

## IONA RESEARCH CONFERENCE

April 10th to 12th 2012.

Paper for the *Historic Scotland and Iona Community Conference on The Interpretation of Iona Abbey*; April 2012.

From **Ian Macdonnell**, Australia.

Copies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. published and supplied to all conference participants and Historic Scotland staff with support from **Harold McIsaac**, High Commissioner, Clan Donald New Zealand.

Historic Scotland will bring together contributions on a range of topics:

1. Was art and monasticism in Iona influenced by Ireland, Norway or further afield?
2. How and where was Iona influential?
3. What was the form of the Columban and later monastic settlements?
4. What do the carved stones tell us?
5. What was the spiritual and architectural development of the abbey and nunnery?
6. What were the lay influences on the site, and the impacts of the Reformation?
7. How has restoration/ reuse in the 20th century changed perspectives on heritage?

<http://www.ionahistory.org.uk/iona/ionahome.htm>

(includes links to : Conference Papers : draft framework, cultural significance, etc.)



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The main body of work is substantially complete. The full sections on the other Lords of the Isles are still in draft (Angus Mor, Alex. Og, John I, Donald of Harlaw, Alexander and John II).

They will be available with the complete book publication mid 2013 [with Index then]. However, there is information on all of them contained in other sections where necessary.

# IONA

## The ancient ecclesiastical capital of Dalriada and of the 'Royal Family of MacDonald', 1200 - 1500.

THIS IS A THOROUGHLY CLAN DONALD CENTRIC ACCOUNT.

AS IT OUGHT TO BE.

- ❖ HIBERNIA'S 'SCOTTI' WERE THE FUNDAMENTAL FOUNDATION TO DALRIADA, IONA, CLAN DONALD and the CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND CHRISTIANITY OF 'ALBA'
- ❖ BUT, A FOUNDATION IS NOT A VIABLE CONTINUUM WITHOUT THE MANY BUILDING BLOCKS AND STRONG, INDIVIDUAL CORNER STONES THAT MAKE UP THE UNIQUE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF TODAY'S SCOTLAND.
- ❖ FROM 1207 TO 1493, THE EARLY CLAN DONALD AND ITS CHIEFS, THE LORDS OF THE ISLES WERE ENTIRELY CENTRAL TO IONA ABBEY'S WHOLE MEDIEVAL EXISTENCE, DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICS. IN ALL BUT NAME, ST MARY'S WAS CLAN DONALD'S CATHEDRAL OF THE ISLES, c.1480.
- ❖ THIS ENDURING MACDONALD PHASE EQUALS THE 300 YEAR PERIOD OF PRIMARY COLUMBAN MONASTICISM. IT IS PARAMOUNT IN PROVIDING THE SOLE WITNESS TO IONA'S EXTANT ARCHITECTURE AND IS A PRINCIPAL WITNESS TO THE SURVIVING MONUMENTS.
- ❖ THE CULT OF SAINTS, BODY PART RELICS, THE DOCTRINES OF PURGATORY AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER (AND EVISCERATION, "HEART BURIAL") WERE TO PROFOUNDLY SHAPE THE BURIAL RITES OF THE CLAN DONALD LORDS OF THE ISLES – OF THE 'BODY POLITIC.'

Author

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