



CLAN DONALD MID-EAST



Fall 2010

A Brief History of Clan Donald USA

Clan Donald has always been first in the minds of Donald descendents throughout the world. Clan Societies date to the late 1800's with the establishment of the Clan Donald Society of Glasgow in 1889 and the Clan Donald Society of Edinburgh in 1891. While many Donalds immigrated to North America, there was no formal Clan Donald organization until the mid 1950's.

In the 1930's, Major Reginald Henry Macdonald of Kingsburgh, O.B.E. (Retired), a senior cadet of Sleaford and personal friend of Lord Alexander Macdonald, relocated with his wife from their home in New Zealand to Pittsburgh, PA. He became a United States citizen in 1940. In 1954, he returned to South Uist for the unveiling of a memorial to his Great-Great-Grandmother, Flora McDonald. During this visit, the Right Honorable Alexander Godfrey Macdonald of Macdonald, Lord Macdonald, High Chief of Clan Donald, asked his friend Reginald to establish a Clan Donald Society in the United States. On August 31, 1954, Lord Macdonald commissioned Reginald as his High Commissioner in the United States.

Upon his return he enlisted the aid of many MacDonalDs in Pittsburgh and with their help, they formed the Clan Donald Educational and Charitable Trust on December 15, 1955. This Trust sponsored the Clan Donald Games in Ligonier PA, later to be known as the Ligonier Highland Games.

On November 8, 1956, The Clan Donald Society of America was incorporated in Pennsylvania. Together with many MacDonalDs from throughout the eastern US, he appointed regional commissioners. Together with Nestor (Mac) McDonald, Agnes MacRae Morton and Donald MacDonald, he helped establish the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

In the succeeding years with the assistance of Bill (Crusty Bill) McDonald of New York together with James A. McDonald our Genealogist and many others, Clan Donald grew throughout the United States.

Reginald died in 1964 and was succeeded by his deputy, Robert E. MacDonald of St. Louis. Robert was president of a large construction company and traveled extensively throughout the world. His company constructed the St. Louis Arch. In 1971 while traveling overseas he died leaving the office of High Commissioner vacant.

In 1970, Lord Alexander Macdonald died and his son Lord Godfrey James Macdonald, our present High Chief matriculated to the Arms of High Chief of Clan Donald. Lord and Lady Macdonald first visited the US in 1971 and were greeted by Bill and Ruth McDonald. Nestor McDonald invited them to be guests of Honor at the Grandfather games and while there, were introduced to Ellice and Rosa McDonald. Ellice and Rose invited them back to their home "Invergarry" in Delaware. While there "Crusty" Bill spoke of the vacancy of a High Commissioner. Upon Bill's advice,

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Regional Events 2010:

- September 4-5 — Virginia Games, The Plains, VA
- September 22-26 — Clan Donald AGM, Myrtle Beach, SC
- October 2 — Chesapeake Celtic Festival, Snow Hill, MD
- October 2 — Williamsburg, Scottish Festival, Lanexa, VA
- October 2 — Radford Highlanders Festival, Radford, VA
- October 23 — Meadowfield Games, Doswell, VA
- December 4 — Alexandria, VA Christmas Walk & Dinner



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Regional Commissioner's Letter — Dear Kinsmen;

I am shocked that another game season is nearly finished with five games left (Virginia, Radford, Williamsburg, Chesapeake and Richmond games). I hope that you can make at least one of them if not more. Again this year the mid-east will be doing three games in one day, so we will need your help, on that day we are stretched pretty thin. That brings me to my next point -- attendance and participation.

Very few of you know how much work and planning is done to make sure a clan tent is up and running for a game. It's much more than showing up and setting up a tent, as well as taking it down. There are telephone calls to the membership, planning and getting food and drink for the tent (that means shopping for them). If the tent has beer, wine and/or Scotch, it comes out of the commissioner's pocket since national forbids clan money to purchase alcohol for the games. Also, much of the food also comes out of your commissioner's pocket. Then there is the paperwork for the games that needs to be filled out before and after. Then comes games day, traveling to and from the games for many Commissioners, Deputy Commissioner and Conveners, which means getting up at un-godly hour to get to the game and get set up before the opening. And many times that means traveling hundreds of miles or staying at a hotel. Oh I forgot packing and unpacking the car with Clan gear most of the time by themselves. Then working at the tent and trying to answer all the questions and that's an impossible job. Not too mention setting up the lunch and social areas, and much more.

