



# THE GREEN BANNER

## NEWSLETTER

Clan Macpherson Association Canadian Branch

Vol. 10 Number 3

FALL ISSUE

September 2016

### NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

By Chantal McPherson, Registrar



It is with sadness that I must announce the passing of two members. One of our oldest Life members Mrs. Margaret Hambleton lived in Edinburgh, Scotland. Although I had never met Margaret, just this past winter I had received a lovely hand written note in the mail just to let me know how much she enjoyed receiving news from Canada via the Green Banner. On July 13, Dawn Roussel, life member, wife of Roderick E. Smith of Waterloo, Ontario died. On behalf of all members we extend our deepest condolences.

I will be stepping down from the Registrar position soon and would like to thank all members for your trust. Special thanks to Mark F. Macpherson our Editor and Jan Macpherson of Glenfarg Scotland, CMA Registrar and Editor of The Creag Dhubh for all your help & support.

See you all soon in Toronto at the Delta East for a great Gathering!

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Warm good wishes to all of our members and readers in Canada and around the globe. Summer has been hot and dry in Ontario in sharp contrast to the wet and windy conditions in Badenoch on the Platinum Dhubh Gathering weekend. Despite the weather Irene and I had a fabulous weekend and the organisers did an excellent job. Twenty-three members and guests from the Canadian Branch were among the 373 participants and a great time was had by all. You will find some of the feedback in the article “Platinum Dhubh Impressions” on pages 16 to 19 inclusive.

I was pleased to report to the Association AGM that the Canadian Branch was alive and kicking and looking forward our own Gathering in September.

It is appropriate, that as the Autumnal Equinox arrives on 22<sup>nd</sup> September this year, the start of a new season, our Gathering begins the next day heralding the opportunity for new leadership and Council members for the Branch. It has been my privilege to serve as Chairman, but as has become customary after three years it is time to elect a new person to fill the role. My thanks to all of the office bearers for their excellent support and to former Chairmen for their wise council and encouragement, and to the members at large for making our Branch such a fun and interesting group to which we all belong.

I would encourage all members to attend the AGM if possible, and to consider taking on a role in council. It will not consume too much of your time and there are many, many past officers eager and willing to provide advice and assistance. Please contact Mark Macpherson if you are interested, the only requirement is affection for the clan and the association.

In closing, I would like to say a final word of thanks to all of the contributors to our newsletter and to our Editor for compiling another excellent edition.

Yours Aye, **Bill Macpherson**

### MESSAGE FROM CLUNY



Just to report that the 90th birthday party was for me a great occasion---all done for me by all the family! Annie has many pics. But also to thank you and all others who sent wonderful cards and messages. So many that I simply cannot thank individually, and hope that in your next circular you could very kindly send my warmest thanks to all who sent greetings. They all much enriched the day! Most grateful thanks.

With all love and salutes, - **Bill/Cluny**

## TREASURER'S CORNER

By Ken Gillis Honorary Treasurer



The Branch is in good shape financially as of the end of July. We have \$5,135 in our current account and \$11,131 in our Life Membership Fund. We are showing a deficit of \$1,054 year to date at the end of July. The deficit is largely because we have paid the deposit for the Clan Gathering and to date only \$200 in registrations has been deposited. I believe this is the result of many of our members attending the Platinum Dhubb in Scotland, and delaying their registration.

I plan to remit our membership fees to Clan Macpherson Association mid-September in accordance with the request of the CMA Registrar. This change is an effort to align the membership accounting across the entire association.

I am only expecting the expenses associated with our Branch Gathering for the remainder of this year. Our Gathering is typically self-supporting and so should not affect our final financial position.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the Gathering in Scarborough this September.

## DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER ISSUE

Articles, stories and photos for the November issue are due on the Editors desk on October 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

## 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  
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Robert W Archibald PhD, Honorary Secretary  
Chantal McPherson, Registrar

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Bruce Gillis QC, Nova Scotia  
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Ed Smith CD, Ontario  
Donald Pearson, Alberta  
Helen Macpherson-Potts British Columbia

**Editor:** Mark F Macpherson CD

**Associate Editor:** John C House MOM

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

## WE REMEMBER

**Margaret Macpherson Hambleton**, the first Editor of the Canadian Branch, passed away in Scotland in July at the age of 91. She was born in Edinburgh, grew up there, and graduated MA (Honours) from Edinburgh University. Margaret joined the CMA in 1949 in Scotland and was Secretary of the East Scotland Branch. She emigrated to



Canada and transferred to the Canadian Branch in 1959 as a life member. In Canada she worked as an actuarial in the insurance field and eventually became senior economist with the Nova Scotia Government. After the death of her husband Arthur Hambleton, whom she had met in Canada, Margaret returned to Scotland in 1992. Margaret edited and published the Canadian Branch Newsletter for five years until she left for Scotland. She was pleased that the Branch kept up the newsletter tradition with the Green Banner and sent letters complimenting us on our publication. She remained a member of the Canadian Branch until her demise.

**Dawn Roussel** life member, passed away in July at the age of



59, after a long illness, Dawn was the wife of Rod Smith former Ontario Provincial Councillor. Her career was in education, the past 25 years in Early Childhood Education at the University of Waterloo. She received The National Certificate of Achievement from the Federal Government in 2007 recognizing her outstanding contributions and dedication to this field

## PROJECT CANADA

# 150

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

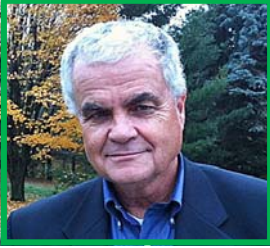
If you or a member of your family has contributed service to your community or to Canada your story could be posted in the Clan Museum in 2018.

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

**Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org**

# JOHN DONALD MACPHERSON

By J Douglas MacPherson



My father, J. Donald MacPherson, our seventh Chairman, was extremely active in the Clan Association involved in International, Canadian, and American Branch activities for over 60 years until the time of his death.

He was born at his family's home at Duart located in southwestern Ontario. Because his father Dr. John Roy MacPherson was the local country doctor, the house also served as the local medical clinic. Later, the house became the home and clinic for his brother Dr. J. Archibald MacPherson, and currently remains in the family, owned by J. Donald's nieces. He attended the one-room country school in Duart before completing his high school at the Ridgetown District High School.



J Donald circa 1938

In 1938, Donald attended the University of Western Ontario for two years prior to going to UCLA to earn his degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1940. During his time at Western, he participated on the Western rifle team and won a gold medal in sharp shooting. After finishing at UCLA, Donald returned to Canada to work for the war effort in the design of landing pontoons for small aircraft for the Arctic. He was unable to serve in the military during World War II due to emphyse-

ma, a serious chest condition.

Donald married Elizabeth (Betty) Inksater in 1945 at the Church of the Advent in Ridgetown, Ontario where her brother-in-law, the Rev. Douglas Henry, was rector. Following the wedding, they moved down to the United States, living in Lancaster Pennsylvania before moving to Mansfield and Sandusky, Ohio. During that time, Donald worked for New Holland Machinery, a farm implement company.

Donald and Betty returned to Canada in 1952 settling first in Burlington for two years before moving to Oakville, where they built their permanent home, Kildonan, and raised their three children Peter (deceased), Douglas, and Cluny. He and Betty named their home in honour of the Strath of Kildonan, where Donald's ancestors came from before they embarked for Canada in 1813. *The Red River Story* by Alfred Silver details the story of J Donald's ancestors' journey from Scotland to Canada.

In Oakville, Donald took a very active role in community affairs. He served as a Wolf Cub leader for several years. As well, he was extremely involved with St. Jude's Anglican Church sitting on the financial committee, working as a Sunday school teacher, serving as a sideman, and becoming the deputy People's Warden in the mid-1960s. Also, he worked on numerous local campaigns for the Progressive Conservative Party during elections. As a member of the Oakville Club, Donald participated in a number of tennis tournaments.

After returning to Canada from the US, Donald became Presi-

dent of Storarr Dunbrick, a company involved in the production and marketing of bricks to builders. Later he became Vice-President of St. Mary's Cement in 1960. He was quite active in the Canadian Concrete Masonry Producers Association serving as Chairman in the late 1960's.

Donald's interest and involvement with CMA started when he attended a rally held at Riverdale Presbyterian Church, Toronto in 1956. It was during that rally that a photograph of Dr. Cluny Macpherson of St. John's Newfoundland our second Chairman, was taken with Donald's daughter Cluny and published the next day in the Toronto Telegram. This photograph can now be seen at the Clan Museum in Newtonmore. Upon joining the Association, he immediately became involved with Canadian Branch affairs serving on the Executive Committee. He was elected Canadian Chairman in 1971 holding the office until 1978.

During his term as Chairman, Donald and Betty, who also was the Branch Secretary, hosted the Chief and Lady Cluny when they were honoured guests at the CNE in 1972. He worked closely with the late Robert Macpherson of the USA in re-establishing the US Branch and separating it from the Canadian, which had been called the North American Branch. Immediately following his term as Canadian Chairman, he was elected as CMA Vice Chair becoming CMA Chairman in 1979 until 1982. As a result of his various roles with the Association, Donald attended 17 rallies in Scotland with the last one being in 2002, marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clan Museum, where he was joined by 16 members of his family. In addition to his official duties in the CMA, Donald and Betty hosted visiting clansmen from the U.K. and U.S.A at their home Kildonan including the Chief and Lady Cluny on several occasions.



