



the Scottish Banner



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Volume 49 Number 11

NEWS FOR GLOBAL SCOTS

May 2026

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The Banner Says...

Strange Spectacle on Loch Ness—What Was It?



by Sean Cairney

Ninety-three years ago, this month, the first newspaper article on a strange and massive, whale-like creature churning the water in the dark waters of Loch Ness was printed. It was May 1933 and *The Inverness Courier* featured an article of an unexplained creature in the cold and deep waters located just outside of Inverness. The author of the feature was Alex Campbell, a water bailiff and part-time journalist, and was titled *Strange Spectacle on Loch Ness—What Was It?*

This article would go on to gain national and international attention and change the course of the region, which is still being felt today. The article detailed how Aldie Mackay and her husband reported seeing an enormous animal rolling and plunging in the loch on April 15, 1933. Whilst this was not the first mention of a strange sighting on the loch, it was the first printed recollection and led to the story gaining far reaching appeal and curiosity.

One of Scotland's most enduring mysteries

The legend of Loch Ness is one of Scotland's most enduring mysteries — a blend of ancient folklore, modern myth, and scientific curiosity that continues to ripple across the world. At its heart lies Nessie, the elusive creature said to inhabit the deep, dark waters of Loch Ness in the Scottish Highlands.

Loch Ness itself is a vast freshwater lake stretching about 23 miles (37 kilometres) and plunging to depths of over 750 feet. Its peat- stained waters are famously opaque, creating the perfect stage for tales of hidden beasts. The earliest known account of a monster near the loch dates back to the 6th century, when Saint Columba

reportedly confronted a “water beast” in the River Ness. According to Adomnán’s Life of St. Columba, the saint made the sign of the cross and commanded the creature to retreat — which it did, leaving witnesses awestruck. This story, though set in the river rather than the loch, became the first written record of what would later be called the Loch Ness Monster.

Nessie's place in popular culture

For centuries, Scottish folklore spoke of kelpies — shape- shifting water horses said to lure travellers into the depths. Many historians believe these tales helped shape the Nessie legend.

But the modern phenomenon began in 1933, when a new road along Loch Ness offered unobstructed views of the water. When Mrs Mackay, who was the manageress of the Drumnadrochit Hotel, reported seeing the massive creature it sparked a media frenzy. There have been over 1,000 reported sightings since and so far just one this year, which took place in March.

Nessie remains a living reminder that some mysteries are meant to be cherished — not solved.

In 1934, the world was captivated by the so- called “Surgeon’s Photograph”, allegedly showing Nessie’s long neck rising from the water. Decades later, it was revealed to be a hoax — a toy submarine with a sculpted head. Yet the image cemented Nessie’s place in popular culture.

People who knew very little about Scotland had heard of this monster lurking deep in the waters. Over the following decades, sonar scans, underwater photography, and scientific expeditions sought proof of the creature. None found definitive evidence, though some readings hinted at large, moving shapes beneath the surface.

In this issue

One creature more accessible to the visitor to Scotland is without doubt the Scottish deer. Not to be just found

in the Highland landscape but deer have been used throughout history in art, carving, architecture, stories and folkloric symbolism. This month we look at some of the symbolism of deer to Scotland, both in the natural and supernatural forms.

Pipe bands are located right across the world. Being part of a band is not just a musical ambition for many, but it also brings a unique life experience. Bands travel to many places to perform and take part in some incredible events. This month we feature the Haddington Pipe Band who are a community focused band, and we would love to hear from other bands on their story.

Alexander Wilson (1766–1813) was born in Paisley and was a poet, weaver, artist and pioneering ornithologist, celebrated as the Father of American Ornithology. His nine-volume *American Ornithology*, the first bird book with coloured plates to be published in America, transformed bird study in North America. He sadly died in poverty at just 47 but is remembered for introducing a new way to present nature writing and illustration.

The legend of Nessie

Despite scepticism from scientists, who attribute sightings to misidentified animals, floating logs, or optical illusions — the legend thrives. Nessie has become a symbol of mystery and wonder, drawing millions of visitors and contributing tens of millions of pounds to Highland tourism each year. Modern studies, including DNA sampling of the loch’s waters, have found no trace of unknown species, but the myth endures. I visited the loch in 2025, and you bet I was watching the water...just in case!

Ultimately, the legend of Loch Ness is less about proving a monster’s existence than about celebrating imagination itself. In the Scottish Highlands, where history and myth intertwine in story, Nessie remains a living reminder that some mysteries are meant to be cherished — not solved. 🍀

Do you have any comments from the content in this month's edition? Share your story with us by email, post, social media or: #ScottishBanner, #TheBanner.

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We appreciate your support and hope you enjoy this edition.



Gracing our front cover: The Haddington Pipe Band flying the flag at Traprain Law, near Haddington. Photo: Nick Callaghan.

A glorious day for the 2026 Australian Pipe Band Championships

Images courtesy of Louise Rowland.



The quality of the school bands who came from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia was very impressive and made the Juvenile Grades hotly contested events. Western Australia Police Pipe Band were the winners in Grade 2, the highest grade in the Championships. Another local WA band, Perth Metro, won Grade 3. City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band were the victors in Grade 4A, with Scotch College Melbourne No.2 winning Grade 4B. Scots College Sydney No.1 won Novice Juvenile A. Scotch College Melbourne No.2 won the Novice Juvenile B contest.

the Pavilion. Recognised as the highest level of pipe band competition in the country, the Championships are run by Pipe Bands Australia every two years. This is the first time in 30 years that the Championships have been held in Perth, with Pipe Bands WA hosting the event. Following the presentation of trophies the President of Pipe Bands Australia, Ainsley Hart, announced that Brisbane will host the 2028 Australian Pipe Band Championships.

For updates on pipe band events, and for full results of the 2026 Championships, visit the Pipe Bands Australia website: www.pipebandsaustralia.com.au. The entire video stream of the 2026 Championships is available to watch online via the Pipe Bands Australia YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/live/VstUmu3C2ec.

The highest level of pipe band competition in the country

Interestingly, the local West Australian bands were the best dressed, with WA Police, Perth Metro, Perth Highland, Coastal Scottish, and PLC Perth each winning the dress inspection in their respective grades

There was also a Drum Majors Flourish contest during the day, which is always a crowd-pleaser. The Drum Majors march along the course, displaying their skills 'flourishing' the mace and occasionally throwing it the air and catching it without missing a step. The winning Senior Drum Major was Dominic Anderson-Strudwick of the Australian Federal Police Pipe Band, based in Canberra. Winning the Juvenile Drum Major Flourish was Hamish Wiseman from The Scots College Sydney.

The day concluded with an impressive 500-strong massed band advancing across Subiaco Oval toward a capacity crowd in

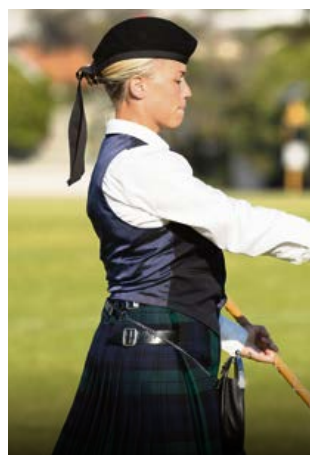


Singapore's Lion City Pipe Band.



Perth treated visiting bands to a warm welcome, turning on a sunny 29°C (84°F) day for the 2026 Australian Pipe Band Championships on Saturday April 11. An estimated crowd of 7,500 people came to Subiaco Oval to see 18

bands from around Australia and Singapore compete throughout the day. Amongst the 500 pipers and drummers performing were guest players from around the world, including contingents of players from the USA, Scotland, and New Zealand.



Ken your country

This mansion was originally built for Andrew Carnegie. 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) Which musical instrument did Robert Burns play?
- 2) How many ships of the German fleet were scuppered at Scapa Flow in 1919?
- 3) Where in Scotland is the Crinan Canal?
- 4) What was James Braidwood famous for?
- 5) Near which Scottish island does the Isle of Raasay lie?
- 6) Which famous book was written by economist Adam Smith?
- 7) Which northerly baronial mansion was originally built for Andrew Carnegie?
- 8) Which town did Robert Burns say had "honest men and bonnie lassies"?
- 9) Name the castle where you would hear the One O'Clock Gun?
- 10) What name did the Romans give to Scotland?

Answers

- 1) The fiddle and he taught himself to play.
- 2) 52 within five hours, representing the greatest loss of shipping in a single day in history.
- 3) Argyll, it connects Loch Fyne to the Sound of Jura.
- 4) He established the first municipal fire brigade in the world and is considered the 'father of the modern fire service'. The Edinburgh Fire Engine Establishment was formed in 1824.
- 5) The Isle of Skye. Raasay sits between the Isle of Skye and the mainland of Scotland.
- 6) *The Wealth of Nations*.
- 7) Skibo Castle, which is located near Dornoch in the Scottish Highlands.
- 8) Ayr in the poem *Tam O'Shanter*.
- 9) Edinburgh Castle. Ships in the Firth of Forth once set their maritime clocks by the One O'Clock Gun. The firing of the gun dates back to 1861.
- 10) Caledonia, it was the Latin name applied to the lands north of Roman Britannia.

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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?

Diana Gabaldon



Photo courtesy of Scottish Heritage USA.

What a delightful way to kick-off Spring by meeting *Outlander* author Diana Gabaldon at the Scottish Society of Wilmington's event. She is coming out with her 10th book in the series later this year, but found time to charm everyone she graciously visited with in Wilmington and at Moore's Creek - including our contingent from Scottish Heritage USA (L to R) Bill Caudill, SHUSA board, Susie Thomas, SHUSA Exec Director, Diana Gabaldon, Scottish Society President Catherine Fort, Mary Ann Masters on the SHUSA and Colonial Dames board, Steve Quillin, President of Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

Scottish Heritage USA

Combined Clans & Societies Group Otago



Attached is a photo from a Combined Clans & Societies Group Otago shared lunch. From left to right are: Joy Baker (Clan Elliot), Dene Mackenzie (Clan MacPherson), Sheila and Todd Gunn (Clan Gunn). The event was a shared lunch, or potluck lunch, organised by the Combined Clans & Societies Group Otago. *The Scottish Banner* is always sought after.

Many thanks,

Dene Mackenzie

Dunedin, New Zealand

Ed note: Thank you Dene and we are so glad to hear the Banner is being enjoyed in the 'Edinburgh of the South'.

Tribute to Tartan Day in Nova Scotia

Guest Speaker Jean (MacKaracher) Watson spoke at the Tribute to Tartan Day Dinner at St. Margaret of Scotland Church Hall on April 11th in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. 40 years after Tartan Day was founded in Canada. Jean with the help of her husband Andy, in 1986, was the one person committee who for ten years worked to establish the great idea of Tartan Day in Canada of behalf of the Federation for

Scottish Clans in Nova Scotia. Jean contacted Scottish Societies across Canada to push the idea and contacted every serving Member of Parliament across Canada at that time.

In attendance as well were The Pipes and Drums of Clan Farquharson who she also founded in 1981. Her talk to the assembly covered topics about the tartan and of Gauls wearing checkered and striped clothing back when the Scribes noted the tribal habits outside the walls of Rome.

Also, of the great history of each Clan in Scotland and the stories behind them. The fairy flag, MacFarland's Lantern, the Curse of the MacDonalds on the Campbells and the curse of the Lamont widow on the Farquharson Chief. How Celts were considered very phisic and stories behind this even in local School social studies books.

Her closing remarks were: "Always remember... the Tartan thread... is the never-ending circle like the Celtic cross... it never breaks with our past. Like the call of the pipes, even in the distance you will stop and listen, some claim they get the chills. The pipes are calling our ancestors to us."

The tartan and the pipes, tell of the terrible times and happy times, of family and of love and battles and loss. But it is our strength, built on the shoulders of those who came before us."

Federation for Scottish Clans in Nova Scotia Nova Scotia, Canada

Ed note: We thank the 'Mother of Tartan Day' and Andy for all their inspiring work for the Scottish community.

Glasgow Central Station



Photo: Network Rail Scotland.

Just a wee note to thank for your April editorial on Glasgow Central railway station. As a Fly Fifer and leaving Scotland at a young age I had few reasons to visit Glasgow, so my memories are not as clear as yours. However, the obvious passion you have for the station and the great city of Glasgow came through in your words!

The cause of the fire was suspected to be the lithium-ion batteries used in vape and other products. They can self-combust and the resultant explosions, fire and toxic fumes are extremely difficult to extinguish! Unfortunately, a timely reminder of how we use and store these dangerous products!

You are doing the Scots of this world a great service with your publication!

Keep up the good work!

Baxter Henderson

Aspendale Gardens, Victoria Australia

Ed note: Thank you Baxter for your letter, this has been a tough time for a very resilient city.

The Frasers of Quebec

Many years ago, I read a Fraser story I'd like some authentication for or correction, if any of your readers know source detail?

During the time of the Battles for Quebec, about 1775, Lord Lovat, with the Frasers self-exiled to France (a natural selection, since originally they were from there - Frasier, and the fraises strawberry plant on some badges still), went to King George III and volunteered to raise a regiment of the Clan, if in return, after their service, he'd allow their return to their seized lands by Inverness. George, pressed by the costs of the 7 Years War and the French battles for Quebec, allowed this was a good deal, so agreed. Thus, Lovat raised a regiment. They were stationed in the fort at Stirling, awaiting a ship to take them to

the Canadian scene - the taking of Fort Louisbourg, and eventually Quebec itself.

Then the story becomes more hearsay! While in the fort at Stirling, the Frasers, no doubt living on 'hard tack,' heard there was quite a stache of cheese being held in locked storage above theirs in the fort.

So, a Fraser, name unknown, climbed up the OUTSIDE wall to the window of the storage, got in, got a supply of cheese, and returned to his waiting no doubt hungry friends. The Brits, of course, soon knew the cheese had been stolen, no doubt by some of the Frasers, but could prove nothing. Later, in the 1759 attack on Quebec, the Frasers were in some of the 1st boats that landed at the foot of the considerable bush and treed cliffs leading up to the later famous 'Plains of Abraham' on the outskirts of the walled city (still there in part too!). Much of that is true, I'm told, at least them being in Stirling awaiting passage and at the attack on fortress Quebec. The 78th. Then it becomes more imaginative. In the leading boat full of Highlanders, the officer in charge is SUPPOSED to have said "Alright, since one of you is such a great climber I'm told, you lead the way up that vague path onto the 'Plains of Abraham' above!" Thus, he does. At the summit, as he's breaking out of the underbrush, he's challenged by a Frech patrol, in French, no doubt "Qui va la?".

But having been exiled in France he's able to reply "De La Reine!" leaps out, silences the sentry. The squad behind debouch onto the plain without further challenges, and the taking of the fort and Quebec - and deaths of Wolfe & Montcalm - are true history. The question I have is any of this factual? I know the Frasers were in France in exile, and at the battle for Quebec (many of their Clan remained in Canada, not entirely trusting George III's word about returning their lands in Scotland quite rightly!).

I worked in Quebec in forestry and it was quite common to come across names like Pierre-Alphonse McGregor or Claude Adelard Fraser! There is still formed a 78th volunteer Regiment of historic 'Highlanders' that parades in Quebec.

Best regards,

Fraser (Murray) McKee

(Commander, RCNR (ret'd)

Toronto, Ontario

Canada

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Edinburgh lights rush past The Balmoral.

Brad Dickson Photography

Scottish Highlands



The beauty of the Scottish Highlands.

Mik Coia

Scotland's oldest heritage charity launches global £1.5m race against the clock



An artist's impression of the proposed heritage hub. Image: Benjamin Tindall Architects.

One of the UK's oldest heritage societies has launched a global £1.5 million campaign to secure a permanent home in Edinburgh, with a deadline of January 2027 to complete the purchase. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, founded in 1780 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1783, is seeking to buy a B-listed property on a site within Edinburgh's UNESCO World Heritage Site that was once part of the historic southern gateway to the city. The building has been offered to the charity at a fixed price if purchased by January 2027. The Society is contributing £600,000 from its own investments and must raise the remaining £1.5 million.

For nearly 250 years, the Society has supported archaeological and historical research. Its early Fellows contributed collections that formed the foundation of the Scottish history and archaeology galleries for the National Museum of Scotland. Today it connects more than 2,700 Fellows across six

continents and reaches millions of people annually through media and digital channels, including recorded lectures and open access publications.

Scotland's first national heritage hub

Despite this historic role, the Society currently operates from an inaccessible top-floor flat within the National Museum of Scotland complex which limits its ability to engage with the public and collaborate across the sector. The project would establish Scotland's first national heritage hub. Here, academics, visitors and anyone curious about Scotland's past can explore their heritage and engage directly with the work of protecting Scotland's history.

The campaign carries added significance as the Society approaches its 250th anniversary in 2030. Diana Murray CBE HonFSAScot, President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, said: "For centuries, this small corner of Edinburgh has been a gateway to Scotland's past. We now have a rare and time-limited

opportunity to secure this building and open our doors properly for the first time in our modern history, ensuring that Scotland's past belongs to everyone, at home and across the world."

Dr Simon Gilmour FSAScot, Director of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, added: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime alignment of opportunity, affordability and historic significance. The building sits at the very heart of Edinburgh's cultural quarter, beside the National Museum of Scotland, within a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in an area attracting more than ten million visitors a year. We invite everyone who cares about Scotland's past to help us secure it."

Architectural and historic significance

Located on the corner of Bristo Port and Bristo Place, this B-listed property holds special architectural and historic significance, standing on ground that has witnessed more than five centuries of Scottish history. Bristo Place was once the southern gateway into Edinburgh, entered through Bristo Port, a fortified arch built in 1515 as part of the Flodden Wall. In 1503, Margaret Tudor entered the city here through a grand Renaissance arch to marry King James IV, marking the Treaty of Perpetual Peace between Scotland and England. Nearby, in 1638, the National Covenant was signed at Greyfriars Kirk, another turning point in the nation's story, and later the doomed Darien project was directed from a house on Bristo Place.

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is an independent membership charity which actively supports the study and

enjoyment of Scotland's past. The Society's purpose is "to investigate both antiquities and natural and civil history in general, with the intention that the talents of humanity should be cultivated and that the study of natural and useful sciences should be promoted."

Professor Ewan is Professor Emerita of Scottish Studies and History at the University of Guelph and one of Canada's leading authorities on Scottish and medieval history and has been a Fellow of the Society since 1985. She said: "From Canada I have seen first-hand how deeply Scotland's history runs in people across the world. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland has been at the heart of Scottish historical scholarship for nearly 250 years, connecting researchers and heritage enthusiasts across the globe. A permanent home would transform what the Society can offer to that global community."