What I'm getting at, is what can you do as a clansmen to help? I know that many of us are getting old and can not do heavy work, but just showing up and having the clan out in forces help draw in new members when they see large numbers at the tent having a great time. You can also help by answering questions and greeting people at the tent. One way to help is to relieve your Commissioner, so that he or she can use the rest room and look around the games at other tents and vendors. Just attending is showing them that they are appreciated and that all there work is not for nothing at the end of the day. Also a thank you at the end of the games goes a long way. So please show up and bring a side dish for lunch and thank your State Commissioner and their staff. You may be surprised and find out you like it and keep going to the games.

The National AGM this year is coming up on September 23 – 26 in Mytle Beach, SC, if you can make it please do so. The Mid-East will have a great honor placed on it this year. Also the Alexandria Christmas walk and annual Clan Donald dinner will be taking place this year on December 4. The Christmas walk committee is already hard at work to make this another great event to remember. If you would like to volunteer, please contact John Gillis or myself. This year our guest of Honor will be our Deputy High Commissioner Merlin McReynold and next year's High Commissioner. Also in attendance will be our future Deputy High Commissioner, which I am not permitted to say his name because he has not been confirmed yet. We're working on getting a band and pipe band also. Come out and show our new High Commissioner that the Mid-East Region is a strong and proud region.

The region always needs volunteers for different committee chairs, regional position and committee members. We had a successful fundraiser which helped lessen our debt. If anyone has any ideas for fundraisers let me know. We had our first region movie night and dinner, which was hosted by our Deputy Regional Commissioner Stan Darroch and his lovely wife Tracy. They did a great job, thank you. We had around ten members show up and everyone had a great time and enjoyed themselves. If anyone would like to volunteer for hosting a movie night please contact me. I better get going or my newsletter editor will get on me for using too much space. I hope to get to see you at one of our games and at the Christmas walk. ■

Yours in Service,

David MacDonald Rankin



Deputy Regional Commissioner's Report

Welcome, Clan Donald to the fall season. As the Deputy Mid-East Regional commissioner, my duty is to support the Commissioner — so the party line is, my advice to head down and check out the Clan Donald Annual General Meeting set for Myrtle Beach, South Carolina from 22 to 26 September. I understand that the accommodations are reasonable and the drive is not too bad from Maryland and Virginia. You may not get another Clan Donald AGM that is as convenient to attend and they are generally a lot of fun. Speaking of fun, we have our Fall lineup of games beginning this weekend with the Virginia Scottish Games on 4 and 5 September. As Dave's deputy, I sort of pitch in where the State Commissioners need the help. In that capacity, I hope to see as many of you as possible at the games and at the Alexandria Christmas Walk & Dinner in December. ■

Stan Darroch

Maryland Commissioner's Report

On Saturday August 14th, a Clan Donald Dinner fundraiser was held at the Killarney House in Davidsonville, Maryland. Two dozen members from our region stopped by to share a meal, and we raised \$240. Great fun was had by all and I can't thank the wonderful folks at the Killarney House enough for their continuing support!

In another few weeks we're off to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for the 2010 Clan Donald USA Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Mid-East Region promises to put in a good showing and demonstrate to the entire assembly just how tremendously we are doing this year!

We have one more event in Maryland this season: the Chesapeake Celtic Festival in Snow Hill is set for October 2-3 and I hope that as many of you who can will attend. Stop by and say hello, I would love to see you there! ■

Fred Greenwood

Virginia Commissioner's Report

Hello to all Clan Donald Members!

