



# THE GREEN BANNER

## NEWSLETTER

Clan Macpherson Association Canadian Branch

Vol. 9 Number 4

ANNUAL GATHERING ISSUE

November 2015

### NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

By Chantal McPherson, Registrar



To our newest member, Fran Gomersall, we say welcome to the CMA. Fran's mother's father's family came from Scotland in 1884 and settled in the Wapella district of Saskatchewan. Fran decided to join us following the McPherson family reunion in Saskatchewan. You will recall Elaine McPherson's "Scotland on the Prairies" article in the August edition of The Green Banner

A warm welcome-back to Judith MacPherson-Adams of Montreal. Judith and her father were members many years ago and were reminded of the Association when visiting the CMA website.+

In closing I would like to encourage you to offer family members a gift of membership this Christmas! And to all Annual members you will find your 2016 Membership renewal form with this issue or online at <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/canada/membership.html> . The 2016 edition of Creag Dhubh will be sent out early this year so we ask that annual memberships be received by the end of December.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Greetings from Mississauga!

I trust everyone enjoyed some family time over the Thanksgiving weekend. Irene and I were pleased with the quieter pace after our enjoyable and busy schedule at the Itasca Joint Gathering with our cousins from the US. A remarkable 31 members and guests represented the Canadian Branch. We should be very proud of the contribution made in making the weekend a great success. Joint conveners Donna and Jacqueline ensured a marvellous program of events with something for everyone. My personal thanks to all of the Past Chairmen and Officers that supported the council meeting and members present at the AGM.

I am pleased to report administration of Branch affairs remains in good hands as all current officers agreed to accept re-election. Honorary Secretary Bob Archibald has indicated he would like to retire and hand over his responsibilities as soon as a replacement can be appointed. Our thanks go to Bob for his past and current service performing these important duties. Anyone interested in taking on the task of record-

ing the minutes of our council meetings and AGMs should contact either Bob or me to discuss details.

Before our A.G.M. was adjourned a motion was raised and unanimously accepted that we send a message declaring fealty, allegiance and affection to our Chief from all of the members of the Canadian Branch. I passed on these sentiments and good wishes and Cluny responded that he was deeply touched and sends his warm best wishes our way.

I am looking forward very much to our next Gathering and the opportunity to catch up with good friends and cousins from near and far.

Vice Chairman Jacqueline has been scouting out a venue for our 2016 Branch Gathering and we hope to send out details soon. Mindful that many members may be planning to attend



Members of the 2016 Council at present at the AGM  
Back : M ark Macpherson Editor, Robert J Archibald ,Former Chair, Myles Macpherson Councillor Quebec, John Gillies Past Chairman, Ed Smith Councillor Ontario, Don Pearson Councillor Alberta, Front : Chantal McPherson Registrar, Bill Macpherson Branch Chair,., Jacqueline Murdoch Vice-Chair, Ken Gillis Hon, Treasurer, Robert W Archibald Hon. Secretary

next year's 'Platinum Dhubh' (Association Gathering) in Badenoch, Jacqueline plans to make cost a main priority in the selection process.

Activities slow down as we prepare for winter hibernation but I am sure everyone will enjoy reading this, another excellent edition of our Branch Newsletter. Continued thanks go to Editor Mark and all contributors.

Yours Aye, Bill Macpherson,

## TREASURER'S CORNER

By Ken Gillis Honorary Treasurer



The Branch is in good shape financially as of the end of September. We have \$7,490 in our current account and \$11,131 in our Life Membership Fund. We are showing a profit of \$122 year to date at the end of September.

I plan to add the balance of our life membership fees to Life Membership Fund when the GIC becomes open in February of next year. What this means is that our small profit really is a small loss on the year. I do not believe there will be any large expenses for the balance of this year.

At our AGM an increase to \$35 for the annual membership fees was approved. The need for the increase was driven by four factors: the major increase in postage rates, the weakened Canadian dollar and the low rate of return on our investments. Council has directed me to set up for the possibility of receiving dues payments via Paypal, the costs of which must be covered.

### WE REMEMBER

We regret the passing of Marlene McPherson of Scarborough ON on October 14. Marlene was a long-time member of CMA who served with distinction on the Branch Council as Hon. Treasurer from 1994 -1998. She was active in her community as a dedicated supporter to organized soccer for 46 years.

Our deepest sympathy to husband Jim and family.

### THE GREEN BANNER

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

**Honorary Chairman:** RGM Macpherson CM, KStJ,

**Officers:**

William Macpherson PEng, Chairman  
Jacqueline Murdoch, Vice Chairman  
Ken Gillis, Honorary Treasurer  
Robert W Archibald PhD, Honorary Secretary  
Chantal McPherson, Registrar

**Immediate Past Chairman:**

John C Gillies

**Provincial Councillors:**

John C House MOM, Newfoundland and Labrador  
Bruce Gillis QC, Nova Scotia  
Major Myles G Macpherson CD, Quebec  
Ed Smith CD, Ontario  
Donald Pearson, Alberta  
Helen Macpherson-Potts British Columbia

**Editor:** Mark F Macpherson

**Associate Editor:** John C House

Inquiries and articles may be sent by email to [Canada.Editor@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.Editor@clan-macpherson.org) or by post to PO Box 1005, Hemmingford QC, J0L 1H0

## COUNCIL FOR 2016

The Branch Council for the coming year was elected by acclamation at the Annual General Meeting held on October 3, 2015.

