

Volume 3 | Issue 4

The Tartan Telegraph



Carving and Photo © Steven D. Roe

Celtic Connections

By J. Beau Buffington

It's been an interesting summer! Between wet weather and flooding (and the inevitable result on the lawn with the apparently daily mowing schedule), the Japanese beetles and the rumor that FireFall could actually get cancelled this year due to budget constraints, this is not a summer to soon forget. What's that you say? Prodigious rainfall, invasive pests and a pyrotechnic speculation do not an interesting summer create! Perhaps *serendipity* is the more accurate term, but allow me to elaborate.

At the City of Battlefield's 4th of July celebration, I volunteered to play bagpipes for the

festivities. After all, my wife and I are both volunteers on the park board – I'm even the chairman. And while I don't really feel qualified to give a rousing speech about patriotism, I do feel qualified to play a rousing selection of piping tunes. Not exactly patriotic piping of the 'Yankee-Doodle Dandy' variety, but a nice jig in July would surely get the fireworks off to a good start. Or as I told the crowd of four who evidently heard me on the microphone, "What's the connection between bagpipes and the 4th of July? You can't have a real celebration without a bagpipe!" Piper's bias, perhaps.

Rewind to the moment right before I walked up to the stage, as I carried my instrument case into the city park. A fellow approached me and inquired, "What's in the case?" After responding that it was a bagpipe, we had a brief conversation and I gave him my card. His email a few days later left no doubt that we had much in common. Mr. Stephen Roe is not only a professional counselor, musician and an historical educator (Elizabethan era), he is also an excellent woodcarver of Celtic designs, including the one featured above.

Celtic artwork offers a perspective on the complexity,

In This Issue:

Celtic Connections
 Interview: Melissa and Alastair Haddow
 Piobaireachd-of-the-Season
 Midsummer's Ceili at Riverside Inn
 CD Review: *Dastirum* by Allan MacDonald

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar Now!

Friday, September 5th

Jim Malcolm, Buffalo Old City Park

Saturday, September 6th

Southwest MO Celtic Festival at Old City Park in Buffalo, MO

Saturday, October 25

Society Halloween party at Champ's House

Saturday, November 1

Kirkin' of the Tartans and Annual meeting at Westminster Presbyterian Church

Saturday, January 17, 2009

Burns Supper

Double Tree Hotel, Springfield, Missouri

beauty, fragility and interrelatedness of life. Celtic art reminds us that we are connected to the natural world and to one another. Meeting Mr. Roe has reminded me that some of the most interesting people are often found in our own community. No need to drive a great distance and pay historically high gas prices to seek them out! THIS is what makes Celtic culture worth celebrating.

Speaking of Celtic culture and interesting people, as many of you are aware, the 6th Annual Southwest Missouri Celtic Heritage Festival and Highland Games will take place on September 5-6th, 2008 at the Old City Park Buffalo, Missouri www.swmocelticfestival.com.

I wrote a Missouri Arts Council grant last Spring and official results put the award at 87% (\$8,265) of the original request, which will go a long way towards helping with promotion, advertising and entertainment.

Yet, since the grant is a 1:1 dollar per dollar match with funds or in-kind donations, success of the festival will still depend largely on your



Carving and Photo © Steven D. Roe participation as sponsors, volunteers, and spectators and this is where you can help! No Celtic blood is required! (Heck, I'm a piper, and I'm not even Scottish or Irish.)

Aside from having an opportunity to watch (and participate in) athletic events,

visit Celtic vendors from around the state, watch Celtic entertainers, see a Highland bagpipe band, learn Celtic art forms, participate in a Gaelic mass and meet interesting people from your community, you can also research your Celtic connections – or find out that you don't have any, like me, but create some anyway! This festival is for everyone!

