

A newsletter by, for & about
Canadian Gregors, their
heritage and their kin

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Maple Leaf MacGregors

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VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1

WINTER 2025 - 2026



Greetings from the Chair

Calendar year 2025 will be a year to remember. Your Canadian Chapter of the Clan Gregor Society experienced a number of firsts and, along the way, a number of meaningful moments. In many ways, we came of age and are coming into our own as a strong and independent Chapter of our two-century old Society. Formed in 1822 with the primary purpose of rebuilding our Clan through education after proscription and hundreds of years of persecution, today we can proudly say that the Society's mission is flourishing in Canada.

Perhaps you will have already seen the Canada Chapter report presented at the Society AGM in August. This was included in Newsletter 101 which recently arrived from Scotland in the mail. Some of this year's highlights are noted there, but warrant another mention in our Maple Leaf MacGregor. Here is a listing of major activities. As you look through these, please recognize the hundreds of hours contributed by your Council and volunteers to make these events happen. Special note of thanks goes to Stacey Crawford, Alix Williams, Sylvie Theriault and William Petrie for all they accomplished this year.

In February, we heard your suggestions and automated our annual renewal process by sending out invoices to all members with subscriptions due in 2025. This was a first, and will go a long way towards simplifying collection of dues. A reminder to outstanding accounts was sent out in August. While there are still a few stragglers, response has been favourable.

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Greetings from the Chair

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In March we began planning for a proposed visit from Sir Malcolm and Fiona, Lady MacGregor, to attend the 80th Fergus Highland Festival in August. Meetings and plans with the organizers, the MacGregors and Council to make this a reality began in earnest and proceeded right up until the final day of the festival.

In April, we began in earnest working on the dream of a way to visually present major Gregor events anchored in both Scottish and Canadian history. What evolved was a 20-foot-long timeline that visually presents events in a sequential and contemporaneous manner on a banner specially designed to hang in our tents at games and gatherings. This is also described in the Canada Chapter report. Special thanks to member Erica Petrie who assisted Council with the final graphic art presentation. The banner debuted at the Glengarry Games and was on display for the Chief at Fergus. To say this has been an overwhelming success is an understatement. It will add structure and authority to all future Gregor presentations. I hope you will be able to stop by one of the games and see for yourself this magnificent teaching tool.

May and June, Council met multiple times to map out our summer of activities. We can say with pride and a sense of accomplishment the summer of 2025 was a memorable one for Clan Gregor. We expanded our presence in Canada by attending 12 different highland games in three Provinces, some for the first time. These were well attended and we picked up 22 new members bringing our total to a high point of 170. This makes the Canadian Chapter the second largest in the Society, a true testimony to Canada's roots in Scotland.

In July we raised the Gregor standard in Antigonish, Nova Scotia for the first time. This was the 160th anniversary of these games, making them the oldest continuously operating highland games outside of Scotland. It was fitting that at last we had a presence in Nova Scotia where it all began for so many.

In early August we hosted our annual tent at the Glengarry games in Maxville, Ontario where we unveiled our timeline banner. One week later, Sir Malcolm MacGregor and Fiona, Lady MacGregor, joined us at the Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games August 7-10. This is fully reported elsewhere in this issue but it is important to note just what a grand success this was for your Chapter. Sir Malcolm attended as both our Chief and Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, and Fiona attended as both Lady MacGregor and Lord Lieutenant, the Crown's representative in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. Our social event was well attended by members and we were charmed by the open, warm and gracious presence of our special guests. This was a proud moment for the Canadian Chapter.

In September, we booked in all our new members and sent out the welcome packages. October and November brought some rest for the volunteers and I continued to participate in Council and com-

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Greetings from the Chair

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mittee duties in Scotland. Your Society is working diligently on expanded digital services, web improvements, digitized record access for members and on-line shopping for unique Gregor products. This is a large and bold undertaking and will take time, programming assistance, and funds of course, but we are confident it will put us in the best possible position in an increasingly interactive digital world. Details will be released as project targets are met.

And so here we are a month into 2026 and I am penning my annual message to the Canadian Gregorach. If our efforts in 2025 are measured by honoring our heritage, teaching our history, reaching out across the miles to family in support of clan, connecting people, or by productive and creative output, then we have succeeded. I am grateful for our volunteer and supporters and for each of you for your commitment to membership and furthering the objectives of the Society.

As we close down this year to remember, I wish the very best of the New Year to all Maple Leaf MacGregors. Your Canadian Chapter of the Clan Gregor Society of Scotland is alive and well. Many thanks to all of you who have joined to celebrate your heritage as a part of this old and proud Clan. We come from Scotland, and we'll always go back, but this new year, as we gather around our homes with family and friends, take a moment to thank our ancestors, for today we are at home right here in Canada.

My prayer is that we work together in 2026 to build understanding, collaboration, hope and peace wherever we can in our world. It begins with each of us and has the potential to heal so many wounds. It is the Light that shines in darkness.

Lang may yer lum reek!

Slainte'

Wayne MacGregor Parker

Spotlight on the Canadian Gregorach - New Feature

From early settlers and community builders to artists, leaders, and athletes, the Gregorach have long shaped Canada through quiet determination, adaptability, and service to others.

This new spotlight series celebrates contemporary Canadian Gregors whose lives reflect those enduring values that celebrate the Gregorach character, resilience, and contribution to community.

Each feature will highlight a living Gregor story, reminding us that our shared heritage is not only something we inherit, but something we continue to build together.

Our first feature on Paralympian Tyler McGregor appears on page 4 of this edition!

Spotlight on the Canadian Gregorach - Tyler McGregor

Tyler McGregor

As Canada looks ahead to the next Paralympic Winter Games in Milano Cortina 2026, one Gregor will help lead the nation onto the world stage. Tyler McGregor has been named co-captain of Canada's paralympic delegation; an honour that reflects not only elite athletic achievement, but trust, character, and a deep sense of responsibility to others. For the Gregorach, it is a moment of shared pride.



Raised in Forest, Ontario, Tyler's story begins like many Canadian ones: skates laced early, long hours at the rink, and big hockey dreams. From a young age, the ice was home. Then, at the age of fifteen, a leg injury revealed a devastating diagnosis - spindle cell sarcoma. Treatment led to the eventual amputation of his left leg, abruptly altering the path he had imagined for himself.

