Dance. First Annual Oscar Wong Whisky Tasting will honor the memory of our friendly spirits leader. Online Charity Auction and Raffle Fundraiser open for public online bidding and accepting donations and sponsorships to raise funds for Writer in Residence in Dunkeld & Birnam Scotland. Info: <https://ashevillesistercities.org/event/2026-robert-burns-night-supper>

APRIL 2026

North American Festival of Scottish Country Dancing 4, Philadelphia, PA

North America is hosting its very first North American Festival of Scottish Country Dance at North Lights Community Center. Info: www.tac-rscds.org/index.php/na-festival

Tartan Day 2026 6, Nationwide

An annual celebration of Scottish culture, heritage and recognises the incredible contributions Scottish immigrants have made to their new lands. A celebration of Scottish heritage on April 6, the date on which the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in 1320, and started by a *Scottish Banner* reader!

RedStone Highland Games & Festival 10-11, St George, UT

Come discover the exciting epic tradition with pipe bands, athletics, clans and more at Sandtown Park, 600 N Bluff St. Info: www.redstonehighlandgames.com

Dunedin Highland Games 11, Dunedin, FL

Celebrate the heritage and culture of Scotland with great music, dancing, athletics, good food, drink, and friends at 1920 Pinehurst Rd. Info: www.dunedinsafoundation.com/highland-games

Dressed to Kilt

11, New York, NY

Scotland's largest, most prestigious and exciting charity celebrity fashion show, celebrating tartan and Scottish style. Info: www.dressedtokilt.com

NorCal Celtic Festival 11-12, Woodland, CA

A celebration of Scottish and Celtic culture featuring Championship Highland dancing, pipe band competition, solo piping and drumming, and drum major competitions. Info: www.norcalcelticfestival.com

Colorado Tartan Day 11-12, Longmont, CO

A weekend of Scottish heritage, history, and community. From the skirl of the pipes to the clash of broadswords, come experience the spirit of Scotland and celebrate Tartan Day. Info: www.coloradotartanday.com

A Celebration of Scotland's Treasures 16, New York, NY

An evening of Scottish music, dining, and dancing all in support of the National Trust for Scotland's most urgent conservation projects at The Metropolitan Club. Info: www.ntsusa.org

Virginia International Tattoo 16-19, Norfolk, VA

Largest Military Tattoo in the US with 800+ International cast bands, pipes, drums, dancers, drill teams & more at Scope Arena. Info: www.vafest.org/tattoo

Caledonian Club of San Francisco Tartan Ball 18, San Ramon, CA

Celebrating Tartan Day with dancing, food, and Scottish music at San Ramon Marriott 2600 Bishop Dr. Info: www.caledonian.org

Las Vegas Highland Games & Festival 18-19, Las Vegas, NV

Athletics, pipe bands, dancing, entertainment and more at Craig Ranch Park. Info: www.lasvegascelticsociety.org

Loch Norman Highland Games 18-19, Huntersville, NC

Come and experience all the fun with dancing, pipe bands, athletics, historic reenactments and more at Rural Hill. Info: www.lochnorman.com

Central Carolina Highland Games 25, Oxford, NC

Join Operation Gillie Brogues as they host another incredible year of Scottish athletics, bagpipes, vendors, clans and much more. All the money raised goes to Central Children's Home of NC. Info: www.centralcarolinahighlandgames.com

Scotland

MARCH 2026

Cullen Skink World Championships 2026 1, Cullen

Bringing together home cooks, amateurs, and professional chefs in an epic battle to create the most mouthwatering bowl of Scotland's iconic Cullen Skink. Info: <https://discovercullen.com/events/cullen-skink-world-championships-2026>

Edinburgh International Improv Festival 5-8, Edinburgh

Scotland's funniest improv event, a four-day festival in celebration of improv. Info: www.edimprovest.com

