



# The Honourable Alexander Leslie, Chief of Clan Leslie

## The Flodden Service



It was a chilly morning on the 9th September 2013. It was, we understand, a chilly morning 500 years earlier. Then, the day would bring a sea of blood and the greatest catastrophe ever suffered by Scotland. Now, the day brought a solemn commemoration of the battle that ripped out the best of Scottish governance, vision and society.

Flodden.

The service was two years in the making and we had enormous support. From the Minister of St. Giles' Cathedral to Isla St Clair, from the New Club in Edinburgh to Maxwells who donated the flowers, everyone was behind the enterprise.

The earliest of decisions was to make sure that the service would not be misconstrued as some strange 'celebration' of the disaster. So, we set out to raise money for two contemporary Scottish charities that look after soldiers who are damaged in current conflicts. We chose Combat Stress and Erskine.

Energy company EdF and auction house Bonhams sponsored a reception after the service, so that all donations could go straight to the charities. We raised over £25,000 for them.

The service itself was beautiful. It was solemn, with stirring songs and sad, with Flowers of the Forest sung with extraordinary beauty by Isla St Clair. It was also a reunion, with over 40 chiefs gathering to commemorate ancestors (such as ours, William, 3rd Earl of Rothes) who were lost. As such, it was, ultimately, an upbeat affair.

A highlight was the address by historian and sought after speaker Alistair Moffat. If anyone would like the full speech, please drop me a line and I will gladly email it to you. Here are two excerpts:

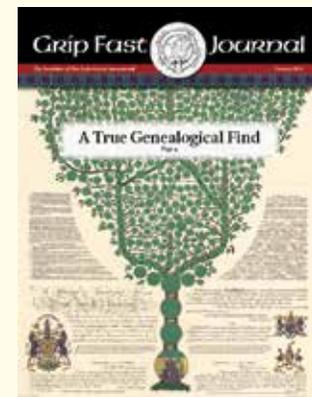
1. When dawn broke on the morning of 10th September, 1513, the landscape of hell was revealed. On the gently undulating northern ridges of Branxton Hill more than 10,000 men lay dead or dying. In the midst of the carnage were the naked, plundered bodies of King James IV of Scotland, his half-brother, Alexander Stewart, Archbishop of St Andrews, George Hepburn, Bishop of the Isles, two abbots, nine great earls of Scotland, fourteen lords of parliament, innumerable knights and noblemen of lesser degree and many thousands of farmers, ploughmen, weavers and burgesses. It was the appalling aftermath of the battle of Flodden, the greatest military disaster in Scotland's history.
2. At the same time, James IV was about to make a catastrophic decision, a crucial error of judgment. Instead of occupying an elevated position at the rear of his vast army, he chose to lead from the front. His division raced down Branxton Hill and as they reached the lower slopes and

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## ABOUT THE COVER

A genealogical tree approved by the Lord Lyon. Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.



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## The Flodden Service (con't)

much softer ground, many men began to skid and lose their footing. This unsteadiness made it very difficult for them to control their long, 12 foot pikes. The wet ground made them charge out of formation, only engaging piecemeal with the solidly planted ranks of English billmen. With their shorter, more easily handled bills, they began to slice into James IV's division. And as the men at the back saw the Scottish pikes go down, they hesitated and many of them ran, believing their king to be killed. By leading from the front, James was immediately submerged in the ruck of the fighting, only able to see what was directly in front of him, in no position to direct his forces. The result was disaster.

And the result was to be felt by generations. The only people left to Govern Scotland were children and old men.

The service was a great success, money was raised for two important charities and the profile of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs was raised, due in part to the extensive television and press coverage we received.

The moment that I will long remember is when I saw a BBC television sound engineer behind a pillar waiting for Isla St Clair to sing Flowers of the Forest. We had told him before the service that she did not want to use a microphone. I could see him thinking 'this is going to be rubbish, I bet I can't use....' and then he stopped as she began to sing and he looked up. And, I could not be sure, but I thought I saw a tear in his eye.

Alex Leslie

October 2013

Read more about the battle of Flodden:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Flodden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Flodden)



# David Leslie White, Chieftain, Clan Leslie Society International

## The Bluebells of Scotland



The CD “The Bluebells of Scotland” by the King’s Own Scottish Borderers Military Band, apparently recorded about 1978 and re-mastered on a CD in 2003 before the KOSB Regiment was “amalgamated” into the Royal Regiment of Scotland. If you like Scottish military bands (with lots of pipes, drums and brass) and/or have a fondness for the KOSB, I suggest you buy this CD. It is very well done, both the performance and the recording. There are thunderous marches (“The March of the Cameron Men”) and sweet tunes like “The Skye Boat Song “ and the “Highland Cradle Song”. And of course, the Regimental Quick March most loved by the KOSB, “Blue Bonnets O’er the Border.” I don’t know how much longer this CD will be available.

Music in Scotland has it available for about \$9.42 US (depending on the exchange rate). You can order from them at [www.musicinscotland.com](http://www.musicinscotland.com) CD 6520.

Or, you can order from Delta Music for about 3.59 Pounds (about \$5.56 US). You can order from them at [www.deltamusic.co.uk](http://www.deltamusic.co.uk) Again, Cd 6520. In either case, I suspect shipping is extra.

The pride, esprit de corps and camaraderie of the KOSB is clearly present. “Once a Borderer, Always a Borderer.”

## 52nd Annual Salado Scottish Clan Gathering & Highland Games

The 52nd Salado Scottish Clan Gathering & Highland Games will be held in Salado, Texas November 8th thru the 10th. The entertainment this year looks very good, including Carl Peterson, Don Gabbert, Hugh Morrison and the Oak and Embers Celtic music band. Carl Peterson was born in Greenock Scotland on the banks of the river Clyde, and he is the author of the book Now’s the Day and Now’s the Hour: Scotland Remembers the Alamo. Of course, there will be the Highland athletics, and competition for pipe bands, Highland dance, and solo piping and drumming. The Salado event is the oldest Scottish festival in Texas.

