Belfast Telegraph

Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

the Ulster-Scot

SATURDAY 5th JULY 2025



Win a Family Ticket to Belfast International Tattoo! See page 16



Superb Ulster-Scots 'sights and sounds' join the celebration at Armed Forces Day!

◇ *As huge crowds gathered in Newtownards, on June 21, Ulster-Scots musical talent and dancing flair added to the impressive festival of colour and pageantry.* *See Page 6*



◇ Communities Minister, Gordon Lyons, on the vital role played by Ulster-Scots in the founding of America

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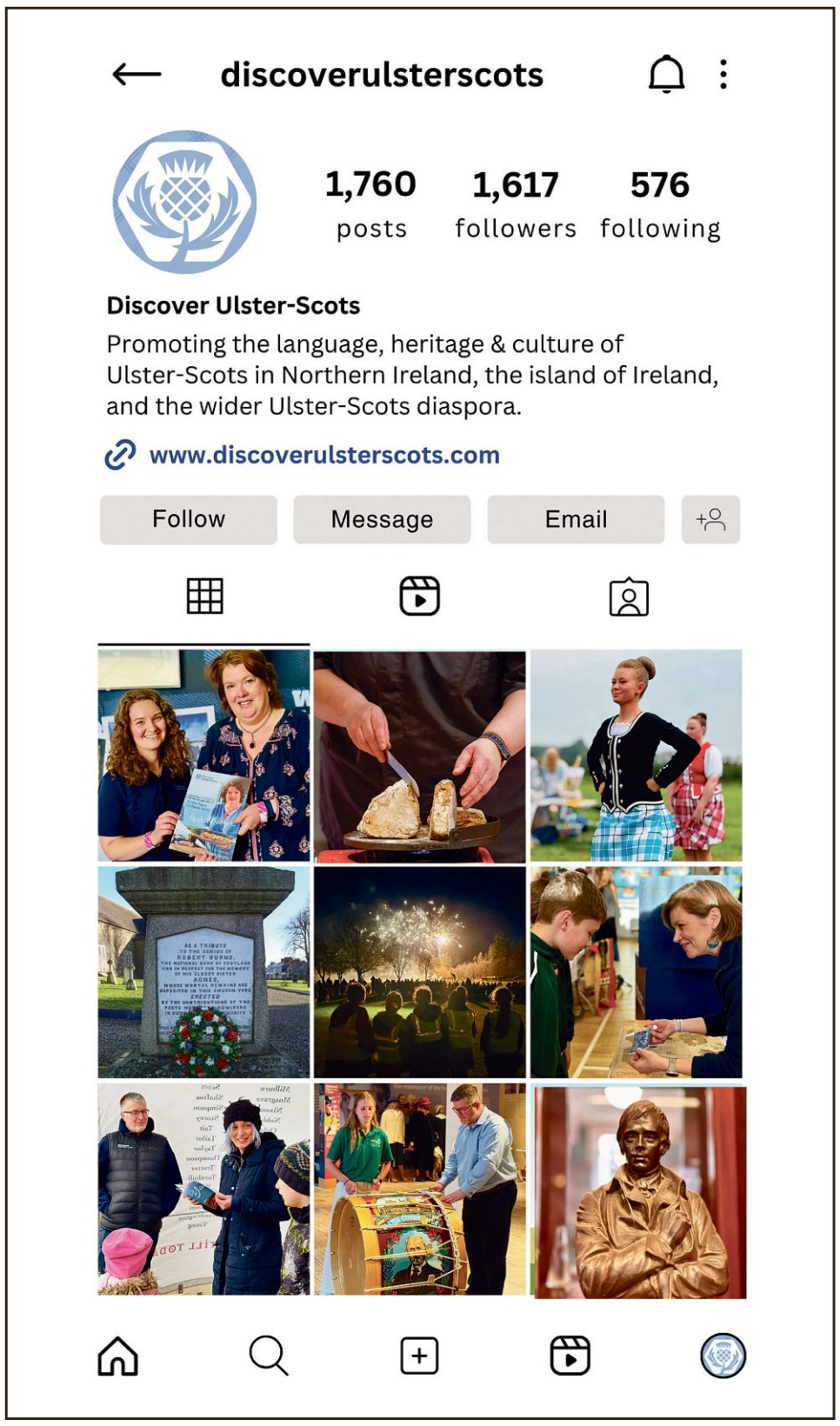
◇ Liberty before Loyalty: The Glorious Revolution and the Declaration of Independence

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◇ Agency Education Workshops bring smiles to young faces

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The Young Ambassadors were welcomed by Ulster-Scots Agency CEO Ian Crozier

Agency Welcomes Young Ambassadors

We were delighted to welcome the 2025 Young Ambassadors from The Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick to the Discover Ulster-Scots Centre in Belfast recently, as part of an action-packed visit to the UK and Ireland.

Made up of young people from across the United States of America, and one from Canada, the group enjoyed a history lesson, focusing on the central role played by Ulster-Scots (also known as the Scotch-Irish) in the founding of the US; a language lesson, examining Ulster-Scots words and phrases; and a lambeg drumming demonstration and competition.





The levels of interaction throughout their visit were terrific and they have now returned home with a lot more knowledge and understanding, which will undoubtedly enrich their celebrations of the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence next year.

If you would like more information about the strong, deep links between the Ulster-Scots and America, please visit our website - https://discoverulsterscots.com/emigration-influence/america.

As 2026 draws closer, we will be continuing to promote the key role our ancestors played in the emergence of one of the most important nations on earth, including the Ulster-Scots' unwavering dedication to liberty and freedom.



Word of the Issue
Gunk
Meaning: Shock /
"We got a quare gunk!"

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Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch



Summer Schools and Festivals promise something for everyone

As the sun (hopefully) starts 'splitting the stones' across the country, there is lots of Ulster-Scots activity taking place all over the land. Summer Schools and Festivals supported by the Ulster-Scots Agency will ensure that our culture, history, heritage and language will be celebrated, shared and enjoyed by thousands of people, young and old, from all walks of life.

The list of upcoming events is below.

Summer Schools

Mourne Valley Cultural Association
July 7 – 11

Tubrid Pipe Band, Kesh
July 7 – 11

Small Steps Community Development Organisation, North Belfast
July 14 – 18

Johnston Memorial Hall (Clogherney Presbyterian Church)
July 21 – 25

Portadown Heritage Tours (2 Day)
July 21 – 22

SEFF (Supporting, Empowering, Fair, Focused), Brookeborough
July 21 – 25

Donaghadee Fife and Drum Club (2 Day)
July 24 – 25

Portadown Heritage Tours (5 Day)
July 28 – August 1



A large crowd enjoys a presentation during the Maiden City Festival in 2024

Lislagan Primary School PTA (2 Day)
July 28 – 29

Schomberg Society, Kilkeel
July 28 – August 1

SEFF (Supporting, Empowering, Fair, Focused), Rathfriland
July 28 – August 1

Maiden City Festival
July 29 – August 4

Castlederg Young Loyalists Flute Band
August 4 – 8

Magherafelt Junior LOL
August 4 – 8

Schomberg Society, Annalong
August 4 – 8

Small Steps Community Development Organisation, North Belfast
August 11 – 15

Sollus School of Highland Dancers (2 Day)
August 12– 13

Sir Hans Sloane Centre, Killyleagh
August 14 – 20

Omagh Cultural Hub
August 18 – 22

Schomberg Society, Kilkeel (2 Day at Cranfield)
August 19 – 20

Schomberg Society, Kilkeel (2 Day at Ballyvea)
August 21 – 22

Festivals

Annahoe Junior Orange Cultural & Sports Group
July 5 – 11

Maiden City Festival
August 1 – 9

Portaferry Community Services
August 1 – 4





'I'll give it a go!' Ulster-Scots Summer Schools are great places to learn, socialise and have fun

Donaghadee Community Development Association
August 15 – 17

Discover Groomsport
September 5– 7

Derry & Raphoe Action
November 17 – 30.

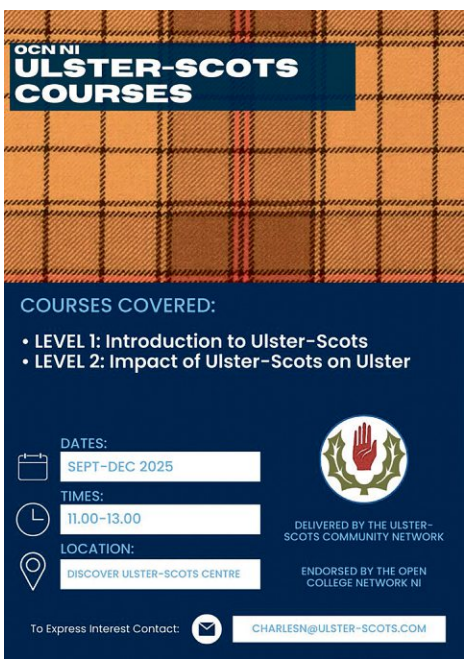
If you would like any more information about any of these events, please contact our team via email at reaneyd@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk / freena@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk or by calling 00353 7 4917 3876.

OCN courses return for autumn/winter 2025

The Ulster-Scots Community Network have announced the return of their popular range of courses for Autumn/Winter 2025.

