



CLAN ROSS

Association of Canada,
Inc.
Founded 1960

David C. Ross of Ross, Chief

SUMMER ISSUE
AUGUST, 2009

An Cìrean Ceann Cinnidh



Current and past executive of Clan Ross Canada, Inc. at dedication of plaque honouring Dr. Milton A. Ross in Chatham, Ontario. From left, back row: Denis Fletcher (Past National President), Andrew Ross Thibodeau (National President), Shirley Ross, and Denis Ross (National Vice-President). Front row: Barbara Fletcher (Past Treasurer and Membership Chair), Patricia Ross (Newsletter Editor), and Doug Ross (National Webmaster).

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
Andison	Denune	Gillanders	MacLulich	Tullo
Andrew/s	Dingwall	Hagart	MacTaggart	Tulloch
Corbet/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

DR. ALEXANDER MILTON ROSS DAY, JUNE 20, 2009, BME FREEDOM PARK, CHATHAM, ONTARIO

By Andrew Ross Thibodeau, National Clan President

"Family is everything."

This was my opening statement as I stood before about 30 people at the newly opened BME (British Methodist Episcopal) Freedom Park in a beautiful residential corner of Chatham. The Park, named for the site of the first meeting of the BME church here in 1856, had been officially opened in early May. The BME church had its origins and leadership from freed slaves that had come to Canada via the Underground Railroad. At the May opening, the key part of the park to be unveiled was the bust of Mary Ann Shadd, the woman who published Canada's first black newspaper. The goal of the park was to honour heroes of the Underground Railroad and Canada's black history. Over time, new plaques will be added to its short walkways and gardens.

In coordination with the Chatham Kent Black Historical Society, Clan Ross funded a plaque honouring Dr. Alexander M. Ross, Canada's greatest abolitionist. June 20th was the day that Dr. Ross would have some of the recognition he so rightly deserved.



It was sunny and bright as I continued with my opening remarks. The plaque stood behind me, in a garden of flowers, covered by a quilt. The quilt was created based on patterns and ideas from the Quaker and Black quilts of the mid 19th century. When hung outside on a clothes line, these quilts offered clues and directions to escaping slaves heading north to freedom in Canada. An escapee would see a quilt with a certain pattern and know that the home would offer food, shelter and direction for the dangerous trip north.

"Family is everything", I continued, "In all cultures and all races. In Scottish history, the family was called your Clan, and for almost 50 years Clan Ross Canada has been

**Brenda L. Travis, (President Chatham-Kent History Society)
Andy Thibodeau, Gwen Robinson, and Steven Duff.**

promoting family, history, and our ancestral ties to Scotland." After four years of planning, we were at the moment we had looked forward to.

Beside me stood Steven Duff, author, historian and retired teacher. The smile on his face revealed the thrill he was gaining from this moment. For Steven, the journey to this moment was 23 years in the making. In 1986, Steven, a Toronto high school teacher, first heard the incredible story of Dr. A.M. Ross. A student was doing a classroom presentation on a man from Belleville, Ontario, and his contributions to bringing slaves to freedom in Canada via the Underground Railroad. As stated on the plaque itself:

"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 north to freedom.

At night, he would meet groups of trustworthy slaves and describe in detail the best escape route to Canada and the 'stations' on the Underground Railroad. In Ross's words, "To each I gave a few dollars in money, a pocket compass, a knife, and as much cold meat and bread as each could carry with ease".

Steven was inspired by this student's presentation to learn more about this great man. He was surprised to find how little recognition there is for Dr. Ross's incredible contribution to North American history. This formed the basis of his historical novel "*Hunter of Dreams*" which depicted the life and adventures of Dr. Ross as an abolitionist. Now, there he was, standing beside me, at the Canadian Terminus of the Underground Railroad, about to unveil a plaque that he had so long dreamed about seeing as a reality. It was with great excitement that Steven and I each took one side of the quilt and whisked it up and away to reveal the black marble plaque. Simple, beautiful, and easy to read, the plaque carries an excellent image of the doctor and his inspiring story for all to see.

