

Remember Those from Whom You Came

Newsletter for The House of MacAlpine

The Worldwide Organization for MacAlpine's



Fourth Quarter 2024 ~ Volume 66

2025
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Can you believe that it's 2025 already. This is the beginning of our 25th year as a Society and we have been busy.

*A Commander commissioned by the Lord Lyon
Seven Armigers in support of our efforts to seat a Chief
Court supported Family Convention held in Scotland
56 Quarterly Newsletters
25 AGM's held*

*Located over 100 old MacAlpine homesteads in Kilmartin Glen and North Knapdale area,
which have been visited by scores of MacAlpine's*

Commander's Note

House of MacAlpine donates \$1000 to the hurricane recovery at Grandfather Mountain

Hurricane Helene devastated the North Carolina High Country, both from disastrous flooding and high winds. The area around Grandfather Mountain was especially hard hit. The Grandfather Mountain Games have experienced much damage and incurred extraordinary expenses, and have asked participating Clans and Families for assistance. All donations go to a separate fund, and any money remaining from the campaign will go to the Avery County Chamber of Commerce "Build Back Avery" fund. The Avery Chamber of Commerce account will be targeted 100% to Avery County recovery.

We are proud and honored to be able to contribute to the recovery efforts.

January 25th is the birth date of Robert Burns

Celebrations of Scotland's immortal Bard will be held the world over, and I know many MacAlpine's will be in on the festivities. It is a good time to kilt up and show off the tartan. I will be in Chicago with the MacAlpine Pipes and Drums at the 164th celebration of Robert Burns by the Burns Club of Rockford Illinois.

Burn's himself was from the Lowlands, but he understood the heart of the Highlands. In 1789, he wrote a tribute to his then paramour, Mary Campbell, or Highland Mary, titled My Heart's in the Highlands. That expression "my heart's in the Highlands" runs deep.

The MacAlpine's hail from North Knapdale and the Kilmartin Glen, about 30 miles south of Oban in the Western Highlands. It is magnificent country, green hills, clear streams, rich in history. Well known for its Neolithic standing stones and ancient cairns, and for its early history in Dalriadic Scotland.

There is an old Gaelic saying: "Cnuic is uiltt is Ailpeinich", or "Hills and Streams and MacAlpine's", referencing that the MacAlpine's have been in that area since the hills and streams themselves were formed. I would like to think that our ancestors placed themselves there because they found it defensible, surrounded as it is by 1200 acres of boggy peat moss. That, or just maybe they had a longer-term vision that with so much peat they could make whisky for a thousand years.

This is the area where the MacAlpine's dwelled, and where they became one with the land.

There is a Gaelic word, *Duthcas*. It doesn't translate well into English, maybe it is perhaps best described as a sacred wedding of the land to the people. This marriage of land and people, this *Duthcas*, is at the heart of the passion for place in the Gaelic culture. It is where place becomes part of the person, tied to ancestral memories and culture. The feeling of being one with one's place of origin. Community becomes place, place becomes community. Each field, hill and stream, each home was named with affection, and each naming tells a story of where we lived, how we lived, and all too often, why we left.

The MacAlpine's passed from clan to clan as vassals or tenants, scratching out a living as farmers, or fishermen, or tradesmen. Landless and searching for opportunity, the MacAlpine's began to scatter, many crossing the oceans, settling in the Scots communities of Australia, South Africa, and North America.

“Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods”

In 1740 the population of the Glen was about 1,700, by 1840 it was less than 1,200, by 1900 it was 600. Still, as the population scattered, the emigrants held to their love of their ancestral homelands.

As the immortal bard said:

“Wherever I wander, wherever I rove
The hills of the Highlands forever I love.”

As they scattered, they named their new homes and villages after the old place names, a heady reminder of their ties to the old sod. Indeed, their heart was still in the highlands.

Over a twenty-five years ago, a small group of MacAlpines began the process of reconnecting, of reestablishing those ancient ties to our ancestral highland home and to find or nominate a Chief. More than a hundred of the old homesteads have been located, dozens have been visited by many MacAlpines from around the world.

Although no hereditary chief has been found, the Scottish Court recognizes the MacAlpine's as a distinct family and has commissioned a Commander as the head until a Chief can be recognized, we are hopeful that will be in the next several years.

It is a lengthy process to determine a new chief, and we have been moving in that direction for a long time. The process is slow, and deliberate, many t's to be crossed, and i's to be dotted.

At a future date another Family Convention will be called and a nomination for a Chief of the Name and Arms of MacAlpine will be made to the Court.

In the interim, we will continue to be drawn to the highlands, and to our ancestral homelands



Le gach deagh dhùrachd

With every good wish,

Michael T McAlpin

Commander

Name of MacAlpine



President's Letter

Hello family,

I hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Twenty-five years ago, this society was created to provide education on our Scottish roots and search the world for a hereditary Chief. Although the process has seemed to take a long time, we have been successful in having our Commander, Michael McAlpin, named by the Lord Lyon Court. Our work is not complete and we will continue to move forward in our quest to seat a Chief. With that in mind, it is not too early to start saving if you plan to join us in Scotland in 2027. We don't have the dates nailed down yet, but it will be upon us sooner than we think.

