



# clan STRACHAN

*Clachnaben!*



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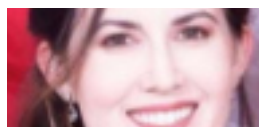
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## Clachnaben!

Newsletter for the  
Clan Strachan  
Scottish Heritage  
Society, Inc.

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We're on the web!  
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Incorporated in 2008, the Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc. was organized for exclusively charitable, educational and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as except organizations under said Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Specifically, the Corporation will promote the history, tradition, and heritage of the Gaelic-Scottish culture; encourage education, the collection and preservation of records, traditions and historical material related to the history of Gaelic-Scottish culture wherever located; provide instruction on Genealogical research techniques; perform such charitable work as is compatible with the aims and objectives of Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc.; to invest in any property worldwide that has relevance to the needs and objectives of the Society; and, to engage in any other lawful activities permitted under the California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation Law and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Law. The recital of these purposes as contained in this paragraph is intended to be exclusive of any and all other purposes, this Corporation being formed for those public and charitable purposes only.

## Convenor's address

Hello the Clan!

In this crazy time where the world has gone completely mad over the Covid scare I truly hope this newsletter finds all of you in good health and good cheer.

I want to welcome all of our new Clan members to our fold. I have noticed quite a few new Strachan's (various spellings) have been visiting the Clan Facebook page and posting various thoughts and hellos!

I know in today's troubled times international flights were put on hold but they are now opening up again if you had plans to visit Scotland we all hope you visit Strachan and remember to post pictures to the Facebook page to share. We are still looking to have another Gathering in 2024 to usher in Robbie as our true Clan Chief. Please mark your calendars and start saving now.

Well, enough from me. Please enjoy the newsletter!  
Clachnaben!  
d

*Gu Deoch Gu Cairdean Gu Spors*



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## A busy week of events in 2019

By Jim Strachan

August 2018, a letter from the Lord Lyon confirmed that a second Clan Convention (or Derbhfine) to recognize our Commander, Rob Strachan, as hereditary Chief of the Name and Arms could not be held until at least 2024.

Not to let an excuse for a party go to waste, five gentlemen of the Clan Strachan Society decided to meet in Scotland. After some of our wives and daughters expressed an interest in coming along, we quickly came to our senses, and started planning the First International Clan Strachan Gathering and quickly surmised that about 20-30 people in total might attend. Events were subsequently planned for a reception, two coach tours, a Ceilidh, hike to Clachnaben, and all culminating at the Aboyne Highland Games.

To our great surprise, nearly 130 Strachans from around the globe attended various events throughout The Gathering.

Having quickly come to the realization that we had bitten off far more than we could chew, Jim Strachan enlisted the help of his







## Strachans returned to ancestral roots in 2019

By Rob Strachan

At the Clan Gathering 2019, Strachans arrived from around the world centering on Banchory Lodge Hotel, where there was a Meet and Greet night with the Commander Rob Strachan.

Next day approximately 70 Strachans headed to Dunottar Castle, (a castle ruins set above cliffs to the sea and a beautiful rugged coastline) to hear about 'the Strachan staircase' and the crown Jewels of Scotland amongst many other historical facts, then on to lunch at Stonehaven harbour, on to Benholm castle for some and to Fettercairn distillery for others over the Cairn o' Mount.

Second day included a trip to two stone circles with a packed lunch visiting Castlehill and Burn o' Vat, in the evening we had dinner and History night with questions and answers at the Banchory Lodge Hotel.

Thursday had all the Strachans visiting Mill of Strachan, with teas and cakes, a piper, followed by soup, with fishing and everyone joining in the famous duck race, and fires in the evening.

Friday a good small party of 15-20 climbed Clachnaben, flying the Clan Strachan banner and a little piping at the top. In the evening the Commander's Ceilidh in Strachan Village Hall had everyone dancing around attempting many very



*Rob Strachan with Evangeline Strachan.*

energetic Scottish dances.

Saturday everyone met at the Clan Strachan tent at The Aboyne Highland Games, a piper in a procession led Rob Strachan and the Strachan Clan through the grounds to the Clan Tent. The strong showing of Strachans at the Games left none in any doubt that Strachans had returned to their ancestral roots!



*Left: Kirk and Rob Strachan compare family resemblance during a visit by Kirk to the Mill of Strachan.  
(Photo courtesy of John Strachan)*



daughters: Alesia, Lindsay, and Ainsley. Additional buses were added to the tours, and Rob Strachan, our Commander, opened up the Mill of Strachan for a day so visitors could come by for a visit.

Activities at the Mill included the infamous Duck Race (Bruce Strachan, Winner), cakes, cheese, wine, and more! A very special thank you to Rob, Melina, Jamie, Sam, Lize, Tricia, and the rest of the family at the Mill of Strachan!







## The coming home of Clan Strachan



By Lindsay Strachan

The proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss," means, "A person who does not settle in one place will not accumulate wealth or status or responsibilities or commitments."

During the First War of Scottish Independence, the House of Strachan were staunch supporters of John Comyn, Earl of Buchan; with a moderate to high probability cousins of John Comyn, Earl of Buchan; supported the Balliol and Comyn cause; opposed Robert de Bruce's claim to the crown of Scotland; and were subsequently disinherited of the Barony of Strachan on Nov. 1, 1315 by King Robert de Bruce.

Since 1315, Strachans have wandered without a home. However, as of Sept. 15, 2020, the Strachans are coming home thanks to all of the help and support from sources near and far!

An inn has sat on the banks of the Feugh since before the 16th century. On the

outskirts of Strachan, this land has been purchased by Clan Strachan Society and represents a perfect opportunity for our family to build a Clan Strachan Gathering and Heritage site. After a short deadline window and feeling like the odds were against us at times, we were able to reach our campaign goal!

