

DUNVEGAN CASTLE



Dunvegan Castle was originally a rock fortress, founded about eight and a half centuries ago on the Isle of Skye, Inverness-Shire, Scotland and until the late seventeen hundreds accessible only from the sea. Its name is believed to be a derivation of the Gaelic “Dunbhegain,” i.e. “Beagan’s Dun (dun meaning a fort or fortified residence). Over time it has evolved from a rock fortress to its present appearance. Today, it is a prominent and historic castle, the oldest continuously inhabited stronghold in the British Isles, set amid beautifully landscaped grounds with a magnificent view of Loch Dunvegan. This highland home of MacLeod of MacLeod is the symbolic home to MacLeods around the world. Among its many treasures are portraits by famous painters, the Fairy Flag, the Dunvegan Cup, Rory Mor’s Drinking Horn and relics of Bonnie Prince Charles and Flora MacDonald. Visiting this castle is an experience for everyone associated with Clan MacLeod. Every four years the castle grounds become the location for the Clan MacLeod Parliament (International Gathering). Close by is the village of Dunvegan and the famous MacLeod’s Tables. What an exquisite example of Highland Scotland!

Additional information on Dunvegan Castle and its history can be found in the book [Building Dunvegan Castle](#) by Ruari Halford-MacLeod.

THE CLAN

The MacLeods have their origins with the Vikings and the kingdom of Norway. The fascinating story of the clan begins with Leod. Born about 1200, he was the son of Olave the Black, King of Man and the Isles. He was also the foster son of Pal Balkasson (believed to be sheriff of Skye). From Pal, Leod is said to have received Sleat, Waternish, Trotternish and Snizort on Skye, and Harris and North Uist of the Outer Hebrides. Leod married the daughter and heiress of MacRaidl about the year 1220. From this marriage he acquired Dunvegan, Duirinish, Barcadale and Minginish, thus controlling a sizable area in Skye and the Outer Hebrides. Through his son Tormod came the MacLeods of Harris (Dunvegan and Glenelg). Through his second son Torquil came the MacLeods of Lewis (Assynt and Raasay). Siol Tormod (MacLeods of Harris) fared better than Siol Torquil (MacLeods of Lewis). In the sixteenth century, the main line of MacLeod of Lewis failed to produce an heir. Leadership was then conveyed to the cadet branch -- MacLeod of Raasay. The late chief Torquil Roderick Macleod traced his lineage and has resurrected the MacLeod of Lewis title. Siol Torquil’s history is one of greatness and strength associated with treachery and intrigue. Little remains to document its history. Siol Tormod has a long and distinguished history. Much of Siol Tormod history revolves around its impressionable chiefs: Malcolm, third chief, fortified Dunvegan Castle with a massive Keep. Legends associate him with the motto “Hold Fast!” and Rory Mor’s drinking horn. Alasdair Crotach, eighth chief, built the Fairy Tower at Dunvegan, St. Clement’s Church at Rodel in Harris and settled the MacCrimmons (Pipers for the MacLeods) at Borreraig. Rory Mor, fifteenth chief, was perhaps one of the ablest, raising himself from the position of forfeited outlaw to honored servant of the King. Iain Breac, eighteenth chief, restored the family fortunes and name. Norman, twenty-second chief, was called the “Red Man.” Norman, twenty-fifth chief, endeared himself to his people supporting them through the potato famine. Dame Flora, twenty-eighth chief, strove to rekindle the MacLeod heritage throughout the World. The current Chief(thirtieth) is Hugh MacLeod of MacLeod. Throughout the centuries MacLeods and their allied families (called Septs), have been known for their devotion to their chief, their appreciation of music and Gaelic lore, their outstanding record in the professions, and their loyalty to one another.

CRESTS



The “Crest” is used to identify clanspersons of the Clan MacLeod. The crest can be worn as a badge or brooch. The crest of MacLeod of MacLeod (Harris) bears the Bull’s head and the motto “HOLD FAST.” The crest of MacLeod of Lewes (Lewis) bears the Sunburst and the motto “I BURN QUHIL I SEE” or “I BURN WHILE I SEE” and is representative of the beacon fires. The crest of the MacLeod of Raasay is the same motto of the Lewes in Latin. The three crests do not show a separation of clanship, but rather a togetherness, a shared loyalty to one another. Any of the three crests may be worn by members.

THE CHIEFS

Few families are as fortunate as the MacLeods in having, generation after generation, chiefs who take pride in being MacLeods. From Leod to the present, the Clan has enjoyed strong leadership. In modern times, the energy and intelligence of Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod laid much of the foundation for the system of MacLeod Societies we now share. Dame Flora’s grandson, Chief John the 29th MacLeod of MacLeod continued in her traditions of strongly supporting the MacLeod Societies. The memory of her and John’s wonderful enthusiasm binds us all together to this day. Now Chief Hugh MacLeod of MacLeod, 30th Chief of the Clan MacLeod, aspires to continue to stride forward with the MacLeod heritage.

Recognized as MacLeod of the Lewes by Warrant of the Lord Lyon King of Arms in 1988, Roderick of Tasmania restored leadership to the family of Torquil, being without a Chief for many years. His eldest son Donald has ascended to the title of Chief of the Lewes while his youngest son, John is Chief of Raasay. Together, Chief Hugh, Chief Donald, and Chief John, the Macleod Chiefs, produce a united Clan, generating pride and unity for both chiefs and Clan.



