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25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**SCOTTISH NORTH AMERICAN**  
**COMMUNITY CONFERENCE**  
 December 5, 2025  
 ALEXANDRIA, VA



# SAVE THE DATE

AND THE 2025 ALEXANDRIA CHRISTMAS WALK



CHICAGO  
SCOTS



THE AMERICAN-SCOTTISH  
FOUNDATION, INC.



Page 1



DETROIT  
SCOTS



The Scottish  
Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# NEA Grant Cuts Threaten Scottish Heritage

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# **NEA Cuts Threaten Our Scottish Heritage Programs**

## **You Can Help**

Due to recent National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant cancellations, the Scottish Cultural Outreach Foundation—which has long relied on federal arts funding—now faces a critical funding gap. Please help us fill the gap by making a donation today.

Your donation today will directly support:

Reaching over one million children through our free Scotland in the Class program, bringing Scottish culture, music, dance, and history into classrooms.

Providing Scottish cultural workshops and assemblies to schools across multiple states.

Continuing the Highland Echoes show tour across the East Coast, where ticket sales cover only about one-third of touring costs.

Covering operational costs to keep all our programs sustainable and growing.

Every donation is tax-deductible, and no gift is too small to make a meaningful impact.

## **Donate Now**

Your past generosity has accomplished so much. Today, your continued support will ensure that we can keep bringing the beauty, heritage, and traditions of Scotland to young learners and audiences throughout the U.S.

Thank you for standing with us.

Warm regards

Jennifer Licko  
President  
Scottish Cultural Outreach Foundation  
[jennifer@highlandechoes.com](mailto:jennifer@highlandechoes.com)  
910 338 0787



# Resurrection of Clan MacEwen

After centuries of silence, a voice has risen once more from the mists of Scotland's storied past. The re-establishment of any Scottish clan chiefship is not merely a legal formality—it is the cultural resurrection of identity, the return of a living symbol who binds past to present and cause for celebration of a globally dispersed family community. In the mists of the western Highlands, where the sea sings to the stone and the wind whispers ancient names, there once rose a proud people bearing the name MacEwen, sons of Eòghann, their legacy etched into the rugged cliffs and banks of Otter on Loch Fyne in Argyll and carried by the tide into legend. Though the clang of swords may have quieted, and their banners once lay furled beneath the shadow of greater powers, the lion of MacEwen never died—it only slept.



On 20<sup>th</sup> March this year, by virtue of a signed Warrant by Scotland's Lord Lyon King of Arms, Sir John Roderick Hugh McEwen of Marchmont and Bardrochat, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, was recognised as Chief of the Name and Arms of MacEwen (the heraldic parlance for the Chief of a Clan or Family, (see next page). The Ancient

Chiefship of Clan MacEwen was therefore brought back to life, 575 years after it fell into abeyance, which is believed to be the longest period of time (so far) between a Chiefship collapsing or dying out and coming back to life in law.

This incredible success is not due to solely sifting through records, archives, genealogical succession or legal professionals arguing over parentage, rather the new Chiefship of MacEwen has occurred as a direct result of galvanising enormous global participation, awareness, passion, unity and vibrance. The Clan at the same time invested considerable amounts of time, effort, scholarship and due diligence to the rules, protocols and legality of Clan Chief's



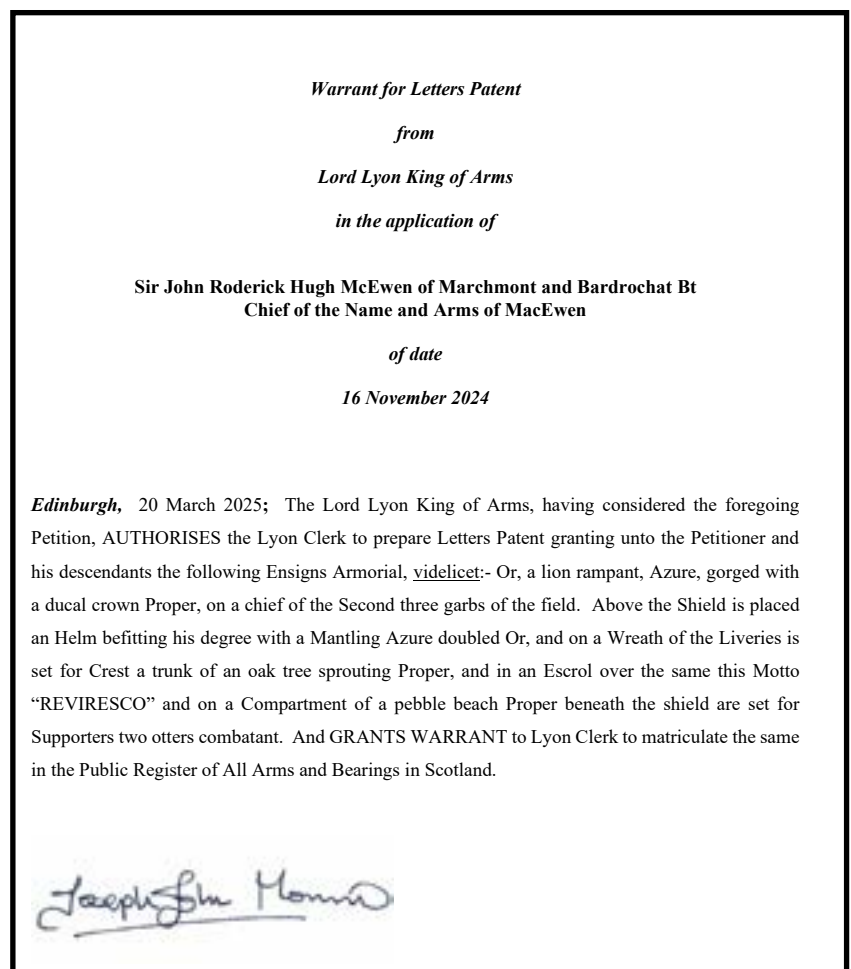
relationship with Scots Heraldic Law. Clan MacEwen, which operates one single Society / organisational body for the entire world and appears at 50 Highland Games each year across all its various jurisdictions have achieved new heights and feats as far as global participation and rallying Clan members around the world towards their common goal, returning the name of MacEwen to full recognition once again.

While efforts to find a Chief to begin a new Chiefly line (owing to the 15<sup>th</sup> century bloodline being considered 'lost') began in the 1950s, On 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024 161 members of Clan MacEwen from around the world descended upon the ancient Clan seat of Otter Ferry for the Clan's final Family Convention. The Family Convention, the largest known to have ever taken place, was presided over by The Hon. Adam Bruce, Marchmont Herald at the Court of the Lord Lyon (and second son to the present Chief of Bruce) who worked closely with the Clan's heraldic subject specialist Ross M. McEwen on the design and undertaking of the Convention so to ensure the most robust, transparent and formalised Convention in Scots Heraldic history thus far took place.

A 100-page submission was then lodged with the Lord Lyon accounting the research undertaken to try and locate a provable living descendent of the last MacEwen Chiefs, the evidence of global united and sustained support towards Sir John McEwen's suitability, the wet signatures of the attendees at the Family Convention as well as a design proposal for the Chiefly Coat of Arms for MacEwen. Due to the Chiefship of MacEwen having already collapsed by the time Heraldry became legally regulated in 1672, a new Coat of Arms design was required, now becoming the 'undifferenced' or 'senior' Arms, which all future Coats of Arms for the name MacEwen will be derived from, adding another historic element to this already momentous moment in Clan and MacEwen history.