This year, the Gathering & Highland Games has moved from the Field of Dreams, behind the Salado Holiday Inn Express, back to the Civic Center on North Main Street. Salado is located on I-35, about 8 miles south of Belton and about 50 miles north of Austin. The Tattoo will be held on November 9th (Saturday) on the ruins of College Hill on the south end of Main Street. Frank and Lynne Leslie will be the tent hosts again this year.

For additional information, you can go to their current website at <http://www.saladoscottishgames.org/>

November weather is usually warm sunny days and cool nights. This is also a great opportunity to do some Christmas shopping at the upscale jewelry stores and many antique shops in Salado.

Hope to see many of you there!

## Welcome New Members

**Diane Leslie DeLeon**  
Madisonville, TN

**Brenda Taylor Leslie**  
Madisonville, TN

**Bobbie Peacock**  
Mathiston, MS

**Terry Moore Kovac**  
Rock Hill, SC

**Mary E. Quigley**  
Fort Bragg, NC  
Inceptor Member (under 18)

**Bryan Aldridge**  
Robbinsville, NC

**Mark Weller**  
Wapakoneta, OH  
Associate Member

**Ryan Leslie**  
Edgewater, NJ

**Linda Leslie McNamee**  
Clear Spring, MD

**Todd Leslie**  
Arlington, OH

**Tim More**  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Canada

**Cindy Flora**  
Greensboro, NC

**Marilyn Leslie McQuarrie**  
Vancouver, BC  
Canada

**Sorina Abernathey**  
Hiawatha, IA

# Tim Leslie, Historian, Clan Leslie Society International

## A True Genealogical Find



Over the past year or two, I kept coming across references to a genealogical tree approved by the Lord Lyon (who, besides being responsible for tracking heraldic arms used by individuals, is also responsible for the official genealogy of the royal family of Scotland.)

These references included information about our Bartholomew and his wife Beatrix. Finally, I had to seek it out. Once again I found just what I wanted at that wonderful institution, the National Library of Scotland. For a very reasonable cost, they sent me a CD with a VERY high resolution picture/scan of a chart entitled “An historical and genealogical tree of the royal family of Scotland”, created in 1797 by a genealogist for his Highness, the Prince of Wales. This document is significant in supporting two of our most ancient traditions – that of Bartholomew marrying King Malcolm’s sister Beatrix, and that of all Leslie’s in Scotland having descended from Bartholomew. The fact that the office of the Lord Lyon has approved this genealogy is very significant for us, as there simply is no higher authority regarding Scottish genealogy than the office of the Lord Lyon. Please refer to the accompanying picture – the overall chart is quite beautiful, and the portion dearest to us is shown enlarged. The National Library of Scotland very generously allowed us to reproduce this image for our newsletter. If anyone wants to obtain their own copy of the chart, please email me, and I can share the link on the National Library of Scotland site where I obtained my copy.

Another interesting thing you might notice is the reference to “of whom Findressy is Chief”; i.e. this is stating that Findressy is the Chief of the Leslie’s, as The Honorable Alexander Leslie is Chief of Clan Leslie in the present day. The Rothes line has long been considered the Chief of Clan Leslie, and when this chart was published, Jane Elizabeth Leslie was Countess of Rothes. The word “Findressy” gave me some pause, as there is almost no reference on the internet to such a place name, excepting a reference in the Records of Elgin, and in it, Findressy was specifically mentioned in conjunction with Leslie’s. Eventually I determined that Findressy was also known in the present day as Findrassie, in Morayshire, Scotland. Findrassie is a couple of miles north of Elgin, and Rothes is about 11 miles south of Elgin. The Countess of Rothes was married in London, and died in London, and was never “Laird of Findrassie”.

Regarding Findrassie, more information is to be found in our own Historical Records of the Family of Leslie by Col. Charles J. Leslie, Baron of Balquhain. The Leslie’s of Findrassie are a branch of the Rothes family, which ties the Countess of Rothes and Findrassie closely together, but still strongly suggests that the Findressy referred to in the chart was not the Countess of Rothes. Unfortunately (from a clarity standpoint) the Findrassie Leslie’s were embroiled in legal battles for many years leading up to the time of the chart, arguing over who was legally the “Laird of Findrassie”. The courts ultimately decided Dr. Abraham Leslie was Laird of Findrassie, on December 13th of 1785. The royal genealogist may have been referring to Dr. Abraham Leslie, or to his daughter who succeeded him as Laird of Findrassie, Caroline Jemima Leslie. I had no idea that such a simple statement, “of whom Findressy is Chief,” would lead to so much inconclusive research!

In summary, this chart is a fascinating piece of history and a valuable reference regarding the nobility of Scotland. And the fact that our progenitor, Bartholomew, is referenced in it, and the way it supports two of our most ancient traditions, is simply wonderful.



# Balgonie Castle

Written by Stuart Morris of Balgonie

*Editor's note: The first half of this intriguing history was told in the July, 2013 Grip Fast Journal. We are indebted to Stuart Morris, author of this article, for bringing to life the story of this landmark. As promised, here is the "rest of the story!"*

"The Second Bishop's War occurred in 1640. Leslie marched the Scottish Army in to the north of England, taking Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In 1641 the King created Leslie, Earl of Leven and Lord Balgonie. Leslie then commanded the Scottish Army in the English Civil War, entering England with 3,000 horse and 10,000 foot. He had his own regiments, the Earl of Leven's Life Guard of Horse and the Earl of Leven's Lifeguard of Foot. These were regular regiments in the Scottish Army, wearing red uniforms. He commanded the entire Parliamentary Army at the battle of Marston Moor, 1644.

