



WIN A TRIP TO SCOTLAND
PAGE 16

Ulster-Scots Agency (Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch) official publication

SATURDAY JANUARY 17 2015

Opening of hub and visitor centre heralded as 'milestone moment'



Stormont Culture Minister Caral Ní Chuilín and Ulster-Scots Agency chief executive Ian Crozier with guests at the opening of the new Ulster-Scots Hub in the old Corn Exchange building in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter

SEE PAGE 3



SARAH LEECH BLUE PLAQUE UNVEILED

PAGE 4



BOYS MODEL SCHOOL COMMEMORATES THE GREAT WAR

PAGE 7



AWARD-WINNING FOLK SINGER EMILY SMITH TO PERFORM AT BURNS NIGHT IN BELFAST

PAGE 8

Fair faa ye



Welcome to the January 2015 edition of the Ulster-Scot - and may I start by wishing you a Happy New Year with a traditional Ulster-Scots wish – lang may yer lum reek wi ither fowks coal! For those who have not heard this greeting before, it means may you live long and happily!

The Ulster Scots Agency will be hosting the annual Burns Night concert with the Ulster Orchestra and the awarding-winner Emily Smith (pictured) on January 24 at the Waterfront Hall.

It's an exciting time of the year with Burns Night just around the corner – find out more on **Pages 8&9!**

The Agency is also celebrating the opening of the new Discover Ulster-Scots centre at the Corn Exchange Building, Belfast. The centre features a wonderful range of exhibitions and literature for all to enjoy and we will look forward to seeing you there over the coming months - find out more on **Page 3.**

Also in this edition we have a wonderful recipe for Decadent Whiskey Chocolate Truffles – hard to resist at any Burns Night supper! As always, we welcome your feedback and hope that everyone finds something of interest in this edition.

- Ian Crozier is Chief Executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency



The Ulster-Scot

The official newspaper for the Ulster-Scots Agency /
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch

Main office:

The Ulster-Scots Agency,
The Corn Exchange
31 Gordon Street
Belfast BT1 2LG
Telephone: (028) 9023 1113
Fax: (028) 9023 1898
Email: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

International callers dialling the Ulster-Scots Agency:

Europe - 00 44 28 9023 1113
Australia - 00 11 44 28 9023 1113
USA - 011 44 28 9023 1113

Regional office in Raphoe:

The Ulster-Scots Agency
William Street, Raphoe
Co Donegal
Telephone: +353 7 4917 3876
Fax: +353 7 4917 3985
Email: freena@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

Editor: Gary McDonald

Associate Editor: Catriona Holmes

Production: The Irish News

Printing: Interpress NI Limited

The Ulster-Scot next edition: Saturday March 14
Deadline for copy: Wednesday February 25
Contributors should note that publication of any submitted article is at the Editor's discretion


Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch

ULSTER-SCOTS HOST AWARDS EVENT FOR ULSTER'S TOP FLUTE BANDS

A number of Ulster's top flute bands have successfully received their certificates for successfully completing the Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCNNI) B flat flute course at level two.

The Ulster-Scots Community Network hosted a special awards event at the Discover Ulster-

Scots Centre to make the presentations.

Musicians from Macosquin First Flute, Dervock Young Defenders, Pride of the Park Army, Ballymena Corps of Drums and Skeogh Flute Band had enrolled on the pilot 20-week course using resources and material created by the Ulster-Scots Community Network and accredited by OCNNI.

Attendees on the evening were treated to a talk on the history of Ulster's flute bands and the instruments they play, delivered by Pastor Alvin Mullan from Enniskillen, who also displayed many old examples of flutes and drums from years gone by. The evening concluded with a musical performance by Skeogh from Dromore in Co Down, one of the bands who had participated on the course.



CLICK ON THIS...



For details of what's on check out our events calendar -
www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events

For Ulster-Scots news - www.ulsterscotsagency.com/news

To sign up for the Ulster-Scots E-Newsletter - visit www.ulsterscotsagency.com/newsletter/subscribe/ register your details and receive updates on the areas that you are most interested.

Join us on Facebook - visit www.facebook.com/UlsterScotsAgency now and like our page to keep up to date on what's happening, upload your photos from Ulster-Scots events and share your comments.

WORD OF THE ISSUE

Carnaptious

Meaning: Permanently angry/looking for a fight

New Ulster-Scots hub and visitor centre opens in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter

A new Ulster-Scots Hub has been officially opened in the old Corn Exchange building in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter - in what has been described as a "milestone moment" for the Ulster-Scots community.

The Discover Ulster-Scots centre provides office space for the Ulster-Scots Agency, Ulster-Scots Community Network, the library of the Ulster-Scots Language Society and the Ministerial Advisory Group for the Ulster-Scots Academy (MAGUS). It also comprises a visitor centre on the ground floor, offering information about the history, culture, language and identity of the Ulster-Scots community.

"These facilities offer a new opportunity to tell our story to a diverse audience and are an important milestone for the Ulster-Scots community," according to Iain Carlisle of the Ulster-Scots Community Network. "Our location in Belfast's cultural quarter is ideal. People can view the interpretive panels and displays, browse our shop, use the meeting space or just drop in for a coffee. We look forward to welcoming friends, old and new," he added.

The centre at 1-9 Victoria Street is set in the historic Corn Exchange Building, which can boast its own Scottish links, having been used in 1859 as the venue for a celebration to mark the centenary of the birth of Robert Burns (it was attended by his grand-daughter Eliza, who lived in Belfast at the time).

The visitor centre will feature new exhibitions highlighting the long standing cultural and linguistic links between Scotland and Ulster, a performance and lecture area, and public research spaces providing tourists, community groups and schools with the opportunity to learn more about the rich cultural heritage of Ulster-Scots.

Stormont Culture Minister Caral Ní Chuilín, whose department contributed £340,000 towards the project, said: "The Discover Ulster-Scots Centre provides an imaginative and informative presentation of the historic link between Scotland and Ulster.

"It's a one-stop shop for all those interested in these important connections at home and abroad, be it culture, heritage, tourism, language or genealogy.

"The exhibition also highlights the many ways in which Ulster-Scots culture, history, heritage and language has shaped Ireland and the province of Ulster in particular. Ulster is a multicultural province where Irish, English and Scottish strands have been intertwined throughout history."

She added: "The history, culture and traditions celebrated in this building are something we can all be proud of.

"This is not a reflection of one community,



but is part of our shared heritage and belongs to us all. I hope it will open up Ulster-Scots to everyone - people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, here and beyond these shores."

Iain Crozier, chief executive of the Ulster Scots Agency, said: "This new hub and visitor centre will provide an invaluable resource to both the local community here in Northern Ireland and domestic and international tourists.

