



GRIP FAST

JOURNAL

The Newsletter of Clan Leslie Society International

February 2019



Highland Games Season is Approaching!

Take a look at some of last years' games page 7.

The Honourable Alexander Leslie, Chief of Clan Leslie



Dear All,

Where does the time go?

2018 seems to have gone in the blink of an eye. The last time I looked it was February and we were just beginning to plan our trip to Salt Lake City. This seemed, to us at least, slightly off the beaten track but fascinating as well.

It turned out to be an amazing trip, incredibly interesting and we were – as we have come to expect from Leslies – so well looked after by Jordan Hinckley and his team. In fact our cheeks hurt for weeks afterwards from the laughter (what?) and the glass or two of wine, well, OK, slightly more than that.

While we were there we decided that the next Gathering will be in 2020 and when we got home we met with Brian and Petra Lesslie who immediately started the preparations with David Leslie. It will be the 25th Anniversary of the last Gathering at Leslie Castle in Aberdeenshire and this time we will centre it around the Aboyne Games.

I do know that we have many people who are interested in coming to Scotland and if all of those who are interested sign up and make it over here then we will have, if the not the biggest, one of the biggest, Gatherings of Leslies in recent times.

Further ahead, there is a plan, or perhaps at this stage half a plan, to go to Las Vegas in 2022 and that sounds to us like more fun than any sane clan should have – so let's do it! The mixture of Elvis and Leslies is too good to pass up.

That said, perhaps that plan should be made in the cold light of day, when the forthcoming festivities have been dealt with appropriately!

Talking of which, let me take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Best wishes

Alex and Miranda
December 2018

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ABOUT THE COVER

CLSI Members at the 2018 Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. See pages 7-8.



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MARCH WITH CLAN LESLIE IN THE NEW YORK TARTAN DAY PARADE! SATURDAY APRIL 6, 2019

Clan Leslie is registered to march in the NYC Tartan Day Parade and we want you to be a part of this very special event! To sign up, contact Laura Messing at designinvasion@gmail.com.

Let's show NYC some Leslie pride on April 6!

Chieftain's Report



TRULY INTERNATIONAL

Recently it was noted that the Clan Leslie Society International, which started out as the American Clan Leslie Society, was 40 years old. So what is International about it now? Granted that the majority of its members are from the US and Canada but we have members from 7 other nations including Scotland, Australia, Finland, Latvia, France, Turkey and Slovakia. All members worldwide have access to the online Grip Fast publication as well as our web site and the CLSI Facebook. We also would welcome articles for the Grip Fast Journal from our international members to share their family histories or interesting family related experiences.

Congratulations to Laura Messing and Dane Gay who were elected unopposed as Vice Chieftain and Secretary/Registrar respectively. As a result of Dane's new title he automatically as an officer of CLSI is a member of the Council .

That meant his unexpired term as a Council member at large needed to be filled. I'm pleased to report that Jordan Hinckley has agreed to serve on the Council. Jordan Is the Convenor for the Mountain Region and recently hosted the 2018 CLSI Gathering in Salt Lake City.

The Council is aware that the membership would like to hear about it's proceedings or significant actions that it has taken which would be of interest. Therefore I will attempt in my reports to include news from the Council. For example we are looking into expanding the Huxtable and Kleiforth Scholarships both as to the amount of the stipend but also their expansion to on line academic as well Scottish History, Arts and Music studies. Recently the Committee recommended the awarding of two Kleiforth scholarships to piping students sponsored by our CLSI piper and Council member Gale Walker.

In addition our former CLSI Secretary, Christine Johnson, will now be able to concentrate on her role as Genealogist offering her services to CLSI members wishing to further their knowledge of their family heritage. She also will be contributing articles periodically to the Grip Fast Journal informing of various resources that could be accessed for individual research.

And last but importantly I want to remind the members of the 2020 CLSI Gathering in Aberdeenshire, Scotland in conjunction with a larger Leslie Clan Gathering and the Aboyne Highland Games July 30 - August 2, 2020. I hope some of our international members would be able to attend. There will be much more in future Grip Fast Journals.

Yours Aye,

Loren Leslie M.D.

CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL – SCHOLARSHIPS

CLSI is offering scholarships to our members. We have two different types of scholarships. They are the Alexander Leslie Klieforth Memorial Scholarship (Scottish and Celtic Activities) and the Sherry Huxtable Memorial Academic Scholarship (Academic Studies) The academic scholarship valued at \$250 and the Scottish or Celtic Programs scholarship is valued at \$200 and both can be applied for at any time. The Scottish and Celtic Activities scholarship 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

Election Results & Bios

Here are the results of the recent CLSI elections and the bios of the newly elected officers and council member.

Vice Chieftain: Laura Messing

I currently serve as Vice Chieftain but would love to continue in this capacity. I have been on the council since 2007 and was the Convenor for the Midwest Region until moving to Massachusetts in 2010. I then became Convenor for the North East region and always enjoy hosting the Leslie tent at the New Hampshire Highland Festival. In addition, I have hosted two CLSI gatherings, designed and maintain our current website and am co-editor/designer of the Grip Fast Journal. Along with my husband Dean, I traveled to Scotland last year to march with the Leslies as part of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. In 2019, the Leslies will be marching in the New York Tartan Day parade for the first time, a tradition I hope we can continue for years to come.

