



Remember the Death of Alpin

Newsletter Of The Clan MacAlpine Society

The Worldwide Organization For MacAlpines

1st Qtr 2013 ~ Volume 19

President's Message

The Society will be holding its Annual General Meeting at Grandfather Mountain near Linville North Carolina this July, details may be found in this issue, and are posted on our web site www.macalpineclan.com.

Our thanks to Dale McAlpine for making the arrangements.

Our planned 2014 Annual Meeting in Scotland coinciding with the 700th Anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn appears to be in jeopardy.

You will find several articles in this newsletter regarding the difficulties behind this event. The articles from the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, and from the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations call into serious question the advisability of holding our Annual meeting in Scotland in 2014.

We will have a full discussion at our meeting at Grandfather Mountain on the practicability of continuing to plan for the Bannockburn event in 2014, or whether we should entertain an alternate location. After the large turnout we had at Oban in 2004, and Edinburgh in 2009, I know that many have been excited about Scotland in 2014 and will be greatly disappointed if plans have to be scrapped.

Please give your thoughts and views to any of the Society Officers, or email me at Michael@macalpineclan.com, or post them at our Facebook page.

In Kinship,
Michael T McAlpin

UNITE! UNITE!

UNITE!

Society Officers

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

Coordinators:

Canada: Bruce McAlpin
bmacalpine@personainternet.com
Europe: Finn Alpin
finndane@gmail.com
United Kingdom: John Gilpin
j.gilpin1@btinternet.com
Eastern U.S.: Mary Ann Baker
wizad3@yahoo.com
Western U.S.: Renee Hensley-McAlpin
rhensley95@gmail.com
Commissioners:
England: John Gilpin
j.gilpin1@btinternet.com
Sweden: Finn Alpin
finndane@gmail.com

USA

California (N): Renee Hensley-McAlpin
rhensley95@gmail.com
California (S): Kenneth McAlpine
kenneth@macalpineclan.com
Georgia: Michael T. McAlpin
mc539@aol.com
Hawaii: Dave Stevens
tekheaddave@me.com
Idaho: Robert G. Winkle, Esq.
winkle@cableone.net
Kansas: Brian Garrett
atoz@grapevine.net
Michigan: Mary Ann Baker
wizad3@yahoo.com
North Carolina: Randy Madry
randymadry@comcast.net
Oregon: Warren McAlpine
wdmcalpine@comcast.net
Utah: Dodd Greer
doddgreer@hotmail.com

Clan MacAlpine Society– 2013 AGM Grand Father Mountain Highland Games

by Dale McAlpine

Hello MacAlpine Kinsmen, Grand Father Mountain Highland Games

Put on your MacAlpine kilt for the 58th Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, the largest Scottish games in the country. The games will be held July 11-14, 2013 at MacRae Meadows on Grandfather Mountain near Linville, NC. They are the premier Scottish Highland games and gathering of Clans. Grandfather Mountain Highland Games and Gathering of Scottish Clans foster and restore interest in traditional dancing, piping, drumming, athletic achievement, and sheep herding to caber tossing. There are food vendors and other merchants, so bring your cash. At night they have concerts that you can purchase tickets. There is no parking on the mountain so be prepared to pay to park and take a shuttle, at minimal cost.

On Friday, July 12th we will host the MacAlpine Clan Society tent and will provide drinks and snacks. Stop by the clan tent early and we will supply you with the opening ceremonies assembly time.

If you plan to come to the area before the AGM or stay after, there are many nearby attractions. Visit America's Largest Home, the Biltmore located in Asheville, North Carolina or Hop on board Tweetsie's Wild West Adventure, on a train pulled by one of their historic steam locomotives.

Agenda:

Friday July 12th

Setup clan tent at 07:30 AM.

Host clan tent at 09:00 AM.

Meet at Host tent to prepare for Opening ceremonies.

Clan Welcome (snack foods / finger foods) at MacAlpine Clan Tent until MacRae Meadows closes at 3:00 PM.

Saturday July 13th

Host clan tent at 07:30 AM.

Meet at Host tent to prepare for Opening ceremonies.

MacRae Meadows closes at 04:00 PM.

Clan Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 04:00 PM at the hotel.

Clan MacAlpine Society Dinner at Banner Elk conference Room 06:00 PM.

Sunday July 14th

Host clan tent at 08:00 AM

Meet at Host tent to prepare for Parade of Tartans and Clan March (time TBD)

Break down clan tent camp.

Closing Ceremonies at 04:00 PM.



Where to stay:

Please make your reservations at Best Western Banner Elk Hotel, by calling (828)898-4571 and mention "MacAlpine Clan" for the discount rates we arranged. You must call for this rate, you will NOT get these rates by registering online.

