

The Monadh Croibhe

Clan Moncreiffe Society

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From the CMS President



Welcome to our newest members, helping to keep CMS strong!

Steve Wightman

Pamela Lloyd

Adam Rauh

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Robert E. Moncrief

In this issue:

Article	Page
Welcome	1
Officers and contacts	2
President's Message	3
Moncreiffes in Orkney—Farmers and	4-5
Heritage	6
Tidbits	7
Games Notices	8

Our first tent in San Antonio!
Thanks to our new Texas Commissioner

Special points of interest:

- The CMS website is currently down and being rebuilt. I apologize for the inconvenience and will go into this more in the next newsletter. Please email Rob Dawes at Sgiandhu@aol.com should you have any questions or concerns.

CMS Officers and Leaders

Chief of Clan Moncreiffe: The Honorable Peregrine David Euan Malcolm Moncreiffe of Moncreiffe

Lieutenants to the Chief: Lord Moncreiff (Rhoderick H. W. Moncreiff) - In Scotland
Robert V. Dawes - In The United States

Patrons: The Right Honorable, Sir Merlin Sereld Victor Gilbert Hay of Errol., Bt,
24th Earl of Erroll, Lord Hay and Slains, Hereditary Lord High Constable
of Scotland, 32nd Chief of Clan Hay, MacGARADH MOR

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From the President

Good day to my Clan Moncreiffe family! I hope that everyone has been doing well since our last meeting. As I prepare this message it is only about 13 months until we venture across the pond on our next adventure in Scotland. In preparation for this, I wanted to take a few moments to pump everyone up for the pending trip. I am especially looking forward to this trip as both Kelsey and Jonathan will accompany me this time. In setting the stage for the trip I did a little research thanks to *The Lord of the Dance*, *A Moncreiffe Miscellany* and Wikipedia, on one of our previous Chiefs of the clan, Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that ilk. April 9, 1919 to February 27, 1985. He was the 11th Baronet and Chief from 1957 until he passed. A member of the Scots Guards in World War 2 and subsequently Attache at the British Embassy in Moscow. What an interesting time for him. He graduated from the University of Edinburgh Christ Church in Oxford and was an Officer of Arms, an Officer of the Atholl Highlanders and Albany Herald from 1961. Additionally, he was a well-known genealogist who authored *The Highland Clans* (1967), *Simple Heraldry, Cheerfully Illustrated* (1953), *Simple Custom* (1954) and *Blood Royal* (1956) and was elected a fellow of the American Society of genealogist in 1969. Of course Sir Iain was the father of our present Chief, Peregrine Moncreiffe. In preparation for our trip we should reflect on our heritage and where we came from so that we can thoroughly enjoy our time in Scotland. I am certainly looking forward to all that our Past President, Rob Dawes has prepared for our trip and can't wait for the Stone Mountain Highland games in October to hear more about it. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at Stone Mountain and hope that the few months between now and then finds you all healthy and happy and enjoying a good whisky every now and then. Take care and safe travels to you and your family!

Sur Esperance!
Bill Tew

Moncreiffes in Orkney: Farmers and Fighters

Moncreiffes in the Orkneys Farmers and Fighters - Part 1.

About 5000 years ago, towards the end of the Stone Age, the people of Orkney gave up their hunter/gatherer existence in favor of the more comfortable lifestyle of farming communities.

This was made possible through the development of agricultural practices that likely came to the islands from mainland Scotland, along with the crops and livestock that made a more stationary culture possible. Barley, wheat, sheep, and cattle first supplemented, then largely replaced their previous food sources of deer and fish. Their first permanent communities are believed to have been constructed of timber readily available from the forests being cleared for farmland. As these communities aged, however, the inhabitants had to travel farther for timber making it more



practical to use readily available flagstone to build their homes and community structures.

Skara Brae is one of the best examples to be found of these early communities.

Photo courtesy of VisitOrkney

The communities of this time never grew large, probably no more than 100 people. Fields and livestock had to be close to the people who tended them, so communities would develop in new areas to keep livestock and fields close to the dwellings. Skara Brae remains in remarkable condition largely due to rising sea levels that forced its early abandonment. While all of the farmable land was not flooded, the salty spray from the sea was deadly for the crops. Had the land remained arable, future generations would likely have dismantled the site to reuse the stone in new structures.

Moncreiffes in Orkney: Farmers and Fighters

As these farming communities multiplied across the Orkneys, the people felt the need to occasionally gather for purposes of trade, religion, and social interaction. Successful farms provided many people their first opportunity to do more than simply struggle to survive. Communities could now support specialized skills and explore cultural advances with their neighbors. On Mainland Orkney, the chosen



gathering place was a relatively narrow strip of land between the Loch of Harry and the Loch of Stenness. Here numerous ceremonial

and burial sites are located in close proximity. The Ring of Brodgar is one of these ceremonial sites, consisting of a circular earthen mound known as a “henge”. Atop this mound stood a circle of 60 standing stones, of which 27 remain today. Nearby Maeshowe is a massive burial mound. The labor estimated for its construction exceeds 100,000 man hours. The tomb consists of a central stone chamber covered by an earthen mound. The human remains once housed by the tomb were likely prepared for burial elsewhere, perhaps through rituals allowing carrion eaters to remove all the flesh before the bones were relocated to the tomb.



