



Craigellachie



Winter 2003

It's Great to be a Grant!

Volume XXVII, Issue 1

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Reminders

Next AGM - June 6-8, 2003, at the Arlington, TX, Games. Our hosts are John and Helen Grant.

The next "Gathering of the Clan" in Scotland will be held in August, 2005.

Next Issue

- The deadline for articles for the next issue of *Craigellachie* is April 7. Please email items to: thecraigellachie@hotmail.com.
- The membership would like to read about the remarkable Grants in your family, or about any special interest of yours related to Clan Grant or to Scotland: art, recipes, current events, history, etc. And your Grant-related photos are always of interest. Please contact Leigh Haines at 703-753-1964 or thecraigellachie@hotmail.com.

GRANTS ON PARADE NATIONWIDE



Pleasantown Games: Six more Grants showed up after this photo... And ten more after that - The most to attend the Pleasanton Games!



Old Town Virginia Scottish Walk: Not the 70 degree temperatures from last year. This year, pipists had problems with their reeds freezing!



Modesto Games: Carol and Jim Suttie, a friend, and Carol Grant. More "Pics" on page 5.

Calendar

March

1
Southeast Florida Scottish Festival and Games
1301 N.W. 99th. Ave.
Plantation, FL 33322-4864

April

4-6
San Antonio Highland Games
P.O. Box 101045
San Antonio, TX 78201

5
Scottish Walk
671 Walnut Street
Woodland Park, CO 80863

4-6
National Tartan Day Celebrations held around the country, including:

- 41759 Higgins Way
Fremount, CA 94539
- The Mall
Washington, DC

11-13
Loch Norman Highland Games
P.O. Box 1009
Huntersville, NC 28070-1009

12
Dunedin Highland Games
P.O. Box 507
Dunedin, FL 34698

18-20
Las Vegas Highland Games and Celtic Gathering
612 Bonanza Plain Ave
Henderson, NV 89015

26
Southern Maryland Celtic Festival and Highland Gathering
P.O. Box 209
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

26-27
Culloden Highland Games and Scottish Festival
P.O. Box 109
Culloden, GA 31016-0109

To have your upcoming events included in the *Calendar*, please email thecraigellachie@hotmail.com or call Leigh Haines at 703-753-1964.

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From The Leadership

RAVES AND RANTS

David Grant, President

UK Society News – Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk assumed the presidency of the UK Society at the August, 2002, annual meeting at the Duthil Centre. He succeeds Sir Patrick Grant of Dalvey, who has stepped down due to the increased travel demands of his business. We look forward to working with Sir Archie as he assumes his new position, and congratulate Sir Patrick on his years of dedicated service and vision at the helm of Clan Grant. Well done, gentlemen!

Appointments – We have a new clan genealogist! Don Grant, from here in Atlanta, has agreed to serve and to be the repository of our various genealogical materials, much to the relief of those of us who were wondering what would happen to all those boxes. He can be reached at (404) 525-5648 or grant.donald@attbi.com. Thanks, Don, for stepping forward.

Games - We held our marathon Stone Mountain Games & Highland Festival here in October, with record crowds for the games and for Grants. Jane and I hosted our usual Friday night reception at Hampton Inn, with Jane providing the munchies and my playing pack mule, hauling a stash of beverages... Scottish and otherwise. We wound up with about 25 folks crowded into a small meeting room, with various groups spilling out into the hall. Richard contributed a favorite single malt, which unfortunately for him, turned out to be the most popular beverage of the evening. And Don Grant and Russell Grant (son of VP Allan) brought their children to represent a new generation of clansmen. Last year we had about half as many folks rattling around in the large room. Hard to plan ahead!

Saturday began with what we later learned was a surprise joint 80th birthday party (terrific genes, you two!) for Ed and Marie Grant from Amelia Island, FL. Sixteen of their extended family showed up from all points of the compass, dressed in red t-shirts with a modified Grant crest reading "Ed & Marie - 80." Whoever put all this together has logistical talents that could be used in the War on Terror!

The Saturday games set new records with more than 40,000 participants, and at times I thought they were all coming by our tent! I knew we would have at least 35, so I got the grounds officials to look the other way while we put up a new pop-up canopy behind the official tent. Then Ed and Marie showed up with their bunch and we were overflowing! What a nice problem to have, while we're enjoying visiting with old friends and making new ones. Wound up with more than eight pages of sign-ups!

Speaking of nice problems, I was spending most of my time peddling shirts while George, Lucille, Allan, Richard, Shirley, and others signed people up and

spread their wisdom about all things Grant. We unloaded ... er, ah, sold ... 20-some t-shirts and five golf shirts, and George sold a set of glasses. Very nice for the treasury!

Saturday night, we gathered at life members Maggie and Duane Kline's house to share a Honey-Baked Ham and a crowded table of wonderful dishes. We've enjoyed their hospitality for years, but they keep inviting us back! After the usual visiting and sharing of embellished stories, we had a mini board meeting (since VP Allan, sec. Phil, treas. Richard, board member John, and I were there, we had a quorum) with lots of discussion and very few decisions. I know you're as surprised as I am that so many Grants were perfectly willing to express themselves! (Yeah, right!)

Sunday was a little calmer, with visiting, marching in the Parade of Tartans, finishing off the ham and whatever else we could lay hands on, and making many round trips to the hospitality tent to keep everyone fortified (who says we don't have our priorities right?). The gorgeous weather held until about 3 PM, when we started closing down. We had lots of help putting everything under the main tent as the rains came, but wound up loading in a torrent after we finally got the car through the traffic. Ah, the smell of a wet kilt!

Special thanks to Allan, Don, John C., Eric, and all the others who helped us set up and take down. And special memories of our Flowers of the Forest, Eiko Grant, wife of VP Allan, who left us several weeks after she and Allan attended these games last year, and Col. Kyle Bowie, who passed away earlier this year. In prior years, West Pointer Kyle tried to organize us into something more than a rabble for the Parade of Tartans, with limited success (consider who his raw material was!).

Jacksonville Games - Mark your calendars for February 21-23, 2003. Local hosts are membership secretary Jean Grant Wilson and husband Jim. One of the nicest sponsors' receptions I've seen, plus Jean and Jim knock themselves out working with the games AND putting up with us ornery Grants!

Next AGM - June 6-8, 2003, at Arlington, TX. games. Our hosts are board member John and Helen Grant.

Scotland 2005 - August, 2005, the next "gathering of the clan" in Scotland.

Tartan - Convenor Emeritus George Grant has agreed to handle our new tartan material. It's 50/50 poly/cotton twill, lightweight, available for \$12 per yd. plus shipping. Call (423) 842-4581 or e-mail grant301@aol.com.

HELP!

Allan F. Grant, Vice-President

If you are reading this, you are probably a member of the Clan Grant Society, part of our extended family. We still have some states that do not have commissioners and we could use some help ensuring that they are covered.

The states in question are: Alaska, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Alabama, southern Arkansas, Idaho, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Iowa, Minnesota, western Wisconsin, western North Dakota, and South Dakota.

As you can see, we have vast territories that have no Clan Grant Society representation.

Many of our members do not come forward and volunteer their time because they are under the impression that being a commissioner is a hard and time-consuming job. That is not necessarily so and we have lots of clan officers and other commissioners that are more than willing to advise and help where they can.

Generally speaking commissioners pretty much run their own little domain. Most send out letters from time to time advising the members of

games and other happenings of general interest. They also set up at games or have others do so, and in general supervise clan Grant activities in their area. In addition they are the focal point for receiving information from Scottish organization and deciding what participation we should have, if any.

