



grip fast **JOURNAL**

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society international



ANOTHER LESLIE CASTLE

Edin Castle Deveron River, Banff.

Photograph courtesy of Stanley Bruce. Banff

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**I am not a Scot.
I truly am not!
Nowhere in my past can I find
Anyone I can blame
For a true Scottish name
Alas, I do hope you won't mind!**

**But the man that I wed
Spoke a truth when he said,
"Someday to Scotland we'll go.
I must seek my roots
And may wear out my boots,
But there are many things I want to know!"**

**And now that I've been there,
And felt what I felt there,
I must speak the real truth to you.
I am still not a Scot.
No, truly I'm not!
But my heart is Scot all through and through!**

From the editor, Sherry Huxtable

THE HONOURABLE ALEXANDER LESLIE, CHIEF OF THE CLAN LESLIE

LESLIE HISTORY FINDS A HOME



Red tape never gets less and red tape around charities is in danger of suffocating them as it is wrapped ever tighter around them. I remember when my father first set up the Clan Leslie Charitable Trust and invited me to be a Trustee. We would meet in a rather dark lawyer's office in Edinburgh, talk about whether any chattels had been acquired and go for a long lunch.

Then it began to become clear that we needed to work for our lunch. There were new rules about 'public display.' We had always been keen for Leslies to see the pictures, silver, books and manuscripts, and we were always on the lookout for a place for a permanent display. We allowed and encouraged public access. This was no longer enough and simply to be looking was not good enough. Nor was having a web site, which displayed the items in the Trust to anyone who searched.

New powers and a new body emerged to oversee the implementation of new, tighter regulations. Private schools (usually run as charities) were suddenly in the news and being investigated and asked to justify their status. People – lawyers included – became nervous that they might be asked to justify the charitable status of what is, on the face of it, a private family collection. There were clouds on the horizon and they were dark.

We had been working with the Glenrothes and Area Heritage Centre who were trying to find a permanent home for a 'museum' of the local area. The local area was the home of the Rothes line for about 900 years and we supported them as much as we could. They were promised premises and then suffered delays and then were thwarted.

As they kept looking, the regulators seemed to be circling. For a while it was looking as if we would be back to 'square one' – again. And then we had a letter from one of the driving forces behind the Heritage Centre. They had secured premises – we had a place to display the Trust items.

It is early days, this has only just happened and the Trustees have yet to see the room that they are proposing for our displays. Much will depend on security and curation but it is very good news.

Hopefully soon I will be able to report that it is up and running and inviting you to come and visit the exhibition when you are next in town. Perhaps in 2014 – which is another story...

...2014 AND ALL THAT

Many of you will remember the Gathering in 2009, and some will remember the Convention in the Scottish Parliament. On the face of it, it was a huge success and the memory of the sea of tartan parading up the Royal Mile will linger long. The event brought upwards of £20 million to the Scottish economy.

Behind the scenes, however, things were not so bright. The finances were on a knife-edge, the weather meant that not quite enough visitors came on the Sunday, underwriting promises were broken, creditors and the press got angry and a Scottish Chief had to flee the country.

Bearing this in mind, when the Government announced that 2014 was the next 'Year of Homecoming' they did it with an element of caution. They could not, they decided, have another 'Gathering,' the word was still too emotive. They could not, they decided, have an 'event' in Edinburgh, it would be too political in the year when Scottish folk will vote on whether they want Independence. What they did, eventually, decide was to 'do something' in Stirling. The Chiefs pushed for early announcements and again and again told the organisers that plans needed to be published at least two years ahead of time. There were meetings and more meetings and it became clear that nothing was happening and nothing would continue to happen.

Eventually, doing anything 'big' in Stirling was quite obviously not going to happen. There were resignations and then the Scottish Government decided that they were always going to focus on the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn. There will be clan tents, although there is not room for very many, there will be a re-enactment of the battle, if you like that sort of thing, there will be parades, although not very big ones, on account of the lack of room and, oh, there will be falconry displays. Over three days, not just two and it will coincide with the opening of the new visitor centre by the NTS. And it will be in late June, before the 4th July.

That is all we know, and we wait for more news. My own view is that, as it stands, I might go along if I lived 20 miles away but I certainly would not go along just for this if I lived a few thousand, unless I was already coming to Scotland.

Alex Leslie, Clan Chief

WILLIAM LESLIE – COMMISSIONER, CLAN LESLIE, NORTH AMERICA

THE LESLIES HAD GOOD YEARS IN 2011 AND 2012



The Leslies had good years in 2011 and in 2012. In 2011, Leslies and septs all over the world joined together to raise a beautiful monument at the Chapel of the Garioch, Leslie Chapel of North East Scotland, to the fallen Leslie soldiers of 1411. The Battle of Harlaw which was fought in the back yards of the Leslies in Aberdeenshire was the last Civil war in Scotland. No one had previously honoured these ancestors of ours. Historical tourists usually go to Scotland to see monuments to their ancestors. We went to Scotland to raise a monument to our ancestors. As a result of all the celebrations of the 600th Anniversary of Harlaw, including the Leslie celebrations and memorials, a new group has been formed in Aberdeenshire near Inverurie, the Freens o Reid Harlaw. This group of mostly local people are determined to keep the memories and significance of Harlaw alive. They have initiated an annual memorial at the Chapel of the Garioch and a dinner on the anniversary on July 24th. They have also mapped out the many significant historical sites of the battle and intend to help preserve and protect these locations.

