



# The Lion's Face

Newsletter of Clan Farquharson in the United Kingdom

[www.farquharson-clan.co.uk](http://www.farquharson-clan.co.uk)

## Winter Edition 2013



Invercauld House from the garden



The Chief, Sir Angus Farquharson, Alison Lady Farquharson, and Madame Farquharson at the Gathering dinner in 2012

### **In this edition:**

Messages from the Chief and President

We celebrate the lives of Maureen Farquharson and Group Captain William Farquharson

We hear from Tony (former vice-President) and Helen Farquharson

New from overseas. Report on the Worthing Gatherings

## Chief's Message (January 2013)

Greetings – and since it is just past the turn of a new year as I write this, my very best wishes to you all for a happy and healthy one. As I look outside midwinter is making its presence duly evident with a snowstorm, a biting wind from the north east and the highest tide of the year later this evening at 9.4 metres (over 30ft).

Time for thought perhaps, both for reflection and for looking forward.

Last year was truly memorable encompassing the historically unique double of the London Olympics and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. As we reflect upon this combination surely this should forcefully remind us that youth and age must ever go forward together. For the essence of Olympic achievement lies at the heart of youth, and a diamond jubilee is the greatest of the achievements of age. And is not such a splendid example of the combination of youth and age essential in the troubled times in which we live?

As we look forward then let us strive to enlist and encourage youth to join with age and go together with us as we raise our clan banner proudly bearing witness to the past, and carry it forward with courage and determination to face the changes and challenges of our times.

This year's annual gathering is more compact than of yore which it is hoped will meet with approval. But it includes much to interest us as we meet again in our heartland.



I should also mention Braemar Castle. Considerable improvements are in hand in which our clan features under the direction of the Braemar community. These are being funded mostly by grants and partly by fund raising. The first phase of the roof repairs is about to start costing over £100,000. And work is in hand on the unique Farquharson of Invercauld mineral collection. The picture shows scaffolding on the outside of the castle.  
<http://www.braemarcastle.co.uk/>

The cataloguing and arrangement for exhibition of this is being undertaken by an enterprising amateur mineralogist Mr Roy Starkey, with whom I had a most interesting talk here recently.

So do please look in at the castle when you are up. Until we meet then – 'Ceud Mile Failte'!

From the Chief and his lady.

*Alwyne Farquharson of Invercauld*

## President's Message

It was fine weather and old friends that welcomed us to Royal Deeside for the annual Clan Farquharson Gathering in August 2012. The time went well and many thanks must go to our Past President, Alistair Farquharson, so ably helped by his wife Joan. They have elevated our presence at Aboyne, Ballater, and Braemar from the dark and dingy to a friendly welcoming style.





The year concluded with the sad death of two of our long standing members. Bill Farquharson, who often attended the Worthing lunches, died on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 a few days before his 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Bill, was born in Malacca, Malaya where he attended school and also in Australia. He completed his education in Dundee and then at Birmingham TC. He enlisted in the RAF at 21, trained as a pilot and went on to have an outstanding record through the Second World War. Our thoughts are with his widow Patricia and their three children.

The next sad news came with the death in December 2012 of Maureen Farquharson from Portpatrick, wife of Gordon. They were founder members of the reformed Clan association and were loyal and regular attendees of our Clan Gatherings every year. We look forward to Gordon's continued

presence.



We are delighted to report the exciting news that our committee member and editor of the Lion's Face, Hannah Farquharson (now Jones), gave birth to Elisa on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2012. Congratulations to Hannah and Mark and of course the proud grandparents, our Treasurer Gordon and Jane.

It was with great pride I was asked to stand again for President of the Clan from the AGM in 2012. I thank the members for voting me in for a second term and I will do my best to include all Farquharsons around the globe and extend to them the social and friendship of our great Clan.

The programme is now on the website for the 2013 Clan Gathering and this culminates with a new host for our annual Clan Dinner. Donald and Catriona Farquharson have kindly invited us to their home, Finzean House, where a warm welcome awaits. There is a summary of the programme in this edition of the Lion's Face.