Dr Lorna Barrow FSAScot, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, editor of the *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, former researcher on the Australian edition of *Who Do You Think You Are?*, and recipient of the Celtic Council of Australia's Duine Urramach award for services to Scottish heritage, said: "Scotland's story belongs to people on every continent and nowhere is that truer than here in Australia where Scottish heritage runs deep in our national story. Helping the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland secure a permanent home is something the global Scottish community should rally behind."

For more information, visit:
www.socantscot.org

Protecting Scapa Flow and the Queen of Sweden



Queen of Sweden. Photos: Historic Environment Scotland.

A World War naval base and a centuries old Swedish ship have both been named as Scotland's newest Historic Marine Protected Areas. Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy Gillian Martin confirmed the designation of the two sites off the coasts of Orkney and Shetland to recognise the national importance of the historical marine assets and provide legal protection to ensure their preservation. The Scapa Flow site off the coast of Orkney has a number of different historic marine assets including the largest concentration of warship wrecks and other wartime artefacts in the UK. It played an important role as a naval base during the two World Wars of the 20th century and was the location of the internment and scuttling of the German High Seas Fleet at the end of the First World War.

The *Queen of Sweden* is one of the best-preserved remains of a Swedish East India Company ship located in waters around Scotland. She was built in

Stockholm in 1741 to trade with China - the largest ship built for the company at that time - and sank off the coast of Shetland in 1745 during strong winds. The first Historic Marine Protected Areas were designated by the Scottish Government in 2013 to identify and protect marine historic assets of national importance which survive in Scottish territorial waters. It is a criminal offence to remove, alter or disturb any of the protected sites across the country.

Scotland's underwater heritage

Confirming the designation of the two sites, during a tour of the Scapa Flow site, Ms Martin said: "These two new Historic Marine Protected Areas - at Scapa Flow, and the *Queen of Sweden* wreck site in Shetland - are important additions to our network of Historic MPAs, which protect the most significant wreck sites across Scotland's seas. The designation of these sites recognises their national value and will help to ensure that future generations can continue to explore,

learn from, and be inspired by Scotland's underwater heritage. I'm grateful for the support from local authorities, heritage bodies, and marine industries in bringing these designations forward."

Orkney Islands Council Leader Heather Woodbridge added: "Wrecked vessels, including those of the German High Seas Fleet, are a significant heritage asset and attract visitors from all over the world, contributing to the economy of Orkney. Sadly, the condition of the wrecks is deteriorating, and these important remains will not last forever. Officially recognising and protecting these sites is therefore vitally important to maximise their longevity. This Historic MPA will ensure these irreplaceable assets are protected from future human damage or disturbance while still allowing for responsible access, research and education where appropriate."

The Historic Marine Protected Areas for the Scapa Flow and *Queen of Sweden* designations came into effect on 1 November 2025.





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Lady MacGregor's Scotland

By: Lady Fiona MacGregor



Lady MacGregor of MacGregor – otherwise known as British writer and broadcaster Fiona Armstrong – works for ITV news and current affairs. Fiona's husband is the Chief of Clan Gregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor. She is an active member of Clan Armstrong, so their lives are interwoven with all things tartan. The couple live in the Scottish Borderlands, although filming and writing takes Fiona all over Scotland.



Major MacGregor's dirk.



The 17th century quaich.

wonderful time to see Scotland's seventh largest island. With a mix of Highland, Lowland and Borderland scenery, this place has been called 'Scotland in Miniature'.

Here, sandy beaches and sparkling seas beckon, along with hard to climb Goat Fell. There is an ancient stone circle, a distillery, and, of course, those famous Arran oatcakes. Sweet and nutty, he promises to bring some home, along with a fat slab of tasty Arran cheese.

That peak comes with its own story

Before he leaves for the west coast, though, we find ourselves in the Trossachs, and it is a joy getting there; travelling through winding glens, leaves budding baby green; passing dark forested peaks and weathered stone bridges. Then there is the Lake of Menteith – Scotland's only lake - because the country's waters are all lochs. Here wildlife abounds, with regular signs telling us to watch out for red squirrels and deer. Here are ancient cottages and the more modern Rob Roy Hotel. Because this is the edge of once bandit country; the legendary Scotsman owning around 7,000 acres; a base from where he could carry out his blackmail operations and drive his cattle down south into England.

More memories return. Because this is close to where the chief was brought up as a boy, and he seems to know every bend in the road. Up the glen we drive, with a snow-capped Ben Lomond now in view – and that peak comes with its own story.

It is said that in 1803 this mountain was climbed by two chiefs - the MacGregor and the Colquhoun. The reason? To remember the infamous Glen Fruin massacre of 1603 when members of Clan Gregor killed a group of Colquhoun clansmen. The feud would simmer for two centuries. Until the early nineteenth-century when these two lairds reached the top of Ben Lomond, accompanied by a piper and a picnic.

And there at the summit, the story goes that they shook hands and danced a jig to try to put the past behind them...

The Children of the Mist

We continue on, reaching the larger village of Aberfoyle, and just beyond that, at the head of Loch Ard, the hamlet of Kinlochard. This is a place recently in the news with their 'Field' project; local people hoping to transform a 27-acre piece of boggy, rough land into a place for community use. Nature and history are all around and Kinlochard is where the chief has been invited by the local history group to give a talk about Clan MacGregor. Suitably he is wearing his MacGregor red and green kilt whilst I have on a similar tartan coat. Both seem to go down well in the community hall.

Now I have heard my husband speak on many occasions, and this time he is in full flow: bringing in family history, heraldry and clan rivalries. There are photos he has taken of Clan Gregor sites, including

Glengyle and Glenlyon. There is mention of how his ancestor, Evan MacGregor, supported Bonnie Prince Charlie in the taking of Edinburgh in the '45. As a reward for his leadership the prince gave Major MacGregor a large dirk. Then, after Culloden, the would-be king presented him with his personal quaich. We have both and these precious seventeenth century artefacts are passed round an admiring audience.

As is a large ancient weapon we bring with us. Once outlawed, with a bounty on their heads, Clan Gregor, the Children of the Mist, regularly found themselves pursued by packs of blood hounds. But they did not go down without a fight. Members of the history group are shown a gun that was used to shoot one of the baying dogs. It is humbling to sit in a room with people who know about and want to find out more about the past – and many questions are asked. After all, this is not just Rob Roy country. It is also Walter Scott land. The novelist made much of local folklore and set his poem *The Lady of the Lake* in the Trossachs. That work was a sensation, turning a wild, forgotten area into a tourist attraction. And they are there already; next morning we see a crowd of Japanese visitors taking in Highland scenes.

It is a magical place. And best of all – no midges. It is clearly too early, but like the Isle of Arran, this is Scotland at its finest...

Victorian Hotel Robbers prisoner records go online



Eliza Thorpe. Photo: Crown copyright National Records of Scotland.



Inveraray Jail. Photo: Inveraray Jail Museum.

to details that are unlikely to have been preserved for most people. Finding out the colour of their hair, details of their health or whether they could read or write can turn a name and some dates into a much more rounded person. And of course, if they have committed a serious crime, it can explain a lot about the decisions of other relatives such as moving area, changing a name or simply never talking about them."

The new additions mean there are now over 400,000 historical prison records available to search on Scotland's People. This includes the old Edinburgh prisons, Barlinnie, Perth and Largs.

Histories of both prisons and more on the cases highlighted in this story are available at Scotland's People: www.scotlandspople.gov.uk

The once infamous 'Highland Hotel Robbers' are among Victorian prisoners whose records are now online.

Scotland's People, the official site for Scottish government records, has published details of more than 100,000 inmates from Ayr and Inveraray jails.

In the summer of 1883, American James Edward Lyon and his young accomplice Eliza Thorpe targeted well-to-do guests in fancy hotels from Argyll to Aberdeenshire. Cash, jewellery and other valuables went missing and Lyon and Thorpe just always seemed to be around when it happened.

The pair who travelled as man and wife were arrested at a hotel in Edinburgh. Their associate Joseph Dowling was caught red handed with some of the stolen items.

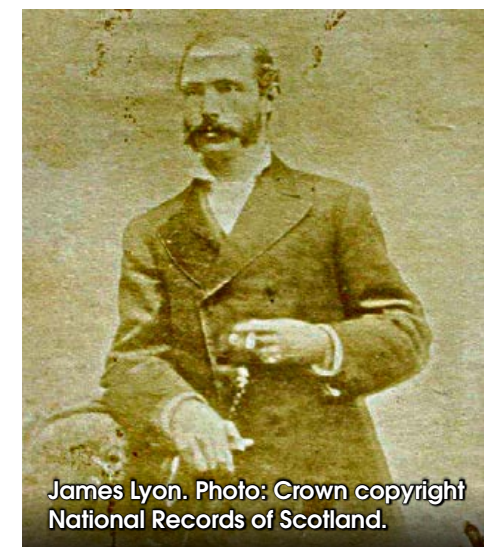
At their trial the men were convicted but the case against Thorpe, who was 20 years old, was found not proven. Lyon was sentenced to seven years. Photographs of Lyon, Thorpe and Dowling were kept in an album of interesting cases by the local procurator fiscal.

Prison registers are a rich source of information

Their entries in the registers for Inveraray prison are among 4,600 for that jail now on Scotland's People. Men, women and

children were incarcerated at the jail in the 19th century. The youngest was seven-year-old James McCulloch who was caught stealing, the oldest 82-year-old Ann Kerr found guilty of "vagrancy".

The newly published records also include 98,000 entries from Ayr Prison from 1841 to 1911. Notable prisoners included murderers Joseph Calabrese, Thomas Bone and Mary Boyd. All of them were sentenced to death and all spared. Archivist Veronica Schreuder said: "Prison registers are a rich source of information for social researchers and family historians alike. While it can be a shock to find an ancestor in prison, it can sometimes lead



James Lyon. Photo: Crown copyright National Records of Scotland.

THE BANNER BOOK SHOP

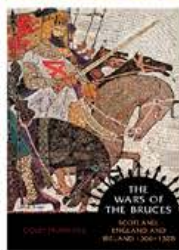
To order please see us at www.scottishbanner.com/shop call us, or use our order coupon found on the page 6.

The Highland Clearances The Highland Clearances stands out as one of the most emotive chapters in Scottish history. This book traces the origins of the Clearances from the 18th century to their culmination in the crofting legislation of the 1880s. In considering both the terrible suffering of the Highland people as well as the stark choices that faced landowners during a period of rapid economic change, it shows how the Clearances were one of many 'attempted' solutions to the problem of how to maintain a population on marginal & infertile land. This offers a balanced analysis of events which created a scar on the Highland & Gaelic imagination. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



The Wars of the Bruces-Scotland, England and Ireland 1306 - 1328

The Bruces of 14th century Scotland were formidable and enthusiastic warriors. Whilst much has been written about events as they happened in Scotland during the chaotic years of the first part of the 14th century, England's war with Robert the Bruce profoundly affected the whole of the British Isles. Packed with detail and written with a strong and involving narrative thread, this is the first book to link up the various theatres of war and discuss the effect of the wars of the Bruces outside Scotland. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



Charles Maclean's Whiskypedia

Why does Scotch whisky taste as it does? Where do the flavours come from? How might they have changed over the years? The flavour of Scotch whisky is as much influenced by history, craft and tradition as it is by science. Whiskypedia explores these influences. Introductory sections provide an historical overview, and an explanation of the contribution made by each stage of the production process. Each entry provides a brief account of the distillery's history and curiosities, details how the whisky is made, and explores the flavour and character of each make. Whiskypedia will guide, entertain and inform novices and experts alike. This is a new extensively updated edition which includes entries on new distilleries. **Price: \$40.00 Plus postage**



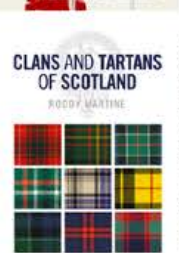
Scottish Traditional Tales

All over the world traditional tales were told at the fireside until their place came to be taken by books, newspapers, radio and television. A.J. Bruford and D.A. MacDonald present an entertaining collection of the oral tales that have been passed down by generations of Scottish story-tellers, and have been recorded and collected by researchers from the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh over the past fifty years. With almost a hundred tales, this is the most wide-ranging introduction available on this fascinating part of Scotland's heritage. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



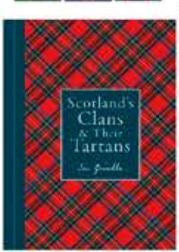
Clans and Tartans of Scotland

Throughout the world there exists an enduring fascination with our ancestry - who we are and where we come from. The Scots are a remarkable race with a justifiably proud history and culture which they have successfully passed on through generations. This compact book sets out to identify the larger Scottish clan and family names, their tartans, septs (dependent family names), heraldic crests, mottos, ancestral lands and allegiances. This book features full colour photographs of each tartan as opposed to digital reproductions, allowing readers to see both the textures and patterns. **Price: \$20.00 Plus postage**



Scotland's Clans & Their Tartans

A beautifully presented history of Scotland's clans and their iconic tartans. With over 150 tartans beautifully displayed in full colour images, this guide serves as both a visual celebration and an exhaustively researched reference for historians, enthusiasts, and anyone with an ancestral connection to Scotland alike. This book offers an authoritative exploration of the origins and evolution of Scotland's clan system. **Price: \$40.00 Plus postage**

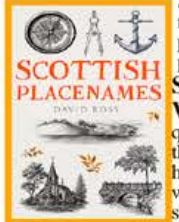


Edinburgh's Best Buildings

As a world heritage site and one of the most visited cities in the world, Edinburgh boasts a huge range of buildings from all periods and in many different styles. This book introduces 300 of the city's most fascinating places, from imposing public buildings such as galleries, museums, banking halls, churches and theatres to pubs, domestic dwellings, monuments and industrial architecture. Conveniently grouped by location, all areas of the city are covered, including suburbs. All are accessible by walking, cycling, public transport or car. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



Scottish Placenames Names are very important & can unlock vast amounts of information about places & their origins. The placename of Scotland are a goldmine of info about times past & the lives of early inhabitants. The different languages of their origin - Gaelic, Pictish, Old Norse & Old English - reflecting cultures that have been part of Scotland's story. Other names date back to prehistoric times & are the only link to a world now lost to us forever. It features +500 placenames & is an essential for all interested in Scottish history. **\$20.00**



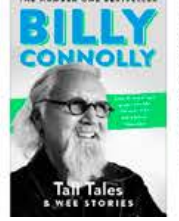
A History of Scotland

Historian Neil Oliver presents a compelling new portrait of Scottish history, peppered with action, high drama and centuries of turbulence that have helped to shape modern Scotland. Along the way, he takes in iconic landmarks and historic architecture; debunks myths surrounding Scotland's famous sons; recalls forgotten battles; charts the growth of patriotism; and explores recent political developments, capturing Scotland's sense of identity and celebrating her place in the wider world. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



Billy Connolly - Tall Tales & Wee Stories

Tall Tales and Wee Stories brings together the very best of Billy's storytelling for the first time and includes his most famous routines including, The Last Supper, Jobja Shampoo, Incontinence Pants and Shouting at Wildebeest. With an introduction and original illustrations by Billy throughout, it is an inspirational, energetic and riotously funny read, and a fitting celebration of our greatest ever comedian. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**



The Final Curtsey - A Royal Memoir

This is the intimate and revealing autobiography of Margaret Rhodes, the first cousin of Queen Elizabeth. Born into the Scottish aristocracy, her home frequently visited by royalty. She was a bridesmaid at the wedding of her cousin, Princess Elizabeth to Philip. In 1990 she was appointed as a Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen Mother, acting also as her companion. The Queen Mother regarded Margaret Rhodes as her 'third daughter' and she was very close to her cousins the Queen and Princess Margaret throughout their lives. **Price: \$20.00 Plus postage**

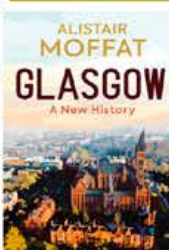


Scottish Festivals The origins of many Scottish festivals, such as Beltane and Hallowe'en, lie deep in the pagan past, and although the significance of many festivals may now be long forgotten, they have continued to evolve and evolve to satisfy the needs of the time. This book is an enthralling journey through the year and the pageants, parades, festivals and fairs which have played a huge part in Scottish life. It introduces the customs, traditions, lore and crafts associated with them. **Price: \$20.00 Plus postage**



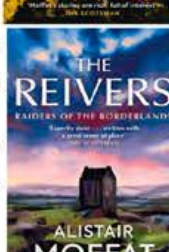
Glasgow - A New History

Scotland's largest city has always been one of the most vibrant, varied and fascinating places in the country. This new history of Glasgow begins with the river, for the Clyde made the city flourish. From prehistory to the Romans, to Mungo and the kingdom of Strathclyde, it's a rich, quirky and moving story that remembers the foundation of the burgh by the bishops and moves rapidly to the Union of 1707. Football, architecture, heavy industry, politics and a distinctive sense of humour are all celebrated. Glasgow has never hesitated to reinvent itself - because its greatest resource has always been its people. This is their story. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



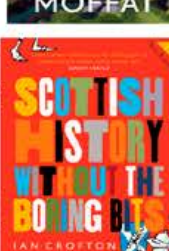
The Reivers - Raiders of the Borderlands

From the early 14th century to late 16th, the Anglo-Scottish borderlands suffered one of the most intense periods of warfare and disorder in modern Europe. As a consequence of constant conflict, Borderers suffered horribly at the hands of marauding armies who ravaged their land, destroying crops, slaughtering cattle, burning settlements and killing indiscriminately. For the best part of 300 years, countless raiding parties made their way over the border, this is the story of the Reivers - one of survival, stealth, treachery, ingenuity and deceit. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



Scottish History Without the Boring Bits

As an antidote to more sober accounts of Scotland's history, Ian Crofton offers a colourful chronology of the eccentric, the infamous, the bawdy, the horrific and the hilarious people and events that have spattered across the pages of our nation's story. From the Royal High School riot to Marocco the Wonder Horse, from the War of the One-Eyed Woman to the MP cleared of stealing his ex-mistress's knickers, A History of Scotland Without the Boring Bits includes a host of little-known tales that you won't find in more conventional works of history. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



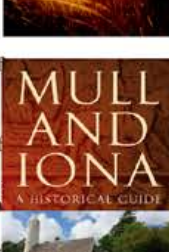
A Scots Quair - The Mearns Trilogy

One of the all-time greats of Scottish literature, truly revolutionary, A Scots Quair is a trilogy of novels: Sunset Song (1932), Cloud Howe (1933) and Grey Granite (1934). At each book's core is the heroine Chris Guthrie, as she grows from a child into adulthood through the Great War to the development of communism in the 1920s. Grassie Gibbon's writing is unique and riveting, blending Scots and English in an accessible style, and eloquent in its humanity and celebration of nature. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



