

# grip fast

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



## DOWN UNDER

Vol. 9 No 1, January-March 2017



### FROM THE CHIEFTAIN

Well, here we go again... another year! My wish is that all members of our Clan and Society have a prosperous and happy 2017, and that we attract new members so that the Society can continue to prosper.

History tells us that the progenitor of the Clan Leslie is a man named *Bartolf* who arrived in Scotland in 1067. This means that our Clan has been around for 950 years.

It is up to us, the current generation to make sure that this proud tradition continues and that we pass on our pride and knowledge to our descendants. One way to do this is to become part of the Clan Leslie DNA Project. You can learn more about this project by going to:

<http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/leslie>  
on your computer.

As you may realise, January sees the 258<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, the Scottish poet who gave the world "Auld Lang Syne", "Scots Wha Hae", and many more wonderful poems and songs. Through my many years of association with Caledonian Societies and St Andrew Society, I have attended countless Burns Suppers, and I look forward each year to my helping of Haggis (and the accompanying dram).

Last year I was asked to attend a luncheon run by the Robert Burns Masonic Lodge here in Toowoomba. I was there to address the Haggis and to propose the toast to the "Immortal Memory". It was a most enjoyable experience. My performance must have been acceptable, because they have invited me back again this year.

You may ask why a Masonic Lodge runs such an event? It is because Burns himself was a Freemason, who clashed with the church authorities of his time, as Freemasonry was frowned upon by the Kirk.

We live in more tolerant times, and it would be a great thing if the whole world subscribed to:

*"Then let us pray that come it may,  
(As come it will for a' that,)*

*That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,  
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.*

*For a' that, an' a' that,*

*It's coming yet for a' that,*

*That Man to Man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that."*



Until next time,  
Slainté

**Malcolm Leslie** Chieftain

### SITUATIONS VACANT

The following situations are vacant and need enthusiastic Society members to volunteer to take them on:

- Editor, Grip Fast Down Under
- Membership Secretary
- Representative Victoria
- Representative New South Wales

If anyone can see their way clear to make any of these positions their own, please contact the Commissioner/Chieftain

## From Chief Alex

I did not ask the Chief for an article for this issue, as he had sent a message for insertion in the Christmas edition. However I would like to remind all members about the 2017 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, which will feature various Clan Chiefs, including Chief Alex. Refer to the articles in the Christmas issue and the October-December issue for details.



## POWIS HOUSE, ABERDEEN

Powis House was built Hugh Fraser Leslie of Powis, the owner of the Powis estate which formerly lay behind them. The Fraser Leslie Arms are visible on the obverse of the arch, with a shield on the reverse showing the bust of three black men - a link to the family's involvement in a grant of freedom made to their Slaves in Jamaica. The entrance now leads to the University's Crombie-Johnston and King's Postgraduate Halls of Residence. Powis Gates were erected in 1834 by John Leslie and have a design that could have been inspired by Turkish Architecture. Partly stone, partly harled brickwork, the skinny minaret-like towers are capped with slated turrets bearing gold-leaved orbs and crescent finials; the crescent being part of the Fraser Leslie coat of arms. Original construction coincided with the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 that outlawed slavery in the British Colonies from 1 August 1834, and a shield at the back of the gates carries busts of 3 black slaves commemorating the freedom of (or profit from) slaves on the family's Jamaican plantations.

The former slaves received no compensation for their years of unpaid labour



and suffering. Slave Owners, however, were compensated for the loss of their 'property'. The payouts varied from colony to colony and the value of slaves to their owners was individually assessed, but in total the British Government authorised that £20M be given to the slave owners. This was a huge sum; in terms of Britain's national earnings today, it would be about £60 billion. An Aberdeen recipient of compensation money was Agnes Anne Lamond, the widow of Hugh Leslie of Powis. In 1834 she received a payout of £2,065 for her former slaves at Castile Fort Pen in Jamaica. Some of the money was used to pay off legal debts, but her eldest son, John Leslie, also used a substantial chunk of it to pay for Powis Gate an ostentatious entrance to the family estate he was building in Old Aberdeen.

