

wandering the Duirinish peninsula, the “Glendale Coo”. They barely acknowledge the presence of the road surface or the small cars of Britain, over which a few of them tower. Proceed very slowly and steadily when you encounter these gentle domestic beasts, and they will eventually – albeit begrudgingly – get out of the way.

Also, there is an abundant deer population throughout Scotland, especially in areas where road warnings are posted. These animals have become bolder during the course of recent harsh winters, and have moved closer to the human population. Beware of deer crossing the roads, especially at twilight as that is the time when they move to new feeding areas.

An incident involving injury to an animal should be reported to the local police.

Midges (the only truly dangerous animal on Skye)

Welcome to the real top of the food chain!

Midges are tiny, aggressive biting insects that seem to be unbothered by most forms of bug repellent. If you are prone to allergic reactions to insect bites, then bring along your antihistamine medication. Over-the-counter products that seem to work as repellents include:

- Avon's “Skin So Soft” and its retail clones (from the USA and Canada),
- Rid (from Australia), and
- “Bite Free” (and its companion after-bite medication, “Bite Soother”), natural and effective Scottish-made products for dealing with the midges.

We will try to make insect repellent and after-bite medication available along with Clan MacLeod merchandise.

6. “HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS”, CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

As anyone would observe from watching our events at Parliament, nearly one in three people who attend have volunteered their time in some capacity, to make it all run smoothly. The smallest efforts, such as staffing the information point for an hour, or giving someone a ride back to their B&B, can make a big difference in a fellow MacLeod's day. Contact the Parliament Coordinator if you would like a special assignment.

In 2010, there are also Parliament activities that can help generate excitement before your trip, and add to the fun:

- locate memorable items for the silent auction,
- volunteer to help with your National Tea or the Taste-in Dinner on Thursday in Dunvegan,
- design a revolutionary tartan garment for the “Tartan Challenge” on Tuesday in Dunvegan,
- rehearse your “ceilidh idol” performance, or
- share Parliament information with family and Clansfolk.



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<http://www.clanmacleod.org>

Parliamentarian's Handbook

16th Clan MacLeod Parliament

Pre-Parliament trip to Assynt, 21-24 July 2010

Parliament week in Dunvegan 24-31 July 2010

North Room Group Service Project in Assynt 17-24 July 2010



Welcome!

Along with other MacLeods, you are about to begin a fascinating adventure in Scotland. You will have an opportunity to explore your heritage, visit places of renowned natural beauty, and greet both old and new friends.

Parliament is an event run by volunteers -- by MacLeods for MacLeods. There is a great deal of preparation and many daily chores required to make it run smoothly. We are constantly learning how to do new things, and how to do old things better. Parliament also involves many local businesses and members of the island and rural communities. In some cases, the influx of so many Parliamentarians will stress these businesses and other local resources. You can be sure that during Parliament there will always be one or two memorable situations where an extra bit of patience and humor will help get us through the day.

Cooperation, consideration, and care for each other can only enhance the time we spend together. This booklet contains information that will help facilitate an enjoyable experience for everyone.

What's in this booklet?

This booklet includes general information that will help you get ready for your trip to Scotland. This is one of a group of booklets that can be downloaded from the Parliament pages of the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies' website, <http://www.clanmacleod.org/clan-parliament/clan-parliament-2010/parliament-publications.html>.

If you are familiar with the leaflets that were printed for Parliament 2006, the information from the following 2006 publications has been updated and added to this more comprehensive "Parliamentarian's Handbook":

- Travel tips
- Parliamentarian etiquette and cultural guide
- Why we do what we do

If you have further questions, if you believe there are mistakes in this booklet, if there is additional information that you think should be added, or if you would like printed copies of this booklet, please contact:

Dorna Caskie, Parliament 2010 Coordinator
 268 Washington Street
 Groveland, MA 01834 USA
 Tel: +1 (978) 373-7826
 Fax: +44 131 777 8017
 Email: parliament@clanmacleod.org

5.2 Weather

There are many Internet weather sources that report on conditions in Scotland. For instance, check the Herald newspaper at <http://www.heraldscotland.com/services/weather/ullapool> or Wunderground at <http://www.wunderground.com> (search for "Portree, Scotland"). Usually, dress for "cool summer" weather is appropriate in Scotland at this time of year. Waterproof (or easily dried) comfortable shoes and outerwear that will also stand up to the wind are good to have. A small folding umbrella may become your constant companion.

The latitude of Skye is 57 degrees north, the same as Moscow, Russia and parts of Hudson's Bay in Canada, but the Gulf Stream tempers the weather. Still, it can be very changeable - even within one day. The predicted temperature during Parliament is about 55-60°F or 12-16°C, but we did have a genuine heat wave during Parliament 2006!

Be happily prepared for long summer evenings and fantastic sunsets. The full moon will take place on 26 July 2010.