As Chairman, Canadian Branch 1972



His personal coat of arms matriculated at Lyon Court in Edinburgh in 1981

In his final years at Wyndham Manor in Oakville, Ontario, Donald received many visits from Canadian as well as overseas clansmen. He died on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and his ashes were interred at St. Jude's Memorial Gardens where the ashes of his wife Betty and son Peter are also interred.



I wish to thank my sister, Cluny MacPherson-Zawadzki for her invaluable help in this article

J Douglas MacPherson was Chairman of the Canadian Branch from 2000 to 2004. He was also Editor of our newsletter called "Bratach Uaine" (1991—1997) then "The Green Banner" (2000—2003).(ed)

## CMA CHAIR REPORT

By Jean Macpherson-Duffy



Two weeks after the Platinum Dhubh, I sit here in the Scottish sun with a light breeze rustling the leaves. The hills are purple with heather. The scene could not be more gorgeous. If only this weather had taken place during our weekend activities in August.

The Platinum Dhubh, so long in the planning, has come and gone. Almost everything was perfect except the weather! The rain, which started on Saturday afternoon, became even heavier with ferocious wind on Sunday afternoon. I understand that the wind gusts over the Cairngorms were the second highest ever recorded in August!! The Ruthven ceilidh was therefore moved into our large marquee at the Duke of Gordon Hotel. The ceilidh was wonderful, just absent the flaming torches.

The worries were over, as to whether we would make the required attendance to receive the grant from “Event Scotland”, which required the sum of the product of activities and attendance to be 2000. We had over fourteen countries represented, and 350 seated for the ball. With 10 activities and significant participation in each we exceeded the target, thanks to our hard-working organizing committee

The Platinum Dhubh badge produced by your branch is beautiful and will be worn for years on my jacket with my Association badge. Thank you so much for your beautiful contribution. Gordon’s design said it all – the logo is exactly right.

As I said in my report to the AGM, what makes us, as a clan

association so successful is the willingness to work by much of the membership. Without the team that I was able to put together, I can assure you the week-long activities would not have occurred. Every branch participated, as did so many others on the various committees. It is this feeling of family and togetherness that is the glue that makes us as one. All over the world there is so much strife, war and hopelessness,

yet we shine as an example of how the many nations, all with different ideas, can come together with one goal. At our meetings we may have very different and vocal opinions, but in the end, we share a commitment for inclusion of various viewpoints. With democratically run meetings, all voices may be heard. In fact at the AGM Xerxes Harrington a US Branch member, who owns property in Italy brought up an idea, hatched by several European members, that we should have a European

Branch! We welcome such ideas, and Xerxes will be working on this along with our legal expert John Barton. The proposal will be presented in full at the November 5<sup>th</sup> Council meeting at the Museum in Newtonmore. We welcome this type of enthusiasm and expansion.

I regret that I will not see you at your Gathering in Toronto this year – although I will be in Victoria, off a cruise ship, for a visit. So I will be in Canada – but at the wrong side!

Many thanks for your continuing support. To Bill, who leaves the Chairmanship of the Branch – thank you for your leadership and support. I look forward to working with all of you in the future. Blessings to you all,



Jean Macpherson-Duffy as CMA Chair leading the March on the Elian



A panoramic view of the Annual General Meeting held in the marquee tent at the Platinum Dhubh. Jean is addressing the meeting

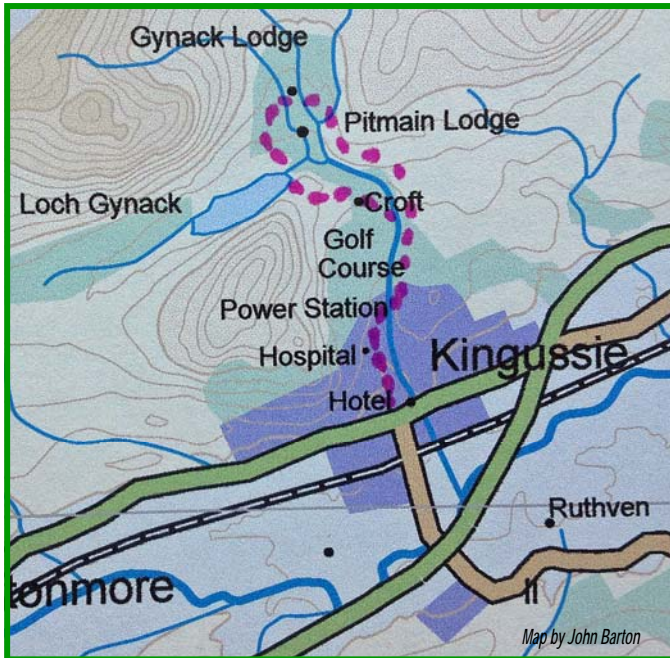
# UP THE GYNACK

By Mark F Macpherson



On Monday August 8, Ed Smith and I assembled with 90 other clans-folk in front of the Duke of Gordon Hotel with John Barton to participate in one of his famous “walks”.

The River Gynack has its source at Loch Gynack located about 1000 meters up a hill 100 meters high behind the hotel. The river passes just to the east of the Duke of Gordon and runs under the main road through Kingussie on its way to the River Spey. It is narrow and runs fast with the rushing sound of it quite clear from the hotel. The river originally supplied water power to linen mills in the town during the 19<sup>th</sup> century



The track of the walk up the Gynack



John Barton briefing the intrepid hikers in front of the Duke of Gordon Hotel at the beginning of the walk. Ed Smith is listening intently

The weather for the walk started out sunny and a little cool but as the walk progressed up the steep hill, a light rain started falling adding to the fun. The trail started following a paved road rising steeply from the hotel, and at the St Vincent's hospital originally a TB sanatorium, we crossed over the river on a short foot bridge. There was a small weir supplying water to a small generating station below that supplies power to the local community. The path was now rougher still ascending steeply with steps cut into the hill that had a high rise and short run making them challenging to ascend. We were following the river which was roaring below us while the rain showers were getting heavier. Plastic ponchos were issued to some who did not bring umbrellas.

We passed a ruined croft for the lands on which the Kingussie golf course is now located, and crossed over one of fairways ascending to the headwaters of the river at Loch Gynack. There is another weir between the loch and the river for a generating station that supplies power to the Pitmain Estate into which we now passed, arriving at the Gynack Lodge. From there we took a loop descending down the road from the estate to Kingussie ending back at the hotel with the sun now shining. We had walked through history, with commentaries here and there by John Barton that provided additional interest and kept our spirits up in the inclement weather.



Loch Gynack, the source of the river. The weir providing hydraulic head for the Pitmain generating station is in the foreground

The forebears of Alastair Macpherson of Pitmain, came from the estate. He is a senior Chieftain of the Clan Macpherson who is a former Chairman of CMA, and continues to have a keen interest in the Association.

It is also interesting to note that Robert Louis Stevenson who wrote the novel *Kidnapped* which included a piece with Cluny of the '45, visited Kingussie in 1882. Stevenson described the River Gynack as “the golden burn that pours and sulks in the den behind Kingussie.”

The author wishes to thank John Barton for his advice and excellent assistance with this article, which includes the map he painstakingly produced

# RUTHVEN IN MY REAR-VIEW MIRROR

by Donna "Dee McPherson" Rucks



Ruthven is in my rear-view mirror now, and my trip to Scotland will soon become but a memory. Leaving behind the dramatic landscapes, the ancient ruins, the cows and sheep and bunnies and deer, the piper on the hill, the blooming heather, and the peace in the Highlands. I take home with me the friendships made and the spirit of the Clan. I have started to plan my return for next year.

One purpose for this month-long trip was to attend the Platinum Dhubh, take down the Minutes from the Council Meeting and the AGM, and spend some time in the Museum. But the other purpose was to enjoy the quiet of the Highlands, relax, read, write my reports, concentrate on my music, and finish writing my fourth book.

I started my UK journey with my travel buddy, Harriet Heyda from Chicago, with first night in London and the express mission to visit the Imperial War Museum and the Churchill War Rooms and Museum.



The famous Royal Crescent at Bath



Harriet and I at Stonehenge

we decided to have our lunch in Wales. Next day, my birthday, we spent the day at Stonehenge.



Saying goodbye to Ruthven Barracks at Kingussie



Heather in full bloom in the Highlands

We continued our trip by train to Bath for four nights, with a visit to the Royal Crescent, the Roman Baths (still overwhelmed), and immersed ourselves into Jane Austen history. Next day, our driver took us to Malmesbury Abbey and Ladswood Farm, and at that point, we decided to

visit to Newton Castle, when Cluny leaned in to me and said, "go and play my piano."

I stayed long enough in the Highlands to see the heather turn brilliant purple and bloom. I enjoyed a very special Tea with Lady Jean Macpherson, with an invite to play her grand piano at Biallid. Attending Sunday morning worship service at Laggan Church was very nice indeed.

A quick flight took us from Bristol to Edinburgh, two days before the Royal Mile Walk and the Tea at Catherine and Sandy's, to kick off the Platinum Dhubh. It gave us a chance to enjoy a morning at the National Portrait Gallery before lunch at the Witchery with our friends Jim and Joyce Newport.

Our driver took us north to Badenoch, where the Clan festivities were set to begin. Activities were literally non-stop for the five days. We were welcomed each evening to the quiet of our B&B and a warm peat fire. The creative breakfasts cooked and served by our hosts John and Irene England, gave us a great start to the day.