In his remarks, Steven called a hero a person "who faces great inconvenience, or danger, to help the lives of others." With that simple yet perfect description, Dr. A.M. Ross qualifies as a hero to be admired.

Gwen Robinson, curator and founder of the Chatham Black Historical Society, spoke about Dr. Ross in this way. "When we talk about Dr. Ross in our museum, I call him my favourite Canadian ever. Here is a white man, a doctor with all the privileges of society, from Canada, traveling in the American south, under great danger, risking his life so that my ancestors could find freedom in the north."

After the pictures and short speeches at the park, we visited the CK Black Historical Society WISH centre & museum. Gwen introduced us to Leona Wright, Reverend of "Voice of Triumph" ministries. The two of them had created a program to honour the stories and history behind the great black spiritual songs from across the centuries. With Gwen reading the stories and inspiration, Leona would complement each short story by singing a stanza or two from the song being described. This 30 minute program was stunningly powerful and moving, with Leona's songs and Gwen's stories taking us all through 300 years of history. The presentation was worthy of paying money to see in concert or to have broadcast on television ... it was so good. I am so glad I filmed it all!



Leona Wright (L) and Gwen Robinson (R).

On an interesting note ... Leona, a black woman raised in Chatham, had a Scottish grandmother, a McAllister, from Glasgow!

Steven returned to the stage to give us some of his thoughts. He complimented Gwen and Leona, talking about the healing power of music and how the world is bound by stories. He thanked them for revealing both the songs and stories in such a powerful way. In his remarks about his experiences as a historian and author, he told a moving story about when he was asked to speak at the National Freedom Centre in Cincinnati, Ohio. This museum honours the Underground Railroad. "It was a cosmic experience for me," he said,

"speaking, looking out the window, seeing the river at the spot that so many had crossed from Kentucky northward towards freedom."

Attendees for the day included my family, my parents, my wife's parents, past executives Denis & Barbara Fletcher, Clan VP Denis and his wife, Shirley, Doug Ross (Clan Webmaster), Patricia Ross

(Newsletter Editor), Alastair McIntyre from www.electricscotland.com, Jean Hillen, her sister June and husband, Larry Hubert, (their grandmother was a Ross), and Jack Ross and his friend, Ursula. Jack had just arrived back in Canada from Scotland the day before. It was Jean, June, Larry and Jack's first Clan Ross event. Their participation reminded me of the value of promoting our work through the website and newsletter. We organize activities hoping to provide a fun experience for Clan members to come together to enjoy each other's company. As you read about future Clan Ross events, please remember, like these folks did, that these activities are not just for our executive members or the other "regulars" that come to each National Gathering. They are for all of you, our Clan and members of our extended "family".

Clan Ross members, when visiting Chatham, are encouraged to visit the BME Freedom Park and the Dr. Ross plaque. Information can be found at: www.ckblackhistoricalsociety.org

Photographs of this event may be seen at: www.greatclanross.org



THE GATHERING 2009

By Andrew Ross Thibodeau, National Clan President

It was a life highlight that I will never forget ...

Thousands of men and women from over 100 clans, tartans and flags, sun and smiles, gathered in front of the Royal Family's residence, The Palace of Holyrood House, at the base of the Royal Mile.

The pipes play, the call is made to march, we pass the palace, take a big left turn, to face over a mile of thousands of people cheering us on. For the 35 members of Clan Ross who marched in the greatest display of the clans in history, it was a half hour walk that will be priceless in its power ...

