

## Highland Games, A Unique Mix of History and Traditions

by Kenneth Turnbull - Editor

*Celebrations for the 2015 Highland Games in Scotland begin next month and continue throughout sixty-two districts until mid September. But for those who have not visited and/or experienced this tradition, what do these celebrations mean? Perhaps it is timely to trace a brief background of this very popular annual event.*

The Highland Games provide a unique combination of culture, sport and social entertainment. They are unique events held throughout the year in Scotland and other countries, as a way of celebrating Scottish and Celtic culture and, especially that of the Scottish Highlands. However, these celebrations are also held in many other countries throughout the world, including Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany, Netherlands, United States of America, Canada and Norway.



More and more communities across Europe are also re-discovering their Celtic heritage by holding their very own Highland Games, with around 46 hosted in Germany alone.

While Snefj rd in Norway, hosts the most northern Highland Games, New Zealand hosts the most southerly Games. Records indicate that it all began in Scotland, when King Robert the Bruce

granted the small village of Ceres in Fife (*just north-east of Edinburgh*) a Charter to hold Highland Games in June of each year, as recognition of their support in the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. They are the oldest free games in Scotland. However it could also be claimed that Robert the Bruce was inspired by the games origins, beginning in Ireland even before the ancient Olympics.

The games are also noted for their unique sporting and athletic events, many of which involve throwing and lifting. These include the shot put, tug-o-war, caber toss and hammer throw and are collectively known as the heavy events.

Caber toss is a heavy weight challenge where competitors toss a large tapered pole (19 feet 6 inches (5.94 m) tall and weighing 175 pounds (79 kg) called a "caber". It had its beginnings when it is said to have developed from the need to toss logs



*Ancient skills of Caber Tossing*



*Highland Sword Dancing is recorded as far back as the 15th century across narrow chasms (in order to cross them) or by axemen challenging each other to a small contest. The person throwing the caber is called a "tosser". The main objective is to toss the caber so that it turns end over end, falling away from the tosser. Ideally it should fall directly away from the tosser in the "12 o'clock" position. The distance thrown isn't important.*



*Bagpipes & drums also play a large part in the Games competitions*

Many people also participate in 'Haggis Hurling', in which a haggis is thrown. The contestant who throw their haggis the farthest, wins.

France has a giant champagne cork which is tossed instead of a caber. The Highland Festival held in Washington, USA, has introduced yet another challenge and is renowned for the "Anvil Launch" where a blacksmith's anvil is launched into the air with a quarter-stick of dynamite! An explosive way to mark the start and end of the Games.

By far the most unusual challenge was in Cupar. The world record for the biggest bowl of porridge was set at the Cupar Highland Games in Fife in 2010. The huge breakfast of 690 litres of porridge, was cooked and could feed 2,000 people. More than double the existing record.

The president of the Scottish Highland Games Association, Charlie Murray, says, "I think that the Highland Games will always exist." He added, "At the top of the tree, the standard of piping, dancing and heavy events are better than they've ever been," he says.



# Phoenix, AZ Highland Games Big Success

By Marty and Louise Turnbull

The weather was just beautiful for the Highland Games this year at Steele Indian School Park. It was slightly breezy and 85 degrees both Saturday and Sunday. It seems like more and more folks come to the park every year to celebrate their Scottish, Irish, and Welsh heritage. There were thousands of people on Saturday (March 21) who enjoyed sports, dancing, drinking, British cars, pipe bands, drinking, clan tents, Renaissance re-enactors, Celtic musical groups, food vendors, and oh yes, drinking.

Our daughter, Laura Turnbull, from Florence, AZ, was able to spend the day with us on Saturday. She helped set up and host the TCA tent. This was the first time that any of our children have been able to attend the games with us. She was amazed at what all goes into setting up the tent and displays. She busied herself all day taking pictures and posting on Facebook to all our family and friends. She especially enjoyed carrying our Turnbull banner with her Dad during the opening ceremonies. Like her mother, she also teared up when the mass pipe bands marched onto the ceremonial field, and later, playing *Amazing Grace* for all those we had lost the previous year.

There were close to seventy clans and societies represented



*Marty Turnbull and daughter, Laura, proudly wait for the opening ceremonies at the Phoenix, AZ 2015 Highland Games.*

at the games this year. It is always fun to meet and greet the many tent hosts that have become our friends. We were pleased to meet Matt Turnbull, a piper, who had flown in from Seattle, WA, to pipe for the dancing competitions. We don't have very many Turnbulls or Trimbles stop by to sign our guest book, but we know they are out there, so we will keep trying, and at the same time, enjoy the spirit of the games.

