

# HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

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

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## NEXT GATHERING

We do not have a February gathering. Instead, members are encouraged to attend the Masters of Scottish Arts concert on February 14<sup>th</sup> at the Edmonds Center for the Arts, 410 4<sup>th</sup> Ave N., Edmonds, WA. Tickets may be obtained from the ECA Box Office at 425-275-9595.

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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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## Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership for 2020. Bring your check made out for \$35 for a single and \$45 for a couple to the next Gathering or send it to:

Treasurer  
Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle  
PO Box 27278  
Seattle WA 98165-1778

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## Sunshine Report

Bonnie Munro reports that Hans Heia passed away last Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. Long-time members may remember Hans, although he and Myrtle have not been able to attend gatherings for many years. Cards may be sent to Myrtle Heia and family at 9001 Lake City Way NE, #316-B, Seattle, WA 98115-8223.

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

### February

**1 Tacoma Scots Burns Dinner**, Slavonian American Hall, 2306 N.30<sup>th</sup> St., Tacoma, WA. 6:00-11:00pm. \$45. Tickets through [www.BrownPaperTickets.com](http://www.BrownPaperTickets.com). Questions: [sheepgirl@msn.com](mailto:sheepgirl@msn.com).

**14 Masters of Scottish Arts Concert, Edmonds Center for the Arts (New Location and date)**, 410 4<sup>th</sup> Ave N., Edmonds, WA 7:30p.m. Tickets only from the ECA. 425-275-9595 or <https://www.edmondscenterforthearts.org/events/detail/289/masters-of-scottish-arts-concert/1321>

**23 Gung Haggis Fat Choy 2020**, China Harbor Restaurant, 2040 Westlake Ave. N., Seattle. Doors open at 4pm, entertainment starts at 5pm. \$45. Contact Bill McFadden for tickets at 206-364-6025.

### March

**21 Vancouver, BC Heather Ball sponsored by RSCDS**. Scottish Cultural Centre, Vancouver, BC. \$80 for RSCDS members, \$90 for non-members. Tickets: <https://rscdsvancouver.org>.

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## Interesting Website

Rampant Scotland is a useful website for anyone looking for links to all things Scottish, whether you are looking for accommodations or information about clans, castles, history, genealogy, tartans, or tourism. Check it out at <http://www.rampantscotland.com/>.

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## Re-Cap of January Gathering

The January gathering was a celebration of Robert Burns with 29 members and families in attendance. Neaps, tatties, haggis, salad, and dessert were provided for tea. Christian Skoorsmith piped in the haggis, accompanied by Porter Patten, Jim Van Zee, and Selwyn Lane as sword bearers. Dennis Smith was the haggis bearer. Tom Lamb set up a karaoke program to lead the singing of Scottish songs. Christian Skoorsmith performed the Address to a Haggis, and he and Harry McAlister read poems by Robert Burns.



## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

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From *The Scottish Banner*

### Leap Year Traditions

In Scotland Leap Year Day has had its own unique traditions. February 29<sup>th</sup> is the day a woman could propose. The custom is believed to have originated in Ireland and came from a decree from Saint Patrick, which was then brought over to Scotland by Irish monks. Apparently, St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick about women who had to wait too long for men to make proposals of marriage.

In 1288 Queen Margaret of Scotland had a law passed that allowed a woman to propose marriage (often wearing red) to their true love in a leap year, with the law also stating that any man who declined the proposal on this day would have to pay a fine. Fines could include money, gloves or silk.

Scottish farmers used to believe leap years were not good for crops or livestock, thanks to the old Scots proverb: "Leap year was ne'er a good sheep year."

In Scotland, it also used to be considered unlucky for someone to be born on leap day, just as Friday 13<sup>th</sup> is considered an unlucky day by many. However, those Pisceans born on February 29<sup>th</sup> have unique talents, including high levels of creativity and the ability to give sound advice.

### Valentine's Day Traditions

A Scottish tradition on Valentine's Day was for young unwed men and women to write their name on pieces of paper, place them in a bonnet and each draw one of them. If one name was read out three times, it meant a marriage would take place.

If you don't want to get that deep into commitment, there is also National Flirting Week the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>.

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### Scottish Snowdrop Festival

Each year the Scottish Snowdrop Festival gathers together some of the best gardens and woodlands where visitors can see snowdrops growing, one of the most delightful signs that spring is on the way. Organized by Discover Scottish Gardens, many of the gardens are open especially for the festival even



if the homes and castles on whose grounds they stand are not, and can be entered for a small ticket price, a donation, or for free. The festival runs from 25 January – 11 March.

