



The Clishmaclaver



Newsletter of the Clan Donnachaidh Society, UpperMidwest
FEBRUARY 2011 CLISHMACLAVER

CLAN CENTRE IN BRUAR FALLS TAKES MAJOR HIT FROM OLD MAN WINTER

Although the Northern Hemisphere in the U.S. and Canada has been hit by one of the most severe Winters in many years, Scotland and our Clan Centre in the Bruar/Pitlochry area suffered severe storm hardship. Christy Duncan Lange, International Vice Chairperson, has relayed a chilling report from retired, but still working part time, Clan Secretary Ginnie Wilkie.

Compressing Ginnie's two page Diary of the events highlights what happens, when the wrath of the largest snow storm recorded in modern times, strikes before Christmas! In fact, snow started November 26th and continued until Dec. 3rd, when Ginnie braved a trip from her home in Pitlochry to Bruar by public bus. The Centre's boiler was out! She returned on another bus trip on Monday, Dec. 6th, but with no heat, she took work home to do.

When she returned on Friday the 10th, an attempt was made to put the boiler back on, however, the situation turned into a disaster. A pipe burst in one of the radiators and flooded the floor of the Museum—the water was finally shut off and the search for a plumber began.

The next week, the plumber made it by bus for the repair job. That accomplished, there was still no let up from the cold and as the next week began an attempt was made to close down all the water pipes. Another disaster—the water pipe broke with the attempt and another flooding of the shop and museum. With help from the Fire Brigade and neighbors, the outside shut off was located, and a T-bar to shut it off. The Fire Brigade came with sirens sounding and checked out the electric service to see that all was okay. Happy to have made it to Christmas, managed to make it through to New Year's Eve, and Ginnie finished up some overdue correspondence.

Now that January is here, Ginnie and Cath, the new Shop Manager and Membership Secretary, have tried to get organized after the two floodings. Carpet cleaners have been sent in by the Insurance carriers, and they have been promised a new boiler.

Ginnie—we appreciate your service and hope our membership can do something to bring the Museum and Clan Centre back to more usefulness. Although the report from the Membership earlier this year was that "reduced International dues" would be welcome and increase International dues payments, we have a further reason the help out the Bruar facility.

In addition to personal contribution, a specific "Storm assistance" donation from the Branch Treasury would be appreciated. Membership dues to the Clan Centre can be made through the clan society's website: www.donnachaidh.com In addition, new information, "Instructions for submitting subscriptions/membership dues to the Clan Membership Secretary in Scotland" has been added to the website which should answer all questions about sending the yearly dues to Scotland.

Le deach dhurachd, (with best wishes)

Christy Duncan Lange, International Vice Chairperson, Clan Donnachaidh Society

PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION

To: Clan Donnachaidh please charge my donation of \$ _____ (U.S. Dollars) on my _____ Card
Card Number _____ Expire Date _____

Three Digit Security Code on reverse side of the card _____

Signature: _____

My name and address (as it appears on the card)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

If you send by e-mail: manager@clandonna.wanadoo.co.uk ;
U.S. Mail, Ms. Catherine McCartney, Manager, Clan Donnachaidh Centre,
Bruar, Pitlochry, Perthshire PH18 5TW, Scotland, U.K.

Note: After processing, all details of the transaction are shredded.

President's Message

Happy Imbolc!

That signals the winter is half over and the Council is preparing to meet again to outline the events to be covered for the year. Some changes, as usual:

First, the Fort Wayne Games are cancelled this year.

Second, the Chicago Games, sponsored by the Illinois St. Andrew Society, are moving to their new venue (hurray!).

Third, Minnesota is offering an indoor option for Clan space, as well as considering moving the date next year.

New tents for use at the Games are in the offing. Lots of details to plan and people to help out.

