

Clan Maclean Heritage Trust

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Céad míle fáilte

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A hundred thousand welcomes to all Friends of the Clan Maclean Heritage Trust. We particularly welcome those of you who have joined us during the year.

This newsletter is a catch-up on some of the activities with which we have been involved during 2016, and also a look

forward to the International Clan Gathering and other activities planned for 2017.

Many of you are following the Trust though our Facebook page. If you have a family story to tell, please share it with us. We are keen to feature interesting Macleans as well as the famous ones.

The Trust celebrates 20 years

The Clan Maclean Heritage Trust was established as a charity in 1996 by the Clan Maclean Association to recognise and cherish the heritage of Clan Maclean around the world, as well as in Scotland, and to educate a wider public about it. Its Trustees include ex-officio, the Chief and the President of the Association, along with others nominated by the Chief and the Association.

The Association, in its early days, had attempted this task, including erecting a tombstone at Soroby, Tiree, to the Maclean bard, and publishing historical pamphlets on clan history, including a History of the Rankins.

In 1986, the Association placed an armorial stone



The Pitreavie cairn, erected in 2001, commemorating the Battle of Inverkeithing, 1651

above the entrance to Duart Castle, and in 1992 they restored the ancient Maclean burial ground at Lochaline. But, by 1993, it had become clear that the Fund needed to take a different approach.

The Drimnin cairn to commemorate Charles Maclean, who was killed leading the

Macleans at Flodden, was erected in 1996 (See page 2), the year in which the Trust took over from the Clan Maclean Heritage Fund.

For the following five years, it was led by Major Nicholas Maclean Bristol of Breacachadh Castle.

It contributed to the memorial cairn at Ticonderoga, USA, to the Hector Maclean cairn in Killeen, Australia and built a cairn at Triagh Ghruinneart on Islay.

Many more projects have followed, and we pay tribute to those in the Association who worked so hard in those early years to make the Trust what it is today - an organisation that carries out the Trust's aims and objectives around the world, chaired by The Chief.

The 7th International Clan Maclean Week



The 7th International Clan Maclean Week will be held on the Isle of Mull from Tuesday June the 20th to Sunday June the 25th 2017.

The Gathering will be at Duart Castle on Saturday June the 24th.

The full programme can be found on the www.maclean.org website

*“an exclusive
drinks party or
similar reception
at the 5-yearly
Maclean
International
Gathering on
Mull”*

Heritage Trust Gathering highlights

The Clan Maclean Heritage Trust will have a strong presence at the 2017 International Gathering where we look forward to meeting our new friends and renewing acquaintances of those of long standing.

The Trust Stalls

The Secretary and some of the Trustees will set up a Trust stall in the Aros Hall on Tuesday 20th June, and again at Duart Castle on Saturday 24th June.

This is an opportunity for Friends of the Clan Maclean Heritage Trust to make enquiries about their membership and meet the Trustees. Our displays will be available to all clansmen and clanswomen giving them an opportunity to see the work that the Trust does around the world -and a chance to join.

Visit to Drimnin

The Heritage Trust is working with Mr Derek Lewis, proprietor of the Drimnin Estate, to restore the burial ground of Alan Maclean 'The Survivor'. There will be an opportunity for Friends to see the work done, and to visit the cairn erected by the Trust in 1996.

This trip involves taking a boat from Tobermory on which spaces are limited. Early booking is advised.



**The Drimnin cairn,
erected in 1996,
commemorating
Charles Maclean,
killed at Flodden.**

(Continued on page 3)

The Trust at the Gathering (continued)

Special day at Duart

One of the benefits of Friends membership is that they are invited to a an exclusive drinks party or similar reception at the 5-yearly Maclean International Gathering on Mull.

In 2017, the Chief, Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart and Morven, who is also Chairman of the Heritage Trust, will be taking us on a private tour of the castle, with a close-up view of the important restoration work. This will be followed by afternoon tea.

Battlefield tour

An extra event, if there is sufficient interest, is being planned for those who arrive on Mull over the weekend before the Gathering. This will be on Monday 19th June.

Brigadier John Macfarlane, a Trustee, will lead a tour to Port a' Bheathain, where the MacPhies of Colonsay, who had come cattle-reiving to the Ross of Mull, met their fate at the hands of the Macleans. Details of the battle can be found on page 6. Contact the Secretary for details of the tour.

