

Notable Bairds of the 20TH CENTURY series

William R. Baird of Alabama

Debra J. Baird, Ph.D.

The National Coal Mining Strike of 1920

In Alabama, the center of the early 20th century mining labor controversy was in Walker County, just a few miles over the county line from Winston County, at a small mine called Slick Lizard, in the village of Nauvoo. The main players were mostly African-American, but one of the mine managers, the Rev. Adrian Northcutt, and his son-in-law, William Roosevelt Baird, believed that the coal mines in Alabama amounted to nothing more than another form of slavery, and fought against the brutality that characterized the everyday working conditions of that mining.

They were seeing men killed in mines and buried in shallow graves, or thrown in a drainage ditch to be covered in slag, while other men were sent back into the same terrible under-earth conditions immediately. There were no safety measures. Many of these men's deaths were never reported, their families never knew what became of them, and the mine owners denied having ever seen them when someone came searching. Adrian Northcutt and Will Baird decided to help strengthen the United Mine Workers local (UMWA) as a way to fight what they considered such unfair and inhuman working conditions.

Baird was descended from a family that refused to participate in the American Civil War because of their philosophy of life, abolitionist standing, and absolute belief in the idea of the unity of the nation. They were citizens of what continues to be known as "The Free State of Winston". Beyond that, Will Baird's life had been

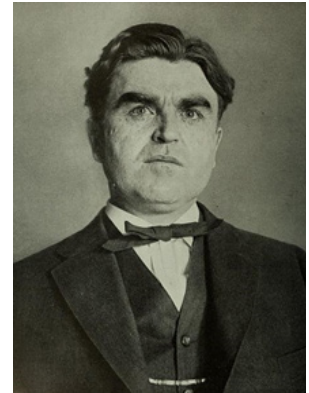


William R. Baird and his wife
Mamie Northcutt 1920

overshadowed by a family Jacobite background, stubborn and willing to accept hardship in life to remain free and independent. He was named for his Jacobite 4th great-grandfather, William Baird, young silk dyer from Aberdeen, who was involved in the Rising of

the '45 in Scotland and transported to the American Colonies as punishment.

By the early part of the 1900's, John L. Lewis, a rising official in the mining labor forces, asked for all miners to strike several times. He went into the mines himself at the age of 15, working tirelessly to improve conditions. Lewis rose quickly in the fledgling Union ranks and by late 1919, took over the duties of the then UMWA President Frank Hayes. He was elected in his own right in 1920.



John L. Lewis in his early career

Mr. Lewis called for a five-month coal strike in 1920, beginning in September, and most of the miners in Alabama complied. They really had nothing to lose. Sometimes they died just walking into the mines, due to gas and toxic fumes. It is believed that

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Ceud Mìle Fàilte!

(100,000 Welcomes)

*We welcome to our
Clan the following:*

New Members Since
Spring 2018

Scott Paul Axworthy, Washington
Clare Baird, Scotland
Cliff Baird Jr., Montana
Davonna Baird Ryan, Montana
Peter Baird, New York
Mark Baird, Florida
Michelle Baird, Florida
Stephen Edward Baird, Indiana
Charles Mancel Beard, Washington
Matthew Ryan Beard, Tennessee
Jeannie Parker Beard, Tennessee
Brodie Parker Beard, Tennessee
Richard Carrol Beard, Tennessee
Seth Franklin Borders, North Carolina
Emma Cole, Scotland
Patrick Cole, Scotland
Sofie Cole, Scotland
Stacy Beaird Doyle, Florida
Craig Donavon Hicks, North Carolina
Beverly Smith, Michigan
Georgina Stirrup, South Africa
William Stirrup, South Africa
Timothy Stirrup, South Africa
Isabelle Stirrup, South Africa
Bruce Beard, Virginia
Louise Holman-Baird Murray, Kenya
Angus Holman-Baird, Scotland
Amelia Holman-Baird, Scotland
William Rodgers, South Carolina
Kathy Baird Shand, Indiana
Jon Baird Shipman, Oregon
Marla Tierney, Georgia

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at least 70% of miners in Alabama were African-American and considered “expendable” by the owners, with a majority of them brought in from the prison system, picked up for petty crime or just caught walking down the road, and forced into hard labor in



Home of Hiram Jeremiah “Jerry” Baird, Natural Bridge, Alabama, 1910. Jerry holding the horse, Will sitting on the horse

unsafe mines. This was the situation at Slick Lizard, where Will Baird was a manager. Slick Lizard miners struck and refused to work. The then governor, Thomas Kilby, called out the state militia and state police, to put down the strikes and supposedly to keep peace. This is the beginning of our Baird story.

