



# CLAN MACLENNAN CANADA

Dum Spiro Spero While I breathe, I hope.

## From the President



Greetings to our clan folk. Spring has arrived! In February we saw more than enough snow to make up for last year and this winter with 12 inches falling within 24hrs. We were looking after our grandchildren in London On. then and they loved all the snow especially when a "Snow Day" was called for no school.

We've had our March executive meeting for Clan MacLennan Canada and are well on our way with plans for Chief Ruairidh's Canadian visit. Chief Ruairidh will be attending both Glengarry Highland Games on Aug. 2nd and 3rd and the Fergus Highland Games on Aug. 9th and 10th. There will be a Clan MacLennan Dinner and Ceilidh on the Saturday at both games where Chief Ruairidh will speak and also pipe. We hope that all members of Clan MacLennan Canada and their families will attend one or both Dinners. Tickets will be available soon. The contacts for the Glengarry functions are Marilyn Lawlor and Barbara MacLennan and for the Fergus functions, Melanie McLennan and Barbara MacLennan.

Chief Ruairidh will be the Guest of Honour and speaker at the Tartan Ball on Thursday, Aug 1st at the Metcalfe Centre, Glengarry. Clan MacLennan will be the featured clan at the Glengarry Highland Games this year with speakers at our clan tent being Chief Ruairidh, David MacLennan from Ottawa (speaking on family history), David Anderson of Glengarry Historical Society and Julia Danskin speaking on the history of the kilt. Other attractions are being planned for the MacLennan Clan tent including a slide show of Chief Ruairidh's photography, displays on family history and activities for children.

## 2013 Games Schedule

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| June 8 2013             | <b>Georgetown</b><br>Bob MacLennan and<br>Elizabeth Prebble  |
| June 15 2013            | <b>Cobourg</b><br>John and Barbara<br>MacLennan  |
| July 1, 2013            | <b>Embro</b><br>Gord and Bernice Keane   |
| July 19, 2013           | <b>Cambridge</b><br>Bob MacLennan  |
| Aug 2 & 3, 2013         | <b>Glengarry</b><br>John and Barbara<br>MacLennan, and<br>Marilyn Lawlor                                     |
| August 9, 10 & 11, 2013 | <b>Fergus</b><br>Robin MacLennan, Bob<br>MacLennan, John and Barb<br>MacLennan and Gord and<br>Bernice Keane |

On Aug 4th at the Kirkin'o'The Tartan at St Columba Presbyterian Church, Kirk Hill at 2:00 PM the MacLennan tartan will be the featured tartan and Chief Ruairidh will lead the procession of tartan carriers into the church and will give one of the readings.

We are looking forward to a wonderful summer with good times and new memories to share with our Chief Ruairidh and MacLennan Clan friends.

Cheers, Barbara.

## 50 Years at Baile Mhinistir

*Ruairidh MacLennan*

The coastal path along the Aird Peninsula passes the picturesque bay' of Baile Mhinistir (Bay of the Minister) where, placed alongside a row of stone ruins, lies a small wooden cabin perched above an attractive pebble beach often now referred to as 'Ronnie's Beach'. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the arrival of this rather curious cargo, brought in by sea and built section by section by my Dad, Ronnie MacLennan, with the help of locals and friends.

Born in Edinburgh in 1925, Ronnie, a former Army Physical Training Instructor who served in Germany, France and Belgium during the latter stages of World War II, represented Great Britain as an International Athlete whilst studying Physical Education in Denmark before becoming a PE teacher based between Ullapool and Gairloch. In 1976, after decades of family research, he matriculated Arms and was granted the Chiefship of the Clan MacLennan by the Lord Lyon's Court in Edinburgh. Within a decade the enthusiastic and driven Clan Chief had created a Clan MacLennan Association with active branches throughout Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States as well as Scotland. Between his teaching, Clan work and family life, spending time at Baile Mhinistir was one of his greatest loves. Whether it was the daily ritual of diving off the rocks into the sea at first light, kayaking, tending his once beautiful garden or story telling with friends in the village over a dram, Baile Mhinistir was very much home.

