CLAN GENEALOGIST APPOINTED

Mr. Donald MacRae of Glasgow, Scotland has recently accepted the appointment as Genealogist for the Clan MacRae Society of North America, Inc. In a recent telephone interview with Donald on January 1 of this year, the new appointee indicated that he was honored and delighted with his new role.

An active researcher of the various branches of the MacRae family tree, Donald is a member of the Scottish Genealogical Society and has written several publications of interest to those of MacRae offspring. He has within the last two years completed two long visits in the southern United States, primarily for the purpose of studying the connection of the MacRae of this country to the Kintail ancestry.

Betty and Donald MacRae of Glasgow, seated behind Mrs. Donald MacRae of Atlanta. Crieff, Scotland

A major portion of the research obtained by our Genealogist in this country has been through the unbelievable efforts of Miss Flora Burdette Taylor of San Antonio, Texas. Donald credits a major portion of his success in his work in this country to the vast quantity of valuable and detailed information gathered and examined by Burdette, as she prefers to be called.

The continued efforts of these two individuals will be a strong asset to clan affairs. Both believe that the role that they will play will give them contact with more and more people of MacRae descent, which is necessary to attempt to make the data available complete, and perhaps more accurate.

Donald's experience and knowledge, as well as his great interest in all MacRae's, makes him an excellent choice for this position.

In the near future, we can look for publications from Donald in this newsletter as well as from professional publishing houses.

CLAN HISTORY SOON AVAILABLE

We may expect to see the republication of Alexander MacRae's HISTORY OF THE CLAN MACRAE within the next several months, hopefully by the summer. Correspondence to our President, Hugh MacRae, II of Wilmington, North Carolina, from Gateway Press suggests that the book has gone to press. In about two months, he will be able to examine a proof of the book for final approval and changes. Upon final approval of the committee, which includes your editor of SGURR UARAN, Gateway will print and bind the copies.

We have contracted Gateway for 1000 copies to be reprinted under the sponsorship of our Society. A small quantity has been set aside for shipment and sale immediately in Scotland. Announcements of the availability for personal order by our readers and members will be made as soon as the books are available.

Gateway forwarded a copy of the HISTORY OF THE STRONG FAMILY to Hugh and your editor for examination.
The publisher indicated to us that our publication would resemble the sample provided. Indeed, if this is so, the HISTORY OF THE CLAN MACRAE will be a high-quality edition.

The contract specifies that this cloth-bound edition will be "printed on 60 lb. paper and case-bound in group D buckram. The size of the book shall be 5½ x 8½. The cover shall be stamped on the spine and front cover with the title of the book and the name of the Author. The spine shall also bear the logo of the publisher."

We have also assigned Gateway Press "the sole and exclusive right to publish this book."

At present we anticipate that the price will be approximately $20 per copy, with highest priority for available sale given to members of the society, but not limited to the same.

The body of this book will not be altered from the material in the 1899 original edition. However, the work is considered our most authentic documentation, which quotes many records in Scotland. In addition, there are many legends of the early days that present romantic and gothic plots. Accounts praising the valor of many American MacRaes also excite the mind. This is one book all will enjoy greatly, especially if their own ancestry is recorded there.

CORRECTION NOTED

In the last issue of SGURR UARAN we printed the beautiful TOAST TO THE TARTAN, which we attributed to Murdoch MacRae. We erred!!! The poem was written by Murdoch MacLean, a native of Kintail. Donald MacRae, of Glasgow, writes, "Murdoch was born in Coolbear, near Killilan, at the head of Loch Long and was educated at the small school at Killilan. After leaving school at 14, he served as a clerk to a firm of lawyers in Newcastle and later served in the first world war, 1914-1918. He wrote three books of poems, which all dealt with his native Kintail and conditions in the Highlands. His poems are still available and most of them are worthwhile reading. Although he worked all of his life in the northeast of England, he returned each year to his native Glen Elchaig in Kintail."

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Clan Members:

I write this message looking back on the old year and looking forward to the new year of our Bicentennial. This past year has been wonderful for us, as our Society has grown strong in numbers, and we have come to know each other as friends. We have been joined by new members, not only from the southeastern United States, but also from very many other states.

Our progress is steadily forward on the matters which are important to our Society. Our newsletter is a regular feature, carrying important news to our members. Our most exciting project is the order that we have recently placed for the republication of THE HISTORY OF THE CLAN MACRAE, and handsome copies will be available to us about three months from now.

We have recently been visited again by our noted kinsman, Donald MacRae of Glasgow, Scotland, who has brought with him news of our fellow clan members over there. Mr. MacRae has also consented to be our Clan Genealogist, as he is completing extensive research about MacRae families in Scotland and America, in particular. Inquiries may now be directed to us for submission to him.

Together we may all take pride in our Society and its accomplishments. We now look forward to the Bicentennial year, and to seeing all of you during that time. We send our best wishes to each of you for a happy and prosperous New Year.

