



October 2023 Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Events for October

- 1st October 2023 CelticFest, Warwick, QLD
- 7th October 2023 Canberra Highland Gathering ACT
- 28th October 2023 Williamstown Highland Celtic Gathering, Nelson Place Williamstown VIC

Profile of Your Committee

This month, I bring you a well-known face, our Public Officer Helen Sutherland

Helen Sutherland comes to us from central NSW. She represents our Clan at the Australian Celtic Festival in Glen Innes and the Aberdeen Highland Games with her two beautiful puppy dogs June Dianne Sutherland and Daniel Austin Sutherland in toe.

Helen is a keen hobbyist genealogist and enjoys getting out to country music festivals around her area as often as possible. Helen is very passionate about her Scottish heritage and Sutherland roots. You will find her representing us at the Australian Celtic Festival and Aberdeen Highland Games every year where she flies our banner proudly and makes our clan known. Previously Helen has had several roles on the committee of Clan Sutherland as Secretary, Genealogist and Historian. Currently, Helen is our Public Officer keeping fair trading up to date with our financial records.



A highly valued member of our Clan, thank you Helen for everything you do for us.

Get involved!

If you would like to get involved with our Clan as a representative at a festival or event, please get in touch! We are looking for someone to take over the **Bundanoon Highland Games (6th April 2024)** whether it be temporary or permanent. As a representative you will get to enjoy the festival **FOR FREE!** While also getting to know some of your clan members and meet and greet new members as they enquire about who we are, what we do, and how they can join us. You don't have to be available the whole day. Please let me know if this is something you could consider.

South East Queensland Luncheon

Clan Sutherland Storytellers

I was very glad that we had seventeen happy souls at our, now traditional, springtime lunch gathering on September 9 in central Brisbane. Members from southeast Queensland travelled from near and far. Old friends relished the opportunity to renew fellowship and to extend a warm welcome to those attending for the first time.

The conversations were wide ranging and widely shared. One of the things that stood out for me was the sharing of stories about how we belong to Clan Sutherland, and thence, to one another. Stories beginning like **'my dad came from'** and **'my granny used to talk about'** and **'my folks arrived on board the ...'**. There is no doubt that sharing companionship face to face is a very worthwhile aspect of our clanship.

My thanks to all who accepted my invitation, for being great company. To those of you who were unable to be there, there is always 'next time'!

Mona Sutherland Black (Membership Secretary)



Thank you, to Fiona, for these lovely photos!

A huge thank you to Mona Black for organising this lunch every year.

One of the reasons I love attending these luncheons is how connected I feel with everyone on my way home. I grew up around a family that talked over food. It didn't matter which meal it was, there was always some kind of conversation or banter going on. Much like Mona said above, for me, these lunches remind me of those family moments that I don't get to share with people as often as I did. So, for me, they are a special time to connect and enjoy common interests with someone I may not have spoken to in a long time, or someone I had not ever met before.

We had some new faces this year, some regulars too and some that we hadn't seen for a while. For those that couldn't make it, we are sorry we missed you and hope maybe next year to see you there. For those that did come, thank you so much for making the time to come and connect with your cousins. We aren't just a clan, we are family. It certainly felt that way at the luncheon.

Michelle

Upcoming Luncheon's in other cities

For those of you in Sydney and Melbourne, please keep an eye out as we look at hosting similar events in your cities. If you would like to help organise these, please get in touch. Many hands make light work!

- Melbourne location and date to be determined.
- Sydney will be in late April (location to be determined) to coincide with my attendance at the Meeting of Two Cultures which is held annually on the 29th of April in Kurnell, Sydney NSW.

Upcoming Celtic Fest Warwick

For those attending the Celtic Fest in Warwick. Please note the **Saturday parade has been cancelled.**

Also, organisers have announced there will be no public parking at the showgrounds. Instead, they have free buses travelling from two locations within Warwick to bring you to the festival. The **Shamrock Shuttle (Bus 1)** leaves from the Cleary Street Entrance of Australiana Park **or Saltire Express (bus 2)** will leave from the Post office on Palmerin Street. Both will bring you to the Showgrounds gate 1.