What followed, however, speaks to something the Gregorach understand well. Tyler did not retreat from challenge; he adapted. Through para ice hockey, he rediscovered not only the game he loved, but a renewed sense of purpose. Within a year of first trying the sport, Tyler earned a place on Canada's national para ice hockey team; a testament to resilience, determination, and an unwillingness to be defined by loss... a Gregor to the core.

Tyler has since represented Canada at three Paralympic Winter Games, earning bronze in Sochi (2014) and silver medals in PyeongChang (2018) and Beijing (2022). Yet medals alone do not tell his story. In 2019, he was named captain of Canada's Para Ice Hockey Team, recognized as a leader who brings people together, sets the tone through action, and carries responsibility with humility.

Beyond competition, Tyler's sense of kinship extends well past the rink. He serves on athlete advisory councils, sits on the board of Make-A-Wish Canada, and has led meaningful fundraising efforts for cancer research, including the powerful Sledge Skate of Hope. His work reflects a deeply Gregor instinct: to give back, to protect community, and to ensure others feel seen and supported.

Now, as co-captain of Canada's Paralympic delegation, Tyler stands not only as an athlete, but as a representative of Canadian values and quiet leadership. His journey reminds us that the strength of the Gregorach lies not only in history, but in how each generation answers life's most challenging calls.

In celebrating Tyler McGregor, the Clan Gregor Society - Canada Chapter celebrates a living Gregor story; one of courage, compassion, and leadership rooted in service to others. It is a story worth sharing, and one that continues to unfold with pride.

Alix MacGregor Williams

Read more about Tyler McGregor at <https://paralympic.ca/athlete/tyler-mcgregor/>

Scotland - Canada Academic Partnership - Annual Lecture

The Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph invites you to attend the nex Scotland-Canada Academic Partnership (S-CAP) Lecture: Nova Scotia and the Imperial Strategies of Highland Scots, to be delivered by Professor Karly Kehoe, St. Mary's University.

The event is free and will take place online on Tuesday, February 10, at 1 p.m. (EST), 6 p.m. (UK) and you can register via eventbrite at the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/nova-scotia-and-the-imperial-strategies-of-highland-scots-tickets-1980101123764?aff=oddtcreator>

About the Talk...

This talk explores the legacy of colonial privilege by looking at patterns of Scottish Highland settlement in Nova Scotia. Catholic Highlanders made use of the spectrum of advantages inherent in the White European settler experience despite facing significant persecution at home. Examining their connections with the process of empire building builds a deeper understanding of the complexities of colonization and helps us to think about Scottish History's connection with Canada's reconciliation process.

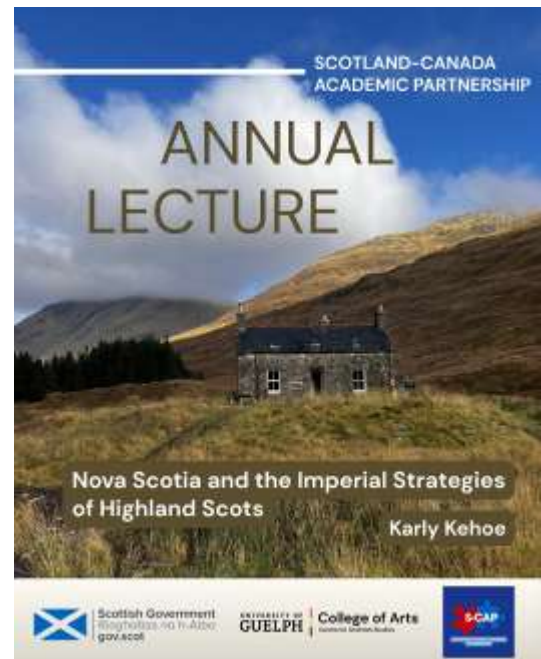
About the Speaker...

Karly Kehoe (pictured to the right) is Professor of History at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Her work focuses on Scottish Highland migration, colonial privilege and settler colonialism in the north Atlantic world. She is the author of numerous works related to Scottish History, including the award-winning book *Empire and Emancipation: Scottish and Irish Catholics at the Atlantic Fringe*. She is the past convenor of the Scottish Historical Review Trust and co-editor of the *Histories of the Scottish Atlantic* book series with Edinburgh University Press.

S-CAP is a partnership between the Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph and the Scottish Government Office in Canada which has generously supported this talk.

I do hope you find this of interest. Best wishes and thank you for your support.

David Hunter
President
Scottish Studies Foundation



On Carrying the Clan Gregor Banner

Last summer at the Fergus Festival we asked long standing member Ron Gregory if he would once again carry our banner in the Parade of Clans at the opening ceremony. This year was unique. With Sir Malcolm present, he carried the Chief's personal Coat of Arms. Afterwards he sent this note.

Hi Wayne,

Thank you for the kind words. Carrying the banner or flag is an honour, and I do it with pride. I would be happy to do it as long as you like. I missed being able to talk with you, but I didn't want to get in the way, as you had your hands full keeping Sir Malcolm and Lady Fiona entertained. I don't know what I was expecting, but I was surprised and pleased by how soft-spoken and kind they both are. I was even more surprised when Lady Fiona asked me if she could have a picture of me. I did not expect that. I did get to speak with your better half, and she, too, was kind and welcoming to both me and everyone else there. Fergus is the one weekend a year that is on my calendar, and I hope that never changes. I will try to make Orillia's festival next year as well.

Thank you and your team for all the hard work put into promoting our Clan in Canada. I look forward to seeing you again.

Ron Gregory



Ron Gregory and Sian Williams carry the Gregor Standards at Fergus

Important Membership Renewals

Membership renewals for 2026 were due in January for those whose memberships expire in 2025. New for this year, you will receive an invoice showing your renewal amount and payment details. We received the message loud and clear that it is more convenient for members to receive an invoice than to rely on memory and voluntary subscription. Your prompt response will be much appreciated.

As an FYI, your membership number is to be used in all correspondence (eg mine is 3221/27). If in doubt call or email me and I'll be happy to assist.

Also new this year, as noted in the recent Newsletter 101, all future Newsletters will only be sent as digital copy to your email address on file. The cost of a digital membership remains at \$45.00 CDN. If you wish to receive a print copy, the renewal rate is \$55.00 to cover postage and you must contact me to make arrangements to confirm your email and payment. Note: This means that unless we hear from you, you will automatically receive only digital Newsletters hereafter. There is no need to check in unless you want to upgrade to Print only.

