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REMEMBRANCE —At 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918, the guns on the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare. The allied armies had driven the Germans back, having inflicted heavy defeats upon them over the preceding four months. In November, the Germans called for an armistice, or suspension of fighting, in order to secure a peace settlement. They accepted Allied terms that amounted to an unconditional surrender, although back home they did not call it that.

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month attained a special significance in the post-war years. The moment when hostilities ceased on the Western Front became universally associated with the remembrance of those who had died in the war. This first modern world conflict had brought about the mobilization of over seventy million people and left between nine million and thirteen million dead, perhaps as many as one third of them with no known grave. The Allied nations chose this day and time for the commemoration of their dead soldiers.



The cenotaph in Whitehall, London. Photo: Wikipedia

On the first anniversary of the armistice in 1919, a two-minutes silence was instituted as part of the main commemorative ceremony at the new cenotaph in London. The silence was proposed by Australian journalist Edward Honey, who was working in Fleet Street. At about the same time, a South African statesman made a similar proposal to the British Cabinet, which endorsed it. Designed by Edwin Lutyens, the permanent structure was built from Portland stone between 1919 and 1920 by Holland, Hannen & Cubitts, replacing Lutyens's earlier wood-and-plaster cenotaph in the same location. Lutyens's cenotaph design has been extensively reproduced elsewhere in the UK and the Commonwealth.

The tradition of Remembrance Day evolved out of Armistice Day. The initial Armistice Day began at Buckingham Palace, with the king hosting a banquet honoring the French president. Later, during World War II, many countries changed the name of the holiday. The U.S. chose to call it Veterans Day.

Remembrance Day in Canada, also known as 'Jour du Souvenir,' remains a statutory holiday in six of the 10 provinces. The Armistice Day Act, which was held throughout the 1920s, declared that Canada's Thanksgiving would also be observed on Armistice Day — the Monday of the week in which November 11 fell. In 1931, the government officially changed the date to November 11. The name was also changed to Remembrance Day.



Remembrance Day at BC Legislature—2014
Photo: Darren Stone, Times Colonist

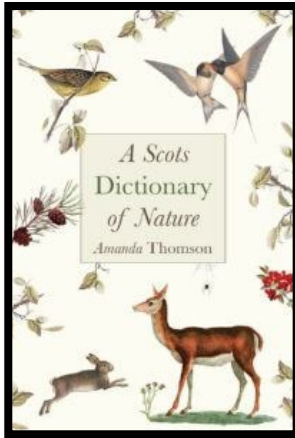
Canada has declared that the date is of "remembrance for the men and women who have served, and continue to serve our country during times of war, conflict and peace," particularly the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War, and all conflicts since then in which members of the Canadian Armed Forces have participated. The official Canadian national ceremonies are held under a strict protocol at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The armed services representatives carry out a service. In May 2000, the remains of an unidentified Canadian soldier, who died in France during World War I, were laid in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National War Memorial.



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (lower left)

A Scots Dictionary of Nature

By Amanda Thomson. Reviewed by L. Scott



VICTORIA—Sometimes in the world of books, it is possible to come across something old presented in a fresh way that seems surprisingly new. This is true of Amanda Thomson's exploration of historic Scots dialect in *A Scots Dictionary of Nature*, published in 2019 by the independent Glasgow publisher Saraband. While reading a dictionary sounds rather desperate, even in Covid times, this exploration of how speakers

of lowland Scots have created a special vocabulary and worldview in describing their surroundings, is a step into another world. You may have some hint of such a world if you have read those works—of Robert Burns or Sir Walter Scott—that have used terms from Scots dialect.

Thomson has collected and researched traditional Scots words, grouping them into six major chapters that describe the land, wood, weather, birds, water and walking in Scotland. She didn't begin from scratch, but drew upon John Jamieson's *A Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808), abridged in 1825. Her focus is in using her own background to draw out those Scots words that serve the purpose of presenting nature from the six perspectives mentioned above. And not everyone has that background!

