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JUNE NEWS FROM OUR CHIEF

I am a native of Victoria, on Vancouver Island, the capital city of the most western Canadian Province of British Columbia. The 150th anniversary of the Victoria Highland Games was celebrated here on May 17 to 19 in characteristically cool, damp but sunny weather after a week of associated events, and before the 3-hour Victoria Day Parade on Monday, May 20.

This year our Clan MacDowall canopy (tent) was shared with our historical Highland allies Clan MacDougall for whom our friend Scott MacDougald, Vice President (Canada) of The Clan MacDougall Society of North America, came out to the Games from London, Ontario, Canada. We also had as a family guest at our tent Piper Derek Davidson, past coordinator of piping for the New Hampshire Highland Games for the past seven years.

After the introductory Victoria Tartan Parade, in which I marched in my MacDowall tartan kilt behind massed pipe bands down Government Street on the previous Saturday, the Games began on the evening of Thursday, May 17 with a "Torchlight Ceremony" where my grandson Garnett Macdowall was called to announce our Clan Name and Motto while Scott did so for the MacDougalls. Then, each holding a flaming torch, they lined up with reps. of other clans in the form of a Saltire on the lawn of the Parliament Buildings with The Canadian Scottish Regiment, Princess Mary's, pipe band on Parade.

The highlight of the Victoria Highland Games and Celtic Festival this year was the Guest of Honour of the Victoria Highland Games Association, the second son of Queen Elizabeth II, His Royal Highness Prince Andrew Duke of York. My wife Alexandra ("Sandy") and I for Clan MacDowall, and Scott for Clan MacDougall were invited by the Lieut. Governor of B.C. to an informal reception for the Prince at Government House on Saturday evening. His duties, however, were to officially open and close the Games on Saturday and Sunday. I spoke to one in his entourage from the U.K., asking if he were an equerry, but he replied "no", and that he was from Scotland Yard!

There were several other highlights including the most popular Victoria International Heavy Events Challenge, the Canadian Invitational World Drum Major Championship, and many others. Our own highlight, however, was in the clan tent rows after the Opening Ceremony on Sunday when the plaque for "The Best Clan Display" was presented to us at our canopy by H.R.H. Andrew Duke of York (see photo. in which I was wearing three golden eagle feathers of clan chiefship with my wife Sandy on the right.). SEE PHOTO

Derek kindly piped at our tent and led us to the Heritage tent for our MacDougall/MacDowall meeting to initiate our search for a new B.C. Regional Commissioner and for local representatives. For the Games Derek gathered and led the 20 clans present to the Sunday Opening Ceremony and back past the reviewing stand echoing the tunes of the massed bands well ahead of us. The massed pipes returned to lead away the Prince and his escort together with the other reviewing dignitaries including the Mayor of Victoria, the Games' President Jim Maxwell and Randy Stewart Convener of the clans and cultural events both of whose names were related to us in Scotland of old.

I wished that you all were here, and that you with the crowd, in excess of this year's 25,000 gate, can come next year.

With best wishes,

Fergus

Your link to the Games:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2013/05/19/bc-prince-andrew-victoria-gallery.html>



Wylie's History Of The Scottish Nation

Vol 1, Chapter 4 - The Stone Age

Let us come closer to these British aborigines. They have no knowledge of letters. They had set out from their original homes before the invention of the alphabet. They have brought with them the implements of the shepherd and of the hunter, and in the foresight of danger they have provided themselves with some rude weapons of defense such as the club and the stone hatchet, but they are wholly ignorant of the art of conversing with posterity, and of communicating to the ages to come a knowledge of what they were, and what they did. This parts them from our ken even more completely than the wild sea around their island sundered them from their contemporaries, and it may seem bootless, therefore, to pursue them into the thick darkness into which they have passed. And yet the labor of such Inquiry will not be altogether thrown away. These ancient men have left behind them traces which enable us to reproduce, in outline, the manner of life which they led, much as the Arab of the desert can tell from the footprints of the traveler on the sand to what tribe he belonged, whether he carried a burden and the days or weeks that have elapsed since he passed that way. The characters which we are not to essay to read are inscribed on no page of book, they are written on the soil of the country; nevertheless, they bear sure testimony regarding the men to whom they belong, and the study of them will disclose to us something, at least, of what went on in our dark land before history arrived with her torch to dispel its night.

On yonder moor is a cairn.

