



# FRASER



THE CLAN FRASER  
SOCIETY OF  
SCOTLAND AND  
THE UNITED KINGDOM

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 54

NOVEMBER/XMAS 2017



## WORCESTER SAUCE

As you know, for the first time in a few years we have a new official on the committee, in a completely new position, Donald Fraser-Clark took on the role of Events & Social Secretary, after his outstanding success organising the dinner before the Edinburgh Tattoo, Michael and I were delighted he agreed to make the position permanent and now another event has already been launched. The Battle of Worcester Event will take



place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2018 with a CFSSUK dinner in the evening, the Battle of Worcester took place in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, or English Civil Wars as they're more commonly known and this battle has incredible relevance to Clan Fraser, full details are in Donald's article as well as the dinner in Edinburgh, the Tattoo was superb and I never thought I'd ever be taking part in the Military Tattoo itself, quite an experience and

someone else who has had a great experience this year is Jonathan Kersting and his wife, who attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and read about all this and more, including the Finnish Frasers and our presence at Braemar, in this Newsletter, I hope you enjoy it.

## CFSSUK VISIT & DINNER

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1651 the 16,000 strong, mainly Scottish, army of Charles II of Scotland (later Charles II of England) fought Cromwell's Parliamentary army in the last battle of the Civil War at Worcester. We know that many Frasers, including 800 men under Alexander Fraser, Lord Philorth and men under another Alexander Fraser, Master of Lovat, took part in the battle. We have been working with the Battle of Worcester Society and have devised a visit to include a study of the battle grounds on which the Frasers fought together with an audio-visual presentation of the Battle to be followed by a Clan Fraser Dinner in the Great Hall of the Commandery, the Royalist command centre during the battle.



This event will take place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2018, starting at 1.00 pm by meeting at The Commandery for coffee.

1.30 -- 2.30 pm we will start a guided tour of the Commandery.

3.00 – 3.30 pm visit Fort Royal Park where an estimated 1,500 Scottish soldiers were killed defending the Fort.



4.00 pm back to the Commandery for a Battle of Worcester presentation highlighting where the Frasers fought.

5.00 pm Visit to Worcester Cathedral where 10,000 Scots were imprisoned after the battle and where King Charles watched the battle from the tower.

7.00 pm Clan Fraser Dinner at the Commandery.

The cost of the whole event including the guided tours of the Commandery, Fort Royal Park, Worcester Cathedral, the Battle of Worcester audio/visual presentation and the 3 course Clan Fraser Dinner is £38 per head. With this event we hope to not only have a first class Clan Fraser Dinner but also a day which will entertain and inform clansmen of our ancestor's deeds in the past. If you are interested in taking part in this event please let me know by email on [annfraserclark@supanet.com](mailto:annfraserclark@supanet.com) as soon as you can but by end of January

2018 if at all possible. Donald Fraser-Clark, Events and Social Secretary

### EVENTS & SOCIAL SECRETARY

Since we took over, Michael and I had been conscious that not enough was being done on the social side of the Society, partially a problem with time and resources for both of us but also, we had no great expertise in that area. When Donald and his long suffering wife, Ann, so capably organised the dinner at Airth Castle, when we were at the Bannockburn anniversary, we realised we had a potential solution to the problem. Never running at full speed it never the less took us till last year in Edinburgh to ask Donald if he'd like to take up the newly created position and thankfully, he agreed, so now we feel we're running properly with three of us and this also has the added advantage of back up and more brain power to solve the problems that from time to time occur. So welcome to the team Donald and Ann and thanks for all your efforts at Edinburgh. *Photo, Donald's a fellow caravan and Bill Fraser and his wife Diane joined us at the Edinburgh site. Editor*



It was a great day at Edinburgh and thanks to all who turned up, especially the contingent who travelled specially to support us from Castle Fraser. Also, there was a member, Don Fraser, from our cousin North American Society, there with his wife Sandy, many of the photos are his and many thanks for him allowing us to use them. We did collate all our photos including some from Clan Gunn on the net, so take a look at <https://goo.gl/photos/L5hPDeC2uUDEUqmv8>

Top left, enjoying dinner, out on the Royal Mile in full regalia & Don USA, walking through arena, Kate with Clan Gunn, Keeper of the Castle & Tattoo Director. In the Great Hall, the long walk back, our escort The Jacobites applaud us. The arena, we wait for the toast and Kate's there with Clan Gunn.



## SUSAN BOAG CFSSUK FOUNDER

It's sad I have to report the passing away of Susan Boag (née Fraser) on, 22 September 2017, at Dr Grays Hospital, Elgin, she had put up a brave struggle in fighting Motor Neurone Disease. Susan founded this society way back in 1995 and because of her fight and determination, we still survive to this day.



*Graeme Fraser Editor*

---

---

## EDINBURGH TATTOO DINNER AND EVENT

THIS year's world famous Royal Military Edinburgh Tattoo promised to be a most special occasion for Clan Fraser, and indeed many other clans who were represented throughout the month long event. The organisers of the Royal Military Edinburgh Tattoo, worked with the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs to align this year's theme of the Tattoo, 'A Splash of Tartan', showcasing Scottish clan's rich and abundant history. Nearly 60 clans were taking part in the initiative and the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, which was the first Saturday of the Tattoo was the turn of our own Clan Fraser, standing side by side with Clan Gunn.

