



OPD 2017
Newsletters

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OPD ²⁰¹⁷ Monthly Newsletter

The Omaha Pipes and Drums – *A Celtic tradition since 1970*

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Scottish Skating

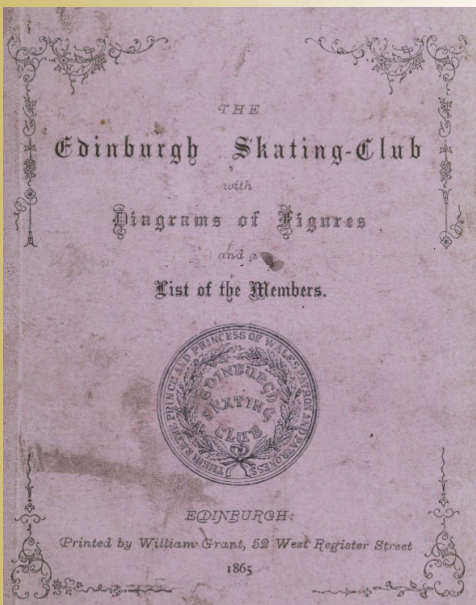
Studies suggest the earliest ice skating happened in southern Finland more than 3,000 years ago. Originally, skates were merely sharpened, flattened bone strapped to the bottom of the foot. Skaters did not actually skate on the ice, but rather glided on top of it. True skating emerged when a steel blade with sharpened edges was used. Skates now cut into the ice instead of gliding on top of it. Adding edges to ice skates was invented by the Dutch in the 13th or 14th century. These ice skates were made of steel, with sharpened edges on the bottom to aid movement. The construction of modern ice skates has stayed largely the same since then. In the Netherlands, ice skating was considered proper for all classes of people.

Ice skating was also practiced in China during the Song dynasty, and became popular among the ruling family of the Qing dynasty.

Ice skating was brought to England from the Netherlands, where James II was briefly exiled in the 17th century. When he returned to England, this "new" sport was introduced to the British aristocracy, and was soon enjoyed by people from all walks of life.



While some sources claim the club was established in 1642, most sources accept 1742 or 1744 as the date of its founding. The claim to the 1642 founding date appears to derive from a small book published by the club council in 1865, [The Edinburgh Skating-Club with Diagrams of Figures and a List of the Members](#).



At the time of its publication, the club had the honor of being patronized by the Prince and Princess of Wales, both of whom it notes delighted in the amusement of skating.

From this description and others, it is apparent that the form of skating practiced by club members was

indeed an early form of figure skating rather than speed skating. The figures in use were known as "The Half and Whole, or a Quarter, a Half, Three-Quarters, a Whole", "Each the Whole", "Each on his own Circle", "The Figure 8", "Sixes", "The Worm or Screw", "Crossing", and "The Wild Goose."

The favorite meeting place of club members was Duddingston Loch, near Edinburgh, Scotland. It's most recognized member was the *Skating Minister*; Robert Walker. He was a Church of Scotland minister who was born on 30 April 1755 in Monkton, Ayrshire. When Walker was a child, his father had been minister of the Scots Kirk in Rotterdam, so the young Robert almost certainly learnt to skate on the frozen canals of the Netherlands. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1770 at the age of fifteen. He married Jean Fraser in 1778 and had five children.

The Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch, better known by its shorter title **The Skating Minister** (shown above), is an oil painting attributed to Henry Raeburn in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh. It was practically unknown until about 1949, but has since become one of Scotland's best-known paintings. It is considered an icon of Scottish culture, painted during one of the most remarkable periods in the country's history, the Scottish Enlightenment.



Today, the loch rarely is iced enough for skating.

The club also held an annual dinner where the standard dish served was "sheeps-heads and trotters", perhaps in deference to the local Sheep Heid Inn in Duddingston.

Until next month...

Sláinte

Brewing in Scotland

Perhaps best known for its Scotch, beer has been produced in Scotland for approximately 5,000 years. Brewing in Scotland goes back 5,000 years; it is suggested that ale could have been made from barley at Skara Brae and at other sites dated to the Neolithic.

The ale would have been flavored with meadowsweet in the manner of a kvass or gruit made by various North European tribes including the Celts and the Picts. The ancient Greek Pytheas remarked in 325 BC that the inhabitants of Caledonia were skilled in the art of brewing a potent beverage.

The use of bittering herbs such as heather, myrtle, and broom to flavor and preserve beer continued longer in remote parts of Scotland than occurred in the rest of the UK. Thomas Pennant wrote in *A Tour in Scotland* (1769) that on the island of Islay "ale is frequently made of the young tops of heath, mixing two-thirds of that plant with one of malt, sometimes adding hops".

Even though ancient brewing techniques and ingredients remained in use later in Scotland than was the practice in the rest of the UK, the general pattern of development was the same, with brewing mainly in the hands of "broustaris", or alewives, and monasteries, just as it was throughout Europe; though, as with brewing ingredients, the trend was for developments to move more slowly. The Leges Quatuor Burgorum, a code of burgh laws, showed that in 1509 Aberdeen had over 150 brewers – all women; and this compares with figures for London which shows that of 290 brewers, around 40% were men. After the Reformation in the 1560s commercial brewing started to become more organized, as shown by the formation in 1598 of the Edinburgh Society of Brewers

After the Acts of Union 1707, new commercial opportunities emerged that proved a substantial stimulus to Scottish brewers. Tax on beer was levied at a lower amount than in other parts of the United Kingdom, and there was no tax on malt in Scotland – this gave Scottish brewers a financial advantage.

Scottish brewing reached a peak of 280 breweries in 1840. The merger of breweries led to changes, the higher hop content of some of the beers allowed them to travel better than previous products thus creating a higher quality product for export. Edinburgh and Alloa in particular became noted centers for the export of beer around the world. By 1920, there were only 62 brewers left. The decline continued so that by 1960 there were only 26 and by 1970, they had dropped to just 11.



Shilling Categories

The shilling categories were based on price charged per hogshead (54 Imperial gallons) during the nineteenth century. The stronger or better quality beers cost more. The same shilling designation was used for beer of totally different types. Usher's, for example, in 1914 brewed both a 60/- Mild and a 60/- Pale Ale. In 1909 Maclay brewed a 54/- Pale Ale and a 54/- Stout. In 1954 Steel Coulson were still producing both a 60/- Edinburgh Ale and 60/- Brown Ale on draught, both with a gravity of 1030; the third draught beer was 70/- P.X.A. at 1034. Customers would ask for a strength of beer by names such as "heavy" and "export". The terms *export* and *heavy* are still widely used in Scotland. Even though the practice of classifying beers by the shilling price was not specific to Scotland, during the cask ale revival in the 1970s Scottish brewers resurrected the shilling names to differentiate between keg and cask versions of the same beers. This differentiation has now been lost.

While the shilling names were never pinned down to exact strength ranges, and Scottish brewers today produce beers under the shilling names in a variety of strengths, it was largely understood that: **Light** = (60/-) was under 3.5% abv; **Heavy** = (70/-) was between 3.5% and 4.0% abv; **Export** = (80/-) was between 4.0% and 5.5% abv; **Wee heavy** = (90/-) was over 6.0% abv.

/- is read as "shilling" or "bob" as in "a pint of eighty-bob, please". The *"/-* was the symbol used for "shillings exactly", that is, shillings and zero pence, in the pre-decimal £sd British currency, so the names are read as "60 (or 70 or 80) shilling (or bob) ale"

Until next month...

Sláinte

The Irish in Omaha

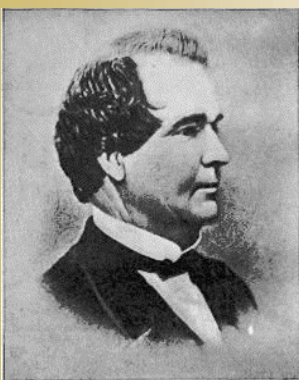
The Irish in Omaha, Nebraska have constituted a major ethnic group throughout the history of the city, and continue to serve as important religious and political leaders. The Irish were the third largest ethnic group in South Omaha in 1900, with 1,073 out of 26,001 residents claiming Irish ancestry. By 1909 that area of the city claimed 2,250 out of their 30,000 residents were of Irish descent.

The first church of any denomination in Nebraska was a Catholic church built in Omaha by Irish immigrants in 1856. Around this time a community of Irish settlers inhabited an area known as Gophertown, located north of the town of Saratoga and south of the town of Florence. It derived its name from the dug-out shanties the residents built for themselves.

The Irish have comprised a major component of Omaha's immigrant community since the 1860s. Coming to the city in large numbers to build the Union Pacific Railroad starting in 1864, many Irish immigrants stayed to work in the railroads and took jobs as laborers in the wholesaling district. As many as 10,000 Irish laborers worked out of Omaha along the Union Pacific lines as they sprawled across the Western United States. Few had come directly from Ireland, instead arriving in Omaha via New York City, Boston, and other cities in the Eastern United States. During the twelfth and final meeting of the Nebraska Territory Legislature a group of 31 Irish leaders in the community promoted George Francis Train (right) becoming a Senator for the new state because he had, "advocated so long the cause of Irish nationality."