The Alabama Guard began to terrorize the area, beating striking miners when found alone, and hiring farmers to work the mines, causing the striking miners to protest and revolt even more. Leaders of the local churches tried to keep peace, speaking from the pulpit about brotherhood and working together for the greater good of all. On December 22, 1920, local union official and outspoken Nazarene minister, Rev. Adrian Northcutt, was feeding his cows in the pasture behind his house. A group of state militia, Company M, Alabama Guard from Tuscaloosa, surrounded him and were pretending to talk with him about the strike, but were slowly forming a circle, ready to do harm. Northcutt was not armed and was reported by his daughter

Mamie, who was watching from a window, to have had his arms high in the air when the shooting began. Will Baird, his son-in-law, hearing seven shots in rapid succession, came out of the house and observed a man bending over the body of Rev. Northcutt. Will ran to the pasture with his rifle, once again saw Pvt. James Morris standing

over his father-in-law, and shot Morris.

Many historical reports of the story state that Will Baird then ran away into the woods, but his actions were misunderstood. He was, in actuality, taking a short-cut to his father’s farm in Winston County. Baird remained at his father, Hiram Jeremiah Baird’s farm for a few days, until his father, who was a former

Treasurer of Winston County, and friends of his grandfather George W. Baird, who had been sheriff of Winston County until his death, worked out a means for Will to turn himself in to the authorities.

It was decided that Will would give himself up to the Marion County sheriff, who would accompany him to Jasper, the county seat of Walker County. The Franklin County sheriff also came with them, to insure Will would be fairly treated. Marion and Franklin Counties were more open to Unions and other “modern” ideas, and the hope of the Baird family was that Will would have a better chance at trial if it was known that he had support of several judicial groups.

The trial of Will Baird only took a few days in early January, he was found innocent, the jury deciding he had acted in self-defense. The town of Jasper and most of Walker County continued to be in turmoil with opposing protests after the verdict, it was

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Message from the President

Greetings

We have lost several of our early and founding members this summer. Dorothy Baird Baker of Texas and California donated a number of boxes of genealogical materials, old letters between members, and pictures. She called me several times over the last two years and gave me many important insights into the Society and those who put it together.

Ms. Ann Elizabeth Baird of Ohio was a member of the Society for many, many years and worked highland games in her area, as well as Minnesota. She helped put the Society together and kept up her membership activity until her death.

Georgia Capshaw of Kansas and Louisiana wrote me a letter when I took over as president of Clan Baird Society. She warned me of some pitfalls, congratulated my grit for having taken on the role, told me to always do what is honest and what

I think best, and I would have no problems. Of course, as you know, this was all done with great humor and gusto. She had that. Humorous Passion and gusto for everything she did.

She, Frances Beard of Florida, Justus Baird of Georgia, Dorothy Baird Baker of California, and Ann Elizabeth Baird of Ohio were all there, at the beginning of Clan Baird Society, more than fifty years ago. We were a very widely dispersed family, due to wars and rebellions, conflicts of philosophy with kings and rulers over several centuries, and these people brought us back together. There is an old adage (thank you to George Snyder for this quote) that one of the keys to a peaceful and meaningful life is to daily maximize our gratitude and minimize our expectations. Yet, I believe that for these we have lost one of the keys to their meaningful lives was to maximize their gratitude without lowering her expectations in the slightest. They have set a high bar for us to continue bringing the family together.

George Baird Snyder, the man Georgia left in charge when she left Kansas, wrote this acrostic poem for her 80th Birthday. The first letter of each line spells her name, and who she was to us. I further dedi-

cate it today to all those we lost this summer. They were servants of the Baird family and should always be remembered. May new members step up to serve as they did.

Gone near and far once more to Highland Games,

Each one the better for her being there,

Our regional commissioner with care

Receiving guests and writing down their names.

Great is her energy, her style, grand

In her commitment to the Clan Baird cause.

