



# Association of Highland Clans & Societies

*Newsletter: March 2015*

## Clans on Parade for Culloden Commemoration Weekend

AHCS to lay wreath for those member clans not represented individually at the service on Saturday 18th April, and all invited to a Social Event and Sept Dissection discussion at The Glenmoriston Town House Hotel on Friday evening

Every year the turnout for the annual Battle of Culloden Commemoration organised by the Gaelic Society of Inverness increases, and AHCS is doing its best to attract yet more clans to this moving occasion by once again trying to make it a weekend event. Our society was founded on the Friday evening of this weekend two years ago, and though we weren't able to hold a pre-battle day event last year because of Easter, we're returning to the fray this year with an informal gathering to enjoy each other's company and to ask the question *Septs – Are we being honest or greedy?*

Following last September's spectacular torchlit Parade of the Clans in Inverness – pictures of which we feature on this page – there was discussion in the Highland Clans Partnership Group about how this too might be made an annual event. Since the turnout of clan members in September was actually a little disappointing (perhaps too many other clan events earlier in this Year of Homecoming) and the parade's success depended unduly on the large turnout of athletes in town for the Masters World Championship games, it was thought best to consider another time of year for any repetitions. The Highland Games weekend in July was one possibility, but high summer evenings are too light for torchlit parades, so the possibility of holding it in future years on the Friday preceding the Culloden commemoration has been mooted – to make the most of the large and colourful turnout this event now attracts. This will be another matter for discussion on Friday evening this year.



Above: Alexander Brodie of Brodie prepares to parade through the centre of Inverness with members of the AHCS on the evening of 12th September last year.



Left: Special guest Kriss Akabusi leads the Clan MacKenzie contingent at the parade, having just been made a Honorary Member of the clan in recognition of his charitable work with Project Mackenzie.

A video of the clan parade is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5OUz2RrIje](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5OUz2RrIje)

# Recent Events

## HIGHLAND CLANS PARTNERSHIP GROUP

The HCPG met in Inverness Town House on the 6th November. Gerry Reynolds gave an analysis of the Highland Homecoming weekend in September, and the desirability of making the "Parade of the Highland Clans" an annual event was discussed (as noted elsewhere in this newsletter).

Another matter discussed at some length was the idea of turning Inverness Castle into some kind of Highland Clans & Heritage Centre. This has been much mooted in the press, and has been taken up by Highland Council and the Scottish Government, who have established a Joint Working Group to examine options. John Graham has submitted an excellent paper to the Working Group on behalf of the HCPG considering what some options might be.

The Highland Clans themselves have not so far been consulted on this—through AHCS or in any other way—and though the HCPG recommended that the Working Group co-opt as a member Lachie Stewart, the President of the Stewart Society and an architect with considerable experience of restoring and converting castles, they have refused to do so. The clans as such therefore have no real input into a project being touted as to do with clans.

In the light of this situation, it is hoped that as many clan members as possible will take the opportunity of making their views known to the consultants commissioned by the Working Group at the so-called "Inverness Castle Stakeholder Workshop" to be held at the Highland Archive Centre at 12.00 noon on Monday 13th April.

## SCOTTISH CLANS AND FAMILIES FORUM

The Inverness Castle project was also discussed at a meeting of the SCFF held in Perth on 24th November, in which representatives from the USA participated by phone. The meeting was chaired by Fergus Ewing, Minister of Tourism, who made clear his personal support for the idea of using the castle as some sort of clan heritage centre once the courts had been rehoused - a precondition he is pursuing in government.

The meeting was given a report on the take-up in 2014 of the opening round of the Scottish Clan Event Fund, which had proved a boon to a number of clans holding gatherings last year. Initial take-up for 2015 was thought a little disappointing by government, but it was pointed out that there was bound to be a diminution of activity this year since so many clans had organised events last year precisely because government had decreed it a Year of Homecoming.

Future themed years were discussed, and the Minister expressed the hope that the clans would use 2017's "Year of History, Heritage, and Archaeology" to organise events that might once again attract overseas clanspeople back to Scotland. Since those attending the meeting had been given a briefing paper by COSCA - the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (in America) - which appeared to reaffirm its interest in having another International Gathering of Clans in Scotland sooner rather than later, it was necessary to establish that there would be no attempt to do that in the years immediately after 2017, lest they become competing attractions. Assurances were given to that effect.

# Future Events

## CULLODEN COMMEMORATION WEEKEND

**Friday 17 April, 7.00pm:** AHCS Social Evening in the Windsor Room at the Glenmoriston Town House, with seminar *Septs- Are we being honest or greedy?*. Do you really know what a sept is? How many septs does your clan claim? How many of them can you explain? Have any of them been sept-napped by other clans?

Book your own meal in the Glenmoriston Town House Hotel, or one of the many neighbouring hostelrys, then come along for a chat and a dram. Please tell the Secretary if you plan to be with us.

**Saturday 18 April, 11.00am: Battlefield Service.** Most clans meet at the Visitor Centre 10.30 to 10.45 and march up to the large cairn where the service is held. At the conclusion of the service, clans and other interested bodies, are invited to lay wreaths in memory of their people who fell at the battle.