In May, 1646 the King surrendered to Leslie, knowing that he would be treated properly. It is on record that they played golf together. Leslie was going to bring the King up to Scotland but his political masters forced him to hand the King over to Cromwell. He was so appalled at this intervention that he tried to resign from the Scottish Army. His resignation was refused, so he returned to Scotland, giving effective command of the Army to Lieutenant General David Leslie, later Lord Newark.

In 1650 the Scottish Army sided with Charles II. Leslie was still in nominal command of the Army but David Leslie was in effective command. It was the intervention of the political and religious masters of the Army that led to the defeat at the Battle of Dunbar. Leslie was a good age by now, so when the Scottish Army entered England, to be defeated at Worcester, he remained in Scotland raising and training the reserve Army. He was captured outside Alyth by General Monk, initially imprisoned at Broughty Castle before being shipped to the Tower of London. Queen Christina of Sweden intervened, asking Cromwell to release her old friend. Leslie returned to Balgonie via Sweden, to thank the Queen.

In spite of his active life, Leslie died in his own bed at Balgonie on the 4th of April, 1661. He was buried "in his ain aisle" in Markinch Church following a midnight torchlight procession on the 19th.

Leslie's son and heir, Colonel Lord Balgonie, had died from wounds sustained at Marston Moor. He was, therefore, succeeded by his grandson, who was only Earl for three years. The 2nd Earl left two infant daughters, who were made wards of John, Earl (later Duke) of Rothes.

In 1666, the Earl of Rothes ordered the building of a Skale and Plat Tower between the Great Tower and Hall House. This was built by Robert Milne of Balfarg, 7th Hereditary King's Master Mason for Scotland.

Margaret, Countess of Leven, married the Hon. Francis Montgomery of Giffen. He was a wastrel who bankrupted the Balgonie estates. They had no children so Margaret was succeeded by her sister Catherine, Countess of Leven, who died unmarried. The Earldom passed to David, son of George 1st, Earl of Melville and Lady Catherine Leslie (sister of the 2nd Earl of Leven.) David had spent his early life in the Netherland, at the Court of William of Orange. He had been appointed a Colonel at the age of 21.

The new Earl of Leven returned to Britain with William. In 1689 he raised a regiment in Edinburgh, within two hours of recruiting. This regiment was called Leven's Regiment, then the Edinburgh Regiment, then the 25th Regiment of Foot, eventually becoming The King's Own Scottish Borderers, who along with all of Scotland's Noble Regiments, went out of existence in 2006, through the short-sightedness of an unthinking government.

Leven's Regiment first saw action at the Battle of Killiecrankie, opposing Bonny Dundee. It is interesting to note that the Viscount of Dundee and Earl of Leven both descended from the Lundin of Balgonie family, so they were distant cousins. This was also the first battle to use a new weapon of mass destruction, the bayonet!

The Earl of Leven went on to become General Officer Commanding Scotland and Master Gunner of Scotland. He was also Governor of Edinburgh Castle and the first Governor of the Bank of Scotland, as well as first Secretary of State for Scotland. He spent much of his life trying to reclaim money owed him by the government (the wages for his regiment had come out of his own pocket.)

He built the last addition to Balgonie in 1702, a three story section of the East wing. This was built by James Smith of Whitehill, Surveyor of the Royal Works, who had recently built his masterpiece, Melville House (for the 1st Earl of Melville.) This was built in a more comfortable style, larger windows, in equal rows, with thinner walls to allow more internal space. However, there was still an eye on defense as the lower windows were furnished with iron bars.

The 3rd Earl had the surrounding lands turned into 350 acres of parks and gardens, almost forming a perfect rectangle. This work included an 11 acre walled garden, which in turn was divided into two. The northern half was a formal laid out garden with a spectacular sundial as a centre piece dated 1696. This sundial was removed in 1824 and taken to Melville house where it sat in the centre of the entrance court. During the Second World War, Melville was used as a special training centre by the Army. Unfortunately the sundial was used for target practice and only the base remains today. The work carried out to the castle between 1635 and 1702 had transformed Balgonie from a medieval castle into an Earl's Palace.

On the 6th of January 1716, Rob Roy MacGregor, whilst ransacking Falkland Palace, learned that General Cadogan was going to garrison Balgonie. So he decided to come here first. He came via Leslie, where he got a rough reception, then to Markinch, where he fought a running battle through the streets, capturing twenty Hanoverians (mainly Swiss mercenaries) and marched on Balgonie. The Earl was in Edinburgh at the time, so there would have only been a few servants in the castle. Rob Roy walked into the castle unopposed, with 150 to 200 men. He clearly went through the wine cellar, as we are constantly picking up pieces of broken bottles that have been strewn all over the castle and surrounding area. We do not know how long the MacGregors were here but probably only a few days. The Earl wrote to the government demanding £ 2,000 compensation for the damage that had been done to Balgonie. With the death of his father, the Earldoms of Leven and Melville were united, although it was not until the 7th Earl that they were styled Earl of Leven and Melville. This was out of protest, when the Scottish Statesman Henry Dundass was elevated to the Peerage, taking the title Viscount of Melville (after his home, Melville Castle.)

One notable American visitor to Balgonie was Dr. Benjamin Rush from Philadelphia. He did his medical training at Edinburgh University, then the world leader in medicine. He became friendly with the family and would spend his holidays at Balgonie Castle, where he said, "It was here that I first saw true domestic happiness in its highest perfection." He twice proposed to one of the Earl's daughters and was twice rebuffed. Rush went on to found the first purpose-built hospital in America and the first post-revolution college. He was also a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and served on General Washington's Staff during the War of Independence.

