

# The Tartan

The Clan MacDougall Society of North America

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Report from Grandfather Mountain
- Games in California
- Sir Walter Scott and the MacDougalls

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## The Grandfather Mountain Games 2014

The Grandfather Mountain Games and Gathering is large, variegated and vital. This year the days were bright and the breezes cool. At the Games site on McRae Meadow up on Grandfather Mountain there are two Celtic Groves for daytime music, evening Celtic Jams and Rock concerts, highland dancing and piping competitions, sheep-herding (this year closer akin to sheep-hunting) dog demonstrations, track and field competitions, and heavy highland athletics of all kinds, including highland wrestling for adults and children. The athletic events begin on Thursday with the Bear, a five-mile footrace climbing over one and a half thousand feet from Linville to the base of the swinging bridge at the top of Grandfather Mountain. The runners, having thus warmed up, undertake a 26.2 mile marathon from Boone to McRae Meadows on Sunday. Performances in these competitions are impressive. A week long Gaelic Immersion program is held at Lees-McRae College the week preceding the games and the North Carolina Gaelic Mòd is held on Saturday afternoon. The Gaelic of the participants is quite good. This year, the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (COSCA) hosted a Genealogical Master Class Thursday morning, a tutorial on using social media by Scottish organizations early that afternoon, and a late afternoon lesson on how to cuss in Gaelic with Dr. Michael Newton. And astride the walk to the Clan tents and athletic field is the vibrant presence of the campsites of the armies of McRae Meadows.

MacDougalls, MacDowalls and our associated families were at the games, as we have been for over fifty years. The Board of Directors met at the Eseeola Lodge on Friday afternoon, the only physical, traditional Board meeting of the year. Holding quarterly meetings of the Board, three of them by conference call, seems to have increased, rather than decreased, the work load of the officers at these meetings as it advanced the purposes of the Society. The Board meeting was expanded from one to two hours but still did not cover the entire agenda. The Board is tracking exciting events just now, as is the membership, including development of enhanced internet communications, our first webcast AGM, the 2014 international gathering in Oban, and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clan MacDougall Society of North America next year.

Late Friday afternoon we gathered for a reception on the lawn at the Eseeola Lodge from which we were piped inside for the Founders Dinner. The evening was uplifting as always, exchanging news of family, friends and events, enjoying superb piping, eating a fine dinner, exchanging recollections of events in the life of the Clan MacDougall Society and listening to (even participating in) the ballads of Richard vanValkenburgh. Sibyl McD Wilkinson and, as we might name them, the Highland Watch of Alabama provided core of warmth for the evening as they have so often. Past President Dick MacDougall shared his memories of visits to the MacDougalls of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, the enchantment he felt of the families living in a still vigorous Scottish culture and his easy recruit-

*Continued on  
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## A Note from Our Editor

This issue highlights our Annual General Meeting and Board of Directors meeting this July at Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina. Ashby McCown, Chris MacDougall, and Albert Clepper supplied the photos. The article on Sir Walter Scott is from Hugh MacDougall, the editor of the *Somerled*, our sibling in the United Kingdom. He kindly also supplied the portraits and the picture of the Scott Monument. Our next issue will feature our Clan Gathering in Oban this year.

*—by Peter Clepper*

# President's Message

As I write this, we finish preparations for our visit to Oban, Dunollie and MacDougall Country for the 2014 Homecoming. I know that Chief Morag, Mary Freer and a cast of assistants have worked very hard over the past year to make this happen. Of course, by the time you read this our Homecoming will be another finished chapter in our long clan tradition.

As I mentioned in our August e-newsletter, our Society hosts a table at the Oban (Argyll) Games during Homecoming week. Our Dunollie people asked us to exhibit, saying that native Scots are enthralled with the fervor, pomp and Scottish pride their American kinfolk demonstrate.

The next issue of *The Tartan* will provide colorful, in-depth Homecoming reports. As we've also noted, our visit comes on the eve of the Scottish independence referendum. We hope to provide some retrospectives on the atmosphere in Oban leading up to the historic vote.

