

# ROBERTSON'S RANT

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



## SOUTHERN MARYLAND GAMES REPORT

By Jim Fargo

At 8:00am on Saturday, April 27th, the clan van arrived at the Jefferson-Patterson Park in Saint Leonard, Maryland for the 41st annual Southern Maryland Celtic Festival. **Robert Knight** and I soon had the van unloaded and set up our double tent layout between our Clan Donald and Clan Forbes neighbors. Soon after, **Evan Duncan** and President **Sam Kistler** arrived to join us for the day.

It was a typical sunny “Scottish” day with the temperature in the low-70s. Unfortunately, the winds off the river were constant and gusty. The overall games attendance was about what we expected – lots of people for the first local DC-area Celtic event of the year.

We welcomed a number of members and guests along with their families to the clan tent including **Alex Duncan** and her niece **Amanda Duncan**; **Judy and Mike (Reid) Katan**; **Steve Hoffman** and his family; **Tina (Collier) Burke** and family; **Harry Robertson**, **Carolyn (Donaghy) Stein** and her family; and **Charles (Reed)** and **Heather Smylie**. 100,000 welcomes to our newest branch member: **Carolyn Stein**.

We missed the clan parade this year, as Evan, Sam, Robert and I were each holding onto a tent pole to keep one of our tents from becoming airborne due to the gusty winds. After the parade, the Clan Donald contingent returned to their clan tents and invited us to share their repast while we provided various liquid refreshments. **Chris Lindsay** (the convener for Clan Lindsay) came by several times during the day and received several reminders that this event marked the passing of another year since the “Raid of Angus” in 1392!

A special highlight for me was attending the Clan Hay Society Annual General Meeting at 1:00pm as my grandmother, Beatrice Hay, was born in Aberdeen Scotland.

All of our men missed the Knobbly Knee competition which was reportedly judged by three discerning ladies. **Robert Knight** managed to arrive at the competition after the winners were announced and was rewarded with a participation medal for showing up.

This is one of the best Celtic festivals in our region and Sam and I believe everyone enjoyed themselves. We will be back with our double tent setup again next year on April 25th, 2020, the 42nd anniversary of this festival! Hope to see you there!

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### Branch Officers

President:

Sam Kistler

Vice President:

Ron Bentz

Secretary/Treasurer:

Norman Dunkinson

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## ROBERTSON'S RANT

### DUNCANSON—KNIGHTS OF MALTA

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

In J. Robertson Reid's book, there is a brief mention that two Duncansons were warrior-monks of the Knights Hospitallers (later known as Knights of Malta) in a community of the Order of Saint John located at Mary-Culter southwest of Aberdeen. Prior to Mary's (Queen of Scots) birth in 1542, the Reformation arrived in Scotland. In 1545, the last remnant of this warrior-monk community was "ousted from its venerable settlement." This last group consisted of five knights and one chaplain. Of the five knights, two were named Duncanson. At this point in history, Robert (our 7th chief), was a Ward of the Crown until he was served heir in 1545. In 1559, John Knox led Protestant riots in Perth.

The history of these Knights in Scotland goes back to about 1187 when King William the Lion granted Culter lands on the south bank of the River Dee to them and a Preceptory was established. When the Preceptor of the Order converted to Protestantism in 1553, the Order is thought to have ceased in Scotland. So who were these two clansmen?

In the year 1099, the crusaders conquered Jerusalem. The Hospitallers established their headquarters at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In addition to fighting the Muslims, the Hospitallers provided protection, shelter and medical care to pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem. The Knights of the Hospital of Saint John supported the Brothers of Saint John's Hospital in Jerusalem. In the 11th century, they were known as "Knights Hospitallers". In 1113, Pope Paschal II officially recognized their monastic community as a lay religious order. The order was forced to move with the loss of the Holy Land in 1291 and re-situated itself first in Rhodes (1310-1522) and then to Malta (1530-1798) where it was expelled during the French First Republic occupation of Malta. The Islamic Ottoman Empire, in an effort to control the Mediterranean, besieged the naval base of Malta in July 1551 and again in 1565 but were repelled. The Ottoman siege of the fortress of Tripoli was successful and the Knights of Malta surrendered in August 1551.

Today, the Order is officially known as the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta and is a Catholic lay religious order headquartered in Rome. This Catholic Order is not associated with the historic military and religious Order of Knights Templar (founded in 1118) which was dissolved by Papal Bull and its members excommunicated by Pope Clement V in 1312. Much of the Templar's revenue and land possessions were transferred by the Pope to the Hospitallers. With the abolishment of the Order, King Philip IV of France's debt to the Order was cancelled and he acquired the rest of the Order's monetary wealth located in France.

Postscript: Unfortunately, Wikipedia searches failed to discover any additional information on either of these two 16th century Duncansons.

