



# the GRYPHON

Late Summer 2017 / Newsletter of the Clan Baird Society Worldwide, Inc.

## CLAN BAIRD SOCIETY WORLDWIDE SCOTLAND TRIP SPRING 2017 part one



### *Rickarton and Ury Estates*

As part of the Clan Baird Society trip to Scotland, Heather Snyder and Debra Baird were treated to a day at the Baird estates of Rickarton and Ury. Laird and Chieftain Richard Holman-Baird, his wife Polly, and his mother, Lady Diana Baird Holman, met us at Ury House for a tour of the renovations. This was after a fairly interesting ride down from Gardenstown with Debra driving and Heather navigating, both activities had many rather unfortunate, but adventurous, turns. Clearly, the I-Phone GPS from the U.S. does not work extremely well in Scotland, and the confusion that we should be looking for “balls” on top the stone columns, and not “bulls” added to our adventure. Finally with the help of Richard on the cellphone, we made it to Rickarton House.

With Richard and his group was Philip Mills-Bishop, a district and community councilor from Stonehaven, and chair of the Stonehaven Heritage Society, who brought with him books outlining Baird history and lands, as well as other interesting information about the area. One of the developers of the Ury House, John Milne, was also available to show us the state of improvements.

Ury House and estate are being developed into a hotel and golf resort. When completed, it will offer beautiful views, lavishly spacious rooms on the level of Claridges London, and service of the same quality, as well as a world-class Jack Nicklaus golf course. Flying in to Aberdeen will allow arrival at this resort

within thirty minutes of the airport. It was a delight to walk through the house, and hear the memories and recollections of Lady Diana, who remembers when the



house was occupied by her grandfather. Heather and Polly investigated what was believed to have been an enormous wine cellar, when we were downstairs in the historically expansive kitchens. We were glad to see them emerge from the cellar; having visions of calling out the fire brigade to extract them.

On leaving Ury House, Lady Diana and Polly went on to other engagements, and Richard brought Heather, Phil, and Debra to tour the Rickarton Estate in his Land Rover. We went over hill and dale to the

Houff, the historic burial ground of both the Baird and Barclay families, generational owners of the estates. The views from the Houff were breathtaking. We were then treated to the orphaned lamb nursery, with ultra-modern feeding tubes in each pen, offering on demand nursing to each lamb, and much better health overall for the long term. From there we were shown the standing stone from many centuries past, rune writing showing on its side. The stone has been identified as to be the memorial to an important seer of the Viking days. What impressed us most was that no one had bothered the stone over the centuries; it had been left alone,



even protected, in the middle of the field, something that would never have been the case in the United States. The level of respect for the past found in the Scottish people is a model for the rest of us.

Phil left on other business and Richard showed us the town of Stonehaven, which has grown a great deal in the last

*Continued on page 7*



# Ceud Mìle Fàilte!

(100,000 Welcomes)

**We welcome to our Clan the following:**

- Christopher Scott Baird, Virginia
- D. Scott Baird, Virginia
- George and Janice Baird, Utah
- Traci Baird, Oregon
- William Baird, Washington
- Sean Patrick Biard, California
- Jerry Beard, Florida
- Logan Beard, Utah
- Susan Ledford Blankenbeckler, Tennessee
- Doris Lea Winkler Isaacs, North Carolina
- Saundra Blankenship Ledford, Tennessee
- James McGhee, Virginia
- George Minsterman, California
- Connie J. Baird O'Dell, Tennessee
- Julie Baird Poulson, Utah
- Noelle Poulson, Utah
- Ted Baird Saunders, Florida
- Vicki Baird Stec, Virginia
- Bob and Isobel Watson, Mintlaw, Scotland
- Alton Wilson, Alabama



It is with great pleasure that we announce the marriage of Louise Holman-Baird and Christopher (Topper) Murray. Christopher George, second son of Mr and Mrs Gordon Murray of Kenya, and Louise Saragh, elder daughter of Mr Richard Holman-Baird and the late Mrs Saragh Holman-Baird and stepdaughter of Mrs Polly Holman-Baird. The couple were married at Kincardine O'Neil on the 8th April, 2017 with the reception at Rickarton House, Stonehaven.



Kenyan marriage blessing of Christopher and Louise.