The new Chief, whose grandfather was originally approached over 70 years ago at a time when numerous Clan Chiefships were being re-established in Scotland, is an actor, writer and director, father of four and lives near the town of Duns in the Scottish Borders on the outskirts of the former 8,000-acre estate of Marchmont which his family owned for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Given the global nature of modern Scottish Clan engagement, the new Chief is committed to continuing to foster and encourage overseas engagement, while at the same time paying proper time and attention to reigniting a passion and participation in Clan culture by native Scots. Moving forward, the Clan MacEwen Society will continue to serve as the sole global member-driven organisation of the Clan around the world, with a new Clan Council and Chief's



Household being assembled over the coming months charged with managing matters relating to the Clan's ceremonial, networking, heraldic and heritage aspects. The Chief's principal aims for all areas of Clan MacEwen will focus on environmental efforts of tree planting (aligning with the Clan's crest) and the promotion and preservation of the Gaelic language, which includes the appointment of a Gaelic Advisor to the Chief to aide those efforts and assist Clan members wishing to learn Gaelic.

Clan MacEwen is an example of a modern clan with an ancient past and a motivated forward looking state of mind, in order to celebrate shared heritage and community, while pressing on with the job of being a welcoming, rewarding and beneficial body in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The re-establishment of its Chiefship is proof that Clans are not dusty relics of a forgotten time, but living and breathing cultural entities of importance, and potentially serve an ever increasingly important role for Scottish culture in Scotland, and around the world.

The story of Clan MacEwen is one of a family who refused to be forgotten, whose bloodlines coursed through exiles, warriors, poets, tragedy and perseverance. A clan scattered, yet enduring. Unchained by the loss of land, power and position, but never of lineage. Now, after centuries in silence, the name MacEwen has stirred from slumber. The lion lifts its head once more. This is not just history—it is resurrection

[www.ClanMacEwen.com](http://www.ClanMacEwen.com)

## MAJOR EVENT POSTPONED

We have found it increasingly difficult to secure sufficient funding for the launch of The Saltire Gathering Festival, which was due to take place in May of 2026. Despite significant interest and enthusiasm for such a Festival in Scotland, we have been unable to date to develop the festival in line with the timeline required to create a festival of note.

A strategic decision has been made to move the festival from Summerhouse Festivals Ltd, the company created to manage the festival, to Louise Hunter, Festival Director, and owner of Summerhouse Media Ltd—an international events company. It is hoped that funders will be open to working with a company with an eighteen-year track record.

I am planning to attend the Stone Mountain Games this year and would be very happy to meet up with any COSCA members there.

Madam Pauline Hunter of Hunterston

**Madam Pauline Hunter of Hunterston**

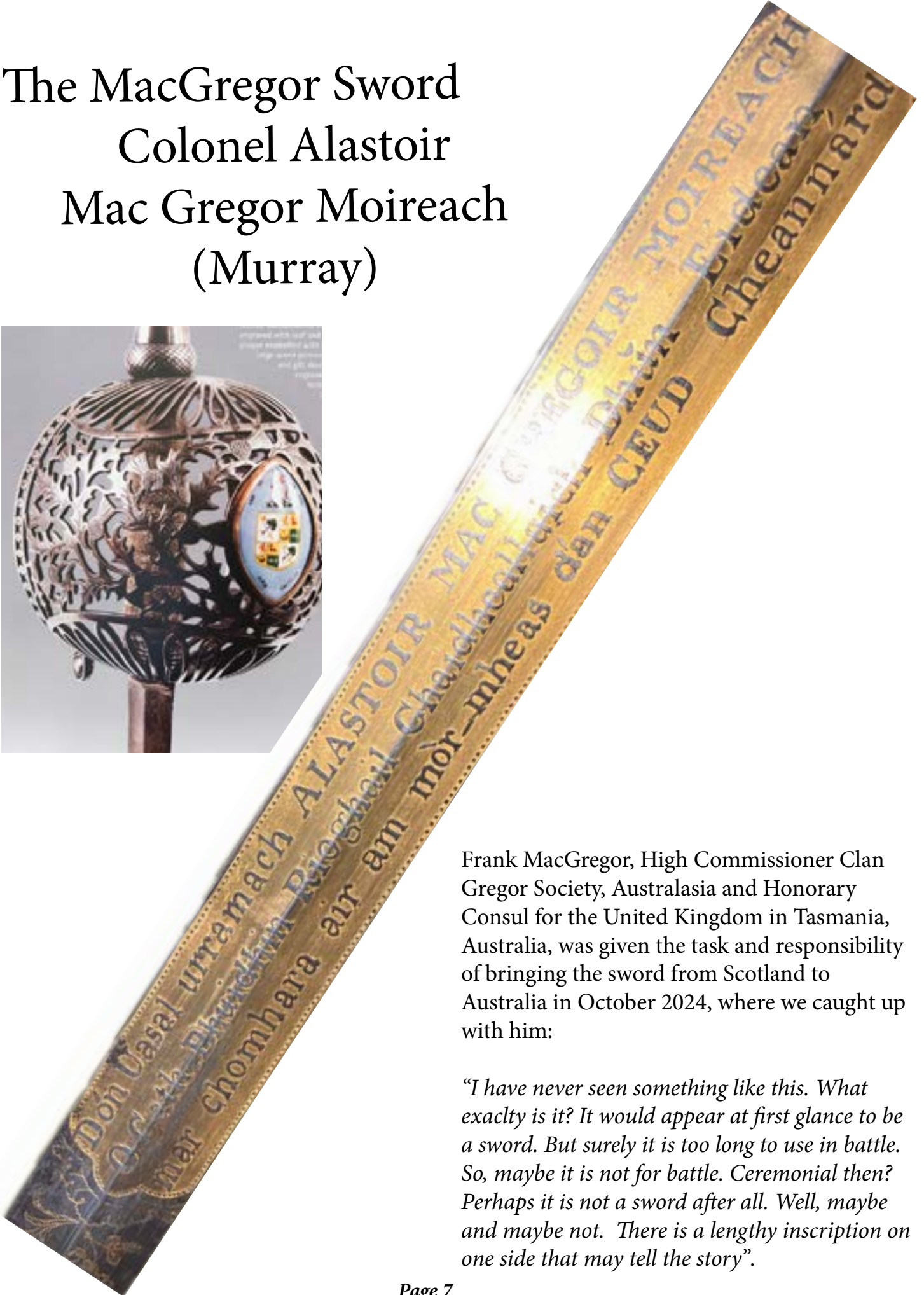
Praefectus Venatorus Regis, 30th Chief of Clan Hunter





# The MacGregor Sword

## Colonel Alastair Mac Gregor Moireach (Murray)



Frank MacGregor, High Commissioner Clan Gregor Society, Australasia and Honorary Consul for the United Kingdom in Tasmania, Australia, was given the task and responsibility of bringing the sword from Scotland to Australia in October 2024, where we caught up with him:

*"I have never seen something like this. What exactly is it? It would appear at first glance to be a sword. But surely it is too long to use in battle. So, maybe it is not for battle. Ceremonial then? Perhaps it is not a sword after all. Well, maybe and maybe not. There is a lengthy inscription on one side that may tell the story".*

## **A VERY RARE LATE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SCOTTISH PRESENTATION BASKET HILTED BROADSWORD**

*the large steel hand guard pierced and engraved with leaf and thistle decoration mounted with an oval plaque enamelled with the shield, crest and motto of MacGregor, large acorn pommel and fish skin covered grip. The blued steel and gilt double edged flattened diamond section blade engraved with a highland figure, trophy of arms including the Royal Standard of Scotland, and the Order of the Thistle, engraved foliage, a Royal coat of arms and motto Scotland beneath a baldachin, and entwined laurel and oak, opposite side with Brittania and Unicorn, and the badge of the Black Watch; the centre of the blade has a gilt panel etched with the presentation inscription in gaelic “Dón Uasal urramach ALASTOIR MAC GREGOIR MOIREACH O Gath Bhuidhin Rioghail Chaidheallaich dhùn Eidean, mar chomhara air am mòr rheas dòn CEUD Cheannard”, Steel mounted wooden scabbard covered in black leather with pierced locket and applied enamelled badge of the Order of the Thistle.*