"Not only does it enhance the provision of cultural heritage in the Cathedral Quarter, but we also hope it will provide an education in Ulster-Scots for those tourists, schools and community groups who come to visit and enjoy the centre."

John Erskine of the Ulster Scots Academy Group added: "We're delighted to be part of the new Ulster-Scots Hub and to support the Discover Ulster-Scots Centre.

"The bodies in the hub have very complementary roles. Our focus is on undertaking, developing and disseminating research, knowledge and understanding of Ulster-Scots history, heritage, culture and language traditions, through evidence-based research and dissemination activity - to tell the Ulster-Scots story well.

"We look forward to working closely with our partners through this hub and Discover Ulster-Scots Centre to further enrich the Ulster-Scots story."

The Discover Ulster-Scots visitor centre is open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday and entry to the centre is free.

For more information contact Matthew Warwick via email Matthew@ulster-scots.com or phone 028 9043 6710.

Double festive celebrations in Raphoe

The town of Raphoe had a double Ulster-Scots celebration on Saturday December 13. The Ulster-Scots Agency, in partnership with the Ulster History Circle, unveiled a blue plaque to the 19th century poetess Sarah Leech, and in partnership with the Volt House a local community organisation in Raphoe, also jointly hosted the town's annual Christmas market.

The market - situated in a large marquee in the Diamond - was packed with shoppers from noon to 5pm. Meanwhile the town's Christmas tree lights were switched on by local broadcaster Mary Harte.

There was also a visit by the Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht local TD Joe McHugh, while that other festive VIP visitor Santa Claus also put in a well-received appearance.

This is the second year the Agency has been involved with Raphoe's Christmas market, and it attracted around 700 people to the town.



Local group Sontas Lite provided a wide range of traditional Ulster-Scots music, members of the Sollus School of Highland Dancers performed at the event with poetry recital of some of Sarah Leech's poems by Ullans Speakers Association development officer Anne Morrison Smyth. Members and tutors from the Ulster-Scots Agency Juvenile Pipe Band were also present, offering the opportunity to show off some drumming skills.

One of the highlights was from a regular visitor to the regional office in Raphoe, Mrs Charlotte Watson, who has lived in Raphoe for the majority of her 85 years. She recited two Wilson Burgess poems in Ulster-Scots. Derek Reaney, the Agency's development officer based in Raphoe, said: "We're delighted to be involved in the annual Christmas market, which provides an ideal platform for the Agency to interact with the local community. We had a lot of interest in our stall and in the work of the Agency in the community."

Sarah Leech blue plaque unveiled...

A new blue plaque to perpetuate the memory of 19th century poetess Sarah Leech was unveiled at the Ulster Scots Agency's Raphoe office last month by Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The event was co-hosted by Chris Spurr, chairman of the Ulster History Circle and Derek Reaney, development officer of the Ulster Scots Agency, who gave a talk on Sarah Leech and her contribution to the Weaver Poet's tradition.

Sarah was born in 1809 in Ballylennan, in east Donegal. She was one of six children in the family of Thomas Leech, a linen weaver, and his wife.

Her father died when she was three, and the family then had to support themselves. She was at school for only six months, but Sarah developed a love of books, and a strong religious faith.

From the age of 12, she worked at the spinning wheel, a tedious task, but while she worked, she read and also composed her poetry.

*Wi' heck weel-teeth'd,
and spit renew'd
I sat me down to spin contented*

Her work exhibits an enthusiasm for the people and places she knew, and it is noteworthy that the



rhythm of her verses matches that of her spinning wheel.

In 1822 the young poet moved with her mother and family to Lettergull, where she lived until her death in 1830.

Much of her poetry uses the Ulster Scots tongue of her hearth and home, and in 1828 a collection of her work was published as Poems on Various Subjects, in order to offer her some small income.

When she was 17, Sarah had been in danger of losing her sight, and rheumatism afflicted her until she died, aged 21.

Sarah Leech is acknowledged as occupying a unique place in literary history, as the prominent female poet within the weaver poet tradition. The Sarah Leech plaque was the fifth unveiled during 2014 in a partnership between the Ulster Scots Agency and the Ulster History Circle, and is the third in the Republic of Ireland throughout the project.



On air with FUSEfm Mourne

FUSEfm was officially launched on Friday November 28 at Reivers House in Kilkeel by the Ulster-Scots Agency chief executive Ian Crozier.

The first broadcast then took place at 7am on Monday December 8, coming live from FUSEfm Mourne on 106.2fm from Reivers House.

Schomberg project officer and presenter Roberta Heaney was the first voice heard on Fusefm Mourne, when she welcomed all listeners to this new venture and read a short statement of commitment on behalf of the Schomberg Society in Kilkeel. The broadcast continued in the capable hands of three pupils from Kilkeel High School - David, Justin and Jared - who together shared the responsibility of overseeing the first ever FUSEfm Mourne breakfast show.

The trio served up an interesting, informative and at times humorous programme which, judging from the number of text requests received, proved to be going down well with the Ulster-Scots Mourne public.

At 9am, it was then time to kick off the FUSEfm morning show presented by Roberta Heaney. The repertoire included a variety of music from pop, bluegrass, country 'n' western and local Ulster-Scots acts.

The programme featured the first on air interview with the guest being Maynard Hanna from the Ulster-Scots Agency and also the first ever quiz question asked, which was 'What does the Ulster-Scots



word 'thran' mean?' Fusefm Mourne 106.2fm continued to entertain through the next 14 days with interviews with local prominent businessmen, school teachers, community activists, sports folk, charity workers, local clergy, bandsmen, local library manager Gary McCullough and Kilkeel vet Liam Quinn among others who all enjoyed air

time from the studio Schomberg FUSEfm Mourne 106.2fm extend a huge thanks to Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) and the Ulster Scots Agency for all of their help and financial assistance as well as to Paul Moorehead and David Johnston for all of their dedicated hard work. Thanks too to all of the prize sponsors and

advertisers, Kilkeel High School students and all the marvellous volunteers as well as to all folk who made themselves available for interview, to Mrs Doris Heaney for catering, and everyone who helped to create a magical fortnight. Their generosity and support was much appreciated by all connected with FUSEfm Mourne.

A Stone, a Leaf an Unfound Door

By Frank Ferguson
(Ulster-Scots Poetry Project)

The Scots Vernacular Tradition has a great fondness for old simple things. Auld trees, auld coats, auld shoes all hold the poet's attention and spark a rhyme or twa. Perhaps one of the most powerful of these poems in the Ulster-Scots tradition is David Herbison's *The Auld Wife's Lament for Her Teapot*, itself based on the conceit of an old woman surveying her life through the symbol of her worn out teapot.

ALAS! Alas! what shall I do,
My auld black pot is broke in two,
In which I did sae often brew
The wee drap tea,
And thought it would have cheered me
through
Life's weary way.

