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Tulach Ard

Clan MacKenzie Society in the Americas

Special Interest Articles:

- Games & Festival List
- Clan Cookbook a Hit!
- Get Ready to Travel

Individual Highlights:

Chieftain's Corner	2
Gathering 2009	3
MacKenzie events	4
Burns MacKenzie	4
1 st Time Hosts	5
Recipes/Cookbook	6
Luggage Strap	7
Society Officers	8
Clan Leaders	9
Mackenzie Alliance	10
New Hampshire	11
Waxhaw, NC	12
Cape Cod Festival	13
New Members	13
Travel Planning	14
An eBay Treasure	
McKenzie Woodcarver	
Anne Arundel Games	
Games Schedules	
Scotland, CT Games	
More!	



The Clan MacKenzie contingent preparing to join hundreds of fellow Scots on a cold day in Alexandria, VA

The MacKenzie contingent lined up early for the 38th annual Scottish Christmas Walk in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. This event is listed as one of the major tourist attractions in the region and draws as many as 35,000 spectators. Over the years we have had rain, we have had snow, we have had cool weather, we have had warm weather. This year we had COLD weather.

There were still 190 groups or units in the parade. Participants included the Grand Marshall, Willard Scott, two U.S. Senators, one Senator-elect, one U.S. Representative, the Governor of Virginia, several members of the state legislature and Santa Claus.



MacKenzie Paige Nelson was a passive participant in the Christmas Walk. She slept through the whole thing even with a large pipe band marching right behind the MacKenzie group.

Scotland's Gathering 2009

The Gathering 2009 is one of the signature events of Homecoming Scotland 2009, a year-long government initiative aimed at encouraging those with a passion or connection with Scotland to come home.

During Homecoming Scotland 2009 we'll be celebrating with a year-long program of events to highlight Scotland's great contributions to the world: Robert Burns (the 250th anniversary of his birth is in 2009), golf, whisky, great minds & innovations and Scotland's rich ancestry and culture. For many years Scotland has witnessed a decline in the popularity of Highland Games and a near extinction of clan activity. However, the opposite is true in some countries, especially in North America, where clan membership exceeds 100,000 and over 300 Highland Games and festivals are held annually.

Over the past few years there has been an overall strengthening of national identity within Scotland. This has provided an ideal environment in which to celebrate the contribution that the clans and their descendants have made to maintaining national traditions. This strengthening will be enhanced by providing an educational component associated with each event within The Gathering 2009 which will encourage people to try out the various disciplines and learn more about them. Additionally there will be an emphasis on youth participation which will be nurtured through school and community group engagement prior to the event.

The Clan Parade will take place early evening on Saturday starting from Holyrood and traveling up the Royal Mile to the Castle for the Clan Pageant.

- Come home and celebrate your roots
- A unique celebration of Scottish heritage and culture
- A celebration of one of Scotland's greatest traditions
- An opportunity to thank the clan associations and Scottish societies from around the world for their role in keeping these traditions alive.

One of the great benefits of The Gathering 2009 is to have the majority of chiefs and senior Clan figures all in Edinburgh at the same time.

This has allowed us to convene the first ever Clan Convention, which will be held on Friday July 24th at a venue of Historic significance, yet to be confirmed.

The Convention will have genuine historical relevance especially when one considers the dramatic changes in today's communication technology, which has brought the International Clan system much closer together.

The purpose is simple; to discuss the Role of the Clan in the 21st Century. Due to limited capacity only chiefs, clan commanders and leading clan representatives will be invited to attend. This will probably amount to around 300 people.



Clan MacKenzie Society in the Americas President – and Lieutenant to Cabarfeidh – Don McKenzie, will join Cabarfeidh and other clan members in Scotland for the Gathering 2009. If you would like to join Don and MacKenzies from around the world, contact Don for more information at mcphoto@pinehurst.net



Membership:

Howard reports as of 10/25/08 that we've had 430 renewing members. As of July 14, 2008 we were up to 581--so about 150 more to hopefully come in! If you happen to be one of those 150, go ahead and renew with Howard to save him dropping you another notice.

Cookbooks:

Although we received them at the end of the '08 Games season they have sold well at the fall games. As of 10/28/08 we've collected for 133 books---so only 367 more to go! Our tent hosts have been averaging 12 to 18 books sold at each event.

We are able to ship one at a time for \$12.00 per book plus \$3.00 for postage (\$15.00). Or, we can ship 10 in the flat rate box with postage of \$10.00 and 20 in the large flat rate box with postage of \$13.00. If you are ordering to sell at your events then the Society covers the shipping. So now is the time to get stocked up for your 2009 Games and events. You order to books, we ship the books, and you sell the books and submit the monies collected after each game. If you happen to have cookbook money not yet submitted, please do so soon. We want to make sure we've covered our costs as soon as possible and then begin submitting funds for the Castle Leod Restoration Project.

'09 AGM

I met with Eastern Region VP Mike Lawler (and his wife Chris) and Commissioner Johathan Gordon at the Richmond Games in Virginia about planning the 2009 AGM.

Wonderful Scottish weather---mist followed by heavy mists all day! But we were able to meet with some of the games officials and the MacKenzie's and the Gordons will be the Honored Clans in 2009.

The games site is moving from the Richmond Raceway Complex to The Meadow Event Park. The Meadow is located north of Richmond, off I-95 at exit 98 next to Kings Dominion in Doswell, VA. Mark your calendar for October 24-25, 2009.