5.3 Local flora and fauna

Plants

In general, there are no dangerous plants to avoid on Skye, although anyone who has been roughed up by a bunch of prickly thistles might disagree. Do not consume wild berries or other plants unless you are knowledgeable about their genus and any possible treatment - although unlikely - with pesticides.

On four legs

Sheep rule. Skye is a rural community with a strong agricultural component. There are many areas where the sheep roam without benefit of fences. This means that our woolly friends may be travelling on, crossing, or even napping on the pavement. You may encounter sheep day or night, so be mindful of their presence. They generally will scatter to get out of your way.

However, there is an especially colourful group of cattle whom you may encounter

SUN			MOON	
☉			☾	
July			July	
Rise	Set	Day	Rise	Set
h m	h m		h m	h m
0454	2210	17	1331	2325
0456	2208	18	1501	2339
0458	2207	19	1630	2358
0459	2205	20	1753	
0501	2203	21	1905	0025
0503	2201	22	2002	0105
0505	2200	23	2043	0159
0507	2158	24	2110	0307
0509	2156	25	2128	0422
0511	2154	26	2142	0540
0512	2152	27	2152	0657
0514	2150	28	2200	0813
0516	2148	29	2208	0927
0518	2146	30	2216	1041
0520	2144	31	2225	1156

ask other friends to join you as they later enter the restaurant, but this can create a service nightmare for establishments with limited seating and smaller kitchens. In a less busy time, this might be less of a problem, but during Parliament week it can create a real burden for kitchen and wait staff.

Scottish hospitality works both ways

Hospitality in the highlands is nearly a sacred tradition. You can be assured that your hosts will do everything they can for your comfort and safety. But it is also important to remember that you are a guest in your hosts’ home. In addition to managing family life, your hosts may have other employment obligations besides operating their B&B. Please respect your hosts’ requests concerning smoking, parking, noise, meals, and other uses of the accommodation’s facilities.

5. OTHER FEATURES OF THE SCOTTISH PART OF THE PLANET

5.1 Time zones

All of Scotland is within the Greenwich Mean Time zone (GMT), and all of Scotland practices daylight savings time in the summer. So, to the east of Scotland:

- France and Germany are 1 hour AHEAD of Scotland
- South Africa is 2 hours AHEAD of Scotland
- Western Australia is 8 hours AHEAD of Scotland
- Sydney and Melbourne are 11 hours AHEAD of Scotland
- New Zealand is 13 hours AHEAD of Scotland

and to the west of Scotland:

- Toronto and the east coast of the USA are 5 hours BEHIND Scotland
- Chicago and Houston are 6 hours BEHIND Scotland
- California and Vancouver are 8 hours BEHIND Scotland

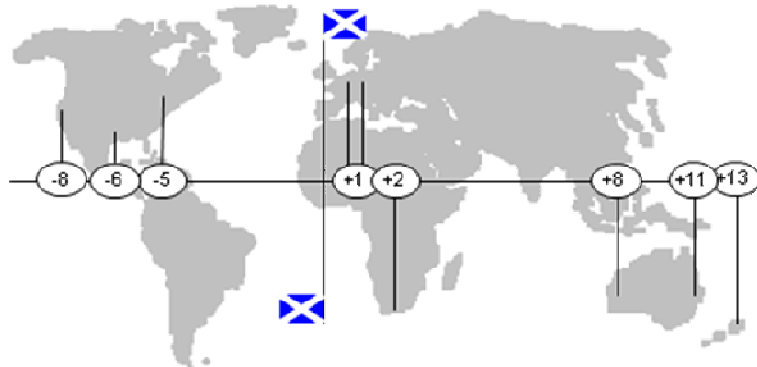


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1. WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO AT PARLIAMENT

1.1 Why is there a Parliament?

Once upon a time, Dame Flora -- our great Chief of the MacLeods -- invited Clansfolk from all over the world to gather at Dunvegan for a "Parliament", to talk about the Clan. At first, Parliament was small and included only a speaker and a few country delegates. The early Parliaments were held every three years. Later, attendance at Parliament grew to include hundreds of people, and Clan Societies were established representing several more countries. Parliament is now held every four years in Dunvegan, with interim gatherings in North America and the Pacific.

As the Parliament programme has grown, being a first-timer in Dunvegan has become a little more overwhelming. Parliament is a very busy time for many of us. There are formal activities to engage the larger number of people attending, as well as many ad hoc get-togethers and mini-reunions. Senior members of the various Clan MacLeod Societies are frequently tied up in Parliament tasks or business meetings and are not always available to demystify the proceedings.

The purpose of this section of the booklet is to tap the knowledge of the Wise Ones and share the origins of some of the events on this year's Parliament programme. It is not a substitute for the many fine books and pamphlets that chronicle the history of the Clan Societies, MacLeod lore, or Parliament itself. And you should never hesitate to ask questions of your fellow Clansfolk!