Cover notes from the book indicate that Amanda Thomson is a visual artist and writer who teaches at the Glasgow School of Art. She graduated with a first from Glasgow School of Art and has an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her arts-based PhD, from the University of Highlands and Islands and the University of Aberdeen, is about the forests of Abernethy and Morayshire. Her artwork is often about notions of home, movement and migration, landscapes and how places come to be made. She lives in Glasgow and works there and in Strathspey.

For example, she writes: "There's a beautiful poetry, but also a prosaic unsentimentality in some the old Scots words that we have lost: *fir gowns*, *fir troosers* and *cauld-bark*, as well as *timmer breeks* are all words for coffin, and, together with words for the grave like *doon-lie*, *lang-hame* and *cauld-yird*, speak of a close connection to the earth, and the materials of the earth we use," (p. 5). I like a *waddin o' craws* (a large flock of crows) and *mare's-tails* (long, streaky clouds portending of rain.) But maybe your fancy is for a *wuddie-tow* (a hangman's rope.) While one is not likely to become fluent in Scots by reading this book, Thomson has given us new insight into a Scots worldview!



Amanda Thomson

Remembrance Day ...cont'd from p. 1



Remembrance Day is one of the many days countries observe to remember their fallen soldiers and those who have fought in times of war and conflict. On May 4 in the Netherlands, they mark Dodenherdenking, which means "remembrance of the dead" in Dutch; it celebrates all civilians and military members from the Netherlands who have died in conflicts since World War II.

On April 25 in Australia and New Zealand, they have ANZAC Day which commemorates the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War, building a national consciousness in both countries. On the Sunday closest to November 16, Germany marks Volkstrauertag. After a brief period when the Nazi propaganda machine changed Germany's day of remembrance to a day of hero-worship, the nation went back to celebrating Volkstrauertag as a solemn honouring of the dead.



Last Post ceremony, Ypres.



Ypres in Flanders, Belgium.



Menin Gate, Ypres.

Like Canada, Belgium honours Armistice Day, celebrating the end of World War I on November 11. The Belgians also hold a daily Last Post ceremony at 8:00 pm at the Menin Gate in Ypres. The editor was there for the ceremony in 2014. At the Menin Gate, volunteers from the local fire department provide the buglers. Visiting veterans and military service personnel are invited to participate, while tourists and townspeople look on.

Americans honour their fallen soldiers on Veterans Day. The federal holiday is observed on November 11th or the weekday closest to November 11th, if November 11th falls on a weekend. There is also Memorial Day, observed on the last Monday of May, honouring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it evolved in the years following the Civil War. *Above article adapted from* <https://nationaltoday.com/remembrance-day/> Editor

Scenes of Scotland in November



Black Grouse. *Photo: surfbirds.com*



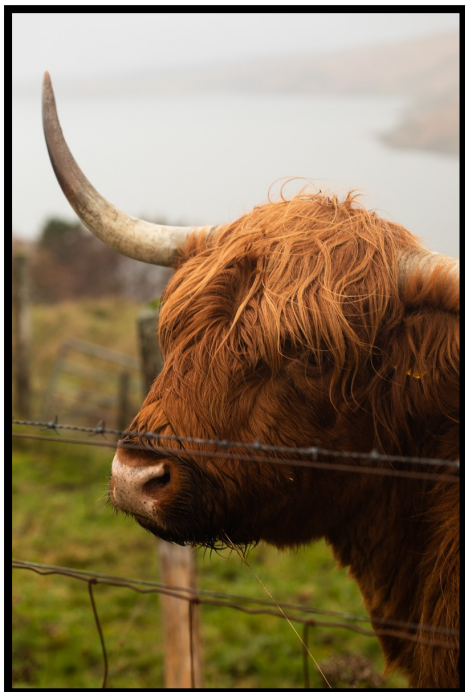
Autumn view of lodge over Loch Ossian.
Photo: ltrcastles.com/Scotland-in-November



The Jacobite train traversing the Glenfinnan Viaduct, made popular by the Harry Potter movies. The train runs once a day from Fort William to Mallaig. *Photo: theavanguardian.com*



Remains of Taigh na Sleubhaich beneath Stob Bàn, near Kinlochleven and Loch Leven, Lochaber. *Photo: Bill Cameron.*