With warm regards, *Andrew Farquharson.*

## **Group Captain William Lyall Farquharson, DFC\* (1919-2012)**



It was with great sadness that Clan Farquharson learnt of the death, aged 92, on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012, of its distinguished member, Group Captain Bill Farquharson, DFC\*

Bill was one of the valiant crews of Bomber Command. He flew on 63 missions over Germany, mainly as the captain of Lancasters, but also in Halifaxes and Blenheims.

He and his wife Patricia, whom he met as a WRAF officer, serving in the same

Bomber Command Station, were regular attendees at the twice yearly clan luncheon parties in Worthing, until health problems made it too difficult for them to travel.

He was a charming and modest man, warm-hearted and generous and the few RAF crew members who have survived the war and the years between, will remember Bill as a most courageous leader.

*This tribute (above) to Bill was written by Captain Stuart and Mrs Ursula Farquharson-Roberts, who had become friends with Patricia and Bill through the clan lunches in Worthing and often visited each other. Together with John Farquharson, the three men spent many companionable times at Worthing, talking about their war experiences. Their stories were so interesting.*

We have taken the opportunity of reproducing the obituary from the Daily Telegraph.

Towards the end of the war Farquharson was the senior flight commander of No 195 Squadron, and on a number of occasions led it on daylight formation bombing raids.

On March 14 1945 he was leading a large formation to attack the oil plants at Datteln, 20 miles north of Dortmund. Before the target was reached, his Lancaster was heavily engaged by anti-aircraft fire and hit several times. The mid-upper gunner was killed at his post and the engines and fuselage severely damaged. Despite the parlous state of his aircraft, Farquharson pressed on and led his formation over the target, which was bombed. Unable to return to his base in Suffolk, Farquharson made a masterly landing at an airfield near Brussels despite very poor visibility. He was awarded an immediate Bar to a DFC he had received earlier.

The son of a police officer in the Colonial Service, William Lyall Farquharson was born in Malacca, Malaya. Due to the loss of family records in the war, the year of his birth remains uncertain, but his passport states he was born on September 28 1919. His early schooling was in Malaya and Australia, and he completed his education at Harris Academy, Dundee, before attending the Birmingham Central Technical College. He enlisted in the RAF in January 1941 and trained as a pilot.

His family remained in Singapore. A brother and a sister managed to leave before the Japanese arrived in December 1941, but his parents and a brother were captured as they tried to escape on one of the last ships out. His father died in captivity, and in 1945 Farquharson was to return to Singapore, where he was reunited with his mother and brother, who had survived internment in Sumatra.

Meanwhile, in July 1942 he joined No 115 Squadron and flew his first bombing operations in the Wellington before the squadron converted to the four-engine Stirling. Initially he flew a number of sorties to drop mines in the Kattegat, the Baltic and off the French Biscay coast. Known as “gardening” sorties, crews “sowed their vegetables” along the main coastal shipping routes used by the Kriegsmarine and at the entrances to the U-boat bases. Though highly effective, these Bomber Command operations have subsequently received little attention.

Farquharson also bombed targets in Germany and in northern Italy, the latter involving very long flights over the Alps. On April 20 1943 he and his crew attacked Stettin at low level in full moonlight. Dissatisfied with the first attempt, he made a second bombing run despite heavy opposition. His Stirling was badly damaged, but he then made a third run to photograph the results of his attack before turning for the long flight home. He was awarded his first DFC.

After a period training bomber crews, Farquharson returned to operational flying in October 1944 when he joined No 195 Squadron. Bomber Command was concentrating on attacks against the German oil industry and he bombed many targets in the Ruhr.

With the end of the war, Farquharson and his crews turned their attention and skill to humanitarian operations. He dropped food to the starving population in the Netherlands and took his Lancaster to Belgium and France for Operation Exodus to pick up prisoners of war recently released from German PoW camps.

Farquharson readily admitted that he was “frightened all the time” and he always recognised the role that luck had played in his survival.

