

ROBERTSON'S RANT

The Newsletter of the Clan Donnachaidh Society—Mid-Atlantic Branch



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AUGUST 2025

CARROLL COUNTY GAMES REPORT

by Norman Dunkinson

The 4th annual Carroll County Celtic Festival kicked off at Westminster, Maryland, on Saturday, June 14, 2025. Due to forecasted thunderstorms, the decision was made the afternoon previous to relocate the clan tents to inside the main arena building along with the vendors and one of the music stages. I arrived around 7:30am and was joined prior to games opening at 9:30am by Branch President **Sam Kistler**.

Clans in attendance included Elliot, Bell, Donald, Hannay, Hay, Little, MacAlister, MacLeod, and MacLaren. We were positioned beside Donald and across from the Ancient Order of Hibernians, at one of the row ends to facilitate departure since I was only able to set-up for the first day of this two-day festival.

Opening ceremonies were held at 10:00am inside the main arena building. Sam announced the clans, starting with Elliot, the honored clan this year, and proceeding alphabetically. The clans were quiet until our turn came and Sam set me up with a "Fierce" across the microphone for my (quite loud) "When Roused!"

Sam and I greeted a number of prospective members throughout the day and member **Stephen Robertson**. We accommodated the children by stamping a

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Branch Officers

President:

Sam Kistler

Vice President:

Tom Due

Secretary/Treasurer:

Norman Dunkinson



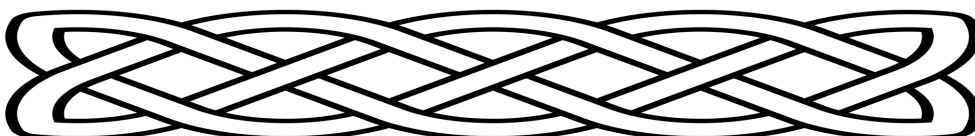
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CEUD MILE FAILTE—100,000 WELCOMES!

We'd like to welcome the following new and returning members who joined or renewed since the last report:

Ezra Duncan	Patrick E. Macrae	Jennifer Roberts
Kim Roberts	Kenneth A. Robertson	Stephen P. Robertson
Eugene J. Wikle III		



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CARROLL COUNTY GAMES REPORT (CONTINUED)

number of “passport” books as well. A highlight of the day was the Sean Heely Celtic Band on the main stage in a tent outside, a short walk from our tent. Avian Encounters and Dragon Wings Falconry were also on hand, walking their birds of prey about throughout the day. The Irish Wolfhounds were about too. The highland games here, in addition to the usual caber toss, sheaf toss, stone, hammer, and weight throws, also feature the “stones of strength” competition, where athletes carry stones weighing up to 320 pounds!

While clan attendance at this game was a tad light, it is a great game nonetheless with plenty to see and do both inside and outside. We encourage you to check it out in 2026!



Left to right: Norman Dunkinson and Sam Kistler at the Carroll County Celtic Festival, June 14, 2025.

WILD & WONDERFUL GAMES REPORT

by Jim Fargo

On Saturday June 21st, **Robert Knight** and I arrived at the Wild and Wonderful Celtic Festival and Highland Games in Beverly, West Virginia for their 3rd annual festival. We soon located our tent sites with the help of President **Sam Kistler** who had arrived earlier and located our designated spots while we were searching for them on the opposite side of the field. This was the debut of our new clan signage for the tent designed and produced by President Sam. Our adjoining neighbors for the day were Clan Bell and Clan Macleod.

It was a very hot, sunny day, which was a nice reprieve from two weeks of rain. While the ground in front of our tents was a soggy bog, we still had a lot of visitors stop to visit. Many were interested to learn which clan(s) they might be associated with. Our assortment of research books is always helpful in connecting individual visitor surnames to various clans.

We welcomed a new member to our branch, **Kim Roberts**, a transfer from our Upper Midwest Branch, who is now a resident of Beverly, West Virginia, vice the Chicago area. My particular thanks to **Bob Strickland and his wife** for joining us and helping with the stamping of our clan crest on "Clan Passports" as the multitude of children never seemed to end.

Bob and I were joined by an Irish-descent U.S. Navy veteran, name forgotten, wearing the U.S. Navy Edzell tartan and marched with us in the noon parade of clans. The parade was supported by four pipe bands originating from western Maryland and West Virginia. I have fond memories of my first trip to the Edzell area and the U.S. Naval Station there years ago (it closed in 1997) with clansmen **John Lentz** and the late **David Levite**. We did enjoy a side visit in kilt to the Clan Lindsay Museum at Edzell where we were welcomed with whisky drams from their curator, but no offer of any cows!