Remember that once upon a time, we all came to Parliament for the first time. We have all quietly worried how well we would dance at the ceilidh, forgot how to spell Borreraig, got lost on the way to Orbost, or suddenly found ourselves standing shock-still on the main street of Dunvegan, staring in awe at the MacLeod Tables. So if you feel a little overwhelmed, you have joined a fine tradition!

1.2 Who chooses the activities?

While business activities at Parliament are centered on issues brought forward by our National and Regional Councils, much of the "work" at Parliament is dedicated to having fun. Activities can be recommended or requested by anyone, and it is up to the Parliament Coordinator -- with the support of the ACMS Council and many volunteers -- to figure out how to fit it all in. In general, the activities at Parliament in Dunvegan are chosen because they take us to sites of historic significance to the Clan MacLeod, they allow us to enjoy places of natural beauty, or they have been popular events at previous Parliaments. Some Parliaments include an additional excursion to other MacLeod lands, as did our fantastic visit to Lewis and Harris in 2006, and likewise the upcoming Assynt pre-Parliament trip in 2010.

4.2 Getting around

Transportation to and from events - please use the buses

Buses or motor coaches are provided for transportation to and from major Parliament events. It is in fact possible to attend Parliament without renting a car. There are many serious practical reasons for this, including: Skye's narrow roads cannot accommodate the dozens of private automobiles that may be carrying only one or two people; we would like to reduce pollution and consumption of fuel resources; parking is always limited; and an excess of private cars can impair the movement of fire and medical emergency vehicles. So please, plan to use our buses whenever possible.

Pedestrians, be alert!

It is important for pedestrians to use the sidewalks and to cross streets only at designated places. In Scotland, pedestrians typically don't "jaywalk" or wander in the road, so drivers may not expect to see you there. Please especially be sure that young children are supervised when walking in the village.

4.3 Softening our footprint on local businesses

While you will find that local establishments welcome our business, it is helpful to remember that this is already a hectic time of year for our hosts, and Parliament sometimes introduces additional complications. We can distinguish ourselves by being just a little bit more aware and considerate of the effort that the local Scottish communities make to accommodate the invasion of MacLeods!

Please note that the detailed Parliament programmes (both Assynt and Dunvegan) will include a list of local sponsors, as well as the businesses that have contributed to our events. Please patronise these businesses whenever possible -- either in 2010, or perhaps on a future visit of your own to Scotland.

Local business hours

Although Parliament takes place in busy tourist areas, these areas are still largely rural. Sunday business closings are not uncommon, and some businesses close earlier on weekdays than you might expect. It's best to check posted business hours, and plan ahead.

Dinner for two... or twelve?

Dinner reservations are strongly recommended during Parliament week. Please be prompt so your restaurant can be of service to as many of your fellow Clansfolk as possible.

Also, please keep the size of your party down to the number of folks for whom you made the reservation and with whom you originally arrived. You may be tempted to

4. ETIQUETTE AND CULTURAL GUIDE

4.1 All about you

Name tags

Remember to wear your name tag at all times. Although you may be well-known at home or within your national Clan Society, there are many people around the world who have not had the pleasure of meeting you yet.

Parliament "dress code"

Most Parliament activities require functional and not glamorous clothing. The village setting is informal, and the outdoor activities are best enjoyed with casual clothing. Kilts and tartan are encouraged at any time, dressed up or dressed down according to the event. Ladies may wear skirts or slacks as they prefer. In the long run, what you wear doesn't matter as long as you are willing to get up and dance!

The weather on Skye is variable, so it may be tempting to bring a lot of clothing. There is an old joke about packing for travel, which says you should first pack your suitcase -- then open it up, take out half of everything you packed, and close the suitcase again. Then you are ready to go.

Consumption of alcohol

The legal limit for drinking and driving is 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 milliliters of blood (80mg/100ml). This is equivalent to 35 micrograms in 100 milliliters of breath. You can expect these limits to be enforced.

Persons under the age of 18 are not allowed to purchase or to be served alcohol in Scotland. This law will be observed at all Parliament functions. Young MacLeods should expect this law to be enforced in all public establishments, in Dunvegan and elsewhere on Skye.

Be aware that businesses that serve intoxicated persons or underage persons can lose their license to serve alcohol. And as always, the best thing to do is to refrain from drinking alcohol if you have to drive.

Trash and the three R's (reduce, reuse, recycle)

Please dispose properly of your own personal trash, especially smoking materials. In some parts of Scotland, you can be fined £50 for dropping cigarette butt litter.

Parliament organizers will make every effort to reuse or recycle catering and other supplies. Where possible, it would help if you could reduce your need for fresh supplies. Using a personal coffee cup or your own cutlery can make a difference, especially over the course of a week.