With the show starting in the early evening a merry band of Frasers from far and wide met for a late lunch in Edinburgh Old Town in a restaurant whose name was in keeping with the Tattoo's theme, Angels with Bagpipes.



These gatherings are always very special affairs as they present the opportunity for old friends to see each other once again and new friends to meet with a common thread, no matter how different their background. This day was no different. A large thank you has to go to all those who came and especially to Donald and Ann Fraser-Clark for organising the meal.

Once all were fed and watered, there was a short walk up the Royal Mile to the foot of Edinburgh Castle. Here our group was led up to the Castle for some instructions prior to marching in procession behind a pipe band onto the Esplanade for the official opening of the evening's show. This was signalled by a ceremonial toast received by Kate Nicolson, representing Lady Saltoun, and her counterpart Iain Alexander Gunn of Gunn, Chief of Clan Gunn. With the whisky inhaled and the show starting our cohort of Frasers made their way into their seats for the start of the Tattoo.

There were many highlights of the 90 minute show including a tasteful reimagining of the Ambush in the Glen during the Jacobite Rising, a vibrant display from the Indian Naval Band who were accompanied by some highly impressive dancers whose synchronised dance moves included a veritable cornucopia of colourful flags, a comedic but charming display from the American Navy

and a crowd pleasing turn from the French Army band complete with a Daft Punk melody (for those whom this does not mean anything, a short trip to YouTube may be interesting!).



*Xander left, on Royal Mile*

There was also a very special performance to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RAF which transformed part of the Castle promenade into an aircraft carrier. This preceded the closing act which always tugs to one's patriotic heartstrings. A mass pipe band is always a spectacular sight and this was no different. 250 plus pipers playing in unison with a multinational crowd all watching in equal enthralment.

After the show we filed out we were invited for supper by a friend of the Clan, Flanagan, who gamely agreed to host us to close out a wonderful day. Thanks to Graeme for organising and all who attended and made it such a special day. Till next time!

Alexander (Xander) Fraser

## EDINBURGH MILITARY TATTOO 2017

It was a great honour to have the opportunity to show a little of my personal sense of pride at being a member of such a famous clan as Clan Fraser by being part of The Hon Kate Nicolson's retinue as she took the salute at the Tattoo on behalf of her mother, Lady Saltoun, and the clan. For my own part, the weekend did not get off to a particularly auspicious beginning for, on arrival at Edinburgh airport, I tripped on someone's luggage and fell with quite a heavy crash into a steel pole holding up a canopy leading into the terminal. Although I didn't feel anything too serious had happened, staff felt I should wait to be looked over by a paramedic. However, as the fall occurred airside, I was informed that none of the terminal paramedics could come, so I had to wait back in the plane until the fire engine arrived. Anyway, I was considered OK to leave, until the flipside adventure of trying to find my hotel in the rain and dark once I had got off the airport bus.

The afternoon and evening of the tattoo was, indeed, memorable. After the splendid dinner so ably organised by Donald at the Angel with Bagpipes (see the separate report), fully refreshed and ready for what was to come we battled our way through the crowds on the Royal Mile up to the Castle, along with the contingent from Castle Fraser who came to support us. There was a while when we had to wait outside the arena for things to be got ready for us, and this gave us an early glimpse into the precision with which the whole event had been organised



*Mike & Bill*



as we watched a seemingly endless procession of identical coaches bringing the performers to the castle.



*Sandy & Don from CFSNA*

Then we were invited to make our way up through the Castle to the Great Hall where we met the members of Clan Gunn who were sharing the salute honour with us, and were greeted by Kate and her family, and a

brigadier. There was a brief opportunity to admire our very impressive surroundings with all the weaponry displayed on the walls until we were summoned to make our way down again to a parade ground where we were passed over into the hands of the Garrison Sergeant-Major. I have to confess I did feel a twinge of sympathy for the lovely man who must spend most of his working days organising troops of well-drilled and knowledgeable soldiers. And here he was being required to try in 15 minutes to ensure that this somewhat motley group, including several of us who are advancing in years, formed into two columns that had, at least, a rough resemblance to an organised parade. Another confession – I don't think I was quite alone in trying to work out exactly how far a metre was as we were being instructed to ensure that, when we arrived in the arena, we stood in a straight line a metre to the right of the red carpet. (When we got there, there wasn't a red carpet!) We were also instructed that, just before our eruption into the arena we were to give, at a signal, a bloodthirsty roar. We were very good and did more or less as we were told, except for those desperate to capture photos of this momentous occasion and who were jumping in and out of the line (don't take "jumping too literally!") The roar happened, but I am not sure it had much effect on those entering the arena looking for their seats.

The salute took place as planned very efficiently as both the clans and their chiefs were introduced to the crowd and the military protocols were followed and then we climbed to our seats to watch the show. As always, it was an incredibly skilfully arranged performance with many memorable moments. These included the massed pipes and drums which is always an experience to raise the hairs on the back of the neck, performances by soldiers from Japan and India, a mock battle and much extremely precise patterned marching and first class musicianship. The precision of the marching was so exact that I am convinced that if every performer had had a series of personal marks painted on the ground, they would have landed exactly on them each time at the identical beat of the music.

