

Kith & Kin Newsletter

Volume 4

Issue 1

April 2008

WELCOME

In our last newsletter we asked you to send us your individual family revisions, additions, and updates. Larry MacDonald certainly never expected your overwhelming response. He has been furiously revising genealogical information ever since. A glutton for punishment and of course a genealogist par excellence, Larry continues to encourage everyone to keep sending him your information.

As the Kith&Kin Newsletter and Website evolve, our goal continues to link our diverse Kith&Kin across the miles hopefully with new information and articles provided by many of our families. We look forward to your additions, comments, suggestions, and even your criticisms.

We are also working on suggestions such as adding and revising different areas on the web site to make them more inclusive and user friendly. We hope to add old time McKinnon family Down East fiddle playing that has been restored and digitalized by Chris McKinnon from a 1941 78 RPM record, and Colleen McNally's rendition of "*The Brae Reel*" by Neil McKinnon, if we can do this without affecting dial-up users.

Where did my family surname go on the web sites?

With the ongoing overhaul of Larry MacDonald's site <http://www.members.shaw.ca/larry-macdonald/index.htm> some surname pages have been deleted and consolidated. This also occurs where there are no second-generation descendants on new surnames - eg when a daughter marries but does not have grandchildren listed. While this helps simplify the links and reduce page clutter, it means that some links had to be removed. This is the case on the Kith&Kin intro page where there were direct links to Larry's web site for surnames such as Crosland, DellaCava, Grist, Handy, Shields, Obendorfer, and Reilly. The data for these are now included as part of George and Dan McKinnon pages or others like the Seavers page. There are many new family links for your viewing on Larry's Web page. Laura and I (mostly Laura) are working on cleaning up clutter and dead links and trying to keep up with the new links on <http://kithandkinfamilytree.com/index.html> Seamless integration sounds easy but in reality it takes a lot of time and effort.

From Debbie Klughers:

"Hello! This is Debbie Klughers, daughter of Jane Ellen White, daughter of Cecelia McKinnon, daughter of George Allen McKinnon son of Felix McKinnon. Therefore, we are cousins! I have been in contact with Larry from Canada recently and he directed me to your wonderful website. I was wondering if you knew Gertrude Seaver. Or for that matter, my Aunt Bernadette. (She was my Grandmother Cecelia's sister) She took me to Mass. in 1976 or so when I was about 11 or 12 years old. We went to a beach house with a lot of "family members" (After reading some of your information about your mother, I wonder if the house where I stayed was your parents' beach house and perhaps you were one of the cousins who I played with there ?) I remember going for a motorcycle ride with Michael, but I don't remember if that was at the beach house or another home). We then went on to Prince Edward Island and stayed there for a while. Anyway, it is nice to see all of the work you both have done to document our history! I have also read that our relatives from WAY back were once the rulers of an area of Scotland! I have just told my oldest daughter she is officially a princess! And I guess that makes me a Queen?! Or am I too a princess (HA-HA)?" (Debbie went on to add and correct family information for Larry's database) Well, thank you again so much for enlightening me of my heritage! Have a wonderful day! Debbie Klughers"

Rick's note: Debbie's Aunt and Uncle, Gertrude and Harold Seaver were my mother Elaine (McKinnon) Atkinson's cousins and they frequently visited our summer home at Brant Rock, MA as did my mother's Aunt, Bernadette (McKinnon) O'Toole. Debbie did indeed visit there and played with my children, nieces and nephews, other family and friends. You could always be sure there was a crowd at Brant Rock.

From Maureen Gaidosz: I received this note and article last year about Maureen's family search.

"My search for a PEI born ancestor has developed into two stories of Kith&Kin; the first being an emigration from PEI to the USA; the second being a modern day kinship. Perhaps the key to breaking down this genealogical brick wall will aid other readers. Between about 1870 and 1880 a number of McDonalds' emigrated from PEI to Connecticut and settled in an area affectionately known as the Valley (a group of small towns along the Housatonic & Naugatuck Rivers). The Valley was becoming a manufacturing area ripe with employment opportunity and undeveloped land. The town of Derby and its boroughs was the focal settlement. Later the boroughs would become towns in their own right.

