



*Creag
Dhubh
2026*

Number 78

Cluny ... Cluanaidh



*The Annual of
The Clan Macpherson
Association*

CREAG DHUBH

2026

NUMBER 78



The Annual of
**THE CLAN MACPHERSON
ASSOCIATION**

Cover tartan: Macpherson Hunting

Cover picture: Cluny, courtesy of Annie Macpherson

Image of Creag Dhubh, courtesy of Angus Macpherson of Biallid

CLAN MACPHERSON ASSOCIATION

CURRENT HONORARY PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OF THE CLAN

James Brodie Macpherson of Cluny and Blairgowrie

PREVIOUS HONORARY PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OF THE CLAN

The Honourable Sir William Macpherson of Cluny and Blairgowrie

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

John P Macpherson
T A S Macpherson FRICS, FSA Scot
Ewen S L MacPherson MA, Chartered MCIPD
M Alastair F Macpherson of Pitmain
William R McPherson
George A Macpherson
Mrs Shelagh Macpherson Noble Dip Ed., MInstAM
Mrs Annie Le Roy-Lewis
John Macpherson
Jean Macpherson Duffy
William J S Macpherson
Mrs Bonnie McPherson

PAST CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION

Tom Macpherson 1946 - 1952 Died 1965
Lord Macpherson of Drumochter
Niall Macpherson 1952 - 1954 Died 1987
Lord Drumalbyn
Lt Col Allan Macpherson 1954 - 1957 Died 1958
Capt Hugh Macpherson 1957 - 1960 Died 1987
Hon J Gordon Macpherson 1960 - 1963 Died 2000
Hon. Macpherson of Drumochter
Allan G Macpherson 1963 - 1966 Died 1987
Lloyd Macpherson 1966 - 1969 Died 1988
A I S Macpherson 1969 - 1973 Died 1997
Ronald W G Macpherson 1973 - 1976 Died 2002
Kenneth McPherson 1976 - 1979 Died 1993
J Donald MacPherson 1979 - 1982 Died 2010
John P Macpherson 1982 - 1985
Monroe Macpherson 1985 - 1988 Died 1993

T A S Macpherson 1988 - 1991
R G M Macpherson 1991 - 1994 Died 2023
Ewen S L MacPherson 1994 - 1997
M Alastair F Macpherson of Pitmain 1997 - 2000
Larry Lee McPherson 2000 - 2003 Died 2021
Catherine M D Macpherson 2003 - 2006 Died 2024
William R McPherson 2006 - 2009
Shelagh Macpherson Noble 2009 - 2012
John Macpherson 2012 - 2015
Jean Macpherson Duffy 2015 - 2018
William J S Macpherson 2018 - 2021
Bonnie Macpherson 2021 - 2024

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Dr Ewan Macpherson, Hugo MacPherso

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A NOTE FROM OUR CHIEF



Another year, another update from your Chief! Once again we had a very successful Gathering in the Highlands, with over 175 registered to attend the weekend. It was wonderful to see such a large contingent of young at The Ball, they interacted brilliantly and lit up The Duke of Gordon. It was a very enjoyable weekend, with everyone in great spirits throughout with the weekend, which culminated in a human pyramid at the picnic.

We also saw Angus' first full year as Chairman, carried out with honour. Although I am sure he was most disappointed to lose the tug-o-war to the Chief's Team at the Newtonmore Highland Games, I know he will be working on his revenge!

Sadly, we saw the passing of Lady Jean, the widow of Sir Thomas Macpherson, and Angus' mother, as well as John L from Australia, a past Chairman of the Branch. We pass on our condolences to their families and to all of those who have lost loved ones recently.

A personal highlight this year was our youngest, Angus, piping in the Tartan Parade in New York, where he met several Macpherson attendees, which was a very special moment. A more difficult time for our entire family, was the sale of our beloved Newton Castle in Blairgowrie. Sometimes we have to let go of things that we love and cherish. It was evidently time to see another family breathe life back into the place we called home for many generations with fond memories for so many, within the Clan and further afield. However, Annie and I continue to extend an invitation to you all to visit us in Melrose, as long as you give us advance notice of course!

And so, I finish by sending you all much love and best wishes for 2026. We think of those who have passed away. To those who have joined, we welcome you; and to those that do so much for our association and your branch, we give you thanks.

Yours aye

FROM THE DESK OF THE CMA CHAIRMAN

Greetings to all from Valerie and me.

I write this on a train to London having set off this morning from Craig Dhu, where there was a light sprinkling of snow. As I head south, so the weather improves, very different from the last time that I passed through the Borders just before Christmas. On that occasion it was pouring with rain as I headed to the village of Clifton in Cumberland, the site of the skirmish between Bonnie Prince Charlie's retreating army, which included the Macpherson Regiment and the chasing Hanoverian army under the command of his cousin, the Duke of Cumberland.



I had been asked by The 1745 Association to lay a wreath at the Rebel Tree on behalf of the fallen, which included 7 Macphersons. The ambush took place on the 18th of December, a damp day, as did the wreath laying, so the weather was appropriate. Sadly, at that time, the plaques put up to mark the tree had been destroyed. I am delighted to report that now thanks to the work of the English and Welsh Branch, amongst others, those plaques have been replaced.

Last year was busy with visits to the England and Wales and United States Branches for their Annual General Meetings. The former held at the Highland Wildlife Park, near Kingussie, to learn about the wildcat release programme they are running and admire the Highland Wildcats, who seemed to be in excellent fettle, sponsored by the Canadian branch. The United States Branch's was held at Dunedin, Florida, a State with close Macpherson connections. In the brief period that it was part of the British Empire, James 'Ossian' Macpherson was the Colonial Secretary of West Florida and General James Grant of Ballinalloch, whose niece married George Macpherson of Invereshie, was the first Governor of East Florida. Both branches were in good heart. Both gatherings reinforced the belief that Clan means family.

I also attended the Canadian Annual General Meeting electronically which was more challenging as it was done by telephone in pouring rain in the middle of a wood which formed the "Clan Village" at Stone Mountain Highland Games. Not only was reception poor, but there was a certain amount of background noise!

While thinking of family, our second son, Lochy, is getting married this year in Spain, while our eldest son and daughter, Tom and Fiona, and their respective spouses, Alex and Robbie, are working hard at providing

Valerie and me with 'buckets' of grandchildren: Francesca, Angus and Stella so far with, I am told, more on the way!

This year is the year of recruitment. We have created a trifold to assist branches in this process. While, as the examples above show, Macphersons have travelled far and wide, at its core, the Association remains a family organisation and our Gatherings are a reunion of friends and family. Our Highland Games offer an opportunity to display prowess at traditional Highland activities, whether that be hill running, dancing, piping or "tug o' war". As in so many things in life recruitment to the Association begins within the family and it can never start too early!

Preparations for our 80th Annual General Meeting and Gathering at Badenoch are progressing and applications are now available online at <https://www.clan-macpherson.org/gathering/>. It is also the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Memorial Cairn to Ewan of the '45.

It starts with the Chief's Ball at the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie on Friday, the 31st of July, 2026. Other key events are the Newtonmore Highland Games and Clan March at the Eilan, Newtonmore on Saturday the 1st of August, 2026. The Games are followed by the Ceilidh, which is preceded by an informal supper of stovies and haggis, both traditional Scottish dishes, back at the Duke of Gordon Hotel. If anyone has an act, song, dance or wishes to join our magnificent pipers please let us know when you apply for tickets. On Sunday, the 2nd of August, the Association hold an ecumenical Church Service at St Columba's Church in Kingussie and a picnic at the Cairn.

There will be other events. Not least a talk by Sandy Macpherson, who has attended every Gathering since its inception. Please come forward if you have any ideas and/or keep watching the website to see how the programme matures. Please book early to avoid disappointment and make our lives easier. We run the gathering on a shoestring. I must thank all the officers of the Association for their assistance and the wise counsel of the Council. Thank you too to all those that have contributed to this magazine, which has matched the standards of its predecessors.

I look forward to either greeting you in Badenoch or at Branch Gatherings or both! Those in France and Germany, Aubigny-sur-Nere and Wuppertal respectively, are already in the diary. We are working on getting to Africa, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.



EDITORIAL

SHANNON MACPHERSON

2026 Number 78

Our rains seem to have arrived early. I am definitely an ombrophile and love this time of year. The rains bring cooler temperatures and everything greens up. There is an African proverb that reads “those who pray for rain should be ready to deal with mud”. Africa changes from a dry, hot and dusty landscape to lush bush and lots of mud.

The 2025 Gathering seems to have been a happy event and some members have sent in photos of the Ball, AGM, March and Picnic.

Ewen has written an article on the Japanese Banchor Macphersons who attended the Gathering this year. Please look out for it in the Gathering Pages.

Donna has submitted several articles which may be found in the Museum Pages. These include “The At Home” and “A Fresh New Look”.

The Great Macpherson Quiz is once again featured in our magazine. Please send your answers to Sandy Macpherson. You will find his address on the quiz page.

Our magazine will remain online this year and will be hosted on the Clan website. If you are receiving a printed copy of the magazine and would prefer to only receive the digital version, please let our registrar know. This year the information on the Gathering and related events will be sent out as a separate PDF and available on the Clan Website. A link to the pages will be sent to the Clan Members via e-mail.

Feel free to send me articles and photographs for submission to the Creag Dhubh. This is your magazine. We would love to hear from you. The due date for submission of articles for our next Creag Dhubh is the end of November 2026.

I look forward to hearing from you.



*Meren, catching rainbows.
It would appear that being
an ombrophile is genetic.*



THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 79th CMA Annual General Meeting

Held on 2nd August, 2025 in St Bride's Parish Church, Newtonmore

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Angus Macpherson welcomed Cluny and family, all clan members, family and guests to the meeting, the 79th AGM of the Clan Macpherson Association

ATTENDEES

Australia - Fiona Macpherson, Sophie Macpherson, Wesley Macpherson,

Canada - Edward M Smith, William Macpherson,

England and Wales - Ian Macpherson, Suzy Macpherson, Eliza Le Roy-Lewis, Torquil Le Roy-Lewis, Alex Macpherson of Pitmain, Charlie Macpherson of Pitmain, Lindsay Jax Rousseau, Dorothy Pearson, Caitlyn Riley, Grace MacPherson, Andrew MacPherson

Europe - Jolanda Hinthum, Will Tulling, Bodo Schmitz, Talina Meyer, Georg Meyer, Marion Meyer

Scotland and Northern Ireland - Jamie Macpherson of Cluny, Annie Macpherson of Cluny, Angus Macpherson of Cluny, William Macpherson of Cluny, Valerie Macpherson, Angus Macpherson, Tom Macpherson, Alasdair Macpherson, Moray Cattanach, Joyce Cattanach, Jerome Le Roy-Lewis, Annie Le Roy-Lewis, Chris Gillies, Margaret Gillies, Shelagh Macpherson Noble, Catherine Morag Barr, Lachlan Macpherson of Glentruim, Flora Macpherson, Oliver Macpherson of Glentruim, Bill Macpherson, Sandy (Sandra) Macpherson, Bruce Macpherson, Jim Love, Christine Love, Ewen S.L. MacPherson, Ailsa MacPherson, Margaret MacPherson, Sandy Macpherson,

United States of America - Sheila Winslow, Donna McPherson Rucks, Bonnie McPherson, George McPherson

APOLOGIES

Australia - Pam and Bill Rhemrev, Euan Noble

Africa - Derek and Shannon Macpherson

Canada - Denise Lagundzin

England and Wales - Alastair and Penelope Macpherson of Pitmain, Prof. Philip Howard, Connie Howard

Scotland and Northern Ireland - Fiona Cumming, John & Iris Macpherson, Jean Macpherson of Biallid

New Zealand - Tony McPherson

United States of America - J David McPherson

OBITUARIES

The following names were read out, followed by a minute's silence:

Australia - Bob K McPherson, Lt Col John L Macpherson

England and Wales - Frederick Pearson

New Zealand - Jeannie Levett

Scotland and Northern Ireland - Donald Barr, Alexander Morison Macpherson (Alistair), Catherine Macpherson, Donald Macpherson

United States of America - Francis Holladay Archibold, Robert W Curington, Annette L P Gentile, Alan Mackie, Elizabeth (Beth) McPherson Frost, Marian Mariko McPherson

MINUTES OF THE 2024 78th AGM

These minutes were published in Creag Dhubh 2025 publication number 77. The motion to accept them as an accurate record was proposed by Ed Smith and seconded by Shelagh Macpherson Noble.

MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous AGM were published online along with Creag Dhubh; the Chairman asked if anyone had not received a copy - the answer from the room was no. The Chairman also asked everyone who may have changed their e-mail address to please let the registrar and/or their branch secretary know.

Feedback from those who received a printed copy of the magazine was excellent.

EWEN MACPHERSON

The Clan Macpherson Association Council members, Museum Advisory Committee members, Museum Trustees and all members of the Association would like to formally acknowledge and thank Ewen Macpherson for his years of voluntary service to the Museum. His knowledge will be irreplaceable, but we all hope that he will be not too far away. The Trustees presented Ewen with gifts for his 'retirement' alongside renaming the Archive Room at the Museum in his honour.

