

D-Day piper, Bill Millin, dies at 88



Bill Millin, the piper who was immortalized in the movie *The Longest Day*, died August 17. Millin was the “Mad Piper” who played allied commandos ashore under heavy German fire at Sword Beach in Normandy on D-Day, on the extreme eastern flank of Operation Overlord.

Although the War Office banned it because it would attract sniper fire, his commander, Brigadier Lord Lovat (Simon Fraser, hereditary chief of the Clan Fraser) remarked: “Ah, but that’s the English War Office, Millin, you and I are both Scottish so that doesn’t apply.

Nicknamed the “Mad Piper” by both his own comrades and the Germans on Sword Beach at Colleville-sur-Mer, the Germans remarked that the only reason they didn’t shoot him is that they thought “he must have gone off his head.”

“I didn’t really notice I was being shot at my-

self,” he said. “The water was freezing. The next thing I remember is my kilt floating in the water, like a ballerina.” He launched into one of Lovat’s favorites, “Hielan’ Laddie”, as he waded ashore. Lovat, firing his old non-service issue Winchester rifle and brandishing a walking stick, gave him a thumbs-up.

On the beach, in the heat of the battle, Lovat asked him, “Would you mind giving us another tune, Millin? How about ‘The Road to the Isles’?” Millin half-jokingly replied: “Now, would you also want me to walk up and down, Sir?” “Aye, Millin, that would be nice. Aye, walk up and down.”

William Millin, soldier and registered mental nurse: born Glasgow 14 July 1922; married Margeret Dowdel, (one son); died Torbay, Devon 18 August 2010.





Editor, photographer, etc.
Beth Gay-Freeman, LOK, FSA Scot
<bethscribble@aol.com>
102 Lakeside Drive
Walhalla, SC 29691

Webmaster
Alastair McIntyre, KTJ, FSA Scot
<<http://www.electricscotland.com>>

Masthead Designer
Tom Freeman, KR, FSA Scot
<tom@caberdancer.com>

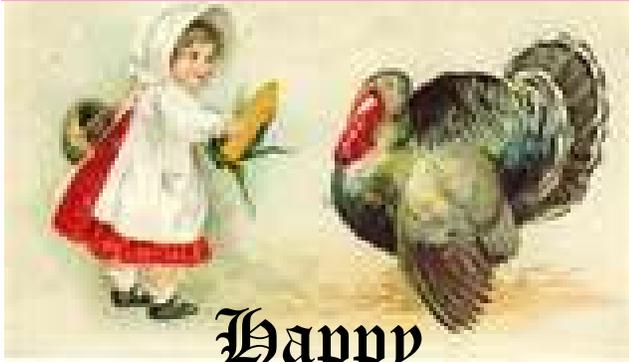
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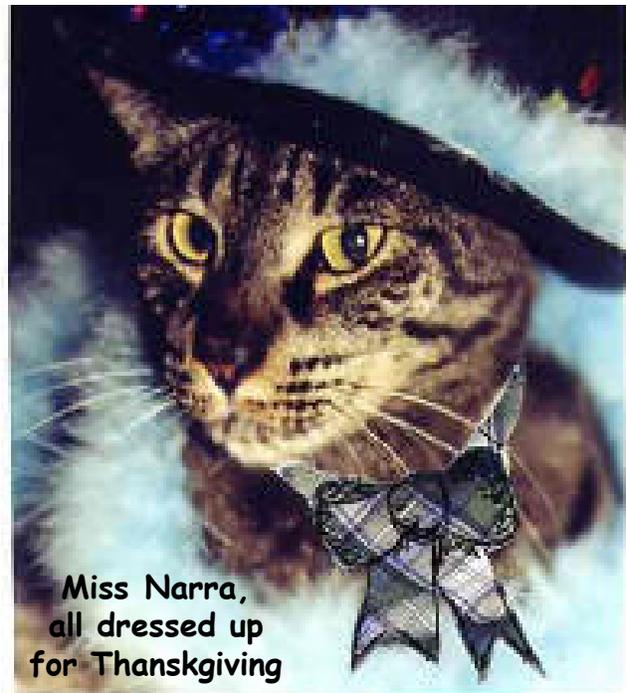
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**Happy
Thanksgiving**
from Miss Narra
The Wonder Cat
from Beth & Tom
and Alastair!



Miss Narra,
all dressed up
for Thanksgiving

A letter from your editor

Beginnings & endings.... and a few middles!

My beloved grandmother told me when I was a little girl, "Nothing lasts forever."

I couldn't understand it then as when we are very young, one day seems to be a forever all of its own. Two weeks Christmas holidays from school seemed an eternity then. Summers? Oh my, they just lasted and lasted and lasted.

Nowadays, a day is a blink of an eye...and days and weeks and months seem as if they are going at hurricane speed and sometimes spinning us about in the same way a hurricane does a palm tree.

At the right, you'll see a photo of Tom and me taken a few weeks ago at the Charleston, SC Highland Games. It was the fifth anniversary of the day we became a couple! It seems like this morning. The beginning of the rest of our lives.

I learned at Charleston that my longtime friends, Bob and Anne Armstrong, have "retired from the Highland games circuit." How they will be missed! Bob and Anne went to Scotland with us a few years ago and I'll always have memories of their gentleness with each other and loving ways towards each other...and their hilarious senses of humor and the laughter we all enjoyed. Their friendship has been a part of my life forever.