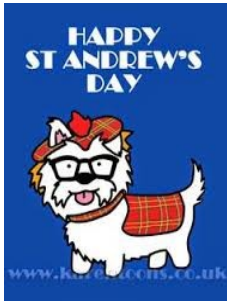


Highland Cow in meditative pose.
Photo: www.theavanguardian.com



Curious deer in Glen Etive, south-east of Glencoe. *Photo: Terry Long*

St. Andrew's Day — November 30th



On the last day of this month, somebody might say “Happy St. Andrew’s Day” to you, but I doubt it. People get much more excited about that other icon of Scottish identity, Robert Burns, whose namesake day is on January 25. The latter is celebrated with poetry, haggis, bagpipes and scotch. In contrast, St. Andrew’s Day is celebrated with minimal fanfare.

St. Andrew’s Day (Scottish Gaelic: *Là Naomh Anndrais*), was proclaimed as Scotland’s official national day, and designated a bank holiday, by the Scottish Parliament in 2006. Apparently it has also been a national holiday in Romania since 2015. While people of Scottish descent associate St. Andrew with Scotland, he is also the patron saint of Cyprus, Romania, Russia, the Ukraine, Bulgaria, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, San Andres Island in Colombia and Saint Andrew Parish in Barbados. I doubt that those places utilize bagpipes and kilts as part of their celebrations!

St. Andrew is a saint in the Catholic calendar and his feast day is therefore potentially observed in Catholic churches. Where Scots have immigrated in the English speaking world, there might be a touch of tartan or even a Scottish hymn added to the liturgy; however, in most countries St. Andrew is more generic and often is associated with the national identity of that country. Our own St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Victoria had a very Scottish beginning at the end of the 19th Century, but in recent years there have been no special observances of St. Andrew’s Day. In a similar vein, St. Andrew’s Cathedral (RC) downtown has only its regular masses on that day and few of its parishioners would claim Scottish heritage.

Prior to the Covid pandemic, St. Aidan’s United Church hosted a Kirkin’ of the Tartans Service in April, but this event was related to Tartan Day, not St. Andrew’s Day. Scottish-born and retired Anglican bishop, Logan McMenamie has commented tongue in cheek, “I like St. Andrew because he’s the only saint with a Scottish name!” For Canadians generally, the last Sunday of November is significant not because it is the closest Sunday to our St. Andrew’s Day (November 30), but because it is often

Grey Cup Sunday! (This year the latter sports festival is taking place on December 12 in Hamilton.) For church attenders, it is also the case that November 28 happens to be the First Sunday of Advent. And Hanukkuh falls this year on November 29. On November 30, St. Andrew’s Day often jostles for position with both religious and sports festivals that take up our calendar.



Advent Wreath

As one might expect, St. Andrew’s Day is a bigger deal in Scotland than in Canada. Scotland is somewhat pragmatic about the timing, which is automatically moved to the next Monday if St. Andrew’s Day falls on a weekend. It is a matter of individual company policy if the employers actually give their employees a day off on that bank holiday, even for banks!

Most places fly the Saltire instead of the Union flag on Saint Andrew’s Day. Apparently historic Edinburgh Castle is an exception because it is controlled by the British Army and therefore it follows British Army protocol in flying only the Union flag. On a less official level, people celebrate the day with Scottish food, music and dance. There is a giant ceilidh held in Glasgow City Centre at night, on St. Andrew’s Day.



Glasgow City Centre St. Andrew's Celebration

How traditions get started is rather an interesting question. People who concern themselves with popular history believe that the celebration of St. Andrew’s Day as a Scottish national festival probably goes back to the time of Malcolm III (1034-1093).

The choice of the disciple Andrew as a patron saint for Scotland arises because Saint Andrew is believed to have died on a diagonally transversed cross which the Romans sometimes used for executions and which therefore came to be called a St. Andrew’s Cross. (See icon photo to right.) There is a tradition that the disciple Andrew became an early missionary to the Black Sea area, and descendants of those Scythian believers are thought to have travelled to Fife in Scotland, as early missionaries. If so, they would have brought the St. Andrew’s Cross with them. This is a belief that is not historically verifiable, but traditions have a life of their own in shaping national identities.



