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Member of Clan Hunter

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Newsletter of the Clan Hunter Association, Canada

April 1998 Vo 2,2

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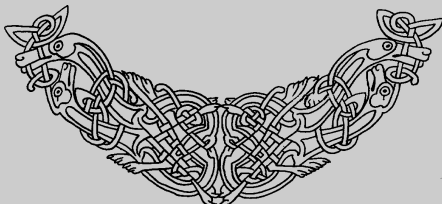
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I'm afraid I must begin this word from the editor with an apology for the lateness of this issue. I'm afraid my life has been in a constant turmoil for the last two months. First of all my computer crashed and I had to rebuild my whole setup and then I had a whole bunch of other things that you don't want me to bother you with which culminated in my retiring in 5 weeks time. So now I need to get on with all the things that have been in limbo for so long. I did want to encourage everyone who can, to make a special effort to be at Fergus this year, to help us support our chief, Pauline Mullen Hunter of Hunterston. The Clan Hunter will be one of the featured clans this year because of our chief's visit and so we need as many folks as we can to march in the parade and lift up the name of Hunter. If you haven't yet decided on what you are doing this summer, then give a thought to coming to Fergus. You can meet the chief, join us for dinner, attend the annual membership meeting and perhaps attend the "Kirkin' o' the tartan" on Sunday morning. I will supply more of the details in the next newsletter to help folks decide on what they would like to do. I am still/always looking for "Hunter" related info for the newsletter such as the article by new member James Hunter of Calgary so come on folks I really need your help.

Tom

A Message From The Chief

Dear Clansfolk,

Spring is once again upon us and the lambing is in full swing and Nigel is being kept extremely busy with all the deliveries. The daffodils around the Castle are just coming out and although there has been a lot of snow in Scotland recently Hunterston has fortunately not had any. The work on the planned wetland is progressing slowly, it will take some years for the full benefit to be seen but it is a very exciting and innovative project which will enhance the environment around Hunterston.

I am pleased to announce that 90 new Clan members have joined the Hunter Clan in the last two years, well done all those of you who work so hard to interest Hunters in their heritage and encourage them to join. You are all doing an excellent job.

Recently I was approached by a company wishing to advertise Scottish Clands on the Internet in conjunction with those involved in

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tourism. As it was free to Clans I have sent them some information and the site can be viewed at: <http://www.scottishclans.com>. I am considering creating a web page for Hunterston. We will endeavour to make sure it is different to Clan Association web sites.

Thank you all e-mailers for your letters. I have tried to respond to them promptly. Also thank you those of you who have written to Nigel in good time to let him know of your visits. He has told me that it makes planning much easier.

There is now fine and medium weight tartan available directly from the Clan Mail order. The fine weight is \$20 per metre and the medium weight is 23 per metre.

Apologies are in order for those of you who have had to wait for your video "The Heritage of the Hunters", 50 more have been received. I have now sold 80! Thank you so much for buying them. I am delighted they are such a success. If anyone is going to Detroit/Fergus I shall be bringing some with me.

Yours Pauline

Clan Chief to Attend Fergus Games

This is an important year for the Clan Hunter Association - Canada as we welcome our Clan Chief on her first visit to Canada in her official capacity. Pauline will be accompanied by her mother Lady Sonia as she joins us at the Fergus Highland Games 7-9th Aug. 1998. An open invitation is extended to all Hunters to attend the General Membership Meeting. (place and time still to be finalized) Before joining us at Fergus, Pauline will be the honoured guest at the Detroit St Andrew's Scottish Games. Their General Membership Meeting will be 31 July 1998 at 4pm at the Detroit Marriott Livonia, 17100 Laurell Park Dr North, Livonia ME.

Leith United Church

Editor's note: Having been born in Leith, Scotland, I was intrigued by an article I read recently on Leith, Canada. Until that moment I was not aware that there was such a place.

(Excerpts from an article by Roberta Avery)

In 1840 the area now known as Grey and Bruce counties near Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, was first opened for settlement.

Most of the emigrants came from Scotland and were in the main, staunch and devout Presbyterians. They settled in the Leith area about 10 kilometers northeast of Owen Sound, Ontario, where they maintained a stubborn loyalty to the church of Scotland - or Auld Kirk - and in 1863 they decided to build their own church.

The sod was turned for the

Auld Kirk now known as the Leith United Church, in 1865. It was built in the austere style of the Auld Kirks in Scotland. There was no ornamentation or statues. The plain box style pews have wooden doors and seat four or five people.

"As the story goes pioneers brought their dogs to church and the doors kept the dogs apart and prevented dog fights breaking out in the middle of the sermon.", says Gwen Mitchell, a long time church member who is involved in the church restoration project. But, she adds, that explanation doesn't make a lot of sense: "The dogs could have got to each other by crawling under the seats."

The March 1866 edition of the Presbyterian describes the first service at the Leith church as follows: "A Gaelic service was given at two o'clock, at which the attendance was large. Our Highland friends seemed delighted to hear the message of mercy in their dear old tongue - a privilege they seldom enjoy in this locality."

(Editor's note: The article referred to the first minister as Dr. Alexander Hunter then changed to the Rev James Hunter so at this moment I am not sure which it is.)

The Auld Kirk's first minister, The Reverend (Alexander/James) Hunter, was born in Glasgow in 1828. He grew up near the village of Lanark and moved to Canada when his family, including ten brothers and two sisters, emigrated in 1842. He was appointed to the Leith church after spending his summers there as a student missionary.

