



CAPE CALEDONIAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPE TOWN CALEDONIAN SOCIETY



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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Fellow Caledonians

Last month I wrote briefly about the relatively low attendance at the St Andrews and Burns Dinners, noting that I would be circulating a poll to help Council better understand the reasons for this. By the time you read this, you will have received an email from the Chief containing a link to a short questionnaire designed to give Council some insight into how this might be addressed.

If you have not already responded, please consider doing so. The questionnaire is very brief and easy to complete: Simply click the link, select your responses, and press submit.

I will also shortly be circulating a second questionnaire covering a broader range of topics, aimed at gaining insight into what you would like the Society to offer and focus on, events, etc.

Nothing for sale or wanted this month but there's news from the Munros and Chief Peter Ross..... Upwards and onwards to a dynamic and more vibrant Caledonian Society!

Lang may your lum reek
Andrew (Chieftain & Editor)

FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF

Dear Caledonians,

I have been reflecting on the days when I first join the Callies. This happened waaaaaay back - 40 years ago - in June, 1986. Nicky, who was my wife at the time, and I paid our annual subscriptions of R11 per annum each (can you believe?). We were introduced to the Society by a fellow clansman Neville Ross who was so proud that another Ross had joined the Society. He also later went on to become the Chief of the Society.

Our forms were signed by the then Chief of the Society, Brian Fitzpatrick, and the Honorary Secretary Cathy Gordon. I remember Brian being an amiable friendly Scot, who (as I recall) had a contract with Eskom and was in the country on a contract basis. Cathy was a rather stern Scots lady who did not speak much at all. But beware if you had stepped out of line, she would make it perfectly clear that what you had done was unacceptable! Unfriendly though, she was definitely not, as deep inside she had an absolute heart of gold, and she served the Callies with great dedication in her role for many years. Another real character on Council was the inimitable Bob Ritchie who also served as Honorary Treasurer for many years. Bob had his own style of keeping the financial records which was manual, all handwritten in his very illegible script much like that of a doctor. When he heard that I was a Chartered Accountant he was initially very guarded but as we got to know each other, we developed a great mutual respect for one another and became great friends. I am sure some of you will remember Bob.

Our AGM will soon be held on Saturday, 14th March, 2026. You will all be receiving a Notice in this regard. In the best interests of our Society, I would like to urge you to please make a special effort to attend. Last year the AGM was relaxed and friendly and those attending were urged to speak openly. It ended with a great lunch where there was much joviality and laughter. I am sure that this year's AGM will be no different. This is a great opportunity for you to be part of the future strategy of the Society and make your own contribution regarding future functions. Some of the functions which we as your Council are considering include:

- Seniors Lunch – sometime soon
- Soup & Quiz evening / Bingo – June, 2026
- Tattoo & Fish and Chips evening – end August, 2026
- Heritage Day – September, 2026
- St Andrews Dinner – November, 2026

But these are not cast in stone so please come along to the AGM and have your say!

That's all from me this month.

Take care.

May yer blessings outnumber the thistles that grow and may trouble avoid ye wherever ye go.

Yours aye, Chief Peter Ross

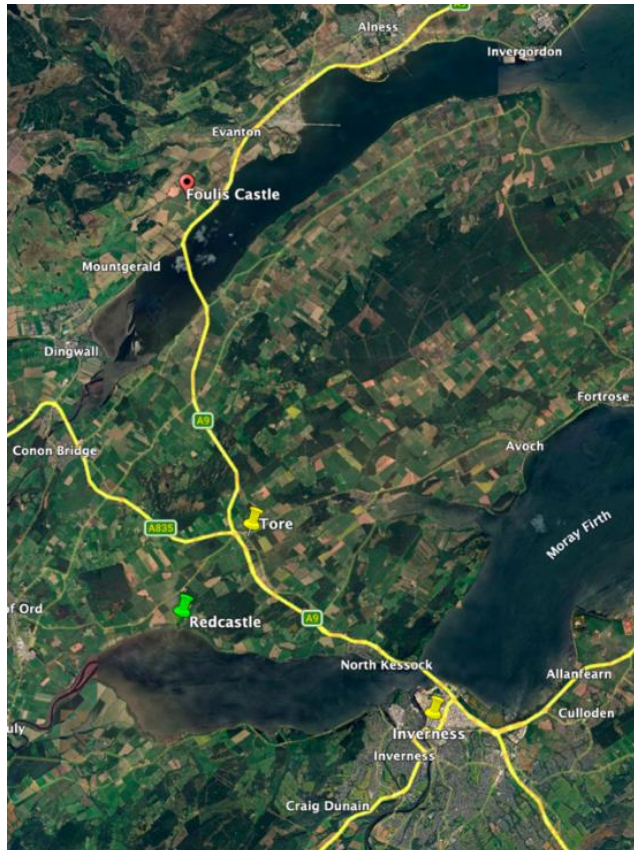
SCOTTISH HISTORY CORNER (continued from previous editions)