Edward Charles Creighton was a prominent pioneer businessman in early Omaha, Nebraska. The brother of John A. Creighton, the Creightons were responsible for founding many institutions that were central to the growth and development of Omaha.



Creighton was born on a farm in Belmont County, Ohio in 1820. He was raised in an Irish Catholic family, and was always active in Church affairs. In the 1840s, he became involved in the freight shipping/telegraph businesses. By 1856, he had become one of the largest builders of telegraph lines in the United States. He married Mary Lucretia Wareham in Dayton, Ohio on October 7, 1856; the couple moved to Omaha after their wedding. He quickly became involved in several

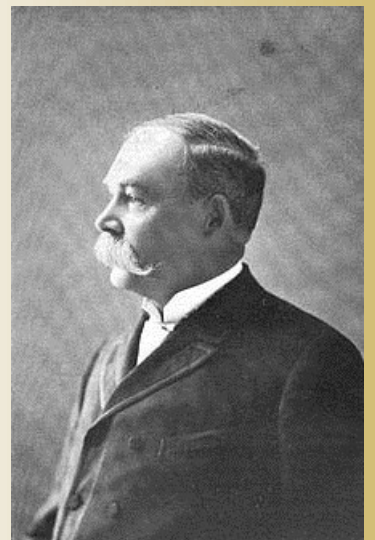
business ventures in Omaha, including wagon freighting, merchandising, real estate, banking, railroading and ranching. In the winter of 1860-61, Creighton surveyed the route of the proposed Transcontinental Telegraph line between Omaha and Sacramento, to be built with the financial support of Western Union. He dug the first post hole for the telegraph line on July 2, 1861; the line was completed on October 24, 1861.

Edward turned his attention to banking and railroading. He served as the first president of First National Bank of Omaha and was one of the founders of the Omaha and Northwestern Railroad. The Creighton brothers invested heavily in the Union Pacific Railroad which ran a route parallel to their telegraph line. The Creighton brothers knew both Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, both of whom had stated their desire to construct a transcontinental railroad. He very well fought unsuccessfully for Omaha's selection as the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad (an honor given to Council Bluffs, Iowa). A high ranking railroad official touring early Omaha had been beaten and robbed and the city was considered to be too wild and corrupt for such a venture.

Both Creighton brothers contributed heavily to social and educational causes in the Omaha area. Edward Creighton provided the funds for an order of hospital nuns to come to Omaha in the 1860s, and a second order shortly thereafter. St. Catherine's and St. Joseph's hospitals were built and staffed as a result of their support. John Creighton also contributed heavily to the construction of a Methodist hospital. For his church building and other services, John Creighton was made a Papal Count, and given a titled estate on Vatican held lands outside Naples.



James E. Boyd was an Irish-born politician in Omaha. The founder of Boyd's Packing House and Boyd's Theater and Opera House (built in 1881 at 15th and Farnam Streets currently the offices of OPPD), he served as the Mayor of Omaha from 1881 to 1883 and from 1885 to 1887, and as the seventh Governor of the state of Nebraska in 1891 and from 1892 – 1893.



Boyd was born in County Tyrone, Ireland on September 9, 1834. He moved to Belmont County, Ohio, with his family in 1844; he moved to Omaha, Nebraska Territory, in 1856. Boyd County, Nebraska is named after Boyd. Boyd Elementary School, part of the Omaha Public School system is also named for him, as well as Boyd Street that runs along the south side of the school's property.



In 1885 James O'Connor became the first Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Diocese of Omaha. Born in Queens-town, Ireland, he went to America at the age of fifteen. He was educated at St. Charles's Seminary, Philadelphia, and in the Propaganda College, Rome where he was ordained a priest in 1848.

In 1885, the Diocese of Omaha was created, and Bishop O'Connor was appointed its first bishop. Bishop O'Connor died on May 27, 1890.

Omaha also wound up with a hero of Irish nationalism; he may not have lived in Omaha during his life, but he has been here ever since. He was born in Drumgallon, Clontibrit County Monaghan, where he received some schooling. He emigrated to New Jersey in 1848 at the height of the Great Famine (Ireland). In 1857 he enlisted in the 2nd United States Dragoons and served in the Utah War (May 1857-July 1858), apparently deserting afterwards to California. In California, he joined the 1st Cavalry, and served as a sergeant in the American Civil War with this regiment until December 1862, at which time he was commissioned as an officer in the 5th Indiana Cavalry.

John O'Neill, buried in Holy Sepulchre cemetery, became a member of the Fenian Brothers, which eschewed politics in favor of militant action to expel the British presence in Ireland. O'Neill's story is too complicated to fit into this article, but it is suffice to say that in the 1800s Irish-Americans decided it would help the cause to invade Canada. O'Neill did so repeatedly, leading the most famous of these "Fenian raids." He died in Nebraska while working for a firm of land speculators. Somehow his body wound up in Omaha.

The most colorful of early Omaha's Irish leaders was a man named Tom Dennison (shown left in photo). Starting in the late 19th century, Omaha's Irish crime lord and political boss Tom Dennison gathered power in the early 1900s. His powerful political machine controlled all gambling, liquor and prostitution schemes in Omaha for almost 50 years.

The son of Irish immigrants, Tom Dennison came to Nebraska from Iowa in 1860 at the age of two. When he was young, Dennison traveled throughout the West as a prospector, saloon-keeper, gambler and robber. Dennison had owned and operated gambling houses such as the Opera House Gambling Saloon in Leadville, Colorado and the Board of Trade saloon in Butte, Montana.

Tom Dennison was thirty-four when he arrived in Omaha with \$75,000 in cash. Upon surveying the city, he found Omaha to be a "wide open town", meaning there was little legal control over gambling, liquor, prostitution and other criminal interests. Dennison soon became known as the city's "King Gambler" and first entered the political arena around 1900 as a way of protecting his interests. Dennison never actually held public office, instead buying influence through lavish campaign contributions and his ability to get out the vote.

Dennison acted as a power broker between the business community and the local vice lords. His gambling operations were mainly located in Omaha's third ward. He actively worked with local temperance groups to eliminate half of the saloons in Omaha — reportedly, the half he didn't control. Dennison operated a private bank at 1409 Douglas Street, the site of the current Union Pacific Center, loaning money and providing a discreet repository for those who shunned traditional banks. For more than 25 years, his power was such that no crime occurred in the city without his blessing, the police reported to him daily, and the mayor himself answered directly to him. Dennison once explained his law theory to the *Omaha Bee*, saying, *"There are so many laws that people are either law breakers or hypocrites. For my part, I hate a damn hypocrite."*

Throughout his life Dennison maintained he had no control over city politics, and repeatedly pronounced that he never hurt anyone. His funeral on February 20, 1934 at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Omaha was attended by more than a thousand people, reportedly representing Omaha's business, official and sporting interests. One hundred eight cars made up the procession to Forest Lawn Cemetery.

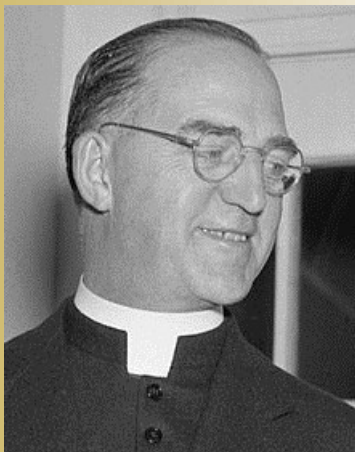


In 1917, Flanagan founded a home for homeless boys in Omaha. Bishop Jeremiah James Harty of the Diocese of Omaha had misgivings, but endorsed Father Flanagan's experiment. Because the downtown facilities were inadequate, Flanagan established Boys Town, ten miles west of Omaha, in 1921. Under Father Flanagan's direction, Boys Town grew to be a large community with its own boy-mayor, schools, chapel, post office, cottages, gymnasium, and other facilities where boys between the ages of 10 and 16 could receive an education and learn a trade. Flanagan did not believe in the reform school model, and stated, "there's no such thing as a bad boy".

Father Flanagan received many awards for his work with the delinquent and homeless boys. Pope Pius XI named him a Domestic Prelate with the title Right Reverend Monsignor in 1937. He served on several committees and boards dealing with the welfare of children and was the author of articles on child welfare.

Internationally known, Father Flanagan traveled to the Republic of Ireland in 1946, where he was appalled by the children's institutions there, calling them "a national disgrace"; his observations raised negative comments against him in the Irish press and the Oireachtas, and he was forced to leave the country. He made a similar trip to Japan and Korea in 1947 to study child welfare problems, as well as to Austria and Germany in 1948. While in Germany, he died on 15 May 1948 of a heart attack. He is interred at Dowd Memorial Chapel of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Boys Town, Nebraska.

