



GRIP FAST

JOURNAL

The Newsletter of Clan Leslie Society International

August 2021



Clan Leslie
AT THE
GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN
HIGHLAND GAMES!

The Honourable Alexander Leslie, Chief of Clan Leslie



The Clan Leslie Charitable Trust bought a quaich the other day. This does not sound a fascinating story but, well, it is.

The Trust was set up by my father, Ian, a long time ago to keep items of interest (old family portraits and silver) in one place and prevent them being the property of one individual.

Some years ago, we were offered a silver quaich. It was interesting because it was a) very old and b) was made to celebrate the wedding of one Helen Leslie to one John Grant, in Aberdeenshire, in 1680.

This proved that Leslies and Grants had married before and Miranda and I agreed that it was worth investigating, which we did.

The problem was that it was eye wateringly expensive. As our builder would have said to the agent 'sober

up and call me back.'

It came up again some years later and the price had gone down about a third. We thought a little harder about it, with our fellow Trustees, but again decided it was too much money.

It is a familiar problem. The auction price would have been about half of this offer but dealers know that a family connection will double the price.

Finally, two months ago, we were offered it again and this time the price was less than half (a lot less) than the first time round.

So, the Trust bought it. And it arrived yesterday, bringing another piece of Leslie history home.

(The inscription reads: This Cup the property of John Grant of Nevie and Helen Leslie his Spouse eldest daughter of John Leslie of Kinninvie. Married at Kinninvie 14 Oct 1680).

Alex Leslie,
Clan Chief, August 2021



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ABOUT THE COVER:

Another fantastic Leslie tent from Virginia & North Carolina Convenors Lew and Christine Johnson at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, 2021.

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Correction from the last issue: on the CLSI Officers Contact List, we accidentally cut omitted a "t" from the Honourable Alexander Leslie's email address. The Chief's email is: alex@leslieandbaggott.com. We apologize for the error!

CLSI ELECTIONS

The following offices will be up for election in the fall of 2021. The elected officers will take office in January, 2022.

Chieftain-currently held by Loren Leslie
Treasurer-currently held by Linda Flowers

The Chieftain shall be a fully qualified adult lineal CLSI member over twenty-one (21) years of age, and a member of the Society in good standing. The Chieftain shall have general supervision of the Society, and preside at its Gatherings and meetings, appoint officers as specified in the bylaws and carry out other duties as may be determined by the Society. The Chieftain shall be elected for a term of two years, and no Chieftain may serve more than two consecutive terms.

The Treasurer shall collect all dues and income and have charge of all other funds of the Society except as designated by the Council. He/she shall deposit the funds in a bank designated by the Council, and disburse funds as directed by the Chieftain, Vice Chieftain or Council.

If you are interested in running for one of these two offices, we always welcome CLSI members to run for office. Please contact our secretary/registrar Dane Gay at dane_gay@disciplefish.net.

CLSI Donation to Preserve Culloden

April 25, 2021

Please accept this donation from Clan Leslie Society International for the Conserve Culloden fund.

We are happy to donate and hope Culloden remains intact. I personally have visited Culloden and it was a wonderful experience.

Linda Flowers, Treasurer
Clan Leslie Society International
302 SW 3rd St.
Tuttle, OK 73089
Lflowers1954@yahoo.com
405-833-2948

NH SCOT®

Join us at the 46th New Hampshire
Highland Games & Festival
September 17-19, 2021

Clan Leslie will once again have a tent at the New Hampshire Highland Games and Festival! Join us for a great weekend of Scottish fun. Saturday morning is the parade of Clans so if you're a Leslie in the Northeast, put on your colors and march with us. Contact Northeast convenor Laura Messing at designinvasion@gmail.com with any questions or if you would like to volunteer to help with the tent.

Clan Leslie AT THE 20 GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN HIGHLA

This year's Grandfather Mountain Highland Games set a new record for attendance. For Friday and Saturday, it was reported that The games exceeded the highest Friday attendance by 50 percent. At the two CLSI tents, it was non-stop visitors and people needed to take turns entering the tents to view our displays. We had members from: CA, GA, FL, MN, NC, NH, SC, and TN sign the visitor's log for a total of over 30 people,

On Thursday evening, Lesley Craddock answered the calling of the clans for Clan Leslie. Then on Friday morning we began greeting visitors and renewing friendships with CLSI members we have not seen in over a year. We had a member Shea Thames and his family from North Carolina join us for all three days. They will be joining us at other games to help and be part of the CLSI tent-hosting team.

Michael Leslie and his wife Brendalee donated a book *Lesley – Leslie: A History of Two Hundred Years In America 1755-1955*, by Ruth C. Leslie. This book chronicles William and Elizabeth Lesley and their descendants. This book will be a valuable addition to our genealogy reference materials. Thank you again for the donation.