In 1869, Rev. Hunter was

taken ill during a service and died a few weeks later. He was buried behind his beloved Auld Kirk where the first congregation erected a monument to his memory.

A Little bit of Home

The city of Calgary was named on February 29th, 1876 by Col. MacLeod, then Stipendiary Magistrate. He named the city after his old home Calgary, a small estate on the Isle of Mull, Scotland. Calgary Castle stood on his estate. The word Calgary means "clear running water" in an ancient Scottish dialect. In keeping with the Scottish origins of Calgary, many communities have been given Scottish names as the city has grown, for example: Balmoral, Braeside, Thorncliffe, Highland Park, Beddington Heights and Huntington Hills, the community in which I live which was established in the early 1970's. My street, Hunterston Hill, was named specifically after Hunterston Castle and all of the streets in the area feature "Hunter" in their names. i.e Hunterquay Way, Hunterview Drive, Huntercroft Road etc.) I live at the very top of Hunterston Hill, looking directly down on the surrounding area, which is rich with parks, sandstone, thistles and wildlife that wanders down from Nose Hill Park, a nature preservation area that lies directly behind my home.

James W Hunter, Calgary

The Bagpipes

This article is an extract of an article taken from the 1995 program for the Capital District Scottish Games of Altamonte, NY

The bagpipe is central to Scottish music, and it is unlikely that any one genius invented this ancient instrument. The first real evidence of the bagpipe appears in the first century AD when it was used as a motif on a coin of Nero. Historians have suggested that instead of fiddling when Rome burned, Nero played the bagpiper. It is difficult to imagine that the warlike Roman race adapted the bagpipe and spread it throughout the countries it invaded; however, adequate documentation does exist that this is at least partially true. Almost certainly the Romans encountered native forms of the instrument on their travels, but what modifications, if any, were made by this contact would be mere guesswork.

Early development of the instrument probably centered on the problems of making it loud enough to be heard by the audience while simultaneously sustaining a musical note. Essentially, the bagpipe was created for the outdoors where most social life occurred. As long as activities took place in the fields, woods or hillsides, loudness and the ability to sustain notes were of prime importance.

The instrument evolved from a one-note whistle carved from a hazel twig to the addition of a few more notes and finally the

incorporation of a bag as a reservoir for air thus providing a continuous sound. Scales and harmony were not seen as problems initially, although later they became the major stumbling blocks and thus the main fields of improvement.

Once life became more urban, social life moved indoors, and interest in the bagpipes waned. The exception was Scotland, and in particular the Highlands. While Scotland makes no claim as to the invention of the bagpipe, the mere mention of the instrument makes one think of Scotland.

The survival of the Highland bagpipes appears to have a three-part foundation. First, the Highlanders' way of life changed little during the Middle Ages because work and recreation still thrived in the great outdoors. It was not until the Defeat at Culloden in 1746 that the old Highland life changed. The subsequent Disarming Act, which banned bagpipes, had a disastrous effect, but it did not stop the playing of the instrument. The colleges of piping were disbanded and the number of pipers diminished, but the traditional passing on of knowledge and skill was only slightly affected. A new stimulus to Highland piping came in the form of raising the Highland regiments. The bagpipe, which had remained unaffected by trends or what was fashionable for the parlor, had survived into modern times.

A second reason for the instrument's survival was the Highland piper's refusal to

compromise. He accepted that his music was different. While other pipes gave in to the popular demand for softness and sweetness, the Highland pipe stood firm and immovable, prepared to be broken if necessary, but not to change.

Finally the importance of Piobaireachd, the Highland bagpipe's classical music, to the Highlanders ensured the survival of the bagpipes. Piobaireachd consists of a theme and variations composed especially for the highland bagpipe. While it is not necessarily a lament, the theme is always played slowly, and the general effect is often slow and sad. By tradition it is played from memory, a feat which may last fifteen minutes or more. Piobaireachd's soulful and unmetered character may not appeal to everyone. However, whatever one's background, no one is indifferent to the sound of the bagpipe, and it is not necessary to be a Highlander to enjoy the music of the bagpipes.

*Source: Piobaireachd -
Classical Music of
the Highland Bagpipe -
Seamus MacNeill*

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Calculating Age or Birth Dates From Tombstone Listings

By Glenn Smith

This is an easy way to calculate a close estimate of the birth date from a tombstone listing showing the age at death.

For example: JaneDoe-died Nov.30,1910
age 55 yrs, 3 mo. & 10 days

Set up your work sheet as follows:

	Year	Month	Day	
Death date	1910	11	30	
Age at death	55	3	10	
Birth Date	1855	8	20	(August 20, 1855)

Another example:

If you know the birth and death dates, you can calculate the person's age as follows:

	Year	Month	Day	
Died	1901	10	10	(Oct. 10, 1901)
Born	1850	1	3	(Jan. 31, 1850)
Age at death	51	8	9	(51 yrs, 8 mo., 9 days)

Another example:

	Year	Month	Day	
Death date	1900	1	2	(Jan. 2, 1900)
Age at death	65 yrs.	2	15	
Birth date	1834	3	17	(Mar 17, 1834)

All dates would be approximate. Thirty (30) days for each month was used here.

Celtic Heritage Magazine

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