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# GRIP fast

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# DOWN UNDER

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THE NEWSLETTER OF CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY  
OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND. (CLANZ)

Vol. 4, No 7, July, Aug, Sept 2008

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## REPORT ON CLANZ.

Well here we are halfway through the year and I am still asking for help to run CLANZ..

I desperately need a **Web Master** as the person who set up the website has indicated that she no longer wishes to continue as webmaster.

As previously, I still need someone to act as our Honorary Treasurer. Again this position in itself would not take much effort, but combined with all the other duties, which I perform, I need someone else to relieve me of the task.

We need more members as each year some members do not renew their membership and although I do chase them up, I often do not get any reply.

The Roll of Honour this time is on Robert Leslie who was one of the leading participants in the move to establish Australia as a leader in Space communications. I did a Google search on him and guess what, nothing came up for him at all. Although the item is a very long one, I believe that it is vitally important that Robert's contribution to the Deep Space Network is written up and it will then be available to later generations whereas it could be lost.

This is the point that I have been trying to make, that it is important for us to collect as much information as we can on Clan Leslie members who have made a contribution to Australia and New Zealand. I am sure that there are a lot more stories, which need to be made known, but unless I am told about them, we cannot tell their story. Please think about your family and I am sure that there will be a story that needs telling.

Anne Fowle, the sister of Robert Leslie is a gifted artist in her own right and I am sure that CLANZ members would be interested in seeing examples of her work and I have to thank her for the help which she has given me in this story.

*Barrie Leslie. Gordon. NSW.*



**ROBERT ALEXANDER LESLIE. BE.**  
**Flight Lieutenant. 63112. RAAF.**

**Born Dimboola Victoria 30<sup>th</sup> March 1923.**  
**Died. Batemans Bay. NSW. 1995.**

Robert was born to Thomas Cromie LESLIE (born 6<sup>th</sup> April 1886 at Laen Victoria) and his wife Mary Ann Barber ADAMS (born 31<sup>st</sup> May 1887 at Laen Victoria)

They were both from farming families and both were descended from Northern Ireland Scots families. Thomas' father was William George LESLIE, born 1850 Owenberg Co Antrim, Ireland, who arrived in Australia in the Great Britain in 1872 and died at Boxhill Victoria c1919.

The children went to school in Dimboola – firstly the Primary school and then the Higher Elementary School, which finished at Year 10.

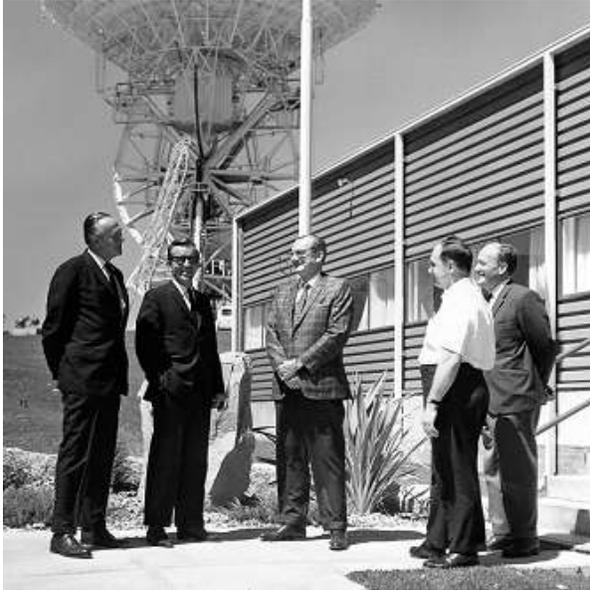
Robert (Bob) went to boarding school at Wesley College and then to Melbourne University by this time World War II had started and Robert's parents had moved to Melbourne and Bob joined up. Firstly the Royal Australian Army, Melbourne University Rifles on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1941, Service Number V158254 and discharged 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1942 and he then joined the Royal Australian Air Force, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1942 as a Flight Lieutenant 63112 at 3 Aircraft Depot, serving at various places in Australia and New Guinea. He was discharged on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1945.

Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station, which opened in early 1967 and finally closed in 1981, played an important role in the tracking of the Apollo Space Missions and most notably it provided the world with the first confirmation and pictures of the success of the Apollo II moon landing on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July 1969. It also played

a prominent part in support for Skylab and other Deep Space Missions.

Robert (Bob) Leslie, as a highly ranked officer in the Australian Public Service, played an important role in the shaping of the relationship between NASA and the Australian Government.

returned by the Apollo XI astronauts, from the first moon landing.



*Bob Leslie (far right) at Honeysuckle Creek 7<sup>th</sup> February 1969 with Willson Hunter NASA (far left) Senior Science Representative in Canberra. Tom Reid, Honeysuckle Creek Station Director, Ozro Covington and Dale Call.*

Bob Leslie was the first Director of Tidbinbilla Tracking Station and the Australian Public Servant completely responsible for all the tracking stations and other facilities for a number of years. Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex, was opened by the Australian Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Sir Robert Menzies on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 1965.

As part of NASA's Deep Space Network the Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex provided and is still providing daily data support for literally hundreds of spacecraft exploring all parts of our solar system. That is the legacy that Bob Leslie has left us.

The first ever close-ups images of Mars, were provided by the Mariner IV spacecraft when it was launched on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 1964 and flew close to Mars on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 1964.

Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex celebrated 40 years of space communication and on exhibition at the Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex, it has on display, amongst other exhibits, a 3.8 billion year old piece of moon rock which was



*Bob Leslie (right) with Sir Robert Menzies (middle) with Mr (later) Sir Allen Fairhall, Australian Minister of Supply at the opening of Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex 19<sup>th</sup> March 1965.*

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### **BOB LESLIE**

**By Doug Mudgway.**

#### **The Need for a Second Network.**

To support the more sophisticated missions of the 1965 to 1968 period. The DSN recognized the need to expand and improve its communications, mission, and network control capabilities. The two major lunar missions nearing launch readiness, Lunar Orbiter and Surveyor, would pave the way for the start of the Apollo program and would transmit data streams at thousands of data bits per second, rather than the tens or hundreds of bits per second, received from the Mariner and Rangers



*A tense moment during Tidbinbilla's 1<sup>st</sup> track of Mariner IV during the Mars flyby with Bob Leslie, (seated at rear between the two members standing)*

The increased complexity of the spacecraft would require expanded and faster monitor, control and display facilities.

For the first time, the DSN began to find that the simultaneous presence of several spacecraft on missions to different destinations created new problems in network and mission control. The vexing problem of DSN “antenna scheduling” began to arise as several spacecraft began to demand tracking coverage from the single DSN antenna, available at each longitude. The difficulty of assigning priority among competing spacecraft, whose view periods overlapped at a particular antenna site, was to prove intractable for many years. The problem was exacerbated by competition between flight projects from NASA Centers other than JPL, each of which felt entitled to equal consideration, for the limited DSN resources. The DSN was placed in the impossible situation of arbitrating the claims for priority consideration. The regular “Network Scheduling” meetings conducted by the DSN often resulted in the establishment of priorities that were determined more by the dominant personalities in the group, than by the real needs of the projects.

With all these imminent new requirements in mind, NASA decided to embark on a program to construct a second network of DSN stations. Arguments as to where the stations were to be located were complicated, not only by technical considerations, but by political and international considerations. There were already two stations at Goldstone, one at the Pioneer site and a second at the Echo site. Eventually, NASA decided to build two new stations, one at Robledo, about 65 kilometers west of Madrid in Spain and the other at Tidbinbilla, about 16 kilometers from Canberra Australia.

NASA looked to the Spanish Navy’s Bureau of Yards and Docks to design and construct the Robledo Station. For its new facilities in Australia, NASA dealt with the Australian Government Department of Supply, through its representative, Robert A Leslie.