(The detailed write up of the sword, item #799, was written by the auction house in York. The translation was provided by a number of experts including Viscount Dunrossil, Gaelic scholar Nick Freer, and the on-line Gaelic language guide. The accuracy of this translation is somewhat questionable but is the best we could produce)



This sword was presented to Colonel Alastair MacGregor son of Alexander MacGregor, younger brother of Sir John MacGregor. The Colonel reached the rank of Maj-Gen and his portrait hangs in Brisbane, Australia, painted by Raeburn. The sword was presented to him on completing command of a regiment in Edinburgh. The quartered arms were probably added at a later date. There is an exact copy in our family mausoleum in Balquidder. The quarterings are MacGregor and Macdonald of Sleat. Sir John's mother was a Macdonald of Sleat and therefore Maj-Gen Alexander's grandmother. The above historical narrative of the origin of the sword was provided by Sir Malcolm MacGregor.

**Colonel Alastair  
Mac Gregoir  
Moireach  
or  
Colonel Alastair  
Mac Gregoir  
Murray**



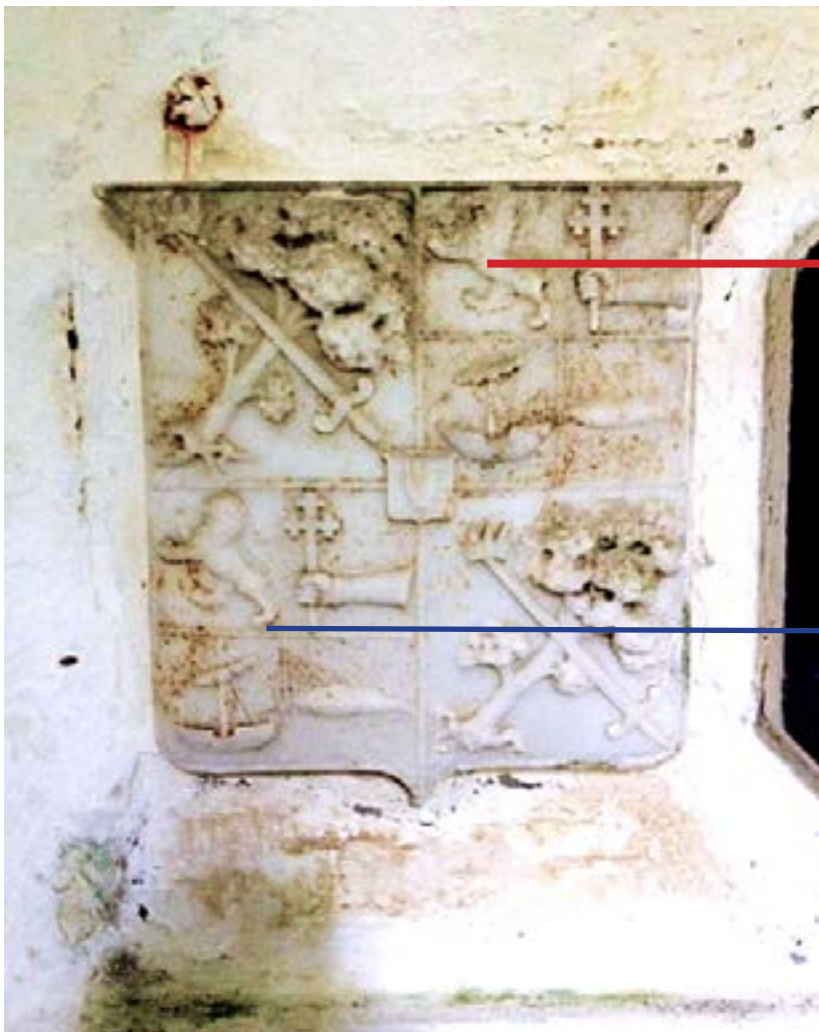


We sought Gaelic speaking people who may have been able to translate the inscription. There was general agreement of the entire inscription, excluding one single word, “*Chennard*”. This word has multiple meanings and spellings. For example, Chennard means boss, headman, commander, or shepherd, depending on the geographic location where it is being used, and the “family” using it. So, now the inscription in its entirety could read (*pink is the inscription on the sword and green the English translation*):

**“Don Uasal urramach ALASTOIR MAC GREGOR MOIREACH  
“To the noble and revered Alastair MacGregor Murray**

***Bhuidhin Rioghail Chaidheallaich Dhūn Eidean*  
from the Royal Battle Group Shepherd of Edinburgh**

***mar chomhara air ammòr\_mheas d’an CEUD Cheannárd”*  
as a mark of great respect to the First/High Chieftain”.**



The quarterings are the Arms of  
**MacGregor** and **Macdonald of Sleat**



# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

**COSCA Clan & Family Caucus to Be Held at GMHG on Friday, July 11th.** Grandfather Mountain Highland Games (GMHG) is COSCA's "home games." We were founded there in 1976 and every year we host a large COSCA tent and those games, plus convene what we call a "clan & family caucus." (This is not a business meeting per se but rather a social gathering for all our members, at which the officers give short progress reports and take questions. Plus visiting chiefs and other "honored guests" of the games stop by and deliver remarks to our members, followed by fielding questions from our group.) All individual Members of COSCA are invited to attend and participate, as are all members-in-good-standing of Organizational Members of COSCA--mainly the clan and family societies attending these games. This year our Clan & Family Caucus will convene at 1:30 PM on Friday, July 11—first day of the games. As always, we will meet in the Chieftain's Tent at the far side of the games field, adjacent to the Scottish Village tent and near the overnight camping area. Our meeting will last approximately one hour. We will talk about priorities for COSCA for this year and next and take questions. Please plan to attend!

**Volunteers Needed to Help Staff the COSCA Tent at GMHG in July.** Once again this year we will need volunteers to help us staff the COSCA tent, which is right inside the main gate to the games field. As always, we will be offering our "Let Us Help you Find Your Clan" feature at our tent, which draws many hundreds of visitors. Reference materials are maintained at the tent and queried to help visitors determine if by surname they are eligible to join a clan or family society (most of which are COSCA members) and how to get in touch with that entity—whether present on the games field or reachable online. This is a major service COSCA has long provided to our member clan and family societies, but it is quite labor-intensive. If you'd like to volunteer for an hour or two on Friday, Saturday and/or Sunday to help the Officers at our tent respond to these inquiries, please get in touch with me directly, by phone or email. I will be at the COSCA tent all weekend and will coordinate this service.

**Tartan Day Award for 2025 to Be Presented by the Scottish Coalition, USA to GMHG President Steve Quillin.** Each year since 1998, the Scottish Coalition, USA (TSCUSA), of which COSCA is a founding member, presents its National Tartan Day Award to a deserving Scottish-American who has distinguished herself, or himself, in significant ways. Earlier this year, the members of TSCUSA unanimously selected Steve Quillin, President of GMHG, to receive the 2025 Tartan Day Award—in recognition of his outstanding leadership in guiding GMHG through the many challenges, both natural (i.e., Hurricane Helene and its aftermath) and man-made, which this event has successfully faced over the past five years. The award will be presented by several of us, representing TSCUSA member organizations, on Saturday afternoon, at the games, and Steve will say a few words. The presentation will be broadcast from the reviewing stand so that all event attendees on the field and in the stands can hear the presenters' remarks, followed by Steve's brief acceptance speech.