Mary McDonald & I were kith via e-mail correspondence, having met because of her research & posting thereof on The Island Register website, family lineages page. Though we shared the McDonald surname in common our research did not find a common kinship until the discovery of a lengthy 1905 obituary in *The Evening Sentinel* newspaper detailing the life of 1 of 5 McDonald brothers:

Excerpt: "Mr. Macdonald was born in Prince Edward's Island and soon after locating in Ansonia engaged in the building trade with his four brothers. All were carpenters and erected many dwelling houses and other buildings in this city and Derby" "besides being an expert carpenter, was a ship builder and millwright"

Therein lay the advantage to researching old newspapers in the Valley area. The paper was hometown in nature, covering the small towns and boroughs of the Valley. In mentioning 4 brothers (rather than 3), it was apparent that 1 brother was generally unrecognized within posted PEI family trees. As is typical, only surviving siblings were mentioned by name in the news article. I had not connected my great grandfather to a family of siblings, nor had I identified my John McDonald among all of the John McDonalds' born on PEI in the 1830's. Somewhere along the line, not so very long ago really, we forgot to record the stories of previous generations -- and catch-up has been a struggle.

Upon further research, and to my great blessing, *The Evening Sentinel* newspaper reported the 1896 death of my great grandfather, although he was a resident of nearby New Haven, not the Valley. That one blurb, intending to report that one of their residents attended a brother's funeral out-of-town, finally placed John within a family of siblings. There was also a blurb mentioning another brother & his wife (former residents) coming up from Florida for the funeral. Suddenly, Mary & I are kin. My John is the brother of her Isabella. Some of the siblings are clearly traceable to PEI births/baptisms. As for John & a few other siblings we've yet to succinctly dot that 'I' -- no minor point, though they are acknowledged in the Will of their father James McDonald that I recently discovered!

The siblings as assembled by local newspaper obituaries are: John, Roderick, James, Joseph, Augustine, and Isabella. Some went consistently by McDonald, others by MacDonald.

Now sharing a common ancestry, Mary and I wanted to learn more about this McDonald family of 5 brothers & 1 sister. Expanding the newspaper research to the McDonald brothers, sister, wives, marriages of children, we discovered a growing group of former PEI kith & kin reassembled in the Valley and surrounding cities of New Haven and Bridgeport. Taken separately, each individual left PEI bound for America. How could they leave family and friends in the Provinces of Canada? Through newspaper research it is apparent that their home was not easily left behind. A close-knit Canadian/Scottish community unfolded. Newspaper coverage detailed pallbearers, wedding guests, and wedding parties -- most with PEI/Canadian roots. The men were carpenters, home builders, millwrights, and cabinet makers -- skills brought from Canada. They watched the next generation marry and have families. They found common resting places at journey's end. In the interest of privacy (of which the internet machine knows no bounds) I will mention surnames only and show Mc though some records say Mac: McDonald, McIsaac, McLellan, McAler, Milligan, Williams, Beaton, Gillis, Ellis; Steele, Monroe, and McArthur surely there are more. These folk succeeded in Connecticut with the support of friendships formed well before the journey to America.

How fortunate we descendants are, today, that the folks of PEI have documented, preserved, and shared the much older history & lore of the Island, surrounding Provinces, and Scotland, so that we could recognize the surnames of that reassembled community of kith & kin in Connecticut's Naugatuck River Valley.

Note: Written with the permission of Mary McDonald whose posted research guided me through the brick wall and whose enthusiasm for family history is encouraging as we seek to dot the 'I's' of the family tree". Maureen Gaidosz

From Judy (Stuart) Vincent:

“Hi Rick. On my internet "travels" I did come across your site. Larry sent me some info but I haven't been able to make contact with anyone who may have further info on what he sent. So, I am at a dead end. My paternal grandfather was Alexander Stuart, son of Charles Stuart and Annie McKenzie. I have absolutely no contact with the Stuart side of the family, other than Larry and now you. I would so love to correspond with anyone who is family. There were only 2 males from the union of Alexander and his wife (my paternal grandmother) Lillie May Siliker. They were George Darby Stuart (my father) and Charlie Stuart. Both have died. There were of course female offspring, but the ones who married have different last names. And I have no info about their children, my cousins. I do have last names but they are common and I don't know how to follow up with their location. Thank you for writing. I would like to keep in touch, if you would like to also. Rick, I wanted also to say that finding information on my family is very important to me. I was an only child and I, in turn, only had one child, so passing on the family history is very important. My son has one son and one daughter. His son's name is Angus Ian Skye Ray. As you can see, our Scottish heritage is important to us, as Skye was named after his great, great, great, great grandfather and also the island of our heritage. Thank you again, Judy (Stuart) Vincent”

If you can help Judy in her search for her Stuart relatives, you can contact her directly at judithv6@yahoo.com

Ricks Note: The following happened within a short 2 week time span. As background, in the mid 80s I traveled with my mother and her brother, John McKinnon. On that flight Uncle John told me “I remember everything I ever learned! You never really forget anything - you just might not remember it right now - if you put your mind to it, you will remember!” He then quoted passages from the Bible (which many people can do - but Uncle John quoted the passages in both Greek and Latin in addition to reciting poetry which he learned in grade school!) Uncle John was 83 at the time. I was more than a little impressed.