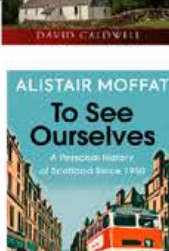
Mull and Iona: A Historical Guide

Mull and Iona are two of the most visited islands in Scotland, and have played a central role in the history of the country. As the cradle of Christianity in Scotland, Iona has been a place of pilgrimage for almost 1,500 years and was a beacon of intellectual light during the Dark Ages, when magnificent works such as the Book of Kells were crafted by the monks of the abbey founded by St Columba. This book provides a full and engaging history of the islands from the time of their earliest human inhabitants to the present day. The gazetteer lists all the places of interest from all periods in the islands' history. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**



To See Ourselves - A Personal History of Scotland Since 1950

Since 1945 the world has changed at breakneck speed, and life in post-war Scotland is now entirely different from what it was like when Alistair Moffat grew up in the Border town of Kelso in the 50s. At that time practicalities of daily life which had remained constant for generations were about to change in the most unimaginable ways. This is a book about these changes, many of which have been disorientating and how they have affected all parts of Scotland. Themes such as housing, healthcare, sport, media, the arts & entertainment, urban and country life, politics, religion are all viewed through the lens of personal experience. **Price: \$40.00 Plus postage**



Scottish Queens - The Queens and Consorts Who Shaped the Nation

The lives of the Scottish queens, both those who ruled in their own right, and also the consorts, have largely been neglected in conventional history books. One of the earliest known Scottish queens was none other than the notorious Lady MacBeth. Was she really the wicked woman depicted in Shakespeare's famous play? Was St Margaret a demure and obedient wife? Why did Margaret Logie exercise such an influence over her husband, David II, and have we underestimated James VI's consort, Anne of Denmark, frequently written off as a stupid and wilful woman? These are just a few of the questions addressed in this entertaining, impeccably researched book. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**

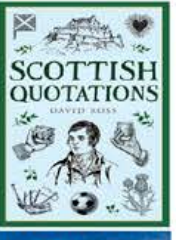


The Picts - A History

This is an edition explores the popular history of the Picts, an ancient nation who ruled most of northern and eastern Scotland during the Dark Ages. Despite their historical importance, they remain shrouded in myth and misconception. Absorbed by the kingdom of the Scots in the ninth century, they lost their unique identity, their language and their vibrant artistic culture. Tim Clarkson pieces together the evidence to tell the story of this mysterious people from their emergence in Roman times to their eventual disappearance. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**



Scottish Quotations The Scots have always had a reputation for clarity of thought and also for the vigour with which it is put into words. This collection spans the entire gamut of a nation's recorded thought from Roman Scotland to now... It covers a vast range of subject matter and demonstrates a remarkable variety of moods and tones, from the literary to the colloquial and bawdy. Packed with sharp observation & humour. Meditative, triumphant, tragic, accusing, tender - and often hilarious - it reveals the spirit of Scotland in a truly unique way. **Price: \$20.00 Plus postage**



The Hebrides

Paul Murton has spent half a lifetime exploring some of the most beautiful islands in the world - the Hebrides. He has travelled the length and breadth of the Scotland's rugged, 6,000 mile coast line, and sailed to over 80 islands. This new edition visits each of the Hebridean islands in turn, introducing their myths and legends, history, culture & natural beauty. He also meets the people who live there and learns their story. A vivid account of the Hebrides and serves as unique guide to the less well-known aspects of life among the islands. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



The Folk Tales of Scotland - The Well at the World's End and Other Stories

The classic folk tales of Scotland were passed down from storyteller to storyteller, and from the first sentence they were designed to hold the attention of the listener or reader as though a spell had been cast over them. The Montgomeries, distinguished folklorists, gathered traditional stories from all parts of Scotland. Their collection, first published in 1956, became a classic of the storytelling tradition, with the stories retold in a simple, dramatic style, appealing to adult and child alike. **Price: \$30.00 Plus postage**



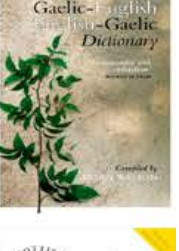
The Highlands and Islands of Scotland

This is the story of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland as it has never been told before. From the formation of the landscape millions of years ago to the 21st century, it brings to life the events and the people who have shaped Highland history, from saints, sinners and outlaws to monarchs, clan chiefs and warriors. Highly readable and informative, it mines a wide range of sources including medieval manuscripts and sagas, poetry and popular culture. Picts, Romans, Irish missionaries, Vikings, Jacobites and the emigrants who left to forge new lives abroad. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



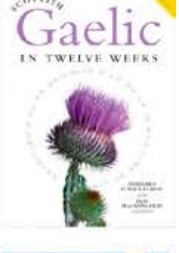
The Pocket Gaelic-English/English-Gaelic Dictionary

Latest soft cover dictionary is ideal for learners of Gaelic at all levels, and its generous coverage of vocabulary from fields such as business and IT makes it a valuable tool for all those who require an up-to-date reference work. It contains a large amount of explanatory material, numerous examples of usage and idiomatic phrases and expressions. Many registers and styles are sampled, from the familiar (and occasionally the vulgar) to the formal and the literary. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**



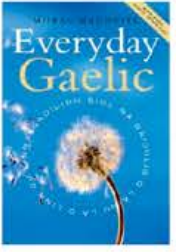
Scottish Gaelic in 12 Weeks - With Audio Download

Scottish Gaelic in Twelve Weeks has been written both as a self-tuition course for beginners and also for use within the classroom. You may want to learn Gaelic because of a general interest in Celtic or Scottish culture, or because it was the everyday language of your ancestors. Each lesson in the book contains some essential points of grammar explained and illustrated, exercises, a list of new vocabulary (with a guide to pronunciation, using the International Phonetic Alphabet), and an item of conversation. This new edition includes an audio download link. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



Everyday Gaelic - With Audio Download

This new and expanded edition of the best-selling Everyday Gaelic has been compiled by an author with many years' experience in teaching the language to adults and children. In addition to basic words and phrases, it also includes more complex and idiomatic material, all arranged thematically and covering topics such as meeting and greeting, travelling, the weather and eating and drinking. The result is an accessible and useful book which will be of benefit to all levels and ages of Gaelic learners. This new edition includes an audio download link. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



Dancing in the Streets

The classic Glasgow Memoir with a new introduction by Tom Morton. This is Clifford Hanley's vibrant, unsentimental and hilarious account of growing up in the 1920s and '30s, and his later working life as a radio broadcaster & journalist. His razor-sharp observations and anecdotes cover many topics, from family life, art and showbiz to politics and what it was like to be a conscientious objector during WW2. But even the most bitter-sweet stories are leavened with humour, and the irrepressible Glasgow spirit always shines through. **Price: \$25.00 Plus postage**



The Scottish Food Bible

Scottish produce is celebrated the world over. The demand for game, for example, far exceeds what can be supplied, and Scottish cheeses surpass many from mainland Europe. In this book Claire Macdonald celebrates the very best of home-grown ingredients - from oatmeal, dairy produce, meat and fish, fruit and vegetables and even whisky - in 60 imaginative recipes for starters, main course and puddings, as well as for sauces, dressings, baking and other treats. **Price: \$ 20.00 Plus postage**



Edinburgh - A New History

From prehistory to the present day, the story of Edinburgh is packed with drama. As Scotland's capital since 1437, the city has witnessed many of the key events which have shaped the nation. But Edinburgh has always been much more than just a political centre. During the Enlightenment, it was one of the intellectual powerhouses of Europe, and in the 20th century it became the arts capital of the world. This book shows how the city changed over the centuries, introduces Edinburgh's famous places and people, as well as the ordinary citizens who have contributed so much to the life of one of the world's most incredible cities. **Price: \$35.00 Plus postage**



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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.



Dugs

Hey daddy, wid you get us a dug?

A big broon alsation ur a wee white pug,

Ur a skinny wee terrier, ur a big fat bull,

Aw daddy, get us a dug, wull yi?

Whit! An whose dug'll it be when it dirties the flerr?

An pees'n the carpet, and messes the sterr?

It's me or yer mammy'll be tane for a mug.

Awa oot'n play! Yer no gettin a dug.

First two verses of 'A Dug, A Dug' by Bill Keyes

Jean loved dogs and dogs loved her. When I first met her, she owned a dog called Major, a handsome golden Labrador, and he often accompanied her on her trek from one side of Pollok to the other, to visit me. Jean had been given Major by her Uncle Davie, the gamekeeper on the Ardlamont Estate. Davie had other mouths to feed, those of his four children and his working dogs, Jack Russell Terriers.

Jean had begged her parents to let her have Major as her pet and they reluctantly had agreed to relieve Davie of the extra burden of caring for him. He was like all Labradors a gentle, reliable dog, friendly to all he met and a danger to none. He, nevertheless, met an untimely death years later, in East Kilbride, when he was either baited or inadvertently took bait when out on one of his many wanderings as dogs were free to do in those days.

Courum

After the loss of Major Jean's solace was found in Couram, the only surviving pup from her Uncle David's latest litter of Jack Russel Terriers. He was the progeny of Davie's large sturdy, working terrier and *Shoe-Shoe*, a small bitch, called that because she once could fit into a large shoe. For years Courum enjoyed his days in East Kilbride and the freedom of running around on holiday at Portavadie, Argyll until one day at the beginning of December when out on a walk with Jean, disaster struck. The lightweight Courum

was attacked by a large, aggressive Alsation that took the helpless Courum in its jaws, shook him vigorously from side to side and finally tossed him against a brick wall. The little Jack Russel was never the same again. Jean carried him home and her parents drove her and the dog immediately to the vet. The vet advised them that they would need to keep him over the next few days so that they could monitor him.

After a few days it was obvious that a decision had to be made about Couram's future. His quality of life had become really poor. From that day forward he seemed to acquire a number of health problems including what appeared to be brain damage. As a last resort the vet suggested that they try a new treatment being trialled at the faculty of veterinary science at Glasgow University. He had discussed Couram's condition with people he knew there and they were willing to include him in their trial of some new drugs. Courum went off in due course to seek some improvement and recovery and to make his own small contribution to science. He had nothing to lose.

What dog?

After some weeks the predictable bad news came from the family vet. Courum had not responded to the treatment given; and there had been no evident improvement in his condition. Could they have permission to 'put him down'?

Jean and the rest of the family were devastated, and it fell upon me as the science teacher in training, now back in Scotland from my first term at college, to agree to have him euthanised. In our minds, Courum had now gone to where the spirits and souls of all good little dogs should go. It was some months later when Jean and I were living in Manchester and everyone had just about used to Courum not being around anymore that the family got a follow-up call from the university. "When is someone going to come and collect that dog you left with us?"

"What dog? There must be some mistake. Our dog was put down months ago!" said Jean's father. What had happened was that my agreement to have the dog euthanised had not reached the people charged with his day-to-day care and treatment. They had soldiered on with the treatment, in good faith, and in the end it had borne some fruit.

Like a canine Lazerus Courum had miraculously returned to the land of the living. He never quite recovered the vigour and full health that he had enjoyed before his wounds and injuries occurred, but he did recover enough to have an acceptable quality of life for a few years more. Jean was delighted with the result. Her parents agreed to look after Couram as Jean and I were now living in a very small flat in Manchester and were not allowed to have pets in residence.

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Scottish New Wool Tartan Blanket:

This luxury 70% wool 30% mixed fibres blend blanket will keep you cosy and warm during the winters and also can be used in the car or as a picnic rug. These timeless durable travel rugs measure 180cm x 140cm and are with a purled fringe, these classic blankets are approved by the Scottish Tartans Authority with 34 tartans available.

Scottish Tartan Scarves:

Made in the Scottish Borders and available in over 100 Clan, family and district tartans. Made by Ingles Buchan these soft lamb's wool scarves are both comfortable and elegant, suitable for any occasion and anyone. 100% Lambswool, measuring approx. 30cms x 152cms.

Is YOUR clan here?

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Anderson Modern
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Black Watch
Brodie Red Modern
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Bruce of Kinnaird Ancient
Buchanan Modern
Buchanan Antique
Burns Check Modern
Cameron Clan Modern
Cameron of Erracht Modern
Campbell Clan Ancient
Campbell of Argyle Modern
Campbell Cawdor Modern
Carmichael Ancient
Clark Ancient
Clergy Ancient
Colquhoun Modern
Crawford Modern
Cunningham Modern
Davidson Clan Modern
Douglas Ancient
Douglas Modern
Duncan Ancient
Earl of St Andrews Modern
Elliot Modern
Farquharson Modern
Ferguson Modern
Forbes Modern
Fraser Red Modern
Galbraith Modern
Gordon Clan Modern
Gordon Dress Modern
Graham of Menteith Modern
Graham of Montrose Modern
Grant Clan Modern
Gunn Modern
Hamilton Modern
Henderson Modern
Irvine Ancient
Johnstone Modern
Keith Modern

Kennedy Modern
Kerr Modern
Kilgour Modern
Lamont Modern
Lindsay Ancient
Lindsay Modern
Logan & MacLennan Modern
MacBeth Modern
MacDonald Clan Ancient
MacDonald Clan Modern
MacDonald of Clanranald Modern
MacDonald Dress Modern
MacDonald Lord of the Isles Ancient
MacDougall Modern
MacFarlane Clan Modern
MacGregor Clan Modern
MacInnes Modern
MacIntosh Clan Modern
MacIntosh Hunting Modern
MacIntyre Hunting Ancient
MacKay Modern
MacKenzie Modern
MacKinnon Red Modern
MacLachlan Modern
MacLaren Modern
MacLean of Duart Modern
MacLean of Duart Weathered
MacLean Hunting Modern
MacLeod Dress Modern
MacLeod of Harris
MacLeod of Harris Modern
MacMillan Old Modern
MacNeil of Barra Modern
MacPherson Clan Modern
MacPherson Hunting Modern
MacQueen Modern
Marshall Modern
Menzies Blk/White Modern
Mitchell Modern
Moffat Modern
Morrison Green Moder Modern
Murray of Atholl Modern
Ramsay Blue Ancient
Robertson Red Modern
Robertson Hunting Modern
Ross Hunting Modern
Ross Red Modern

Russell Modern
Scott Green Modern
Scott Red Modern
Sinclair Red Modern
Smith Modern
Stewart Camel Modern
Stewart Black Modern
Stewart Blue Dress Muted
Grey Dress Stewart Modern
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Stewart Royal Modern
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IN SCOTLAND TODAY



Dumfries and Galloway Councillors Designate Stranraer as Region's "Oyster Town"

Dumfries and Galloway Council has formally agreed to designate Stranraer as the region's "Oyster Town". The decision was made at Full Council in March 2026 following a notice of motion. Loch Ryan is home to Scotland's last remaining wild, sustainably harvested native oyster bed.

The bed is of national biodiversity importance and has been managed locally for centuries. The motion recognises the success of the Stranraer Oyster Festival, which now attracts over 20,000 visitors and takes place in September each year. Councillors agreed to adopt and promote the "Oyster Town" title and to seek national recognition through the Scottish Government. As part of the motion, the Leader of Dumfries and Galloway Council will write to the Scottish Government requesting formal backing for the designation. The letter will highlight how the move aligns with Scotland's Good Food Nation ambitions. The council's Economic Development team will also work with partners – including the Regional Economic Partnership – to promote the designation through relevant tourism strategies and plans.

Full Council also recorded a formal vote of thanks to the local volunteers, community groups and the Stranraer Development Trust. Their efforts in establishing and growing the Oyster Festival have helped transform the town's identity and economy. A council spokesperson said: "Stranraer's oyster heritage and the success of its festival have been there for all to see. Being known as our region's Oyster Town is more than just a title – it celebrates a unique local asset and a community-driven success story. By officially embracing this identity, we can work with local partners and national bodies to boost Stranraer's profile, attract visitors and support ongoing regeneration efforts, while recognising the people who made it possible."

Team Scotland celebrate Official Tartan



Photo: Team Scotland.

Team Scotland has revealed its Ceremony Outfits for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games. The attire, which

will be worn during the Opening Ceremony on 23rd July 2026, was unveiled at a special dinner to mark 100 days to go until the Games, bringing together stakeholders, partners, athletes and supporters.

The Team Scotland tartan for Glasgow 2026, unveiled on Tartan Day on 6th April, takes a bold new direction, using the Team Scotland thistle logo as inspiration and incorporating metallic gold yarn to represent the team's ambition and pursuit of success. Gold embroidery on the shirt collar and custom-made kilt pins tie-in the thistle design and metallic gold from the tartan, as accents in the full outfit. In addition to the main team attire, the outfits to be worn by the flagbearers were also revealed, adding a jacket and fly plaid to create an eye-catching contemporary twist on tradition. Team Scotland is delighted to be collaborating with award-winning Scottish designer Siobhan Mackenzie for a third time.

Siobhan, who kick-started her career as tailoring technician at Glasgow 2014, designed the women's Ceremony Outfit for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, and the tartan and Ceremonies Outfits at Birmingham 2022. She has once again designed all elements for the team at Glasgow 2026, from the tartan to the outfits and accessories, with everything being manufactured in Scotland. Siobhan said: "It's an incredible honour to be asked to design the Ceremony Outfits for Team Scotland at a home Games. I want the athletes to walk out into the Opening Ceremony feeling great in their outfit, with the bold colours and introduction of metallic gold representing their drive and determination. The outfits are classic and timeless, with the tartan very much the focus. It's also really important to me that everything is made in Scotland, from the woven cloth to the finished garments and accessories, supporting local textiles and craftsmanship." Team Scotland Chef de Mission Elinor Middlemiss MBE added: "Tartan is one of the strongest symbols of Scotland's identity and this design captures exactly what it means to represent the country on the international stage. With a home Games coming up, this is something our athletes and team members will wear with pride and I'm sure it will become a big part of Glasgow 2026."

Commemorating History: The 90th anniversary of the Spitfire



Photo: Darren Harbar.

Spitfire "K5054" during transit to Southampton Airport ahead of the Spitfire90 Launch. Photo: Darren Harbar.

This year marks 90 years since the first flight of the Supermarine Spitfire. To celebrate this milestone, the Royal Air Force and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight collaborated to honour the anniversary of this iconic aircraft. A two-seat Spitfire, painted to replicate the

original K5054 prototype, embarked on a historic tour of the UK, which included Scotland. The Scottish tour visited RAF Lossiemouth and Glasgow Prestwick Airport. The event also raised funds for two important charities: the Mark Long Trust, which supports disabled individuals in aviation, and the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, which provides vital assistance to serving and former RAF personnel and their families.