Our Honorary Secretary Robert W Archibald announced his decision to retire as soon as a suitable replacement is identified but not later than the Annual General Meeting of 2016. The Nominating Committee represented by LCol Mark Macpherson took due note of this intention and will search for a replacement.

The Council for 2016 is as follows:

Chairman	William Macpherson PEng.
Vice Chairman	Jacqueline Murdoch
Hon Treasurer	Ken Gillis
Hon Secretary*	Robert W Archibald PhD.
Registrar	Chantal McPherson
Councillor, Newfoundland and Labrador	John C House MOM.
Councillor, Nova Scotia	Bruce Gillis QC.
Councillor, Quebec	Major Myles G Macpherson CD.
Councillor, Ontario	Ed Smith CD.
Councillor, Alberta	Donald E Pearson
Councillor, British Columbia	Helen Macpherson Potts

### Annual Appointments:

Editor	LCol Mark F Macpherson CD
Web Master	Ewan A Macpherson PhD

### Ex-Officio:

Honorary Chairman	RGM Macpherson CM, KStJ.
Immediate Past Chairman	John C Gillies

Former Chairmen Ex Officio:  
LCol Mark F Macpherson CD.

Robert J Archibald  
Douglas MacPherson  
Stuart G MacPherson  
Neil F McPherson

There are three vacancies on Council: Councillors for New Brunswick/PEI, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

\*The Honorary Secretary has announced his decision to retire from Council.

## DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE

Articles, stories and photos for the March issue are due on the Editors desk on February 15. We look forward to input to the Green Banner from all members. Send your drafts or outlines as soon as possible to

[Canada.Editor@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.Editor@clan-macpherson.org)

# DR. CLUNY MACPHERSON CMG

By John C. House MOM



**T**he second Chairman of the Canadian Branch 1954 – 1957, was Dr. Cluny Macpherson of St. John's, Newfoundland. A fourth generation Newfoundlander, he was born in 1879. His great-grandfather, Peter Macpherson, arrived in Newfoundland from Greenock, Scotland in 1804. The Macphersons went on to become prominent members

of the St. John's business community, and operated the former Royal Stores on Water Street. For the most part, Cluny followed a different career path, studying medicine at McGill University.

Cluny took great pride in both his Newfoundland and Scottish roots, and took particular pride in his Macpherson heritage. A supporter of the Clan Macpherson Association from its inception, he went on to serve as its honorary vice-president and as Chairman of the Canadian Branch. Although he was a remarkable man who made significant military and professional contributions during his lifetime (see November, 2010 issue of the Green Banner for a comprehensive account of his numerous accomplishments), this article will focus primarily on his legacy to the Clan Macpherson Association.

In 1915 the Germans began to employ chlorine gas against allied troops with devastating consequences. In response, the British War Office established a committee of experts tasked to identify a solution to the problem. Cluny was appointed to this group and it was he who came up with a design for a gas mask that ultimately led to the device that was utilized by allied troops, saving countless lives. In recognition of this enormous contribution, he was made a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (CMG) in 1918.

Cluny accepted his appointment as Chairman of the Canadian Branch in 1954, which he held until 1957. Early in his term (on September 1st, 1954) he led a delegation to Edinburgh Castle to present a plaque to its Governor to commemorate the distinction of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment being the first non-Scottish regiment entrusted with the guardianship of the castle for a short time in 1915. At the ceremony the castle's Governor, Lieutenant General Sir Colin Barber, introduced Cluny as the oldest surviving officer (Lieutenant Colonel) of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment (see the 1955 issue of Creag Dhubh for a detailed account of this).<sup>1</sup>

Cluny took advantage of any opportunity to promote the CMA. Shortly after the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) commenced television operations in 1952, Colonel Rivers Macpherson (the Founder of the Branch) and Cluny were given the opportunity to tell Canadian viewers about

the Clan Macpherson Association. To increase CMA membership, Cluny suggested to association members that a good goal would be that each member attempt to recruit at least one member to the Association.<sup>2</sup> In a report to members of the Canadian Branch at the conclusion of his term as president, Cluny mused that his own longevity could be attributed to his involvement with CMA. He said:

*"I consider it a good investment to become a Life Member even though I did it after 70 with little expectation of being alive at 78 but, let me tell you I attribute my still being alive in no small degree to the interest this Association has given me. Financially, I suppose it would seem ridiculous for a Scot to take out Life Membership after 70, but I fear my action of making my great-granddaughter a Life Member was more in keeping with the Scots character."<sup>3</sup>*

Cluny also believed in collecting and recording folklore and family histories. In the 1963 issue of Creag Dhubh, he recounted his own personal journey to Greenock to trace his roots.<sup>4</sup> As he pointed out, much history is lost and he urged the membership to take the initiative in gathering narratives.