I took up the challenge to search for Stuart relatives using basic internet search techniques with some unconventional spins. In the early 60's my aunt Edna (McKenzie) Scott and her husband Clyde visited our summer house in Brant Rock with daughter Sherri Jean. Edna was the daughter of Priscilla (Stuart) McKenzie, my grandmother's sister. I once went to Detroit, MI on a business trip about 30 years ago and at my mother's insistence, looked up Clyde and Edna. They not only graciously insisted that I stay with them; they actually threw a great party where I was reacquainted with Sherri Jean and met her husband. After 30 years, I just couldn't remember his name. When I reached out to relatives, no one else seemed to be able to come up with a name either so I gave the search a rest.

People may scoff but a few days later I actually woke up from a dream and I remembered his first name, Paul. So I now had Sherri Jeans husband's name but still no last name. Still at a dead end.

When Clyde and Edna retired they moved to Florida, near my uncle and aunt, Ronald and Edna McKinnon (all of whom have sadly passed). Knowing that obituaries are a great source of family information, I checked Florida and Michigan but ran into another brick wall. The information just didn't seem to be there or I couldn't find it so I gave the search a rest - again. A few days later, out of the blue I suddenly remembered Paul and Sherri Jeans last name - I was really proud of myself for my intuitive thinking but NO!!! I couldn't find their information anywhere on the internet and I gave the search a rest - again.

On a lazy Sunday afternoon while working on this Newsletter I was inspired to try different spellings of Paul's' unusual last name on internet searches. With brute strength and ignorance (mostly ignorance) and after more than several false leads, I indeed found Paul! I actually saw his smiling face on his work web page - the face might have changed over the past 30 years but the smile never changes. With a quick email I confirmed that I had finally located my cousin Sherri Jean (her actual name is Sharon which I didn't remember – that complicated the search.) I have forwarded this information and hopefully they will connect with each other.

I'd like to think that the World Wide Web is somehow interconnected to the Great Unknown and Beyond and this helped guide my search! I know that I am not smart enough to do this all by myself. Thanks Uncle John for the inspiration to keep trying to remember!

Family Heritage Through Recipes:

Although I received a positive response on last Newsletter's article “How To Make Haggis”, no one seemed to have the courage to actually make much less eat one. Perhaps you were put off by the “unfit for human consumption” or “memorable but not positive” comments. I am sure there are some tried and true absolutely delicious family heirloom recipes out there that you may want to share! I enjoy taste testing recipes!

WHOZIT?



Hint-check the last Kith&Kin Newsletter for a 1970 picture or you can find the answer on last page.

Solicitation! We did not receive any new mystery pictures for this edition!

The Kith&Kin Newsletter and web sites are maintained for your enjoyment. They are a conduit to distribute and share our family history and information and preserve for it for posterity. (As a side note, my family actually lost most of our irreplaceable Atkinson family memorabilia stored in the basement during the Blizzard of 78 floods in Brant Rock! There are many new ways on the internet to safely secure your memorabilia.) Our efforts can only be as good as what are provided by each of us. We know that some of you have large collections of memorabilia, pictures, and history out there but incorrectly may think that it is of little interest to others or that someone else must have already sent something. We are actively soliciting, knowing that a certain amount of culling will be required by the owners to properly display memorabilia and articles. We respectfully request that you please take the time to select, copy, label, and forward anything you may want to share. This includes but is not to be limited to family legends, stories, provenance, anecdotes, histories, old documents, letters, pictures, tips on research, recipes, interesting web sites etc.

PS - We always appreciate jokes in good taste. If you want better humor than you find in this issue, you have to send it!

We also understand that some of us may be uncomfortable sharing information and may not be familiar with utilizing computers or the internet. You also may not have your own email account or log on infrequently. Please, don't be shy! We may even be able to help you with the write up and/or necessary research for your articles or suggest ways to share your information. When I receive something to share, it usually takes several weeks of communication and re-editing. I am hesitant to edit someone else's article in a vacuum and do not want to publish revisions without the authors permission. Proper credit will always be given.

