

HEATHER BELL

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APRIL GATHERING

Our May gathering will be on Sunday, **May 10th**, at 2:00 p.m. We will meet at Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125.

The gathering will be hybrid: in-person and on Zoom. The link for those who attend on Zoom is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjlxQT09>

MAY PROGRAM

The May program will be a video about how castles are built. Video host David Macaulay explains a detailed animated story dramatizing medieval life. He talks about the cultural and sociological significances of castles as well as their architectural designs.

SCOTTISH MOVIE NIGHT

The Scottish Movie Night for May will be on Sunday, May 31st at 6:00 p.m.

We will watch the comedy *That Sinking Feeling*, the first movie directed by Bill Forsyth. He later directed *Gregory's Girl*. Four aimless Glasgow youths hit upon a money-making scheme to sell stainless steel sinks. Their first step is to steal them.

The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjlxQT09>

SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie reported that she sent a get-well card to Tom Lamb after he fell and broke his collar bone.

She also sent a condolence card to Lauri Camera, sister of Stephanie Sprinkle at the death of Stephanie.

Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

May

10 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00pm, Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave. NE., Seattle, WA <https://caledonians.org> 206-714-2601

31 Caledonian Scottish Movie Night. 6pm on Zoom

Recap of April Gathering

The April gathering featured stories of several known and less well-known Scottish women, which had been the intended March program for International Women's Month.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner*, *The Scotsman* newspaper & using *Wikipedia* and various other websites pertaining to the topics for supplemental information.

Scottish Deer – Totems and Trophies

For thousands of years in Scotland, deer have been seen as the embodiment of both the natural and the supernatural world. They appear as heraldic emblems, millennia-old carvings, iconic paintings such as "The Monarch of the Glen," and in countless folkloric tales of grand hunts and encounters with the unknowable.

Deer bones and antlers have been found within Mesolithic middens, Neolithic chambered cairns, and Iron Age brochs. Ancient tribes often chose these animals as symbols beyond their practical uses for food or tools. For example, in the Hebrides, decorated pottery features only deer, despite the presence of wolves, golden eagles, dolphins, and other animals that could have served as totems.

In Britain, just nine examples of prehistoric figurative rock art showing animals have been discovered, and nearly all depict deer. These creatures evidently held great significance in the daily lives and imaginations of ancient people.

Of the nine known examples of deer in prehistoric British rock art, five are in Scotland. Besides appearing at Kilmartin Glen and Glen Domhain, they are found at Ballochmyle in Ayrshire, Eggerness in Dumfries & Galloway, and on the outer wall of a rock shelter on Blackford Hill in Edinburgh.

Deer are pivotal in many of the oldest and best-known tales of the Celts, in which an encounter with a deer often heralds contact with the Otherworld. A revered symbol in the Middle Ages was the appearance of a white deer (hart). Seeing one was believed to signal God's favour.



Many noble houses in the Middle Ages used deer – typically stags – in their heraldic emblems. Among them, to name but a few, are the crests of Fraser of Lovat, Clan Davidson, Clan Forbes, Clan Keith, and Clan Carruthers.

Deer populations grew during the Industrial Revolution and Edwardian period after land was enclosed, commons removed, and hunting estates created. With predators like wolves extinct by the

18th century, many Highland and Lowland estates became dedicated solely to hunting. Deer are often viewed either as pests or commodities within these sporting estate systems.

The history of deer in Scotland reflects shifts in attitudes toward nature. Prehistoric societies revered deer as spiritual symbols and valuable resources for food and tools. During the Middle Ages, deer became linked to religious and political power. As fencing and modernization progressed, their symbolism declined and they became seen mainly as economic assets or pests that damage forests and farmland.

Scottish Prisoner Records Go Online

Prison registers are a rich source of information for people seeking information about their genealogy. Scotland's People, the official site for Scottish government records, has published details of more than 100,000 inmates from Ayr and Inveraray jails.

Men, women, and children were incarcerated at the jails in the 19th century. The youngest was seven-year-old James McCulloch who was caught stealing, the oldest 82-year-old Ann Kerr found guilty of "vagrancy".