Services will operate regularly between the CBD and the Showgrounds/between the Showgrounds and the CBD, and on a loop of approximately every 20 minutes between Australiana Park and the Showgrounds, While the post office bus will be every hour to half hour on both Saturday 30 September and Sunday 1 October.

The Celtic Fest events kick off with their Irish Night on the **Saturday evening at 2pm to 10pm** with live entertainment, food and bar, medieval village, Highland games championships, highland coos and a Ceilidh! **(Barbara and I will be in attendance!)**

Then things keep rolling on the **Sunday from 9am to 4pm** at the **All-Things Celtic Day**. This is where you will find me and other Clans folk in our clan tent in the **Celtic Markets**. The day will be full of fun as you watch brawny men and women tossing the caber at the National Highland Games Competition, thrill to the skirl of the bagpipes and take in the graceful performances of Highland and Irish dancers. Soak up the atmosphere of the Medieval Village and stroll through Celtic-themed markets, where artisans will display their wares. View displays of lost trades, such as tin smithing, and Celtic creatures, including Highland cows. The clans and genealogists will also gather. There'll be plenty to eat and drink, with some delicious Celtic food on offer including Haggis, Guinness pies and of course Guinness on tap.

Prepurchase your tickets here <https://www.celticfestqld.com.au/tickets>



Upcoming Canberra Highland Gathering

Canberra Highland Gathering held on Saturday 7th October 2023 at Kambah Oval, Kett St Kambah ACT 10am to 7pm with Ceilidh from 7:30pm!

Please note there is Free Entry to the Canberra Highland Gathering

Our Clan tent will be found at site 15 (located adjacent to Kett St) hosted by Sharon and John Kontista with the assistance of their little westies. (Thank you, Sharon and John!!)

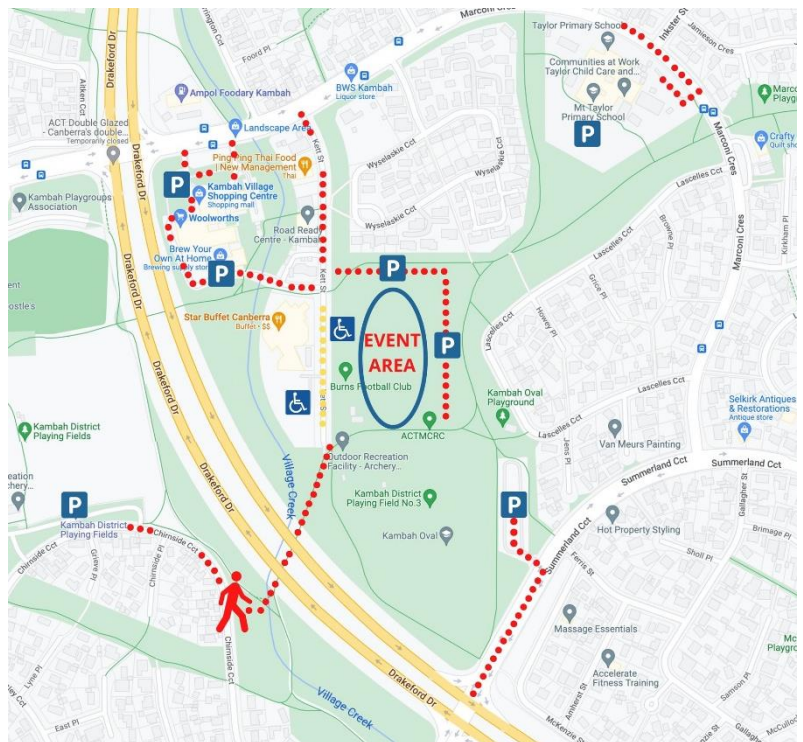
As well as the dancing and pipe band competitions that will run throughout the day, the gatherings entertainment will include spectacular displays of strength and athleticism by the Tartan Warriors. Several times throughout the day, the Warriors will demonstrate traditional Scottish heavy sporting events such as the Caber Toss, Lifting of the Stones and the Atlas Stones. The National Military Re-Enactment Group and the Rural Fire Brigade will conduct displays throughout the day, and the Canberra College of Piping & Drumming will host an information tent for those who want to try blowing a set of pipes or hit snare drum. Together with the other events and displays during the day and the Scottish Ceilidh that evening in the Canberra Burns Club, They plan to create their very own little Scottish village in Canberra for this one day of the year.



