

Remember Those from Whom You Came

Newsletter for The House of MacAlpine

The Worldwide Organization for MacAlpine's



Third Quarter 2025 ~ Volume 69

Commander's Note

The name 'Halloween' comes from a Scottish shortening of 'All-Hallows Eve' and has its roots in the Gaelic festival of Samhain (pronounced Sow een) an ancient Celtic festival marking the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter.



Halloween first came to light in the 16th century where folklore, customs, and religious beliefs played a large part in celebrations and traditions. Many of those folkloric traditions came from the Gaelic speaking areas of Argyll. The mid Argyll area is teeming with ancient stories, and Gaelic superstitions.

You will find several articles about where we lived, how we lived, and all too often, why we left. However, in leaving, we took these traditions with us, into new worlds in Canada, the U.S., Australia, South Africa and elsewhere.

It has been 25 years since the Society first met with the goal of being recognized and locating or nominating a Chief. We have covered a lot of ground over that quarter century. It continues to be my honor to represent the family as the Commander. I look forward to our continued success at uncovering our roots and sharing our heritage.

Le gach deagh drachm

With every good wish,

Michael T McAlpin

Commander

Name of MacAlpine



Presidents Letter – Looking Back!

The past twenty-five years have gone by so quickly and as a family, we have done so much toward our goal of seeking a candidate and seating said candidate to be Chief of the name MacAlpine. I thought this would be a great time to take a stroll down memory lane to remind everyone where we have been and for those who are new, showing you where it all started.

Our first meeting was held July 22, 2000

Almost 60 people attended the picnic.



In 2004, we gathered at the Oban Highland Games



2005 we gathered in Arlington, Texas



Alma, Michigan 2007



The Gathering in Edinburgh 2009



Costa Mesa, CA 2010



Pleasanton, CA 2012



Grandfather Mountain 2013



Kilmartin 2014



Presenting our petition for a Family Convention to Lord Lyon, 2015



Family Convention, Sir Walter Scott's home, 2016



Commission of Commander Michael Todd McAlpine, 2017

COMMISSION by the Lord Lyon King of Arms in favour of Michael Todd McAlpin, Senior as Commander of the Name of McAlpine.

Unto All and Sundry whom These Presents Do or May Concern, WE, Joseph John Morrow, One of Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the Law, Doctor of Laws, Lord Lyon King of Arms, send Greeting: Whereas it has been represented to Us without a Chief of the Name of McAlpine difficulties have arisen in maintaining the well-being of the McAlpines at home and overseas; That in order to preserve the spirit of family, traditions and kinship of the said people of the said Name, a Commander ad interim should be recognised to rally the said people, to convene meetings thereof and to preside thereat during the absence of a Chief; That the Principal Men and Women that now are of the Name of McAlpine have, after due consideration by way of Family Conclave, otherwise known as derbhfhine selection, selected and recommended to Us Michael Todd McAlpin, Senior, residing at 2380 Saddlesprings Drive, Alpharetta, Georgia, United States of America, as a fit and proper person to be recognised as Commander ad interim of the said Name; Now Therefore We, after due consideration and investigation, being well satisfied as to the good qualities, abilities and loyalty of Michael Todd McAlpin, Senior and of his fitness for the said Office, do by These Presents Recognise and Confirm the said Michael Todd McAlpin, Senior as Commander of the Name ad interim for a period of ten years from the date hereof with power and commission to him to do and perform all acts and functions proper to the Commander of the said Name in the personal absence of the Hereditary Chief thereof, in the same manner and to the same effect as if he had been specially appointed and instructed by such Hereditary Chief; And We direct These Presents to be recorded in the Books of the Lyon Court (Probative Writs Section); In Testimony Whereof We have Subscribed These Presents and the Seal of Our Office is affixed hereto at Edinburgh this Nineteenth day of April in the Year of Our Lord Two thousand and Seventeen before this witness Elizabeth Ann Bruce or Roads, Snawdoun Herald of Arms.

