When driving around Greater Victoria, you could be forgiven for thinking that you were touring about Scotland, at least in terms of street and neighbourhood names. A year ago we had an article summarizing some of the founding Scots who shaped colonial Victoria. Not only their stories but enduring place names are a legacy of their presence. Read on for a tour of Scottish name-sakes in Victoria but without the midges.

I happen to live in the Cook Street Village. Cook can be a Scottish or an English family name. Cook Street (from which Cook Street Village derives) was named for Captain James Cook, who sailed up the west coast of Vancouver Island in 1778. Admittedly Captain Cook was born at Marton (now a suburb of Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire) but his father was a day labourer from Ednam, near Kelso in the Scottish Borders. Although Captain Cook was an Englishman, he was Scottish through his father, which results in an indirectly Scottish origin for the name of Cook St. Village. Ahem.

Perhaps a more obvious Scottish connection is Douglas Street, named after Sir James Douglas who was the second Governor of Vancouver Island. He was born in colonial British Guyana, to a Scottish father and a Creole mother. After being raised in Scotland he became employed by the Hudson’s Bay Company, eventually becoming Chief Factor at Fort Victoria. Mount Douglas in Saanich is also named after him. The Douglas family was prominent in the Scottish Borders and there is a Douglas village in South Lanarkshire. (See photo view to left.)

What’s In A Name?

Maybe you have driven by Braemar Heights, between Colwood and Albert Head? The subdivision has a rather different character than the village of Braemar in Aberdeenshire, which hosts The Braemar Gathering every September. This highland games is attended by the Royal Family, who are normally in residence at Balmoral at that time of year.

Victoria has a Balmoral Road which is two blocks north of Pandora, running east from Quadra. Its namesake is obviously Balmoral Castle, near the village of Crathie, Royal Deeside in Aberdeenshire. Our Balmoral Road has the castle-like First Metropolitan United Church but it’s not quite like Balmoral Castle. The photo below shows yours truly there in 2011.

You are likely familiar with Burnside Road. It would seem that Burnside is a popular name in Scotland. On the map you will see two places in Angus and one place in each of Fife, Moray, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian. In Scots Gaelic the word ‘burn’ means fresh water and it occurs in many Scottish place names. In modern Scottish dialect, “burn” means any watercourse from a large stream to a small river.
Upcoming Events: October & November 2017

The Ceremony of the Keys
Fraser's Highlanders' Fort Victoria Garrison
11:00 a.m., October 1st - Bastion Square

Ceremony marking the closing of the Bastion Square Public Market. Fraser's guard of honour returns 'the keys to the fort' to the garrison's officer commanding.

Vancouver Island Piper’s Club
Dr. Gord Pollock & Cowichan Valley Pipe Band
October 14, 8:00 pm

Piper's Club has initial gathering on 2nd Saturday of October. Venue is Sergeants Mess at the Bay St Armoury, Victoria. For parking enter from Field St off Douglas, going north. Admission is $10.00 Cash bar.

Bruce Knight Memorial Piobaireachd Competition
Sunday, October 22
For location, times, etc go to: www.facebook.com/bruceknightmemorial

Highland Regimental Dinner
6:00 p.m., 28 October - Bay Street Armoury
To honour Simon Fraser, Fort Victoria Garrison—Fraser’s Highlanders will host a mess-style dinner at the Officers' Mess of the Canadian Scottish Regiment. Tickets $40 per person. Contact Quartermaster at motorcycle.zen55@gmail.com

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society
Halloween Social
Saturday, October 28, 7:30

City Light Church Hall, 550 Obed Avenue. Admission is $10.00. Refreshments will also be served. Most dances will be walked through. The program is available on our website viscds.ca and it also appears in our monthly VISCDS newsletter.

People and Profits: Scots in India, 1690-1820
Dr Andrew Mackillop
University of Glasgow
7:00 pm — Tuesday, October 24th
UVic Campus
Hickman Building #105
Free Admission

Vancouver Island Piper’s Club
Host: Kevin Dougan
November 4, 8:00 pm

Meeting details are same as for October.