1.3 An activity sampler

1.3.1 PLACES OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE TO THE CLAN MACLEOD

Borreraig

The MacCrimmons are the hereditary pipers to the Chiefs of the Clan MacLeod. Many years ago, there was college of piping at Borreraig, where the MacCrimmons and others were trained. It took many years of study and practice to master the pipes. (It still does!) Some stones from the old buildings can still be found, marking the ruin of the original school. In the 1930s, a large stone cairn was erected to commemorate the cultural contributions of the MacCrimmons.

When we visit the cairn at Borreraig, we acknowledge the long relationship between the MacLeods and the MacCrimmons. The trip to Borreraig gives us a wonderful opportunity to enjoy both the spectacular views across Loch Dunvegan as well as to listen to live music in a magnificent location. The custom is to invite a MacCrimmon piper to lead this event.

Assynt

Assynt boasts some of the wildest and most haunting landscapes in Scotland. Located in the far northwest highlands, this area is dominated by spectacular mountain scenery and an almost other-worldly atmosphere. These have been MacLeod lands for a long time. Torquil, the famous son of Leod, was granted the "four penny land" of Assynt sometime around 1343. Torquil eventually controlled Lewis, Raasay, Assynt, Waternish and a portion of Skye, along with territory on the Western shore of Scotland. His family became known as the MacLeods of Lewis.

In 2010, our pre-Parliament trip to Assynt will allow us to explore these "DNA altering" vistas, to meet the current day Assynt community, and to explore the historic sites associated with the ancestors of many of our Clan members today. The official website of the locally-managed Assynt Tourism Group <http://www.assynt.info> offers a good introduction to the area. More information about Assynt will be in the "Parliament 2010 Assynt Program".

Isle of Raasay

One of the MacLeod septs is Raasay, which now has its own Chief. Raasay has a fascinating history, typical of a smaller Scottish island. The Raasay visit is traditionally one of Parliament's most popular activities. More information about Raasay will be in the "Parliament 2010 Dunvegan Program".

Orbost

Orbost is traditionally "MacLeod territory" but has changed hands in recent years.

The Orbst community has several interesting public projects underway, including the possible construction of a "Emigration Wall" using stones brought back to Skye by the descendents of Scottish emigrants scattered overseas by the Clearances. More information about Orbst will be in the "Parliament 2010 Dunvegan Program".

The Norman Magnus Hall and Dame Flora Lounge

When Norman Magnus was Chief, he had the original Village Hall erected and gave it to the community. It has subsequently been expanded by other groups to include the Sports Hall, parking, public toilets, and other facilities.

Within the present Village Hall, there is a room dedicated to the memory of Dame Flora. After she passed away in 1976, the ACMS paid to have this room, built, furnished, and decorated. Make sure you visit this lovely memorial.

1.3.2 THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF SKYE (ONLY A SAMPLE!)

Climbing MacLeod's Tables

"Just do it" -- experience the distinctive Skye terrain and memorable views.

Waternish, Trotternish, Duirinish, Uiginish, Minginish...

In Norse, "nish" or "ness" means headland. The "nishes" of Skye form the spreading wings of the island. Each has a slightly different character.

Coral Beaches

The Coral Beaches are famous for their special "sand", which is not really sand at all. Rather, it is made of tiny bits of crushed coral, thousands of miles away from tropical waters. Legend says that if you can count 12 little pink cowrie shells on the beaches, it means you will return to Skye within a year. (But please leave them on the beach for the next shell seeker!)

1.3.3 POPULAR CELEBRATIONS AT PARLIAMENT

Because of the increasing number of people at Parliament, formal activities are included each evening, but they should not get in the way of spending time with friends.

Fireworks

We have always been treated to an evening of fireworks at Parliament, very memorably with Dunvegan Castle in the background. Because of the renovation work ongoing at the Castle this summer, we have happily relocated the fireworks to the center of the Village of Dunvegan. There, the display will also be open to the general public. This year, our fireworks will be set off on the last night of Parliament, and will also celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Millennium Stone. (This landmark can be seen

