

HEATHER BELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALEDONIAN & ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY OF SEATTLE

www.caledonians.com

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NEXT GATHERING

Our next gathering is **Sunday, March 12th**, at 2:00 p.m. **Remember – March 12th is the start of Daylight Saving Time, when we set our clocks forward.** We will meet at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125. For those taking the freeway north, use the exit at NE 130th St in Seattle, turn left across the freeway, and turn right at the first light (1st 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=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjlxQT09>

MARCH PROGRAM

Bill McFadden will continue his talk about the Isle of Mull, its castles, and other historic places.

ALL IN A SCOTTISH EVENING (AKA SCOTTISH MOVIE NIGHT)

Fifteen people joined us on Zoom on Sunday evening, February 26th to watch the Scottish movie “The 39 Steps.”

The next Scottish Evening will be on Sunday, March 26th at 7:00 p.m., using our usual Zoom connection. (See link to the left.) The movie shown will be “**Whisky Galore!**” The story line for this romantic comedy is supposedly based on a true event. Due to wartime rationing, whisky became scarce on an island in the Outer Hebrides during WWII. Providentially, a ship carrying a large amount of whisky became stranded and was sinking offshore of the island. Needing whisky for a wedding, the islanders tried to plunder cases of whisky from the sinking ship. It’s a story as well of a community working together to solve a problem and overcoming a more powerful opponent.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie reported that she has sent a sympathy card to Gene McPhail and his family at the death of his wife (and Caledonian member), Debby McPhail. The service for Debby will be Sunday, March 5th, at 2:00 p.m. at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave NE., Seattle, WA

She also sent a card to Susan Oxley, who broke her arm and had surgery for it. Susan is doing much better now, although dealing with an inconveniently bulky cast.

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

MARCH

4 William Wallace at 500: How the Nineteenth Century Reinvented the Scottish Hero. 7:00-9:00 pm. \$25. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 360-416-4934
<https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/williamwallace/>

11 St. Patrick's Day Dinner. 5:30 p.m. \$40. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 360-416-4934 <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/st-patricks-day-dinner/> **This event frequently sells out early, so check if tickets are still available.**

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

17 Geoffrey Castle's St. Patrick's Celebration Concert. 7 pm, \$41. Kirkland Performance Center, 350 Kirkland Ave., Kirkland, WA 425-893-9900

18 Geoffrey Castle's St. Patrick's Celebration Concert. 7:30 pm, \$25/\$30. Auburn Performing Arts Center, 702 4th St. NE, Auburn, WA. 253-931-4900.
<https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=142661>

26 Fourth Sunday Caledonian Scottish Movie Night. (See note above for information about the film.)

APRIL

16 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00pm. In-person & on Zoom. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE., Seattle, WA. **This gathering is on the THIRD Sunday because Easter is the 2nd Sunday.**

MAY

21 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00pm. In-person & on Zoom. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE., Seattle, WA. **This gathering is on the THIRD Sunday because Mother's Day is the 2nd Sunday**

27 RSCDS Vancouver (BC) 2023 Heather Ball. Scottish Cultural Center, 8886 Hudson Street, Vancouver, BC. \$120.
<https://rscdsvancouver.org/events/heather-ball-2023/>

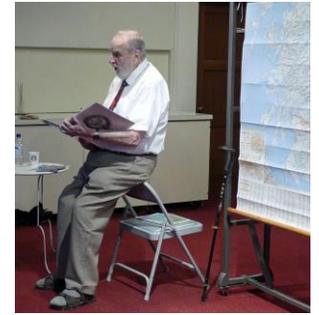
FACEBOOK

The Caledonians have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/seattlecaledonians/?ref=bookmarks>

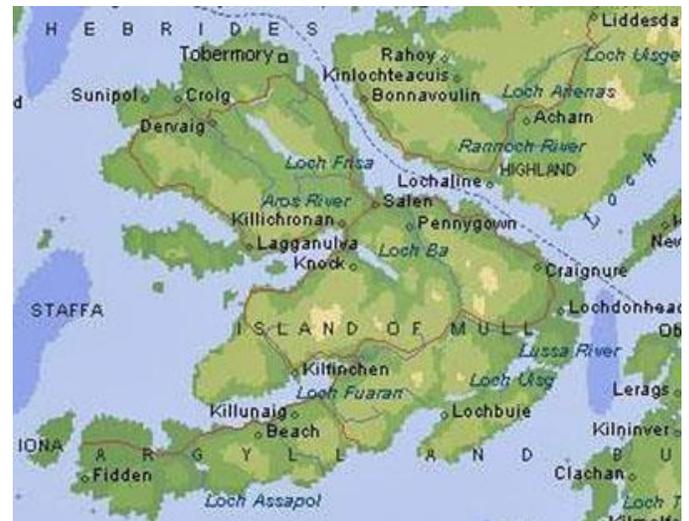
Diana Smith frequently posts interesting articles and notices, so check back often. Be sure to "Like" the articles so they show up frequently on your Facebook stream.