Bob and Anne, you are greatly missed. Please come sometimes when you can!

I learned at Charleston that long-time friends, John Dall and Flora Macdonald Gammon Dall, have also retired from the Highland Games. I'll never forget Flora singing *Morning Has Broken* (an ancient Gaelic melody) in the Gaelic and a Capella at one of our Knights



Templar Investitures in Nashville, Tennessee. Goose bumps appear at the memory of that lovely voice.

John Dall in his 78th Frasier's uniform has been a part of games for so long and his strong voice when he has served as announcer...and his enthusiastic hugs...all will be greatly missed.

I learned that Flora and John will come back each year for Grandfather Mountain - so, we will all look forward to seeing you there!

Al and Judy Eaton have retired after 30 years as president and secretary of Clan Home. Thank you for such dedication and service, dear kind friends!

I look back on the Flowers of the Forest from just this year...and am saddened by the treasures we have lost amongst our Scottish friends. I'm afraid to make a list - as I know I'd leave someone out - but if you think of the ones who are gone from the games...who added so much to our lives and our experiences...and who are simply irreplaceable ..sadly, we are all diminished.

Do you look around still for Mad Max? We do. Mad Max stories still bring us laughter and joy. Friends like Max occur only once.

Anyway, as we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, maybe we can each think of those who are still here - our friends in the Scottish community - and make an effort to thank them for the things they have done for us all and thank them for the people they are - whom we love.

The use of finger rings has been around for a long, long time

While there is a touch of barbarism in wearing rings on the fingers, yet the civilized hand has so long been adorned by them, that it would look plain and unfinished without its hoops of gold.

The ancient Romans wore the ring on the joint just under the nail. The Hebrews wore it on the right hand alone. The Greeks wore their rings on the fourth finger of the left hand, the Gauls and Britons on the third finger of the left hand. In Pliny's time the betrothal ring was an iron hoop, set with a loadstone instead of gem.

The Romans were even greater slaves to fashion than we of the present. They had winter and summer rings, the weight and color of the rings being adapted to the season. The Greeks wore weekly rings, which



were charms, and were always intaglios and cameos. Talismanic rings were also in use among the Romans.

Seal rings were heirlooms and of great value in business transactions. The wedding ring is of great antiquity. It is a common thing to find wives who have been married a lifetime, yet never have allowed the wedding ring to slip over the finger joint. It is considered unlucky to take it off. To lose it indicates a misfortune.

The Official Clan Macfie Facebook page is up!

Glen Cathey has recently put up
The Official Clan Macfie Facebook page
and it is ready for you to join and participate.

You can see some Youtube of the Clan Parliament at Nethybridge. This is the link: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Official-Clan-Macfie-Page/177565770680>

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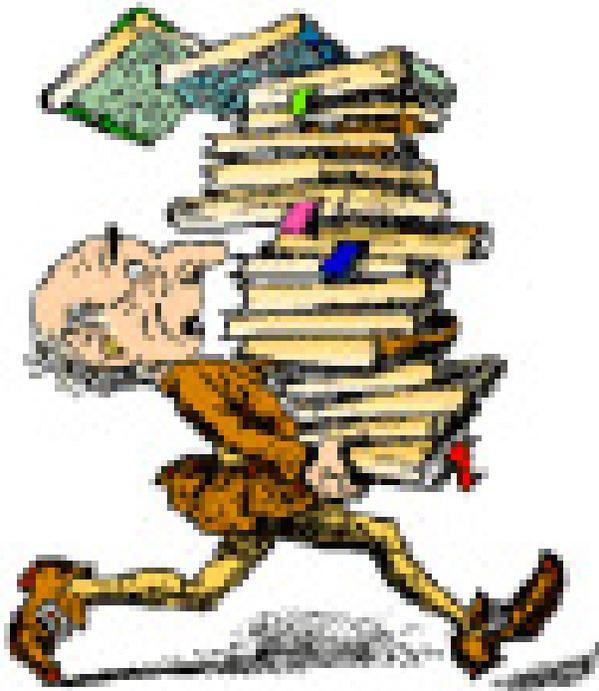


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Bryan Mulcahy, Reference Librarian

Hello: I have received a number of requests recently from patrons outside our service area for information on various aspects of our genealogy collection and services. The two attachments I am sending will provide a detailed profile of our services, including a subject guide to the 140 different study outlines that have been compiled. If you find a subject of interest among those listed in the study guides, you are welcome to request an electronic copy. If you are unable to download and save the attachments, I will be happy to print them out and send them via mail. However, due to very strict budget limitations, there are two requirements to receive a study guide by mail:

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Laurel & Hardy in Buchanan kilts? YES!

With thanks to Buck Buchanan

Anyone with the most basic knowledge of Stan Laurel's early years will know that he was born in England but then, in his mid- to late-teens, spent time in and around Glasgow, Scotland. These were Stan's formative years; not only in that he matured from a callow youth to a mature adult, but also in the learning of his stagecraft. At his father's theatre, the *Metropole*, he witnessed the stage productions of others; acted on stage himself; and had one of his own first comedy scripts made into a stage sketch, namely: "*The Fire Fighters of Frizzlington*."

