



CAPE CALEDONIAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPE TOWN CALEDONIAN SOCIETY



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SEPTEMBER 2025

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Fellow Caledonians

As we move towards summer (at last), Scotland of course, is rapidly moving to winter. Having spent a number of winters there (including Braemar and surrounds), I am reminded of the beauty of Scotland in both summer and winter. From the Highlands to the Borders, Scottish heritage is more than just tartan and tunes—it is a living legacy of an incredibly beautiful country, resilience of its people stemming back to the days of ancient Kings and Queens, community, and a pride in identity second to none.

In a world growing faster by the day, the values of kinship, tradition, and a deep-rooted sense of place, have never been more vital. Whether we gather for ceilidhs or commemorate historic milestones, we are not only celebrating the past but safeguarding it for future generations. In earlier editions I have asked that members share news. We had a wonderful piece last edition from one of our members, relating his travels through Scotland, but I had nothing, zero, zilch, to publish and share this month; until past Chief Stuart Munro came to the rescue. I encourage again that you share your stories—be it a family recipe, an old photograph, or a tale from a village you have ties to from long ago. These are the threads that bind us as a Society together.

I understand life is busy, and priorities shift—but the heart of the “Callies” has always been its people. Without your stories, photos, announcements, and your presence at functions, our newsletter risks becoming a one-way street rather than a shared platform to promote Scottish heritage and culture.

So, I ask: Have you something to share? A milestone? An old item looking for a new home to place on the “Buy/Sell section? A suggestion for an event?

Your voice matters. This is *your* Society. Let’s bring the spirit back.

Lang may your lum reek
Andrew (Chieftain & Editor)

FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF

Dear Caledonians,

We have had some excellent feedback regarding our monthly newsletter so please keep the comments and contributions coming. A doff of the cap again also to our Editor, Chieftain Andrew Bosch for his efforts on getting this show on the road.

Last month I went and visited my sister and her husband for a few days in Settlers Park Retirement Village in Port Alfred. Eleanor is 9 years older than I am, so I try and get to see her every year for her birthday on 14th August. She

suffers from Motor Neuron disease, so needs a wheelchair to get around. With her blessing, her husband, Justin and I arranged some outings, the first one being a visit to Bathurst, which happens to be just 15 minutes away from Port Alfred. One the way we drove past the 43 Air School which has a very proud history of training pilots. It is an award-winning international flight school and claims the distinction of being Africa's largest. There are more than 50 flight instructors and 50 aircraft at the School. I was amazed to hear that more than 6,000 students have graduated from the School, so it is clearly a major feeder for pilots in South Africa. I was really impressed with the school's credentials; something I was not at all aware of.



Our visit to Bathurst was equally interesting. Its chief claim to fame is that it was the early administrative centre established by the British Government for the 1820 British Settlers who were sent to the district as a buffer between the Cape Colony and the Xhosa pastoralists who were migrating southwards and westwards along the coast. The town was named after Lord Bathurst. The town experienced turbulent Frontier Wars, with its church serving as a refuge during conflicts. It features a unique English village atmosphere with preserved colonial architecture. Justin had delicious lunch washed down with some craft beer at the Pig & Whistle Inn, South Africa's oldest licensed pub. Bathurst is also the centre of a thriving pineapple industry, symbolized by a Big Pineapple monument.

The few days spent in Eastern Cape (I was born and raised in Graaff-Reinet) were really nostalgic, memorable and special. I will definitely be back soon.

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)

Following the dramatic reign of Macbeth, who ruled from 1040 to 1057 after defeating Duncan I in battle, the Scottish throne returned to Duncan's lineage when his son, Malcolm Canmore (Malcolm III), killed Macbeth and later overthrew Macbeth's stepson, Lulach. Malcolm III's long reign from 1058 to 1093 marked a turning point, as he strengthened ties with England through his marriage to the English princess Margaret, later Saint Margaret of Scotland. Their union brought both cultural and religious reforms, aligning Scotland more closely with continental European and Roman Catholic practices. After Malcolm's death in 1093, internal power struggles among his sons, Edgar, Alexander I, and David, led to a period of instability. All were in line for the throne, but were challenged by Malcolm's brother, Donald Bán, who initially seized power. David's older brother, Edgar, eventually became king (1097–1107), with the help of English military support, and ruled until his death.