In 1957 Cluny, our Chief, appointed him to an honorary role as Leincochreas, or Clan Privy Councillor, with the approval of the Lord Lyon.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Cluny Macpherson was a remarkable man who left a lasting legacy in his home province of Newfoundland and Labrador and with the Clan Macpherson Association. He passed away at his home in St. John's on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1966 at the age of 87. As a tribute to Dr. Cluny, the Clan Museum in Newtonmore flew the old flag of the Dominion of Newfoundland at half-staff. The same flag had been last flown during the Great War victory celebrations at St. John's in 1919.<sup>6</sup>



Dr Cluny Macpherson  
by Helen Parsons Shepherd



Dr Cluny was granted  
armorial bearings in 1954  
by Lyon Court in Scot-  
land

## References:

- <sup>1</sup>Newfoundland Ceremony at Edinburgh Castle. (1955) Creag Dhubh, 7: 17-19
- <sup>2</sup>Macpherson C. (1955) Dr. Cluny Macpherson (1879-1966) Reflections of a Newfoundlander. (Notebook 1: Address to annual gathering, page 148). <http://www.med.mun.ca/macpherson/pages/bio.htm>
- <sup>3</sup>Macpherson, C. (1957) Dr. Cluny Macpherson (1879-1966) Reflections of a Newfoundlander. (Notebook 1: Address to annual gathering, September 14, page 153). <http://www.med.mun.ca/macpherson/pages/bio.htm>
- <sup>4</sup>Macpherson, C. (1963) Tracing our ancestors. Creag Dhubh, 15: 41-44
- <sup>5</sup>6. The Macphersons of Newfoundland: A generation passes. (1967) Creag Dhubh, 19: 212
- <sup>6</sup>Lennox, D. (2009) Now You Know Canada's Heroes Toronto: Dundurn Press, 92

## CMA CHAIR REPORT

By Jean Macpherson Duffy



The joint Canadian/US Gathering is now but a sweet memory but as it was my first time to such an event, I have some impressions to share with you!

- North Americans are a friendly group who know how to enjoy a great party!
  - Canadians know how to organize concise, relevant annual general meetings.
- I give kudos to Bill Macpherson and his Council for being on target their entire meeting of about 40 minutes!! Well done.
- Bill Macpherson is a master at reciting Robert Burns as he recited both Tam O'Shanter and Address to the Haggis flawlessly. Tam O'Shanter was executed with a series of props – knives, hatchet, skeleton and the participation of the audience in the form of owl screeches, thunder and scary winds.

Now I turn my attention to the 2016 Platinum Dhubh to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clan Macpherson Association. In August when I became chairman, I put together a committee, each with a different task, and a leader, my vice chairman, Bill Macpherson, Glenfarg. To date we have the general outline of the very busy program that begins on Wednesday, August 3 and concludes on Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>. The program will be printed in full for the next Green Banner, but to date it looks like this:

Wednesday: Edinburgh location: walk of the Royal Mile led by Sandy Macpherson

Thursday: drive up the A-9 to the interesting town of Pitlochry where we have been invited to the Tartan Shop, Claire Charles Designs. From 11:-1, Janet Washington, the owner will display the Macpherson trews (tartan pants), for the gen-

tleman, skirts and blouses for ladies. She will demonstrate the correct and several methods of wearing a sash. All will be for sale with an enticing 10% off for purchases that day.

On to Kingussie and a walk around this town with many Macpherson cousins. led by John Barton – our very own legal expert who has just completed a book about the Badenoch area. The walk begins at 3pm.

Friday there will be a golf tournament led by Cluny's son, Jamie Macpherson at the Newtonmore Golf Course. You can hire clubs so you need not bring your own.

Afternoon there will be a dance practice from 2-4 followed by a reception for first time attendees to learn of the history of the Clan.

Friday's highlight, as always, will be the ball preceded by a reception for Cluny and family followed by a table service banquet in the huge marquee in the back of the Duke of Gordon.

Before tempting you further, I remind you to stop reading now and book your room at the Duke of Gordon. We have a special rate of £42 per person, bed and breakfast. The Duke will be our own if we can fully book the rooms. We are close to that now, so please hurry so as not to be disappointed.

Drinking and driving is not tolerated in Scotland and it is most responsible to stay where the action is and not worry about ending up in the local jail!!



I am going to save the remainder of the nine-day event for the next Green Banner. But to give you some hints: Highland Games, two ceilidhs in different venues, whisky tasting, history hike, museum lecture, and finally a visit to two private distilleries.

Stay tuned for the exciting Platinum Dhubh. Blessings to you all.

## UNOFFICIAL OPENING

By Ewen SL MacPherson



Ewen pointing out the new sign for the Heraldry Room at the museum

There was quick and very happy "unofficial impromptu unveiling" of the new sign for the Gordon Macpherson Room in August attended by two groups of ladies who just happened to be in the museum as I was putting it up. I expect the Museum Advisory Committee will agree to it being "officially unveiled" at the Platinum Dhubh next year.