No longer do we fumble for change in our pockets while indistinctly muttering our surname, unsure of its pronunciation. Instead we proudly announce our surname, either Strackan or Strawn and spelled Strachan, Strahan, Strawn, Straughan, Strawhun, Strain, etc.

For the first time since being disinherited 705 years ago, we have found our place home and the Feughside Inn is now under the very proud ownership of Clan Strachan!

Thank you to our nearly 100 donors and all those who followed, supported us, and believed in our vision! Because of you, we're coming home.

## The Press and Journal

News notes adapted from the Aberdeen newspaper

### SAVE THE CAPERCAILLIE!

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has pledged £2 million towards helping to save one of the UK's rarest birds.

Capercaillie, the largest grouse species in the world, are only found wild in the UK in the Cairngorms National Park, particularly around Strathspey.

Once found in abundance, there are now thought to be fewer than 1,000 of the birds left in the wild.

The cash will go toward community-led conservation projects. Conservation efforts will focus on include improving habitats, as well as controlling the deer population to allow for regeneration of woodland.

Two community rangers will work with the community to put the projects into action. Scientists and field workers will also be studying the breeding success of Capercaillie and the impacts of predators on the birds. The project will directly create nine jobs, as well as supporting the local economy.

Xander McDade, chairman of the Cairngorms National Park Authority



(CNPA) board, welcomed the funding.

He said: "We are determined to save the Capercaillie for future generations and the added bonus is we know the work carried out across the park during the life of this project will also benefit a whole variety of species that rely on healthy native pinewoods – including people."

"Capercaillie numbers have been declining for several decades and previous conservation activities have certainly prevented us from losing them completely but with numbers considered to be at an all-time low, it is extremely important that we take action."

Caroline Clark, Scotland director at the National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "This support from National Lottery players will give Cairngorms National Park residents and visitors an opportunity to help protect this precious landscape and the charismatic Capercaillie. This new community-led model has the potential to provide a sustainable way of caring for our natural heritage."





**NEW CANINE POLICE RECRUIT**

By Kirsten Robertson

A young pup called Boris has been recruited to help crack crime in the north-east. The 10-week-old sprocker – a mix between a cocker and a springer spaniel – will be trained to become a specialist search dog.

During the early stages of his training, the puppy will be exposed to varying challenging environments to build his confidence and develop his natural traits and abilities.

Inspector Calum Welsh said: “The addition of a pup is always an exciting time and is a welcome addition.

Boris will receive regular instructor-led training over the coming months, where his development will be constantly monitored. “I am sure Boris will be a great asset in the future and will help keep people in the north-east, and further afield, safe.”



The pup was donated by a member of the public in Aberdeenshire, who allowed the police to take their pick of the litter. The six pups were all assessed at eight weeks of age and all showed “the correct attributes” for a life within the force.

**FREE ONLINE GAELIC LESSONS OFFERED DURING LOCKDOWN**

By Chris MacLennan

Hundreds of people around the world have taken advantage of the abundance of Gaelic resources and activities made available online during lockdown.

Feisean nan Gaidheal (FnG), a Gaelic arts organization, has reported that since the lockdown was imposed, 1,718 lessons have been provided free of charge.

Overall, the activities include Gaelic song and game sessions, drama tips, fiddle and accordion lessons and talks hosted by a variety of fluent Gaelic speakers. Participants have logged in from all over Scotland, with some also joining in from as far away as Canada.

Feisgoil, the formal education strand of FnG, reorganized several aspects of their provision to ensure that youngsters across Scotland are still benefitting from the Gaelic tuition usually provided in the classroom.

The Hub Hab Early Years Theatre in Education project has proven to be a hit with around 150 young primary children who, with their parents, enjoyed Gaelic action songs performed by Ellen Macdonald, a singer with Sian and Daimh.

The online sessions have also delivered a welcomed boost to various freelance tutors and musicians at a time when their income and work vanished.

Eilidh Mackenzie, Feisgoil manager, said: “Every change in circumstance brings new opportunity and at Feisgoil we have been keen to embrace the potential partnership between not just schools and Feisean nan Gaidheal but also families themselves.

“We fully appreciate the difficult circumstances in which many families and individual young people now find themselves and we are determined to help engagement in the Gaelic arts continue and even flourish through these unusual times.”

**ANDREW STRACHAN****HE SERVED WITH SIR RICHARD STRACHAN****PART TWO**

By Garry Strachan

In Part I of this article we told of Andrew Strachan joining the Royal Navy, serving under Admiral Sir Richard Strachan in the Walcheren campaign. Sir Richard Strachan saw no further sea service after 1809, however Andrew soon found himself back in the heat of battle.

**Guerrilla War in Spain**

Sir Home Popham, returned to his command in HMS Venerable, being despatched to Corunna on the Spanish coast in August 1810. Andrew Strachan and his crew mates would now be plunged into the middle of a guerrilla war, carried out by the Spanish against the French.

In June 1812, Popham and his crew found themselves engaged in supporting the Spaniards in an assault on the fort at Lequeitio.

The crew of Venerable could not elevate the ship's guns high enough to reach all of the French defences.

A decision was made to land a 24 pounder, naval gun ashore and drag it up a hill which overlooked the French fort. It took 100

seaman, 20 draft oxen and 400 Spanish guerrillas to get the gun in position. The French were taken by surprise, the walls of the fort were soon breached by naval firepower, allowing the Spaniards to storm and take the fort.

Andrew Strachan and his comrades, found themselves heavily involved in the harrying of French positions, all along the Spanish coast.

In December 1812, Venerable returned to England for a major refit. Andrew Strachan was paid off, transferring to HMS Bulwark (74 guns).

