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

Vol. 4 No 11, July August Sept 2009

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### REPORT ON CLAN LESLIE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

Here we are halfway through the year and there is still so much to be done.

I earnestly implore our members to try and get some new members to replace those who do not renew their membership. If we do not replace those members, we die.

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2009 ?**, I have sent emails and phone calls to those who have not paid them but with some I have not had a reply. If you are not sure send me an email on [lesliejb@ozemail.com.au](mailto:lesliejb@ozemail.com.au) or ring me on 02 9418 2262 (Sydney).

**CAN YOU HELP WITH RUNNING OUR SOCIETY.** Volunteers are the life-blood of any society, because without volunteers, the running of the society is carried out by only one or two members. In our case it is me and I need help. In the last ten years, we as a society have preserved so much information on Leslies in Australia and New Zealand, which would not have been recorded, as after one or two generations it would have been lost and that is an unforgivable thought.

**HOMECOMING 2009 GATHERING AT HOLYROOD PARK EDINBURGH. 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> July 2009.** Have you made a decision to go to this Gathering. The Hon Alex Leslie has made arrangements for a Leslie Tent, so we really need to support him and go there. I know that it is a long way to get to Scotland from Australia and New Zealand but this is a once in a lifetime opportunity. [www.clangathering.org](http://www.clangathering.org)  
If anyone has a story to put into the newsletter please contact me with the details, as I always need information to put into the newsletter.

**Yours Aye, Barrie Leslie.**



### ALEXANDER FORBES LESLIE.

Private 5<sup>th</sup> Cont 2715 South African War  
Bombardier 2/2665 New Zealand Artillery WWI.  
Cpl. 414187 R.N.Z.A.F. WWII.



Bombardier Alexander Forbes Leslie  
Photograph taken in France 1917

Alex was born at Opotiki in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand, 14<sup>th</sup> April 1879, the only child of Dr Alexander James Leslie, born Old Machar Aberdeen 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1841 and Florianne Remington, born 7<sup>th</sup> April 1860 Jersey Channel Islands.

His childhood was spent in various towns around the Bay of Plenty and Rotorua, wherever his father had a medical practice and his mothers

family was in the Bulls / Feilding area where his maternal grandfather had a chemist shop. He was a man of leisure, as the family had an income from the family estate in Scotland. He spent time in Timaru and Christchurch where he met his wife Mary Catherine Benington whom he married 28<sup>th</sup> March 1900 in Christchurch, New Zealand. On the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1900 he signed to go with the Fourth Contingent (Rough Riders) to the war in South Africa, but for some reason, I suspect that it was because he had just got married, he actually sailed with the Fifth Contingent which arrived at Beira in Mozambique.



*Trooper Alexander Forbes Leslie No 2715  
Photograph taken at Albany W.A.*

On arrival he joined the 1/15 Pr Battery of the New Zealand Artillery as a driver. Volunteers were called for from the 5<sup>th</sup> Contingent to join the Rhodesian Field Force Artillery and while on service in Rhodesia he was thrown from his horse and had to recuperate at Fort Tuli Hospital. His Commanding Officer Capt G Dalglish of the South African Constabulary appointed him acting quartermaster, allowing him to ride on the wagons. He performed these duties until the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1901 he contracted Enteric Fever at Brandfort and he was sent to Bloemfontein Hospital for a period of 35 days, where his temperature went up to 104.9 degrees and he sent an 18 word telegram to his wife at a cost of 36 shillings, which was quite expensive .

On the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1914 he signed up to serve in World War I with the 16<sup>th</sup> Waikato Regiment

as Lionel Forbes and sailed on the troop ship for Egypt from the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1914 to the 4<sup>th</sup> December 1914. I suspect that he signed under that name as he had three children and was 34 years of age and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1915 he was discharged and returned to New Zealand for “refusing an inoculation”.



