

# *An Drochaid* *The Bridge*

Vol 54 Issue 2  
Spring (Late!) 2026 Newsletter

ISSN 0703-1491

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# Frae the Chair

## A leadership perspective on Robert the Bruce

Every leadership team eventually faces a crisis of execution. The vision is clear, the talent is present, but the day-to-day actions fail to move the organization forward. Often, this happens because the chain connecting the ultimate vision to the daily work is broken.

To understand how to forge an unbreakable chain of execution, we can look to one of history's greatest turnarounds: Robert the Bruce and the Scottish Wars of Independence. By examining his campaign through the lens of a particular Cascade framework (Goals, Strategies, Objectives, and Tactics), we can see how a seemingly impossible vision was translated into decisive, victorious action.

Many believe that frameworks such as the one we're talking about here are modern in origin. However these all have a heritage in the millennial old teachings of ancient Greeks, Romans and Sun Tzu in 'The Art of War'. While there's variations on the frameworks, they share a commonality of leadership vision being transformed, by phases, into action and value. Let's see how Robert the Bruce did it!

### Setting the Stage: A Nation on the Brink

The year is 1306. Scotland has been under brutal English occupation for over a decade. King Edward I of England — "The Hammer of the Scots" — has stripped the nation of its leadership, its wealth, and its pride. William Wallace has been captured and executed. The Scottish nobility is divided, demoralized, and largely compliant.

Robert the Bruce is crowned King of Scots at Scone, not in triumph, but in desperation. He has no army, no treasury, and few allies. Within months of his coronation, he is defeated in two battles, three of his brothers are hanged, and his sister and daughter are displayed in iron cages by Edward I. He is forced into hiding, a fugitive king sheltering in the caves and islands of the western coast.

How does a leader with no resources defeat the most powerful military machine in the British Isles? He does it by establishing a clear Goal, defining a radical Strategy, setting measurable Objectives, and executing brilliant Tactics. He does it through the Cascade of Goals, Strategies, Objectives and Tactics.

### 1. The Goal: The Ultimate Destination

#### What is a Goal?

In this Cascade framework, the Goal is the ultimate destination — the broad, primary outcome the leadership team is striving to achieve. It defines the organization's purpose and provides the "North Star" for all subsequent decisions. A Goal is typically long-term and visionary in nature. It answers the question: What does winning ultimately look like?

#### Robert the Bruce's Goal

A free, independent, and sovereign Scotland under a legitimate Scottish King.



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This Goal was non-negotiable. It was the singular reason for the entire struggle. Every noble who joined his cause, every soldier who picked up a spear, and every sacrifice made was dedicated to this ultimate destination. The Goal did not change when Bruce was defeated in battle, when his family was imprisoned, or when the Pope excommunicated him. It remained constant through eight years of hardship.

For a leadership team, if the Goal is not universally understood and fiercely defended, the organization will fracture under pressure. People will begin to optimize for their own sub-goals rather than the shared destination. Bruce's genius was that every person in his cause understood, in the simplest possible terms, what they were fighting for.



Stirling Castle: Fortifications were leveled after Bannockburn in 1314 but it was later rebuilt as now one of Scotland's grandest and most prominent fortresses

## 2. The Strategy: The Logic of Winning

### What is a Strategy?

Strategy is the guiding logic that determines how the Goal will be achieved. It is not a list of actions; it is the overarching approach that leverages your unique strengths while exploiting your opponent's weaknesses. Strategy dictates what you will do — and equally important, what you will not do. A clear Strategy makes it easy to say no to activities that are distracting, however appealing they may seem.



The mounds and rocky ruins of Turnberry Castle: Believed to be his own birthplace, Robert the Bruce captured it in 1307 and totally dismantled it in 1310.

### Robert the Bruce's Strategy

**Asymmetric warfare through attrition and the systematic denial of strongholds.**

Bruce recognized a hard truth: Scotland could never win a conventional war of attrition against England. The English had vastly superior numbers, a seemingly endless treasury, and devastating heavy cavalry. A direct, head-to-head confrontation would be organizational suicide.

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# Frae the Chair

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Instead, his Strategy was to change the rules of the game entirely. He would refuse to fight pitched battles where England was strong. He would use guerrilla warfare to exhaust English supply lines and wear down their will to fight. Most radically, when he captured Scottish castles from the English, he did not garrison them — he demolished them. This denied the English the ability to re-occupy and re-fortify Scottish territory, systematically dismantling their infrastructure of control.

For modern leadership teams, a true Strategy requires honest self-assessment. You cannot adopt the strategy of a well-resourced competitor if you have limited resources. You must find your asymmetrical advantage — the terrain where your strengths matter most and your opponent's advantages count for least.

## 3. The Objectives: The Measurable Milestones

### What are Objectives?

Objectives are the specific, measurable milestones that must be reached to validate that the Strategy is working and the Goal is being approached. If the Goal is the destination and the Strategy is the chosen route, Objectives are the mile markers along the way. They are concrete and time-bound, and a leadership team can look at each one and say definitively: "Yes, we achieved this," or "No, we fell short."



A depiction of the [Battle of Bannockburn](#) from a 1440s manuscript of [Walter Bower's Scotichronicon](#). This is the earliest known depiction of the battle

### Robert the Bruce's Objectives

To execute his Strategy of attrition and denial, Bruce established three clear Objectives:

- 1. Clear the North** — Systematically remove English garrisons from the northern territories by 1308 to establish a secure base of operations from which to expand southward.
- 2. Dismantle the Strongholds** — Capture and destroy the key English-held fortresses in central Scotland — specifically Edinburgh and Roxburgh Castles — by early 1314, removing the pillars of English military presence.
- 3. Force Sovereign Recognition** — Compel the English Crown and the Papacy to formally recognize Scottish sovereignty, transforming a military victory into a permanent political reality.

Notice how each Objective is specific and measurable. "Clear the North" is not vague aspiration — it has a geographic scope and a time horizon. Objectives turn a philosophical Strategy into a practical roadmap that the entire leadership team can navigate by.

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## 4. The Tactics: The Actions on the Ground

### What are Tactics?

Tactics are the specific, day-to-day actions and maneuvers executed to achieve the Objectives. Unlike the Goal and Strategy, which must remain stable, Tactics are highly adaptable. If a tactic fails, it is discarded and replaced with a better one. Tactics are the domain of the team on the ground, requiring rapid decision making, creativity, and the willingness to experiment.

### Robert the Bruce's Tactics at Bannockburn

The culmination of Bruce's campaign was the Battle of Bannockburn on 23–24 June 1314. Here, four specific Tactics perfectly served the Objective of dismantling the English strongholds, which in turn served the Strategy of asymmetric warfare, which drove relentlessly toward the Goal of a free Scotland.

**Choosing the Ground:** Bruce positioned his army between the dense Torwood forest and the marshy banks of the Bannockburn stream. This tactic funneled the massive English army into a narrow corridor where their numerical advantage — over 20,000 men against roughly 7,000 Scots — was almost entirely neutralized.

**The Schiltron Formation:** Rather than using traditional battle lines, Bruce deployed his infantry in tight, circular formations of spearmen called schiltrons. These formations could repel cavalry charges from any direction, turning the English heavy cavalry — their greatest weapon — into an ineffective force.

**Hidden Traps:** Bruce's men dug concealed pits (known as "pots") in the approaches to the battlefield, covered with brush and turf. These traps were designed to break the legs of charging English war-horses, disrupting the cavalry charges before they could gain momentum.

**Psychological Warfare:** On the first day of battle, an English knight named Sir Henry de Bohun spotted Bruce riding alone and charged at full gallop. Armed only with a battleaxe and riding a small pony, Bruce sidestepped the lance at the last moment and split de Bohun's helmet with a single blow. This act of personal courage electrified the Scottish army and sent a devastating message to the English: their enemy was not afraid.



Robert the Bruce and Sir Henry at the Battle of Bannockburn

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# Frae the Chair

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Tactics are where the work actually gets done. But as Bruce demonstrated, brilliant Tactics are only effective when they serve a clear Objective, align with a sound Strategy, and drive toward the ultimate Goal.

## The Goals to Tactics Chain: A Leadership Mandate

When an organization struggles, it is usually because the chain is broken at one or more links. Tactics without objectives is simply noise before defeat. Objectives without strategy is an academic exercise that never gets off the proverbial napkin. Strategy without a Goal lacks purpose and direction. A Goal without Strategy, Objectives and Tactics is nothing more than a wish.

Level	The Question It Answers	Bruce's Answer
Goal	What does winning ultimately look like?	A free, independent, sovereign Scotland under a legitimate Scottish King.
Strategy	How will we win?	Asymmetric warfare: exhaust England through attrition and deny them strongholds.
Objectives	What milestones tell us the Strategy is working?	Clear the North; Dismantle Edinburgh & Roxburgh; Force Sovereign Recognition.
Tactics	What specific actions do we take right now?	Choose the terrain; deploy schiltrons; dig hidden pits; inspire through personal courage.

Robert the Bruce succeeded because his goals to tactics chain was unbreakable. Every trap dug at Bannockburn (Tactic) served the capture of the territory (Objective), which supported the asymmetric war of attrition (Strategy), which ultimately secured a free Scotland (Goal). The chain held under eight years of pressure, defeat, exile, and loss.

For any leadership team, the mandate is the same: Define your Goal with clarity and conviction. Commit to a Strategy that is honest about your strengths and your environment. Set Objectives that are measurable and time-bound. Execute Tactics with creativity and adaptability. And above all, ensure that every link in the chain connects to the one above it.

Bruce did not win Scotland's freedom through luck or brute force. He won it through alignment — the relentless, disciplined alignment of every action with a single, unwavering Goal. That is the enduring lesson of the framework, and it is as relevant to leadership of our member organizations as it was on the field of Bannockburn.

**"It is not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting,  
but for freedom alone."**

**— The Declaration of Arbroath, 6 April 1320**

I close with a confession. My journey down the path of looking for a Scottish historical application of this Cascade Framework, this working from Goals, Strategies, Objectives and Tactics started with my own

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# Frae the Chair

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setting of a goal with Scots of Canada. There's these nagging issues I'm beset with as Chair:

1. Adversity to the president for life syndrome no matter how well the job is being done.
2. Recognition that it is folly to hang in too long like the proverbial underclothes that eventually are changed only when becoming too foul to the senses of those around one.
3. It should not be on my watch, or even at the end of it, that our organization undergoes another ELE (Extinction Level Event) because of a leadership vacuum. Whether because of 1 or 2 above or a winning of the 'lottery'.

So the **goal** is to have a leadership team and organization guided by a mission and framework that lasts beyond myself and the leadership team itself.

The **strategy** is to provide education and enlightenment to the leadership team on mechanisms that put tools in their hands and hearts to achieve that goal. And to share those benefits with the wider membership.

The **objectives** are:

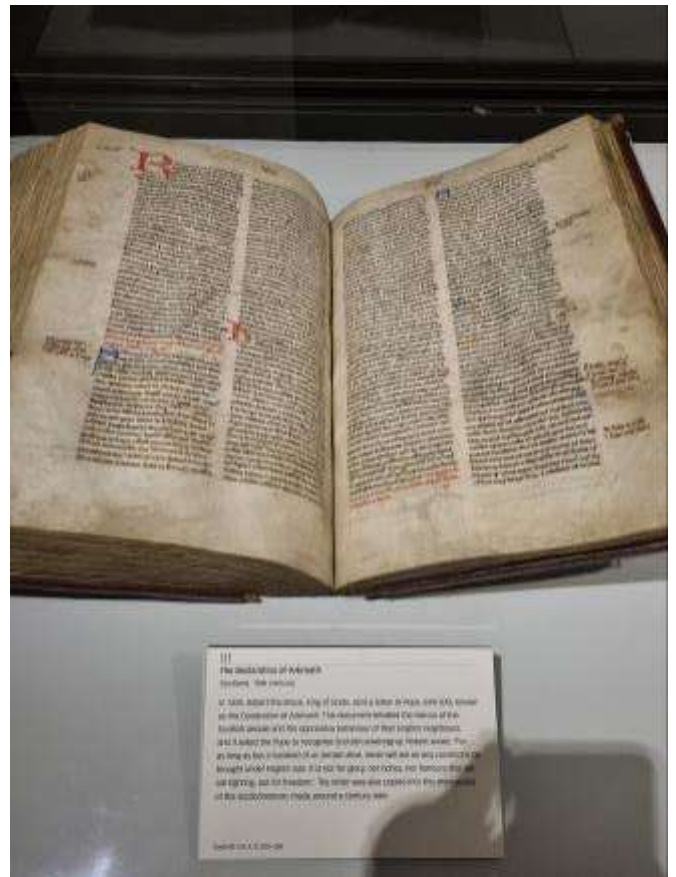
- provide examples and explanations of tools that work in contexts that are relevant to the organization and that resonate with our cultural heritage. This is to be done over the Summer and into the Fall.
- have a governing Goals, Strategies, Objectives and Tactics framework completed by the board for presentation and acceptance at the AGM in November 2026

The **tactics**:

- this research and article followed by more
- be openly eager to respond to asks by our directors and by any member
- ask for affirmative buy-in by directors at our first board meeting of the next fiscal year in September
- meet weekly in October to complete the second objective
- seek out and ask for participation by others in this governance process

I truly welcome your thoughts on this and, with hope, look forward to all of you participating in the next phase of this Scots of Canada's journey.

Yours aye,  
William Petrie, FSAScot,  
Chair, Scots of Canada  
[chair@scotsofcanada.ca](mailto:chair@scotsofcanada.ca)



The Declaration of Arbroath included in the text of the *Scotichronicon* in the [British Library](#)

**Ailsa Craig Highland Games & Scottish Festival**

# **Be a Scot for a Day!**

**Fourth Saturday in July**

**July 25, 2026**

**Some of the Exciting Things Happening!**

The Ailsa Craig Village Association Community Breakfast

Traditional Highland Games

The Ailsa Craig Arts Centre Thistle Market and Vendors

The Locality Wellness Hub Kids' Zone

Tug of War Demonstration

Cannon firing by the War of 1812 Royal Scots Reenactors

Evening concert by the Mudmen!





30TH ANNIVERSARY

# Almonte Celtfest

JULY 3-5, 2026 | GEMMILL PARK

Almonte Celtfest is an annual cultural celebration of the Almonte (Mississippi Mills), Ottawa Valley, greater Ottawa region's heritage through music, song, and dance, and is located in the rural community of Almonte.

It is a three-day, by-donation event that features a schedule of presentations and activities in Gemmill Park and the downtown area.

Celtfest endeavours to explore and celebrate a wide [variety](#) of local culturally significant history and heritage by supporting culture and traditions that include, but are not limited to, the Scottish and Irish settlers, the Francophone community, and the Algonquin (Anishnaabeg) peoples.

The festival features a wide variety of performances, workshops, street performances, children's activities, and concerts, and encourages impromptu sessions or ceilidhs.

[Click here for contact information](#) or [email almonteceltfest@outlook.com](mailto:almonteceltfest@outlook.com)



# Join us for the 161st Highland Games!

July 5-12  
2026

**Presented by MacLeod Group**

EVENT SCHEDULE

If you and your kin would like to take part in Clan activities at the 161st Antigonish Highland Games, Please register to participate in the Clan Tent by filling out the form at [\(Click here or visit https://antigonishhighlandgames.ca/clans/\)](https://antigonishhighlandgames.ca/clans/)

CAMBRIDGE  
**SCOTTISH  
FESTIVAL  
SATURDAY JULY 18TH**



**1** PIPING AND DRUMMING

Experience the stirring sound of Scotland as talented pipers and drummers fill the air with traditional tunes. Feel the power and pride of this timeless Celtic music that lies at the heart of the Cambridge Scottish Festival!

**2** HIGHLAND DANCE

Watch the grace, strength, and precision of Highland dancers as they perform traditional Scottish dances in vibrant tartan and spirit. A showcase of culture, rhythm, and heritage you won't want to miss!

**3** HEAVY EVENTS

Cheer on the athletes as they take on classic Scottish challenges — from caber tossing to hammer throwing! These powerful displays of strength and skill are a thrilling highlight of the Games field.

**4** CHILDREN'S GLEN

A world of fun for the wee ones! Enjoy bouncy castles, crafts, games, and medieval adventures — the perfect spot for family-friendly festival excitement.

[Click for more Info about Games Day](#)

[Click here or the  
image for clan  
registration](#)

**Scottish Clans**

Discover the proud history and enduring spirit of Scotland's Clans — families bound by heritage, honor, and tradition. Meet them on Heritage Ave and explore your own Scottish roots!





**SEPT 4-6,  
2026**



## CELTIC CULTURE IN CANMORE Canmore Highland Games

Save the Dates for the 2026 Canmore Highland Games!



**Friday, Sept 4 – Sunday, Sept 6**

2026 Events Currently being Planned:

- Sept 4 – Taste of the Highlands  
5-9 pm
- Sept 5 – The Games, Part I  
(details to follow)  
Sept 5 – The Canmore Ceilidh  
6-11 pm
- Sept 6 – The Games, Part II  
(details to follow)  
Sept 6 – The Big Hoolie  
6-11 pm



# 87<sup>TH</sup> EMBRO HIGHLAND GAMES!

JULY 1, 2026 • 8AM - 5PM

JOIN US AT ONTARIO'S OLDEST HIGHLAND GAMES!

**FAMILY FUN WITH  
A SCOTTISH FLAIR**



*Hosted by the Zorra Caledonian Society*

**NEW!  
INTERNATIONAL TUG-OF-WAR COMPETITION!**



Embrow Zorra Community Centre  
Adults: \$30 (online in advance: \$27.50)  
Under 18: No Charge

*Free Parking!  
Bring a lawn chair!*

**EMBROHIGHLANDGAMES.CA**



# Fall Celtic FESTIVAL



**Saturday September 26 - Sunday September 27, 2026**

**Toronto Rock Athletic Centre - Oakville, ON**

The Oakville Fall Celtic Festival is an annual celebration of Celtic culture, featuring music, dance, food, and family-friendly activities. The 2026 festival is scheduled for September 26-27 at the Toronto Rock Athletic Centre, 1132 Invicta Drive, Oakville, Ontario, Canada.

Attendees can enjoy live performances by Irish and Celtic musicians, traditional and contemporary dance showcases, and a variety of culinary offerings, including local brews and ready-to-drink cocktails. The festival also offers children's activities such as craft stations, face-painting, and a bouncy castle, making it a fun event for all ages.

**Free Admission.** The festival aims to promote & celebrate Celtic heritage within the community.

**Email: [FallCelticFestival@gmail.com](mailto:FallCelticFestival@gmail.com)**

**[www.fallcelticfestival.ca](http://www.fallcelticfestival.ca)**



Fergus Scottish  
Festival & Highland  
Games

**August 7 - 9, 2026**

**About**

**Events**

**Schedule**

## Who We Are

The Fergus Scottish Festival & Highland Games is an annual three-day event that celebrates local Scottish heritage and features world-renowned talent and entertainment in the beautiful town of Fergus, Ontario. This year's Festival features Heavy Events Competitions, Pipe Band Competitions, Highland Dancers, over 50 Clans, Heritage Village, Whisky Tasting, McKiddie's activities, Celtic musicians and international vendors featuring Scottish wares and fares!

**[Click here for information on Clans](#)**

**Chair's Note :** Fergus will be on the Scots of Canada Roadshow. We're planning a clan pot luck breakfast on Sunday August 9th, please provide your input on being able to join us for this. Let me know by email at [chair@scotscanada.scot](mailto:chair@scotscanada.scot)

# THE DEVIL'S BRIGADE



*Click the image above for a video*

**From Scotland to Japan, Italy To Cuba, Spain to Guam to the Middle East, and Across North America This Electrifying Group is Embracing Celtic, Rock, World Music, and more with Daring, Skill, and a Wee Bit O' Cheek.**

## **Upcoming 2026 Tour Dates**

**June 26-27, Ohio Scottish Festival**

***July 1, Embro Highland Games***

**July 4, Fairfax City 60th Annual Independence Day Parade**

**July 17, Theatre in the Wood, Intevale, NH**

***August 7, Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games***

**August 8, Central New York Scottish Games**

**August 15, Festival des Traditions du Monde, Sherbrooke, QC**

**August 16, Harmony Concerts Presents, Morrisburg, ON**

**August 21, Strathmore Medieval Faire & Artisan Market**

# July 31–August 1, 2026



## Attending

Everything you need to know about attending our event including Accommodations and Transportation, Admission, Grandstand Accessibility and Directions, Concessions, Grounds Map, Hospitality Venues, Schedule, Souvenir Program, and Tourism.

[Learn more](#)

## Competitions

Learn about the competitions that take place throughout our event. Find all the details about Canadian Armed Forces Primary Reserve Tug of War, Heavyweights, Highland Dancing, Piobaireachd, Piping and Drumming, and Rugby.

[Learn more](#)

## Events

There are so many events to take in over the course of the weekend. Find out about Children's Events, Clans, Entertainment Schedule, Golf Tournament, Harp Workshop, Kilt Run, Official Ceremonies, Scottish Fiddling, Tartan Ball, Tattoo, and Whisky Tasting.

[Learn more](#)

Since the first Games were held in 1948, the people of Glengarry have extended close to a million welcomes to visitors who come to see what is estimated to be one of the largest Highland Games in the world. Thousands of people find themselves drawn each year to Maxville to witness an outstanding display of music, dance, sports, fiddling, pageantry, and tradition.

Learn More : <https://www.glengarryhighlandgames.com/about>

**Chair's Note :** Glengarry will be on the Scots of Canada Roadshow. We're planning a clan pot luck breakfast on Saturday August 1, please provide your input on being able to join us for this. Scots of Canada traditionally has a large booth just inside the gate closest to the 'barns'. Let me know by email at [chair@scotscanada.scot](mailto:chair@scotscanada.scot)



# Join Us In Celebrating Over 25 Years of All Things Scottish!

July 3-5, 2026

[GET YOUR TICKETS](#)

[WEEKEND SCHEDULE](#)

## Clan Avenue

**Find out about your own heritage or the history of different clans from near and far on our Clan Avenue!**

This year we are sure to hear some great stories from clans like MacDougall, MacPherson, Fergusson Cameron and more, in addition to the Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada. They are sure to share wonderful stories that will take you on fascinating journeys of history and cultural heritage – conversations that help you have a richer, deeper connection to your roots while you enjoy the bustle of the surrounding Festival.

[Apply To Have Your Clan Represented This Year!](#)

K I N G S V I L L E • O N T A R I O • C A N A D A



THE POWER THE PRIDE  
**TRADITION**

**JUNE 27, 2026**

EVENT VENUE:



1550 ROAD 3 EAST, KINGSVILLE, ONTARIO

THE POWER, THE PRIDE, THE TRADITION

Where the spirit of the Highlands meets the shores of Lake Erie.

The Kingsville Highland Games honour the rich Scottish traditions and Celtic heritage of Southern Ontario. As the only Highland Games in the Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent regions, this beloved festival blends 11th-century customs with modern community revelry.