After surviving a sweltering summer the Fall games season is upon us. I'd like to extend an invitation to everyone to stop by the Clan Donald tent at any (or all) of our upcoming games. As Commissioner, one of the most enjoyable things about the position is the opportunity to visit with other Clan Donald members. We're a diverse family, and the conversations in the tent are always a chance to learn about our shared heritage or simply enjoy fellowship at the games.

There will be many opportunities to visit a Clan Donald tent in Virginia, as we will be attending one festival in September and three in October. First up are the Virginia Scottish Games (September 4-5), then the Williamsburg Scottish Festival (October 1-3) and the Radford Highlanders Festival (October 1-3). Yes, that is correct; Clan Donald will once again be represented at two festivals on the same date. Finishing out the month are the Meadow Highland Games (October 23-24), the relatively new name for the old Richmond Highland Games. Also, we can't forget the Clan Donald Annual General Meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC at the end of September (22-26).

With the high temperatures lately it's been hard to think about Christmas, but it isn't too early to think about the Christmas Silent Auction. Please think of items that could be donated to our auction, and feel free to contact me if there are any questions.

If there are ideas you have for events or things we could be doing in Virginia, please do not hesitate to contact me. ■

Yours in Service,

Jeff Davis



West Virginia Commissioner's Report



(WV Commissioner, Dale Field)

Greetings from the mountain state! It has been another great year for Clan Donald. First off, I would like to focus on expanding the events in West Virginia for the upcoming year, and would like to see more of our membership step up to assist in planning. We would like to ask for a chairman to plan quarterly dinners for the state, and we are also in need of a couple conveners. Any help the membership could offer would be great! Secondly, I would like to remind everyone that the AGM and the Christmas Walk are both rapidly approaching. I would like to see a decent member base there, so do not forget to register as they come about. On another note, a couple of members still have dues left unpaid, and as we still love you all, we can not maintain expired memberships on the books, so please look into that. If you have any questions regarding the status of your dues, feel free to contact me.

As the state commissioner, I would feel as though I am doing you all a great disservice if I did not share a story with you. For the sake of confidentiality, keep in mind that all parties involved, with the exception of myself, will remain nameless. It was a warm sunny day in West Virginia, and of course I was out of town so I didn't know this at that the time. An awesome deputy commissioner arrived on time and did a great job of setting things up (kudos to you by the way). In the mean time, I was en-route to this Bridgeport Game to meet said deputy, and a Regional Commissioner who shall remain nameless (cough cough). I attempted to make numerous calls to touch base with both parties, and the above deputy stated that the anonymous Regional Commissioner had still not shown, an hour late might I add. I arrived at the games some time later, which taught me a valuable lesson about sleeping in, and still no Regional Representative. At this time, I began to worry as phone calls remained unanswered. Late the same night, still no word from anonymous regional representative. At this time I began to go into panic mode, thinking of all the things that could have gone wrong. Keep in mind this occurred on Saturday. I initiated a phone tree to alert people of the situation. No one could locate said party. A nameless Virginia Commissioner, myself, and a Virginia Member, who happens to be my mentor and previous West Virginia Commissioner who must remain nameless due to the stipulations I have given myself in writing this, did quite a bit of calling and leg work in an attempt to locate our missing Regional Commissioner. Come Monday morning, I contacted a certain person's place of employment, to see if said party was at work, and no luck. I notified them that said party was missing since Saturday. They contacted our missing person's family who had the police go to the house and bust a door in. During the busting of the door, our missing person returned home to find that he must replace a door, and had a lot of phone calls to make. It turned out that said party had their car stolen a couple months prior, and the car was still listed on the stolen car records in the state of West Virginia. Needless to say that State Troopers of the Mountain State, which we will call Barney Fife for nameless purposes, "dun did think he went and caught himself a felon" and our poor missing person had to spend a weekend in jail so the magistrate could clear it up on Monday morning. Poor Dave. OOPS! I mean poor nameless person. By the way, did I mention that the arresting officer was Officer Campbell? As if Glencoe wasn't bad enough! So kudos to Dave for surviving the bars for a few days, and I am sure the Golden Sporrán awaits — again. ■



(Mid-East Commissioner Dave Rankin)

Dale Field



Clan Donald Chiefs Tour 2010 — Recap



We took our grandson Anthony this year, as a graduation gift, and he loved meeting everyone and enjoyed the tour very much.

