

# BICENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

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**BANFF, 1824**

VISIT OF

**GEN. JOSÉ DE SAN MARTIN**

LIBERATOR OF

**ARGENTINA, CHILE, AND PERU**

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## Until 6<sup>th</sup> Sep The Museum of Banff

An Exhibition explaining the background to the 1824 visit, the Ambassador's visit in 1950, masonic connections and modern day links with Argentina.

(Wed 2-4; Thu 10-1; Fri 10.30-1; Sat 10:30 to 1)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Aug to 1<sup>st</sup> Sep Duff House

An Exhibition explaining the achievements of General San Martin, his fellow Liberators and James 4<sup>th</sup> Earl Fife, how the General travelled from London and his stay in Duff House; and what Banff looked like in 1824.

(Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun 10-4.30 – last entry 4pm; closed for lunch 12-1)

## Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Aug Airlie Gardens

The Vinery 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday Family Fun Day 10.30 to 2.30

Crafts stalls, local organisations, artists, games, face painting and so, so much more.

Taster Argentine food available.

Friends of Duff House will have a mini San Martin Exhibition.

Guided Walks "Banff in 1824" – with a free map – just come along on the day to the FoDH stall.

## Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Aug Banff Castle

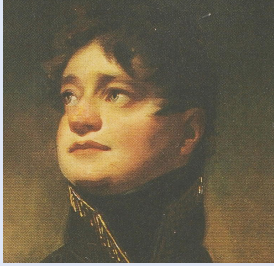
Celebration to Commemorate Planting of the Monkey Puzzle Tree 1-3pm

In 1950 His Excellency Carlos Hogan, the Argentine Ambassador, planted a Monkey Puzzle tree at Banff Castle. Come and help celebrate with entertainment including Deveron River Brass Band and Banff Castle Pipe Band.

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General José Francisco de San Martín was a name to be conjured with in Banff early in the nineteenth century. He became a great friend of James, the 4th Earl Fife, after they met during the Peninsular Wars in Spain. At that time they had both given allegiance to Spain, but José was born in Argentina, and in 1812 was drawn back to South America. Interestingly the Burgess Roll of Banff for 1824 lists José as from Colombia, rather than Argentina; at the time this was correct as José's last South American domicile was in Guayaquil, originally in Peru, annexed to Colombia and today in Ecuador.



It was actually James Earl Fife – who had returned to UK in 1811 after his father died – who organised José's trip via London, managing the politics of switching allegiances to now fight against Spain, after being one of their most successful military leaders!

As a great strategist, José was the General who led Argentina (then known as the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata) to gain independence from Spain, and also led armies to liberate Chile and then Peru. He ceded to another Libertador, Simon Bolivar, in 1822 in Peru, left his life in the military and politics and came back to Europe.

For 7 days in 1824 he visited his friend James at Duff House – the really well liked and respected fourth Earl Fife. José made great effort to get here, spending five days travelling by stagecoach from London, and presumably the same for the return journey. Recent research is revealing that the visit was more than just visiting his friend, but a planning exercise for some international diplomacy to better the governance of Peru, something the British government of the time were interested in. During that stay, specifically on 19th August, the town of Banff granted General San Martín the freedom of the Burgh. He probably cut quite a dashing figure at the time; this painting between 1825 or 1827 was quite representative of his visit to Banff.



José went to live in France, and died on 17th August in 1850. James planted a Monkey Puzzle tree in his memory, which still survives in Duff House woods. One hundred years later the then Argentine ambassador, Carlos Hogan, paid a celebratory visit to Banff on 25th October. Part of his visit was planting a native Argentinian “Monkey Puzzle” tree in Banff Castle grounds – where it can be seen today together with its plaque.

Just over two years later Banff is given another accolade in memory of José de San Martín. Carlos Hogan went on to become the Argentine Minister of Agriculture, and arranged for a square in Buenos Aires to be called “Plaza Ciudad de Banff” – Banff Square – “in recognition of the hospitality given to the Argentine Liberator Don José de San Martín by Banff in 1824, and the freedom of the Burgh they conferred upon him.” That Plaza retains that name to date in Buenos Aires.

Today General San Martín is one of the most revered people in many South American countries, and celebrating the bicentenary of his visit to Banff will take place at the weekend of 17th and 18th Aug, and more formally on Mon 19th with a private event at Duff House.