



Nova Scotia Branch

# Clan Chisholm Society

FALL NEWSLETTER!

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NOVEMBER 1990

SPECIAL\_\_SPECIAL\_\_SPECIAL!!!!

At a recent executive meeting held at the home of Marie and Art LeBrun, it was decided to hold a Christmas Party for Clan Members and Friends.

It will be in the John Paul Center on Main Street in Antigonish on Sunday, December 2, 1990 from 3:00 P. M. to 7:00 P .M.

Wear your tartan!! Pot Luck Food !!!

Even the Antigonish Chisholms admit they may have problems with the weather and plan that, should Dec. 2 be a snow day, the function will be postponed until Dec. 9.

See you there!!

Well, a Fall Newsletter-- what a surprise! We'll try to bring you up to date on the Clan happenings of 1990 and the plans for 1991.

As most of you will know, 1991 will be a special year in Nova Scotia with another "Gathering of the Clans". First held in Nova Scotia in 1979, it repeats at four year intervals, 1983, 1987, now 1991.

Back in 1979 Rod J. Chisholm was the first Clan Society President, and as will be reported below, the 1990 annual meeting reelected Rod as President. Talk about recycling of natural resources we Chisholms recycle our Past-Presidents! No need to break in a new one, we know our Rod, his good points and--- well enough said. Seriouslywe look forward to Rod's second reign and while he is a busy guy, we know he'll do a grand job, again.

Looking back over the last paragraph and noting the editorial "we" reminds me of a story about those entitled to use "WE", it goes like this- three sorts of people may use "we" Royalty, Editors and people with fleas.

## 1990

I recall an executive meeting at the home of Liz and Bo Chisholm on Xavier Drive, I also recall being latefor that meeting but not much detail about it. We did plan the 1990 Clan Day July 10 selected a program for the Day, planning a ceremony at our Cairn, Dinner at the Claymore

and a brief Annual Meeting to receive reports and to elect officers for the next year.

## At the Cairn, July 10, 1990

Quite a number of Clanspeople gathered at the Cairn to hear a brief ceremony conducted by Art. Chisholm. There is more information about our Cairn later in the newsletter. Art was assisted by Rod., Ed Rogers, Clan Piper and others.

## Annual Meeting, July 10

President Liz chaired the meeting at which we were told our finances werein reasonable condition, our membership was down and the nominating committee report was accepted.

Rod Chisholm---	President
Stan "	Vice President
Archie "	Vice president
J. Ronald "	Vice president
Nancy "	Secretary
Art LeBrun	Treasurer
Art Chisholm	Newsletter and Historian
Angus "	Membership
Liz Chisholm	Past-President, of course

## The Dinner, July 10

There was a choice of Roast Beef or Salmon and a few managed Lobster all were said to be delicious. Service was excellent, the speaker, Father Greg. MacKinnon held our interest and the musical program was great.

1990, cont'd

September 16,

The executive met at President Rod's home, the treasurer reported a balance of \$1724 a modest increase over the summer, The paid memberships total 45, more about memberships later.

A committee was struck to plan for Clan activities in 1991.

To the delight of the editor, regional representatives were named to provide information for the Newsletter. (To the dismay of the editor to date no news items have been received.)

November 4, 1990

Another executive meeting was held, at the home of Marie and Art LeBrun. Plans were pretty well finalized for our 1991 Clan Day with arrangements not differing much from 1990.

Date: Tuesday July 9, 1991. This date was chosen after much discussion as a mid-week date makes attendance difficult for those in Metro and for those who are still working for a living.

Cairn ceremony, Dinner at the Claymore, Speaker to be named later, Annual meeting on another day, There was discussion about a Metro (Halifax) Clan Day in July.

IN MEMORIAM

We report the deaths of several friends and members of our Clan Society.

December 26, 1989

Katherine Julia MacMaster of Long Point, Inverness County. Katherine was our Clan Genealogist for some years and had always shown a keen interest in our Society. She was a retired schoolteacher and was survived by four sons, four daughters, a sister and nine grandchildren.

March 13, 1990

William Francis (Bill) Chisholm

Bill was historian of our Society. He was educated in Antigonish and at St. Francis Xavier Univ., played hockey with the Bulldogs, served in the R. C. A. F. was newseditor of CJFX, Antigonish and was an M. L. A. from 1956 to 1970.

Bill was survived by his wife, six daughters, one son, three brothers, two sisters and eight grandchildren. Rev. Greg. MacKinnon, one of Bill's brothers, officiated at the services in St. Ninians Cathedral.

Bill was one of the founders of our Society in the Fall of 1978.

August 11, 1990

Wilena MacInnes Penney

Although not a Chisholm, our Society honoured Wilena several years ago for her on-going and extremely active interest in all things Scottish. She was Games Chairperson of the Antigonish Highland Society for many years and was the first President of the Antigonish Highland Society.