On one occasion the engine of his Wellington caught fire and he ordered his crew to bail out. As the last man left, he realised that the aircraft would be too low for him to survive a jump and he was forced to crash land into the tops of some trees before hitting a farm in the Cotswolds. The wings sheared off and he ended up, badly concussed, in the fuselage section. The farmer’s son rushed into the house shouting, “there’s an aeroplane in the greenhouse”.

On another occasion his bomber was damaged by anti-aircraft fire. On landing he discovered a large piece of shrapnel embedded in the parachute he had been sitting on.

Farquharson remained in the RAF and much of his early service was involved in training pilots. After attending the Central Flying School he commanded flying training squadrons and in 1953 led a large formation of aircraft in the Coronation Flypast. Later he was the chief instructor at an advanced flying school equipped with the Meteor jet fighter.

After appointments in the Far East and as station commander at RAF Episkopi in Cyprus, Farquharson was appointed air attaché in Warsaw at the height of the Cold War. There all his activities were closely monitored by the secret police. Having shown no previous interest, he suddenly became an expert in birdwatching when he “discovered” that the most interesting sites were close to military airfields.

After retiring from the RAF in 1976, Farquharson worked in the sales division of a company manufacturing flight simulators. He supported the Sea Scouts and served a period as chairman of the Bomber Command Association. He was later made an honorary vice-president and worked hard seeking recognition for his fellow veterans. With his wife, a former WAAF operations officer on his bomber station, he was able to attend the unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial by the Queen in July, a few weeks before his death.

In September 2009, on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Lord’s Cricket Ground opening as the wartime aircrew reception centre, he was the guest of Jonathan Agnew and the Test Match Special team during a match against Australia. After his live conversation with “Aggers” during the tea interval he was able to salute a Lancaster bomber which overflew the ground to commemorate the anniversary.

Bill Farquharson married, in 1944, Patricia Pinney, who survives him with their son and two daughters.  
**Group Captain Bill Farquharson, born September 28 1919, died September 20 2012**



## **Maureen Farquharson (1935-2012)**

Maureen died suddenly on 17 November, she had been diagnosed with cancer earlier in the year and had gone through an operation in late August, and she appeared to have made a marvelous recovery, with her usual witty humour always to the fore even after grueling chemo sessions.

Maureen and Gordon met in 1953 but with Gordon’s National Service in the RAF it was not until 1958 that they were married. In 1961 the first of their three children Neil was born, Morag came along in 1963 and Grant in 1965. As the children were growing up, Maureen decided to train to be a teacher. In 1971 she went to Hamilton College for three years to train and on qualifying took a post in Paisley where she taught for eleven years. She then transferred to Netherlee Primary in East Renfrewshire. In both schools Maureen was greatly admired by staff and children alike.

A great sporty person, Maureen enjoyed hockey, tennis, badminton, golf and bowls and up until her death was the Secretary of Portpatrick Bowling Club. In her earlier sporting days she won the Junior Challenge Cup at the Langside Tennis Club in Glasgow.

In 2001 Maureen was a founder member of the Clan Farquharson Association and along with Gordon attended every gathering from that time on, she loved going up to Deeside and wearing the tartan at the gathering.

Maureen was that kind of person who you could not but like, with her wicked sense of humour and her easy conversation she was always the life and soul of the party and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

*Stuart Farquharson (Maureen’s brother-in-law)*

## **Tony and Helen Farquharson**

Helen and Tony wrote to Jane and Gordon at Christmas. Tony and Helen had been part of the team that got the Clan association back on the road. We thought many of you would like to share their message and I sure send them our love and best wishes. It's great to read about their expanding Clan around the world.

