



Clan MacDougall Society of North America

MONTHLY NEWS



August 2015

Welcome to our monthly report of events and activities of our Society. We are always looking for information to share with our members, so if you have a birth or wedding or know of a special event, please send a photo along with relevant information to president@macdougall.org.

Ashby's Reflections

Tha am foghair air teachd agus cumar gèamachan cuthromach agus sporsail fad an ràithe seo agus thar na tìr-mòr againn. Tha mi dòchas gum bith sibh an làthair aig an fhear aca. Tha "am foghar" 'ga chleachdadh an seo mar anns an t-seann seagh - sin ri ràdh, an Lùnasdal, an t-Sultainn agus an Damhair.

Autumn has come. That is to say Autumn in the old Celtic sense of the harvest months of August, September and October. ["fogham" in Gaelic means "harvest" and "am fogham" (or "the harvest") means the Autumn season.]

Although not usually connected to the harvest, there are very significant, and enjoyable Scottish Games and Festivals being held this season, as can be seen in the Scottish Games section of this newsletter. These are being held across the continent. I hope that you have the opportunity to participate in one of the gatherings in your region and that those who are not directly hosting a tent or a table at these games will devote a little time to helping the host. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet, and exchange information with, others who are interested in the heritage of Clans MacDougall and MacDowall, and indeed of Scotland as a whole.

There are many strands in a rich heritage, as there can be threads of many colors in a tartan. One of the most distinctive threads in Scottish heritage is piping and there is a particularly strong piping tradition in the heritage of Clan MacDougall. We are including in this newsletter an excerpt from a chapter from Nancy Black's Book, From a Hollow on the Hill, that sketches this MacDougall tradition. Nancy Black is a towering figure in



Kilbride.

the Clan, known for her unique in-depth histories of some of our associated families. This excerpt notes the

In This Issue

Ashby's Reflections
The 2015 Fergus Scottish Festival
New Members
Tents at Highland Games

New Members

Cathleen Cieply
Hudson Falls, NY

Heather Shepherd
Fort Collins, CO

Tents at Highland Games

Please notify our webmaster if you've signed up to host a tent at any games. We want as accurate a Games Calendar as possible. Games listed here are found on our website. We would be pleased to receive any report on a game, with photos of course.

SEPTEMBER

5-6 - Virginia Scottish Games
Great Meadows, The Plains, VA

10-13 - Longs Peak Scottish - Irish Highland Festiva Estes Park, CO

19 - Charleston Scottish Games and Highland Gathering Charleston, SC

26 - Ligonier Highland Games
Ligonier, PA

establishment of a piping school at Kilbride, where the chiefs of Clan MacDougall have been buried for the last three or four centuries. Kilbride occupies a large place in MacDougall heritage, to which we will return at some future date.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd

Ashby

Tòmas MacCòmhghan // Thomas Ashby McCown
Ceann-suidhe // President

OCTOBER

10-11 - Seaside Highland Games
Ventura, CA

16-18 - Stone Mountain Scottish Festival and Highland Games
Stone Mountain State Park
near Atlanta, GA

24-25 - Central Virginia Celtic Festival and Highland Games
Richmond, VA

2015 Fergus Scottish Festival Chris MacDougall Reports

On Saturday, August 7th, the Clan MacDougall Society of North America was well represented at the Fergus Scottish Festival



69 Cabers Prepared for Flight

in Ontario. Considered the largest festival of its kind in Ontario, Fergus celebrated its 70th festival August 7-9 with a three day event that offered a little bit of everything. A special item was the mass caber toss, with 69 simultaneous successful throws -- a new world record!

Chris MacDougall, Tami del Carmena, Val McDougall and her son



Richard all helped to make the booth, representing both MacDougalls and MacDowalls, look spectacular. Many people stopped to learn of their heritage, with many taking applications. To enhance the atmosphere of the event, Chris tried a new pole on which to carry the MacDougall flag in this year's opening ceremonies -- a viking spear.

Hope to see you there next year!

Contact Us

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Membership Year

Membership Dues are on a calendar year basis ending on 31 December. Dues may be paid, or prepaid, online for one or more calendar years through Paypal at:

<http://macdougall.org/wp/membership-information/>

Submissions

Persons wishing to submit articles, or photos, of interest to our newsletters may contact:

The Editor of The Tartan at:
editor@macdougall.org
or

The Editor of the Monthly Newsletter at
president@macdougall.org

Your Contact Information

Please report your email, telephone, or

excerpted from
From a Hollow on the Hill
by
Nancy Black
(with permission of the author)

Gay pipes of the sticks smooth
And heads of bone,
Hard wood of Jamaica growth.
The best there were grown;
Lathe-turned, and round, and straight,
Ivory-ringed,
Mouthpiece, chanter, all ornate,
With sweet sound winged.

Donnacha Bàn - translation

Bagpipes are a primitive instrument consisting of a bag which receives the air and the pipes which give it out. They were known to the ancient Greeks, to Poles and Italians in early years. The English and the Irish developed elegant instruments but it took the Scots, some time before 1500, to evolve the great Highland, or military, bagpipe whose wild scream has lead armies into battle, rallied breaking ranks and sung above victorious warriors in piobaireachd. So effective were the great pipes that after Culloden an act of Parliament declared the bagpipe "an instrument of war" and, to make assurance doubly sure, also eliminated the hereditary office of piper!

From very early times MacDougalls were skilled woodturners. Thus they could, and did, make their own pipes. By the beginning of the 16th century there appears to have been more than one McDougall family of pipers on the Dundellie estates, where they were given rent free houses, and a piping school was maintained.

The MacDougall Piping School at Kilbride was founded by Alastair Mòr (1635-1709) who is said to have composed the tune "Day of Dunaverty". It was continued even after 1745 by his son and his great grandson. This family was to become one of the foremost bagpipe makers that ever existed in Scotland. In this present day MacDougall pipes are sought after by those pipers who can afford to pay the price demanded.

Alasdair Mòr is the first piper we have on record as being in the position of hereditary piper at Dundellie, a position he held between 1635 and 1709. There appears to be no knowledge of who taught Alasdair and, similarly as the family progressed through the years, who taught the rest of them. I think it's feasible to presume it was on a father to son basis. Ronald Bàn was the son of Alasdair, and he eventually took over the office of piper from his father, presumably in 1709. His son Rachnuill Bhàn (Ronald) continued the hereditary line and was with Ian Ciar at the battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715.

MONTH/YEAR

Our Scholarship Program supports one of the key purposes of our Society. Access our website for the procedures for applying for a scholarship. Donations to our Scholarship Fund help defray the costs, are accepted year-round and are greatly appreciated by the Society and recipients. The Society is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions to its endeavors may be tax deductible in the U.S.