Inverness Half Marathon 8, Inverness

The route starts alongside the banks of the River Ness near the centre of Inverness and takes in many of the city's icons. A warm Highland welcome awaits all participants as they approach the finish line. Info: www.invernesshalfmarathon.co.uk

Glasgow International Comedy Festival 11-29, Glasgow

Scottish talent and emerging comedians from around the world offer a diverse array of comedic styles, including stand-up, improv, sketch, and alternative comedy, at various venues in the funniest city in the world. Info: www.glasgowcomedyfestival.com

StAnza – Scotland's International Poetry Festival

13-15, St Andrews, Fife

With a global reputation for hosting an innovative, inspirational festival showcasing poetry from around the world. The festival theme for 2026 is 'You Are Not Alone' and with more than 70 poets from 7 countries and over 75 events across three packed days centred around the Byre Theatre, StAnza's buzzing festival hub. The festival features readings, workshops, open mics, exhibitions and theatre all under one roof. Info: www.stanzapoetry.org

Borders Art Fair

13-15, Kelso, Scottish Borders

Fun, friendly and packed with fabulous contemporary visual art – Borders Art Fair returns in 2026 with 80 artists, makers and galleries, making it one of the biggest ever. While many of the exhibitors are from the Borders, others come from all over Scotland and the rest of the UK. Info: www.bordersartfair.com

HippFest

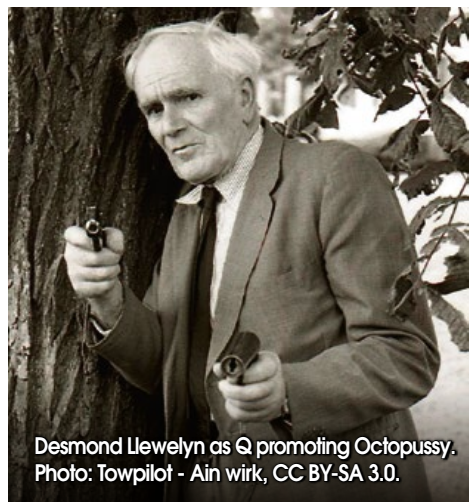
18-22, Bo'ness

Scotland's only silent film festival returns to its historic home, showcasing restored classics, live musical accompaniments and engaging talks, at The Hippodrome. Info: www.hippodromecinema.co.uk/hippfest

007's Glasgow Gunsmith



Sir Sean Connery.



Desmond Llewelyn as Q promoting Octopussy. Photo: Towpilot - Ain wirk, CC BY-SA 3.0.

By: David McVey

Scotland has contributed a great deal to the James Bond phenomenon, both the books and, especially, the films. Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, was English but he had a notable Scottish family background. When the long-running film series began, former Edinburgh milkman and footballer turned actor Sean Connery made the role of Bond his own to the extent that in the later books, Fleming gave Bond a Scottish background not unlike his own.

Actors like Robbie Coltrane, Robert Carlisle and Alan Cumming have appeared in the films, while Lulu, Sheena Easton and Shirley Manson-fronted Garbage have all provided theme songs (*The Man with the Golden Gun*, *For Your Eyes Only* and *The World is Not Enough*, in case you are wondering). And of course, Scottish locations have featured in several of the films, most notably *From Russia with Love*, *The World is not Enough* and *Skyfall*.

Geoffrey Boothroyd

But right near the beginning of the Bond phenomenon, a Glasgow resident helped to shape Bond's profile and even inspired one of the most popular recurring characters in the film series. Geoffrey Boothroyd

was not actually Scottish, though. He was born in Blackpool in 1925, but by 1956 was living in Strathbungo, near Queen's Park, in the quietness of 17 Regent Park Square, as *douce* and prosperous then as it is now. He worked for the now vanished British chemicals giant ICI in their armaments division. In his private life he was also a firearms expert and enthusiast.