There are some magic moments to remember and share, including finding the Moor of Feshie, where the bracken and the pines filled my senses, with a view from the earth to the blue sky beyond. One day I took the train to Perth for a visit to the Black Watch Museum to see the Poppies: Weeping Window and was treated to a personal tour by Bill Macpherson. A memorable moment was my



At Tea with Lady Jean Macpherson

As the days progress and the trip draws to a close, I will say farewell to the Highlands. I am comforted that Ruthven will not long be in my rear-view mirror and I will soon be planning my return. When you come to Scotland next year for the Gathering, perhaps you can customize your trip and see some more of the sights! I look forward to seeing you next year!

# THE BLACK WATCH MUSEUM

By Mark F Macpherson



Wednesday August 9 after our visit to Newton Castle, June and I went to Perth as in all of our visits to Scotland, we had never been there. We stayed at a great spot, in an old manor house on a hill overlooking the Village of Scone just north of Perth, sporting two golf courses and two hiking trails. Bill Macpherson of Glenfarg who was acting as a volunteer guide for the Black Watch Museum had offered to give us a personal guided tour of the museum the next day.

The museum is located in a stately building called Balhousie Castle near the North Inch, where in 1396 the king had the Cromyngs and the Macphersons settle their differences in a battle of 30 selected champions per side. The Macphersons won and our Chief's coat of arms bears the charge in the chief of a hand grasping a dagger commemorating this long-ago event. By the way "Inch" is not a measurement but the Gaelic word for swampy ground.



Balhousie Castle home of the Black Watch Museum

The Black Watch (*Am Freiceadan Dhubh*) was originally formed as independent companies of highlanders in 1725, with the aim of reducing smuggling and cattle rustling as well as to keep an eye on the Jacobites. In 1739 they were integrated into the British Army as the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot. This Regiment fought in many battles for the British Empire during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries including at Montreal and Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) during the French and Indian War preceding the American Revolution in which they also participated. The Black Watch holds several battle honours covering many countries around the world, the two world wars, Korea, and the Iraq War. With the amalgamation of Highland Regiments in 2004 it is now designated the Black Watch, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

In Canada there is an allied militia battalion in Montreal, the



Diorama of the battle of Fort Carillon July 1758 in which the Black Watch participated. The Highlanders could not employ their famous charge against these defences and lost to the French. The fort became Ticonderoga, now located in upper New York State

Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment of Canada) that traces its roots back to the 5th Battalion Volunteer Militia Rifles in 1862. In 1930 the battalion was designated The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) of Canada and is the oldest Highland Regiment in Canada. This unit served with distinction in World War II. It became the Canadian regular army highland regiment designated the Black Watch (RHC) in 1953 until 1970 when the two regular battalions were reduced to nil strength.

The museum represents this proud military history with many artifacts from the various campaigns throughout its 291-year history. There are several rooms holding exhibits arranged in chronological order and very well presented. Bill was an excellent guide adding many historical anecdotes along the way and took us over to the North Inch so we could have an appreciation of this Macpherson event as well.



Part of the Canadian Black Watch exhibit. Note the World War I kit on the mannequin This man would have served in the Royal Highlanders of Canada, a predecessor regiment of the current Canadian Black Watch Militia unit

Sources:

<http://www.regimentsofscotland.com/origins/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Black\\_Watch\\_\(Royal\\_Highland\\_Regiment\\_of\\_Canada\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Black_Watch_(Royal_Highland_Regiment_of_Canada))

## BEFORE BADENOCH

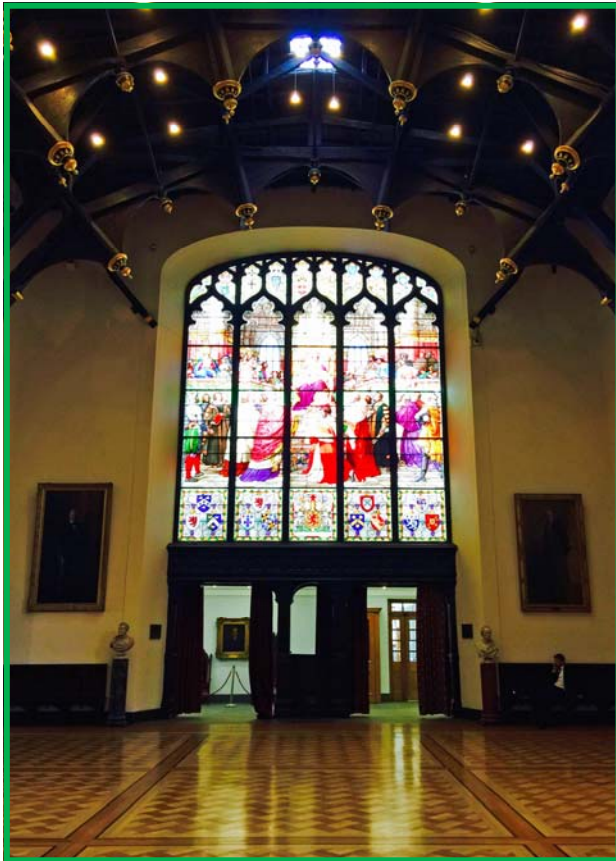
By Donna "Dee McPherson" Rucks



This year the Gathering had an extra day of activities in Edinburgh for those who could come early to the Platinum Dhubh. On August 3 an organized walk of the Royal Mile along with a formal Tea were scheduled.

Sandy was right! The Royal Mile walk on Wednesday morning was indeed a mile walk on hard pavement! There were nine groups made up from the over 70 participants, with a guide for each group during the 2½ hour walk. But what an educational and historical way to start off the Platinum Dhubh festivities!! We gathered at the top of the famous Royal Mile at the Cannonball House, just outside the grounds of Edinburgh Castle. Our guide took us into the Esplanade of the Castle, where the Tattoo grandstand seating was already in place. Exciting to think of the massed bands and precision marching and performers from around the world, getting ready to entertain each night except Sunday.

Lucky for us, it was all downhill walking from there. We learned many little tidbits about Old Edinburgh. For instance, John Knox is buried under parking space 23 of St. Giles Car Park. Deacon Brodie's Tavern is named for Deacon Brodie, a Scottish cabinet-maker, who maintained a secret life as a burglar. We learned that he was the real life inspiration for "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," published in 1886 by Robert Louis Stevenson.



Inside the Parliament Building showing the stained glass windows

We entered Parliament Hall for a look at the magnificent stained glass and some amazing sculptures and paintings. We saw Gothic monuments and we soaked up the city's history, and walked through narrow alleyways to hidden courtyards. We passed St. Giles Cathedral, a site of worship for over a thousand years, Whisky Horse Close, the Canongate Kirk with its gold adornments, to name a few more sights.



Looking at the Palace of Holyroodhouse through the wrought iron gates

We ended our walk at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the official residence of Her Majesty, the Queen, located just outside the old toll gates of the city. Then we made our way to Sandy and Catherine's place for the Tea scheduled in the afternoon.

It was a beautiful afternoon to have Tea at Sandy and Catherine's! To be exact, tea, coffee, orange juice, lemon shortbread biscuits, Rocky Road, cinnamon and chocolate chip cookies, banana and chocolate chip tea loaves, courgette tea loaves, scones and pancakes, iced eclairs, meringues . . . and tablet!!! Mmmmmmmmm!

A cozy setting with tables and chairs on the lawn, comfy seating on the sun porch. The dining room set for Tea, the kitchen table set for Tea, the lounge set for Tea, with many cups and saucers and small plates and teapots! And two kettles! And helpers, Alison and Helen and Janice from Scotland Branch, Carolyn and Harriet and Donna from the US Branch, plus Shelagh and Catherine our hosts from Edinburgh. Many hands made the work much lighter. The 39 guests attending, made the talk much brighter.

These two events were a perfect kickoff in Edinburgh to the long-anticipated Platinum Dhubh weekend in Badenoch.

Thanks to Catherine and Shelagh for heading up the Tea committee, baking all the goods, arranging all the crockery and seating, and to Sandy and Catherine for opening up their home to the Macphersons! Thanks also to Sandy for the well-organized Royal Mile walk. Well done!



# HIGHLAND FOLK MUSEUM

By Mark F Macpherson

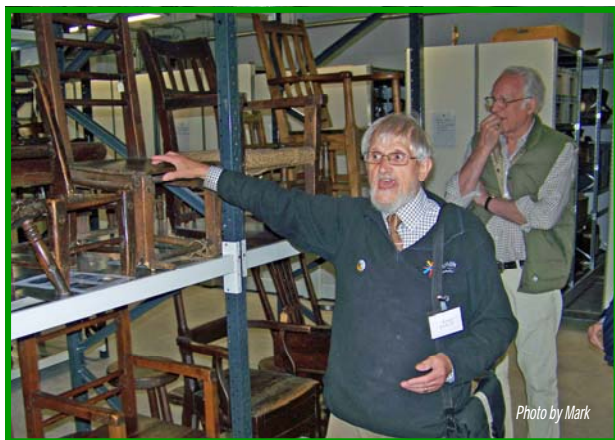


In August 9 Ed Smith and I drove to Newtonmore from Kingussie to visit the Highland Folk Museum originally established in Kingussie in 1944 and moved to Newtonmore in 1995. It is an 80 acre site just to the east of the village with open-air exhibits located in a mile-long plot. The centerpiece of the open museum is a complete township from the 1700's, moved to the museum from Easter Raitts in the Spey Valley. This exhibit spans from the middle ages through the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. This along with several other period structures makes for an interesting visit. When we arrived, we were joined by John House and his wife Penny.