The official opening of the "Sir Tommy Exhibition" is the main event planned for the museum during the museum "At Home". Due to the numbers likely to attend the Gathering in 2016, it may be difficult to unveil Gordon's sign at the same time as the two exhibitions are located at either end of the museum.

One thought I have in mind if it is considered not practical to unveil it during the "At Home" is to do it immediately after the AGM. Perhaps invite Elizabeth Roads, the Lyon Clerk who is a friend of Gordon, to perform the opening and Canadians who are at the Gathering could also be in attendance.



## PROVINCE OF ONTARIO REPORT

By Edward (Ed) Smith CD., Provincial Councillor



As the Councillor representing the Province of Ontario, I have many duties one of which is finding new members for the Association. Because new members do not grow on trees I have been trying different approaches.

I have made it a point to continue to work with Robert J.(Bob) Archibald and, Marlene in as many highland games held in Ontario as I can manage. I have taken membership in the Scottish Studies Foundation and associated Scottish Studies program at Guelph University. I also am involved in other Scottish functions and events all of which provide our Clan Association with a presence.

In addition to the above I volunteered to head up the Project Canada 150, along with Jaqueline Murdoch. I expected assistance from all of the 200 plus Branch members to make it a success.

In 2017 Canada will be celebrating 150 years since confederation. It was decided at the 2014 Annual General Meeting held in Ottawa that the Canadian Branch should provide a display in the museum of Clan and Associated Families' contributions to Canadian society and Canada as a whole over the past 150 years.

A Letter was sent out to every one of the 200 members of the Canadian Branch requesting input.

The aim was get as much information about Macphersons who in some way have made contributions for the betterment of their fellow Canadians.

These would include, those who served their country in times of need at any level, be it depression, disaster, or war, those who rose to be leaders within their community, or in the realm of Government, Finance, Industry, Education or Research and Development, or those who have made a significant contribution to their community.

The stories could be about you or a member of your family if you feel there has been a contribution from this quarter.

A short write up or outline on each person of note, along with a photo, if available, would be much appreciated and can be sent as soon as possible to,

[Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org)

At this point I had hoped to be wading through a pile of material that would be sorted into lists of types of contributions. I am disappointed to report I have received only six to date.

I am asking all of you as CMA Members to pick up the ball and pitch in to get this project back on its feet. Jaqueline Murdoch and I expect this to be a total Canadian Branch effort. If you have any questions contact me and I will be pleased to clarify any issues with you

I look forward to seeing your Macpherson stories at the email address above

### PROJECT CANADA 150

A Clan Macpherson  
Museum Display Project Celebrating  
Clan Macpherson and Associated Families  
Contribution  
To Canada in the past 150 years

If you or a member of your family has contributed service to your community or to Canada your story could be posted in the Clan Museum in 2016.

If your ancestors were prominent in advancing life in Canada their history is also be of interest..

If you know of a Macpherson or Macpherson related family individual who has contributed to Canada since Confederation let us know who.

If you can contribute a story, outline ,or idea, contact Ed at

[Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org)

Without delay!

# WANTED

DEFINITELY ALIVE!

## HONORARY SECRETARY

TO START IN 2016

REQUIRED TO TAKE MINUTES OF  
BRANCH MEETINGS

USUALLY TWO EACH YEAR AT ANNUAL GATHERING

KEEPS AND MAINTAINS BRANCH  
ARCHIVES

Contact Bill as soon as possible at

[Canada.Chair@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.Chair@clan-macpherson.org)

## NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

By John C. House MOM, Provincial Councillor



There has not been anything of significance to report from Newfoundland and Labrador since September. I have been conducting historical research of Macpherson (and general Scottish) history in Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of this will be presented in future editions of the Green Banner.

We are making preparations to attend the 2016 Platinum Dhubh in Scotland. We have not yet attended a Clan Gathering, so this milestone event should be a great introduction.

## PROVINCE OF QUEBEC REPORT

By Myles G Macpherson CD., Provincial Councillor



Since September activities in the Quebec region have been at a lull. This is normally a back to work and back to school for most and so naturally my efforts have likewise been occupied in this area as well. I attended the joint Canada-US Gathering in October and was quite impressed with all that it had to offer (see my impressions elsewhere in this edition).

The end of November will see the annual St Andrew's Ball here in Montreal, which is usually very well attended by much of Montreal society including the Canadian Black Watch Regiment which is stationed in downtown Montreal.

As we move past November and through December the next major event will be the annual Robbie Burns Day dinner at the end of January. I will send reports of these events in our next issue of the Green Banner. My best wishes to everyone at this busy time of year and hope to see you all of you as you have an opportunity to pass through the Montreal area.

## NOVA SCOTIA REPORT

By Bruce Gillis QC., Provincial Councillor



MA activity in Nova Scotia since September has been fairly quiet. Tim Gillis, my brother was inducted into the Middleton Sports Heritage Hall of fame on September 26 as the Assistant Coach of the only Middleton high school hockey team ever to win the provincial high school championship. Tim has been assisting the coach ever since he was in school, so the award is well deserved.

