

The Carolina Piper



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Donald C. McLeod, Editor

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NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Spring is here, the flowers are blooming and I am proud to be Scottish. It makes me think of Rabbie Burns and Scotland in the spring.

The St. Andrew's Society of North Carolina has been busy working on several upcoming events and evaluating our purposes. We are currently working on the Grandfather

Mountain Highland Games reception and dinner event which will be held this year at the Chetolah Resort. Our normal Blowing Rock Country Club was not available and we quickly made the effort to find something else just as nice. Chetolah is beautiful and is in the town of Blowing Rock. Our dinner is July 10th and the Board meeting is Friday afternoon, July 9th, at 2:30pm. Get your reservations early as we may only have 100 attendees.

Another event the Society is working on is the 50th Anniversary of the Society that will take place in 2022. The Society was founded in 1972 and we had a big celebration on our 25th Anniversary in 1997. The history of the Society was published in 1997 and another book is being considered for the 50th Anniversary. The Celebration Weekend will be in 2022 at the Carolina Hotel (Pinehurst Resorts) the first weekend in December. This event will include spouses and guests for a special weekend event.

Recently, the Scholarship and Grants Committee donated \$2,500 to the Ayr Mount Foundation of Hillsborough, NC. Ayr Mount was built in 1815 by William Kirkland, a Scotsman. The house is part of the Classical American Homes Trust, made up of several historic homes on the east coast, and put together by North Carolinian Richard Jenrette. It is a fine house for the State of North Carolina. Ayr Mount Foundation is excited about working with the St. Andrew's Society and wants our aid on Scottish events they sponsor. This relationship should help us with membership recruitment.

As I do my daily responsibilities for the Society, I often take a quick look at the book, *Scotch or It's Smart to Be Thrifty*, published in 1931 by MacSimon and MacShuster. It brings about a big laugh and makes me proud to be a Scotsman.

- a. Origin of the 1920's dance craze called the *Charleston*: A Scotsman in front of a pay toilet.
- b. When the census taker wants to get the population of a Scottish village, he simply rolls a penny down the street.
- c. The idea for a slow motion movie came to its inventor while watching two Scotsmen reaching for the lunch check.

I look forward to seeing you in Blowing Rock!

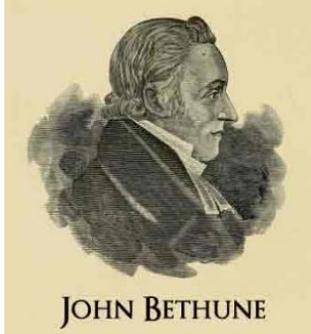
J. Robert Boykin III
President

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MOUNT CARMEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH CAROLINA ENTERED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church, P.C.A., near Norman in upper Richmond County, was established about 1773 by Highland Scot immigrants. Sustained Highlander influx into N.C. began in 1739 with the arrival of 350 Gaelic-speaking Gaels from Argyll and the lower Hebrides. From Wilmington these Scots settled up the Cape Fear River and encouraged thousands more to immigrate over the next decades. By the American Revolution Highlander Gaelic settlement had reached the Pee Dee River, including Mount Carmel on Silver Run Creek, a tributary of Mountain Creek and the Pee Dee. Mount Carmel is in the middle of an area called the Scotch Settlement at the time and was populated by McDonalds, McLeans, McIntyres, Stewarts, McLeods and other Highlanders.

The church was organized by John Bethune, a young



JOHN BETHUNE

minister from the Isle of Skye. Bethune's ancestors were physicians to the chiefs of Clan MacLeod at Dunvegan. He was a friend to Alan MacDonald of Kingsburgh and his famous wife Flora, from

Skye, who had located on Cheeks Creek a few miles from Mount Carmel. After the Jacobite defeat at Culloden in 1746 Flora aided the escape of Charles Edward Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) from British Royal forces. Flora did not support the Jacobite cause but aided the Prince as a humanitarian gesture.

