

# MORE THAN JUST BAGPIPES

## A handful of traditional Scottish songs

For many people Scottish music means bagpipes. Although the pipes and pipe bands are something of a symbol of Scotland, the country is rich in other forms of traditional music, too. Here are some popular Scottish folk songs which are often performed – and not only in their homeland.

### Loch Lomond

*You'll take the high road, and I'll take the low road  
And I'll be in Scotland before you  
But me and my true love will never meet again  
On the **bonnie**<sup>14</sup>, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.*

Taking the name of a Scottish lake as its title, “Loch Lomond” probably refers to a failed Scottish rebellion in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many **captured**<sup>15</sup> Scots were taken to England, where some of them were **released**<sup>16</sup> and others were **executed**<sup>17</sup>. The song is sung by a rebel who is about to be executed. He says he will take the ‘low road’ (through the **afterlife**<sup>18</sup>) and will therefore reach Scotland more quickly than his friend who will take the ‘high road’ (walking home over the high hills).

### Barnyards of Delgaty

*He promised me the two best horses  
Ever I set my eyes upon  
When I got home to the Barnyards  
There was nothing there but skin and bone.*



“Lorelai” is a deeply felt lyric about a relationship ending, one in which the singer realises that he did not work hard enough to make it work. His lover was *the glue*<sup>13</sup> / *holding [them] together*. Now the relationship and its memory is only *dust on the window*.  
**Ryan Scott** (Australia)



Traditional Scottish music is still inspiring and performed all around the world. American musician Dan Zanes recorded a modern version of “Loch Lomond”.

“Barnyards of Delgaty” is one of the best known Scottish bothy ballads – work songs composed and sung by farm labourers. The narrator is hired to work at a barnyard (an area next to a **barn**<sup>19</sup>, where farm animals are kept) in a place called Delgaty. The work conditions are worse than he was told, but he does not seem to care, as he is more interested in girls anyway.

### Peggy-O

*As we marched down to Faneri-o  
Our captain fell in love with a lady like a **dove**<sup>20</sup>  
And they called her name pretty Peggy-o*

“Peggy-O” is a love song: An army captain falls in love with a girl and tries to **persuade**<sup>21</sup> her to leave her home and go with him. When she refuses, he **threatens**<sup>22</sup> to burn her city down. The song is popular in the US as well and has been recorded by many folk singers, with slightly different

lyrics. But no matter which version, the poor soldier is unsuccessful with the girl.

### Auld Lang Syne

*Should auld **acquaintance**<sup>23</sup> be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
And auld lang syne?*

“Auld Lang Syne” was written by the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Scottish poet Robert Burns. He used a traditional melody and some traditional words and added his own lyrics. The title of the song is an expression in Scottish dialect which refers to ‘good old times’. The song, remembering old times and old friendships, is popular in English-speaking countries and has been translated to many other languages. It is traditionally sung when **parting**<sup>24</sup> and at New Year’s Eve celebrations.

**Zuzana Pernicová** (CR)

## VOCABULARY

### CHRISTMAS SONGS

- hippopotamus** [hɪpəˈpɒtəməs] – hroch
- holly** [ˈhɒli] – cesmína
- ivy** [ˈaɪvi] – břečtan
- pagan** [ˈpeɪɡ(ə)n] – pohanský
- grace** [ɡreɪs] – milost
- hymn** [hɪm] – chvalozpěv, náboženská píseň
- minister** [ˈmɪnɪstə] – duchovní
- mercy** [ˈmɜːsi] – milosrdenství
- descent** [dɪˈsent] – původ

### THE FLEET FOXES

- is rooted in** [ˈruːtɪd] – je zakořeněna v, vychází z
- to evoke** [ɪˈvəʊk] – vyvolávat dojem
- cog** [kɒɡ] – kolečko
- glue** [ɡluː] – lepidlo

### SCOTTISH SONGS

- bonnie** [ˈbɒni] – krásný
- captured** [ˈkæptʃəd] – zajatý
- to release** [rɪˈliːs] – propustit

- to execute** [ɪkˈsɛkjʊt] – popravít
- afterlife** – posmrtný život
- barn** [bɑːn] – stodola
- dove** [dʌv] – holubice
- to persuade** [pəˈsweɪd] – přesvědčit, přemluvit
- to threaten** [ˈθret(ə)n] – vyhrožovat
- acquaintance** [əˈkweɪnt(ə)ns] – známost
- to part** [pɑːt] – loučit se