

HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

www.caledonians.com

Volume 118

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March 2020

NEXT GATHERING

The March gathering will be Sunday, March 8th, at 2:00pm. As usual, we meet at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. The program will be Judith Cummings singing Gaelic songs.

Note that our April and May Gatherings will both be on the 1st Sunday, April 5th and May 3rd, since Easter Sunday (April) and Mother's Day (May) are on our usual gathering schedule of the 2nd Sunday of each month. June will return to the 2nd Sunday.

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 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

March

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

<http://www.caledonians.com> Info: 206-364-6025

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

14 St. Patrick's Day Ceilidh-bration, Celtic Arts Foundation, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 5:30pm. \$40. 360-416-4934
<https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/spd20/>

21 Clan Gordon Pipe Band Tartan Ball, Washington State Fairgrounds, Puyallup, 7:00pm. \$25 Order tickets through Brown Paper Tickets on the pipe band's website: <https://www.cgpb.org/tartan-ball.html>

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>.

April

5 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125. **Note: this is one week earlier than usual, due to Easter Sunday being on the 2nd Sunday.** <http://www.caledonians.com> Info: 206-364-6025

May

3 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125. **Note: this is one week earlier than usual, due to Mother's Day being on the 2nd Sunday.** <http://www.caledonians.com> Info: 206-364-6025

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/>.

Gung Haggis Fat Choy 14

Nearly 280 people enjoyed a multicourse Chinese dinner and haggis at the multicultural Robert Burns Dinner & Chinese New Year celebration on Sunday, February 23rd at China Harbor Restaurant. Producer Bill McFadden had arranged a terrific program. Special guests were Alex Fan, Director General of the Taipei Economic & Cultural Center, and colleagues Dr. James Chin and Charles Liu. Founder Todd Wong of Vancouver, BC attended and was the emcee for the event.



Bill McFadden with Todd Wong and Alex Fan



Northwest Junior Pipe Band (drums)



Todd Wong giving the "Address to A Haggis"



Dale Cummings and daughters, Flora & Elinor.



Karen Shelton-Johnson's Scottish Dancers



"Fire Dance" by Melody Xie's Chinese Dancers

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

From *The Scottish Banner* and Wikipedia

Bagpipes

March 10th is International Bagpipe Day.

The bagpipe is considered to be the national instrument of Scotland. However, bagpipes truly are a global instrument with historians believing they can be traced back to Egypt and were introduced into Scotland by Roman armies. Nero, the then-powerful Emperor of Rome from A.D. 54, was said to be quite a skilled piper. (Ed.: Maybe the unproven legend that Nero fiddled while Rome burned was actually that he piped!]

What is certain, however, is that ancient bagpipes have existed in various forms in a variety of places around the world for a millennium or more, including all areas of Europe, Anatolia, the



Caucasus, and around the Persian Gulf. Many examples of early folk bagpipes in continental Europe can be found in the paintings of Breughel, Teniers, Jordaens, and Durer. They also were carved on buildings and

furniture.

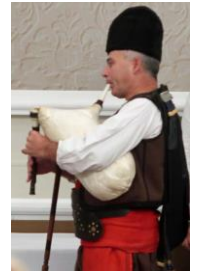
Traditionally, bagpipes were made from the skin of a sheep or goat, turned inside out, with the pipes attached where the legs and neck would be. Today, both synthetic and leather varieties are available, each with its own set



of aficionados. Some bagpipes are inflated when the player blows into the bag; some are inflated by a small set of bellows held under the player's arm. In general, bagpipes must have a source of air (the bag), and at least one drone and one chanter (melody pipe.) Depending on the local tradition and use, various bagpipes may have a second chanter and/or up to four drones.

Some Celtic regions have individual national versions adapted to suit their own unique sound. For example, the Scottish Highland pipes are the loudest, and most played in large pipe bands worldwide. However, even in Scotland there is need for quieter versions, often grouped as "fireside pipes" or "small pipes". In Ireland, the quieter uilleann pipes are more popular, in French Brittany they favour the binou and in the Spanish Celtic regions of Asturias and Galicia, the local bagpipe is the gaita. It is thought that there are approximately 130 distinct varieties of bagpipes across the world.

Modern Bulgarian Bagpiper



Musician with a Northern Italian Baghèt, wearing traditional dress.



Laz man from Turkey playing a Tulum.



Various forms of the Tsampouna, found in the Greek Islands.



Syrian piper in Damascus.

Besides accompanying singing and dance, bagpipes were notably used on the battlefield. It is the only musical instrument in history that has ever been deemed a “weapon of war”. James Reid, a Scottish Jacobite piper, was hung by British authorities for having a bagpipe during the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

There are stories of the brave pipers, who during WWI, climbed out of the trenches, unarmed, to play bagpipes for the Highland regiments going over the top and into battle. This remarkable feat earned the respect of German troops who dubbed them “Die Damen aus der Hölle” or “Ladies from Hell” due to the kilts worn and the fighting spirit of the Scots. Pipers were trained for military service in WWII. One notably played on the beach on D-Day.

While one traditional purpose of bagpipes was to provide music for dancing, this use declined as traditional forms of dance declines and dance band and recordings increased. As music tonalities and tastes in music changed, the use of bagpipes for dancing and singing declined. However, since the 1960s, composers have re-introduced bagpipes into other forms of music, including rock, metal, jazz, hip-hop, punk, and even classical music. Examples of this are Paul McCartney’s “Mull of Kintyre”, AC/DC’s “It’s a Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock ‘n’ Roll)”, and Peter Maxwell Davies’s composition *An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise*.