## Full day of Competitions and Activities

PIPING & DRUMMING  
HEAVY EVENTS  
TUG OF WAR  
HIGHLAND DANCING  
HAGGIS HURL  
CLAN VILLAGE  
JACOBITE ENCAMPMENT  
SHEEP SHEARING & HERDING  
ARTISANS & MERCHANTS  
FOOD CONCESSIONS & BEER TENT

[www.kingsvillehighlandgames.ca](http://www.kingsvillehighlandgames.ca)



# Fall Festival d'Automne



## Friday

GATES OPEN at 4:00 PM  
Free admission

## Saturday

GATES OPEN at 10:00 AM  
Admission: \$10/car or \$5/pedestrian

## Sunday

GATES OPEN at 10:00 AM  
Admission: \$10/car or \$5/pedestrian

# September 18 - 20, 2026

### HIGHLAND GAMES

- Open stone
- Light weight for distance
- Heavy weight for distance
- Light hammer
- Heavy hammer
- Weight over bar
- Caber toss x2

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Fiddle playing
- Highland dancing

### PIPE BANDS

- 78th Fraser Highlanders
- Elgin Pipe Band
- R.C.M.P.

### BONUS GAME OPTIONS

- Caber distance
- Keg toss
- Sheaf toss



**Our Fall Festival d'Automne includes our Scottish Festival on Sunday September 20th.**

This year we'll be incorporating a curling workshop in partnership with Curling Quebec, another great Scottish tradition!

Ormstown Exhibition, 1 Rue McBain,  
Ormstown, Quebec J0S 1K0

<http://www.expoormstown.com>

Clans are welcome, contact us at: [manager@expoormstown.com](mailto:manager@expoormstown.com)



2026 Schedule



## **Join us for the 41st Annual North Lanark Highland Games!**

Celebrate the Scottish culture and heritage of the Ottawa Valley at the 41st annual North Lanark Highland Games in Almonte, Ontario.

The Games offer a traditional format and size attracting about 3,000 visitors.

Twenty pipe bands, a hundred dancers and champion heavyweight athletes combine to present what is recognized as one of the Ottawa Valley's premier summer events.

With Mini-Highland Games and free admission for kids 11 & under, and the picturesque Mississippi River as the backdrop, the Almonte Games have a reputation not only as having the prettiest site but also as being the friendliest Games on the Ontario circuit.

[Click here to register as a clan](#), for other registrations [click here](#)

For more information : [nlhgconcessions@gmail.com](mailto:nlhgconcessions@gmail.com)



**JEUX ÉCOSSAIS DE**  
**MONTREAL**  
**HIGHLAND GAMES**  
DEPUIS 1855 | SINCE 1855  
AUGUST 2, 2026

**SCOTTISH ATHLETICS · PIPE BANDS · HIGHLAND DANCING · CELTIC MUSIC**

Bringing together Montrealers of all backgrounds to celebrate Scottish sport, music and culture.

## Festival week events

Don't miss the special events that take place during the week of the Festival!



*One week before the*  
**Athletics Clinic**

Learn some Scottish heavy athletic events under our expert guidance!

[Learn more](#)



*Thursday of Festival week*  
**Promenade of Cabers**

Don't miss the ceremonial arrival of the Highland Games and Festival

[Learn more](#)



*Friday of Festival week*  
**Wee Ceilidh**

Join us for a fun pub night, including live Scottish music and dancing!

[Learn more](#)

**Calling all clans and Community Organizations**  
**Registration is now open**

[Clans and NPO registration](#)

25th Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games

September 19 & 20, 2026 | Saturday 10am-10pm; Sunday 10am-5pm

# Welcome!

Thanks for visiting Western New York's home for all things Irish, Scottish, Welsh and more...



## About Us

The Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games was formed in Autumn of 2001. The two day event draws about 12,000 guests and participants to Niagara County, and has become an important tradition for locals and visitors alike.

Located less than an hour from both Buffalo and Rochester, NY, guests are immersed in the traditions and pageantry of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and all things Celtic! If you haven't attended before, join us this year and celebrate Celtic culture in an amazingly memorable way.

For Clan registration contact Vince and Robbin Zaleski : [robbin.zaleski@yahoo.com](mailto:robbin.zaleski@yahoo.com)



**Our 48th year, JULY 17, 18,  
19, 2026**

*The "SOCIABLE!" Festival*

AWARDED THE 2025 NORTH ARTS CREATIVE EXPERIENCE AWARD!

## **Celebrating 48 Years in 2026**

July 17, 18, 19, 2026 Honouring 100th Year of the Orillia Legion and Royal Canadian Legion. The Planning Committee are well on their way with planning this year's event. Stay tuned! We also want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our patrons. We recently were honoured with the 2025 Creative Experience Award, awarded by North Simcoe Arts. Thank you to all who support us and who have kept us rolling for 48 years! Our planning committee aim to keep traditional favourites and create new traditions each year. Thank you for being part of this big adventure. Sociable!

**Hello Clans!**

**We have moved our Clan applications  
online.**

**Please click on the button to access and  
complete the form.**

**Clan Application**

**We look forward to seeing you on July  
18, 2026.**

[orilliascottishfestival@gmail.com](mailto:orilliascottishfestival@gmail.com)

# Red Deer highland games



## 2026

2026 Schedule

Saturday, June 27th

Central Middle School

Red Deer, AB

Heavy Events - Piping & Drumming

Highland Dance - Entertainment - Puppy Parade

Shortbread - Kilted Mile Run - Celtic Market



[www.reddeerhighlandgames.com](http://www.reddeerhighlandgames.com)



# UXBRIDGE SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

## Friday July 24 - Saturday July 25



### Welcome to the Uxbridge Scottish Festival!

For 30 years, Scottish culture has been proudly celebrated in Elgin Park, bringing together tradition, music, sport, and community for an unforgettable summer gathering.

Join us Friday July 24th & Saturday July 25th, as the Uxbridge Scottish Festival continues this proud tradition with a multi-day event of Scottish heritage and entertainment for all ages.

Visitors can experience the excitement of the Highland Dance Competition, the strength and spectacle of the Heavy Games, and the stirring sound of pipe band performances and the massed pipe bands echoing across the park. Throughout the day you'll also find Scottish entertainers, traditional music, and Scottish food vendors serving up classic favourites.

The celebration begins the evening before with our Friday night concert, kicking off a weekend filled with Scottish culture, community, and fun.

Come celebrate 30 years of Scottish tradition in Elgin Park and be part of one of Uxbridge's most beloved summer events.

#### ♥ Entry is by Donation

We're proud to keep the festival accessible to all. Entry on Saturday is by donation, with every dollar going toward making next year's festival even bigger and better.

Mark your calendars, bring your family, and join us for unforgettable fun, music, and culture at the Uxbridge Scottish Festival. Whether you're a longtime Scot or just Scot-curious, everyone's welcome—bagpipes optional, but encouraged!



# Sherwood Park Highland Gathering

July 25-26, 2026



**Highland  
Dance**



**Bagpipes &  
Drums**



**Heavy  
Events**



**Celtic  
Community  
Marketplace**

## About the Event

The Sherwood Park Highland Gathering is an outdoor event held on the Salisbury High School Athletic Fields in Broadmoor Lake Park. Located in the heart of Sherwood Park, we strive to host an accessible event for all.

The event consists of piping and drumming competitions, massed band performances, Highland Dance competitions, and Scottish heavy games. There will also be children's activities, food trucks, beer gardens, community market with local makers and Scottish Clan booths, and a family Ceilidh.

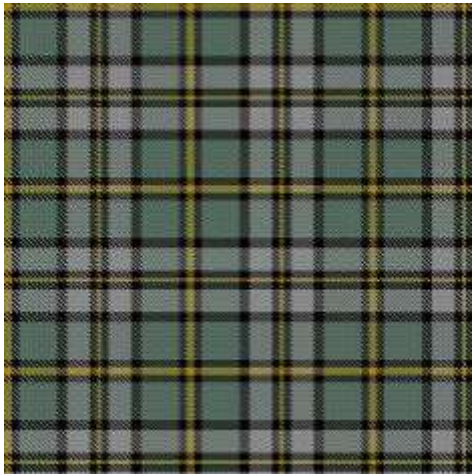
## Clan Invitation

Scottish clans are invited to attend the Sherwood Park Highland Games and set up in a free 10 X 10 space. Just provide your tent and other items needed to join our clan community.

Bonnie Koch

[eventcoordinator@sphg.ca](mailto:eventcoordinator@sphg.ca)

# Sydney Mines Highland Games Cultural Society



*Cape Breton Tartan*



*Nova Scotia Tartan*



*Maple Leaf (Canada) Tartan*

**Sunday, August 16, 2026**

**11am - 8pm**

## About The Games



**Vision:** Celebrate Celtic culture through traditional music, dance, sport, language and customs by hosting a community building festival, (in honour of Coal Miners who built our towns) – Highland Games IS for the public good of local citizens, while drawing tourists to the region, thus contributing to the social wellbeing, recreation and spirit of Sydney Mines and Cape Breton.

**Mission:** Our non-profit society is chartered to offer a fun, family outdoor Highland Games in Sydney Mines, N.S. for citizens' leisure, pleasure, and recreation. The annual Highland Games honours traditional Scottish culture by: Scottish music: bagpiping, fiddling, an outdoor concert; Scottish dancing: Highland dancing, step dancing, Gaelic Milling frolic; Scottish sports: Scottish Heavy Events for women, men, adaptive, youth, tug of war, track and field and other athletic competitions for all ages. Gaelic language, customs and traditions

**Click Here to Find  
Out More**



# gathering of the clans HIGHLAND FESTIVAL



## 2026

Heavy Events  
Artisan Vendors  
Chainsaw Carving  
Kids Zone

Food Trucks  
Pipes and Drums  
Highland Animals  
Demonstrators

# Saturday, August 22, 2026

Wild Rose Co-op Rec. Centre 5301 51<sup>st</sup> Ave, Sedgewick, AB

GATES OPEN @ 10AM

Andrew Reimer



St. James Gate



Evening entertainment starts @ 5pm  
Dance to **St. James Gate** (starting @ 8pm)  
Overnight camping available  
Pancake breakfast Sunday morning

[info@flagstaffscottishclub.com](mailto:info@flagstaffscottishclub.com)

# Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI)



This document is to the support commissioned and voluntary contributions to the newsletters, websites and other forms of media being provided by Scots of Canada to its membership. Our hope is that this will provide a means for Scottish Studies students in particular to publish their works to the broader community.

A key intent of this policy is to say that Scots of Canada supports **augmented intelligence, not automated authorship**. In other words, AI may help a contributor think, test, organize, polish, or extend a line of inquiry, but it must not become the creator. Scots of Canada actively welcomes students and freelancers who can bring Scottish and Celtic Studies knowledge into member life, but we also intend to protect the integrity of that work through source requirements, factual verification, permissions review, editorial oversight, and fair compensation practices.

The spirit of adoption of these guidelines is to not discourage innovation. On the contrary, it is to make innovation safer, clearer, and more culturally responsible.

**Purpose and scope:** This document sets out recommended contributor guidelines for Scots of Canada serving both household and organizational members. It is intended for **students of Scottish and Celtic Studies, independent scholars, community researchers, and freelancers** who may contribute newsletters, feature articles, interviews, podcasts, videos, short explainers, heritage profiles, event-oriented pieces, and other member-facing content. Its purpose is to encourage the thoughtful use of **augmented intelligence** while protecting historical accuracy, cultural integrity, authentic voice, and editorial trust.

*Augmented intelligence means the use of digital and AI-assisted tools to support human creativity, research, planning, and editing, without displacing the human contributor as the actual author, narrator, interviewer, analyst, or storyteller.*

Scots of Canada welcomes responsible experimentation with AI-assisted tools for research support, idea generation, and language correction, but that it does **not** accept AI as a substitute for human judgment, lived interpretation, original synthesis, or authored expression. This approach is consistent with nonprofit and media guidance that permits limited AI-assisted support while requiring human responsibility, verification, and transparency.

**Editorial intent and content philosophy:** Scots of Canada's membership content is to do more than circulate information. It is to strengthen cultural memory, deepen public understanding, and invite members into a living conversation about Scotland, the Scottish diaspora, and Scottish-Canadian experience. Contributors are therefore encouraged to create work that is accurate, accessible, well-sourced, and shaped by a recognizably human voice.

This contributor policy emphasizes that Scottish-themed content may be **narrative, interpretive, or commemorative**, but in every case it should be grounded in reliable evidence and cultural care. The School of Scottish Studies and related public heritage bodies show that Scottish cultural work draws on archives, oral history, folklore, song, place, and lived experience, and that such materials have long been used in publications, broadcasts, and public history projects.[3](#) [4](#)

*(Continued on page 31)*

## Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

This supports a contributor model in which a student or freelancer may produce content that is creative in form while still disciplined in method.

**Recommended sources:** Contributors are directed first toward **authoritative, reviewable, and citable sources**. In Scottish and diaspora content, these often include archives, public institutions, scholarly journals, oral-history collections, and official cultural bodies.

Source category	Recommended use	Why it is valuable	Editorial caution
Official Scottish cultural bodies and public heritage organizations	Dates, heritage interpretation, event framing, public history context	These sources are generally curated and designed for public accuracy and accessibility	Contributors should still confirm dates, terminology, and context across more than one source when possible
School of Scottish Studies Archives and related collections	Folklore, oral tradition, songs, tales, customs, place-based history, community memory	The archive includes large collections of songs, tales, customs, beliefs, oral history, place-names, and community life materials in Gaelic, Scots, and English. <sup>4</sup>	Archival material may require contextualization, permissions review, and sensitivity to recording date, speaker, and historical framing
Scholarly journals and university publications	Historical interpretation, cultural analysis, bibliographic grounding	Such sources strengthen reliability and help distinguish evidence from legend or received memory	Contributors should translate specialist language for a general membership audience
Oral history interviews and community testimony	Member features, diaspora memory, intergenerational storytelling, podcasts, and videos	Oral testimony brings community voice and lived nuance into member content	Oral testimony should be identified as recollection or testimony, not treated automatically as settled fact
Official government and institutional sources in Scotland and Canada	Public commemorative dates, heritage recognition, statistics, and policy references	These sources are useful for dates and public framing, such as Burns Night and Tartan Day	Contributors should avoid overextending official statements into cultural generalizations
Organization-held records and local branch archives	Internal history, anniversaries, legacy profiles, and institutional memory	These can supply unique member-relevant material not available elsewhere	Internal records should still be verified, dated, and attributed before publication

Scots of Canada believes that **source quality matters at least as much if not more than source quantity**. A smaller number of strong sources is preferable to a long list of weak or derivative ones. Scots of Canada will strive to maintain an internal source bank with pre-approved reference points, such as the School of Scottish Studies Archives, Historic Environment Scotland, Scotland.org for public cultural observances, and selected university or archive portals.<sup>3 4 5 6</sup>

**Themed narratives and calendar-based content planning:** There are two broad ways that Scots of Canada will use contributor content: first, for **themed narratives** that explore ideas such as migration, Gaelic language, music, storytelling, local Scottish societies, women in Scottish history, com-

*(Continued on page 32)*

## Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

munity cooks and recipes, civic contributions, or regional identity; and second, for **calendar-based orientation content** tied to significant Scottish or Scottish-Canadian dates.

Scottish storytelling guidance emphasizes the continuing importance of place, spoken word, and the idea that storytelling is a living, participatory art rather than a purely academic exercise.<sup>5</sup> That principle is especially useful for newsletters, podcasts, and short videos. Contributors should therefore be encouraged to connect research to **place, memory, voice, and relevance to contemporary members** rather than merely compiling facts.

Content anchor	Recommended treatment	Notes for contributors	Example use
Burns Night, 25 January	Literary, musical, historical, and community content	Burns Night is celebrated each year on <b>25 January</b> in honour of Robert Burns. <sup>6</sup>	Member essay, poetry reading podcast, Burns supper explainer, youth video on Burns traditions
Tartan Day in Canada, 6 April	Scottish-Canadian heritage and diaspora contribution stories	Tartan Day in Canada is an annual celebration of Scottish heritage and is officially marked in Canada. <sup>3</sup>	Scottish-Canadian profile, timeline graphic, oral history segment, short educational reel
Local anniversaries and milestones	Organizational memory and community identity	Prefer documented records and attributed interviews	History article, commemorative video, archival photo essay
Heritage months, festivals, or local community observances	Broader member engagement	Use a mix of official sources, interviews, and archival context	Event guide, member voices audio montage, historical background article

In the past Scots of Canada has used an informal editorial calendar that pairs each significant date with more than one content format. A Burns Night cycle, for example, might include a researched newsletter article, a short podcast reading, an interview with a piper or scholar, a recipe-and-ritual feature, and a short video for social distribution. This editorial calendar will evolve as editorial capabilities and experience matures.

**Formal policy on augmented intelligence and AI-assisted tools:** The following is the Scots of Canada’s initial policy on the use of augmented intelligence and AI tools. It includes a contributor submission checklist as a component of a contributor agreement.

**Core principle:** All published content must remain human-created, human-reviewed, and human-accountable. AI-assisted tools may support parts of the contributor workflow, but they may not replace the contributor as the actual author, narrator, interviewer, researcher of record, or interpretive voice.

*(Continued on page 33)*

## Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

**Permitted uses of AI:** AI-assisted tools may be used to help identify possible topics, suggest lines of inquiry, assemble preliminary background reading lists, surface public sources for further checking, suggest structural or formatting options, and assist with grammar and spelling review. Human verification remains mandatory. [1](#) [2](#)

Permitted use	Conditions
Researching possible topics for content	The contributor must independently evaluate whether the topic is relevant, accurate, timely, and suitable based upon Scots of Canada’s mandate to promote Scottish culture and heritage.
Researching information for content	Every factual statement generated or suggested by AI must be checked against independent sources before use
Formatting, structure, headlines, or stylistic approaches	The contributor is responsible for the final structure and tone
Grammar, spelling, and light copy improvement	The contributor must preserve their own voice, cadence, interpretation, and style
Generating interview prompts, production outlines, or brainstorming questions	The resulting content must still be based on human reporting, interviewing, or analysis

**Prohibited uses:** AI may **not** be used to write the actual deliverable on behalf of the contributor. The submitted article, script, narrative, interview framing, voiceover text, interpretation, and final argument must be written by the human contributor. [1](#) [2](#)

Prohibited use	Reason for prohibition
Using AI to draft the full article, script, narration, or final deliverable	It displaces human authorship and weakens accountability
Presenting AI-generated wording as the contributor’s original prose without disclosure	It is misleading and undermines editorial trust
Using AI output as if it were verified fact	AI systems may hallucinate facts, citations, quotations, or chronology. <a href="#">2</a>
Using AI alone for fact-checking	External editorial guidance explicitly warns that facts should be checked against multiple authoritative human-curated sources. <a href="#">2</a>
Using AI to imitate living writers, community voices, or interviewees	It risks ethical misrepresentation and loss of trust
Using AI to fabricate quotations, scenes, recollections, translations, or citations	It violates basic editorial integrity

*(Continued on page 34)*

## Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

**Required verification standard:** No content supplied by AI may be used unless it has been **factually verified through an independent mechanism**. In practice, that means checking the information against reliable published sources, archival records, interview recordings, official documents, or other human-reviewable evidence. Nothing should be stated as fact unless it is known to be so on the basis of evidence. Where certainty is not possible, contributors must use appropriate framing such as *"according to family recollection," "traditionally understood," "it is believed," "records suggest,"* or *"one interpretation is."*

This standard is especially important in Scottish heritage work, where folklore, oral history, local tradition, and commemorative memory are valuable but may not always be conclusive in the same way as official records. Contributors should be encouraged to preserve the richness of tradition **without overstating veracity**.

**Source retention and disclosure:** Contributors must provide their source list to the editor even where sources will not appear in the published version. This reflects good scholarly and editorial practice, and it is consistent with submission standards requiring references to be checked for accuracy and completeness.<sup>7</sup> Where AI has been used materially in topic development, background research, outline generation, headline experimentation, or language correction, Scots of Canada may require a brief disclosure note with the contributor submission form.

**General contributor standards beyond AI:** Scots of Canada requires that all submissions must be original, clearly written, rigorously proofread, and suitable for an informed but non-specialist membership audience. That expectation is supported by both nonprofit contributor guidance and Scottish Studies publication practice.<sup>17</sup> Contributors are also required to respect permissions, privacy, and attribution.

Editorial requirement	Practical expectation
Originality	The contribution must be the contributor's own work and not simultaneously promised elsewhere unless agreed in advance
Accuracy	Claims, dates, names, quotations, and translations should be checked before submission
Attribution	Interviews, archives, publications, and media assets should be identified for editorial records
Permissions	Contributors must secure permissions for third-party materials before publication unless clearly within permitted use
Accessibility	Writing and scripting should be intelligible to general members, not only specialists
Cultural care	Contributors should avoid romanticized stereotypes, unsupported clan myths, or flattening of Gaelic, Scots, Highland, Lowland, island, and diaspora diversity
Conflicts of interest	Contributors should disclose relevant affiliations, funding, advocacy roles, or family or commercial interests where relevant but which is not explicitly evident in the submission.

*(Continued on page 35)*

# Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

## Format-specific best practices

Format	Best-practice expectation
Newsletter article or feature essay	Include source notes, use clear chronology, distinguish fact from tradition, and write for readers who may not know specialized Scottish terms
Podcast	Keep a record of sources, interview consents, music rights, pronunciations, and factual checks for narration
Video	Verify all visual assets, captions, dates, and on-screen text; do not use images, maps, or archival footage without rights review
Interview or oral history profile	Distinguish the speaker’s recollection from editorially verified historical fact
Educational explainer or date-based content	Use official or institutional sources for date framing, and add context that is accurate but concise
Social or short-form derivative content	Ensure excerpts do not strip away qualifiers or distort nuance present in the longer piece

## References

- [1] Guidelines for Contributors | TechPolicy.Press
- [2] NPQ Editorial Policies and Procedures | Nonprofit Quarterly
- [3] Tartan Day in Canada | Scotland.org
- [4] School of Scottish Studies Archives | University of Edinburgh
- [5] Traditional Spoken Storytelling | Historic Environment Scotland
- [6] Burns Night | Scotland.org
- [7] Author Guidelines | Scottish Studies

**DISCLOSURE:** AI-assisted tools were used for background research using detailed requirements for general guidelines and the use of AI.

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# Contributor Guidelines and Use of Augmented Intelligence (AI) *(cont)*

## Contributor declaration form

Each submission should be accompanied by a short declaration confirming authorship, source provision, permissions status, and whether AI-assisted tools were used. This need not be punitive. Its purpose is to normalize honesty and create a documented editorial record.

## Submission checklist

A concise checklist is one of the most practical ways to improve compliance.

<b>Contributor submission checklist</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
I am the human author or creator of this submission	
I have disclosed any material use of AI-assisted tools in preparing this work	
I have independently verified factual claims derived from AI or any secondary source	
I have supplied my sources to the editor	
I have identified where a statement is tradition, recollection, or interpretation rather than settled fact	
I have obtained or confirmed permission for third-party images, audio, music, or documents	
I have preserved my own voice rather than submitting machine-generated prose	
I have disclosed any conflict of interest relevant to the topic	

## Spot-checking and source audit

Scots of Canada reserves the right to ask for notes, transcripts, links, or source scans for any piece it receives for publication. Not every submission requires exhaustive audit, but occasional spot-checking will be done to strongly encourages compliance. This will be undertaken by a formal, informal, or external editorial board/reviewer as appropriate.