As we look back on the past year we can be proud of many accomplishments, a budget surplus that will enable us to do more good works, and a somewhat historic influx of new members. Many are coming in with unbridled enthusiasm and are volunteering to become involved in the work of the Society. Unfortunately, we still face the critical issue of retaining members. The Board is taking on this dilemma and I'm confident we'll find more reasons to make people want to remain active with their membership.

We continue to seek out people to lend a hand in running the Society. One immediate need is for a member with legal or tax background who is able to provide one-time guidance on questions that have come up regarding dona-



**Overlooking McRae Meadow at Grandfather Mountain**

tions. I stress one-time guidance; we have no desire to take advantage of anyone's assistance. If you think you might have the expertise to answer these questions, please contact me confidentially at [President@MacDougall.org](mailto:President@MacDougall.org)

One last item: You'll be hearing a lot about next July being the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clan MacDougall Society of N.A. This is a major milestone and we have a committee working on the festivities. We hope you can participate. Do you have some ideas? Think about it and please let us hear from you. How can we bring the recognition and celebration to every corner of our Society in 2015?

---by *Malcolm MacDougall*

## The Clan MacDougall Society of North America

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## The Grandfather Mountain Games 2014 (cont)

ment into our Society by Walter MacDougall. [The dates of the Antigonish Highland Games and the Grandfather Mountain Games now overlap and keep us at least physically apart during these special events.] Among the friends present at the dinner were Neil McDowell and his wife who had driven, and not for the first time, from Weed California to join us. Appreciation Awards, for Service and dedication to the Clan MacDougall Society of North America, were announced for Buzzy Bramble of South Carolina and Peter Clepper of Maryland. Buzzy was present to receive the award.

Saturday was a particularly exciting day at the two MacDougall tents on McRae Meadow. Attendance was very good, but not suffocating. Old friends met; ten new members joined; many old and new stories were heard; a new piper, Gemma Briggs, and her family were welcomed into the Society; and new contacts in distant regions made. There was barely time to get off the mountain and down to the COSCA House at Lees-McRae College in the village of Banner Elk for Beacham McDougall's Carolina BBQ, the Feast of Porky Campbell. Beacham improves the recipe each year, continually achieving a higher level of superb.

There were 20 members physically present at this year's AGM, which meeting was webcast to absent members for the first time. Inevitably the event was filled with drama. There were a



*Some AGM attendees gather before the meeting*

host of technical difficulties – echos, loss of audio, overuse of bandwidth – that delayed the start. There was a suggestion that a message should be sent out canceling the webcast. Chris MacDougall, our new Recording Secretary/Archivist, replied “No, begin” saying that he would record, and if need be, broadcast the meeting immediately after. President Malcolm MacDougall began the meeting and in a couple of minutes someone whispered “We’re live!” A greeting from Madam MacDougall of MacDougall was read, recorded videos from Dunollie staff on the international gathering and projects to repair the Dunollie castle were played. As Executive Officers gave their reports, events of the year and plans for the future were discussed.

—Le Tòmas MacCòmhghan/Thomas Ashby McCown  
Bethesda, Tìr-Mhàiri // Bethesda, Maryland

## Award for Buzzy Bramble

The Society extended Buzzy Bramble an Achievement Award for his long and devoted service. Buzzy was born August 9, 1961 in Charlotte, North Carolina. He moved to Georgia in 1965 and he grew up in Tucker, Georgia. He attended the local community college on a golf scholarship, majoring in business and sales/marketing. After college he started his own business in car leasing. Later he worked in real estate in various capacities which included marketing new homes. Buzzy stayed



*Buzzy receiving his award from Sandra*

busy during his working years raising five children and coaching little league baseball.

Buzzy first attended the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in 1984 with his grandfather, John A. MacDougall (called Papa by many); and Buzzy has continued to

attend the games each year. He is a Life Member of our Clan MacDougall Society. He served as our Georgia State Representative and Southeast Regional Commissioner until his grandfather's passing in 1986. Since then he has served continuously on the Board of Directors. He stimulates activity at our clan tent because he persuades the hotel kitchen at our founders dinner to prepare an extra haggis. They provide it on a stylish platter which he places prominently at our tent. A crowd soon assembles.

