



THE GREEN BANNER

NEWSLETTER

Clan Macpherson Association Canadian Branch

Vol. 8 Number 2

July 2014

NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

By Chantal McPherson, Registrar



A warm welcome to our new annual members:

Robert T. Macpherson of Cochrane, Alberta. Bob is a distant cousin of life member Jean Whitten.

Beverly Ann McPherson-Letford and her husband, Duart Munro Letford, of Port Colborne, ON. Beverly & Duart will be attending the Gathering in Scotland this August, so we look forward to seeing photos and hearing all about your journey.

Presently, there are 13 annual members who are overdue. If you have not yet renewed, I have attached a form to this mailing for your convenience. If you are not sure of the status of your membership, please contact me. Remember, it's never too late to renew your annual memberships, transfer to a life membership or sign up a family member.

To all of you, fellow clansmen and women, have a safe summer and I look forward to attending some of the highland games in Ontario....perhaps I will see you there (See Games Schedule in this issue), or at the Canadian Gathering in Ottawa! In September.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Hip, hip, hooray summer has arrived at long last (our garden tidy up, annual planting and first BBQ all happened later than usual) and I hope that you are all enjoying some outdoor time after our severe winter.

Activity in the Branch slows down over the winter season but I am pleased to report that judging by the email traffic our officers and members are starting to come out of hibernation looking forward to the various highland games and gatherings. Georgetown (I was there) & Coburg will have taken place by the time you read this newsletter and some may have visited Bob & Marlene Archibald at the clan tent. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for the work they do on our behalf at the various highland games.

I would also extend a warm welcome to our new members this year and look forward to meeting them at one of our Branch activities.

Irene and I are looking forward to our trip to Scotland in August to participate in the Association Gathering and I am pleased and proud to report that there will be 15 Canadian Branch members in attendance (Bob & Marlene Archibald, Vice Chair Jacqueline & daughter Jamie, Ken Gillis (our treasurer) and wife Ella, Ed Smith, plus new members Robin Blencoe & wife Victoria MacPherson Blencoe plus Duart Munro Letford & wife Beverly McPherson Letford, and last but not least our USA dual members Stuart MacPherson (New Hampshire) & Donna McPherson Rucks (Chicago).

I know of at least 3 members that have sponsored Jacqueline and I for participating in this years Creag Dhubh Hill Run (during the Badenoch Gathering), our thanks to them. It is not too late if you can spare a few \$s, proceeds will be donated on behalf of the Branch to the museum.

The highlight of our year is always the Annual Canadian Branch Gathering and Jacqueline has done an excellent job in organizing our 65th event. I look forward to welcoming many members and visitors to Ottawa in September. Details and Registration Form are available on the Branch Website pages. I will not steal any of Jacqueline's thunder as she has organized a marvellous (not to be missed) program of events.

Irene joins me in sending best wishes to all branch members and your families.

Yours Aye, Bill Macpherson, Mississauga

TREASURER'S CORNER

By Ken Gillis Honorary Treasurer



The Clan Association is in good shape financially as of the end of May. We have just over \$9,400 in our current account and a little over \$11,000 in our Life Membership Fund.

I will be remitting our membership fees to Clan Macpherson Association in Scotland in June which will reduce our current account balance to around \$8,750. Our paid annual memberships are three more than last year at this time. This is very encouraging as we are just beginning the highland games season.

I will be paying for a much needed replacement tent for use at the highland games and I am not expecting any large expenses until our annual gathering. The deposit for our gathering in Ottawa has been paid and the event is typically self supporting.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you in Ottawa in September.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Editor wishes to thank the following for their excellent contributions to the July issue: Robert J Archibald, Ken Gillis Bill Macpherson (Mississauga), Helen Macpherson Potts, John Macpherson (Montrose Scotland), Chantal McPherson, Donna McPherson-Rucks (USA) Jacqueline Murdoch, Father Ewen A Macpherson (UK) Ewen R Macpherson (Scotland) Stuart H MacPherson (USA) Jennifer Collins (UK)

THE GREEN BANNER

Published three to four times each year to bring news to the members of the Canadian Branch of the Clan Macpherson Association.

