



The Tartan



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Hail to the Chief
- In Memory of
Morag MacDougall
- Dunollie's Gardens

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Hail to the Chief Robin MacDougall of MacDougall and Dunollie

It is with pride that we salute Robin MacDougall of MacDougall and Dunollie, our thirty-second Chief. Through *The Tartan*, our new Chief sends his greetings and good wishes.

I would like to thank everyone for all the kind messages of condolences for my late mother Morag 31st Clan Chief in this difficult time, she will very much be missed.

I look forward to welcoming you to Dunollie if you are planning on visiting. We have some changes for this year, such as a new exhibition. Further information is on our website www.dunollie.org or our Facebook page. The annual Oban Games (Argyllshire Gathering) is on August 27 this year for those wishing to attend and parade with our Clan MacDougall in the opening ceremonies.

Slainte Mhath

Robin MacDougall of MacDougall





Robin is the son of Morag MacDougall of MacDougall and Dunollie and Richard Morley.

Morag MacDougall of MacDougall, a Clan Chief for Our Times

A Tribute by Walter Marshall Macdougall, Past President

There was at Dunollie House, and probably is still there, a large and excellent wood carving of the Arms of the MacDougall Chiefs. When this writer first saw this carving many years ago, it sat resplendent in details and heraldic colors on the hearth of an unused fireplace. The hearth might have been simply a convenient place for displaying the Arms, but this writer was sure that Coline MacDougall of MacDougall, Chief of Clan MacDougall and mistress of this house, had purposely placed the carving where it was. The juxtaposition of the Chief's Arms and the hearth represents an ancient understanding which has survived for centuries. Amidst all the roles and expectations assumed by a clan chief, perhaps the most significant is to keep the central fire burning on the clan's home-hearth, for this fire is the spirit of clan-togetherness.

Madam Coline MacDougall had served in the Second World War. Her assignment was setting-up RAF training ranges for bombing runs. She understood the necessity for being on target. As Chief, she focused upon bringing Clan MacDougall into a new century. Under Madam MacDougall's leadership, a High Commissioner was appointed to focus and encourage efforts within the burgeoning Clan community in the United States and Canada. Increasingly there were Clan gatherings at



Morag MacDougall (cont)

Dunollie, and the huge task of preserving Gylen and Dunollie castles was begun. She passed before all could be completed, but she had left our clan's home-hearth burning brighter.

And then there came Morag as if on cue in some grand musical score. In her quite strength and sensitivity, there lived an understanding of how important it is to feel that one belongs to a tradition of worth – and how essential it is to have a place where one can gather within ancient walls and hear the rising wind singing old, old songs. But then, Morag was a fine pipe organist; she sensed music everywhere. Perhaps her profession as a hearing specialist led her to believe that this music of the soul was for everyone. Great Chiefs have a greatness inside themselves. Iain Ciar was a notable Clan MacDougall chief; his greatness lay in his warrior's skill as a swordsman. Morag MacDougall of MacDougall was a great chief because she had a beautiful soul and a caring vision. Such strengths are precious in our troubled world.

Morag had no wish for power, notoriety, or privilege. When she did agree to become our thirty-first Chief it was because of a deeply felt responsibility. She must help complete what her aunt Coline had begun. What Morag achieved, with the assistance of many who also believed, was huge. She oversaw, with her quite persuasion, the extraordinary formation of the MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust. Dunollie would no longer be a private place. It would be a Clan MacDougall Center, a place of learning about and appreciating the Highland Heritage for both Clan members and the public. And there, a museum housing the Hope MacDougall Collection would become a reality. Changes were made to make Dunollie more accessible, and two major preservation projects were completed on Dunollie and Gylen Castles.

Thinking of Morag, my mind sees the grand view from Dunollie. The sun in the west has just set away upon the Sound between Morvern and Mull, and the seawater expanse of the Firth of Lorn is a watercolor image of the sunset. The bright colors lavender into evening and the first stars are lit. We who are the children of Dougal sit by the hearth welcoming the warmth from the flame - a flame of hope, trust and trustworthiness.

