



Volume 119

Issue 6

June 2021

## 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, June 11<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00pm. 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=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjlxQT09>

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.

## JUNE PROGRAM



Entertainment for the June 11<sup>th</sup> gathering will be a repeat musical performance by balladeer Charlie Zahm. Charlie entertained us at our September 2020 gathering. Charlie normally can be found performing at games and other venues on the

northeast and Atlantic coast states of the U.S., where he weaves magical moments of Scottish and Irish history and accompanies himself on guitar. He brings an authentic love and respect for the music he sings and will draw you into the stories of his songs. We enjoyed his music and stories last September and look forward to hearing him again.

## 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.

**July 11<sup>th</sup>: Skye Richendrfer** – Skye is the founder and executive director of the Celtic Arts Foundation in Mount Vernon. He is a lively and interesting speaker who also plays the bagpipes.

**August 8<sup>th</sup>: Bill Mullen** – Singer from the Florida Scottish entertainment circuit

**August 15 – Lawn Party** – the McFaddens invite Caledonians to an outdoor gathering at their home.

## 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.

## SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie reported that she sent a get-well card on behalf of the Caledonians to Selwyn Lane, who recently had ear surgery.

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

### Highland Games in the area:

Most highland games that were cancelled in 2020 are also **cancelled in 2021**, including the following:

Tacoma (Graham) – May 22

Bellingham – June 5

Prosser – June 19

Mount Vernon – July 10-11

Portland – July 17

Seattle (Enumclaw) – July 23-25

Spokane – August 7

**September 11-12 – Kelso Highlander Festival.** Still scheduled, but check their website closer to that date for updated information.

[www.kelso.gov/visitors/highlander-festival](http://www.kelso.gov/visitors/highlander-festival).

The **Celtic Arts Foundation in Mount Vernon** is holding only occasional virtual events. Although there are no events scheduled for June, please check their website for information about future events at <https://celticarts.org/events/>

**Jamie Lavel** is not performing live at this time, but encourages people to watch his YouTube videos at [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWBtgXxJ11Yi8rrx27nrBw9YwzTa6bS-s](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWBtgXxJ11Yi8rrx27nrBw9YwzTa6bS-s)

**June 20 – Livestreaming by Bill Mullen** – Bill is based in Florida, but is known in this area, too. He has a free livestreaming event on Facebook at 1:00 pm Seattle time at <https://facebook.com/billmullenentertains>. You can find information about his livestreams at <https://www.bill-mullen.com>

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## Recap of the May Caledonian Gathering

Eighteen members and guests attended the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Caledonian gathering on Zoom. This gathering was held a week earlier than usual because Mother's Day was on our usual second

Sunday meeting day. Seumas Gagne provided a beautiful program of Gaelic songs and music on his harp. As is common for our gatherings, Seumas was happy to chat with us both during his performance and afterward.



## Installation of Officers

We elected officers for the coming year at our May gathering, and they will be installed at the June gathering. Caledonian bylaws specify two-year terms for Board members with continuity established by having half the Board elected in even-numbered years and half elected in odd-numbered years. Because 2020 was an unusual year and we had no idea whether the organization would be able to function when public gatherings were precluded by state law, the Board decided to merely have existing officers continue for another year without holding an election in 2020.

Although everyone on the Board was elected this year, the slate of officers reflects term lengths based on whether the election year was supposed to have been on “even” (2020) or “odd” (2021) years. Therefore, some of the positions on the Board this time are officially for one year (re-election in 2022), and some are for two years (re-election in 2023).

