

## 7.2 Some local services and conveniences

- There are two “big” banks in Somerled Square in Portree: Halifax Bank of Scotland +44 (0) 01478 612438 and Clydesdale Bank +44 (0) 844 736 2616. Both banks have 24 hour ATM machines. There is a mobile Bank of Scotland unit that will be in Dunvegan at noon on Tuesdays, but they only service BOS, Halifax, or Lloyds customers.
- Locations where cash withdrawals/ATMs are located will be available at Parliament registration or else through the Information Point.
- Dunvegan Travel/Private Hire <http://www.dunvegantaxi.co.uk/> +44(0)1470 521448 is a family run business that provides daytime taxi service within the village, and evening service to restaurants.
- Skye Car Hire and Taxi is a family-run MACLEOD OWNED (!) business in Kyle, which provides taxi and car hire service all over the area. <http://www.skyecarhire.co.uk/> +44 (0)1599 534323.
- At the time this booklet was published, we were uncertain about wireless Internet access at the Village Hall. If nothing is available, the Information Point will have a list of alternative sites.
- Locations where mobile phone top-up cards can be purchased will also be posted at the Village Hall.
- All event reservations or cancellations must be made at Parliament registration or else through the Information Point.
- A lost and found will be maintained at the Information Point in the Village Hall. Articles left unclaimed after Saturday 26 July will be recycled or else donated to charity.

### EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The Emergency number for Ambulance, Police and Fire in the UK is 999. 999 can be dialed from a mobile phone or telephone booth at no charge.

The Dunvegan Police Station is up the street (north) from the Village Hall. You will see their sign on the building next to the parking lot, to the left of the Dunvegan Hotel.

### MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCIES

Regardless of your nationality or your home health care provider or insurance, if you need ambulatory health care or advice you can call the National Health Service at +44 (0)8454 242424.

The nearest hospital to Dunvegan is in Portree +44 (0)1478 613200.



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<http://www.clanmacleod.org>



# Parliamentarian's Handbook

## 17<sup>th</sup> Clan MacLeod Parliament

Parliament week in Dunvegan 19-26 July 2014

North Room Group Service Project in Dunvegan 12-19 July 2014

## Exploring our MacLeod lands on Skye and Raasay



Download this booklet <http://www.clanmacleodparliament.org/2014-books.html>.  
This version was last printed on Thursday, 10 July 2014 at 14:28

## 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, and can be downloaded from the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies' website for Parliament, <http://www.clanmacleodparliament.org>.

We hope that the information you find here will demystify the various activities at Parliament and help make them more enjoyable. We also hope that we can help you feel more comfortable with the international challenges of:

- Travel, money, and technology,
- Etiquette and culture shock, and
- Discovering the marvelous and friendly country of Scotland.

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

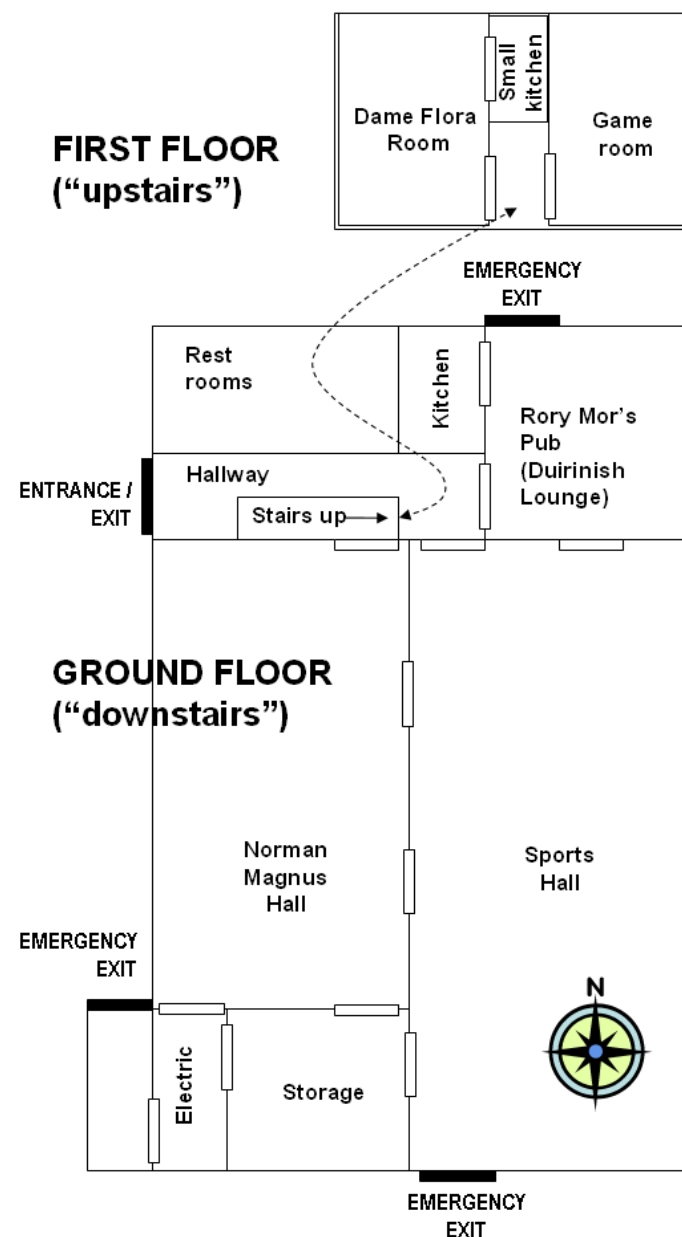
268 Washington Street, Groveland, MA 01834 USA

