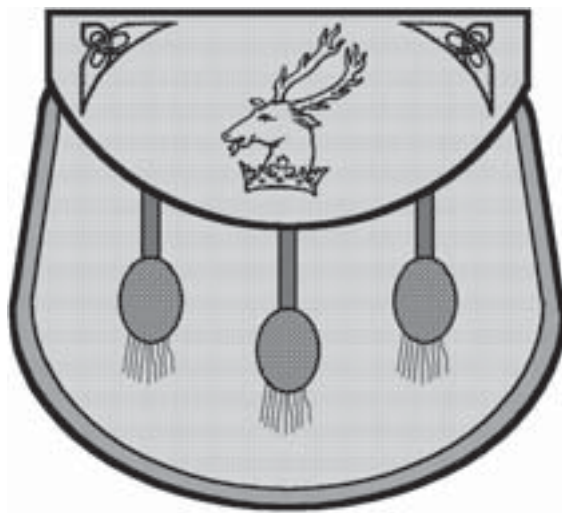


# The Sporran



Arms Of The Chief



Edition

News From

Sample

The Clan Davidson Society

Warmest greetings from the Sennachie and the Clan Davidson Society (USA) newsletter, *The Sporran*. This publication has been in constant production since 1982 and has undergone a number of stylistic changes and improvements over the years.

The earliest generations of *The Sporran* were mimeographed on legal sized paper and there were few, if any, photos or other graphics inclusions. Generally they were very limited in size, almost always 8 pages or so. Most of the articles were news reports of the Society's attendance at various Highland Games mostly located in the southeast, since the majority of the Society's membership was located in that part of the country at that time.

The current Sennachie (or Editor, a most repulsive term) assumed the task of putting together *The Sporran* and distributing it with the January 1993 edition. The format of *The Sporran* changed to a booklet style and quickly grew in size to 20 to 24 pages per edition. The nature of the articles changed as did the number of photos and graphics images. Clearly, the direction of both the newsletter and the Society was "up".

Since that time *The Sporran* has grown to a

publication of 32 to 36 pages. The articles are gleaned from the membership and from around the world where the other Clan Davidson organizations publish newsletters and journals. From time to time historical studies of various subjects of interest to the Scottish American community are included as a way for us North American Colonials to further our knowledge of the land of our forbears, Scotland.

I hope you enjoy this sample of our humble little newsletter. I have selected articles, letters and reports from past issues of *The Sporran* to give you an idea of what our Society and its newsletter are all about. Since this sample is destined to be distributed via the Society's Internet Web Site, I have purposely kept the number of pages down (only 10, sorry...) and the number of photos and Celtic graphics images to just a few so you don't die while waiting for the document to download.

If you like what you see, remember that all it takes to get the "real McCoy" is to become a member of the Clan Davidson Society (USA). Welcome home to your Clan...

MacDhai, AYE!

Dave Chagnon, Sennachie



## A Note About Editorial Conventions by the Sennachie

All articles included in *The Sporan* will have attribution as to who the author is and what the source was, if appropriate. The Sennachie's introductory comments and follow-on comments **will be italicized**. There will generally be some form of obvious demarcation between articles or other changes in content such as a line or Celtic artwork inclusion.

The term "Sennachie", by the way, is pronounced "SHAAAWN-aa-hee". It was a title used in ancient times to denote the keeper of the Chief's pedigree, his genealogist if you will. Over the intervening centuries, it's meaning has come to be closer to that of the history-keeper or storyteller, a title much more lyrical than Newsletter Editor and one which more closely describes what I feel my function to the Society really is... after reading this Sample, I hope you agree!

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## A Lost Chief Is Found

*The first article was written by Dr. Frank Davidson, President, Clan Davidson Society of Australia. In it, Frank describes the search for the Chief of Clan Davidson, a post that was last occupied by Duncan Davidson, VI of Tulloch who died without heir on November 11th, 1917 in Scotland. But I'll leave it up to Frank to finish this story. This article first appeared in the January '97 Sporan.*

### Hail To The Chief! by Frank Davidson

The Lord Lyon King Of Arms Recognizes Duncan Davidson Of Davidston, Chief Of The Name And Arms Of Clan Davidson.

After 79 years, Clan Davidson has rejoined the ranks of the clans whose Chiefs are recognized at the Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh. Throughout the world, members of our clan can rejoice that our Chiefship's dormancy is ended.