**COSCA-Sponsored Athletic Awards to Again Be Made at GMHG.** Last year at GMHG we initiated a new practice of sponsoring annual awards in COSCA's name to both the best all-around male athlete and the best all-around female athlete at those games. This practice will continue this year and into the future. The large COSCA trophies for this purpose have now been fabricated and will go on public display at GMHG starting this July. As was the case last year, the two winning athletes will each receive a pewter plate bearing their name and the award date. Their names will also be inscribed on the base of the large trophies, along with the names of all future award winners. The idea was first proposed by COSCA At-Large Board Member Scott

McCauley and was brought to fruition by COSCA at-Large Board Member David McKenzie, who identified the vendor, finalized the design, and supervised the fabrication process. Our thanks to both Scott and Dave for bringing this excellent idea to fruition.



**Merchandise Discounts Now Available to COSCA Members from USA Kilts.**

Last year we kicked off a business partnership between COSCA and USA Kilts. A 10% discount is now available to all COSCA members (including all members-in-good-standing of all clan and family societies which are Organizational Members of COSCA) on new kilts and other highland wear and tartan items. Contact USA Kilts directly to take advantage of your COSCA discount!



**New Battle Streamers Available for Pickup by Clan & Family Society Members at Selected Highland Games Events.** Last year we began distributing to all our clan and family society members bright yellow 'battle streamers'/'campaign ribbons' suitable for attachment to flag staffs or tent poles and bearing COSCA's name and logo. These proved very popular. While a few of the yellow streamers remain available for distribution, we have now purchased a second batch—this time bright red, but likewise bearing COSCA's name and logo. We will have both colors available for distribution at the Clan & Family Caucus at GMHG this July and later in the season at other highland games where COSCA representatives are present.

**Leadership Guide for Clan & Family Societies Being Developed by COSCA.** Recently, with a unanimous vote of support from the COSCA Board, our Communication Director Bart Forbes submitted a grant application to the Scottish Government to develop a Leadership Guide for clan and family societies. Facing heavy competition from other submissions, our grant application was not funded, though it scored well. Not to be deterred, Bart and others from COSCA governance are now seeking out other sources of grant funding. The COSCA Board has voted to provide some seed money to this worthwhile project going forward to complement grant funds from an outside source. We hope to have a product available for use by our clan and family society members in the upcoming months. Stay tuned for updates and further developments on this front.

**Ranks of COSCA Regional Commissioners Being Expanded.** Emma Saggars (Clan Forsyth Society) and Mary Erwin (Clan Irwin Society) have now joined the expanding ranks of COSCA's Regional Commissioners. Emma will handle the Lower Mid-Atlantic Region (DC, MD, VA, and DE), while Mary will handle the Gulf Coast States (East TX, LA, AL and MS). Welcome to the COSCA Governance Team, Emma and Mary! They join COSCA's other regional commissioners— Past President Bob Heston (Mountain States), Louis Johnson (South Eastern States), and Ethan MacDonald (Upper Midwest States). The job of regional commissioners is primarily sales and marketing (new member recruitment) for COSCA at highland games and other Scottish heritage events in their respective regions. We are now actively looking for more regional commissioner candidates to represent COSCA in New England, the Upper Mid-Atlantic (NY, NJ and PA), Lower Midwest, the Plains States, Southwestern States, Upper Northwest (OR, WA and Northern CA), West Coast Central (Los Angeles, etc.), and Southern California. If you live in one of those regions and would like to become a Regional Commissioner for COSCA to help us recruit new members, contact me directly by phone or email and we can discuss the job in detail. (Note these are presidential appointments and have no fixed term limits, so the appointment process is quick and simple.)



**General Liability and D&O Insurance for Clan & Family Society Members.** At my request, COSCA Board Member John Cherry has conducted a survey of U.S. insurance companies interested in possibly providing either general liability insurance, or directors and officers (D&O) liability insurance, or both, to clan and family societies which are Organizational Members of COSCA. This inquiry was undertaken by COSCA in response to a number of requests from our clan and family society members: While some highland games events provide blanket liability coverage to any and all who set up a tent at their event, others do not, and instead require the clan societies to have their own insurance as a precondition of being able to attend and participate. And this number seems to be growing. Not only to protect themselves from liability for something that might happen at their games tents but also at their in-person AGMs and other gatherings, it is strongly recommended that all clan and family societies consider purchasing general liability insurance. Likewise, as virtually all clan and family societies are incorporated entities with officers and board members in governance positions, whether elected or appointed, D&O insurance is strongly recommended to protect these members of their governance groups from being named in any lawsuits against the corporation for things that happen at their games tents or at other sponsored events. The COSCA Board of Directors will be reviewing John's report and reaching out to one or more carriers for a more in-depth discussion of the extent of coverage offered, costs, etc. Our findings will be reported in the next edition of *The Claymore*. Note that if one or more insurance carriers ends up being recommended by COSCA to our Organizational Members, any insurance policies will be issued directly to that clan society and not through COSCA. The legal relationship established will be entirely between the insurer and the insured. (COSCA's role will be limited to negotiating a good price for our members, based on the volume of business we are able to send the carrier's way.)

**COSCA Vice President John Cochran Retires from Active Duty with US Army After 33 Years in Uniform.**

After a distinguished military career, COSCA Vice President John Cochran retired from the U.S. Army at the end of May. Congratulations to John! John Cochran is our longest continually serving COSCA Board member; after many years as an At-Large Director, John was elected at our AGM last December to a two-year term as COSCA's Vice President. John is also very active in his clan society (The Clan Cochrane Society) and serves as Sennachie to his Chief, the Earl of Dundonald. As a Green Beret (U.S. Special Forces), most of John's time in the Army involved him in intelligence-related assignments, some overseas and in combat zones. These allowed him to work side by side with senior officers from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and various NATO countries. See the article that appears in this edition of *The Claymore* for a short summary of John's very impressive military career, taken from the program distributed at his recent retirement ceremony in Washington, DC, which our newsletter editor, Dr. Bruce Whyte, and I attended.

**COSCA Participates in Tartan Day 2025 Luncheon at British Embassy in Washington, DC.** COSCA was well represented at a formal luncheon in April at the British Embassy to celebrate National Tartan Day. The event was sponsored by the National Capital Tartan Day Committee (NCTDC) and cosponsored by the American-Scottish Foundation (ASF). Attendance was limited to 40 persons, based on the capacity of the dining room. Newly appointed British Ambassador Lord Mandelson joined us for lunch, as did Colin Gray, the new head of the Scottish Government Office, USA and his deputy, Eilidh MacKinnon. A special treat for the attendees was a precision drill and pipe & drum performance by a 60-member contingent of the Atholl Highlanders (the Earl of Atholl's bodyguard and the last private army in Scotland), commanded by the Earl of Kinnoull, which was over from Scotland for the event. See NCTDC's website (at [www.nationalcapitaltartanday.com](http://www.nationalcapitaltartanday.com)) for excerpts from the program and photos taken at the event.

**Charles, Lord Bruce Installed As New Convenor, Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs (SCSC).** There has been a change in top leadership at the SCSC. My Chief, Sir Malcolm MacGregor, has stepped down as Convenor after a second term in office and Charles, Lord Bruce has assumed the Convenorship of the organization. Lord Bruce is very active and visible in the Scottish heritage community, on both sides of the Atlantic. He is also very involved in the Family of Bruce International (their clan society), as his elderly father, the Earl of Elgin, Chief of the Bruces, is now over 100 years old! Lord Bruce joined us a few of years ago at the SNACC Conference to dis-

cuss the SCSC's Heirs Project, of which he is a major proponent. He has been invited to return for SNACC 2025 this December and address the conferees about his plans and vision for the SCSC.