ELECTION OF CMA OFFICERS

Angus Macpherson - Chairman
Derek Macpherson - Vice Chairman
Joyce Cattanach - Secretary
Annie Le Roy-Lewis - Treasurer
Shannon Macpherson - Editor
Dave Muxo - Webmaster

Motion proposed by Shelagh Macpherson Noble seconded by Chris Gillies.

CLUNY'S REQUEST FOR THE CLAN MACPHERSON MARCH

The Chief asked the members attending the CMA AGM to be mindful of the following: only kilted men, women, and children. Avoid umbrellas, raincoats, ball caps, strollers and strictly no mobile phones. Let's keep it efficient. William will be the new Warrant Officer so please pay attention.

The Chairman added that at the start of the March it would be cash only for the entry fee. Card payments can only be taken at the ticket booth. To avoid paying twice please keep your ticket as proof of payment.

PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE GATHERING WEEKEND

The Chairman went through the schedule for the rest of the weekend. Following the Games there will be the Museum 'At Home', with a special presentation to Ewen MacPherson in recognition of all his work on the Museum and its artefacts over many years. Saturday evening brings the Stovies Supper and Ceilidh. Church at St Columba's in Kingussie at 10.00am Sunday morning. The picnic at the Cairn will be from 1.00pm with a walk to a local viewpoint an option. Angus will be delivering the talk on the Wolf of Badenoch at 3.00pm and Sunday evening will be free. Monday at 2.00pm meet at the Duke of Gordon for a walking tour of the local graveyards and Church sites.

Raffle tickets will be on sale over the course of the Saturday evening and will be drawn at the Ceilidh.

AOCB

Sandy Macpherson congratulated the Museum on the replacement of the Saltire which flies a welcome to the town and Museum.

An invitation was passed on to all for the Anniversary service to commemorate the 280th Anniversary of the battle of Clifton, on the 18th of December at Shap.

CLUNY'S CLOSING REMARKS

Cluny extended his and the Clan's condolences to the families of Alistair Macpherson (Newburgh), remembering his long attendance at the Clan events; of Catherine Macpherson, the first Lady Chair of the Clan Macpherson Association, and her input to the Clan along with her family; and to John L (Australia), welcoming his son and daughter to the Gathering weekend and thanking them for reading the Australian report with such feeling.

Cluny extended his thanks to all the office bearers and noted the positive income in the bank.

Family news: Angus was delighted to attend the Tartan Parade in New York and to have the opportunity to play his bagpipes at such an event. Thanks to those who managed to attend and show their support.

Newton Castle has been sold after 8 generations as a family home.

Cluny extended an invitation to all to visit him and the family in Melrose.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Saturday 1st August 2026

Minutes completed 19.08.2025

Joyce Cattanach

Secretary

Clan Macpherson Association

Cma.secretary@clan-macpherson.org

OFFICE BEARERS' REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I write this concurrently with putting the finishing touches on the detail for this year's gathering and find myself astonished how swiftly this year has passed! All I can say is that without the supporting team of Annie, Joyce, Dave, Shannon, Suzy and the Branch Chairmen the show would have spun seriously off the rails.

While we have sadly lost several members of the Association, a special mention must go to John L, erstwhile Chairman and Secretary of the Australia branch, Honorary Vice President of the Association and enthusiastic supporter of the Museum, who died in March. It is a delight that his son, Wes, has managed to join us this year. John L's dogged determination and sage ideas have been a very necessary thorn in my side for over a decade both as Convenor of the Museum and Chairman of the Association! He has constantly encouraged using the Museum as a tool to increase recruitment for the Association; arranged for a pistol, which had been owned by Duncan of the Kiln, the son of Ewen of the '45, to be loaned to our Museum from the Museum of Victoria in Australia; and his final proposal was that the Association should lend some of its reserves to the Museum for investment rather than being kept in a bank. This proposal was approved by the Council but has yet to be implemented.

Over the last year we undertook a review of the Creag Dhubh, which confirmed that it was possible to publish a paper copy on a more limited scale concurrently with an electronic copy. The paper copy proved popular amongst those who received it but remains a significant cost. While actions can be taken to reduce this cost, if a paper copy is to be retained an administratively simple mechanism will be needed to recoup these costs from those that receive it.

This year the numbers attending the gathering are down by some 10 per cent. There are a number of contributory factors, such as a transition between managers at the Duke of Gordon Hotel and a consequent delay in the publication of Creag Dhubh, some difficulties with booking via the website at a crucial time, and equally, some global difficulties that are discouraging travel! Nevertheless, one factor may be that the electronic version is not as good at stimulating bookings as the paper version, so we will need to find solutions to address this.

There have been questions and some discussion about potential applications to the Association from those that are neither Macphersons nor from an Associated family. The answer, as explained on the website, is that they can be accepted so long as they get Cluny's approval. Clearly, Cluny cannot interview every applicant, so it is requested that the individual sends

to the Registrar of the Association a letter addressed to Cluny that includes a proposer, or, at least as a minimum, an individual in the Association whom they know who would be willing to propose them, and an explanation as to why they wish to join the Association and what benefits they could bring to it. Thereafter the Registrar consults with Cluny, and, if felt appropriate, some or all of the Council. A decision is then relayed to the candidate. All applications for Man Rent (there are very few) will require approval from the Council prior to acceptance.

You will recall that one of my and Valerie's priorities was a desire to visit every branch during my tenure as Chairman. I am disappointed to report that we have performed extremely badly on that front with only a visit to join the Scottish Branch at Dunkeld achieved this year. Things are looking up for 2025/26, with visits to the United States to attend their AGM and the Stone Mountain Games and, with aspirations so far, to visit Scottish Days in Wuppertal, Germany, the Franco-Scottish Festival at Aubigny-sur-Nère, France, as well as the Ball, held in London by the England and Wales branch. Please can I encourage you to keep your branch websites up to date so that we can start planning – our diaries get ridiculously busy – and also let us know at the earliest opportunity if you think there is any event to which we can come that could help your branch's recruitment or retention. We are very conscious that there are a lot of branches to go to!

It is good to welcome you here in person at both the Annual General Meeting and our other activities. We hope that includes for many of you the Clan March. Please remember that it is a parade where the Clan are demonstrating their support for their chief, Cluny, so kilted only, no pets and no mobile phones. There is nothing worse than looking like a shambles and feeling the need to film it!

ANGUS MACPHERSON



REGISTRAR'S REPORT

The current membership can be seen in the table below.

As always, I would like to thank all the branch secretaries for their work and support in keeping our membership information up to date.

Branch	Life	Term	Annual	Young Adult	Junior	Total	2024	+/-
Africa	16	-	0	-	-	16	17	-1
Australia	109	4	41	-	1	155	115658	-1
Canada	111	3	21	-	-	135	137	-2
England & Wales	250	4	44	5	7	310	320	-10
Europe	39	6	14	3	-	62	55	7
New Zealand	9	1	9	-	-	19	20	-1
Scotland & N Ireland	214	5	24	-	11	254	263	-9
United States	457	15	203	5	47	727	725	2
Other Locations	4	2	-	-	-	6	6	-
Total	1209	40	356	13	66	1684	1699	-15

NB: I have been unable to obtain the current figures for the United States Branch. I have therefore included the latest figures I have for that branch in blue. The total for July 2025 is also shown in blue as it does not include latest US information. I will hope to be able to provide a full AGM report for 2nd August.

SUZY MACPHERSON



TREASURER'S REPORT

The full CMA financial statements to the 31st of December, 2024, prepared by past Treasurer, Alison Christie, were agreed and signed at the most recent Council Meeting. A full copy of the accounts is available on request. I will now take you through a synopsis of these accounts by way of an income and expenditure account covering the past four years.

The first column on the sheet shows the most recent year and highlights a profit on membership income versus expenses of £4,386. This is the line highlighted in green. This profit, versus quite substantial losses in previous years, was almost entirely due to sending out the annual magazine electronically with a nominal charge to print and post hard copies to those who requested one. Membership was very similar to the previous year, and of course we have benefitted from higher interest rates in recent months.

The Gathering in 2024 made a small profit of £321 and, added to the profits over the previous years since Covid, means that we hold a gathering fund of £3455. This is there to help fund extra costs, such as a marquee, incurred in any future 'celebratory years'. The amount in the bank as at 31 December 2024 was £36,776.

At the recent Council meeting it was agreed that rather than having a large amount of cash in the bank, £22,000 would be invested within the Museum share portfolio with the income generated given to the Museum. This is a sensible way of supporting the Museum and ensuring the best investment for the CMA funds. This £22,000 joins the £8,000 already invested in this way, bringing the total to £30,000.

It should also be noted that, in the 1970s and 1980s, the sum of £31,437 was given to the Museum from excess funds held by the Association. Unlike the £30,000, which can be called back at any time, the £31,437 would only be claimed back if the Museum were to close its doors permanently.

It was also agreed in the most recent council meeting that in future only an income and expenses sheet would be provided and checked each year rather than a full set of accounts. There is no need for a membership association to compile accounts that include complicated balance sheets and so, to streamline this, Alison Christie has agreed to continue to check the figures to produce an income and expenditure sheet. This should give Association members, and me, peace of mind that all figures are checked by a third party.

ANNIE MACPHERSON

	31.12.24		31.12.23		31.12.22		31.12.21	
Membership	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Life - 1/30th of life fund	1193		1217		1185		1119	
Term - 1/10th term fund	450		417		313		248	
Annual Subscriptions	4818		4983		5340		4872	
Other, includes interest	478		366		17		164	
		6939		6983		6855		6402
Management								
Bank Charges	-8		-3		-5		-39	
Paypal Charges	-57		-62		-40		-80	
Secretarial/Accountancy	-195		-293		-285		-205	
Webhosting	-277							
Other	-225		-25		-104		0	
		-761		-383		-434		-325
Creag Dhubh								
Flipbook	-1831						-2913	
US Licence	376							
Printing	-384		-3765		-3435			
Distribution	-154		-5536		-4906		-5444	
Income	200		0		100		500	
		-1792		-9301		-8241		-7857
Membership income versus expenses		4386		-2701		-1820		-1780
Gathering								
Income	10551		12645		12320			
Paypal Charges	-178		-238		-205		4	
Expenditure	-10052		-11083		-10304			
		321		1324		1811		4
Total Profit/Loss		4706		-1378		-9		-1776
Cash held in bank accounts as at 30th Dec 24 = £36,776								



EDITOR'S REPORT

Derek and I are very sad not to be attending the Gathering this year. It was so good to be with you last year celebrating “family time”.

I feel that our online magazine was a success this past year. We were able to put it on our website, at no additional cost, and although I do not have the statistics, I hope many were able to read it online. I was able to produce the magazine in the traditional format, which facilitated the printing thereof. There were a number of members who requested a printed copy of the 2025 Creag Dhubh. However, I hope that the number of printed copies will reduce each year as members see the value in the online version.

Co-ordinating the Gathering pages takes a lot of work and is time-consuming. A number of the service providers take time to get back to the committee with confirmed costs for events. This often causes a delay in finalising the pages for the Creag Dhubh and subsequently a delay in going to print. The council has agreed that the Creag Dhubh will go out, as usual, towards the end of January. The Gathering pages will be published at a later date on the website as a second publication, as soon as the costs and events have been finalised.

I would like to encourage you all to submit articles and photographs to me for the 2026 Creag Dhubh. The deadline for articles is the end of November. This allows time for our proofreaders to get the articles back to me before the holiday season begins. I would very much like to have most of the magazine ready by early January.

I am excited to put the 78th Creag Dhubh together and look forward to receiving your articles.

SHANNON MACPHERSON



WEB MASTER'S REPORT

The CMA website had a tense week of an outage involving our Perl scripts this year. Zen moved our web space from one server to another without notifying us. The move also changed our server name, which caused various errors in our code, especially in our Perl code, which runs all of the membership, AGM, and donation forms for both the CMA website and the Museum website. The result was that thankfully, while the websites did not go down, all of our forms were broken.

Bill was able to contact Zen support after several tries, and Zen did fix their problems and assisted us in solving ours. This major event came at a bad time for us due to the rapidly approaching CMA AGM. I have heard several comments about perhaps changing host companies again. My feeling is that such a move is unnecessary and would be more trouble than it would be worth.

Coincidentally, I volunteered to assist with the new Museum website to help with the membership and donation forms processing. Jason Reign is programming the forms, and I assist with the background processes. Morrigan has been doing a great job with the WordPress pages. I am particularly interested in seeing the development of forms processing without using Perl or PHP for the background processing. If we can get that to work for the Museum website, I believe that it could also be used for the CMA website in the future.

We have reached our limit of 50 email accounts, and in several instances I have deactivated a current unused account to make way for a new one.

Thanks to Bill once again for running the Facebook page, and to our team of monitors. I have advised Angus that, as of sometime in February of 2027, I will be retiring as the Webmaster of the CMA website. However I will be available for all of 2027 to assist the new Webmaster. What I am seeing now with the new Museum website leads me to believe that a transition to a WordPress CMA website could be possible.

Note: After this report was written, the WordPress forms for the new Museum website were incorporated into the new Museum website successfully.

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DEREK MACPHERSON

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AFRICA



To the Chair and fellow Council members, warm greetings from Malawi.