# Altantic Firth Scottish Dance Band - New Member



Website: <https://www.karensteven.co.uk/>

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576582333205>

Email: [atlanticfirth@gmail.com](mailto:atlanticfirth@gmail.com)

We are a 4-piece Scottish Dance Band comprising; Karen Steven (Fiddle/Co-lead), Alastair MacDonald (Accordion/Co-lead), Ian Clark (Guitar accompanist) & John Mitchell (Piano accompanist). We have been performing concerts and for dancing for around 2 years, mainly in Ottawa, with Karen & Alastair also playing for Scottish Country Dancing in Sherbrooke, QC and in Alberta - Calgary, Edmonton and Lethbridge. There's a vibrant Scottish Country Dance scene all over the world.

Three of our four band members are Scottish, now living permanently in Ontario. We used social media and google searches to find organisations interested in promoting Scottish culture, heritage and history. We are interested to maintain links with Scottish organisations and to share our love of Scottish music in Canada. Karen has a degree in Gaelic Studies and is a qualified highland dance teacher. Karen & Alastair have a wealth of experience in playing for listening and Scottish dance.

***Atlantic Firth Scottish Dance Band provide us with a wonderful musical interlude for our spring meeting. Click the image below to watch.***



***Scots of Canada is thrilled to be supporting, through the Member Activity Fund, Karen Steven's participation in the [North Atlantic Fiddle Convention, Aberdeen June 24-29, 2026](#)***

***Karen has been invited to teach fiddle and to play fiddle for traditional dance workshops. We look forward to sharing her article on the convention in a future newsletter.***

# Clan Bell North America

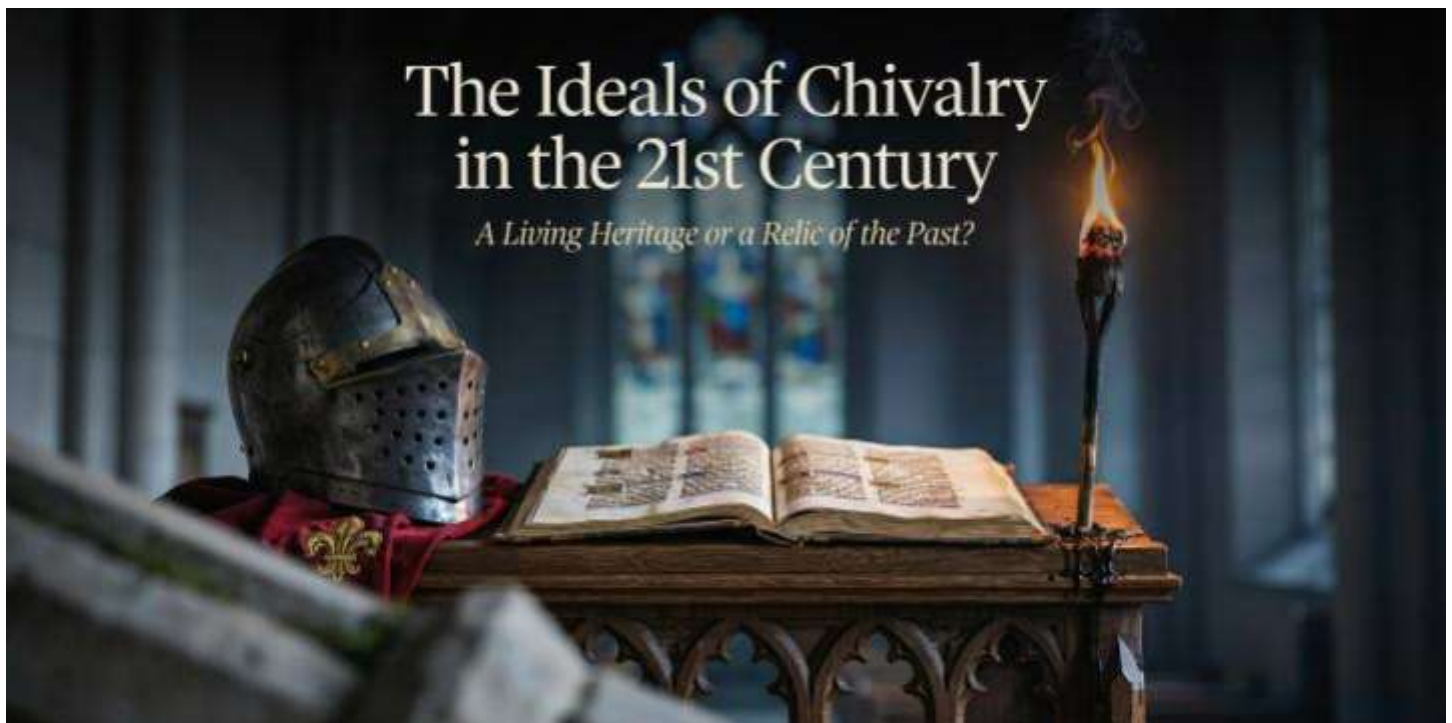


Image credit : Ideogram.ai

A note from Peter J. Bell, CBNA representative in the UK.  
(reprinted from *House of Bell Vol. 39 Issue 4*)

Dear fellow CBNA members

I include for you a really good essay from the Leader of the Ordo Balliolensis that I hope you will enjoy and encourage you to consider joining the order, (As Colonel William Bell of CBNA and the earlier Clan Bell International did). I found it described exactly what I was looking for to fit in with MY near family values as I was brought up and I am sure derives from the greater and wider Bell family.

**"Where values collapse, virtues must rise again."**

In the age of artificial intelligence, omnipresent social networks, a globalization as rapid as it is disorienting, and a new world order taking shape, sweeping away all our democratic landmarks and values once considered secure under the guarantee of the world's greatest power, a question arises with renewed urgency: Do the noble ideals of chivalry still have a place in our contemporary world?

Inherited from the Middle Ages, these ideals—honour, loyalty, courage, duty, protection of the weak, faith, courtesy, spirit of sacrifice—might seem anachronistic. They evoke ancient frescoes, swashbuckling novels, or the pages of an old moral code forgotten in a dusty library.

But should we relegate them to history? Or can they still illuminate our path? Despite appearances, these virtues have lost none of their relevance. On the contrary: they appear as precious antidotes to the excesses of our age.

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# Clan Bell North America

*(Continued from page 38)*



**Peter J. Bell with Frater Robert A. Bels**

In an era marked by great upheavals, relativism, fake news, and widespread cynicism, honour, understood as fidelity to oneself and to the truth, becomes a necessity. It is no longer simply about preserving an image, but about remaining faithful to who we are, educating ourselves, elevating our minds, even as some states insidiously promote the ignorance of their peoples. For everything seems to push us to silence, to bend, to dissolve into the crowd. To stand firm, lucid, and free thus becomes an act of chivalry and inner nobility.

Courage, for its part, is no longer expressed on battlefields but in the discreet struggles of daily life: affirming a just conviction, defending the weak, resisting the surrounding fear, countering lies. It is no longer a matter of brandishing the sword but of standing up, in the noblest sense of the term. Facing the homogenization of thought, media intimidation, and the erasure of essential truths, this courage becomes a vital necessity. It is a new storming of the Bastille, but intellectual, spiritual, and global this time.

The sense of duty is no longer reserved for knights or nobles. It takes root in the conscience of each person: the responsible citizen, the upright professional, the loving parent.

The protection of the weak, a quintessential chivalric foundation, today finds new resonance in battles for human dignity: manifesting in the defence of great traditions, support for the most vulnerable, but also in the demand for true justice, apolitical and nonpartisan. To be a knight in the 21st century is to refuse that strength crushes law, that forgetfulness erases memory, that the rich crush the poor, or that ideologies manipulate truth and justice.

And what of faith? Even in a deeply secularized world, the quest for transcendence, justice, and inner light remains very much alive. Chivalry does not impose a religion, nor does it cling to the external forms of worship; it embodies a demanding spirituality, oriented toward good in its highest and most universal sense.

Today, no scientist truly honest with themselves can deny the existence of a "something." Not necessarily a God fixed in traditional representations or imposed dogmas, but a Presence, a subliminal Spirit, which many now call the Cosmic Intelligence. For everything in nature, from the order of galaxies to the structure of a cell and the order governing the elementary particles of our Universe, testifies to a universal knowledge, a profound harmony, far beyond the understanding of our brightest scientists.

*(Continued on page 40)*

# Clan Bell North America

*(Continued from page 39)*

Perhaps chivalric faith is just that: humbly recognizing that reality surpasses us and striving to live according to its noblest laws, with uprightness, fervour, and a sense of mystery.

Recognizing the value of these ideals does not imply adopting their historical forms without discernment. Medieval chivalry was marked by elitism, patriarchy, and war. It belonged to a feudal structure now obsolete.

To survive and bear fruit, the chivalric spirit must evolve. It must universalize its virtues: The modern knight is no longer necessarily noble by birth. They may be a woman, an engaged adolescent, an honest scientist, a craftsman faithful to their work, or a passionate artist. Nobility of soul knows no caste.

The modern knight must be non-violent. Their fight no longer takes place on battlefields but through true speech, just action, and peaceful resistance. They no longer brandish the sword but the spirit of equity. Their moral commitment does not stop at humanity; it extends to the animal, the plant, and even mineral worlds. For they know, deep within, that all visible reality—no matter how distinct, shares the same origin. Reduced to their simplest expression, all beings and elements of creation are but manifestations of the same primal matter, composed of energy, elementary particles, and universal ordering, all governed by that great unknown called, for lack of better superlatives, the Cosmic Intelligence.

One day, a journalist asked me, "Why are there women in chivalry?" I simply replied, "A knight, a human being, is never anything other than a manifestation of Energy. Do you believe Energy has a sex?"

In a world seeking guidance, chivalric ideals are not relics but resources. They call not for nostalgia but for elevation. Not for repeating the past but for transfiguring its best intuitions. What we must preserve is not the fixed code of chivalry but its momentum, generosity, and moral grandeur. It is not about putting on armour but strengthening the soul.

The 21st century need new crusaders. It needs, more than ever, knights of justice, defenders of dignity, servants of the common good. Men and women capable of combining courage and compassion, fidelity and lucidity, strength and humility. Today, a new crusade is needed, not for the defence of "a" global multinational, but for the preservation of our Western civilization. Never has the danger been greater. The fire is no longer at the gates of our walls, but at the very doors of our homes.

And what if, in the light of modern times, chivalry were to rediscover its ancient torch?

Non Nobis Domine... Non Nobis ...

Fra. Robert Adelson Bels

# Clan Bell North America

**Visiting Games & Festivals in other Countries: Keeping our Scottish heritage alive!**

## **Gaining A New Perspective Revisited**

*Article submitted by Stephanie Bell Clements Adams*

An original article was written soon after our Fall 2019 trip to Scotland, and it reflected our surprise at how our perceptions of highland games were changed after we attended the Braemar Highland Games. At that time, my husband Mike and I had been representing Clan Bell at the Highland Games and Scottish Festivals in southern California for nine years, and we expected that there would be many colorful, welcoming Clan tents, music stages, lots of vendors offering all manner of food and beverages, memorabilia and merchandise for purchase, and the like. Actually attending the Braemar Gathering made us realize how differently the Scots view these events!



*This is the main Braemar Gathering venue. All of the heavy athletics , dancing and piping competitions, tug-of-war, and track events take place here ; the hill race begins and ends here.*

We drove up from Edinburgh and got lost along the way, so by the time we got parked and hiked to the Braemar Games venue (another odyssey), we were late and unable to get a seat in the grandstands. We ended up having to be satisfied with “distance viewing” from the grassy areas. This “festival” seating had very limited viewing opportunities due to the 15 person deep crowd at the only other viewing area at the edge of the field. There were very few food and beverage vendors, and the lines were very long (another miscalculation on our part). The Official Merchandise booth was almost completely sold out. There were a few other community stalls, trade stalls, and vendors, but there were no music stages or brightly decorated, inviting clan tents we see in the US and Canada. There was a large enclosed canopy near the Duke of

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# Clan Bell North America

*(Continued from page 41)*

Rothsay Highland Games Pavilion which had an overseas visitors area at one end. The tables were wall to wall visitors, so engagement with then one or two tent hosts (we couldn't see to tell if there was more than one). Once you finally elbowed up to the table, you could sign the visitors' register, write the name of your hometown on a note card, and pin the card to the map of your country on the tent wall. I think there might have been one clan represented, but tent was so crowded it was well-nigh invisible. We were completely mystified by what seemed a major difference between Braemar and the North American games and festivals.

So much of what we do in North America as clan representatives and tent warriors focuses on making our clans visible and accessible to visitors who may not know their heritage, and acquainting them with their Scottish roots. What may start out as a pleasant day at a festival can become a real "AHA" moment for the visitor and an affirmation of the passion we feel for our clan and paying forward our Scottish legacy.



**Another visitor from the United States pins her completed home town card on the map of North America in the Braemar Overseas**



**Overseas visitor reception area**

We came to Braemar with preconceived, generalized notions about Scottish festivals which we came to see in a clearer light. After the four of us compared our impressions of the day at Braemar, we came to the conclusion that the local Scottish people attend the highland games for much the same reason as many of our North American festival visitors do: a pleasant day out to watch the various competitions, sample different food and beverages, and hear some bagpipe music. What we discovered at Braemar is this: the Scottish people do not need to be reacquainted with their heritage—the lucky souls are living it every day!.

# Clan Bell North America

**Kirkin' O' the Tartan, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 25, 2025**

*Submitted by Erin Bell Young, CBNA Commissioner for Utah*

On Sunday October 25, 2025, Erin Bell Young and her family attended the Kirkin' o' the Tartan at the First Presbyterian Church of Salt Lake City, Utah. Erin's family has attended the Kirkin' o' Tartan at this historic Salt Lake City church for many years, though this was their first attendance since her Dad, CBNA Commissioner David K. Bell, passed in 2024. This was Erin's first time taking part in this wonderful celebration, and she felt as if her father was there with her. Erin wanted to share this day with us. Some of the pictures shown here are from previous Kirkin' o' the Tartan celebrations and some from this year.

## **The Kirkin' O' the Tartan: A Scottish-American Tradition**

The Kirkin' o' the Tartans service celebrates Scotland and Scottish heritage, and it is truly a Scottish-American custom. The Kirkin' O' the Tartan was the brainchild of the Rev. Peter Marshall, originally from Coatbridge, Scotland. Reverend Marshall was the pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC and served as Chaplain of the United States Senate before his death in 1949.

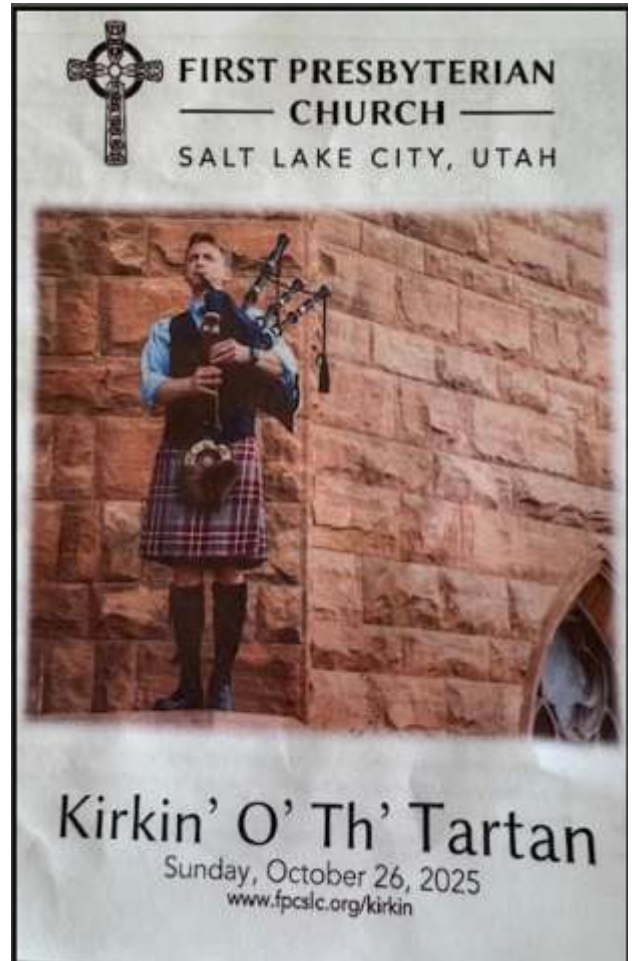
On April 27, 1941, Rev. Marshall gave a sermon entitled "the Kirkin' o' the Tartans", and from this beginning, he organized a special service in Washington DC for Scots and those of Scottish ancestry and encouraged the people attending to wear their clan tartans.

The service was very popular and soon representatives of each Clan began marching in with Clan banners. The church service was often scheduled with social gatherings afterward making for a day-long celebration.

From the United States, this celebration of the tartans and Scottish heritage spread to Canada then across the globe to Australia and New Zealand. Nowadays a Kirkin' of' the Tartans is celebrated as a part of many of the Scottish Festivals and Highland Games around the USA.

The First Presbyterian Church of Salt Lake City, Utah was modeled in the English Scottish Gothic revival style of Carlisle Cathedral in England. This iconic building was designed by well-known Salt Lake City architect Walter Ware. Alexander Carpenter, the builder, had the red sandstone from Red Butte Canyon above Fort Douglas cut and hauled to the site by wagon. The cornerstone for this historic building was laid on June 4, 1903.

For more on the background of the Kirkin' o' the Tartans, go to the interesting and informative article by Todd Williamson on the Scottish Tartans Museum Website at: <http://www.scottishtartans.org/kirkin.htm>





TOUR  2026

**Brighde Chaimbeul**

Brighde Chaimbeul will be returning this summer for a special exclusive and extensive Canadian tour.

Brighde will be making her first trip to the Maritimes since playing Celtic Colours in 2018. As well as several stops at prominent folk festivals and the National Arts Center!



# Brighde Chaimbeul

JULY 10-12 WINNIPEG, MB...*WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL*  
JULY 16 HARRISON, BC.....*FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS*  
JULY 18-19 VANCOUVER, BC....*VANCOUVER FOLK FEST*  
JULY 21 OTTAWA, ON.....*NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE*  
JULY 24 HALIFAX, NS.....*ST. DAVID'S CHURCH*  
JULY 25 MUSQUODOBOIT, NS.....*STEEPLE GREEN*  
JULY 28 INVERNESS, NS.....*ICCA*  
JULY 30 SYDNEY, NS.....*ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH*  
AUGUST 01 SACKVILLE, NB.....*SAPPYFEST*

## TOUR 2026



## Scotland Made the World

**Bruce Fummey is where humour meets Scottish history and insightful storytelling.**

Bruce, the comedian behind the 260k subscriber YouTube channel Scotland History Tours, returns to tour Canada with a new show. Laughs galore and quirky observations as he explains how Scotland Made the World.

His unique style showcases and celebrates Scottish culture and history, in a way that will not only keep you fully engaged, but have you rolling with laughter and screaming for more!

Every Saturday morning UK time Bruce tells a story from Scotland's history. This show will deliver more jokes than you'd get from the YouTube videos, and some might even make you blush, but you'll still leave having learned about Scotland's role in the world while laughing along the way.

Nominated for comedy awards in Australia, at home in Scotland and even named Scottish Comedian of the Year, Bruce appeared on CBC series Stuff the British Stole and many UK TV and radio shows

<p><u>Fri, June 19 • 7:30</u>  <u>Studio Theatre Perth</u>  <u>Perth, ON</u></p>	<p><u>Sat, June 20 • 7:30</u>  <u>Masonic Temple</u>  <u>Port Hope, ON</u></p>	<p><u>Sun, June 21 • 7:00</u>  <u>RCAFA, 416 Wing King-</u>  <u>ston, ON</u></p>	<p><u>Sat, June 27 • 8:00</u>  <u>Paradise Theatre</u>  <u>Toronto, ON</u></p>
<p><u>Tue, June 30 • 7:30</u>  <u>The Westdale</u>  <u>Hamilton, ON</u></p>	<p><u>Fri 17 Jul, 7:30</u>  <u>Timms Centre for the</u>  <u>Arts</u>  <u>Edmonton, AB</u></p>	<p><u>Thu 23 Jul, 7:00</u>  <u>Dakoda's Sports Bar &amp;</u>  <u>Grill</u>  <u>Kelowna, BC</u></p>	<p><u>Sun 26 Jul, 6:30</u>  <u>Victoria Scottish</u>  <u>Community Centre, BC</u></p>

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# CelticLife

INTERNATIONAL

## Celtic Common Ground

ALSO!

*Mclusky, Holly Redmond Harvey  
Tartan Trek, Pys Melyn  
Ishna, Yukon Gaelic Festival*

Our Mid-Spring 2026 edition explores the past, present, and future of Celtic lands.

Also, enjoy feature stories on Mclusky, the Irish Mammy, Holly Redmond, Crain Ferguson's Tartan Trek, Pys Melyn, ScotDance, the No Fame Games, O'Brien Farm, Yukon Gaelic Festival, Ishna, and more!

And, as always, we bring you the latest in Celtic news, views, reviews, recipes, fashion, culture, tradition, history & heritage! **Subscribe today!**

For a limited time, pick up a 1-year print or digital subscription and save 40%! Details [HERE!](#)  
(use promo code 40YEARS)

# Clan Crawford Association - New Member



The surname Crawford was first recorded in an historic document in 1147 A.D. This period was a time of major change in Southern Scotland. This document was concerning the Barony of Crawford located on the upper Clyde River.

Our early history is rich, layered, and sometimes challenging to untangle. Like many Scottish clans, Crawford history stretches back nearly a thousand years, across more than thirty generations, where records are incomplete and later traditions sometimes conflict.

Over time, multiple theories have emerged, making it difficult to distinguish between documented lineage and well-intentioned speculation. This complexity is part of what makes Crawford history so compelling—and why careful research matters.

**Website:** <https://clancrawfordassoc.org/>

**Delegate:** Bruce Crawford [argyll.crawford@gmail.com](mailto:argyll.crawford@gmail.com)

**Membership:** Fred Crawford [phrederic16170@gmail.com](mailto:phrederic16170@gmail.com)

**Crest:** A stag's head erased (torn at the neck) in red (Gules), with a small black cross (cross crosslet fitchée) between the antlers.

**Motto:** "Tutum te robore reddam" - I will give you safety by strength

## Primary Name Variations & Septs

Crawford, Crafoord, Craufurd, Crawford, Crafford, Crofford, Crowford



# Scottish Language and Culture - Gàidhlig ~ Scots



UNIVERSITY OF  
**ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE**  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

✉ [david.livingston.lowe@utoronto.ca](mailto:david.livingston.lowe@utoronto.ca)

\* <https://linktr.ee/daibhidhdauvit>

**Upcoming academic and community courses and workshops  
for information and registration please visit the websites provided**

## **Introduction to Scottish Gaelic Celtic Studies Program, Toronto**

September 2026-2027 USMC Celtic Studies CLT242Y1Y university academic course. An introduction to Scottish Gaelic language and culture. Students will master fundamentals of reading, writing, and the basics of grammar and will begin to speak Gaelic. Proverbs, poetry, songs and folktales introduce students to the language, literature and folklore of Gaelic Scotland and immigrant North America. No prior knowledge of the language is required.

