

# HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

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

Volume 118

Issue 1

January 2020

## NEXT GATHERING

Our January gathering will be a celebration of Robert Burns on Sunday, January 19th. **This is a week later than our usual monthly gatherings.**

As usual, we will gather at 2:00 pm at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125.

Entertainment will be piping, poems and recitation of the "Address to a Haggis", and haggis, neeps, and tatties will be served at tea. Please understand that this is a celebration of Robert Burns in the month of his birth, not a Burns Dinner, and **alcoholic beverages cannot, and will not, be served.** Guests are requested to respect the fact that we gather in a United Methodist Church. The United Methodist Church around the world has a strict non-alcohol policy.

## 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.

## 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

## Sunshine Report

Bonnie Munro sends cards to members who are ill. If you know of anyone who needs a card, please let her know.

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.

## Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

### January

**10 Annual General Membership Meeting**, Celtic Arts Foundation, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 7:00 p.m. Free, but attendees must be current members of the CAF. [events@celticarts.org](mailto:events@celticarts.org) or call 360-416-4934.

**18 Robert Burns Supper**, Celtic Arts Foundation, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 5:30pm. This event is sold out, but call to be put on the wait list: 360-416-4934 <https://celticarts.org>

**19 Robert Burns Celebration at the Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering**, 2:00 pm. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125. [www.caledonians.com](http://www.caledonians.com)

### 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.

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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 October Gathering

Caledonians gathered on December 8<sup>th</sup> to for a holiday sing-a-long program led by Christian Skoorsmith with his fireside pipes and whistle. Some of the familiar carols that originally came to us from the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries were composed in a different musical tone than our modern tonality and were surprisingly easy to sing accompanied this way!



Tom Lamb accompanied slides of old fashioned illustrations from a children's book of "The Night Before Christmas" while reciting the poem.

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## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

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From *The Scottish Banner*

### Robert Burns - The Heaven Taught Ploughman

Robert Burns has become an international icon – the Ayrshire ploughman who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the world's best-known poets. In 2009 Burns was voted "The Greatest Scot" ever, polling ahead of Scottish cultural giants Sir William Wallace and Robert the Bruce.

He was called a 'heaven taught ploughman' by an Edinburgh critic in the late 1700's and has inspired people from every walk of life for many years.

After Queen Victoria and Christopher Columbus, Robert Burns has more statues dedicated to him around the world than any other non-religious figure. They are in Scotland, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, England and the USA, to name a few countries. A replica of Burns' birthplace in Alloway can be found in Atlanta, Georgia, which was constructed by the Burns Club of Atlanta.

Robert also is the first person whose face has ever appeared on a bottle of drinks giant Coca-Cola. You may have also seen Robert's face on stamps, shortbread tins, money, post cards, mugs and an edition of his works has even been blasted into space, so if there is life beyond this Earth they too can enjoy Scotland's most famous son.

Whilst Burns wrote in both English and Scots his works have been translated in numerous languages around the world including most European languages, Russian, and Japanese.

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## Tartan of the Month - Burns 1930 Tartan



James Mackinlay, a tartan collector, put a collection of Burns tartans together between 1930s -1950s. This one is found in the Scottish Tartans Society archive. This tartan (SRT ref: 1539) was recorded prior to the launch of The Scottish Register of Tartans.

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## Glenfinnan Historic Rail Bridge



A fundraiser for a new footbridge at the popular tourist attraction, the Glenfinnan Viaduct in the Highlands made famous by *Harry Potter*, has been launched.

The historic railway bridge first opened in 1901 but came to the attention of the wider world over 100 years later after appearing in four *Harry Potter* films. It now attracts 300,000 visitors a year, creating traffic jams and difficulties for nearby residents. Plans are now underway to improve the safety of the area for both tourists and residents.

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## Visit Edinburgh in Winter

### Royal Botanic Gardens



Proving that gardens are not just for summer, visitors can appreciate the gorgeous winter landscape of the Royal Botanic Gardens, which are split across three themes and stretch across an impressive 70 acres. Discover seasonal flora and fauna as well as modern sculptures and installations dotted throughout. There is a fee for the Victorian glass houses but if you don't want to spend any money, you can still admire the exterior of this stunning piece of architecture.

