

# HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

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

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## NEXT GATHERING

**Sunday, October 8, 2017, 2:00 pm at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98125.**

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## PROGRAM

Dale and Flora Cummings will perform a number of Scottish songs and dances. Tea will be provided by the Board.

Diana Smith has said she will be visiting in Seattle at this time and she plans to attend the Gathering. She hopes to see many of you while she is in Seattle and this would be a good time to see her. Hope you are able to attend.

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## Facebook

Did you know that the Caledonians have a Facebook page? Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/seattlecaledonians/?ref=bookmarks>

Interesting articles and notices are frequently posted there, so check back often.

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## Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

### October 2017

**5 Geoffrey Castle**, The Hard Rock Café, 116 Pike St., Seattle, WA. Benefit for Lois Hashikawa Levin, freelance photographer with cancer. 206-204-2233 Tickets \$25 at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3087801>

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

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

**14 Geoffrey Castle**, Kirkland Performance Center Gala Fundraiser and Auction. Hyatt Hotel, Bellevue, WA

**21-22 Celtic Fling Weekend**, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 111 NE 80th St., Seattle, WA. 206-523-7476

**21 A Taste of Scotland**, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 8398 NE 12th St., Medina, WA. 425-454-9541

**23 Geoffrey Castle**, The Wilde Rover, 111 Central Way, Kirkland, WA 425-822-8940

### November 2017

**3 Geoffrey Castle**, Pay it Forward Benefit Concert, The Camano Island Center, 606 Arrowhead Road, Camano Island, WA. 7-9pm. \$20

**4 Heather Tartan Ball & Silent Auction**, Seattle Latvian Center, 11710 3rd Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 6pm-11:30pm. Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 at the door. <http://www2.sshga.org/heather-tartan-ball/>

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

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

**17 Geoffrey Castle**, The Wilde Rover, 111 Central Way, Kirkland, WA 425-822-8940

**18 Geoffrey Castle, Fortieth Annual Festival of Trees Gala Fundraiser**, The Fairmount Olympic Hotel, Seattle

**24 Geoffrey Castle**. STG Presents Seattle's The Last Waltz Tribute, Neptune Theater, 1301 NE 45th St., Seattle, WA. 8pm.

**30 Geoffrey Castle, Celtic Christmas Celebration**. Concrete Theatre, 45920 Main St. Concrete, WA.

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## **Celtic Fling Celebration and Fundraiser**

On Saturday, October 21, the Parish Hall and educational building rooms at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church will be transformed into a marketplace of Celtic shops, tea room, pub, demonstrations, music, and much, much, more...fun for the whole family to celebrate Celtic heritage and raise funds for the outreach programs of the parish.

On Sunday, October 22, at the 10 am service John McBride, bagpiper, members of the Benson School of Dance, and the Keith Highlanders Pipe Band will be part of the worship service. They will present a program following the service in the Parish Hall.

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## **53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Heather Tartan Ball & Silent Auction**

The Seattle Scottish Highland Games Association is pleased to extend an invitation to you and your friends to attend the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Heather Tartan Ball and Silent Auction.

**Saturday, November 4**  
6 PM – 11:30 PM  
Seattle Latvian Cultural Center  
11710 – 3rd Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA

Doors open at 6:00pm with a social hour. The dress is semi-formal. There will be a no-host bar, and Scottish meat pies will be available for purchase.

Scottish country dance instruction at 6:30 pm and 9:30pm. Dance music provided by BottleRockit at 7:45pm. Piping performances will be throughout the evening.

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## **Looking Ahead:**

### **Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society Burns Dinner**

Plan to attend our own Burns Dinner on Saturday, January 27, 2018.

This year we will be moving to the Latvian Cultural Center, 11710 – 3rd Avenue NE, Seattle, WA. In lieu of a formal bar, you can BYOB and/or add it to the "share" table, if you wish.

Doors will open at 5pm and dinner will be served at 6pm. Dinner will again be catered by Kaspars Seattle Catering.

Tickets are \$45, and may be purchased at our October, November, or December Gatherings. Or, send a check (or have your bank send a check) made out to the Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society to P.O. Box 27278, Seattle, WA 98165-1778.

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## **Articles About Scotland and Things Scottish**

From *The Vintage News.com*

### **A brief history of the Scottish tartan**

Tartan has been associated with Scotland for centuries, but if we go further back in history to the 8th century BC, the tartan can be traced in Hallstatt salt mines near Salzburg, Austria and later in Xinjiang, China.

It got first to the British Isles before it was finally discovered in Scotland during the 3rd century.

