

McQuiston, McQuiston, McQuesten, McQuestion,
McCuiston, McCuiston and other related names.

Mountain Echo

April 2009

Published by Jim McQuiston jamesamcquiston@gmail.com

This month's Mountain Echo is short and sweet, but the message is as big as it can be.

The names associated with Hugh of Sleat, or Uisdean McDonald, those similar to McQuiston, are without any doubt, related to the family of the Lord of the Isles.

This has been our family tradition for a long time, and now, with a pronouncement by Clan Donald, we can be absolutely sure that we have been correct all along. The Clan Donald DNA Project has been vast and has taken place over several years now. A considerable number of men from our family, from many different spellings, have entered the project at their own expense.

Clan Donald has recently posted an extremely detailed report, online.

In the fifth paragraph on the opening page the report reads, "McCutcheon and McQuiston R1b groups are clear subsets of the Red 'Scots' one." - the "red Scots one" being considered the main McDonald DNA.

The word clear is defined in the dictionary as "easily seen; sharply defined" or "free from darkness, obscurity, or cloudiness" or "free from confusion, uncertainty, or doubt" or "easily understood; without ambiguity".

A subset is defined in the dictionary as "A set that is a part of



Lord of the Isles

This oft-used drawing of the Lord of the Isles does not indicate which of the several men who held this title it is meant to represent. Hugh of Sleat's grandfather, Donald, and father, Alexander, were the most war-like so the drawing would be most representative of one of these two men.

a larger set” or “in mathematics, a set consisting of elements of a given set that can be the same as the given set.”

There is no greater authority on the face of the earth than this scientific DNA study conducted by our parent clan, and according to Clan Donald’s own DNA research, we are a “clear subset” of the main line.

This is very significant, since there are many, many other names on this DNA website not singled out for this honor. It is also interesting to see that McCutcheon, a form of McUisdean, is the only other name specifically singled out.

It seems that McDonald DNA is fairly diverse and complicated, but we can take comfort in the “official” statement that we are a “clear subset” of the main line.

One of the men who matched BJ McCuiston and myself sent us a spreadsheet with DNA markers and analysis on it.

We matched the basic Clan Donald DNA and that of Colla Uais (the man Ed McCuiston, a long, long time ago told us we descend from, in Leona McQuiston’s 1937 book). We matched these DNAs by a 72% probability. We matched Colla’s descendant, Somerled, by a 50% probability. Obviously, Colla and Somerled’s DNA’s are guesstimates based on readings from several different “known” descendants, so their accuracy is debatable. But the Clan Donald benchmark is current and accurate.

A very quick look at some of the close matches we’ve had show five McDonalds - and we descend from Uisdean McDonald.

Also there are three McConnells and this name was a very common Irish spelling for McDonald. There are three McDaniels. Daniel is



Here are just a few of the reminders of the Lord of the Isles tradition. The ferry over to Skye is called the Lord of the Isles, as is a train that runs through Scotland. Prince Charles is the current holder of the Lord of the Isle titles. One of Sir Walter Scott’s greatest poems was called Lord of the Isles and there have been a handful of romance novels and historical works named this, too. Finally, there’s a whiskey and a pipe band both named for the Lord of the Isles.



given as the Irish form of Donald so these would also be three more McDonalds, making 11 instances of the McDonald name in just one list.

Then there’s the Houston name, which we know came in part from Hugh of Sleat, or Uisdean (Ooshtn) McDonald.

We had a McBride match. The McBride name is a sept of Clan Donald of the Isles and developed from Somerled’s father, Gillebride, which became Mc Gille Bride, and was shortened to McBride. We had a McBride match.

Finally we have Mack, which could well have been a shortening of our Mc name. I grew up with lots of people calling me Mack, or Jimmy

Mack. Some still do.

There are a few other names like Carr, a name we know was historically connected with ours, and its close relatives Carrow and Kilmur, the latter of which is the name of an area on Skye where Clan Uisdean held sway.

There is much more to sort out to fully understand our DNA results, but I think we can fairly say that our goal to prove our connection to Clan Donald has been achieved.

Thank you to all who participated for without your efforts and expense our family would not now be able to “clearly” claim ownership of our long- held family tradition as a sept or “subset” of this great clan.