Today there is a strong ethnic Irish presence in Omaha. Several social organizations, including the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Omaha Area Emerald Society, and the Irish American Cultural Institute have chapters in the city. There are also several organizations promoting Irish culture, including as Brigid St. Brigid Theatre, the Omaha Irish Dancers, Craoi na Tire Studio of Irish Dance, and Dowds Irish Dance Academy. The Irish culture also includes the annual St. Patrick's Day parade.



En route to an assignment in rural Nebraska in 1912, Irish-born Father Edward J. Flanagan became concerned about the welfare of orphans in the Omaha area.

Flanagan was born in the townland of Leabeg, County Roscommon, near the village of Ballymoe, County Galway, Ireland. He attended Summerhill College, Sligo, Ireland.

In 1904, he immigrated to the United States and became a US citizen in 1919. He attended

Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland, where in 1906 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Arts degree in 1908. Father Flanagan studied at St. Joseph's Seminary in Dunwoodie, New York. He continued his studies in Italy and at the University of Innsbruck in Austria where he was ordained a priest in 1912. His first parish was in O'Neill, Nebraska, where from 1912 he served as an assistant pastor at St. Patrick's Catholic Church. He then moved to Omaha, Nebraska, to serve as an assistant pastor at St. Patrick's Church and later at St. Philomena's Church.

Until next month...

Sláinte



Scottish Sports

It could be Scotland's dream landscape; or our people, with their lust for life and a huge desire to enjoy themselves; or an innate inventiveness and creativity. Most likely it's a combination of all of these factors that has led to Scotland's sporting heritage and today's true love of sport.

The sporting traditions of Scotland are legendary worldwide. Scotland boasts the invention of many popular international sports including tennis, golf and rugby. Scotland has its own sporting competitions and governing bodies, such as the Camanachd Association, the Scottish Rugby Union, Scottish Rugby League. The country has independent representation at many international sporting events, for example the Rugby League World Cup, as well as the Commonwealth Games.

Football code games include traditional football, association football, rugby, American Football, Australian Rules football and Futsal. Stick and bat games include Cricket, Golf, Shinty, Baseball, Croquet, Elephant Polo, Field Hockey, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, and Rock-it-ball. Scots also have competitive Basketball, Netball, Billiards, Pool and Snooker, Badminton, Racquetball, Squash, Tennis, Royal Tennis, Fencing, Judo, Karate, Back-Hold, Track and Field, Water Polo, Motor Sports and more.

We'll take a look this month at some of the more unusual sports.

Shinty (Scottish Gaelic: *camanachd*, *iomain*) is a team game now played mainly in the Scottish Highlands, and amongst Highland migrants to the big cities of Scotland, but it was formerly more widespread in Scotland, and was even played for a considerable time in England and other areas in the world where Scottish Highlanders migrated.

Shinty is older than the recorded history of Scotland and is thought to predate Christianity. Hurling, an Irish pastime for at least 2,000 years similar to shinty, is derived from the historic game common to both peoples. Shinty/Hurling appears prominently in the legend of Cúchulainn, the Celtic mythology hero. A similar game was played on the Isle of Man known as cammag, a name cognate with camanachd.

The game was traditionally played through the winter months, with New Year's Day being the day when whole villages would gather together to play games featuring teams of up to several hundred a side, players often using

any piece of wood with a hook as a caman. In Uist, stalks of seaweed were put to use due to a lack of trees. Modern camans are made from several laminates of ash or hickory, which are glued and cut into shape, although one-piece camans were still commonplace until the early 1980s. The ball was traditionally a round piece of wood or bone, sometimes called a *crnag*, but soon developed into the worsted leather balls used today.

The objective of the game is to play a small ball into a goal, or "hail", erected at the ends of a 140 to 170-yard-long by 70 to 80-yard-wide pitch. Teams consist of 12 players (men) or 10 players (women), including a goalkeeper. A match is played over two halves of 45 minutes. A player can play the ball in the air and is allowed to use both sides of the stick. The stick may also be used to block and to tackle, although a player may not bring their stick down on an opponent's stick, which is defined as hacking. A player may tackle an opponent using the body as long as it is shoulder-to-shoulder. The winner of a game is the team that scores the most goals. A team scores a goal "when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal-line and under the cross-bar".

Hurling (Irish: *iománaíocht/iomáint*) shares a common Gaelic root with the sport of shinty. The game has pre-historic origins, and has been played for 3,000 years.



The objective of the game is for players to use a wooden stick called a hurley (in Irish a *camán*) to hit a small ball called a *sliotar* between the opponents' goalposts either over the crossbar for one point, or under the crossbar into a net guarded by a goalkeeper for one goal, which is equivalent to three points. The *sliotar* can be caught in the hand and carried for not more than four steps, struck in the air, or struck on the ground with the hurley. It can be kicked or slapped with an open hand (the hand pass) for short-range passing. A player who wants to carry the ball for more than four steps has to bounce or balance the *sliotar* on the end of the stick and the ball can only be handled twice while in his possession.

Like shinty, no protective padding is worn by players. Hurling is played throughout the world, and is popular among members of the Irish diaspora in North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina, and South Korea. In many parts of Ireland, however, hurling is a fixture of life. It has featured regularly in art forms such as film, music and literature. The final of

the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship was listed in second place by CNN in its "10 sporting events you have to see live".

Teams consist of fifteen players. Scoring is achieved by sending the sliotar (ball) between the opposition's goal posts. The posts, which are at each end of the field, are "H" posts as in rugby football but with a net under the crossbar as in football. If the ball goes over the crossbar, a *point* is scored and a white flag is raised by an umpire. If the ball goes below the crossbar, a *goal*, worth three points, is scored, and a green flag is raised by an umpire. Players may be tackled but not struck by a one handed slash of the stick; exceptions are two handed jabs and strikes. Jersey-pulling, wrestling, pushing and tripping are all forbidden.

Scotland is also one of the few countries with world renowned oddball games and competitions.

Swamp Football Championships. Having been conceptualized in 2008, it has attracted its own set of supporters and participants from all over the United Kingdom and other crazy countries. The games follow the same rules as a normal football match, but with only 6 players on the field. The match lasts 30 minutes including breaks. But the big difference in Swamp football is that the games are played on thick, slimy mud. Yes, players out-play each other, diving and slipping on wet and sticky mud, while trying to play a decent game of football. But don't be fooled, Swamp football is more about fun rather than a serious competition, as players are highly encouraged to wear fancy dresses to add a more hilarious and light appeal. Shoes are also recommended to be taped to the feet, otherwise, players will see themselves with bare feet when their shoes are sucked in by the mud. Teams are also encouraged to create funny team names, such as the Mudchesthair United and Real Mudrid.



World Stone Skimming Championships. If you lived close to a body of water as a child, then you've certainly done this to pass time and compete with your friends. In Scotland, it has become a widely played sport. The World Stone Skimming Competition is a widely participated event held in Easdale Island, near Oban, in Argyll. Every year, during the last Sunday of September, hundreds of participants and spectators head to the banks of the waters to join and watch this lively event. Absolutely anyone can join, be it a child or an adult. Each person is given three skims using selected Easdale slate stones, competing for the most and longest skims created. It is a lively event that not only attracts spectators for the game itself but also for the festivities before and after the games. A pre-skim party, barbeque, live music, stilt walking and kids activities make it an excellent event for families.

Coal Carrying Championships. Another much participated event, which is one of only two in the world, is the Scottish Coal Carrying Championships. Held in Kelty, Fife, men and women race through the streets carrying sacks of coal on their backs. Men carry a 50 kg sack and 20 kg for women. The race has been going since 1994 and is regarded as a way of honoring the proud, sad industrial history of the Fife coalfield. A new category was added this year, with mascots carrying coal. This one mile race attracts thousands of spectators every year.

Haggis Hurling. The Scottish sport of haggis hurling has a somewhat controversial history. While it is claimed to be a traditional Scottish sport with an ancient origin, the game as it is played today is believed to have much more recent roots. Whatever the history of the game, its popularity has grown over the years.

A widely accepted story of the origin of haggis hurling tells of a wife preparing a haggis for her husband's lunch while he was out working in the fields or cutting peat. With the many rivers running through crofts and the presence of bogs, walking from the house to where the husband was working often entailed a long detour to find a suitable point to cross rivers and bogs. So, to save time the wife would toss the cooked haggis over the obstacle to her husband, which he would have to catch with the front apron of his kilt. Dropping it would mean haggis coated with dirt for lunch.

Turning this ancient time and effort saving practice into a sport reportedly came about in 1977, when Robin Dunseath placed an advertisement in one of Scotland's national papers announcing that at the Gathering of the Clans in Edinburgh that year there would be a revival of the ancient Scottish sport of haggis hurling. The response was overwhelming, with large numbers of people wanting to participate, believing that they were reviving an ancient traditional Scottish sport. Dunseath remained as president of the World Haggis Hurling Association for almost 20 years, sending out certificates to champion haggis hurlers all over the world and even writing a book called the Complete Haggis Hurler, outlining the history and rules of the sport.

