



the Scottish Banner



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A' Bhratach Albannach

Volume 49 Number 10 NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS April 2026



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Expiry

The Banner Says...

A tragedy at Glasgow's beating heart



by Sean Cairney

Just prior to this issue being released some very tragic news came out of Scotland's largest city. A major fire struck the area around Glasgow Central Station on March 8th, triggering one of the most disruptive incidents in the station's long history.

Iconic building

The blaze began in a vape shop on Union Street, rapidly spreading through a connected 175-year-old Victorian-era commercial building. Flames climbed toward the roofline and reached the corner of Union Street and Gordon Street, where part of the historic structure—including a dome—partially collapsed under the intense heat. The building known as Union Corner, dates back to 1851, pre-dating the station itself which opened in 1879. The iconic building which was destroyed may be remembered by some readers for the adverts for Irn Bru and Bells Whisky that were displayed on its rooftop.

More than 200 firefighters battled the inferno for hours, they even pumped water from the River Clyde to help battle the blaze, as thick smoke drifted across the city centre. Although Glasgow Central Station itself avoided major structural damage, the proximity of the blaze, falling debris, and the scale of the emergency response forced the complete closure of the high-level station, with all services suspended while safety inspections were carried out. Sadly, council have decided that total demolition of what remains of the building must happen in the interests of public safety. The disruption brought Glasgow's transport network to a standstill, affecting thousands of passengers.

Thankfully no casualties have taken place during this tragic event, however most Glaswegians will now

be coming to terms with the loss of such an iconic part of their city. There are businesses now lost and others who will be greatly impacted by the temporary closure of the station and surrounding streets. This is a hit to the city who is still getting over the catastrophic fires of the Glasgow School of Art and is preparing to welcome the world this summer for the Commonwealth Games.

Glasgow's beating heart

Glasgow Central Station is not just Scotland's busiest railway hub, but also the city's beating heart. Its origins lie in the fierce railway rivalries of the 19th century. Before the station existed, Glasgow's main rail terminus sat south of the River Clyde at Bridge Street and was opened in 1841 as Glasgow's first purpose-built passenger railway jointly operated by the Glasgow, Paisley, Kilmarnock & Ayrshire Railway and the Glasgow, Paisley and Greenock Railway. As passenger numbers surged and Glasgow's industrial power grew, it became clear that a larger, more centrally located station was essential.

The Caledonian Railway Company, eager to dominate routes into the city, secured permission to build a new station on the north bank of the Clyde. Construction began in the late 1870s, and Glasgow Central Station officially opened on 1 August 1879, serving as a grand terminus for trains arriving from the south and west. Its strategic location quickly made it indispensable.

Demand grew rapidly. To accommodate increasing traffic, a Low Level station was added beneath the main platforms in 1896, creating a vital cross-city link. The early 20th century brought even more ambitious expansion: between 1901 and 1905, chief engineer Donald A. Matheson and architect James Miller oversaw a major redevelopment. This project extended the station over Argyle Street, added new platforms, and introduced the iconic glass-roofed train shed that still defines the station's appearance. The result was a striking Edwardian structure which is still today widely regarded as one of Scotland's grandest railway buildings. Throughout the 20th century, Glasgow Central evolved with the times. The Low Level station

closed in 1964 during widespread rail cutbacks but was revived in 1979 as part of the new Argyle Line, restoring vital east-west connectivity.

Modernisation continued with resignalling in 1960 and major refurbishments between 1984–86 and 1998–2005, ensuring the station could meet the demands of a modern transport network.

Citizen Firefighter

One of the both iconic and ironic images that was seen during the fire was the Citizen Firefighter statue which stands outside the station on the corner opposite to the fire. Created by Scottish artist Kenny Hunter and unveiled in 2001. The bronze figure honours firefighters past and present, depicting a responder in full gear returning from duty. The statue was not damaged and has become a symbolic tribute to bravery and public service of fire fighters and this was shown ten-fold on this sad occasion.

Glasgow Central is not just a train station to get somewhere from, it is celebrated not only for its architectural grandeur, but also for its role in the city's social history. Its incredible marble floors, soaring glass roof, and bustling concourse have witnessed wartime departures, daily commutes, and countless personal stories.

The Glasgow spirit

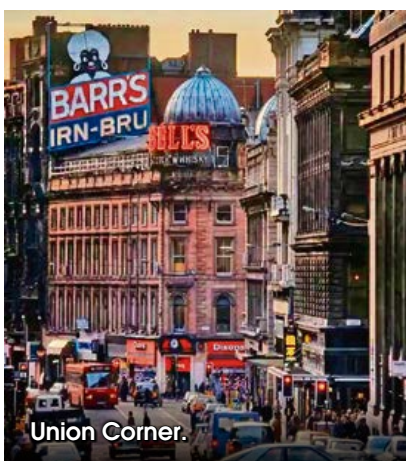
Central Station is a special place, and I always go to the station on a visit to Glasgow, whether I am catching a train or not as I love the place. The station itself is my favourite in not just Scotland but all of the UK and it holds a special place for many. Now the 2026 fire will be added to its history. This station is so much more than a transport hub, it remains a living monument to Glasgow's industrial heritage, civic ambition, and part of the Glasgow spirit.

That Glaswegian spirit will now be called upon to rebuild the adjoining Union Street building and showcase the city's resilience, which unlike the fire cannot be extinguished. 🇪🇺

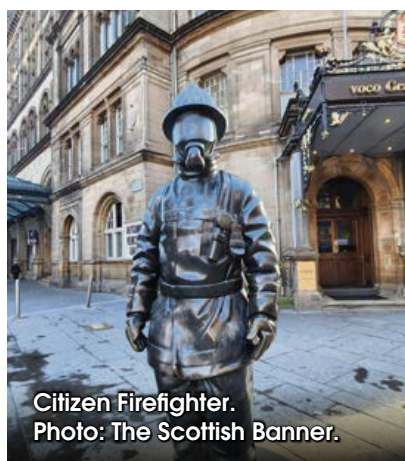
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We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Union Corner.



Citizen Firefighter. Photo: The Scottish Banner.



Gracing our front cover: The setting sun shines through a precisely-placed hole in a Neolithic standing stone in North Ronaldsay, Orkney. Photo: David C Weinczok.

Jings, crivens, help ma boab! Oor Wullie and The Broons turn 90



On 8 March 2026, *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons*, two of Scotland's most beloved cultural icons, celebrated 90 remarkable years of mischief, family humour and unmistakably Scottish storytelling. To mark the milestone, a year-long programme of events, publications and community activities will honour Scotland's favourite schoolboy and best-loved family, whose adventures have helped shape the nation's identity for generations.

Woven into Scotland's cultural DNA

First appearing in *The Sunday Post* on 8 March 1936, *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons* created a uniquely Scottish universe that has endured for nine decades. Their stories chronicled working-class life with warmth, humour and a deep sense of community, becoming woven into Scotland's cultural DNA. Since then, *Oor Wullie* has spent nine decades perched on his famous

bucket, getting up to no good with his pals Bob, Wee Eck and Soapy Soutar, girlfriend Primrose Paterson and dodging his nemesis PC Murdoch around the fictional town of Auchenshoogle.

Meanwhile, *The Broons* has portrayed the joys, chaos and heart of family life in 10 Glebe Street, from Maw's wisdom to Paw's blustering and from the antics of the bairns to the romances and mishaps of Hen and Daphne. *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* were an instant hit, and the country quickly became enamoured with the comics' cast of characters. Readers were particularly charmed by the distinctive Scots language in the strips.

For many, these comics weren't just entertainment, they were a window into everyday Scottish life, reflecting everything from changing fashions and technologies to shifts in society across the decades. Few cultural exports capture the Scottish experience as honestly, or as affectionately, as *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons*.

Lived vividly in Scotland's imagination

Thomas Hawkins, Editor of *The Sunday Post*, said: "Very few fictional characters have lived as vividly in Scotland's imagination as *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons*. For 90 years they've mirrored Scotland back to itself – its humour, its grit and its sense of community. This anniversary is a chance to celebrate where they've come from, and the new stories still to be told. From boosting morale during the Second World War to putting a smile on readers' faces during the Covid pandemic, *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons* have been a reassuring constant in a world in flux. Throughout this anniversary year, we have fun activities and events planned plus a national competition to help find the next budding comic artist. So, get involved, we can't wait to see what you will come up with."

Martha Burns Findlay, Head of Public Programmes at the National Library of Scotland, added: "The National Library of Scotland is proud to preserve and champion Scots language as an integral part of our nation's cultural heritage. We care for rich collections in Scots dating back centuries, from the likes of Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott to *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons*, including the first ever *Broons* annual which was published in 1939. *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons* are truly national treasures, and we're delighted to be working with DC Thomson to celebrate this special birthday."

Genealogy takes centre stage in Glasgow, June 2026



Join Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies (SIGS) for a 2-day academic conference on the 25

and 26 June 2026; Beyond the Family Tree: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on AI, DNA, Education and Community in Genealogy. Explore a variety of topics, including genetic genealogy, history, and genealogy, with parallel streams featuring keynote presentations and guest lectures—giving you the freedom to choose the sessions that inspire you most.

The conference will be preceded by a one-day Professional Genealogy Symposium in on the 24 June 2026, hosted by the Association of Professional Genealogists in partnership with SIGS. Symposium sessions will be led by industry experts and will cover topics such as expanding your genealogy business, client deliverables, financial considerations, productivity tools, cross-border marketing, ethical and legal issues, and much more.

Both events will be held at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow UK. Most sessions will be available online, allowing you to join from anywhere in the world.

Three days. Two events. A unique and immersive experience bringing together genealogists, educators, and enthusiasts from connected disciplines. Hold the date (24–26 June 2026 - both events) and get the latest updates by registering your interest on the website www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/beyondfamilytreeconference2026

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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?

Hunter Valley Scottish Club Burns Night Supper 2026

The Hunter Valley Scottish Club (HVSC) Burns Night Supper was a wonderful evening filled with rich Scottish traditions and outstanding entertainment. We were honoured to welcome our special VIP, Malcolm Buchanan from Scottish Australian Heritage Council, who kindly presented Graham Adams with a special gift recognition of his remarkable dedication as a piper and tutor, celebrating over 65 years of experience.

Guests were treated to fantastic entertainment throughout the night, including the talented Highlander Celtic Rock Band, The United Miners Pipe Band, Newcastle Highland Dancers, and the talented young man Lachlan King. For the first time, we were also delighted to have Richard Brown from *The Tartan Trail Podcast* join us, along with professional photographer Megan Gael to capture the evening's special moments.



Graham Adams and Malcolm Buchanan.

The raffle of 15 amazing hampers organised by Linda Baer was a fantastic success. A special thank you also goes to Stephen Snedden of Snedden Contracting for the kind donation of a beautiful handcrafted Sgian Dubh for our silent auction.

Our President, Andrew MacPherson, extends his sincere thanks to Secretary Linda Baer and the dedicated HVSC committee for organising such a memorable successful Scottish night.

Linda Baer
Secretary, Hunter Valley Scottish Club
NSW, Australia

Call to Pipers



The Rotary Club of Berry invite pipers to perform at the annual Berry Celtic Festival, to be held this year on the 23rd of May 2026. This invitation extends to any piper experienced in playing a range of familiar Scottish Pipe tunes who wishes to be involved in the festival's street parade and massed bands performance. This invitation presents an excellent opportunity for pipers to be involved in a combined public performance with very reputable pipe bands from around the region at a very popular Celtic Festival.

Registration, tickets and more information is available through the Humanitix ticketing platform
<https://humanitix.com/au/events/au--berry--2535>

The Rotary Club of Berry
Berry, NSW
Australia

Smile

My Scottish grandmother had this poem in her room and thought I would share with your readers.

Smile

Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu
When someone smiled at me today
I started smiling too,

I walked around the corner
And someone saw my grin
When they smiled, I realised
I'd passed it on to them,

I thought about my smile and then
I realised its worth
A single smile like mine could travel
Right around the world,

If you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic-quick
And get the world infected!

Thank you, *Scottish Banner*, for all the smiles you brought my grandmother every month.

Kris Chapman
Buffalo, New York
USA

Ed note: Thank you Kris for sending this, which has made us smile.

100 Pipers Project



2026 marks the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion, and with that comes a celebration that everyone can take part in. The '100 Pipers Project' was created to encourage pipers and drummers in our country to get into their local Legion and play a tune or two. They are asked to contact their Legion, set up a performance – be it inside or out – anytime this year, and send us a photo once done. From a solo piper or drummer to a full band – all are encouraged to take part.

Using the contact form on the Sons of Scotland website, we will list the proposed performances until the goal of 100 Legions is met. With 1350 Legions Canada-wide, we know that there are lots of opportunities to visit your Legion and make this part of your year, and theirs. With free membership all year, the Royal Canadian Legions need and deserve our support. And with this project, we can share our great music with them.

Please visit our website at www.sospb.com and go to the 'Royal Canadian Legion' page for all the details, and to see who's signed up and ready to play!

Thank you,

Bethany Bisailion
Sons of Scotland Pipe Band
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada

Ed note: Thank you for sharing this great project with us for a great organisation and hope many take up the call.

Gunsmith

Regarding David McVey's article on 007 James Bond's pistol (*007's Glasgow Gunsmith, the Scottish Banner, March, 2026*). My father, BRIG. Clarence McKee, was C.O. of Canada's 1st Corps Army Signals all through their battles in Sicily and Italy in 1943-'45. He carried at first a 1st War Smith & Weston massive .455 very heavy revolver; an unnecessary large weapon he felt. So, he told one of his junior officers to tell a dispatch rider to take a small pistol from a captured Italian infantryman. This was done within a few days – a neat little 'pistole Baretta' of .32 calibre – in, of course, a beautiful Italian leather holster.

He used to just carry it in a uniform or coat pocket – ideal for a senior officer just in case situations called for him to encounter not-yet-overrun enemy. Just as he asked. He brought it home with him (after all, it wasn't an 'issue!'), and I, a returned Naval officer, tried it out. As Mr. McVey and Ian Flemming noted, it wasn't much of a pistol – very inaccurate even at close range, and anyway fortunately he had no occasion to actually use it. Interestingly, on its butt was a metal disk saying it was actually a NAVAL weapon – 'RM – Regio Marina!' Fires a North American colt .32 rim fired ammo. I turned it in about 15 years ago as requested by local police in exchange for a small camera, to 'get guns off the street.' I can see why Bond (and Flemming) wanted a better weapon!

Fraser Murray McKee
Commander, RCNR (Ret'd)
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Ed note: Thank you, Fraser, for sharing this interesting piece of your family history.

FROM OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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

Loch Etive



Stunning reflections on Loch Etive.
Mik Coia

Highlands



You take the high road...
Fly – Caledonia

The Kelpies



The magic of The Kelpies.
The Kilted Photographer

Edinburgh



Incredible Edinburgh!
Ryans Photography

Calls to save the original Hampden Park

By: Jim Whyteside

As Scotland's men's football team makes plans for the 2026 World Cup and Scottish football sits top of mind for many across the country, we have added our voice to those seeking assurances about the preservation of the first ever Hampden Park in Glasgow. The site, at Kingsley Avenue in Glasgow's southside, is where Scottish and International Football played out its formative years. It was home to the Queen's Park club from 1873-1883, and hosted Scottish Cup finals, including the very first final between Queen's Park and Clydesdale in 1874, as well as Scotland internationals.

The story of Scottish football

Importantly, it was also where modern football as we know it was created. Scottish teams are considered the first to start passing the ball between teammates, which went on to inspire the game in South America and beyond. Since 1905, the grounds have been leased by the Hampden Bowling Club, but with the club winding up in this month, there has been a considerable level of community and public concern that the site will be lost and subject to development. Football's Square Mile, the world's largest open-air football museum sharing the story of Scottish football and the impact of the earliest matches in Glasgow on the modern game, is leading the call for the site to be saved.

Philip Long, the National Trust for Scotland's Chief Executive, said:

"Scotland's recent win was a glorious moment in the game's history, so let's not sully that by the potential obliteration of the very first Hampden Park. The site is intrinsic to the development of the game of football as we know it, so it makes a vital contribution to Scotland's culture and modern identity. A place of such significance needs to be protected and respected. It is vital that our country's cultural history is preserved, and we continue to tell the stories that have made Scotland the place it is today. We urge all parties concerned, as well as Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Government, to come together to find a way forward that will ensure this pivotal site is saved and its historic role shared and celebrated."

The first purpose-built international football stadium

An archaeological excavation at the site discovered the remains of what has been described as 'the first purpose-built international football stadium', and it is considered the template for the countless pitches and stadia that followed it worldwide. Eventually, because of the construction of the now adjacent railway line, Queen's Park and Scottish Cup and International fixtures moved to a new site - 'Hampden Two' - 150 yards away in Crosshill in 1884. However, this was not before Scotland beat England 5-1 in 1882, an event commemorated in a mural on the back of the bowling pavilion, visible daily to commuters on the very railway line that led



The site of the first Hampden Park. Photo: Campbell Ramage.

to the move. The third Hampden Park was built on land acquired in Mount Florida in 1899, and play began there in 1903. This is the stadium that is still in use today.

Football's Square Mile and the Glasgow Building Preservation Trust have been working together to devise a feasibility study that can design a viable future for the site of the first Hampden Park. Funding has been secured for the study, and a design team is ready to start once a small amount of gap funding is found. Ian McLelland, the National Trust for Scotland's Regional Director for the South & West, added: "Over the last 150 years, football has become synonymous with Scotland and Hampden Park synonymous with Scottish Football. We're aware of the valiant efforts being made by Football's Square Mile and the

Glasgow Building Preservation Trust to find a viable way forward for the very first incarnation of Hampden Park so that it is not lost. While as a charity, we are not in a position to take over the site, we are keen to support the interpretation of this cultural legacy and work with partners to tell the story of Scottish football and its impact on the world. Football's Square Mile fulfils an important need in Glasgow, ensuring that this intangible history is not lost. Intervention at national and local authority level will be necessary, and we believe this site and the heritage it represents certainly justifies that."

Text and images are courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland. For more information on the Trust or to help them protect Scotland's heritage see: www.nts.org.uk



These hills sit at the Anglo-Scottish border. Photo: VisitScotland.