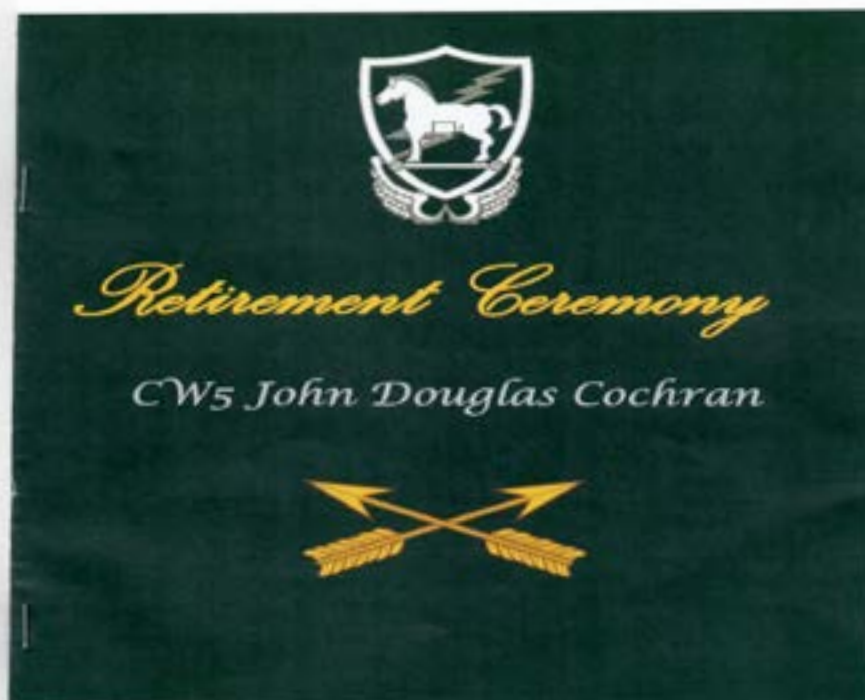
**Highland Echoes Needs Our Help!** At the top of this edition of The Claymore, you will see an appeal for funding support from Highland Echoes, a nationally known and respected Scottish music and dance ensemble which is headed up by Jennifer Licko. Highland Echoes is an Organizational Member of COSCA. A 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable nonprofit, Highland Echoes also sponsors Scotland In The Classroom—a program about Scottish heritage and culture for grade school kids. Highland Echoes has just had its funding from the National Endowment for the Arts pulled, despite its excellent reputation and many documented accomplishments. They desperately need support from their friends and colleagues in the Scottish-American Community. Please consider making a tax-exempt charitable contribution to Highland Echoes so they can continue their important arts and education work.

**Scottish North American Community Conference (SNACC) to Again Be Held In Alexandria, VA This December.** Now in its 23rd year, the Scottish North American Community Conference (SNACC) will again be held this year in Alexandria, VA--right across the Potomac from Washington, DC—and in conjunction with the annual Scottish Christmas Walk Parade (largest Scottish heritage parade on the East Coast) in which over a hundred clan and family societies participate each year. COSCA is a longtime co-sponsor of the parade. This year's SNACC Conference will be held on Friday, December 5, the day before the Xmas Walk Parade, and much closer to the eastern end of Old Town, Alexandria, where the parade is held. Conference planning is now actively under way. Stay tuned for further details on the venue, conference theme, speakers and sessions.

John B.

**John King Bellasai, JD**  
**President**

**Council of Scottish Clans & Associations**  
**(202) 258-4876 (cell)**  
**president@cosca.scot**





Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CW5) John D. Cochran enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1992, into the Military Police (MP) career field. He served at various Reserve and National Guard units before being assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 19<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group. After his deployment to Iraq in 2006 he transferred to active duty. He was assigned to 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group to serve as a Detachment Commander for SFODA 013, and later as the Assistant Detachment Commander on SFODA 0136 as a member of the Commander's In-extremis Force. During this assignment, he deployed numerous times in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans-Sahel, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

CW5 Cochran graduated Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA in 2012, where he completed a Master of Science in Defense Analysis. Following graduate school, he was assigned to 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Warfare Training Group where he oversaw numerous intelligence and planning courses serving as a Company Commander, Company Executive Officer, and Doctrine writer.

In 2016, CW5 Cochran was assigned to the Office of Special Warfare (OSW), a directorate responsible for the oversight of all 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Command sensitive activities. He immediately deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve where he served as the Sensitive Activities Operations Officer for the Commanding General of Special Operations Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve-Iraq (SOJTF-OIR-I).



# HOW TO ADDRESS A LORD

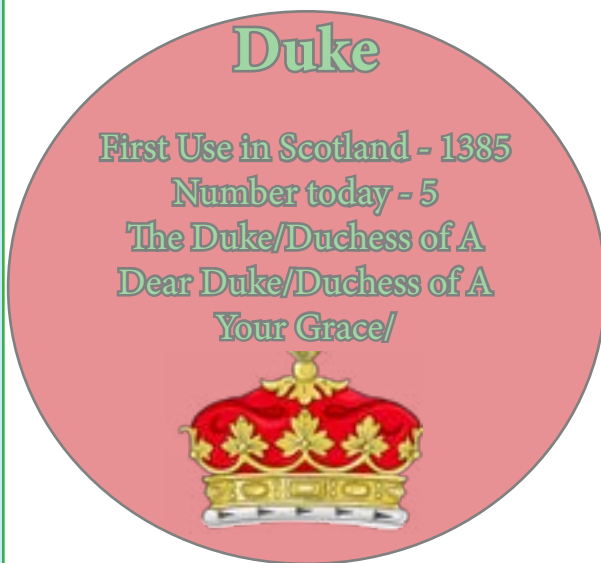
How many times have you started talking with someone who speaks with a “toffee” accent? Someone with an old world title for a name? You lose your train of thought and start stuttering. How are you supposed to address them? Will they be offended if you get it wrong? Is there a cure for this paralyzing social dysfunction? Fear not! COSCA is here to help!

In fact, most peers are refreshingly human, normal, down to earth. They may be wearing a kilt, but they put their pants on like you do, one leg at a time. Nevertheless, on the theory that a little knowledge may make **YOU** feel more comfortable, here goes.

## PEERS AND NOBLES

Is there a difference? Yes. All peers are nobles but not all nobles are peers. We can speak of noble families.

The wife, siblings, children and cousins of a peer are all part of the nobility, but there’s only one peer of the name. There are five grades or ranks of peer, in descending order: Duke, Marquess, Earl, Viscount and Lord.



Confusingly, Lord is also a generic term for a peer of any rank, but the lowest level of peerage has a different name in Scotland from that used in England. In Scotland they are called Lords of Parliament, in England Baron. Even more confusingly, there are barons in Scotland, feudal barons, but they are not members of the peerage. Knights and their hereditary version, baronets, are also not peers and were allowed to sit in the House of Commons, if elected. It should also be pointed out that the word laird, which refers to someone who owns large tracts of land, is not part of the peerage either. Despite what those charlatans trying to sell souvenir plots may tell you, a laird is not a lord.

More confusion: not everyone who is known by a noble title is a peer. They might be the eldest son of a senior peer and be granted the right to one of their father’s unused minor titles as a courtesy. If the Earl of A also holds the title of Viscount B, he may allow his heir to call himself Viscount B. Holding a courtesy title does not make the holder a peer...yet, but you should address them as if they are.