Offered free of charge, and accredited by the Open College Network NI, the courses cover a wide range of topics, including history, language, faith and emigration, and much more besides. There is certainly much to be learned and enjoyed.

The details for Levels 1 and 2 are listed below (please note: only participants who have completed the Level 1 course can register to progress to the Level 2 version):



Level 1: Introduction to Ulster-Scots:
Duration: Four, two-hour sessions covering -
- Definitions and indicators of an Ulster-Scots Identity
- Overview of the Plantation of Ulster;
- Taakin with Ulster-Scots (language) and
- Ulster-Scots and family history

Schedule: September 23 & 30; October 7 & 14, 11am to 1pm
Venue: Discover Ulster-Scots Centre, Belfast

Level 2: Impact of Ulster-Scots on Ulster
Duration: Eight, two-hour sessions covering:
- Early 17th century Ulster and evolving Ulster-Scots Identity
- Impacts of Plantation on Rural and Urban Ulster
- Rural Revolution in 18th century Ulster and impact on Ulster-Scots
- A Leap of Faith; Ulster-Scots perspectives in 19th and 20th Century
- Home and Away: The Ulster-Scots Diaspora and Resurgence of the culture

Schedule: October 30; November 6, 13, 20 and 27; December 4, 11 and 18, 11am to 1pm
Venue: Discover Ulster-Scots Centre, Belfast (venue subject to change).

If any of the options listed above capture your interest and you would like to express an interest, please email charlesn@ulster-scots.com for further information. (Please note – lunch is not provided.)

Additional courses can also be delivered to specific groups at their own preferred locations, or in some circumstances, via Zoom. If interested, please also send any requests to the same email address.

Glenelly & Derg
335th Boyne Celebration

Saturday 5th July 2025 at 8 pm
Ulster-Scots Ceilidh in Donemana Orange Hall

Entertainment by:
Alastair Scott Ceilidh Band,
Piper & Ulster-Scots Poetry

Alastair Scott
Ceilidh Band



Tickets £5 per head to cover refreshments
Please contact Elaine on 07904019483 or
email:draulsterscots.info@gmail.com for further information!

Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSratha Báin
Derry Cittie & Stràbane Destrick Cooncil



Education Team share the Border Reiver Story

School pupils in County Fermanagh have been having a lot of fun learning about their local history, after members of the Agency's Education and Language Team held workshops in the county examining the legacy of the Border Reivers.

Pupils from six primary schools – Kesh, Lisbellaw, The Moat (Lisnaskea), Tempo, Irvinestown and Ballinamallard – met with Gary Blair and Shirlie Gregg, who engaged with them through an interactive presentation, games and quizzes.

The Reivers (the Scot's word for 'raiders') were a fiercely loyal, familial community, who lived along the border between Scotland and England. As the two nations warred, the border ebbed and flowed, with the families living there unwilling to trust either side to protect them and their interests. Instead, they looked to 'kith and kin', forming fierce bonds within family units. The uncertainty of life along the border meant that they also adopted increasingly nefarious means of supporting their families, a decision that was to have long-term implications for County Fermanagh, even if no one knew it at the time.

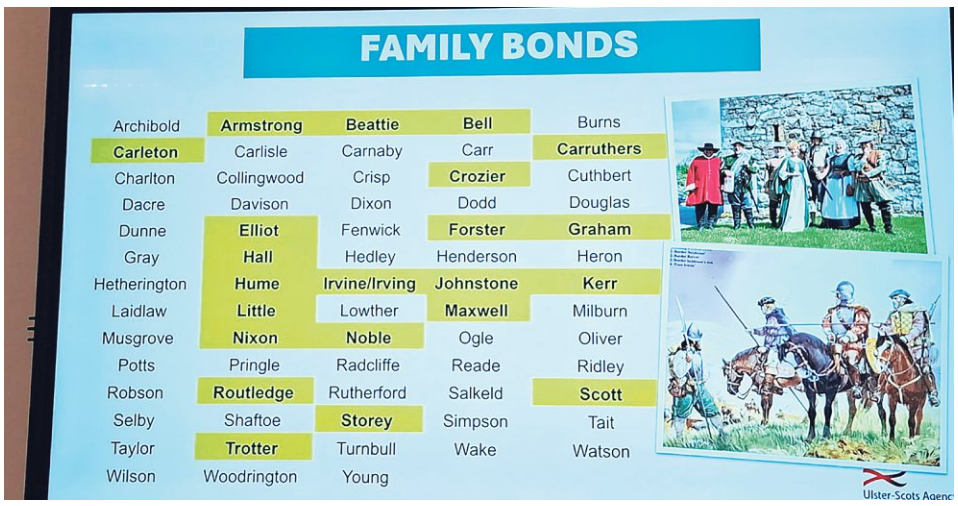
Following the union of the Scottish and English Crowns under James 1 in 1603, a single ruler controlled both sides of the border for the first time. The Reiver families were given a choice – stay and face the punishment for their crimes, which could include everything up to hanging, or go to Ireland and serve the King there as part of the Plantation of Ulster. Many, rather understandably, picked the latter option, with huge numbers settling in Fermanagh.







Pupils enjoy learning about their ancestors and how their traits and everyday sayings thrive today



A similar terrain to the lowlands of Scotland, and located in the corner of Ulster, about as far away as you could get from the 'long arm of the law' in England, it's evident why the Reivers felt at home in the county. And, while they didn't have any huge affection for King James 1, they did undertake their plantation responsibilities with seriousness, establishing several notable strongholds, including Crom Castle, Monea Castle and Castle Balfour. A few generations later, their grandchildren would rally to the cause of William III, Prince of Orange, as members of the 27th (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot, demonstrating that the traits their families were famed for in Scotland, including loyalty, bravery, cunning and horsemanship, still ran deep in the blood.

Fast forward to today, and Reiver family names are still to be found throughout Fermanagh. Armstrong, Bell, Elliott, Graham, Johnston, Maxwell, Nixon, Crozier and many more Reiver names fill schools across the county, including, of course, many of the pupils at the workshops. Indeed, everywhere you go, there are signs of the success of the Reivers in terms of community building, architecture and trade.

As you can imagine, as the pupils hear the exciting stories about the Reivers, and then realise these are their relatives from hundreds of years ago, it causes a tremendous amount of excitement. Feeding back after the workshops, the teachers were complimentary, one commenting: "The tutors have a lovely manner with the children, and they were really engaged. The PowerPoint was engaging and well designed. It was lovely to hear the children trying to use Ulster-Scots Language in their normal conversation." Another noted: "It was very engaging, informative and I did not realise how many words we used daily!"

As William III famously said prior to the Battle of the Boyne, "let ambition fire thy mind", and this is certainly the case with these young people as they grow in knowledge about the resourcefulness, courage, loyalty and thran nature (in a determined, positive sense) of their ancestors. It is fuel for their young hearts and minds, giving them an eagerness to know about the Reivers and the wider Ulster-Scots story.

Robert Huddleston Ulster-Scots Poetry Competition

The Robert Huddleston Ulster-Scots Poetry Competition, in association with Moneyrea Primary School and Nursery, has returned for 2025.

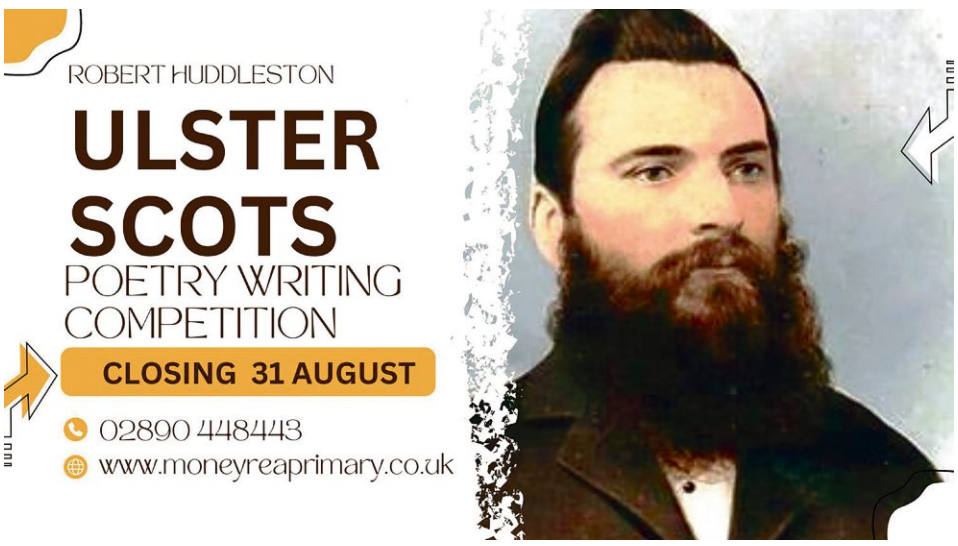
The competition is in honour of Robert Huddleston – also known as The Bard of Moneyrea – who is believed to have written thousands of poems in the Ulster-Scots language during his lifetime.

There are two separate competitions – one for general entries, and one for primary school pupils. All are welcome to take part. Poems may be submitted on any subject, but they must include phrases, expressions, and words from Ulster-Scots.

Cash prizes and gift vouchers are available for the winning entries!

Closing date: August 31, 2025.

For further information, including how to enter and competition T&Cs, please visit moneyreaprimary.co.uk and click on the 'Community' tab.



