



The Lion's Face

Newsletter of Clan Farquharson in the United Kingdom

www.farquharson-clan.co.uk

Games Edition 2012



Sir Angus and Alison Lady Farquharson enjoy our trip to Loch Callater



Unusual Images from Invercauld House (more on back cover)

In this edition:

John remembers his Valerie (Farquharson)

Messages from the Chief and President

Report of 4x4 tour to Loch Callater 2011

Chief's Message

Greetings!

We shall soon be gathered again up north in *oor ain countrie* and reunited with our friends up there. This occasion will mark the close of our President Alistair's three year term of office as President. He has given us splendid service, and he and Joan have put great personal effort and commitment into the detail of our affairs, and we thank them immensely for their joint contribution.

For us all it will be a particularly poignant moment when we gather at the Cairn, remembering especially, our founding Secretary Val and her inspired and outstanding service to our clan; and also our loyal supporting member from Glasgow, Paul. But as we go about our other activities this time, we shall not be being daily pursued by cameras. Instead we shall have an opportunity to sit back and enjoy last year's efforts. Summer is now supposedly with us. Let us keep fingers crossed and hope for a bit more of the sun cum August. Meantime we greatly look forward to being with you soon.



Alwyne Farquharson of Invercauld

P.S. I shall be bringing with me to put on display at Braemar Castle, in the Farquharson room with the other Clan artefacts, two magnificently leather bound and beautifully illustrated Bibles. These are cherished family heirlooms, along with details of their origin and presentation.

John remembers Valerie



Valerie was born in the King's Cross area of London in 1932. Her father was of Welsh stock and her mother was a Londoner. Just before the last war, the family will moved to Claygate, Surrey. She was a student at Hinchley Wood commercial school, studying shorthand, bookkeeping and general accountancy up to the age of 17. From the age of 17 to 23, she was working up in London for a firm of solicitors and patent agents.

I first met Valerie at a local dance in Surbiton. She was then 17 and myself and ex- RAF serviceman aged 25. We were eventually married in Claygate church on 6th of June 1952, our first permanent home (1954 to 1961) was in Tolworth, near to Kingston upon Thames, Surrey. Valerie was working for the local authority, and I was working in the shipping office at the NAFFI in Kennington London.

In 1954, our first son called David was born, at present working at Hever Castle in Kent. He was at one time a silver and goldsmith by trade. In 1958 youngest son called Martin was born, presently he has his own business as an electrician with a team of seven working in Chessington Surrey.

We sold our property in Tolworth in 1961 and took out a lease on the shop in Worcester Park selling electrical goods, lighting etc. For a while it did well, but in the long run there was too much competition so we moved on in 1968. Our next permanent home was also in Tolworth area, and this lasted from 1968 to 1989.

During the next 20 years Valerie was working for a small firm of light engineers as a secretary, bookkeeper and wages clerk. In 1989 we discovered the present abode, and moved to live by the sea for the last 22 years. During our time in Ferring, both being retired Valerie continued doing the invoicing, wages and bookkeeping for the firm in Chessington, and also acting as secretary for the Clan Farquharson association for 10 years.

Val also gave loyal voluntary service working with mentally and physically handicapped children, also in a local home for elderly residents. In her usual way, she gave generously of her time and really enjoyed developing real friend ships.

John Farquharson

President's Message

Greetings to all, summer is here again and with it the Gathering, an opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones.

Clan events start with the Farquharson tent on 04 08 12, at the Aboyne games, hosted by Joan and myself, for clans folk and personal friends, who are all most welcome.

We will be privileged to listen to a talk by Sheila Sedgewick, archivist at Invercauld House. We also plan a showing of Heiko de Groot's excellent film of last year's activities in Strathdee. Many familiar faces will be recognised on the screen. These events will be followed by a visit to The Cairn, where once again those who have gone before will be remembered, in particular this year we will be commemorating the passing of Valerie, a great servant of the Clan, and Paul, as gallant a gentleman as ever was.



Thursday is the day of the games, lunch in the tent this year will be in the form of a 'Hog Roast' and it is hoped a fine time will had by all.

A most important meeting is the AGM. This is your chance to learn and influence what we have been doing as an association. This year a revision of the Constitution is a vital task, followed by election of the officers. We are looking for new nominations.

We are delighted that our Gathering will let us welcome folk who will be travelling from around the world as well as the UK., such as Muriel and Ray from Australia, Ansgar and family from Germany and Ethelwyn and Colin and family from New Zealand intend to join us.

This will be my final appearance in print as your President. It has been a great honour as holder of the Office, to serve the Clan. I thank all for your support over the past three years but especially my dear wife Joan!

Best Wishes to all,

Alistair.

Around the Churches — Our Heritage Continues ~

Our recent trip to Scotland took us into many old and beautiful Churches.