Boothroyd enjoyed the early Bond books but was not happy that Fleming had armed 007 with a .25 Beretta. Boothroyd wrote to Fleming and advised him (trigger warning - 1950s attitudes coming up!) that the Beretta was '...really a ladies' gun and not a really nice lady at that...'. Fleming was always keen to get the detail in his books correct and entered into a correspondence with Boothroyd. Boothroyd recommended a .38 Smith and

Wesson or a Walther PPK. In the end, Bond was armed with the Walther right up to the present day in both films and books.

At the time Boothroyd and Fleming were making their acquaintance, the author was busy editing the book of *From Russia with Love*. Fleming had wanted a cover picture that juxtaposed a Beretta pistol with a rose. Somehow, Berettas proved hard to find. Fleming wrote to Boothroyd asking if he knew how he could get hold of a Smith and Wesson instead. As a gun enthusiast, Boothroyd actually owned one, and sent it off to Fleming in London (special delivery, you would hope). The Glasgow weapon was duly illustrated alongside a rose on the cover of the first edition.

Meanwhile, in the usually quiet Glasgow Southside suburb of Burnside, a horrible triple murder had taken place. The victims had been shot, and the weapon used was a Smith and Wesson. The local police had Boothroyd registered as possessing the exact same weapon so they came knocking on his door in the quiet surrounds of Regent Park Square. Boothroyd was able to immediately demonstrate his innocence by proving that his weapon had an alibi; he showed the police a telegram from Ian Fleming - yes, *that* Ian Fleming - conforming receipt. (The murderer was later identified as the notorious Glasgow criminal Peter Manuel, who was captured, tried and hung in 1958).

The Glasgow firearms expert

Fleming's next Bond novel, in 1958, was *Dr No* and it features an armorer who supplies Bond with a Walther PPK; the armorer's name is Major Boothroyd. Before he gets the Walther, though, the fictional Boothroyd removes 007's Biretta telling him 'Ladies' gun, sir.' Geoffrey Boothroyd had been immortalised in fiction.

Fleming did not actually come face to face with the real Boothroyd until he travelled to Glasgow in 1961, in a meeting arranged by Scottish Television. By then Boothroyd had been engaged as an advisor

on the first of the Bond films, *Dr No* (the films did not follow the order of the books). The film retains the character of Major Boothroyd, played by Peter Burton. In subsequent films, Bond's weapons and gadgets are supplied by 'Q', played by the much-loved character actor Desmond Llewellyn, but if you watch carefully you'll notice that in one or two films he is still addressed as 'Boothroyd', a long-lasting tribute to the Glasgow firearms expert.

Fleming died of a heart attack in London in 1964. His final novel, *The Man with the Golden Gun* was in the pre-publication stages and Boothroyd (the real one from Glasgow) was the obvious choice to advise on the book's weaponry and he even helped with the editing of the book.

A lasting contribution

Boothroyd was now living in 11 Regent Park Square, having moved there from No. 17 on his marriage. He appears in a short film, *The Guns of James Bond*, made in 1964, in which he discusses his choice of weapons for Bond. Sean Connery introduces the film which was mostly shot inside No. 11. The film is available on the BBC archive on YouTube, so you can easily view it, and the remarkable Mr Boothroyd, online.

Boothroyd had been a lodger in No. 17 with the family of Mr Harold Skaife. Skaife ran a business called Glasgow Cine Services that supplied film and sound recording services. He built a sound recording studio in Wishaw, Lanarkshire, where Glasgow songstress Lulu recorded her very first songs. And Lulu, of course, would go on to record a Bond theme. It really is a small world.

Geoffrey Boothroyd sold his house, 11 Regent Park Square, in 1971. He went on to publish a number of books about guns, and eventually died in 2001. Perhaps you are as uncomfortable reading about guns and gunsmithery as I am writing about them, but Boothroyd seems to have been a good egg. And he made a lasting contribution to one of the most lucrative expressions of British popular culture.



Join Scottish Heritage USA Today!

MEMBER BENEFITS:

- Free admission to all National Trust properties in the UK and North America.
- Print and digital subscriptions to Scottish heritage magazines.
- Digital subscription to Scottish Heritage USA e-newsletter.