"The Great Cause" (1291–1292) was the legal process and crisis of succession following the death of King Alexander III and his heir, the Maid of Norway. To avoid civil war, Scottish nobles asked King Edward I of England to arbitrate between 13+ claimants. Edward, however, forced contenders to recognize him as overlord before selecting John Balliol as King in 1292, a condition that fatally undermined Scottish sovereignty. Balliol's reign proved short and troubled, as Edward repeatedly interfered in Scottish governance and demanded military support for his wars with France. In response, Scottish nobles formed the Auld Alliance with France in 1295, directly challenging English authority. Edward retaliated swiftly, invading Scotland in 1296, defeating Scottish forces at Dunbar, and deposing Balliol, who was publicly humiliated and taken to England. Scotland was left leaderless, occupied by English forces, and subjected to harsh rule. Yet this apparent collapse of Scottish independence would soon provoke resistance, giving rise to a national struggle embodied by figures such as William Wallace and Andrew Moray, and igniting the Wars of Independence that would define Scotland's future, one of my favourite periods in Scottish history.

HISTORY OF THE CLANS

This month I highlight Clan Munro.

Clan Munro is a Highland clan traditionally associated with Easter Ross in the northern Highlands of Scotland. The clan's origins are usually traced to the 12th century, with tradition holding that the Munros descended from a family of Irish or Gaelic origin who settled in Ross-shire. The name *Munro* is commonly thought to derive from *Rothach* or *Monadh Rois* (the hill country of Ross), reflecting their territorial roots.



The Munros first appear clearly in historical records in the late 13th and early 14th centuries, when they supported Robert the Bruce during the Wars of Scottish Independence. Their chiefs were granted lands around Foulis, near modern-day Evanton, which became the clan's principal seat for centuries. Throughout the medieval and early modern periods, the Munros were loyal supporters of the Scottish Crown and frequently served as sheriffs, military commanders, and royal officials.

During the turbulent clan conflicts of the 15th and 16th centuries, Clan Munro was often involved in feuds with neighbouring clans, particularly the MacKenzies and Rosses, as they competed for land and influence in Ross-shire. Despite these conflicts, the Munros steadily increased their status and reputation as effective soldiers and administrators.

The Munros generally supported the British government during the Jacobite risings, which helped preserve their estates after 1746.

Previous Page: Google Earth image showing location of Foulis Castle
Below: Foulis Castle



Today, Clan Munro remains an active clan with a strong sense of heritage, centred on Foulis Castle, which lies just north of Cromarty Firth, with Loch Glass to the north. A fabulous, rugged area, well worth exploring. It is not too far from Inverness, so venture a bit further north next time you are in the Highlands.

Closer to home, your immediate past Chief and immediate past Lady President of the Society, are Munros.

LOST HISTORY FILES

In January we covered an article by historian Dr Philip Major who runs a YouTube channel called *Lost History Files*. He has sent a new video (link below), with a Scottish theme. It's on Charles Davidson Bell, and his many roles at the Cape.

[The Impossible CV of Charles Davidson Bell](#)

DID YOU KNOW: HERE ARE SOME PROMINENT SCOTTISH FAIRY TALES AND LEGENDS:

Scottish fairytales, deeply rooted in Celtic folklore, feature magical, often dark tales of selkies, kelpies, brownies, and fairies. Famous stories include Assipattle and the Stoor Worm, Tam Lin, The Selkie Hunter, Whuppity Stoorie and The Black Bull of Norrway, which are often tied to the rugged landscape of the Highlands and islands.