The Chairman of this new group is David Leslie, Baron Baillie of Balquhain. Since David organized our tour of Leslie sites in 2011, we have become aware of many more locations related to the Battle of Harlaw. On the tour we visited the location of the grave of Sir Andrew Leslie, 3rd Baron of Balquhain. Sir Andrew was a major figure in the battle; he commanded the Cavalry for the Earl of Mar's army and lost six sons that day. It is hoped that the Freens will assist us in getting government approval to improve and preserve this extremely important Leslie historical location. Most of us are descended from the Leslies of Balquhain. This area around Inverurie, Castles, Chapels, forts and graves, is an area that must be visited by Leslies who wish to be enveloped in their history. This year and the next will see celebrations of major historical events in which Leslies were prominent. The 500th Anniversary of the Battle of Flodden in which the English army of Henry VIII under the Earl of Surrey defeated the Scottish army led by the Scottish King, James IV, will be memorialized in September. William Leslie, 3rd Earl of Rothes as well as many other Scottish Chiefs were killed that day. In 2014, the Battle of Bannockburn will be remembered at Stirling Castle on its 700th anniversary. We have no records of Leslies who were there, but we can be sure that there were many. The English army of Edward II, the largest ever to invade Scotland, suffered one of its greatest defeats by the outnumbered Scots led by King Robert Bruce. We hope that many of us can be there for this great celebration.

Now that I have more free time, I am back to exploring the history of my family. I am finding some amazing stories. The genealogical information you gather in building a family history tree is often very dull, with only names and dates but when you find stories that allow you to imagine some part of the lives of your ancestors, it is well worth the effort. I am still trying to trace my Aberdeenshire ancestors back to whatever castle they first inhabited.

You are important in the success of the efforts of the Clan Leslie and the Clan Leslie Society International to discover and preserve our heritage. After all, the people we memorialize and celebrate are your ancestors. You are related to Kings, Earls and Barons of our past. Your participation in the work of the Clan and the Society are essential to their success.

William Leslie, Commissioner

DAVID LESLIE WHITE, CHIEFTAIN, CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL



AUBIGNY-SUR-NERE AND THE SCOTTISH CONNECTION

The winter issue of *The Scottish Sporting Journal* has an article on the town of Aubigny-sur-Nere, a French town about 160 miles south of Paris. This town is proud of its old link between Scotland and France, known as the “Auld Alliance.” This alliance against the English included military, political, cultural and trading connections. A nearby castle, the Chateau de La Verrerie in Barry, was originally the “country” estate of the Scottish Stuarts.

The Scottish nobility fought with the French and following the Battle of Bauge in 1423, Sir John Stuart of Darnley was awarded the Seigneurie of Aubigny, a moated and walled town in Berry, which became known as the “City of the Stuarts.” The Stuarts were strong supporters of the French monarchy and Beaud Stuart Darnely, grandson of Sir John, was the 4th Seigneur and Commander of the Garde Ecossaise, the personal

Scottish bodyguard of the French king. This elite Garde Ecossaise was not disbanded until 1830 when the last king of France abdicated. French citizens could claim dual nationality with Scotland, and vice-versa, an agreement that didn’t end until the signing of the Entente Cordiale in 1906.

The town has a kilted pipe band, and some of the shops fly the blue and white Saltire, and the Cutty Sark pub is famed for its whiskies. And the arms of Robert Stuart, 5th Stuart of Seigneur of Aubigny are still displayed outside the Maison du Balli. The town hosts an annual “Fete Ecossaise” or Scottish Festival, “Ecosse” being the old French word for Scotland, so “Ecossaise” is “Scottish.”

FROM THE COUNCIL

The Council meeting that commenced in early November continued into January. There was extensive discussion about scanning the four issues of *THE GRIFFIN REPRINTS*, originally published by the Clan Leslie Charitable Trust in 1998. These paperback booklets contained the best articles that had been published in the 17 issues of *The Griffin*. The first issue of *The Griffin* was published in February 1979, and the series was intended to be our Society’s “publication of record.” Most of the contents are on the history of Clan Leslie, Scotland and some Leslie places. The last issue was number 17, for 1997-98. The members who still have copies of the original issues and especially *The Griffin Reprints* treasure them greatly. However, all of these reprints sold out years ago, and we no longer have any to offer to the membership. The Council approved the concept of scanning these four booklets to a CD and offering it for sale. Currently Council members are obtaining cost estimates, and determining if the booklets scanned can be rebound.

There was also much discussion about a recent symposium held at Stone Mountain Georgia with ten Chiefs of Scottish clans, who are members of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, and members of the Council Of Scottish Clans & Associations (COSCA). The Scottish clan chiefs made several points that they believed to be very important, if not vital, to the continuation of clan societies and associations. Some of these key points were:

a. **Be authentic:** Discover your clan’s history and customs, and retain them. Be authentic with your clan’s traditions. A “clan” is defined as a family, and the conclusion was that whatever you do, do not dilute your clan history and traditions. Be authentic. A family includes a sense of belonging.

b. **Be a resource:** Be a resource for members in the areas of arms (heraldry), history, genealogy and the proper wearing of Scottish attire. Accurate information is essential to preserve and perpetuate clan history and traditions. Beware of some of the “information” on the Internet.

c. **Have a Project:** The successful and growing clan societies have projects. This pulls the members together and provides a purpose and focus for society activities. (Remember our project for the Battle of Harlaw Commemoration and the erection of the new Leslie’s Cross at the Chapel of the Garioch?)

d. **Have a Clan Seat:** Our Clan Leslie seat is the Leslie Castle in the village of Leslie, Aberdeenshire, that was restored by David Leslie.

e. **Have a Museum:** The Clan Leslie Charitable Trust is currently seeking a suitable location for displaying and protecting the collection of Clan Leslie artifacts and papers.

f. **Role of the Clan Chief:** The role of the Clan Chief is to be active, supportive and to give direction.