AND MORE!

www.ScottishHeritageUSA.org



SCAN ME

Our non-profit organization fosters the history and culture of Scotland through educational scholarships and preservation of heritage landmarks and properties in Scotland. Become a Scottish Heritage USA member today!



Celebrating 60 Years

Sir Michael Grant of Grant, The Lord Strathspey, 34th Chief of Clan Grant



As hereditary Chief of a Scottish Clan, I feel a strong sense of duty, reaching out to my fellow kinsmen worldwide, to bring them together in friendship, embracing our past and enjoying all aspects of our Clan Society today. Our activities are far reaching, from Highland and Celtic Games and Clan Gatherings to exploring our history, ancestry, Highland dress, tartan, music, dancing, Gaelic traditions and whisky.

I greatly enjoyed my first visit to Australia last year, when I was privileged to be Games Chieftain at the Bundanoon Highland Games in April. My Clan Society team, headed by Hon Troy Grant, took me on a splendid tour over the Mountain

Range from Sydney to Brisbane, taking in local Scottish heritage sites at Glen Innes and Maclean.

I was delighted to be invited by Ian Young and the Committee to be Chieftain at the Melbourne Highland Games and Celtic Festival on 29 March. I am very much looking forward to that occasion, visiting Melbourne and meeting both Grants and fellow Celtic followers alike.

My great grandfather Frank, being a second son, emigrated to New Zealand in 1870, seeking fame and fortune, as was typical at the time. He farmed near Otago, stood for Parliament in 1884 and became the Earl of Seafield in 1888. He died shortly after and was buried in Oamaru.

His eldest son, James inherited and returned to the UK, only to die in the trenches in 1915, passing the Seafield titles to his daughter Nina and the Grant titles and Chieftainship of the Clan to his brother Trevor, my grandfather, who became Lord Strathspey. He returned to the UK with his family in 1912, the year his son Patrick was born, my late father.

I therefore have a strong connection with New Zealand. We are re-starting our Society there, which in the 80s had more members than our US Society! Canada also has a special significance for me, as a Baronet of Nova Scotia. The title was granted in 1625, by King James 1st of England and 6th of Scotland to my forebears, who helped fund an early settlement mission to Nova Scotia. I attended a 400-year Anniversary Celebration at Stirling Castle last July, which included lectures about the Mission, early settlers and the present day. My title of Lord Strathspey is a Barony, which allowed my forebears to sit in the House of Lords in Westminster. As the senior title, this takes precedence over the Baronetcy title of Sir and is therefore my correct form of address.

I regard the Chieftainship of the Clan as my most significant position. My mission is to support our Clan worldwide, increase global participation in events and history, developing and sustaining our bond of kinship. I helped my late father set up the International Societies in the 1980s and am following his footsteps in my various trips abroad and Clan activities. Life is now so very different, the internet and social media bringing instant connectivity, the sharing of ideas and events as they happen.

This necessitates a change in the way our Societies are run, embracing the new technology.

Personal contact remains all important and thankfully meeting together, whether at a Gathering, Games or just socially remains key, IT (in theory!) simply making all such arrangements easier to set up and manage. Our Societies in the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand are either re-starting or evolving in a similar manner. We have agreed to set up a global website and a digital historical archive for all to share, access and enjoy. Meanwhile, we have launched the Grant 1714 tartan, one of the earliest Clan tartans on record, the traditional Clan tartans, including Grant, having been registered in the 1850s. We are following this with the launch of a Grant 1714 branded Highland single malt Scotch whisky. I work closely with all those involved in the Societies, trying to help bring about change, expand our “offering” and reach out to members, both old and new, embracing the spirit and bond of Kinship.

Our Annual Gathering in Scotland will take place from 7-13 August in Grantown on Spey, including the Abernethy Games on 8th and the Grantown Show on 13th. All Grants, affiliated families and friends are all most welcome!