Apart from my CLSI activities I am the owner of Design Invasion, a graphic design agency in Burlington, Massachusetts where I also serve on the board of a local non-profit: The Mama Bear Effect. This year I became a brand ambassador for Nutrisystem and was appointed to the advisory board for the St. Louis art fair.

Secretary/Registrar: Dane Gay

I am a U.S. Marine veteran and a career retail professional, working for 13 years at a fortune 500 company in sales, management, training, & training design; and the last fourteen years at a local Richmond Virginia company managing Social Media, a fleet of vehicles, IT, and doing special projects. I also own a small business providing Social Media consulting and other internet and technology related services.

When I'm not at work, I spend time with my wife of 27 years (we love camping!), our 2 adult children, and our 2-year old grandson. I volunteer as a Chaplain Candidate with the Virginia military reserve. I have a Bachelor's degree in Religion, minors in Christian Counseling Church

Administration and Biblical Studies; and I am currently working on a Master's degree in Pastoral Counseling.

My wife and I have been members of CLSI since 2012, attended the Clan Gathering at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in 2014, and were co-hosts for the Clan Leslie tent with Lew and Chris Johnson at the Richmond Celtic Festival and Highland Games the past few years. I have been the CLSI Registrar for the past seven months and would be honored to serve as Secretary if elected.

Council: Lew Johnson

Lewis R. Johnson, Ed.D. Retired Director of Testing and Research and Director of Technology for a county school district and Professor of Special Education. Currently, I am the owner and lead data consultant of a business that provides data reporting and analytics to school districts in North Carolina. I have been on the CLSI Council previously, and now serving an appointed term until 2020. I am also serving as the quartermaster for the Society. My wife and I are conveners for CLSI in Virginia and North Carolina and represent CLSI at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

I am a member of CLSI to honor my maternal grandfather, Arthur Leslie from Barbados, who is a descendant of William Leslie who was the first Rector of St. John Parish Church in 1653.

CLSI Items For Sale

Our website has a great selection
of Leslie items for sale!
Visit our online store at:
www.clanlesliesociety.org/store

Welcome New Members!

Max Gardner
Dallas, TX

Peggy Stull
New Castle, PA

John Lesslie
Rock Hill, SC

Heather Crowner
Thompson Station, TN

Michael Leslie
Lincolnton, NC

Stanislav Macak
Slovakia

Debbie Manos-McHenry
Johnstown, OH

Erik Quist
Longwood, FL

Donna Noyes-Sprankles
Escondido, CA

Margaret Leslie-Peacock
Sun Valley, CA

Richard Leslie
Hertfordshire, UK

Howard Dobko
Saskatoon, Canada

Kirsten Barr
Mount Pleasant, SC

Kevin Leslie
Kenosha, WI

Rick Leslie
Springfield, OH

John Lessley
Sacramento, CA

Maggie Carr
Parksville, BC
Canada

Bruce Leslie
Broomfield, CO

Terry Leslie
Redbank Plains
Australia

Susan Quillman
Cedar Mountain, NC

Lori Slaney
Humble, TX

Renee Leslie
Portage, MI

Patricia Weyhrauch
Capac, MI

Sandy Kerr
Scarborough ON
Canada

Rollin Abernethy
Laramie, WY

Richard Leslie
New York, NY

Suzanne Taylor
London, UK

Andrew Welch
San Diego, CA

DONATIONS *Thank You!*

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Bonnie Simmons
Cedar Rapids, IA

Charles Toles
Summerville, GA

GENERAL FUND

Timothy Pannone
Piney Point, MD

Bonnie Gleason
Cincinnati, OH

Thomas Leslie IV
Dallas, TX

Charles Toles
Summerville, GA

LIBRARY FUND

Vivian Little
Ball Ground, GA

REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

One of the objectives of our Society is "To promote, foster, collect and preserve historical and genealogical records and information about descendants of Clan Leslie around the world." In the past, we have had many articles in our Grip Fast publications about history, geography, traditions, homes, castles and members of Clan Leslie.

The responsibility for the research and writing of such article lies with the members. The membership is "the contributing staff" to the publications. The editors are not the ones responsible for writing the articles; their responsibility is to edit and publish. Even though you may have never written an article before, don't let that hold you back. The editors will prepare your article for publication. To quote Alexander Leslie Klieforth (The Griffin, Vol. 1, 1979, p. 4) "We are not looking for polished gems or prose; we are a Clan, a family organ, and an important purpose of this publication . . . is to promote kinship."

You get out of our Society what you put into it. Gifts of your time, talent and effort are what make us successful. Please consider writing an article for our Grip Fast newsletter or Grip Fast Journal. It can be a short book review of a book by or about Leslies, Abernathys, Cairneys, Laings, Moores or Bartholomews, your visit to Scotland or some site with a Clan Leslie connection, or an article on a prominent Leslie from your area.

Or you can do some serious research and write an more academic article. The choice is yours, but the gift of your time, talent and effort if what is needed.

David Leslie White

Lickleyhead Castle for Sale

bellingram.co.uk
01738 621121



Lickleyhead Castle Auchleven, Aberdeenshire AB52 6PN

Category A listed, 16th century castle with later additions, set within gardens, woodland and parkland policies of about 10 acres, and a detached cottage.

- Drawing room, dining room, library, sitting room, kitchen, 7 bedrooms, 7 bathrooms, laundry, 2 bed detached cottage, walled garden, parkland and amenity woodland, about 10.7 acres (4.33 ha), EPC Rating F

Contact: Carl Warden

Offers over £700,000



COSCA Meeting at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games

On Saturday the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations met to address the following Agenda:

- **Reports from the officers and committees**

The treasurer reported that the current balance is \$3,500.