And, Spring through Fall, with scarcely moment's pause,

Can find her traveling throughout the land.

Are five or six enough to take her place,

Performing all the tasks that she can do?

So few there are who could keep up the pace;

Her years of service, ever tried and true!

And, who will follow in that peerless gait

We only can attempt to emulate?

Beannachd Dia dhuit,
(Blessings of God be with you)
Debra

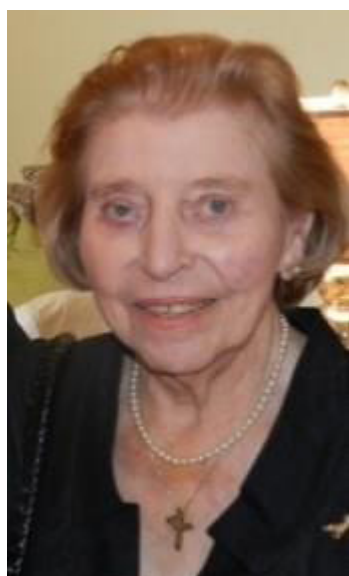




Flowers of the Forest

Georgia Rose Rountree Capshaw 1921-2018

Georgia Rose Rountree Capshaw passed away on Wednesday June 20, 2018 in New Orleans, LA. She was born in Tallulah, LA (Madison Parish) on August 1, 1921, the daughter of William Lyle and Rosalie Clinton Baird Rountree. Georgia attended Brenau College and received her B.A. degree in Journalism from Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge where she was a member of Kappa Delta Sorority. She is survived by her sister, Geneva Mae Rountree Williams, of Tallulah, LA.



She married Benjamin Dowell Capshaw Jr. (Col. USA Retired 1919-2006), February 6, 1943 and was the consummate military wife for nearly 30 years. They retired in 1972 and made their home in Leavenworth, KS for over 35 years. During her years in Leavenworth, Georgia volunteered and served the community as an active member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, DAR, DBE, Cushing Auxiliary, Docent for 25 years at the Toy and Miniature Museum in Kansas City, Chairwoman of several successful Miniature Shows for Cushing Hospital, Midwest Regional Commissioner of Clan Baird Society for 30 years, Leavenworth Historical

Society, Friends of the Library, LADS, Philomathians and Panhellenic.

Her years as Regional Commissioner of Clan Baird Society were filled with many activities, participation in the 1997 Scotland tour and General Meeting, and work in so many festivals, competitions, and gatherings there is no means of cataloguing them. She will be sorely missed as one of the great members and holders of the collective history of the Society.

In 2010 Georgia relocated to New Orleans. She resided in Garden House at Poydras Home until October 2017 before moving into Poydras Home. She was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church, Caledonian Society of New Orleans, Poydras Auxiliary and a contributor to the Poydras Art Show.

Georgia leaves a legacy of three children, Benjamin Dowell Capshaw III (Kristin Oser) of New Orleans, LA, Clinton Lyle Capshaw (Kathryne Hoffman) of Montgomery, TX, and Donna Lynne Capshaw Sumpter (John) of Kansas City, MO; Five grandchildren, Dr. Erica Lyle Capshaw Brooks (Clay), Benjamin Christopher Capshaw (Kristin), Clinton Lyle Capshaw II (Jessica), Christopher Kyle Capshaw (Stephanie) and Kelly Elizabeth Capshaw; Nine great-grandchildren, William Brooks, Lily Capshaw, Anna Claire Capshaw, Ellis Brooks, Nicholas Capshaw, Daniel Capshaw, Emma Capshaw, Thomas Capshaw and Charlie Capshaw.

Information on Descendants of William Baird, 7th Laird of Auchmedden

By Debra J. Baird, Ph.D.

There has been an ongoing debate as to whether William Baird, 7th Laird of Auchmedden, and Jacobite leader in the '45 had any surviving male descendants. We know that he had two surviving daughters, Jean, who married a Mr. Cort, and shortly left for New Brunswick, had ongoing generations of issue, and Henrietta, who married Francis Fraser of Findrack, had children and grandchildren, who then wrote about the Bairds of Auchmedden, one of whom received as part of his coat of arms, the Auchmedden family quarter.