The group photo is of the Holman-Baird family Richard, Polly and their other children Angus and Amelia.



A second event was held in Kenya on the 15th July, 2017 so all their Kenyan friends could enjoy celebrating the happy union. It is noted that the Holman-Baird gentlemen are wearing the Baird dress tartan, and the groom is wearing the Murray dress tartan.

Christopher lives in Kenya, where he grows roses for the European market. Louise is the owner of Holman-Baird Safari's, also in Kenya. The couple will reside in Kenya.





# Message from the President

## *Greetings Members!*

### **Our Clan Baird Society Scotland trip was the highlight of my year**

Many thanks to all who traveled and welcomed us. Heather Baird Snyder, Karen Baird Scott, Bethany Scott, Genie Gallagher, Erin McCanna and I arrived and stayed in a house near Gardenstown, on the Banff coast. We met

Our days out with family and friends allowed us to really see the area, not just be tourists.

We no sooner landed than John Baird and his wife, Paulina, stopped by for a visit, with another Scottish ancestry friend, Claudia Johns. They live in New Zealand, but happened to be close by on business and came through to visit. We had tea (yes, a wee dram was had also) and much lively conversation

Bob Watson (a friend of Clan Baird Society) then arrived with a new book by the Rev. John Woodside, *Together in Christ: Following the Northern Saints*. It is a fascinating book that gives short biographies of the saints of Aberdeenshire and surrounding counties, with prayers and pictures of many kirks and ruins from many, many, years past. Of course, my favorite is St. Drostan, who landed on the beach at Aberdour in 580 CE, as a missionary to the Picts. There was a pilgrimage walk and rededication of St. Drostan's Holy Well on 16 September 2017, led by the Banffshire Pilgrimage Group. Clan Baird Society is most honored to be one of the sponsors of that event. The well continues to flow, offering fresh water to all travelers, right there on the beach of the sea, near St. Drostan's Kirk where so many Baird ancestors were buried from around 1200 until the mid 1700's.



As was the first day on the northern coast of Scotland, each day forward was filled with new friends and family, new information about the Bairds, and new hope for all of us. We went on to Ury House and a tour of Richard Holman-Baird's estate in his Land Rover, see Baird artifacts at Lady Diana Baird Holman's home, go through historical books and documents with Phil Mills-Bishop at the Ury House reconstruction, and discuss the future of Clan Baird Society with Ross and Doreen Baird, during our General Meeting at the Boat Inn, Aboyne.

Richard Holman-Baird, Ross Baird, Erin McCanna, Doreen Baird, Karen Baird Scott, Bethany Scott holding Genie Gallagher, Debra Baird and Heather Baird Snyder in Back, and Lady Diana Holman-Baird.

many people and saw many beautiful places and things. A special thanks to Richard and Polly Holman-Baird, Lady Diana Baird Holman, Ross and Doreen Baird, Bob and Isobel Watson, Claire and Gordon Harper, and Phil Mills-Bishop, for making us feel so welcome and for entertaining us so grandly.

about what the Society is doing and planning to do, as well as differences in how we live, but mostly how similar our family life is in America and New Zealand. The influence of our Scottish background continues to live in our new lands.

It was truly a difficult time of leaving one another when we all had to take the planes back to our homes in America. We are planning a Clan Baird trip and General Meeting in Scotland in 2019. We hope many of you will join us.





## The Baird Archaeological and Historical Initiative:

### The Hamesucken: A Glimpse into Life at Auchmedden Castle

By Isaac Baird, FSA SCOT

One aim of the Baird Archaeological and Historical Initiative is to identify the location of the original medieval Auchmedden castle and preserve the remains (subterranean foundations). Unfortunately, there are few records directly describing the architecture. Rare descriptions do exist, from which the architecture can be inferred. These records include the Hamesucken description and the description provided by James Ferguson when he visited in the 1730's. Analyzing these records aid in generating an artistic reconstruction of the Castle and life in the Clan. In this article, the Hamesucken is specifically reviewed.