Mike and Jonathan are working on selecting a host hotel for the MacKenzie's, so stay tuned for more information during the next two Tulach Ard's.

Election Time:

Election Time for the Society is upon us. Please indicate your intentions or send in your nominations by early spring. Our society could not operate without each of you dedicating your time and talents. Many of you have served for several years and your experience and knowledge is priceless to the Society. I personally "Thank You!" and hope that you will continue to serve and promote the mission of the Clan MacKenzie Society.

Yours aye!
Don McKenzie

To all members and friends
of the Clan Mackenzie

Salzkotten, 15th of November 2008

Clan-Alliance of Clan MacKay, Clan Mackenzie and Clan MacLaren in Germany

With pride and happiness we announce a historical event. On the 1st of November 2008, coevally with the celtic New Year, a new era for Scottish Clans in Germany began.

The only three Clan Societies in Germany which are officially recognised by the Clan Chiefs, met in a friendly atmosphere to bundle their power for the future. The aim is to organize common events, to strengthen the relationship between Scotland and Germany, to establish friendships between the Clans and to convey authentic Clan culture in Germany.

Wherever possible we will act in concert, without giving up our separate identities. United in our spirit, strong in the alliance! With this motto, Markus Kewitz from Clan Mackenzie, Siggie Schierstedt from Clan MacKay and Dieter Deckert from Clan MacLaren built the basics for a Clan-Alliance which has never been before in this way.

As a sign for the unity a common headquarters was set at the "Sophienburg" in the beautiful landscape near Münster in North Rhine-Westphalia. From here, our spirit shall go around the globe and send the message of friendship. May other Clan Societies follow and contribute to unite the clansfolk all over the world!

Alba gu brath – Scotland forever!

MacKenzie and Burns

Every year, at the stroke of midnight, on New Year's Day, the world remembers the national poet of Scotland, Robert Burns, even if they don't know all the words to "Auld Lang Syne." But did you know, that there was a close friend to Burns during his time in Ayrshire, one John D. MacKenzie?

Mackenzie, a native of Ayrshire, studied medicine at Edinburgh University, and, on the invitation of Sir John Whitefoord, set up in practice in Mauchline, where he married Helen Miller, one of the 'Mauchline belles'.

He first met Burns when he attended the poet's father, William Burnes, at Lochlea in the early spring of 1783.

Mackenzie became a warm friend to Burns, particularly after Burns went to Mossgiel. Depute Master of St James Lodge, Tarbolton, Mackenzie received in 1786 from Burns a rhymed summons to attend: 'a procession celebrating the Festival of the Nativity of the Baptist, Friday first's the day appointed'. In 'The Holy Fair', Dr Mackenzie is personified as 'Commonsense', who left the assembly to keep a dinner



Burns rented this home in Mauchline from Dr. MacKenzie (who lived in the attached home immediately next to it).

appointment with Sir John Whitefoord at the home of the Earl of Dumfries as soon as 'Peebles, frae the water-fit' began to preach.

Mackenzie received from Burns a two-line note, dated 3rd September 1786, enclosing a first draft of 'The Calf'. It was thanks to Mackenzie that Burns was introduced to Professor Dugald Stewart.

When Burns set out for Edinburgh, Mackenzie had already sent off letters of recommendation to Sir John Whitefoord and to the Honourable Andrew Erskine. Whitefoord received Burns with special kindness, as Burns reported to Mackenzie in a letter dated 11th January 1787. On the poet's return from Edinburgh in February 1788, he rented a room in Mackenzie's house for Jean and himself, where Jean's second twins were born. The house is now a museum.

Mackenzie eventually left Mauchline and moved to Irvine, Scotland where he became, for a time, the physician to the Earl of Elgin.

Following the poet's death, the Irvine Burns Club was formed in Milne's Inn, (now The Crown Inn) High Street, Irvine, Ayrshire on 2nd June 1826.

The original minute reads:

"The subscribers agree hereby to form, and do now form ourselves into a Committee for the purpose of establishing a Club, or Society for Commemorating the birth of Robert Burns the Ayrshire Poet - and we agree to meet at an early day to get the preliminaries of the Club properly arranged."

The document is signed by the following twelve men:

John Mackenzie, M.D.

David Sillar, Bailie

William Gillies, Grain Dealer

John Peebles, Convener of Trades

James Johnston, Town Clerk

Robert Wyllie, Harbour Master

John Orr, Merchant

James Allan, Merchant (grocer)

Maxwell Dick, Bookseller

William Shields, Senior, Merchant

John Fletcher, Surgeon

Patrick Blair, Writer

Five of the signatories were friends of the poet, the first two, Dr. John Mackenzie and David Sillar, very much so. Dr Mackenzie, was selected the first President of the Irvine Burns Club.



The home of Irvine Burns Club is 'Wellwood', 28 Eglinton Street, Irvine. This spacious and imposing building of Ballochmyle red sandstone was built in 1903.

The club renovated the top floor front room into a concert room with a seating capacity of 100. Ground floor rooms include the library and the "Burns Room".

The Irvine Burns Club has an impressive collection of Burns history, among them, the treasured, "Kilmarnock Edition - Poems chiefly in the Scottish dialect" by Robert Burns - Printed by John Wilson, Kilmarnock. Only 612 copies were printed. The club is proud to possess an original copy of this rare and famous book. It is estimated that there are fewer than 30 copies of the book known to exist.