#### References:

Reid, J. Robertson, "A Short History of the Clan Robertson", Stirling, 1933, pp.131-132.



Knights of Malta Past Commander Medal Awarded to Cook Dunkinson (1858—1910)

## THOMAS REID (1580?-1624); THOMAS REID (1710-1796)

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

The first Thomas Reid in this article was the second son of James Reid, minister of Banchory Ternan in Kincardineshire. He graduated from Marischal College Aberdeen in 1600 and in 1603 was chosen a regent in Marischal College. After teaching there he traveled to the continent to continue his studies and where he taught philosophy and humane letters. On his return to England around 1613 he helped translate into Latin the English writings of King James I. In 1618 he was appointed Latin Secretary to the King, an office which he retained until his death in 1624. He is chiefly remembered as the founder of the first public reference library in Scotland. His will bequeathed to the town and new College of Aberdeen his collection of books and six thousand merks to endow a librarianship for the library.

The second Thomas Reid was the son of a Presbyterian minister of Strachan in Kincardineshire. In 1722 he entered Marischal College Aberdeen and on graduating he began the study of divinity. After completing his theological training in 1731 he was admitted to the ministry of the Church of Scotland and licensed to preach in 1731. From 1733-1736 Reid was employed as the librarianship that had been established by his kinsman and namesake. After completion of his studies at the University of Aberdeen, Reid entered the ministry in 1737. In 1740 he married Elizabeth, the daughter of his uncle George Reid, a London physician. He taught at Kings College Aberdeen before succeeding Adam Smith as Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow in 1764. As a member of the Glasgow College Literary Society, he presented papers on a wide variety of scientific, philosophical, political and economic topics. He was the founder of the Scottish school of Common Sense philosophy. He retired in 1780 from teaching and continued publishing until his death in October 1796.

Postscript: It was interesting to discover the existence of these two noted clansmen on Wikipedia and with some research work to find the above relationship between them, albeit over a century apart.

## SCOTS HUMOR

Contributed by Andrew Fargo

### ***Audacity***

“Had ye the audacity, Angus,” said a Scottish laird to his servant, “ta go and tell some people that I was a mean fellow, and no gentleman?”

“Na, na,” was the candid reply. “You’ll no catch me at the like o’ that. I keep me thoughts to meself.”

### ***Minister and the Lawyer***

A Scots minister chanced to meet two of his parishioners in the office of a lawyer, whom he regarded as being too sharp. The lawyer jokingly and not very graciously put the question, “Doctor, these are members of your flock; may I ask, do you look upon them as black or white sheep?”

“I do not know,” answered the minister drily, “whether they are black or white sheep, but I know if they are here long, they are pretty sure to be well fleeced.”

## ROBERTSON'S RANT

### WHAT'S AN AGM?

By John & Janet Duncan

Every year there is an AGM in or near the old clan lands in Scotland, and everyone assumes we all know what an AGM is. Because many of us come from thousands of miles away it is our tradition to have many activities spread out over several days. The real AGM is the business meeting, like a general meeting for the stock holders. That Annual General Meeting is usually held for a couple of hours on Friday.

The activities begin earlier in the week. There is usually a Welcome Reception in the early evening of the first day of any activities. It is planned to be drinks and snacks and friendly talk before you go to dinner. In recent years there has been a workshop on the Donnachaidh DNA Project, and a chance to learn a bit of Scottish Country Dancing for the Ceilidh later in the week.

There is at least one Coach (Bus) Tour of the Clan Lands or to some place of historical interest to the clan. These are led by Donnachaidh Society members and are full of interesting information. Other events may include talks, concerts or plays. This year the Pitlochry Highland Games will be one of the week's activities.

In the evening following the business meeting there is the Chief's Reception and Dinner. This is a very nice reception and dinner followed by a Ceilidh (Gaelic word for party) with Scottish Country Dancing. Most of the men wear highland formal dress and the women wear nice dresses. Less formal attire is welcome but this is a chance to show your best.

The final event of AGM week is the Sunday service at Struan Kirk. This a pretty normal Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) service most often led by the clan society chaplain. At the end of the service is the time of remembrance in the churchyard with piper and prayers for the departed.

Last year this was followed by a buffet lunch at the nearby Struan Inn. Since this is planned to be done again this year the lunch will probably become a tradition.

The date for the following AGM is usually set at the end of the business meeting. The chosen date is either in June or September. The weather is usually better in June and the airfares are lower in September so we go back and forth.