Whilst I do not have much news to share about the activities of the Africa Branch of the Association I am happy to report that we are still alive!

Concerning membership, I am delighted to be able to inform you that we have had news from a Life Member with whom we have not been in contact since at least 2014. Rob Gillies reached out to the Association in May this year (many thanks to Moray for linking us up). Rob's father was William Gillies, who was born in Laggan and passed away in 2017. Rob lives in Zimbabwe. He has recently retired from a job in Infrastructural Inputs Manufacturing. He

plays the drum in a local (Harare) pipe band.

We have lost one Annual Member, Maarten de Groot. Maarten contacted us last year and joined the DNA programme only to discover that he is not connected to the Macphersons or any associated name. He has not renewed his membership.

I have some good news from South Africa. Ed Ostrosky has published his second book, which is a factual work. The title is "Tembe, Saving the Sihangwane Elephants". It is largely an autobiographical account of his time in the 300 square kilometre Tembe Elephant Park. It is well worth the read and comes on the heels of his first book, "Macpherson's Elephant".

Salaams to all,

DEREK MACPHERSON

PAM REMREV

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AUSTRALIA



Greetings from Australia to all at Newtonmore and to our cousins around the world. The Australa Branch committee has had a change since last reported: David Gillies and Donald McPherson have exchanged places, David becoming Treasurer and Donald a committee member.

17th and 18th August 2024 -

David J McPherson, who was assisted by John Waddel, Peter Shine, and David McPherson, mounted a tent over the weekend at the successful Ballarat event. Attractions included highland dancing, massed pipe bands, a Lone Piper opening, jousting duels on horseback and traditional Scottish games

12th of October, 2024 - Bright sunny weather greeted visitors to Kambah where the annual Canberra Highland Gathering was held. We were among a large collection of Clan tents that maintained the Scottish flavour of the day.

24th of November, 2024 - Overnewton Castle in Keilor saw the final event of 2024. Macphersons joined Clan Cameron as the only two Clans represented at this event.

5th of May, 2025 - A number of us followed our Clan banner in the march that started the day's events at Bundanoon is Brigadoon. There was a large number of Clan tents and a stream of visitors.

VALE: Our condolences are extended to the families of Lt-Col John Lachlan Macpherson and Neil Athol McPherson OAM FQSN.

John Lachlan passed away on the 10th of March, 2025 at the age of 89. He joined the CMA in 1998 and had most recently been Secretary of the CMA Australa Branch. He will be best remembered for the many years he served as the Chairman of the Australian Branch. His service to the CMA was recognised by his appointment as a Vice-President.

Neil Athol McPherson OAM FQSN, of Runaway Bay Queensland, a Notary Public and solicitor, passed away on the 3rd of June, 2025 at the age of 83.

In conclusion, I thank the Australian Branch committee for their support.

PAMELA RHEMREV

DENISE C LAGUNDZIN

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CANADA



Cluny and family, Madam Chairman, Officers, and members of the Association, it is my great honour and pleasure to send greetings from all Canadian members.

My apologies for not being able to join you. Thank you to Bill Macpherson, former Branch Chairman, for representing me and delivering my report. Canada's AGM was held on the 23rd of November, 2024. There were two changes in our Executive as Ken Gillis stepped down as Treasurer after several years of dedicated service and Bill Macpherson of Mississauga was

voted in as the new Treasurer. Ewan Macpherson stepped down as the Canada branch's Webmaster and Vance McPherson was voted in as the new Webmaster. Both Ken and Ewan were thanked for their dedication and received promises that we would continue to see them at clan events.



Rod Smith

Two members of the Canada Branch were honoured in 2025. On Sunday, 23rd of February, Rod Smith was honoured by the Lutheran Church of Canada with their highest award for Leaders, The Lamb Award. The Lamb Award is a national recognition bestowed on Lutheran adults (including laypersons, pastors, professional church workers, men and women) by the National Lutheran Association of Scouting.

Congratulations to Bruce Gillis LL.M, FSAScot of Paradise, Nova Scotia. Bruce has been awarded the Sovereign's Volunteer Medal for outstanding volunteer work by the Governor General of Canada.



Bruce Gillis

We have a “Hod” again. Thank you to Chris Cain for crafting one for us. A Hod is a wooden tray used to carry the Haggis into dinner.

Our branch also has another sword. The new sword was gifted to me, and I am gifting it to the clan. Now, all we need is a targe, and we will be a splendid sight in the Highland Games and festival Clan Marches.

The Canadian Branch welcomed 2025 with a Robert Burns Weekend, held at a new venue in London, Ontario with twenty adults and two teenagers gathering together at the Idlewyld Inn and Spa. We enjoyed a delicious meal in the Wine Cellar at the Idlewyld, which was built in 1878, as a private home for Charles Smith Hyman. Mr. Hyman was a Canadian businessman, notable politician, and sportsman. Mr. Hyman was a popular tennis player and won a record five Canadian Opens, until broken by Ivan Lendl with six titles.



Summer began on the 1st of July - Canada Day - with the welcoming sound of pipes and aromas of haggis at the oldest Highland Games in Ontario, The Embro Highland Games. John and Janet McCredie and Ewan, Nancy and Jessica Macpherson joined my husband Mike and myself for an extremely sweltering day talking to people about our beloved clan.

Four days later, while The Canadian Branch of Clan Macpherson were setting up for the Kincardine Highland Games and Scottish Festival, we were informed by the Clan Representative of the Games that we had been given the honour of being the Honorary Clan. Macphersons have been in Kincardine since Malcolm MacPherson (born in Perthshire, Scotland in June, 1806, and moving to Canada in 1815). The Macpherson family moved to Kincardine in February, 1854. The family donated land for Macpherson’s Park and MacPherson’s Park Beach, near to McPherson Crescent.

Many families with the surnames of Gow, Gillis and Archibald stopped by the Clan tent in Cambridge. They were thrilled to be a part of the Clan Macpherson and took away information on joining us. Darla and Ken Foote and Dan and Pat Pearson joined in the Clan march. The Fergus Highland Games and Scottish festival is celebrating 80 years in August.



The Lord Lyon , Dr Joseph Morrow, as well as four Clan Chiefs and two Clan Commanders will be attending the games this year. I have been invited to the Lord Lyons' Dinner, which is being held after the Saturday Games, which I am very honoured and excited to be attending. This will wrap up the Ontario Summer Games. Bob and Sylvia Macpherson will be attending the Canmore Highland Games in Alberta and making a report for the next Green Banner. We shall meet via Zoom for our AGM, the tentative date is Saturday, the 25th of October, 2025. Lastly, I am pleased to report that the Canada Branch remains healthy and committed to the work of the Association.

In closing, as Chairman of the Canada Branch of the Clan Macpherson Association, I would like to convey our message of fealty and allegiance to our Chief Cluny, from myself and all the members in Canada.

DENISE LAGUNDZIN

WILL MACPHERSON

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ENGLAND AND WALES



Greetings from the England and Wales Branch and thanks to Tom for delivering this report. I am absent because a few weeks ago we welcomed our newest branch member: Gaia Macpherson was born on the 19th of June, 2025.

Very sorry not to be at the Gathering this year, but we will introduce Gaia to you in 2026.

A bit to report from the England and Wales Branch over the year. We held a fantastic AGM in Regents Park in the autumn, followed by a tour of the Churchill War Rooms.

We are likely to hold our ball in London in the spring of next year - more details to follow soon - and we hope to

see some of you there.

After years of service, Bill Macpherson stepped down as our secretary in November. He will be missed, having been the life and soul of the committee!

It does mean that we are on the hunt for new committee members - including a secretary, and a chairman ... so if you are interested, please get in touch.

Wishing you all a fantastic games and Ceilidh and see you soon!

WILL MACPHERSON

BODO SCMITZ

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EUROPE



On behalf of the members of the European Branch, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to our Chief, his family, and all those present!

The European Branch is growing slowly but steadily. We have grown to 63 members.

Despite intensive efforts, it remains difficult to establish contacts within the Branch. We have now set up regional councils in the 4 largest countries.

After his resignation from the position of Vice Chairman, Anthony is now available to me in France. In Germany, Marian will take on this role.

In September, I will be travelling to Belgium to meet with members from Belgium and the Netherlands, and at this meeting I will try to find someone for this position in both Belgium and the Netherlands.

The dates of the events in Europe will be communicated to all members as soon as possible. We hope many will take part.

The European Branch pages on the CMA website have been updated. Dave, many thanks for your support!

I wish everyone a great Gathering!

Thank you very much.

BODO BERND SCHMITZ

TONY MCPHERSON

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NEW ZEALAND



Welcome from New Zealand/ Aotearoa, "the land of the long white cloud", named by the Maori on arrival to this land from their journey down the Pacific approximately 1000 years ago.

This description is so correct. In recent times with climate change we are experiencing some exceptional rainfall in parts of the country with the resultant flooding. We are all looking forward to Spring and drying out.

Membership of the clan branch remains around the 20 the level. This small group is spread across the 3000 km length of New Zealand, North and South - hence the difficulty in organising any physical gathering. Communication is

by newsletter three to four times a year.

Currently we are in the early planning stage to attend the 2026 Gathering. We wish all those attending the 2025 Gathering a great experience.

TONY MCPHERSON

MORAY CATTANACH

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SCOTLAND AND N IRELAND



The Scotland and Northern Ireland Branch continues to thrive, and we are lucky enough to be able to hold various social events. We try to make them as family friendly as possible to encourage all ages along.

We were saddened to lose long-standing members this past year, who have been aligned with the clan for so many years. We would like to remember Donald Barr, Alexander Morison Macpherson (Alistair), Catherine Macpherson, and Donald Macpherson.

Our 2024 AGM was held in Perth before a light lunch at The Giddy Goose. This was followed by an exciting tour of the new Perth Museum. We were shown key items from the Recognised Collection of National Significance and a separate tour of the Stone of Destiny

special exhibition space within the Museum.

There was a good turnout on not so good a day weather wise for our Spring Social Event which was held at the end of March. We had a lovely walk along the river and back again and were all ready for our soup and sandwiches.



Clan Macpherson - S&NI Branch

WALK & TALK

Saturday 29th March 2025

Please join us for a walk along the banks of the River Tay before a Soup and Sandwich Lunch in the Royal Dunkeld Hotel, Dunkeld

For those who wish to make a day of it (or for those who are not able to walk far) there is the Cathedral to visit as well as beautiful scenery to enjoy

11.00am Walk
1.00pm - Lunch - £7.50 per head

RSVP (by 7th March) to book and pay for lunch
SandNI.Treasurer@clan-macpherson.org



On Saturday, the 19th of April, Moray and Joyce represented Clan Macpherson at the Culloden Commemoration Day. Although, again, the weather was not the best, it was well-attended in general. It may be an idea to attend formally in the future with a banner and take part in the day.

The CMA S&NI branch picnic, held on the 21st of June, 2025, in Craigtoun Country Park, St Andrews, was such a happy day. The weather could have been kinder as the haarf forced us to eat inside. However the Picnic

Hut really came into its own. Lunch was followed by a stroll around Craigtoun Park, collecting the treasure hunt letters, which ultimately spelt out the Clan Macpherson cry, Creag Dhubh! Some of our more intrepid ladies even had a bounce on the trampolines!



We hosted a stall in the Clan tent at the Inverness Highland Games on the 12th of July, 2025, promoting the Clan Macpherson Association. I would like to thank Annie, Bill, Helen, Sandy and Joyce. We took part in the Clans' March onto the field behind our own Banner carrier Bill Macpherson (Glenfarg). It was a very hot day in Inverness, which brought the crowds out in force. We also had our new pop-up banners thanks to Annie and Bill! Sandy was the star tourist attraction of the event, having his photo taken with all the tourists and regaling them with stories, history and information.



We took contact details for those interested in joining the CMA, and Joyce will pass them onto Suzy and the relevant Chairmen. We did sell some of the Museum merchandise, and the Sum Up card reader worked perfectly. All the clans' representatives were finding that people are less likely to buy things or take written information, but they did scan our QR codes, and it was so easy with having them on the banners.

We are all looking forward to attending and supporting the Clan Gathering and AGM. We will be offering an all-abilities guided walking tour of the Highland Wildlife Park on Saturday the 11th of October for those who wish to join in after the AGM and lunch. No visit would be complete without an update on the Wildcats.

The switch to the Royal Bank of Scotland is complete, with the new account working well and all funds transferred from the Bank of Scotland account, which is now closed.

Our branch mascot, Sandi, has arrived safely on the Tarbat peninsula, about an hour north of Inverness, where he is staying with Carly. Sandi has met all of Carly's stuffed friends, including Dr Squashmallow, a knitted tiger and physician, with whom he has become firm friends. Sandi has recently been to a talk at the Dornoch Golf Club. He listened to Carly's mother, Mairi, talking about tartan as part of Threads of Belonging, and briefly got up when Mairi talked about him and how he came about! Sandi was particularly intrigued by the golf club's mascot, a fellow wildcat, and insisted on posing with it.



MORAY CATTANACH



DAVID MACPHERSON

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UNITED STATES

On behalf of the U.S. diaspora, greetings to all CMA Cousins in attendance and abroad. Thank you to our U.S. members, who have made the trip over to experience and partake in the celebration - have fun representing the Branch.

