

# HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

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

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## NEXT GATHERING

Our next gathering is **Sunday, June 11th**, at 2:00 p.m. **This is the second Sunday of June, as we are back to our usual meeting day of the month.** We will meet at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125. For those taking the freeway north, use the exit at NE 130<sup>th</sup> St in Seattle, turn left across the freeway, and turn right at the first light (1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE.) The church is one block north, on the left.

There is no requirement that people attending be vaccinated and/or boosted. The mask requirement has been changed and it is okay to either wear, or not wear, a mask while present in the church. Air purifiers will be running.

The gathering will be hybrid: in-person and on Zoom for those who truly cannot attend in person. The link for those who attend on Zoom is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjkxQT09>

## JUNE PROGRAM

Tom Lamb will lead a discussion about the future of this organization. The issues are a declining membership, which results in fewer persons to do the various tasks that keep an organization going, as well as a dicey financial situation.

It's a conundrum, one we need to discuss with everyone. We encourage every member to

attend as they are able, either in person or via Zoom.

The Caledonians will not meet over the months of July, August, and September, to allow members to attend the various Scottish Highland games being held. See the Calendar for dates of games and contact information.

## ALL IN A SCOTTISH EVENING (AKA SCOTTISH MOVIE NIGHT)

Sixteen people joined us on Zoom on Sunday evening, May 28<sup>th</sup> to watch the Scottish movie "The Bruce."

The next Scottish Evening will be on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m., using our usual Zoom connection. (See link to the left.)

Based on votes from participants, the next movie will be "Kidnapped." We will view the 1971 version of the 1886 novel by Robert Louis Stevenson. This version stars Michael Caine, Trevor Howard, Jack Hawkins, and Donald Pleasence, as well as a number of well-known British character actors. The film begins in the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden.

## SUNSHINE REPORT

If you know of a Caledonian who would be cheered by a card, let Bonnie Munro know. She can be reached by phone at 425-806-3734.

## Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

### JUNE

**3 Bellingham Highland Games.** 2240 Grandview Road, Ferndale.

<https://www.scottishdancesociety.org/scottish-gathering-information>

**11 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle gathering.** 2:00pm. In-person & on Zoom. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE., Seattle, WA.

**24 In Memory of Skye Richendrfer.** 2:00 p.m. Salem Lutheran Church, 2529 N. Laventure Rd., Mount Vernon, WA

**24 Tacoma Highland Games,** Frontier Park, Graham WA. <https://www.tacomagames.org>

**25 Fourth Sunday Caledonian Scottish Movie Night.** 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.

### JULY

**8-9 Skagit Valley Highland Games,** Edgewater Park, Mount Vernon. <https://celticarts.org/skagit-valley-highland-games/>

**21-23 Pacific NW Scottish Highland Games & Clan Gathering.** Enumclaw Expo Center, 45224 284<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Enumclaw, WA 98022

### SEPTEMBER

**9-10 Kelso Highlander Festival.** Tam O'Shanter Park, Kelso, WA

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## 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. Be sure to "Like" the articles so they show up frequently on your Facebook stream.

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## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Election and Installation of new officers will be at the June 11<sup>th</sup> gathering.

Nominations put forth for offices for the 2023-24 year are:

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President – Diane McAlister  
Treasurer – Ruth McFadden  
Parliamentarian – Victoria Johnson

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2 Trustees – Dennis Smith & Diana Smith

## Recap of the May Caledonian Gathering

Sixteen people were present in person and on Zoom. Bill McFadden presented information about the Picts and recent archaeological discoveries about the stones they left. We also viewed a Youtube documentary about the Picts.

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## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

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Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner* and *Smithsonian Magazine*, as well as information in *Wikipedia* and various websites pertaining to the topics.

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### Common Ridings

The Return to the Ridings, a tradition unique to the Scottish Borders, is one of the world's oldest equestrian festivals. Riding the boundaries has taken place for centuries. Eleven towns in the Scottish Borders continue the ritual, using horses for the traditional ride out.