The Hamesucken description refers to the legal proceedings following an attack on the Baird Castle in 1602. Hamesucken, a legal term specific to Scots law and legal system, refers to forcible entry and assault in a private residence. It remains a valid crime to this day and in 2010, 85 people were charged with hamesucken. (Slaon, 2011)

The events leading up to the Hamesucken of 1602 reveal a much longer conflict between wealthy families and clans, including the Earl of Huntly (Gordons), the Earl Marischal (Keiths), the Regent Moray (Stewarts), Baird of Auchmedden and Chene (Cheyne) of Esslemont and Straloch. The fight between these individuals, resides in the story of the Marian Civil war, the downfall of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the violent struggles of the reformation.

In 1562, Mary, Queen of Scots, distributed the titles of Earl of Mar and Earl of Moray, from the Earl of Huntly, to her older illegitimate half-brother, James Stewart, in an attempt to appease him. During this time, Scotland underwent radical religious and societal changes

and Moray came out as a staunch protestant supporter. The Earl of Huntly greatly distrusted the Queen's brother feeling the Earl of Moray eyed the throne. Incensed at the loss of his titles and power, he met the Queen's forces at the Battle of Corrichie. The Clan Gordon followed Huntly, as did his close friend, George Baird of Auchmedden. The battle ended in defeat for the Earl of Huntly as he suffered a stroke, and Auchmedden attempted to rescue his dying friend. The outcome of the battle resulted in the execution of Huntly's eldest son. The Queen forfeited the titles of the Gordons and the North of Scotland suffered a power vacuum.

Auchmedden, with the death of Huntly and his son, reconciled with Earl of Moray and for good reason. Moray married Agnes Keith, the daughter of the Earl Marischal and the second cousin to the George Baird of Auchmedden's wife, Elizabeth Keith. Moray, a protestant, in return connected with a staunch catholic supporter in the North and drew Auchmedden into his personal circle. In a series of small moves and gestures, the Earl of Moray began to slowly turn away from his sister and preparing what some historians consider as his aim for the throne.

In 1565, the Queen's marriage to Lord Darnley created a final rift with her elder brother. Repulsed by the marriage, he refused to attend his sister and was "put to the horn" or declared a traitor with three sharp blasts. The queen forfeited his titles and looking for allies, reestablished the Gordons to their titles and lands. War erupted, war resulted in the abdication and death of Mary, Queen of Scots. Moray, scheming an manipulating attempted to reduce the power of the Earl of Huntly, now a member of the Privy Council. He drew George Baird of Auchmedden into his circle with his relationship despite Auchmedden being a staunch catholic. Auchmedden's neighbor, Patrick Chene of Esslemont, a vassal of the Earl of Huntly, remained a loyal queen's man during the Marian Civil war. George Buchanan, the political theorist begun All of Moray's scheming was for naught, Moray was assassinated in 1569 before his plans could come to

fruition. With the death of Queen Mary, King James rose to power as a child.

The war waged on in Pennan and Auchmedden. In 1570, Patrick Chene of Esslemont purchased Pennan, Aberdour, Clinterlie, and other properties associated with modern Auchmedden. He then proceeded to attempt to evict George Baird of Auchmedden. Hard feelings must have existed between the two families when in the trial, Auchmedden declared Esslemont to be a traitor and criminal and should be "put to the horn" as a queen's man.

Patrick's son, James Chene, often called Cheyne of Pennan, had his first run in with Auchmedden perhaps as early as 1580. In court documents, Chene claimed that that over the next 22 years, George's son, Gilbert Baird of Auchmedden continually assaulted him. He listed 12 attacks that occurred as well as the forces numbered up to 60 men including many unidentified Bairds including revenge attacks for the Hamesucken. The charges reigned from attacking his house, crops, wife and family to practicing Catholicism. In the end, Auchmedden was cleared of the charges. In 1602, Cheyne was charged with Hamesucken, and "rapt and ravisching of Majorie Cuike." The translation of the transcript of the Hamesucken reads:

James Chene in Pennan

The which day, James Cheyne being entered as indicted, accused, charged, pursued of the crimes specified hereafter, those are to say,

For contravening of the sovereign Lord's acts of parliament, in bearing and wearing harquebuses and flintlock pistols upon his person and in his company, openly, outside of the houses, in the months of September, October, November, December, January, February, and March, the year of God 1597, upon the lands of Pennan, Auchmedden, and diverse other bounds within the sheriffdom of Aberdeen: Likewise, For as much as he accompanied with diverse others, his accomplices, sorners, and broken men, all equipped in warlike array with