*Ed Smith at 18th century croft. Not too luxurious!*

I had not been to the Museum for a few years and was interested in the object of this tour, a new building called *Am Fasgadh* (The Shelter) which reputedly holds 10,000 artefacts as well as restoration and research facilities. We were not disappointed.



*Our Guide explaining the development of chairs in Scotland*

The items at Am Fasgadh covered from the 16 century to the present including household utensils, furniture, clothing, farm implements and machinery, industrial equipment and machines, and vehicles with many examples of each. There were 69 Macpherson clans folk on the tour so we were divided into groups of about 12 and assigned to a volunteer guide. The items were arranged by type covering the whole period for

each. For the older things the guide was necessary, as the exhibits were not labelled. The guide for our group was very knowledgeable, giving very interesting detailed talks about a wide range of objects.

Some notable examples were the development of various pieces of furniture such as chairs, kitchen cabinets and beds which were new to me. For example chairs were seen as a measure of status, as peasants used three legged stools while the better off had chairs with four legs and backs, becoming more elaborate with higher status. Lower class chairs were short so one could sit below the smoke prevalent in the houses. The smoke, besides discouraging vermin, was also used to smoke meat and fish for the winter. This food was hung in the rafters for smoking.

People who owned household goods such as cooking utensils and dishes for dining, stored them in chests in the early days. As people became more affluent, the kitchen cabinet with shelves, cupboards, and a working surface appeared. Later on drawers were developed producing a more modern looking cabinet. Before dinner services were used, people carried their personal spoon made of wood or horn when invited to dinner. The traveling tinker would make horn spoons for a price. These were somewhat more finished and hygienic than the wood variety.

The story of beds was quite amusing. In Scotland the better off used cupboard beds. The parents slept in the cupboard which had double doors to close it in. For convenience, the children slept on the top of the cupboard, usually with a suspended cloth cover over that to ward off droppings from the animals that frequented the thatch ceiling. The Church of Scotland eventually sanctioned the cupboard bed on moral grounds because the children would be aware of what was going on with the parents. What resulted was the large shelf bed that was open on the front and too high for anyone to sleep on top.



*The cupboard bed. Circa 1700. Imagine being closed in for the night with the kids on top*

One visit cannot do justice for this museum and there is not space in the Green Banner to even cover this visit properly. I commend the Highland Folk Museum for those who go to the Gathering in Badenoch in the future.

## A "TYRING" EXPERIENCE

By Mark F Macpherson



June and I picked up our shiny new rental car in downtown Edinburgh and drove the length of the city and beyond, to the Forth Bridge. We crossed over the Firth going north on the M9, a four-lane highway to Perth, entering the highlands, where we picked up the A9, a mostly 2 lane road with dual carriageways spotted along the route. After a half hour a "Low Tyre Pressure" warning appeared in the instrument display. Continuing on at reduced speed to Pitlochrie, the next large town, I refilled the tire at an automatic tire pump that neatly extracted two pounds sterling for this service.

We then went to the local golf course for lunch, as parking in the town was impossible due to a heavy influx of visitors. It was raining which added to the misery. We had to pass up several culinary attractions on the main street as we searched the public parking lots for vacancies. Following lunch and underway again, after a short time the "Low Tyre Pressure" message reappeared. Continuing on at 50 mph with frustrated drivers in tow behind waiting for opportunities to pass, we finally reached Kingussie and the Duke of Gordon Hotel, our destination.

The Hotel Manager suggested that as I had rented the car, the rental company would repair the tires free of charge. He offered to help with the contact and after several telephone calls through the hierarchy of the car rental firm, they agreed to come in the morning to fix the tire. My previous experience in Scotland was that a specially equipped vehicle would arrive with tires and equipment to repair or change tires in place. In the morning at the appointed hour of 0800 h, to my surprise, a large breakdown truck appeared with a driver ready take me and the car to Inver-

ness 40 miles away, where the dealer for that make of car would change the tire. After driving over an hour to the dealer it was discovered they could only do the work on Monday, and this was Thursday! In fact they wouldn't even look at the tire to determine what had to be done.

The driver of the recovery truck got on his cell phone and started through the beauracracy of the car rental firm, who eventually advised that only the originating outlet in Edinburgh could authorize the repairs. The Edinburgh office only took voice mail messages. After a half hour of playing that game, the driver suggested that the next best step would be to go to Inverness Airport and see if the car rental outfit would exchange the car for another. So off we went for a three-quarter hour drive in the recovery truck with the car on the back. After finally locating the local manager, he politely advised that my contract did not cover tire repairs and suggested returning to Inverness to a tire repair shop. So the driver, truck, car, and I returned to Inverness, passing the dealer we had visited earlier, to a tire shop that had the tire in stock, and who agreed to effect the repairs in two and one half hours. After about two hours of reading an interesting British golf magazine, I was presented with the keys to the car and told, "It was only a simple puncture and there is no charge". Now I was pleasantly surprised!

I arrived back at the hotel by 1400 h after a six-hour adventure in tire repairs. I had missed the Kingussie walking tour previously booked on the Gathering program, but with a new insight to Scottish ways of doing business. Like everywhere, there are helpful types who make your life easier and bureaucrats who don't. Also in Scotland be prepared for long drives for short distances.

## POPPIES WEeping WINDOW

By June Macpherson



I was very grateful to the organizers of the Platinum Dhubh to find in the package sent to those who had registered, a list of events that one might wish to include in the days before or after their time in Kingussie.

Of special interest to me was the POPPIES WEeping WINDOW. I had seen the original installation at the Tower of London when it was shown on television. I thought it was visually stunning as well as something I would have liked to have visited. Therefore I was very pleased to know that by going to the Black Watch Museum at Perth I might have



Weeping Poppies displayed on Balhousie Castle  
*Photo by Dee*

the opportunity to see some small part of the original sculpture. And thanks to Bill Macpherson (Glenfarg) not only did Mark and I have the opportunity to see this sculpture from the outside, but also from inside the window from which the poppies flowed. And later Bill conducted on a private tour of the museum. Because of Bill's very extensive knowledge of the exhibits and his inclusion of many anecdotes we spent a most enjoyable afternoon, one I will not forget.



Poppies as seen from inside at the point of connection to the building  
*Photo by Dee*

## PROJECT CANADA 150

By Ed Smith, Chair Project Committee



The Project is moving right along. Due to activities in the Clan Museum next year, it was decided to delay our exhibit until 2018. It will still represent 150 years of achievements for Macpherson Clans folk in Canada. This will give us more time to put an excellent Branch exhibit together.

While we were in Scotland at the Gathering, a meeting was held with Ewen MacPherson who is responsible for putting the exhibit together from the material we send him. He is looking for about 150 sheets including images to fill the panels in the Drumochter Room in the museum (see [www.clan-macpherson.org/museum](http://www.clan-macpherson.org/museum)). The Canadian Branch has agreed to accept this challenge, so we have a year to acquire the exhibit material on Macphersons who have contributed to Canada. This can be in any century including the 21<sup>st</sup>. With about 40 entries so far, we have a little way to go. The Project Committee will be trolling through of for the Green Banner for potential copy.

Each sheet in the proposed exhibit will contain about 200 words of typewritten copy with an image of the subject person at the top. Additional captioned related images are encouraged for display on the panel with the subject sheet. These images can be any size, with large ones preferred. If the story is particularly interesting there can be additional typewritten material, bearing in mind that museum visitors don't stand around and read, they prefer to look and pass on.

The bottom line is, we are not looking necessarily for Macphersons who were nationally or provincially prominent, but those who have a story to tell about contributions to their country during their lifetime and they don't have to be dead.

If you have taken the trouble to read this far, we enjoin you to consider your story, your father's story, and your grandfather's story, for this project. Don't forget your wife's story as she is married to a Macpherson!

There is one proviso on the origins of the stories and that is, those who do not bear the surname "Macpherson" or its variants, should be able to demonstrate a family connection to Badenoch, a key Macpherson location in Scotland. Clarks and Smiths for example, also originate in England and Ireland, as well as other parts of Scotland, as these names originally denoted the occupation.

Please submit your ideas to Ed Smith, Project Manager, at [Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org](mailto:Canada.ON.Exec@clan-macpherson.org). All submissions will be acknowledged. They can be long or short – just get them to us



## HIGHLAND GAMES SUMMER 2016

By Robert J Archibald



The **Georgetown Games** were held on a bright sunny day June 11<sup>th</sup>. It was well-attended by members of Clan Macpherson. Marlene and I had just set up the tent when Ed Smith appeared, followed soon after by Bob and Sondra Archibald. Chairman Bill

had just made an appearance when Chantal arrived with some material and membership forms for the tent. This year a new slate of people organizing the Games, placed the Clan tents in a location too out of the way for traffic to the tent. The result was we had a good informative visit with each other but the day was rather unproductive for sales or memberships.

The **Cobourg Games** on the following weekend on June 18<sup>th</sup> were held at Victoria Park. Marlene and I arrived early to set up the tent and get a good parking spot. Ed Smith arrived a short time later having driven down from Brantford. The location of the Clan tents did not encourage for traffic from the attendees. The result was another warm and pleasant but rather unproductive day.

**Cambridge Games** July 16<sup>th</sup>. We have never done these games in the past and were pleasantly surprised once we found our way there. There were tents and chairs provided here so we had brought more material than we needed. We finally made a sale at these games, which is always a bonus, and with the clan tents setup under some shade trees the day was bright, sunny and much cooler than being under the sun. Marlene and I worked the tent alone here and were kept quite busy pretty much all day.

