



The Worldwide  
Organization  
For MacAlpines

# Chief of Chiefs

## Newsletter Of The Clan MacAlpine Society

*Remember the death of Alpin!*  
3rd Qtr 2010 ~ Volume 12



John MacAlpine



Michael MacAlpin



William MacAlpine

## President's Message

I would like to thank Past-President Kenneth MacAlpine for his leadership in the Society. Ken not only founded the Society, but he laid out a long-term vision of gaining recognition as a Clan. That recognition only comes through the Court of the Lord Lyon in Scotland.

Recognition is a rigorously monitored legal requirement from the Lyon Court, and it requires having broad representation from many, many branches of MacAlpines from all over. As such, we have sought to gain Armigers, hold annual meetings, publish newsletters and promote information regarding the history of the MacAlpine name.

Much has been done since our first Annual General Meeting in Dearborn Michigan in July of 2000.

Under Ken's leadership we have held Annual Meetings in Canada, Scotland (twice) and in many locations around the US.

We are on a clear path of gaining Armigers, and thousands have enrolled in the Society representing many branches of MacAlpines.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Ken.

We have a great opportunity to move the Society forward, and I would like to focus on a few key areas that we discussed at the Annual Meeting.

To support our long-term goal of gaining recognition, we need to reach out to more MacAlpines. There may be "Armigers in waiting" in Scotland, where proof of Scottish roots is easily established, some of our kinsmen in Scotland may be in a good position to become Armigers.

There are large numbers of MacAlpines in Canada that we need to encourage to join in our efforts.

As we gain in numbers, and Armigers, we will be better able to understand, and hopefully comply with Lord Lyon's requirements for recognition. Lyon has recently provided "Guidance as regards the holding of a Derbhfine or Family Convention," and although the impact on our efforts is not yet understood, diligence on our part in gaining membership, holding Society events, gaining Armigers, providing frequent communication, and continuing to act in a cohesive manner will be our intermediate goals until our long term goal of recognition is achieved.

That long-term goal will be difficult, and lengthy, yet recognition, once gained, is enduring.

In kinship,

Michael T. McAlpin

## UNITE! UNITE! UNITE!

### Society Officers

**President:** Michael T. McAlpin  
**Vice President:** Renee Hensley  
**Treasurer:** Kenneth McAlpin  
**Secretary:** Robin McAlpin  
**Historian:** Dale McAlpin  
**Editor:** Janet McAlpine

### Coordinators

**Canada:** Bruce McAlpin  
bdmacalpine@personainternet.com  
**Europe:** Finn Alpin  
finndane@gmail.com  
**United Kingdom:** John Gilpin  
j.gilpin1@brinternet.com  
**Eastern U.S.:** Mary Ann Baker  
wizad3@yahoo.com  
**Western U.S.:** Renee Hensley  
rhensley95@comcast.net

### Commissioners

**England:** John Gilpin  
j.gilpin1@brinternet.com  
**Sweden:** Finn Alpin  
finndane@gmail.com  
**USA**  
**California (N):** Renee Hensley  
rhensley95@comcast.net  
**California (S):** Kenneth McAlpine  
kenneth@macalpineclan.com  
**Georgia:** Michael T. McAlpin  
mc539@aol.com  
**Kansas:** Brian Garrett  
atoz@grapevine.net  
**Michigan:** Mary Ann Baker  
wizad3@yahoo.com

## “News from Lyon Court” ~ Guidance as Regards the Holding of a *Derbhfine* or Family Convention

*Note from Michael T. McAlpin*

*Kinsmen - This in from Lyon Court. The impact on our effort is not clear, nor is the attitude of the Lyon Court towards our effort; however, Lyon has published new guidelines for a Family Meeting or Derbhfine.*

*Derbhfine* was the name given in Old Irish Law to a four generation agnatic kingroup of importance in determining succession and the ownership of property. More recently the term has been used to describe what might be termed a Family Convention, held when the identity of the Chief or Head of a historic Family or Name is in doubt, the object of which is to recognise a new Chief or Head of the Family or Name; or to indicate a suitable Commander for a term of years.

A Family Convention should be composed of the leading members of the Family or Name in question. It has not proved easy to define who exactly qualify as leading members, but the term certainly includes the heads or representatives of leading branches of the family. In the past the term has been defined in terms of armigers and substantial landowners. Although being an armiger does suggest a certain status and a degree of commitment to the Name, this definition has not proved entirely satisfactory, being on the one hand too exclusive and on the other open to abuse. For example, such a definition might exclude non-armigerous heads of leading branches; also, in theory at least, definition in terms of a given number of armigers may make a Family Convention open to “packing”. There is also the possibility that someone unconnected to the Name in question, might adopt that name as his or her surname and become an armiger. It is

not appropriate that someone in this position should then be regarded as a leading member of the family. It does seem appropriate, however, to consult with a well established clan or family association where such exists.