Within a couple of years the American Revolution was underway and many Highlanders, particularly

those recently arrived and who had taken oaths to support the Crown, were mustered to oppose the Rebels (Patriots). Alan MacDonald, Alexander MacLeod (husband of Flora's daughter) and 1700 Loyalists were marching towards Wilmington to join British forces, but at Moore's Creek they suffered a quick and decisive defeat by the Patriot militia in the early war. John Bethune was chaplain to the Loyalist army. All named above were imprisoned in Philadelphia for months before release. John Bethune went to Canada, as did many N.C. Highlanders. He founded the first Presbyterian church in Montreal and later more churches in Ontario. He is considered the father of Presbyterianism in Canada. Alan and Flora left for Nova Scotia and later returned to the Isle of Skye. Their time in America was tragic and severe.

Mount Carmel was without a pastor until Colin Lindsay arrived in 1799. Lindsay was a colorful Highlander from the Isle of Arran in the Hebrides. He was a great orator and before his death in 1818 served at least a dozen churches in the Gaelic area of N.C. He fiercely opposed the revivalists and their emotionalism in the Great Awakening of 1802. Harmony church, now Ellerbe First Presbyterian, was a daughter church of Mount Carmel and received many members who liked the "rock and roll" abhorred by Lindsay. Lindsay was highly fond of other than Holy spirits and due to that and other indiscretions, was thrown out of the Presbytery three times. Thousands of Highlanders, however, mourned his passing.

In the 1820-1840 period lands opened up in the South and Southwest and many church members moved to Florida and Alabama. This loss of members was the case at Harmony, in Ellerbe, as well. Families were large, farming was the main occupation, and land divided too many times would not support a family. In 1823 emigrants from Mount Carmel established the Pea River Presbyterian Church in Clio, AL. Ruling elders were Gilbert McEachern, Daniel Currie, and Farquhar and Alex McRae.

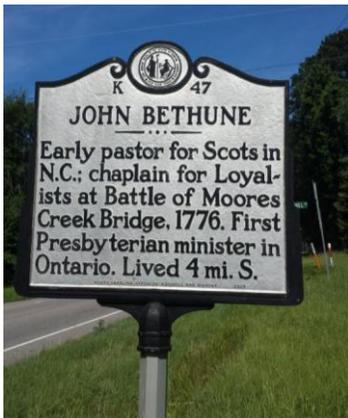
Mount Carmel has had almost 50 ministers in its 248 year history. Family names prominent in the church have evolved over the years. In its recent history McInnises, McFaydens, Nicholsons, Cravens, Allreds and others are noted. It is a distinct honor for Mount

Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery to be entered in The National Registry of Historic Places. The author has 13 ancestors and kin buried in the old cemetery pictured below.

Donald C. McLeod

Southern Pines, N.C. (Native of Norman)

Source: Russell, Lee, Jr.: *A Historical Sketch of The Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church of Richmond County, North Carolina*, 1985.



N.C. historic marker on Hwy 27-27 west of Carthage

N.C. historic marker on Hwy 731 east of Mount Gilead near Pekin (not China)



Civil War era Mount Carmel Church and cemetery. Modern church in front at 1367 Clayton Carriker Road

TRAVEL MEMORIES IN INVERNESS

When my wife Sandy and I were in Inverness in 2018, many Scots were once again advocating for independence from the United Kingdom. This time it had to do with Brexit. In the vote to leave the EU, the Scots had overwhelmingly voted to "remain". Many felt that in order to remain part of the European Union the only path forward was to do as Ireland had done almost 100 years before and become independent.

We had reservations at a rather nice hotel in downtown Inverness overlooking the River Ness and Inverness castle. As we were getting closer to town, we started seeing people walking toward the city carrying the Scottish Saltire and folded up banners. The closer we got to downtown the more people we saw protesting; our curiosity was peaked.

When we arrived at the hotel, I went in to register. As the young lady behind the desk was looking up my information I asked if she knew why all these people were coming to town carrying flags. She told me that later that day there would be a parade and a Brexit protest. As is my normal habit, I engaged my mouth before my brain and said: "So you are finally going to get rid of the bloody English?" She looked up at me quite seriously and I thought to myself, "you've done it now!" She then said, "Sir, I have just upgraded your room."

As a result, we were given a second floor room overlooking the parade route along the river. It was quite surprising how many people were involved. People with all sorts of flags, posters and banners marched by our window for the better part of an hour.

