



# CLAN ROSS

Association of Canada,  
Inc.

Founded 1960

David C. Ross of Ross, Chief

December, 2006

An Cìrean Cèann Cinnidh



**FERGUS HIGHLAND GAMES, 2006**

Andrew Thibodeau, First Vice President, Wendy Ross, Commissioner for Ontario,  
and David Ross of Kincardine carrying the Ross Banner.

# THE CLAN ROSS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA, INC.

**Motto:** *Spem successus alit* (Success nourishes hope)

**Gaelic name:** Clann Aindrias (Clan Andrew)

**Crest:** A hand holding a garland of juniper, proper

**Badge:** Juniper

**Pipe Music:** The Earl of Ross March

**Septs:** (according to Scottish Kith & Kin/Chief of Clan Ross)

Anderson	Denoon	Gear	MacCulloch	Taggart
Ansison	Denune	Gillanders	MacLulich	Tullo
Andrew/s	Dingwall	Hagart	MacTaggart	Tulloch
Corbett/tt	Duthie	Haggart	MacTear	Tyre
Crow/e	Fair	MacAndrew	MacTier	Vass
Croy	Gair	MacCullie	MacTire	Wass

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STANDARD OF CHIEF DAVID CAMPBELL ROSS

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

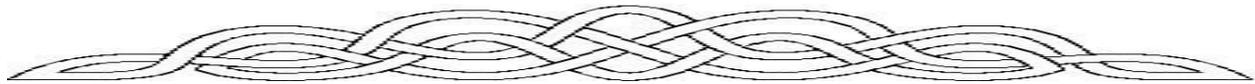
What an amazing surprise on the night we arrived home from Australia to open the October Newsletter and see myself introduced on the second page. The sight of my red jacket jolted me right out of my jet-lag induced stupor. I sincerely thank Shelagh Rayworth, our former editor, for her kind words.

I also thank those who helped to put this "Year-End" edition of the newsletter together: Ian Ross and Barb Fletcher provided the "nuts and bolts" and other articles. Please read Ian's important article concerning membership dues; Andrew Thibodeau forwarded two articles concerning Dr. Alexander Milton Ross in addition to photographs of our AGM in London; Doug Ross provided, among other items, a history lesson on Haggis.

Beginning in 2007, the Clan Ross Association of Canada, Inc., Newsletter will be published four times a year, in February, May, August, and November. We encourage all members to contribute articles, photographs of events, news of upcoming events, jokes, favourite family recipes, and other things Scottish. Please send your contributions to the editor well before the beginning of the month of the newsletter in which you would like your article included. Contact information is provided on the back of the cover page under *Communications*.

I wish you all a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year.

Patricia D. Ross  
Editor



### FREE MEMBERSHIP IN 2007

by Ian Ross, National Secretary

Your National Executive has recently decided that 2007 membership dues will be waived for all existing members (those who were paid up to date for the 2006 year).

Existing members who have already paid their 2007 dues in response to the notice in the last (October/06) newsletter will have their "free year" extended through 2008. Those who have already prepaid future years will have an additional year added. New members joining in 2007 will pay their 2007 dues as normal.

Here is the rationale. The prime use of the annual fees is to fund production and postage of our newsletter, with four seasonal issues expected each year. Unfortunately, recently retiring editor Shelagh Rayworth has been plagued with severe computer problems. As a result, since the May 2005 newsletter, members have only received three issues instead of six ... and these were not on a timely basis. Although these issues were of excellent quality, and a larger size than normal ... for which Shelagh deserves our thanks ... the Executive still feels that members did not entirely get their money's worth.

Treasurer Barbara Fletcher has assured the Executive that this will not cause any financial problems for our Association. Because of the money we have saved on newsletters in 2005 and 2006, we have enough money in the bank to meet all newsletter expenses in 2007 AND fulfill our monetary pledge for the Dr. Alexander Milton Ross plaque to be erected in Ontario as our current National Project.

# **DR. ALEXANDER MILTON ROSS – HIS BIOGRAPHY**

Compiled by Don Ross of Orillia

Dr. Alexander Milton Ross (born December 13, 1832 - died October 27, 1897) is a hidden treasure among Canadian heroes. Born in Belleville, Ontario, his parents were descendants of Scotch Highlanders who came to Canada's Maritimes from Ross-shire in 1758. He was in his lifetime a medical doctor, an explorer, adventurer, secret agent and a naturalist of worldwide distinction ... but it was his work bringing American slaves to safety in Canada in the mid-19th century which stands as a singular devotion to the well-being of humanity.

Ross' parents had discussed the evils of slavery with him when he was a lad, and when he read Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, he made a lifetime commitment to the abolitionist cause. In later years Ross said of Stowe's novel: It excited the sympathies of every humane person who read it in behalf of the oppressed. To me it was a command; and a settled conviction took possession of my mind that it was my duty to help the oppressed to freedom ...

