



CLAN MACRAE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Sgurr Uaran

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CLAN MACRAE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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50th Anniversary

Our Clan MacRae Society of North America
is celebrating our
50th Anniversary in 2023!

Come join us in the celebration!

THIS ISSUE

NOTES & CORRESPONDENCE
PRESIDENT'S LETTER
EVENTS, HAPPENINGS & MORE

FEATURE ARTICLES
CSS MCRAE
BARD OF KINTAIL
CHRISTMAS & HOGMANAY IN
SCOTLAND

IN CLOSING
WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
A BRAW BOOK & A WEE DRAM

President's Letter

BY BRUCE W. MCRAE



Greetings Fellow MacRaes,

First off, I want to wish all of you a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. 2022 so far has been a wonderful year with almost all our games back on schedule and well attended. We expect 2023 to be even better for we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our Clan MacRae Society which was formed at the Grandfather Mountain Games in 1973. So, plan on coming out to one or more games next year to celebrate with us!

Our Society's main purpose as a non-profit is to educate and I am very grateful to all the women and men who host tents at Scottish festivals across our nation.

Did you know that we have 21 members who host Clan MacRae tents?

It's a lot of work, but also a lot of fun and lifelong relationships are made in the process. We appreciate your hard work for our Society!

We have more men and women who've expressed a desire to host a Clan MacRae tent. If I can't get to you fast enough, then please drop me an email with the games you would like to host. We will help you get started.

In our last newsletter, we put out a call for volunteers and we received help from two stellar ladies!

Rhonda Cummons is taking over Membership from Judy McRae and Bethany McCoy has volunteered to be our new Editor.

Rhonda's activities are more behind the scenes, but please enjoy Bethany's new look for our newsletter! You can read more about them later in this issue.

Let's welcome them and give a big thank you to Judy for her years of work in both these areas and for making Rhonda and Bethany's transition into their roles easier!

And so now, I am calling for more volunteers for the specific areas below. Would you be willing to help out in one of these areas?

- Facebook Admin help to post/advertise our Scottish festivals
- Person to maintain our Scottish festival calendar
- Person to coordinate changes to the website with our Webmaster
- Help planning our 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2023
- More writers and/or articles for our awesome Sgurr Uaran newsletter
- More family histories for our Member's Only section of our website



"What can you offer to our Clan MacRae Society as a volunteer?"

Please let me know how each one of you wants to volunteer and become a greater part of our Clan MacRae Society.

We are at the brink of our anniversary year and have an awesome 50 years behind us and quite honestly, the best is yet to come!

Judy and I are going to start the year off right by attending the first games of 2023, the Central Florida Games, in the Orlando area in January. We hope to see many of you there and we will be attending as many of the games next year as possible.

We especially hope to see many of you at the Grandfather Mountain Games, for we will be sure to have a special celebration at our annual Banquet there. 2023 is going to be an awesome year!

As aye,

Bruce W. McRae

Bruce W. McRae, President
Clan MacRae Society of North America
brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com

FIND US ONLINE AT WWW.MACRAE.ORG OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Member Happenings



Pictured above at the Stone Mountain Games: Linda McRae, Babs McRae-Hall, Leon Folsom, Janet Folsom, Larry McRae, Jen Linneman, Doug Linneman, Mary Ruth McRae, David Ray, & Carol Ray



Pictured above at the Longs Peak Games: Beginning with the back row are Angela and Greg Rea; seated are Chad Walker and Elizabeth Woodland-Walker with daughter Kinsley in the middle. Miss Piper, a Cairn Terrier was the star of the show!



Pictured right: Elizabeth and Joe Warner and Sheila and Doug Schmidt at the Tucson Celtic Festival.



Pictured below from left to right: Melinda Norton, Wesley McCraw (Mark's son) and Commissioner Mark McCraw at Oklahoma Highland Festival held in Choctaw, OK in October.