(A or B are used in this article to designate a region as Region A or B or other geographic area)

## KINGDOMS SEPARATE AND UNITED

The Act of Union between England and Scotland was signed in 1707. Before that time there were separate peerages in the two countries. Between 1707 and 1801 any peerages created were peerages of Great Britain. Any created since 1801 are peerages of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and (now Northern) Ireland. It makes no difference now which jurisdiction a title was created under. Anywhere in the UK, an earl is an earl is an earl. But curiously, the chief of the Montgomeries holds two earldoms, one English and the other Scottish. His En-

English Title is Earl of Winton and his Scottish title is Earl of Eglinton.

# HERALDRY

Only Peers, chiefs and Knights of the Order of the Thistle are entitled to supporters on their arms, that is to figures either side of, and helping to hold up, the shield depicting their coat of arms. These figures can be human or animal. The arms of peers are also distinguished by having a crown or coronet identifying their rank and a different kind of helmet above the shield from that of a non-peer. Flags are also distinguished by rank. Thus the standard or headquarters flag for a Duke is 21 feet long, for a Viscount 16'6" and for a chief who is not a peer, 12ft.

## Marquess

First Use in Scot - 1385

Number today - 34

The Most Hon. the Marquess/  
Marchioness of A  
My Lord/Madam



## DUKE

There are two kinds of Duke, some royal and others not. Royal Dukes are not hereditary. Rather the name is available to the monarch to bestow on family members. Examples are the Duke of Cornwall and the Duke of Edinburgh. The wife of a Duke is called a Duchess. When talking to a Duke, one should address them as Your Grace. When writing to them or speaking of them in the third person, you should refer to His Grace, the Duke of...

The origin of the word Duke is the Latin dux, meaning leader, which came into English via the French duc. The oldest dukedom or duchy was created in 1337.

# MARQUESS

The oldest Marquessate dates to 1385. The wife of a Marquess is called a Marchioness. The origin of the name is from the Latin marca, via Old French marche, meaning frontier. The French spelling of Marquess is Marquis. When writing to a Marquess one should address them as The Most Honourable The Marquess of...and in conversation they should be addressed as My Lord.

## EARL

The oldest use of Earl in English dates to 1035, before the Norman Conquest. The term derives from the old Anglo-Saxon or Norse term Eorl or Jarl and it is used only in Britain. The equivalent rank in Continental Europe is known as a Count/Comte and derives from the Latin comes, a companion. This is why the wife of an Earl is called a Countess. The word county for the geographical subdivisions in Britain derives from the word count, and so an Earl is always the Earl of somewhere. When writing to an Earl one should address them as The Right Honourable The Earl of...and in conversation as My Lord.

## Earl

First Use in Scotland - 1035

Number today - 195

The Right Hon. Earl/Countess  
of A

My Lord/Madam of A  
Duke/Countess



# VISCOUNT

The rank of Viscount first occurs in 1440. The term derives from vice-count, someone who can act as an alternate for a count. The wife of a Viscount is a Viscountess. Like an Earl, they should be addressed as The Right Honourable The Viscount X (no of) and in conversation as My Lord. The French equivalent is called a viscomte and in Italian, Visconti.

## LORD OF PARLIAMENT

The remaining and lowest rank of peer is called a Lord.

Confusingly, all other peers may also be called Lord. In England the lowest rank of peer is more specifically called a baron, whereas in Scotland this lowest rank is called a Lord of Parliament, even though they are

no longer entitled to sit in either the Scottish or UK Parliament. Originally the Upper House of the British parliament was open only to peers and is still called the House of Lords, but in almost every case the people entitled to sit in the chamber today are Life peers: these are barons whose titles are not heritable, that is, they die with the holder. Life Peers are always identified by reference to a place: Lord X of Y. Many are women and are known as Baroness or Lady X of Y. All were appointed by the Government of the day and would be expected to support the agenda of the political party which called for them to be enobled. There are currently a small number of hereditary peers still allowed to sit in what was their House, but the current Labour government of Sir Keir Starmer is attempting to end that surviving privilege. The few who sit there today have been elected by their “peers,” that is by other hereditaries.

### Baron

**First Use in Scotland - 1066**

**Number today - 100's**

**The Duke/Duchess of A  
Dear Duke/Duchess of A  
Lord/Lady of Parliament**



### Viscount

**First Use in Scotland - 1440**

**Number today - 111**

**The Right Hon. Viscount/Viscountess**

**The Lord/Lady**

**Viscount/Viscountess**



## LADIES

Various kinds of women may use the title, Lady. First, there are a few who are peers themselves, who might be referred to as “in their own right.” (Hereditary titles tend to pass down through a system known as primogeniture, to the oldest male heir.) Many more will be the spouse of a peer, but they could also be the spouse of a knight or baronet. Sir Michael and Lady Smith. They should all be addressed as My Lady in conversation. Perversely, the female equivalent of a knight is called a Dame, but rather unfairly her husband is not entitled to any courtesy title whatever.

A chief who is a woman but not a peer is addressed as Madam not Lady or simply as Chief. Finally, the widow of a peer may be known as The Dowager Countess of X to distinguish her from her daughter-in-law, the Countess.



# CONCLUSION

So there you have it. Simple, yes? In reality, and in the vast majority of cases, peers will not expect you to know any of this. So relax. If you do begin by addressing them as Your Grace, Your Lordship or My Lord, they will probably jump in and suggest you call them by their name. . . . Probably.

## *References for this article*

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This article has been co-written by The Rt. Hon. Viscount Dunrossil (Andrew) and Dr. Bruce MacGregor Whyte (Bruce). Lord Dunrossil is a member of COSCA's Advisory Board and Dr. Whyte is the Editor of the Claymore. Andrew and Bruce would each like to take the credit for the bits you might like and assure you that any bits you might not like are entirely the other's fault."



# Lios Mor (Great Garden)

One of the COSCA advisory board members, Mike McIntyre, recently received a communication from a Community representative from the Isle of Lismore, Inner Hebrides. As we stated in our last Claymore, the Church of Scotland is selling off many of their churches, support buildings, houses and land. On Lismore, this includes a significant historic building – which has effectively been put on the auction block. But the Church is prepared to dispose of it to the community at broadly ‘market value’ – if the community and its supporters can make viable plans for its future.

Sebastian Tombs, spokesperson for the charity, Kilmoluag Liosmor, writes:

*“Our small community faces a huge challenge – and opportunity: to acquire and repair this significant 13<sup>th</sup> century building, which formed the Choir of the original Cathedral, and make it fit for multi-purpose uses for the current century, compatible with its spiritual heritage. The plans are ambitious – and involve reorienting the building’s access to its original format, with entry from the West through the noble arched doorway, into a majestic, light-filled space, opening up to the glorious stained-glass windows celebrating St Columba of nearby Iona, and St Moluag” (see image).*

*“New comfort facilities will be required, and later Victorian appendages removed, to be replaced by a contemporary lightweight entry canopy welcoming users, providing a vantage point for interpreting the scale and setting*

*of the original Cathedral. We anticipate the budget for such a major project could be in the order of some £2m”.*



To date, over £36,000 has been raised for consultant fees. We are a small, friendly community with a strong community spirit as demonstrated by the £26,000 donated by the congregation until now that is in addition to the £36,000 above.

*‘The sheer scale of this is daunting – and beyond our modest means; but with support from all Lismore’s friends and especially from the Scottish diaspora, whose families hail from these and neighbouring lands, we believe we have sufficient energy and enthusiasm to transform these assets into a project that honours this place’s deep historical roots in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.’*



**LISMORE** is a small island, 10 miles long by 1 mile wide. Its population is about 170. The top of Ben Nevis and the Glencoe range can be seen to the north east, the twin peaks of Cruachan to the east, and the Isle of Mull to the south west. It has a primary school, community shop, thriving heritage centre – and one church!