We were searching for family connections, and our attendance at the Church of Scotland, Church Service in the small village of Strathdon (on the river Don, north of Balmoral Castle) yielded many answers.



The present Heritage listed Church, set in open countryside, was built in 1853, of local grey stone, with a high steeple and leadlight windows. It is large enough to seat 800 parishioners and ministers to the needs of worshippers from a wide area. The Church was built when Queen Victoria was on the throne, the Great Exhibition had just finished, William Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Dickens and Thackeray were among the leaders of literature, and Tennyson and Browning among the poets.

Abroad, David Livingstone and Cecil Rhodes were opening up Africa to

Christianity. Also at this time, the people of Queensland were petitioning the Crown for Separation from the Colony of New South Wales.



One can never describe the feeling of worshipping in Strathdon Church, knowing that my Grandfather, William Farquharson (who came out to Australia in 1893) also worshipped in the same Church. Also to know that my Grandfather's parents, Grandparents and two of his sisters are buried just outside in the Church graveyard, in the family plot marked by the family Crest on the wall of the Church. There is now a bronze plaque inside the Church, honouring my Grandfather's memory, and bringing a family connection to the Brookfield Uniting Church in Queensland. In our 140th. Year, it is to be hoped that we can

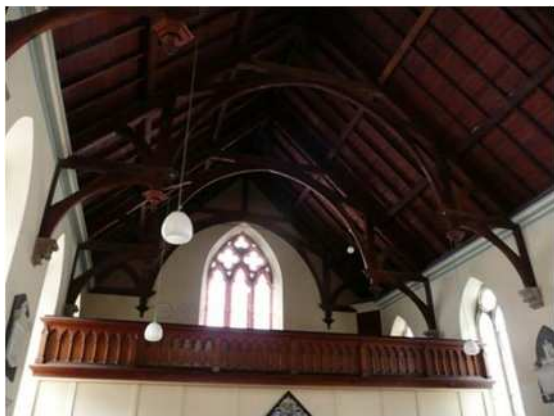
welcome back families who can trace their connections to the early days of our Uniting Church in Brookfield, Queensland.

©Muriel R Ward-Leitch. NLA.. B.Bus.

Some additional notes about Strathdon Parish Church.

There has been a church on this site since at least 1200, when it was known as Invernochtie. A map shows a church here in 1654, which was replaced in the 1660s and then rebuilt again a hundred years later. The present church dates to the mid 19th century and was largely funded by the landed and influential Forbes family.

The parish church of Strathdon is a striking cruciform building, very large for a rural parish. It sits on slightly raised ground above the Water of Nochtly with fertile agricultural land surrounding it. The church is located within a large, walled graveyard, with a modern cemetery extension to the west. The large former manse stands just to the north.



The present church was designed by James Matthews and consists of a large nave, transepts, chancel and tower. It was built using grey granite blocks, roughly shaped and tooled, with contrasting sandstone and granite window tracery, surrounds and detailing stones. The large roof structure is slated with lead flashing.

The nave of the church is of four bays and has buttresses running along the side elevations and at the corners. Each bay has a large pointed-arch window with simple stone tracery and latticed glazing. The west gable of the nave has a large pointed-arch window with trefoil and quatrefoil tracery and protective laminate sheeting. Below is a recessed pointed-arch doorway with attached columns at the jambs and a thick hoodmould above. At the north-west corner is a slender hexagonal stair tower with a narrow doorway and slate roof. It gives access to the gallery at the west end of the church.

At the east end of the church is the tower and chancel. The tower is square and has corner buttresses and a broached stone spire. The east face has a large pointed-arch doorway with moulded jambs and hoodmould. This is the formal entrance into the church. The second stage of the tower has a tall pointed-arch (lancet) window and above, in the third stage, are pointed-arch belfry openings with louvered panels and stone tracery. The base of the spire is corbelled out and there are pinnacled and gabled blank round openings in the lower spire. Towards the top of the spire are small gabled openings, called lucarnes. The spire is topped by a metal weather vane.

The chancel is attached to the south face of the tower. It has a single very large pointed-arch window with trefoil tracery and latticed glazing. The window rests on a thick sill course. The chancel also has corner buttresses at the south-east and there is a small stone cross finial on the apex of the gable.

The north and south transepts have the same roof height as the chancel and nave. They were originally private galleries for local powerful families (including the Forbes family) and are each lit by large pointed-arch, traceried windows in the gable faces. Access to the north gallery is through a doorway in the attached tower, while the south transept has a narrow stair tower at the south-west corner.