Why go this winter? Check out the Hidden World of Plants. There is a hidden microscopic world that the naked eye cannot see. This world is revealed through the breath-taking images produced by a scanning electron microscope. This exhibition reveals the structures of plants in images created at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh by microscopy technician Frieda Christie.

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## Burning of the Clavie

The traditional Burning of the Clavie takes place in Burghead, Moray. The festival dates back to 400AD, when the village was the capital of the ancient Pictish kingdom.

The Burning of the Clavie is a celebration of the ancient Scots Hogmanay, which fell on January 11 before the Gregorian calendar was introduced in Britain in the 18th century. The event takes place annually, as the townspeople of Burghead celebrate New Year twice - on January 1 and then again 10 days later.

The event involves lighting a 100kg barrel of tar which is then carried around the town. Tradition dictates that members of the 'Clavie Crew' must be natives of the town. The Clavie is then taken up Dorie Hill before being allowed to burn out and tumble down the hill. Locals then gather around the smoking remains as it is supposed to bring good luck for the year ahead.

The Burning of the Clavie is held on 11 January each year, except when the 11th is a Sunday, in which case it takes place on the 10th.

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## Icon Stars and "Starlets"

Certain iconic locations have become almost synonymous with Scotland itself in the minds of people around the world. For evidence, just survey the shortbread tins sold on Edinburgh's Royal Mile and you'll likely be able to count on

one hand the number of places gracing the lids. That's not to imply they don't deserve to be there, but Scotland is a big wee place and for every international superstar there are many locations that are just as atmospheric and awe-inspiring, but which haven't quite managed to take centre stage. Here are four perfect destinations for all those who revel in taking the road less travelled.

**Calanais Stones, Isle of Lewis, are superstars, but see the Starlet: Machrie Moor Stone Circles, Isle of Arran**



Standing stones have been drawing crowds since long before *Outlander* hit the silver screen. Archaeologists, neo-Pagans, romantics and artists all draw their own distinct types of inspiration from these megaliths.

The Calanais Stones are distant, but Machrie Moor can be done in a day from anywhere in central Scotland while losing none of the drama. The Isle of Arran, popularly known as Scotland in miniature, has scenery to rival anywhere in the Highlands and Isles.

Machrie Moor lies on the island's western coast and comprises six stone circles as well as scattered chambered cairns, hut circles, and other historic remnants. The most sensational, pragmatically called Circle No.2, has three stones standing high as giants. Aptly, legends of the giant Fingal abound in the area, with one of the Moor's stone circles dubbed Fingal's Cauldron Seat. Robert the Bruce is alleged to have had his encounter with a determined spider in the nearby King's Cave, so there is plenty in the area to keep history hunters happy, too.

**Dunnottar Castle, Stonehaven, is a well-known superstar, but see the Starlet: Findlater Castle, Portsoy**



Perched atop a clifftop promontory thrust defiantly into the cold embrace of the North Sea, Dunnottar Castle is a contender for Scotland's most fantastically situated castle - quite the feat, seeing as there are over 2,000 competitors. It has been fortified since before Scotland existed, and has played a pivotal role in many of the most decisive moments in the nation's history. It seems impossible to rival, and yet if you travel along the northeast coast to the shores of the Moray Firth there's a place that comes close.

At first glance Findlater Castle, also built into a promontory, almost seamlessly blends into the stones it is rooted in, such that a casual observer scanning the coastline may not see a castle at all. An admittedly precarious path leads out to it, and as you approach details slowly begin to emerge until, almost by surprise you find yourself standing atop the ruins of a hidden leviathan. Beneath your feet are a complex of chambers, halls and corridors, half-filled in sand like the set of an *Indiana Jones* film. You can clamber down into the belly of the beast, but take great care - both of yourself and of the structure - if you dare to do this.

The best perspective of the site is gained from the stony shore immediately to the west, where a deep cave once used by pirates can be explored when the tide is out. It's nearly impossible to give Dunnottar a run for its money, but with hidden caverns, a pirate cave, and the luxury of usually having it to yourself - which would never happen at Dunnottar - Findlater comes admirably close.

