# THE SCOTS CANADIAN

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# Lynn McDonald's Activist Life

*On Wednesday, April 22, 2025 we were delighted to have Dr. Lynn McDonald give a special talk to University of Guelph faculty, students and Scottish Studies Foundation and Society board members in Guelph's recently renovated University Club. During the event she was presented with the Society's 2025 Scot of the Year Award. The event was organized by the Society's President Maggie McEwan and the talk was recorded and transcribed for this article by the Foundation's Vice-President Simon Burke.*

*Dr. McDonald with her King Charles III medal awarded to persons who have obtained outstanding achievements abroad that bring credit to Canada*

**Advocacy for Women's Equality in Canada**

I was president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women for two years. [*The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) was a feminist, activist organization that was founded in 1971 to convince the Canadian government to move forward on the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.*] We had a very small office. It was smaller than this room today and we only had one full time employee. It was no big deal! But it was important. I was never paid for any of the work pursuing equality and fairness. I was just an activist doing it because I cared about it, and going about it with small groups of people who would largely meet in a living room to plan for a better future. But we got to working by briefing MPs. We wrote the briefs ourselves and then we went out and worked hard to achieve our aims and objectives for women throughout Canada.

The first brief I ever gave, which ages me of course, was for the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada was very important. [*The report contained 167 recommendations, on many issues such as daycare, maternity leave, family law reform, education and pensions.*] It did excellent work and produced excellent recommendations on all kinds of important subjects like pay equity. It was an excellent report, but how do you get its high-minded recommendations to happen in practical ways? So some of us formed the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women. We worked hard to see through implementation of Royal Commission Report recommendations at the provincial level, and of course, a focus was on pay equity issues and pay equity issues are provincial.

I don't know how many of you will remember or if any of you actually realize just how bad things were for women in Ontario regarding equal pay and pay equity in those days. For example, a woman selling shirts at a retail counter in downtown Toronto could be paid any amount less than a man selling shirts at a counter across the aisle because they "weren't in the same establishment." We produced evidence through a quantitative study, and were surprised how bad the situation was ourselves. Our report found that that women in full time work earned only 60 cents on the dollar compared to men doing the same work or equivalent work.

And then I thought since we were encouraging people to get lawyers and take up discrimination cases, I had better take my own case forward and see what I could do. Well, I ended up at the Ontario Ministry of Labour. I showed them that I was underpaid compared with my male colleagues at McMaster University. (I was working in my first university teaching job back then.) And so there I was sitting in front of the very authoritative civil servant (let's call him "the guy") who went over my information with me. After a time reviewing what I had laid out in black and white—what my male colleagues did, what I did and what I was paid and what they were paid—"the guy" looked up to say, without a hint of irony, something like: "I finally understand. So, you're saying that you teach more classes and more students than your male colleagues.

*Continued on page 4*

*Maggie McEwan presents the Award (a specially engraved quaich) to Dr. Lynn McDonald*

# *Haverings*

*P.B. Grant*

The recent tariffs imposed on Canada by the current US government (of which the less said the better) have provoked us into spending more time in stores, scanning labels to ensure that we're buying Canadian goods. This, in turn, has led me to reflect on a few things that I miss from home, things that are sometimes difficult to find on Canadian shelves. Top of the list is Scottish candy—or, as all forms of candy are called in Scotland, "sweeties."

It's fair to say that Scots are connoisseurs of confectionery. Teacakes, snowballs, caramel wafers, fudge, tablet, macaroon bars, toffee, soor plooms ["sour plums"]—the list goes on. In Canada, some supermarkets and small stores have British sections where you can find a few of these mouth-watering treats; but many, alas, are unobtainable. In recent, rather desperate online searches, I did discover a few UK-based companies who cater for the sweet-toothed in Canada, but the shipping costs are exorbitant; frankly, it would be cheaper to fly back home and buy them straight from the Scottish shelves.

Like many of my kin, I have a terrible sweet tooth, the roots of which lie in childhood. Sweeties were consumed in vast quantities during Easter, Halloween, and the festive season. Just as Easter wasn't Easter without chocolate eggs, Christmas wasn't complete without a Selection Box in your stocking. These came in the form of plastic trays which contained a variety of sweeties: a Mars Bar, a Marathon ("Snickers" to Canadians), a Twix, an Aero, etc. You can still find Selection Boxes in some stores in Canada, but they're not quite the same: they seem … smaller. Maybe it's just my memory playing tricks.

