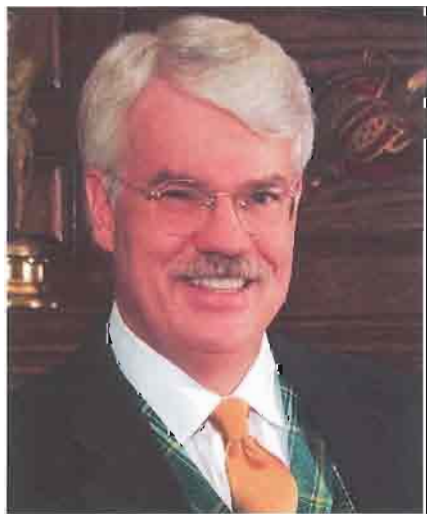


Vol. XI No. I *Beth's Newfangled Family Tree* Section B June 2017

## NECO Announces the 2017 Ellis Island Medals of Honor Recipients



### *Robert Currie Among the Exceptional Americans Honored in 2017*

NEWYORK, NY – The National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations – NECO, has announced recipients for the 2017 Ellis Island Medals of Honor. Board Director and Secretary of Save Ellis Island Robert Currie, former astronaut Buzz Aldrin, CEO of PepsiCo Indra Nooyi, TV host and journalist Fareed Zakaria, CEO of HSN Mindy Grossman, former actress and film studio executive Sherry Lansing, chef and restaurateur Thomas Keller, are amongst the one-hundred outstanding Americans in business, government, medicine, art and education, will receive the 2017 medal.

Robert 'Bob' Currie is a respected leader in the Scottish-American community. He has dedicated the last 30 years of his life to preserving and promoting Scottish history and culture. He created and produces two of the nation's signature Scottish-American heritage events: Tartan Day on Ellis Island, and *The Pipes of Christmas* concerts. Some of the concert's beneficiaries have included the British Soldiers Fund, the USO and the SHIP food kitchen program.

Based on the concert's success, and in response to Hurricane Katrina, Currie produced *No One is Alone: A Concert for Hope*, which raised funds to support emergency relief efforts in the Gulf Coast.

In 1992, Currie took over the Clan Currie Society; a family heritage organization founded in Glasgow, Scotland in 1959. Under his leadership, membership has grown from 200 to approximately 4 thousand members worldwide and has raised thousands of dollars in scholarships in the US, Canada and Scotland.

Robert was appointed by Governor Whitman to the NJ Advisory

*Continued on page 27*

There is a web seminar  
on family research in  
Scotland that might be  
helpful to those interested at:

<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/webinars.asp>



Happy Birthday to BNFT! We're 11 years old!



# Clan Grant

Society - USA

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*Stand Fast, Craigellachie!*

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of Clan Grant**

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Buie · Gilroy · MaccAllan  
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McKerran · M(a)cKieran  
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**IT'S GREAT TO BE A  
GRANT!**

[www.clangrant-us.org](http://www.clangrant-us.org)



Clan Grant AGM Stone Mountain, GA 2016

I'M FROM TECH SUPPORT. I'M  
HERE TO DELETE YOUR COOKIES



It's true!  
Your editor  
IS a  
Scottish  
Mutt,  
and a  
Celtic Mutt!

The DNA results are in from  
Ancestry.com

on your editor's genetic heritage.

The overlays on the map  
over Scotland regarding my DNA  
look like they have the measles.

Having done genealogy  
for such a long time, I was  
not surprised at my  
Scottish "Muttness."

I did not know about the  
Irish connections.

They say I am also made  
with a pinch of Russian  
and a pinch of Scandanavian.

Ethnicity Estimate  
66% Great Britain  
28% Ireland  
6% Other regions

# The Birth of Darien Venture Tartan!

Peter Wilson of Great Scot, International wrote, "My weaver friend Gordon Kirkbright and I have a designed and registered a tartan to commemorate the early Darien Venture event in Scottish history and woven the tartan in 11/12oz worsted wool. Scarves, and a few ties, etc will be made and will be on sale at GMHG."

This tartan is inspired by the failure of the Scottish plan to establish a trading colony in the Panama Isthmus in the late 1600s.

The Darien Venture was a scheme which saw brave men and women risk and/or lose their lives with some never seeing their homeland again.

The dream of a transoceanic trade route was to be fulfilled some two centuries later by a descendant of one of the survivors who settled in the Carolinas.

The colors represent blue for the Saltire, red for the Panemanian flag, purple for the Scottish heather and gold for the Golden Isle which sits at the mouth of the bay in New Caledonia in Darien.

The Clan Colquhoun Society in North America  
is now...

**The Clan Colquhoun International Society**

**<http://www.clancolquhoun.com>**



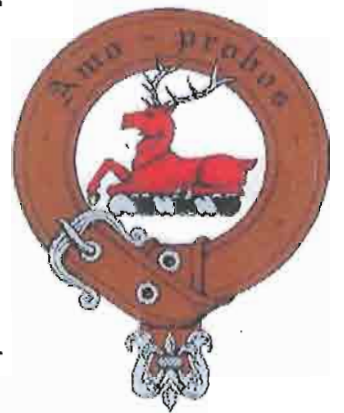
Contact Tom Hodges:  
[sijepuis@bellsouth.net](mailto:sijepuis@bellsouth.net)

Allied Families and Septs of  
**Clan Colquhoun are:**  
Colquhoun, Calhoun, Cowan,  
MacClintock & MacManus

# Clan Blair Society

Memberships are cordially invited for Blair  
descendants and other interested parties.

