

Get your kilts ready for the Fort Nottingham Highland Gathering

The 10th Fort Nottingham Highland Gathering is returning to the KZN Midlands after a break of five years.



Image by Val Adamson: The 10th Fort Nottingham Highland Gathering is returning to the KZN Midlands

Inspired by the world-famous Braemar Gathering, the Fort Nottingham Highland Gathering is typically a day of nostalgia, heritage and ancient tradition. All the rousing spectacle, athletic prowess and hauntingly beautiful music will be celebrated in abundance – with a contemporary family-friendly local twist.

The core focus is as always the various Highland Games showcasing brute strength and stamina: tossing the caber; tug-o'-war, walking the weight, the kilted mile, hammer throw, weight over the bar and stone put. The athletics have been sponsored by Kings Arms in memory of Doug Kirton.

The competitive athleticism is complemented by the grace and precision of Celtic dancing, piped bands and of course, rousing bagpipes. Guests are invited to get into the spirit of the occasion by wearing tartan, eating shortbread and sampling whisky!



Image by Val Adamson: Tug of War – classic eight men teams, the only sport performed backwards!

This year's event will feature a range of stalls of locally-sourced market wares and Midlands Meander-based merchandise; food and beverage stalls, field demos, dog events and children's activities – including face-painting and jumping castles. In attendance will be, among others, the Pietermaritzburg and the Durban Caledonians, the First Medical and Pietermaritzburg Caledonian Pipe bands.

"We are delighted to be able to host the Fort Nottingham Highland Gathering again after the long Covid lockdown. Like so many other events, starting up again is always something of a challenge. However, we are beyond delighted that the games are going ahead this year. We are grateful for the generosity, goodwill and possibility-thinking of so many people and organisations in making this event possible; and thank Louise Fox whose land surrounding the fort we are using for the games. We look forward to welcoming friends and family to Nottingham Road for what promises to be a magical day," said Victor Muhlenbeck, one of the organisers of the event.



Image by Val Adamson: Walk the Weight – carrying a 74kg granite rock carried over a circuit between two poles. Current record is 218m

Situated about 50km north-west of Pietermaritzburg, about the same distance from the Drakensberg mountains, and about 150km from Durban, Fort Nottingham is quiet and small with houses dating back to the late 1850s and boasting a quaint town hill and museum which is in the Old Fort itself.

The fort was commissioned by Queen Victoria in 1856, and the Scottish link is from settlers from Scotland who inspired the naming of nearby Balgowan, Glencoe and Dundee.

The Nottingham Highland Gathering will take place on 10 September. To book tickets, go [here](#).

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