

WHO ARE THE MACDUFFS TODAY?

Clan MacDuff is one of the most ancient of clans and has a rich, unique history unlike that of any other clan.

The Clan has a membership of nearly 1000 worldwide with members from Canada, Scotland, Australia, and New Zealand as well as the United States. Thanks to the many dedicated members, who are all volunteers, Clan MacDuff is very active and represented at over 50 Highland games and Scottish festivals each year along with other events.

Clan MacDuff had vast land holdings in Fife and Banff. Over 400 surnames are associated with Clan MacDuff or Fife. If your name is on our sept list, found on our "Membership" page, you are eligible to apply for membership. We would love to have you join us. Please remember that there are many variant spellings of a surname. Just because your exact spelling does not appear on our list does not mean that you are not eligible. Please check with us.

HISTORY OF THE MACDUFFS

The Duffs are descended from those original Gaels who inhabited the Highlands of Scotland long before the Roman Invasion, and before the Christian era. Their ancient Gaelic name, Dhuibh, is pronounced Duff, and signifies a dark complected man with dark hair. The first Scottish Highlanders were members of the ancient German Tribes who crossed over the German ocean and

settled first on the east and north coast of the barren island of Caledonia, later moving inland.

The people of Britain and the lowlands of Scotland were originally from France and southern Europe, but the highlanders from the beginning, kept themselves apart, and did not mingle with the lowlanders, whom they hated.

The duffs were of German Catti ancestry, having settled on the shores of Caithness in very early times. With the other Caledonian tribes the duffs fought the roman invaders and thus prevented the foreigners from gaining a foothold in Scotland.

According to an old genealogical manuscript, the Duffs were Mormaers of moray during the era of the Pictish Kings, and were also prominent in Fife and Fothruff. Strath Avon was one of their old neighborhoods, near the Cairngorm Mountains.

The first official record of the thanes of fife was in the year 838 A.D. when Kenneth MacAlpine appointed his governors for the several provinces, Fifus Duffus, or duff of Fifeshire was appointed governor of Fifeshire.

In 1039 Queen Gruoch's (travestied by Shakespeare as Lady Macbeth) second husband king Macbeth, Mormaer of moray - who also belonged to the house of duff slew King Duncan and seized upon the throne. Duff, the thane of fife, failed to aid in

building Macbeth's castle, and was exiled by the pretender swore vengeance and drove duff, the thane of fife, into exile.

But upon returning, with an army, duff, the thane, found that Macbeth had murdered Lady MacDuff and several of her children. And attacking Macbeth's castle of Dunsinane, they drove him north into the hills above the Dee River, where duff slew the pretender.

The Clan Duff always marched with their kinsmen, the mackintoshes of clan Chattan, and the Shaws of Clan Quhele in time of war, and it was established that they were not only valiant on the field of battle, but mostly continued to be conscious of and to uphold those fine ideals and traditions that had so long sustained their brilliant ancestors back in the earlier days of Scotland's history.

The direct line of the ancient house of clan duff has been continued in the family of Wemyss.

The priest of Wedale was once Tosach of the ancient Clan, and was connected with Saint Andrews, as were all the tribe of the good Duff, Thane of Fife.

The Piobaireachd of the clan are salutes, gatherings and marches commemorating historic occasions in the past, and Cu'a' Mhic Dhu, or Duff's Lament, is a mournfully beautiful piece of pipe music.

Although events did not occur quite as the bard describes them, Shakespeare's MacDuff was an historic personage.