

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, October 8th**, at 2:00 p.m. **This is the second Sunday of October, as we are back to our usual meeting day of the month.** 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=K1ZUQnBOSE53YURUYjE4SW4ySjkxQT09>

OCTOBER PROGRAM – TBA

SCOTTISH MOVIE NIGHT

The Scottish Movie Night continued over the summer, although was skipped in September. Since there are 5 Sundays in October, October 1st was substituted for the missed September evening. The October movie will be the 5th Sunday, October 29th this month.

Movie Nights have been popular with around 16 people joining to view the movie of the month. After a bit of a kerfluffle getting a movie set up on October 1st, we watched “Happy Go Lovely”, a fluffy, dance-filled story about the unlikely romance of a beautiful star and the unwilling, curmudgeonly sponsor of the show in which she is the lead.

The next Scottish Evening will be on Sunday, October 29th at 7:00 p.m., using our usual Zoom connection. (See link to the left.)

Memories of Chuck Cook



Charles (Chuck) Cook was born and raised in Seattle. In 1946, he altered his birth certificate and dropped out of Roosevelt High School so he could join the United States Army. After a 26-year career in the Army, including three wars, he

retired and became a Campground Ranger at Mount Rainier National Park.

Retiring for good in 1997, Chuck took a trip to Scotland accompanied by his daughter. Long a fan of bagpipe music, he was delighted to attend the Edinburgh Festival and hear the bands performing at the Tattoo. He ordered his kilts in Glasgow, and returned with a renewed interest in all things Scottish. He started attending all the local Highland Games and Tartan Balls.

In 1999, Chuck began a letter writing campaign to have Tartan Day officially recognized by the State of Washington. This was accomplished when a bill in the Legislature was passed unanimously, proclaiming April 6th, the anniversary of the signing of Arbroath, to be Tartan Day in Washington State.

Chuck had multiple opportunities to wear his kilts as he had been a member of the Caledonian & St. Andrews Society of Seattle, chair of the Washington State Tartan Society, vice-president of the Tacoma Highland Games, a member of the Seattle Scottish Highland Games Association, and a member of the Scottish American Military Society.

Chuck passed away on September 17, 2023. His remains will be interred at 9am on October 13th at Tahoma National Cemetery, 18600 SE 240th St., Kent. WA 98042.

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

OCTOBER

8 Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00 p.m. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125. Also on Zoom.

14 Scottish Tasting Fundraiser, for members and guests. 4:00 pm. Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. events@celticarts.org 360-416-4934

NOVEMBER

12 Caledonian & St. Andrew's Society of Seattle gathering. 2:00 p.m. Haller Lake United Methodist Church, 13055 1st Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125. Also on Zoom.

13 Tannahill Weavers Concert, Littlefield Celtic Center, 1124 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon, WA. 7:00 pm. \$30. events@celticarts.org 360-416-4934

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 June Caledonian Gathering

A discussion about the future of this organization was held at the June gathering. It became evident that everyone wanted the Caledonians to continue, although there were no new volunteers to help run it. In the end, the decision was made to continue meeting until our money runs out.

We were able to locate money in a CD that we had lost track of. It had been invested in a CD with HomeStreet Bank, but had been sent to the Washington State Unclaimed Property Office. After jumping through the appropriate hoops, including getting a letter from the IRS showing that the business number we have used for years is not what the IRS has in their records and updating the State, the missing funds were returned to us. We deposited the \$5,570.31 check into the Caledonian checking account.

Summer Garden Party

The weather was hot, but there was a nice breeze for the summer garden party held at the McFaddens' residence on August 13th. Due to illness and calendar conflicts, there were a few less attending, although those who came had a great time. Guest piper Jan Begg piped people in and also played a set later as entertainment. The potluck was well supported with delicious and varied food offerings. President Tom Lamb presided over an auction of Scottish items that netted \$136 for the Caledonians, and Diane McAlister charmed us with a surprise "raffle" of Scottish items.

Articles and Topics About Scotland and Things Scottish

Information based on articles in *The Scottish Banner* and various websites pertaining to the topics.

Stories From the Annals of Scottish History

Earthquake

Scotland is not known for having earthquakes, but historical records suggest that one occurred on 12 September 1784 that affected Loch Tay. An observer wrote:

“... the water was observed to retire about 5 yards within its ordinary boundary and in 4 or 5 minutes to flow out again. In that manner it ebbed and flowed successively 3 or 4 times during the space of a quarter of an hour, when all at once the water rushed from the east and west in opposite currents ...in the form of a great wave.”