There will be another symposium by the Council Of Scottish Clans & Associations (COSCA) on January 26, 2013 on the topic of "Clan Leader Boot Camp: Growing and Retaining Your Membership," that will be "broadcast as a Webinar. All Council members and Convenors were urged to register for this free seminar and to listen.

For her strong support and great efforts during the transition from one Secretary/Registrar to another, our Treasurer, Linda Flowers, was awarded the Garioch Award. A suitably engraved bowl will be shipped to her soon.

The Council approved a motion to authorize David Leslie White to proceed with collecting more books by or about Leslies and the Septs for eventual shipment to our Clan Leslie Collection at the University of Guelph. This effort is off to a modest start, but with hopes for further growth.

There was discussion about having a Clan Leslie Christmas tree ornament produced for our membership. A committee was appointed to follow up on this idea.

There being no more business, the Council meeting was adjourned on January 13, 2013.

David Leslie White, Chieftain • clanleslie@earthlink.net

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

BETH-NION-LUIS: Thinking of Trees



These past few months have been more than challenging for many on the east coast of the United States. Whether or not we say "hurricane" or "superstorm", Sandy packed a wallop, and damaged an incredible amount of territory, especially the coastal regions of New Jersey and Long Island and Staten Island (these last two belonging to NY). What most folks think of as New York City - Manhattan Island - and lower Connecticut didn't fair much better.

I'm old enough to remember the hurricanes we had when I was a child in the 1950s, and this one brought back all those memories. I've never seen so much blue roofing tarp. And trees which didn't break, simply fell over from their roots. Two and a half months later, there are still piles of wood everywhere for the taking. We had our own trees trimmed last year so we had nothing much come down, but all these woodpiles by curbs, sitting in yards and on patio wood racks got me to thinking about trees in

general, and how our far ancestors considered them specifically.

In Chaplain's Corner, I try to present modern and ancient religious and mythological thought - often they are not so different and frequently are so tightly intertwined that we hold remnants of ancient practices in our modern beliefs and rituals. Trees are a part of that - our Maypole dances from ancient Beltane, and Christmas trees and the partridge in the pear tree every December from traditions hundreds of year old, and even apple trees associated with the school year beginning after the summer holiday are not really a new symbol.

Tree traditions and lore, stemming from religious and spiritual stories and practices are still with us. To our far progenitors, trees were more than shade, building material and providers of dead branches here and there for firewood. They had souls, magical properties and were treasured and worshipped by Picts and Druids as well.

There is a relatively modern theory on how trees might have been used in a sort of calendar, evolved from the research of scholar and poet Robert Graves in his 1948 book "The White Goddess". Graves book is supported by some researchers and disputed by others, but it explores the myths and religious practices of early inhabitants of Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Brittany and England. Graves contends that later Celtic people marked their lunar months by the Ogham (oh-ah'm) alphabet called Beth-Luis-Nion. Sources accepting this theory vary on exactly how many sacred trees comprised this early alphabet corresponding to the first letter in each tree's name, but 12 to 16 seems to be the general consensus depending on whom one is reading. Thirteen of these were chosen to stand for the lunar months of the Celtic year.

Each tree had a letter of the Celtic alphabet (Ogham, pronounced "Oh-ah'm) associated with it. Dates vary, but from approximately December 20-21st to January 21st the lunar period was referred to as Beth ("Beh") and was under the protection of the Birch Tree. Silver birches grew throughout the area of Scotland and England, and are among the first trees to show buds anywhere they grow. This sign of new beginnings was welcomed as a sign of warmth and spring to come. The trees were slender, seldom break under the weight of snow due to

their supple, flexible branches, and birch was used where limber woods were needed in building furniture and even in bows if yew was scarce.

The approximate period from January 21st through February 17th was called "Luis" (pronounced "loosh" or "lweesh"), which was symbolized by the Rowan. Rowans are small trees or large bushes found across many parts of the world. Druids reportedly used rowan bark to produce black dye for linen and wool. Although the month that claimed the Rowan as a symbol was called Luis, the tree itself was referred to by the Albannach (Scottish people - AHL-bah-nock) as "ruadh-an" (Roo-ATH-in), meaning "red" for its bright leaves and berries. Twigs of Rowan were considered a sure protection from evil; travelers carried them and even tied them on their horses. They were also tied to cradles with red thread as a blessing and to prevent baby switching by bad fairies. The North American mountain ash is part of the Rowan family. Birds often eat the berries, but become drunk on them. If you have a Rowan tree near your house, evil fairies will not fly in your windows, but tipsy birds might try it, so it's best to use suncatchers or decals on large areas of window glass.

From February 18th to approximately the same time in March, the month was under the regency of Nion, (NEE-uhn) or the ash tree. The triplets oak, ash and thorn (hawthorne) are trees that, growing together in the same place, reveal the spot where fairies gather to hold court. Ash was considered in Norse mythology to be the "World Tree" Yggdrasil (Ig-DRAH-sil) upon which Odin hung to gain his wisdom. It is hard wood, and often used for baseball bats and objects that must not shatter or splinter. The trees take the shape of elms at maturity and can live over 200 years.

