



GRIP FAST

JOURNAL

The Newsletter of Clan Leslie Society International

June 2022



2021 Capitol District Games

Tent host Patrick Masson (pictured center wearing his fantastic Leslie hat) with his family (right) and Justin Leslie (tartan shirt) and his family on the left.

See more tents and events on pages 8 & 18.



The Honourable Alexander Leslie, Chief of Clan Leslie

It is 2022! What could possibly go wrong?

First, we very much hope that this year will be better than last (and the one before that).

Sadly, 2022 is already proving to be a challenge.

We were looking forward to our trip to Las Vegas enormously. The sad truth is that, after much thought and consideration, Miranda and I had to make the difficult decision not to come to Vegas.

The Omnicron variant is apparently less severe than previous strains, it could also be a tipping point in when and whether Covid becomes endemic rather than a pandemic.

It is also incredibly irritating.

Because it is so contagious and the same rules apply if you test positive or have been in contact with someone who tests positive, in the UK at least, you must self-isolate for a week or more. And while some rules around travel are being relaxed, this may change at any time.

Apart from the questions around gatherings of any kind, the truth is that the consequences for us, should we test positive while in the US or while travelling, or if we are in contact with anyone who tests positive, are that we are not covered by insurance and we will have to self-isolate (if we are on our way back to the UK, in a Government selected hotel – which are more like prison camps).

All of these issues forced us to make the choice not to come to America this year.

Let us hope that, finally, we are making some sense of the pandemic and that, soon, we will be able to meet again, in person.

Until then, very best wishes and stay safe .

Alex Leslie, Chief

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Laura Messing, Chieftain, Clan Leslie Society International

Hello everyone! To say the past couple of years have been challenging is an understatement. Our gathering in Scotland: canceled. Our gathering in Las Vegas: canceled. Countless games and activities: canceled. But it looks like things are beginning to look up and gradually, more and more events are being planned and people are finally able to come together.

While international travel was dicey for our April CLSI gathering, recently in the US in-person events started happening again. You will see in this issue the uptick of Leslie tents at the end of 2021 and the first part of 2022. This is great news! And while we really missed seeing Chief Alex, Miranda, and our UK and Canadian kinsmen this past April, things are feeling hopeful for the first time in awhile.

In our upcoming council meeting we will be discussing the location of our next gathering. Judging from the number of people who have asked about a gathering, it may end up being one of our biggest to date. I think all of us are really looking forward to seeing each other again, which says a lot about us as a clan.

On page 17, there is a list of upcoming Scottish festivals that will have Leslie tents. If you are anywhere near one of these, I encourage you to go! Tent hosts work hard and LOVE to see new (and familiar) Leslie faces. Besides, attending a festival, marching in the parade of clans and learning more about the Leslies is fun, and a great way to spend a day.

If you are a CLSI member at large, I encourage you to become more active in the Society. It's a wonderful way to bond with fellow members and help preserve our collective Leslie heritage. Reach out to any council member (contact information is on page 23) to learn more. Maybe you'd like to host a tent or event, join a committee or give a talk, we welcome anything you would like to do and are here to help.

I hope to see all of you soon!

Laura

CONGRATULATIONS GALE!

I am excited to announce that Gale Walker has accepted the appointment of Vice Chieftain. Many of you already know Gale as our CLSI piper and council member. Gale will serve in the role of Vice Chieftain and stand for election (for a full, 2-year term) in November. Thank you, Gale!



ABOUT THE COVER:

Tents are making a comeback! Patrick Masson hosts the CLSI tent at the Capitol District Games in Altamont, New York.

CONGRATULATIONS ADAM!

I am also excited that Adam Flowers has accepted the appointment to the CLSI council. Thanks for answering the call!

THANK YOU, DAVID!



David Leslie White has served Clan Leslie Society International for upwards of 18 years. He is a past Chieftain, hosted a gathering, served as convenor and tent host for the Southwest region, on the library committee and as an ex-officio to the council. His contributions to CLSI are truly too numerous to list here. I mention this because David is retiring from CLSI after years of dedicated service. We wish him and his wife Beth all the best in the coming years. We will miss you, David! Thanks for your hard work.

THE LESLIE TOWER IN ELGIN

By David Leslie White

In 2012 Beth and I visited the Leslie Tower at 103 High Street in Elgin. The house was remodeled in 1859 and this tower is the only surviving portion of the house built by Andrew Leslie of the Glen of Rothes. Andrew Leslie was a merchant and a magistrate or judiciary official of Elgin. A date-stone and pediment, although eroded, show the arms of Leslie of Abernethy, initials A.L. for Andrew Leslie.

On the third floor of this tower is a small circular room with a fireplace. Above the fireplace is a "marriage stone" with the initials A.L. and J.B. for Andrew Leslie and Jean Boneyman, and the date 1629.

The tower is currently used by Ritsons Chartered Accountants, who generously guided us through the tower.

The local Elgin museum had an old book by Isaac Forsyth, titled "Elgin Street Architecture" that provides some more recent history of this Leslie Tower.

"Next, we come to a House with a stair tower, marked repeatedly with the date 1634 and the arms of Leslie of Rothes, and distinguished by the Iron Cross at the top, which marks the houses held under the Knights of St. John. The old titles are lost, and I cannot tell you what Leslies dwelt there in 1700 (the time we are trying to look back upon). Alexander Forsyth, merchant in Elin, bought it in 1744."

It appears that the history of this Leslie family between the construction of this house in 1634 and the sale to Alexander Forsyth in 1744 is missing or non-existent.



On the third floor of the Leslie Tower in Elgin, there is a small room (perhaps originally a bedroom) being used as an office. It has a fire place, and above the fireplace is the "marriage stone" of Andrew Leslie and Jean Bonyman, dated 1629.

THE MAN WHO SAVED LESLIE CASTLE By Lesliecastle

The man who saved Leslie Castle did not wield a sword, or strike with a battle axe. He did not command an army to defend the Leslie lands with. He was an architect, a practical hard working man who thought the castle was worth saving for future generations. Having visited Leslie with his father years before, he would come back to restore it. His name is David Carnegie Leslie.

One day back in 1979 he began the epic task of restoring the castle. One thing is certain; if he had not acted when he did the castle would have been surely lost to the perils of time. By 1979 parts of the north and east walls had completely collapsed. They came down in the great storm of 1953 and such was the weight of stone that fell on the night of 31 January that the ground shook and was felt in the surrounding areas. Without intervention it is likely little more than a pile of stones would remain today



Sir Norman Alexander Leslie

By Christine Johnson, CLSI Genealogist

One of the positive aspects of researching family trees for Clan Leslie Society International (CLSI) is discovering interesting people. CLSI has had trail blazers, innovators, scientists, freedom fighters, and

rebels as part of its history.

Recently in helping a CLSI member with her family research, I was told about two of her impressive family members. According to his great granddaughter, Captain John Leslie (1833-1916) owned and sailed the clipper ships "Calypso" and "Santa Maria" from Aberdeen and Gravesend to Dunedin, New Zealand every year from 1864-1874. He took pride in the fact that he took 3 months to sail around the Cape of Good Hope to New Zealand's South Island while other ships took 4 months to do the same trip. He had a wooden leg and was reported to have read Shakespeare to his crew. Leslie Street in Port Chalmers, New Zealand is named for him.