The membership chair reported that there were about 50 clans represented at the meeting. President John Bellassai thanked those in attendance. Membership includes only about half of the clans and he is hoping this will increase.

- **Comments by visiting clan chiefs who were guests at the GMHG**

Chief of Clan Elliot and Chief of Clan McThomas visited with the members of COSCA at the meeting. They talked about the growing influence of the Scottish clan momentum in the U.S. and its relationship with the Standing Council of Clan Chiefs in Scotland. Also, there is an increasing inclusiveness in the ranks of clan chiefs with an increasing number of females in that role.

- **Elections to the Board of Trustees for officers and At-Large Directors up in 2018**

Two new representatives at-large were nominated and approved by voice vote. Members from Clan Wardlaw and Clan Gunn are new representatives.

- **Preview of upcoming strategic planning initiative for 2018 – 2020**

COSCA is starting a strategic planning process to better meet the needs of clans and to increase membership. The challenge is to increase presence in social media and to keep the website current. There will be a survey going out to members, both individual and to clan representatives for input. Partnership with Family Tree DNA and its surnames projects may be included in the plan

Lew Johnson

HIGHLAND GAMES SEASON IS APPROACHING

As you know from reading the Grip Fast Journal, Clan Leslie Society International is represented at many highland games and festivals each year. The society has a dedicated group of tent convenors who donate their time and energy to represent the Society at these events. The purpose of the clan tent is to: 1. Provide hospitality and a meeting place for CLSI members who attend the games, 2. Meet and educate visitors on topics related to Clan Leslie, Scotland, and the Society, 3. Recruit new members, and 4. Participate in games events such as the Torchlight Ceremony and the Parade of Tartans.

Convenors are likely to contact CLSI members by email to invite them to attend the games and the opportunity to meet other CLSI members. Also, many of the convenors post announcements on Facebook of upcoming games to reach out to the larger Clan Leslie group.

Members can keep up to date on CLSI Tent representation by visiting the CLSI website in the Events calendar. You may use the information in the Grip Fast Journal to contact the convenor in the region if you want more information about events in your area.

See you at the games!

Lew and Christine Johnson

TENTS AND GAMES

**CLAN LESLIE MEMEBERS HOSTED TENTS EVERYWHERE!
THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR CONVENORS AND TENT HOSTS.**



This page: Clan Leslie marches in the parade of tartans at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

Opposite page: Back Row (L to R) Leslie Craddock, Peter Craddock, Sheryl Moore, Chistine Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Chester Maritz, Lew Johnson.
Front Row: Mary Johnson, Benjamin Craddock, Joseph Craddock



Grandfather Mountain Highland Games

LEW AND CHRISTINE JOHNSON, CONVENORS

CLSI was represented at the GMHG with two tents. The information tent was hosted by Christine and Lew Johnson, and the hospitality tent was hosted by Lesley and Peter Craddock along with their children. This hospitality tent provided front-row seats to watch the action on the field and a nice place to sit, relax and talk with other visitors.

Lesley was present Thursday night to answer the calling of the clans at the torchlight ceremony. Friday and Saturday were very busy days with hundreds of people stopping for "passport" stamps and to say hello.

The high point of the games was the Parade of Tartans on Sunday. The banner was held by Peter, the honor guard was his son Joseph with sword flanked by two shield bearers Benjamin and a friend Brooks. The entourage was completed by flag bearers holding both green and red flags. We got a special recognition by our favorite games' announcer Bill Leslie.

Twenty-eight visitors came to the tent with Leslie, Moore or Abernethy connections. One couple came from Orlando, FL specifically to see the Leslie tent, and another couple came from Gulf Shores, AL. There was great interest in the 2020 gathering in Aboyne with many visitors taking information about the games and asking questions about the gathering. Unfortunately, we took no applications for membership at the Games but distributed many applications for membership.

The weather cooperated with only a brief shower on Sunday. We had mixed sun and clouds which made the events during the day and the concerts in the evening quite enjoyable. In all, the games this year were a great success. There were 118 clans and societies tents and pre-ticket sales were up 13% from last year and last year was a record. This year's attendance is estimated to be between 20,000 to 25,000.

THE 57TH GATHERING OF THE SCOTTISH CLANS & HIGHLAND GAMES, SALADO, TX



Lynne and Frank Leslie

Lynne then said, "Clan Leslie is here!", followed by the remaining clans giving their name and/or motto. Saturday dawned cool, but that did not seem to slow down attendance at the Gathering. Lynne carried a Leslie shield sized banner during the Saturday Opening parade and Opening Ceremony. All scheduled activities took place. Sunday was again a cool morning. The Kirking service took place at 9AM in the Entertainment tent and Lynne carried the Leslie banner during the banner presentation portion of the Kirking service. We place to convene at the 58th Gathering next year.

Frank & Lynne Leslie
Convenors

The 57th Gathering of the Scottish Clans & Highland Games at the Salado, TX Civic Center was a huge success! The weather, although cool, low 50's during the day, was nice as the rain held off until after the closing ceremony on Sunday. We had two people sign in at the CLSI tent who were not members of Clan Leslie Society International (CLSI). Both were emailed a thank you note and a membership form was given to one. Since both Lynne and I are members of the Salado Museum and College Park board, I led the torch bearing Clans to the Calling of the Clans ceremony on Friday Night. The honor clan, Clan Lindsay this year, followed me to the ceremony site with all the other clans following them. Each Clan, starting with Lindsay, announced either their name or motto, or in some cases, both. Once Clan Lindsay finished, Lynne and I yelled, "Grip Fast!"