### FAIR HILL GAMES REPORT

By Ron Bentz

Early in the morning on Saturday, May 18th, **Betty Duncan Bentz** and I headed for the Fair Hill Colonial Highland Games. It was a very pleasant drive through scenic Lancaster County. We arrived on site at 6:45am, and were soon set up and ready to go. **Sam Kistler** arrived shortly afterward, and we welcomed members and friends including **Norman Dunkinson**, his son **Asher**, and Norman's father **Norman**. It was also nice to see **Smitty (Wendell Woodland Jr.)**, as I hadn't made it to this event since 2016 and it's been several years since I've been able to catch up with him.

The main focus at this event is on the bagpipe competition, and indeed you could hear the pipes wherever you were throughout the day. Something that sounds interesting but that I didn't get to see was the Border Collies herding sheep as well as ducks! As we tore down at the end of the day we noticed someone had left their pipes at our tent. No one knew who's they were or why they were there. Hopefully they found their way back to their owner!

Heavy rain in 2016 and 2018 wiped out the rainy day fund for this long-running game. Hopefully the beautiful weather this year helped put the event on sounder footing. I hope to see everyone at Fair Hill in 2020!



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

We'd like to welcome the following 8 new and returning members:

<b>Brendan Baggitt</b>	<b>Carolyn Donaghy-Stein</b>	<b>Christopher Duncan</b>	<b>Thomas Duncan</b>
<b>Christopher Hills</b>	<b>Sharon Mehl</b>	<b>Harry Robertson Jr.</b>	<b>Wendell Woodland Jr.</b>

## CUMBERLAND VALLEY BATTLE OF THE BAGPIPES REPORT

By Norman Dunkinson

At about 7:15am on the morning of Saturday, June 8th, I arrived with the tent gear at the site of the 1st annual Cumberland Valley Scottish Games in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

As this was planned as a “test” event by the organizers—billed as the “Battle of the Bagpipes”—it was limited to a few clans and individual bagpipe competitions, though the clan steward, **Zane Walls** from Clan Lockhart, has plans to grow the event into a full-fledged “highland games” in future.

I was joined shortly after set-up by President **Sam Kistler**. As only a few clans were present, an atmosphere of camaraderie quickly developed, and we met **Tom Little** from Clan Little, **Martain Ferguson** from Clan Ferguson, and **Don Henderson** from Clan Henderson, who also runs the Covenanter Scottish Festival in Quarryville, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Our tent was situated at the entrance to the clan area, and, as such, we actually had quite a number of visitors for such a small event, including a number of prospective new members. The weather was beautiful, with temps in the low 80's and a steady, moderate breeze to keep things cool when under the tent (while the wind was nice for us, it tended to wreak havoc with Don Henderson's tent, which was holding down a flank of clan row). One of the three bagpipe judging tents was located near the entrance to the clan row, and we were treated to each player's best throughout the day.

Toward the end of the day, we learned from Zane that we were selected for “best clan tent,” which came with a “no-fee” pass for set-up at next year's event. The event itself was free of charge for visitors, as it was organized in conjunction with another free event, the Bloom Festival (we did encourage Zane to consider charging admission next year, in order to continue to grow the event).



L to R: Sam Kistler and Norman Dunkinson at the Cumberland Valley Battle of the Bagpipes (photo by Martain Ferguson)

## ROBERTSON'S RANT

# 600-YEAR-OLD STONE CARVINGS DISCOVERED AT DUNKELD CATHEDRAL

Press Release—Historic Environment Scotland, December 27, 2018

Recent works at Dunkeld cathedral in Perthshire have revealed previously unseen stone carvings which had lain hidden for centuries.

A routine inspection of the site by Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) Conservation team led to the discovery of at least a dozen unrecorded carved saint-like figures.



The torch-lit discovery within the obscured recesses of the tomb of Bishop Cardeny, which dates from 1420, was followed by a second, more in-depth assessment undertaken using cutting-edge 3D photogrammetric technology. A detailed 3D model was created by obtaining multiple images using cameras and mirrors, enabling a closer look at the carvings which had been previously hidden from direct view.

Bishop Cardeny was the longest serving Bishop of Dunkeld Cathedral. Not unusually, the tomb was created before his death, in this case 17 years before.

[Dunkeld Cathedral \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

The unearthing of these stone carvings has shed new light on the history of the site, revealing that the tomb has at some point been moved and built into the wall from its original free-standing location.

Colin Muir, Stone Conservator at HES who led the discovery, said: "The discovery of these rare, hidden carvings behind the 15th century tomb of Bishop Cardeny is very exciting, and will enrich our understanding of the history of Dunkeld Cathedral and late medieval stone carving.

"This discovery also gives fresh incentive for further research and exploration of the site, as we still don't know when exactly the tomb was moved, or why. This discovery also hints that there may still be other obscured areas of detail preserved within the walls behind the tomb.

"Conservation works to protect the fabric of the tomb are currently being planned, and we hope to undertake further investigation of what may lie behind it. At this stage we don't know what, if anything, remains - but it will be fascinating to find out."

