

# *The Sgian Dubh*

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**Clan Morrison Society of North America**

<https://clanmorrison.net/>

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**Morrison, Morison, Murison, Gilmore, Gilmour, Brieve, MacBrieve, Judge**

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## **Dun Eistein bridge at risk**



Photo by Matt Cranson

**Heather Jossely-Cranson, a Morrison on her mother's side, and her daughter Seraphina, on the bridge to Dun Eisetin in 2014.**

# Future of bridge to our past

## *Support grows for repairs to access to Dun Eistein*

By James Morrison

Michael Morrison of Comfort, Texas, was enchanted by Dun Eistein, calling the windswept outcrop at the end of Scotland's Isle of Lewis a "magical place." Sean Morrison of Henderson, Nevada, declared his visit to the historical refuge of Clan Morrison the "most spectacular trip of my life."

With the news that the footbridge to Dun Eistein is in desperate need of repair, members of the Clan Morrison Society of North America are sharing memories of their visits to the ruins of the medieval fort where ancient Morrisons would seek refuge from their enemies.

The ~~clan~~ society is trying to raise at least \$20,000 to help restore the bridge, which was dedicated July 24, 2002. The cost of repairs to the 40-foot-long walkway is estimated at about \$50,000. Society Chairman Michael Morrison called the fundraising effort, "essential to preserve our heritage."

"We are linked by blood to this land, and it would be negligent on our part to allow the bridge to be shut down because it has fallen into disrepair," he wrote in his column in this edition of the newsletter.



**Heather Morrison on Dun Eistein**

Society members have been posting photographs and descriptions of their visit to the Dun Eistein on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cmsna/> and pledging support for repairs to the bridge.

Heather Morrison of Dobbs Ferry, NY, posed by the famous ancient stone monument on a visit two years ago.

For Lynn Jones, a society member from Texas, her trip to was almost an other-worldly experience.





**Lynn Jones with her father's flag**

Her father arranged to have an American flag sent to the moon on a lunar expedition, and she brought that flag to Dun Eistein.

“My Morrison ancestors built bridges across rivers and my father built bridges to the stars,” she wrote. Her visit to Dun Eistein was on a “rain-soaked, cloudy day” in August, 2023.

“And to represent how far the progeny of our Morrison ancestors have traveled these last several centuries and the many contributions they’ve made to the world, I took my father’s flag that traveled from the earth to the moon and back,” she wrote.

“For a brief time, it sat on the moon in the lunar lander. We still look at the same moon that our most ancient of ancestors looked at.

“So, filled with gratitude and pride, I went ‘home’ for my dad and his forefathers knowing [that] we stand on the shoulders of every one who came before us.

“If they had not been, I would not be.”



**Sean Morrison trudges toward the stone monument on his “spectacular trip.**

Although rocky, barren and wind-battered, Dun Eistein is rich as both a symbol of the hearty past of the ancient Morrisons who fled to the sea stack in times of trouble and of the present shared by Morrisons worldwide who have traveled to the northern cliffs of Lewis walked into history.

The Dun Eistein bridge, a steel structure that spans the 40 feet gap across a deep ravine that drops about 50 feet at low tide, opened 22 years ago with help from the Clan Morrison Society of North America.

“The bridge was dedicated ... in a ceremony attended by Morrisons from around the world,” wrote Jeff Moore, society treasurer at the time.

[https://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/magazine/augsep2002/dun\\_eistein.htm](https://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/magazine/augsep2002/dun_eistein.htm)

He noted that the society raised more than \$30,000 for a preliminary archaeological study in 1999. That initial effort led to more than two decades of study that has revealed a site as old as the Iron Age and as recently inhabited as the 17th Century.

“An investigation uncovered pottery remains, flint tools, pieces of rusted iron, and, most surprisingly, a lead pistol shot that had never been fired,” according to the British travel site, Britain Express.