## **Loch Ness in the Highlands is a superstar, but take a look at the Starlet: Loch Doon, East Ayrshire**

The tendency of visitors to plan itineraries around the same small set of usual suspects invariably puts Loch Ness on the list, and while it does feature the fantastic Urquhart Castle and tales of a certain beastie, when it comes to overall scenery it is entirely average. Don't by any means let that stop you from ticking it off your bucket list, but if you're the sort to venture off the beaten path then follow the road signs south instead of north until you reach the Galloway Forest Park in Ayrshire.



With Loch Doon at its heart, the Galloway Forest Park is one of Scotland's best kept secrets. The loch sports a uniquely formed and incredibly picturesque stone castle along its banks, the forested hills that flank it are rife with hiking and biking trails, and some of the best wildlife spotting and stargazing anywhere in the country can be found here.

Best of all, while the road along Loch Ness overflows with souvenir shops and heavy vehicles in a hurry, the small routes along Loch Doon and through the Forest Park are some of the quietest in the country, allowing plenty of opportunities to stop and take it all in. Loch Doon may not have anywhere near the name recognition of Loch Ness or a mysterious monster stalking its shores, but it makes up for it by providing serenity in spades.

## **Visit Superstar: Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh, but also visit the Starlet: Dumbarton Rock, Dumbarton**

Arthur's Seat, a vast volcanic plug towering over the heart of Edinburgh's medieval Old Town, is so striking precisely because of its abruptness. In

contrast to the tame fields and rolling hills of the Lothians, Arthur's Seat and the rest of Holyrood Park are a towering, elemental exclamation point on the land. Looking from certain angles like a lion in repose, all kinds of legends have swirled around it including how it was formed from the body of a lazy dragon and that King Arthur himself rests beneath it. Yet, it is not the only stony spire swirling with myth to loom above a Scottish capital.



Dumbarton Rock, the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Strathclyde, rises as an indomitable sentinel from the waters of the Clyde just a few miles west of Glasgow. Just like Arthur's Seat, Dumbarton Rock was once a mighty volcano whose eruptions forged the land around it.

From the top you can see as far as the peaks of the northern Trossachs deep behind the Highland Line, and from here the Rock's residents watched in terror as a vast fleet of Viking ships made their way to bring fire to Dumbarton once again in 870 CE. Some even say that the wizard Merlin held court here in the mists of the Dark Ages. Despite all that and it being the oldest continually fortified site in all of Britain, however, Dumbarton now flies inconspicuously under most peoples' radar - it's time to bring the Rock of the Britons back to its former glory!

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## **Robert Burns Quotes**

**Tam O'Shanter**

*But pleasures are like poppies spread  
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed  
Or like the snow falls in the river  
A moment white then melts for ever*

From Burns' epic poem *Tam O'Shanter*, written in 1791. As well as containing humour, horror and social commentary, the poem also includes beautiful lines like the above.

### **The Cotter's Saturday Night**

*From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,  
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:  
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,  
An honest man's the noblest work of God.*

From *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, this poem was written for inclusion in the Kilmarnock Volume, Burns' first book of poems. It is one of the best known and most admired of his works.

### **To A Mouse**

*The best laid schemes o' mice and men Gang aft a-gley;  
And leave us naught but grief and pain For promised  
joy.*

These lines, which are amongst the most famous in world literature, are from Burns' poem 'To a Mouse'. The lines inspired the title of John Steinbeck's 1937 classic novel 'Of Mice and Men'.

### **To A Louse**

*Oh wad some power the giftie gie us To see oursel's as  
others see us!  
It wad frae monie a blunder free us, And foolish notion.*

The poet notices an upper class lady, Jenny, in church with a louse roaming around unnoticed in her bonnet. The theme is contained in the final lines (above) and is that we would all be disabused of our pretensions if we were to see ourselves through each others' eyes.

### **Auld Lang Syne**

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And auld lang syne!*

Amongst the top most sung lines in the English language, these words are, of course, from *Auld Lang Syne*, which has become an anthem sung the world over at New Year.



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

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