The elected officers who will be installed on June 13<sup>th</sup> are as follows:

President – Tom Lamb (1 year)  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres. – Christian Skoorsmith (2 years)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres. – Rosemary Blakemore (1 year)  
Secretary – Ruth McFadden (1 year)  
Treasurer – Ruth McFadden (2 years)  
Social Director – Bill McFadden (1 year)  
Parliamentarian – Victoria Johnson (2 years)  
Sunshine Chair – Bonnie Munro (1 year)

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Trustee – Harry McAlister (1 year)  
Trustee – Selvyn Lane (2 years)  
Trustee – Dennis Smith (2 years)

## Diana Smith Painted a Piano



Long-time member Diana Smith, who now lives in Connecticut and joins Caledonian gatherings on Zoom, has become a celebrity in her area. She was chosen for the Art in Public Places program in Stamford, and was

assigned a piano to paint for display and the public to play on a street in that city's downtown. On May 4<sup>th</sup> her efforts were



highlighted on the front page of the Stamford Advocate newspaper. You can read more about Diana's project and design on the Stamford Advocate website at <https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/local/article/Color-and-sound-Painted-pianos-are-coming-to-16145742.php?src=sthpdseecp>

## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

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

## Picturesque Scottish Villages to Visit

Tourism in Scotland is slowly opening up, mostly for local residents, after being shut down by the coronavirus pandemic. However, once travel to Scotland opens again for the rest of us, there are numerous picturesque villages in Scotland that belong on your travel list. Here are three more to supplement the list in the May issue of the *Heather Bell*.

### Fort Augustus



Located on the Caledonian Canal at the most southern tip of Loch Ness, Fort Augustus originally was a settlement named after Saint Cummein of Iona, who had built a church there. After the Jacobite rising in 1715, General Wade built a fort in this strategic spot and had intended to name the surrounding barracks and town Wadesburgh. The fort was captured by the Jacobites just prior to the Battle of Culloden.

The most striking views in this easily walked village are the dramatic series of locks stepping down from the Caledonian Canal to Loch Ness. There are many beautiful walks around the area, the most popular being the Great Glen Way. The Caledonian Canal Heritage Centre details the history of the canal and the Clansmen Centre is interesting as appropriately attired docents demonstrate 17<sup>th</sup> century clan weaponry.

## Pennan

Film fans may recognize Pennan, a pretty 18<sup>th</sup> century fishing village in Aberdeenshire, as a scene in the classic film "Local Hero." The village consists of a small harbor and a row of homes on a single street. The film featured a red phone box, originally placed as a film prop but now a genuine phone box, which visitors can still see. Most of the original fishermen's houses have been bought up as holiday houses.



For those interested in prehistoric peoples, this part of Aberdeenshire was inhabited since at least the Bronze Age. However, the area is subject to land slips that damaged the village, so putting it a bit higher on your travel list might be a good idea.

## Coldstream



Coldstream is a pretty village in the Scottish

Borders area where it sits on the north bank of the River Tweed, across the river from England. Noted as the location where Edward I invaded Scotland in 1296, the village has been engulfed in numerous battles over the years. It is the home of the Coldstream Guards, a regiment in the British Army.

Much like Gretna Green, Coldstream lay on a major road, and in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries it was a popular centre for young people running away to get married at its toll house.

Places to see in Coldstream are its famous bridge, the Priory of St. Mary founded in 1166, and the Ba Green. A new museum at Bughtrig House should be open by the time tourism to Scotland is open again.

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## David Douglas, the Douglas Fir Man

Many of us in the Pacific Northwest know that our native fir tree, the Douglas fir, is named for Scottish explorer and botanist David Douglas. Many may not know that Douglas brought back this conifer to Scotland and now there are whole forests with this tree in Scotland.

David Douglas was born in the picturesque Perthshire town of Scone in 1798. He was educated locally, and embarked on an apprenticeship with William Beattie, the head gardener at Scone Palace. Over his early years he enrolled in classes in science and mathematics and researched wild plants throughout the summer months. His reputation grew as a horticulturist as he moved to the home of Sir Robert Preston at Valleyfield, and then to Glasgow's illustrious Botanical Gardens. At the age of 25 he was recommended to the Horticultural Society of London.

Douglas' first trip to the New World as a botanical collector was in 1823. In 1825, he returned to America, this time spending some time in South America as well as the west coast. By 1827 he was well known on the west coast of North America, where he recorded in his diary that "not a day passed but brought



something new or interesting either in botany or zoology.”