*The medals of Bombardier Alexander Forbes Leslie  
From left to right; South Africa, next three WWI. Next two WWII.*

On the 19<sup>th</sup> October 1915 he signed up for service again under his correct name with the 9<sup>th</sup> Artillery Reinforcements and served with various artillery batteries, received a head wound in France on the 26<sup>th</sup> October 1918, returned to his battery and on the 15<sup>th</sup> July he forfeited 16 days pay for being absent without permission and was discharged on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1919 and returned to New Zealand on the Adolf Woerman and disembarked at Wellington 1<sup>st</sup> October 1919.

You wonder how I know so much about Alexander Forbes Leslie, he was my grandfather.

*Barrie Leslie, Gordon, NSW.*

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### MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CHIEF

The Leslie House fire – a silver lining?

A couple of days ago I spoke to the man in charge of restoring Leslie House. I expected the conversation to be depressing and indeed in part it was. However there is cause for optimism too.



The bad news is that the project to renovate Leslie House – to create a new Leslie House in the spirit of the old one – has been put back by months if not years. When the fire happened the first of the apartments was close to being ready for the

decorators. The other bad news is that the fate of the building is now in the hands of the insurers, no surprise there perhaps, although the burden of proving that a) the developers had nothing to do with the fire and b) took every precaution against fire in the first place is taking longer and is more taxing than anyone thought. This is probably because of the size of the claim and the current economic conditions. The other issue is that the bank who was lined up for the final round of funding is now in administration and there will be problems there too.

I cannot even imagine the frustration that such a fire must instil in a property developer, after months of struggling with planners and previous owners. I know that it took almost a year to get the previous owners to pay to deal with the dry rot. Almost as soon as the problem was sorted, it went up in flames. No-one yet knows the cause of the fire. The original speculation that it was due to lead being welded on the roof is now known not to have been the cause.

There is good news however. Strangely the severity and heat of the fire meant that the entire interior burned, but very quickly. The outer walls are all intact and in good condition. This means that the developers have much more freedom in their designs of the interior, can use more modern materials and thus leap more nimbly through the hoops put up by the fire department, health and safety executives and all the other gentle folk that must be satisfied with these things.

The other good news is that the planners and Historic Scotland are being incredibly co-operative. They, like me, obviously realise that the developers want to recreate Leslie House in spirit, not simply develop an old house for profit. The community, once opposed to the whole project, now seems to have got behind it and taken it to their hearts.

The bottom line is that whilst the project has been put back by as much as a year or two the reality is that the end result will probably be a house of apartments that really is a new Leslie House, beginning a new chapter in its history and not simply the end of the line.

Hon Alex Leslie, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009.

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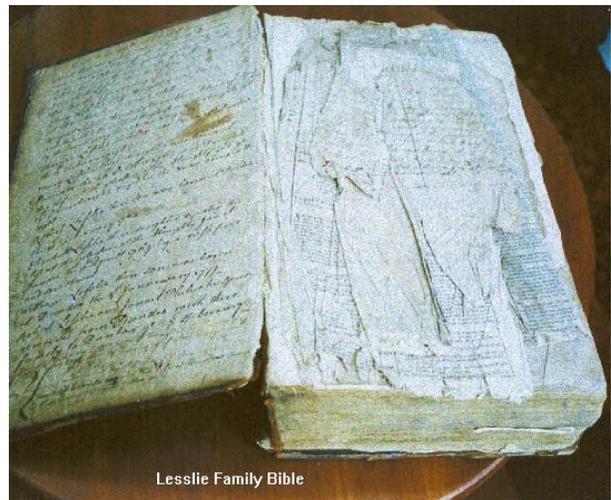
## **RUSSELL JOHN LESSLIE.**

**Born 25<sup>th</sup> November 1924. STRATHFIELD  
N.S.W. AUSTRALIA.**

Russell was an early member of the American Clan Leslie Society and was then made an Honorary Member, which had the effect of disenfranchising him from the Society he had worked so hard for and was very disappointing for him. Russell has been interested in his branch of the Lesslie family for many years.