The Hon. William Leslie was the second son of the Earl of Leven. William was commissioned into the 42nd Regiment of Foot, The Black Watch (which was also the regiment that the future Duke of Wellington was commissioned into also.) He then bought a captaincy in the 17th Regiment of Foot. On the 3rd of January 1777, William was killed at the Battle of Princeton, where his body was placed on the communal pyre.

On discovering this friend's death, Rush told Washington about his experience in Scotland and about how well he had been treated by his friend's family. Washington was so moved that he ordered the body to be taken off the communal pyre, to be buried with full military honours at Washington's expense.

Another revolution happened towards the end of the century, this time in France. Britain had a small standing Army so to combat the threat of invasion, the Government passed the Militia Act in 1797. The Militia was to be raised by ballot divided between the parishes. The problem was that it was a secret ballot where each Deputy Lieutenant held the list of all eligible men in his area. On the 21st of August a mob of several hundred people descended

## ADDENDUM TO THE HISTORY OF BALGONIE CASTLE

Descendants of the Sibbald family who were the first tenants at Balgonie emigrated to Ontario, Canada in the 1830's. They bought property which has evolved into The Briars Resort and Spa at Jackson's Point on Lake Simcoe. This means they have been in the area for 170 years. Dr. Frank Sibbald purchased the property in 1878 and quickly added unique features to its landscape including a peacock house (the only such structure in Ontario), a barn that eventually hosted summer theatre programs for many years until it burned down, and he planted cedar hedges which gave the road around the property its name, Hedge Road. The Briars quickly became a regional focal point for agriculture and hospitality and over the years it has evolved into an elite resort destination in Ontario. Jim and I have been regular visitors over the last 5 years or so, including their New Year's Eve party which is really a Scottish ceildh. There is a provincial park not too far away named after the Sibbald family, Sibbald Point Provincial Park, which sits on Sibbald family property which they owned until 1951 when they sold it to the County of York. Two major attractions in the park were constructed by the Sibbalds during the 19th century: the family home, initially a small cottage but was transformed into a rural estate and completed in the 1840's - the home was called "Eildon Hall" after the family estate in Scotland. Today the building serves as a museum, the Sibbald Memorial Museum. There is also St. George's Anglican Church, also built by the Sibbald family, and completed in 1877. It continues to serve the surrounding community. John Sibbald, his wife Barbara, and their two sons run the resort presently and have done so for many years.

Bonnie Leslie Rudnisky

upon Balbirnie House, seat of John Balfour of Balbirnie, DL, to demand his list. By the time the mob came to Balgonie, there were more than one thousand. Lord Balgonie, DL, was also forced to hand over his list, but only after the threat to burn down Balgonie.

The Riot Act was read and the ring-leaders arrested. James Ramsay, son of Alexander Ramsay, Baron Officer of Balgonie, was sentenced to one year in the Tollbooth of Edinburgh, and to keep the peace for a further three years. John Christie, a tenant, was transported for seven years with the proviso that if he returned before that time he would be executed “without benefit of Clergy.” The following year, Lord Balgonie was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the 5th Fife Militia.

By the end of the 18th century, the Earl of Leven was in financial difficulties. In 1800 the Earl established the Leven Iron Works, but this venture failed. In 1824, the 8th Earl sold Balgonie to Sir James Balfour of Whittingham, MP, for the astronomical sum of £109,000. Sir James was the son of John Balfour of Balbirnie (the Balfours of Balbirnie also descend from Sibbald of Balgonie.) He was also the grandfather of Arthur J. Balfour, 1st Earl Balfour, and Prime Minister 1902-05.

Sir James gave Balgonie to his second son Charles Balfour of Newton Don. The Balfours bought Balgonie as an investment as the estate was capable of producing vast quantities of coal. The castle was abandoned to fall into decay. By the 1840s there were letters appearing in the Edinburgh newspapers, concerned at the rate that Balgonie was deteriorating. The stone floors were concreted in 1912, and plans were drawn up to restore Balgonie.

It was at this time that a human skeleton was discovered under the floor of the Great Hall.

In 1922, the smaller half of the East Range was restored to be the Estate Office. During the Second World War, the castle was used for exercises by the Home Guard and elements of the 1st Polish Airborne Division. The one artifact that we have found from this period is a .303 Drill Round.

The estate office was abandoned in the 1950's, and then followed two decades of vandalism, which destroyed the last of the 17th century plaster ceilings and the Gate House, which had been almost complete in 1961. In 1950 the Estate was sold to the Balgonie Colliery Company, later renamed the Balgonie Estate, Ltd.

In 1911, the Castle was sold to David Maxwell from Edinburgh. He carried out restoration to the Tower. He also oversaw an archaeological excavation in the Courtyard. One of the discoveries was the well; however this was filled in again after the dig. We bought Balgonie in 1985 and began the slow restoration process. We re-uncovered the well and rebuilt the wellhead. We also deforested the ruins and cleared several hundreds of tons of rubble, taking care to preserve the usable stone. The chapel was restored in 1989 and the gooth wedding took place in May, 2007.

The Great Hall was restored back to what it would have looked like in the Middle Ages. The aim is to restore the Hall house, East Range and Gate House back to their former glory.

## OVERSEAS CONNECTIONS

The Varmlands Brigade in the Swedish Army carries on the Honours of the Varmlands Regiment (1622-2000) raised by the then Colonel Alexander Leslie for King Gustavus Adolphus.

Sir Alexander Stuart was the first Premier of New South Wales in Australia. He was born in Milton of Balgonie, where his family owned the Flax Mill. Part of the town of Wollongong, NSW, is called Balgonie in his honour.