Perhaps because late February to mid-March is a time of first thaws, when winter begins to lose its grip and become early spring, Nion came to be associated with transformation. In all places, different woods have taken on different meanings, but an anonymous 19th century English folk song (or poem) which is quoted by sources as widely divergent as books on Celtic myth to The Old Farmer's Almanac gives particular advice to us about how to use wood in a very practical manner:

"Oak logs will warm you well, that are old and dry;
Logs of pine will sweetly smell, but the sparks will fly.
Birch logs will burn too fast, chestnut scarce at all;
Hawthorne logs are good to last - cut them in the fall.
Holly logs will burn like wax, and you may burn them green;
Elm logs burn like smoldering flax, with no flame to be seen.
Beech logs are for winter time, and yew logs are as well.
Green elder logs - they are a crime for any man to sell.
Pear logs and apple logs will sweetly scent your room,
And cherry logs across the 'dogs' will smell like flowers in bloom.
Ash logs, smooth and grey, burn them green or old;
And buy up *all* that come your way - they're worth their weight in gold!

Blessings for a safe, healthy and warm winter season to all Leslie Kith and Kin!

Samantha Leslie Gray, Chaplain, CLSI

HAPPY NEW YEAR, MEMBERS OF CLSI!

As this New Year starts, and as my term as a council member for the Clan Leslie Society International council starts, I wish to thank the society for electing me to this position. I look forward to serving the Society and hope that I can do the job as well as your past council members have.

Since Dec. 15th, I have been privileged to monitor all the council business being carried on via e-mail. They are a very busy and enthusiastic lot!

Along with our Commissioner, William Leslie, I hope to generate interest in our Society among Leslies and the septis in southern Ontario.

May you all have a happy and prosperous 2013!

Robert Leslie; Acton, Ontario

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN MARCH?

I came across some interesting trivia in a book "In Search of Your British and Irish Roots", by Angus Baxter⁽¹⁾, something of particular interest to those tracing their family tree way back. I'm not sure of the math involved, but in a much simplified form (summarizing the account given in Baxter's book), here is what happened:

In the year 325, Julius Caesar originated his Julian calendar. It was a success and was used happily by the Christian world, until some astronomers got to thinking about it. They discovered that every 400 years, the calendar gained on the solar year by 3 days! Well, that troubled Pope Gregory XIII. The proper date of Easter was being affected. In 1582, the error amounted to 10 days. So, to make things right, he decreed that 10 days were to be dropped from that year, and that to minimize future error, every four hundred years, a leap year was to be omitted. To top it off, he moved the annual New Year's Eve party from March 24th to Dec. 31st! This new Gregorian calendar was adopted by the Roman Catholic countries.

Other countries were not so quick to follow. Around this time, England and the Pope were at odds with each other, and being shy of new ideas anyway, did not follow suit. For the next 170 years, most of the British continued on, steady as she goes. But then, in 1752 they could hold out no longer. The government decreed that to catch up, the days Sept. 3 to Sept. 13 were to be missed and New Years day was to be moved from March 25th to January 1st. This led to riots, rioters demanding their 11 days back (perhaps pay packets had been affected). Thus, the Gregorian calendar came to Britain.

So, for those tracing family roots – don't think that the age difference between siblings during these changing times indicate mothers enjoyed a reduced period of pregnancy, it is more likely due to the changes made to keeping track of time.

(1) In Search of your British & Irish Roots, Angus Baxter, Macmillan Canada, Toronto, Ontario

Robert Leslie; Acton, Ontario

FRONT COVER - ANOTHER LESLIE CASTLE



The following article is from the *Grip Fast Down Under*, Vol. 4, No. 6, dated April, May, June 2008. The author of the article is J. Barrie Leslie, Commissioner of Clan Leslie Australia & New Zealand, and is reprinted with his permission.

Eden Castle from the rear

Eden Castle is about 3 1/2 miles from Banff in Aberdeenshire. It was originally a Z plan Tower Castle built by the Meldrums in 1577. It was purchased by the Leslie family of Iden, which was the original spelling of the name and extended by them.

The Leslie family of Iden is a branch of the Barons of Balquhain and the progenitor of the Leslie family of Iden was Patrick Leslie, third son of Patrick

Leslie of Logydurno, a natural son of William Leslie, 4th baron of Balquhain by Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Meldrum of Fyvie.

Patrick Leslie, third son of Patrick Leslie of Logydurno, was the 1st Laird of Iden, who purchased the Lands of Iden from the Meldrum family who had built Iden Castle in 1577, which was later extended by the Leslies of Iden.

George Leslie, 4th Laird of Iden, married Margaret Leslie, sixth daughter of Patrick, Count Leslie, 15th Baron of Balquhain and had a daughter Elizabeth.

George Leslie, 4th Laird of Iden sent, as a present, a curious manuscript, on vellum, relating to the Cathedral Church of Aberdeen, containing the necrologie thereof and other valuable papers, a letter of thanks was ordered to be written by Alexander Galloway, Parson of Kinkell, who, according to an entry therein by another hand, died 6th October 1552.

George Leslie, 4th Laird of Iden, sold the lands of Iden, situated in the parish of King Edward on the bank of the Deveron, between Turriff and Banff, to William Duff of Braco (Earl of Fife) in 1712 and died in 1740. His wife, Margaret Leslie, commonly called Lady Kinnares, died 3rd February 1744.

THE CLAN LESLIE PLANT BADGE IS THE RUE. JUST WHAT IS RUE?

Rue is a hardy evergreen plant and is a native of Southern Europe. The stem is woody in the lower part and the leaves are a bluish-green. Rue emits a strong and somewhat disagreeable odor and the leaves have an exceedingly bitter taste. The greenish-yellow flowers appear from June to September. In England, Rue is one of the oldest garden plants, cultivated for its use medicinally. It is also the favorite larval food of the swallowtail butterfly and is used in many butterfly gardens.

The plant grows almost anywhere, but thrives best in a partially sheltered and dry situation. Rue will live much longer and is less liable to be injured by frost in winter when grown in a poor, dry, rocky soil than in good ground.