In tracing the history of the Australian family, Russell had little difficulty in arriving at Robert Leslie, Master Mariner of Banff, Scotland of the late 1600s. This family, through a series of Master Mariners, moved to Dundee and then Dunbar.

In short, the Dunbar Leslie/Lesslies interest evolved with one branch, staying in England as part of the Orient Company, with other members of the family taking an increasing interest in whaling and trading in Australian waters. The English branch of the family, in later years were unable to continue the male line and they then sent the family bible, which dated from January



1757, to Australia, via a purser in an Orient ship, to the now Australian branch of the family.

The first in Australian waters was Captain Robert Lesslie, born 1768 of the Dunbar family, who in 1812, as master of the brig "Active" sailed from Port Jackson Sydney, to the Derwent (Tasmania) and New Zealand, with a Mr Gordon as a passenger, thought to be Charles Gordon, then 21 years of age, whose daughter Hepzibah, was later to marry Captain Robert Lesslie's nephew, Captain William Lesslie, born 1812 in Dunbar. Later in 1812, Captain Robert Lesslie was whaling in Frederick Henry Bay, near Hobart, where Abel Tasman first landed on Australian soil and then a year later, on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1813 Captain Robert Lesslie was murdered by natives on the island of Otahete, now called Tahiti.



Captain William Lesslie's, nephew, born 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1812 in Dunbar, Scotland arrived in Australia, as master of the sloop /cutter "Vansittart". A ship of 80 tons from Cowes, London to Hobart on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1836, in time to celebrate his 24<sup>th</sup> birthday. The same year, his elder brother

*Capt William Lesslie* Robert Lesslie, born 1807, of the English branch of the family arrived as master of the "Success". Later in 1836, Capt William Lesslie carried goods and passengers between Hobart, Sydney and Kangaroo Island, South Australia, prior to the founding of Adelaide and Port Phillip, now called Melbourne, then only one year old. The Vansittart was then sold to the infamous Port Arthur convict settlement in Tasmania and it was later seconded to Charles Darwin for use with HMS Beagle. Capt William Lesslie then assumed command of the "Success". Captain William Lesslie continued as master of a number of ships. He was wrecked in the "Falcon" in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand and his own ship the "Pedlar" which was driven ashore on the southern end of Bondi Beach Sydney, 27<sup>th</sup> July 1847. The "Pedlar" was a 29 foot, 16 ton cutter which was built in Limehouse London in 1841. Here enters Charles Gordon, Russell's great, great, grandfather who arrived in Australia as a child with his family in 1804. They settled on a grant of land at Richmond, NSW. Charles became proficient in agriculture and purchased land at Castlereagh NSW. There he married Maria, the daughter of a neighbour, John Lees, who built the first Methodist chapel in the southern hemisphere. Charles Gordon, with his first wife, Maria, his sister Mary Ann and his brother in law, William Carlile, were among the first twelve white settlers at the Rev Samuel Marsden's first missionary settlement at Rangihoua, Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Charles Gordon's wife Maria gave birth to Ann, one of the first white children born in New Zealand but, unfortunately on their return to Australia, Maria died in childbirth.

Back in Australia Charles Gordon married Mary Brown, who gave birth to his second daughter, Hepzibah who on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1842 married Captain William Lesslie, born 1812. He continued his seafaring career and died at a comparatively early age in 1855. Hepzibah

continued to live at Double Bay with her children, Mary Elizabeth (Hardie) born 1842, William Charles born 1847 (Russell Lesslie's grandfather and Anna Maria born 1850.

From an early age, Russell was naturally interested in Lesslie family history and as a result he was given custody of the family bible. His early endeavours were to trace the ancestors of Captain Robert Leslie of Banff, Scotland. Birth and death details are unavailable and public records were non existent or limited.

To assist in these endeavours, he purchased, in London, the 3 volumes of "The Historical Records of the Family of Leslie", published in 1869 by Col Charles Leslie. It has been particularly useful, so much so that it has recently been scanned and CDs are available through Barrie Leslie of Clan Leslie Society of Australia and New Zealand. Barrie had previously extracted all the names from the 3 volumes into a computerised database along with information from other sources.



