



Volume 119 Issue 11 November 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, November 14th, 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.

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

St. Andrew Program - Tom Lamb will do a presentation on St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, and include Scottish music by the Corries.

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.

The December Caledonian gathering will be on Zoom on December 12, at 2:00 p.m.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie Munro reports that she has learned that Harry McAlister is doing reasonably well and Bill McFadden, who recently tripped and twisted his knee, is much improved.

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.

PASSING

We regret to report that long-time Caledonian member Janet Lyle Hews passed away on September 25, 2021. She had been a resident at Providence Mount Saint Vincent in Seattle for several years. Janet was born in 1928 in Canada and was raised in Scotland. She came with her mother and sister to Yakima, WA, during World War II, and married Richard Hews there. After their divorce, she moved with her children to Seattle. Janet was fiercely proud of her Scottish heritage and her liberal philosophy. She was active in community theater, both in Yakima and Seattle, and read children's stories on KRAB radio. She earned a B.A. in Journalism from the UW in the 1970s. She is survived by three of her four children, Peter, Clair, and Diana.

We have been unable to connect with her family since her passing. If anyone has contact information for them, please let Bill McFadden know.

Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

NOVEMBER

14 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjJkxQT09>

Recap of the October Caledonian Gathering



Blackthorn Band provided their usual high quality program for the October Caledonian gathering, despite being on Zoom. Most of us have been accustomed to attending

their concerts at the Seattle Scottish Highland Games, so this was a very different setting. Even so, the four members of the group rose to the challenge and entertained us with verve.

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.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

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

Celebrating St. Andrew, Patron Saint of Scotland

St. Andrew's Day, November 30th, has been a longstanding opportunity to celebrate Scottish culture, food, and dance.

St. Andrew was known for being strong, sociable, and fair. He encouraged people to share what they had with those in need. The first Society of St. Andrew was set up in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1729. Its initial purposes were to provide homesick Scots a way to get together, and to help Scottish migrants in distress.

St. Andrew is believed to have died on a diagonally transversed (X-shaped) cross. This cross came to be called St. Andrew's cross. The Saltire, the flag of Scotland, is in the form of a white X on a blue background.

Even though St. Andrew never set foot in Scotland, a few of his bones were brought to the cathedral at St Andrews, Scotland, and he has been considered the patron saint of Scotland.

St. Andrew's Day celebrates the beginning of Scotland's winter festivals. It is also connected with Advent, which begins on the first Sunday after November 26.

North Ronaldsay Sheep

The sheep of North Ronaldsay in the Orkney isles are most amazing animals. Not only are they thought to have been roaming the island since the Iron Age, but they have evolved to be one of only two species in the world that feed exclusively on kelp and seaweed. (The other is the marine iguana, native to the Galapagos Islands.)

This breed spends most of its time on the island's rocky shore, blocked by a Sheep Dyke built in the 19th century



that encircles the entire island and blocks them from fields. Instead they feed on seaweed washed up by the surrounding sea. Since more than in other seasons, winter storms throw larger amounts of kelp and seaweed onto the shore, North Ronaldsay sheep fatten in winter when this food is abundant. They feed at low tide and retreat to higher ground at high tide to ruminate.

These sheep are smaller than most, ranging 50-60 pounds. They were originally kept for their wool, which can be white, black, grey, or brown. Now, however, the flocks are largely feral and in danger of extinction.

Because they subsist only on kelp and seaweed, their digestive systems have adapted to this unusual diet. One such adaptation is to more efficiently extract the trace element of copper,

something that is quite low in these plants. Copper in large quantities is toxic to sheep. The North Ronaldsay sheep have evolved so much in this regard that if they were to change their diet to grass, they would be susceptible to copper toxicity. Even the slight amount of this trace metal in grass is too great for them. Their meat has a high iodine content from the kelp and is described as “gamey.”

What Once Happened In Scotland In November?

1489 - Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII of England and wife of James IV of Scotland, was born. It was due to her bloodline that King James VI of Scotland inherited the crown of England after the death of Queen Elizabeth I.