Chris, the CLSI genealogist, was kept busy all three days answering questions and collecting information from visitors about their families and stories of Leslie family history were shared.

Our photo of Rose Leslie was a highlight for many fans of Game of Thrones and Downton Abbey. We had on display photos of Lickleyhead Castle and Wardhill House with an article about Rose's connection to Lickleyhead Castle.

On Sunday, all members of CLSI in attendance marched in the parade of tartans and we got a special recognition by the announcer Bill Leslie who also presented us with a copy of his latest music CD. As it has in the past, the games closed with dark clouds rolling in, and by 3 pm showers moved into the area.

The Craddock family, Lesley, Peter, and their two sons Joseph and Benjamin, along with Lesley's mother Brenda Meyer, are deserving of special recognition for providing lunches and snacks for the weekend. They welcomed many members into the hospitality tent to view the piping and athletic competitions.

Lew and Christine Johnson



21 ND GAMES



Mom Who Went Viral Pushing Dairy Truck Through Snow Gets Year's Supply of Milk

She's really got milk.

A Scottish woman who went viral for helping to push a huge dairy truck up a snowy hill has been rewarded with a year's supply of milk.

Charlene Leslie told the Central Fife Times how she left two of her three kids with a friend so she could get in the street and push a truck that was stuck with its wheels spinning in snow.

Video showed Leslie pushing the truck from behind as it moved uphill at a walking pace — with people dubbing her a real-life Wonder Woman.

After the clip went viral last week, Graham's The Family Dairy, whose truck she pushed, tracked her down — and gave her “milk and high protein dairy products free for the rest of the year,” the company said.

“When I saw the video of Charlene pushing one of our artic lorries up a steep hill singlehandedly, I couldn't believe it,” company chairman Dr. Robert Graham Snr. said.

“She not only made our family, farmers and colleagues smile, but clearly captured the hearts of thousands of people across the world.”

Still, the dairy company noted that “although she is a real-life superwoman” others should not “follow her actions,” with many noting it could have been deadly had the truck rolled backward.

Leslie agreed that it was “really dangerous,” but said, “I would never just stand by when I see someone in trouble. In the moment I wasn't really thinking about me, I just wanted to help.”



Charlene Leslie has been rewarded with a year's supply of milk.



Kind-hearted mom Charlene Leslie helped push a struggling Graham's dairy truck up a snowy hill.

DUES ARE DUE

Members owing membership dues should have received an invoice by email or mail at the end 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 LFLOWERS1954@YAHOO.COM or 405-833-2948.

SW Convenor Needed

CLSI is in need of a convenor for the Southwest region. If you would like to serve as convenor or host a tent in the Southwest, please contact Laura Messing at: designinvasion@gmail.com

INFORMAL GATHERING IN SCOTLAND

We know many of you had plans/reservations to attend the Gathering in Scotland last summer. Unfortunately, it had to be cancelled due to Covid. We have had questions from members about when/if you plan to use your reservations and maybe a small group could meet in Scotland. If you have plans or would like to be a part of this informal gathering, email Lew Johnson, ljohnson355@gmail.com.

Calling all Convenors & Tent Hosts!

If you are a convenor or tent host, we want your event on our online calendar. Email the event, dates and website to Laura Messing: designinvasion@gmail.com

NEW ITEMS IN OUR STORE!

We have many new items for sale in our store on our website. We have added engraved leather coasters, ball caps, Clan Leslie stickers and The Shipbuilder's Book. Check out our new items!



Coasters!



Stickers!



Ball Caps!

Visit: clanlesliesociety.org/shop

SHOP AMAZON, DONATE TO CLSI!

Clan Leslie Society International now has an **Amazon Smiles** account. Amazon Smiles is a system where Amazon donates a portion of your purchase to your designated charity. This does not cost you extra when you make a purchase. We are a tax-free organization so we are eligible for Amazon Smiles. To use Amazon Smiles, simply shop at smile.amazon.com, login using your regular login information and choose Clan Leslie Society International. Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to us. If you are a Amazon Prime member, that works with Amazon Smiles as well.

CLSI Member Promoted

On March 24, 2021, CLSI member Adam Flowers was promoted to Major of the Canadian County Sheriff's Office in El Reno, Oklahoma. Adam will be in charge of all investigations at the Sheriff's Office. He is a certified computer forensics expert and began his career in law enforcement as the lead investigator to apprehend child sexual predators. He was sent to computer forensic school in California and uses these skills to gain images and videos of child sexual predators from their computers, cell phones, tablets, etc. Adam has arrested over 200 child sexual predators and has a 100% conviction rate. Adam is the son of CLSI treasurer, Linda Flowers.