Common Ridings, or riding town boundaries, traces its tradition back over 900 years when the "border badlands" were in constant disruption during the long wars with England and because of the tribal custom of looting and cattle thieving. Reiving, the ancient Scots word for theft, was commonplace among the major Borders families. Reivers not only stole from the nearby English, but also from their own Scottish neighbours.

Children in lawless borders families such as Armstrong, Elliot, Graham, Irvine, Johnstone, Kerr, Maxwell, Nixon, and Scott grew up thinking of reiving as a kind of job taught from father to son,

one that they naturally would follow in their elders' footsteps. Members of these families rode, feuded, fought, and pillaged over the wild tribal borders area for 350 years.

During these lawless and turbulent times, townspeople would ride their boundaries, or "marches," on horseback to protect their common lands and prevent encroachment by neighbouring landlords. As more peaceful and settled times came, the ridings ceremony remained in the border region in honour of local legend, history, and tradition.

Each of the eleven towns still involved in the tradition puts their own local tradition and spin on these historic equestrian pageants from June through August. The Selkirk Common Riding, which takes place mid-June, is recognised as one of the oldest of the Border festivals. Its history goes back to 1113, when David I wanted to establish an abbey at Selkirk.

Today, the colorful spectacles are a stunning display of horsemanship, pageantry, and tradition by hundreds of riders at a time. Some Festival events can last for up to two weeks, involving lots of rideouts, barbecues, traditional sports, games, music, and traditional tipples.

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### The Glasgow—Scotland's Farm Tractor



In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, imported mass-produced American-made farm tractors dominated the market in Britain. But these tractors were designed mainly to work the vast flatlands of the American Midwest, and weren't ideally suited to operating on hilly and muddy Scottish farmlands. With an eye toward creating a tractor fitted for working in such British conditions, W. Guthrie, in conjunction with John Wallace & Sons Farm Implements and the DL Motor Manufacturing Co of Motherwell, designed the Glasgow Tractor.

The Glasgow was not only an all-wheel drive tractor, but was in a three-wheeled configuration with two wheels in the front and one in the back. This layout, combined with its weight distribution and low centre of gravity made the tractor resistant to overturning. It offered more stability than did a four-wheeled configuration, as it was less likely that one of the wheels would lift clear of the ground on steep or awkward landscapes.

Each of the Glasgow's wheels could be fitted with spuds for improved traction, while the machine's even weight distribution reduced bogging.

The Glasgow's unique steering system, rather than turning the rear or front wheels, slowed one of the front wheels while the other wheels kept rotating at a consistent speed, causing the vehicle to pivot on the slowed wheel and so turn the tractor. The driver's seat was positioned all the way at the back of the machine behind the rear wheel, from where the driver had a full view of the front wheels as well as of the hitching and lift mechanisms which were positioned below the seat.

Despite its promising start, the Glasgow Tractor had some daunting challenges. For one thing, it cost nearly three times as much as the Fordson Tractor then available. Further, its motor was overwhelmingly noisy and proved to be a high maintenance unit. These factors led to the demise of the Glasgow in 1924.

A surviving example of the Glasgow Tractor is on display at the National Museum of Rural Life, near East Kilbride in South Lanarkshire. The museum is operated by National Museums of Scotland.

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### Origin Insights into Scotland's Mysterious Picts



Scotland's Picts have long been viewed as a mysterious people with enigmatic symbols and inscriptions carved on stones, accentuated by representations of them as wild barbarians with exotic origins. The Picts were first mentioned in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE as resisting the Romans.

They went on to form a powerful kingdom that ruled over a large part of northern Britain in present-day north-east Scotland.

Recent genetic research has confirmed that the origin of the Picts was local to the British Isles, as their gene pool is drawn from the older Iron Age, and not from large-scale migration from exotic locations far to the east. Studies comparing samples between southern and northern Pictland showed that they were not one homogenous group, but had some distinct differences. While the differences seem to point to patterns of migration and life-time mobility, researchers agree that this needs further study.