	New UK SIM card	Your own SIM card
Your phone (continued)	If your own phone supports the UK frequencies, it is possible to use a new UK SIM card with it. This means you will be making local calls in Scotland, but making international calls when you call home. HOWEVER, you need to find out in advance if your home operator has "locked" your phone so that it can't use other operators' SIM cards. If your phone is "locked", ask the operator to "unlock" the phone so you can use a UK SIM when you travel. If they can't or won't do it, you will have to purchase a new UK phone to use with the UK SIM.	The statements in this block are relevant if you are considering using your own SIM card (in either your own or a new UK phone). BEFORE you decide to use <u>your own SIM card</u> in the UK, find out from your operator if your SIM card is "locked" to your phone (and if the operator can "unlock" it), AND exactly how much your international calls will cost. (Make sure your SIM account is enabled for international roaming in the UK.) Using your own SIM in the UK is convenient, but it can be expensive. The good thing about using your own SIM (and therefore your own phone number) in the UK is that your friends and family can call you as if you were still in your home country, with no additional charges to <u>them</u> . The bad thing is that <u>your</u> mobile number will be charged the international tariff for any calls you receive. And any calls <u>you</u> make from Scotland using your own SIM will also be charged international rates, as if you were calling from your home country -- even if you are only calling someone else in Scotland.
New UK phone	The easiest thing is to just purchase both a UK mobile (as little as £25) and a UK SIM when you are here. If you are not a UK resident, you will only be able to use a "pay as you go" billing option. This requires that you have a debit-card like account for your phone to use, which the salesperson in the store where you purchase the phone will set up for you. Then you will pay for service in advance, by physically going into a retail shop "top up center" and adding funds to your phone card, or else purchasing an additional "top up card" in advance.	

3.3 Dialling UK and international telephone numbers

A UK telephone number is typically written with a leading (0) or "0" and followed by the number. Sometimes there is a "44" in front of the (0) -- this is the UK country code, to be used by international callers. For example, the published number for VisitScotland is "44 (0)1506 831 121". To call them:

- If you are inside the UK, ignore the 44 and include the "0", followed by the destination number 1506 831 121.
- If you are calling from outside the UK, drop the "0" but use the UK country code "44".
- If you are in North America, international calls from a landline typically require that you dial "011" first, to access international service. Then you should dial the country code "44", followed by "1506 832 121".

If you are in the UK and you want to dial another country using a landline, you must first dial "00" to access international service, then the country code of the destination number, then the number. For example, if you want to call the White House from Scotland you will first dial 00, then 1, then 202 456 1414. (Note that the country code "1" is used by both the USA and Canada).

- Check with your local ISP or e-mail provider to find out if they support a web browser interface for e-mail. If so, you can use any public PC to access your mail.
- If you want to bring your own laptop, please note that laptops typically include power converters in their power supplies, so you only need a plug/outlet adapter.
- UK analogue cables (for phones or laptop modems) require little plastic adaptors in order for UK telephone lines to be plugged into your non-UK laptop. These are usually offered in multi-national adaptor kits or individually at technology stores.
- It is possible to charge your mobile phone using a charging cable that plugs into the USB port on your laptop, rather than buying a separate UK charger for your phone. These are universal, very lightweight cables that are stocked at your local phone shop or electronics store.

3.2 Mobile phones

3.2.1 YOUR OPTIONS FOR USING MOBILE PHONES

There are several options for travelers who want to use mobile phones in Scotland: purchase a UK mobile with a UK SIM card, purchase a UK SIM card and insert it in your non-UK mobile, or just use your existing non-UK mobile and non-UK SIM. UK mobiles and SIM cards are available in UK phone retail shops, UK airports, and sometimes through your UK car rental company. Communicating using texts (SMS) on your mobile will be cheaper than making voice calls.

3.2.2 ABOUT SIM CARDS AND MOBILE PHONES

- The mobile phone service in Scotland uses GSM 900 and 1800Mhz frequencies. CDMA phones (e.g. in North America, Verizon and Sprint) do not work here.
- There are several options for using either your own or new UK mobile equipment - or a combination of the two. Hold your breath as some of it can be quite technical! Unlike CDMA phones, all GSM phones use little removable SIM cards. SIMs are plastic chips that contain your phone number and other information about your account. A SIM card can be inserted in any GSM phone, turning it into "your" phone. Therein rises the complexity, but also the advantages:

	New UK SIM card	Your own SIM card
Your phone	<p>The statements in this block are relevant if you are considering using your own phone (with either a new UK SIM card or your own SIM card).</p> <p>If you can use your existing mobile phone handset in Scotland, this will save you the expense of buying a new UK phone. You should check with the operator from whom you purchased your mobile phone and make sure that your phone itself supports the GSM 900 and 1800 frequencies used in the UK.</p> <p>If your phone <u>doesn't</u> support these frequencies, you will have to purchase a UK phone.</p> <p>If your phone <u>does</u> support the UK frequencies, then you next need to decide if you will use either a <u>new UK SIM card or your own SIM card.</u></p>	

overlooking the village.) We also welcome in the Dunvegan Show, which opens the following day.

Silent Auction, "Tartan Challenge" and games night

A friendly competition – with prizes – will be the background to our Silent Auction in 2006. Please proudly show off your best traditional, historic, or modern use of a MacLeod tartan. We also hope to reprise our Quiz Night, first held in 2006. You will be challenged by a selection of simple questions on general knowledge, current events, music, sports, and Clan history. During breaks from heavy quizzing, please peruse the fine selection of items displayed in the Hall for the ACMS Silent Auction fundraiser.