Icon of St. Andrew

The heraldic symbol for the St. Andrew’s Cross is called the Saltire, (white diagonal cross on blue background.) It became the flag of Scotland in the 15th century. The St. Andrew’s Cross is a constituent of the Union Jack, adopted as the flag of the United Kingdom, in 1801. We



have a Saltire Society here in Victoria and a Saltire banner is displayed in each of the society’s monthly gatherings. Info for above article was excerpted from sources in the public domain and from: www.scotland.org Editor

Covid-19 Deaths in Scotland Drive Fall in Life Expectancy

www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-58663991 Report from BBC Scotland on 23 September 2021



SCOTLAND—Life expectancy in Scotland fell last year with the biggest annual decrease seen in 40 years, figures show. Average life expectancy for men dropped by 17.6 weeks and by 6.1 weeks for women, according to the National Records of Scotland (NRS). The NRS's head of vital events statistics, Julie Ramsay, said the decrease had been driven by Covid-19 deaths. Scotland has the lowest life expectancy at birth of all UK countries. However, average life expectancy in all the UK nations has fallen over the past year.

Women born in Scotland are now expected to live until they are 81, with men reaching the age of 76.8 on average. The NRS figures for 2018-2020 represent the biggest annual decrease in life expectancy since estimates began in 1980-1982. Men have highest life expectancy in the Shetland Islands - 80.6 years; their lowest is in Glasgow City—73.1 years. Women have the highest life expectancy in East Renfrewshire—84 years; their lowest is in Glasgow City—78.3 years. (Source: National Records of Scotland.)

Ms Ramsay said: "It is clear that the high number of excess deaths in 2020 has led to the fall in life expectancy. Our analysis shows that Covid-19 deaths accounted for the vast majority of the fall in life expectancy for both males and females, with drug-related deaths also having a negative impact on life expectancy for males."

Ms Ramsay said measuring life expectancy was an important indication of the health of the population. "Covid-19 has clearly driven a significant increase in deaths and this life expectancy measure will provide important evidence as to whether the impact of the pandemic is a one-off shock or whether it will have a sustained impact on mortality," she added.

How does Scotland compare with the other UK nations? For an answer to that question, check out the chart in the next column. The data is taken from the National Records of Scotland.

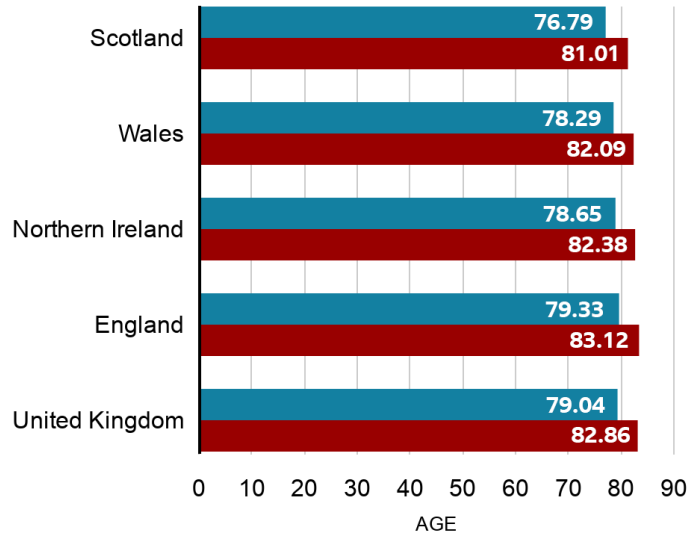
The NRS also found that deprivation continued to have an impact on life expectancy, with men living in the least deprived areas having 13.5 years more life expectancy than those living in the most deprived areas. The difference was 10.2 years for women.

Despite the drop in life expectancy at birth, the NRS said the number of centenarians in Scotland had increased by 13% over the last year. There were 960 people aged 100 or over living in Scotland in 2020 — 770 women and 190 men. The NRS said the rise was linked to the increase in the number of births that followed World War I.

Article reprinted from BBC Scotland.