Then a voice inside me begins to sing an old hymn:

*"Softly now the light of day
Fades upon our sight away.
Free from care, from labor free,
Lord, we would commune with Thee."*

Morag has passed before all could be completed, but she has left our clan's home-hearth burning brighter still. Now she rests with her ancestors at Kilbride. In the new morning the dew will glisten on the purple of the Bell Heather, and we will be thankful for the memory of Morag MacDougall of MacDougall.





Stitch and Spin at Dunollie

By Shannen Provan-Sloan

In October 2024, Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds launched a brand-new community group: Stitch and Spin. Inspired by the traditional textile production tools in Miss Hope MacDougall's social history collection – which is cared for by the MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust – this group aimed to bring people together to share and learn traditional fibre arts skills like spinning, knitting, crochet and more. Hope's collection was given a home here following her passing by 31st Chief, Madam Morag MacDougall, who knew the importance of protecting not just MacDougall heritage, but all of Scotland's stories. When Madam Morag and her family stayed here for a week in summer 2025, her daughter Fiona and both of her granddaughters joined Stitch and Spin for an afternoon, continuing the family's ongoing support of the work we do here at Dunollie to engage locals with the rich history and traditions we are so proud to care for. At Dunollie's 2025 volunteer party – the first one that Stitch & Spin members had attended – we were lucky enough to hear a generous and warming speech from Madam Morag conveying her heartfelt thanks to all of Dunollie's volunteers for the work they do in supporting our work, which touched everyone's hearts. This memory is even more special to all of us now.

Despite staff not knowing quite what to expect at the group's first meeting, it defied all expectations, and quickly grew into Dunollie's largest community volunteer group, bringing laughter, skill, and an incredibly warm welcome to the terrace every Wednesday afternoon, come rain, shine, sleet or hail! Though the group is welcome to everyone, it is at the minute entirely attended by women from Oban and the surrounding communities, who come together to share in crafts, coffee, and many, many biscuits. True friendships have been developed between all the women, with them often speaking openly about the support they have found at the group – through life changes, job stress, or even bereavement.

One of the first group projects we decided to tackle was creating a product for Dunollie's on site gift shop, the Drapers Shop. We wanted the product to encompass the skills present in the group, as well as deep connection to the Scottish stories preserved within our collections. The group eventually settled on knitting coasters in the style of traditional fishermen's gansey patterns from across Scotland. These jumpers were practical in nature, and their patterns varies geographically, with some sources stating that a fisherman could be identified, if needs be, by the pattern on his jumper. Preserving these stories of



Stitch and Spin (cont)

traditional Scottish communities was the life's work of Miss Hope MacDougall, and we aimed to do her proud with our coasters. Following the success of these coasters, we have opted to do something more permanent next: the Dunollie blanket. Every member of the group is knitting squares for a blanket, and we invited anyone from our local or global community to also submit knitted squares if they would like to be included. This blanket will be displayed in our 'Maid's bedroom' exhibition here at Dunollie, showcasing the continued dedication we have to engaging in Scotland's heritage and traditional skills, and to preserving and promoting the legacy of Miss Hope MacDougall as a collector and protector of Scotland's stories.

The sight of so many women coming together in the grounds of this ancient place, to share skills, laughter, and love, is one that we hope goes on for a long time, as it so deeply reflects the values at the heart of Dunollie.



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MacDougall

President's Report

Misha Lowther, CMSNA President, 2023-26

April has arrived, and with it the promise of spring. As the season brings renewal and new growth, it also marks a time of reflection and transition for us here at CMSNA. Serving as President of the Clan MacDougall Society of North America has been one of the most fulfilling seasons of my life. Over the past year, many meaningful initiatives have taken shape, including the 2024 International Gathering, the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of our Society, the strengthening of collaboration among our teams, and the continued growth of our Games agents and Budget Committee.



I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our Board Members, Chairpersons, Regional Commissioners, and to all of you for the opportunity to serve as President. It has been both an honor and a privilege to lead and work alongside such a dedicated and capable group.

