

HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

www.caledonians.com

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NEXT GATHERING

Members of the Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society will continue to gather using the electronic app Zoom for several additional months, due to continuing prohibitions on large gatherings of people.

Our next gathering is **Sunday, February 13th**, at 2:00 p.m. An e-mailed link will be sent to everyone who has computer access a few days in advance of this date. You can also join by clicking on this link or copying and pasting this address into your browser:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjkxQT09>

You can also participate by phone by calling 1-253-215-8782 and entering the meeting ID: 713 418 301 and then the passcode: 004905. For those without a camera on your computer, you can do both, letting you see everyone on the computer and connecting with people on your phone.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

The February gathering will be information and a discussion about current re-wilding efforts in Scotland. There are good and bad points about these efforts, and it's well worth our becoming more knowledgeable about the topic and its issues.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Plan ahead to join us each month for gatherings on Zoom. We will have a variety of local, national, and international talent for the program.

March 13 - Tyrone Heade, piper

SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie Munro reports that she sent cards on behalf of the Caledonians to Art Henderson, who is receiving hospice care in his home, and Stephanie Sprinkle, who is recovering from heart surgery to replace a heart valve. Stephanie has also had some kidney issues, but is on the mend from those.

Gene and Debbie McPhail are both home and making slow progress toward their individual recoveries with multiple visits each week from home health nurse and therapists.

Phillip Junkins has recovered enough from foot surgery to be able to put light pressure on his foot.

Chuck Cook has been experiencing some health problems and has been in the hospital this week.

Kathy Bowie reported that their household came down with Covid, but symptoms were mild and quickly resolved in a few days. They thought that they didn't get very sick because they had gotten booster shots.

If you know of a Caledonian who would be cheered by a card, let Bonnie know. She can be reached by phone at 425-806-3734.

Reminder – It's time to Renew Your Annual Membership for 2022

Membership dues are what allow the Caledonians to book the fabulous fiddlers, singers, harpists, and bagpipers who have entertained us so well during 2021 while we couldn't meet in person and instead gathered using the Zoom app. The coronavirus pandemic has devastated music performers all over the world. Many who depended on venues at Scottish highland games and Celtic festivals for their living have found few concerts bookings possible. They have been amazingly receptive to our pleas for entertainment using Zoom. Please help us continue enjoying Scottish and Celtic performers from all around the USA and Scotland in 2022.

Dues are \$45 for individuals and \$55 for couples/families. Checks should be made out to the **Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle** and marked for **2022 Membership**.

We want to keep our membership directory updated, so **please include your address, phone number(s), and e-mail address(es)** when you send your check.

We have been pleased to have three new members join in 2021. New members who paid their membership fee in the last six months are "good to go" for 2022. All others, please send new and renewal memberships to:

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

Membership includes receiving monthly newsletters and a copy of the membership directory. Information about upcoming Scottish activities and concerts (when they are able to resume) and reminders about gatherings are sent to members by e-mail as well.

New Member Drive

In order to be successful, an organization needs a steady flow of new members. Without it, the organization will die. New members provide long-term stability and growth. They help develop new ideas and establish new programs. Larger membership provides larger income, which allows for more and better programs and entertainment. It also

provides better community relationships through sharing.

The Board is encouraging existing members to recruit new members. As an incentive, existing members who bring two new memberships in 2022 will pay no dues for a year.

Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

FEBRUARY

13 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjIxQT09>

MARCH

1 John Whelan & Sean Cleland Concert, 7:00pm-9:00pm. \$25.00 Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 360-416-4934
<https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/whelanandclelandconcert/>

13 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjIxQT09>

19 Clan Gordon Pipe Band Annual Tartan Ball. 7:00pm. Puyallup Fairgrounds. \$25 Tickets at <https://tartanball.brownpapertickets.com>

Recap of the January Caledonian Gathering



The January gathering celebrated Robert Burns with a virtual observance of his birthday. Christian Skoorsmith gave the "Address to the Haggis", and 28 members and friends enjoyed a Cantata created by the Robert Burns Society of Scotland commemorating Burns' life and music.

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. Be sure to "Like"

the articles so they show up frequently on your Facebook stream.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner* and *The Scotsman newspaper*.

National Parks in Scotland

Scotland has two national parks. One is Cairngorms National Park, which is the largest in the UK. The other is Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Creation of a third national park has been pledged by the Scottish government. Contenders for the honor include Ben Nevis, Glen Affric, Argyll, Wester Ross, Harris, the Scottish Borders, and Galloway.

National parks both promote and conserve landscapes, and Scotland has many magnificent landscapes that would benefit from these actions. They also have economic impacts because they attract visitors while helping fragile rural economies to thrive, providing jobs and services.

Scotland has committed to protect at least 30% of its land for nature by 2030. A new national park would greatly assist this ambitious commitment.

Rewilding of Scotland

Scotland is looking to become Europe's first "rewilding nation".