On the athletic field, we were represented by members **Zack McCrobie**, who was competing in the highland athletic events, and **Alex Duncan**, who was one of the judges running the athletic events. We packed up and left before the athletic competitions ended, so was unable to learn how Zack did in the competitions.

I am well pleased with the games staff, who made every effort to assist the clans throughout the day. Next year's games will be held on the third Saturday of June, June 20th. We will have a clan tent there and hope you can come by and join us for a very enjoyable day.

SCOTS HUMOR

Walking

An Englishman was walking along a narrow country road near Pitlochry when he saw a local man working in his field. The man stopped and called out, "How long will it take me to get to the next town?"

Old Angus didn't answer and continued with his work. The man waited awhile and then started walking again. After he had gone about a hundred yards, old Angus yelled, "about half an hour!"

"Thank you. But why didn't you tell me that when I asked you?"

Angus replied, "Didna know how fast ye could walk."

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DEATH OF HELEN STARK—1544

By James E. Fargo, FSA Scot

After the death of King James V in 1542, Cardinal David Beaton wanted to become Regent of the kingdom for the infant Queen Mary and eliminate Protestantism from Scotland. His thirst for power was driven by his desire to keep the alliance with Catholic France and prevent an alliance with Protestant England. He seized the infant queen and the widowed Queen-mother Mary of Guise from Linlithgow and installed them in Stirling Castle. Beaton then began his campaign to roll back the tide of heresy by holding Courts of Justice to try heretics to the Catholic Church. In January 1543-44, attended by the Earl of Argyle (at that time Lord Justice-General of Scotland) and other notables, he was also accompanied by a heavily armed following with cannons. Cardinal Beaton traveled to the cities of Stirling, Perth and Dundee to punish heretics.



Cardinal Beaton. From <https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/usbiography/b/cardinalbeaton.html>.

In Perth, a wooden image of Saint Francis which hung from the portal of Greyfriars Monastery had been changed into a foul devilish fiend and sermons in the church had been interrupted by heretics. When Cardinal Beaton and his entourage set up the Court of Justice in Perth on January 24th, five reputable men and the wife of one of them were charged with crimes by a Franciscan friar named Spence. Having confessed and been found guilty of not praying to the saints and other crimes, they were sentenced to death with execution scheduled for the following day. William Anderson, James Ronald, and James Finlayson were convicted for having affixed ram horns and a cow's tail to the image of Saint Francis and for eating a goose on All-Hallow eve. James Hunter, a butcher, was convicted on suspicion of having provided the animal decorations. Robert Lamb and his wife, Helen Stark had interrupted the friar's sermon and his wife had refused to pray to the Virgin Mary while in childbed and saying that she would only pray to God in the name of the savior.

The prisoners were led out from the Spey Tower the following morning and the five men were hung. Helen made the following speech to her husband before his execution. "Husband, be glad, we have lived together many joyful days, and this day of our death we ought to esteem the most joyful of all: for soon we shall have joy forever. Therefore, I will not bid you good night, for we shall shortly be in the kingdom of heaven." Helen was then taken to a deep pool of water along the shore of the Tay River and after her infant child was taken from her and given with her other children to neighbors, she was drowned.

Postscript: It wasn't long before Cardinal Beaton overplayed his hand. He continued to persecute supposed heretics and increased the hostilities toward him among the population. After trying and burning at the stake the preacher George Wishart at Saint Andrews on March 28, 1546, a conspiracy was formed against him. Two months later on May 29th, the murdered Beaton's naked dead body was hung from a window tied by one arm and a leg to form a cross of Saint Andrew on the wall of his own castle. He was the last Scottish Cardinal before the Scottish Reformation.

Reference:

Fittis, Robert Scott, "Recreations of an Antiquary in Perthshire History and Genealogy", Perth, 1881, pp. 180-183.

BATTLE OF CALLANDER—1646

By James E. Fargo, FSA Scot

In August 1642, civil war broke out in England between the Royalist forces of King Charles I and the Parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell. During the Autumn of 1643, the English Parliament made an agreement, known as the Solemn League and Covenant, with their Church of Scotland supporters under which Scottish Covenanters would raise a lowland army to attack the Royalist forces in the north of England for the payment of 30,000 pounds per month. In the Spring of 1644, James Graham, Earl of Montrose abandoned the Covenanter's side and rode into Scotland to "Raise Scotland for the King."