Let us open it, and see whether it does not contain some record of a long forgotten past. We dig down into it, and light upon a stone coffin. We open the lid of the rude sarcophagus. There, resting in the same grave in which weeping warriors laid him four thousand or more years ago, is the skeleton of one who was, doubtless, of note and rank in his day. We can imagine the blows that great arm-bone would deal when it was clothed with sinew and flesh, and the fate that would await the luckless antagonist who should encounter its owner on the battlefield. This ancient sleeper, whom we have so rudely disturbed in his dark chamber, may have surpassed in stature and strength the average Caledonian of his day, but even granting this, he enables us to guess the physical endowments of a race which could send forth such stalwart, if exceptional, specimens to assist in clearing the forest or subduing the rugged glebe, or fighting the battles of clan or of country.

We open this coffin as we would a book, and we scan its contents with the same engrossing interest with which we devour the printed volume which tells of some newly discovered and far-off country. But we have not yet read all that is written in this ancient tome. We turn to its next page. The weapons of the warrior have been interred in the same rude cist with himself. Here, lying by his side, is his stone battle-axe. Its once tough wooden handle is now only a bit of rotten timber. On its stone head, however, time has been able to effect no change: it is compact and hard as when last carried into battle. This stone axe is a silent but significant witness touching the age in which its owner lived. No one would have gone into battle armed only with an implement of stone if he could have provided himself with a weapon of iron, or other metal. But weapon of iron the occupant of this cist had none. He fought as best he could with such weapons as his age supplied him with, making strength of arm, doubtless, to compensate for what was lacking in his weapon. The inference is clear. There was an age when iron was unknown in Scotland, and when implements of all kinds were made of stone.

There is a close resemblance betwixt the battle-axes dug out of the cairns and *tumuli* of our country and those fabricated by many other savages. With an axe of stone he cut down the oak; with an axe of stone he hollowed out the canoe; with an axe of stone he drove into the ground the stakes of his rude habitation; with an axe of stone he slaughtered the ox on which he was to feast; and with an axe of stone he laid low his enemy of the battlefield, or himself bit the dust by a blow from the same weapon. It was the STONE AGE, the first march on the road to civilization.

FOOTNOTES

1. A cairn on the moor above Ardoch when opened was found to contain a cist in which was the skeleton of a man seven feet long. Sir John Sinclair, *Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. Viii. P. 497; Wilson, *Prehistoric Annals*, p. 64, Edin. 1851.
2. "Early Man in Britain," W. Boyd Dawkins, p. 272, London, 1880.

link to the History: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/wylie/vol1ch4.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairn>

Ben MacDougall: A Kinsman Stars in Many Fields



Listen to Ben MacDougall's Music and Compositions :
at this link <http://benmacdougall.com/>

Before Ben [MacDougall's](#) eighth birthday, he became interested in the flute and tried out for lessons near his home. He was not accepted, but despite his disappointment, he persevered and took private lessons. That was fortunate, because Ben is now an award-winning young flutist, broadcaster, composer and writer. He recently made his first solo performance in his new homeland, America, at the Theatre House, Castleton Farms, near Warrenton, Virginia. Castleton is a major center for classical music in fields including orchestral and solo works and opera.

Born and raised in England, Ben is proud of his Scottish heritage – reflected in the Clan MacDougall/MacDowall Society through his paternal grandfather who hailed from Kilbride and Dunach on the shores of Loch Feochan, just south of Oban and the Clan MacDougall castle, Dunollie. Ben studied at the Royal College of Music in London where he won both the Flute and Woodwind prizes.

Ben and his wife, soprano Megan Welker, recently moved to Boston, and he is looking forward to pursuing his interests on two continents. In previous visits to America, he participated as a composer of music for films in festivals in such cities as Los Angeles, Washington, Nashville, San Diego, Cleveland, and Richmond. He wrote the score for the award-winning film, “App-ocalypse,” and won the gold medal at the Indie Gathering Film Festival in Cleveland.

He has also made his mark as a broadcaster — he hosts a program on classical music for the BBC and writes for classical music magazines.

“I love good tunes, and that’s what I write,” he says.
“One of the greatest thrills for a composer is to leave the theater and hear someone singing one of their tunes.”
A work at his Castleton performance was a flute arrangement of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons Concerti.
Ben says he is pleased to live in America “and take part in the exciting music world here,
And I want to add to that.”

NOTE: William L. MacDougall Our Co-Editor had the privilege of a personal interview with Ben before the Concert..

Thank You Bill for sharing this extraordinary young man with us all. His music it is totally captivating.

For more information on any of the articles in this newsletter, or to contact the editor to submit your McDowell/MacDowall family stories for review, Please contact the Editor Charlotte McDowell Baker at this e-mail address: charlotte_baker@tds.net



**Till Next Time Your Editor
Charlotte McDowell Baker In Kilt 2011**