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Southwest Division of the U.S. Branch

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Summer 2006

Convener's Corner

Hello everyone –

Where do I begin? So much has happened since the last newsletter. The Highland Games schedule is in high gear. The House of Gordon was represented at Bakersfield, Livermore, Las Vegas, Sacramento, Prescott, and the LA Fairplex. It is always wonderful to see familiar faces at the House of Gordon tent. I want to invite and encourage all the rest of our members to come to the games and experience the friendship that we all share with each other.



16th. I encourage our members to come to Fresno for the Games and our meeting.

Bydand – Tom Adams,
Convener House of Gordon
Southwest (CA, NV, AZ & NM)

Meet the Clan Chief

During the House of Gordon 2005 trip to Scotland the group had the opportunity to attend the Aboyne Games hosted by our own Clan Chief. In addition to meeting with our Chief at the games we were invited to his home (Aboyne Castle in Aberdeenshire) for a visit and tour. Aboyne Castle is a most beautiful and fitting home for a clan chief and his charming wife, Lady Catheryn.

Recently Linda Hilton, our Arizona Regional Director, told me she needs to step down. Linda did a great job for the House of Gordon and I want to thank her for all her good work. Two of our new members from Arizona, Larry and Margaret Lamper, have volunteered to assume the Arizona Regional Director role. In addition, two more of our new Arizona members, Patrick and Jodi Gordon, have volunteered to help Larry and Margaret with tents and such. Thank you and welcome to Larry, Margaret, Patrick, and Jodi. They will be greeting folks at our tent in Flagstaff.

A little background for our new members: Granville Charles Gomer Gordon is the 13th Marquess of Huntly. He also holds the titles of Earl of Enzie, Earl of Aboyne, Lord Gordon of Badenoch and Lord Gordon of Strathavon and Glenlivet. In addition, he holds the title Baron Meldrum of Morvan in the Peerage of the United Kingdom. He is the premier Marquess in Scotland and is recognized as the Chief of the Name and Arms of Gordon. His titles are all listed in the Peerage of Scotland.

The Northern California group is still looking for members willing to attend the games up north and help out with the House of Gordon tent. Anita has a friend helping her but she could certainly use additional help. It doesn't take much time and is a worthwhile way to help the House of Gordon.

Don't forget to check the Games schedule and plan to come on out. Don't forget that the annual House of Gordon Southwest meeting is held during the Fresno Games on September



Woody with our Chieftain (left) Aboyne Castle (above)

Note: The Peerage is a system of titles of nobility that exists in the United Kingdom. Hereditary titles are passed from one

generation to the next, usually in direct succession, from one member of the family to the next, dependent on how the titles were originally granted.

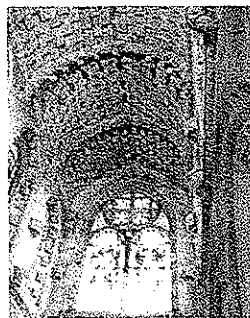
Rosslyn Chapel

It is such an opportune time to present a brief article about Rosslyn Chapel and all the credit goes to Dan Brown, Ron Howard, and Tom Hanks for the inspiration. Last August the House of Gordon 2005 tour had the opportunity to visit Rosslyn Chapel, just a short drive south of Edinburgh. It is a fascinating place that remains an enigma to historians and history buffs alike. It is a "must see" for anyone's list of things to see in Scotland.

Rosslyn Chapel, or the Collegiate Chapel of St Matthew as it was to have been, was founded in 1446 by Sir William St Clair, third and last St Clair Prince of Orkney. It is in fact only part of the choir of what was intended to be a larger cruciform building with a tower at its centre. The larger building he had planned was never completed. But the foundations of the nave are said to have been excavated in the nineteenth century and found to extend ninety-one feet beyond the Chapel's original west door, under the existing baptistry and churchyard. (<http://www.rosslynchapel.org.uk/index.php>)

Rosslyn is touted as one of the most mystery filled places in Scotland. It was believed to be a hiding place for the Holy Grail. The Chapel is filled with fascinating stone carvings that portray a host of references to Christianity, Green Men, The Knights Templar and the Freemasons. There is the additional enigma of carvings that show plants indigenous to the New World; plants which were not discovered until after the chapel was built. There is also the story of the Apprentice Pillar and a murder most foul.

Even if you do not believe any of the mysticism and lore associated with Rosslyn Chapel it is worth suspending disbelief for a brief period to allow you imagination to take flight, if only for a little while. A visit to Rosslyn Chapel can be an opportunity to experience, first hand, five hundred and fifty years of unanswered questions.