Thursday July 11th = \$86.24 (after tax)

Friday July 12th = \$162.91 (after tax)

Saturday July 13th = \$162.91 (after tax)

All rooms are for two doubles beds or one King bed.



[Best Western Plus Mountain Lodge](#)

1615 Tynecastle Hwy, Banner Elk, North Carolina 28604

Getting There:

Closest Airports to Grandfather Mountain

Airport	Drive Time to GM	Service type
Hickory, NC	1 1/2 hours	Commuter / Regional
Johnson City, TN	1 1/2 hours	Regional
Asheville, NC	1 1/2 hours	Regional
Charlotte, NC	2 1/2 hours	International Hub
Greensboro, NC	2 1/2 hours	International Hub

In Kinship,
Dale

Dinner Menu:

Choice #1

Prime Rib au Jus (14 Oz)

Tender Prime Rib served rare to medium rare in a brown au jus sauce, with baked potato, green beans, and apple cobbler

Includes service charge, tax and room fee \$37.76

Choice #2

Flounder Piccata

Flounder Filets in a lemon-caper and butter piccata sauce, with rice pilaf, mixed vegetable, apple cobbler

Includes service charge, tax and room fee \$26.40

Choice #3

Herb Chicken

Baked Chicken in a rosemary and sage butter sauce, with garlic mashed potatoes, green beans, apple cobbler

Includes service charge, tax and room fee \$17.56

Please forward Dinner selections and payment by June 12th to:

Clan MacAlpine Society

c/o Kenneth McAlpine, Treasurer

32682 Rosemont Drive

Trabuco Highlands, CA 92679-3386 USA



Robert Burns Supper

Clan MacAlpine Society was well represented at the Robert Burns Supper held at the Officers Mess, Royal Dragoon Guards, in Stockholm. Sweden

Upholding a multi year tradition, Clan MacAlpine Society member and European Commissioner Finn Alpin won the coveted main prize (a fine bottle of one of Islay's finest)

Past Clan MacAlpine Society Members that have won have been:

2007 Finn Alpin
2009: Ronny Lindergren
2010: Leizel Alpin
2011: Sven Gustavsson
2012: Lotta Lenberg
2013: Finn Alpin



Pictured are Finn Alpin, Fredrik Goetzing. (wearing Scandinavian District Tartan) and Tommy Lenberg

Update on Doris McAlpine Russell

Doris, the matriarch of the Alexander McAlpine line in North America, who has done so much for all of us through the years and has published the 730 page "McAlpin(e) Genealogies 1730-1990, has recently had a very serious medical issue.

After being rushed to emergency, and finally stabilized, she is home again, however she will have to go for dialysis four hours a day three days a week for the rest of her life.

"I am so blessed with my family and friends who are supporting me. It has been through the prayers of many that the Lord has brought me through this. We had wonderful nurses and treatment during our entire stay at the hospital.

I love hearing from you so keep in touch. It is just very good to be home."

Doris, our thoughts and prayers are with you, Jim, and your entire family.

**"Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!"**
Sir Walter Scott

From the Lay of the Last Minstrel

The area around Kilmartin contains more than 350 ancient monuments, 150 of which are prehistoric. This extraordinary concentration of monuments that includes rock carvings, standing stones, and Neolithic and Bronze Age burial cairns distinguishes the Kilmartin Valley as Scotland's richest prehistoric landscape. Dunadd, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Dalriada also stands nearby. A good overview of the remarkable archaeology of the area can be found in the audio-visual presentations at Kilmartin House in the village.

Notable MacAlpines Henry McAlpin of Savannah

Born in Scotland in 1777, Henry McAlpin immigrated to the United States in 1804 at the age of 27. Arriving at the port of Charleston, South Carolina, McAlpin made his way to Savannah by 1812. He was described at the time as a man of ruddy countenance with straight forward blue eyes and a strong chin.

McAlpin married Helen McGinnis, a native Charlestonian. Together they had eight children, but only seven survived. When Helen died prematurely at the age of 31, the children were separated. The boys remained with their father in Savannah, but the girls were sent to Charleston to live with relatives.

Ambitious to establish himself as a businessman, McAlpin acquired property before he became naturalized. McAlpin's friend, William I. Scott, purchased the Hermitage Plantation for him at a public auction on April 4, 1815. The Hermitage, located on the banks of the Savannah River, was one of several area plantations known as the Savannah River Plantations.



In 1819 McAlpin built a brick manufacturing plant on the Hermitage. The Hermitage became the only plantation in the area to earn the bulk of its revenue from non-agricultural production. Bricks for the house and outbuildings were made by slaves from clay on the plantation, which also provided a source of bricks for other buildings in Savannah.

Savannah, in need of building supplies after a devastating fire in 1820, turned to McAlpin for help. The brick plant became a thriving business, supplying thousands of bricks to help rebuild the city.

