



An Drochaid - The Bridge



January 2018

ISSN 0703—1491

Volume 46, Issue 1

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**Celebrate Canada's
Scottish Heritage...**
with bare knees

 
Sons of Scotland
happily Scottish, proudly Canadian

**Sir John A's Great Canadian
Kilt Skate**
Toronto's 2nd Annual

and ice!

FREE
Hot Chocolate and
Birthday Cake

**Sunday, January 28
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Nathan Phillips Square**

kiltskate.com
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 **The
Scottish Society
of Ottawa**

facebook.com/clansandscottishsocieties/

 **Scottish Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

*Help celebrate Scotland's
year of young people*  **year of the young people**
Bladhna na h-òigridh
2018

Come and Join us for a **Great Canadian Kilt Skate**



Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada (CASSOC)



Founded in 1977, CASSOC is an organization for organizations. Our primary purpose is to provide coordination and communication between our member groups. We encourage the celebration of our Scottish cultural heritage and the promotion of this Scottish culture in Canada in all its aspects. We seek to be the assembly of all groups in Canada who are pursuing Scottish interests.

AN DROCHAID – The Bridge is the newsletter of CASSOC and will be published in March, June, Sept and Dec. Items for publication should be submitted to the Editor, editor@cassoc.ca

Any member group of CASSOC may submit an advertisement to any issue at no cost.

Membership in CASSOC is open to any and all organizations which promote or encourage some aspect of Scottish tradition or culture, represent a link between the Scottish people and their descendants and relations in Canada, or seek to develop an understanding of the role Scotland and its culture has played in the development of Canada and its history.

2017-2018 Board of Directors:

Chair: Karen Macleod McCrimmon

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Secretary: Jo Ann Tuskin

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John Duff

Patrons: Charles Edward Bruce, Lord Bruce, DL MA MSc FSA Scot
Major The Hon. Sir Lachlan MacLean of Duart Bt. CVO DL

Meetings 2018:

The Executive Meetings will be 8 April and 28 October 2018.

The General Assembly meetings will be 6 May and 25 November 2018, location TBA.

Website:

The website contains, among other things, a list of Scottish and Celtic Events in Canada, Canadian Regional tartans, and a list of our member groups with a link to their websites and other digital media, as well as their membership contact information. On the Events list, for each date, our member group events are highlighted with a link to their website and our icon if we will be participating.

www.cassoc.ca

Frae the Chair:

Greetings Clansfolk,

I hope that this message finds you all well. Here in the Toronto area, we got our white Christmas, but the temperatures, feeling close to -20o for the last week, have put a bit of a damper on spending time in the great outdoors.

You will notice that the format of the An Drochaid has changed. We have gone completely digital to keep up with modern technology and Jo Ann Tuskin is our interim editor. CASSOC would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Alene McNeill for all her work on the An Drochaid over the last 20+ years. This newsletter is an anchor for our organization and we are looking for a new editor to continue this quality publication.

We had a very productive general meeting at the end of November and look forward to another eventful year. We continue to look for more members to join our executive family. If you are interested please contact me. Commitment to the executive requires you to attend 2 meetings a year in addition to our general meetings in November and April. Your voice and opinions are important to us.

We are excited to be part of the Sir John A. Macdonald's National Kilt Skate which is held in 7 cities across Canada in the month of January. CASSOC will be hosting the Toronto Kilt Skate on January 27th and I hope you are able to join us for some skating fun at Nathan Phillips Square.

I look forward to attending some of our member activities in the upcoming year. Please make sure that you visit our website, www.cassoc.ca to see what events are offered by our many members to celebrate our Scottish heritage, whether it is Robbie Burns Day, Tartan Day or a special guest speaker who is in town. If you do not see an event that should be posted, please email our webmaster to make sure it gets included. The CASSOC website is one of the advantages to your group's membership.

Of special note is the article from Rianna Crawford about the new Youth Initiative. Rowan Gladish (pictured with Rianna and Zachary Wallace) has recently joined CASSOC as the Clan MacLeod representative and spoke at the general meeting in November. At 17, she is an important link to our missing youth and CASSOC is excited to welcome her to the fold. We have also recently learned that Zachary Wallace has climbed the ranks within the Gaelic Society of Toronto. These developments provide some much-needed encouragement for all our groups. Rowan welcomes your thoughts and feedback about the Youth Initiative through rowan@gladish.ca.

Please feel free to email or contact me at any time. Happy Hogmanay to you all.