Remembrance Day Service
November 11
Cenotaph—BC Legislature
Gather by 10:45 am

Cenotaph, BC Legislature, taken November 11, 2014
Photo by Darren Stone, Times Colonist.

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society
St. Andrew’s Social
Saturday, November 18, 7:30 pm

City Light Church Hall, 550 Obed Avenue. Admission is $10.00. Refreshments will also be served. Most dances will be walked through. The program is available on our website viscds.ca and it also appears in our monthly VISCDS newsletter.

St. Andrew’s Dinner
Saltire Society of Victoria
November 24th (Members Only)
What’s In A Name? ...cont’d

One of the landmarks that has survived from colonial times is Craigflower Manor. Along with nearby Craigflower School and the Craigflower neighbourhood, the name hearkens back to the Craigflower Farm which was managed by Edinburgh-born Kenneth McKenzie. It’s his name that is commemorated in the busy McKenzie Avenue, crossing Saanich. The word 'craig' is the same in Scots Gaelic as in English and it often turns up in place names. Maybe McKenzie thought his new abode was a rocky place with flowers — Craigflower?

A similar rocky logic may apply to the name Craigdarroch Castle (left), chosen by Robert and Joan Dunsmuir. It opened forty years after they emigrated from East Ayrshire in 1850 and perhaps nostalgia led them to give their grand 1890 Victoria home a Scottish namesake. ‘Craigdarroch’ is a composite using the Scots Gaelic words for “rocky place” and “oak”; the mansion is located on what was a rocky high point where Garry Oaks grew. It could also be that the Dunsmuirs were familiar with an old Scottish song written by William Douglas about his romance with Annie Laurie. Her father forbade marriage. Douglas eloped with someone else and she later married the 14th Laird of Craigdarroch. She and her husband had Craigdarroch House built near Moniaive, Dumfries and Galloway. (See photo right.)

James Bay is the city’s oldest neighbourhood and it takes its name from Sir James Douglas, as his residence used to be approximately where the Royal BC Museum stands today. At the time, “James’ bay” had water in it!

Mt. Tolmie is our Arthur’s Seat … if you magnify it a bit! The surname Tolmie is a sept of the Clan MacLeod. The BC Geographical Names website says of Mt. Tolmie: "Named c. 1845 by the Hudson's Bay Company, after Dr. William Fraser Tolmie (1812-1888), a medical officer in the service of [the Company]. Born at Inverness, Scotland, 3 February 1912, and educated at Glasgow… Joined the Hudson's Bay service in 1832 in London, and arrived at Fort Vancouver, Columbia River, via Cape Horn, in the spring of 1833... Dr. Tolmie was appointed chief factor in 1856, residing in Victoria…" Arguably William Tolmie (photo to left) is a dour looking Scot who is remembered by an appropriately dour looking mountain. There are more Scottish namesakes locally than I have mentioned but rest assured, Scots have left their mark!

Piobaireachd Pointers

In case there is ever a Trivial Pursuit invented for lovers of Scottish music, you need some advance pointers on the section about classical bagpipe music. With the help of these pointers you could also turn up at the Bruce Knight Memorial Piobaireachd Competition on October 22nd. (See ad on p. 3.)  If you are not actually a piper your presence would totally surprise the organizers but they are open to the shock.

Piobaireachd (pronounced “pea-broch”) is to pipe music as symphony music is to Pop or Country. One isn’t better than the other but they are different genres. Piobaireachd belongs to [Scottish Gaelic] ceol mòr meaning the "great music", to distinguish this complex extended art-music from the more popular Scottish music such as dances, reels, marches and strathspeys, which are called ceol beag or "little music". Pipe bands parading down the street will be playing various marches and you can easily tap your foot to the regular beat. Even if you are rhythm challenged, there is a cadre of drummers to accentuate the beat and the bass drummer thumps with emphasis to keep everyone in step. In pipe band competitions, the marches can be quite intricate and they are no longer recognizable Scottish folk pieces, but the structure of the music is the same. Pipe bands will also play dance music like strathspeys and reels while the band is at the halt; usually no one actually dances and these pieces are performance oriented.