Much of the brick produced became known as Savannah grey brick. Made from grey clay found on the plantation, the brick -- which is actually a reddish brown color -- was popular because of its low cost of production and its subsequent low selling price.

The Central Georgia Railroad building was built with Savannah grey brick, as was Fort Pulaski. Many of the older homes still standing in Savannah are built with Savannah grey brick. This inexpensive brick, once sold at cut rate prices, now demands a premium.

It was McAlpin's brick manufacturing which created the need for a railway, the first in the United States. In 1820, he needed to move a building from one kiln to another, so he constructed a crude rail system. A car pulled by a horse ran on track connecting the two kilns. After its use, it was disassembled.

Not only did McAlpin run a thriving brick business, but he also owned a foundry and lumber mill. In addition, he owned rice fields on the low-lying areas of his plantation.



The house has remained unoccupied since it was sacked by Sherman's soldiers in 1864.



Homecoming 2014: What's In & What's Out

Dear Friends:

Way back early in 2012 COSCA joined with most of the rest of the Scottish diaspora in welcoming the news from Stirling Council and the Homecoming 2014 planning team that the ultra-successful 2009 Gathering would be repeated in 2014 as part of the 2nd Year of Homecoming. Initially we understood that the 2014 event would build on the successful experience of the 2009 Gathering and be of a similar character and scope.

Unless you have been under a rock for last six months you now know that there appears to be no central Gathering at Stirling in 2014. While we appreciate the Scottish Government Homecoming 2014 team's efforts to save the day through the Bannockburn Anniversary events, logistically, the Bannockburn field carries very difficult limitations for hosting an international clan gathering as does the Bannockburn event itself. So, while Bannockburn looks to include a spectacular high tech next generation visitors' center, a stellar reenactment and a medieval village possibly with clan elements, it's no Gathering.

Alright, we're over it. And what is the teaching moment? In future, we will design and plan our own gatherings. We will work collaboratively with the Scottish government and Scottish commercial enterprise to nail it. Indeed, there are many very keen minds thinking about that right now. The concept of a gathering is rooted in history, culture and tradition. It is the work of the chiefs to summon a gathering for clearly articulated reasons. Unless the diaspora

regains control of the concept and reality of an international gathering of Scottish clans and families, our traditions will remain in danger of being boiled down into a commercialized festival event just like any other instead of the special and authentic cultural and heritage celebration that they should be.

So, as it is currently all the buzz, you may want to check out the Scottish Parliament's politically tinged inquiry into whatever happened to the Gathering 2014. [Click here](#) to read the written testimony and evidence submitted to the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee of the Scottish Parliament on the subject.

I highly recommend beginning with the [Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs'](#) written submission as those comments are driven neither by politics or profits and instead they, alone among the group, contain a clear history and discussion of what happened and why. You can read the SCSC testimony [here](#).

And yes, do look at the National Trust for Scotland's written testimony, where the NTS suggests that a final decision on what is in and what is out as far as Bannockburn Anniversary events will not be made until May 2013. Yes, according to NTS, even the Bannockburn reenactments may be scrapped if the stars are not correctly aligned.

In spite of the fact that the clan gathering element of Homecoming 2014 didn't come off, the truth is, Scotland has put together a truly incredible lineup of events for their 2nd Year of Homecoming. While I am certain that the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup will be compelling athletics, in the minds of the active ancestral diaspora, the Bannockburn Anniversary events, including the new visitor's center and reenactments, are among the most intriguing offerings.

It is notable that Bannockburn represents the only currently supported ancestral element in the entire Year of Homecoming and that makes for a missed opportunity to optimize the unique advantage of the remarkable Scottish

diaspora. We encourage NTS to stay the course and produce all of the successful events to commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Bannockburn that can be produced.

Additional and further to the big splashy events, are the smaller and thus far independent regional gems that have caught the 2014 buzz. We understand that [Glamis Castle](#), already a veteran at hosting large complex events, continues to consider holding a 'dry run' games and clan gathering in 2013 to see what a larger event might look like in 2014. The folks in West Lochaber in association with the [Arisaig Games](#) are working feverishly to give ancestral visitors to their region an outstanding experience in 2014 and beyond. And of course, [Struileag](#) plans to live-stream it's culminating diaspora heritage and cultural production in October 2014, in association with the National Mod at Inverness.

So that is nothing to shake a stick at. The energy is there; it needs to be harnessed. Still, the diaspora will have to undertake to produce our own gatherings in the future. We must all note however that there is not absolute unanimity about the details of a gathering. Where, when, why, who, what? Those are our questions and it is our obligation to begin to explore and answer those questions before heading down the gathering road once again.

Yours aye,

slm

Susan L. McIntosh, President
Council of Scottish Clans & Associations



The Saltire – the National Flag of Scotland

According to legend, in 832 A.D. Óengus II led an army of Picts and Scots into battle against the Angles, led by Æthelstan, near modern-day Athelstaneford, East Lothian.