However, in 2004 Dunseath revealed that it had all been a hoax thought up by a group of friends as a gullibility gauge. Proving that it was just a joke and not done with the objective of financial gain, all proceeds from haggis hurling competitions as well as the sale of the book have gone to charity.

The rules of haggis hurling are very specific and are enforced by the Hagrarian, with the Clerk of the Heather starting the event and the Steward of the Heather measuring the hurl and confirming that the haggis is still intact upon landing. The haggis must be cooked and of a certain weight, which differs for male and female contestants. After the haggis has been inspected to ensure that it is not adulterated with any firming substance and has been prepared according to the traditional recipe, the haggis hurler stands elevated, usually on a whiskey barrel, for the throw. Winning hurls are determined by distance and accuracy. Despite Robin Dunseath's hoax confession, the sport has not lost its appeal among serious haggis hurlers and remains a popular event at Scottish traditional games - with a good time being had by all.



A new record at the World Haggis Hurling Championships was set in 2017 by Gary McLay, 26, from Kilmarnock by hurling the traditional Scottish pudding 59 metres.

Until next month...

Sláinte

A Weapon of War



It's interesting to learn that until 1996 the bagpipes were classified as a weapon of war. This does not simply mean an instrument played in battle, or a tool used to direct troops, it actually means a physical weapon, like a sword or a musket. The origins of this take us all the way back to the Battle of Culloden and a piper named James Reid.

James Reid was one of several pipers who played at the Battle of Culloden. He was captured along with 558 men by Cumberland's troops and taken to England. There James was put on trial and accused of high treason against the English Crown. Piper Reid claimed that he was innocent because he did not have a gun or a sword. He said that the only thing he did that day on the battlefield was play the bagpipe.

After some deliberation the judges had a different opinion on the matter. They said that a highland regiment never marched to war without a piper at its head. Therefore, in the eyes of the law, the bagpipe was an instrument of war. James Reid was condemned and subsequently hanged then drawn and quartered.

The decision of those judges has echoed down through the generations. It was the first recorded occasion that a musical instrument was officially declared a weapon of war. For hundreds of years and many conflicts to come the bagpipes, when listed among the items captured in combat, was counted among rifles, sabers, and munitions. It is interesting to note that bugles and drums were recorded as musical instruments, where the bagpipe ranked among the lists of weapons. This continued through the Great War; perhaps a fitting place for the pipes but a tragic legacy for the piper James Reid who played at the last bloody battle of the Jacobites on Culloden Moor.

William "Bill" Millin, commonly known as Piper Bill, was the personal piper to Simon Fraser, 15th Lord Lovat, commander of 1st Special Service Brigade. Millin is best remembered for playing the pipes whilst under fire during the D-Day landing in Normandy.

Millin was born in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada on 14 July 1922. His father, who was a native Scot, moved the family back to Glasgow when he was three. He joined the Territorial Army in Fort William and played in the pipe bands of the Highland Light Infantry and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders before volunteering as a commando and training with Lovat at Achnacarry, near Fort William in Scotland. Lovat had appointed Millin as his personal piper during this commando training.

Pipers have traditionally been used in battle by Scottish and Irish soldiers. However, the use of bagpipes was restricted to rear areas by the time of the Second World War by the British Army. Lovat, nevertheless, ignored these orders when making their landing at Sword Beach on D-day and ordered Millin, then aged 21, to play.

When Private Millin demurred, citing the regulations, he recalled later, Lord Lovat replied: *"Ah, but that's the English War Office. You and I are both Scottish, and that doesn't apply."* He played "Hielan' Laddie" and "The Road to the Isles" as his comrades fell around him on Sword Beach.

Millin was the only man during the landing who wore a kilt, the same Cameron tartan kilt his father had worn in Flanders during World War I, and he was armed only with his pipes and the sgian-dubh, sheathed inside his kilt-hose on the right side. In keeping with Scottish tradition, he wore no underwear beneath the kilt. He later told author Peter Caddick-Adams that the coldness of the water took his breath away. Millin states that he later talked to captured German snipers who claimed they did not shoot at him because they thought he was crazy.

Lovat and Millin advanced from Sword Beach to Pegasus Bridge, which had been defiantly defended by men of the 2nd Bn the Ox & Bucks Light Infantry (6th Airborne Division) who had landed in the early hours by glider. To the sound of Millin's bagpipes, the commandos marched across Pegasus Bridge. During the march, twelve men died, most shot through their berets. Later detachments of the commandos rushed across in small groups with helmets on. Millin's D-Day bagpipes were later donated to the now Pegasus Bridge Museum.

Millin, who suffered a stroke in 2003, died in hospital in Torbay on 17 August 2010, aged 88. His wife Margaret, from Edinburgh, died in 2000. He was survived by their son John. With the help of son John Millin and the Dawlish Royal British Legion, a bronze life-size statue of Piper Bill Millin was unveiled on 8 June 2013 at Colleville-Montgomery, near Sword Beach, in France.

Bagpipes were commonly used during World War I to lead the men 'over the top' of the trenches and into battle. However, unarmed and drawing attention to themselves with their playing, pipers were always an easy target for the enemy. The death rate amongst pipers was extremely high: it is estimated that around 1000 pipers died in World War One.



Daniel Laidlaw was born at Little Swinton, Berwickshire on 26 July 1875, Laidlaw joined the Army in 1896. He served with the Durham Light Infantry in India where he received a certificate for his work during a plague outbreak in Bombay in 1898. In the latter year he was claimed out by his elder brother and transferred as a piper to the King's Own Scottish Borderers, in 1912 he transferred to the reserve. In 1915 Laidlaw re-enlisted in The King's Own Scottish Borderers.



On September 25th 1915 the company was preparing to 'go over the top'. Under heavy fire and suffering from a gas attack, the company's morale was at rock bottom. The commanding officer ordered Laidlaw to start playing, to pull the shaken men together ready for the assault.

Immediately the piper mounted the parapet and began marching up and down the length of the trench.



Oblivious to the danger, he played, "All the Blue Bonnets Over the Border." The effect on the men was almost instant and they swarmed over the top into battle. Laidlaw continued piping until he got near the German lines when he was wounded. As well as being awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces, Laidlaw also received the French Croix de Guerre in recognition of his bravery.

He later achieved the rank of sergeant-piper. His medals are on display on the 5th floor of the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Only one other piper was awarded a Victoria Cross during the First World War, the Scottish-born Canadian soldier James Cleland Richardson.

Fighting Jack Churchill or Mad Jack, was a British soldier who fought throughout the Second World War armed with a longbow, bagpipes, and a basket-hilted Scottish broadsword (sometimes incorrectly called a Claymore).

As part of the British Expeditionary Force to France, in May 1940 Churchill and his unit, the Manchester Regiment, ambushed a German patrol near L'Épinette, France. Churchill gave the signal to attack by cutting down the enemy

Feldwebel (sergeant) with a barbed arrow, becoming the only British soldier known to have felled an enemy with a longbow in WWII.

Jack Churchill was second in command of No. 3 Commando in Operation Archery, a raid on the German garrison at Vågsøy, Norway on 27 December 1941. As the ramps fell on the first landing craft, Churchill leapt forward from his position playing "March of the Cameron Men" on his bagpipes, before throwing a grenade and running into battle in the bay. For his actions at Dunkirk and Vågsøy, Churchill received the Military Cross and Bar.

In 1944 he led the Commandos in Yugoslavia, where they supported Josip Broz Tito's Partisans from the Adriatic island of Vis. In May he was ordered to raid the German held island



of Brač. The landing was unopposed but on seeing the eyries from which they later encountered German fire, the Partisans decided to defer the attack until the following day. Churchill's bagpipes signalled the remaining Commandos to battle. After being strafed by an RAF Spitfire, Churchill decided to withdraw for the night and to re-launch the attack the next day.

The following morning, one flanking attack was launched by 43 Commando with Churchill leading the elements from 40 Commando. The Partisans remained at the landing area; only Churchill and six others managed to reach the objective. A mortar shell killed or wounded everyone but Churchill, who was playing "Will Ye No Come Back Again?" on his pipes as the Germans advanced. He was knocked unconscious by grenades and captured.

He was flown to Berlin for interrogation and then transferred to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Churchill tunneled out of the camp with an RAF officer, but was recaptured and transferred to a PoW camp in Austria. When the floodlights failed one night he escaped and, living on stolen vegetables, walked across the Alps near the Brenner Pass. He then made contact with an American reconnaissance column in the Po Valley.

Churchill had always wanted to serve with a Scottish regiment, and so transferred to the Seaforth Highlanders, becoming a company commander where he remained until he retired in 1959.

In 1996, after some disputes with authorities, a man known as Mr Brooks was taken to court for playing the pipes on Hamstead Heath, an act forbidden under a Victorian by-law stating the playing of any musical instrument is banned. Mr Brooks plead not guilty by, claiming the pipes are not a musical instrument, but instead a weapon of war, citing the case of James Reid as a precedent. The unanimous verdict was that the pipes are first and foremost musical instruments returning them from a weapon of war to their rightful place as a musical instrument.