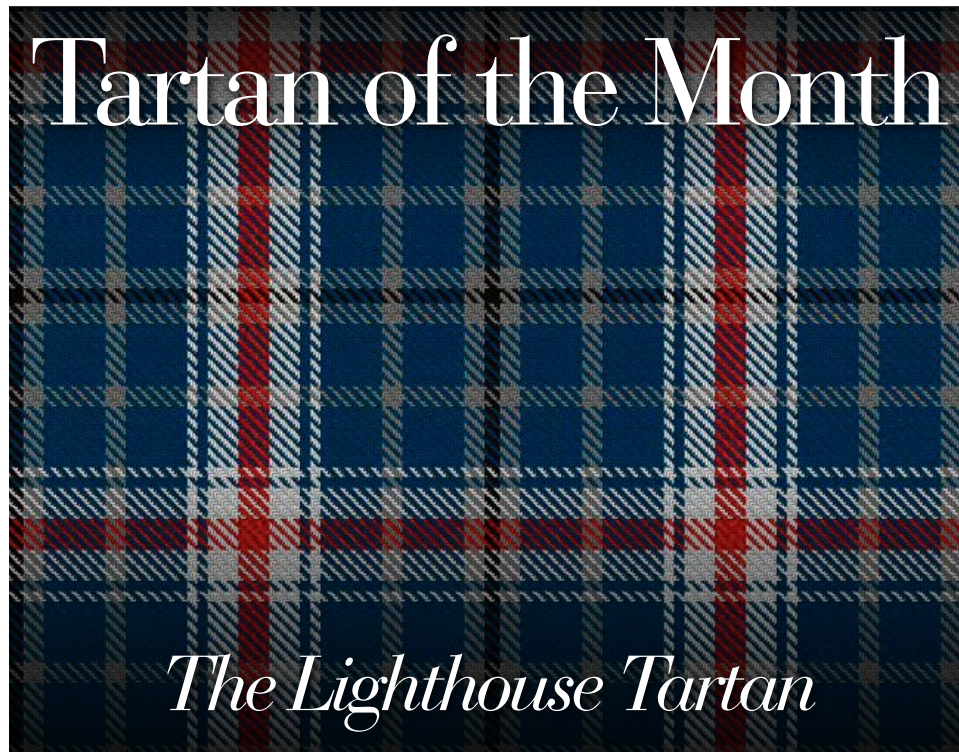
How well do you know Scotland? To test your knowledge we have assembled ten fun questions on its geography, history and culture - but if you get stumped, the solutions can be found underneath. Good luck!

- 1) Ben Nevis is Scotland's highest mountain, what is the second highest?
- 2) What does skeerie mean in Old Scots?
- 3) How many warships of the German fleet were scuttled at Scapa Flow in 1919?
a) 113 b) 21 or c) 52?
- 4) What in Scotland is a coo's lick?
- 5) What gives malt whisky from Islay its characteristic flavour?
- 6) What were the three "Js" connected with the city of Dundee?
- 7) What and where in Scotland is the Grey Mare's Tail?
- 8) What famous liqueur is said to commemorate the 1745 rebellion?

- 9) Name the range of mountains that separate Scotland from England?
- 10) Name Glasgow's two main railway stations?

Answers:

- 1) Ben Macdui located in the Cairngorms National Park.
- 2) Easily scared or frightened, timid or shy.
- 3) c) 52 were scuttled within five hours, this was the greatest loss of shipping in a single day in history.
- 4) A tuft of hair growing at an awkward angle from the head.
- 5) Peat.
- 6) Jute, Jam and Journalism.
- 7) It's a 200-foot waterfall near Moffat in Dumfriesshire.
- 8) Drambuie. The name comes from the Gaelic "An Dram Buidheach", meaning "the drink that satisfies."
- 9) The Cheviot Hills, or also known as The Cheviots.
- 10) Queen Street Station and Central Station.



Tartan of the Month

The Lighthouse 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).

Inspiration for the colours in this tartan are from the beautiful and iconic lighthouse in Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Deep marine blue is the colour of the North Atlantic Ocean, white, the crashing waves, white caps and the lighthouse structure, red the beacon light, grey the barren granite, and the black, the danger zone at the water's edge and to remember those who have been lost to the sea. Peggy's Cove Lighthouse, also known as Peggy's Point Lighthouse, is one of Nova Scotia's most well-known lighthouses and may be considered to be the most photographed lighthouse in Canada. This tartan (reference: 14221) was designed by Lori Nason and registered in February, 2024.

SCOTSPEAK

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



“The 2026 cruise season represents another major milestone for Stornoway Port, with 89 scheduled calls highlighting the continued growth in demand from international cruise operators. The return of high-profile vessels such as Queen Anne, alongside visits from MSC Preziosa and Carnival Legend, demonstrates the strength of Stornoway’s reputation as a world-class destination. Our Deep Water Terminal continues to transform what the Port can offer, strengthening our ability to accommodate larger vessels and enhancing the overall visitor experience.”

Kirsty Hutchison, cruise and marketing manager at Stornoway Port, said the 2026 schedule will welcome a record 89 cruise ship calls during the 2026 season. The season is expected to bring 60,000 passengers to the Outer Hebrides, generating an estimated £7.8m for the local economy.

“As many of you all know, Bowdens Kilt Hire will be closing its doors for the final time...just shy of 110 years, we have been providing the people of Edinburgh and beyond with men’s formal wear as Edinburgh’s oldest independent formal hire company. From everyone at Bowdens, past and present, we want to thank each and every one of you who have supported us from the very start. Thank you to everyone for being a part of our journey.”

A statement from Bowdens Kilt Hire on Easter Road in Edinburgh said, the business served the community from the same historic shop for nearly 110 years after first opening its doors in 1916 and was described as Scotland’s “oldest kilt hire specialists”.



“This renovation was driven by the need to carry out essential repairs and upgrades to an iconic building on our campus. We have significantly improved accessibility, facilities and sustainability, while carefully preserving its heritage and character for students today and for generations to come. It is fantastic to see Teviot so thoughtfully reimagined and ready to welcome visitors once again.”

Professor Sir Peter Mathieson, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, said the University’s Teviot, the world’s oldest purpose-built student union,

has officially reopened its doors following a two-and-a-half-year refurbishment. First opened in 1889, the building was designed by architects Sydney Mitchell and Ralph Scott and, in what is widely thought to be a global first, created specifically as a place for students to gather. In the 136 years since, Teviot has remained an iconic feature of student life, establishing itself as a year-round events host and much-loved venue during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.



“I’m immensely proud of everything our team achieved together, creating a distinctive Scottish beer brand enjoyed by customers at home and around the world. While this outcome is not what any of us hoped for, I’m glad the brand has found a home with C&C Group. We’ve worked closely with the team for many years and they have the scale, distribution and experience to take Innis & Gunn forward.”

Innis & Gunn founder and chief beer maker Dougal Gunn Sharp said as over 100 jobs were lost across Scotland. The craft beer brand founded in 2003 was purchased by Dublin based beer maker, brand owner and distributor C&C Group in a rescue deal worth £4.5million. Innis & Gunn will join C&C’s existing portfolio of brands including Tennent’s, Bulmers, Magners and Caledonia Best in the UK market.

“It’s great to see that the £2 Bus Fare Cap Pilot is now live in Orkney, following the earlier launches in Shetland and the Western Isles. This means that, for the duration of the pilot, no one will pay more than £2 for a bus journey in Orkney, the Western Isles or Shetland. With the pilot now live across Orkney, the Western Isles and Shetland, it is already helping to make everyday travel simpler and cheaper while supporting more people to choose sustainable transport. I look forward to seeing the positive impact it brings for local communities and the wider region as the pilot continues.”

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Fiona Hyslop said bus passengers in Orkney are the latest in the Highlands and Islands to benefit from a £2 cap on fares. The year-long Scottish Government pilot scheme aims to make bus travel easier and cheaper,

while encouraging greater use of public transport. The scheme was introduced in Shetland in January and in the Western Isles in February.

The roll out will also continue across Highlands, Moray and Argyll and Bute areas.



“The People’s Palace and Winter Gardens is a Category A-listed building. The detailed survey works we have been undertaking are informing the next phase of design development. This process has been essential to fully understand the condition and conservation requirements of these complex historic assets and to finalise the considerable scope of restoration and redevelopment works. When we closed the building in 2024, we indicated an ambition to reopen in 2027. As is common with large-scale capital projects involving major heritage structures, timelines, options and cost estimates continue to evolve as more detailed technical information becomes available and as funding discussions progress. As has been the case from the outset of the project, our focus remains on delivering a high-quality restoration of the People’s Palace and Winter Gardens, which reflects the aspirations of local communities and secures the long-term future of this much-loved cultural space as an inclusive, accessible and world-class museum. We look forward to being able to announce an exciting reopening programme and will confirm a revised date for this as soon as practically possible.”

A spokesperson for Glasgow Life said a multi-million pound revamp of one of Glasgow’s most historic attractions has stalled. The People’s Palace and Winter Gardens located in Glasgow Green in the city’s east, first opened in 1898 and closed in 2024 to undergo a £35.9m revamp. The museum is expected to remain free to visit when it reopens and a new opening time has yet to be announced.

SCOTWORD

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

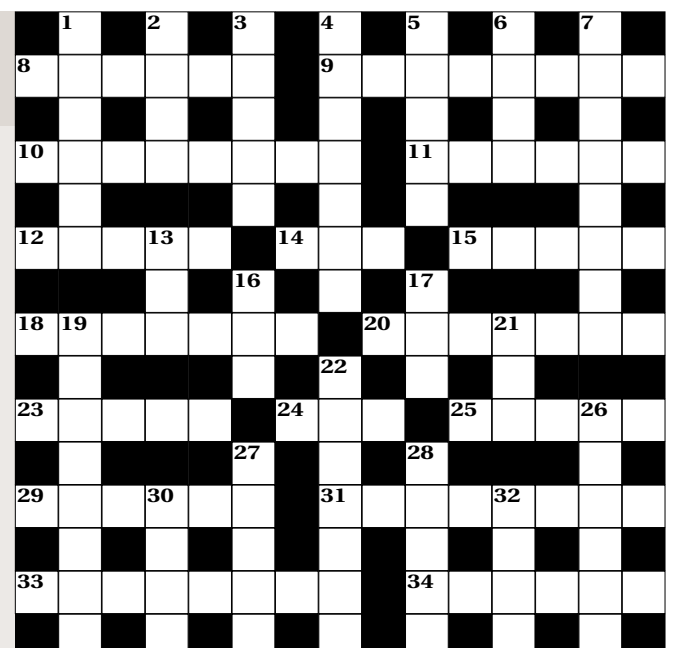
CLUES ACROSS

- 8) Scots kids (6).
- 9) Eternally (8).
- 10) Jimmy Shand’s polka (8).
- 11) The -----o’ the Isles (6).
- 12) A northerly flow! (5).
- 14) Row of kirk seats (3).
- 15) Old Scots garment (5).
- 18) A capital street (7).
- 20) Village on Arran’s east coast (7).
- 23) A Scot gone awry (5).
- 24) A Grampian flower (3).
- 25) Border river (5).

- 29) Arbroath delicacy (6).
- 31) Resort near Burntisland (8).
- 33) Like a stag! (8).
- 34) How dancers should be (6).

CLUES DOWN

- 1) The true Scots tongue (6).
- 2) A Scots hillside (4).
- 3) They’re surrounded by water (5).
- 4) Scots gumboots (7).
- 5) Town south-east of Elgin (5).
- 6) The last word (4).
- 7) Rain protectors (8).
- 13) Barrie’s Peter! (3).
- 16) A Scot who knows! (3).
- 17) A Scots roll (3).
- 19) Military division (8).
- 21) An isolated Scots hill (3).
- 22) Jacobite emblem (7).
- 26) Eagles nests (6).
- 27) River dams (5).
- 28) Miss Laurie (5).
- 30) Narrow arm of the sea (4).
- 32) Part of the Highland dress (4).



48th ANNUAL

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Storms reveal rare 2,000-year-old footprints on Scottish beach



Footprint marked with an outline left in the clay 2,000 years ago.

Storms which recently ravaged Britain's coastline have revealed 2,000-year-old footprints on an Angus beach - one of only a handful of locations in the UK where markings of this kind have ever been discovered. The imprints of human and animal feet - made around the time of Boudicca, Jesus, and the height of the Roman Empire - were temporarily revealed by shifting sands at Lunan Bay and spotted by vigilant members of the public.

Lunan Bay locals Ivor Campbell and Jenny Snedden were walking their dogs Ziggy and Juno along the picturesque sands when they saw that storm damage to the dunes had revealed a fresh layer of clay in which Ivor noticed distinct markings. He called council archaeologist Bruce Mann who, suspecting both the significance of the discovery and the race against time they faced to capture it - called in expertise from the University of Aberdeen.

A team of archaeologists led by Professor Kate Britton dashed to the scene - picking up essential supplies like Plaster of Paris in a craft store enroute. The team, including a group of faculty staff and PhD students, worked in windspeeds of more than 55mph while being battered by whipped up sand to preserve evidence of the footprints. Similar markings have been identified in small numbers of sites in England including the Severn Estuary, Formby in Merseyside, and Happisburgh in Norfolk, but there is no previous record of a similar site in Scotland.

A unique snapshot in time

Professor Britton said: "We knew we were dealing with a really rare site and that this discovery offered a unique snapshot in time - but it was also clear that the sea would soon take back what had so recently been revealed. We had to work fast in the worst conditions I've ever encountered for archaeological fieldwork - the sea was coming in fast, with every high tide ripping away parts of the site, while wind-blown sand was simultaneously damaging it. We were effectively being

sand-blasted and the site was too, all while we were trying to delicately clean, study and document it, so it became a race against the elements. And, within 48 hours the entire site was destroyed."

Back in the laboratory, they selected preserved plant remains found in deposits just below the footprints for radiocarbon dating, which has recently confirmed the markings were made around 2,000 years ago. Ongoing analysis of the footprints has identified red deer, roe deer and other animals, as well as humans who would have walked barefoot on the now semi-fossilised clays. "This is a real tangible link to the region's past," team member Professor Noble added. "The late Iron Age dates are in keeping with what we know about the rich archaeology of nearby Lunan Valley. It's very exciting to think these prints were made by people around the time of the Roman invasions of Scotland and in the centuries leading up to the emergence of the Picts."

Archaeologists say the unique find offers a window into human activity along the Angus coastline and the changing nature of the landscape.



The team working at Lunan Bay.

Scottish brewer BrewDog goes into administration



US beverage company Tilray Brands has completed the acquisition of Aberdeenshire-based independent brewer BrewDog which went into administration, including the global brand and related intellectual property, the UK brewing operations and eleven strategic brewpubs in the United Kingdom and Ireland, for a total consideration of £33 million. In Australia Tilray has also taken over two owned BrewDog bar locations in Brisbane- DogTap Brisbane and BrewDog Fortitude Valley, as well as three franchised BrewDog locations in Pentridge (Victoria), South Eveleigh (New South Wales), and Perth (Western Australia). Tilray is separately negotiating to acquire certain BrewDog assets in the United States.

One of the world's most recognized names in craft beer, BrewDog is a brand-powered, vertically integrated beverage and hospitality platform. Founded in Scotland in 2007, BrewDog quickly became one of the largest independent craft beer brands in the United Kingdom with its portfolio of iconic craft, premium and low & no alcohol beer brands, including Punk IPA, Hazy Jane, Lost Lager and Wingman. From its beginnings in the UK, it developed its strong global brand awareness through its global expansion via international breweries, localized brewpubs and strategic partnerships. For Tilray, the acquired asset portfolio presents a significant opportunity for growth in the UK and previously untapped international markets.

Irwin D. Simon, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Tilray Brands, stated, "BrewDog is one of the most iconic, mission-driven craft beer brands in the UK. It helped redefine modern craft beer through bold innovation, fearless creativity and an unwavering commitment to great beer. What makes BrewDog truly special has always been its brewers, its brewpubs and its passionate community of beer fans. As we begin a new chapter for this great brand, our priority is to refocus BrewDog on the craft beer excellence that made it beloved in the first place and strategically invest to return the operations to profitable growth. BrewDog's future is bright, and we are committed to ensuring the brand continues to lead and inspire the global craft beer movement."

Following this news it has been announced Scottish craft brewer Innis & Gunn has also collapsed into administration and purchased by an Irish drinks company.

Atlantic: A Scottish Story comes to ASF Supper Club



The American Scottish Foundation 2026 Supper Club will bring together an array of performers for an evening of Scottish musical celebration - culminating in a performance for the first time of the award winning *Atlantic: A Scottish Story*, an unforgettable live performance of the award-winning podcast series and the hit Edinburgh Fringe production.

Set against the backdrop of the remote island of St Kilda, *Atlantic* weaves original and traditional Scottish music with true stories and rich characters to tell a deeply moving tale of a community on the edge of the world. *Atlantic: A Scottish Story* is

part of the Carnegie Hall Festivals - United in Sound: America at 250 programming. Join creators Scott Gilmour and Claire McKenzie (Noisemaker), alongside acclaimed artist Kirsty Findlay (The List Hot 100 Artists 2024) who will lead in bringing this powerful celebration of life. Alongside performances from some of Scotland's most exciting new musical voices. *Atlantic* was developed in association with Royal Conservatoire Scotland and Noisemaker will continue development with Carnegie Mellon - four young performers from Carnegie Mellon.

Atlantic highlights the rich musical traditions that have influenced American music folk, bluegrass and country music, creating a powerful bridge across cultures.

Experience *Atlantic: A Scottish Story* at the ASF Supper Club, Thursday April 9th, 2026. For details visit: www.americanscottishfoundation.com



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SCAN ME!



IN SCOTLAND TODAY

Major fire at Glasgow Central Station

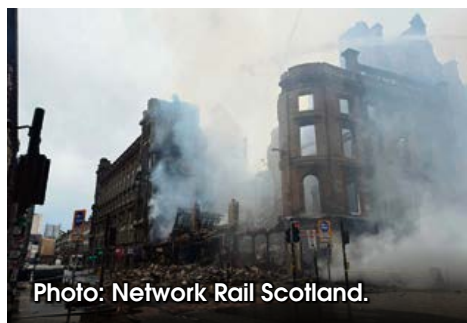


Photo: Network Rail Scotland.

A devastating fire has ripped through parts of Glasgow's historic Central Station. Large parts of the city centre were evacuated as the blaze took hold of the B-listed outside buildings on Union Street, which reportedly started in a vape shop, and a major incident was declared. The Victorian buildings, located at the corner of Union and Gordon Street's, date back to 1851 and had the iconic dome known for its Barrs Iron-Bru & Bells Whisky signs fully collapsing.