Norman Alexander Leslie (1870-1945), one of John's sons, inherited his father's merchant vessels. He became a partner in the law firm of Law, Leslie, & Co., a director of George Thompson and Co., Ltd., and a well-known member of the Baltic Exchange. During World War I, he volunteered for service in the Transport Department of the Admiralty (1915-16). He transferred to the newly formed Ministry of Shipping. During World War I, Norman's daughter recalled him saying: "We are going to be starved out of this war." In April 1917, German U-boats were sinking ¼ of all merchant vessels headed for the United Kingdom. Merchant vessels lost 860,334 tons of provisions in the peak month of U-boat

activity, which brought the grain reserves for the British Isles to a six-week supply. Norman agreed with his merchant vessel friends that they could help the situation by setting up a Convoy System to protect the ships carrying the much-needed supplies. The Admiralty was approached with the plan, but the First Sea Lord deemed the plan unworkable. The main objection to providing escorts for the shipping merchants (as opposed to troop transports) was lack of forces. Two weeks later, they returned and the plan was again rejected. Norman Leslie of the Ministry of Shipping showed the Admiralty that 75 destroyers (which was the original estimate) were not needed and that the Convoy System could be fully operational with the 43 destroyers that were available. Soon after, the First Sea Lord was removed from office and his replacement felt the plan was worthy of a try.

The Convoy System proved to be a success. The merchant vessels sailed alongside of the American vessels with destroyers on their outer flanks. The U-boats could see the US ships, but the British destroyers sunk the U-boats before they could use their torpedoes. The Convoy System played an integral part in ensuring the British victory. Norman Alexander Leslie was knighted for his contribution to the war effort.

"The Papers of Sir Norman Leslie" which include "The System of Convoys for Merchant Shipping 1917-1918" and a letter from his daughter Cecilia Mary Leslie explaining her father's work (1978) are available from Churchill Archives Centre. Norman Alexander Leslie was an example of an outstanding member of the Leslie family.

A Scot in Mexico

By Edith K. Leslie, Wife of Michael Alexander Leslie

In 1972 my husband Michael Alexander Leslie was working with a Canadian company in Toronto. This company decided to send him to work in their office in Mexico. We took our two children, Michael age 5 and Fleur age 1 to Mexico City and rented a pretty house there which was within walking distance to a British school. While we lived in Mexico we made many friends and had many adventures.

We returned to Toronto in 1978, speaking Spanish and full of wonderful memories. I felt a great urge to write down those memories and I am pleased to share some of them with you.

CONSULATE

Before we were allowed to move to Mexico, we had to get our visas from the Mexican Consulate in Toronto. We were all finger-printed: my husband, myself and our son who was 5 years old. Our little daughter, however, who was only ten months old, had no intention of having her dainty porcelain fingers blackened by a total stranger. She announced her displeasure by screaming loudly. "No problem" said the clerk, and took hold of my little finger, dipped it in the black ink and rolled it on the document which was to be Fleur's visa.

I wonder what would have happened if she had committed a crime? They would have thrown me, her innocent mother, in jail!

DREAM HOUSE

Our house on Calle Magnolia was modern, bright and sunny. It had a lovely garden protected all around by a 20-foot high wall and was a perfect playground for our children. But there was another house which had almost ensnared me when we were looking for a place to live. It was a townhouse in a small compound which was secured against the street by a heavy wrought iron gate. Presumably a guard was on duty night and day to protect the wealthy (and the foreign) from criminal elements.

The house was quite dark inside, there was a feeling of tightness, narrowness in its circular staircase. The living and sleeping areas have left no impression on my mind, but the bathroom ... ah, I almost fell for it. A deep red carpet covered the floor and under the sink there was a glass case which contained an elaborately ornamented china vase with a bouquet of paper flow-

ers in shades of red, orange and purple. The faucets were golden pineapples and the spouts were spitting lions.

The dining room held another surprise. One wall was completely taken up by floor-to-ceiling mahogany shelving and cupboards, some with solid wooden doors and others with glass doors meant for displaying beautiful china and crystal. While I was wondering how the maid would make the long trek to the kitchen several times a day, the rental agent opened one of the cupboard doors - and voila! - a gleaming white kitchen appeared behind it.

WALKING TO SCHOOL

I always walked the children to school and picked them up again. On these journeys we had many conversations some of which I will never forget. One time I said to Michael: "Do you love me?" He said "Yes." "How much?" I asked. "To the end of the numbers," he replied.

Another time little Fleur, who was no more than three years old, accompanied me on my way to collect Michael from school. It was raining, and she was dressed in a little Scotch plaid raincoat with a matching hat. The hat prevented her from seeing my face, but, ever resourceful, she said: "Bend down, Mummy. I want to smile at you."

LIPSCHITZ

Downtown Mexico City in the Zona Rosa I entered an art gallery where I found some powerful sculptures on display which I admired very much. They were by Lipschitz about whom, I must confess, I knew nothing at that time. I had never even heard his name. A man

whose self-confident demeanour suggested that he was the owner of the gallery came towards me and we started to chat a little. He said that he was Lipschitz. I was deeply impressed to meet such a great artist and willingly followed him upstairs where he promised to show me more and even better works of art.

Some prints were hung on the wall along the staircase: ugly, confused and chaotic black scribbles on white background. They looked utterly banal to me, but he proudly claimed them as his creations as well. Slowly I became suspicious, but still I kept climbing the stairs, half curious, half amused. When we arrived at the top, another man was there, and my "Lipschitz" told him to get lost. It was then that I realized I had been had, or perhaps was about to be had. So I turned on my heels with the excuse that my husband was waiting for me.

AUCTION

The Edron Academy, a British school in Mexico City, was having an auction. Useless items donated by parents were sold to other parents who thought they might come in handy. Drinks flowed freely and a good time was had by all. Michael's teacher, Miss Foulkes (who was also the very refined daughter of the Headmaster) purchased an electrically wired basket with comfortable padding and covering, described as a "bum warmer". At the end of the auction the spirit moved me to go and shake hands with Miss Foulkes and to congratulate her on her unusual acquisition. Unfortunately by that time my tongue had lost some of its agility, and I said: "That's a great bum warmer you bought!"

SHIRTS TRADED FOR GODS

My friend Chris and I, together with our five children, visited the site of Tula. When the children got tired of looking at the ruins, we went in search of a picnic place in the surrounding area which was slightly hilly and covered with low bushes. Out of these bushes there suddenly appeared a local man, then another, and then a third one. We were somewhat concerned for our safety, but we did not need to be. The men carried small cloth bags, and they opened them up to reveal their mysterious contents: beautifully shaped clay pots, figurines of gods, priests and animals. They claimed that they had found them on the site, and that those pieces were hundreds of years old.

We said we had no money, none at all. But that did not discourage these eager vendors. They pointed to our jackets, shirts, skirts, trousers and shoes indicat-

ing that an exchange could be made. Even though we doubted very much the antiquity of the objects they were displaying, we found enough material among the seven of us without resorting to any indecent exposure, and we exchanged those for a few artefacts. Years later we treasure these pieces more than any that we bought with money.

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

One day I took little Michael to the barber for a haircut. He was not too happy about it, but the little girl who sat in the chair next to him was even less happy. In fact, she was screaming: "Quiero pelo, quiero pelo!!!" ("I want hair, I want hair!"). She wanted what was just being removed from her head. Completely shaved off.

Many Mexicans believe that a child's hair will grow back stronger and thicker after the very last vestige of it has been removed. While the poor child was becoming more and more hysterical, her mother kept telling her: "Never mind, darling, mummy will buy you new hair just down the street." What a way to build trust!

THE PORRÓN

My favourite restaurant was the "Gitanerias" where I hardly knew what I was eating because the flamenco dancers captivated every bit of my awareness. I wanted to dance, not eat!

One night I noticed a man sitting at a nearby table who was pouring wine in his face. "Look," I said to my husband, "that man has had one too many." "Not at all," said Alec, "you watch him, he has great skill." So I watched. He was pouring red wine from a porrón (a glass decanter which has a large opening on one side and a very fine spout on the other) directly on the spot between his eye-brows, and from there the wine trickled down around his nose and into his mouth. He was drinking it all the while. After he lifted the porrón off his face with a great flourish, we talked to him and discovered that he was a professor of Mexican history at the University of Utah.