If I had a criticism it was only a minor one – it just seemed a pity that we were appearing at the early evening show as I think the effect of the fireworks and the lighting would have been that much greater after dusk.

I went with some apprehension as this is not the sort of event that I would probably have paid to watch otherwise, but, as I say, to be able to express my pride in my name and all that it stands for over the years was important, so

a weekend that started off, potentially catastrophically, ended on a very high note, and one I shall long remember. Michael Fraser, Secretary

### CLAN FRASER TATTOO DINNER

As we had been invited to take part in the Fraser Clan March-In at the start of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo it was decided that we ought to have a Clan Dinner to fortify us for the coming evening. We were lucky in finding a fine restaurant, just down from the Castle Esplanade, on the Royal Mile, called the Angels with Bagpipes. It takes its name from the fact that in St Giles Cathedral, just across from the restaurant, there is an ancient statue of an angel playing the pipes.

Twenty two of us gathered at 3.30 pm to start a splendid three course meal with a little drink (we had a long night ahead) and much good conversation. We were pleased that Lady Saltoun's daughter, Kate and her husband, Mark, could join us together with their son, Xander. We were also pleased to see Dick Fraser and his family from Finland, Don and Sandy Fraser from America, also four lovely ladies from Castle Fraser and our new member (on the day) Cameron Fraser and his wife Lynn. We also had the usual suspects of Michael, Graeme, Bill and myself with our wives.



We managed to finish by 5.45 pm just in time to be ushered through the phenomenal crowds to the entrance of the Castle Esplanade from where we were escorted to the Great Hall. We were welcomed there by the Governor of the Castle and the Director for the Tattoo who then passed us over to the Garrison Sergeant Major who knocked us into shape for our march in the Tattoo. After Kate had "supped whisky" with the Salute Taker and the "Lone Piper" we all took our seats to have a wonderful evening watching an inspired display.

Finely we all went along to a party given by Kate at a friend's house in Murrayfield where we had more drinks, fine food and good company to end a perfect day. Donald Fraser-Clark

---

### THE ROYAL GARDEN PARTY Jonathan Kersting

In January 2017, I received a telephone call from The Lord Lieutenants Office in Carmarthen, asking if I would like to attend The Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on either of the following dates 16<sup>th</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> May or 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017. Naturally I inquired, how this had come about, and was informed I had been nominated because of the New Llanelli Memorial. As three of us were involved in bringing the memorial to fruition, I asked if Lt Col David Mathias D.L. or Ian Kirkpatrick were going, and was told it was highly likely the Col had already been, and they were not sure about Ian Kirkpatrick. As David Mathias is a D.L. I phoned him to say that whilst I had undertaken a vast amount of work towards the New Memorial Ian had done far more, therefore I felt I should step aside and

allow Ian and Angela to go instead, particularly as Jamie their Son had been killed in Afghanistan. David said I would think your invite is not only because of the New Memorial but also because of the other things you have done, so you should go. I had a worrying evening, but when I phoned the Lord Lieutenants Office in the morning and graciously accepted for the 23<sup>rd</sup> May, I was told Ian and Angela were going.



Jean immediately booked our train tickets, and by doing so we travelled for £38 each return, which is a vast saving, and I booked us into the Victory Services Club at Marble Arch, London, where I have been a member since the 1970's. That evening Christian joined us for Dinner and insisted he was paying. Which was very nice.

In the morning we went our own way, but agreed to get ready about 1.15 p.m, with the

intention of leaving the club at 2 p.m. Altogether four other couples were obviously going to the same place as we were, and we shared a taxi with a lovely elderly Irish Lady and her son.

The arrival. There are three entrances for the Garden Party, The Grand Entrance through the Front Gates which means you cross the Quadrangle, then walk through two ground floor rooms to enter the garden. A long red carpet covers the two floors and I believe it is known as the Duke of Edinburgh Way. Alternatively, you can enter by the Hyde Park Corner Gate or Grosvenor Place Gate. I can state here, this was an easy decision for Jean and I. It could only be by the Grand Entrance. On stepping into the garden, we were greeted by a mass of colour from three quarters, the sun, the flowers, the ladies' dresses and the military uniforms. Jean kept saying "what is he in?" and fortunately I was able to answer. The lawn was like velvet, and there were no visible weeds or litter. There were several marquees, two military bands who played alternatively during the afternoon, and a grand gathering of people. I was amazed by the size of gardens, apparently, they are large enough to take 20 Football pitches. Everything was just perfect, the weather, the food, the drink, the staff and we consider ourselves very fortunate in being nominated.



Just before we left, I noticed a young Lt Col in a maroon beret with a chest brim full of medal ribbons, so I approached him and said "you must feel very proud to be a Lt Col with a maroon beret and so many medal ribbons

at your age" to which he replied "I think it is my Mother who is proud" He went on to say he was in the Royal

Engineers, had done P company for his beret, and was the ex C.O of The Royal Engineers 101 Bomb Disposal Unit. This was unbelievable, for he knew Ian and Angela Kirkpatrick, and had been Jamie's C.O, and had earlier that afternoon introduced Ian Kirkpatrick to the Duke of Edinburgh.