Over the summer, I was transcribing the notes, letters, and dairies of Dr. Victor Gibeau, Ph.D., political science professor at the University of Alabama for 30+ years. He was a close friend, and as executor of his will, his papers were left to me. Victor's father was the city engineer of Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands from about 1925 until he retired in the 1970's. He was also a businessman, owning a shipping fleet, a partial interest in the Cruzan Rum Distillery, and various other holdings in the Islands. Victor Jr. grew up on their estate, St. Mary's Mount, which was just down the road from The Grange, hereditary estate of Alexander Hamilton, the American Patriot who developed the U.S. banking system. The family who owned the Grange in Victor's time was surnamed Armstrong (believed to be relatives of Hamilton, with more than eight generations of living in the Islands), and Victor mentioned to me many times that there were Baird's in the Islands, but it was not something I thought

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2019 CLAN BAIRD SOCIETY WORLDWIDE SCOTLAND TRIP



We have several people signed up to go on the Scotland tour and it is turning out to be a great group! There are a few seats left, but please remember that you must register and pay your deposit before January 1st, in order to hold a place on the tour. We have added the application at the end of the electronic Gryphon, and as an insert in this hard copy.

A short history of the Bairds is being published in the spring and each tour participant will receive one of these books at the beginning of the tour. The book will be a small guide to all things Baird in each of the places we visit.

The Baird General Meeting is planned to be in Edinburgh the day of the Tattoo. We will announce the venue as soon as we have a final number of those who plan to attend. We have heard from several of our Scotland and England Society members who are planning to join us for the meeting and the Tattoo. It will be nice for all of us to be together, so get those applications in soon!



clanbairdsociety.com



TRAVEL DATE: 7/28/2019 TERRITORY: S9
RES#: 868909

Discover Scotland featuring the Royal Edinburgh
Military Tattoo

For Reservations Contact: Debra Baird (205) 454-6852 email: djbaird4@gmail.com
Clan Baird Society Worldwide Inc., 3491 County Rd 3459, Haleyville, AL 35565
Send Payments to: Collette, 162 Middle St., Pawtucket RI 02860 FAX: 401-727-9014

A deposit of \$500 per person is due upon reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis. Reservations made after the deposit due date of January 22, 2019 are based upon availability. Final payment due by May 29, 2019. Deposits are refundable up until January 29, 2019.

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Notable Bairds... from page 2

late in the day, and it was decided that Baird would remain in the Walker County Jail until morning, for his own safety. Will unfortunately agreed to the suggestion and sent his wife and family home. Later, it was revealed in evidence that it was part of the plan for him to be taken by the soldiers.

Early on the morning of January 13th, seven guardsmen of Company M (most of those who had killed Adrian Northcutt) entered the jail, pistol whipped the sheriff on duty and took Baird. First, they dragged him behind their truck to Manchester, about six miles, on the road toward Double Springs, and not far from the road to Nauvoo. They then tied him up to a tree, so that his feet just touched, beat him with sticks and iron rods, shot him 22 times, and left him to be found by the authorities.

The leaders involved in the lynching of Will Baird were Sgt. Robert Lancaster and Sgt. Glenn Stephens. They, and the other seven men who planned or participated, were brought to trial in Hamilton, Marion County, in late January, but a mistrial was called, and Judge Horace C. Wilkinson, special attorney general in charge of the case, as appointed by governor Kilby, asked for a dismissal. He also immediately asked for rearrest and reindictment of all nine, along with the indictment of six others, who would be charged with "conspiring with or aiding the nine principals in the lynching."

The other seven men who actively participated in the beating and killing of Will Baird were Roy Patton Jr., Ernest W. Speed, W.E. Hamby, Manley Sexton, James Franklin, Joseph W. Key, and Clarence Richardson. They and the two sergeants were moved from Hamilton, after the mistrial, to the Jefferson County Jail in Birmingham, where they remained until the new trials. They finally were found guilty, after seven trials, but on appeal, all were acquitted. None of the men spent any measurable time in jail. The leader, Sgt. Lancaster was, at one point,

sentenced to eighteen years in prison, but that sentence was also reversed on appeal. He was released from the Bessemer jail in December 1925 on \$2500.00 bond, never to be returned to any jail. It is believed by Will's family that Horace Wilkinson was told by Governor Kilby to make sure none of the men were ever punished, and it seems that was the outcome. Letters between Wilkinson's office and Baird family members show a resistance to working toward real prosecution. One even speaks of Wilkinson's prosecuting attorneys having "to be away on vacation and therefore, unable to push the case forward". A former Alabama governor, Braxton Bragg Comer, would later claim that the lynching of William Baird "had some element of self-defense in it.