Rosslyn ceiling



Apprentice Pillar

Monster Problem

Newly declassified papers from the 1980s, released under the Freedom of Information Act, show that there was a flurry of activity as government officials debated the question of legal protection for the fabled Loch Ness Monster. The issue had arisen because the Swedish government had sought guidance on drafting legal protection for the Storsjo Monster, Sweden's equivalent of Nessie. A series of memos then passed between government departments - one stated, with typical civil servant language that "The protection of this putative denizen of the deep deserves protection".

Another raised the question of protection of humans from Nessie, but concluded that "Past history indicates that Nessie's taste does not extend to homo sapiens." Unfortunately, Nessie could not be defined as a salmon (and so get the protection from a Fisheries Protection Act) but eventually it was decided that the monster could be protected from poachers under the provisions of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside act which made it an offense to "snare, shoot, or blow up the Nessie with explosives."

VisitScotland would have been delighted that officials were keen for the Swedes to come over and spend some time around Loch Ness where "there is a plentiful supply of the national beverage which will help them see her in the dark." Who says civil servants lack a sense of humour? Reprinted from Scottish Snippets - 14 January 2006

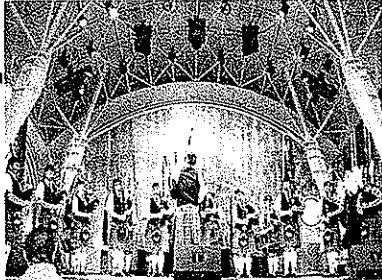


2006 Games Report

The Bakersfield Games is a one day event. There was a great turn-out with a lot of area members stopping by the tent. In the evening we had a Clan dinner at Logan's Roadhouse. We were joined by members from Clan Graham, Clan Elliot, and other friends.

The Las Vegas Games (April 8 – 9) were bigger and better this year! Twenty-three clans and societies were represented, twenty seven vendors offered an intriguing array of crafts and food, eleven pipe bands thrilled onlookers, and Alex Beaton, The Wicked Tinkers, The LA Scots Pipe Band, and various Celtic country dancers entertained for an enthusiastic crowd throughout the day and at a special Saturday night performance downtown at the Freemont Street Experience.

LA Scots Pipe Band perform on the Freemont Street Experience main stage in Las Vegas.



The Prescott Games (May 13) were small but obviously making an effort to grow and attract new participants. Friday, upon arrival, the Clans were welcomed with a complimentary lunch of BBQ burgers with cold soda and beer to enjoy while we set up our areas.

There was only one small, but enthusiastic, pipe band; however, there was Celtic music in the air throughout the day. Talented country dancers and other musicians entertained on the stage.

Although the opening ceremonies were unimpressive (the clans were not announced as they paraded past the reviewing stand!), the opening itself was short with limited political speeches and that is always a plus. We did enjoy some impressive sheep herding (the sheep escaped from the arena for a brief period) and duck herding (ducks don't like to be herded!) demonstrations during the day, which took place across from our tent, giving us front row seats. Last, but not least, we marveled at the bungi jump ride set up for the kids.

Our House of Gordon tent had many visitors, mainly due to their fascination watching Jodi craft her House of Gordon gourds. Jodi generously donated a portion of the proceeds from her gourd sales to the House of Gordon.

We signed up three new members, and sold about \$100.00 worth of merchandise. Best of all, we managed to acquire four volunteers to handle House of Gordon representation in Arizona. Larry and Margaret Lamper, and Patrick and Jodi Gordon will be working together to help revitalize the House of Gordon representation at the Arizona Games.

Jodi's hand-crafted gourd



Jodi at the clan tent

The Pomona (LA Fairplex) Games are a two-day event that saw a good turn-out. This is the second year for the Games at this venue. The Games are still having some growing pains but the organizers are working hard to cultivate an impressive event. Many of our Southern California members stopped by during the two-day event.

Betty Parker, from Las Vegas, took third place in Grade II tenor drumming with her band, Desert Skye. The LA Scots looked and sounded great, but as there were no other Grade I bands in attendance, they couldn't compete. The Robert Malcolm Memorial Band from Canada swept grade IV and grade III competition taking first both days. The great thing about this band is that it's all kids and that's pretty impressive. Overall, the Pomona Games were well organized, and the venue was very nice with plenty of shade. A great variety of vendors were there and a nice amount of clans were represented. The Gordon tent was particularly lovely. Tom Reoch is the games chieftain and he is to be congratulated for organizing such a nice event.

Member News

The House of Gordon, Southwest, is delighted to welcome several new "family" members: Patrick and Jodi Gordon, Larry and Margaret Lamper, and Mike and Sharon Orley joined in Prescott, Arizona. Mike and Sharon were House of Gordon members in Central Florida for many years. Also joining us are Al and Jan Vasquez from Ontario, California, who became members at the Pomona Games.

Lynne & Woody Gordon recently received wonderful news from their son Sean and daughter-in-law Marnie. A wee bairn is expected in December. They have already received the first (ultrasound) photo of their new grandchild!