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65TH CANADIAN GATHERING SEP.19-21, 2014 IN OTTAWA

By Jacqueline Murdoch



This year is the celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Gathering for the Clan Macpherson Association in Canada. We have a fantastic line up of events and activities planned for you! The Westin Hotel is where the fun will be, but don't wait too long to book! Reservations are going fast at our fantastic room rate!

The weekend begins with a Ceilidh on Friday night in the Daly Restaurant featuring a wonderful buffet dinner, dances, musical performances by Donna McPherson on piano and a special guest fiddler who actually works at the hotel. The real treat will be the step back in history: a historical perspective of the Canadian Branch by our own Gordon Macpherson. This is not to be missed. We have a few other surprises up our sleeve but we can't let the cat out of the bag quite yet!

Saturday afternoon includes either a tour of the Canadian Parliament or a guided tour of the Canadian War Museum, as you choose. If that isn't quite what you want, there is shopping in ByWard Market and the Rideau Centre (steps away from the hotel), there are cruises, children's activities, and the city will be pumped with activities in preparation for the Canadian Army 1/2 Marathon on Sunday. This will be the safest time to ever be in our Nation's Capital!

Saturday evening starts with a cocktail reception at 5:30pm followed by our 65th Anniversary Formal Highland Dinner at 6:30pm. The Chefs at the Westin have prepared a special Scottish dinner that will delight all appetites. Bring lots of money because our raffle is never topped. And if that isn't enough, we will have dancing and more entertainment after dinner.

If you are so inclined, get out of bed early and support the Canadian Armed Forces as they run the annual Army 1/2 Marathon and cheer on our own vice-Chairman who will be running this race for the first time. Or sleep off the scotch and wine in the luxury of the Westin Hotel's amazing accommodations. Repent your over-indulging at church services at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, the oldest church in Ottawa, at 11:00am,.

The registration form with all of the details is included with this mailing. Don't delay registering and book the hotel now!

We can't wait to see you there!

Call the Westin at 1-800-937-8461 and reserve using "Clan Macpherson" block

For online bookings use this link:

<http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1403276028&key=292DDED6>

SOME THOUGHTS

By Donna "Dee" McPherson Rucks

This collection of thoughts is designed to lead you to Scotland and the Gathering in 2014. After being among the members of Clan Macpherson in Newtonmore and Kingussie last year, I felt a need to share my memories of this beautiful land and lovely people. Please read, savour, and then come join me. I am at the ready to help you plan your journey.

Scotland Is -

Not just the sheep on the hills,
Not just a whisky by the warm peat fire,
Not just men in kilts,
Not just lush flower gardens,
Not just golf,
Not just the sticky toffee pudding,
Not just the dramatic and ever-changing landscape,
Not just white clouds against the darkened skies,
Not just the falcon in flight,
Not just the lone piper on the hill,
Not just the heavy brogue (talk to me some more),
Not just the rain, the misty rain, bucketing,
Not just the lay-bys, and the winding, twisting roads,
Not just the mossy stones, under the ancient trees,
Not just haggis and black pudding,
Not just pheasants and grouse,
Not just driving on the left, and round the roundabouts,
Not just the Highland lass dancing to the fiddler's bow,
Not just the steep stone steps, up the ruined towers,
Not just the ancient castles and cathedrals.

Not just this, but more!

It's the magic of the moment as the mist starts moving in.
It's the purple heather beckoning from the distant hills beyond.
It's the easy understanding you have with one who has been there, really been there.
It's the music of the fiddlers and the mood it sets upon you.
It's the darkening of the skies bringing the buckets of rain.
It's the moment the bald eagle lands on your gloved arm during the falconry lesson.
It's the clouds gathering over the mountains across the loch, still daylight at eleven pm.
It's the peacock on the gate post, about to dive into your car.
It's the open arms and happy smile of a fellow Clansman welcoming you home.
It's the chaos on the dance floor as we all get up to Strip the Willow.
It's the richness in our voices and the soulful look in our eyes as we cross arms, hold hands in a circle, and sing Auld Lang Syne.
It's the ache in your heart and the catch in your voice when you try to explain the land and the people and how you desperately must return soon and stay longer next time.

by Dee McPherson 2014

STUART MACPHERSON OFFICIATES

Stuart who is the busy membership Chair for the US Branch and an active life member of the Canadian Branch has been a busy uncle the last while officiating at two marriages of family members.



