

Scotland is rich in history and legend



In the fishing port of Oban, also known for its single malt scotch, the townsmen don kilts and march through Main Street to the Highland Games.

IF YOU GO

- Scottish currency is the Scottish pound sterling, which trades on a par with the U.K. pound sterling, but is uniquely Scottish. Value about \$1.54
- The National Trust for Scotland <http://www.nts.org.uk>
Nonprofit that maintains and operates dozens of important sites including Gladstone's Land.
- Historic Scotland (<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/>) is a government agency that maintains and operates some 300 important sites including Edinburgh Castle, Melrose Abbey, Stirling Castle, and Bannockburn battlefield. On first visiting an Historic Scotland site, it is worthwhile to buy three, seven or fourteen day Explorer Tickets covering admission to all Historic Scotland sites. (Lower-priced "Concession" tickets are for senior citizens and children under 16.)
- If you plan to visit Scotland in August next year, stop in Edinburgh and experience the delights of the Festival of Arts. Order tickets before leaving home for the sellout Military Tattoo, which for three weeks is set against the world famous backdrop of Edinburgh Castle (<http://www.edinburgh-tattoo.co.uk/tickets/index.html>).

BY GRETCHEN HITCH KIRKPATRICK
CORRESPONDENT

When we arrived in Edinburgh, capital of Scotland, the Edinburgh Festival was in full swing in the ancient, storied city. Ten members of the Kirkpatrick family set off to find their Celtic roots with a stroll down the Royal Mile and the lively avenues that branch off from the famous thoroughfare.

After wandering the Royal Mile, we toured historic Edinburgh Castle, crossing the drawbridge past imposing statues of Scottish heroes Robert the Bruce and William Wallace, whose wild and patriotic life is the *Braveheart* tale. Near the end of the castle tour, the Scottish crown jewels exhibit included the legendary Stone of Scone, used when crowning Scottish kings.

Touring historic Edinburgh Castle, we discovered they were preparing for the evening's festival, the Military Tattoo, which included massed bagpipe units, bands, and dancing groups from all over the British Commonwealth.

Everyone was tingling at the conclusion of the Tattoo when a lone bagpiper stood on a parapet of Edinburgh Castle piping a poignant *Auld Lang Syne* and closed with the stirring *Scotland the Brave*.

One evening we dined at the Abbotsford Restaurant named in honor of Sir Walter Scott's stately mansion. On the way Gladstone's Land, a restored 17th century merchant's house in Old Town, made a good tour stop to experience medieval home life.

On another glorious day, an excursion to Roselynn chapel enabled us to examine the hidden Mosaic insignia in the intricately carved stone columns.

We also viewed the rose-colored stonework of Melrose Abbey, richest and most powerful of Scottish Abbeys, which was the inspiration for Kirk in the Hills in Bloomfield Hills.

Recent excavations at Melrose unearthed what is claimed to be the embalmed heart of Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland for 30 years in the early 1300s. The silver casket with Bruce's embalmed heart was reburied at an undisclosed location.

MUSEUMS AND BOATS

The Royal Museum of Scotland adjoining the Museum of Scotland takes civilization from prehistoric carvings to the present day; a fascinating must-see before our expedition headed to the Highlands and Islands. From the western fishing seaport of Oban, we went by ferry to the island of Mull and took a long bus ride the length of the island to another smaller boat. The craft took us to visit the mystic island of Iona, where one feels a mysterious atmosphere still.

But first the boat circled and tied up to Staffa, a strange and uninhabited island of basalt columns framing a large cave known as Fingal's Cave, which can be explored by the brave, walking on the tops of precariously wet and slippery basalt crystals.

Back in the Highlands, Invermay Castle displays

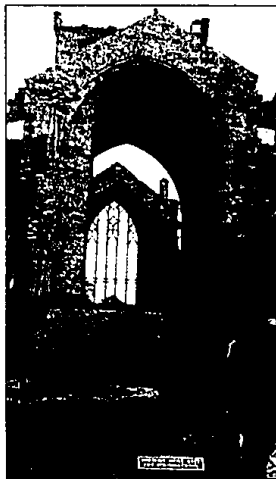
an impressive arrangement of historic armaments used to fight the Jacobite uprisings for Mary Queen of Scots. Another day was spent viewing the Highland Games in Oban where the throwing of the caber (similar to a telephone pole) is the highlight. Along the way Highland cattle can be seen in fields, almost prehistoric in appearance with long shaggy hair and serious curved horns.

In the town of Dumfries, we found Closeburn Castle, given to Sir Roger Kirkpatrick's descendants by King Alexander in the late 1300s. Roger Kirkpatrick is noted at present by a brass plaque on the original site of the Church of the Grey Friars.

On the closing days of our fortnight Scotland visit, we toured Stirling Castle. From the ramparts of Stirling Castle, seven battlefields can be seen.

Two miles south of Stirling, we visited the grounds where the famous Battle of Bannockburn was fought in 1314 to win Scotland's freedom from England. As told in a National Trust of Scotland panoramic mural, "At daybreak Scottish foot soldiers advanced. Although the English cavalry charged, the Scots stood firm...and the Scots prevailed." Robert the Bruce remained King of Scotland until his death in June 1329.

Gretchen Hitch Kirkpatrick is a Bloomfield Village resident who writes about travel and society news for the Observer & Eccentric.



The ruins of Melrose Abbey.

MICHIGAN AND OHIO'S
Largest Dealer in Patio
Furniture, Umbrellas, & Grills

**MASSIVE "One Time"
LIQUIDATION
SALE!**

ALL NEW 2002 PATIO SETS MUST GO!
STILL HUNDREDS OF SETS AVAILABLE

To make
Room for
2003
Merchandise!



**ALL MERCHANDISE
MUST BE SOLD AT**

COST!

NATIONAL BRANDS
-BROWN JORDAN
-HOMECREST
-WINSTON
-LLOYD FLANDERS
-TELESCOPE

-O.W. LEE
-CARTER GRANDLE
-MEADOWCRAFT
-ACTIWIN

Also LIQUIDATING...
-HUNDREDS OF UMBRELLAS
-UMBRELLA BASES
-GRILLS, ACCESSORIES

•First Come
•Cash & Carry
•Delivery for
Nominal
Charge

**LABADIE'S CASUAL
FURNITURE**
1707 West Rd. • Trenton
(734) 676-3020

Dinner Coupon
\$25 VALUE
AT A FINE LOCAL DINING ESTABLISHMENT
WITH PURCHASE OF A PATIO SET
MUST BRING IN COUPON • Expires 9-30-02

TOLL FREE 1-800-310-5094

**PATIO FURNITURE
FACTORY OUTLET**
5630 Hoover • Trenton
(734) 676-6540
OUTLET HOURS: MON-SAT 10-7, SUN 12-4