



# Remember Those From Whom You Came

## Newsletter Of The Clan MacAlpine Society

The Worldwide Organization For MacAlpines  
2nd Quarter 2017 ~ Volume 36



Kenneth McAlpine



William McAlpin



Michael McAlpin



Sir William McAlpine



Finn Alpin



Sidney Fay McAlpin



Earl Dale McAlpine



Bruce McAlpine

### Commander's Note

The Clan MacAlpine Society was founded nearly twenty years ago with the objectives of identifying and unifying our diaspora, preserving our Scottish heritage, gaining recognition from the Scottish Court of Lord Lyon, and ultimately having a Chief of the Name and Arms of McAlpine, and a Crest.

It was a great honor to be at the Lyon Court in Edinburgh to receive the Commission from the Reverend Dr. Joe Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms for Scotland. Accompanying me were Society President Dale McAlpine from California, Ian McAlpine and his lovely wife Margaret from Midlothian, and our advisor Dr. Bruce Durie.

Lyon made a short presentation of the Commission in his office, and then we all retired for dinner and conversation.

With Commission in hand, we are well on our way to our long-term objectives. We have nearly 3,000 members around the world, and we have recognition from the Court. Now is a good time to reflect on what we have accomplished, but also to take measure of what our vision is for the future. To assist with that, I have asked a few folks to help with identifying a few areas that may help preserve our heritage by looking at the potential of offering small scholarships for piping, and dancing. It might also be an opportunity to give back, to think of some effort on a worthy cause in Scotland, perhaps some signage at a location important to the McAlpines, or a donation to the Kilmartin Museum. We will also begin contacting the websites and vendors that need to correct their content to a more accurate description of the McAlpines. If you are interested in getting involved with one of these projects, please let me know.

Paraphrasing the Commission, it says the interim Commander should rally the McAlpines. I am committed to that worthy effort. I'll see you in Fergus.

Yours Aye,  
Michael T McAlpin

### President's News

Wow! We did it. After many years and efforts by the whole family, on April 19th we became a clan. We have a Commander. We have been blessed with Michael McAlpin to lead us into the future.

It is not the time to sit back and revel, but the time to steadily continue in to the future. We have much to do. Think about how you can help further the knowledge of our ancestry to our children and future generations. When they look back in history at this momentous occasion, what will they see?

Quickly approaching is August 12th and our AGM. This is the first AGM as a clan. Michael will be on the reviewing stand and honored as our new Commander. We hope to see you there celebrating with us. (You can find ticket and lodging information in this newsletter).

It such an honor to be part of what we are doing. Attending the derbhfine last September then seeing Michael receive his commission in May makes me so proud to bear the name McAlpine. I'm looking forward to seeing where we go from here.

In Kinship,  
Dale



## MacAlpine AGM ~ August 12, 2017

Our AGM this year will be held in Fergus, Ontario Canada, on August 12, 2017, hosted by Bruce and Donna McAlpine. We hope to have a great turn out.

### Discount accommodations have been arranged at:

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Geulph  
540 Silvercreek Parkway  
North, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6N3  
Phone – 519-824-2400 Fax – 519-824-2450

Our group rate is: \$179.99 per night + tax. To receive the discount make sure to mention you are with “Clan MacAlpine Society” when booking your room. A block of 12 rooms have been set aside. Arrival Date for August 11, 2017 – Departure for August 13, 2017 (2 nights). You will have up until July 11, 2017 to guarantee a room.

Your stay will include a complimentary Hot Breakfast Buffet each morning, as well as an Indoor Pool and Jacuzzi Spa, Free Parking, Fitness Centre, Business Centre, Guest Laundry and an Elevator. Check-in time is 3:00 pm and check out is 11:00 am

Room Types Available:

TQNN – Two Queen size beds, Non-smoking  
KEXN – King Bed Executive, Non-Smoking

### Our AGM dinner will be on Saturday, August 12, 2017 at 7:00 pm at:

Breadalbane Inn  
487 St. Andrew Street West,  
Fergus, Ontario  
The cost is \$42.00 pp



### Three Course Dinner:

#### Starter Choices

- 1) Potato & Corn Chowder with roasted red pepper & Chives
- 2) Traditional Caesar Salad with House-made Garlicky Dressing
- 3) Garlic & Shrimp with white beans, salsa verde & microgreens