When my Dad died in 1989 after a seven-year battle with leukaemia my Mum, Margaret, was already terminally ill with cancer and died in 1993. The bothy, along with the family home, passed on to my two sisters Kirsteen,

Lorna and myself. Still teenagers at the time, the result was that the bothy went through a long and sad period of neglect whilst waiting for this next generation to gather the skills, resources and enthusiasm to once again bring it back to life. The Chiefship of the Clan passed to me as male heir and, at the age of twelve, I became Scotland's youngest Clan Chief. The media took an active interest in the story of this Schoolboy Clan Chief which was enhanced following the launch of a legal challenge to the Chiefship from an Australian cousin. It would take more than a decade for the challenge to be withdrawn from the Lord Lyon's Court. A number of television documentaries resulted from my story including the filming of a BBC1 documentary entitled 'Wee Chiefy' which focussed on me hosting my first International Clan Gathering at Tulloch Castle, Dingwall in 1990 aged thirteen. The nickname has remained with me ever since, changing to 'Chiefy' when the 'wee' became less appropriate!

Clan Gatherings in Scotland and abroad became part of my life. By the time I had finished School at eighteen I had toured Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. At nineteen, I was guest of honour at one of America's largest Highland Games at Stone Mountain, Atlanta. Being the 24th anniversary of the Games, I enjoyed pointing out that I was the first guest of honour younger than the Games themselves.

Clan visits continue and 2013 will include visits to Canada and Melbourne, Australia attending Clan Gatherings. Enjoyable as they are, these trips can be exhausting. After the usual questions, 'does everyone in Scotland wear the kilt and play the bagpipes?' the next question is often, 'did you inherit and live in a Castle in



*These are a couple of photographs taken at the weekend during our 50th year celebrations of dad building the "bothy" at Shildaig. We were lucky to get a few hours of dry (ish) less stormy weather during what was an otherwise wild weekend. The larger gathering of people are a combination of locals from Shildaig and Dores. The other photo is obviously the family. The event was on Saturday 4th May which was my mother's birthday and exactly 20 years to the day of her burial.*

Scotland?' My standard response is that I did not inherit any such burden but I did inherit, along with my sisters, a very charming bothy on the West Coast. Somewhat bewildered, some will then ask if this is the Clan Seat!

When at home and firmly in the real world I lead a relatively normal life, or so I like to think! After studying at Aberdeen University I trained as a land agent with Strutt & Parker in Aberdeenshire then CKD Galbraith in Inverness. After qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor I took up a position as a Senior Valuer with the District Valuer's Office, part of HMRC, based in Inverness. I specialise in rural estate and farm valuations, compulsory purchase and Crofting and cover the Highlands and Islands and Morayshire with a Scotland-wide remit as agricultural valuation advisor. Aside from work hobbies include hill walking, landscape photography, kayaking and piping. I have been with the Officer Training Corps (OTC) and Territorial Army (now the Army Reserves) for fifteen years, presently with the 51st Highland Division, 7th Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland where most of my time is now spent with the Pipes & Drums. Since taking up piping at the age of ten I became Pipe Major of my School band at Fettes College in Edinburgh and have played at the Nova Scotia, Virginia, Luxemburg, Basel and Edinburgh Military Tattoos, on the bridge of HMS Edinburgh, at Birkhall for Prince Charles and at the Shieldaig Fete! The pipes that I play are very much at home in Shieldaig as they were previously owned by the late Murdo Matheson (Mort Ali), a former resident of the village and close friend of my parents.

With the family home in Dores on the shores of Loch Ness, family and friends have increasingly visited the bothy over the years and the neglected building has slowly been transformed into a loved and cared for little cabin once again. In recent years it has been largely re-

panelled externally, reroofed with box profile sheeting, equipped with a wood burning stove, gas oven cooker, rainwater harvesting water supply, solar power and a dry compost toilet. It is now very much an off-grid 'eco shed' with the intention being to continue to improve it whilst ensuring that it retains its quaint and unique charm. Aside from work and other commitments, visits to the bothy are a welcome and treasured experience often combining some DIY on the bothy with some hill walking and socialising in the village. My two sisters, Kirsteen, an air hostess with British Airways, and Lorna, a nurse at Raigmore Hospital, along with myself hold many fond memories of our childhood trips to Baile Mhinistir and continue to cherish time spent there. Our sociable nature has resulted in us developing close ties with many folk within the village and has resulted in us feeling a sense of belonging to Shieldaig, not just Baile Mhinistir. It is this interaction and the friendships created that inspire many visits west and make them more memorable.