A better pot, sure, ne'er was made,

It wadna vent the smallest blade;
Still when the tablecloth was laid
And it appear'd
A smile out o'er my visage played,
And a' things cheered.

On the face of it, this is one of our great sentimental poems of the nineteenth century, but if we examine it more closely it becomes clear that it is a lament for a lost family and community which are now bereft of hope during a time of economic hardship:

And well may Erin weep and wail
The day the wheels began to fail,
Our tradesmen now can scarce get kail
Betimes to eat,
In shipfuls they are doomed to sail
In quest of meat.

For that machine that spins the yarn,
Left us unfit our bread to earn,
O Erin! Will you ne'er turn stern
Against your foe,

When every auld wife can discern,
Your overthrow!

Once again an Ulster-Scots poem beguiles us with its outward simplicity and sentimentality, only to reveal a keener edge once its narrative unfolds. Furthermore, it could be argued that even more profound things are being discussed here. For not only is this poem part of a Scottish tradition, but also of a platonic and a romantic one: where the poet seeks to find the way back into a lost world of ideas and inspiration.

For William Wordsworth, a man not averse to reading Ulster Scots poetry, nature provided those moments of discovery in which revelation might occur. In his great autobiographical poem *The Prelude* simple objects such as 'a tree, a stone, a withered leaf' attest to their power of awakening powerful ideas and emotions. Similar objects found their way profoundly into the Ulster Scots' tradition and indeed crossed the Atlantic to find utterance in the work

of Thomas Wolfe. Wolfe, a native of North Carolina, reworked this phrase into his seminal novel *Look Homeward, Angel*, as the meditative search for his identity as 'a stone, a leaf, an unfound door.' As someone who was of Scotch-Irish extraction, it is tempting to speculate whether the fascination for these hamely words owed something to his ancestral culture from Ulster, as much as it did to his reading of the literary greats. We will probably never know for certain. What we do know is the prevalence of such wee things to trigger creativity. In James Fenton's magical poem *A' it taks* we're treated to a brief inventory of occurrences that speak deeply about our human attachment to objects and memory: a whap's cry, a stane-daked field, a hannled peat. These are the things that dreams are made on and these yearnings for home words connect us to the ancients and bridge the continents in our search to find the way back home.

Dissenting Voices: a review

Nelson McCausland MLA, chairman of the Stormont Assembly's culture, arts and leisure committee, reviews *'Dissenting Voices: Rediscovering the Irish Progressive Presbyterian Tradition'*

'Dissenting Voices: Rediscovering the Irish Progressive Presbyterian Tradition' is the title of a book by Roger Courtney. The cover also describes it as 'profiles of 300 progressive Presbyterians over four centuries'.

The book is dated 2013, but I first noticed it in the bookshops a few months ago and I was given a copy as a Christmas present. I am glad I received it and glad I read it, but it is not a book that I would wholeheartedly recommend. Presbyterianism has been an important influence in the history of the Ulster-Scots and this book contains some interesting information. It also raises some interesting questions, albeit unintentionally, but it suffers from a number of serious flaws. First of all, the author describes the characters as 'progressive Presbyterians' and there is no doubt about the Presbyterian credentials and the Presbyterian faith of many of the people he has included. However, for many others it would have been helpful to know more about the nature and extent of their Presbyterianism. Was it real, nominal or superficial? Secondly, he speaks of 'the Irish progressive Presbyterian tradition', 'a radical tradition within Presbyterianism' and 'a very different Presbyterian tradition'. But there is no single 'tradition' in the book. Are we really to believe that Liberal Unionists such as Thomas Sinclair and

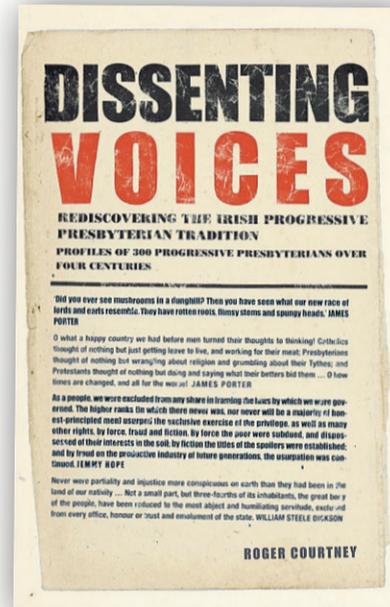
Isabella Tod were in the same 'tradition' as an IRA gunman such as George Gilmore? There are actually a number of different and indeed dissident traditions in the book. Thirdly the book shows a fascination with the unusual, something that has been evident in a number of books that have been published in recent years about aspects of Ulster history and culture.

However a fascination, maybe even a fixation, with the unusual does not make for a balanced view of history. The author has a particular fascination with the United Irishmen and this is clearly evident on the front cover which features quotations from James Porter, Jemmy Hope and William Steel Dickson.

However, he has failed to set them within the context of the 'three traditions' that have shaped modern Ulster and fails to acknowledge that within a few years many of the United Irishmen had come to see the benefits of the Act of Union.

In the case of William Drennan, the real founder of the United Irishmen, the author states that Drennan 'opposed the Act of Union' but omits to say that in the end Drennan became reconciled to it! In December 1811, in his Belfast Monthly Magazine, Drennan advised: 'Be Britons with all your souls – and forget your father called himself an Irishman'. The truth is that within a few years, after 1798, many of the United Irishmen had become unionists. This fascination with the unusual has also led the author to include several 20th century Irish republicans whose inclusion was distinctly unwise.

George Gilmore (1898-1985) was a leader of



'Dissenting Voices: Rediscovering the Irish Progressive Presbyterian Tradition', by Roger Courtney

Since McIlroy lived through the Home Rule crises, until his untimely death on the Lusitania in 1915, the reference to liberal politics could be taken to mean that he supported the Liberal Party policy of home rule for Ireland. In fact McIlroy opposed Home Rule and in 1903 he described himself as an 'Imperial Liberal'. In the case of Thomas Sinclair, the author omits to say that in 1912 he was the editor, if not the author, of the Ulster Covenant, which was inspired by the old Scottish covenants. He also omits any reference to Sinclair's many declarations of his Ulster-Scots identity.

The book would certainly have benefited from the inclusion of dates of death for each of the individuals, as opposed to simply a year, at least where the dates are known, as this would have enabled interested readers to look up obituaries in the newspapers and relevant journals. Finally I notice that the book, as was the case with Presbyterians and the Irish Language, was supported financially by the Community Relations Council. In view of their commitment to the principles of 'equity, diversity and interdependence' I have no doubt that they will also welcome applications for support for books on other Presbyterian or Ulster-Scots traditions.

the IRA in South Dublin from 1915 to 1926 and took the Republican anti-treaty side in the bloody years of the Civil War. During the 1920s he visited Russia to seek the support of the Soviet Union for another IRA campaign. He remained in the IRA until 1934 and then joined the Republican Congress. Unfortunately we are told nothing about the nature of his Presbyterianism. Overall the book would have benefited from more careful research and more thorough analysis. For example, we are told that the Ulster-Scots author Archibald McIlroy (1859-1915) was elected to Down District Council and was 'a strong supporter of liberal politics'.