He went heart and soul into the crusade for the abolition of slavery, and became a friend and associate of John Brown, the great abolitionist martyr. As well as helping to organize the Canadian end of the Underground Railroad, Alexander Ross, at great personal risk, traveled in the American South to secretly alert slaves to the existence of the Underground Railroad. As he was an avid ornithologist, plantation owners let him ramble around their estates to study birds, hence his nickname of "The Bird-Man". Many plantation owners were amateur naturalists or Masons themselves, and enthusiastically let a fraternal Ross collect specimens with his shotgun. Using this cover, Ross is credited with developing his own routes of escape which he used to help slaves in the flight to freedom.

His work to this day stands as a monument of care for those who need help. Senator Wade, when Vice-President of the United States, paid a public tribute years afterward to Dr. Ross. Speaking of the abolitionists he said that "No one of their number submitted to greater privations, perils or sacrifices or did more great and noble work than Alexander Ross".

Dr. Ross was also a famous naturalist and ornithologist, whose researches and travels contributed a vast deal of permanent knowledge to that science. He traversed the whole of the Canadian wilderness, collecting and classifying 810 species of birds; 247 species of mammals, reptiles and fish; 3,400 species of insects and 2,200 species of Canadian flora. This, and his numerous books, put the natural history of North America on a basis as complete as that of any continent in the world. He was made a member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1870.

He was generous in contributing his collections to the natural history museums of Paris, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Rome, Athens, Dresden, Lisbon, Tehran and Cairo. In gratitude, he received many knighthoods and awards from foreign rulers. At the time of his death he wore more foreign decorations than did any other Canadian.

Dr. Ross died in Detroit, but his remains were brought to Toronto for internment, where he had resided the last ten years of his life.

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## **CEUD MILE FAILTE**

**A hundred thousand welcomes to new members:**

Gwyneth Pearce and James Murdoch	Toronto, ON
William and Lilly Ross	Chilliwack, BC
Murray and Carol Ross	Winnipeg, MB

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. ALEXANDER MILTON ROSS

By Gillian Ross, cited from *Men of Time*, 1879

Alexander Milton Ross, son of William Ross and grandson of Captain Alexander Ross, who was grandson of the 6<sup>th</sup> and last Earl of Ross.

Born 1832

MD 1855

MA 1867

Dr. Ross has, in recognition of his achievements as a naturalist, been made:

- ❖ Chevalier of the Order of St. Anne of the Russian Empire -1876.
- ❖ Chevalier of the Legion of Honour – France
- ❖ Chevalier of the Order of the Redeemer of the Kingdom of Greece -1876.
- ❖ Knight of the Military Order of the Conception of the Kingdom of Portugal - 1877.
- ❖ Knight of the Socca Order of Albert of the Kingdom of Saxony -1876.

Presented with:

- ❖ Title of Baron by King of Prussia -1876
- ❖ Medal of Merit – Shah of Persia- 1884
- ❖ Decoration Khedive of Egypt - 1884
  
- ❖ And elected to: Académie Française - 1879

Author of:

*Birds of Canada* - 1872

*Butterflies and Moths* - 1873

*Forest Trees of Canada* - 1874

*Mammals, Reptiles and Freshwater Fish of Canada* -1878

*Vaccination – A Medical Delusion* - 1885

*Friendly words to Boys and Young Men – Natural Diet of Man* -1886

*Recollections of an Abolitionist* - 1867

*Ferns and Wild Flowers of Canada* - 1877

*Freshwater Fishes of Canada* - 1878

*Flora of Canada* - 1873

Was befriended by many important people because of his anti-slavery efforts.

\* \* \* \*



Sighted in Sydney, Australia, by Doug and Pat Ross:

### ***The St. Andrew's Cross Spider.***

The St. Andrew's Cross Spider hangs upside down in its web with its legs in pairs positioned along each arm of the cross. The zigzag silk along each arm of the cross reflects ultraviolet light and may be useful for attracting insects, camouflage, or for strengthening the web. Female spiders may grow to 20 mm in length. Males are much smaller and grow only up to four mm long. The bite of this spider, unlike many other spiders in Australia, is not toxic to humans.

Photograph by Doug Ross

## 10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CLAN ROSS (MANITOBA CHAPTER) BURNS EVENING

By Barbara Fletcher

A warm Highland invitation is extended to one and all to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Clan Ross (Manitoba Chapter) Burns Dinner. We offer all the traditional formal elements, but within a most congenial atmosphere ... liberally spiced with Scottish wit and humour.

