

# ROBERTSON'S RANT

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



## EDITOR'S NOTES

By Norman Dunkinson

Another games season will kick-off soon, and we hope to see many members at the games during 2017!

We've replenished our black Donnachaidh Clan Crest t-shirts this year, and **Tom Due**, our western Pennsylvania convener, will now have a stock of his own for sale at the games he attends (Ligonier, Edinboro, etc.). Note that wholesale purchase prices have increased and that t-shirts will now retail for \$20.00.

The games schedule is, for the most part, set for 2017, as shown on the last page of this newsletter. I am still attempting to confirm the date for the Celtic Celebration at the Maryland Renn Faire. The Branch plans to have a tent at 8 of these games: Southern Maryland, Frederick, Fair Hill (Colonial), McLain, The Plains, Edinboro, Ligonier, and Richmond. The Clarksburg, WV, games are cancelled this year.

The Parent Society's Annual Gathering and General Meeting will be held the week of Sunday, August 6th, in Pitlochry, Scotland, with the AGM occurring on Thursday, August 10th.

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### Branch Officers

President:

Sam Kistler

Vice President:

Ron Bentz

Secretary/Treasurer:

Norman Dunkinson



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## ROBERTSON'S RANT



Clan Donnachaidh at the Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk

## ALEXANDRIA SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS WALK—2016

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

Our last Branch event of 2016 was the Scottish Christmas Walk in Olde Town Alexandria VA. This is always held on the first Saturday of December and marked the start of the Christmas shopping season in Alexandria. Andrew Fargo, **Robert Knight** and I arrived at 8:00am and had breakfast at the local Subway while awaiting the arrival of President **Sam Kistler**. Arriving at the gathering site on South Pitt Street around 10:00am, we joined **Norman and Christine Dunkinson's family** along with **Steve Duncan's family** and **Don and Mary Alice Behe**.

We stepped off about 11:40am after a good hour of socializing and various flask refreshments at our assigned spot in the staging area. Leading off our clan unit were **Steve Hoffman** with our wolf head totem with President **Sam Kistler**. **Evan Duncan** and **Andrew Fargo** carried our clan flags. **Jill Stark** and **Allan Robertson** among many others also joined us. 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. Even though the weather was a wee bit cool, we were very lucky to have a beautiful sunny day.

Upon the conclusion of the parade at Market Square, most of our 20 plus marchers headed for the traditional Branch luncheon at the Fish Market (105 King Street). We were joined by clans Wallace, MacNaughton and the Scottish American Military Society (SAMS). We had a delicious lunch. Afterwards, most of us wandered over to Murphy's Pub for a wee pint (or two) before heading home.

As always, it was a great day for a parade and it concluded our 2016 event season. Please make plans to join us in Alexandria on December 2, 2017!

## BATTLE OF DALNASPIDAL—1654

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

King Charles I of England was executed in London by order of Parliament in January 1649. His son, King Charles II, was crowned King of Scotland, but his attempt to regain his English throne from the Parliamentary government of Oliver Cromwell ended in defeat in September 1651 at the battle of Worcester. William Cunningham, Earl of Glencairn was one of the royalist leaders in Scotland and in early 1653 raised a highland army in Scotland to restore King Charles to the English throne. This attempt is known as the “Glencairn Rising” (1653-1654). To quell this rebellion, Cromwell’s forces invaded Scotland.

At this time, our teenage chief was Alexander (12th chief) son of Alexander (11th chief) who had died in 1636. His uncle Donald was appointed his guardian and was known as the “Tutor of Strowan”. Donald had led our clansmen in support of Montrose’s efforts to keep King Charles I on the English throne in 1644-1645. In 1653 the English army entered Atholl and established garrisons at Blair and Grantully castles. Our chief’s castle at Invervack was burned down.

In April 1654, General Monk returned to England from the continental wars in Holland. The English Parliamentary forces in Scotland were now commanded by General Monk with support from Campbell of Argyll’s militia. Colonel Morgan commanded the English cavalry.