I feel blessed to work with our Clan Grant Society teams and to meet the ancestors of longstanding Grant families from around the world.

Standfast Craigellachie!

Your Chief, Michael, Lord Strathspey

For details on the Clan Grant Society visit:
www.clangrant.org or [Clan Grant USA at: www.clangrant-usa.org](http://www.clangrant-usa.org)

From Strathclyde to the world: 100 years since television's first demonstration

The birth of television has been marked 100 years on at the London address where Strathclyde alumnus John Logie Baird first demonstrated the technology to the world. Baird gave the first public demonstration of a working television system on 26 January 1926 at 22 Frith Street in London's Soho.

Working from two attic rooms he had used as a laboratory since 1924, he became the first person to transmit moving images by television – a moment that laid the foundations for one of the most influential technologies of the modern era.

Commemorative plaque

To mark the centenary, a commemorative plaque has been unveiled at Bar Italia which now occupies the Frith Street site, by the World Origin site organisation. A World Origin Site marks the place, people and moment where something groundbreaking was invented, discovered or first used.

A newly refurbished space, the Baird Room, was also officially opened by Baird's grandson, Iain Logie Baird.

Born in Helensburgh in 1888, John Logie Baird studied electrical engineering at the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College – now the University of Strathclyde – from 1906 to 1914, graduating with a diploma in Electrical Engineering. His connection to the University continues to be recognised today, with a bust of Baird on permanent display in Strathclyde's Royal College Building.

Baird began experimenting with the transmission and reception of moving images in 1922. His early work included



demonstrations using silhouette images at Selfridge's department store in London. By 2 October 1925, he had successfully transmitted a television image with tonal gradation from his Frith Street laboratory, famously using a ventriloquist's dummy known as 'Stooky Bill', before progressing to live human faces.

Under pressure to publicly establish his claim before rivals, Baird invited around 50 people to witness a formal demonstration in January 1926. It was the first time television had been shown to an invited audience and marked a decisive step towards the technology's rapid development, which would see television become a mass medium by the mid-20th century.

Pioneering innovation

Professor Graeme West, of Strathclyde's Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering, who works in the same Royal College Building where Logie Baird would have studied, attended the centenary event. He previously led a student project to recreate a working replica of Baird's original 'television' as part of a STEM outreach initiative.

Professor West said: "John Logie Baird exemplifies Strathclyde's ethos of useful learning through pioneering innovation. A century on from his first television demonstration, we continue to draw inspiration from his legacy in our teaching, research and outreach – connecting the past to the future of engineering and technology."

Martin Wilkie from World Origin Site said: "World Origin Site marks and celebrates inventions, discoveries and world firsts and you don't get a bigger world first than television. It has had such a dramatic effect on entertainment, politics and the economy across the globe and it all started at 22 Frith Street 100 years ago. We are so pleased to have had Professor West here to represent the link between Baird's education at the former Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College which is now the University of Strathclyde. The work by Strathclyde students to recreate Baird's technology has been a fascinating link to the past."

Virginia International Tattoo 2026-A Salute to 250 Years of American Independence



of America Band, U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band, U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Band, Virginia Symphony Orchestra Chorus and more.

No comparable experience in the United States

As it has been since 1997, one of the anchor events of the Virginia Arts Festival is the Virginia International Tattoo. Led by J. Scott Jackson, the Virginia International Tattoo has become the largest such event in North America and numbers among the largest Tattoos in the world. Selected by the American Bus Association—the nation's premier travel organization—as the top event in the United States in 2016, the Virginia International Tattoo has drawn visitors from across the country and around the world and has welcomed performers from 31 nations. There simply is no comparable experience in the United States and no greater voice for expressing our nation's gratitude to those who serve. Some of the most memorable of the 25 past Virginia International Tattoos have saluted the Tuskegee Airmen, Vietnam Veterans, Medal of Honor recipients, and women in the military. Each show is a moving lesson in history and patriotism for every generation, including the more than 20,000 students who attend the Tattoo every year.