**Garden Party Timetable for the afternoon.** The following timings are approximate. 3.00 p.m Gates Open. Two military bands will play music alternately throughout the afternoon. 3.30 p.m Tea is served in the Main Tea Tent until 5.00 p.m. 3.40 p.m. Yeomen of the Guard hold ground. 4.00 pm. The National Anthem announces the arrival of The Queen and Members of the Royal Family. A small number of individual presentations will be pre-arranged with those who are to be presented in the Garden near the Terrace Steps. Gentlemen at Arms will then form lanes for The Queen and Members of the Royal Family to move through the guests. 4.15 p.m. Tea is served in the Diplomatic Tea Tent. 4.30 p.m. Tea is served in the Royal Tea Tent. 5.10 p.m The Queen and Members of the Royal Family take tea in the Royal Tea Tent. 5.40 p.m. The Queen and Members of the Royal Family depart. 6.00 p.m. The National Anthem.

---

#### DICK OLIVER Albert Medal

In very early editions of the Newsletter I featured our brave clansmen who won the Victoria Cross and now I'm turning my attention to the George Cross, which was instituted on 24 September 1940 by King George VI. I've found five so far, who have won the George Cross through their bravery and here's the fourth one I've turned my attention to. In 1971, the living recipients of either the Albert Medal or Edward Medal were invited to exchange their medals for the George Cross, 24 recipients elected not to exchange their medal, Dick Oliver was one of them. He was born 6<sup>th</sup> June 1901 in Christchurch, Dorset and died on fifth February 1986 in Bournemouth. He joined the Royal Navy in January 1916, and would serve for nearly 30 years, retiring as a Chief Petty Officer in 1946.



Date and place of George Cross action: 23/05/1928 Malta. He was 27 years old and serving in the Royal Navy. During an examination of the bilge compartments on the port side of HMS Warspite the cover from the lower compartment was removed; it was found that the air was foul and poisonous. The chief stoker attempted to enter the compartment, although he was aware of the danger. He was overcome immediately and fell unconscious to the bottom of the compartment. Reginald Armytage GC fetched his gas mask and, with a lifeline around him, entered the compartment, but when he reached the bottom the gas overcame him. He was hauled back out. He had stopped breathing and was taken to the Royal Naval Hospital. Dick Oliver then volunteered to try a rescue, despite seeing what had just happened. He managed to get into the compartment and reached the chief stoker; he passed a lifeline around him and got him hauled up. He managed to then get himself out. He took part in both World Wars. He did decline to swap his Albert Medal for a GC.

He managed to get into the compartment and reached the chief stoker; he passed a lifeline around him and got him hauled up. He managed to then get himself out. He took part in both World Wars. He did decline to swap his Albert Medal for a GC.

## FAMILY CONNECTION

Ashley Fraser, New Member

As you can see, I am a Fraser. This is from my father's side of the family. My father and his father, both named Paul, grew up in South Boston, Massachusetts....an area that is, to this day, historically known for being inhabited by the Scottish and Irish. I have an aunt on my father's side of the family who did some extensive heirship research about our family, tracing us all the way back to Scotland. She has quite a lot of information and a very well-organized family tree created. However, she has fallen ill and I am trying to figure out how to track down her research, as I would love to look into it in further detail. From stories I have been told from numerous family members, it sounds like my family has a connection with the Clan Fraser of Lovat. I certainly hope that is true, as I have had "Je Suis Prest", the Lovat motto, tattooed on my back....and that is rather permanent!

I am 29 years old, having just had a birthday on July 2nd. I currently reside in Texas. I moved here about 3 years ago for my job. I work in the oil and gas industry, and Texas is quite the place to be for my work. My job is a lot of research. I spend my days at the courthouses all over Texas and New Mexico (previously, Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania). Essentially, my goal is to figure out who owns a specific piece of land and if they own any of the oil and gas rights beneath the surface. Sometimes numerous people own the rights, sometimes only one. But, it is quite interesting research, as I get to look at Wills and Probate Records and the like. My job requires quite a bit of heirship research and ancestry-type work. I've become so busy with work that I haven't even started on my own family research! But....it is on my to-do list!

Aside from work, I spend a lot of time traveling around Texas with my boyfriend and our dogs. We enjoy hiking and going to concerts, going over to Mexico for short day-trips (we live close to the border), and visiting my father's side of the family in Boston for a couple weeks out of the year. I also enjoy going on cruises and vacationing anywhere warm and tropical! My grandparents took a trip to Scotland several years ago and had an amazing time. I will be making a trip sometime as well; visiting Scotland is at the top of my bucket list! And I so badly would like to visit Castle Fraser!