On 5th March 1936, Captain Joseph 'Mutt' Summers piloted the first Supermarine Spitfire prototype, K5054, from Eastleigh Aerodrome, what is now Southampton International Airport. After just eight minutes in the air, he famously declared, "Don't change a thing." Numbers 602 (City of Glasgow) and 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadrons flew Spitfires at the start of the World War 2. On 16 October 1939 the German Air Force, or Luftwaffe, launched air attacks on Royal Navy ships in the Firth of Forth. It was the first air attack on Britain since the end of the First World War. Two German Junkers Ju 88 bombers were shot down into the Forth by the Scottish Spitfire squadrons. Ninety years later, this historic moment was commemorated with nine special flights across the UK. The Spitfire went on to become one of the most recognisable fighters of the Second World War.

Spitfires remained in RAF service after the end of the Second World War. The last RAF Spitfire mission was on 1 April 1954.

Scottish distillery in world first to produce low-carbon whisky



Exergy3, a clean heat technology company, has announced the commissioning of a first-of-a-kind decarbonised heat project at Annandale Distillery near Dumfries in Scotland. The pioneering project delivers high-temperature process heat of up to 1,200°C using low- and zero-carbon electricity. This represents a major breakthrough in the affordable decarbonisation of industrial heat, which currently accounts for around 18% of global CO₂ emissions and is notoriously difficult to decarbonise.

The award-winning Annandale Distillery aims to become one of the first distilleries in the world to produce low-carbon whisky. Prof. David Thomson, cofounder of Annandale Distillery, said: "This is a first – not just for the whisky industry or Scotland, but globally. Heat-intensive industries like ours are under increasing pressure to decarbonise, and solutions that can deliver high-temperature heat without fossil fuels have been hard to find. The fact that it does so economically, while also helping tackle the rising costs of balancing the electricity system, makes it incredibly powerful." What makes the solution particularly distinctive is its use of renewable electricity that would

otherwise be curtailed. In this project, the system utilises wind power, which is the most abundant renewable energy source in Scotland.

Iron Age human remains identified in South of Scotland excavation



Adie's Brae excavation. Photo: Airborne Lens.

Cremated human remains dating from the Iron Age have been discovered during an archaeological excavation at Adie's Brae near Moffat. The dig was part of the Destination Tweed project's community-based archaeology programme, Uncovering the Tweed, which is investigating important sites of activity along the River Tweed and in the surrounding area. The programme is being led by AOC Archaeology Group who worked with a team of volunteers to carry out the dig in October 2024, with results now emerging from post-excavation analysis.

The cremated remains were found during an initial excavation of the Adie's Brae scooped settlement at Ericstane near Moffat on land owned by Borders Forest Trust, a partner in the Destination Tweed project. Scooped settlements are enclosures that have been cut into the hillside. They are found exclusively in south-east and central southern Scotland and typically date to the Middle Iron Age (c.200BC-200AD).

The dig uncovered two roundhouses, pits and postholes as well as evidence of everyday domestic activity. Burnt bone fragments were discovered in a small pit within the settlement, with specialist analysis later identifying them as human remains representing one individual, thought to be male and aged over 17.

Radiocarbon dating indicates that the person was cremated somewhere between the second half of the 1st century BC and the end of the 1st century AD. It is believed that the cremated remains represent a small deposit deliberately placed within or under a building, with the main funeral pyre located elsewhere. While human remains of various forms have been found in Iron Age domestic settings in other areas of Scotland, surviving remains of this type in a domestic context are a very rare discovery in this part of Scotland and have the potential to aid understanding of funerary rituals and pyre technology of the time, as well as the health of the people of the period. Destination Tweed Project Officer, Charlotte Douglas, said; "Discoveries like this highlight the incredible depth of history that exists along the River Tweed and its surrounding landscape. Through Uncovering the Tweed, we're both revealing fascinating insights into how people lived and commemorated their dead thousands of years ago, and also giving local communities the chance to play a direct role in these discoveries. It's a wonderful way to connect people with the heritage on their doorstep and to help tell the story of the people who have lived in these landscapes across the centuries."

'Celtic curse' genetic disease hotspots revealed

People from the Outer Hebrides and north-west Ireland have the highest risk of developing a genetic disease that causes a dangerous build-up of iron in the body, a study suggests.

The study marks the first time the genetic risk for haemochromatosis – also known as the 'Celtic curse' – has been mapped across the UK and Ireland, despite a high incidence of the condition among Scottish and Irish populations. Targeting genetic screening for the condition to priority areas could help identify at-risk individuals earlier and avoid future health complications, experts say.

Genetic risk

Haemochromatosis symptoms can evolve over decades as high iron levels in the body cause damage to organs. Early diagnosis and treatment – such as regular blood donation to reduce iron levels – is key to prevent liver damage, liver cancer and arthritis.

The condition is caused by small changes in DNA, known as genetic variants, which can be passed down through families. The most important risk factor in the UK and Ireland is a genetic variant called C282Y. Scientists at the University of Edinburgh analysed genetic data from more than 400,000 individuals in the UK BioBank and Viking Genes studies to determine the prevalence of the C282Y variant across 29 regions of the British Isles and Ireland.

They found that people with ancestry from the north-west of Ireland have the highest risk of developing haemochromatosis, with one in 54 people estimated to carry the genetic variant. This is followed by Outer Hebrideans (one in 62) and those from Northern Ireland (one in 71).

Mainland Scots – particularly in Glasgow and southwest Scotland – are also at increased risk of the condition, with one in 117 people estimated to carry the variant, corroborating the 'Celtic Curse' nickname.

The high combined genetic risk across these locations suggests that focusing genetic screening at these key areas would discover the largest number of people with the condition, researchers say. Professor Jim Flett Wilson Chair of Human Genetics, Usher Institute said "If untreated, the iron-overload disease haemochromatosis can lead to liver cancer, arthritis and other poor outcomes. We have shown that the risk in the Hebrides and Northern Ireland is much higher than previously thought, with about one in every 60 people at risk, about half of whom will develop the disease. Early detection prevents most of the adverse consequences and a simple treatment – giving blood – is available. The time has come to plan for community-wide genetic screening in these high-risk areas, to identify as many people as possible whose genes mean they are at high risk of this preventable illness."

Celtic connection

The team also examined haemochromatosis diagnoses across NHS England and identified more than 70,000 cases. A diagnosis was nearly four times as high in white Irish individuals than in white British individuals.

Among white British individuals, those from Liverpool were 11 times more likely to have a diagnosis than those from Kent. The research team suggest this could be due to historical immigration from Ireland – more than 20 per cent of Liverpool's population was Irish in the 1850s. The prevalence of



haemochromatosis in England largely follows the pattern of genetic risk, but some regions – Birmingham, Cumbria, Northumberland and Durham – have lower rates of diagnosis than expected. These areas of potential under-diagnosis in England could also benefit from genetic screening to reveal additional cases, experts say.

Haemochromatosis prevalence data from the NHS are not available for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, so could not be included. Torcuil Crichton, the Labour MP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar (the Western Isles), has haemochromatosis and supports the call for community screening for haemochromatosis genetic variants in the Western Isles. MNR Crichton said, "This research writes the case for community-wide screening in the Western Isles, Northern Ireland, and other haemochromatosis hotspots. I have previously raised this with Ministers in the House of Commons and this new evidence ought to be enough to persuade the UK National Screening Committee to review its position and approve a pilot screening programme. The Western Isles offers a contained and distinct population sample to start from. Early identification, which I was lucky to have, means a whole range of bad health outcomes can be avoided and I'll be urging Ministers and the Screening Committee to reconsider their stance."

Celtic Spirits Unite at Berry



The 2026 Berry Celtic Festival will take place on Saturday 23 May. The day commences at 9.30am with the Grand Street Parade down the main street of Berry, leading to the Berry Showground for a breathtaking massed band performance to officially launch a day packed with Celtic fun, music, and culture. Enjoy family-friendly action including pipe bands, jousting knights, medieval re-enactments, Highland Muscle competitions, traditional artisan displays, Celtic themed market stalls, Celtic dancing and musicians, plus all the colour of the clans.

The bands in this year's line-up include: NSW Police Pipe Band, Illawarra Pipe Band, Ingleburn RSL Pipes and Drums, Shoalhaven City Pipes and Drums, Canberra Celtic Pipe Band, Penrith RSL Pipes & Drums, Goulburn Soldiers Club Pipe Band, St George - Sutherland Pipe Band, Sydney Thistle Highland Band, PLC Sydney, Bundanoon Pipe Band and Kiama Pipe Band

For more details visit: www.berryrotary.org.au

The High Kings-The Rocky Road Tour 2026



A celebration of Irish folk on a global stage.

Ireland's leading folk group, The High Kings, are set to excite fans once again with the announcement of their Rocky Road Tour 2026, which includes Australia in October. As global ambassadors of Irish heritage and storytelling, The High Kings have consistently brought the timeless tradition of folk music to audiences worldwide, earning them chart-topping success and widespread acclaim. With their signature blend of classic tradition and modern edge, The Rocky Road Tour promises to be a vibrant showcase of Irish culture, energy, and musicality.

Following a record-breaking 2024 – including a sold-out world tour, a feature on Disney's critically acclaimed *Only Murders in The Building*, and over 5 million weekly streams – the band are showing no signs of slowing down.

Their momentum continued in 2025 with a string of sold-out U.S. tour dates, culminating in a headline performance at the legendary Troubadour in Los Angeles, after stops in Kansas, Nashville, St. Paul, St. Louis, New York, New Hampton, Glen Ellen, Ridgefield, Alexandria, and more.

Storytelling, musicianship, and connection

But it was their inclusion on the soundtrack of *Sinners*—the hit movie worldwide, starring Michael B. Jordan and directed by Ryan Coogler—that marked a defining moment in their global recognition.

The film's soundtrack, already topping international streaming charts, was curated by Oscar- and Grammy-winning composer Ludwig Göransson a long-time admirer of The High Kings' distinctive vocal blend and musicianship. After attending their

sold-out show at The Troubadour in Los Angeles, Göransson selected two tracks—*The Rocky Road to Dublin* and *Go Lassie Go* to feature prominently in the film's score.

The Rocky Road Tour 2026 will build on this global success, offering audiences a high-energy live show that reinforces The High Kings' place at the forefront of Irish folk. With a renewed focus on storytelling, musicianship, and connection, the tour reflects the group's ongoing commitment to honouring Ireland's folk legacy while pushing creative boundaries.

As well as their recorded music triumphs, The High Kings have performed for hundreds of thousands across the globe and graced prestigious stages including Glastonbury Festival, The Isle of Wight Festival, Times Square, NYC, Trafalgar Square, London (St. Patrick's Day) and many more.

Tickets for The Rocky Road Tour 2026 in Australia are on sale.
For details visit: www.davidroywilliams.com



Berry Celtic Festival
Sat 23 May
from 9.30am

Feel the mystical spirits when the mass bands send their cries across the arena ... and stay back when jousting knights charge at one another. Experience medieval camp life, watch Highland Strongmen and Scottish soldiers reliving glory battles. Or just enjoy the Celtic fiddlers and the enchanted singing and dancing.

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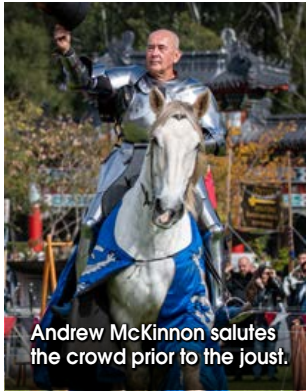
Berry Celtic Festival



From the Antipodes to Scone: *Clan MacKinnon returns to the Battlefield*



Australian representative Rodney Deaman of Tarago, NSW.



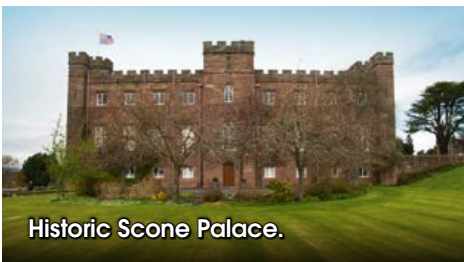
Andrew McKinnon salutes the crowd prior to the joust.



Andrew McKinnon.

In June 2026, the grounds of Scone Palace—long regarded as the spiritual heart of Scottish kingship—will once again echo with the clash of arms. This time, however, history is not simply being remembered; it is being lived anew. Among those taking the field is Andrew McKinnon of New South Wales, Australia: an armiger of Clan MacKinnon, his arms granted by the Court of the Lord Lyon, and serving as Gillie Mòr (swordbearer) for the clan.

He has been invited to compete in a full-contact medieval tournament on 20–21 June, representing Australia alongside fellow New South Welshman Rodney Deaman. Their opponents are not merely other competitors—but history itself.



Historic Scone Palace.

Where kings were crowned

Few locations could be more fitting. Scone Palace stands near the ancient Moot Hill, where Scottish kings—including Robert the Bruce in 1306 and Charles II in 1651—were crowned upon the Stone of Destiny. Centuries later, the same ground will host a different kind of coronation: not of kings, but of courage, skill, and living tradition.

At the heart of the tournament lies something far rarer than sport: a true interclan contest. Not since the Battle of Mulroy in 1688—fought between MacDonald of Keppoch and Clan Mackintosh—have Scottish clans met in formalised combat. In that final clash of the old clan era, Clan MacKinnon stood alongside MacDonald of Keppoch.

Now, 338 years later, Clan MacKinnon once again takes the field—this time against Clan Murray. Representing Clan Murray is Roy Murray, serving as Gillie Mòr for his clan and fighting on home soil. Opposing him, Andrew McKinnon carries both the weight of his lineage and the distinction of representing Australia in what is believed to be the first

international jousting contest between Australia and Scotland. Rounding out team Australia is Rodney Deaman, a highly experienced international competitor. Roy Murray's teammate for Scotland will be experienced horsewoman Jane de Bleu. History, it seems, has come full circle.

The tournament will feature two principal disciplines:

- The joust—the thunder of hooves, the splintering of lances, and the timeless test of nerve and precision.
- Ground combat with poleaxes—a demanding and highly technical form of armoured fighting, requiring strength, control, and tactical awareness at close quarters.

For McKinnon and Deaman, this is not theatre, but the culmination of years of training in historical martial disciplines—where authenticity is matched by athleticism.

A clan story renewed

For Clan MacKinnon, the symbolism runs deep. To have stood in the last interclan battle of the old era, and now to take the field in the first of a new one, is a rare and powerful continuity. It speaks not only to heritage, but to resilience—the enduring identity of a clan whose story has crossed both centuries and continents. From the Hebrides to New South Wales, and now back again to the ancient seat of Scottish kings, the journey is as meaningful as the contest itself. “I am proud to represent both Australia and Clan MacKinnon. I feel a deep calling to serve the betterment of our Clan. Though small, we have achieved remarkable things throughout

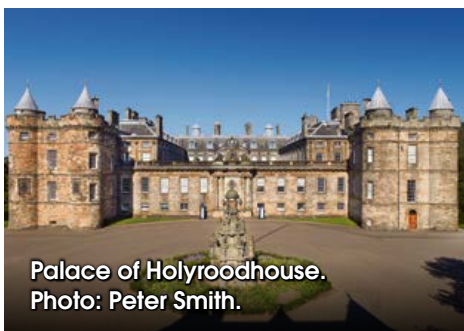
history, and I am in a unique position to win new renown for the MacKinnon name. Cuimhnich bàs Alpein.” History, as the clans have always known, is not something left behind. It is something carried forward—into the field, and into the fight.

Beyond the tournament, this moment marks the beginning of a broader storytelling journey. Andrew McKinnon's participation will form part of *The Bard & the Blade*, a developing series exploring Scottish history through lived experience—where scholarship meets steel, and where stories are not only told, but embodied. For history, as the clans have always known, is not something left behind. It is something carried forward—into the field, and into the fight. Andrew McKinnon (gàidhlig - Anndra Mac Fhionghuin Nan Cath [Andrew McKinnon of the battles]) is an armiger of Clan MacKinnon and serves as Gillie Mòr (swordbearer) for the clan. Based in New South Wales, Australia, he trains in historical martial disciplines and represents both Australia and Clan MacKinnon in competitive medieval tournaments across the globe.



Representing Scotland Jane de Bleu.

Public to be given unique glimpse into Queen Elizabeth II's private rooms at her official Scottish residence



Palace of Holyroodhouse. Photo: Peter Smith.

The private apartments used by Queen Elizabeth II when in residence at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the official residence of the monarch in Scotland, will open to visitors for the first time in 2026 to mark the centenary of her birth. Available only this year, the tours will run for 100 days and will see small groups taken behind the scenes by expert guides to discover the history of the rooms and learn how they were used by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, during her 70-year reign.

Setting for many significant occasions

The Palace of Holyroodhouse was the setting for many significant occasions during the late Queen's reign. While visiting Edinburgh to meet and celebrate Scots from all walks of life, she and Prince Philip would occupy a suite of private rooms on the Palace's east side, with stunning views of the gardens and Holyrood Park.

These modestly decorated rooms offer a rare glimpse into the personal, 'lived-in' spaces used during private moments between official duties.

The rooms date from the 17th century and have been used by successive monarchs and members of the Royal Family since Queen Victoria's reign. They are furnished with historic objects from the Royal Collection, as well as pieces from Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip's personal collections, many of which reflect their longstanding affection for Scotland.

Tours will take visitors through rooms and spaces including the Royal Breakfast Room, where the Queen and Prince Philip would dine privately while in residence. The room is hung with magnificent Flemish tapestries, woven around 1650, featuring a beautiful design of a pergola framing an ornate vase filled with flowers. The tapestries were hung in the room in the 1920s at the request of Queen Elizabeth's grandparents, King George V and Queen Mary.

In the Dressing Room, giving a sense of how the Queen would prepare for official engagements, visitors will see three ensembles from her wardrobe, each worn during a significant occasion in Edinburgh. For the official opening of the Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999, the Queen wore a purple coat made of a silk-wool blend with a green silk-crepe and lace dress, and a shawl of purple and green Isle of Skye tartan, woven on the Island of Lewis. The ensemble was inspired by the Scottish landscape and reflects the designer Sandra Murray's interest in her Scottish heritage. The matching hat, by the milliner Philip Somerville, is trimmed with a bow of the silk-wool fabric of the coat and curled dark-green feathers.