We arrived in Edinburgh and our first order of business was haggis at Crombies. So we dropped off our bags, got directions and set out for haggis and meat pies. The food was everything I expected and well worth the long walk. Later that evening we enjoyed a great meal at the welcoming dinner, at the Macdonald Holyrood Hotel (a great hotel to stay at when in Edinburgh) and got reacquainted with some of the clan members from last year and met a few new ones as well.

Saturday 19th — We loaded up after a full Scottish breakfast and traveled to Inverness, with a stop at the Ben Nevis Distillery for lunch and a cask tour. This was one of the best distillery tours I've been on so far. We stayed at the Drumossie Hotel in Inverness and had a chance to visit Culloden (but it was a short stop and we will need to visit here again.) Later that day there was a Clan meeting with Lord Macdonald, Chamberlain Rob Parker, High Commissioner Clan Donald USA Ron Coutts, High Commissioner Clan Donald New Zealand Harold Mclsaac, and a few others.

Sunday, June 20th — We traveled to John O'Groats and boarded the ferry for Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney. The ferry looked more like a cruise ship than the ferries I'm accustomed to. After landing at Kirkwall, we toured the Highland Park Distillery. We also attended the annual St. Magnus Festival, Orkney's world class Midsummer Celebration of The Arts. We spent three nights at the Stromness Hotel. We had a real nice quaint room overlooking the Harbor. It reminded me of Nantucket and we had a great time there as well.



Monday, 21st — During our stay in Orkney, we had a guided tour to visit the Ring of Brodgar, Ring of Stenness, Maeshowe, Skara Brae, Skaill House, St. Magnus Palaces, Italian Chapel, and Scapa Flow. There's just not enough space to put in words the enormous amount of Historical significance of all these places.

Tues 22nd — We visited Shela Fleet's shop and had a chance to purchase a few items. She's a local craftsman who makes handmade jewelry.

Wednesday, June 23rd — We headed to the Isle of Skye for one night. We stopped at Eilean Donan Castle and a night in Portree's Cuillin Hills Hotel. This hotel was beautiful and will definitely be our choice to stay on our next visit to Skye.

Thursday, June 24th — We returned to our Clan lands! We stopped at Armadale Castle, the Clan Donald Centre on the Isle of Skye for a Memorial dedication for Rosa McDonald, followed by a welcoming lunch. Then back on the bus for a ride to Glencoe before getting back to Edinburgh and the Macdonald Holyrood Hotel, where we had our Farewell Dinner together.

The Chief's tours are a great experience and traveling with Clan members is like traveling with family. If you get the chance to go, I recommend it. ■

Michael McDonald



2009 Edinburgh Clan Gathering

My name is Michael McDonald, and all my life was told I was Irish. I married an Irish girl and since our kids are all grown up, we thought we would travel to Ireland to see the country and try to find where our families originated. To my surprise, when I asked which County the McDonald's are from, the response I got was " County Scotland!"

My wife, being the genealogy researcher that she is, quickly found the history of Clan Donald and we both decided to tour Scotland and check out some of the places we were reading about.

While looking into booking a tour she found an article on the 2009 Edinburgh Clan Gathering and also that Clan Donald was one of the largest Clans that would be attending. Soon after that I sent a request to the Clan and became a new member.

My wife e-mailed Rob Parker and Peggy Ruetz, and we signed up for the Chiefs tour. We arrived in Edinburgh and stayed at the Macdonald Holyrood Hotel (very nice experience) and spent some time touring the city and attending the games.