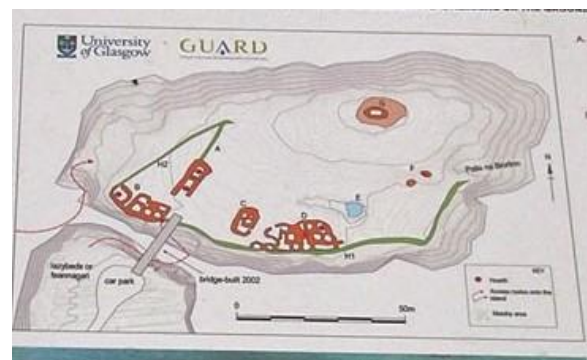
<https://www.britainexpress.com/scotland/Outer-Hebrides/dun-eistein.htm>

The University of Glasgow’s Dun Eistein Archaeology Project, which has conducted extensive research of the area, called it an “exceptional site.”

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/archaeologyresearch/projectarchive/duneistein/>

“The excavations ... have shown that Dun Eistein stands at the end of a long tradition of clan strongholds seen in the MacLeod lordship of the western seaboard of northwest Scotland in the medieval and early post-medieval periods.

“The [sea] stack was in repeated use as a refuge in times of trouble in the 16th and early 17th centuries, but it also functioned as a power center and was caught up in the wider political scene of the time.”



**A map of Dun Eistein displayed at the site.**

# From the Chairman

**By Michael Morrison**

*Chairman, Clan Morrison Society of North America*

The society held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August at the Colorado Scottish Festival in Denver. Though there was a meager turn out, it was a very successful event thanks in no small part to Ann and Rachel Morrison who traveled from out of state to man the Morrison tent. Andrew Morrison, Clan Morrison's regional chieftain for North America, was the event's guest of honor. Without Ann and Rachel, Andrew's part in the event could not have taken place.

Over the last several years, most of the AGM events have been held on the East Coast. However, the board of directors has taken steps to ensure that there is representation in all corners of the nation. It is a difficult undertaking without volunteers heeding the call and serving as conveners.

As chairman of the society, I have committed to attend and personally conduct each AGM. I am pushing for the meetings to be held in a new place every year for the foreseeable future. Whether you wear a kilt or not or

have any affiliation with the greater society, it's important that you attempt to attend one when it comes to your area. By extension we would love to be able to hold international events that boast attendance from Morrisons from all parts of the world.

The society is still working on the Dun Eistein bridge restoration project. Communication with the landowner and construction agency is slow, but progress is being made. The latest estimates for the cost of the restoration are approximately \$50,000.

While the society helped fund the original construction of the bridge in 2000, we have no official capacity when it comes to ownership of the bridge. That being said, the bridge leads to Dun Eistein, the ancestral Morrison stronghold from which we take our motto.

We are linked by blood to this land, and it would be negligent on our part to allow the bridge to be shut down because it has fallen into disrepair.

The Board is seeking to raise \$20,000 or more to be used for repairs. This will ensure that future generations have access to the dig site. The society is currently researching which fundraising platform best suits our needs. If you

feel drawn to donate now, please reach out to [clanmorrison2019@gmail.com](mailto:clanmorrison2019@gmail.com).

The society is a 501c3 organization and all donors will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

## **‘Gilmore’ tartan made for Masons**



In my last column, I discussed the discovery of a fake Gilmore tartan that was advertised on the Internet by a Pakistani firm. I recently discovered that the plaid wasn't a Gilmore tartan after all.

It is a legitimate design created by a textile artist and musician named Anne Carroll Gilmour <https://rb.gy/5ypv3i> for the Freemasons. Anne is a society member, originally from historic Williamsburg, Virginia, where she

met Williamsburg's master Scottish weaver Norman Kennedy.

"There was no turning back," she said, explaining she has been "hooked" on weaving and textiles ever since.

As a teenager, Anne moved West with her family. She studied clothing and textiles in college, raised sheep in Wyoming, moved to the Wasatch Mountains in Utah and settled in Brush Prairie, Washington, where she operates her studio.





**Andrew Morrison outside the Morrison Room at London's Caledonia Club**

## Send us a Sign

We will just call it “Morrison Manor.” The elegant Georgian-style townhouse at No. 9 Halkin St., in the posh Belgravia neighborhood of London, is a private club dedicated to homesick Scots who find themselves waylaid in the English capital.

The luxurious Caledonia Club is located in the former home of Hugh Morrison, once one of the richest men in Great Britain, who owned much of



the Scottish Isle of Islay and helped save Stonehenge from modern development in the 1920s.