Burial ground of Alan Maclean 'The Survivor'

The burial ground is need of repair to ensure its survival. The Trust has offered a grant to the land-owner to help cover the costs. Alan Maclean gained his moniker for surviving the Battle of Culloden.



The Lady Maclean Fund

Our congratulations go to Comunn Gàidhealach Mhuile (The Highland Association of Mull) who are this year's winners of The Lady Maclean Award. They also won several solo competitions and the Junior Harmony competition.



The Fund has entered into a 10-year commitment to award a prize, called the Lady Maclean Award, to the Junior Choir that obtains the highest mark in a single competition in the Mull Mòd.

Honourary Friends

From time to time, the Trustees elect Honourary Friends in recognition of their contribution to the Clan Maclean Heritage Trust.



**Ian Maclean (l)
and
Curt Speight(r)**

Curt Speight, President of JR Mapping, seen left with Trustee, Ian Maclean, was appointed in recognition of his contribution to the creation of the very successful Clan Maclean map (Available to purchase through our bookshop on the clan website).

Also recognised has been Doug McLean's significant contribution to the Kilties commemoration, his work on designing the plaque, and the designing, and

then creating of storyboards to illustrate their history, and, more recently, his involvement in doing many, often computer related, behind the scenes.



**Doug and Karen McLean at
Cairn Park in Antigonish,
Nova Scotia**

Cairn Park, Antigonish

Cairn Park, in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, is home to a collection of cairns erected by Scottish clans.

Clan Maclean Atlantic constructed a cairn at Cairn Park, in Antigonish, which was unveiled by Sir Lachlan Maclean in 2009. Construction of the cairn included stones contributed by members of Clan Maclean Atlantic, taken from areas important to local Macleans.

The cairn was dedicated to the Maclean pioneers who settled the Atlantic provinces.

Percy Guthrie and the Maclean Kilties

On 17th September 2016, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the 236th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force, popularly known as the MacLean Kilties, was held at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, New Brunswick.

The highlight of the celebration was the launch of Dr. Paul Belliveau's book *Percy Guthrie and the Maclean Kilties*.

Among the 116 people in attendance were the Hon. Lisa Harris, Minister responsible for Celtic Affairs in the New Brunswick Government; Lt. Col Erik Andresen, CFB Gagetown; Andrea MacLean-Holohan, Clan MacLean Atlantic; Ian MacLean, CMHT, and Mel Fitton, New Brunswick Scottish-Cultural Association.



Percy Guthrie and the Maclean Kilties is available to purchase through on-line stores. The Trust has acquired a number of copies which will be on sale at the 2017 International Clan Gathering.

Piping on Mull and Iona

William MacLean was born in 1878 at Tobermory, Mull, from a Raasay family. He was related to the famous MacKay piping family of that island.



He was taught by his father and Malcolm Macpherson, 'Calum Piobair'. He joined the Cameron Highlanders in 1914 and was pipe major of the 5th Battalion.

He won the Inverness Gold medal in 1901 (Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay), and the Oban in 1912 (MacCrimmon's Sweetheart) and the Clasp in 1913 (Unjust Incarceration).

When aged 77 he made a number of recordings for the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh University, which provide an important link with piping in the 19th century. He composed a number of tunes among which were Raasay Highlanders, Lachlan MacLean, Duart Castle, Battle of Arras and a piobaireachd, Salute to the Children. MacLean died at Kilcreggan in 1957.

In November 2016, the trust made a grant of £500 to the Mull and Iona Schools Pipers as part of our programme of promoting and advancing the education of the public in the history, music and traditions of Clan Maclean.

The Battle of Port a' Bheathain

The beaches of Mull have resounded for centuries to the crunch of raiding birlinns or galleys coming to shore.

Donald Morrison and Archie Maclean, two noted Mull seanchaidhean or tradition-bearers, told the story in fine Mull Gaelic, of an engagement between the MacPhies of Colonsay who came cattle-reiving to the Ross of Mull, and the Macleans at whose hands they met their fate.

Readers can hear one version at:

<http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/251/2>



Port Bheathain
on the Isle of
Mull

The battle was the result of a vendetta arising from the murder of a much-favoured Maclean henchman, a MacGillvray in Glen Cannel, by a mysterious Colonsay man. The man appeared in Mull and enquired where MacGillvray was. When told he was hunting in Gleann Mòr, the man asked 'How will I recognise him?', and received the reply that he would be hunting with a hound which had a white ear.