ST. LOUIS SCOTTISH GAMES & CULTURAL FESTIVAL, ST. LOUIS, MO

No tent? No problem! The Leslies put their colors on and had a great day at the St. Louis Scottish Games & Cultural Festival held on September 28 & 29, 2018. Helen Lesslie Jack answered the call for the Leslies during the opening ceremonies Friday evening. She was joined on Saturday by even more Leslies. Grip Fast!

Laura Messing



Pictured from left to right: Janet Leslie Pyatt, Laura Messing, Dean Messing, Helen Lesslie Jack, Debby Leslie and Ron Leslie.

CAPTIAL DISTRICT SCOTTISH GAMES ALTAMONT, NY



CLSI member Patrick Masson hosted a tent at the Captial District Scottish Games in Altamont, New York on September 1 & 2, 2018. Patrick is pictured with Diane Hugo, a Leslie and visitor to his tent. Diane also joined Patrick to represent Clan Leslie in the parade of clans!

Diane Hugo and
tent host Patrick Masson

NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHLAND GAMES & SCOTTISH FESTIVAL, LINCOLN, NH



Clan Leslie was back at the New Hampshire Highland Games & Scottish Festival on September 21, 22 and 23, 2018. Vice Chieftain and North East convenor Laura Messing hosted the Leslie tent for this 3-day festival. Friday got off to a rainy start but Saturday and Sunday were sunny and bright. Laura was joined by husband and CLSI member Dean Messing for the parade of Clans on Saturday. Every year, more Leslies visit our tent at the NH Games!

Laura Messing
Convenor

Laura & Dean Messing



Holly, Ivy and Mistletoe – Plants for the Holy Days

“Oh the holly and the ivy, When they are both full grown, Of all the trees there in the wood, The holly bears the crown”. Most of us have sung this sweet old carol which uses the symbols of plants to trace the Grace of Jesus’ life. We’ve all seen the brilliant poinsettias in every nursery center, and enjoyed the

scent of fresh green trees and wreaths in our local nurseries. We’ve also pulled ivy off brick walls from time to time, hung mistletoe, decorated with pine, and some of us even may have spent hours sticking apples and oranges with cloves to make spicy smelling pomanders to freshen closets and chase flour moths from our pantries. How many of us actually know what the symbolic plants really mean? I learned as a teenager with our YPF group in my home parish at Trinity Episcopal in Roslyn, NY. We were helping to decorate the church for Christmas Services when our priest commented during a break “Well, we’re certainly maintaining those fine old Pagan traditions!” Naturally, we wanted to know more about this. Since your Chaplain is an amateur botanist, I’ve had a life-long interest in how plants have been used - by the human species in particular, and especially at important celebrations and milestones in life. My newborn Unitarian cousins were sprinkled with water from a white rose at their “receiving ceremony”. The Victorians had an extensive language of flowers with which they could communicate their feelings. Duchess Kate carried Sweet William flowers in her wedding bouquet. The founders of my home town chose the violet for its plant symbol, believing “modesty” was the virtue they wished to convey most about their fair community. After my high school graduation as we all shed our robes and mortarboards backstage, I received a dozen long-stemmed red roses with the endearing note from my mother “American Beauties for my American beauty”. Each one of our 50 states has its own representative flower. And we all know the story of Scotland’s thistle which stung an invading English soldier creeping up to the Scottish lines in the dark; he yelled in surprise and pain, the Scots were thus warned of the impending attack and disastrous defeat averted. In this edition of Grip Fast we will explore the history and reasons certain plants are used at Christmastide.

Today, a shipment of fresh mistletoe arrived from a nursery in Texas, as it’s impossible to come by in NY. I’ll be tucking it in the front door

wreath as a symbol of peace and good will. Most people know the tradition of kissing beneath the mistletoe: with each kiss, a berry is picked off until none remain, after which time all such smooching below the leaves is ended (theoretically...). But the association with love and peace goes back to Norse mythology. In ancient days when the mistletoe had no berries, Frig, the Norse Goddess of Love, bore a son named Balder. Frig dipped Balder into a magical caldron after his birth which protected him from all harm except the spot where she held him by his heel to immerse him. Balder was compassion itself, loved, helped and blessed everyone and was much beloved by his people in return. But the evil Loki was jealous and made a poisoned arrow out of a mistletoe stem and shot him in the heel. When Balder subsequently died, Frig wept tears which became the white berries of the mistletoe. She then declared that henceforth, mistletoe would stand for love and peace to reflect Balder’s gentle kindness. Enemies long ago gave one another the Kiss of Peace beneath the mistletoe to show their sincere wish to resolve differences without war. The Norse myth traveled with the Vikings down into Scotland, and finally to North America with immigrating Scots. The idea of loving peacefulness eventually arrived in Canada and the US with a slightly romantic twist to the original meaning. And mistletoe can be healing (Which Druids also believed) in the proper form: Helixor and Iscadore are two complimentary medicines available in the UK and Europe for adjunctive cancer treatment and both are made from mistletoe. It is one of -if not the - most studied plants for use in cancer treatments in the world; it has been found to reduce tumor size and even to offer protection from metastases. There are many varieties of mistletoe, including one with red berries. The name, derived from the Anglo-Saxon words “mistl” (manure) and tan (a twig or small branch) literally means “dung on a stick” - not terribly reflective of our romantic perception of mistletoe at the holidays!

