

# HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

[www.caledonians.com](http://www.caledonians.com)

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## NEXT GATHERING

Our April gathering will be on Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 pm at **Haller Lake United Methodist Church**, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125.

Entertainment will be the Cummings Family.

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## Facebook

The Caledonians have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/seattlecaledonians/?ref=bookmarks>

Diana Smith frequently posts interesting articles and notices, so check back often.

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## Sunshine Report

Sunshine Chairperson Bonnie Monro reports this information about members, former members, and those in the Scottish community:

Victoria Johnson has moved to a convalescent home north of Ballard. She is using her cell phone so people can contact her at 206-321-4980.

Jim Mentzer recently had cataract surgery and has recovered well.

Kathy Bowie's issues with back pain have returned and she is awaiting back surgery again.

Bonnie reminds people that she does not have e-mail, so please call her when you have information about Caledonians who are ill or passed away. Her phone is 425-806-3734.

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## Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

### April

**6 National Tartan Day. Meet at the Capitol steps in Olympia at noon.**

**8 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125.**

**10 SSHGA Meeting 7:30 pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 111 NE 80th Street, Seattle WA Info: (206) 522-2541**

**14 Gaelic Language & Song Workshop, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 98273. 10:00am-3:00pm. Workshop \$20, Lunch \$10 <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/spring-gaelic-18/>**

**21 Blackthorn Band Concert, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 98273 7:00pm. \$25. <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/blackthorn-band-concert/>**

### May

**6 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125. (Note that this is a week earlier than the usual meeting, since the regular meeting date is Mother's Day.**

**19-21 Victoria, BC, Highland Games & Celtic Festival, Topaz Park, Victoria, BC. <http://victoriahighlandgames.com/games/>**

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## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

A selection of objects important in the history of Scotland will be highlighted in this and future Heatherbells. This information comes from an ebook titled "The History of Scotland in 25 Objects" and available at [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com).

## Poltalloch Jet Necklace



The Poltalloch jet necklace is an ornate necklace that is crescent-shaped, and made up of six decorated spacer plates, a triangular fastener, and 95 barrel-shaped beads. It was discovered in 1928 in a cist grave in Kilmartin Glen in Argyll, along with a bracelet made from 15 barrel-shaped beads, a flint knife, some pieces of ochre, and scraps of human remains.

For those unfamiliar with the term, “jet” is a precursor to coal, and is considered to be a minor gemstone. Jet is not considered a true mineral, but rather a mineraloid because it is derived from decaying wood under extreme pressure.

The Poltalloch necklace is about 4,000 years old – a true rarity of the Early Bronze Age – and is in exceptional condition. It would have been the most treasured possession of a high-ranking woman, and it had probably not been worn for very long before it was buried. Jet was probably believed to have had magical powers because of its electrostatic properties.

Early Bronze Age aristocrats showed off their success and power by burying their dead with ostentatious symbols of wealth – showy jewellery for women and daggers for men. Some of their graves were covered by imposing cairns. Necklaces such as this would have been the height of fashion for well-to-do women around the 21st century BC, and would have been brought over from Yorkshire, where they had been made by specialist jetworkers.

It is believed the elite in and around Kilmartin Glen were wealthy because they controlled the flow of Irish copper, and possibly also bronze, to other parts of Scotland and northern England. The objects they buried with the dead reflect these extensive connections, with pots made in Irish and Yorkshire styles and with jet spacer plate necklaces, such as this one, imported from Yorkshire.

The necklace is on display at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, where you can learn more about 'magical' stones and burial rituals in early Bronze Age Scotland.

It's not possible to visit the site where this necklace was found because the cist is on private land and isn't open to the public. However, Kilmartin Museum is a treasure trove of artefacts found in this rich glen. It's also fascinating to be able to look out over the land there and picture life as it was four millennia ago.

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From *The Scottish Banner*



Team Scotland is set to step out in style at the Opening Ceremony of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games this month, with its new parade uniform created in collaboration with bespoke tartan manufacturers House of Edgar and multi-award winning Scottish fashion designer Siobhan Mackenzie. Following the tradition of creating a distinctive new tartan for each Games, the 2018 tartan was designed by Team Scotland in collaboration with House of Edgar of Perth and woven at their Isle Mill in Keith, Moray. It reflects Team Scotland's brand colours (blue, purple, magenta and green) with the use of green also an acknowledgement of Australia's traditional sportswear colour.

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## £300,000 upgrade for Urquhart Castle



Work is underway on a £300,000 upgrade of facilities at Urquhart Castle on the banks of Loch Ness - one of Historic Environment Scotland's most popular sites. The centrepiece of the investment is the creation of a new stairway in the Grant Tower, giving visitors easier access to the existing viewing platform, and its spectacular, iconic view over Loch Ness. The historic spiral staircase will remain in use, providing an alternative for those who want the experience of walking in the footsteps of the medieval lords who once lived in and fought over the castle. The new staircase is being crafted from sustainably sourced oak by a local firm based in Inverness. Access for visitors will also be improved thanks to upgraded non-slip paths throughout the site and the addition of a new, surfaced path to replace a popular desire path. The Visitor Centre is receiving an £80,000 refurbishment of its toilets, and a refurbishment of the shop planned. Working at a site which can be traced back to the Pictish people, and which even has associations with St Columba comes with challenges. As a result of some of these, access to the Castle and grounds has been limited, with only the Visitor Centre and café open as normal.