If you are currently a commissioner and feel that you could take on additional states that are adjacent to your current territory, or if you are not currently a commissioner but would like to learn more and possibly become a commissioner, contact:

Allan F. Grant
651 C. St.
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e-mail afg29@comcast.net.

If you don't wish to become a commissioner but would like to become more involved at some of the games, contact the commissioner for your area. Their names and addresses are listed in this issue of *The Craigellachie*.

Get involved in the workings of the Society. I believe you will find it an enjoyable experience and you will get to meet many more of your kinfolk in our extended family.

CLAN GRANT MEMBERSHIP FOR THE 4TH QUARTER

Jean Grant Wilson, Membership Secretary

With the cooler weather coming on us it really makes me think of my life in Scotland. It is so important for me to keep my Scottish ways and family traditions going. One way I do that is through Clan Grant Society membership, reading *The Craigellachie* and being involved with Scottish Highland Games.

A thank you to those of you who have sent in your birth dates so that we can track when our members reach their 80th birthday. So far in this 4th quarter two members have been awarded Life memberships because of their age, as per the Bylaws. Having said that...don't forget that just because you don't need to pay dues anymore, any financial donation is greatly appreciated!

Please get any change in your info to me quickly so that I can keep your records current. If your zip code or area codes are changed we need to update your records. All information on your records are held confidential and never go outside the Society. We also need to know about marriages, divorces, deaths, births! Don't forget that if you move and don't tell us, the Post Office will not forward your *Craigellachie*.

We also picked up four new members so far this quarter. A big welcome to you all! We hope you will enjoy your membership and participate in the activities of the Society. Do you have some expertise to offer? Remember, volunteering is only as "big a chore" as you make it but reaps great rewards!

I'd also like to urge you to keep the Listserve administrator aware of any changes in your email address. Be sure to include both your old and new address when doing so. That way, you will not miss any 'news flashes' going out to the membership. If you haven't added your email address yet, please do so by sending it to htp@parsonage.net. The Clan Grant Listserve is a private mailing list open **only** to members of the US Society. Names **will not** be sold or distributed in any way!

Just one last thought... memberships make great gifts to friends and family throughout the year. Whether it's Valentine's Day, a birthday, or any special occasion, a membership always fits and is always the right size. We must keep our heritage strong and what better way than this?

Clan Grant News

FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

COLONEL KYLE BOWIE

George H. Grant

Colonel Kyle Bowie, one of my best friends and a long time member of Clan Grant Society, died about 8:00 AM on September 3 at his home. He was buried with his wife and son in the cemetery at St. Johns Episcopal Church in Halifax, VA.

In 1979 at Grandfather Mountain Games, Kyle and Betty Bowie joined Clan Grant. He told me he contacted Elice MacDonald, Chairman of Clan Donald, to join that society. Bowie is listed as a Sept of the Donald's and the Grants. Elice asked him if his family was Catholic or Protestant. When Kyle responded Protestant, he was told he should join Clan Grant and he did. Kyle and Betty became enthusiastic members, attending games and functions all over the south and east.

We became very good friends. It turned out that our ancestors were from the same area of Virginia. His great grandfather served with the 57th Virginia Militia; mine with the 32nd Virginia Rifles. Both units were part of Armistead's Brigade, Pickett's Division, and took part in Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. We collected all available information on Gettysburg and Armistead's Brigade, including a book he found that listed every man enlisted in Pickett's Division and where he was from.

When our fourth child graduated from college, we took a six-week tour

of the eastern United States beginning in Richmond, VA. We visited battle sites of the "War between the States" in Virginia and Pennsylvania. Our trip continued through New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, and New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Canada.

When we started Betty said, "When this is over, we'll be the best of friends, or never speak again." She was right - we became best friends.

Kyle was born in southwestern Virginia, 25 miles from where he passed. His family were longtime Virginia settlers. His mother's brother, Owen Cheatham, founded the company that became Georgia Pacific.

Kyle was a graduate of West Point. He served 30 years as an officer in the Army. Kyle served two tours in Korea and two in Viet Nam. He was one of most highly decorated officers in the Army. He was awarded two Silver Stars, three Bronze Stars, three Purple Hearts, plus many other citations. Kyle nominated one of his men for the Congressional Medal of Honor and it was awarded posthumously.

Kyle Bowie was a man of impeccable integrity, high loyalty, and clear vision. Lucille and I and all of Kyle's friends will miss him but will never forget him.

SCOTLAND'S ARCHIVES ONLINE

John Pratt

Peter Pratt, of Aberdeenshire, Scotland, reports that a new website gives online access to Scotland's archives.

According to Scotland's Press and Journal, "A treasure trove of previously unseen Scottish history was yesterday made available on the internet for the first time. The move is part of a new partnership between new media publisher Scotland Online and The General Register Office for Scotland."

Deputy Justice Minister Richard Simpson officially launched the new website:

www.scotlandpeople.gov.uk. This website contains hundreds of years of historical data and should be invaluable to historians and genealogists alike. Material available will include statutory registers of births and deaths for Scotland, Scottish census information from the 19th Century and records of baptisms from between 1553 to 1854.

The site, which will be updated throughout the year, includes a number of free features, including a surname search and data on well known figures from Scottish history.

Dr. Richard Callison of Scotland Online said that by the end of 2003, Scotland will probably have the most complete online genealogical information source in the world.

Editor's Note: The membership would be very interested in the usefulness of this website. If anyone should access this information, please keep us informed and we would be happy to report on your experience.

SURPRISE, SURPRISE!

Allan F. Grant, Vice-President

On 19 October at the Stone Mountain Highland Games, Ed and Marie Grant from Florida received a big surprise and a wonderful birthday gift.

They both lost their first spouses so this is the second marriage for each and they were celebrating their 80th birthdays together. Both had children from their first marriage and these children got together and decided to surprise Mom and Dad.

And what a surprise it was! As Ed and Marie were about to sit down for breakfast, the whole troop marched in: children and their spouses, and their children - 16 in all.

They had special red t-shirts with the Grant Crest made up for the occasion, and in the place of "Stand Fast" had "Ed 80 Marie," so it was easy to see what a large contingent they were.

This was quite a feat to accomplish when you consider they came from all over the country and only got to stay one day. By Sunday they were all headed out to all points of the compass.

Ed and Marie were thrilled to say the least. Best birthday celebration they ever had.

OZARKS GRANTS TRACE HISTORY

*Steve Grant
Ozarks Commissioner*

It's a good thing economy of words is a Clan Grant characteristic! The editors and publishers of a new history book about Polk County, Missouri, have asked for a "write-up" of Ozarks Commissioner Steve Grant's ancestors. The maximum verbiage allowed is only 500 words!

Steve and his only brother Gary are descendants of two brothers who were their maternal and paternal great-great-grandfathers: James Morris Grant and Alfred Webster Grant. James and Alfred and their younger brother, Henry, moved from eastern Tennessee to the Springfield, Missouri (Greene County) area, before the Civil War. Then they settled 15 miles north in Polk County.

Steve and Gary are definitely "all" Grant. Their mother was a Grant and married one!

A SCOT'S FAREWELL

*When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me,
I want no tears in a gloom filled room.
Why cry for a soul set free?*

*Miss me a little but not for long,
And not with your head bowed low.
Remember the love that we once shared.
Miss me...but let me go.*

*For this is a journey we all must take
And each must go alone.
It's all a part of the Master's plan -
A step on the road to home.*

*When you are lonely and sick of heart,
Go to the Friend we know
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds -
Miss me...but let me go.*

Join Lucille and me and hoist a toast to a fine, fine person who is an example to us all.