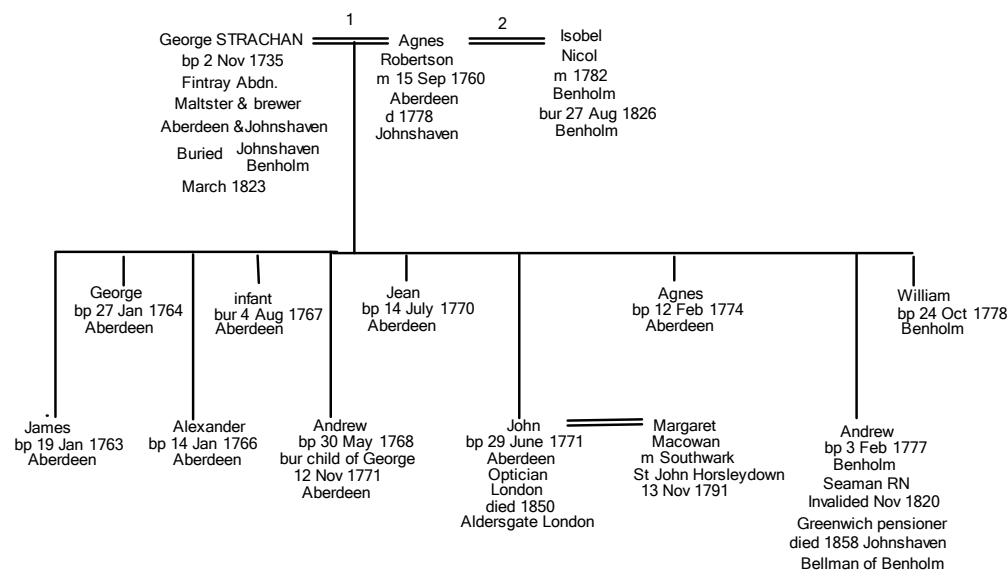
**The War of 1812**

By January 1813, HMS Bulwark, was en-route for Bermuda and Halifax, Nova

The following is a list of ships captured or re-captured by HMS Bulwark, which may have provided the crew with prize money:

- Experiment, a sloop of 40 tons, taken 14 May 1813
- Amelia, a sloop of 49 tons, taken 15 May 1813
- Nelly, a schooner, taken 10 July 1814
- Orient, a schooner, taken 11 July 1814
- Thorn, a schooner, taken 11 July 1814
- Tyger, a brig of 173 tons, taken 22 July 1814
- Harlequin, a schooner 232 tons (a privateer), taken 23 Oct. 1814
- Tomahawk, a schooner of 202 tons, taken 22 Jan. 1815
- Joseph & Mary a brig of 267 tons, taken 24 Jan. 1815
- Rhoda, a schooner of 129 tons, taken 26 Feb. 1815





Scotia. Sailing out of Halifax, Bulwark would be employed in the blockade of the United States, during the war of 1812.

Andrew would have seen action in the Canadian lakes, and Bulwark also took part in the campaign on the Penobscot River, which saw the British occupation of Downeast Maine in 1814. By this date, Andrew was being paid as a quarter gunner (a rating, established in maintaining and handling four great guns).

An action widely reported, was the raid on Biddeford Pool on 16 June 1814. Captain David Milne, sailed the Bulwark into Biddeford Pool, on the coast of Maine. The principal owner of the property, consisting of a shipbuilding yard and warehouses, was a certain Captain Thomas Cutts, who surrendered under a white flag.

Milne, leading a party of 150 seaman and marines, had orders to destroy the site. They destroyed two vessels under construction and confiscated a third. Valuable stores were looted.

Later, Captain Cutts was allowed to buy back his own ship after paying a ransom.

In December 1814 the American and British governments signed a peace treaty in the Belgium city of Ghent. The treaty was ratified in February 1815, ending a costly war.

With Napoleon Bonaparte finally defeated

in Europe and a treaty signed at Paris in November 1815, the Napoleonic war was over. The British navy was now overmanned, ships were being mothballed and sold off. HMS Bulwark returned to Chatham dockyard in the summer of 1815 and the crew, including Andrew Strachan, were paid off.

### The War on Smuggling and the Last Days at Sea

We have difficulty following Andrew's career from this juncture, however, many seaman moved over to the revenue force. Greater resources were now available to pursue smugglers and Andrew may well have signed up as crew on a revenue cutter.

A revenue cutter HMS Speedwell had been sent to patrol the eastern coast of Scotland, sailing from Leith. During severe weather in February 1819, Speedwell was forced on to the deadly rocks at Cairnbulg Briggs, off the coast of Aberdeenshire, near Fraserburgh.

Speedwell was wrecked on the rocks, however, all of the crew were saved. A sister ship Royal Charlotte, was despatched from Leith to retrieve the crew. It is probable that some of the crew were injured in the loss of their ship.

The next notice we have of Andrew Strachan is his appearance before a medical



examination board at the Royal Naval Hospital, Greenwich, 21 February and 2 March 1820, where he applied to be retired to a naval pension.

Decisions on pension eligibility were not immediate. Andrew returned to Leith, where he joined the crew of the Dover, the flagship of Admiral Otway, the commander of the North Sea squadron. Andrew joined HMS Dover on 23 October 1820 by the following November, he was discharged to a Greenwich Hospital Out Pension.

The record in the Greenwich Hospital Register of Candidates, granting out pensions, states that Andrew Strahan, aged 45, has served 16 years 6 months and that he is granted a life pension of £12-4 shillings, per annum; Reason: Debility.



### Return to Johnshaven

Andrew Strachan returned to Johnshaven to be re-united with his father and step-mother.

George Strachan, the maltster passed away in March 1823, his wife Isobel, Andrew's stepmother, was buried at Benholm in August 1826.