*2012 has been a very mixed year for us with some wonderful highs mixed with some not so good lows. The year started off well knowing that Rob and Sally were expecting their first baby in May. James was born on 14th May and he is adorable. Mum is very laid back and relaxed making James a very chilled little chap. Dad is the opposite but Sally keeps him in line and they are both wonderful parents and besotted with their beautiful son.*

*We had planned another holiday to Africa in March visiting Victoria Falls and then spending almost 3 weeks in Botswana and Namibia. At the end of 2011 Tony had been unwell with 3 quite serious infections and his GP had been monitoring him with blood tests etc. To cut a very long story short, the day before we were due to travel to Africa Tony's doctor advised us not to go as his immune system wasn't working properly and he was advised that any infection could be a risk to his life. We were travelling with Maggie and Alan and we all cancelled the trip which, in itself, was devastating.*

*A week later Tony was diagnosed with Myeloma, a cancer of the bone marrow, incurable but treatable. He was treated from April to September with chemotherapy, steroids and other medication which was to lead on to a stem cell transplant. He coped with the treatment very well but did have four separate stays in hospital with infections, one ending with a three pint blood transfusion as his body, with the help of the antibiotics, couldn't kill off the infection.*

*Liz and Lawrie were lucky enough to get 4 tickets for the second Saturday of the Olympics, which was also Tony's birthday. We saw Mo Farah win the 5000 meters and Usain Bolt cross the finishing line first in the men's 4x100 meters relay. The whole day was amazing, truly a once in a life time experience. Lawrie's brother won a bronze medal at the Athens Paralympic Games with the GB wheelchair basketball team and this year was playing for the South African team. They didn't get very far but watching him play was a wonderful. He certainly knew the Jellows/Farquharson clans were there to support him and he was the top scorer for the SA team in the match we saw!!*



*In October Liz and Lawrie were married at The Priory Barn in Little Wymondsley in Hertfordshire. It was a beautiful venue and a wonderful day with Tony the very proud father of the bride. He coped with the day well and, after a lot of heartache, made a perfect speech. The happy couple then went on honeymoon to Tanzania where they were on safari for 8 days and then went to Zanzibar to chill out on the beach for a week. Jason came home from the Far East for the wedding which was his second visit this year. It must be very hard for him being so far away and not seeing how his dad is getting on. He has moved back to the Philippines and we hope to visit him at the end of 2013 when Tony is well enough to travel again. We miss him and our 5 year old grandson, Anthony, and only wish that we were able to see a lot more of them.*

*Tony was due to start the stem cell transplant process at the end of October but ended up in hospital again with another infection. In early November he had a huge dose of chemo and then 2 injections every day for a week in his stomach to get the stem cells multiplying and moving. Unfortunately, during the process, he caught another infection and ended up in hospital again! Luckily the doctors decided that they would still go ahead and try to harvest the stem cells and, after a slight falter the first day, they started harvesting the cells on day two.*

*Unfortunately that's as far as it went as an injection to mobilise the stem cells was forgotten and the whole process stopped. It was a very upsetting and disappointing time for us all and a very expensive mistake for the hospital. The process has now been rescheduled for the middle of January with the transplant in the middle of February. Tony will have to be in isolation, in hospital for anything from four weeks upwards. He will have no immunity at this time and will be at huge risk of catching infections. Not a time any of us are looking forward to.*

*Tony has been amazing through all the treatment and very positive. We have both been supported superbly by many friends and by two people in particular. The husband has had Myeloma for about 8 years and been through similar treatment to Tony. Talking to him has been a huge help to Tony and talking to his wife has been reassuring for Helen. It's amazing what a comfort it is knowing that you are not alone. We are hoping that all goes well in February and have been told that by September 2013 Tony should be in remission. Roll on September!!*

*With love, Helen and Tony (Farquharson).*

*Tony and Helen can be contacted through e-mail, or we have their address if anyone would like it.  
tony.farquharson@btinternet.com  
helenfarquharson@btinternet.com*

## **Margaret Finlay writes about the Worthing Gatherings in 2012**

The seaside gathering in May was, at John's request, a tribute lunch in memory of Val. John kindly hosted the event at The Indigo Restaurant, happy that a good number of clansmen were able to share the occasion. Everyone enjoyed a splendid meal in a most convivial atmosphere. Ian kindly said a few appropriate words, and absent friends were remembered.