The Town of Balgonie in Saskatchewan, Canada, was named after the castle in the late 19th century. It celebrated its centenary of gaining town status in August, 2007. In 1993 the town was granted a Coat of Arms by the Chief Herald of Canada. These Arms incorporate the Arms of Sibbald of Balgonie and Morris of Balgonie.

The Chilean Navy has a ship called “Sibbald” which is named after an early hero of the Chilean Navy. All Sibbalds descend from Sibbald of Balgonie. Another renowned Sibbald in Scotland was Sir Robert Sibbald of Kipps. He founded the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal Bontanic Garden in Ediburgh. He was also physician to Charles II and James VII and Geographer Royal for Scotland. He was also a noted author of scientific books and the first definitive history of Fife.

## ARTISTIC BALGONIE

The tune “Lord Balgonie’s Favourite” was recorded by the renowned Neil Gow as an old “Highland Air.” This tune is now better known as the theme tune of the highly acclaimed film, “The Piano.”

“General Leslie’s March to Long Marston Moor” is an old song which commemorates the Battle of Marston Moor, 1644. The music to this song is “Blue Bonnets O’er the Border,” which was also the Regimental March of the King’s Own Scottish Borderers, which was coincidentally raised by Leslie’s great grandson.

The pipe tune “Raymond Morris of Balgonie and Eddergoll March” was composed by John Winton, Piper to the Laird of Balgonie.

The pipe tune “Salute to the Steward” received its World Premiere at Balgonie in 1998.

The epic and Shakesperian poem, “The Maid of Balgonie” was published in 1842, all thirty-eight verses of it.

The poem “Balgonie Castle” by John Ball, Bard to the Laird of Balgonie, was published in an anthology of contemporary Scottish Poets.

“The Balgonie Birdman” is an animation produced by the Film Board of Canada. It is the true story of Balgonie resident Bill Gibson, who tries to be the first Canadian to fly. An unfortunate accident means that he becomes the second Canadian to fly.

The magnificent timbered roof of the Parliament Hall in Edinburgh is made from Balgonie Oak, gifted to the Parliament by the 1st Earl of Leven.

## Upcoming Festivals with CLSI Tents

**NOVEMBER, 2013**

**Salado Scottish Gathering & Highland Games**

<http://saladoscottishgames.com/>

Salado, TX

November 8-10

Hosted by Frank and Lynne Leslie

## 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

**Texas** – Frank and Lynne Leslie

**Washington** – Steve Olling

## Aboyne Highland Games, Saturday August 3, 2013

At 5.00am on the morning of the Aboyne Games, Leslie began her final preparation of the last minute food items for our buffet table which we provide for our visitors who call on the Leslie Tent, one of nine Clan Tents at Aboyne.

After loading up the 4x4 we set off at 7.45am for our 40 minute drive to Aboyne. The weather looked promising as we left The Coach House at Leslie with the sun rising in a clear blue sky. However, as we travelled nearer and nearer to Aboyne the sky gradually clouded over and things did not look too promising weather-wise for the day.

Not long after our arrival at our tent, Brian Snr. and Petra Lesslie and their son and daughter in law Brian Jnr. and Catherine arrived and we all set to putting up tables, hanging Leslie information boards, setting the buffet table, displaying Leslie items for sale and hoisting flags.

By 10.00am we had completed setting up and were ready to receive visitors when the gates opened at 10.30am.

While we were busying ourselves setting up we had not been aware that the weather had been changing and to our relief we realised that the sun was starting to break through the clouds and by about 11.00 was shining in a blue sky, with a fairly brisk breeze blowing, which made it a perfect day for the Games, pleasantly warm.

Soon we were entertaining our first visitors with information on Clan Leslie and its history, all helped along with a glass of wine, beer or soft drink and of course the excellent buffet.

During the day, which became very busy, just under 100 visitors passed through the Leslie Tent. But apart from the 6 Leslies manning the tent and a lady with Lesley for a middle name we did not have any other Leslies.

This did not deter us in any way however as we made many friends from all over the world who experienced true welcoming Scottish hospitality and fellowship that day.

The Games were a great success and although small to American standards, about 8,000 attendees, the Aboyne Highland Games must surely rank as one of the best of the 'friendly family highland games' in Scotland.

My sincere thanks must go to Brian Snr, Petra, Brian Jnr., Catherine and especially to my wife Leslie for their help and support on this very special day.

David Leslie  
from Leslie,  
Baron Bailie of Balquhain



## Chaplain's Corner

### Samantha Gray, Chaplain, CLSI



In Chaplain's Corner we have been exploring the ancient Ogham (OH-am) alphabet associated with trees which were symbols for periods of time for the druids and early peoples of the Bronze Age. Their beliefs mingled with Christianity and come down to us today in forms recognizable to people of many faiths.

In this edition of Grip Fast

we will continue our inquiry into the Ogham trees beginning with Holly.

Holly, or Tinne (Cheen-yuh) comes after oak in the tree alphabet and governed from July 8 through August 4 each year. The holly of our ancestors was *Ilex Aquafolia*, with dark glossy leaves and red to red-orange berries, common in the British Isles and most of Europe. The holly we in the USA and Canada are most familiar with is the *Ilex Opaca*, with dull olive green leaves and vivid red berries in winter. Holly wood is dense, and cream to white with little visible grain, and was highly prized for small harps and other instruments as well as furniture. The wood becomes even harder when worked in fire, and was used for chariot wheels and spear shafts and other weapons requiring a solid, tough wood that would not splinter or break easily under pressure in battle. Because of this, and its thorns, holly came to signify protection. It also stood for death and rebirth. The ancient Celtic peoples believed that there were two kings, the oak and holly, who did battle with one another at each solstice. On the summer solstice, the holly king (winter) defeated his brother the oak king, who died until the winter solstice came around, when he then arose and defeated the holly king in a yearly celebration of the cycle of death and rebirth. This was not a grim occasion for people who lived close to the land and accepted death as a part of life, indeed the continuation of it in Druid belief, but in another dimension. It was a festive time and enacted with mock battles, fair maidens being crowned as Oak or Holly queens and with what would eventually be referred to as Morris Dancing. This cycle can be seen in the legend of King Arthur in the battle between Gawain (Oak and summer) and the Green Knight (Holly and winter). As vernacular English developed, the word "holy" was associated with the holly tree, considered the second most sacred tree in the land. As English became the