All rail services to and from the station were cancelled and fortunately no injuries were reported. Glasgow Central Station was closed for several days causing major travel disruption and many businesses have been lost or severely impacted by this fire event. The station itself has avoided significant damage; however, a safety assessment of the building was being undertaken by the council, fire and rail teams. David Ross, ScotRail Chief Operating Officer, said: "Glasgow Central will remain closed while the impact of the fire in the building next to the station is assessed and we expect disruption to continue for several days. We'd like to thank our colleagues in the fire and emergency services who worked incredibly hard to tackle the blaze and prevent it from spreading to the station itself. We know this closure will cause significant disruption for our customers, and we're very sorry for the impact this will have on their journeys."

Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council, added: "We are thankful there are no casualties, but it is very upsetting to see the damage the fire has caused to the heart of Glasgow City Centre. The priorities of all those working at and behind the scene are keeping everyone safe and supporting those immediately affected. I'm extremely grateful to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and all the others who worked through the night and all emergency services, without whose efforts this could have been even worse. Please give all these professionals the space they need to do their jobs. This is another reminder of just how important Glasgow City Centre is to Scotland's national life. It has no equivalent in terms of economic and cultural impact. Ensuring a swift recovery and longer-term restoration must be a priority for all levels of government in the weeks ahead."

This fire is a further hit to the city after a major blaze tore through the world-renowned Glasgow School of Art in 2014. Four years later, a second blaze took hold of the school's Mackintosh building in June 2018. Glasgow Central was opened by the Caledonian Railway on 1st August 1879 and is used by over 100,000 people per day. The station is consistently ranked as the busiest train station in Scotland, handling over 25-33 million passengers annually.

Glasgow named most generous Scottish city



GoFundMe, the world's leading social fundraising platform, has named Glasgow as Scotland's most generous city. GoFundMe CEO Tim Cadogan visited Glasgow recently to celebrate the accolade after recently released data laid bare the record-breaking kindness of locals. He handed the award to the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Dr Jacqueline McLaren, on behalf of the city. The data, which revealed one in every 17 Glaswegians donated on GoFundMe last year, also found Glasgow was the second Most Generous City in the UK, skyrocketing up from tenth place the year before. It comes after an extraordinary response to Sir Chris Hoy's Tour de 4 cycling challenge, which took place in Glasgow in September and raised over £3.1 million for cancer charities.

The generosity of Scottish communities was central to the event's success, with participants on the road routes blown away by the local support. Nearly 3,000 donations to Tour de 4 from Glaswegians helped secure the city's position as the second most generous in the UK when it came to supporting the challenge during its inaugural year, just behind Edinburgh.

Lord Provost of Glasgow, Jacqueline McLaren, said: "I am delighted to accept this award on behalf of the people of Glasgow. This recognition from GoFundMe reflects something that we already know to be true; kindness and generosity is woven into the very fabric of our city. Whether responding to moments of crisis and hardship, supporting local causes, or getting behind challenges like the Tour de 4, Glaswegians consistently step forward for one another. Being acknowledged as Scotland's most generous city, in addition to once again being named the UK's friendliest, speaks volumes about the type of city we are. I am proud of everyone who contributed to this achievement, and I know Glasgow will continue to lead with humanity in the year ahead."

Edinburgh, Scotland's second Most Generous city, came tenth in the overall UK rankings.

Stirling Visitor Levy Scheme approved to generate investment in tourism economy



At a meeting of Stirling Council a year round 3% levy was agreed for all overnight paid visitor accommodation stays in the Stirling Council area. It will come into effect

for stays on or after 14 June 2027 and apply to bookings made from 1 January 2027. The 3% levy is a reduction on the 5% rate that was initially proposed in the draft scheme and is based on the feedback from a rigorous consultation and public engagement exercise, as well as the findings of an independent economic analysis.

The 3% levy is expected to raise almost £3 million income every year, with all money raised to be reinvested in services and facilities largely used by leisure and business visitors, including facilities and services that will grow the visitor economy, focusing on Stirling's key strengths of history, culture, scenery, landscape and outdoor pursuits. Accommodation providers will be able to retain 3% of the levy money they raise to help cover the costs of collection and compliance – the highest offered by any Scottish local authority rolling out a levy so far.

Stirling Council Leader, Cllr Susan McGill said: "Introducing a visitor levy scheme for Stirling gives us an incredible opportunity to invest in and grow our tourism economy that wouldn't otherwise be possible given the pressures on local government finances. Stirling's scheme strikes a balance between raising vital funds to improve our tourism experience while minimising any short-term impacts on businesses. All the income generated by the levy will be spent on projects that will be beneficial to Stirling's tourism industry and residents alike, with the aim of attracting more visitors to the region all-year round and restoring civic pride in our communities.

These investments could include better public transport links across the region, more events and festivals, community projects such as heritage walks, new seating or planting beds, job creation schemes for businesses and tourism marketing campaigns. The 3% rate for Stirling is lower than any other visitor levy scheme agreed in Scotland so far and a decrease on the 5% rate that was initially proposed."

The Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024 was passed by the Scottish Parliament in May 2024. Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and West Dunbartonshire Councils have already agreed to introduce a visitor levy, with several other local authorities progressing with proposed schemes.

Gaelic Drama An t-Eilean (The Island) will return for a second series



The BBC has announced the award-winning Gaelic drama series *An t-Eilean (The Island)* will return following a successful debut series last year. *An t-Eilean* was the UK's first high-end Gaelic drama series and the biggest, most high-profile drama in BBC ALBA's history. Created by Nicholas Osborne and co-written with Mairead Hamilton, the new series will feature a gripping new mystery and will see Sorcha Groundsell return in

the lead role of Detective Sergeant, Kat Crichton. The drama will film largely on location in the Western Isles with production due to start soon.

Sorcha Groundsell, who will return in series two of *An t-Eilean* in the lead role of Detective Sergeant Kat Crichton, said: "I'm so pleased that *An t-Eilean* has been recommissioned for a second season. It was a wonderful and deeply fulfilling experience to be a part of season one and I have every faith the team will build on the work they did and that they will take the show to new heights and even broader audiences. It's so important that we continue to platform Gàidhlig and to provide further opportunities for Gaelic creatives so that we can reinforce the language as a vital and vibrant force on the global cultural stage. I'm looking forward to picking up Kat's journey and seeing where the show takes her in this next series!"

Bill MacLeod, Commissioning Editor BBC ALBA added: "We're delighted to have recommissioned this international award-winning show. *An t-Eilean* will once again transport viewers to one of the most dramatic landscapes in the world with a taut and twisty story that will keep them on the edge of their seats until the final few frames."

Independent research has found that Gaelic media generates £1.34 for every £1 invested and supports 340 jobs across Scotland, including 160 in island communities. Gaelic gained official language status in Scotland through the Scottish Languages Act in 2025.

More than 1 million to live alone by 2032

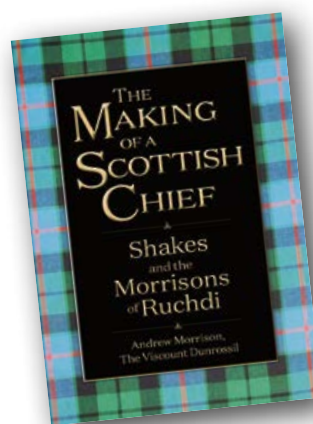
The number of people living alone in Scotland is projected to top one million for the first time by 2032, according to new figures from National Records of Scotland (NRS). NRS projects the number of households will increase by 6.7% from 2022 to 2032 to a total of 2.68 million. Within that total 1,018,000 (38%) will be a single person household. The increase is equivalent to 17,000 more households per year.

Sandy Taylor, head of household statistics at NRS said: "The number of households in Scotland is projected to grow at a faster rate than the population. This is because Scotland's population is ageing and people are more likely to live alone as they get older. By 2032 it is projected that just over one fifth of the population aged 16 and over will be living alone. This proportion increases with age. It's just over a third for those aged 65 and over and more than half for those aged 85 and over."

Men are more likely to be living alone than women in all age groups up to 64 years old. However, from this point onwards women are more likely to be living alone and this likelihood increases with age. This reflects greater life expectancy of females and also the tendency of women to have partners who are older than them.

Most areas of Scotland are seeing an increase in the number of households, with Midlothian being the highest at 17.4%. With a projected fall of 1% in the number of households, Inverclyde is the only local authority area projected to show a decrease. Relatively small increases are projected for West Dunbartonshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Na h-Eileanan Siar and North Ayrshire.

The Making of a Scottish Chief: Shakes and the Morrisons of Ruchdi



The arms of the Viscount Dunrossil.

Leadership and honour

I hope that anyone with even a hint of Scottish ancestry—not just Morrisons—will find this part interesting, not just because of their individual accomplishments, but because of how they illustrate the way a modern chiefly family can still bring honor to the name they bear. I have also endeavored to explain how

are clans? What's the role of the Lord Lyon and the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs? What's the role of a clan chief today? And who really cares about this? I have attempted to answer these questions—and more—in the first half of my new book, *The Making of a Scottish Chief: Shakes and the Morrisons of Ruchdi*. What are my qualifications for writing this book, you might ask?

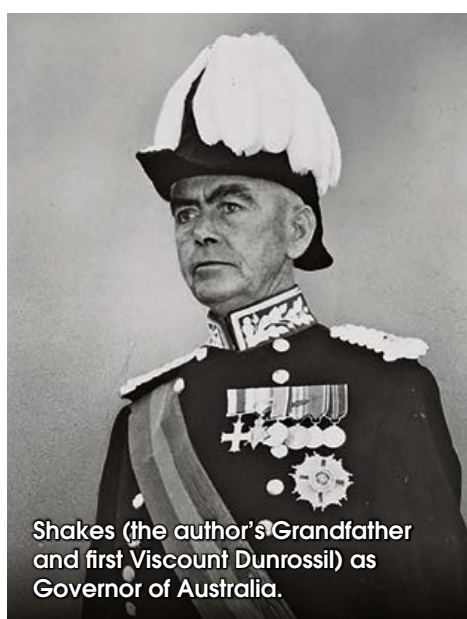
Though not actually a chief myself, I serve as the vice convenor (vice chairman) of the Standing Council and on the Advisory Board of the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations in the US. I am not, however, a lawyer, just an informed amateur in these matters, and nothing I say in this book should be seen as representing the official position of any of the august organizations with which I have the honor to be associated. Nevertheless, this does represent the way I see the consensus moving.

The second half of the book is all about Morrisons. There are some characters there! John Wayne, for instance (whose birth name was Marion Morrison), was a proud paid-up life member of the Clan Society. There have been other weird and wonderful Morrisons too worth hearing about, Clan Morrison includes among its membership such notables as Van Morrison, Jim Morrison and David Gilmour among many others. The book concludes with accounts of the lives of my father and grandfather.

the duties, functions and privileges of a chief have changed over the centuries, but leadership and honour remain core values.

We live in a time when hereditary titles have lost much of their luster, when the word “entitled” has come to have strongly negative associations. Hereditary peers are no longer able to participate in the Parliamentary chamber which bears their name. Even a Prince has been stripped of his titles and roles, for having brought dishonor to his country. If a chief is to mean anything and the institution of chiefs is to survive and have value for future generations, it is imperative that we see it as an office, a job, not just a title. As I say in the book, you can be a lord, even a duke, without anyone to lord it over. But you can't be a chief without a clan.

Author Andrew Morrison, the current Viscount Dunrossil, is the Vice Convenor (vice chairman) of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs and serves on the Advisory Board of the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations in the USA. The Making of a Scottish Chief is a must-have for anyone with even a hint of Scotland in their ancestry—it is insightful, informative and laced with wonderful anecdotes reflecting a rich and fascinating history. This book is being released on April 6th (National Tartan day) at which time the book will be available from all good online booksellers (Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Waterstones etc) or directly from the publisher: Elm Grove Publishing: www.elmgrovepublishing.com.



Shakes (the author's Grandfather and first Viscount Dunrossil) as Governor of Australia.

Who gets to decide who's a chief?

This was an impasse. Generally speaking, heraldry and titles were a feature of Lowland, Anglo-Norman culture. The sets of Hebrideans and armigers just didn't intersect! So, as Shakes recited his ancestry (orally, in Gaelic, as he'd learned it), Lyon felt he'd solved a 50 year—even a 350-year problem. Shakes must be the chief! “Not so”, said Shakes. He had older brothers. “Then the oldest must be chief!”

And so it happened. Shakes died in 1961, in Australia, where he was Governor-General. A few years later his brother, Dr. John Morrison, Morrison of Ruchdi, was acclaimed by the clan and by Lyon as chief. Today, Dr. John's great grandson, Alasdair, is the fourth chief in this new line. Alasdair is studying Robotics and Artificial Intelligence at the University of Glasgow - a very modern chief! The Morrisons are not alone in setting out to find a chief and be accepted as a clan. There are many other surname groups which have recently formed societies. This raises lots of questions. Should they be recognized as a clan, should one of them be accepted as chief? Who gets to decide who's a chief and what names

By: Andrew Morrison, Viscount Dunrossil

In 1959, my grandfather, W.S. “Shakes” Morrison, made the decision to retire from Parliament and step down as Speaker of the House of Commons. As a former Speaker, he was then raised to the peerage and became Viscount Dunrossil and as a new peer he would need a new coat of arms. Shakes was a Scot, a native Gaelic speaker from Argyll, whose parents had moved there from the Outer Hebrides. He therefore approached the Lord Lyon, King of Arms, the chief heraldic authority in Scotland, to help design the arms.

Morrison is one of the larger clans in Scotland. It's the 18th most common name in Scotland, the 8th or 9th most common in the Highlands and Islands and the third most common in the Outer Hebrides. But they hadn't had a chief in 350 years, not since the last Brieve or hereditary Judge of the Isles had been murdered by Macleods in the early 1600s. Without a chief, they could not be recognized as a clan, a “noble community”, under the law. As a result, a clan society was formed in 1909 to try to identify possible candidates for chief, suitable to the Lyon Court.

Various suggestions had been rejected, either because they were not armigers (people with their own coat of arms) or because they were not from the Outer Hebrides, where the main center of clan activity had been.



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SCAN ME

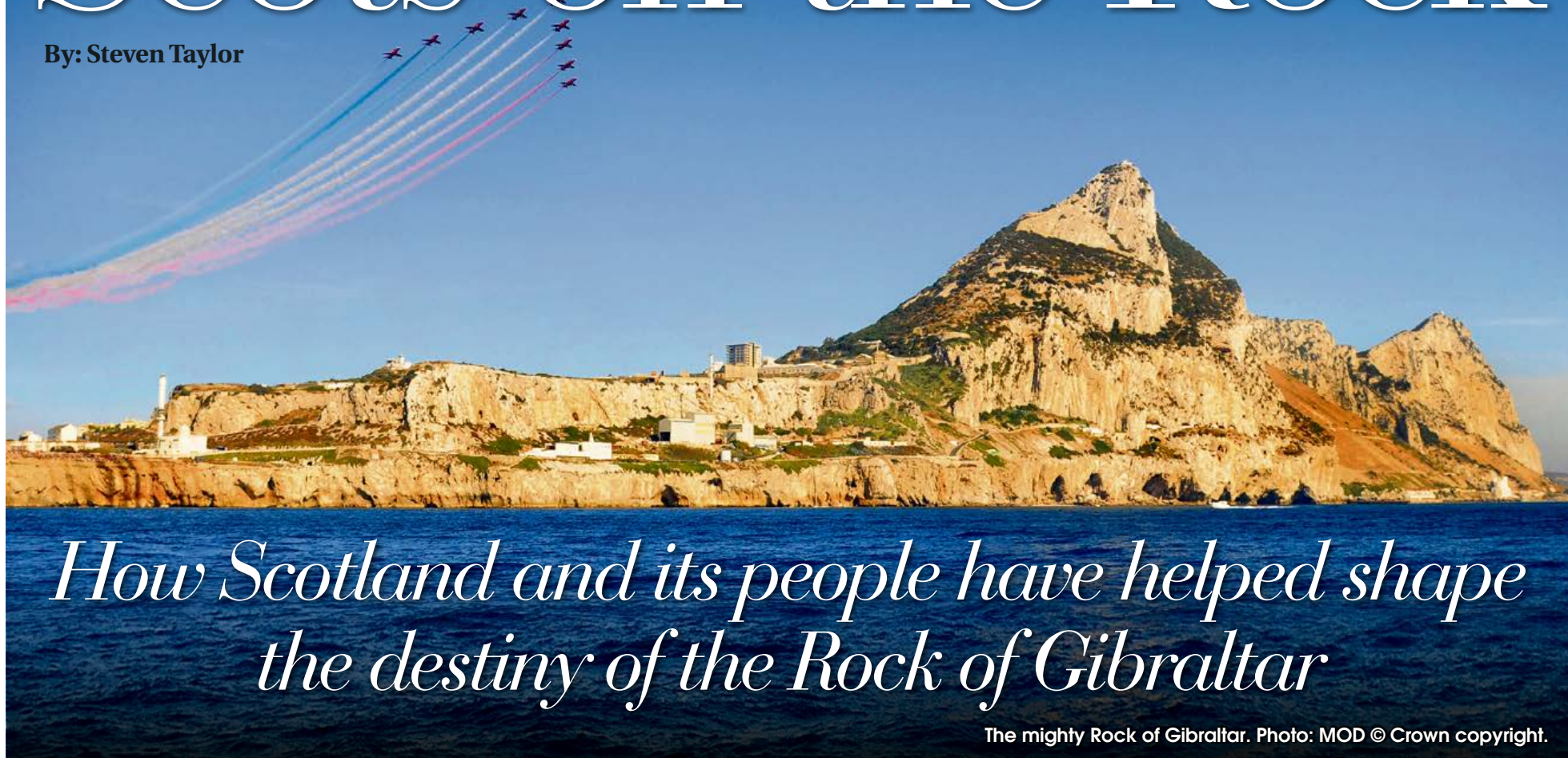
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Celebrating 60 Years

Scots on the Rock

By: Steven Taylor



The mighty Rock of Gibraltar. Photo: MOD © Crown copyright.

It's often described as a little piece of England in the Mediterranean. But it would be just as accurate to describe the Rock of Gibraltar as a small chunk of Scotland in the sun, given the indelible mark the country and its people have made on Britain's famous fortress in the Mediterranean over the past three centuries.

One of the first Scots to make his mark on Gibraltar was the 1st Earl of Portmore, David Colyear, whose family seat was in Perthshire. A Major-General in The Queen's Royal Regiment, Colyear served as one of the first governors of Gibraltar, following its capture from the Spanish by an Anglo-Dutch force under Admiral Sir George Rooke in 1704. After his tenure as governor ended in 1720, seven years later

Colyear was despatched to Gibraltar with military reinforcements to take command of the garrison when Spanish forces under the Count de las Torres laid siege to the Rock. The siege was lifted, however, whilst Colyear was *en route* to Gibraltar.