*Elizabeth Ann Bruce
Snawdoun
(Witness)*



*Joseph John Morrow
Lyon*

Fergus, Ontario, 2017



Burn's Dinner, Stockholm, 2017



The Homestead Project is Introduced, 2018



France family gathering, 2023



Lord Lyon assigns our Supervising Officer for our 2027 Family Convention

News We've Been Waiting For...

Lord Lyon appoints Supervising Officer to Family Convention.

The MacAlpines will hold a Family Convention, likely in early Summer 2027, to choose a Chief.

This is a major step for an honourable Highland Name which has never had a Chief, but has made great strides in organising itself and moving forward.

Details, including how to be considered for selection as a candidate for Chief and how to take part, in the Family Convention, will be announced soon.

To this end, the Lord Lyon has appointed one of his Officers of Arms to be the Supervising Officer.

Dr Joseph J. Morrow, CVO, CBE, KC,
Rt Hon Lord Lyon King of Arms



THE COURT OF THE LORD LYON
Rt Hon NEW REGISTER HOUSE
EDINBURGH, EH1 1YT
Telephone: 0131 536 7277
Email: lyon@scotland.gov.uk

APPOINTMENT OF SUPERVISING OFFICER
TO THE FAMILY CONVENTION OF MACALPINE
8 March 2024

WE, JOSEPH JOHN MORROW, Lord Lyon King of Arms, do hereby appoint
Lithgow Pursuivant Extraordinary, Professor Gillian Black, as Supervising Officer to the Family
Conventions of MacAlpine, to report as due course to myself.

Dr Joseph J. Morrow, CVO, CBE, KC, FRSE
The Rt Hon Lord Lyon King of Arms



Prof. Dr. Gillian Black is Professor of Scots Private Law at the University of Edinburgh, and a Commissioner at the Scottish Law Commission. In September 2021 she was appointed Linlithgow Pursuivant Extraordinary at the Court of the Lord Lyon.

Prof. Black is shown here wearing the traditional uniform of Linlithgow Pursuivant at the recent coronation of King Charles III. The tabard bears the Royal Arms in their Scottish form.

Rockford, Illinois, 2025



As you can see, we have been busy growing the family base around the world and supporting our Scottish heritage with education of the MacAlpine's and supporting those involved in Scottish arts of dance, piping and heavy games. We welcome new members we meet at games throughout the United States, Canada, France and Scotland.

Stay tuned as we plan the 2027 Family Convention. We certainly hope you are planning to join us in Scotland in June 2027.

In Kinship,

Dale McAlpine
President



Looking Forward

After that little trip down memory lane, you may be asking yourself "What's next?" The future is bright for The House of MacAlpine. We are in the beginning stages of planning for our 2027 Family Convention. We have a capable team working to gather all the documentation required by the Lyon Court to present to our Supervising officer, choosing the location for the convention and putting together a program that will entice even those who have been to Scotland many times, to join us in June 2027.

Meet the team:



Hi, I'm originally from Ayrshire (Burns country) on the west coast, however, have lived most of my life in Midlothian, just south of Edinburgh in the east of Scotland. My background is from coal mining communities. Grew up in a loving family. I worked in mines surveying and planning and then headed up the coal industry social welfare organisation in Scotland until i retired 7 years ago. When I was younger, I had many interests including, motorbike racing and mountaineering. However, now it's caravanning and gardening. My passion is working towards restoring Scotland's independence from the colonial British state. I have a long-suffering wife Margaret, two wonderful boys and three amazing grandchildren and feel truly blessed.

~Ian McAlpine



I was born and raised in Detroit in the 50's/60's when the neighborhoods were full of kids and technology was nowhere to be found. Being one of 9 children meant a very busy household for my parents and i'm deeply thankful for them. We were properly dunked in our Scottish heritage and the older i get, the more interesting it becomes to me. After 40 years in the working world, i retired and started serving the lord in ministry in Scotland. I lived in Glasgow for 2 years and now I'm in Angus Council in the wee town of Kirriemuir, the birthplace of JM Barrie. I love exploring my adopted country, writing when time allows and an occasional journey to nearby countries (it's so much easier from here!). I'm keen on collecting vintage books and an occasional vinyl from my younger years, now considered "vintage". 🤖 I've been single for many years, and I have 2 adult sons and 2 beautiful granddaughters in Michigan.