Harquebuses, and flintlock pistol, and other invasive weapons, contrary to the meaning of the acts of Parliament, late in the month of March, the year of God 1597, having constituted one deadly feud, rancor, and malice against Gilbert Baird of Auchmedden and Lillias Baird his spouse, came by way of Hamesucken, under silence and cloud of night, to the said Gilbert's dwelling-place of Auchmedden, where the said Lillias Baird was for the time, in sober and quiet manner, accompanied with her children and servants ( her husband being absent), and there climbed the courtyard wall of the said place, pulled out the iron bars of the kitchen windows, broke up some doors, and besieged the said Lillias and her servants for three hours or thereby; climbed up to the tops of their houses, cast stones at the chimney, and shot in harquebus and handguns at the doors and windows of the said place; shot the said Lillias through the clothes, she being late in pregnancy; for fear of the which she shortly thereafter parted with the said child, which was cruelly slain by the said James(Chene); and thus he committed Hamesucken, besieging of houses under silence and cloud of night, and he contravened the meaning of the said acts of parliament in bearing, equipping and shooting with Harquebus and flintlock pistols.

The charges dramatically lay out the scene where Lillias Baird, the daughter of Walter Baird of Ordinhivas, whom her husband and brother-in-law referred to as their Chief, and wife of Gilbert Baird of Auchmedden, rested at home in the castle estate. Her marriage to Gilbert, linked to ancient families of Baird. Gilbert's brother, Professor Andrew Baird, referred to Walter as "our Chief" and "our Father" showing the bonds of Clan-ship. Lillias, was the heir to her father.

Gilbert, her husband, away at the time, left her with her children and servants. In the dead of night, Cheyne and his band men climbed the outer walls and besieged the castle for three hours. Volley after volley of hand cannon fire, from an early weapon known as Harquebus, rocked the estate for three hours. The attacker climbed the roof, and clogged the chimneys, attempting

to drive the defenders out with smoke. Cheyne and his men tore out the iron bars guarding the kitchen attempting to enter. For three hours, they were refused entry by the stiff defense. The daughter of Walter Baird was no easy meat for the wolves. Doors splintered under the assault. We see no record of assassination, or punishment, but rather it appears Lillias was shot not while cowering or hiding, but in the heat of the battle. That Lillias received wounds, and was not killed, tells us that during this time, she must not have surrendered or covered in safety. She defended her home, despite being with child and over-run and led the defense of the castle.



Depiction of an arquebus fired from a fork rest. Image produced in 1876. (Public Domain)

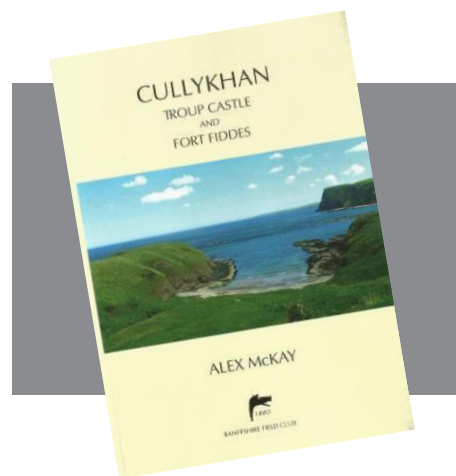
The Hamesucken contains more than a dramatic story, also of note is the description of the Castle. In this description, we see glimpse of life at the castle and can begin to uncover the architecture, positioning, and structure of the house. Further investigation into this attack also shows the Clan Structure as the Bairds were not simply a small family living on a small farm but rather a complex clan society, living on the edge

of the highlands and engaging in decades long feud with their neighbors.

*Next Time: An Analysis of the Castle*

Works Cited  
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Alex McKay launched his book about **'Cullykhan, Troup Castle and Fort Fiddes'** in the Fife Lodge Hotel in early June. The book is the story of Cullykhan, a windswept headland on the scenic coast of the Moray Firth, its ruined medieval castle, and Fort Fiddes, the last fortification built there.

The headland lies in the lands of Troup to the east of Troup Head, near the boundary between the historic counties of Banffshire and Aberdeenshire. To the east of the headland is a beautiful sheltered bay, also called Cullykhan.