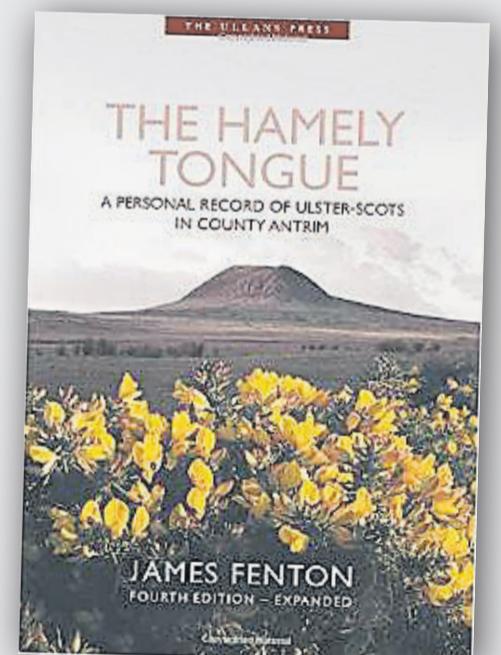
Popular Ulster-Scots poet James Fenton publishes fourth edition of *The Hamely Tongue*

The new fourth edition of *The Hamely Tongue* by James Fenton, who is the most gifted poet currently working in Ulster-Scots, is now available from Amazon as both a paperback and in Kindle format.

As the compiler of *The Hamely Tongue*, Fenton is also of a generation of academics that pioneered phonological

and lexical studies of Ulster-Scots, such as the late Brendan Adams, Professor John Braidwood and Professor Bob Gregg (the Founding President of the Ulster-Scots Language Society). *The Hamely Tongue* aspires to be and is an authentic, comprehensive record of a living language: its vocabulary, idiom, characteristic turns of phrase and modes of expression, its aphorisms and its humour.

The publication has been deservedly acclaimed as the authoritative record of contemporary Ulster-Scots in its heartland of north Antrim where James Fenton grew up and faithfully recorded his dictionary items over a 30-year period. This new fourth edition, published almost 20 years after the first, includes further supplementary material and a new foreword by Dr Philip Robinson.



Portora and the Great War



BY **ROBERT NORTHRIDGE**

Portora Royal School in Enniskillen is one of the five Royal Schools founded by James VI & I at the time of the Plantation of Ulster. Despite pretensions to being 'the Eton of Ireland', in 1914 Portora was a small boarding and day school with a headmaster, five staff and 70 pupils.

Yet 371 young men who had attended the school served in the Great War. They served in every rank in the army from private to brigadier-general. Two Old Portorans served as brigadier-generals during the conflict. Although they overwhelmingly served in the army, some served in the Royal Navy and the Royal Flying Corps (and subsequently the Royal Air Force). They saw service in an astonishingly wide range of units: 47 in the Royal Army

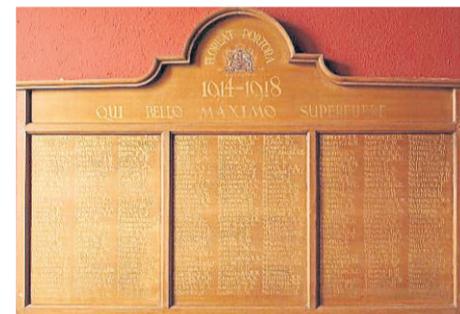
Medical Corps, 32 in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 22 in the Royal Army Service Corps, 18 in the Royal Irish Rifles, 16 in the Royal Irish Fusiliers, 15 in the Royal Engineers, 13 in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 13 in the RFC/RAF, 12 in the Canadian Infantry and 10 in the Royal Navy. Others served in great variety of English regiments and Imperial units. One Old Portoran served in the Anzac Imperial Camel Corps.

Forty-seven Portorans received gallantry awards including one VC, eleven DSOs, 36 MCs and two Croix de Guerre. Lieutenant Frederick Maurice Watson Harvey of Lord Strathcona's Horse, the son of a Church of Ireland clergyman in County Meath, won the VC for his conduct on March 27 1917 in an attack on the village of Guycourt, France. At school he had been an accomplished rugby player and was a member of the Portora XV which won the Ulster School's Cup in 1905.

A great many of those Old Portorans who served in the Great War had achieved distinction as rugby players, rowers and cricketers. None more so than the legendary Captain Richard Averell Lloyd (captain of the Portora XV of 1908-9 which defeated Coleraine 42-0 in the final of the Schools' Cup) and holder of 20 full international caps for Ireland.

Of the 371, some 76 died as a result of the great global conflagration. The first to die was Lieutenant Inglis Francis Rowley Miller (21) of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers who was killed on September 13 1914. The last Portoran to die in the war was 2nd Lieutenant John Darling MC (with Bar) of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, killed aged 20 on October 26 1918.

On September 25 1915, brothers Kenneth and Melbourne Ross from Cultra, both lieutenants in the Royal Irish Rifles, died at Ypres on the same day. A third brother



– Lieutenant Harrison Ross – served in the same regiment but survived the war. Robert Northridge, a former deputy headmaster of Portora and currently the school archivist, has produced a truly impressive volume which does honour to both those Old Portorans who served in the Great War and those who made 'the supreme sacrifice'.

• The book (which costs £10 or €13) may be obtained from Robert on OPU. information@gmail.com or from the school office.

Boys Model commemorates World War One

To commemorate the 100th year anniversary of World War One, students at the Belfast Boys' Model School have been on a genealogical journey to find out more about their ancestors who were in active service during the war.

A celebration event was held in the school, against a backdrop of 'a sea of poppies' made by the pupils. Each pupil carried a postcard image of the World War One soldier they have researched encouraging them to think about that serviceman during the event.

The Remembrance Day event was the culmination of a week-long programme of classes with a World War One theme.

The boys took part in a range of activities including making poppies in art, learning to play Great War songs in music, baking authentic steamed puddings in home economics and studying war poetry in English.



ROBERT BURNS 1759-1796

ULSTER ORCHESTRA TO PAY HOMAGE TO BURNS IN MUSICAL SPECTACULAR

Emily Smith, a multi-award winning folk singer and leading figure of the Scottish folk scene, will be among the headline acts performing with the Ulster Orchestra at its fourth annual Burns Night Celebration at the Belfast Waterfront Hall on Saturday January 24.

