

*The
Scottish
West
March*

REIVER



THE NEWSLETTER OF CLAN LITTLE SOCIETY NORTH AMERICA

Volume 18, Number 2

www.clanlittlesna.com

Summer 2008

Flowers of the Forest

Word has come to us through Clan Henderson, that Rex and Pat Maddox have lost their adult son Michael to illness. It is reported that they devoted their lives to making his life comfortable, knowing the inevitable result. Condolences to the family are sent from the entire Little Clan. (*Pat is the genealogist for Clan Little Society and Rex is the chieftan of Clan Henderson. They live in Alexandria, VA.*)

LEO LITTLE of Austin, TX was not technically a member of Clan Little, but he was the co-administrator or the Little DNA project which is linked on our website. Leo passed away unexpectedly in mid-May. This editor had many lively debates via e-mail with Leo and he will be missed. He is the author of the article *Tracing the Border Littles Through DNA Testing* which can be found on www.littledna.com website. Our sincere sympathy is expressed to his wife and family.

FROM THE STEUART

Hello all,

Hope your summer has ben going out well. We, the Clan Little Society have changed a few things: When you become a Life Member, you will receive a cap badge, necklace or kilt pin (your choice). This is a very small thank you from us. Also, when you become a new member the new membership fee will be \$25.00 and the new member will receive a Reiver pin. The yearly dues are still \$20.00

We have a new quartermaster, Leroy Little and his wife Teresa. We will have his contact info on the website in the next month. Please welcome them to the position.

Please remember to send pictures for the games that you have attended and mark your them with names and dates. This will help others identify who and when the Games were.

Stay safe and cool this summer.

Aye,

John E Little-Steuart
Clan Little Society NA

WELCOME NEW QUARTERMASTER

Leroy and Teresa Little have been members of the clan society since last fall. Since then they have become very interested in doing whatever they can for the clan. They are also planning to set up a tent for the first time in Maine this summer.

Also last fall, James Kleparek had to retire due to health reasons, as reported in past issues. John Little, steuart, had been handling the job until a new quartermaster was found. Leroy and Teresa have stepped in to take over that important job.

We welcome them to that position and congratulate them on their decision.



Biography Column

Alan Burke

Alan Robert Burke was born in Syracuse, NY to Robert W. Burke and Lucille Kehler Burke. He is the great, great grandson of Elfleda Meribah Little. Alan's father was a dispatcher with the NY Central Railroad and was subsequently transferred to Western New York requiring that the family move to Rochester when Alan was about 5. He remembers many joyful summers spent in Hillsgrove, PA with his maternal grandparents, William W. Kehler and Mary K. Chilson Kehler. Mary was the granddaughter of Elfleda.

With all of that wonderful 'Little' influence, Alan went on to join the US Army Reserve in 1971 with active duty from 1985 to 1992. He was assigned to the 98th Division HQs and retired in 1998 after moving to North Carolina. In between he fathered four children – Alan, Jr. – 26, Amy Katherine (Katy) – 24, Nathaniel Wesley (Nate) – 22, and Peter Roy – 20 all living in Rochester, NY. He also earned a BA in Technical Communication and a Master's degree in Information Technology from Rochester Institute of Technology.

Since relocating to NC Alan has become extremely active in his Masonic Lodge and is serving as Master for 2008. Prior to entering into the line (you Masons will understand) Alan served as the secretary for the Lodge and has been asked to resume this position once his term as Master has expired. He is also active in the Order of the Eastern Star and was the Worthy Patron in 2005.

As a former member of the military, Alan joined the Scottish American Military Society (SAMS) in 2003 and is currently serving as The Adjutant General for the national organization. He is a member of the local post and participates at the many Scottish/Highland Games in NC and SC.

Just to make certain he stays busy enough, he sits on the Board of Directors for the Triad Highland Games in Greensboro. In his spare time Alan works at Hanesbrands, Inc. as a senior forecast analyst for Bali Bras brand (responsible for approximately \$250 million budgeted forecast) and tends to his 7 acre homestead in Woodleaf, NC

Alan's wife, Deb was born in the San Francisco area to Arthur Kent Newcomb and Leah Weatherby. Ironically, they met in Upstate NY and through their genealogy work-

ings have discovered that they are 8th cousins, once removed. She is an 8th cousin to his mother, which is on the same side of the family that the Littles are related to him. So, Deb is a cousin to all of those Little family members as well.