Clan Grant News

LONG-STANDING NY COMMISSIONER RETIRES FROM CLAN DUTIES

David Grant
New York State Commissioner

On Labor Day weekend, my wife and I encountered not one, but two heroes. Champions both, not described in dusty archives, but living heroes, Hal and Beryl Grant, Clan Grant Society's Commissioners and "first couple" in New York State, have over the last several decades manned their Grant tent, a sort of moveable "seat of the clan," at countless Celtic festivals across the Empire State and surrounding areas, with the very distinguished and tireless assistance of James Grant, Deputy Commissioner based in Syracuse, NY.

All their efforts have kept the Grant's symbolic fires burning, a signal to welcome back long lost family. Hal presided over the formal dinner on Labor Day weekend at the Celtic Festival at Altamont, NY, with ease and grace, and extended perfect hospitality to all who approached the Clan Grant Tent on Saturday.

The benefit of Beryl's painstaking genealogical research is shared with all who come with a need to know about the name and a desire to find clues as to how they uniquely fit into the unfinished puzzle that is the ancient and noble Clan Grant.

Her children, especially daughter Cathy, have inherited her enthusiasm for all things Grant and warmly help visitors further their search for information.

Although he has been recently battling illness, Hal's charm can only be described as chief-like. He has an ability to lead even reticent inquirers to sign up for membership in the Clan Grant Society. He knows that they need the newsletter to stay connected, and he knows that the Clan Grant Society needs dedicated new members.

We watched with true admiration as a steady stream of his friends from other clans came by to greet this great gentleman who has contributed so very much to American's understanding of Scottish culture and genealogy.

And we were deeply touched by his no-nonsense manner at the end of the day when he and Beryl removed the Official Clan Grant banner from its long-standing position beside their tent and handed it to us. No speech, no pomp, and no ceremony was required to convey what is expected and necessary of one who would assume the role of New York State's Clan Grant Society commissioner. His example is a lofty benchmark, a high rock, not unlike Craigellachie.

And so what began for me and my household as a casual "filling in for Hal and Beryl" at some of the smaller regional Celtic festivals when health issues demanded they slow down a bit, has taken on much greater significance as we have experienced for ourselves how much a Clan presence means to those who seek a sense of belonging and as we have come to better understand the practical aspects of getting there and setting up and remaining focused and available when so many delightful distractions beckon, or when weather is less than pleasant.

Hal's grandfather and my great grandfather were brothers, William and Elmer Grant.

My father's name is also Harold Grant - "Hank" to most - but some people call him "the other Harold Grant," a compliment certainly as Hal's legend is told. Except for his own health issues he might have received the banner from Hal.

So we do share a traceable patrimony, but perhaps more importantly, we share a conviction that in these times especially, it is important for children to know their family history, that it is our job to see to it that they do, and that lost family can find their way back.

When at last, truck packed full, Hal and Beryl drove away from the park, it seemed a lot like watching the hero and his best gal ride away toward new adventures. He expects us to Stand Fast and to tend those Clan Grant signal fires. We must not disappoint, and we must not forget to thank him, Beryl, and James Grant for all they've done for our great big worldwide family!

A big STANDFAST to all of them!

As for the future, I plan to establish a regional clan website with regional schedules and information. We have also amassed a very significant library of old books from Scotland with many references to the Clan, including some very rare independently published volumes. We will keep everyone informed when we have time to dig through some of them.

We invite all with Clan Grant connections or interest located in the New York State area to contact us if we can be of any help and we hope to see you at the next event!

MORE GRANTS ON PARADE NATIONWIDE



Clan Grant at Enumclaw.



Jim Suttie (San Jose), Carol Grant (Seattle), and Robin Achterberg (Antioch) at the Modesto Games.

My Heart is in the Highlands:

My heart is in the Highlands, my heart is not here;

JOURNAL FROM SCOTLAND JULY 19 – AUG 9, 2002

Dr. Christopher Pratt and
Mrs. Jimmie Cochran Pratt
74th Chief Board of Directors
New York Caledonian Club

Many people ask about traveling in Scotland, and we always answer quickly that it is easy and among the best destinations. We have been fortunate to travel to Scotland about every other year, and this was the most recent trip.

ARRIVAL

Leaving from LGA for Philadelphia and our Trans-Atlantic flight to Manchester on Friday, July 19, Jimmie and I cooked in the sweltering commuter plane with no AC on one of those infamous HHH days in NYC. Hazy, Hot and Humid all along the east coast of the US with late thunderstorms in Philadelphia; flights were delayed as a result of power outages at the airport. We arrived late at MAN to 12 C and rain on Saturday morning.

MILNGAVIE

Due to heavy rain, construction, traffic, and accidents, it took all day to drive north to Milngavie, near Glasgow, where we visited our dear good friends, our matron of honor and best man. They greeted us with fresh Salar salmon salad sandwiches from South Uist and they were delicious!

"Milngavie" – Another of those names designed to separate the locals from the travelers! Pronounced, would you believe, "Mill-guy," with the accent on the second syllable, it is often said that the name derives from "Gavin's Mill." Another possibility is that it comes from the Gaelic, *muileann gaoithe*, meaning windmill.

GAVIN'S MILL, MILNGAVIE

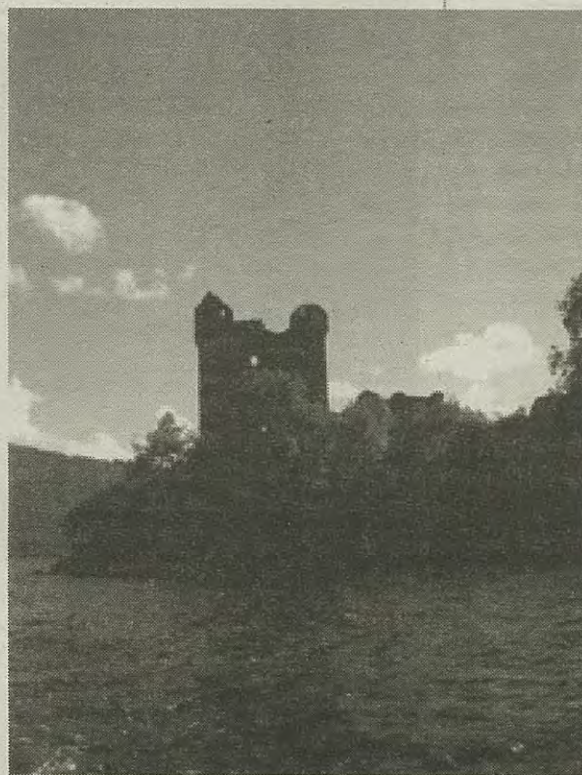
The early history of Gavin's mill is uncertain, but is inextricably linked with that of the village of Milngavie. It has been proposed that the name "Milngavie" is derived from the Gaelic, *Muillinn Dhadhidh*, meaning "Mill of David," and it has further been suggested that the David concerned is King David I (1124-1153).

It is certain that there was a mill in existence here by the time of King David IV in the late fifteenth century.

Sunday, July 21, and our wedding anniversary, was a nice day and got better as we went along. First we went to Arrochar on Loch Long where we were welcomed back to the church where we were married by the good Rev. Dane Sherrard and our

friends.

From Arrochar, we drove around the loch and southwest toward Bute. Along the way, our friends showed us



Castle Urquhart's Grant Tower as seen from Loch Ness.

ancient gravestones behind the church at Clachan that are among some now being preserved in small buildings erected for the purpose.