Plenty of noise in Bushmills this summer!



Many congratulations to pupils at Bushmills Primary School, who recently achieved Entry Level 3 OCN certificates in Lambeg drumming. The certificates were presented on June 19 by Gary Blair from the Ulster-Scots Agency's Education and Language Team



Schomberg Society Fifer John Shields performing at the Schomberg Society's VE 80 Street Tattoo in Kilkeel

Street Tattoo marks 80th Anniversary of VE Day

To celebrate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, the Schomberg Society held an Ulster-Scots Street Tattoo in Kilkeel town centre.

Thousands of people gathered to mark this special occasion, which included performances from marching bands, World Champion Drum Majors, the Kathryn Stewart Highland Dance Display Team, fifes and



The Kathryn Stewart Highland Dance Display Team entertaining the crowds

lambeg drums, singers and much more!

The Tattoo was officially opened by the Lord Lieutenant for County Down, Gawn Rowan Hamilton, while 100-year-old World War II veteran, Captain Gough, who hails from Newry and served with the Irish Guards, was in attendance to ring the symbolic peace bell during the celebration.

Following the Tattoo, a parade including marching bands, historical floats, military vehicles and children made its way to Mourne Esplanade for the finale, which included an Act of Remembrance, lighting of a beacon and fireworks extravaganza.

In addition, the Society also organised two educational exhibitions to mark the occasion. The first, which was held in Reivers House, Kilkeel, welcomed more than 400 people, including visits from five schools. The second exhibition was held in the 1st Presbyterian Church (Non-Subscribing) Newry, welcoming over 350 people, including pupils from six



Pupils from Newry High School visit the VE 80 Exhibition in 1st Presbyterian Church (Non-Subscribing) Newry



Pupils from Brackenagh West Primary School visit the VE 80 Exhibition in Reivers House, Kilkeel

schools in the Newry area. Educational talks were delivered to all the young people during their visits, highlighting the vitally important role Ulster-Scots played in World War Two and VE Day.

The Schomberg Society expressed their thanks to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for supporting the Tattoo, and the Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner's Office and Ulster-Scots Agency for their support with the VE 80 Educational Exhibition projects.

The event was a fantastic showcase of all aspects of Ulster-Scots to celebrate this important anniversary.



Captivating pageantry and colour as Ulster-Scots join celebration of Armed Forces Day

There was certainly no shortage of spectacle, speed and skill at Armed Forces Day this year, both in the air, as the world famous Red Arrows turned the skyline into a bright canopy of red, white and blue, and on solid ground, as the Campbell College Pipes and Drums, and the Kathryn Stewart Highland Dance Display Team, brought Ulster-Scots 'sights and sounds' to the masses.

Following on from our successful first involvement in this major event last year, the Agency was delighted to be back again, this time in Newtownards, celebrating the prominent role many Ulster-Scots have played, and still play, in our Armed Forces. We were also pleased to invite our friends from Belfast International Tattoo to join us at our stand, providing attendees with an opportunity to get their tickets for one of the truly spectacular Ulster-Scots events of the year.



The Kathryn Stewart Highland Dance Display Team entertaining the crowds



The Scottish Hornpipe Dance is always popular with those watching

Of course, few Ulster-Scots military heroes are better known than Blair 'Paddy' Mayne, a founder member of the SAS, who was born and lived in Newtownards and who features prominently in our D-Day Exhibition which was on display.

When it came to the music, the students from Campbell College, guided by their tutor, Grahame Harris, put on an impressive display of piping and drumming, with their set including the well-known 'Highland Laddie' and the ever popular 'Highland Cathedral'.

It was then over to the dancers from the Kathryn Stewart Highland Dance Display Team. They delivered four sets of dances throughout the afternoon, featuring a mix of traditional dances as well as the famous 'Scottish Hornpipe' dance.

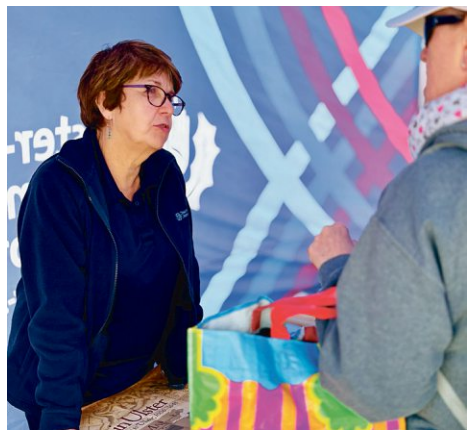
Young and old alike watched on with great appreciation (with some weans even joining in), before making their way into the Agency gazebo, where we had resources, literature and pruck available for people to take home and enjoy.



Campbell College Pipes and Drum filled the air with Ulster-Scots music at Armed Forces Day in Newtownards, on Saturday, June 21



Our exhibition about the prominent role played by Ulster-Scots in the Armed Forces during World War Two was well received

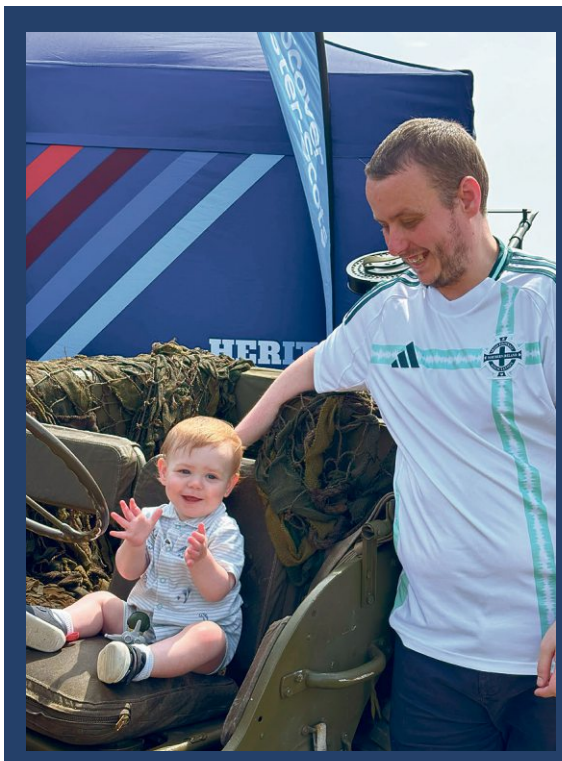


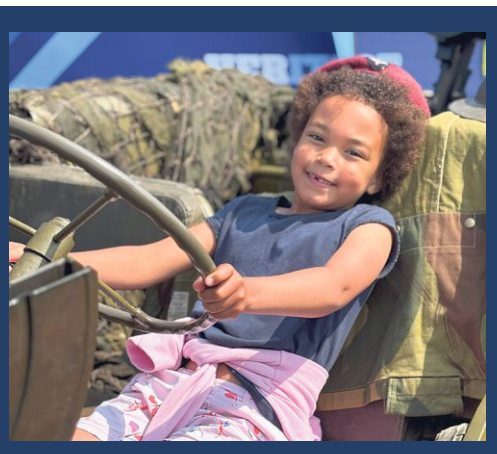
Visitors had plenty of questions about Ulster-Scots culture, history and language

Another eye-catching attraction was our classic military vehicle, 'The Willy's Jeep', with hundreds of people coming to get their photos taken throughout the day.

The world's first mass-produced, light weight, multi-purpose vehicle, it first appeared in 1941 (650,000 had been produced by Willy's, and also by Ford, by 1945), and is has been used widely by the forces, including by the SAS.

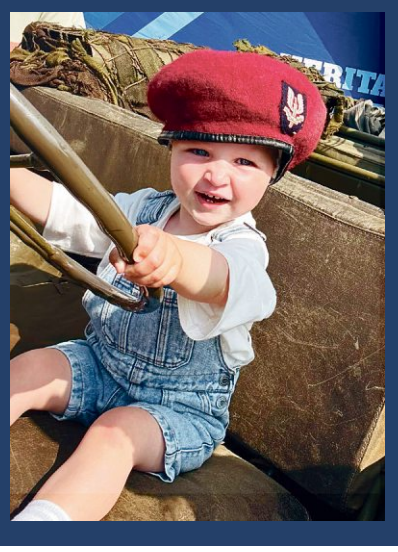
As we celebrated the brave men and women who have protected (and still protect) our cherished liberties and freedoms – many of which can be traced back to the principles and ideas of our Ulster-Scots forefathers – it was a pleasure to talk with visitors about all things Ulster-Scots. Now we can look forward to next year, when Armed Forces Day will head to another local town steeped in Ulster-Scots history, music, culture and language – Coleraine.













It was smiles all round when it came to photo time on The Willy's Jeep

Sir Harold Alexander: A WWII hero with Ulster-Scots roots

Given the truly global scale of the Second World War, Northern Ireland's contribution is astonishing in a wide range of areas, not least the high proportion of British commanders who were either men of Ulster birth or of Ulster stock: Brooke, Alexander, Auchinleck, Dill and Montgomery. Over 50 years ago the Ulster historian Hugh Shearman observed that successive chiefs of the Imperial General Staff were 'a major Ulster export'.

Harold Rupert Leofric George Alexander was born in London on December 10, 1891, and was the third son of the 4th Earl and Countess of Caledon.