The 1841 census, records Andrew Strachan in Johnshaven, aged 60. Occupation: Bellman.

The census schedule, reveals that Andrew Strachan had been appointed to the office of Bellman to the parish of Benholm (which included Johnshaven). His main duties would be to ring the deid bell and announce the death of a parishioner, whilst walking through the parish. He would lead the



Johnshaven today.





funeral procession, ringing out a solemn tone. Charges were made for the hire of the funeral bell, with the proceeds going to the kirk session poor funds.

The 1851 census, records Andrew Strachan lodging with Ann Jaffrey at Fore Street, Johnshaven. Occupation: Greenwich Pensioner, aged 73. Andrew remained in Johnshaven until his end, we can imagine him seated on the quayside, regaling a

younger generation with tales of the sea, whilst drawing on a clay tobacco pipe.

Andrew died 27 December 1859, a bachelor, and he was buried in the kirkyard of Benholm.

#### Sources for Andrew's progress in the Royal Navy:

Held at the National Archives, Kew, London

ADM 36/15602 Muster Book of Glatton 1804 - 1805

ADM 35/2416 Paybook of Renomee 1805 – 1808

ADM 37/1234, 1235 Muster Books of Venerable 1808 – 1809

ADM 37/ 3490 Muster Book of Venerable 1812 – 1813

ADM 37/3927 Muster Books of Bulwark

ADM 37/5025 1813 – 1815

ADM 37/5027

ADM 35/4090 Pay Book of Dover 1819 – 24

ADM 6/268 and ADM 6/269 lists of candidates for the Royal Seamans Hospital Greenwich.

ADM 6/283 Lists of Seaman and Marines admitted to Out Pensions.

#### Census Returns for Johnshaven, Benholm

1841, ref. HO107/253 District 6, folio 6, page 11

1851, ref. HO107/253 District 5, folio 189, page 12

#### Sources for the Walcheren Expedition and the Actions in Spain:

Walcheren 1809, by Martin R. Howard.

A Damned Cunning Fellow, The Eventful Life of Rear Admiral, Sir Home Popham, by Hugh Popham.

**General Naval History:** Six-volume, *Naval History* of Great Britain, 1793 – 1827 by William James.

#### North America

American vessels captured by the British during the revolution and war of 1812; Nova Scotia. Vice-admiralty court, Halifax, published 1911.

A Ruinous and Unhappy War: New England and the War of 1812, by James H. Ellis, 1932.



## Archeologists discover a Scottish Thing

A ground penetrating radar survey, commissioned by the Dingwall History Society, has been undertaken at the Cromartie Memorial Car Park in Dingwall, Scotland. A Viking assembly mound or Thing, which is a parliamentary site that dates to the 11th century, was discovered.

The site was dubbed a "Thing" site (pronounced "Ting"), referring to its name in antiquity. In Germanic cultures, a Thing was a governing assembly made up of free people of the community meeting in a specially-designated place, often a field or common called a Thingstead.

The Thing met at regular intervals, legislated, elected chieftains and kings, and judged according to the law, which was memorized and recited by the "law speaker" (the judge). The Thing's negotiations were presided over by the law speaker and the chieftain or king. Such a balancing structure was necessary to reduce tribal feuds and avoid social disorder.

Historians have long wondered whether Dingwall is the site of a Viking parliamentary gathering because the word Dingwall probably originated from the word thingvellir, which means "the field of the assembly."

However, very little was known about an assembly in Dingwall and scholars assumed

the town had been built over it. The old sagas did not mention a Thing at Dingwall or anywhere else in the north of mainland Scotland. This mystery was heightened by the fact that there is little historical or archaeological evidence for a Norse or Viking settlement in the area, despite there being a large number of Norse place names within the county.

Local tradition suggests that the Thing was held on the eastern slope of Gallows Hill west of the medieval town. Recent historical research revealed that the actual location is the mound on which the Cromartie Memorial now stands and which exhibits many features typically associated with Thing sites. The field adjacent to the mound (now the site of a petrol station) would have been the gathering place for those attending the Thing. It is believed that the mound was built on the instructions of Thorfinn the Mighty, a powerful Viking earl who died in 1065. The site has links with the nearby Kirk, and Gallows Hill would





have been a place of execution from the Norse period onwards.

This particular survey was aimed at assessing the car park and the immediate environs for buried archaeological remains relating to the historic mound, its use as a medieval assembly site and Dingwall's historic environment more generally. This formed part of the wider research and community project seeking to address key issues as to the character and origins of Dingwall's Viking heritage, thought to have begun in the 10th-11th century, but conceivably at an earlier date.

Around 1710, Sir George Mackenzie, the first Earl of Cromartie, erected a large obelisk on the top of the Thing mound. After his death in 1714, he was buried beside it, an act that ensured the survival of the mound. By 1917, the monument had begun to lean so dangerously it had to be removed. In 1923, it was replaced by the smaller structure we see today. In 1947, much of the mound was leveled to make way for a car park. Only the central part containing the burial place of the Earl now remains.

### Rediscovering Dingwall's Thing

After many years of being a puzzle for historians and archaeologists, Dingwall's History Society unlocked the secrets of its Thing's location. The answer lay in three documents, which when put together, finally revealed the location of Dingwall's lost Thing site. The first, a document, dating from 1503, detailed how James, Duke of Ross, gave up all his lands in Ross, with the exception of the moorhill of Dingwall. Possession of the moorhill was enough to allow him to retain the title of Duke of Ross, demonstrating the continued importance of the site at the time. According to this document, the moorhill lay directly beside

the town, rather than at a distance, as is often the case. The second clue was in the Earl of Cromartie's title deed, dated 1672, to a piece of land in Dingwall known as the Hillyard. Moot hills were often referred to simply as hill and the document confirmed this connection, describing the property as "'ye mute hill of Dinguall.'" The final clue was found in 18th century land records, which record that the Hillyard, or Yardhill is "now the burial place of the family of Cromartie", better known now as the Cromartie Car Park.