Buzzy currently serves on the John A. MacDougall Scholarship Committee and the Annual General Meeting Committee. He has recruited numerous new members into the Society over the years and has hosted many regional games, especially the Stone Mountain Games. Buzzy lives in Isle of Pines, South Carolina, where he and Paula enjoy the beach and ocean view. They are planning a trip to Scotland in the near future.

—By Sandra MacDougall



MacDowall

# Is the Long Trip Worth It?

It is a long trip from Weed, California (Yes, Weed, located about 40 miles from the Oregon border on Interstate 5) to Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina. This was the second time we made the trip and it was just as long the second time. With two senior citizens sharing the wheel, it takes more than five days to make the trip depending on road construction, weather, and traffic conditions. The first three fourths of the trip is spent on long stretches of freeway with the last day on narrow winding roads through the mountains. On this last leg, the passenger enjoys the beautiful scenery while the driver focuses on the narrow winding road. It is on this last leg that one begins to appreciate the long journey, especially if you are the passenger and can observe and appreciate the scenery.

Though the festivities on the mountain begin on Thursday, we plan our trip so that we get there on Friday in time for the MacDougall Clan meeting and dinner at the Eseeola Lodge in Linville. At that meeting, the business for the coming year was planned and a new member of the board was welcomed. As an introduction to the dinner, the Haggis was piped in and dinner was served. After dinner, and the formalities of introductions of the clan officers who were attending, and a quick summary of the business transacted during the business meeting, we were entertained by Richard Van Valkenburgh who played and sang several traditional Scottish ballads. In all, it was a very pleasant evening.

On Saturday and Sunday there is no parking on the mountain at McRae Meadows where the games are held, for other than patrons, sponsors, merchants, and performers, so we and hundreds of other visitors board school busses which are driven by volunteers from local volunteer fire departments to complete the voyage. The trip is

two twisting miles through a hardwood forest which is an experience in itself.

At the meadows where we leave the busses, there is a huge campground where tents, RV's and all other manner of temporary dwellings cover every inch of the ground. These spaces are made available from the Fourth of July and I am told that reservations need to be made well ahead of time. I understand that most of the spaces are occupied for the duration of the games.

Once through the camping area and a small area where merchants have

pitched their tents with all kinds of souvenirs for sale, we reach the grounds where the games are held. Our first impressions are of color, music, and activity. With over seventy clans represented, with over 200 tents displaying clan tartans and colorful banners, circling an area that appears to be larger than a football field, circled by a running track and bleachers on one side of the field, one is overwhelmed by the colors. At the time we arrived on Saturday pipers were parading across the grounds adding the sounds of pipes and drums to the colorful scene. At one end of the grounds highland dancers were performing on stages set up before the judges who were busy evaluating the performances. The dancing continued throughout the day and the next day also. When the pipers cleared the field, the games began. The Saturday events were the hammer throws, the weight throws and throwing the caber by professionals competing for trophies and for amateurs. The weight throws aren't the usual types of weights we see at track meets. The weights look more like large stones or sacks of straw. Some are thrown for distances and others are thrown over bars set at ever increasing heights. On Sunday the same events were held for the professional athletes who were competing for money, and for amateur athletes. Highland wrestling, nothing like professional wrestling, was also held on Saturday. There were matches for the wee ones as well as for the older ones.



**Address to the Haggis**



**The Clan MacDougall Tent**



## Is the Long Trip Worth It? (cont)

The track events were held on Sunday with classes for all ages. Piping and drumming competition was held throughout the day on Saturday.

Without a doubt, the parade of tartans on Sunday was the most colorful event of the week. As many as 100 clans including more than 1,000 marchers in full regalia, carrying their banners, marched around the field before gathering in the center of the field, an impressive sight. The clans then marched around the track again passing in review before the officials before returning to their individual tents.

Among other activities available to visitors were storytelling, Gaelic language lessons, Scottish spinning and weaving, sheep and goose herding, competition in harp and fiddling, sword dancing, to name a few.