The AHCS will lay a wreath for those member clans not individually represented at the service—with the names of those clans read out when the wreath is laid. If you would like your clan represented in this way, please inform the Secretary ASAP.

## INVERNESS HIGHLAND GAMES - 18th July

So far as we know at this stage the arrangements for the Inverness Highland Games will be the same as last year; i.e. places will be available, with tables and chairs, in the tent provided by the games committee for the use of the AHCS, which will charge each participating clan a small amount to cover admin.

Since the number of clans that can be accommodated in the tent is limited, and membership of the AHCS has increased once again over the last year, it's not certain that all will be able to fit in—if all wish to be there. You are advised therefore to book your places promptly when you receive this year's Membership Renewal and Inverness Games Booking Form, which may be available at the Culloden Weekend (and if not, will be soon after it).

If there are not enough places available in the tent for all the clans that wish to attend, we may be able to fit more in by some clans having one table, instead of the two usually allocated to each clan. If your clan could get by with only the one table, please let the Secretary know when booking.

# Highland Homecoming Weekend



**Left:**  
Friday evening's Torch-lit Parade of the Clans was preceded by a Civic Reception in the Town House on Friday evening.



**Right:**  
The Great Hall of the Town House, with its colourful banners, was thrown open on Saturday afternoon for a "Meet the Clans" session.

**Below Right:** Lunch was served on Saturday in the Council Chamber where the British Cabinet held an emergency meeting in 1921.  
**Below Left:** George MacMillan of MacMillan & Knap in conversation over lunch with former Inverness Councillor, Duncan Chisholm.



*Photos by Nick Hide of Clan Davidson*



**Above:** The Kirking of the Council, a 400 year old tradition, is preceded by a Civic Parade - led on this occasion by the current Provost, Alec Graham (above left) - to which clan representatives and their banner bearers were invited.  
**Below:** The AGM of the Association was held in the Town House on the morning of Saturday 13th September.



## About the AHCS

Full membership is open to all clans judged by their peers in the AHCS to be "Highland" – whether represented by a Society, Commander, or Chief. Non-Highland clans and families may become Associate Members, and thus enjoy preferable rates at our events and a voice, but no vote, in our Council. Highlanders with no clan organisation may become Individual Members, on the same terms as Associate Members. Our events are intended to be open to all clans and families, but where space is limited preference will be given firstly to Full Members, and secondly to Associate Members. The full constitution, details of current membership fees, contact details for the clans, and for the Association's officers, can be found on our website: [www.highlandclans.org](http://www.highlandclans.org).

### CURRENT FULL MEMBER CLANS:

**Buchanan**  
**Cameron** (M'Gillonie, M'Martin, M'Sorlie of Glen Nevis, M'Lachlan of Coruanan, Cumming of Achdaliu).  
**Chattan** (Mackintosh, Shaw, Farquharson, M'Bean/Bain, M'Phail, M'Gillivray, M'Queen, M'Thomas, Macintyre in Badenoch).  
**Chisholm**  
**Currie/MacMhuirich**  
**Davidson**  
**Donald** (representing Clanranald, MacDonell of Glengarry, MacDonald of Keppoch, MacDonald of Sleat, etc).  
**Donnachaidh (Robertson)**  
**Fraser of Lovat**  
**Grant**  
**Iver/MacIver**  
**MacAulay**

**MacFarlane**  
**Macfie**  
**Macintyre**  
**MacKenzie**  
**Maclean**  
**MacLennan**  
**MacMillan**  
**Macpherson**  
**Macrae**  
**Matheson**  
**Munro**  
**Stewart**  
**Sutherland**  
**Urquhart**

### CURRENT ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

Clan Fraser Society of Scotland & the UK  
Clan MacKinnon Society (USA)

### Events in 2015 to be attended by AHCS or a Member Clan (on the basis of last year's attendances):

**17 April:** Social Evening and Informal Seminar on Septs: 7.00pm at the Glenmoriston Town House Hotel, Inverness.

**18 April:** Battle of Culloden Commemoration organised by the Gaelic Society of Inverness at 11.00am.

**4 July:** Gairloch Highland Gathering. Clan MacKenzie.

**18 July:** Inverness Highland Games: 16 pitches in AHCS tent available (sharing may be possible). Please register your interest in having a tent place as soon as possible with the Secretary at address below.

**23 July:** Mull Highland Games at Tobermory. Clan Maclean.

**29 July:** Arisaig Highland Games. Clanranald (Clan Donald).

**7-8 Aug:** Moy Game Fair. Clan Chattan.

**1 Aug:** Newtonmore Highland Games. Clan Macpherson.

**1 Aug:** Aboyne Highland Games. Clan Cameron.

**8 Aug:** Abernethy Highland Games. Clan Grant.

**7 Aug:** Battle of Pairc Day and the Reconciliation Ceilidh. Clans Coinnich and Donald and their allies get together in Strathpeffer, in the course of Clan MacKenzie's quinquennial International Gathering, to mark a legendary battle and to bury the claymore with a special ceilidh in the grounds of Castle Leod.

**8 Aug:** Strathpeffer Highland Gathering. Clan MacKenzie.

**13 Aug:** Ballater Highland Games. Clan Farquharson.

**22 Aug:** Glenfinnan Highland Games. Clans Cameron & Donald.

### Association of Highland Clans & Societies

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