



Clan MacDougall Society of North America

MONTHLY NEWS



September 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

B'e an t-Sultainn mìos mòr airson Fèisean Albannach.

We had wonderful Scottish Festivals and gatherings in September, among other places: outside Old Tavern in western Virginia; on



*MacDougalls and MacDowalls at
Longs Peak Festival*

Andy Jackson's estate outside Nashville; in a amusement park, closing for the winter, near Fort Ligonier, Pennsylvania; at Estes Park, in a great glen nestling into Rocky Mountain National Park; and in Charleston, South Carolina. There are brief reports on two of these Festivals in this newsletter. We may need to carry the reports on the other games

over to future newsletters.

The Society will be hosting tents at three very important games in October: The Seaside Games in Ventura, CA; the Stone Mountain Games outside Atlanta; and the Central Virginia Games in Richmond, VA. We hope to see you there.

Most are aware of the many sites of historical and prehistorical significance surrounding the seat of Clan MacDougall at Dundlie - the castles of Lorn and the islands, the tombs and carvings at Kilmartin, the Fort of Dun Add, the site of Saint Columba's religious house on Iona. There are also significant ancient sites in Galloway, the home of MacDowalls. A brief review of the history and prehistory of Whithorn and its surrounding area is included in this newsletter to provide a rough sense of the age and importance of the cultures of this land.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd

Ashby

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

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New Members

Bruce McDougall
Toronto, ON

Brynne Seifert
Rockville, MD

Colleen McDowell Hannas
Herndon, VA

Robert Brown
Friendship, ME

Rocky Balzar
Park Falls, WI

Heather Shaw
Troy, NY

K. Shannon McCullough
Nashville, TN

Mary Kelly McCullough
Lexington, KY

Jamie Leigh Stevens
Murfreesboro, TN

A Note from the Treasurer

Dues payments provide over 60% of the funds for our operating expenses. Without those funds we would not have a Scholarship program nor would we be able to support regional and many other activities through the year. Each member's renewal is important and appreciated so when that envelope arrives, please renew your membership in the Clan MacDougall/McDowell Society to ensure that our activities continue in 2016. Without your support we would cease to exist."

Thank you,

Don MacDougall
Treasurer

Dale McDougal
Old Hickory, TN

Jason Thomas MacDougall
Hendersonville, TN

Molly McDowell Heber
Nashville, TN

Stephen Loran
East Liverpool, OH

Cheryl A. Smith
Du Bois, PA

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.

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

November

December

5- Scottish Christmas Walk
Alexandria, VA

2015 Virginia Scottish Games and Festival Sandra MacDougall Reports

A wonderful time was had by all at the 42nd Annual Virginia Scottish Games held on Saturday and Sunday, Sept 5 & 6, at Great Meadows. There were many visitors to the Clan MacDougall tent both days and two new members joined the Society. Ashby McCown's grandson, Liam carried the tartan flag in the Clan Parade



Liam awaiting the parade

on Saturday.

This year's events included "Dogs of Scotland" games and races.



Roy awaiting the audience

The competition groups included fiddle, dancing and athletics. A highlight of the day was one young fiddler, Roy Wulf (7 years old) who entertained many in the tent area. Roy has been playing violin for 1 1/2 years and on occasion entertains residents at a local nursing home.

The 2015 Ligonier Highland Games

This is a good location for a Scottish Festival. The great 18th century immigration of transplanted Scots from Ireland to the American Colonies passed this point, before taking a sharp left turn to head down the Shenandoah Valley. The Black Watch was stationed at Fort Ligonier for awhile, an event highlighted in the reconstructed fort. Moreover, the weather was shockingly good this year.

Contact Us

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From the perspective of the Society, there are many MacDougalls, MacDowalls, McHouls, Livingstons, etc. of all spellings and their descendants here about. We had very good family conversations at our tent this year, with both old and new members.

There were also good competitions and important events at the Games, including dancing, piping, bell ringing, and singing. The Gaelic Society of America holds its annual Mòd, hosting competitions in Gaelic song, poetry, and storytelling, in conjunction with the Ligonier Games. The quality of the Gaelic competitions is high and the cèilidhs (and indeed the after-cèilidh parties) are quite fun. It is a very difficult festival to attend in that one cannot do everything, but it is enjoyable nonetheless.



Story telling



Whithorn in Galloway

Whithorn and its surrounding area is a very old, complex, and beautiful religious and commercial site in the Machars of Galloway.