McKenzie, Linda, Adam, Dakota and Danielle Flowers.



Major Adam Flowers



CANADIAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Join Clan Leslie Society International for our biennial gathering in conjunction with the 2022 Las Vegas Highland Games April 8-10 at Floyd Lamb Park! More details to follow but so far here's what we have planned:

Meet & Greet: Friday April 8

Highland Games: Saturday and Sunday April 9-10

Chief's Banquet: Saturday April 9

If you would like to reserve a room at the Vdara Hotel, please contact Jet Luxury at the Vdara Hotel at **1-877-538-7389** and ask for the Clan Leslie block (if that doesn't work it may be under Laura Messing) Questions? Contact Laura Messing at: designinvasion@gmail.com.

LESLIE LOG HOUSE

Stories

By Malcolm Byard, Streetsville Historical Society



The first encounter with a person of great interest took place Sunday, January 15, 2020 before the COVID 19 pandemic upset our in-house programs. Darryl Laidlaw, a relative of the Laidlaws who lived in the log house before it was acquired by the developer, visited us in the house with some recollections of his visits with the family. He recounted that the summer kitchen, attached to the side of the house had become a utility room and his uncle had a very nice roll top desk in there. He said the family had a large parrot in a cage in the large room near the front window where our gift shop is now located. He said while they were standing in the utility room they could hear the bird making loud squawks. He told us that the smaller room had served as the family dining room with a long table front to back close to the interior wall. He told stories of family meals and gatherings around that table.

After his visit he chose to go outside, sit on the lawn in front of the house—a mild January day—and have his picture taken with his dog.

Sunday, November 29, 2020 the Byard phone rang at 2:30 in the afternoon, it was a call from Taylor Ledden in Midland, Ontario telling us he had lived in the log house as a teenager. He said they moved onto the farm in 1948 and he thought no one had lived in the house for around 40 years. The deed stated the farm was 100 acres more or less and the house had no running water and no electricity at the time. The logs were covered with clapboard and they had no idea it was a log house until the electrician came to electrify the house. The electrician complained that he had broken several drill bits in attempting to drill through the walls.

He commented that there was a lot of wood in there. When they removed some of the cladding they found out it was a log building.

Taylor also recounted renovations they made to the interior walls. They found a board inside one of the walls with the date 1830 on it which must have been the date of the installation of the wall they were working on. He said there were slat boards inside the wall which had been split with a hatchet to that they could be used as laths for the plaster wall. An earlier renovation revealed a board with 1826 which we have accepted as the date of the construction of the log house since the Leslies had arrived in Canada in 1824.

He said that the summer kitchen at the side of the house had originally been at the back and when he came home from college one weekend it had been moved to the side. Interestingly he said his father had a roll top desk in that room. It was probably the same desk the Laidlaws had in there.

When the house was moved from its original location to where it is now the summer kitchen was left behind.



The Leslie Log House is located at 4415 Mississauga Rd,
Mississauga, ON L5M 3G8 Canada.

Visit: <http://www.streetsvillehistoricalsociety.ca/> for more information.



Darryl Laidlaw outside the log house

The driveway from the house to Mississauga Road was a half mile long (800 metres) and it was often a problem in the winter. One time they were snowed in and they were trying to contact the snow plow to plow them out; they were on the phone sharing a party line with Fred Reeves and his wife Lavinia, "Viney" from whom they had bought the farm. The Reeves were living along Mississauga Road and the Leddens heard a woman's voice on the line telling them the plow had just gone down Mississauga road, they asked who it was and she said it's Viney. Eventually they got plowed out.

Taylor said he lived there until the early 50's when he left to attend the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph. His mother and father lived there until the 1970's; he said his parents sold off 90 acres and kept the remainder with the house for themselves. After it was surveyed it turned out the remainder was 11½ acres since the initial size of the farm was 101½ acres.

The Leddens, Taylor and Ruby, are looking forward to visiting the Streetsville Historical Society once we are free of COVID restrictions.

One more story concerning the log house was with William Lyon Mackenzie, a fiery Scot politician who was the leader of the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion which fell flat after a skirmish at Montgomery's Tavern in Toronto.

Mackenzie was well-known in Streetsville and he went on the run after the failed rebellion and came through Streetsville. He found refuge in a barn which still stands North and West of what was then the village and I have heard from two different sources that he also hid out in the Leslie Log House. The story has been handed down rather carefully. At the time Mackenzie was on the run he was being pursued and there were many in Streetsville who were vehemently opposed to him so anyone who assisted him in his escape would have been careful to say nothing at the time. A family who did help him and who suffered because of it was well known. Comfort was a miller near Streetsville and Mackenzie sought shelter with his family. Comfort was found out, arrested and his pregnant wife was hosed down with freezing cold water, she died while he was imprisoned. It is a shocking and disgusting story but it did happen. After he was released Comfort and his surviving children were happy to leave this area.