Wilena was survived by her husband, two sons, four daughters, her mother and four grandchildren.

We express our sincere regrets, on behalf of all of our members, to the families of these three grand people.

OUR CLAN CAIRN

The inscription on the cairn reads-  
"IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF OUR CHISHOLM PIONEERS WHO LEFT US A GOODLY INHERITANCE. DEDICATED: JULY 11, 1979, BY: ALISTAIR CHISHOLM OF CHISHOLM "THE CHISHOLM", CHIEF OF CLAN CHISHOLM"

The 1981 newsletter states, in part "The Chisholm Cairn is not any longer lonely. Clan MacDougall have commenced the erection of a cairn also. The location is a bit west of the Clan Chisholm Cairn."

It was thought there would be a number of other Clans with cairns by 1983, one reads in that newsletter, but must say that now in 1990 there are still only the two cairns in the "Field of the Clans."

The 1981 newsletter continues--"It should be noted that without the contribution of St. Francis Xavier University and its President, Father Gregory MacKinnon it would not be possible to have the Field of the Clans in its present location. The University gave the property on the North side of St. Ninian St. to the Antigonish Highland Society with the right that the various Clans to erect Cairns and specified that the property should be known as the FIELD OF THE CLANS, a companion to the HALL OF THE CLANS in the Angus L. MacDonald Library.

Taken from Court transcripts:

Q. Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A. All my autopsies have been performed on dead people.

MEMBERSHIPS, ETC.

It is of great concern that only 45 members were enrolled by September. One variable has been the fiscal year of the Society and it will be proposed at the next Annual meeting that the fiscal year be the calendar year. New membership cards will so indicate, in anticipation of a "yes" vote.

All organizations must depend on new people joining and participating as there is always some attrition. To attract and keep new members there must be a program which will be of interest. We are seeking input; what can be done to (1) maintain current membership, (2) attract former members who have become inactive and (3) to increase the members on the rolls?

The newsletter costs, delivered to you continues to increase and it has been suggested we should not send newsletters to those who have not been contributing, perhaps they should receive an invoice! Let us have your reactions. We also need continuing help with addresses, changed names, news and while we would like to collect genealogies and family histories we are not in a position to do research for you.

ADDRESSES

The official address of the Society remains Box 1263, Antigonish, N. S., B2G 2L6; both the editor and membership addresses are Great Village, N. S., B0M 1L0. Our Genealogist, J. Ronald Chisholm is at 24 Fairview St. Antigonish, B2G 1R3.

A mixed up sports report:  
Gretsky won his sixth consecutive Hart Trophy as the NHL's Most Valuable Player, an unprecedented feat that tied him with Gordie Howe as a six-time winner.

You figure it out:  
His death leaves a void in the community which will be hard to replace.

And from a school exam:  
A virgin forest is a place where the hand of man has never set foot.  
A fossil is an extinct animal. The older it is the more extinct it is.

Rural life is mostly lived in the country.

1991 EVENTS

July 9, a Tuesday will be Clan Chisholm Day. There was much discussion about having it on a Saturday but finally the Tuesday was chosen. There will be another cairn ceremony at 3:00 P. M., the Dinner will be at the Claymore Motel probably at 6:30 with the Clan Hour at 5:30. Dinner will be a choice of Lobster, Roast Beef or Salmon--choose ahead, probable cost--\$20.00 each, with a ceilidh after.

April 28, a Sunday will the Annual Meeting at 2:30 P. M. in Antigonish.

April 6, Saturday, is Tartan Day in Canada wear a tartan and persuade your Member of Parliament to support the proclamation of Tartan Day in honour of the Scots pioneers of this country.

April 13, also Saturday, another chance to wear your tartan on the annual march to the monument at Knoydart on the Saturday nearest the anniversary of the Battle of Culloden. Come early, it is becoming more popular each year and is always thoroughly enjoyed despite the sometime inclement weather.

CHISHOLM'S HISTORY

Recently received a copy of "Discover Scotland" a publication of the Sunday Mail and discovered a lot of information about Chisholms, in fact, that was the reason it was sent to me the Clan Chisholm Society.

The article describes the Great Glen, Glen Urquhart, Strath Glass, Glen Affric, Glen Cannich, Strathfarrar and indicates that the several great clans in that area included "the powerful and numerous Frasers, the smaller but tenacious Chisholms, the Urquharts and MacKenzies of Kintail---"

"It is an area of sad and poignant memories, and of these surely none more so than the Chisholms; a small clan in past times, but a prominent one, with fightingmen noted for their build and stature. An old saying has it that there are only three individuals in the world whose titles include, by right, a capitalized definite article: The Pope, The King (or Queen) and The Chisholm.