Jane Hill-Farquharson visits the Braemar Games

On the 27th August (2011), Michael and I had a week's holiday at Moness Country Club where we have a time share. After a lovely week there we decided to make a detour on the way home. We thought that we would go to the Braemar Games and represent Clan Farquharson and support Joan

and Alistair Farquharson, our Clan President. The Patron of the Games is the Queen, and the Vice-Patrons are His Grace the Duke of Fife, Capt. A.A.C. Farquharson of Invercauld, M.C., and Capt. Mark Nicholson. It meant getting home very late but we thought it was worth it. We saw the Queen and Prince Philip arrive by car. We went to the "Overseas" tent where Clan Farquharson had a display stand, Joan and Alistair were already there. The Chief was also present though we missed him as we arrived after he left the tent..... that was a shame. Jeanette and Douglas (Farquharson) also arrived so we were a select band. Michael and I left after a while as we had a nine hour journey home from there, we said our goodbye's and headed for home.....we were glad that we made the effort to attend the Braemar Games.

Jane Hill-Farquharson

A Piper's Christmas

Sharon Farley (President Clan Farquharson USA) sent a poem from Bill McWood.

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the night
Not a piper was stirring--they all were quite soused;
Their hose were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that Saint Knicker-less soon would be there;
The drummers were nestled all snug in their beds,
Midst visions of drumsticks and new Premier heads.
And Ma in Balmoral and I in my tam,
Had just settled down for an impromptu jam,
When out on the lawn there rose such a clatter,
I sprang from my chair, my music a-scatter.
Away to the window I tore in a hurry.
Yelling to Ma, "Keep piping! Don't worry!"
She struck in her drones and had a wee blow,
As I gazed at the moonlight on new-fallen snow.
Then what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a sleigh full of pipers and drummers and beer.
With a little old driver who spoke with such force,
That I knew right away--he's the PM, of course!
More rapid than eagles his pipers they came--
He whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Angus! Now, Seamus! Now, Gordon and Harry
On, Duncan! On Ian! On, Willie and Larry.
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
Now pipe away! Pipe away! Pipe away all!"
Almost as one, and without any gripe,
They blew up and struck in eight sets of pipes.
And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof,
The chanter, the drum rolls, with nary a goof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney Knicker-less came with a bound;
With shoes newly shined, and shirt neatly pressed;
He was, I could see, regimentally dressed.
His eyes--how they twinkled! His dimples how merry
I could see that he'd already been into the sherry.

I smiled at him now and became somewhat bolder,
As a new set of Naills he flung on his shoulder.
The blowstick he held tight in his teeth,
The bass drone caught at and knocked off our wreath.
He had a broad face, was fairly well built,
And, damn! this guy looked good in a kilt!
A wink of his eye, a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I'd be best off in bed;
He spoke not a word, by the light of the moon,
But struck in his pipes and played me a chune.
He played a 2/4, a 6/8, and a reel,
A strathspey, a hompipe, a jig--with great zeal.
After he'd played all these chunes just for me,
He stopped and put gifts out under the tree--
Pipes by McCallum, and pipes made by Kron,
All guaranteed to blow steady tone;
Reeds and chanter, a new water trap,
Ash plugs and tuners, and all of that---stuff.
Then laying a finger aside of his nose,
He gave the pipes a couple more blows;
He looked at the chimney he'd come down before,
Said, "The hell with this--I'll go out the door!"
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of Scotch
thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, e'er he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all--and a Piping Hot night!"

From the pipe band forum.
<http://www.pipebandsforum.com/showthread.php?t=1720>
And for the Irish among you:
<http://www.irishemigrant.com/ie/go.asp?p=story&storyID=10475>

THE FIVE 4 x 4's (Our off-road trip to Loch Callater 2011)

by Connie Cleps



The plan was to sweep us all into the fine commanding hills to see Loch Callater and view Lochnagar, with a BBQ at the lodge where prince Charles stays.

With the mists hanging low in the sky and the water rushing past in the over flowing burns, gurgling, spuming, splashing and spraying their way down through the glen, the mountainous view ahead was dismal and dank. Rain was falling, splattering the wind screens. The steam was rising from our hot breath as we kept rubbing it away from the glass with the sleeves of our coat to get a clearer view. On and on

drove the five 4 x 4's over the narrow rocky pathways further into the murky mists. One could hardly see the way ahead.

As we looked into the depths of the loch down below. What did we see lurking in its dark peaty waters? A hint of something shadowy? A being of some sort perhaps? I felt a cold shiver go through me as I stared and stared.

The vehicles stopped. We had reached the end of the pathway. A welcoming sight as we watched the smoke curling into the air from the chimney of the Bothy where we were expected for lunch. Over the wooden bridge drove the five 4 x 4's.



A warm glow from the fire burning in the kitchen range. With kettle on the side gently simmering in readiness to make our cups of tea. We listened to ancient tales by the story teller who had us all spellbound (Neil Bain).