Other interests include....anything funny! I love laughing so much and good company and laughter go so well together. And wine! I can't forget about the wine. I've spent the last couple years learning about and trying new wines. It has become quite a hobby of mine and I plan on continuing my "education" in the wine department. Learning and sipping wine, what more could a girl ask for? :)

---

---

## CONTACTS

Website <http://www.fraserclan.net/>

**TREASURER Michael Fraser, Church Farm Cottage, Osborne, Dorset, DT9 4JY. EDITOR G. B. Fraser, 2 Hoe Hill View, Tollerton, Notts, NG12 4GE. EVENTS Donald Fraser-Clark, 15 Gills Croft, Clitheroe, Lancs, BB7 1LJ**

## THE FRASERS IN FINLAND

The Thirty Year's War (1618 to 1648) a truly "international", destructive war, fought in Central Europe and one of the deadliest European religious wars in history. Swedish army under king Gustavus II Adolphus (fallen in the battle of Lüzern, 1632), was heavily involved from 1630 to 1648. This also marked the beginning of the Swedish Empire that stretched around



the Baltic Sea from Sweden to parts of Northern Germany and Poland, the Baltic states, part of Russia, and Finland, and fell apart in two major stages; the Great Northern War against Russia which ended in 1721, and the war between Sweden and

Russia (supported by Napoleon) that ended 1809.

**The Swedish Empire 1648-1721** (Wikipedia picture)



Many Scots participated in the conflict as very important diplomats (e.g. James Spens, John Henderson, Hugh Mowatt), others joined the European armies as mercenaries.

The list of Scotsmen, occupying prominent positions in the Swedish army, is long: Archibald Douglas, Alexander Forbes (also known as "Finn Forbes", a neighbour to Frasers!), Alexander Hamilton (also known as 'Dear Sandy'), and many more. But not only generals and diplomats, but also other young men sought their fortunes in the fighting armies, seeing that as a chance to make some money or even a fortune, which they had no hope to gain, being last on the list of inheritors.

Thomas Fraser, born in the 1580's as the fifth son of Alexander Fraser, 8<sup>th</sup> of Philorth, also went to Sweden. Thomas served as a page to James Spens,



"General British and "General of *Edinbureh. Dick & Mareareta with Kate* Scots" and Ambassador (to Sweden during several decades), an important figure in recruiting Scottish soldiers for the Thirty Years' War. Thomas rose to second lieutenant in Spens's regiment in the Swedish army, and that is about all that we know about him.

His son, Anders, (1616- 1686), also joined the army, was naturalized in Sweden-Finland, achieved the rank of Major, and settled in Kilpoila, Parish of Tiurala, in Eastern Finland (Carelia). In 1656 he excelled when the Russian army besieged Riga, which was under Swedish reign, and in 1658 he was severely wounded, brought as

dead into the Polish Cobrons fortification, after which he opened the gates for the Swedish soldiers. As a recognition of these acts of bravery he was knighted in 1663, and in 1664 the family of Fraser was introduced in the Swedish House of Nobility as no 725. During the next generations the Frasers rooted themselves in Finland, which was then the Eastern part of the Kingdom of Sweden.

Since the “beginning of history” Finland was the battleground between the West, represented by the Catholic, later Lutheran, Sweden) and East (Greek Orthodox Russia). The border between the countries shifted over the centuries several hundreds of miles, from West to East, and back again.

In the war between Sweden and Russia in 1808-1809, all of Finland as well as a good part of northern Sweden, was conquered by the Russians and in the subsequent peace treaty Sweden conceded Finland, the Eastern half of its territory to the Russia Empire. Finland became a Grand Duchy, an autonomous part of the Russia Empire. The present 1200 km border between Finland and Russia represents a fairly accurate average of where the border mainly has been drawn since the 11<sup>th</sup> century. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1917, in the aftermath of the Russian revolution and in the final year of the First World War Finland declared its independence. As a consequence of losing Finland, the Finnish Noble families Swedish House of Nobility were “homeless” for almost a decade, but in 1818 the process of registering male members, permanently living in Finland started. Since 1820 the Frasers were introduced under no 59 in the Finnish House of Nobility. As with many other legal rules and laws, the Finnish House has followed the rules from the Swedish era. Thus, the family name and seat go from father to son, and this has “hanged on a thread” as we say here, because there has only been one son to carry on the name. There are no Frasers of the branch in Sweden.

Through the generations, ever since Thomas in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the male Frasers in Finland sought military service, a proud traditional career for Frasers all over the world. There was a priest among the eight heads of family, but he, too, joined the army, as a military chaplain during ten years of his career. My grandfather Bernhard Olof Georg, was the



first truly civilian head of family, and so was my father, Georg Ole, as are I, Georg Richard (Dick) and my son, Georg Alexander - all non-military civilians.

The Frasers in Finland today are myself and my wife, Margareta. We have two daughters, Tania and Maria, and one son, Alec. Our three grandsons, Mathias Alfons, Andreas William and Elias Alexander are Maria’s sons. Tania and Alec both live in England, Maria lives in Finland with her family. There are also three ladies Fraser in Finland; they are daughters of my father’s cousin, but they have no children. I’d love to hear what you think of this historic tale. Dick Fraser

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: CAMERON FRASER, ASHLEY LOUISE FRASER, VERNE KENNETH GREENLEE, THERESE JONES, HUGH IVO FRAZER.**

**COL. H.H. MATHIAS C.B.**

It is quite amazing how a casual remark can lead to an interesting story. Let me explain, I recently held a party in my house to celebrate the unveiling of the New Llanelli Memorial, and Lt Col David Mathias Retd, but now a D.L. mentioned his Great-Great Uncle was in the Gordon Highlanders, once I heard this I thought of Duncan McDonald a collector of Scottish Military items, and knowledgeable, particularly about the Gordon Highlanders history through his family connections. I mentioned the name Mathias to Duncan, and he said yes, I’ve read about him, and the following day phoned me with the following information.