*David & Leslie Leslie with Russell Lesslie at Leslie Castle 1995*

Continuing with his research Russell has been able to connect his known Scottish and Australian family tree to the important Kininvie branch of the main Leslie family. By reason of circumstantial evidence, it is understood that the master mariner, Robert Leslie of Banff, was the second son of Mr Robert Leslie, son of John, 6<sup>th</sup> Laird of Kininvie and Christian Gordon. Taking into account the information available, this has been accepted by professional genealogists.

Because of his interest in Leslie matters, Russell joined the American Clan Leslie Society in the early 1980s. He became so involved with the Society that he was granted honorary membership, along with Baron David Leslie and George Pravez-Leslie of Argentina. In 1995

Russell and his wife Patricia attended the Clan Gathering at the refurbished Leslie Castle, which gave him the opportunity to meet many of the Leslies, particularly Lord Rothes who officiated and also the host and hostess Baron David and Leslie Leslie.

Russell always advocated and still holds the view that the American Clan Leslie Society should be an International Society in reality as well as name, however in earlier times the parochial attitude of the American executive stood in the way of a broader understanding and outlook

He, as well as the society's legal advisors, at the time, advocated the incorporation of the society. He saw it, particularly as a means of limiting the personal liability of individual members, of which most were unaware and of course providing status to the society.



*Russell with the Brian Lesslie's*

It was obvious that no genealogical research material was provided to those seeking to help members, extend their family history, which should be an area of interest as well as an attraction for new members. Russell saw no progress being made in these areas and he was particularly upset that George Pravez-Leslie, who was on the committee, on being made an honorary member was disenfranchised from voting on committee matters, purely because he was an honorary member. Russell therefore submitted his resignation from the American Clan Leslie Society and Lord Rothes sent Russell a

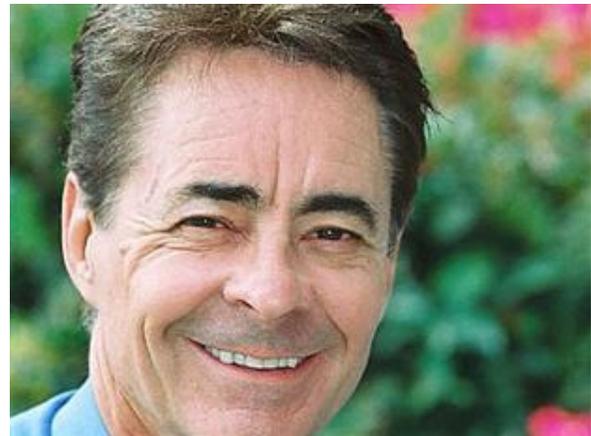
personal letter of understanding, expressing his disappointment and hopes that the matters would be rectified.

Russell transferred his interests to Clan Leslie Society of Australia and New Zealand, which after talks between Lord Rothes and Barrie Leslie, who also had been on the executive committee of the American Clan Leslie Society, Lord Rothes approved the setting up of the Australian and New Zealand Society.

Russell continues his retirement at Killara NSW with regular trips to various parts of Australia and is in close liaison with Barrie Leslie who was appointed by Lord Rothes to be his Commissioner for Australia and New Zealand.

*Barrie Leslie, Gordon, NSW.*

## CONGRATULATIONS TO IAN CRAIG LESLIE. O.A.M.



*Ian Craig Leslie. OAM.*



In the Queens Birthday Honours, announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009, well known media personality

Ian Leslie received the Medal of The Order of Australia, "*For Service to the Media, particularly Current Affairs Journalism and to the Community*"

Ian was born in 1942 in Java to William Leslie who was born in Aberdeen in 1906. My personal

congratulations go to Ian, who I have known for many years, with the comment that it is well deserved.

The Order of Australia is the pre-eminent way Australians recognise the achievements and service of their fellow citizens. The order was instituted in 1976 with nominations made by individuals or community groups to the Order of Australia Council.