The use of holly comes from our far ancestors as well. Holly’s sharp leaves often left drops of blood on those whom it poked; holly berries looked like drops of blood themselves. Because no one willingly tangled with the holly, it became a symbol of protection. Grow holly in your yard and your home will be defended from all manner of evil which cannot get past the thorny aspects of the plant. Holly has true seasonal connotations also. The Celts divided the year into Light and Dark halves. After the Summer solstice when days began to shorten, the Holly King - who ruled the Dark season - defeated the Oak King in a deadly battle. After the Winter solstice when days began to lengthen, the Oak King - who ruled the Light season - resurrected with the growing light and defeated the Holly King in a yet another battle. The Holly King was especially celebrated just before his yearly downfall at the winter solstice. The ancients believed that

bringing holly indoors would provide protection to themselves and their homes. Kindly nature spirits dwelled in the woodlands but had nowhere to go when the vegetation died. Bringing in holly, which kept its leaves all winter and did not shed indoors either, provided a place for these nature spirits to survive the bitter months. Celts believed these sprites were grateful, and so they blessed and protected the home and the family who lived there.

Ivy, a vine, is often thought of as the plant after which the Celtic month “Gort” (vine) is named. Ivy represents marriage due to its tenacious “embracing” quality. Anyone who has ever pulled ivy from brick, fence or tree knows about this. It clings no matter what and under “better or worse” conditions. Marriage – and therefore, ivy - also stood for loyalty, devotion, immortality and love. Because of this, it became connected with Christmas through those same qualities which the medieval mind saw in the Virgin Mary and Jesus. And ivy is another one of those plants that remains green in winter. The newest ivy leaves (before the plant matures) have three points which also reminded ancients of the Trinity, and sometimes of God the Father, Jesus and St. Mary. That Marian association ensured that ivy was one of the plants most used at Christmas. There was also a more secular and Pagan association with ivy: Dionysus, the god of wine, worn an ivy wreath around his head. It was thought that wearing ivy kept one from becoming drunk, and the practice rapidly spread, presumably helping those imbibing merrily at holiday celebrations to stay sober. Later it went from being a wreath worn by revelers to becoming a general decoration. One hopes it had the same effect...

Roses have come late upon the scene to be used in Christmas decorations, but the rose is Mary’s own flower and so it has appeared more and more in recent years, especially white roses and baby’s breath - both highly symbolic of the ‘reason for the season’. Pine stands for immortality and is also one of those boughs brought in for the protection and care of the woodland spirits during winter months. Is it any wonder that pines and their relatives became our Christmas trees? And the evergreen yew, which has red gel-filled berries, was thought of as a healing and protective plant for centuries. Interestingly enough, yew berries also ae used to produce a drug especially useful for combating and protecting from breast cancer in its medicinal derivative of Taxol. Yew’s cheerful red and green colors provide decorations for Christmas, but it does so much more. And what about poinsettias, now apparently in every color of the rainbow and even covered in with glitter by florists who favor bling?! It is a native of Middle and South America where, left unchecked, it grows into small trees. Poinsettia’s myth goes like this: a little girl from a poor home heard about the birth of a wonderful baby boy and wanted to bring something to welcome the special newborn. But she had nothing to bring as her family was impoverished. She went to see Him anyway, and picked some weeds to take as an offering - the only things she could find growing in the stony winter ground. Carefully

she gathered these into her apron and carried them with her. When she arrived at the stable and saw the rich gifts that had already been given, she was ashamed of her own humble present and was reluctant to offer it. But Mary, loving all children and sensing this child’s devotion, asked what she carried. When the little girl opened her apron the weeds had turned into beautiful, brilliant red flowers with many petals like the rays of the star above the stable. No one had ever seen flowers of this kind before, and Mary declared them a gift fit for a King.

In the cold days to come, remember that the light in increasing, spring will return and the world will grow green again. Meanwhile, I wish all of our Clan Leslie kith and kin, a warm and safe winter with all the blessings of this season of Light. Beannacht Leat!

Samantha Leslie Gray, Chaplain, CLSI

.....



Eric Leslie works security at the Skagit Valley Highland Games in Mount Vernon, WA.

Lang May Yer Lum Reek

“Lang may yer lum reek” is the lowlands Scots language equivalent to “happy birthday”. It is your chaplain’s privilege and pleasure to wish each CLSI member celebrating a birthday much happiness and health in their upcoming personal year. The following members have or will celebrate birthdays through the next edition of Grip Fast:

October

Judy Hinckley, Gregg Leslie and Stephen Leslie- 10/3; Brian Lesslie – 10/4; Ruth Dittman, Frank Leslie and John Updegraff – 10/6; Stephen Talley – 10/8; Mathilda Gould and Lewis Johnson – 10/9; Debbie Manos McHenry – 10/10; John Lessley – 10/12; Thomas Allen and Jeffrey Dorsey – 10/13; Dane Gay and Peggy Stull – 10/14; Barrie Leslie – 10/15; Tom Leslie, Overton Lesley and William Leslie – 10/16; Johon Abernethy, Donald Leslie and Sandra Leslie – 10/20; James Leslie – 10/21; Dwight Leslie – 10/22; Florence Leslie, Helen Leslie, Noreen Leslie – 10/23; John Lesslie – 10/24; Mark Weller – 10/26; Wanda Lucas – 10/27; Richard Leslie – 10/28; Kenneth Leslie and Melva Wheelwright – 10/31.