<https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/program/celtic-studies>

## **Songs and Speech of Gaelic Scotland** September 2026, Toronto

6-week non-credit course at USMC Continuing Education. This course will provide an introduction to speaking and singing in Gaelic, the Celtic language of Scotland. Students will learn pronunciation, basic vocabulary and useful phrases. Music is an effective tool for learning language. Each class will explore a different type of traditional song from Scotland's rich Gaelic heritage.

<https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/program/smce4010-f26-songs-speech-of-gaelic-scotland>

## **Scotland's Robert Burns: Life, Lyrics and Legacy** January 2027, Toronto

6-week non-credit course at USMC Continuing Education. Robert Burns (1759-1796) is Scotland's most internationally renowned poet and lyricist, revered by many as the nation's bard. Each session will focus on an aspect of the poet's work and life, and provide an opportunity to read aloud and sing a song together. Topics covered will include Robert Burns's early years, pastoral works, love lyrics, activist and revolutionary Burns, the narrative poem Tam o' Shanter, Burns Suppers and legacy.

[Continuing Education - University of St. Michael's College](#)

## **Previous Courses and Workshops**

### **Cànan agus Òran** April 18 2026, Toronto

Day-long workshops in Gaelic language and song

### **Uisge-beatha: The Gaelic in the Whisky**

Community educational workshop

### **Lowland Scots Language and Literature**

Celtic Studies Program course

<https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/program/celtic-studies>



**David Livingston Lowe**



Editor's Note: The following is from the page at <https://dot.scot/stories/12484/>

## **The origins of Scots of Canada**

Scots of Canada emerged from the evolution of Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada (CASSOC), an organization long dedicated to supporting clans, families, and societies across the country. For many years, that work included representing members at Highland Games, helping people trace their Scottish roots, and supporting initiatives such as the Scottish Studies Graduate Bursary at the University of Guelph. That foundation remains important, but it also became clear that the traditional model could not fully meet the needs of all Canadians eager to connect with their Scottish heritage.

## **Please describe the work that Scots of Canada does now**

Across Canada, millions of people have Scottish ancestry or affinity, yet many do not belong to a clan or local society and thus have no real 'home' within the Scottish community. At the same time, many heritage organizations face common challenges: aging memberships, volunteer fatigue, and the difficulty of sustaining programs over time. Scots of Canada was transformed from CASSOC in response to that reality, with a vision of becoming a truly national Scottish organization for all Canadians who want to connect with Scottish culture and heritage.

*(Continued on page 51)*

(Continued from page 50)



A key part of that new vision is the introduction of household membership. Rather than focusing only on individuals or established organizations, Scots of Canada is building a model that encourages families and households to participate together, share traditions across generations, and find a meaningful sense of belonging. This approach is intended not to replace clans and societies, but to strengthen them by creating a broader national network that can support long-term growth, engagement, and renewal.

### **What does the future hold for Scots of Canada and why did you choose .scot to be a part of it?**

The organization is also building a digital-first foundation through a custom web platform that will support membership management, events,

educational resources, and community connection from coast to coast to coast. In that context, choosing a .scot domain was a natural and important decision. In a digital world crowded with .com, .org, and .ca addresses, it is easy for an organization to disappear in a forest of others. .scot gives immediate cultural meaning and signals, from the first glance, that this is a Scottish organization with a clear sense of identity and purpose.

Scots of Canada is currently transitioning from its legacy websites and high-level domains. During this transition and thereafter, automatic translation of the old to new and vice-versa is being done to minimize disruption for our members and the public. You can safely use dotScot (.scot) wherever you see .ca, .com or .org in a URL or email address for us during this transition.

For Scots of Canada, the domain does more than identify a website. It reinforces the organization's mission to sustain Scottish culture and heritage, while also reminding visitors that this work belongs to a wider global Scottish diaspora. Although rooted in Canada, Scots of Canada is part of a story that reaches far beyond North America. The dotScot name helps express that broader perspective and supports a future in which Scottish culture is not simply preserved, but actively renewed and shared.



# Clan Dunbar - New Member



**Website:** [www.ClanDunbar.org](http://www.ClanDunbar.org)

**Delegate to Scots of Canada  
and Membership Contact**

David Dunbar [Chieftain@ClanDunbar.com](mailto:Chieftain@ClanDunbar.com)

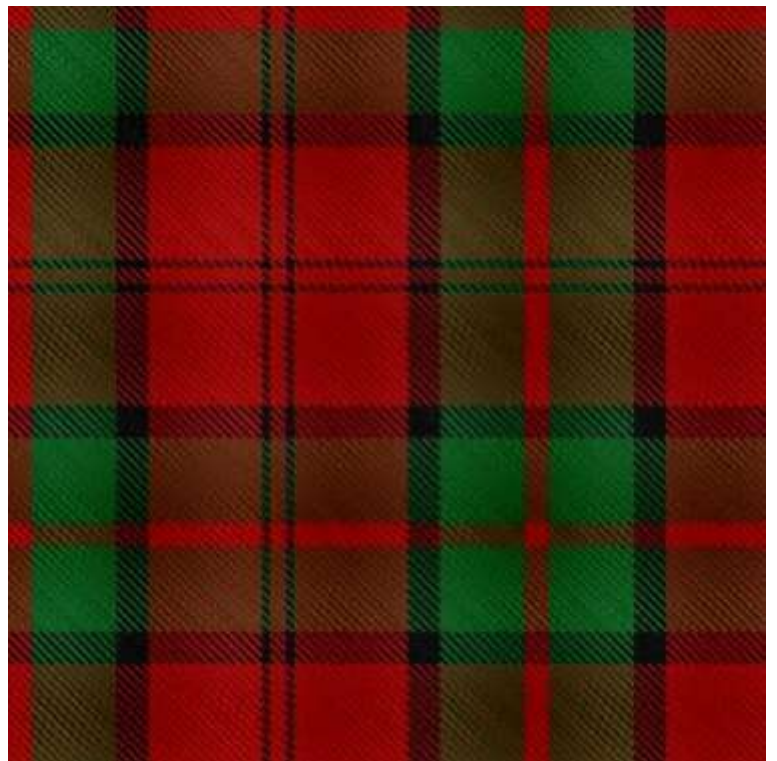
**Crest:** A horse's head, Argent (silver/white), bridled and reined, Gules (red).  
bull's head erased Sable, armed Vert

**Motto:** In Promptu (In Readiness)

The Clan hosts tents at highland games across the US and seeks to gain membership and new connections with long lost relatives. Clan Dunbar publishes a quarterly newsletter, "The Lion and the Thistle", which is distributed periodically world-wide. The Clan has five total Baronets in Burke's Peerage. More importantly, the Clan has active members who help each other find common ancestors and create new memories. The Clan is actively promoting interest and knowledge of Scottish history and heritage

## Membership

All persons interested in Scottish history associated with the Dunbar name are invited to join. Especially those who are members of families associated with the following surnames: Blackadder, Clugston, Corbett, Dundas, Edgar, Grey, Herying, Home, Knox, Neville, Nisbett, Pepdie, Strickland, Washington, Wedderburn, and Whiteadder





## Great Canadian Kilt Skate - Toronto 2026

Congratulations on another fantastic Great Canadian Kilt Skate! This year was truly exceptional, with a record-breaking 15 communities from Canada, United States, and Scotland joining the festivities.

It was inspiring to see people come together, and for the first time ever, we marked International Kilt Skate weekend with eight participating communities. The camaraderie and friendly shout-outs across the globe really set the tone for this year's celebration — what an achievement!

Our event is gaining momentum, with media recognition helping to spread the word about the spirit and fun that define our Great Canadian Kilt Skate. All the smiles and good humour have been wonderful, but as always, they make choosing this year's Great Canadian Kilt Skate Capital especially tough!

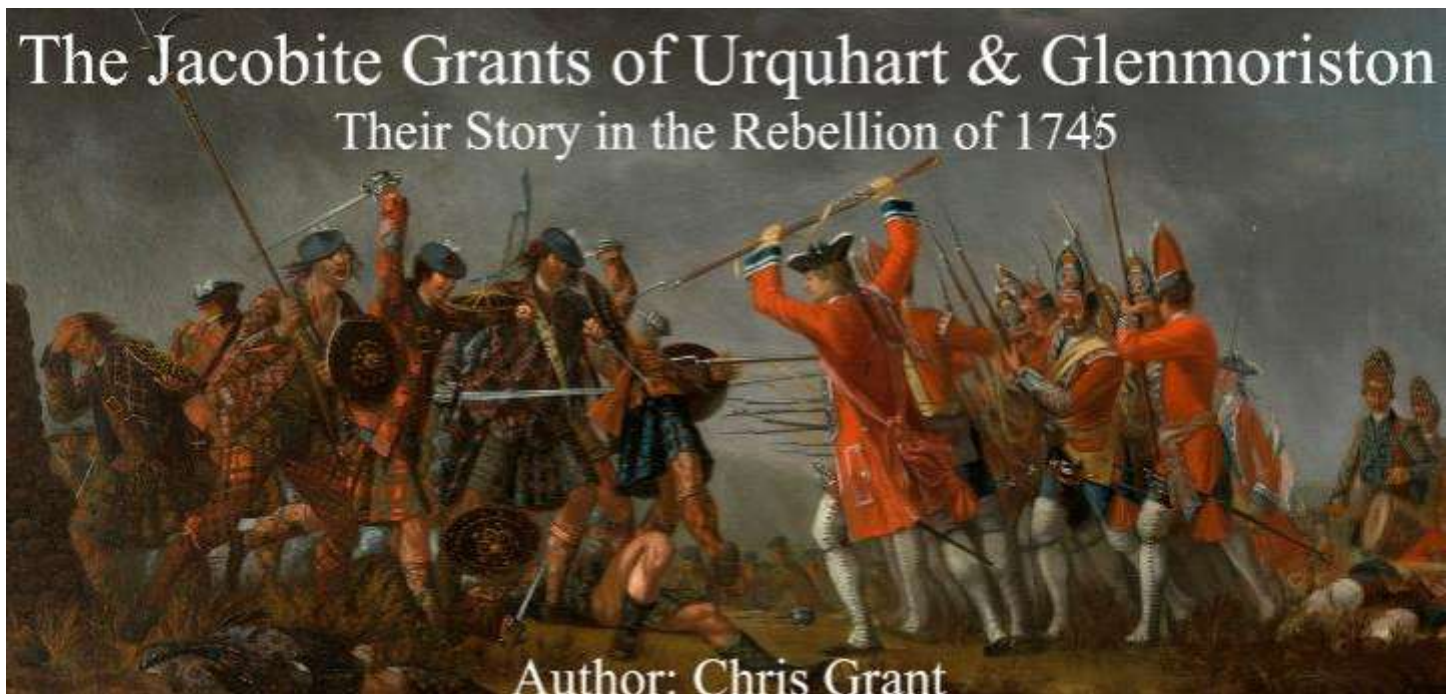
The past few years have been quite challenging for those hosting their kilt skate outdoors—sometimes too warm, other times bitterly cold. We acknowledge eight communities who braved the elements: Halifax, Fredericton, Moncton, Concorde (USA), Ottawa, Orillia, Winnipeg, and Calgary (willing but no ice!). Special mention goes to Halifax, who, in only their second year, held a kilt skate in extreme conditions—wind chill of -20°C, gusts up to 60km/hr, and heavy snow.

Despite it all, the celebration thrived, featuring highland dancing, bagpipes, and plenty of kilted skaters of all ages. The event was capped off with a wee dram at The Beavers Den, truly capturing the Canadian spirit! For full details and pictures, please check this link below. [Great Canadian Kilt Skate Capital 2026](#)

With great pleasure, please join us in congratulating Halifax as this year's Great Canadian Kilt Skate Capital. Sláinte

Don Cumber, Andy MacCulloch.  
The Scottish Society of Ottawa

# Book Review



## ***Uncovering the Ultimate Betrayal: A New Perspective on Clan Grant***

For nearly three centuries, historians and descendants alike have debated one of the most shameful and perplexing chapters of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion: the betrayal of Clan Grant by their own chief. The narrative of what truly happened to the Grants of Loch Ness-side has long been obscured by time and conflicting historical accounts. Now, thanks to the lifelong dedication of Grantown author Chris Grant, the veil has finally been lifted on this enduring historical puzzle.

In his extensive 632-page volume, *The Jacobite Grants of Urquhart and Glenmoriston - their story in the Rebellion of 1745*, Chris Grant offers an unprecedented look into the events that led to the tragic fate of his ancestors. A professional chef for four decades, the author was simultaneously driven by a deep personal quest to uncover the facts behind a story that has haunted his family for generations.

### **The Cumberland Papers Revealed**

The breakthrough in this painstaking research came when the author gained access to the Cumberland papers, historical documents that have been held in Windsor Castle. These previously unpublished letters and records provide the crucial evidence needed to challenge long-standing historical assumptions.

According to the author, traditional history books have largely been incorrect in their portrayal of Clan Grant as a unified, Hanoverian-supporting entity during the '45 Rebellion. The newly uncovered documents suggest a starkly different reality: the majority of the Grants in Strathspey were, in fact, Jacobites at heart.

The book details the harrowing journey of nine members of the author's own family. These men fought valiantly in the Glengarry Regiment, marching to Derby and back alongside Charles Edward Stuart's Highland Army. However, their loyalty and bravery were ultimately met with deceit.

*(Continued on page 55)*

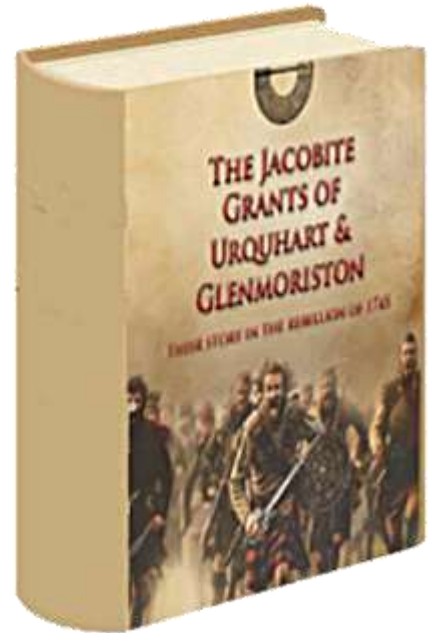
# Book Review

*(Continued from page 54)*

## **A Clan Sacrificed**

The core of the book delves into the specific sequence of events that led Ludovick Grant, the head of the clan, to hand over his own men to the Duke of Cumberland in Inverness. The author argues that these men were made "sacrificial lambs" to cover up the murky conduct of their fellow clansmen in Strathspey, whose actions had drawn the ire of King George in London.

The consequences of this betrayal were devastating. The betrayed men endured ten agonizing months in the disease-ridden prison hulks at Tilbury Fort on the River Thames. Many perished in these appalling conditions. Those who survived the imprisonment faced a grim future; they were transported to the Caribbean island of Barbados as indentured slaves. There, the harsh environment and tropical diseases claimed even more lives. Only a fortunate few managed to survive the decade that followed and eventually return to their native glens.



## **The Fate of Alexander Grant of Shewglie**

Beyond the immediate betrayal, the book also sheds light on the fascinating story of Alexander Grant of Shewglie, the head of the family. On the very day the betrayal occurred in Inverness, Ludovick Grant presented a letter to the Duke of Cumberland—a letter originally sent to Shewglie by Charles Edward Stuart after the raising of the Royal Standard at Glenfinnan.

This action led to Shewglie's immediate arrest on charges of high treason and his subsequent transfer to Tilbury Fort. Yet, as the book reveals, Shewglie's story took an unexpected turn when he was released from his cell, allegedly through the influence of prominent Hanoverian figures in Britain.

The narrative extends beyond the immediate aftermath of Culloden, following the Shewglie Grants into the subsequent decades. Many joined the Honourable East India Company, playing commanding roles in pivotal conflicts such as the Battles of Plassey and Buxar, which cemented the Company's dominance in India.

## **A Must-Read for Scottish History Enthusiasts**

Chris Grant's *The Jacobite Grants of Urquhart and Glenmoriston* is more than just a family history; it is a profound re-examination of a pivotal moment in Highland culture. As the author notes, this betrayal was an infamous act without equal in the turbulent history of the Highlands.

For those interested in the true, unvarnished history of the Jacobite Rebellion and the complex loyalties of the Scottish clans, this book promises to be an essential and eye-opening read.

[Click here for the Paperback and Kindle Editions on Amazon](#)

# Clan Hunter - International Gathering 2026

Friday 24th July 2026 – Sunday 26th July 2026.

**Join us at our Clan Hunter International Gathering 2026!**

We are thrilled to welcome you to the Clan Hunter International Gathering 2026—an extraordinary celebration of heritage, history, and Highland pride.

Whether you're reuniting with fellow Hunters or discovering the depth of our clan legacy for the very first time, this gathering promises moments you'll remember for a lifetime.

## **A Landmark Moment for Clan Hunter**

The 2026 Gathering marks a truly historic chapter for our clan, celebrating several exciting firsts. With great pride, Madam Pauline announces two significant new appointments that will help shape the future of Clan Hunter:



*Madam Pauline with Graham Wright, Macer Venatorus and Chief Elect Raymond Morehead of Clan Muirhead*

**Louise Hunter**, accomplished marketing expert and events organiser, will be formally appointed Chieftain.

**Martin Beer**, our dynamic social media specialist, will be appointed Depute Macer Venatorus.

Clan Hunter is poised to expand its presence, engage in more events, and continue championing Scotland's rich cultural traditions on a global stage.

## **Honoured by the Court of the Lord Lyon**

These historic appointments have been submitted for approval at the highest level, and we are deeply honoured that The Lord Lyon has graciously granted consent for the official inaugurations.

We are delighted to announce that **George Way** of Plean, Rothesay Herald and a senior representative of the Court of the Lord Lyon, will attend and officiate at the Friday afternoon ceremony.

This special event will also celebrate our Bonds of Friendship with the chiefs of Clan Grant, Clan Irving Clan McEwen and Clan Carruthers, adding powerful symbolism to an already momentous occasion.

Additionally, we will warmly recognise our 25-year Bond of Friendship with Clan Muirhead.

Adding further depth to our celebrations, we are pleased to welcome two distinguished experts:

**Philip Tibbetts**, March Pursuivant of Arms at the Court of the Lord Lyon and Honorary Vexillologist, who will explore the meaning and power of flags and their symbolism.

*(Continued on page 57)*

# Clan Hunter - International Gathering 2026

*(Continued from page 56)*

**Ross McEwen**, seanachie to the Chief of Clan McEwen and renowned authority on heraldry, who will guide us through the rich traditions and stories behind heraldic symbolism.

## **The Ancient Bearing Sword of Hunterston Castle**

Almost as old as Hunterston Castle itself, the clan's magnificent 15th-century ceremonial sword has been carefully restored to its former glory. This remarkable artefact will be formally presented during the Friday afternoon ceremonies—a stirring link between our past and our future.



*Louis Hunter and Martin Beer*



Ross McEwen and Philip Tibbetts

On Saturday evening, our Clan Dinner will be held at the West Kilbride Golf Club – an evening of fine food, live music, and traditional Scottish dancing. Be sure to wear your tartan with pride and bring your dancing shoes!

We cannot wait to welcome you to a gathering filled with history, friendship, ceremony, and shared pride in the enduring legacy of Clan Hunter.

[Click here for more information and to attend](#)

***Note: Chair of Scots of Canada has been honoured with an invitation and will be attending ceremonies on the Friday***

# Clan Logan

## Remembering Ted Gunn and the Strength of Our Scottish Community

By Steven Logan, FSA Scot

Clan Logan Commissioner of Canada

Clan Logan Canada wishes to honour the memory of Ted Gunn, a man whose kindness, leadership, and steady presence strengthened the bonds between clans across our Scottish community. Ted had a remarkable way of making everyone feel welcome, whether you were part of Clan Gunn or visiting from another clan entirely. His warmth was genuine, and his respect for our shared heritage was unmistakable.



Charles Edward Fraser Gunn

1933-2026

Over the years, I had the pleasure of meeting Ted and Louise at several Highland Games including the Maxville Glengarry Highland Games and, of course, our own Montreal Highland Games. Each time, their presence brought a sense of continuity and friendship that extended far beyond their own clan. They represented Clan Gunn with dignity, but they also embraced the wider Scottish family with open arms.

The turnout at his reception reflected that spirit. Members of many clans came together, not out of obligation, but out of affection and respect.



Moments like these remind us that our community is strongest when we stand beside one another, celebrating our traditions and supporting each other through loss.

Clan Logan Canada extends heartfelt support to Clan Gunn during this time. Ted's legacy lives on in the friendships he nurtured, the unity he encouraged, and the kindness he showed to all of us. We will continue to honour his memory by carrying forward that same spirit of connection between our clans.

## En mémoire de Ted Gunn et de la force de notre communauté écossaise

*Par Steven Logan, FSA Scot*

*Commissaire du Clan Logan au Canada*

Clan Logan Canada souhaite rendre hommage à la mémoire de Ted Gunn, un homme dont la gentillesse, le leadership et la présence rassurante ont renforcé les liens entre les clans de notre communauté écossaise. Ted avait cette capacité remarquable de faire sentir à chacun qu'il était le bienvenu, que l'on appartienne au Clan Gunn ou que l'on vienne d'un autre clan. Sa chaleur humaine était authentique, et son respect pour notre héritage commun ne faisait aucun doute.

Au fil des années, j'ai eu le plaisir de rencontrer Ted et Louise à plusieurs Highland Games — notamment aux Maxville Glengarry Highland Games et, bien sûr, à nos propres Montreal Highland Games. Chaque fois, leur présence apportait un sentiment de continuité et d'amitié qui dépassait largement les frontières de leur clan. Ils représentaient le Clan Gunn avec dignité, tout en accueillant la grande famille écossaise avec une ouverture exemplaire.

La participation à sa réception en a été le reflet. De nombreux clans se sont réunis, non par obligation, mais par affection et par respect.

Ces moments nous rappellent que notre communauté est à son meilleur lorsque nous nous tenons côte à côte, célébrant nos traditions et nous soutenant mutuellement dans les moments difficiles.

Clan Logan Canada offre tout son soutien au Clan Gunn en cette période de deuil.

L'héritage de Ted perdure dans les amitiés qu'il a cultivées, l'unité qu'il a encouragée et la bienveillance qu'il a montrée à chacun d'entre nous. Nous continuerons d'honorer sa mémoire en perpétuant cet esprit de connexion entre nos clans.



# Clan MacDuff Society of America - New Member



## Website

[www.clanmacduff.org](http://www.clanmacduff.org)

## Membership and Delegate

Sean Bradshaw : [macduffsb@gmail.com](mailto:macduffsb@gmail.com)

## CREST

A demi-lion rampant holding a dagger

## MOTTO

Deus Juvat - God assists

In the list of names in the MacDuff territory and from various sources,  
there are approximately 421 entries.