Hold Fast,



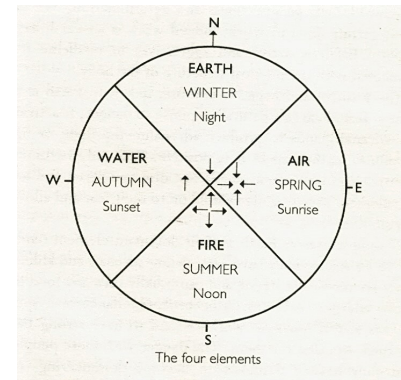
New Publishing Schedule:

Please note the new publishing schedule: An Drochaid - The Bridge will be published in March, June, September and December. Deadline for submissions is the **1st** of the month of issue.

The Celtic Elements - Winter

The Four Elements:

When the Celts looked at the world about them, they noticed that many things had four aspects. There were four winds, four seasons, four cardinal directions and so on. They also noticed that there was a circular or cyclic nature to the world and that, by looking at these four aspects, one could see where on its cycle anything was. The assigned these four aspects names, Earth, Air, Fire and Water. These four 'elements' became the foundation of the Celtic medicine wheel

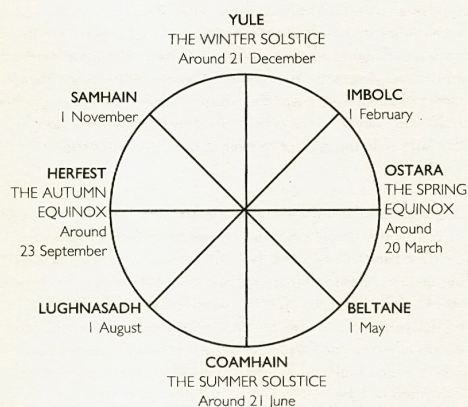


Winter – North – Earth:

The North is the place of winter in the cycle of a year: the time when many animals return to the earth to hibernate; when the leaves and fruits have died and are returning to Grandmother Earth through natural decay. It is a time of inactivity, of quiet reflection. In the cycle of a day, the North is night-time, the time when animals return to their burrows to sleep, the time when we humans sleep too.

The power of the North is the power of Earth. In the winter, everything returns to the earth, everything has a downward notion to it. Plants decay *down* into the earth, animals and humans go *down* to sleep. The power of Earth is downward. It is groundedness and determination. We talk about getting *down* to work; indeed work is an Earth-based activity. Earth is wisdom, the ability to know how to use knowledge effectively.

The Wheel of the Year



NB: All Celtic festivals begin at dusk the night before the festival day, e.g. Samhain begins on the night of 31 October

Yule

Yule is the festival that marks the winter solstice – around 21 December – the time when the darkness rules the earth for the longest. It is a time of great celebration because the power of the dark begins to wane from this time onwards and the Sun is reborn to grow in power through to the summer solstice. To mark this birth, evergreen plants were brought into homes to decorate them, candles were lit and the Yule log was burnt. Presents were exchanged and feasts eaten.

The majority of the celebrations that occur at Christmas are of pagan origin. The presents, the feast, the holly and the ivy, the mistletoe and even to some extent the Christmas tree all have their roots in the old celebration of Yule.

From Celtic Wisdom by Andy Baggott, published 1999 by Judy Piatkus (Publishers) Ltd.

Youth Group Initiative

A Promising Future: Youth Engagement in Scottish Groups

Greetings to all! My name is Rianna Crawford, and I was this year's youth ambassador for the Scottish North American Leadership Conference. On behalf of us all, I am excited to introduce some very exciting news to you!

On the front of youth engagement, the Scottish North American Leadership Conference 2017 was a smashing success! Myself (Highland Dancer), and participants Rowan Gladish (Clan MacLeod Society of Canada) and Zachary Wallace (The Gaelic Society of Toronto), participated in a youth panel at the event to present ideas on how to get young people involved in Scottish culture. We have developed a plan that was a hit with all of the delegates in attendance and got near-immediate approval from everyone; a Scottish youth organization that is unaffiliated with the clan societies runs primarily across social media platforms and plans youth-specific events across the North American region. We collectively feel that this group will be a surefire way to engage young people and inspire them towards involvement in Scottish culture, leading them to then follow that spark of interest into adulthood where they will join other groups, such as clan societies and other related Scottish organizations. The effort, which we are all ecstatic about, has already been offered various sources of funding and should be underway in the coming months. The future of youth involvement in the Scottish Cultural Community of North America is looking brighter than ever!

Below, you will find the notes scribed from the youth panel of the conference.

Alba gu Brath!

