

The URLAR: A Short History Of The Name and The Journal *a compilation from two URLAR stories*

(with thanks to George McPherson for the first writing of The Urlar story, just after Issue #136 had been written, to Jack Raines for some additional facts, and to Ewen Macpherson, Tallashee, for his story about the other Urlars he has found in his research)

URLAR, the journal

The URLAR is the quarterly journal published for members of the US Branch of Clan Macpherson Association. The name URLAR is Gaelic in origin meaning floor or layer, course or vein. Our URLAR journal and the US Branch website serve as the main means of communication between the US members and Clan Macpherson Association members who visit the website or read the journal.

Conceived in 1974, the URLAR started as three pages, stapled in the top left corner, folded in half, and addressed and stamped by hand. The first Editor was on the lookout for someone else to take his place, because the last page was signed “Robert B. Macpherson, Editor — until we have a volunteer.” He remained as Editor for 35 issues.

At this writing, there have been 170 issues of the URLAR. It has grown from 3 pages to 76 pages and the latest issue was 64 pages. There was no **Issue #13**, perhaps for some superstitious reason.

The cover of the issues has been printed in a variety of colors as the years went by: white, gold, blue-green, and orange.

Some interesting historical facts have been found in past URLARS: the cost for hotels for the US Rally in 1975 ranged from \$10.70 to \$24.00. There were three Editors in **Issue #11 (January) 1977**: Robert B. Macpherson, James M. Jarrett, and Herman T. Armitt.

Beginning with **Issue #35 (Spring) 1985**, the URLAR took on the more familiar look of today, and for the first time was printed with hard paper stock covers. It was 48 pages in length. Rod Clarke was the Editor, and the format he set up has remained for many years. “Focusing On You” appeared for the first time in that issue.

Issue #38 (Winter) 1985 marked the first time an issue was given a Gaelic name: An Geamhradh. The Gaelic name of the season has been added to all issues since then: **(Winter: An Geamhradh. Spring: An Earrach. Summer: An Smahradh. Autumn: An Foghar).**

There was a change of Editor in 1987 from Rod Clarke to John Fish, who served as Editor until 1989. David W. Howard became Editor after that, and introduced a formal *Table of Contents* in the front of each issue. In 1995, Rod Clarke and John Charles Macpherson stepped up as co-Editors, serving until 1996 when Jack Raines became Editor. Jack was Editor for 48 issues plus one special issue and multiple pamphlets. With Jack as Editor, URLAR grew to 76 pages, Scriptype Publishing became the official Publisher, and remains so today. Jack continued as Editor until 2008, at which time George McPherson became the current Editor.

URLAR, a name not unique to just this journal

Urlar Wine is produced in Gladstone, North Island, New Zealand, by the Thomson family who originated in Scotland. They chose the name Urlar when they founded the company in 2004, because of its Gaelic meaning 'Earth' and their desire to bring an abundance of life back to the ancient soil.

Urlar Design Flooring is found in County Donegal, Ireland, and proudly boasts that "quality doesn't have to cost the earth."

The small village of Urlaur, also referred to as Urlar, is found in County Mayo, Ireland. Its Dominican Abbey is located by the shore of **Urlaur/Urlar Lake**.

A farm to the southwest of the pretty market town of Aberfeldy in Highland Perthshire is named **Urlar Farm**, and through it runs the **Urlar Burn**. The dramatic falls and woods by the side of Urlar Burn are well-known for their plants and wildlife. It was here in 1787 Robert Burns wrote **The Birks O'Aberfeldy** (*the Birches of Aberfeldy*).