Morrison was a member of the British Parliament, representing the English town of Salisbury, the home of Stonehenge. Previously he served as a member of Parliament from Wilton.

Morrison built the grand home in Belgravia in 1910 and lived there until he died in his London townhouse in 1931.

The Caledonia Club bought the house in 1946, six years after its original location near St. James Park took a direct hit from Nazi bombs during the Battle of Britain in 1940.

Today, the Morrison name is remembered inside the club with a plaque designating the Morrison Room, one of several elegant reception rooms.

In the photo, our clan chieftain Andrew Morrison, the viscount Dunrossil, raises a toast outside the Morrison room, which, according to the plaque, used to be the club's smoking room.



## Volunteers needed to help the clan grow

The Clan Morrison Society of North America needs you!

We have openings on the executive board for a vice president and treasurer, and we always need conveners who will pitch a Morrison tent at Scottish festivals.

If you can help, please email Society Chairman Michael Morrison at [clanmorrison2019@gmail.com](mailto:clanmorrison2019@gmail.com)

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## Correction

The Sgain Dubh incorrectly identified Andrew Morrison in the summer newsletter. Andrew, the viscount Dunrossil, is Clan Morrison's regional chieftain for North America.

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# Jim Morrison, former clan chief, dies

As chairman of the Clan Morrison Society of North America, James Morrison was a mentor to many and an inspiration to all who knew him in the Scottish-American community.

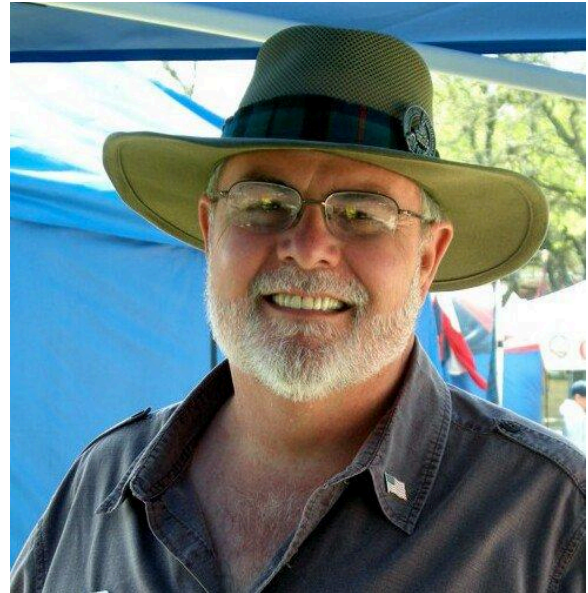
“Jim was a kind and generous man with a quick smile and a hearty laugh,” said Ann Morrison, who met him at the San Antonio, Texas, Scottish games in 2008. “Jim loved his role in the clan society.”

Jim, the society chairman from 2009 to 2011, helped Ann and her husband Alan prepare to take over as conveners in Colorado.

“He gave us tent banners and shared numerous documents with content about the clan, the society and the responsibilities of being a festival convener. He was super helpful,” she said.

“He was passionate about clan history and loved to share all of his knowledge,” added Rachel Morrison, who served as convener for New Mexico and also in Colorado.

“Jim was a gentle giant of a man, yes with a tough-cop kind of no-nonsense approach but loved to joke and laugh.”



**James Martin William Morrison**

Edwin Holcombe, a former society chairman, remembered Jim as a “great help to me over the years.”

Jim, who died July 8 at the age of 73 in Hobbs, New Mexico, was a retired captain with the Hobbs Police Department and received an award for valor in 1986.

He was an avid fly-fisherman, ham-radio operator, firearms expert, storm chaser, photographer, kilt maker, genealogist and drone flier.

Jim is survived by a son, Rick Morrison of Midland, TX, and a “host of cousins and family members,” the Hobbs News-Sun reported.

# Outside the box

## *New school year and a focus on the past*

**By Buddy Morrison**

*Professional genealogist*

As students begin an exciting new academic year, it would be awesome if a growing number of them could understand their past from their families while still embracing their future in knowing their genealogy. Imagine if they learned how their parents and grandparents approached getting ready for a new school year when they were young. Hearing the stories of how their parents not only went to school but also where and what obstacles they faced. We all have heard similar stories of how students, years ago, would help on the farms before and after school or the stories of long walks in the snow uphill both ways in the winter months to get to school.