**Maxville** was the next on our list so we packed up the motor home and our granddaughter Isobel and headed east. We spent a couple of lazy days camping and shopping and spoiling her on the way to Maxville. Isobel helped us staff the tent and marched with us in the Clan Parade while looking after two small McPherson boys who also marched with us. Sales were poor to say the least, but the weather was good and meeting old friends made the whole weekend busy, and nice.

**Fergus Games.** After arriving home from Scotland on Wednesday August 10<sup>th</sup>, we packed the "coach" for the trip to Fergus.. Marlene and I were still suffering from jet lag, so bit by bit we got the setup done during the day on Friday. Friday evening just after dark, Fergus has a hearth lighting ceremony. Each Clan is given a lighted torch which is carried on to the field and extinguished when the Clan is announced.

Saturday morning was spent getting the tent in order and greeting people who dropped by the tent, including Stuart McPherson from Oshawa. Clan Leslie who were also holding a Clan Gathering at the games, put well over 100 members into the March of the Clans which started at noon. In contrast

*Continued on Page 12*

## FORMER CLANSWOMAN HONOURED

By Bruce Gillis



My mother, the late Mary G. Gillis, a long-time fervent supporter of the Clan Macpherson Association was honoured at a special service marking the 225th Anniversary of the Old Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Middleton, Nova Scotia. The service on Sunday August 14th, commemorated the first service held on that date in 1791. It is the oldest Loyalist Church in Canada that remains in its original condition, although repaired from time to time.

In 1991 the Parish Minister proposed to have the now two hundred year-old building torn down as its condition had deteriorated and he did not wish to incur the substantial repair costs. Mary was appalled at the prospect of the destruction of the historic landmark, and quickly organized a group to save the church. They arranged to have it designated as a Provincial heritage building, and formed a charitable trust to raise funds for its repair. She threatened to chain herself to the building if workers should attempt to demolish it

In time the group won the battle. The building is now in excellent condition and a popular tourist attraction, with student guides hired each summer.



Photo by Bruce

The Gillis family gathers with the officiants following the special service honouring the late Mary Gillis.

Left to right: Thom Gillis, Dorena Gillis, Timothy Gillis who was the Crucifer, Bruce Gillis, Bishop Ron Cutler, Don Gillis, Debbie Gillis, NS Premier Stephen MacNeil, Rectors of Holy Trinity-Middleton NS, St James-Bridgetown NS, and All Saints-Kingston NS.

The ceremony was attended by the Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. as well as the Premier of the Province, the Mayor, other dignitaries, and the Gillis family members in appropriate highland outfits. Special space was provided in the program for comments recognizing Mary's outstanding efforts to preserve the historic building. By coincidence the event was held one day after the anniversary of her birthday.



## 67<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GATHERING

By Jacqueline Murdoch

September 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the Delta Toronto East



Did you miss the Platinum Dhubh in Scotland this summer? Well you certainly don't want to miss the Canadian Branch Gathering

this September. So if you haven't reserved your tickets for the 67<sup>th</sup> Canadian Branch Annual Gathering there is still time! Held in Toronto, Ontario, from Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at the Delta Toronto East on Kennedy Road near Hwy 401, we want all Clansmen and women to join us for a wonderful week-end of relaxation, historical discovery, and topping it off with our formal Highland Dinner and Dance.

For Registration Forms on-line go to:

<http://www.clan-macpherson.org/canada/rally.html>.

Rooms at the Delta Toronto East (2013 Kennedy Road, Scarborough) can be reserved by calling 1-800-663-3386. The booking code is CLANMACPHERSON. We look forward to seeing you all there and renewing friendships.

## HIGHLAND GAMES SUMMER 2016

Continued from Page 11

Clan Macpherson had a total of two in the parade with someone who joined me from the crowd. With a full field of Clans, bands, participants, dignitaries and spectators it started to pour rain, but no one moved a muscle. As the speeches progressed, everyone became drenched to the bone. The speeches were cut

short and nearly everyone retired from the field.

I arrived back at the tent drenched, in a wet kilt. Some clans started bringing their cars into the area to load up their soggy goods, turning the grass into a muddy mess as they drove off.

Sunday morning my kilt and some of our material were still wet, so we spent the day on the site drying out. Later, we said goodbye to our friends and headed home.



Photo by Marlene Archibald

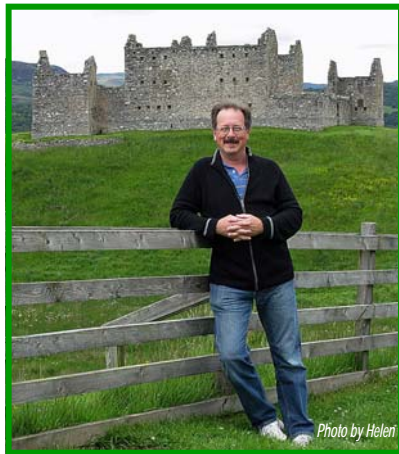
Bob at Fergus. Returning to the tent from the field after the speeches, thoroughly soaked. Not a happy camper!

## THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

By Helen Macpherson-Potts



Brian and I were able to spend some time in Scotland from July 10-22 climbing “up yon heathery mountain an’ down yon scroggie glen” as Robbie Burns would say. We spent most of our time in the Glasgow area, taking day trips into Glasgow or out to Dumbarton Rock, Largs and Millport Beach on the Isle of Cumbrae. The day we decided to go to Millport Beach was one of the hottest days Scotland had had for a while so we weren’t the only ones with that brilliant idea. We think everyone in Scotland went to Largs that day as the train was packed, however, we felt very much like “locals” rather than “tourists” as we were clearly doing what the locals like to do on the rare hot and sunny day.



Brian in front of Ruthven Barracks Kingussie

Although we were unable to attend the Platinum Dubh, I wanted Brian to see Kingussie and the Clan Museum in Newtonmore so we took the train from Glasgow to Kingussie and spent a couple of days exploring Kingussie, Newtonmore and Ruthven Barracks. Brian was enthralled with Ruthven Barracks and decided he much preferred exploring old ruins than pristine Castles. Our youngest wants to become a blacksmith and be “the crazy auntie that makes everyone knives” so I took a picture of Brian with James Macpherson’s sword so he could ask her to “please make me one.”

Although we were unable to stay at the Duke of Gordon Hotel as they were booked, we had a pleasant stay at the Columba Hotel and had an enjoyable evening at the Duke for Thursday night open mic where we were able to do a bit of waltzing, making good use of our four years of dance lessons! It was nice for Brian to see where the Clan Gatherings are held and to see Kingussie in the “calm before the storm” of clan members gathering for the Platinum Dubh in August.

I will close with a toast we found on a billboard outside a Pub in Glasgow seen in the box at the right:

Mey the best ye hae iver seen  
Be the worst ye’ll ever see  
Mey the moose ne’er lea yer giral  
Wi the tear drop in its e’e  
May yer lum keep bithely reekin’  
Till ye’re auld eneuch tae dee  
Mey ye aye just be sae happy  
As a wiss ye aye tae be!

## FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

By Mark F Macpherson



The September issue is truly a magnum opus. Again, we had a good group of contributors without whom the Green Banner would not be possible. The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CMA was celebrated in Scotland in August and represented considerable news from our point of view. When I returned from the Platinum Dhubh, the deadline was upon me. Realizing that many of the contributors would be in the same fix, I decided to slip the deadline for submissions. The response was great and this 22 page edition is the result. I don’t have the heart to ask an author who has worked hard to meet the deadline, to wait to see his or her masterpiece in another issue, given that we publish only four times each year.

We had a first-time contributor in Rebekkah Rogers, Jacqueline Murdoch’s eldest daughter. Rebekkah has attended several Canadian gatherings with her sister Jamie where they were effective saleswomen for the raffle. This was Rebekkah’s first Badenoch Gathering and she shared her impressions of the highland ball with us in “Platinum Dhubh Impressions” on page 17. We hope to see more of her in the future as a member of the CMA.

Shelagh Macpherson Noble, continues to support our newsletter with interesting stories which are much appreciated. They provide an insight into Scottish life in the recent and sometimes more distant past. I hope she doesn’t run dry and continues to volunteer her contributions from time to time.

Douglas MacPherson, former Chair of the Canadian Branch who is a first timer for this version of the Green Banner, provided the article on his father J Donald, also a former Chair of the Branch and CMA Chair. Douglas is no stranger our newsletter having been the Editor for several years. We hope we will see more contributions from him in the future.

Our more regular contributors, Jean Duffy CMA Chair, Donna Rucks, Helen Macpherson Potts, Chairman Bill, Ed Smith, Bob Archibald, and John House did yeoman service to the Green Banner by ensuring we had excellent coverage of the Gathering from different perspectives and hence this extensive issue. I would be remiss and probably in trouble, if I didn’t mention June’s contributions of an article on the Weeping Poppy Display in Perth and two mini-articles on her impressions of the Gathering.

Bruce Gillis continues to offer family stories from Nova Scotia which I hope he will continue to do, as I am hopeful this may inspire others to emulate his example.

I have started to receive articles for the November issue and look forward to receiving more contributions from more members at large before the deadline mid-October.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

By Helen Macpherson Potts, Provincial Councillor



Summer is almost over and what a busy one it has been! I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer season. Not much CMA activity has happened here in the West as Brian and I were away most of July (see article titled “The Calm Before the Storm” elsewhere in this issue). I hope to get back to things clannish in the fall and connect with our local Celtic Club that goes dormant during July and August as so many members are away for the summer.