Dunkeld Cathedral is one of over 300 Historic Scotland properties across the country managed by HES. The site of the cathedral has long been an important ecclesiastical centre, with relics of St Columba brought to Dunkeld from Iona by King Kenneth McAlpin in 849. The cathedral was developed over a period of around 250 years, with the earliest surviving section – the choir (used as the Parish church today) – dating from the late 1200s.



## REIGN OF KING EDGAR (1097-1107)

By Jim Fargo, FSA Scot

On King Malcolm Canmore's death, along with his eldest son Edward, at the battle of Alnwick in November 1093 the succession to the throne was thrown into the normal contention between rival claimants. Queen Margaret died three days later. Canmore's third eldest son from his second marriage, Ethelred, had been made the abbot of Dunkeld to keep this powerful position in the family and was thus not eligible to inherit the throne. Under the laws of primogenitor on one side was Malcolm's fourth son Edgar from the second marriage. On the other side under the celtic system of tanistry was Malcolm's brother, Donald Ban. Donald attacked Edinburgh castle and claimed the vacant throne as King Donald III. The remaining four sons from Malcolm's second marriage (Ethelred, Edgar, Alexander and David) fled to the English Court of King William Rufus. The third claimant to the throne was Duncan, Canmore's eldest son by his first wife. With military support from England, King Donald was ousted and Duncan was crowned as King Duncan II in May 1094. Six months later, Duncan was murdered and Donald III again reigned. During his short reign, Duncan II gave a charter to the monks of St. Cuthbert that was witnessed by his brother Malcolm and his half brother Edgar.

After Duncan's death, William Rufus of England preferred to see Edgar on the throne and again intervened. In 1097 Edgar arrived in Scotland backed by another English army and Donald III and his co-ruler and nephew Edmund (Edgar's older brother) were defeated. Edmund was passed over for betraying his brothers and was allowed to become a monk, but Donald was blinded and imprisoned until his death in 1099.

As part of the 'Normanization' of the kingdom, Edgar converted the semi-independent Pictish kingdoms into earldoms under the feudal system. The mormaers became earls with charters for their former kingdoms. King Edgar created the new earldom of Atholl in 1115 and bestowed it upon Madach, the son of his uncle Melmare, youngest brother of his father. On Earl Madach's death, without a suitable heir, his lands and honors were given by King David I in 1152 to his cousin Malcolm. This Malcolm (second celtic earl of Atholl) was the son of King Duncan II's younger brother Malcolm from Canmore's first marriage. The descendants of this Malcolm from Canmore's first marriage were excluded from the throne in favor of Saint Margaret's sons but retained the earldom of Atholl.



Seal of King Edgar of Scotland

### References:

Bingham, Caroline, *"Kings and Queens of Scotland"*, New York, 1976, pp. 18-20,150.

Fittis, Robert Scott, *"Recreations of an Antiquary in Perthshire History and Genealogy"*, Perth, 1818, pp. 232-233.

Hanley, Cliff, *"History of Scotland"*, London, 1986, pp. 18-19.

Paton, Sir Noel, *"The Descendants of Conan of Glenerochie"*, privately printed, 1873, p. 3.

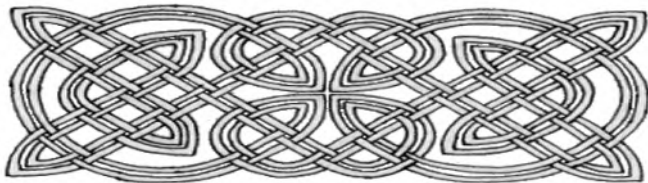




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The Clan Donnachaidh Society is a world-wide organization dedicated to the preservation of our Highland heritage. Membership is open to those persons bearing recognized sept surnames and their descendants and spouses.

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).

## CELTIC EVENTS AND GAMES—2019 (2ND HALF OF GAMES SEASON)

<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Green Hill Highland Games	Salem, VA	Aug 24th
McLain Celtic Festival	Carlisle, PA	Aug 31st-Sep 1st
Virginia Scottish Games & Festival	The Plains, VA	Aug 31st-Sep 1st
Covenanter Scottish Festival	Quarryville, PA	Sep 7th
Edinboro Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Edinboro, PA	Sep 7th
Ligonier Highland Festival	Ligonier, PA	Sep 14th-15th
Celtic Classic	Bethlehem, PA	Sep 27th-29th
Chesapeake Celtic Festival	Snow Hill, MD	Oct 5th-6th
Radford Highlanders Festival	Radford, VA	Oct 12th
Central Virginia Celtic Festival & Games	Richmond, VA	Oct 26th-27th
Scottish Christmas Walk	Alexandria, VA	Dec 7th