While in Scotland, we encourage you to explore everywhere from the Borders to the Hebrides, to the Highlands and Islands. And all iconic places in between (in addition to the distilleries). We wish everyone a productive and convivial Gathering. Enjoy the special place that is Badenoch.

A special thank you to Cluny for your leadership of the most special Clan of the Highlands. Warm wishes and best regards to you and your family. And hurrah! to young Angus for his good cheer and big smiles as you joined us recently, with your pipe band and schoolmates, on the Avenue of the Americas in New York City.

We extend respect and appreciation to CMA Chairman, Angus Macpherson, for donning the mantle of leadership. We look forward to hosting Angus and Valerie in October at the Stone Mountain Games in Georgia, and following that, our Branch Gathering in Dunedin, Florida. Thank you for your commitment to visiting the Branches during your tenure. And welcome! In fact, we invite any and all world travellers to sunny Florida for the U.S. Gathering.

The United States Branch continues, with our near and far cousins, the climb out of 2019/2020, when the planet was turned upside down. We have experienced the return of many games and festivals and the sprouting up of a few entirely new festivals - hopefully to establish strong and resilient roots. The Clan Macpherson Association is represented throughout the year at approximately 100 festivals in all corners of the nation. Congratulatory recognition to all the tent conveners and helpers, who show the flag and help recruit new members, the life blood of any self-sustaining organisation.

Our twelve regions - from the rugged seashore of New England to the New World settlements of Florida, across the vast plains of the Midwest and Central regions, heading up to the highlands of the Rocky Mountains, stretching from border to border, north to south and finally to the 1300 mile Pacific Coast, Alaska and Hawaii - are home to over 750 Clan Macpherson

Association members, and growing. With growth, comes growing pains.

Covering such vast territory has always been a challenge. For decades our Ruthe McPherson, very effectively and singularly, served members concentrated in the major population centres as the Regional Commissioner. Now with her handing over, there is a learning curve. In addition, a few long-serving volunteers in critical positions are growing older and we are looking for new volunteers. Our work is cut out for us to serve members in all of our regions, and we consistently seek to recruit able and enthusiastic representatives. In the past year we have pooled the knowledge of current Conveners to formally develop a Convenir's Kit to assist new and continuing Conveners with a how-to guide of processes and equipment suggestions. In addition, the Council voted to increase the financial support for Conveners, reducing the out-of-pocket expense for starting up and maintaining representation. We're happy to report these efforts are paying off with several new Conveners joining our ranks.

Our Branch journal, *The Urlar*, is an unparalleled publication in the USA amongst the clans. It is a high-quality tool for engagement by our members and is invaluable for chronicling our history. Since the migration of the publication to digital format a few years ago, the Branch has realised significant savings in the budget, which has allowed us to redirect monies to focus on member development efforts.

At a recent CMA Council meeting, Ewen Macpherson suggested formally recognising a theme for the upcoming year of recruitment and engagement. We heartily endorse this. Along with all the other CMA branches, we face the same challenges and opportunities. Parts of our Council discussions have been focused on conversations with our members on the value proposition, retention and recruitment. For most prospective members the value resides in being a part of a family, a cultural and historic group, a Clan. We aim to provide that family, clan, home.

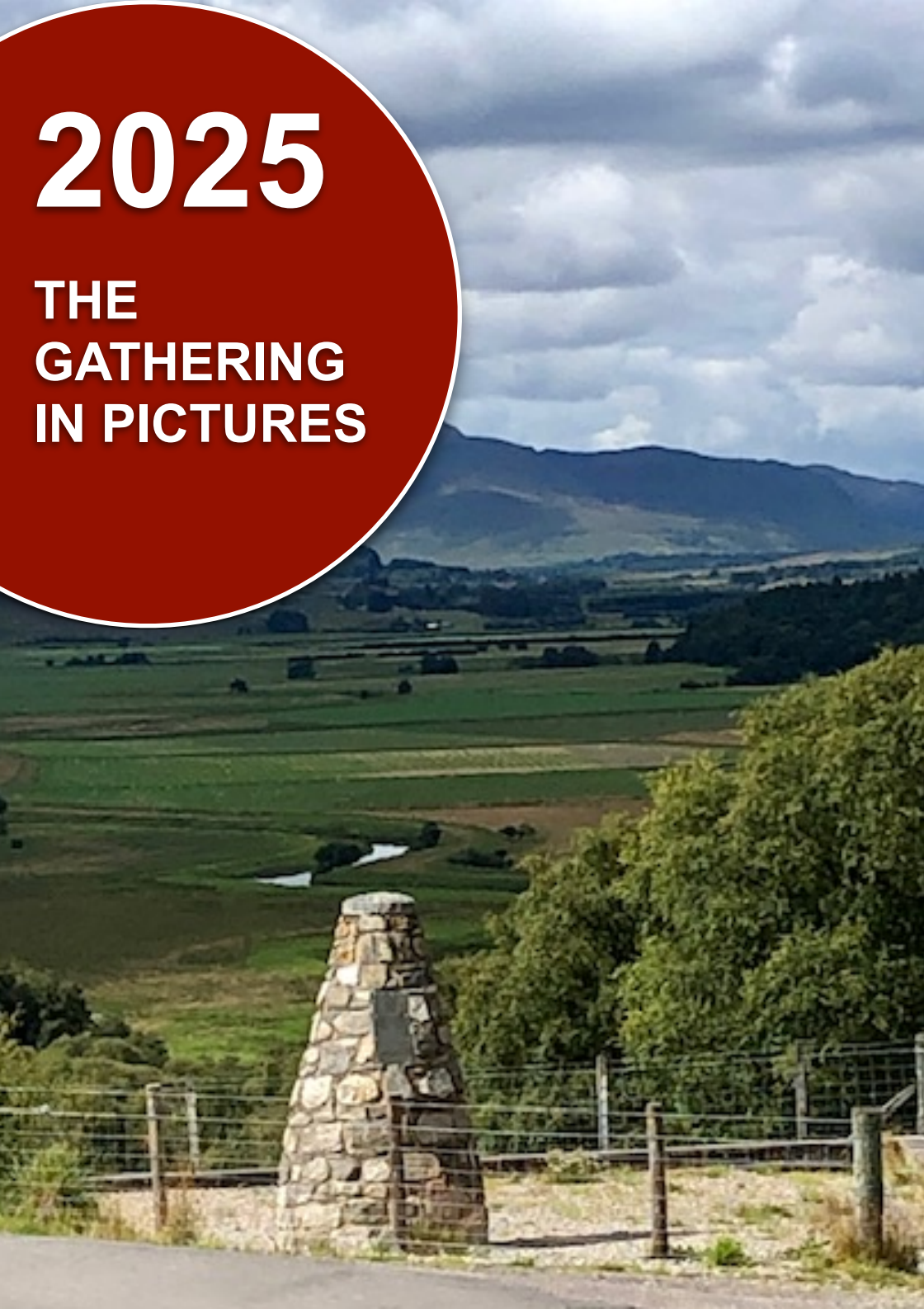
The Council is working toward surveying the branch members for their opinions on a few topics, with the intent of gauging interest, value, and participation. We hope this will help with recruitment and engagement, and in turn help with sustainability and ultimately the growth of the Branch and Association. We hope to be able to report on the results of our survey before the end of the year. The Council and volunteers are dedicated to providing the best experience for everyone, and indeed, we salute the many volunteers without whom we could not carry on.

In closing, we regret being unable to be at the Gathering, now assembled in Newtonmore and Kingussie. We have many fond memories of past Gatherings and look forward to the future when we can again enjoy the company of cousins Macpherson. Thank you to George and Bonnie McPherson for standing in for us. Our thoughts go out to all, for continued good health and happiness, remembering our friends who have passed and saluting our friends who return. Good luck to all in conducting the meeting, and best wishes for a wonderful weekend of fellowship. Sláinte!

DAVID J. MCPHERSON

2025

THE GATHERING IN PICTURES



From left to right - Ian and Suzy Macpherson and Miriam, Kinga, and Guy Laycock



Annie Le Roy-Lewis and Bonnie McPherson



Angus, William and Eliza Macpherson attending the AGM



*Our Chairman, Angus,
welcoming his Clan onto the
Eilan*

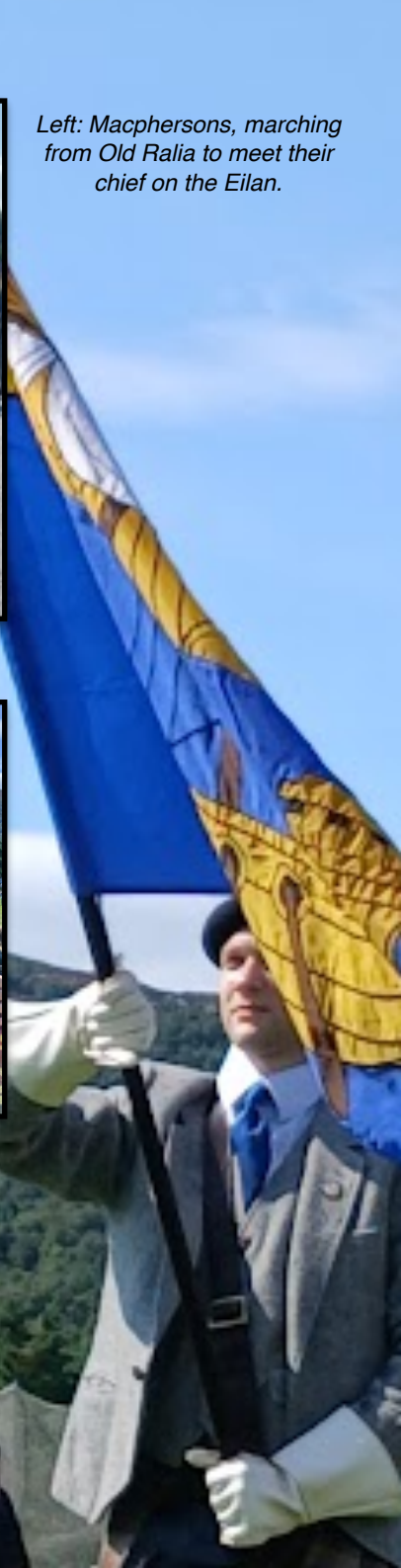




Left: Macphersons, marching from Old Ralia to meet their chief on the Eilan.



Above from Left to right : Torquil Le Roy-Lewis, Angus, William and Lucy Macpherson.





JAPANESE BANCHOR MACPHERSONS AT THE CLAN GATHERING

In May 2025, I received an enquiry via the Clan Museum from an organiser of a trip to Scotland for Japanese friends connected to the Clan Macpherson. This reminded me of a similar message I received via the Clan Museum in 1997 from Isamu Takama in Japan, enquiring about his connection to the Macphersons of Banchor. On that occasion, I sought the assistance of the late Dr Alan G Macpherson, and he subsequently wrote the article *Introducing Isamu Takama (Macpherson)* in *Creag Dhubh*, 1998, pp. 33-35.

Following contact with the person enquiring, it was established that he was making the arrangements on behalf of Keisuke Amano and his wife, Ayano, who are from the area of Hamamatsu, Shizuoka, about 150 miles southwest of Tokyo. They would be accompanied by his father, Susumu and uncle, Kenji, and be in the Badenoch area at the time of the Clan Gathering.



*Taken whilst visiting Badenoch.
From Left: Keisuke, Ayano, Susumu (father) and Kenji (uncle) Amano.*

In *Creag Dhubh*, 2008, pp. 65-66, I wrote a brief history of St Andrew's Church in Quebec City and its first minister, the Rev. Robert Macpherson (1731-1791), of the Banchor line, a cadet branch of the House of Cluny, who served in the 78th Fraser Highlanders as *Am Caipal Mòr* (The Big Chaplain). The Rev Robert's eldest son was John Macpherson (1776-1845), of Ness Bank, who was

married to Christian Macdonald and was the chief factor to Lord Macdonald on the Isle of Skye.

So, where did Keisuke and his family fit in the Banchor line? From my experience in 1997, I was aware that Angus John Macpherson, the former Chairman of the England & Wales Branch of the Clan Macpherson Association, was of the Banchor line, so I contacted him. Angus forwarded a family tree that showed the exact connection with Keisuke Amano. Angus is also a direct descendant of the Rev. Robert Macpherson (*Am Caipal Mòr*), but from Duncan, a younger brother of John of Ness Bank.



Taken at the grave of Matthew Townsend Bethune Macpherson in the Yokohama General Foreign Cemetery.

Keisuke & Ayano's children: Haruto (aged 6, sitting on Keisuke's knee), Mitsuki (aged 10, standing with V sign), Soma (aged 8, sitting on the right).

In *Creag Dhubh*, 2011, pp. 51-52, I wrote the story of Lt. Col. Ranald Macpherson (1817 - 1869), the 5th son of John of Ness Bank, who was the architect for the design and construction of St Andrew's Anglican Church, later to become St Andrew's Cathedral in Singapore.