So, if you are willing to volunteer at the festival, help with promotion or if you think that your organization or corporation might be interested in donating time or dollars, please contact the festival co-chairs Monty Viets or Kathy Kesler through the festival website. With your support, we can make this the best festival yet, and not only help the community to see the unique beauty of Celtic music and art, but also to meet wonderful people and to create synergy and serendipity in our own community without having to spend a fortune doing it.



Tartan-of-the-Season

According to historians, George Washington was a descendant of Malcolm II, one of three kings who ruled Scotland during the 11th century. Because standardized tartan patterns were a much later development (and the result of effective marketing of the 18th century weaving industry!), the American National tartan in the title bar is a tribute to the Washington's Scottish connections.

**Insurance Services,
Competitive Rates**
Life Insurance, Health Insurance, Annuities
From the Top National Companies.

Contact Beau Buffington, Licensed Insurance Agent
Call 417-881-4138 for more information



Protection Your Family Deserves

An Interview with Melissa and Alastair Haddow, Pt. 1

By J. Beau Buffington

I received a phone call late last summer from a woman who wanted a piper for her daughter's wedding. She explained that having bagpiper at the wedding was the most important part of the ceremony, that the bride's father was Scottish and her grandfather had practically written the book on piping and *piobaireachd*. Given the tradition and the fact that she was booking the date so far in advance, I knew that it was very important that I play.

Every few months, Mrs. Melissa Haddow would contact me to make sure that I was still available for the ceremony. When we finally did meet in person to go over the details of the ceremony, I was intrigued by the story she told me of how she met her husband, her future father-in-law and had lived in Scotland after the wedding. I have finally been able to catch up with the Haddows to get the story of how they met in their own words.

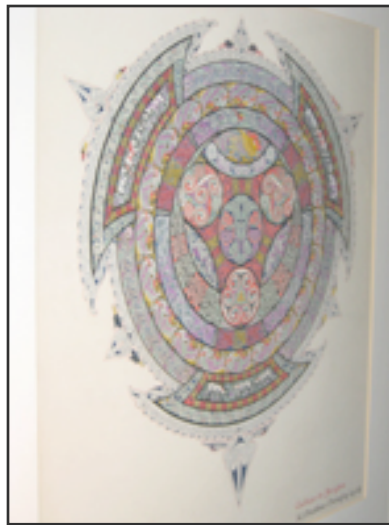
Born in Glasgow, Scotland and raised in Africa, Alastair D. Haddow has a perspective on the world not shared by many of his colleagues in the Ozarks. His father, Alexander J. Haddow was a world-renowned scientist and a pioneer of the vaccine for yellow fever as well as a strong mem-

ber of the St. Andrew's Society of Uganda.

Beau Buffington: You grew up in Africa and spent your formative years there, but did you have any perspective of how unique this experience must have been?

Alastair Haddow: Not really. At the time, we were clearly very linked to Scotland. My father always had a very strong affinity to the homeland, and every two years we'd go back to Scotland and stay with my grandmother who lived in Glasgow [...] a lot of our family is in the Glasgow area. My father's mother never left Scotland.

Melissa Haddow: You told me that when you were living in Uganda, you had a club once a month and you all learned and performed the Scottish dances.



Cadhas do Brighade
by Alexander J. Haddow
© Alastair D. Haddow

AH: My dad started a Scottish county dance class for young folks that ran at the local club every week. All the young people in town would come [...] and we would all learn the different dances, strathspeys and reels.

BB: Was there quite an expat community there in Uganda?

AH: Yeah, It was a protectorate, not a colony so nobody could own land or buy property there, unlike Kenya, where they could buy land and property. You could rent land, but you couldn't own it.

MH: So even though they only went back to Scotland every two years, their heritage was very much alive, obviously, if every week they were doing reels and Scottish dances.

AH: When we went back, we would stay for about two or three months.

BB: Did you travel around when you went back to Scotland?

AH: Yeah, we went everywhere. We stayed in the highlands and visited all kinds of places.

MH: Well, you had a little place, a cabin [...] that you used to stay.

AH: One of my father's childhood friends lived way out in the west Highlands and we'd go out and stay there for a month and usually stay one other place.