Until next month...

Sláinte

Scottish popular and obscure tourist attractions

From castles to cottages, Scotland has something for everyone. Here are some of the 2016 most popular and obscure tourist attractions from across the country as rated by CommonSpace.

Stirling Castle

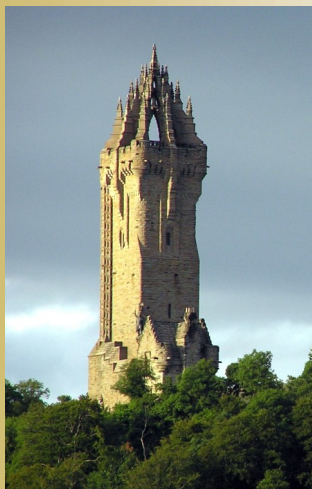
Situated in the heart of the city, Stirling Castle is one of Scotland's largest and most historically important castles. Built around about the early 12th century, the castle has been home to many historical names, notably Mary Queen of Scots and James VI. It also played a key role during the Wars of Independence (1296-1357), having been taken siege several time. Today the castle boasts a number of attractions including exhibitions on the Stuart dynasty and of the architecture and artwork found throughout the grounds. Tours of the Great Hall and the Royal Palace which both date back to the 16th century are also available and for younger visitors there are the palace vaults which feature interactive games and activities.

<http://www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk>



Riverside Museum

The Riverside Museum opened in 2011, replacing the old Transport Museum at Kelvin Hall in Glasgow. Designed by award-winning architect Zaha Hamid, the museum has a collection of over 3,000 objects and vehicles on display, from 20th century Glasgow trams to a mobility scooter. As well as impressive displays, visitors can also take a trip 80 years back in time to the streets of Glasgow. With access to the model shops and subway station, people of all ages will be able to immerse themselves in the city's past. <http://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums/riverside/Pages/default.aspx>



Wallace Monument

The National Wallace Monument first opened in 1869 to commemorate Sir William Wallace, the warrior who fought during the first Scottish War of Independence. Sitting upon the top of Abbey Craig, the monument looks out towards Stirling, giving visitors views of Ochil Hills and the Forth Valley. Abbey Craig is said to be where Wallace watched the gathering of Edward I of England's army before the battle of Stirling

Bridge, arguably his greatest victory. There are also a number of artifacts believed to have belonged to Wallace including a long sword which weighs over three kilos and a 'Hall of Heroes' which celebrates the lives of Scottish warriors and pioneers.

<http://www.nationalwallacemonument.com>

Sma' Shot Cottages

The Sma' Shot Cottages were built in the 18th century to house weavers during a boom in the town of Paisley's threads and textiles industry. The town's industrial era may now be over but the cottages give visitors a chance to see what living and working just before the time of the industrial revolution was like. Restored to be as accurate to the time of the weavers as possible, the attraction has displays and pictures of Paisley's past as well as a functioning loom which highlights that these cottages were a place of work as well as a home. <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/sma-shot-cottages-p254461>



Urquhart Castle

Urquhart Castle was first believed to have been inhabited by William the Lion (1165-1214) and later went on to be a key fortress in conflicts between Highland clans. The castle was also important during the Jacobite uprising and was subsequently destroyed to prevent it being used as a stronghold for supporters of the deposed James VII. Today the castle lies in ruin by the shores of Loch Ness but is open to the public with a visitor's center providing exhibits about the history and stories of the noblemen who once lived there. http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/propertyresults/propertyoverview.htm?PropID=PL_297



the National Trust
for Scotland
a place for everyone

New Lanark

The village of New Lanark is considered to be one of the first important milestones in urban planning. Opened in 1786 as a housing scheme for workers of David Dale's cotton mills, it is now one of Scotland's six world heritage sites. New Lanark became a successful business and with the help of philanthropist Robert Turner became an example of utopian socialism, with profits going back into the village and to the workers. Around 200 people still live in the settlement and there is a hotel and visitors center, with tours of the mills, village shop, restaurant and even a ride which brings to life what the village was like in the early 19th century. <http://www.newlanark.org>



Aberdeen Maritime Museum

Giving visitors a terrific view over the busy harbor, the Maritime Museum brings Aberdeen's history with the sea to life. Opened in 1984 by the local council and the National Trust, the museum has the only display in the UK about the North Sea gas and oil industry. Boasting a large collection of nautical memorabilia the museum brings the city's history to life through interactive activities and hands-on exhibits. <http://www.aagm.co.uk/venues/aberdeenmaritimemuseum/amm-overview.aspx>



Skara Brae

Discovered in 1850 after a storm battered the coast of Orkney, Skara Brae is one of the best preserved prehistoric villages in Western Europe. Lying along the Bay of Skall, the settlement was believed to have been inhabited over 5,000 years ago. Furnished with ancient stone beds, dressers and seats, visitors are given a picture of what life would have been like all those years ago. Skara Brae is part of the Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/propertyresults/propertyoverview.htm?PropID=PL_244



Edinburgh Castle

Edinburgh Castle is arguably the most important castle north of the border, having been the seat of Scottish royalty and host of many important moments throughout the country's history. Sitting high above the old town atop a dormant volcanic plug, the castle today sees annual visitors of around 1.5 million. It has a number of attractions which include viewing the crown jewels, the one o'clock gun and St. Margaret's chapel -Edinburgh's oldest building. The military played an important part in the fortress's past and visitors can pay respects at the Scottish National War Memorial or visit the National War Museum which displays over 400 years of conflicts involving Scotland either overseas or at home. <http://www.edinburghcastle.gov.uk>



Loch Ness

Loch Ness is the second largest loch in Scotland but probably the most famous. Spanning an impressive 23 miles through the highlands, it's the deepest body of water in the British Isles. The loch has gained fame thanks to alleged sightings of the Loch Ness Monster or 'Nessie' as it more commonly known as by the locals. First 'spotted' in 1933, the monster has become world famous and visitors can enjoy boat trips, nature trails or 'Nessie Spotting' voyages down the loch. <http://www.lochness.com/home.aspx>



Until next month...

Sláinte

Weapons of Deeds

At the close of the fifteenth century, the two-handed sword became the weapon of choice for Scottish fighting men, particularly the chiefs and gentlemen of the Highland clans. The archetypal Highland two-handed sword with quatrefoil quillons that is popularly known as the 'claymore'.

The term *claymore* is an Anglicization of the Gaelic *claidheamh-mór* "great sword". It became part of vocabulary of the Victorian era sentimental or Romanticist "retro-Jacobite" literature and poetry such as the Skye Boat Song (1870).



The two-handed claymore was a large sword used in the late Medieval and early modern periods. It was used in the constant clan warfare and border fights with the English from circa 1400 to 1700. Although Claymores existed as far back as the Wars of Scottish Independence they were smaller and few had the typical quatrefoil design. The last known battle in which it is considered to have been used in a significant number was the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689. It was somewhat longer than other two-handed swords of the era. The two-handed claymore seems to be an offshoot of Early Scottish medieval longswords (similar to the *Espee de Guerre* or *Grete war sword*) which had developed a distinctive style of a cross-hilt with forward-angled arms that ended in spatulate swellings. The lobed pommels on earlier swords were inspired by the Viking style. The spatulate swellings were later frequently made in a quatrefoil design.

The average claymore ran about 55 inches in overall length, with a 13 inch grip, 42 inch blade, and a weight of approximately 5.5 lb. For instance, in 1772 Thomas Pennant described a sword seen on his visit to Raasay as: "an unwieldy weapon, two inches broad, doubly edged; the length of the blade three feet seven inches; of the

handle, fourteen inches; of a plain transverse guard, one foot; the weight six pounds and a half." The largest claymore on record; known as *fuilteach-mhuirt*, weighs a hefty 22 pounds and measures 7 feet 4 inches in length. It is believed to have been wielded by a member of Clan Maxwell circa the 15th century. The sword is currently in the possession of the National War Museum in Edinburgh, Scotland

A common weapon among the clansmen during the Jacobite rebellions of the late 17th and early 18th centuries was the Scottish Basket Hilted Broadsword, commonly known as *claidheamh beag* or "claybeg" – meaning "small



sword" in Scottish Gaelic. In close quarters, the claybeg was the ideal weapon of choice for combating British soldiers armed with long, unwieldy, muskets with plug bayonets. When paired with a "targe", or light buckler a highlander was provided with a staunch defense, allowing him to block a bayonet with the targe and then deliver a thrust with the sword into his opponent's torso.

At range, this strategy would do little against musket armed troops firing in volleys or artillery using canister shot (while effective against bayonets, the targe would not fare so well against a musket ball), which necessitated tactics such as the "Highland Charge", which required a Jacobite war band to close with their targets as quickly as possible, normally under heavy fire, using the smoke from musket and cannon fire to cover the last leg of the assault before attacking the line. Yet even this risky strategy led to many casualties among the Jacobite clansmen against disciplined volley fire and massed artillery firing grape and canister shot.