Alan G. Macpherson's article in *Creag Dhubh*, 1998 informs us that Ranald was married to Christina Bethune and that they had seven sons and two daughters. The fifth child and fourth son was Matthew Townsend Bethune Macpherson (1849-1897), who married Sai Sakamoto of Nagasaki, Japan, and is buried in the Yokohama General Foreign Cemetery.

Matthew and Sai's eldest son was Ryokichi Sakamoto (1873-1931), who married Hanako Gillingham, née Date. Their eldest son was Ryoichi Sakamoto (1899-1976), who married Kiyoko Tada (1901-1964). The eldest child was female, Yuriko Saskamoto, who married Sukenari Amano, and is the grandmother of Keisuke Amano and the older sister of Isamu Takama.

Keisuke and his family attended the Clan Gathering. His English was excellent, and during the talk on James Macpherson of Ossian fame, he discreetly interpreted it to his family. They visited the Clan Macpherson Museum, enjoyed the Highland Games on Saturday afternoon and the buffet supper in the evening. They enjoyed their visit to the Clan Gathering and hope to return in the future.

EWEN SL MACPHERSON

THE AT HOME

Two lone pipers were out front, piping the guests into the At Home on the Saturday of this year's Gathering. The magical sounds of the pipes drew a hush over the crowd gathering outside.

Mesmerised by the mournful tune of 'Macpherson's Rant,' I entered through the Perth door. The Museum was full of Friends and Guardians, celebrating the many accomplishments that have given the Museum a fresh look!

More than 75 guests enjoyed wee drams of whisky and wine along with shortbread and a lot of talk! The joy of getting together was clear, as folks renewed old friendships and made new acquaintances. It was not all just talk - we had an exciting presentation to deliver. Ewen S. L. MacPherson had announced his retirement earlier this year, and the Museum Trustees secretly planned to honour him at the At-Home.



William and John Macpherson



To set the stage, the pipers snuck around the outside of the Museum to the Laggan side. With a nod from me, they piped themselves into the Museum while playing 'Scotland the Brave'. The noise level of the pipes on entry was startling! They marched through the Museum, weaving among the guests, the sound of the pipes fading in the distance. . .



Ewen had been warned earlier to stay where he was as we would be gathering around him. He was bemused. The Convenor of Trustees Alex Macpherson of Pitmain took over, congratulating Ewen on his many years of volunteer service to the Museum, telling him that the Trustees had voted him “Trustee Emeritus” and had re-named the Archives Room in his honour. Ewen received several gifts including an album full of photos highlighting his many years’ career at the Museum, a duplicate Archives Room sign for his home office, and the newest edition of Macpherson Places of Interest.

The applause and cheering was long and loud, as Ewen enjoyed his few moments of celebration! Thank you, Ewen! Well done! Thanks go to many for making the afternoon happen, including Paul McPherson, Custodian; William and John Macpherson, pipers; Bonnie McPherson, for organising the photo album; Alex Macpherson, for the tribute, and to all the guests.



DONNA “DEE MACPHERSON” RUCKS

Trustee of the Clan Macpherson Museum

A FRESH NEW LOOK

A busy year, indeed! The Museum has a fresh new look because of the careful allocation of resources and the vigorous work carried out by the Trustees, the MAC, the Men's Shed group, Custodian, Paul McPherson and Museum Mentor, Dan Cottam.

The new exterior signage project is complete. New signs are among the first things one notices when walking around outside. A wide piece of Macpherson Hunting Tartan splashes down the left side of each sign, a nod to our Macpherson heritage. To tie it all together, the

design is repeated on each of the new interior signs, as well as on the new Museum business cards and leaflets.



Part of the stone wall surrounding the garden has been repaired. The black iron railings have been cleaned and painted, and the old sign over the Drumochter Room window has been replaced with a coat of paint to match the window trim.



We have a new flag. Even the Cairn received attention! A new sign has been crafted in black and gold colouring, complementary in design to the Cairn gate. This small sign invites visitors to explore the Museum to learn more about the Clan Macpherson.

The garage door has been replaced, and electricity has been installed. The shelving is organised, and the garage is ready to provide additional on-site storage.



Two new benches reside outside the Museum under the new long Clan Macpherson Museum sign. These benches were successfully auctioned off last year and that story is told in the previous issue of Creag Dhubh.

Better use has been made of space inside the Museum which allows for more archival and secure storage. New interior signage has been installed on the doors of the Hermitage, Library and Archive Room. The Museum Shop has a new and improved layout thanks to Dan, Paul, and Valerie Macpherson. The updated effect has contributed to much success in the shop so far this year. The newly designed notelets are for sale in the Museum Shop. The large mural on the entry wall served as inspiration for the design. Also for sale in the Museum Shop is the newly updated Museum Places of Interest (MPOI). This 20 page magazine is spiral bound and is a creative souvenir for those wishing to visit the local sites the Macphersons hold dear.

The design team created a series of business card leaflets that are being distributed in the Museum to interested visitors. The Each One Reach One, the Legacy and the Adopt An Artefact card/leaflets carry the tartan theme as well, to coordinate with the signage.

Completing the bright new image of the Museum is the Cat Logo Etching, installed on one of the interior doors. The etching is up for auction, and details can be found in the accompanying advert.

Thanks go out to many for their part in bringing a fresh new look to the Museum this year!

DONNA “DEE MACPHERSON” RUCKS
Trustee of the Clan Macpherson



The Cat Logo Etching

Ready for Sponsorship
See it at the Laggan
Entrance to the Museum



Minimum bid £1,000
Bidding closes 1 May, 2026



Bid by email only, for the time stamp
Each bid will be acknowledged

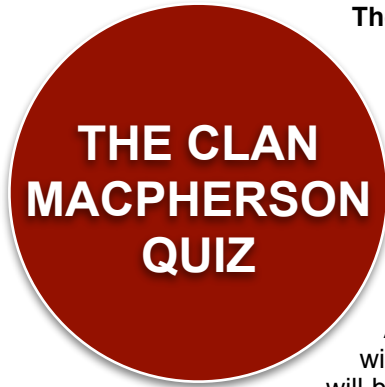


Send your bid to
Museum.treasurer@clan-macpherson.org



A perfect opportunity
to show your support for the Museum





The Great Clan Macpherson Quiz is back!

Entries are invited for this year's Clan Macpherson Quiz, the answers all being Scottish place names.

Macphersons throughout the world all originate from Scotland and this quiz is intended to test your knowledge of your homeland. An atlas or a map of Scotland will be a helpful aid.

A handsome prize will be awarded to the winner. In the event of a tie, the winning name will be pulled from a bonnet by Cluny at the Annual General Meeting in August.

Closing date for entries 30 June 2025. The answers will be published in Creag Dhubh 2027. Please send in your entry to:

**Sandy Macpherson, 39 Swanston Avenue, Edinburgh EH10 7BX
or e-mail sandymacpherson39@gmail.com**

1. Part of a zoo	11 Used in some games of chance
2. Soldier's hat	12 Made of dough in Scotland
3. A cheap servant	13 A royal utensil
4. A dark river	14 Thirsty males
5. An explorer	15 Some French before mid-day
6. Foreign coin	16 This one cannot be beaten
7. Confused tree stand up	17 Change of sweetheart
8. Part of a church in Scots	18 A chap in Scots
9. The piper's son after his bath	19 It flows in currents
10 Comparatively large	20 A swindler from Drake's country

All donations, large or small, will be welcomed. The Clan Macpherson Museum bank account details are as follows:

Royal Bank of Scotland, Sort Code 83 19 09, Account No 00628594

Please reference Quiz and mention your name.

Good luck!

SIR WILLIAM & LADY SHEILA MACPHERSON OF CLUNY MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND

Registered Scottish Charity Number SC035718



As I write this, my final annual report for *Creag Dhubh*, it is 22 years since the passing of Sheila, Lady Cluny, on the 30th of October, 2003. The Endowment Fund was generously initiated by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, with the assistance of John Barton as the legal advisor, on 14th of February, 2004. Following the death of Sir William in 2021, by popular request, the name of the Endowment Fund was changed to include Sir William. Since its inception, the Endowment Fund has been fundamental in enabling the trustees to open the doors seven days a week during the entire season.

The reader is reminded of the four objectives of this restricted fund:

- To provide professional curatorial support for the museum.
- To upgrade exhibitions of both a permanent and temporary nature within the museum.
- To promote scholarly research in relation to the Clan Macpherson and using the resources of the museum.
- To support a student internship/attachment using the resources of the museum.

The Trustees are delighted that the Clan Museum successfully retained its Accredited status with the Arts Council of England and Museums Galleries Scotland. The financial support of the Endowment Fund helped us to achieve this.

The capital sum invested stands at £107,510. The income received from this investment for this financial year was £4,969, and this amount was transferred to the Clan Macpherson Museum Trust to assist with the objectives of the Endowment Fund.

All donations, large and small, are welcome and will be personally acknowledged. These may be sent online to:

Bank Account No. 00157570, Sort Code 83-26-17.

Please notify the treasurer of the donation by email to:

museum.treasurer@clan-macpherson.org

Alternatively, donations may be sent by post to:

**The Honorary Treasurer, Mrs Valerie Macpherson,
c/o Clan Macpherson Museum,
Main Street, Newtonmore, Inverness-shire, PH20 1DE.**

Donations are eligible for Gift Aid in the UK, and US members may be able to claim a deduction from US taxes.

It has been a privilege to be Chairman of the Endowment Fund since it was established, and I am delighted to announce that I am being succeeded as Chairman by Clan Museum trustee, Bruce J.S. Macpherson.

I also express my appreciation to family member trustee Annie Le Roy-Lewis and all eight chairmen of the Clan Macpherson Association who have served as ex officio trustees during my time as Chairman of the Endowment Fund.

I wish the Sir William and Lady Sheila Macpherson of Cluny Museum Endowment Fund the best of wishes for the future.

EWEN S. L. MACPHERSON



THE REV.
THOMAS
SINTON
RETURNS
TO
LAGGAN

The late Alan G Macpherson of Newfoundland contributed an article to the 2010 Creag Dhubh headed the "The Sintons and Badenoch". The Sintons had lived near Hawick in the Scottish Borders. In the late 18th century many Highland landlords were struggling financially and resorted to employing border shepherds to introduce large herds of Cheviot sheep in the expectation of higher rents. Sadly, this resulted in many crofters being moved off the land. David Taylor* relates that Aberarder,

located to the north of Loch Laggan and below the escarpment of Creag Meagaidh was one of the first farms to be so affected, and the cattle were soon replaced by large flocks of Cheviot sheep.

The Sinton family settled in Boleskine (on the south-east side of Loch Ness) around 1800, and the youngest of nine children, Thomas, was born there on the 22nd of March, 1821. Sometime between 1841 and 1848, Thomas became tacksman (tenant) of Aberarder. He died on the 25th of April, 1855 and was succeeded by his son Thomas jr. Thomas jr married in 1853, and their first child, another Thomas - later to become Minister of Dores - was born on the 18th of September, 1855. In or about the 1860s, Thomas jr and his family moved to Kerrow (adjacent to Kingussie). Young Thomas was educated at Kingussie School, Inverness Royal Academy and the Royal High School in Edinburgh. He studied for the Ministry at the University of St Andrews and was licensed by the Presbytery of Abernethy on the 18th of May, 1881. He became an assistant at Blair Atholl (serving Struan), and in the same year, he was ordained to Glengarry. Sinton was transferred to Dores on the 10th of July, 1889, and served as minister there until his death in 1923. From 1901 he was also clerk of presbytery.

In 1898, Sinton married my grandparents - Angus McPherson and Elsie McLean. Sinton himself was married to Catherine Macfarlane** of Blair Atholl on the 30th of October, 1903. They had one son, Thomas Christopher John born on the 4th of May, 1906. Thomas was also ordained and served as minister of Stanley, in Perthshire, and as a military chaplain. He died on active service on the 23rd of October, 1943.

Although living in Dores, Sinton never forgot his early surroundings, and in 1910 he wrote and published "By Loch and River - being memories of Loch Laggan and Upper Spey". In the early chapters, he describes life in Aberarder through the seasons. Practically the whole of the lands had for long been in the possession of the Cluny Macphersons...with Ewan Macpherson ("Old Cluny") taking particular pride. Sinton narrates that one morning

"Every season, along with his family, and usually a number of friends, he was in the habit of spending a day at Aberarder. On those occasions, luncheon was always laid out on the wooded lawns by the Loch-side, between the Aild Dhubh and the Corrie Crannock Burn. Boating on the loch and netting fish constituted part of the amusement of the company - char being occasionally found here, and not a little prized.

When the old Chief happened to be out on the water, and especially should he be crossing to the opposite shore, he would turn to his piper in Gaelic and request him to play his favourite pibroch”.

In Sinton's time, sheep farming was the dominant activity, and in his chapter heading “The Fleecing Day” he describes the communal gathering of all the sheep for the purpose of sheering.

“Like everything else appertaining to modern sheep-farming in the Highlands, it was strongly suggestive of the Borders in design and workmanship, as well as in its surroundings. Built of rough stone walls topped with turf, it had a substantial and enduring appearance, as though designed for unborn ages and leases unnumbered. And there, I believe, it still remains - but always empty now, and forsaken. For there are no sheep on the hills of Aberarder today - no bleating ewes and lambs; nor doughty wethers are classified within its ingenious enclosures. The deer may rub their velvet antlers against the corner stones.”