Rue is first mentioned by Turner, 1562, in his *Herbal*, and has since become one of the best known and most widely grown herbs for medicinal and homely uses.

The name *Ruta* is from the Greek *reuo* (to set free). It was used by the Ancients; Hippocrates specially commended it, and it constituted a chief ingredient of the famous antidote to poison used by Mithridates. The Greeks regarded it as an antimagical herb, because it served to remedy the nervous indigestion they suffered when eating before strangers, which they attributed to witchcraft. In the Middle Ages, it was considered to be a powerful defense against witches, and was used in many spells. It was also thought to bestow second sight.

Piperno, a Neapolitan physician, in 1625, commended Rue as a specific against epilepsy and vertigo.

At one time the holy water was sprinkled from brushes made of Rue at the ceremony usually preceding the Sunday celebration of High Mass, for which reason it is supposed it was named the Herb of Repentance and the Herb of Grace. 'There's rue for you and here's some for me; we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays.'

Shakespeare refers again to Rue in *Richard III*:

'Here in this place
I'll set a bank of *rue*, sour herb of grace;
Rue, even for ruth, shall shortly here be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping queen.'

The following is a quotation from Drayton:

'Then sprinkles she the juice of *rue*,

With nine drops of the midnight dew
From lunarie distilling.'

Gerard says:

'If a man be anointed with the juice of rue, the poison of wolf's bane, mushrooms, or todestooles, the biting of serpents, stinging of scorpions, spiders, bees, hornets and wasps will not hurt him.'

Rue-water sprinkled in the house 'kills all the fleas,' says an old book

The juice was used against earache.

Rue has been regarded from the earliest times as successful in warding off contagion and preventing the attacks of fleas and other noxious insects. It was the custom for judges sitting at assizes to have sprigs of Rue placed on the bench of the dock against the pestilential infection brought into court from gaol by the prisoner, and the bouquet still presented in some districts to judges at the assizes was originally a bunch of aromatic herbs, given to him for the purpose of warding off gaol-fever.

In Saxony Rue has given its name to an Order. A chaplet of Rue, borne bendwise on bars of the Coat Armour of the Dukedom of Saxony, was granted by Frederick Barbarossa to the first Duke of Saxony, in 1181. In 1902 the King of Saxony conferred the Order of the Rautenkrone (Crown of Rue) on our present King, then Prince of Wales. Since the latter half of the seventeenth century, sprigs of Rue have been interlaced in the Collar of our Order of the Thistle.

By coincidence, the name of this plant is identical with an English word meaning 'to regret bitterly', and so the plant symbolized grief or repentance. Discussing Herefordshire wedding customs, Ella M. Leather records an incident where a jilted girl waited in the porch at her ex-lover's wedding and, as the couple emerged, threw a handful of rue at them, in a parody of the throwing of flower petals, saying, 'May you rue this day as long as you live!' This curse was thought particularly effective because the rue "was taken direct from the plant to the churchyard, and thrown "between holy and unholy ground", that is, between church and churchyard". Other jilted girls had put a bunch of rue enclosing a half-eaten slice of bread and butter in the church porch

So we might all plant some rue in our gardens. We might not ward off witches, but maybe we can control fleas and have some beautiful butterflies.



Linda Flowers, Tuttle, OK

THE STORY OF THISTLE

Thistle is really a weed—but what a beautiful weed it is! Scottish thistle is also called cotton thistle or Scott's thistle. Plants produce spiny, silvery-white foliage the first year and the following year thick triangular stems grow up to 6 feet tall and are topped with lavender thistle-like flowers. The plant has long, very sharp thorns. They prefer full sun and well-drained soil. It may become a weed if plants are allowed to self-seed freely. If you grow thistle, you should trim the flower off when the bloom dies to prevent reseeding or it can get out of control.



Every school-child in Scotland learns the legend of how the thistle, their national emblem, saved the country in when the Scots and Norsemen were at war. Under cover of darkness, the Norsemen managed to land unobserved on the coast of Scotland. Removing their boots, they crept on bare feet toward the unsuspecting Scottish army. Suddenly, a sharp cry of pain shattered the stillness: A Norse soldier had stepped on a thistle.

Thus alerted to the surprise attack, the Scots sprang into action and drove the invaders from their shores.

Thistle is a biennial (it takes the plant two years to bloom), flowering in late summer and autumn. The erect stem is 18 inches to 5 feet high, the leaves are very large, wavy, and with sharp prickles on the edge. The whole plant has a white, cottony down that comes off readily when rubbed, and causes the young leaves to be quite white. From the presence of this covering, the Thistle has obtained its popular name of Cotton or Woolly Thistle.

It is generally considered that Thistle was originally the badge of the House of Stuart, and came to be regarded as the national emblem of Scotland. The first heraldic use of the plant would appear to be in the inventory of the property of James III of Scotland, made at his death in 1458, where a hanging embroidered with 'thrisills' is mentioned. It was, undoubtedly, a national badge in 1503, in which year Dunbar wrote his poetic allegory, 'The Thrisill and the Rose,' on the union of James IV and Princess Margaret of England. The Order of the Thistle was instituted in 1540 by James V, and revived by James VII of Scotland and Second of England, who created eight Knights in 1687. The expressive motto of the Order, *Nemo me impune lacessit* appears surrounding the Thistle that occupies the centre of the coinage of James VI. From that date until now, the Thistle has had a place on Scottish coins.

Pliny states, and mediaeval writers repeat, that a decoction of Thistles applied to a bald head would restore a healthy growth of hair.

The Ancients supposed this Thistle to be a specific in cancerous complaints, and in more modern times the juice is said to have been applied with good effect to cancers and ulcers.