Deb's mother, Leah, lives in Salisbury and her son, Richard and his family, moved to the Charlotte area about a year ago. So, they are very fortunate to see their grandchildren quite often.

Alan picked up the reins of compiling and expanding the family genealogy from his uncle, Charles 'Bud' Kehler several years ago. Continually building upon Bud's years and years of research Alan was able to locate distant cousins in the area and ultimately joined Clan Little. He proudly wears the Little tartan at every opportunity and looks forward to meeting more and more of his kith and kin.



DID YOU KNOW...

- The Scottish word "corn" refers to oats. "Meal" refers to oatmeal.
- The word "Scotch" refers to drink or food, "Scotch whisky" or "Scotch bun" for example.
- "Scots" refers to the people of Scotland;
- "Scottish" refers to social or political concepts like "Scottish parliament, Scottish schools," etc.
- There is no "e" in "whisky" in Scotland.
- "Biscuit" refers to what we call cookies. In fact, a cookie is a round, sweet dark glazed bun.
- The Tooth Fairy is a Scottish concept
- Heather, boiled and applied warm to the top of the head will cure a headache.
- Catch the first bee you see and put it in your purse and you will be wealthy all year.
- In the Borders, if you encounter a funeral procession you must take off your hat and join it or you will soon die yourself.
- "Buntata" means potato in Scotland.

Reiver Champion...Again!

As reported in last summer's edition of the REIVER, Jim Little, Secrateur/Marischal of Clan Little met all foes on the field of honor at the Triad Highland Games in 2007 and emerged victorious at the first annual Reiver Challenge. At this year's games in May, 2008, the event was even more challenging as other clans sent forth their champions to try and dethrone him.

As before, there were five events: Archery, swordsmanship, hatchet throw, dirk toss and lancing as well as trivia.

The archery contest was first with Little



emerging victorious chalking up two bulls-eyes.. After a less than stellar showing in swordsmanship, the reigning champion was still ahead. The hatchet throw and dirk toss proved a dead heat as did the lancing competition. So it all came down to the trivia contest, with Little barely in the lead.

The questions were tough, but your champion proved worthy and Little held his ground against all comers to emerge as the *second annual Reiver Challenge Champion*. All hail the victor! All hail Clan Little!



All lesser clans, for there being none equal, are hereby given notice that the champion has agreed to defend his title against all challenges at the 2009 Triad Highland Games. Let all others beware for he will not be dethroned easily.



Ross and Phyllis Little, from Sacramento recently celebrated the graduation of their grandson Al and the marriage of another grandson Doug. As can be seen, Al is already playing the bagpipes and Doug had a Scot-



Jennifer & Doug Little

tish wedding. Both were presented memberships in Clan Little Society for these occasions by their grandfather.

BEST SHORT BREAD RECIPE WE'VE TRIED

- Preheat oven to 350°F
 - 1 cup butter
 - ½ cup + 1 tbsp powdered sugar
 - 2 ½ cups plain all purpose flour, sifted
- Butter should be soft. Sift sugar and flour together and add it to butter a wee bit at a time. Keep working until well mixed. Pat out to about ½ inch thick. Cut into desired shape. Bake 20-25 minutes until edges brown.

SHORTBREAD TOPPING

- 8 oz. Butter
 - 4 tbsp corn syrup
 - Few drops of vanilla extract
 - 4 oz sugar
 - 1 lg. Can sweetened condensed milk
 - 7 oz chocolate
- Melt all ingredients in a sauce pan. Boil 5 minutes stirring constantly. Pour over shortbread. Melt chocolate and spread on top. When cool cut into fingers.

Enjoy!