There are a number of circumstances in which it would seem appropriate to hold a Family Convention:

- (1) Where a blood link to a past Chief or Head of Name is likely but is not conclusively proven and it is wished to propose a particular person in that situation to be recognized as Chief.
- (2) Where the main line of descent from a past Chief has died out and it is wished to recognize the Representer of a cadet line as Chief.
- (3) Where neither blood link to a past Chief nor Representer of a cadet line can be identified but it is wished to propose a particular person of the surname as Commander. It is generally desirable that such a Commander should live in Scotland.

It should be noted that the Lord Lyon is unlikely to recognize a person recommended by a Family Convention as Chief or Head of a Family or Name, unless that recommendation is unopposed or, at the very least, has been approved by a substantial majority of the Family Convention.

The Family Convention should take place in Scotland although members outwith the jurisdiction may participate by video link or similar. It is anticipated that the number of those participating in a Family Convention will be relatively small, of the order of ten to twenty-five people.

### Mac Alpin's Glory!

By John Gilpin, 2007

If faither time cud turn aboot,  
In truth ye'd ken this story.  
The Bards wud rise frae oot their graves,  
Tae praise MacAlpin's glory.

Ah'l tak ye back o'er a thousand years,  
Hark ye well tae ma wee rhyme.  
O murderous feuds frae Alba's past,  
An' history's un-written time.

Sin' ne'er afore an ne'er till then,  
'Ad wan Laird ruled the land.  
So MacAlpin called the clans tae feet,  
Stood he Chief, wi' blade in hand.

“ Fear nought fur fear is nought its sel',  
Wi' the guid Lord at oor side,  
No mon, this day, gi' quarter,  
Fur oor land, we'll dei wi' pride.”

Argyll's Black Boar, on banners prood,  
Whaur set a-foor the foe  
“Cuimnich Bas Alpin,” wus Kenneth's  
cry,  
Ilka mon intae battle wud go.

As claymore, axe an hammer,  
Intae Pictish flesh did tear.  
The stench o' blood, the screams o' death,  
Filt auld Dalriada's air.

The battle raged, fur mony an hoor,  
Wi their blood the clans did pay.  
Saved, by the grace o' him above,  
MacAlpin won the day.

Hence, wus Bonny Scotland born,  
An those ancient Bards would sing.  
“ King Kenneth, the 1st, o' Scotland,  
One God! One Law! One King!”

Sae Scots the whole world o'er,  
In yer hearts, lang , keep this story.  
Stand prood, an raise a dram, tae hame,

The Toast...

“ MAC ALPIN'S GLORY !”

John Gilpin, 2007.



# Notable MacAlpines

## John D. MacAlpine

(d. 1557),

*Submitted by Finn Alpin*

Continuing with our theme on Notable MacAlpines in history, this issue features **John D. MacAlpine (d. 1557)**

John D. MacAlpine (d. 1557) was a Dominican friar and protestant reformer, also known as John Machabeus, born in Scotland of well-to-do parents according to John Bale.

After studying at the University of Cologne he was licensed as BTh by the Dominican order in 1525. At Cologne he had been a classmate of John McDowell and possibly Henry Balnaves. Macalpine served as prior of the Dominican convent at Perth from 1532 to 1534. By August in the latter year he had adopted protestant tenets, and was cited with others to appear at Holyrood by James Hay, bishop of Ross, acting as a commissioner for Archbishop James Beaton of St Andrews.

Instead of complying, Macalpine fled to England, prompting the tribunal to condemn him in his absence. In England Macalpine was befriended by Nicholas Shaxton, the evangelical bishop of Salisbury, whose chaplain he had become by May 1535, and who on 12 July 1538 collated him to the prebend of Bishopstone in Salisbury Cathedral. Macalpine married Agnes Matthewson (or Macheson), another Scottish exile, whose sister Elizabeth wed Miles Coverdale about 1540.

By 1540 Macalpine had left England for Saxony, where he matriculated at the University of Wittenberg and associated closely with Philip Melanchthon. With Luther presiding, Macalpine engaged in a scholastic disputation at Wittenberg in 1541.

Inclined toward the humanists, Macalpine (who Latinized his own name as Machabeus) was widely read in patristics and scholastics as well as in canon law and the proceedings of church councils. After receiving his DTh degree at Wittenberg, in 1542 Macalpine became professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen, which he served as chancellor in 1544 and 1549, and also chaplain to King Christian III (r. 1534–59).