November

Toni Leslie – 11/1; Darrell Abernethy, T. Ashley Leslie Fodroci, Margaret leslie Peacock and Anne Hooper – 11/2; Bonnie Simmons – 11/3; Carolyn Linebarrier and Mary Anne Regling – 11/4; Maggie Carr and Kristina Nellis – 11/6; Craig Leslie, Jack Merrill, Steve Olling and David leslie White – 11/7; Bonnie Rudinsky – 11/9; William G. Leslie and Murna Nason – 11/11; Leslie Evans – 11/12; Heidi Hanson – 11/13; Robert E. Leslie and Karen Leslie – 11/14; William F. Leslie – 11/17; L. Leslie – 11/19; Sarah Lessley – 11/20; Richard Leslie and Monica Roderiguez – 11/21; Fredrick Lang – 11/25; Cillian McKenzie Moore – 11/26; Libby Gray and Harold Wilcox – 11/28; Janet Abernathy – 11/29.

December

Peggy Allen and Samuel Reid – 12/1; Sharon Eastwood – 12/2; Matthew Allen - 12/3; Duncan Moore, Sandi Moore and Max White-Vilmouth – 12/7; Mary Margaret Allen – 12/8; Beryl Leslie – 12/9; Christine Johnson, Ruth Trombetta and Dale Young – 12/11; Vicki Dodson, Leslie Hicklin and Eric Leslie – 12/12; Harriet Esham – 12/16; Lauren Thompson – 12/18; Emma Katlin Reed and Rennly Williams – 12/19; Steven Leslie – 12/20; Elizabeth Henry and Richard Leslie – 12/26; Nena McNeely – 12/28; Russell Lessly – 12/29; Janique Leslie-Calderone and Stephen leslie – 12/30; Kristen Barr – 12/31.

January

Daniel Jones and William Leslie – 1/1; William Laing – 1/2; Robert Leslie – 1/6; James Leslie 1/7; Laura Messing – 1/12; Dominik Leslie – 1/13; Timothy Abernathy and Collin Leslie – 1/16; Donald Leslie and Robert j. Leslie – 1/20; James Festerman – 1/21; Josephine Gordon Gale Walker and Poet Rabbie Burns – 1/25; Robert Bailey, Clark Leslie and Donna Nicholson – 1/26; Syver Moore – 1/27.

February

James Leslie – 2/2; Ann Eidsmo and Robert M. leslie – 2/5; Richard Leslie – 2/7; Janice Leslie and Louise Monroe – 2/8; Linda Hart, James Leslie and Walter Leslie – 2/10; Stephanie Phillips – 2/11; Mary Ann Weiss – 2/12; Mary Erler and Charles Leslie – 2/13; Cherie Davila – 2/16; Hugh Moore – 2/18; Carol Welk – 2/20; Linda Joseph – 2/22; Patricia Powell – 2/23; David Leslie – 2/26; Mary LaCombe – 2/27; Helen Harkness and Magnus Leslie– 2/29.

To all celebrating: SLAINTE’!!



In Memorium

Harvey Edward “Ed” Leslie age 87 of Remlap, AL passed away Monday, October 29, 2018 at his home. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Mary Evelyn Sizemore Leslie. He was born October 5, 1931 in Ensley, AL and was the son of George Howard Leslie and Paula E. Campbell Leslie. He served his country in the United States Navy. He received his B.A. degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1955 from Auburn University and upon graduation accepted a job with Anderson Electric Company

Library Donation

In accordance with our Constitution and Bylaws (Article I, para. 2. Archives and Library: “The Society shall collect and store books, articles, records, manuscripts, pamphlets, and other materials pertaining to Clan Leslie, the Society and its members, to which members of the Society in good standing shall have access.”

I am very pleased to announce that two rare books have been added to the Clan Leslie Collection at the McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario. The first book is *Never a Dull Moment: The Memoirs of Sir John Leslie*, 4th Baronet of Glaslough, County Monaghan, Republic of Ireland. John Norman Ide Leslie was born December 6, 1916 in New York City, the eldest son of Sir John Randolph Leslie, 3rd Baronet (known as Shane Leslie) and Marjorie Ide, the daughter of General Henry Clay Ide, an American diplomat who was the former Governor-General of the Philippines. Sir John's grandmother was Leonie Jerome, a sister of Jennie Jerome who was married to Randolph Churchill, the parents of Sir Winston S. Churchill. Hence, John Norman Leslie was a first cousin once-removed of former Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill. John Norman Leslie had an older sister, Anita Leslie (Anita Theodosia Moira Leslie) who became a noted author of many books and a younger brother, Desmond Arthur Peter Leslie, a film maker and writer.

While still living with his mother in New York, he developed “a mastoid in his left ear.” It was operated on, leaving him completely and permanently deaf in that ear. Since his father had become a Catholic, and was a friend of Cardinal Farley, the Archbishop of New York, John was baptized by the Cardinal. In 1919, at the age of three, he and his mother moved to Castle Leslie, Glaslough, County Monaghan, Ireland. After two years at Castle Leslie, the family moved to London which was his home for the next seventeen years.