As an Australian foreign national **Robert A Leslie** played a major role in shaping the relationship between NASA-JPL and the Australian Government, on whose good offices NASA depended for the support of its several tracking stations in that country. With family origins in the State of Victoria, Australia and an honours degree in electrical engineering from the University of Melbourne (1947), Leslie had worked on radio controlled pilotless aircraft for the military in both England and Australia for

fifteen years, before he encountered NASA. He was a high-ranking officer with the Australian Public (Civil) Service (an affiliation that he retained throughout his career) when, in 1963, he became the Australian Governments representative for NASA’s new deep space tracking facility being built at Tidbinbilla, near Canberra in south eastern Australia.



*Honeysuckle Creek 1980, just before it was shutdown in 1981 and the antenna sent to Tidbinbilla Deep Space Complex*

As might be expected, the success of a NASA venture in a foreign country depended to a large extent on the personalities of the people who were directly involved on each side of the international interface. The foundation for the success of what later became the Canberra Deep Space Communications Complex (CDSCC) was, in no small part, due to Bob Leslie’s personal ability to “get along” with people at all levels. In representing the Australian side of negotiations between NASA and JPL, Bob Leslie was firm but gracious, capable and friendly. His unassuming “paternal” manner endeared him alike to counterparts at NASA, his colleagues at JPL and his staff in Australia.



*Tidbinbilla 1965*

Along with a few Australian technical staff members, Leslie spent a year at Goldstone assembling and testing the electronic equipment

that would subsequently be reassembled at Tidbinbilla to complete the first 26-meter tracking station (DSS 42) at the new site. He was the first director of the new complex when it began service in the network in 1965. It was there that he established the procedures and protocols on which all future DSN operational interactions between JPL and the Australian stations would be based.

A few years later, in 1969, Leslie left the “hands-on” environment of the deep space tracking station to head the Australian Space Office, a branch of the Australian Government that, under various names and government administrations, would guide the future expansion and consolidation of all NASA facilities in Australia. In that capacity, his charm, experience and wisdom served the DSN well.

Leslie’s build was stocky and solid, his appearance craggy, his attitude “laid back”. Cheerful, sociable, easy to talk to, and blessed with a good sense of humour, he was held in high regard by everyone he met, Australian or American. Tennis was his sport, fishing his hobby and “do-it-yourself” home building his passion. In his younger days, he actually excavated the ground with a shovel and wheelbarrow and single-handedly (*the family may dispute the singlehanded bit*) built the family swimming pool at his home in Canberra. Many a JPL engineer enjoyed a poolside barbecue at the Leslie home in the course of a technical visit to the station.

Robert Leslie retired in 1983 and died in Canberra, Australia in 1996. (*He lived at Malua Bay and died at Batemans Bay in 1995*)

By mid-1965, the two new stations were completed and declared operational. The DSN then had two stations in Australia (Woomera and Tidbinbilla), one in Spain and one in South Africa. In addition, a permanent spacecraft monitoring station had been built at Cape Canaveral to replace the temporary facility with its hand-steered tracking antenna. Impressive as this growth was, still greater changes were in progress.



Many thanks to Doug Mudgway for the reproduction of pages 64 to 66 of his book **Uplink-Downlink: A history of the Deep Space Network 1957-1997.**

Washington DC.  
NASA SP-2001-4227, 2002  
By Doug Mudgway.

Details of the book are available from the NASA History Office. It can also be downloaded as PDF files.

See also Doug Mudgway’s new book, “**Big Dish; Building America’s Deep Space Connection to the Planets.**”

For further information go to;  
[www.honeysucklecreek.net](http://www.honeysucklecreek.net)  
[www.honeysucklecreek.us/Leslie/index.htm](http://www.honeysucklecreek.us/Leslie/index.htm)