And that's what the Clan and SDSUM are all about. People related by temperament, interest, and bloodlines coming together to focus on the task at hand and accomplish something important. Note that I don't call it a job, as it is more fun than most people's jobs are. It's an opportunity to learn and share and meet and socialize and all the other great activities we do when gathering. We share thoughts, jokes, opinions, hospitality, as well as food.

I want to encourage everyone to come join the fun this year. Bring a friend or three. Bring the Family. You can even bring the dog at many of the Games. Also bring a comfy chair and some good stories. Did your part of the Upper Midwest get caught in the Blizzard of 2011? We'll share what's offered and offer a share to all. And give a health to one and all.

Slainte Mhah

Russ Read

JAMES IRVINE ROBERTSON'S STORY OF CLAN DONNACHAIDH-THE ROBERTSONS

The Robertsons of Clan Donnachaidh are the oldest family in Scotland, said the Historiographer Royal W.F. Skene in the middle of the 19th century. Since every family is as old as every other one, this is Victorian shorthand for the family that can trace its origins back the furthest. And Clan Donnachaidh - pronounced Donnachy - stems from the rulers of the ancient Pictish kingdom of Fothla, now Atholl, which lies at the centre of Scotland. This family gave the last Celtic kings of Scotland in the line of King Duncan, killed by MacBeth, and, from the last of the Celtic earls came Duncan of Atholl, considered the first chief of the Clan. The Gaelic for Duncan is Donnchadh, in the genitive case Donnachaidh, so the name of the clan literally translates to 'Children of Duncan'.

During the Wars of Independence, King Robert Bruce was defeated at the Battle of Methven outside Perth in 1306 and fled into Atholl where he was given protection by Duncan. They fought together at the battle of Dalry where the king lost his brooch to the Macdougalls of Lorne and Duncan and his clan were beside their monarch at Bannockburn. Duncan named his eldest son and heir Robert after his king

The fourth chief, Robert Riabhach - grizzled - tracked down and captured Walter of Atholl and Sir Robert Graham who assassinated James I in Perth. For this the new king offered him an earldom. Instead he preferred a legal charter to his lands which then stretched from the gates of Perth to the beautiful landscape round Lochs Tummel, Rannoch and Tay. His successor who spawned most of the chieftains of the clan used the name Robert-son in honour of his father and this became the preferred surname of his clansfolk, although others chose Duncan or, after a red-headed son of the first chief, Reid.

Menzieses were granted land and moved into Atholl. The earldom fell to Stewarts who ruled from Blair Castle and whole tribes of them - bastards and cousins of the king - followed. The daughter of the last Stewart earl married a Murray and this family are still the Dukes of Atholl.

William the 6th chief lost his head and half his lands to the earl but those living on them remained Robertsons and they often ignored commands from Blair Castle and followed their chief. The heart of the Clan lies at Struan a few miles west of Blair Atholl. The chief is known as Robertson of Struan, or Struan Robertson or simply Struan. This was a turbulent country rife with cattle thieves from the wastes of Rannoch Moor and Macgregor refugees from the persecutions of the Campbells of Glenorchy with their seat on the edge of Atholl at Taymouth.

More than any others the Clan Donnachaidh suffered from their support for the Stuart kings. The earls and dukes of Atholl, though not all their family, supported the government. But under Robertson command, the Athollmen banded together to fight for Montrose. In his glittering campaign of 1644 he won every battle in which they took part. In the words of the historian Robert Scott Fittis, 'The Robertsons of Athole were long esteemed the best swordsmen in Scotland, and their prowess, under the royal banner, mainly contributed to the brilliant triumphs of Montrose.'

In 1688, the Stuarts finally lost the throne of Great Britain. The young clan Chief Alexander was at St Andrews University. He cut short his studies and raised the clan to fight for the deposed king. This Alexander was one of the most remarkable men of his time. As well as a fighter and devoted supporter of King James, he was a bon viveur and highly rated poet, writing in English, French, Gaelic, Latin, Italian and Greek. During one of his periods of exile in France, Louis XIV, the Sun King, described him as 'The First Gentleman of my Court.'