A letter from Lyon Clerk Mrs. C.G.W. Roads dated 13th June announced the Lord Lyon's warrant for Letters Patent recognizing DUNCAN HECTOR DAVIDSON (of New Zealand) as Chief of the Name and Arms of Clan Davidson. The letter states:

"The Lord Lyon suggests the designation "Davidston" as this is the name of the farm on the Black Isle from which the family originated. The then Lord Lyon in 1952 indicated that this would be the correct and historic course to follow as Davidston was associated with the family long before Tulloch, which was acquired through marriage and is of relatively recent association. It would also avoid any possibility of association with the Vickers of Tulloch line."

Duncan's full name title and description when the Letters Patent are issued shall be: "Duncan Hector Davidson of Davidston, Chief of the Name and Arms of Clan Davidson."

The new Chief's Arms, which accordingly dispense with the Tulloch quarterings to become the undifferenced Arms of Davidston, are described thus:

Argent, on a fess Azure between a dexter hand couped accompanied by two pheons in chief and a pheon in base Gules, a buck lodged Or. Above the Shield is placed a helmet befitting his degree with a Mantling Azure doubled Argent and on a Wreath of his liveries is set for Crest a stag's head erased Proper and in as Escrol over the same this Motto: "Sapienter Si Sincere".

## "A Tale Of Three Duncans"

Our last Chief, Duncan Davidson 6th of Tulloch, who claimed to be the 25th Chief of the ancient Davidsons of Invernahavon descended from Donald Dubh and the Comyn Lords of Badenoch, died without issue on 11th November 1917 in Scotland.

Fifteen months earlier, on 14th June 1916, our new Chief Duncan, now entitled Davidson of Davidston, was born in New Zealand; to this small extent the lives of these two Duncans overlapped. But they had something else in common.

Both descended from another Duncan, 4th of Tulloch - the spectacular head of the Clan from 1827 to 1882, father of eighteen children by his five wives, grandfather of Duncan 6th of Tulloch - and great grandfather of Duncan of Davidston, our newly recognized Chief.

## A New Chief; An Old Title

Scottish baronial titles derive from the name of lands held from the Crown. In the same way that lands in the New World lent their names to significant families, prominent Scottish families became identified by their territorial titles. The Davidson Lairds of Tulloch held that title until 1917 but with the death of Duncan 6th the title passed to



the female line and was then said to be held by the Vickers of Tulloch, who held other titles also.

In 1952, the then Lord Lyon indicated that, since Tulloch had passed to the Vickers, the “correct and historic course” for Recognition of the next proven Davidson Chief should be to confer on him the designation “... of Davidston”.

### Davidston And The Davidsons

The title DAVIDSTON in fact precedes that of Tulloch. The Davidsons, of Davidston, a farm on the Black Isle near Dingwall in Cromarty, are noted in Lyon Court records back into the 15th century. Ian Davidson (former Membership Secretary of the Clan Davidson Association UK) tells of his visit to Davidston in 1992:

“I found that it consisted of a farmhouse with outbuildings and a terrace of derelict cottages. From 1730 onwards, however, the parish register mentions a range of tradesmen living there, including weavers, blacksmiths, wrights and a mason. So it was once more than a farm.”

It is pleasing for Antipodeans to think that their Chief's title reflects not only something of the Clan's past in Scotland, but that the designation is from a small settlement typical of the kind once to be found throughout the Australian and New Zealand bush, where each station settlement supported not only the family of the owner but the community of workers and tradesman needed for its successful functioning.

Duncan has nominated his cousin Alister Guthrie Davidson to succeed him. With Alister's two sons, Grant and Jeffrey, the succession looks secure for many years to come.

May our new Chief and his heirs embody the world-wide identity of the Clan for all of us; with our help may they guard well its history, and heritage; may they be the instrument to focus its several Societies and Associations on the task of building and maintaining good works, friendship and international goodwill.

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*Unfortunately, Duncan's time as Chief of the Name and Arms of Davidson was all too brief. Duncan was recognized as Chief in January, 1997 and he passed away just 13 months later in early 1998. Duncan's cousin, Alister (Jock) Guthrie Davidson, was put forth to the Lyon Court to carry on as Chief. This effort was successful, and Jock officially assumed the position as Chief of Clan Davidson in 1999.*

*Jock is a grand gentleman in all the finest meanings of the term. Here is a brief bio, also by Frank Davidson.*

### Alister Guthrie Davidson of Davidston, Chief of the Name and Arms of Davidson

by Frank Davidson, President, Clan Davidson Society of Australia

Alister Guthrie Davidson of Davidston, Chief of the Name and Arms of Davidson and Chief of Clan Davidson (“Jock” to his clan and friends) lives in New Zealand. He is a direct descendant of the Davidson of Tulloch Chiefs, being a great-grandson of Duncan IV of Tulloch (1800-1882). Duncan IVth's fourth son, Hector Francis Davidson, had emigrated to New Zealand, married there, and raised a family which has now given Clan Davidson two Chiefs, the late Duncan Hector Davidson of Davidston, who renewed the Chiefship in 1997, and his cousin the present Chief.