The well illustrated book examines the history of the people who lived in the castle. It describes the landscape and recounts what is known from early maps and journals. New work on the place names in the immediate area is included. Including some Baird family members.

If you are interested in purchasing this book, please contact the author by the following email: [amcksing65@gmail.com](mailto:amcksing65@gmail.com)



## ST. DROSTAN'S KIRK PILGRIMAGE

Bob Watson and Rev. Woodside sent a poster showing we sponsored the St. Drostan's Walk on 16 September. Our crest and name appeared at the bottom of the page. *His saint's well, from 580 AD is on the beach at New Aberdour, part of the old Auchmedden Estate. The Kirk where many of the Baird's are buried is in sight of the well, and it is called St. Drostan's Kirk.*

If you have read much about Saint's wells, you know that they are considered to be places of miracles and praying there is powerful. St. Drostan came to Scotland in 580 and landed on the beach at New Aberdour; he was a missionary to the Picts. The travelers had been without fresh water on the ship for a long time, and the well opened up for them; has been there ever since, with fresh water for pilgrims and travelers. (It is currently in need of cleaning, but that is being worked on, with this walk and our sponsorship.)



### *Clan Baird Society is studying possibilities of establishing a Foundation for the continued care of Baird artifacts, places, and culture, as well as Scottish culture and heritage.*

It has become abundantly clear that our family artifacts continue to be lost, such as the articles in the newspaper clipping below, where this summer, Sir David Baird's pistols were sold at auction. It would have been more advantageous to the Clan, and to those who were selling, if we could have purchased these and kept them safe for the larger family. Preservation of sites of important events of the Baird's need care also. The Baird burial aisle at St. Drostan's Kirk, New Aberdour, has no roof, and the monuments are slowly becoming unreadable. We need to work with the Aberdeenshire Council to install roofing that will both protect the graves and be acceptable to their guidelines for restoration.

It is with these objectives that we propose setting up a trust or foundation in each country where we are active. This may take some time, but setting up entities in the U.S.A. and Scotland are our main aims for the next couple years. We welcome any comments the membership may have about their vision for this foundation, or any pro or con comments about the idea. This foundation would allow us to accept tax deductible donations, but would also require very careful accounting of every dollar donated and given as grants to particular projects.

The Board of Directors spent the last year investigating how to accomplish a means of preserving our heritage and encouraging care of our Scottish culture, which has resulted in the idea

of the Foundation. During our biennial meetings in Aboyne, Scotland and in the U.S. at Grandfather Mountain, the idea was discussed, and the Board was given the go-ahead to continue the quest for the best means of setting up the preservation of our Baird world. We look forward to hearing from the membership as a whole. Please send your comments to our President, [djbaird4@gmail.com](mailto:djbaird4@gmail.com).

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16 July 16, 2017



■ Sir Baird.

### Historic guns sold for £32k

A PAIR of rare double-barrelled pistols made for an 18th century Scottish military hero has fetched £32,000 at auction in Edinburgh.

The silver mounted firearms, made in London around 1790, belonged to Edinburgh-born Major General Sir David Baird.

The Scot is famous as the British general who led the attack on the Indian Tipu Sultan at the Assault of Seringapatam in 1799.

Baird, who had spent nearly four years in Tipu's dungeons, famously issued his troops with a "cheering dram" of whisky and a biscuit before he drew his sword to signal the attack.

His pistols, which feature the crest of a Scottish boar's head, were sold at Lyon & Turnbull for £31,875.



## Sgoil Ghàidhlig

Gaelic School  
pronounced (skoal gallic)

~ by Bethany Scott ~

### Months of the Year

Miosan na bliadhna  
(nah mee-sun nah blee-a-nah)

JANUARY: Am Faoilleach (ahm fool-yahk)

FEBRUARY: An Gearran (ahn gehran)

MARCH: Am Màrt (ahm marsht)

APRIL: An Giblean (ahn gipleen)

MAY: An Cèitean (ahn kaychen)

JUNE: An t-Ògmhios (ahn tohk-veeus)

JULY: An t-Iuchar (ahn chookar)

AUGUST: An Lùnastal (ahn loonastal)

SEPTEMBER: An t-Sultain (ahn tooltain)

OCTOBER: An Dàmhair (ahn dah-vair)

NOVEMBER: An t-Samhain (ahn tah-veen)

DECEMBER: An Dùbhlachd (ahn doo-lochk)

### Seasons of the Year:

Raidhean nah bliadhna  
(Ray-thun nah blee-a-nah)

WINTER - An Gearrachd (ahn gowrohk)

SPRING - An t-Earrach (ahn cherahk)

SUMMER - An Samhradh (ahn sowrohk)

AUTUMN - Am Foghar (ahn foa-er)

The ancient Gaelic year began in November following the festival of Samhain (sah-win). Samhain marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the winter, and has over time evolved into what current Americans celebrate as Halloween.