Don't miss the Virginia International Tattoo – America's International Military Tattoo. Tickets are available and on sale now at www.vafest.org, by phone at 757-282-2822, or in person at the Virginia Arts Festival Box Office located at 440 Bank St, Norfolk, VA 23510.



soldiers would return to their barracks for an evening roll call. The ensuing parade of soldiers evolved into a military marching band performance now known worldwide as "Tattoo." The Tattoos seen across the world today are ceremonial performances of military music by massed bands. Each Tattoo is influenced by the culture of the country they represent.

Fans of these massed spectacles of music and might flock to the world's great Tattoos including Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland, Basel Tattoo in Switzerland, and Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo in Canada. But the greatest Tattoo in the United States, and rivaling the largest in the world, is the Virginia International Tattoo.

This year's performers include Royal Canadian Air Force Pipes and Drums (Canada), Musique de la Marine Nationale (National Band of the French Navy), Republic of Korea Army Military Band and Honor Guard Battalion, King's Color Squadron of the Royal Air Force (UK), and from the USA Camden County Emerald Society Pipes and Drums, Hampton Roads Police Color Guards, The Kiltie Band of York, Norfolk Fire-Rescue Honor Guard, Rhodes Academy of Irish Dance, Tidewater Pipes and Drums, U.S. Air Force Heritage



As the USA prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the founding of the United States, there's no better place to reflect on our shared story than Virginia. The 2026 Virginia International Tattoo takes place April 16-19 at Scope Arena in Downtown Norfolk, proudly celebrating 250 Years of American Independence.

Presented in partnership with Virginia Tourism Corporation and The Hixon Family, join a cast of over 800 performers from across the globe in a dazzling display of military pageantry, precision, and passion, featuring massed pipes and drums, military bands, drill teams, dancers, choirs, and special guests. Expect heart-stirring moments of majesty and might, timeless traditions, and stirring tributes that will move and inspire.

"Each of the 2026 Tattoo's seven performances will be just under two

hours long, but the staff, cast, crew, and volunteers of the Tattoo will collectively spend more than 60,000 hours in order to make those two-hour performances happen," said Scott Jackson, Producer/Director of the Virginia International Tattoo since 2002. "Our performers in 2026 come from five different nations and eight different time zones. That means every hour of every day from now until opening night, someone somewhere in the world will be preparing for the Virginia International Tattoo. Every hour of every day somewhere in the world people will be preparing to share their very best with you, the audience!"

What is the Tattoo?

The centuries-old tradition of Tattoo originated as a signal from drummers instructing Dutch innkeepers near military garrisons to "Doe den Tap-too" or "turn off the tap". Hearing the call "Tap-too"



The 2026 Savannah Scottish Games



Savannah, Georgia, USA is a beautiful city to visit in May for the 48th annual Savannah Scottish Games. The area is known for old live oak trees draped in Spanish moss, with its long, draping, silvery-gray strands that hang from trees in warm, humid climates like the Southeastern U.S.

Savannah was founded in 1733 by General James Oglethorpe and is renowned as America's first planned city designed to create a scenic, walkable environment. The design is based on a grid system each containing a central square, surrounded by homes, churches, and civic buildings. Twenty-two often tree-shaded, public spaces of the original twenty-four squares are still in existence today. Savannah is known for its rich history (including being the birthplace of the Girl Scouts and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*), a vibrant arts scene, delicious Southern cuisine, and a reputation for being one of America's most haunted cities, making it a

top destination for history buffs, foodies, and those seeking spooky tales. A perfect backdrop for a Scottish games!