Perhaps this is just a sign of the gender gap, but one thing that struck me over and over again was the absence, or near absence, of young people with their noses stuck in electronic devices.

Walk down any busy street today and it will not be long before you find yourself dodging someone busy texting, phoning, or playing electronic games. At Grandfather Mountain I saw very little of such activity. People were immersed in the activities either as spectators or participants for the most part. That was a delight to see.

So, is the long trip worth it? I will just say that once you have attended your first Highland Games at Grandfather Mountain, you will most likely realize that you have only dipped your toe in the pool. You will realize that there was so much you missed you will feel that you must go back again. Long trip or short jaunt Grandfather Mountain will be calling you back.

People celebrating their heritage together, in an atmosphere of community, is a rare sight today. Don't miss the opportunity to be part of this celebration.

*—By Neil McDowell (Neil and Margaret drove this long trip as part of their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary – editor.)*

## Viewing the San Diego Scottish Games



**Darleen staffing the MacDougall tent**

The word vista in Spanish means “view,” and is an apt name for the Southern California city in which the San Diego Scottish Highland Games are held. The vista overlooking Brengle Terrace Park this past June 28 was particularly inviting as I ambled down the steep road from Vista High School to the entrance of the 2014 San Diego Scottish Highland Games. The sky was a saturated blue and cloudless, ideal summertime “fair” weather.

The

The Games occupy a crescent-shaped area in the park, with stages for music and Highland dancing near the entrance, the clan tents and sales booths to the left and west. The route curves to the south and up a hill for food, drink, and spirited Celtic music. The tree-covered southernmost section accommodated the judging area for the pipe bands and the Sheep Dog Trials. I decided to locate the Clan MacDougall tent first, then eat lunch and view as many events as I had time for. I would end my visit catching up with Darleen Weisz at the MacDougall tent.

The Clan MacDougall tent was located near the music stage, at the end of one of three aisles of clan booths. Easy to spot, it was receiving frequent visits from curious enthusiasts and volunteers from the many other clan outposts.

Across the aisle was the Clan Cian of Ireland, as far as I knew the only Irish clan represented. I wandered the aisles, reading the clan names and noting the colors of their tartans and coats of arms: Cameron, Wallace, Grant, Campbell, and countless others. The Scottish American Military Society displayed military medals on their uniforms as they posed for pictures, while another group



**MacDougall**

# Viewing the San Diego Scottish Games

offered impromptu lessons in Highland dancing. Kilts were worn everywhere, even by small children and pets. A few people sported functional black canvas "Utilikilts."

I looked in on some of the vendors. Many offered kilts or t-shirts, ceremonial swords, books, jewelry, and the like, but there were wood-carved clocks, stringed zithers to be used as door ringers, and locally made Scottish-styled shortbread cookies. There was the charming Tea Tent where you could take a break, sit at a tartan-clothed table, and enjoy a pot of tea and cookies with your family or friends. Finally there was a popular stand for selling Scottish and other British grocery snacks, including ice-cold Irn Bru in plastic bottles.

Hiking up the hill toward the food vendors, I shuffled through the already crowded beer pavilion, where the enormously popular band The Wicked Tinkers was setting up for their first show. As I stood in a fairly short line I was tempted by a lamb curry pie, less so by a "haggis," such was the variety of foods available. I settled upon a tasty steak and mushroom meat pie for my lunch. I moved to the beer line, where for \$6.00 one could have a cold draft beer from San Diego's Ballast Point Brewing Company or a shot of Scotch whisky. I will try just about any red ale, so I ordered a Scottish ale called "Piper Down." As you might have expected, this was the most popular beer served, but it was worth the several minutes' wait.

The Wicked Tinkers were getting started just as I finished lunch. This group plays an exuberant, loud Celtic music that includes both new and familiar songs. The musicians included a violinist, a bagpiper, an accordionist, and a very propulsive drummer, all of whom brought the crowd to its



**Clan Tents at Vista**

feet. I have seen their shows at all of the Games and look forward to their yearly appearances. Security was everywhere near the pavilion, but I noticed no unruliness, the more noisily enthusiastic folks preferring to stay near the music.

