

## Scottish (In Scotland) Highland Games losing battle for survival. Now down to 90

**John Ross** - published on Saturday 19 November 2011 in the *Scotsman*

With their colourful displays of strength, athleticism, piping and dancing, Highland Games are still popular tourist attractions and community focal points across Scotland.

But the first national study into the culturally-rich events has found the games are closing down at an increasing rate and that organisers are battling for their survival.

A three-year study entitled *Scotland's Highland Games: Challenges in an Ageing World*, found the number of events has declined from more than 200 in the 1940s to just 90 today.

And the rate of closure has accelerated with 25 events – including the Caithness, Beaulieu, Dingwall, Elgin and Stirling Highland Games – ceasing to exist in the past decade.

The study urges the Scottish Government to intervene, particularly as no single department appears to oversee the games, making them bureaucratically

invisible.

Its author said many ageing organising committees struggle to attract new blood.

Gerry Reynolds, who compiled the report, said: "The Scottish Highland Games network is based on a

foundation of volunteers. No volunteers, no Highland Games, it's as simple as that.

"And if the volunteers are all getting older together, and there is nothing in place to replace them, then we have a real problem."

Reynolds, events manager for Highland Council, has staged Inverness Highland Games and the Inverness Festivals programme. In the study, 48 committees were ques-

tioned and it was found almost two thirds (61.4 per cent) of members were over 50 and 7 per cent were aged between 71 and 80.

Nearly a third reported a fall in volunteers and 60 per cent were finding it difficult to keep up num-

*Continued on page 7*



# Flowers of the Forest

**Katherine Grant of Rothiemurchus** - Passionate conservationist and friend to estate workers, farmers and tourists alike. She was born 1 June, 1918, in North Wales and died: 8 November, 2011, in Inverness-shire, aged 93.

Although she held the titles 12th Countess of Dysart and Lady Huntingtower, Katherine Grant was known to her family simply as 'Highland Katie'. She was born in her soldier father's home in North Wales but spent much of her childhood in the family's Highland homes in Glen Etive and Glen Cannich, as well as rented winter quarters in Aldourie Castle, on the shores of Loch Ness. During the Second World War, she married another outstanding soldier, Lt Col John Peter Grant, who happened to be the 15th Laird of Rothiemurchus, near Aviemore, and she settled there for the rest of her life.

Along with her passionately conservationist husband, Katherine helped conserve, protect and, if that were possible, further beautify the Rothiemurchus estate, now in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. After her husband's death in 1987 she continued to dedicate herself to the estate and to sharing its beauty. It now welcomes visitors from around the world to enjoy a range of adventurous outdoor activities, spectacular camping and its historic 13th-century island castle in Loch-an-Eilean, which was voted one of Britain's best picnic spots.

Lady Katherine Greaves was born in North Wales in 1918, one of three daughters of Major Owain Greaves, of the Royal Horse Guards, and Wenefryde Agatha Scott, the 10th Countess of Dysart in Fife. Perhaps Lady Katherine's most famous ancestor was the 17th-century Countess of Dysart, Elizabeth Murray, who was a major player in the English Civil War, helped restore the monarchy and left her legacy in the palatial Ham House, outside Richmond upon Thames in Lon-

don, now a major tourist attraction.

On 12 April, 1941, Lady Katherine married Lt Col Grant, the Laird of Rothiemurchus, himself the son of a Great War hero, Colonel John Grant, 14th Laird of Rothiemurchus, who won the Military Cross fighting with the Lovat Scouts. The Second World War precluded much of a honeymoon for Katherine. Her husband had been posted to train a new breed of British and allied 'irregular' soldiers 'they called them 'commandos' ' at Lochailort, which had been requisitioned by the War Office for top-secret training. To

be near him, Katherine set up home in a farmhouse at Back of Keppoch, north of Arisaig, a move that inflamed another lifelong passion, apart from her laird. It was a passion for the west coast of Scotland, particularly the Mallaig area, the Isle of Skye and the Small Isles between Skye and Mull.



Rothiemurchus in Aviemore

She was able to move to the laird's family seat in Rothiemurchus in 1942, but the shadow of war remained. Her new home was in a restricted area controlled by the Special Operations Executive (SOE), which had established a base there for Norwegian special forces 'the famous Kompani Linge' ' preparing for an allied return to Nazi-occupied western Europe. 'Rothiemurchus was a very different place from now,' her children recalled. 'It was the traditional centre of the community, with two churches, the primary school, the library and the golf course, later to become a tennis club. The road from the railway station, hotels and shops in Aviemore petered out at Coylumbridge, where the main route to Glenmore Lodge went over the Sluggan and the more direct rough forestry track was often laid over boggy sections.'

As a result of the military activity, Katherine had to live ' and did so gladly for the war effort ' in the

*Continued on page 5*



## Clan Elliot Society, USA

Any person of Scottish ancestry bearing the name Elliot in any of its various spellings, including the spouse or descendant of such person, or any person who would like to be a friend of the Elliot Clan is welcome to join the group.

Please contact the treasurer for a membership form or visit <http://www.elliotclanusa.com/> for a form.

The Clan Elliot Society, USA  
Treasurer is: **Patricia Tennyson Bell**,  
2288 Casa Grande Street, Pasadena, CA 91104.

## Clan Gregor Society

**Sir Malcolm**

**MacGregor of MacGregor**

7th Baronet of Lanrick  
and Balquidder,

**24th Chief of Clan Gregor**

*Great Lakes, New England,  
Pacific North West, Western U.S.  
and Southeast Chapters*

**[www.clangregor.org](http://www.clangregor.org)**



For membership contact:

PO Box 393,  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Ms. Ishbel McGregor,  
Secretary,  
Mo Dhachaidh,  
2 Breachhead Alloa,  
Clackmannanshire,  
FW102EW, Scotland

## Clan Macfie FaceBook page is up!

Glen Cathey has recently put up  
The Official Clan Macfie FaceBook page  
and it is ready for you to join and participate.  
You can see some Youtube of the Clan Parliament at Nethybridge.  
This is the link: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Official-Clan-Macfie-Page/177565770680>

## Clan Crawford Association

Incorporated to serve our members worldwide to preserve our legacy. Our Associates can assist you with surname related activities including events, DNA genealogy, heraldry, surname history and more.

**Ralf Smart, Director, SE**

803-425-5316 or [general\\_ly@yahoo.com](mailto:general_ly@yahoo.com) or  
[www.clancrawford.org](http://www.clancrawford.org)



Looking for your Scottish Family History?

Visit our newly  
redesigned website:  
[www.unicornlimited.com](http://www.unicornlimited.com)

Information on hundreds of  
Scottish families, as well as:

- \* Bagpipe music books
- \* Scottish history and culture
- \* Scottish and Celtic folklore
- \* The Scots and Scots-Irish in  
North America

Visit our site to purchase  
instant download materials

Unicorn Limited, Inc.

Since 1979, your #1 source  
for information on all things Scottish!

Renny and Vicki McLeod  
P. O. Box 125, Loachapoka, AL 36865  
334.501.0202 [mcleod@scotpress.com](mailto:mcleod@scotpress.com)



## Katherine Grant of Rothiemurchus, *continued from page 2*

Boat House of the estate. The fact that it had no electricity was no big deal. None of the estate's farmers or workers had electricity either, and to Katherine they were not her staff but her fellow human beings.

She milked goats she had wangled through her husband's military connections, and grew her own vegetables especially to feed her new daughter Jane, who was born in 1943.

