



# Dualchas

A newsletter of Clan Donald Mid-Atlantic Region • Sept. 2022 • Vol. 3 • Issue 3

## Upcoming Events

### Edinboro Highland Games and Scottish Festival

Sept. 9-10  
PennWest Edinboro University, PA  
[www.edinboro.edu/events/highland-games/index.php](http://www.edinboro.edu/events/highland-games/index.php)

### Covenanter Scottish Festival and Highland Games

Sept. 10  
Covenanter Presbyterian Church  
Quarryville, PA  
[www.covenanterscottishfestival.com](http://www.covenanterscottishfestival.com)

### Ligonier Highland Games

Sept. 17  
Ligonier, PA  
[www.ligonierhighlandgames.org](http://www.ligonierhighlandgames.org)

### Celtic Classic Festival

Sept. 23-25  
Bethlehem, PA  
[www.celticfest.org](http://www.celticfest.org)

### South Jersey Celtic Festival

Oct. 8  
Liberty Lake, Bordentown, NJ  
<http://www.sjceltic.org/CeltFest.htm>

### Maryland Irish Festival

Nov. 11-13  
Maryland State Fairgrounds  
[irishfestival.com](http://irishfestival.com)

### Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade

Dec. 3  
Old Town Alexandria, VA  
[www.campagnacenter.org/alexandria-scottish-christmas-walk-parade/](http://www.campagnacenter.org/alexandria-scottish-christmas-walk-parade/)



## Charlotte Hosts AGM

Clan Donald USA held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Charlotte, NC, August 18-20.

Participants traveled together to tour a pre-revolutionary, antebellum, and post-civil war settlement in Brattonsville, SC, representative of the settlements many of our Scots ancestors would have experienced. Our tour guide, Zach, was both an experienced middle school history teacher and a fiddler. The summer heat made a stop for homemade ice cream a particular delight on the return trip.

Friday's schedule included the Board meeting. The general meeting was held Saturday afternoon before the banquet. High Commissioner Linda Harlow reported the following actions of



Cabin interior at Historic Brattonsville



Clan Donald members at Historic Brattonsville

the board and appointments.

The terms of office for High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner have been changed from a 3-year to a 4-year term. High Commissioner Harlow appointed April Ritchison as North Atlantic Deputy Regional Commissioner and Mike McDaniel as Red River Deputy Regional Commissioner to fill current vacancies.

Effective Jan. 1, 2023, Kevin McCall, Bill Yoder and David McDaniel will become Regional Commissioner Emeriti. At the same time, Victor Donham will become Mid-Atlantic Regional Commissioner, Eric Shaw will become Great Lakes Regional Commissioner, and April

*Continued on Page 5*

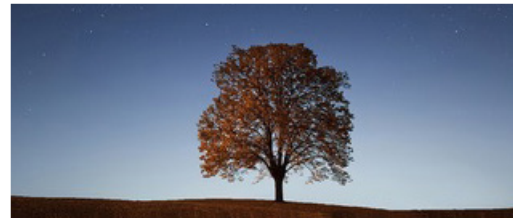
## Get Started Learning About Your Genealogy

Clan Donald Genealogist Louise McDonald is offering monthly Zoom workshops on Beginner Genealogy. To participate in the workshop:

- (1) You must be a current member of CDUSA
- (2) Registration is required and will be reviewed and approved

The next workshop will take place Wednesday, Sept. 28, at 6:30 pm. Eastern Time, using Zoom software. There is no cost for the workshop. Each registrant will receive a link to use for access to Zoom. Workshops are not recorded.

To register in advance for this meeting, go to:



[https://us06web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZElcOipqzoiGd1Zro9d\\_07Ejyx4vLZ82WbI](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZElcOipqzoiGd1Zro9d_07Ejyx4vLZ82WbI)

Should you have any questions, please contact Louise McDonald at [cdusagenealogist@gmail.com](mailto:cdusagenealogist@gmail.com).