Alister "Jock" Guthrie Davidson of Davidston

Jock Davidson of Davidston was born in 1924 in the small country town of Dargaville, New Zealand some 200 kilometers north of Auckland, where his father had a sheep and cattle property. After completing his education he enlisted at the age of 18 in the Royal New Zealand Air Force. He served in the Pacific theatre until demobilized in 1946. A career with an engineering supply firm followed and he eventually became Divisional Manager and finally Consultant before his retirement. He and his wife

Mary were married in 1953; they have three adult children and seven grandchildren.

Davidson of Davidston's heir is his elder son Grant Guthrie Davidson, who is a professional shore manager in the yachting industry. He has sailed all over the world for some of the most eminent yachting syndicates. Grant, Younger of Davidston and his wife Brenda have two daughters.

Since succeeding to the Chiefship, Jock has actively promoted his clan in New Zealand and has been rewarded with the establishment of a thriving Clan Davidson Society there. He is well aware of the special problems and responsibilities that ensue from living so far from the Clan heartland, but he is also aware of the fresh perspective that this distance can give him. He is an acknowledged promoter of Scottish tradition and Celtic heritage. This was recently recognized by the Celtic Council of Australia, which awarded him one of its highest honours. **Cyfaill y Celtaid** (Friends of the Celt).

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*Jock and his charming and lovely wife Mary took on the chores of being the titular head of Clan Davidson with dignity, élan, and gusto. They began attending Scottish gatherings in various locations in New Zealand and Australia. As the first year of the new millennia approached, the leaders of the Clan Davidson Association (UK) began planning an International Gathering of Davidsons to be held during May, 2001 in Newtonmore, Scotland.*

*They invited the Chief and his Lady to be the guests of CDA-UK at this event. Ms. Caroline Davidson-Kock, Vice President of the CDS-USA, had a brainstorm and began agitating to arrange for Jock and Mary to make a stop over visit in the USA en route to Scotland. Caroline and the Sennachie got their heads together, conferred with the organizers of the Loch Norman Highland Games (Dick & Keets Taylor), and everything began falling in place.*

*Jock was to be the Guest Of Honor at the April 2001 Loch Norman HG, a most fitting honor since the LNHG was held on the grounds of Rural Hill Plantation, a Davidson family homestead from the early 1700s until the 1980s. Indeed, the entire area of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina is thick with the history of many Davidsons for 250 years, and Davidson College is located just 10 miles north of Rural Hill Plantation.*

*Everything was set. Jock and Mary would stop in the USA for about three weeks prior to their continuing on to Scotland. They would be hosted by Mike and Elaine Davidson (the Society's President and Treasurer, respectively) for the NC part of the stay, would migrate*

*south to Georgia where Rich and Jane Halliley (former Society President and Secretary, respectively) would be their guides. From Georgia, Jock and Mary would be handed off to Debbie and Jim Hensley (Society's Reg. 7 Director and Webmaster, respectively) for a tour in the Washington DC area. What a trip!*

*The next article deals with this journey.... It was written by the Sennachie for the July, 2001 issue of **The Sporrán**.*

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## NEWS FLASH!!!

### **Rumors of Kidnapping of Clan Davidson Chief At The Hands Of Renegade Davidson Society (USA) Members Broadcast Overseas Cause International Diplomatic Incident**

*The following "heads-up" warning sent by the Sennachie to the President of the Clan Davidson Association (UK) James Davidson and his Lady, Janet has touched off rumors of a split at the highest levels between the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, and The President of the United States, George W. Bush.*

*"I was only trying to help" squeaks the Sennachie, attempting to smooth ruffled feathers.*

*Here's the message... you be the judge.*

May 1, 2001

Dear Janet & James,

Oh, dear... I'm afraid I've received rumors that, if true, could threaten the International Clan Davidson Gathering in Newtonmore!

The rumors swirl in the wake of the Chief's triumphant and historic visit to the USA, and deal with the possibility of certain members of CDS-USA kidnapping... gasp... that's right... KIDNAPPING the Chief! We... er... they, are finding it very difficult to relinquish possession of such a grand Gentleman and his even grander Lady.