Her husband was involved in the D-Day landings of June 1944 but, typically, kept his role quiet. When he was demobbed at the end of the war, and all the allied commandos he had trained had either liberated western Europe or were dead, Katherine and Lt Col Grant set up home in Inverdrue House, on their Rothiemurchus estate, where their son Johnnie was born in

1946. Lt Col Grant would later become Sheriff of Inverness.

After the war, Katherine persuaded her husband's comrade, the war hero Lord Lovat who famously waded ashore at Sword Beach, Normandy, on D-Day with his piper Bill Millin playing Highland Laddie to sell his fishing lodge at Glasnacardoch, outside

Mallaig.

For much of the rest of her life she filled that lodge with children, godchildren and children of friends or staff, giving them magical adventure holidays, picnicking on the beach, catching mackerel, camping on Canna or Iona.

In the great tradition of the true Scots nobility Katherine Grant preferred being Highland Katie to

Lady Katherine. She was an extremely private person, in stark contrast to the ladies of today, whose husbands are knighted for riding bikes, kicking balls or singing rock songs.

On the west coast, she helped fishermen and their families. Inland, she helped foresters and farmers or anyone whose work was preserving rather than destroying.

Hundreds, probably thousands of working class people in the area will never forget her face, and yet most of them possibly never knew her full name or background.

In the early 1960s, Katherine and John moved to Drumintoul, the estate's old shooting lodge. It had

*Continued on page 6*



Rothiemurchus in Aviemore

### Clan Davidson Society, USA, Inc.

[www.clandavidsonusa.com](http://www.clandavidsonusa.com)



**COME JOIN US!** The Clan Davidson Society, USA, Inc. will be sponsoring an *International Gathering of Clan Davidson* on the 2nd weekend of June (**June 10, 11 & 12**), 2011. The event will be held in conjunction with the Kansas City Scottish Highland Games.

**Richard Halliley, President**  
5650 Harmony Bend  
Braselton, GA 30517  
[gahalliley@gmail.com](mailto:gahalliley@gmail.com)

**Dave Chagnon, Membership**  
7004 Barberry St.  
North Little Rock, AR 72118  
[sennachie@earthlink.net](mailto:sennachie@earthlink.net)

**Clan Davidson Society, USA invites all Davidson's and Septs of the clan to membership:**

Davey, Davie, Davis, Davison, Davisson, Daw, Dawson, Day, Dea(s), Dean, Deane, Deason, Dee, Desson, Devette, Dewis, Dey, Dow, Dye, Kay, Keay, Key, Keys, MacAdie, MacDaid, MacDavid, MacDavitt, MacKay, Slora, Slorach.

# Clan Blair Society

Membership cordially invited from Blair  
descendants

and other interested parties.

**[www.clanblair.org](http://www.clanblair.org)**

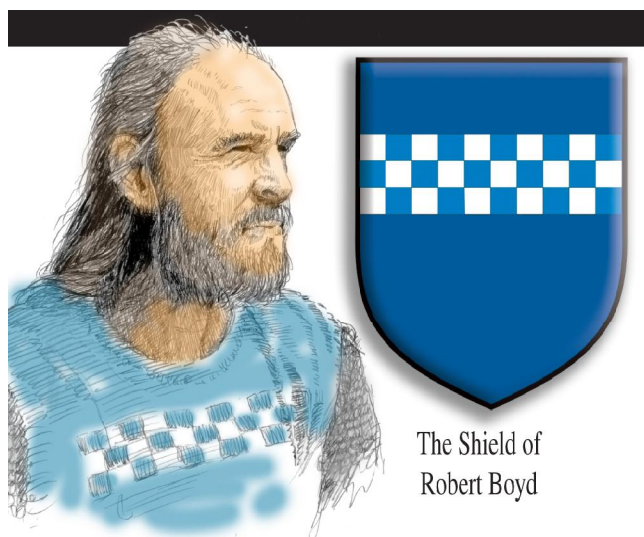
Shawn R. Blair, President

40 Pearl Street

South Portland, ME 04106-2734



Robert I. Blair, Membership Chairman  
7516 E. Hermosa Vista Dr.  
Mesa, AZ 85207-1110



The Shield of  
Robert Boyd

A lifelong friend and close lieutenant to Robert the Bruce, Sir Robert Boyd heroically defended Castle Kildrummy and was an exemplar to all in the Scots' cause. He survived the years and faced harsh dangers in taking his country back from the English kings, and fought alongside his family's Stewart kinsmen at the Battle of Bannok Burn.

The epic story unfolds before you in the historical *Rebel King* novels. See them here:

## REBELKING.COM

### Katherine Grant of Rothiemurchus,

*continued from page 5*

the convenience of electricity, which allowed her to make her famed pancakes, latterly for après-ski friends coming back from Aviemore. She maintained that pancake tradition until shortly before her death. Although she was as conservation-minded as her husband, she won him over in developing Aviemore and the Cairngorms as a ski-tourist-friendly area ó a difficult balance.

Katherine Grant took on the title 12th Countess of Dysart when her elder sister Rosamund died in 2003. Under the Scottish peerage tradition, it is a title that goes to an eldest daughter if there is no male child. It has moved from earl to countess for centuries. Hence, after Lady Katherine's death, her son Johnnie (John Peter Grant) took on the title 13th Earl of Dysart while his son James became Lord Huntingtower.

The Huntingtower title, which also shifts between male and female offspring, is more of a nominal one chosen by one of Lady Grant's ancestors, none of whom, it seems, ever lived at Huntingtower, on the western edge of Perth. The English media always referred to Lady Grant as Countess of Dysart and Baroness, rather than Lady Huntingtower.

Katherine Grant is survived by her daughter Jane, son Johnnie, five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

The flea can jump 350 times its body length.  
It's like a human jumping the length of a football field.  
*You learned something new today!*



### **Scottish Highland Games are in trouble, continued from page 1**

bers.

In addition, 58 per cent of committees said sponsorship was falling, and 73 per cent said grant income was shrinking as costs rose.

Reynolds added: "Scotland's Highland Games require structured and co-ordinated support from a number of agencies if they are to survive in significant numbers. Without intervention it appears inevitable that more Highland Games will fail."

Political backing and funding could fix the problem, he insisted.

He said: "Given the fact these events have been estimated to be worth millions of pounds to the Scottish economy each year, there is a significant argument for the Scottish Government to intervene and introduce measures to ensure that the games survive."

"They are drifting into an uncertain future and there is no evidence to suggest that anything will prevent many of them joining those which have already sunk."

David Stewart, a Highlands and Islands Labour MSP, said: "I will be writing to the Scottish Govern-

ment to try to get clarity on who has responsibility. We need to develop the games."

Pauline Bain, 71, who spent 27 years as secretary of Caithness Highland Games, which folded three years ago, said: "I enjoyed it but it just got too much. I don't think there is any prospect of it coming back as no-one is interested."

The Scottish Highland Games Association, which represents 60 events, said last year the games generated more than £20 million and attracted 150,000 spectators.

Its secretary Ian Grieve agreed the increasing age of volunteers was a problem, but added: "The biggest thing against us recently has been horrible summers."

A Scottish Government spokeswoman added: "We will be happy to discuss these concerns with Mr Reynolds."

*With many thanks to Alastair McIntyre from ElectricScotland.com for this story and photos. Visit <http://www.electricscotland.com> anytime, any day.*



# ***Clan Sinclair Association, Inc., (USA)***



7 ft. x 9 ft. tent panel created by Heraldic Artist, Tom Freeman, for the 2009 Gathering in Edinburgh.

## **Clan Sinclair Association, Inc. (U.S.A.)**



Do you know who came to North America  
almost 100 years before Columbus famous voyage?

