

The Genealogy of Croft 1 Calbost

Oral tradition informs us that Alistair Macleod, born 1796, the original tenant on Croft No 1 was one of three brothers who came from Garenin, Carloway to Park early in the 19th century. His name appears on an early list of kelpers as follows:

Alastair Macleod	Subsequently Croft 1	Born 1796	Married 1815
Donald Kennedy	Subsequently Croft 2	Born 1788	Married 1810
Norman 'Buidhe' Mackenzie	Subsequently Croft 3	Born 1780	Married 1805
Donald Smith	Subsequently Croft 5	Born 1790	Married 1815
Kenneth Macleod	Subsequently Croft 13	Born 1780	Married 1809
Malcolm Finlayson	Subsequently Croft 14	Born 1800	Married 1820
Kenneth Maclean	Moved to Gravir	Born 1760	Married 1790

All dates of births etc. are given as approximate dates extracted from the census figures. It would appear that Alistair came to Calbost as a very young man to work the kelp along with Robert Weir, the tacksman, and when the village was first lotted about 1818 he was one of the original seven crofters in the village. Probably his brother Calum 'Mor' Macleod who was 2 years younger than him came to 35 Gravir at the same time, but their brother Jock who was several years younger came later and settled at 8 Calbost.

Although the three of them were traditionally known as brothers, the indications are that Jock might have been a nephew, probably bought up in the same home. The parents of Alistair, 1 Calbost and Calum, 35 Gravir, were given as John and Margaret Macleod whereas the parents of Jock, 8 Calbost was given as Angus and Ann Macleod, and he was referred to patronomically as 'Mac Aonghais Bhàn', as was Finlay Macphail who remained at Garenin. He was known as 'Fionnlagh Mor a Muile'.

There was a strong and persistent tradition that the three brothers who came to Lochs changed their name from Macphail to Macleod, and that is probably true in the case of Jock at least. The tradition of the change of name was perpetuated by the Marvig satirist Robert Finlayson, 2 Marvig in Gaelic verse aimed at his neighbour 'Coinneach Sheoc', son of Jock, 8 Calbost. Part of the verse reads:- "Ged a their iad Macleoid ruit, Se bu chòir bhi ort ach Macphail".

Robert also links his neighbour to 'Fionnlagh Mor a Muile, Mac Aonghais Bhàn às na Gearrannan"

Surnames were not in common use in the early 19th century. People were referred to by their patronomic name. It was not until about 1814 when a start was made with the first lotting in Lewis that people began to use their English names because they became directly responsible to the Landlord for their croft rent. Some of the people did not know what their real English surname was and they were not fussy what surname was given to them, hence there were members of the same family bearing different surnames sometimes.

Alistair Macleod 1 Calbost, Jock Macleod 8 Calbost and Calum Og Mackay (1801) 35 Gravir were married to three sisters, Catriona, Anna and Christy, daughters of 'Coinneach Ruadh' Maclean 1760 who himself came from the Carloway / Shawbost area and resided at Calbost for a while before he moved to 15 Gravir where his son Kenneth 1796 was married. Another daughter Mary was married to Calum Macritchie 38 Gravir. It is thought that Angus Maclean 1761 who resided at 35 Gravir was a brother of the above Kenneth Maclean of Calbost and 15 Gravir.

1 Calbost 'Crofter'

Alastair Macleod	1796-1881	Came from Garenin, Carloway
Catriona Maclean	1790-1881	Son of John & Margaret Macleod
John	1823-1878	Daughter of Kenneth Macleod Calbost/15 Gravir
Duncan	1825-1905	Bachelor
Angus	1828-1901	Settled at 14 Calbost
		Settled at 14 Calbost

1 Calbost 'Crofter'

Angus Macleod	1828-1901	'Aonghais Alastair'
Catherine Macmillan	1830-1901	Son of Alastair Macleod 1 Calbost
Angus	1857-1882	Daughter of John Macmillan 17 Crossbost
Christy	1859-1893	died as a young man
John	1861-1920	Mrs. John Macaulay 14 Crossbost
Ann	1863	Settled at 1 Calbost
Roderick	1867	became Mrs. Angus Mackenzie 12 Calbost
Johnnie	1871-1908	Cottar at 1 Calbost
Alastair	1873	Bachelor
		died young

'Ian Bàrd' John Macmillan 17 Crossbost father of the above Catherine, was evicted from Lemreway in 1843 and he went to 17 Crossbost. Two other sisters of Catherine were married in Calbost, Jessie wife of Roderick Kennedy 'Sen' 2 Calbost and Mary, wife of Kenneth 'Jock' Macleod 8 Calbost, moved to Marvig later.