During the past three years, I have had the opportunity to build lasting relationships with team members across the United States, as well as with our colleagues in Canada and in Oban. These experiences have been rewarding both personally and professionally, and I am grateful for the friendships and shared commitment that have grown from our work together.

As our new season begins on July 1st, we welcome new leadership and new opportunities. I am confident that our incoming President, Anne Carine, will be supported by an outstanding and dedicated team. I look forward to continuing my service to CMSNA as a fellow Board member, as liaison to DPT, as editor and contributor to The Raven, as a member of the Web/IT team, as State Representative for Oklahoma, and, most importantly, as a friend and supporter of this remarkable organization.

Serving CMSNA in these many roles has been both an honor and a privilege. I wish each of you a wonderful spring, a successful summer, and a rewarding year ahead. The Clan MacDougall Society of North America has brought new skills, enduring friendships, and many meaningful experiences into my life over the past three years.

I hope that each of you will continue to explore the opportunities within our Society and deepen your connection with our clan. Together with our kin in Oban and at Dunollie, we still have much to accomplish and much to share.

May God bless each of you and the endeavors you choose to pursue.

Sincerely,

Misha Lowther

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To All My Kith and Kin

By Anne MacDougal Carine, Society President 2026 to 2029

My given name is Anne Spotswood MacDougal. I was given this name after my mother, Catherine, a professional genealogist, had discovered in her research that her ancestral lineage on her mother's line was to Alexander Spotswood (6x ggf.), the first governor of the Royal Province of Virginia. His wife's name was Anne Spotswood. It has been researched that his ancestral line goes back to Robert the Bruce – if I dare say it!



My father, Richard (Dick) MacDougal, who would become President of CMSNA, was inspired by her work. Their shared efforts led to discovering Alexander McDougal, born in 1790, who had voyaged from Greenock, Scotland to Canada, then south to Elizabethtown, NY. He settled in Elizabethtown as a tanner. His wife, Lucretia Abel, had five sons and seven daughters. His final resting place is the historic cemetery in Elizabethtown with his wife. His message on his stone says: "Farewell to our Scottish Highland Happy Home." Generations of my MacDougal ancestry are deeply rooted in Elizabethtown.

I was born in Beverly, MA to my parents, Catherine Ann Finney and Richard T. MacDougal after they had had four boys, David Charles, Richard Harry, Robert Bruce and Douglas Finney! I was a special treasure being the only girl! I grew up living in Norton with my mother, but spending quality time with my father every weekend! When I was 15 and my brother Doug was 17, we joined an exchange student program called Operation Friendship. During the summer of 1980, we had a choice of what country we'd like to travel to. We chose Scotland due to our Scottish Heritage on both sides of our family. My hosts, the Hall family, with Scotland's Operation Friendship gave us experiences and memories to last a lifetime.

I majored in Early Childhood Education while a student at Dean Jr. College, where dad taught psychology. After graduation I was a preschool teacher for some time, then decided to follow another passion, photography, and work as a portrait photographer at Olan Mills. While working there, my mother suddenly passed away of a diabetic coma when I was 21. She had encouraged me in my profession, so I continued on. Another milestone happened while working there. I married Adam Carine at my little stone church. Our lives together brought us three sons: Adam John Jr, Aaron MacDougal, and Abraham Brothers. Being a mother is one of life's richest blessings! While they were growing up I would enrich their lives with experiences. One was taking them to visit Grandpa Mac and Grandma Betsy at highland games where he was representing Clan MacDougal.

In 2004 I began my career working with special needs adults in their homes, providing them with direct care as well as life enriching activities in their communities. It was challenging to be a single mother balancing work and family but, with God's grace, family and friends, life would be a joy. Hoping to work with children again, I answered the need for school bus drivers! It has been a joy working



MacDowall

To All My Kith and Kin (cont)

with children again. Even short bits of time are enough to be a positive light in their days. It was wonderful being asked by my granddaughter, Ava, to be her bus driver. Yes, I am a blessed grandma of three: Adam John 18, Ava Lynn 10 and Autumn Anne 4! It is also a blessing having my three sons grown, married, hard working and happy!

