

If you care about Scottish traditions, this is the most important thing you'll read for a long time. So please do read on. The future of Scottish heritage needs your help!

My partner, Adele Telford, and I have stepped in with a last minute rescue package to save Scotland's last surviving traditional taran weaver, D.C. Dalgliesh, of Selkirk, Scotland, which was on the point of closure.

Here's why: if this mill had gone the way of so many others, then 90% of all family tartans would never be woven again. Most people could never wear their family tartan!

That's not being dramatic. It's a fact. Without this mill, the only tartans that you, or anyone, would find to wear, ever again, would be the popular best-selling designs such as Royal Stewart, Black Watch, and a few hundred other setts that the big mills produce in volume. The thousands of recorded tartans for everyone else's clan, family, business, club, or district would have become effectively impossible to obtain - ever.

We didn't want to see that happen. We know how much tartans matter, to people like us all over the world. So whether or not this is a sensible business decision, Adele and I are staking our commitment and personal savings on the faith that we can turn this amazing mill's fortunes around.

We need YOUR help! (Please.) This is a time you can make a serious difference

Here's how to help

We think that the main reason D.C. Dalgliesh found itself in such financial trouble was mostly that not enough people knew about their unique products. So what we really need right now is for YOU to help us spread the word.

Unless you're a famous celebrity or journalist yourself (or know any, in which case please forward this!) the single most important thing you can do is to put up a link or banner advertisement somewhere on the web, perhaps your own web site or blog. There's a page with ideas to help you do this, for D.C. Dalgliesh Supporters. Even 'liking' the D.C. Dalgliesh site on Facebook, or tweeting, would help. But a permanent link is what we really want.

So please visit the Supporters page at [www.dcdalgliesh.co.uk/support.html](http://www.dcdalgliesh.co.uk/support.html) and spread the word in any way you can.

Here's why it matters

D.C. Dalgliesh is the ONLY tartan weaving mill able to produce a short length, just for a single garment like a kilt or skirt. The minimum weaving length at most mills is 30-60 yards. D.C. Dalgliesh will weave just four yards, in single width tartan. This makes a special weave affordable for almost anyone, so anyone can wear their own family tartan.

That's not the only reason. All D.C. Dalgliesh fabrics are produced on traditional flying shuttle looms, which give the tartan the 'natural' or 'kilting' selvedge that any proper kilt should have. Most mills have been installing modern high speed computerised looms that need each line of 'weft' to be cut at each side, leaving untidy threads that give a thick edge when tucked in, and can fray. D.C. Dalgliesh is the only mill to promise this.

And that's not all. D.C. Dalgliesh are woven with heavier yarns, and more tightly woven per inch, than is normal elsewhere. This gives their fabrics a quality you just don't find anywhere else. And it's all done by hand, with immense skill and care. Their product is without doubt the finest tartan on earth. It would be a tragedy, not just today, but for future generations, if it weren't to survive. That's why Nick and Adele stepped in. Here's what we're doing

Until now we branded our D.C. Dalgliesh fabrics as Glen Affric. Over the coming weeks we'll be redesigning our site to make their true heritage more prominent. We'll also be increasing the range of tartans available from D.C. Dalgliesh, for anyone wishing the very best tartan on earth.

Meanwhile, Nick and Adele will be working with the D.C. Dalgliesh management to find new ways to return the mill to prosperity. The one thing they don't want to do is to modernise it; we'll do nothing to undermine the qualities that makes this mill so unique.

Nick has already (almost single-handedly!) produced a new D.C. Dalgliesh web site, and a fascinating short video, about the D.C. Dalgliesh production process which you'll also find there. The aim of both is to show the world just how much skill, care, and time goes into each and every piece of fabric. If you can rebroadcast this video anywhere, please do! (Instructions on the site.)

Here's what you can do (again)

Visit the D.C. Dalgliesh Supporters page, and please add a link (or encourage someone else to) anywhere you can. We can't stress enough how important this is. We need everyone to rally round and help save this unique and historic mill for future generations. It will only take a few minutes. And please forward this email to anyone you can!

Thanks!