We took the ferry across the little hop from Colintrave to the Isle of Bute. Bute is very much worth a visit, not least of all for visiting Mount Stuart house, which is the home of the Marquis of Bute – we'd heard our friends raving about it.

MOUNT STUART

In the whole of Britain you are unlikely to come across a stately home as breathtaking and romantic as Mount Stuart. The house is a masterpiece of Victorian Gothic imagination. You feel a sense of wonderment in every room, from the magnificent marble hall to the radiantly white marble-chapel. The 300-acre grounds, with their various gardens and glorious vistas over the Firth of Clyde, are a haven of tranquility.

Mount Stuart is the family seat of the Stuarts of Bute. The Bute family are direct descendants of King Robert the Bruce, whose daughter Marjorie married Walter, the then "Steward of Bute," in 1315. Their son, King Robert II of Scotland, thus became the first Stuart King. The Stuart name is derived from the hereditary office of "Steward of Bute" held by the family since 1157. The hereditary appointments of "Sheriff of Bute" and "Captain and Keeper of Rothesay Castle" date

Continued page 10.

OUR FIRST TRIP TO SCOTLAND

K. Leigh Haines

DRUMNADROCHIT

Having joined Clan Grant last year, my husband Allen decided it was time to do more than study his roots – it was time to visit them. So for our first trip to Scotland, we focused on two towns prominent in Grant history: Drumnadrochit, the town closest to Urquhart Castle (though better known to non-Grants as the home of the Loch Ness Monster); and Grantown-on-Spey.

Our first adventure was driving from the airport to Drumnadrochit. Allen had driven on the left side of the road before and adapted quickly. I did not. Allen promptly posting a sign in the back window that read: "Keep back – American driving."

While I am sure this warning heartened many drivers, I also believe that all of Scotland breathed easier when I flatly refused to drive again that trip.

The drive itself was incredible.



A pipist being judged at the Drumnadrochit Games.

Within a matter of minutes, we passed flatland and mountains, residential areas and farmland, and long stretches of woods, all changing color and texture. The sky itself was constantly shifting from blue to green to gray, sometimes brilliantly clear, sometimes white with towering clouds or obscured by rain.

The actual town of Drumnadrochit had a main street and very little else. On one end of town were a few hotels and gift shops that catered to tourists in search of the Loch Ness Monster. The

town itself consisted mainly of bed and breakfasts that served the more seasoned travelers who were interested in the beauty of the Loch. The other end of town leads to Urquhart Castle and a number of hiking trails with names like Craigmonie, Divach Falls, and Cnoc a' Bhuachaille. One afternoon, we took the Divach Falls trail and found ourselves overlooking a waterfall that is said to be next to the home where *Peter Pan* was written.

We were fortunate enough to stay in a cottage in the center of town. We soon discovered that homes in Scotland traditionally have names instead of numbers; we stayed in the "Wee Fiddler's Cottage" for a week. With a 5'8" ceiling upstairs, the cottage was true to its name. And at 6'5", Allen became something of a local celebrity as the tall American who was staying there.

Fortunately, there was not only a Wee Fiddler's Cottage, but also a Wee Fiddler's Restaurant complete with a Wee Fiddler's whisky bar – a Scottish tradition that we did our best to participate in.

Yes, we did visit the Loch Ness Monster museum. We did take a boat tour of the Loch guided by someone who may – or may not – have taken the monster's picture. But it was Castle Urquhart that had brought us to Drumnadrochit. We took some breathtaking pictures of the castle on

our boat tour, some that may – or may not – include Nessie.

We also visited the castle itself. It is now no more than ruins with a few remaining towers. However, enough remains to get a sense of the original layout and of the site itself as one of the few defensible positions on the Loch.

The castle now has a visitors' center where we could study its history. However, more than one

Notes From "Home"

My heart is in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer. -Robert Burns-

Scotsman, with a role of his eyes, called this the "commercial" history of Castle Urquhart (see insert). The proof? As one local put it, the castle and visitors' center were being run by Historic Scotland – we nodded knowingly – and the documentary that was shown at the visitors' center had been put together by the History Channel – and they believed *anything* they were told.

We were very fortunate that on our last day, Drumnadrochit held its annual Scottish Games. They were very much like the American adaptation... until it started to rain. Until then, we had not experienced the rain so often associated with a typical Scottish day.

When the skies opened up shortly after the opening ceremony, we fully expected the Games to be cancelled. Instead, raincoats, umbrellas, boots, even baby carriage covers appeared out of nowhere. Both the children and the adult athletes kept competing as though nothing was happening. And us? Along with all the other tourists, we could be found huddled in the one-and-only

food tent, waiting for a break in the weather that never came. But as long as they continued to serve some of the best Scottish beef sandwiches we had ever had, no one complained.

The Games were a very fitting



Allen Haines at Divach Falls.

close to our last day in Drumnadrochit, and it was now time to head on to Grantown-on-Spey.

To be continued next issue.

WHAT I DID THIS SUMMER

Howard Parsons
Clan Grant Past President

Folks,

I just flew in from three weeks in Scotland and boy are my arms tired!

That ancient one-liner aside, I was fortunate to spend three weeks on the far side of the pond, thanks in part to my lovely wife Judith. While we had originally intended to take a trip together this year, it turned out that she did not have enough vacation time available to make this trip any more than a fly-right-over and then fly-right-back sort of jaunt. Judi was gracious enough to allow me to make a solo journey, but fear not! She received a seven day cruise in the Caribbean as a consolation prize in the spring.

The following are a few notes and items of interest gleaned from my afternoon in Nethybridge. They are as correct as I can remember them and if anyone has a more correct version of the facts, please feel free to interject. After 27 years of marriage, I have come to be quite used to being wrong most of the time.

Our Chief is in good health, all things considered. When I met him, his arm was in a sling due to a snapped collar-bone. He has been hard at work renovating "The Manse" next to Duthil Kirk. He knew there was a good bit of work to be done when he bought the place and he is finding out just how much there really is. With any luck, he'll have it ready for us in '05.

Our Chief's mother passed away a little over two months ago. Though this was, naturally, a blow to him, Sir James feels that considering her health and physical condition, it was

probably all for the best.

Sir Patrick Grant of Dalvy, chairman of the UK Society, stepped down from the post at the General Meeting held at Duthill the morning after the Nethybridge event. Succeeding him is Sir Archibald Grant of Moneymusk. Sir Patrick said that he felt that some fresh energy and new ideas were in order for the UK Society and they are taking their cue from their American cousins who have started passing the mantle of leadership around.

The future of Castle Grant is in doubt again. The most recent purchaser, a man from the Grantown area, has apparently bitten off more than he can chew and, among other things, is unable to pay the electricity bill. Consequently, the power has been shut off and there has been a bit of vandalism. There is no speculation as to what will happen next. This latest development caused the UK Annual dinner to be switched at the eleventh hour from Castle Grant to the Cairngorm Hotel in Aviemore.

The UK Society has been given two old photographs of the earliest gatherings of the Clan Grant Society at Castle Grant. Bob Grant, our host and raconteur from the gathering in 2000, has made copies of these suitable for framing.

There were a few things on hand but it seems that most are anticipating the next international gathering in 2005. While there has been speculation as to the programme to be laid on for this event, nothing definite has been set down as yet.

Finally, I am able to pass on greetings and best wishes from our Chief and all the "cousins" on the east side of the pond. There were a lot of familiar faces asking about how things were with the US society and they are looking forward to seeing us again in the not too distant future.