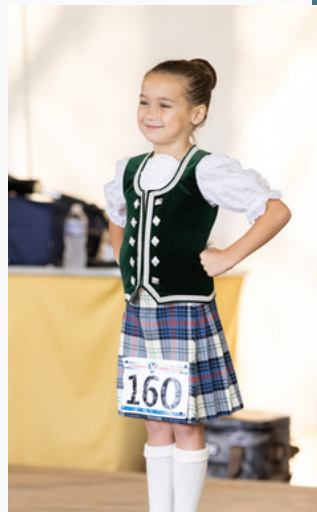


Pictured above: Our Commissioner John Wayne McRae (4th from left) visited the Old McKinnon Cemetery at China Hill, GA recently with other McRaes. His GGG Grandmother moved there in 1819 after her husband Christopher McRae died in 1814 at Minturn, SC.



Pictured left: Rebecca Ferrell and Greg Rea holding the banner with Mike Golec bringing up the rear at the Longs Peak Games.

Pictured left and right: Kyla and Maysen Cowan, granddaughters of Jim MacRae, are following in the footsteps of their mother's (Sandy MacRae Cowan) heritage of Scottish Highland Dancing. Kyla, an intermediate dancer, took first place in the Highland Fling at the Stone Mountain Games. Maysen, a primary dancer, also competed and placed in her group.



Send your Member Happenings to Bethany McCoy, bethany.mccoy23@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY

Jan. 14-15, 2023

Central Florida Highlands Games
Winter Springs, FL www.flascot.com
Contact: Daniel McRae- dgmcrac@comcast.net

FEBRUARY

Feb. 25, 2023

NE Florida Highland Games
Green Cove Springs, FL www.neflgames.com
Contact: John Wayne McRae- jwwmc@comcast.net

MARCH

Mar. 3-5, 2023

North Texas Irish Festival
Dallas, TX www.ntif.org
Contact: Ebby Darden- ebbydarden@msn.com

Phoenix Scottish Games

Phoenix, AZ www.phoenixscottishgames.com
Contact: Patrick MacRae- patrick@patrickmacrae.org

Mar. 25-26 2023

Sherman Celtic Festival
Sherman, TX www.shermancelticfest.com
Contact: Paul Jarnigan- ask4paul2@hotmail.com

APRIL

April 2-3, 2023

San Antonio Highland Games
San Antonio, TX www.sahga.org
Contact: Ronald Crowe- doccrowe@gmail.com

April 15-16, 2023

Loch Norman Highland Games
Huntersville, NC www.lochnorman.com
Contact: Leon Folsom- leonfolsom@prodigy.net

Las Vegas Highland Games

Las Vegas, NV www.lasvegascelticsociety.org
Contact: Patrick MacRae- patrick@patrickmacrae.org

April 22, 2023

Grapevine Lake Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games
Grapevine, TX www.grapevineceltic.com
Contact: Ebby Darden- ebbydarden@msn.com

The Scottish festivals listed will have a Clan MacRae tent hosted by one of our members. For a list of all Scottish festivals visit:

www.hIGHLANDGAMESANDFESTIVALS.COM/u-s-events/

If you want to host a Clan MacRae tent at your local festival, please contact Bruce at brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com.

We'll help you get started!

NEW COMMISSIONER & APPOINTEES

COMMISSIONER, DANIEL (DANNY) RAY

Daniel lives in Morganton, NC with his wife Pam and their two golden retrievers, Daisy and Joe. Danny is an avid outdoorsman who loves hiking, canoeing, hunting, and camping. He received his Master in Biology at UNC-Wilmington and has devoted a career to the state's wildlife agency. Likewise, Pam received her Master in Education at Western Carolina University and has worked her career in teaching. Raised on Cane River in Yancey County, NC, Danny didn't become interested in his heritage until late in life when his dad spoke of their family history after Danny's grandfather died. According to family records, Danny's ancestors fled Scotland to Northern Ireland, where they lived for approximately one generation before continuing to America. Entering through ports in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, they made their way south through the Appalachians to North Carolina. Danny's first known ancestor in Yancey County was Thomas L. Ray, Sr. in 1792. Danny's interest in his family heritage grew after seeing Eileen Donan on a trip to Scotland. He joined our Clan MacRae Society in 2019 at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. In 2022, Danny and Pam had the pleasure of assisting at the Bethabara Highland Games in Winston-Salem, NC. You can contact Danny at swampcollie03@hotmail.com (before you ask, swamp collie is a slang name for a golden retriever).