When King Edgar died without heirs in 1107, he left the crown to Alexander I, his brother, but also granted David (his other brother) the lands of the southern part of Scotland (notably Cumbria and parts of Lothian) in what was effectively a divided kingdom. David I became King of Scots in 1124 (1124-1153) after Alexander I's death. There was no major battle for the throne; it came about through a combination of dynastic succession, political alliances, and support from the powerful English crown. Specifically, David had been raised in the Anglo-Norman court and had close ties to King Henry I of England, who supported his claim. Under King David I, Scotland experienced major administrative, legal, and ecclesiastical reforms. David invited Norman nobles into Scotland, reorganized the church, and founded burghs, laying the groundwork for a more centralized medieval Scottish state.

INTERESTING SCOTTISH FACTS

1. Scotland has its own legal and education systems Even after the 1707 Act of Union with England, Scotland retained its distinct legal, educational, and religious institutions. Scots law is separate from English law, and the Scottish education system includes a unique structure and curriculum.
2. The national dish, haggis, is illegal in the U.S. Haggis is banned in the United States because it contains sheep lung, which is prohibited under U.S. food safety regulations.
3. Scotland's national flag is one of the oldest in the world The Saltire (or St. Andrew's Cross) is believed to date back to the 9th century, making it one of the oldest national flags still in use.
4. Loch Ness holds more water than all the lakes in England and Wales combined Famous for its mythical monster, Loch Ness is not only deep (230 meters), but also long (36km).

HISTORY OF THE CLANS

I start this series with Clan Donald, followed by the others in the months to come.

Clan Donald, or Clan MacDonald, is one of the largest and most storied clans in Scottish history. Its roots trace back to Somerled, a 12th-century Norse-Gaelic warlord who established an independent kingdom in the western Highlands and Isles. His grandson, Donald of Islay, gave the clan its name.

By the 14th century, the MacDonalds had become immensely powerful. Angus Og MacDonald supported Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn in 1314, earning vast lands and influence. The clan later rose to become Lords of the Isles, ruling the Hebrides and parts of the western mainland as semi-independent princes. However, because of the strength of the clan, in 1493, James IV abolished the Lordship of the Isles, stripping Clan Donald of much of its autonomy. Despite this, the clan remained influential through its many branches, including Clanranald, Sleat, Glengarry, and Glencoe.

One of the darkest chapters in Clan Donald's history came in 1692 with the Massacre of Glencoe. Government troops, led by Captain Robert Campbell of Glenlyon, were billeted with the MacDonalds of Glencoe under the guise of peaceful hospitality. After 12 days, they received secret orders to slaughter their hosts, resulting in the murder of 38 MacDonalds, with many more dying from exposure as they fled into the winter mountains. The massacre was a brutal betrayal and remains a symbol of treachery in Scottish memory, although it must be said that evidence is that the Campbells didn't carry out this order with much enthusiasm, deliberately giving warnings to their Hosts, allowing many to escape. There is a very interesting museum in Glencoe with tons of little-known information about the massacre: I have spent many hours there. Really worth a visit if you are ever in the area.

Clan Donald played key roles in the Jacobite risings, particularly at Culloden in 1746. Today, the legacy of Clan Donald lives on through current members of the Clan throughout the world, historic sites, and as having played a proud role in Scotland's history.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Stuart Munro (your immediate Past Chief) tells of an interesting invitation, which ended up him being a "guinea pig" for two days for 6 qualified physiotherapists who were training to pass an international exam and to enhance their abilities in their chosen medical field. At the age of 84, Stuart suffers some aches and pains – some because of arthritis and some joint deterioration so he was a good 'patient' for the class to check out. Stuart's knees are particularly problematic, and he had previously been advised that a knee replacement was the only way solve the problem.