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



President Clan Blair Society: Jim Blair  
7200 S. Prince Street  
Littleton, CO 80120  
Email: [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org)



Membership Chairman: Charles Diman  
3413 Sunnybrook Drive, Charlotte, NC 28210-4715  
Email: [ClanMembership@clanblair.org](mailto:ClanMembership@clanblair.org)

# Tracing Ancestors in Criminal and Prison Records

Bryan L. Mulcahy, MLS Reference Librarian Ft. Myers, FL Regional Library

Some of our ancestors at one time or another took shortcuts in their lives that resulted in arrest and jail time. Two of the most common hints would include ancestors who disappeared from public records for a period of time or individuals that the family refuses to talk about their past.

Keep in mind that historically, people were arrested and jailed or were transported halfway around the world to prison colonies, for offenses that today would be ignored or considered minor. Some examples of what passed for crimes may have included, using fowl language, vagrancy, non-attendance at church, falling behind in your payment of debts, infidelity, fishing in somebody else's pond, multiple marriages, sexual misconduct or lack of activity, etc.

Criminal records come in many forms. While privacy and statutory laws may regulate timely accessibility, most genealogists will not be impacted unless the records were generated past the 1950s. With the exception of cases involving juvenile defendants, most criminal court records on any level are open to the public. Keep in mind that these rules vary by jurisdiction. From a genealogical research perspective, the most useful are record types are listed below.

**Biographical Registers** contain data about the inmate and the inmate's family.

**Clemency Files** contain requests to the governor for clemency in the sentence of a convict. A narrative in these files explains the circumstances involved in the commission of the crime, the reasons for clemency, and attestations to the character of the convict. The petition was signed by individuals who supported the granting of clemency.

**Convict Dockets** include some of the information sometimes found in other records, including name of inmate, crime, sentence, date of sentencing, court of sentencing, name of prosecutor, date admitted, physical description, date discharged.

**Death Warrants** consist of the actual warrant and all the supporting documentation of the conviction, and contain information of greater historical than genealogical value. The disposition of appeals for clemency and commutation are often included in the file.

**Descriptive Registers** are similar to registers of prisoners, giving the date of entry, name, age, birthplace, occupation, complexion, color of eyes, color of hair, stature, physical marks, sentence, when sentenced, number of convictions, when and how discharged, expiration of sentence, and remarks.

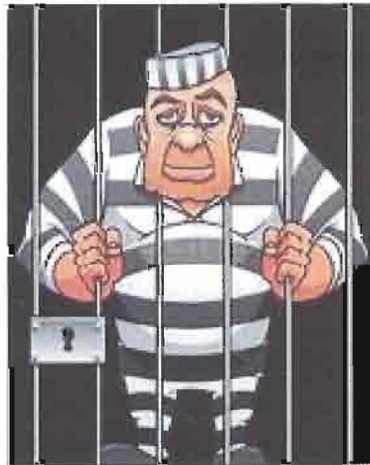
**Lists of Executions** include some descriptive information about convicts, including date and time of execution, name, age, weight, and race. In addition, the name of the victim(s) and the arresting sheriff's name will appear.

**Military Prisons** Besides having information about detainees in their custody, many have information on POWs buried at a cemetery near the hospital or prison camp where they died. The bodies of others were returned to their home area. The cemeteries near Civil War prisons usually have a Union area and another area for the Confederate men. Many national cemeteries have burials from across the country. Many of the records indicate the company or unit, regiment, and date of death. Listings include rank, company or unit, state, date and place of capture, date and cause of death, and place of burial.

**Pardon Books** attest to pardons granted to convicts by the state governor and contain little genealogical information. These books often make reference to the place of original conviction and the court of sentencing.

**Prison Hospital Record Books** may offer detailed information about the inmate's medical treatment while imprisoned, hospital record books may

*Continued on page 9*



# 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)



**H o l l a d a y**  
**“Holly”Harris Anderson**, 58, of Alpharetta, passed away April 29 after a courageous 10-year battle with breast cancer.

She is survived by her children, William C. Anderson of Atlanta and Caroline E.N. Anderson of Alpharetta, parents William

M. and Leonie B. Harris of Johns Creek, sister Elizabeth M. Harris of Roswell, brothers W. Claiborne Harris (Karen) of Virginia Beach, VA, and Dr. J.S. Randolph Harris (Carol Ann) of Winston Salem, NC, four nieces and nephews, and many aunts, uncles, cousins and a large extended family of friends.

Born June 1, 1958 in Lynchburg, VA, Holly grew up in Richmond, VA and Rocky Mount, NC. She was a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill and an avid Tar Heel fan.

She was known for her gorgeous gardens, hosting fabulous dinner parties, birthday celebrations and holiday events. She was the epitome of grace and charm, unless her Tar Heels were playing Duke.

She was a member of the St. Andrew’s Society of Atlanta.

A Memorial Service was held Friday, May 5, at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Karen Wellington Foundation for Living with Breast Cancer ([karenwellingtonfoundation.org](http://karenwellingtonfoundation.org)).

**Walsler Arthur “Art” Blackwood, Jr.**, Feb. 16, 1939 - April 25, 2017. Mr. Blackwood passed away at home peacefully on Tuesday, April 25, 2017.

“Art” was born on February 16, 1939 to Mr. Walsler Arthur Blackwood, Sr. and Mrs. Jesse Mae (Koonts) Blackwood, who preceded him in death.

The family lived in Mayodan, North Carolina until Art was 12 years old and then moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where they were members of Centenary United Methodist Church.

Art graduated from R. J. Reynolds High School in 1955 and then attended Duke University. He then joined the 312 US Army Reserve Medical Corps.

Art married Jean Turner (Blackwood) of Greensboro, North Carolina on July 14, 1962.

Art is survived by his wife, Jean, and his children Walsler Arthur (Art) Blackwood, III (Mrs. Kirkie Blackwood), and Jessica Margaret (Meg) Blackwood (Mr. Kimberly King), and his grandchildren Arthur Benjamin Blackwood and Meghan Elizabeth Blackwood.