A decoction of the root is astringent and diminishes discharges from mucous membranes.

Gerard tells us, on the authority of Dioscorides and Pliny, that 'the leaves and root hereof are a remedy for those that have their bodies drawn backwards,' and Culpepper explains that not only is the juice therefore good for a crick in the neck, but also as a remedy for rickets in children. It was considered also to be good in nervous complaints.

The cotton is occasionally collected from the stem and used to stuff pillows, and the oil obtained from the seeds has been used on the Continent for burning, both in lamps and for ordinary culinary purposes. Twelve pounds of the seeds are said to produce, when heat is used in expression, about 3 lbs. of oil.

Linda Flowers, Tuttle, OK

LESLIE TENTS AT HIGHLAND GAMES, SCOTTISH FESTIVALS AND FAMILY GATHERINGS.

This list is made up from information supplied by our many dedicated Convenors who give of their weekends to have Clan Leslie Tents at Games and festivals all over the world. They share our great family history with visitors who are interested in Scotland and specifically the Clan Leslie. Planned Leslie Family Gatherings are also included.

HOGMANAY IN NORTH CAROLINA

In North Carolina there are many people of Scottish descent, so it is quite understandable that Hogmanay is celebrated throughout the state. On the first Saturday of the New Year the association that organizes and sponsors the Triad Highland Games meets to welcome the new year. It is a wonderful gathering of about 75 members representing over 20 clans.



Hogmanay is the Scots word for the last day of the year and is synonymous with the celebration of the New Year in the Scottish manner. It is celebrated around the world by Scots and those of Scottish heritage, by an evening beginning with the explanation of the customs, such as first footing, followed by the presentation of the haggis. This is a grand procession led by a piper, followed by the haggis, and ending with a wee dram to pay the piper for his service followed by the address of the haggis. After the Selkirk Grace was given, the haggis was cut and served with tatties and neeps. Then the celebration moves on to dinner of traditional Scottish foods and desserts. After dinner, everyone is given opportunity to charge their glasses with the drink of their choice in preparation for a round of toasts. Christine and I were honored to be

selected to do the toasts to the laddies and lassies. As tradition dictates, the evening ended with the group singing “Auld Lang Syne”. During the evening, there is a silent auction and a 50/50 raffle to help the association raise funding for the Triad Highland Games. We encourage anyone in the central North Carolina or South-central Virginia area to attend the Saturday Triad Highland Games on April 27th in Greensboro.

Christine and Lewis Johnson

GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE INTERESTED IN SCOTTISH CLANS



On November 19, 2012, Bethany Elementary School in Reidsville, North Carolina held their annual “Multi-Cultural Day”. In an effort to explain to the students of my school the weekends that I spend hosting Leslie Clan tents at highland games, I volunteered to be part of the activities. The students entered my room to the tune of the Red Hot Chili Pipers performing “We Will Rock You”.

On the ActivBoard screen were scenes of the 2009 Gathering in Scotland. I was dressed in my new Scottish outfit that I ordered at the Loon Mountain Games and was delivered on the previous Saturday. The students enjoyed hearing the book “Hamish McHaggis and the Clan Gathering” by Linda Strachan and Sally J. Collins. The book talks of making a clan banner, tossing the caber, playing bagpipes, and seeing the Clan Chief with three eagle feathers in his bonnet.

The students asked many questions concerning how to trace their ancestry, the proximity of highland games in our area, food in Scotland, and much more. This was a wonderful opportunity to inspire students to research their family origins and attend area highland games. I was invited to several classrooms to talk about how to begin doing family research by interviewing relatives and using on the internet. Of course, everyone wants to find out if they belong to a Scottish clan!

Christine Johnson

THE 2012 STONE MOUNTAIN GAMES

The 2012 Stone Mountain Games were hosted by Terry and Cathy Duling. This was the 40th year for the games and there were over a hundred clans represented. The weather was beautiful. On Sunday we held our biannual business meeting. The new officers are Cathy Duling, president and Caroline Duling, secretary. We had one new member join this year.



Pictured left: Al and Fern Leslie, Don and Marian Leslie, Tim Sering, Cathy Duling, Caithlyn Agin, Caroline duling and her children Terry and Eliza Duling.

Pictured below: Caroline Duling and her children Terry and Eliza, Cathy Duling, Tim Sering, Patrick and Sarah Duling and their children Adam and Kira.



Cathy Duling

REPORT FROM SUSAN ABERNETHY

Clan Leslie will NOT be at the Queen Mary Scottish Festival (calling itself ScotsFest) this year; they have taken the name of the Clans of the Highlands event in May, further angering already angry Clan Societies (they were staged inside the ship for years but last year and again this year they are outside). The weather is quite tricky mid-February. Besides, they didn't "have the budget" to have me come as Mary, Queen of Scots this year. Oh, well.

I am planning to have a Clan Leslie Tent at the Scotsfest on May 25 and 26 at the Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa, CA. Alec Klieforth will be honored for his military service during the opening ceremonies. <http://www.scotsfest.com/> (not yet updated)

As soon as I have more information about what they are doing for Alec, I will let you know.

I will also have the Clan Leslie Tent at the San Diego Games on June 22 and 23 at Brengle Terrace Park in Vista, CA <http://www.sdhighlandgames.org/>

LOCH NORMAN HIGHLAND GAMES

<http://www.ruralhillscottishfestivals.net/>

Rural Hill, NC - April 19, 20 & 21, 2013

Lew and Chris will start the North Carolina highland game season hosting the tent at the Loch Norman Highland Games in Rural Hill, NC just north of Charlotte. This is a wonderful event starting with the calling of the clans at dusk on Friday night and events all day on Saturday and Sunday. All CLSI members in the area are encouraged to attend and enjoy the hospitality of the CLSI tent and the events of the games. We will be staying at the Drury Inn near the Northlake Mall. This location provides a full breakfast and very nice hot snacks from 5:30-7:00 each evening.