These discoveries paved the way for archaeological work to be undertaken at the Dingwall Thing site for the first time ever. Key findings included the identification of a possible ditch surrounding the mound; indications of a route-way connecting the church and mound; and considerable disturbance from post-medieval buildings particularly on the south side of the car park. A possible ditch approximately 5m wide and 2m deep was identified on the north, west and south side of the mound's historic footprint.

David MacDonald, of Dingwall History Society, who was involved in the excavation of the site, has been quoted as saying that a road, a ditch and an aqueduct, known as the Water of Dyke, that drew water from hillside springs, were also constructed when Thorfinn was in control of Ross-shire, and that Thorfinn's rise to power was aided by his victory in a battle at Torfnes on the south side of the Cromarty Firth, possibly against MacBeth's troops. At the height of his power, Thorfinn became Lord of Caithness, Shetland and Orkney.

Further surveys and excavations of the area will reveal more about the site's history, and there are definitely plans to research the story more fully.



## The origins of Lady Macbeth

Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth appears to be a composite of the wives of Kings Duff and Duncan as outlined in Holinshed's Chronicles (1587), a history of Britain: Donwald's nagging, murderous wife in the account of King Duff, and Macbeth's ambitious wife in the account of King Duncan.

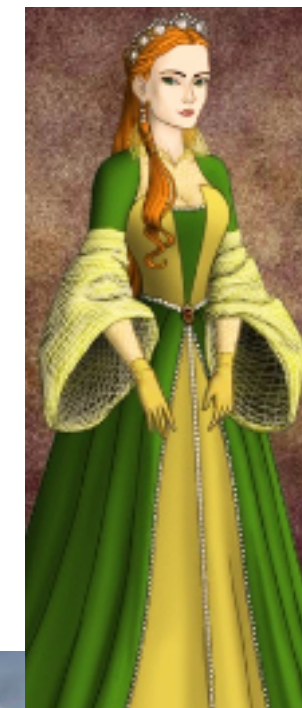
She was born Gruoch ingen Boite, the daughter of Boite mac Cináeda, son of Cináed III. Little is known about her and key dates of her life, leaving an open door for legends to enter.

While based on the real-life Queen Gruoch of Scotland, both the character of Lady MacBeth and Shakespeare's play's events are tied very weakly to actual history. Such as it is, the early history of Scotland is confused and obscure, and often contradictory, vague, and lacking in detail. Information about kings' lives prior to Malcolm III are sparse and knowledge about their wives is almost non-existent.

According to what is known historically, Gruoch, Queen Consort of Alba, was very likely innocent of many of the deeds the Bard attributed to her. However, the Bard is probably correct in depicting her and her husband as sufficiently angry and ambitious to kill any rival family member that got in their way.

Cináed mac Ailpín, King of the Scots and Picts, is credited with uniting the two races many generations before. Over time Picts and Scots had begun to identify themselves with their common Celtic background and by their common Christian faith.

In order to further strengthen the two races' commonalities, MacAlpin proclaimed in his Law of Tanistry that kings of Scotland were to marry Pictish Princesses, who held Scottish lands and each firstborn daughter princess was to inherit her father's estates. As the Picts were a matrilineal society, this was a bow to the Pictish tradition through which children inherited their rights, their names







and property from their mothers. Therefore, through MacAlpin's laws, Scot kingship, and royal bloodlines passed through the royal mothers, in a matrilineal succession.

This was not the case for the young Pictish Princess, Lady Gruoch (later Lady Macbeth). In the Royal Scoto-Pictish line, Lady Gruoch was senior representative.

But, the hereditary 'right to rule Scotland' had begun passing through several ambitious royal daughters and granddaughters without any clear rule of precedence, a circumstance encouraging internecine warfare to gain unquestioned right to the throne. Adding fuel to the fire, previous successions also involved strife between various rígdonna - men of royal blood.

In Lady Gruoch's case, her father Prince Beodhe. made his wife, also named Lady Gruoch, heir to his estates instead of his eldest daughter. Lady Gruoch, the daughter, in turn, mustered fierce opposition against King Malcolm II for his violation of the succession rights.

Moreover, he married his daughter off, instead of to the next heir to the throne, to Gille Coemgáin mac Maíl Brigti, Mormaer (Earl) of Moray. Marriage to Lady Gruoch fueled her husband's ambitions to become High King.

Also ambitious, Malcolm II murdered Kenneth III and his sons in order to gain the High Kingship. This left Lady Gruoch and her brother, Malcolm MacBodhe, as the only surviving grandchildren of Kenneth III.

In a departure from the usual Royal succession progressing through Pictish Princesses, when Malcolm II realized he wasn't going to have legitimate male heirs, he proclaimed that the heir to his throne would be Duncan, son of his eldest daughter, Bethoc. Duncan's cousin, Macbeth, son of Malcolm's younger daughter, Donalda, also had a very strong claim to the throne through Malcolm II's new succession proclamation. By introducing the concept of hereditary monarchy in Scotland, Malcolm II violated an established system whereby the kingship alternated between two branches of the royal family descended from Kenneth

MacAlpin, and destroyed the traditional matrilineal succession.

Lady Gruoch held a significant sovereign claim, as she was the ranking Royal Pictish Princess in the other branch of the royal family, and her son, by rights, should have been the next king.

Lady Gruoch instigated a revolt against the planned succession to Duncan, mustering fierce opposition against Malcolm, who, in league with Lady Gruoch's stepmother, led an ambush on Gillecomgain, Lady Gruoch's husband, in his fortress. The Annals of Ulster (s.a. 1032) reports that Gille Coemgáin was burned to death, together with 50 of his men.