Rianna Crawford

Youth Presenters at the Scottish North American Leadership Conference

August 10-11, 2017

University of Guelph

From left to right,

Rowan Gladish

Zachary Wallace

Rianna Crawford



Youth Initiative (cont'd)

Scottish North American Leadership Conference 2017 Youth Session

Youth are interested in:

- social media (Facebook, twitter, Instagram)
 - consider a separate youth account or a Social media ambassador position for youth
 - while they may seem to live on-line, they also want real connections with people
 - Help connect youth locally, nationally & internationally with similar interests
- The arts (music, dance, literature)
 - As the focus of an event

What Youth Engagement might look like:

- A social society (non group/clan specific)
- No membership fees (But youth would pay to go to an event)
- A newsletter would published (on-line only)
- An independent youth group that would organize events for youth (a youth movement)
- Role of mentors (from established groups) important
- This youth group might grow to be a number of people that would participate together in different Scottish events (such as Clan Ceilidhs, Highland Games, concerts etc.)
- Once the youth group is established and up and running, members may be drawn to join specific clan groups and other Scottish Societies that align with their specific passions

Additional Things to Consider:

- Charity work also a draw
- Internship as a draw? (support in Canada through the Gov.)
- International contacts would be great for travel
- A new youth group would need to be promoted through our clans and games and on our websites

Member Group News:

Member Groups are encouraged to submit news to this regular column in *An Drochaid*. If there is no news about your group, it is probable that none was submitted to the Editor. Deadline for submissions is the 1st of the month of issue: March, June, September and December

Clan Cameron Canadian Branch:

Leighton Cameron reported that Clan Cameron now attends five games a year and are also looking for a newsletter editor. Leighton noted that they are very interested in the Youth Group activities to help encourage young people to become interested in their Scottish and Clan heritage.

Clan Davidson Society of North America:

Clan Davidson Society of North America hosted its first Clan tent at the Fergus Games. Our Tent Convener (TC) was Doug Young and he was assisted by Society vice president Logan Dawson. The Clan Tent had many visitors and the Society received several new members. Since Fergus we have recruited 2 additional TC's. We may also have at least 1 event covered in the BC area hosted by an existing TC in California and family in the area. This represents the largest growth our Society has experienced since early in our existence.

Clan Donnachaidh Society in Ontario:

Clan Donnachaidh saw a busy summer attending 4 Highland Games this year, Embro, Kincardine, Georgetown and Fergus. The Fergus Games being the busiest we have ever seen our tent and visitors were very interested in the history of the Clan. We have launched our new website and are still working on design ideas. We look forward to the New Year and being able to push the reset button and start a new year with new hopes, thoughts and ideas.

Elliot Clan Society of Canada:

The Elliot Clan Spring Luncheon was in April and they were honoured to host Lord Bruce, the new Patron of CASSOC. They had a clan tent at Fergus and have four new members as a result. The world-wide Gathering was held in Scotland, in the Borders, at the Chief's residence of Redheugh. They were also the featured clan at the 2017 Edinburgh Military Tattoo on the Wednesday evening, and so about 100 Elliots marched in to the area as a clan at the beginning of the Tattoo.

Clan Graham Society Inc

Clan Graham is pleased to announce the appointment of Norma Benwell of Lethbridge, AB, to the position of Commissioner for the Prairie Region of Canada. Norma is a relatively new member of Clan Graham Society and has volunteered to take on the representation of Clan Graham at events in the Prairie Region. She is a former resident of Fergus, ON, and is quite familiar with Highland Games. Her family connection is well-represented in several other clan associations and she is interested in her family genealogy.

Clan Gregor Society – Canadian Chapter:

2018 will be a big year for MacGregors from all over the world as we will be joining together at an International Gathering July 15-22 in Scotland. This will be held at the Loch Awe Hotel which is located a mere stone's throw from the remains of Kilchurn Castle occupied by our earliest Gregor ancestors at the head of the 3 Glens, Glenstrae, Glengyle and Glenorchy.

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Clan Lachlan Association of Canada Inc:

"The Rowan Tree" newsletter, is published twice a year and the "Clan Lachlan" magazine comes out of the USA twice a year as well. The Clan was represented at the wonderful Gaelic Society Whisky Tasting, held Nov. 13, 2017 at the Albany Club on King Street. The major Clan MacLachlan Society event for 2018 will be our large international Gathering at Castle Lachlan, on Loch Fyne, Argyll, Scotland on May 26 and 27, 2018.