This popular event will be held on Saturday, January 20, 2007. Once again, we will enjoy the intimately elegant surroundings of the Clubroom at the Fort Garry Hotel on Broadway, along with a full course prime rib dinner from their gourmet kitchens. The ticket price is \$55.00, which includes dinner, door prize, excellent speakers and top-notch entertainment. Cocktails will start at 6:00 p.m. with dinner at 7:00 p.m.

A fine panel of presenters will be on hand and entertainment will include a piper, world class Highland dancers, and the stirring male voices of Brochan Lom. You may wish to participate in our silent auction, and we always ensure intervals to visit and chat.

Obtain your tickets early, as this event always manages to be a sell-out. We are happy to accommodate singles, couples, part or full tables. If you "come a stranger" you will "leave a friend". Contact Denis Fletcher at 257-7511 or Len Perry at 775-7631 for tickets.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 27 - 30, 2006:** Toronto, ON. *Preparing for Hogmanay*. Gibson House. 5172 Yonge Street at Park Home Avenue (between Sheppard and Finch Avenues) from noon to 5 PM. Event Hotline: 416-338-3888. Adult: \$4.25 Senior & Youth: \$2.75 Child (to 12): \$2.25. [A First Footing](#) with entertainment & haggis. 8 to 10:30 PM on December 29 and 30. Reserved Tickets: \$20 in advance. Website: <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/holiday-events.htm#gibson> for further details.

**JANUARY 20, 2007:** Winnipeg, MB. 10th Annual Burns Dinner of the Winnipeg Chapter of Clan Ross. . . . Please see Barbara Fletcher's article above.

**January 26, 2007:** Toronto, ON. Traditional Burns Supper. (The 48<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes and Drums Band will be featured.) Reception at 6:00 PM and Dinner at 7:00 PM. Toronto Granite Club. Dress: Highland Formal, Black Tie, or Business Suit. \$80 per person (tables of 8 or 10). Tickets from Gordon Hepburn (416-881-5780) of The Scottish Studies Society. Website: <http://www.scottishstudies.com/700burnsnight07.htm>

**February 24, 2007:** Winnipeg, MB. 14th Annual Winnipeg Scottish Festival at the Convention Centre, 375 York Street. Website: <http://winnipegscottishfestival.org/> Contact: Velma Davis, Treasurer. Phone: 204-489-4485 Email: [ronvel@mts.net](mailto:ronvel@mts.net)

We encourage you to send information of upcoming events to the editor.

## ATHOLL BROSE RECIPE

By Ian Ross, Keeper of the Atholl Brose

The word “brose” means a mixture, usually of oatmeal and warm water. Atholl Brose is much grander, adding whisky, honey and cream. According to legend, it originated when Blair Atholl castle was under siege by the Earl of Ross. Lord Murray, then Earl of Atholl, feared that his valuable stores of whisky, oats, honey and cream would be captured by the Ross, so he poured them all down his well. The Ross came upon the well and ... it being a particularly hot day ... drank deeply. He fell under the power of the well's intoxicating elixir, promptly passed out and was captured by the Murray as he slept.

There is no historical basis for this tale. In fact, John, 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Ross and 4<sup>th</sup> Lord of the Isles, rebelled against the Scottish King James II, captured the royal castle at Inverness, took Urquhart castle and **successfully** stormed the Castle of Blair Atholl ... dragging Lord and Lady Murray off to Islay as his prisoners.

The more likely origin of this delightful concoction was simple self-defense. At that time Scotch whisky was often crudely distilled “skull-splitter” ... not the elegant single malts and refined blends available today. Mixing it into a brose, to line the stomach and ward off severe hangover, was commonplace. The best I have found is the Atholl Brose, and I highly recommend it for Hogmanay or for your Burns Dinner. Here is a recipe for 2 liters (which will very nicely serve up to 8 Highlanders, 16 Lowlanders or 24 mere mortals):

- 1) A few days before you plan to drink the brose, put 13 oz. (370 grams) of steel-cut (also called pinhead) oats into a large pot. Look in your local health foods store for them. Don't use rolled, quick or instant oats, as they will quickly absorb all the water.
- 2) Get a 2-liter container of spring water and pour 80% in with the oats. The rest of the spring water can be used elsewhere ... but keep the container for holding the brose.
- 3) Stir the oat and water mixture with a large spoon and let it sit for at least 2 hours, but no longer than 3 ... stirring every hour, and just before straining in step 4.
- 4) Strain 27.25 fluid ounces of the resulting opaque oat water from the surface of the oats through a pair of panty hose (ideally Scotch-coloured ... but whatever your wife or girlfriend has available) into the 2-liter container reserved earlier.
- 5) Add 7.5 fluid ounces (325 grams) of liquid honey. It will flow most easily if you pre-warm in a hot water bath (the honey, not you).
- 6) Add 25.5 fluid ounces (1 regular 750 ml. bottle) of Scotch. Don't use your good single malt. Any inexpensive blended Scotch will do.
- 7) “Shake like hell” to dissolve the honey into the whisky and oat water, then put it in your fridge. Give it another good shake every day until the day you use it.
- 8) On the day of use, fill the empty space in the 2-liter bottle with whipping cream (this will be about 7.5 fluid ounces/250 ml.) and again “shake like hell”. Keep it refrigerated until served ... with a last good shake just before pouring.