On May 17, 2014 Stuart H. MacPherson, proud uncle (centre) of the groom, performed the handfasting ceremony at the wedding of nephew Stephen Hudson to Jillian Huyck in Milwaukee, WI. Stephen recently completed his PHD in Molecular Genetics and Jillian is an MD finishing up her residency at a local hospital.



Stuart H. MacPherson, led his niece Mariah Sinclair to her groom Nick Perrault-Dumas. The wedding took place on March 16 in Jackson NH. Nick, an airman, left shortly after the ceremony to serve a mission in Afghanistan. He is due to return before the end of the year.

YOUR BRANCH NEEDS YOU

If you reside in New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, or BC, the Branch needs you as a Provincial Councillor.

In order to grow our Branch and make Clan Macpherson Association a truly national organization, we need a presence in each province where we have members,

The Provincial Councillor advises the Chairman on means to increase our membership and presence in the province in which he or she resides. The amount of work required will depend on the time available to the individual Councillor and the assistance they can obtain from local members.

This is an important executive level position, open to all members old or brand new. Please seriously consider joining Council. Contact Bill Macpherson at bill.macpherson@rogers.com

CMA CHAIRMAN REPORT

By John Macpherson of Montrose



Cousins All,

It is hard to believe that June is upon us already. This year there will be a lot of things happening in the coming months. Our Secretary, Iris, has been very busy with bookings for the August Gathering. Things were very brisk for a while and I can say with certainty that we are fully booked for the Ball & Ceilidh. The Duke of Gordon management have been helpful. With our organisation we should get everyone fitted in.

Iris & I had the pleasure of attending the remembrance service at Culloden battlefield. Later we went to the inaugural lunch of the newly formed Association of Highland Clans and Societies in the Drumossie Hotel nearby. This was attended by over 50 representatives and in addition to the meal we heard talks on the future plans of this new association which should enable participating Clans to keep up to date with what is happening all over Scotland.



Our Clan has a stand at the Bannockburn 700th Anniversary weekend on 28th & 29th June where at least 40 other Clans are attending and the Scottish Branch will be in attendance. There will be a lot of sideshows of interest including historic battle re-enactments, bread making, even sword making and, if the weather is kind it will be a great experience.

On the 19th July the Scottish Branch will have a stand in the Clan Village, Inverness. Many foreign visitors attend these games and my Kith & Kin book is always helpful when answering many of the queries we get regarding possible links to Macphersons or indeed any other Scottish Clan.

Our own Clan gathering in August will have the usual events, Chief's Reception, Dinner & Ball, AGM, March, Supper & Ceilidh. Sunday has the usual Church Service, Picnic and Afternoon tea at Craig Dhu House thanks to Angus & Valerie for their kindness. Monday has the walk in morning organised by John & Gertie Barton and this year we have a change with a WW1 exhibition at the museum on Monday afternoon. This has been expertly arranged by Ewen (Talla-Shee) and the ceremony will begin with a wreath-laying by Cluny at New-tonmore War memorial, followed by the official opening at the Museum. Over 70 Clansmen & guests have opted to attend and refreshments will be provided. Although the Museum "at home" will not take place this year it will be open as usual for all visitors.

I am looking forward to meeting members from Canada in August and of course again when we visit Ottawa in September.

ABQ IN 2014



The US Branch invites Canadian Branch members to join us at our 2014 Gathering in Albuquerque, NM, Sept 26-28, 2014. The Gathering will be held at the Hotel Albuquerque www.hotelabq.com situated in the heart of Old Town Albuquerque, less than 10 minutes from the International Airport. Rooms are priced for CMA at a reasonable \$99.