I'd like to share with you how my journey started with CMSNA! My father's work had made an impression on me for many years. He had asked me to take his official president's picture outside his Mendon home! When Aaron was a boy, he had asked Aaron to travel with him to an out of state highland game to be his helper, since dad had recently recovered from his heart attack. This trip provided Aaron with a foundation for his future work helping me.

I had taken Abe and Aaron to the Scotland, CT Highland Games when they were young, found that our Clan was not represented, and realized the need for volunteers. Several years later, after learning Ed and Sheila McDowell needed assistance here in the North East Region, I checked the volunteer box on my annual campaign letter. Scott MacDougald called me and was eager to have us begin to represent the Society in our area. Dad ended up sending us a full suitcase of his supplies from his days of tent hosting. My son Aaron, his girlfriend Eve and I were off to Glasgow Lands Highland Games in N. Hampton, MA to host our first tent! Sheila and Ed were there to guide and teach us how to set it up and how to answer questions from excited visitors. In the nine years since we began, we have traveled to ME, NH, VT, CT, NY, NC, VA and WV helping to represent Clan MacDougall and Clan MacDowall. It's been a great deal of fun seeing people's faces light up when they see their clan present. That gives us the opportunity to teach them and welcome them as new members of the family, if they so wish!



Having been the North East Regional Commissioner and on the Board of Directors, after traveling with my father to the 2024 International Clan Gathering in Oban, I felt I had to step up into the Tanist position to work with Misha. I look ahead to stepping up into the President's role in July at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Perhaps you and your family can join us there for our 61st anniversary! I hope you will reach out to me or one of our leaders if you would like to become more involved. There are wonderful opportunities open to our readers and members!

Blessings to you and yours,

Anne MacDougal Carine

Tanist, Clan Mac Dougall Society of North America

Dunollie's Garden Landscape

By Alison McNab and Caroline Boswell



Dunollie's garden forms part of Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds, an iconic visitor attraction and seat of the Clan MacDougall. It is a special west coast Scottish Garden with flowering rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias thriving in the damp but mild west coast climate.

The garden is dominated by trees planted in the Victorian era when plant hunting was de rigueur and MacDougalls travelled far afield bringing back a wide variety of plant and tree life. The majestic and ancient Redwood planted in the 1860s towers over beautiful Irish Ewes, Norway Maples and Sweet Chestnut with the ground cover of spring bulbs and low shrubs complementing the canopy.

Dunollie's pond is a haven of wildlife surrounded by hostas and lilies and a young tree fern; a green sanctuary to sit and enjoy the garden's tranquillity. Another key point is the wooden sculpture of a Raven sitting atop Chief Alexander's pine tree. Despite the tree being felled in a storm, the symbol of the Clan MacDougall was created at its highest point to oversee Dunollie House and grounds.

Planting in the last few years is set to re-invigorate the gardens. Newly discovered ancient plants like Metasequoia, the Dawn Redwood, and Wollemi Pine have taken root to become the next generation.

Morag MacDougall, Clan Chief, was well known for her love of the Dunollie Gardens and wildlife. She was renowned for her efforts to preserve both wherever she could. Morag was extremely knowledgeable about plants and varieties having learned at a young age from her gardening enthusiast mother, Jean, and her aunt, Hope MacDougall. At



Dunollie her biggest delights were the seasonal swathes of snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells, a succession of beauty. She was very protective of these areas, making sure no one trod over them or mowed them down before their time was fully done.

Morag had a keen understanding of habitat and how essential pollinators were. As such, she was keen to provide wild areas where wildflowers and native plants could thrive, encouraging bees & insects to do their work, whilst still maintaining the



MacDougall

Dunollie's Garden (cont)

balance of the more formal planted gardens. With this ecological outlook her wish was for the gardens to evolve and continue with a view to increasing biodiversity working in harmony with nature and encouraging all the richness that this west Highland coast has to offer.

The gardens remain a tribute to her and her vision for Dunollie for the future.