~Laura McAlpine



I'm a semi-retired Data Engineer of 28 years at Microsoft. I am currently acting as the Seannchaidh-elect for the House of MacAlpine. I was born and raised in Washington State. I pair forensic precision with a deep love for our clan's heritage—archiving ancestral lore, weaving mythic narratives, and even adding subtle folklore-inspired touches to my seasonal cooking. I look forward to greeting you in clan colors, sharing stories that bind us, and kindling new traditions together. Currently, I live in Georgia with my wife and teenage son who is a force on the lacrosse field.

~Mark McAlpin



I'm a California girl at heart, but currently a nomad. I'm retired and Dale and I live in our RV and travel full-time. I am a grandma to 9 fabulous kids and great grandma of 1 little guy. We have BIG blended family and enjoy whatever time we have with them.

As the former secretary of House of MacAlpine Society, I planned the last family convention, and I'm looking forward to getting this one in the books. We have worked diligently to get to this point in our history. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

~Robin McCain McAlpine

The Homestead Project – McAlpine's at Shirvan

Submitted by
Mark S.C. McAlpin
Sennachie elect

Recent research into the Shirvan Estate near Kilmichael Glassary reveals a modest but meaningful presence of McAlpin families in the heart of Argyll. Hearth Tax records from 1691 and early 19th-century estate maps list names such as Hugh McAlpen, Angus McAlpen, and Duncan McAlpen among the tenants of Shirvan, Fernoch, and nearby Dunadd. These individuals likely worked the land or practiced skilled trades under Campbell stewardship, during a period of shifting tenurial structures and economic change.

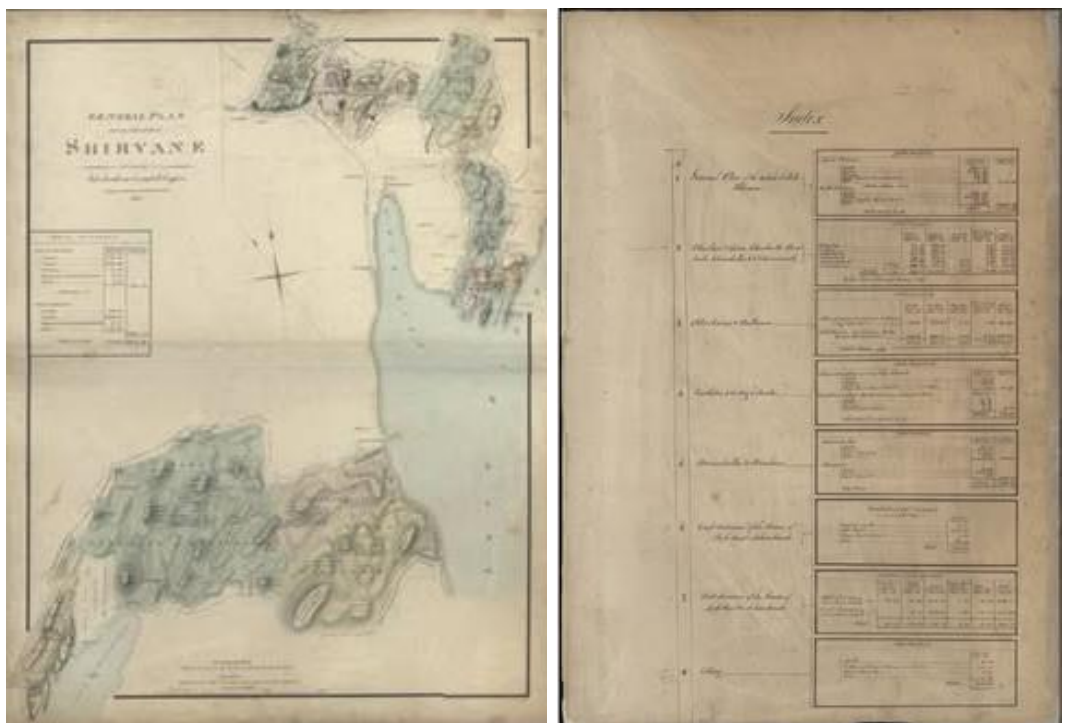
Pinpointing exact locations can be challenging. "Shirvan" often appears as a collective designation for a cluster of farms within the estate, while other records name specific holdings. This variation in documentation reflects both the fluid nature of rural tenancy and the administrative habits of estate managers. Still, the recurrence of McAlpin names across these records suggests a sustained presence—one rooted in the rhythms of agricultural life and local kinship networks.