While you are in town, there is no shortage of ways to discover the many different facets of the New Mexico culture and heritage. Visiting one of our many museums or cultural centers will bring the past alive and offer insight into our traditions. You can take excursions to see ancient cliff dwellings or petroglyphs that introduce you to millennia of history. New Mexico's lands are full of discoveries: fascinating cultures, extraordinary landscapes, intriguing ruins, recreational opportunities, and arts and crafts produced by people proud of their traditions. Visit www.itsatrip.org to find information on museums, golf, shopping, and other activities.

Please call the hotel directly at 505-222-8743 and mention that you are with Clan Macpherson to make your room reservations and receive our special rate



Lobby Hotel Albuquerque

Written copy supplied by Jan Smith of the US Branch. Photos taken from www.itsatrip.org (ed)

DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Please submit your notes and captioned photos before
August 15, 2014.

TAKING ON SCOTLAND

By Donna McPherson Rucks



Donna McPherson Rucks and her cousin, Jill Fields, were on the way to the 2012 Macpherson Gathering in Badenoch. Here are two true stories (there are more) about their adventures, (or misadventures), in Scotland. There was no fear in these two Macphersons! Read on and enjoy their trip!

“Peacock, Peacock, Peacock!”

Jill was driving, and we were on our way to the Glenlivet Estate. The countryside, overgrown with brush, trees, fences, and fence posts, seemed peaceful with late afternoon sun dappling the leaves in the forest. I was minding my own business in the passenger side of the car, reading a map, figuring out our next turn. Suddenly, Jill shouted, “Peacock, Peacock, Peacock!” I dropped my map, looked up, turned my attention to the side of the road next to our car, and there was this gorgeous brilliant peacock standing on the fencepost, in full sleek mode, making ready to dive straight into our car! I took a quick look at Jill, who was ghost-white, gripping the steering wheel, ready for the



Donna's Peacock getting ready to strike

impact.

In an instant, our entire Scottish adventure could have come to a halt. We were pretty sure they'd put us in jail for running over a peacock! Or for causing a 4-car pileup by putting on the brakes with no warning to the cars behind us! Explain that one to the police officer, Jill!

The peacock felt our fear, looked death in the eye, thought better of it, jumped down off the fence, and literally ran alongside the car for some yards, next to me, between the car and the fencerow. I could have touched him if I'd had presence of mind to roll down the window and put my hand out there. After a bit of a run, there was a break in the underbrush, he turned left, and was gone into the forest.

Jill and I looked at each other, and literally said, “Breathe... breathe...” to calm down, and the next words were, “This is one for the Green Banner!”

“Donna And The Big, Black Dog”

Same day, a half hour later . . . we had turned north to head to Glenlivet and our Bed and Breakfast nearby. We knew we would be slightly directionally challenged, because we couldn't find it on the GPS. Being Missouri girls, we were not afraid to ask for directions. Our first bet was to pull into the parking lot at Glenlivet, and ask someone who worked there . . . nope, Glenlivet was closed and the parking lot was empty! As Navigator, the next plan fell to me to figure out what to do, where to go. I looked up, I looked around . . . and . . . a stone's throw from the Glenlivet Estate was the sign for Minmore House Hotel! I knew this hotel! I had had reservations there 7 years earlier! I knew they would be glad to see me and give directions to our nearby Bed and Breakfast!

We pulled into the courtyard, and Jill parked the car at the front of the house. There was the front door, as I had remembered it. She said that she would stay in the car, and wait for me to return after asking for directions to our ‘Old Manse of Craggan B&B’.

Feeling very sure of myself (after all, we had just survived the peacock-incident), I walked to the front door, rang the bell, heard some voices and a dog barking, and opened the door. I stepped into the room, waiting for the host to enter. He opened the door at the far end of the room, said “Hello, can I help you?” and then, it happened. The **Big Black Dog** came bounding through the door, racing across the room, straight for me! He stood up on his hind legs, plopped his front paws on my shoulders, and walked me backwards, falling out that door into the courtyard, straightaway onto the hood of Jill's car. She was shrieking in horror! I was laughing so hard at the absurdity of it, and the **Big Black Dog** was lick-lick-licking my face!