Prior to becoming landed aristocrats, the Alexanders were an Ulster-Scots merchant family. James Alexander (1730-1802), the 1st Earl, made his fortune in India and purchased the Caledon estate straddling counties Armagh and Tyrone in 1776. He entered the Irish peerage in 1790.

At Harrow, Harold Alexander was an all-round sportsman, excelling at cricket, athletics, rackets, rugby, boxing, fencing and gymnastics. He also taught himself to carve in both wood and stone and began to paint which became one of the main passions of his life.

Alexander initially toyed with the notion of becoming an artist rather than a professional soldier. As this suggests, he was by no means a typical soldier, being a gifted linguist and speaking Russian, German and Urdu fluently.

He saw service in the Great War, commanded the 2nd Battalion of the Irish Guards, was wounded twice and won the MC, the DSO and the Légion d'Honneur.

In his history, *The Irish Guards in the Great War*, Rudyard Kipling observed that, 'It is undeniable that Colonel Alexander had the gift of handling the men on the lines to which they most readily responded ... His subordinates loved him, even when he fell upon them blisteringly for their shortcomings; and his men were all his own.'

In 1919, during the Russian Civil War, Alexander led the Baltic Landswehr, a Baltic-German unit, against the Bolsheviks.

In 1937 (at the age of 45) he became a major general, the youngest general in the British Army.

During World War II, Alexander oversaw the final stages of the evacuation from Dunkirk where he was the last man off the beaches and demonstrated sangfroid throughout. "Our position is catastrophic," a staff officer told him. "I'm sorry," he replied, "I don't understand long words."

He subsequently held commands in Burma, North Africa (where he gave Montgomery a free hand and allowed him to take all the credit), and Italy, including commander-in-chief Middle East and command of 18th Army Group in Tunisia. He then commanded 15th Army Group for the capture of Sicily and again in Italy before receiving his field marshal's baton and being made Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.

Alexander's military career had two great highlights.

First, on May 13, 1943, he sent Churchill a dispatch announcing: "The Tunisian campaign is over. All enemy resistance has ceased. We are the masters of the North African shores."

Secondly, on April 29, 1945, he received the surrender of a million German troops in Italy – 'the most coherent enemy group of armies still resisting' – and the first of the big surrenders.

Alexander was always mindful of the widespread criticism of Great War commanders for their lack of contact with ordinary soldiers. As a result, he spent more time with his forward troops than he did in his HQ. His popularity was immense. His strategic planning was informed by his acute appreciation of what war was like on the front line.

Harold Macmillan, who was minister resident in the Mediterranean between 1942 and 1945, rated Alexander highly, believing that his urbane manner and willingness to discuss and compromise were a sensible way to maintain inter-Allied cooperation. Macmillan and Alexander had similar personalities.

The Americans got on extremely well with Alexander, who was a significantly more gifted strategist than is often appreciated. He had the ability to retrieve difficult situations, as is evidenced by his command in Burma. Modest and self-deprecating, throughout his life he demonstrated that he was imperturbable, courageous and possessed a great capacity for friendship. Churchill was a friend who regarded Alexander as his favourite general.

James Holland accords Alexander a deservedly positive treatment in his book *The Savage Storm: The Bagle for Italy, 1943* (London, 2023).

> The Tunisian campaign is over. All enemy resistance has ceased. We are the masters of the North African shores



General Harold Alexander



General Sir Harold Alexander with General George S. Patton, US Army, and Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk, US Navy, on board USS Ancon (AGC-4), Kirk's flagship, during an inspection tour prior to the invasion of Sicily, on June 23, 1943



A Legacy of Connection and Opportunity

With the USA's 250th birthday next year, ***Communities Minister Gordon Lyons MLA*** *reflects on his ongoing work to build on the role of Ulster-Scots in the foundation of the United States.*



Minister Lyons is pictured after securing a unique role for Northern Ireland to have special status in the 250th anniversary celebratory event to mark the signing of the Declaration of Independence

The 250th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence, signed on July 4, 1776, is an event of global significance and it is vital that we are ready to mark the occasion and that our contribution to the birth of the nation is recognised.

Two Ulster-Scots had a unique role in the events of the original 4th July, Upperlands-born Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, who was effectively the Prime Minister of the 13 Colonies: and Strabane-born John Dunlap, who printed the original Declaration of Independence documents, which became known as Dunlap Broadsides. In later versions when colonial representatives added their signatures, at least five had direct links to Ulster, including Matthew Thornton who was born here, possibly in Lisburn.

The celebrations that will happen across the United States offer a fantastic opportunity for Northern Ireland to be part of this historic milestone, to strengthen relationships with the US and promote our shared cultural connections. We have a unique window to highlight our role in the formation of the United States 250 years ago and the role we continue to play today.

Strengthening links

Since assuming responsibility for the Department of Communities, I have been focused on strengthening our cultural and historical links as well as showcasing Northern Ireland as a place to invest, visit and discover more about the Ulster-Scots influence on modern America.

An early action was to draw together a working group representing key organisations in Northern Ireland with a contribution to make including the Ulster-Scots Agency, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Bureau in North America; and this has since been expanded to include National Museums NI, Tourism NI and a range of other partners.

In the spring, I travelled to the United States and met with key figures who will be involved in next year's landmark celebrations, including the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution and America250, the Congressional Commission responsible for planning the national programme. These discussions further strengthened the positive relationships we have, and we explored practical ways that US partners could work with my US/NI Working Group to celebrate the anniversary and give a voice to our shared heritage.

After engaging with America250 in Washington DC, I was delighted to be able to announce that we have secured a unique place for Northern Ireland at a major US event and celebration planned for June 2026. Importantly, this relationship is underpinned by a written agreement which reflects a shared vision to celebrate our historic connections and underscores the vital role the Ulster-Scots played in shaping America. This has been developed into a framework for cooperation including cultural exchanges, educational programmes and events, both in Northern Ireland and the United States as part of America250's initiative.

It has been hugely encouraging to see and hear the enthusiasm from partners in America for Northern Ireland to get involved. The comments of Rosie Rios, the Chair of America250 demonstrate this: "As we prepare for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we recognize the deep and lasting ties between the United States and Northern Ireland. I'm excited to invite Northern Ireland to participate in our celebrations next year, recognizing our shared history and the invaluable contributions of those with Northern Irish heritage to America's story. I look forward to working together to create meaningful moments of reflection and connection as we mark this historic milestone."

Unlocking £20 million

Of course, the outcomes we want to achieve will not be delivered by positive words alone, they will also require resourcing. While at the Smithsonian in Washington DC, I announced a £750,000 investment in the Ulster American Folk Park to support a project that will modernise the museum's Welcome Centre with updated interpretation and exhibitions. The project will also enhance the immersive storytelling experience across the open-air museum, ensuring the park's heritage buildings and collections are brought to life in new and dynamic ways. This announcement is the first step in unlocking over £20 million through the Mid South West Growth Deal.

Our story and the heritage we share with the US is a history worth telling. Our connections make Northern Ireland a deeply resonant tourist destination for many Americans wishing to learn more about their Ulster-Scots roots. I want to ensure we can attract these visitors and share the story of their ancestors' journey from our local shores, providing visitors with new ways to engage with this captivating narrative.

More recently, I have announced funding of £250,000 for organisations to mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which will help local organisations discover and celebrate the heritage links between Northern Ireland and the United States in the run up to July 2026.

We have made good progress, but there is still a lot to do. I want to make sure that our ambition matches the strength of the incredible story that we have to share, not just about our past, but about our present and future, as we work to build a legacy of connection and opportunity for people and communities in Northern Ireland and the United States.



Minister Lyons pictured outside the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, after announcing over £750,000 for the Ulster American Folk Park in County Tyrone, to boost cultural and heritage links with the United States



L-R Kathryn Thompson, National Museums NI, James Applegate, US Consul General, Joe Crowley, America250 with Communities Minister Gordon Lyons, Jen Condon, America250 and Gordon Milligan, National Museums NI in Washington DC



Minister Lyons pictured outside the Library of Congress, Washington D.C, after announcing a first-time partnership with Washington's historical institutions to uncover and tell stories of our shared past



Minister Lyons pictured at the Sollus Centre and Ulster-Scots Cultural Hub in Strabane, seeing how community-led initiatives are preserving and promoting our rich Ulster-Scots heritage

Two Revolutionary Declarations William of Orange (1688), and Thomas Jefferson (1776)


King William III Prince of Orange

Each July, many look back to the events of the Glorious Revolution of 1688-90, celebrated on 12th July, and regard those as an expression of loyalty, whereas the events of the American Revolution of 1776, marked on 4th July, are seen as an expression of disloyalty. This is wrong: both were expressions of liberty. The principles of liberty which were established in the British Isles in 1688 were reclaimed in the 13 British colonies in America in 1776, by the grandchildren of the 1688 generation.