Shirvan itself lies just north of Lochgilphead, between the wooded slopes of Glassary and the ancient hillfort of Dunadd. Though not a clan seat, its proximity to key historical sites places McAlpin families within a broader Gaelic-speaking community with enduring ties to place. Their lives may not have been marked by high drama, but the archival traces they left behind speak to quiet resilience and generational continuity.

By the mid-18th century, rising rents and estate restructuring began to displace many tenant families across Argyll. Some McAlpins from Shirvan and surrounding lands joined the wider Highland diaspora, emigrating to North America and beyond. While not all movements were formally recorded, oral traditions and family archives continue to preserve fragments of their journey.

For those with McAlpin roots in Mid Argyll—particularly within the bounds of Glassary parish—Shirvan offers a compelling window into the past. Estate maps preserved by the National Library of Scotland reveal not just field lines and tenant names, but the subtle contours of daily life: where families settled, how the land was divided, and which names endured across generations.

If your lineage touches this landscape, we invite you to explore it with us. Stories, documents, and fragments of family memory can help illuminate the quiet legacy of those who lived and labored here. Together, we can bring greater clarity to the mosaic of McAlpin history woven through these hills and farms.



Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) in the area of the Kilmartin Glen

By Kurt C. Duwe

In the late fifth century, Gaelic speaking migrants from Ireland settled in Mid Argyll and established the Kingdom of Dalriada.

The hillfort of Dunadd, just south of Kilmartin is believed to have been its capital.



DUNADD

As a result, Gaelic has been used in the area longer than anywhere else, and was the first language of most of the entire *Cinn Tìre* (Kintyre) peninsula up to the 1850's.

Whereas Campbeltown and the southernmost tip of Kintyre were anglicized relatively early by the introduction of Lowland settlers in the 18th and 19th century the area where the MacAlpines hail from maintained their Gaelic well into the 19th century, although it diminished greatly after the introduction of compulsory (English only) education in 1872.

1881 saw the first census of Scotland in which a question about Gàidhlig was introduced. In that census it shows that in the areas associated with the MacAlpines, Cill Mhartainn (Kilmartin), An t-Ath (Ford), Glasairidh (Glassary) and Cnapadal a Tuath (North Knapdale) 80 % of the inhabitants spoke Gaelic.

By 1901, that had fallen to about 65%.

By 1911, just four civil parishes in Dal Riada still had a Gàidhlig speaking majority, Creiginis (Craigmish), Cill Mhartainn *Kilmartin), Glasairidh (Glassary) and Cnapadal a Tuath (North Knapdale) with special strongholds like An Loch Geàrr (Lochgair), An Crìonan (Crinan) and Taigh a' Bhelaich (Tayvallich).

Between 1931 and 1951 the number of Gàidhlig-speakers was almost cut by half in the area.

In 1951 only the island of Giogha still had a majority of Gàidhlig speakers.

By 2001, the language had become very much a minority affair, where less than 3% of the population could read and speak Gaelic, with many of those from the generation prior to WWII, and only a handful of children could understand spoken Gaelic. Compared with the rich Gaelic tradition in these heartlands of Earra-Ghàidheal (Land of the Gael) the profile of the language in the district is on an all-time low these days.

Kurt's entire article may be found at the following link:

https://www.akerbeltz.org/images/8/88/Gaidhlig_Local_Studies_Vol_25_Dal_Riada_Cinn_Tire_Ed_II.pdf

Myths, Folklore and Kilmartin's Prehistoric Stage

Kilmartin Glen's prehistoric landscape which has many standing stones, chambered cairns, cup-marked rocks and ogham-inscribed boulders—would have been a fertile backdrop for oral tales long before the medieval Gaelic poets arrived.