As soon as I found a porrón, I bought it, took it home and tried the trick myself. Getting the flow started without pouring wine all over myself took a lot of practice, but when I finally mastered that step, I had great difficulty in swallowing the wine as fast as it came running out. I decided to go back to my mother's Rosenthal wine glasses.



MEMBERSHIP BIRTHDAY TRIVIA

Whenever a Grip Fast Journal is coming out it's a pleasure to wish everyone covered by the dates of publication a very happy birthday. I was reviewing my membership lists last week and updating them; happily, we have a number of new CLSI members! And sadly, several empty chairs. May God bless the souls of those who recently occupied them and comfort their families

While reviewing the lists, I found some fun facts about us all which I submit here for your amusement and interest. First our names: among the men, the most frequently occurring names were, in order: James (11), Robert (10), William (8); David and Richard were tied (7). Donald, Thomas and John had 5 each. Someone emailed me some time ago saying that I had mentioned a particular name twice in the birthday greetings ("Lang May Yer Lum Reek") for the same month. Yes, we have some duplicate names. Different birth days, however. Among the ladies, we have a much wider variety and fewer repetitions: Margaret and its several variants came in as most popular with 8; after that, Mary/Mary Ann(e) with 5, then Carol and Linda with 4 each.

Now for the idiosyncrasies of each month – and let me mention here that it is usual to have a couple of members with birthdays on the same day within each month, although not the same year, unless you are counting our three sets of twins! That said, in January, the month with the fewest member birthdates, we have two New Year's birthdays, and two members who share a birthday (25th) with the Scottish Poet Laureate, Rabbin Burns. Just think of it - Burns Nicht! Now THAT'S a birthday party! Also, on January 1st, Hogmanay, we have two New Year's birthdays. In February we have two leap year babies (29th), one Groundhog's Day baby (2nd) and one born on St. Bridget's Day (1st), also called by the ancients "Imbolc" or "Brinnasadh", the first day of Celtic spring. March sees one Ides of March baby (15th) and two born on St. Paddy's Day (17th). April has

one member born on April Fool's Day (1st - bet he's got a great sense of humor!), 3 on Tartan Day (6th), the date in 1320 that the Declaration of Arbroath was signed declaring Scotland's freedom from England, and one on St. George's Day (23rd), he of the dragon battles. April also has three groups of three people who share the same birth dates.

May has three people who were born on the 5th - please invite the rest of us to your Cinco De Mayo birthday party! June is next to January in having fewest members' birthdates, but July makes up for it with five people sharing the same day – rivaling April, which shares that distinction also. It seems April 29th and July 13th are great times to be born! August Has two members sharing the same day with St. Bartholomew, or Clan Leslie Day, the 24th.. August also has the most double birthdays – two people born on the same day, and shares this status with October coming in a close second. September, October, November and December all have large numbers of birthdays – the most out of all the months in the year. September has one birthday on St. Ninian's Day, he who preached to the Picts (9th); and one on the 29th, or St. Michael and All Angels Day. We have two Halloween (or Samhain according to our ancestors) birthdays in October as well. In November we have two birthdays on Armistice Day; and December gives us two Boxing Day/St. Stephens Day birthdays (12/26) and two New Year's Eve birthdays.

If anyone has an unusual bit of history or folklore, myth or a holy day attached to your birthday, please let me know so I can include this in our records.

We will resume birthday listings (Lang May Yer Lum Reek) in the next issue of the Grip Fast Journal!

TENTS, GAMES & EVENTS

2021 CAPITOL DISTRICT GAMES TENT HOSTED BY PATRICK MASSOM



2022 CENTRAL FLORIDA HIGHLAND GAMES TENT HOSTED BY MICHELLE GREEN SMITH AND SHERYL MOORE

Late fall, winter and early spring is “high season” in Florida which means it is the perfect time for outdoor festivals and events. Just about everyweekend there are Scottish Festivals and Highland Games somewhere in the state. It is also the dry season so you can almost rest assured that the weather will be nice. Choosing the right ones are tricky since you want to reach as many people as possible. This year Michelle and I focused on the larger festivals closest to Orlando, where we both live.

The Central Florida Highland Games held in January each year are probably the largest in the state and this year was the 44th Gathering. The games last year were canceled due to Covid-19 so we knew it would be well attended. Saturday was a picture-perfect day with clear a clear blue sky and light wind blowing. Perfection, to say the least, is where our tent was assigned. It was on the main entrance to the Scottish Clans. We were busy all day with people stopping by the tent. Sunday morning was the complete opposite. We arrived at the park with heavy wind and rain. The tent was saved by Chuck and Sheryl Moore along with 2

park employees where they spent about 45 minutes holding the tent in place from the blowing winds. Approximately 10 clans were not so lucky with their tents being damaged or destroyed by wind and water, The sun came out about noon and so did the crowd with many people again stopping by our tent.

February saw Clan Leslie participate for the first time at the Mount Dora and NE Florida Highland Games. Both were a complete success with many people happy to see us participate.

Next Year all three games will be a must participate. Plans are now in the making for South Florida being added to the schedule.

The Savannah Games in May are the next on the schedule. Again, this will be a first time, We are looking forward to meeting and making new friends.

**TENTS, GAMES & EVENTS
CONTINUED PAGE 20**

IN SEARCH OF LESLIE:

ONE FAMILY'S VISIT TO THE OLD COUNTRY

By Bill Leslie

(Note: This material first appeared in a family newsletter in 2001. The author has added a few notes for this publication. Materials related to everything but Leslie were removed from the letter.)

In 2001, my wife and I took our two kids to England and Scotland on a family vacation. It wasn't really a genealogical research trip, but we agreed that we couldn't go to London without adding a few days to explore our family's Scottish heritage. After exploring London and York, we headed north to visit the Leslie Manor House in Fife, the Leslie's Bar in Edinburgh, and the Leslie Castle near Insch, in Aberdeenshire.

Now, first a word about these "connections" to our family tree: At present, these are connections in name only. I've spent years researching our family tree, but in spite of my efforts, I've not been able to connect our branch of the Leslies to the Leslie Clan through genealogy. So far we've traced our family tree to one Alexander Leslie, a seller of pots and crockery in Carlisle, England, in the early 1800s. Carlisle, England is about ten miles from the Scottish border.

We stayed in the A-Haven Townhouse Bed and Breakfast (180 Ferry Road, Edinburgh.) It was comfortable and just a short bus trip from Edinburgh Castle and the Royal Mile. I read recently that the only reason that Britain has hotels at all is so that you will stay in - and appreciate - the Bed and Breakfasts. It's true. Our B&B experiences in England and Scotland were uniformly pleasant and comfortable, and our hotel experiences were uniformly mediocre, or worse.

For several days we explored the Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile, and other places around Edinburgh, and we generally walked our legs off. It was fun, but we really only scratched the surface. Then we set out to explore our clan "connections." With considerable trepidation, we rented a right-hand-drive, standard transmission 2001 Toyota Corolla from a small mechanical shop. They were cheaper than the "name-brand" rental companies located in the city's core, as well as being within walking distance of our B&B. To our surprise, cars in Scotland require only one brake light. (The other light wasn't even wired.) By the way, driving on the left side of the road is much less intimidating with two people because the passenger can focus on the map and on keeping the driver on the correct side of the road.