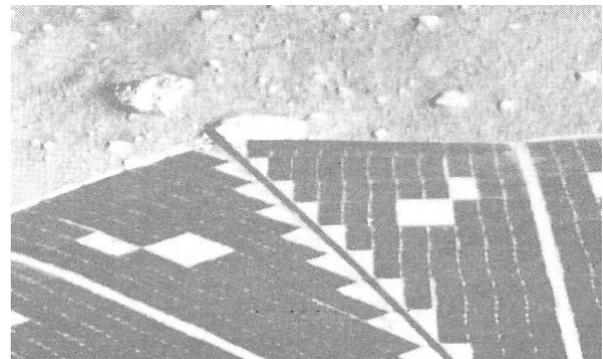
*Barrie Leslie, Gordon, NSW.*

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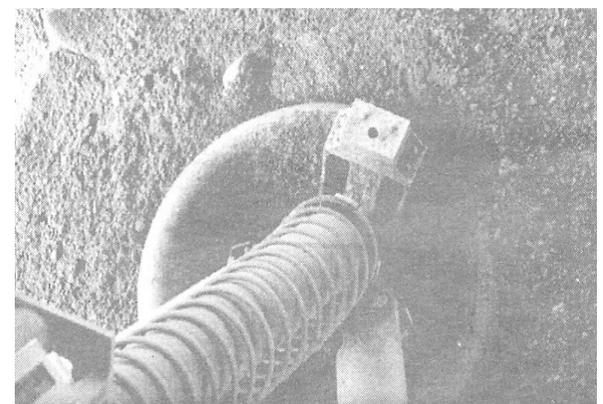
**POST SCRIPT;**

**ROBERT (BOB) LESLIES’ LEGACY.**

On Monday 27th May 2008, shortly before 10-00am Australian Eastern Standard Time, the \$420M Phoenix Mars Lander began beaming signals from the surface of Mars, to the Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex tracking station at Tidbinbilla, which is just outside Canberra, ACT, which were then sent on to Pasadena, California, USA.



*Scanning the Phoenix Mars Lander Solar Panels to ensure that they had deployed.*



*Scanning Phoenix’s Legs to ensure stability.*



*One of the first images of the Martian surface.*

Bob Leslie would have been proud to have seen what the unit that he worked on, has achieved.

*Barrie Leslie. Gordon. NSW.*



*Dewars White Label Whisky Advert 1937  
Clan Leslie Piper*

**NEW WEBSITE**

[WWW.LESSLIE.COM.AU](http://WWW.LESSLIE.COM.AU)

The Clan Leslie Societies and their members should be aware that a new website [www.leslie.com.au](http://www.leslie.com.au) has been set up.

It principally caters for the needs of those Australian Lesslies who originated as a maritime Leslie family in Banff, Banffshire in the 1600s, then migrating through Dundee and Dunbar, in Scotland, to the present in the 2000's non maritime family of Leslie's in Australia. It provides for historical details of this family and its members.

The known family tree for this period is recorded in detail on the website, but there are undoubtedly many branches of the family, extending into Canada, USA and elsewhere. In addition, by circumstantial evidence, the Banff Lesslie's are believed to be derived from the Kininvie branch of the Leslie family and details of this evidence are recorded on the website.

It may be well worthwhile for Canadian and USA Leslie/Lesslie's, perhaps with a maritime background and those families with a Kininvie connection, to check the family tree on this website, with the intention of extending both their family tree and that published in this website.



*Russell Leslie.*

Russell Lesslie in Australia would appreciate any comments or suggestions that you may care to make. He can be contacted direct on email at [russlesslie@bigpond.com.au](mailto:russlesslie@bigpond.com.au) or by snail mail at Unit 3 / 23 Arnold Street, Killara, NSW, 2071. Australia, or the Commissioner for Australia and New Zealand Barrie Leslie at: \_

[lesliejb@ozemail.com.au](mailto:lesliejb@ozemail.com.au) or 43 Rosedale Road , Gordon, NSDW 2072. Australia.

It would be appreciated if Clan Leslie Society International could copy.

*Russell Lesslie, Killara. NSW. Australia*

## NEWLANDS AND THE LESLIE MERCHANTS OF ABERDEEN

*Reprinted with permission from Journal 107 of the Aberdeen & North-East Scotland Family History Society.*

When I started my family history research some thirty years ago, I was given a dream run for some of my Aberdeen ancestors. My 19<sup>th</sup> century Australian forbears had compiled a version of the Laurus Lesleana and this had been enhanced in the 1940s showing the full descent from the legendary Bartholomew in the 11<sup>th</sup> century through the Leslies of Wardes and the Duguids of Newlands in Aberdeen to myself. This was supported by an extract from a family bible giving full family names and dates back to one John Leslie who died "26th June, about 3 o'clock in the morning, aged about 61 years". No year was given but I later found his burial in 1764. I was subsequently able to confirm all these dates in parish registers.