At a nearby theatre, the *Britannia*, he made his



first entry into the world of stand-up comedy, which, although he didn't pursue a career as a patter comedian, was the point at which the stage bug bit. And then, over at the *Grand Theatre*, was where Fred Karno himself took him on as one of Fred Karno's Comedians - a real life-changing step.

Consequently, Stan held a great fondness for Glasgow, and for the Scots themselves, for the opportunities and encouragement he was given to develop his comedy skills. He never forget the debt he felt he owed them and was determined that, one day, he would demonstrate his gratitude. However, his first appearance in Scottish garb, in a Laurel & Hardy film,



did not exactly convey the respect he held for the national costume. "*Putting Pants On Philip*" was based on the comedy premise that maximum embarrassment can be caused to both wearer and on-looker by the kilt blowing upwards, or the underwear falling downwards.

Some years later, in the film "*Bonnie Scotland*," Stan had the opportunity to repeat these gags, plus add others, but ignored the easy target and maintained complete reverence to the tartan throughout the film. If one doesn't wish to treat this as a tribute by Stan, then one can't help but accept Stan's next appearance in kilt and full regalia as anything but a tribute.

One of the working titles for the film "*Bonnie Scotland*" had been "*Kilts*," but it was in the "real" Scotland that Stan chose next to use the kilt to demonstrate his affection for the Scots. In 1947, Laurel and Hardy's film career was all but over and so, finding himself in Glasgow on a stage tour of British theatres, Stan decided that he and Hardy would appear on stage - IN KILTS.

There was a newspaper cutting from the *Evening Citizen*, 30 May 1947, revealing Laurel & Hardy's intent to wear kilts on stage at the *Glasgow*

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November and the leaves are dying...

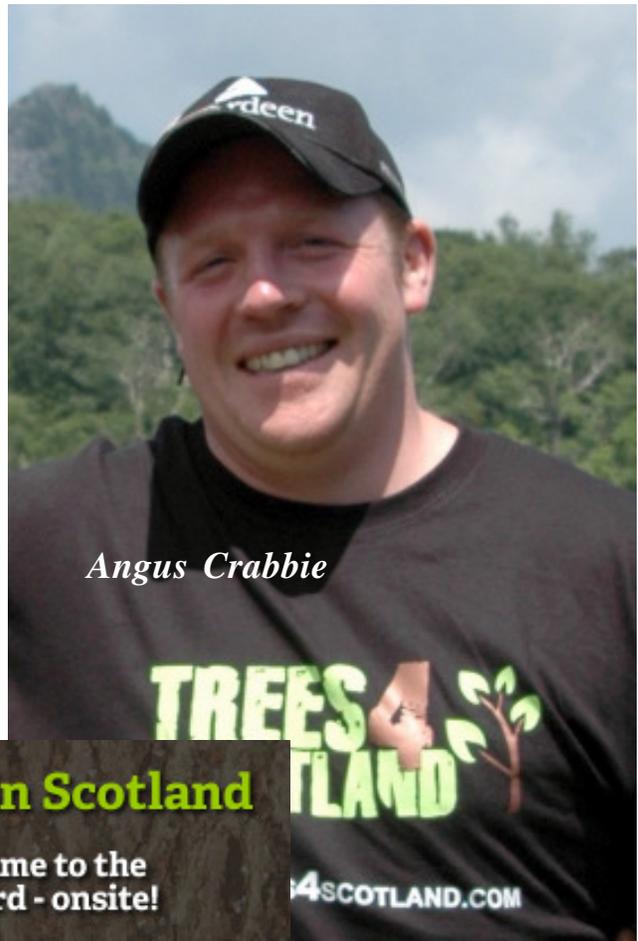
Well some of them are anyway. Scotland is particularly beautiful in the Autumn, when the leaves are on the turn and the million shades of green begin to dominate the countryside – especially in Perthshire!

It has been a good year for Trees4Scotland with many more trees getting planted and many more to go in, in the coming season. The tree planting season for bare rooted trees is really from October through to March/April time, when the trees are not in leaf and the ground is pretty wet.

Sadly Scotland is still well behind our annual tree planting target but the coming together of Teaghlach Wood is living testament to what can be achieved by working together – globally. It is largely thanks to the clans-people of Scotland, living in many far flung places, that the project has become a reality.

What started out as a legacy to The Gathering 2009 event has now taken on a far wider significance. Lord Sempill himself stated that the woodland was something to come out of the event that we should all be very proud of and yet as he also states in his piece to camera on www.trees4scotland.com that we have 'not even scratched the surface' in terms of garnering the support of Scots at home and abroad.

Our visit to The Grandfather Mountain Highland Games did prove to us that there is no substitute for meeting people in person and telling them about what



Angus Crabbie

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we are doing but sadly budgets do not allow us to make these trips too regularly. Nevertheless we are keen to build on the many great relationships that we did make and support from the clans and societies, continues to grow all the time.