According to a wonderful article on Scottish sweeties by Audrey Gillan (*The Guardian*, 2011; available online) my hometown, Greenock, was once known as "Sugaropolis" because of the number of sugar refineries that graced its streets. Surely this accounts, in part, for my early addiction to sweeties: living at the epicentre, I didn't stand a chance. And oh, my local sweet shop… a Mecca. Row upon row of glinting glass jars, filled to the brim with colourful candies of all kinds. Scooped stickily into pocket-sized brown paper bags, they'd send the old salivary glands into overdrive. The scene in the sweet shop from *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* isn't an exaggeration: it sums up the sense of wonder that overcame you when you entered these hallowed shrines. In a bid to replicate the experience, my younger brother and I used to buy big bags of sweeties and set up shop in our shoe cupboard, selling them back to our siblings for 50% mark up. Sure, it lacked the requisite ambience, but we made a tidy profit.

Unsurprisingly, my own children have inherited my love for Scottish sweeties, so whenever I visit my family in Scotland (which is not often enough) I always bring a bunch back to Canada. I'm not a Candy Man, by any stretch—a bit too soor, to be honest—but on these occasions, if I pack the right ingredients in my suitcase, I can (momentarily) make the world taste good.

# *Scottish Travel Exhibit Launched*

On Tuesday, March 25, before a very large audience, a new exhibit was launched in the University of Guelph's McLaughlin Library—*Charting Scottish Travels: The Origins of Tourism in Scotland*—which was curated and installed by students in experiential learning classes supervised by Dr. Kevin James, Scottish Studies Foundation Chair and Professor in the University of Guelph's Department of History; and Melissa McAfee, Special Collections Librarian, McLaughlin Library.

Students who worked as apprentices with McAfee learned the importance of design and preservation in effectively installing materials, creating promotional materials, and developing the launch itself.

"This experience gave students pathways to careers that have the potential to integrate appreciation of the humanities with viable professions in universities, museums, and other cultural heritage settings," said McAfee. "They researched the historical significance of the objects on display which helped them to develop an appreciation for the effective material presentation of these objects."

The Library's Scottish Studies Collection boasts an impressive and expanding set of archival travel-related material, examples of which are featured in the exhibit which is open to the public and will run until November 28, 2025.

The exhibit explores Scottish tourism, and the different ways it came to be such a sought-after destination for many travellers. It reflects the extent to which Scottish tourism development was also fuelled by an information revolution when, by the end of the nineteenth century, levels of literacy were far higher than at its beginning. It meant that guidebooks, tickets, maps, and other resources, from travelogues to postcards, became part of the apparatus of travel, providing travellers a way to share and document their experiences

Many factors likely contributed to the popularity of Scottish tourism, including its beautiful landscapes. The Scottish Highlands, for instance, is characterized by diverse terrain featuring picturesque mountains and the rugged islands of the Hebrides.

New infrastructure and industry contributed to the rise in tourism across the county. With the development of railways and rising incomes, tourism increased, which spawned the development of businesses catering to those interested in exploring the country.

The items showcased in the exhibit can be divided into the following categories:

**Travel Journals**

In 17th century Scotland, travel journaling emerged due to growing interest in Scottish landscapes, fueled by the contemporary desire to explore the "picturesque." During the late 18th and 19th centuries, travel journals became popular throughout the English-speaking world and interest in Scottish tourism grew. Travel journals were considered a reliable, personal account of the author's journey and were written in the first person, separating them from less intimate travel genres such as guidebooks.

Travel journals typically served as guides for subsequent tours and established a foundation for mass travel to particular regions. In the early 19th century, prior to the increase of Scottish tourism, much of the country was unknown to foreigners. The portrayal of Scotland's unique culture in


*One of the books on display*


*Poster from the 1950s*

travel journals enchanted eager tourists and motivated them to journey north, cementing the popularity of Scotland as a travel destination.

Travel journals often varied by style as some journals were published, while others exist as unpublished manuscripts. Journals were recorded by hand during or after a tour, and information was often organized by location or date. In the case of published journals, information was sometimes altered or omitted to mold the narrative into a specific theme. By the mid 19th century, a set of standard topics emerged in travel journaling, such as nature, weather, and culture. The narrative voice was designed for a specific audience and presented an analysis through the lens of contemporary biases. The framed narrative of travel accounts often produced ideals rather than depictions of an authentic Scottish society.