## ONTARIO

By Ed Smith CD, Provincial Councillor



It has been a short summer for some of us as we dash about with everyday matters, taking that long awaited vacation and now preparing for the upcoming school year.

As for myself it has been all too short. With not enough time to squeeze in all my planned activities and plans. I did however manage to assist Bob and Marlene Archibald at two of the Highland games. There was time enough for me to spend better than three weeks in Scotland this year, the first week in St. Andrews with the Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society summer school at which I discovered how much improvement is needed in technique. Apart from the dancing there were some points of historical interest that garnered my attention. The time following was spent poking around Edinburgh and the beginning events of Platinum Dhubh. A very interesting guided tour was conducted by Sandy Macpherson with a tea party later that day in his home. The views from Sandy’s garden are quite captivating.

The remaining time in Scotland was spent in Badenoch. There was little free time available. We were kept quite busy attending a well organized rally as I am sure those attended will agree.

I would like to thank those of you who are able to attend some of the Highland games and Scottish functions in your area. It is healthy for you and your families to revisit your roots.

Finally I spent many hours working on the Canada 150 Project, which is progressing, but more slowly than I had anticipated. A meeting as held with Ewen MacPherson during the Platinum Dhubh, for which a more detailed report appears elsewhere in this issue.

## NOVA SCOTIA

By Bruce Gillis QC., Provincial Councillor



CMA activities in Nova Scotia have been slow this summer, but I am still pursuing the Macpherson immigrant records referred to previous reports. I hope my friend Charlene will be back soon from her posting in the Air Force so I can follow her up as she is key to this activity.



## QUEBEC

By Myles G Macpherson CD., Provincial Councillor



Summer is coming to a close for all of us. The Highland Games season in Quebec is now behind us. Looking forward to the coming months the next big Scottish event is the St-Andrew’s Ball. This year the St-Andrew’s Dinner will take place on December 2 in Montreal. For those of you looking for fun things to do in the in and around Montreal, I recently came across a web site that will help if you are planning to travel to the area:

<http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/What-To-Do>

Mark and June Macpherson celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary at a BBQ here in August. The dessert was piped in by a local piper and drummer.

The happy couple were recognized for this auspicious event by Her Majesty the Queen as well as the Governor General and the Prime Minister. Congratulations!

We hope there are many more anniversaries to be celebrated in the future.



Left to right: Drummer- Captain Doug Hudson, Piper –Isaac Hudson, Mark, and June

## NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

By John C. House MOM, Provincial Councillor



Penny and I had the pleasure of attending the Platinum Dhubh in Newtonmore this August. It was an exceptional experience and we had the opportunity to meet many Macphersons from the Canadian Branch as well as Macphersons from around the world. I would recommend this experience to any CMA member who has not yet attended a Clan Gathering in Scotland.

This past month has been a particularly hectic period for us, as I have accepted a position in Nova Scotia and have just relocated, and am writing this report surrounded by moving boxes that were delivered to our new home earlier today. As a result, we shall be seeking a new Counsellor for Newfoundland and Labrador, and I will be canvassing potential candidates in the near future. Because of this move, I will be unable to attend in the upcoming Canadian Branch Gathering in Toronto. I send best wishes to those attending.

# SHINTY AND MY MACPHERSON FAMILY CONNECTION

By Shelagh Macpherson Noble, Vice President CMA



Although the game of shinty or *camanachd* has been played for over 1000 years, it was first recorded in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Macphersons were involved from the beginning. Cluny of the '45 was said to have heard the sounds of the game being played on New Year's Day whilst he was hiding in the heather avoiding the government troops.

Shinty was, and still is, a part of the social structure in Badenoch and Macphersons have always been involved. The history of shinty is well documented. However what is not so well known is the Macpherson connection to the game, in particular the close links with my family.

My grandfather, John Macpherson, was born in 1873 in Newtonmore, the home of shinty. As a young boy, he played the game and became a good player. When he moved to Inverness, he continued to play and became interested in the manufacture of shinty sticks (camans).

In the early days, the sticks were clumsy, badly balanced chunks of wood, so he decided to improve them and the result was called the John Macpherson Caman. The stick was made from the finest Californian red or white hickory which was exported to Great Britain in log form. John discovered a company in Liverpool that



My grandfather John on the left with my father Allan on the right displaying camans with an unidentified soldier in front of John Macpherson & Sons Sporting Goods in Inverness around 1935

would use a special process to cut and steam bend the wood before sending them to Inverness where he would spend all night shaping them into sticks, which were ordered in dozens because there were 12 players in a team. John was made the official supplier of camans and this type of stick was used until well after World War II.

Shortly after the Camanachd Association was formed in 1896, My grandfather John agreed to present the captain of the win-

ning team of the Camanachd Cup with a silver mounted caman, suitably inscribed and the annual gift was continued after his death by my father Allan Grant Macpherson, a former chairman of the Clan Macpherson Association, and his brother Hamish until they both retired in 1976. After the war, the Macpherson family was asked if they would present silver mounted camans to the captains of two other winning teams playing in different competitions, so between 1945 and 1976, three silver mounted camans were presented each year, many of which can still be found in the players' homes in Newtonmore and Kingussie



The two Macpherson cups for Shinty

In 1937, John gifted a silver trophy, the John Macpherson Cup, for senior players in the winning teams and this cup is still presented today. When my father, Allan, passed away, my sisters and I did not want to lose the Macpherson family connection with shinty, so we decided to present the Allan Grant Macpherson Memorial Cup for junior players, along with a small cup, called the Clan Macpherson Cup for the most promising young player.

My Macpherson family tradition continues my grandfather's legacy of over 100 years.



Shelagh presenting the John Grant Macpherson Memorial cup to the coach of the winning team from Newtonmore

## Editors Note:

*Shinty (camanachd, iomain) is a team game played with sticks and a ball. It is now played mainly in the Scottish Highlands. The game was formerly more widespread in Scotland, and was even once competitively played in England and other areas in the world where Scottish Highlanders migrated.*

*While comparisons are often made with field hockey, the Olympic sport, the two games have several important differences. In shinty, a player is allowed to play the ball in the air and is allowed to use both sides of the stick, The stick may also be used to block and to tackle within limits. Players may also tackle using the body as long as it is shoulder-to-shoulder.*

Source: Wikipedia

## PLATINUM DHUBH IMPRESSIONS

The Gathering in Badenoch this summer was a great success. For those who enjoy statistics, there were 373 people registered for the weekend including 23 from Canada consisting of 15 members, 5 guests or partners and 3 children. Fourteen countries were represented by Clansmen in attendance. Three hundred and fifty sat down in the tent for the formal Highland Dinner at the Ball. The marquee tent set up behind the hotel was 140 feet long by 70 feet wide, filling the complete parking lot for the hotel. All of the main events of the Gathering took place there. Following are impressions of some of our Canadian Branch members of specific scheduled events that took place before, during and after the weekend portion of The Platinum Dhubh:

All events from beginning to end were well organized and executed. The only significant change in plan was the change of venue for the Sunday Ceilidh from Ruthven Barracks south of Kingussie to the marquee set up behind the hotel, due to heavy rain. The change went seamlessly and everyone remained dry and happy. Rain, sometimes heavy, dogged the Gathering most of the weekend affecting outdoor events including the Newtonmore Games where most Clans folk crowded into the Clan tent for repeated drams of the wine of Scotland. To keep out the chill. However it didn't rain on the traditional Clan March from the Ralia into the Elian, thus maintaining this record.



Canadian Branch Members at the Platinum Dhubh  
 Left to right :Robert J Archibald, June Macpherson, Sondra Archibald, Donna Rucks, Bill Macpherson, Marlene Archibald, Robert W Archibald, Ed Smith, John House, Mark Macpherson.  
 Missing: Ewan Macpherson, Irene Macpherson, Chantal McPherson, Jim McPherson, Jacqueline Murdoch

### Registration in the Marquee Or Why Volunteering is Fun

By June Macpherson

When asked to be on the registration desk at the Gathering I volunteered immediately. What could be more fun than to meet all those attending the Platinum Dhubh. As well I got to work with Jan Macpherson, an old friend, and Sandy, who is a new friend and as you can see from the photo we were having a good time. Then, too, as everyone came in to register I was able to chat with those I had met at previous Gatherings. I was also able to greet the new attendees, answer questions and offer advice. So if you are asked to volunteer, don't be shy, you really will enjoy yourself!



Happy volunteers  
 Sandy Macpherson, Jan Macpherson, and June Macpherson,

### Golfing in the Highlands

By Chantal McPherson



The Winners!

"Come with me to the Ball and I will take you to the home of Golf" That was the deal I made with my husband Oh Jang, and we had the trip of a lifetime! Our adventure started in Edinburgh with the scheduled Walk of the Royal Mile, after which we boarded the train for Kingussie.

Friday started early for us at the Newtonmore Golf Club for the Clan Macpherson Golf tournament.

Not only was this a memorable day for us since it was our first round of golf in Scotland, but Oh Jang came in second in the men's division, while I won the ladies. For this I collected a beautiful engraved Quaich and a Macpherson golf umbrella.

The Highland Ball and whole weekend made quite an impression on my husband since this was his first experience with Highland culture.

Our journey continued for the following two weeks, where we played seven championship courses including St Andrews, the home of golf. For my husband, who has a low handicap, and I, the mystery & challenge of playing golf in Scotland has been met and conquered. I am grateful & proud to have been able to introduce Oh Jang to the strong Macpherson bond that we all share as members of the CMA.



