



The TARTAN

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Clan MacDougall Society of North America



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Christmas Greetings
- The Cailleach

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Christmas Message

This comes from our MacDougall Family based at Dunollie Castle, Oban, Scotland. We are amazed how much you have put into your special 60th Anniversary Celebrations of the North American clan Society this past year. I have heard of excellent team work and activities put into many Games venues around your country and especially at the Grandfather Mountain Games (which was visited by my son, Robin Hamish MacDougall enjoyably in 1995).



"The Tartan" has been, and still is such an Asset for the Clan's Heritage over these years. We, and I'm sure, many others abroad are delighted to read it now, and in the years ahead.

At Dunollie, We are working hard to make the Museum and Castle Grounds fully sustainable and we are most grateful for all the donations over the years that we have been blessed with in addition to some really expert photographs which are much appreciated.

We wish you a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a rewarding NEW YEAR for 2026.

Morag MacDougall of MacDougall

Christmas Greetings from Clan MacDowall



Merry Christmas and a happy new year to all the MacDowall and MacDougall clansfolk around the world!

Season's Greetings and a Merry Christmas to all.

J.A. Dougal Macdowall
Grandson of Clan Chief
Professor Fergus D.H. Macdowall

**The Cailleach
Yule Log Cake**



The Cailleach

Recipe by The Hebridean Baker, Coinneach MacLeod

In Gaelic mythology the Cailleach is the symbolic embodiment of the old woman of winter, the bringer of cold and darkness. Traditionally, on Christmas Eve, it was considered good luck to carve the Cailleach's face into log and gather around to witness it burn in the fire. In modern times, the celebration has evolved into a more festive occasion and the baking of the Yule log serves as a commemoration to the Cailleach. Don't forget to leave a slice out for her in thanks for her guardianship during the winter.

Serves 8	METHOD
INGREDIENTS	Preheat the oven to 160oC fan (350oF) and line a Swiss roll tin with baking parchment.
For the cake	
7 eggs, separated into yolks and whites	Separate the eggs in a bowl, whisk the eggs until thick, then add 50g (1 ¾ oz) of the sugar and continue to whisk until stiff peaks appear.
150g (5 oz.) sugar	In another bowl, whisk 100 g (3 ½ oz) of the sugar along with the egg yolks, this should take a couple of minutes to get creamy. Add the vanilla, sieve in the cocoa powder, then fold in. Fold a large spoonful of the egg whites into this mixture, then continue to fold in the rest until completely combined.
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste	
50g (1 ¾ oz.) cocoa powder	Pour the batter into the Swiss roll tin and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
For the icing	Once cooled a little, turn the cake out of the tin onto a piece of baking parchment and cover with a clean tea towel.
175g (6 ¼ oz.) dark chocolate, chopped	Now, for the icing. Break up the chocolate, add half to a bowl and place in the microwave in burst of 20 seconds until melted, then add the rest of the chocolate and stir until completely melted. Allow to cool.
250g (9 oz.) icing sugar	Sieve your icing sugar into a bowl and whisk in the butter. Add the melted butter and vanilla and whisk again until smooth. Spread a thin layer of icing over the sponge, then begin to roll the cake.
225g (8 oz.) butter	
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste	Using the baking parchment as support, roll the long side of the cake, making a swirl filled with the chocolate buttercream.
	Cut a slice off one end of the cake at an angle and one straight. Then on the side of the log, place the angled slice first then the straight slice connecting to it to create the look of a branch.
	Smother the log with icing, covering the cut-off ends and any branches. Create a wood-like texture by marking along the length of the log with a fork; be creative.
	Dust with icing sugar before serving. Remember a slice for the Cailleach!

President's Report

Season's Greetings from the Clan MacDougall Society of North America

As we enter this special season, I want to extend warm holiday wishes to each and every one of you. This December marks the close of a remarkable year — a year in which we celebrated 60 years of service to our mission. It's been an honor to preserve and present the rich heritage of Clan MacDougall and Clan MacDowall, and we couldn't do it without your continued support.

I would like to personally thank you for your generous contributions during our annual fundraising campaign in November and December. Your support plays a vital role in sustaining our work through our 2026 fiscal year and beyond. The fundraiser concludes on December 31 each year, and it truly reflects the spirit of the season — a time of giving.

Our donors provide the financial resources that keep our organization thriving, and our volunteers donate their most precious commodity - their time - to ensure we continue moving forward. Both are essential to fulfilling our mission, and I am deeply grateful.