Glencairn came to Rannoch to raise the MacGregor and Donnachaidh clans in support of the Royalist cause. Young Alexander sent around the “fiery cross” in the spring of 1654 and our clansmen gathered at Fea Corrie (a secluded gathering place in Glenerochy (north of Loch Rannoch) to prepare for excursions outside of the clan area) and marched north to join the MacGregors near a farm known as Annat. The joined clans continued north and met up with Major General Middleton’s cavalry and infantry at Loch Garry. There had been an earlier quarrel between Middleton who had been given command of all Royalist troops by King Charles and Glencairn who had been waging a guerrilla campaign in the highlands. This led to Glencairn withdrawing his support from Middleton’s army and leaving the army with divided loyalties. Middleton eventually proceeded northward up the old North Road to the Drumochter Pass which leads into Badenoch with a force numbering around 2,000.

On the evening of July 19, 1654, the Royalist army (consisting of about 1,200 foot and 800 cavalry) became separated as the infantry followed the cavalry at a slower pace up through the pass. Unfortunately the Royalist cavalry was surprised by a sudden attack by Colonel Morgan’s English cavalry and put to flight. The ensuing panic upon seeing their fleeing cavalry racing past them left the infantry unsupported and they in turn broke ranks and fled into the mountains upon seeing the approaching English cavalry. Fortunately, clan casualties were very light as only a Captain Robertson was killed. About 300 of the Royalist cavalry were reported captured.

Middleton, although wounded, also managed to escape into the surrounding mountains but was unable to rally a sufficient force to continue the Royalist rebellion. In September 1654, Glencairn surrendered to General Monk. In early 1655, Middleton escaped Scotland and rejoined King Charles II at Cologne. That ended the Rising.

Postscript: In writing the above, I learned that the Annat rendezvous site for where the MacGregors and Robertsons joined forces was an early pre-Christian religious site named for a pagan goddess of victory. Could they possibly have gathered there to make an offering before proceeding north?

### References:

- Hanley, Cliff “History of Scotland”, 1988, pp 68-69.  
 Paton, Sir Noel “The Descendants of Conan of Glenerochie”, 1873, p 6.  
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## ROBERTSON'S RANT

### CLAN CONNECTION TO ROMAN CATHOLIC SAINTS

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

Until 1969, the Roman Catholic Church listed 350 saints. After a series of meetings known as Vatican II, the calendar of saints was reduced to 173 by Pope Paul VI. Among the remaining 173 are missionary saints, martyrs, defenders of the faith, and others of equal rank. The Pope divided those into three orders of saints. The remaining saints were either "a glory on the mountaintop, a gleam on a hillside, or a faint light in a valley."

For example, Saint Patrick is in the "a glory on the mountaintop" category and was a missionary saint. Saint Patrick's Day (March 17th) celebrates not the day of his birth but the day of his death. Originally an Irish religious day it is now both a religious and festive holiday.

Our own clan history has a connection to two Roman Catholic saints and to one who was never canonized. King Malcolm III (Canmore) was the grandson of Crinan, the Abbot of Dunkeld. Malcolm's younger brother Maelmare was the celtic earl of Atholl and through his descendants, our chiefly line derives.

#### *Saint Margaret*

The first recognized saint was Princess Margaret of the Saxon kingdom of Wessex. She was the sister of Edgar Atheling, the uncrowned Anglo-Saxon King of England. After the Norman conquest of England, they fled England in 1068 and a storm forced them to land in Scotland. At that time, Scotland was ruled by King Malcolm III, son of King Duncan I and head of the Royal House of Dunkeld. At this time, King Malcolm was a widower with a son Duncan (later King Duncan II).

Margaret married King Malcolm III in 1070 at the castle of Dunfermline and they had 8 children. There were six sons (the three youngest subsequently ruled as kings of Scotland) and two daughters from this marriage.