Strategically vital territory

When Spain next attempted to wrest back the strategically vital territory from Britain, in the Great Siege of 1779 – 1783, Gibraltar was under the governorship of another Scotsman, General George Augustus Elliott.

Born in Roxburghshire in 1717, Elliott served in the Engineers and as an aide-camp to King George II before being appointed governor in 1777. When the Great Siege commenced two years later, he set about strengthening Gibraltar's defensive fortifications, which helped the garrison resist the repeated attacks from both land and sea launched by the Spanish and their French allies. Amongst the military units at Elliott's disposal was the 2nd Battalion, the Highland Regiment, which distinguished itself in the fighting. The Great Siege finally ended in February 1783, with Britain retaining control of Gibraltar. In recognition of his successful

defence of the Rock, General Elliott was knighted and later made a peer.

But the history of Scottish soldiers on the Rock has not always been so illustrious. On Christmas Eve 1802 simmering discontent with conditions in Gibraltar and the authoritarian rule of the newly appointed governor, King George III's fourth son, Prince Edward, boiled over when armed (and, it was claimed, drunken) soldiers of the Royal Scots surrounded his residence at Line Wall Road. Complaining that they were "being treated worse than slaves", the aggrieved Scottish soldiers demanded he be replaced as governor. A confrontation with soldiers from an English regiment that remained loyal to Prince Edward ensued, and, after an exchange of fire that left one Royal Scots soldier dead and several others wounded, the rebellion petered out.

Unrest broke out again just a couple of days later, however, and once again soldiers from a Scots regiment were involved. This time, it was men of the King's Own Scottish Borderers who marched on the prince's residence. Eventually, the mutiny was put down after more violent clashes with loyal units. The ringleaders of the mutiny were court-martialled and three executed by a

firing squad drawn from their own regiment. Several others were exiled to Australia, then a penal colony. However, London felt it prudent to recall the unpopular prince to England soon after.

Although he continued to hold the title of governor until his death in 1820, Prince Edward would never return to Gibraltar. From 1814, the actual running of the territory fell to Lieutenant-General Sir George Don, a Scot born in Edinburgh, who held the post of Lieutenant-Governor of Gibraltar until his death in 1832. In contrast to Prince Edward, Don became one of the Rock's most successful leaders, as popular with the military garrison as he was with the civilian inhabitants, the so-called 'rock scorpions', as the Royal Navy dubbed them.

Scottish influence

Don's tenure began at a particularly difficult time, with an epidemic of yellow fever ravaging Gibraltar, which killed almost one thousand of its inhabitants. Upon his arrival, Don found Gibraltar to be in a sorry state of neglect – overcrowded, filthy, disease-ridden and poorly administered. Described by William Jackson, governor of Gibraltar between 1978 and 1982, as 'a man of vision and political acumen', Don immediately set to work on improving conditions and infrastructure.

He introduced a proper sanitation and sewage system, oversaw construction of the Rock's first civilian hospital – today called St Bernard's – and overhauled law and order, establishing a civil judiciary and the Gibraltar Police Force. He also instigated sweeping political and social reforms, including addressing long-standing religious discrimination by abolishing a ban on Catholics owning property. During Don's 18-year reign as *de*



St Andrew's Church pictured here in the 1950s. Photo: Courtesy of the Ministry of Heritage, HM Government of Gibraltar.



A portrait of Scots-born General George Augustus Elliott on Gibraltar's £10 note. Image: Public domain.

facto governor, Gibraltar began its transformation from simply a useful base for the Royal Navy to a town and community in its own right.

The Scottish influence in Gibraltarian society deepened further in 1854, when the Church of Scotland opened the St Andrew's Church on Governor's Parade, principally to cater for the large number of Scottish soldiers stationed on the Rock, but also the sizeable Presbyterian community. For the next few decades Gibraltar enjoyed relative peace and growing prosperity. A key figure in the economic development of Gibraltar during the latter part of the 19th century was John Mackintosh. The son of a Scots emigrant to Gibraltar, he was born in 1865 and made his fortune as a coal merchant. During his life he supported many causes, providing homes for the poor and elderly, and donating generously to the Rock's civilian hospital, which named a wing after him. He died in 1940 and Gibraltar's main plaza was named John Mackintosh Square in his honour.

But World War II brought more upheaval to Gibraltar and its people. In the run-up to the war, another Scotsman was serving as governor, the Edinburgh-born General Sir Edmund 'Tiny' Ironside, who helped prepare the colony for the titanic struggle that lay ahead by overseeing the beefing up of Gibraltar's defences. Ironside's spell as governor was cut short, however, when he was recalled to Britain upon the outbreak of war to take up the post of Chief of the Imperial General Staff – overall commander of the British Army.

The defensive preparations begun by Ironside were continued by another officer of Scottish descent, General Noel Mason-Macfarlane, who was appointed General Officer Commanding Gibraltar in July 1940, amid fears Hitler and his fascist Spanish ally General Francisco Franco were planning a joint invasion of the Rock. Although the feared invasion never materialised, most of Gibraltar's civilian population was evacuated as a precaution. Some were sent to Jamaica and Madeira, others to various parts of the United Kingdom, including Glasgow, where several pregnant Gibraltarian women were sent to give birth after

arriving by ship at Liverpool docks in August 1940, deemed at that time to be safer while the 'Blitz' was underway.

Post-War tragedy

After the war, the people of Gibraltar were gradually repatriated, a process only completed in 1951. That year, just as life was beginning to return to normal, the Rock experienced its greatest post-War tragedy, one which turned a Scots fireman into a local legend. On the morning of 27 April, whilst its cargo of depth charges was being unloaded at the dockyard, the Naval Armament Vessel *Bedenham* caught fire. Among the local firemen who responded to the emergency was Sub-Officer George Henderson. Born in Aberdeenshire in 1910, Henderson joined the Gordon Highlanders in 1931. While stationed in Gibraltar a few years later, he married a local woman and, after leaving the army, settled in Gibraltar, joining first the police force and later transferring to the Dockyard Fire Brigade.

As the fire on the *Bedenham* quickly spread, Henderson boarded the ship with his hose to fight the fire. Unfortunately, the fire set off the depth charges, causing an immense explosion that tore the ship apart, killing Henderson and twelve others, injuring more than fifty, and causing substantial damage throughout Gibraltar. An investigation later found that the fire was started due to faulty ammunition on the ship. For displaying "courage of the highest order in the face of almost certain death" in his efforts to control the raging inferno, Sub-Officer Henderson was posthumously awarded the George Cross in November 1951.

In the wake of the tragedy, another Scotsman was made governor, General Sir Gordon MacMillan, a highly decorated World War II veteran. Besides the damage caused by the *Bedenham* disaster, MacMillan also had to deal with renewed belligerency towards Gibraltar from General Franco, who now made the return of the territory to Spain a political priority. His increasingly aggressive policy towards the Rock eventually led to the sealing off of the border with Spain in 1969, effectively blockading Gibraltar. During the 1982 Falklands conflict Gibraltar's military usefulness was again demonstrated,



The George Cross, Britain's highest civilian honour, was posthumously awarded to George Henderson. Photo: MOD © Crown copyright.



A bust of Scots-Gibraltarian businessman and philanthropist John Mackintosh. Photo: Courtesy of the Ministry of Heritage, HM Government of Gibraltar.

serving as an important staging post for British ships of the naval task force heading to the South Atlantic to retake the Falkland Islands after the Argentine invasion. Serving as Flag Officer Gibraltar at the time – the overall commander of all military forces on the Rock – was Rear-Admiral John Mackenzie from Perthshire.

Rear-Admiral Mackenzie had to contend with the possibility that rogue elements in the Spanish army might try to take advantage of Britain's preoccupation with the Falklands situation by attempting a military move of their own against Gibraltar, fears that were shared by the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.

Scotland's presence in Gibraltar

"Mr Nott (the Defence Secretary) said that the Prime Minister was much concerned about the implications of this crisis for our position in Gibraltar," a note of a Cabinet meeting, held two days after the Argentine invasion, stated. "(She) noted the jubilant reaction in the Spanish press to the Argentine seizure of the Falkland Islands, and was also clearly concerned that the move of the task force might leave us militarily exposed to a similar Spanish attempt against Gibraltar." To deter any planned Spanish aggression, Mackenzie requested the garrison be reinforced with an anti-aircraft unit equipped with surface-to-air missiles and RAF Jaguar strike aircraft, based at the airport. It later transpired that Gibraltar did indeed face the threat of attack during the Falklands War – not from Spain, as feared, but from Argentina. The chief of the Argentine Navy, Admiral Jorge Anaya, dispatched a team of commando divers to the southern

Spanish city of Algeciras, from where they were to swim out into the Bay of Gibraltar and attack British shipping in the harbour using limpet mines. Fortunately, the Argentine team was arrested by Spanish police before they could execute the plan and swiftly deported.

The diminishing military presence in Gibraltar over subsequent decades has meant that the Scottish presence has also inevitably waned. In 2022, the St Andrew's Church was closed due to dwindling attendance and the building sold to developers, bringing an end to the Church of Scotland's presence in Gibraltar after 168 years. But from the local ten pound note, which features a portrait of General Sir Augustus Elliott, to the numerous statues, plaques and street names scattered throughout the territory commemorating distinguished Scottish governors and business leaders, the profound impact Scots have had on the history of the Rock is still very evident to this day.

Steven Taylor is the author of Rock Scorpion, a thriller set in Gibraltar during the Falklands War. Now available to buy from Amazon in paperback and ebook format. Visit: www.steventayloronline.co.uk



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THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - Hunt the Gowk - Scottish equivalent of April Fool's Day (gowk is a cuckoo).

1 - Scottish singer Susan Boyle born. Boyle rose to fame in 2009 after appearing as a contestant on the third series of *Britain's Got Talent*, singing *I Dreamed a Dream* from *Les Misérables*. Susan has sold over 25 million albums, has had 250 million audio streams, and over 650 million YouTube hits. **1961**

1 - *Reporting Scotland*, BBC Scotland's flagship national television news programme, is broadcast for the first time. The show continues today and has the largest reach of any televised news in Scotland. **1968**



2 - The College of New Aberdeen was founded. The college was founded by the Earl Marischal of Scotland, George Keith of Inverurie, and became known as Marischal College. Marischal College was the second university in Aberdeen, following the foundation of King's College in 1495 by Bishop William Elphinstone. The two universities were united in 1860 as the University of Aberdeen. **1593**

2 - Tartan Day is officially proclaimed in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island. **1992**

2 - Scottish comedian Janey Godley wins the inaugural Billy Connolly Spirit of Glasgow Award at the Glasgow International Comedy Festival. Godley went viral during the 2020 pandemic with her impersonations of the then First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. She was later diagnosed with ovarian cancer, from which she died in 2024. **2023**

3 - Murder of Duke of Rothesay, heir of Robert III. **1401**

3 - King James VI travelled to London to take up the English throne. James moved his court to Whitehall Palace in London, where they settled around the palace in an area which became known as "Scotland Yard". On his way to London he knighted 300 people, and in the space of four months in England had knighted more people than Queen Elizabeth had in her entire reign. James returned to Scotland only once, in 1617, and he liked to boast that he now ruled his northern kingdom with a stroke of his pen. **1603**

4 - Parliament held by King Robert II at Scone, resolved that his son, the Earl of Carrick should succeed his father as King (as Robert III although he was baptised John). **1373**

4 - King Robert III died and James I ascended the throne (but was not crowned until 1424 as he was a prisoner of the English). **1406**

4 - John Napier, inventor of logarithms, died in Edinburgh. **1617**

5 - Disaster at an England vs. Scotland football match at Ibrox Stadium when part of the flooring collapsed, killing 25, injuring over 500. **1902**



6 - Declaration of Arbroath - "For we fight not for glory nor for riches nor for honour, but only and alone for freedom, which no good man surrenders but with his life", was drawn up by the monks of Arbroath Abbey. The Declaration of Arbroath is widely regarded as being the inspiration behind the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. **1320**

6 - Nova Scotia officially proclaims Tartan Day. Started originally as "Tartan Day in Nova Scotia," founder and *Scottish Banner* reader Jean Watson approached every provincial Legislative Assembly in Canada, as well as other Scottish-cultural societies across Canada, to help get such a date established. **1986**

6 - Tartan Day is officially proclaimed in the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. **1992**

6 - Tartan Day is officially proclaimed in the Canadian province of Newfoundland & Labrador. **1995**

6 - The U.S. Senate declared April 6 to be National Tartan Day to recognize the contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States. **1998**

7 - The Scottish National Party was founded. The SNP was created out of the merger of a number of parties; the National Party of Scotland, formed in 1928 from an amalgamation of a number of small parties following the rejection of a Home Rule bill, and the Scottish Party, a breakaway section of the Cathcart Conservative Association. The party enjoyed its first success in 1945, when Robert MacIntyre was elected to represent Motherwell. **1934**



7 - Jim Clark, Duns farmer, twice World Motor Racing Champion, killed in crash, Hockenheim. The Jim Clark Motorsport Museum opened in the historic market town of Duns in the Scottish Borders in 2019. **1968**

7 - *Rob Roy*, starring Liam Neeson as Robert Roy MacGregor, is released. **1995**

7 - The last native person born on the island of St Kilda, Rachel Johnson, died at the age of 93 at a care home in Clydebank. **2016**

8 - Radical prisoners were taken from Paisley to Greenock jail under escort. The citizens of Greenock fought their escort, the Port Glasgow Militia, until they reached the jail. Still coming under attack, the Militia opened fire on the stone-throwing crowd. Eight were killed, including an eight year old boy, and ten wounded, before the militia retreated from Greenock. In the evening, the angry Greenockians stormed the jail and freed the prisoners. **1820**

9 - Second Treaty of Durham in which David I is recognised as King of an independent Scotland by King Stephen of England. **1139**

9 - Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, the leading Scottish Jacobite rebel was beheaded on Tower Green, London. Lovat has the unwanted notoriety of being the last man to be publicly beheaded in Britain. It is said his last words said were in Latin: "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori" or "It's sweet and seemly to die for one's country". **1747**

10 - King James V born. James V was the king of Scotland from 1513 to 1542. **1512**

10 - Sandy Lyle becomes the first Scottish (and British) golfer to win the US Masters tournament. **1988**

11 - Scottish settlement in Darien, Panama, abandoned. **1700**

11 - The wedding of Scottish tennis star Andy Murray to his long-term partner Kim Sears takes place in Dunblane. **2015**

12 - Union flag adopted as the flag of England, Wales and Scotland. **1606**

12 - The SNP won their first electoral victory. Dr Robert D. MacIntyre won the Motherwell and Wishaw by-election in a straight fight with Labour by a majority of 617 votes. MacIntyre later became Provost of Stirling. **1945**



12 - The Cromarty Bridge opens. The road bridge joins a junction with the B9163 to the south in Ross and Cromarty with a junction with the A862 to the north at Arduilie Point. It became part of the A9 in 1982. **1979**

13 - The Stone of Destiny, which had been removed from underneath the Coronation Chair by Scottish nationalists on 25 December 1950, was returned to Westminster Abbey after being found at Arbroath Abbey. **1951**

14 - University of Edinburgh founded. It is the sixth oldest university in the UK, and some prominent alumni include Charles Darwin, Alexander Graham Bell, Sir Walter Scott, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. **1582**

14 - Aberdeen Football Club was founded. **1903**

15 - Prof Joseph Black chemist, researcher, teacher, first to identify carbon dioxide, died. **1799**

15 - Infamous passenger liner the *RMS Titanic* sank in the Atlantic Ocean after hitting an iceberg. Several Scots died on the ship including musician Jock Hume who played as the ship sank, First Officer William Murdoch, and several staff members. 1,500 people perished on the maiden voyage to New York. **1912**

15 - Actor and comedian Rikki Fulton born in Glasgow. He was best known for his double act with Jack Milroy as Francie and Josie and as the Rev I M Jolly in *Scotch and Wry*. **1924**

16 - The Battle of Stracathro, also known as the Battle of Inchbare, where forces loyal to David I defeated the invading army of Óengus, the last King of Moray. **1130**



16 - The Battle of Culloden took place at Culloden Moor, where British troops defeated the Scottish Jacobite army for the final confrontation of the 1745 Jacobite Rising. It was the last ever battle to be fought on Scottish/British soil with over 1,500 Scottish fatalities. **1746**

16 - *Royal Yacht Britannia* launched at John Brown's shipyard, Clydebank. *Britannia* served the Royal Family from 1954 until 1997, and travelling more than a million nautical miles. The *Britannia* opened as a visitor attraction in Edinburgh in 1998. **1953**

16 - Livingston in West Lothian is officially designated as a New Town. It was the fourth post-war new town to be built in Scotland. **1962**

17 - Alexander Mackenzie, the Scottish-born Canadian statesman, died. Mackenzie was the first Liberal Prime Minister of Canada, serving from 1873-78. **1892**

17 - A British record attendance at a football match was set when 149,547 watched Scotland play England at Hampden Park, Glasgow. Until 1950, this was a world record. **1937**

18 - Remains of David Livingstone, the famous Scottish missionary and explorer, interred in Westminster Abbey. **1874**

18 - Harbourne Stephen, the Scottish World War II fighter pilot, was born. Stephen was a Battle of Britain fighter ace who went on to forge a career for himself as a newspaper executive. On his way to a tally of 23 registered kills (though it was almost certainly higher) he shot down five enemy aircraft in a single day in August 1940. **1914**

18 - Britain's most successful Olympian, cyclist Sir Chris Hoy, announced his retirement from active competition. **2013**

19 - Robert II, grandson of Robert the Bruce, died at Dundonald Castle. **1390**



19 - Jim Mollison, the pioneering Scottish aviator, was born. Mollison held many individual records for distance, endurance, and speed flying, he became the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic from East to West. **1905**

20 - The first public meeting of the Scottish National Party was held. The meeting was held in the Central Hall, Tollcross, Edinburgh. The Scottish National Party was formed by the amalgamation of The National Party of Scotland and The Scottish Party. **1934**

21 - John Muir, the Scottish-born American naturalist, was born in Dunbar. Muir was responsible for the creation of Yosemite and Sequoia national parks in California. The 550-acre Muir Woods National Monument is named after him. **1838**

21 - Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act passed by the Scottish Parliament, the first piece of legislation in the UK to give formal recognition to the Scottish Gaelic language. It aims to secure Gaelic as an official language of Scotland, commanding "equal respect" with English, by establishing Bòrd na Gàidhlig within the framework of the government of Scotland. **2005**