Robert McLeod
Wilmington

**Grandfather Mountain
Highland Games**

July 8 - 12, 2021

<https://gmhg.org/>

JOHN CHARLES MCNEILL
N.C. POET LAUREATE

John Charles McNeill, first acknowledged Poet Laureate of North Carolina and my great-uncle, was born in 1874, after the American Civil War. Although he lived only 33 years, he published prolifically during that time, and established what one scholar has called an almost “cult following.” Many have remarked that he was the proverbial ‘tall, dark and handsome.’”



Richard Walser, a professor at North Carolina State University, noted that McNeill’s work can be divided into two types — his “fine-toned lyrics” and his “down-to-earth poems” so that “he quickly won wide acceptance and a popularity that has not been surpassed by any other native Tar Heel poet. Truly, there is a certain mystique about him and his work. Perhaps part of the appeal he holds rests on his life being cut so short, a genius cut down in his prime.

McNeill was reared in the Scots settlement of Riverton, along the Lumbee (Lumber) River near the village of Wagram. Both of his grandfathers were born in Scotland. Jay Jenkins, a long-time writer for both *The Charlotte Observer* as well as *The News and Observer*, and also my first cousin, noted, “No matter where McNeill’s body was, his mind was never far from his boyhood haunts.”

On one occasion, when he was ensconced in Charlotte on the staff of *The Charlotte Observer*, he wrote to his niece, Kate McArn Watson, begging her to send to him through the U. S. mail, ‘two or three tablespoonfuls of the stuff that exudes from sweet-gum trees. I have scoured the whole countryside hereabouts to find enough for a single wad, in vain....”

McNeill taught English briefly at Mercer University and Wake Forest College, and he was also trained as a lawyer. Once, when asked how the law business was going, McNeill remarked, “The law business is going fine, but I have no clients.” Because of his

enormous popularity as a poet, achieved largely because of his regular contributions to *The Charlotte Observer*, he was elected a state legislator, but his heart was in his poetry. As reported in *The Monroe Journal*, “Mr. McNeill is a lawyer and member of the legislature from Scotland County, but he is too candid to be a legislator and too good a writer to be a lawyer.””

In addition to his being the first Poet Laureate of the State of North Carolina, McNeill had two other noteworthy achievements. First, he was singularly honored by being awarded the Patterson Cup in Washington, DC, on October 19, 1905, by President Theodore Roosevelt. One of my favorite pictures features the poet and the president casually leaning against a car. Second, he was inducted posthumously into the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame in the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines. I attended the ceremony in 1998, and it was most impressive.

Sen. Sam Ervin, of Watergate Hearings fame, observed that McNeill “had the rare capacity to see and portray the beauty of everyday things and ordinary people, and the most inspiring events of life. In my judgment, John Charles McNeill wrote some of the most beautiful poems ever penned by any poet and deserves to rank among the great American poets.

John Charles McNeill, who attended Spring Hill Academy, near Wagram, penned a moving poem about the school, *Old Spring Hill*. His most famous poem is *Sunburnt Boys*, both reproduced here.

Finally, I will share a poem that touches my heart, *Sundown*. It is engraved on John Charles McNeill’s gravestone. It was read at the funerals of both my parents and more recently that of my brother. To me, it is utterly beautiful in its simplicity (see next page).



Mary Wayne Watson, PhD
Professor Emeritus
Nash Community College
Great Niece of John Charles McNeill
Dr. Watson has several cultural and
literary presentations available.
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POEMS OF JOHN CHARLES MCNEILL

OLD SPRING HILL

I wonder who the children are
That troop to school these days
Along the old McDuffie path
That winds through woody ways
And leads into the road whereby
The neighbors go to mill.
I wonder who the scholars are
At Old Spring Hill.
I wonder if they play the games
We played when I was there-
Round-town, low-razor, bull-pen, cat,
Base, leap-frog, hounds and hare.
Perhaps the spring is choked with leaves;
Perhaps the church is gone,
With all its shattered panes that told
Of wild balls thrown.
Who'er the children are, I know
The same old noise is there:
The droning whisper, afternoons
When chalk-dust fills the air,
The same old fractions multiplied,

The same old cities named;
Mensa, mensae is still declined,
And Spartacus declaimed.
But, oh, the vines of muscadines
That cluster in those woods!
Those ripe persimmons, hanging high,
Loose in their browning hoods;
Those tough dwarf-apples, full of seed,
Are ready now to eat.
And thorns of prickly-pear, though dead,
Are quite alert for feet.
If I should go there now, those brats
Would stare into my face
And whisper who that stranger was
That sauntered round the place.
But, though the tow-heads knew me not,
I could have all my will
Of those dear memoried childhood haunts
At old Spring Hill.