2007 ... I am in Scotland for a 5th time, visiting my wife's family who still lives in the birthplace of Clan Ross. At the world wide Gathering of the Hunter Clan, my wife's clan, we learn about plans for a worldwide gathering of all of the clans in 2009. In an email, it stated that the highlight would be a march of the clans, up the Royal Mile, to Edinburgh Castle. As I walked the Royal Mile on that vacation in 2007, I looked up that famous street. I thought "how cool it would be to march its length surrounded by my Clan while wearing the kilt".

Tonight, I look fondly back on the weekend of July 24-26, and it seems amazing that the two years have come and gone and the Gathering is now past.

My family and I made a commitment two years ago to represent Clan Ross Canada at the Gathering, and we were thrilled that Doug & Patricia Ross from Toronto would join us. I soon learned that our American Clan Association was planning a three week tour around the event. So, we combined our efforts with the Americans to purchase a clan tent at the Gathering. I want to state early on my greatest thanks to the USA Clan President, Charles Ross, clanswoman Fran Baumann, and my new friends from the U.S. for showing great cooperation with our Canadian Clan in representing Ross so well.

After a very wet Friday, it was thrilling to wake up Saturday, July 25th, to blue skies. It was a perfect day, reaching the mid 20's Celsius with no rain in sight. I arrived at Holyrood Park by 7:15 a.m. to set up the tent. The enormity of the Gathering site had me in awe. It was a huge field full of tents, displays, and a temporary stadium for the Highland Games with the dominating hills of the Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat hill overlooking it all. The nearby Palace had the Queen's Royal flag flying, indicating that a member of the family was in residence. Prince Charles and Lady Camilla would appear later in the morning.

My first guests, before 9, were our guests of honour, Chief David Ross of Ross and Balnagowan, and his wife Lady Eileen Ross of Ross. Charles Ross, Clan Ross USA president, soon joined us, and guests from around the world started arriving within minutes of the gate opening at 9 am.

Reading our guest list signatures, I count 75 lines of people or couples that signed just on the Saturday! Wow! Thirty signed on Sunday. From Aberdeen and Glasgow, Scotland; Victoriaville,

California; Kelowna, British Columbia; Germany; Newport, Australia; and Auckland, New Zealand, the world came to Edinburgh!

Spending time with Chief David and Lady Eileen was simply an inspiration. Their genuine interest in other people, their quick insights on Scottish history and geography, and the ease at which they conversed with Clan members was so impressive. With people literally lining up to shake their hand, have a word, and get a photo, we watched the two of them handle it all with grace and humour. People were really touched that they could get a photo with the chief and his wife, and we frequently heard the comment "wait till my father or mother sees this!"



As a final indication of their commitment ... the clan tents were supposed to "close" at 6 p.m. on Saturday to allow people time to get ready for the march of the clans...Chief David and Lady Eileen stayed until 6:45 pm chatting with two families who had come by after 6 p.m... One family, Roddy (wearing his Hunting Ross kilt) and Alison Tulloch of Linlithgow, Scotland, and their three children (one who's first name was Ross) were not planning on walking the parade. After speaking with the Chief and Lady Eileen, they changed their mind and joined us. The boys had just a blast walking up the mile with us!

Left to right: Charles Ross, Chief David Ross of Ross and Balnagowan, and Andy Ross Thibodeau at the Ross tent.

Sunday was slower because the weather was variable, with some sprinkles, but it held out well enough that no one really got wet. By mid afternoon it was sunny and warm. Also, with the late night on Saturday, the entire park didn't get rocking until past 11 am. The chief and his wife could not join us on Sunday

Here are a few of the highlights of the people we met.

Nicola Ross Wood (maiden name Ross), was the great X4 granddaughter of Sir James Clark Ross, the man who discovered the North magnetic pole with his uncle and led the first expedition that discovered Antarctica. What a thrill to meet the descendent of such a phenomenal Ross! Chief David was very familiar with her family and where they lived and they had a nice conversation. The Rossler family from Germany, who were making their 6th visit to Scotland, loved all things Scottish, and because the name "Ross" is in their last name he had a piece of Hunting Ross tartan up in his home.