The Cathedral was dedicated to St Moluag (Old Irish Mo-Luoc) who founded a monastery on this site, and died in 592. It became a major centre of Christianity in Scotland, and was the seat of the Bishopric of Argyll. To modern eyes it seems an isolated location for such a centre, but in an era when the fastest and most reliable transport was by water, sheltered Lismore was ideally suited.

The Diocese of Argyle was Scotland's most impoverished, and although modest in scale, the 13<sup>th</sup> century Cathedral would in its day have been the largest religious structure on the north west, and a most impressive sight. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, major repairs were required, the choir became the parish church with new windows, the nave and western tower being reduced to their foundations. The chief surviving medieval features are three doorways, one blocked, another originally the entrance through the pupitun, a piscina and the triple-arched sedilia (see image). Several late medieval grave slabs are preserved in the church and in a special covered display beside the road.

Under recent Church of Scotland reforms, the congregation is now joined with Appin; the current minister is Dugald Cameron, previously of Kilmore and Oban.

Many are the names associated with the Church, old and new, including: McDonald of Islay – Lords of the Isles; McDougall of Lorn; McRurie of Gamorgan (which became Clanranald McDonald); the Campbells of Argyll; the Stewarts of Appin; the Carmichaels – two were signatories of the 1240 Charter. Blacks, Livingston(e)s, MacGregors and MacColls all share its history.



This seems a worthwhile venture, if the price is right. If anyone wishes to contribute, or knows others who may contribute, contact: Sebastian Tombs, Chair of Kilmoluag Liosmor, by [email](#) or phone +44 7540 939 505.





# A Special Liddell Tartan

It's been 100 years since Scottish sprinter Eric Liddell won the gold medal at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, the story told in *Chariots of Fire*. And it's been another 100 since he left his fame behind on June 29, 1925, to become a Christian missionary to China.

His Edinburgh-based care charity, *The Eric Liddell Community*, has been celebrating these centennials in the U.K. by promoting values that Eric inspired – Passion, Compassion, and Integrity – through sports, educational, cultural, and faith programming.

As part of the cultural programs, [Kinloch Anderson kiltmakers](#) in Leith designed and registered a special tartan to commemorate these anniversaries. The Liddell family were very involved in selecting the design. The tartan is the background for this page.

The design takes inspiration from elements: the Dalziel tartan (connected to the Liddell name); numbers 100 and 24 in the threadcount referencing the centennial of his 1924 Olympic success. Each color has a special meaning: yellow for gold including his gold medal; blue for Scotland; navy blue for Scottish Rugby and Edinburgh University, his alma mater; red for China; green for his intent to represent his family holidays at Carcant and his love of field sports; and grey to represent the pain of separation, internment, and loss in his life.

Also, as reported in the previous issue of *The Claymore*, The Eric Liddell 100 is offering to the U.S. free of charge the resources it developed to celebrate the life and values of Eric Liddell in the U.K. They are easily downloadable from its website – [www.ericliddell.org/us-canada](http://www.ericliddell.org/us-canada). The site includes ideas for how to incorporate Eric Liddell -themed sports events in local Highland Games and recognize the June anniversary.



For more information on Eric Liddell 100 activities in the U.S., contact Mart Martin, Eric Liddell 100 US Ambassador and COSCA member, at [mmartin@3keyquestions.com](mailto:mmartin@3keyquestions.com).

# The University of Strathclyde

## Research on the Scottish Diaspora

Professor Tanja Bueltmann, an expert in Scottish diaspora history at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, is seeking individuals with Scottish heritage in the United States and globally to take part in an important survey. This research explores how diasporas stay connected to Scotland, and the online survey is designed to gather data to better understand how those with Scottish heritage engage with their ancestral homeland and diaspora today.

Whether your connection to Scotland is strong or distant, your experiences are invaluable. The survey is open to anyone with Scottish heritage and takes only a short time to complete.

### **Why Participate?**

Contribute to new academic research on the Scottish diaspora. Help inform the Scottish Government (Scottish Connections Framework).

### **Take the survey,**

The survey can be completed anonymously by [clicking here](#). It begins with an information section, followed by a consent page—these are standard academic protocols, so please don't be put off. Your participation is truly valuable!

Please share this survey with others in your networks. The more voices we hear, the richer our understanding of the Scottish diaspora will be.

Thank you for your time and for helping to keep the Scottish spirit alive across the world!



# Northton Heritage Trust

Hebrides People, formally known as *Seallam! 'Cò Leis Thu?'* ('from whom do you come?'), began as a family effort in 1988, founded and operated by Bill Lawson and his late wife Chris. Mr. Lawson is widely recognized as the authority on genealogy of the Western Isles, having completed over 60 years of research.

*Seallam! 'Cò Leis Thu?'* genealogy research service is now rebranded as the Hebrides People Visitor Centre. The genealogy and heritage centre is located in Northton on the Isles of Harris on the Outer Hebrides. It is an island chain off the west coast of mainland Scotland, the fifteen inhabited islands had a total population of 26,120 in 2022 and there are more than 50 substantial uninhabited islands [\[1\]](#). The traditional language of the Western Isles is Scots Gaelic and it is still used in daily life by most Islanders. The Hebrides People heritage centre is among one of the many vibrant and unique Hebridean experiences alongside traditional music, crofting, local distilleries, weaving, outdoor adventures, and festivals found exclusively in the Western Isles.

The People of the  
Western Isles

## *Seallam! 'Cò Leis Thu?'*

The history of modern people in the Outer Hebrides begins with the melting of the ice sheets and the arrival of Mesolithic Man. The oldest site found so far for these hunter-dweller ancestors is near Northton in the south of Harris, which has been dated to 9,000 years ago, and no doubt there are other and possibly older sites still to be found.

Current DNA research shows a later group of Neolithic settlers arriving by sea from the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts and mingling with the older people, to give rise to the later Iron Age people, whose distinctive broch-style duns grace many headlands and lochs around the isles.

The coming of Christianity is shown by many religious sites around the islands, but these were soon destroyed by the Viking raids of the 800s onwards. The north of Lewis was thoroughly settled by the Norsemen, but further south they were more of a ruling caste. Their main legacy in the islands has been their placenames – and perhaps a love of the sea.

Successive generations became less Norse, and when the Hebrides became part of Scotland after the Treaty of Perth in 1266, the islanders became known as the Gall-Gàidheil – the foreign Gaels. The main power passed to Clan Donald as the Lords of the Isles, with their base in Islay and their church in Iona.





The Lordship collapsed in the 1500s, and the power passed to the clan chiefs – MacNeil in Barra, Clanranald in South Uist, Clan Uisdein in North Uist and MacLeod in Harris and Lewis, building their own castles and churches through the islands.

The economy of the islands was still largely subsistence-based, based largely on cattle raising, but a new industry was coming, which would disrupt the whole economy of the islands. The ash of kelp – seaweed – proved to be a source of minerals, in great demand during the French Wars of the late 1700s and early 1800s. The island landowners encouraged settle settlement on the sea-lochs of the east coasts of the islands, where there was little productive land but a wealth of seaweed and a boom industry grew up, greatly to the economic advantage of the landowners, but also providing a source of small capital for the crofters.



***"Hercules" and fleet, Scalpay, Harris***

There had already been a mass emigration from the islands in the 1770s, after a series of years of poor crops, and this intensified as crofters used their capital to pay their fare across the Atlantic, from Lewis to mainland Nova Scotia, from North Uist and Harris to Cape Breton and from South Uist to Cape Breton and to Prince Edward Island.



