



July 2023 Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Events for July

- 1st July 2023 Aberdeen Highland Games - Aberdeen, NSW Australia.
- 29th June – 2nd July 2023 Robert Burns Scottish Festival Camperdown, Vic.
- 1ST - 30TH July 2023 Melbourne Tartan Festival
 - Saturday 24th June - A classic Scottish movie screening followed by Caledonian Castaways show - Theatre Royal, Castlemaine.
 - Sunday 2nd July the annual Kirkin 'O the Tartan service at The Scots' Church, Collins Street at 11.00am.
 - Sunday afternoon, 2nd July - City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band Concert, Melbourne Town Hall.
 - Friday 7th July - Ceilidh Dance with Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club , Collingwood Town Hall
 - Saturday 8th July - VPA Solo Piping Championships, Presbyterian Ladies College
 - Saturday 8th July - Scottish Gaelic Society event, Assembly Hall, Collins
 - Sunday 9th July - Melbourne Tartan Day Parade on Collins Street at 2.00pm.
 - Friday 14th July - The Scots School Albury Pipe Band presents 'Sounds of Scotland' - 7.00pm Albury Entertainment Centre
 - Friday 14th July - 7.00pm Scotch Whisky's Legacy to the World. now
 - Saturday 15th July - The Scots School Albury Pipe Band presents 'Sounds of Scotland' - 7.00pm Albury Entertainment Centre. Book [HERE](#)
 - Saturday 15th July - VSDMAI 62nd Commonwealth Championships venue TBC
 - Sunday 16th July - Concert - 'A Celebration of Scots Song' with Fiona Ross
 - Monday 17th July - Online Lecture: A Grand Tour of Scotland Part 1
 - Wednesday 19th July 7.00pm - The Scots Cellar: Rare & Old Whisky
 - Saturday 22nd July - MTF Gala Dinner & Concert, Melbourne Town Hall.
 - Sunday 23rd July - CBD Walking tour - Discover some of Melbourne's Scottish Connections with historian, tour director Kenneth.
 - Monday 24th July - Online Lecture: A grand Tour of Scotland Part 2
- For more information on the Melbourn Tartan Festival and how to book events see their website www.melbournetartanfestival.com.au/

Profile of Your Committee

This month I introduce you to our Vice President Duncan Sutherland

Duncan was born in 1949 in Wagga Wagga, NSW, the fourth of nine children of John Ramsay and June Sutherland (nee Murray). Duncan's ancestor William MacKinlay Sinclair (Black) Sutherland left Thurso in Scotland for Hylton in England in 1793 to find work as a farm labourer. Duncan's grandfather James Henry Sutherland was a ship's captain who came to Australia in 1909. June is descended from John Murray, a former soldier of the Peninsular Wars who came to Australia in 1833 to take up work as a policeman in Goulburn, NSW. Both the Sutherlands and the Murrays maintain strong connection with their Scottish heritage.

After graduating from Sydney University Duncan worked in education, emergency services and corrective services. He has a master's degree in educational administration and a Graduate Diploma in Chinese Language and Culture. Duncan is Vice President of Clan Sutherland Society of Australia, and Secretary of Southern Alps Ski Club. As such, represents us at as many Sydney based events he can get to. Namely, Bundanoon, the ANZAC day wreath laying ceremony, Sydney Week events and most importantly, The Meeting of Two Cultures, held at Kurnell 29th April annually.



Sunday 2nd July the annual Kirkin 'O the Tartan service at The Scots' Church, Collins Street at 11.00am. Nathan Rantall will be in attendance. Any clan members wishing to attend are welcome. Please let us know so Nathan can keep an eye out for you. There is usually a morning tea after the mass. All are welcome to attend.

The International Gathering, Scotland

Hopefully by now you received my Special Edition June 2023 Newsletter. If not and you would like to read it, let me know.

Recent events we attended and reports from our representatives.

27th May 2023 Berry Highland Games by Sharon Kontista

Thank you to David and Margaret Sutherland with Sharon and John Kontista (and who can forget the westies! Eira & Angus) for representing us at the Berry Highland Games.



At 8am Clan members David & William Sutherland, John & Sharon Kontista arrived at Berry Showgrounds to set up the Clan Tent. It was a mild morning with promises of good sunny weather to be enjoyed throughout the day for Celtic outdoor activities.



Entry: \$15.00 per festival goer, Children under 15yrs Free.

At 9.30am was the Grand Street Parade.



John & Sharon represented our Clan in the Street Parade. Our new Banner cross rod frame worked a treat, making it lighter to carry long distance! Thanks to John's handywork!

At 10.10am Massed Bands followed by the Official Opening at 10.20am.

Angus & Eira look on, we are sure that they are missing little Shona at this moment in time. It's their 1st festival without her...



David, John, William and Westies chilling out after the morning's events.

Meanwhile outside around the grounds

Medieval knights armour up for the 12.00pm Jousting battle.



The Berry Spinners and Weavers got busy with weaving some woollen tartan.