At Copenhagen, Macalpine initiated the Melanchthonian tradition in Danish theology which reached its zenith in his

younger contemporary Niels Hemmingsen. Macalpine also found time to assist Scottish students who came to Denmark, including James Erskine of Dun, whose tutor Richard Melville of Baldovie brought Erskine to Copenhagen to study with Macalpine. The latter maintained his contacts with Melanchthon, recommending one James (possibly James Balfour, who would soon join John Knox), to both Melanchthon and Alesius. After Sir David Lindsay visited Macalpine at Copenhagen in 1548, the latter reportedly provided funds for the publication of Lindsay's *Ane Dialog Betuix Experience and ane Courteour* (1553); the claim is made on the title-page, but is probably spurious. While visiting Denmark as an ambassador in the spring of 1550, the earl of Rothes took some documents to Macalpine. The same year saw the publication of a folio edition of the Bible in Danish, translated from Luther's German version, a project to which Macalpine contributed.

Although Macalpine was a Lutheran, his outlook toward Calvinists was eirenic (a. promoting peace. eirenicism, n. such state of mind. eirenicon, n. such act. eirenicus, n. theology aiming at religious unity). This was evident in 1553 when John a Lasco brought a group of Calvinist exiles to Denmark in search of refuge, only to be denied. Whereas Peder Palladius, superintendent of Zealand, opposed their request for asylum, Macalpine refused to follow suit. The following year Macalpine twice prevailed on Christian III to intervene with Mary Tudor on behalf of Coverdale, whom she finally permitted to go into exile in February 1555. Macalpine wrote a commentary on Deuteronomy,

which was published posthumously, and a treatise, *De conjugio sacerdotum*, which Archbishop Matthew Parker subsequently bequeathed to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Following Macalpine's death in Copenhagen on 5 December 1557, his body was buried there, in Our Lady's Church, with Christian III in attendance at the funeral. Macalpine's son, Christian Machabaeus (1541–1598), a professor at Copenhagen from 1565 to 1567 and a friend of Hemmingsen, went on two embassies to Russia and was ennobled in 1580.



Maccabæus

## Flowers of the Forest



It is with sadness that we report the passing of Kenneth McAlpine who died peacefully June 1, 2010.

Ken was born August 11, 1934, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. He and his wife, Debi, owned and operated Le Bistro Restaurant in Gig Harbor, Washington for the last 20 years. Ken loved living in the Harbor, and was very thankful for the wonderful support the people of Gig Harbor gave their restaurant. Feeling like a part of the community and making many close friends over the years was a source of great pride for him.

Ken considered one of his greatest accomplishments to be learning to play the bagpipes later in life. He enjoyed playing in parades and at special occasions, and treasured the many friends he made through piping.

Piper Kenneth was a mainstay at MacAlpine annual meetings, and our commissioner for Washington State. He will be missed by all of us.



---

## Clan MacAlpine Society on Facebook

*Submitted by Janet McAlpine, Editor*



Have you ever looked at Facebook? If not, you might want to check it out. Clan MacAlpine Society can be found on it. Its link is: [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6366603471](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6366603471). Just copy/paste that site into the Internet and you'll be there. Once there, go to Wall where you will see the entries.

It may be a great way to connect with fellow MacAlpines and share information . . . or simply enjoy interaction with our membership. I ran onto it just the other day and scanned through some of the messages. In reading them I found a verse that I have included in this newsletter and discovered that if I keep checking back with it, I might even find a key to some of my never-ending genealogical search or maybe a long, lost relative.

I think you will find the site of interest. It could also possibly be a way for you to stay current with news that takes place within the society between issues of Chief of Chiefs, the society's newsletter.

## Clan MacAlpine Society Holds 2010 AGM

*Submitted by Dale McAlpin*

### Scots Fest - 2010 Costa Mesa, California, USA,

The Clan MacAlpine Society held their 2010 AGM at Scots Fest 2010 at the Orange County Fair and Event Center in Costa Mesa, California, Memorial Day weekend May 29-30, 2010.

The organizers told us this year had a record for the most clans attended - 57. This year the festival also had the most pipe bands in the history of the festival - twenty-three bands, including six bands from Canada. Scots Fest also hosted the National Athletic Championship, Highland Dancing Western Regional Championship, and added a fourth entertainment stage.

Friday night there was a tour of Scotland and single malt tasting at the Irvine Marriot Hotel. A few of our MacAlpine group attended this event while others went to dinner.

The evening after our AGM, members enjoyed dinner at a local pub before dispersing back to the hotel or home.

If you did not attend the AGM this year, think about trying to attend one in the future. It is a great way to make connection with other society members.



A great group of visitors to the Clan MacAlpine Society tent at Scots Fest 2010 in Costa Mesa, California where the 2010 AGM of Clan MacAlpine Society took place. It looks like all had a great time. A few familiar faces here. Do you recognize them?