Hugh MacRae, II

Hugh MacRae, II
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What is the legal status of our Society? I notice that we are incorporated. Is this a benefit?

The clan MacRae Society of North America is indeed incorporated under the laws of the state of North Carolina. It is one of only a few such societies that have this status. As such, can we only exist as a tax-exempt non-profit organization.

Generally non-incorporated organizations have no legal status at all, although an enthusiastic following is the capstone of any organization.

The laws of North Carolina require that we have a Board of Directors which meets on a regular basis. Our Board of Commissioners does this. Further, we are required to have a set of By-laws, by which we function. This and the Articles of Incorporation are the only necessary legal documents for our existence.

Incorporated as we are, we are thus recognized as the only such society in North America which is continental in its scope of membership. Regional societies who seek to affiliate thus give status to themselves (legally) and contribute to the strength of a unified clan. In this way are we able to come closer to our many established goals.

SKIRL O' THE PIPES

(NOTE: The following article is by J. R. Miller of White City, Oregon, who is actively researching his kinship to MacRaes. His article shows his love and frustrations over the "art of piping."

What true Scotsman, no matter how far removed from his ancient homeland, can but help to raise his head with pride and to puff out his chest but a wee bit when the sound of the pipes, like the wailing of a thousand tormented souls, is to be heard through the air. Twas said by a Sassenach propagandist of old that

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN
1976 GAMES

Plans should be made now for the 1976 Games at Grandfather Mountain. As always, this year should be exciting and, if last year was any indication, we should have a mob of MacRaes present. Mark your calendars now to attend the SECOND WEEK-END of JULY, 1976, especially for the annual national meeting.

the one factor that made the Scottish soldier so terrible in battle was an overwhelming desire to put as much distance as possible between himself and "the black sticks o' the de'il," when the regimental pipes were blown up.

All attempts at humor aside, it is a certain thing that no modern musical instrument has enjoyed such a resurgence of interest nor attracted as large a following throughout the world as the Great Highland Bagpipe.

With my love of Scotland, I have long desired to learn the art of piping, for it is an art not to be undertaken by the faint of breath or the impatient. For me, there will be no satisfaction until such time as I can play the classical music of piping, the Piobaireachd, or "Great Music."

All good things must begin with basics. Piping is no exception. A practice chanter and a good teacher are the essentials for a start. The chanter is a musical instrument in its own right and is older in history than the pipes themselves. In its original form, the reed pipe was played by lonely shepherds tending their flocks in the Highlands.

A chanter is easy to obtain by simply ordering one from a reputable
"Skirl o' the Pipes" from P. 3

importer. As to the teacher, possibly the more important of the two, that can be a good deal difficult to find.

There are many different aspects to learning how to play the pipes. Each stage must be mastered before going on to the next. In the beginning, there is the pentonic scale of nine notes with no sharps or flats. In order to keep the music from sounding more like noise, grace notes and doublings must be learned. Then there is the matter of half-doublings, the grips, and other related embellishments. If you have the opportunity to do so, ask a piper to play a tune without the grace notes, and so forth. Then ask him to repeat the same, but with all of the "assistance" notes. The vast difference will be readily apparent.

The pipes are one of the very few instruments that cannot be mastered in a short time. There was a saying in Scotland to the effect that some seven years went into the making of a piper. It is possible that in the first four of these years the student would never even see a set of pipes. There is much work to be done on the chanter itself. Body reflexes must be developed and coordinated so that the lungs, arms, hands, fingers, and most especially, the ears must become attuned.

A truly novice piper, I am in the beginning stages. You can imagine my chagrin when I first picked up my new chanter and discovered I was possessed of ten thumbs. Now, some months later, they have begun to develop into fingers with one thumb to a hand. I can pick out the beautiful tune, though simply, to "Amazing Grace." It will become much sweeter with more time and practice.

I would welcome correspondence with all would-be-pipers.

**J.R. Miller, 8022 Gladstone Ave., White City, Oregon 07501

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APOLOGY TO READERS

The editor owes the readers an apology for the tardiness of this issue. We had planned to have this ready to mail by January 5. Here it is January 10, and I am typing frantically. Will do better next time.

SGURR UARAN is a publication of the Clan MacRae Society of North America, Inc. Members receive copies with membership. Special mailings are made to prospective members until notification of the availability of the HISTORY OF THE CLAN MACRAE is complete. Address correspondence to either the President, Hugh MacRae, II, P. O. Box 3155, Wilmington, North Carolina 28401 (national headquarters) or to the editor, John D. McRae, 150 College Avenue, Danville, Virginia 24541. Membership is offered to all of MacRae ancestry. Annual: $10; Conditional Life: $25 per yr. for 4 yrs.; Life: $100.

Reports on the Stone Mtn. Games and on families of MacRae's in the U. S. A. will appear in upcoming issues.