Since taking over the publication of the Kith&Kin Newsletter and developing the web site last year, I learned all of us need a little more time to respond to each other in an appropriate manner. I have learned that a lack of forward planning on my part does not necessarily make for an increased priority, sense of urgency or enthusiasm on your part. Most of all, I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. For example I started gathering additional information for this Newsletter during Feb 2008 with a brief email and my self imposed schedule to print and distribute by "first day of spring". There simply wasn't sufficient lead time to properly gather and organize information, especially with new family contacts. Because of my late start, there are several things still pending and will be put into the next Newsletter. I didn't want to wait until summer to send this Newsletter out! **The next Newsletter Scheduled for fall 2008! That should be enough lead time!**

Scotch vs. Scottish:

I am humbled by an email I received from Sandy Malcolm. "I hate to point out minor things, but some purists might note your use of the word Scotch. Scotch is a whiskey, while Scottish is the national reference. I know many people use the terms interchangeably, but if you want to be 100% perfect in your contacts with other Scots, particularly hundreds of McKinnons, you might want to use Scottish as the term of choice." I stand corrected.

Travel between Canada and the States:

For those of us that may be considering travel between Canada and the United States this summer, we strongly suggest that you check the changes in most current governmental regulations concerning entry, exit, land, sea and air travel, passport and identification requirements. The rules are changing and becoming more stringent. Don't ruin your vacation by being stopped at the border and denied entry because you don't have the proper documentation.

From Christine Crosland: An Invitation to Kith & Kin:

"Hello all. I am the sixth daughter {one of nine and one son} of John D. McKinnon {son of Daniel, son of Felix, son of Neil and Hannah} and Eileen, nee Arsenault.

I live in Burlington, Ontario. In early summer, it is my great joy to trade the heat and traffic of Toronto and surrounding areas for the peace, stillness, and beauty of the Brae, PEI. I was born in the Brae and from June to Sept

I live in the former Parish House. It is situated across the road from the Immaculate Conception Church and the cemetery where many of our ancestors are buried. Next door is the Parish Hall and in my yard is the very old, recently restored Derby School. Check out this bit of heaven on the Kith&Kin website in the "Interesting Sites" section link to Larry MacDonald's information "About the Brae."

If you are visiting the Island in this or any summer, I invite you to drop by for a cup of tea and a chat. With luck, you may be on time for one of our amazing down home house parties. In 1989, when I acquired the "priest's place," it was my dream to replicate the musical house parties held long ago in the McKinnon household of Felix and Elizabeth and later, their sons, Leo and Neil. It has been said that those parties lasted longer than a day and evening and were attended by young and old alike. Gatherings then were all about music, family, friends, and neighbours, as are those in many Island homes today.

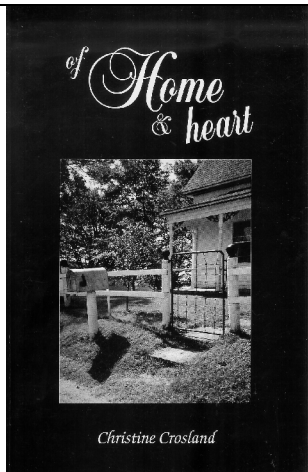
At my first party, there were a dozen in attendance. That number has grown over the years by leaps and bounds. One memorable night we were eighty-one! Always there are four to six fiddles, numerous guitars, spoons, harmonica, bass guitar, piano, etc. etc.....all played by the most talented and generous people on earth. Did I mention singers? Yes, we have those, as well as step dancers and the occasional square dance! Many in this amazing group of musicians are Kith&Kin. In keeping with Island tradition, everyone pitches in to serve a delicious lunch with a cup of tea. Come. Bring your instruments and your voices to join in the merrymaking. Last summer we celebrated the many of our loved ones who are no longer with us. We miss them and treasure their memory.

Join us as we make new memories.