22 - Captain John Paul Jones (born and raised in Scotland), Commanding Officer of the Continental Warship *Ranger*, led a raid on the town of Whitehaven, England. The first raid on England in over a hundred years and the last time England was attacked on its own shore. No one was hurt and the damage was minimal, but the fear created in England played a huge part in the American victory. **1778**

23 - King Alexander I died at Stirling Castle, succeeded by David I. **1124**

23 - Blackout restrictions lifted as World War II heads to a conclusion. **1945**

24 - 15-year-old Mary, Queen of Scots, married French Dauphin, Francis Valois (aged 14) at Notre Dame in Paris. They had no children and Francis died in 1560, ruling France for just eighteen months. **1558**

25 - Malcolm III (Canmore) crowned. Referred to as the founding father of modern Scotland. **1058**



25 - The Royal Navy's last battleship, *HMS Vanguard*, was accepted for trials by the navy. The ship was built at John Brown's in Clydebank. It was originally intended to be part of the Far Eastern Fleet fighting the Japanese but was not completed until after the war, and so became the only British battleship never to fire her guns in anger. **1946**

26 - Philosopher David Hume born. Recognised as an exponent of philosophical naturalism, the precursor of contemporary cognitive science. **1711**

27 - The Scottish army was routed in the Battle of Dunbar by Edward I, King of England. Hostilities started when the King of the Scots, John Balliol, renounced his allegiance to the English Crown. The battle became known as the "Dunbar Drave". **1296**

27 - James Bruce, the Scottish explorer, died. Bruce became the first European to discover Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile, in 1770. **1794**

28 - Henry Dundas, powerful politician, known as "Uncrowned King of Scotland", born. **1742**

28 - Glasgow Garden Festival opened by Prince Charles and the Princess of Wales on the south bank of the River Clyde. The festival would welcome 4.5 million visitors over five months. **1988**

29 - Lonnie Donegan, the Scottish skiffle singer, composer and guitarist, was born. Considered by some to be Britain's first pop superstar, James Anthony Donegan burst onto the scene in the mid-1950s with a distinctive, lively sound called skiffle. **1931**

29 - Stephen Hendry, aged 21, becomes the youngest world snooker champion by beating Jimmy White 18-12 in the final. **1990**

30 - Royal Bank invents first overdraft, William Hogg overdrafts by £1,000 (over £75,000 at today's money). **1728**

30 - David Livingstone, the renowned Scottish missionary and explorer, died. Born in Blantyre, Livingstone was famed for his exploration of central and southern Africa. He was the first European to see Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. **1873**

30 - An Comunn Gaidhealach was formally instituted as a vehicle for the preservation and development of the Gaelic language and the cultivation of Gaelic literature, history, music and art. **1891**



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IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN



Scottish Stovies

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons dripping
- ½ kg or 1½ lb. tatties (potato), sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, sliced
- ½ a small neep/swede
- 2 tablespoons stock or meat jelly
- 500g/15oz. of cooked meat- lamb, mutton or roast beef
- Salt and pepper
- Lamb or beef stock

Method:

Melt the dripping in a large pan and cook the chopped onion in it until softened and

almost brown. Add the chopped tatties and mix thoroughly with the onions and dripping. Add the chopped carrots and neep and mix through. Heat the stock or meat jelly and pour over the vegetables. Add the chopped, cooked lamb and mix with the vegetables. Season with salt and pepper. Cover the pot and cook over a low heat for around 30 minutes or until the tatties are soft and flowry.

Flora Macdonald

Ingredients:

- 2 Parts Dry Vermouth
- 1 Part Gin
- 1 Part Whisky/Honey Liqueur

Method:

Fill a mixing glass with ice cubes. Add all ingredients. Stir and strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

Arbroath smokie fishcakes with chive sauce

Ingredients:

- For the Arbroath smokie fishcakes
- 4 Arbroath smokies, or any other smoked fish
- 400ml/14fl oz. full-fat milk
- 450g/1lb floury potatoes (such as King Edward or Maris Piper), peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- 1 free-range egg yolk
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 75g/3oz plain flour
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 110g/4oz Japanese panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp. olive oil

For the sauce:

- 50g/2oz butter
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 110ml/4fl oz. white wine
- 110ml/4fl oz. hot chicken stock
- 200ml/7fl oz. double cream
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 limes, juice and zest
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped fresh chives
- 2 handfuls mizuna leaves or other micro salad leaves, to serve

Method:

For the Arbroath smokie fishcakes, place the Arbroath smokies (or smoked fish) into a large frying pan and pour over the milk. Bring the milk to the boil, then remove the pan from the heat. Take the smokies out of the milk and set aside to cool. When cool enough to handle, remove as many bones from the fish as possible, flaking and reserving the flesh as you go. Set aside.

Meanwhile, cook the potatoes in a pan of boiling, salted water for 15-20 minutes, or until tender. Drain well and return the potatoes to the pan, then return the pan to the heat for a further minute or two to dry the potatoes out. Mash the potatoes until smooth using a potato masher or ricer, then mix them in a bowl with the parsley, chives, egg yolk and flaked fish until well combined. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Roll small amounts of the fishcake mixture into balls using your hands, then flatten each slightly to form patties. Chill in the fridge until firm so that they don't collapse when you fry them. Sprinkle the flour onto a plate. Beat the eggs in a bowl. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs onto another plate. Dredge each fishcake in the flour, then dip it into the egg, then roll it in the flour until coated. Heat the olive oil in a large frying over a medium heat. Add the fishcakes for 3-4 minutes on each side, or until crisp and golden-brown on both sides and completely warmed through.

For the sauce, heat a small frying pan until hot, add a knob of the butter and, when melted, fry the shallots for 1-2 minutes, or until softened. Add the white wine, chicken stock and cream and bring the mixture to the boil. Reduce the heat until the mixture is simmering and simmer until the volume of liquid has reduced by half and thickened. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve into a clean pan, then whisk in the remaining butter, the lime juice and zest and the chives. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper. To serve, divide the mizuna leaves among four serving plates. Place the fishcakes on top and spoon some of the sauce over each portion.

Easter Hot Cross Buns



Ingredients:

- 450g/1lb strong white bread flour
- 7g/½ oz. dried yeast
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp allspice
- 100g/3½oz raisins
- 1 orange, zest only
- 100g/3½oz sugar
- 50g/1¾oz butter
- 250ml/9fl oz. milk
- 1 free-range egg

For the cross:

- 75g/2¾oz flour
 - 4 tsp caster sugar
 - 4 tbsp. water
- For the glaze:**
- 1 tbsp. smooth marmalade
 - 1 tbsp. soft dark brown sugar
 - 2 tbsp. water
 - butter, to serve

Method:

For the dough, sift the flour, dried yeast, cinnamon, allspice, raisins, orange zest and sugar into a bowl. Warm the butter and milk together in a saucepan until the butter has melted. Remove from the heat and whisk in the egg. Fold the milk mixture into the flour mixture to form a dough. Tip the dough onto a floured work surface and knead for 10 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and elastic. Divide the dough into 12 pieces, shape into balls and cover with a damp cloth. Set aside for 12 hours, or until the dough has doubled in size. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

Meanwhile, for the cross, mix the flour, sugar and water together in a bowl and spoon into a piping bag with a plain nozzle. Place the buns onto a baking tray and pipe a cross onto each bun. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until cooked through. For the glaze, heat the glaze ingredients in a pan until the sugar has melted and the mixture is smooth and glossy. Remove the buns from the oven and immediately brush each bun with the glaze. Set aside to cool. Serve the hot cross buns warm with butter.

Edinburgh Tattoo Fog

Ingredients:

- 250ml/1 cup double cream
- 30g/1oz. (fine granulated) sugar
- 60g/2oz. small macaroon biscuits (Also try Coconut Bliss balls, meringue cookies, or Italian Ricciarelli almond cookies)
- Almond essence
- Drambuie liqueur, or substitute, to taste
- 30g/1oz. flaked almonds

Method:

The cream should be whipped until it is stiff, and the sugar added to your own preference. Crush the macaroon biscuits and mix well with the cream. Add a few drops of almond essence and Drambuie liqueur (or rum, whisky or brandy) to taste. Serve well chilled as a luxury dessert.

Lauriston Castle launches 2026 centenary programme



popular leisure activities of the era, will have guests following the clues to meet some characters from the past whilst enjoying the beauty of the grounds.

Visitors will be able to enjoy the return of much-loved Japan Sakura, offering another weekend of fun, with the opportunity to take part in traditional crafts and hands-on activities for all ages.

One of Edinburgh's most treasured sites

To mark the centenary, guests can also watch a series of film screenings of titles both made and set in the 1920s starting with *The General* (1926). Many events will be free to attend, with some ticketed experiences available through advance booking. Details of all events are listed on the Culture Edinburgh website.

Culture and Communities Convener Margaret Graham said: "Lauriston Castle is one of Edinburgh's most treasured sites, and the centenary is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate both its past and its future. This programme brings together heritage, creativity and community in a way that reflects the spirit of Mr and Mrs Reid's generous gift. We look forward to welcoming new and returning visitors to discover everything that Lauriston has to offer in 2026."

For more information visit:
www.cultureedinburgh.com

To celebrate 100 years since the Castle was gifted to the nation by the Reids, this year's programme has a strong 1920s theme. The centenary programme was officially launched with a visit from Councillor Margaret Graham, Culture and Communities Convener, who joined colleagues and volunteers at the castle to mark the beginning of a year-long celebration.

Featuring an exciting and varied selection of events, the programme will include talks, creative workshops, film screenings, and family fun activities. A highlight of the year will be the original murder mystery plays, composed and performed by Edinburgh Living History, where guests can use their sleuthing skills to uncover the culprit. In August, the 1920s-inspired scavenger hunt, reflecting

Rock on - *The Neolithic Revolution in Scotland*

By: David C. Weinczok



All images: David C Weinczok.



One of several sets of standing stones at Machrie Moor, Arran.

When we think of revolutions, we think of mass social movements that reshape the political landscape of a state. Some revolutions, however, transformed the literal landscapes they took place within. The Industrial Revolution likely comes first to mind, or perhaps the age of enclosure which preceded it. Yet there is one revolution which arguably laid the foundations for all the rest that followed: the Neolithic Revolution.

Modern humans inhabited the British Isles on and off for the past 500,000 years, coming and going with the retreat and advance of the great glaciers that scoured all traces of these ancient settlers from the land. The first people to arrive in post-glacial Scotland walked here. Until approximately 6,000BC the British Isles were not isles at all, but linked by land to the rest of the European continent. Sea levels rose gradually, turning that land bridge into a boggy morass. The collapse of a colossal ice shelf in Norway is credited for its final inundation, creating a flood which was truly biblical in scale and suddenness. In its wake, any people who wanted to settle in, trade with, or invade Britain and Ireland had to do so by boat.

The basic patterns of life changed relatively little for the next several thousand years. Small kin-based communities survived by hunting and gathering. Some established semi-permanent camps, likely for safeguarding resources and for allowing children and the elderly among them some respite from the wilds. One such camp was discovered near Moffat in 2014, dating to between 9,000 and 8,000 BC. Another from a similar period was found at Cramond on the outskirts of Edinburgh, and yet another in the Isle of Rum.

Permanent settlements

By around 5,000 to 4,500BC, the way of life for over 100 prior generations began to fundamentally change. Farming practices from the Middle East made their way to Scotland, not – as was previously believed – due to some sweeping invasion or replacement of the locals, but very gradually and piecemeal. In some parts of Scotland agriculture was not significantly adopted until nearer 2,000BC, and well into the Middle Ages many Highland communities relied more on pastoralism than on agriculture.

Permanent settlements slowly popped up in low-lying, fertile areas such as the Lothians, Moray, and Ayrshire. Some emerged in places you might not expect – one of the oldest farming settlements yet discovered was the Knap of Howar in the small island of Papa Westray, Orkney, which was first established around 3,800BC. Most domestic buildings were small rectangular structures, often built partially of stone where stone was readily available. The majority of buildings were likely made mainly from timber, which does not survive the passing of ages. This is why stone houses like those at Skara Brae are so synonymous with the Neolithic, not because they were necessarily typical but because they are some of the very few which have endured.

Far more houses of the dead than the living survive from the Neolithic. Scotland has thousands of chambered cairns, interment places for a community's dead, with remarkable clusters located in places like Kilmartin Glen, the Northern and Western Isles, and in the hinterlands of the Cairngorms. These extraordinary tombs were expertly crafted, featuring massive quantities of worked masonry, internal compartments, and – as in the famous case of Maeshowe – an alignment of their entrance passages to the light of the setting sun on the winter solstice.

Iconic symbols of ancient Scotland

Neolithic peoples raised standing stones, among the most iconic symbols of ancient Scotland. Sites like Machrie Moor in Arran include multiple stone circles and dozens of standing stones set within a landscape where hills, farmland, and waterways intersect. Such places were not developed all at once, but over the course of centuries. We will likely never understand exactly why they were raised, but the communal effort of doing so likely functioned to bring together disparate groups in a shared effort to strengthen bonds and revel in rituals.

Recent investigations have demonstrated that it was the stone circles of northern Scotland which inspired the raising of more southerly counterparts like Stonehenge, and not the other way around. Indeed, it appears that Orkney, particularly the area around the Ness of Brodgar which includes the Ring of Brodgar and the Stones of Stenness, was the closest thing to a cultural capital in the British Isles at the time.



One of the famous Neolithic stone houses at Skara Brae.

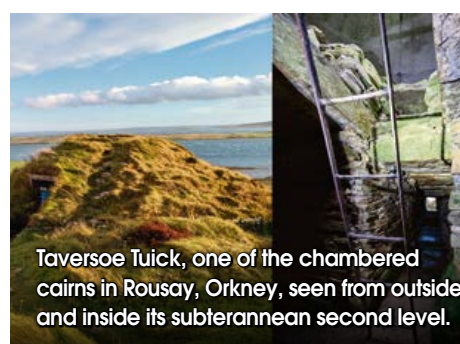
Such specialised and communal endeavours were made possible by agricultural surplus. The earliest crops grown in Scotland were ancient strains of barley and wheat. Cattle, sheep, and goats were farmed alongside them, and diets were supplemented by harvests of wild nuts and tubers, herbs, shellfish, and game. Neolithic middens – organic rubbish piles – are invaluable sources of information for this period. Imagine what future archaeologists might conclude from the contents of our household rubbish bins!

Between 3,000 to 2,000BC significant changes in material culture appear in the record. New styles of pottery such as Beaker pots appear in grave goods, demonstrating an influx of people into Britain from the rest of Europe and occasionally beyond. Several Neolithic graves such as that of the 'Culduthel archer' in Inverness also contain increasingly sophisticated archery equipment. The vast majority of day-to-day items, however, are lost to time due to being made of organic materials, leaving us with tiny fragments to form our picture with.

All of these activities changed the very face of the land. To prepare arable ground for crops, Neolithic peoples undertook considerable deforestation. The earliest trees in Scotland were birch, elm, hazel, alder, and oak, and evidence from pollen samples taken from Scotland's bogs show many were hewn and burnt away in the Neolithic. This, in turn, encouraged the development of the very peat bogs which attest to their existence, as deforestation can result in the spread of acidic boggy ground. In some places, bogs spread so thickly that standing stones were consumed by them. The Callanish Stones in Lewis, the tallest being 4.8 metres high, were completely submerged in peat bog for thousands of years until their rediscovery in 1857.



The standing stones of Callanish, Lewis, raised between 2,900-2,600BC.



Taversoe Tuick, one of the chambered cairns in Rousay, Orkney, seen from outside and inside its subterranean second level.

A successful revolution

Some native species were hunted to extinction or near-extinction, likely in part to protect the herds belonging to permanent settlements from them. These include massive elk, brown bears, and lynx. Others were brought in, such as Soay sheep and pigs. The basic pattern of growing crops in lower, more fertile soils and having animals grazing on more upland, marginal ground was established. You will still see this arrangement in many parts of Scotland today.

The Neolithic Revolution profoundly changed humanity's relationship with the land. Permanent settlements and monuments became fixed points in the cultural, social, and economic imagination. The 'wilds' were tamed, to a far greater extent than previously believed, by the clearance of trees, the sowing of crops, and the grazing of animals. Social hierarchies, more clearly defined than ever before, began to emerge. Stone buildings provided far greater protection from the elements, and a growing population nurtured by agriculture fanned out into every previously unreachable corner of the country.

To someone alive in 5,500BC, the changes evident by 3,000BC would have rendered the world unrecognisable. The Neolithic Revolution set in motion basic patterns of life which are still with us today, and which will likely remain with us indefinitely unless some science fiction-worthy leap forward or apocalyptic lurch back occurs.

Some revolutions transform society for a few years, while others create paradigm shifts that last for generations. More than 6,000 years later, the changes of the Neolithic still shape us. Now that's a successful revolution.



The setting sun shines through a precisely-placed hole in a Neolithic standing stone in North Ronaldsay, Orkney.



The type of native forest that Neolithic farmers would have encountered and cleared. Kilmartin Glen, Argyll.

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



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

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

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 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

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ClanFarquharson.us

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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

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www.clan carruthers society.org
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CLAN DONALD in VICTORIA

Proudly affiliated with Clan Donald Australia, Victorian Scottish Union and Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group. Represented at all major Highland gatherings in Victoria.

CLAN DONALD VICTORIA

President: Mr Norman A. Macdonald

Contact: secretary.clandonaldvic@gmail.com

Formed in 1934, with membership from many MacDonald, McDonald and Macdonald families living in Victoria. Membership available, with dance classes for Scottish Country Dance most Friday evenings in Gardenvale.

CLAN MACDONALD YARRAVILLE

Hon Chief: Mr Lindsay McDonald

Contact: secretary@clanmacdonaldyarraville.com

A hereditary clan society formed by the children of Norman Hume Macdonald and Johan McKenzie Macdonald (nee Munro) who departed Scotland in 1854.