**Prince Henry Sinclair in 1398!**

***Come join (and enjoy) your Sinclair family***

President

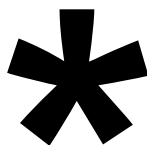
**Melvin Sinclair**

**224 Bransfield Road**

**Greenville, SC 296715**

**864-268-3550**

**[Mel@ClanSinclairSC.org](mailto:Mel@ClanSinclairSC.org)**



Membership Contact

**Alta Jean Ginn**

**12147 Holly Knoll Circle**

**Great Falls, VA 22066**

**703-430-6745**

**[aginn@cox.net](mailto:aginn@cox.net)**



# House of Gordon holds 2011 AGM at Seaside Games, Ventura, CA



Gordon clan members from all over the USA met at the *Seaside Highland Games* in Ventura, CA October 8, 2011 for their Annual General Meeting.

Business at this Meeting included the biennial election of officers.

Elected as President was Roger J. Mills of Jacksonville, IL; Lynne Gordon of Las Vegas, NV as VP; Nellie Lowry of Chatsworth, CA as Treasurer; and, Laura Whiteside of Marengo, IL as Secretary.

Directors-at-Large John Lowry of Chatsworth, CA and Lucretia Gordon of Johnson City, TN remain in office.

Incoming President Roger J. Mills has served the House of Gordon as Illinois Convener and National VP and is a member of the St. Andrew Society of Central Illinois, as well as a member of the St. Andrew Society of Illinois.

Vice President Lynne Gordon has been a member of the House of Gordon Southwest for almost 10 years and currently serves as their Treasurer, *Cock's Crow* Editor, and Website Administrator. She is also a member of the St. Andrews Society of Southern Nevada and the Las Vegas Celtic Society where she is the VIP/AGM Coordinator for the Las Vegas Highland Games.

Secretary Laura Whiteside is a member of the

St. Andrew Society of Illinois and wife of H of G Northern Illinois Convener, David Whiteside.

Nellie Lowry is a member of the St. Andrew's Society of Los Angeles, and her husband, John Lowry, Director at Large, is President of the St. Andrew's Society of Los Angeles.

Director at Large Lucretia Gordon has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2004.

The *Seaside Highland Games* Guest of Honor for its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Event was The Honorable, the 13<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Huntly, Chief of the House of Gordon, who journeyed from his home at Aboyne Castle, Aberdeenshire, for the Seaside Highland Games. Lord Huntly presided over the Seaside Games from his formal remarks officially opening the Games on Saturday to his closing congratulations Sunday to all participants for the splendid manner and enthusiasm in which American Scots embrace their heritage. Lord Huntly spent a significant part of time during the Games venue visiting each clan represented at Seaside.

The House of Gordon USA and its Southwest Region organization hosted a Gala Event Dinner Saturday evening honoring their Chief. Participants once again enjoyed listening to both formal remarks and the humorous anecdotes that filled Lord Huntly's comments throughout the weekend.

# 2011 Dignitaries at Seaside Games



*Just after the Opening Ceremonies of the recent Seaside Highland Games in Ventura, California, Games officers and special guests had their photograph made. You'll see (left to right) Neil Andrews (Ventura City Councilman), The Hon. Bill Fulton (Mayor of Ventura), John Lowry (Chief of the Games) and Lord Huntly (Chief of the House of Gordon) from Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Next is Jim Hartman (The Chief's Piper - Lord Huntly's Gordon Piper), Bill Graham (Director of Ceremonies for the Games) and Command Master Chief Thomas Cyr of the Naval Base, Ventura County, California.*

*Front row is Gabby Trainor who sings our National Anthem at the Ventura Games,*

---

## Clan Leslie manuscript lost

Some fifteen years ago, Alexander Leslie Klieforth wrote an article titled "Suddie House, Ross-Shire. (1995). This article was about the Suddie House, located at Munlochy, on the Black Isle, Rosshire. This house was situated on high ground with a great view of Munlochy Bay, the Moray Firth and Inverness. The house was bought about 1863 by Alexander Leslie along with about 240 acres of land. This house is no longer owned by a Leslie, and is now called Roskill House. Alec Klieforth cited a manuscript titled "The Leslies of Suddie," by Francis Murray-Leslie, Boxmoor, Herts,

1987.

In a recent letter from Gloria Klieforth, she said that they no longer have this manuscript and that it, along with all of their Leslie files were sent to the Society long ago.

Unfortunately, this manuscript and most of Alexander's Leslie files are not in the collection from the south Georgia Library. If anyone has this manuscript, I would greatly appreciate a copy. This will be forwarded to our collection at the University of Guelph in Ontario.

**David Leslie White, Chieftain**  
clanleslie@earthlink.net

# Christmas Sale on Leslie History book! Don't miss it! Good til 12/15

Again this year, we are offering a special Christmas price for the book *Grip Fast: The Leslies in History* by Alexander Klieforth. This book is an excellent source of Leslie history and is autographed by our Clan Chief, The Honorable Alexander Leslie. The special price is \$59 which includes shipping.

The special runs from November 1 - December 15.

This book will be an excellent gift for your Leslie relatives! We accept PayPal (use iflowers1954@yahoo.com as the PayPal address), check in

US funds drawn on a US bank, money

order, International Postal Money Order, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. If you pay by credit card, I need the card type, name

on card, card, number, expiration date, and 3 digit CVS code on the back. To order a book, contact me and when payment is received our quartermaster will ship you the book. Christmas is approaching so take advantage of this special.

Linda Flowers, 302 SW 3rd St., Tuttle, OK 73089, 405-381-3577,

lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net



## Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor New Standing Council Convenor

On Tuesday, July 5th, 2011 - The Standing Council met in Edinburgh and elected a new slate of officers as follows: - Convenor: Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor (Chief of Clan Gregor) - Vice Convenor: Margaret Elliott of Redheugh (Chief of Clan Elliott) - Treasurer: David Irvine of Drum (Chief of Clan Irwin)

In addition to electing the above slate of officers, the Council made two important appointments. Lord Jamie Sempill was appointed to be the liaison between the Council and the Scottish diaspora, and Jamie Macnab younger of Macnab is charged to be the liaison with the heirs of the Council members.

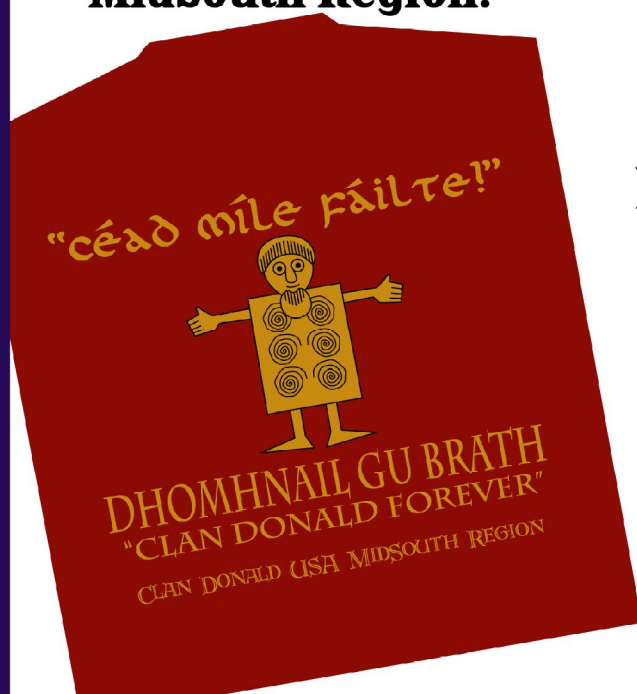


Ye kin wear yer heart on yer sleeve, aye,  
but keep yer name out in front!

## TROMBONES AND BAGPIPES

Clan Hume Air Force Members  
Get Your Squadron T-Shirts Here!

All ye Donalds o' th'  
MidSouth Region!



Kit yersel' up wi' most anythin' ye kin  
imagine sportin'th' glorious name o'

## Donald!

All products will feature  
original art created exclusively for  
Clan Donald USA MidSouth Region.