Evening ceilidhs

"Ceilidh" (pronounced "KAY-lee") is a Gaelic word that means "visit" or house party. Ceilidhs are informal musical events popular throughout Scotland -- and the world. At Parliament, Clan members are warmly invited to share their talents and perform traditional and reinterpreted works. Often we have a new song or story composed just for MacLeods.

Clan MacLeod Ball

The Clan MacLeod Ball or formal dance is held on the last night of Parliament. While many of the other events during the week are less formal, the Ball is an opportunity to "dress up" in whatever finery you may have. However, it is not necessary to go to any extraordinary expense as everyone is welcome to come as they are. Enjoy this fine evening of dancing and the opportunity to bid farewell to old and new friends.

North Room Group or "NRG"

A Young Peoples Clan Parliament was introduced at the fourth Clan MacLeod Parliament in 1965. Eighteen young MacLeods representing 6 countries met in the North Room of the Castle, and subsequently became called the "North Room Group" -- or "NRG", and now sometimes "Energy". Beginning in the 1990s, NRG has taken on service projects for the Castle estate and for Parliament itself.

MacLeod Mhor, Bheag, Sùrdail, Ealanta, and the Nellies

These names refer to the various themed youth activities for young MacLeods. Some are Gaelic words: "mor" or "mhor" (large), "bheag" (small), "sùrdail" (strong), and "ealanta" (artistic). The "Nellies" are the youngest of the Clan, and received their name from a distinguished Clan member -- nicknamed "Nellie" -- who referred to the other children in her age group as her "Nellie Club".

2. TRAVEL TIPS

This section of the booklet was put together using advice from CMS members. Please treat these as useful suggestions, and not absolute rules. Although we have travel experience, we are not experts. Please be sure to verify business hours, terms, and the availability of the services described below.

2.1 Personal tips

2.1.1 VISAS, LEGAL, MEDICAL, ETC.

The nations who host Clan MacLeod Societies currently have no unusual restrictions on tourist travel to the UK. The British Tourist Authority (<http://www.visitbritain.com/>) has a good source of legal and medical information for all travelers.

Note that regardless of your health insurance at home, the National Health Service in Britain provides that you will be given any required emergency care in Scotland. Local emergency information will be printed on the back pages of the Assynt and Dunvegan programmes.

If help is needed in severe emergencies in Scotland, dial "999" on your mobile phone or landline to summon assistance.

2.1.2 INSURANCE

Parliament attendees are advised that participation in any events or activities by themselves or any of their party is done so on a voluntary basis. The ACMS therefore disclaims all responsibility for any injury or mishap which those attending Parliament may incur. The ACMS strongly advises all Parliament attendees to take out holiday insurance, with coverage for cancellation, accidents, and medical and dental care, as well as the usual inclusions typical of these policies.

2.1.3 ACCOMMODATION

For the pre-Parliament trip to Assynt, please make your own reservations at either the Inchnadamph Hotel or the Inchnadamph Lodge. Further information can be found on the Parliament pages of the Clan MacLeod magazine or on the Parliament pages of the ACMS website (<http://www.clanmacleod.org>).

For the Dunvegan part of Parliament, please make your own reservations at the establishment of your choice. If you need help, we recommend that you use Visit Scotland (formerly the Scottish Tourist Board):

Internet <http://www.visitscotland.com>

E-mail: info@visitscotland.com

Telephone: (0)845 22 55 121 (in UK) or +44 1506 832 121 (outside UK)

3. TECHNOLOGY TIPS

3.1 General

3.1.1 ELECTRICITY

The standard electrical voltage in Britain is 240 v AC, 50HZ. A three square pronged adapter plug and/or electric converter for appliances is required to access a power point. Converters are necessary if your appliance has been manufactured for something other than 50HZ. Mobile phone chargers and laptops usually have a converter built into their power cord. Check the information printed on the appliance itself, as well as the "black brick", to find out if the unit can use the Scottish power supply.

- Converters are relatively expensive to buy at the airport. If you can't buy one before you leave home, it's better to buy one at an urban UK technology store (e.g., "Dixons") or discount pharmacy.
- If you require small personal appliances such as a hairdryer or iron, it makes sense to buy inexpensive UK travelers' devices rather than to buy converters to make devices from outside the UK work here.
- Magellan's Catalogue (<http://www.magellans.com/store/tips/Electricity>) has detailed information on the use of electrical goods when traveling.

3.1.2 DIGITAL CAMERA AND AUDIO VIDEO EQUIPMENT

There are digital photo print kiosks and digital camera media for sale throughout Scotland. (Disposable camera development services will create CDs.)

Bring extra batteries for your personal camera, especially if there's any question about whether or not you will be able to re-charge them in the UK.

