

# 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](http://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*

### Highland hideaway



Keeping warm in the Scottish Highlands.  
*Fiona McNicol*

### Loch Etive



Beauty and calm at Loch Etive.  
*Fly - Caledonia*

### Scottish Highlands



Winter in the Scottish Highlands.  
*Mik Coia*

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