Please send your \$45.00 Digital Copy or \$55.00 Print copy by e-transfer to

treasurer@mapleleafmacgregor.ca

or by cheque to CGSCC, PO Box 232, Dorset, ON P0A 1E0. Remember your best deal is to renew for five years for the price of four (\$180.00 Digital/ \$220.00 Print). Your prompt attention to this will be much appreciated.

If I do not receive your subscription by the end of May, we will send another email reminder. Please consider that I'm a volunteer and it's always nice to receive prompt renewals without having to make repeated appeals! Many thanks.

Wayne MacGregor Parker

An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

Earlier in this issue on page 3 we announced a new regular MLM feature, Spotlight on the Canadian Gregorach, and on page 4 introduced you to Tyler McGregor. In the following story you will learn of another brave Canadian Gregor who drew on the amazing personal strength, tenacity, commitment and perseverance which has allowed Gregors to survive and thrive against amazing odds. It's an inspiring story.

There are many Gregors who have made a difference in Canada. We look forward to sharing their stories in future issues.

An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

An unstoppable MacGregor legacy: What I learned running marathons across the globe

The origin

In August 2007, I looked at my life and knew it was time for a drastic change. I moved to the island of Montreal, bought a condo my mom found on Kijiji, and completely redefined my path. To guide this new chapter, I needed a fresh passion. A Running Room was just blocks away, and a crazy idea struck me: With the Montreal Marathon just two months off, why not run it?

I joined their clinic, gained a new friend circle, and started training in earnest. Everyone thought I was crazy, but I put in the work and made it happen. Crossing the finish line felt magical, a powerful reminder that anything is possible.

After the glow wore off, a feeling of malaise set in—an emptiness in the absence of that mission. But just two weeks later, an article about running marathons on all seven continents appeared. I immediately knew I had found my next purpose.

Clan MacGregor

Purpose can be a funny thing. It's what you find when you're stripped of everything else. The MacGregors represent a clan defined not by their land or their name, but by a deeper purpose—a fierce, stubborn will to endure.

The history of Clan MacGregor is one of immense hardship and resilience, a story best told through the proscription—a time when the very name was banned. Following a decisive victory at the Battle of Glen Fruin, King James VI declared the name MacGregor a capital offense in 1603. To be born a MacGregor was to be born without a legal name, without land, and without the protection of the law. For a time, those who bore the name could be killed on sight.

In an act of survival, the clan was forced to scatter, taking on the names of other families. This is why many names today are considered sept names of Clan MacGregor, adopted by those seeking to escape persecution.

Among these, my name—MacAdam—holds a special place. It is considered a prominent sept of the clan, a title that signifies its direct lineage and continued loyalty. Many other names were adopted for survival, and MacAdams are seen as direct descendants; a family group that carried the MacGregor bloodline through one of the darkest periods in Scottish history.

For nearly two centuries, use of the name MacGregor was forbidden. The proscription was not officially lifted until 1774, but its legacy endures. The attempt to erase our identity ultimately failed; instead, it forged an enduring spirit of purpose and resilience that is still celebrated today. It's a spirit I have been proud to carry around the globe.

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Montreal Marathon (September 2007) – North America

My first marathon was something I'd never imagined I'd attempt, let alone finish. It started at the iconic Olympic Park, home to the 1976 Summer Games, and wound through Montreal's vibrant streets before finishing inside the Olympic Stadium.

The race began with excitement buzzing in the crisp September air. I felt strong for the first 30K, soaking in the cheering crowds, the sounds of cowbells, and the rhythm of countless running shoes on pavement. But then came the dreaded wall around 32-35K. My legs turned to concrete. Every step was agony, and I seriously doubted whether I could finish.

Then, I saw my mom. She looked concerned and said something like, "Do you think you can finish?" That hit me hard. Not in a bad way—it lit a fire. There was no way I was quitting. I pushed through the pain and entered the Olympic Stadium. The roar of the crowd, the pounding drums, the surreal feeling of finishing where Olympic athletes once stood—it was overwhelming. Crossing that finish line changed me forever. I learned that what feels impossible often isn't—you just need grit. And then suffered an hour of raging leg cramps. Finish time: 4:52.

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An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

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Prague Marathon (May 2008) – Europe

Running Prague was deeply personal for me as a Czech-Canadian. This wasn't just a race; it was a homecoming of sorts. The cobblestone streets, Gothic spires, and historic bridges were breathtaking—but the experience was brutal.

I came into this race sick. I'd been fighting a serious infection, had lost 11 pounds in three days, and honestly shouldn't have been running. To make it worse, race day hit 30°C with zero shade. The sun was relentless. Around halfway, my body began to shut down. I slowed to a crawl and focused on

just making it to the next water station.

The best part?

The camaraderie. I bonded with runners from all over the world who were struggling like me. We cheered each other on in broken English and shared salt tablets and gels. The last stretch through Old Town Square was surreal—the Astronomical Clock chiming as we staggered across ancient stones. I collapsed just past the finish line, completely spent, but my sister-in-law was there, and we shared a final run across the line, where I promptly collapsed.

It was my worst marathon time at that point, but one of my proudest moments. Sometimes finishing is the only victory you need. Finish time: 5:53.

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Istanbul Marathon (October 2009) – Asia

The Istanbul Marathon is the only one in the world where you literally run from Asia to Europe—and that alone made it worth every step. The route starts on the Asian side, crosses the Bosphorus Bridge, and winds through a city steeped in history. Mosques, bazaars, and vibrant neighborhoods made this feel more like a cultural journey than a race.

But the week leading up to the marathon wasn't exactly smooth. Just days before, I slipped on polished marble stairs in Antalya and slammed my tailbone. The pain was intense and the hematoma was massive—I wasn't sure I'd even make it to the start line. But adrenaline and sheer determination carried me through.

Running across the Bosphorus Bridge as the sun rose was magical. The view stretched across two continents, and the air buzzed with excitement. Crowds lined the streets, offering Turkish delights and tea to runners. Every step felt like I was running through a living museum. I didn't care about time—I cared about the experience. And it was unforgettable. Finish time: 5:16.

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An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

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Learning I had come second in my age group in those conditions felt like winning the Olympics. When I crossed the line, I was too cold to celebrate. It took days to warm up. But now? This race is one of my proudest. Finish time: 6:28.