Edinburgh's royal palace

The tours will conclude in the Sitting Room where the late Queen would work, reviewing the papers and documents presented in the Government red dispatch boxes, as well as using the room for private audiences or resting between engagements, often while watching horseracing on television.

Prince Philip was an enthusiastic collector of contemporary Scottish art and served as Patron of the Royal Scottish Academy of Art (RSA). Throughout the rooms, visitors will see highlights from his private collection, including works by 20th century Scottish artists, acquired over four decades at the RSA's annual exhibitions and reflecting his deep appreciation of Scotland's landscapes and wildlife.

The rooms are also furnished with a remarkable collection of furniture from the Royal Collection, made by the Edinburgh firm of Young, Trotter and Hamilton. The pieces were supplied to the Palace in 1796 in preparation for the arrival of Charles-Philippe, Comte d'Artois – Marie Antoinette's brother-in-law and the future Charles X of France – who took refuge at the Palace during the French Revolution. Emma Stead, Curator, Palace of Holyroodhouse said: “Queen Elizabeth II's well-known love for Scotland will be given fresh context through this unique and special access to the private apartments, where visitors will enjoy a new perspective into both the formal and more informal use of Edinburgh's royal palace.”

After their tour of Queen Elizabeth II's private apartments, visitors can

explore the rich history of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, including the magnificent State Apartments and the historic apartments of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Queen Elizabeth II Private Apartment Tours will run daily from 21 May to 10 September 2026 and can only be purchased with a ticket to visit to the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Visitor information and tickets: www.rct.uk, +44 (0)303 123 7300.



The Queen's outfit from the opening of the Scottish Parliament.



The private apartments used by Queen Elizabeth II. Photo: David Cheskin.

Haddington Pipe Band - *The innovative community band driving Scottish culture at home and overseas*



The band at Aubigny-sur-Nère, led by Pipe Major Fraser Wilkinson, playing for the crowds at the 2025 Fête Franco-Écossaises. Photo: Nick Callaghan.



A photo staged for one of the band's memorable calendars. Photo: Nick Callaghan.



Photo: Nick Callaghan.



Performing in 2025 with the Aubigny-sur-Nère band under the shadow of Haddington's St Mary's Kirk. Photo: Daniel Hogarth.

In the historic East Lothian market town of Haddington, where the first recorded mention of town pipers dates back to 1542 and a 15th century carving of a piper graces St Mary's kirk, the musical heartbeat of piping and drumming has been part of local life for centuries. Yet it was only in the early 1980s that the modern incarnation of Haddington Pipe Band took shape under a formal name and structure. That initiative sparked a journey that would extend far beyond its borders and resonate with Scots and many others at home and abroad.

What began modestly in 1981 - when four friends abandoned fancy dress performances as the 'Tyneside Tipplers' to establish a 'proper' band - has blossomed into an organisation celebrated not merely for its musical talents, but for its cultural reach, community spirit, innovation, and international bridge-building.

Roots in community and tradition

Haddington Pipe Band describes itself first and foremost as a community band dedicated to encouraging the art and tradition of piping and drumming. Open to all ages and skill levels, it runs a structured tuition programme that nurtures young pipers and drummers alongside more seasoned players. Rather than pursuing competition circuits, the band has chosen a different path - one that prioritises cultural engagement. Band members regularly perform at local galas, festivals, weddings, charity events, dances, parades, and markets,

embedding the sound of the pipes deep into the everyday life of East Lothian and beyond.

Over the years, engagement with local schools and collaboration across generations - from teenagers to octogenarians - has kept the tradition alive and evolving, fuelling a pipeline of young talent that carries the echoes of Scottish heritage into the future.

Celebrating Scottish musical heritage

In a proud tradition of cultural leadership and innovation, the band has spearheaded events that extend beyond performance alone.

One standout moment came back in 2009, a year the band affectionately refers to as their 'annus mirabilis'. The band organised a worldwide competition to compose a pipe anthem for East Lothian. Composers from across the globe sent in entries, and the winning tune - The Haddington Turnpike, by Bruce Thomson - was performed live in front of a large local audience. The tune has become the band's signature tune and went on to achieve high recognition when it was included in the bible of outstanding pipe tunes, the *Scots Guards Standard Settings of Pipe Music* collection.

The band didn't stop there. They brought together local bands in a series of massed band events to showcase this new anthem and the breadth of piping talent in the county, culminating in multiple awards at the Scottish Event Awards and - in a remarkable accomplishment - winning Scottish Pipe Band of the Year at the Scots Trad Music Awards in 2009, beating top-class competing outfits despite being a non-competitive community band.

This focus on inclusion and celebration of Scottish musical heritage reflects a deep cultural confidence - a willingness to define success not by trophies but by community engagement and creativity.

The story of Haddington Pipe Band is more than local history.

International footsteps

Haddington Pipe Band hasn't confined its influence to local shores. In addition to visits to, among other destinations, China and Germany, the band has maintained a thriving cultural link with Aubigny-sur-Nère, Haddington's twin town in France.

What began as a goodwill visit soon grew into a tradition of reciprocal performances and cultural exchange. The band regularly travels to Fêtes Franco-Écossaises, where crowds numbering tens of thousands gather in the historic French town to celebrate Scottish-French heritage through music, dance, and community spirit.

In turn, the Aubigny pipe band - whose very existence was sparked with Haddington's encouragement - has performed in Scotland, joining forces with their Scottish counterparts in shared performances that honour the Auld Alliance between the two communities and nations.

These exchanges reveal a remarkable truth: Scottish culture - distilled in the haunting resonance of the pipes - travels

not only across sea but through hearts, reinforcing diasporic ties and reviving old alliances. For many Scots abroad, stories of gatherings like those in Aubigny become bridges back to home.

Connecting to wider audiences

While rooted in community, Haddington Pipe Band has consistently stepped onto stages that connect Scottish tradition with wider audiences. They've organised award-winning traditional music festivals (Trad on the Tyne) and concerts, performed at Edinburgh's Usher Hall, supported the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra in end-of-year concerts, and taken part in significant civic events like remembrance parades, torchlight processions, and memorial commemorations.

Perhaps most importantly, their performances at hospitals and charitable events underscore a belief in the positive power of music, bringing joy to children and communities alike.

A thriving tradition

For the Scottish diaspora, the story of Haddington Pipe Band is more than local history. It's an affirmation of how tradition can thrive when it opens itself to exchange and innovation, celebrates community, and never forgets its roots.

It's not merely the sound of drones, chanters, and drums that travels; it's the spirit of Scotland - resilient, generous, and joyful - carried by each performance, each shared tune, and each gathering where the pipes and drums fill the air with stories of home and carry forward a mightily significant facet of Scotland's culture.

For more information on Haddington Pipe Band, visit: www.haddingtonpipeband.co.uk



Band members at the Scots Music Trad Awards back in 2009, when the band won the Scottish Pipe Band of the Year award. Pipe Major David Leckie with the trophy.



Photo: Nick Callaghan

THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

Names & Places In The News From Today And The Past

1 - England declared war on both Scotland and France. **1522**

1 - Act of Union of English and Scottish parliaments proclaimed, the Union was brought about in spite of opposition by the majority of Scots. **1707**

1 - Glasgow band Deacon Blue release their debut album *Raintown*. **1987**

2 - Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert the Bruce, crowned High King of All Ireland. **1316**

2 - King James I crowned at Scone. **1424**

2 - Mary, Queen of Scots, escaped from Loch Leven Castle and revoked her abdication. She soon gathered an army and moved towards Dumbarton Castle. **1568**



2 - Loch Ness monster is sighted. Although accounts of an aquatic beast living in Scotland's Loch Ness date back 1,500 years, the modern legend of the Loch Ness Monster is born when a sighting makes local news on 2 May 1933. The newspaper *The Inverness Courier* related an account of a local couple who claimed to have seen "an enormous animal rolling and plunging on the surface." **1933**

3 - John Knox began the Reformation in Scotland. **1557**

3 - Nearly 300 miners are arrested outside Ravenscraig in clashes with police as they try to stop lorries laden with coal entering. The steel works was the site of some of the most violent conflicts of the strike of 1984 and 85. Bottles, stones and missiles were thrown with both workers and police suffering many injuries. **1984**

3 - The Pan Am Flight 103 bombing trial opens at the Scottish Court in the Netherlands. Flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, on December 21, 1988, after a bomb was detonated. All 259 people on board were killed, and 11 people on the ground also died. **2000**

4 - Marquis of Montrose victorious at Battle of Auldearn. **1645**

5 - King Charles I surrenders to Lord Leven and was later passed to the Parliamentary forces. **1646**

5 - King George VI officially opened the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow. Glasgow's Bellahouston Park played host to over 13 million people who came to visit the Empire Exhibition, a celebration of the achievements of the British Empire. **1938**



6 - Last major bombing attack on the Clyde area by the Luftwaffe; Greenock was badly hit with 280 dead. **1941**

6 - Icelandic gunboats fired live rounds at British fishing trawlers, many of them from Scottish ports, during the Cold War over fishing rights. **1959**

6 - The election of the first Scottish Parliament since 1707. Elections were held for the Scottish Parliament and the 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) took their seats on 12 May 1999. **1999**

7 - The Earl of Hertford invaded Scotland in an attempt to force the marriage of Edward, son of Henry VIII, and Mary, Queen of Scots. **1542**

7 - James Naysmith, engineer and inventor of steam hammer, died. **1890**

7 - First broadcast of the BBC television variety show *The White Heather Club*, featuring music, dance, and comedy acts, which aired nationally until 1968. **1958**

8 - Scottish-born pirate "Captain" William Kidd tried for piracy at London's Old Bailey. He was hanged on 23 May. **1701**

8 - V.E. (Victory in Europe) day marked the end of World War II in Europe. Over 50,000 Scottish servicemen lost their lives during the conflict. **1945**

9 - J M Barrie, author of *Peter Pan* born. **1860**

9 - The Marquis of Montrose and his Royalists camped at Auldearn near Nairn, enroute to attack Inverness. The Covenanters, reinforced by troops withdrawn from England because of the threat from Montrose, gathered at Inverness before marching overnight in an attempt to surprise Montrose at Auldearn. The Royalists won a fierce fight, killing 2000 Covenanters for the loss of 200 of their own men. **1645**

10 - Rev Henry Duncan opened the world's first savings bank in Ruthwell, near Dumfries. **1810**



10 - Rudolf Hess crash-landed in Scotland after his bizarre solo flight from Nazi Germany. Hitler's most trusted official and friend, he crash-landed a stolen plane at Eaglesham in an inexplicable effort to negotiate an end to the war. He died in 1987 after apparently trying to hang himself with an electrical cord. He was 93. **1941**

10 - Donovan, Scottish pop and folk singer-songwriter, was born. Upon his emergence during the mid-'60s, Donovan was anointed 'Britain's answer to Bob Dylan'. **1946**

11 - Covenanter martyrs, Margaret Lachlane, or McLachlan, and Margaret Wilson, refused to take an oath of loyalty to Charles II that acknowledged his authority on everything, including religious matters. They were tied to stakes in the Solway near Wigtown where they drowned as the tide rose. A reprieve had been sent from Edinburgh but never reached Wigtown. **1685**

12 - The Black Watch regiment was commissioned under General Wade to police the Highlands. The force was known in Gaelic as Am Freiceadan Dubh, "the dark" or "black watch". The regiment's motto is Nemo Me Impune Lacessit (No One Assails Me With Impunity). **1725**

12 - Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, daughter of the Earl of Strathmore, was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom with her husband King George VI. Queen Elizabeth was raised at Glamis Castle in Forfar. Queen Elizabeth reigned until 1952 and became known as the Queen Mother as her daughter, the current Queen Elizabeth, took the throne. **1937**

12 - The Scottish Parliament reconvened with Dr Winifred M Ewing MSP as acting Presiding Officer. Her first words to the Parliament were: "The Scottish Parliament which adjourned on the 25th of March in the year 1707 is hereby reconvened." **1999**

13 - The forces of Mary Queen of Scots are defeated at Battle of Langside by a confederacy of Scottish Protestants under James Stewart, the regent of her son, King James VI of Scotland. During the battle, which was fought out in the southern suburbs of Glasgow, a cavalry charge routed Mary's 6,000 Catholic troops, and they fled the field. Three days later, Mary escaped to Cumberland, England, where she sought protection from Queen Elizabeth I. **1568**

13 - James Kirk was executed near Dumfries as a Covenanter refusing to swear the oath, one of the last of the wave of deaths of the 'Killing Times'. **1685**

13 - MSPs vote 70-56 in an initial vote to accept the principles of the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, which would allow assisted dying in Scotland. **2025**



14 - St Andrews Society of Golfers constituted. In 1834 it became the Royal and Ancient Golf Club. Thus began the foremost club in both Scottish golf history and world golf in general. **1754**

15 - Mary, Queen of Scots, married Earl of Bothwell - at 4am. Mary's third marriage to James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell took place in the Chapel of Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh. **1567**

15 - Bobby Murdoch, Scottish footballer, died. Murdoch was a key figure in Celtic's European Cup-winning side of 1967, dubbed the Lisbon Lions. **2001**

15 - Stagecoach Group launches a driverless bus service on the Forth Road Bridge, believed to be the world's first. **2023**



16 - The Bay City Rollers form in Edinburgh. Called the 'tartan teen sensations from Edinburgh', The Bay City Rollers sold 120 million records worldwide. **1966**

17 - King James V established paid judges to sit as the Court of Session, the highest civil court in Scotland. **1532**

17 - Robert Tannahill drowned himself in a Paisley canal. A compassionate poet, he explored themes of love, friendship and empathy, and often used his surroundings as inspiration, taking long walks in the country around his home. He was prone to bouts of melancholy. **1810**

18 - Robert the Bruce invades Isle of Man. **1313**

18 - The Free Church of Scotland was founded by dissenting members of the Church of Scotland. **1843**

19 - Death in Auchinleck of James Boswell, biographer of Dr Johnson. **1795**

20 - Battle of Dunnichen (also known as Nechtansmere), south of Forfar in Angus, as a result of which the Picts stopped the advance northwards of the Angles of Northumbria. **685**

20 - The Earl of Argyll sailed from Holland to Campbeltown with 300 men in an attempted uprising. After its failure he was executed. The rebellion was designed to place Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, on the throne. The failure of this revolt led to a close bond between the Stewart monarchy and the enemies of the Campbells in the Highlands, which was to become more apparent in the subsequent Jacobite uprisings. **1685**



Photo: Fife Council.

20 - Dunfermline, Fife, is among a record number of locations to have won prestigious city status through a competition, as part of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Dunfermline became the eighth Scottish city, joining Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Stirling and Perth. **2022**

21 - Clocks and watches went forward for one hour as the Daylight Savings Act brought in 'British Summer Time' (BST) for the first time. **1916**

22 - Britain's worst train disaster at Quintinshill (near Gretna Green) in which three trains collided, with the loss of 227 lives. A troop train carrying the Seventh Royal Scots Regiment hit a stationary train and the night express from London then hit the wreckage. Two signalmen were later jailed. **1915**

22 - The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland voted in favour of women ministers. Soon after four women were accepted as candidates for the ministry by the Presbyteries of Edinburgh, Irvine, and Kilmarnock. **1968**

23 - Captain William Kidd, the notorious Scottish pirate, died. Born in Dundee, around the year 1645, Kidd became one of the best known pirates of his age. **1701**

23 - 'The Unknown Bairn': The drowned body of a young boy is found washed up onshore at Tayport; he is never identified. **1971**

23 - A major fire at the Glasgow School of Art causes severe damage to the main building, designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. A further fire took place during the restoration in June, 2018. **2014**

24 - King David I died at Carlisle and Malcolm IV crowned at Scone. **1153**

24 - Glasgow Rangers became the first Scottish side to win the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup, when they defeated Dynamo Moscow in Barcelona. **1972**

25 - John Stuart, Earl of Bute, Britain's first Scottish Prime Minister, born. **1713**

25 - Celtic FC become the first British football club to win the European Cup. The winning team was made up of eleven Scots, all born within a thirty mile radius of Glasgow. **1967**

25 - St. Enoch Centre shopping mall opened to the public in Glasgow city centre. The building is notable for its massive glass roof, the largest glass-covered enclosed area in Europe, and is affectionately nicknamed 'The Glasgow Greenhouse'. **1989**

26 - The parliament convened by King James I approved the arrest of a number of the Scottish nobility - and also banned the playing of football. **1424**



26 - Dunnottar Castle, the last Royalist stronghold in eastern Scotland, surrenders. Dunnottar Castle had been under siege for eight months by Cromwell's forces. Although the castle fell, the defenders managed to smuggle out the Crown Jewels of Scotland to nearby Kinneff Church. **1652**

27 - Maiden voyage of liner *Queen Mary* from Southampton to New York. Built by John Brown & Company in Clydebank, Scotland and was a luxury ocean liner for three years until 1939, when it was transformed into a troopship for the Second World War. She resumed passenger service in 1947, where it continued until 1967, when it docked permanently in Long Beach, California. **1936**

28 - Papal Bull signed by Pope Alexander VI confirming the marriage of King James IV and Margaret Tudor and the "Treaty of Everlasting Peace" between Scotland and England. **1503**

29 - King Charles II born. **1630**

29 - King Charles II returned to England. Royal Oak Day. **1660**

30 - Thomas Chalmers, the Presbyterian cleric, theologian and social reformer, died. Chalmers was a popular figure within the Kirk and held a keen interest in improving social welfare. **1847**

31 - The Royal Bank of Scotland was formed from a company of debenture holders. **1727**



31 - Start of passenger services on Edinburgh Trams. Trams previously ran in the Scottish capital from 1871 to 1956.

31 - A huge wildfire covering 30 square miles (80 km²), thought to be the largest ever seen in the UK, is brought under control by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service at Cannich in the Highlands. **2023**

The Bird Man of Paisley

By: David McVey



Alexander Wilson's statue outside Paisley Abbey.

Paisley-born Alexander Wilson is famed for his pioneering study and illustration of American birds. He is described as the 'founder of American ornithology' and noted as one of the leading naturalists of the early 19th century, as David McVey explains.

The late 18th century saw several talented poets emerge from the town of Paisley. Mostly they were working-class men, employed as weavers in what was becoming one of the great thread and fabric centres of the world.

The best-known of these was, of course, Robert Tannahill. Not only is his work still read and celebrated but his name lives on in the popular Scottish traditional music ensemble The Tannahill Weavers.