Visit [www.scotscanada.scot/macduff](http://www.scotscanada.scot/macduff) for the full list.

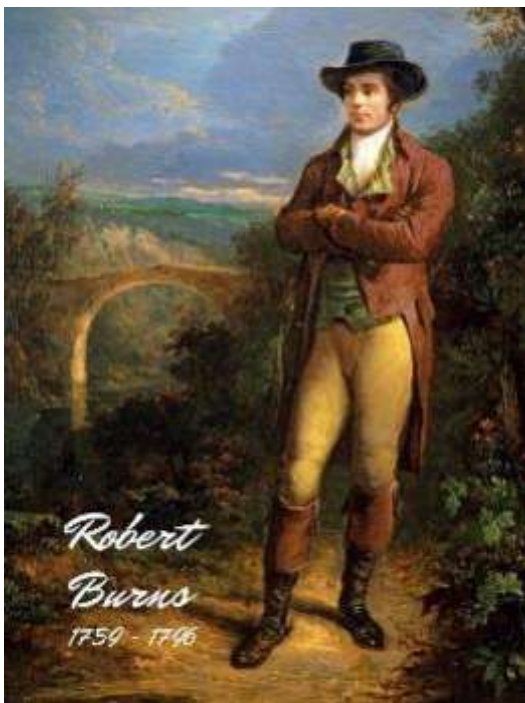


# Clan MacFarlane

## Attending a St. Andrews Burns Supper

I have never attended a St. Andrews Burns Supper. I've seen photos, and I've been invited, but for one reason or another, I have not been able to attend. This begs the question: "What happens at a Burns Supper?"

The Burns Supper is an annual celebration about the life and writings of the Scottish poet, Robert Burns. Robert Burns was born 25 January 1759, so my understanding is that most of the dinners are held on or near his birthday. I've heard them called various names, too.



Robbie Burns Day, Burns Dinner, or a Burns Supper seems to be universal.

So now that you know what to wear, what happens? First is the usual cocktail hour. Then the actual program starts about 7:00ish that evening. There will be celtic music (of course ), someone will address the Haggis (a Roberts Burn poem recitation), and then there will likely be Scottish dancing. Some times there will be silent auctions to raise funding for the St. Andrews Society. In any case, you should not be bored.

Members of CMW, Jeff and Joanne Bissell, attended a recent Pittsburg St. Andrews Society Burns Supper. You can enjoy the photos they shared with us below in their perfect attire.

### Addressing the Haggis

Robert Burns wrote a poem in 1786 that purports to compare the traditional Scottish dish to French cuisine. If you attend a Burns Night, you will be treated to the "Addressing of the Haggis." A Piper will pipe in a server who has the Haggis on a silver platter. Attendees will stand for this address. The individual who stands in front of the Haggis will then recite Burns poem, and at the appropriate moment, then slice it open with what is deemed a ceremonial knife.

The photo to the right is from a YouTube video you can access here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5ZlihPWz08>



### Youth scholarships for Scottish arts

Did you know the Clan MacKenzie Society of Canada has two \$500 scholarships for the Scottish arts?

These one-time payments are offered to promote Scottish culture in Canada by helping defray the costs of instruction or study in highland dancing, piping, Scottish drumming, Scottish fiddling or Scots Gaelic. They are available for youths who are Clan MacKenzie junior members or are the child or grandchild of members of Clan MacKenzie Society of Canada.

Applications can be completed on the CMSC website (along with junior membership applications at just \$25) and must be submitted by **June 30, 2026**.



Applicants are advised to be sure to fulfill the eligibility requirements **before June 30** to be considered for this year's scholarships.

To apply, visit

<https://www.clanmackenziecanada.ca/clan-mackenzie-society-of-canada-annual-youth-scholarship-for-the-highland-arts/>

# Clan MacLeod Societies of Canada

## 2026 MacLeod Gathering and Parliament

August 1st – 7th, 2026

Dunvegan Castle

Isle of Skye, Scotland



What is the Clan MacLeod Gathering and Parliament? In 1956, Dame Flora, the 28th Chief, envisioned a meeting of MacLeods from around the world at Dunvegan in Skye—the traditional home of the Clan—to discuss its global management. Deeming this serious business, she gave it the grand title of "Parliament." However, bringing MacLeods together inevitably means having fun!

Over the years, social activities have grown in importance. To reflect this, the word "Gathering" was added, denoting that, like other Clans, we gather to celebrate our kinship. The "Parliament" aspect remains, encompassing the meetings where we decide the Clan's management and elect the President and Council. We meet for a week, balancing a few hours of meetings with ample time to explore, reconnect with old friends, and make new ones—remembering that as a Clan, we are distant cousins!

We convene in Skye every four years during the northern summer (July or August). Today, we share Skye with tens of thousands of tourists during its busiest season. Despite these modern challenges, the long summer evenings and beautiful scenery make the effort entirely worthwhile.

August 2026: A Week of Celebration In August 2026, we will meet in Dunvegan for a full week of Clan Events, historical trips, and meetings of the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies. Highlights from past Gatherings include exuberant Ceilidhs with live performances, climbing MacLeod's Tables for magnificent views of Dunvegan, and trips to Borreraig, home of the MacCrimmon Pipers.

We also look forward to the traditional barbecue at Dunvegan Castle hosted by the Clan MacLeod Society of Germany—"Bratwurst and Beer at the Pier!"—and Whisky Tasting evenings. Your registration fee includes complimentary access to Dunvegan Castle, and there will be a traditional day trip to the Isle of Raasay.

Young MacLeods Activity Week Planning is well underway for an Activity Week for Young MacLeods (aged 18-30) during the last week of July 2026, just before the Gathering. This week has long been a highlight for younger members. More details will follow as the programme develops.

Registration and Updates Registration for Parliament is expected to go live towards the end of the year via the [clanmaclod.org](http://clanmaclod.org) website. Please note there is no pre-Parliament tour this time.

We look forward to greeting you in Dunvegan next summer! The draft programme and latest updates are available at: [Clan MacLeod Parliament August 2026 Update](#)

# Clan MacLennan Canada



*The mission of Clan MacLennan Canada is to encourage research, documentation and sharing of the history and genealogy of Mac/McLennans and related surnames in Canada, and to promote fellowship and a connection to Mac/McLennans around the world.*

**Greetings Scots of Canada Members,**

Winter has at last given up the fight and let spring happen! With spring, we are thinking of the 2026 Highland Games that Clan MacLennan Canada will be officially attending, which are Cambridge Scottish Festival, Glengarry Highland Games and The Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games. We look forward to seeing former Scottish Clan friends and making new ones.

2027 and 2028 will be highlight years for our Clan. In 2027 our Chief Ruairidh Donald George MacLennan of MacLennan will be visiting Canada along with his wife, Jillian and their two daughters. He will be in attendance at both Glengarry Highland Games and The Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games. We are planning functions at both so that all CMC members will have opportunities to meet their Chief.

The last time Chief Ruairidh was in Canada for the Games was in 2013 when CMC held a Clan Dinner and Ceilidh at both Glengarry and Fergus. Chief Ruairidh treated us and showed his Piping skills when he Piped both solo and with a fellow Piper at Glengarry. We will have more news about their visit in the summer newsletter.



**Chief Ruairidh leading Clan MacLennan Canada in the Fergus Clan Parade and Piping in 2013**

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# Clan MacLennan Canada

*(Continued from page 64)*

The Scotland Executive of Clan MacLennan are thrilled to announce that they will be hosting the 2028 Clan MacLennan Gathering at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer from July 5th to July 10th.

Our 2028 clan gathering will mark the 50 year anniversary of Chief Ronald's inauguration and reinstatement of a modern day Clan MacLennan Chief. We hope you will join us in Strathpeffer to celebrate this special occasion and mark this momentous milestone in our Clan's history.

Email the team at the Ben Wyvis Hotel to secure your accommodation now:

[salesbenwyvis@strathmorehotels.com](mailto:salesbenwyvis@strathmorehotels.com)

More information about Clan MacLennan: [www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com](http://www.clanmaclennan-worldwide.com)

Hope to see you at The Games,

*Cheers,*

*Barbara MacLennan*

*VP Clan MacLennan Canada*



**Strathpeffer village nestles under Knockferrel Hill site of an ancient fort**

# Clan MacNicol

## The Hector: A Symbol of Scottish Emigration to Nova Scotia

The Hector was a ship that was part of the first significant migration of Scottish settlers to Nova Scotia in 1773. A full-rigged Fluyt, the Hector (built in the Netherlands before 1750) was employed in local trade in waters off the British Isles as well as the immigrant trade to North America, having made at least one trip c. 1770 carrying Scottish emigrants to Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1762 the earliest of the Scottish Highland Clearances forced many Gaelic families off their ancestral lands. The first ship loaded with Hebridean colonists arrived on “St. John’s Island” (Prince Edward Island) in 1770. In 1784 the last barrier to Scottish settlement – a law restricting land-ownership on Cape Breton Island – was repealed, and soon parts of both Prince Edward Island and Eastern Nova Scotia were predominantly Gaelic-speaking. It is estimated more than 50,000 Gaelic settlers emigrated to Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island between 1815 and 1870.

Clan MacNicol Society  
of North America



The Hector’s famous voyage took place in 1773 with a departure date around the second week of July, carrying 189 Highlanders who were immigrating to Nova Scotia. The vessel’s owner, Mr. John Pagan, along with Dr. John Witherspoon, purchased three shares of land near Pictou, Nova Scotia. Pagan and Witherspoon hired John Ross as a recruiting agent for settlers willing to emigrate to Pictou with an offer of free passage, 1 year of free provisions, and a farm. The settlers (23 families, 25 single men) were recruited at Greenock Renfrewshire and at Loch Broom (Ross-shire). The settlers that boarded Hector were poor, “obscure, illiterate crofters and artisans from Northern [Scotland], who spoke Gaelic.” The school teacher, William McKenzie was one of the few passengers on the Hector to speak both Gaelic and English.

Hector was an old ship and in poor condition when she left Europe. The arduous voyage to Pictou took 11 weeks, with a gale off Newfoundland causing a 14-day delay. Dysentery and smallpox claimed 18 lives amongst the passengers. The vessel arrived in Pictou Harbour on September 15, landing at Brown’s Point, immediately west of the present-day town of Pictou.

By Dennis G. Jarvis CC BY-SA 2.0,  
[commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25519691](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25519691)

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During the late 1980s and early 1990s, heritage officials in Nova Scotia sought to commemorate the Hector's contribution to Nova Scotia's Scottish history. In 1992, the Ship Hector Foundation was formed from a group of volunteers in Pictou County and elsewhere who began to raise funds for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a replica of Hector.

The Hector Heritage Quay, along with the Ship Hector Company Store were opened on the Pictou waterfront in the ensuing years. The marine architect firm J.B. McGuire Marine Associates Ltd. was commissioned to research the particulars of the original Hector and to develop blueprints for an accurate replica. Scotia Trawlers of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia were commissioned to complete phase one and two of the construction at the Hector Heritage Quay, which allowed visitors to the Pictou waterfront to observe the ship's progress, making it an important local attraction. After several years of construction, the replica Hector was launched with great fanfare and media coverage on September 17, 2000.

In July of 2025, the Hector was relaunched marking a major milestone in a multi-year restoration of the iconic tall ship. The ceremonies came with the announcement of two generous donations: \$1,000,000 from Sobeys Inc. and the Sobey Foundation; and \$250,000 from the David and Faye Sobey Foundation.

The Ship Hector Society also wrapped up a major modernization of the Hector Heritage Quay Interpretive Centre in 2025, which received a combined \$4 million in funding from the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada.

"This wasn't just about launching a ship," said Vern Shea, Ship Hector Project Manager. "It was about years of craftsmanship, community effort, and cultural responsibility. We've rebuilt something that carries real meaning, not only for those who came before us, but for those who will come after."

"The launch of the Ship Hector marks a turning point," added Wes Surrect, Chair of the Ship Hector Society. "It's a powerful reminder of where we come from and what we can achieve when we come together."

With its successful relaunch, the Ship Hector is now one step closer to becoming a passenger sailing vessel - a goal the Ship Hector Society aims to achieve as the final phase of its fundraising campaign is completed. Once operational, the ship will offer public sails, educational programs, and cultural experiences that will serve as a powerful heritage and economic anchor for the region.



Image left : By Dennis G. Jarvis - Flickr: DGJ\_4066 - The Hector, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=16697572>

# Clan MacNicol

## Symbols of Scotland - Part 5: Scotch Whisky

By James Nickelson

Whisky comes from the Scottish Gaelic uisge-beatha (pronounced ooshga bay-ha or wishga bay-ha) meaning “water of life.” This obviously comes from the Latin aqua vitae, also meaning “water of life,” which is the general term used to refer to distilled spirits. But as the Scotch Whisky Association says, “Whatever you call Scotland’s national drink, and whichever Scotch you discover, you know that it is a product of quality, crafted in Scotland, with a unique heritage stretching back more than 500 years.”

Names like The MacAllan, Lagavulin and Glenfiddich elicit images of business suits and cigar bars, just the same as song lyrics have praised Johnny Walker for decades as a good friend you’d want to hang out with at a party (along with the likes of Jack Daniels and Jim Beam). Whether a finely crafted single malt or a more affordable blend, Scotch Whisky has earned a key place in popular culture. But what makes a Scotch stand out among whiskeys, and for that matter what is the difference between whisky and whiskey?

The earliest record of whisky is in the 1494 Exchequer Rolls of Scotland which reference eight bolls of malt being given to Friar John Cor to make aqua vitae. This amount was equivalent to 32 bushels and likely could have been used to make 1500 bottles of whisky implying at least one well-established distilling operation by the late 15th century.

The Scottish Parliament began taxing whisky production in 1644 with a duty of 2 shillings and 8 pence per pint. Taxation led to a flourishing of illicit production and smuggling between the 1760s and 1830s.

The unlicensed trade became so significant that lowland distillers complained that over half the whisky market came from untaxed Highland stills. In fact, in 1782, over 1000 illegal stills were seized in the Highlands.

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By Ann Harrison, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=13575048>

*(Continued from page 68)*

Scotland's most famous poet Robert Burns even trained as an exciseman. He extolled the virtues of whisky when he wrote "Scotch Drink" in 1785, described as "an ode to whisky and the nature of happiness." But in the same poem, he described his earlier profession thusly: "Thae curst horse-leeches o' the' Excise, wha make the whisky stells their prize!"

Local magistrates, many of whom were also landowners, were often sympathetic, owing to their understanding that a good portion of some tenants' rents likely came from illicit whisky production. Despite the fact that some of the finest illicit whisky in Scotland was being produced on his lands, the Duke of Gordon proposed in the House of Lords that the government should make legal production more profitable.

The Excise Act of 1823 set a £10 licensing fee for operating a still, set duty levels for distilled spirits, allowed warehousing of distilled spirits before duty needed to be paid, and reduced opportunities for evading tax on distilled spirits. As a result, whisky production drastically increased from 2,232,000 gallons in 1823 to a total of 4,350,000 gallons in 1824. The first distillery organized under the new Excise Act was founded when George Smith became the first distiller in Scotland to secure a license, opening the Glenlivet Distillery in 1824. Over the next few years Bowmore, Strathisla, Balblair and Glenmorangie Distilleries were all founded and remain in operation to this day. Meanwhile, by 1830, smuggling had almost completely died out.

In 1831 Aeneas Coffey introduced the column still which allowed for continuous distillation which produced whisky more efficiently than the earlier pot stills which needed to be cleaned between each batch. Manufacturing became more affordable and produced a whisky that was lighter in flavor. This led to the rise of blended whiskies, which combined the lighter grain whisky from the column still with the more flavorful malt whisky from the pot still.

Producers like James Buchanan, Tommy Dewar, Johnnie Walker, and James Chivas began exporting whisky throughout the British Empire and beyond. This was fortunate as there was a surge in demand for whisky in the 1880s when a parasitic insect destroyed many vineyards in France causing a shortage of wine and brandy. By the time the French vineyards recovered Scotch Whisky had replaced Brandy as the spirit of choice for many.

However, the early 20th saw a decline in demand caused by World War I, Prohibition in the United States and then the Great Depression. Of the 159 distilleries operating in Scotland in 1900, only 15 were still operating in 1933. Whisky production rebounded leading to a boom in the 1970s which led to overproduction in the 1980s causing many distilleries to cut production by a third. A new era of growth began in the 2010s seeing the opening of many new distilleries.

## **Whisky Production**

Whisky production varies depending on the style being made, the country where it originates, and other

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# Clan MacNicol

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factors, but the general process remains the same in most cases.

**Malting:** All whisky starts with raw grain that is either malted or unmalted. In the case of malt whisky, it is made from barley that undergoes malting to access its sugars: The barley is moistened and allowed to partially sprout, or germinate, which secretes an enzyme that converts the barley's starches to sugars. Germination is cut off when the barley is dried by heating. Most common in scotch whisky production. Other types, like Irish single pot still and bourbon are made using unmalted grains.

**Mashing:** The sugars contained in the grain must be extracted before fermentation, and this is done through mashing. The grains that are being used—like corn, wheat, or rye—are ground up, put in a large tank (called a mash tun or tub) with hot water, and agitated. Even if the distiller isn't making malt whisky, some ground malted barley is typically added to help catalyze the conversion of starches to sugars. The resulting mixture resembles porridge. Once as much sugar as possible has been extracted, the mixture—now known as mash or wort (if strained of solids)—moves on to the fermentation stage.

**Fermentation:** Fermentation occurs when the mash/wort meets yeast, which gobbles up all the sugars in the liquid and converts them to alcohol. This takes place in giant vats, often called washbacks. The process can take anywhere from 48 to 96 hours, with different fermentation times and yeast strains resulting in a spectrum of diverse flavors. The resulting beer-like liquid—called distiller's beer or wash—clocks in at around 7%-10% ABV before it goes into the still.

**Distillation:** The process of distilling increases the alcohol content of the liquid and brings out volatile components, both good and bad. Stills are usually made of copper, which helps strip spirits of unwanted flavor and aroma compounds. The two most common types of stills—pot stills and column stills—function differently.



*(Continued on page 71)*

Image credit: By HighKing - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, Wikimedia.org

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**Maturation:** Nearly all whiskies are aged in wood—usually oak—containers. One notable exception is corn whiskey, which may be aged or unaged. Bourbon, rye, and other types of American whiskey must be aged in new charred oak barrels, while for other countries' styles, the type of oak and its previous use are generally left up to the producer. Barrels are stored in warehouses, and as the whisky matures, some of the alcohol evaporates: This is known as the angels' share, and it creates a distinct (and lovely) smell in the warehouse. Some whiskies, such as scotch, have a required aging period.

**Bottling:** Once matured, whisky is bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV. The whisky may be chill-filtered or filtered in another way to prevent it from becoming cloudy when cold water or ice is added. For most large whisky brands, a bottling run combines a number of barrels—anywhere from a few dozen to hundreds—from the distillery's warehouses. When only one barrel is bottled at a time, it's labeled as single cask or single barrel.

## Regulation

Scotch is currently regulated by the **Scotch Whisky Regulations Act of 2009** which oversees the production, labelling, packaging and advertising of Scotch Whisky in the United Kingdom. These 2009 Regulations define Scotch Whisky as any whisky that:

- Is produced at a distillery in Scotland from water and malted barley (to which only whole grains of other cereals may be added) all of which have been:
- Processed at that distillery into a mash
- Converted at that distillery to a fermentable substrate only by endogenous enzyme systems
- Fermented at that distillery only by adding yeast
- Has been distilled at an alcoholic strength by volume of less than 94.8% (190 US proof)
- Is wholly matured in an excise warehouse in Scotland in oak casks of a capacity not exceeding 700 litres (185 US gal) for at least three years
- Retains the colour, aroma, and taste of the raw materials used in, and the method of, its production and maturation
- Contains no added substances, other than water and plain (E150A) caramel colouring
- Has a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 40% (80 US proof)
- Must be bottled and labelled in Scotland

Certain elements of the label are regulated by the SWR. The label always denotes the name of the distillery and the malt or grain whiskies used (i.e., single malt, blended, etc.). The alcoholic strength is also included on the bottle expressed as Alcohol by Volume or ABV, which is typically 40-46% ABV. A whisky's age is often listed on the label which denotes a guarantee of the youngest whisky used to produce the bottle. However, many bottles do not have an age statement, thus guaranteeing that the whisky was aged for a minimum of three years.

Whether you prefer a single malt or a blend; whether a Speyside or an Island; whether a 14-Year Caribbean Cask Balvenie or a 30-Year Old Sherry Oak MacAllan (if only we had the \$7500 to buy that one); it's time to raise a glass and share a dram in honor of Scotch Whisky!

# Medicine Hat Burns Club - New Member



**Website:** <https://www.mhburnsclub.ca/>

**Delegate to Scots of Canada and Membership Contact**

Ken Montgomery [mhburnsclub@shaw.ca](mailto:mhburnsclub@shaw.ca)

**Member 2064 - Roberts Burns World Federation**

The club was formed in 2008 to celebrate the works and life of the Scottish poet and bard Robert Burns who is renowned for his wonderful poetry and songs.

Our mandate is "To gather a group of like minded individuals who wish to preserve and promote the memory and talents of Robert Burns and all other relevant aspects of Scottish culture".

Membership is open to all over the age of 18, and of good report who wish to support our mandate.

*"Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will, for a' that,  
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,  
May bear the gree, and a' that!  
For a' that, and a' that,  
It's coming yet for a' that,  
That man to man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that."*

**(ROBERT BURNS 1795) (From 'A Man's A Man For A' That)**

Robert Burns (25 January 1759 – 21 July 1796) (also known as Rabbie Burns, Scotland's favourite son, the Ploughman Poet, Robden of Solway Firth, the Bard of Ayrshire and in Scotland as simply The Bard) was a Scottish poet and a lyricist.

He is widely regarded as the national poet of Scotland, and is celebrated worldwide. He is the best known of the poets who have written in the Scots language, although much of his writing is also in English and a "light" Scots dialect, accessible to an audience beyond Scotland.