MH: Sounds pretty idyllic, doesn't it?

BB: Yeah, it does. It was the kind of childhood that I always

dreamed about. So, did you ever learn bagpipes?

AH: I play the whistle and early on, I played the chanter, but just never really fell in love with the thing, I guess. I probably started a bit young, and it was hard for my fingers to hold the stops.

BB: But, obviously you picked up the science side from your father. Did you help with his work, with his research?

AH: There were several papers that I assisted him in, light readings and mosquito catching.

BB: Was he an MD?

AH: Yes, but he never practiced medicine. He wasn't really fond of that part of it. He liked doing research. And subsequently, when he came back from Africa – we left in 1965 – he was a professor at Glasgow University, where he'd gone to school. Subsequently, he became one of the deans of the medical school.



Professor Alexander J. Haddow
CMG, DSc, MD, FRCP, DTM&H, FRSE, FRS

MH: It's kind of interesting, though, because his dad was really an entomologist. And then Ali is in infectious diseases, and then our son is getting ready to graduate with his PhD in medical entomology [...] In fact, he went

over to London and stayed for awhile with an entomology professor who worked with Ali's father in Africa. So that was a real highlight for Andrew.

AH: He was a professor, and subsequently head of one of the departments of entomology at Cambridge University...a world-renowned scientist. He's the only remaining member of my dad's research team that's still alive.

MH: So, it's really something for Andrew to go and spend time with him [...] since Andrew is following in his grandfather's footsteps. Andrew's expertise is in mosquitos, which is the same thing that Alec studied.

AH: My dad was a world renowned scientist in that area, and a fellow of the Royal Society and at the Royal Society of Edinburgh. You know, the Royal Society is an elected thing, so you're invited to join [...] there are people like Sir Isaac Newton who are members of the Royal Society. It's kind of fascinating, but when you die, another member of the Royal Society writes your obituary. And it's written as a small book, 40, 50, 60 pages that covers your entire life and career. I can show you that...that gives you an idea about my dad.

MH: To have married into this family, here I was eighteen years old when I got married [...] it was the most incredible experience! It was like something of a novel!

BB: So, how did the two of you meet?

MH: My grandparents lived in Florida, and Ali in the summer

would come over to Yale and do an externship. One of his friend's mother lived in the same place that my grandparents did. We had all gone down there for Spring break. We went to this cocktail party, and we were the only three people under about 75 there. So, it wasn't hard for the three of us to get together. We chatted for maybe about an hour at this party, and I thought he was really funny. Ali had told me his name was 'Boris,' Boris Haddow. I had him write his name and address on a napkin [...] So, we started to write back and forth. I was seventeen at the time. So, we wrote and wrote and wrote and kind of developed this relationship. Then I went away to college in Wisconsin – we had formed this really solid relationship just by writing – then I get this phone call. Somewhere in there he had told me his name was not Boris, it was really Alastair. And then he calls and he says in a very thick accent that I could hardly understand, "I'm coming down to Milwaukee to spend the weekend with you." And I was like, wow! I called my parents and said we were going to come home. So I took him to meet my parents. He was there for a weekend, just a weekend and flew back to Scotland. I'd only known him two and a half days in real life and when he left, I was standing in the kitchen and I told my parents, 'You have to send me to Scotland over this next Spring break, because I'm going to marry him.' But, before they would let me go, my father wrote his father, because they didn't quite know what to make of this.

AH: Either family.

MH: Either family. Neither one of them did. So I flew over for

Spring break, and we were there seven days....and we drove and we drove and we drove. We saw the Standing Stones...

BB: Standing Stones?

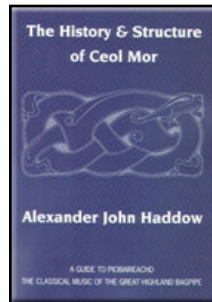
AH: These are the ancient stones that are like the Stonehenge stones.....