The October gathering was again at The Indigo, followed by a committee meeting and as before, the meal was excellent and much enjoyed by all. Round the table were seated John, Ansgar, Arthur, Elizabeth, Jane, Michael, David, Ursula, Stuart, Andrew and Margaret, with Gordon joining the committee later for the meeting. He fitted it in, around a family celebration. Ansgar came over from Germany in order to participate and had taken his eldest daughter Tanya, (who was also at Ballater), to stay with friends at the riding school in Winchester where she had previously taken an intensive course in horsemanship. Her main occupation is at university studying for a teaching degree in English but she has a passion for riding and from her Facebook photos, is very proficient at it. They certainly had the furthest to travel.

The round table encouraged general conversation and chatting with those nearest, and we all appreciated the usual excellent service. It is hoped that there will be another gathering in April/May. In the past, supporters have come from the far north east of Scotland, from middle England and the Home Counties, right down to the southernmost part of the UK. There is plenty of overnight accommodation as Worthing is a popular seaside resort, so if anybody feels like a weekend away in a pleasant place, then why not try the spring lunch? You will be most welcome.

*Thank you Margaret for you hard work arranging these important occasions (Ed).*

## **News from overseas**

### **AUSTRALIA**

The latest news from Australia is to record a name change! At their recent AGM, a motion to remove the qualification of "NSW Branch" was carried, as the membership now includes all states and territories of Australia. It is a great credit to those within the association, that they have grown and attracted more members as they develop their profile. Added to this is the news that Mr Sydney Finlay is now Clan Commissioner for New South Wales.

Their big event was the Bundanoon Gathering where Bruce Finlay, Clan Commissioner for Australia, was the Chieftain for the day. This was very well supported and Bruce's wife Pauline, notes that many grandchildren and great nephews were proudly marching behind the vintage car at the head of the parade followed by many clan members. The younger generation support clan activities which is very encouraging and lustily sing The Skye Boat Song.

Pauline (also editor of Carn-Na-Cuimhne), writes that a recognition ceremony for Sydney's appointment as Clan Commissioner for NSW & ACT took place in Canberra, where the Governor General's husband was the special guest. This year, at the Wingham Gathering, Bruce will be the Chieftain for the day – another great honour for the clan. Piping competitions have taken place. The list of events for the early part of the year is quite amazing with Burns Nights and various festivals in many different places. We send our best wishes for all these events,

On a personal note, Sydney and Brenda have enjoyed an extended visit to Western Australia, going north and south from Perth and are very excited because their daughter is moving back to Sydney from Brisbane with her family, which will save them both very long trips for visiting.

Pauline and Bruce continue to work tirelessly for the clan, as can be gathered from all the events and on the home front, they value time with their family. They too have enjoyed some interesting holidays, particularly a Rhine cruise, where they discovered some bagpipes en route!

### **CANADA**

Jean and Allan from Paris in Ontario, send greetings to Clan Farquharson UK and have updated us on their news. Highlights of their year include a visit to Texas for a family wedding, a newer and warmer trailer for their star parties (they are keen on astronomy), a lumberman's festival, enjoying events marking 200 years since the war of 1812 as well



as welcoming a daughter back to Canada, after having lived in Istanbul. Jean tells us they have been very thankful for excellent healthcare with her knee replacement operation and Allan's ongoing treatment. They have plans for travelling this year, especially to their favourite Manitoulin lake. They add a prayer for love and peace throughout the world.

## **ANOTHER DUDELSACK PFEIFER !!**



It has been a great pleasure to meet Horst Kraus via email and to learn that he is another very keen piper. Horst lives in Hildesheim, Germany. He addressed his initial letter to the Chief who immediately responded with a welcoming letter, suggesting that he should make contact with Ansgar, which he did. It appears they live some 150 miles apart, so they hope to meet at some stage. Horst is very keen on Scottish traditions, culture and history and he tells us that he plays the Great Highland Bagpipe and is a member of the German Bagpipe Association. In February he will be going to a week's seminar on playing the pipes.

He explains that there is an old Benedictine monastery which is used by the Catholic and Lutheran churches and literary events are staged there. An important festival celebrates the life and work of Robert Burns and one of the afternoons consists of his songs specially

arranged for a choir and orchestra. There is lots more of interest in the emails so far received so more news will probably be in the next Lion's Face. Interestingly, there is a bag pipe angel at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh with a replica in Horst's home town. He and a friend have each written a poem each about this angel which we also hope will feature in the next issue.