CASTLE URQUHART

According to Historic Scotland:

Urquhart Castle has seen many battles and sieges throughout its 500-year history. Evidence of some kind of fortified residence on the promontory goes back to Pictish times during a missionary visit by St. Columba about AD 580.

The first record of a castle at Urquhart comes more than 600 years after Columba's visit. By the year 1250 Alan Durward was lord of Urquhart. As brother-in-law of King Alexander III, Alan was one of the most influential men in Scotland, widely recognized as the power behind the throne.

Soon after the Wars of Independence began in 1296, the English Army captured Urquhart. Within two years, the castle was back in Scottish hands during the resistance, led by William Wallace. Over the next half century it changed hands many times.

Urquhart's stirring history continued with frequent raids by the Macdonald Lords of the Isles in the 15th and 16th centuries. In 1509, the Chief of Clan Grant was granted the castle. It was last inhabited by Government troops following the Jacobite Rising of 1689.

Allen and I learned that in 1884, Caroline, Countess Dowager of Seafield, widow of the seventh earl of Grant, assumed control of the Grant estate. She was considered a great benefactress of Strathspey and Aviemore, and was very much respected and beloved. She is best known for having planted 50,000,000 pine trees in Strathspey and Aviemore alone, and we heard her referred to more than once as the "Scottish Johnny Appleseed."

When she died in 1911, her will stipulated that Castle Urquhart be turned over to the state.

On the second half of our trip to Grantown-on-Spey, we learned that the Countess was also responsible for having the Grant burial vault sealed after her own death.

We have not been able to learn her reasons and would be very interested in any insight into the "non-commercial" version of Castle Urquhart's history and the Countess.



The children's Scottish Dance competition at Drumnadrochit.

Clan Grant History

FOLLOWING UP WITH THE HEROES OF THE USS ALBERT W. GRANT

Stoney Grant and Mark Hylton

INTRODUCTION

Recently we were invited to attend a reunion of the crew of the World War II destroyer known as the USS Albert W. Grant. Our intent was to interview these men and gather stories about their time onboard the destroyer that bore the name of one of the Clan Grant, that of Rear Admiral Albert W. Grant. We received so much more than we had hoped for, not only in interesting stories about their service but as an insight about the character of the men who were willing to place themselves in harm's way for their families and their country in a time of uncertainty and national emergency. This is their story told in their words. It is not a story of a ship but rather a story of those that made the ship come alive and allows it to live on, years after it has been consigned to the scrap yards. We give you now, "The USS Albert W. Grant."

THE USS ALBERT W. GRANT

A Fletcher class destroyer with a hull number of 649 had its keel laid down on December 30, 1942, and six months later, on May 29, 1943, it was launched. On November 24, 1943, it was commissioned with the name Albert W. Grant and became one of many such ships that were produced during the war years that preceded and followed her commissioning.

Like the other destroyers of the Fletcher class, this one was armed with 5 five inch 38 caliber deck guns, 2 five tube torpedo launchers, 10 forty millimeter and 7 twenty millimeter machine guns, and other weapons to accomplish her mission as a warship. The ship could accommodate a crew of 329 officers and men.

Even after the ship was commissioned, it still was not really the USS Albert W. Grant, for a ship does not become a lady and earn the name she was given until a crew has taken her through her paces. That began on November 24, 1943, under the command of Commander T.A. Nisewaner, when the ship got underway from Charleston, SC, for a shakedown cruise to Bermuda. Also onboard were Cecil L. Albertson, Emmett R. Crump, Jr., James Bert Farley, Robert Kelly McGuinnis, J.C. Moore, and Ralph E. Natali, all of whom, with the exception of J.C. Moore (who was represented by his daughter), were present at this year's reunion.

MEMORIES FROM THE CREW

Ralph Natali, who is one of the plank owners (one who was assigned to the ship at the time of commissioning), spoke briefly about that first



U.S.S. Albert W. Grant, Destroyer Class, DD649

cruise. It was, for the most part, uneventful. Like most first cruises, there were glitches in the machinery that would need to be repaired or altered. It was also a time of adjustment for the crew as they began to work with each other for the first time as a crew underway. Two months later, the ship was back at Charleston for minor alterations and then headed for Norfolk, VA, to join up with the new carrier, USS Hornet, to act as escort on the transit to Pearl Harbor. They transited through the Panama Canal, which had only been completed about twenty years earlier. Other ships from San Diego, CA, joined the group before arriving at Pearl Harbor.

It would not be long, just another month, before the crew would see their first action of the war. They would engage in picket duty, inshore patrol duty, and help to cover the landing forces landing at Hollandia, New Guinea. Next the crew would be assigned to screen the carriers during air strikes on Truk, an island in the Caroline Island chain. It would be their job to confront enemy ships and planes in protection of the carriers. They would be the ones that would have to place themselves between torpedoes and the main battle group. They were truly expendable. After a brief stay back at Pearl Harbor, the USS Albert W. Grant set sail for Eniwetok in the Marianas, and on June 11, 1944, sailed for Saipan to provide gun support.

Kelly McGuinnis recalled for us an incident while the ship lay off the beach at Saipan. The ship was doing call fire in support of the Marines on the beach. At one point, a group of Marines had cornered some Japanese

soldiers high on a cliff. The fighting was fierce and the Marines were held back. The skipper of the USS Albert W. Grant radioed the Marines to back off to a safe distance so that the ship's guns could be trained on the enemy position but the Marines refused the offer. This caused the standoff between the Japanese and the Marines to continue well into the afternoon.

The ship's lookouts saw an enemy soldier jump into the water and start swimming toward the ship. The skipper called for the whale boat to be lowered in hopes of capturing the Japanese soldier. Kelly was the coxswain for the boat crew. There was also a gun crew placed onboard

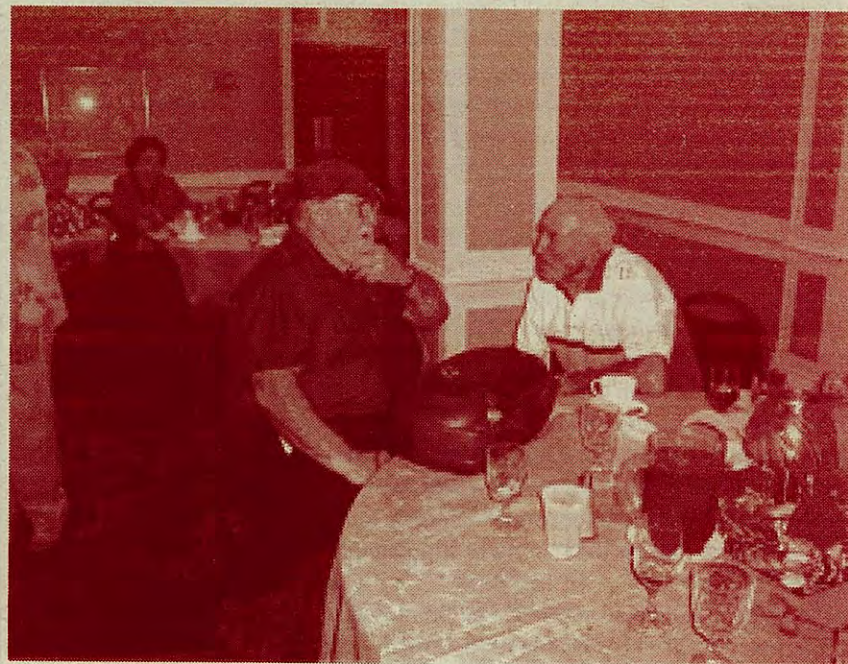
to support the operation. As the boat drew closer to shore, a Japanese machine gun and mortar position open fired on them.