Recap of the February Caledonian Gathering

The February program was a presentation by Bill McFadden on the Isles of Mull and Iona, highlighting some of the places that had been included in the movie "I Know Where I'm Going" that had been shown at the January Scottish



Movie Night. Bill started the trip to Mull at Oban, and talked about Duart Castle, Moy Tower, the colorful town of Tobermorey, and the Isle of Iona off the southwest coast of Mull.



Reminder - It's time to Renew Your Annual Membership for 2023

Dues are \$45 for individuals and \$55 for couples/families. Checks should be made out to the **Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle** and marked for **2023 Membership**.

Many thanks to those who have already paid their dues!

We want to keep our membership directory updated, so **please include your address, phone number(s), and e-mail address(es)** when you send your check.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner* and *Smithsonian Magazine*, as well as information in

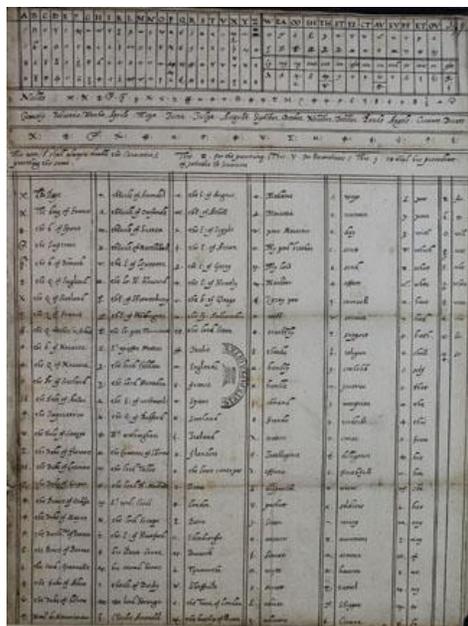
Wikipedia and various websites pertaining to the topics.

Code Breakers Discover—and Decipher—Long-Lost Letters by Mary, Queen of Scots

Over the course of her 19 years in captivity, Mary, Queen of Scots, wrote thousands of letters to ambassadors, government officials, fellow monarchs, and conspirators. Most of these missives had the same underlying goal: securing the deposed queen’s freedom. Tudor espionage was quite sophisticated and Mary used more than 100 cyphers in her secret correspondence.

Mary’s letters have long fascinated scholars and the public, providing a glimpse into her relentless efforts to secure her release. But the former queen’s correspondence often raises more questions than it answers, in part because Mary took extensive steps to hide her messages from the prying eyes of Elizabeth’s spies. In addition to folding the pages with a technique known as “letter-locking,” she employed ciphers and codes of varying complexity. She had been well trained in the art of cipher by her mother, Marie de Guise, from a very young age.

More than 400 years after Mary’s death, a chance discovery by a trio of code breakers is offering new insights in the queen’s final years. They found a cache of coded notes housed at the National Library of France that turned out to be



letters Mary had sent to the French ambassador to England between 1578 and 1584.

The trio included George Lasry, a computer scientist and cryptographer based in Israel,

Norbert Biermann, a German pianist, and Satoshi Tomokiyo, a Japanese physicist and patents expert.

Codes involve simple substitutions, with specific symbols standing in for letters, numbers or words. Mary’s letters fell into the category of ciphers, which use algorithms to transform messages into seemingly random strings of symbols. Mary also used a number of dedicated symbols representing commonly cited words and people. For instance, an elongated “H” denoted the Earl of Shrewsbury, an English nobleman who served as the queen’s custodian during her time in captivity.

Seven of the letters were already housed in the British Library and other archives in the UK. It is believed that those seven letters were obtained from a mole (spy) in the French Embassy.

The rediscovered letters mentioned more than 120 individuals and added “color” to many events, such as the doomed marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and Francis, Duke of Anjou, and the capture of Mary’s son, James VI of Scotland (and the future James I of England), in 1582.