The Leslie House is located in the town of Leslie, about half an hour or so north of Edinburgh, just across the Firth of Forth. A "firth," in case you didn't know, is a bay or finger of a sea that extends into the center of Scotland. Two distinctive bridges cross the Firth of Forth, one for cars, the other for trains. They are distinctive for the length. Much has been written about British roads and driving, and about traffic circles or "roundabouts" so I need not cover them here. Suffice it to say that driving in Scotland was interesting. We arrived at the village of

Leslie late in the morning. We drove along a narrow street past several businesses, and found ourselves in a residential neighborhood. Without realizing it, we had entered and passed through the "downtown" part of the village of Leslie - or at least, through one part of it. It's that small. As we turned around, we spotted a cemetery, and we paused to see whether the Leslie name was prominent. (We genealogists are mindful of such opportunities.) The cemetery, which sits to the north of the village, is medium-sized, and well maintained. Burials seemed to range from the mid 1800's up to the present, although by no means did we tour the entire cemetery. We saw no Leslie graves, nor did we see the graves of any of the Rothes family, which family carries the title of head of the clan. Sadly, vandals recently visited the cemetery, and a number of fine old tombstones had been toppled. We were pleased to see that a number of obviously new stones had been placed on older graves - a welcome sight.

The sight of a bakery with open doors convinced us (rather quickly, and without a struggle) that we need look no further for a place to ask for directions. (An aside here: Bakeries are a frequent stopping place for us as we travel. We typically don't eat three full meals each day. We eat a hearty breakfast at the B&B, stop at one or two bakeries for lunch, and have a sit-down dinner in a restaurant. Unfortunately, we found London to be almost completely free of bakeries. We have no idea why, but they are just not to be found. York, England, and Edinburgh, Scotland, however, seem to have a bakery every few blocks, and we strongly recommend that you plan for at least one light meal each day at a bakery. For three dollars you can try three or four different kinds of baked goods, including various kinds of meat pies, which are generally unavailable in American bakeries - at least, in bakeries in our state of Oregon. This will be quicker and cheaper than sitting down in any kind of restaurant. Few of the bakeries had a place to sit down, but the food is easy to munch on as you walk to your next stop.

The bakery where we stopped at was everything that we had come to expect from a UK bakery: The food was good, and varied, with many things that we had never had before, and the lady running the shop was very helpful. I suspect that we were not the first Americans named Leslie to seek out the Leslie House. In fact, I am certain that we were not, since I think my sister stopped at the same bakery in 1991 on her way to the Leslie House. The lady in the bakery advised us that we had passed the entrance to the Leslie House on our way into the village. She was friendly, as were all the Scots that we met, if busy. We seemed to have arrived during the shopping hour, and she didn't have much time to talk.

Before heading back to the Leslie House, we sampled the pastries and wandered up and down High Street, which seemed to be the main street through town. All of the buildings, a mix of shops and homes, were made of stone, and

the doorways opened directly onto the sidewalks. Many of the buildings had no signs at all, and I suppose that these were private homes. Other buildings had very small signs to identify their purpose, and none of the signs had neon of any kind. If there was a pub in town, we missed it, although a look at a map later on showed that the town continued onto Mansfield Rd., which may have been more commercialized than High Street. Although many of the sidewalks were made of concrete, all of the curbs were of cut stone, as we had seen in Edinburgh. It felt like much of the town looked as it had for a hundred years. The street itself was narrow enough that it was difficult for two cars to pass each other where cars were parked on the street.

As we walked around the town, there were several signs that we were in "Leslie" territory. Directly across from the entrance to the Leslie House, a sign pointed to the Green, sometimes called the Leslie Green. For many years a large tree, called the Dule Tree or Tree of Sorrow grew in the center of the green. It was here that hangings and other punishments were given out. This tree became dangerous and was cut down shortly after the turn of the 20th century.



Old photo of the Leslie Green including the memorial marking those from the town of Leslie who fell in WWI and WWII.

An old stone called the Bull Stone once stood in the Leslie Green. Bulls were tied to the stone, and attacked by dogs or bears or other animals for entertainment. The stone was used for so many years, that it developed a narrow "waist" from the ropes or chains rubbing around its' middle. It developed the appearance of a small snowman. We didn't see the stone, but the internet says that it is still there. Also in the Leslie Green is a stone monument to the war fatalities from Leslie, I think from both world wars.



This monument to those who fell in both world wars is located in the center of the Leslie Green, and is readily visible from the street.

We took several photos of what we thought was the "gatehouse" to the estate because it was so striking in appearance. We later found out that it was originally called the "Countess Lodge" and was later renamed the "Duchess Lodge." To give the turret a perspective in size, it is probably eight feet or so inside diameter, and perhaps ten or eleven feet in outside diameter. There is no access from the ground floor to the top of the turret – its one tall narrow building, which probably either served as a place for a gateman to get out of the rain, or perhaps it was just for looks. It's not big enough for anything else.



This photo of the gatehouse was taken from just inside the entrance to the property, looking out towards the road A911.

In 1902, the ground near the turret on the left subsided, revealing a secret chamber. We didn't notice any sign of the chamber when we were there, but we didn't learn about it until after we left.

There is another building to the right of the main entrance that appears to still be in use, perhaps as a residence. In general, the Duchess entrance appears to be in rather good condition, much better than some other buildings on the estate. I suppose that the Duchess Lodge is still part of the Leslie House estate, and therefore (in 2001) belonged to the Church of Scotland.

After we left Britain, we obtained a map of the town of Leslie (included herein). I don't know how current the map is, but it gives you some feeling of size for both the Leslie House property, and for the town itself. Note that the bridge at the top center of the map is called the Leslie Bridge, and that several other buildings of interest appear on the map.

We also obtained an undated map of the estate itself. We didn't try to find the "Duke's Lodge," which is another building that apparently exists on the estate. We wondered whether this might be a place that the Duke might hide out from his responsibilities and smoke cigars and play cards with his pals.



This old postcard, probably from the 1930s, shows the house as you approached it at the end of the long driveway.

The driveway to the entrance to the Leslie Manor house is some 1,500 feet from the gate to the front of the house. Although the trees have grown to such an extent that they hinder the view, one can imagine how the house appeared a hundred years ago, in view for 1,000 feet or more, steadily growing larger as you pull your carriage to the doors.



: In 2001, the front of the building was little changed from its appearance on the postcard in the 1930s.

We noticed the Rothes crest on the face of the house, either cast or carved. Although this is not the Leslie Crest as it appears on clan badges, it does carry the Leslie Motto "Grip Fast." In general, the Leslie House was well maintained, clean, and looked as if it would be a comfortable place to spend one's retirement. In 2001 it was maintained as an elder care facility, called an eventide home, apparently by the Church of Scotland. It was beautiful, if a bit dark, and the residents seemed to be well-cared for.

The house was once called the "Villa de Rothes." Here is probably an appropriate place to insert a note regarding the Rothes family history. Movie fans may recall that the Countess of Rothes was mentioned in the 1997 movie "Titanic." She was pointed out to Jack Dawson by Rose in a dining room scene. A quick check of the book "A Night to Remember," by Walter Lord (which book contains a list of all the passengers on the Titanic) confirms that the Countess of Rothes, the real head of the Leslie Clan, was on the Titanic. She survived the sinking. Since the Rothes family still owned this house when the Titanic sailed, it was perhaps from here that the real countess set out to board the Titanic on its maiden voyage in 1913.

Because we were uncomfortable just walking around the grounds, we rang the bell, and were admitted. We were greeted quickly and courteously by one of the staff. Our timing was such that we had arrived at lunch time, which meant that we would be on our own in exploring the house. We were invited to walk around and look at the place. That was good and bad - no one would be available to answer our questions, but we would also be able to look at what we wanted, for as long as we wanted.

I suspect that we were far from the first yanks named Leslie that were curious about the old house. The staff presented us with two booklets (one previously mentioned) and a second called "Leslie House, The Church of Scotland, Social Work."

Immediately to the left as you enter is a grand piano and a fireplace. The fireplace is ornate and carries the Leslie crest

cast or carved into it. The ceilings are high – perhaps 12-13 feet high – and ornately cast or carved as well. I suspect the lobby is little changed from the 18th century when the house was last restored. The floor is made of large – perhaps 15 inch – tiles. To the right, was a small couch and two hand-some stained glass windows dating to the 19th century.