Parking

On the oval as indicated on the below map:

- At the Kambah Shops
- On the bottom of the Oval as accessed by Summerland Circuit
- At the top of the oval at Mt Taylor Primary as accessed from Marconi Crescent
- Disabled Parking is available in the marked area on Kett St
- At Kambah District Playing fields, access the Event Area with a short walk utilising the underpass to cross Drakeford Drive
- You can also access the Gathering by Public Transport, information on routes can be found [here](#).
- Route #71 runs between Woden Interchange and Tuggeranong and stops at Kambah Shops, more information [here](#)



For more information go to <https://www.canberragathering.com.au/> or follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/canberrahighlandgathering>

Clan Sutherland European Branch

I attended, electronically, the meeting of the European Branch on September 9. Philippe supplied an outline of the plans for Clans Day during the first weekend of October.

The bus trip will travel through the Flemish fields. During visits to the cemeteries at Bard Cottage and Poelkapelle Sutherland soldiers buried there will be commemorated.

At the ceremony close to the Menin Gate wreaths will be laid and the names of five members of each of the twelve clans represented will be read out. The Sutherland names this year will be relatives of James Sutherland, who is the Clan Sutherland Society Historian.

We in CSSA are indebted to the members of the European Branch for continuing to honour the memory of those who served. Clans Days are designed to remember and respect the fallen.

Did you know that there are no fewer than twelve cemeteries in Belgium where Australians who perished in world war one is remembered? For those of us who have not had the opportunity to visit, I commend clips like the one on Bard Cottage. A video of the cemetery can be found here <https://youtu.be/6DKjnmUnc6k>

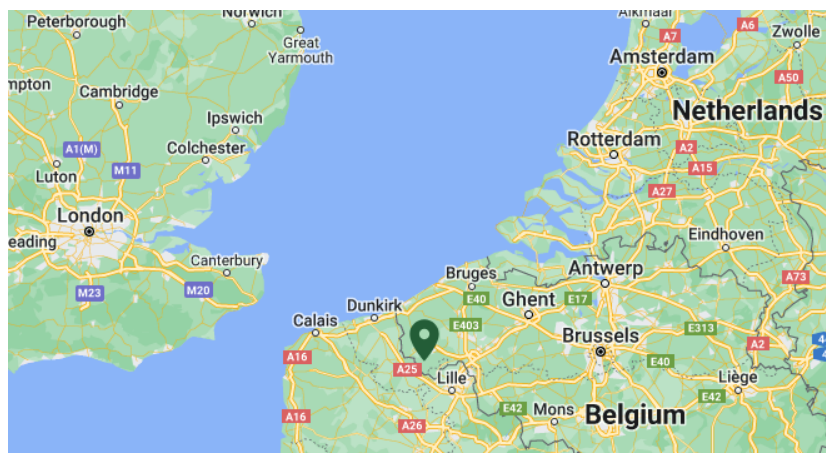
Mona Sutherland Black (CSS Council, representing CSSA Inc)

History & Location Information on Barn Cottage Cemetery

The Cemetery is located south of Dunkirk, in the region of West-Vlaanderen, Belgium on the Diksmuidseweg road (N369) in the direction of Boezinge. The total casualties identified is 1607 from the First World War.