Struan was unique in Scotland for participating in all three of the great Risings - 1688, 1715, and 1745. In the last, he was an old man but joined Bonnie Prince Charlie at Perth and watched his clan join in

the route of the Redcoats at Prestonpans outside Edinburgh. After that he was escorted home in the captured carriage of General Cope with a barrel of the general's brandy beside him for refreshment. When they reached the roadless wilds of the clan's heartland, his escort removed the coach wheels and carried it on their shoulders to the old man's home in the shadow of Schiehallion. When he died in 1749, 2,000 men marched 15 miles behind his coffin to the burial ground at Struan Kirk.

His lands were forfeit after the Rising. When his successors regained them in 1782, they were saddled with their old predecessor's debts and, piecemeal, the estates were sold off. But the chief never lost the respect of his people perhaps because no clansman in Atholl was forcibly evicted from their farms during the clearances. The population drained away but these movements were voluntary taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the proximity of clan country to the Lowlands. From there many emigrated to the New World.

The Clan Society began in 1823. In 1969 it built the first purpose-built Clan Centre and Museum in Scotland at Bruar near Pitlochry. Today, Clan Donnachaidh's DNA surname project with the FamilyTreeDNA testing laboratory of Houston, Texas is showing kinship links between members still living in Scotland, and Robertsons, Duncans, Reids and other clan names now scattered across the world. With 17 overseas branches, clan spirit still flourishes.

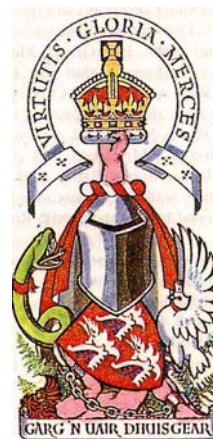


The Clach na Bratach. The Stone of the Standard.

This globe of rock crystal was discovered adhering to the base of the flag pole of the clan standard c1330 during a campaign by Duncan, the first chief, against the Macdougalls of Lorne. Thenceforth it was carried in a little cage at the top of the pole when the clan went into battle. The Clach is the most famous and has the oldest history of any such charms. Its prime function was for healing. Any water in which the stone was dipped had curative properties for both man and beast. It could also predict the future and went cloudy at the approaching death of a chief. The consternation of the Poet Chief can be imagined when he consulted the Stone on the eve of the Rising of 1715 and saw a great crack running through its heart. Certainly if Struan had not joined the rebellion his own fortunes and that of his successors would have been very different.

Website: The Clan Society: www.donnachaidh.com

For DNA Information: www.familytreedna.com/public/clandonnachaidh



The Chief's Arms

The supporters - the Dove and the Serpent - indicate descent from the Kindred of St Columba. The Wolves' Heads are said to commemorate Duncan's sterling work in ridding Atholl of these pests. The Imperial Crown and the Wild man in Chains were awarded to Robert Riabhach, the fourth chief, for his capture of the assassins of James I. The motto means 'Glory is the Reward of Virtue', the Slogan or battle cry 'Fierce when Roused'.

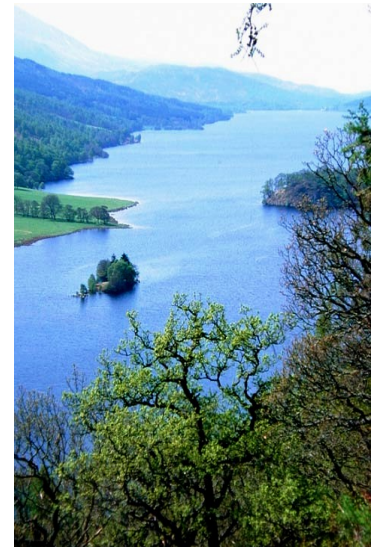


The Poet Chief

Alexander Robertson of Struan (1670-1749), The Poet Chief

The Queen's View

Queen's View, named after Bruce's queen, Isobel of Mar, overlooking Loch Tummel.