The skirl of the pipes, whirl of jigs and reels and romance of Robbie Burns' traditional songs will make this the ultimate Burns Night celebration, and a full house is expected. The top quality line-up also includes local singing star Eilidh Patterson, world champion drummers Marcus and Matthew Wenlock, the Ulster-Scots Agency's 37-strong Juvenile Pipe Band, folk group Bernagh and the Market Hill Dancers. Dan Gordon is compere for the evening.

Emily Smith (33) from Dumfries and Galloway has risen to become one of Scotland's leading folk singers in the course of the last decade, and last month she was named Scottish Singer of the Year at the 2014 Scots Trad Music Awards.

Holder of a degree in Scottish music from The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, she will take to the stage with her husband, guitarist Jamie McClennan, to perform Burns favourites such as *The Silver Tassie*, as well as solo selections to include *My Love is Like a Red Red Rose*.

Emily said: "Burns Night is such a wonderful occasion, and I'm delighted that I will be marking it in Belfast with the Ulster Orchestra. "The connection between Northern Ireland and Scotland is a strong one, so it's a wonderful opportunity for us all to celebrate it together."

The Ulster Orchestra, conducted by John Logan, will lead all the performers in a programme of music that mixes traditional favourites with more up to date work such as Dougie MacLean's *The Gael*, taken from the soundtrack of the film *Last of the Mohicans* and Logan's own composition, *Tiree*. And of course, the work of the famous bard himself will feature heavily throughout the programme.

Tickets are priced from £13.50 to £29 and are still available from the Ulster Hall and Belfast Waterfront Hall (028 9033 4455) or online at www.ulsterorchestra.com.



Award-winning Emily Smith will take to the stage at the fourth annual Burns Night Celebrations



Just some of the highlights from last year's concert

LINENHALL LIBRARY TO RESTORE GIBSON COLLECTION THROUGH AGENCY GRANT FUNDING



Belfast's Linenhall Library is celebrating the Scottish poet and lyricist Robert Burns with an exhibition of rare and valuable materials from its Andrew Gibson collection, the largest collection of Burns materials held outside of Scotland.

And part of the Gibson collection is currently being restored through £10,000 of grant funding from the Ulster Scots Agency. The project aims to conserve, preserve and make widely available the 'Gibson Collection of Burns and Burnsiana', which was purchased by public subscription and placed in the Linen Hall Library in 1901. The collection comprises every edition of the poems of Burns from the second Edinburgh edition of 1787 to the date of donation.

As part of the restoration project some 200 rare volumes of the poems of Robert Burns and the 'Songs of Scotland' will be repaired and re-bound to ensure their utility to a modern audience. Many of these books were published in Belfast and all were collected in Belfast.

Included will be the 1787 Belfast edition of 'Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect' and



the facsimile reprint of the Kilmarnock edition as well as early examples of Burns' work published in the *Belfast News Letter*. The Gibson Collection of Burns and Burnsiana has influenced local poets and literature, as demonstrated by the library's holding of the works of the weaver poets in Northern Ireland. The restoration of the collection will allow

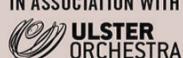
the Linen Hall Library to make it more accessible to the public and will promote the knowledge and understanding of Ulster-Scots history, heritage and culture by the promotion of Burns writing. The project also seeks to site the bronze statue of Robert Burns, the property of the National Museums of Northern Ireland, in the Linen Hall Library.

BURNS NIGHT SUPPERS

- A class of the Belfast Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society (RSCDS) will be holding their annual Burns Night celebrations of dance, songs and poetry on Saturday January 24 in Knockbreda Church Hall at 7.30pm. After the address to the haggis the guests will be served up neeps, haggis and tatties. Tickets are available at £7 from Lucy Mulholland on 028 90814495.
- Meanwhile the Naggy Burn Ulster Scots Society is holding its annual Burns Supper in the No 1 Club at Narrow Gauge Road in Larne on January 24 from 7.30pm to 1am. Music is by Star Express and Willie McPherson will address the haggis, which will be piped in by Graeme Harris. Speakers on the night include Jimmy Fleck, John Baird and Paula Kinnear. This is a ticket-only event. The cost is £12.50 and tickets can be ordered by phoning either 07968164633 or 07592324542. The menus include vegetable broth, haggis, sausage, neeps & tatties and shortbread.

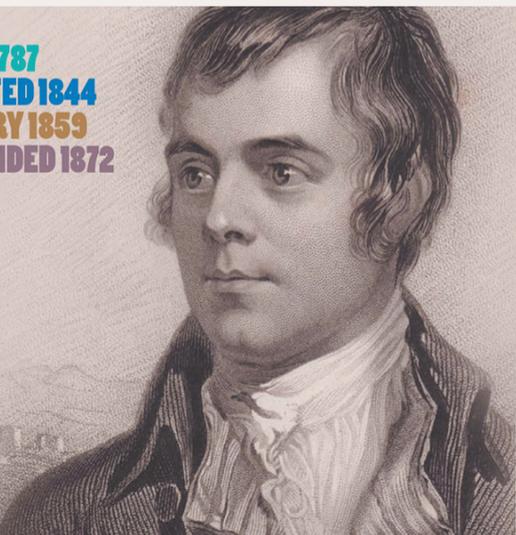
BURNS IN BELFAST PRINTED 1787
CELEBRATED 1844
CENTENARY 1859
CLUB FOUNDED 1872


Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
ulsterscotsagency.com/Burns

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
 **ULSTER ORCHESTRA**

 **Dumfries & Galloway**

 **ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM**



BURNS NIGHT CELEBRATION

ULSTER ORCHESTRA & EMILY SMITH

**AT 7.45 ON SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2015
IN THE WATERFRONT HALL, BELFAST**

BANGOR ABBEY CAROL SERVICE**FULL HOUSE AT ANNUAL ULSTER-SCOTS CAROL SERVICE**

The Ulster Scots Agency's annual Christmas candlelight carol service at Bangor Abbey attracted a near full-house congregation, with people travelling from as far away as Cairncastle, Carrickfergus and Saintfield as well as from the more local areas of Ards and North Down.

The service featured readings from the children of Kirkistown primary school and Gary Blair of the Ulster Scots Agency as well as performances from the choir of Kirkistown PS, the Ulster Scots Agency Juvenile Pipe Band and music from Ulster-Scots band KasK.

Children from the choir at Ulster Scots flagship school Kirkistown led the congregation in a series of carols including *When a Child is Born*, *Away in A Manger* and the *Candle Song*.

As guests arrived hot mulled punch and mince pies were served to help everyone to get into the festive spirit for the service.

The Agency extends its thanks to the children and teachers of Kirkistown PS and the staff at Bangor Abbey for their help in the carol service.