As well as being a dog lover, Horst is a very keen and talented photographer. He has featured in the press for his piping and is planning to visit Scotland during our Ballater gathering and looks forward to meeting us all.

## **A message from David Coates, our new Membership Secretary.**

I am writing to introduce myself as I have recently joined the committee, and taken responsibility for matters relating to Clan membership.

There are a number of important developments I need to tell you about. In these tough times, we are trying to reduce our administration and postal costs where possible. The main opportunities for reduction are asking clan members, if they have not already done so, to give consideration of payment of the annual subscription by standing order, and wherever possible use email to communicate.

We are in the process of updating and placing our records for payments on to a new data base, together with details of the membership and friends. It would be helpful if members and friends would confirm firstly your contact details including email address, post code and telephone number. We intend to have a clean database from the renewals in September 2013. In this way we will be able to commence our new data base confident in the knowledge that we have done so with the correct details.

Those who prefer to pay their subscriptions by cheque are asked to send them to me for the data base to be updated, and for onward transmission to the Treasurer.

With kind regards, *David Coates*

## **The programme for our Gathering 2013**

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>-Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

We look forward to seeing you at Ballater in August this year (2013) for another great Clan Farquharson GATHERING



From Andrew Farquharson  
President, Clan Farquharson  
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Clan Farquharson Gathering in Ballater, Scotland.

**Saturday 3rd August, from 11.00 onwards**

**Aboyne Highland Games and Clan tent**

A traditional Highland Games where The Farquharsons from Finzean will be present. We will have our Clan Farquharson tent where Alistair and Joan Farquharson will welcome all visitors. Light refreshments will be available.

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August, anytime after 7.30pm**

Informal get-together at The Deeside Inn –Hotel, Ballater  
Come along and enjoy a drink or a bar-snack and catch with old friends and new.

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> August, 11.00-17.00**

**Visit the Highland Games in Ballater.**

Our Chief is Games Patron and Chieftain. There will be an informal buffet lunch in the Clan Tent. The Pipers play on the green after the games for a few hours.

20.00-21.30

Concert in Albert Hall- Victoria week arrange this concert so see Victoria Week programme closer to the time for more details.

22.00- 00.00

Ceilidh & Dance. The evening is not related to our events but is great fun in the Albert and Victoria Halls. This is a good evening if you have the energy left and really gives you a feel of the spirit of the Highlands.

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August, 14.30 -15.15**

**Visit to the Clan Farquharson Cairn.**

This is just past Balmoral Castle going west to Braemar. 15 Minutes drive from Ballater.

Join the Chief and a Piper for reflection and a prayer for Farquharsons who died in Battle and the recent deaths of Maureen and Bill Farquharson.

Bring suitable footwear for this walk along the fields by the Dee.

**When you like, visit Braemar Castle.**

This is a suggested visit either before or after the Cairn visit.

Another chance to see how the work is coming along inside the old Farquharson stronghold and see the new Clan Farquharson room.

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 10.30 f or 11.00--12.00**

**Clan Farquharson AGM at the Glenaden Hotel, Ballater.**

Coffee and shortbread will be served.

Come be involved in the running of your Clan and hear what we have been up to and then let's hear your suggestions.

12.00 -13.00 (Committee meeting to follow)

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 18.45 for 19.30**

**Formal Dinner & Clan Photo at the Finzean House.**

Come and dine in these grand surroundings. A piper will be playing and will pipe in our Chief and Madame Farquharson before dinner. The Annual Clan Photograph will be taken before the dinner. Black tie / Lounge Suits. This will be a three course meal and will be served with wine.



**Friends united at the Gathering Dinner 2012. Maureen and Gordon 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> from the left**

### Website

Don't forget to visit the Clan Farquharson website and FaceBook page.

[www.farquharson-clan.co.uk](http://www.farquharson-clan.co.uk)

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