THE SKIRL OF BAGPIPES THE TWIRL OF KILTS

Br Jason D, Little
8/29/96

Ever see a kilt? If you are one of the unlucky few who have never encountered this foreign piece of clothing, you may find it to be an eye opening experience. The best way to see a kilt, however, isn't to go stare at the old guy in the park belting out an out of key "Scotland the Brave". No, I think that the full immersion technique is far better, and by this I mean the Scottish games. My reasoning for this is simple. If you were to see one, crazy, old guy wearing a mail order kilt, you might be inclined to laugh, but if you were to see fifty men wearing kilts, many of them quite large, and some also toting the traditional Scottish dagger, called a "dirk", it's probably more likely that you'd keep your mouth shut and learn something. This would be a great experience for anyone, for at the Scottish games, there is a lot to learn, and in the process of learning, lots of fun to be had.



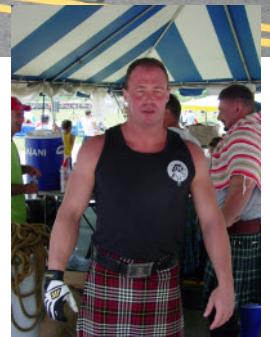
Bud & June Little at Glasgow, KY games, 6/3/2008

Buying a ticket to the games and stepping through the gate is like entering a realm where the sights sounds and smells of another world and time form an imperfect meld with our own. Finding the games is not hard at all. Once in the general vicinity one can simply follow the swarms of kilts, Scottish deerhounds (a very distinctive looking dog) and a rainbow of different clan tartans (a plaid to any not of Scotland). Meals can be found in the form of a traditional Scottish pasty, (a small meat pie), or a British banger.



All around there are people dressed in the clothes of old Scotland, including everything from full, flowing dresses to suits of armor. From the direction of the gaming field can be heard the sound of pained grunts and yells as the competitors throw, lift, and carry impossibly heavy objects, participating in the same unchanged events as centuries ago. Clydesdale

horses proudly march around a field, and border collies can be seen manipulating flocks of Scottish sheep. Throughout all this medley of activity there is the constant symphony created by bagpipes, Scottish drums, fiddles, and the occasional, haunting melody of the hurdy gurdy winding its way through the air.



Dr David Lyttle

I say all this forms an imperfect meld because of some of the juxtaposed oddities that one occasionally sees. A caber tosser wearing spandex under his kilt, for instance, or maybe a warrior cleaning his armor with a brillo pad. These things all lend a very distinctive and interesting flavor to the games that is not easily forgotten, and often brings one back for more, which is good, because the games are something that require more than just a quick glance to truly appreciate.

(continued from page 4)

The name “Scottish games” obviously implies some importance to the competitions, and not without good reason. The Scottish game tournaments are some of the most impressive around. The games, as explained to me by third year pro, Phil Marlin, are multinational competitions arranged in the manner of a decathlon, where the competitors must compete in eight different events and place at least third in each event in order to move on. The events in the competition are quite varied, with one very common bond, they all require lots herculean strength. The events include two stones, which are like shot put except that they use rocks. There are two weights for distance in which the athlete must spin around, generating enough momentum to hurl a 28-56 lb. weight as far as possible. Next are two hammers, involving a full sized sledge hammer being hurled down-field, except, unlike the weight for distance, the athlete’s feet must remain stationary. There is a weight for height, where the competitors stand under an elevated bar over which they try to loft the weight, and finally, the last event is the caber toss. The caber toss all by itself makes for a very interesting sport. The equipment consists of a lot of physical bulk, as well as a large, wooden pole about the size and shape of the members of the PG&E forests planted along our roadways. The caber is picked up and balanced nearly vertically, supported by the hands and shoulders. The athlete then runs forward at full tilt and, often with a barbarian yell, throws the caber in such a way that the end that was in the air hits the ground while the rest of the caber follows over and lands pointing, hopefully, directly away from the thrower. This sport has two possible origins, one being that it started out as a logging technique, but the second (and also the more favored among the caber tossers), is that cabers were used in assaulting castles. After hearing about some of these sports, one might guess that the competitors might be fairly large, and one would certainly be right. Among the pros, there are lots of ex-Olympic athletes with the average weight being about 280 lbs. This interviewer, topping off at 6’2” and weighing 180 lbs. felt like a genuine squirt talking to some of these guys.

