

# THE CLAY PIPER

First Coast Highlanders Newsletter

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August 2022

June 21st 2022, First Coast Highlanders Pipers and Drummers and a hand full of tag a longs loaded up on the Gator Bus, to make our way to Orlando International airport, headed for Scotland. After several cancelations, over the past three years our long awaited trip has finally started. After fourteen hours of



air travel, we finally made it to Edinburgh, Scotland. It was early the next day but we didn't care. We were all anxious to see and do all we could during our 10 day visit in Scotland. Since it was only 8am and we couldn't check into the University of Stirling Dorms, our bus driver took us to the Kelpie Statues. These horse-head sculptures stand 98 feet and depict the shape of shifting water spirits. Next on the route to Stirling University was a stop at the Falkirk Wheel. This rotating boat lift connects the Forth and Clyde Canals with the Union Canal. When this engineering marvel was completed it was the first time the canals had been connected since the 1930's. Many of us rode the wheel and afterwards had a taste of our first Scottish foods at the restaurant.



We finally made our way to Stirling University and were greeted by Rick Hearn, who had been in country for several weeks. He had the campus all scoped out. He informed us of our room locations, where to eat, how to get around via taxi and train. As the Scottish day was fading so were many of us due to the jet-lag that was starting to set in. Pipe Major called for a quick practice to ensure our bagpipes and drums had survived the trip across the pond. Rick informed each of us that we could not go to sleep until 9pm. For most of us it wasn't too difficult but with the daylight still showing at 9pm the blinds had to be pulled tight.

Day three, Thursday morning, band members awoke refreshed and ready for our first performance at Stirling Castle. Thanks goes out to our guest Piper Jennifer Kerr, from St. Andrews Scotland, a friend of Art Tenney. She performed with us at the Stirling Castle. Once we were at the castle we were greeted by many tourists, not only European and Scottish folks but many American as well. We didn't tell them we were tourists because we were performers invited to play our Scottish bagpipes and drums in Scotland. After a quick photo session in front of the castle, we formed up in the green room and proceeded to Queen Annes Garden where we provided a wonderful performance for a large crowd of visitors and a young group of Scottish students. The rest of the day was spent touring the many sights and historical areas of Stirling Castle, provided by knowledgeable castle staff.



Saturday, day 5 of our journey to Scotland, First Coast Highlanders were invited to play at the marvelous Inveraray Castle. Inveraray Castle



is home to Clan Campbell. We have several Campbell Clan members in our band. This Castle is a country house near the town of Inveraray in the County of Argyll, in Western Scotland, on the shore of Loch Fyne, Scotland's longest sea loch. It is one of the earliest examples of Gothic Revival architecture and has been the seat of the Dukes of Argyll, Chiefs of Clan Campbell since the 18th century. King James V stayed at the old castle of Inveraray in September 1533. In 1975 a devastating fire struck the Castle and for some-time the 12th Duke and his family lived in the

castle's basement, during restoration. The restoration required a worldwide fundraising drive. It is said that if it were not for the local town folks removing all of the historic items from within the castle, many items would have been destroyed by the fire. The Campbell family traditionally supported the British Crown however the Eighth Earl of Argyll, who was a presbyterian fell out of favor with King Charles I and was beheaded. The son [Ninth Earl] became in good graces with the British Crown, but unfortunately also fell out of favor with King James VII and was also beheaded. Both Dukes were beheaded with the Scottish Guillotine, The Maiden.

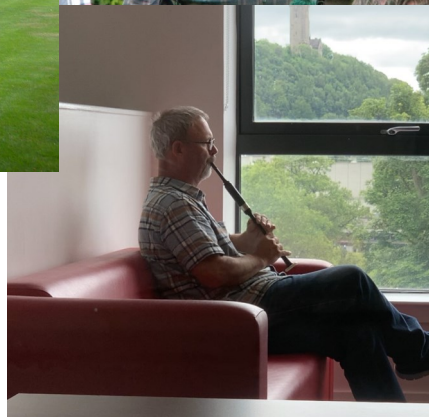
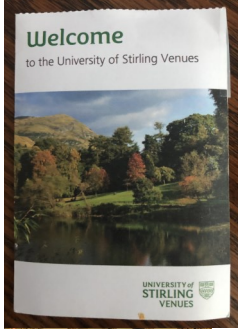
Traditionally a Guillotine would sever the head from the body from the back of the neck not seeing the blade coming. With the Scottish Guillotine, "The Maiden", the victim would be placed on their back so they could see the blade coming down before it cut off their head.





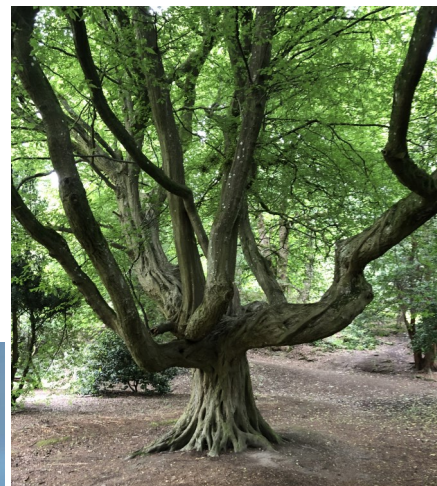


# FIRST COAST SCOTLAND





# HIGHLANDERS TRIP - 2022



Day 6, Sunday, most were worn out from our performances and seeing the many sites to behold in Scotland, a much needed day of rest was requested. Some found the energy to locate a space on campus to celebrate the Lord, Scotland style. Jim (little Jim) Roberts officiated a church service to include communion, thanks Jim. Monday, Day 7, everyone was up early to catch our private bus to the Highlands. We made several stops along the way to include Loch Ness, don't believe anyone saw Nessie. It was a typical Scottish weather day with rain and wind. Our final destination to the Highlands was the town of Inverness and the Battlefield of Culloden. This location was similar to being at the Vietnam War Monument. If emotions could tell a story there would be many told at this location. When there were no performances or organized bus trips, small groups would get together and call a taxi to take them into Stirling for self sightseeing tours. The train was taken to go a little further up North to Glasgow or South to Edinburgh to see many of the historic sites and sounds of old and new Scotland. Art spent a day in the Mitchell library in Glasgow tracking down his Scottish ancestry. He made contact with his long lost first cousin, Andrew who he never knew. The weather was a little warmer than expected, however jackets were still required and the daily rainy conditions didn't let us down. Many pictures were taken during our 10 day venture into Scotland, actually too many to post into this newsletter. Picturesque Scotland, with all its history, is something one must see to get the true experience. We returned to USA on July 1st and I believe most of us slept through the trip. Thanks goes out to everyone who pitched in and assisted with luggage. Thanks to Art Tenney for putting this experience together. Thanks to First Coast Highlanders for a job well done.

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