I'm still expecting to get a copy of the book listing all the Macpherson's in the country from Sharlene Gillis, who is on course with the RCAF. I haven't seen her at band practice for several weeks, so she has not been available.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

By Mark F Macpherson



I reported to the Branch Annual General Meeting in October on the activities of the Editor for the past year. The Editorial staff is responsible for publishing the Green Banner and ensuring that the Canadian pages on the Clan website are updated with new items from time to

time. In fact each time the Green Banner is published it is posted to the website and the News tab there is updated along with revisions and corrections to the other tabs.

For those that don't know, a tab is a separate page on the website carrying a different topic. One change we made in 2015 was to add a tab covering the subject of Branch Heraldry. If you are not a regular visitor to the website I recommend, when you have time, you could visit and see what is going on there. With the advent of the Official Clan Macpherson Facebook page, administered by a separate team under CMA, where individuals carry on conversations and post their own news, photos, and videos to share with their friends, the Canadian web pages are carrying more information of a longer-term sort on topics designed to inform members of the Branch on various subjects such as Branch history, or contact information for our Council. I should add here that any suggestions regarding the content on the website are welcome

In the September issue of this newsletter, we inaugurated our long-term project to provide in each edition a biographical sketch of our former chairmen. As promised the story of our second Chairman Dr Cluny, appears in this issue. We have been approaching family members of other former chairmen to see if they could write the history or at least provide data. We have had some success with this approach and some interesting articles will appear in the future. Presently we have enough researched material to cover this project in the four issues to be published in the coming year, and the research on our former chairmen continues.

The joint Canada-US Gathering in Itasca was a success. You will notice this year in our Gathering issue for the Green Banner, we opted not have a single report but to have those Canadian Branch participants who were interested, to provide their impressions or an anecdote, on what struck them the most about the Gathering. Each contributor has a separate sub-article in their own words with thumbnail photo and byline. There is quite a variation in the views of the different authors covering the same event. We are searching for more innovations such as this to make the newsletter interesting for you the reader. Your suggestions are appreciated so let's have them.



## ALL THE VERY BEST

by Donna "Dee McPherson" Rucks



**C**lan Macpherson came to town! We sang, we danced, we listened to great music, we ate great food, we had a Pig Roast, we went to a Ceilidh, we went to a Kirkin', we toured around, we drank whisky, we told stories, we took pictures, we saw old friends, we made new friends, and we had a splendid time together!

One hundred members and guests celebrated with us at the Eaglewood Resort and Spa in Itasca, Illinois, just a short time ago, October 2-4. The occasion was the 2015 Joint US/Canadian Gathering. This joint meeting happens every five years, and this was our year to host the Canadians. We entertained 58 US members and guests, 33 Canadians, 7 Scots, and 2 Australians. We were eagerly welcomed and served by 75 named Eaglewood managers and staff, and by the unnamed and invisible housekeeping and accounting staff.

We watched 21 Ceilidh performers plus one Ceilidh Master, sing, dance, recite, and play their hearts out for us! We had a talented and experienced Whisky Master! We had 5 pipers who played now and again for us through our time together. We enjoyed 5 more performers on Saturday night, plus our MC who kept that night rolling along. There were toasts! And we had a Haggis procession never to be forgotten! We danced to the tunes of our Celtic band, Character Fleadh, five talented musicians who never stopped playing once we started dancing!

We enjoyed the talents of an art director, a graphics guy, and a professional photographer, who created and pulled together a most vivid visual background for us. And we have dance videos!

The professional photos taken at the Gathering can be viewed on Flickr at the following link: [Clan Macpherson](#) If you have problems viewing the photos, contact me for more information at donnarucks@att.net .

Our theme was "The Warmth of Your Welcome," and our goal was to create memorable and magical moments for you to savor and enjoy and take home with you. We accomplished that goal with an outstanding Gathering!

So, thank you to those who helped me, to those who attended, to those who brought a raffle or silent auction or Macpherson Marketplace gift, to those who came into the beautiful and welcoming Hospitality Room to enjoy a wee dram and have a look around, and to the entire Eaglewood Hotel and Spa family who served us. It was intense, we did something amazing, and we made a difference!

*Donna was the convener for the 2015 Joint Gathering and is a member of both the US and Canadian Branch. These are her reflections on the event.*



## Bits, All The Bitsey Bits

by Donna "Dee McPherson" Rucks

some of the tiny little details  
that made this event more special  
did you notice?

haggis presented in a shot glass, adorned with a  
little Scottish flag

Celtic instrumental music playing in the background  
of our Hospitality Room and Pig Roast

a first-time fiddle and piano duet at the Ceilidh

a Scotsman came to the Gathering, brought his guitar  
and played the blues in Chicago  
a lifelong dream  
and he got an encore

every photo, every item placed  
in the Hospitality Room  
carefully  
with meaning

the energy and talent of our Celtic band

our newest junior member  
who played her first piano solo for us  
sitting on Mom's lap

signs pointing to each location  
for each meeting

an "apple breakfast" with  
three choices of apple dishes  
on the buffet  
and sparkling apples on the table!