Kelly looked to the boat officer for what to do next. While he waited, he continued to maneuver the boat to avoid the enemy fire. He said the officer was most probably scared just like the rest of them, no super human courage reigned in that situation, just real men in real danger. The officer seemed confused and did not give any orders, either to continue or to turn back. It was at this point that Kelly took it upon himself to turn the boat around and head back toward the ship. To this day he just has to close his eyes and he can clearly see the soldier motioning for them to come back.

When they got back to the ship, the officer regained his composure and asked the skipper if the skipper wanted them to go back and pick up the enemy soldier. The executive officer, Hunt Hamill, who passed away earlier this year, talked with the skipper about the machine gun fire and mortar rounds that the enemy had brought to bear on the boat the first time and that they had been fortunate to get back to the ship. The skipper decided to abandon the attempt at capture. Kelly said, "I believe that we were saved by the XO that day and we will never forget him for that."

When asked about John R. Pratt, Sr., the father of John R. Pratt, Jr. (who is a member of Clan Grant), Kelly told us that John R. Pratt, Sr., was a good friend of his and that

Continued page 10.



Stoney Grant interviews a crewmember.

Clan Grant History

HISTORICAL NOTES ON SOME SURNAMES AND PATRONYMICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCOTTISH CLAN GRANT

James H. Grant, Hickory, NC

INTRODUCTION

The surname *Grant* first appeared in the annals of the Highlands of Scotland in the 13th Century, however it was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that the name was widely embraced by the many descendants and followers of the Chiefs of Grant. Although the name *Grant* was used exclusively by the Chief and frequently by the lesser barons and tacksmen¹ of the Clan, patronymics² were the standard name form used by most tenants and tradesmen in the country of the Grants prior to the 18th century. In some districts they continued to be used well into the 19th century. Many patronymics evolved into surnames.

Even after surnames supplanted the use of patronymics, not all the inhabitants of Strathspey and the other districts held by the Grants adopted the name *Grant*. In fact, a close study of parochial records would reveal that the name *Grant* was actually in the minority in its own clan lands. There were many *MacDonalds*, *MacKenzies*, *MacGregors*, *MacPhersons*, *MacGillivrays*, and *MacIntoshes*, as well as *Camerons*, *Cummings*, *Frasers*, *Gordons*, *Rosses*, *Shaws* and *Stewart/Stuarts* who lived in the lands of the Clan Grant³. Although bearing the names of other well-known clans, these families lived among the Grants, worked and socialized with the Grants, attended kirk with the Grants, married Grants, and were generally loyal tenants and followers of the Chiefs and Chieftains of the Clan.

Conversely, not all people named Grant were members of the Clan Grant *per se*. There were significant numbers of Grants who lived in districts outside the lands held by the Clan. It must be assumed that their allegiance was not to the Chief of their own name, but to the local lairds and chieftains in their places of residence.

There were many other family names associated with the districts of Strathspey, Strath' on⁴, Glenlivet, Glenmoriston, and Glenurquhart. Although these families had surnames other than *Grant*, they were inextricably linked to the Clan by marriage, occupation, and place of residence. Consequently, they must be included among the ranks of loyal clansmen. Some of these families had – and continue to have – long and significant historical affiliations with the Clan Grant and its lands. Some are erroneously called *septs* of the Clan. The concept of “septhood” is extremely complex and cannot be adequately treated in a survey such as this.

Some 18th Century parish records include entries in the form *John Grant or Bain*, *Alexander Grant or Roy*, *William Grant or Miller*. These entries occurred when the minister recorded a nominee for baptism by both his father's surname and his mother's maiden name. For example, *John Grant or Bain* might be the son of James Grant and Isobel Bain, whereas *John Grant or Roy* might be the son of another James Grant and his wife, Elspet Roy. John Grant and James Grant were such common names in Strathspey that an impromptu system had to be devised by the parish clergy to distinguish one John and James from another. As one might expect, the most common pair of names in this style was *Grant or Grant* indicating that both parents were surnamed Grant.

Another interesting patronymic style noted among the Grants during the 18th and early 19th centuries was the use of an *alias* to designate a specific family descended from a common ancestor. These names occurred in Strathspey, but were particularly common in Strath' on and Glenlivet, as *Grant alias Bowie*, *Grant alias McRobie*, *Turner alias Grant*, etc. These aliases prevailed for a number of generations and distinguished one family of Grants from another. Presumably the *Grant alias Bowie's* descended from an original Grant ancestor with blond hair; the *Grant alias McRobie's* descended from a forbear named Robert Grant; and the *Turner alias Grant* line was established by a Grant who was apparently skilled in the use of the lathe.

CHRISTIAN NAMES

The most frequently occurring male Christian names among the Grants in their Clan lands during the 18th Century were the following: (1) John, (2) James, (3) Alexander, (4) William, (5) Donald, (6) Peter, (7) Robert, (8) Patrick, (9) Thomas, and (10) Duncan.

The most popular female names were: (1) Margaret, (2) Elspet/Elizabeth, (3) Ann/Anna, (4) Janet, (5) Isobel, (6) Jean/Jane, (7) Mary, (8) Helen, (9) Christian, and (10) Katherine.

SURNAMES AND PATRONYMICS

The inclusion of a name on the list below does not imply that it was affiliated only with the Clan Grant, nor does it imply that these names are *septs* of the Clan. In fact, almost all the names were associated with other clans and districts. The list is simply a compilation of names that had, and continue to have in many cases, a significant affiliation with the Clan Grant and its lands. It must be further

understood that this is only a partial list. A thorough examination of parochial records and Grant documents could yield many more names and patronymics that have Clan affiliations. Patronymics are recorded in the “Mc” form, although “Mac” and other patronymic forms were commonly used.

Bain, Bayne, Bayn
Burgess, Burges
Clark, Clerk, Clerach
Dow, Due, Doe, McIndowie

Gow, Gove

Lawson, Louson, Lason
McAlaster, McAlester, McAlister

McDonald, Donaldson, Donalach,
Donald, McDonald, McCondill

McKerron, McKeran

McSwene, McQuene, McQueen

Miller, Millar, Millart
Reoch, Riach, Rioch, McInreoch,
McInriach

Taylor, Tailzeor, Tailor, McIntayler

Bowie, Buy, Buie, Bouy
Cattanach
Cruickshank, Crookshank
Finlay, McFinlay, McInlay,
McFinlaroy
Gregorach, Grigor, Gregory,
McGregor
Maggach, Margach, Mugach
McConnachie, McDonnachie,
McCondochie, M' Conquhy,
McKonachy

McJockie, McIockie, McJokie,
McKiokie
McRobert, McRobie, McRobbie,
Robertson
McWilliam, McWillie, McCullie,
McKullie, Williamson
More, Mor, Moir, Mohr

Roy
Turner, McInturne

1 Lease holders

2 A name form based on the name of a paternal ancestor, (*i.e.*, Iain McDonald = John, the son of Donald).

3 In this report, the “lands of the Clan Grant” are those lands formerly held by the Chief of the Clan, his cadets, and followers in the parishes of (a) Duthil and Rothiemurchus, (b) Abernethy and Kincardine, (c) Cromdale, Inverallan, and Advie, (d) Invera'on, (e) Kirkmichael (f) Knockando, (g) Aberlour, (h) Glenurquhart and Glenmoriston, and (i) Monymusk.