In January 1736, 177 Scottish Highlanders, recruited by Gen. James Oglethorpe, founded New Inverness (later Darien) an hour south of Savannah on the Altamaha River to serve as a military buffer against Spanish Florida. Led by John McIntosh Mohr and Hugh Mackay, these settlers were renowned for their warrior skills, crucial in defending the colony. Fort King George State Historic Site in McIntosh County, Georgia, is the site of the oldest English fort on Georgia's coast, built in 1721 as the British Empire's southernmost outpost in North America to defend the frontier against Spanish and French threats. Today, it features a reconstructed colonial outpost with a blockhouse, barracks, and museum, showcasing the hardships of early soldiers and the history of the region. This coastal region is a great day trip from Savannah full of beaches, tidal communities and fresh seafood.

Family friendly festival

The Savannah Scottish Games is a family friendly festival jam packed with dancing, music, athletics, and fun for all ages. Held at Bethesda Academy for 18 years, the Savannah Scottish Games will welcome you with the sound of bagpipes, the thrill of the caber toss, and the warmth of Highland camaraderie. Bethesda is located approximately 12 miles east of downtown Savannah. Founded in 1740, it features gorgeous marshland on the Moon River with the region's signature majestic live oaks draped in Spanish moss. A great backdrop for a Highland Games.

Bring a lawn chair and brace yourselves for the ultimate battle of strength on the bonnie fields. Cheer on 60 heavy athletes throwing heavy things. If that is not enough, competitions include tug-of-war and the Irish sport of Hurling. Wee lads and lassies are greeted at the front gate with a Children's Passport. Visit with the various organizations and clans, collect passport stamps and redeem for a prize! Imaginations soar as sheep/duck herding border collies, birds of prey, hockey and living history reenactments perform demonstrations under the live oaks.

From powerful pipe bands and traditional bands (Seven Nations bringing Celtic rock,



and folk music performances by Scotland's Colin Grant-Adams, and local favorites-Swamptooth and Lochlann), you can take in a variety of music and dancing all day long.

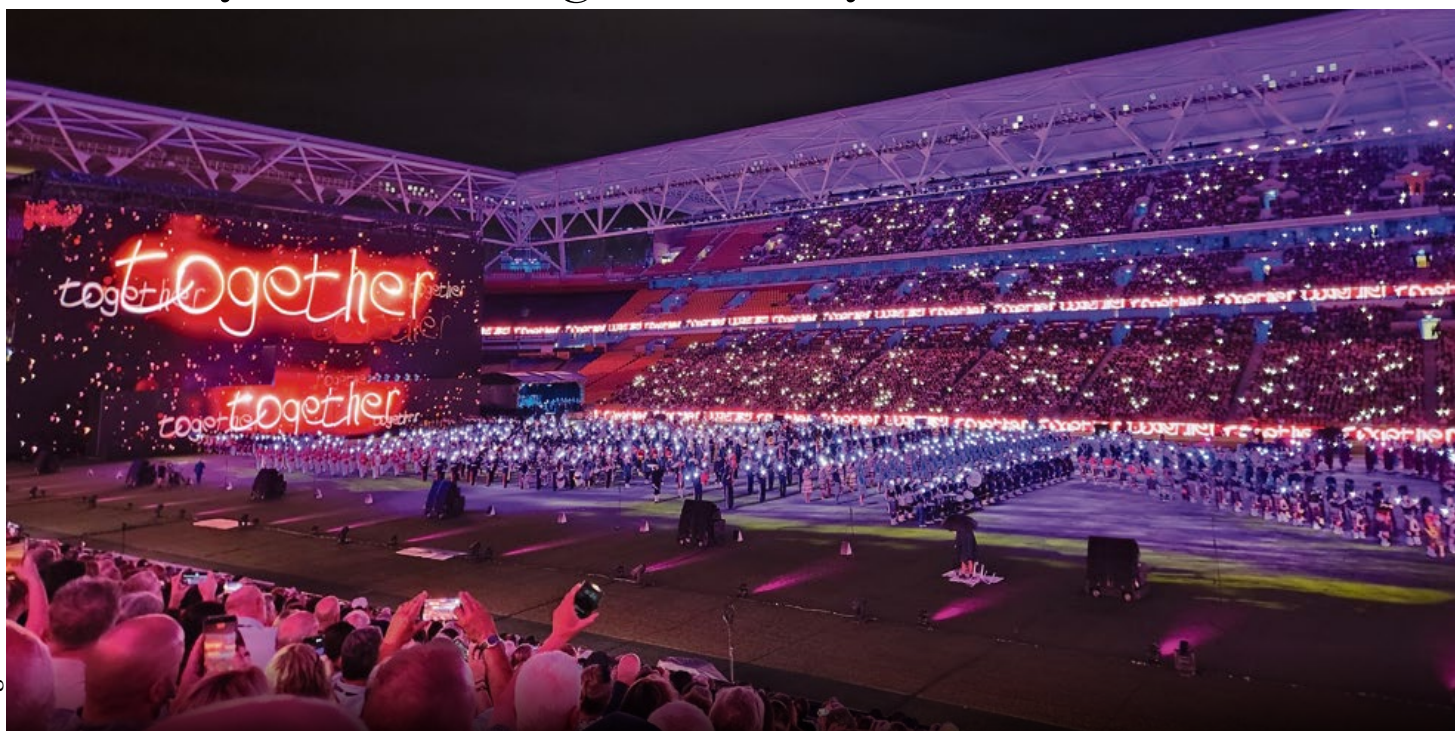
Strolling the marketplace is a unique shopping experience. Enjoy local beer and mead—popular with the Celts and Vikings. Find your new favorite whisky during the whisky seminar & tasting experience.