In between rebellions, after the disastrous Jacobite defeat at the Battle of Culloden and the overall failure of the rebellions, it would become illegal to carry the claybegs and targes and so many Highlanders would hide these weapons in the heath. It is not an uncommon story that features a hiker finding such a blade while walking.

There is some evidence on historical fencing as practiced in Scotland in the Early Modern Era, especially fencing with the Scottish basket-hilted broadsword during the 17th to 18th centuries. In the 17th-18th century, there were a number of warriors and soldiers that developed a reputation as skilled duelists. In the highlands, they were known as *Caterans*, and were noted for cattle theft as well as black-mail, and often traveled to different villages challenging them to produce a fighter that can best them, or pay a fee. Some belonged to the *Duine uasal* (Warrior Class) of their Clan.

An example is Robert Roy MacGregor (1671–1734) - Son of Chief Donald MacGregor of Clan Gregor, he was a cateran of great repute. He was said to be the best swordsman in all the Highlands. His final duel was with Charles Stewart, 5th of Ardsheal (a laird of Clan Stewart of Appin), to whom he lost with a cut to the chin (which would later cause his death).

It has been suggested that certain Scottish Clans and families had specific training systems that were distinct from one another. For example, it is said that some members of Clan Macdonald were ambidextrous, and were thus able to fence with either left or right hand. The Kerr family is known in its family tradition to have predominantly left-handed swordsmen (as apparent in the construction of their castles), which has led to the term "Kerr-Fisted".

Until next month...

Sláinte

Scotland 2017

If you have been following our website, you know the band will be competing in Scotland this month. This is only the second time the band has competed in Scotland—the last time was in 2004.

Saturday – August 5th: North Berwick.



North Berwick is a seaside town and former royal burgh in East Lothian, Scotland. It is situated on the south shore of the Firth of Forth, approximately 25 miles (40 km) north-east of Edinburgh. North Berwick became a fashionable holiday resort in the nineteenth century because of its two sandy

bays, the East (or Milsey) Bay and the West Bay, and continues to attract holidaymakers to this day. Golf courses at the ends of each bay are open to visitors. The name North Berwick means North "barley farmstead". The word North was applied to distinguish this Berwick from Berwick-upon-Tweed, which throughout the Middle Ages the Scots called South Berwick. It was recorded as Northberwyk in 1250.

The Highland Games at North Berwick consistently attracts a crowd of over 15,000. The international visitors are not confined to spectators as many of the competitors, particularly in the Pipe Band competitions come from abroad. Last year the visiting pipe bands included the New Zealand Police, the City of Blacktown (Australia), the 78th Fraser Highlanders (Canada), The Royal Army of Oman, Benoni-McTalla (South Africa), and not forgetting local support from the North Berwick Pipe Band and many others.



The Pipe Band competitions last throughout the day with the junior bands competing in the morning and the senior bands competing in the Grade 1 Competition in the middle of the afternoon. The event includes the Lothian and Borders Pipe Band Championships, and during the day there is a separate competition for all the Drum Majors from the different bands to display their prowess in Formal Dress, Marching and Flourish. The Pipe Bands compete under the auspices of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association.

At the conclusion of the competitions, all the pipe bands parade into the center of the arena to salute the Chieftain of the day and then form up into a massed band of over 1,000 pipers and drummers. Together the bands play the traditional salute to the Chieftain of *Highland Laddie*. After the presentation of trophies and awards to the winners, the bands reform and individually march down through the streets of North Berwick - winning bands proudly displaying their trophies in front of them.

In 2004, the OP&D placed 6th in Grade 4 out of 23 competing bands.

Sunday – August 6th: Bridge of Allan.



Bridge of Allan is a town in the Stirling council area in Scotland, just north of the city of Stirling. It lies on the Allan Water, a northern tributary of the River Forth. The site occupied by modern Bridge of Allan stretches from the clachan of Logie across the

Allan Water to the University of Stirling. It was first mentioned in a charter granted by King David I. The charter was written in connection with a dispute between the nuns of North Berwick and the monks at Dunfermline Abbey over the tithes of Airthrey and Corntown. It is undated, but had been granted by 1146.

A hog's back, narrow, stone bridge was built to replace the old ford across the River Allan in 1520. It rose sharply from the riverbank and dipped steeply at the other side. Soon after a few cottages began to appear around the ends of the bridge and an embryonic Bridge of Allan slowly formed. In the woods above the bridge a mine opened. This was worked from around 1550, and quantities of copper, silver and gold were extracted. The Jacobites were in Bridge of Allan in 1745, where three hundred highlanders set up a roadblock on the bridge and charged a toll for its passage.



Bridge of Allan is one of Scotland's premier Highland Games, attracting crowds of between 8,000 and 10,000 people. The games field nestles between Stirling Castle – Scotland's grandest historic attraction, the beautiful Ochil Hills and the National Wallace Monument, made famous by the blockbuster movie, *Braveheart*.

Coming as it does shortly before the World Pipe Band Championship, Bridge of Allan Highland Games is an ideal opportunity for bands to 'fine tune' their performance in time for the big one, as well as an important event to win, in its own right. This fortuitous timing also helps greatly with visiting bands from overseas, which often plan their trip to include several Highland Games before the Championship.

In 2004, the band placed 8th out of 14 bands.



Saturday—August 12: World Pipe Band Championships



The World Pipe Band Championships have been held in Glasgow, Scotland every August since 1930, when the Scottish Pipe Band Association (today known as the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association) was formed. Before 2013, the entirety of the World Championships has taken place on one day in August, the current venue being Glasgow Green on the north

bank of the River Clyde. Typically several hundred bands attend, traveling from all over the world.

Depending on the size of the grade - or in the case of Grade One, where a band has not secured automatic qualification - bands are required to perform in a qualifying round which takes place in the morning. The top bands at the end of the qualifying round play in a second event in the afternoon to determine the winner.

Prizes at the Worlds are awarded in eight categories:

- Grade One
- Grade Two
- Grade Three "A"
- Grade Three "B"
- Juvenile
- Grade Four "A"
- Grade Four "B"
- Novice Juvenile "A"
- Novice Juvenile "B"



Grade One is the highest of these categories, and Novice is the lowest. Grading and eligibility are overseen by the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA), and bands must apply for downgrading or upgrading

Because of time constraints, the RSPBA uses "A" and "B" designations in Grade 3 and 4, for major competitions. By doing this, bands are grouped based on prior-years' performances, and can receive promotions within their respective grade. It is also important to note that these vary slightly throughout the world. For example, in North America, many regional associations have implemented Grade Five, an entry-level Grade, intended to help bands familiarize themselves with competition and in Australia, New Zealand and Northern Ireland there is no Novice grade at all. There is also no Juvenile grade in Northern Ireland. The band will be competing in Grade Four "B".

In 2004, there were two qualifying heats in Grade 4 "B" each with 19 bands. The Omaha Pipes and Drums finished 7th in our qualifying heat—only the first six proceeded to the finals; missed it by thissssss much.



The band will be staying at Glasgow Caledonia University.

Glasgow Caledonian University (informally GCU or Caledonian) is a public university formed in 1993 by the merger of The Queen's College, Glasgow (founded in 1875) and Glasgow Polytechnic (founded in 1971). As of 2015 it is one of Scotland's largest universities with nearly 20,000 students. It is regularly ranked among the UK's top 10 modern universities. The new university took its name from Caledonia, the poetic Latin name for present-day Scotland. GCU's main campus is in Glasgow city-center.

Band members, family and guests traveling with the band have the option of attending:



Pre-Worlds' Concert : Rise at the Royal Glasgow Concert Hall
Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band will headline the 2017 'Pre-Worlds' concert at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on Wednesday the 9th. Shotts and Dykehead will present 'Rise', a program of music that will showcase selections from both their competitive and performance repertoires. Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia are 16 time RSPBA World Champions, taking the top prize most recently in 2015.



THE ROYAL
EDINBURGH
MILITARY
TATTOO

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle. The first official Edinburgh Military Tattoo was held in 1950 with eight items in the program. It drew some 6,000 spectators seated in simple bench and scaffold structures around the north, south, and east sides of the Edinburgh Castle esplanade. Since the 1970s on average, just over 217,000 people.

Wish us luck.

Until next month...

Sláinte

Royal Scots Navy



There are mentions in Medieval records of fleets commanded by Scottish kings including William the Lion and Alexander II. The latter took personal command of a large naval force which sailed from the Firth of Clyde and anchored off the island of Kererra in 1249, intended to transport his army in a campaign against the Kingdom of the Isles, but he died before the campaign could begin. Viking naval power was disrupted by conflicts between the Scandinavian kingdoms, but entered a period of resurgence in the thirteenth century when Norwegian kings began to build some of the largest ships seen in Northern European waters. These included king Hakon Hakonsson's *Kristsúðin*, built at Bergen from 1262–63, which was 260 feet long, of 37 rooms. In 1263 Hakon responded to Alexander III's designs on the Hebrides by personally leading a major fleet of forty vessels, including the *Kristsúðin*, to the islands, where they were swelled by local allies to as many as 200 ships. Records indicate that Alexander had several large oared ships built at Ayr, but he avoided a sea battle. Defeat on land at the Battle of Largs and winter storms forced the Norwegian fleet to return home, leaving the Scottish crown as the major power in the region and leading to the ceding of the Western Isles to Alexander in 1266.