Mackenzie did escape, it was rugged and he had a rough time but he eventually crossed the border to the USA and safety at Niagara Falls.

REMEMBERING THE ACLS GATHERING AT THE WILLIAMSBURG SCOTTISH FESTIVAL 1984



Editors Note: Shortly before his passing, CLSI Member Marty Brown shared some photos and memorabilia from the 1984 ACLS (American Clan Leslie Society, as it was known before changing to Clan Leslie Society International). Marty was the husband of CLSI member Marge Brown. If you zoom in tightly on the program below, the Honored Guest is listed as the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Rothes, Chief, Clan Leslie. As we prepare for the 2022 gathering in Las Vegas, it's fun to take a look back at some earlier Leslie events.

– Laura Messing





Pictured Left to Right: The Right Honourable Ian Lionel Malcolm Leslie, Earl of Rothes, Marge Brown and Lady Marigold Leslie.

The Celtic Civilization

Part I

"The best (largest) example of prehistoric migration in Europe yet found." *National Geographic Society*
Jim Ski Schiaffino Post 1814

All Scots are Celts, but not all Celts are Scots. Indeed, Scots are a relatively small segment of a larger Celtic world. As a student of History I have always felt it important to know from whence we came. So to that end; before there was 'Western Civilization', long before the Greeks, the Romans, The Mesopotamians even before the Chinese, there were the Celts or the people we now refer to as The Celts. Yes Virginia, they really were the first. The Celtic influence stretched literally from one ocean to the next. Many aspects of our 'modern world' can be traced to the Celts, or actually the *Gaedhaels* as they called themselves.

The origins of The Celts can be traced to Circaesya which is a Scythian word for Sea of Grass. The original Celts were part of the Scythian Empire and Circaesya was found in what is now Kazakhstan about 2,000 BC. The Scythian/Celts were part of the group who controlled what later would be called 'The Silk and Spice Roads'. The part of the world where the Scythian/Celts existed also contained the Altai Mountains. The source of a lot of ancient gold. (Altai is a Mongolian word for gold. This is also the source for the association of gold,

and gold working (Metallurgy) and the Celts.

Mythology (Scythian and Mesopotamian) maintains that The Celts first leader was Gaedhael Glas son of Agnoman, who was the son of Magog, son of Japheth. Japheth was a son of Noah (or Utnapishtim if you follow the Mesopotamian flood story in the Epic of Gilgamesh which predates the old testa-

ment.). Japheth is said to have founded a group of tribes in Central Asia called The Iapatic. They were considered to be one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Which was one of the reasons that the prophet Burgh (Baruch) brought the Stone of Destiny to Scotland by way of Ireland. But, that is another story.

The Celtic Diaspora

The reason for the diaspora are unclear although the two most popular suggestions flow around overcrowding or drought. From Circaesya, they spread out in three directions, East, West and South. Descendants of the Gaedhaels, called the Tochairian/Celts were, according to Chinese myth, the original founders of the Chinese Civilization and their mummies have been unearthed in the Takia Melan Desert. The mummies have been carbon dated from 4,000 B.C +/-1000years. The mummies had long braided red or blond hair, blue or green eyes, were clothed in woven wool and decorated with gold jewelry. The Chinese did not weave wool until about

200 B.C. Mitochondrion DNA proves them to be Indo-European (Scientific speak for Celtic or non-Asiatic).

The histories of the Medes, Serbs, Croats. Picts, Albanians, Hungarians, Azerbaijani, the original Canary Island inhabitants and the Carolingian and Merovingian Franks all mention Scythian /Celtic origins. The Turkic Kazakhs and Yakuts as well as the Pashtuns of Afghanistan claim to be of Scythian /Celts decent. Not to be outdone, in AD 1312 in The Treaty of Arbroath the Scottish elders referred to Scythia as the homeland of the Scots. So, there is very compelling written evidence supporting the spread of Celtic influence. You can look it up.

The Celts also established an enduring civilization encompassing Asia Minor and Northern Europe. The manner in which Celtic civilization differed from Greek or Roman versions is that they had no central authority, no capital, no senate, no king or emperor. It was their culture bound them together. They only unified in the face of outside threats. Their leader/king, like Cincinnatus, served only during a crisis. In a very real sense their culture/civilization was much closer to the ideal of 'democracy' than any other since.