SUNBURNT BOYS

Down on the Lumbee river
Where the eddies ripple cool
Your boat, I know, glides stealthily
About some shady pool.
The summer's heats have lulled asleep
The fish-hawk's chattering noise,
And all the swamp lies hushed about
You sunburnt boys.

You see the minnow's waves that rock
The cradled lily leaves.
From a far field some farmer's song,
Singing among his sheaves,
Comes mellow to you where you sit,
Each man with boatman's poise,
There, in the shimmering water lights,
You sunburnt boys.

I know your haunts:each gnarly bole
That guards the waterside,
Each tuft of flags and rushes where
The river reptiles hide,
Each dimpling nook wherein the bass
His eager life employs
Until he dies -- the captive of
You sunburnt boys.

You will not -- will you? -- soon forget
When I was one of you,
Nor love me less that time has borne
My craft to currents new;
Nor shall I ever cease to share
Your hardships and your joys,
Robust, rough-spoken, gentle-hearted
Sunburnt boys!

SUNDOWN

Hills, wrapped in gray, standing along the west;
Clouds, dimly lighted, gathering slowly;
The star of peace at watch above the crest—
Oh, holy, holy, holy!

We know, O Lord, so little what is best;
Wingless, we move so lowly;
But in thy calm all-knowledge let us rest—
Oh, holy, holy, holy!

CLAUDE SNOW ON SCOTTISH POLITICS TODAY

The United Kingdom (UK) Parliament passed the Scotland Act of 1998 with the assent of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and granted self-government to Scotland on a range of issues for which a Scottish Parliament was formed. The UK Parliament “reserved” to itself continued governance in Scotland on matters of Labor and Benefits, Social Security, Immigration, Defense, Foreign Policy, Employment, Trade, Broadcasting, Energy, Consumer Rights, Data Protection, and the Constitution. It “devolved” to the Scottish Parliament governance in Scotland for Agriculture and Fishing, Education, Environment, Public Health, Housing, Law and Order, Sports, Arts, Tourism, and certain aspects of Transportation.

The Scottish Parliament first convened on July 1, 1999 with five major political parties: Conservative, Green, Labour, Liberal Democrat, and Scottish National. Since then, the Scottish National Party (SNP) has risen in prominence over the other parties and first won a majority of seats in the Scottish Parliament in the 2011 Election. In the 2019 General Election, the SNP won 48 of the 59 seats (80 %). A new General Election is planned for May 6, 2021. The leader of the SNP, Ms. Nicola Sturgeon, MSP for Glasgow Southside, has announced that Scotland will seek to hold a second independence referendum should the SNP win the majority of seats in the May 2021 election. The last (and only) independence referendum was in 2014 and the results were 45% For Independence and 55% Remain (in the UK).

Because the SNP controls the majority of seats in the Scottish Parliament, its platform is the de facto government policy. The SNP platform, named “Stronger for Scotland,” is a 52 page document that sets out the policies the party endorses. Its primary policies are:

Hold an Independence Referendum in 2021/2022

The SNP declares Scotland should become an independent nation and a part of the European Union (EU). A SNP majority in the 2021 election would all but assure a push for a new independence referendum and implies a majority of Scots now would vote for independence from the UK.

Increase Health Spending

Scotland spends more per capita on healthcare than any other part of the UK. The UK Government, headquartered in Westminster, provides financial block grants to its constituencies to pay for healthcare. Scotland wants Westminster to up its health spending by billions of pounds so Scotland will get a bigger proportional grant (as long as it is a part of the UK).

Devolve Economic Grants for Public Services and the Economy

The SNP supports additional spending to stimulate public services and the economy but has not said from where the expanded monies will come. The Economy is a reserved power of the UK Parliament. The SNP wants the UK Treasury to devolve its economic grants so that they can be integrated into the Scottish Parliament’s income tax powers.

Get Rid of the UK’s Nuclear Capabilities

The SNP demands the UK no longer station nuclear-armed submarines in Scottish waters. In addition, the SNP believes scrapping all UK nuclear capabilities would free-up tens of billions of pounds to spend on hospitals and schools. The UK Government has proposed to spend 35 Billion pounds on four new nuclear submarines.