The legend states that whilst engaged in prayer on the eve of battle, Óengus vowed that if granted victory he would appoint Saint Andrew as the Patron Saint of Scotland; Andrew then appeared to Óengus that night in a dream and assured him of victory.

On the morning of battle white clouds, forming an X shape in the sky, were said to have appeared. Óengus and his combined force, emboldened by this apparent divine intervention, took to the field and despite being inferior in terms of numbers were victorious. Having interpreted the cloud phenomenon as representing the crux decussata upon which Saint Andrew was crucified, Óengus honoured his pre-battle pledge and duly appointed Saint Andrew as the Patron Saint of Scotland.

The white saltire set against a celestial blue background is said to have been adopted as the design of the flag of Scotland on the basis of this legend.

Haggis in Hawaii

Submitted by David Stevens
Clan MacAlpine Society Commissioner,
Hawaii

"Mahalo"

I would like to let everyone know of the annual Scottish Highland Games held in Honolulu, HI which are held at Kapiolani Community Park in Waikiki at the base of Diamond Head crater

This annual Scottish Festival is held on the first weekend of April to celebrate the heritage and history of the Scots is a gathering of Clans from around the world.

A great time for all including Athletic events such as:

- Caber toss
- Stone put
- Hammer throw
- Weight Toss
- Tug of war
- Kilted mile run
- Men's haggis toss
- Highland wrestling
- Maide Leisg
- Housewife games



- Highland Dance Competition for all ages!



- Demonstrations of swordplay
- Weaving, and fencing.
- Entertainment including piping, music, song and dance.



- Whiskey tasting!
- Vendors featuring Celtic clothing, jewelry, musical instruments, house wares, and more!
And
- Vendors serving traditional Scottish fare (even haggis)!

A wee bit of Scotland in the islands

A ***"hui hou"*** (until next time),
Dave

**LETTER FROM STANDING COUNCIL OF
SCOTTISH CHIEF TO
MURDO FRASER, CONVENER, EET
COMMITTEE**

(Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee of the Scottish Parliament), 4 JANUARY 2013
Thank you for asking me to comment on Homecoming 2014. I am now in a position to do this from a clan perspective.

Centralized Gatherings and Homecoming

Centralized gathering events in Scotland do not have a good record. Gathering 2009 was a great occasion promoting Scotland's image and increasing tourism revenue. But it was financially unsound, which has left a questionable legacy. The proposed gathering in Stirling planned for 2014 did not even get off the blocks. Part of the problem lies in the fact that there is no cultural and historical tradition for these big centralized clan events in Scotland out with clan lands.

There is one further problem with any centralized gathering and that is to do with the creditors from Gathering 2009. Until such time as they are compensated in some way, any centralized gathering is always going to be dogged with controversy. These creditors took a hit of some £300,000 so that Edinburgh could benefit to the tune of some £10 million. That will always count against any future gathering in the city, particularly if public money is involved.

Edinburgh is a world famous destination city, which resonates with millions of people around the world, not just the clans. It is a great shame that it cannot host an international clan gathering for the foreseeable future because of the problems associated with 2009, which are purely financial.

Bannockburn 2014

After the demise of the proposed gathering at Stirling in 2014 a second plan for a gathering type event was drawn up quickly and efficiently by the Homecoming team. This is to revolve around a re-enactment of the battle of Bannockburn scheduled by the National Trust at the battlefield on 28-30 June 2014.

Feedback from overseas clan groups indicates that a re-enactment with a clan village will not be enough to bring the diaspora to Scotland. At our 2012 clan conference in Atlanta, the idea of a re-enactment as a 'clan event' in 2014 was not particularly well received, this surprised me.

A minimum of two years is needed to promote these sorts of events to the clans overseas. They have to be sure that what they are getting

is worth paying for, often with a family. We are now well within the two years period and we don't know what is really going to happen at Bannockburn apart from the re-enactment.

Because 2009 was so successful operationally, the feeling in the USA and Australia is that only a gathering on that scale will bring people in large numbers to Scotland. But, within Scotland, such an event is controversial because of the creditors. That is the dilemma.

About £50 million accrued to Scotland as a result of Homecoming 2009, a sizeable amount of which can be directly attributed to the constant marketing of the Gathering throughout 2008. Essentially the clans made a serious contribution to Homecoming 2009 on the back of the Gathering.

The Regions

The overseas clan's folk want a large centralized gathering, but there is no doubt that the clans here would appreciate more support at a regional level. It is here that clanship really resides. Many clans are integrated with local communities through chiefs, various societies and Highland Games. They contribute in numerous ways to the local economy and finance local heritage projects (such as museums), which attract visitors. An example in 2012 was the gathering of clan Maclean on Mull which brought some 1000 people to the island of which 75% were from overseas. This gathering lasted three to four days. It was centered around the chief's home at Duart castle and brought considerable revenue and publicity.