the immediate attention of the  
Eaglewood staff if we needed anything at all

a whisky tasting setup in the lobby  
beyond our expectations  
with the pipers making lots of music

the US National Anthem and  
the Canadian National Anthem, sung by  
the talented Christy Ogilvie McCreary  
who invited us to sing along with her!

a soulful "Amazing Grace"  
prelude on the piano  
at the Kirkin'

## JOINT GATHERING 2015

At the completion of the Gathering this year the members of the Canadian Branch who were there, were asked for their impressions or an anecdote on what they experienced during the weekend. Donna Rucks who was the convener provided a summary report found elsewhere in this issue on page 7. These are the impressions of Branch members at large and not just a report by one individual.

### HATS OFF!

By June Macpherson



Hats Off to the Organizing Committee led by Donna Rucks for the wonderful week-end at the Eaglewood Resort! After a harrowing drive on the Chicago Thruway, Mark and I arrived at the resort to be met by a super receptionist who immediately made us feel welcome and took care of all our needs. Our room overlooked the first tee of the golf course and a wonderful maple which was just turning red. We then proceeded to the Prairie River Lounge and a drink which revived our spirits and a delicious dinner which was much enjoyed.

And that was only the beginning! Very indulgent was the Spa treatment enjoyed by many as was the pool and the bowling. Of course the Ceillidh, the dinner dance and



Photo by Mark

the meetings were all part and parcel of the festivities. But most important of all was renewing acquaintance with so many cousins from North America, Europe and Australia. I can't mention names for fear of leaving someone out but I hope to see everyone at the Platinum Dhubh—will I see you there???



### A PLEASURE

By Ed Smith



What a Happening!! The venue was first rate and the organization was top notch, There was a cadre of volunteers made up of CMA members from various regions of the US who, with Donna Rucks' guidance, made the event flow seamlessly. To say nothing about the planned off site events consisting of wine tours, Cathedral tours and sight seeing or shopping in Chicago.

Internal events were well attended especially the Whiskey tasting hosted by our good friend Sandy Macpherson, and the pipe –off by three US branch pipers. There was many a happy winner when the raffle draws were made. I came away with a cozy red tartan flannel shirt, just what I needed for the upcoming winter season.



Photo by Mark

US Branch pipers at work

The Canadian Branch Council and AGM went well. There were two items that were of particular interest to me; the proposed exhibit next year in the Clan Museum of Clan and associat-

ed Family contributions to Canada during the past 150 years, and a proposal to Council for the Branch to be associated Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada, an umbrella organization.

In all, this Gathering was a pleasure and worthwhile investment of time and money and I encourage all members to take advantage of annual Gatherings in the future

### A BEAUTIFUL VENUE

By Ken Gillis



The joint clan Gathering was a great success. There were over 100 participants and Canada was well represented. Donna Rucks the US convenor and her team did an amazing job of organizing and executing the event. Everything went off without a hitch.

Some very talented Macphersons performed at the ceilidh. The youngest being 5 year old Sarah, who performed on the piano. Canada was represented by Ed Smith who rendered a version of the Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen without accompaniment

and our chairman, Bill Macpherson, who did an encore presentation of Tam O'Shanter. Bill, as usual, gave an absolutely magnificent performance. The ceilidh was followed by a whiskey tasting, which



Photo by Mark

Kirkin on the golf course

I enjoyed very much. It is hard to beat a good Scotch.

The Gathering took place in a beautiful, if somewhat confusing, hotel with golf course attached. During the Kirking of the Tartan one could gaze out the windows and watch as golfers teed off. Of course I would not do that, as I paid close attention to the service.

All in all a very enjoyable weekend.



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## JOINT GATHERING 2015

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### THERE IS NO FEAR IN MACPHERSON

by Donna "Dee McPherson" Rucks



The newest US Branch junior member, Sarah Dirksen, played her first piano solo at our Ceilidh, sitting on Mom's lap. Sarah just turned 5 years old, and she is the daughter of Dave and Lisa Dirksen of Colorado Springs, Colorado. The name of her piece was Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."



Photo by Emil Schiavo

*Sarah was fearless, she was flawless, she was smiling through the entire performance.*

Her excitement and confidence was overflowing as she sat back down at her table to watch other Macphersons perform. In fact, not too long after, her grandmother got up to play a piece on the concertina. As I announced her grandma's name, Sarah jumped up and down and shouted, "You can do it, Grandma!"

Even the child knows there is no fear in Macpherson!

### A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY

By Robert J Archibald



The Joint 2015 American and Canadian Branch Gathering held in Itasca Illinois was a wonderful opportunity to enjoy each other's company without having to travel across the pond. Members from both North American branches and several members of the Scottish Branch got together for a weekend of fun and entertainment with a side order of yearly business thrown in.