Liberty before Loyalty

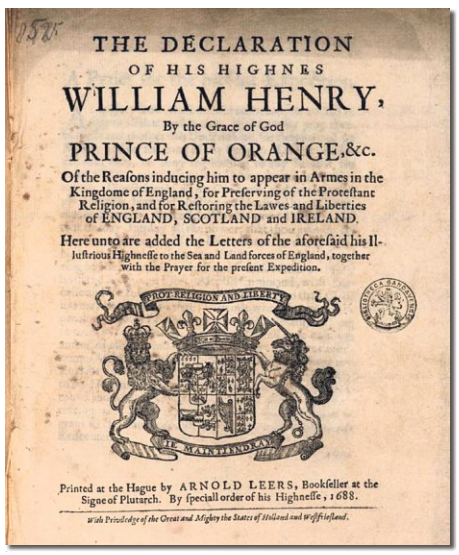
The Ulster-Scots have never been unthinkingly loyal. If so, they would have supported King James II against King William III. But our ancestors had a profound sense of justice and liberty, forged from their own ancestral experiences of tyrant 'absolute monarchs' and governments who had ruled over them in Ireland, Scotland and England.

THE 1688 DECLARATION

In 1685 there were two uprisings to oust King James II. They both failed, and the horrific reprisals James inflicted upon the civilian population have gone down in history as the 'Bloody Assizes'. Leaders across Europe saw that the plans of King James II and his cousin Louis XIV of France to dominate the continent had to be stopped. They formed a 'Grand Alliance' led by William of Orange and supported by the Holy Roman Emperor and Popes Innocent XI and Alexander VIII.

Before William's multi-national, multi-religious, liberation army arrived in November 1688, he prepared the biggest publicity campaign that Europe had ever seen. Entitled The Declaration of His Highness William Henry Prince of Orange, it was translated into multiple languages and 100,000 copies were printed in the Netherlands and secretly distributed. It had been written in Dutch by Gaspar Fagel, and translated into English by Scottish minister Gilbert Burnet (whose uncle had co-authored Scotland's National Covenant in 1638). The renowned philosopher John Locke was likely to have been involved, as was another Scottish minister called Robert Ferguson.

When William landed at Torbay in Devon, smuggled copies of the Declaration were publicly read aloud to gathered crowds in towns across the south of England, and eventually in other parts of our islands.


THE DECLARATION
OF HIS HIGHNES
WILLIAM HENRY,
By the Grace of God
PRINCE OF ORANGE, &c.
Of the Reasons inducing him to appear in Armes in the Kingdome of England, for Preserving of the Protestant Religion, and for Restoring the Lawes and Liberties of ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and IRELAND.
Here unto are added the Letters of the aforesaid his Illustrious Highnesse to the Sea and Land forces of England, together with the Prayer for the present Expedition.
PROTE RELIGION AND LIBERTY
Printed at the Hague by ARNOLD LEERS, Bookseller at the Signe of Plutarch. By speciall order of his Highnesse, 1688.
The 1688 Declaration in English

18 April 1689: Boston Revolt and the Siege of Derry

The British colonies of north America were also impacted. When copies of William's Declaration reached the port of Boston, Massachusetts, in April 1689, the people rose against King James II and placed the Governor, Edmund Andros, under house arrest – an event known as the 'Boston Revolt' – on the same day that the Siege of Derry had begun.

1690s Virginia: Williamsburg and the College of William and Mary

In 1693, with William III and Mary II secure on the throne as the first and only joint 'gender equal' British monarchs, the prestigious College of William and Mary was founded in the town of Middle Plantation, Virginia. Six years later the town was renamed as Williamsburg.

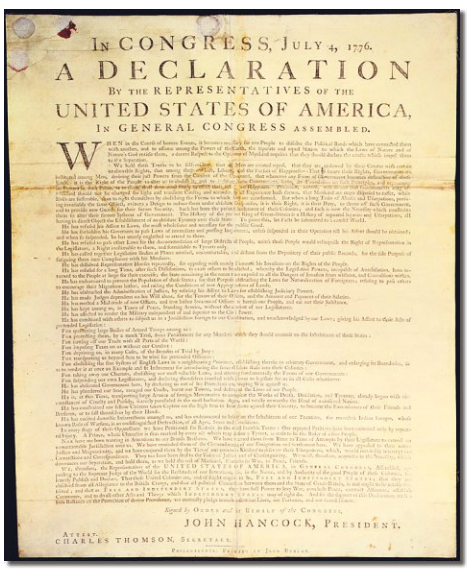
THE 1776 DECLARATION

The revolutionary thinkers of 1770s America were highly literate and deeply infused with the philosophy of the Glorious Revolution. The British colonists in America were treated as second class citizens by the London government, but while they vehemently opposed its policies, they continually asserted their loyalty to the Crown and to King George III, appealing to him to intervene.

Thomas Jefferson was one of the famous 'Committee of Five' who were tasked with writing the Declaration of Independence.


Declaration of Independence by John Trumbull

Many of the Founding Fathers had already expressed their thoughts in writing and independence was their last resort. Jefferson famously said: "... I would rather be in dependence on Great Britain, properly limited, than on any nation upon earth, or than on no nation ..."


IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.
A DECLARATION
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.
JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.
1776 Declaration (Dunlap Broadside)

> I WOULD RATHER BE IN DEPENDENCE ON GREAT BRITAIN, PROPERLY LIMITED, THAN ON ANY NATION UPON EARTH, OR THAN ON NO NATION
>
> *Thomas Jefferson*

Jefferson studied law at the College of William and Mary under Scottish-born William Small, who introduced him to the writings of John Locke. Jefferson may well have known of the 1688 Declaration, because the vocabulary and structure of each are remarkably similar.

'Evident', 'Liberty' and 'Happiness'

The two Declarations are documents of their time, with different contexts and content, but there are clear similarities. Jefferson's iconic opening to the 1776 Declaration of Independence is:

'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness...to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it'.

Jefferson then listed 27 grievances against 'the present King of Great Britain'.

William of Orange's 1688 Declaration had this, very similar introduction:

'It is both certain and evident to all Men, that the publick Peace and Happiness of any State or Kingdom cannot be preserved, where the Laws, Liberties and Customs, established by the lawful Authority in it, are openly transgressed and annulled...'

William then continued with 25 grievances against 'the King and Parliament'.

Expressions of community liberty have been a constant factor throughout Ulster-Scots history. Senator James Webb's famous 2004 book title *'Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America'* captures one aspect of our legacy, but our thinking and our writing has been every bit as important.

‘Tha Hairtlan Festival’ and 11th July Celebrations return to Kilkeel

The Schomberg Society is delighted to have launched its annual Hairtlan Festival, which is offering a fantastic range of more than 30 Ulster-Scots events during a two-week period in the Kingdom of Mourne.

The festival commenced on Thursday, June 26, getting off to a terrific start with events including an Ulster-Scots Panel Discussion and Debate in Kilkeel High School’s Lecture Theatre; an Ulster-Scots Gathering and BBQ at Cranfield Beach; 36th Ulster Division commemorations; Ulster-Scots musical showcases and competitions; and Ulster-Scots masterclasses in cookery, music, dance and language.

Looking ahead, upcoming events at the festival include an Ulster-Scots Tay Dance, a guided walking tour, exhibitions, wean’s football, an Ulster-Scots Summer Camp, Ulster-Scots Gospel Concert, and further masterclasses, before the finale events on 11th July.



Junior members of the Schomberg Drum Major Academy performing at the 11th July Night Open Air Concert in Kilkeel in 2024



Living History Re-Enactors will be centre stage during Tha Hairtlan Festival’s 11th July celebrations

11th July Celebrations

An important day in the calendar for people right across the country, the 11th July morning will get underway with a Highland Dance Competition organised by Kirknarra School of Dance, which will take place in the Queen Elizabeth II Park, Kilkeel.

An Ulster-Scots Family Fun Day will then take place from 11am – 2pm in the Queen Elizabeth II Park, featuring a fantastic lineup of Ulster-Scots activities and performers for everyone to enjoy. This includes marching bands, Ulster-Scots musicians and singers, Highland Dancing, Drum Majoring, and lambeg drumming.

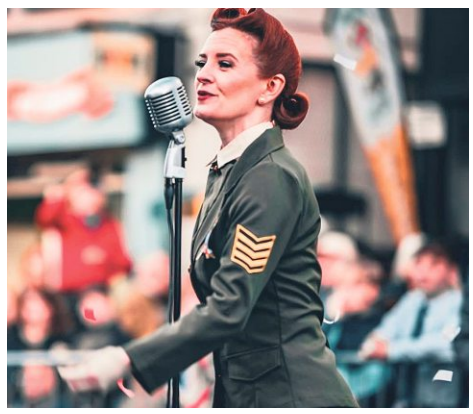
A wide range of Ulster-Scots re-enactor interactive campsites will be on display, along with educational exhibitions, craft workshops, and living history drama performers. There will be a brilliant range of entertainment for weans, including Highland Games and Tug o’ War, boxing, crazy golf, falconry, children’s inflatables, a petting farm, archery and target shooting, face painting, balloon modelling, a wean’s bonfire, and much, much more!

As the festival reaches its climax, the traditional 11th Night Pageant will make its way through Kilkeel town centre from 7.30pm, featuring a wonderful range of marching bands. Also taking part will be a variety of Ulster-Scots re-enactors, floats, horses, cannons, auld time banners, military vehicles, Highland Dancers, Drum Majors and children’s entertainers. Any children coming along are encouraged to dress in period costume and participate in the Pageant!

Following the Pageant, the 11th Night Open Air Concert will commence in the Queen Elizabeth II Park, beginning at 8.30pm and featuring a major open-air concert with Scottish Glasgow Rangers singing sensation, Robyn Keen, topping the bill.