Art worked his early years in the savings and loan business and was an executive at Winston-Salem Savings and Loan. He later owned Cable Harley Davidson in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and his



*Continued on page 9*



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Or contact us at

[admin@tartansauthority.com](mailto:admin@tartansauthority.com)



**Bryan Mulcahy**, *continued from page 5*

include a specific date and cause of death. They may contain statistical accounts of the types of illnesses treated and the frequency of treatment.

**Reception Descriptive Lists of Convicts** are an expanded form of early prison registers, and contain detailed information about the prison inmate. The information listed in these records includes the convict's name, age, race, crime, date of reception, date of sentence, county of conviction, occupation before and at the time of arrest, physical description, shoe size, weight, birthplace, education, occupational training, marital status, parental relations at fifteen, drinking habits, relatives in prison, cause of crime, and relative's residence.

**Art Blackwood**, *continued from page 7*

own business, WAB Enterprises.

In his younger years, Art was very involved in The Boy Scouts of America and was a proud recipient of the Eagle Scout honor in 1953; he also served on the executive board of The Old Hickory Council.

Art was a charter member of the Stratford Rotary Club in 1968 and remained very involved in the Rotary Club for numerous years, including serving as president.

In his later years, Art was a proud member of Clan Douglas of America and was the Regent for North Carolina for many years. He enjoyed going to all the Celtic games, including the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games and the Loch Norman Games in North Carolina and the Stone Mountain Games in Georgia.

Art also enjoyed golf, fishing, hunting and sharing recipes with friends and family. He enjoyed telling stories, had a swift wit and an insatiable sense of humor.

Art led his life with dignity, in loyalty and with honor, and will be remembered as a loving husband, father and grandfather, as well as faithful friend to many.

A graveside service was held at Salem Cemetery on Saturday, May 6, 2017. The Reverend Bill Gramley presided.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to The Old Hickory Council, 6600 Silas Creek Parkway, Winston-Salem, NC 27106. Online condolences may be made to [www.salemfh.com](http://www.salemfh.com).

**Registers of Prisoners** are similar to admission books and list the name of the prisoner, age, race, birthplace, number of convictions, county of residence, court of sentencing, date of sentencing, crime, maximum sentence, and remarks (usually about release).

Locating prison records requires some searching. Determining the name of the prison from other sources, such as newspaper articles, is very helpful. The federal census enumerated inmates when they were jailed in a census year. If you know the place or state of imprisonment, write to the prison itself or to the state department of corrections. Researchers should consult online sites for the particular institution or state corrections office to view the access policy guidelines.

Many jurisdictions have online request forms which must be downloaded and submitted. Queries should specify the exact record/s of interest. Keep in mind that many older municipal, county, and state court records have been transferred to the state archives or historical society, which is probably where you would also find state court records. Most federal court records are at the NARA branch nearest the court.

Many of these records are now available online at [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com)/Library Edition, Family Search, Find My Past, My Heritage. Some additional websites of interest include the following:

*Ancestry.com Wiki Prisons and Penitentiary Records*

[https://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Prisons\\_and\\_Penitentiary\\_Records](https://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Prisons_and_Penitentiary_Records)

*Black Sheep Ancestors*  
<http://www.blacksheepancestors.com/usa/prisons.shtml>

<http://www.blacksheepancestors.com/>  
*Cyndi's List – Prisons and Prisoners*

<http://www.cyndislist.com/prisons>  
*Family Search Wiki – United States Court Records*

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United\\_States\\_Court\\_Records](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Court_Records)

Bryan Mulcahy, M.L.S., Reference Librarian |  
Ft. Myers Regional Library, 2450 First Street, Ft. Myers, FL 33901. Email <[bmulcahy@leegov.com](mailto:bmulcahy@leegov.com)> or Voice 239-533-4626 | Fax 239-485-1160 See our website: [leelibrary.net](http://leelibrary.net)

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# LALLANS

## The Journal o Scots Airts an Letters

### *A lovely letter for June from George Watt and The Journal o Scots Airts an Letters...*

(I find if I read the Scots out loud, I can pretty well figure out what it says. It turns out, it is great fun!)

Guid dey ma freins, aye a pleisur tae hae a wee news wi ye aa.

Last time I telt ye ma partner an masel wir awa tae the Hebridean Island o Islay for ome dauncin an walkin. The dauncin wis brawlie an the weither wis dree so the walkin wis fell guid anaa. In fac we went ower tae the neiborin Island o Jura tae sclim Beinn na Oir.

I haed an ambition for mony a lang year tae sclim the Paps o Jura tae tak ae photie o Islay frae the tap o ain o thay twa bens that owerluik Islay faae'er ye hap-pen tae be.

Noo this is nae awfy easy tae dae, accaus thay twa hills is aye covered wi guid Scotch mist!

About fower five year ago I haed a bash at it. The forecast wis owercastr in the fornoon but clearin by noon so I thocht I wuid hae ae guid chaunce o it. Weel I sclimmed up an faur frae clearin, the mist got waur an waur, til it turnt intae ae richt drab dey wi solid raen an the mist as thick I cuid hairdly see ocht ataa.

I sat atap ae narra ridge like ae Coowboy on ae cuddy ma legs dangling down either side haen ae coffe an ae piece howpin it micht clear.

I haed nae idea gin I wir on the richt track or no. Onywey, as I chawed awa on ma breid an cheese ae gowden aigle flew by an lauded juist a few feet awa. It luikit ower at me, shuik its heid an flew off again fell bambazed like tae see a biddie up yonner in siclike conditions.

I tuik ma cue an heided bek down. Fan I got bek tae near sea level, the sun wis oot an it wis ae stoater o a dey, but thay bens wir still smooored wi mist.

It wis ae richt chyave sclimmin Bein na Oir (an nae ae drap o gowd did I find) for it's covered wi scree an patches o muckle boulders but it wis weel worth it.