Our son poised between the two stained glass windows in the lobby. We wonder whether the windows survived the fire.

The lobby was some 20 feet wide and 30 feet long, with two guest rooms, and seemed little changed from the late 18th century when the building was last restored.

In the lobby one beautiful stained glass window had the following dedication:

"To the Glory of God and in memory of Henrietta A.H. Waldegrave Leslie, Countess of Rothes XVIth, Earl. Born 6 Feb 1832, erected by her many friends, Sunday scholars, and the inhabitants of Leslie."



This is the window on the left, with a dedication to the Countess of Rothes.

We peeked into one or two residence rooms and found them to be immense, perhaps 15 feet wide by 22 feet long. Like the rest of the building, they had 13 foot ceilings. There was none of the musty damp smell that is often present in rest homes. The rooms were clean and well-maintained. By its charter, the house is limited to some 23 guests, and has 21 single rooms and one double room.



This painting of an unknown Leslie ancestor hung in the main lobby. We were unable to read the inscription at lower left.

On the second floor we were met by one of the residents. She followed us around and pointed out features of the building and a number of ornate portraits that lined the hallways. She spoke of those painted as if she knew them personally, which, given her age, could have been the case... if she were 200 years old. She added a little sparkle to our tour, and she resisted when one of the caretakers suggested that she return to her room and not bother us. She was no bother. We heard that one of the portraits was of a Leslie family member who was accused of trying to kill a church official – but he was acquitted. For some reason, he became a hero to my father – and this convinced dad that we must certainly be related to the Leslie Clan.



This portrait hung in a hallway on the second floor.

We examined the staircases and peeked out the back windows, but we were reluctant to explore the third floor without a more explicit invitation. (In hindsight, that makes us sad, as that, and most of the building, no longer exists.) In any event, the house was in fine shape, was well cared for, and seemed to carry much of the charm and character that one would expect from a stately Scottish home of the 1700s. Our inside tour complete, we left by the front entrance and set out to explore the grounds.

To the right, or south of the main entrance the ground slopes down. Around the corner we came upon a small fountain, which presented an opportunity for a photograph. On the left is my son Rob (13 at the time). My wife, Kristi, is in the center, and our daughter Kareen (then age 11) is on the right. As you can see, at this point we are below ground level of the yard behind the house.

At the southeast corner of the main house is a green house, or atrium. Although we could not tell whether it is still being used, it seemed to be in good repair. It may be used

as a place where residents can “take the sun.” By the way, throughout our visit, the Scots congratulated us on arriving at a time when the weather was good. They felt that 60 degrees was unseasonably warm for June. In truth, we found Scotland to be pretty cold. On a windy day at the entrance to Edinburgh Castle I asked a kilted soldier if he were cold. We certainly were. “I’m a highlander, sir,” he replied. His tone made it clear that he felt this was a foolish question, but the blue tint to his lips suggested otherwise.



The photo of the atrium hints at the original layout of the house. The house was originally a large rectangle surrounding a central courtyard. Following a fire in the 18th century, just one of the four sides was restored.

Off to the right of this photo, Kareen “discovered” an area with trees arching over a small fire pit, which looked like it belonged in a Robin Hood movie. A little bit further on, she found the ruins of an old stone building. The ruins sit below the level of the back yard. This building does appear on the map of the Leslie House property that we later received. Although it is little more than ruins now, I believe that it could be restored to livability again, although it seems unlikely that this will ever take place. Still, the stone walls are virtually intact, and with the addition of doors, windows, and a roof, perhaps it could be done. It is of similar design to many buildings that we saw throughout Scotland and northern England, perhaps fifteen feet wide, thirty feet long, two rooms with a fireplace at each end. Efforts have been made to protect these ruins from vandals, but there is still evidence that small fires had been built in the ruins, perhaps by children from the town.



Our daughter, Kareen, examining the ruins of a cottage on the property.

The map shows that the Leslie House is “L” shaped, the house itself was a rectangle. Around the corner we came upon a small fountain, which presented the ground level if you are standing behind the house. We saw what may have been a carriage house.

Here's a brief history of the Leslie House, provided courtesy of the Church of Scotland, in an undated five-page brochure. This was given to us by the staff at the Leslie House, and is quoted with their permission.

John, 6th Earl of Rothes, carried the Sword of State when Charles the 2nd was crowned at Scone in 1651. It was he who around 1660 built on this site a magnificent mansion similar in style to Holyrood Palace. It was built in a square shape, with an open central courtyard. The building contained 80 bedrooms excluding dressing rooms and other apartments. The picture gallery was reported to be particularly fine with one side lined with the portraits of family members and the other side was lined with those of friends. The gallery was three feet longer than that in Holyrood, which is a royal palace in Edinburgh.

Disaster struck on Christmas Day, 1763. A large house party was in residence for the festivities and on Christmas Eve all was hustle and bustle as preparations were underway. Venison was roasting on a spit in the large fireplace in the servant's hall.

Coachmen were melting wax at the fire for the coach lamps. One can imagine the busy scene and the sounds and smells as the meat sizzled and the juices spat and ran into the flames, the sudden flare of the flames as the grease hit them, and the even bigger blaze and pungent smell as some of the wax was knocked over into the flames. It was these things which were blamed when, after dinner that night, a smell of burning was reported. The Earl ordered a search but nothing untoward was found and so the Earl carried on with the party. During the night a guest, young General Dalrymple was awakened by the smell of smoke and found the wall of his bedroom a mass of flame. He raised the alarm and the rest of the guests, family, and servants were roused. It was a night of wind and snow so thick that the townspeople who rushed to the scene and attempted to help by ferrying water to the building at times were hidden from each other.

As the storm raged the wind fanned the blaze so that the sky was lightened by its brilliance. A newspaper report of the time describes how the Earl could be seen silhouetted by the blaze, with his military cape swirling round his shoulders, directing the evacuation of the building. This he did so skillfully that no lives were lost and many of the paintings, books, and other treasures were saved. (It is interesting to note that a recent visit from all art restorer revealed that several of the paintings still in the House have evidence of fire damage. Research into the subject and the artists has shown that these may indeed have been some of the treasures rescued on that dreadful night.) The entire mansion was almost burnt to the ground and the ruins smoldered for several days. Investigations into the cause of the fire seemed to point to a beam in the chimney above the fireplace in the servant's hall having become scorched and then burst into flames when fanned by the draught caused by the rising storm outside.

Following the fire the Earl stayed in Edinburgh until he gathered enough money to rebuild. This took him three years and it was in 1766 that Leslie House as it is today was built on the site of the west wing of the original mansion.

Stones from the original building were used to create the Italian Garden in what had been the central courtyard, and also to build the terraced gardens to the south side of the house overlooking the River Leven. On the east aspect of the present house evidence of the original stonework can still be seen.

The house has been adapted for its present use as an eventide home (Ed: a retirement home, or a care facility for the aged.) but prior to this it was a very grand family home. On the top floor, situated in the South Wing was the night nursery. Also on this floor was a most magnificent ballroom, situated between the two staircases and ran the full width of the building, and boasted beautiful crystal chandeliers.

On the first floor was situated the Countess' boudoir, the Earl's bedroom and dressing room, and various other family rooms and guest rooms. Also on this floor was the drawing room which is now the main lounge. This room gives a wonder view of the driveway. On the ground floor the layout remains almost unchanged. The dining room still has the carved mantelpiece with the coat of arms proudly displayed. The drawing room overlooks the River Leven and what is now an office boasts double doors, which are thought to have been built to deaden the sounds of gentlemen playing billiards. The hall is almost unchanged and indeed it is thought that the fireplace may have been the very one in which that dreadful fire started all these many years ago.