I hope by now you are coming to see that my message is only a hoax...although the sentiments are most assuredly true enough. Mary and Jock are certainly among the nicest people whom I've had the pleasure to meet, anywhere, any time. I envy your upcoming time with them in the heart of the Highlands. You will certainly come away with much the same feelings, I'm sure.

The Gathering at Loch Norman near Charlotte,

North Carolina a week and a half ago was nothing short of magnificent. The weather was pleasantly warm and blessedly dry, the pageantry uplifting, and the gathered Davidsons many in number and large in fellowship. Jock handled his "official" chores with dignity and aplomb. I was never so proud of my ancestral right to the wearin' o' the Davidson Tartan as during the time I spent with Jock, Mary and the rest of the Clan gathered there. The feelings of world-wide Clan unity and kinship were incredibly strong.

Mike & Elaine Davidson have done yeoman duty in their roles as host and hostess. Richard & Jane Halliley took over for the Georgia leg of the voyage this past weekend, and Jim & Debra Davidson-Hensley are acting as native guides for Jock & Mary in Washington DC at this time.

Please pass along to the Davidsons gathered at Newtonmore the sincerest thanks of the CDS-USA to the CDA-UK for sponsoring Jock & Mary's trip that allowed them to stop over in the USA.

MacDhai, AYE!!

Dave Chagnon

*Now you know what a fraud your Sennachie is! As if you need a refresher...*

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*There were a number of other stories written about Jock's visit to the USA (not the least of which the one by Debbie Davidson Hensley - Washington DC) but space prohibits including them in this sampler.*



Jock & Mary Davidson with Jim & Debbie Davidson (Hensley) enjoy a wee dram at the LNHG 2001. Jim & Debbie hosted Jock & Mary's visit to the Washington DC area.

## From Times Gone By

*Over the years there have been a lot of myths promulgated about the historical Clan Davidson. One of the most persistent is that of the (in) famous Battle Of The North Inch Of Perth in 1396. To the best of anyone's knowledge, no one had ever undertaken a focused and methodical search into the reality of the Clan's history.*

*A group of serious historians, members of the CDA-UK, set about dispelling the myths and doing the research required to get down to the reality of our Clan's origin and it's history... or as close as the surviving documents and their efforts could get them.*

*This Project took a number of years and the first part of their report published in the USA appeared in the July, '01 **Sporran***

### The Origins Of Clan Dhai (Clan Davidson)

*Note from the Sennachie: The following material was first published in The Pheon, The Journal Of The Clan Davidson Association (UK) in 1999. It is the result of many man-years worth of scholarly research into the true historic origins of the Clan Davidson by the Historical Committee of the Clan Davidson Association (UK).*

*A few of us may not like the results of this research, since it treads heavily on many of the myths long held dear to the hearts of many modern Davidson Clan members (such as the Battle of the North Inch of Perth). Like it or not, it represents the best research ever conducted on our Clan Origins.*

*Personally, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Historical Committee for this, their labor of love.*

Note to the following account of the origin of Clan Dhai by Charles Davidson, Chairman of the Historical Committee

The Historical Committee has researched so intensively over the last few years that they have cast doubt on or even disproved much that has been conventionally held to be Davidson history!

The difficulties that face anyone investigating what took place in Scotland in the late 1300s are not only the scarcity of written evidence but that such evidence is mostly versions of events recorded by those who came to power over that time, by sycophants who wished to justify the exercise of political control by those families, and subsequently by the families in emerging power blocks who wrote 'family history', weaving a web of fact and fancy to justify their position.

Victorian writers, following Sir Walter Scott,

preferred a good story to probable truth. Passage of time reinforced the acceptance of such family histories and hallowed them as 'traditional belief'.

Almost all sources have been queried at some time, so any history can only be based on the least discredited.

## The Origin Of Clan Dhai

### Findings of the Historical Committee

The earliest reference to the Davidsons, or Clan Dhai, of Badenoch, is in the genealogy of Clan Mackintosh by Lachlan Mackintosh of Kinrara, brother of the 18th chief of Mackintosh. He wrote in Scots about 1679<sup>1</sup> and quoted two sources now lost: Ferquhard 12th of Mackintosh, who died 1514, and Andrew Weaver/MacPhail, the 16th-century parson of Croy. In Macfarlane's *Genealogical Collections*<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, beginning on p.166 are Latin and English translations. The English reads:

"Eneas, son of Ferquhard [Mackintosh], when he had scarcely reached the sixteenth year of his age, was engaged in marriage to Eva, daughter and only child of Gilpatric Macdugal vic Gillichattan [son of Dugal and grandson Of Gillichattan], chief of his family, of whom he begat seven sons and two daughters, namely, William, John, Eneas oig [Junior], Malcolm, Ferquhard, Duncan, and Shaw beg (that is, little), Muriell, and Slane. Muriell was married to the laird of Culloden, and Slane was mother of David du. of Nude, from whom are descended the Clan Dai, formerly the most flourishing family among the Chattans. Eneas received with Eva, as dowry, possession of the lands of Glenlui and Locharkaig in Lochaber, together with the hereditary chiefship and command of the Clanchattans."