DANIEL (DANNY) RAY

MEMBERSHIP, RHONDA MCRAE CUMMONS



RHONDA MCRAE CUMMONS

Rhonda McRae Cummons has answered our call for volunteers and will be taking over the all-important position of Membership from Judy McRae. She felt led to help take some of the burden off the Clan MacRae leadership and is excited to take on the Membership position. She lives in Kernersville, NC (which is between Greensboro and Winston-Salem) with her husband James and three four-legged and furry children. She grew up in Montgomery County, NC which seems to have a McRae everywhere you look and she's been a member of our Society since her first trip to the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in 2016. She's a graduate of Guilford College Greensboro, NC and is a CPA by trade. When not busy with work or caring for animals, she travels and seeks out new experiences. She asked Bruce and Judy to place her in a role which would benefit most from her strengths of being highly organized, detail oriented and efficient. She hopes to get more acquainted with each of you.

EDITOR, BETHANY C. MCCOY

Bethany McCoy has assumed the role as editor for our newsletter. She was raised in southeast Tennessee and calls the mountains her home. She received a B.A. in Communications and an MBA from Lee University, and has worked in marketing and public relations roles for over 15 years. While history and genealogy have always been of interest, her quest to truly trace her family lineage began during the pandemic which led her to finding her Macrae connection. Bethany and her husband, Joshua have been married for 13 years and have one furbaby. When not working for Ranger Outdoors, LLC or with clients through her consulting company Sonder Consulting, LLC, Mrs. McCoy serves as the president of the Rotary Club of Cleveland, and as a board member for Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region and Willowbend Farms. She serves faithfully in the Worship Arts Ministry at her church and tries to live her life with these three things in mind: Laugh. Travel. Play Music.



BETHANY C. MCCOY

What are you reading?

A BRAW BOOK...

Braw (adj, Scots) - great, brilliant, pleasing

The Highland Clans

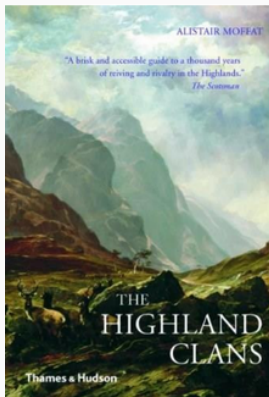
by Alistair Moffat

Review by Shelia Schmidt

The HIGHLAND CLANS is must have book filled with stories of the bloody clan history, as well as, being an excellent reference book listing all the Highland Clans and their roles in the politics of Scotland. It also explains the ancient surnames that unified the people and connected them to their kindred ground on the rugged map of Northern Scotland.

From 1150, when clans and their chiefs ruled the Highlands, to the great emigrations of the 18th and 19th century, the book narrates the rise and fall of the clans. Many classic old illustrations, including one of Eilean Donan Castle, adds depth to the stories and shows how Scotland might have looked during that time period.

Although very warlike, the book portrays the Scots as both tough and resourceful people.



What are you drinking?

AND A WEE DRAM

Wee (adj, Scots) - a little bit

Natterjack: No Time for Questions. Follow the Toad...

Review by Ralph White

My bagpipe band meets weekly and post-rehearsal we sample the finer things of life ... whiskey. Not one of us share a common favorite. Mine is a whimsical product, sporting a "woodcut" image of a Natterjack toad on the label. I tried it with suspicion at first but found the humble drink to be wonderful. Named for a notoriously noisy toad of Ireland, Britain, and northern Europe, natterjack is slang for a bloke who can't stop talking (nattering). Produced in a 150-year-old building by Gortinor Distillery of Waterford, Ireland, it's triple distilled.

First aged in Irish bourbon barrels and finished in virgin American oak, using the right amount of char before bottling to capture a unique taste. Gortinor love note: Building something great takes mettle, sweat and an ounce of terror. You'll taste the true authenticity of adventure and fear in our whiskey.

"Live Deliberately" is our mantra ...



Order Now: Clan MacRae North American Tartan Fabric Available

"In our Society Tartan, the MacRae "Sett" is used, of course, as the basis of construction. The colours used were not randomly chosen, but have significance, viz.: The Base colour is the light blue with a white stripe as in the Saltire Flag. There is a somewhat darker blue/grey that symbolizes the Ocean crossed by "The scattered children of Kintail". Then we have the Stronger blue that, in combination with the Red and White stripes, symbolizes the colours of "The Stars and Stripes" of our American Flag. Finally, the White Stripe is supported on each side by a lining of Gold. This represents the "Golden Opportunity" that this country has represented to its vast number of immigrants who came seeking a better and more prosperous life."