Oor associe, the Scots Language Society / Scots Leid Associe will be haein thair annual collogue on the 4th June in Perth.

Oor theme this year is 'The Scots Leid an Europe.' We inten tae hae a CD oot in time wi owersettins o poesy frae mony different European leids intil Scots.

Some o oor Scots makars are weel kent for thair ability tae owerset - translate - the beist o literature frae ither leids intil Scots.

Among the tracks duin sofaur are owersettins frae Russian, Polish, French an Swedish.

Some richt guid stuff I can tell ye.

Richt noo I'm also warkin on recordin the poesy o Margaret Gillies Brown faw bides nae awfy fuar frae ma hame here in Dundee.

Margaret spent some time in Canada an is weel kent for her autobiographies as weel as an excellent poet. On tap o that, I hae recorded an owersettin, *The Heights o Macchu Picchu*, bi the laet John Law ae stalwart o oor Associe an that shuid be oot suin anaa.

Aa the best ma freins, George T Watt



*George made it to the top!*

# THE CLAN GREGOR SOCIETY

*'S Rioghal Mo Dhream!*

**Royal is my Race!**

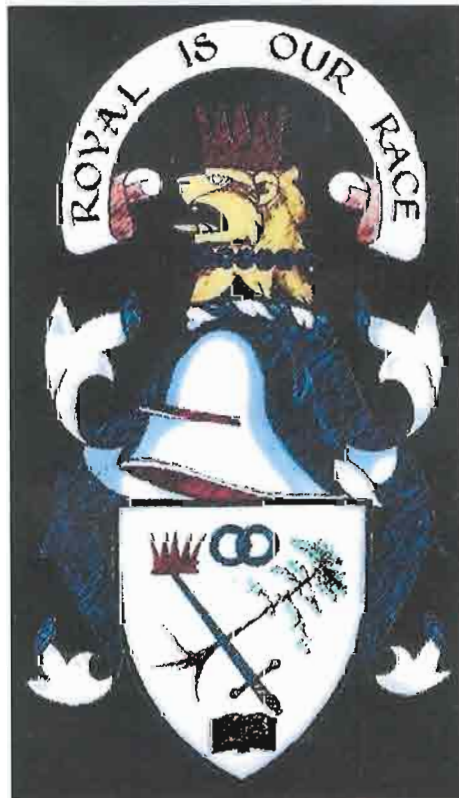
Fàilte! The Clan Gregor Society is a growing organisation with membership throughout the world. It's most active objectives are to extend the links of kinship and friendship between MacGregors, wherever they may be, and to provide a focal point for all members of the Clan and interested visitors who wish to learn more of our noble past.

**Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor**

7th Baronet of Lanrick and Balquidder

**24th Chief of Clan Gregor**

Clan Gregor  
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New England,  
Pacific  
Northwest,  
Western  
United States  
and  
Southeast  
Chapters



For membership,  
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GA 30350

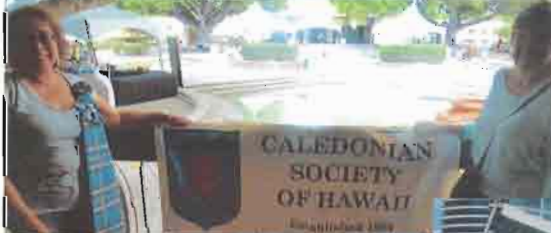
Ms. Ishbel McGregor,  
Secretary  
5 Alloa Road  
CAMBUS by Alloa  
Clackmannanshire  
FK10 2NT  
Scotland