It is customary to tell your guests the legend of the Atholl Brose as you pour it out (or whatever other fables you have at the ready). Then, invite them to drink a toast to whatever you fancy. If you've invited the right guests there won't be any left over.

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## SCOTTISH HUMOUR

It was cold on the upper deck of the ferry, and the captain was concerned for the comfort of his passengers. He called down below: “Is there a mackintosh down there big enough to keep two young lassies warm?” “No, skipper,” came the reply. “But there's a MacCullough willing to try!”

## THE TRUTH ABOUT HAGGIS

Embellished by J. Douglas Ross

As Burns Night approaches, we are certain to receive numerous email messages about the haggis. Please forgive this serious item in amongst the jokes.

It's time to tell the truth about the haggis, which for too long my friend Hamish has treated as something humorous. He will hate me for doing this, but his myths have actually done more harm than good to the reputation of one Scotland's finest dishes.

For example, here is but one wee example of the blather which my pal Hamish would pass off as an absolute fact about **How to Catch a Haggis**: "Dig a large hole 6 inches deep and 6 inches wide. Cover with bracken to hide the hole from vision. Cover the bracken with fried eggs, a tidbit highly favoured by haggis. The haggis, having spotted and smelt the fried eggs, makes a beeline, totally unaware that yet again a trap has been set. The haggis, being a flightless bird and thick as mince, is captured in the hole."

For years tourists, American ones in particular, have listened as Hamish prattled on with his tales of how there is a haggis hunting season, and embellishing that absurdity with enough nonsense to make



haggis seem to be an imbecilic, three-legged booby in order to appeal to the American sense of cute. Do you believe that it makes any difference when tourists are told that such stories are all drivel, and that our national feast is nothing more than a sheep's stomach filled with hearts, livers and oatmeal? Not one whit!

It's far too late to correct matters, I fear. Hamish and his ilk are doing our country no service by propagating contradictory tales about the haggis, then looking foolish by telling tourists we made it all up to make **them** look idiotic. Nobody wins . . . not us, not the Americans, and certainly not the haggis.

So, hate me if you will, but I must now reveal the entire truth of the haggis. Few know that a haggis was actually rarely seen - - - until Queen Victoria tasted it. She loved it so much that it soon became an essential provision in the royal larders, but the problem was that the supply couldn't meet the demand. When her courtiers scoured the countryside in search of this delicacy, it only made the situation worse, since this attention made haggis so fashionable that the

wealthy must have it for their estates and the common folk began to hoard it in their humble abodes. Haggis became scarce.

It is a fact that the royals developed a real love of Scotland and they were largely responsible for the development of tourism. Alas, the Americans came to Scotland and they wanted haggis too. Thus, by Royal Decree and great expenditure of money, two stories were spread - - - one, that the haggis was a horrible beast - - - the other, that it was a disgusting heap of sheep's stomach and guts. There, you have it; the origins of all haggis myths. The stories even worked for awhile, but in modern times Scots are once more witnessing this Scottish Icon being hunted ILLEGALLY to near extinction outside the Haggis Season. The Royal Decree was doomed to failure. Hamish's tales also proved to be a poor defense for the haggis. What's needed now are proper laws enshrined in an Act of Parliament before the haggis does indeed become a future myth after all.

## AUTHORS OF INTEREST

**Steven Duff** – *Hunter of Dreams: A Story of the Underground Railroad*. 2002.  
Trafford Publishing, Victoria BC

**David R. Ross** – *For Freedom: The Last Days of William Wallace*. 2006.  
Bell & Bain, Glasgow.

## PHOTO GALLERY

### Clan Ross Association of Canada AGM, June, 2006



Ian Ross toasting the haggis  
Photograph by Andy Thibodeau



Gillian Ross sharing a poem  
Photograph by Andy Thibodeau



From the left: Shannon Prince (Curator), Janet Montague Jones, Gillian Ross, Spencer Alexander (Assistant Curator), and Steven Duff at Buxton. Photograph by Andy Thibodeau



Classroom in the original Buxton School House built in 1861. Photograph by Andy Thibodeau



AGM.  
Sunday, June 25, 2006. Photograph by Pat Ross

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