The people I ran the Antarctica marathon with 12 years ago I count among my closest friends to this day. We still take a race trip together at least once every year or two.

Toronto Waterfront Marathon (October 2013) North America Round #4

Perfect cool weather and a well-organized race. Toronto offered a perfect mix of urban energy and lakeside calm. The course swept through downtown past the CN Tower, then out along Lake Ontario under a crisp October sky. Crowds lined the streets, cheering with signs and cowbells, giving the city a festive pulse.

The waterfront stretch was beautiful yet challenging, with headwinds pushing back against every stride. Still, the flat course made it tempting to push hard. Crossing the finish near City Hall, the skyline towering overhead, felt electric—a celebration of strength, stamina, and the city's vibrant spirit.

Seeing my niece and nephew cheer with a homemade sign made my day and helped me finish. Finish time: 5:32.

Cape Town Marathon (September 2014) – Africa

Running in Cape Town was a mix of beauty, history, and personal challenge, made even better because I was joined by my friends from Antarctica. Table Mountain dominated the skyline, and the route wound through vibrant neighborhoods and past the Atlantic Ocean. The weather started cool but warmed quickly under the African sun.

The energy on the course was electric. Locals came out in droves, singing, dancing, and handing out snacks. Drummers pounded rhythms that kept me moving even when fatigue hit. At one point, a group of kids ran alongside us barefoot, grinning ear to ear. It was a powerful reminder that running is universal.

But it wasn't easy... My legs screamed, and I had to dig deep to keep going. With the heat and rolling hills, I was determined to finish. When officials tried to stop me just 5K from the finish, telling me the race was over, I refused to give up, pushing through to cross the line and feel an incredible sense of gratitude. Finish time: 6:29.

Rio de Janeiro Marathon (July 2015) – South America

If I had to pick the most stunning marathon... Rio might take the crown. I traveled there with a whole gang of my friends from Antarctica, and we celebrated by running a course that hugged the coastline, with the Atlantic Ocean glittering under a brilliant sun, the iconic Sugarloaf Mountain in the distance, and the energy of Brazil all around.

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An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy



An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

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Ottawa Marathon (May 2010) - North America Round #2

This race will always hold a special place in my heart because it was everything a marathon should be: perfect weather, amazing crowd support, and a personal breakthrough. I barely trained and went in expecting to suffer—but instead, I had the race of my life.

A pace bunny helps runners hit their goal by running at a consistent speed to finish at a set time. I started with the 4:45 pace bunny, felt great, and kept passing other pace bunny groups... 4:30... then 4:15... and I kept going, and somehow never hit the wall. I crossed the finish feeling strong and couldn't believe the time on the clock. The flat, scenic route along the Ottawa River was stunning, and the energy of the spectators kept me smiling the entire way.

The cherry on top? After the race, I was blown away to get a congratulatory Facebook wall post on my PR from Adam Goucher, the elite American Olympian, husband of fellow Olympian distance runner Kara, whistleblower in the Alberto Salazar scandal.

Not only that, I also got a bouquet from Merima Mohammed, who won the marathon, and a picture with her and her fellow African elite runners. This was one of those rare days when everything clicks, and you feel unstoppable. Finish time: 4:02—my PB, and I still can't believe it.

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Walt Disney World Marathon (January 2012) North America Round #3

What a unique experience - with magic throughout. The race started at 5:45 a.m. with fireworks lighting up the Florida sky. We ran through all four Disney parks, past iconic landmarks like Cinderella's Castle, with music, characters, and energy everywhere.

I stopped for photos with characters, danced along to the music, and tried to soak up every second. The course was crowded and the humidity was high, but it didn't matter—I was in Disney World! The volunteers were amazing, and the joy was contagious. The best part was running down Main Street in Magic Kingdom with people cheering like you were in the Boston Marathon.

This wasn't about speed. It was about magic. And I felt it - most - of the way to the finish. Finish time: 4:50.

Antarctica Marathon (March 2013) – Antarctica

This one was a beast, and a completely magical one at that. Just getting there was an adventure; our ship hit an iceberg, and we became the last tour group of the season. The journey itself was truly as significant as the finish line, and it's what created a profound sense of accomplishment and a unique camaraderie among the runners.

Unlike any other marathon, the course in Antarctica is set against a backdrop of towering glaciers, vast ice fields, and immense mountains. The pristine, untouched nature of the continent is breathtaking, creating a feeling of running on another planet. The silence is often deafening, broken only by the crunch of ice and snow underfoot and the sound of your own breathing. Seeing penguins and seals from the race course adds to this sense of wonder, reminding you that you are a visitor in one of the most remote places on Earth.

The conditions were brutal: -5°C, strong winds, and a course of mud, ice, and deep snow. I fell hard once, got hypothermia, and cried the last 5K. My hands were so frozen I couldn't open gels. But I finished—somehow. Coming second in my age group in those conditions felt like winning the Olympics.

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An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy

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This wasn't just a race—it was a party. Samba bands played along the route, dancers in full carnival costume cheered us on, and the crowd energy was infectious. Every time I wanted to slow down, the music pushed me forward.

But wow, the humidity was brutal. Sweat poured from the first kilometer, and hydration became a constant challenge. I stopped at every aid station, dousing myself with water and fighting dehydration. The last stretch along Copacabana Beach was pure magic. People lined the streets, clapping and calling out “Vai, vai!” Crossing that finish line felt like a celebration of life. Finish time: 5:51.

Rotorua Marathon (April 2016) – Oceania

Rotorua was a race like no other—set in the heart of New Zealand, around a geothermal lake with mist rising off the water and the scent of sulfur in the air. The course was hilly and challenging, winding through lush forests and past bubbling mud pools.

What made it unforgettable was the Maori culture woven into the experience. Traditional chants greeted runners at the start, and performers in full regalia cheered us along the way. The sense of heritage and pride was powerful—it felt like being part of something sacred.

The hills were relentless, and my quads were on fire by 30K. But every time I thought about stopping, I looked around at the breathtaking scenery and thought, “When will I ever run in a place like this again?” Crossing that finish line felt like closing a chapter in the most epic way. Finish time: 5:57.