**Published Travelogues**

Travelogues have become an easily identifiable form of information to prepare tourists for the exploration of foreign regions of the world. They grew in popularity to become a staple source for tourism information in Scotland, growing in production and circulation in the 17th century and beyond because of a growth in literacy and printed forms of advertisement. Travelogues tend to be detailed, reading intensive accounts of the author's learned experiences of different places for the benefit of a general public wishing to understand more or travel to these locations. The subjectivity of the author was undisguised, in contrast to 19th travel guidebooks.

Travelogues grew in popularity because of the developments in modes of transport and a growing British middle class that possessed the necessary disposable income to travel to their sparsely inhabited northern frontier. Scotland was becoming an increasingly popular destination for tourists intrigued by the Highlands, wanting to experience firsthand the scenic vistas and preserved nature with which Scotland was becoming increasingly associated. This necessitated a production of travelogues to describe the experience of travellers, explaining personal experience, geography, communities, food, wildlife, and other attributes that would be of a great benefit to first time visitors.

As tourism to Scotland continued its growth, these narratives became integral sources for informing the interested tourist and even promoting Scotland as a suitable tourist destination, describing beautiful landscapes that cultivated a public perception of Scotland

**Guidebooks**

Guidebooks were instrumental in the development of Scotland's travel and tourism industry. They offered travellers detailed itineraries, practical recommendations, and vivid descriptions of the nation's captivating landscapes and cultural landmarks.

In 1820, James Lumsden & Son published *The Steam Boat Companion*, which catered to the growing popularity of travel via steamship around the Scottish Highlands and Isles. Fitting within the genre of travel literature, but assuming the formal tone of a guidebook "directing" readers, and providing them with systematic details regarding means of transport and other aspects of travel, Lumsden's writing romanticizes the rugged beauty of the Highlands and adds allure through his use of the "indescribable." The Steam Boat Companion shaped perceptions and directed tourists to certain historical sites, encouraging success within Scotland's tourism sector.

By 1844, Black's *Picturesque Tourist of Scotland* expanded upon this concept, presenting fifteen different detailed tours and more than twenty itineraries, ranging from day trips to journeys spanning hundreds of miles. Black's guidebooks were essential to the growth of Scotland's tourism industry as they helped promote the nation's culture while encouraging international and domestic travel into and across the nation.

Guidebooks played a pivotal role in shaping Scotland's travel industry, not only by providing essential travel information, but also by fostering a deeper appreciation for the country's rich cultural and natural heritage.

**Ephemera**

Ephemera are the transitory items of everyday life. Due to ephemera being either free or extremely inexpensive, they became accessible to the masses. Before the advent of mass tourism and the transport systems that facilitated it, Scotland was seen as a tourist destination for the wealthy traveller. Ephemera reflects Scottish tourism's expansion to the middle and working classes.

As the middle and working class gained the means to travel, cheaply produced ephemera testify to the extent of its popularity. The growing production of ephemera coincided with increased affordability in transportation, with ephemera often promoting railway and steamship travel. Ephemera also allowed advertising to become cheaper, as small paper handouts were distributed for a fraction of the price for the advertiser or to people and firms that could not afford older methods of advertising.

Ephemera had a constant and important presence in Scottish tourism, playing a major role in every aspect of a traveller's journey, whether in hotels, railway stations, and tourist sites, both large and small. While some ephemera were collected, others were thrown away. On a vacationer's journey, brochures advertised a destination, while train schedules and tickets helped them travel there. When they reached their destination, a traveller was given a map and a menu, and the hotel guestbook was signed to provide them with the essentials of travel. When visitors left, they had the option to purchase a commemorative item, such as a postcard to send to a friend to promote the highlights of their trip, continuing the cycle of tourism and consumption.

**Gift books**

Gift books on travel were books commonly bought to be given around the holiday season or for birthdays. They contributed to the ways places were remembered and imagined. Often published in limited editions by private presses, they contained high quality illustrations, brief essays, short fiction, and poetry.