Email: [dcaskie@greenet.net](mailto:dcaskie@greenet.net)

**Please note that in this booklet the "centrefold" is a simple map of the Dunvegan area, and EMERGENCY INFORMATION is on the back cover.**

## 7. GENERAL INFORMATION IN DUNVEGAN

### 7.1 Floor plan of the Dunvegan Community Hall



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.

Any 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 repellants 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.

## **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 2014, there are activities that can help generate excitement before your trip, and add to the fun. Keep an eye on <http://www.clanmacleodparliament.org> for more information. You can also:

- locate memorable items for the silent auction,
- let your National Society know that you are coming, and volunteer to help with your National Tea or other activities that may have been planned,
- rehearse your “ceilidh idol” performance, or
- simply share Parliament information and your enthusiasm with family and Clansfolk.



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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 that first Parliament in 1956, the gathering was small and included only a speaker and a few country delegates. The early Parliaments were held once 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 Boreraig, got lost on the way to Orbst, 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 and meeting fellow MacLeods from all over the world. Activities can be recommended or requested by anyone, but 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 pre-Parliament visits to Lewis and Harris in 2006, and Assynt in 2010.

5.2 Weather

There are many Internet weather sources that report on conditions in Scotland. For instance 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, with a full moon on the 12<sup>th</sup>, and a new moon on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

SUN		DATE		MOON	
					
RISE	SET	JULY	RISE	SET	
4:47	21:57	11	20:38	3:57	
4:48	21:56	12	21:23	5:08	
4:50	21:55	13	22:00	6:29	
4:51	21:54	14	22:29	7:54	
4:53	21:52	15	22:55	9:20	
4:54	21:51	16	23:19	10:44	
4:56	21:50	17	23:42	12:06	
4:57	21:48	18		13:25	
4:59	12:47	19	12:06	14:41	
5:00	12:45	20	12:32	15:53	
5:02	21:44	21	1:02	17:00	
5:04	21:42	22	1:38	18:00	
5:05	21:41	23	2:20	18:53	
5:07	21:39	24	3:08	19:37	
5:09	9:37	25	4:03	8:14	
5:10	9:35	26	5:03	8:44	

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

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 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**

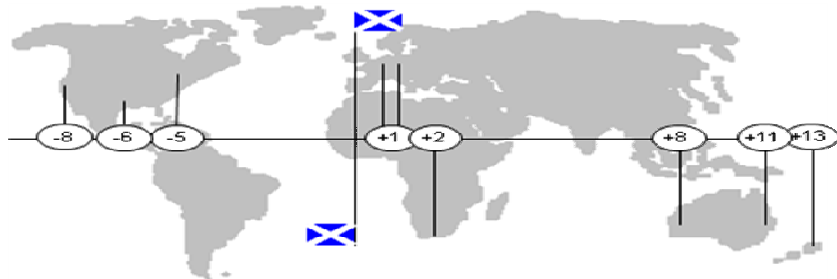
### **5.1 Time zones**

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, Germany and Switzerland are 1 hour AHEAD of Scotland
- South Africa is 1 hour 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



## **1.3 An activity sampler**

### **1.3.1 PLACES OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE TO THE CLAN MACLEOD**

#### ***Boreraig***

The MacCrimmons are the hereditary pipers to the Chiefs of the Clan MacLeod. Many years ago, there was college of piping at Boreraig, 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 Boreraig, we acknowledge the long relationship between the MacLeods and the MacCrimmons. The trip to Boreraig 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; this year we will again listen to world-renowned piper, Euan MacCrimmon.

#### ***Isle of Raasay***

The Macleods of Raasay have their own Chief John of Tasmania, who will join us at Parliament. Raasay has a fascinating history of its own, in some ways typical of a smaller Scottish island, but has been home to a number of unique industries and individuals. Our day-long Raasay visit is traditionally one of Parliament's most popular activities.