On Friday evening after registration, we gathered in one of the large halls for a meal of barbecued pig with all the trimmings. We were entertained at the ceilidh by some very young ladies aged 6 to 12 from the local Thistle Highland Dance Group. Some of our talented members also performed in the usual ceilidh fashion, each of them demonstrating their particular skills and talents. One budding young artist who was 5 years old played the piano for our appreciation and pleasure. Later there was a whisky tasting in the lobby of the resort for everyone who enjoys a wee dram.

Saturday afternoon provided some time to take in some sights or do some shopping. Several members visited the Masonic Scottish Rite Cathedral, located only a few blocks away. On Saturday evening following our formal dinner, there was a display of highland dancing by two young women from the same local dance group who performed superbly, followed by the US Branch pipers who plied their craft.

### LIFE IS GOOD!

By Bill Macpherson



We planned to allow time for a visit to Chicago, which we made on Wednesday, marveling at the City's architecture from the comfort of a river boat cruise. The sun shone and weather remained calm whilst aboard but we found out on dry land why it is known as the 'Windy City'. Glad I was not wearing the kilt!

All planned activities went very well. Generous portions at the various banquets and everyone had fun at the Ceilidh and Ball. Mike Miller of the US Branch did an admirable job presiding over the worship and 'Kirkin of the Tartan' ceremony. Donna had arranged a few side excursions - something for everyone, allowing an ideal mixture of large and small group activities. There were 31 in the Canadian contingent and everyone seemed to be having a fun weekend.

I was very pleased that all of the Canadian Branch Officers made the trip including three of our Provincial Councillors; Don Pearson, Alberta; Ed Smith Ontario and Myles Macpherson Quebec. Our meetings were brief and constructive allowing us to apportion maximum time afterward for drams & nourishment.

Life is good!



Photo by Mark

*The Address to the Haggis  
R T Macpherson, Piper US Branch, David MacPherson Australia, Sword Bearer, Bill Macpherson, Chair Canadian Branch, the Resort Chef, Sandy Macpherson Scotland, Whiskey Bearer*

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## JOINT GATHERING 2015

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### CONNECTING

By Jacqueline Murdoch



The Gathering, no matter where it is held, is about connecting. Connecting with family, with friends we see regularly or infrequently, and with people we have never met. The 2015 Gathering in Chicago was special because not only was I able to spend time not only with my two favourite women in the world, Rebekkah and Jamie, but I was able to spend time with friends I've made over the years, and to be introduced to new friends from around the world.



Jacqueline with daughters Rebekkah left and Jamie right

The Gathering allows for a connection on another level: a connection to my cultural past. When I was younger, this connection to my ancestral roots was not particularly important. But over the years I've learned that these roots are deep and strong and contribute significantly to who I am today as a woman, a Canadian, and a citizen of the world. Watching the rituals of The Gathering each year fills me with a sense of belonging. So like Thanksgiving, Canada Day, and various religious holidays, The Gathering has become a regular celebration with family and friends who share a cultural past. A cultural past that connects us deep in our hearts and for many, many more years to come.

### GREAT MACPHERSON CELEBRATION

By Mary Margaret Gillies



The celebration of all things Macpherson was evident from beginning to end. As Cluny reminds us, we are cousins. I always look forward to connecting with friends only seen at our Gatherings.

I really liked the choice of venue. It's public areas enabled us to meet and visit with others. Seating arrangements at the Saturday night dinner facilitated meeting new friends. I loved all the music and the dinner music was a great idea.

So many items to see on the walls of the hospitality room, a gallery in itself, demonstrating a lot of planning and artistry. I won the Bodhran in the silent auction. If I learn to play it by 2016, I'll bring it along to our Branch Gathering next fall. Who else among us plays a musical instrument? ...Band anyone?

From beginning to end an atmosphere of energy, comradery, and fun. A new place, new friends, new experiences.

### A MEMORABLE WEEKEND

By Chantal McPherson



I had the pleasure of attending our joint US / Canada gathering in Chicago. Many thanks to all the wonderful volunteers for putting on a memorable weekend. I was reminded of how heart-warming it is to see my "cousins" and share whisky, laughter, dancing while bagpipes stir our emotions! I must say the Celtic Band that kept us entertained at the Ball was fantastic. You can find a video on Youtube of the "Eightsome Reel-2015 Clan Macpherson at the following link:

<http://youtu.be/3JQuMun9vNA>

### MY RETURN TO CHICAGO

By Robert W Archibald



The Itasca Gathering was a first for us in a couple of ways: while we have met many of our American cousins previously, both in Scotland and at Canadian Gatherings, this was our first visit to an event in the U.S.; also it was the first time we have brought all of our children (and one grand) to a Gathering anywhere. It was a grand time and they all enjoyed it—hats off to the organizers! Then Sondra and I capped the weekend on Monday with our anniversary (58<sup>th</sup>).

We also took the opportunity to see some highlights in the Chicago area. I spent some months in Chicago many years ago (around 1965) and this was my first return to the area since. Needless to say there have been many changes but the heart of the city retains its impressive heritage. The Architectural Boat Tour was fantastic, also the Art Institute, and we made a visit to some of the Frank Lloyd Wright houses in Oak Park.