VHS and other digital video and broadcast formats are different between North America (NTSC, VHS) and most parts of the UK (PAL, S-VHS). This is a huge subject so it makes no sense to try and explain it all here, but if you think there might be an issue with your equipment or media, contact your device manufacturer or electronics specialty store. Note also that digital music or movies (CDs or DVDs) purchased in Europe may not work on media players purchased in Asia or the Americas.

3.1.3 SPECIAL TIPS FOR COMPUTER GEEKS

- If you will be making a presentation at Parliament, please be aware that we will have available a PC data projector (sometimes called a "beamer") that you can use with your laptop.
- If you don't have or don't wish to bring your laptop, there is also a Windows XP laptop available (for use by presenters only). In this case you should format your presentation in either Microsoft Office 2003 Word or PowerPoint or PDF, and bring it on diskette, CD, or USB thumb drive.

Outside of the villages, the roads are not well lit at night. It is important to take extra care when driving after dark. In general, it's a good idea to remind yourself to watch for unexpected behavior by others – especially fellow tourists -- either on foot or in cars.

Finally, if you ordinarily drive on the right hand side of the road, there seem to be two common mistakes people make when switching to the left hand side:

- The first common mistake occurs when you enter a roundabout or rotary. When you enter a rotary in Scotland or the UK, go CLOCKWISE (to the left).
- The second common mistake is inadvertently staying in the right hand lane after you have made a right hand turn. Make sure you stay in the LEFT lane after you make a right hand turn (especially on rural roads).

And when you return from Scotland to your right hand driving world, you may find you are second-guessing yourself for as long as 6 months...

2.5.3 AUTOMOBILE ETIQUETTE

From an “etiquette” point of view, it is important to remember that during Parliament we are guests of the community of Dunvegan and of Skye. Parking notices, speed limits, and road safety markings reflect the experiences of residents and tourists over many years and we should heed them. We would like the swarm of MacLeods to be remembered for our outstanding consideration and courtesy.

Scotland is not as “car oriented” a society as you may find in other parts of the world, and cars are a necessity rather than a “given” part of the culture. Parking is limited, even two-lane roads are narrow by some standards, road surfaces are maintained differently, fuel is relatively expensive, and pedestrian walkways are narrow and not always well-delineated. The best advice is to always be alert, never drive impaired, and expect to use a combination of automobile, public transportation, and human muscle power to get around during Parliament.

2.6 Ferry use during Parliament

Parliament 2010 does not require that you make personal reservations on any ferries. The cost of ferry tickets for the trip to Raasay is included in your Dunvegan registration. You will receive the tickets when you get your badge in Dunvegan. If you are driving yourself to Skye, you can take the ferry from Glenelg to Skye, as a scenic alternative to driving over the bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh. (Note that the Kyle bridge is now free.) The Glenelg is an old-fashioned, hand turned ferry owned by the community. More information is available at <http://www.skyeferry.co.uk/>.

2.1.4 CASH AND BANKING

International bank exchange rates are available at <http://www.oanda.com>.

If you have a credit or debit card that allows you to make ATM withdrawals in Scotland (pound notes will be dispensed), it will generally be less expensive to use than FOREX money exchange, or travelers' cheques (which are not used very much these days). Check with your bank to make sure your card can be used internationally in ATMs, and that your PIN number is no longer than 4 characters. Alternatively, you can obtain a debit card just for travel expenses, in order to separate it from your other bank accounts.

Also, fraud prevention measures mean that many Scottish businesses may not accept Visa or Mastercard charges without “chip and PIN” security. However, you can still use cards without “chip and PIN” to make ATM withdrawals.

2.2 Airline tips

Get help from a travel professional, or DIY?

There is a lot of financial pressure today on the travel industry. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find inexpensive air fares to the UK, especially in the summer months. Bargains may be hard to find. These are suggestions for finding the best fare:

- Revised fare programs are generally published on the internet every Sunday. Note that fare programs from previous weeks may not necessarily be carried into subsequent weeks.
- Airline travel on Tuesdays or Wednesdays is usually less expensive.
- Consider flying into Inverness instead of Glasgow or Edinburgh. It is a much shorter drive from Inverness to Dunvegan (less than 2 hours, as opposed to 6 or more hours from the other cities), and car rentals are usually a little cheaper.

Finding a flight on-line

Some “aggregate” internet websites are very useful in finding the best fares on major airlines. These *.com sites are can be oriented toward USA travelers, but there are also Expedia and Travelocity sites for UK and Europe (*.co.uk), and Canada (*.ca):

- Travelocity (<http://www.travelocity.com>) lists all the lowest published fares for the trip you want, but it's up to you to find out if the fares are still available.
- Expedia (<http://www.expedia.com>) will give you the low fares that are immediately available for your route. If you spot a fare you like on Expedia, sometimes you can get it a little cheaper if you call the airline directly.