#### Main Choices

- 1) Grilled Natural Beef Sirloin (with rochdale gold whipped potatoes, with seasoned vegetables, red wine & balsamic jus)
- 2) Marinated Chicken Supreme (Calabrian roast chicken with onions & tomatoes served over orzo with seasonal vegetables)
- 3) Lasagna alla Napoletana – vegetarian (fresh pasta, spinach and mozzarella in house-made tomato sauce)

#### Desert Choices

- 1) Renowned Chocolate Fudge Cake with warm fudge sauce and vanilla ice cream
- 2) Rustic Carrot Cake with cream cheese icing and sweet carrot jam
- 3) Budino house-made pudding, with layers of whipped cream and spice walnuts

Please contact Robin if you plan to join us for dinner. She will track those attending and advise on payment.

### Commander

Michael T. McAlpin

### Society Officers

**President:** Earl Dale McAlpine  
**Vice President:** Mark McAlpin  
**Treasurer:** Kenneth McAlpine  
**Secretary:** Robin McAlpine  
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## MacAlpine's Mining Expedition Lost in Canada's Far Arctic North

Colonel Cyril D. H. MacAlpine's lineage traces to Dugald MacAlpine of West Airdair, Kilmartin, Scotland. Dugald married Euphemia Campbell on June 7, 1748 at Kilmartin Church. His descendants migrated to Ekfrid, Middlesex, Ontario, Canada.

Cyril was born in 1886, and after graduating from the University of Toronto, he attended the Manitoba Law School, then practiced law in Winnipeg from 1910 to 1914 and served with the Cameron Highlanders of Winnipeg during the First World War. He later moved to Toronto where he became president of Dominion Explorers, a Toronto Mining Company.

On August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1929, Col. MacAlpine set out with seven other men in two single-engine planes and rushed into the Arctic. The men in the expedition were hoping to stake claims on a rich copper find they heard was to be opened up by the government.

In 1929 there were only half-a-dozen radio stations in the Northwest Territories, no radio-equipped planes and no airstrips. Their plan was a three-week sweep of the Territories – to the Arctic shore and back. Arriving at Churchill, Manitoba, along the shores of Hudson Bay on August 26, the expedition received its first indication of the dangers involved when the crew of the supply ship Morso, which was to supply the expedition, rowed into Churchill Harbor aboard a lifeboat. The Morso had accidentally been set afire and sunk.

Subsequently, a plane badly moored at Churchill was lost in the tide. The replacement aircraft took a week to arrive and the delay caused the trip to run into bad weather and near disaster.



Colonel Cyril D.H. MacAlpine

Carried off course by compasses thrown out of kilter by the magnetic pole, the prospectors had to land their floatplanes at remote Dease Point 100 miles inside the Arctic Circle due to lack of fuel. The nearest settlement was 60 miles west and across 25 miles of not yet frozen sea, to a Hudson's Bay post at Cambridge Bay on Victoria's Island.

By unanimous vote, the group decided to sit tight until the sea was frozen and they could cross it. They settled-in beside an Inuit hunting camp and built a four foot tall house with stone, mud and moss.

Meanwhile, on September 24, 1929, a telegram was received in Winnipeg, informing the world that the expedition had failed to arrive at their checkpoint at Bathurst Inlet, Nunavut, resulting in the first massive air search in Canadian history. Fifteen aircraft took part. By the end of their search, the would-be rescuers logged some 50,000 kilometers flying across Canada's Far North.

The rescuers ran into difficulties of their own. Frozen lakes were a problem as most of the initial rescue airplanes were equipped with floats which required open water to land, The MacAlpine expedition had the same type of air craft. Only aircraft equipped with skis could land on ice, and changes from skis to pontoons and back had to be made. Dominion Explorers chartered the icebreaker Ocean Eagle to move supplies for the rescuers.

Back at the mud hut, the expedition group had to ration food and ammunition. Meals were reduced to two a day. Organized hunting warranted a stock of ptarmigan (a type of grouse, also known as snow chicken) and squirrels. They gathered moss and willows for fuel. They received 55 dried whitefish and two dried salmon from the Inuit.

On October 15, the temperature dropped sharply below zero. The Inuit hunters indicated that the 'walk out' could start soon.