The 13-ounce worsted wool is double width at 59", so only four yards are needed for a kilt. The fabric is \$70 a yard plus a shipping cost (no tax). You may order any length which makes it ideal for scarves, crafts, etc. We also have access to professional kilt-makers. If you are interested in ordering fabric or having something made, please contact Judy at judymcrae777@gmail.com.



It's Official! 45 yards available now!

Christmas and Hogmanay in Scotland

by Judy McRae

Christmas has been a national holiday in America since 1870, but it wasn't until 1958 that Christmas became a holiday in Scotland. Traditionally Hogmanay is a bigger celebration than Christmas to Scots, mainly because celebrating Christmas was banned for 400 years! Such a surprise to discover the Protestant Church is the antagonist who banned Christmas all those years. How's that for the Scottish Grinch who stole Christmas? Well, we say Bah Humbug to that! So, if you felt this was going to be the normal Scottish Traditions article, you'd be wrong! Me and Grinch are going in a fun direction!



This article is interactive- so you can click and listen along. And for all of you who are reading a paper copy of this newsletter, just go to the newsletter on the website and you can click, too.

The first thing you need to know is that Santa is a Scotsman! Didn't know that? Well now you do. And we have an awesome song to prove it.

Santa's a Scotsman! by the Scottish Quest All Stars

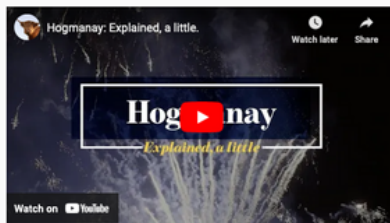
It's Christmas time in Scotland and my kid said to me
"Just one question daddy, before I go to sleep, how will Santa find me?"
So I said "Wherever he may roam, Santa will find you because he's coming home."

Santa's a Scotsman, he's loved everywhere he goes
He moved from Glasgow to Lapland following Rudolph's nose
Santa's a Scotsman, come on make a fuss
Too many pies, not enough exercise, of course he's one of us!

He only works one day a year and then he takes a break
He'll have a nip of whisky and a bit of Christmas cake
He likes a pudding supper and when he arrives tonight
He'll come in through the window 'cause the chimney is too tight



So exactly what is Hogmanay...
and how do you celebrate it?



How do you shake off too much partying
on Hogmanay the night before?



Meet the annual Loony Dook!
Annual Loony Dook in the Firth of Forth

And what's a Santa without reindeer?
Scotsman Santa has his own herd in
the Cairngorms of course!



And did you know about the Daft Days?

Those are the 12 days between Christmas and January 6th when tradition says the Magi visited baby Jesus. It's fitting to include this toast (really it's a poem) although it's not in Gaelic like how our Gaelic Bard wrote, but it is in the lovely Scots language.

A Toast Tae The Daft Days
a poyum (poem) by Len Pennie



Christmas Holly Wreath w/ Red Berries

I could not find a good video explaining the meaning of holly Christmas wreaths, but I love the meaning and from now on will have a holly wreath with red berries every Christmas. The round circular shape is representative of eternal life and the holly leaves and berries are symbolic of Christ's crown of thorns and blood. Awesome!

And with that I close this fun journey with a hearty Merry Christmas! or should we say it in Gaelic, Nollaig Shona!

CSS MCRAE (1861-1862)

BY RALPH WHITE

Pretty, fast, 680-ton, three-masted (and steam) wood sloop gunboat and originally built for speed as a “mail packet”- Confederate Steam Ship McRae (her 5th name) was 104 feet long, and a mere 14 feet wide.

She originally wore the name Colon when launched at the Montreal Marine Works, Canada and was intended for scheduled mail and coastal trade between Cuba and Mexico.

A painting of her, as built, can be found in the Canadian Archives- presenting a light colored hull, a prominent fore cabin, and extended aft cabin.

It was in November of 1858 she assumed her intended trade.

But in January of 1860, already renamed Marques de la Habana, she was purchased and fitted out for the Marin expedition under Captain Victor Suarez N. Campos- before being renamed a third time as Santa Ana. As Santa Ana, she was armed with one bronze 24 pounder and two old Spanish 32 pounders.