Bill McGown Yoder  
Regional Commissioner

**DUALCHAS** is a Scots Gaelic word meaning heritage or culture

#### Mid-Atlantic Region

*Regional Commissioner:*

**Bill McGown Yoder**

bill.yoder@gmail.com

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*Delaware Commissioner:*

**Brad Slader**

*District of Columbia Commissioner:*

**Vacant**

*Maryland Commissioner:*

**Vacant**

*New Jersey Commissioner:*

**Vacant**

*New Jersey Convener:*

**John MacDonald**

*Pennsylvania Commissioner:*

**Vacant**

*Pennsylvania Convener:*

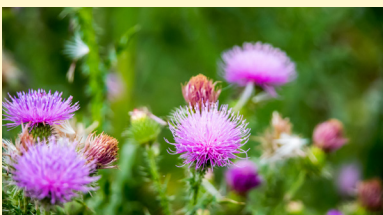
**Barry MacDonald**

*Dualchas Editor / Director of Communications:* **Lynn Donham**

Send news, announcements, articles and photos to:

**Lynn Donham, Editor**

lynndonham@gmail.com



# From the Commissioner

Latha Math! I hope that everyone has had a great summer!!

Ginny and I just returned from the Clan Donald Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Charlotte, NC where we had a delightful visit with many kinspeople and old friends.

This year's AGM included a visit to the Brattonsville (SC) historical site, which provided lots of insights into early Scots settlers in the Carolinas, several fascinating workshops addressing genealogy, Scottish immigration, historical Scottish armament, and a fun evening at the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery. The weekend was capped off with a banquet, featuring a delicious haggis, which we addressed with great fanfare, and devoured with appropriate enthusiasm. If you have not been to an AGM, I recommend attending at least once — the next Clan Donald AGM will be in St Louis, MO, in August 2023, and previews of plans look very exciting.

September will be a busy month for Clan Donald with lots of opportunities to gather and celebrate our heritage. There is a festival almost every weekend, and some weekends have two events. Most are in Pennsylvania. The fun will continue in October with a new

festival in Southern New Jersey. Clan Donald plans to attend all of these events — please stop by our tent and say hello. Mark your calendar with the list of upcoming events on page 1 of this newsletter.

As Clan Donald rolls into our fall season of gatherings, we are still needing volunteers to help host or to convene events, or to help with the newsletter. Would you like to welcome visitors to the Clan Donald tent? It's a great way to meet new folks and enjoy the Games. Do you have an idea for an article you'd like to see? Send it to me or to Lynn Donham, our editor, at [lynndonham@gmail.com](mailto:lynndonham@gmail.com).

In closing, I would like to congratulate Victor Donham, our current Deputy Commissioner, on his appointment to be your new Mid-Atlantic Regional Commissioner. Vic will replace me in this role when my term expires on Jan. 1, 2023, and I will be taking on a new role as Regional Commissioner Emeritus.

Yours aye,

Bill McGown Yoder  
Commissioner  
Clan Donald Mid-Atlantic Region

## Renew Your Membership — Online!

You can now renew your membership online! If your membership has not expired, you can follow the steps below to renew online. If it has expired (or you don't wish to renew online), please print the Membership Renewal Form on Page 7 and mail with a check to Bill Yoder at the address on the form.

Membership is currently \$30 per year, or \$500 for a lifetime membership.

To renew online, go to [clandonaldusa.org](http://clandonaldusa.org), sign in and follow these steps.

Choose "Regions" in the top menu, and then select "Mid-Atlantic."

On the right will be a small menu. Click on "Membership Forms." Fill it out and either mail or email to the regional commissioner.

Next, pay for your membership online. From small menu at the right, select "Membership Online Renewal."

Thank you for renewing your membership!