Whether marrying Eva could transfer the chiefship of Clan Chattan to Mackintosh is dubious. The story may have been fabricated to buttress Mackintosh's claim to the chiefship of Clan Chattan.

Whether or not he was the grandson of Gillechattan, it is likely that David dhu of Nuide, Dai dubh or David the black, the founder of Clan Dhai was born at the beginning of the 14th century. (His Mackintosh grandfather, Eneas, died in 1346.)

The omission of the name of David's father, Slane's husband, indicates some embarrassment on the part of the chronicler.

Charles Fraser-Mackintosh<sup>3</sup> names David's father

as Donald dhu of Invernahavon.

The Family Records of the Bruces and Cumyns<sup>4</sup> mentions a Donald, probably in Speyside, as a member of the Comyn family and says Donald's elder brother was succeeded by his nephew David. Circumstantial evidence might say Donald Comyn was in the right place at the right time to be David's father, but we have no corroboration, other than a statement attributed to Kinrara by Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, that the Davidsons of Speyside were of Comyn origin.

When the Comyns annexed estates belonging to Eneas Mackintosh's grandfather they made a bitter enemy of the Mackintoshes. Since a common way to make peace involved marrying your daughter to a son of the enemy it is possible that at some point hostilities were suspended through the marriage of Slane with Donald Comyn. When hostilities resumed this would become an embarrassment. Kinrara says Slane's sister, "Muriell, was married to the laird of Culloden". M E Cumming-Bruce has her married to Angus Comyn, Donald's brother.

For many years after 1320 [when the victorious Bruce proscribed the name of his enemy Comyn] it would have been unthinkable for any Highlander conscious of pride of descent to claim Comyn forebears. He would have backed the winning side of his ancestry... the Gillechattans. Some native men with Comyn connections by blood or as retainers must have occupied the lands around the Comyn stronghold of Ruthven in the early 1300s. These could have formed the nucleus of Clan Dhai under David dhu of Nuide.



Kinrara, continuing his history of the Mackintosh chiefs, places the Battle of Invernahavon in 1370, though it is now reckoned to have taken place in 1386 (v. Creag Dhu, - the Clan Macpherson journal, 1986). This encounter was an incident in the long-running feud between Clan Chattan and Clan Cameron. Both claimed lands in Lochaber. The Camerons having driven away the cattle of Badenoch, Lachlan VIIIth of Mackintosh "immediately pursued, with those whom in so sudden and hasty an expedition he was able to collect, and reached them in flight near the village of Invernahavon, where a fierce fight took place. Victory at first inclined to the Camerons, who were the greater number, for almost a whole sept of the Chattans, by name the Clan Dai, was utterly destroyed. Whilst these things were being so acted, another sept of the Chattans named the Clanvurrich

[ancestors of Clan Macpherson], who had not joined with those who were fighting, because the Clandai were preferred by Mackintosh to the right wing of the line of battle, withdrew, " etc.

While members of Clan Dhai may well have fought also in the Battle of the North Inch of Perth in 1396 there is no sound basis for arguing that Clan Dhai was one of the two contending clans. Their annihilation at Invernahavon was too recent. Since the Perth combat was organized by the Earls of Moray and Crawford, the feudal superiors of Clan Chattan and Clan Cameron respectively, these would appear to have been the embattled clans

The Clan Davidson Association's Historical Committee has winnowed the above wheat from the abundant chaff of pseudo-historical accounts. Unlike the authors of many modern clan histories, we have checked statements that are copied from one to another and found them to be without foundation. For example, the oft-cited McLaughlin manuscript of 1467 contains no mention of the origins of Clan Dhai; Kinrara does not say that the clan was of Comyn origin; and the clan chiefs did not live at Invernahavon!

The McLaughlin manuscript, transcribed by W F Skene in Vol. 3 of his *Celtic Scotland*<sup>5</sup>, is a list of names without dates or places; it contains no reference to Muirich mor and Dai dubh, alleged sons of Gillechattan mor.

Fraser-Mackintosh was the first to say that Kinrara claimed Comyn origin for Clan Dhai, but Dr Jean Munro, studying a 1761 copy of Kinrara's original manuscript, finds no reference to this.