For much of the First World war, the village of Boesinghe (now Boezinge) directly faced the German line across the Yser canal. Bard Cottage was a house a little set back from the line, close to a bridge called Bard's Causeway, and the cemetery was made nearby in a sheltered position under a high bank. Burials were made between June 1915 and October 1918, and they reflect the presence of the 49th (West Riding), the 38th (Welsh) and other infantry divisions in the northern sectors of the Ypres Salient, as well as the advance of artillery to the area in the autumn of 1917. After the Armistice, 46 graves were brought in to Plot VI, Row C, from the immediate area, including 32 from Marengo Farm Cemetery (this was located a few hundred metres to the south of Bard Cottage, on the same side of the road. It was used from June 1915 to August 1916). There are now 1,639 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 39 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate three casualties known to be buried among them. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

More can be found about Bard Cottage Cemetery here: <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/50800/bard-cottage-cemetery/>



Follow on from the Stone Circles of Scotland

I had an enquiry after the last newsletter asking if I had any idea what they stones may have originally been used for. Contrary to popular belief, the stones are not designed for time travel. For that, I recommend



picking up a good book and let your imagination take you on a journey. There has been much speculation regarding stone circles and their uses. Much of which usually centred around Stone Henge in England. I thought in this newsletter, I'd focus on one of the circles found on Orkney that represents the ancient heritage of the island and its inhabitants.

The Ring of Brodgar is in the west mainland of Stenness on Orkney's main island on an eastward-sloping plateau on the Ness of Brodgar which is a thin strip of land separating the Harray and Stenness lochs. The interior of the Ring of Brodgar has never been fully excavated, or scientifically dated, leaving the monument's actual age uncertain. However, it is believed it was erected between 2500BC and 2000BC before the Stenness loch existed. The area was said to have been covered by wet, marshy bog surrounding pools of water. It is believed it had originally contained 60 megaliths, with only 27 remaining today. Heights of the stones vary from 2.1m to



4.7m tall with a diameter of the whole Ring being 103.6m covering an area of 8,435 square meters.

But what were they used for? Well, it seems from what I have read, much like other stone circles, the Ring of Brodgar had left experts baffled and arguing over the possibilities. It is plausible to think, they may have had multiple purposes, much like the modern-day churches are used for many different ceremonies and gatherings. The uses most likely revolved around religion or ritual and could have hosted up to 3,000 people for all manner of events or festivals ranging from human burials, festivals, giving thanks, animal sacrifice, marriage, meeting areas or pathways to the gods. It's also possible they were built to honour the ancestors. One theory is that the Ring of Brodgar represented a symbolic area for the dead, while the Standing Stones of Stenness, with its central hearth, represented life. The procession from Stenness to Brodgar, therefore, could be seen as a symbolic journey from life to death. While others speculate it was the building itself that rather than its use, that had significance to the builders. Lastly, there was also speculation that they may have been an astronomical observatory that followed the rising and setting of the moon. But we may never know for certain what they were originally built for. The knowledge lost to time.

So, do you think the stone circles were built for? One thing is for certain, when I have visited stone circles, I feel something buzzing in the air (no, not like Outlander, sorry ladies). Given the size of the circle, they were clearly important to those that built them.



Bog Cotton or Eriophorum Angustifolium

The Clan Sutherland plant badge is the cotton sedge or bog cotton, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, which is often found in the Highlands on the peaty or acidic soils of bogs. It flowers in May and during summer develops white seed heads which resemble cotton.

One website introducing it saying, "Bog Cotton may sound like something you might flush down the toilet". But, when in flower, it looks like wispy clouds flowing across the peat bogs. Otherwise known as Common Cottongrass, the perennial plant can grow up to 60cm in height and flowers from May to July. It likes an acid

soil, the more acidic the better and is quite happy to get its feet wet in a shallow pool. It can cover vast areas of heathland turning them white with its cotton-like seed heads. It is a member of the Sedge family, all of which resemble grasses in some way.

Common Cottongrass has grass-like leaves which curve inwards along their length in a tubular fashion. They are rigged with feint lines and turn red at the tips. The flower stems end in a cluster of drooping flower heads, from 3 to 7 heads. These heads contain a dense cluster of tiny brownish-green flowers, rather non-descript. But no one is interested in the flowers. It is the seed heads that give Common Cottongrass its striking appearance, turning heaths and moorland strikingly white in late summer. As the flowers are fertilized each produces an achene with a furry white pappus. Bunched together they make a white ball of cotton-like hair about 4cm long, with one long narrow purple bract reaching above the seed head.

Though the brittleness of its threads renders it useless in the manufacture of cotton, during the First World War, Common Cottongrass was used by the Scottish to dress wounds.