We turn rugged hillside into native woodland rich in biodiversity – and representing you. So thanks to all of you who have planted trees with us and we encourage you to plant some more. Perhaps a tree in our memorial woodland called The Whispering Wood – check it out at www.trees4scotland.com/whispering-wood





The Whiskey Corner

Ray Pearson, Anaheim, CA
The Whiskeymeister

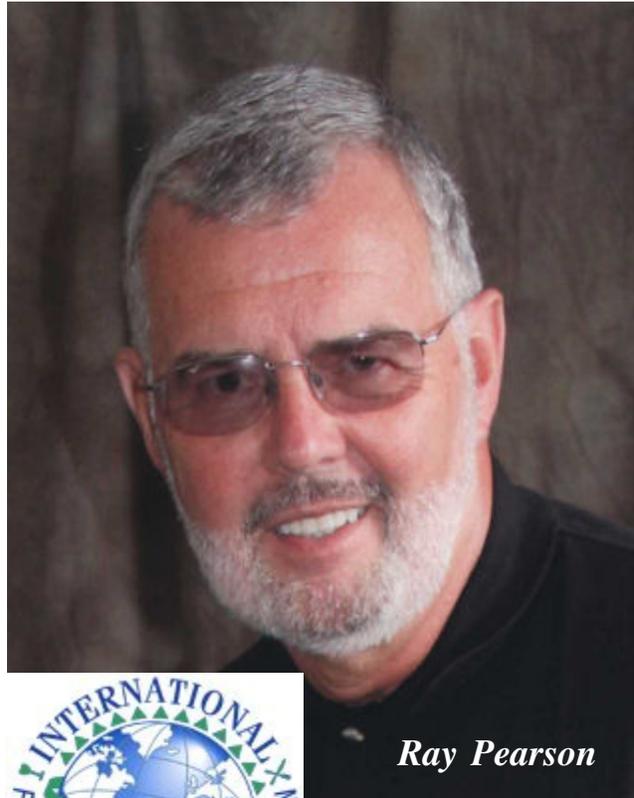
Whiskey Highlights on a Recent Road Trip Ray Pearson

The 7000 miles zipped by in a bit over three weeks. 19 states, three time zones, 27 stops for gas and countless memories. The primary objective of the trip was to drive from Southern California to New Orleans, then follow the Mississippi River northward to its source in Minnesota. Enjoying a whiskey or single malt Scotch after a day's driving was a great way to relax, enjoy the local scenery, and reflect on the joys of road tripping. A few of the highlights:

Menger Hotel Bar, San Antonio, TX: This was one of the places Teddy Roosevelt recruited volunteers for his Rough Riders. Many authentic TR relics are on display outside the bar. My favorite is the



guidon (small flag) replete with bullet holes, carried by Joseph Beck, alongside Colonel Teddy Roosevelt up Kettle Hill on July 1, 1898, during the Spanish American War. Maker's Mark Bourbon, over ice, was the perfect drink in this most authentic of western bars,



Ray Pearson



and to make the very large buffalo head seem less intimidating!



The Lobby Bar, Peabody Hotel, Memphis, TN: If it were not for Jack Daniels Whiskey, the famous ducks of the Peabody might not exist. It's a long story, but the end result is that, since 1933, a small group of ducks makes their red-carpeted way from the elevators to the water in the magnificent fountain in

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The Whiskey Corner, continued from page 10



(Above) Duckingham Palace

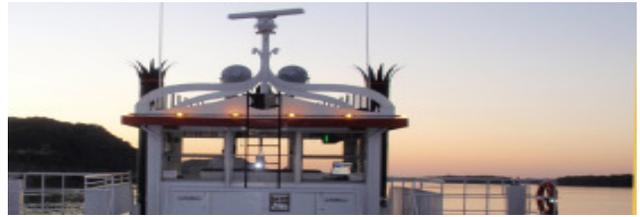


the middle of the lobby at 11:00 AM each day. At 5:00 PM, again under the direction of the Duck Master, they return to the elevators and to their quarters in “Duckingham Palace” on the roof of the hotel. These duck processions draw throngs of guests and visitors! The Peabody Old Fashion, with fresh orange and cherry crushed together and served with Jack Daniels Single Barrel and a splash of soda made is a great companion to take to the roof to check out the ducks’ royal digs.

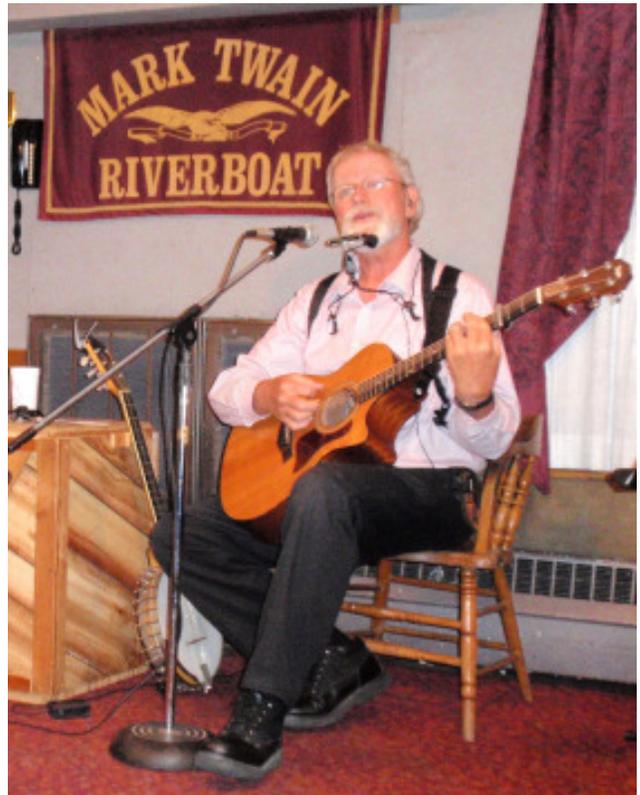


The Mark Twain Riverboat, Hannibal, MO:

An evening dinner cruise on the Mississippi River, with just a hint of a warm, balmy breeze, was the perfect way to absorb some of the majesty of the great river



in a slow, genteel way. A Jim Beam whiskey complimented the mellow music and singing of the multi-talented L. A. Sues.