In 1897 Col H.H.Mathias C.B. was the C.O of the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders and established his



reputation in Dargai, Afghanistan. The Gordon Highlanders column moved through the Kohat pass to the lower slopes of the Samana range of mountains, and it was here that a bloody exchange took place with the Afridi and Orakzi tribes. At this time the enemy held the hilltop position, were well dug in and were returning accurate

fire. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Gurkhas led the first assault, across open ground followed by the Dorsetshire Regiment, but both were pinned down and were unable to advance. The Gordon Highlanders were then called upon led by Lt Col Mathias, who announced “Men we will take this hill. Forward” and off he went leading from the front, with his piper George Findlater who was shot through both ankles whilst playing, The Cock O’ the North. Straight away they found themselves moving steadily upwards, to shouts, cheers, and shortness of breath. When Mathias reached the summit the tribesmen had fled, and he stopped to catch his breath. “Stiff climb, eh Mackie” he said to a sergeant, “Not quite as young as I was you know” “Never mind sir” said the sergeant “ye’re ga’un vera strong for an auld man” Yeatman-Briggs the Commander of the force recommended Mathias for a V.C. but the War Office had made a rule that Commanding Officers and General Officers should not be recipients of this award.

Lt Col H.H.Mathias C.B. became a Brevet Colonel in 1899 to Queen Victoria, and was her Aide-de-Camp. I believe he would have drawn full pay as a Lt Col, and half pay as a Brevet Colonel. Unfortunately, he died at 66 years of age. in Portslade, Sussex.

Jonathan Kersting.

*Many thanks to the Gordon Highlanders Museum, a Museum well worth a visit, for use of the image. Ed*

## CLAN FRASER AT THE BRAEMAR GAMES

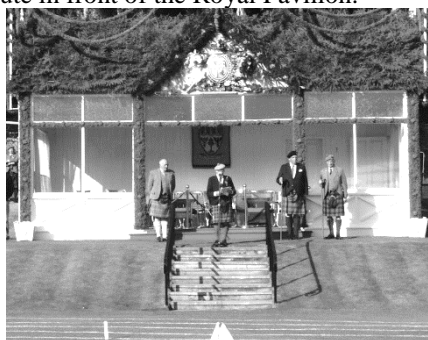
This year Clan Fraser was invited, via Kate, Lady Saltoun's daughter, to be one of the six clans represented in the International Tent at the Braemar Royal Highland Gathering.



Ann and I drove up to meet Kate on Friday teatime to set up the Clan Fraser Society table within the International Tent and the following bright and sunny morning we met her husband and son, Mark and Xander to join them in the official march-in and opening of

the Games. We were led in by Ballater & District Pipe Band and Mark, as one of the Gathering's Patrons, joined in taking the salute in front of the Royal Pavilion.

Ann and I then went to man our Clan Fraser table and had a very successful day, meeting and greeting Frasers and other clan members



*Mark (second from right) taking salute*

from all over the world and also getting two new American members for our Society. Although in the Royal Pavilion Mark and Xander dropped in more than once to see how things were going on and give encouragement. Any visiting Fraser was offered a dram of Fraser Whisky and I, as a Rotarian, had a couple with the Rotary Club of Banchort-Ternan which, just by chance, was the next table to ourselves. Jim Wood, the Gathering Secretary, was very helpful and friendly and everyone had a good time. The aim was to promote Clan Fraser and our Society and this proved a great success.

Donald Fraser-Clark, Events Secy

### HOMECOMING FOR HISTORIC MAP

An incredible map dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century has returned home to the Aberdeenshire estate where it was discovered in the 1980s. The 'chimney map' is now known to be one of only 3 created by Dutch engraver Gerald Valk. It was found in Drumnahoy House, which was, at that time, part of the Castle Fraser Estate.

How the map came to Aberdeenshire is unclear. One theory is that it was owned by Andrew Fraser, the 4<sup>th</sup> Laird who was known to have Jacobite sympathies. The map shows William and Mary, so would have been controversial at the time, and may have been hidden away. The rare piece was in very poor condition and was thought to have been stuffed in a chimney for many years. It was eventually taken to the National Library of Scotland where it underwent intricate conservation work. It is a privilege to have the map on loan and on display in our Exhibition Room at Castle Fraser.

## NEWS FROM CASTLE FRASER

**Archaeological event "Dig the Past"** Archaeologists from NTS organised this free event on the lawn in front of the Castle to introduce archaeology to the public. Over 250 adults and children enthusiastically took part over the 2 days and the highlight of the weekend was the discovery of a Tudor period (circa 1570) half a silver coin.

**The Holly Tree** Hopefully everyone took part in voting for the Woodland's Trust competition to find Scotland's oldest tree. We put forward our Holly Tree on the East Lawn which to our delight won a nomination and the result will be announced at Holyrood Palace on 6<sup>th</sup> of December – watch out for the result on the Castle Fraser website.