Moving on to the athletic events, I first observed the women's Sheaf Toss, an event that looks easier than it is. The competitors were some strong ladies, smiling triumphantly when they succeeded in tossing the 10-pound bundle over the high bar. I got to see the men's Weight Throw, Stone Put, and Hammer Throw. There was a women's Weight Throw as well. The athletes all had to contend with full sun, displaying a colorful variety of kilts, tattoos, and fearsome haircuts as they twirled and tossed heavy objects. They had their game faces on and got encouraging cheers from the crowds, but it was clear that hot weather added to the events' challenges. Unfortunately there was no caber toss during my stay, but the other heavy athletics provided plenty of competitive spirit.

Wanting a break from the heat, I walked back up the hill past the pavilion and onto the tree-covered southern hillside toward the band-judging event. I saw and heard two wonderful pipe and drum bands: the polished University of California Riverside Pipe Band and the impressive Helix (High School) Highlander band. They played at different levels of difficulty, but both exuded the unity and indomitability we love to see from pipe bands. The UCR Pipe Band's tartan includes distinctive tan and sky blue, which I have come to recognize at these games. The Helix High School band competes in the same tournaments as my own son's marching band and is the only high school



**The Scottish American Military Society**



# Viewing the San Diego Scottish Games (cont)

band I have seen that includes bagpipes in their field shows.

Next, back to the small musical stage (where last year spectators were treated to a Scottish wedding) to hear Scottish fiddler Alistair Fraser, accompanied by cellist Natalie Haas. They played a beautiful variety of Scottish and Celtic tunes, but I was particularly taken by their "Highlander's Farewell." This beautiful melody has migrated both geographically and musically, and this duo played it as a medley of the forms the song has taken over the years. Heavy-hearted and sorrowful at first, it became a sprightly Irish reel, and finally a lively Appalachian dance. I look forward to hearing more from their broad repertoire.

Energized by the fiddle and cello music, I stopped by the Clan MacDougall tent to chat with Darleen Weisz, the Clan MacDougall Society's Southern California rep who, year after year, brings her extensive knowledge of the Clan and her enthusiasm for its heritage to the San Diego Games. She is

pretty well known in this venue and introduced me to several volunteers from other organizations as they stopped by for some conversation and news. She edits a newsletter called "Voice of the Highlands" to inform the Clans of the Highlands about Southern California events. As we were catching up, a couple of MacDougall newlyweds came by, and Darleen introduced us all to the old and new tartan colors, Dunollie Castle, and the history of the Clans MacDougall and Macdowall. A few children stopped by too to have their clan "maps" stamped at the MacDougall tent.

I ran out of time before I could watch any Highland dancing or Sheep Dog Trials, so I purchased a few goodies for the family and lumbered back up the hill to the parking lot. At the top I paused for the vista one last time, the sun now lower and the shadows longer, looking forward to next year's Games.

—By Albert Clepper

## The Kincardine Scottish Festival

During the first weekend of July the annual Scottish Festival attracted a fine crowd to Kincardine, a small town on the shores of Lake Huron. The Festival began with a parade through the town to the beautiful Victoria Park. This year, Clan MacDougall was the honoured clan.

The call was sent out far and wide by the Society's VP for Canada, Scott MacDougald, as well as Ontario Regional Commissioner Chris MacDougall and Ontario Provincial Representative Valerie McDougall, that it would be a momentous occasion and that having as many kinfolk represented as possible would reflect well on the Clan and on the Society. On the day of the event, we were pleased to have thirty-five (35!) MacDougalls in attendance from all over Ontar-



**Gathered among the clan tents**



**The MacDougalls at Kincardine**

io, plus one furry four legged MacDougall. It was a true honour to walk at the head of the parade with so many kin representing the clan, showing that the MacDougalls have a strong presence in the centre of Canada, one that is reflected across the country. In the photos, Scott McDougald is the man in blue shirt and tartan tie.