She then became a ghost, until she was captured in 1860 by the U.S. Navy as a suspected pirate and impounded at New Orleans. At some point prior to her capture, her name had been restored to Marques de la Habana.

As the Civil War was beginning the building of ten fast gunboats was funded by the Confederate Legislature for the Confederate Navy. However, no shipyard yard could turn out vessels quickly enough. This led to a commission being appointed to buy, beg, or seize any existing steamers for conversion to commerce raiders.

The Marques de la Habana was purchased on 17 March 1861, and duly fitted as the CSS McRae- featuring one nine inch canon, six 32-pounders, and one rifled six-pounder.

This was a serious arrangement of firepower for a small ship. She was named for Colin J. McRae.

Born in North Carolina in 1812, he was a co-owner of a large foundry in Selma, AL and served as a Confederate States Financial Agent in Europe during the war. His foundry made iron plates for gunboats and was one of the largest ammunition providers in the south.

Consequently, extensive engine repairs to the two 60-hp steam engines prevented the CSS McRae from going to sea before the arrival of the blockading Union Fleet. She found herself committed to the defense of

New Orleans and the lower reaches of the Mississippi River.

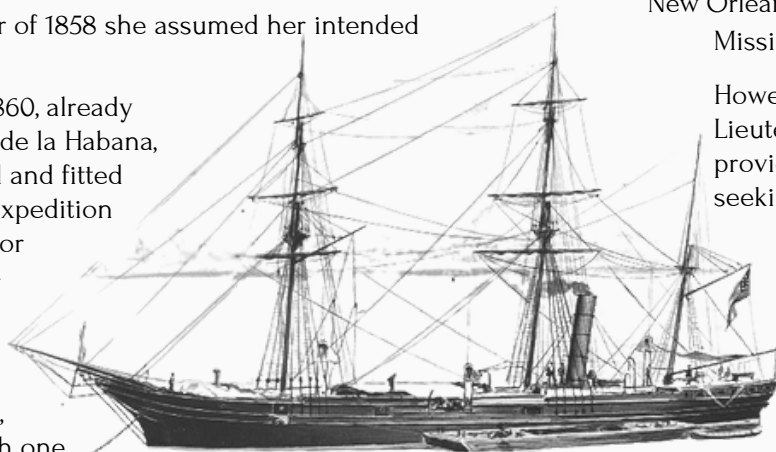
However, under the command of Lieutenant Thomas B. Huger, she provided cover for blockade-runners seeking to evade union warships.

On October 12, 1861, CSS McRae engaged in combat with the Union blockading fleet during the Battle of the Head of Passes as part of Captain Hollin's famed “Mosquito Fleet”.

She drove the Union blockading forces from the Head of Passes in the Mississippi Delta, and she was assigned the tiny fleet's flagship.

Then, on April 24, 1862 warships of the Union fleet attempted to pass Fort Jackson and Fort Saint Philip to reach New Orleans. She suffered little damage in the beginning as her resemblance to the identical Union gunboat USS Miramon prevented northern ships from firing at her. The USS Miramon was, ironically, the ship she had been captured with by the U.S. Navy in 1860.

Although “McRae” fired at will on the yankee warships within range, several union ships simply passed by her. Alert to what was happening, the “USS Iroquois” fired back with an 11-inch shell at close range, setting fire to the McRae's sail room and threatening her powder magazines.



The image depicts the CSS McRae loading coal from a barge off Baton Rouge sometime in 1861. This was Hollins flagship and had a distinguished career on the Mississippi. Recognized up and down the river, she was one of the Confederates' most effective and well handled gunboats.

CSS MCRAE (1861-1862)

The officers and crew fought on, suffering severe casualties (Lt. Huger being among those mortally wounded), and the ship was severely damaged. With all guns knocked from their carriages or damaged, she was out of the fight. On fire and taking on water badly, she ran against the shore.



Colin J. McRae

The surviving crew finally put out her fires, and she stayed aground until dawn, before pulling off. Limping away, nearly all the crew remained occupied manning the bilge pumps- trying desperately to keep her afloat.