Inger, a woman from Norway, who was related to the Lockhart family that owned Balnagown Castle from 1711 until the 1940's, visited.

John & Maria, from Ross, California, visited.

A young family from Oklahoma, whose mother was a Ross, visited. The Chief revealed that the three eagle feathers in his cap (symbolizing his position as a chief) were given to him from someone in that state.

Chatting with James Shoemark (his father's mother was a Ross), from the nearby town of Dalmeny, and commenting to him that I heard that the best preserved pre-reformation church in Scotland was in his home town. He laughed and said, "Go to the church, go across the street to No.5, knock on the door - my father is the curator for the church. It's closed during the week, but he will let you in for a look ... just tell him you are Ross!"

James revealed that he lives in another nearby town, Tranent. The high school is "Ross High School", named after his great grandfather, who was the Provost of this town about 100 years ago.

Looking at the pictures of Balnagown Castle, Steven Michie told me that his grandfather was the chauffeur to "the Lady Ross" who lived in the castle in the 1950's.

David Ross, reporter for Scotland, part of the Scotsman paper, interviewed me on Saturday. I was thrilled to read the Sunday paper and see two paragraphs on his interview with myself.

Neil Ross, music producer, whose latest act is the well known in Europe group, "Red Hot Chili Pipers". That's right ... Pipers. Featuring drums, keyboard, bass & electric guitar, the 3 pipers fuse rock with the Highland sound that had the crowd rocking on Sunday.

A young boy, living in the Edinburgh suburb of Loanhead, came by just to say he loves Ross. Why? Rosses Candy, found in all of the local shops, especially for tourists, is made in his town. I will do research in the future on the origin of that company's name.

Joan Farquharson, who in 1975 was hired as an interior decorator to work on a room for Mr. Fayed at Balnagown Castle, came by.

The family of Britain's oldest man came by because he was a Tulloch. He was 106. He just recently gained that distinction when the world's oldest man, a British WW1 veteran, had just passed that week.

I had a nice talk with Nova Scotian Olive Tingley, whose sister-in-law was Catherine McLeod (mom's maiden name was a Ross). Catherine's family was in land development in Sydney, Cape Breton. When they oversaw the building of a subdivision, Catherine honoured her Ross heritage by having streets named Tain, Cromarty, and Shandwick.

A particular pleasure for Chief David, Lady Eileen, and all of us, was the number of local Rosses that participated in the weekend. It was the great question going into the Gathering ... how would the Scots react? The answer ... with enthusiasm! Our guest book showed Scots from all over this country participating. However, where Edinburgh really shone was that evening's parade.

The mustering of the clans outside of Holyrood was a sight that is difficult to describe. As the largest gathering of people in tartan in history, it was a sea of thousands of people assembling under white signs bearing the names of 140 clans. Clan Ross assembled in the last of five huge groups. The parade was in alphabetical order and we were behind all of those last names that start with M. (Look at a book of Clan names ...M takes about half the book!)

The advantage of this was that I had 45 minutes to wait at the base of the Royal Mile and watch the procession from letters A to H. It's difficult to write how it felt as the first pipe band leading the parade took up the start of the march with an inspiring "Scotland the Brave." The clans-people cheered and the parade was on. I was proud to hear that the Canadian Massed Pipes and Drums was the lead band, and would later conclude the pageant that night.

The parade was led by "Alba", the old Gaelic name for Scotland, and included anyone who had no clan affiliation but had purchased the Passport to participate. Anderson, a family name often associated with Clan Ross, soon followed. While here, I learned that there is a strong Anderson Clan association here in the UK. They told me that there is no real proof or reason for the Andersons to be linked to Clan Ross. With that new knowledge, I would now recommend that Andersons join the UK Family association.