On October 21, after almost six weeks of waiting at the mud-and-stone hut at Dease Point, the party moved northwest along the coast. With 10 Inuit guides, three sleds and dog teams, the group, 18 in all, scrambled across the rough ice, moving in and out among the coast ice field. It was 15 below zero.

*Continued on page 4*

## MacAlpine's Mining Expedition Lost in Canada's Far Arctic North . . . Continued from P. 3

At night they camped in igloos fashioned by the Inuit with blocks carved from snow. They ate boiled trout and salmon with bacon and sugar from the dwindling emergency rations.

On October 26, the group started across the frozen strait over rough hummocks of ice. They got a quarter of the way across when they reached open water. There was nothing they could do but turn back.

The following six days brought hungry men, and near mutiny as only dog food remained. The Inuit parted ways with the expedition group to retrieve supplies and returned to them at 6:00 a.m. on November 1 with tobacco, fresh fish, flour and sugar.

After a big breakfast on November 2, the group set out again. They spent nerve-wracking hours trying to pick a course across a large ice floe; tugging sleds over towering ice hummocks and crossing narrow leads of unsafe ice after the Inuit tested it with spears. At 4:00 p.m. they struck thin ice and decided to camp for the night on the floe.

November 3, the last day of the trek, started with a race across thin ice, in bitter wind at 27 below zero. The group fanned out and ran over the rising, falling, crackling rubber ice, veering away from the darker, thinner areas.

On November 4th, the weary group straggled into the HBC post, collapsed, tore off their stinking parkas and sodden moccasins and ate.

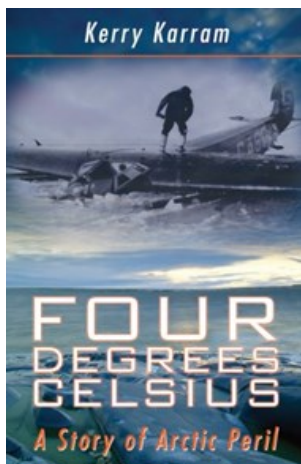
The HBC Post Manager sent word with obsolete wireless equipment that the prospectors were "All Well".

The group relaxed and marveled that most of them were in better shape than when they left the south. Only one member of the group suffered permanent injury; three frozen toes that had to be amputated. They agreed, with gratitude, that without the help of the Inuit their expedition would possibly have ended in disaster.

Rescue operations ceased when word reached the rescue team that the prospecting expedition had returned safe and sound. Four of the rescue aircraft were damaged, and both of the expedition aircraft were a complete loss.

In the end, the lessons learned were rather expensive. The cost of the rescue attempt was approximately \$400,000 (about 5.7 million dollars today) all of which ended up being paid by Dominion Explorers Ltd.

Col. MacAlpine, the leader of the lost party died in Toronto on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1951.



*For further reading:  
(Four Degrees Celsius:  
A Story of Arctic Peril, by Kerry  
Karam, 2012).*



## Highland Dance

*Submitted by: Melissa Cummins*

Family dinnertime sounds a little different at the Cummins' house than it does in most houses in our neighborhood. While most families argue over who gets the ketchup first or talk about the tests and boring assignments from school, I hear, "toe, heel, toe, heel, rock, rock, rock, rock, toe, heel, toe heel, rock, rock, rock, rock" and we go to bed hearing bagpipe music instead of lullabies. Highland dancing is not only taking over our evenings, we dream about it!

Two years ago, we were searching for an activity for the little girls. The McElprang family had a family reunion planned in California and we all made the journey to the Highland Games. The timing was perfect because my dad had passed about a month before the reunion and he loved anything Scottish. This was the Highland Games where we met some of our McAlpine clan!

It was our first Highland Games and while we were looking around at the different booths, my oldest daughter (Aliza – 7 at the time) had disappeared! I quickly found her in front of the stage on the front row watching some dancers. I couldn't pull her away from the stage and that is where we spent the afternoon.

That day, our lives changed. That weekend, I found a dance studio through a friend. The girls have been participating and competing for about two years. Aliza is 9 now and loves to dance. She bounces around the grocery store, the zoo, church, and anywhere else. Addie, is 7 and isn't as enthusiastic as Aliza is about competing but she loves the life of a recreational dancer.