Happy to meet Kith & Kin,

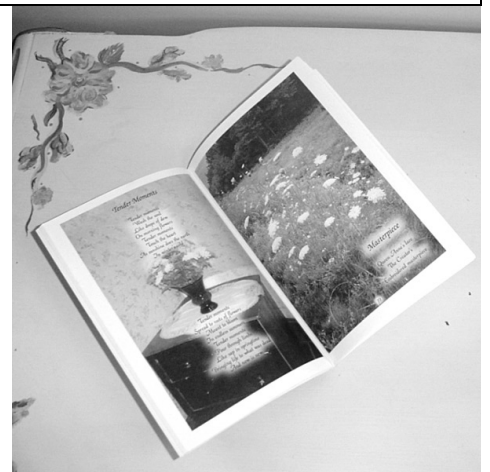
Chris {McKinnon} Crosland chriscros@sympatico.ca "

Information for Chris's Book "Of Home and Heart"



"*Of Home & Heart*" is a compilation of photographs and poems inspired by the circumstances of life "away" and the people, places and pastoral beauty of Island summers in and near the Brae. Photographs, taken by the author, show the beauty of West Prince.

1st printing, 900 copies sold - 2nd printing now available at www.unforgettables.ca {click on Treasures, New-Books}. Also directly from Chris in the Brae from June – September.



Humor:

An American, a Scotsman, and a Canadian were in a terrible car accident. They were all brought to the same emergency room, but all three of them died before they arrived. Just as they were about to put the toe tag on the American, he stirred and opened his eyes. Astonished, the doctors and nurses present asked him what happened. "Well," said the American, "I remember the crash, and then there was a beautiful light, and then the Canadian and the Scot and I were standing at the gates of heaven. St. Peter approached us and said that we were all too young to die, and that for a donation of \$100, we could return to the earth." He continued, "So of course, I pulled out my wallet and gave him the \$100, and the next thing I knew I was back here".

"That's amazing!" said one of the doctors, "But what happened to the other two?"

"Last I saw them," replied the American, "the Scot was haggling over the price, and the Canadian was waiting for the government to pay for his".

Quoits:



This antique Quoit was brought back to the States in the 60's by my dad, Fred Atkinson, after a nostalgic trip reconnecting with his family in Nova Scotia. When dad showed the Quoit to his father in law Raymond Alexander McKinnon, he said that in his youth he played Quoits in PEI. This Quoit has a beautiful patina, is made of metal, about 5" across and weighs 2.2 lbs

Edited from Wikipedia:“Quoits (k-waits) is a traditional lawn game involving the throwing of a metal or rubber ring over a set distance to land over a pin in the centre of a patch of clay. It is closely related to horseshoe pitching and the fairground game hoopla. The game's centre of popularity is in parts of the Canadian Provinces and North East England countryside. The game is also popular in parts of the Scottish lowlands, Wales and the Wensleydale, Swaledale, Beck Hole and areas of Yorkshire, England.

The quoit is a circular disc with a four inch hole in the centre which was traditionally made of steel. The quoit can weigh anything up to 10lbs - although a weight of approximately 5lbs is more common. This is thrown over the "hob" - a pin set in clay within a box-like framework. The clay helps the quoit to stick in place once it has landed. As the game has developed differently in various localities, the rules may vary, but, in the Welsh version, for example, the player is able to make two attempts at hitting the central hob. In the North of England, a quoit which has landed on the hob is called a "ringer" and scores two points. The first player to reach 21 wins the game. Players will also try to land their quoits in ways which block further attempts by other competitors.

There is evidence of a similar game which was played by Ancient Greeks and Romans before being spread to Britain. There are mentions of the game in England from 1388 onwards, although the game was banned in the 1360s by Edward III who believed it to be foolish. A set of 15 rules were laid down in The Field (magazine) in 1881. Although the game is dying out in some areas, others are taking a renewed interest in the sport, with small-scale International Games being held alternately in Scotland and Wales.”

Family Feuds:

While contacting distant Kith&Kin I have inadvertently stepped into the minefields of our collective Kith&Kin family feuds.

Edited from Wikipedia “A feud (pronounced /fju:d/) is a long running argument or fight between parties often through guilt by association and groups of people, especially families or clans. Feuds tend to begin because one party (correctly or incorrectly) perceives itself to have been attacked, insulted or wronged by another. A long-running cycle of retaliation, often involving the original parties' family members and/or associates, then ensues. Feuds can last for generations.”

This is true in many extended Scottish families and clans and the McKinnons certainly are no exception. To that end, we all face the difficult and personal choice of continuing our family feuds or trying to put them aside and getting on with the important things in life by simply letting family feuds go. It may be difficult to actually apologize, make amends or atonement for our past and present generations' family feuds, especially for something you personally didn't actually do. Lets face it, life is too short - eat desert first!

Further Definition: Scottish Alzheimer's “When you forget everything except your grudges!” Sometimes it is harder to forgive than forget. It is sometimes harder to forget than forgive. Sometimes there really is no difference