(Pictures courtesy of the *County Down Spectator*)

**St Andrew's Day celebrations at Carrickfergus Castle**

November's St Andrew's Day Celebrations in the historic surroundings of Carrickfergus Castle proved a huge success, with around 700 visitors taking part in a day of festivities, food and family fun.

There were re-enactments and weaponry displays from historical re-enactment group Kragfergus, providing a fantastic opportunity for everyone to experience life at Carrickfergus Castle in the 1600s.

There was a falconry display on the Castle Green, blacksmith, armour and fight and re-enactment, sword, pike and musketry demonstrations and general weapons display in the Inner Ward, archery in the Middle Ward, crown making workshops and face-painting in the Banquet Hall, storytelling in the AV room and Scottish country dancing demonstrations in the Solar Room.

Another popular area on the day was the vault of the castle, where visitors enjoyed a feast of hog roast, Scotch broth and freshly made soda bread whilst enjoying performances by bluegrass band Broken String.

The event was hosted by the Ulster-Scots Agency in partnership with Carrickfergus Borough Council and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, who would like to thank those who came along to celebrate and enjoy the festivities.

**CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE – VISITOR INFORMATION**

MARINE HIGHWAY, CARRICKFERGUS, BT38 7BG

Carrickfergus Castle houses historical and other displays as well as cannons from the 17th Century to 19th Century.

The castle is open to the public and costs £5 for adult, £3 for children/OAPs, free for under 4s; family rate £13 (two adults & two children).

Group rates are also available (10+, must be pre-booked, £3 per person). Guided tours are also available - visitors are advised to book tours in advance.

Opening times: 10am to 6pm daily (April 1 to September 30); 10am to 4pm daily (October 1 to March 31). Last admission 30 minutes before closing time.

For more information contact Carrickfergus Castle on (028) 9335 1273.



Young fiddlers rewarded for exam success

The Mid-Armagh Community Network (MACN), the Ulster-Scots cultural community group based in Markethill, hosted an evening in the town's courthouse to present certificates to students who had passed their exams in Scottish traditional fiddle in conjunction with the London College of Music.

The certificates were handed over by Ulster Scots Agency chairman Tom Scott, who commended the students on their achievements and congratulated the group on their record of promoting Ulster Scots music and dance within the Markethill community.

The students orchestra played for the assembled invited guests and family with the tunes played a combination of seasonal Christmas standards and music which they had played as part of their exams.

Grades presented ranged from grade one right through to Diploma level and incorporated all ages.

So far this year MACN have 66 fiddlers currently enrolled and demand is growing each year from the community for this service.

A spokesman for MACN congratulated



the students and said they were a credit to themselves, their parents and community and the group was proud to be in a position to facilitate this local talent and encourage future generations in this style of music.

The programme this year was funded by the Ulster Scots Agency and MACN. He said this is a vital rural community resource which for a small amount of funding provides excellent value for money both for funders and the community, and even though there was continued measured growth each year, further funding cuts would have a negative impact and hit the community disproportionately. "I would encourage people to lobby their MLAs and councillors to ensure funding to this rural community is maintained," the MACN spokesman added.

'Ulster-Scot Dimensions of Political Thought in Ireland' conference

Queen's University Belfast and the Ministerial Advisory Group for Ulster Scots will be hosting a special 'Ulster-Scot Dimensions of Political Thought in Ireland' conference on Thursday January 22.

The one-day academic symposium will examine political ideas and competing political allegiances to emerge from within the Ulster-Scots tradition.

The conference will feature discussions ranging across the history of modern Ireland – from the early role of Presbyterians in the politics of Ireland, the 1798 Rebellion, the complexities of the nineteenth-century, through to partition and the politics of Northern Ireland.

The event will include contributions from leading scholars in the field - including Ian McBride, Andrew Holmes, Wesley Hutchinson, Laurence Kirkpatrick and Carol Baraniuk - and new research from early-career academics.

These contributors will examine the political thought of philosophers, poets, preachers, politicians and others from the Ulster-Scots tradition, as well as broader trends in the changing politics and culture of the Ulster-Scots.

The discussions will detail the pivotal role of these historical trends and figures in the development of

"The diverse range of topics to be discussed will include the philosophy of Frances Hutcheson, the weaver poet and 1798 rebel James Orr, the theologian Samuel Rutherford, the Young Irlander John Mitchel, and the politics of the Ulster Vanguard Party."

various, often competing, political movements and ideologies. The various speakers will also detail how Ulster-Scots were central not only to the evolution of Ulster unionism and loyalism, but also to Irish republicanism and nationalism, and the broader development of the enlightenment, liberalism, conservatism and various campaigns for political and social reform.

The diverse range of topics to be discussed will include the philosophy of Frances Hutcheson, the weaver poet and 1798 rebel James Orr, the theologian Samuel Rutherford, the Young Irlander John Mitchel, and the politics of the Ulster Vanguard Party.

The conference will focus particularly on the Ulster-Scots

dimension to the interaction between Irish, British and international political trends, especially the transatlantic relationship between Ulster and the United States. The relationship between politics and religion will also be a major subject for discussion.

The conference (which runs from 9.30am to 5pm at the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Queen's) will appeal to anyone interested in the history of modern Ireland and the complex, contested, roles of Ulster-Scots in shaping it. All are welcome to attend.

:: For more information email Dr James Greer at james.greer@qub.ac.uk

Agency raising the bar in tuition aid

The Ulster-Scots Agency will be investing almost £200,000 in its 2015 Music & Dance Tuition Programme, providing financial support to 24 dance projects and 80 music projects.

The funding will see more than 600 dance participants and 1,120 music participants take part in funded tuition programmes throughout this year.

Derek Reaney, manager of the Music and Dance tuition programme at the Agency, said: "This financial support can make a real difference to community and voluntary groups. including bands which are committed to supporting and advancing the Ulster-Scots culture through music and dance.

"This year's programme was very competitive with considerably more applications than funds available, but the Agency is delighted with the significant improvement in the quality of applications submitted.

"Rejections on issues of eligibility have been reduced from 25 per cent last year to just 12 per cent, a massive improvement on previous years. "Of course there will be a

This financial support can make a real difference to community and voluntary groups.

number groups who will be disappointed that they have failed to secure the funding, but we have a limited budget and have invested a similar amount of funding to this programme in 2015 as we did in 2014, which is a great achievement for the Agency given the current challenging economic pressures on public spending."

Derek recorded his thanks to the staff at the Ulster-Scots Community Network who made the presentation at the various public information workshops and also provide a drop in facility and advice to groups.

The Agency also recognises the support offered by the three Ulster-Scots project officers funded by the Agency's Community Impact Programme and located in Kilkeel, Newtown Stewart and North Belfast, who each provided funding clinics and advice to groups.

