

ROBERTSON'S RANT

The Newsletter of the Clan Donnachaidh Society—Mid-Atlantic Branch



BRANCH UPDATE

By Norman Dunkinson

The 2014 Games Season is well under way. Thanks to all members who have come out and enjoyed the Games with us so far this year. If you have yet to make it out, there is still time prior to the summer hiatus with the McHenry Maryland Games and the Bonnie Brae New Jersey Games (no tent), both on Saturday, June 7th. And if we don't see you during the first half of the Games season, we'll look forward to seeing you in the second!

New t-shirts have been ordered and are in route. The t-shirts are black, and are nearly identical to the black ones we had a number of years ago, with the stylized clan crest on the back. An ample quantity of smaller sizes were ordered, based on feedback received last year. I hope to have these distributed to various conveners by the Virginia and McLain Games, both on Saturday, August 30th.

ALEXANDRIA NATIONAL TARTAN DAY CELEBRATION

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

Saturday morning, April 5th, we arrived at the Waterfront Park in Old Town Alexandria Virginia to celebrate National Tartan Day which is actually on April 6th, the date on which the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in 1320.

The National Capital Tartan Day Committee had previously held this event at the Market Square site in Old Town, where the Christmas Walk Parade ends. The Park was a much better location. With the temperature in the low-60s, and a breeze off the Potomac, it was a wee bit nippy but the beautiful sunny day was more than welcome after this past winter.

We were situated between clans Ferguson and Wallace (both good neighbors) and were directly across from the musical stage where good Celtic music was provided all day.

President **Sam Kistler** and I were able to assist lots of visitors in determining their clan affiliations and very pleased to welcome **Mark Robertson** as a new member of the clan and visit with members **Tim Keefer**, **Kathy Fraser** and **Anne Kennedy**.

Much thanks are due to **Ralph Wallace** for all his work in putting on this festival. It was a great way to start the Mid-Atlantic festival season and we will be back next year.

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JUNE 2014

Branch Officers:

President:

Sam Kistler

Vice President:

Ron Bentz

Secretary/Treasurer:

Norman Dunkinson

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FROM THE CRUSADES TO BANNOCKBURN

By Jim Fargo

While researching another article on clan history, I ran across an interesting item that connects the last of the Holy Land crusades (1270-1272) with a key player in the Battle of Bannockburn. This June 24th marks the 700th anniversary of that battle where we were one of twenty-one clans present.

The background to this story begins with Earl Henry, the third and last Celtic earl of Atholl. Earl Henry had two sons, Constantine (who predeceased him) and Conan (from whom Duncan our first recognized chief descends). When Earl Henry died around 1222, the earldom passed through his first son's daughters successively to their respective husbands. The youngest daughter, Fernelith married Sir David Hastings and in her right he became the seventh Earl of Atholl. Their grandson David de Strathbogie became the ninth Earl in 1264. Known as the Crusader Earl, David took the cross in 1268 and raised a force of Athollmen and joined the French King Louis IX's second Crusade against the infidels in 1270 as joint leader of the Scottish contingent. The other Scottish leader was Adam de Kilconquhar, Earl of Carrick. Adam had come to the earldom through his marriage to Marjorie, daughter of the previous earl. When the Athollmen departed, Ewan and Andrew, respectively grandfather and father of Duncan our first recognized chief, probably watched them leave.

The combined French and Scottish army sailed from France to North Africa in late summer of 1270. Unfortunately, the earl of Atholl and many of the Scottish contingent died during the siege of Tunis in August 1270. On the death of Atholl, Carrick assumed command of the remaining Scottish host and sailed to Sicily in the autumn of 1270 to join up with the English crusader army. This army was led by Lord Edward (son of King Henry III of England who died in 1272) and later as King Edward I of England. The combined force proceeded to Acre in the spring of 1271 and it was there that Carrick died. Included in the English host was Robert de Bruce, the elder lord of Annandale and his son, Robert de Bruce. On their return from the Holy Land in 1273, the younger Robert married the young widow Marjorie, countess of Carrick and in her right became the earl of Carrick. Their first son, born on July 11, 1274, was named Robert. We know him as King Robert the Bruce.

Reference:

Alan MacQuarrie, "Scotland and the Crusades 1095-1560", 1997, pp. 56-62.