In his chapters about Laggan, Sinton describes his own experiences on the hills between Loch Laggan and the headwaters of the Spey, and he gives a vivid account of travelling back from Fort William on the stagecoach and tells of the many Macpherson families in the parish.

Sinton's father was latterly to take the tenancy of Kerrow farm, bordering on Kingussie, and in the final chapters of the book he describes in detail the various buildings in Kingussie and the life of a young boy attending school there and playing around the Spey. Sinton related that one morning

“We observed some workmen that were strangers to us, busily engaged with picks, shovels, and barrows at the end of a gravelly terrace in front, that overlooked one end of the [meadow]. These odd-spoken new-comers turned out to be navvies beginning a portion of the Highland Railway then under construction. A good while subsequent to this,was the coming of the first steam engine to Badenoch and Kingussie.” [1863]

This was the beginning of a major social change. Sinton was a native Gaelic speaker. Throughout his education he would have seen a diminution of that language and at an early stage he began to transcribe all the traditional songs and verse that he heard. The outcome was his “Poetry of Badenoch”(1908), a tome of 179 items set out in Gaelic and English with notes and extending to 569 pages. Many of the items have connotations with Clan Macpherson. Indeed, the volume is dedicated to Albert Cameron Macpherson of Cluny, the youngest son of “Old Cluny”, and acting chief of the Clan; and in the preface, Sinton particularly acknowledges the assistance given by Old Cluny's second son, Brigadier-General Ewen Macpherson of Cluny in providing particular manuscripts from the Cluny Charter Chest.

Turning to the text, there are verses commemorating Cluny of the ‘forty-five, Duncan of the Kiln, Old Cluny and his sons, and many other members of the Clan together with memorable events such as the battle of Invernahavon, the Loss of Gaick, the battle of Culloden, and the burial of Cluny in France.

A particular favourite, still sung at many ceilidhs even today is, “Gu'm a slan do na fearaibh...” (the Emigrants' Song) by Domh'Il Phail (1798 - 1875), commemorating the event in 1838, when a large number emigrated from Badenoch

to Australia. The “St George” lay at Oban, so it was necessary for the party to make the long journey by carts to Fort William and then by steamboat for the next stage. The departure took place at mid-summer, on the day of St Columba’s Fair, with the emigrants ascending to the summit of Creag Bheag and then to the old stage house of Pimain - where they said “farewell” to their friends. Domh’Il Phail, who was a shepherd, intended to be one of the travellers, but circumstances prevented him. It was when in prospect of leaving his native land that he composed the song, expressing thoughts such as

“When I go to the mountains
 And roam with my musket,
 No keeper or living
 Will drive me away.”

Sinton died in 1923. A portrait photograph was prominently located in the Church at Dores, but was taken down when the church building was recently sold for conversion to a private house. As it happened, Dr Hazel Campbell who had been an elder of the church and now resides with her husband in Badenoch, had fond memories of the photograph. She saved it from being lost; and being aware that the local community had acquired Laggan Church, she arranged for the future display of the photograph to be in that church.



The Sinton memorial has a prominent location close to the entrance door of the church in St Columba’s churchyard in Kingussie.

Appropriately, Laggan Heritage and Laggan Church Partnership convened a joint meeting on the 17th of September, 2025 to receive the photograph. Dr Campbell related her memories of the photo within the church at Dores, and Graham Grant spoke of the land around Aberarder. Reverting to the Poetry of Badenoch, Sheila Mackay read verses (in Gaelic and English) from Sinton's own poem "An Tarmachan" (no.10) (The Ptarmigan) and the Badenoch Waulking Group sang "Feasgar faghair air acha'-buana" (54), a song composed by a young lady from Laggan, who was known as 'The Cluny Dairymaid' - a popular song still sung today. They also sang "Mo Chlòlan Dubh" (84), a song composed by Miss Barbara MacPherson of Ralia, and a final song "Theid sinn nùll gu Taobh Loch Eireachd" (11), described by Sinton as a dancing song ("port-a-beul") to which Katrina Brown of Aviemore step danced...a memorable evening.

Note: Both "By Loch and River" and "The Poetry of Badenoch" are out of print, but copies are available on ABE Books. Alternatively, it is possible to read the whole of "The Poetry of Badenoch" on Internet Archive.

*In his "The Wild Black Region" (2016) and "The People Are Not There" (2022) David Taylor describes in detail the changes in the population of Laggan between 1750 and 1863.

**Catherine Macfarlane was the widow of Alexander Macpherson, solicitor and banker of Kingussie, the author of "Glimpses of Church and Social Life in the Highlands" (1893), who had died on the 11th of January, 1902. The marriage certificate for Alexander and Catherine shows Thomas Sinton as the first witness (usually the "best man"); and the certificate for the marriage of Thomas Sinton identifies Catherine as "second cousin". (Significantly, the maiden name of Alexander Macpherson's grandmother was "Eliza Macfarlane").

JOHN BARTON

**REMEMBERED
AFTER 157
YEARS**

Sir Robert Menzies of Menzies, 7th Baronet (1817-1903), Chief of Clan Menzies, resided at Menzies Castle in Weem, near Aberfeldy in Highland Perthshire. In the 1860s, Sir Robert decided to build an Episcopal Church in Weem, and work commenced. However, on the 22nd of December, 1868, a dreadful accident occurred.

On the 30th December, 1868, The North British Agriculturist reported that it appeared that the gable at the west end of the building had been completed, and while the workmen were removing the scaffolding, beams that rested horizontally on the bottom of the end window, overbalanced, causing the entire wall above the window to be thrown in on top of four workmen. The Dundee Courier of the 22nd of December, 1868, explained that due to the wet weather, the work on the wall had not fully compacted and yielded to the weight against it. Drs Reid and Menzies of Aberfeldy attended promptly to help the injured men.

A young mason, Alexander Menzies from Dundee, suffered internal injuries and died the next day. Thomas Robertson, middle-aged and from Strathtay, sustained a fractured skull and died soon after the accident. He was married with a family. Archibald McPherson, a blasting labourer from Aberfeldy, suffered serious injuries to his head and a broken arm. Duncan McGregor, a mason of Boltachan, near Aberfeldy, was slightly injured.

Archibald McPherson, born in 1807, baptised at Fortingall on the 17th of January, 1807 and brought up at nearby Croftgarbh, Fortingall. His father was Donald McPherson, an agricultural labourer, born c1783 at Croftgarbh and also baptised at Fortingall. He was married to Margaret (Peggy) McGregor of Fortingall. His grandfather was Donald McPherson, born in 1743, and married to Vera Menzies. It is believed his great-grandfather was also Donald McPherson, born c1713 in Scotland. It is likely that at some earlier time, the family moved south over the Drumochter Pass from Badenoch into Highland Perthshire.

Archibald was married to Margaret Cameron, and they lived at Dunkeld Street, Aberfeldy. He died on the 21st of December, 1878 and was described on his death certificate as a porter, formerly a labourer. Margaret followed on the 10th of June, 1880. They had a son, Robert McPherson, born in 1845 in Aberfeldy. The 1871 census shows that he was a warehouse porter and residing at 20, Stirling Street, Glasgow.

The building of the church was subsequently completed and officially opened in 1875. Sir Robert Menzies died in 1903 and was succeeded by Sir Neil Menzies, who died without issue in 1910. After the death of the last of the Menzies of the Weem line in 1918 and the break-up of the estate, the church was acquired by the Church of Scotland as the new Parish Church.

On Sunday, the 10th of August, 2025, 150 years since the church was opened and 157 years since the accident, the Rev. Robert Nicol unveiled a plaque on the inside of Weem Parish Church on the west wall to commemorate the four men involved in the accident. This was during the annual service of the Clan Menzies Society. Members of the Clan Robertson, Macpherson and MacGregor were also in attendance.

EWEN SL MACPHERSON



On Friday 5 May 1928, the following report appeared under this heading in the Sydney Morning Herald.

LONDON May 23.

Owing to the exigencies of the times Mr Cluny Macpherson, Chief of the Clan Chattan, offered at auction at Sotheby's today several Stuart relics, which had been retained by the Jacobites after Culloden, and preserved at Cluny Castle, Kingussie.

"Mr Cluny Macpherson" was in fact Albert Cameron Macpherson, the youngest son of Old Cluny and a great-grandson of Cluny of the '45. Albert Cameron had become laird of Cluny Estate in 1900 but never called himself "Cluny", as that title had passed to his nephew, Ewen George Macpherson, a son of an elder brother.

The "exigencies of the times" was a kind expression reflecting that Albert Cameron had a separate house in London and that the Cluny Estate yielded insufficient funds to maintain both establishments.

A complete list of the relics sold by Sotheby's is attached at the end of this article. However, four of the items have been more fully researched.

Prince Charles Edward's "Medusa Head" Targe (lot 101).

Sotheby's Catalogue describes this as a circular shield of 19 inch diameter, covered in leather and lined at the back with leopard skin, with a handle by which it is held to the left shoulder. On the front are various decorations on silver in the finest style of 18th century work. In the centre, a Medusa head in high relief (in which a spike, now missing, could be inserted), surrounded by sunflowers and small trophies of torches. On close examination, it will be seen that one of the sunflowers has been lost – and replaced with a silver button! All are surrounded by ornamental "cartouches" - two banners bearing in the corner a St Andrew's Cross crossed over a straight sword, and a pistol and broadsword crossed under a Scotch bonnet; divided by trophies of bow, quiver and fasces, drum and trumpets. The edge of the targe has "festoons" of studs and a border of alternate scallop shells and cinquefoil leaves.



The narrative in the Catalogue related that the targe had been made and presented to the Prince prior to his departure for Scotland in 1745 and that it is shown in a miniature of Old Cluny, painted in 1827. Grant R Francis (in his *Romance of the White Rose* - published in 1933) recalls a visit to Cluny Castle when he saw many of the relics including the targe, which were sold in 1928.

The purchaser of the targe was recorded as "A Fraser" and who was apparently resident in the Highlands. The relic is now on display in the Scottish National Museum in Chamber Street, Edinburgh.

Copper Plate for Printing Currency Notes (lot 112).

Robert Strange (born in Kirkwall, Orkney in 1720) was an artist/painter who joined the Jacobite Army in 1745 and fought at the battles of Prestonpans and Falkirk. In April 1746 he was billeted at Culloden House - five miles east of Inverness. The battle was to take place on Wednesday 16th April. Late on the preceding Friday he was wakened by a messenger to be told that the Prince wished to see him as soon as possible. His horse was saddled, he made his way into town and was directed to the Prince's bedchamber. There had been a ball, but after a short delay the Prince came into the room. Strange was advised that printed money was required. He explained that he had no experience but that it was "exceedingly practicable" - subject to the resources being available in Inverness. He met with the Prince again the following evening. He reported that he had been unable to find a "rolling-press", but that he had secured the services of a carpenter, who was also a mechanic. The Prince approved of the proposed design and the paper to be used. Next day, the carpenter began early, but not the coppersmith: he was a good Presbyterian! However, Strange persuaded him and by noon on the Monday Strange had a copper plate. He worked the rest of that day engraving the plate and delivered it on the following morning. No notes were printed, as by that time it had been ascertained that the Hanoverian Army had crossed the Spey and was encamped at Nairn. Strange joined his regiment in marching to Culloden. He had the good fortune to be mounted and escaped from the battlefield without injury. He was later to become an established engraver, and in 1786 he was honoured with a knighthood by George III.



What happened to the copper plate?

One account tells us that it was found at the west end of Loch Laggan where the Ath a Mheirlich, the "Thieves' Ford", crossed the River Spean. It may be a coincidence, but the Prince crossed here on the 28th of July, 1746 on his way to "Cluny's Cage" on Ben Alder. (The location was swallowed up by the extended Loch Laggan when the Dam was constructed in 1934). In contrast, Grant Francis recorded that it had been found in a bog near Culloden in 1860.

Whatever, the copper plate was given to Old Cluny and was on display in Cluny Castle until it was sold in 1928. The relic was purchased for the West Highland Museum in Fort William and continues to be on display there.

Shortly after the acquisition by that Museum, prints were taken from the copper plate, and one of these prints was acquired by Albert Cameron Macpherson. It was sold when the contents of Cluny Castle were disposed of in 1943. The print is on display at the Clan Macpherson Museum. The print shows notes with the denominations of one penny, two pence, three pence and six pence, with four others left blank. The central motif displays the intertwined initials "CP" (Carolus Princeps) and a thistle, surmounted by "Prince of Wales" feathers. (As the eldest son, Prince Charles would have been Prince of Wales if his father had been king.)

Sgian Dhu (lot 108).

Sotheby's catalogue described this as having a wooden handle with interlaced carving, with the footnote that it had been found in 1901 in Cluny's Cave on Craig Dhu. In John Telfer Dunbar's *History of Highland Dress* (1962) he adds that this knife has a copper ferrule and that the 3 ¼ inch iron blade bears the letters "P.E.T.E." After the sale in 1928, it was donated to the Scottish National Museum of Antiquities, and it is now in the Scottish National Museum in Chamber Street in Edinburgh. It has been suggested that the stocking knife was introduced by Col Alastair MacDonell of Glengarry at the time when George IV visited Edinburgh, and it is believed that Sir Henry's Raeburn's portrait of Glengarry - painted in 1822 - is the earliest painting of a figure wearing a sgian dhu.