— by Chris MacDougall



**MacDowall**

## A Kinsman Stars in Many Fields

Before Ben MacDougall's eighth birthday, he became interested in the flute and tried out for lessons near his home. He was not accepted, but despite his disappointment, he persevered and took private lessons.

That was fortunate, because Ben is now an award-winning young flutist, broadcaster, composer and writer. He made his first solo performance in his new homeland, America, at the Theatre House, Castleton Farms, near Warrenton, Virginia. Castleton is a major center for classical music in fields including orchestral and solo works and opera.

Born and raised in England, Ben is proud of his Scottish heritage – reflected in the Clan MacDougall/MacDowall Society – through his paternal grandfather who hailed from Kilbride and Dunach on the shores of Loch Feochan, just south of Oban and the Clan MacDougall castle, Dunollie. Ben studied at the Royal College of Music in London where he won both the Flute and Woodwind prizes.

Ben and his wife, soprano Megan Welker, recently moved to Boston, and he is looking forward to pursuing his interests on two continents. In previous visits to America, he participated as a composer of music for films in festivals in such cities as Los Angeles, Washington, Nashville, San Diego, Cleveland, and Richmond. He has written film scores,

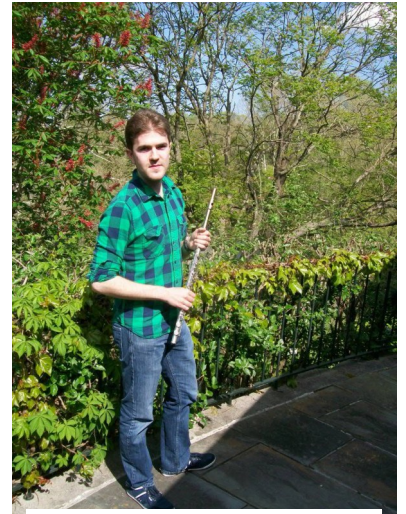
and he won the gold medal at the Indie Gathering Film Festival in Cleveland.

He has also made his mark as a broadcaster – he hosts a program on classical music for the BBC – and writes for classical music magazines.

"I love good tunes, and that's what I write," he says. "One of the greatest thrills for a composer is to leave the theater and hear someone singing one of their tunes." A work at his Castleton performance was a flute arrangement of Vivaldi's Four Seasons Concerti.

Ben says he is pleased to live in America "and take part in the exciting music world here. I want to add to that."

—By William MacDougall (with photo)



**Ben MacDougall**

## The Great Unknown Should Be Read Again

On Princes Street in Edinburgh stands the world's biggest monument to any author. Standing 200 feet high it honours Sir Walter Scott. The nearby Waverley Railway Station is named for one of his novels but despite such public prominence regrettably too few people now read his novels and poetry.

He was dubbed 'the Great Unknown' for much of his literary life because he wanted his authorship to remain anonymous for reasons to do with his work in the legal profession. Such was the originality and power of his writing the great Waverley Novels, however, that he changed the face of English literature. Then having already created a new style of poetry, he abandoned it because he recognised that the quality of newcomer Lord Byron's verse was better. He then invented the historic novel genre. Scott was astonishingly prolific as an author. In addition to handwriting 27 novels in 18 years (Charles Dickens wrote 16 novels in 34 years), Scott penned numerous major works of non-fiction. The novels sold like hot

cakes. Readers clamoured for more and Scott obliged. No one had a more profound effect on English literature than Scott.

He was lionised throughout Europe, North America and Russia. Until well into the twentieth century his works outsold all other books except The Bible. He inspired Honore Balzac, Lord Byron, James Fenimore Cooper, Alexander Dumas, Washington Irving, and Leo Tolstoy, but James Joyce, Mark Twain and Emile Zola despised his work.

Jane Austen wrote famously: "Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones. It is not fair. He has fame and profit enough as a poet, and should not be taking the bread out of the mouths of other people. I do not like him, and do not mean to like *Waverley* if I can help it, but I fear I must."

Now, sadly and unjustly, *the Great Unknown* has become



# The Great Unknown Should Be Read Again (cont)

the Great Unread. His works used to feature in English literature studies at all Scottish schools and most in England and Wales, but his flame began to dim after the Second World War and is barely a flicker. One reason is that Scott's novels are long and intensely descriptive, which few readers are willing to tackle, and the plots excite equally few people because they are not to modern tastes.