Marathon du Médoc (September 2024) – Europe Round #2

The Marathon du Médoc, with my Antarctica friends, was one of the most extraordinary experiences. I knew this would be my final marathon so chose this party race as a final, epic victory lap. Over 20 wine tasting stops through the vineyards of Bordeaux—live bands, oysters, steak, and cheese lined the course. Runners wear costumes, and the whole event feels like a carnival on foot. I was the Queen of Hearts, fitting with the game theme.

I drank Chateau Lafite Rothschild mid-race (yes, really), and ate cheese along the way. It was the most joyful, indulgent, and completely un-serious marathon I've ever run. But don't be fooled—it was still a marathon, and by far my slowest ever. The heat, the rolling hills, and, yes, the wine made those last kilometers especially tough.

I was worried about getting swept from the race with a cutoff of 6:30, which in some years is strictly enforced. Luckily, they allowed some latitude that year. When I eventually crossed that finish line (well over 42.2 km later), it wasn't just the end of a race. It was the completion of a dream that started 17 years earlier. Eleven marathons. Seven continents. One unforgettable journey. Finish time: 7:02. And they closed the finish line just after I crossed.

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An Unstoppable MacGregor Legacy Bagpipe Pop Music - Anna Smart

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The takeaway

I had begun my journey with a need for purpose, a search for a passion that would redefine my life. Over time, the relentless training and physical toll of running the full distance had started to wear on me, and I knew it was time to bring this chapter to a close. But my marathons taught me that the finish line isn't the end; it's proof that every step mattered. I learned that endurance can be joyful and that courage is found in the moments of discomfort. This endurance, this ability to find strength in discomfort, is fueled by my ancestors. The MacGregors were one of Scotland's most persecuted clans, forced to hide and live as the 'Children of the Mist.' They never broke.

I faced a moment of deep personal challenge and, like my ancestors, chose to endure rather than surrender. My first marathon wasn't just a physical test; it was an act of personal defiance. By hitting that wall and smashing through it, I embodied the unyielding MacGregor grit.

My journey represents a testament to perseverance, curiosity, and the courage to find joy in embracing life in its extremes. I finished a marathon on every continent, plus four more for good measure. But the true victory was in the lessons I learned about resilience and the unbreakable spirit of a runner—a truly unstoppable MacGregor legacy.

Michelle MacAdam, Nova Scotia

Video by Claire Thompson



'I play bagpipe pop music - from Scotland to Times Square'

A music student at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow is helping to show that the bagpipes are more than "just a traditional instrument".

Anna Smart, 24, who is originally from Fife, started playing the bagpipes when she was only six years old.

Now, she is part of a bagpipe pop group called the Rollin' Drones and has played at gigs across the world, helped to break down gender stereotypes in the industry and gained popularity on TikTok for her Scottish twists on modern pop songs.

"It's my little fun fact, people don't expect that I would play the bagpipes, but I love it," Anna said.

And she has big ambitions for the future – including a dream to perform at the 14,300 capacity OVO Hydro in Glasgow and to work with a major music artist. ([Click for more and the video](#))



Fergus 25 Report



The news arrived from our Canadian Chair on one of those hot, sunny summer mornings when life is good and anything seems possible. It was a call to muster for all Gregorach, complete with metaphorical fiery cross and sword. The Chief of Clan Gregor, Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor and his lovely wife, Lady Fiona MacGregor were coming to Canada for the first time to mark the celebration of the 80th year of the Fergus Scottish Festival. This was very exciting news indeed!

In 2024 I had the great good fortune to attend the Clan Gregor gathering at Loch Awe in bonnie Scotland. It was a truly wonderful and memorable experience but I did come away with one disappointment. I had not found the opportunity to introduce myself to Sir Malcolm or Lady Fiona during my time there. And now, a year later, another opportunity for meeting them had presented itself!

As an added bonus, I could enjoy another highland festival together with some friendly Maple Leaf MacGregors I had met while in Scotland and others I had yet to meet. I decided right then and there that my husband Uwe and I would answer the call to muster and get ourselves to Fergus, Ontario no matter what.

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On the Saturday of the festival there could be no doubt as to which culture was being celebrated with great enthusiasm. The air resounded with the sound of pipes and drums as we approached the venue, accompanied by the loud buzz of people and families gathering for a day or two of fun. There were vendors selling everything from shortbread to sausages to decorative sgian-dubh! There were tents providing information on clans and heritage. And of course there were the competitive events: highland dance, pipes and drums, and the ever popular 'heavies'. There were concerts both days and evenings and whisky tasting too. People were everywhere, many sporting clan colours and all in festive spirits. A real celebration!

Clan Gregor occupied a nice corner tent with clan information and merchandise available, including an informative timeline of the history of the clan. There were friendly faces ready to help newcomers with any and all questions. And yes! I finally got my wish to both meet and chat with Sir Malcolm and Lady MacGregor. They are both so gracious and totally down to earth. They mingled and chatted with all the Maple Leaf MacGregors as we munched our way through some truly delicious treats prepared by Alix and other talented bakers. It was such a great pleasure and honour to meet them both.

At the meet and greet we learned that there were MacGregors in attendance from coast to coast. Everyone gathered together to hear a few words of welcome from our Committee Chair, Wayne Parker MacGregor and William Petrie, both of whom presented Sir Malcolm with Canadian maple syrup as a token to enjoy and remember us by. It was over all too soon with Sir Malcolm and Lady MacGregor heading off to attend to other official duties.

The rest of us formed up to join the parade of the clans as it marched past the attending Clan Chiefs, dignitaries and Lord Lyon of Arms. Sir Malcolm was there in his capacity as Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs and therefore key to the celebrations. Clan Gregor held our banner high and made sure to shout "Ard-Choille" with great gusto as we marched past. I spent the rest of the afternoon cheering on competitors and enjoying the festival.

I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to share in this important celebration of our clan and Chief at the Fergus Scottish Festival. I returned home to BC with many fond memories that I will always treasure.

Brenda MacGregor Zundel

West Kelowna, BC

Important Announcement

The Dalmally Stones, written by Keith MacGregor and Richard McGregor is now available for sale to members. After years of research, lobbying, fundraising and organization, the most substantial relics from the time of our early Chiefs are these gravestones, and they are now successfully preserved. They have been raised and are permanently restored to the inside of the Dalmally kirk where they were originally placed to mark the lives of Gregor Chiefs in the 14th and 15th centuries.