# Ontario Scottish Clan Convenors Society - New



**Website:** [www.scotscanada.scot/osccs](http://www.scotscanada.scot/osccs)

**Delegate to Scots of Canada  
and Membership Contact**

Nathan Thomson [nathan.a.thomson@gmail.com](mailto:nathan.a.thomson@gmail.com)

We are a collective of individuals who represent their clan societies across Ontario. As an organization, we have four goals:

1. To provide a social space for Scottish clan convenors.
2. To support each other in the important task of preserving the traditions and history of Scottish clans.
3. To act as a collective for the benefit of the community of Scottish clans in communicating with Highland Games festivals.
4. To collaborate in the preservation of Scottish traditions and culture

# Clan Munro

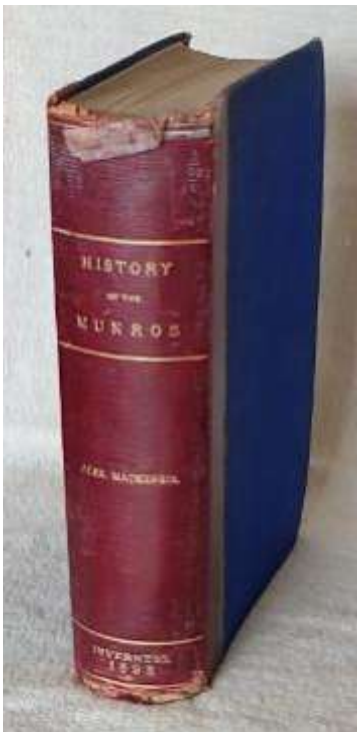
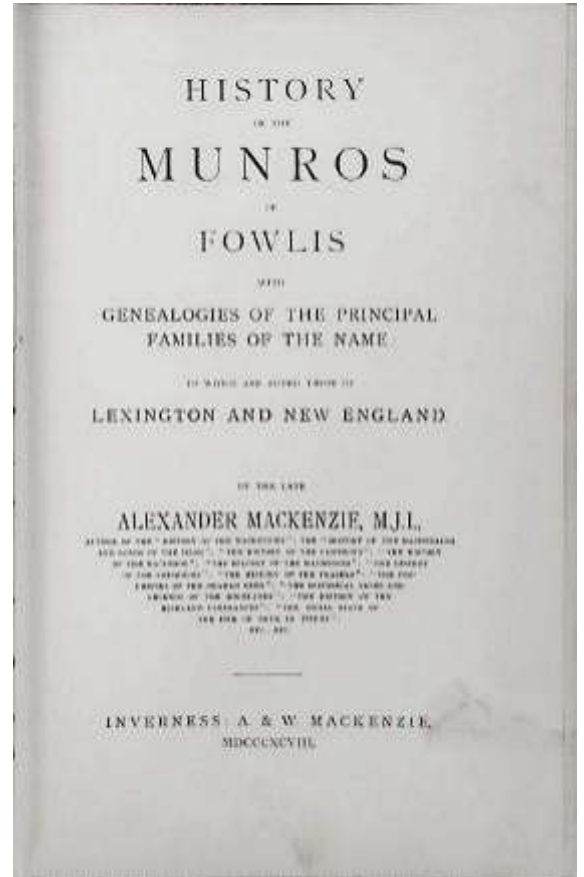
## “History of The Munros”

From Lesley Munro Dunning

Ah, Royal Descent, or is it more like passing the baton? You see, one of my dad’s brothers took on the role of becoming the family genealogist, years ago. He just got so inspired by his dad’s (my grandfather’s) many Scotland Munro stories and Clan items. But when my uncle passed away, no one else in our large family put out a hand for the baton, in order to continue unravelling our Munro family line - so, I did! Therefore, you can imagine my surprise, when I came across a thick book, tucked away in an old bookcase of my uncle’s, entitled, “History of the Munros” by Alexander Mackenzie, dated 1898. Since I have been the family genealogist for a while now, I pretty much had my dad’s Munro family all lined up as best I could. However, after reading this book, I realized, that I’ve only touched the tip, of a huge, enormous iceberg. Oh my!

As a Scottish historian, author, magazine editor & politician, Alexander Mackenzie wrote numerous Clan history books. Even though Alexander died in January of 1898, just as he was finishing up the “History of The Munros”, his son Thomas took over his dad’s next step of getting it published.

Therefore, “History of the Munros” subtitled “of Fowlis, with Genealogies of The Principal Families of The Name”, did get published. Whew! So, how fortunate are we to have this knowledge base of our Clan Munro, for future generations to appreciate? The book covers the genealogies of the principal Munro families before 1898.



When I first opened this hard covered, 632+ pages book, I was immediately taken aback by some handwriting on the 1st page. Apparently, my grandfather Albert I. Munro had purchased the book for his dad, Thomas Condy Munro on May 23, 1918. He purchased it in Edinburgh Scotland, since he was already overseas, participating in WW1. The hand written words of “with good wishes to Dad from Albert”, were on that 1st page. I knew right away, I had to keep this book, and work my way through it carefully, since the pages were aged, brown and fragile. Okay, so now I really know why all my dad’s brothers and relatives were named as they are. Ha! Ha!

Interesting though, there were 3 pages that were bookmarked. Could these pages with the brown stain markers on them hold some clue as to my own early Munro family lineage? Two of the bookmarks marked stories of 2 Thomas Munros, while the third bookmark focused on a George Munro. Since Thomas was the name of my great-grandfather and George was his dad’s name, just maybe, I could find a new thread in a location or birth date, so I could begin searching again.

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As intriguing, interesting and enticing as the facts and Munro Baron stories were, I found no string of thread for me to pick up and run away with. However, learning what family life was like for them back in the day, and the unfolding progression of the Munro Clan throughout its history, allowed me to appreciate our status today. As for the book, well, nowadays, you can easily download a book as a PDF, or read several condensed and summarized versions of *The Munros History*, but meanwhile, nothing can replace my personal attachment to my great grandfather's book.

And even though the Munros managed to get out of the way of the Romans, in order to survive back in the day, the Munros continue to be one of Scotland's most enduring, law abiding, peaceful & creative Clans. No more beheading, poisoning or torture is needed in going forward in this day.

With no places to run away to in today's full world, we are left with facing reality, by sitting down at a table and communicating respectfully. Perhaps, just maybe, that'll bring about reasonable and fair ways of compromising, since we live in a diverse world of over 8 billion people now. It's a good thing Munros are "invincible" and are so experienced in helping out!

## **The Season of Gold Dust and Gilt by Jude Munro**

Lovers of historical fiction will enjoy a rollicking tale of action, passion and humour as the story moves from the gilt and glitter of London to the gold dust of Australia.

Summer, 1854: As steam locomotives and steamships forge new pathways around the globe, a British regiment escapes the carnage of the Crimean War by taking a posting to the unruly goldfields of Australia. With them are Sarah Cartwright, the Major's beautiful but dangerous daughter and Rhys Wetherby, the charismatic son of a peer who has been disinherited and press-ganged into the military.

Far from finding safety, they land in the middle of a battle between ten thousand angry miners and a few hundred soldiers and police. Can Sarah and Rhys survive the Eureka Stockade and forge their own path despite old ties and past mistakes?

Sarah Cartwright and Rhys Wetherby both come from military backgrounds, but the Wetherby family has acquired titles and land while the Cartwrights are constantly on the move between barracks and camps. Sarah has the skills of a soldier and the heart of a nurse but she dreams of living in a house and community where she will not be an outsider any more. Rhys loves his family traditions but is cruelly thrown from his path, finding himself contracted to serve with the 18th Light Dragoons just as they are sent to police the goldfields of Australia.

The great southern land is at a turning point in its history as colonial traditions are challenged by democratic ideals. The Victorian goldfields are in such a state of turmoil that the police and military commanders are preparing for civil war. As events unfold, Sarah and Rhys are forced to make choices that will determine whether their paths lead to happiness or heartbreak.



# SFSPAM - New Member



## School For Scottish Performing Arts & Music

### Helping Build the Next Generation of Niagara Pipers & Drummers

A new youth music program has been launch in St. Catharines Ontario that is providing FREE instruction in bagpipes and drums to youth ages 9–13 from across the Niagara Region.

This program is operated by the School for Scottish Performing Arts & Music, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving the tradition of pipe bands while providing meaningful opportunities for young people. The Director & Business Manager is Peter A. MacKenzie, a 12 x North American Pipe Band Champion.

Our goal is to build a Niagara Youth Pipe Band that will proudly represent our communities at parades, festivals, and Remembrance Day ceremonies for years to come.

### Why This Program Matters

Thirty-five years ago the Niagara Region had eight active pipe bands. Today only three remain.

Without new youth learning today, we risk losing the traditions that have long been part of our community — from pipe bands leading parades to the Lament played on Remembrance Day.

This program is designed to reverse that decline by providing free instruction, instruments, and mentorship to young musicians.

### About Our Instruction Team

The program is led by— Peter A. MacKenzie the 12x North American Pipe Band Champion and this award winning team of instructors including:

Drew Marshall ~ Jim Baker ~ Jim Rankin ~ Devon Saunders ~ Tim Murphy ~ Cameron Sinibaldi ~ Caitlin Crichton ~ James Calder ~ Amanda Paterson ~ Wendy Greco ~ Ethan Flynn ~ Nolan Flynn

### BAGPIPE AMNESTY - AN INOVATION in PIPING

We are looking for that set of pipes that you have in the basement, attic or garage that you have not

*(Continued on page 77)*

# SFSPAM - New Member

*(Continued from page 76)*

looked at for,,,, well a long - long time. These need to be played!!! We will accept – refurbish and present to a deserving piper in our program. Canada & USA donations are most welcome.

Step 1. Please go and find them and consider donating the pipes to our School & Youth Pipe Band

Step 2. Contact Peter MacKenzie [sfspam2026@gmail.com](mailto:sfspam2026@gmail.com) or 905 321 3489 for details on shipping.

Step 3. Pack the case or shipping container with padding or plastic bubble wrap – label & ship.

Step 4. Know that these pipes will once again sound the BIG MUSIC in the hands of a skilled young piper.

Step 5. Please do this today – if not – you won't do it tomorrow. Time to “un-clutter”!!

## **Sponsorship Opportunities**

Your business can also play an important role in helping this program succeed.

Your sponsorship will help fund:

- students' bagpipes and drums
- teaching materials
- band uniforms
- instructor expenses
- program administration
- recruiting campaigns

Bronze Sponsor – \$500. ~ Recognition on our website and certificate

Silver Sponsor – \$1000. ~ Website recognition + acknowledgement at events + sponsors certificate

Gold Sponsor – \$2,500. ~ Website recognition + event acknowledgement with business LOGO + sponsors certificate.

Platinum Sponsor – \$3,500 ~ Prominent website recognition + event recognition with business LOGO+ special plaque & certificate

Custom Corporate sponsorship are also available - including LOGO placement on instruments & uniforms

## **How to Become a Sponsor**

Cheques payable to:

School for Scottish Performing Arts & Music

43 Royal Manor Dr.

St. Catharines Ontario L2M4L2

E-Transfer / Pay Pal: [sfspam2026@gmail.com](mailto:sfspam2026@gmail.com)

Contact: Peter A. MacKenzie 905 321 3489

Chair & Director – School for Scottish Performing Arts & Music – SFSPAM

Website: [www.niagarabagpipes.org](http://www.niagarabagpipes.org) – **GIVE US A VISIT**

Together we can ensure the sound of the pipes continues to be heard across this country for generations to come.

# Clan Ramsay

## Savoring the Highlands: A Traveler's Delight with Haggis Balls in Inverness

Submitted by Mona Ramsay

In the heart of the Scottish Highlands, where mist-shrouded mountains meet bustling Victorian streets, Inverness beckons with a timeless blend of rugged beauty and warm hospitality. As the cultural capital of the north, this gateway to Loch Ness and the Cairngorms offers more than just scenic hikes and whisky trails—it's a feast for the senses, where ancient traditions simmer in modern kitchens.

My holiday in July 2024, amid the golden haze of a Highland summer, brought this to life in the most delectable way: through a plate of panko-encrusted haggis balls, a cheeky twist on Scotland's national dish that left me utterly enchanted.



After a day exploring Inverness and the emerald banks of the River Ness, I sought refuge at The Heathmount Hotel, a stylish indie gem just a stone's throw from the city center. Tucked on Kingsmills Road, this boutique haven hums with local charm—think of crackling fires, artisanal spirits lining the bar, and a terrace that catches the fleeting Highland sun. As I checked out the menu, my eyes locked on the appetizer: golden orbs of haggis, rolled in crisp panko breadcrumbs, nestled in a velvety whisky cream sauce and crowned with vibrant watercress.

It arrived steaming, the exterior yielding to a savory burst of oatmeal, lamb offal, and spices—earthy, peppery, with a whisper of whisky warmth. One bite, and I was hooked. The panko added an unexpected crunch, elevating the humble haggis staple to sophisticated starter. Paired with a dram of single malt, it was pure poetry, a harmonious nod to Scotland's thrifty roots and innovative spirit.

Are haggis balls a "thing" in Inverness? Absolutely, they're a Highland hallmark. Haggis, that poetic "great chieftain o' the puddin'-race" immortalized by Robert Burns, has long been a canvas for creativity here. In Inverness, where local butchers supply local eateries with the finest offal blends, chefs reimagine it as bon bons, croquettes, or fritters, where modern Scottish fare meets pub comfort.

This trip reminded me why Scottish culture thrives on reinvention. From ceilidhs in leaky bothies to fusion feasts in city inns, it's about community, resilience, and flavor that warms the soul. As I left Inverness I toasted to future visits.

Whether you're a first-timer eyeing the classics or a devotee chasing twists, the Highlands invite you to dig in.

Slàinte—may your plate always overflow with such joys.

# Clan Ramsay

## **Spy Amongst Us: Daniel Defoe's Secret Service and the Plot to End Scottish Independence**

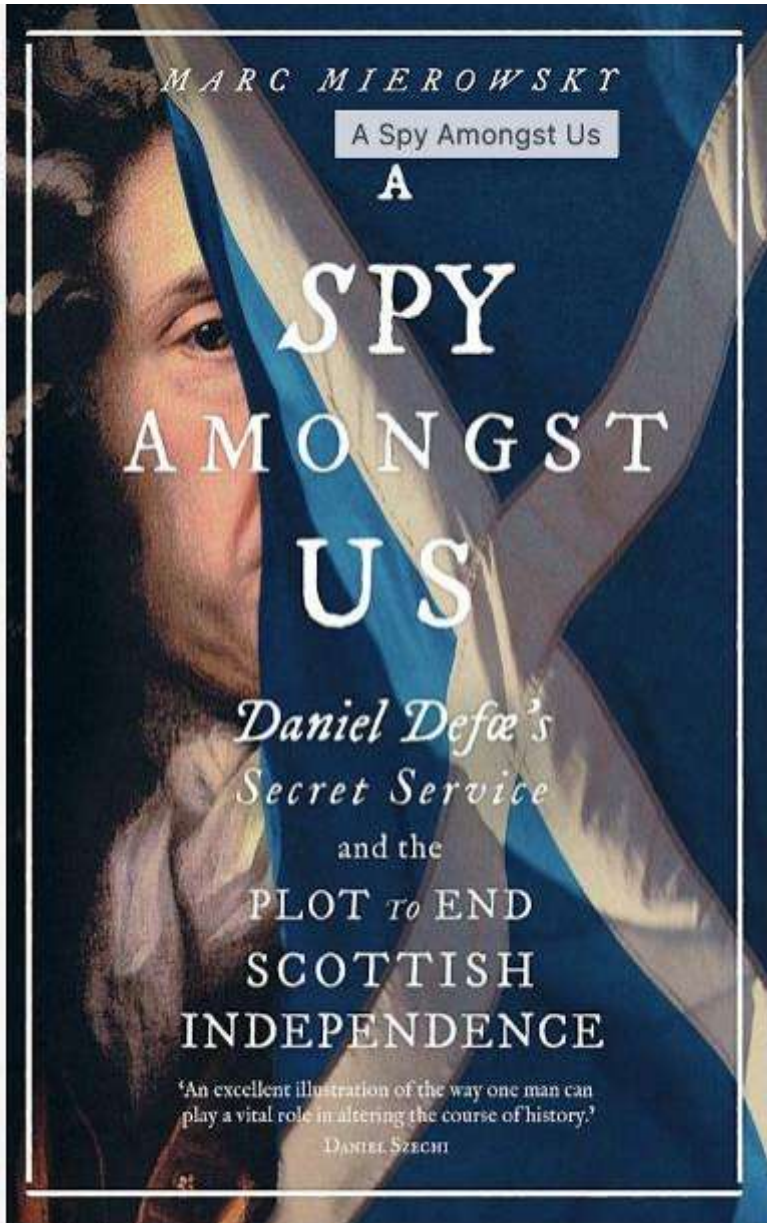
**Book Review by Dick McGraw**

A review of Marc Mierowsky's *A Spy Amongst Us* delves into the fascinating and lesser-known role of Robinson Crusoe author Daniel Defoe as a British spy working to undermine Scottish independence during the 1707 Act of Union.

If you have even a modicum of interest in Scottish history and the centuries battles with England, you likely will enjoy this book by Marc Mierowsky.

You probably know Daniel Defoe as one of the great writers in the history of English literature: He wrote Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders and others. But what you may not know about Mr. Defoe is that he was also a British spy for the government trying to undermine Scottish independence tie Scotland England with the 1707 Act of Union.

In 1706, Edinburgh was on the brink of a popular uprising. Men and women took to the streets to protest the planned union with England, fearing the end of Scottish sovereignty. But unbeknownst to the mob, the spy was in their midst—Daniel Defoe, now bankrupt, had turned a government agent.



Marc Mierowsky tells the dramatic story of Defoe and his fellow spies as they sabotaged the Scottish independence movement from the inside. Together they disseminated propaganda and built a network of operatives from London to the upper Highlands, providing the English government with up-to-the-minute intelligence and monitoring its adversaries' every move.

"This is not only a highly readable account of Defoe's role as the hired gun of English imperialism during the Union crisis of 1706-07, it is also a good introduction to the dark arts used to make the Union happen. An excellent and sobering illustration of the way one man's personal circumstances can play a vital role in altering the course of history—Daniel Szechi, author of 1715—The Great Jacobite Rebellion."

# Kids Zone - Exploring Scotland for Kids

Exploring Scotland for Kids - *by Nathan Thomson*

Scotland is an amazing place with castles, mountains, and a long history. A lot of us may have never been there to experience it though, and so let's explore and learn about Scotland together.

## Geography Fact:

One of the most notable facts about Scotland as a place is that there are primarily two areas: the Highlands and Isles, and the Lowlands. The line that separates the Highlands from the Lowlands starts at Loch Lomond near Glasgow, and stretches northeast and up to the Moray Firth in the North.



What areas of Scotland are your ancestors from?



The Highlands make up the West and North of Scotland, and are an area of rugged and ancient mountains, lakes (called "lochs" in Scotland), wetlands, and forests. The islands off the West coast of Scotland are called the Hebrides. The Highlands are difficult to travel across when you're walking, and can be a cold, wet place, so you had to be a strong person to live there. The picture to the left is of an area in the Western Highlands called Knapdale, and this is the region where Clan MacTavish ancestors lived.

The Lowlands are a flatter area of fertile farm land in the South and East of Scotland. It was also faster to sail to places like France and Belgium from the Eastern Lowlands, so they tended to have more people because they were easier to live and do business in. So, this is where the biggest cities in Scotland tend to be. Cities like Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, Aberdeen and Edinburgh are all in the Lowlands.



## Would you rather...

Live in a quiet village in the wilds of the Highlands, or in a busy town or city in the Lowlands? Why is that?

*(Continued on page 81)*

# Kids Zone - Exploring Scotland for Kids

*(Continued from page 80)*

## History Fact:

When people think of Scottish culture, one of the things they tend to think about first is tartan. A tartan is cloth made of different checkered patterns with different colours, and is connected to a particular family or clan.

## Did you know?

People in Scotland have worn tartan for thousands of years. The earliest known piece of tartan cloth is the Falkirk Tartan (white and black) which dates to the 200's AD. The oldest modern piece of tartan cloth we have today is the Glen Affric Tartan (red and yellow) which dates to the 1500's.



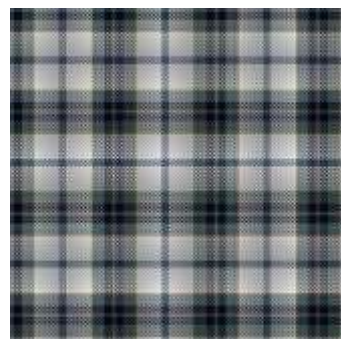
## Who wears tartan?

Traditionally, wearing tartan was something that was mostly only a part of the culture of the Highlands and Isles before the 1800's. Today, many families across Scotland have their own tartan; they have their own checkered pattern with different colours that is unique to their family. So, if you can recognize different tartans, you might be able to tell what clan or family someone belongs to by what they're wearing. If you have Scottish heritage, you should wear your tartan with pride. Clan MacTavish is a Highland clan and have what might be some of the earliest clan-associated tartans of any clan.



## How old are clan tartans?

A lot of tartans people wear today aren't actually that old and were made in just the last 200 years. For instance, the Cash tartan was designed just a few years ago. Any new tartan someone designs is made official by registering it with the Scottish Registry of Tartans. Clan MacTavish does have some pretty old tartans, however. The Hunting tartan (brown and green) is probably our oldest, and it may have been worn by MacTavishes as early as the 1600's! The MacTavish of Dunardry Dress (white and navy blue) is another one of our oldest tartans. It was traditionally a tartan that is meant for just women and girls to wear as they wore lighter/brighter colors than the men, and it was being worn by them as early as the 1730's AD, but maybe even earlier.



## What makes a tartan?

A tartan is made from crisscrossing colors in a checkered pattern. You'll notice that all MacTavish/Thom(p)son/Cash tartans might have different colors, but have the exact same pattern. This is called the "sett", and all MacTavish, Thom(p)son, and Cash tartans have the same sett.

*(Continued on page 82)*

# Kids Zone - Exploring Scotland for Kids

(Continued from page 81)

## Challenge:

Have a look at some of the most-commonly worn MacTavish clan tartans on the this page and tell us which one your favorite is and why. Please send us pictures of you wearing your favorite MacTavish tartan! See all our tartans on our website: <https://clanmactavish.org/history/clan-mactavish-tartans>



MacTavish/Thompson/Thomson – 1880



Cash (MacTavish)



MacTavish/Thompson/Thomson Dress Blue



MacTavish/Thompson/Thomson Camel



Thompson Dress Grey



Holmes



Todd



Stevenson (Personal)



Stephenson



Stephen Dress

# Kids Zone - The Fairy Boy of Balmaha

**The Fairy Boy of Balmaha - by Nathan Thomson**

Many years ago, a man named Ian Buchanan was travelling home to Dumbarton from a business trip in Inveraray. Riding his horse south along the shores of Loch Lomond, he was nearing the village of Balmaha near the southern end of the loch. It was getting to be the evening, and Ian was thinking that he was going to stop in Balmaha for dinner and to sleep for the night. As he neared the village, he was passing by Conic Hill – a large hill that rises up and away from the loch. Ian thought to himself that the hill looked rather enchanting with its moss, crags, and heather all in bloom, and the way mists seemed to circle around the top of it.

Just then, Ian noticed a young boy who looked to be no older than ten years old sitting on a rock at the base of the hill beside the road. Ian looked around to see if his parents were nearby, but he didn't see anyone. It seemed odd to Ian that this boy was out here seemingly by himself, so he stopped to see if he was alright.

Getting down off his horse, he asked the boy, "Are you alright, young lad? What are you doing out here by your wee self?" The boy looked up at him and answered, "Aye, I'm alright enough. I'm just waiting for the party to start." Ian looked around again and once more noted that there was no one else around but the two of them. "Well, you must be very early because there's no one here." Ian responded to the boy with confusion. "What kind of party would be happening outside of the village and in the hills like this?" he inquired of the boy. "It's a fairy party; I drum for the fairy folk who live under this hill. They gather under this hill for a party every Thursday, and I play the drums for them so they can dance," he said very proudly as he tapped on the drum next to him that Ian only now was noticing. "You play the drums for the fairy folk do you?" Ian quickly snapped back with amusement. "But why did they ask you? You're just a boy!" Ian wondered. "Because I'm the best drummer around!" the boy snapped back as he jumped up onto his feet, his chest puffed out and his chin raised with pride. "Pay me two coins and I'll show you," he said confidently as he stuck out his hand.