King Charles appointed him Lieutenant-General for Scotland and Montrose quickly raised a highland army from clans that hated the leader of the Covenant, Archibald Campbell, the Marquess of Argyll. A skilled general, Montrose led his army to a series of victories over the Covenanters. But, as usual when harvest time approached, his highland army slowly began to melt away as they carried their plunder home and made provisions for their families over the winter months. Without the Athollmen, Montrose's depleted army of 600 were surprised and defeated by a force of 6,000 at Philipshaugh on September 13, 1645. It was his first defeat at the hands of the Covenanters. Leaving Selkirk, he headed north and returned to Atholl to regroup and rally his forces.



James Graham, Earl of Montrose. From <https://collectionimages.npg.org.uk/large/mwl32054/james-Graham-1st-Marquess-of-Montrose.jpg>.

With Montrose was his cousin, Patrick "Black Pate" Graham of Inchbrakie, whose sister was the mother of our 12th chief, Alexander, who was then 9 years old. While Montrose went north with 400 Athollmen to gather reinforcements and laid siege to Inverness, Black Pate was soon ordered to go on the offensive against an army of Campbells heading toward Atholl from Argyll. Young Struan's two uncles, Black Pate and Donald Robertson, known as the Tutor of Struan, quickly raised a fresh force of 700 Athollmen and headed toward Argyll to meet this Campbell threat. The Athollmen were quick to volunteer for this opportunity to get revenge of the Campbells since Atholl had twice in the preceding year been laid waste by fire and sword. First, when General Baillie invaded Atholl in May 1645 and then again when the Earl of Crawford's men ravaged Atholl during June while the Athollmen were with Montrose's army at the Battle of Alford by the River Don where General Baillie's army was destroyed on July 2, 1645.

In January 1646, near the village of Monteith, the Athollmen caught up with the Campbells. Splitting their force, 100 Athollmen advanced on the Campbell position while the rest circled round to their flank. They attacked and quickly routed the force of 1,200 Campbells led by Campbell of Ardkinglas at what became known as the Battle of Callander.

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BATTLE OF CALLANDER—1646 (CONTINUED)

The Campbells were reported to have “fled like madmen, divers of them being slain in the fight and more drowned in the river of Goodie, their haste being such that they staid not to seek the fords.” The survivors fled to Sterling and the victors returned home.

Despite this victory and Montrose's continued siege of Inverness, his supposed allies were following events in England and deserting him. With less than 1,000 men remaining under his command, there wasn't much he could do to turn the tide. On May 31st, Montrose was stunned to hear that King Charles had surrendered to the Scottish Covenanter army at Newark, England. For a promised payment of 400,000 pounds, the Covenanters then handed the King over to the English and returned to Scotland. As part of the Agreement, the King had agreed that Montrose should disband his army and leave Scotland.

Montrose disbanded his army at Rattray on July 30, 1646 then took ship for Norway of September 2 and remained in exile until he learned that Cromwell had executed King Charles at Whitehall on January 30, 1649. He returned, but that is another tale.

Postscript: This article was written 28 years ago and first published in a Spring 1996 issue of “Robertson's Rant.”

HAGGIS

By Jim Fargo

Haggis is probably the most recognized culinary symbol of Scotland. Known as “The Great Chieftain of the Puddin' Race” and made famous in Robert Burns' poem, “Address to a Haggis”. The dish is made traditionally from the less expensive sheep ingredients, including the sheep's stomach, lungs, liver, heart and tongue minced together with beef suet, oatmeal, onions, spices, pepper and salt.

The first haggis recipe was printed in a cookery book “Cookery and Pastry” by Mrs. Susanna McIver in 1773. All the recipes were tested and eaten by Mrs. McIver and her students at her culinary school in Edinburgh before publication.

Sadly, all haggis imported into the United States since 1971 have been missing one vital ingredient.

This was due to the “Mad Cow” disease crisis and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's fear that eating the sheep's lungs was hazardous to our health. To comply with US regulations, haggis purchased in the US must substitute sheep lung with other ingredients like lamb or beef liver.

Postscript: Amazon has a new edition of Mrs. McIver's original book for sale online for \$24.99.

Reference:

Green, Jonathan, “Scottish Miscellany”, Skyhorse Publishing, New York, 2014, p. 128.

Multiple Wikipedia searches.



Haggis. From <https://www.britbuyer.co.uk/haggis-questions-answered/>.

JOHN COLLIER (1884—1968)

By James E. Fargo, FSA Scot



John Collier. From [https://www.wikiwand.com/en/articles/John_Collier_\(sociologist\)](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/articles/John_Collier_(sociologist)).