"It is impossible to walk the hills of Glen Connich or Glen Affric, or to be in Strath Glass and forget the Chisholms. The hill farms still flourish, crofting survives, tourism, forestry and the big estates provide work, but once well inhabited glens are largely empty and the ruins of the townships from the days of a cattle economy and their sheilings in

the upper glens can still be seen."

The article says that the area was used as the setting for the film "The Last of the Mohicans" because the glens looked like the North American haunts of the Hurons!

Reproduced on this page is a box from the magazine--have you heard of the Chisholm memorial?

## Fierce with the Fierce: Clan Chisholm



*Left: Roderick Donald Matheson Chisholm – the last clan chief in a direct line, who died from tuberculosis at the age of 24. The painting by William Walter Oules dates from 1887. Below: The Chisholm clan has resided in Affric and the Aird since the 14th century, and the area is deeply imbued with their heritage. The Chisholm memorial, which is situated on Cannich brae – in the area known as Chisholm's Pass – overlooks the house of Comar, the main residence in the barony granted to the clan chief in 1538.*

Stewarts and were among the most faithful of Jacobite clans, although they had men on both sides at Culloden in 1746 – one of the most tragic of Highland stories. And the fugitive Charles Edward Stewart was hidden in a shieling hut in Strath Glass by the Seven Men of Glen Moriston (who actually numbered eight and included a Chisholm), before travelling to safety in France. The area still has a strong Catholic tradition.

The collapse of the last of the Jacobite risings (and subsequent events) were to leave a distinctive mark on the landscape, which the visitor to Strath Glass sees. After the rising of 1715 petered out, the Chisholms reached an uneasy compromise with the Hanoverian government, and two of the chief's sons, John and James, held commissions in the Hanoverian army.

The chief was too old to fight in the '45, but his youngest son, Roderick Og, commanded the Chisholm contingent with the Jacobite army on that fateful field, while 600 yards away across the moor his brothers, both captains, stood in the enemy ranks.

With him was Ian Beg, piper to the Chisholms, who stood behind his young colonel and held the clan's legendary Black Chanter, known as 'The Maiden of the Sandel'. It had reputedly been brought from Rome by a chief and was bound with hoops of silver. It was believed to have supernatural powers: tradition had it that if a member of the chief's family was about to die no one could finger a note from it and accounts differ as to whether it was heard that day.

Roderick Og was struck by a cannonball just before the last disastrous charge of the clans and, as he was carried from the field, was hit again, this time fatally. When the battle was over his brothers found his body.

A lovely and deeply moving Gaelic lament for one of the many Chisholms who died that day, William Chisholm of Strath Glass, standard-bearer at Culloden, is still sung today. It was composed by his widow, Christina Ferguson, and entitled *Mo run geal og* (*My Fair Young Love*). Fifty years later many of the Chisholm clansmen and their families were forcibly cleared off their land by estate owners, successors of the chief, to make way for the coming of the sheep in large numbers and the newly-created, big sporting estates. The main evictions began in 1801, and 30 years later there was hardly a Chisholm left. Most found their way to Cape Breton, Antigonish in Nova Scotia and Glengarry in Upper Canada (now Ontario). Some went to the United States and married, leaving their name on the map of America, as in the Chisholm Trail (from Texas to Kansas) of cattle-driving fame.



Clan Chisholm is of Norman origin (the name Chisholm translates as 'waterside meadow for producing cheese'). It fought with Robert Bruce in the Wars of Independence and also owned land in the Borders and Perthshire. Powerful marriage alliances brought them north and to lands in Strath Glass. Their territory bounded with the Mackenzies of Kintail to the west, with the Fraser country to the north and with Clan Grant to the southeast. Fraser-held land in Strath Glass split part of their holding in two, but on the whole both clans got on reasonably well.

The chief's house at Erchless Castle, 10 miles southwest of Beauly, still stands and Comar House, on a minor road half a mile southwest of Cannich on the A831, is owned by the clan society. A memorial cairn, the Chisholm Stone, is situated at the side of the road leading from Cannich village to Glen Cannich and the dam at Loch Mullardoch. It overlooks the lands of Comar and Strath Glass.

Chisholms were not people to be readily crossed and their motto, 'I am fierce with the fierce', showed a truculence in the face of those who tried to coerce them. As Roman Catholics, they supported the exiled

.I have an old document said to have belonged to one Capt. Matthew P. Chisholm of Highland Village, N. S. entitled "Chisholm of Erchless Castle. It gives a bit more information about The Chisholm, Roderick Donald Matheson; born in 1862, succeeded his father May 1885, died April 4, 1887, childless. He had three sisters and his mother Anne Cecilia succeeded to the estates of Chisholm.