Saint Ninian is said to have established a religious house, named Candida Casa (Shining House), as early as 397 AD. This was the first major Christian establishment in Scotland and described in Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People (731). The Latinus stone, the oldest Christian monument in Scotland, dating back to the fifth century, was found at Whithorn. Three others monuments, dating to the sixth century, were found in what some believe to be a sister religious site, Kirkmadrine, in the Rhinns of Galloway.

Northumbria (a kingdom founded by the Angles early in the seventh century) established a bishopric at Whithorn in 731 AD that lasted to at least 823. In this period place names of religious sites in Galloway were often converted to English place names, so that for example Cill Choan becomes Kirkcowan. The saint in the names typically keeps a Celtic form of the name and the word order retains its Celtic form. Other place names, like farmsteads, were not so much affected, particularly in the west of Galloway.

The Bishopric was reestablished in 1128 when Fergus Lord of Galloway, the ancestor of Fergus Macdowall of Garthland, chief of Clan MacDowall, in all probability appointed Gilla alden to the post. Whithorn became an important destination for pilgrims in the middle ages, with Robert the Bruce, and the Stuart monarchs holding it in special respect.

Internet

Web site :

www.macdougall.org

Facebook Page

Clan MacDougall Society of North America

Twitter

twitter.com/Clan_MacDougall

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/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 send your email, telephone, or postal address changes to:
records@macdougall.org

Whithorn and Western Galloway has been the object of very important archaeological work in the last half century, revealing an old



Whithorn Priory

and vital community. The religious community at Whithorn appears to have been part of an older center of trade and perhaps manufacturing in the hands of a native population that was not Roman dominated. There is evidence of trade with the continent and the

Mediterranean, metal use and probably metal working. The extremely large collection of glass fragments at Whithorn probably reflects both active trade in and manufacture of glass.

Some scholars have remarked on the amount of colored glass, identified as fragments of drinking vessels, recovered and have argued that this was more characteristic of a secular than a religious community. They have gone on to question whether Whithorn was the site of the Saint Ninian's church. It has been suggested that Kirkmadrine, across Luce Bay, is a more likely location. (See the Whithorn Trust's website, <http://www.whithorn.com/archaeology/>) Kirkmadrine lies a few miles south of Garthland, the ancient seat of the Mac Dowalls of Garthland.

There are many interesting archaeology sites near Whithorn that show old and vibrant secular cultures. In this context, we can note briefly three nearby sites, two of which are recent: Rispain Camp, excavations at the Dunragit bypass, and excavations on the Black Loch of Myrton.

Rispain Camp stands on a hill a mile west of Whithorn. The site covers a little under an acre of land and is ringed by a system of banks and ditches. It was initially believed to be the site of a Roman camp.



Sketch of Rispain Camp

Excavations between 1978 and 1981, using carbon dating and other modern techniques, concluded that Rispain was, however, the site of a large homestead built between about 200BC and 50BC, and occupied for several centuries thereafter. The excavations produced evidence of a timber gateway guarding a 6 meter

wide access bridge across the ditch, through which a metalled road led into the enclosure. There were probably a number of circular houses in the enclosure, one of which has been excavated, and areas for keeping livestock.

Dunragit bypass

In building the Dunragit bypass, which, opening at the end of March 2014, allows travelers to avoid a dangerous stretch of road running through the village of Dunragit, a remarkable set of archaeology finds was discovered. The finds include the earliest known Mesolithic dwellings in south west Scotland, believed to be a hunting camp dating back to 7000 BC. Although the finds are still being assessed, they also include: more than 13,500 mesolithic flints; an early Neolithic settlement; a Bronze Age cemetery, early Bronze Age stone-lined cist burials with grave goods including ceramic food vessels, a flint knife, and jet bead necklaces; Bronze Age cremation urns and pottery sherds; and six Iron Age

roundhouses and Iron Age pottery

Black Loch of Myrton

The remains of an Iron Age village, dated to the fifth century BC have been discovered on the edge of an ancient loch near Wigtownshire. In 2013, archaeologists thought they were excavating a crannog but discovered instead seven or eight round houses built on wetlands around the now filled-in Black Loch of Myrton. Such a "loch village" is unique in Scotland and very rare elsewhere in Britain. To date a quarter of one round house has been excavated. Some have speculated that there must have been significant manufacture and trade at the site, but the archaeology is yet to confirm this. The site does demonstrate, however, that there were significant communities in Wigtownshire long before Ninian set up his church.

Some of the finds from the Black Loch of Myrton are on display through the end of October at the Whithorn Trust's Museum.

John A. McDougall Memorial Scholarships

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.