David dhu (Dai dubh) lived at Nuide. The attribution of Invernahavon may be observed traveling through time: building on Sir Aeneas Macpherson's *Loyall Dissuasive*<sup>6</sup> of about 1701, Collier's *Great Historical Dictionary*<sup>7</sup> in 1721 associates 'David Dow's descendants' with Invernahavon; Lachlan Shaw in 1750 associates David Downs descendants with Invernahavon; and Fraser-Mackintosh in 1898 calls his father 'Donald Dhu of Invernahavon'. But Kinrara in 1679 said 'David du. of Nude.'

The above is an example of a common process, whereby qualifying words like "about", "perhaps" and "tradition affirms" are jettisoned in the interest of a clear-cut story.

In interpreting early accounts we must also take account of bias and propaganda. Alexander MacBain (in *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*,

1891) analyses the conflicting genealogies of the chiefs of Macpherson and Mackintosh in which both claimed descent from Gillechattan Mor, and appears to show that each genealogy was fabricated to bolster a claim to the captaincy of Clan Chattan.

Macphersons were keen to prove themselves the senior branch of Clan Chattan and turn Clan Dhai into sons of a younger son, in spite of the latter being preferred before them for the place of honour at the Battle of Invernahavon. (See Kinrara's account of the battle above.) This means that both the Mackintosh and the Macpherson versions of the Davidsons' origin are unreliable and likely to have been concocted to further their rival claims. We have discarded the ancestries of David dhu that take his life-time back to the 11th and 12th centuries, and incline to Kinrara's simple statement that David's ancestor Gillechattan mor, son of Clerk Archibald or Gillespie, came to Lochaber from Connaught in 1215. Kinrara's near contemporary, Murdoch Mackenzie of Ardross<sup>8</sup>, gives Gillechattan an eldest son, Dugal dall, who acquired Glenloy and Locharkaig and passed them on to his son Gilpatric, whose only child, Eva, took them to Eneas Mackintosh in 1291.

We may never know for certain, and new findings may present a different picture, but the most probable scenario is that throughout the 1300s Clan Dhai was a strong clan in Upper Speyside which necessarily owed allegiance to the Comyn overlords and which may have been of Comyn origin itself. After the downfall of the Comyns, the Clan bonded itself to and intermarried with the incoming Clan Chattan and

was later weakened by clan feuding.

The first reference to Clan Dhai by the name of Davidsons is in 1701, in *The Loyall Dissuasive of Sir Aeneas Macpherson*<sup>6</sup>. It would appear that Macpherson anglicized the name because he was writing in the Lowland tongue, where the form "Davidson" was well known.

1 'Epitome of the origin and increase of the Mackintosh'

2 MacFarlane's *Genealogical Collections*, vol.2, SHS, 1900

3 *The Confederation of Clan Chattan* ("The Minor Septs of Clan Chattan"), Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, 1898

4 *Family Records of the Bruces and Cunyns*, M E Cumming-Bruce

5 *Celtic Scotland*, W F Skene, 1876

6 *The Loyall Dissuasive*, Sir Aeneas Macpherson of Invershie, SHS 1902



7 Great Historical Dictionary, Jeremy Collier, 1721  
(Macpherson of Cluny Papers in SRO)

8 'The origin of the haill tribes of the Clan Chattan',  
1687 Ms by Murdoch MacKenzie of Ardross (Macpherson  
of Cluny Papers in SRO)

*There were more parts to this Report plus "buttals"  
and rebuttals... all of tremendous interest to the modern  
Davidson Clansman. Of course, you'll have to join the  
Society to take advantage of the Sennachie's Newsletter  
Reprint Service to find out "the rest of the story!"*

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## LETTERS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

*One of the many other functions of the CDS-USA  
newsletter is to publish "Letters To The Sennachie". The  
tone, tenor and subject matter of these letters can take on  
many forms depending on who the author is & what she or  
he has to say.*

*Not long ago, the Sennachie received the following  
poignant letter, unusual both in its degree of serious  
content as well as the importance of its message to the  
author's fellow Clansmen. I think this letter is a marvelous  
sample of what a powerful tool **The Sporrán** can be if used  
in the spirit of the Clan's motto, Sapienter Si Sincere  
(wisely if sincerely). Again, you be the judge...*

*Although I wanted to change the names of the members  
involved, they remain unchanged at the insistence of the  
members themselves. These folks are really committed to  
spreading the word about this little known killer and they  
are not ashamed to admit it. You have to admire the strength  
of their convictions.*