Footprint carvings at Dunadd hint at inauguration rituals that likely gave rise to stories of kings literally “taking the land” underfoot, a motif echoed in Gaelic royal lore.

Broad Gaelic myths such as Finn MacCool, the Cailleach, selkies and kelpies originated in early Ireland and sailed across to Argyll, where local storytellers grafted them onto familiar landmarks.

Argyll & Bute itself boasts legends of the Witch of Ben Cruachan (the Cailleach) and myriad water spirits—kelpies on Islay, water bulls and fairies in the glens—that reflect how the Gaels were rooted in local topography and ancient monuments.

So while the foundational characters and plotlines of Scottish myths are Irish in origin, Kilmartin Glen's unique prehistoric sites almost certainly spawned their own variant tales.

As the earliest Gaelic royal hub in Scotland, it offered a stage where imported legends were reimagined, giving the glen a potent, if regionally bounded, mythic resonance.

Archaeological digs around Kilmartin continue to unearth Ogham grooves, carved symbols and structural remains. Each find refines our picture of how early Gaelic speakers interacted with even older ritual landscapes.



Fergus Scottish Festival

The 80th Fergus Scottish Festival was held from August 8-10th.

From the torchlight parade to the closing ceremonies, it was a great event. Bruce McAlpine was once again a great tent host. We always well represented at these games, and they are a MacAlpine favorite.



Lord Lyon
officially
opening
the
games

Many dignitaries attended the 80th Fergus Games



Lord Lyon
King of Arms



Steven MacTavis
Chief of MacTavish



Lady Fiona MacGregor
Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfries



From left to right Robert Baird, Commander of Clan Baird, Sir Alexander Matheson, Chief of Clan Matheson, Commander Robert Currie, Commander of Clan Currie, John Cochran, Vice President of COSCA, Sir Malcolm MacGregor, Chief of Clan Gregor, The Lady Saltoun, Chief of Fraser, Lord Andrew Morrison 3rd Viscount Dunrossil, Alexander Fraser The Master of Saltoun, Michael McAlpin, Commander of the House of MacAlpine



Lord Lyon King of Arms: Dr Joseph J. Morrow CVO, CBE, KC, LLD, DL, FRSE and Michael T McAlpin FSA Scot, Commander, House of MacAlpine



Commander: Michael T. McAlpin

Society Board Members:

President: Earl Dale McAlpine

Vice President: Mark SC McAlpin

Secretary: Laura McAlpine

Treasurer: Teala Pennel

Membership: Robin McAlpine

Member At Large: Fin Stavnsbo Alpin

Newsletter Editor: Robin McAlpine

Grandfather Mountain Highland Games

July 11-13, 2025

For the 69th year, MacRae meadows was filled with the sights and sounds of the Highlands, as over 100 Clans and Societies gathered on the mountain.

The MacAlpines always have a presence at Grandfather, and this year was no exception. Our tent was perfectly positioned with an excellent view of the field.





Thanks to all who staff this event!

**Check our Facebook page for upcoming games and all things
House of MacAlpine related**



Scan QR code with your phone

Trebsen, Germany Highland Games

For three days in September, the grounds at Trebsen Castle, in Trebsen Germany become a center for Scottish life. For twenty-five years this large three-day Scottish festival has featured competitions in heavy athletics and pipe bands, along with music, dance, and opportunities to connect with various Scottish clans

Society member Dirk Martin once again represents the MacAlpine's at this annual event.



UPCOMING HIGHLAND GAMES

**Mark your calendar &
Look for the MacAlpine Tent**



Stone Mountain Highland Games

October 17-19, 2025

**Stone Mountain Park
1000 Robert E Lee Blvd
Stone Mountain, GA 30083**



Charleston Scottish Games

November 7-8, 2025

**Riverfront Park,
061 Everglades Ave
North Charleston, South Carolina**