BB: In Callanish?

AH: And all over that part. My father and a friend of his actually had written three or four scientific papers on those standing stones and their link to the sun-moon cycle of the calendar. They pre-date Stonehenge by about 1,000 years. You can take Midsummer's Day or Midwinter's Day, and if you line up these stones on a set of mountains, if you line them up on the Paps of Jura which are out in the Atlantic [...] you can just see the tip of the sun on the inside of the mountain slope on Midwinter's Day and on the other side it's Midsummer's Day. And they did all of this way back then...these massive stones that probably weigh 10 to 12 tons. They're gigantic. But he wrote these scientific articles. He was a true Renaissance man. He spoke Greek – he spoke fluent Arabic – he read the Qur'an in Arabic. He spoke Latin.

MH: So he was taking me all over the country. And I remember thinking, "I have never been around such people in my entire life!" I felt completely inadequate. Everybody I met when I was in Scotland seemed so much smarter than me! And they

knew not only about their history, they knew about the United States. I mean they just seemed to be such an intellectual group of people. And I was just fascinated by it! For a young girl that was just 18 years old, it was the most incredibly romantic experience.



The lights in his father's office looked out over the street, and the lights in there had this orangish cast and it was so haunting because I'd walk out there and the mist would be coming down [...] and the pipe music would be coming out, and I thought I was in a movie! It was just unbelievable. The seventh day that I was there – so I'd now known him 9 1/2 days total – the day before I was to leave on that seventh day we went down and picked out a ring, and I got engaged. So, I flew back and I told my parents when they picked me up at the airport that I was going to get married [...] and they were sort of aghast, I guess. So, I finished out that year of college and then we were married the following September. During that period, my father corresponded a lot with his father. Alec was really, to begin with, not very happy about this fact. He really liked me, but he felt that I would interfere with...Ali was in medical

school....he didn't see how Ali was gonna marry this very young 18 year old girl from Chicago....that I would stifle his education and he would never graduate from medical school and all of this kind of stuff. And of course, education was always very important to Alec. Anyway, we were married. He came over and lived with us for two weeks before the marriage, so I was really with him in person less than a month before I married him. We were married on a Friday night, and I moved to Scotland on a Monday morning.

BB: Wow!

MH: I lived there about four years, and I fell in love with his father, and his father fell in love with me. We had the most incredible relationship. All of his fears were for not. I spent the entire four years that I was there trying to find something that Alec did not know. It was a game between us. I would even come up with comic strip characters from the United States like Little Orphan Annie and he knew them. When I left, I had yet to find one thing that I knew that Alec did not know. And it was about any subject matter. The man was a genius. He was incredibly gifted in every way from painting to composing music to everything. I have never known anyone like him in my life. It was the most unbelievable experience. Ali is very much like his father in many ways [...] And part of the deal when we got married was that after he finished medical school we would move back to this country. That was sort of the

negotiation with my father letting me get married at this young age [...] but by the time we left Scotland to move back to this country, I didn't want to come. I totally fell in love with that country and [...] if it weren't for my children, I could move back tomorrow. I just felt so embraced by it, and I loved the people. I look back...and people say, you married a man you were only with a couple of weeks...and I couldn't understand him. I mean his accent was very thick. So I married a man I really could hardly understand and didn't really know, left school, left all my friends at the age of eighteen and moved to Europe. And we've been married...I think...we can't decide...but I think 37 years in September.

BB: That's a great story!

In The Next Issue: From Scotland to Springfield Via Iowa



Cadhas do Brighade (detail), which took the artist 19 years to complete

© Alastair D. Haddow

Tune-of-Season: *Too Long in This Condition*

From Seamus McNeill's notes on *John D. Burgess, The Art of Highland Bagpiping, Vol. 3*, Topic Records 12TS393 (out-of-print)

A piobaireachd with an intriguing title, this tune has been attributed to several composers and to various peculiar circumstances. However, it is generally accepted now that the tune is a Donald Mor MacCrimmon composition of about 1612, inspired while he was in Sutherland, living somewhat under a cloud.