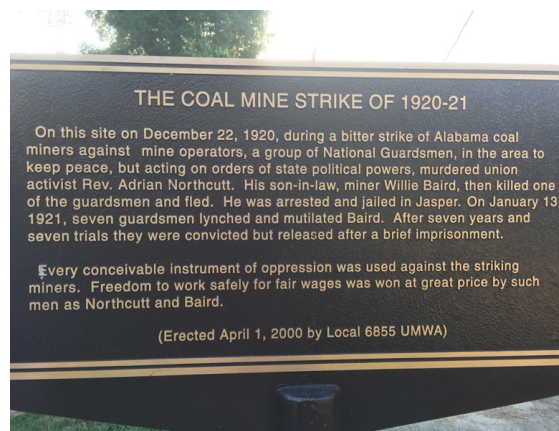
Norman Paul and William Horace Baird in Illinois

Will Baird's wife fled to Illinois after his death, along with most of the Northcutt's. Mamie was expecting their second son when Will was killed, and William Horace Baird was born in Illinois in March 1921. They already had a son, Norman Paul Baird, born in 1919. She then married Will's best friend and fellow reformer, Eutah Plyler, and they remained in Illinois until they died, having one child of their own, Juanita.

Will's father and family were, as expected, in extreme grief and it has taken until the last twenty years for the larger family to open up about what happened in those dark times. Will was a hero, there is no doubt, but his family continues to suffer from the pain of nothing ever having been done by the State of

Alabama. His lynching crossed all lines formerly held concerning soldiers and law enforcement allowing or helping lynch-mobs to kill citizens. Until the death of Will Baird, white people in Alabama were not treated in this manner. His death was a forerunner to the whites who were killed later in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. Adrian Northcutt and Will Baird were considered to have broken ties with the white population because they were defending the African-American miners. The fight for the equality of all began with the Civil War, came through the coal mining and union strife of the ensuing years, and to a head with the changes brought by Dr. Martin Luther King's followers. Will stood up for those who were being mistreated and killed; and he died trying to make the world a better place. The State of Alabama, the governor, and the courts, were acting illegally in regard to almost everything done concerning the mines, unions, and the men who lost their lives during those years.

There is now an historic plaque with an iron picket fence on the site of Rev. Adrian Northcutt's murder in Nauvoo, and the place where Will Baird killed James Morris, the guardsman. The plaque also describes how Will Baird was killed by the soldiers. The plaque was placed by the United Mine Workers



of America (UMWA), Local 6855 of Nauvoo. The State of Alabama has yet to admit its responsibility for the crimes committed.





The Baird House of Edina, Minnesota

Submitted by Erin McCanna

I have lived almost 30 years in the city of Edina, Minnesota. Edina (pronounced ee-DY-na), is suggested as a more “poetic” version of Edinburgh, is a southwest suburb of Minneapolis, and has an 1886 house that I always admired. I was surprised to find out that it is known as the “Baird House”. So when a lecture appeared in my newsfeed from the Edina Historical Society about the original lady of the Baird House, I was determined to find out more.



The Baird House was built by George Washington Baird as a 20th anniversary present for his wife, Sarah (nee Gates). George, according to Clan President Debra, is a descendant of John Baird of Midlothian/Aberdeen (a direct ancestor of about 1/3 of the Baird’s in the U.S). He left Luzerne Township, Pennsylvania

in 1857 and bought farmland in the Edina Mills area. He met Sarah here and they married. They were amongst the first livestock farmers here and introduced Merino sheep to MN. In 1873 the couple helped set up the Minnehaha Grange Hall (a farmers’ organization where men and women had equal status). Not only did they both serve as Grange Master - in a time where women seldom held such positions - but Sarah even became the first female Grange Hall State Master in 1906. In fact, her whole life was dedicated to pioneering agricultural advancements, especially livestock husbandry standards, and women’s

suffrage. George is listed among the founders of the city of Edina which incorporated in 1888.