Unlike guidebooks and travelogues, they did not offer travellers detailed itineraries, practical recommendations, or descriptions of popular tourist landmarks. In 19th century England, the market for gift books grew, driven by the increased literacy of a growing middle class and a widespread desire to explore the unknown. In effect, this genre of travel literature might be seen as the muse of the tourism industry, encouraging interest in foreign places. These volumes served as the perfect antidote to guidebook that told people where they must go and what they must see. They were as much intended to be seen as to be read.

For more information please visit:

https://scottishresearchcollections.lib.uoguelph.ca/exhibits/show/charting-scottish-travel

*From page 1*

"You're saying that you publish more than your male colleagues, but yet you're being paid less. And you are saying that you do more and you publish more—and because more academic peer-reviewed publication is supposed to improve your pay—you should be paid more?" And I said, "yes" He then offered, without so much as a pause to catch his breath: "Well, what is clear to me, after reviewing the facts, is that you're not doing the same job as the men!" The rather jolting conclusion reached by the Ontario Ministry of Labour was that McMaster University could pay me any amount less than a man [because I did a different job than the men…more teaching, more research, more published papers]. Absurd! In short, without a change in the law you could never get equal pay, employers could always give the woman more to do, and pay her less. It was very clearly not right. So, it was things like that that were just so commonplace. And there needed to be change.

One of the things that we did as advocates for women was to go and see Bill Davis. He had been the Minister of Education back then just before being Ontario Premier. And we asked to know what he was going to do about the Royal Commission and what he would prioritize for implementation. Well, Bill Davis was there, sitting in a big boardroom, and he was kind of lounging, you know, back in his chair. I also remember him as smoking a cigar while we met with him. Now, Steve Paikin of TVO and the author of Paikin *and the Premiers: Personal Reflections on a Half Century of Ontario Leaders* insists that he was smoking a pipe, so probably Steve is right but I remember a cigar, but in any event, there was a lot of smoke, and Mr. Davis was quite condescending and I can't remember the words exactly but he said something like: "Why are you women so lazy? Lots of women are teachers, but it's the men who are the principals. Why are there no women principals? Why don't you women get these jobs and they will be paid more?" Well, we were gobsmacked and didn't know what to say. We did not have a polite answer to that nor any data to use to refute it. So, we went and found out why. The truth was that in order to become a principal, you had to take the Principals Course. In order to take the Principals Course, you had to be nominated by a principal… and principals were all men and appeared to only be nominating men for the course. So, we had an answer for the new Premier.

I want to tell you that a lot of the people I was working with who contributed to the National Action Committee to lobby the federal government were great. They saw things that needed to get done and they got done. And I am pleased about that and I am pleased that many women had the chance during those years to show how good they were, you know, how confident and professional and capable they were. Two of our members became deputy ministers; one became a senator and a university president. They showed their stuff.

**Time in the House of Commons**

The advocacy work in Ontario helped me to get into Parliament because many of the people with whom I worked on those issues then came out and supported my efforts to be a candidate for the New Democratic Party. I was elected in a byelection 1982 in Toronto Broadview-Greenwood. The by-election was called after the resignation of Bob Rae (future Premier of Ontario and current Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations). It was fairly close to the end of the first Trudeau era. I was also there for the first years of the Mulroney era. Parliament, let me tell you, was an extremely congenial place to work. I think it's quite less congenial now. Nobody threatened elected officials with anything then. Now you see *Question Period* and you know, people are acting really terribly and really irate.

**CBC**

A quick story about the CBC. It really sounds weird now, but I worked to oppose the license renewal of the CBC. The CBC has to get its license at a meeting with the CRTC every number of years and my colleagues and I argued that the CRTC should not renew the license of the CBC because its discrimination against women. It was so easy to document. There were no women news readers or any sort of female news correspondents. You hardly ever heard a woman speak on radio. I heard a CBC executive say in response, in public, that…"Well, even women don't like the sound of women's voices." I said, 'Well, where is your research?" I might have said something else! Well, of course there was no research. And people who are defending a lousy status quo can say any absurd thing that they want, and they often did.
Well, the CRTC did renew the license of the CBC, but Al Johnson [*who was the President of the CBC and he had been a senior civil servant in Saskatchewan]* made a big effort. He had worked in Tommy Douglas' Saskatchewan. Tommy not only brought in Medicare, the first public system in Canada, but he cleaned up government. He had brought in the merit principle for hiring and a competitive bidding process for contracts, Well, Al Johnson picked up on those improvements that were made initially in Saskatchewan. Al Johnson was the very, very nicest of men but he wasn't too pleased with all of this and he came up to me after a public hearing to get my contact number and so on, and said quite plainly and gruffly: "We'll talk." And, of course, we did. We had meetings with all sorts of CBC Executives and these meeting got things going. The CRTC took up our cause too and they actually had a commission where there were six women on the commission panel.