In July, 1931 Thomas Ramsay Member, of Parliament for the Western Isles, came to the House of Commons in full Highland Dress but was excluded entry as he was wearing a sgian dhu and it is now accepted that airlines do not permit travellers to wear a sgian dhu, or to have it in their cabin baggage.

Wooden Snuff Mill (lot 107).

This object was observed in a showcase when recently visiting the West Highland Museum. The inscription is - "snuff-mill & pestle used by Cluny of the '45: bought by "Friends of the Museum" from Cluny Castle".

Is it the same snuff mill that was sold at Sotheby's on 23 May 1928? The print of the catalogue names the buyer as "Borenus" and the only other item purchased by him was the Copper Plate referred to above, suggesting that Borenus was a dealer commissioned by the West Highland Museum for these two items. The comment in the catalogue that the snuff mill was "used by the Cluny of the '45, and found in the cave where the prince was in hiding" - is very significant, in that the only hiding place which Cluny shared with the Prince was the Ben Alder cage.



Relics sold on 23rd of May, 1928 and the price bid for each:

Lot 101. Prince Charles Edward's "Medusa Head" Targe. £4,000

Lot 102. A pair of Pistols engraved with the laureate heads of Louis XIV and Prince James Francis Edward. £200

Lot 103. A Memorial snuff Box carved on the top with an equestrian figure of Prince Charles Edward. £130

Lot 104. A pocket coffee mill. £20

Lot 105. A Lace Ruffle worn by Prince Charlie £220

Lot 106. A Silver Memorial Cup of Prince Charles Edward engraved with the arms of Scotland. £70

Lot 107. A wooden Snuff Mill used by the Cluny of the '45, and found in the cave where the prince was in hiding £28

Lot 108. A Sgian Dhu £56

Lot 109. A brass chamber Candlestick, used by Cluny of the '45. £13

Lot 110. A miniature of Prince James Francis Edward. £31

Lot 111. A Fan Leaf painted by Sir Robert Strange. £24

Lot 112. A copper Plate for Printing Currency Notes. £430

Notes:

Prince Charles Edward Stuart is variously referred to as (Bonnie) Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender and the Young Chevalier. His father, James Edward Stuart, was the son of King James II and VII.

In Sotheby's catalogue it was hinted that the provenance of the various relics could be open to question as Cluny Castle was destroyed by Hanoverian troops immediately after Culloden, and it was some forty or fifty years before the relics were settled in the new Castle. Prior to landing in 1745, the Prince had no specific connection with Scotland to have his family being restored to the throne of the United Kingdom of England and Scotland. However, it is to be noted that the only national emblem on the targe is a St Andrew's Cross, suggesting that it might have been manufactured to commemorate the prince's participation in the 45' Rising, and only dates from after that time.

There was in London, at the time of the sale in Sotheby's, an art historian and advisor by the name of Tancred Borenius. Originally from Finland, it is said that he acted as a British agent for MI6 during World War II and was instrumental in enticing Rudolf Hess to fly to Scotland in 1941.

JOHN BARTON

being made Lance Corporal in the machine gun section. We know from letters received from comrades that Gordon was “the life and sole of the section” known for his impersonations of Charlie Chaplin and his favourite song, “Trumpeter, what are you sounding now?” Eventually Gordon found himself at the battle of Loos, near Lens, in northern France on the 25th of September, 1915. At Loos, as part of the 15th Scottish Division, the Cameron Highlanders took part in a huge and extremely costly attack on German positions. At first, they were successful, pushing the enemy out of the town of Loos, over hill 70 and to their reserve line of defence. However, the success was not mirrored elsewhere along the line, and being exposed, the Scottish division succumbed to German flanking fire and then counter-attack. Comrade’s letters tell us that Gordon was with the advanced line and killed, while working his gun, as the Germans counter attacked. Like many of his comrades Gordon was not recovered, being lost behind the new German lines. We have letters exchanged between families desperately trying to find out what had happened to their loved ones as well as letters from comrades. One of these tells us that “from time to time, one of the boys will start to sing (Trumpeter, what are you sounding?)” but will suddenly stop, it was Gordon’s song, we can’t sing it now”. Gordon’s and Jim’s stories were always kept alive in the family. The family treasure, “the black box”, containing the letters, military insignia, medals and even shrapnel removed from Jim, would frequently be brought out and studied with fascination. We always wondered about Gordon and what became of him. The family photograph of the four proud soldiers is treasured.

Fast forward to 2024, and construction workers building a new hospital on the outskirts of Lens discovered a grave containing the remains of 7 Scottish soldiers. This is a common occurrence as a result of farming or construction activity on the WW1 and 2 battle fields. The site of the discovery, when compared with trench maps from the engagement, shows that this was at the very high-water mark of the advance that day.

Enter the Ministry of Defence, Joint Casualty and Compassion Centre “The War Detectives”. The War Detectives role is to try to identify, where possible, which is sadly more often not the case, the identities of casualties. Generally, there is little to go on other than metal items such as regimental badges and buttons. So often, even if it is possible to identify a casualty’s regiment, it is, more often than not, not possible to identify individuals.



*Newcastle Corporation Tramway
buttons found with Gordon.*

In the case of the 7 Scottish soldiers on the Lens hospital site, one of the soldiers, as well as badges identifying him as a Cameron Highlander, had on his person a very unusual artefact for a Scottish soldier. A pair of small buttons, which when cleaned were found to be from the Newcastle Corporation Tramways. The War Detectives set about trying to find a Cameron Highlander with a link to Newcastle. There was only one, Gordon, and there he was in the 1911 census living with his parents in Newcastle, working with his mother at the tobacconists, his father working for the tramways. From there the War Detectives

tracked down our family, DNA tests were requested and it was confirmed that, at last, Gordon had been found.

On 25th September 2025, 110 years to the day since he was lost, Gordon, alongside his six comrades, only one other of whom could also be identified, received a full military funeral attended by his two great nephews, myself and my brother, Alistair with our wives, Sarah and Dorothy.

Gordon was piped to his resting place and laid to rest by soldiers of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The funeral was attended by around 200 people including representatives of the JCCC, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Scottish Government, the Mayor of Loos, British, French and Belgian veterans.

We were presented with the flag from Gordon's coffin by the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The JCCC presented us with his Cameron shoulder badge and, most precious of all, with the tiny buttons that helped find him after over a century lost.

Gordon is on of the few graves in the Loos British Cemetery that bears the name of the soldier who lies there, all too often they simply say "a Cameron Highlander" or sometimes just "A soldier of the great war"

Gordon's stone further bares a line from his favourite song. "Trumpeter, what are you sounding now? I'm calling them home, come home, come home!"



Gordon is piped and carried to his resting place by soldiers of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

ANDY LEARN



Gordon is laid to rest.

JOHN LACHLAN MACPHERSON

1935 - 2025

John Lachlan Macpherson - former Chairman of the Australian Branch, passed away peacefully in Bowral on the of 10th March, 2025 - aged 89.

He was born in Rockdale, a suburb of Sydney, on the 28th of September, 1935 and went to Penshurst Public school before his love of choral music and singing eventually led him to be enrolled at St Andrew's Cathedral College ,where he became a lead chorister. In those days St Andrews only went to what nowadays would be about year 9, so he had to transfer to Trinity Grammar.

At Trinity, his love of cricket grew as did his love of Rugby. He progressed to be in the 1st 11 as a fast bowler and was a handy middle- order batter.

He played in the first XV and was regarded as a fine winger and in the spring was known as being a very good hurdler. His family have been told that he was the first to kick a penalty goal from halfway on Hurstville Oval for St George Rugby, which is no mean feat with the heavy leather footballs of the day and a toe poke action.

After school, he chose a career in the Army, so Duntroon, then eventually Officer Cadet School, Portsea in Victoria. In 1954, he graduated as a first lieutenant with the Governor's medal (first in his class). Postings all around the east coast of Australia and active service in Vietnam as an artillery officer in Phuoc Tuy province. Then, a two-year stint in the UK as the Staff Officer at Australia House.

Upon his return to Australia in 1974, his sons Wesley and Robert were enrolled at Trinity and a few years later, Fiona, at their sister school, Meriden. In typical style, his service above self to his old school did not end when the boys left school he just readjusted his focus and became the president of the Old Boys Union for a number of years in the late 70's to the mid 80's. He continued in this role way past the time his sons had left school.

While the boys were at the school, reliance was on teachers and parents to be referees for the rugby games. While well-intentioned, some refereeing skills were not that flash.



John L receiving the NSW Governors Medal for the leading cadet at Portsea Staff College - Sir John Northcott KCMG, KCVO, CB

John and an old soldier mate introduced a rugby refereeing class introduced to the school via Western Suburbs Rugby and Sydney Rugby to develop their own qualified referees. There are a number of old boys who were products of that training. He was well regarded as a very good first-grade referee and officiated at national level when combined Australian forces played touring teams from NZ, Fiji and the UK.

When he had finished his involvement with Trinity, John switched his focus to Meriden. There were a number of achievements that were a result of his chairmanship including the purchase of a number of properties adjoining the school, so future building projects could be enabled, such as the music centre. He drove the future proofing of the school with the introduction of technology infrastructure, such as fibre optic internet, a good vision for 1992.

John retired from the Army in 1981 at the rank of Lt Col and took on other executive posts in private enterprise.

John was very active with freemasonry and became a foundation member of Lodge Trinitarian, where he has given over 40 years of service to local charities and their good works.

When they downsized to Bowral, John became active with the Bradman museum as a volunteer tour guide. He was active in a number of international projects that Rotary is involved with, such as eradicating malaria and many other humanitarian projects across the Pacific Island nations. Recently he was involved in re-homing or re-purposing medical equipment such as hospital beds, trays, medical tables, and other hospital and medical equipment that had run its use-by date, but in no way were they useless. This equipment was shipped by Rotary around the nation to remote indigenous communities and internationally to Pacific Island nations.

His involvement with the school never ended. He was very proud when his granddaughters, Charlotte and Sophie, had leading roles in the Trinity Grammar / Meriden Cadet Unit. His daughter Fiona, was instrumental in getting the girls at Meriden involved with the cadets at Trinity to carry on the family legacy.



John L at home in Bowral - a keen eye may note the chair he is sitting in!!



*Three generations of Trinity Grammar / Meriden Schools Cadet Unit
Left to Right Fiona Brennan, Sophie Brennan, John L*



John L. presenting the Australian Branch report to the Clan at the AGM in 2019

His love of history and the extended family Macpherson grew with every year. He eventually had a network of contacts around the globe and was well-regarded across many continents. The Motto of the Australian Staff College is "Service above Self", and at the passing of anyone, we ask ourselves, did this person leave a mark? John Lachlan Macpherson left a lasting impression on many.

**JEAN
HENRIETTA
STEWART
MACPHERSON
1930 - 2025**

LADY MACPHERSON OF BIALLID

Born 20th of August, 1930

Died 14th of September 2025

Jean Henrietta Butler-Wilson, Lady Macpherson of Biallid, better known as 'Lady Jean' or 'Lady Mac', was much more than the wife of Sir Tommy Macpherson, the mother of Angus, Ishbel and Duncan, the grandmother of Tom, Lochy, Fiona, Alasdair, Archie, Inès and Mariota, and the great-grandmother of Francesca and Angus. She has been described variously as full of "joie de vivre", a "tour de force", and a "Grande Dame": fearless, fearsome, a bundle of energy, the power behind the throne, and greatly loved.

Jean was a woman of enterprise and energy who took great adversity in her stride. Born in Manchester, the daughter of First World War veteran David Butler-Wilson, a native of Burntisland, Fife, and his wife Dorothy, she was the younger and weaker of identical twins: asthma, severe eczema, damaged lungs, and a weak heart topped the list of ailments. This resulted in regular trips to hospital and eventually a longer stay in Switzerland at the age of 7, a sojourn cut short by the outbreak of war.

In 1940, Jean and her twin sister Anne were evacuated to Canada on one of the last ships organised by the Children's Overseas Reception Board. A sister ship, SS City of Benares, was infamously sunk by U-boat with the loss of 77 children, leading to the cancellation of the programme. After creating lifelong friendships, Jean and Anne returned to England before the end of the war via New York, Lisbon and Limerick. Her parents did not recognise them disembarking, as both were now striking young women standing over 5'10" tall.

After school, Jean studied Domestic Science in Edinburgh and taught at Westonbirt in Gloucestershire, during which time she met Tommy. Jean often recalled that the first part of Tommy she saw was his knees, as he danced on her table in a kilt, after attending the Achilles Ball. For Tommy, it was love at first sight. He used his war-time skills to track her down, armed with the only information that she was called Jean and taught in the west of England in a school that began with a W. Shortly thereafter they were engaged.

Jean and Tommy married in 1953 in Edinburgh and honeymooned in Majorca, staying on the way with General Montgomery at the Château de Courances. Montgomery ran a stern household, which included placing bride and groom in separate rooms, fortunately linked by an outside balcony. Monty gave Jean a large bottle of Chanel No. 5 as a wedding present, which she was unable to open. As Montgomery forced the cork, he splashed his uniform in scent, just before taking the salute for a parade of troops in the courtyard. Jean delighted at what the soldiers must have thought.