Alexander Wilson

However, there were others; Robert Allan, principally a songwriter, Ebenezer Picken and Alexander Wilson. Wilson would achieve some notoriety as a poet, fame in quite another field, yet he would die poor in a far distant country. Wilson was born in 1766 in Paisley. His mother died when he was ten and he had to begin working on a farm in 1777 when his father married a widow with two children and there were three more mouths to feed. He began as a weaver in 1779, apprenticed to his brother-in-law William Duncan; he was 13.

Wilson had received some education but not much but this didn't stop him growing and developing and acquiring an interest in poetry. This was especially fuelled by the publication of Burns' *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* in 1786. Just as a generation of 60s youngsters heard The Beatles and

picked up guitars, the emergence of Burns inspired many Scots to write imitative poetry. Wilson wasn't the best such poet, but he certainly wasn't the worst. He published a small collection (unimaginatively entitled *Poems*) in 1790. He published anonymously a long poem called *Watty and Meg* in 1792; some assumed it was by Burns himself. It opens as follows:

*Keen the frosty winds were blowing,
Deep the snaw had wreathed the ploughs,
Watty, wearied a' day sawing,
Daunert down to Mungo Blue's,*

*Dryster Jock was sitting cracky,
Wi' Pate Tamson o' the Hill,
Come awa', quo' Johnny, 'Watty Haith
we'se hae anither gill.'*

Social justice

Like other Paisley poets, Wilson had a strong sense of social justice and often addressed the plight of working-class people. In 1794 he penned a poem called *The Shark, or Lang Mills Detected* which was a satirical attack on the Paisley mill owner William Sharp, whom he accused (disguised as 'The Shark') of using, no pun intended, sharp practices to exploit his weavers;

*Think, thou unconscionable Shark!
For heaven's sake bethink thee!
To what a depth of horrors dark
Sic wark will surely sink thee
Repent of sic enormous sins...*

This poem was also published anonymously but Wilson unwisely tried to blackmail Sharp by offering to suppress the poem for five guineas. He was fined £60, couldn't afford to pay, and so spent 14 days imprisoned in Paisley's tolbooth in February 1793.

America

By 1794, Wilson was living in poverty. After being arrested again (for 'political agitation') he decided to emigrate to America at the age of 27. He landed in Delaware and *walked* to Philadelphia where he tried to make a living in his old trade but could find little work and so made the unusual, even for the time, switch into teaching. He taught for five years in

Philadelphia before having to scamper off to New Jersey in 1801 after a scandalous affair.

He taught for a while in Bloomfield, New Jersey before heading back to Pennsylvania. He taught at Union School near Gray's Ferry from 1802 until 1806. A near-neighbour was the naturalist William Bartram. Bartram seems to have identified Wilson's enthusiasm for nature, especially bird life, a love that comes out clearly in a number of his poems. He encouraged Wilson's growing interest in birds, and also his ambitions as a painter

Bartram's niece gave Wilson lessons in draughtsmanship. By 1804 Wilson was expressing his ambition to publish a book recording all the known American species of bird. He started travelling, collecting, recording, observing, painting and acquiring subscribers to fund ('crowdfund' essentially) the work. He worked closely with Charles Willson Peale, the founder of the Peale Museum in Philadelphia (one of the first natural history museums in America) and used the ornithological collections there for reference.

Alexander Wilson travelled a long way from the weaving industry in Paisley. Poet, artist, ornithologist, teacher, he packed a great deal into 47 short years of life.

He resigned his teaching job in 1806 to become editor of *New Cyclopaedia*, but the bird volumes were still his focus. Eventually, *American Ornithology* was published in nine volumes (by the publishers of *New Cyclopaedia*) between 1808 and 1814. It described 268 species of birds, 26 of which had not previously been recorded in print, and featured 76 plates drawn by Wilson.

The father of American ornithology

On a collecting expedition on the Ohio and Mississippi in 1810 (in his skiff, *Ornithologist*), Wilson reached Louisville, Kentucky. Here he met John James Audubon who would be inspired to improve upon Wilson's work.

Audubon's *Birds of America* was published between 1827 and 1838 in Edinburgh and London. While Audubon was much the better artist, some argued that he plagiarised much of Wilson's writing and that he had actively tried to suppress *American Ornithology* in order to promote his own work.

Ironically, in Wilson's home town, Paisley Museum and Art Gallery holds a copy of the four-volume edition of Audubon's book.

Wilson had become an American citizen in 1804 and in 1812 he was elected a member of the Society of Artists of the United States. The following year he was welcomed into the American Philosophical Society. Yet when Wilson died that same year, he was living in poverty, his great project having taken its toll. His friend George Ord, himself a zoologist of some note, saw the final two volumes of *American Ornithology* through to publication. Ord also later wrote Wilson's first biography. Wilson is buried in the graveyard of Gloria Dei Church in Philadelphia.

Wilson is not forgotten at home. His statue stands proudly outside Paisley Abbey while there is a plaque on the former Laigh Kirk (now the Paisley Arts Centre) where he was baptised. He is sometimes referred to as 'the father of American ornithology' and there were at one time several species of bird named after him. The American Ornithological society, however, is gradually renaming bird species named after individuals. Wilson's Warbler, an attractive little yellow bird with a black cap, will be one of these. The bird serves as the logo of the Wilson Ornithological Society in the USA; it publishes the *Wilson Bulletin*. There is also a *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*.

Alexander Wilson travelled a long way from the weaving industry in Paisley. Poet, artist, ornithologist, teacher, he packed a great deal into 47 short years of life.



A drawing from the book *American Ornithology* by Alexander Wilson, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



A Wilson's Warbler. Photo: Rhododendrites, CC BY-SA 4.0.

IN THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN

Honey and whisky porridge



Ingredients:

- 150g/5½oz. porridge oats
- 3 tbsp. double cream, plus extra to serve
- 250ml/9 fl oz. milk
- 1 tbsp. soft brown sugar
- dash whisky
- 1 tbsp. clear honey, to serve

Method:

Place the oats, cream, milk, sugar and whisky into a small saucepan and cook over a gentle heat for 6-7 minutes, until thickened and smooth. To serve, pour the porridge into a bowl and drizzle with honey and cream.

Whisky sauce

Ingredients

- 2 shallots, roughly sliced
- 1 celery stick, roughly sliced
- 2 tsp light olive oil
- 4 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 100ml/3½fl oz chicken stock
- 400ml/1½ pints double cream
- 70ml/2½fl oz good Scotch whisky
- 2 tsp wholegrain mustard
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- sea salt and freshly ground white pepper

Method:

Place a large saucepan over a medium heat and cook the shallots and celery in the olive oil. Fry gently for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, without colouring the vegetables.

Add the thyme and bay to the pan, taking care as they might crackle a little, then stir and cook for 2 minutes.

Pour in the chicken stock and reduce the liquid by half. This should take about 5 minutes.

Stir in the cream and then gently simmer the mixture for 20 minutes, reducing the liquid by one third. Take care not to let it boil and stir every couple of minutes.

Remove the sauce from the heat and strain it through a sieve into a clean pan, discarding the cooked vegetables and herbs.

Place the sauce back on the heat and stir in the whisky along with both types of mustard. Cook for a further 5 minutes before seasoning with salt and white pepper to taste and serving.

Steak Balmoral

Ingredients:

- 750g/1.5-7 sirloin of beef
- 250ml/½ pint margarine, liquid
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 4 tbsp. of preferred Scotch whisky
- 500 ml/1 pint whipping cream

- 250ml/½ pint beef stock
- 200g/1/2 lb. mushrooms
- 1 tsp of strong mustard

Method:

Cut the sirloin into up to 4 individual steaks. Brush the mushrooms and cut into slices and fry them in a pan. Add the mustard, cream and stock. Simmer until the liquid has reduced to half the volume and thickens. Season with salt and pepper.

Fry the steaks in a pan on high heat till meat juice is trickling out on top. Add salt and pepper. Turn steaks and wait until meat juice appears for medium cooked steaks-cook as preferred. Add the whisky and flambé (When you set fire to the whisky you have poured over the meat in the frying pan do so immediately so that the alcohol evaporates, while the flavours of the dram is left with the other flavours in the pan). Server steaks with mushroom sauce or a whisky sauce.

Hot toddy fruitcake



Ingredients:

- For the cake:
- 200ml hot, strong black tea (use any type)
- 3 tbsp. whisky
- 3 tbsp. good-quality orange marmalade, thin or medium shred
- 700g mixed dried fruits
- 100g mixed peel
- 100g glacé cherries (natural colour)
- 225g butter
- 225g golden caster sugar
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 225g plain flour
- 1 tsp ground mixed spice
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- finely grated zest 1 lemon
- To feed the cake:
- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 50ml hot black tea
- 1 tbsp. whisky (or use orange juice if you prefer)

Method:

Mix the hot tea, whisky and marmalade in a large bowl until the marmalade melts. Stir in all of the dried fruit, peel and cherries, then cover and leave to soak overnight. Next day, heat oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3 and grease and double-line a 20cm round, deep cake tin with non-stick baking paper. Using electric beaters, cream together the butter and sugar until fluffy.

Add the eggs a little at a time, beating well after each addition, then fold in the flour and spices, followed by the lemon zest and soaked fruit. Add any liquid that hasn't been absorbed by the fruit, too. Spoon into the prepared tin, level the top, then bake for 1½ hrs. Turn the oven down to 140C/fan 120C/gas 1 and bake for another 1½ hrs. or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean.

Cool on a wire rack in the tin. While the cake is still warm, use the skewer to pepper the cake with holes, poking it all the way down. Dissolve the sugar in the tea, add the whisky or orange juice, then spoon

over the surface. If you're making the cake ahead of time, feed it with a fresh swig of hot toddy every week, but take care not to make the cake soggy. Can be kept for a month well-wrapped in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. If short on time, the cake can be made the same day that you decorate it.

Whisky Fudge



Ingredients:

- 450g/1lb. granulated sugar
- 50g/2 oz. butter
- 2 tablespoons golden syrup
- 4 tablespoons water
- 8 tablespoons full cream condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon whisky

Method:

Put the sugar, butter, syrup, water and condensed milk in a saucepan and stir over a gentle heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil without stirring, then continue boiling until a temperature of 116C/240F is reached on a sugar thermometer, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Remove the pan from the heat, add whisky, and beat the mixture with a wooden spoon or an electric mixer

Whisky Month

Celebrate Whisky Month in May with these recipes which add a splash of flavour using "the water of life". You can of course omit Whisky if preferred, enjoy and Slainte mhath! Your very good health!

until thick, grainy and cloudy. Pour the mixture into a lightly greased 18cm/7-inch shallow square tin and leave until almost set-about 5 to 10 minutes. Using a sharp knife, mark the soft fudge into squares then leave to cool completely before cutting and removing from the tin. The fudge can be stored for up to 2 to 3 weeks in an airtight container.

Classic whisky cocktail

Ingredients:

- 1 thick slice orange peel
- 1 maraschino cherry, with stem
- 1 tsp. sugar syrup (also sold as gomme syrup)
- 2-3 drops whisky bitters
- ice cubes, as necessary
- 50ml/2fl oz. Scotch or bourbon
- twist of lemon peel, to garnish

Method:

Take the orange peel and squeeze it with your fingers. Rub the peel around the insides of a whisky tumbler, then place into the glass. Add the cherry, sugar syrup and bitters, along with three ice cubes.

Add half of the scotch or bourbon and stir for about ten seconds. Add more ice and the remaining scotch or bourbon and stir again for 10-15 seconds. To serve, garnish with lemon peel.

Argyll community breathes new life into landmark pub



The Oakbank Community Inn. Photo: Kenneth Milligan.

The Oakbank Community Inn in Sandbank, near Dunoon, has opened its doors for the first time in almost three years. One of Scotland's newest community-owned pub ventures, the venue dates back to the 1860s and has played a key role in the history of Sandbank. It was purchased by the community of Sandbank in 2025 thanks to a substantial grant from the Scottish Land Fund. A new dawn for the pub contrasts sharply with the recent, potentially devastating announcement that eight Argyll Holidays parks in the area have gone into receivership.

Following months of hard work by the committee and a dedicated team of volunteers resulting in a redesign of the bar area, the pub opened just before Christmas. Sue McKillop, who led the campaign to bring the pub back to life, explained: "There have been so many hurdles to jump over and it's been a big learning curve for us all as we get set to

embark on a new chapter for a much loved and cherished community resource. We are under no illusions as to the challenges that lie ahead. Like any pub venue, we will need to keep innovating in order to survive. Many community-owned pubs fall by the wayside and we're determined that that won't be the case with the Oakbank. Our aim has always been to be a vibrant resource for the entire Sandbank community as well as for people and groups from further afield and, so far, we seem to have achieved that but we will have to keep listening to the community and the 200 or so shareholders as well as our key funders whose investment and support has made this project a reality. It's exciting but all just a wee bit scary!"

The committee is planning to provide food and accommodation in the very near future as well as hosting a permanent display related to the 'American Years' when the US Navy made Holy Loch their home from 1961 to 1991. The provision of 'gallery space' for the Cowal Open Studios artists' collective is also being considered. Sue concluded "We've achieved a lot over the past few months but there is so much more still to do. We want to take everyone in Sandbank and the surrounding areas with us on this journey! Watch this space!"

For more information and to contact the venue please visit the Oakbank Community Inn Sandbank on Facebook or email: sue.mckillop@ocis.org.uk.

Scotland Cool: Braveheart to Outlander Dressed to Kilt Returns to NYC



Dressed to Kilt, the internationally recognized celebration of Scottish fashion, culture, and philanthropy, returned to New York City on April 11 at the New York Academy of Medicine for an evening that brought together standout talent from



across Scotland, the UK, and the U.S. Co-founded by Sir Sean Connery and Dr. Geoffrey Scott Carroll, the event once again delivered a dynamic runway experience in support of the Navy SEAL Foundation.

Hosted by Dr. Carroll alongside Scottish television personality Danni Menzies, the show highlighted this year's theme, "Scotland Cool: Braveheart to Outlander," with a mix of heritage tartans and contemporary design. A standout moment included the appearance of Miss Scotland 2026, Eilidh MacDonald, who walked in a bespoke Gwen Russell gown representing the next generation of Scottish cultural ambassadors. Scottish football legend John Collins also took to the runway, marking Scotland's highly anticipated return to the global football stage.

Fashion and performance

The evening featured a dynamic mix of fashion and performance, including a U.S. debut by award-winning Scottish jazz vocalist Georgia Cecile and a high-energy appearance by rising boy band Just The Brave. Designers from across Scotland and beyond showcased collections that blended craftsmanship with innovation, including Carolyn Baxter, Prophetik by Jeff Garner, Calzeat, Strathmore Woollen Company, Lorna Gillies, Sandra Murray, and Red Label Kilts of Canada, led by designer Deana Lloy, whose presence added an international dimension to the runway.

The evening was further elevated by support from the Scotch Malt Whisky Society, which offered guests exclusive access to its global whisky program and introduced a custom event label, "Kilty Pleasures."

This year's show also marked two significant commercial announcements. The first was the launch of a new bespoke women's design brand, Redmond Harvey of Scotland, founded by designer Holly Harvey. Known for one-of-a-kind dresses and gowns, the brand debuted a series of striking long tartan gowns on the runway, signaling a fresh and elevated direction in Scottish womenswear.

The second announcement introduced a landmark collaboration between Strathmore Woollen Company and the Navy SEAL Foundation. Strathmore will curate a range of products in the official Navy SEAL Foundation tartan, designed primarily for the women of the Navy SEAL community—including wives, mothers, daughters, and supporters. Following the show, these pieces will be available via the Navy SEAL Foundation's e-commerce platform. This partnership represents the first collaboration of its kind between the Foundation and a Scottish company,

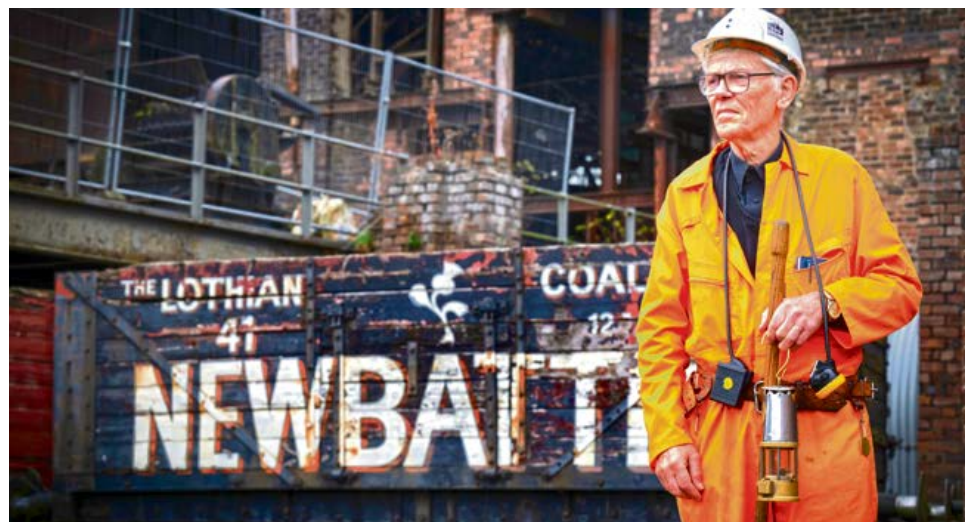
celebrating both Scottish craftsmanship and the legacy of the SEAL community with a distinctive Highland influence.

True to its mission, Dressed to Kilt continues to serve as a platform for philanthropy, with proceeds benefiting the Navy SEAL Foundation and several former Navy SEALs participating in the show. Blending culture, fashion, and purpose, the 2026 edition reinforced the event's place as a distinctive and enduring highlight of New York's cultural calendar.



All images courtesy of JP Yim/Getty Images for Dressed To Kilt.

New appeal launched to honour Scotland's mining communities



A new public appeal has been formally launched to help safeguard and transform National Mining Museum Scotland, which is home to a Recognised Collection of National Significance, Scotland's first 'super pit', and the country's last surviving colliery built in 1895. The initiative aims to preserve the legacy of coal mining - an industry that powered the Industrial Revolution, drove innovation and social change, advanced workers' rights, and shaped Scotland's landscape. It has been designed to give everyone who has a passion for preserving Scotland's national heritage an opportunity to 'be part of' the museum's future.

The Be Part of Our Future appeal marks the launch of community centred, nationally significant initiative to preserve the memories of Scotland's mining heritage.

It is hoped it will support the museum in caring for and interpreting the nationally significant collections it houses, maintaining and repairing aspects of the A-listed colliery buildings and grounds; developing green energy and community initiatives; and enhancing the venue's capacity to host community and cultural events across the site.