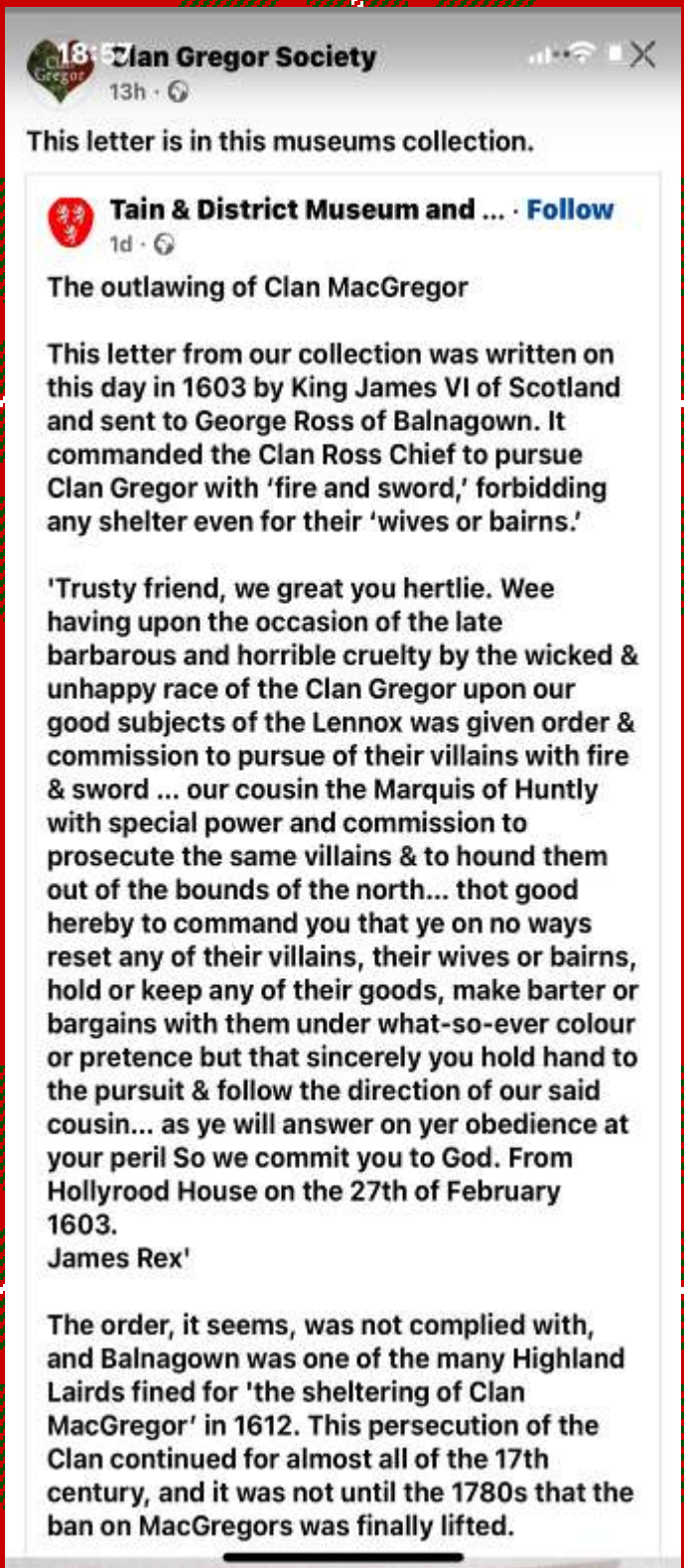
Between the loss of our lands, the proscription of our very name, and the challenging times Clan Gregor endured, we have no castles and very few permanent relics beyond these stones to visit or anchor us to a physical space. It is therefore important that we understand their significance. This little booklet is easy to read and tells their story and the work behind the largest project the Clan Gregor Society has ever undertaken. Complete with color photos, it is now available for \$15.00 including shipping.

This booklet belongs in the library of every member of Clan Gregor.

Contact keithmacgregor1@icloud.com to place your order.

Wayne MacGregor Parker

The Outlawing of Clan Gregor



Welcome Note from Fergus

Note From Fergus Highland Festival Clan Activities Chair David Radley

We received a royal welcome and support for Sir Malcolm and Lady MacGregor's visit this summer. Shortly after the Festival I received the following welcome note. Be sure to go to the link after the note to see some additional photos of interest. The answer to his question was well over 75!

Wayne,

Thank you for joining us at Fergus this year and helping to make our 80th one of the most successful years yet.

We had a total of 56 clans represented and welcomed over 27,900 visitors.

The clans area seemed to be busy all weekend and I, and my team, sincerely hope you enjoyed yourselves and that the experience was rewarding.

Malcolm and Fiona were great as guests and added dignity to our festival. Fiona's talk was well attended and we had a great deal of positive comments. With Malcolm moderating the panel discussion it went down very well and was greatly appreciated. Something we will emulate in the future.

We will talk in the near future. In the meantime I have included links to some Gregor specific photos and general dignitary photos. I have not included the dignitary photos for other clans, but as Malcolm and Fiona feature heavily, I thought you might enjoy, and be able to use, them.

Can you let me know how many additional clans members you entertained this year as a result of the Chiefs attendance please?

Dave

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QpSufX74c4UIAFy_qRebsmLvKs7qw2q5?usp=drive_link

Scots Banner Article, Sept 2025 - Lady MacGregor

Greetings! Not from Scotland this time – but from across the pond...

The MacGregor and I are in Canada and guests at the country's biggest clan gathering. 58 clans are represented. It is a sell-out crowd. What a weekend!

This is the 80th Fergus Scottish Festival & Highland Games, and it has it all. Heavy event athletes, Highland dancers, pipe bands, tartan and kilts... As they say: '80 years of Scotland without the air-fare.'

It is a milestone anniversary and the weather is hot. How apt then that the Red Hot Chilli Pipers are among those topping the bill. Bagpipes with attitude, as they say.

There is a blast from the past with Scotland's original boy band. It is the Bay City Rollers, complete with songs like 'Bye Bye Baby' and 'Shang a Lang' – and still going strong fifty years on.

Then the past is all around. Not least with the re-enactment group, the Atholl Brigade Recreated.

These are Jacobite soldiers, and whilst they look somewhat scary, they are most hospitable. Their womenfolk invite visiting chiefs into their tent to eat cheese and biscuits and drink lemonade and whisky.

The fare is delicious, yet they apologise for its simplicity. On another day they would be roasting a hog on a fire, but this year flames are not allowed because of the fear of wildfires.