# Armadale Castle Museum Reopens



*Armadale Castle, Isle of Skye*

Armadale Castle, Museum of the Isles, gardens and gift shop are open Wednesday to Sunday through to the end of October 2022, and have been welcoming visitors from across the globe once more.

The self-catering lodges are as lovely as ever, with views looking out over the Sound of

Sleat. Each lodge has undergone refurbishment this year, and they are currently being painted to protect them for the winter.

This year the Stables Café has been closed, but Bothy Blend, an outdoor café has been serving coffee and light fare to guests, both local and from afar.

Coach parties have been visiting once more and the retail shop has undergone a transformation with new lines of stock added including Skye and Scottish products, gifts, toys, books and many Armadale exclusives such as MacDonald purses, bags, scarfs and even dog collars.

The monthly markets have been a success this summer and have supported many small crafters from around the island.

In the gardens the team have been taking part in adder surveys, fencing repairs, tree works and walking trail improvements, to name a few.

To plan your visit, see <https://www.armadalecastle.com/plan-your-visit/>



*Godfrey, Lord Macdonald, along with children, plants two trees to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Clan Donald Lands Trust.*

# Second Book Debuts in Series on Clan Donald

*Bound by Honor*, book two in the Clan Donald Saga by Regan Walker, takes place in the waning years of the 13th century. Two young noblemen form a bond that forever changes their destiny and that of Scotland's. Their shared pledge of honor would endure for a lifetime to secure power in the Isles for Angus Og Macdonald and a crown for Robert Bruce. This story shares their friendship, their times and the battle that secured their future. This historical romance novel features two women who stand beside them.

Regan Walker is a descendant of Clan Donald, and reports that her ancestors hail from Islay. Based in San Diego, she is an award-winning, #1 Amazon bestselling author of Regency, Georgian and Medieval novels.

Walker is a winner of the International Book Award for Romance Fiction, the San Diego

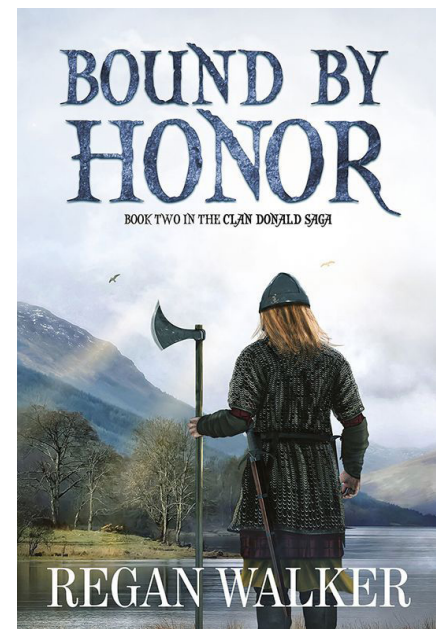
Book Award for Best Historical Romance, the RONE Award for Best Medieval Novel and the Gold Medal Illumination Award. Author and Clan Donald member Ian R. Macdonnell consulted with Walker on *Bound by Honor*.

The next book in the Clan Donald Saga will be *The Strongest Heart*. It's the story of Angus Og's grandson, Donald Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, the Hero of Harlaw.

The books are available through Amazon.com and in Kindle format, as well as through Kindle Unlimited.

Author website: <http://www.reganwalkerauthor.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ReganWalkersReaders/>





# Who built Iona, the Cathedral of the Isles

Part three of a multi-part article by Ian R. Macdonnell about the medieval abbey built on Iona and Clan Donald

In a late medieval invocation, St. Columba was still revered and referred to as *Spes Scoturum*, “the hope of the Scots.” By c.1450, with a still dilapidated Abbey church trying to cope with increasing pilgrim traffic necessitating more space and a new processional layout for them (“crowd control”), the Earl of Ross, Lord of the Isles, John (II) Macdonald (1449 - 1503), son of Alexander, instead of just economically restoring the existing structures, enlarged and enhanced them from c.1450 to 1476. It was “so comprehensive a scale as to involve the destruction of nearly three-fourths of the structure.”