The concert will also include marching bands, top class singers, musicians, Drum Majors, Highland Dancers and lambeg drums. Moreover, you can expect an Ulster-Scots battle re-enactment, living history campsites, cultural and historical exhibitions, and children’s entertainment. The night will then move towards a close with the traditional 11th Night Bonfire, including spectacular fire-breathing performers and a fireworks extravaganza, before finishing off just before midnight with a display of traditional fifing and lambeg drumming in Kilkeel town centre.

This year’s 11th July celebrations will have a special focus on celebrating VE 80 and the contribution made by Ulster-Scots to securing Victory in Europe during World War II. In particular, there will be VE80 themed historical floats, living history campsites and displays, educational exhibitions and a number of VE80 themed musicians and singers performing at the 11th July concert.



The Victory Rollers War Time Swing Band, who will be performing during the Schomberg Society’s 11th July Celebrations to mark VE80

The annual 11th July festivities in Kilkeel remember and celebrate the freedoms and liberties won for everyone during the Glorious Revolution and the Williamite Wars in Ireland. Of course, the Ulster-Scots played a key role in securing victories at the Siege of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne, and the Hairtlan Festival 11th July celebrations help tell these heroic stories through live drama performances, living history re-enactors and exhibition displays.

The Schomberg Society’s Hairtlan Festival is now a major tourist attraction, and everyone is encouraged to go along to experience and enjoy all that is good about Ulster-Scots.The Schomberg Society placed on record their sincere thanks the Ulster-Scots Agency; Newry, Mourne and Down District Council; Newry, Mourne and Down District PCSP; and the National Lottery Community Fund for their support with Tha Hairtlan Festival 2025.

For further information on Tha Hairtlan Festival, please don’t hesitate to get in contact with the society via telephone: 077753222553 or email: schombergsociety@gmail.com. You can also follow them on Facebook, by searching for ‘Schomberg Mourne UlsterScots’.



Fusefm Mourne Radio Returns to the Airwaves



Popular radio presenters, David and Sharon Hutchinson, have returned to the Fusefm Mourne Studio to bring you more entertainment and top music

The Schomberg Society’s Fusefm Mourne radio station has returned to the airwaves for Summer 2025! The broadcast commenced on Friday, June 27, at 8am and will be ongoing for two weeks, finishing on Thursday, July 10.

The Radio station will be broadcasting alongside the Schomberg Society’s annual Hairtlan Festival. Popular local presenters and DJs will keep everyone updated with the festival events and activities taking place.

The radio station can be tuned into within the Kilkeel area on 106.2fm; on your Alexa; via the free Fusefm Mourne App on smart phone; and online via the Fusefm Mourne website - www.fusefmmourne.co.uk.

A spokesperson from Fusefm Mourne commented: “Fusefm Mourne is a fantastic outreach initiative for the Schomberg Society and is a very successful way for us to promote the best of Ulster-Scots music, culture, traditions and language.”

The Schomberg Society and Fusefm Mourne both expressed their heartfelt thanks to the Ulster-Scots Agency for their continued support with their radio broadcasts.

Agency opens Ulster-Scots Music and Dance Tuition

The Ulster-Scots Agency has opened an Ulster-Scots Music and Dance Tuition programme for voluntary and community organisations.

The funding will support music and dance tuition from September 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026.

Please note: There are TWO separate applications for funding - one for Dance Tuition and one for Music Tuition.

Dance Tuition: This grant supports up to 30 weeks of Highland or Scottish Country Dance with an option which supports accreditation.

Music Tuition: The grant supports up to 20 weeks of tuition across a range of Ulster-Scots musical traditions, including drum major tuition, and offers support for accreditation.

Applications close at 3pm on Thursday, July 17, 2025.

For further details and to apply, visit the Ulster-Scots Agency website – ulsterscotsagency.com/news. Groups can also contact the Ulster-Scots Community Network for advice and support on 028 9043 6710. For further information, contact the Ulster-Scots Agency's Community Development Officer, Derek Reaney, on reaneyd@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk or 07843 279 912.



Pupils at Denamona Primary School with their Scottish Country dance tutor, Ruth Clarke



Calling all flute and accordion bands - We need your help!

We are creating a new Ulster-Scots tune book and we need support from local bands to bring it to life.

We're looking specifically for tunes linked to Ulster-Scots heritage and fall into four categories: Tunes from Ulster, Scottish Tunes, Sacred Tunes, and Tunes from the Ulster-Scots Diaspora across the world.

Think about the tunes you regularly play, or tunes your band used to play – do any of them fall into these categories?

After gathering the tunes, our team of experienced musicians will collate, research their Ulster-Scots links, and organise the pieces into the different sections. We will then publish the book, providing the Ulster-Scots community across Northern Ireland and beyond with a vital tool for strengthening the band scene, while simultaneously promoting and protecting our musical heritage.

This is an opportunity for your band to be part of an exciting legacy project.

Tunes can be provided with music or in ABC (letters only) format.

Please email your contributions to education@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk by Thursday, July 31, 2025.





‘Noo yer taakin!’ Belfast pupils learn more about Ulster-Scots language, history and culture

School pupils from across North Belfast have been having a ‘wheeker’ time at workshops run by the Ulster-Scots Agency Education and Language Team in recent weeks, learning more about the words, phrases, culture and history that surround them in daily life.

Organised to coincide with Ulster-Scots Heritage Week, pupils from Glenwood Primary School, Springfield Primary School, Fane Street Primary School, Carrs Glen Primary School, Nettlefield Primary School, Blythesfield Primary School, and Holy Family Primary School, all travelled to the Discover Ulster-Scots Centre in the city. There they embarked on a fun-filled time of learning





with Ulster-Scots Agency and Ulster-Scots Community Network Team Members, including interactive presentations, games, pruck, and even some singing and dancing – ‘Heid, Shoothers, Knaps and Taes’ – resulting in wide smiles and lots of happy chatter!

Arranged in cooperation with Small Steps Community Development Organisation, the workshops were extremely well received. We trust all the pupils feel motivated to go on and learn more about the rich Ulster-Scots heritage which can be heard and seen all over Belfast, and which is a key part of its vibrant cultural tapestry.







Glenelly & Derg
335th Boyne Celebration

Thursday 10th July 2025 at 7.30pm
Ulster-Scots Cultural Celebration and BBQ in Kilclean Orange Hall
Entertainement by:
Houl Yer Weesht
Lislaird Highland Dancers
Kilclean Pipe Band



Tickets for BBQ £10 can be purchased from Keith Kerrigan tel: 07783036388



Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSratha Báin
Derry Cittie & Stràbane Destrick Cooncil

DERRY & RAPHOE ACTION

Ballymena-born physicist was part of Manhattan Project

From his roots in County Antrim to his role in the top-secret development of the atomic bomb, discover the extraordinary life of Samuel Curran, a physicist whose work helped shape the 20th century.

In the spring of 1912, Sarah Carson Crowe, Samuel Curran's mother, went to Ballymena, her home town, a few weeks before the birth of her second son – perhaps so that he could be born an Ulster-Scot. Shortly afterwards she returned to her husband and family in Wishaw, in north Lanarkshire, Scotland.

Samuel studied mathematics and physics at Glasgow University before earning his PhD from Cambridge.

At Cambridge's Cavendish Laboratory Ernest Rutherford ('the father of nuclear physics' under whose direction John Cockcroff and the Methody-educated Ernest Walton split the atom) was his head of department. He worked closely with CTR Wilson, who won the Nobel prize for physics in 1927 and who was the inventor of the cloud chamber, which was widely used in the study of radioactivity, X rays and other nuclear phenomena.

War effort

During the Second World War, he joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment along with his wife, fellow physicist Joan Curran (née Strothers), to work on the development of radar and the proximity fuse.

The Currans' radar equipment would also be used by all Bomber Command aircraft and Coastal Command.

The proximity fuse would prove crucial in the destruction of over 90% of the German V-1 rockets.

Joan Curran was credited with having 'the scientific equivalent of gardening green fingers'. One of her innovations was the scattering of strips of tin foil in the air, disrupting enemy radar. In June 1944 the RAF dropped huge quantities of tin foil over the English Channel, simulating an invasion force of ships heading towards the Pas de Calais, helping to convince the Germans to concentrate forces there rather in Normandy.

Manhattan Project

In 1944, Samuel Curran went to work on the Manhattan Project (the codename for the US-led development of the atomic bomb) at the Radiation Laboratory in Berkley, California, where his specialism was the separation of isotopes of uranium.

In his spare time, he invented the scintillation counter, a device which is still used in laboratories around the world for measuring radioactive activity.