The house remained in the possession of the Leslie family until 1919 when it was sold to a Major Crandell from London, who never lived in the house. He retained it for a few months and then sold it to Sir Robert Spencer Naim. Sir Robert saw the New Town of Glenrothes encroaching more and more in to the area surrounding the Leslie House and then one day he was approached in his place of work by the Rev. D. P. Thomson, who was on an evangelical mission in Fife. Following this meeting, Sir Robert approached the Church of Scotland and offered Leslie House to them for use as an Eventide Home. This offer was gratefully accepted and the Leslie House was opened on June 8, 1956, as a home for the elderly.

The view from the rear of the house gives a sense of just what a stately place this was - and is. The gardens, while not lavishly maintained, are still impressive.

I am curious about the Count and Countess of Rothes and the Leslie Clan. Are they properly the "Clan Chief," or is some other title more appropriate? I would welcome clarification of this relationship from anyone who knows.

Several other features of the map are noteworthy. The bridge at the top of the map is called "Leslie Bridge." the finest of Britain's high society, seems to give a taste of the Leslie House that we glimpsed, and the people that must have inhabited it a century or two ago.

Directly above the Leslie House is something called the "Leslie Mains." The "downtown" of Leslie seems to be centered on High Street, but we didn't travel much around the town. If you come to town from the main highway, you'll come from the right of the map. I suggest that you pass the Leslie House, visit the bakery, and then drive back to the House, as we did.

With our visit to the Leslie House completed - for now - we headed off north to Aberdeen, and then over to Huntley, in search of the Leslie Castle, which, strangely enough, was nowhere near the Leslie House. There are two websites, each of which gives some information about the Leslie Castle. One of them announced that it was in operation as a bed and breakfast, the other said that it was no longer in operation as a bed and breakfast. As of Christmas, 2021, it is scheduled to reopen on April 1, 2022 as a guest house. A map with the general location of the Leslie Castle can be found at: www.celticcastles.com/castles/leslie/images/map.gif. The castle is located about 140 miles north of Edinburgh, and about 30 miles west/ northwest of Aberdeen, near the small town of Insch. This current castle is the third fortified building on the site since 1070. We had tried to contact the owners, David and Leslie Leslie, by web to arrange a visit, but we were unable to reach them.

But we went anyway. After all, we traveled thousands of miles. Our hope was that any offense would be attributed to us personally, rather than to Americans in general. The highway north from Leslie to Aberdeen is well-maintained, and traffic is slowed only slightly by traffic circles, and by a 45 MPH speed limit. The circles are intimidating at first, and at second, and still at third, but in truth, they work fairly well at keeping the traffic moving. Reaching Aberdeen, our trip took a slight turn for the worst, as Aberdeen is a very difficult town to get through. We turned ourselves around several times, and only with difficulty did we get on the right road to Huntley. The countryside was beautiful, if simple and stark. Rolling hills covered with grass and very little else stretched in every direction. For the most part, the hills were free of sheep and cattle. A young lady had mentioned to us that hoof and mouth disease had recently hit Scotland very hard, and it must be true.

Traffic was slow, signs were confusing, and for us, uninitiated as we were to driving in the UK, it was a trial. Nice as the people may be (we didn't stop - no time!), we were glad to leave Scotland's road system behind. We got lost several times in short order.

As we traveled we spotted several things that warranted further exploration, including Castle Craigleith (or something like that), a tall stone arch on a not-distant hillside, and what appeared to be an outdoor children's dinosaur museum. Any information on any of these sights would be very much appreciated.

In truth, I don't have very much to say about our motor trip, because no particular events or details stand out, yet the trip was one of the highlights of our vacation. In part it must have been because the endless rolling hills were relaxing. Perhaps it was because we were together as a family, or because we weren't (for a change!) walking. In any event, we thoroughly enjoyed it. We arrived at the Leslie Castle at dinner. I approached the Castle and knocked on the door. Notice that I didn't say that we arrived at the castle around dinner time; we arrived at dinner time. David Leslie answered the door with a cooking utensil in hand. I introduced myself, and explained that we had come from America, that we were named Leslie, and I asked permission to walk on his beautiful lawns while we took a few pictures. He quickly consented, for which I again extend our thanks, as well

as our apology for interrupting his dinner. I attempted to take pictures of the castle from all angles, and if I have not succeeded, perhaps I have managed to capture some of the feeling of the castle and its surroundings. It is a beautiful thing, indeed, with multiple towers and turrets. I suppose that an expert could tell its age from its appearance. All I know is that we liked it very much.



The Leslie castle is some 115 miles north of the town of Leslie. It took us about 2 ½ hours to drive there from Edinburgh. It is open as a B&B from time to time. While not inexpensive, it's probably worth an overnight stay.

The Leslie Castle is particularly striking because it stands out so much from the surrounding countryside, which is almost uniformly rolling hills, with few buildings. Most of the buildings that we did see were one story, which emphasizes the height of the castle. The nearest town to the Leslie Castle according to our map, was called Leslie. I'm not sure that we saw the town. What we saw is little more than a crossroads. I don't recall even seeing a store, gas station, or pub. I think that it was a small agricultural crossroads, with a feed store, farm implements place, and the like. We were short on time, and we did not pause there. Guess that will have to wait for the next trip.

A web message posted to the Leslie Clan website notes that the Leslie Castle was sold March, 2000 to a Mr. & Mrs. Dorth of Germany. Baron David Leslie and wife will be staying on as they did not sell the small cottage they want to restore. It appears, then, that the Leslie Castle has left the hands of the Leslies, at least for a time. One of the Leslies obviously has an interest in gardening. We saw a number of interesting plants in Scotland, but we were hesitant to collect seeds at random, for fear of violating some agricultural restriction on our return to the U.S.

(Update by Ed: As readers may already know, the Leslie House was in the process of being converted into 17 luxury condominiums when a fire broke out on Feb 5, 2009. Workmen had been doing welding on the day before. 70% or more of the roof was destroyed, and what was left of the poor building was exposed to the elements. Little remains of the original structure. In 2020, the decision was made to create a total of 28 residence at the Leslie House itself, and 8 additional residences in two locations, at the gatehouse and in the "east garden" area. As of 2021 it does not appear that construction has commenced.)

Our last stop on the Leslie tour was Leslie's Bar, in Edinburgh. (Leslie's Bar, 45 Ratcliffe Terrace Edinburgh, Scotland, Midlothian EH9 1SU Tel: 01316675957) I had read a glowing account of the bar, and of its owners and employees on another website, and we decided that it

would be a perfect end to our visit to Edinburgh. On one web site, Leslie's Bar was described as "a genuine Victorian howff," (house) or tavern, with real coal fires and an unusual "snob screen" is incentive for a 20-minute walk out of the center of town, along Causewayside St., which is lined with interesting antique shops. The pub was purpose-built in 1896 and remains remarkably unchanged. Be warned that the snob screen may still have its uses today because this is very much a local's pub." That description, plus a glowing report from an American tourist who could not say enough good about it, made us settle on it for dinner one evening.



The Leslie's Bar serves little or no food – not even bar snacks. Dating to the Victorian era, it's a nice place for a quick drink if your kids aren't with you, but make plans to have dinner elsewhere.

Since we had no car, we traveled down to the university district, south of the Royal Mile, by bus, and then went by foot for four or five blocks. The place looked, I suppose, much as we had expected: full of charm, and looking all of its 100 years plus age. I took one photo from across the street (note the bike rider attempting to dodge my camera) and another photo from the middle of the street. Yes, I took my life into my own hands.