Later, loaded with wounded from Fort Jackson and St. Philip, CSS McRae was allowed by the Union Navy to return to New Orleans on April 27- under a white flag of truce. After unloading the wounded at New Orleans, her crew cut her steam pipes to prevent Union troops from reusing her and scuttled (sank) her at a pier across the river at Algiers.

She rests there today, buried in the delta mud- a proud warrior. A Midshipman gave a first-hand accounting of the CSS McRae's end,

"The McRae was in the thick of the fight. Her sides riddled. Heavy projectiles had knocked her guns off the carriages and rolled them along the deck crunching the dead and wounded. Her deck was a perfect shambles. When day broke the McRae was the only thing afloat with the Confederate flag flying."

In the battle, Captain Huger had been mortally wounded and LT. "Savez" Read taken command.

"Admiral Farragut, with his flagship the Hartford, was by this time at the Quarantine Station, about four miles above the forts. Read sent the only boat he had that would float over to the Hartford to tell Admiral Farragut the condition of his vessel and the difficulty he was having to keep her afloat - that he did not have a gun left on a carriage, and no one to care for his dying captain or the many other wounded. Farragut gave him permission to proceed to New Orleans, saying that he would tell him there what disposition he would make of the ship."

Sources:

https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/CSS_McRae

Edwin Layton, Colin J. McRae and the Selma Arsenal, Alabama Review, XVIII (1966), 132-133

Hearn, The Capture of New Orleans, 1862 p. 246
Morgan, James M. (1917). Recollections of a Rebel Reefer.

New Clan MacRae Ancient Hunting & Dress White Tartan Fabric Now Available

We now have the washable lightweight Clan MacRae tartan fabric available!

There are yards available - 30 yards in MacRae Dress White and 30 yards in MacRae Ancient Hunting that can be made into skirts, shawls, etc.

It is a new lighter weight washable poly-viscose fabric and they are both stunning to look at!

This fabric is available only to our members and sells for \$60 a yard. Pictures below are of the actual fabric swatches.

There are professional seamstresses available, so if you are interested in ordering fabric or having something made, please contact Judy at judymcrae777@gmail.com.



John “Ian MacMhurachaidh” Macrae, Bard of Kintail

BY STEVE TRIMM

Throughout history, Clan MacRae has produced many accomplished and fascinating individuals. Since I am biased in favor of poets and singers, here is the story of one of Kintail's Bards whose Gaelic songs are remembered to this day.

The Bard John Macrae was born in Kintail and his Gaelic name was “Ian mac Mhurachaidh ‘ic Fhearchair” (John son of Murchadh son of Fearchar). For this article, we will call him by his Gaelic name Ian. Living in the 1700s and unlike many poets who wrote about getting the soul in order before meeting one's Maker, Ian wrote sparkling poems and songs about ordinary folk he knew and the land they all loved.

Those who read Gaelic say that Ian's songs are moving and beautiful. Sad to say, the English translations are not lyrical at all. They read like prose, and not very good prose, at that. I'm sure they do not do justice to Ian's brightness and brilliance as a poet.

Still, the English translations of his last works tell a compelling story.

Ian's poems, written originally in Gaelic, have been passed down through subsequent generations of Scots on both sides of the Atlantic and are still a testament of his ability to weave into rhyme the ups and downs of Scottish life during the tumultuous times of the American Revolution.

His poems and songs present a story of hope for an impending move to the American colonies, great promise for a baby girl in her new home, and then later disillusionment with America and finally his despair at being exiled because of his pledge of loyalty to the English crown.

The translations below are quoted from Rev. Alexander Macrae's book, History of the Clan Macrae, published in Scotland in 1899. I admit to tinkering with obscure phrases, hoping to make their meaning more understandable to modern readers.

We start with a poem about a letter Ian received from John Bethune ...



This Highland cottage depicts living conditions in the 1770s.
The man, a weaver, is seated at his loom to the far left.

A letter comes from John Bethune.
He is going to America and he invites us to join him.
John writes “A few of my country people are about to depart to a land of plenty, where we can find every kind of the most delightful hunting that can be seen. We shall find deer, buck and doe, with the freedom to take as many as we want. We shall get the woodcock and the woodhen, teals, ducks and wild geese. We shall get salmon and white fish and gray fish, if it will please us better. This is better by far than to stay under landlords who won't suffer a tenantry with them, who would take, instead of a good man, gold, were it from the claw of a lobster, who would take, instead of a brave man, a sulky sneak, provided he was rich. Come with us and may the blessings of God be with us. Let us depart, all of us.” I raise a chorus of delight.
We should all be delighted at seeing this letter and its invitation.

