



# Scottish Heritage USA

## NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2021

*Halloween in Scotland*

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## SPOOKY HALLOWEEN TO ALL!

Upon that night, when fairies light  
On Cassilis Downans dance,  
Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,  
On sprightly coursers prance;  
Or for Colean the route is ta'en,  
Beneath the moon's pale beams;  
There, up the cove, to stray and rove,  
Among the rocks and streams  
To sport that night.



Thus begins Robert Burns 1785 poem “Halloween” that details many of the customs and superstitions of Halloween, many of which are of pagan origin. All Hallows Eve, or Halloween is the night before All Saints Day, celebrated on November 1<sup>st</sup>, but its roots can be traced back to Samhain (*pronounced Sawain*) the ancient Celtic festival of summer’s end. The harvest was celebrated as winter approached, the festival, was a symbol of preparing for the winter and marked the boundary between the fertile land of summer and the dead of winter.

Celebrated widely in the US, and to a lesser extent in the UK, it is surprising that it is not more popular in Scotland. It is not surprising to learn that Halloween first took root in Scotland where misty moors, numerous superstitions and haunted castles abound.



The Celts believed that on the night of 31 October, ghosts of the dead would walk again among them – large bonfires were lit in each village in order to ward off any evil spirits. All house fires were put out and new fires lit from these bonfires.

While some areas of Scotland light bonfires to scare away the dead, you will be more likely to see “neep lanterns (turnip lanterns) made by scooping out a turnip similar to carving out a pumpkin. These lanterns will ward off evil spirits.

*See Halloween continued on page 2*

# EASY SOUL CAKE RECIPE



Enjoy this tasty and easy to bake Halloween Treat

*From: Fuss Free Flavours  
Helen Best-Shaw*

## INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup golden caster sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 pinch saffron-or turmeric for color
- 1 tsp allspice
- 2 tbs milk
- 1 small box raisins (2 oz)

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 360°

Cut up the butter into small chunks to allow it to soften

Using an electric mixer, cream butter and sugar together in medium-sized bowl until light and fluffy

Whisk in the egg yolks

Add the flour and spices, adding enough milk to form a dough that holds together.

Stir in the raisins

Turn dough onto floured surface and roll out to about 1 cm thick

Bake at 360 for about 25 minutes until golden and firm



## HALLOWEEN *continued from page one*

Here are some other old-fashioned traditions from Scotland:

**Guising or "galoshin"**- Children would disguise themselves as evil spirits, blackening their faces and dressing up in old clothes to go "guising." This kept them from being recognized by wicked spirits. Guisers had to actually perform a 'trick' by reciting a song, poem, or joke before receiving any goodies.

**Dookin' for apples** – is the same the world over. Trying to grab apples floating in a tub of water with your mouth and with your hands tied behind your back. To make it even harder, try it with a fork!

**Treacle scones** – again with hands tied, this game challenges participants to take a bite out of treacle-covered scones hanging from ropes.

**Nut burning** – recently engaged couples each toss a nut into an open fire. If they burn quietly, the union will be a good one, but if the pop, hiss and crackle, the couple could be in for a bumpy ride!

The Witchcraft Act of 1735 prevented the consumption of pork pastries on Halloween (*why pork? We do not know. Perhaps it stemmed from the unclean stigma pork carried*). The Act was repealed in the 1950's so it is now legal to offer sausage rolls as a treat on Halloween.



# STUNNING NEW DISCOVERY ALONG SCOTLAND'S EARLIEST RAILWAY

Archaeologists say they have made a “stunning” new discovery on the route of Scotland’s earliest railway. The Tranent Waggonway in East Lothian was first constructed in 1722. It was initially built for hauling coal from a pit at Tranent to Cockenzie and Port Seton for use as fuel in a process for making salt.

New archaeological excavations have revealed three wooden railways, each one laid immediately on top of the last.

The 1722 Waggonway Project said it appeared to have been an attempt to upgrade the railway with “crudely cut timbers” over a brief period of time.

The gauge (*the distance between the two rails*) was also changed from an initial 3ft 3inches in the first phase to 4ft in the second and third phases, probably to accommodate larger wagons.