**Join Clan Gregor today! [www.clangregor.org](http://www.clangregor.org)**

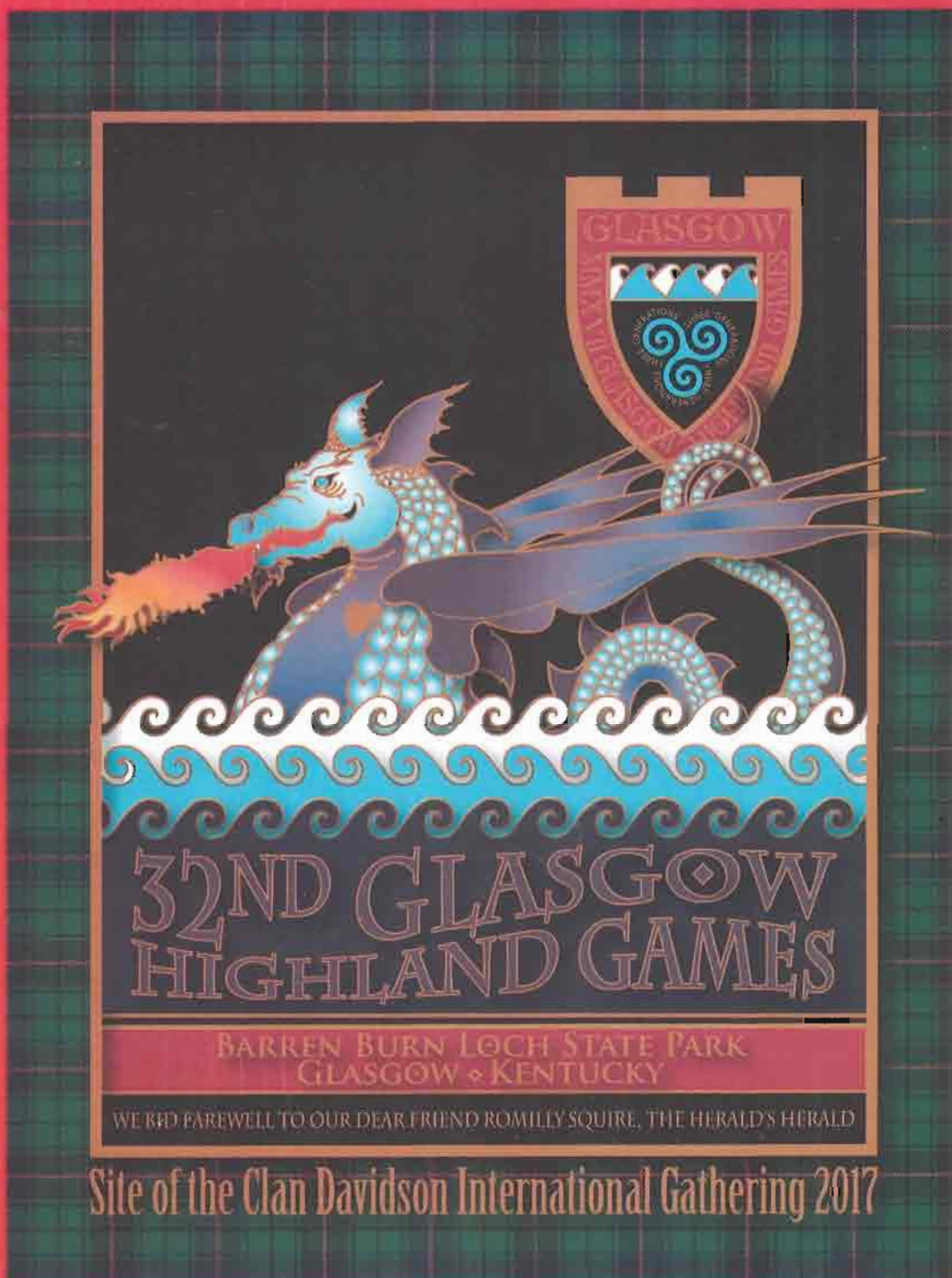


A huge "Thank You" to my dear friend, **Jennifer Blair**, from Tucson, AZ. (Jennifer went with us to Scotland every time we took tours. Was it four or five times? Anyway, she is an "always friend.") That's her on the upper left with her son, Chai, who lives and works in Hawaii.

Jennifer, who went to Hawaii to visit Chai and attend the Scottish Festival took photos for BNFT while she was there. Thanks! Thanks! Thanks, Jennifer. She is a member of Clan Graham and a member of Clan Blair.



**Friday June 2nd - Sunday June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017**



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**Please print the form and return to the Glasgow Highland Games Office with check  
or call the office at 1-270-651-3141 to make a payment with a card**

*“For those of you  
who haven’t visited  
the two-floor  
“Scottish Tartans Museum”  
in Franklin, NC, the  
“20th Taste of Scotland  
Festival”  
there would love to see you!  
It’s Father’s Day Weekend, “  
June 15-18,2017.*

*The street festival is free  
as is a guided tour of the  
Museum;*

*the Clan Parade is Saturday,  
June 17th at 10:30 am.*

*tasteofscotlandfestival.org*

*For information: Festival (727-  
424-8901) and Museum  
(828)524-7472. “*



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## Blairs! June 1 cut-off date. Apply now for the brand new *William Campbell Blair Youth Scholarship Award!*

Fellow Scots – The Clan Blair Society Board has introduced the **William Campbell Blair Youth Scholarship Award**. The award is in honor of Dr. Bill Blair who was one of the founders of our organization and has served as president and long-time Northern California Commissioner.

This is the invitation for your nominations of youth members (members of families) to be considered for the inaugural award. The award recognizes member youth who have excelled in Scottish related activities during the past year (12 month year of 2016 or 12 month blend of 2016-2017).

Nominations must be received by May 31. Please send them to [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org). Paper nominations should be mailed to: 7200 So. Prince St., Littleton, CO 80120.

Complete details are available by contacting Jim Blair, President Clan Blair Society. Call 303-795-9754 (o) or 303-886-8450 (c). You may email [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org) or visit [www.clanblair.org](http://www.clanblair.org)



**CSSA  
Annual  
General  
Meeting  
by the Lake  
(Lake Erie  
that is)!**



The Clan Stewart Society in America, Inc.  
Announces its 2017

**Annual General  
Membership Meeting**  
Erie, Pennsylvania

Thursday July 20 - Sunday July 23, 2017

You may begin to make reservations at:  
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814-866-4755

For more information:  
[www.clanstewart.org](http://www.clanstewart.org)

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Clan Munro  
Association, USA  
2017**

**Clan Gathering  
October 19-22  
Stone Mountain  
Highland Games,  
Stone Mtn., GA**

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# THE DARIEN VENTURE A SCOTTISH TRAGEDY?

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Highland Games

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Scottish Heritage USA, Inc.  
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to expand the traditional bonds of  
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dues and other contributions are tax  
deductible, except for a fee to cover  
the cost of literature.

Memberships are available in  
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Wales, Scotland and Northern  
Ireland, subscription to The  
Highlander, quarterly SHUSA  
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National Trust for Scotland's new  
magazine) and a reception following  
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British lawyer and the Attorney General of the British Overseas Territory of Anguilla, John McKendrick, has written an exciting novel about the unsuccessful 17<sup>th</sup> century

Scottish venture to begin a colony in Panama: *Darien: A Journey In Search of Empire* which was published by **Birlinn** in February 2016.

John grew up in the village of Strathblane, Scotland and was schooled at Kelvinside Academy in Glasgow. He received his further education at the London School of Economics, the University of Leuven, and University of Oxford. He was called to the English Bar in 1999, the Scottish Bar in 2008, and the Bar of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court in 2013. In 2016 Her Majesty the Queen appointed him Queen's Counsel, and later that year the Foreign and Commonwealth Office appointed him for a two-year term as the Honourable Attorney

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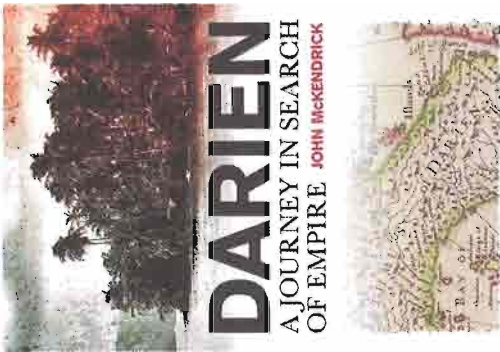
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General of the beautiful Caribbean Island of Anguilla. He was the *London Times* Lawyer of the Week in September 2013, and nominated for *The Lawyer* magazine's

Barrister of the Year award for 2016. John has also had experience in Scottish politics running as the Labour candidate for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross in 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. In the 2010 General Election, he stood as the Labour candidate for Ross, Skye and Lochaber.