Arrowhead Golf Club, Littleton, CO: A perfect spot for a single malt Scotch! The Glenlivet 12 year old, neat, was the ideal prelude to an early dinner, and to watch the shadows change on the juggernaut of red sandstone outcroppings, charging toward the driving range. Golf, Scotch, and breathtaking scenery ... what could be better!



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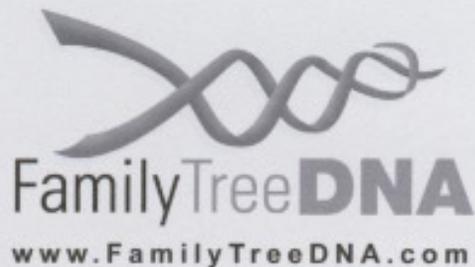
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I wondered why the golf ball kept getting bigger and bigger. Then, it hit me.

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Laurel & Hardy in Buchanan kilts? *Continued from page 8*

Empire. There was also a newspaper cutting from the *Evening Citizen*, 20 June 1947, explaining the difficulty they had had in obtaining the kilts. It must be added that restrictions on clothing, caused by post-war rationing, further complicated the procurement of the kilts.

He must have planned this in advance, as he had brought over with him the two sporrans he had worn in the film "*Bonnie Scotland*" - which necessitates, here, a further explanation: In "*Bonnie Scotland*" Laurel wore TWO different costumes: one as a member of the Highland Regiment, and one as his own ancestor, 'Angus McLaurel' - the latter seen only in picture form. The kilt Stan wore as Angus was one given to him by Harry Lauder; of which there are earlier photos of Lauder wearing it. This was the kilt Laurel brought over to Britain along with the two sporrans they had worn in the film *Bonnie Scotland*.

However, when it came to kitting out Hardy in a kilt, all efforts to find him one off-the-peg failed. This necessitated them having one made-to-measure for Hardy, during the process of which it was decided that Stan would have a matching one made. Several days, and several clothing coupons later, Laurel and Hardy's kilts were ready to be displayed to the theatre audiences. The Boys' stay in Glasgow was for two weeks, which turned out to be quite fortuitous, as the kilts had taken over a week to make. Consequently it was Tuesday of the second week before Stan and Ollie paraded them on stage. From at least one local newspaper report, it would appear that the gesture was very much appreciated, and applauded, by the patriots.

The kilts and sporrans in the colour photographs, above, are not just ANY kilts and sporrans, but are the actual kilts and sporrans worn by Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy.

So what happened to the kilts after that? Well they were put in storage, and brought out only for a New Year's Eve party, for which the Boys wore the "Glasgow" kilts, and Lucille wore the Lauder/McLaurel kilt. After that they were put back in a travelling trunk and never used or viewed again - not by Stan or Babe anyway.

On their British tours, Laurel and Hardy travelled with FORTY pieces of luggage. When they effected their enforced return to the U.S., in May 1954, a lot of the luggage containing stage wear and props was left with Stan's sister, Olga. The luggage went with Olga when she moved from the *Red Lion*, in Barkston, to the *Bull Inn* at Bottesford, but when, finally, she quit the pub trade to retire, she had no desire to take all the baggage with her.

At this stage enter Olga's friend, Ethel. One day Ethel saw Olga sorting through the trunks, with the intent of disposing of the

contents, as by this time the possibility of Laurel and Hardy returning to England had vanished.

Ethel said to Olga: "Do you mind if I take some of these costumes for our local amateur dramatic society?"

I would advise anyone of a nervous disposition not to read Olga's reply. Look away now.

OLGA: "Not at all. I wish you'd told me sooner - I've been taking them out the back and BURNING them."

Thankfully, Ethel saved and kept some of the items, among which were the kilts in our story. Sadly, Ethel has since passed on but, thanks to her, those kilts are now in very good hands. One day soon it is hoped they will be used to dress some life-size mannequins of Laurel and Hardy, and be placed on display as a tribute to Stan's Scottish influences.



Narra says she might wear her Halloween costume all the way through Thanksgiving!



We caught Miss Narra The Wonder Cat just as she was leaving for the Halloween festivities in Walhalla, SC. Her fairy princess outfit was judged "the best cat outfit" of the evening! Miss Narra says, "Of course it was!"

Three things come without seeking — jealousy, terror, and love.

Anonymous, from Gaelic



The Shield of Thomas Randolph as Earl of Moray



Captured at Methven in the debacle that all but ended the reign of Robert the Bruce, the king's nephew Thomas Randolph was forced by his captors to track his king and the Army of Bruce. His heart still yearned for Scotland to be free, and at Loudoun Plain, he calmly turned his back to the English and rode across the battlefield to rejoin the Scots and stand against Edward's army. Find out more about the epic story at....