John exhibited an exceptional memory, and mentioned that between 1933 and 1939 he attended a never-ending series of debutante dances and balls, and he lists the names of many of the girls he danced with, and the names of many of the young men who also danced with the girls. He and his family would spend Christmas at Castle Leslie. At that time, the Leslie estate was about twenty-four thousand acres and also Lough Derg with its fifteen islands, one of which was named ‘St Patrick's Purgatory.’ In this book, John once again exhibits his remarkable memory by recounting the castles, mansions, and Victorian houses in the area, and the families that lived in them. He comments that his “world was populated by Lords and Ladies, all of whom I knew had velvet and ermine robes and gold and silver cornets in their wardrobes . . .”

In 1927 he was sent to Downside School Catholic school for five years. He writes of joining the monks in Gregorian Chant, canings, birchings (actually floggings) and other physical punishments now forbidden. Eventually John entered Magdalene College, Cambridge where he was on the eight-man rowing team. He casually mentions that his Great-Great Grandmother,

Minney Seymour, was a child of King George IV. John graduated with a B.A. and at sometime later joined the Irish Guards, received an officer's commission (in spite of being deaf in one ear)

As a second lieutenant (ensign) in the Irish Guards, he had duty at the Tower of London in 1938 and then at Wellington Barracks to guard Buckingham Palace and St. James Place. In 1939, the war broke out. The Nazis occupied Denmark and Norway to the Arctic Circle. Then the Nazis invaded Holland and Belgium and deep into France. John Leslie was given command of a platoon and his unit was embarked to the coast of France. (It appears that the Irish Guards had been well trained in marching, parades, guard duty and weapon firing, but no training in tactics). There was intense combat and his unit was captured by the German Army, marched a great distance with little food and was imprisoned in a primitive camp in Bitburg, Germany. Later they were moved to a small village near Salzburg. The following years of his imprisonment are covered very briefly until April 1945 when he was moved to Moosberg, Bavaria. Then, on the 10th of May 1945, the American tanks arrived and they were liberated. He returned to Leslie Castle in Glaslough, Ireland.

John recalls the names of many of the staff, butler, chauffeur, housekeeper, gardeners, carpenters, yardman, dairymaid, gamekeeper, herdsman, etc. In 1949 John traveled to America with his mother and sister Anita to visit with some of his American cousins. Later, his mother and Anita returned to Ireland but John wished to see more of America. He traveled on Grayhound buses, trains and at times hitch-hiked. He traveled to El Paso, Texas, Santa Fe New Mexico, Carlsbad Caverns, Minnesota and Houston Texas where he got a job as a kitchen steward at the then new Shamrock Hotel. He later moved to San Francisco, then on to Oregon before returning to Ireland. In 1953, he returned to Rome. He bought an old palazzino inhabited by four families, paid them to move out, restored this 16th century house, and furnished it with 17th century furniture. The pages in his memoirs roll on, filled with paragraphs about visiting the elegant homes of friends, and he can describe in great detail the home and the furnishings.

John did write about his grandfather's sister, Olive Leslie, who married Murray Guthrie. They bought the Durart Castle Estate on the Isle of Mull. This purchase included the ruins of Durart Castle (ancestral home of the McCleans) and thirty-eight thousand acres. Murray and Olive gave the castle to the head of the McClean clan, Sir Fitzroy McClean, who restored it. Murray and Olive lived across the bay at their Torosay Castle, which is actually a baronial mansion.

In the 1990s, at the age of 78, Sir John Leslie left Italy and returned to his ancestral home at Castle Leslie. Since his father, Sir Shane Leslie, 3rd Baronet of Glaslough died in 1971, John became Sir John Leslie, the 4th Baronet of Glaslough. Castle Leslie was opened to the public as The Tea Rooms and rooms were available to paying visitors. Castle Leslie had a staff of over 100. Sir John Norman Ide Leslie died on April 18, 2016 at the age of 99.

WELCOME to all who have signed up to the latest Clan Gathering in 2020

When David & Leslie, Petra & I started this journey we were hoping that we would have lots of time to get the organisation into some simple shape. How surprised we were to the response. We were totally over the moon with the number of people who sent questions and sat waiting for a reply. When we got it sorted it all started to drop into place. At the outset we thought it was a Royal Wedding.

Down to the questions and answers.

We sorted out the hotel and got a good price for you to book your rooms. (Per Room). It is the biggest hotel in the area and also can seat 220 people in the function room. At the moment we are fully booked but have put some of the names on to an overflow list as we don't expect everybody who applied will attend due to many reasons. Who knows what will happen in a year.

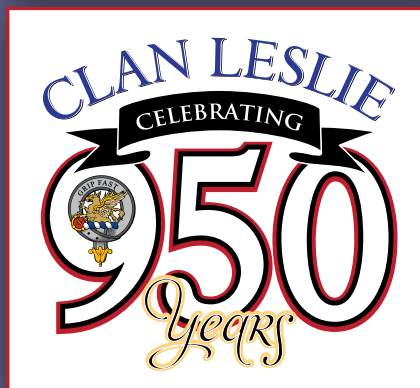
We will be sending out the registration papers at the end of April, 2019. We hope to get all the replies in by the end of June 2019 That gives you 2 months to return them to us with your payment. When the registration papers are returned to us the attendees have to book your rooms the following month July 2019. Don't waste time booking.

As you the attendees are the only people who know exactly how many family/friends are coming we need this information ASAP. If in the event of not enough beds we will have more rooms booked in another hotel nearby.

I will leave you now to think about the great time you will be having in Scotland.

We are all looking forward to meeting you all.