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*I've been putting together and publishing the  
newsletter for the Clan Davidson Society (USA) for nearly  
a decade. Over the years, I've tried to get my articles and  
material from the Membership as much as possible, tried to  
inject some humor into **The Sporrán** (or what passes for  
humor in my warped little mind...), tried to make the  
reality of being a member of what is, after all, a modern and  
global extension of an extended Scottish family a very  
personal thing. The very word "Clan" originates with the  
Gaelic word "Clanna" which means "children".*

*All of us were children at one time, and many of us  
have the tough job of being parents to children. As with all  
families, there are really great times... and, every so often,  
some that are not very great at all. All of us and all of our  
families have experienced low points in our lives. So it is*

*with our extended Davidson family.*

*The following letter deals with just such a low time in  
the life of one of the CDS "clanna", David Davisson and  
his son Scott. These folks are dealing with a life threatening  
situation with the grace, dignity, and courage so  
characteristic of what I like to think represents the best of  
our mutual Scottish genes and heritage.*

*But I'll let David speak for himself and his family... his  
words are so much better than mine. He feels so strongly  
about the issue his family situation raises that he has  
requested this very personal tragedy be shared with you, his  
extended Davidson family, in an effort to help you avoid  
the same problem in your future or the future of your  
children.*

May 15, 2002

Dear Sennachie,

*I've wanted to send you this picture for a while  
now because I thought you might enjoy it (note the  
great shirt). My son Scot will be graduating from  
High School on May 26, 2002. We are very proud of  
our son's accomplishments as he has faced a lot of  
hurdles in his life. He has had to deal with allergies  
and problems with asthma and has had some  
challenges with Dyslexia too.*



*Scott is planning on going on to college to study  
Automotive Repair and Music. He has been active in  
Band (playing percussion instruments), and Choir  
(chorus and "Show Choir") and has been taking  
lessons on the bass guitar.*

*But here's the real reason I'm sending this letter.*

About a month ago Scott found a lump on one of his testicles. He could have chosen to hide it, but instead he told us about it. We took him to the Doctor for an exam.

He had been planning on taking a trip to Colorado all year with the Music Department from his High School. He left by bus that afternoon after the exam. The urologist called us later that day to tell us that the results of his exam and ultrasound indicated the lump was growing and was characteristic of cancer. Scott is scheduled for an orchiectomy (testicle removal) to be followed by chemo and radiation treatment.

I am now an advocate for self examination and early detection of this type of cancer and would appreciate it if you would use your position to bring attention to this growing health problem. Women are taught from an early age to check themselves for lumps in their breasts but men are not and it is very important to do so. I have spent many hours this past weekend on the Internet looking up information on this, and thank GOD there is a support system on the web. This type of cancer is the most common form in teenage boys to men age 35/40 and re-occurs after age 50/55. 1 in every 400-500 men will come down with it, with a cure rate of 95% (some say as high as 98%) if caught early.

Sincerely,  
David Davison

*Follow-up Report June 25, 2002: Following his orchiectomy in May, Scott was definitely diagnosed with testicular cancer. He is currently undergoing a series of treatments, both chemo and radiation. A second follow-up will be published in the January '03 Sporran.*

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*What else can be said about this? For more information about this silent and little known killer, check out the web site to be found at <http://www.uro.com/tcancer.htm>.*

*If you want to help the MacMembers in their efforts to spread the word about testicular cancer, or just send them a message of support, contact them at.....*

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*Here's another sample of a "Letter To The Sennachie" or, more specifically, a letter from a CDS-USA Clanswoman copied to the Sennachie. It contains both information and the warm humor so typical of the members of "The Best D—ned Clan In All The Land", the*

*Davidsons, and is yet another fine example of the kind of material to be found in each and every edition of the Society's newsletter, **The Sporran**. Margaret MacMember's real name has been changed to protect "the guilty".*

*Read on and enjoy!*



*I received the following e-mail from Margaret MacMember a few months ago. Margaret took umbrage to a musical piece played on her local radio station KAAM (Dallas - Ft. Worth TX) on St. Patrick's Day. Margaret, in a typical laid back Scottish way, overcame her native shyness to let the folks of KAAM know exactly how she felt about playing the tune of "Scotland The Brave" with Irish lyrics.*

*Of course, in my own shy Scottish way, I feel compelled to point out that Margaret's assertion of "Scotland The Brave" as being "the Scottish National Anthem", while well intentioned, is quite wrong. Robert Burns' "Scots Wha Hae" is generally accorded the honor of being the Scottish National Anthem, and there's a school of thought that pushes the well known but much more recent "Flowers Of Scotland" in that direction as well.*

*Nevertheless, you have to admire Margaret's low-key correction of the errant ways of KAAM.*

Dear KAAM,

Please inform Lynn (O) Martin the next time she waxes nostalgic about her Irish heritage, that playing the tune of the Scottish national anthem (Scotland the Brave) with other lyrics, and referring to it as Irish is a no-no and offensive to Scottish listeners.