My wife, two daughters, and in-laws were marching with their Clan, the Hunters. Finally, after a half hour, they appeared. By this time, I was friendly with my neighbouring parade watchers, and they struck up a particularly big cheer for the Hunters ... thanks to my encouragement! It was so cute to see the beaming smiles on my daughters, wife, and family, as strangers cheered them up the Royal mile, while I walked alongside taking pictures. For a small family lowland clan, the Hunters always have fun events with impressive attendance. I feel blessed to have married into such a great group of people. My father and mother-in-law are an inspiration to me when it comes to Clan Association leadership. Check out their amazing website at www.clanhuntercanada.com, managed by my talented father in law, Tom Hunter.

By far the largest clan was the "Donald" clan, including all of the clan groups like MacDonald. A rough guess would be over 300 marched with them. At the tent area, they had four of the huge five by five metre tents all attached in one amazing display. (Ross and most others had three by three metre

tents.) They claim almost three million Clan members worldwide; they have four chiefs and one high chief.

I returned to the 35 assembled Rosses from Canada, England, Scotland, New Zealand, Australia, and from all over the USA. A German, (who was born in Scotland, Charles Ross) joined us about half way up the Royal Mile.



After starting the parade around 7:45, it was nearing 8:45 when our group began its march past Holyrood to the big left turn, and up one of the most famous streets in the world. We started on a great note as the group I stood with earlier recognized me and gave us a huge cheer. When talking with Rosses later, all commented that the next 50 minutes was a highlight of their life. The incline of the Royal Mile seemed to affect no one's energy as we smiled, waved, cheered and strode with pride in our Scottish heritage. It was amazing that people yelled out "yeah! Ross!" With no barriers for most of the route, the crowd stepped out onto the street

for photos and high fives. Inspired, I started yelling out accomplishments of our Clan to the audience. "We discovered Antarctica! We discovered the North Magnetic Pole! We saved lives from Malaria! We sewed the first American Flag! A Ross signed the Declaration of Arbroath and the Declaration of Independence! We had the wrong clan chief for over 200 years!" That last one produced gales of laughter from our marchers. (It's true, from 1711 to 1960, a Lockhart "Ross" was called our chief, but they were an unrelated family that had purchased Balnagown Castle. With our current Chief, David Ross of Ross, everything is as it should be.)

Another six people joined our march along the way, the crowds getting rowdier, larger, and closer as we neared the top one third of the Royal Mile. We loved how people waved to us from open 2nd and 3rd floor windows and gathered in front of pubs, beers in hand, cheering us on. A few times the parade would stop for a few minutes, and I would chat with the crowd. I always had special energy for those showing a Canadian flag! My favourite saying as I walked was telling the crowd, "thanks for waiting for the Rosses after all of those M's!" It was impressive ... most people were watching from before 7 pm till around 9:45 when Clan Young finally brought up the rear of the parade at the Edinburgh Castle Esplanade.

The evening ended with a 45 minute spectacle of actors, music and grand drama that laid out Scotland's role in history and its homeland status for millions of people worldwide. Called "Aisling's Children", it was directed by a Ross! The ending featured the Canadian Massed Pipe bands parading out of the castle playing "Mari's Wedding". This is one of my favourite tunes played by the Cape Breton band The Rankin Family. Ending with Scotland the Brave, they marched us out of the Esplanade and into the cool evening with memories of the greatest clan event ever.

*Towering in gallant fame,
Scotland my mountain hame,
High may your proud standards gloriously wave,
Land of my high endeavour,
Land of the shining river,
Land of my heart for ever,
Scotland the brave.*

From Scotland the Brave ...

KINCARDINE, ON. 10TH ANNUAL KINCARDINE SCOTTISH FESTIVAL & HIGHLAND GAMES

July 3 - 5, 2009

Photos submitted by Shirley Ross



Back row from left: Wendy Ross (Ontario Commissioner), Don Ross (Denis's son) Denis Ross (1st National Vice-President), Ida (Don's wife). Front row: Brandon Harris (Shirley's grandson), Nichole & Danielle Ross (Denis's grandchildren).