Scottish Women Remembered on International Women’s Day

Mary Sommerville

Born in the Scottish Borders town of Jedburgh in 1780, most would not have expected the wee girl named Mary to become a leading scientist, mathematician and astronomer. Mary Somerville received very little formal education, but became a self-taught scientist at a time when



it was not considered possible for a woman to comprehend, never mind, teach science. In fact, the gender-neutral term ‘scientist’ was coined in 1834 and it was used to specifically describe Mary herself (thus making her the world’s first scientist).

Mary would go on to help find the planet Neptune and champion the rights of women in education, politics and society. In 1835 she was one of the first women to be elected to the Royal Astronomical Society and even has a crater on the moon named after her, as well as a variety of places here on earth. She wrote five books that explained complex scientific topics for a wide audience, and lived a long and productive life, dying at the age of 91 in Italy.

Edinburgh Seven

Seven pioneering women who aspired to become medical doctors changed the world at the University of Edinburgh in 1869. Sophia Jex-Blake, Isabel Thorne, Edith Pechey, Matilda Chaplin, Helen Evans, Mary Anderson and Emily Bovell were the first women to study medicine at any UK university. They endured many roadblocks, including riots against them and a medical board who said that 'the poor intellectual ability and stamina of women would lower professional standards.' Sadly, the women were not awarded degrees from Edinburgh, but five would go on to get medical degrees in other countries of Europe. The group fought to allow future women to qualify as doctors in the United Kingdom, inspiring a number of other young women to take up medical studies. It was not until 1894 that the University of Edinburgh allowed women to graduate and the first doctors graduated in 1896. In 2019, the University of Edinburgh posthumously awarded all seven women the degrees they should have received all those years ago.

Dorothee Pullinger



Though born in France, Dorothee Pullinger would grow up in Ayrshire, and become a prominent businesswoman and automaker.

Her father, Thomas Charles Pullinger, was an engineer who was a managing director of Arrol-Johnston, the oldest and largest Scottish car manufacturer at that time. She began work as a draftsman, but when WW I started and the company switched from making cars to making aeroplanes, she was appointed female supervisor of a large munitions facility where women were employed in the manufacture of high explosive shells.

After the war ended, Dorothee returned to Scotland when the munitions facility was converted back to the manufacture of automobiles. It was renamed Galloway Motors Ltd, and Pullinger was its director and manager. The company produced a car, the Galloway, for Arrol-Johnston that was designed for women.

During WW II, Dorothee was the only woman appointed to the Industrial Panel of the Ministry of Production.

Dorothee would become the first female Member of the Institution of Automobile Engineers and paved the road for women to enter the industry. After her death in 1986, she was inducted into the Scottish Engineering Hall of Fame in 2012.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon

As she steps down soon, Nicola Sturgeon has been Scotland's longest serving First Minister. It certainly seems she gained more international media coverage than her predecessors ever did. Perhaps this is because of the major events happening during her tenure, such as Brexit, Covid, Scotland's response to the Ukraine war, and planning for a new referendum.

Sturgeon also strongly supported the petition launched on International Woman's day in 2020 that demanded an official pardon for those (mainly women) who were accused of being witches under the Witchcraft Act of 1563. This was a time when a woman could be called a witch for being different, single, poor, disabled, or simply for being a woman. These women were not allowed to speak in a court and were convicted on hearsay, dislike or rumour and then publicly executed. Sturgeon formally apologized for the persecution of those accused of witchcraft, saying it was an "injustice on a colossal scale."

Flora Macdonald

Flora Macdonald helped save Prince Charles



Edward Stewart during his flight after the defeat at the Battle of Culloden. She was born on the island of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides in 1722. Her family generally backed the government during the 1745 Rising and she later claimed to have been

unwilling to assist Charles at first and did so merely out of sympathy for his situation. Arrested and held in the Tower of London, she was released under a general amnesty in June 1747. She died in Kingsburgh, Skye, in 1790 (in the same bed in which Bonnie Prince Charlie had slept during his escape).

Binkie Stuart

Binkie Stuart, the child film actress, was born in Kilmarnock in 1932. Born Elizabeth Alison Fraser, she was hailed as Britain's answer to Shirley

Temple and enjoyed huge fame as a child star. "Binkie", the name of the character she played in her first role, became her stage name. Her career effectively was brought to an end at age seven by World War II. At age 15, her parents insisted she take a job as a receptionist in a dentist's office, and she continued to work in this field for years. Eventually she became a nurse until retiring in the 1990s.