The man murdered MacGillvray and left his corpse in the Glen but, during his return journey to Colonsay, he stopped at Pennyghael and set fire to a house belonging to MacGillvray's brother.

On his way to the sea, he met a man who was afoot early and, pointing to the burning house, told him to tell the owner that there was a dead dog in Glenmore which he should bury. The murder enraged Maclean of Duart who sent a message to Colonsay asking that the man be returned so that local justice might be done. It is uncertain what happened next.

The MacPhies either dumped the body of the messenger on shore in the Ross of Mull with a willow withy through his two eyes, or possibly executed the Colonsay man in this manner and dumped his body, without trial, on the shores of the Ross.

Whatever happened, the tale recounts that, as a result of this insult, a company of people called 'The Rugged Banner of the Ross of Mull and the

Black Men of Bròlas' (Garbh Bhratach an Rois agus Fir Dhubha Bhròlais) allied themselves to a party of the Macleans of Torloisk who, on receiving news of the incursion(1), arrived on horse-back.

Under the able tactical skill of an Eòlachan (a skilled guide who knew the lie of the land) whom Donald Morrison identified as Lachainn Odhar,(2) the Macleans received their orders. He briefed them that there was an ebbing tide and that the Colonsay birlinns would soon be beached.

The shore would be the killing-ground. Under his direction, the Macleans made a tactical withdrawal to the hills until, pursued by the Colbhasaich (Men of Colonsay) they reached near the site of an ancient religious settlement, Cill a Ghuibean. The Eòlachan had chosen a piece of dead ground where a stop-group of Macleans were placed in an ambush, concealed in the heather between the invaders and their galleys.

The ambush was to be sprung when the group saw the Eolachan's bald head leading the Macleans counter-attack downhill.

On the command of the Eòlachan, the stop-group ambushed the MacPhies. They broke through the ambush, only to find their boats high and dry. Lachlann Mòr MacLean, a great archer, was among the clansmen. He could slice the head off bog-cotton with an arrow from his bow.

With men like him in the company, considerable slaughter of the MacPhies took place at what came to be known as Blàr Port Bheathain(3).

It is said that nine-times-nine bailerfuls of MacPhie fingers and thumbs were gathered after the battle: a folklore motif which occurs fairly frequently in tales of Highland fights involving sea-going vessels.

There may have been a good number of MacPhie survivors but they would find it hard to row home to Colonsay, grasping an oar with three fingers!

1. Recollections of an Argyllshire Drover and Other West Highland Tales. Eric R Cregeen, 2013, p173.

Donald Morrison's Gaelic account of the tale, as recorded, is ambiguous at this point. He says: 'Thruis garbh-bhratach a'Rois's Fir Dhubha Bhròlais's Cloinn Illeathain Thorroisgte. This could be interpreted as 'The Fierce Banner of the Ross gathered both the Black Men of Brolas and the Macleans of Torloisk'. In other words, a form of fiery cross or gathering banner was employed.

2. Donald Morrison (Cregeen, 2013) identifies the Eolachan as Lachlan Odhar. There was a Maclean of that name, Lachlan of Ardchraoshinish, nicknamed Odhar (sallow) who was of the Ross and a noted warrior. He fought at the battle of Glenlivet in 1594.

3. The Battle of Port Bheathain, NGR NM 405 189.

Brigadier John Macfarlane, Trustee



A modern day yacht lies where the birlinns came ashore



Clan Maclean Heritage Trust

Trustees

Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart and Morvern (Chairman)

Mr Nigel Alington

The Very Rev Allan Maclean of Dochgarroch

Mrs Fiona Maclean of Ardgour

Mr Hector McLean

Mrs Vera MacLean

Mr Ian MacLean (Canada)

Mr Alan McLean (France)

Judge Sandra L. McLean (USA)

Mr Noel Robinson (New Zealand)

Brigadier John MacFarlane

Trust Representatives

Peter MacLean (Western Australia)

Marcus MacLean (New South Wales)

Pat McClean (Pacific North-West)

Gordon McLean (Clan Maclean Association in Australia Inc.)

Dr Leslie H. McLean (Clan Gillean USA).

Secretary and Treasurer

William Douglas has continued as Secretary of the Clan Maclean Heritage Trust.

The position of Treasurer lies vacant. The Secretary is the point of contact meantime.

Email: cmht@maclean.org

Principal address

The Gables, Station Road, Balfron, Glasgow G63 0SX

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