Piobaireachd (or Piobroch) is different in that it is more technically difficult and is always played solo. The clusters of grace notes (movements) are longer and have names like Crunluath, Taorluath, Leumluath. They sound like warbles and each section of the piece features a different movement, repeated very often to demonstrate the player’s mastery of that movement. Like a symphony, a Piobaireachd begins with a basic melody (Ground) and then there is a progression through a series of ever more complex variations; the music is rhythmic but not regular in beat.

One Piobaireachd might last 10-15 minutes. There are changes in tempo and mood but concentration is required, both for player and listener. You can hear a relatively short sample by a Royal Scots Dragoon Guards piper playing “Lament For Kinlochmoidart”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzIXZS3TE0 There are scenes of Scotland that change as you listen, which of course doesn’t happen at an actual Piobaireachd competition. Pictured at right is Ann Gray who judged at last year’s Bruce Knight Memorial Piobaireachd Competition.
Celtic Samhain, All Saints Day and Secular Halloween

Samhain (from Irish samhain, cf. Scots Gaelic samhainn, Old Irish samain "summer's end", from sam "summer" and fuin "end") is a festival on the end of the harvest season in Gaelic and Brythonic cultures, with aspects of a festival of the dead. Many scholars believe that it was the beginning of the Celtic year. The term derives from the name of a month in the ancient Celtic calendar, in particular the first three nights of this month, with the festival marking the end of the summer season and the end of the harvest.

The Gaelic festival became associated with the Catholic All Souls' Day, and appears to have influenced the secular customs now connected with Halloween. The term Halloween, originally spelled Hallowe'en, is shortened from All Hallows' Eve (both even and eve are abbreviations of evening, but Halloween gets its n from even) as it is the eve of "All Hallows' Day", which is now also known as All Saints' Day. In the 9th century, the Church measured the day as starting at sunset, in accordance with the Florentine calendar. Although All Saints' Day is now considered to occur one day after Halloween, the two holidays were, at that time, celebrated on the same day.

Samhain is also the name of a festival in various currents of Neopaganism inspired by Gaelic tradition. Sahain and an t-Samhain are also the Irish and Scottish Gaelic names of November, respectively. The Samhain celebrations have survived in several guises as a festival dedicated to the harvest and the dead. In Ireland and Scotland, the Fête na Marbh, the 'festival of the dead' took place on Samhain. The night of Samhain, in Irish, Oíche Shamhna and Scots Gaelic, Oidhche Shamhna, is one of the principal festivals of the Celtic calendar, and falls on the 31st of October. It represents the final harvest. In modern Ireland and Scotland, the name by which Halloween is known in the Gaelic language is still Oíche/Oidhche Shamhna. Traditionally, Samhain was time to take stock of herds and grain supplies and decide which animals would need to be slaughtered in order for the people and livestock to survive the winter. Bonfires played a large part in the festivities celebrated down through the last several centuries, and up through the present day in some rural areas of the Celtic nations and the diaspora. Villagers were said to have cast the bones of the slaughtered cattle upon the flames. In the pre-Christian Gaelic world, cattle were the primary unit of currency and the center of agricultural and pastoral life. The word 'bonfire', or 'bonefire' is a direct translation of the Gaelic ‘tine cnámh’. With the bonfire ablaze, the villagers extinguished all other fires. Each family then solemnly lit its hearth from the common flame, thus bonding the families of the village together. We still experience camaraderie around a bonfire, minus the bones, be it at Halloween or at other festive times in the year.