Profits to Clan Donald USA MidSouth Region

[www.cafepress.com/bonesandpipes](http://www.cafepress.com/bonesandpipes)

# 2012 Clan Leslie Gathering set for Loon Mountain next September 21-23

Hello Leslies! I am pleased to announce the dates for the next Clan Leslie Gathering in the beautiful White Mountain region of New Hampshire on September 21, 22 and 23, 2012. I am excited to be hosting the event in conjunction with the New Hampshire Highland Games, one of North America's largest Scottish festivals. Stay tuned for the next issue of the *Grip Fast* for more details regarding prices and host hotels as I am in the middle of working out all of the details.

I can tell you that if you've never visited New England or the White Mountain region, then you're in for a real treat. You will definitely want to make the Clan Leslie Gathering part of a larger New England vacation, if possible, as September is a gorgeous time to visit our region and there is no shortage of things to

do. And, the weather is perfect for wearing all of your Leslie Tartan at the festival. In the meantime, visit some of the websites I've provided below to start getting a picture of the festival, area and surroundings. I look forward to seeing everyone next September!

New Hampshire Highland Games - <http://www.nhscot.org/> Loon Mountain Ski Resort - <http://www.loonmtn.com/>

Franconia Notch State Park - <http://www.nhstateparks.org/explore/state-parks/franconia-notch-state-park.aspx>

Lincoln/Woodstock, NH - <http://www.lincolnwoodstock.com/> Boston, MA - <http://www.boston.com/travel/boston/>

See you next September! Laura Sawyer Messing



## Henry Morgan's flagship found

Welsh-born Captain Henry Morgan was a true stand out in his swashbuckling age. He is regarded as the most successful privateer ever, the model for a host of fictional gentleman pirates from Captain Blood to Jack Sparrow.

Archaeological divers this summer located the remains of Morgan's flagship *Satisfaction*, lost in 1671 off the mouth of the Chagres River in the course of the campaign that resulted in his sacking of Panama City.

Though he ended his days as the governor of

Jamaica, Captain Morgan returned to the sea when his Port Royal burial site was toppled into the Caribbean by the 1692 earthquake.

With thanks to The Celtic League. Join by writing Celtic League American Branch, PO Box 20153 Dag Hammarskjold Center, NY, NY 10017. Dues are \$35 for an individual membership and \$40 for a couple. \$50 is contributing member and \$100 for a Sustaining membership.



*Celebrating Our 13th Anniversary!*

**Saturday and Sunday,**

## ***The Pipes of Christmas*** **at 2:00 PM**

Madison Avenue  
Presbyterian Church,  
921 Madison Ave., at 73rd St.,  
New York City.

%The musical experience was thrilling!+  
***Classical NJ Magazine***

%A majestic seasonal experience...+  
***The Star Ledger***

One of the most delightful Christmas programs to enjoy in New York.+

***Fred Bisset 96th President, The St. Andrews Society of New York.***

%One of the highlights of the holiday season.+

***The Mirror***

From the bold sounds of the pipes and drums, and the harmonious blending of brass, strings and percussion, to the poetic and lyrical words that complement them, all filling the beautiful Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, *The Pipes Of Christmas* is a festival for the soul. Presented by the Clan Currie Society, the concert features the music of Christmas accompanied by a selection of readings taken from the Celtic literature of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales.

Featured performers include Andrew Weir from the film *Braveheart*, Scottish Country Dance trio Local Hero (Paul Woodiel/fiddle, Christopher Layer/uilleann pipes and Susie Petrov/keyboard), the Solid Brass ensemble, Scottish harpist Jennifer Port and the Kevin Ray Blandford Memorial Pipe Band of Redlands, CA.

Proceeds from the concerts fund a growing number of music scholarships bestowed annually by the Clan Currie Society. The Alex Currie Memorial Scholarship for Bagpipe was created in honor of the famed Canadian piper and is administered by the Gaelic College in Nova Scotia. The Pipe Major Kevin Ray Blandford Scholarship - is awarded annually by the National Piping Centre in Glasgow, Scotland. The Col. William McMurdo Currie Memorial Scholarship for the Clarsach (Scottish harp) is administered by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (formerly the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama) in Glasgow. The newly-created Private Bill Millin Memorial Piping Scholarship is bestowed annually to Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas.

The Pipes of Christmas is made possible through the generous support of OBAN Single Malt Whisky, the Grand Summit Hotel, the Hat Tavern and Walkers Shortbread. Complete details at [www.PipesOfChristmas.com](http://www.PipesOfChristmas.com)

**LIVE preview performance on Sunday, December 4, 2011 at 1:00 PM at the Miracle on Madison fundraiser for the Children's Aid Society of NY, Madison Avenue at 61st Street.**



# Flowers of the Forest

**Dorothy Blair**, wife of deceased Clan Blair Society founder, Norman Blair, mother of Clan Blair Society #2- John Blair of Virginia and mother of Clan Blair Society #3- Larry Blair of Pennsylvania, has died after a long debilitating illness. Condolences and prayers for the family.

Clan Blair Society #671- **Philip Arnold Blair** died September 4, 2011 in Phoenix AZ after a valiant struggle with Myelodysplastic Syndrome. He was the oldest son of Oscar A & Dorothy Arnold Blair. He was born in Phoenix AZ, received his BS in 1955 from CO A&M & Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 1959 from Colorado State University. He began his veterinary career in Broken Bow, Nebraska. He partnered at the Casa Grande Animal Hospital in Arizona from 1964-1977. He fulfilled one of his life-long dreams and began farming in the San Luis Valley of southern CO for 10 yrs before returning to Phoenix, Arizona to manage his family's business, The Arnold Pickle & Olive Company. In 1997 he became the Assistant State Veterinarian with the Arizona Department of Agriculture.

Clan Blair Society #100- **Helen Louise Blair Summersgill** of Sycamore, Pennsylvania has died. She had been a member since 1988 until we lost track of her in 2009. We just found out she had died but we were unable to get much information. She used to send little cards with her membership stating she always enjoyed all the articles in our newsletter.

**Norman Alexander Macintosh Macdonald** died last 17th May. Mr. Macdonald was the author of a biography of his great grandfather, Lord

Kingsburgh, who served as the first president of both the Edinburgh and Glasgow Clan Donald Societies. He is survived by his wife, Jill, and one son and one daughter.

Mr. Macdonald served as president of the Clan Donald Society of Edinburgh from 1992-1993. He also served as council member and librarian.

**George H. Thompson and Jean S. Thompson**, parents of Bonnie Thompson, Clan Donald USA

International Correspondent and CPR Deputy Commissioner, recently died. George died on July 4, 2011 at the age of 88 and Jean passed away on September 9, 2011 at the age of 84.



**Gloria Bridge Walker** passed away on 21 September 2011 surrounded by family at her home in Federal Way, Washington.

She was born December 4, 1939 in Sedro-Woolley, Washington to Mervyn and Bernadine Bridge. She was a member of Clan Donald USA for many years.

**Judy Watt Maples**, wife of Ernest G. Maples died April 30, 2011 at her home in Bowling-Green Tennessee. A member of Clan Donald for many years, she enjoyed singing and was always a member of her church choir or community chorus.

**Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald of Largie**, 11th Baroness of Pollock died 21 April 2011 at the age of 104. She married Jock Macdonald, 19th of Largie in 1930. She assumed the name Maxwell Macdonald upon their marriage. She succeeded to her father's baronetcy at the age of 98 upon recognition of Lord Lyon. She is survived by two sons, John and Donald.