### **Cambo Gardens, Fife, near St. Andrews**



Snowdrops in the woodlands can be enjoyed on a walk out to the sea. Guided tours and family activity sessions are

available. Cambo Gardens also has a snowdrop themed tearoom and plant shop where snowdrop plants are available for sale.



Head to **Abbotsford, Scottish Borders**, the home of Sir Walter Scott, to see beautiful white snowdrops in full bloom. Swathes of snowdrops cover the woodland

slopes along the walks and paths by the River Tweed.

### **Cringletie House, Scottish Borders**



Enjoy a walk around the enchanting grounds of Cringletie House and see if you can spot the fairies hiding amongst the snowdrops.

### **Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Dawyck Botanic Garden and Logan Botanic Garden**

Wonderful collections of specialist snowdrops are at



these three sites. Dawyck Botanic Garden near Peebles is a stunning garden in the Scottish Borders, where gleaming snowdrops are set against the enchanting backdrop of the shimmering SCAPE Burn. Logan Botanic Garden, situated in the mild surroundings of the Rhins of Galloway in southern Scotland, is renowned as Scotland's most exotic garden.

### **Culzean Castle and Country Park, South Ayrshire**



The 600 acres of the Culzean estate provide walks through majestic woodland, past secluded ponds, and along the clifftop. The castle is open during this festival, and has attractions of the Walled Garden, Swan Pond, Deer Park, and

Adventure Cove.

### **Dunrobin Castle, Golspie**

Dunrobin Castle has a little-known place in the history of snowdrops in the UK. In 1879 the Duke of Sutherland's head gardener, David Melville, raised a new snowdrop variety, the *Galanthus nivalis* 'Melvillei'. He

distributed bulbs to many gardens and enthusiasts, but unfortunately the variety has now died out. The widely grown modern snowdrop variety *Galanthus* 'Magnet' has Melville's snowdrop as one of its parents.



*For more details about the Scottish Snowdrop Festival, see: [www.discoverscottishgardens.org](http://www.discoverscottishgardens.org).*

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## **The Massacre of Glencoe**

The Massacre of Glencoe took place 328 years ago this month, on 13 February 1692. In the long and often sorrow-stained history of the Highlands, nowhere does the echo of tragedy resound so

clearly as in Glencoe. For those who know what happened here, merely evoking its name brings a



heaviness to the heart; to enter the glen with this knowledge is altogether more moving. In the frigid dark of that morning, some thirty-eight men, women and children lay dead, with a further unknown number succumbing to the

cold in their attempt to flee.

In 1688 William of Orange, the Protestant champion of the Dutch Republic, crossed the English Channel with some 30,000 men and ousted King James VII from the throne. After defeating the first Jacobite Rising of 1688-89, William sought to consolidate his deeply fractured domain. He issued an ultimatum to the chieftains of the Highlands, the heartland of Jacobite support, that if they did not swear their allegiance to him by 1 January 1692 they would be declared outlaws and enemies of the state.

Oaths came pouring in for fear of the wrath of the crown, yet some in William's upper echelons openly expressed their desire to make a brutal example of the clans as a deterrent against future resistance. The opportunity to do so landed in their laps in the form of Maclain, chieftain of the MacDonalds of Glencoe. In the midst of a harsh winter which plugged the Highland passes with snow, Maclain set out to give his oath to royal representatives.

Arriving in Fort William, he was informed that the necessary officials were in fact in Inveraray, some sixty miles to the south, and that his oath could not be accepted in their absence. Desperately he raced towards Inveraray, only to be arrested for 24 hours en route. He arrived five days after King William's deadline, sealing his clan's fate.

The Massacre of Glencoe was a flashpoint in the longstanding blood feud between clans MacDonald and Campbell. There were plenty of causes for animosity between the two, as the growth of the opportunistic Clan Campbell came at the explicit

expense of clans including the MacDonalds and many others.

The Massacre of Glencoe enduringly made a mark upon the story and psyche of Scotland, leaving a lasting legacy in politics, art, and popular culture. Many who took up arms as Jacobites in the Risings of 1715, 1719, and most famously 1745-46 were opposed to the total political union between Scotland and England of 1707 and inspired by a desire to avenge the fallen. Victorian artists such as James Hamilton painted heart-wrenching scenes from the Massacre that fostered widespread sympathy and collective guilt in the public imagination. More recently, George R. R. Martin used the Massacre of Glencoe as the basis for the Red Wedding in *Game of Thrones*.

