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**For immediate release**

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**Fergus Scottish Festival**  
& Highland Games

## **Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games**

### **Celebrating 73 Years of Tradition and Innovation!**

Following last year's tremendous success, the 2018 Fergus Scottish Festival has put together an even bigger line-up of talent and entertainment for this summer's 73<sup>rd</sup> annual celebration, held the weekend of August 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> in the beautiful town of Fergus, Ontario. The dynamic board of directors and dedicated team of volunteers continue to take the Festival back to its Scottish roots and revitalize the four pillars of Scottish heritage and culture: Pipes and Drums, Clan Gatherings, Heavies Competitions, and Highland Dance. This year, tradition and innovation collide to bring you the best Festival yet!

This year's Featured Guest is Graham McTavish, the Scottish actor who portrays Dougal MacKenzie, War Chieftain of Clan MacKenzie, in Diana Gabaldon's unbelievably popular series, *Outlander*, now a television drama series currently airing on STARZ. Graham will be onsite all weekend long, with scheduled autograph signings and appearances on Saturday and Sunday. We are also thrilled to announce a Scottish Brunch with Graham, Gaelic singer Gillebride MacMillan, and famed Canadian book publisher Douglas Gibson on Sunday morning at the Wellington County Museum and Archives! This is a separately ticketed event and is selling out fast!

Whether you want to rock out, chill out, or belt it out, this year's entertainment lineup is sure to satisfy the musical tastes of every festivalgoer, young and old! The Red Hot Chilli Pipers bring their bagrock back to Fergus at Friday night's Tattoo'd in Tradition ceremony. Albannach also returns with their bareknuckle pipes and drums to deliver the fire and thunder of Scotland! We've got the Glengarry Bhoys, Stephanie Cadman, Cantrip, The Shananigans, Fair Warning, Bob McLean, D'Arcy Furniss, and many other talented Celtic performers who will perform at various venues throughout the weekend. If you're looking for a more melodious approach to traditional Scottish music, join Tommy Leadbetter and Friends in the air-conditioned, newly renovated, comfort of the Fergus Grand Theatre on Saturday night. In addition to the many other talented Celtic artists performing throughout the weekend, Gillebride MacMillan of *Outlander* TV series fame returns to share his lyrical interpretations of Gaelic song and tradition.

Whisky Tastings will be available onsite on Saturday and Sunday, with two Women's Only tastings! Join us for an experience that will warm your belly and enrich your soul. With the help of a variety of well-regarded purveyors, we will walk you through the fundamentals of whisky appreciation. Learn the processes behind single malts and blends, tutor your nose and palate on the act of tasting, and dip your toe into a world that continues to inspire highlanders and poets alike.

The Festival is also proud to host the largest clan gathering in Canada, with over 40 Scottish clans in attendance. The Heritage Tent is sponsored by the Ontario Genealogical Society in partnership with numerous organizations where you can come down and research your family's Scottish history and even take a DNA test!

New this year, the Heavies Competition welcomes the Canadian Scottish Athletic Federation's 2018 Women's Championship on Sunday! Our Heavies events continue to showcase the spectacular strength and skill required by local, national, and international men and women in their attempts to master the Caber Toss, Hammer Throw, Weight-for-Distance, Weight-for-Height, the Stone, and Sheaf Toss. Also new this year, Clash of the Regiments Tug-of-War competition! Join us on Main Field Sunday to cheer on teams comprised of currently serving soldiers of the Canadian Armed Forces wearing their regimental kilts while competing for a grand prize and most importantly, bragging rights!

The Scottish tradition of Highland Dance also remains a focal point of the Festival, and this year's competition invites dancers to compete in the Fergus Scottish Festival Championship, the Pre-Premier and Premier Highland Competition, and the National Competitions. Come see these talented young dancers perform their dances of victory, celebration, and Scottish nationalism as they compete for well-deserved trophies and prizes.

Then, let the skirl of the bagpipes and the crack of the drums lead you to the breath-taking sounds of the solo and massed band competitions on the main field. Enjoy the many impromptu performances throughout the weekend as these incredible musicians practice their craft and graciously share their talents with passersby.

From Friday night's Tattoo to Sunday's closing ceremonies, the 2018 Fergus Scottish Festival is filled with cultural events and activities perfect for those who are young, and young at heart. Sunday's Family Day is loaded with activities for everyone; come try your hand at mini golf, archery, curling, crafts, swordplay, and meet The Fergus Friends! Check out the interactive displays in the Heritage Village, including the Jacobite Re-enactment Camp, Highland Cattle, sheep shearing, blacksmithing, and handicrafts. Visit the Tea tent, Highland Pub, concessions, and vendors as they contribute to the wonderful festival atmosphere felt by everyone throughout the weekend. With so many offerings at such great value, the 2018 Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games welcomes you to join the party and take a trip to Scotland... without the airfare!

For more information, please visit [www.fergusscottishfestival.com](http://www.fergusscottishfestival.com)