Average UK life expectancy

■ Men
■ Women

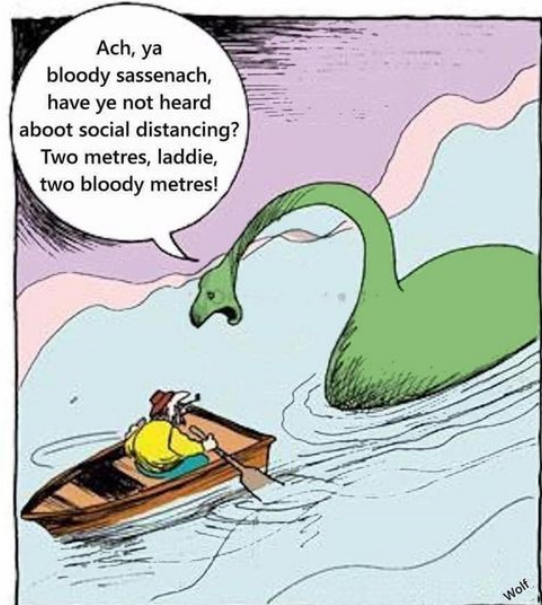


Figures for 2018-2020

Source: National Records of Scotland

BBC

+++++ For a further comparison, life expectancy fell across most of Europe and the USA in 2020, on a scale not seen since World War Two, and experts say further reductions may be seen in the next year or so. In Canada, the average life expectancy was 80 years for males and 84 years for females in mid-2020. Of those considered in this statistic, the life expectancy of female Canadian infants born in 2020 was the longest, at 84 years. +++++ Editor.



THE LOCH DOWN MONSTER

Walls of Scottish Community Centre Continue to Rise

Update and photos by Ian Booth



Site of Scottish Community Centre on 22 October 2021

VICTORIA — The Victoria Scottish Community Centre Society continues to be amazed with the pace of construction on the new centre being built at Craigflower Manor. All exterior walls are framed up and the steel columns for the large glue-laminated beams for the ceiling are expected to arrive on site in the first week of November, well ahead of schedule. This means that the roof will be on before the end of the month.

On a recent site visit and standing in the centre auditorium area, I stood looking outward to the several rooms of the hall. I was in awe of the magnificent view that the building enjoys. Our architect, D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism, has also noted this quite stunning perspective and has recently chosen to increase the size of the windows to take in more of this view that overlooks the Gorge Waterway. Fortunately, this can be done at no additional cost to us.

Our construction managers, Knappett Projects, had eight carpenters on site this day (October 22); in addition, the heavy duty equipment contractors were also there with a crew of four, getting ready to back-fill around the building and also finish the site grading.

The way that this is all taking shape I am certain that this will truly be a wonderful building — one that the entire Scottish Community can take pride in.

The pace at which the building is taking shape means that the project could be taken to a lock-up phase earlier than originally forecast. This is good news in a way, but leaves us less time to raise the additional \$250,000 needed to finish and furnish the centre. Cost increases due to the pandemic and the time delays in getting started on construction, have left us with a shortfall in the budget. With the Covid situation we have been limited in our normal abilities for fundraising opportunities. We are as ever seeking the support of members of the community to step forward and help us reach our goal. With your support the new Scottish Community Centre will be open soon for all to enjoy.

We are also very pleased to announce that our anonymous benefactor has stepped forward to announce his identity and extend his offer to match donations, up to a total of \$50,000. This opportunity to have your donation matched is available until the end of the year. We are extremely grateful for this contribution from Dr. Ken Wilson. A big round of applause for this generous individual!

Certainly not everyone is in the position to make a large donation. But every bit helps. Any donation over \$25 will receive a tax deductible receipt. The Victoria Scottish Community Centre Society is a Registered Charity with the CRA and any deductions made before the end of the year can be applied to your income tax deductions for 2021.

Apart from cash donations we do have a number of other opportunities, which are also eligible for a tax receipt, to participate in our fundraising. We have the popular “commemorative brick,” which can be inscribed to remember a loved one or mark a memorable event. These come in three different sizes, with most of the large bricks spoken for, but the medium and small are still available. We also have the Rowan Tree Program, whereby a sapling tree can be purchased to be placed on site as part of our landscaping plan. If you wish more details on these, please visit our website which is available below at: www.victoriasscottishcommunitycentre.ca.