Ian felt around in his purse and pulled out two small gold coins. He hated the idea of paying gold simply to

*(Continued on page 84)*



Ai Generated Image

# Kids Zone - The Fairy Boy of Balmaha

*(Continued from page 83)*

see a boy beat a drum, but he was very curious as the boy had insisted on his skill with such confidence. His business trip had been very fruitful and he was feeling generous, so he pressed the coins into the boy's hand. The boy quickly stuck the coins in his pockets and grabbed his drum and started to play. He didn't just play, however – he was jumping, bouncing, and whirling all around while he played. He was, indeed, very good with his drum, Ian thought to himself as he watched. When the boy finished, Ian thanked him for a wonderful show and with a chuckle he said, "Have a terrific party with your fairy friends." The boy looked up at Ian and answered in kind, "Thank you. I will!"

Ian smiled, and the boy smiled a big grin back. Only, it wasn't the kind of grin that Ian had seen before... It was a very big grin. It was larger than any grin Ian could remember seeing a child grin, and it was rather sharp and strange-looking, and didn't really seem altogether human. It seemed to Ian that it looked... well, it looked rather elvish! Before Ian could think about it for too long, the boy quickly turned and ran up the side of the hill – so quickly and nimbly that Ian thought that maybe he was part goat as well as part elf! Ian watched him for a moment, but suddenly noticed how dark it was starting to get and hurried on his way to the inn for the night.

A week had now passed since Ian had met the boy beside Conic Hill. After a long day at work, Ian came home and asked his wife what was for dinner. "It's beef stew, darling – just like it's been on every Thursday since we've been married," she answered. Suddenly, Ian remembered the boy's insistence that every Thursday was the night of the fairies. It occurred to him then that he should ride out to the hill to see if he could spot the boy. He apologized to his wife that he was going to miss her stew that night as he had prom-

*(Continued on page 85)*



# Kids Zone - The Fairy Boy of Balmaha

*(Continued from page 84)*

ised his friends, Robbie Ryan and Murray Kincaid, that he was going to take them that evening to introduce them to a potential business partner whom he had met on his travels.

Ian quickly gathered his mates and told them about the boy and the fairy folk under Conic Hill, and they rode out to see for themselves. It was already dark when they arrived, but even as they were getting close, he could hear it... drums! It was unmistakable; he could hear some very lively drums. Then Ian's friend, Robbie, asked, "Och, what's that rumbling sound? Do you both hear that?" They did, in fact hear it, but it couldn't be cannon fire and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. "Very strange," Ian said to himself. When the three got near the base of the hill, there he was: whirling around at the top of the hill, the three men could see the silhouette of a boy dancing in front of the large harvest moon and drumming at a furious pace – just like he did the day that Ian had met him along the road. The rumbling was much louder too, and it seemed to be coming from under the hill. There was a strong wind blowing through the trees – almost like the boy was causing it by beating his drums. The water on the loch was still and dark though, with the moonlight silently shimmering on its calm surface. Ian thought that was odd too. How could there be so much wind, but the water was unmoved?

The three men stayed hidden in the trees and watched the boy dance and drum at the top of the hill for some time. Just as the sun started to spread its rays over the horizon behind them, Ian turned and looked over his shoulder to see the first glimmer of the sun rise. No sooner did Ian see the sun than Murray shouted, "Hey, where'd he go!? The lad's just disappeared!" Ian spun back around to see the boy at the top of the hill, but he was gone! The boy was nowhere to be seen... Ian's eyes darted around looking to see the boy climbing back down the hill, but there was no sign of him. The three men scrambled up to the top of the hill to see if the boy had run down the other side, but no... He had simply disappeared!

"Och, what's this?" Robbie asked as he bent down to pick something up off the ground. "Wow, it's two gold coins! It's my lucky day!" Ian warned his friend to drop the coins. "I gave those coins to the boy, so they're his now. He's clearly one of the fairy folk, and it's always dangerous to take what they leave behind," he tried to explain. "Aye, the fairy folk are tricksters, and they're testing us," Murray echoed. "If you take something from them, you could be marked to be taken back to the fairy world with them. We don't know if he means to bless us or hurt us," Ian warned his friend again. Robbie didn't want to listen though, and put the coins in his pocket. He insisted that "Gold is gold, and I don't mind who gives it to me!" as they walked down the hill. Ian and Murray shared a look of real unease between them, however.

The men made their way back to Dumbarton quickly. The next day, though, Robbie didn't show up at work. Ian and Murray went to his house and knocked on the door to rouse him from bed. However, it was Robbie's wife that answered the door. She was in tears and explained that Robbie had gotten very sick during the night and was mumbling things about seeing a fairy boy drumming at the end of the bed. When she awoke in the morning, he had completely disappeared! From that day on, Ian Buchanan took whatever children said very seriously – even if it sounded very silly!



## Hutchison House Museum Summer Workshops

Are you looking to beat the summertime boredom? Parents or grandparents looking to find an activity to occupy some of the children's time this summer? Look to Hutchison House for the answer. We offer a fun alternative to full time camp programs.

We start on Thursday mornings and by noon have completed something fun and exciting that your children will love to show off! Programs run from 9:30am-12pm.

The cost is \$25 per attendant and pre-registration is required. For ages 6-12. Children are encouraged to bring their own snacks.

### July 16th – Nature Tracing

Collect your favourite pieces of nature in the Hutchison House Gardens and trace or sketch them on a piece of paper. Then, colour in your landscape using pastels and experiment with blending colours.

### July 23rd – Straw Hat Decorating

Inspired by Anne of Green Gables, let your creativity flow and decorate your own Victorian straw hat using bows, lace, and fake flowers. Wear to the beach, a summer party, or every day as sun protection as well as fashion!

### July 30th – Fish Mobiles

Using toilet paper rolls, create fish friends of different colours, shapes, and sizes to hang in a window. Incorporate some seashells and other creatures to enhance the ocean scene!

### August 6th – Collage Decoupage Box

Need a box to hold all your trinkets? Flip through magazines, cut out your favourite pictures, and glue them to a box to create your own masterpiece.

### August 20th – Coffee Filter Flowers

Using dyed coffee filters and pipe cleaners, mix and match colours to create your own bouquet of everlasting flowers. Once assembled, wrap them in flower wrapping paper to take home.

### August 27th – Handsewn Teddy Bears

In this activity, children will be given a pattern for a teddy bear, sew two pieces together, and fill them with stuffing. Then, decorate with pieces of scrap fabric, buttons, and thread to give your new friend some character!

**For more information, phone 705-743-9710 or visit the website at [www.phs-hutchisonhouse.ca](http://www.phs-hutchisonhouse.ca) or visit us on Facebook and Instagram!**

# Hutchison House



Conceptual representation of a Scottish Tea at Hutchison House. Generated by Ideogram.ai (2026)

## Scottish Tea Season has arrived!

Celebrate the summer season with the start of our Scottish Tea Season on Thursday, July 2nd 2026.

Scottish Teas will continue every Tuesday- Sunday until September 6, 2026 from 1-4 pm.

Scottish Tea, served on the terrace in the period garden, includes fresh baked scones, preserves, whipped cream, oatcakes, and tea, lemonade, or ice tea. Complimentary tours of the 1840s restored stone house are included with the teas.

The cost for tea is \$15.00 for adults and youth, \$10.00 for children under 10 years of age, children under 5 are \$5. Discounts available for members of PHS or the Friends of Hutchison House program.

**Registration is required if you are a group of more than four.**

This year Hutchison House Museum would like to give a big Thank You to LLF Lawyers for sponsoring our Scottish Tea program.

**For more information or to reserve a seat please contact the museum at [info@hutchisonhouse.ca](mailto:info@hutchisonhouse.ca) or phone us at 705-743-9710.**

# Turnbull Clan Society - New Member



Website: [www.turnbullclan.com](http://www.turnbullclan.com)

Delegate to Scots of Canada  
and Membership Contact

Betty Turnbull [betty@tbull.com](mailto:betty@tbull.com)

**Crest:** A bull's head erased Sable, armed Vert

**Motto:** I Saved the King

The Turnbull Clan Association (TCA) is a non-profit organization with a mission to research, preserve, and promote our cultural heritage for the enjoyment and benefit of our members and of future generations. TCA also serves as a fraternal organization which brings together individuals who are descended from the Turnbull family and its branches.

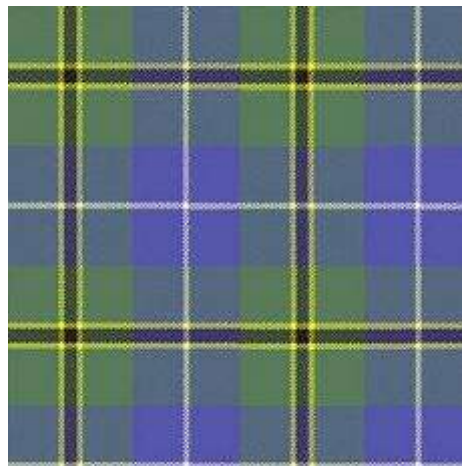
## Accepted variable spellings of the names Turnbull and Rule (Septs)

Thrumbald, Thrumball, Tourneboeuf, Trambell, Tremblay, Tremble, Trembley, Trimbil, Trimbill, Trimble, Trimbole, Trombe, Trombi, Trombil, Tromboul, Tromel, Trommel, Trommele, Trommelen, Trommels, Trumbald, Trumbel, Trumbil, Trumble, Trumbly, Trumbo, Trumbold, Trumboli, Trumbul, Trumbulle, Trummell, Trunball, Trymbille, Trymbulle, Turnball, Turnbaugh, Turnbeaugh, Turnbell, Turnbill, Turnbole, Turnboll, Turnbough, Turnboul, Turnbow, Turnbull, Turnebu, Turnebulle, De Rolle, De Rollo, De Rue, Regulus, Rewel, Rieul, Roall, Rollis, Rolous, Rool, Rouel, Rouley, Rouley, Roull, Rowell, Rowl, Rowle, Ruele, Ruhl, Ruhl, Rule

**Dress**



**Ancient**



**Hunting**





Dear Friends,

Please find below links to the latest issues of the Scottish Banner if you wish to share with your membership.

Some of the latest edition's content will also be available on our website throughout the month at:

[www.scottishbanner.com/category/article/](http://www.scottishbanner.com/category/article/)

We hope your membership enjoys our content and we invite all Scottish community organisations to keep us posted on their news or events for future editions.

Keep up with what is happening across the Scottish community, with the world's leading international Scottish event listings, at: [www.scottishbanner.com/events/](http://www.scottishbanner.com/events/)

Please encourage your membership to subscribe with us, in order to help to continue to create our unique content for the international Scottish community at: [www.scottishbanner.com/subscribe/](http://www.scottishbanner.com/subscribe/)

Any queries please do get in touch.

Kind regards,

*Susan Leslie*

*The Scottish Banner*

E: [info@scottishbanner.com](mailto:info@scottishbanner.com)

March 2026



April 2026



May 2026



June 2026



**IRN BRU, have made a hilarious and fun video supporting the Scotland team in their bid for success. Come on, Scotland! [Click](#) below to watch!**



Once again this year, the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto is proud to sponsor the 81st annual Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games!

If you're attending, we'd love for you to stop by the St. Andrew's Society tent to say hello, test your knowledge with a fun Scottish quiz, enter a draw to win prizes, learn more about the Mull, and help us celebrate the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto's 190th anniversary - a milestone we're incredibly proud of.

We're also looking for a few volunteers to help out at the tent over the weekend. If you're able to lend a hand (and have a little fun while you're at it!), please email Patricia at [info@standrewstoronto.ca](mailto:info@standrewstoronto.ca)

We hope to see you there for a fantastic weekend of Scottish culture, community, and celebration!

# St. Andrew's Society of Toronto

## *Tartan of the Month - No Scotland No Party*



**Crown copyright**

**Source: Scottish Register of Tartans**

**Source: Slanjkilts.com**

The No Scotland No Party tartan was designed in collaboration with Slanj Kilts and musician, Nick Morgan, songwriter of the unofficial anthem for fans of Scotland's Men's National Football Team. The design is intended to capture the vibrance of the flags of the 3 host nations for the FIFA World Cup 2026; USA, Mexico and Canada.

At its heart lies gold, symbolising the coveted trophy, framed by red to honour Scotland's Lion Rampant. Surrounding checks weave the Saltire's blue and white into the stars and stripes of the USA, while green, white, and red pay tribute to Mexico. Finally, the bold red and white of Canada completes the design. Together, these colours unite heritage and sport, blending Scotland's pride with the spirit of the host nations.

# Clan MacPherson Association Canadian Branch



## Pinpointing my Smyth Ancestral Homeland within Clan Macpherson Territory

*By Ian Ronald Smythe, Edmonton, Canada*

**Summary:** Ian Smythe explores his ancestral roots using Y-DNA testing to trace his paternal line back to the Strathclyde Britons and ultimately to the historical lands of Clan Macpherson in northern Scotland, unraveling the origins of the Smith surname within the clan.

### The Y-DNA Case Study

In summer 2025, I consulted Dr. Tyrone Bowes of [scottishorigenes.com](http://scottishorigenes.com) to conduct a Case Study of my Y-DNA test with the intent of learning more about my Smyth origins. By studying my Y-DNA surname matches in the years previous, I had already concluded that my early surnamed Smyth ancestors were associated with Clan Macpherson which is consistent with the clan's historical record pertaining to the surname 'Smith.'

Dr. Bowes reported "his closest Y-DNA matches indicate that his paternal ancestor was living in (or near) Gaelic Western Scotland when surnames first appeared an estimated 1,000 years ago." This story is how I interpret my ancestor's migration path from south-west Scotland to where they adopted the surname Smyth in south Banffshire.

### Strathclyde Britons

Quoting the case study: The test subject's R-DF13 SNP indicates that his paternal ancestors were descended from the R-M269 Indo-Europeans whose Y-DNA genetic signature dominates Scotland. The test subject is descended from the second wave of Indo-European who arrived in Scotland in around 2500BC during the Bronze Age. His R-DF13/R-Z39589/R-L1065 SNP's indicate that his paternal ancestors were the Scots Gaels whose Y-DNA signature dominates Western Scotland.

The FamilyTreeDNA Globetrekker estimates geographical ancestor locations and migrations based on ancient DNA results from archaeological remains and user-reported ancestral locations; estimates that will change over time as more people test their Y-DNA. This map estimates that my ancestors, who became Celtic Britons, migrated north after crossing over from the continent thousands of years ago. During the Roman occupation c.43-410, my ancestors were likely living between the Roman built Hadrian and Antonine walls, or south of Hadrian's wall. By c.600 this region evolved into the Brittonic kingdom of Strathclyde. Gaelic was gradually adopted as the language of the North Britons to the extent that they became culturally identified as Gaels. So thorough was the disappearance of Britishness in twelfth-century southern Scotland, particularly within the bounds of the Glasgow diocese, that the entire history of the Clyde Britons was almost forgotten in their former homelands. [1]

An important note: Until recently it was commonly believed that a group of migrants from Antrim in Northern Ireland established a colony on the coastlands of Argyll at the beginning of the sixth century. This image of Irish migration to Britain has long been accepted as the traditional origin-tale of the Scots. It seemed to explain why the Early Historic inhabitants of Argyll spoke Gaelic, the language of Ireland, at a time when their neighbours – the Picts and Britons – spoke languages of the Brittonic group...There is certainly no archaeological evidence for a mass-migration of peasants, but nor are there any hints that a small group of Irish nobles imposed themselves on a native British population...(Argyll) was the home of a people known to the Romans as Scotti, 'Scots'...an alternative view...sees them as an indigenous, Gaelic-

*(Continued on page 93)*

# Clan MacPherson Association Canadian Branch

*(Continued from page 92)*

speaking group whose ancestors simply adopted the language of the Irish\* as a result of social and economic contacts.[1]

\* It being determined that I have no lineage coming out of Ireland, Y-DNA matching reveals that some branches of my lineage migrated into Ireland from Scotland, mostly those who descend from the R-L1335 branch. My 10 Sweeney and 3 O'Donnell matches, for example, are undoubtedly descendants of Galloglass soldiers from Scotland (Castle Sween, Knapdale) that left for Donegal to serve as professional soldiers sometime between the 13th-16th centuries. To date, 70 out of my 581 Y-111/Y-67 matches trace their earliest known ancestors to Ireland.

My understanding is that clan names with which I have many Y-DNA surname matches; Macpherson, Buchanan, Macgregor, McRae, etcetera, are clans that were born from the North Britons who migrated north into the highlands. The Buchanan Y-DNA project has dispelled their myths and traditions regarding Irish origins and now realize that their ancestors have been in the greater Strathclyde area probably for thousands of years. The Buchanan Project also identified a strong link to Clan Gregor with each having a common male ancestor from about c.400. I have Y-67 marker matches with the current chief of Clan Gregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor, and the late chief Sir William Alan Macpherson of Cluny, with which we share a predicted common ancestor between 650-1300CE. (The Buchanan and MacRae hereditary hierarchical lineage has died out) Like the Buchanan's, the Macpherson's, MacGregor's, MacRae's and other clan associations should not support any myth of an Irish origin.

The Buchanan and Macpherson's, MacGregor's, MacRae's and other clan associations should not support any myth of an Irish origin.

## **The Herschip of Buchan, 1308**

...In Buchan the Comyns were in their own territory, amid their own vassals, and with four strongly fortified places in which to defend themselves. It is not to be supposed, therefore, that they gave up the contest without a fierce struggle, and it is to that fact that the Herschip of Buchan was mainly due. It has too long been supposed that the sweeping devastation of Buchan's territories was merely an act of savage vengeance on the part of Bruce, difficult though such a deed is to reconcile with all that is known of his conduct and character. For it must not be forgotten that in an age notorious for its cruelty in warfare, Bruce was distinguished for his humanity, as even the English chroniclers admit. But the Herschip of Buchan, ..., was not a simple act of vengeance. It was forced on Bruce, or his brother Edward, partly by necessity and partly by policy.[4]

[1308, the 'herschip' (harrying) of Buchan] Now let us go to the king again, who was well pleased at his victory [Inverurie], and had his man burn Buchan from end to end, sparing none. He harried them in such a

*(Continued on page 94)*



This map shows the location of archaeological discoveries that link my ancient Y-DNA to Strathclyde revealing their migratory trail. The ellipse reaches well into Lochaber, province of Moray, the birthplace of Clan Chattan.

# Clan MacPherson Association Canadian Branch

*(Continued from page 93)*

way that a good fifty years afterwards people bemoaned the devastation of Buchan.[6]

[The Comyn] base in Buchan was utterly destroyed and the physical symbols of their presence there – the castles of Dundarg (New Aberdour), Slains, Cairnbulg (Philorth), Rattray, Kingedward and Ellon, their manor house at Kelly (now Haddo) and their religious centre, the Cistercian abbey of Deer – almost entirely wiped from the Buchan landscape.[6]

When Robert I destroyed the Comyn family's control of north-east Scotland during his campaigns of 1308, he replaced them with men on whose loyalty he could depend, through proven allegiance and service...the practice of giving land for army service continued to be the most important means of acquiring the services of properly armed and armoured men... [7]

The First War of Scottish Independence ended in 1328 to be resumed four years later when Edward, the son of the former king John Balliol, led an English backed invasion of Scotland to claim the Scottish throne. The war was over, for the most part, by truce in 1357, although intermittent fighting continued for decades.

## **The Battle of Invernahavon 1370 or 1386**

Simply stated, this battle (pronounced InvernaHAN) was between Clan Macintosh and Clan Cameron over rent owed to Macintosh and subsequent cattle raiding by both parties. Macintosh was supported by the Chattan confederation; primarily Vurich (Macpherson) and Dhai (Davidson). A dispute arose between the Chattan clans over who should have privileged command over the right wing of the army; Vurich or Dhai with the Macintosh commanding the centre. Macintosh favoured Clan Dhai to which Clan Vurich took offence and withdrew from the line of battle. The battle proceeded and Many of the Macintoshes, and almost all of the Davidson's, were cut down by the superior number of the Cameron's...At this perilous crisis, (the Macpherson's) rushed in upon the Cameron's, who, from exhaustion and the losses they had sustained, were quickly overcome.[2]

As stated earlier, Clan Davidson was probably founded by Donald Comyn & Slane Macintosh, which, in my mind, was the reason Clan Vurich was expected to take a subordinate position on the field. It has been elsewhere suggested that the high casualty rate inflicted on the Dhai's and Macintosh because of Vurich's decision did in part contribute to the feuding that led up to the Battle of North Inch 1396.

## **Smyth Toun**

### **My Case Study reports:**

...the test subject's terminal SNP matches illustrates that he shares closest paternal ancestry with the MacDonalds and Shands (who) share the R-FGC4441 mutation which lies downstream on the R-L1065 branch of the R-Z39589 Haplogroup tree...Y-DNA SNP testing reveals that the test subject's paternal ancestor originated in an area of Scotland that is associated with the Smith, MacDonald, and Shand surnames. Distribution mapping of Scottish farmers named Smith, MacDonald, and Shand reveals that they ONLY occur together within Northern Scotland... An examination of the surnames associated with the Morayshire, Banffshire, Inverness-shire, and Aberdeenshire borderlands as it appears on the Scottish Origenes Surnames map reveals an area where the Gaelic and non-Gaelic worlds collided. That map reveals two clusters of

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would take other surnames like MacDonald, Macpherson, and Shand. [Note: Clan Macpherson supplanted this region during the 14th century, as explained above] ...An examination of the surrounding area reveals 'Smithtown' south of Dufftown, clear evidence of his Smiths long ancestral association with this area. The test subject's paternal ancestors will also have left evidence of their long ancestral links with this area in its history, and in the DNA of the current inhabitants.

Up until now I have described my ancestors as being in Clan Vurich (Macpherson) because of several indicators: the Smith surname being associated with the clan from c.1400, my Macpherson Y-DNA matches, and last because Dr. Bowes located my early name-sake ancestors on the clan Y-DNA map within former the Macpherson territory.

Robert's war on the Comyn's explains the how and why Badenoch and west Buchan were supplanted by Clan Vurich (Macpherson) which further explains the how and why my early Smyth ancestors are pinpointed to the area near present day Dufftown. Three important geographical reference points triangulate around Smyth Toun from this period: Balvenie Castle to the north, the river Fiddich to the east, and Mortlach Kirk to the north-west. The district is named Balvenie while the parish area was called Mortlach. (Balvenie is now within the Moray council area)

A survey of the church records index for Mortlach parish ([scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk)) shows a list of many Smith, Shand, MacDonald & Macpherson surnames as does the list of existing headstones in the Mortlach church cemetery. ([findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)) These lists include many Cumming's and Greens who were originally Comyn's.