After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 and the end of the French Wars, the market for kelp collapsed in the face of foreign competition, and the whole economy of the islands collapsed. Crofters no longer had an income with which to pay the rent, and the landlords had lost their main source of revenue. Most of the landlords went bankrupt and almost all the clan chiefs lost their estates to creditors. The new owners felt no responsibility to their tenants, and were quite willing to dispossess them in favour of sheep-farmers offering higher rents. Great numbers of tenants left the islands, and many more were forced to leave as the best lands were cleared for sheep.

In the 1840s potato blight struck the islands and famine on the Irish scale was only averted by well-organised charitable bodies from the Scottish mainland. There was even more reason for emigration, but few could afford the fares, unless with assistance from bodies like the Highlands and Islands Emigration Society, to Australia. Landlords like Matheson in Lewis and Gordon Cathcart in South Uist and Barra arranged their own emigration schemes to Ontario and Quebec, those from South Uist being carried out in a particularly inhumane way. For those remaining in the island the threat of eviction was ever-present until the Crofters Act of 1885 gave them security of tenure of their crofts, but there was still the problem of great numbers of landless cottars. Gradually, and particularly in the period between the two World Wars, most of the land cleared for sheep was restored to crofters, though this could never be enough to satisfy the demand, and emigration still continued in great numbers, especially in the 1920s.

In the rural areas of the Outer Hebrides, emigration to the Scottish mainland remains the norm for most children, as the economy at home offers only limited opportunities. There has been a move in the last few years for local groups to buy-out some of the large estates, so bringing them under local control. It is hoped this will help to improve the local economies and so increase the range of opportunities available for the young people whose retention is so necessary to reverse the loss of population that is still a feature of too many areas. [2]

Explore your own heritage and ancestors! Help us continue to preserve the rich culture and history of the



Peat stack, Scalpay, Harris, and Northton, Harris



Western Isles. Support us by visiting the website, create a profile, and access the database to find an ancestor, and or purchase one of our many literary works. The preservation of Hebrides People's research facility is a noble cause that has inspired many, not only at a local and national level but on a global scale, please join us!





# World University for Performing Arts

## Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

On March 12, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) announced it has retained its impressive sixth place among prestigious institutions in the QS World University Ranking for Performing Arts, affirming its global status as a leading destination for aspiring performers, artists and creators.

Renowned for its exceptional training and vibrant artistic community, RCS has consistently demonstrated excellence in various disciplines, including all areas of music, Scottish traditional music, drama, dance, opera, musical theater, production, and film. Around 120 of RCS's 1200 students are from the USA and Canada, and RCS is

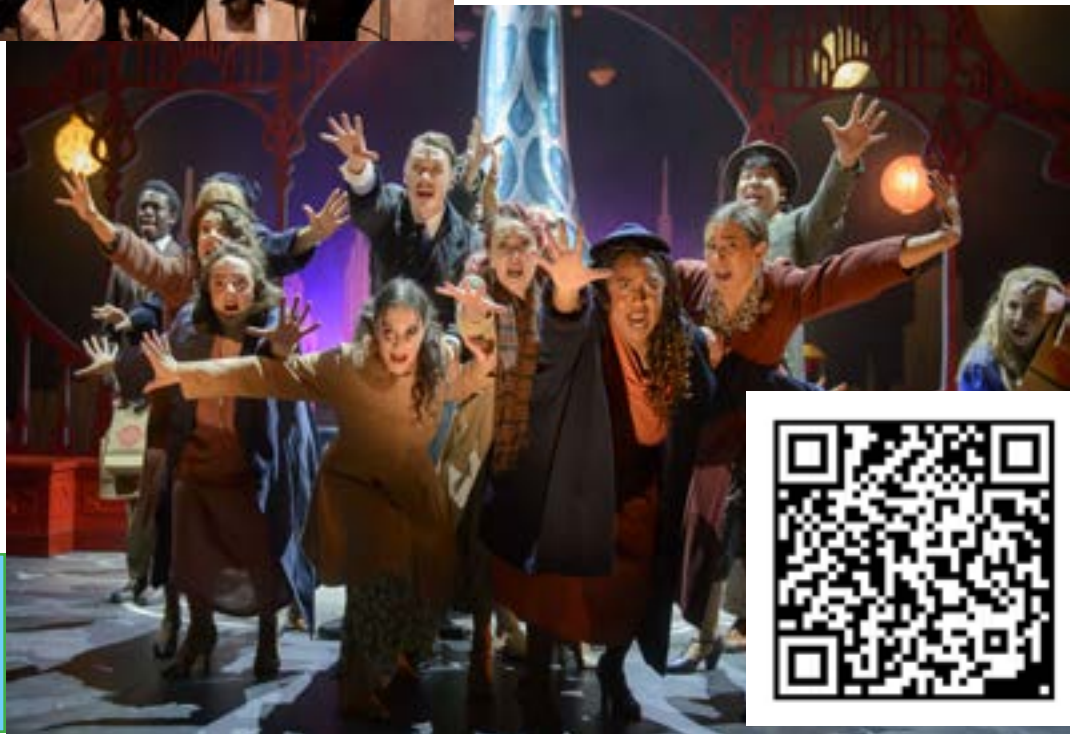
grateful for the support for students provided by the Scottish diaspora and its friends across North America through scholarships, program and partnership opportunities.

RCS's top ten ranking is a testament to its ability to nurture talent and provide a dynamic environment where students can thrive creatively and professionally. If you are in Glasgow, please stop by and enjoy a show or a cup of tea in the RCS café at 100 Renfrew Street. In the USA and Canada, the RCS International Advisory Board works to garner support for student scholarships and other programs. Please consider making a gift via the link at this [QR code](#), or please contact us at (855) 572 7422 or [development@rcsiab.com](mailto:development@rcsiab.com).



**Congratulations  
RCS on a  
stellar  
achievement once  
again in the world  
rankings!**

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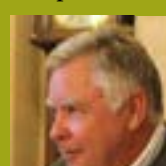
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A 501(c)3 organization created with the goals of:

- Supporting Scottish American Clan and family Societies with training/resources
- Providing education and learning opportunities in Scottish fields
- building Global relationships with Scotland and the Global diaspora

This news letter does not accept any responsibility for the opinions



**Ethan MacDonald**  
Mid-West



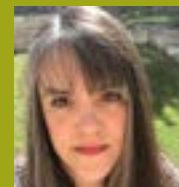
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# Council of Scottish Clans & Associations

## Membership Applications

### Council of Scottish Clans and Associations, Inc.

"Service, Education & Advocacy in support of the Scottish American Ancestral Diaspora"

#### Membership Application form (Membership Year January 1 - December 31)

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Organizational Membership: \$50 per year**

Scottish Clan or Family Association Represented: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yr Founded: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Regional Directors (average annual): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Memberships (average annual): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Scottish Games or Events attended (average annual): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(First, Middle, Last)

Contact Position/Title

Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(No., Street, City, State & Zip)

Home Phone No.: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No.: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed #: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature

Applicant's Printed Name

What can COSCA do for you? \_\_\_\_\_

(use the back of this sheet if needed)

What can you do for COSCA? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Individual Membership: \$25 per year**

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(First, Middle, Last)

Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(No., Street, City, State & Zip)

Home Phone No.: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No.: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed #: \_\_\_\_\_

Clan Membership(s) (use back if necessary)

What can COSCA do for you? \_\_\_\_\_

(use the back of this sheet if needed)

What can you do for COSCA: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Scottish Games/Events attended yearly? \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite 2 Scottish Games or Events: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to Volunteer to staff an information table for COSCA? Yes!

No

**Mail to: Scott Swan at COSCA, 1061 Legend Dr, Greensboro, GA, 30642**

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