Hugh Fraser Leslie was born 17/07/1802 and baptised 31/07/1802 in Old Machar, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, son of Hugh Leslie and Anne Agnes. Hugh Leslie and Anne Agnes Lamond were married at Old Machar, 02/08/1788. They had at least 13 children baptised in Old Machar, 1791-1808. Leslie registered his own enslaved people in Jamaica when aged 24 yrs in 1826 and 1829 and was a vestryman in Port Royal, Jamaica in 1839. Leslie gave evidence to a special committee of the Jamaica Assembly in 1847: "... in that year, 1847, he was in possession of several coffee and sugar plantations, including several in the Yallahs region: Sherwood Forest, Arntully, Eccleston, Brook Lodge, and Belle Claire. In addition, Leslie was also in possession of Petersfield, Newfield, Munts, Grove, and Leith, all coffee plantations, and Delve, a sugar estate. He reported that prior to emancipation, a total of 1268 workers were attached to these plantations. By 1847, there were fewer than 400." He was living in Powis House from at least 1851 until his death in 1873. Hugh Fraser Leslie died intestate.



## Historical Records of the Family of Leslie

Historical Records of the Family of Leslie' was first published in 1869. The author, Colonel Leslie of Balquhain, offers it as 'as a collection of the most authentic documents relating to the history of the family of Leslie' from 1067 to 1868-9.

A CD with a digital version of all three volumes is available for purchase by following the link:  
<https://www.gould.com.au/historical-records-of-the-family-of-leslie/sca002/>

### Nuggets from Banff and District

(Courtesy of David Leslie White, of Clan Leslie Society International)

One of the recent acquisitions for the Clan Leslie Collection at the University of Guelph is the rare book *Banff and District* by Allan Edward Manhood, printed by the Banffshire Journal Limited, Banff, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, 1919. The following are a few "nuggets" concerning the Leslies of Banff.

On page 33, there is section on cottages and town houses along the shore. "Beyond the next two cottages, there is a garden wall which was part of the town house of Alexander Leslie, Junior. A lintel was formerly over the door with the inscription "- 16 - AL . IH . 95". This caved stone was removed by the owner, about 1906, and is now carefully preserved at the Castle, which was held by Alexander Leslie and his spouse Janet Hamilton in 1695." (Due to the difficulty in carving a "J" in stone, it was often carved as an "I")

In Chapter V about the Castle and Royal Visits, on page 63 there is a brief entry as follows: "In 1364 [King] David Bruce bestowed the land of Blairshinnoch, &c., upon Walter de Leslie, father of Euphamia Leslie, Countess of Ross, for furnishing a solder to attend the King in his Court "apud castrum de Banffe." [in the Castle at Banff]

Regarding ownership of the Castle (pages 64-65) "For 195 years the Castle remained in the family of the Earls of Buchan. While William Sharp, Sheriff Clerk, was tenant of the Castle, his son, James, Archbishop of St Andrews, was born there in 1618. It was bought by Robert Sharp in 1662, and from his family passed to a kinsman, Alex. Leslie of Kininvie. Lord Deskford (afterwards 5th Lord Findlater) bought it in 1722."

Robert Burns had visited Banff in 1787. Burns wrote to a Mrs. Dunlap that part of his beautiful song, "My Bonnie Mary," was derived from an old source.

"Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,  
An' fill it in a silver tassie,  
That I may drink before I go  
A service to my bonnie lassie."

Peter Buchan suggested that the original of this was composed by Alexander Lesly of Eden, near Banff, about 1636. His verses are printed at the head of Chapter XII, as the early form, but without the author's name -

"But bring to me a bottle o' wine,  
A bottle o' wine and a drinkin' glassie,  
And I'll drink to ye a' afore I gan,-  
Guid nicht and joy be to my lassie."

Alexander Lesly, Laird of Eden

On page 180 there is the complete but slightly different version of this poem, which reads:

"As I went out to take the air,  
'Twas on the banks of Deveron water.  
I chose a maid to be my love,  
Were it my fortune for to get her.

Ye'll bring me here a pint o' wine,  
A server and a siller tassie,  
That I may drink before I gang,  
A health to my ain bonnie lassie."

It seems that this Alexander Lesly was a bit of a rake. And Robert Burns was a bit of a plagiarist.

David Leslie White



Alexander Leslie  
Clan Chief (and Vice Convenor of the SCSC)

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**WEBSITE for CLANZ.  
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**Previous issues of Grip Fast Down Under:-**  
Can be viewed on our website. You can also  
see them on,  
[www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm)

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