### Scotland Trip continued from page 1

forty years. Lunch was delicious, fresh fish and chips, while looking out on the harbor. As part of the tour we saw the Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum, which displays many tools and household items used more than 100 years before. It would be hard for Richard to top the morning's tour, but indeed he did. Mr. Jim Bruce, a farmer businessman just outside Stonehaven, owns several very large barns, in which he stores antique farm and home equipment of every kind. In fact, we learned that most of the items in the Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum are on loan from his collection. He was kind enough to show us around, each piece carefully catalogued as it is brought in, and repaired/restored if needed, keeping the original parts.

Samhain is a liminal time, which means that spirits of the dead and fairies can easily cross between their world and ours. Many Halloween traditions have their origins in appeasing the spirits of the dead and the fairies so that the people and their livestock would survive the coming winter. A Scottish community would hold a large feast and set places at the table for their dead kin. Mumming was a part of the celebration, where people would go door-to-door in disguises reciting verses in exchange for food. Scholars debate whether the disguises were meant to imitate the fairies or disguise the wearer from the fairies that might harm them.

In the 9th Century, Christians established All Saints' Day to assimilate and convert the ancient Gaelic festival into the Catholic Church.

What Mr. Bruce has is a very large museum of tools we used last century and before. The tractors and implements are most impressive, especially the larger tractors and horse drawn implements.

We appreciated the kind hospitality given by Richard and his family, and we all enjoyed our general meeting next day in Aboyne, when Lady Diana graciously invited us to her home, showing us many Baird artifacts and historical documents. As we left, she gave us each a copy of Lady Mary Kintore's second book of poetry, *Over the Horizon*. Lady Mary was the wife of Diana's brother, Lord Michael Keith, Earl of Kintore, and chief of Clan Keith until his death. His son, Jamie, is now Earl and Chief. As many of you know, Michael's and Lady Diana's father changed his name from Baird to his mother's Keith in order to become the Earl, but always held onto his Baird heritage with great pride.



### Clan Baird Society Worldwide Financial Statement

Second Quarter - 2017  
April 1 to June 30, 2017

Income:	
Dues Received	360.00
Misc Income	
Donations - from President	924.56
Quartermaster Sales	

Total Quarterly Income:	1,284.56
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Expense:	
Advertising	195.00
President-Membership	648.56
Vice President	
Annual Report Fee	20.00
Secretary	
Genealogy	
Gryphon	507.76
Games	486.00
Awards, Trophies & Donations	
Miscellaneous - PayPal fees	

Total Quarterly Expense:	1,860.84
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Net Income or (Loss) for Quarter:	(576.28)
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Cash in Bank - Last Quarter:	6,720.80
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Cash in Bank/Available Funds:	6,144.52
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Submitted by:  
Robert G. Beard, Treasurer for Clan Baird Society Worldwide





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### Newsletter Deadlines

**Autumn 2017 Issue**  
deadline is October 15th

**Winter 2018 Issue**  
deadline December 15th

**Spring 2018 Issue**  
deadline March 15th

Please submit newsletter articles to:

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or mail to:

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Northfield, VT 05663

Electronic file formats accepted are  
Microsoft Word documents  
Adobe Acrobat. Any photo images,  
JPG, TIFF, GIF

*Any questions about The Gryphon  
submissions please feel  
free to call Heather  
at 802-485-5541*



### Where you can find us

## Finding Your Family Roots

We have other of Clan Baird Society  
who are very knowledgeable in the  
history of Baird. Please email  
[info@clanbairdsociety.com](mailto:info@clanbairdsociety.com)  
for more information.

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**Check out our website!**  
[clanbairdsociety.com](http://clanbairdsociety.com)