The owner called the dog off. I stood myself up with as much dignity as I could muster, and greeted him properly. “Hello, I'm Donna McPherson, and this is Jill, my cousin, and we are just stopping in to ask directions to our ‘Old Manse of Craggan B&B.’ I've had reservations before at your lovely house, and thought you might be able to help us!”

To this, he laughed mightily and said, “Sure, I'll give you directions to your B&B. By the way, we've been closed as a hotel for four years, and we are now a private residence. Our dog must have thought you were one of the kids coming home!”

There may be more of the adventures of Donna and Jill in upcoming issues of GB. Let me know how much you enjoyed these two stories (ed.).

CLAN MACPHERSON MUSEUM CREAG DHUBH HILL RACE FUND-RAISING EVENT

By Jacqueline Murdoch

On Saturday, 2 August 2014 at 3:15 PM the gun will sound at The Eilan in Newtonmore, Scotland, and the Canadian Branch Chairman and Vice Chairman will be running the Creag Dhubh Hill Race to raise funds for the Clan Macpherson Museum. It is a Canadian Branch tradition to raise money for a variety of things that have been much needed by the Museum. This year we hope to raise \$1,000. It is a grand amount, and we are counting on you to contribute by sponsoring one or both of us. The various levels of sponsorship are shown below.

The race begins with a full lap of the games field before heading towards the hill via an obstacle course of two barriers, a lumpy field full of thistles, two more fences, a river, some rounded boulders, a very steep bank, another fence right next to a crash barrier, across a road, and then racers can finally start running properly.

The race proper after the initial scramble starts with a wide gravel track leading towards the birch woods of Coille na Creige Duibhe, where a narrow path leads through grass, and rising to a narrower rockier trail through heather to the fine perch summit of An Torr.

The descent is fast and exciting down heather initially and then back down the narrow trail with little chance of overtaking until lower down. Then after the road crossing, the same crazy obstacle course of 5 fences plus a river to cross, before a final lap of the games field to finish.



Last year, 84 brave men and women participated with finishing times ranging between 0:29:34 and 1:07:47

The distance Bill and Jacqueline will run is 5.6km (3.5 mi), with an ascent of 370m (1,214 ft).

SPONSOR BILL AND JACQUELINE NOW

There are only a few short weeks until the race

HEATHER	up to \$25
SGIAN DHUBH	\$26 to \$50
CLAYMORE	\$51 to \$75
WILDCAT	more than \$75

Mail your cheque to

Ken Gillis, Treasurer
698 Castleguard Cresc.,
Burlington ON, L7N 2W6

Note: As at June 12 three WILDCATS had signed up

NOVA SCOTIA AFTER CULLODEN

By Fr Ewan A. MacPherson

The stranger wind sings other music here
And, when I am exhausted, I shall sleep
With pictures of the past turned upside down
In dreams that linger lonely when I wake.
There are no red deer here; only the moose
And rocks, which we knew for a thousand years,
The Spey at Laggan and the heather hills;
The Kirk at Newtonmore, where Cluny went
To pray his anguish out when all was lost.
All we have now, although this land is fine
With lakes of emerald and stands of birch;
The deep, black earth is longing for the plough
And love, like crocus waiting in the snow,
Gives just a hint of what it shall become.

All we have now, to tell of what we lost,
The lilting drone of pipes and violins
And memories faded cloth stained by the sea,
Which brought us hope and heartache to this place,
Caught in a gale; came out from Ullapool.
We turn the earth, we shape the stones we took
To build new houses in the Highland way.
There is such freedom here. The northern light
So soft and bright; it is a compline prayer.
We bury ancient hates. We learn to live,
Trusting the land, which has so much to give.

Ewan A. MacPherson

25th March 2014.

Annunciation of Our Lady

VISIT TO CLAN MUSEUM

Jennifer Collins, daughter of Life Member Ron Collins of Oakville, granddaughter of Life Member Audrey Collins of Guelph, and great granddaughter of the late Hume Macpherson, former Chairman of the Canadian Branch, now lives in the UK. Jenn visited the Clan Museum in May and sent us this photo.