After exhaustive questioning and physical examination, the physiotherapists disappeared for a lengthy "pow-wow" before eventually coming back with various suggestions. They explained that with work, patience and persistence with rehab, the knee problem (and a few other concerns) could be resolved. They then proceeded to treat his knees, as well as advising on specific exercises to continue at home. The bottom line, says Stuart, is that his knees are much better even after just one manipulation, which has made life a lot easier with very much less painful.

LOCH NESS MONSTER VIDEO SIGHTING

The following article recently appeared in “Scotland Now” magazine (online). The “Scotland Now” magazine is an ‘offshoot’ of the “Daily Record” paper

I have taken the liberty of editing a bit. I must admit that every time I have driven along Loch Ness, I have kept a sharp look-out, but never seen anything!

While many consider the Loch Ness Monster to be a myth, the official Loch Ness Monster Sightings Register has received over 1,000 reports since 1996, demonstrating ongoing public interest in the legend. Interestingly, the number of “sightings” went down after 2008, but just recently there has been an increase. In the article below, there were sightings on 2nd March at Urquhart Castle, 22nd March near Dorres Beach, and on 16th June on the Loch Ness Webcam. Have any readers ever seen anything? Let me know (contact details at end of Newsletter).

From “Scotland Now”

A possible new sighting of the Loch Ness Monster has been recorded in video footage, with two "humps" were reportedly seen on the surface of Loch Ness.

On August 29, long-term Loch Ness Monster enthusiast Eoin O’Faodhagain was observing the Visit Inverness Loch Ness webcam of the loch. While watching the livestream, O’Faodhagain noticed movement at approximately 5.49pm. According to the ‘Nessie hunter’, he saw a "large disturbance of water" when looking at the webcam. Following this, two "humps" appeared onscreen before submerging.

O’Faodhagain stated that, after this, a single large hump could be seen coming out of the water. Finally, the other two humps could briefly be seen again before submerging.

Speaking to the Daily Record, O’Faodhagain said: "I first noticed a large disturbance of water on the right-hand side of the screen more than halfway across the loch. Then two humps appeared, then submerged, and then a large single hump appeared out of the water, then the webcam rotated left to right, and on its return to the sighting area of the loch, the two humps reappeared briefly, but had changed direction; then they submerged and that was the end of the sighting”.

The Loch Ness Monster enthusiast also shared a video of the supposed sighting. According to O’Faodhagain, at approximately 30 seconds into the clip, a wake can be seen briefly coming into view near the area of the hump. Additionally, he stated that a "thickish curved neck-like object" can be observed poking out of the water. O’ Faodhagain described the object as "looking behind". He continued: "I discovered some more information from my video clip, when I zoomed in further near the end of the video clip, at 30 and 31 seconds into the clip, a wake comes into view momentarily at the area of the sighting of the humps. At the head of this wake, a thickish curved neck-like object is seen out of the water looking behind. I took a zoomed screenshot of this and put a circle around the wake and the disturbance of water area, including the visual black hump shape at the back of it. The total length of the object from front to back would be 20 feet plus, with the large singular hump four feet high out of the water, and a neck-like object three feet long”.



The “Official Loch Ness Monster Sightings Register” also reported another disturbance on the loch on the same date (August 29). According to the website, a longtime local saw something beneath the water near Lochend at around 9.15am that caused a strange disturbance pattern on the loch.

The Daily Record reported earlier this year that a bystander observed a dark grey shape underneath the surface of Loch Ness near Urquhart Castle. The observer stated that the unusual shape blew bubbles then briefly surfaced above the water before then submerging.

More information can be found by typing “The Official Loch Ness Monster Sightings Register” into your search engine eg Chrome. There are all sorts of interesting links to follow from there.

The webcam can be found on the “Visit Inverness Loch Ness” website. Just enter “visit inverness loch ness webcam” in your search engine, press enter, and then click “Find Loch Ness Monster”. A page with a number of webcams will launch. The Clansman Hotel one, I found, worked the best. Pretty cool being able to see everything happening on the Loch.

EDINBURGH TATTOO EVENING: A brief report

On Saturday 6th September 32 Members and Friends were entertained by viewing the 2025 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in a special meeting hall in the Vista Nova School (Primary School Campus), 11 Milner Rd, Rondebosch. The Cape Town Caledonian Society has a special connection with Vista Nova because Past Chief of the Society, Stuart Rennie, was a much-liked Headmaster who served the school for many years and built up a close connection between the School and the Callies over that time.