1695 - The Bank of Scotland was founded by an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

1703 - The greatest storm on record hit Britain with the loss of 8,000 people in 24 hours.

1835 - Andrew Carnegie, the American steel magnate, was born in Dunfermline.

1850 - Robert Louis Stevenson was born.

1869 - Edinburgh University admitted women to the study of medicine, although the first woman to pass her exams was not allowed to graduate.

1877 - Mitchell Library in Glasgow, opened. It is now the largest public reference library in Europe and has one of the finest collections of Robert Burns materials.

1896 - The speed limit for horseless carriages was raised from 4 mph to 14 mph.

1918 - Armistice Day marked the end of hostilities in World War I. Though Scots made up only 10% of the UK population at the time, they were a fifth of Britain's total dead.

2014 - Nicola Sturgeon is officially sworn in as First Minister of Scotland, the first female in the role.

Scottish Words for Wet Weather

Dreich – This is the most common word to describe Scottish weather. And it tends to [top](#)

[polls](#) for favorite Scots words. The Scotsman explains it as: “Wet, dull, gloomy, dismal, dreary or any combination of these. Scottish weather at its most miserable.”

Drookit – Extremely wet, drenched, from an Old Norse word meaning drowned.

Fret – A cold, wet mist from the sea.

Oorlich – “Damp, chilly and unpleasant, raw, bleak, depressing,” says Dictionaries of the Scots Language.

Plowetery – Messy, dirty and wet.

Smirr – Drizzle.

Snell – “The most biting of weather, the type that you can feel right down to the bone,” says the Scotsman.

Stoating – When heavy rain bounces off the ground.

Pictish Fort Reconstructed

The largest known Pictish settlement is being reconstructed at Burghead, Moray, with archaeological digs providing considerable new knowledge about what life for Picts living in this northern fort might have looked like between the sixth and tenth centuries.

Located on a high spot in northeast Scotland on the tip, or head, of a peninsula jutting into the Moray



Firth, Burghead was well protected on three sides by rocky cliffs. A series of three separate man-made ramparts guarded its land connection. Its size and complexity suggests it was a significant power base for the northern Picts.

Excavations by archaeologists funded in part by Historic Environment Scotland have revealed that the fort, then called Torridon, was densely populated. Dating of wood and iron spikes suggests the site is pre-Roman Iron Age.

Despite willful destruction by locals over the centuries as the stones of the site were mined for local construction, the foundations of the ramparts and buildings have survived far better than expected. Middens (garbage dumps of the era) yielded a trove of objects that help explain the everyday lives of inhabitants. Other evidences of metalworking, weaponry, even hair pins and dress pins were found, along with Pictish carved stones and fragments of early Christian sculpture.



This is the only Pictish fort where bullstones have been found, and they are a symbol of the site.

Orkney Vikings attacked the Moray coast around the 9th or 10th Centuries. Torridon, with its views over the Moray Firth, easy sea access, and good defenses was over run and burned to the ground by Vikings.

After the Highland Clearances, the planned town of Burghead was built in the early 19th Century beside the ancient fort. As a result, the ramparts were leveled and parts of the town were built of their stones and sit on top of their old foundations.

Part of the seaward defenses were destroyed and transformed to construct a harbor for the new town. It became a thriving fishing and trading port with the Baltic fleet.

Below is a picture of the modern town and the raised site where the fort once stood.



If you are interested in reading more about this fascinating Pictish fort, additional information can be found on these sites:

www.burghead.com/burghead-fort

<https://highland-scotland.com/burghead/>

Dual Scottish-American Scientist Wins Nobel Prize in Chemistry

David W. C. MacMillan, a professor Chemistry at Princeton University, shared the 2021 Nobel Prize in Chemistry with Benjamin List “for the development of asymmetric organocatalysis.” MacMillan was born in 1968 in Bellshill, Scotland and grew up in New Stevenston. He received his undergraduate degree at the University of Glasgow, and came to the U.S. to begin doctoral studies at the University of California, Irvine. He hailed his Scottish upbringing as a reason for his winning the Nobel.



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

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