The Medal of Australia is a badge with a gold-plated silver insignia of the Order in the centre. The central insignia is inscribed with the word "Australia". The circle also contains two gold sprigs of mimosa. The insignia is ensigned with the Crown of St Edward and the "Post Nominals" O.A.M. can be used after your name in any correspondence.

*Barrie Leslie, Gordon, NSW.*

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**THE REV KEN LESLIE. OBE. BA. Th Schol.**

Ken Leslie was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 1911 to Ernest Thomas Leslie (1877 – 1965) and his wife Margaret Jane Maggs (1879 – 1982) at his parents home *Ellora* at Hitchin, 30 miles from London.



*The Rev Ken Leslie. O.B.E. BA. Th Schol.*



*The Rev Ken Leslie with Barrie Leslie.*

I had been wanting to get to Bathurst to see Ken, who is the Patron of Clan Leslie Society of Australia and New Zealand, for some time and finally in May I was able to get there to see him.

For a 98 year old I found him in remarkable health and spirits. Unfortunately he is almost blind but his hearing and mobility is amazing

I count myself lucky to have met such an amazing man and I can understand how he was called "The Bishop who Walked", as when he was 60 years of age, he walked 130 miles from Dubbo to Bathurst in NSW to raise funds to complete the Bathurst Cathedral where he was the 6<sup>th</sup> Bishop.



*Chaplain Ken Leslie  
Darwin 1942*

During our talk he told me, how as the Army Padre during the bombing of Darwin in 1942 he had buried several men on the Darwin beach and that it was never told how the labourers on the Darwin wharfs were almost all killed when the Japanese bombed the wharfs. He also said that the propaganda that the Australian authorities resorted to, to keep the information from the Australian public was over the top. Maybe it was also to keep the Japanese from learning how much damage had been done.



Ernest Thomas Leslie, 1877-1965



Margaret Jane Maggs, 1879-1982

*The Rev Ken Leslie's parents.*

A thoroughly amazing and humble man.

*Barrie Leslie, Gordon. NSW.*

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## WARTHILL HOUSE.

can bring your own wine or sample the fine wine from the estate.

### MEIKLE WARTLE ABERDEENSHIRE.

“Warhill” was the ancestral home of Patrick Leslie who came to Australia with his two brothers, rediscovered and settled the Darling Downs in Queensland.

The current Laird of Warhill is Sebastian, who with his wife Candida (Candy) live there and also offer the house as bed and breakfast accommodation, just 45 minutes from Aberdeen.



*Warhill House.*

During the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, the Warhill Leslie's sided with Bonnie Prince Charlie and when the Government Army passed close by, a detachment of troops were sent to burn the house. The Laird's Chamberlain managed to bribe the troops to not burn the house down and while they went back and reported that the house was burnt, the Chamberlain piled straw bales around the house and set them on fire. From a distance, it looked like the house was on fire and thus Warhill was saved.



*The Dining Room at Warhill.*



*The Green Bedroom at Warhill.*



*The Main Bedroom at Warhill*

Warhill is surrounded by 250 acres of parkland with many pleasant walks to prepare you for dinner, if that is what you require. The breakfast is great way to start the day and you stay for dinner, well you may well require a workout to compensate and special diets are catered for. You



*Part of Warhill House.*

For further details on staying at Warthill House you can enquire by email; [lickleyhead@hotmail.com](mailto:lickleyhead@hotmail.com) or phone Candy or Sebastian 0165 1821276 or from outside the UK on +44 165 1821276 or mobile +44 7917 889 286 “Warthill”.

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Aberdeenshire AB51 5BJ.  
Scotland. UK.

The cost is £40 per person per night, including breakfast and the optional dinner is £25 per person, which includes complimentary wine, but no smoking please. One more point the library is amazing and if you ask nicely you may even get to see one of the copies of the Laurus Lesleana Explicata. The first written history of the Leslies. The family of Leslie of Warthill is descended from the Wardis (Wardes) branch of the family of Leslie Barons of Balquhain.