IRON THISTLE FESTIVAL

www.uscoscots.org

Yukon, OK – April 26, 27, & 28, 2013

Linda Flowers will be hosting a tent at this festival. This is a great festival for you to attend.

THE 2014 CLSI GATHERING

Although it has only been a few months since CLSI met at the Loon Mountain Highland Games in New Hampshire, the Council has started work on the 2014 Gathering. At the biennial meeting, the Council appointed Don Abernathy and Lew Johnson as co-chairs of a committee comprised of Mike Hadley, Janice Abernathy and Chris Johnson. The Council decided that the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games which is deep in the heart of an area rich in Scottish heritage was an outstanding location to celebrate the 700th anniversary of Bannockburn. Plans are now taking shape for lodging, and a wonderful event-filled gathering of CLSI members. So, mark your calendars for July 11-13, 2014 for a trip to the North Carolina mountains.

Visit this site to learn more about GMHG: <http://www.gmhg.org/>

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

IN THE USA

- **Dane Gay, Chesterfield, VA**
- **Christopher Leslie, Roselle, IL**
- **Robyn Leslie, Roselle, IL**
- **Linda Hart, Clinton, MA**
- **Drew Seich, Jackson, NJ**

THANK YOU TO THE DONORS TO THE CLSI

- **Thomas Leslie Allen, Gardena, CA**
 - **Joan Leslie Eike, Barton, NY**
 - **Rose Marie Lessley Phillips, Center Harbor, NH**
 - **Donald And Janice Abernathy, Albemarle, NC**
 - **Jane H. Roe, Jackson, TN**
 - **Michael N. Abernathy, Wyoming, DE**
 - **Kathleen Leslie Jones, Oneonta, NY**
 - **Karen Davis Engle, Hanover, PA**
 - **Harold L. Wilcox, Edison, NJ**
 - **Pat Leslie, Olympia, WA**
 - **Bret William Leslie, Vienna, VA**
 - **Stewart R. Leslie, Mount Hope, Ontario, Canada**
 - **Timothy A. Pannone, Piney Point, MD**
 - **David R. Leslie, Cambridge, MA**
 - **Jean Leslie, Calgary, Alberta, Canada**
 - **Marguerite Pope, Salem, SC**
-



Jina Johansen

Jamesina Leslie, aunt of our Commissioner William Leslie, was a long-time member of CLSI. She was born on 4 December 1916 in Roanheads, Peterhead, Scotland and passed away 27 January, 2013 at her home in Minneapolis. She attended the Leslie Castle Gathering in Leslie, Scotland and the CLSI Gathering in Orillia in 2002. She often travelled to Peterhead in the summer until her 90th birthday. She was one of seven children born in Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. She had a great love for her family and was a lover of dogs, cats, goldfish and "birdies" and had a great sense of Scottish humour! She will be missed by her family in the US, Canada, and Scotland.

CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL – SCHOLARSHIPS

CLSI is offering scholarships to our members. There are two different types of scholarships. One is an academic scholarship valued at \$250. The deadline for the next scholarship is November 30 with the award of one scholarship being made on January 15. The second type of scholarship is for Scottish or Celtic Programs. The amount of this scholarship is \$200 and can be applied for any time. It will cover things such as bagpiping camp, dance, the arts, etc. The person applying for any scholarship must be a member or inceptor member of CLSI. For more information contact: Linda Flowers, CLSI Scholarship Chairman, LFLOWJINGO@SBCGLOBAL.NET.

Linda Flowers, Treasurer

CLAN LESLIE ITEMS FROM THE QUARTERMASTER

Clan Leslie items for sale are listed on our clan website, www.clanlesliesociety.org Click on the Leslie Badges, Crests and Flags link. The list of items includes a description, price, and photo along with how to order. All prices are in \$US and include postage and packaging. The Clan Leslie items now available for sale are listed below.

- 1) Grip Fast - The Leslies in History, a beautifully hardbound book, detailing the Leslie clan from its inception (290 pages), authored by Alexander Leslie Klieforth and signed by our Clan Chief, The Honorable Alexander Leslie. Price \$66, including shipping.
- 2) Post Cards-Two styles. One style contains King Malcolm's promise to Bartolf and the origination of our clan name; and the other style provides open space for your personal notes. Please specify which style you prefer. \$5.00 for a package of 25 post cards.
- 3) Grip Fast Pin -- \$3.00
- 4) Grip Fast Patch -- \$3.00

The post cards were developed by Laura Messing and can be used by members to tell family and friends of upcoming Scottish events, to recruit prospective CLSI members and to help increase interest in all events Scottish. Also, a **free** packet of "giveaway" postcards is available for those Conveners/Tent Hosts who host a CLSI tent.

Payment should be made to Linda Flowers, CLSI Treasurer, 302 SW 3rd, Tuttle, OK, 73089, USA. lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net

Peter M. Leslie, scotslad11@yahoo.com

KILTS AVAILABLE

We have the opportunity to order acrylic kilts in the Leslie red tartan. They are \$69 each or with accessories \$169. Also available are hostess kilts for women. These are longer and suitable for dressier occasions. If you are interested in ordering one, please contact Ralph at the Clansman at 412-276-3242. His email is clnsman@aol.com. He said the best way to contact him is through email. For measurements he needs following: (a) waist around belly button (b) hips at widest point (c) length from belly button to top of knee. I also have a picture that shows how to measure for one. You can email me and I will send it to you. For a hostess kilt, you would need to measure longer as the kilt is longer. I have a regular kilt in the green and a hostess kilt in the red. Several members have these kilts. We are very pleased with the quality and they are made in Scotland. The acrylic is much cooler and less expensive than wool. You can also contact Linda Flowers 405-381-3577, LFLOWJINGO@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Linda Flowers, Treasurer

CLSI LIBRARY FUND

The second Objective of our Constitution is "To promote, foster, collect and preserve historical and genealogical records and information about descendants of Clan Leslie throughout the world."