The Queen Anne brick house was designed by architect Charles S. Sedgwick and is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. It is privately owned and the current residents won

the first ever Edina Heritage Award in 2003, given to recognize owners that help preserve community heritage. The house has curved walls, a winding staircase, spacious rooms, and a square tower. It is a lovely structure in the heart of the city.



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much of, until finding these entries in his family papers.

In the papers I have been working on this summer, Victor’s father mentions some business transactions and possible land purchases from the Charles Baird family of Antiqua and Barbuda. I was struck that that was the name of one of the sons of William of Auchmedden who emigrated to the Islands, so I began to look for more references. To the point to which I have transcribed, there were a few more postings about land on Barbuda and possible prices, with a Charles Baird mentioned as having left the Islands in the mid-1800’s, for the mainland U.S., but then (as of the entries) the descendants wanted to sell all holdings. The fact that he had a brother was also noted, but no name was given. Charles seems to have been the elder son and manager of the estate as a descendent from the time the family left the islands. These postings were dated in 1927 and 1928. There was also a mention that there were several African-American holders of the name Baird.

According to Victor, the elder Armstrong’s told him that the Bairds were a family who arrived in the Islands in the mid to late 1700’s, built a fine estate and plantation, and were very much a part of Society until they all emigrated to the mainland in the early to mid-1800’s. Some of them held governmental offices at differing times.

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CLAN BAIRD *Scholarship*

Dear Clan Members:

My name is Jennifer (Baird) Gray.

Rebecca, my daughter, was the recipient of the Clan Scholarship last year.

I just wanted to give a short update of what has happened since. Rebecca is 11 years old. She plays the lever harp specializing in Scottish music. I drive her once a week at a minimum an hour one way to her harp lessons. She has named her Harp Sofie Morning Glory. In February, she decided she wanted to compete at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. So we picked the music she was going to play. She has a HUGE decision in this as at the end of the day, she is the one performing. Unfortunately, several things occurred and she was unable to perform at Grandfather Mountain. Despite working extremely hard getting her two pieces she was going to perform, they didn't come to fruition for competition. That was coupled with her slamming her thumb in the car door which prevented her from using her thumb for a few weeks. I think we were all trying to push too hard for her to compete in 2 competitions in a year. Rebecca will be ready for Stone Mountain Highland Games. As of writing this email, she will be playing a Strathspey, Sir James G. Baird, Bart., and a Lament, McPherson's Lament. This is always due to

change, but that is what we are working on at the current moment.

On top of all of that, she is also studying to take her ABRSM Exams in Spring of 2019. If you are unfamiliar with ABRSM, it stands for The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Here is a link for more information: <https://us.abrsm.org/en/about-abrsm/introduction-to-abrsm-our-mission-and-team/>

I would like to thank you all for the gracious gift of the Scholarship. The scholarship money helped offset the cost of lessons, costs of driving, attendance of the Highland Games, and the cost of the harp. Rebecca LOVES her harp. Rebecca LOVES to compete at the Highland Games. Rebecca LOVES learning more about the harp and Scotland!

Hope to see everyone at Stone Mountain. Becca is always showing off Sofie Morning Glory. Feel free to come play on her harp, or ask Becca to play for you!

Sincerely,
Jennifer (Baird) Gray



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They talked of sons, William, Charles, and John, and grandsons Charles, George, and John.

I am searching for other records of the men mentioned in these journals and by the Armstrongs, in order to determine whether they are the descendants of our William, 7th of Auchmedden. So many records in St. Croix and the Islands have been lost due to natural disasters of one type or another, it is very difficult to get original information, but it is important for us to try. If there is anyone out there who has documents about these Baird men, or knows of them, please get in touch with me. I will be transcribing the Gibean papers all winter, and hope to find more information or at least a few more notations.

I am also searching for any descendants of the Frasers of Findrack or the Courts of New Brunswick. If you have any information on them, I would appreciate your emailing me.

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**Newsletter
Deadlines**

Autumn 2018 Issue
deadline October 30th

Winter 2019 Issue
deadline December 30th

Spring 2019 Issue
deadline February 30th

Please submit newsletter articles to:

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or mail to:
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Electronic file formats accepted are
Microsoft Word documents
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**Any questions about *The Gryphon*
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