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*From The Scotsman*

## Who were the 'redshanks' of the Highland clans?

By Alison Campsie

The redshanks were a mercenary force who played a key role in fighting the English in Ireland during the 16th Century. The plaid-wearing fighters were known as redshanks given they went into battle with bare legs and possibly even bare feet too.

The supply of redshanks to northwest Ulster took off following the marriage of Lady Agnes Campbell, daughter of Colin Campbell, the 3rd Earl of Argyll, of Inverary Castle, to Irish chieftain Turlough Luineach O'Neill in 1569. The marriage came with a dowry of 1,200 Highland soldiers with Lady Agnes, who died in 1601, becoming a key figure in the Irish resistance to English rule.

Marriage between Irish leaders in Ulster and Scottish wives became more common to secure a steady stream of mercenaries, according to accounts. The redshanks were given money and food for their service, with the men usually away from home for a year at a time. Reserves of men

were kept at home in Scotland to ensure land could still be tended.

At the time, the English espionage network estimated that well over 6,600 men were ready for war in the Western Isles of Scotland, according to historian Allan MacInnes in his book *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuarts*.

The redshanks, known as the buannachan in the Scottish Gaelic, usually hired themselves out to Irish lords during the summer months with the fighting contracts a way for the Highland clans to raise cash. Poverty and overpopulation in the Highlands made the professional soldiering, usually in Connacht and Ulster, an attractive proposition with the fighting prowess of the men, normally schooled in seamanship and military tactics from a young age, highly regarded.

Usually drawn from the Hebridean clans, clans on the west coast of the mainland also offered up men for paid fighting. Clans who assembled the redshanks included the McQuarries, the Macleods and the Macleans with the southern branch of Clan Donald contracting out men from Jura, Islay and Kintyre. Meanwhile, the Campbells recruited from their base in mid Argyll and allied clans in Lennox, Arran, Bute and Mull.

Those who went to Ireland were accompanied by leagues of advisers, which MacInnes described as a "distinct parasitic class" who profited from the mercenaries and survived on food and shelter offered by tenants and labourers.

The English government started to take steps to curb the flow of mercenaries from Scotland in the late 1590s. The Earls of Argyll were discouraged from recruitment of the fighting forces with subsidies paid to key figures in the Western Isles to keep men and home, according to accounts. Naval forces were also sent into the North Channel of the Irish Sea to prevent the mass movement of fighters. James VI, seeking succession to the English throne, also took action against the rebels in Ireland with a series of expeditions made to pacify the islands. The end of the redshank contracts was sealed with the routing of Irish rebel leader Hugh O'Neil, Earl of Tyrone, at Kinsale in December 1601 by English forces, with the demand for large troops of Highland fighters starting to wane.



## Famous Scots

### Military

For centuries Scotland has been highly regarded for its military prowess. Scottish soldiers have fought throughout in Europe, Asia, North America and Africa - with more than a battle or rebellion or two under their sporrans. Many died heroes, many of their names we will never know. But here we remember the lives of some of our bravest and the freedom they gave us.

### The Marquis of Montrose

**1612 - 1650**

James Graham, 5th Earl and 1st Marquis of Montrose was born in Montrose and the only son of the Graham family. He was well educated and talented in mathematics, archery, golf and fencing. He lived for some time in France as an officer in the Scottish Guard. On his return, he first joined the Covenanters, but afterwards became a zealous royalist. He won several battles for the king, but was defeated by Leslie at Philiphaugh in 1645. Five years later, having been captured in Orkney, was brought to Edinburgh and executed in 1650.

### John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee

**1648 - 1689**

He was a professional soldier who fought in Europe before returning to control the Covenanters in the reign of James II where he earned the name 'Bloody Clavers'. He was shot and killed after successfully routing the Government forces of William of Orange at the Battle of Killiecrankie. Claverhouse became a Jacobite hero, acquiring his second nickname 'Bonnie Dundee'. There is a visitor centre at Killiecrankie near Pitlochry.

### Douglas Haig 1861-1928

Douglas Haig was born in Edinburgh to an old Borders family. He was a soldier who rose through the ranks to become Commander in Chief of the British Army in 1915 and is remembered as a national hero for his defence at Mons and Ypres. He later became the First Earl Haig of Bemersyde and founded the Earl Haig Poppy Fund and Royal British Legion to care for those wounded and bereaved as a result of the First World War. His home of Bemersyde was presented to

him by the nation. A monument to Douglas Haig can be seen at Dryburgh Abbey where he is buried.

### John Paul 'Jones'

**1747 - 1792**

Jones was born in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1747. He is famous as the founder of the American Navy during the Wars of Independence. He fought with the French when they planned to invade Britain in 1779. In 1788 he entered into the service of Empress Catherine II of Russia.



A fellowship founded in Seattle in 1902 to foster a love of Scotland, her people, and her heritage.

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