



Volume 120      Issue 7      October 2022

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### NEXT GATHERING

Members of the Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society will continue to gather using the electronic app Zoom in October.

Our next gathering is **Sunday, October 9th**, 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=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjIxQT09>

Alternately, you can 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.

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### OCTOBER PROGRAM

Penny DeGraff from Sligne nan Gaidheal, Washington's Gaelic language and cultural society, will bring videos made by Seirm for their annual concert during Covid. Seirm is a cèilidh band of singers and musicians who create traditional and innovative Scottish Gaelic music together. They normally perform at various Scottish and community events to promote interest and awareness of the Scottish Gaelic language, music, and song tradition. Each video is a separate song or set of tunes,

and Penny will tell the story behind the song before showing the video.

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### FUTURE PROGRAMS

The Caledonians are resuming monthly gatherings on the second Sunday of each month. We hope to get back to in-person gatherings soon, and perhaps use some sort of hybrid style to allow those who are unable to travel to participate via Zoom.

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### SUNSHINE REPORT

Bonnie sent get-well cards over the summer to Richard McMillan and Stephanie Sprinkle.

Bonnie, herself, caught Covid and was sick enough to have 24-hour care in her home for two weeks. She still has a raspy throat and a dry cough, which her doctor said may last for a few months. If you would like to congratulate Bonnie on her recovery with a card, her address is 19800 68<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE. Kenmore, WA 98028.

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.

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### Calendar of Seattle Area Scottish Events

#### OCTOBER

**9 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering**, 2:00 pm. Zoom:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/713418301?pwd=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjIxQT09>

**13-16 Bellingham Celtic Festival**. Downtown Bellingham, WA. [Bellinghamcelticfestival.com](http://Bellinghamcelticfestival.com)

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## NOVEMBER

### 5 SSHGA Heather Tartan Ball & Silent Auction.

Seattle Latvian Cultural Center, 11710 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE, Seattle, WA. 6:00 pm. Tickets \$30.

<https://www.sshga.org/heather-tartan-ball/>

### 6 Traditional Scottish Breakfast for Celtic Arts Foundation members. 12:00-3:00pm 7:00pm-9:00pm.

\$40.00 Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 360-416-4934.

<https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/22breakfast/>

### 11 Ye Vagabonds Concert. 7:00pm. \$25. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 360-416-4934. <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/ye-vagabonds-concert/>

### 13 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Location TBD

## DECEMBER

### 2 Lecture: "From the Cradle to the Grave; Understanding Traditional Scottish Customs" by Dr. Gary West. 7:00pm-9:00pm. \$25.00 Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA 360-416-4934. <https://celticarts.org/celtic-events/garywestlecture/>

### 11 Caledonian & St. Andrews Society Gathering, 2:00 pm. Location TBD

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## Recap of the June Caledonian Gathering

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The Backup Clan, a Scottish Country dance band from NW Scottish Fiddlers, was unable to perform for us due to a family emergency of one of the band members. Instead, Caledonians enjoyed viewing several You Tube videos with scenes around Scotland.

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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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## Caledonian Tent at Highland Games

Caledonians had a tent at three Highland games this summer: Tacoma Highland Games, Skagit Valley Highland Games in Mount Vernon, and Pacific Northwest (Seattle) Games in Enumclaw. Bill McFadden generously shared part of his double Clan MacLaren tent

with the Caledonians at Tacoma and Mount Vernon, while the Caledonians had their own tent at Enumclaw. The purposes for the Caledonian being at these Games were to offer information about the Society and National Tartan Day and to assist those attending the games in identifying their clan associations.

Many thanks to these members who took two hour shifts at the tent and interacted with quite a number of visitors who gladly accepted help to identify the clan they may be connected with. Some came to more than one of the Games! Here are a few pictures.



Harry & Diane McAlister  
(Tacoma & Seattle)



Laura Genoves &  
Dennis Smith (Seattle)



Loveday Conquest &  
Fiona Goodchild  
(Seattle)

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Phillip Junkins (Seattle), Victoria Johnson (Tacoma, Mount Vernon, & Seattle), Chuck Cook (Seattle), and Diana Smith

(Seattle)

Porter Patten (Tacoma) and Tom Lamb (Tacoma, Mount Vernon, & Seattle)



Rosemary Blakemore (Seattle)



Ruth McFadden (Tacoma, Mount Vernon, & Seattle)

Not pictured were Thomas Laing (Mount Vernon) who came attired nattily in his clan plaid with his wife, Judy. (Sorry, but the picture didn't turn out!)