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Would you ever guess to check here?

Register Books from funeral home visitation/wakes will include names of family members, neighbors and friends. The signatures and names sometimes include “Aunt” or “Uncle” or “Cousin.” The book might also include cards from the floral arrangements and sympathy cards.

Usually, those books go home with the next of kin. Remember, when you are a genealogist, you become a pretty good shade-tree detective!

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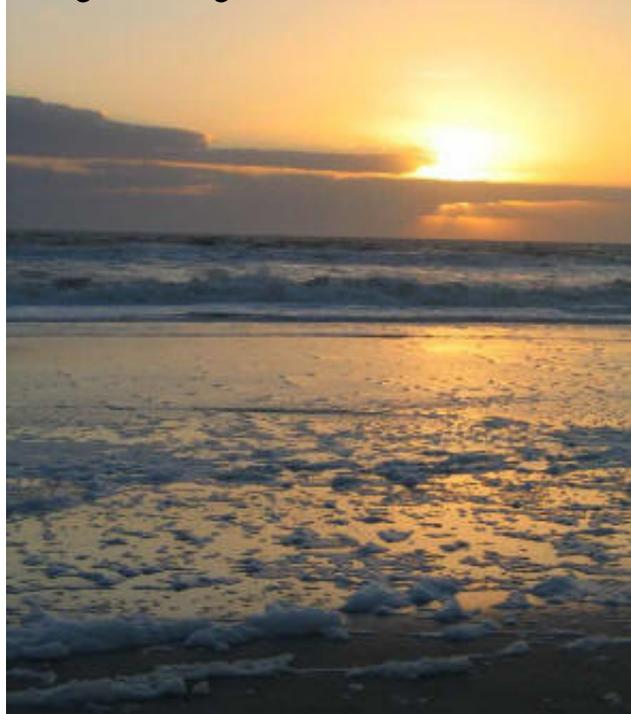
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Bye bye Summer!



I took this a long while ago at Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Back then, I used to visit my Auntie Mildred and run on the beach. I miss those runs and the lovely sights and sounds of the seashore.

JGS invites you on November 20

November 20, 2010, the Jacksonville Genealogical Society is fortunate to have as our speaker, Mary Ann Machonkin, President of the Citrus County Florida Genealogical Society. She has held this position for the past 8 years. Her topic will be: *Identifying and Dating Old Photographs*—Early photographic methods will be described and examples of types of photographs will be on display.

Photographs can be approximately dated by comparing clothing and hair styles to images from the same time period. Books with period clothing styles will be also be on display. Techniques for identifying old photographs such as placing images in the context of genealogical information and comparing to known photographs will be presented.

Ms. Machonkin will use her own personal experience in identifying and dating old photographs will be used as illustrations.

For any additional information any of these meetings please feel free to contact: Jim Laird, (904-264-0743).

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Greyfriars Bobby and the Ramsay's of Edinburgh

Oklahoma Clan Ramsay Commissioner Gina Lagaly

Last spring, I had the pleasure of visiting the land of my ancestors, Scotland.

I had one goal on this journey. I wanted to learn about my Ramsay Clan. You can hardly do anything in Edinburgh without a Ramsay connection. This story comes from my trip to a famous Kirkyard (aka cemetery) in the heart of old town Edinburgh. Many thanks from the Greyfriars Kirk Visitor Center for the information you find below.

John "Jock" Gray a gardener, together with his wife Jess and son John arrived in Edinburgh around 1850. Unable to find work as a gardener he avoided the workhouse by joining the Edinburgh Police Force as a night watchman.

To keep him company through the long winter nights John took on a partner, a diminutive Skye Terrier, his 'watchdog' called Bobby. Together Jock and Bobby became a familiar sight trudging through the old cobbled streets of Edinburgh. Through thick and thin, winter and summer, they were faithful friends.

The years on the streets appear to have taken their toll on John, as he was treated by the Police Surgeon for tuberculosis. John eventually died of the disease on the 15th February 1858 and was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard.

Bobby soon touched the hearts of the local residents when he refused to leave his master's grave, even in the worst weather conditions. The gardener and keeper of Greyfriars tried on many occasions to evict Bobby from the Kirkyard. In the end he gave up and provided a shelter for Bobby by placing sacking beneath two tablestones at the side of John Gray's grave.

Bobby's fame spread throughout Edinburgh.

It is reported that almost on a daily basis the

crowds would gather at the entrance of the Kirkyard waiting for the one o'clock gun that would signal the appearance of Bobby leaving the grave for his midday meal. Bobby would make his way to the same eating place that he had frequented with his now dead master, where he was given a meal. This eating place was owned by William Ramsay (1857-1858) and then his wife Mrs. Ramsay (1858-1859). Bobby continued to eat at the same place for the rest of his life.

In 1867 a new bye-law was passed that required all dogs to be licensed in the city or they would be destroyed. Sir William Chambers (The Lord Provost of Edinburgh) decided to pay Bobby's license and presented him with a collar with a brass inscription "Greyfriars Bobby from the Lord Provost 1867 licensed". This can be seen at the Museum of Edinburgh.

The kind folk of Edinburgh took good care of Bobby, but still he remained loyal to his master. For fourteen years the dead man's faithful dog

kept constant watch and guard over the grave until his own death in 1872.