Also passed down to me were a lovely Aberdeen silver ladle with a Duguid armorial crest, a gold signet ring from about 1750 with the Leslie demi-griffin crest, and a cane with an engraved gold head. There was also a series of letters deposited in the local State Library between Australian Duguids and their Aberdeen relations and lawyers. Then there was a paste brooch, said to have been given to one of the Aberdeen ancestors by Bonnie Prince Charlie for services rendered. I haven't even tried to authenticate that one, though the brooch is of the correct vintage.

Over the years I inspected parish registers, wills, sasine and service of heirs indexes, Marischal College records, burial records, etc, etc - some available from Australia and some during visits to the King Street library(ANESFHS). A picture built up of a family of moderately substantial merchants in Aberdeen, living at Newlands, a property of at least 35 acres in Ruthrieston, on the southern edge of Aberdeen.

An unsubstantiated statement by one of the Australian immigrants in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century claimed that Newlands had been "400 years in the family". In fact the earliest ownership I have found was a reference by the last family owners of Newlands, two elderly Duguid spinsters in the 1880s, whose wills referred to their great grandfather John Leslie as "of Newlands". His

son Alexander Leslie certainly owned Newlands and passed it through his daughter to the Duguids. However Newlands was not mentioned in the parish register baptisms of either John or Alexander's children, the former being just John Leslie, Merchant, the latter Alexander Leslie, Merchant in the Green.

One problem with the Laurus Lesleana chart was a complete absence of dates. I sought further details from published information, including McFarlane's Genealogical Collections and Historical Collections of the Family of Leslie, by Col. Leslie. Everything stopped where my family record becomes confusing, with Alexander Leslie, fourth son of Sir William Leslie of Wardes and his wife Helen Gordon. He would seem to have been born about 1610 and is said to have died without issue. I have taken it that he had no legitimate issue.

Interestingly, one George Leslie, Baillie in Aberdeen, "descended of a 4th son of Wardis", had arms recorded in the Lord Lyon's Register of Arms of 1682. I know of no relationship to my Leslies but I would love to know more of this man's ancestry.

In fact my dream run seems to have shuddered to a halt in the gap between William Leslie, third baronet and eighth laird of Wardes and John Leslie, merchant of Aberdeen born about 1700. The tree in fact states that William's son Alexander was "of Bogfenton" and that his son John was the abovenamed merchant. That would have made Alexander in his nineties when he fathered John! I think it likely that two generations have been missed, another John (there was in fact a John Lesley recorded in the 1696 poll of Bogfountain) and an Alexander, perhaps one of the Aberdeen merchants, father of the known John Leslie.

A search of the various records soon shows a great number of Leslies who are merchants and/or baillies of Aberdeen, not a few of them John or Alexander. I have so far found it impossible to sort them into their rightful families.

Now to complicate matters relating to Newlands. The cane mentioned above has a London hallmark of 1754/5. It is recorded in the will of the spinster Duguid aunts as "the property of our ancestors". I have taken this to mean the Leslie side rather than the Duguid. I note that Alexander Leslie, merchant, came of age in

1754, perhaps to be given the cane. On the gold head is engraved arms of three unidentified birds (possibly doves) and around the collar the motto “*Altius Ibunt qui ad Summa nituntur*”. This motto appears to be almost the sole province of the family of Forbes of Newe. Though I know that more recent members of that family changed their arms to the three bear heads of the Pitsligo family, I have been unable to find the arms of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Forbes of Newe. I also know that none of my known merchant forebears were armigerous, though that didn’t stop them using the heraldic symbols.



*CLANZ member Dr Robert Cameron.*

*High Commissioner for Clan Cameron Australia*

Then I find that one of the Forbes of Newe daughters married in about 1620 (Burke’s Landed Gentry) William Leith, 1<sup>st</sup> of Newlands! Is this all co-incidence? Why would the later Leslie family consider the Forbes motto should be perpetuated? It would seem we are getting closer to the 400 years ownership claimed by my Australian great great uncle. Three more generations of Leiths of Newlands are recorded in sasines, including a John Leith of Newlands and of Marischal College around the 1650s and

two Alexanders around 1700. Few other details of this family have emerged.