Celts in Europe

Western History first comes into contact with the Celts through Greek and Roman writers. Most notably Herodotus, a host of others and Gaius Julius Caesar. It was Herodotus who gave them their western name. He first called them Keltoi. He described the Keltoi as tall, with gold, red or blond hair and a milk-white

complexion favoring bright colors. He also noted that all Keltoi wore a neck band of gold and a wide belt around their tunic. He also described their armour as metal breastplates with helmets and the helmets were adorned with carved figures, animals and horns, not the horns one finds on cows, but more like antelopes or goats. (It was Wagner who assigned the large horns to helmets.) The Keltoi rode horses and chariots and fought with swords and shields made of wicker. The Celts were also very adept at working metals, especially gold. Their jewelry was ornate, delicate and beautiful.

It was primarily through Caesar's writings that we have a somewhat divergent picture of the Celts, whom he referred to as Gauls. While the Greeks viewed them with curiosity, the Romans viewed them with disdain bordering on hostility or even fear. Since, Caesar's primary purpose was propaganda ie: (*Id Est - Latin for in other words*) glorification of his own deeds. He frequently portrayed his adversaries as derivative, vulgar and in need of civilizing. The Gallic tribes he identifies



Japheth
son of Noah



Herodotus

Editors note: This story was sent to us by David Leslie White and appeared in *The Patriot Summer of 2020*.

had names like the Belgae, Helvetii, Usipetes, Tencteri, the Visigoths and even the Vandals. But they all were Celtic. One could almost say the primary reason for the establishment of the Roman Empire was because of interaction with the Celts.

It was the Celts who crossed the Alps through what is now known as the Brenner Pass, prior to the rise of The Etruscians. They overwhelmed the Veneti and Liguri and established what Caesar referred to as Gallia Cisalpina (Cis Alpine Gaul - Gaul this side of the Alps). For those of you who did not have second year Latin - 'The Writings of Julius Caesar' - He begins with that famous sentence: "*Gaul is divided into three parts*". Cis Alpine Gaul is one of the three parts of Gaul. The other two were Gallia Transalpina (Trans Alpine Gaul - Gaul on the other side of the Alps) and my personal favorite Gallia Comata - Long Haired Gauls. They were found in what is today Germany and Poland and northern Europe. The Romans called Spain *Celtiberia*, England was *Britannia*, Ireland was *Ierne*, Scotland was *Caladonia* and the Orkneys were *Ultima Thule*.

Yes, the Romans actually sailed that far north. Writing around 56 BC, Diodorus set out to record an account of, what was then, the known world. His account is based on a report by the Greek sailor Pytheas of Massilia, who is thought to have sailed around Britain in 325 BC.

According to Orosius, Orcadian emissaries made a formal submission to the Roman Emperor Claudius at the time of the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43. The "King of Orkney" was one of 11 British leaders who is said to have submitted to the Emperor Claudius in AD 43 at Colchester (called Camulodunum in Latin) in modern day Essex. Roman coins dating from the first century AD have been found in the Orkneys.

During both Punic Wars (264 BC to 146 BC). Approximately 2/3 of the Carthaginian troops under Hannibal were Celts from Spain, France and Northern Italy. With few exceptions the early adversaries of the Romans were almost exclusively Celtic. In 390 BC they even sacked Rome. The Celtic leader Brennos defeated a Roman army led by the Consul A. Quintus Sulpicius and moved on to Rome. They destroyed much of the city except for a fortification atop the Capitoline Hill to which they laid siege. They left after accepting a sizable tribute.

In 281 BC they entered Greece and plundered Delphi. There were three Celtic armies were involved in the invasion of Greece. The two entered Macedonia. One was led by Cerethrios and another by Bolgios. A third was led by Brennos (like his namesake who sacked Rome) and Acichorius. They defeated an Athenian army near Thermopylae and went on to destroy the sacred Greek Temple at Delphi. Celts remained in Northern Greece until about 169 BC. Later crossing over into modern day Turkey and established what the Romans referred to as Galatia stretching from The Hellespont to the Black Sea. A part of which today is still called Galatia keeping alive a Celtic presence in former Hittite/Celt area.



Boadicea queen of the British Celtic Iceni tribe



Cartimandua queen of the Brigantes

Some of the most formidable adversaries of the Romans can be found in such Celtic figures as Vercingetorix, Boadicea of the Iceni, Cartimandua of the Brigantes (both women), Cunobelinus Cymbeline in Celtic yore) and his son Caratacos, Teutoboduus, Nennius, Cassivelaunos. On a more modern note, the movie *Braveheart* was incorrect in its depiction of Scots/Celts. While some tribes of Celts did use blue face paint, that was in post Roman times. (The blue paint was made from the leaves of the European Woad plant. When crushed and mixed with water yielded a blue like dye). Mostly it was the Picts (who were not Celts) who used it. The first historical record of blue face paint was the Battle of Nechtansmere AD 685. Fought near Letham in Angus. The Picts defeated the Northumbrian invaders. Scots/Celts did not wear plaids, they wore tunics. Plaids as such did not evolve until the 18th century. They did not fight naked as many sculptors portrayed. Herodotus clearly described their armament. Only Polybius wrote about naked warriors. He was describing the Gaesatae, a band of professional warriors who fought naked for religious reasons. To fight naked was to increase their karma, their unity with nature and harmony with living things.