Lots of festival goers with their

kilts on for today's festival was a real atmosphere treat.



There were lots of vendors for family history memorabilia and food stalls. For everyone's needs.



A big thanks go to The Rotary Club of Berry and its sponsors for making this festival a success. Will ye come back again in 2024 (25 May 2024).

Scottish Australian Heritage Council's Scottish Week Burns Supper in Sydney

Burns Supper Sydney was Hosted by the Scottish Australian Heritage Council to celebrate the beginning of Scottish Week in Sydney on Friday 23rd June. Honoured guests for the evening were The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Loudon, Simon Abney Hastings with SAHC Patron the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Dunmore, Malcolm Murray was held at the Club York Sydney (near QVB / Town Hall Station)



In attendance from Clan Sutherland we had, Commissioner Graeme Sutherland, President Philip F Sutherland with wife Angela, and Vice-President Duncan Sutherland attended the Burns Night Dinner hosted by the Scottish Australian Heritage Council as part of the Scottish Week festivities in Sydney. Commissioner Graeme had the pleasure of addressing the haggis. I have it on good authority that a great time was had by all who attended.

Guests enjoyed a three-course meal and entertainment of a Piper, Address to the Haggis (by our very own Commissioner Graeme Sutherland), Address to the Lassies and their response, as well as a Highland dancing display, choral singing, and a wee dram or two.

Thank you, gentlemen, for representing Clan Sutherland.



Scottish Week Kirkin' of the Tartan

Sunday 25 June at 9.00AM the Scottish Australia Heritage Council hosted the Kirkin' o' the Tartan service at the Hunter Baillie Memorial Presbyterian Church, Annandale. The Còisir Ghàidhlig Astràilianach (Australian Gaelic Singers) performed. Thank you to President Philip F Sutherland and his wife Angela for attending on our behalf.



The History of Peat Farming

I am not sure about you all, but I love the smell of peat burning on a wood fire. When I stay in a hotel or stop for dinner, I can instantly tell it is being used. I also enjoy a good Whisky that has used it in the process of production. When I was in Scotland with Nathan, I was thrilled to drive by a peat farm being farmed the traditional way. But what is it and where does it come from? I thought I'd do some research and present it to you all.

Peat is formed when plant material decomposes over thousands of years in wet, boggy areas of land. Farmers graze sheep and cattle on upland peatland sites which helps to protect these habitats while producing high-quality British beef and lamb. Lowland peatland sites can be excellent for growing cereals, fruit and vegetables because of their fertile soils.

More than 20% of Scotland is covered by peat and much of our drinking water filters through these peatland catchments making them crucial for clear drinking water. Peatlands also hold most of Scotland's carbon store (they are estimated to hold the equivalent of 140 years' worth of Scotland's total annual greenhouse gas emissions), and so are vital in helping us to tackle climate change. Healthy peatlands provide many benefits to us all – but not all of our peatlands are in good health. It is estimated that 80% of Scotland's peatlands are damaged.



Types of peatland habitat

There are four main natural peatland habitat types in Scotland: blanket bog, raised bog, fen and bog woodland. Although all supported by peat, and there are some intermediate forms, generally they are quite distinctive in terms of their vegetation, hydrology, place in the landscape, nutrient status and, to some degree, geographical distribution.

Blanket bog is only found in a few parts of the world with cool, wet and typically oceanic climates. Under these conditions bog mosses and other plants break down very slowly and gradually form a layer of peat. Peat depth varies, with an average between 0.5 and 3 metres deep, but depths of up to 8 metres are not uncommon.

Found throughout the Scottish uplands, blanket bogs are most extensive in the north and west in areas with gentle slopes and poor drainage. They are dominant over the gently undulating moorlands, particularly in the North Highlands and Western and Northern Isles.

Blanket bog covers some 1.8 million hectares, 23% of our land area. Rare globally, Scotland holds a significant proportion of the European and world resource. It also supports some of our rarest and most threatened wildlife, including internationally important breeding bird populations.

It is also our largest terrestrial carbon store, holding around 1.6 billion tonnes of carbon. Ensuring that this carbon is secure, and enhancing its capacity to store more even more carbon, are among the highest priorities for this plan.

Raised bogs are found mainly in the lowlands. In their natural state, these appear as domes growing to 10 m or more in height, with the growing dome being 'fed' by rainwater. The surface is waterlogged, acidic and lacking in nutrients. Vast areas have been lost to agricultural, horticultural and forestry practices.

Fens are special places where nature and centuries of human activity combine to produce a rich and ever-changing habitat. Scotland supports a wide variety of different fen types, ranging from tiny fragments to extensive mosaics of wetland habitats at a landscape scale. Once highly valued for their products, their use within social and agricultural systems declined with the advent of intensive agriculture, drainage and mechanisation.

Bog woodland is one of Scotland's rarest habitats, with a limited range. Scots pine is the main tree species present, but other trees such as birch and willow occur. The underlying vegetation is often similar to that of open bog. As these woods can be hard to get into, they are often un-managed and probably represent some of our most "natural" native woods, with a truly wild feel to them.