## **Editors Note:**

Marty and Louise will next be at Tucson Celtic Festival and Highland Games, November 6-8, 2015. If you are in the area, be sure to attend and check out the TCA tent!

Highland games are becoming increasingly popular and make wonderful family events, as well as ways of learning about heritage, tasting Scottish favorite foods, and meeting "cousins" you never knew you had. They become especially fun and meaningful if your clan is represented with its own tent.

Turnbull Clan Association would love to see more Turnbull tents at more and more games. An interesting article by Kim Trimble, a long time tent host with brother and sister-in-law, Bill and Pat Trimble, might just be the push you need to get you going.

[http://library.turnbullclan.com/newsletters/2000-2009/be\\_2005\\_v06\\_n10.pdf](http://library.turnbullclan.com/newsletters/2000-2009/be_2005_v06_n10.pdf)

If you are interested in hosting a TCA tent in your area, contact [editor@turnbullclan.com](mailto:editor@turnbullclan.com) to find out how TCA can help. If you currently host a tent at one or more games, please send your game schedule to [editor@turnbullclan.com](mailto:editor@turnbullclan.com) so we can share the dates with our extended family.

And don't forget to send photos and news from the games you have hosted. Let's work together and see how many new Turnbull tents we can add in 2015!



*Marty Turnbull with Matt Turnbull from Seattle, WA who was there to play for the dancing competitions.*

## **BULLSEYE**

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## **Membership in Turnbull Clan Association**

It costs nothing to be a registered member with TCA! That's great news as now anyone can sign-up the whole family and stay in touch. However, TCA still has financial needs, one of the main ones being helping Tent Hosts with the cost of game registration. You can become a Contributing Member (\$24 per year) or donate to the Tent Fund. Contributing members can vote in elections and have the option of receiving the Bullseye by mail. Check out how you can help at [turnbullclan.com](http://turnbullclan.com)- Look for Membership Options.



# Turnbulls Worldwide Wear Their Colors for Tartan Day!



Bullseye editors Kenneth Turnbull, who works from Australia and Betty Turnbull, located in the USA, wear their colours (Kenneth) or their colors (Betty) while working on the latest edition of the Bullseye. Evidently Kenneth had a hard time choosing just which colours to wear so he donned them all!



*Below, Far Left:* Adriana Rosado Bonewitz, our Mexican cousin, proudly wears the Turnbull Dress tartan and displays the scarves she plans to give other family members at an upcoming reunion.



*Below:* Fiona Turnbull celebrates where it all began, Arbroath Abbey, Scotland



*Above:* Piper Jim McNally Turnbull wears the tartan while participating in the NY Tartan Day Parade.



*Above:* Christine Turnbull Batchelor dons her tartan ribbon at home in Puckers, UK.. *Right:* Bill Turnbull, Queensland, Australia prepares to be teased by the children for wearing a skirt.



*Bottom Right:* Phillip Turnbull, required to wear his uniform for the Seattle Mariners Opening Day, sneaks in a bit o' Turnbull tartan. (WA, USA)

*Below:* Jim Turnbull, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, prepares for the day with his Turnbull Hunting tie, posing by his proud display of his Turnbull heritage.





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# Bitty Bulls



## Scottish Highland Games

The summer months, for many, are a time of travel and vacation. Some enjoy family reunions. The Highland Games is like a family reunion for Scottish clans and is a time of enjoying the culture and customs of Scottish heritage. All around the world Scottish clans gather to celebrate and compete at the Highland Games. These events include track and field competitions, dancing competitions, and bagpipe music.

Many accounts of the history of the Highland Games claim that King Malcom III of Scotland, in the 11th century, created a foot race to the summit of Craig Choinnich to find the fastest runner in the land to be his royal messenger and used other contests of strength to find able men to be his soldiers. This gathering near Braemar, held every September, is the largest and most prestigious Highland Games and is attended by the Royal Family each year. Clan chiefs would pick their strongest and fastest clansmen to represent their clan in various sporting events. Each clan would proudly wear their clan dress. Over time the Games grew in number and popularity, but in 1746 the Act of Proscription outlawed Scottish dress, customs, and gatherings. This lasted for almost 40 years. After the ban was lifted the Games started again and have been a part of Scottish custom to this day.