Long time Arizona Regional Director, Linda Hilton recently notified our convener that she needed to step down. We all send a heartfelt "thank you" to Linda for her tireless efforts on behalf of the House of Gordon Southwest. There will always be a welcoming chair waiting for Linda at the House of Gordon tent!

Also, give a big welcome to Larry and Margaret Lamper, and Floyd Adams Castle, Jr. They have graciously volunteered to accept the roles of House of Gordon Southwest Regional Co-Directors for Arizona and Regional Director for New Mexico, respectively.

A Trip to Scotland

Ralph and Alicia Moore were kind enough to share their email note about their trip to Scotland (and Ireland) last March and gave permission to your Editor to share their experience with you:

Hi All,

Just a note to let you know that Alicia and I are back from our month long vacation in Scotland and Ireland. On a scale from one to ten, we think the trip was a nine! Spent St. Patrick's Day in Edinburgh at the Deacon Brooders Pub having a great time talking to the people and enjoying the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in Scotland. I made a mistake in planning our

itinerary, should have had us in Ireland for St. Patrick's Day instead of Scotland.

We stayed in some beautiful old mansions in Scotland (two hundred and fifty years old) and an old farm house that was over a hundred and sixty years old. One of the best parts of the trip, which just happened by good fortune, was Alicia and I getting to St. Andrews just in time to attend church services at St. Andrews University old church with its regal hall and pulpit.

Twenty-eight days is long enough to drive completely around Ireland and Scotland. Alicia may have had two or three heart attacks resulting from my driving; can't say that the roads are all that wide in either country. I have to confess that it is a little nerve racking to meet a car coming at you on your right hand side at eighty miles an hour and only inches on either side of the car to pass by.

Met some wonderful people and had a great time, no I didn't play golf on this trip, too cold and too much snow and rain, but we did enjoy lunch in St. Andrews and got to walk around the course and then into the club house for some merchandise.

Thanks for sharing with all of us Ralph.

House of Gordon - US Branch

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The House of Gordon Southwest

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Southern CA volunteers needed

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EXHAUSTED SUPPORT STAFF

Website volunteer webmaster needed

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FINAL NOTICE! Membership renewal in The House of Gordon Southwest is due **now**. Your \$25.00 contribution keeps your family (including children under the age of 18) membership current at all levels! Regretfully, those who do not renew promptly must be dropped from the membership rolls.

Dues contribution checks should be sent to our membership officer:

Arlene Adams, 10562 Odell Road, San Diego, CA 92126-3012

ATTENTION MEMBERS

Several regions urgently need bighearted volunteers to transport materials and to set up our House of Gordon tent at the games. You only have to attend a few games a year in your area (and you get free tickets and VIP parking), its lots of fun and ITS EASY! Please volunteer and help keep the games alive and flourishing in your area.

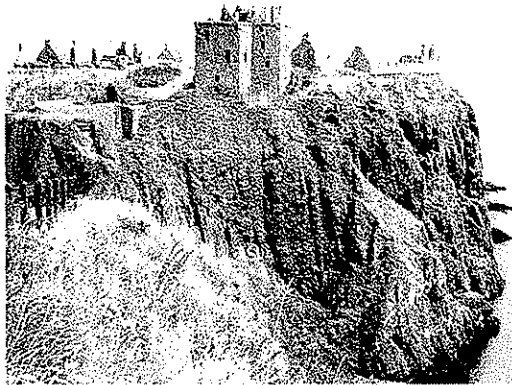
Is your son or daughter, sister or brother a computer geek? Are you? The House of Gordon Southwest is frantically searching for an IT specialist to take over as webmaster. Our website is years out of date! After the initial set up, it should only take a few hours a month to keep things current. Contact our Convener, Tom Adams, and volunteer a little of your time.

Greetings from the Editor

Being a member of the House of Gordon is far more than a membership card and receiving copies of the Cocks Crow newsletter. For me, it represents an affirmation of my pride in my Scottish heritage. It means I am descended from and forever tied to an ancient, noble, and proud family; a family with a history of immense power and influence in Scotland that spanned

hundreds of years. The Clan Gordon with all of the affiliated septs comprise the modern House of Gordon. When you put us all together it is difficult to imagine the vast scope of our family.

Being a member of the House of Gordon has given me the means to indulge in my fascination and my love of Scotland. I have been fortunate to be able to visit Scotland. It is a beautiful country! It is the Scotland my father dreamed of visiting, the Scotland of Robert Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Sir Walter Scott. It is the spiritual connection I feel, the beauty I see, and the overwhelming sense of history I feel for my ancestral home that is Scotland. I cherish the warm welcome when I visit Scotland and the inexplicable sense of belonging.