## Amateur Hour

By June Macpherson



After a marriage of sixty years and attendance at many gatherings, I was astonished when Mark informed me that he was going to perform at the Platinum Dhubh Saturday Ceilidh. While I had watched him bark out commands on the Parade Square when he was commanding the Canadian Grenadier Guards, I had no idea that he wished to tread the boards in front of the footlights! So much for knowing what your nearest and dearest is thinking. Of course I asked him what he was going to do and when he told me he was going to sing, I burst out laughing because he usually just mumbles the hymns at church. I was reassured when he told me that Donna McPherson-Rucks was going to collaborate with him. I was even further reassured when he told me that there might be others and that there would be a practice before the big event.

When we arrived in Kingussie it seemed that there would be a practice but that the others had dropped out so Mark convinced Ed Smith to sing some choruses, in addition to Donna who would be on the keyboard. They were unable to find a time to practice so it was with trepidation that I waited for their number. With audience participation and the kids enthusiastically clapping whenever the chorus demanded it, it was very well received. However my advice to Mark was not to quit his day job!



Photo by Penny Abraham

### "The Thing"

Dee McPherson on the keyboard, Ed Smith singing a chorus, Mark at the microphone

## From A Performers Perspective

By Donna Dee McPherson/Rucks



We had some fun at the Saturday Ceilidh! I had three unique perspectives: as a performer, as a photographer, and as a member of the audience being entertained!

As a performer, I helped set up my keyboard and microphones, tested the sound, and used three music stands to hold my music. I played the keyboard and sang in three numbers: "Un Beso Mas" a solo I co-wrote to honor the Spanish Macphersons, "Tired of Wandering" a duet with Ruis which was the theme song of the Platinum Dhubh, and "The Thing" a rhythmic recitation with Mark Macpherson and Ed Smith, and



Photo by Dee

Some of the Spanish Macphersons listening intently

with "boom-da-boom" audience participation! Sheer joy arrived when I felt the energy of the audience and the other performers, a feeling that surrounds me like a force field when I perform. I caught a glimpse of the Spanish Macphersons, all standing en mass and listening intently as I sang entirely in Spanish. By then I knew this performance was going great! As I sang with Ruis, the very words he wrote, I caught his sweet smile and knew how much this meant to him. As for "The Thing," what a thing it was! Pulling together three performers from different walks of life, it was a great romp and we enjoyed ourselves!

## The Highland Ball

By Rebekkah Rogers



Photo by Jacqueline

### At the Ball.

My sister Jamie on the left, and me with Clarke my new daughter

The Platinum Dhubh highland ball was held on August 5th at the Duke of Gordon Hotel, in the lovely town of Kingussie, Scotland. As it was my first time in Scotland, I was looking forward to getting to know new people, to relax, and have a good time with the many people I knew from Canadian and US Gatherings over the past several years

With delicious food, amazing company and more dancing than one person

could imagine, enjoying myself became a second nature. I enjoyed watching my mom Jacqueline Murdoch, and sister Jamie Rogers, look graceful as ever while they did some traditional Scottish dancing together. All the while my 6 week-old daughter Clarke slept through the whole thing (must be the Scottish blood), while I sat back and tapped my feet to the beat.

I wondered in amazement at all of the people from every part of the world, from old generations to new, and the sense of pride every single person had in their heritage. Pride in being part of the Clan Macpherson. We are certainly looking forward to celebrating again in Scotland in the near future... maybe the 80th?

## Annual General Meeting

By Bill Macpherson



Chairman Bill reporting to the Platinum Dhubh AGM

Since I attended my first Badenoch AGM several years ago it has been held in the Village Hall in Newtonmore. This year because of the number of attendees and the hectic program of events, the meeting was held in a very large marquee tent set up behind the hotel specially for this Gathering.

It worked out well, allowing a more relaxed transition from breakfast in the dining room, and also allowed more time for lunch before heading off for the Clan March.

The meeting went along at a good pace giving members present the chance to hear first-hand the affairs of the Association presented by the relevant office bearers. Reports were presented by: Chairman Jean Duffy who also read a report from the Webmaster, the Secretary, the Registrar & Creag Dhubh Editor, the Treasurer, the Museum Advisory Committee Chair, the Platinum Dhubh Committee Chair, and each of the Branches. Six Branch Chairmen were present and there were representatives from fourteen countries. Cluny's closing remarks and humorous anecdotes were as usual, a fitting end to a successful meeting.

## The Clan March to the Eilan

By Bill Macpherson

Those of you who follow CMA affairs on Facebook may have seen the photograph that included our Editor and Former Branch Chairman, Mark Macpherson on the right proudly carrying a sword as one of the colour party guarding Cluny's Banner and leading the Clan March.



Next in the photo, behind the Colour Party, is Jamie of Cluny representing the Chief, then Clan Chieftains, Alistair of Pitmain, and Ewan of Glentrium (with immediate families), followed by the Association Banner. The Green Flag, just seen a little behind the main party, contains the old Association badge and after that in the order of march, CMA Chair Jean leads a large contingent of clansmen and women (See CMA Chair Report on page 4 for a photo).

Yours truly can be seen in the photo below carrying the Branch Cromag which is a customary prop for all Branch Chairmen taking part in the March.



You would never guess I was born in Scotland carrying that rain jacket

The sense of pride one feels taking part in this event, which is an annual highlight of the Newtonmore Highland Games is difficult to match. It has often been said that it never rains on the Clan Macpherson March and this year was no exception.

Cluny was waiting at the Eilan to present his clansmen to Games Chieftain Angus Macpherson and after an exchange of greetings Jamie dismissed us to the Clan tent for wee dram at which time the rain came on and we were forced to linger

LONGER than expected - my excuse anyway.

I am proud of our heritage and proud to have participated in the clan march. It has to be on all CMA members' bucket list.

## Newtonmore Games

By Robert J Archibald



On Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of August Marlene and I, like everyone else, took in the AGM in the marquee behind the Duke of Gordon. When that was over we headed for Newtonmore by car to attend the games. We no sooner got to the village when the pipe band struck up for its march through town to the Eilan where the games are held, and the traffic was stopped. (See photo below) We managed to crawl through town to a place to park near the Eilan so we could enter the games. A spitting rain started falling and continued off and on all afternoon.



Now highland games are all very similar in nature and the Newtonmore games are not too different from others we've attended. The dancing competitions, the piping competitions, the heavy events are standard fare. Having said that though, each one has a little something that makes it unique from all the others. In Newtonmore, it is the Clan Macpherson presence and the hill race up Creag Dhubh and back, that makes it different from all other games we've visited. Nowhere have I seen the likes of the Clan Macpherson March from the Ralia, down the hill onto the Eilan led by the pipe band and nowhere have I witnessed such a gruelling race like they have here. All good stuff indeed!

## The Church Service

By Bill Macpherson



After four busy days it was great to join with local parishioners at St Columba's Church in Kingussie, for Sunday morning worship service. There was not an empty pew in the kirk as many clans-folk who had attended the after-ceilidh, showed up enthusiastically. A variety of interesting hymns were selected by Jean Duffy and the Branch Chairmen giving an international flavour. The minister presented a memorable sermon comparing clan and religious values, with aid of a video screen at the front of the church. Near the end of the service, the minister asked all from Clan Macpherson to rise and repeat after her:



Cluny reading the lesson

*"I dedicate myself to promoting and fostering the Clan spirit and life of the Clan at home and abroad, keeping Clans folk in touch with one another in all parts of the world, encouraging the study and preservation of the history, folk-lore, literature, music, treasures and traditions of the Clan Macpherson."*

Many will recognize this as the objectives list on the Association webpage.

What an ideal way to give thanks for our many blessings and the bonds of friendship we share as members of the worldwide CMA!.

## The Whisky Tasting

By Bill Macpherson

Sunday afternoon at the typical Badenoch Gathering is wind-down time for most after kirk and picnicking at the cairn. This year sandwiched between the evening hog roast and Ruthven Ceilidh was a special event hosted by the Scotland and Northern Ireland Branch, a Whisky Tasting. From Canada besides Irene and I, we had Bob and Sondra Archibald, Chantal McPherson, Jim McPherson and Ed Smith.



Irene enjoying a wee bit of single malt

We joined 85 other connoisseurs and novices as we marvelled at the knowledge of Bill Glenfarg and sampled a selection of fine single malts. Bill and Jan had even waded into the River Spey collecting pebbles for each participant. These are kept in the freezer at home

and brought out appropriately for those that like their Scotch on the rocks. Two Islays an Orkney a Wick and two Speysides later, Irene and most at our table were feeling no pain.

Those that have heard me recite Tam O'Shanter by Robert Burns may recall the line "Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil; Wi' usquabae, we'll face the devil!" Usquabae is an Old Scots version of the Gaelic uisge beatha or 'water of life', better known as Scotch Whisky. It was good to feel that there is life in the old dogs yet.

## The Hog Roast

By Mark Macpherson



The hog roast on Sunday was fine fare. After dinner with the rain pelting down on the marquee tent, the relocated Ruthven Ceilidh started with the entry of the Virtual Pipe Band. Cluny's grandchildren were stars singing and playing instruments including the harp. Sandra of Glentruim played violin in a group on this occasion.

The Virtual Pipe Band which included our Dr Ewan Macpherson among its members, played several numbers that kept the feet tapping in the audience. The drum corps of this band consisting of three ladies was outstanding. I noticed on the tenor drum, Barbara Reyelts, Piper Hugh Macpherson's sister, who was in fact a drum instructor and a former member of the Canadian Branch.