"Rewilding" is defined as the large-scale restoration of nature to the point that it can take care of itself. The process would restore habitats and include reintroduction of native species of both plants and animals, where practical. A major focus in Scotland is recreating the Caledonian Forest that used to cover much of central Scotland, along with the animal life that flourished within it.

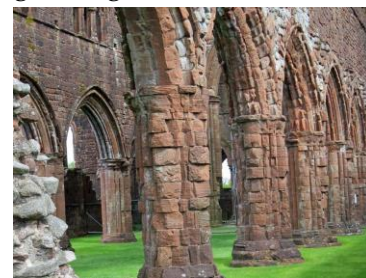
While UK opinion polls show that, in general, rewilding the UK has widespread support, and certainly Scotland is prime territory for doing this, the fact is that there are a lot of "moving parts" for engaging in the process and not all people agree all aspects of doing this are for the best. In short, rewilding Scotland is a bit of a controversial matter in Scotland.

Our February Caledonian program will examine the pros and cons that are being discussed across Scotland for how rewilding might be accomplished without tying up the bulk of the land in private holdings that are unavailable to the public.

St. Valentine's Day Thoughts for Feb.

Scotland has a relic of another saint besides Saint Andrew, and that is Saint Valentine. The relic, a bone from one of Saint Valentine's forearms, is kept in the Blessed John Duns Scotus church near Glasgow.

Sweetheart Abbey was founded in 1273 by the grieving wife of Lord John Balliol. When he died in



1268, his widow had his embalmed heart placed in an ivory casket. She is said to have carried the casket with her everywhere so she could have him

always with her. The abbey was one of many charitable acts undertaken by his widow in his name. When she died 21 years after his death, she was laid to rest in front of the abbey church's high altar with her husband's heart clutched to her bosom.

Gretna Green in the Scottish Borders is historically famous for marriages of couples younger than the allowed age in England to wed. Underage English couples eloped to Gretna Green where they could be married "over the anvil" by the blacksmith. The town is still famously the site of thousands of couples tying the knot each year.

When US pop star Madonna wed UK film director Guy Ritchie in 2000 at Skibo Castle, their union caused a boom in couples seeking a Scottish wedding. In the years following, the "Madonna effect" resulted in 30% of weddings in Scotland being for those who didn't even live in the country.



Many good luck tokens are associated with brides — *i.e.*, "something borrowed, something blue . . ." A popular good luck token in the Scottish Borders is a sprig of white heather hidden in the bride's

bouquet.

Scottish Highland Dancing

The New Yorker has a recent video on its documentary site about children in Scotland learning to dance the historical Highland dances.

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-documentary/practicing-tradition-and-learning-to-dance-in-the-scottish-highlands>

All interested in Scotland and its history are familiar with the period after the Jacobites rose up against King George II when wearing a kilt and dancing in the Highland style was harshly suppressed. A century later tartan became fashionable again and the Highland style of dancing was allowed.

This *New Yorker Documentary* video shows how the Highland style of dancing that has its roots in the villages and among the warrior clans of northern Scotland is now taught to school children. While the video focuses on children in Scotland who are practicing their dancing skills one summer, it is surely an example of children all around the world learning these intricate steps and complicated athletic motions for both pleasure and competition.

The Scottish Village That Disappeared in a Sandstorm

Culbin, a village situated to the northeast of the Culbin Forest on the south shore of the Moray Firth, disappeared in The Great Sand Drift of 1694. History and folklore, along with many theories and superstitions, have led to stories about the “haunted” village that occasionally came into view



when the sands shifted significantly in huge storms over the years.

While the village’s exact location was unknown for many years, subsequent research has found that the village of Culbin comprised five farms and 735 acres of cultivated land. The nearby Kinnaird

Estate was much larger with thousands of acres of land and orchards. The estate included a manor house, a church, a number of smaller buildings, and many more associated farms.

In the 17th century, people knew little about nature and nature’s effects, and believed that bad things happened because people misbehaved. One embellished legend claimed that on a Saturday night a card-playing Kinnaird laird insisted on playing past midnight, boasting he would continue playing even if the Devil was one of his partners. A clap of thunder (probably from the storm) heralded the arrival of the devil and sand engulfed the estate. Another legend was that the sandstorm was punishment for villagers hiding smugglers in the dunes.

The likely facts are that villagers uprooting much sand-gripping marram grass to use for thatching and the 17th century practice of cutting coastal turf for fuel allowed the coastal sand to loosen and shift. The heavy storm of 1694 likely changed beach dynamics such that the village and estate were completely overwhelmed and destroyed by loose sand.

In the decades that followed abandonment of the village and estate, shifting sands occasionally exposed the remains of the manor house and chapel, and even the top branches of the laird’s orchard came into view, with the trees said to bear excellent fruits.

The history and folklore of Culbin is explored in a new project led by Robert Gordon University and Moray Libraries.

<https://newsroom.moray.gov.uk/news/explore-culbin-the-disappeared-village-with-moray-libraries>



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