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## Where History Happened - Mary Queen of Scots

*Information from Historic Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland (HES)*

### Craigmillar Castle

Located a mile outside the old city walls of Edinburgh, Craigmillar Castle provided a rural retreat from the capital. It was close to the political cauldron of Edinburgh, but pleasingly separate from it. Currently a ruin, it is one of the most perfectly preserved medieval strongholds in Scotland.



It was built by the Preston family of Craigmillar who were local feudal barons. They began building the

castle in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. More additions were made in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Mary Queen of Scots famously used the castle as a safe haven in 1566.

The tower house, 17 metres tall and one of Scotland's oldest, was built in the late 1300s. Its walls are almost three metres thick. It houses a maze of rooms, including fascinating features like a fine great hall and a prison.



The grounds include a pond built in the shape of a "P" for Preston, and a garden with plants that were likely part of the original castle garden. One of these plants is "Good-King-Henry", a perennial goosefoot, also called poor-man's asparagus or Lincolnshire spinach, which was once widely eaten as a vegetable.

## Lochleven Castle



Lochleven Castle is a ruined castle located on an island in Loch Leven. Constructed around 1300, it lies

in a strategically important position between the towns of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Perth.

During the First War of Scottish Independence (1296-1328) the invading English army held the castle and parts of the fortification were perhaps built by the occupying English. It was captured by forces of William Wallace before the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the castle served as a state prison.

Mary Queen of Scots visited the castle in 1565 as a guest of Sir William Douglas of Lochleven, when she held an interview with the Calvinist preacher John Knox. She was returned there a year later as a prisoner and was forced to abdicate by her noblemen, who opposed her marriage to the Earl of Bothwell. Upon arriving, Mary fell ill due to suspected poisoning, and sometime before 24 July she miscarried twins that she had conceived with Bothwell. Mary won over George Douglas to her cause and escaped with his help after multiple previous unsuccessful attempts.

## Traquair Castle



The name of this former Royal hunting lodge comes from Celtic

words *træt* for "dwelling place" and *quair* for "a

stream with a winding course." The Quair burn joins the River Tweed a few hundred yards from the rear of the house.

Foundations for this house were laid in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. It was used as a hunting lodge for royalty and also as a base where they could administer justice, issue laws, and hold courts. Hunting parties came for wild cat, wolves, deer, wild boar, and bears that roamed the forest.

During the Wars of Independence Traquair became one of many fortified towers built along the banks of the Tweed. In the 1500s Traquair made the transition from a defensive tower house into a family home. John Stuart, 4<sup>th</sup> Laird of Traquair, became the Captain of the Queen's bodyguard to Mary Queen of Scots. In 1566, Mary visited Traquair with her husband and baby son, James.

This building has a long subsequent history attached to it, coming to the post WWII period, when it was opened to the public and hosted weddings, received guests on a bed and breakfast basis, and developed an annual programme of summer events. It is now the family home of Catherine, 21<sup>st</sup> Lady of Traquair, her husband, and their three children.

## Falkland Palace



Falkland Palace is a royal palace of the Scottish kings. It, too, was originally built as a hunting lodge in the 12<sup>th</sup>

century, and then expanded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century to become a castle. Between 1501 and 1541, Kings James IV and James V transformed the old castle into a beautiful royal palace. With Stirling Castle, it was one of two Renaissance palaces in the French manner in Scotland. A Royal Tennis Court was completed on the grounds of the palace in 1541. The tennis court still survives and is the oldest in Britain.

Falkland became a popular retreat with all the Stewart monarchs. They practiced falconry there and used the forests around the palace for hawking and hunting deer. Wild boar were brought in from France. They loved using the Royal Tennis Court, and Queen Mary became especially fond of the

game. It is recorded that she scandalized the people of Scotland by wearing men's breeches to play.

## Inchmahome Priory



Situated on an island in Scotland's only lake, Inchmahome Priory was founded in 1238 as a monastery for a small

community of Augustinian canons. The name comes from Gaelic, meaning "Island ("inch") of St. Colmaig".

The priory had a long history of receiving many notable guests. King Robert the Bruce visited in 1306, 1308, and 1310. Nearly 200 years later, the priory served as a refuge for Queen Mary, aged four, who was hidden here for a few weeks following the disastrous defeat of the Scots army at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh during the Rough Wooing.

Most of the buildings are ruins, although much of the original 13<sup>th</sup> century structure remains.



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

### Mailing Address:

Caledonian and St. Andrew's Society of Seattle  
P.O. Box 27278  
Seattle, WA 98165-1778

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

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### HEATHER BELL EDITOR:

Ruth McFadden 206-364-6025  
[ruthmcfadden@mindspring.com](mailto:ruthmcfadden@mindspring.com)