4 Strathavon and the parish of Inveravon are frequently written as they are pronounced locally – Strath' on and Invera'on, or Strath' en/Invera'en.

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Reaney, P.H., *A Dictionary of British Surnames*, edited by R.M. Wilson.

Old Parochial Records, derived primarily from the International Genealogical Index, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the General Records Office of Scotland: Parishes – Duthil and Rothiemurchus, Abernethy and Kincardine, Cromdale, Inverallan, and Advie, Invera'on, Kirkmichael, Knockando, Aberlour, and Urquhart and Glenmoriston, and Monymusk. “Tacksmen and Subtenants in Glenlivet 1761” – from The Summary of Glenlivet CR8/188, The Gow MS. Appendix, 1873, by John Gow alias Smith, and Hidden Families – Aliases and Patronymics in Upper Banffshire (all courtesy of Stuart Mitchell).

The Grants in Sutherland, by Miss Margaret W. Grant, Golspie.

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Birth Records of the Glen Urquhart Grants 1740-1773, ed. by Philip D. Smith, Ph.D., 1983.

Selected MS. histories relating to the Clan Grant.

Note: Comments or questions regarding this article can be addressed to: standfast@charter.net

Continued from *Journal from Scotland*, page 6.

back to 1385 and 1498 respectively.

The original Mount Stuart house was built in 1719 by the second Earl of Bute (1682-1723). Following a disastrous fire on December 3, 1877, in which the central part of the building was destroyed, the third Marquess of Bute embarked upon his ambitious plan to build the existing house, although parts of the project remained incomplete at the time of his death in 1900. A programme of major renovation and refurbishment was carried out by the late sixth Marquess before the house was opened to the public in 1995.

THE MARBLE HALL

Described as "the dark and mysterious heart of Mount Stuart," this great hall of rare Italian marble soars to a height of some eighty feet. Themes from astrology and astronomy form the design of the stunning vaulted ceiling, complete with "the stars in their courses" and the remarkable zodiacal windows. At the time of construction, stories were rife as to the mystical nature of the design of Mount Stuart. Lord Rosebery, a future Prime Minister, commenting in 1885: "Rumours point to it as something beyond the Arabian nights."

We would certainly recommend it and would go back there anytime; it's a fabulous place. And we had a lovely lunch at the tearoom there with the best lemon tart for dessert. Mount Stuart House was built by marquises of yesteryear who were fabulously wealthy. Their fortune came from the export of Welsh coal after funding the building of Cardiff docks in the early 18th Century, and the father of the present one was one of the prime movers in getting the new Museum of Scotland set up. He was a real lover of art, and commissioned loads of contemporary artists, sculptors, etc., to add to the already spectacular house.

The chapel is built entirely of Carrara marble from Tuscany, and a railway was specially built to land all the marble on the island and take it to the house. There are crystals in the stain glass windows at the top of the main hall and as the sun moves around the house and shines through the windows the crystals splash color all over the walls.

We also visited Rothesay Castle, a favorite residence of the Stewart Kings. This is a wonderful example of a 13th Century circular castle enclosure with 16th Century forework containing the great hall. The castle was attacked by Vikings in its earlier days.

We purchased our membership in Historic Scotland at Rothesay Castle. We visited the Victorian Public Bathrooms and had the best fish and chips in Rothesay. We then took the ferry from Rothesay to Wemyss Bay and drove on, stopping in a little pub in Glasgow for some live music and a wee dram. Later at home in Milngavie, we had a delicious dinner and ate the last of our wedding cake which had kept frozen for us. It had been dropped, but was no worse for it.

Monday was cloudy and chilly, but no rain. We had meetings in the morning at University of Glasgow and in the afternoon with the Chamber of Commerce in West Dunbartonshire at the Tell House. In between we had a great lunch

with friends from the UofG at the famous Ubiquitous Chip at 12 Ashton Lane in Glasgow.

The Chip is one of the most prestigious restaurants in Britain serving traditional and original Scottish fare using the finest local produce in beautiful surroundings.

Tuesday it rained in Milngavie, but we drove out of it as we headed north toward Glencoe. We stopped at Luss to see the renovations (900,000 pounds) to the church there, but could only see the outside, so we walked down to the banks of Loch Lomond.

WANDERING WALLABIES HOP ASHORE

Drivers admiring the scenery along the shores of Loch Lomond have a new hazard to look out for - wallabies hopping across the road. Fortunately, they are very shy and hop off as soon as humans appear, whether in cars or not. It appears that a small number of wallabies were brought to Inchconnan Island in the middle of the loch in the 1970s, opposite the village of Luss. They have been breeding like, well, wallabies, and now some of them have decided the island is overcrowded, so they have hopped (more likely they swam) to the shore. They have been seen in Luss itself and police are now considering putting up warning signs. But who would believe notices saying "Watch out for wallabies" on the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond?

From there we continued north to Glencoe and camped in Glen Etive with the midgies.

On Wednesday, there was not much rain and we drove to Skye by way of our favorite road from Shiel Bridge over the mountain to the ferry from near Glenelg to Kylerhea on Skye.

Jimmie discovered a great old stone bridge where we stopped to take photos and explore. We had planned to visit a friend at Sabhal Mor Ostaig at Sleite on Skye, but did not get there in time, so next time.

PUTTING ISLAY ON GAELIC MAP

A new £2 million education centre for the Gaelic language and culture opened on the island of Islay this week. 700 years ago, Islay was the location of the court of the Lord of the Isles at Finlaggan and was the heart of Gaelic culture at that time. Over the years, the Gaelic language has struggled on Islay, with the number of speakers falling from 50% in 1971 to around 20% today. The education centre will be linked to the University of the Islands and will be overseen by Sabhal Mor Ostaig, the Gaelic College on Skye. The Rampant Scotland Newsletter

We took the ferry from Uig to Lochmaddy on North Uist, and drove to Benbecula where we camped next to the Dark Island Hotel and the Liniclate community school.

On Thursday there were some showers off and on during the day as we explored the Uists.

To be continued next issue.

Continued from *Following Up with the Heroes of the USS Albert W. Grant*, page 8.

John is a great person. Kelly was sad that John could not attend this year's reunion, because of health concerns.

John is remembered for being the high diver of the ship. He would climb up on the upper lookout platform on the ship during swim call and do a perfect swan dive into the water. Kelly said that John is someone that you can be proud of knowing.

While at Saipan, the USS Albert W. Grant was involved in action against Tinian, also part of the Marianas Island group. Ralph Natali tells of a radio communication between two Marine units that he had overheard. Someone yelled into the radio that he thought he saw someone moving around outside the perimeter. Thinking it was a Japanese soldier, the Marine was preparing to shoot him. Just then, another Marine told him that because the first Marine was off watch, he needed to go out and capture the enemy soldier. When the first Marine got to where he had spotted the movement, he found out that it wasn't the enemy at all, but instead, just a cow that had gotten loose. He was going to shoot it but then the Second marine said, "No, Lets milk her first. I'm an old farm boy and I sure could use some fresh milk..." Ralph Natali didn't say what finally became of the cow, but she probably supplied a large cup of milk and a steak dinner to those Marines on the beach.

The USS Albert W. Grant next saw action in the Palaus conducting pre-invasion bombardment and supporting the landings on Peleliu and Angaur. The next stop was the Philippines for the landings at Leyte Gulf and the invasion of the Philippines to liberate the Philippines from the Japanese. The USS Albert W. Grant provided protection for the USS Crosby, a fast transport that landed troops on Suluan Island, Philippines. Gun support for those troops was the USS Albert W. Grant's main focus.