Whether it be dinner in the Coastal Kitchen being entertained by Frank, drinking too much ale at the bar and heckling the Coast Road Truckers, talking to Harra by his front door about his adventures kayaking with our Dad, winning the Tug O' War with our imported team from Dores (a few years ago now), making fools of ourselves in the boat race (more than once) or a visit to Nanny's catching up on local news whilst eating too much cake, it is these experiences that make our trips west all the more enjoyable.

To celebrate the 50th year anniversary of the bothy we plan to mark the occasion this summer with a BBQ at Baile Mhinistir followed by some music if we can find a good band locally! We then look forward to another 50 years.

## Clan MacLennan Canada Statement of Receipts and Disbursements

September 8, 2012 - March 15, 2013

### Receipts

Bank Balance September 8, 2012		2,819.73
Members Dues -		
2012-13	30.00	
2013-14	50.00	
2014-15	30.00	110.00
Bank Interest	.69	110.69
		2,930.42

### Disbursements

Newsletters, Directory, New Member Kits, etc.		
New cheques		53.64
Bank Balance March 15, 2013	2,876.78	
Royal Bank GIC		3,000.00
Branch Total		5,876.78



## TELEGRAM

Sunday 21st April 2013 Torridon House Hotel, Ross-shire, Scotland, Chief Ruairidh D G MacLennan of MacLennan and Miss Jillian A Ferguson are delighted to announce their engagement.



*Ruairidh & Jillian, on hill near Applecross taken early this year. Isle of Skye in the background.*

## NEWS FROM OUR CHIEF

*Dear Clansfolk*

I often sit down to write my message for the newsletter and struggle to recall the various events and highlights of the past three months. On this occasion, it is less difficult as it has been a busy period of birthdays, christening, 50th year bothy anniversary and an engagement! However, in the midst of all this activity, a reminder that with all life's ups, there are also life's downs, as we rejoice the many happy occasions that we have experienced over the past few months, it is necessary to pause and reflect upon those of us in less fortunate places at this time, due to ill health.

Kirsteen's 40th birthday was celebrated on the



*Kirsteen & Donald on board a boat on Loch Ness.*

Saturday prior to her actual birthday being 23rd April. The format was an afternoon cruise down Loch Ness for the 30 or so guests followed by an evening meal in the Dores Inn. Many of the guests had travelled from far afield and the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all. There was a skirl of the pipes, a birthday cake and a short and emotional speech from Kirsteen. As well as celebrating her 40th, there were added celebrations as Kirsteen and James have sold their house in Fochabers and have now bought a town house in Inverness. The move is due to take place in mid-June.

The weekend's celebrations continued and on the Sunday morning, Kirsteen and James had their youngest boy, Donald, christened in Ness Bank Church in Inverness. This was attended by around 30 friends and family in addition to the congregation. There were some tears from young Donald but it was a wonderful and happy occasion for all.

Following the service, I was whisked away for my own birthday surprise by my girlfriend Jillian and driven blindfolded, out of Inverness to a surprise location. Due to the spectacular scenery, Jillian decided that the blindfold could be removed (nothing to do with the fact that I recognised the road layout and noises of bridge crossings etc!) and I was excited to see that we were meandering through my beloved Torridon mountains. Soon we were at the Torridon House Hotel on the shore of Loch Torridon, a beautiful exclusive highland retreat

which would be our base for my birthday. It is a stone's throw from the Shildaig bothy but far more luxurious!