As well as Newlands in Aberdeen I have identified a Newlands of Erisfield in parish Premnay which was in the hands of a related branch of Leith, two George Leiths of Overhall at least from 1619 to 1655. Another complication is that the widow of one George Leith of Overhall, mother of the next, was Isobel Dunbar, who subsequently married without issue Alexander Leslie, 4<sup>th</sup> son of William Leslie of Wardes above, claimed as my ancestor. Do you wonder my head spins? I have yet to prove which Newlands the Leiths were “of”. Perhaps it was both.

I strongly suspect that Newlands in Aberdeen came to John Leslie, merchant, during his lifetime somehow by a connection with the Leith family. It does not seem to have been through his wife, Marjory Gray. If my theory is correct it is more likely to have been a connection in the missing two generations, as yet unidentified, perhaps reverting when the direct line of Leiths of Newlands failed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

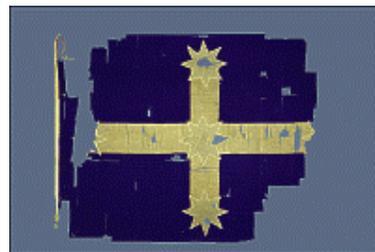
If any reader has knowledge of any of these families that might shed light on these merchant families I would love to hear of it. I have of course amassed a lot more detail than given here.

*Many thanks to Bob Cameron for the above information and he can be contacted on this email address:- [rcam1111@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rcam1111@bigpond.net.au)*

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**A LESLIE ARRESTED AT THE EUREKA STOCKADE AFTER THE INSURRECTION  
3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 1854.**

The Eureka Stockade was a very bitter exchange of arms between the Victorian Government and gold miners who were very resentful of the very high licence fees, which they had to pay for the right to search for gold in Ballarat Victoria,



*A remnant of the original Eureka Flag.*

There were several incidents beforehand, including the burning of the Eureka Hotel but

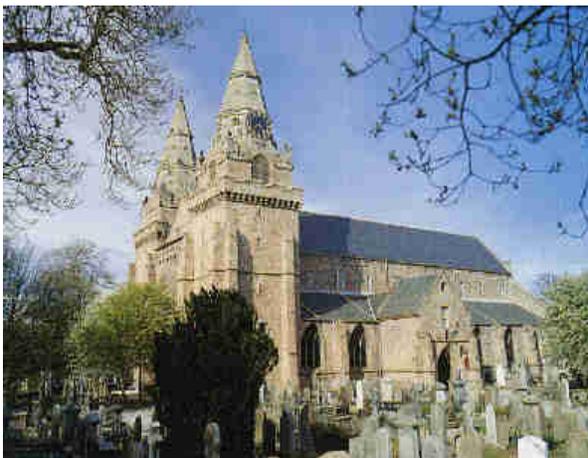
the actual fighting started on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1854 when Government troops attacked the Stockade at dawn. There were approximately 150 men in the Stockade as other miners had returned to their tents.

In the short altercation which followed, 30 miners and 6 soldiers were killed. Thirteen of the miners leaders were arrested and brought to trial, but a jury acquitted all but one. In 1895 the Victorian Government abolished the Miners Licence fee and introduced a Miners Right fee. There were approximately 90 miners arrested between the 6<sup>th</sup> December and the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1854 and most were let free. Among them was a **Robert Leslie** who unfortunately has just disappeared and I am hoping that someone knows who he was.

*Barrie Leslie. Gordon. NSW.*



*Closeup of Powis Gates Old Aberdeen*



*St Machars Cathedral Aberdeen.*

*Thanks to David & Sheena Leslie of Banchory Kincardineshire, for the above photographs.*

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6<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Bathurst.

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**WEBSITE for CLANZ.**      <http://www.clanleslie.org>

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[www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm)

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**Acting Chief of Clan Leslie**      **Hon Alexander John Leslie**  
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