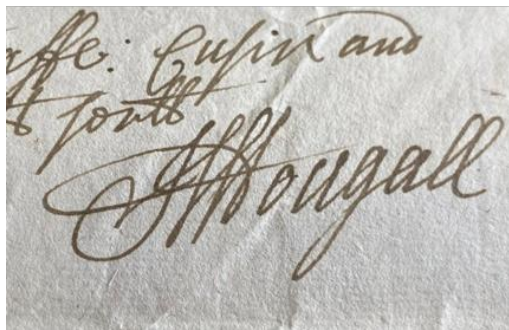


The Dunollie Documents Archive

By Ashby McCown, Past President

The Documents Archive is one of the central pillars of the MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust's program to preserve MacDougall and Lorne historical structures, museum collections and heritage, and to promote their use for educational purposes. The program was envisioned by our late Chief, Morag MacDougall of MacDougall and Dunollie.

There are thousands of documents in this collection. The current catalogue itself runs to over 400 pages. The documents provide a rich, albeit incomplete, vision of the lives and environment of the MacDougall family and those with whom they have interacted over centuries. This coverage begins in the 14th century, although the greater portion of the collection is from the 18th and 19th centuries.



**Clan Chief Iain Ciar's signature
from the 1730s**

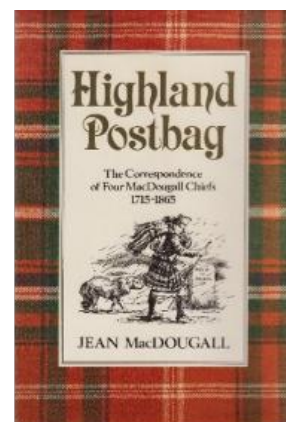
Documents not only record past events but are instruments in creating the events themselves. The documents collected at Dunollie include charters, letters, wadsets, inventories of writs and progress, publications, photographs, navel logs, other legal and commercial documents spanning centuries. There are sasines among the documents that are beautifully written on vellum, some in Latin with English summary and some in English with Latin summary. There are even a few poems to be found in the collection. These are from the first part of the 19th century, with one

obliquely referring to Wordsworth who wrote at least three poems at Dunollie. There is a fair amount of material of political interest – including a hasty 1689 note of a nearby landing of “600 troupes” from Ireland, a formal 1691 letter, with official seal, from the Earl (a decade later, the Duke) of Argyll trying to organize support for William III, and correspondence during the early Jacobite risings. There are many family letters, particularly those received by Dunollie. The collection includes importantly journals of the outgoing correspondence of John MacDougall, the 25th chief, during his tours as a naval officer. He most likely had the services of a secretary during these periods to retain copies. Other outgoing letters are

The Dunollie Documents (cont)

naturally less common although some of these have been collected by Clan stalwarts like Colin MacDougall. The collection contains not only primary documents but a small number of copies of pertinent documents from other sources.

These documents were the source of historical research decades before they were gathered into a formal collection. The three daughters of Colonel Alexander James of Dunollie (our 29th Chief) – Coline Helene Elizabeth (our 30th Chief), Jean Louisa Morag (mother of our 31st Chief) and Margaret Hope Garnons – carried out, in particular, extremely important work with the documents. They assembled and transcribed a large part of the correspondence of four chiefs: Iain Ciar, his son Alasdair Dubh, his grandson Patrick, and his great grandson Vice Admiral John. The correspondence was woven into a family history by Jean MacDougall and published in 1984 as *Highland Postbag – The Correspondence of Four MacDougall Chiefs 1715-1865*. Hope used letters and other documents in the archives in her book, *Kerrera – Mirror of History*, published in 1979. She was, in addition, an energetic collector and documenter of material culture as well as a gifted photographer. Her very large collections are now under the care of the Dunollie Preservation Trust founded in 1998. Catherine Gillies describes the development of the Archive from that point:



Once the castles and the Brooch of Lorn were safely in the care of the MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust, Morag moved to transfer the archives across as well. They were dotted throughout the main house and attic, filling ordinary cupboards and boxes in corners as well as in the main cabinet which was intended by Admiral John MacDougall to store the 'muniments', which is in the dining room of the house he built (completed 1836). There was also a secondary main repository, which was a cupboard (still in situ) in the alcove in the hall which was once a doorway through to the North Wing. This was quite organised, with dated bundles of documents.