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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

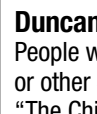
CHISHOLM

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 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>

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contact@curriekindred.com
www.learnedkindredofcurrie.com

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 clanlands, 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

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

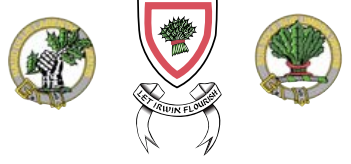
Edmonstone Clan Society
Invites membership to anyone of the surname or variations: - Edmiston/e, Edmondston, Edmanson, Edmeston, Edmonson, Edmundson, etc. Chieftain Sir Archibald Edmonstone Bt of Duntreath
Contact: Mal Edmiston
3 Laguna Ave
Kirwan, Qld, 4817
61 (0)7 4755 4370
m.edmiston@bigpond.com

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 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: clangregoraustralia@gmail.com
 Web: www.clanregor.com
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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, MacRaid, 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



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



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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:
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and variant spellings
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 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 Rhenrov 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 EnglandW.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +44 7877 363 507
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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
clanhaymemberships@hotmail.com

The American Branch of the First Family of Scotland welcomes inquiries from descendants of: Hay(s); Hays(e); Hayne(s); Hey(s); Alderston; Arml; Ayer(s); Constable; Con(n); De La Haye; Delgatie; Delgatie; D' Ay(e); Della'h'a'y; Errol(l); Garrad; Garrow; Gifford; Hawson; Haygood; Hayter; Hayward; Haywood; Haynie; Hayden; Hayfield; Hayne(s); Leask(e); Leith; Lester; MacGaradh; Peebles; Peoples; Peoples; Turriff; Tweeddale; Yester
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 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: clanmacraeaustrnz@gmail.com
NZ Contact: Sue Tregoweth
 email: sue.treg1@gmail.com



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president@clanhope.org
www.clanhope.org

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Membership Chair: Cynthia Hope Henderson
membership@clanhope.org
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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](https://www.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

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 We invite MacRaes of all spelling variations and their descendants to join our Clan MacRae Society. Learn your Scottish MacRae history and family lineage!
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dean.mccraw1@gmail.com



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carolyn_dobbs@msn.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, Maitten and similar name spelling. See the entire list and your family history at: www.clanmaitland.org.uk



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Morrison
Clann MhicGillehoire: Morrison + Gilmore + Brieve

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www.clanmorrison.net




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



Clan Wardlaw Association

Founded 2004

Worldwide organization for all Wardlaws or related families. We invite you to join us.

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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

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Clan Muirhead Society

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Muirhead, Muirbude, Morehead, Moorhead and all Variant Names

www.clanmuirhead.com

Rev. Ret. Chev. Raymond L. Morehead, GOTJ, FSA Scot,
Chief Officer Elect Clan Muirhead Society

Email: raymondktj@msn.com or raymond@clanmuirhead.com



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




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www.clanmunroassociation.org.au

memberships@clanmunroassociation.org.au



Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

Contact: M Williams, Secretary

clansutherlandsocietyaustralia@gmail.com
<http://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus>
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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)

Discover Your Nesbitt/Nisbet Ancestry



ibydeit.org
nesbittnisbet.org.uk



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.

www.facebook.com/huntervalleyscotclub
Web: hvscots.org Email: huntervalleyscotclub@gmail.com
Ph: 0432 306 670 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/>
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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

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Highland Dance Awards
Scottish Gaelic Scholarship
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Scottish Festivals & Exhibitions
Highland Games • Young Fiddler Awards

email: info@vshcf.com.au
website: <https://www.vshcf.com.au/>



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

YOUNGS OF SCOTLAND



Membership inquiries:
Ms. Laura Young,
33 McKeen Street,
Jarvis, Ontario,
Canada N0A 1J0

4scottishthistles@gmail.com



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Established 1905

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Clan Grant	Scottish Country Dance Society of Victoria
Clan Hay	Robert Burns Scottish Festival Camperdown
Clan Macdonald of Yarraville	The Robert Burns Club of Melbourne
Clan Sinclair	Warrambool & District Caledonian Society
Geelong Scottish Dance	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

Clyde Puffer “VIC 32” to undergo restoration programme



All images courtesy of Samuel Callen.



supplies to Islanders on the West Coast of Scotland. VIC 32 was commissioned by the Admiralty, as part of a fleet of over 100, and built to carry provisions to naval vessels and depots during WWII. Unlike most of her sister ships, VIC 32 was not scrapped and was purchased by Nick and Rachel Walker in 1975. They undertook an extensive renovation to carry passengers resulting in a unique example of a steamboat that has been almost continuously cruising in West Coast waters for 45 years.

Whilst the money generated from carrying passengers over the past 20 years has allowed the charity to fund the necessary maintenance and restoration of the vessel, the COVID years and a following dip in tourism on the West Coast made it challenging to complete the final parts of this works programme.

This National Lottery Heritage Fund award will enable the Puffer Preservation Trust to complete many of these final parts, including a replica wheelhouse and completion of replacement steel

hull plating throughout the hold area of the vessel. The funding will also support investment in a steam turbine powered by VIC 32's biofuelled boiler to generate on board electricity. Replacing a diesel generator and further reducing the carbon footprint of the vessel which was already ahead of its time in converting to Biofuel in 2022.

Scottish seagoing icon

The project will also expand on the opportunities for people to get involved with VIC 32. Including workshops for volunteers to take part in the project and learn some of the traditional skills associated with maintaining a heritage vessel. In the long-term the works funded by this grant will allow the Puffer Preservation Trust to keep the boat steaming and educating future generations on the workings of steam power, as well as a continuing educational role demonstrating how these boats were entwined in the lives of Scots along the West Coast.

Phil Robinson, Trustee of Puffer Preservation Trust said: “The trustees of The Puffer Preservation Trust are extremely grateful to the NLHF for providing the financial assistance to support and sustain VIC 32's much needed works over the coming 18 months. The Clyde Puffer is a Scottish seagoing icon, and this NLHF award will enable VIC 32 to operate into the foreseeable future.”

Caroline Clark The National Lottery Heritage Fund Director for Scotland added: “The Clyde Puffer is a hugely



evocative symbol of way of life that has become a part of Scotland's shared heritage. With our support, thanks to National Lottery players, the Puffer Preservation Trust will continue to care for and operate Vic 32 for many years to come. A living reminder of these hard-working little boats, their crews and their vital role in the communities they served.”

For further information visit:
www.savethepuffer.co.uk

Did you know? The S.L. VIC 32

- Built – 1943 at Dunstons Shipyard, Yorkshire for the Admiralty.
- Launched – 3rd July 1943.
- Carried - She is known to have carried cement, ammunition, and naval stores as far away as Scapa Flow and Devonport.
- Weight – 163 TONS.
- Speed – 6 knots.
- Max no. of personnel – 10 passengers, and 5 crew.

Dennis the Menace makes his mark on the UK 50p coin

The nation's most iconic prankster has broken out of the pages and landed on an official UK collectable 50p. The Royal Mint in collaboration with Beano have unveiled a brand new 50p coin celebrating 75 years of *Dennis the Menace* – and knowing Dennis, he's already planning what mischief to get up to next. Since bursting onto the scene on 17th March 1951 in *Beano* issue 452, Dennis has been giving Walter Brown a headache for three quarters of a century. Now, the spiky-haired, red-and-black jumper-wearing icon is making history as he and his trusty Abyssinian Wire-Haired Tripehound, Gnasher, appear on an official UK 50p coin.

The collectable 50p has been created in collaboration with *Beano*. The design showcases Dennis in his instantly recognisable striped jumper alongside his loyal, sausage-obsessed companion. A selection of coins will feature vibrant colour printing, bringing Dennis and Gnasher bursting to life straight from the pages of *Beano* and onto metal.

75 years of laughs

Rebecca Morgan, Director of Commemorative Coin at The Royal Mint, said: “*Dennis the Menace* is a true British icon who has been causing mayhem and bringing joy to readers for 75 remarkable years. There's something wonderfully fitting about this legendary mischief-maker finally making his mark on a collectible 50p and I'm sure Dennis himself would see it as his greatest prank yet. This coin captures everything we love about him, that unmistakable mischievous grin, his furry pal Gnasher by his side and that irresistible spirit

of rebellion that has made him a favourite across generations. We're incredibly proud to bring Dennis to life in this way, and we know this coin will be treasured by Beano fans young and old.”

Rob Glenny, Executive Director of Growth and New Product Development, added: “Dennis has always had a knack for turning up where you least expect him, and we're very excited that he has now landed on a 50p coin. With Gnasher by his side, this coin captures the unmistakable spark that has kept Dennis at the heart of childhood for generations. To see that mischief officially minted is a brilliant way to mark 75 years of laughs, pranks and unleashed imagination.”

Beano is Britain's longest-running weekly comic, first published by DC Thomson on 30th July 1938. Over its 87-year history, the comic has entertained generations of children with its characters, humour, and rebellious spirit. Alongside *Dennis the Menace*, *Beano* has introduced readers to much-loved favourites including *Minnie the Minx*, *The Bash Street Kids*, and *Roger the Dodger*. Today, *Beano* continues to delight readers both in print and online, remaining a treasured part of British popular culture.



The Edinburgh Tartan Parade returns in May



Leading the way, The Edinburgh Tartan Parade committee.

The Edinburgh Tartan Parade returns on Saturday 9 May 2026 for its second year, celebrating Scotland's rich heritage, tartan, and global cultural connections in the heart of the nation's capital. Following a highly successful & spectacular inaugural parade in 2025, which welcomed 1,600 participants, this year's event is set to grow to approximately 2,500 participants, with thousands of spectators expected to line the route. The parade will step off from the Royal Mile at 1pm, winding down Cockburn Street, across Waverley Bridge, and concluding at the Mound Precinct.

The Parade will be followed by a Participant Ceilidh in the Gardens at the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens. Please note, this event is exclusively for participants, volunteers, and special guests, and is not open to the general public. In the evening, a Post-Parade Celebration Concert will take place at the

Usher Hall, headlined by the Red Hot Chili Pipers and Ally the Piper (USA), with Gail Porter joining as MC.

The Edinburgh Tartan Parade is organised by a six-member team voluntary group, Tartan Parade Scotland and in part, inspired by the long-established New York Tartan Day Parade. In 2026, the Parade aligns with US 250 commemorations, marking 250 years of shared history between Scotland and the United States. American performers, including Ally the Piper and her band, will travel from the USA to take part in the celebrations. The event also coincides with Europe Day and World Fair Trade Day, providing an opportunity to highlight Scotland's European and global relationships.

The Edinburgh Tartan Parade is a non-political, inclusive, civic celebration with a focus on heritage, culture and community.

The Edinburgh Tartan Parade takes place on Saturday 9 May 2026. For more details visit: www.tartanparade.scot



Photos: Tommy Slack.

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

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

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!

The St. Andrew's Society of Toronto

Spring Dinner 2026

10, Toronto, ON

Join for a belated Tartan Day celebration with a night of Scottish cuisine and camaraderie in downtown Toronto. The St. Andrew's Society of Toronto will be returning to The Chefs' House for their annual Spring Dinner. This innovative restaurant operates as part of the Hospitality & Culinary Arts Program at George Brown College (GBC). The dinner will feature modern Scottish cuisine. Info: www.standrewstoronto.ca

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

A Celtic Celebration!

17, Revelstoke, BC

The Revelstoke Community Choir is excited to present "A Celtic Celebration!" - an evening of rhythmic melodies, traditional ballads, and songs from the heart of Ireland, Scotland and more at Revelstoke Performing Arts Centre, 1007 Vernon Ave. Info: www.eventbrite.ca/e/a-celtic-celebration-tickets-1982735911485

Guelph Pipe Band Tartan Day - A Taste of Tartan

18, Rockwood, ON

Get ready to celebrate Guelph Pipe Band Tartan Day with a delicious taste of tartan - it's going to be a piping hot event at Rockmosa Community Hall, 110 Rockmosa Dr. Info: www.eventbrite.com/e/guelph-pipe-band-tartan-day-a-taste-of-tartan-tickets-1982738866323

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

Early Modern Scottish Family History

Research-Online course

28-May 12, Virtual event

Tracing and identifying your ancestors in Scotland before 1800 can be very challenging, especially when trying to find those who migrated elsewhere. This course will provide an overview of various records which may contain useful information and will also outline records which do not exist for the period 1600-1800. Info: www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/tartanandstars

MAY 2026

Victoria Highland Games & Celtic Festival

9-17, Victoria, BC

Pipe bands, Clans, dancing and entertainment on Vancouver Island. The Games will also host the World Women's Heavy Events Championship, the first time held in Canada, at Topaz Park. Info: www.victoriahighlandgames.com

Saskatchewan Highland

Gathering & Celtic Festival

16-18, Regina, SK

Pipers, drummers, dancers, heavy events athletes, and enthusiasts from Western Canada come to southern Saskatchewan each year on the May long weekend to participate in this exciting line-up of events at Victoria Park. Info: www.saskhighland.ca

Stoney Lake Weekend 2026

22-24, Stoney Lake, ON

Scottish country dance weekend and events hosted by Peterborough Scottish Country Dance Society. Info: www.pscds.ca

Oakville Scottish Country Dance Group

70th Anniversary Dinner Dance

23, Oakville, ON

Live music, food and dance celebrating 70 years at St Josephs Banquet Hall, 300 River Oaks Blvd. E. Info: www.oscdg.ca

Spirit of Scotch

23, Gravenhurst, ON

Brought to you by the Rotary Club of Gravenhurst, enjoy a sumptuous three-course food pairing followed by a delightful dessert. Scotch Sampling: Savour the rich flavours of five exclusive Scotches from distinguished Scottish distilleries at Gravenhurst Centennial Centre. Info: www.spiritofscotch.com

USA

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!

ASF Scottish Supper Club-

Atlantic: A Scottish Story

9, New York, NY

This year's event brings the essence of the Islands to New York City with an unforgettable program of live performances from some of Scotland's most exciting new musical voices. This event forms part of Carnegie Hall's United in Sound: America at 250 festival. Info: https://americanscottishfoundation.com/events/2026-Tartan_Week_Supper_Club.html

NYC Tartan Week Pre-Parade Ceilidh

10, New York, NY

NYC Tartan Week Pre-Parade Ceilidh hosted by New York Caledonian Club. The iconic New York Caledonian Club Pre-Parade Ceilidh takes over Racket NYC, 431 West 16th St. Whisky Kiss, Scotland's chart-topping ceilidh band, makes their return to lead us as we reel the night away. Additional highlights include a special performance by the winner of the NYC Tartan Week Mod and an exciting appearance by the New York Caledonian Club Pipe Band. Info: <https://nycaledonian.org/events/2026-nyc-tartan-week-pre-parade-ceilidh>

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

Sailing to Philadelphia: Scottish sources for tracing emigrant ancestors-Online talk

16, Virtual event

This presentation will help researchers to discover family members who have left Scotland, and the destinations where they eventually settled. Rather than looking at the obvious passenger lists, it will cover less well-used records such as poor relief applications, estate papers, and gravestones. This talk will be held online. Info: www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/tartanandstars

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 Ghillie 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

Early Modern Scottish Family History

Research-Online course

28-May 12, Virtual event

Tracing and identifying your ancestors in Scotland before 1800 can be very challenging, especially when trying to find those who migrated elsewhere. This course will provide an overview of various records which may contain useful information and will also outline records which do not exist for the period 1600-1800. Info: www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/tartanandstars

MAY 2026

Catalina Island Weekend Workshop & Ball

1-3, Catalina Island, CA

Scottish Country Dance weekend and events presented by the Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego and San Gabriel Valley Branches of the RSCD. Info: www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com

Savannah Scottish Games

2, Savannah, GA

Grand celebration of Scottish culture, music, dancing, athletic competition, children's activities, shopping, food, and fun for the entire family, overlooking Moon River at Bethesda Academy. Info: www.savannahscottishgames.com

2026 Scottish Tartan Festival

2, Minden, LA

Scottish music & dancing, living history, athletics & more at Miller Quarters. Info: www.louisianahighlands.scot

Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival

2-3, Albuquerque, NM

Celebrating seven Celtic nations in New Mexico, the Festival gives participants the opportunity to see and learn about many of the arts and athletics as well as the culture of nations like Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brittany, Isle of Man, Cornwall and Galicia at Balloon Fiesta Park. Info: www.celtfestabq.com

Decatur Celtic Festival

2-3, Decatur, TX

A celebration of Celtic music, culture, dance, food and tradition at Wise County Fairgrounds. Info: www.decaturcelticfestival.com

Fair Hill Scottish Games

16, Elkton, MD

A day of athletics, music, dancing, food, and arts celebrating Scottish and Celtic culture at Fair Hill Fairgrounds. Info: www.fairhillscottishgames.org

Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games

16-17, Townsend, TN

A weekend of Highland athletics, pipes & drums, Highland and Irish dance, whisky tastings, vendors and more at the Greater Smokies Event Grounds, 7930 E. Lamar Alexander Pkwy. Info: www.smokymountaingames.org

Greenville Scottish Games

23, Greenville, SC

Celebrating Scottish heritage at Furman University. Info: www.gallabrae.com

Scottish Fest

23-24, Costa Mesa, CA

Orange County's largest annual Scottish and Celtic American Festival at Orange County Fairgrounds and Event Center. Info: www.scottishfest.com

Southern Kentucky Highland Games

30, Park City, KY

Enjoy traditional Highland sports such as the caber toss, tug o' war and the hammer throw, Highland dancing, music, and lots of family fun at Bell's Tavern Park. Info: www.southernkyhighlandgames.org

Eugene Scottish Festival

30, Eugene, OR

Immerse yourself in the rich traditions of Scotland with live music, the stirring sounds of bagpipes, and a stunning display of kilts and traditional dress at the Irving Grange, 1011 Irvington Dr. Info: www.eugenescottishfestival.org

Scotland

APRIL 2026

The Scottish Colourists Revealed

3-October 26, Perth

The exhibition brings together paintings by Samuel John Peploe, Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell, George Leslie Hunter and John Duncan Fergusson, collectively known as The Scottish Colourists. The exhibition features further masterworks from Dundee and Edinburgh Universities, the Hugo Burge Foundation and The Royal Scottish Academy at Perth Art Gallery. Info: www.culturepk.org.uk/perthartgallery

Edinburgh International Harp Festival

10-14, Edinburgh

Concerts, courses, workshops and more at George Watson's College. Info: www.harpfestival.co.uk

Dùthchas

18, Glasgow

Join the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland for Dùthchas at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, a spectacular end-of-year celebration. Info: www.nypbs.co.uk

Scotland Ice Hockey Cup

20-27, Edinburgh

For the first time, professional players of the National Hockey League will take to the ice in Scotland as USA and Canada NHL Alumni go head-to-head in an unforgettable exhibition series. Info: www.scotlandicehockey.com

Nuart Aberdeen

23-26, Aberdeen

Recognised as one of the top six street art festivals in the world, Nuart Aberdeen combines large-scale murals with intimate, thought-provoking pieces, creating a dynamic experience for residents and visitors alike. A vibrant street art festival that brings global artists to transform the city with stunning murals and installations, creating a lasting cultural legacy. Info: www.aberdeeninspired.com/festival/nuart-aberdeen