E. J. W. Barber, a textile historian, argued that ancient Celtic populations produced tartan-like textiles and some of them, very well preserved, have been discovered in 2004 in the Hallstatt salt mines near Salzburg, Austria. When the textile from the Tarim mummies in Xinjiang was analyzed, it showed similarities with the ones discovered in Salzburg.

The earliest tartan discovered in Scotland which dates from the 3rd century AD is the "Falkirk" tartan found as Falkirk in Stirlingshire. It was just a fragment with a simple design of natural light and dark wool stuffed into a ceramic pot that contained almost 2,000 Roman coins.

But the tartan we associate with today's Scotland can't be traced earlier than the 16th century or after the 17th or 18th century when the tartan became a common fabric for the Scotts.

At first, the tartan was common among the Highlanders while in the other parts of Scotland it evolved into a symbol of the clans. The tartan was used for making today's established traditional Scottish dress that includes the "philabeg," or kilt, and of course, the trews, worn with shoes of untanned hide and the "cuarans," knee length boots.

After the Battle of Culloden in 1746, the government in London passed an Act of Parliament that forbade the Highlanders to carry weapons and wear tartan. When the Act was repealed in 1785, the Highlanders weren't very enthusiastic about

wearing the tartan since they got used to wearing the same dress as the other Scots. And it wasn't until 1822 when George IV, during a visit to Edinburgh suggested that people attending the official functions should wear their respective tartans.

The early tartans had only two or three colors extracted from local trees, berries, roots and plants growing in certain local areas. So, certain colors became symbols of and associated with clans. The clan tartans became widespread during the 19th century. However these "clan tartans" are more of an invented tradition that started probably around the end 18th century. It is known that there weren't such distinctions during the time of the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

It is supposed that the idea of groups of men being associated with certain tartan originates from the military units in the 18th century. So, before everyone could wear any tartan they preferred and it rather depended on the one's location, but with time, its design became a symbol of identity with certain clans.

Some of the most popular clan tartans are, for example, Mackenzie's one which is the uniform of Seaforth Highlanders, an infantry regiment of the British Army from Northern Scotland, established by the Earl of Seaforth in 1778. Today, the Pipes and Drums Band of the Royal Military College of Canada wears the Mackenzie tartan.

Another one is the Campbell tartan which has many varieties but there are only four, officially recognized by the Clan Chief and are worn by different branches of the clan: Campbell, commonly known as the Black Watch; Campbell of Breadalbane; Campbell of Cawdor, and Campbell of Loudoun.

All clans have a specifically designed tartan which is officially recognized as the clan's symbol.

There are several types of tartan among which the most popular today are the "Royal Stewart tartan" which is the personal tartan of Queen Elizabeth II and the "Black Watch tartan" also known as "Old Campbell", "Grant Hunting", "Universal", "Government" which is still used by several military units throughout the Commonwealth.

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From the *bbc.com News Magazine*

## The Italian Highlanders who may have Scottish roots

Thousands of Italians immigrated to Scotland in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, but it seems that 400 years earlier a group of Scots may have settled in a village in the Italian Alps. So local legend has it. . . And there are plenty of signs to suggest that maybe, just maybe, it's true.

High up in the mountains of northern Italy, just a few kilometres from the Swiss border, the people of the tiny village of Gurro speak a strange dialect, incomprehensible even to the other villages in the same valley. They have peculiar surnames, and the women's traditional costume features a patterned underskirt that looks suspiciously like a tartan.



One possible explanation is that their forefathers include a unit of Scottish soldiers – the *Garde Ecossaie* – who served the French King, Francis I, and were defeated with him at the Battle of Pavia, near Milan, in February 1525. The story goes that while trying to make their way home the Scots stopped in Gurro, where they got snowed in for the winter. Many locals believe they never left. One tale describes how the Scottish visitors stole girls from the next village, celebrating their trophy brides with big parties – before waking the village priest at dawn to legalise their unions. This could explain a custom peculiar to Gurro, in which receptions were traditionally held before the marriage ceremony and weddings took place early in the morning. Alma Dresti, who was born and bred in Gurro, said, "This tradition of having the wedding lunch one week before the actual marriage continued until the 1950's. My parents, who got married in January 1951, did that –they had a big party with all their relatives a week before the wedding, then returned to their family homes, and then a week later got married at 6am in church."

Alma's mother wore traditional dress, including the tartan underskirt. Some have the surname

Patritti, which they believe is derived from “Patrick.”