Scott is a divisive figure in his native land. He is loved or loathed. Those like myself who love him delight in the beauty of his prose and his superb creation of many memorable characters. Irish author Maria Edgeworth said that the writing in *Waverley* showed the skill of Shakespeare, Mary Shelley thought Scott was unsurpassed except by Shakespeare, and the renowned modern author V.S. Pritchett said Scott was the Shakespeare of prose.

Many Scots blame Sir Walter for originating an imbalance in how the country is seen in the modern world. Those who hate him tend to criticise the astonishing effect he had in giving the nation a lasting identity as the country of tartan and bagpipes instead of as a forward looking society. They blame his novels for turning Scotland's image into just warring history and clans.

His critics often dismiss his literature as irrelevant, with nothing to say to readers today. Scott's work can be reasonably criticised on several counts but irrelevancy is surely not one of them. In *Waverley*, his first novel, with its apt subtitle 'Tis sixty years since, Scott was demonstrating that while it was right for Scotland to respect and remember the conflicts of the past [the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion] it was vital to look to the future and build a new order in society. People in the Balkans, Ukraine, North Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan are wrestling with violent, traumatic and transitional circumstances today. Scott pioneered the analysis of changing societies in his fiction 200 years ago.

All with interest in or links to Scotland, all who love literature who have never read a Scott novel should put right that oversight. Readers new to the *Waverley* Novels should be prepared to engage in focussed concentration. Buy inexpensive softback editions. Skip until later the introductions and prefaces Scott wrote. Some readers might find it helpful firstly to skim the text and then return for a detailed read. You will find long sentences containing several phrases and sub-divisions, but if you appreciate beautiful language you cannot but admire Scott's skill and dexterity.

His stories take time to develop, but along the way he builds a huge variety of fascinating, memorable characters in great

detail. He has been criticised for his female characters being shallow, but the leading women in *Waverley*, *The Heart of Midlothian* and several other novels are, in my view, great and deeply emotional creations. Scott's portrayal of Mary, Queen of Scots, in *The Abbot* is one of the most vivid in literature.

Non-Scots might be advised to leave until later the Scottish novels (*Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *The Tale of Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, and *The Heart of Midlothian* among others), because of the dialect used in some of the direct speech, although good paperback editions usually have a glossary. Do try them at some stage, though, because I think they are his greatest works. *The Heart of Midlothian* is based on a heart-rending true story, *Old Mortality* is intensely powerful, and *The Antiquary* was Scott's own favourite of his novels.

Scott's attention to detail is essential to the structure of his stories but fear not, there are chapters of swashbuckling action and dramatic incident written with spectacular artistry. Start with the wonderful *Ivanhoe*, set in the medieval England of King John and good King Richard the Lionheart. The tale became the most successful film adaptation of all Scott's novels, starring with Elizabeth Taylor and Robert Taylor. I live in the city of York which features regularly in *Ivanhoe*. Many of the places Scott describes are still part of the city today.

I suggest you might then try another of his renowned English historical novels, *Kenilworth*, set in the world of Queen Elizabeth I and dealing with the deeply tragic real drama of the death of Amy Robsart.

In Britain most of the larger bookshops in the cities will stock a few Scott novels in paperback. In second-hand bookshops you usually find ordinary editions of Scott's books in dusty corners, untouched for years. All his better known titles are still in print in good quality, inexpensive softback editions, Oxford University Press World's Classics and Penguin imprints being excellent. His works are easily available online.

The magnificent *Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels* published by Edinburgh University Press is expensive and specialised, academics having laboured for decades to present for the first time Scott's original words instead of



MacDougall

## The Great Unknown Should Be Read Again (cont)

the greatly changed texts printed even in his lifetime because of the complicated system of production he insisted on in order to preserve his anonymity. I have a complete set, bought volume by volume over 20 years as each was published until the final one of the series was issued a couple of years ago, sitting proudly and beautifully on my shelves.