The donation of the book by Thomas G. Leslie titled *The Remarkable Mr. Jerome*, written by Anita Leslie (1954) prompted me to do a search of books by and about Leslies that were for sale by Abebooks and Amazon. I was pleasantly surprised to discover many such books for sale, and many at very low prices. I did some further research and discovered that most of these books had been in public and college libraries, and had been sold for pennies on the dollar to various antiquarian book sellers. Libraries do this when there seems to be no further interest in the book. And the antiquarian book sellers post a price, and if the book doesn't sell, it may be offered with free shipping. And then if it doesn't sell, the book is sent to the trash.

Another discovery was that a number of the Leslies (and also probably Abernathys, Moores, and other Leslie sept) have written many books. Shane Leslie, the father of Anita, wrote or translated 60 books, and Anita Leslie wrote at least 12 books. Shane's brother Lionel, in addition to being a sculptor also wrote books and poems. Anita's brother, Desmond Leslie, an RAF fighter pilot in World War II also wrote books, and this is just one branch of the Leslie family! Some of these books are very inexpensive, while some of the older books are somewhat rare and are rather expensive. *The Gilt and the Gingerbread* by Anita Leslie (1981) with approximately five copies for sale worldwide is available from \$50 to \$294. *Wilderness Trails in Three Continents* by Lionel A. D. Leslie (1931) with approximately four copies available worldwide is priced from \$100 (Switzerland) to \$134 (USA).

The bottom line is that some of these books will disappear in the trash soon, while the price on others continues to rise to higher and higher levels and I haven't even identified all of the books from this one branch of the Leslie family. In order to "collect and preserve" at least some of these books, the CLSI has created a Library Committee to identify books to add to the Clan Leslie Collection at the University of Guelph, and to purchase the most significant or most in danger of "disappearing." To make this happen, we need funds to make these purchases. I am asking for donations specifically for the "CLSI Library Fund." If you would like to contribute, please send your check to our Treasurer, Linda Flowers, and mark the check for the "CLSI Library Fund." Your donations will be sincerely appreciated.

David Leslie White, Chieftain

CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY CARDS OFFERED AT A DISCOUNT

We have several cards that that we sold at Christmas in 2011 and 2012. The 2011 card features Leslie Castle. We have these available with the Christmas verse. The 2012 card features Balgonie Castle. We have both the plain card and the card with the Christmas verse. We are offering these at a special price of \$10 for a pack of 10.

If you are interested in purchasing, contact Linda Flowers, 405-381-3577 or LFLOWJINGO@SBCGLOBAL.NET. As usual, we accept checks, money orders, Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and PayPal. If paying by PayPal, use the email address LFLOWERS1954@YAHOO.COM. If paying by credit card, I need the card type, name on the card, card number, expiration date, and security code from the back. Hurry and purchase yours before they are all gone.



MEMBERS OVER 85 YEARS OF AGE

Did you know that if you have been a member of Clan Leslie Society International for at least 10 years and reach the age of 85, the CLSI will continue your membership without further payment of annual dues?

Contact Linda Flowers
lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net

YOU CAN CHOOSE HOW YOU RECEIVE THIS PUBLICATION

As you know, you can receive this Journal by regular mail or email. It is your choice. If you would like to change your method of delivery from email to regular mail or regular mail to email, all you have to do is notify me. I will be happy to make the change. We want all our members to receive the publications by the method of delivery that is best for them.

The Grip Fast Journal is published in January, April, July, and October. In the other months, the Grip Fast Online is sent to those members who have an email address on file. Please make sure you keep your email address up-to-date so you receive Grip Fast Online.

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

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS



The Council is considering offering a series of Clan Leslie Christmas ornaments each year. The first one for this year would have Clan Leslie crest on one side and the words Clan Leslie 2013 on the back. We would offer a different one each year, making them a collectable series. They could be displayed year round on ornament stands. I can just see them on my piano for me to enjoy all year. The price is yet to be determined as we are working with a vendor in Scotland but we estimate the cost to be \$10-\$15 each. What we need from our members is a response from you so we know how many to order. Are you interested in having an ornament and how many? If you could respond to me, it would help us make this decision.

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

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Quartermaster	Peter M Leslie — Phone 206-890-3053 3930 Knowles Road, Wenatchee, WA, 98801, USA	scotslad11@yahoo.com
Webmaster & Web Site	Brian Lesslie Jr. — Ph. 01738 560687 117 Nimmo Ave., Perth, PW1 2PV, Scotland Clan Leslie Society International Web Site -	bless7506@blueyonder.co.uk www.clanlesliesociety.org

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CONVENORS HOSTING CLAN LESLIE TENTS

Aberdeenshire, Scotland – David Leslie from Leslie
 Iowa – Chris Chamberlin
 Kansas – Tom Huxtable
 Michigan – David Leslie from Canton
 North Carolina and Virginia – Lew and Christine Johnson
 North East USA – Laura Messing
 Oklahoma – Linda Flowers
 Southern and Central Ontario, Canada – William Leslie
 Southern California – Susan Abernethy