The History of Scotland

- The history of Scotland begins around 10,000 years ago when humans started to inhabit the area that is now known as Scotland after the last ice age.

- The Roman invasion of Britain started around AD 43.

- By the year 79, the Romans reached the borders of Scotland and met with resistance from the local population of Caledonians, the Picts.

- To defeat the fierce Picts the Romans built a wall, the Antonine Wall across the land. However they had to retreat to the stronger Hadrian's Wall further south.

- Old-Irish speaking Scotti (or Scots) arrived from Ireland in the 5th century and took possession of the west coast. Around 850 their kingdom fused with the area of the Picts and got the name Alba. In the late 9th century the Vikings arrived and took hold of some areas. Beside these there were the Anglo-Saxons expanding from the continent.
In 1296 the English invaded Scotland and the kingdom of Alba.

The following year the Scots again defeated the English under the leadership of William Wallace.

In 1298 Scotland again fell into the hands of the English. Wallace escaped but was later executed by the English.

Robert the Bruce was appointed in his place. A long period of wars between England and Scotland followed. The Scots entered into an alliance with the French, "the auld alliance".

In 1314 Scotland declared its independence. In 1326 the first Parliament of Scotland met.

The English acknowledged the Scottish independence but after Robert the Bruce's death in 1329 they again invaded Scotland and the second war of independence started. The English failed in their attempts to secure the throne and Robert the Bruce's son David II became king of Scotland. After his death the first Stuart king, Robert II, came to the throne.
His son James I was captured and imprisoned by the English for eighteen years till Scotland paid the ransom.

When returning he was determined to restore justice and the rule of law. His unpopularity grew and he was finally assassinated.

His son, James II continued the work of weakening the great noble families.

The period when James IV was king was a time of cultural flourishing. James IV is regarded to be the most successful of the Stuart kings.

The "auld alliance" with the French forced James IV to launch an attack on the English to support the French that were attacked by the English under Henry VIII. The invasion was stopped in a battle in 1513 in a bloody defeat for the Scots. The king and 10,000 of his men died.
A number of regents followed before James V became the king. His reign was fairly successful until a campaign against the English led to a defeat.

His daughter Mary became Queen of Scots only six days old. Henry VIII wanted Mary to marry his son Edvard. To avoid this she was sent to France at the age of six. She was raised a Catholic in France and married the Dauphin Francis. On the death of his father she became the Queen of France. When Francis died she returned to Scotland, now 19 years old. Her six-year reign was troubled by a series of crises caused by the rivalries of the leading nobles. She was finally imprisoned and forced to abdicate in favour of her son James VI. She later escaped from her prison and tried to regain the throne. She was defeated and escaped to England where she was tried for treason and executed in 1587.

In 1603 James VI became king of England too. The Stuarts led by Bonnie Prince Charles (Charles Edward Stuart) protested against this but were finally defeated at Culloden Moor in 1746. This was the last military uprising and Scotland was now under English rule.
The Scottish Parliament today has legislative authority for some matters relating to Scotland and limited power to vary income tax.

Scotland has 59MP's in the British House of Commons.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) became the largest party in the 2007 Scottish Parliament election. Scottish independence is supported most strongly by SNP. The party's goal is to hold an independence referendum by 2010.

Opponents of independence argue that Scotland is economically stronger as a part of the UK economy. Also they believe that Scotland has more influence, both politically and militarily as part of a unitary British state.

Scottish History Timeline from 3000 BC till 1997
A History of Scotland (1st - 8th century)

Here are some film clips from BBC showing the early history of Scotland ....

First an introduction!

A history of Scotland Part 1
Introduction BBC Scotland

1st part of the part 1 of A history of Scotland

2nd part of the part 1 of A history of Scotland

3rd part of the part 1 of A history of Scotland

4th part of the part 1 of A history of Scotland