Baroness Angelia Georgina Burdett-Coutts, President of the Ladies Committee of the RSPCA, was so deeply moved by his story that she asked the City Council for permission to erect a granite fountain with a statue of Bobby placed on top.

William Brody sculptured the statue from life, and it was unveiled without ceremony in November 1873, opposite Greyfriars Kirkyard. And it is with that, that Scotland's Capital city will always remember its most famous and faithful dog.

Bobby's headstone reads "*Greyfriars Bobby - died 14th January 1872 - aged 16 years - Let his loyalty and devotion be remembered always.*"





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in the hallway. One hat said to the
other: "You stay here; I'll go on a head."**

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Clan Colquhoun Society Of NA

Membership is invited for all spellings of Colquhoun/ Calhoun, Cowan, MacClintock, MacManus. Applications available online at

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10th Anniversary Foothills Highland Games, Hendersonville, NC
10th Anniversary Foothills Highland Games, Hendersonville, NC

The Other 70%

Judith Lloyd, president of the Scottish District Families Association
starshipraleigh@aol.com

Lowland Scots Dunbar

Dunbar, the birthplace of John Muir, who traveled extensively in the U.S. and founded the Sierra Club, which still exists, has played a couple pivotal roles in the history of Scotland. The city sits on the southeastern coast of Scotland where the Firth of Forth joins the North Sea in the East Lothian area. It is approximately 30 miles east of Edinburgh. It is believed that the Picts were once there, plus items from the Dark Ages and the Bronze Age have been discovered there. Nearby Doonhill was the site of a 6th century wooden hall and a 7th century chief's hall. Scotland's first king, Kenneth McAlpin, torched Dunbar in the 9th century and then in the 11th century the land was granted



to Gospatrick of Northumbria (which was that area's name at that time). It was he who founded the family and earls of Dunbar. The king's of the area then were Duncan and MacBeth, whose names were made very familiar by Shakespeare's MacBeth.

There were two major battles at Dunbar. The first in 1295 occurred when John Baliol, who had been set as king of Scotland by Edward I, turned and attacked England. Edward retaliated and routed him at Dunbar. The second battle was in 1650 after Charles I had been killed, and Charles Stuart returned from exile to Scotland where the Scots proclaimed him King Charles II of Scotland. Cromwell was then 'in charge' of all of Great Britain. The Scottish army led by David Leslie, the 1st Lord of Newark, was encamped 'safely' on Doonhill, and had trapped Cromwell's troops in Dunbar when he decided to leave his advantageous position and set up camp in the lower area near Dunbar. In the night Cromwell attacked. The Scottish

army was decimated, even though it outnumbered the English, and thousands of prisoners were sent to Newcastle, never to see Scotland again.

When Queen Mary's secretary, Rizzio, was murdered in Edinburgh she fled to hide in Dunbar Castle. Shortly after her son, James the VI of Scotland, became James the 1st of England the castle was destroyed.

Andrew Spratt, who has sketched many of Scotland's castles based on their ruins and the type castles being built in an era, has sketched Dunbar Castle as a red stone structure sitting on rocks or a spit of land jutting out into the North Sea. Beneath it is what are known as the Dunbar vaults. The main chamber of these vaults

contains crystal clear water. Some of these vaults also have wooden floors.

From the Clan Dunbar website the earldom itself has had its own very colorful history passing through the women in the family at times when there was no male heir, rescinded by James I. Recognized as a clan in 1579, the current chief is Sir James Dunbar. The clan itself has a list of septs recognized by the clan and a list of acceptable spellings of the name. People whose names have been found in the area of Dunbar, but are not one of the above two clan related groups are still entitled to wear the district tartan of the Dunbar area.

The area has rich deposits of limestone and a few of the lime kilns used in the 18th and 19th centuries to burn the limestone to make the powdery lime used as fertilizer are still there.

In the 19th century Dunbar became a golfing resort, perhaps since it receives more direct sunlight than anywhere in Scotland. It is still an agricultural area and fishing port.

Would you like for your clan to be represented in these pages?

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For membership information, contact:
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*from The House
of Scotland*

There was a Scottish painter named Smokey Macgregor who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further. As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the Baptist Church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings.

Smokey put in a bid, and, because his price was so low, he got the job. So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and, yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with water...

Well, Smokey was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Smokey clear off the scaffold to land on the lawn among the gravestones, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

Smokey was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried: "Oh, God, Oh God, forgive me; what should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke..(you're going to love this) "Repaint! Repaint! And thin no more!"

Sent in by Cathy Hale. Many thanks to The House of Scotland, San Diego, CA. Contact them: Graham McGruer (619) 425-3454.

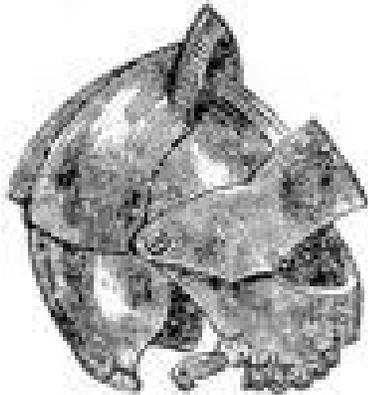
“Oyez, oyez, oyez,” says the town crier!