most common tongue, Tinne came to be called Holly, and many legends arose about it. The carol "The Holly and the Ivy" speaks to Christian symbolism of the trees leaves and berries. A holly tree on one's property was thought to be a sure protection against evil. Hazel, or Coll ("Cull") ruled the period of August 5 to September 1 and was associated with wisdom in the arts and sciences, poetic inspiration and healing. This came about because a salmon ate nine hazelnuts that fell into its pool, absorbed the knowledge from them and was then eaten in turn by a man who became even wiser as a result. The number nine was sacred to the Druids as a multiple of the divinenumbertwoforthetriplicegoddess. Later, Christians also valued the number nine as a multiple of the Trinity. To this day, hazelnuts are often found associated with the winter holidays and are prominent in the stores around Christmas time. Forked hazel ticks were used for dowsing and woven into gateposts and fences to ward off all manner of evil. Hazel trees planted by dwellings also ensured safety from marauders and even Vikings in some places. Because of the knowledge associated with the hazel tree, Druid priests, called Flamen, would make their wands of hazelwood. Druids placed a very high degree of value on knowledge, and all learning was done by memorizing whatever was being studied. There were no books in the College of Druids, and exams entailed being able to recite perfectly pages and pages of poetry or information on various subjects. It's no wonder hazel was cherished by them. The hazel tree also imparted good luck and inspiration.

Vine, or Muin ("mWIN" or MUN") influenced the period of September 2, to September 29. The original vine was the blackberry, a native of the British Isles and used for food and spirits from time-out-of-mind. The vine was particularly honored at this season of the year because it was harvest, and signified that shortly cold weather would follow. Berries could be dried and kept well in this form against the winter food shortages. They could be – and were – distilled into a warming alcoholic beverage to brighten the long winter evenings. Because vines grew upwards, they were believed to point to the Gods as the source of this gift of food and drink. Muin sustained people during the long cold months, and also fed cattle and other hooved animals who were able to chew the less thorny stems and leaves as a nutritious addition to their usual hay. Blackberries have a high vitamin C content in their berries and in their leaves, which were also brewed for a tonic. Vines were honored as a sacred gift to nourish, heal, protect and sustain life. The beverage in sufficient quantity raised gloomy spirits, inspired song and merriment and

### “Lang May Your Lum Reek”

was given to warriors to “warm the blood” before battle and engender courage. Where blackberries were not available, mulberries were used, and later, when grapes were brought and cultivated, they became the preferred source of wine, although both of the fruits continued to be used by the common folk. Gort or Ivy (Gort”) was the tree for September 30 through October 27. It was the same Hedra Helix species brought hundreds of years later to the USA and Canada by settlers. Ivy is also a vine, but left on its own to mature it develops a thick stem, the leaves become spade shaped and the plant produces miniscule greenish flowers which turn into pale grey berries. The vines become hairy with tiny suckers that penetrate stone or wood, and eventually will overcome the strongest opposition to its growth. Because of this, our ancestors named the ivy a “Chieftain tree’. It’s characteristics – relentless, unstoppable, tenacious, undying, and able to overcome anything, no matter how tough, were exactly the qualities these peoples sought in their most fearless, successful and respected leaders. In addition, the ivy often wrapped itself in a spiral around whatever it grew on, and the spiral was a sacred symbol to the Celts, signifying the spinning in and out of life. The Triskele, a frequently seen carving in stone and wood, or embroidered on cloth, is an ancient design of three adjoining spirals. This had significance to the Pagan peoples as a reflection of their triple Goddess; and to the Christian Peoples, it was a symbol of the Holy Trinity. This association resulted in the ivy often being planted around sacred sites. Witness the need to remove ivy from historic churches in order to preserve the stonework from the plant. In an interesting and ironic twist for plants related to things religious, the holly and the ivy were originally written about in early verse as a battle between the sexes; the sound, tall and strong masculine holly tree, eventually overcome by the twining, feminine and far more slender creepers of the ivy. What Freud would make of that I’m not sure, but it speaks to the eternal differences between men and women. Perhaps we should all be grateful that some things in this often turbulent and confusing universe are constant. Blessings to all kith and kin for a warm, sunny and fruitful harvest!

**Lang May Yer Lum Reek**, was and is still a birthday wish that you live to a ripe old age to tend your hearth, and therefore your chimney will smoke for many a year.

We wish a Happy Birthday to the following members of CLSI with autumn birthdays:

**October** Christiana Leslie, 10/1; Brian Lesslie, 10/4; Harvey Leslie, 10/5; Ruth Dittman and Frank Leslie, 10/6; Overton Lesley, 10/8; Mathilda Gould and Lewis Johnson, 10/9; Alpheus Leslie and Eugene Leslie, 10/10; Robert Leslie, 10/12; Thomas Allen and Rafi Guroian, 10/13; Dane Gay and Valda Leslie, 10/14; Robert Abernethy and Elaine Lanier, 10/15; Overton Lesley, Sr. and William Leslie, 10/16; Andrew Leslie, 10/17; John Abernethy, Donald Leslie, and Sandra Leslie, 10/20; James Leslie, 10/21, Florence Lesley and Helen Lesley, 10/23, Jo Michaels, 10/24; Wanda Lucas, 10/27; Kenneth Leslie and Melva Wheelwright, 10/31.