— Mark Smith

Heritage

The kilt is visual, the sight of it makes people think of...the Irish! If they are enlightened then they think of the Scots and know that it was used to demonstrated your allegiance to a family or region. It was so identified with the Scots that the kilt was banned after the rising of '45. However, what unifies a people, a culture, more than anything else is a common language. The language of the Scots helped them identify as a people and kept them close to their cousins, the Irish. The English couldn't understand Gaelic, the "harsh" language of the Scots, and considered it barbaric to the ears. But after the '45 the English had a better way to tame the Scots and that was to teach them English and only allow them to speak English in school. Unfortunately, in many areas of Scotland this became very effective so that there are generations of Scots who don't know how to speak Gaelic. Worse, those that don't even want to learn. The only areas of Scotland able to hold onto the Gaelic language were those in the more remote highlands and islands.

Over the last few decades though the Scottish government has been putting increasing effort and funding into Gaelic education, events, radio, tv stations, and other forms of medium. The latest effort has seen Gaelic education moving towards younger students and back into more mainstream Scottish curriculum. Even as the Western Isles of Scotland and remote Highland areas have traditionally been the last holdout for Scottish Gaelic (the Gaelic college is on the Isle of Skye) there has been a more national approach to Gaelic teachings so that areas that were not strong Gaelic areas in the first place are getting Gaelic studies introduced, areas such as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirlingshire. I doubt that this will mean we visitors will need to start carrying their Gaelic to English dictionaries when they visit, but it is encouraging that the local and national governments of Scotland have put a real effort into keeping the language that is so much a part of the Highland Scots and their history.

The reality of Gaelic speakers in Scotland is that long before the '45 Gaelic was not commonly spoken nor even heard on the streets of Edinburgh or other larger "lowland" cities. Scots, the language of Robert Burns and his contemporaries, would have been spoken for quite some time when he put pen to paper. Gaelic is more of a Highland language and further separated the Highland people from the lowland areas in the 17th century and beyond into Burns' time and beyond. It is humorous to note that those with a Scots accent were looked down upon in the 18th and 19th century but a study showed that the accent that was deemed to be the most trustworthy was that of a Scot! But I digress. The point of this article is to put a little warmth in you...like a fine peat single malt whisky...in knowing that a piece of the culture that we all share a connection to is not only being preserved but is being championed. Prince Charles himself has been a patron of Gaelic and the Gaelic college. Maybe having a sitting royal speaking Gaelic would have a good effect!

So the next time you are in Scotland, take moment to learn the proper pronunciation of the Gaelic place name that you are at. It will be a fun and interesting way to learn more about your area and learn a bit of the Gaelic while you are at it.

Tidbits

Golf—a rather Scottish sport. Golf at a resort in Scotland? That is like going to the source, right? I'm sure that many of you were aware of this already. However, do you know what Irn-Bru is? It is the other Scottish drink, not quite as famous as whisky but has a very loyal following in Scotland and among expats. So imagine hearing that the Turnberry Golf Resort in Scotland has banned Irn-Bru?!? The management came to the decision to ban the soft drink after the extensive remodel because the soft drink is very difficult to get out of carpets and fabrics and has a very bright color. Makes sense that way but...really?!? Banning Irn-Bru in Scotland, maybe we ban coke in Atlanta.

Speaking of whisky,. Whisky is Scotland's biggest export, contributing at least 3 billion pounds to the country's economy. Forty bottles of Scotch whisky are shipped abroad every second.

The shortest commercial flight in the world in in Scotland. Those wanting to explore the isle of Orkney may choose to take a flight from Westray to Papa Westray.. The flight is 1.5 miles long and takes just 47 seconds. Barely enough time to drink your in-flight beverage!!

Mel Gibson helped bring to life a great Scottish icon in William Wallace when he made "Braveheart." While there have been a few documented inaccuracies in the movie and some that didn't even make sense to change, the biggest gaff may be in the name itself. "Braveheart" is actually the nickname that the Scots gave to their brave king, Robert the Bruce. The Bruce was also not a weak traitor easily led astray, as in the movie, but a hero of the Scots. Of course, I can't turn the movie off whenever it comes on as there's no denying it's a great movie to get your Scots blood going!

Newsletter Editor

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Clan Moncreiffe Society



We're on the web!
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Games Attending in 2017

CMS will be attending these games this year:

Savannah Scottish Games—Savannah, GA—May 6, 2017

www.savannahscottishgames.com

Blairsville Scottish Festival—Blairsville, GA—June 2017

<http://blairvillescottishfestival.com/>

Kansas City Scottish Highland Games and Celtic Festival—Kansas City, MO— June 2017

<http://www.kcscottishgames.org/>

St. Louis Scottish Games — Chesterfield, MO—September 29-30, 2017

<http://www.stlouis-scottishgames.com/>

Stone Mountain Highland Games—Stone Mountain, GA—October 20—22, 2017

Annual General Meeting—Friday October 20, 2017—Stone Mountain Hampton Inn 10 –2:00

<http://www.smhg.org/>