The project team said there was no other site like it in railway archaeology. Its research has identified the three phases of upgrades happening between 1722-25, 1728-30 and 1743-44. The second phase was described as “extremely well-constructed,” with cobbles laid to form a track between the rails for the horses that pulled the wagons.

Railway historian Anthony Leslie Dawson said: “Whilst we know these railways had a limited lifespan due to their method of constructions, to see this process of continual replacement and upgrade – including a change of gauge – in the archaeological record is outstanding. The waggonway excavation has shown that these waggonways are far more complex than the single-phase structures previously excavated, and the survival of timber on-site including joints, help us further understand the construction of these early railways.

The project’s archaeologists also excavated a salt pan building in Cockenzie, and discovered evidence of use of the site in the production of salt from 1630-1780

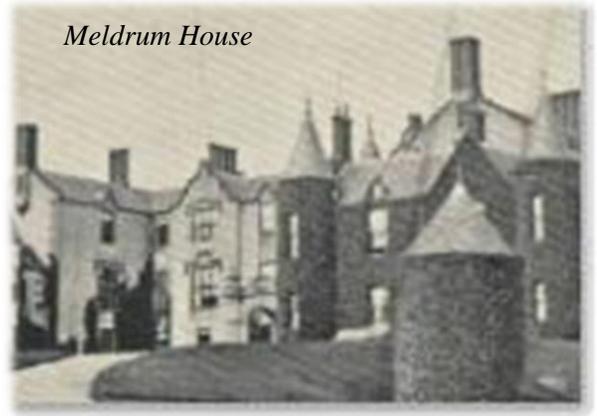


Original wagonway cart



# SOME OF THE MOST HAUNTED PLACES IN SCOTLAND

1. **Meldrum House** in Aberdeenshire: This 13<sup>th</sup> century building is now a hotel where a number of male guests have been surprised by the ghost of Isabella Douglas. She wanted to marry for love but her father had other ideas, so she stole away on a ship bound for America. The ship was assailed by pirates and she lost everything and was sold as a wife to the son of a New Jersey farmer. Her longing for home was so great it is said she haunts her former home to this day. Isabella is said to appear during thunderstorms and seems to watch over unattended children. When you stay here, you may see this lady in white.



2. **Culloden Moor**: The last battle fought on Scottish soil took place on 16 April 1746 and lasted less than an hour. Despite its brevity, the battle resulted in over 1,250 Jacobite deaths and resulted in the end of the clan



system in Scotland. The slain highlanders were buried where they fell with little or no markings.

It is said that the fallen come back on the anniversary of the battle and the sounds of steel-on-steel clashing and battle cries are heard. Others report of a dead Jacobite soldier lying under a tartan cloth on one of the grave mounds.

3. **Slains Castle**: built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, it was originally the property of the Comyn, Earl of Bucan. After its forfeiture, the castle was given to Gilbert Hay by Robert the Bruce. The castle was destroyed in 1594 and Hay built a new Slains Castle near Cruden Bay. But the old castle ruins remain brooding over the North Sea and is home to a good many ghosts. It is believed that Slains Castle was the inspiration for the Castle Dracul in Bram Stoker's book.



## SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

1. Which Scottish explorer discovered the source of the Blue Nile?
2. When do you 'dook' for apples?
3. Who died in the Palazzo Muti in Rome in 1788 ?
4. What is the name of Scotland's oldest surviving journal?
5. Which legal ghost haunts Edinburgh's Greyfriars Kirkyard ?
6. Who designed the National Wallace Monument in Stirling?
7. What is a 'broch'?
8. What is a 'but and ben'?
9. Where was Flora Macdonald taken after her arrest?
10. What was the first battle victory for the Jacobite cause?

**Bonus:** *Whom did Bonnie Prince Charles marry in 1772?*



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We can also be found on Instagram - check us out.



1. James Bruce 2. Halloween 3. Bonnie Prince Charlie 4. The Scots Magazine 5. Judge George Mackenzie 6. John Thomas Rothead 7. A pre-historic building, round in shape 8. A small two-room house 9. Tower of London 10. Prestonpans

**Bonus:** *Princess Louise of Stolberg*