They moved to London, where Jean taught at the Monkey Club, an educational establishment for debutantes, the London Polytechnic, Greycoats School, and the Sacred Heart in Hammersmith. That Jean taught domestic science surprised guests later in life, as her cooking was famously idiosyncratic. Blame was

put on the invention of the deep freeze. Jean believed that any three ingredients could create a meal. Identification of the ingredients was a lottery. The deep freeze was shared as storage by the neighbouring Highland Wildlife Park. The ingredients all started as unidentifiable blocks of ice. On one occasion it was a smouldering owl, feathers and all, on another Brasso! Possibly unsurprisingly a guest was once caught with a suitcase full of tinned food.

With the arrival of her children, Jean set up Hyde Park Nursery School, initially in the Church Hall of St John's Church. At first just for children of friends, the school grew to some 120 children and expanded in 1970 into the deconsecrated St George's Fields graveyard, known the 'Long Garden'. The stones were placed against the wall apart from one, marked "This Grave Must Never Be Opened. By Order", which still remains.

The school was advanced for its time and boasts well-known alumni. Jean created a charity for those unable to pay the fees, funded by quiet donations solicited from wealthier neighbours. A serious car accident led to the sale of the school in 1992, to her deep disappointment. The school continues to thrive, and Jean was delighted to see some of her grandchildren recently attend.

Jean had a strong Christian faith and was proud of being an elder for 25 years of St Columba's, Pont Street, where she was on the Committee for the London Hostel for Adolescents. She dedicated much of her time to charity work, including as a Director of the YWCA and the Royal Caledonian Schools, Governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation, Trustee and European representative of Help the Aged, the Distressed Gentlefolk Aid Association, and the NSPCC. She was a long-standing Patroness of the Royal Caledonian Ball.

Jean's ability to encourage and sustain those struggling was greatly appreciated in all these roles. Perhaps because of her own ill-health and timidity as a young woman, Jean took great care to encourage those lacking in confidence or connections to get ahead. This intervention could be robust but was always well-meant and usually effective. Warm, generous and loving, she always had time to support those who were struggling for as long as necessary.



Despite her London obligations, Badenoch in Invernessshire was her spiritual home. Jean and Tommy summered at Cluny Castle in their early marriage, before in 1970 being offered Balavil, a dilapidated Adam house outside Kingussie. Jean ran the restoration with typical gusto, managing an army of builders and doing much of the decoration herself. Their expansive entertainment was famous, not least for Jean's cooking.

In 1993, they moved to Craig Dhu and then in 2008 to Speyville, Tommy's childhood home in Newtonmore. On each relocation, they doubled the size of the reception rooms so that their hospitality could continue. The house seemed never empty of visitors, often staying for indeterminate periods.

In Badenoch, Jean chaired the North of Scotland Branch of the Clan Macpherson Association, and, after losing Tommy in 2015, enjoyed presenting the Sir Tommy Macpherson Memorial Trophy at the annual shinty match between great rivals, Newtonmore and Kingussie. She was also proud to present, at the annual Friends of Scottish Rugby dinner in London, the Lady Jean Macpherson Women's Trophy to the most aspiring female Scottish rugby player, and the Sir Tommy Macpherson Quaich to the most promising young player at London Scottish FC.

Jean bore her decline with customary good humour and fortitude, and was delighted by the stream of visitors. She felt every day was a blessing, given her previous fragile health. She leaves a hole in the lives of everyone who knew her and is deeply missed.

CONGRATULATIONS



On New Year's Day, 2026, Fiona and Robbie Houstoun welcomed a baby girl, Stella Susan Houstoun, to the world, a sister to Angus.

It is my great pleasure to present the largest Scottish events in Belgium, Germany and France. Our Clan families were there to represent Clan Macpherson.

The respective Regional Councillors sent me their reports.

Enjoy reading!

**BODO
BERND
SCHMITZ**

GERMANY

This year, the Macpherson clan attended the Highland Games in Trebsen for the third time. The largest games in Germany take place here every year.

Visitors enjoy a wide range of activities around Trebsen Castle. Numerous traders display their leather goods, and woodwork. Scottish paraphernalia such as kilts, sporrans and glengarrys are available. There was also everything the heart desired in terms of food and drink. Even haggis was offered to visitors. There were pipe competitions, both individual and bands, Highland Games and dancers. A lot of interest was shown in our wildcat project.

On Friday evening, a large clan calling took place, during which the clans were introduced individually. On Saturday, the march took place, with numerous visitors lining the route. We were then welcomed

onto the battle arena to thunderous applause. Almost all the German representatives were present in the march. The event was very well attended and we were able to inform interested visitors about our clan.

We are looking forward to next year and participating in this successful event, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2026.

MARION

Regional Councillor Germany



FRANCE

During the Franco-Scottish Festival of Aubigny-sur-Nère, a major event celebrating the Auld Alliance, the Clan was honoured in the opening ceremony, where the tartans were presented in front of the Château des Stuarts.

The modern hunting tartan, generously offered by Alison Christie Macpherson, symbolised the Clan's presence.

Throughout the weekend, despite the intense heat, Anthony and Laura Rocquet Macpherson warmly welcomed visitors, shared the Clan's history, and paid tribute to its legendary figures such as Sir Tommy Macpherson and Cluny of the '45.

Homemade pastry sales made it possible to donate £49 to the Clan Macpherson Museum.



The Jura Highland Pipes & Drums, who were proud to wear the Macpherson colours, performed "Macpherson's Lament" in front of the Clan tent and in a spirit of true Scottish brotherhood, marched with us during the grand parade.

ANTHONY

Regional Councillor France

WILDCATS

This summer saw the “Saving Wildcats” project embark on the third year of releasing wildcats into the Cairngorms National Park.

For the first time, members of the public were able to participate in this process, including some local residents. Back in July, Angus and Valerie Macpherson accompanied the team to a quiet location in Badenoch and Strathspey at the crack of dawn, to open the doors to the release enclosures, allowing four wildcats to start their adventures in the wild.

As part of Clan Macpherson, it was great to be able to give Angus and Valerie that unique experience, given the strong cultural links between the Clan and wildcats, and the animal’s enduring cultural significance with local communities in Badenoch. It was especially poignant hearing Angus tell the stories of some of the Clan’s forebears from the 1700s and their relationships with the landscapes that wildcats inhabit. Everyone involved with Saving Wildcats is very grateful for the continuing support of Clan Macpherson and their willingness to support wildcat restoration in the local area.



A DAGGER FOR CATHERINE DOUGLAS

Euan Macpherson

A book review by Toby Berry

"...a second chance; and maybe I can say I am fighting on the right side this time."

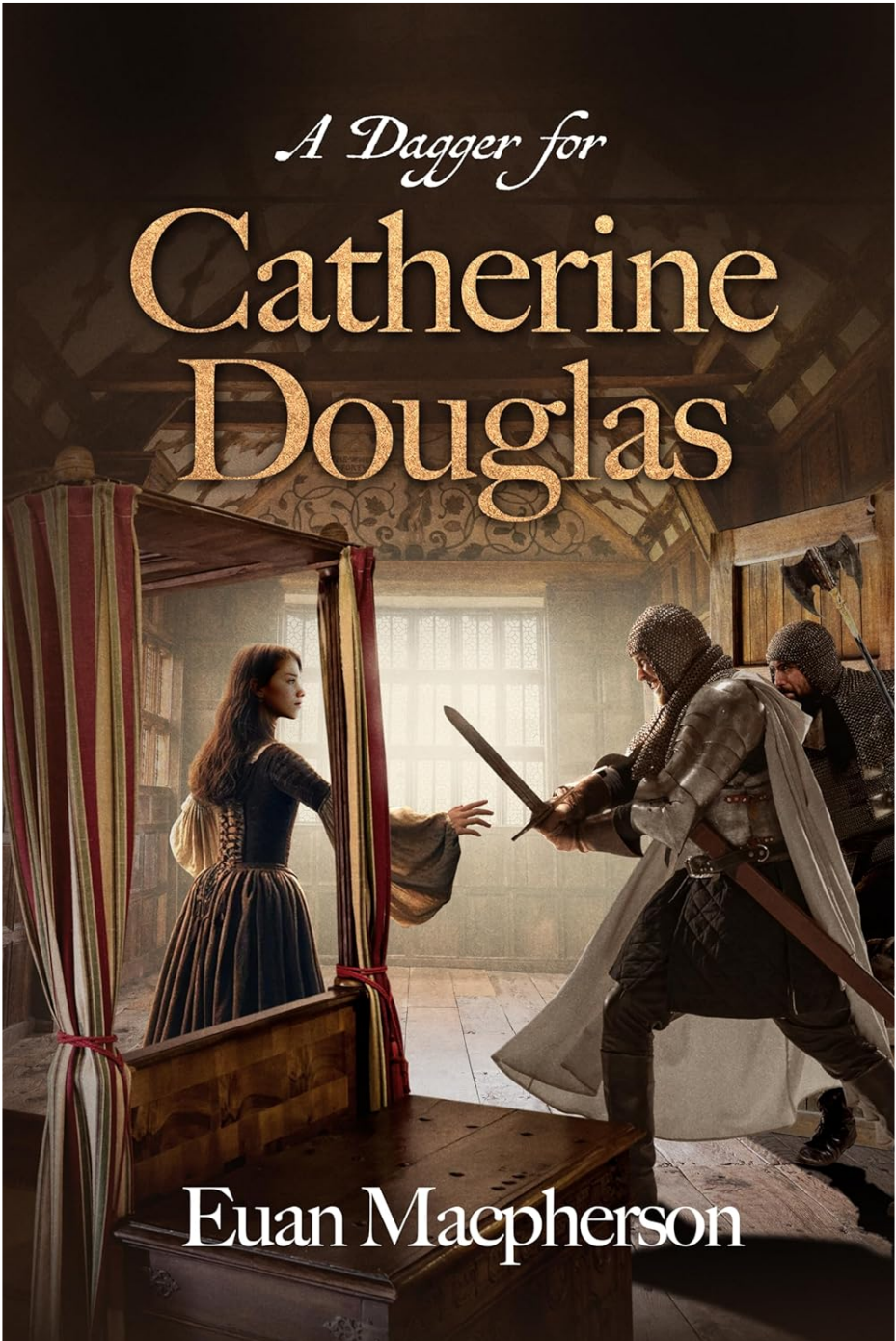
This historical novel is about Scottish court life in the early 1400s. For readers who have visited an old castle, the book gives life and breath to the structures they once encountered. For those who haven't seen one in the flesh, the story comes to life anyway. The author interestingly describes life at court and castle architecture. Readers looking for action and adventure get it here, too. The main character, Catherine Douglas, is a lady-in-waiting who falls in love with a soldier who, as it turns out, isn't sure where his loyalties lie or what he stands for.

The book details the lives of knights and princesses and sword and dagger fights. The action never stops. Some fights are so well described that it can be hard to read without reaction. *"There was a horrible snap, and the arm hung limply at the monk's side, broken at the elbow"* is a perfect example of this.

The author shows incredible writing talent. The dialogue and descriptions are most notable. Humour in dialogue is hard to write well, but Macpherson nails it. For instance, "...You'll never see him," says one of the ladies-in-waiting to Douglas as she tries to convince her to agree to an arranged marriage. "You want me to marry a man I will never see?" asks Douglas. "Those are the best kind..." replies her coworker. The reader can hear the conversation like a fly on the wall and laugh out loud with the characters.

Those unfamiliar with fifteenth-century European history won't know how the story ends until they finish reading. But even those who know the true ending of the reign of King James I will still enjoy reading every word of how Macpherson imagines it.

A Dagger for
**Catherine
Douglas**



Euan Macpherson

CHANGE OF MEMBER DETAILS

Notification of death and change of name and/or address should be sent to the Registrar and, if resident outside the UK, to your Branch's Membership Secretary/Registrar. Notice of death may also be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in the obituaries for the AGM, and to the Editor with an obituary for inclusion in Creag Dhubh.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Personal data provided by a member to the Clan Macpherson Association (CMA) will be used solely for the purpose of communicating with the member about information and events relevant to the membership and matters related to the organisation of the CMA. It will not be passed to any third party for any other purpose unless this is required by law. Any member may apply to the Registrar at any time to ascertain the accuracy and content of data held. Any information found to be incorrect will be corrected as quickly as possible.

We hold and process members' data based on our legitimate interest to serve the objectives as set out in our constitution where such interests are not overridden by your interests or fundamental rights and freedoms, and we will protect the data we hold from unauthorised use by any third party. We also process information where this is necessary for compliance with our legal obligations.

You have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office about anything relating to the processing of your personal information by the CMA. You can contact the ICO via its website at www.ico.org.uk or at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

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MEMBERSHIP

Africa, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, UK, US and 'other location' members can now renew online.

A spouse/partner of a member or duly qualified applicant for membership is eligible for full Life, Term or Annual Membership. For further information please contact the Registrar.

Annual subscriptions are due on the 1st of January, and should be remitted to their local Branch by members in the US, Canada, and Australia or to the Registrar.

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