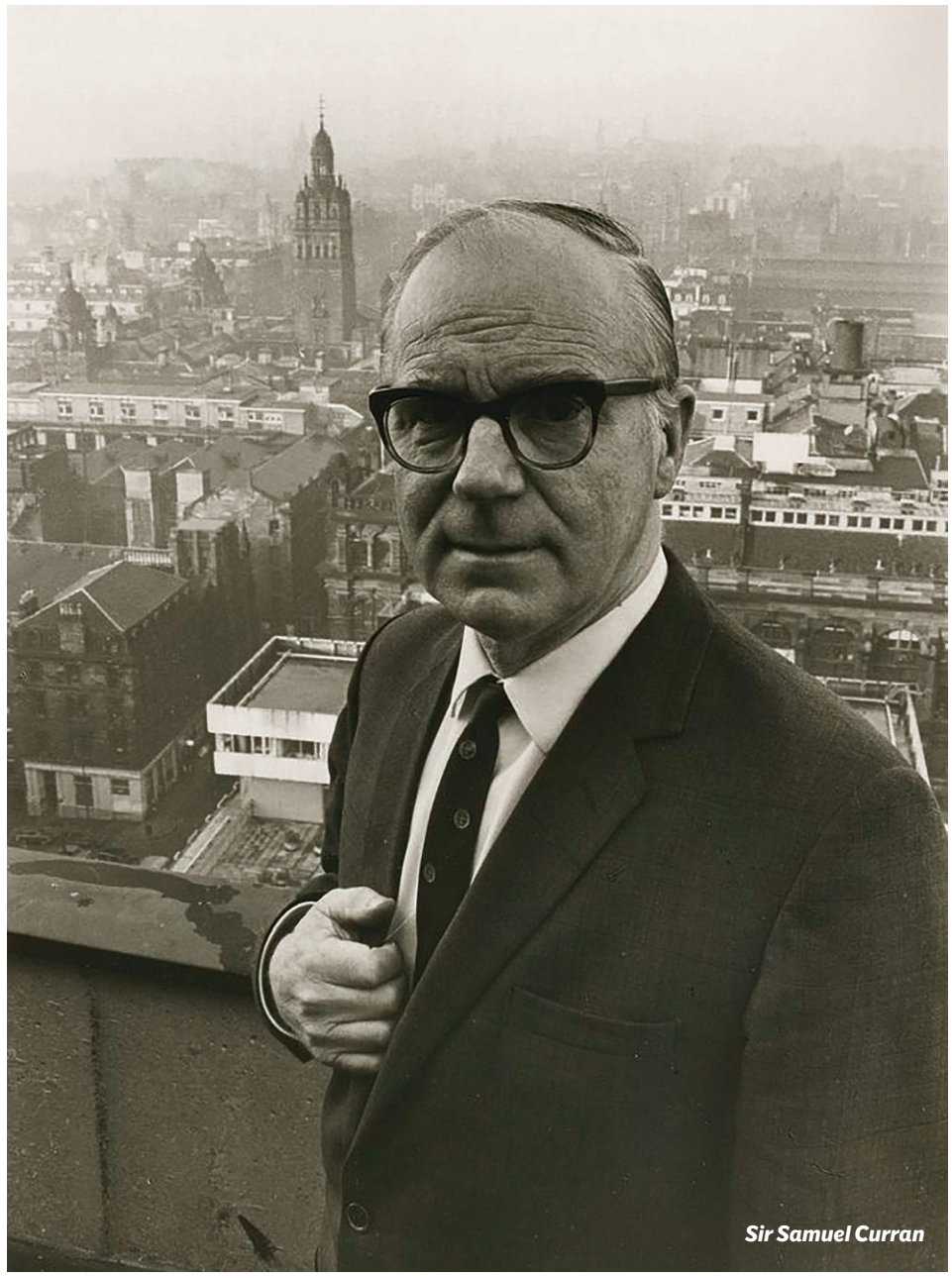
Reflecting on his role in the creation of the atomic bomb, Curran admitted to Tam Dalyell, the long-serving Scottish Labour MP, that he did not 'agonise' as much as some of his colleagues (and here he probably had Sir James Chadwick, who also worked on the separation of isotopes of uranium, in mind) but he did wonder about 'where the ultimate results would lead'.

In the early 1990s, Curran told Sir Tom Devine, Scotland's pre-eminent historian, that the Allies were in the dark about how far advanced the Nazis were in developing their own bomb but it was vital that the Allies built their bomb before the Nazis did.

Curran deplored the horrendous loss of life at Hiroshima and Nagasaki but maintained the dropping of the bombs was essential to bring the war in the Far East to a close.

After the war, Curran returned to the UK to work at the University of Glasgow despite being offered a post at the University of California.

Between 1955 and 1958 he worked on the development of the British hydrogen bomb at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, the main centre for nuclear power research in the UK, and then became chief scientist of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston for a year.


Sir Samuel Curran

University of Strathclyde

In 1959 Curran became the principal of the Royal College of Science and Technology, a prestigious institution which produced many of the great engineers and scientists of the 19th and first half of the 20th century. He steered the institution through to full university status as the University of Strathclyde in 1964.

Curran was appointed the university's first principal and vice-chancellor. Strathclyde was the first new university in Scotland for almost 400 years and the first technological university in the UK.

Curran was passionate about the importance of technology. He blamed much of the industrial and manufacturing decay of the UK on the failure of government and the universities to appreciate the importance of technological education. He stressed the importance of co-operation with industry and was a pioneer in the appointment of top industrialists as visiting professors.

'Scientific Revolution'

At the Labour Party Conference of 1963 Harold Wilson, the new party leader, spoke of his party's plans to harness a 'scientific revolution' to modernise British industry and drive economic progress, saying: "The Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this revolution will be no place for restrictive practices or for outdated methods on either side of industry."

The influence of Sam Curran may be readily discerned in this.

As prime minister, Wilson told Tam Dalyell: "Sam is one of the people in higher education whose good opinion of our policy I really covet." Dalyell seems to have acted as a conduit between Curran and Wilson.

Curran served on a wide range of governmental bodies relating to science and technology.

He was responsible for the creation of an Engineering Laboratory in East Kilbride whose facilities were available to all the Scottish universities. Access was later extended to QUB, a development perhaps attributable to his Ulster birth.

Polish connections

As honorary president of the Scottish Polish Cultural Association, he forged an extremely successful working relationship between Strathclyde and the technical University of Lódz. This was even more remarkable because it was achieved during the Cold War when Poland was still part of the Soviet bloc.

Following the birth of their intellectually disabled daughter, the Currans established the Scottish Society for the Parents of Mentally Handicapped Children (now known as Enable Scotland). He served as its president from 1964 to 1991.

According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, two things particularly irked Curran: the very low salaries paid to scientists by comparison with businessmen and the state's failure to recognise how science and technology had contributed to WWII.

Sir Samuel Curran died on February 15, 1998. Tom Devine described him as 'a man of gravitas and intellect' but without 'pomposity or side'. Tam Dalyell regarded him as 'one of the great Scots of the 20th century – in the tradition of the heroes of the 18th-century Scottish Enlightenment'. No one would seriously quibble with either assessment.



Samuel Curran was appointed the University of Strathclyde's first Principal and Vice-Chancellor

> ONE OF THE GREAT SCOTS OF THE 20TH CENTURY – IN THE TRADITION OF THE HEROES OF THE 18TH-CENTURY SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT

Taakin Braid

In the last two iterations of this column, we discussed the roots of the Ulster-Scots language in Ulster and how people continue to use it in their daily lives, often switching to and from English depending on their location and audience. In this piece, we will continue to think out loud about the Ulster-Scots language and its future in the digital age.

You may have heard of Gen Z? Did you know that we have a new name for people born in 2025? This demographic cohort is named by futurist and demographer, Mark McCrindle, as 'Generation Beta'. These individuals are expected to grow up in a world characterised by rapid technological advancements, with significant integration of artificial intelligence (AI), smart homes, and virtual reality. They will likely experience a highly connected and digital environment from a very young age.

In the last 18 months, we've seen an increase in the use of AI technology for research and for content creation, and it is now regularly pre-installed onto new computers and mobile phones from the moment we purchase them.

Whilst AI can help us access vast amounts of information, boost our productively, and save us a lot of time, there are grave concerns on its future impact on employment, critical thinking and our privacy.

Where does the Ulster-Scots Language (USL) fit into this new "artificially enhanced" landscape? We have noted previously that the Ulster-Scots tongue has been mainly "caught" rather than "taught", in that it has relied on oral transmission from one generation of speakers to the next. Over the years, the Ulster-Scots Agency has been working hard to create new educational materials for the classroom and the community to support this transmission. We also want to increase awareness of not just how we speak but the historical reasons for why we speak as we do. Happily, there have been significant successes introducing our culture and language into formal education.

Coming back to technology for a moment, the internet is dominated by the main world languages, with English accounting for 49% of website content. That is not going to change anytime soon. **As speakers of a minority language, we must lever AI to our advantage, maximising opportunities to capture, collate, collaborate, converse and create in Ulster-Scots, remembering that the AI algorithm depends on what it can find online.**

Over the centuries people have expressed the USL by spelling it using the only writing system they know i.e. English. This is a highly subjective exercise and has resulted in many ways emerging to spell the same word. For example, (just) *jist, jaist*, (for) *fir, fur, fer*, (with) *wi/wi'/wye*, and so on.

The lack of an agreed spelling system has not prevented us from encouraging writing

> IN THE LAST 18 MONTHS, WE'VE SEEN AN INCREASE IN THE USE OF AI TECHNOLOGY FOR RESEARCH AND FOR CONTENT CREATION, AND IT IS NOW REGULARLY PRE-INSTALLED ONTO NEW COMPUTERS AND MOBILE PHONES FROM THE MOMENT WE PURCHASE THEM.



in Ulster-Scots. The prestigious Linen Hall Ulster-Scots Writing Competition, which takes place annually, is just one of several such events that provide an important platform for USL in the public square.