Excerpts reprinted from online article at www.celticmythmoon.com/holidays.html#Samhain

CORRECTION: WORLD’S RESULTS
In the September issue there was an article on the World Pipe Band Championship 2017 results, indicating a 7th place finish for Simon Fraser University Pipe Band. In fact the band placed 7th in the Grade 1 March, Strathspey, Reel (MSR) event and 5th in the Medley Event, resulting in an overall finish of 5th place. The organizers post a table online for Final Position (7th) and another for Final Total (5th); I mistakenly quoted the first one but the second one determines official ranking. My apologies to SFU.
Scottish Culture:
Saltire Society of Victoria: Contact is the Provost, Irwin Henderson 250 382-1779 or the society’s Scrivener, Gordon Robinson 250-477-8317.

Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association: www.sonsofscotland.com For inquiries, Grand Chief is Keith Feir. Contact 250 652-5773 or kfeir@shaw.ca

Victoria Gaelic Choir: The group sings in both Gaelic and English. www.victoriagaelicchoir.com

Victoria Highland Games Association: President is Jim Maxwell. Many volunteer opportunities exist. For info see www.victoriahighlandgames.com


Websites About Scotland:
The Scottish Banner is pleased to now offer a digital download subscription service. You can receive 3 free editions at www.scottishbanner.com/sb40 Enter the coupon code: Banner40 to trial this service.

Scottish Review is edited by journalist Kenneth Roy, giving a weekly sampling of current news stories in Scotland. You can sign up for free. www.scottishreview.net

Rampant Scotland is a site begun in 1996 and written by Alan Scott, a Glasgow-area resident. Visit his site at www.RampantScotland.com/letter.htm

Dance Instruction:
Brentwood Scottish Country Dancers: contact janet.mitchell@shaw.ca for more detailed information. Classes happen at Brentwood Centre.

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society: www.viscds.ca Weekly classes for various levels of ability. Further information may be had from Dora Dempster, doradempster@shaw.ca

Bon Accord Highland Dancers: Lynne Griffith Tel. 250 479-7804 BonAccordDancers@shaw.ca

Glengarry Highland Dancers: Carolyn Phillips-Cusson. Tel. 250 758-0208 or email for information to info@celticperformingarts.com

Kathleen Laurie School of Highland Dance: Tel. 250 213-9627 dancehighland@gmail.com

Katie Dean School of Highland Dance: H 250-920-3513 cell 250-514-8110 kdean@shaw.ca


Victoria School of Highland Dance: www.victoriahighlanddancers.com Contact Alison Paladini Tel. 250 888-9421 or alisonpaladini@shaw.ca

Victoria Area Pipe Bands:

Castle Cary Pipes and Drums. www.castlecarypipesanddrums.ca

443 Squadron RCAF Pipe Band. P/M Stephen Kelly Stephen.kelly@forces.gc.ca or stevekelly@live.ca


Pipe Band of the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary’s). Drum Major Glen Ereaut, contact at Glen.Ereaut@forces.gc.ca

Saanich Peninsula Pipe Band. www.saanichpeninsulapipeband.blogspot.ca

78th Fraser Highlanders Pipe Band. www.78fraservictoria.ca/ Pipe Major Steve Kelly Sr.

2136 Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps Pipes and Drums. www.2136cadets.ca


Local Businesses With Celtic Flavour:
Bard and Banker Scottish Pub, 1022 Government St, Victoria www.bardandbanker.com

Fraser Orr’s Butcher and Deli, 108-1931 Mt Newton Cross Rd., Saanichton. Haggis, Scotch pies, etc. www.fraserorrsbutcher.com

Freedom Kilts, 1919 Fernwood Rd, Victoria www.freedomkilts.com

Irish Linen Stores, 1019 Government St, Victoria www.irishlinenvictoria.com

Irish Times Pub, 1200 Government St, Victoria www.irishtimespub.ca

Island Bagpipe, 5775 Alder Way, Nanaimo www.islandbagpipe.com Bagpipes and much more.

Lion Rampant Scottish Pub, 6777 Beaumont Ave., Duncan. www.lionrampant.ca

North of Hadrian’s Kilts and Celtic Clothing, 264 Island Highway, Victoria www.northofhadrians.com

Out of Ireland Irish Importers, 1000 Government St., Victoria: www.outofireland.ca

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