Launching the initiative, Mhairi Cross, CEO of National Mining Museum Scotland said: "This initiative is vital for the museum at this moment. This appeal brings together essential strands: raising financial support we need and gathering the stories and memories that keep Scotland's mining heritage alive. Together, these strands strengthen our ability to honour the past while building the resilience the museum needs now, and in the years ahead. This is about preserving

the experience of mining communities and ensuring that the museum remains strong enough to carry their stories forward."

Living heritage site

Former mine worker at the Lady Victoria Colliery and Kilmarnock Mine Rescue Station, from a long family line of coal miners, Sinclair Sutherland (age 75) is supporting the museum in engaging young people with the appeal by telling his stories through a new series of child-led video interviews. Now a volunteer and family history researcher at the museum, he said: "I'm very pleased to support National Mining Museum Scotland and would urge everyone to 'Be Part of Our Future' in whatever way you can to protect this national treasure. It is an incredible living heritage site which triggers memories and stories. It's like our generation's form of social media, allowing us to share the important learnings we had down the pits in a really visual and inspiring way. There are not many heritage sites where you can meet and learn from the people who were involved. It is a real honour to represent the pit community, but we also want to make sure that our legacy lives on in the next generation. Younger people will be the tour guides of the future, and sharing stories as part of conversations will enable us to continue to deliver a unique, authentic, and worthwhile experience."

Fellow interviewee, former timekeeper, Marion Brown age 90 from Newtongrange, agrees: "Working for the coal mines was so

much more than just a job. From the social clubs and our cooperative stores to the landscapes and monuments, the industry made so many of the communities we know today and it's important to remember that. It's not just been part of our family heritage, it's our national heritage and we must do all we can to preserve it and the living memories we still have access today."

The Lady Victoria Colliery was opened in 1895 as Scotland's first super-pit. It ceased production in 1981 and now serves as an example of one of the best-preserved Victorian Collieries in Europe. The National Mining Museum Scotland was established to make Scotland's mining heritage relevant to everyone by embracing the legacy of Scotland's mining communities and found in Newtongrange, Midlothian.

For more information about the Museum's ambitions for transformation or to donate to the Pithead Circle, visit nationalminingmuseum.com/ourfuture.

To share a mining story or find out more about the museum's Living Archive From the Depths of Coal, Rose the Scotland We Know, email: yourstory@nationalminingmuseum.com.



Calling the Clans

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

Clan Baird Society Worldwide



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

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

Clan Baird Commander

Richard Baird of Rickarton, Ury and Lochwood
Rickarton House, Stonehaven, Scotland.

Hereditary President of Clan Baird Society Worldwide

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



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

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THE WORLDWIDE BURNETT SOCIETY
www.houseofburnett.org



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, Edmondson, etc. Chieftain Sir Archibald Edmonstone Bt of Duntreath

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



CLAN 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 Australia

"Under the patronage of the
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State Commissioners

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

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

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



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

The Blair Society for Genealogical Research



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

www.blairsociety.org



All Campbells or descendants of Campbells and members of Clan Septs are welcome to join the Society.

For State Branches contact the National Secretary Margaret Vallance
Email: libertyv93@gmail.com
www.clan-campbell.org.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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I Fear Nae Foe
ClanFarquharson.us



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 decent, 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



Arms of the Chief
Peter Carruthers of Holmains
Society Patron

CLAN CARRUTHERS SOCIETY (INTERNATIONAL)

Royal Charter to Holmains (1755)

Official home of Carruthers

www.clancarruthersociety.org
michaelcarruthers100@gmail.com

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



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](http://www.clanchisholmsociety.org/public/AUSmembership.php)

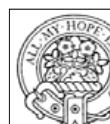


Clan Donnachaidh Society of New South Wales Inc., Australia

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>

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)



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

contact@curriekindred.com
www.learnedkindredofcurrie.com

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 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

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 Scotland UK




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www.clanirving.com

Clan Mackenzie Society in Australia

Inviting all Mackenzies to join us in celebrating our heritage.

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





Clan MacNicol

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



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: clangregoraustalia@gmail.com
 Web: www.clangregor.com
"Royal is our Race"





Clan Irwin Association

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

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



Clan MacKenzie Society of New Zealand

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




Clan Macpherson Association

Clan Macpherson welcomes enquiries from Macphersons and members of our Associated families. For information about local activities visit our web site www.clan-macpherson.org/branches

Africa: Derek Macpherson African.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +265 999 512 620	Australia: Pam Rhemrov Australian.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +61 407 789 924
Canada: Denise Lagundzin Canada.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +1 519 507 4465	England & Wales: William Macpherson EandW.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +44 7877 363 507
Europe: Bodo Bernd Schmitz Europe.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +0152 538 19 355	New Zealand: Tony McPherson NewZealand.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +64 274 587 812
Scotland & Northern Ireland: Moray G Cattanach SandNI.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +44 7810 860 528	USA: Dave McPherson UnitedStates.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org phone +1 408 781 5199

The **Clan Macpherson Museum** is located in Newtonmore, Inverness Shire PH20 1DE, at the junction of the A86 and B9150. It is open from 1st April to 31st October. Ph + 44 1540 673 332. See <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/museum/>



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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MacLaren

Clan Labhran

Clan MacLaren Society of Australia

Information about the Clan and application for CMSA membership is available on the website or via the email address below.
 Membership is open to MacLarens (all spellings), Septs, individuals and families with an association to the Clan.

<https://clanmaclarenau.org/>
clanmaclarenau@gmail.com



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: clanmacraeustrnz@gmail.com

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



Clan Hamilton Society

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

McAlpin/e

and variant spellings

Commander: Michael T. McAlpin

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 Website: <https://macaipen.com/>



Clan MacLaren

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

Mark A. McLaren, President
President@clanmaclarenna.org



Clan MacRae Society of North America

Granted Arms in 2008

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

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



Clan Hay

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

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

www.clanhay.com



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Clan Maitland Society

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North America: Carolyn Dobbs
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, Maitlen and similar name spelling. See the entire list and your family history at: www.clanmaitland.org.uk



CLAN HOPE of Craighall Society

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

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

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

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

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



Macfie Clan Society of Australia

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

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



Clan MacLeod Societies of Australia

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

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

• Email: peter.macleod@exemail.com.au



Clan Morrison Society of North America

Morrison

Clann MhicGillemoire: Morrison + Gilmore + Brieve

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


www.clanmorrison.net

Clan Muirhead Society

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

Clan Ross 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.
 Email: clanwardlaw2004@gmail.com
'Wardlaw ivermair!'
www.clanwardlaw.com
Wardlaw Tartan and Ancestry Books

The Scottish Australian Heritage Council

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

www.scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

CLAN MUNRO ASSOCIATION
 AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND


 We would be pleased to
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 Monroe and the septs,
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www.clanmunroassociation.org.au
 memberships@clanmunroassociation.org.au

Clan Sinclair Australia

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

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Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

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

Caledonian Society of WA Inc.

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

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

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 and all descended
ClanOliphantMembership@gmail.com
www.OliphantOfNorthAmerica.org

Clan Sutherland Society of North America Inc.


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

Hunter Valley Scots Club Inc

 Promotes and supports all forms of Scottish culture in Newcastle,
 Hunter Valley and surrounding areas. Members and interested
 people are welcome to attend activities such as Burns Night,
 Caledonian Night, St Andrew's Day, and other social functions.
www.facebook.com/huntervalleyscotclub
 Web: hvscots.org Email: huntervalleyscotclub@gmail.com
 Ph: 0432 306 670 P.O. Box 34, Kotara NSW 2289

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By: David C. Weinczok



From totems to trophies: *The changing symbolism of deer in Scotland*



Highland beauty. Photo: Mik Coia.



A striking deer sculpture on the grounds of Fernie Castle in Fife. © David C Weinczok.

Time, the deer, is in the wood of Hallaig'. So begins perhaps the most enduring and resonant poem by Somhairle MacGill-Eain (Sorley MacLean), dwelling in a place lost to the Clearances. No other animal than the deer could have carried the weight of this vision. For thousands of years in Scotland deer have been seen as a potent embodiment of the natural, and indeed the supernatural, world.

They appear as heraldic emblems, millennia-old carvings, iconic paintings such as *The Monarch of the Glen*, and in countless folkloric tales of grand hunts and encounters with the unknowable. Even now, the vision of a deer appearing in a back garden or bounding in a field beside a motorway evokes a sense of calming wonder in many people.

Intertwined with deer

Some of the earliest people in Scotland to leave an archaeological record were intimately intertwined with deer. Deer bones and antlers are commonly found within Mesolithic middens, Neolithic chambered cairns, and Iron Age brochs.

Not all can be explained by their utility as sources of protein and tools. Bones from 36 red deer were found within the Knowe of Yarso in Rousay, Orkney, where ancient tribes seem to have identified themselves in part by their affinity for certain animals. At Dun Mor Vaul, an Iron Age settlement in Tiree where there has never been a large deer population, a highly atypical proportion of deer remains were found, suggesting a possible special significance for local people which they expended great effort to maintain.

Deer are the only animal to appear on prehistoric decorated pottery from the Hebrides, where wolves, golden eagles,

dolphins, and other suitably totemic animals roamed. Even more remarkable is their abundance in Neolithic rock art. There are only nine known examples of prehistoric figurative rock art depicting animals in Britain, and almost all of them include or exclusively feature deer. Clearly, these animals loomed very large in peoples' imaginations and lived experiences.

Two of these depictions of deer are in or near Kilmartin Glen in Argyll, a place I have explored in several past articles. Deep in Glen Domhain on a low stone beside a burn is a lightly carved image of an almost cartoonish deer, its pointed ears, big eyes, and tuft of a tail looking straight out of a Pixar animation. It likely dates from the Iron Age and is thought to mark the boundary between two kindreds, or possibly even between the Gaels of Argyll and the Picts of the central Highlands.

The Fabulous Stag

The other was discovered by chance in 2020 by Hamish Fenton on the underside of a capstone in Dunchraigaig Cairn, an Early Bronze Age burial chamber in Kilmartin Glen. There are five deer altogether, a pair and a trio, the most striking of which is the aptly named 'Fabulous Stag' with its massive antlers.

Some of the deer appear to be in motion, as if climbing up a slope. The carvings were almost certainly made when the capstone was upright in the landscape, perhaps in the form of a standing stone which was then incorporated into a later funerary monument. Just like how people today display antiques in their homes, past peoples regularly incorporated older elements into their domestic and ritual spaces.

Of the nine known examples of deer in prehistoric British rock art, five are in Scotland. Besides Kilmartin Glen and Glen Domhain, they appear at Ballochmyle in Ayrshire, Eggerness in Dumfries & Galloway, and on the outer wall of a rock shelter on Blackford Hill in Edinburgh. Deer are pivotal in many of the oldest and best-known tales of the Celts, in which an encounter with a deer often heralds contact with the Otherworld. They are strongly associated with the Cailleach, a creation goddess in the folklore of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man who brings winter to the land and keeps nature

in balance. Deer feature in many tales of the Fianna, which people across the Highlands and Islands held in great esteem. In one tale the deer-mother Saba mates with the great Finn mac Cumhail (Finn MacCool) himself, bearing his two sons Oisín (Ossian) and Oscar. Oisín was the most gifted of all in the sacred art of poetry, a talent attributed to his unconventional parentage.

The appearance of a white hart – a deer with leucism – was a revered symbol in the Middle Ages. Catching sight of one could mean that the favour of God was upon the witness, or in the case of Arthurian lore that it was time to embark on a new quest. Thomas the Rhymer, the famed Borders prophet, was recalled into the land of the Elfen Queen beneath the Eildon Hills by the appearance of a white hart and hind in his village. Many pubs across Britain, including one in Edinburgh's Grassmarket, are named 'The White Hart'.

For thousands of years in Scotland deer have been seen as a potent embodiment of the natural, and indeed the supernatural, world.

The location of Holyrood Abbey in Edinburgh is attributed to King David I's pursuit of a white hart into Holyrood Park. Despite it being a Sunday feast day the king set out to capture it, but it charged him and threw him from his horse. As David I was about to be gored by the furious hart the Holy Rude (true cross) appeared in the sky, scaring the hart away. Later that night David I was visited in a dream by St Andrew who instructed him to build an abbey near that fateful spot as penance.

Many noble houses in the Middle Ages used deer – typically stags – in their heraldic emblems. Among them, to name but a few, are the crests of Fraser of Lovat, Clan Davidson, Clan Forbes, Clan Keith, and Clan Carruthers. Returning to Kilmartin Glen, the main landowners from the 18th century through today, the Malcolms of Poltalloch based at Duntrune Castle, use deer imagery on their crest, and the gate leading onto the castle grounds is adorned with its iconic stags.



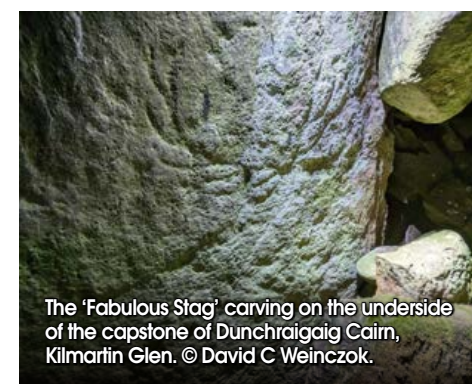
Two stags adorn the gate at Duntrune Castle in Kilmartin Glen, Argyll, home to the Malcolms of Poltalloch. © David C Weinczok.

Deer forests

Our view of deer changed during the Industrial Revolution through Edwardian period when land previously used as commons were enclosed, people were evicted, and hunting estates were established. Deer, especially red deer, proliferated due to the extinction of large predators such as wolves in the 18th century, and many estates in the Highlands and Lowlands alike became ecological deserts given over entirely to hunting.

In 1811 there were only six 'deer forests' for hunting in Scotland; by 1912 there were over one hundred, covering a staggering 3.6 million acres. During this time, and still today, many people consider deer to be either a pest to be controlled or a product to be sold as part of the sporting estate package. No country house of this time was complete without a room displaying dozens, if not hundreds, of taxidermied specimens mounted on the walls attesting to our near-total domination of the countryside.

The history of peoples' relationship with deer in Scotland can be read as shorthand for our changing views of the natural world. Prehistoric peoples saw great wonder in them, using deer totemically while also hunting them for meat and harvesting their sinews and antlers for daily tools and rituals. In the Middle Ages deer were often used in the foundational stories of saints and dynasties, becoming symbols connected with spiritual and secular power in an age of increasing hierarchies in society. In the age of enclosure and early modernity, deer lost much of their symbolic potency and became to many instead a mere resource to be exploited and profited from. Today, as the natural world is in dire peril and our connection to it weakens further still, deer are regaining some of their lost wonder – fleeting remnants of a world just beyond our own, sometimes fenced in but never fully domesticated. Next time you see one, ask what we might do to rebalance the scales.



The 'Fabulous Stag' carving on the underside of the capstone of Dunchraigaig Cairn, Kilmartin Glen. © David C Weinczok.

WHAT'S ON - SCOTTISH EVENTS

Enjoy Australia & New Zealand'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 North America) or add your event at: www.scottishbanner.com/events

Australia

MAY 2026

Australian Celtic Festival-Year of Scotland 1-3, Glen Innes, NSW

Celebrating the Year of Scotland. Get ready for a spectacular event filled with the sights and sounds of bagpipes, Highland dancing, kilts, clans, and the legendary spirit of the Scots at the Australian Standing Stones. Info: www.australiancelticfestival.com

The Warringah Scottish Society Tartan Night 2, Colloroy, NSW

With a swirl of a kilt, come and enjoy a night of dancing Scottish and old-time dancing. Be entertained by the Manly Warringah Pipe Band and Highland dancers. Info: warringahscottish@gmail.com or www.facebook.com/WarringahScottishSociety

R U Brown Piobaireachd Society of South Australia Gold Medal Competition 2-3, Adelaide, SA

This is the major event of each year's calendar. Held over a full weekend in May, the event involves two days of competition, a recital night and a tutorial. Info: www.rubrown.org.au

The Glen in Glenelg 3, Adelaide, SA

Join the Scottish Associations of South Australia on a stroll through the streets of Glenelg and learn about its Scottish connections, as part of the South Australia History Festival. Info: www.scotasa.com.au or 0423 942 936.

Scottish Gaelic Retreat 8-11, Glen Innes, NSW

Spend a weekend immersed in the Scottish Gaelic language at beautiful Glen Innes in the Northern NSW Country. We have booked rooms at a local motel and everyone will have their own room with bathroom. Please contact us if you'd like a shared room so we can arrange that for you. Formal Scottish Gaelic language classes will be interspersed with exploring the local area. All activities are optional, providing time to relax. All meals, materials, accommodation, etc. are included in the price. No prior knowledge of Scottish Gaelic is required. Info: www.celticlearning.com.au/tours-and-retreats

Out of the Mist 9, Launceston, TAS

Celtic Spin returns with Out of the Mist, now bigger and better at the Albert Hall. For one night only, be swept into a spectacular Celtic celebration of myths, legends, music and dance from the mystical isles and highlands. Info: <https://theatrenorth.com.au/out-of-the-mist-26>

World Whisky Day 16, Nationwide

A day of global whisky celebration, try a dram and raise a glass to celebrate the water of life!