A range of other semi-natural wet woodland types can occur on peatland and should be recognised for the biodiversity and other benefits they provide. To prevent soil drying out and being eroded by wind or by water run-off, farmers plant trees around fields and use cover crops. Cover crops are sown between periods of regular food production to both protect the soil from erosion and put nutrients back into the soil. More and more farmers are also using soil conservation practices which allow them to plant seeds while disturbing the soil as little as possible and other techniques such as underground irrigation.

But how is peat harvested?

One of the ways I have seen farmers harvest peat is, they would use what's called a peat shovel or spade. Pictured right is a variety of designs. They are used to cut the peat from the bog into what looks like a brick before leaving it to dry. When dry it can be used in the fire to keep warm or adding that lovely smoky flavour to whisky.



There are several peatland restoration projects underway across the UK. The government has announced that it has a new 25 Year Environment Plan, and as part of this has promised to put more than £10m towards a strategy that will help restore the equivalent of 10,613 football pitches of upland and lowland peatlands in England.

Phasing out use of peat to protect the environment.

There are some that are calling for the sale of peat to be banned in Scotland, as part of wider plans to protect peatlands and reduce carbon emissions. The government is also asking for views from industry – those who extract peat, those who supply it, garden centres and other users of peat such as the fuel and whisky industries.

The intention is to ban the retail sale of peat for home gardening first, before considering how a wider ban would affect commercial users.

Responses to the consultation will inform plans and timescales for moving away from using peat products in order to protect peatlands from further damage. Their protection and restoration form important components of Scotland's response to the climate and nature emergencies.

I found these websites that explains it nicely. The information provided was taken from these websites.

www.countrysideonline.co.uk/articles/peatlands-and-farming/

www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/carbon-management/restoring-scotlands-peatlands

www.gov.scot/news/ending-the-sale-of-peat-in-scotland/

Flag of Scotland

This month I bring to you one of the most recognised Scottish flags other than the Saltire. The Royal Banner of the Royal Arms of Scotland.

Also known as the Lion Rampant or The Royal Standard of Scotland, or even the Banner of the Kings of Scots, it is the late Queen's official banner in Scotland. The flag consists of gold, with red rampant lion and royal tressure.



Did you know unlike the Saltire, *"the Royal Banner of the Royal Arms of Scotland correct use is restricted by an Act of the Parliament of Scotland to only a few Great Officers of State who officially represent the Monarchy in Scotland. It is also used in an official capacity at royal residences in Scotland when the Head of State is not present."* [Royal Banner of Scotland - Wikipedia](#)

Believed to be first used by William I (otherwise known as William the Lion 1143-1214 AD) and at this time it may have been called 'The Lion of Bravery'. There is no clear evidence it was used before 1222 by his heir Alexander II. However, the additional embellishments of the double border set with lilies didn't appear until the reign of Alexander III (1249-1286).

Wikipedia gives the flag's history saying: *"The Lion rampant has been used as a heraldic symbol by heirs of Malcolm III beginning with David I. The Great Seal was used by Alexander II (1214–1249). Its use in Scotland originated during the reign of Malcolm III (1058–1093), The Lion rampant motif is used as a badge by those Irish clans that have lineage in common with Malcolm III. They are linked to the legendary Milesian genealogies (specifically, the red lion is associated with the descendants of Érimón). An early recorded Scottish royal standard featured a dragon, which was used at the Battle of the Standard in 1138 by David I (1124–1153). Robert the Bruce, King Robert I, almost certainly wore a yellow surcoat that bore the Royal Red Lion Rampant at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314."* [Royal Banner of Scotland - Wikipedia](#)

With their not being a Scottish King or Queen since the 17th Century, the Monarchs of the United Kingdom claim the rights to the flag. [The Lion Rampant - Scotland's Unofficial Flag \(scottish-at-heart.com\)](#)

The Royal Household website states *"In 1934, in connection with the preparations for the Silver Jubilee of King George V, His Majesty issued a Royal Warrant granting the people of Scotland permission to use the Royal Banner of the Royal Arms of Scotland as a sign of loyalty and celebration."*

The Royal Banner of the Royal Arms of Scotland is currently flown at the Palace of Holyroodhouse and Balmoral Castle when The King is not in residence. When His Majesty is in residence, The Royal Standard of the United Kingdom is flown." [The Royal Banner of the Royal Arms of Scotland | The Royal Family](#)

(While I try not to use Wikipedia as a reference, you will note other websites with similar information)

Next month another flag of Scotland.

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

Change of postage address

Please note that I will be giving up my post box that I have been using for all clan mail. In future, please use 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).

Clan Sutherland Handbook

Since the AGM on the 17th of April, I have updated the Clan Sutherland Handbook and wish to offer anyone wishing to receive a copy to let me know. There are only slight changes, but this is our Anniversary year and some of you may wish to keep a copy for prosperity.

Membership Fees

Just a friendly reminder, if you haven't already, membership fees were due 1st April. 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 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.