An unusual architectural feature is that some of the buildings have



wooden supports under the windows, positioned to form what looks like the St. Andrew’s cross. Some consider Celtic-derived words in their dialect to be a sign of Scottish origins. The word

“yes”, instead of being “si” as in Italian, is “aye”. They actually switch the accent so it’s more “ayee” than “aye”, but it sounds like the Scottish way.

There are plenty more fragments of apparent evidence that locals can list. One is a typical folk song with words indicating nostalgia for the sea, although 500 years ago the people of Gurro would never have traveled far enough to see it. And there is a fisherman’s knot that must have been taught to the mountain folk by men who fished. The bar in the village had always been called the Scotch Bar, but now it is the *circolo degli scozzesi* – the Scottish social club.

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From *The Scotsman* Newspaper

## **Nardini’s: Scotland’s best-loved ice cream institution**

By David McLean



It’s one of Scotland’s most iconic eating institutions, an ice cream empire that’s captured Scottish hearts,

minds, and taste buds for more than eight decades.

Largs’ Nardini Café can trace its origins back to 1890. That was the year Tuscan-born Pietro Nardini arrived with his family in sunny Renfrewshire.

After decades of squirrelling away their earnings, the Nardini family relocated to the seaside town of Largs in 1935 where they opened the café that would make theirs one of the best-known Italian surnames in all of Scotland.

Dressed in stylish Art Deco, it was a fully-functional café and restaurant from the get-go. Nardini’s specialty, however, has always been its authentic Italian ice cream, made from scratch to the family’s own secret recipe.

The Nardini name echoes far beyond the North Ayrshire coast and prior to the age of cheap package holidays abroad, you’d have been hard-pressed to find a free table. It became synonymous with the Glasgow Fair, spring weekends and summer trips ‘doon the watter’. But the glory days, knickbocker or otherwise, didn’t last forever. A sharp rise in the number of families jetting off to sunnier climes for their holidays saw Nardini’s profits melt faster than a half-abandoned hot fudge sundae.

Then came the much-publicised family feuds, Nardini’s own internal ‘Ice Cream Wars’ between brothers Peter and Aldo Nardini that at one point threatened to tear the business apart.

The ship was temporarily steadied in 1997 when the family sought help from a man accustomed to running parlours of a very different kind: funeral parlour impresario and friend of Peter Nardini, David Hendry. With Hendry involved, Nardini’s did initially turn a corner, but this came at a price, as the number of actual family members pulling the strings became increasingly wafer thin. Profit, however, did increase for a spell and the company even began to branch out and franchise itself, but it wouldn’t last. After racking up debts of £1.5 million, Nardini’s entered receivership in 2003.

The Nardini’s had indeed lost control of their empire, but it wasn’t the end of the café. In 2004, Tony Macaroni owner, Giuseppe “Sep” Marini, and David Equi, who fronts Equi’s, Scotland’s second largest ice cream manufacturer, formed a consortium to bring the famous café back from the brink. They reopened Nardini’s in December 2008 following a major £2.5 million refurbishment.

Having saved it from almost certain oblivion, joint owners, David Equi and Sep Marini have helped transform the fortunes of one of Scotland’s best-loved institutions. This was perfectly illustrated in 2015 when the *Sunday Mail* named Largs’ Nardini’s the best ice cream parlour in Scotland.

Now Nardini’s famous flavours can be enjoyed elsewhere, with cafes to be found in St. Andrews and in Glasgow.

## Did William Shakespeare visit Scotland to win over James VI?

By Stephen Millar



Robert Burns is Scotland's bard, but there is some evidence that more than a century before Burns was even born, William Shakespeare made a visit north of the border.

Macbeth was of course set in Scotland, but did the bard ever visit the country himself? Have you heard

the one about Elizabeth I, James VI, and William Shakespeare?

The story begins in 1599 when Elizabeth I (old and childless) was struggling to cope with rebellious courtiers, difficult wars in Ireland and elsewhere, and the threat of a Spanish invasion. One of her few pleasures came from private performances by troupes of actors, and the Lord Chamberlain's Men – with Shakespeare as a member – was one of her favourites.

In Scotland, James VI waited for Elizabeth to die, desperate to be named as her successor. But the Queen kept stringing him along, and meanwhile he had to deal with his own rebels, as well as the religious extremists of the Presbyterian kirk who openly defied him. It was for good reason he wore a stab-proof tunic.

Shakespeare was not having an easy time either. The Chamberlain's Men had recently been shut out of their own theatre, and were forced to dismantle it and rebuild it in Southwark as the Globe. Shakespeare owned a share in the new venture, but was under pressure. Not only did he have to keep writing hit plays, but the playhouses of London were under threat of closure. The Privy Council and civic authorities wanted the theatres 'plucked down' because they feared the plays encouraged immoral behaviour and sedition. Regular outbreaks of the plague also closed the playhouses, forcing actors to go on tour in the provinces.