Margaret died on November 16, 1093, three days after the death of her husband and eldest son Edward at the battle to recapture Alnwick castle in Northumberland from the Norman King William Rufus. She was canonized in 1250 by Pope Innocent IV. Margaret's feast day is the same as her day of death. [St. Margaret of Scotland](#)



[Matilda of Scotland](#)

#### *"Saint" Matilda*

Margaret's eldest daughter Edith (she was crowned as Matilda and known as "Good Queen Maud") married King Henry I of England (younger brother of King William Rufus) in 1100 and died in 1118. Due to her devotion to the poor and to the founding of many religious houses and two leper hospitals in England there was an attempt to have her sainthood recognized though she was never canonized. Her daughter Matilda born in 1102 married and became the Holy Roman Empress on her marriage to Holy Roman Emperor Henry V. On King Henry I's death in 1135 the Empress sought the English throne but was succeeded by his nephew Stephen of Blois, beginning the English civil war which

## CEUD MILE FAILTE (100,000 WELCOMES)!

We'd like to welcome the following 5 new or returning members who joined us or renewed since the last report:

**Don Behe**

**Karen Layne**

**Carol Lucian**

**Robert McRobbie**

**Carolyn Orr**

## CLAN CONNECTION TO ROMAN CATHOLIC SAINTS (CONTINUED)

didn't end until 1154 on Stephen's death and Matilda's son being crowned King Henry II, the first of the Plantagenet kings.

### *Saint David*

Margaret's youngest son David (as the Prince of Cumbria) married Matilda the daughter of the English earl of Northampton and Huntingdon around 1113. David reluctantly became King David I of Scotland in 1124 on his older brother's (King Alexander I) death. On the death of his brother-in-law, King Henry I in 1135, a civil war began between Matilda and her cousin Stephen who challenged her right to the English throne. David supported his late sister's daughter, the Empress Matilda, but devoted most of his attention to Scotland's interests. He established royal burghs in Edinburgh, Berwick, Roxburgh, Stirling, Dunfermline and Perth to reorganize the administration of the kingdom and increase the royal tax revenue through foreign trade.

David was one of medieval Scotland's greatest monastic patrons and was canonized for his work in establishing convents and monasteries throughout Scotland. He founded an abbey at Holyrood (later Holyrood Palace) in Edinburgh. It was named for a relic, 'the Black Rood', brought to Scotland by his mother. It was believed to contain a fragment of the cross on which Christ was crucified.

The great border abbeys Dryburgh, Jedburgh, Kelso and Melrose were also founded. Nine bishoprics were established at St. Andrews, Aberdeen, Brechin, Caithness, Dunblane, Dunkeld, Glasgow, Ross and Whithorn.

St. Margaret's Chapel was built in honor of his mother in Edinburgh castle reputedly on the spot where she died. His saint's day is May 24 as he died on that date in 1153 and was buried in Dunfermline Abbey founded by his parents.

### *References:*

*Donaldson, Gordon, "Scottish Kings", 1977, pp 9-16.*

*Ross, David, "Scotland, History of a Nation", 2004, pp 61-68.*



St. David of Scotland



Robertson Flask

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**CELTIC EVENTS AND GAMES—2017**

<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Southern Maryland Celtic Festival	St. Leonard, MD	Apr 29th
Frederick Celtic Festival	Mt. Airy, MD	May 13th
Colonial Highland Gathering	Fair Hill, MD	May 20th
Celtic Fling & Highland Games	Manheim, PA	Jun 24th-25th
Adams County Irish Festival	Gettysburg, PA	Jul 15th
McLain Celtic Festival	Carlisle, PA	Sep 2nd
Virginia Scottish Games & Festival	The Plains, VA	Sep 2nd-3rd
Edinboro Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Edinboro, PA	Sep 9th
MD Renaissance Festival Celtic Celebration	Annapolis, MD	????
Celtic Classic	Bethlehem, PA	Sep 23rd-24th
Ligonier Highland Festival	Ligonier, PA	Sep 23rd
Chesapeake Celtic Festival	Snow Hill, MD	Oct 7th-8th
Central Virginia Celtic Festival & Games	Richmond, VA	Oct 28th-29th
Scottish Christmas Walk	Alexandria, VA	Dec 2nd

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).