The clear intention of “*JOHIS DE YLLE COMIS ROSSIE DOMINI INSULARUM*,” c.1450-80, was the raising of the small Iona church of St. Mary to the dignity of the Cathedral of the Isles. This political goal was the zenith of a many-decades-long sequence of connected events by successive Clan Donald chiefs (the founder’s heirs) and Macdonald abbots and

bishops managing “conditionality of endowment”. John II used the Lordship’s ever-increasing treasury and resources which were greatly boosted from 1426 by additional revenue from the new territories of Ross and Skye. John did this with the clear ambition of raising its status to the dignity of the *Macdonald Cathedral of the Isles*. 1462: John’s Grand Treaty of Ardtornish–Westminster with King Edward IV, England—what expectations! What a miscalculation, leading to his first forfeiture in 1476.

John Macdonald’s rebuilding enterprise employed Donald Ó Brolcháin of the Lordship’s long-serving hereditary chief masons, church-wrights, clerics and personal secretaries from the distinguished Derry family of abbots/bishops, past Coarbs of the St. Columba Familia and Chief Lectors, Prime Artificers of Ireland. The Ó Brolcháins had been associated with Iona since the eponymous Donald’s father, Reginald mac Somerled founded the

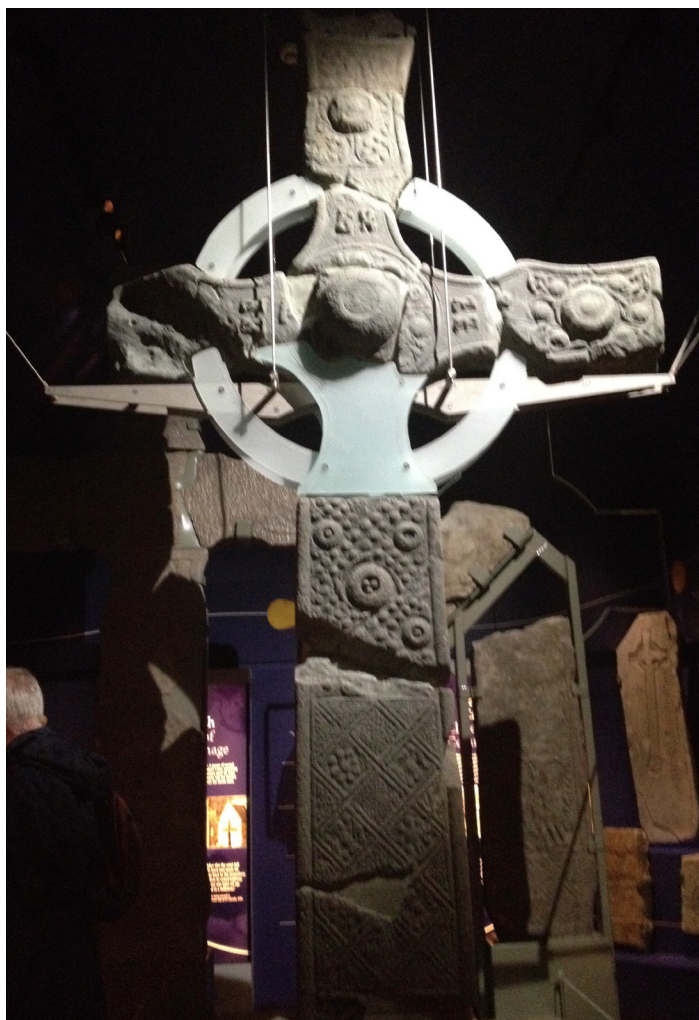
Abbey, the first prior being Domnall Ua Brolcháin d.1203, and continued right throughout the Lordship. Somerled tried to re-found Iona Abbey in 1164 and have Flaibhertach Ó Brolcháin, first Bishop of Derry, take the Abbacy, but failed on both counts. Another Ó Brolcháin was

the personal secretary to Chief Alexander Macdonald, and one was the master mason, Donald Ó Brolcháin, who rebuilt the cathedral, and lastly to the Ó Brolcháin master graveslab carver who left Iona and went to the mainland c.1500 after the Lordship collapsed in 1493.