To add to Shakespeare's woes, the Chamberlain's Men had serious competition for the Queen's affections, whilst her death was sure to make them vulnerable to their enemies. Here's where we add an obscure English comic actor named Lawrence Fletcher into the mix. The religious zealots of the

kirk ensured Scotland had no public theatres, but King James (a poet, writer and linguist) coveted the cultural scene down in London. Fletcher found a position as the 'King's Servant', arranging plays for James, and organising visits by English actors.

In late 1599, Fletcher arranged for one group of actors to come to Edinburgh, with records showing payments made to 'Inglis Commeidianis'. This appearance infuriated the Church (or Kirk, as it was known in Scotland) who tried to ban the troupe, but an incensed King James forced the Kirk to back down.

It seems reasonable to think Shakespeare was part of this troupe of actors. He was already a well-known poet and playwright, and Fletcher would have wanted to impress James.

Historian Michael Wood noted that as well as being "the greatest performing art of its day, theatre was also the most political." Indeed actors were routinely sent on tours by their wealthy patrons for propaganda reasons, serving as cultural diplomats and spies.

It seems plausible that Elizabeth would have sanctioned the visit, and wanted an 'A' team of actors to build goodwill with the Scottish king. A man as shrewd as Shakespeare may also have wanted to go to Scotland, given it afforded the opportunity to impress James and secure patronage from the future King of England.

There is no evidence regarding where the English actors performed, but it may have been at the Tennis Court theatre at Holyrood Palace.

Elizabeth died in 1603, and James arrived in London in May that year to take her throne. Just six days later, a Royal Patent was issued confirming the rights of the Chamberlain's Men to perform in London, and promoting them to the 'King's Men'. Soon they became 'grooms of the chamber', leap-frogging their rivals, and now safe from their enemies.

During Shakespeare's lifetime the King's Men would perform for James 187 times. Why would King James have made such a swift decision about Shakespeare and his colleagues without first seeing the competition? Perhaps he had already made up his mind after seeing the troupe perform in Scotland.

Crucially, the Royal Patent lists the key members of the King's Men. Lawrence Fletcher is listed first,

ahead of Shakespeare. This is strong evidence that Fletcher and Shakespeare were linked long before 1603. Shakespeare's ability to navigate the complex world of Elizabethan politics had paid off handsomely.

We will never know what really happened, but it is nice to think of Will Shakespeare strutting along the Royal Mile, avoiding the Kirk, and trying to find a decent pint with his mate, Lawrence Fletcher.

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## **New Highland trail to celebrate Gaelic poet Rob Donn**

By Alistair Munro

"Trailing Donn" will establish a themed trail linking places and people from across Mackay County in the north Highlands which appear in the stories, poems and songs of Rob Donn. Donn is an extremely important figure in the history of Gaelic literature and he is argued to be as important to Gaelic poetry as his contemporary Robert Burns is to poetry in Scots.

Donn made his living as a cattle drover and travelled widely around Mackay County. Unable to read or write, and dictating his poetry from memory only towards the end of his life, his work represents an important document of a world both expanding and contracting as the British state made its presence felt in the day-to-day life inhabited by Donn and his contemporaries.

Born at Alltnacaillich, Strathmore in 1714, Donn lived through a chaotic period in Highland history as the Jacobite Risings resulted in lasting changes throughout the Highlands. During Donn's lifetime poetry played a pivotal role in people's lives and circulated rapidly by oral transmission.

Rob Donn died in 1778 and a plain stone slab with his name and the date marks his grave in Balnakeil Churchyard. In 1829 a monument to him was erected with inscriptions in Greek, Latin, Gaelic and English.

For more about the Donn County project people are encouraged to visit <https://mackaycounty.wixsite.com/donncounty>

## **Bizarre Edinburgh Tradition**

### **SPITTING ON THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN**



The Heart of Midlothian is a heart-shaped mosaic on the pavement of the Royal Mile, which many people spit on in passing, supposedly to bring them good luck. Whilst spitting on the Heart of Midlothian is a tradition that goes back several hundred years, it was originally done as a sign of disdain rather than luck. The heart marks the entrance to the now-demolished Old Tolbooth prison, which was where Edinburgh's public executions took place. It is thought that locals would spit on prisoners as they were led from the prison entrance to the gallows to show their disgust.



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

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