# The Families of Clan MacTavish Welcome You to Discover Your Scottish Heritage!



Chief Steven MacTavish

Family names associated with Clan MacTavish:  
*Cash, Kash, MacCamish, MacCash, MacCavish, MacComb, MacCombie, MacComich, MacComish, MaComie, Macomie, MacCosh, MacLaws, MacElhose, MacLehose, MacTavish, McTavish, Mactavish, Mactavis, M'Tavish, MacThomas, Stephens, Stephenson, Stevens, Stevenson, Tavish, Tawesson, Thom, Thomas, Thomason, Thomasson, Thompson, Thomson, Tod, and Todd, and all variant spellings.*

## We Are Clan MacTavish!



For information about joining us email: [clanmactavishUSA@gmail.com](mailto:clanmactavishUSA@gmail.com)

# Email: [clanmactavishUSA@gmail.com](mailto:clanmactavishUSA@gmail.com)



# Christmas in Scotland

The tradition of celebrating Christmas was banned in Scotland for nearly 400 years until the 1950s. In the 1580s, this festival was obliterated from the list of Scottish festivals as it was seen to be supporting Romanism. Until 1958 when Christmas Day was declared a public holiday, people worked normally on this day although the children did get presents.

Even today, the traditional Christmas celebration is usually a low-key affair. The Christmas traditions in Scotland are similar to that of the United States, although the Scots do have some interesting customs of their own.

Just before Halloween, gift shops here are seen to be stacked up with a variety of gifts for Christmas. As days pass, fairy lights are put up in the trees in larger cities. Department stores and buildings are decorated with strands of Christmas lights. Multicolored light bulbs are set up on big trees in the centers of the smaller towns.

In the days leading to Christmas, these lights are smashed up one by one by young people so that only one or two remain at the top of the tree by Christmas Eve.

Children join in the countdown by making Advent calendars at home. They also compose a letter mentioning all the presents they want for Christmas and send it to Santa in Lapland. One means of doing this is throwing the Christmas letter into the fireplace. It is believed that the list will go up the chimney and get to Santa that way.

Christmas Eve in some regions of Scotland is called òSowans Nichtö. The name probably comes from ðsowans, a dish made from oat husks and fine meal steeped in water, that is eaten on this day.

A popular tradition practiced on Christmas Eve is burning the branches of a rowan tree signifying that any bad feeling between friends



or relatives have been put aside for Yuletide.

It is believed that if the fire goes on Christmas Eve, the household would suffer bad luck in the coming year.

Many children hang up their stockings at the end of their beds before going to bed believing Santa Claus will come and fill them before morning. Some of the youngsters use their pillow cases instead of stockings.

In many homes, open air lunches are arranged. Black buns - cakes made from fruits, almonds, spices and a little whisky, Bannock cakes made of oatmeal and cakes baked in the sun are the traditional picks for the Christmas meal. Other dishes are plum pudding, mince pies, spaced roast duck, smoked salmon coronets with prawns and seafood bisque served with brandy sauce.

Some may have a Yule Log, a chocolate cake from Sweden.





# Places to look for fairies... pretty much all over Wales

Arthur Conan Doyle drew a lot of flak for his 1923 book about purported fairy apparitions in the English countryside, but perhaps he was looking in the wrong places.



The Shield of  
Thomas Randolph  
as Earl of Moray



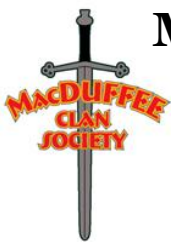
Captured at Methven in the debacle that all but ended the reign of Robert the Bruce, the king's nephew Thomas Randolph was forced by his captors to track his king and the Army of Bruce. His heart still yearned for Scotland to be free, and at Loudoun Plain, he calmly turned his back to the English and rode across the battlefield to rejoin the Scots and stand against Edward's army.  
Find out more about the epic story at...

## REBELKING.COM

Wales dominates a newly published list of the top ten fairy-sighting hotspots in Britain, with such places as Freni-fawr in the Preseli Hills, the magic lake Llyn Barfog in Gwynedd and Llyn y Fan Fach, home to a whole fairy tribe and their fairy cattle too.

While the Little People aren't easily seen, fairy list compiler Janet Bord noted, "Do not be surprised when you experience a sense of otherworldliness when you visit these places."

*My goodness, I have had that feeling of another time and place in half a dozen places in Scotland and in Wales too! I KNEW that if I just had more time to stay sitting quietly, I'd see something magical! Your ed.*



## MacDuffee Clan Society of America, Inc. Of Clan MacFie

Organized July 1962

Registrar:  
Marty Rosser  
336-275-8619  
martyrosser50@aol.com

Annual General Meeting each year in July  
at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games

Genealogy Chairman: Richard Ledyard  
865-671-2555 rledyard@tds.net

Treasurer: David Nathan McDuffie  
678-557-9215 dnmcduffie@hotmail.com



# Tallahassee, Florida St. Andrews Society invites you to Burns Night February 4, 2012

Well-known singer and entertainer **Charlie Zahm** will be with us for Burns Night on Saturday, February 4, 2012. Some of you may remember his performance at our St. Andrews 2005 Burns Supper and his deep baritone voice.

Also on the billing is our own **Beth Gay-Freeman**, who now lives in South Carolina and writes and edits her own newsletter *Beth's Newfangled Family Tree*. Beth, who is also an FSA, Scot, will be deliver-

ing the Burns *Immortal Memory*.

If you would like complete information including how to make reservations regarding the Burns Night, please contact [ericking@comcast.net](mailto:ericking@comcast.net)



## Scottish History Course online

We would be grateful if you could pass details of our new Modern Scottish History course (distance learning), which you or your members may be interested in pursuing.



The programme is headed by Professor Catriona MacDonald, who recently won the 2010 Saltire Society Scottish History Book of the Year Award at the Saltire Society Awards in Edinburgh on the 29th November, for her book *Whaur Extremes Meet* (2009).

Visit <http://www.saltiresociety.org.uk/4153> for complete information.

Jacqueline Ramsay, School Recruitment and Marketing Officer. You may contact her at [jmc@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:jmc@gcu.ac.uk) [www.gcu.ac.uk/lss](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/lss)

You can apply online at <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/study/postgrad/GCU%20Postgrad%20Application%20Form%20V9.pdf>

## Site Seeing!

<http://www.usgwarchives.org/special/ppcs/ppcs.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0ffwDY00Q>

<http://www.oldesttelevision.com/>

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/nd5WGLWNlA?rel=0>

I promise, you'll enjoy ALL of these sites and will go back again and again.

# Clan Bell International



This old West Marche Clan, one of Border clans since the early 1100s, were retainers of the Great House of Douglas and also allied with the best border families through blood and friendship. Their land holdings were extensive, and to survive, they engaged in the “rieving” of the period and participated in many battles against the English.

Declared “unruly” by the Scottish Parliament, many of the Clan emigrated to the Ulster Plantation after 1610.

After William Bell, called *Redcloak* and Chief of the Clan died in 1628, the chiefship became dormant, and without leadership, the Bells ceased to exist as a viable clan.

Clan Bell International (CBI) in the United States represents Clan Bell world-wide with a coordinated network of 20 International Representatives, each representing the Clan in their own country.

CBI is a charitable organization of Scottish descendants and friends of Family/Clan Bell dedicated to the study of Bell genealogy and Scottish history and the perpetuation of family tradition.

CBI cordially invites membership inquiries from persons Named Bell (all spellings), their descendants and friends. Quarterly newsletter published. Tents hosted at major Scottish festivals from coast to coast.