John II, son of Alexander, was assisted by his cousin, Bishop Angus (II) Macdonald “son of a bishop of Royal stock,” grandson of Donald of Harlaw and the exemplary reforming abbot, Dominic MacKenzie from Wester Ross, kin of Chief Alexander Macdonald’s mother, Mariota, Countess of Ross.

In the 1430s Alexander was at peace with King James I. He was recognised by James as the Earl of Ross and became Scotland’s chief legal officer, *Justiciar of Scotia*. Alexander had his centers of power in Ross at Dingwall and Inverness, but his son John, of course, later forfeiting Ross, was centered back in the Isles. It’s worth reiterating that the first Macdonald bishop, Angus, relocated his seat, the Isles’ Cathedra (throne), to the Iona Abbey Church in c.1433, functioning probably as a form of the common ‘Benedictine monastic cathedral chapter’ (not the proposed chapter of secular canons).

Historically, there was no distinction between the *monastic cathedral chapters*, *monastic orders*, headed by a prior (all Benedictine),



*St John's Cross was once the finest of all the crosses on Iona. It is still striking today, though it survives only as fragments put back together, on display in the Iona Abbey Museum (left). The cross was dedicated to John the Evangelist, and it once stood outside Iona Abbey. A replica put up in the 1970s now stands on the spot (right)*

*Complex and ornate, the cross head has eight interlocking parts. The ring to support the arms of the cross may have emerged as an elegant repair solution after it had had a fall. This type of cross is likely to have been created on Iona in the 700s and later used in Ireland.*





# Who built Iona?

## Part Three, *Continued*



*Iona Abbey*

and those of the secular canons headed by a dean, in their relation to the bishop or diocese. They can be “*numbered*,” in which case they are provided with a fixed prebend (appropriated benefice from parish revenue), or “*unnumbered*,” in which case the bishop indicates the number of canons according to the income. Over a period of time there is the exceptional convergence of a *Macdonald* patronised abbey (through patrilineal descent from founder Reginald) with *Macdonald*-sponsored abbots, one a Clan Donald *MacAlasdair* (descent from Alaxandair Og) and with two bishops *Macdonald* and a kindred Maclean Bishop, John, first-cousin, once-removed from Chief Alexander. The King of Scots had the right to present the bishop candidate to the Archbishop of Nidaros, Norway, but note that the “*House of Macdonald*” as of John II, son of Alexander, was considered a “*Royal race*” with considerable influence (until 1476!).

This convergence presents the opportunity to at least use a portion of Iona abbey’s income (relatively wealthy in the context of the west) and the episcopal-diocese’s *communa funds* revenue specifically for the shared cause of both needing a new church and a chapter house — Iona’s being derelict and Snizort’s untenable. For example, using the rents and tithes from the majority of parishes in the Diocese of the Isles that were not endowed to Iona abbey (albeit they were hard to collect).

Also, the larger and grander decorated

church/cathedral and the only in situ corporeal (body-part) relic/reliquary of St. Columba, which was entirely the product of, and acquired by, the Macdonalds, would then have revitalised a more regular pilgrim visitation with increased donations (not just on isolated special feast days and one-off indulgences).