As a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, John travels a lot and during a visit to Panama City and meeting with members of the St Andrews Society, he was inspired to learn about the Darien venture undertaken by Scotland in the late 17<sup>th</sup> C. This led him to write: *Darien: A Journey in Search of Empire*. Though previous accounts have been written on the subject of Darien, John's historical account of Scotland's unsuccessful attempt to establish a colony on the isthmus of Panama, is combined with his fascinating travelogue to Darien in Panama as well as Darien, Georgia. The impact of the Darien venture had a far-reaching impact on Scottish, British and American history.

John is a guest of Scottish Heritage USA and will be giving presentations on the Darien venture at the Scottish Cultural Village, which is also generously supported by Scottish Heritage USA.

Signed copies of his book will be available for purchase (\$29.95) at the Scottish Heritage USA tent during the games and on Sunday evening at the Eseeola Lodge "Members Only" Buffet on Sunday evening.

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# Elliot Clan Society, USA

## Membership Information 2014

The Elliot Clan Society is a worldwide organization, with active branches in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. In accordance with Scottish Clan Law, Clan membership includes all Elliots, Elliots, Elliotts, those of whose mother or grandmother was so named and their spouses. This also applies to Elliotts of known Scottish descent.

If you are a person of Scottish ancestry bearing the name Elliot, Elliott or Eliott (Including the spouse or descendant of such person) and wish to join the Elliot Clan Society, please fill out the membership form. Those forms may be found on the "Official ECS Website" at:

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

For US residents, please make sure that you send your completed ECS USA membership forms to the Membership/Treasurer. Once you join the Society, you will receive periodic newsletters from the ECS USA and our Parent Society in Scotland. The newsletters will inform you of Scottish festivals in your area and other announcements of importance to our Clan. Membership allows you to meet other Elliots with similar interests who share our Scottish heritage.

Contact Patricia Tennyson Bell

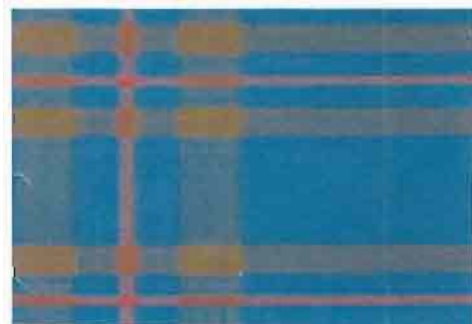
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# Flora MacNeil:

## The queen of Gaelic music

David McLean, from *The Scotsman.com*



She was the voice of generations who helped to popularise and revitalise Gaelic music while rescuing scores of traditional folk songs from being altogether lost and forgotten.

Flora MacNeil was born in 1928 into the remote community of Barra in the Outer Hebrides. The small island was, and still is, largely Gaelic speaking, and as a small child, Flora was fully-immersed in the ancient oral traditions of her surrounds.

Flora hailed from a long line of singers on either side of her family, but it was through her mother and aunt, Ann and Mary Gillies, that she learned the most. From a tender age she was consuming old folk lyrics and melodies in their hundreds.

At age 4, Flora was able to recite the mature *Mo Run Geal Og* (My Fair Young Love) – a Jacobite lament in which a woman blames Bonnie Prince Charlie for the loss of her beloved – and many others from the *Oran Mor* (the Great Songs).

With little else other than work to distract them, Barra's isolated islanders were great purveyors of their own heritage and engaged regularly in Ceilidhs and sing-a-longs. Flora's parents were no different, and once it became clear that their young daughter possessed a singing voice of beauty, they encouraged her to make the most of it. Flora MacNeil would go on to become a global emissary for the great Gaelic traditions.

In her early twenties, Flora's big break came about somewhat by chance when she relocated to Edinburgh to work as a switchboard operator.

Her arrival coincided with a 1950s British folk revival and a renewed interest in traditional Scottish music. MacNeil began singing publicly at ceilidhs and

folk concerts, eventually capturing the attentions of acclaimed Scottish poet and songwriter Hamish Henderson and American folklorist Alan Lomax.

In 1951, Henderson assisted in putting on a ceilidh during the inaugural Edinburgh People's Festival – a precursor of the *Fringe* – in which Flora gave a spell-binding performance, wowing the crowds with her expert delivery and tremendous presence.

Alan Lomax was described as being 'bowed over': "It was in Edinburgh one June night... that Scotland really took hold of me. A blue-eyed girl from the Hebrides was singing."

Flora sang forgotten songs in her native Gaelic tongue, spreading them out far and wide, effectively saving them from extinction.

In 1992 she was awarded an MBE for her services to Gaelic music and inducted to the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame 13 years later.

She released two albums, the first in 1976 entitled *Craobh nan Ubhal* (The Apple Tree),

and *Orain Flòraidh* (Songs of Flora) in 1999.

Those influenced by Flora's work include performers such as Karen Matheson from the group *Capercaillie* and Julie Fowlis.

During a documentary about Flora's life, Neil Fraser, former deputy controller of Radio Scotland, remarked on the music which would have been lost had it not been for her efforts: "Flora has kept faith with the tradition. But for her and others like her, most of our heritage would be beneath the sod with the previous generation."