The regional clan aspect of any Homecoming is obviously important, but it is not clear as to how this will manifest itself in 2014. It would appear that regional events have to be pretty substantial to qualify for any sort of grant. There has been talk of a marketing campaign covering all Highland Games which would be well received. There might be a regional fund to enable clans to stage gatherings at or around clan seats and highland games. But I am not sure how much of a reality these good intentions are.

Perhaps one of the reasons why there is a lack of clarity about 2014 is that it is not clear who is actually in charge. Is it CEO Event Scotland, CEO Visit Scotland or Director Homecoming? But these competent organizations are agencies, without executive responsibility. Somebody somewhere should take overall charge, I would suggest.

Summary

In summary, it is worth noting that many clan chiefs attend large gatherings of clans folk in the USA, Canada and Australia, and have done so for the last 50 years. Some of these events attract 30-40,000 people. Yet in Scotland, we seem to be dogged by difficulties. If these centralized events in Scotland are to be successful in the future and be properly supported by the clans, the following needs consideration:

The creditors from 2009 ought to be paid, or compensated in some way, otherwise centralized gatherings will always be controversial, particularly in Edinburgh.

In order to really attract overseas Scots in large numbers any centralized event needs to be based primarily around an International Clan Gathering. The concept is sound and was proven in 2009. Infrastructure and good transport access are also key factors in deciding a location.

There must be clarity as to how the regions would benefit from any centralized international signature event.

There should be one person in overall charge of the whole project and it should be clear who that person is.

5. There should be someone with a good understanding of the diaspora who physically goes to selected clan events in the USA, Canada and Australia from Scotland. This would be part of a professional marketing effort to support any signature event in Scotland at which an overseas clan presence is desired.

The foregoing points are made based on a wealth of experience amongst clan chiefs and international clan associations, which can be likened to a worldwide network of active people who are passionate about their heritage and Scottish ancestry.

SUBMISSION FROM STANDING COUNCIL OF SCOTTISH CHIEFS SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs (SCSC) is a non-political organisation. It and many of its members have close links to independent Clan-based organisations, both at home and overseas and the umbrella organisations.

Chiefs and Heads of Families have arranged Clan Gatherings for their Diaspora for many years. These events bring much-needed tourism and economic benefits, not only to businesses in the Clan heartlands, but also to Scotland as a whole. This is repeat business that could, and should, be exploited more fully. Although not run by the SCSC, the 2009 International Gathering of the Clans was a

watershed for Scottish Clan Tourism. If the brand was built on successfully, numbers attending in future could be considerably higher. However if a future Gathering is to fulfil its potential, the private sector creditors from 2009 must be reimbursed their losses.

The SCSC was not involved in the arrangements, but was asked for, and provided, advice to Stirling Council on The International Gathering 2014, or Clans 2014. Its cancellation was a huge disappointment, both nationally and internationally.

There are no other centralised clan events being marketed in place of the International Clan Gathering as part of Homecoming 2014. There are individual clan gatherings at a local level, but these are being promoted and marketed by Clan Associations at different times of the year around Scotland and not on any strategic level.

The vast majority of the Diaspora who attend these events cannot afford to take the time off, or make an expensive visit to Scotland more than occasionally. They tend to arrange these visits to coincide with Clan activities, and short notice of major changes of plan has a disproportionately negative effect.

The SCSC does not have the professional competence to comment on marketing and promotional issues to do with the re-enactment of the Battle of Bannockburn 2014. It does, however, have a wide-ranging knowledge of the Diaspora.

The SCSC is of the opinion that it is now too late to plan any other events around Bannockburn 2014 to attract the US Diaspora. Time is too short. Overseas clansfolk need at least two years' lead-time, but preferably longer.

The role of the SCSC in Bannockburn has yet to be fully determined, as there has only been one general meeting and, to date, no meetings of the steering group.

The SCSC believes that Bannockburn will be successful for the home market, but the event as it stands may not be large enough to bring the same numbers of the Diaspora to Scotland as occurred in 2009. Nor should it, as the site is too small to hold that number.

The SCSC believes there would be an economic benefit in mounting large, centralised International Clan Gatherings in the future, but they will need very careful consideration. They should be run by the private sector, with the SCSC in an advisory role, and with the full support of central and local government and the public sector.

A. The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs (SCSC) was founded in 1952. The Objects of the Council, which is non-political, are to consider matters affecting Scottish Chiefs and the Clans and Names which they represent

and to submit their views and interests to HM Government, to the Scottish Government, to local authorities, to tourist authorities, to the media and to associations connected with Clan and Family in the UK and overseas.