We know that Loch Tay sits upon one fault line, the Loch Tay Fault, and very near another, the Highland Boundary Fault. Some movement from either, or both, of these faults likely explains the sudden tides.

Bovine Assault Force

Roxburgh Castle was once one of the mightiest castles in the realm. During the Wars of Independence Robert the Bruce tasked James “the Black” Douglas to take this castle from its English garrison. A deadly stretch of open ground lay between the Scots and the castle with a herd of black cattle, a smaller and scrawnier breed than cattle we now know, grazing on this land. Douglas needed to be fiendishly clever.

After dark, Douglas ordered his men to cover themselves with their dark cloaks, drop down on all fours, and meander towards the castle gate. It’s hard to believe that the guards didn’t catch on, but the ploy worked without a hitch and Roxburgh was in Scottish hands by morning. One writer commented that a guard apparently noticed that the herd seemed larger than usual, but only remarked that the farmer ought to keep his herd better penned as he would regret if the Douglas made off with them!

A Death For a Head

At the height of the Viking Age, Sigurd, 1st Earl of Orkney, brought fire and sword to Scotland’s northern shores. In the course of his wrath, he made a bitter enemy of Maelbrig, mormaer of Moray, called “the Tusk” because his bottom incisors sharply protruded from his lips. In 892

AD, they arranged to fight a decisive battle to the death with forty men on each side.

Sigurd didn’t think the Scots could be trusted to keep to just 40 men, so he himself cheated by mounting two men on each horse. Even though severely outnumbered by the Vikings, the Scots put up a good fight, but Maelbrig fell. Sigurd chopped off his head, and rode off to celebrate his victory with his grim trophy strapped to his horse. There not being any true roads in that time, the ride was bumpy.

Along the way, Maelbrig’s tusk scratched Sigurd’s leg, so slightly that the Viking didn’t notice until it was too late. An infection set in, and within days the scourge of the north was dead.

Robert Burns at Halloween



Robert Burns is well-known for dealing with the supernatural folklore of his native 18th century Scotland in his poetry. This is especially apparent in his narrative epic *Tam O’Shanter*. The poem is a reimagining of an old tale from Burns’ youth about what happens to a farmer in the early hours riding past haunted Alloway Kirk.

In 1860, Thomas Hall Tweedy made a carving in lime-wood, called “Warlocks and Witches in a Dance,” that takes its name from a line in Burns’ poem. The art work captures the humour evident in *Tam O’Shanter*, as well as the more gruesome elements of the goings-on at the kirk.

The carving is on display at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.

Halloween in Scotland



Halloween, celebrated on 31 October, is widely assumed to be a North American festival, but it’s actually an ancient Celtic pagan celebration. The term Halloween comes from All-hallow-even or All Hallows’

Eve—the evening before All Hallows’ Day or All Saints’ Day.

The festival originated as a pagan ritual among the Celts in Ireland and Britain, who regarded 31 October as the last day of summer. November was associated with the death and slaughter of animals that provided meat for winter. In the old Norse religion, sacrifices were made to the elves, and food was blessed and stored for winter.

Pumpkins became a part of Halloween because of Irish and Scottish immigrants in the 19th century. The Irish brought the tradition of using scary faces carved into turnips to frighten bad spirits away during this festival. In America, they discovered the pumpkin, a much easier vegetable to carve than turnips.

Looking for Nessie

Hundreds of volunteers and media participated in the largest surface area search of Loch Ness in 50 years on a weekend in August.



Wild weather did not put off hardy hunters who flocked along both sides of the 23-mile long loch to volunteer in the surface watch, alongside hundreds who participated online via webcams.

Highlights from the weekend included:

- Four mysterious and previously unheard loud noises from the depths of the loch.
- Possible video footage of the monster with mysterious “humps” filmed on the loch moving before disappearing.
- An online volunteer captured a giant shadow just under the surface, moving, dipping out of sight, then returning and swimming across again.
- Multiple submissions of potential sightings, including streaks in the water.

Commented the general manager of the Loch Ness Centre, “This excitement has proven that the ongoing hunt for the Loch Ness Monster is still very much alive and continues to draw and attract a global audience.”

Edinburgh’s Balmoral Hotel

Originally known as the North British Station Hotel, this hotel opened its doors next to Waverley Station for the first time on October 15, 1902. The hotel had been acclaimed as one of the great railway hotels. It originally boasted 300 bedrooms and 52 bathrooms. After being



refurbished, in 1990 it was renamed The Balmoral, which means “majestic dwelling” in Gaelic.



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

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