*Continued on page 23*





# COCKSPUR

HERALDIC SERVICES  
& GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tom Freeman is a heraldic artist & graphic designer living in Northeast Georgia. He has been working in the Scottish community both in the US and internationally since 1999. He can be reached using the information shown below.

## Thomas R. Freeman, Jr.

Mo Leannon  
688 Camp Yonah Road  
Clarkesville, GA 30523-4008  
706-839-6612

[tfr@cockspurherald.com](mailto:tfr@cockspurherald.com)





Did you know 2017 marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Clan Grant Society in North America?

Thanks to Hank Grant, our Historian, we can revisit some of the events from the early years. *When established, and for a few years thereafter, the society was known as the Clan Grant Society of North American. This name was used until a sister association was formed in Canada, at which time the name was revised to the Clan Grant Society – USA.*

*The society was conceived in 1977, when John Grant, an attorney in Los Angeles,*



**Flora MacNeil**, *continued from page 21*

Having followed in her mother’s footsteps, Maggie MacInnes, a harpist and award-winning Gaelic singer herself, had this to say: “She soaked up the songs when she was growing up and did so without thinking about it. When she took these songs to the stages of the world, her authenticity, sincerity and love for them shone through.”

Flora MacNeil died in 2015 following a short illness. She was aged 86.

With thanks to the *ThistleDown*, the publication of the Scottish Society of Tidewater, Inc.

Contact information is below:  
**Scottish Society of Tidewater, Inc.**  
 c/o Marcey Hunter  
 301 E. Randall Ave.  
 Norfolk, VA 23503  
[www.tidewaterscots.org](http://www.tidewaterscots.org)



*got in touch with the Chief of the Clan Grant, the Right Honorable Lord Strathspey, Sir Donald Patrick Trevor Grant of Grant, Baronet, to inquire about the possibility of establishing a branch of the clan in America. Almost simultaneously and providentially, the late George H. Grant of Hixson, Tennessee, also initiated contact with Lord Strathspey. George’s close friend and neighbor, Ivan MacArthur, Convener of the Clan MacArthur Society, had encouraged George to make inquiries about founding a society in the United States.*

We will be holding a special anniversary meeting before the AGM at Stone Mountain this year. All Grants are cordially invited to join us in a toast to the Chief, Sir James Grant of Grant, Lord Strathspey 33rd Chief of Clan Grant. Mark your calendar for October 21<sup>st</sup> to be at Stone Mountain, Georgia.



# ClanKeith-USA.org

Official website of The Clan Keith Society USA, Inc

If you have genealogical ties to the surname Keith (including alternate spellings such as Keeth) or any of Clan Keith's Sept family names, you were born into the Clan Keith!

Septs and spellings include: Achindachy - Astine - Aston - Austen - Austin - Cate(s) - Dick - Dickson - Dicson - Dixon - Dixson - Falconer - Faulkner - Harvey - Harvie - Hackston - Haxton - Hervie - Hervey - Hurrie - Hurry - Keath - Keech - Keeth - Keith - Keyth - Kite - Lum - Lumgair - MacAustin - MacDick - MacDicken - MacDickie - MacDeetch - MacKeeth - MacKeitch - MacKeith - Marshall - Urie - Urry

The Clan Keith Society would be delighted for you to join us as a member. For more information, please email [membershipclankeith@mindspring.com](mailto:membershipclankeith@mindspring.com) or call 404-539-5222.



Dunnottar Castle, stronghold of the Keiths (near Stonehaven)

Please plan to attend your local Highland Games and, if you see our tent, please come by for a visit. The tent convener will have information about Clan Keith's fascinating history as well as membership information. Membership in the Clan is not expensive but one of the finest investments that you will every make. Hope to see you soon!



# Leslie's gather at the Leslie Log House



Leslie's enjoy the Leslie Log House



## Lord Lyon pays a call on the Clan Leslie tent at the New Hampshire Scottish Games



Here's Clan Leslie's Laura Messing with Dr. Joseph Morrow, Lord Lyon. With thanks to the *Grip Fast*, publication of the Clan Leslie Society, International.

Leslie's from Scotland, the USA and Canada, including the Chief of Clan Leslie, the Honorable Alexander Leslie and his wife, Miranda, gather near Mississauga, Ontario, Canada at the Leslie Log House last August.

The cabin was moved from Meadowvale to Mississauga Road some years ago and is open Wednesdays and Sundays from 1 - 4. Visitors are always welcome.

With thanks to the *Grip Fast*, publication of the Clan Leslie Society, International.

To contact Clan Leslie, Christine Johnson is the Secretary/Registrar. Email <cejohnson@triad.rr.com>.



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## LORD NELSON'S GALLERY

IN HISTORIC GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA EST. 1990

It's true what they say. "Time flies when you're having fun!". And we've had a lot of fun organizing the History Meets the Arts show and sale in Gettysburg and this year will be the 20th year! The dates for this year are June 9-11 and will be held in the Gettysburg College Jaeger Athletic Center. Here, you'll have the opportunity to meet with 35 painters, sculptors, period accoutrement makers and historical authors.

The Opening Night Preview Party is Friday June 9, and free entry will be on Saturday and Sunday June 10 & 11. For complete details, please visit the the official show website [www.HistoryMeetsTheArts.com](http://www.HistoryMeetsTheArts.com).

### Bob Curry, *continued from page 1*

Committee on the Preservation and Use of Ellis Island. Previously, he served as Chairman of the Ethnic Advisory Council of the State of New Jersey. In 2000, the committee's work developed into the Save Ellis Island Foundation where Mr. Currie currently serves as Director and Secretary. He holds a BS and MS degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University and an Honorary Doctorate in the Arts from Edinburgh Napier University.

In its 31<sup>st</sup> year, the Ellis Island Medal of Honor ceremony will once again be held on Ellis Island starting at 6:30pm. The ceremony will be followed by a black-tie Gala Dinner in the historic Great Hall, the original registry room and gateway for 12 million immigrants to the US.