Chiefs and heads of Clans, Families and Names, have been heavily involved in ancestral tourism. They have arranged Clan Gatherings for their Diaspora for many years. These events bring much-needed tourism and economic benefits, not only to businesses in the Clan heartlands, but also to Scotland as a whole. Those attending will usually visit other places as well. This is repeat business that could and should be exploited more fully.

SCSC research reveals that Clan Gatherings make substantial financial contributions to local areas – mainly through hotels, catering and transport, without grants or help of any kind from the centre. Recent examples are: 900 Camerons, £300,000 to Fort William; 200 MacPhersons, £100,000 to Newtonmore; and 250 Elliots, £75,000 to Newcastleton.

In 2012, the Clan Maclean Gathering based at the Chief's home on Mull attracted 1000 people from around the world, bringing some £700,000 to the island. Working with local businesses, this Gathering was helpfully scheduled in the off-peak month of May when there was less pressure on accommodation and infrastructure.

Clan Gatherings in the regions bring publicity, regional affinity, community spirit, a sense of belonging, genealogy, education, research, footfall to local shops and Highland Games. Some clans run museums at no cost to the taxpayer, such as Clan Armstrong in Langholm. Others run heritage projects, such as the Clan Sinclair Heritage Trust, which has raised one million pounds for the restoration of Girnigoe Castle on the remote coast of Caithness. Whether it be gatherings, museums, or heritage projects, Chiefs and Clans operate like small businesses in the rural economy of Scotland.

The SCSC and many of its members have close links to independent Clan-based organisations overseas and the umbrella organisations - in particular the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (COSCA) in the USA and in Australia, the Scottish Australian Heritage Council (SAHC). The feeling of kinship between many in the Diaspora and the Clan or Family back in Scotland remains very strong. For them that is personified in the Chief, or Head of the Family.

B. The Gathering 2009

The SCSC was happy to support the International Gathering of the Clans based in Holyrood Park in Edinburgh, as part of The Homecoming 2009. Its composition and connections brought added value to the occasion. That Gathering was organised by a private company called 'The Gathering 2009 Ltd', in which the SCSC had no financial, nor management interest. It was a totally separate organisation. Nothing on this scale had been undertaken before and the unique two-day event, with its Royal Patronage, was a resounding success, with about 50,000 thousand people from 40 countries around the world attending. There were some 300 Clan and Family groups from across Scotland, with 125 separate Clan tents in the "Clan Village" and an array of tartans, kilts, and re-enactment groups.

Given the nature of the challenges posed by the uniqueness of this event, it is perhaps not surprising that disappointingly Gathering 2009 Ltd. collapsed owing some £344,000 to numerous private sector creditors. This has cast a cloud over the event. However it must be remembered that it exceeded the expectations of the Diaspora and was a life-changing experience for many people.

This event generated an estimated £10.4 million boost for the Scottish economy, of which £8.8 million came to Edinburgh. This was a phenomenal return on public monies invested and showed what could be achieved. There was a 98% satisfaction with 80% wanting another Gathering. Not surprisingly, even then, people were talking about something similar in 2014.

The event was a watershed for Scottish Clan Tourism. If the brand was built on successfully, numbers attending in future could be considerably higher. However if a future Gathering is to fulfil its potential, the 2009 creditors must be reimbursed their losses.

Gathering 2009 was preceded the day before by the first ever Clan Convention, organised by the SCSC in the Parliament. This was attended by over 100 Clan Chiefs. It attracted key leaders within the international clan network and added value to their weekend in Edinburgh. This, too, was a notable success and demonstrated how much could be achieved with the public sector working together with the private sector.

C. Stirling 2014

The Intellectual Property Rights to Gathering 2009 were purchased by Stirling Council with the intention of staging a similar International Gathering of the Clans on 11-13 July 2014 to coincide with the Stirling Highland Games. The SCSC was not involved in the arrangements, but was asked for, and provided, advice.

With Stirling Castle as the backdrop, the event would feature much of what was delivered in 2009 - with one notable addition. Stirling was to link the "2014 International Gathering" to the commemoration of the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn, which has considerable resonance amongst the clans. The strapline 'Clans 2014' was used to signify that the event would aim at the clan network. The starting gun for 2014 was fired in good time on 9th March 2012, with Stirling Council outlining their intentions in a detailed press release. It was clear at a reasonably early stage what was being offered. Added to this was a re-enactment of the Battle of Bannockburn which was to be organised by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) to run from 28-29 June 2014.

Although the logistics of holding a Gathering on the scale of 2009 at Stirling was always questionable, there appeared to be the political will for such an event and it looked an attractive proposition. Given the enthusiasm of the Diaspora, some Clans, which have a regular pattern of Clan Gatherings that did not include anything in 2014, started to reorganise their schedules to attend this event and groups began booking accommodation and travel.