The camera crew who had joined us on the trip panned in and out of our lively conversations. They had stood in the rain, on precarious points zooming in and out of the beautiful scenery and towering mountains hidden within the mists and rain.

The smell of barbecued sausages reached our nostrils through the open doorway and into the Bothy. Above the hubbub of chatter and laughter a voice was heard to say 'FOOD'. There was a mad scramble for the exit. Some were tucked up round a cosy wood burner and sinking into the soft cushions of the chair. I

collected my long awaited barbecued lunch. A bap, two sausages and a side salad and headed back to the cosy fire.

The queue for the “LOO” stretched the length of the corridor. That was an interesting interlude which will remain untold to the readers but the ‘USERS’ will remember it well!

Did you all visit the “Special Room” at the back and sit on the bed?
“NO - YOU MISSED IT”. It is said that Prince Charles often sleeps in that bed!

We clambered back into the five 4 x 4’s for the return journey. The Chief driving one of them too. Cameras were still clicking as we headed back over the narrow stony pathway. Peering over the edge when the loch came into view. There it was again. “Was that a fin speeding its way through the waves?” An eerie shape could be seen just below the watery surface and then it was gone. A trick of the eye or the mind perhaps?

Connie, Margaret and Jane Hill look anxious in the Land Rover.



Connie Cleps

October 2011

Clan Matters

Website

Don't forget to visit the Clan Farquharson website

www.farquharson-clan.co.uk

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Margaret Finlay, our secretary writes with various news sent to us:

Sadly, other clansmen have died. Mary Findlay of Hinchley Wood, Esher, wrote to say that her husband George has passed away. Worthing 'regulars' may remember that Mary & George sought the Chief's permission to have a special flag made, to fly outside their house in celebration of their golden wedding anniversary. They brought it down to Worthing for us to see & a photo of it subsequently appeared in The Lion's face. Our condolences have been expressed to Mary. George will be in our minds, when we remember clansmen who have died recently.

Alistair received a call from Catherine Farquharson of Fochabers in Morayshire recently to tell him of the death of her husband Ian. They joined the clan not long after it was re-constituted & attended clan gatherings. Again, sadness at losing another supportive clansman. Catherine wrote to express her thanks for the letter of sympathy sent from the clan.

News from Jean & Allan Farquharson of Paris, Ontario was received earlier this year. They were warmly welcomed when they came over here for the 2008 gathering. Allan has had a bad & painful year during which he has had surgery, skin grafts & radiotherapy. Jean writes to say that they have updated their trailer & very much hope they will be able to drive to their favourite holiday location at Manitoulin Island, which is the largest freshwater island in the world. At home, on their farm, while Jean has been awaiting a knee replacement operation, she has been as active as possible in the garden as well as continuing with voluntary jobs such as news articles for the library, the York Grand River Historical Society. Jean is the author of a book on local history. Alan continues with his active interest in astronomy as well as his toastmaster duties. They have also attended a short course of Indian archaeology. They certainly maintain a wide range of interests, although Scottish history has had to take a back seat during all the medical treatments but they do hope to re-visit Scotland where I know they will have another warm welcome from Clansmen.

Bruce & Pauline Finlay keep in touch via their wonderful Australia newsletter, (shown on our web site,) which is packed with interesting information about their events. They have had a very busy year so far.

Their gatherings started with one in Armidale in March, a place where many Scots settled, including a number of Farquharsons. The biggest gathering in Australia is "Bundanoon is Brigadoon" & Bruce felt very honoured on behalf of the clan, to be Chieftain for the day. Interestingly, not only were parts of this televised by a German company, but nearby is a place called Braemar, which is where their association was formed.

Pauline & Bruce managed to fit in a quick trip to Europe where they enjoyed the pleasures of cruising down the Rhine & the Danube. They were surprised to hear the pipes playing at Marksburg before they reached their destination of Budapest. Since then, a couple of events, another gathering then Scottish Week which involves a great deal of preparation & visitors from the National Museums of Scotland. Following that, they write that they were stunned by the very sudden death of Margaret Rowan, a close friend & a founding member of Clan Australia. Margaret visited Ballater as part of the Australian party, who came over for the "Homecoming", meeting them. Our very sincere condolences are extended To Margaret's family & her many friends within the clan.

Bruce & Pauline enjoy the pleasure of being grandparents, as part of their busy lives. Their two daughters each have a boy & a girl, two of whom are already at school. They send their best wishes for a happy & successful gathering at Ballater this year.

The "Cairn" newsletter from Clan Farquharson USA is packed with interesting information about the many gatherings in different parts of the States as well as articles on Scottish history & news of members. No wonder Sharon travels around a lot. It makes very good reading so perhaps it might appear on our website in due course, so that we can all share the news.



A roof with a view