#### ***Orbost***

Orbost is traditionally "MacLeod territory," and is a great example of contemporary, mixed-use businesses in rural Scotland. Part of the area includes the Orbost Estate, land owned by the local government and leased to private citizens. There are several MacLeod-themed projects underway, including the construction of a "Emigration Wall" using stones brought back to Skye by the descendents of Scottish emigrants scattered overseas. This project was preceded by the planting of the MacLeod Woodlands, an area filled with trees donated by MacLeods from all over the world.

#### ***The Norman Magnus Hall and Dame Flora Lounge***

When Norman Magnus was Chief, he had the original Village Hall erected in 1904 and gave it to the community. It was subsequently been expanded in 1985 by Dunvegan residents 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.

#### *Silent Auction*

The Silent Auction – to which anyone is most welcome to make a donation – is our major fundraiser at Parliament. The money raised is used to get the next Parliament (2018!) off the ground. The articles available are typically Clan-themed goods, and can range from homemade crafts to a great find at a local salvage store.

#### *Midge Drive*

The Midge Drive is a variation of the traditional "Beetle Drive" game, which can be enjoyed by old and young alike.

#### *Whisky tasting*

Don't think of a whisky tasting as just another excuse to enjoy a fine drink with friends. The art of whisky making is rigorous and exacting – and it is truly an art form. Within the body of a single malt you will find not only gorgeous flavours and colours, but also qualities of history, geology, politics, and commerce – the spirit of a nation.



*The Scottish midge*

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.

### 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 and practical reasons for this: 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 there are a number of local businesses that have contributed to our events. Please patronise these businesses whenever possible – either in 2014, 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

destination number, then the number. For example, if you want to call the White House from Scotland you will first dial 00, then 1 (the country code used by both the USA and Canada), and finally the destination phone number 202 456 1414.

## 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. Ladies may wear skirts or slacks as they prefer. Kilts and tartan are encouraged at any time, dressed up or dressed down according to the event. Dressing up a bit for the ceilidhs is also encouraged, but what you wear doesn't matter very much 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.

If you have never participated in a whisky tasting before, our Parliament event is very welcoming to newcomers. And if you are a collector or a connoisseur, there is always something a little different to try, or a wonderful opportunity to help introduce another member of the Clan to this fascinating and enjoyable aspect of Scottish culture.

#### *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. The evening will also be filled with live music and dancing, so make sure you wear your tartans!

#### *North Room Group or "NRG"*

A Young Peoples Clan Parliament was introduced at the fourth Clan MacLeod Parliament in 1965. Eighteen young MacLeods representing six 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 gathers during the week before Parliament, and takes on a service project for the Castle estate, community organizations, or 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 is on the back page of this booklet.

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 those policies.

### 2.1.3 ACCOMMODATION

It is your responsibility to make your own accommodation arrangements at the establishment of your choice in the Dunvegan area. Please note that spots in and near the village fill up quickly in a Parliament year. If you need help, we recommend that you use Visit Scotland (formerly the Scottish Tourist Board). Please note that the Tourist Office in Dunvegan Village is closed in 2014.

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

E-mail: [info@visitscotland.com](mailto:info@visitscotland.com)

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

### 2.1.4 CASH AND BANKING

International bank exchange rates with the British pound (GBP) 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 could also obtain a separate debit card just for travel expenses, in order to separate it from your other bank accounts.

Note that 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.

from another phone company. If you have a GSM phone, you need to check with your local phone company to make sure your phone is unlocked (see option 2, below) so you can use a SIM card from a phone company in Scotland.

### *What are my options if my phone can be used in Scotland?*

Assuming your own phone has a GSM radio transmitter that works in Scotland, you have three options:

1. You can use your own phone in Scotland as it is, but you need to check with your local phone company to make sure that "international roaming" is enabled. However, while using your phone "as is" in Scotland can be the most convenient option for you, it can also be very expensive. The cost of any phone calls you make will be the same as if you were making a call from home – even if you are calling a person on the other side of the room Dunvegan Hall!
2. The second option is to purchase a new UK SIM card, which will give you a new account and phone number to use. Using a UK SIM card in your own phone is usually your least expensive option for telephone service while making calls within Scotland. You will pay only domestic UK rates. However, make sure you understand what services are available on your new account (voice mail, picture messages, etc.) Also, these temporary accounts are generally pre-paid, so you need to understand how to add money to your account if you need to.
3. The third option is that you purchase a new phone and new SIM card. While this is your most expensive option, the advantage is that it always works! This is also your ONLY option if your phone from home is CDMA or doesn't support the Scottish radio frequencies. Again, if you choose to do this, make sure you sign up for all the phone services you want. This will also be a pre-paid account, so make sure you understand how to add money to your account.