Celtic Society

While the Romans viewed the Celts as barbarians, Celtic Society was far from barbarous. In point of fact it was probably much closer to that fictitious ideal - a democracy. It was a very organized society and controlled by strict rules. Otherwise it would not have endured for thousands of years. As the Celts moved throughout Asia Minor and Europe itself, the Celtic Culture absorbed the local tribes and their cultures. However, the Celtic Culture proved to be the dominant one providing a unified Code of Mores and Laws and a common language (more or less). That is why today someone who can speak, say, Polish can still communicate with folks from the Ukraine, Russia and most 'Slavic' countries. Before the establishment of the Roman Empire, a Celtic language was spoken throughout Asia Minor and Europe, except in the Mediterranean basin. Chinese mythology even holds the Tocarians (Celts) as the founders of their civilization. The Highland Code, up holding clan loyalty and personal honesty, is a remnant of these laws.

Celtic Society was divided into two parts; the Aristocracy and the Commoners. They did possess slaves

but they were exclusively foreigners captured in war. The largest group - the commoners, was composed of the *Tuath* similar to today's Clan. Caesar referred to them as tribes. The *Tuath* was further subdivided into the *Fine* or families. In each *Fine*, the oldest male of the oldest male held sway. Even before Roman times this 'rule' had evolved, in certain circumstances, to include females. In the *Tuath* the leaders of each *Fine* would select one among them to lead. His role was not so much as a king, but more of the wizened elder that clan members sought for guidance. Similar to the "chief" in Native American societies. Each *Fine* was self-sufficient and tended to live in a small area. The *Tuath* was a group of genetically related *Fines* and as such controlled a larger area. Among the Commoners a warrior class developed. Aristotle wrote grudgingly: *"It is not bravery to withstand fearful things through ignorance - for example if through madness one were to withstand the onset of thunderbolts - and again, even if one understands how great the danger is, it is not bravery to withstand it through high-spiritedness as when the keltoi (Celts) take up arms to attack in waves; and in general all the courage of barbarians is compounded with high spiritedness."*

The *Tuath*'s were held together by the nobility, which consisted of three groups: *Bards*, *Filids* and *Druids*.

Another "non-barbaric" concept - equality among the sexes was first practiced by the Celts or more correctly the *Geadhaels*. Greek mythology speaks of a warrior race of women called the Amazons. It was Herodotus who wrote of a race of warriors led by women and living north of the Black Sea about 1200 BC. Graves have been found in Kazakhstan and China holding the remains of women clothed as warriors with weapons, some have even had the trappings of leadership. In Celtic Society men and women were known to fight together.

Another Roman writer Diodorus wrote about the Celts and their "gruesome custom" of keeping severed heads in cedar boxes. Celtic people believed the head to be the home of the soul. The gruesome part came of the severed heads conundrum came from the custom of the Gauls in Southern France of severing the heads of their enemies during battle. To the Celts this was pretty much the same idea as the Romans slaughtering all the captured warriors and selling the women and children in to slavery.

"They (The Gauls) cut off the heads of enemies slain in battle and attach them to the necks of their horses. The blood stained spoils they hand over to their attendants and carry off as booty, while striking up a paeon and singing a song of victory, and they nail up these first fruits upon their houses just as those who lay low wild animals in certain kinds of hunting. They embalm in cedar oil the heads of the most distinguished enemies and preserve them carefully in a chest, and display them with pride to strangers, saying that, for this head, one of their ancestors, or his father, or the man himself, refused a large sum of money. They say that some of them boast that they refused the weight of

the head in gold" - Diodorus Siculus.

Herodotus and Diodorus, like Caesar, cited Celtic customs like the severed head and the Amazons as further evidence of their lack of civilization and therefore were gravely in need of Greco/Roman influence.

One popular myth was that the Celts worshiped trees and practiced human sacrifice led by Druid priests. It is simply that - a myth. The Celts were *Pandeists* meaning they worshiped many gods, but not plants, although some gods did manifest themselves through non human entities. Although the Celtic gods and goddesses were anthropomorphic, most were associated with some form of natural phenomena. This was not an uncommon idea in early times - think of Moses and the burning bush or Helios and his flaming steeds bringing sunrise.