President:

**William H. Bell**

2322 Shadow Hill Drive  
Riverside, CA 92506

[clanbellusa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clanbellusa@sbcglobal.net)

Visit our Web site:

**[clanbell.org](http://clanbell.org)**

Membership Secretary:

**Alta Jean Ginn**

12147 Holly Knoll Circle  
Great Falls, VA 22066

[aginn@cox.net](mailto:aginn@cox.net)





## New Caledonian Foundation USA president elected

Bob Murdoch of Whitehall, Pennsylvania, formerly of Munhall, has been elected President of the Caledonian Foundation, USA.

The Caledonian Foundation is one of six major Scottish-American organizations that comprise the Scottish Coalition USA and celebrates its 35th anniversary this year. The Caledonian Foundation is a nonprofit organization devoted to the support of all aspects of Scottish Culture, including Scottish Opera.

Mr. Murdoch has been known for his leadership in Scottish affairs, both nationally and internationally for over 40 years. He is a charter member of the St. Andrews Society of Pittsburgh and has been Chairman of the Scottish Nationality Room for more than fifteen years. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in Edinburgh and in recent years has received several awards for distinguished service among them, the National Tartan Day Award from the Scottish Coalition USA, an award from the Scottish Heritage Center in North Carolina and an award from Clan Donald USA.

He was a Distinguished Guest at the Grandfather mountain Games in North Carolina in 2009.

In 1999 he accepted the appointment that he still holds as the National Chairman of Tartan Day, an event that has grown into an event celebrated nationally and internationally.

In 2009, Mr. Murdoch received his personal coat of arms from the Court of Lord Lyon in Scotland.

Mr. Murdoch has been a tenor soloist in churches in the Pittsburgh area for years. He performs at Scottish events as the Tartan Tenor and has recorded a CD of 24 well known Scottish songs entitled Ae Fond Kiss from the Tartan Tenor. Professionally, he is a practicing attorney in Pittsburgh.

## *We mourn*



**Mrs. Evelyn Cannon Darley Wendzel Mabry**, age 89, died September 9, 2011, at Southern Manor Retirement Inn in Statesboro, Georgia.

She was a longtime resident of Bulloch County and a 1938 graduate of Statesboro High School.

Mrs. Mabry graduated from Georgia Teachers College with a degree in Education and taught school for many years.

She was a member of Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, the Georgia Southern Museum Board, the Bulloch County Historical Society and the Scottish Heritage Society.

Mrs. Mabry was also a member of the Georgia Southern University Center for Irish Studies and the Friends of the Henderson Library.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Alfred Wendzel; her second

*Continued on page 22*

**Mrs. Evelyn Cannon Darley Wendzel Mabry**, *continued from page 21*

husband, Dr. Kemp Mabry; and her four brothers, John Darley, Jr., Fred Darley, Sr., Ray Darley, Sr., and Hugh Darley, Sr.

She was a founding member of The Scottish Heritage Society of Southeast Georgia.

Survivors include her sister, Carolyn Cannon (Carroll) Gay of Millen; several nieces and nephews, Pam Darley (Rick) Smith of Statesboro, Ray (Lisa) Darley, Jr. of Savannah, Bryan (Joy) Darley of Statesboro, Hugh (Ashlie) Darley, Mike (Jennifer) Darley, and John (Pam) Darley, all of Orlando; her sister-in-law, June Darley of Orlando; several great nieces and nephews; two great great nephews; and

her special caregivers, Brenda Brown and Missy Chester.

Burial was in Eastside Cemetery, Statesboro.

Her nephews will serve as active pallbearers.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to Ralph Cowart, Alan Skipper, and the staff of Southern Manor for the wonderful love and care provided to Mrs. Mabry.

Memorial contributions may be made to Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, 5820 Westside Road, Statesboro, Ga. 30458, Ogeechee Area Hospice, P.O. Box 531, Statesboro, Ga. 30459, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

## Pioneer News

is a free genealogy newsletter which attempts to keep the researcher up to date on GA, NC, SC, VA, KY and TN family histories. Included: 1. American Pioneer Series. Sketches of pioneer settlers generally not published elsewhere. 2. Tips on how to find Lost Generations by Jeannette Holland Austin, author of over 100 genealogy books. 3. Free advertising and notices of events.  
[jeannette@georgiapioneers.com](mailto:jeannette@georgiapioneers.com)

### Clan Colquhoun Society Of NA

2984 Mike Drive

Marietta, GA 30064

[sijepuis@bellsouth.net](mailto:sijepuis@bellsouth.net)

Colquhoun/Calhoun, Cowan, MacClintock, MacManus. Applications available online at [http://www.geocities.com/clancolquhoun\\_na/home.html](http://www.geocities.com/clancolquhoun_na/home.html)



# Clan Sutherland Society of North America



Septs and Associated Families:  
Cheyne, Clyne, Duffus, Federith, Gray,  
Keith, Mowat, Murray, Oliphant.

For membership information, please visit our website at  
**[www.clansutherland.org](http://www.clansutherland.org)**

---

---

You may contact  
the president:

**George Sutherland**  
9613 Highstream Court  
Charlotte, NC 28269

---

---

Clan Chief,  
**Lady Elizabeth,**  
Countess of Sutherland



Elizabeth Sutherland, Countess of Sutherland

Chief of Clan Sutherland

---

---



## **Plant a tree in Scotland**

Add your name to the  
honours board - onsite!

[www.trees4scotland.com](http://www.trees4scotland.com)

**Make sure you become part  
of Scotland's history**

**Trees only £10 each**

**Join us in reforesting Scotland**

## **Taking your camera to a Highland Games?**

Why not send your pictures to [bethscribble@aol.com](mailto:bethscribble@aol.com) and have them published in this magazine with your own photo credit? Just send about 30-40 or more photos on a disc to: Beth Gay-Freeman, 102 Lakeside Dr., Walhalla, SC 29691. Your photos will be featured in the next *BNFT* - along with your very own photo credit!

## **Hispanic Genealogical Society of Southern California**

PO Box 2472

Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670-0472

<http://www.scgsgenealogy.com/GSHA.htm>

Subscribe now, for wonderful Celtic reading

# **Celtic Seasons**

...from the

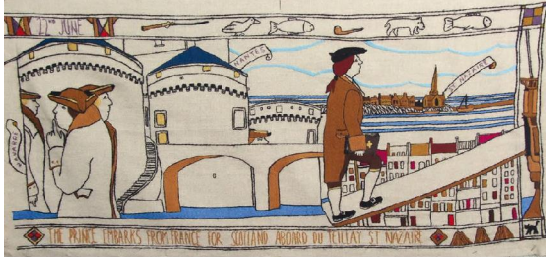
**Stream of Celtic Consciousness**

Just send your name and address and  
some kind of monetary donation to:

**Rich Shader**

**2593 Chapparral Drive  
Melbourne, FL 32934**





## Battle of Prestonpans Embroidery completed



Many of us are aware of the details of the Battle of Prestonpans in 1745. This battle represents the first major victory of Bonnie Prince Charlie in his attempt to regain his throne.

On 25 July 1745, Prince Charlie landed near Moidart in the Highlands of Scotland with seven companions. He raised his standard at Glenfinnan and assembled an army from the clans that supported his bid for the throne. This army marched into Edinburgh on 17 September 1745.

General Sir John Cope, the commander of the small royal force in Scotland, marched his troops north along the coast towards Edinburgh. His cavalry found the rebel army to be inland and to the south, causing Cope to form his army against the sea behind a marsh.

During the night of 20 September the rebels made use of a path through the marsh to come up on the left flank of the royal army.

Under the impact of the Highland attack, the royal army fled.