Archivist Veronica Schreuder said: "*Prison registers are a rich source of information for social researchers and family historians alike. While it can be a shock to find an ancestor in prison, it can sometimes lead to details that are unlikely to have been preserved for most people. Finding out the colour of their hair, details of their health or whether they could read or write can turn a name and some dates into a much more rounded person. And of course, if they have committed a serious crime, it can explain a lot about the decisions of other relatives such as moving to another area, changing a name or simply never talking about them.*"

The new additions add to those from the old Edinburgh prisons, Barlinnie, Perth, and Largs. This means there are now over 400,000 historical prison records available to search on Scotland's People.

Scottish Pirates

Scottish pirates were seafarers from the Viking era through the 18th century who engaged in piracy. Many started legitimately as privateers, or ships that were given written permission to attack ships from countries with which their own country was

at war. They performed as auxiliaries to their own country's navy.

Scottish privateers mostly operated under Letters of Marque, which were government-issued permits authorizing attacks on enemy vessels, thereby distinguishing them from acts of piracy.

Those with a Letter of Marque were expected to bring captured ships and their cargo back before admiralty courts of their own or allied countries for condemnation. If the ship and its cargo were "condemned", they were sold at auction with the proceeds divided among the privateer's owner and crew.

Privateers were also required by the terms of their Letters of Marque to obey the laws of war, honour treaty obligations (avoid attacking neutrals), and to treat captives as courteously and kindly as they safely could. If privateers did not fulfill their responsibilities, admiralty courts had the authority to revoke the Letter of Marque, withhold prize money, forfeit bonds, or impose personal injury damages against the officers and crew of the privateer.

While many charged with piracy started as privateers helping their own navy protect against the piracy of their enemies, it was a narrow line between that and piracy on their own behalf.

Early Scottish Piracy

Piracy in Scotland can be traced back to 617, with Viking raids on monasteries and settlements. Sweyn Asleifsson, a notable Viking pirate from Caithness, operated from Orkney around 1150, raiding the British Isles and Ireland. Scottish islands like Canna, Pabay, and Longay served as pirate bases, and clans such as the MacNeils of Barra often targeted English ships.

Notable Scottish Pirates

William Kidd (c. 1645–1701): Kidd was a privateer from Dundee who operated for many years with royal authorization. He later was accused of piracy after seizing the ship *Quedah Merchant*. He was captured in New York and tried and executed in London. Historians remain divided over his guilt, suggesting that he might have been a scapegoat in political disputes.

John Gow (circa 1600–1725): Gow was an Orkney merchant sailor turned pirate whose brief but brutal career as a pirate brought terror to the coast of Scotland. He seized the ship *Revenge* and raided

both Scottish and English ships. When he attempted to return to Orkney he was captured, tried, and eventually hanged in London.

Alexander Dalzeel (c. 1662–1715): A Glaswegian who, after serving in the navy, became a mercenary for the Barbary corsairs. He later operated independently, infamously terrorizing ships from England to Spain. He had a reputation for ruthlessness and extreme cruelty to captives.

Sir Andrew Barton (c. 1466–1511): A Scottish privateer with a Letter of Marque from the Scottish crown. He legally attacked Portuguese and English ships but was executed by the English despite having official permission.

Female Pirates

Gráinne O'Malley (Granny O'Malley): An Irish leader with ties to Scottish maritime activity, she commanded ships from Clare Island, raided vessels, and negotiated with Elizabeth I for her family and territory.

Helen Gloag, born in Perthshire, started out not as a pirate, but as a captive. She was captured by Barbary pirates in the late 18th century on her way to the Caribbean. She became the concubine and later the favorite wife of the Sultan of Morocco and rose to have influence within the Barbary corsairs and Moroccan affairs.

Legacy

Scottish pirates contributed to maritime history through their actions, influencing trade routes, naval warfare, and the development of pirate traditions. Their activities included local raids in the Hebrides as well as international ventures in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, leaving a significant mark on Scottish and global maritime history.

So why aren't most of them famous? Many Scottish pirates were viewed as mercenaries or privateers, rather than romanticized rogues. Few were immortalized in books, films, and folklore like the English pirate Blackbeard.

In 1725, the Black Watch regiment was commissioned under General Wade to police the Highlands. The force was known in Gaelic as Am Freiceadan Dubh, "the dark" or "black watch". The regiment's motto is *Nemo Me Impune Lacessit* (No One Assails Me With Impunity).

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