Other Caledonians present at these games, but who were representing their own clan societies, were Bill McFadden (MacLaren), Don Moore (Muir, Lamont), Annette & Jim Mentzer (Thompson), and Selwyn Lane (McLean of Duart).

## Award for Shelley Butchart

This summer, Tom Lamb and Bill McFadden presented Shelley Butchart with an award for her many years supporting the Caledonians by being the webmaster for the Caledonian website. Shelley, with her husband, Bart, has been a longstanding member. Besides managing the website, for many years, she supervised the tea at Caledonian meetings. Bill has been especially appreciative of Shelley's artistic and website skills for Gung Haggis Fat Choy.



## Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner*, *Wikipedia*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, and *historic-uk.com*.

This is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of two incredible Scottish canals, the Caledonian and the Union. Therefore, this issue of the Heather Bell is bringing to you several articles about these and other Scottish canals.

### Reinventing Scotland's Centuries-Old Canals

Scotland is home to gorgeous high country, scenic coasts and mist-veiled lochs – but the canals? It's not surprising that some Scots hold poor opinions of the canals, says Chris O'Connell, the heritage manager and resident historian for Scottish Canals, a public corporation of the Scottish government charged with caring for the country's five canals. After all, the waterways don't exactly have a pristine history.

Scotland's first canal, the 35-mile Forth & Clyde, was built in 1768 to transport coal. Horses would walk alongside the canal on a

towpath, pulling massive barges of coal at first, and then all kinds of other goods. Throughout the late 18th century, furniture, granite and paving slabs all made their way along the canals from the Scottish interior to Glasgow on the west coast, then the second biggest city in the British Empire. Much of it, O'Connell says, was shipped out to fuel the explosive growth in New York City around the turn of the century.



Then, in 1822, a second canal was completed, connecting the Forth & Clyde to Edinburgh. This one, the Union, was a revolutionary “contour” canal: Engineers dug the trench along a single topographical contour, keeping it at the exact same elevation for nearly its entire 31-mile length. That nearly eliminated the need for locks, which were expensive to build and maintain, and time-consuming to cross.



Elsewhere in the country, three other canals — the Caledonian to the north, the Crinan to the east, and the Monkland, which ran parallel to the Forth & Clyde — were built during this same time period. During their golden years, the canals were wildly successful. The Union and Forth & Clyde, in particular, funneled an endless stream of coal and raw materials into

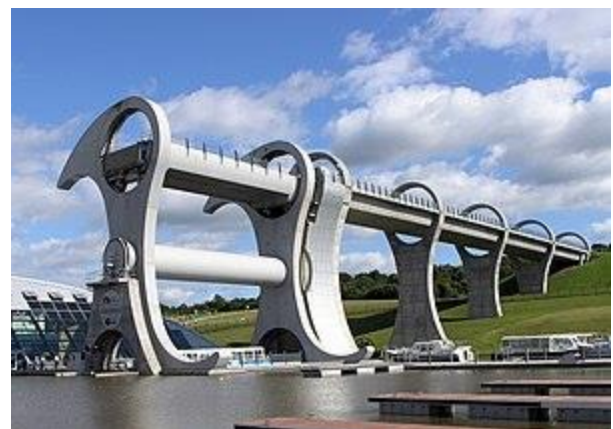
Glasgow, contributing to its ultimate role as one of the birthplaces of the Industrial Revolution.

There could be as many as 1,500 or so boats a day on the Forth & Clyde, which was wide enough to take seagoing vessels. Quite an unusual sight to see three-masted ships with sails floating through the countryside!

By the 1840's, with the advent of railways, canals were on the decline. Railways were easier and faster, and trains could hold more people. Without traffic or income, it no longer made sense to maintain the Union's few locks, so in 1933, they were filled in, and in 1963 the canals were closed entirely.