As we celebrate the holidays, I hope your season is filled with joy, laughter, and meaningful moments, both at home and at work. Thank you for being part of CMSNA in 2025 and for helping us mark this important milestone of 60 years.

On a personal note, as I come to the end of my term as President, I want to extend heartfelt thanks to those who have served so faithfully during my nearly three-year tenure. While we have formal awards for recognition, this message is my final opportunity to say thank you — not only as President but as a fellow member who deeply appreciates your dedication and hard work. I encourage anyone reading this to consider joining our teams in whatever capacity suits your talents and interests. There is always room for more helping hands.

Our organization is driven by a committed group of 18 volunteers who serve as our Board of Directors. I extend sincere thanks to:

Board of Directors:

Anne Carine (*my successor*), Valerie McDougall-Tillie, Dana M. Chandler, Scott MacDougald, T'Shael Jones, Christopher McDowell, Diane McDowell, Gayle Crosby, Doug MacDougall, Geordan Jones Baker, Whitney Revell, Brian S. McDowell, Peter Keeley, Darleen Weisz, Malcolm MacDougall, Barry MacDougall, Lindsay Davis, and Shelly Tremblay. (Former Directors who have served with me as well: Chris MacDougall, Barry Marler, Barbara Edleman, Barbara Osgood, Brent Rich, Doug Fowler, John McDowall, & Kyle Jones ~ *my mentor*).

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President's Report (cont)

We are also deeply grateful to our **Committee Chairpersons and Games Volunteers**:

Scott MacDougald, Malcolm MacDougall, Valerie McDougall-Tillie, Kyle Jones, Travis Miller, and Dana M. Chandler.

In Canada, thank you to Barry McDougall, Valerie McDougall-Tillie (RC), and Scott MacDougald.

In the U.S., our Regional Commissioners include: Doug Fowler, Christopher McDowell, Doug MacDougall, Jon MacLucas, Darleen Weisz, and Anne Carine.

Our State Representatives deserve special mention as well:

Aaron Carine, Heather Shaw, Lester Howell, Mimi Leroy-Marler, Mark Lucas, Brad MacDougall, John & Lynn Cowan, John & Cynthia (Lowden) Dowdle, Miranda Reid, Millye MacDougall.

Thank you all for your dedication. Truly, we could not do this without you. And to those considering getting involved — we welcome you. Many hands make light work, and there's a place for everyone.



Volunteering is a gift of time — something that can never be recovered or replaced. Unlike money or possessions, time is finite, which makes every volunteer's contribution all the more meaningful. That's why we proudly offer this recognition in our holiday edition of The Tartan.

From all of us at the Clan MacDougall Society of North America, Inc., we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a joyful, prosperous New Year.

Thank you — and God bless you all.

~Misha Lowther
CMSNA President, 2023-26

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MacDougall

How I Became a Clansman of MacDougall

My story of MacDougall by Steve Sarak

When I was five, I was watching a movie on TV about warring Scottish clans. After the movie, thinking of it, I suddenly thought I wanted to be part of Clan MacDougall. I thought about that clan name I just made up, and it sounded good, it felt right, so I went to my mom and told her I wanted to be part of Clan MacDougall. She asked if I had heard that name in the show and I told her proudly: “No, I just made it up.”

Four or five times that year and the year after, I thought about being part of Clan MacDougall, and each time it still felt like something I wanted, that I needed to be part of. Then the next year, now age seven, with it still popping into my mind throughout the year, I found out that there actually was a clan called MacDougall. I was shocked! I had made up that name, and here I found that one actually existed. Well that fueled my desire more to be part of Clan MacDougall.



Growing up I was attracted to anything Scottish. I've always had an eclectic taste in music, but I've always been especially attracted to bagpipes. As a kid I ate butterscotch candy because it had the name Scotch in it. I looked forward to growing up so I could drink scotch, and I've always loved listening to a Scottish accent, who doesn't.

As I grew older, the thought of being part of Clan MacDougall kept popping into my head four or five times a year, every year. This continued for years then decades, then one of those times, when I was 64, I thought: Wait, since wanting to be part of Clan MacDougall has been so much part of my life, why not see if I could actually make it happen. I looked online and found the North American MacDougall Society. I filled out a form to be a lifetime member, and on the form, I let them know that I was not a MacDougall, but wanted to be part of the clan, and gave a quick explanation of how I had thought about it all my life.