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Castle opening to visitors** We celebrated this occasion by organising a unique "Strip the Willow" record-breaking attempt. Although over 600 people took part, we did not achieve the largest "Strip the Willow" but have applied to set the record for the "longest". This line stretched from the Castle all the way



down to the bottom of our event field. It was a very successful, happy occasion

with people asking us to try again next year – which we will, of course!

**The Voices of Castle Fraser** Our newly formed Choir held a concert in the Great Hall in October and were proudly clad in Fraser tartan sashes and ties, courtesy of The Lauchentilly Trust. Their next concert to be held on Friday 8 December will be "Mistletoe and Wine" with carol singing and readings, and mulled wine.

**Conservation issues** We are hoping that work will shortly begin to light up the magnificent Waterford Crystal chandelier in the Dining Room which will enhance the dining experience.

Work will also commence shortly to repair the holes in the chimney in the Great Hall; a hole in the exterior wall on the west side of the Castle and damp proofing in the Michael Tower.

One of our volunteers, Jean Jolly, is kindly undertaking work cataloguing and listing the Castle Fraser archive.

**The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA** We were delighted to host visitors from the Foundation for a tour of Castle Fraser, hosted by our General Manager for Aberdeenshire & Angus, Ian Hawkins. They were interested in conservation issues and we were happy to discuss this topic as we do, of course, have several conservation projects underway.

**The Stables at Castle Fraser** This has been the area office for the NTS for the past 40 years, but administration has now transferred to Crathes Castle. It is hoped that this office space can be rented out. Two of the apartments at The Stables, The Old Mill and the Coach House are currently on long letting arrangements, and it is hoped that the John Bell apartment can be redecorated and let out shortly.



**NTS Archaeological Dig at Castle Fraser** More than 200 people took part in digs at Castle Fraser in October and nine-year-old

Sonny Crighton from Banchory found a fragment of a sixpence which dates to 1572 and the reign of James VI.

**Visitor Numbers** Visitor numbers this year have been very encouraging this year with 38,000 recorded to date. This will undoubtedly increase over the next 2 months with our Hallowe'en and Christmas events.



All of us at Castle Fraser send you our best wishes for a happy New Year, And hope to see you in 2018. *We'd*

*like to thank Castle Fraser NTS for the article but especially thank the staff who took the trouble to come to the Edinburgh dinner and Tattoo. Ed*

---

### FAMOUS FRASERS JAMES FRASER BARRON

James Fraser Barron was the son of James Barron, and of Winifred Ellen Barron (nee Fraser) and was born on 9 January 1921 in Dunedin, New Zealand. He was one of 55 New Zealanders to join the Royal Air Force's Pathfinder Force in 1942 and was one of only four New Zealanders to be awarded a bar to his DSO and was considered a standout bomber pilot of the war. On one particular mission, Barron was flying a Stirling, one of the first four-engined aircraft, through appalling weather to raid the factories of the Ruhr. Long before they reached



their target, their bomb circuit was wrecked by flak. This made it impossible to release the 5000lbs of bombs in the bomb-racks and only those under the wings could be dropped. On the flight back to Britain, deteriorating weather forced Barron to detour thousands of miles. The added distance, combined with the load of bombs created anxieties over fuel. Over the Channel

Isles he discovered he had enough left for only ten more minutes' flying. Three of his engines cut out as he landed, without time for the customary circuit, at the first airport on England's southern coast. Every drop of fuel had gone. The flight had lasted nine hours and ten minutes. One minute or so more could have brought disaster.

Barron was promoted to Wing Commander in February 1944 and he took command of 7 Squadron on 28<sup>th</sup> April. He was awarded a Bar to his DSO on 16 June 1944; his citation read: One night in May 1944, this officer participated in an attack on an airfield at Nantes. By his appreciation of the responsibilities entrusted to him and the skill and precision with which he executed his attack, Wing Commander Barron contributed in a large measure to the success achieved. Since being awarded the

Distinguished Service Order, this officer has taken part in many attacks on dangerous and difficult targets. He is an outstanding captain whose example of skill, bravery and determination has impressed all. He died on a raid on 20 May 1944, Age 23, at Le Mans, France. *Credits to Auckland Museum for use of the photo and some of the information. Ed*

---

### COINCIDENCES

I've lived in Nottingham for 45 years and when I go to town I never bump into anyone I know, yet I was up in my home city of Aberdeen for a school reunion and I realised the coincidences there are in life, when I bumped in to an old friend, playing Pokemon in the middle of Union Street, with her younger son and some older friends. Why grown adults chase mythical Japanese cartoons around with their cameras I'll never understand but I certainly can't complain, as it gave me this article. I was up in Aberdeen for the unique but very enjoyable experience of meeting school chums I hadn't seen for 50 years, we went to "The Grammar", an ancient institution dating back to 1262 and as there are only two schools older than it in England but seven in Scotland, it says something about our educational standards, even then. Now for the coincidences, my friend Cheryl went to the Grammar but only after it took over 700 years for the



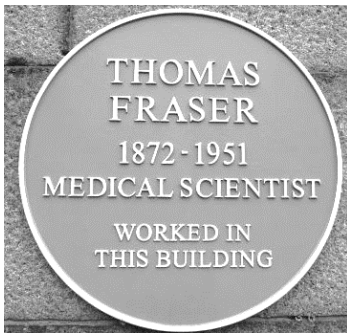
powers to be to let in female pupils but after I left. In fact, when we toured the establishment, I met my first ever female Grammar Prefect, as you'll see from the photo, which also shows a statue of its most famous pupil, no not me

but Lord Byron, who, by coincidence, I followed to Nottingham, now do you get the theme?