The canals were historic structures, so they couldn't be destroyed, but no one really wanted them. Not used for transportation, they soon became dumping grounds, filled with tires and cars and even shopping carts, becoming mosquito and rat-filled cesspools by the 1960s. Some canals that ran alongside industrial sites became dangerously polluted with toxic waste. Pressure from communities grew as the public agitated for the government to fill in and bury all the canals.

Amazingly, in the 1980s, a grassroots movement of canal enthusiasts started to fight for the canals, clearing rubbish out on their own volition. In the mid-1990s houseboat owners were encouraged to move onto the Forth & Clyde near Glasgow to make the canal look more appealing and habitable.



Around the turn of the millennium, the Scottish government started hunting for big



engineering projects to fund, something that would put Scotland on the map as a modern nation. A unified group of canal enthusiasts came up with the idea of building a giant rotating boat lift that would reunite the Forth & Clyde and Union canals. In 1999, the Millennium Link project was accepted and funded. The old canals were cleaned up to make the water clear enough to pass safety tests. With the completion of the Falkirk Wheel in 2002, recreation has come back to the canals.



The canals are fulfilling their legacy in ways the original builders probably never imagined. They still serve as a connector, but now they connect urban dwellers with natural landscapes, kayakers with Scotland's industrial past, and the age of coal to Scotland's renewable future.

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### Caledonian Canal

The Caledonian Canal, Scotland's longest canal, stretches 60 miles between the Highland capital of Inverness on the east and Fort William near the west coast, and opened in October 1822. To build this amazing feat of engineering, Scotland's first ever steam dredger was used. The steam dredger was purpose-built for the incredibly difficult terrain of the Scottish Highlands. Engineered by the famous Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford, the project started in 1804, cost £900,000, was £425,000 over budget, and provided much needed work for thousands of locals during construction.

The Caledonian Canal was created to assist ships safely getting to the north of Scotland

and also from the Atlantic Ocean to the North Sea without having to navigate the perilous strait between the Orkney Islands and Caithness. The route goes through the great Lochs of Oich, Lochy, and Ness.

The Caledonian Canal includes an amazing "staircase" lock. Neptune's Staircase is the longest staircase lock in Britain.



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### Union Canal

The Edinburgh and Glasgow Union Canal, to use its full name, which runs from Falkirk to Edinburgh, also opened in 1822. It was constructed to bring minerals, primarily coal, to the capital. This connection opened up access to much of central Scotland as well as providing a reasonable way for both freight and passengers to travel from Edinburgh to Glasgow.

As Edinburgh created its very fashionable New Town, it required fuel and building supplies that Glasgow could provide. In return, at a time when horse and cart were the only form of land transport, Edinburgh sent horse manure off its manicured streets to the central belt to be used as fertiliser on Scottish farms.



## Crinan Canal



The Crinan Canal, only nine miles long, was created to improve access to the Western Isles and offer a safe transit route from Ardrishaig on Loch Fyne to Crinan. This short-cut allowed

ships to avoid the extremely rough waters going the long way around the Mull of Kintyre. The build was superintended by the famous Scottish engineer, Thomas Telford.

Originally, horse-drawn barges operated the route, but in 1866 a specially designed steamer,



"the Linnet", was launched to cope with the demand for

transporting passengers, sheep, and cattle.

## Monkland Canal

This 12-mile canal was designed to bring coal from the mining areas of the Monklands to Glasgow. It was opened in short sections, starting in 1771. The construction was initially supervised by James Watt, although he preferred engineering design to managing the works and left before the canal was completed.



The boats used on the canal to carry coal were originally horse-drawn flat-bottomed wooden vessels with low freeboard. Habitually

known as "scows", they didn't have any passenger accommodations or protections for their crew.

## The Kelpies

The Kelpies, 100-foot tall steel equine sculptures near Falkirk, pay homage to the

working horses of Scotland which used to pull barges along Scotland's canals and worked in the fields in the area where they now stand. They tower over a new canal extension which links the Forth & Clyde Canal to the North Sea.

In Scottish folklore a kelpie is a shape-shifting spirit inhabiting lochs. It is usually described as a black horse-like creature. Almost every sizeable body of water in Scotland has an associated kelpie

story. Kelpies have been portrayed in various forms in art and literature, including the two steel structures in Falkirk.



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

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