Before Ian and the others boarded the ship that would take them to the Carolinas, they invited the captain to share dinner ashore. During the meal, the captain noted their cheerfulness, and this troubled him so much that he felt compelled to give them a reality check. He told the Kintail people that their dreams of an easy life in America were a fantasy. Life for new arrivals in the American colonies, he said, was hard. Some were having second thoughts about emigrating and the captain's honesty gave them the courage to speak. Women took the lead in trying to talk Ian out of emigrating. He reacted to their pleading with ...

John “Ian MacMhurachaidh” Macrae, Bard of Kintail

...continued



Battle Moore's Creek Bridge

Now that we are met over a flagon and drinking-shell,
let us drink in anticipation of seeing our shipboard quarters.
Women, take courage for the voyage and stop your mourning.
Restrain your anxiety, now that you are under the sails.
I do not think I can be induced to return, now that I have
ceased to herd cattle. I do not think I can be bent backwards to
our poor country of destitution.
Every thing in our lives is being tightened. We are embittered by
the landlords raising the rents. Lackeys of the rich, using great
nets, catch and salt our fish.
Many a hard day was I making dykes and walls to pay the rent,
my cattle dying. When matters fell into ruin, all that was left me
was to sigh over them. I despise the landlord who sends us over
the ocean for the sake of a little wretched rent, which he will not
long enjoy. I hate to go, but I must go.

Ian moved into North Carolina in 1774, purchased land on McLendon's Creek in modern-day Moore County and developed a new life for himself. During Ian's first winter of 1774-1775, he wrote a lullaby for his daughter Dean Cadalan Samhach. The lullaby, which is still sung on both sides of the Atlantic is the earliest surviving Gaelic poem written in North America! The music is based on an old Scottish air, "The Yellow-Haired Laddie", which dates from the 1600s. The below poem Lullaby was translated from the Gaelic to English by Dr. Charles W. Dunn.

Sleep softly, my darling beloved. Stay as you are, now that you're in a new land. We'll find suitors abounding in
wealth and fame, and if you are worthy you shall have one of them.
In America now are we, in the shade of the forest for ever unfailing. When the winter departs and the warmth
returns, nuts and apples and the sugar will grow.
Little do I like some of those who are here, with their drugget coats and tall hats on their heads, and their
scanty breeches split to the belt. Hose never are seen, and a misery it seems to me.
We're turned into Indians surely enough. In the dark of the trees not one of us will be left alive, with wolves
and beasts howling in every lair. We've come into ruin since we left King George.
My fondest farewell to you, Kintail with your cows, where I spent my time of upbringing when I was a little,
young nipper. There would be dark-haired lads dancing heel and toe to the music, and lasses with their
flowing tresses and cheeks like the rose.
At the onset of harvest-time our joy would be hearty; we'd get deer from the moors and salmon from the
deeps; the herring fleet would come in under sail with her daring heroes who never showed gloom.

It was the misfortune of the Kintail migrants to arrive in America not long before the outbreak of the Revolution. Scottish Highlanders, especially those who emigrated after 1770, had little understanding of or sympathy for the Revolutionary cause.

Most Scotsmen had to swear allegiance to the King to receive land grants and having given their word of honor to support the King, the Scots sided with the British crown.

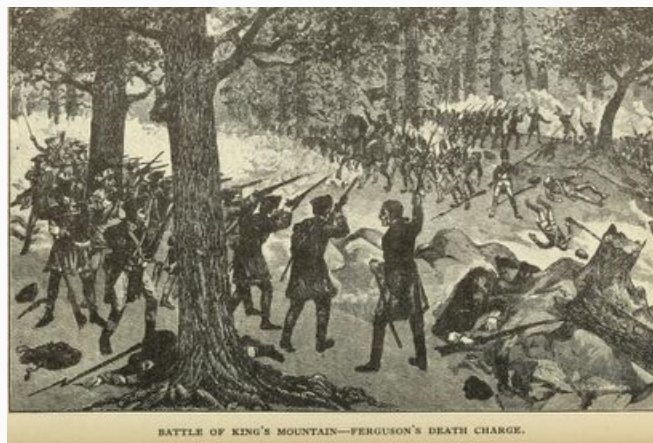
It is believed that Ian fought at the Battle Moore's Creek Bridge in February 1776. American forces overwhelmed a large unit of Scottish Highlanders and other loyalists and one of Ian's sons, Murdoch, died of his wounds in that battle.