Both photos were taken by me along the path to the Abandoned Village of Bagbea in Scotland



Information taken from <https://www.bogcottonelopements.com/what-on-earth-is-bog-cotton/>

And <https://www.highlandtitles.com/scottish-wildflowers/>

Book release announcement

Brora Heritage Centre hosted the launch of a new book featuring Brora's salt-making industry - 'Salt: Scotland's Newest Oldest Industry'. The whole day free event was held on Saturday 16 September at Brora Heritage Centre with the Book Launch and Sea Salt Day with a light lunch provided by volunteers.

Guests were invited to watch or help in the making of Brora Sea Salt. While learning about the history of salt making on the Brora coast from the 16th century and how we use the same process to make salt today. They watched the traditional method of salt basket-making in a demonstration from local weaver, Anne Coombs. Many joined in with the 'Songs of land, sea and industry' workshops, where they explored a collection of Scottish and Gaelic songs inspired by working life, led by singer Aileen Ogilvie.

The book launch premiere of 'Salt: Scotland's Newest Oldest Industry' was introduced by co-editor and Archaeologist, Joanna Hambly, followed by informal talks by some of its other authors.

About the book:

'Salt is a vital commodity. For many centuries it sustained life for Scots as seasoning for a diet dominated by grains (mainly oats), and for preservation of fish and cheese.'

Sea-salt manufacturing is one of Scotland's oldest industries, dating to the eleventh century if not earlier. Smoke- and steam-emitting panhouses were once a common sight along the country's coastline and are reflected in many of Scotland's placenames. The industry was a high-status activity, with the monarch initially owning salt pans. Salt manufacture was later organised by Scotland's abbeys and then by landowners who had access to the sea and a nearby supply of coal. As salt was an important source of tax revenue for the government, it was often a cause of conflict (and military action) between Scotland and England. The future of the industry – and the price of salt for consumers – was a major issue during negotiations around the Union of 1707.

This book celebrates both the history and the rebirth of the salt industry in Scotland. Although salt manufacturing declined in the nineteenth century and was wound up in the 1950s, in the second decade of the twenty-first century the trade was revived. Scotland's salt is now a high-prestige, green product that is winning awards and attracting interest across the UK.'

Available in eBook or paperback. To purchase the book go to Booktopia or Amazon.

<https://www.booktopia.com.au/salt-christopher-a-whatley/ebook/9781788855907.html>

<https://www.amazon.com.au/Salt-Scotlands-Newest-Oldest-Industry/dp/1910900974>

The poster is for a 'Salt Making & Book Launch' event. At the top, it says 'Salt Making & Book Launch' in large blue letters, followed by 'Saturday 16 September' and 'Brora Heritage Centre'. A circular logo in the top right corner says 'highlands & islands CLIMATE FESTIVAL'. The poster lists activities: 'BRORA SALTERS MAKING SEA SALT FROM 10-3', 'SALT BASKET MAKING DEMONSTRATION', 'COCKENZIE SALTERS IN 18TH-CENTURY ATTIRE', 'ARTWORK DISPLAY BY BRORA PUPILS', 'SONGS OF LAND, SEA, AND INDUSTRY', 'SINGING WORKSHOPS AT 10 & 1.30', 'SALT: SCOTLAND'S NEWEST OLDEST INDUSTRY BOOK LAUNCH AT 11.30 WITH GUEST AUTHORS', 'LIGHT LUNCH AT 12.30', and 'HELP THE ENVIRONMENT BRING YOUR OWN MUG'. It also states 'EVENT FREE - ALL AGES WELCOME'. Contact information is provided: 'Contact 07434678605 penny.paterson1@btinternet.com'. The event dates are '1ST - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023'. Logos for 'BRORA SEA SALT', 'SCAPE', 'Net Zero Scotland', 'LET'S DO NET ZERO', and 'CLIMATE HUB' are at the bottom. A book cover for 'Salt' is shown on the right, with the subtitle 'SCOTLAND'S NEWEST OLDEST INDUSTRY' and editors 'CHRISTOPHER A. WHATLEY AND JOANNA HAMBLY'. Hashtags #HICLIMATEFEST and #HILOCAL are also present.