Some of the standard competitions at each Highland Games include the caber toss, the stone put, Scottish hammer throw, and the sheaf toss. A caber, or long tapered pole or log, is stood upright and hoisted up by the competitor vertically and then tossed end over end. The stone put is a heavy stone (8-22 pounds, depending on male or female competition) that is thrown with one hand and the winner is determined by distance of throw. The Scottish hammer throw is not actually a hammer, but a round metal ball attached to a handle that is whirled over the head and then thrown. The sheaf toss event uses a bundle of straw (the sheaf) that weighs 10-20 pounds, bundled in burlap and is tossed up in the air by a pitchfork over a horizontal bar.

Other fun activities include sheep herding by dogs, piping competitions, dancing competitions, and visiting different clan tents to learn about their history. You can sample lots of Scottish foods, look at Scottish weapons and costumes, and take home some fun memorabilia to remember your time there.



Top Left: Bagpipe procession  
Bottom Left: Scottish hammer throw  
Above: Scottish Highland Dancing



Top Left: Clan Turnbull Tent  
Bottom Left: Sheep Herding  
Below: Caber Toss





# ~Family Fun~

Create your own version of the Highland Games in your backyard and invite neighbors over for some friendly competition.



Ideas taken from [www.listotic.com/32-best-diy-backyard-games](http://www.listotic.com/32-best-diy-backyard-games)



Cut different shapes out of a tarp, edge with colored tape to avoid fraying, and then designate point value of each hole. Hang tarp up and have fun throwing balls through each hole. First team to 500 wins!



String yarn up between a bunch of trees in a zig zag pattern. First team to make it through the string course wins!



Tug of war on upside down milk crates not only tests strength, but balance as well.



## Pool Noodle Games



Pool noodles can easily be bent and duct taped to make almost anything. Use them to make your own "caber toss" or obstacle course.



## Book Nook~

**Scottish Highland Games** by Francie Hall  
(32 pages, ages 4+)

An informative book that explains many of the activities held at a Highland Game such as caber toss, stone toss, sheep herding, dancing, and bagpipe music. The illustrations spark interest in any age reader.





**UK - He's a cut above the rest**

**B**utcher Mark Turnbull has taken one of the industry's top honours. He

has been elected chairman of the Butchers Q Guild, which represents award-winning butchers the length of Britain, at an awards ceremony in York. Mark, 43, was born and bred in Alnwick and joined the family business, Turnbull's Butchers, at 16, after leaving the Duchess's Community High School in 1987. Turnbull's, one of Alnwick's oldest surviving businesses, was established in 1880 by Mark's great-great grandfather, Roger Turnbull, and has since been run by successive generations of the Turnbull family. Daniel, became the sixth-generation to join the firm.



*by Kenneth Turnbull - International News Editor*

**Australia - Mum creates girls' book minus the princesses**

When Samantha Turnbull went looking for inspiring books for her little girl Liberty she found nothing but princesses and fairies. Shocked at what she described as the "princessification" of everything and anything aimed at young girls right down to the newborn level, she decided to do something about it. The result is *The Anti-Princess Club*, a new book that has old-school princess stereotypes firmly in its sights. Ms Turnbull, a writer and journalist, said princess merchandise has taken over everything else for girls and they didn't have the diversity of choice boys enjoyed.

**Scotland - Peebles and Hawick enjoy success**

Peebles Under 15 and Hawick Under 15B teams have won the Aitken Turnbull Border league final and Plate, respectively. The final of the Aitken Turnbull Border League was played at the Gytes at the first weekend in March and for the second year in row featured both of Peebles Netball U15 teams. However, within the first few minutes it was clear that gloves were off and both teams were playing to win the championship. In the end, it was accuracy on goal which secured the win for Hawick, for the second consecutive year.

**Canada - Snow and romance in the arboretum**

Hooves clack against chilled pavement as a white, hooded carriage is pulled gracefully through a moonlit, snow-laden forest by a team of two large, black Clydesdale horses to extend a magical Valentine's Day experience at JMU's Arboretum. Gail Turnbull, said, "We thought carriage rides would be a wonderful way to provide the upkeep of the Arboretum."

**New Zealand - Beautiful images of books on Tumblr**

There's a lovely Tumblr dedicated to images and information on some of the "rare books and fine printing" in the Alexander Turnbull Library. This is a selection of publishers' cloth bindings from the 19th and 20th centuries held in the Alexander Turnbull Library. These bindings are described as being the most beautiful mass produced objects of the Victorian period.