William Leslie, first Laird of Warthill, born 1490, was the second son of John Leslie, second Baron of Wardis by his third wife, Margaret Forbes of Echt, widow of Walter Stewart of Dryland. He was a clever and prudent man and was bailie of the courts of his father John, and of his brother Alexander Leslie, Barons of Wardis, who at that period had a great inheritance. He got from his father a lease of the Kemmils of Durno for his lifetime and to his heirs for nineteen years after his death. He got in wadsett the lands of Ryehill. William Leslie married first a daughter of William Rowan, burgess of Aberdeen in 1511 and by her had a son John, who was slain at the battle of Pinkie along with his uncle, Robert Leslie, son of John Leslie, second Baron of Wardis in 1547.

William Leslie married, secondly Janet Cruickshank, the heiress of Warthill who was the only surviving child of John Cruickshank of Tillymorgan and he became the first Laird of Warthill of the name of Leslie. He had issue of twenty one children.

William Leslie, first Laird of Warthill died in 1561, upwards of seventy years of age.

*Barrie Leslie. Gordon. NSW.*

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## CLAN LESLIE DNA PROJECT

Please visit [www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/leslie](http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/leslie) to check on the Leslies who have taken the DNA test which will help future generations of Leslies and please participate in the program and take the test.

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**Commissioner** James Barrie Leslie 61-2-9418-2262  
**Clan Leslie** 43 Rosedale Road. Gordon.  
**Aust & NZ** NSW. 2072. Aust [lesliejb@ozemail.com.au](mailto:lesliejb@ozemail.com.au)

**Convener CLANZ** J. Barrie Leslie as above

**Patron of CLANZ** Rt Rev Kenneth Leslie OBE. BA. Th. Schol.  
6<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Bathurst.

**Secretary** Malcolm W Leslie 61-7-4635-8358  
**Membership** 1 Mannuem Crt. Toowoomba. Qld.4350.Aust  
[mle98103@bigpond.net.au](mailto:mle98103@bigpond.net.au)

**Treasurer [acting]** Elaine M Wood 61-2-9498-5068  
41 Kooloona Cres West Pymble  
NSW 2073. Aust [elawood@ozemail.com.au](mailto:elawood@ozemail.com.au)

**Newsletter** newsletter editor or committee required

**Webmaster & I T Manager** Andrew C Leslie 61-2-9958-6284  
19 Douglas Ave Chatswood.  
NSW 2067. Australia  
[aleslie@amalgamated.com.au](mailto:aleslie@amalgamated.com.au)

**New Zealand Representative** Ruth M Leslie 64-9-634-9022  
1/76 Wallace Rd Mangere Bridge.  
Manukau City New Zealand  
[Clickimin@ihug.co.nz](mailto:Clickimin@ihug.co.nz)

**Queensland Representative** Selwyn J Leslie 61-7-4630-7023  
32 Gowrie-Tilgonda Road. Gowrie Junction  
Qld 4352.Aust [selwyn.leslie@bigpond.com](mailto:selwyn.leslie@bigpond.com)

**South Australia Representative** Audry M Fry 61-8-8331-9688  
37 Ormond Grove, Toorak Gardens,  
South Australia 5065. Australia.

**Victoria Representative**

**West Australia Representative** Robin Stott 61 -0405 390 585  
25 Hartford Ave. Viveash.  
W.A. 6056. Aust. [perostott@hotmail.com](mailto:perostott@hotmail.com)

**WEBSITE for CLANZ.** <http://www.clanleslie.org>  
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[www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm)

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**Acting Chief of Clan Leslie** Hon Alexander John Leslie  
Boreland House. Lockerbie.  
Dumfriesshire. DG11 2LN Scotland

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## Clan Leslie Society International

**Chieftain** Bob (Robert C) Bailey. 6113 El Toro Court. San Jose.  
CA 95123. USA email:- [rcbailey3056@bcglobal.net](mailto:rcbailey3056@bcglobal.net)

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