As their mom, I am excited about the way Highland Dance has given my girls the opportunity to connect to their roots. Aliza has completed school reports on Scotland and has given demonstrations to her school and has danced at our county Fair. They have even taught me the sword dance. Watching their chubby mom do pas de basques is funny to 7 and 9 year old little girls. We love it and I hope they continue to do this into their teenage years.



Aliza



Addie and Aliza

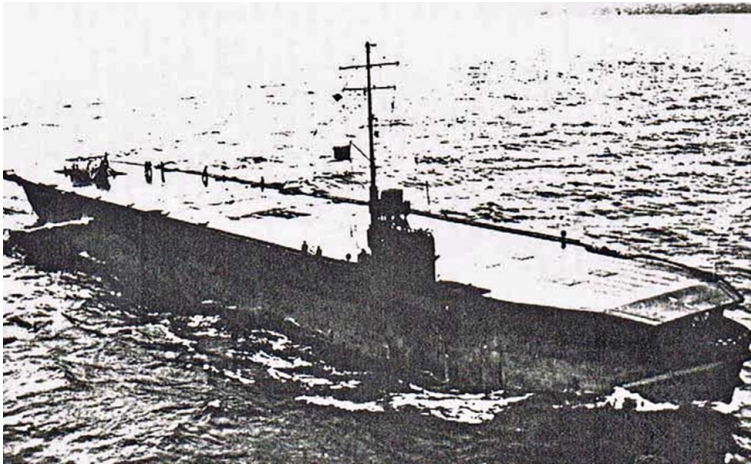
*Note from Secretary, Robin McAlpine: As I read Missy's article, it dawned on me that we had met. We actually met at the games in Pleasanton when her family was there for their reunion. I remember the entire family was so excited to have found us there. Each family had worn a different colored shirt to represent each sibling. We had such a great time getting to know them throughout the day. This is exactly why we sponsor tents at various Highland Games throughout the US and the world. To connect with family. If you have questions on how to represent the family at your local games, let us know. We are happy to help.*



### **Drum Major of MacAlpine Pipe Band of New Zealand Retires**

Bernie Powers leads MacAlpine's North Canterbury Pipe Band in Rangiora's Anzac Day Parade for the last time as drum major, a position he has held since 1994. A drummer in the band since the early 1960's and a well known local identity, he will retire as the drum major next month, although he will continue as a member of the band.

## M.V. Empire MacAlpine and the Battle of the Atlantic



M.V. Empire MacAlpine

In the Autumn of 1940 the Royal Air Force had already won the Battle of Britain in the skies over the United Kingdom, however, the “Atlantic Lifeline,” the convoys that delivered supplies to the embattled island, were being compromised by German U-Boat operations. Shipyards were furiously assembling escort ships for the convoys, and radar was improving, but vast numbers of convoy ships were still being lost.

Operating from bases in Northern Ireland and Canada, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Air Force were providing cover as far out as they were able, but there was still an enormous distance of about 750 miles, referred to as the “Atlantic Gap”, that remained unprotected. In this area the convoys were especially vulnerable to U-Boat torpedoes.

The Merchant Aircraft Carrier (M.A.C.) developed an innovative approach to bridging this gap.

The first M.A.C. was the Empire MacAlpine. She was designed as a grain ship, and then fitted with a carrier deck by the Burntisland Shipbuilding Company of Fife, Scotland.

The flight decks of M.A.C. Ships were approximately 400 feet long by 55 feet wide and the ships had a top speed of about 12.5 knots. The modification allowed her to carry 80% of her capacity as a grain ship with an escort of four Swordfish Aircraft armed with bombs and rockets. In all Six grain ships were converted to the new M.A.C. configuration. Additional M.A.C. ships were converted oil tankers.

The Empire MacAlpine was operated by William Thomson & Co (the Ben Line). As a M.A.C ship, only her air crew (Naval Air Squadron No. 836) and the necessary maintenance staff were naval personnel, but to comply with the Geneva Convention all the Royal Navy personnel had to sign on as deck hands or officers in the Ben Line with the pay of one shilling a month and a bottle of beer a day.



Landing a Swordfish on M.V. MacAlpine

On 7th of May 1943, Lt/Cdr Ransford W. Slater accomplished the first deck landing on M.V. Empire MacAlpine.