## **The Battle of North Inch 1396 and the Smyth Surname**

Today, Smith is the most common surname in Scotland. Almost every highland clan would have had blacksmiths who may, or may not, have adopted the surname Smith. Yet Macpherson is the only clan association that has formally recognized Smith as an associated surname. Why is that? As many in the Clan Macpherson Association are aware, it derives from the recognition of one man, a blacksmith armourer who was recruited on short notice to replace one of their own for the pre-arranged clan contest known as the Battle of North Inch, Perth, 1396.

It is not recorded why King Robert III ordered this duel-to-the-death other than to resolve a long ongoing feud between two rival highland clans. Speculations remain as to origin of the feud, so I will offer my own as well. The first question is which two clans faced off against each other? The most popular belief (with which I concur) is that this was a battle between Clan Vurich (Macpherson) and Clan Dhai (Davidson), both clans of the Chattan confederation. I suspect that Clan Dhai (a Comyn clan) was the name chosen, or given to, the proscribed Comyn's that bordered Macpherson territory to the north-west of Balvenie. The bitterness of being cleared from their lands in the civil war of 1307-08 would not easily be forgotten or forgiven. This, in addition to knowing that Dhai was a Comyn clan, with which there is a history of friction. My belief is supported by these facts:

## **Why the Cummings?**

1) USA Clan Davidson Society states that their founders were Donald Comyn & Slane MacIntosh, a daughter of the chief of Clan MacIntosh and Chattan. Because of these political connections, it is a reasonable

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assumption that Clan Vurich would have been expected to subordinate themselves to Clans Davidson and Macintosh. This would have planted a long-lasting bitterness, being that Vurich was the older and senior clan.

2) In support of Robert I, Clan Vurich battled and supplanted the Comyn's from their lands in the civil war between 1307-08.

3) Robert I proscribed the Comyn surname in 1320, banning its use. Surviving Comyn's adopted the surname Cumming and they are the immediate neighbours to the north of the Macpherson's on two separate lines of contact as shown on the clan DNA map. Smyth Toun itself was very near the Cummings.

4) It is recorded that most of the fighting men of Clan Dhai were wiped out at Invernahavon in 1386 or 1370. This didn't leave much time for another generation of fighting men to be reconstituted in time for a battle in 1396, even though it only called for 30 men. I suspect that those who fought under the name Clan Dhai were at least in part Cummings that bordered the Macpherson's.

## **Why the Macpherson's?**

1) The 'Black Chanter,' a trophy from the battle, appears to have remained in Macpherson hands ever since.[2]

2) Macpherson's replacement for the battle, Hal' the smith of the wynd, aka Gow Chrom (the bowed smith) was the person whose surname was welcomed and formally associated with Clan Macpherson.

3) After the battle, Henry Smith was invited to join the clan, which he did, settling in Macpherson territory which has been historically recorded and located.[10]

4) Lastly, my Y-DNA pinpoints me to the immediate area of where Gow Chrom, Henry-the-smith settled.

## **Leac-a'-Ghobhainn – the Smyth Ground Zero**

In my case study, Dr. Bowes points out a farm called Smithtown, located about 4km south of Dufftown, which turns out to be much more than a curiosity. The map below was drawn between 1636-52 [8] Highlighted near the bottom is Smyth Toun, with Balvenie Castle to the north, Mortlach kirk to the north-west and the river Fiddich on the east.

More recent maps detail something else substantial. In the book *An Account of the Confederation of Clan Chattan; its kith and kin (1898)* by Charles Fraser-Mackintosh [10] he wrote: THE GOWS...The happy connection betwixt Henry and Clan Chattan, was not destined to terminate with the fight. Henry was invited to the north, and to unite with the clan for the future,-- and it is recorded that "Henry of the Wynd set out from Perth, with a horse load of his effects, and said he would not take up his residence or habitation until his load fell, which happened in Strath Avon in Banffshire, where he accordingly settled. The place is called to this day Leac-a'-Ghobhainn. The Smiths or Gows, and MacGlashans are commonly called 'Sliochd a' Ghobha Chrom,' \* but all agree that he had no posterity, though he had many followers of good position to the number of twelve, who were proud of being reputed the children of so valiant a man. The more to ingratiate themselves in his favour, they generally learned to make swords as well as to use them. His twelve followers spread themselves over the country...

\*'Sliochd a' Ghobha Chrom' translates to mean the offspring of the bowed smith. 'Bowed' implies that

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# Clan MacPherson Association Canadian Branch

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Henry was born with a physical defect or that he had suffered a permanent injury.

Fraser-Mackintosh wrote that Henry Smith settled at a place called Leac-a'-Ghobhainn, which translates to 'a slab or ledge of natural stone or rock, an expanse of flat stone or rock' and '(black) smith.' Strathavon is the general area where Henry settled, but specifically to the north-east in Balvenie. This map from 1838-39 [9] identifies the farm called Smithstown, and most importantly, next to it, the Hill of Smithstown – Leac-a'-Ghobhainn. A short distance to the north is a place called Smiddy hillock.

Given how thinly populated Scotland was c.1400, only an estimated 400 000 people spread out over the entire country, which was even more sparsely populated in the highlands, I can say with confidence that my earliest namesake Smyth ancestor was probably one of the twelve or so followers of Henry the smith. Even by c.1600, the estimated population of Scotland was only 800 000 people. To date, I match with 26 Macpherson's at 67 markers and 1 at 111 markers, which includes the late chief, Sir William Alan Macpherson of Cluny, at a Genetic Distance of 6 steps – estimating a common male ancestor between c.650 – 1700. This estimate can be narrowed to between c.650 – 1400 because of the Smyth surname adoption around c.1400. I match 5 Macintosh's in this range.

## Aftermath

One can't close this story off without mentioning Sir Walter Scott's romantic novel 'The Fair Maid of Perth,' whose main character is Henry, the smith. [11]

The Battle of Glenlivet was fought on October 3, 1594, between Protestant and Roman Catholic rivals. In an interesting twist, Clan Macpherson, under the Earl of Huntly, fought for the Roman Catholic cause alongside their former enemy, Clan Cumming (Comyn), which defeated the protestant army that included their former Chattan confederates; clans Macintosh and Macgillivray.

Family notes and traditions from relations state that the last Smyth of our lineage from Scotland was a sol-



The author with James Brodie Macpherson of Cluny, chief of Clan Macpherson; clan gathering in 2024

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dier in the Covenanter army who was among the 'Scottish Exiles to the Netherlands' following the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Another family source states that our last Smyth ancestor from Scotland became a soldier for the Dutch who had married a Dutch widow and was paid off with land in Ireland following the Glorious Revolution c.1690. I have located their marriage record. I suspect that both stories are true; the Covenanter Smyth relocated his family to the Netherlands where his son became a soldier.

From this small area of Balvenie and Strathavon came two notable Smith's. George Smith was the founder of the Glenlivet distillery in 1824. Donald Alexander Smith 'Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal' was a founder of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Donald's family heritage was from the area; his sister married his business partner in Dufftown. Neither of these Smiths have living male descendants to match Y-DNA.

Clan Vurich's modern name, Clan Macpherson, was adopted around the middle of the 15th century,[2] and in closing I quote: Please note that we use the term "Cousins" or "Associated Families" and not Sept. The word "sept" was borrowed from the Irish culture in the nineteenth century in a mistaken attempt to explain the different surnames that can be found in a clan.[15]

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# Book Announcement: Adventures of a Looney Scot

**A humorous mix of biography, fiction, and Scottish history!**

We are excited to share a new book by author Ian McFeat-Smith that will surely appeal to our members who enjoy life stories filled with adventure, personal growth, and cultural perspectives.

*Adventures of a Looney Scot* follows our hero as he struggles to graduate from being a wee Glasgow Warrior to a professional geologist and International Businessman, taking him from Scotland to Hong Kong. This book launches the *Quantum Leap Forward Trilogy*, setting the stage for a journey that leaps far beyond Scotland.

*(Insert Book Image Here)*

*(Insert Link to Amazon Listing Here)*

## Accolades and Reviews

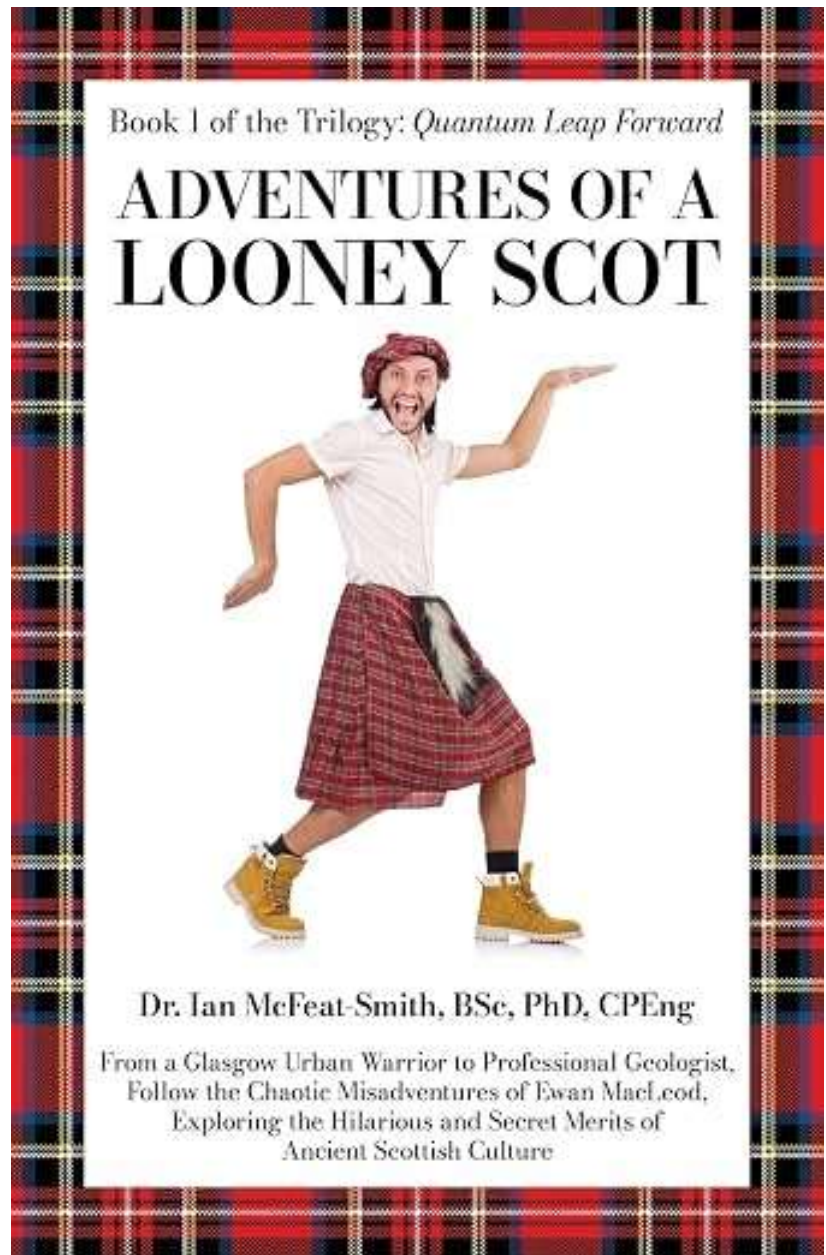
The book has already won several accolades, including the **Literary Titan Gold Book Award**.

## Explore More

**Author's Video Clip:** Watch a short video clip from the author [here](#).

**Interview with Literary Titan:** Read an interview following the Gold Book Award [here](#).

*Submitted by Ian McFeat-Smith*



*(Continued on page 101)*

# Book Announcement: Adventures of a Looney Scot

(Continued from page 100)

Here is what reviewers are saying:

*"Adventures Of A Looney Scot is a humorous mix of biography, fiction and Scottish history [...] In every instance, the unapologetic tone and continuous wordplay leave no room for dullness. It is both charmingly rugged and ruggedly charming."*

—Independent Book Review

*"What gives the book its real personality is the voice. McFeat-Smith writes in a way that's unruly, funny, self-mocking, and deeply attached to Scottish speech and rhythm."*

—Literary Titan (5-Star Review)

*"Readers who enjoy life stories filled with adventure, personal growth and cultural perspectives will find this book especially appealing... The memoir is masterfully written, and intellectually stimulating."*

—Readers' Favorite (5-Star Premium Review)

*"Readable, interesting and humorous – this book has all the essentials of a thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining book. Highly recommended."*

—David W. Gee, Author

*"An era hopping, pun popping journey through the bedrock of our modern existence via Scotland's important historical and geographical peculiarities. The author starts off as a wee salty underdog but emerges as an educated, thoughtful voice for the way forward."*

—Anthony C Murphy, Author

*"Flying Scot bikes, camping, hiking to youth hostels, kayaking, long holidays on Loch Lomond. The author's stories explore the beauty of outdoors Scotland. Quixote-like, he escapes from serious injury and even death. [...] And displays a brain powered by curiosity."*

—Katherine Elberfeld, Author



# Road Show 2026

On the following page is the banner flow plan for 2026. Our special thanks to Kirstin Hunter, Chris Hodge, John Duff, Robert MacKenzie and those of our festivals displaying the new style 10'x6' banners being sent to them. Also to Clan Gregor's Wayne MacGregor Parker who'll be displaying for us in Orillia this year.

As you may appreciate from the diagram, the combination of the number of events we're presenting at and the effort involved in optimizing tracking information has made this quite a logistics exercise. What definitely hasn't helped is some vendors blowing past promised delivery dates and Canada Post seeming to not be motivated to expedite deliveries across the country. One wonders what this is telling us?

The alpha code for a banner indicates the set of tracking codes being used for it. Separate codes are allowing us to report separately on what poster QRs were clicked at events on the same day such as Moncton and Georgetown Saturday June 13th. The goal of the tracking is to let your group know where there is interest. Where you should show up, should focus on when possible.

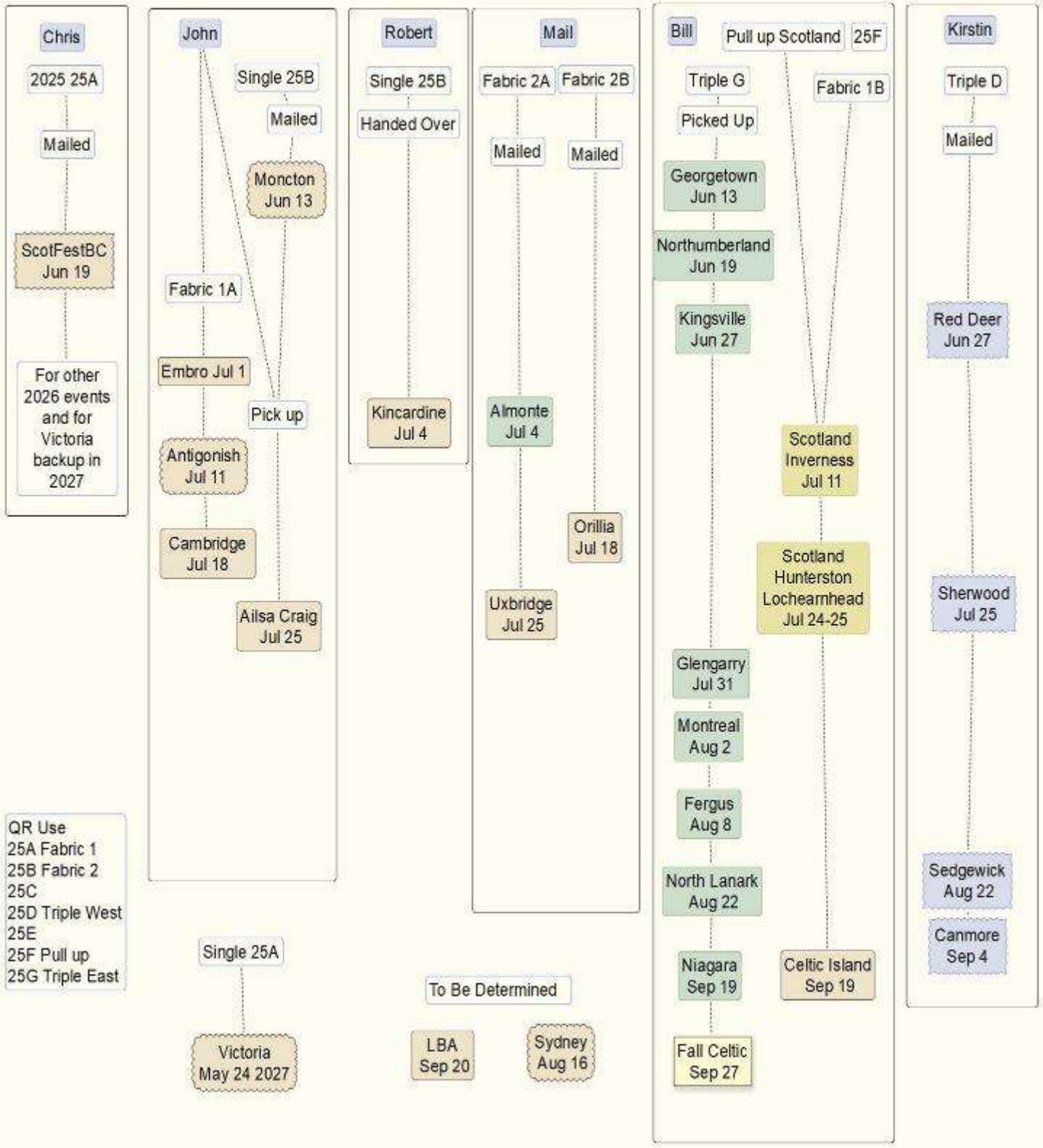
We're really excited to be taking Scots of Canada overseas this year with us providing a x-frame version of the banner at two events in Scotland, the Inverness Highland Games and the Balquhidder, Lochearnhead and Strathyre Highland Games. Both of these will be presented through the Clan Gregor Society.

If you can visit us at any of our local events, we'll be trying to have the x-frame showing. Our test of both it and the 10'x6' fabric version was very successful and popular at the past Northumberland Highland Games. **Despite the wind!** The three styles of banners are shown below in the image from Northumberland.



Want to know more or help with booths and display? Contact us at [info@scotscanada.scot](mailto:info@scotscanada.scot)

# Road Show 2026



*The following are affiliated with our membership and available for bookings.*

Piper	Locale	Contact Info
Rory Sinclair	Toronto	<a href="http://www.caledoncounty.com">http://www.caledoncounty.com</a> rorygus.sinclair@outlook.com
Mike Chisolm	Greater Vancouver Area	604-628-8140 <a href="http://bagpipervancouver.com">http:// bagpipervancouver.com</a>
Callum Gauthier	Ottawa / Rideau River / Toronto	613-620-1014 Callum.gauthier5@gmail.com
William Morrison	Western Ontario	226-600-3472    piperwilly@hotmail.com
Jenna Denisson	Greater Montreal Area	514-835-6320 <a href="http://www.jennadennison.com">www.jennadennison.com</a> dennison.jenna@gmail.com
Ewen Booth	Quebec City - Montmagny area	514-966-0205 or <a href="mailto:info@tourschardon.com">info@tourschardon.com</a>

Speaker	Topic(s)	Contact Info
Christine Woodstock	Scottish Genealogy	<a href="mailto:Genealogytoursofscotland@gmail.com">Genealogytoursofscotland@gmail.com</a>
Rory Sinclair	Scottish History and Culture	<a href="http://www.caledoncounty.com">http://www.caledoncounty.com</a> rorygus.sinclair@outlook.com
Ewen Booth	Scottish-French & Military History in Early Canada	Email; <a href="mailto:genealogy@tourschardon.com">genealogy@tourschardon.com</a> Cell 514-966-0205

## Media Guidelines Reminder

As we become more engaged with various forms of media, we need to set boundaries for acceptability when content affects our fellow members and the public as a whole, particularly regarding what reflects on **Scots of Canada** as an organization. **Scots of Canada** is an organization formed to promote Scottish culture and heritage.

Here are guidelines to help with this:

- No media content is allowed that promotes a political viewpoint, whether for a party, government, labor organization, or activist activity, without the advance consent of the Board of Directors.
- No media content is allowed that violates the terms of membership as set out in the bylaws, specifically regarding the making of false statements, defamation, intimidation, or the attribution of false or defamatory statements, or any dissemination of misinformation or unsubstantiated information specifically meant to bring disrepute to an individual or group.
- No media content is allowed that promotes the violation of intellectual property and copyright laws or that lessens respect for the laws and standards of heraldry in Canada and internationally.

# About Scots of Canada

## **Founded in 1976 as Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada, our purpose is:**

To advance Scottish Cultural Heritage in Canada, such Scottish culture be defined to include, but not be restricted to, traditional Highland, Island and Lowland cultures, whether in Scotland, Canada or wherever Scottish Culture may be expressed;

To foster the organization of and co-operation and communication between Scottish federations, clans, societies or groups through the initiation and co-ordination of projects and undertakings;

There are two types of membership now available in Scots of Canada.

**Organizational Memberships** are open to any and all organizations which promote or encourage some aspect of Scottish tradition or culture, represent a link between the Scottish people and their descendants and relations in Canada, or seek to develop an understanding of the role Scotland and its culture has played in the development of Canada and its history.

All of the original memberships in Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada have now been converted to the equivalent Organizational Membership class

**Household Memberships** are open to any household with a postal address where one or more residents of the household identify with a Scottish Heritage by birth, descent or an inclination. Over the next couple of months a new site [scotsofcanada.ca](http://scotsofcanada.ca) will be extended to provide registration, services and benefits to this new membership class. Extension of the same will be extended to Organization Members over the next few months.

**Meetings 2026:** Fall Annual General Assembly - November 29, 2026 3PM Virtual

## **Websites and Emails:**

We are now in the process of transition for our web and mail services from a legacy domain of [cas-soc.ca](http://cas-soc.ca), a transitional domain of [scotscanada.ca](http://scotscanada.ca) to a new domain of [ScotsOfCanada.ca](http://ScotsOfCanada.ca). During this time we will be using all three domains for email with automatic readdressing or forwarding depending on where we are in the migration of services and email accounts

The following are image credits for Frae the Chair

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## An Drochaid - The Bridge

This Spring 2026 edition features as its cover the Achnambeithach Bridge in Glencoe, Scotland

The wooden bridge crosses the River Coe, flowing near Loch Achtriochtan.

It is located directly off the A82 road in the West Highlands. The surrounding landscape of Glencoe with dramatic mountains was shaped by ancient volcanoes and glaciers.

Photo by [Dave Drury](#) on [Unsplash](#)

An Drochaid - The Bridge is usually published quarterly for each season.

Submissions are welcome, though articles may be edited for length and content.

Whenever possible, please provide PDF, Word, RTF or text formats

Submissions are due as follows :

Winter: January 11, Spring April 12, Summer: July 12, Fall: October 11,

Any member of Scots of Canada may submit an article or ad at no cost. A grant of right of use for publication and posting on the web is implied. Submitter must be able to legally provide the contents. For instance, please ensure that you have image rights for persons in photographs.

Publication of material is at the sole final discretion of the newsletter editor. Format, length and content may be adjusted by the editor as deemed necessary. Scots of Canada assumes no responsibility nor liability for submitted content in terms of factual correctness or right of use. All submissions will be published with the implied or explicit attribution of source.

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