The present genetic findings not only provide new insight into Pictish population history, but serve to test directly various longstanding assumptions, and even myths, about Pictish origins and social structure.

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## Dark Skies of the Isle of Rùm



The Isle of Rùm is one of the Small Isles comprising an archipelago in the Inner Hebrides, situated south of Skye and north of Mull. Rùm and the other Small Isles of Eigg, Muck, Canna, and Sandy are accessed by passenger-only Caledonian MacBrayne ferries. Visitors are not permitted to take vehicles to the islands.

Rùm is the largest of these islands. Its name is either Old Norse, meaning “wide island” or Gaelic meaning “isle of the ridge.” It measures merely 40.4 square miles and is largely volcanic.

Clearances in 1825 removed all the indigenous residents, and the isle became a sporting estate. In 1888 it was bought by John Bullough as a private holiday retreat. Bullough re-introduced the native Rùm pony. After John’s death, in 1897, his son Sir George Bullough, a textile tycoon from Lancashire,



commissioned the construction of the grand Kinloch Castle. It is actually a huge Edwardian mansion that

was built as a private residence.

Construction provided employment for over 300 stone-masons, carpenters, wood-carvers, stained glass makers and many other specialist tradesmen. One in particular was almost unique, that of electrician, as Kinloch Castle was the only place outside Glasgow that had electricity at the time.

After Sir George died, the island passed through several hands until the Nature Conservancy Council (now Scottish Natural Heritage) bought the island in 1957 and continues to manage it. The population of 22 is made up entirely of SNH employees and their families, a schoolteacher, and a few researchers. All live at Kinloch on the east side of the island. The once exclusive Castle is now a museum piece and a hostel with its own bistro, bar, craft shop, and tea room.

Besides the semi-domesticated Rùm ponies, wildlife includes Manx Shearwater colonies and nearly 1000 Red Deer on the island, and both Golden and White-tailed Eagles breed here. Otters abound in the seas around the island.

While Rùm encourages visitors, the Isle is not for the faint-hearted. There is a lot of explore, but the terrain is tough and there are few paths. Rùm’s Cuillin ridge is a very challenging 13 miles of ascent and descent, taking in up to six peaks and, on a good day, some fantastic views. Other possible activities include cycling, kayaking, fishing, and deer stalking.



In an effort to encourage more visitors, particularly in the winter months, and thus support additional employment, Rùm is now looking to the sky in a bid to be declared Europe’s very first “dark sky island.” A £10,000 fundraiser on behalf of the Isle of Rùm Community Trust to buy sky-gazing equipment such as cameras, telescopes, and weather stations is part of the bid application to the International Dark-Sky Association.

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## Clothes Rationing in World War II

Rationing was an integral part of life in the Second World War. There were many things in short supply, but even clothing purchases were limited.

Clothes were rationed from 1 June 1941 until 1949. The fabrics were needed in the war effort, so people were urged to mend and reuse their clothing, and needed coupons to purchase new clothes, when they could find them in shops.

In many ways war disrupted fashion. Prices rose and fashion staples such as silk were no longer available. It became important for civilian clothes to be practical as well as stylish. Clothing and accessories manufacturers were quick to see commercial potential in some of the war's greatest dangers. By the outbreak of war in September 1939, over 40 million respirators had been distributed in Britain as a result of the potential threat of gas warfare. Retailers were quick to spot a gap in the



market for an attractive solution to cardboard boxes toted dangling from string handles. Handbags were specially produced with a compartment for a gas mask.

The blackout provided another unexpected

commercial opportunity as people struggled to be safely seen at night. A range of luminous accessories, from pin-on flowers to handbags were produced that would reflect light and help make their wearers more visible in the dark. For instance,



buttons were made that looked normal in daylight, but glowed in the dark.