**RAISING OF IONA CATHEDRAL: 1433.** Some historians point out that there are no records (any *found* that is) for cathedral/diocesan chapter activity at Iona for the Diocese of the Isles between 1433 and 1493 (end of Macdonald Lordship) and construe that the bishop’s seat did not move to Iona before 1499 when the abbacy and the bishopric were combined ‘*in commendam*’ (ie, “*the fruits*” of the abbey were stripped, including by seven successive Earl of Argyll’s Common-dators, i.e., in essence, his pre-dissolution “property managers”). But neither are there such records that specify *Snizort* in this 60-year period, or after 1499 for Iona, so this argument is flawed. It could be equally said that the Cathedral was not at Snizort then (i.e., the concept of “*incidence of survival*”). RCAHMS state, with regards to Iona cathedral status, that there is: “...evidence of an attempt to develop a secular chapter”.

No one should underestimate the advanced nature of the polity in the isles. The Lordship was very different from the rest of Scotland in its form of government and culture. An elected council at Finlaggan, Islay, governed the isles—a “*High Court of Judicature*.” It:



## AGM, continued

Ritchison will become North Atlantic Regional Commissioner.

Debra Macdonald will take on a new role as Life Membership Coordinator. Membership is rebounding from the low level caused by COVID, but the budget is still experiencing lower than normal membership contributions. The 2023 budget projects a \$1,925.00 deficit.

Clan Donald Genealogist Louise McDonald is leading monthly genealogy workshops for members, via Zoom.

Heartfelt thanks were given to Clan Donald Southeast, led by Brian and Brenda Jackson, for their warm hospitality in Charlotte, and their extensive work in planning and executing the AGM.

The 2023 AGM will be in St. Louis, MO, August 16-20. All members of Clan Donald are encouraged to attend.



*Bill Yoder addresses the Haggis at the AGM Banquet*



# Who built Iona?

## Part Three, Continued



*In about 1200, Reginald MacDonald of Islay, one of the sons of Somerled, decided to revive old traditions partly lost as a result of Viking raids, and turn Iona into a centre of Christianity important enough to rival anything on the continent. What was left of an earlier Columban monastery was replaced with a very much grander Benedictine monastery built on the same site. Reginald also built an Augustinian Nunnery on the island. He installed his sister (Beatrice) Bethoc as its first prioress. The pink granite walls that remain, despite being ruinous, are amongst the best examples of a medieval nunnery left in Britain. One of only two Augustinian Orders in Scotland, the Iona Nunnery earned itself the name 'An Eaglais Dhùbh' - the black church - after the colour of nuns' robes.*

*"decernit, decrevit et dedit sicut fuit iuxta legem factam per Ranald McSomhacle .....King of the Occident Isles." It decided weighty matters of law, succession and inheritance, and gave direction to the cultural and spiritual life of an extended community:*

*"Fourteen to sixteen chieftains of prestigious clans whose number and make-up may have varied from Lord to Lord, advised and wielded influence and power commensurate with their territorial jurisdictions and the strength of their fleets. The Council, likely modelled on the Manx Tynwald, was, in fact, an effective and cohesive Norse-Gael-style parliament well suited to the Isles. It was a learned and skilled assembly of prominent Gaels that convened at Finlaggan."*

The point to make with this knowledge and understanding is that the desire, ambition and ability of the Lords of the Isles to have a Monastic Cathedral of the Isles in this advanced polity, in their own two-and-a-half centuries-old dynastic foundation and eccle-

siastical capital of Iona, is very understandable, reasonable and attainable. In 1499, just six years after John II was forfeited, and with all its attributes from the late 15th century entirely unchanged, Iona Abbey church acted 'de facto Cathedral' under John Campbell, Abbey Commendator and Bishop, brother of the new, 1498 petitioner, Archibald Campbell, 2nd Earl of Argyll (what a "co-incidence"!)). It's obvious therefore, that if the church could act as Cathedral then, it could have equally "acted de facto" from 1433 with Bishop of the Isles, Angus Macdonald transferring his Cathedra (seat) there.