But who are these guest chiefs? The MacGregor is there as Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs. Then there is the Fraser Chief, Lady Saltoun, and her son, Alexander Fraser, the Master of Saltoun.

Sir Alexander Matheson of Matheson is present. Steven MacTavish of Dunadry is there, too. As is the Vice Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, Viscount Andrew Morrison.

Yes, there's no shortage of chiefs, and feathers further abound, with Commanders Robert Currie, Richard Baird of Riccarton and Michael McAlpin.

With time to explore, we make our way through the festival grounds. Past the whisky village and the tea tent. Past the Sugar Shack and the British Baked Goods vans.

Flags fly, bonnets abound. Then there is another journey back in time with the 'Outlander' tent. One of the series stars, the actor who plays William Ransom is there and he is utterly charming. Charles Vandervaat is a local lad, and I confess I am a wee bit starstruck. It seems I am not alone. The ladies queue up to have their picture taken with him - whilst others vie to be seen with another famous face.

The Lord Lyon King of Arms is the Chieftain of the games. He is the person who officially opens the festival, and he does it in style. Dr Joe Morrow is Scotland's ultimate authority on coats of arms and heraldry. He is highly learned and amusing, and as such, is incredibly popular on the clan circuit.

Yes, Joe is always much in demand. Not least to judge the clan tents. After a visit to all 58, he decides

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Scots Banner Article, Sept 2025 - Lady MacGregor

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the winning prize must go to the Frasers - with Clan Gregor a close runner-up. It is no surprise that we get a mention, because our own tent is a tartan triumph. Inside tartan and heather abound, with an amazing timeline that shows our Scottish and Canadian clan histories.

There is a team photo as clansmen and women arrive for a members only meet and greet breakfast hosted for the MacGregor and me. The Canadian Chapter of the Clan Gregor Society was started more than a decade ago by Wayne MacGregor Parker, and under his guidance, it has truly blossomed.

We exchange news and eat home-made scones and muffins. Then there is a delightful interlude.

A nine-year-old boy in a Macgregor kilt approaches with his parents and asks to play for the MacGregor. His name is Callum, and he is the youngest piper in the Rob Roy pipe band, one of Canada's oldest. The young man is loaned a chieftain's bonnet for the occasion.

What a weekend! We are so warmly welcomed. Then the town of Fergus has deep Scottish roots. Indeed, it got its name from one of its Scottish founders, Adam Fergusson.

From the memorable ride down St Andrew Street in a carriage pulled by Clydesdale horses, to the delicious dinner at the Breadalbane Inn. From the mass Highland dances performed by the young, to the pipe and drum bands that kept us utterly enthralled.

Thank you, Fergus, and thank you Canada! We would love to come back...

Lady MacGregor



The Celtic Calendar: A Scottish Tapestry of Ancient Traditions



Award winning photograph of the Callanish Stones by Josh Dury, 2022

Stepping into the circle of Callanish Stones, you stand at a crossroads of time and culture. These stones, rooted in Hebridean soil, were raised by hands that understood the delicate balance of equinox.

Their roots reach deep into Neolithic Scotland, where stone monuments aligned with the sun marked turning points in the passage of years. Later, Pictish and Gaelic traditions would layer meaning onto these seasonal markers, while Norse settlers would bring their own midwinter customs; in one sense, enriching the celebration of Yule with feasting and fire.

The Celtic Calendar is based on the lunisolar timekeeping systems employed by ancient Celtic societies, and is primarily informed by the Coligny Calendar, an artifact excavated from a Roman temple in eastern France in 1897.

The cycle of festivals known by many as the Wheel of the Year – with its solstices, equinoxes, and fire festivals – is not the legacy of a single culture, but a woven tapestry of heritage and tradition. That tapestry stretches far beyond Scotland's shores. Across Canada, where winter skies blaze with aurora and summer fields



Coligny Calendar: The 1,800-year-old Lunisolar calendar banned by the Romans | Image courtesy of Ancient Origins

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The Celtic Calendar: A Scottish Tapestry of Ancient Traditions

(Continued from page 24)

echo with pipes and drums, the rhythm of these ancient festivals still resounds.

Today's observances – whether in the Hebrides or among the Scottish diaspora in Canada – are syncretic, blending prehistoric astronomy, Celtic lore, and Viking resilience into a distinctly Scottish rhythm. These festivals are not relics; they are living traditions, echoing across oceans and centuries, binding communities through light, balance, and belonging.

The following key Scottish spokes of the Wheel include two equinoxes and two solstices.

Winter Solstice, December 21/22 - Yule (Alban Arthan)

The Long Night and the Promise of Kinship

As the cold of December deepens, the sun rides low across the horizon, and the year exhales. In Orkney, the passage tomb of Maeshowe waits for the solstice sunset, its inner chamber glowing with a shaft of light; a Neolithic promise that darkness will not endure. Centuries after its construct, Norse settlers brought their Yule feasts and fire rituals, blending with Celtic midwinter customs.



Torchlight Procession Returns | Image courtesy of VisitScotland.org

Today, Hogmanay torchlight processions flicker through Edinburgh's streets, echoing those ancient flames.

Across the Atlantic, the Scottish diaspora in Canada gathers by hearth and candle. Yuletide is more than a holiday; it is a covenant of kith and kin, a moment when laughter and music bridge oceans and centuries. In the hush of winter, the Wheel turns, and hope glimmers.

Spring Equinox, March 20/21 - Ostara (Alban Eiler)

The Rebalancing of Spring

March brings a fragile equilibrium; the rebalancing of day and night. The Celts called it Alban Eiler – "Light of the Earth," a festival of renewal and rebirth.

In Orkney lore, Sea Mither's winterlong struggle against the spirit of winter is finally won and the land shakes off Teran's frosty grip. Homes are purified with saining straw and herbs, sweeping away the old to welcome in the new.

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The Celtic Calendar: A Scottish Tapestry of Ancient Traditions

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For Scots in Canada, the equinox is more than a seasonal marker; it is a milestone on the road to summer's Scottish festivals and Highland Games. Planning and preparations accelerate and soon, pipes will skirl, kilts will whirl, and clans will gather under banners of heritage. The promise of summer lays just beyond the thaw.