There is no specific record of human sacrifice, nor evidence ever found. Only undocumented rumors. These came from Caesar through his propaganda and Lucan, a Roman poet and avid admirer of Caesar. (One might consider Lucan as an early version of a PR man for Caesar in the Senate while he was away fighting.)

Many historians have written about the Celts: Greek Herodotus of Halicarnassus (The Father of History), Hieronymus of Cardia, Hecataeus of Miletus, Dionysius of Miletus, Charon of Lampascus, Hellenicus of Lesbos, Xanthus of Lydia, Strabo and Philostratus of Tyana. Roman Cicero, Pausanias, Diodorus Siculus, Tacitus, Pliny the Elder, Cato the Elder, Livy, Seneca, Sallust, Suetonius, Appian, Polybius, Flavius Josephus and even Publius Vergilius Maro (You may know him as Virgil. His epic work 'The Aeneid', tells the story of Aeneas, and his travels following the fall of the city of Troy - The Trojans were Celtic.) All of these historians wrote about the Celts and never mentioned human sacrifice. Considering the length of time and extent of the Celtic Civilization (The Pacific to the Atlantic Oceans including Asia, Asia Minor and Europe) it is inconceivable that any of these Historians would have failed to mention this, if it had actually occurred. Therefore, one must conclude that human sacrifice was possible but not probable. In the 3,500+ year reign of the Celts only one writer mentioned human sacrifice (old Gaius Julius) therefore the inescapable conclusion is that the Celts simply did not practice this morbid ritual. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

The **Bards** were the poets, singers and storytellers. Their primary function was the spread of culture. They were the repositories of Celtic history, legends, folklore, and poetry. If a member of a *Tuath* was held to be in violation of a rule (a *More*) of society he or she would be demonized in story and song. As the Bards traveled between *Tuaths* (Think of the term 'troubadour') the word of his or her misdeed would spread. Bards also served the purpose loosely described as advisors to elders of each *Fine*. They would advise the local *Fine* or *Tuath* leader what was done in other places. They were the source of information concerning how other *Tuaths* dealt with a problem. This is a concept that echoes down through English Common law.

The *Filid* were the Soothsayers or Seers. They would be the ones you went to for predictions or prognostications of future crop yields, birth of children et cetera. The *Filid* were a kind of human Punxutawney Phil. Mythology has handed down to us one of the more notorious *Filid* - Myrddin or Merlin. The idea of a mad wizard comes directly from him. Most scholars feel that Myrddin was actually several people who practiced their art over a long stretch of time.

The *Filid* also dabbled in what today we would refer to as 'the sciences' including astrology. There is a school of thought that holds that modern horoscopes are actually a corruption of Celtic soothsayer's practices. If you recall a biblical story, it was the magi or mystics who came from the Media (a Celtic place) following a star, that would predict the birth of a king. Star study was not found in Israel. It is believed to have originated in the part of Asia or Asia Minor that was populated by the Celts. These magi or mystics had studied the stars and had predicted the birth of a king. The written descriptions of magi mirror those of the *Filid*.

The *Filid* were also concerned with spagyric or plant alchemy, a predecessor of Biology. Metallurgy was one of their other secondary focus'. It centered on testing and refining various ores, and metalworking, especially gold. They also perfected a variety of ink, dyes, paints, cosmetics, leather tanning, and the preparation of plant extracts, and the distillation of liquors. The medieval study of Alchemy and the search for the "philosopher's stone" can be directly traced to the Celts. Their spagyric practices were the forerunners to alchemy, which evolved into modern chemistry.

Which leads us to the *Druids*. As stated in the prior paragraphs, they were not blood thirsty priests who practiced human sacrifice. They were the teachers, philosophers, lawyers and judges all rolled into one. Druid means *Knowing One*. It is derived from two old Gaelic words - one meaning "all or most" and one meaning "to see".

It was Pliny the Elder who mistakenly associated Druids with trees. He mistranslated the Greek word for the Druids as 'opuq' which means Oak. He had also observed some Celts in the woods appearing to pray to trees. What they were actually doing was gathering the mistletoe as a sign of life in winter. So, he merged the two ideas and tree worship was the result. It should be noted that Celts viewed trees as symbols of strength and endurance. Evergreens were another sign of life in winter. Sound familiar?

As the acknowledged leaders of a Celtic society the Druids were held in high esteem their primary function was dealing with the leaders of the Tuaths and on rare occasions leaders of the Fines. As the accepted leaders they were upon occasionally called upon to render decisions of both social (not dealt with satisfactorily with by the Bards), legal, political, religious and upon occasion even military natures.

Druids essentially were what we would term today as 'pacifists' abstained from any form of violence directed toward other people including warfare. Druids

were even able to stop battles among rival Celtic tuaths by simply standing between the armies forbidding them to fight.