Schiehallion

Schiehallion which means the Seat of the Fairies of Caledonia lies at the heart of Clan Donnachaidh Country.



Article by James Irvine Robertson for Scotland Magazine, Issue 17, November 2004.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS SCOTS CELEBRATE ROBBIE BURNS DINNERS AT FIVE SITES

Enthusiasts of poet Robert Burns began their celebrations at three different locations on Saturday, the 22nd of January. The oldest of these events was in Rockford at the Hoffman House. It was the 143rd celebration by members and friends of the Rockford Burns Club.

The second event on that Saturday was the 41st Annual “Nicht Wi’ Burns” held at the Oak Lawn Hilton on S. Cicero Avenue in Oak Lawn. The Rotary Club of Naperville held their first Burns Supper at the Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook.

The following Monday, the 24th, the 10th annual Burns Supper in memory of Gwen Sale was held at Martyrs, 3855 N. Lincoln, Chicago.

Downtown Chicago’s Union League Club was the location of the Illinois St. Andrew Society Burns Supper on January 29th.

The portrait of the famous Scottish Bard shown below was presented to the Rockford Burns Club in 1875. It has presided over every Burns Banquet since! (<http://www.rockfordburnsclub.com>)

COUNCIL CONVENES FEBRUARY 19TH

Treasurer Marian Robertson will host the Winter Council meeting this year as plans are presented for the Highland Games Season and the Annual General Meeting. Marian’s gracious town home has been the scene for previous Council sessions, and members will spend a Saturday afternoon, February 19th reviewing the business of the Society and conclude with a Pot Luck Supper.

Some of the Council members come from far distances, so President Russ Read will bring the gavel down for a 2 p.m. start of the business meeting, permitting an early start for return home.

“Your favorite dish to pass will be just fine,” commented Marian, “or it may be your favorite dessert. It usually works out to provide a balanced meal. I would like your confirmation that you are coming.” (See phone at bottom of the article) The address is 4406 Four Winds Lane, Northbrook, IL 60062, and is easily accessed from the nearby Tri-State Tollway 94 using the exit at Lake-Cook Road. You then head west to Caribou Crossing, which is just one block west of Sanders Rd., the first major intersection after you leave I-94. There is a big Discover Card Billboard on the north side of Lake-Cook Road just opposite the Caribou Crossing Street sign.

“Turn left (south) into Caribou Crossing, then left (east) at the fork in the road; follow this street (Four Winds) and go all the way to the end. My town house is the last on the left, just before the fence across the road. If lost, call (847)559-9035.”

QUEENSLAND GETS DOUBLE TROUBLE

Shirley Oliver, President of the Western Australia Branch, has e-mailed the news that they are having a catastrophic Force 5 cyclone (hurricane)—the worst in the nation's entire history. This comes on top of one of the most devastating floods! We want to offer our prayers and hope for the safety of Clan members in the Queensland area. (This information was received from our International Vice Chairperson, Christy Duncan Lange as we go to press.)

UPDATE FROM QUEENSLAND

Editor's note: Below is another report from a member in Australia, commenting on the storm that swept through Southeast Queensland. This was relayed by our International Vice Chairperson.

We live on top of a mountain so were not affected by the Southeast Queensland floods and were well away from the effects of the cyclone. We were of course deeply aware of the terrible destruction caused by both which continues to plague the day to day lives of so many of our fellow Queenslanders and Australians. It will be a long time before their combined effects are fully overcome. I know of no member who was affected directly but member Bruce Robertson's younger sister's house went under in the Brisbane flood.

Although we escaped unscathed this round, our brush with Mother Nature took place just over two years ago when we were hit by 'The Gap storm', a super storm cell that devastated our immediate area and caused significant damage to our house and destroyed the 'garden' and the bush land around it. The house is long repaired but the cleanup of the grounds continues albeit slowly.

Thank you and the other clan family members for their prayers on our behalf.

Kind regards

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