Flags of Scotland

This month, the Flag of Orkney. This design was chosen in a competition in February and March 2007. The 5 designs that were short listed were put to a vote. 200 votes were counted, and the current Flag of Orkney won the majority by 3%.

The colours red and yellow are from the Scottish and Norwegian royal coats of arms, which both use yellow and red, with a lion rampant. The flag symbolises the islands' Scottish and Norwegian heritage. The blue is taken from the flag of Scotland and also represents the sea and the maritime heritage of the islands.



Former Flag of Orkney

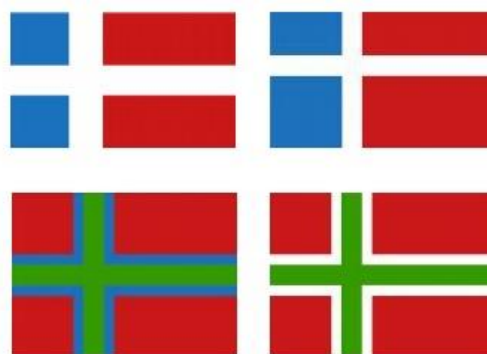
However, the Orkney's did have a flag previously. The former flag of Orkney was adopted in 1995. However, it's use was said to be much older, pointing back to the 14th century as the flag of the Kalmar Union (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) from 1397 to 1512. The colours of red on a yellow background was widely used across the county until in 2001, the flag of Orkney, the traditional flag of St Magnus, was declined official recognition by the Lord Lyon, the heraldic authority of Scotland, due to similarity with other national flags; as well as the flag

of the Kalmar Union. Other reasons for the declined decision was the use of the design in Scandinavia at least twice. Orkneyjar stated "The Norden Flag, as it is referred to, is also unofficial and seems to have been introduced at the end of the 1970s in an attempt to strengthen links between the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden." [Orkneyjar News - Controversy continues over Orkney's flag](#)

The designer of the new Flag of Orkney was Duncan Tullock. It was reported to the BBC that "*Mr Tullock (52 at the time), took just two hours to come up with the design after borrowing his granddaughters' crayon set.*" He later noted when interviewed that "*the final submission was a bit more professional, but it all started with their crayons and a sketch book.*" [BBC NEWS | UK | Scotland | North East/N Isles | Postman designs new Orkney flag](#)

Other designs that were shortlisted are pictured right. All similar in design but colours vary.

Next month another flag of Scotland.



Other entries to the competition

Some housekeeping

For regular updates of the events, we attend as they unfold be sure to follow our Facebook page. Feel free to email me at any time, I am happy to forward emails to other committee members or members at your request as well.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/clansutherlandocietyinaustralia>

Michelle Williams Secretary clansutherlandaustralia@hotmail.com

New members contact clansutherlandocietyaustralia@gmail.com

Our website <https://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus>

Reminder of our postage address

All clan mail to be sent to my home address **44-58 Old Pub Lane, Greenbank, QLD, 4124.**

Request for newsletter items

Do you have something interesting your fellow Clan Members might like to read about? Or perhaps there's a topic you would like us to research and include. Send your ideas and additions for the newsletter to Michelle Williams (Secretary).

Membership Fees

Membership fees are due 1st April each year. However, we are happy to receive them any time. Please contact me (Michelle) If you have any difficulties.

I have had some people email asking how much the fees are and how to pay.

Individual: **\$15.00** Family (spouse/partner or household members): **\$20.00**

Our bank details:

For those doing it in person at a bank, it is a Westpac Bank account.

Account name: Clan Sutherland Society in Australia,

BSB: 032-008,

Account number: 222050

Please include your Clan ID number as a reference if you recall it, otherwise your name is sufficient.

Clan Sutherland Australia Lapel Pins available!

These superb lapel pins are still in stock. This is the same pin that was presented to Lady Rachel on behalf of her father The Earl of Sutherland.

If you would like to purchase a pin for you or a loved one for \$10 (including postage), These can be added to your membership fee payments. Please contact Michelle Williams (Secretary) for how to order.