It was intended that Gruoch was to be killed also, leaving her stepmother free and clear to Prince Boedh's estates, but Gruoch was visiting relatives at the time and survived. The following year Malcolm II had her brother, Malcolm MacBodhe, killed.

Lady Gruoch, pregnant at the time, fled to the safety of her husband's cousin, Mac Bethad mac Findlaich, Mormaer of Moray and grandson of Malcolm II.

Many riots broke out when Donnchad mac Crínáin assumed kingship upon Malcolm II's death, because in naming Duncan his heir, Malcolm insured succession confusion. Lady Gruoch's stepmother quickly became an ally of Duncan, who had supported the murder of Lady Gruoch's husband.

Lady Gruoch, ultimately married Macbeth in 1032 and was known from then on as Lady Macbeth. She despised Duncan for his support of her stepmother, instead of recognizing her own inheritance rights, because of his support of her first husband's death, and because his kingship usurped her own matrilineal rights. Duncan also soon faced the rivalry of Macbeth, whose claim to the throne was strengthened through his wife's status as the ranking Pictish Princess.

Lady Macbeth's new obsession in life was to make her husband King and win back what she felt was her birthright. She persuaded Macbeth to challenge Duncan for the crown and tried to convince her husband that Duncan should die. She wanted Macbeth to establish his claim to the throne, and later her son to inherit the kingdom, as

was right and proper.

Lady Macbeth soon found that her husband would not take part in killing his cousin Duncan. He loved Duncan and honored his throne. In fact, Macbeth invited Duncan for a holiday to his castle, Glamis. According to one legend, while Duncan was sleeping in the castle, Lady Macbeth killed him. According to Shakespeare, Macbeth killed Duncan.

According to history, soon after Duncan's succession a series of riots erupted led by various clan chiefs angered by Duncan's kingship. A military council was convened, and Macbeth gained control of the King's troops and managed to subdue the revolt. He thus became more popular than the King. This further elevated the ambitions of Lady Macbeth, who now knew the crown was within her husband's grasp.

Duncan led an army north into Moray, traditionally seen as Macbeth's domain. There he was killed in action, at Bothganowan, now Pitgaveny, near Elgin, by his own men led by MacBeth. There is no historical evidence that Lady Macbeth assisted in a murder of Duncan. But, it did become the prevailing fashion to murder a king in order to succeed him. Of seventeen kings who ruled Scotland from 844 to 1057, twelve died by assassination.

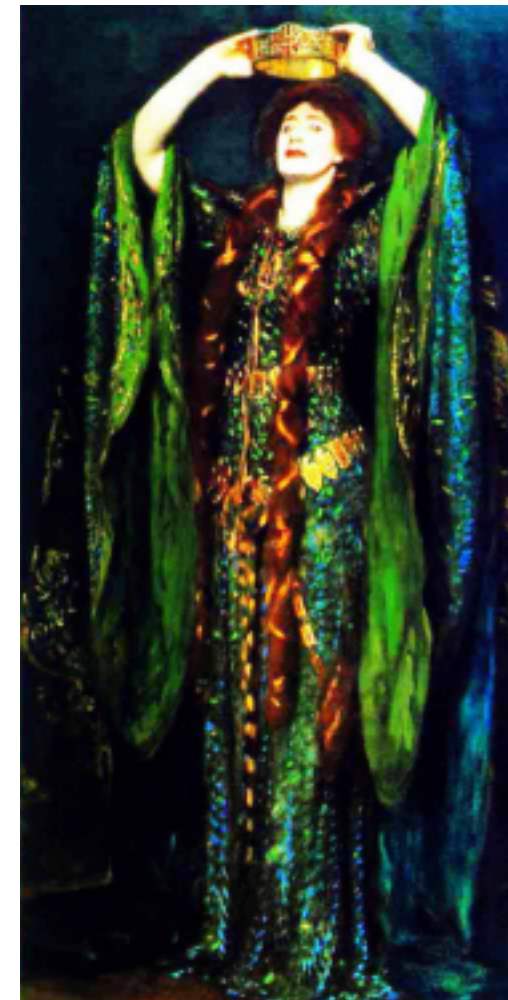
The Pictish Princess eventually finally gained her rightful title and lands. And her second wish was finally granted when Macbeth ascended the throne. But the ultimate cost was great. On August 15,

1057, Macbeth was defeated in battle and mortally wounded by Duncan I's son, Malcolm III, on the north side of the Mounth, after retreating with his men over the Cairnamounth Pass to take his last stand in battle at Lumphanan, Aberdeenshire. He was buried on the Isle of Iona, Argyllshire.

Lady Gruoch's son, Lulach mac Gille Coemgáin, nicknamed Lulach the Simple, crowned King of Scotland in August 1057 at

Scone, reigned only briefly following the death of Macbeth. Lulach was also killed in a battle against Duncan's son, Malcom III, near Strathbogie, less than a year after his reign began.

Thus ended Lady Macbeth's ambitions, as the throne then returned to Duncan I's descendants. She ultimately committed suicide.







# Sketches of the continuing Strachan stories in colonial North America

By Paul K. McKeough, Jr., M.A., M.S.

On a historical plaque in Nova Scotia, Canada, we read that “following upon the tragic evictions of [many of] the Acadians, new settler groups, now described as the “Planters” arrived [about 1760] into Nova Scotia. [At about the same time,] driven by the ‘push’ of land hunger and the ‘pull’ of freely available real estate, as well as the promise of extensive civil rights, some 7,000 people [mainly United Empire Loyalists] from New England poured north. Over the next few years, they occupied a series of fishing and farming communities” (Nova Scotia Genealogy Network).