Cheers D,L & B, P.



How's Your Appetite?

Greetings, Cousins! Some time ago it was decided in CLSI Council to attempt a Leslie Cookbook as a way of preserving family recipes and sharing members' favourites. A request went out in Grip Fast Journal for recipes and a few came in. But some could also not be used as they were taken from cookbooks already published. While this has, unfortunately, been common practice for many groups putting together cookbooks, it is not in accordance with United States copyright or "intellectual property" laws. To use such material we must first contact the publisher/editor and receive specific permission for inclusion of that particular recipe. If it is given, then we must credit the original author, and not the person who submitted the recipe. If we do not obtain permission and use a published recipe, CLSI is subject to a fine for copyright infringement and possibly for plagiarism. Even for a member living outside the USA, we still must follow the above protocol or be held responsible for a breach if it is noticed. There is an important ethical consideration here as well. As Chaplain, I would like to see us all do it the right way!

So again, I am asking everyone's help to get this cookbook off the ground. While the Cookbook Committee is willing to try to obtain permission for a few recipes, it takes a long time to get it, and it is never certain that we will. So, to be clear – if you have recipes passed down from Great-Granny Leslie, or Uncle Jim Cairney, that's wonderful. If you don't, but have a recipe you've been using 'forever' and can't remember the origin, please send it. I watched my grandmother make her favorite soup every winter. She didn't really have a recipe, so I wrote it down by observing what she did. These are the kind of family treasures that we would like to include in a CLSI cookbook: the stuff you make every day from memory, and the stuff you have been making for special occasions for years. They are tucked away on notes, on 3X5 cards, on the backs of envelopes which we stuff into our favourite cookbooks or recipe file boxes to keep them from getting lost.... Send everything from snacks to entrees to soups, salads and desserts, beverages – and anything and everything in between – to Riognach@aol.com. Please write your name clearly with your State, Province and Country so we can properly attribute the contribution to you. I would love to borrow a line from the great poet Rabbie Burns and call the cookbook "Gie Us A Haggis" (with proper attribution, naturally!) but that's yet to be decided. Have any good ideas for a title? Now's the time! And thanks for all your recipes in advance!

Samantha Gray, Chaplain, CLSI

BALQUHAIN CASTLE

Balquhain Castle, located close to Leslie Castle, was built in the 14th century and held by Leslie family from 1340. In July 1441 John Leslie of Balquhain instructed four masons, David Hardgat, David Dun, Robert Masoun and Gilbert Masoun to build Balquhain Castle. It became the stronghold of the Leslies of Balquhain

The Castle had a difficult history, it was destroyed in a feud with the Forbes family in 1526, and rebuilt in 1530. The castle was abandoned in 1746 after it was burned by the forces of Prince William, Duke of Cumberland. Today the castle stands as a ruin, but still remains an important Leslie monument visited by Leslies touring Scotland. It is protected as a scheduled monument.



New Member has Strong Leslie Connection

Thank you for accepting me as a Member of Clan Leslie, while I am not a Leslie by family, I was born in a house with the Leslie crest on the front of it. This was the Duchess Lodge at the entrance to the house as a youngster grew being a regular visit to the Earl of Rothes house, as it was my Grandfathers place of work. As a youngster I was interested in the Local history especially Leslie House I also have a large collection of postcards from the 1900's to the present day covering the area. Years later became a trustee in the Glenrothes Area Heritage Center where we have a display of the Earl's artifacts. So over the years I have got to know the Leslie family well. when Alistair Leslie (the current Earls uncle) retired from the Leslie family trust, They asked me if I would fill the Vacant position as they were advised that there should be a non-family member as a Trustee which I accepted. a few weeks ago I met up with Brian Leslie he suggested I should become a Member of the Society.

Regards,
Bill Fiet



New member Bill Fiet is at the very far left of the photo, decked out in his Leslie Tartan suit.

Editor's Note:

My family and I were fortunate enough to meet Bill during our visit to Scotland in 2017 when we marched with Clan Leslies in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. We were introduced by our friend, Max Scotto, when he took us to visit the Glenrothes Area Heritage Center. What a treat we were in for! Bill is EXTREMELY knowledgeable about all things Leslie and the history of the area. Not only is Bill knowledgeable and kind but he is so generous with his time and resources. He spent so much time with our family answering questions and explaining the exhibits. I hope that everyone who attends the upcoming gathering in Scotland will have the opportunity to meet and chat with Bill.

Laura Messing

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Leslie Tartan

At the Grandfather
Mountain Games, we
found a vendor who
has 13 oz. wool, Leslie
Ancient tartan 54 inches
wide for \$55 per yard.

The vendor is:
Grandfather Scottish
PO Box 1132, Linville,
NC 28646
perrys@charter.net
phone 828-733-3476

visit us at clanlesliesociety.org

CLAN LESLIE GATHERING 2020

Thursday July 30 - Sunday August 2, 2020
Aberdeenshire, Scotland

TO CELEBRATE 950 YEARS OF THE CLAN

Your Hosts will be:

Brian & Petra Lesslie and David & Leslie Leslie

Your Clan Chief Alex and his wife Miranda
will also be attending.

We have already had a high number of people
interested in attending the gathering.

As we will be limited to the number who can attend,
due to the size of the Function room, anyone who is
interested in attending please send your name and
email address a.s.a.p. to BRIAN LESSLIE at:

bless993@blueyonder.co.uk



Join us for this exciting event!



Leslie

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