Extracts from letters Douglas wrote during his trip across the Rocky Mountains enroute to Hudson’s Bay in 1827 were published in an Edinburgh journal. As a result, he received numerous offers to publish a book about his travels, but he never completed a manuscript for this purpose.



Douglas fir trees grown from seeds brought back by David Douglas are among the tallest trees in Scotland. Timber from this tree is imported into GB as “Oregon Pine” although it is botanically neither fir nor pine.

Returning home, Douglas had a place among the scholarly elite in London, where he was elected a Fellow of the Geological, Zoological, and Linnaean societies. After so many years exploring and collecting botanical samples on his own, Douglas found life in the public eye less and less to his taste. He became increasingly difficult to work with. Two years later, the lure of travel and exploration consumed him and he was off on another exploration trip, spending time in California.

Then in 1834 Douglas sailed to Honolulu, where he died. His body was tragically found in a cattle trap. The cause of his death became a matter of speculation – with no clear evidence whether it had been a result of a tragic accident, suicide, or even murder.

By the time of his death at age 36, Douglas’ place in history was set. He had sent several thousand botanical species back to Britain. His name lives on in the Douglas fir and numerous

other plants and flowers that he discovered in the Pacific Northwest and other areas. Finally, in 1914, a book was created from his letters and journals: *The Journal Kept by David Douglas During His Travels in North America, 1823-1827*.

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## Robert the Bruce – Scotland’s Greatest Castle Destroyer?

Scotland is known to have had well over 2,000 castles through the centuries, many of them known only through historical records. This does not include those buildings constructed as family homes that later had the term “castle” gifted to them for services to kings and government.

Castles were damaged and/or destroyed by many causes, including weather, war, neglect, bankruptcy, being rendered moot by more modern fortifications, urban sprawl, fire, and sword. The cannons of war were especially destructive.

One cause that people often do not think about is the destruction, or “slighting,” of castles in order to make sure that they are not taken over by the enemy. There are relatively few people responsible for many individual instances of castle “slightings” but high on that list is Robert the Bruce. There is no clear record of how many castles Bruce was responsible for destroying, but historians believe that over one hundred is a reasonable number.

Many of the castle destructions were because an intact castle posed a far greater threat to Bruce’s military actions than if it was rendered unusable. Edinburgh Castle is perhaps the most famous example of this thinking. Bruce simply didn’t have enough soldiers to maintain a trained garrison defending Edinburgh Castle after it was wrested from the English garrison while he was preparing to attack the English garrison at Stirling Castle. The English needed castles to control Scotland, while Bruce did not. He needed to be sure it could not be used against him while he was focused on Stirling. Roxburgh was a royal

Lowland castle slighted by Bruce for the same reason.

Other castles were destroyed in anger between rival families. After Bruce murdered John Comyn, fighting ended with the destruction of many Comyn and MacDougall castles, and related major and minor castles, notably Aberdeen, Dundarg, Fyvie, Slains, and Rattay.

Castles of northeast Scotland served little military purpose to Bruce since the northeast was unlikely to be a frontier against the English, but he could not afford the risk of having entrenched enemies behind his own lines. Therefore, castles such as Inverness, were also slighted, although Bruce later rebuilt Inverness when he controlled the area.



Dunstaffnage Castle

Bruce captured Dunstaffnage Castle near Oban from the MacDougalls, but reinforced it and used it as an important location from which to assert authority over the western waterways. Inverlochy Castle in Fort William, however, was never rebuilt.

Robert the Bruce is rightly remembered as a nearly peerless champion of Scotland. However, he ranks high alongside villains in Scottish history for his destruction of so many Scottish castles.

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## Resource for Scottish Genealogy

A book just written by David Dobson, an expert in researching many Scottish sources is

an excellent resource for your family genealogy research. It has an extensive list of publications and archival records in Scotland.

*Scottish Genealogy: The Basics and Beyond*  
Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2021



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

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