The royal casualties are said to have been about 300

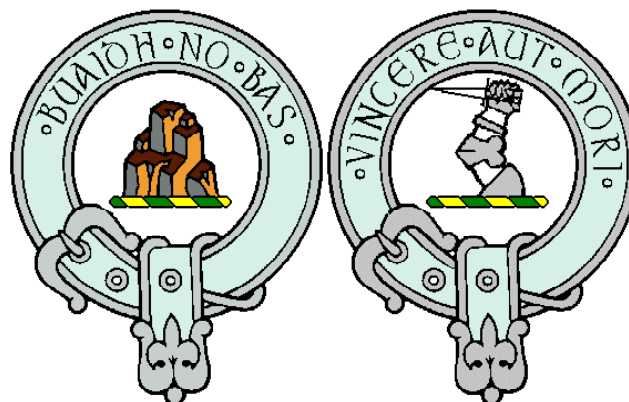
*Continued on page 27*



# Clan Macneil Association of America

If you are a Macneil or any of the following %Sept+ names, then you have found the clan that you are looking for.

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| • Macneil    | • McNeill   |
| • MacNeil    | • Mcneal    |
| • Macniel    | • McNeal    |
| • MacNiel    | • Mcneale   |
| • Macneill   | • McNeale   |
| • MacNeill   | • McNeilage |
| • MacNeillie | • Mcneilage |
| • Macneal    | • McNelly   |
| • MacNeal    | • McNelly   |
| • Macneale   | • McNeally  |
| • MacNeale   | • Mcneally  |
| • MacNeilage | • Neil      |
| • Macneilage | • Neal      |
| • MacNelly   | • Neall     |
| • Macnelly   | • Neale     |
| • MacNeally  | • Neill     |
| • Macneally  | • Niel      |
| • Mcneil     | • Niell     |
| • McNeil     | • OøNeal    |
| • Mcniel     | • OøNeil    |
| • McNiel     | • OøNiel    |
| • Mcneill    | • OøNeill   |



**“Cuimhnich Air Na Daoine  
o’n D’thainig thu.”**

**- Remember the men from  
whom you have come.**

**President C. McNeill Baker, Jr.**  
6959 Almours Drive  
Jacksonville, FL 32117-2628  
**clanmacneilua.us**

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| • Oneil     | • Macguigan |
| • Oneill    | • McGougan  |
| • Nelson    | • Mcgougan  |
| • Neilson   | • McGrail   |
| • Nielson   | • McGrail   |
| • MacGougan | • Mcgrail   |
| • Macgougan | • Mcgrail   |
| • MacGrail  | • McGugan   |
| • Macgrail  | • Macgugan  |
| • MacGugan  | • McGuigan  |
| • Macgugan  | ...and      |
| • MacGuigan | • Mcguigan  |





## Prestonpans Tapestry, continued from page 25

killed, 400-500 wounded and 1400-1500 captured. The Highlanders lost less than 30 killed and 70 wounded.

In 2010, led by lead stitcher, Dorie Wilkie, more than 200 embroiderers made over 10 million stitches, taking more than 25,000 hours. In nine months of stitching, they created the longest 'tapestry' in the world consisting of 104 panels. Technically the work is embroidery as a tapestry would be woven where this is hand stitched.

Each individual or group was sent a one metre panel with a full size paper illustration by the artist, Andrew Crummy, as a guide. The linen panel had basic outlines penciled in and they stitched from the guide. They added embellishments as they wished but had to stay true to the designer's vision and could use only the 21 colors of wool provided by the Trust.

You'll see some panels to the left which are examples of the exquisite workmanship of the stitchers.

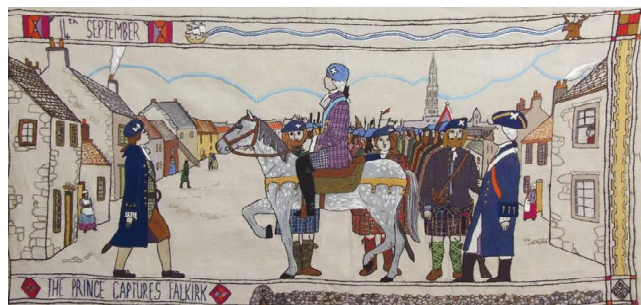
The Prestonpans Tapestry was made to be a mobile display and is currently making its rounds of Scotland stopping at places visited by Prince Charlie. The Tapestry celebrates the enduring triumph of youthful hope and ambition.

The journey that 25-year-old Bonnie Prince Charlie made from France through the Highlands to the victory of Prestonpans is depicted in 104 metre wide embroidered panels each created by volunteer embroiderers along the route.

A book has been published depicting all 104 panels, with historical notes, details of the designing of the panels and brief biographies of the stitchers.

The book and many of the included details are available at <http://www.prestonpanstapestry.org/tapestry/>

With many thanks to *By Sea By Land*, national newsletter of Clan Donald USA via the Clan Donald Society of Edinburgh.





# Would you like for your clan to be represented in these pages?

These ads for Scottish Clans and genealogical groups are \$5.00 each issue, never mind the size. (My way of saying "Thank You" for all the kindnesses given to me by the Scottish community over the last 20 plus years.)

Just send me in jpeg format your crest or other symbols you'd like in your ad...and the copy (words) you wish...your billing address...and that's it. Send to [bethscribble@aol.com](mailto:bethscribble@aol.com).

## Clan Buchanan Society, International, Inc.

Bohanan	Maccollwan	Macwattie
Buchanan	Maccormac(k)	Macwhirter
Colman	Maccommon	Macwhorter
Cormack	Maccoubrey	Masters
Cousland	Maccubbin	Masterson
Dewar	Maccubbing	Morrice
Donleavy	Maccubin	Morris
Dove, Dow	Macdonleavy	Morrison
Gibb(s)(y)	Macgeorge	(of Perthshire only)
Gibbon	Macgibbon	Murchie
Gibson	Macgilbert	Murchison
Gilbert	Macgreusich	Richardson
Gilbertson	Macgubbin	Risk
Harper	Macinally	Rusk(ie)
Harperson	Macindeo(r)	Ruskin
Leavy	Mackibb	Spittal
Lennie	Mackibbon	Spittle
Lenny	Mackinlay	Walter
Macaldonich	Mackinley	Walters
Macalman	Macmaster	Wason
Macandeior	Macmaurice	Wasson
Macaslan	Macmorris	Waters
Macaslin	Macmurchie	Watson
Macauselan	Macmurphy	Watt
Macauslan(in)	Macneur	Watters
Macausland	Macnuir	Weir
Macauslane	Macquat	Wuill
Macalman	Macquattie	Wool
Macalmon(t)	Macquattiey	Wule
Macammond	Macquyer	Yuille
Macasland	Macquinten	Yool
Macchruiter		Yule
Maccollman		Zuill



For membership information, contact:  
102 Lakeside Drive  
Walhalla, SC 29691 or [bethscribble@aol.com](mailto:bethscribble@aol.com)



# Kissinø Irelandø Blarney Stone!



Five miles north west of the small city of Cork is the village of Blarney. Near the village, standing almost 90 feet in height is the castle of Blarney with its world-famous Blarney Stone. More than 300,000 people come to kiss the Blarney Stone each year, in the hopes of gaining more eloquent speech.

While the Blarney Castle that visitors see today was constructed in 1446, the history of the place goes back two centuries before that time. The story begins with a magical stone, its origins shrouded in mystery. One legend says it was the rock that Moses struck with his staff to produce water for the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt. Another legend relates that it had once been Jacob's Pillow and that the prophet Jeremiah had brought it to Ireland. According to this telling it became the Lia Fail, or 'Fatal Stone' and was used as an oracular throne of the Irish kings.

Some, however, believe it was the Stone of Ezel, which David hid behind on Jonathan's advice, while fleeing from King Saul, and that it was brought to Ireland during the Crusades. Yet it may have once been the Coronation Stone of Scottish monarchs and later used by St. Columba as a traveling altar during his missionary activities throughout Scotland. After Columba's death it had been brought to Ireland where it served as the Stone of Destiny, the prophetic power of royal succession.