Over the last 20 years, many USL enthusiasts have supplied us with lists of words, grammar books and spelling guides, not to mention new poems, songs and even translations. This has, to an extent, improved literacy, by strengthening the link between the sounds of the language and the written word.

The more we can write in USL online, the more this will feed the AI algorithm. Here is the result of an AI prompt for a poem in USL:

A Smoor o' Rain

The cloods cam creepin ower the brae,
Wi' grey airm's streetchin wide,
An doon the skye did greet its tears,
As rain began tae slide.
The stanes war sleekit, glessy-wet,
The dykes ran wi' a sang,
An puddles danced in dreepin lanes
Whar bairns wad splash alang.
The coos stood glum, the hens took tent,
The thunner grummled low,
An yet, there's peace in pitter-pat
That only rain kin show.
A cuppa by the ingle-neuk,
The kettle steams sae braw,
While ootside, nature taks a wash,
An we jist watch in awe.

Whilst it's not perfect, it's not bad at all, often relying on Scots words to fill in the blanks.

I also asked AI to analyse the poem, and the result was very enlightening:

Rain: *More than just weather, it symbolises renewal, calm, and introspection.*
Cuppa by the ingle-neuk: *Represents warmth, home, and the comfort of routine.*
Nature washing itself: *Suggests cleansing and the cyclical nature of life.*

We cannot foresee the future implications of this technology on our world, both for good and ill, but surely there is a case to be made for a more unified, accessible, community Ulster-Scots writing system? Something we can all use and learn to use (that will still reflect the dialectal differences which exist across Ulster) but will be especially useful to create content online. One example of this could be the creation of an online USL dictionary, which those interested could access from anywhere in the world and would be a source of knowledge for generations to come.

This process will take time, but I've seen a real willingness in our communities to learn more USL than simply a wheen o wurds.

With these future developments in mind, we are creating a brand-new, exciting USL language course! *'Dinnae Houl Yer Wheest'* will be trialled in the autumn, and we would love you to sign up and be a part of it. Email us at language@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk for more information.

Whut mair can a say? If we aa wurk thagither, wi ivrieyin o iz daein oor pairt, a quare lock can be wrocht. (What more can I say? If we all work together each playing their part, a great deal can be accomplished).





> AS SPEAKERS OF A MINORITY LANGUAGE, WE MUST LEVER AI TO OUR ADVANTAGE, MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES TO CAPTURE, COLLATE, COLLABORATE, CONVERSE AND CREATE IN ULSTER-SCOTS, REMEMBERING THAT THE AI ALGORITHM DEPENDS ON WHAT IT CAN FIND ONLINE.

Glenelly & Derg
335th Boyne Celebration

Friday 1st August 2025 at 7pm
Ulster-Scots Cultural Celebration and BBQ
in Tullywhisker Orange Hall
Entertainment by:
Ulster-Scots music by Malcolm Fisher
Blue Thistle Highland Dancers
Piper, Ulster-Scots Poetry



- * Tickets can be purchased from Leslie Sproule tel:07759026434 or Bryan Finlay tel:07727629757
- cost £20 per ticket*



Derry City & Strabane District Council
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSratha Báin
Derry Cittie & Stràbane Destrick Cooncil

DERRY & RAPHOE ACTION

MAIDEN CITY FESTIVAL
PRESENTS

ULSTER SCOTS SUMMER DRAMA SCHOOL

The cast will rehearse and perform the play 'Fair Faa Ye', written by Jonathan Burgess.

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE

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10AM - 3PM DAILY

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Join us for a fun rehearsal process, culminating in a performance on Monday 4th August.
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THE LINEN HALL BELFAST 1788

Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

THE LINEN HALL
ULSTER-SCOTS



WRITING COMPETITION
30 JUNE - 29 AUGUST 2025
LINENHALL.COM

Weans Wurld

Roon tha wurl wi tha Ulster-Scots

For hundreds of years, Ulster-Scots have not only shaped our homeland but travelled across the globe, bringing knowledge, skills and talents to nations near and far.

Politicians, engineers, scientists, explorers, military commanders, musicians, missionaries, industrialists, and even an astronaut – the Ulster-Scots have made their mark in a lot of different ways, making the world a better place as they have gone along.

Perhaps you have a job you would like to do when you grow up? Chances are that there is already an Ulster-Scot who has gone before you, leaving a path for you to follow and build upon as you make your way through life.

To find out more about some of the most famous Ulster-Scots adventurers, pioneers and inventors, visit our website – discoverulsterscots.com (or scan the QR code below).

Like them, you too can play a role in inspiring the next generation of Ulster-Scots to use their gifts, talents and resolve to follow their dreams.







Win a family ticket to Belfast International Tattoo!

We have a brilliant competition for you to enter, with a very special prize up for grabs courtesy of our good friends at Belfast International Tattoo – a Family Ticket to their annual extravaganza!

Taking place at the SSE Arena in Belfast, and featuring a spectacular array of pipers, drummers, flautists, singers, dancers and military personnel from nations across Europe, North America, Africa and Oceania, it is truly an event not to be missed.

To be in with a chance to win this excellent prize, unscramble the letters below to reveal some of the counties where Ulster-Scots have influenced government, international relations, scientific discoveries, fashion, music and much more. Write the name of the country in the space provided and then mark these countries on the map:

EAAMCRI

.....

ADANAC

.....

AWENLEAZDN

.....

NHIAC

.....

DAINI

.....

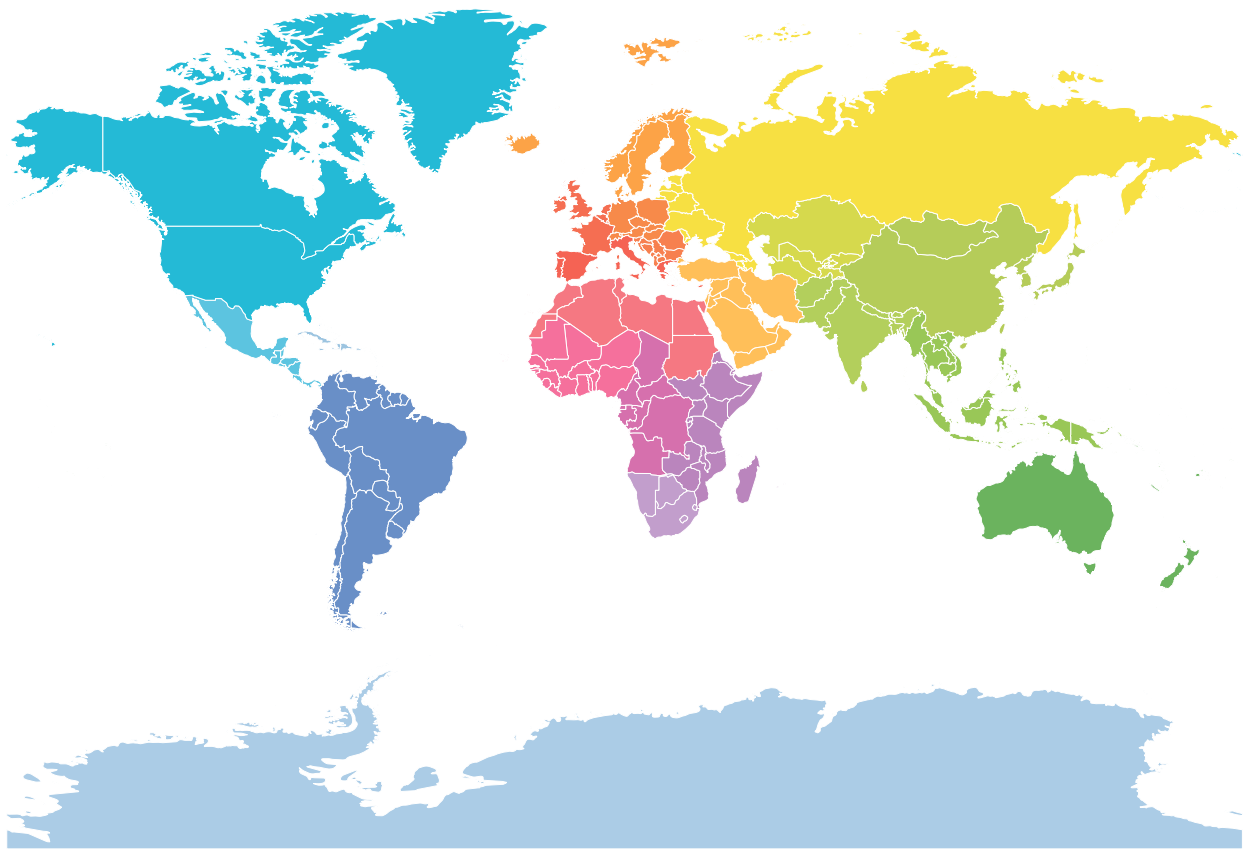
LSRATAUAI

.....

CTARCAATNI

.....

WORLD MAP



■ Take a photo of your answers and labelled map, and email it to competition@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

This competition will close on Thursday, July 31, so get your entry in soon!

The winner will then be notified, and the Family Ticket will be posted out by Belfast International Tattoo.

(A Family Ticket covers 2 adults and 2 children under 16. The show is at 2pm on Saturday, September 6, in the SSE Arena, Belfast.)

Good luck!