English naval power was vital to Edward I's successful campaigns in Scotland from 1296, using largely merchant ships from England, Ireland and his allies in the Islands to transport and supply his armies. Part of the reason for Robert I's success was his ability to call on naval forces from the Islands. As a result of the expulsion of the Flemings from England in 1303, he gained the support of a major naval power in the North Sea. The development of naval power allowed Robert to successfully defeat English attempts to capture him in the Highlands and Islands and to blockade major English controlled fortresses at Perth and Stirling, the last forcing Edward II to attempt the relief that resulted at English defeat at Bannockburn in 1314. Scottish naval forces allowed invasions of the Isle of Man in 1313 and 1317 and Ireland in 1315. They were also crucial in the blockade of Berwick, which led to its fall in 1318.

After the establishment of Scottish independence, Robert I turned his attention to building up a Scottish naval capacity. This was largely focused on the west coast, with the Exchequer Rolls of 1326 recording the feudal duties of his vassals in that region to aid him with their vessels and crews. Towards the end of his reign he supervised the building of at least one royal man-of-war near his palace at Cardross on the River Clyde.

In the late fourteenth century naval warfare with England was conducted largely by hired Scots, Flemish and French merchantmen and privateers. James I took a greater interest in naval power. After his return to Scotland in 1424, he established a shipbuilding yard at Leith, a house for marine stores, and a workshop. King's ships were built and equipped there to be used for trade as well as war, one of which accompanied him on his expedition to the Islands in 1429. The office of Lord High Admiral was probably founded in this period. In his struggles with his nobles in 1488 James III received assistance from his two warships the *Flower* and the *King's Carvel* also known as the *Yellow Carvel*.

There were various attempts to create royal naval forces in the fifteenth century. James IV put the enterprise on a new footing, founding a harbor at Newhaven and a dockyard at the Pools of Airth. He acquired a total of 38 ships including the *Great Michael*, at that time, the largest ship in Europe. Scottish ships had some success against privateers, accompanied the king on his expeditions in the islands and intervened in conflicts Scandinavia and the Baltic, but were sold after the Flodden campaign and after 1516 and Scottish naval efforts would rely on privateering captains and hired merchantmen. James V did not share his father's interest in developing a navy and shipbuilding fell behind the Low Countries. Despite truces between England and Scotland there were periodic outbreaks of a *guerre de course*. James V built a new harbor at Burntisland in 1542. The chief use of naval power in his reign was a series of expeditions to the Isles and France. After the Union of Crowns in 1603 conflict between Scotland and England ended, but Scotland found itself involved in England's foreign policy, opening up Scottish shipping to attack. In 1626 a squadron of three ships were bought and equipped. There were also several marque fleets of privateers. In 1627, the Royal Scots Navy and accompanying contingents of burgh privateers participated in the major expedition to Biscay. The Scots also returned to West Indies and in 1629 took part in the capture of Quebec.

During the Bishop's Wars the king attempted to blockade Scotland and planned amphibious assaults from England on the East coast and from Ireland to the West. Scottish privateers took a number of English prizes. After the Covenanters allied with the English Parliament they established two patrol squadrons for the Atlantic and North Sea coasts, known collectively as the "Scotch Guard". The Scottish navy was unable to withstand the English fleet that accompanied the army led by Cromwell that conquered Scotland in 1649–51 and the Scottish ships and crews were split up among the Commonwealth fleet. Scottish seamen received protection against arbitrary impressment by English men of war, but a fixed quota of conscripts for the Royal Navy was levied from the sea-coast burghs during the second half of the seventeenth century. Royal Navy patrols were now found in Scottish waters even in peacetime. In the Second (1665–67) and Third Anglo-Dutch Wars (1672–74) between 80 and 120 captains, took Scottish letters of marque and privateers played a major part in the naval conflict. In the 1690s a small fleet of five ships was established by merchants for the Darien Scheme, and a professional navy was established for the protection of commerce in home waters during the Nine Years War, with three purpose-built warships bought from English shipbuilders in 1696. After the Act of Union in 1707, these vessels were transferred to the Royal Navy.

Until next month...

Sláinte

The Templars in Ireland

On Friday, the 13th of October, in the year 1307 the king's men came knocking. French men-at-arms took the Knights Templar of Paris into custody. It was the start of the end for the "warrior monks".

Ireland was not a crusading country - even the most obstinate locals were devout, non-heretic Christians. But one should remember that the knightly orders were interrelated with feudal society to a large extent - knights went into temporary service to atone for sins, some even joined to relieve the burden to their families' estates. Others took the full vows late in life, using the orders as a sort of retirement home after a worldly career. And kings and emperor tried to stay in the good books of the orders (which after all provided an ad-hoc task force in times of trouble). Giving estates to the orders and thus "planting" a few combat-hardened veterans as an unofficial police force into wilder areas of the realm was par for the course.

This seems to have been what happened in Ireland - the Knights Templar were given estates, most of which were populated with elderly knights. Still a valid fighting force, though maybe not up to scratch in Palestine and Syria. Officially the Templars arrived in Ireland in September 1220 - though documents pertaining to individual Knights Templar in Ireland go back as far as 1177. The first knights may well have entered Ireland with Strongbow's Anglo-Normans. It is debatable whether this constitutes an involvement of the order or (more likely) of individual knights.

After the events in Paris the Knights Templar in Ireland were arrested and placed in Dublin Castle. Between fifteen and thirty knights were taken, most having seen more than forty years of service with the order. Basically Ireland seems to have been the pensioner's home of the order. Trials commenced in 1310 in Saint Patrick's Cathedral - accusations based on hear-say flew at the knights, but no evidence could be found and no confessions were forthcoming. The trials ultimately fizzled out, ending after six months in an anti-climax. The Templars were admonished to be good Christians and pensioned off. More than likely none of them were expected to put up much resistance if left alone.

The property of the Knights Templar in Ireland was either taken by the crown or transferred to the Hospitallers. Today you will find references to former Templar property even if the property had not been in existence before the order's suppression. A "Templar" church at Ballintemple (County Cork) for instance was only built in 1392. Much confusion might have been caused by the Gaelic *teampall* - literally "temple", but referring to any church. Seriously confusing amateur historians who like to attribute any place-name with a temple reference to the Templars.

The best documented Templar link still visible today can be found in Templetown (County Wexford) - in the churchyard grave slabs mark the burial sites of "Poor Fellow-Soldiers". Here, near Hook Head, the Templars had lands and houses.

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- **Baldungan** (County Dublin, South of Skerries) - some church ruins with what seems to have been a ten-sided tower are believed to be the remnants of a Templar church,
- **Carrigounnell Castle** (County Limerick, near Clarina) - parts are reputed to have been built by the order,
- **Clontarf Castle** (County Dublin) - belonged to the Knights Templar ... but the present castle has no connections left bar the location,
- **Dungeel** (County Kerry, near Killorglin) - ruins of a church and a castle reputed (and disputed) to have belonged to the Templars,
- **Graney** (County Kildare, near Castledermot) - reputed Templar-related ruins near the ruins of the Augustinian nunnery,
- **Kilberry** (County Kildare) - a possible preceptory of the Knights Templar lies in ruins near the River Barrow,
- **Roosky** (County Louth) - part of the "priory" may have belonged to the Templars,
- **Strand** (County Limerick) - Temple Strand has a church of almost certain Templar origin,

- **Templehouse Lake** (County Sligo, near Ballymote) - ruins of a house belonging to the Templars (which gave the name to the lake).



Until next month...

Sláinte

St. Margaret's Chapel

St Margaret's Chapel, in Edinburgh Castle, is the oldest surviving building in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Chapel was built on the highest point of the castle rock in the early 12th century by King David I, the youngest son of Saint Margaret. It is a very simple building, a small rectangular structure with an apsed sanctuary and a nave separated by a chancel arch decorated with chevron moldings.

St Margaret was born about 1045 or 1047 in Hungary. She was an English princess whose family had sought refuge at the Christian court of the Kings of Hungary when the throne of England was seized by the Viking, King Cnut. Her mother was either German or Hungarian, but her father Edward was a direct descendant of the old Anglo-Saxon house of Wessex. The family returned to England in 1054 in the hopes that Edward would be recognized as the heir to King Edward the Confessor, but after his death and the Norman conquest of England, it became clear that Margaret's family would not succeed to the English throne. Quite why she and her mother, sister and brother came to Scotland is not clear, but the family landed in Fife in 1068 and was welcomed by the King of Scots, Malcolm III, whose palace was nearby at Dunfermline.



Malcolm and Margaret were married in Dunfermline in 1070 and had 8 children, 6 boys and 2 girls. Three of her sons went on to become Kings of Scots and her elder daughter became Queen of England when she married Henry 1, the third son of William the Conqueror.

