

JON AND JUDY MCLAREN TRIP TO SCOTLAND AUGUST 2025



A380 from our BA A380



Edinburgh Castle, from Princess Street



Old "Tea Bus", Jon in driver cab; entry & steps to top deck

The reason for our trip was for Judy's 65th birthday. The highlights for her were: attending the 75th Royal Military Tattoo at the Edinburgh Castle, and to enjoy an Afternoon (Birthday) Tea served on this old 1967 Leyland bus.



Jon McLaren at McLaren Terrace; just off of Haymarket Street, Edinburgh



Jon & Judy in Castle Royal Gallery Foyer



Jon with Drum Majors



Judy with Ukraine Dancer who performed with Ukrainian Navy Band



Regimental Bands formed the number 75



Drum Majors and Judy



Officer's hats, with gloves and sword



Judy & Jon at – “McLaren’s on the Corner” (Bar & Grill) Restaurant; fish & chips, mashed peas, “McLaren’s Steak Pie”, glasses have McLaren’s Brand Ale; and of course, a Guinness



I introduced myself as a former cop in California. This cool Sergeant of Police Scotland-Edinburgh agreed to a photo.



Traditional Scottish Breakfast, with haggis



Victoria Street, Edinburgh



The main street in Callander



Other side street views of Callander



On our way west, we tried to see Stirling Castle. NO parking there, or within a 15 minute uphill walk. We stopped in Callander for lunch.



The Old Kirk, Balquhidder



Rob Roy MacGregor Grave" ??

I suggestt any McLaren visiting Scotland should see Balquhidder. Not only because of the concentration of the McLaren population from that area, and many who are still there, but also to to see "Creag an Tuirc" - the Boars Rock.



We started the trail to the Boars Rock behind the new church. Eventually there are two different signs. In some stretches the trail is not always clear. About 40 minutes later, we arrived at the plateau where the rock stands – Creag an Tuirc. The spectacular view made the hike worthwhile. The trek on the way down was different, and it is a story which I will never live down.



We stayed up there for about 40 minutes enjoying the view of Balquhiddy and Loch Voil. I zigged, when I should've zagged, and took the wrong "trail." The trail quickly became not much more than a deer trail, but it looked like I wasn't the first one to do that. The narrow rutted path was worn going down hill. Judy was frantically asking if we would be stranded over night. I said as long as we continue downhill, and follow the shallow stream running toward the buildings in Balquhiddy, we'd be okay. Eventually, after going over some tedious ledges, ditches, and wide rocky streams, we arrived at a fenced sheep pasture, near the church. After climbing over a locked gate, I looked to my right and saw the trail we should have been on, about 40 yards away. Turned out to be an adventure.

We continued westward, in our Ford Puma (like a Ford Focus) rental car, on very narrow highways, to our three night stay in Glencoe.



Beechwood Cottage B & B, Glencoe



Oban, a nice coastal town



For a few £ donation we entered a rubber duck in a local charity race.



Considering my prior service with the U.S. Coast Guard, I was glad to talk with two Members of HM Coast Guard in Oban. They suggested a great place for lunch.

An all day venture in Fort William was to ride the Jacobite Train. Judy wanted to ride this train not only for the fun ride into the Scottish countryside, but also because this train was used in a Harry Potter movie.



Glenfinnan Station



Jacobite Train on
Glenfinnan Viaduct, also
shown in a Harry Potter movie

The destination of the Jacobite Train was the coastal village of Mallaig.



At a local side street pub, a very large hard cider made the train ride back to Fort William that much more enjoyable.

In Scotland, at one of the more than several Nature Conservancies, I “own” a sq. ft. lot, which helps to keep large groves of trees from clear cutting. Just SE of Duror (south of Glencoe), my “land” is within a domain called – “*Highland Titles*.” Being a landowner, they gave me the (very informal) title of Lord, or “Laird.” Thus, I am a “*Laird of Glencoe*.”



Highland Titles nicely maintains the entire property; as a park. My lot is about 8 trees in to the left. I also own this protective bird house.

Our final drive in Scotland was from Glencoe to Glasgow. We made sure to stop in the towns of Milton of Campsie and Kirkintilloch; both just NE of Glasgow.

Scottish Census Records, dating back to 1831, show my direct paternal McLaren lineage residing in Milton of Campsie and Kirkintilloch. I am the first son of the first son going back six generations.



We lunched at The Fells Café, as suggested by a former resident, who we dined with in Oban.



"Downtown" Milton of Campsie



Another view of central Milton of Campsie



8 Cowgate St, in **Kirkintilloch**, was the address listed on the 1841 Census. It is actually a church. Who knows what Census Takers were thinking of?

Although we didn't have time to check any cemeteries for possible McLaren relatives, it was cool walking around both villages knowing that is where my direct paternal family ancestors roamed in c.1831 – 1852...

Our last stop in Scotland was Glasgow. We stayed one night at a nice hotel. We walked around Central Glasgow; took a few miscellaneous photos.



View of River Clyde, from our hotel room



Downtown Glasgow, not far from Central Station



One last place, with the McLaren name – a piano store around the corner from the hotel.

In the morning, at the hotel, we had one last traditional Scottish Breakfast; Judy tried haggis also. We then took an express train to London. It was a very smooth ride, like riding on air.

Submitted by: Jon McLaren