Over the years we’ve viewed the various annual Tattoo’s in the main hall of the school but, this year, the High School exams were being held there. Not to be put out by this, we were

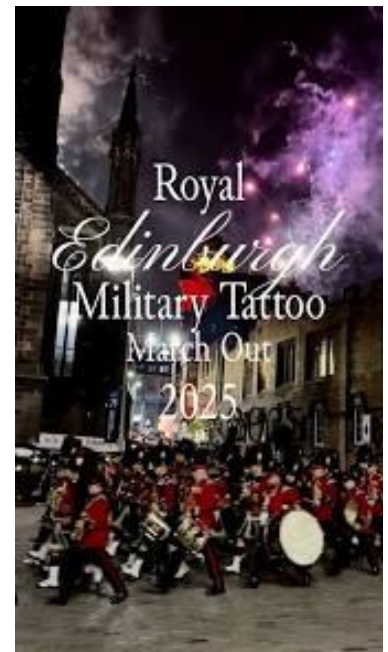


treated to a different venue, somewhat smaller but just large enough to accommodate everyone with space to spare. The Tattoo was originally advertised to be the 2024 one, but thanks to Ian Stevenson, a member of the sub-committee for this function, this year’s Special 75th Anniversary of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo was obtained and enjoyed. Ian also went and collected the Fish and Chips for everyone and brought the delicious meals back just in time to have a break for supper halfway through the Tattoo viewing.



For those of you that missed it, this year’s Tattoo included the much-loved Massed Pipes and Drums as well as many other entertaining spectacles from the UK and around the world. The 2025 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo celebrated its 75th anniversary with the show, "The Heroes Who Made Us,". The theme focused on the history of the Tattoo and

featured international military acts, including the Orchestra of Naval Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the US Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps. The event featured massed pipes and drums, highland dancers, and projections on the castle, all presented against the dramatic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, with BBC coverage provided by JJ Chalmers and Jennifer Reoch.



PIPE BAND

If anyone wants 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 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.

ITEMS FOR SALE/ WANTED: Callies Scottish Marketplace

Last month I introduced the idea of this section, where 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. So far, I've had nobody contact me either with items for sale or items wanted, but we will keep the option open.

BIRTHDAYS

Members Birthdays for October

Marilyn Dougall-Thomas

Nicky Ross

Claire Alexander

Judith Lucas

Graham Morrison

Harry Smith

Pamela Poole

Peter Ross (Your Chief of Society)

Happy birthday to all

ENTERTAINMENT & DATES TO DIARISE

1. Scottish Heritage Evening: For various reasons, the planned Celtic Heritage Day that was to be held this month, had to be cancelled. We will re-look at celebrating the day again next year, and also possible Tartan Day, which is celebrated annually on 06th April. Instead, perhaps try and get tickets for the Welsh Choir performance, featuring both the local choir and a visiting choir from abroad (see flyer below):
2. Remembrance Day service at Gardens Presbyterian Church will be on 16th Nov 2025
3. St Andrews Day will be celebrated in November: Details to come
4. Cape Town Highlanders are putting on a concert on 5th December at Simons Restaurant in Groot Constantia
5. Last, but not least, is the Concert "Why We Sing Together" by the Cape Welsh Choir together with members of the Cwmbach Male Choir from Wales. See details below.

Why we sing - together



Wales - South Africa Concert

featuring

Cwmbach Male Choir - Cape Welsh Choir

www.cwmbachmalechoir.co.uk - www.capewelshchoir.co.za

Why we sing – together

to celebrate an international collaboration for the delight of our
Cape Town audience, with 50 male voices on stage

Join the choirs for an afternoon to remember in a programme ranging
from operatic choruses, spirituals, hymns, folk music and popular ballads.

Venue: Nassau Auditorium, (Groote Schuur High School)
76 Palmyra Road, Newlands

Date: Sunday 28th September 2025

Time: 15h00



Tickets: R150, via www.quicket.co.za

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