

TO THE CLAN MacGILLIVRAY FAMILY CONVENTION

My name is Iain MacGillivray and I wish to be considered for the position of Commander of the Clan MacGillivray. I believe myself to be a suitable candidate for this role, vital to the continuing identity of the clan throughout the world, and I pledge to be an enthusiastic ambassador for the Clan's values of kith and kin, friendship and comradeship.

I was born in 1987 in Inverness and raised on a mixed farm in Scotland owned by my family, and have worked on it for the best part of my life, my main occupation being shepherd and harvester. Pride and passion for the Clan and its history run deep in my veins.

My father Duncan was, and still is, Piper to the Clan MacGillivray and took the family to all the Clan gatherings in Dunmaglass when we were young and to Culloden Battlefield, where its chief, Alexander, died leading the Clan Chattan and the Highland charge. Our mother, Jane-Marie, used to tell us stories of famous MacGillivrays who had migrated to her parts of North America - such as William McGillivray of the fur-trading North West Company, and Alexander McGillivray of the Creek Nation.

We were immersed in this rich heritage from a tender age, so I appreciate the importance of shared experiences and blood ties between Clan members throughout the world - and preserving clan traditions in Scotland.

I am deeply involved in Scottish music, stemming from my father being a musician, and am strongly attached to my Scottish culture and heritage. I love Scottish/Celtic music and I play the bagpipes, fiddle, whistle and bodhran, the spoons and snare drum.

I went through Gaelic Medium Education in Craighill Primary School and Tain Royal Academy. I then went on to further education in Scotland, studying Scottish Music and the Gaelic language at Benbecula College, Uist, between 2006-07, then at Sabhal Mor Ostaig in Skye, between 2007-08, where I developed a passion for the language and its revival. While there, I also did a three-month teaching placement at Eriskay Primary School, assisting with Gaelic in the classroom.

More recently, between 2012-14, I completed an intensive media training course under BBC Alba through Sabhal Mor Ostaig, studying Gaelic and Television Broadcasting, where I created 4 short films with programme material of personal subject choice: 'Remembrance Day', 'St. Columba's Anniversary', 'Gaelic Bible Translation' and 'The Story of Ewan MacPhee: Scotland's Last Outlaw'.

Between 2008- 2012, I studied in the United States at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, Minnesota, where I graduated with a BA in International Studies and minors in Business Management and Spanish. I also won 1st place in the 'College of St. Scholastica Talent Show' in 2008, performing an array of Scottish instruments, and also won 'Mr. College of St. Scholastica' for personality, talent and charisma.

I had the honour of playing on stage for my graduation ceremony in 2012 at the AmsOil Ice Hockey Arena. Kilted and in my graduation robes, I piped alongside my father and three brothers before an audience of some 8000 including a panel of professors, directors and board of trustees. This was truly a moment to be cherished.

As well as being a great academic experience, those four years turned out to be a wonderful cultural voyage, as exemplified by the following:

As a member of the Duluth Scottish Heritage Society, I played at various ceremonial events such as Labor Day, Memorial Day, Remembrance Day, Kirkin of the Tartans, St. Andrew's Night, Burns Night, Tartan Day, and also the Minnesota Scottish Fair and Highland Games. I joined the Twin-Cities Scottish Society in Minneapolis and a Celtic folk group named 'McInnis' Kitchen' which provided Scottish musical entertainment at statewide events.

In sport, I played football for various teams such as Benbecula FC, Sleat FC in Skye and also the College of St. Scholastica in Minnesota. I still enter Highland Games athletics competitions, and am current champion at a few.

I have been involved in church and community service. At my local Catholic Church in Tain, I used to altar serve, and at CSS in Minnesota, I was a Eucharistic Minister for Mass during Sunday student services. On occasion I would also play music with the church choral group.

Every Spring Break for four years I went on voluntary service trips through the college. In 2009, I was fortunate to be part of a Christian Appalachian Project that went to Jackson, Kentucky, where I helped to renovate houses for poor people in poverty-stricken areas of the rural countryside. In 2010, I went on a similar trip to Memphis, Tennessee, and in 2011 to San Diego, California, where I played my instruments to give spirits a lift. I maintain friendships with people from all over the world, particularly with Scots-Americans, Australians and Brazilians and relatives in Canada.

Last year I assisted with the bus tour of MacGillivray country at the International Gathering, gave a PowerPoint presentation of Clan history and played the pipes during the entertainment session. Now I am preparing a YouTube film aimed at people interested in their Scottish ancestry.

I am very proud of my Clan MacGillivray roots and their world-wide associations and will endeavour to foster and grow them. I believe that my own international outlook and experience will help me in that task and make me a suitable candidate to hold the privileged position of your Commander. I will do my utmost to be worthy of any trust placed in me.

Iain MacGillivray