Progress!

But there was not just the CBC to worry about, but the private broadcasters and the advertisers. And so all of those things have changed now. You know Jan Tennent was the first to read the national news in 1974. I got a heads up and knew about it because Al Johnson, told me. He didn't give the name, "but," he said, "you'll be very pleased with tonight's national news." So those things started to happen. You started to see Barbara Frum get a chance and now no one is surprised to see women discussing the important issues of the day on Canadian television. Last night on CBC there was Andrew Coyne giving his weighty opinion—with three accomplished women giving their own too. It's just commonplace. These things are just routine now. Nobody bats an eye at them, but they certainly weren't commonplace then. They were revolutionary.

But there's a bit of a side issue that came out of all that CRTC/CBC work that I want to tell you about. All those many meetings with the CRTC were in some of the most horrible government buildings across the Ottawa River in Hull, Quebec. And in every meeting we had, every room and every hallway we ever visited was filled with tobacco smoke.

**Non-Smokers' Rights Act**

Now, I'm the canary in the coal mine as soon as somebody starts to smoke. My eyes start to feel sore; they get red and watery and I start to feel queasy and I always end up wheezing and come down with terrible colds and respiratory illness. Happened every time. Everybody's harmed by second hand tobacco smoke, but not everybody loses it the way I did. So it was just horrible. Then when I got to Parliament, and as I say, the most congenial of atmospheres but, you could cut the smoke with a knife. There was smoke everywhere. We had a meeting of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health and Welfare with Minister Monique Begin, the Health Minister. I was there prepared to ask questions and so on, on whatever important matter we were studying. But the Committee Room, it was in the basement and it had a low ceiling, there was no air to breathe and it was so horrible. I had to leave and go outside into the Ottawa winter in order to get a decent breath of air.

So I started to work on how others were experiencing their workplaces and the impact tobacco smoke had on them. We did a survey. We got out the word in the newspapers and so on. I had many, many


*Mission accomplished — a smoke free campus!*

people come forward to tell me about how horrible second-hand smoke was in their lives. For example: "I'm a bus driver in British Columbia and everybody smokes on my bus and I can't get a decent breath and I'm afraid I'm going to fall asleep and going to drive off a cliff." Story after story.

So I knew I wasn't just fighting for myself, but for a lot of people, and I started to raise this issue more regularly in the House. I remember being told "Don't bother. Quit wasting our time. Stop raising this issue," or "All the doctors all smoke." And so it took a while to get through all the resistance. My staff and I did some academic research on it and learned that the connection between smoking and lung cancer was well documented all the way back in 1952. But no government would bring in any legislation on it. Well, in most of the world, people were smoking at rates of like 50% at that time. So, I was warned more than once by colleagues that "Half your voters are smokers. Do you want to risk alienating them?"

So governments wouldn't do it, and no Minister would bring in an anti-smoking bill. But John Roberts—a long-time Liberal MP and a Minister of State for Science and Technology, bless his heart, did get a bill drafted, but it was only about mentioning nicotine levels and tar levels. It wasn't a really serious bill, and his House Leader didn't allow it to get even an hour's debate in the House. The government simply didn't want to be associated with a bunch of old ladies who were anti-smoking. That was how I was being described. I had people thinking of me like that. It took a while to get things going, but I went the private member's bill route between 1985 and 1988. Not easy. Cigarette companies sent top executives and corporate communications consultants to Parliament Hill to deny that there was any connection between smoking, second-hand smoke and lung cancer. Despite there being ample documentation that went back a long time. And then one of them, I mean, you really got these incredible vice president types at these committee meetings. One of them said, "Well, if you eat too much apple sauce, you'll die too." I remember asking "How much apple sauce did one have to eat to die?" Of course, he had no answer. People just say the stupidest things.