John Collier was born to Charles and Susan Julia Eliza (nee Rawson) Collier on May 4, 1884 in Atlanta, Georgia. John's father was a prominent banker and mayor of Atlanta (1897-1899) before he and his wife died before John turned sixteen. Collier graduated from Atlanta High School and attended Columbia University in 1906 before graduating from the College de France in Paris, France. Collier became an early prominent activist for Native American rights. He founded the People's Institute in 1909 and in 1920 recognized the importance of preserving tribal life after spending a year at the famous Taos Pueblo art colony in New Mexico where he studied American Indian art and history and the encroachment of white culture and policies directed at their assimilation. To counter this assimilation, he organized and helped found the American Indian Defense Organization in 1922. In 1923 he served as Secretary of the American Indian Defense Association. In 1924 Congress enacted the Indian Citizenship Act and Collier became a lobbyist and advocate for changing the way Americans then looked upon Native American cultures and their right of self-rule.

In April 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed John Collier to the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Collier served under Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes. He set to work to improve economic conditions on the Indian reservations during the Depression in what was then known as the "Indian New Deal", which was a set of policies aimed at reversing the policy of cultural assimilation of Native Americans. His efforts resulted in the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934. This law restored to many Indian tribes and nations the right to adopt their own constitutions and establish self-government governing councils. The law also improved health care, school systems and farming programs by funding loans to assist Indian governments, businesses and farms.

Collier set up the Indian Civilian Conservation Corps to provide jobs to Native Americans in public works projects in soil erosion control and reforestation. In January 1945, Collier resigned as Commissioner and became President of the Institutes of Ethnic Affairs in Washington, D.C. After leaving government, he became a sociology and anthropology professor at the City College of New York, wrote several books and served as director of the National Indian Institute. On his 80th birthday in 1964, Collier received the Distinguished Service Award from Secretary of the Interior Department Stewart Udall.

During World War II, Collier was involved in setting up internment camps on Indian reservations. In 1942, the Poston Internment Camp in La Paz County Arizona was one of ten American concentration camps operated by the War Relocation Authority to incarcerate Japanese-Americans during WW II over the objections of the Tribal Council in the Colorado River Indian Reservation. Collier was unable to overrule the War Relocation Authority in supporting a segregated Japanese-American social and cultural structure based on then current tribal reservation policies.

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JOHN COLLIER (1884—1968) (CONTINUED)

John Collier is remembered as a federal champion for tribal self-determination and his impact on changing federal policy towards Native Americans. He died on May 8, 1968 in Taos, New Mexico and is buried in the El Descanso Cemetery in Taos.

References:

Behrman, Carol, "The Indian Wars", Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, 2005, p. 74.

Multiple Wikipedia searches.

WILLIAM REID (1764—1831)

By James E. Fargo, FSA Scot

"Kate o' Gowrie", the first of the Gowrie songs, was written by William Reid and published by Brash and Reid, a prosperous bookseller in the Saltmarket and Trongate areas of Glasgow. Reid's backroom was frequently visited by Robert Burns, John Galt, Alexander Rodger and other poet notables. The tune is "Loch-erroch side". Lady Carolina Nairne joined with William Reid to write the song, "Lass of Gowrie". She was the daughter of Laurence Oliphant, 7th of Gask and Margaret Robertson; and wife of William Murray Nairne, 6th Lord Nairne. Some her most popular songs are: "Rowan Tree", "Will ye no' come back again?" and "Charlie is my Darling".

Within the inner sanctum of Brash and Reid, one day in 1785, Reid listened to Robert Burns while he recited "John Anderson, my jo". Inspired, Reid composed four additional stanzas that same day to the first and second stanzas written by Burns while he was present. Considered the best of those four is:

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When Nature first began
To try her canny hand, John,
Her masterpiece was man;
And You amang them a', John,
Sae trig frae tap to toe,
She proved to be nae journey-wark,
John Anderson, my jo.

William Marshall, the composer of many beautiful Scottish reel and strathspey fiddle tunes and the personal friend of Niel Gow, supplied the music to the poem. Burns became famous in Edinburgh after the publication of the Kilmar-nock edition on 31 July 1786. On 21 April 1787, the Edinburgh edition was published. After Burns' death on 21 July 1796, William Reid added the third and fourth stanzas, beginning with "Upon the banks of flowing Clyde;" bringing the song to its now eleven stanzas.

After Reid retired, the old bookshop eventually closed and became a coach stop. Reid died in the winter of 1831 in the Trongate area of Glasgow.

References:

Barke, James (editor), "Poems and Songs of Robert Burns", Collins Press, Glasgow, 1955, p. 510-511.

Drummond, P.R., "Perthshire in Bygone Days", London, 1879, pp. 520-525.