These settler villages stretched along the outer banks of Newfoundland, Cape Breton Island, and Nova Scotia where a solid living could be made from fishing throughout the area, including Saint George and Chedabucto Bays. These villages continued southwestward, through the Halifax area and cross-country to the fertile agricultural lands along the Sainte Croix, Saint John, and Saint Stephen Rivers on the coastal lands of what is now New Brunswick and Maine (Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics).

Among these early settlers (or “pioneers”) were tradesmen and military from several regiments who had been sent into the territory to provide essential services and protection for the loyalist inhabitants—as well as for the Crown’s interests. The earliest settler surnamed Strachan to take up residence seems to have been George Strachan (a “Pioneer”), born in Scotland about 1750, who had been a Sergeant with the old 78th Highland Regiment. After marrying in 1788 Elizabeth Taylor, of another founding “Pioneer” Scottish family, this couple settled down in Guysborough, in far eastern Nova Scotia’s fertile agricultural and economically profitable fishing country. This author is an eighth generation descent of George and Elizabeth Strachan (Collin Purcell; Clan Fraser).

One will find that there are earlier Strachan settlers into North America than the aforesaid George Strachan. For example, during the late 17th and early 18th century, there were many natives of England, Ireland, and Scotland who emigrated—or were forcibly exiled for their religious beliefs, political affiliations, and military involvement in the battles raging across the

“British Isles.” For example, after the defining Battle of Culloden, 1745, eighty-eight convicts were exiled to colonial America. Numerous Scots who had been caught up in the “Glorious Revolution,” chose to leave for these same and other areas, even as fates and fortunes of many were destroyed by those who were emerging victorious, at least for a time, in this “New World” environment (Ben Strachan; James Strachan).

The “88 convicts” from the battle cited arrived on the ship Gildart at a coastal Maryland site on August 5, 1747. In time, these forced exiles would seek settlement in

Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and beyond. Among these Scotsmen was 19-year-old James Strachan of the Duke of Perth’s Regiment, a Jacobite loyalist who subsequently served in the 40th, or Philip’s Regiment of Foot, out of Canso, Nova Scotia (Hickey).

A third entry point for British settlers heading to the New World was through the ports of Pensacola and Mobile. Great Britain had acquired lands in the southeastern area of America through the early 18th century. First by the Treaty of

Utrecht, 1713, Great Britain acquired from France the lands of Hudson Bay Company, Newfoundland, and Acadia. Subsequently, substantially additional French and Spanish lands would be acquired, including a ready access to much of the areas to the east of the Mississippi River and north of the Iberville River which remained under Spanish sovereignty. To provide settlers for these newly acquired lands, markets, and trading opportunities, several British regiments were formed and stationed in key strategic positions throughout this vast territory. One of the Scots who immigrated with his







regiment during this period was Patrick Strachan (McKeough).

Patrick Strachan was granted for his loyalty of service "of a Plantation or Tract of Land [in the Province of West Florida] one thousand Acres Situated North Easterly about three miles from the Tensas River in the East side of Bayou Pasquel butting and Bounding on the said Bayou and on all other sides by vacant Land together with all the [usual] Rights... and Limitations...." as of September 1775. Further, this same Patrick Strachan was appointed by royal warrant, as a "Justice of the Peace for the Town and District of Mobile in our said [West Florida]

Province, effective September 11, 1779, at Pensacola by Peter Chester, the "Royal Governor and Commander in Chief over our said Province" (McKeough).

From the three preceding instances of movement of specific Strachans into different areas of the new world, we have clear evidence of the continuing stories of the Clan Strachan in the settling and developing of this country. That these Strachans have carried on their ancient heritage now in this expanded world of Scottish population and influence is clear.

These Strachans had to forgo entitlements to their ancient homeland with all of its cultural familiarity to develop their grants to profitability even as they raised their families in these strange new settings.

What is clear is that these men and women and their families have passed on to their descendants a proud heritage. There are more stories to be shared;

but suffice for now that we introduce our readers and my Strachan kin to the prospects as time goes on.



## The beloved Clydesdale

Clydesdale draft horses originated from mid-18th century cross breeding of local Clydesdale, Scotland mares to two stallions: Lord Darnley and Prince of Wales. Now, over 300 years old, the breed has been extensively used to pull heavy loads, farm equipment and carriages. Their strength, thick coats, long manes and the thick feathery hair on their legs, made them an ideal workhorse that acclimated well to Scottish cold weather and rugged terrain.

Clydesdales can stand as tall as 20 hands in height and weigh as much as 2,000 pounds. A widely recognized Clydesdale feature is the feather, or the long white hair that falls from just below the knees to cover the hooves. These gentle giants have an energetic quality to them the Clydesdale Horse Society terms "gaiety of carriage and outlook."

Clydesdales come in a variety of colours and shades, generally, variations of bay (or brown), chestnut, or black. Some sport a colouring similar to the American West's popular Pinto. Clydesdales of this colouring are used by the Household Cavalry (traditional guards of the reigning British monarch), to transport 90-pound kettle

drums that accompany their band in parades.

Owing to their strength and good nature, Clydesdale breeding moved quickly into England, where they mainly hauled coal. By the 1800s their popularity and use expanded to Australia and New Zealand, and on to North America in 1840.

During their heyday, there were at least 140,000 Clydesdales in Scotland. However, as of 1975, there were so few, they were categorized as "vulnerable" by the Rare Breed Survival Trust.

Owing to their recent popularity as Budweiser mascots, there are now about 5,000 Clydesdales in the world, and they have been upgraded to "at risk" status.

These days, Clydesdales are seen mostly on exhibition and in parades. The Budweiser Clydesdales make an annual appearance in the Pasadena's Tournament of Roses Parade, pulling the St. Louis, Missouri float. In rural areas, they are popularly used by eco farmers and loggers. In fact, New Zealanders use Clydesdales extensively to pull valuable kauri pine logs out of the forest.