There were various meetings chaired by Stirling Council to take this significant project forward. However, it became clear by September 2012 that there were difficulties. In early October 2012 the proposed International Clan Gathering was cancelled. Some clans which had made travel arrangements and booked accommodation had to cancel them. Some lost money.

The news of the cancellation does not seem to have been communicated as thoroughly as it should have been. Many Americans still had no idea that the International Gathering at Stirling was not taking place. Even today some Heritage Centres around Scotland think there is to be an event the size of 2009 in Scotland. It is possible that this false start, and lack of will to take the proposal forward, has made the chances of arranging another large international gathering more remote. It is clear that it takes more than two years to arrange such an event. The logistics are crucial and probably mean that such an event on that scale can only be held in Edinburgh, Glasgow or Aberdeen. Inverness would find it difficult to cater for the anticipated numbers. Clans and

Families as a whole are supportive and would like to be associated with such an event.

The cancellation of The Gathering 2014 or Clans 2014 was a huge disappointment to many, both nationally and internationally.

D. Bannockburn 2014

By now the Homecoming Team had moved swiftly to secure an extra day for the Bannockburn re-enactment, coupled with a form of tented village. There was no in-depth consultation with the SCSC. Although not a clan event as such, Bannockburn now became the 'clan signature event' for Homecoming 2014, with an extra day, thus running from 28-30th June, 2014.

The timing of the cancellation of the International Clan Gathering was unfortunate. The Stirling 2014 package was due to be fully announced three weeks later at a joint COSCA/SCSC clan conference at the Stone Mountain Highland Games in Atlanta, on 20th October 2012.

Attendees at this Clan conference were key leaders in the US clan network. Some had come from as far as California and Colorado. Most of those present were in Edinburgh in 2009. These clan leaders are fundamental to the clan network. If they are not persuaded of the merits of an event or a course of action then there is no 'buy-in' by the clan members at large.

They were surprised and disappointed to hear that the proposed International Gathering had been replaced, not by a Clan event, but by a battle re-enactment. Most had anticipated a re-run of Gathering 2009 in Stirling, and the watered down plans were not well-received. As far as the leaders of the US clan network were concerned, 2009 was a magical formula that worked and had considerable worldwide appeal. What was on offer now did not have the same appeal. Some ten Chiefs including the Convenor of the SCSC saw their disappointment, as did the President and board members of COSCA.

NTS is shortly to announce full details of the events on offer at Bannockburn. The emphasis will be on the battle re-enactment, which will be spectacular. But without the spectacle of a Highland Games, it remains unclear how the Clans fit in beyond a clan village, which may itself be limited due to the terrain. Whatever the package, it will not be big and wide-ranging enough to be called a Clan Gathering on the scale of the one in 2009.

The SCSC understands that there are no other centralised clan events being marketed in place of the International Clan Gathering, as part of Homecoming 2014. There are individual clan gatherings at a local level, but these are being promoted and marketed by Clan Associations at different times of the year,

around Scotland, and not on any strategic level.

The clans that were prepared to change their plans to fit with the Homecoming are no longer prepared to do so and it is too late to make changes now. The vast majority of the Diaspora who attend these events cannot afford to take the time off, or make an expensive visit to Scotland more than occasionally. They tend to arrange these visits to coincide with Clan activities and short notice of major changes of plan has a disproportionately negative effect.

E. What promotion and marketing should be undertaken to promote the Bannockburn event and other supporting events to potential US visitors?

The interest of the Committee in the US market is noted from the above question.

Well over half of the participants in any individual clan gathering in Scotland are normally from the USA. In some instances it is as high as 80%. The International Gathering in 2009 attracted some 75% of attendees from North America, which includes Canada, but one must not ignore the other countries.

The SCSC does not have the professional competence to comment about marketing and promotional issues to do with the re-enactment of the Battle of Bannockburn 2014. It does however, have a deep knowledge of the Diaspora. The role of the SCSC and indeed COSCA is to assess the information available and make recommendations to their constituents.

As an observation, it would appear that apart from a dramatic Bannockburn website, there is little information on the internet to encourage or help visitors from overseas in making a decision on whether to come to the re-enactment, and base themselves in the Stirling area. There is no exposure of the event on any social networking site, which would create interest and discussion.

Gathering Ltd did its own marketing in 2009. The type and nature of any marketing will depend on the nature of the event and its size. Bannockburn should be a great success, but if 25,000 people are trying to get onto a site that holds only half that number, it is likely to be remembered more for the problems than the event itself.

F. What further events should be planned around the Bannockburn event in order to attract the US Diaspora?

The SCSC is of the opinion that it is now too late to plan any other events around Bannockburn 2014 to attract the US Diaspora. Time is too short. Overseas clans folk need a good two years' lead time. Some Clan societies even plan four or five years ahead of any large-scale gathering. Given the problems associated with 2014, unfortunately many

American Scots are generally disenchanted with what is now proposed.