A quick word about the Canadian Lung Association. I am wearing a medal today—the King Charles III Coronation Medal. They are one of the many groups that nominated me for the King Charles III Coronation Medal based for my work of almost forty years ago. And my joke is this "Do something that's really, really difficult and wait for forty years and you'll get a medal for it!"

It was such hard work but there was also an element of luck about it. Private Members Bills are assigned a priority number through a lottery system and my Bill got a really low number. So I got my Bill moving quickly and got it deemed something called "a votable item." Most governments don't like private members bills and the custom was for the government to give it a quick hearing and then let it die on the Order Paper. But I got lucky. At the end of the hour allotted for my Bill the last speaker didn't run the debate to the end of the hour and stopped surprisingly early. It so happened that the Progressive Conservative Whip on House Duty was distracted and not paying attention so the Speaker of the House advised the House that as there being no further debate… "The Question could be called." This I immediately sought. He said: "All those in favor, say Aye." My colleagues and supporters yelled "Aye!" The Speaker than asked for the Nays and because there were so few Tories in the House, a couple of Tories offered up a half-hearted and quiet series of Nays. Well what a ruckus was about to ensue!

Private Members Bills are supposed to be free votes, but the tobacco industry had convinced the government of the day to oppose my Bill and the Government Party had dutifully whipped against it, but the Acting Speaker was a Tory named Steve Paproski—MP for Edmonton North and a former professional athlete—and bless him, he immediately stood up after that and said, "I declare that the Ayes have it." And just at that point, I guess the Government Whip woke up and realized that as it only takes five MPs to stand up and demand a recorded vote, he needed to seek a recorded vote so that the bells would ring and all of the MPs in their offices can run in and vote my Bill down. The government had an absolutely enormous majority and so they could have voted the Bill down at that point, but because the Whip had been snoozing, they needed to get the Acting Speaker to allow for a chance at calling a recorded vote. But, you know, Steve Paproski just looked at them and said: "The House stands adjourned." And he left the Chair and walked out.

I was amazed. It was that act of bravery which got the Bill through Second Reading. But then came the committees. 17 medical and health organizations presented and there were innumerable briefs. There was the Canadian Labor Congress, several unions, the National Art Center, the Canadian Nurses Association, the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke, Lung Association etc., etc. — all superb briefs. To get it through was so hard. The votes needed for the Bill to stay alive were being won but by margins that were very, very narrow. There were two conservative backbenchers—Paul McCrossan an MP from Toronto-Scarborough and Arnold Malone, MP for Crowfoot in Alberta who worked so hard behind the scenes in the Tory Caucus to seek support, contrary to their own Whip's direction, and get votes for the Bill. And so they got some votes for it and so it went through. Bless them.

It was quite narrow, but it did go through the House, and then it didn't have any trouble in the Senate. Senator Royce Frith, the future


*On campus with the Award*

High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, was a very strong supporter. So it went through the Senate and then, of course, the government didn't have to proclaim it or bring in any regulations, and they could just have let it drop. But it turned out that many people wanted it. I think it was Minister of Health Jake Epp who told me that his Department had to hire extra staff to handle all the correspondence that was received supporting the Bill.

So Canada was the first to get it going and then New Zealand took it up. Helen Clark variously Minister of Health and Prime Minister was a champion. She came to see me in Toronto about it, and then when at the World Health Organization she made it a framework convention. Next the European Union took it on. So this little effort to ban smoking in federal workplaces really did go around the world and once people saw that it worked, that people could cope with it, it could be strengthened. So I was very pleased to be able to be part of it all and so many twists in turns that I could never have predicted, you know, what the outcome would be, but you win some of them and you lose some of them, but that's one that went very well. Probably the most important thing I ever did.

**Final Thoughts**

So I want to thank you very much for honouring me and listening to me reflecting on these various things that have been part of an activist's life. Being an activist is a good thing. My activist's life continues. I am working on defending the falsely accused, but not those unfairly accused and incarcerated as James Lockyer has done so very well these long years, but those in our history who have had their reputations unfairly maligned.

I have been working on research projects that I hope do justice to my academic training and to a fair and balanced Canadian history. I have been working on three history projects where some of our greatest contributors have been unfairly maligned: Egerton Ryerson, Henry Dundas and John A. Macdonald.