Dame Margaret Kidd

Scottish lawyer and politician, Dame Margaret Kidd, was born in 1900. Her first choice of career was the Foreign Office, but the then-Permanent Secretary was opposed to having women in that office, so instead Kidd decided to go into law. Not only was Kidd Scotland's first woman advocate, but she was also the first woman King's Counsel in Britain and the first woman to plead before the House of Lords. Apart from her legal work, she was interested in politics and maintained an active public and charitable role. She was an officer of the Federation of University Women and a member of the Electrical Association for Women.



Characteristic Patterns for Knitted Products

Did you know that throughout the last few centuries, scarves, hats, socks, vests and sweaters were knitted up by those whose family members made their living on the sea in characteristic patterns? Each family had their own distinct patterns. Aran and Fair Isle sweaters and jumpers were usually knitted in these distinctive patterns so that if people were drowned their relatives could identify the bodies by their personal woolen knitwear.



Waulking

Waulking or fulling the cloth, the final stage in the long and laborious process of producing homespun tweed woolen cloth, is the perfect rhythmical process for a song. This process is to rhythmically

beat newly woven tweed or tartan cloth against a table or similar surface to lightly felt it and shrink it to better repel water. As many women work together, the cloth is gradually shifted to the left so as to work it thoroughly. A tradition holds that moving the cloth anticlockwise is unlucky.

The process was practiced widely but it is believed that only in Scottish Gaelic culture was it accompanied by singing. It's a very ancient tradition with some of the songs being centuries old, passed on orally and transformed into many differing versions. Most of the songs are loosely structured. In order to make a song last long enough for the work, lines might be imported from another song or perhaps a few lines of improvisation could be thrown in.



The waulking would begin with a slow song, increasing in speed as the cloth dried and became softer. In Uist and Barra, after being waulked, the cloth was rolled up and patted to smooth it out to the accompaniment of a clapping song, which was a fast, cheerful song, sometimes an improvised "pairing off" song when the names of those present would be linked with local young men.

Waulking was an important part of female culture, so women wishing to compose a song often adopted the waulking style. The songs come straight from the heart and are full of passion but utterly without sentimentality.

Scotland's Ancient Sport - Shinty

As a sport, Shinty's fortunes have often reflected the ups and downs of life in the Highlands where it is played, from Celtic myths, through the Scottish diaspora and the decimation of young men during World War One, to the challenges and difficulties of modern rural life, including finding jobs and

housing in the Highlands. Even so, thousands across the Highlands and islands are involved in the game. Yet the sport takes a back seat compared to football or rugby in terms of headlines, even in Scotland. This is because it is pretty much an amateur village sport. As it is an amateur sport, talented players don't disappear off to the big cities with juicy sporting contracts, so in many ways shinty is still the sport it has been for centuries with community pitted against community for honour and pride.

Shinty has common roots with the Irish sport of hurling – the sport was brought over by Irish settlers to Scotland centuries ago, and while the sports have developed differently over the years they have enough in common for shinty and hurling teams to play each other with adapted rules in international games.



The game of shinty has twelve players on a side. It starts with the throw up – the referee throws the small, hard ball into the air at the centre of the pitch

and two players grapple for it in the air with their sticks. The object is to get the ball into the opposed side's net by dribbling it, passing it, or hitting it through the air. Unlike hockey, the stick is allowed above shoulder height and shoulder-to-shoulder tackles are allowed. A goal can only be scored with the caman, not kicked, carried, or propelled by hand or arm.

But bashing your opponent's stick with your stick is called hacking and is a foul. Other fouls are using one's hands, playing the ball with the head whether intentional or not, and recklessly swinging the caman in the air in a way which might endanger another player.

The game has a reputation for a high injury level compared to other sports. Helmets are now mandatory for under-17s and will soon become so for senior players, with many already adopting them.

The stick is known as a caman, coming from the word cam, Gaelic



for crooked, referring to the bend at the end. Once made from whatever wood was available locally, often ash, they are now usually laminated hickory made by a small band of specialist makers. It is a craft industry, not factory produced, and camans can be slightly different sizes and shapes, but since the 1920s, all camans must be able to pass through a 2-1/2" diameter ring.

Another game, ice hockey, is said to have been started by Scottish immigrants to Nova Scotia who started playing shinty on skates on frozen lakes.

From Laugh Scotland!

The Edinburgh policeman waved down a motorist.

"When I saw you coming along the road there, madam, I just thought - 50 at least."

"The woman quickly replied, "Well, you see, officer, I always look older in this black hat!"



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

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