The first convoy that the MacAlpine escorted was heavily attacked by U-Boat wolf packs resulting in the loss of four escort vessels and eight Merchant ships. Subsequently only two more ships were lost in M.A.C. Ship escorted convoys and by autumn of 1944 virtually every Atlantic convoy would expect, and have, a M.A.C. ship as part of their escort.

Although no submarines were sunk by the 836 Squadron, the primary job of keeping submarines 'heads down' was very successful, preventing the U-Boats from tracking and assembling wolf packs around a convoy.

There is little doubt that the Battle of the Atlantic was well on the way to being won by the time the first M.A.C. Ship 'McAlpine' came into service, however by closing the 'Atlantic Gap' the MacAlpine and the other M.A.C. aircraft carriers made a significant contribution to the successful conclusion of the battle.

After the war the Empire MacAlpine was converted to a grain carrier. She was scrapped in Hong Kong in 1970.



## Sharing Pride In Our Young McAlpines—Congratulations Cameron Paul McAlpine



Cameron Paul McAlpine took First Place and the gold medal in the SkillsUSA National Championship in Photography. After winning at the local and state level, he competed (and won) at the national level in Louisville, Kentucky June 19–23, 2017.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry working together to provide educational programs and competitions that support career and technical education. There were over 16,000 in attendance at the National Championship.

Cameron graduated from high school in June and will be attending a film making college in Southern California this fall. He is the son of Paul and Kathy McAlpine of Reno, Nevada. Some of you may have met him as he has attended Clan MacAlpine Society annual meeting dinners in Pleasanton, California and Las Vegas, Nevada. It is great to see our young people taking pride and showing an interest in their Scottish heritage. Way to go, Cameron!

## Mac vs Mc

And why is the “A” capitalized in names like “McAlpine”, but not the “M” in Macmaster? “Mac” is Gaelic for son. Inconsistencies in records are what led to having both Mc and Mac prefixes. Mc is just an abbreviation of Mac, and both can actually be abbreviated further to the much less common M’. The myth that Mac is Scottish and Mc is Irish is simply not true. Similarly, the assertion that Mac names are Protestant while Mc names are Catholic doesn’t have a shred of truth to it. They both just mean “son of” and have no religious connotation.

Mc and Mac names typically contain a second capital letter, but not always. Since proper nouns are capitalized, you would write “son of Alpin,” not “son of alpin.” In the same way, you would usually write MacAlpin rather than Macalpin, but there are many exceptions. Surnames have been around so long that sometimes they get changed, and in some families, the second capital letter was gotten rid of.

Adding to the confusion, some Mc and Mac names don’t include the name of the father, but the father’s profession. Take someone named John McMaster. In this case, John’s father was a master of some sort, therefore John is the “son of a master.” Master is not a proper noun and thus does not need to be capitalized. This practice can be seen in Mcsmith, Mcbaker and Mccook for example. Other Mc and Mac surnames come from some physical feature of the person, such as Macilbowie, which means “son of the blonde man,” while the more recognizable Mackenzie means “son of the fair one.”

There was also a prefix for “daughter of” but these mostly fell out of favor years ago. The daughter prefix was Nc, short for the Gaelic “nighean mhic.” Surnames for women like NcDonald were fairly popular in the 17th and 18th centuries, but after that time there were only a few secluded mentions of them. To a lesser extent, “Vc” was used to denote “grandson of,” so that a person would have two surnames. Now you might have John MacDonald Vcmaster, but this tradition was never incredibly popular and is not as prevalent today.

These surnames have gone through a lot of changes over the years. Aside from Mac being shortened to Mc, in some cases the prefix was dropped altogether. This happened as Macs and Mcs immigrated to other countries and other parts of their names were changed to be more easily pronounced by the people there.

## Clan MacAlpine Society Kilt Pins

Custom designed by Mark McAlpin, incorporating elements of the boar’s head, pine tree, crown, and sword, all of which are linked to the MacAlpines, and appear prominently in MacAlpine Heraldry.



The pins are made of silver weighing approximately 1 ounce -  
Dimensions are 4”x 1 1/8”

\$75 USD payable by PayPal or check  
Please contact

[NotCommonKiltPins@outlook.com](mailto:NotCommonKiltPins@outlook.com) for questions or purchase

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