Having been surprised with the location of this birthday treat, I decided that it would be lovely to turn the tables and produce a surprise of my own. It was therefore very exciting, having arrived at Torridon with my girlfriend Jillian, to depart after my birthday with my fiancée Jillian! It was a wonderful and romantic location to get engaged and very fitting, being an area so close to my heart. It is our intention to marry in September 2014 at a private ceremony at the bothy in Shildaig followed by a meal and reception in Achnagairn House, close to Inverness.

On the 4th May, the family held a 50th year anniversary celebration at the bothy at Shildaig. This was attended by a number of locals from both Shildaig and Dores. When my father built the bothy in 1963, he was a teacher of physical education in Harthill where he was also involved in Scottish Country Dancing and youth work. Harthill is located half way between Edinburgh and Glasgow. He founded the Silver Thistle Dancers and the Harthill Youth Club whilst there. During School holidays, he travelled to Shildaig, often with friends from Harthill and planned and built the bothy. In an ironic twist of events, the view from his house in Harthill was dominated by farmland which at the time was owned and occupied by Jillian's grandparents and now by her parents. It certainly is a small world. When visiting Jillian's parents, I often meet some of his former pupils at the local Church and enjoy hearing their stories of Dad's time in Harthill and his passion for country dancing and gymnastics. The occasion at Shildaig was one of celebration but also one of reflection as the 4th of May was our Mother's Birthday and it was on her birthday 20 years to the day that she was laid to rest in Dores.

The year ahead is certainly going to be a busy one. At the end of July I fly out to Toronto and will be attending both the Glengarry Highland Games in Maxville on 02 - 04 August and the Fergus Highland Games on 09 - 11 August which I am looking forward to immensely. In November, both Jillian and I fly out to Melbourne for the Melbourne Association luncheon on 10th November and an informal dinner in Sydney on 14th November. Following this, we will be embarking on a holiday to the Cairns area of Australia's east coast followed by three weeks in New Zealand's South Island.

We return home via an overnight visit to Melbourne, 3 nights in Singapore and arrive back in Edinburgh on 23rd December to spend Christmas with Jillian's family. Returning to work after the New Year may quite possibly be one of the most depressing moments of my working career!! A bottle of fine malt whisky in the top drawer may not be a bad idea! 2014 will also be a busy year with the Clan Gathering in Inverness in on 4 - 6 July and of course a wedding to organise later in the year!

In early April, Alastair MacLennan, Kirsteen and I had a get-together in Fochabers to discuss plans for the 2014 Clan Gathering. There have been many positive sounds from various corners of the globe which suggests that we may get a sufficient number of attendees to allow us to go ahead and make the necessary bookings. We have started working on a draft programme of events to take place in and around Inverness between the 4th and 6th July 2014. Following some suggestions from the Melbourne Association, we are making some tweaks to this but should be in a position to publish the proposed format for the next newsletter along with estimated costs to those wanting them. We still need more information on numbers intending to travel across for the Gathering so that we can make all the necessary reservations during what is Scotland's peak visitor season. Please therefore get in touch with us if you are intending on coming across for the 2014 Clan MacLennan Gathering in Inverness.

(You may also contact Secretary, Patsy McLennan via email [bobandpatsy1@hotmail.com](mailto:bobandpatsy1@hotmail.com))

I received a telephone call from my Lieutenant Max McLennan in Melbourne a number of weeks ago with the sad news that he has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of lung cancer and that he was due to undergo further tests and treatment. Max, true to form, then swiftly went on to discuss issues relating to our visit to Australia in November, clearly feeling that they were of more importance than dwelling on his poor health. It is my understanding, at the time of writing this message that Max's health is not good and he has been admitted to hospital for treatment. Our thoughts and prayers are with Max, Mary and the family at this difficult and testing time. Dum Spiro Spero.

Yours aye

Chief Ruairidh

## Flowers of the Field

I am sorry to have to tell you of the death of our mother, Margaret MacLennan, on 21 January, 2013.

Mum had suffered various health issues over the past year, including a heart block last February which left her with a pacemaker, and several other health issues which deprived her of her physical stamina, but not her alert interest in and interaction with the world around her. She was able to enjoy most of the activities in which she had always participated, and, in fact, had a wonderful holiday season, as well as a very good month following the holidays.