The records (Registers, etc) that were destroyed on purpose by Argyll in the 17th century could have proved Iona 'cathedral chapter activity' one way or the other:

*"The carrying out of this act was remitted to Argyll and Glencairn, and much has been written with regard to the great damage caused by the mob to the building and monuments and the valuable library."*

They were destroyed with one purpose in mind—to cover up what was to happen:

*"Thus have the revenues of the ancient primacy of Scotland, founded by kings and prelates for the most holy of purposes, and amply endowed by a succession of noble and pious individuals, passed through a variety of secular hands since the Reformation, and been applied to various private purposes."*

Ian R. Macdonnell has become an expert on Iona's connections to Clan Donald. In 2013 he was instrumental in overturning the 1977 decision by the Royal Commission of the Ancient and Historical Monuments Scotland (RCAHMS) to strip our "Noble and renowned High Chief of the Innsigall", Angus Og (k.1318), of his historically attributed 660-year-old Iona burial monument and epitaph (the first ever "Macdomnill" kin name carved in stone). Their subject experts said it was 'inconceivable' to be his.

From his home in Melbourne, Australia, Ian travelled halfway around the world to Iona in 2006 especially to see it. It could not even be found. It took Ian seven years of thorough research, careful analysis and repeated solid arguments to rebut the arguments of the RCAHMS specialists. A plaque is now beside Angus Og's graveslab, and a full-size slab replica is in the Museum of The Isles.

In 2011, Ian led a Clan Donald tour of Iona Abbey and St Oran's Chapel, and for the first time in 500 years, the clan held a service of worship on Iona, in the Michael Chapel (first building finished by founder Reginald mac Somerled). In 2014 he also produced and sponsored a concert in the Museum of the Isles, called Ceol Rìgh Innse Gall, a salute to Angus Og, performing a programme of the Gaelic poetry/song and music associated with the Macdonald Lords of the Isles.

Ian's book is available at: [https://www.academia.edu/62043297/CLAN\\_DONALD\\_and\\_IONA\\_ABBEY\\_1200\\_1500](https://www.academia.edu/62043297/CLAN_DONALD_and_IONA_ABBEY_1200_1500)

For more information on Iona and Clan Donald, see his website: <https://www.ionaab-beyondclandonald.com/>

Some other papers are here: <https://high-councilofclandonald.com/learned-scholarly-papers/> - eg: Attribution Of Iona Graveslab No.154 - to the eponymous Clanranald, d 1386.

# Clan Donald, USA™

**"Home of the MacDonalds"**



# Membership Renewal Form

[clandonaldusa.org](http://clandonaldusa.org)

**\$30 / Year for Annual Dues -- \$1 / Year for Youth Dues**

(Please fill out a Membership Application for Life Membership)

Please fill out this form and mail it to the address below along with payment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last	First	MI	Nickname
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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street / P.O. Box / Apartment #	City	State	Zip Code
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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Home ☐ Mobile E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Life members may use this form to donate / regular members renewing may add donations to dues payment.**

**Help us keep our dues at such a reasonable rate!**

**I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the region.**

I understand that \$2.50 of my annual dues is tax deductible and will go to the Clan Donald Foundation, Inc. (A tax-exempt charitable foundation.)

**Make checks payable to: "Clan Donald USA, Inc."**

Any changes in marital status or children? \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail renewal to: Bill Yoder  
Mid-Atlantic Commissioner  
117 North Water St.  
Chestertown, MD 21620

By default, Newsletters will be e-mailed (Eco-Friendly)

☐ I wish to receive Newsletters by USPS

***For Clan Donald Use:***

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_ CLAN REP APPROVAL:\_\_\_\_\_

DUES PAID BY: ☐ Check#      Date:      ☐ Cash ☐ Credit Card

DISTRIBUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Regional Number ☐ Regional Roster ☐ Regional Income

**REMINDER:** The Regional Commissioner is responsible to ensure that a copy of this renewal is mailed promptly to:

☐ CDUSA Membership Secretary☐ Regional Membership Secretary

# THANK YOU