RECIPES

COOKING WITH JUDITH McLAUGHLIN



DECADENT BOOZY WHISKEY CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

The story:

These truffles are perfectly decadent for Burns Night Suppers and entertaining.

They are rather hard to resist if served from the refrigerator with just the perfect balance of sweetness with a hint of salt.

INGREDIENTS

- 8 fluid oz heavy cream
- 3 Tbsp Bushmills whiskey
- 12 oz 60 per cent bittersweet chocolate
- 8 oz room temperature unsalted butter
- Pinch of Fleur De Sel (or other fine sea salt)
- Unsweetened cocoa
- Confectioners' sugar



How to make it:

1. Place the cream in a sauce pan and bring to a low boil reducing to 50 per cent.
2. Stir in the chocolate until it has melted. Whisk in the rum and then the softened butter until smooth and glossy.
3. Transfer chocolate mixture to a shallow pan and refrigerate until firm.
4. Combine cocoa and confectioners' sugar in a shallow dish. Using a melon ball scoop form balls and roll with hands in the coco and confectioners' sugar.
5. Best stored and served from the refrigerator.

Sollus dancers put on a magical display

Forty four members of Sollus Highland Dancers have returned from a hugely successful trip to the International Gathering of Highland Dance in Disneyland Paris.

The group performed alongside and competed against dancers from all over the world including Canada, Australia and Scotland.

The event began with a prestigious and magical parade through Disneyland which was proudly led by the Sollus dancers.

The Sollus group ultimately returned with five trophy winners including Demi-Lee Street, Caitlin Cooke, Rebekah Loughlin and Leanne Lapsley.

Eight junior members of the group also competed in a Disney choreography competition where they came away with the top prize of best characterisation and costuming of the dance.

The competition had 67 entries, but the Sollus team came out on top with their interpretation of the 'Mickey Mouse Club House March'.

Dance teacher Georgina Kee was highly commended by the organisers for her contribution to choreography and highland dance in general.



ULSTER-SCOTS PLACE TO VISIT: **ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM**

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum



A truly unique encounter with 'Scotland's favourite son'

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum offers a truly unique encounter with Scotland's favourite son. The Ayrshire ploughman, who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the world's best known poets, Robert Burns has become an international icon. His national pride, fierce egalitarianism, and quick wit have become synonymous with the Scottish character itself. Yet who was the real Robert Burns?



By tracing his footsteps from birth to international superstardom, the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, from the Burns museum itself to Burns Cottage to Brig o' Doon to Burns Monument, offers you the best opportunity to discover the complex and passionate man behind the icon.

Set among 10 acres of the poet's cherished Alloway countryside; the museum comprises the famous Burns Cottage where the poet was born, the historic landmarks where he set his greatest work, the elegant monument and gardens created in his honour and a modern museum housing the world's most important collection of his life and works.



Set among 10 acres of the poet's cherished Alloway countryside; the museum comprises the famous Burns Cottage where the poet was born...

The famous Burns cottage



OPENING HOURS

3 January - 31 March, daily 10-5
1 April - 30 September, daily 10-5.30
1 October - 31 December, daily 10-5
Admission

CONTACT DETAILS

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum
Murdoch's Lone
Alloway
KA7 4PQ
Telephone 0844 493 2601
Email: burns@nts.org.uk

Unravelling the Ulster-Scots secrets

By Laura Spence

Last year, I went on a research trip to the Scottish borders, occasioned by my interest in the Border Reivers and my own genealogical interests. Whilst reading about the fractious history of the borders region, I kept coming across the town of Roxburgh – but although I could find County Roxburghshire on the map, I couldn't pinpoint the location of the actual town.

Further research revealed that Roxburgh, a former royal Borough and at one time, the de facto capital of Scotland when King David I had his royal residence there, has disappeared entirely from Scottish maps! It's hard to believe that a town of such historic significance – and one which was formerly as important as Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth – is gone completely. Nowadays, the main county towns are Jedburgh, Hawick, Kelso and Montrose.

“

“It's hard to believe that a town of such historic significance – and one which was formerly as important as Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth – is gone completely.”

Undaunted, I set off to Roxburghshire anyway, inspired by the knowledge that the 20 most common surnames on gravestones in the area are: Scott, Hope, Laidlaw, Henderson, Hogg, Turnbull, Kerr, Robertson, Richardson, Robson, Brown, Bell, Johnstone, Armstrong, Hay, Tait, Walker, Gray, Smith and Rutherford. Many of those names crop up in my family tree, so I was keen to explore their former hunting grounds.

The 'disappeared' town of Roxburgh (which nowadays is often spelt with a final 'e') stood on a defensible site between the rivers Tweed and Teviot, with Roxburgh Castle guarding the narrow neck of the peninsula. During the Scottish Wars of Independence, English and Scottish forces repeatedly captured and recaptured the town, notably in 1314, in the run-up to Bannockburn. A final battle in 1460 saw the town and castle destroyed; and nothing remains today except some ruined



SPLENDOUR: With a history dating as far back as 1543, Sunlaws is today a beautiful country house

segments of castle ramparts which can still be seen on a mound opposite Floors Castle. Floors Castle itself was designed for the first Duke of Roxburghe in 1721; however, in the mid 1800s, it was redesigned by leading Edinburgh architect, William Playfair, to resemble a fairytale castle with drama and romance in equal measure. In the early 1900s, the 8th Duke married a beautiful young American heiress, May Goelet, and she brought her outstanding collection of fine art, furniture and porcelain to Floors. Today, the Duke and Duchess have opened their home as a five-star luxury visitor attraction: all details are available at www.roxburghe.net/castle.

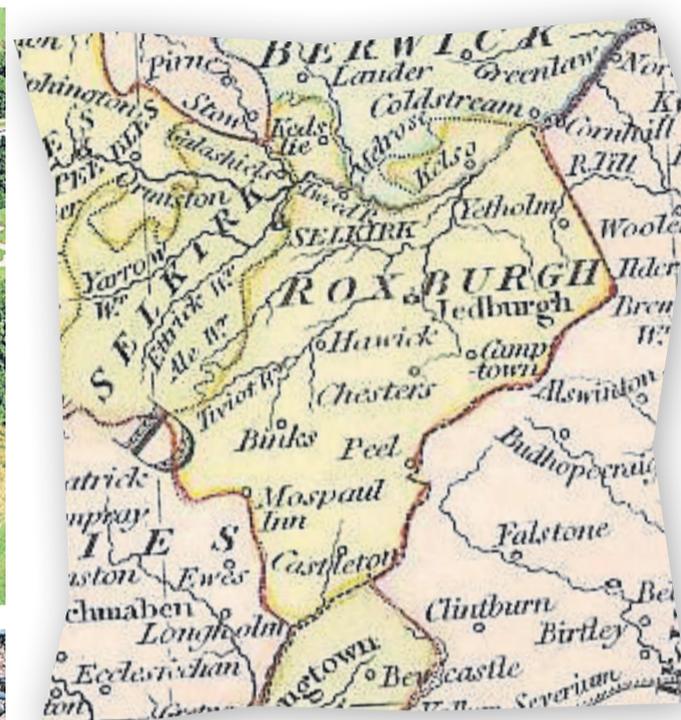
Nearby and also in the heart of the Scottish Borders, is a stunning house formerly known as 'Sunlaws' which has its own colourful history dating back to the great medieval town of Roxburgh: in fact one of the earliest records of a dwelling house