Summer Solstice, June 20/21 - Litha (Alban Hefin)

The Sun at its Zenith

June unfurls the year's longest day, and at Callanish, the stones align with the midsummer sunrise to stand in silent testament to ancient astronomy and its reverence for light. The fires that leapt skyward in ancient rites of fertility and abundance, are today revived in the bonfires and hearth flames that light up homes and skies across Scotland and around the world.



Lighting of the Hearth Flame | Image courtesy of Fergusscottishfestival.com

In Canada, midsummer signals that the games and festival season is in full swing. From coast to coast to coast, a rich patchwork of celebrations unites the diaspora in honouring ancestral rites and cultural accomplishments with competitions, ceilidhs, and camaraderie aplenty. The sun holds steady, and the Wheel hums with life.

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The Celtic Calendar: A Scottish Tapestry of Ancient Traditions

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Autumn Equinox, September 22/23 - Mabon (Alban Elfed)

The Harvest and the Hush

By September, the balance between dark and light is returning. Known as Mabon, this equinox marks harvest and harmony – a time to gather both crops and community, to feast, and to give thanks. Norse and Mabon traditions alike wove gratitude into autumn's fabric, preparing for winter's long embrace.



The Autumn Harvest | Image courtesy of National Museums Scotland

For Scots in Canada, the equinox is the gentle close of festival season. After months of games and gatherings, it invites reflection – a Gaelic thanksgiving of sorts. Festival attire and tents are folded away and hearts turn inward, warmed by memory and tended by the anticipation of the next turn of the Wheel.

A Story that Spans Millenia

From the Yuletide hearths of the Maritimes, across the summer games of Central Canada, and out to the Hogmanay celebrations of the Prairies and British Columbia, these festivals endure as living heritage. They remind us that Scotland's heart blood - enriched by Neolithic engineers, Pictish lore, Gaelic poetry, and Norse resilience – still pulses through communities and across continents.

Whether you light a candle at Yule or cheer at a highland games tug-o-war, you join a story that began under an ancient solstice sun and continues to evolve and expand with every passing season.

By Alix MacGregor Williams, Ontario

Games and Festivals 2025 - Memories



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2026 Games Outlook - Call for Volunteers

The following are the upcoming Highland Games and Festivals that, at this point, we know there will be a Clan Gregor representation. As a member of Scots of Canada (SoC), Clan Gregor will have a poster on the Scots of Canada banners to be shown either at the Scots of Canada booth or by the festival/game itself, indicated by 'SoC Display'. Please be sure to visit when you're at one of these events.

HELP: Please let us know through editor@mapleleafmacgregor.ca if you'd be able to help with or even run a Clan Gregor booth at an event. It is a great way to meet and help your fellow Gregorach! Training and booth materials will be provided.

Dates	Event	Location	Clan Gregor Representation
Mar 21 - 22	College Royal - Celtic Students U of G	Guelph, ON	SoC Display
May 9 - 17	Victoria Highland Games	Victoria, BC	SoC Display
Jun 13	Georgetown Highland Games	Georgetown, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Jun 9 - 13	Greater Moncton Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Moncton, NB	SoC Display
Jun 19 - 20	Northumberland Scottish Festival & Highland Games	Port Hope, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Jun 19 - 20	ScotFestBC	Vancouver, BC	SoC Display
Jun 27	Kingsville Highland Games	Kingsville, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Jun TBA	Red Deer Highland Games	Red Deer, AB	SoC Booth
Jul 1	Embrow Highland Games	Embrow, ON	SoC Booth
Jul 3 - 4	Penticton Scottish Festival	Penticton, BC	TBD
Jul 3 - 5	Kincardine Scottish Festival & Highland Games	Kincardine, ON	SoC Booth
Jul 3 - 5	Almonte Celtfest	Almonte, ON	SoC Booth
Jul 4	Halifax Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Halifax, NS	SoC Display
Jul 5 - 12	Antigonish Highland Games	Antigonish, NS	SoC Display
Jul 17 - 18	Cambridge Scottish Festival	Cambridge, ON	SoC Booth
Jul 17 - 19	47th Annual Orillia Scottish Festival	Orillia, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Jul 24- 26	New Brunswick Highland Games Festival	Fredericton, NB	SoC Display
Jul 25	Uxbridge Scottish Festival	Uxbridge, ON	SoC Display
Jul 25	Ailsa Craig Highland Games & Scottish Festival	Ailsa Craig, ON	SoC Booth
Jul 25-26	Sherwood Park Highland Gathering	Sherwood Park, AB	SoC Booth
Jul 27	Kamloops Highland Games	Kamloops, BC	TBD
	Continued on next page		

2026 Games Outlook - Call for Volunteers

Dates	Event	Location	Clan Gregor Representation
Jul 31 - Aug 1	Glengarry Highland Games	Maxville, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Aug 2	Montreal Highland Games	Verdun, QC	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Aug 7 - 9	Fergus Scottish Festival & Highland Games	Fergus, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Aug 7 - 9	Goderich Celtic Roots Festival	Goderich, ON	TBD
Aug 16	Sidney Mines Highland Games	Sidney Mines, NS	SoC Display
Aug 22	North Lanark Highland Games	Almonte, ON	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Aug 22	The Gathering of the Clans Highland Festival	Sedgewick, AB	SoC Booth
Sep 4 - 6	Canmore Highland Games	Canmore, AB	SoC Booth
Sep 19	Celtic Island Music Festival	Toronto, ON	SoC Display
Sep 19 - 20	Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games	Lockport, NY	SoC Booth
Sep TBA	LBA Highland Games	Ormstown, QC	<i>Clan Gregor Booth</i>
Sep 20	Fall Celtic Festival	Burlington, ON	SoC Booth
Nov 21	St. Andrews Charity Ball	Toronto, ON	SoC Display
Dec 31	Hogman-eh!	Ottawa, ON	SoC Display



An example of a setup for a booth with timeline banners on two walls and t-shirts on the third.

Renewals & Going Digital – A Quick Update

For those whose membership subscription is now due, renewal invoices will be send soon by email. Keep the your Clan Gregor Society thriving!

Going Green & Digital: Future CGS and MLM newsletters are now paperless! Better for the glens and our coffers. You'll get all the same news, just without the papercuts.



Still want a printed copy of the Clan Gregor Society newsletter or have questions about the switch to digital? Send an email to wayne@mapleleafmacgregor.ca. We're happy to oblige our traditional-ists. Thanks for letting us know!



MCGREGOR
KILTS

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