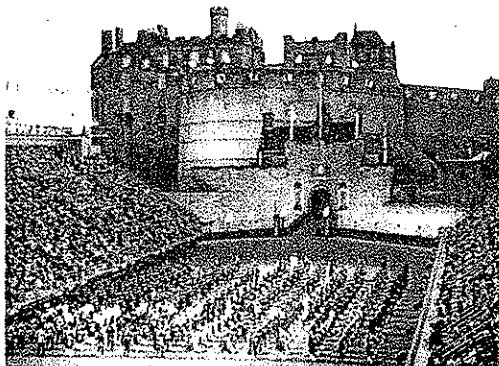
Dunnottar Castle

Robert Louis Stevenson said of the Scots in his unfinished work *Weir of Hermiston*:

“For that is the mark of the Scots of all classes: that he stands in an attitude towards the past unthinkable to Englishmen, and remembers and cherishes the memory of his forbears, good or bad: and there burns alive in him a sense of



Eilean Donan Castle



The Military Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle

identity with the dead even to the twentieth generation.”

Slangeva,

Woody Gordon



Air Son Gradh Na H-Albann

A wee bit of Scottish Trivia

Those in the U.S. who are Scots or of Scot descent:

35 U.S. Supreme Court Justices

9 signers of The Declaration Of Independence

9 of the original 13 colony govenors

Almost 1/2 of the Secretaries of U.S Treasury

About 1/3 of the U.S. Secretaries of State

Over 100 govenors of pre- and post-Revolutionary America

Woodrow Wilson said, “Every line of strength in American history is a line colored with Scottish blood.”



Pipers at Aboyne Games



Woody gazing at the Isle of Skye

2006 Games Calendar

June 3	Modesto Highland Games	Tuolumne River Park, Modesto, CA
June 17	Campbell Highland Games & Celtic Gathering	Campbell Community Center, Campbell, CA
June 24-25	San Diego Highland Games	Brangle Terrace Park, Vista, CA
July 8-9	Oakland Dunsmuir Highland Games	Dunsmuir House & Gardens, Oakland, CA
July 15-16	Arizona Highland Celtic Festival	Foxglenn Park, Flagstaff, AZ
July 22-23	Reno Celtic Celebration	Wingfield Park, Reno, NV
Aug 5-6	Monterey Scottish Games	Salinas & Monterey Peninsula, Monterey, CA
Sept 2-3	141 st Caledonian Club of San Francisco Games	Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton, CA
Sept 15-16	Fresno Highland Games	Coombs River Ranch, Fresno, CA
Sept 23	Dixon Scottish Games	Dixon Fairgrounds, Dixon, CA
Oct 7	Loch Lomond Highland Games	Highlands Park, Ben Lomond, CA
Oct 13-15	Seaside Scottish Highland Games	Seaside Park, Ventura County Fairgrounds, CA
Oct 14-15	Rio Rancho Highland Games	Rio Rancho Sports Complex, Rio Rancho, NM
Nov 5	Tucson Celtic Festival & Scottish Highland Games	Rillito Park Raceway, Tucson, AZ
Nov 18	Orange County Celtic Festival	Irvine Meadows Fair Grounds, Irvine, CA

These are the 2006 dates posted so far. This list is compiled through information from a variety of sources including www.usscots.com/events/dates/geographical.html. Please contact the editor with additions, corrections, and changes for inclusion in upcoming issues of the Cock's Crow.



Aboyne Games, Aboyne, Scotland



Seaside Games, Ventura, CA



Queen Mary Games, Long Beach, CA

House of Gordon 2006 Dues Notice

House of Gordon dues are payable **January 1** of each year. Paying your dues promptly from this notice will enable us to represent the Clan at all Southwestern US Games & Festivals, including those in your area. Regional, National and Scotland newsletters will continue to keep members informed.

Name _____ Basic Dues remitted: **\$25.00**

Address _____ Other Opportunities: _____

Telephone _____ E-mail* _____

Gordon Highlander Museum: _____
 H of G Scholarship Program: _____
 Grand Total Remitted: _____

*for updates about games and clan activities

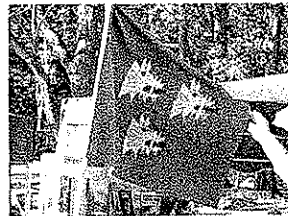
Please make checks payable to "House of Gordon"
Clip this notice and return it with your payment to:

Arlene Adams, Membership Director
 10562 Odell Rd.
 San Diego, CA 92126-3012

Thank you for your support of Scottish culture!



Prescott sheep



Gordon flag at Bundanoon Games*



Mary, Queen of Scots, at the Las Vegas Games



Ken's handcrafted decorations for his first Gordon tent.



Ken Gordon at the Bundanoon Games in Australia



A dedicated Scot - Las Vegas

*For more information about the Australian Games, "Bundanoon is Brigadoon" go to
<http://www.highlandnsnw.com.au/Brigadoon/index.html>