John “Ian MacMhurachaidh” Macrae, Bard of Kintail

...continued

When the British invaded North Carolina in 1780-1781, Ian rallied to the King's troops led by Lord Cornwallis. Evidence from his poems suggests that Ian was present at the Battle of King's Mountain in October 1780. In extremely bitter fighting the patriot soldiers destroyed the loyalist forces. After the loyalist defeat at King's Mountain, Ian spent the winter living in the woods to escape capture. In what is believed to be his last song, he stayed defiant to the end ...

I am an exile since Autumn, building houses without smoke in them. My houses are little huts of brushwood, hidden in the forest where no friend can come to visit me. Though I am an outlaw, no fault can be charged against me, except fighting loyally for the King because he was in the right. Take my sincere farewell to the country where I ought to be. Take my farewell to Kintail, the place of mirth and songs, where I often sat round a bottle with a happy company. It was not the drink I desired, but the worth of the stories. A hundred sincere farewells to Scur Ouran, well do I remember it. The green mountain opposite, bright to me were its daisies. Up and down Glensheil often did I lay an antlered stag low. Trout were found in the pools, men seeking them with a torch. My fare today is like prison rations. I am tired of this exile. I am tired of this loneliness.



The Battle of King's Mountain-
Ferguson's Death Charge

Ian MacMhurachaidh's fate is unknown. Perhaps he starved to death in the forest. Perhaps a patrol captured him and he died in a patriot prison. Legend has it that his friend John McRa, an Anson County blacksmith and farmer, who fought beside Ian and lost his right arm at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, sailed with the British from Charleston, South Carolina, in 1782 and submitted a claim for compensation to the British government.

Clearly, Ian's songs were carried back to Scotland and to Nova Scotia. We are grateful that Ian's friend John McRa returned to Kintail and preserved the Gaelic Bard's memory and music. In 1882-1883, Celtic Magazine published all of Ian's known poems in Gaelic. Ian's friend John McRa had a beautiful singing voice and the songs he sang most often were those written by his friend Ian MacMhurachaidh. John McRa died near Dornie in 1839, age 93.

Through it all, the mystery of the Gaelic Bard Ian MacMhurachaidh i.e. John Macrae remains as to how and where he died. Could there be many of his descendants living in North Carolina today? We hope so. To honor this Gaelic poet, the state of North Carolina erected a historical marker in 1992 with this inscription,

JOHN MACRAE- Gaelic poet. Emigrated from Scotland In 1774.
Loyalist during the Revolution. His home stood 2 1/2 miles south.



SOURCES:

Tar Heel Junior Historian, Winter 1986, Volume 25, Number 2, Loyalist Lullaby by Jeffrey J. Crow, 2-5.

Dunn, Charles W. "A North Carolina Gaelic Bard," North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVI (October 1959), 473-475.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: CEUD MILE FAILTE

100,000 Welcomes to our new members! We warmly welcome the new members to our Society, and we are all the more richer to have you In the family. - Bruce W. McRae. President

#1716 Douglas Mason Castle Rock, CO	#1721 Stephanie Diediker Cave Creek, AZ	#1726 Larry Mayse Milton, GA	#1731 Melinda Norton The Village, OK
#1717 Judith Hajdina Nashville, TN	#1722 Tim McCraw Pacolet, SC	#1727 Gail Macrae Dorchester, NH	#1733 Tyler Ray Omaha, NE
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A Scottish Christmas!



A man in Scotland calls his son in London the day before Christmas Eve and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; 45 years of misery is enough"

"Dad, what are you talking about?" the son screams.

"We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father says. "We're sick of each other and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Leeds and tell her."

Frantically, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like hell they're getting divorced," she shouts. "I'll take care of this."

She calls Scotland immediately and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing. DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife.

"Done! They're coming for Christmas - and they're paying their own way."



"Oh no, I've got my bagpipes in the oven!"