All in all, a wonderful week

### SOMETHING WONDERFULLY CHERISHED

By Arielle Macpherson



Friday night the ceilidh was very diverse and full of smiles. The performers provided a wide variety of presentations from a culture of which we are all a part. On Saturday evening, all presented themselves with their best dress for the formal dinner. We had good music and good food. The dance floor was filled with dancers.

The highlight of this Gathering for me was definitely how many people came from near and far to preserve and celebrate their common ancestry and culture. It will always be a pleasure to be part of something wonderfully cherished.



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## JOINT GATHERING 2015

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### FUN AND MIRTH

By Myles Macpherson



Our family travelled from Montreal to Chicago on Friday October 2 by air. When we arrived, the City of Chicago was living up to its name as the windy city. Although the weather was somewhat bleak and dreary, the welcoming at the resort in Itasca northeast of Chicago was warm and friendly. All was well organized and we were heartily greeted by happy clans-people. Once in the hotel all began to run smoothly. We were told what was happening when and where it would take place. It was immediately obvious that this was going to be an easy going weekend with our clan cousins.

Donna had taken time to look after all of the small details which meant that everything ran without a hitch so that to those of us who just had to enjoy ourselves experienced nothing but fun and mirth. Each of the events was well-handled from the Ceilidh on Friday night, to the final gathering up of our raffle booty.

The gala dinner on Saturday evening was resplendent with everyone donning their finest highland regalia. There was a fine band playing and some of the clan also provided some musical entertainment during the evening. Of course those that were able, began to dance towards the latter part of the night once our bellies were full of fine fare. For my part I found that all was beyond enjoyable and look forward to both our next Canadian Branch gathering in 2016 as well as our next joint North American get together in 2020. See you all there.

### MEETING NEW FRIENDS

By Linda Zema Macpherson



Myles and I were lucky enough to be able to attend the Clan Macpherson Joint US-Canadian Gathering 2015.

The best thing about these get together's, is that it is always nice to be able to see old friends that we've met at the different rallies that we've attended over the years. Of course you make new friends each time as there is always someone new to meet and a new place to visit which is one of the purposes of the Gatherings. The extra bonus is that you get to visit a new part of the county, whether it's in Canada, the US or Scotland.

So needless to say I am looking forward to the next one that I'll be able to attend.

## YOUR BRANCH NEEDS YOU

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

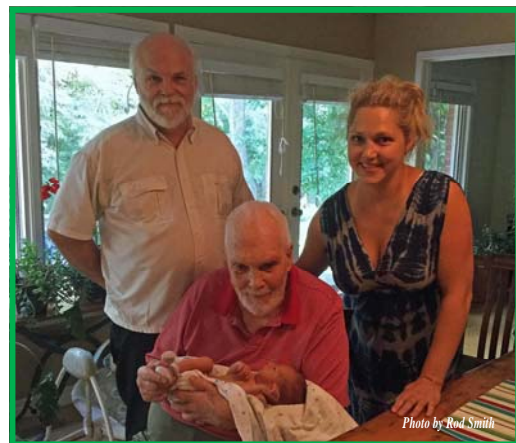
In order to grow our Branch and make Clan Macpherson Association a truly national organization, we need a presence in each province where we have members,

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 the Branch Council. Contact Bill Macpherson at

Canada.Chair@clan-macpherson.org

## ROD SMITH, GRANDFATHER



Rod's daughter Erin delivered a bouncing baby boy in August, who will henceforth be known as Ronin. In the photo from left to right proud grandfather Rod, great-grandfather Rod with Ronin, and mother Erin. Four generations in the same picture!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank all of our contributors to this issue. Without their support the November edition would not have been possible. Robert J Archibald, Robert W Archibald, Jean Duffy (USA), Mary Margaret Gillies, Ken Gillis, John House, Arielle Macpherson, Bill Macpherson, Ewen S L MacPherson (Scotland), June Macpherson, Linda Macpherson, Myles Macpherson, Chantal McPherson, Dee McPherson, Jacqueline Murdoch, Ed Smith and Rod Smith.



WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...  
THE TOUGH EAT HAGGIES

MacDonald was in poor health. He asked his friend Macpherson if he would pour a bottle of scotch over his grave if he should die one of these days.

Macpherson said, "I'll be glad to, laddie, but would you mind if I passed it through my kidneys first?"

# GATHERING PHOTO ALBUM

ITASCA  
2015



Photo by Dee

*Chef with roasted pig, ready for the swine - out to begin*



Photo by Mark

*Kirkin in the tartan. A US Branch special event.*



Photo by Mark

*A sterling performance of Tam O'Shanter*



Photo by Mark

*Rius Alcorn, Clan Museum Curator cum rocker*



Photo by Mark

***Slàinte Mhath!**  
The traditional toast to the haggis following the address. The hotel chefs always enjoy this part of the ceremony*



Photo by Mark

*Your Council deliberating at the meeting. Note, golf course beckoning in the background*



Photo by June

*Checking out the vintages at the Linfred Winery nearby*