There are two recently published books about Scott which are excellent insights into Scott and his world. I thoroughly recommend "*Scott-land: The man who invented a nation*" by Stuart Kelly, published by Polygon in 2010; ISBN 978 1 84697 107 5. This is an easily digestible, fasci-

natingly informative study of Scott's literature and huge global influence.

Another excellent study is "*The Edinburgh Companion to Sir Walter Scott*", edited by Fiona Robertson, published by Edinburgh University Press in 2012 in hardback, paperback, PDF and Amazon eBook. This 190-page volume consists of twelve essays by different specialists on various aspects of Scott's life and works. If you enjoy literature please take time to appreciate, and hopefully enjoy, the greatest of English prose.

—By Hugh MacDougall, York, England

## Sir Walter and the Macdougals

Perhaps Scott's links with the Clan MacDowall and with Clan MacDougall might stimulate you to read him. Sir Walter Scott came from the Borders in the south of Scotland and had ancestral blood ties with the Macdougall of Makerstoun family in Roxburghshire, a clan MacDowall family. This important landed family descended from the Macdowalls of Galloway. Among the many heraldic shields displayed in Abbotsford, Scott's literary shrine of a home, is one for the Makerstoun lairds.

The Macdougals of Makerstoun were descended from the Macdowalls of Galloway but by scribal spelling the Makerstoun family name became Macdougall and Scott



**The Scott Memorial at Edinburgh**

was very proud of this heritage. The full story of the origins and history of the Makerstoun family is dealt with in detail in the book *The MacDowalls*, by Fergus D.H. MacDowall and William L MacDougall, which is available to purchase through Lulu.com, via the Clan MacDougall Society of North America website.

Scott also identified with the greatness of the

ancient clan MacDougall of Lorn and its Highland history. He travelled to Dunollie to get historic atmosphere for his poem 'The Lord of the Isles' in which John of Lorn and the conflict with Bruce features strongly. However, because the aged 24th Chief Patrick was not in hospitable humour on that day, his wife Louisa Maxwell thought it best not to admit Scott to the house. She did enjoy conversation with him, though, walking through the grounds.



**Sir Walter Scott**

Scott wrote of the castle: "Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than the situation of Dunolly." He wrote about the family: "The story of the MacDougalls affords a very rare, if not unique instance of a family of such unlimited power and distinguished during the middle ages surviving the decay of their grandeur and flourishing in a private station."

Scott was the first President of the Celtic Society of Edinburgh among whose members were "... such legendary men as Patrick MacDougall from Lorn, eighty years of age and chief of his clan. Describing Patrick, Scott told Lord Melville that MacDougall had been 'in six battles and thirty times under fire'. With Scott as chief organizer, Patrick was then chosen to be one of the Captains of the



## Sir Walter and the Macdougals (cont)

Celtic Society Honour Guards during the popular Royal visit to Edinburgh.

There are MacDougall of Lorn modern links to Scott as well. The mother of the last two direct descendants of Sir Walter, the late Dame Jean and late Dame Patricia Maxwell-Scott, of Abbotsford, was a daughter of the MacDougall of Lunga family.

One of my abiding memories is of meeting Dame Jean by chance in the dining room at Abbotsford, Scott's home, on an afternoon visit I made fifteen or more years ago. I did not know Dame Jean personally but was aware of who she was. As soon as she saw my MacDougall kilt she told me proudly that her mother was a MacDougall of Lunga and added that if I re-

turned to Abbotsford during my stay at Melrose I was to have free admission! How charming, how gracious of her. It can pay to show you are a MacDougall!

I did, of course, return to avail myself of the opportunity to accept her kind offer and sat on a grass bank outside the house reading a Scott novel for some of the sunny afternoon of my second visit. Then I went to the public café in the grounds of Abbotsford for a cup of tea – which was served by Dame Patricia!

—By Hugh MacDougall, York, England

## Sir Water Scott on Patriotism

*Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,  
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd  
From wandering on a foreign strand!  
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;  
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;  
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
The wretch, concentr'd all in self,  
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.*



MacDowall

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