We are planning to hold our convention in Sterling, Scotland. So think on these items for your budget: Flight to Edinburgh or Glasgow, hotel, rental car or train fare, meals and incidentals (buying that tartan item for your loved ones at home).

Once we have our dates, we will certainly let you know. We would love to have at least 30 voting (with the name McAlpin/e or women born with the name) family members join us there.

If you haven't plugged into our page on FB, please make an effort to do so. We are able to easily post family news and updates there.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/18fdqSEQ7w/>

In Kinship,

Dale



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

The Homestead Project – McAlpine's of Ardnackaig

Submitted by
Mark S.C. McAlpin
Sennachie elect

About 9 miles south and west of Kilmartin is the serene homestead of Ardnackaig.

To get there, one must walk about one-mile due west from the B8025 road through rolling hills and lush valleys, to find this high neck of land (ard nackeig) on the shores of the Sound of Jura.

In the late 1700's and early 1800's, Duncan McAlpine and his wife Helen McInlerand lived, farmed and fished here, bearing twins Archibald and Margaret McAlpine on November 7, 1813.

Their children and their children's children were known not only for their farming prowess but also for their contributions to the community.

Today, the land that the MacAlpine's once worked at Ardnackaig is more than just a scenic farm; it's a living piece of Scottish heritage. Two hundred and eighty-eight acres are dedicated to a rewilding project aimed at restoring natural habitats and promoting biodiversity. Here, native Highland cattle graze freely, echoing a time when nature and farming coexisted harmoniously.



Looking back on the history of Ardnackaig and the MacAlpines, we are reminded of the importance of preserving our natural landscapes and the stories of those who have shaped them. The homestead stands as a beacon of tradition and progress, where the past and future coexist in harmony.

The Homestead Project – McAlpine's of Bellanoch

Submitted by
Mark S.C. McAlpin,
Sennachie Elect

Bellanoch from the Gaelic - beul an eich, meaning the horse's mouth (named after the shape of the bay) is a small village south of the River Add on the southern bank of the Crinan Canal about five miles from Kilmartin.

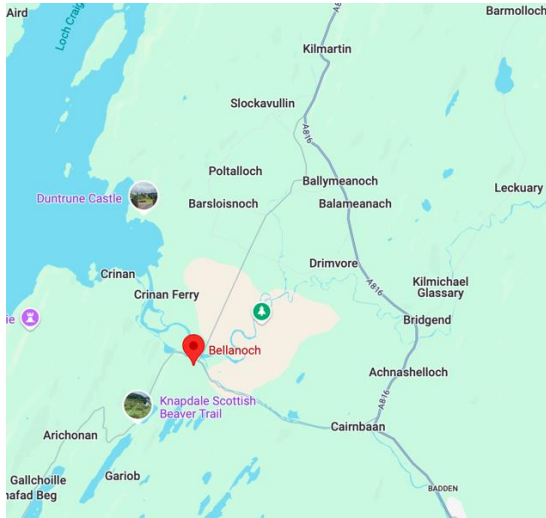


Bellanoch Village

Amongst the several MacAlpines living there in the late 1700's and into the 1800's were John MacAlpine, Malcolm McAlpine and his wife Margaret Campbell, and their children, Kate, Duncan and Robert. Succeeding generation farmed and fished at Bellanoch through the mid 1800's

Other MacAlpines in the area were just a short walk at Drimvore, Arichonan, Ach nabreac, and Garoib.

The Homestead Project – McAlpine's of Bellanoch (continued)



Bellanoch Church

In 1844, the Reverend D. MacLachlan, of the Presbytery of Inverary wrote of the area that the principle language of the common people is Gaelic, but almost all of the young and most of the old inhabitants understand English. The Gaelic is evidently losing ground.

The people, for the most part are decent, orderly, and industrious in their habits; the greater part of them apply themselves to husbandry, or to a seafaring life. Their ordinary food consists chiefly of potatoes and fish, oatmeal and milk. Poaching in game or salmon is very rare, and the degrading and demoralizing practice of smuggling is totally unknown among them”.

52nd Stone Mountain Highland Games



stone mountain highland games

and scottish festival

Perfect weather made the Stone Mountain Games a great success. The MacAlpine's are always delighted to participate at these very large games.



Commander Michael McAlpin with Michael Grant,
Chief of Clan Grant



Michael, Mark, Mike & Charles



Piper Chuck Bohannon



Listening to the Pibroch



Scotland County Highland Games



The Scotland County Highland Games are the only Scottish Games located in the old Highland Scottish settlement of the Upper Cape Fear region of the Carolinas.