Photo by Bob Langrish, Horse Canada





## Introducing new officers

### Alesia Strachan-Sitka Events Manager

Alesia Strachan-Sitka has always held a passion for spending time with family, giving back to her community and bringing people together. Alesia grew up volunteering at the Clan Strachan Society Booth at the Highland Games in Long Beach, CA and Ventura, CA with her family (- Jim Strachan, Clan Strachan Society Co-Founder; Margaret Strachan; Lindsay Strachan, Clan Strachan Society Social Media Officer; and Ainsley Strachan). She continued to follow her passion by obtaining a Bachelor of Business Degree in Event Management from Griffith University located in Queensland, Australia. She has since gained eight years of professional event management experience including coordinating



volunteer programs and raising funds for non-profit organizations including Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley and the American Red Cross.

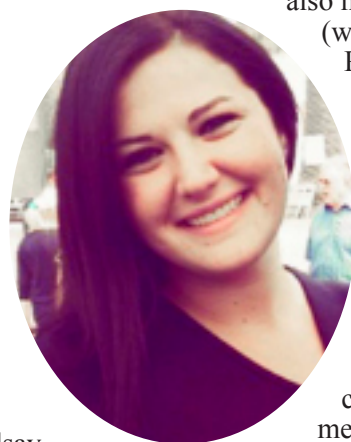
This expertise she brought with her to the International Clan Strachan Gathering in Aberdeen, Scotland in 2019 by assisting with the planning and logistics for the activities throughout the week. She is excited to continue using her expertise to bring others together as the Clan Strachan Society's Event Manager.

Alesia continues to work for the American Red Cross in Western NY as a Volunteer Engagement Specialist. During her spare time, Alesia enjoys doing yoga and spending quality time with her husband, USMC SSgt Aaron Sitka, and their dogs.

### Lindsay Strachan Social Media

Since as long as Lindsay Strachan can remember, her father, Jim Strachan, has had a passion for the Strachan heritage and the Scottish culture, which he instilled into his family. As a youngster, Lindsay's dad researched the Strachan Clan arms, tartan, and even wrote a book about the Clan motto. Lindsay reports that: "Some of my fondest memories are those of the Highland Games with bagpipes playing loudly in the mornings to wake us up. When I was in high school, I remember the trip I took to my homeland in Strachan, Aberdeenshire where we met some of the amazing people who reside at the Mill of Strachan."

Lindsay talked her father into letting her go along for the ride to the Clan Gathering in 2019. With a promise to working wage-free, Lindsay was able to partake in some of the amazing events that honoured the Strachan Clan and revealed to her how truly astounding it is that Clan Strachan reaches all corners of the world



and connects strangers and bonds them into family.

Shortly after this August 2019 Gathering, Lindsay realized that Clan Strachan could spread even farther if it boosted its social media presence and in no time, Lindsay became the Social Media Director of Clan Strachan.

In addition to her love for the Strachan historical background and the Clan, Lindsay is also mom to a seven-year-old, Evangeline (who refers to herself as the Clan Princess), and is a devoted middle school teacher who loves sharing her own genealogical background with students and urges them to do the same.

Lindsay is honoured to be Clan Strachan's Social Media Director and is excited to have an opportunity to share with the world all the awesome things Clan Strachan is doing, will do, and continues to do to honour its members' ancestry!

## Board of Directors and Officers



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**Garry Strachan:**  
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Subordinate Officer  
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**Judy Carole Strawn:**  
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**Alesia Strachan-Sitka:**  
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**Lindsay Strachan:**  
Social Media  
Non-voting Subordinate Officer  
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### Honourary Board Members

**Rob Strachan, Sir Hew Strachan, Roddy Strachan of Benholm**

*President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer are elected positions every two years at the AGM. These officers receive an automatic position on the Board of Directors.*

*\* = A subordinate officer position is appointed by the Board of Directors with a two (2) year term. Must thereafter be confirmed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors every two years to*

*remain in office. To be a Director, subordinate officers must be actively serving in their capacity as an Officer of the Corporation; must be nominated by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, to serve as a Director; AND must be elected to serve a concurrent term as Director by a majority vote of the Society's membership at the Annual General Meeting.*





## Regional Commissioners

### CANADA



**Dr. Lloyd W. Strachan, PhD:**  
**Director, Regional Commissioner**  
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**Ian Strachan:**  
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**Walter Strachan:**  
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### UNITED KINGDOM



**Fiona Strachan of Benholm:**  
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### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Michael Ray Strawhun:**  
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**Jack Schlaeger:**  
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**Melodie Strachan-Zimmerman:**  
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**Sarah Strain-Triton:**  
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**Steve Strawn:**  
**Director, Regional Commissioner**  
**Northwest USA**  
steve@clanstrachan.org



#### INGREDIENTS

1/2 lbs. ground beef  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
1 finely chopped onion  
2 cloves chopped garlic  
1 seeded/skinned/chopped red pepper  
1 tsp. cumin  
1 tsp. mixed herbs of choice  
1/2 cup tomato puree  
1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs  
1/2 cup beef stock  
Salt and pepper to taste

## Spicy Scottish Meatloaf

#### DIRECTIONS

Add onions, garlic and mixed herbs to oiled frying pan and heat over medium heat until onions are soft without browning. Transfer contents to large mixing bowl and stir in tomato sauce, breadcrumbs, beef stock and ground beef. Season to taste and mix ingredients together.

Pack the mixture into a greased 11" x 5" x 3" loaf pan and bake in a heated oven at 350F for 50 to 60 minutes.

Remove from oven, pour off any excess fat and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Slice and serve.