My wife was telling me that, as a young child, she would go on genealogy adventures with her aunt. They would travel to small churches where relatives that her aunt was researching were buried. There was a contest to see who could find the grave the fastest, and then her aunt would talk about the importance of the person they were finding and how that ancestor was related to the family. The trips always included ice cream on the way home. It was a particular time to learn about family and be together.

The practice of tracing one's roots has gained popularity in recent times with so many new television shows and ads about lineages. With an increasing desire for all people to understand their heritage, there is a need for self-discovery, and genealogy could and should be used to help significantly impact our students' lives as they head back to school. As we progress through life, we all should have an inherent desire to know where we all come from, should it surface in conversations. It is proven that children who are more aware of their origins have more respect for others. Genealogy in today's world can provide a captivating avenue for students to embark on a journey for self-discovery by investigating their ancestral past. It is a wonderful opportunity for families to spend time together and navigate the readily available online tools, historical records, and local libraries.

The younger generation can dive into history like never before. We all need to understand the past to help understand where we have come from as a community.

Teachers of history should also recognize the educational potential of genealogy. Trying to integrate the exploration into the classroom enhances students' historical awareness and encourages thinking on research projects. By exploring their family trees at home, the students are better prepared to learn about other subjects. Providing a social, cultural, and geographical context in which their ancestors lived gives them a better approach to forging a personal connection to history. There are special considerations that should be made in school for students who may not have the opportunity to research their family because of adoption, estrangement from family, or other separations that prohibit this research.

## **A personal journey**

In an increasingly smaller world, younger students are becoming more conscious of their cultural identity. By delving into genealogy, they could gain a more significant appreciation for their heritage and the diversity that enriches their lives and learn about their ancestors' traditions, customs and struggles. This process can instill a sense of pride in one's background and promote a deeper understanding and respect for other cultures celebrated throughout the school year.

On a personal note, it would be great to see schools incorporate a genealogy-related club activity into a workshop. Students could explore various cultures and celebrate with their classmates' diversity by discussing their families' ancestral backgrounds. This would create a more cultural appreciation and nurture an inclusive environment within educational institutions.

The study of genealogy is not just a personal journey. It can also inspire career choices. As students uncover their family history, they may develop a passion for Researching history and archiving or even becoming professional genealogists. These budding genealogists have a unique opportunity to transform their lives into rewarding career that helps others connect with their roots and preserve their legacies.

Please feel free to contact me about how this methodology all comes together. To learn how I can help as a genealogist to help you with helping you to dig outside the box and find your story that can be shared for many generations to come. Feel free to contact me at my website, [SouthernShoresGenealogy.com](http://SouthernShoresGenealogy.com) (my website) email [SouthernShoresGenealogy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthernShoresGenealogy@gmail.com).



# Out and About

## *Clan Morrison at Scottish festivals*



### **‘Unfailing hospitality’**

**Arthur Morrison and his sister Fran greet visitors to the Morrison tent at the Stone Mountain games in Georgia in October. Actually, they are very nice people and are just having fun, seriously. The 19th century folklorist Alexander Carmichael wrote that the Morrisons are noted for their “wit and wisdom” and “unfailing hospitality.**



## **Greetings from the Annual General Meeting**

**Clan Morrison and friends gather at the Annual General Meeting at the Colorado Scottish Festival in Denver in August. Left to right: Rachel Morrison; Sarah Morrison; Society Chairman Michael Morrison; Donald Draper Campbell; Viscount Andrew Morrison, Clan Morrison's regional chieftain for North America; Jonathan Wilson; and conveners Ann and Alan Morrison with the Westies, Allie and Sophie.**





## Blue ribbons

**Team Morrison with their first place blue ribbons after winning the Clan Kilted One-Mile Relay race at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in July. Left to right: Kyle Ness, Simon Nakashima, Christian Knight, Ryan Towler, Kendal Shirley and convener Coit Morrison.**