Click on the “Get Involved” link and it will take you to the various options and show more details of the project. (You are not locked in to donate). If you have any questions, there is a further link to contact us, under “Get Involved.”

Several members and groups of the community have already come forward to pledge their support and offer financial assistance. If you are one of those, I would once again like to thank you for your support. If you are able to and would like to help to build something that you and future generations will enjoy and be proud of, please join us with your assistance. I look forward to seeing you all in the new Victoria Scottish Community Centre!

Ian Booth (President),

Victoria Scottish Community Centre Society



Scottish Culture:

Saltire Society of Victoria: Contact is the Provost, Doug McLeod, at 250 360-1776 or the society's Scrivener (secretary), Larry Scott at 250 213-5239.

Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association. For inquiries, contact Keith Feir at 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. www.victoriahighlandgames.com

Websites:

The Celtic Connection: Burnaby-based tabloid, publishing since 1991. Online at celtic-connection.com

The Scottish Banner is a digital download subscription service. View at: www.scottishbanner.com

Bruce Knight Memorial Piobaireachd Competition
<https://www.facebook.com/bruceknightmemorial>

Scottish Review is now edited by Islay McLeod, who is located in Prestwick: www.scottishreview.net

Rampant Scotland is a site begun in 1996 and written by Alan Scott at: www.RampantScotland.com/letter.htm

Canadian Alliance of British Pensioners. Did you ever work in the UK? You may be eligible for a pension. info@britishpensions.com or www.britishpensions.com

Dance Instruction:

Brentwood Scottish Country Dancers: Contact Janet Mitchell at mitchel5@telus.net for more detailed information. Classes happen at the Brentwood Centre.

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

Bon Accord Highland Dancers: Lynne Griffiths. 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

Kathy White's Island Highland Dance Academy: kathywhitedance@hotmail.com Cell 250-710-0837

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

O'Brien School of Irish Dancing: Teachers — Mairead O'Brien/Crystal van Boven. www.obrienirishdance.com Tel. 604 340-2370.

Victoria Highland Dance Association. Sponsors competitions, etc. Contact at www.vhda.weebly.com

Victoria School of Irish Dance: www.victoriairishdancers.com Contact Alison Paladini at 250 888-9421 or alisonpaladini@shaw.ca

Victoria Area Pipe Bands:

BC Pipers' Association serves solo Highland Bagpipers, Scottish Drummers and Pipe Bands in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. www.bcpipers.org

Canadian Scottish Regimental Association Pipe Band
www.canadianscottishregiment.ca

Castle Cary Pipes and Drums. For band info go to: www.castlecarypipesanddrums.ca

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

Greater Victoria Police Pipe Band. www.gvppb.com Pipe Major Warren Fells; Drum Major Randy Evans.

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

Saanich Peninsula Pipe Band. Contact 250-652-9954 or <https://saanichpeninsulapipeband.blogspot.com/>

78th Fraser's Highlanders Pipe Band. Contact Pipe Major Dave Hjalmarson at nordicsword@hotmail.com

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

VanIsle Caledonia Pipe Band. Pipe Major Richard Findlay at www.vanislecaledonia.com

Local Businesses With Celtic Flavour:

Bard and Banker Scottish Pub, 1022 Government St, Victoria www.bardandbanker.com

Caledonia Meats. Haggis makers. colegriffiths11@gmail.com or 250 857-5260.

Craigdarroch Castle, 1050 Joan Cresc, Victoria. Built by Scottish coal baron Robert Dunsmuir. <https://thecastle.ca/>

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

Freedom Kilts, 1335 Pembroke St., 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, 102-318 Wale Rd., Victoria. 778 406-2243 www.northofhadrians.com

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

Victoria Caledonian Distillery & Twa Dogs Brewery does tours and events. www.victoriacaledonian.com

*If you would like to be on the free email mailing list for the **Scottish Newsletter**, contact Larry Scott by email at kitimatlarry@gmail.com There is no print version available.