Also, there are some Americans who feel that Scotland takes the Diaspora for granted, is dismissive of their concerns, and forget that they have choices. This worrying viewpoint needs to be taken on board. The SCSC believes that building excellent long-term relationships are more important to Scotland than, say, a 'Return on Investment', or organizing a clan march so that a target can be met.

Clanship resides out in the regions of Scotland and there may be opportunities to maximize that in 2014. For example, there is a well coordinated schedule of events planned in Lochaber in 2014, involving genealogy, history, presentations, music, book readings, Highland Games and Clan Gathering. This is all specifically aimed at the Diaspora, and yet no grant has been forthcoming. This project is entirely self funded and could attract upwards of 3000 people.

Another example is Glamis Castle in Angus. They plan to run a Clan Gathering based on their successful event in 2012, which attracted 20,000 people. This Gathering could have become International, but now there is not enough time to attract overseas American Scots.

Glamis has applied for a grant from Event Scotland for 2014, but it is unclear even at this late stage whether the grant will be realized. The application process appears to be too long and drawn out. It cannot be stressed strongly enough that if an international clan presence is required, then two years' lead-time is needed and the main blocks, particularly finance, need to be firmly in place.

There has been some discussion about enhancing local Highland Games with centralized funding. This would have a popular regional impact for Homecoming 2014. Unfortunately this concept does not seem to have been developed very much, if at all. To help with local Highland Games in 2014 only, and not on an annual basis, would be discriminatory and cause more resentment than joy.

Even if the Glamis Gathering were to go ahead and the Highland Games proposal progressed, these are not compelling reasons for Americans to come to Scotland at this late stage. Doubtless some would come, but not on any large scale.

G. What is the role of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs in the steering group in relation to Bannockburn 2014?

The SCSC has attended one general meeting about Bannockburn and two working group meetings. These were mainly concerned with the broad prospect of the re-enactment which is primarily NTS business. The SCSC has been invited to sit on the steering group, but what role it can play has yet to be fully determined. To date, there have been no meetings of the steering group.

Once the steering group is up and running, the SCSC can advise on what is being planned for 28-30th June, 2014. We have no doubt that the battle re-enactment will be spectacular. But the SCSC cannot comment on the other aspects, such as a Clan tented area, as there are no visible plans for this yet. Neither can we comment on the food and drink facilities, music, or the medieval village.

It is emphasized that the SCSC has no expertise in setting-up and running such events. But it can offer opinions about the likely views of the Diaspora. The SCSC believes that Bannockburn will be successful for the home market, but the event as it stands may not be large enough to bring the same numbers of the Diaspora to Scotland as occurred in 2009. Nor should it, as the site is too small to hold that number.

H. Conclusion

The SCSC welcomes and fully supports the aims and objectives of the Scottish Government to bring more tourists to Scotland, whether it be through clan events, or in other ways.

It is appreciated that the Scottish Government and its agencies are doing more to engage with the Clans here and abroad than ever before. This is a positive step, but is very much new territory and a learning process for all parties. Inevitably some matters will not run smoothly immediately.

The approach to this whole project could have been better. Instead it was complicated by the financial fallout from 2009. The planning and engagement with the Clans for 2014 has been mixed and needs to be improved. Despite assertions that COSCA was part of the 'partnership', very little communication has actually taken place with them except via the SCSC.

The Scottish Government needs to decide what events are historically appropriate and relevant to attract the Scottish Diaspora. There is no doubt that many people, whether part of the Diaspora or not, will come to Scotland for such events. However if a substantial Clan and Family presence is appropriate, it should work with the SCSC and its members from a very early stage, to maximize economic benefits for Scotland as a whole. That is surely more desirable and appealing than being presented with events into which the clans are expected to opt.

There are lessons that need to be learned from the way the approach to 2014 was managed. The whole aspect of future Gatherings should be discussed and assessed objectively by the key players involved, of which the SCSC is one. How often should such events occur, and, if so, where and when? How should they be organized? What other events, such as clan conventions, should be considered? How should they fit with the main program? Whoever is in charge needs to appoint an Events Company very early on, so that work can begin immediately with interested parties. The SCSC believes that any such wide-ranging event in the future should be run by the private sector, with the SCSC in an advisory role, but with the full support of central and local government and the public sector, and announced at least two years in advance.

Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs
February 2013

Clan MacAlpine Society Information

Website: www.macalpineclan.com

Mail: Clan MacAlpine Society
2380 Saddlesprings Drive
Alpharetta, GA 30004
USA

Contributions: Can be made payable to:

Clan MacAlpine Society
c/o Kenneth McAlpine, Treasurer
32682 Rosemont Drive
Trabuco Highlands, CA 92679-3386
USA

