

## **CLAN MACLEOD PARLIAMENT 2014**

Bronwyn McLeod

I traveled to Scotland to attend the 2014 Clan World gathering as the Clan McLeod Youth Coordinator, engaging in a project during the week prior to the World Gathering, with fellow Youth Coordinator and pal, Finn MacLeod, from Canada. We were accompanied by young MacLeod, Cameron Martin and Dorna Caskie from the USA.

This particularly small group had the privilege of working in the Dunvegan Castle creating a display of previously unseen memorabilia, specifically dedicated to the Clan McLeod. This was an extremely rare and exciting opportunity for us young McLeods, which we cherished and enjoyed very much. Dunvegan Castle's Curator and Aussie, John Nicholson instructed and educated us with knowledge of the Castle, Chiefs and historic significance of the memorabilia we revealed. The archiving, organising and phase boxing allowed the public and Clan members to visit and view the display in the Turret Room. With big thanks to John Nicholson and Chief Hugh for allowing us to undertake this incredible task, it will be forever valued and remembered by us and the Clan.

The Parliament week then commenced, with a bang! Almost 300 attendees this year. Another rare experience and major highlight, was the Royal visit from HRH Princess Anne. Princess Anne did the honors of unveiling the Castle's Garden gazebo, a Memorial to Chief John 29<sup>th</sup> MacLeod of MacLeod which stood elegantly and stunningly amongst the blooming flowers and pristine lawns of the Castle Gardens.



HRH Princess Anne on the occasion of dedicating the Chief John Memorial Gazebo, is introduced to Bronwyn McLeod (SA) Parliament Youth Coord. with other NRG attendees, by Castle Manager

HRH Pr. Anne was then given a tour of the castle by Chief Hugh and John Nicholson and ended in the Castle's Gun Court, where her mother Queen Elizabeth once stood on a visit in the 1950s. This is where I had privilege of meeting Princess Anne. She spoke in a very kindly, composed but straight to the point manner. She asked me who I was, and asked where I was from (unfortunately she had never

been to Moana) and was very interested in our week's project in the Castle. She was very pleasant and had a witty sense of humour (definitely my favorite Royal).

Amongst the Parliament events and festivities, there was considerable focus on the business front, particularly the Clan's future. As the youth Co-ordinators, Finn and I have undertaken future responsibilities for the Clan, highly motivated to keep the Clan known, youthful and thriving for future generations. Finn and I have sincere ambitions to make the 'Young MacLeods Group' as appealing as possible, by simply answering the question from any young member, "what's in it for me?"

I have committed to attending the 2016 North American MacLeod Gathering in Canada, where Finn and I will organise strategies and approaches to gain interest and potential membership from younger generations.

Attention to this duty and challenge, is vital, and I aim to explore opportunities for every young MacLeod to travel and experience the rugged, beautiful Isle of Skye, discover their MacLeod heritage, embrace their Clan ancestry, and most of all meet the beautiful and friendly people of the clan, young and old.

In the mean time, I am still reflecting on my clan adventures with great fondness. The Isle of Skye always amazes me, with its stunning scenery; in one of the best summers in recent years, the colour and drama of the land stirred an appreciation of the timelessness of these ancient places and the long traditions of its people. I admire the long lasting Clan Society, and the future makes me be so very "proud to be a MacLeod."

I thank all Clan members for their the SA MacLeod Society and members for their support and sponsorship in attending Dunvegan.

Hold fast and shine bright.