Mull Music Festival

23-26, Tobermory, Isle of Mull

A fabulous long weekend of Scottish music featuring folk-rock bands, fiddle, accordion, dance and ceilidh bands. Info: www.facebook.com/MullMusicFestival

Etape Loch Ness

26, Loch Ness

A cycle sportive taking place around iconic Loch Ness, offering the chance to cycle 66 miles around the loch on traffic free roads. Info: www.etapelochness.com

Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival

29-May 4, Speyside

From cooperating masterclasses and BBQs to wildlife walks, the Dram Train, music events and canoeing down the river whilst stopping for a Speyside malt, the Festival is packed with a range of diverse events. Info: www.spiritofspeyside.com

Beltane Fire Festival

30, Edinburgh

A living, dynamic reinterpretation and modernisation of an ancient Iron Age Celtic ritual, bringing people together to acknowledge and revel in the birth of the Summer and the fertility of the land, and is the largest of its kind at Calton Hill. Info: www.beltane.org

Shetland Folk Festival

30-May 3, Lerwick, Shetland

Celebrating Shetland's rich musicianship at the UK's most northerly folk festival. Info: www.shetlandfolkfestival.com

Scotword answers from page 6

Across:

- 8 Bairns
- 9 Evermore
- 10 Bluebell
- 11 Tangle
- 12 Scapa
- 14 Pew
- 15 Plaid
- 18 Princes
- 20 Lamlash
- 23 Agley
- 24 Don
- 25 Tweed
- 29 Smokie
- 31 Kinghorn
- 33 Antlered
- 34 Instep

Down:

- 1 Gaelic
- 2 Brae
- 3 Isles
- 5 Keith
- 6 Amen
- 7 Broillies
- 13 Pan
- 16 Ken
- 17 Bap
- 19 Regiment
- 21 Law
- 22 Cockade
- 26 Eyries
- 27 Weirs
- 28 Annie
- 30 Kyle
- 32 Hose

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Scan to view our locations

BAFTA glory for Scottish film shot at Scotland's oldest purpose-built cinema



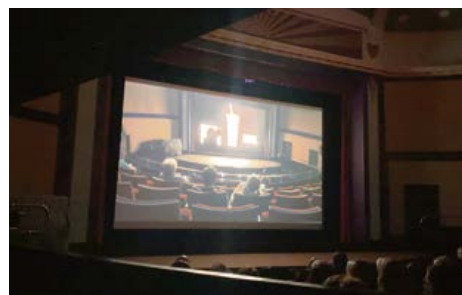
Actor and Rising Star BAFTAs for Robert Aramayo, follows John's extraordinary journey living with Tourette's Syndrome, a neurological condition that was widely misunderstood when his symptoms first emerged aged 15 in the 1980s and was often mistaken for unruly behaviour.

While much of the film was shot in East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and Glasgow, a pivotal early scene was filmed at The Hippodrome, the 113-year-old cinematic landmark often described as Scotland's first picture palace and a premier example of pre-art deco architecture. Film location scouts were searching for an authentic period cinema to match the film's early 1980s setting. The Hippodrome's vintage interior, distinctive frontage and atmospheric

balcony provided the perfect backdrop, offering a look that modern multiplexes simply could not replicate. The key scene sees John on his first date with his girlfriend, closely monitored by her watchful mother, as they attend a screening of the 1982 film, *Tootsie*.

As John's anxiety builds, he experiences a series of Tourette's outbursts, leading to outrage from his date and intervention from the cinema usher, who ultimately ejects him from the screening.

BAFTA success



Filming took place both on the balcony inside The Hippodrome and on the street outside, making full use of the venue's distinctive historic façade. Adding to the cinema's connection to the production, Hippodrome Venue Supervisor Kieran Ferguson makes a cameo appearance in the film, playing the cinema usher who removes John from the screening.

Alison Stauss, Arts Development Officer (Film and Media) at Falkirk Council said: "We're absolutely delighted that *I Swear* has won this BAFTA award. It is a powerful and important film which raises awareness of this widely misunderstood condition.

We were thrilled when the production team chose to film at The Hippodrome, its historic character made it the perfect setting for this key scene. To see Scotland's oldest purpose-built cinema appear on screen in such a significant Scottish film, and now to share in its BAFTA success, is very special. When we previously screened *I Swear*, audiences responded incredibly strongly, with full houses for every showing. There is a real appetite for powerful, homegrown storytelling experienced together on the big screen and our audiences in Bo'ness felt particularly proud to see their much-loved cinema in the spotlight. It was wonderful to be in the auditorium and hear the murmurs of recognition and delight when the Hippodrome appeared on the big screen."

According to Tourette's Scotland around 1 in 100 people in Scotland live with Tourette's, about 1% of the population, though many may never receive an official diagnosis for a variety of reasons. Around 10-15% of the Tourette's population experience tics such as coprolalia, copropraxia and coprographia which include inappropriate language like swearing or shouting racist or homophobic words, as illustrated in the story of John Davidson, or inappropriate hand gestures, text, or pictures. All of these are involuntary.

The Hippodrome, which first opened its doors in 1912, underwent a major restoration in 2009. Each March it hosts the internationally renowned HippFest, Scotland's festival of silent film with live music.

Scotland's oldest purpose-built cinema, The Hippodrome in Bo'ness, has played a starring role in *I Swear*, the film based on the true story of Scottish Tourette's Syndrome campaigner, John Davidson, which won three awards at the 79th British Academy Film Awards recently. The film, which won the Casting BAFTA and the Leading

20,000 voices call for change in Scottish wildlife laws



Images: Nicola Hood.

Wild goats have always been regarded as lowly animals in wildlife legislation terms. In fact, in Scotland, they have no specific legal protection at all. But there is a now a groundswell of public opinion saying this must change. Campaigners seeking to protect a herd of wild goats that roam over a large area of uplands between Langholm and Newcastleton in the South of Scotland from overzealous shooting have been gaining huge support.

A Scottish parliament public petition calling for this rare and distinctive herd to be granted protected status was opened in March this year. That petition has now amassed over 20,000 signatures making it the biggest ever petition linked to wildlife protection to be put before Scotland's decision makers; and the numbers keep on growing. David Braithwaite, Chairman of the campaigning group The Wild Goat Conservation Trust (TWGCT) said "Given

the diabolical way the wild goats are being treated by new landowners. It comes as no surprise that so many people are signing the petition and standing up for these defenceless animals."

The goats have roamed these hills for centuries

A company called Oxygen Conservation that acquired almost 12,000 acres of the moorland in 2023, that was previously Hartsgarth and Blackburn hill farms, stated that they wanted to plant trees to gain carbon credit income and have just revealed plans to erect a 130MW windfarm on their estate. In February of this year, the company started shooting the wild goats on its land to reduce a population of 138 goats by a staggering 86%.

Gail Brown, Vice-Chair and Secretary of TWGCT and who started a local petition to "Stop the Cull" back in February, commented that "Local people were furious

that a company like this could just come along and start the slaughter of over 100 wild goats in the middle of their breeding season. They said they were focussing only on males, but how could that be when at least half of 138 strong herd were obviously females and they intended to reduce the numbers to a mere 20 animals ... it just did not stack up. The goats have roamed these hills for centuries, harming no one and contributing to the ecology of a moorland that is recognised both nationally and internationally for its diverse wildlife. People from near and far value these magnificent animals and want to see them left alone."

Oxygen Conservation has stated that the profit they make from their enterprises at Hartsgarth and Blackburn will be reinvested into what they are calling "natural capital" on this and other of their estates. Mr Braithwaite commented that "If this is truly their intention then why have they not become a registered charity like the National Trust for Scotland? People might then be a little more inclined to believe their marketing rhetoric which comes across as nothing more than hollow greenwash."

A charismatic animal

The enormous public support that the campaign is generating is, Mr Braithwaite thinks, down to people just wanting to see a fair deal for a charismatic animal that links the present day to Scotland's crofting heritage. This type of goat is rare and in 2011 the Langholm-Newcastleton herd was recognised by the government nature conservation agency as being genetically distinct and requiring protection. These wild

goats are direct descendants of the original goats that arrived in Britain 4,000 years ago with Neolithic herds-people. Today they only exist in the wild and in conservation grazing projects.

Without protection and properly regulated management through a wild goat conservation management plan covering the whole 30,000 acres of moorland, TWGCT believes these wild goats are seriously endangered. Many herds recorded in the Scottish/English border region are now extinct because of this kind of persecution, such as with the Bewcastle goats that were last seen in 1980. Commenting on the significance of reaching 20,000 signatures Mr Braithwaite said "With every day that goes by and with this burgeoning public support for these wild goats, the government will find it ever more difficult to just brush this under the carpet. Something must be done and the government must take positive action to protect these endangered wild goats, otherwise people might rightly question Scotland's commitment to democracy."

To learn more about The Wild Goat Conservation Trust, or to sign the petition, visit: www.twgct.co.uk



Art in the Landscape

By: David McVey



Jupiter Artland is an odd and intriguing name for one of the Edinburgh area's oddest visitor destinations. You can get there by car or bus but however you do so it feels strangely like arriving at a safari park. But animals are not the main attraction here. Instead of giraffes and lions there are works of art. It's Jupiter Artland, after all.

The story starts a long time ago. Bonnington House was originally built in 1622, in the last years of James VI. It was much altered over the years and completely refurbished in, ironically, a Jacobean style, in 1858. The house had been owned by various noble Scottish families but the present owners, Robert and Nicky Wilson, acquired the property in 1999. They have since spent a great deal of money refurbishing and adding to the house.

However, early in their acquisition they saw the potential of the fields, meadows and woodland surrounding the property as an open-air art and sculpture gallery. They started acquiring works and laying out the site. Jupiter Artland finally opened in 2009 and over a million people have now visited.

Artworks

Many of the artworks are big but some are quite enormous, features of the landscape rather than objects set there. Some you can't miss; others are almost hidden and you have to really *look* for them. The souvenir map is an excellent guide, however, and with it you should be able to track down the 33 numbered artworks.

Some of the artworks you look at and study, like traditional exhibits in a gallery. Most you can touch. Some of them you actually interact with, and none more so than *Cells of Life* by Charles Jencks.

If you arrived by car you'll have driven through Jencks' work on your way to the car park. If you arrived on foot after getting off the bus, you'll probably stop

and explore as soon as you see it. It's a substantial artificial landform composed of several terraced mounds, like the remains of Iron Age hillforts, with spiral paths that climb to their summits. Between the mounds are still, clear, sky-reflecting pools. It's mesmerising to watch the shapes of the mounds change as you follow the paths and take pictures of the clouds mirrored in the water.

It's supposed to be, as its name suggests, an artistic response to the cell, the very basis of life in all its forms. I have to confess I don't quite get that: to me it comes across more as a stylised celebration of landscape, hill and loch, with nods to humankind's impact on the environment. Go and see and interact for yourself. What do you think?

Better felt than told

Near *Cells of Life* there are some paddocks where you may find the likes of ponies and donkeys. They may give a break from the art, if you or the children need one. If this is a safari park for art, there are at least a few genuine animals around.

It's tempting to describe lots of the other artworks but I'm going to limit myself as it's much better to go and see and prepare to be surprised. As the Scottish phrase has it, Jupiter Artland is better felt than told. However, there is a corner of the park that I particularly enjoyed. It's near the hub of the park, The Steadings, where you'll find the café and shop and indoor gallery. It's quite near the main car park. Just to the west of The Steadings is the area known as Gala Hill, a pleasant and airy woodland which has a surprising number of intriguing, sombre and sometimes funny artworks.

If you have children with you, I can confidently predict that their favourite will be *Firmament* by the legendary artist Antony Gormley of *Angel of the North* fame. *Firmamentis* in stark contrast to his usual slightly eerie standing human figures. It's inspired by an old star map and is like a giant Meccano set gone mad. In recreating the night sky, the metal links actually *almost* take the shape of a sinister monster. Gormley recommends looking at the sky *through* the artwork. It's in an elevated space at the edge of the wood with a fine view over the Forth bridges.

Gala Hill also features three works by the late Scottish artist Ian Hamilton Finlay, who was a pioneer of art designed to be experienced in the landscape, as at his



famous garden of Little Sparta at Dunsyre in the Pentlands. I still remember Finlay's exhibit at the 1988 Glasgow Garden Festival and there's a faint whiff of that event about Jupiter Artland.

Signpost to Jupiter

Bonnington House itself is not open to the public and is a private home, but it often provides an attractive background as you explore the sculptures. Joana Vasconcelos' *Gateway* is an ornamental pool set amongst thousands of Portuguese tiles, amongst beautiful gardens with Bonnington House as a backdrop.

Perhaps surprisingly, Bonnington House was bombed during the Second World War causing some minor damage. One of the artworks commemorates this event; Henry Castle's *Hare Hill* models one of the bombs that fell as well as the aircraft itself, linking the spot to Hare Hill, some six miles away in the Pentlands. A Luftwaffe bomber crashed there during the war, and its wreckage can still be seen.

Other artists you'll probably have heard of, and who are represented in the park, include Andy Goldsworthy and even Tracey Emin. The park supports educational visits to the park for young people; going to visit, and paying the entrance fee, helps to support this important work.

On our visit, in the spring of 2025, we spent a couple of hours at Jupiter Artland, yet there were not only some artworks, but entire areas of the park that we didn't get to. So, there's always a reason for another visit. However, you might ask, why the name. Why *Jupiter* Artland? The honest answer is that I don't know! However, there is an artwork by Peter Liversidge entitled *Signpost to Jupiter* which is, indeed, a signpost pointing (up the way!) to Jupiter. The sign points out that, depending upon orbits, Jupiter is between 893 and 964 million kilometres away.

So, now you know.



New Scottish Internet Domain launches in Canada



Hannah Mondwiwa, dotScot ambassador in Canada.

Eleven years ago Scotland finally took its place on the internet when a small, Glasgow-based not-for-profit company dotScot Registry applied for the .scot domain.

Today .scot is used by Scotland's Government, Parliament and National Health Service as well as thousands of cultural and charitable organisations, businesses and individuals in 62 countries around the world. The original vision for .scot was that it would be a domain for 'the worldwide community of Scots' and Canada in particular. Historically Canada was the most popular destination for Scottish emigrants.

Today there are around 5 million Canadians who claim some kind of Scottish connection, either because they were born in Scotland, have Scottish heritage or lived or studied there at one time. The number is even higher when you add 'affinity Scots' or 'Scots adjacent', a term coined by Canadian newspaper editor Richard Dal Monte to describe those who have a Scottish partner. Recently a second Scottish domain (.co.scot) was created to encourage even more Scots-Canadians to identify their Scottish connection and become part of Scotland's global internet identity.

Scottish identity

Hannah Rowena Mondwiwa is the dotScot ambassador to Canada. Hannah is a journalist who won the Jack Webster Foundation's BIPOC Student Journalism Award. She recently completed a four-part investigative radio feature for CBC. Hannah was born in Malawi, raised in Scotland and now lives in Canada. She says: "So many Canadians I meet are proud of their Scottish heritage, and I think many of them would be drawn to having a domain that showcases their Scottish identity. Personally, although I haven't lived in Scotland for many years it will always be home. I still visit regularly and carry Scotland with me everywhere I go. For that reason, choosing a .scot or a .co.scot domain was a natural fit."

Harry McGrath is Chair and Head of Engagement and Global Outreach at the DotScot Registry. He is a former resident of Vancouver where he was the Coordinator of the Centre for Scottish Studies at Simon Fraser University. Harry now lives in Edinburgh. He says: "The new domain for Scotland and its global community .co.scot feels like a turning point in terms of expanding the number of people in Canada who will be able to express their Scottish connection through their internet identity. I lived almost half my life in Canada and know from personal experience how much interest there is in all things Scottish. Now we have another way that Scots-Canadian members of Scotland's global affinity network can bring their Scottishness online."

.co.scot domains are available exclusively from domains.scot

The biggest ice hockey series ever takes to the ice in Scotland



Scotland Ice Hockey Cup is proud to announce what promises to be one of the most significant ice hockey events ever staged in the United Kingdom: the Scotland Ice Hockey Cup – NHL Alumni USA vs Canada Series, coming to Scotland April 20-27, 2026.

For the first time, professional players of the National Hockey League will take to the ice in Scotland as USA and Canada NHL Alumni go head-to-head in an unforgettable exhibition series. This landmark event will bring together some of the sport's most iconic names for a showcase of elite talent, fierce rivalry, and world-class entertainment.

This historic series marks the largest NHL Alumni event ever hosted in the UK — delivering the intensity of international competition combined with the nostalgia of hockey's golden eras.

A legendary rivalry comes to Scotland

The USA vs Canada rivalry is one of the most celebrated in global ice hockey history. Now, Scottish fans will experience that passion and pride live, as former NHL stars represent their nations in a thrilling exhibition showdown. This is more than a tournament — it is a celebration of hockey heritage, bringing together generations of fans to witness icons of the game in an electric international setting.

“This is shaping up to be the biggest ice hockey series ever staged in the UK,” said Robert Aldridge, Lord Provost of Edinburgh. “We’re proud to welcome everyone to the Scotland Ice Hockey Cup featuring USA vs Canada for what promises to be a fantastic matchup – perhaps a repeat of the thrilling Olympic final – and an unforgettable atmosphere.

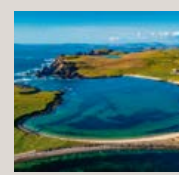
It’s a fantastic opportunity for fans to see true legends of the game compete right here in the capital. With the free youth hockey clinic being hosted alongside the event, I’m sure the next generation will be inspired to grow and strengthen the ice hockey community even further.”

The Scotland Ice Hockey Cup will further elevate Scotland’s growing presence on the international hockey stage and inspire the next generation of players across the country. As part of this commitment to growing the game, NHL Alumni players will host a free youth hockey clinic on Sunday prior to Game 3 of the Cup, giving young athletes a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn directly from former National Hockey League legends. The clinic will focus on skill development, sportsmanship, and sharing the passion of the game — ensuring the legacy of this historic USA vs Canada series extends well beyond the ice.

The exhibition series will take place in Edinburgh, Scotland. Full event details, participating NHL Alumni players, venue announcements, and ticket information is available at: www.scotlandicehockey.com



National Islands Plan



Island communities are set to benefit from a new plan to improve housing and healthcare, alongside efforts to grow the

economy and increase the number of people living on Scotland’s islands. The second National Islands Plan will deliver targeted actions across seven key themes, including committing to delivering more affordable homes, improving access to childcare and exploring permanent transport links – specifically bridges and tunnels to improve connectivity. The Plan also introduces further efforts to pilot remote diagnosis technology to improve access to medical advice.