En.m.Wikisource.org.

FLOWERS OF THE FOREST—DAVID M. LEVITE

David Maurice Levite, age 58, died peacefully at home with family in Mobile, Alabama, on Tuesday, April 1st, 2025, after suffering a lengthy battle with complications due to Type I Diabetes.

David was born to Cheryl and Maurice Levite in 1966 and spent his earliest years in Mobile, AL before the family moved to the Washington, DC, area. He enjoyed growing up in Old Town Alexandria, VA, attending school at St. Mary's Catholic elementary school, St. Stephen's school, and T.C. Williams High School. Throughout his youth David enjoyed participating in sports and activities such as soccer, rowing, sailing and the Scottish Saint Andrew's Society where he made many lifelong friendships. David graduated from the University of South Carolina where he was a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, was a proud Gamecock, and a perpetual and enthusiastic supporter of their football team. David had a passion for his Scottish heritage, animals, and sailing, was exceptionally knowledgeable about antiques and history, and proudly practiced his strong Catholic faith. He was a devoted servant of the Lord, and his Catholic faith gave him strength throughout his life.



David also humbly accepted the honor of being bestowed a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher. True to his generous nature, David pursued a career in non-profit fundraising and development. He was blessed to work for the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA for many years as Vice Chancellor and Chief Development Officer. He went on to serve as Executive Director of Development and Alumni Relations at Catholic University's Columbus School of Law. Consistent with his generous spirit and his love of nature and animals, he also enjoyed working in various executive positions in support of the Audubon Society and the Humane Society, which were causes close to his heart. David enjoyed owning several sailboats throughout the years in Alexandria, VA, Annapolis, MD and Gulfport, FL and was always happiest on the water with friends.

David is preceded in death by his mother Cheryl E. Levite, and is survived by his loving father Maurice R. Levite, extended family and innumerable friends. In memoriam, please consider a donation to the American Diabetes Association, your local animal humane society, Catholic charity, or other charitable organization in memory of David M. Levite.

Obituary from: <https://www.wolfefuneralhomes.com/obituaries/david-levite>.

From President Sam Kistler: With a heavy heart and great sorrow we acknowledge the passing of David. We will miss his presence and great knowledge of Scottish history. The Alexandria Christmas's Walk was always wonderful to start from his house.

From Secretary/Treasurer Norman Dunkinson: David was a long-time member of the international Clan Donnachaidh Society and of the Clan Donnachaidh Society Mid-Atlantic Branch. As Sam mentions, many of us have fond memories from David's clan gatherings at his former home at 222 S. Washington Street in Alexandria that preceded the Christmas Walk. We are greatly saddened by David's passing—we've lost not only a member, but a great friend.



From <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/312507661632990388/>.

CLAN DONNACHAIDH SOCIETY MID-ATLANTIC BRANCH

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The Clan Donnachaidh Society is a world-wide organization dedicated to the preservation of our Highland heritage. Membership is open to those persons bearing recognized sept surnames and their descendants and spouses.

Membership in the parent Clan Donnachaidh Society in Scotland includes a subscription to the Clan Donnachaidh Annual.

Membership in the Mid-Atlantic Branch of the Clan Donnachaidh Society includes a subscription to the Branch newsletter, Robertson's Rant, published quarterly and containing listings of Highland Games and Celtic Festivals throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, Game and Festival reports, historical and biographical articles, and news items of interest to Donnachaidhs everywhere. Membership also includes an open invitation to join your fellow society members at the Clan Donnachaidh Tent and Diner at numerous Games and Festivals, and at other activities including the annual Scottish Christmas Walk and Clan Donnachaidh luncheon in the Old Town section of Alexandria, Virginia, in early December.

Parent Society membership dues are \$25.00 per year (individual) and \$35.00 per year (family = two persons/same address). Mid-Atlantic Branch membership dues are \$20.00 per year (individual).

UPCOMING CELTIC EVENTS & GAMES—2025

<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Jamestown Regional Celtic Festival	Mayville, NY	Aug 22 nd
Virginia Scottish Games & Festival	The Plains, VA	Aug 30 th - 31 st
Edinboro Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Edinboro, PA	Sep 5 th - 6 th
Covenanter Scottish Festival	Quarryville, PA	Sep 6 th
Ligonier Highland Festival	Ligonier, PA	Sep 13 th
Wood Ridge Farm & Brewery Celtic Festival	Livingston, VA	Sep 20 th - 21 st
Celtic Classic	Bethlehem, PA	Sep 26 th - 28 th
Scottish Christmas Walk	Alexandria, VA	Dec 6 th