Now well past dinnertime, we walked into the pub... and into a wall, figuratively speaking. Our plans went awfully awry as the bar keep whispered "we don't have a children's license." Now, I was filled with confidence that such a small item as a license to feed children wouldn't stand in the way of feeding the poor, tired, hungry yanks, who had traveled five thousand miles just to see a pub named after some hypothetical ancestor. I explained who we were, and why we had come to the Leslie pub, confident that we would be accepted as distant cousins. I had visions of the fatted calf being dragged behind the pub. We would turn down offer after offer of free beers, and we would leave with a dozen invitations to visit our new friends. Wrong. Apparently the Scots are somewhat serious about their liquor laws. He smiled, and pointed at a small plate containing two wrapped sandwiches. "That's our only food. We don't serve meals here."

They graciously consented to let us tour the bar, and it was worth a look. Full of history, complete with an engraved brass plaque with a brief history of the place, we were glad that we took a moment for a tour.

Before we left I thought I'd pick up a souvenir. How about a Leslie napkin? Nothing like that. A coaster? Sorry, we don't have those. I had noticed a bottle of Scotch marked "Leslie," so I decided that I might as well buy a full bottle to

take home. After all, this would probably be my only visit to the Leslie Bar, right? I could see myself pulling it out back at home in Oregon and showing it to friends. "You see, we picked this up at the Leslie Bar, in Edinburgh..." The man helping us grabbed a piece of paper, and started scribbling. Turned out that they had never sold a full bottle of Scotch before. He was calculating the price per shot, and multiplying it by the number of shots in a bottle. I don't remember the total, but I think it was near 200 pounds Sterling. That was a bit more than I wanted to spend, so I said "thanks anyway." Perhaps they had an empty bottle that they could give me? Sorry, no. The empties were sent back to be refilled. As we set off to find another place to eat, the man pulled me aside and confided that it really wasn't "Leslie Scotch" after all. They just have a local distillery put a Leslie label on their production.

What about library research on Leslie? Why didn't we do any of that while in Scotland? Well, we did, for one brief hour in Edinburgh, but it was research on the McClain line, not on Leslie. We had decided that it would not be fair to the kids for us to ask them to sit idly in a library. In addition, with the advent of the internet, it seemed that the best library research on Leslie could be done online.

What did we learn?

- We loved our trip. Although it was in the summer, we were glad that we dressed as if we were going in the winter. It was very brisk.
- We enjoyed our "Search for Leslie," but we wish that we'd had more time – for each of our Leslie stops.

On our next trip, we'll likely spend a night or two at the Greenside, a hotel just outside of the gate to the Leslie property – and in walking distance of much of the town. We read that the Rothes Arms (now the Greenside) Hotel was once part of the Leslie House estate.

- We were so glad that we got to see the Leslie House in its glory, before the fire. It's now gone forever.
- A little more research – and communication – in advance might have helped, but we weren't disappointed in any of our hands-on Leslie research, not even the Leslie Bar. All of it added to the experience. We'll go back and try it again, I think. The kids are grown, and if they come along, we could have a drink at the Leslie Bar. And with advance planning, it's likely that we could spend the night at the Leslie Castle.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS FOR 2023-2024

In November CLSI will hold elections for the offices of Vice Chieftain & Secretary Registrar. If you are interested in running for either office please contact Linda Flowers at lflowers1954@yahoo.com.

KEEPING FAMILY STORIES ALIVE

By Lewis Johnson

In December of 2021, my mother turned 102 years old. She is the last child of the Leslie parents who immigrated to the United States from Barbados. There is one male from my grandfather Leslie's line alive and when he passes, there will be no Leslies from that Barbados line left to carry on the name and the history of that branch of the family.

While a few families have a good sense of their history and stories, other may not. It seems that as members of families generation to generation, the stories and history of those people who came before us fades. Our family has a well-documented genealogy of names and dates; however, our history is not well documented. Over the years, I have videotaped conversations with my mother, asked her to retell stories of her youth and early years. I have started to write the family stories, so the information is preserved, so my grandchildren will know not only our genealogy, which is the fabric of who we are, but also the stories, which adds color to that fabric.



Pictured is mother Doris, daughter Susan, and Chris and Lew

UPCOMING LESLIE TENTS

August 8-10 2022 | **Grandfather Mountain Highland Games**
Linville, North Carolina, Hosted by Lew and Christine Johnson

July 23-34 | **Pacific Northwest Highland Games**
Enumclaw, Washington, Hosted by Steve Olling

August 27 | **Quechee Scottish Games and Festival**
Quechee, Vermont, Hosted by Laura Messing

Septembr 16-18 | **New Hampshire Highland Games & Festival**
Lincoln, New Hampshire Hosted by Laura Messing

October 15-16 | **Stone Mountain Highland Games**
Atlanta, Georgia, Hosted by Lew and Christine Johnson

The Ruins of Newark Castle, on the coast of Fife, just south of St. Monans. In 1649, the castle was sold to General David Leslie, later created Lord Newark.

David Leslie White



In Memorium

Lester H. Leslie



Date of Birth March 30, 1946
Date of Death October 11, 2020
City of Death Oak View, Ca

Lester Hewitt (Les) Leslie ,74, passed away on Sunday October 11, 2020

after his battle with Alzheimer's. He was at home with his family by his side. Lester was born on the island of Bequia, which is part of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean. His parents were Vherona and Charles Leslie. He came to the US on a private yacht in 1973 where he met his future wife Alison in Long Beach, California. They moved back to Santa Barbara where Les worked for his father in law Bruce Arnold, who was a painting/drywall contractor. He also worked for many other contractors in town and finally worked as a General Contractor for over 30 years. Les also worked for Kinko's Corporation and Copy Cat doing build outs all over California. After he left Santa Barbara in 2004, he made a home in Palm Desert where he worked as a Construction Superintendent.

Lester and Alison built their 1st home in Santa Barbara where they raised their 2 children Alexia and Cameron. It was important for family time. They would spend time with friends and family at Lake Nacimiento, Mammoth and Hawaii.

Lester is survived by his wife Alison (Arnold) Leslie, his daughter Alexia Leslie-Fisher (Travis Fisher), son Cameron Leslie (Rizvana Salahuddin), and his grand daughter's Emilia C. Fisher and Nur F. Leslie. He also is survived by his brother Earnest Leslie of St. Vincent and sister Melda Gloumeau of Barbados, his niece Janique (Leslie) Calderon, sister in laws Kristina Arnold, Gayle (Arnold) Malinoff , his niece Kyle (Malinoff) Legler and all those countless extended family members who loved him dearly!

Donald William Leslie



Donald William Leslie, 90, of Abbeville, husband of Marian Henderson Leslie, died Thursday, October 7, 2021 at his daughter's home in Madison, GA. Born April 18, 1931 in Atlanta, GA, he was the son of the late Alpheus Ezekiel Leslie and Lucy Katherine Sturdivant Leslie.

A 1948 graduate of the Decatur Boys High School, Mr. Leslie was a member of the 1948-49 class at Presbyterian College where he played football. He

received his BA degree from Georgia State University in 1986. While at PC, Mr. Leslie was drafted into the United States Navy and honorably served his country during the Korean War. He owned and operated Leslie Enterprises, a construction business, retiring after 43 years. Mr. Leslie was most proud of his Scottish Heritage. He was a member of Clan Leslie for 25 years and proudly served as past Chieftan of Clan Leslie Society for four years. Mr. Leslie enjoyed woodworking, watching football and most of all, spending time with his family. He was a member of the Abbeville Historical Society, the Hunting Club and New Hope Presbyterian Church where he was elder emeritus.

In addition to his parents, Mr. Leslie was preceded in death by two sons, Donald W. 'Bo' Leslie, Jr. and Henry Miller 'Hank' Leslie; two brothers, Robert Edward 'Ed' Leslie and Alpheus E. Leslie, Jr.; and a sister, Mary Sturdivant Leslie.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marian, of the home; one daughter,

Susan Leslie Vaughn of Madison, GA; two grand-daughters, Allison Vaughn Candler (Clark) and Audrey Katherine Vaughn; two great-grandsons, Griffin and Clark Candler, III; a nephew and a number of nieces; two sisters-in-law, LaFern Leslie of Atlanta, GA and Jane Leslie of Birmingham, AL.