Further actions include an island scholarship pilot scheme for postgraduate students, and the promotion of Gaelic and island languages such as Orcadian and Shetlandic.

Launching the refreshed plan while visiting Orkney and Shetland, First Minister John Swinney said: “Island communities are a key national asset and are central to our vision of Scotland as a successful country in which to live, work and study. Islanders have told us clearly what they need to pursue their ambitions: homes they can afford, transport they can rely on, and more accessible local services - this plan will deliver for our island communities. It is focused, it is practical, and it puts islanders in the driving seat of their own future. When our islands thrive, Scotland thrives.”

Bannaminn Beach, Shetland. Photo: VisitScotland.

The 2026 Young Scot Wallace Award



Craig with The Dalai Lama.

During New York Tartan Week 2026, the ASF will recognize award winning and celebrated piper, Craig Weir, who has advised and helped the American Scottish Foundation in the development of the ASF Pipes and Drums on the Fountain Terrace at Bryant Park. The Pipes and Drums at Bryant Park is now in its 12th year and a leading element is the opportunity it offers to Scottish Youth Pipe Bands to build upon taking part in the New York Tartan Day Parade by performing on the Fountain Terrace of the Park - in the shadow of Andrew Carnegie’s New York Public Library.

Connecting the diaspora in its love of Scotland and the pipes

The award will be presented during the Pipes and Drums on the Fountain Terrace on Saturday April 11 at 12pm mid the performance taking place that day.

“I am so grateful for Craig’s help and commitment to seeing the young Scottish pipe bands involved in New York Tartan Week and helping us develop Bryant Park Pipes and Drums into such an amazing part of New York Tartan Week - and we are looking to build on that with spotlighting Highland Games opportunities too,” noted Camilla Hellman, President, American Scottish Foundation.

Craig Weir grew up in Dundee and from the age of 8 the pipes have been a part of his life. The pipes have led to Craig travelling the world playing from Europe,

China, Canada and the US where he has performed in 12 States to date. Craig has performed for many dignitaries including the various members of the Royal Family; fulfilling several performances for Queen Elizabeth II most notably at Balmoral in August 2022, and as part of Dundee funeral cortege farewell. Craig pipes have greeted His Holiness The Dalai Lama and First Lady Michelle Obama. From royal visits to rock and roll, Craig has taken the stage connecting the diaspora in its love of Scotland and the pipes. From Queen to Bay City Rollers and to his own band with roaring horn section, Gleadhraich. In 2025 Gleadhraich performed in Tulsa, Oklahoma for Scotfest and will play later

this year at the New Hampshire Highland Games and Festival as well as performing internationally.

For more information visit: www.americanscottishfoundation.com



Craig Weir.



Pipes and Drums on the Fountain Terrace.

KINGS CASTLES AND "DURTY" WEE RASCALS

Australian Jim Stoddart was born in a Glasgow Tenement and raised in a Glasgow Housing Scheme 1943-1965. Jim will be taking readers on a trip down memory lane, of a time and place that will never be the same again and hopes even if only a few people in the Scot's Diaspora have a dormant folk memory awakened, then he shall be more than delighted.



Cracking the Code

Please keep off the grass and let the ladies pass, Here comes a policeman sliding on his ask - No questions and I'll tell no lies.



In the amusement arcade, near to the pier at Largs, there were the usual old fruit machines, later versions to be called one-armed bandits, and those other machines to try our skills out on and to keep us out of the rain. There was the 'powerful' four-pronged crane. It looked like it could lift the shiny watches with ease, but its soft-sprung caliper jaws collapsed with the strength of a feather when manipulated into place, so that even getting a plastic peashooter or a plastic whistle into the chute was nigh on impossible, never mind an expensive looking watch from Hong Kong. The shiny watches and even the cheap toys remained frustratingly in place, week after week, gathering dust, as the machine ate up our hard earned Glasgow pennies.

State of very old art

Another machine already had layers of our pennies and half-pennies in its piles for we would attempt to edge over the elusive half-crown and florin that the arcade owner had enticingly and very kindly seeded into the piles of copper. These were, more often than not, precariously balanced at the very edge of the chute and only needed that one more but very smallest of nudges to bring a fortune tumbling down into the waiting grey

flannel trouser pockets of my cousin Allan and me. We eagerly placed our coins in the slot and pushed them in to join the others, which by chance and bad luck alone always seemed to be accommodated by the other coins as they politely made way, pushed up and squeezed themselves up to make another space for the new arrivals.

But when it came to taking a chance and a bet on the fruit machines at Largs my cousin, Allan Marshall and I were experts. We discovered one year that we could beat the odds by being able to predict what the mechanics of the machines would present to unsuspecting punters. These were not fancy machines with flashing lights, enticing sound effects or even 1950's electronics. These were well-worn and entirely mechanical devices with absolutely nothing new fangled or electrical about them. They were state of very old art and we quickly learned how to make them work for us.

Our favourite fruit machine, or one armed bandit, didn't have the usual pictures of cherries, plums, lemons and oranges printed on its slowly revolving barrels. Instead, it had a more exotic theme, suited to the economist or stock-broker gambler. It pictured words and symbols for coal, wheat, textiles, Corn Exchange, Stock Exchange and so on and my cousin and I discovered that we had become very good at working out what was likely to emerge and line up next on its laboriously spinning barrels. So long as we were willing to invest our time and patience and had a sufficient stake to play the machines, we were on a winner.

Inevitable poor return

When four Stock Exchanges lined up the machine paid big money such as a shilling, for three Corn Exchanges, perhaps a sixpence, for three coal bags, threepence and for two corn sheaves maybe a penny and so on. It was no different from any other fruit machine in that respect, except that the elusive pattern brought about by bias, and sought by gamblers in casinos the world over, was staring us in the face. We had cracked the code. All we needed were a few mug punters to feed the machines until our recognized patterns emerged and we would be ready and waiting to cash in. Our predictions were far from infallible but were reliable enough to allow us to go out of the amusement arcade with more money than we went in with - at least on most occasions.

That was far more than could be said by the majority of gamblers. We still needed our own stake and we still needed unwitting punters to play the machine ahead of us but we were able to stand back whilst adults fed their pennies into the machine for an inevitable poor return. A couple of eleven year olds hanging back and watching the adults play didn't arouse too much suspicion on anyone's part. After paying in a few shillings worth of money most people gave up in disgust, and one and sixpence down. That's when Allan and I stepped forward knowing that a payout was due, having studied carefully the pattern of returns. By feeding in two further pennies we might get sixpence. We were now fourpence up and waiting for our next opportunity. Sometimes we went in

without sufficient funds and got caught out early in the piece, and with our parents not believing what we told them about our personal money-making machine, they were unwilling to help us out. In spite of the pitfalls, on most occasions we made a profit to fund a matinee at the Viking Cinema, another round of putting or a pokie hat from Nardinis Café.

Vikings

It was appropriate that the one and only cinema in Largs had the prow of a Viking longship sitting outside its front entrance.

The Viking campaign of plunder followed by settlement in the western isles had strategy and order to it. The Outer Hebrides were first occupied as summer bases to support extended raids beyond to Ireland, the Isle of Man and so on. As the need arose for personal space and land in Norway the islands of the Outer Hebrides were in turn settled. The Hebrides were geographically beyond the help of the Scottish king so they became Norwegian through time and for more than three centuries they remained so.

The native people of the Scottish islands, in the Hebrides, in the Orkney and in the Shetland Isles who had protested or resisted were undoubtedly put to the sword. Those left would eventually have integrated with their Norwegian conquerors. But for the fact that the Vikings then decided to put their energies in to raiding mainland Europe, rather than encroach further into Scotland, meant that Scottish history was perhaps saved from taking a very different course.

Royal wedding among historical records online



The image of Vicountess Anson and Prince Georg of Denmark with members of their wedding party including the then Queen Elizabeth. Image: Illustrated London News/Mary Evans Picture Library.

The marriage of a Danish Prince to one of the late Queen's cousins is among the latest records to go online for the first time on Scotland's People. Almost 240,000 birth, marriage and death records have been added to the research site. These include births in 1925, marriages in 1950 and deaths in 1975. Prince Georg of Denmark married Viscountess Anson, born Anne Bowes-Lyon, at Glamis Castle chapel in September 1950. They met at a ball at the Swedish Embassy in 1949. The bride was the niece of the then Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) who attended the reception with her daughter Princess Margaret. She had been advised against attending the ceremony of a divorcee. The bride's son from her first marriage was the famous photographer Lord Lichfield.

One of the 126,837 births registered in 1925 was Catherine McIntosh Rankin. As Kay Carmichael she became a leading social policy expert who sat on the Kilbrandon Committee which introduced

community based social work and the Children's Hearing System to Scotland.

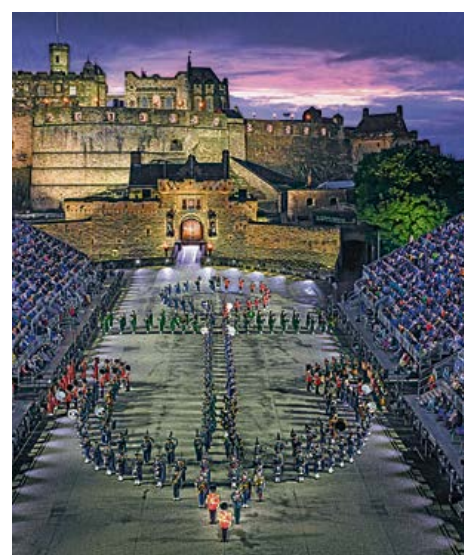
Discover your Scottish ancestors

Rugby union star Arthur Smith died aged only 42 in 1975. Born on a farm near Castle Douglas in Dumfries and Galloway, Smith excelled both academically and in sport. He is best remembered for his 33 caps for the Scottish rugby union side. Off the pitch he was a gifted mathematician who worked in the financial sector.

National Records of Scotland Chief Executive Alison Byrne OBE said: "The annual arrival of new birth, marriage and death records is a big event in the calendar for family historians. This is also an opportunity to look back and acknowledge the remarkable lives captured in the records. We are delighted to bring these new resources to the Scotland's People website so researchers in all corners of the world can discover their Scottish ancestors."

For more visit: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo named No.1 Music Festival in UK



A Call To Gather

Fresh from its victory in the UK festival rankings and near sellout shows in Brisbane and Auckland, it's now full steam ahead for the 2026 Show, *A Call To Gather* in Edinburgh. A production that will invite audiences from across the globe to unite in a shared celebration of music, culture, and community. Jason Barrett, CEO, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo said: "For generations, the Tattoo has been woven into the fabric of our nation's summer, and today, in the eyes of those surveyed, it stands not just as a tradition but as a global stage-setter. We are humbled and deeply grateful for this recognition. For more than 75 years, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo has brought together world-class performers from every corner of the globe, uniting heritage, bold creativity, and unforgettable spectacle in a way only the Tattoo can. In 2026, we will once again open our gates to the world with our show *A Call To Gather*, and I have every confidence that our audiences - new and returning - will understand exactly why the Tattoo continues to be so loved."

Looking ahead, *A Call To Gather* will continue to innovate while honouring tradition, bringing together allies and friends from home and abroad in a production that embodies the Tattoo's unique ability to convene cultures.

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo returns for their 2026 Show, A Call To Gather from 7-29 August. For details visit: www.edintattoo.co.uk

Yes, that's right. Move over, Glastonbury Festival. The massed pipes and drums have taken the crown. The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo has officially been named Britain's No.1 most popular music festival in 2025, according to YouGov Ratings.

This result places the Tattoo ahead of some of the UK's biggest names in live music including The BBC Proms, Glastonbury Festival and Reading and Leeds Festivals. YouGov Ratings, the largest and boldest attempt ever to measure what Britain thinks, analysed millions of responses from the public to determine the nation's most loved music festivals which revealed the Tattoo was on top for all UK adults.

Celtic Culture in America

By: William S.
(Bill) Caudill



Rhodes Academy of Irish Dance.



Pipe Major Ross McCrindle.



Scottish Highland Dancers.

It is no surprise to see Americans celebrating St. Patrick's Day and honoring their Irish roots. Likewise, it is not surprising to see the proliferation of Scottish Games and festivals where kilts and bagpipes represent the diaspora of Scots to America as well. The Celtic influences on America are unmistakable and widely celebrated—and in some cases, elevated to large-scale international performances such as the Virginia International Tattoo, held each year in Norfolk. This event, one of the largest of its kind in the United States, brings together military bands, massed pipes and drums, Irish dancers, Highland dancers, and performers from across the Celtic world and beyond. Notably, pipe bands from Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States regularly perform side by side, while both Irish and Highland dancers add a vibrant visual expression of Celtic tradition through precise footwork and centuries-old choreography.

Ulster-Scots

There were Irish and Scots emigrants in the United States as early as the 17th century. Irish indentured and some prisoners from Cromwell's wars in Ireland were among the earliest from that nation.

Between 1720 and the coming of the American Revolution in 1775 it is estimated that roughly 250,000 Irish—mainly Protestants from Ulster whose ancestors were planted in that region during the Tudor dynasty from lowland Scotland and northern England made their way to America due to social and economic hardships. Scottish merchants prospered in port cities and population centers up and down the Eastern seaboard

while other Scots predominated the trade being established with Native American tribes on the frontiers. Highland Scots, many being affected by the social, economic, agricultural, and cultural changes in the years following the failed Jacobite Rebellion of 1745–46 settled in organized parties—sometimes recruited by colonial governors and led by former tacksmen of Highland estates.

They established notable settlements, the largest of which was in the Cape Fear Valley of North Carolina. Ulster-Scots were the predominant pioneers who settled the colonial “backbone” of the early American colonies pushing toward and across the Appalachian mountains and beginning the nation's westward expansion.

There were Irish and Scots emigrants in the United States as early as the 17th century.

Emigration was renewed again following the American Revolution, with further Scots and Ulster-Scots being influenced by the “push” of economic and social factors such as the continued rises in land rents, while the “pull” of favorable accounts of settlements sent home by neighbors and kinsmen who had improved their conditions in America.

The beginnings of the “Highland clearances” where estate owners found it more financially beneficial to turn lands over to sheep and deer forests than have rent paying tenants with only limited means led further Highland Scots to settle among the regions already pioneered by their kin. The largest numbers of Irish emigrants to America came during the famine years of the late 1830's through the early 1850's where as many as 2 million Irish settlers came primarily to the cities of Boston and New York City with many dispersing further afield as well.

The promise of riches which were offered by news of the discovery of gold in California was also another motivator for many who were in dire straits and seeking better opportunities in America.

Celebration of their uniqueness and identity

While Scots and Ulster Scots in the South proliferated and continued the expansion of settlement into lands cleared of Native American threats as well as those formerly occupied by the French and Spanish, Irish emigrants also expanded along growing westward trails as well as providing labor for factories, the expansion of roads and canals, and the beginnings of rail transportation.

Place names taken from Ireland and Scotland as well as the surnames of prominent settlers can be found from their original places of settlement and along their routes westward throughout the expanding United States. Presbyterian Scots as well as the Catholic Irish placed high regard on education, and early schools as well as colleges which were established based on those values were among the earliest in many regions, with many still existing from those pioneering efforts. The hearty fighting spirit of both Scots and Irish—drawn as some suggest from long struggles in their homelands—led many to become military as well as political leaders from their earliest years in America. A romantic attachment to their homeland, perhaps in some cases influenced not only by family tradition but also by images created by writers such as Sir Walter Scott, Jane Porter, and Robert Burns led many to not only hold on to their concept of ethnicity but to celebrate it through the establishment of St. Andrews and Hibernian Societies nationwide as well as military units with Scottish and Irish themes which reflected the unity of their ethnic communities as well as celebration of their uniqueness, identity and echo of the martial traditions carried to America by Scottish and Irish immigrants.

The cultural representations of these Celtic communities are relatively easy to find through the years. Newspapers were published in America in the native languages of the Gaelic speaking Irish as well as Highland Scots, as well as in the native Welsh of those lesser-known settlers even up into the early 20th century. Emigrations of Celts from Brittany in France to New York City in particular from the late 19th century into the mid-20th century also brought that lesser known culture into the Celtic-American mix. Celebrations of St. Patrick's Day in Irish communities, St. Andrews Day and Burns' Nights in Scottish communities, and even

St. David's Day in Welsh communities are recorded from the 18th century until the present. Irish music clubs and sessions, Irish dance schools and Feis events, as well as the founding of pipe bands, Highland games, and fiddler's gatherings represent efforts to keep traditional music and culture flourishing. Large-scale events like the Virginia International Tattoo serve as a modern culmination of these traditions—bringing together not only Celtic performers but also international military ensembles, reinforcing how these once-immigrant traditions have become part of a broader American cultural and ceremonial identity.

Meanwhile, the ballads and fiddle tunes preserved in isolated regions such as the Appalachian mountains represent the last vestiges of traditions which have had no outside influences to disturb them. They represent the strength of the oral traditions which were so prevalent among these Celtic peoples and served as the inspiration and roots of our own American traditional music.

Celtic roots

Pride in these ethnic connections has become quite mainstream in modern America. The “Roots movement” of the mid-1970's—inspired in part by the release of *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley, as well as the Bicentennial of 1976 seemed to inspire many Americans to delve into their own family stories and backgrounds—with many “discovering” their Celtic roots for the first time. Others who were aware of their ethnic roots had celebrated these connections for much longer. For many years, host Fiona Ritchie's *The Thistle and Shamrock* brought an awareness of Celtic music and culture to millions through her widely broadcast National Public Radio show, and the release of the *Outlander* series of novels and its resulting television adaptation by Diana Gabaldon has launched a new interest and curiosity among mainstream America.

So, whether you celebrate with traditional music in a pub on St. Patrick's Day, attend a Highland gathering, or experience the spectacle of the Virginia International Tattoo, know that the Celtic roots of America are quite deep. This history, these stories, and their associated lore are an important part of the American story. They are woven together into America's history just as threads are woven together to make a colorful Scottish tartan or a rugged Irish tweed.

Bill Caudill, a native of Waxhaw, North Carolina, is a historian, folklorist, and award-winning professional Scottish bagpiper known for his expertise in Highland Scots heritage in the American South. The 2026 Virginia International Tattoo runs April 16–19 at Scope Arena in Norfolk as part of the Virginia Arts Festival. Learn more at: vafest.org/tattoo.



Scots Guards and Royal Canadian Air Force Pipe Majors.