Chief Torquil Donald of the Lewes, Past Chief MacLeod of MacLeod, and Chief John of the MacLeods of Raasay together in Stornoway, July 2007

*Photo:
Clan MacLeod Magazine*

*Chief Hugh
MacLeod of MacLeod*

Photo: Frederique Feder



*XXX. Hugh Magnus
Chief of Harris and Dunvegan*

*Chief Torquil Donald
of the Lewes*

*Photo:
Clan MacLeod Pacific Region
Web site*



*Chief John of the
MacLeods of Raasay
At Raasay
house*

*Photo:
Parliament 2014*



SEPTS OF CLAN MACLEOD

MACLEOD OF HARRIS SEPTS

Beaton / Bethune
Harrold / MacHarold
MacAndie / Andie
MacCaig
MacCaskill
MacClure
MacCrimmon / Grimmond
MacRaidl
Mac William / Williamson
Norman

MacLeod OF LEWIS SEPTS

Lewis / MacLewis
MacAulay / Aulay
MacCabe
MacCaskie / Askey / Caskie
MacCaskill
**MacCorquodale / MacCorkindale /
MacCorkill / MacCorkie**
MacGilleChallum / MacCallum / Callum
Malcolmson
**Nicol / Nicolson Norrie /
Norn**
Tolmie

“M’,” “Mc” and “Mac” represent the same spelling. A Sept is a name (family) associated with the Clan MacLeod. The specific spelling of a name can vary and each spelling is proper and correct.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

- All persons having the name of MacLeod (however spelled) and all persons directly connected by marriage or descent.
- Septs of the Clan MacLeod (however spelled) and all persons directly connected by marriage or descent.
- Friends of the Clan MacLeod.
- Youth Membership - age 18 or younger.



ARMS of the associated Clan Macleod Societies
Granted by the Lord Lyon

CLAN MacLEOD
SOCIETY U.S.A., INC.

<https://www.clanmacleodusa.org/>
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THE CLAN MACLEOD SOCIETY, U.S.A., INC.

CMS USA was founded in 1954 as a result of the tremendous surge of interest stirred by Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod, during her visits to the United States in 1952 and 1953. Today membership has grown to encompass all 50 states. To facilitate the needs of the membership, the national society is divided into regions, using state boundaries. Each region has a regional vice president to help co-ordinate activities for the membership. A National Council provides general administrative direction. The Society is 501-C-3 classified. A national newsletter informs the membership of events in the states. The Society is affiliated with the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies (ACMS), headquartered in Scotland. ACMS is the international coordinating agency for the various national Clan MacLeod Societies (Scotland, England, France, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and USA). The ACMS also publishes the “Clan MacLeod” magazine.

PURPOSE

Clan MacLeod Society USA embodies a desire to preserve and perpetuate the traditions and heritage of Americans of Scottish ancestry (principally MacLeods and Septs of MacLeods). To further this heritage, the Society promotes cultural (e.g. piping and dancing) and educational (e.g. Gaelic) scholarships, awards for excellence in competition, seminars, participation in gatherings and events (e.g. Highland Games, ~Festivals), two publications (a National and an International Newsletter), plus sustained library collections, meetings (the Annual General Meeting [AGM], Parliament) and internet websites.

... FROM THE PRESIDENT

To those who have an interest in the Clan MacLeod - its history, its traditions, its program of activities - we welcome your curiosity and hope that this brief outline will whet your appetite to learn more. We invite you to join our Society and become a member of the family. As a member, you will receive our national newsletter and our international magazine twice each year. You will be able to participate in all Clan programs. But more than that, you can, along with all the Clan, “HOLD FAST TO THE LIGHT” that forms the traditions of the past and the promise of the future and be a “PROUD MACLEOD”.

THE DUNVEGAN FOUNDATION

Dedicated to educational, cultural, and informational activities worldwide, the Dunvegan Foundation supports activities such as workshops in history, Gaelic, and the Tartan, provides for musical scholarships in harp, fiddle and bagpipe, and strives to enrich the knowledge of members in things Scottish and Scottish-American.

Funding to support the promotion of Scottish Heritage is an ongoing program. The Foundation actively solicits endowments, bequests, grants and gifts both within the family of MacLeods as well as from non-affiliated sources. A 501-C-3 classification ensures that donations are personally tax deductible.

While directly associated with the Clan MacLeod Society, the Foundation is a distinct and separate entity, with its own officers and identity. Trustees of the Foundation are elected from the Society.

PROJECTS

The Society maintains family histories of MacLeods and Septs of MacLeods. This history is identified as the Migration Project. Information to support this project is primarily supplied by the membership. The Migration Project consists of Scottish publications and Internet databases.

The Society actively supports various piping competitions (e.g. the MacCrimmon Quaich competition, amateur Piobaireachd, in each US region; the Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod Trophy, Open Piobaireachd at Grandfather Mountain Games). The Society also supports other special interest events (pipe band competition, dancing and fiddling to name a few).

THE TARTANS

The Clan MacLeod has a variety of tartans associated with the branches (Harris and Lewis). In our modern times there is little distinction for wearing the MacLeod of Harris (blue, green, black, with red and yellow stripe), the MacLeod of Lewis (yellow and black with red stripe), or the MacLeod of Raasay (red and black) tartan. Each member is encouraged to wear the tartan that pleases their tastes.