I became a lifetime member, but found that that wasn't enough. It felt like I was missing something by not being an actual clansman. I browsed around online trying to find a way to contact the Chief of Clan MacDougall, but couldn't. Then I received a call from the president of the Society, Scott MacDougald (2017 – 2020). He read my story from the form and wanted to talk. We talked for over an hour. I asked him if there was a way of contacting the Chief and he said he would look into it. Shortly after, I received an email from someone within the Society saying that they were contacting me on behalf of Scott, and that they didn't have the Chief's contact information, but they did have contact information for Dunollie Castle.

I sent an email to Dunollie Castle and received back a reply from Gillian Campbell who was very helpful. She sent an email to the Chief with my story and I waited, hoping to hear

How I Became a Clansman (cont)

something. Over a month went by and I started to give up hope. Then I received an email from Chief Morag MacDougall. She said I was very welcome to be a friend of the MacDougalls and the clan. And that it is always good to have people interested in their activities, but she cannot change my genes if I'm not of MacDougall stock. She went on to say that they have a very old Tartan that is named "Dalriada" and that anyone can wear it, and it is strongly connected to the clan, so I may be interested in that for dress.

Needless to say, that wasn't what I had hoped for. I was hoping to become an actual clansman. I thought this over for about a month then I had an idea. I contacted The Court of the Lord Lyon, Scotland's Heraldic authority, and asked them if there was a way of becoming part of a clan, and they directed me to the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs. I asked them if there was a way I could become a clansman. They said: "The short answer is yes - nowadays belonging to a clan does not involve proving that you have ties but is much more about enthusiasm and a love of Scotland."

Now that I knew that, I did some research to see if there was a previous time that a non-clansman became a clansman and found: "Anyone who offers allegiance to a particular chief is recognized as a member of that clan or family unless the chief decides otherwise. The best-known example is that of Fraser, Lord Lovat offering a boll of meal (six bushels in Scotland, or about 140 lb.) to nearby families who pledged allegiance, and took the name Fraser as their own."

Armed with what I now knew, I contacted the Chief again, told her that I had contacted both Lord Lyon and the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, and told her what they had said. I wrote what I had found about Fraser, Lord Lovat, and told her that: in the hope of fulfilling the desire of that five-year-old boy all those years ago to become a clansmen of Clan MacDougall, I offer my allegiance to you, the Chief of Clan MacDougall, in the hopes of becoming a member of Clan MacDougall. She replied that I can now say that I'm an adopted member of Clan MacDougall and a clansman, and that I can wear the current colors, this, through my early enthusiasm and keenness to join. She also said she was interested in the Fraser example, and if ever I go to the Dunollie Clan Centre in Oban, for me to introduce myself and explain my allegiance. Then she wished me well in any clan activities I may enjoy.

That was a couple of years ago. I just went to the Scottish Fest in Costa Mesa CA for the first time and talked to Mark-David McCool who had the MacDougall Clan Tent there. He, another gentleman whose name I don't remember, and I talked for a good long time on the different official tartan patterns of Clan MacDougall. And now I'm looking around for my first kilt.

Next month I'll be 67, and four or five times a year, every year, I'm still thinking about MacDougall, but now, when I think of the clan, I'm filled with a feeling of pride and fulfilment because now I'm Steve Sarak of Clan MacDougall.



MacDowall

Book Review

On the Amazon bookseller website a few weeks ago, I came across the new booklet of 34 pages titled *Clan MacDowall* which is pictured here. Its first edition came out in June 2025 from Bagtown Clans, who publish numerous clan histories in their Bagtown Clans series The Ancient Clans of Scotland.

I hoped it would be a good booklet, and an excellent read, so I ordered a copy. I found its 34 pages easy to read with one or more factual or historical errors on almost every page - many of them serious errors. It has no identified author and I suspect it may have been created by an artificial intelligence program.

It does give credit to F.D.H. Macdowall, the Clan Chief, and to me for a handout we wrote very carefully about Clan MacDowall in 2010. They incorrectly identify the distributor of our handout as the Clan MacDowall Society, instead of The Clan MacDougall Society of North America. I wish they had paid more attention to the facts within it!

I could list many errors in this poorly researched booklet which will mislead unknowing readers. They range from misspelling the surname of the current Chief of Clan MacDowall in its Chiefs List to including a place named Baldoon in the clan heritage. However, I think this booklet may have one redeeming value – as a way to test readers' knowledge of Clan MacDowall. It should be easy for knowledgeable readers to correctly identify 25 or more errors in the text.

Here is my recommendation for this booklet:

1. Don't buy it.
2. Don't bother to read it except for amusement.
3. Don't recommend it to others.

This could have been a very helpful booklet, and I do look forward to seeing a much improved second edition someday.

Scott MacDougald
Chairman of the Heritage Committee of the CMSNA