Donald Mor was born in 1570 at Galtrigall in Skye. He married in 1595 and almost immediately joined the band of 600 MacLeods who left Dunvegan to fight in Ireland against Elizabeth of England. Although he did not officially become hereditary piper to the MacLeod Chief until some time later, he seems to have been the best composer of his day, for in 1603 when the MacLeods and MacDonalds reached a reconciliation following three years of bloody war, it was he who was called on to compose the welcoming tunes for the feast at Dunvegan Castle.

About 1610, following the murder of his brother Patrick Caogach ("Squinting Patrick"), Donald Mor's revenge – the burning of the clachan of Glenelg – resulted in a period of exile from Skye, and it was then that he found inspiration to compose this haunting piece of music. According to tradition he was already tired of wandering and homesick for Skye when at a wedding he sat for long unrecognized as the greatest piper in the land. Eventually, upon being somewhat rudely asked who he was, he replied in the same vein as did the great Irish poet Raftery on a similar occasion – and then struck up this sad but proudly defiant measure.



Ceol Cumasc ("Mixed Music")

Beau Buffington's CD of traditional piping, whistle and guitar is now available for \$13.00. Get your copy now while supplies last!

If you have ideas / submissions for future issues or if you are interested in advertising in the newsletter contact buffpiper@hotmail.com.

Midsummer's Ceilidh at the Riverside Inn

By Todd Wilkinson

Around 45 society members & friends attended our annual Midsummer Ceilidh on Saturday, June 21. Our venue, the historic Riverside Inn, on the banks of the Finley, proved once again to be a hospitable and gracious host with good food and drink.

Our featured entertainment this year was the Crooked Creek Ceilidh Band from Harrison, Arkansas. Led by Caven Clark, the band played a number of the "auld tunes" and made Riverside's rafters roar with music. Caven's lovely wife Eileen, an accomplished Scottish Country Dancer, took charge of the dance floor and caused a number of us to "dance the buckles off our shoes". Our own Beau and Shannon Buffington also piped and danced for company, to much applause.

The committee would like to thank everyone who made this such a successful & enjoyable event – Slainte!

CD Review

Allan MacDonald's *Dastirum*

By J. Beau Buffington



Allan MacDonald's CD release *Dastirum* on the Sibhual label offers a brilliant, original interpretation of piobaireachd, the classical music of the highland bagpipe. A student of the Gaelic language, MacDonald has done extensive research into the connection between Gaelic and the music of the highland bagpipe. MacDonald is from a family of pipers from Glenuig which includes brothers Iain, former piper to the Battlefield

Band; Dr. Angus, former gold medalist and medical doctor; and cousin Pipe Major Angus, the late, great piper, composer and pipe major to the Scot's Guards from 1953-1983.

The following excerpt from Barnaby Brown's *Introduction* helps to frame MacDonald's approach to piobaireachd in the modern era:

After rising to the top, conforming to the orthodox playing style, Allan MacDonald broke ranks. Since 1990, his refreshing, soulful interpretations have won the hearts of a much larger circle and helped to stimulate fresh thinking.

I had the opportunity to see MacDonald compete at the former winners' piobaireachd competition at the Argyllshire Gathering in

August 1996. At the time, I was struck by his completely unorthodox phrasing of the music. MacDonald seemed to defy convention with his performance. Later, I would come to understand MacDonald's research connecting piobaireachd to the natural rhythms of the Gaelic language. Hearing this recording helps me to bridge the gap in terms of what I recognized as a traditional performance.

MacDonald's CD offers accessible and enjoyable music for the piobaireachd neophyte, as well as a quintessential, Gaelic distillate for more experienced listeners. Coincidentally, the artwork on the CD cover and CD are taken directly from A.J. Haddow's *Cadhas do Brighade* and are worth the cost of admission in and of themselves.

Dastirum available at cdbaby.com