John Macmillan 17 Crossbost was one of 7 sons of Norman Macmillan, Eishkin as follows:

Angus 'Sen'	1783	evicted from Steimreway 1857 settled at 4 Lemreway
John	1788	evicted from Lemreway 1843 settled at 17 Crossbost
Duncan	1793	evicted from Lemreway settled at Glen-Tolsta
Murdo		evicted from Lemreway settled at 14 Lemreway
Alasdair		bachelor
Norman	1801	settled at 32 Balallan
Angus 'un'	1803	settled at 12 Kershader

At the time of the eviction of John Macmillan, 17 Crossbost, from Lemreway his young family consisted of 7 children between the ages of 2 to 22 years.

1 Calbost 'Cottar'		'Coinneach Aonghais Alastair'
Kenneth Macleod	1867-	Son of Angus Macleod 1 Calbost
Mary Matheson		Daughter Donald Matheson 27 Gravir
Christina	1901-1911	Died age 10 years

Kenneth Macleod 'cottar', 1 Calbost (Coinneach Aonghais Alistair) was a shoemaker to trade and he worked in Calbost full-time. He manufactured boots as well as repairs. He also manufactured leather thigh sea-boots not only for local customers but for customers from the East of Scotland fishing ports. He was an Elder in the Park congregation of the Free Church of Scotland.

1 Calbost 'Crofter'		'Iain Aonghais Alastair'
John Macleod	1861-1920	Son of Angus Macleod 1 Calbost
Catherine Macleod	1879	Daughter Kenneth Macleod 3 Marvig
Angus	1903	Settled at Calbost
Mary Ann	1905	Worked in Edinburgh
John Alex	1907	Settled in Glasgow
Christy Ann	1909	Mrs. Hector Macinnes 36 Gravir/Fort William
Catherine	1911	Mrs. John Montgomery 26 Lemreway
Kenneth	1915	Bachelor, Emigrated to Australia
Duncan	1917	Bachelor, Emigrated to New Zealand

John Macleod 1861-1920 (Iain Aonghais Alastair) was a crofter/fisherman as well as a local stone man. He built many houses in the area including his own, about 1901. Both his own family and that of his son Angus, 'Boidy' were raised in this house which is still in good condition.

The previous tenant of the croft, John Macleod's fathers (Aonghais Alistair) house was a thatched house, extending out of the gable-end of the present house with a communicating door.

The ruin below the road and to the left is that of the dwelling house of Kenneth Macleod, 'Coinneach Aonghais Alastair' and was also built in the first decade of this century. The roofs of both of these houses were covered with canvas and coal tar.

There were two families on this croft for the whole of the first half of the 20th century because there was no other land available.

1 Calbost 'Crofter'		'Boidy'
Angus Macleod	1903-1993	Son of John Macleod 1 Calbost
Mary Macphail	1902-1966	Daughter of John Macphail 16 Gravir
Chrisanna	1938-1979	Schoolteacher, Cumbernauld



A view of croft 1 and 2 and part of 3 with the last dwelling house on crofts 1 and 2 still in good condition. Also, may be seen the cultivated fields, 'feannagan' and the boundary fences which indicated that this photo was taken in the age of the croft boundary fences. Up to the time of the Second World War, virtually all the inbye croft land within the village boundary walls were open and grazed in the winter by the collective stock of the whole community. Croft boundary fences are a departure from the original communal way of life of a crofting community.

Weddings were always a highlight in the life of any crofting village. Sometimes marriages took place at the fishing in the various east of Scotland fishing ports. The wedding of Angus Macleod, 1903, 1 Calbost and Mary Macphail 1902, 16 Gravr as seen here took place in Glasgow. By that time service in the big houses in Glasgow etc. had replaced the work of the herring fisher lassies gutting the herring.



The bridesmaid in this photo is Peggy Macleod 37 Gravr (Peggy Dhomhnuill Iomhair) who was a cousin of the bride. The best man is John Alex Macleod 1907, a brother of the groom.

The groom and the best man were sons of John Macleod 1861 - 1920 'Iain Aonghais Alastair', 1 Calbost. All the men folk in the family (four sons) served in the Second World War 1939-45. Three of them were Royal Naval Reservists and the youngest; Duncan served in the Merchant Navy throughout the war. Angus, seen above was called up early in 1938 at the time of the Munich Crisis in 1938 one year before the war started and he served throughout the war including the evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940. John Alex (seen above as best man) served in the Royal Navy as did Kenneth Dan his brother.

All four brothers survived the war without a scratch and Kenneth Dan 1915 and Duncan, 1917, emigrated to New Zealand and Australia. Neither of them married and they died in the country of their adoption.

Kenneth Macleod, 1867 'Coinneach Aonghais Alastair', No 1 Calbost, who was married to Mary Matheson, daughter of Donald Matheson, 27 Gravir, to whom their only child, Christy Ann was born in 1901 and she died 10 years later in 1911. There is a headstone on her grave in Gravir cemetery.



Croft No 1 went to Kenneth's brother Iain Aonghais, 1861, and therefore Kenneth was a landless cottar living on Croft 1. He was a shoemaker to trade and he set up a shoemaking business attached to his house at 1 Calbost where he attracted customers from all over Lochs. He manufactured new ladies and gents' footwear as well as fishermen's leather thigh boots and a footwear repair service. His customers for new fishermen's leather thigh boots included east coast of Scotland fishermen.