SOUTHERN MARYLAND GAMES REPORT

By Jim Fargo

At 8:15 AM on Saturday April 26th, the clan van arrived at the Jefferson-Patterson Park in Saint Leonard, Maryland for the 36th annual Celtic Festival of Southern Maryland. Branch President **Sam Kistler**, son **Andrew** and I (with help from **Robert Knight** of clan MacNaughton) soon had the van unloaded and set up at our double tent site between House of Gordon and Clan Johnstone. We were ready by 9AM for the arrival of **Evan and Rosalie Duncan** with the Donnachaidh Diner provisions.

It was a wonderful Scottish sunny day in the mid-70s and the games attendance was very good. Along with the arrival of several potential new members, we welcomed many members and their families to the clan tent including: the entire **Katan family**, **Steve Hoffman**, and **Harry Robertson**. We were pleased to welcome **Cindy (McRobbie) Matera** as a new member of our Branch.

Evan Duncan, **Andrew Fargo**, **Sam Kistler** and I were joined by the **David Reed family** for the official clan parade at noon and then reconvened in the clan tent for a wonderful lunch with the House of Gordon clanfolk provided by the Duncans. Again this year, there was a Clan Lindsay tent on the opposite side of the athletic field. We visited them several times during the day to socialize with the Lindsay convener - **Leslie Hughes**. This year marks the 622nd anniversary of the "Raid of Angus"!

At 2PM, the Knobby Knees contest was held. **Harry Robertson** was "awarded the high status of Knobby Knees Emeritus" for his many wins over the past years and was not allowed to compete this year. This opened the door for **Robert Knight** to win this year.

This is a great Celtic festival with plenty of activities ranging from crafts to music for every interest. President **Sam** and I believe everyone had a great time. Much thanks to **Evan and Rosalie** for a wonderful lunch. Our double tent setup will certainly be back next year on April 25, 2015. Hope you can join us!

FREDERICK MARYLAND GAMES REPORT

By Ron Bentz

Early in the morning I was met by my mother **Betty (Duncan) Bentz**, for the short trip to Frederick. Well, it should have been short anyway! I managed to miss my exit, and traveled back and forth on route 70 for 45 minutes. At that point I thought "hey, why don't I use the GPS on my fancy phone?" After doing that, we were soon on site.

When we arrived **Sam, Evan and Rosalie** had things well in hand. Once we set up the tent materials and flags we were ready for business. We were pleased to welcome **Leslie Bruchey** and **Linda Wangberg**. Then I saw someone headed for the tent who seemed vaguely familiar, who turned out to be **Dan Roberson**. We were very glad to see him back at the Clan tent! We were also very pleased to see **Mitch and Angie Erauth**.

After the clan parade, we all convened back at the tent for a wonderful Donnachaidh diner—thanks, **Evan and Rosalie**! Unfortunately, for the second straight year, we were hit with some torrential downpours, but everyone kept their spirits up quite well!

I suggest that everyone make this wonderful event part of their Scottish Games season. This Game has all the wonderful food and entertainment you would expect. So in 2015, I want to see more faces to go with all the wonderful clan folk who attended this year!

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FAIRHILL MARYLAND GAMES REPORT

By Ron Bentz

Early in the morning on Saturday, May 17th, **Betty (Duncan) Bentz** and I headed for the Fair Hill Colonial Highland Games. After my adventures the week before, I made sure to use my GPS so we would'nt get lost. It is a very pleasant drive through scenic Lancaster County, and we passed at least four horse and buggies on the way. We arrived on site at 7:15am, and were set up and ready to go before the early 8:00am start. By this time, **Sam Kistler** had arrived, and we welcomed old friends and made new friends throughout the day.

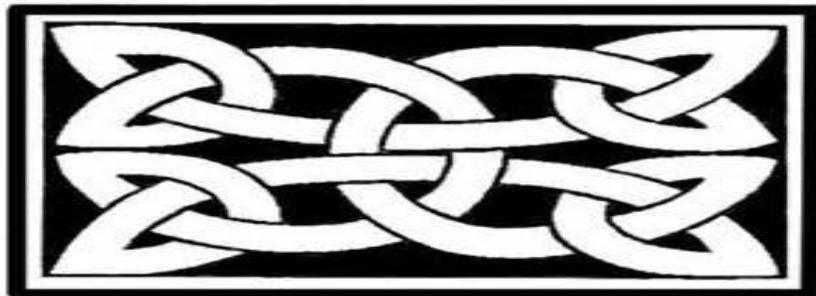
The main focus at this event is the bagpipe competition, and indeed you could hear the pipes wherever you were throughout the site. There were also a number of bands on hand to provide entertainment throughout the day. Among these was Rathkeltair, which features former members of Seven Nations including perhaps the best piper I've had the pleasure of hearing—Neal Anderson. I look forward to this event every year and would love to see some more clan folk at this event in 2015!