Where Lowcountry charm meets Scottish tradition—Daniel Ravenel Sotheby's International Realty/Stewart Sells The Lowcountry, is proud to be the Title Sponsor of the Savannah Scottish Games. Come to the 48th annual Savannah Scottish Games to experience Scotland in Savannah. Come for the heritage. Stay for the music. Leave with tired feet and a full heart!

For more details visit:
www.savannahscottishgames.com



The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Brisbane a Tartan Triumph



Images: The Scottish Banner.

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo's debut in Brisbane in February 2026 proved to be a landmark cultural triumph, blending Scottish pageantry and international flair with Queensland's vibrant energy. Staged at Suncorp Stadium from 12–15 February, the event marked the Tattoo's first-ever full-scale production in the city and formed the centrepiece of its 75th anniversary celebrations. Audiences were treated to *The Heroes Who Made Us*, a milestone show honouring the Tattoo's incredible past while imagining its future.

The production showcased the signature elements that have made the Tattoo world-famous: massed military bands, stirring anthems, precision drill, and the unmistakable sound of the pipes and drums. More than 1,000 elite performers from across the globe, led by the Massed Pipes and Drums of UK military regiments, delivered a spectacle of scale rarely seen in Australia. Performers came from across Australia as well as New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Tonga, Japan and the USA.

The greatest show on earth

Brisbane embraced the event wholeheartedly with the city streets alive with Tattoo guests and performers throughout the weekend. Though rain was persistent during the performances the extensive logistical planning contributed to the Tattoo's polished presentation.

Audiences were enthralled with performances being shown on Australia's largest LED screen, measuring an incredible 50m by 22m, which displayed images of Scottish landscapes including the Tattoo's home of Edinburgh Castle.

The Tattoo's success in Brisbane stemmed not only from its theatrical grandeur but also from its deep history and cultural resonance. The Tattoo has often been called 'the greatest show on earth' and the Brisbane production certainly honoured that. The planning and detail that went into this show was like a military operation and audience feedback has been incredible.

Ahead of the Tattoo the show's promoter told *the Scottish Banner* that pipe bands would form a focus of this production and that was delivered, along with some incredible local and international cast. The combination of military precision, global performers, and Scottish heritage created a powerful emotional experience for audiences to take home. By the time the final notes faded on 15 February, the Brisbane season had firmly established itself as a highlight of the Tattoo's 75 year celebrations. Its blend of tradition, spectacle, and community engagement ensured that the Brisbane edition will be remembered as a resounding success.