Did Moses, Jacob, the Scottish Kings or St. Columba first use the stone? Probably this will never be known. The most commonly accepted story of the stone is that, in gratitude for Irish support at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 (a Scottish defeat of the English), Robert the Bruce gave a portion of the stone to Cormac McCarthy, King of Munster. Installed at Cormac McCarthy's stronghold, Blarney Castle, it became known as the Blarney Stone. A century later, in 1446, King Dermot McCarthy then installed the stone in an enlarged castle he constructed.

The building of the Blarney Castle was a prodigious affair, requiring many hands and several years. The castle would have been used not only by the McCarthy clan but also by their retinue of knights and retainers. A powerful stronghold, it was designed to provide safety in times of attack, one of which happened in 1646 when Oliver Cromwell attacked Ireland and had a devastating effect on the castle.

Yet the McCarthy's were not only powerful leaders and warriors, they were also patrons of Irish culture, music and art. They established a Bardic School at Blarney, which attracted scholars from throughout Ireland. By the 1600's Blarney had become well known as a Court of Poetry where poets gathered to read their compositions, many of which have survived in the original Irish form.

Kissing the Blarney Stone is for some people a difficult physical feat. In past times, to kiss the Stone people were hung by their heels over the edge of the parapet. One day a pilgrim broke from the grasp of his friends and went hurtling downward to certain death. Since that time the stone has been kissed by another method. First, you sit with your back towards the stone and then someone sits upon your legs or firmly holds your feet. Next, leaning far back and downward into the abyss while grasping the iron rails, you lower yourself until your head is even with the stone to be kissed.

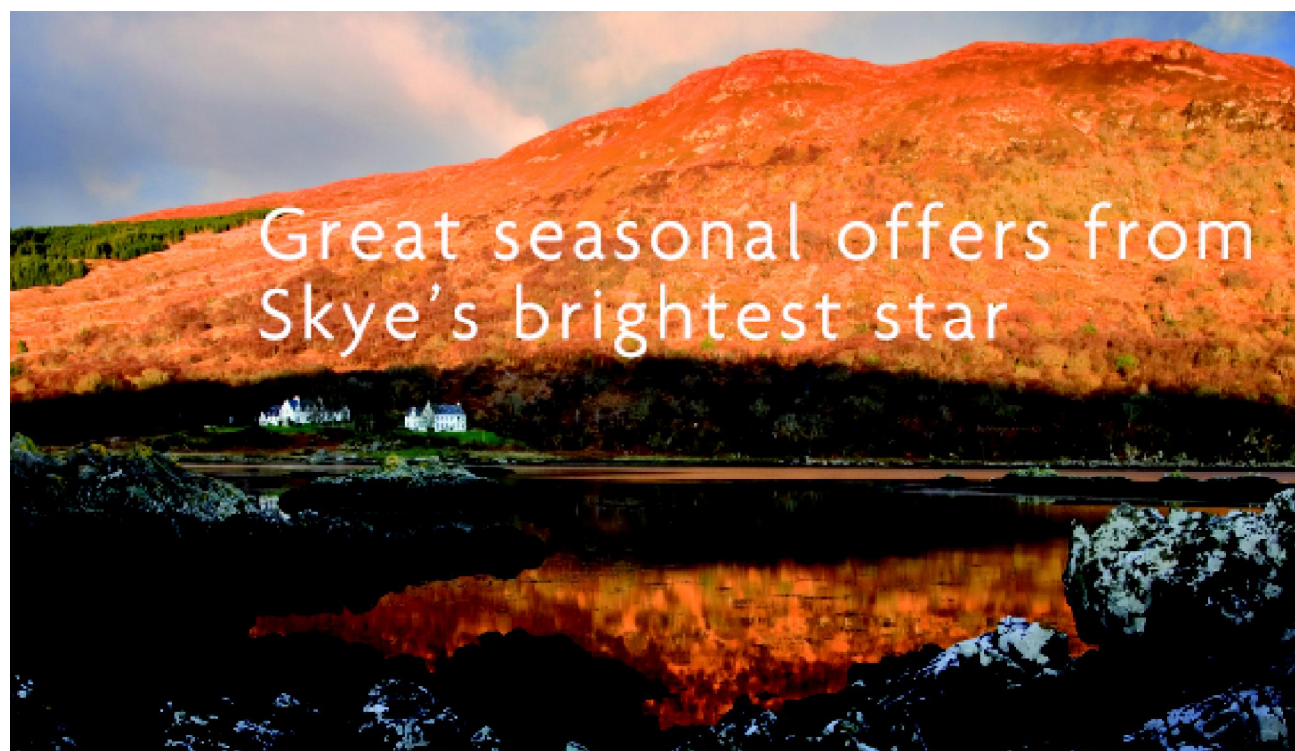
Just how long this custom has been practiced or how it originated is not known. One local legend claims that an old woman, saved from drowning by a king of Munster, rewarded him with a spell, that if he would kiss a stone on the castle's top, he would gain a speech that would win all to him.

It is known, however, when and how the word Blarney entered the English language and the dictionary. During the time of Queen Elizabeth I, Dermot McCarthy, the ruler of the castle, was required to surrender his fortress to the Queen as proof of his loyalty. He said he would be delighted to do so, but something always happened at the last moment to prevent his surrender. His excuses became so frequent and indeed so plausible that the official who had been demanding the castle in the name of the Queen became a joke at the Court. Once, when the eloquent excuses of McCarthy were repeated to the Queen, she said 'Odds bodikins, more Blarney talk!' The term Blarney has thus come to mean 'the ability to influence and coax with fair words and soft speech without giving offense'.

Echoing the power of the stone, Francis Sylvester Mahony, an Irish bard of the early nineteenth century, wrote:

*There is a stone there, that whoever kisses,  
Oh! He never misses to grow eloquent:  
'Tis he may clamber to a lady's chamber,  
Or become a member of Parliament.*





# Great seasonal offers from Skye's brightest star



kinloch

HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Kinloch is a very special hotel in one of the United Kingdom's most beautiful, untouched locations on the Isle of Skye. Owned by the renowned cook and cookery writer, **Claire Macdonald**, the kitchen and restaurant are now run by **Michelin-star chef Marcello Tully**.

Inside Kinloch comfort, family hospitality and the very finest food and wine is everything.

## OUR VERY SPECIAL AUTUMN & WINTER OFFERS

**JOIN US IN OCTOBER** - stay with us for 2 nights and enjoy **complimentary accommodation on your 3rd night** (paying on for dinner and breakfast at £80 per person). Stay with us mid-week and enjoy **complimentary accommodation on your 2nd night** (valid Monday to Thursday)

**JOIN US IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER** - we will be running our 'fabulous Winter offer' where prices start from **£99 per person**, including dinner, bed and breakfast (the £99 rate is only available mid-week. Prices start from £109 p/p for weekends)

**KINLOCH'S CHRISTMAS** - we still have a few rooms left over Christmas. This will be a festive extravaganza - think long, lazy brunches, amazing walks through Skye's stunning Christmassy scenery, lots of hot baths, fizz, delicious food and the very finest wines...



Do call us - we'd love to hear from you

01471 833333

[www.kinloch-lodge.co.uk](http://www.kinloch-lodge.co.uk)

[reservations@kinloch-lodge.co.uk](mailto:reservations@kinloch-lodge.co.uk)

KINLOCH LODGE, SLEAT, ISLE OF SKYE, SCOTLAND IV43 8QY

*From the Court of the Lord Lyon: Lord Lyon King of Arms, the authority of heraldry within Scotland, appointed Mrs. Yvonne Holton, herald painter, to the post of Dingwall Pursuivant, as of June 20, 2011.*