"Ellis Island remains an iconic symbol of hope, new beginnings and freedom. NECO's Medals of Honor stand to remind citizens to support ethnic inclusion, diversity and pursuit of the American Dream for all, something especially needed in the current political climate," said Nasser J. Kazeminy, Chairman of NECO.

The medal recognizes individuals who have made it their mission to share with those less fortunate their wealth of knowledge, indomitable courage, boundless compassion, unique talents and selfless generosity; all while maintaining the traditions of their ethnic heritage as they uphold the ideals and spirit of America. Since the Medal was founded in 1986, NECO has honored such distinguished and diverse Americans including: seven Presidents of the United States; Nobel Prize recipient Elie Wiesel, Generals Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin

Powell, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Secretaries of State, Madeline Albright, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton, Bob Hope, Muhammad Ali, Frank Sinatra, Rosa Parks, Yue-Sai Kan, Mike Wallace and Mia Farrow, all of whom have distinguished themselves through their significant philanthropic and humanitarian contributions to this country.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor ranks among the nation's most renowned awards. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have officially recognized the Ellis Island Medals of Honor, and each year the recipients are listed in the Congressional Record.

To see the full list of 2017 recipients, please visit: [www.neco.org](http://www.neco.org).

#### *About NECO*

The National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations - NECO- was created on the conviction of its founders that the diversity of the American people is what makes this nation great.

Its mission is to honor and preserve this diversity and to foster tolerance, respect and understanding among religious and ethnic groups.

NECO is the sponsor of the Ellis Island Medals of Honor which are presented annually to American citizens, both native born and naturalized, who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups while exemplifying the values of the American way of life.

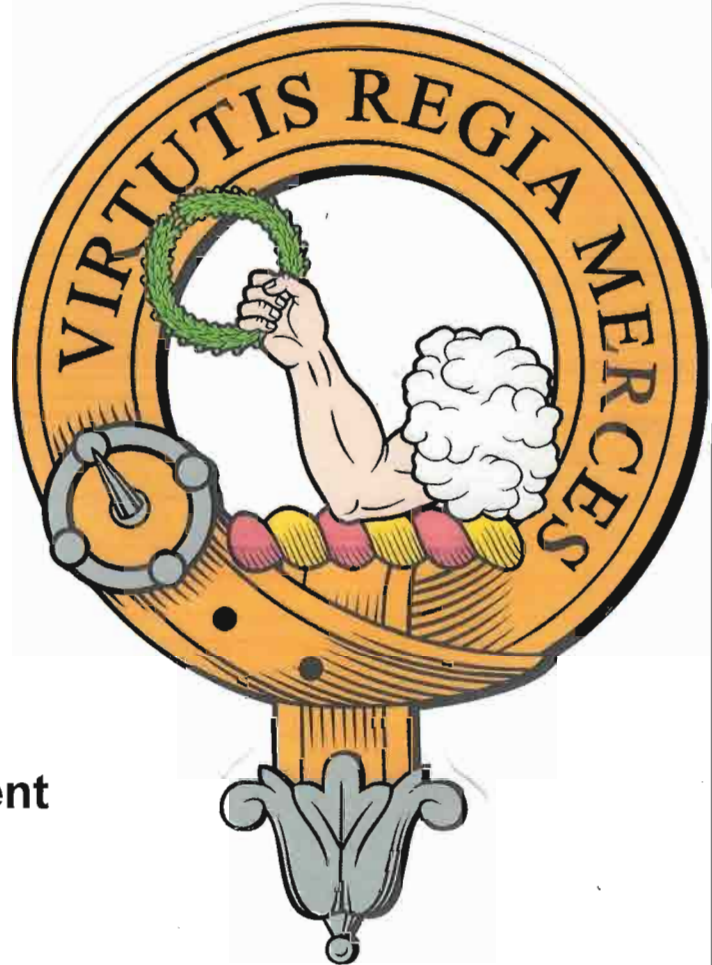
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# The Clan Skene Association, Inc.

The Clan Skene Association, Inc., invites membership from SKENE and septs CARISON, CARNEY/ C A R N I E , CURRIEHILL, DYAS, DYCE, DYER, HALL, H A L Y A R D / H A L L Y A R D , MacGAILLARD, RENNIE & SKAINS.

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273 Amy Clegg Drive  
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<alsrx95@gmail.com>



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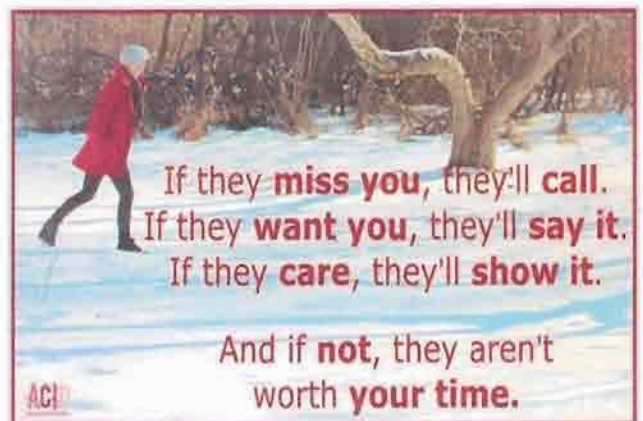
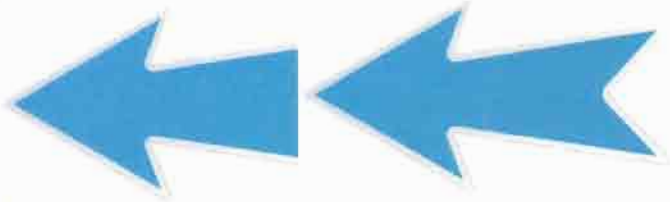


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