Celtic Cities and Towns

I mentioned earlier that the Celts lived in cities. We know this because archeologists have found Celtic towns. When the Druids laid down plans for a town they were very specific as to how those towns were to be arranged. Picture in your mind modern day New York City and Boston. Which of those two places is the easiest in which to find your way around? The Druids would have liked NYC because it is laid out geometrically, with straight lines and streets at right angles. Much like today's Boston, most ancient society's cities, followed the natural lay of the land as in the Seven Hills of Rome. Roads wound around hills. Houses were grouped along the roads. The Greeks would find the highest hill and erect a temple - an acropolis on it. The agora - market was placed at its base and houses would fill out around it. Virtually, all civilizations did this, except one. Which made identification of Celtic cities rather easy.

The Celts laid out their towns in specific geometric patterns. First they were small, round and usually enclosed. The streets were then laid out according to celestial alignment. The main street ran north to south another east to west. A Celtic town was equally divided into four parts. The aristocracy, (the Druids and *Filid*'s houses) were on the east side and their doors opened to the east to face the sun. The towns were further subdivided according to the skills of the inhabitants. Blacksmiths in one area, textile workers in another and so on.

It was a Scotsman, Alexander Thom who postulated that the Celtic engineers used a standard unit of measurement which he identified as a 'megalithic yard' or 2.72 feet. This indicated that Celtic engineers had discovered a rudimentary form of geometry and worked out the Pythagorean Theorem of right angles centuries before the Egyptians or the Greeks. Not too shabby for a supposedly primitive, barbarous people.

Archaeologists in different parts of Europe began to notice a similarity in their excavations. When archaeologists in other countries began to compare their findings to similar and more complete excavations in the UK, the connections were obvious. Those excavations could be verified as Celtic or Druid, as they were originally, incorrectly named. They correctly concluded that they were all built by the same peoples. Carbon dating was used to verify the dates of occupation. This enabled them to trace the movement of the Celtic people across the continent.

Another Celtic construct would be *hengese*, *dolmens* and *menhirs*. They did build Stonehenge. (Stonehenge isn't actually a 'henge' - a Henge is made from earth and wood). Stone structures, standing or otherwise, fall into one of two categories; dolmens or menhirs. More correctly Stonehenge would be a Menhir - a standing stone like the Standing Stones of Clannish. Menhirs are found throughout the Celtic world. In Europe they range from the Orkneys down to modern Turkey. A

Dolmen would be a more crypt like structure and usually buried, like those also found in Orkney and throughout the Celtic world. Strangely one has been discovered in Nova Scotia. Although that dolmen has not been conclusively linked to the Celts, it is eerily similar and opens an entirely new realm of possibilities. But I digress



Celts built stone rings near their towns and they built towns everywhere. Stonehenge isn't even the oldest. The Standing Stones of Clannish in the Hebrides are far older. Great Britain alone has over 600. Stone rings have been found in Scandinavia, throughout

Western Europe, in Eastern Europe as far east as Poland and as far south as Turkey. The standing stones in Turkey are thought even to be older than Clannish. They are suspected to be remains of the Celtic/Hittites/Trojan Culture.

It was Alexander Thom again, professor emeritus at Oxford, who did meticulous research into menhirs. After a study 800 in Great Britain and Western Europe he concluded that they were indeed celestial observatories. All the menhirs were aligned to facilitate study of the sun, moon and stars. Professor Thom found that all the menhirs formed a stone sight line that when aligned with a natural geographic feature on the horizon such as a peak or a mountain notch and that it pointed to a celestial event.

The Celts even developed a calendar, The Coligny Calendar that was far more elaborate than the rudimentary Julian calendar. It included a sophisticated five year synchronization of lunation with the solar year.

Continued in the Fall Issue: *Travels, Religion and the Demise of the Celtic Culture.*



Walking softly and carrying a big stick taken to another level...

What do you do when you are done doing what you want to do but can't do it any more?

Well, in Colorado, a certain someone, notably RC 13 Maggie, raises chickens! Silky Bantams, brought home right out of the egg. Little Ethel is black – a showgirl for the County Fair, I hope – the other three are blonde.



Hennie, the Queen of everything, including Lucy, Ethel, Maud and Maggie.



Post 1921's only Games so far this year, Sonora in March, right before the State shut down. Post Comptroller John Hassenplug mans the tent while everyone else is off gallivanting (or maybe doing Color Guard

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**Join CLSI at the
Loch Norman
Highland Games
April 9-10, 2022!**

Convenors Lew and
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will host the CLSI

tent at the

Loch Norman Games
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Contact Lew at

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for details!

visit us at clanlesliesociety.org



Join us!

Make plans to
attend the
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APRIL 8-10,
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Details in this
issue!



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