**New Zealand - A rare engineer**

There are more than a few stories beneath the hoods of Bob Turnbull's three rare cars parked in a workshop out the back of a house in the small Central Otago town of Ophir.



Sure, one could focus solely on the one-of-a-kind 1934 Bugatti Gangloff Roadster Type 57, the 1907 Sizaire et Naudin and the 1904 Humber Humberette. Certainly, they are interesting enough vehicles. But it's perhaps better to approach the machines as one would a magnifying glass, portals to the life of their intriguing former owner.

**UK - Singer dazzles talent show**

One of Sutton's movers and shakers performed in front of music royalty after making it to the audition stage of BBC show *The Voice*. The 18-year-old Charlotte Turnbull sang in front of stars Sir Tom Jones, will.i.am, Rita Ora, and Kaiser Chiefs frontman Ricky Wilson.

The former Stanley Park High student, who has four brothers and three sisters, sang the Oliver Heldens track *Gecko* (Overdrive). Ms Turnbull, who is on a music performance course at Nescot College in Epsom. However, she didn't make it to the next round, and will enter the competition again next time around.

She says 'It is not the end of the world' "Still it was a great opportunity and I met a lot of people. I would give it a go next year."

Bob Turnbull died in 2012 at the age of 82. He'd never married, had no long-term partners, nor left behind any children. Yet he's left a legacy; memories and tales of a mechanical engineer who had a mind as strong as the blocks of steel with which he played. "A genius," one friend says. A recent book on Canterbury company, Hamilton Jet, written by John Walsh, credits Turnbull with developing a key element in the firm's jet propulsion units- a twin-ducted reversing mechanism now used worldwide.

**USA - A most underrated player**

Brian Turnbull plays the unsung hero on defense for Chicopee. "He is the most underrated defenseman in the league," Chicopee assistant coach Gary Ziemba said.

"He does his job. You don't notice him and then realise 14 did a great job today." Turnbull isn't overly physical, but against a skilled group of Comp forwards, he stays in position, timing his poke-checks well. "He's so smart, he can read the play, and he's just solid on defense,"





When a TCA member came across this photo of our beloved Fatlips Castle, we decided we needed to know more. The photographer is Ancrum, Scottish Borders, born Andrew Macdonald. About this image, he says, "This image sort of started it all for me. I was having a few beers with friends and decided that in the morning I would get up at 5 a.m. and go to Fatlips for sunrise. I had only recently bought my new camera. I drove the short distance to the base. I then climbed to the top with the use of my head torch and a Border Collie for company. I tried in the darkness to find the shot I had in mind. I found these nice rocks for the foreground and waited patiently for the sun. In order to get detail and exposure throughout the image I used a tripod and a method called HDR. A wide lens was also essential. As the sun rose I took images at different exposures and later overlapped them on my computer to create this image. I posted it online and the organiser of Art@Ancrum saw it...the rest is history."

Andrew was born 17th October 1984. After school he went straight into his father's business, painting and decorating. Before he knew it ten years had passed, he had a girlfriend and a mortgage. They both decided that there was more to this world and began exploring possibilities. After saving and taking a one-year trip around the world, they returned to the Borders. Andrew never expected his interest in photography to turn into his own website and photo displays. Today he has a collection of 12 images on display in the Cross Keys Inn in Ancrum. He also maintains his own website where more of his beautiful work can be seen and purchased at <http://www.andrewmacdonaldphoto.co.uk/>.

Andrew and his girlfriend, Carrie, have decided they want more excitement in their lives, so they have packed up and are in South Africa studying to be Safari/Nature Guides, which they both think is awesome. His photography has switched a little more to wildlife than early morning landscapes. We are grateful that while having a few beers one evening, Andrew decided to make the trek up to Fatlips and capture this moment for us all to enjoy!