Unfortunately, on the morning of 21 January, she suffered a massive stroke from which there was no recovering. Although we are all deeply mourning her loss, we are grateful that she did not suffer a lingering illness, and was able to be in her own home until the last day of her life.

Mum was a wonderful mother, a talented teacher, and a kind and gentle friend to many. She will be deeply missed by friends and family, and not least by the four cats who preferred her to any of their other humans. In accordance with her wishes, and as a continuance of the generosity she demonstrated throughout her life, she opted to donate her body to science, an act we, her family, appreciate as her final gift to others.

A memorial service for Mum was held on 26 January. We were all grateful to be able to be together for support and to share memories of Mum at that time. Conducted by Rev. Karen Mitchell, Mum's eldest daughter, it was a beautiful service that was truly a representation of the amazing person that was our mother, Margaret.

Sincerely,

Gwen MacLennan

*on behalf of the MacLennan Family- Kirk, Karen, Jen, Juanita, Shaun, Sheena*

Margaret (Thomson) MacLennan

Born in Scotland, passed on January 21st, 2013

Margaret (Thomson) MacLennan, 91, Sydney, peacefully on Jan. 21, 2013, at An Cala Palliative Care at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, Sydney. Born in Beith, Scotland, daughter of the late Hugh and Janet (Love) Thomson, she was the last surviving member of her immediate family. Margaret taught for many years in Port Aux Basques, Nfld. and as a substitute in the Sydney area while raising her family. She was a wonderful mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother and friend to many, and set a great example of living life with compassion, loyalty and integrity. Mum was funny, intelligent, kind and gentle with everyone she met-particularly her cats, who brought her many hours

of pleasure and companionship. Left to mourn are her seven children: Kirk (Mary), Aylesford, N.S.; Karen (Arch) Mitchell, Carrot River, Sask.; Jennifer (Dave Cowan), Saskatoon, Sask.; Juanita (Jerry Purcell), Halifax; Shaun, Ainsworth, B.C.; Sheena (Bruce MacLean), Sydney and Gwen, at home; as well as grandchildren, Jody (Paul), Thania, Merredith (Doug), Matthew (Suzanne), Becky (Andrew), and Christa; great-grandchildren, Matthew, Adele, and Zach and great-great-granddaughters, Gracelyn and Ella. Margaret was predeceased by her husband, Calvin (1998) and great-grandson, Jonathan, in infancy. A memorial for Margaret will be held on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2013 at 12 noon at T.W. Curry Parkview Chapel, Sydney, where friends may gather two hours prior to the service, from 10 a.m. till time of service.

Donations in Margaret's memory may be made to a charity of choice. In keeping with her lifelong interest in learning, Margaret has donated her body to Dalhousie Medical School. At Mum's request, please make a donation of plasma to Canadian Blood Services if able as the need for platelets far outstrips the supply.

Online condolences to [www.twcurry.com](http://www.twcurry.com).

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I am saddened to advise that Olive MacLennan (Founder and Patron of our Clan MacLennan Ass'n. in Melbourne) passed away this morning. - Olive became 101 years old on 23 January.

Olive's Funeral will be at 2:30pm on Friday 1st March, 2013, at St Columba's Uniting Church, 37 Banool Road, Balwyn (Melway Map 46 G 7/8). In Olive's honour please wear your kilt or some MacLennan tartan. Refreshments will be provided in the Church Hall after the Service. No flowers, in lieu donations to the Royal Childrens' Hospital would be appreciated, envelopes will be available at the Service. Unfortunately, there's only street parking available, so arrive early to allow walking time to Church.

Kind Regards,

Max McLennan (Vice-Pres. & Chief's Lieutenant)

*(Funeral Director: Le Pine, Camberwell - Ph (0)3 9882 2321)*

## Wee Bairns

Marilyn Lawlor wrote to tell us of her nephew Rory Angus MacLennan & Jaime Patricia Ryan's new daughter Asla Grace MacLennan, who was born at 1:12 am, weighing 7 lb 6 oz April 21st 2013.