On the day of the march up the Royal Mile, we gathered behind the gates at the Palace of Holyrood house and lined up in alphabetical order according to our perspective Clans, proceeded by our chiefs and clan banners. Then we started the march. Cheers greeted us from thousands of people lining the streets, and I was so moved and honored to have been able to participate in the biggest Clan Gathering in Edinburgh since George IV was honored in 1822. The march ended at the Castle and we were seated around the Castle esplanade for a pageant on the history of the clans with music, dancing and pipers. ■



(Me with Lord Donald and Joe Alexander)



(Clan Donald getting ready to march)

For more information regarding the 2009 Clan Gathering and to see more photos, you can visit their website by typing in the following web address into your browser window — <http://www.rampantscotland.com/gathering/>

Michael McDonald



A Brief History of Clan Donald USA (*continued*)

Lord Macdonald appointed Robertson McDonald of Nashville TN, Bill's cousin, as High Commissioner. Nestor McDonald remained as Deputy High Commissioner. Nestor had been offered the position as High Commissioner but declined due to business responsibilities.

Robertson was an enthusiastic High Commissioner and Clan Donald flourished. Robertson, however, due to reasons of health, was forced to resign in 1976. Once again we were left without a High Commissioner, Nestor again declining the HC position.

It was a period of great concern until Lord Macdonald convinced Ellice to be High Commissioner. The morning after Ellice accepted, he awoke to say "What have I done?"

Ellice "jumped into" the responsibilities of the Office immediately. He solicited and received the tremendous support of Clan men and women through the United States. He initially divided the US into 12 Regions later to become 13. He reincorporated Clan Donald in Delaware and wrote the Bi-Laws under which we presently operate. These have been revised many times since that initial filing. An important Article in the By-Laws is that the High Chief appoints the High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner. This had been the practice to that time but this formalized the practice. Thus CDUSA is not a Society with elected officials but an extension of the Clan in Scotland. This makes Clan Donald USA unique of all clan societies in the US where their officials are elected.

Ellice established and published *By Sea, By Land* which we still enjoy today. He named Robertson High Commissioner Emeritus and Nestor Deputy High Emeritus. Douglas Murdock of California was appointed Deputy High Commissioner. Ellice formalized CDUSA's representation at Highland Games with the tents which have become the focus of welcome and refreshment for visiting Clan members.

Ellice stepped down on January 1, 1983 and Doug was appointed HC with John F. McDonald Jr. as Deputy HC.

1979 saw the first AGM outside of the Grandfather Games which was held at the Ligonier Highland Games. This AGM established the structure of workshops and meetings which is format today. Following the 1980 AGM, it has been the practice to hold AGM's throughout the US, including Alaska, hosted by the various regions.

Through the succeeding years financial stability has been obtained with life and annual dues accountability. A Scholarship recognizing excellence in Piping, Drumming and Celtic Fiddle is awarded annually as well as the Clan Donald Cultural Scholarship. These together with the Clan Donald Academic Scholarship, sponsored by the Clan Donald Foundation are available to members of CDUSA, their children and family members.

The Clan Donald Archives and Genealogy records reside at the Odem Library in Moultrie, GA with our three branches through the US. There are many other additions to CDUSA which have occurred since its' humble beginning in 1956 and we continue to grow.

We were the first Clan organization in the US and we remain the largest and most successful to this day. ■

The list of past High Commissioners are:

- 1954-1964 Maj. Reginald Henry Macdonald of Kingsburgh, dec.
- 1964-1971 Robert E. MacDonald, dec.
- 1971-1975 Robertson McDonald, dec.
- 1976-1982 Ellice McDonald, Jr.
- 1983-1985 Douglas F. Murdock, dec.
- 1986-1989 John F. McDonald, Jr.
- 1990-1992 Robert C. Galbraith
- 1993-1995 Col. Jack E. McDonald, dec.
- 1996-1998 Angus McBryde, dec.
- 1999-2001 Douglas K. Macdonald
- 2002-2004 James E. McBride
- 2005-2007 Lt. Col. Albert E. Manning, Ret.

John F. McDonald, Jr.



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Check out the Clan Donald Mid-East Website

<http://mid-east.clan-donald-usa.org/index.html>