Jenn outside of the Clan Museum in Newtonmore

CLAN MUSEUM D DAY DISPLAY

When Macpherson sends word from Scotland that a special display was mounted in the museum for D Day June 6 on the 70th anniversary of that momentous battle. This display will form part of the WW II display for the rest of this year. It is important to note that three Macphersons lost their lives in that operation – all of them Canadian.

The wall chart below was produced by Ewen to mark the occasion:

CANADA						
Clan Macpherson Association						
THE NORMANDY LANDINGS - JUNE 1944						
NAME	RANK	RESIDENCE	DATE OF DEATH	AGE	REGIMENT/SERVICE	CEMETERY/MEMORIAL
George Roderick MacPherson	Private		07/06/1944		North Nova Scotia Highlanders, R.C.I.C.	Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, Reviere, France
Malcolm Allen MacPherson	Private	Stamford Centre, Ontario	06/06/1944	23	1st Canadian Parachute Regiment	Ranville War Cemetery, France
Neil James MacPherson	Private	Vancouver, British Columbia	06/06/1944	21	Canadian Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C.	Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, Reviere, France

Left: Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery. Many buried here were men of the 3rd Canadian Division who died either on 6 June or during the early days of the advance towards Caen.

Right: Ranville War Cemetery. Ranville was the first village to be liberated in France when the bridge over the Caen Canal was captured intact in the early hours of 6 June by troops of the 6th Airborne Division, who landed by parachute and glider.

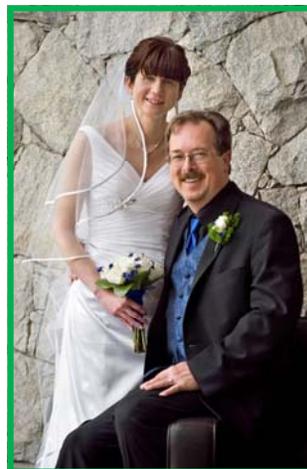
Images courtesy of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website

Of additional interest, Col Rivers-Macpherson, an early former Chair of the Canadian Branch who served in WW II with distinction as a senior ordnance and anti-aircraft officer, invented, on a request by Field Marshal Montgomery, a battle jerkin for the commandos landing in Normandy on D Day. The garment was based upon an idea for a jacket to carry soldier's equipment instead of having to have an awkward set of webbing to perform this job. The jacket itself is modelled upon the type used by poachers and game keepers in Scotland before WWII. A photo of a reproduction appears at the left.



OUR FAIRY TALE STORY

By Helen Macpherson Potts



Once upon a time, back on the Saturday of the Easter long week-end of 1988, we decided to just be friends. After 26 years of separation we reunited in the fall of 2012 and are pleased to announce that on the Saturday of the Easter long week-end (April 19) of 2014 we got married! The wedding was attended by mutual friends, many of whom who knew us back in the late 80's and one of them shouted out "it's about

time!" when the Pastor declared us husband & wife. We had a beach themed wedding as Brian collects sand from beaches around the world and our first date 28 years ago was a walk along Centennial Beach in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. After the wedding we went on a glorious 7 day Eastern Caribbean cruise for our honeymoon, walking on as many beaches as possible! Although there was not a Scottish theme to our wedding, my husband insisted on donning his Macpherson hunting tie (purchased by me from the Macpherson Museum at the Clan Gathering last August!) and having a photo taken of him and my dad in their Scottish ties.



HIGHLAND GAMES 2014

By Robert J Archibald



As forecast in the last issue of the Green Banner, our first games appearance was at Georgetown on Saturday June 14th, then we were at Cobourg on June 21st.

Marlene and I will be present at The Highlands of Durham games in Uxbridge on July 26th and the Fergus Scottish Festival on August 9th. We look forward to seeing members of CMA at these two events – maybe to help with staffing the tent?

We will not be attending Maxville or Montreal this year, but Peter Fish, a member of the US Branch who has supported our Branch at Maxville for many years, has stepped forward to represent us. If anyone in the Montreal area is interested in representing us there, I can provide the necessary material. You only have to contact me ASAP at rarchiba@sympatico.ca

There will a report with more details on our games activities this summer in the September issue