### 3.4 Dialling UK and international telephone numbers (from all phones)

A UK telephone number is typically written with a leading "(0)" or "0" and followed by the ten digit 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) 845 22 55 121". To call them:

- If you are inside the UK, ignore the "44" but include the "0", followed by the ten digits of the destination number, in this case "845 22 55 121."
- If you are outside the UK, you will have to dial an international access code first. (In North America, international calls from a landline typically require that you dial "011" first.) Then you should dial the country code "44", followed by the ten digit number, "845 22 55 121".

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



about whether or not you will be able to re-charge them in the UK.

Note that if you want to be able to send picture messages from the camera on your mobile phone that you must be sure that the data service on your phone will allow it. Ask your telephone operator (T-Mobile, Vodafone, etc.) what will work.

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.

### 3.3 Mobile phones

There are several options for travelers who want to use mobile phones in Scotland: just use your existing non-UK mobile and non-UK SIM, purchase a UK SIM card and insert it in your non-UK mobile, or purchase a UK mobile with a UK SIM card. (The technical and cost significance of these options is explained below.) 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.

#### *Can I use my phone in Scotland at all?*

There are two things that you need to know about your phone in order to use it in Scotland: the radio frequencies it will use, and the services associated with your account.

- Mobile phones have little radio transmitters in them that connect to phone towers in order to get your calls and messages onto a phone company's network. The radio frequencies and data patterns used between your phone and the towers at home may be different from the ones used in Scotland. The mobile phone service in Scotland uses GSM network 900 and 1800Mhz frequencies. This means that exclusively CDMA phones (e.g. in North America, Verizon and Sprint) will not work here. However, some phones have more than one radio transmitter in them. The best thing to do is to ask your local phone company if your phone can work in Scotland. If your phone doesn't support the UK radio frequencies, you will have to buy a mobile phone and SIM card for Scotland (see option 3, below).
- All GSM network phones have little removable SIM cards in them. SIMs are plastic chips that contain your phone number and billing information about your account. Your phone number/account will determine what services you can use and how much you will pay for those services. From a technical point of view, any SIM card can be inserted in any GSM phone. However, sometimes the telephone company from whom you got a great deal on your mobile phone has your phone "locked" to accept only its own SIMs. This would mean you can't use a SIM (or an account)

## 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 Aer Lingus (<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 a 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 stairs you may encounter in the London Underground can be a “memorable” experience. It’s a good idea to check the maps and 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. Note that not all of the “express” services from these airports will stop at King’s Cross – make sure you check the maps for these services.

- 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 it’s important to buy your ticket well 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 £100 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/sleeper/>) 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.

manufactured for something other than 50HZ. A mobile phone charger or laptop usually has a converter built into the “black brick” on its power cord, so you will only need an adaptor for the plug. Check the information printed on the appliance itself, as well as the “brick,” to find out if the unit can be used with the Scottish power supply.

- Plug adaptors are relatively inexpensive to buy while you are traveling. Note that you really only need one that works for the UK, not a fancy multi-nation tool.
- Power 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 a discount pharmacy.
- If you require small personal appliances such as a hairdryer or an iron, it makes sense to buy inexpensive UK travelers’ devices rather than to buy converters to make the devices from outside the UK work there.
- Magellan’s Catalogue (<http://www.magellans.com/travel-advice/power-adapter-guide/>) has detailed information on the use of electrical goods when traveling.

### 3.1.2 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.
- 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. (See notes in the 3.1.1 Electricity section, above.)
- 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 adaptor or charger for your phone. These are universal, very lightweight cables that are stocked at your local phone shop or electronics store.

## 3.2 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

- 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 even if you have a car 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 2014 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, note that the big bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh is now free. However, as a scenic alternative you can take the ferry from Glenelg to Skye. The Glenelg is an old-fashioned, hand turned ferry owned by the community, and it was recently featured in the major motion picture “Made of Honor.” More information is available at <http://www.skyeferry.co.uk/>.

## 3. TECHNOLOGY TIPS

### 3.1 General

#### 3.1.1 ELECTRICITY

The standard electrical voltage in Britain is 240 v AC 50HZ. A three-pronged, square adapter plug and/or electric converter for appliances is required to access a power point in Britain. Converters are necessary if your appliance has been

## 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.

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.

Note that if you are spending time in a major Scottish city such as Edinburgh or Glasgow, a car is more of a burden than a help. Public transportation coverage in the cities is thorough and you get to see more while someone else is driving.

### 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 “Parliament reading list” page on <http://www.clanmacleodparliament.org>. 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 vehicle 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. If the passing place is not on your side of the road, stop opposite it (don't cross the road to the passing place). A nod of the head and a wave between the drivers of the passing vehicles is customary.

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.

If you use an on-line route planner such as google.co.uk, please note that the trip duration they estimate may be up to 30% shorter than you, as a tourist, will require.

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:



[Maps]



With additional annotations by ACMS, 2006