The strength competitions are not the only games played on the fields. Right next to the grunts, wheezes, and flying cabers is a somewhat more graceful addition to the games, the beautiful highland dancing. The dances are very impressive, filled with jumps, twirls, and fast, precise footwork. The more experienced dancers show an amazing amount of lower body strength just in the height and control of their jumps. The overall impression one could get from watching the dance was that a happy and powerful being was somehow concealed inside a small body, and was giving only hints of its true nature. Linda Groth was kind enough to give me a little of her time to explain how the dances are arranged. The dancers are divided into five categories: primary, beginner, novice, intermediate, and premier. The dancers can only move on to the next level when they have shown competence at their current one. There are both western and national competitions, with each age group and level doing different dances. The premier level is the highest and it competes for money. Linda herself is a Novice in the ten and under age group. She became interested in dancing because her uncle plays the bagpipes. She says the hardest part of the dance is simply “doing it!”

Leaving the game fields and the dancing behind, one can wander through the “glen of clans”, the place where the various clan tents are set up for visitation. In each tent can be found a multitude of smiles and hospitality, however the one tent that should never be missed on any visit to the glen is the formidable “Little” tent. Ours is the beautiful blue structure, graced with our maroon tartan and numerous flags. It is filled with friendly people, lots of information about our history, and an endless supply of puns on our name, (the puns aren’t so bad for we only do it a little bit. Actually we toy with the idea of making a little book of them). The Little Clan Society is not an actual clan because we have no actual chief, (looking for a fun job? Have the surname “Little” or some derivation of it? Come on by!), but we do have an “unofficial” clan badge, as well as a democratic constitution, approved in 1994. Our clan logo is a Border Reiver, the fighting border clans who earned the reputation as the finest light cavalry in Europe by continually raiding and reiving the Scottish-British borders. In Scotland, “Little” is listed as being one of these original border clans. The clan president, Bob Little, originally saw an ad for the Little Clan Society in *The Highlander* in 1991 and he volunteered to set up the tents on the west coast. He claims, “I was one of the first members in the US, Certainly the first on the West coast.” Most people that join the Little clan are interested in their heritage. We have an excellent genealogist,

Pat Maddox, who is working on a computer program to merge the histories of the twenty-five different spellings of “Little”. Bob Little, at first, volunteered because he was interested in his mom’s side which was German-English. He knew his father’s side was Scottish only because, “they talked funny”, but there was very little information to be found, and what records there were, were not complete. After joining the clan, he has gone back several generations. Bob Little certainly has his work cut out for him. He says, “We have to get the clan going, and re-organized. As we get more members, we’ll be able to get a lot more done.”

One can imagine all the hard work that goes into the production and organization of these games, and if you ever go to a Scottish gathering, you should drop by the Caledonian Club tent and give them a word of thanks, for the credit goes to them. I talked to Gordon Scott, the chief of the Caledonian Club who has been involved for the past ten years. The club is a Non-profit, open membership organization that funds scholarships, social events, and sponsors games. There are currently 287 families who are members. The club was founded in 1876 by the people who put on games in Sacramento. It operated into the late twenties when there was a break until about the late fifties when it began functioning again. About the games, Mr. Scott said that they are, “A lot of hard work”. After each event there is a meeting in which the success of each category, including food, games, clan organization, is analyzed. New heads are assigned for the next games and plans are made on what to do differently. Several meetings take place to check on progress before the clansmen even start shaking the dust off their kilts. Even after all this preparation the day of the actual event finds the Caledonian club tent to be a beehive of hectic activity just to keep things running smoothly.

So, are you interested yet? The games are a whole different world just waiting to be explored, and it doesn’t matter if you are a burly being into sports and weightlifting, a small, energetic package of dancing dynamite, or just a spectator in search of interesting sights and friendly people to talk to, the games have something for you. Most importantly, however, is that if you are to visit the games, you must not forget to stop by and say “hi” to all the friendly folks in the big “Little” tent. We are all bursting with laughs and information, both of which we give freely.