## Virginia gentlemen

**The Morrison tents at the Virginia Scottish Games over the Labor Day weekend in The Plains, Va. Left to right: Michael, James, Tom and Peter Morrison. Tom is wearing the tartan of his pipe band. The rest are in the modern Morrison red.**





## **Morrison on the march**

**The McCool family, representing Clan Morrison, and Scott Morrison, in the Morrison red, march in the clan parade at the Covenantor Scottish Festival in Quarryville, Pa., September 7. Donna McCool, who organizes the Morrison tent, is the granddaughter of Anna Eliza Morrison.**

# Rock on

## *Gemstones from Lewis a foundation of Scotland*



### **By Tex Gilmore**

Being a geologist, I'm always interested in finding something new for my collection. I was able to acquire some Lewisian Gneiss collected from Lewis Island. I had no idea that some outcrops make great jewelry, these have been polished and formed as cabochons.

This metamorphic rock is the very foundation of Scotland and is one of the oldest exposed rock formations on Earth at approximately 3 billion years. Lewisian gneiss was used by megalithic cultures to construct the ancient Callanish standing stone circle. These were collected from a specific area that contains a higher percentage of the mineral Epidote making it more desirable for jewelry. Epidote is a light green color. These will go well with the Morrisonite jasper I have in my collection.



# October membership report

## New Life Members:

Louise Rhodes Ogden  
Dr. Kathy Parkison

Maple Grove, MN  
Rensselaer IN

## New Annual Members:

Priscilla Elaine Fauchaux  
John Edwin Gilmore  
Bart Fredrick Maney  
Pamela J. McAlonan  
Aidan Patrick Morrison  
Andrew Craig Morrison  
Bree Juliana Morrison  
Joshua Morrison  
Margie Morrison Richardson  
Michael George Morrison

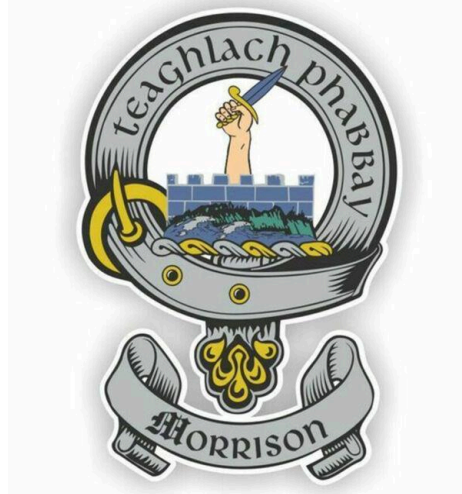
Schertz, TX  
Pueblo, CO  
Sealy, TX  
West Chester, PA  
Birmingham, MI  
Chicago, IL  
Lancaster, VA  
Taylors, SC  
Carrabelle, FL  
Ontario, CN

## Flowers of the Forest:

James Martin William Morrison   Hobbs, NM (Past CMSNA Chairman)  
James Michael Morrison   Downingtown, PA  
Robert H. Krause   Pickens, SC

## Total Membership as of October 5, 2024: 488

Life USA: 388  
Annual USA: 78  
Life Foreign: 15  
Annual Foreign: 7



## CMSNA Executive Leadership

**The Chief of Clan Morrison:** R. Alasdair Morrison of Ruchi

**Chairman:**

Michael S. Morrison

**Vice Chairman:**

Vacant

**Treasurer:**

(Michael S. Morrison, acting)

**Membership:**

William Broome

**Secretary:**

Vacant

**Historian:**

Edmund Potter, PhD

**Chaplain:**

Vacant

**Newsletter Editor:**

James Morrison

**Scholarship Director:**

Robert S. Morrison

**Past Chieftain:**

Anne M. Morrison

**Webmaster:**

William Broome

**Past Chairmen:** Anne Morrison, Chris Gillmore, Arthur Morrison, Edwin F. Holcombe Jr., Jim Morrison, Gerald B. Morrison, Jeffrey Moore, David H. Blain, David R. Gilmour

**Members at Large:** Jan Tremblay, William Hal Morrison Jr.

**Chairman's Advisory Committee:** Edwin Holcombe Jr., Jim Morrison, Robert "Bob" Morrison, David R. Gilmour, Chris Gilmore, Jennifer Wolcott