The family will receive friends 2:30PM - 3:30PM, Sunday, October 10, 2021 at New Hope Presbyterian Church. Funeral services will begin at 4:00PM in the church sanctuary with Rev. James Norris officiating. Burial will follow in Long Cane Cemetery with Rev. Jim Williams officiating.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in memory of Mr. Leslie, may be sent to New Hope Presbyterian Church, 136 Hwy. 71, Abbeville, SC 29620.

A message of condolence may be sent to the family by visiting www.harrisfuneral.com.



Finding Your Scots-Irish Relatives

By Christine Johnson, CLSI Genealogist

Whether you use the term Scots-Irish, Scotch-Irish (widely used in US), or Ulster Scot (used in Great Britain), you are speaking of an ethnic group of people from Ulster, Ireland who trace their roots

to settlers from Scotland. The British leaders decided to relocate Protestants from the lowland Scottish clans to the Ulster Plantation starting about 1605. In the early to mid-1700's, a group of about 200,000 immigrants came to America from this Ulster province. They were Protestants who in large numbers settled in Pennsylvania and then moved on to Virginia and the Carolinas. Westward expansion to Ohio, Indiana, and beyond took these people to all parts of the soon-to-be United States of America.

If you have tried to research a family member from this group, you know that there is a limited amount of information available. In my research, I came across a valuable resource in my search for answers. Her name is Dorothy Arthur. I asked her for permission to write about her for the Grip Fast Journal. She agreed and sent me some information about herself and her writing as follows:

My name is Dorothy Arthur nee Erskine. I grew up outside Ballymoney in County Antrim on a farm. My Erskine family have been farming in the district since the 17th century when they probably moved from Scotland with the Elizabethan plantation.

After school, I did dentistry at Edinburgh University and worked as a general dental practitioner in Edinburgh for 22 years before early retirement caused by neck and shoulder problems. I had also been interested in my family and from my teens I was looking up church records and asking older members of the family what they could remember. I kept

my scribbles and from time to time added to my family tree. On retirement, I decided to write a book on Ballymoney Old Church Graveyard where many of my family are buried. This took 10 years and many thousands of photographs in different light and times of day.

Two years later I wrote my next book on Ballymoney St. Patrick's Church of Ireland Graveyard across from the road from the old churchyard. This had all been one graveyard until a road divided it.

Another two years on I published my next book on Derrykeighan Old Graveyard, followed by Kilraughts Old Graveyard and Armoy Old Churchyard. I am currently working on Ballintoy Old Churchyard which should be published at the end of 2021.

I have now written 5 books in a series of research into old graveyards in North Antrim and I am working on my next one namely Ballintoy Old Churchyard. There is a lot of variation between the graveyards. The books give histories of the parish and churches as well as maps, photographs, accurate headstone transcriptions and concise family trees where possible. Most of my research has been done using church records and the sources mentioned below rather than hearsay.

I have a website at www.ballymoney.graveyard.com and books can be purchased using PayPal.

After purchasing all 5 of Dorothy's books, I find them well written, well researched, and extremely helpful in my search for families of this area of Ireland. Ms. Arthur also performs paid research into North Antrim families.



TENTS, GAMES & EVENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

2021 STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES TENT HOSTED BY LEW AND CHRISTINE JOHNSON



Top photo: Kay Lynn Leslie, Chris, Sheryl Moore. Bottom left photo: Ethan, Eddie and Sidney Talley. Bottom right photo: Sarah Abernethy, Lew Johnson and Kate Abernethy.

Stone Mountain Highland Games and Scottish Festival celebrated their 49th year October 15-17 in the North East suburbs of Atlanta, GA. The games took place on the meandering tree-lined paths for a Scottish experience of clan tents, highland dancing, pipe bands, athletic competitions, sheep dog demonstrations, falconry exhibit, and a whisky seminar.

Christine and Lew Johnson hosted the Clan Leslie Society International a tent at the games. The tent was hosted by. We had visitors from Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. In all, twelve CLSI mem-

bers visited with us. We also had the pleasure of welcoming our two newest members to CLSI, Sid and Ethan Talley. We are so pleased that along with their father Eddie attended and we were able to personally welcome them to CLSI.

Chris spent much of her day talking to visitors about their family history and helping them make family tree connections. Lew spent time with the visitors talking about Leslie history and the importance of understanding and preserving our Scottish heritage. To everyone who attended the games we thank you.

2022 LOCH NORMAN HIGHLAND GAMES

TENT HOSTED BY LEW AND CHRISTINE JOHNSON



Sonny's BBQ – CLSI Food Sponsor at Stone Mountain Highland Games

Clan Leslie Society International is fortunate to have Sonny's BBQ as a food sponsor at the SMHG. Guy Leslie and his wife provided lunches for all visiting members of the Leslie Clan. His BBQ, especially the ribs and pulled pork sandwiches were the best many members have had in a very long time. For this support in providing meals for us, we offer a sincere THANK YOU.

Clan Leslie was well represented at the recent Loch Norman Highland Games. There were CLSI visitors to our tent from Colorado, Virginia, and many areas of North Carolina. The weather was cool and a bit windy but there is nothing like a deep Carolina blue sky for a highland games. Overall attendance at the games broke a recent record.

A Leslie couple visited with us at the tent who will be in Scotland in May and have a reservation to stay in Leslie Castle. We provided a list of Leslie places to visit in Aberdeenshire. Another couple who had recently traveled to Leslie Castle for a stay attended the games. We shared stories of our travels in Scotland. Chris had worked on the wife's family genealogy and they spend quite some time talking about new information they had found.

Highland games, which are really a gathering of the clans, provide opportunities for the clan members to meet and share information about the clan history, travels in Scotland and Ireland, Leslie genealogy, and of course share a wee dram in a toast to the Clan Chief. The highland games are an opportunity to celebrate our common Scottish-Irish heritage and to educate newcomers on all things Scotland.



Above: Lew and Christine Johnson march in the parade of Clans with Kimberly Spitzer.

Left: Christine Johnson with Robert and Miles Abernethy, and Samantha Bowman.



TENTS, GAMES & EVENTS

2022 BETHABARA HIGHLAND GAMES AND CELTIC FESTIVAL

TENT HOSTED BY LEW AND CHRISTINE JOHNSON

Through the cooperation of the City of Winston-Salem, NC and a small group of volunteers, the Bethabara Highland Games held their 20th highland games at the Historic Bethabara Park. Clan Leslie Society joined fifteen other clans to form a clan village around the main field and welcomed hundreds of visitors interested in learning about our common Scottish heritage.

There was something for everyone to enjoy at these games. For music lovers there were pipe bands and shoppers had an assortment of vendors to visit. On the main field, there were sheep dog demonstrations and athletic events. Our daughter Elizabeth and her daughter Mary assisted with the Children's Highland Games. The children ages 5-12 had the opportunity to throw the hammer made from plungers, toss weights, and throw short cabers.

At the CLSI tent, we were first visited by a young lady from Winston-Salem whose grandfather was a Leslie. She had been going to highland games since she was young. She marched in the parade of tartans with our group. Another visitor Jason, from Spartanburg, SC will be traveling to Scotland and wanted to know what Leslie sites he should visit. We had several other visitors with ties to Leslies and Abernathys.



Above: Elizabeth, Mary, Christine and Lew Johnson at the Bethabara Highland Games.

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

Library Committee

Our Library, the **Clan Leslie Collection** at the University of Guelph (Canada) is a true treasure, and one that will tell the stories of Leslies around the world for years to come. We are looking for members to serve on this very important committee. If you would like to help please contact Laura Messing at: designinvasion@gmail.com or Linda Flowers at: lflowers1954@yahoo.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

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