Protect the National Health Service (NHS)

While the Scottish Government is responsible for operating healthcare in Scotland, the SNP is concerned the results of Brexit could allow American companies to bid for health contracts and drive up the cost of drugs. Trade is a reserved power of the UK Government. The SNP wants any trade deal that affects healthcare to require the consent of all devolved parliaments and assemblies in the UK.

Devolve Drug Classification Powers to the Scottish Parliament

Drug Policy is a part of Consumer Rights, a reserved power of the UK Government, while Public Health is a devolved power. Drug use in the UK is governed by the 1971 Misuse of Drug Act. The SNP wants to legalize “consumption rooms” where users would be allowed to inject / smoke / imbibe their own illegal drugs. This liberalization change would be the first part of several long-term actions on drug management, emphasizing treatment.

Tackle Climate Change

The SNP insists Brexit must not compromise Scotland's commitment to net-zero greenhouse emissions by 2045, and all new cars be electric by 2032. The SNP demands the UK Government accelerate the deployment of carbon-capture, usage, and storage capabilities. Scottish independence is suggested by the SNP as key to addressing further climate change.

Devolve Migration Controls

Scotland's population is aging and its workforce shrinking. It has the most acute problem of demographic change anywhere in the UK and has the smallest influx of migrants. Borders and Immigration are a reserved power of the UK Government. The SNP wants immigration in Scotland to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament so it can lower the cost of overseas recruitment, simplify the visa and citizenship process, issue work permits based on the needs of the Scottish economy, and be more welcoming to asylum seekers.

Devolve Work and Labor Powers

Labor Benefits, including Pensions and Workers Rights, are a reserved power of the UK Government. The SNP wants those rights in Scotland devolved to the Scottish Parliament as well as increasing the minimum wage to a "real living wage" for any worker over 25 years old. The SNP also wants to provide better protections for workers on insecure work contracts.

Devolve Transportation Powers

Transportation powers are loosely shared between the UK and Scottish Parliaments. The UK Parliament controls "national" transportation, including railroads and airlines and the Scottish Parliament controls "local" transportation: subways, buses, ferries, and Scotland-only railways. The SNP believes fully devolving transportation in Scotland to the Scottish Parliament would allow it to deliver cleaner, greener transportation. The SNP also rejects any railway nationalization plans, saying it would strip powers away from the Scottish government.

As you can see from these party positions, the SNP vigorously opposed Brexit and wants to broadly increase the power of the Scottish Parliament in

selected matters. The ultimate SNP goal is to exacerbate the growing governance rift with the UK Parliament and thereby create a case with Scottish voters for total independence from the UK. Scotland would then seek to gain membership in the EU as an independent country. The SNP will demand the UK Parliament allow a new independence referendum should it win a majority of the seats in the May 6, 2021 general election. They cite Brexit has changed the governing climate from the 2014 independence referendum and that Scotland's citizens should be allowed to decide again whether to remain in the UK or join the EU as an independent country.

On the eve of the election in late April, the core issue of the election has become the independence referendum, called "indyref2." The SNP is pushing hard for a new referendum, whereas the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Democrat parties all oppose "indyref2." These latter three parties declare Scotland is unprepared economically to act as an independent nation and question whether rule by the EU from Brussels is better than the current partial rule from Westminster (UK government). These three parties want Scotland to focus on economic stimulus to recover from the impact of COVID-related issues. The SNP has countered with plans to woo low income voters with free year-round childcare before and after school, and the creation of a National Care Service to improve child and elderly care. It plans to build 100,000 new homes by 2032, of which 70 percent will be dedicated to "low rent" through subsidies. It plans to create a National Pharmaceutical Agency as part of the NHS to ensure a secure and sustainable supply chain for vital medicines. The SNP also pledges the pursuit of a minimum income guarantee that ensures "everyone has enough money to live on." Sources of funding are to be determined.

Claude Snow, of Chapel Hill, is the author of this article. He has been a close observer of Scottish politics since he supported his friend and co-worker, Liam McArthur, as the Liberal Democrat Party candidate from Orkney, for the Scottish Parliament in the 2007 election. Liam won that election and has been reelected in all subsequent elections as the MSP for Orkney.