What is the meaning of the word “Oyez” which is pronounced either “o-yay,” or “o-yez,” or “o-yes” depending on where you were raised? Officially, it is used three times in succession by the Marshal of the Court to introduce the opening of a court of Law. Until the 18th century, speaking English in a British court of law was not required; one could use Law French, a form of French that evolved after the Norman Conquest, when the Anglo-Norman became the language of the official class in England.

“Oyez” descends from the Anglo-Norman “oyez,” the plural imperative of “oyer,” ‘to hear’; thus “oyez” means ‘hear ye’ and was used as a call for silence and attention. Although it would have been much heard in medieval Britain, it is first recorded as an English word fairly late in the Middle English period, in a work composed around 1425. Since this phrase worked so well in a court of law, the town criers used it to draw the attention of the mostly illiterate public to matters of importance. The criers or bellmen were usually people of some standing in the community, as they had to be literate enough to read and write proclamations. The crier would read a proclamation, usually at the entrance of the local pub or inn, then nail it to the door post - from which comes the expression “posting a notice,” as well as naming newspapers as the post.

Women were often employed in spreading the news of items that had been lost, the arrival of fresh food at the market or some piece of local intelligence. One such person was Betty Dick of Dalkeith in Midlothian (1693-1773). Betty used a large wooden trencher that she hit with a spoon. The din was just about enough to stir the graveyard. The sound would rattle out at different places in the town, causing crowds to assemble to hear the latest announcement, for which Betty charged a sum of one penny. Every night she was employed to bawl out “tripe, piping hot, ready for supper the night at 8 o'clock at Jeanie McMillan's, head of North Wynd. Gang hame, bairns, and tell your folks about it.”

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mosgen@earthlink.net

Thanksgiving Dinner is coming!

Hints on etiquette from a bygone time

These rules are taken from a little book written in 1834 as a serious guide to good manner. It amusingly illustrates the customs of a bygone period. "Although these remarks will not be sufficient in themselves to make you a gentleman, yet they will not be sufficient in themselves to make you a gentleman, yet they will enable you to avoid any glaring impropriety, and do much to render you easy and confident in society."

Dinners: Well-bred people arrive as near the appointed dinner hour as they can. It is vulgar assumption of importance purposely to arrive half an hour behind times; besides the folly of allowing eight or ten hungry people such a tempting opportunity of discussing your foibles.

Ladies should never dine with their gloves on - unless their hands are not fit to be seen.

You cannot use your knife, fork or teeth too quietly.

Do not practice the filthy habit of gargling water from your finger bowl, albeit the usage prevails among a few.

Bread should never be cut less than an inch and a half thick. There is nothing more plebeian than thin bread at dinner.

It is considered vulgar to take soup twice.

Do not pick your teeth much at table.

Introductions: Never "introduce" people to each

other without previous understanding that it will be agreeable to both.

Do not insist upon pulling off your gloves on a hot day when you shake hands with a lady. If it be off, why, all very well; but it is better to run the risk of being considered ungallant to present a clammy ungloved hand.

Visiting: Never leave your hat in the hall when you pay a visit to a lady; it makes you look too much at home. Take it with you into the drawing room.

Smoking: If you are so unfortunate to have contracted the low habit of smoking be careful to practice it under strict restrictions; at least, as long as you are desirous of being considered fit for civilized society. The first mark of a gentleman is a sensitive regard for the feelings of others; therefore smoke where it is least likely to prove personally offensive by making your clothes smell; then wash your mouth and brush your teeth.

Dancing: If you are entirely a stranger, it is to the "master of ceremonies" you must apply for a partner and point out (quietly) any young lady with whom you should like to dance. Do not, on any account go to a strange lady and request her to dance, as she will unhesitatingly "decline the honor," and think you impertinent fellow for your presumption.



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Clan Blair Society

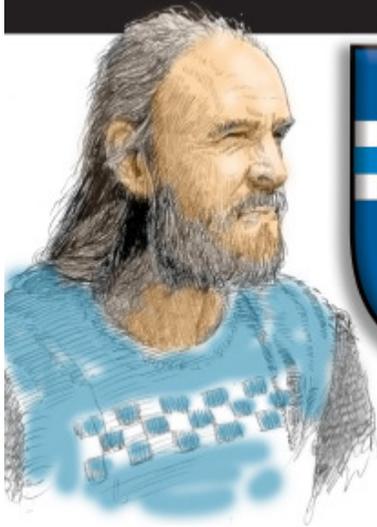
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The Shield of
Robert Boyd

A lifelong friend and close lieutenant to Robert the Bruce, Sir Robert Boyd heroically defended Castle Kildrummy and was an exemplar to all in the Scots' cause. He survived the years and faced harsh dangers in taking his country back from the English kings, and fought alongside his family's Stewart kinsmen at the Battle of Bannok Burn.

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What is your umbilical line?

The term "umbilical line" refers to a single, very specific matrilineal line, that is, the mother's mother's mother ad infinitum.

In an ancestral table, it comprises individuals numbered 1, 3, 7, 15, 31, 63, etc.

It is analogous to the sequentially numbered paternal line that follows a specific surname over generations. Although genealogists have long been obsessed with patrilineal-surname research, since the early 1970s the importance of umbilical lines has been stressed.