The popularity of pipe bands for parades and formal events, as well as in recent movies such as *Braveheart* and theatrical shows such as *Riverdance*, has bloomed in recent years. Despite historical evidence of world-wide use, bagpipes primarily represent Scotland (and sometimes Ireland) in people’s minds. Bagpipe making was

once a craft that produced instruments in many distinctive local traditional styles. Thus, it boggles the mind to learn that today the world’s biggest producer of the instrument is Pakistan!

Ancient Secret of Stone Circles Revealed



New evidence of a massive lightning strike at the centre of a hidden stone circle in the Outer Hebrides may help shed light on why these monuments were created thousands of years ago. One rarely-visited site on the Isle of Lewis, known as Site XI or Alrigh na Beinne Bige, now consists of a single standing stone on an exposed hillside. Geophysics revealed that not only was the stone originally part of a circle of standing stones, but also that there was a massive, star-shaped magnetic anomaly in the centre – either the result of a single, large lightning strike or many smaller strikes on the same spot.

Such clear evidence of lightning strikes is extremely rare in the UK, so the association with this stone circle is unlikely to be coincidental. Whether the lightning at Site XI focused on a tree or rock which is no longer there, or the monument itself attracted strikes, is uncertain. Either way, the remarkable evidence suggests that forces of nature could have been closely linked with everyday life and beliefs of the early farming communities on the island.

Did You Know?

The Forth (Rail) Bridge



The Forth Bridge, a cantilever railway bridge across the Firth of Forth first opened in 1890. The Prince of Wales was part of the opening ceremony. Its opening stirred controversy on aesthetic grounds, as many people believed it to be supremely ugly. This judgment has greatly softened in the passage of time. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, in 2016 it was voted Scotland's greatest man-made wonder, and is considered to be a symbol of Scotland.

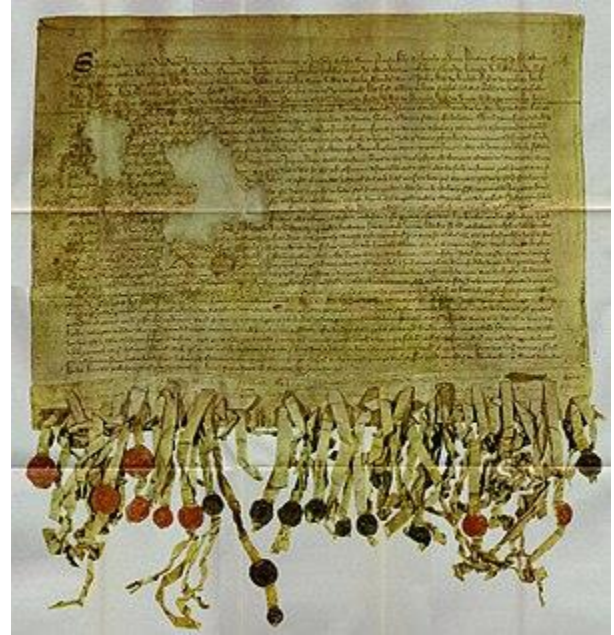
Here are some facts about this iconic, historic, and dynamic bridge: For many years it was the world's longest bridge at 8,094 feet and two cantilever spans of 1,709 feet. The cost was £3,000,000 (about \$15,000,000), an extraordinary amount for the day.

The highest point of the bridge stands 361 feet above high water and 449 feet above its foundations. An amazing 53,000 tonnes of steel and 6.5 million rivets were used in its construction. The main structure (portal to portal) measures 1,630 metres. There are 1,040 lights installed on the bridge, using approximately 35-40,000 metres of cable.

The construction of the bridge resulted in an unbroken East Coast railway route from London to Aberdeen. Two hundred trains use the bridge every day, carrying 3 million passengers each year.

Declaration of Arboath

2020 marks the 700th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath, one of Scotland's most important historical artefacts.



The Declaration is a letter dated 6 April 1320 written by the barons and freeholders of the Kingdom of Scotland to Pope John XXII, asking him to recognize Scotland's independence and acknowledge Robert the Bruce as the country's lawful king. It defended Scotland's right to use military action when unjustly attacked. This letter is the sole survivor of three created at the time. The others were a letter from the King of Scots, Robert I, and a letter from four Scottish bishops that all made similar points.

The Declaration was part of a broader diplomatic campaign, which sought to assert Scotland's position as an independent kingdom, rather than its being a feudal land controlled by England's Norman kings.

Historic letters of this age are rarely still in existence, and the original letter sent to the pope at Avignon has been lost. On the original, the names of 39 earls and barons were listed at the beginning and all likely had their seals attached to the bottom of the letter, imbedded in beads of wax. The existing original is a copy made at the time and has just 19 seals imbedded in the beads of wax. It is held in the care of National Records of Scotland.

The Declaration of Arboath is said to have inspired the American Declaration of Independence.

Radio Broadcasts

Scotland's first radio broadcast took place on 6 March 1923, in Glasgow. By the summer of 1924, stations had opened in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and, by the eve of the Second World War, over 90% of the Scottish population were served by BBC transmitters.



Thermos Flasks

In 1892, Scottish scientist Sir James Dewar invented the vacuum flask. Through his work in cryogenics, he identified a need to keep a chemical placed in a flask at a stable temperature. To do this, Dewar placed a glass bottle in another larger glass bottle, and evacuated the air between the two bottle walls. In doing so, Dewar created a partial vacuum to keep the temperature of the contents stable.

Hiring a professional glass blower to make a sturdier flask led to the commercial manufacture of the "Dewar Flask" in 1898. By 1904 the vacuum insulation technology resulted in a vacuum bottle that quickly became a staple in the lives of ordinary people, not just scientists. A competition to name the vacuum bottle resulted in "Thermos", derived from a Greek word meaning "heat".



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

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