I was present for the first rounds of collection of documents and the subsequent move into the store (formerly a bedroom, later general storage space, in the 1745 House). I was still working for the Hope MacDougall Trust, so this would have been around 2005 or 6. Together with my co-worker, Kerry Caldock, we boxed everything we could find. It was a curious feeling to be emptying whole sections of the family house, which like everyone's home, has its records kept in a few main spaces and then countless small ones.

A second round of gathering took place in the attic, with Morag coming in and out as we did so, and we found a similar pattern – some tightly packed boxes, some stray bundles, and also of course a large amount of loose material that should be saved as archive. Some of this is still in the attic, awaiting more space – an example being the collection of newspapers from the West Indies dating to the brief adventure by one of the 19th century sons, who went out with a reputation and swiftly returned with even more of one. No details given, just an air of 'oh dear, what has he done now'. The cold air and undisturbed conditions in the attic continue to preserve material quite well, but in time all of it will find homes in environmentally controlled storage when funds can be found.

Over the subsequent years, housekeepers who had been briefed that documents were to be moved to the Trust would present the staff and volunteers with anything from a couple of letters found in a drawer to whole trunks of documents. The trickle continues, and the well-trained

The Dunollie Documents (cont)

volunteers continue to deal with them and gain great pleasure from projects to transcribe or just create inventories.

To focus on the archives, so often overlooked in the face of exciting swords and other relics, was a typically astute act by Morag. She knew of her mother and aunt's efforts with the family records, not least through Jean and Hope's books, and completed their actions by ensuring the archive came together and was stored properly.

I first saw the document collection in the summer of 2010. Catherine and I were discussing, over tea in central Oban, Gaelic poetry related to the MacDougalls and the discovery of a new (now known as the Heritage) MacDougall tartan, when she referenced drapes in Dunollie House. After I confessed that I had never been in Dunollie House, she arranged a lightening tour before I caught the noon train to Glasgow the next day. When we arrived at the attic, I found a room filled, it seemed a little chaotically, with boxes of bundled and individual documents. Among the scattered documents was the 1691 letter from the Earl of Argyll. She said representatives of the National Library of Scotland would visit Dunollie the next week to assess whether preservation of the documents was in the national interest. I replied that I thought I knew the answer to the question. She said Dunollie had begun work to upgrade a room, albeit not large, in the 1745 House to meet the archival requirements they would demand. I spent a month there the next summer. Having been found incompetent in moving refrigerators to the stables and cleaning floors in exhibition rooms, I was put to work labeling and transporting document boxes to the new room. Morag was in residence that month and followed our work carefully. She was guiding me through the deeds of Ian Ciar, drawn from a large book on a desk in the front hall, when her husband, Richard, rushed in excitedly announcing that someone had "nicked the Standard." That story deserves its own telling.

The Document Archives continues in our time to support important historical research, casting light on places, events and people important to our heritage. However, there are many documents that are difficult to read. The script may be small, faded, and cramped. Writing may be sequenced in one direction to the end of a page then change direction to utilize margins. Although the greater part of the collection is in good condition, there are important documents that are fragile or faded or partially riddled with holes. Interpolating across holes is an art. Pre 18th century documents are frequently written in a form of Secretary Hand. Abbreviations peculiar to the writer and the era are often used. The Dunollie Archivists have rendered historians a great service over the years in their ongoing efforts to transcribe the primary documents into documents of more manageable text. The transcribed documents of the three sisters form part of the Archives. In later years, Linda Fryer, transcribed several volumes worth of documents. My own research has benefited immeasurably from her efforts. The work of transcription is currently being carried out by Jennifer Shaw and Jamie MacGregor. Linda, Jennifer and Jamie double as historians as well.

As the document collection continues to grow in size and importance, it complements, expands, and clarifies the meaning of other collections protected by the Dunollie Preservation Trust. The Dunollie Archive is a lasting legacy of our Chief Morag of MacDougall. We, and generations to follow, owe much to her foresight.