This region was home to the largest settlement of Highland Scots in all of North America.



Of all the aspects of their identity as Highlanders, most fundamental was their language.

It was through Gaelic that they expressed their experiences as a community and as individuals, and had access to centuries of oral tradition in the form of song, poetry, legend, folktale, lineage, and so on, which embodied their collective past as a people. Most of the emigrants spoke only Gaelic, indeed, Church services were held in Gaelic until the 1860's.

It has been some years since the MacAlpines last hosted a tent at the Scotland County Games, and it was good to be back.

It was also a good opportunity to converse with our friend Dr. Bruce Durie and map out some directions on our process going forward.



Charleston Scottish Games

Submitted by
Charles McAlpine

Each year in the Southeast, the summer season of hosting Highland Games begins and ends on the coast. We kicked off the season on May 4th in Savannah Ga, and ended on November 2nd when we hosted the tent for House of MacAlpine in Charleston SC to close out the season.

This year, the Charleston Scottish Games were held November 2th, 2024 at Riverfront Park on the bank of the Historic Cooper River in North Charleston. The venue at this place is spectacular, and different than what you would typically see in a 'mountain' setting (e.g. Stone Mountain, Grandfather Mountain, etc.) Instead, you are greeted with expansive water views with occasional cruise ship or paddlewheel boat passing by. The weather was perfect with warm sunshine and gentle breezes.

This year our tent was hosted by Charles McAlpine and Mark McAlpin, and we had one of the best locations to have a tent. Quite literally you could watch the athletics and mass pipe bands from one side of our tent, and turn around to see the water views for miles up the river on the other side! Also, we were lucky to be next to the entertainment stage so we could see and hear the awesome Celtic music being played all day.

Our tent was one of the *most popular* tents being visited at the games. It was very well decorated with all the banners and historical material on full display. There was at least 20-50 people gathered around our tent *all day* sharing stories and learning about our history. We were honored to have author Signe Pike with Meagan Gentry hang out with us all day as well. (Signe just release her latest novel "*The Shadowed Land*" which takes place in and around our ancestral homeland in Kilmartin)

In addition, we were honored to have two other special guests with us all day. Bagpipers Chuck Bohannon and Shawn McConnell are our friends who play with the Savannah Pipes and Drums. After they completed their piping competition in the morning, they came over to the MacAlpine tent to spend the day. They brought their bagpipes with them and played for us several times. What a treat to have these accomplished pipers play for us. It was almost like a private concert, and it is no wonder why we had the biggest crowd!

If you have the chance to attend the games on the 'coast' next year, you should come. Both Savannah and Charleston have a deep Scottish heritage going back to the time our country was being founded, and they are both proud of their Scottish roots. Each city hosts wonderful games and memorable festivities that should be on your 'bucket list'. I am proud to see the House of MacAlpine represented, and so well received. I am looking forward to next year!



Charleston Scottish Games (continued)



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



Scan QR code with your phone.

New Chief of the Name and Arms of Carruthers

Albany Herald Extraordinary, Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw, attended the Inauguration of Dr Simon Peter Carruthers of Holmains, as Chief of the Name and Arms of Carruthers and presented the letters patent granting him the undifferenced arms. The Chief was recognized by Lord Lyon in 2019.



Presentation to the Chief of Carruthers the Letters Patent

On the 24 August 2024, Simon Peter Carruthers was officially inaugurated as Chief of Carruthers in his Ancestral homelands of Annandale, Scotland during the Annan Festival. He was presented with his Letters Patent by Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw, Albany Herald Extraordinary the representative of the Lord Lyon, King of Arms on behalf of the Sovereign.

Four symbols of his office were presented by the Shennachie, Dr George Carruthers FSA Scot, to the Chief. Those being an embossed family bible, a balmoral with three eagle feathers, a gold ring engraved with his arms and a cromach (shepherds crook).

An oath of loyalty and to uphold the name of Carruthers in a manner deserving of its respect was given by the Chief to the clan and family. The Shennachie on behalf of all the elders and stewards gave an oath of fealty and loyalty to the Chief, and an oath of fealty and loyalty was then given by all members of the clan to the Chief. Carruthers giving the oath were from the local area, other parts of the UK, Africa, Australasia, Canada, Europe, and the United States of America.

UPCOMING HIGHLAND GAMES

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



Join us at the Loch Norman Highland Games

April 12 & 13, 2025

**4431 Neck Rd,
Huntersville, NC 28078**



Join us at the Savannah Highland Games

May 3, 2025

**Bethesda Academy
9570 Ferguson Ave.
Savannah, GA 31406**



Join us at the Fair Hill Scottish Games

May 17, 2025

**Fair Hill Fairgrounds
4640 Telegraph Rd
Elkton, Maryland**



Join us at the Greenville Scottish Games

May 24, 2025

**3300 Poinsett Highway
Greenville, SC 29613**