IcelandAir (<http://www.icelandair.com>) or AerLingus (<http://www.aerlingus.com>) are generally a good value, and can offer shorter travel times from North America when they bypass London and go directly to Scotland.

Rampant Scotland (<http://www.rampantscotland.com>) is a website that maintains

a thorough list of all the airlines that fly into Scotland from around the world, and is a particularly good source of information for flights from London and Europe into Scotland. Discount airlines and airlines that service minor Scottish cities are included.

Making travel connections

Often you will be responsible for making your own connecting travel arrangements between airports. Keep in mind that many cheaper flights from London originate in smaller airports – Luton, Stansted, London City, etc., which may require complex ground transportation to connect with larger airports. Another one of the ways that some of these smaller airlines or airports are able to offer reduced fares is by offering flights on off-hours, either very early or very late in the day, so pay close attention to the scheduled times for flights offered.

2.3 Train tips

Sometimes you can save significant money by flying only as far as London and then taking the train or bus to Scotland. The public transportation between major UK airports and the rail system is generally good and easy to follow. However, dragging your luggage up and down the London Underground stairs can be a “memorable” experience. It’s a good idea to ask the attendants which Underground stops have elevators (lifts), if you need them.

The easiest points of train departure from London to Scotland are from Kings Cross (daytime trains) or Euston (sleeper trains) stations. If you fly into London Heathrow (<http://www.heathrowairport.com>), you can take the Underground to either train station for less than £5. (A taxi will cost you upwards of £60.) The Thameslink rail connection from Gatwick Airport (<http://www.gatwickairport.com>) goes directly to Kings Cross.

- **Daytime service.** The National Rail service (<http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>) will help you plan your daytime trip, but will not accept reservations more than 3 months in advance. Prices can be very good but buy your ticket ahead of the day of travel. For example, the daytime train from Kings Cross takes about 4 ½ hours to Edinburgh, and can cost as little as £25. But this goes up to £95 or higher, for purchase on the day of travel or for seats in premium cars.
- **Overnight train.** The “Caledonian Sleeper” (<http://www.scotrail.co.uk/caledoniansleeper/index.html>) from London’s Euston station to Glasgow, Edinburgh, or Inverness is a great old-fashioned adventure and can be a very practical and comfortable travel option. The cabins have bunk beds and are a bit small, but they are well kept. The staff is very helpful. You can reserve a berth or “airline style” sleeper seat for as little as £19, but the inexpensive ones sell out fast. You should plan to make reservations as soon as the tickets are available, about 10 weeks in advance.

2.4 Bus tips

Traveline (<http://www.travelinescotland.com>) maintains a huge list of bus services in the UK and Scotland in its “Journey Planner” section.

Examples of service providers that have routes from London to Scotland are:

- National Express (<http://www.nationalexpress.com/>) and Megabus (<http://www.megabus.com/>).
- Citylink (<http://www.citylink.co.uk>) supports other routes within Scotland.

Fares and journey durations vary widely. A trip from central London to Portree can cost under £20, but can take 15-18 hours. A trip from London to Glasgow or Edinburgh is about 9 hours long; a trip from Glasgow to Inverness is an additional 4 hours.

2.5 Automobile tips

2.5.1 RENTAL CARS

Most major car rental companies operate in Scotland, and vehicles are easily reserved from major airports and metropolitan areas. We do recommend that you place your reservations as early as possible to ensure you get the vehicle you want. Parliament takes place during the most demanding part of the year for car rental companies.

During Parliament, we may be able to get discounted rates for Clan MacLeod Society members. Please mention that you are a member at the time that you make your reservation, and watch the “Traveling to Parliament” web page for any updates on available offers. The businesses we have had the best experiences working with are:

- Arnold Clark (<http://www.arnoldclark.co.uk>), a Scottish company, and
- Thrifty (<http://www.thrifty.co.uk>) and
- Enterprise (<http://www.enterprise.co.uk>) known world-wide.

Alternatively, an internet search using the key words such as “car rental Scotland” will reveal websites that aggregate information from the various companies.

2.5.2 DRIVING IN SCOTLAND, AND AROUND SKYE

If you do not have any experience driving in the UK, it is a good idea to get a driver’s manual or other reference book before you rent a vehicle. Two books are recommended on the ACMS Parliament web pages. If you have trouble finding a book in your local bookstore, try an on-line bookstore such as Amazon.com.

Many of the roads on Skye are “single track roads”, which are only wide enough for a single vehicle to travel. On these single track roads there are frequent “passing places”, extra sections of wider pavement that allow one vehicle to pause while the other goes by. The person who first encounters the passing place closest to the point where the cars would otherwise meet is generally the one to wait. A nod of the head and a wave between the drivers of the passing vehicles is customary.