Clan MacFarlane Worldwide:



Clan MacFarlane held a 5 day gathering and AMM scheduled during the Fergus Highland Games last year and set up their clan info tent at six games in Canada last year. \$500.00 was donated to the Centre for Scottish Studies in Guelph. The AMM for 2018 will be held during Scot Fest at Estes Park, Colorado, USA.

Macfie Clan Society in Canada:

Clan Macfie held their 20th International Gathering in Stirling from Sept. 6-10, 2017. Items discussed at the Parliament included: 1. Ways to try to get more members interested in Clan Macfie from around the world with genealogy.

Macfie Clan Society in Canada (cont'd)

2. The small parcel of land on Colonsay, where their Standing Stone sits, needs attention to help keep clean. It contains a plaque of information on Dr. Earle Douglas MacPhee who pioneered to have the Clan once again registered to be an active Clan in 1981.

Clan MacKenzie Society of Canada:

The member newsletter, Cabar Feidh, has gone completely digital; being delivered to members via a password-protected section of the Clan website, and the CMC continues to utilize technology through increased social media presence via Facebook and Twitter. There are also plans to utilize the website for other transactions such as new memberships and member renewals, and the sale of "MacKenzie merchandise".

Clan MacLennan Canada:

This year Clan MacLennan Canada was officially present in the Avenue of the Clans at the Cobourg Highland Games, the Cambridge Scottish Festival, the Glengarry Highland Games and the Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games. Next year is the Clan MacLennan's Worldwide Gathering in Inverness, Scotland from 4-8 July 2018. The gathering will mark the 40th Anniversary of the formation of our modern day Clan, marking when Ronald was inaugurated as Chief of the Clan at a ceremony held in Inverness in 1978.



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Clan MacNeil in Canada:

Clan MacNeil was saddened this year by the passing of our founder, Andrew McNeill, however, one of his grandchildren, Optometrist Dr. Suzanne McNeill of Cambridge, volunteered to become our new Webmaster. Terry Myles, our 1st Vice-President, who takes great pride in our tent at the Highland Games, spent many weekends touring Ontario. Having won the top award for the Best Clan Display at Fergus last year certainly brought a lot of interest to visit his display this year.

Clan MacRae Society of Canada:



Clan MacRae held their 10 Day gathering and AGM in Nova Scotia and PEI last year and set up their clan info tent at 6 games in Ontario and some in BC,

Alberta and Nova Scotia. The 6 day gathering and AGM for 2018 will be held during the Fergus Highland Games.

Clan Munro Association of Canada:

CMAC is working with its sister group, Clan Munro Association – USA, to plan a joint North American Clan Munro Gathering in Halifax, NS, in September 2018. They also participated in the SNAL Conference and the Fergus Games this past summer.



Clan Ross Association of Canada, Inc:

The Clan Ross Canada executive is in the process of planning our 2018 AGM. As well, 2017 saw the initial project in our new initiative with The Tain and District Museum and Clan Ross Centre, in Tain, Scotland. In keeping with the Tain Museum's current theme of World War I remembrance, this project focused on Canadian Ross's who served in World War I.

Clan Sinclair Association of Canada:



This past August, the Clan had the unique experience of attending the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Along with Clan Campbell we marched the length of the parade ground led by our Chief, The Rt. Honourable Malcolm Caithness along with the chief of Clan Campbell, the Duke of Argyle. The highlight of highlights of this trip was the evensong service at Rosslyn Chapel. They were honoured by the attendance of Lord Matthew Sinclair and the Earl of Rosslyn, Peter St. Clair Erskine. This service marks the first time that Lord Sinclair, the Earl of Rosslyn and our Chief, the Earl of Caithness (all descendants of William St. Clair, its founder) attended a service in Rosslyn together.

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Cobourg Highland Games Society:

We had a successful year in spite of the threat of rain. Friday evening June 16, we had our Ceilidh which included a number of teams in a tug of war. At our games Saturday, we had over 200 dancers performing and 26 pipe bands competing. In the heavy events this year we had 10 athletes taking part in the Canadian Men's Amateur Championship.

Our first activity in the New Year is our Robbie Burns supper January 27, 2018 followed by a dance. The next event is the 55th annual games to be held on June 16, 2018 in Victoria Park, Cobourg. All are Welcome.