The "siren suit" was an all-in-one garment that could be pulled on quickly over nightclothes if the wearer had to escape to an outdoor air raid shelter in the middle of the night. A practical drop down panel was attached to the rear so the wearer could visit the lavatory



without removing the whole garment. Most were utilitarian, but some were quite stylish with puffed shoulders, bell-bottom cuffs to the legs, decorative piping, detachable belts, and fitted hoods.

In 1942, the first "Utility" clothes went on sale. These clothes were made from a limited range of quality controlled fabrics. Utility clothes were the result of a need to make production of civilian clothing in factories more efficient and provide price-regulated and better quality clothing. Utility clothing came in a limited range of garments, styles, and fabrics for men, women, and children.

Women's skirts were shortened to save fabric. However, men's clothing changed in unpopular ways. Single-breasted suits replaced double-breasted. Lapels had to be within a certain size. The number of pockets was restricted and trouser turn-ups were abolished. The length of men's shirts was restricted and double cuffs were banned. Braces would have been a vital element of a man's outfit as both zip fasteners and elastic waistbands were banned under the austerity regulations. Elastic was in very short supply throughout the war, and women's knickers were one of only a small number of garments where the use of elastic was permitted.



After the war, the best-dressed were those leaving the military services. Demobilized men traded their uniforms for a full set of clothes, known as the "demob suit." Women leaving the military were instead given an allocation of coupons rather than a new outfit, which gave them more freedom to choose what clothes they wanted. However, they were still limited by what was available in the shops.

### Postbus Services by Royal Mail

Starting in 1968, Postbus services by Royal Mail were used for nearly 50 years to replace rapidly declining local bus and rail services in rural areas. They transported mail, people, and even groceries.

Parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are extremely remote. The mail service in even the remotest areas of Scotland is very good, and keeping it that way involves a lot of postmen and postwomen covering a lot of miles making

deliveries to scattered communities and emptying postboxes. As bus and rail service to remote areas declined due to few riders, but the need for public transportation to those areas continued, the Royal Mail decided to make use of all the post vehicles



criss-crossing remote rural areas to provide a partial solution to the (lack of) public transportation problem. By carrying passengers to and from remote locations, Postbuses recovered some of the costs involved in mail collection and delivery. Anyone wanting to use a Postbus could flag it down anywhere on its route, and tell the driver where on the route one wanted to go. Fares averaged between £2 and £5 for a single journey.

In Scotland, 35 routes were served, many on islands or in the remotest areas of Highlands, exactly where a person was most likely to find oneself without other travel options. Of course, the main job of the vehicle was to deliver or pick up mail, so this wasn't the fastest way to get from points A to B, but it certainly beat walking.

Sadly, on 19 August 2017 the last Postbus ran for the last time on the last route to have survived in Scotland, linking Lairg in Sutherland with Tongue and Talmine on the far north coast.

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## Lord Lyon King of Arms

An Act of the Scottish Parliament came into force "concerning the Office of Lyon King of Arms and his brether Heraldis" in 1592. This Act created the best regulated system of armorial bearings in Europe and the oldest heraldic court in the world that is still in daily operation.

The Right Honourable the Lord Lyon King of Arms, the head of Lyon Court, is the most junior of the Great Officers of State in Scotland. The position is the Scottish official with responsibility for regulating heraldry, issuing new grants of arms,

and serving as the judge of the Court of the Lord Lyon.

Responsibilities include overseeing state ceremonial in Scotland, granting new arms to persons or organizations, and confirming proven pedigrees and claims to existing arms, as well as recognizing clan chiefs after due diligence. The Lord Lyon registers and records new clan tartans upon request from the clan chief.



The Lyon Register (officially the *Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland*) in which these records are kept dates from 1672.

The misuse of arms is a criminal offence in Scotland, and is treated as tax evasion. Prosecutions are brought before the Lyon Court, Lord Lyon being the sole judge.



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

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