Just a quick word on each:

**Egerton Ryerson**

[*Ryerson established a system of free, mandatory schooling at the primary and secondary level—the forerunner of Ontario's current school system.*]

I am writing a history. In short, he had nothing to do with the residential school system. The words do not appear in his writings, and I've checked every book he wrote and all of his correspondence as well. He was named a brother by an Ojibway Chief and given an honourary Ojibway name for his support for Indian land and fishery claims. I am working with an organization called the Friends of Egerton Ryerson to see his reputation restored. More on this in the coming months.

**Henry Dundas**

[*Dundas was the most powerful politician in Scotland and held various different positions in the British government*.]

I am working with another group to restore the good name of Henry Dundas. He was a lawyer who convinced Scotland's highest civil court to declare that no person could be a slave on Scottish soil. And he did it by taking up the case pro bono of a slave from Jamaica. He got blamed for extending slavery by Toronto City Council. He was said to have delayed the abolition of the slave trade by inserting in a motion to abolish the slave trade the idea of it being done "gradually." It is a historical fact that William Wilberforce's motion the previous year had failed miserably, and that its follow-up motion was going to fail also and without Dundas' amendment, it at least got passed. It was the first time that Parliament had spoken against slavery or the slave trade. Henry Dundas achieved that through parliamentary skill.

But let's be clear that motion, while important, didn't stop anything because it was only a motion. A motion is an expression of opinion, but to get it to be a law, it has to go through first, second and third meeting, and it would also have to go through the House of Lords. And the House of Lords was at the time very much pro slavery. So it took a very long time for abolition actually to happen.

Dundas' last important contribution and achievement on the subject of abolishing slavery was that he appointed John Graves Simcoe to be Upper Canada's first lieutenant governor. Simcoe persuaded a member of the legislature to bring in a bill to abolish slavery. It passed. So Ontario is the first jurisdiction in the British Empire to have abolished slavery. By re-naming Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto City Council did not care about the actual history and the work of Dundas. It was all morbid self-accusation and the only thing worse than that is to accuse the wrong people. Henry Dundas was consistently pro-abolition. So I am working to rectify this injustice on his good name.

**Sir John A. Macdonald**

[*Macdonald was the first prime minister of Canada, serving from 1867 to 1873 and from 1878 until his death in 1891*.]

Sir John A. Macdonald is a bit more complicated. He said some things that we would wish he had not said. It is a fact that no one in Parliament at the time disagreed with him. Nobody voted against him. You see what has happened at Queens Park, where they have had to box his statue in plywood and hold hearings on what to do with him, his memory and his statue. I have found that on balance his memory has been unfairly maligned. So there's still lots to do on these subjects, and if you're interested in participating in any of this, you would be very welcome, to join me in my current activism to offer a fact-based assessment that offers context and balances our opposition to the policies enacted in the 19th century and their well-documented terrible impacts on Indigenous peoples.

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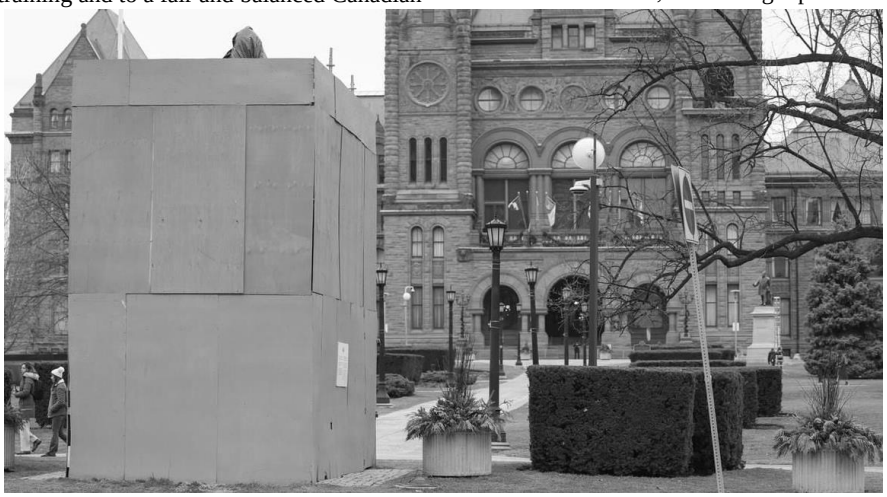
These are the types of things that activists do. It is what I am currently doing. It isn't a popularity contest, I can tell you. It is about doing the right thing. Activists carry on. And so I would like to say thank you for letting me carry on so. And for honouring me and my work over these many years. I wish all the best to the Scottish Studies Foundation and thank you for this lovely luncheon, especially Maggie McEwan, and for this very unexpected honour.