Chaotic Ceilidh 16, Sydney, NSW

Join Scots on the Rocks for a night of dancing and friendship. Featuring music by ARIA Award winning Chris Duncan & Catherine Strutt, it will be a night of energetic and popular dances. Includes supper (BYO alcohol) at Abraham Mott Hall, Argyle Street, The Rocks. Info: www.sotr.org.au/chaos

Berry Celtic Festival 23, Berry, NSW

A great family day out with pipe bands, Clans, medieval villagers, Celtic stalls, singing and dancing at Berry Showground. Info: www.berryrotary.org.au/celtic-festival

Auld Lang Syne 2026 24, Mitcham, SA

Come and try Scotland's social dancing (NO - it's not Highland). Discover its origins, how it has developed and evolved over the years. A great way to connect with people at Mitcham Village Cultural Institute, 103C Princes Rd. This event is part of the SA History Festival and pre-bookings will be essential. Info: www.rscdsadelaide.org.au

Treasures of the Viking Age – The Galloway Hoard 28 - October 11, Sydney, NSW

Travel back in time to early medieval Scotland and discover unique and mysterious Viking-age treasures. Buried around AD 900, and found in 2014 by metal detectorists, the Galloway Hoard contains over 5 kilograms of silver, gold and other materials at Australian National Maritime Museum. Info: www.sea.museum

JUNE 2026

2026 National Show of the Australian Highland Cattle Society 5-7, Bathurst, NSW

This event offers a delightful mix of Highland cattle exhibits, educational activities, fun and opportunities for fellowship, bring the community together for a memorable experiences in the spirit of the Highland breed. Info: www.australianhighlandcattle.org

National Celtic Folk Festival 5-8, Portarlington, VIC

Showcasing the best of Celtic culture and folk from across Australia, as well as internationally, over the June long weekend. Info: www.nationalcelticfestival.com

Mist & Melodies – Australian Celtic Women 6, Wamuran, QLD

Australian Celtic Women with their new "Mist & Melodies" concert series to Wamuran Community Hall, 12 Mole St. Stunning visual effects, angelic voices and costumes combined with the richness of Celtic instruments – fiddles, bagpipes, bodhrans, tin whistle, drums, percussion and keyboards., Info: www.trybooking.com/DJPFV

Queensland State Pipe Band Championships & Tartan Spectacular Festival 7, Brisbane, QLD

Pipe Band, Drum Majors, Clan Stalls, Massed Pipes & Drums at Brisbane Boys' College. Info: www.facebook.com/BBCPIPEBAND

Scenic Rim Clydesdale Spectacular 11-14, Beaudesert, QLD

A four-day Clydesdale & Heavy Horse Experience featuring a Scottish Highland Gathering and Country Music Concert. The biggest, most spectacular Clydesdale event in the Southern Hemisphere at Beaudesert Showgrounds. Info: www.clydesdalespectacular.com.au

2026 World Cup – Scotland Fanzone Live Lounge 14-25, Wanneroo, WA

Get ready for the loudest, rowdiest, most emotional Scotland World Cup experience in WA. Nearly 30 years we've waited. Now the Tartan Army marches again! Join the Live Lounge for every Scotland World Cup game — loud & proud at Live Lounge, #47, 950 Wanneroo Rd. Info: www.livelounge.com.au

Penrith Highland Black Tie Ball 20, Penrith, NSW

Help Penrith RSL Pipes and Drums celebrate their first Penrith Highland Festival by attending the inaugural Penrith Highland Black Tie Ball. It shall have a formal start to our family-friendly, fun-filled Festival; with an adults only black tie/formal/tartan affair at Penrith Showground, Members Lounge, Level 1, 127 - 141 Station St. Info: www.trybooking.com/DJOB

Camperdown Robert Burns Celtic Festival 26-28, Camperdown, VIC

A weekend full of music, history, dance, choirs, ceilidh, food, fun... celebrating Celtic connections, Burns beyond Scotland. Info: www.camperdownburnsfestival.com.au

Celtic Fusion 27, Newstead, TAS

Join St Andrews Caledonian Pipe Band, Tasmania's oldest pipe band, together with other artists from Launceston, including the Studio of National Dancing and the Aileen Poynter's Irish Dance school, the show will explore all things Celtic, from the traditional to the modern at Scotch Oakburn College Horton Auditorium, 85 Penquite Rd. Info: <https://SACPBCelticFusion.eventbrite.com.au>

Tartan Day Ceilidh 2026 28, Adelaide, SA

Come and join in RSCDS Adelaide celebrations for Tartan Day. An afternoon of family fun, to try your hand (feet actually) at Scottish dancing. Easy ceilidh dances will be called and walked on the day. Enjoy live music from the Adelaide Ceilidh Band at Adelaide Irish Club, 13 Carrington St. Info: www.rscdsadelaide.org.au

49th Australian Winter School 28-July 5, Melbourne, VIC

The Melbourne & District Branch extends a warm invitation to all dancers to meet at University College, University of Melbourne, Parkville for a fun filled week of Scottish Country Dancing with great teachers and musicians. Info: www.melbourne2026ws.com

New Zealand

MAY 2026

Scottish Dancing Beginners' Course 4-25, Auckland

Come and learn the traditional art of Scottish Country Dancing - fantastic for fun, fitness and friendship. Beginners' course (easy dances) from 6:30-8 pm with Innes Scottish Country Dance Club. Start at any point you like at Stanhope Road School, 2b Harris Rd, Mt Wellington. Info: www.facebook.com/innesclub

Scottish Country Dancing Club 6, Picton

Take part in Scottish Dancing classes. Very social group, all abilities welcome. No partner needed, just a pair of soft-soled shoes at Picton Little Theatre, 9 Dublin St. Info: www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/picton-scottish-country-dancing-club/marlborough

Wellington Gaelic Club Ceilidh 9, Wellington

Wear some tartan and join the Wellington Gaelic Club at the City of Wellington Pipe Band Hall, corner of Stoke and Hansen Sts in Newtown for music and dancing to a live band. Info: www.wellington-gaelic-club-communn-gaidhealach-wellington.weebly.com

World Whisky Day 16, Nationwide

A day of global whisky celebration, try a dram and raise a glass to celebrate the water of life!

Clan Cameron New Zealand Annual Dinner 16, Auckland

Join Clan Cameron for a wonderful dinner, with a celebration of our Scottish culture, music and customs at

Celtic Pipe Band Celtic Ceilidh 23, Nelson

The ultimate Scottish gathering with music, dancing, and good times. Immerse yourself in the gathering of vibrant Scottish Dancing and Music! Enjoy captivating performances by our talented CPB members at the Broadgreen Intermediate School Hall. Info: celticpb.nelson@gmail.com

The Celtic Unleashed 24, Gore

Pipes and drums, rock 'n roll and country music are a special mix at The Celtic Unleashed variety concert. This event is a variety concert fundraiser for the Hokonui Celtic Pipe Band at St James Theatre, 61 Irk St. Info: www.tussockcountry.nz/thecelticunleashed

Come Ceilidh Dancing! 29, Auckland

Join in for an evening of fun, easy dancing and live music! A ceilidh is a Scottish community event; our ceilidhs are family friendly and fun for all ages and abilities at St David's in the Fields Church, 202 Hillsborough Rd, Hillsborough. Info: www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/come-ceilidh-dancing/auckland/hillsborough

JUNE 2026

Scottish Dancing Beginners' Course 8-29, Auckland

Come and learn the traditional art of Scottish Country Dancing - fantastic for fun, fitness and friendship. Beginners' course (easy dances) from 6:30-8 pm with Innes Scottish Country Dance Club. Start at any point you like at Stanhope Road School, 2b Harris Rd, Mt Wellington. Info: www.facebook.com/innesclub

Wellington Gaelic Club Ceilidh 13, Wellington

Wear some tartan and join the Wellington Gaelic Club at the City of Wellington Pipe Band Hall, corner of Stoke and Hansen Sts in Newtown for music and dancing to a live band. Info: www.wellington-gaelic-club-communn-gaidhealach-wellington.weebly.com

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Join in for an evening of fun, easy dancing and live music! A ceilidh is a Scottish community event; our ceilidhs are family friendly and fun for all ages and abilities at St David's in the Fields Church, 202 Hillsborough Rd, Hillsborough. Info: www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/come-ceilidh-dancing/auckland/hillsborough

Scotland

MAY 2026

Girvan Traditional Folk Festival 1-3, Girvan

The finest in folk & traditional music in beautiful South West Scotland. Info: www.girvanfolkfestival.org.uk

Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival 1-4, 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

Edinburgh Tradfest 1-11, Edinburgh

The very best traditional music from Scotland and around the world. Info: www.edinburghtradfest.com

Edinburgh Tartan Parade 9, Edinburgh

This exciting event brings together tartans, pipe bands, dancers, musicians, organisations, and individuals from Edinburgh, as well as across Scotland, and beyond - to celebrate the country's rich heritage, tartans, culture and inclusivity. Info: www.handuevents.co.uk/tartan-parade-scotland

Gourock Highland Games 10, Gourock

At this year's Games, there will be pipe band and drum major competitions; highland dance competitions; heavyweight events; mini highland games; children's entertainment; gift and craft stalls – a great day out for all the family. Info: www.inverclyde.gov.uk

Isle of Bute Tartan Festival 15-17, Rothesay, Isle of Bute

A vibrant community celebration of Scotland's rich textile heritage, set in the heart of Rothesay. Bringing together tradition and contemporary creativity, the festival showcases tartan in all its forms — from pipe bands and live music to workshops, artisan markets, family activities and friendly competitions. Info: <https://isleofbutetartanfestival.carrd.co>

World Whisky Day 16, Nationwide

A day of global whisky celebration, try a dram and raise a glass to celebrate the water of life!

Gordon Castle Highland Games 17, Fochabers, Aberdeenshire

Traditional Scottish Highland Games at Gordon Castle with pipe bands, dancers, athletics, clans and more. Info: www.gordoncastle.com

Fèis Ile – The Islay Festival 22-31, Isle of Islay

A gathering of whisky and Islay fans from across the globe with walks, history talks, whisky events, Ceilidh's and more. Info: www.feisile.co.uk

Spring Fling Open Studios 2026 23-25, Dumfries and Galloway

Scotland's premier art and craft Open Studios event at locations across the region. Info: www.spring-fling.co.uk

Orkney Folk Festival 24, Stromness, Orkney

Leading international and Scottish artists set to appear alongside home-grown Orcadian talent, brilliant weekend of music and fun. Info: www.orkneyfolkfestival.com

Atholl Gathering 24, Pitlochry

There are plenty of other attractions, such as highland dancing, tug o' war, solo piping, trade stands and refreshments to provide a fun day out for all the family, at Blair Castle. Info: <https://atholl-estates.co.uk/events/atholl-gathering>

Scotword answers from page 6

Across:

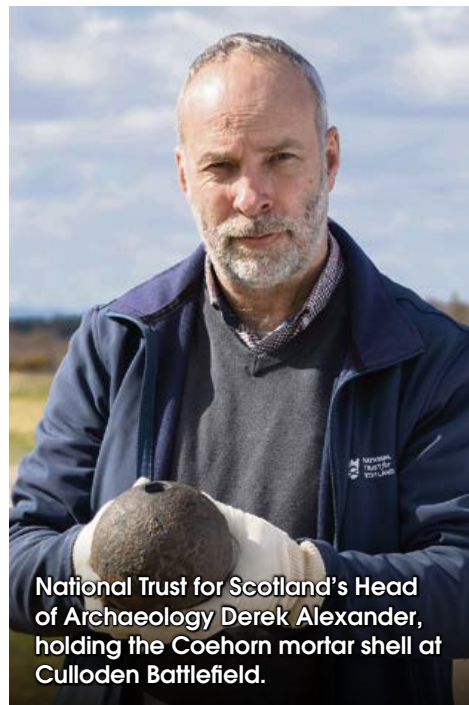
- 8) Nation,
- 9) Oilfield,
- 10) Galloway,
- 11) Dollar,
- 12) Ideal,
- 14) Bap,
- 15) Apron,
- 18) Chanter,
- 20) Thistle,
- 23) Glens,
- 24) Pap,
- 25) Fiery,
- 29) Crieff,
- 31) Aberdeen,
- 33) Montrose,
- 34) Tocher

Down:

- 1) Tabard,
- 2) Gill,
- 3) Knowe,
- 4) Copycat,
- 5) Clyde,
- 6) Will,
- 7) Ullapool,
- 13) Ain,
- 16) Dee,
- 17) Shy,
- 19) Hollyrood,
- 21) Ski,
- 22) Parapet,
- 26) Reeked,
- 27) Afton,
- 28) Keith,
- 30) Efts,
- 32) Dyce

'Explosive' discovery illuminates events from Culloden Battlefield

Images courtesy of National Trust for Scotland.



National Trust for Scotland's Head of Archaeology Derek Alexander, holding the Coehorn mortar shell at Culloden Battlefield.

Archaeologists from the National Trust for Scotland have recovered an unexploded mortar shell, thought to have been fired by government artillery during the historic battle. The Battle of Culloden on 16 April 1746 was a decisive defeat for the Jacobite army, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, at the hands of the Duke of Cumberland's government troops. Intact and gunpowder-packed when it was discovered, the 5.5-inch shell is the first piece of complete government ordnance found at Culloden Battlefield and provides fresh evidence for the deployment and action of government and Jacobite forces at pivotal moments in the battle.

Many other projectiles, including cannon shot, musket balls and fragments of mortar shells, have been uncovered at Culloden, but never before has undetonated ordnance been found. Parts of the battlefield are on boggy ground, and it is thought the shell landed on wet ground and the fuse extinguished before it could ignite the powder. Weighing 8kg (17.5lb), heavier than the Jacobite's three and four-pound cannonballs, the shell is thought to have been fired from one of the government army's six Coehorn mortars. The Coehorn mortar was a lightweight, squat gun that shot explosive shells in high arcs over lines of troops. Fragments of other shells from Coehorn mortars have previously been found at Culloden and at Glen Shiel, where Coehorns were first used during a battle on British soil in June 1719, but the recent discovery is the first complete and unexploded example ever to have been recovered from a Jacobite battlefield.

The Culloden mortar shell was discovered in a field to the north-west of the Memorial Cairn by a team of archaeologists, metal-detectorists, and volunteers led by the National Trust for Scotland's Head of Archaeology Derek Alexander and the University of Glasgow's Professor Tony Pollard. The dig was part of a week-long programme of fieldwork, including digging test pits, machine trenching, metal detecting and mapping, at the Culloden Battlefield in October 2025.

During the excavation, over 100 projectiles, including lead musket balls and pistol shot, were uncovered. Cleaning of the shell by conservator Will Murray at the Scottish Conservation Studio confirmed the presence of a bung, and digital x-ray imaging demonstrated conclusively

that the object was hollow with an internal chamber. The shell still retained part of its original plug, and plant fibres trapped in corrosion layers were also recovered for future analysis.

More secrets and stories to be uncovered at Culloden

Derek Alexander, The National Trust for Scotland's Head of Archaeology, said: "This is a remarkable - dare I say, explosive - find of the kind archaeologists dream of, but never expect to encounter. Along with the other projectiles recovered, this discovery helps us better understand the formation of troops and concentration of fire during this brief, but brutal, battle. The mortars may have been aiming at the Jacobite artillery, so the place where the shell landed may mark the heart of the Culloden Battlefield. The ground rises slightly in this area, providing a better vantage point, and it is adjacent to the old road along which artillery could've moved more easily, making it a plausible location for the Jacobite artillery positions. We have a more vivid image of how the battle played out, but the discovery also tells a human story. Mortar shells mark their path through the air with a smoke trail from the lit fuse, helping the government artillery officers to know how to adjust the length of the fuse to ensure maximum damage. This shell may have been a failed first shot. When it didn't explode as expected, the Jacobite fighters standing nearby must have felt an immense relief. This is our fifth consecutive year of digging at Culloden, so it's an ideal time to assess what we've found and consider how this work impacts on-site interpretation and the long-term management of the battlefield. We didn't have high expectations for this previously unexplored area of the battlefield - acidic soil was thought to have impacted the preservation of artefacts, and the broken ground makes detecting difficult - so we've been invigorated by this unexpected discovery. It's clear there are many more secrets and stories to be uncovered at Culloden. The mortar shell was found buried 30cm deep into the ground and items like these can only be found during professional excavations led by experienced archaeologists, so the battlefield remains safe to visitors. This shell has been cleaned and assessed now, making it safe to handle, and has ensured it is safe to go on display. These exciting finds are made possible by the work of our committed archaeology volunteers and team of local metal detectorists, and the continued generosity of our members and supporters. Professor Christopher Duffy not only made a lasting impact on the interpretation and protection of Culloden, but his hugely generous legacy donation has really expanded the range of our investigations."

Cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, Culloden Battlefield was visited by over 366,000 people in 2025 and is a place of pilgrimage and remembrance for visitors from Scotland and beyond. The battlefield is central to Scotland's cultural identity, and yet historic battlefields don't enjoy the same protections as other historic sites, such as Scheduled Monuments or listed buildings. In its 2026 election manifesto, the Trust is calling for the next Scottish Government to commit to Conservation Management Plans that will give battlefields

enforceable protection. Derek Alexander added: "The importance of more rigorous protection for historic Scottish battlefields like Culloden and Bannockburn is underlined by finds like this one. Not only are such places symbolic of our national story, they also may hold many undiscovered artefacts that can tell us more."

One of the most harrowing battles in British history

Professor Tony Pollard of the University of Glasgow said: "Artillery played a vital role at Culloden, particularly on Cumberland's side, where the Royal Artillery's cannon were well served by experienced gunners; after disabling the Jacobite guns in counter-battery fire, they delivered round shot, grape shot and canister shot at the Jacobite infantry, first as they were stationary and then as they charged across the wide expanse of open moor. We have found evidence for all these types of shot, but our previous archaeological investigations have also recovered fragments from an exploded mortar shell. This was fired into the mass of Jacobites as they engaged in hand-to-hand fighting on Cumberland's left, landing so close that their detonation risked friendly fire casualties. Their location is a clear indication that the impact of the Jacobite charge was taken extremely seriously and regarded as an immediate threat to Cumberland's line."

2026 marked the 280th anniversary of the Battle of Culloden. On 16 April 1746, the final Jacobite Rising came to a brutal head in one of the most harrowing battles in British history. Jacobite supporters,

seeking to restore the Stuart monarchy to the British throne, gathered to fight the Duke of Cumberland's government troops. It was the last pitched battle on British soil and, in less than an hour, around 1,600 men were slain - 1,500 of them Jacobites.

The National Trust for Scotland's richly researched, stimulating and sensitive Culloden Visitor Centre stands beside the battlefield and features artefacts from both sides of the battle and interactive displays that reveal the background to the conflict. It is both a monument and a guide to a pivotal day in history. Culloden's enduring legacy also persists in popular culture, including the book and television series, *Outlander*. Fans of the series are currently running a fundraiser in support of the Culloden Fighting Fund, which supports the Trust's ongoing interpretation of the battle and enables it to create new displays, such as this one of the mortar shell. The fundraiser runs until 2 May 2026 and can be found online at www.justgiving.com/page/jesuisprest.



The mortar shell.

Tartan of the Month

Rablogan Spirit of the Highlands 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).

May is Whisky Month in Scotland, celebrating the 'Water of Life'. The Rablogan Spirit of the Highlands was designed

for Rablogan Castle Limited as part of its Highlands collection. The design was inspired by Scotland's many whiskies, known in Gaelic as Uisge Beatha (the water of life). The colours are intended to depict the various stages in the evolution of the amber liquid from barley field to cask maturation, reflecting all of the phases that collectively form the process of the creation of this Scottish spirit: green and light yellow are for the fields of barley; dark grey is for the maltings and cellars; dark yellow, orange and yellow are for the whisky during distilling; brown is for the casks and red is intended to represent the people who make the process of development possible. This tartan (reference:14786) was designed by Robert K Jones and registered in April, 2025.

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