Margaret had been brought up in Christian courts, first in Hungary and then in England, especially in the discipline of the Benedictines and she founded a Benedictine abbey in Dunfermline. She lived her life accord-

ing to this rule, with an emphasis on prayer, fasting, and caring for the poor. She showed respect for the native Celtic church, and, with the support of her husband, managed to reconcile its practices with those of the Roman church.

An account of her life was written by the monk Turgot at the request of her daughter Edith shortly after her death and she was canonized in 1250. The best known miracle associated with St Margaret was the preservation of her gospel book which had fallen into a river, and her shrine at Dunfermline was the scene of several miracles of healing.

She died, probably in Edinburgh castle in 1093, shortly after hearing of the death of her husband and eldest son in battle.



Passing through Foog's Gate, St. Margaret's Chapel is located on the left, just beyond the Whisky and Finest Food Shop.



A major refurbishment of the Chapel was undertaken in 1993 to mark the 900th anniversary of the death of St Margaret. Ten benches with carved roundels in limewood were commissioned by the Guild, along with an almschest, a flower stand, and a display case for a replica of St Margaret's Gospel book



Although the Chapel stands within the Castle and is part of that historic monument, it is still a consecrated building used for religious services, including baptisms, weddings and the Guilds services held annually on November 16th, St Margarets Day. These are conducted by the Minister of the

Until next month...

Sláinte

Keepers of the Quaich

A number of distillers have claimed the title of the Oldest Distillery in Scotland over the years. To be crowned the oldest distillery in Scotland is a rich reward indeed, however deciding which distilleries are the oldest largely lies in the definition of "official". Among the contenders are the following.



A report in the Aberdeen Journal from 1785 refers to the sale of spirits at the Meldrum Distillery which we believe is almost certainly the former name of the Glen Garrioch Distillery.

THE GLENTURRET BY HAND AND BY HEART SINCE 1775

The owners claim the distillery is one of Scotland's oldest and it is certainly rumored that distillation was carried out in the area during the early 18th century. Whisky smugglers establish a small illicit farm distillery named Hosh Distillery in 1775. John Drummond is licensee from 1818 until 1837. In 1875, the Hosh Distillery takes over the name Glenturret Distillery and is managed by Thomas Stewart. Between 1921 and 1959 production ceases and the buildings are used for whisky storage and later agricultural storage. 1957 James Fairlie buys the distillery and production restarts in 1959.



The Bowmore Distillery was established in 1779 by a local merchant, John P. Simson, before passing into the ownership of the Mutter family, a family of German descent. During the World Wars the Bowmore Distillery halted production, and hosted the RAF Coastal Command for much of World War II, Coastal Command operated flying boats from Loch Indaal on anti-submarine warfare missions. The distillery is owned by Morrison Bowmore Distillers Ltd, a holding company owned by Japanese drinks company Suntory. Morrison Bowmore also own the Auchentoshan and Glen Garioch distilleries and produce the McClelland's Single Malt range of bottlings.

HOWEVER - excise records suggest that Bowmore was not founded until 1816 and Glenturret followed almost two years later, long after distilleries such as Ardbeg, Oban and Blair Athol.

STRATHISLA

THE OLDEST DISTILLERY IN THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND

Strathisla appears to have the strongest case out of the claimants. It was founded as the Milltown Distillery by George Taylor and Alexander Milne in 1786 as an alternative to the waning of flax dressing industry. They leased the land from the Earl of Seafield. By 1830, the distillery was owned by William Longmore, later William Longmore Ltd. In 1879, the distillery suffered terribly from a fire, but was rebuilt with a bottling plant. Bought in 1940 by Jay Pomeroy, a fraudulent financier, it was later acquired in 1950 by James Barclay of Chivas Bros.



The distillery, which originally incorporated a brewery and tannery, stands on the very edge of the town Oldmeldrum in Aberdeenshire. The Garioch — pronounced 'Geery' — is a tract of richly fertile land, some 150 square miles in extent. The location is known as 'the granary of Aberdeenshire', where barley and crystal springs have been abundant for over a thousand years, so it is not surprising that Glen Garioch Distillery was established as early as 1794 — one of the oldest operating distilleries in Scotland. In 1968 the production of Glen Garioch was suspended on account of 'chronic water shortages'; however, in 1972 a manager was appointed with a brief to find another water source. A spring was discovered on a neighbouring farm. It came to be called 'The Silent Spring' as it could neither be seen nor heard. It is operated by Morrison Bowmore Distillers, which is owned by the Japanese company Suntory.

Littlemill distillery was a Scottish malt whisky distillery in Bowling, West Dunbartonshire. Situated on the border of Lowlands and Highlands, its



products were generally classified as lowlands whisky. The year when whisky was first produced is uncertain. Littlemill was described as part of the purchase of Auchentorlie Estate in the 1750s. In 1772 houses had been constructed for excise officers, which is also the year Littlemill claimed as its foundation year, from which it claimed to be the oldest distillery in Scotland. The distillery changed ownership to Matthew Clark & Co in 1817. After the Customs and Excise Act 1823 had passed, which allowed the distilling of whisky at much lower licence costs, Jane Macgregor became the licensee of Littlemill. Around 1840 ownership went to Hector Henderson, who was also shareholder in the Campbeltown distillery in 1837 and founded the Caol Ila distillery. The distillery was rebuilt and expanded in 1875 by Hay, who then was the owner. Littlemill closed in 1929 until it was bought and reopened by Duncan Thomas in 1931, who experimented at the distillery with different new techniques. In 1971 the distillery changed hands to Barton Distilling, who had been a shareholder since 1959. Barton was bought by Amalgamated Distilled Products in 1982, which joined the Argyll Group in 1984. In this year the Littlemill distillery closed. It was reopened and bought by Gibson International in 1989, closed down again in 1994 after Gibson International went bankrupt, and was sold to Loch Lomond Distillery. It was dismantled in 1997, and the remnants of the distillery were destroyed in a fire in 2004. A housing development is now on the site.

A **Quaich**, **quaigh** or **quoich**, is a special kind of shallow two-handled drinking cup or bowl in Scotland. Its thought name is derived from the Gaelic word 'cuach' which is itself a derivation of the Latin 'caucus' meaning drinking cup. Although the origin is Gaelic, this type of cup was known and used both in the Highlands and in the Lowlands of Scotland certainly since the seventeenth century and probably before. It has been suggested that its ancestor was the scallop shell in which drams of whisky were taken in the Highlands and Islands. However, the origins of this theory seem to be based on references taken from the "Poems of Ossian", which is now widely regarded as an immensely influential but ultimately a literary hoax.



Traditionally quaichs are made of wood, an artform known as "treen". Some early quaichs are stave-built like barrels and some have alternating light and dark staves. The staves are held together by bands of willow or silver. They generally have two, and more rarely three or four, short, projecting handles.



Other wooden quaich were lathe-turned out of a single piece of wood and there was another group which were turned then carved outside in basket-weave pattern. In addition to wood, they are made of stone, brass, pewter, horn, and silver. The latter were often engraved with lines and bands in imitation of the staves and hoops of the wooden quaichs.

The origin of quaichs in Scotland is traced to the Highlands; it was not until the end of the 17th century that they became popular in such large centers as Edinburgh and Glasgow. The silversmiths of such local guilds as Inverness and Perth frequently mounted them in silver, as may be seen from the hallmarks on the existing examples.

Commemorative quaichs awarded as prizes, or given as gifts, are more commonly made of pewter or silver. These prize cups are rarely used for actual drinking. Some Scottish churches have superb early silver quaichs which seem to have been used in the baptismal ceremony, others have been used as communion cups.



In the late 19th and early 20th centuries there developed a strong tradition of quaichs within the British Armed Forces which continues to this day. Either as part of regimental mess silver or as retirement gifts. The quaich can be seen as an token of the strong sense of comradeship formed during military service.



The quaich was used for whisky or brandy, and in the 19th century Sir Walter Scott dispensed drams in silver quaichs. One of the quaichs he owned was the Waterloo Tree Quaich. It was made in part from wood Scott had taken from the Waterloo Elm, when he visited the battle-field shortly after the Battle of Waterloo (the elm tree had been the Duke of Wellington's command post for much of the battle). In his collection he also owned some other quaichs made from commemorative wood: one made from Falkland Oak; one made from Queen Mary's yew; and another made from the Wallace Oak. The one he kept for himself was particularly precious to him, because in 1745 that quaich, made of wood with seven bands, had travelled from Edinburgh to Derby with Bonnie Prince Charlie.



Some quaichs' bottoms are made of glass, allegedly so that the drinker could keep watch on his companions.



A more romantic quaich had a double glass bottom in which was kept a lock of hair so that the owner could drink from his quaich to his lady love, and in 1589, King James VI of Scotland gave Anne of Denmark a quaich or "loving cup" as a wedding gift.

However you celebrate the holidays and toast in the new year...

Have a Very Merry Christmas

Until next year...

Sláinte