Here are some of these prominent Scottish fairy tales and legends:

- Assipattle and the Stoor Worm: A classic Orcadian tale about a young, lazy boy who defeats a gigantic, evil sea monster.
- Tam Lin: A renowned Border ballad where a woman named Janet rescues her lover from the Queen of Fairies.
- The Selkie Hunter: Tales of seals that can shed their skins to become human, often leading to tragic romances with mortals.
- Whuppity Stoorie: A Scottish variant of Rumpelstiltskin where a fairy helps a woman, but must be outwitted to avoid losing her child.
- The Black Bull of Norrway: A fairy tale regarding a girl who travels to the "three glass hills" to marry a prince cursed to be a bull.
- The Wee Bannock: A Scottish version of the Gingerbread Man

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Jacinta Munro

Would you believe it, but Jacinta has (kind of) adopted a rabbit that lives in the grounds of the church she attends in Fish Hoek. The rabbit's name is 'Ashley' and is looking for a 'mate' (or so they say ☺) because he/she gets bored and keeps burrowing out of his/her 'home'. Ho hum, such is life! Jacinta's Birthday's on 23rd February so give her a call if you would like to wish her for another milestone (kilometerstone?) in life.

Stuart Munro

Stuart's daughter, Belinda, who now lives in Berlin, Germany, has become internationally known as a mixed media artist and is particularly interested in "Steam Punk" as a subject. Not only does she paint but she teaches various art subjects 'on line' and in person. She's been invited to teach in Texas USA twice as well as traveling to Australia, New Zealand, UK, Poland, Denmark and other countries to teach art in its various forms. During last year she was teaching on board a luxury liner cruising around the Caribbean and had the opportunity to explore many other countries in the Americas as well. Her latest trip was to Venice in Italy earlier in February where she participated in an annual festival and had a great time. She's now back in Berlin trying to keep warm in minus C temperatures.

ITEMS FOR SALE/ WANTED: Callies Scottish Marketplace

In this section, members can buy and sell Scottish items — anything from clothing eg a kilt, Prince Charlie Jacket, etc to memorabilia. If you're looking for something in particular, you can also post a request here. Since this is within our own community of friends, it provides a safe and trusted platform where you don't need to worry about scams. Email me your "advert" or item request and I will include it in the following Newsletter. Nothing wanted or for sale this month.

PIPE BAND

If anyone has a yearn to learn the bagpipes and join a band, contact Pipe Major Grant Scheffel of the Nelson Mandela Artillery Pipes & Drums (Grant can be contacted by clicking the link: grant@bagpipes.co.za)
The band plays one Saturday each month outside Mitchells Scottish Ale House at the Waterfront, at 4PM.

HIGHLAND DANCING

The following are three Highland Dance studios that can be contacted for anyone who might be wanting to try out Highland Dancing:

1. Celtic Dance Tapestry: Contact Hayley 083 2852825 (they often perform at our events)
2. Claddagh Irish & Highland Dancing: 083 564 6717 (Heather)
3. Lucas Highland Dance Studio: Contact Lesley 082 448 6335

COUNTRY DANCING

Anyone interested can contact Heather Hodgson (info@scd.za.net) for dancing in the Fish Hoek area (Wednesday nights at 7:45PM, at St Margaret's Anglican Church in 5th Avenue).

Dancing also at Lynfrae Scottish Dancing Club (Wednesday nights at 7:30PM, at the Congregational Church Hall, Main Road, Claremont). Anyone interested can contact Hilary Kerr (hilary@kerr.za.net).

PIPER FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS & EVENTS

If anyone requires a piper for a wedding, funeral, or other event, please contact me via email (Andrew.bosch@uct.ac.za) or 081 742 3706 to discuss your needs.

KILT MAKER

If you need a kilt made, or repairs to a kilt, contact Kathy. I can highly recommend her work. She can be contacted on 076 342 5371.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AGM: Saturday, 14th March at 11AM. Venue still to be confirmed.

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