Thomas McGrady recounted an episode while operating off the coast of the Philippines during this invasion. The USS Albert W. Grant, the USS Pennsylvania, and the USS Honolulu were maneuvering along the coast with the USS Pennsylvania off their starboard quarter. The USS Albert W. Grant was running close in just off the beach with the USS Honolulu up ahead.

Suddenly, planes came in from over the island. They had come in so fast that it was hard to identify them at first, but when the planes dropped two bombs that just missed hitting the USS Pennsylvania, there was no longer any doubt as to the planes' identity. Torpedo planes then dove for the USS Honolulu and let go with their payloads, striking the USS Honolulu which suffered only minor damage.

Meanwhile, the USS Albert W. Grant was taking fire as the planes strafed the ship. It was able to maneuver to escape any major damage.

Cecil Albertson remembered that while they were firing the main guns

in support of the landings, a cease fire was ordered. The guns were hot because of the firing and they had just been reloaded for the next salvo. The guns had to be cleared. Just then, the fire control officer spotted an enemy ship making a run down the coast. The fire control officer then ordered all five gun mounts to come to bear on the enemy ship and fire. They blew a huge gaping hole in the side of the enemy ship and sent her to the bottom. After seeing that, it brought home just how much more damage those shells were doing to the island. Cecil said of the Japanese ship, "They had sent him on to heaven where he said he wanted to go and we haven't seen him since."

Their next taste of battle would place them on the receiving end of the gun.

Surigao Straits, the narrows south of Mindinao, was a vital seaway through which the Japanese task force was determined to pass and thwart the efforts of the Allied forces landing on the beach. The Philippines were a strategic base of operations for the Japanese that had to be defended at all costs.

HER "FINEST HOUR"

The American task force was divided into three separate groups. The squadron to which the USS Albert W. Grant was assigned was commanded by Captain Smoot. This was where the USS Albert W. Grant would show what kind of character she had, what her crew was made of - *it was to be her finest hour.*

It was around four o'clock on the morning of October 24, 1944, when the USS Albert W. Grant, along with the USS Richard P. Leary and the USS Newcomb, was ordered to attack the Japanese fleet. Thomas McGrady told us that the destroyers followed the torpedo boats into the battle. The cruisers and battleships brought up the rear. The USS Albert W. Grant was the last "tin can" on the run through the straits. "Tin can" was an affectionate term given to destroyers because of their thin hulls - there was only a quarter inch of steel between the men and the open sea.

The USS Albert W. Grant came within 1700 yards of the enemy fleet, under the big guns where only the deck guns could bear down. A shell fired from a deck gun is what hit the ship first, knocking out the communication antenna. The ship ended up on the battle line between the Japanese task force and the American task force. The torpedoes were fired at the enemy but Thomas McGrady did not think they had hit their target. Others said that three of the torpedoes did indeed find their mark to inflict at least minor damage to the enemy.

Edmund Gangl recounted that the USS Denver, mistaking the USS Albert W. Grant for an enemy ship, fired upon and hit the USS Albert W. Grant "a couple of times." In fact, the USS Denver inflicted more damage on the USS Albert W. Grant than the Japanese, hitting her with six inch shells a total of eleven

Grant Miscellaneous

times. J.C. Moore was trapped below decks when the ship was hit during the battle.

His daughter, representing him at the reunion, told us that he thought the world of the men whom he served with while aboard the USS Albert W. Grant. She continues to honor him and the crew by being present for these reunions.

Harold "Baldy" Carlson, who was represented by his daughter as well, wrote in his diary that he had joined the Navy so that he could get three square meals a day. Tragedy struck early on for Harold. While he was at the torpedo training school his wife passed away. He had only a short time to grieve at his loss and to attend his beloved wife's funeral. All too soon, duty called and he had to endure that long, lonely, cross country trip from Massachusetts to California where he joined the crew of the USS Albert W. Grant. During the battle at the Surigao Straits, he witnessed his friend Armand Couette being killed in action. Armand was at his post on the torpedo launcher when a shell exploded around him. Until his own death, Harold would visit his friend Armand's grave. Armand had no other family except the family he had become a part of while serving on the USS Albert W. Grant.

During the battle, the ship's doctor and corpsman were killed. This left only the pharmacist mate William H. "Bill" Swain to tend to the wounded. This was a big job for only one man as there were 38 men killed and 104 wounded during this action.

Others such as Ralph Natali, who himself had been wounded, and Harold Carlson, did what they could to care for the lesser injured so that Bill Swain could concentrate on the seriously wounded.

The damage to the ship was horrendous. The ship was down by the bow and listing heavily to port. Fires broke out and the ship lost steering control and all electrical power. She was helpless in the middle of the battle but the men never gave up. Ralph Hamill, the son of Hunt Hamill, the executive officer, told of a precarious moment during the battle that his father had related to him. Because of the smoke, confusion, and early hours, it was next to impossible for any of the ships to be identified by sight. The Japanese used this to their advantage by using signal lights. They would signal, using the name of one of the American ships engaged in the battle and requesting that the signaled ship respond with its identification. As soon as the other ship would respond, the Japanese ship would open fire, knowing that it had acquired an enemy target. It did not take long for the American force to realize what was going on. The USS Albert W. Grant required assistance but her captain knew that if they tried to signal that they would be fired upon. Hunt Hamill came up with the idea that instead of just asking for help, they would include in their message that no reply was requested. As it turned out, because they specifically

said that a reply was not requested, it had saved the ship from bombardment by the USS Pennsylvania, which had trained her fourteen inch guns on the ship that had begun to signal them. Quick thinking under fire had saved the ship from almost certain death.

This quick thinking was not limited to just the officers on the bridge. Edmund Gangl helped bring up ordinance and get it over the side before the fires set it off. William W. Nagle received the bronze star for kicking five torpedoes off during the battle. The crew effected temporary repairs, fought the raging fires, and was assisted by the USS Newcomb in getting to the relative safety of the American controlled waters where they could be towed to a repair facility at Leyte.

It would be several days later before some of the dead could be removed from the damaged areas within the interior of the ship. Men such as Ralph Natali would be assigned the task of burying the dead and saying goodbye to shipmates.

Even while in the relative safety of a friendly port, the USS Albert W. Grant was not immune from tragedy. George Pong told us that while the work of making the ship ready for battle again, his friend Homer McIlroy, one of the shipfitters, was performing structural repairs with an arc welder when something went wrong and he was electrocuted. It was a sad day not only for George but the whole crew. They had lost so many during the battle that to now lose someone in the relative calm of the rear area only served to further drive home to the men that the way of a sailor is inherently dangerous and death can strike at any time.

The USS Albert W. Grant survived the battle of the Surigao Straits not because of the construction of the ship but because of the determination of her crew. The men who made up the crew of the USS Albert W. Grant were not professional sailors but rather men from various backgrounds who came together when their country called. There were some that were born into families that had for generations mined coal from the hills of Pennsylvania, still others that came from the hills of the Carolinas and Kentucky. Some of the men hailed from the Midwest and still others from the Northeast. After the war was over, some of the men chose to make the Navy a career, while others went back to their families and friends they had left back home. All were changed in some way; all knew that they belonged to another family. This diverse group of men came together to become the USS Albert W. Grant.

Clan Grant can be proud of the men that served aboard the ship that bore the name Grant, for in times of trial and testing, they lived the Clan Grant motto "Stand Fast."

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