Barbara Reyelts on the tenor drum

The Ceilidh was very well produced and executed. It was enjoyed by all even without the torchlight parade from the Barracks.

## An Invitation to Newton Castle

By Donna Dee McPherson/Rucks



An invitation to Newton Castle is special, and a chance to visit with Cluny and Hilary and a few of the Clan members. It was just the thing to top off the frenetic pace of the Platinum Dhubh. As we arrived on Wednesday afternoon August 10 and walked up the lane to the house, we were greeted by Derek Macpherson, Chair of the African Branch, standing in a circle of green grass, piping us in. We walked 'round to the back and entered the building that had been a barn, to have a glass of wine and a sandwich. There we met Cluny and Hilary and the other family members.



Derek Macpherson with his pipes

I leaned down to speak to Cluny, who was seated while greeting the invitees. He drew me in closer and said, "You go on over to the house if you wish, you don't have to wait for a tour, go up and play my piano."

A dream come true! Once again, to play the Bechstein. Thank you, Cluny.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Editor wishes to thank the following for their excellent contributions to the September issue: Robert J Archibald, Jean Macpherson-Duffy (USA), Ken Gillis, Bruce Gillis, John House, Bill Macpherson Mississauga, Douglas MacPherson, June Macpherson, Myles Macpherson, Shelagh Macpherson-Noble (UK), Chantal McPherson, Jacqueline Murdoch, Helen Macpherson-Potts, Rebekkah Rogers, Donna Rucks, and Ed Smith.

# GORDON MACPHERSON ROOM UNVEILED

By Mark Macpherson, Duine Uasail



In the afternoon of August 6 2016, The “Gordon Macpherson Niagara Herald Extraordinary Room” in the Clan Museum was unveiled by Mrs. Elizabeth Roads LVO, Snawdoun Herald of Arms, Lyon Court, who is an old friend of Gordon’s.

Unfortunately Gordon was unable to attend the unveiling as he was not able to travel to Scotland. Mrs. Roads outlined Gordons many achievements in Heraldry and noted that he is one of the most recognized Heraldic Artists in the world of heraldry which covers many countries including of course, Scotland and Canada. She went on to state that Gordon is the mentor of choice to many Heraldic Artists of the current generation.



Gordon in his study in 2007.  
His coat of arms in stained glass is hanging behind him



Mrs. Elizabeth Roads following the unveiling in August.  
Part of the heraldry wall can be seen in the background

RGM (Gordon) Macpherson has been instrumental in Clan Macpherson heraldry for many years. He started the “Clan Armorial” series in the Creag Dhubh in 1965, and continued to contribute to this section over the years as new arms were granted to Macphersons. A black and white version of the Clan Armiger’s (*Duine Uasail* in Gaelic) arms or the bookplate designed by Gordon, appeared along with a description of the symbolism for the various charges found on the arms.

Gordon’s hobby is Heraldic Art and he is a Fellow of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada. When the Canadian Heraldry Authority (CHA) was established in 1988, Gordon’s outstanding work was recognized and he was appointed Niagara Herald Extraordinary an adjunct position in the Authority. Few Canadians have achieved this honour. In 2008 Gordon was made a Member of the Order of Canada, recognizing his dedication and service to his country as a Heraldic Artist.

Gordon prepared several Coats of Arms for Macphersons over the years and helped to matriculate these either through the CHA or Lyon Court, the Scottish Authority, where he is also

recognized as an outstanding heraldic artist and consultant. When the Heraldry Exhibit was established in the Clan Museum some time ago Gordon painted shields from the coats of arms of the then existing Macpherson armigers including our Chief. As new arms were granted, either in Scotland or in Canada, Gordon painted the shield for display in the museum. Eventually the display of Macpherson coats of arms grew to fill a portion of the wall in the museum in what became the Heraldry Room.

The exhibit was gradually expanded to contain additional heraldic and historical items as Gordon assisted in developing the Heraldry Room to what it is today. The central attraction is still the wall of 76 shields of Arms that Gordon painted at his own time and expense and donated to the museum. It is fitting that Gordon’s extensive long-term contributions to the Clan Museum be recognized by renaming the Heraldry Room in his honour. It is also an honour for the Canadian Branch to have Gordon as our Honorary Chairman.



## CANADIAN BRANCH REPORT TO CMA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - AUGUST 2016

Presented by Bill Macpherson Canadian Branch Chairman



Madam Chairman, Cluny and family, and cousins all, I bring greetings from all members of the Canadian Branch and warm best wishes for an enjoyable Platinum Dhubh Gathering. We are very proud of our parent Association and the ties that bind us across the globe.

At this celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Association, I am pleased to be accompanied by Two Past Branch Chairmen Mark Macpherson & Bob Archibald and wives June & Marlene, Registrar Chantal & husband Oh Jang Yoon, Secretary Bob Archibald and wife Sondra, Branch Webmaster & Association Piper Ewan Macpherson accompanied by his better half Nancy & children Jessica & Aaron, Provincial Councillors Ed Smith (Ontario) & John House (Newfoundland) with his wife Penny Abraham, Jim McPherson ( a long-time and active member of the Branch), Jacqueline Murdoch, Rebekkah (with beautiful baby daughter Clarke) and Jamie Rogers plus dual Branch member Donna Dee McPherson Rucks and of course the love of my life Irene. On behalf of the Branch it is our pleasure to provide the PD commemorative badges contained in your welcome packages.

Our membership numbers are down from last year and sadly we mourned the loss of 6 from our roll. I represented the Association at funeral services for 4 of them: Marlene McPherson (former Treasurer), Jean Whitten (long time life member), Neil McPherson (Past Chairman) and Dawn Roussel a life member. We cherish fond memories of their enthusiastic participation at Branch Gatherings. We also learned of the passing of Dr. Ian G.R. Macpherson (Victoria, B.C) and of Joseph MacPherson (Scarborough, ON). We recognize the contribution of all of them in the affairs of the Branch.

On a positive note, Chantal reports we gained 3 new members last month and she continues to remind 10 annuals that have not renewed. As Jan reported, on a global basis the issue of losing touch, we have 3 that have moved without providing contact information. At last year's Branch AGM, we decided to renew our membership in CASSOC (Clans & Scottish Societies of Canada) with Ed Smith being our focal point of contact. Through this organization we are able to provide our members an excellent stream of information on all things Scottish, happening across the country. This initiative, when combined with our excellent Annual the Creag Dhubh and Branch Newsletter the Green Banner, we are sure will help to retain and attract members. Last year we had tents set up at Highland Games events in Ontario and Quebec and this year plans are underway to add two events in Alberta. Our continued thanks go to the team that devote their time for this activity and do so well in promoting the Association.

The Joint US/Canada Gathering in Itasca seems such a long time ago and has been reported on through various channels but since it did happen since the last AGM I will make a few comments.

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, plus many members and guests. All officers agreed and were re-elected.

The organization and attention to detail was excellent. All planned activities went very well. There were generous US portions at the various banquets and everyone had fun at the Ceilidh and Ball. Mike Miller did an admirable job presiding over the worship and 'Kirkin of the Tartan' ceremony. The side excursions (had something for everyone) allowing an ideal mixture of large and small group activities. There were 33 in the Canadian contingent and everyone had a fun weekend. Co-conveners Donna and Jacqueline arranged a very successful Gathering.

Our Gathering this year will be held in Scarborough, Ontario and has been planned to coincide with the exclusive Toronto Exhibition of the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry. You heard in John L Macpherson's Australian Branch report, of the active role played by himself & his sister Heather in the organization of the Australian Exhibition. We are very proud of our member Mary Margaret Gillies one of the organizing committee at St Andrew's (Toronto's oldest Presbyterian Church). Mary Margaret joins me in giving thanks to John & Heather for their assistance in providing brochures and information to support the Canadian event. Our Gathering dates are Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> through Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September and a warm welcome is extended to all.

As I am nearing the end of our customary three year term as Branch Chairman this will be my last report and it would be remiss if I did not offer sincere thanks to both the Association & Branch Councils for their support and encouragement. It has been my privilege to serve as Chairman and I will continue to support the new team to be elected in September.

I would like to pass on congratulations to Bill Glenfarg and the PD organizing team for an excellent program this weekend.

In closing I would also convey a message of fealty and allegiance to Cluny from all in Canada.

Madam Chairman that concludes the Canadian Branch report!

Bill walked into the library and at the enquiry desk said,  
"Robert Burns, the complete works."

The librarian looks up and says,

"I am sorry Mr Burns, the Massage Parlour is back outside and in the next building to this."

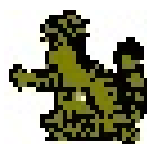
# PLATINUM DHUBH PHOTO ALBUM



*Piper Ewan with son Aaron having a few words with Cluny at the Clan tent*



*The River Gynack roaring down the glen*



*Tasting Glass with pebble from the River Spey*



*Scottish chair circa 1700. Hand crafted from a pine-tree crotch. More finished models had a slab added to bridge the open space*



*The ever-popular whisky table in the Clan tent at the Elian during the Newtonmore Games. Cluny is supervising carefully*



*Claymores carried by Guards to the Colours during the Clan March on the Elian*



*Cluny explaining some family history during the tour of the inside of Newton Castle*



*Jamie of Cluny conducting a tour of Newton Castle grounds for clans folk at the reception*