Please get a copy of "Scotland the Brave" with the REAL words, and play it on National Tartan Day, April 6th.

On that day President Bush and Prime Minister

Tony Blair will receive proclamations on the steps of the US Capitol, honoring the contributions of Scottish Americans past and present. Were you aware that our Declaration of Independence was modeled after the Scottish Declaration of Independence (The Declaration of Arbroath ca 1320)? Also, that 9 of the 13 colonial Governors, and nearly half of the signers of our Declaration of Independence were of Scottish heritage?

By the way, Neil Armstrong carried the Armstrong tartan when he walked on the moon!  
Now y'all put that in your Irish pipe and smoke it.

Scotland Forever,  
Margaret MacMember  
Proud Member, clans Armstrong (Scotland),  
Davidson (USA), and Maxwell (USA)

*When I upbraided Margaret about listing CDS-USA in second place, she pointed out that she just lists them alphabetically!*

*For the complete Declaration Of Arbroath in its original Latin, check out the Web Site at: <http://library.byu.edu/~rdh/eurodocs/uk/arbroath.html>. In the likely event that you are not a Latin scholar, then go for the Queen's English translation at: <http://www.constitution.org/scot/arbroath.htm>.*

*Anyway you take it, it's a "must read" document.*

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*And a last item to close...*

### **A Ghost Story From The Borders**

by C.J. (Dave) Davidson, Clan Davidson Association (UK)

A visitor looking for local lore near Selkirk spent a convivial evening at the local Inn where the atmosphere and the alcohol made him receptive to the stories about Ghosts. His return to his farm lodgings was via a wood next to an old graveyard.

The night was dark and eerie, the moon dancing fitfully between the clouds. As he walked through the wood he heard an owl hooting in the distance and the Church clock slowly chiming midnight.

He suddenly felt uncannily cold. On reaching the darkest part of the wood next to the graveyard he heard a tapping and scratching as if a body was trying to get out of its coffin. As he got nearer the sound grew louder. He walked faster.

Suddenly the moon broke through the clouds and in the moonlight he saw a figure kneeling near a

tombstone with a hammer and chisel engraving the old head stone. With a huge sigh of relief he said, "Good evening to YOU. I thought it was somebody trying to get out of their coffin. I am relieved to see you. What are you doing at this time of night?"

The figure stopped engraving, looked up in the moonlight and solemnly said, "People are always spelling my name wrong." With that the figure dissolved into the night. The visitor ran all the way back to his farm lodgings, where he breathlessly related his adventures to his host.

After a pause his host said, "Och Aye, it will be a ghost of one of the many old Davidsons/ Davisons/ Dawsons/ Davys/ Davies/ Daws/ Deasons etc. buried there. They always argued about how their names should be spelt!"

*C.J. "Dave" Davidson was the life and breath behind the restoration of the Clan Davidson Association (UK) and the search for the Chief by which Duncan Hector Davidson and his line were established as the modern day Chiefs of Clan Davidson.*

*Dave went to be with our Davidson ancestors in February, 1999. This story is so very reminiscent of his quiet humor. He is missed.*

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*So, there you have it... your very own Clan Davidson Society (USA) "first-ever" Sample Edition of its semi-annual newsletter, **The Sporrán**. This sample is longer than I originally intended to produce, but it was very difficult compacting 20 years worth of great material (some 400 to 500 pages) down to just a few pages.*

*Every edition is chockfull of all sorts of items of interest to the Davidson and Scottish-American community... Genealogical Inquires, Member Profiles, Book Reviews, Highland Games Reports, International Davidson Activities, Travel Offerings, Items For Sale, "From Times Gone By" and on and on and on... gathered, assembled and "glued" together by the wit and wisdom (riiiiiight...) of the Society's very own Sennachie.*

*It is enough, however, to give you a "feel" of what both **The Sporrán**, and more importantly, the Clan Davidson Society (USA), is all about.*

*If you liked this taste of **The Sporrán**, all you have to do to get your very own copy of the "real McCoy" delivered to your doorstep twice a year is join up with your fellow Clansmen in the Clan Davidson Society (USA) today.*

*Welcome home!!*

*The Sennachie*