ALEXANDRIA CHRISTMAS WALK REPORT

By Jim Fargo

Our last clan event of 2013 was the Scottish Christmas Walk in Olde Town Alexandria VA, which is always held on the first Saturday of December. We arrived at our assigned spot in the parade by 10:00am after dropping off some gifts with Branch President **Sam Kistler** for "Toys for Tots" at the local Starbucks. President **Sam** was helping at the collection site.

Leading off our clan unit was **Steve Hoffman** carrying our wolf head totem and **Andrew Fargo** with the clan banner. President **Sam** was immediately behind them. We stepped off about 11:30am and we quickly warmed up as we continued along the parade route practicing the clan war cry. As we passed the reviewing stand, we gave a hearty "Fierce When Roused" to the honored guests. Upon the conclusion of the parade at Market Square, our 20 plus marchers headed for the traditional clan luncheon at the Fish Market Inn (105 King Street). We were joined by clan Wallace and had a delicious lunch. Even though the weather was a wee bit cool, it was a great day for a parade and conclude the 2013 event season.



CEUD MILE FAILTE (100,000 WELCOMES)!

We'd like to welcome the following new and returning members who joined us or renewed since the last report:

Don Behe
Anne Kennedy
Mark Robertson

Betty Bentz
Cindy Matera
Harry Robertson

Jane Dunshie
Stacey Pfau
John Robertson

Kathy Fraser
Marvin Reed

Michael Hill
George Robertson

We hope to see you at the Games in 2014!



BLAST FROM THE PAST

By Norman Dunkinson

The following is a selection from *Robertson's Rant* volume 16, issue 1, published during in February 1998:

An English atheist was on a fishing holiday in Scotland. He was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by the Loch Ness monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. Then it opened its mouth to swallow both.

As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, "Oh, my God! Please help me!"

At once, the ferocious attack scene froze in place, and as the atheist hung in mid-air, a booming voice came down from the clouds, "I thought you didn't believe in Me!"

"Come on God, give me a break!" the man pleaded. "Two minutes ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness monster either!"





VP Ron Bentz and his son Liam at the Frederick Games

**CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY
MID-ATLANTIC BRANCH**

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The Clan Donnachaidh Society is a world-wide organization dedicated to the preservation of our Highland heritage. Membership is open to those persons bearing recognized sept surnames and their descendants and spouses.

Membership in the parent Clan Donnachaidh Society in Scotland includes a subscription to the Clan Donnachaidh Annual.

Membership in the Mid-Atlantic Branch of the Clan Donnachaidh Society includes a subscription to the Branch newsletter, Robertson's Rant, published quarterly and containing listings of Highland Games and Celtic Festivals throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, Game and Festival reports, historical and biographical articles, and news items of interest to Donnachaidhs everywhere. Membership also includes an open invitation to join your fellow society members at the Clan Donnachaidh Tent and Diner at numerous Games and Festivals, and at other activities including the annual Scottish Christmas Walk and Clan Donnachaidh luncheon in the Old Town section of Alexandria, Virginia, in early December.

Parent Society membership dues are \$25.00 per year (individual) and \$35.00 per year (family = two persons/same address). Mid-Atlantic Branch membership dues are \$20.00 per year (individual).

UPCOMING CELTIC EVENTS AND GAMES—2014

<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
McHenry Highland Festival	McHenry, MD	Jun 7 th
Bonnie Brae Scottish Festival	Liberty Corner, NJ	Jun 7 th
Grandfather Mountain Highland Games	Linville, NC	Jul 10 th -13 th
McLain Celtic Festival	Carlisle, PA	Aug 30 th
Virginia Scottish Games & Festival	The Plains, VA	Aug 30 th -31 st
MD Renaissance Festival Scottish Weekend	Crownsville, MD	Sep 20 th -21 st
Ligonier Highland Festival	Ligonier, PA	Sep 20 th
Celtic Classic	Bethlehem, PA	Sep 26 th -28 th
Chesapeake Celtic Festival	Snow Hill, MD	Oct 4 th -5 th
Radford Highlanders Festival	Radford, VA	Oct 11 th
Central Virginia Celtic Festival & Games	Richmond, VA	Oct 25 th -26 th
Scottish Christmas Walk	Alexandria, VA	Dec 6 th