Gaelic Society of Toronto:

The NEW YEAR'S PARTY will be on Sat, 3 Feb. from 1-6, at the Estonian Cultural Centre, 958 Broadview Ave, west side, north of the Danforth. There will be a wonderful buffet, table and floor games, a raffle, and entertainment. Visit our website in January for updates. www.gaelicsocietytoronto.com

The YOUNG PIPERS CHAMPIONSHIP will take place on February 8 at the Moss Park Armories and is open to pipers aged 21 and under. Doors open at 1 p.m. with the competition beginning at 2 p.m. We are especially privileged to have Pipe Major Ian K. Mac Donald of the Toronto Police Pipe Band as our judge this year. Ian K., as he is known, became the World Champion in 2016 when he was awarded the historic Double Gold in Inverness, Scotland. Full details of this event will be published on our website in January



Scottish Studies Foundation:

One of the activities that has proved extremely popular over the years has been our Oor Club which meets at noon on the first Friday of the month at the Duke of York pub in Toronto. Every year our high profile gala event is our annual Tartan Day Dinner and its associated Scot of the Year award. Other events include our annual Tall Ship Cruise on the "Empire Sandy" which commemorates the voyage of pioneer ship "Hector" which arrived in Pictou, Nova Scotia in 1773.



Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games

Fergus Games reports that this was an incredible year! From all accounts, they had the highest Saturday attendance in recorded Festival history. There were 16, 500 total attendees, 60 vendors and 48 Clans in attendance. Planning for 2018 is well on its way, so keep checking back on their website for updates and info.

www.fergusscottishfestival.com

Great Canadian Kilt Skate



SIR JOHN A'S GREAT CANADIAN KILT SKATE

Celebrating with bare knees and ice!



Scotland
Scotland.org

Scottish Government supports Kilt Skates across Canada

OTTAWA – For the second straight year, the Scottish Government will help sponsor a uniquely Canadian celebration of Scottish heritage: Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate. Funds will be forwarded to Scottish organizations across the country to help them throw outdoor parties where skaters will take to the ice in kilts, tartans and other Scottish regalia.

"The Great Canadian Kilt Skate is growing into a truly national celebration of what it means to be Scottish in Canada," says Chris Maskell, the Scottish Government's representative in Canada. "The Scottish Government is delighted to be supporting again this year. We're especially interested in reaching out to a younger generation in our Year of Young People, and we love the exuberance and sense of fun of Canada's kilt skates."

In 2018, as the kilt skates showcase the "Year of Young People," expect to see young hockey and ringette teams take to the ice, along with the Highland dance clubs that have been a feature of many kilt skates in past years.

"This is the fourth year we've honoured Sir John A. and Canada's Scottish heritage in this way," says Don Cummer, who's title for the event is Skater-in-Chief. "Thanks to the support of the Scottish Government, the event gets bigger each year. More people. More cities. More fun."

Discussions are underway with Scottish organizations in various Canadian cities. So far, dates for 2018 have been announced for the following:

- ♦ January 13 – [Montreal](#), organized by the St. Andrew's Society of Montreal;
- ♦ January 20 – [Ottawa](#), organized by the Scottish Society of Ottawa;
- ♦ January 27 – [Saskatoon](#), organized by the Saskatoon Highland Dancing Association;
- ♦ January 28 – [Toronto](#), organized by the Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada (CASSOC);
- ♦ February 3 – [Alexandria](#), organized by the Clan Donald;
- ♦ February 11 – [Calgary](#), organized by the St. Andrew-Caledonian Society of Calgary.

"No matter where you are, this event is open to everyone," says Cummer. "It's a chance to nurture your inner Scot. You don't have to be Scottish. You don't even have to wear a kilt. Just come to the party with a spirit of Scottish fun and fortitude, and wear Canada's favourite colour – tartan!"

The funding from the Scottish Government is administered through the Scottish Society of Ottawa, which was instrumental in creating the first kilt skate in 2015, and turning it into a national phenomenon.



Join us for a **Great Canadian Kilt Skate**

28 January 2018

1 to 3 p.m.

Nathan Phillips Square
Toronto, ON



Co-hosted by
CASSOC & Sons of Scotland

Help Wanted! CASSOC needs help!

We need volunteers **NOW** for:

Editor

Bookkeeper

Social Media Liaison

Directors-at-Large

For information contact

chairperson@cassoc.ca

info@cassoc.ca

Facebook Us!

Did you know that the CASSOC is on Facebook? Joining our Facebook group and page is a fun way to get to know each other and to share information.

We would love to see more of you on our page. Please *Friend* us today!



The Next Issue



An Drochaid is published quarterly. Submissions are extraordinarily welcome; articles may be edited for length or content.

The next issue of An Drochaid will be the **March** issue. The deadline for submissions is **Thursday, March 1st**.

Submissions can be emailed to editor@cassoc.ca