**November** Wiliam Moore, 11/1; Darrell Abernethy, and Anne Hooper, 11/2; Bonnie Simmons, 11/3; Carolyn Linebarrier, Leslie Miller and Mary Anne Regling, 11/4; Kristina Nellis, 11/6; Craig Leslie, Jack Merrill, Steven Olling and David Leslie White, 11/7; Redena Lesley and Christopher Leslie, 11/8; Bonnie Rudnisky, 11/9; Joe Faros, 11/10; Ysabella Arnaud, William Leslie and Murna Nason, 11/11; Leslie Evans, 11/12; Heidi Hanson, 11/13; Robert Leslie, 11/14; Karen Leslie, William Leslie and Birl Miller, 11/17; L. Leslie, 11/19; Richard Leslie, and Monica Rodriquez, 11/21; Dorothy Leslie and Robert Leslie, 11/23; Libby Gray and Harold Wilcox, 11/28; Janice Abernathy, 11/29; Karel Leslie, 11/30.

May the warmth of the sun linger long in all your days, and may the year ahead be filled with a good harvest.

### Good News

The Leslies were represented at the Kirkin o’ Th’ Tartan October 27th 2013 at the First Presbyterian church in downtown Salt Lake City.

### Membership Dues Now Due

Members owing 2013 membership dues should have received an invoice by email or mail in the middle of July. Dues are now due. Please pay your dues as soon as you can. Dues can be paid by check, money order, PayPal, Visa, MasterCard or Discover card. If paying by check or money order, please mail to Linda Flowers CLSI Treasurer, 302 SW 3rd St. Tuttle, OK 73089. If paying by PayPal, use the PayPal 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 on the back of the card. If you have questions, please contact me at LFLOWJINGO@SBCGLOBAL.NET or 405-381-3577.

## The Genesis and Founding of the Clan Leslie Society

Copied from the article by Alexander Leslie Klieforth (A.L.K.) that was published in Volume I of The Griffin Reprints.

### A Brief Memoir

Over many years I attended Scottish functions in the United States, Canada, even Asia, where participating Clans had their shields or banners displayed. But never a Leslie one; with one exception, Jakarta, Indonesia, where I was then stationed, when I was invited by the St. Andrews Society of Java as a Leslie representative at their 1974 Gala Ball. It was good to see the Leslie shield with all the others and this stimulated me into thinking about the possibility of a Leslie association of some kind eventually coming about.

I began looking into this some time later while back in the United States on temporary duty. There was encouragement, but with the finger pointed at me - "You do it!" In July, 1976 I wrote to the Earl of Rothes, Leslie Clan Chief, to solicit his views about the formation of some kind of a Leslie organisation in America. The reply came back from Ian, our present Chief, who had succeeded his father the year before, warmly supporting the concept. This was followed by voluminous correspondence between us. In 1977, after home leave during which I explored the possibility and problems of starting up a Leslie association while still stationed overseas, Gloria and I went to Scotland.

In Edinburgh we met Lord Birsay\* (Sir Harald Leslie), Colonel David Leslie and Nora Leslie Edwards who helped Chief Ian and others man the Leslie booth at the First International Gathering of the Clans (1977). Several American Leslies had come over for the occasion, registered at the booth and attended a party given by Lord and Lady Birsay. The Edinburgh Leslies were strongly in favour of a Leslie Society being formed and later when this was under way, supportive. After traveling round Scotland Gloria and I went to Wiltshire to visit Lord and Lady Rothes (Marigold). Ian and I went over the concept of founding a Leslie Society in America, the result of which was the decision that I should go ahead and get it started. This involved, after our return to my post at the American Embassy in Germany, correspondence with the Leslies who had

been at the Edinburgh Gathering and others, and with the Chieftains of some of the older and well established American Scottish Clan organisations. All responses were positive and the latter provided helpful advice and guidance. By April 1978 sufficient preliminary work had been accomplished so I could write to Ian that I thought the project could be undertaken. In a reply dated 27 April 1978, Chief Ian asked me to accept the Commissionership of the Clan and to proceed to organise the American Clan Leslie Society. The Highlander printed a notice about forming the ACLS, and on May 10, I sent a letter to all American Leslies who had expressed interest, which became the founding date. The Society was internationalised later in 1994.

Things began to move along well and when Ian and Marigold visited us in Germany in September we reviewed the Society's progress. In October the first issue of the ACLS Journal was published. By the end of the year the Society was a healthy infant six months old and taking its place in the family of Scottish-American organisations. Sharing the work began the next year, 1979, with the appointment of an advisory council and five officers, from among the Society's membership, to further the development of the Society until its officers could be elected. The Griffin made its appearance, beautifully printed by a Society friend in Germany. Membership more than doubled, reaching almost 100. The Constitution and Bylaws were drafted, sent to all members and approved by ballot. Increasingly members represented the ACLS in many parts of the United States and these meetings and much correspondence fostered a growing 'family feeling'. This became apparent at the first ACLS National Gathering, marvelously organised by John Knox Moore and his helpers, at Charleston, South Carolina, September 1980. I had just retired from the Foreign Service and on the way to Charleston Gloria and I again visited Ian in England to review the progress. The Gathering was a joyful and uplifting event, the first coming together of Leslies in the New World. A full slate of officers was elected, the Constitution ratified and other business enacted. The Society, now two years old, was a fully fledged, permanent, lively organisation.

It was a particularly happy event in my life. A.L.K.