A daughter was born to his brother Iain Aonghais, 1 Calbost, the year they lost their only child and she was named Christy Ann and she was unofficially adopted by Kenneth and his wife and she remained with them as a daughter until they died. Christy Ann is seen here in the photo with her adopted father. Subsequently she married Hector Macinnes 36 Gravir and they lived in Fort William.

When we were growing up in Calbost in the 1920s and 30s there were two footwear repair shops in the village and that attracted customers from every village in South Lochs. These visitors very often stayed in the village overnight and would ceilidh on their relatives whilst waiting for their boots to be repaired. Kenneth Macleod was an Elder in the local Free Church congregation.



Entering Calbost from the Marvig direction.

Croft No. 1 dwelling house of Iain Aonghais, later Angus 'Boidy', may be seen above the road and the ruins of the dwelling house of Kenneth Macleod 'Coinneach Aonghais', one of the shoemakers of Calbost, below the road. Kenneth's only child Christina, 1901 - 1911, died at the early age of 10 years, and they raised one of his brother John's seven children as their own, Christyann, 1909. She was with them until they passed away and then she married Hector Macinnes 36 Gravir and lived in Fort William.

On the far side of the road may be seen the dwelling house of Donald Kennedy 1864-1952, croft No. 2 and Catherine Mackay, 29 Gravir, 1869-1950. Donald was also a shoemaker and skipper of a medium sized motor fishing boat 'Elsie'. They raised a family of nine children, 4 girls and 5 boys. Duguld was lost in the First World War aged 17 and Donald Alex, 1914-1945, died as a result of R.N.R. service in the Second World War aged 31 years. Four of the daughters and another son emigrated to North America in the 1920s, two of them on the 'Metagama'.

On the right edge of the picture may be seen the ruins of the dwelling house of John Macleod 'Iain an Coinneach', 1855. This was the only 'department assisted' dwelling house in the village. Iain an Choinneach was the first foot postman in the village and Alastair Mackenzie 'Glady', 1875-1952, 12 Calbost, succeeded him when he retired from Naval service in the First World War.

Iain an Choinneach raised a family of seven children, two girls and five boys. Three of the sons, Johnnie, Norman and Kenneth emigrated to South America,. On returning, Kenneth set up home at Plasterfield, Stornoway. Another son Rev. Murdo Kennedy Macleod 1895-1979 was a Free Church Minister in Glasgow before he joined the Royal Air Force as a Padre. Eventually he held the position of Principal Chaplain R.A.F. at the Air Ministry in London.

(See the Padres and Preachers of Calbost under Calbost Township History)



Catherine Macleod 'Bean Iain Aonghais Alastair', 1861, 1 Calbost.
Below - four of the seven members of the family:-



Left -; Chrisanne, 1909, married to Hector Macinnes, 36 Gravir; Angus 'Boidy', 1903, married to Mary Macphail, 16 Gravir and Maryann, 1905, not married and worked in Edinburgh. Catherine, 1911, married to John Montgomery, 26 Lemreway

Maggie Macleod 'Maggie Uilleam Chailean', Ranish, wife of John Alex Macleod, 1907, (centre of photograph) the son of John Macleod 'Seònaid Alex Iain Aonghais', 1 Calbost with Mary Macphail (right) 'Mairi Sheonaidh', 1902, 16 Gravir who was the wife of Angus Macleod 1903 'Boidy' who lived at 1 Calbost.

The two children in the photo are thought to be their only child in the case of each family. Both children were born about 1938 and they were both named Chrisanna.

Chrisanna Boidy was a schoolteacher and was subsequently married to Willie Maclean, Laxdale, at Cumbernauld, near Glasgow. She died at the early age of 41 years.

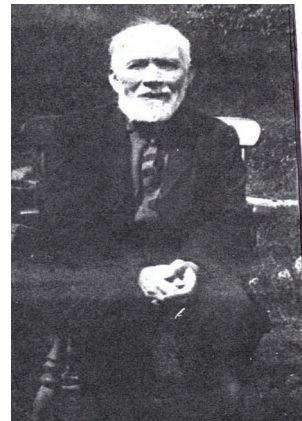
Chrisanna Sheonaidh Alex is married to Donnie Nicolson, near Helmsdale in Sutherland.



Chrisanna Macleod 1938-1979, only child of Angus Macleod 'Boidy', 1 Calbost. She was a schoolteacher and she married William Maclean, Laxdale, Stornoway and they settled in Cumbernauld near Glasgow. They had one daughter Marina.



Left: Donald Alex Kennedy, 2 Calbost
Child Murdo Macleod, 8 Calbost
Angus Morrison (Tom), 9 Calbost
Robert Kennedy, 14 Marvig



Kenneth Macleod 1 Calbost Shoemaker