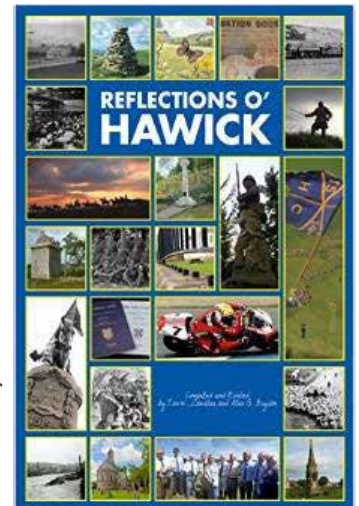
## REFLECTIONS O' HAWICK

There is a new book on Hawick compiled and edited by Ian W Landles and Alan G Brydon, in which local folk contribute chapters across a wide spectrum of subject areas. Their collective "reflections o' Hawick" give a flavour of Hawick's history, heritage, surroundings and community. This is Hawick, as interpreted by its people, the town's greatest asset.

Alan Brydon was born in Hawick on 10th February 1961. He attended Hawick High School between 1972 and 1976, where he enjoyed music, reading and poetry, and technical drawing. Today, Alan is a prolific singer/songwriter. His "Calling Down the Line" and "On the Road to Passchendaele" are now sung in many places at Remembrance time and his "The Bonnie Banner Blue" is now one of the most popular Common Riding songs. He is a great Common Riding enthusiast. He was Chief Guest in 2010 and President of the Ancient Order of Mosstroopers in 2012. He wrote *The Keeper of Teviotdale*, a novel set in Hawick, and co-wrote the musical *A Reiver's Moon* with Ian Landles. He is owner of the Garnett Group which makes automated control systems for carding machinery and fibre feeding equipment.

If you've followed Scocha or just about anything in the Borders, you've heard of Alan Brydon. TCA members were first introduced to him when he spoke about Borders history and performed the song he wrote, *I Turned the Bull*, with Scotia, at the Turnbull Clan AGM, 2007, in Hawick, Scotland. Alan tells us, "Although I was not aware when Ian and I spoke at your dinner, I have Turnbells on both side of my family tree. My great grandmother on my mother's side of the family was Betsy Bruce Turnbull. She Married William Hogg. (Betsy's first husband T Beattie was killed in WW1 - their descendants still in the town. William was on a ship that was torpedoed in WW1 and he survived - to later marry Betsy. Both men are in listed in *Hawick and the Great War*. On this line - her father (my 2nd great grandfather) was Robert Swanson Turnbull and his father was David Turnbull. On my father's side my 3rd great Grandmother was Agnes Turnbull. If you see any links in your various clan trees I'd be most interested. To bring it to present day, my daughter, Sarah, recently married Ian Turnbull. So it comes around again!"

Alan will be in New York City as Master of Ceremonies and honored speaker for the New York Tattoo, May 22 and 23. *Reflections O' Hawick* is currently available from various vendors in Hawick and through [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk).



# Turnbulls Cèilidhs

Right: A belated **Happy Birthday to Earnest Fredrick Turnbull** who celebrated his 97th birthday 27 January this year. Earnest has lived in the city of Adelaide, Australia all his life. He was married to wife, Phyllis, for 71 years until she passed away in September last year. Prior to the war he worked with his father, Albert, and brother, Richard, delivering sand (a business they owned). He served his time in WW2 in Papua New Guinea and the battle in the Pacific on Morotai Island. When he returned he convinced his father to start up a laundry business, which was very successful until his retirement in the early 80's.

**Congratulations to William Turnbull** on his recent retirement. Bill retired from the Naval Air Weapons Center, China Lake. It's the premier U. S. Navy research and development center for avionics software, weapons development and integration on air platforms, energetics, air-to-air technology and other programs.



Bill and his wife, Paulette, have sold their home in the US and are moving to a little town in an agricultural area about 30km to the southwest of Bonn, Bushhoven, Germany. Bill says, "We're looking forward to renovating the home we'll be sharing with our daughter's family. The town has two restaurants easy to bicycle to and of course the travel opportunities will be almost unlimited (SCOTLAND!, I ain't missing the next gathering there!)."

## La Breith Sona!



Wishing a muckle celebration to all our March/April Birthday members!

Turnbull Clan Association  
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Bottom row center: Earnest Fredrick Turnbull on his 97th birthday with son, Dean (left) and grandson Darren (right). Behind are great-grandchildren and their friends.



Above: Ross with son Alexander and wife, Sharon. His mother, co-founder of Turnbull Clan Association, Myra Turnbull, can be seen to the left.



Happy 30th Birthday to Ross Turnbull Irvine, of Turnbulls Deli and Turnbull Whisky fame!



A big welcome to one of our newest members, Josiah Turnbull, born March 3, 2015. Congratulations to the proud parents Michelle and B.J. Turnbull, Windsor, Ontario, Canada!