## Project to Honor Our Society's Founders

In the May issue, I informed everyone of the Council's approval to purchase and install a Scottish oak plaque honoring the founders of our Society, The Right Honourable Ian Leslie, 21st Earl of Rothes, and Alexander Leslie Klieforth, LLD, our first Commissioner and Chieftain. Our intent was to have this plaque hung in the Chapel of the Garioch in Aberdeenshire, which is also named the Clan Leslie Chapel of North East Scotland. However, we needed the approval of the church board before we could proceed. David Leslie from Leslie, Baron Bailey of Balquhain, presented our request to the board. The board approved our request in principle, but also advised David that the memorial should be in accordance with the guidelines of the Church of Scotland. Part of this guidance is "This means that the best memorial may not be a plaque, which records the past, but something to enhance and resource the daily life and mission of the church in the present day." In further discussion with the board, it was suggested that an oak baptismal font would be welcome, as the church does not have one.

David recommended, with the concurrence of the board and the Council, that the oak baptismal font shown here would be appropriate. In place of the carved dove would be the CLSI badge, and on the side a plaque that would honor both the 21st Earl of Rothes and Alexander Leslie Klieforth.

I am confident that we can do this. It is right and proper that we honor those who gave so much of their time and talent to bring our Society into existence. Please send your donations to our Treasurer, Linda Flowers, at 302 SW 3rd., Tuttle, OK 73089 USA and mark your check for the "Founders Font Project." You may also pay by PayPal to LFLOWERS1954@YAHOO.COM or pay by Visa, MasterCard or Discover. If paying by credit card, you need to send the card type, number, names on the card, expiration date, and the 3 digit security code on the back of the card. Listed below are the names of the members who have already given a donation to this worthwhile project.

### Donors:

Don and Janice Abernathy	Laura Messing	Robert G. Leslie	Tim Leslie
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## Thank You to our Donors

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# Clan Leslie Holiday Items

## Special Christmas Card Offer

We are offering our past Christmas cards at a special price. We have the 2011 cards with the Christmas verse and the Leslie Castle on the front and the 2012 cards with the Christmas verse and also plain cards with Balgonie Castle on the front. These cards will be sold in a packet of 10 for \$12. Be sure and order early before they are gone.



## Special for our Members

We are offering the book *Grip Fast: The Leslies in History* at a special price for our members during this Christmas season. From November 15-December 15, members may order the book at a reduced cost of \$59.



## Clan Leslie Christmas Ornaments

The perfect gift for your entire family this year: our limited edition Clan Leslie Christmas ornament! These ornaments can be displayed year round—not just at Christmas. The first one in the series feature the words “Clan Leslie and 2013” on one side and the Clan Leslie crest on the other. Ornaments are \$15 which includes shipping. Quantities are limited so order yours early! We are very excited about these ornaments and they will make a wonderful addition to your Clan Leslie collection.



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## How to Order

To order any of these very special Leslie items, contact Linda Flowers, [lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net), 405-381-3577.

We accept the following forms of payment:

Checks

Money Orders

PayPal to the email address [lflowers1954@yahoo.com](mailto:lflowers1954@yahoo.com)

Credit Cards: Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.

If paying by credit card, please include the card type, card number, name on card, expiration date, and 3 digit security code.

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## Clan Leslie Society International Scholarships

CLSI is offering scholarships to our members. We have 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 all scholarships must be a member or inceptor member of CLSI. For more information contact:

**Linda Flowers, CLSI Scholarship Committee, lflowjingo@sbcglobal.net**

## Griffin Reprints Available

Alexander Leslie Klieforth was not only our first Commissioner and first Chieftain, he was also a prodigious researcher. The early issues of Grip Fast contained many articles that he wrote, and his wife Gloria was the editor. In addition to Grip Fast, in 1979 they published the first issue of a booklet titled The Griffin. The Griffin was conceived by Alec and the Right Honourable Ian Leslie, Lord Rothes, to be a publication on the history of the Leslies and the septs, and to broaden the knowledge of the membership about our ancestors and Scotland. Alec and Lord Rothes were the primary authors

I am amazed that these two gentlemen, along with some articles from the membership, were able to discover and research so much without the benefit of computers and the Internet. Nevertheless, they managed to produce seventeen issues, the last issue being 1997-98. The last page of this issue contained "An Afterword" from Alec and Gloria, bidding farewell as the primary researcher and editor, but noting that the Clan Leslie Charitable Trust would be making the information available again in the future.

The best articles from The Griffin series were selected, and in some cases edited as appropriate, and republished in four volumes of The Griffin Reprints. These were published by the Clan Leslie Charitable Trust, printed in Edinburgh, and sold to the membership. The four volumes had the sub-titles of No. 1: The Clan Society, Some Leslie History and Heraldry; No. 2:

Some Leslie Places and Family Branches; No. 3: A Leslie Miscellany; and No. 4: The Diaspora America. These four booklets were priced at about \$17 each, sold out quickly, and have not been available for over ten years. The members who still have these Reprints treasure them.

The CLSI Council was concerned that our history was no longer available to the membership. After much consideration, we agreed to have these four volumes professionally scanned and the information recorded on a CD. This has been completed and is now available to the membership. I am exceedingly pleased that we can offer this CD of our history for \$30. The articles are excellent, and contain information that may no longer be available anywhere else.

To order the CD of The Griffin Reprints, please send a check drawn on a US bank, International Postal Money Order, or by Visa, MasterCard, and Discover to Linda Flowers, CLSI Treasurer, 302 SW 3rd, Tuttle, OK 73089 USA or contact her by email at [lflowjingo@sbcglobal.com](mailto:lflowjingo@sbcglobal.com). If you pay by credit card, she needs the type of card, name on the card, card number, expiration date, and the 3 digit CVS code on the back of the card. Linda also accepts payment by PayPal. In that case, use the email address [lflowers1954@yahoo.com](mailto:lflowers1954@yahoo.com)

**David Leslie White, Chieftain**



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