*The statue of Sir John A. MacDonald at Toronto's Queen's Park was boarded up after being vandalized in protest of Macdonald's involvement in establishing residential schools.*

# *Marching Together:*

*Preserving Culture, One Parade at a Time*

*By Jamie Lees*

*The Friday evening march through the streets of Amherstburg*

Each Friday evening at 7 p.m., the streets of Amherstburg, Ontario come alive with a sound as stirring as it is timeless: the skirl of the pipes. *Bagpipers in the Burg* has become a summer staple in this historic riverside town—a weekly celebration of Scottish heritage that unites residents, visitors, and musicians in a shared love of culture, pageantry, and community.

*Bagpipers in the Burg* was co-founded four years ago by Stu Smith and Kyle McDonald, two neighbours and parade enthusiasts whose creativity was first seen in their lawn mower parades. Inspired by the long-standing Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band tradition, Stu imagined something similar for Amherstburg. With a vision in mind and a passion for bringing people together, he partnered with Kyle to make it happen.

They turned to Bradley Way, a seasoned piper and the manager of the Windsor-based Scottish Society of Windsor Pipe Band. Bradley enthusiastically took on the challenge of assembling a strong crew of 10 to 13 pipers, inviting participation from members of various bands across Windsor and even Michigan. He scheduled performances around existing commitments, helping *Bagpipers in the Burg* establish itself as a regular and soul-stirring presence in Amherstburg.

Located just across the Detroit River, Amherstburg is rich with history. From the pivotal War of 1812 site Fort Malden, to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum chronicling Black history and the Underground Railroad, the town has long been a crossroads of culture and resilience. *Bagpipers in the Burg* now adds another layer to that legacy.

The group even caught national attention: In 2023, CBC's acclaimed series Still Standing featured Amherstburg and its resilient community spirit. Stu and Kyle promised the show's producers a 1,000-person turnout with community banners, Fort Malden re-enactors, and the full pipe band experience—and they delivered. The *Bagpipers in the Burg* parade wound through King's Navy Yard Park into the town square, a proud moment for all involved. (Watch the episode on CBC Gem, Season 9, aired September 26, 2023.)

But keeping this beloved tradition alive requires ongoing support. *Bagpipers in the Burg* operates on an annual budget of approximately $6,000, which covers operational costs, travel, recruitment, performance fees. Each week, the parade welcomes pipers and drummers from a rotating roster of groups—including members of the Scottish Society of Windsor Pipe Band, Windsor Police Band, Greater Mid West Pipe Band, Michigan Scottish Pipe Band, and Dal Riata Highland Society—who share their time and talent to keep the music marching on.

In May 2025, just weeks before the parade season opener, *Bagpipers in the Burg* was at risk of cancellation due to a sudden loss of funding. That's when Chris Gibb, Amherstburg's Deputy Mayor and owner of Gibb Insurance, stepped in. A lifelong fan of the pipes, Chris offered a personal donation to fully fund the 2025 season. His support was also deeply personal:

"I've always loved the bagpipes and I know how much people who visit our downtown enjoy them, so I was happy that my business was in a position to be able to help bring them back this year. Three Gibb brothers came from Ayr, Scotland in the 1850s and settled in Amherstburg. So it was also a way to tip my hat and thank them for making that decision. One of those three brothers was my ancestor and is the reason I get to live in such a fantastic town."

*Bagpipers in the Burg* continues to inspire, with growing interest from young people eager to learn the art of piping and drumming, says Bradley Way. Instruction is free, but outfitting a student in full kit costs around $1,500—and it typically takes about three years to reach parade-ready level. Still, the next generation is showing impressive passion and commitment."

"The dream? To grow *Bagpipers in the Burg* into a legacy initiative—one that educates, entertains, and brings people together across generations," says co-founder Stu Smith. "It's about more than bagpipes."

"It's about culture shared, stories told, and heritage carried forward, one Friday evening at a time," adds Kyle McDonald.

*Bradley Way with Chris Gibb, who quite literally "paid the piper"—funding the 2025 season of Bagpipers in the Burg*

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