Cheryl, who is the niece of my late best friend Mike Hay, was given away by me at Castle Fraser on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2002 (that wasn't a coincidence, Cheryl plans well), so she's well aware of my interest in all things Fraser and when a Pokemon appeared by a plaque of a Thomas Fraser she knew to take a photo, after capturing the said Pokemon and by coincidence, bumped in to me a few minutes later. Now in all my years I never knew of this Thomas Fraser, who was important in the discovery of insulin, yet here was the plaque 100 yards from my hotel and about a mile from where I lived, all these years ago. Yet, my dad was a Thomas Fraser and my son Brodie was a diabetic from a young age and now, as it seems I've run out of coincidences, on to the article. *Graeme Fraser*

### Thomas Fraser

Thomas Fraser graduated in medicine from Aberdeen University in 1898. In the early 1900s, he and John Rennie, a zoologist, studied the effects of giving patients



with diabetes extracts of fish pancreatic islets of Langerhans. In the patients they studied no benefits were found, but their work was an important part of the movement that led to the discovery of insulin in 1922.

In the first world war he served with distinction in Egypt, Gallipoli and France, earning the DSO and being mentioned in dispatches five times. There followed a distinguished career as a physician in the Royal Infirmary and lecturer in the medical school. He was president of the British Medical Association from 1939 to 1942. He is commemorated by a plaque at 16 Albyn Place, Aberdeen where he worked. *Credit to the Aberdeen Medic-Chirurgical Society for the information and to Pokemon for the article.*

By coincidence, here's another **Thomas Fraser**, Sir Thomas Richard Fraser FRS FRSE LLD, born Calcutta, 5 February 1841 died Edinburgh 4 January 1920, was a physician and pharmacologist who, together with Alexander Crum Brown, discovered the relationship between physiological activity and chemical constitution of the body. He received his early education at various Scottish public schools before entering the University of Edinburgh & he received honorary LLD degrees from the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, an honorary ScD from Cambridge and an honorary MD from Dublin as well as numerous overseas honours, in 1874, Fraser married Susannah Margaret Duncan and together they had seven children.

---

## FESTIVE GREETINGS



Best wishes for Xmas and New Year to you All. **Saltoun**

Dear Clansmen and Women, I wish you all an extremely happy Christmas and best wishes for the new year ahead, and very much hope to meet anyone who manages to make the journey through Beaulieu in 2018. Yours, **Lovat**



### CHIEFLY DINNERS by Lady Saltoun

#### OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS PUDDING

3lb (115g.) plain flour, 1 level teasp. baking powder, 2 teasp cinnamon, 1 dessertsp. mixed spice, 2 level teasp. Salt, 6oz (170g.) brown sugar, 6oz (170g.) Atora suet, 8oz (115g.) white breadcrumbs, 2 level tab. Marmalade, 2lb (900g.) mixed raisins, currants and sultanas, 2 pint (300ml.) Guinness, 4 eggs beaten.

Sift flour, spices and salt, then add sugar, suet, breadcrumbs and fruit and mix well. Add marmalade, Guinness and beaten egg and mix again. Put into 2 well greased 2 pint basins, cover with the lid or a cloth and boil for 6 hours. When cold, cover with greaseproof paper and store. If you like, you can make a few small holes with a skewer and pour brandy into them before covering with paper. To use, cover again with a lid or cloth and boil 2-3 hours. Serve with brandy butter.

#### RIBSDEN CHRISTMAS PUDDING

1lb (450g.) white breadcrumbs, 2lb (225g.) white flour, 3/4lb (350g.) Atora suet, 1lb (450g.) brown sugar, 1lb (450g.) currants, 1lb (450g.) raisins, 1lb (450g.) sultanas, 2lb (225g.) chopped mixed peel, 2 teasp. Cinnamon, 2 teasp. grated nutmeg, 2 teasp. mixed spice, 1 teasp. Salt, a little milk or stout, 3 teasp. bicarbonate of soda, grated rind and juice of 2 oranges and 2 lemons.

Mix together everything except bicarb., fruit juice and grated rind, using just enough milk or stout to make it just hold together. Leave overnight. Next day, add the bicarb., fruit juice and rind, turn into greased basins, sprinkled with dried crumbs, cover with lids or cloths and boil for 10 hours. Allow to cool, cover with greaseproof paper and store in a cool dry place. When required, take off paper, put a lid on and put in a slow oven(275f.,140c.,reg.1) to get thoroughly hot. Enough for 3 big puddings.



**A Blythe Yule an a Guid Hogmanay or Nollaig chridheil agus bliadhna mhath ùr** from Michael Fraser, Secretary, Graeme Fraser, Editor, Donald Fraser-Clark, Events and Giles Fraser, Webmaster. We look forward to seeing you at Worcester.