at Sunlaws dates from 1543. This house was caught up in the ongoing Anglo-Scottish wars when reivers from both sides continuously sacked border towns. In June of 1544, during the period known as the 'Rough Wooing', a band of Englishmen entered Scotland and burned Sunlaws, taking eight Scots and forty oxen, as well as sacking and destroying the town of Roxburgh and the nearby Abbeys of Jedburgh, Kelso, Dryburgh and Melrose. In September of 1600, James Kerr of Chatto purchased the house at Sunlaws with its lands and it has had an association with the Kerr and Scott-Kerr families ever since. The Kerrs lived at Sunlaws during both Jacobite rebellions - and in fact, Bonnie Prince Charlie spent a night here on 5th November 1745 and is said to have planted a white rose bush in the grounds.

A number of serious fires over the centuries led to Sunlaws being rebuilt several times

– but the most significant change in the house's fortunes arose from the purchase of Sunlaws and its estate, during the 1960s, by the Duke of Roxburghe, a distant cousin of the original Kerr of Chatto. After using the house as an estate office for some time, the Duke turned Sunlaws into a gracious 4* country house hotel of the 20th century. The hotel nestles amongst well-tended woodlands on the banks of the River Teviot, and all the bedrooms have been individually designed, many by the Duchess of Roxburghe herself. Each room is named after one of the farms on the estate, and some have four poster beds and log fires. The hotel itself combines a beautiful traditional style with modern luxury; and the chef combines local, Estate and home-grown products to create stunning meals in the welcoming restaurant. Take a look at their website to find out more - www.roxburghe.net/the-roxburghe-hotel.

of the mysterious Roxburgh...



“

“Floors Castle itself (below) was designed for the first Duke of Roxburghe in 1721: however, in the mid 1800s, it was redesigned by leading Edinburgh architect, William Playfair, to resemble a fairytale castle with drama and romance in equal measure.”



Floors Castle

There is also a Championship golf course, designed by Dave Thomas to maximise the spectacular Scottish Borders views. An outstanding parkland course, opened in 1997, it exploits the natural landscape, with well-positioned bunkers and large USGA rolling greens. “The Viaduct” at the 14th tee is the signature hole and is one of Scotland’s most recognisable. All information is online at www.roxburghe.net/scottish-golf-course. The Scottish Borders are a geographical history book – with forbidding tower-houses and bastles, silent battlefields, fortified churches, ancient graveyards and an unchanged landscape with its tumbling rivers and guardian Cheviots. There is no better place from which to explore it than Roxburghshire. If you have the chance to visit, I’d encourage you to contact Visit Scotland (www.visitscotland.com) to find out more about everything that’s happening at the time you plan to be there. Scotland’s history is very much our history too: a trip to the Scottish Borders will leave you relaxed, reinvigorated and with more of a sense of your own ancestry. Raise a glass to me please if you make it to the Roxburghe Library Bar!

WEANS' WURLD**the Ulster-Scot COMPETITION****WIN****A FAMILY TRIP TO ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE**

How would you like to win a family trip to Ayr, where you can visit the birthplace of acclaimed Scottish poet Robert Burns?

The Ulster Scot newspaper has teamed up with leading ferry company Stena Line to offer one lucky family (two adults and two children) the chance to win a return sailing* from Belfast to Cairnryan with their car. For your chance to win this great prize, simply answer the question below.

Stena Line provides a fun, easy and great-value way to travel to Scotland. The travel time is only 2 hours 15 minutes and there is a choice of up to six daily crossings. As well as that there are no baggage charges, so you can really pack it all in when taking a short break or day trip with your friends or family. When you travel with Stena Line there is so much to do onboard. You can avail of the free WiFi, watch a free blockbuster movie in the onboard cinema, take a stroll on deck and enjoy the scenery or watch the kids as they while away the hours in the colourful kids play areas.

If you are looking for a special way to entertain the kids over the coming months, the hugely popular Stena Line Kids Cruises are back for 2015.

Choose from a wide range of fun days out including Pirates and Princesses, Superheroes and an Easter Kids Cruise. They depart from Belfast to Cairnryan

and once onboard the kids will be treated to magic tricks, face painting, balloon modelling and lots more. The cruises start from only £10 and are available on selected dates in February, March, April and May, but book soon as they always sell-out. There are lots of exciting dining options available onboard including Taste restaurant, where you can enjoy a great value meal deal for only £25 per family which includes two adult meals, up to three kid's meals and up to five hot or cold drinks.

In the Barista cafe you can enjoy a combo deal for only £5.95 per person which includes any sandwich, any small hot drink and any muffin or pastry. Also available is the Living Room Lounge which is an ideal place to unwind and enjoy a tasty treat.

While the kids are playing or enjoying a movie, head to the onboard shop and enjoy savings up to 50 per cent on selected items when compared to the high street – ranges include designer fragrances, electronic gifts, handbags, make-up, confectionery and much more.

If you would really like to treat yourself then upgrade to the exclusive Stena Plus Lounge where you can travel in the lap of luxury and enjoy complimentary drinks, snacks, newspapers and magazines as well as a dedicated waiter service and menu.

For more information or to book go to www.stenaline.co.uk, call 08447 70 70 70 or visit your local travel agent

**WIN A FAMILY TICKET TO AYR AND VISIT THE BIRTHPLACE OF ROBERT BURNS**

To be in with a chance just answer the following question:

Q. HOW LONG IS THE STENA LINE BELFAST TO CAIRNRNAN CROSSING?

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN: Simply email your answer to competition@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk with **Stena Line** in the subject line, providing your name and address

CLOSING DATE: FEBRUARY 27

*All sailings are subject to availability and prize must be availed of by June 30 2015.

COLOURING COMPETITION

Thank you to all who entered our Christmas colouring competition. The standard was very high and below are just some of the worthy winners...



Eamon Coyle visited the Agency to say thanks



Maya Stowe came first with her colourful creation!



Clockwise from top left are drawings from: Jamie Lee Simpson, Eamon Coyle, Corey Gallagher and Elisha Pearson.

Well done everyone - they really brightened up the office!