Brandon Harris and Danielle Ross carrying the banner with Denis Ross and Nicole behind.

CEUD MILE FAILTE

A hundred thousand welcomes to our new members

Margaret Herdman, D'Escousse, Nova Scotia
Tom & Emilie Ross, London, Ontario
Kathryn Zuj, Elora, Ontario
Joanne Ross-Zuj, Elora, Ontario
Gregg Fraser Ross & Sharon Ross, Mississauga, Ontario
Brenda Ross & Michael Campbell, Brampton, Ontario

UPCOMING EVENTS

From: <http://www.greatclanross.org>

August 22, 2009: Almonte, ON. 26th North Lanark Highland Games at the North Lanark Agricultural Society fairgrounds. (613)256-2064 ext. 221. Website

September 5, 2009: Calgary, AB. Calgary Highland Games. Foothills Athletic Park. (403)280-9670. <http://www.calgaryhighlandgames.org/>

September 6, 2009: Canmore, AB. 19th Annual Canmore Highland Games. Centennial Park. (403)678-9454. <http://www.canmorehighlandgames.ca/>

September 6, 2009: Toronto, ON. 18th Annual Scottish Cruise aboard the Sailing Ship "Empire Sandy". Times: 11:30 AM and 2:00 PM from pier 27 at Queen's Quay West Harbourfront. Celebrate the voyage of the Ship Hector. Further information at the Scottish Studies Society <http://www.canmorehighlandgames.ca/>

September 9, 2006: Fort Erie, ON. Fort Erie Celtic Festival (formerly Loch Sloy Highland Games & Friendship Festival). Old Fort Erie. (905)894-8905.

September 10, 2006: Trenton, ON. Scottish/Irish Festival. Information: 613-392-2841.

September 13, 2009: Toronto, ON. The 6th Beach Celtic Festival at Kew Gardens. Phone Toll Free: 1-888-699-1549 <http://www.thecelticfestival.com/>

October 9 -17, 2009: Cape Breton Island, NS. 12th Celtic Colours International Festival in various communities throughout Cape Breton. Phone: 1-877-285-2321. <http://www.celtic-colours.com/>

November, 2009: Québec, QC. The 78th Fraser Highlanders of Fort Saint Andrews, Québec, will celebrate their Scottish patron-saint at Québec High School on Rue Belvédère at 6:00 P.M. Tickets (\$30 each) limited to 60 persons (first come basis). Contact: Marc Lestage 418-843-1967.

November 28, 2009: Toronto, ON. St. Andrew's Ball, co-sponsored by the 48th Highlanders and the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto. Held at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Reception begins at 6:00 PM. Phone: (416)449-8070 <http://www.standrews-society.ca/ball.cfm>

November 30: ST. ANDREW'S DAY. Scots around the world celebrate this day to honour the Patron Saint of Scotland. The Scottish Saltire of St. Andrew is a diagonal white cross on an azure blue background. Traditionally, Advent begins on the Sunday nearest St. Andrew's Day and lasts from 21 to 28 days. The Order of St. Andrew or the Most Ancient Order of the Thistle is an order of Knighthood established by King James VIII of Scotland, and it is restricted to the King or Queen and sixteen others.

December 1, 2009: The 49th ANNIVERSARY of The CLAN ROSS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA in terms of its continuous existence since the meeting of "revitalized founders" in Montreal on December 1, 1960, the day after St. Andrew's Day. Help us to celebrate our 49th Anniversary by encouraging another Ross or Ross Sept to become a member.



ANOTHER BENEFIT OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Discover the new service recently offered to Clan Ross Canada by Alastair McIntyre of *Electric Scotland*. Details are posted in the Member's Section of our Association's website. It's free!

Deadline for submissions to the Fall Newsletter is October 29, 2009.