

# IN THE HOUSE!

House of Gordon USA Newsletter Annual Edition

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May 2016



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**AA Milne & Winnie-the-Pooh**

**Abergeldie A Heritage Worth Saving**

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Articles and other materials appropriate for publication are encouraged. All matters submitted for printing are subject to the Editor's approval, who reserves the right to edit prior to publication.

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MEMBERSHIP in the **House of Gordon USA** is available to all who bear the surname Gordon, an Associated Family name or to one who has a sincere interest in the Gordons and all things Scottish.

Annual Dues of \$25 are payable annually. Remit to **House of Gordon USA**, 7 Ladbrooke Rd. Greenville, SC 29615 or remit using Paypal Please visit our website: [houseofgordonusa.org](http://houseofgordonusa.org) for further information.

# President's Message



## **SAVE THE DATE JULY 6-9, 2017**

### **House of Gordon Honoured Clan at Grandfather Mountain with the Chief in Attendance!**

Yes we are planning great things for Grandfather Mountain and our AGM this year as well, but if you can only make it one year, 2017 is the year to plan on coming—and plan early! We are excited to be planning on hosting our Chief at Grandfather and we hope that many of you will join us for an exciting AGM next year.

That being said, we have had an exciting year in 2015-2016 so far with new conveners being appointed in areas where we have been wanting representation for some time! And we are looking to add more new conveners all the time so that we can grow the House and bring the fun at the Gordon Tent to more people!

Our Christmas in July last summer was a lot of fun and the Marines of 1/7 out of 29 Palms who were deployed over the holidays benefitted from all the cards and signatures and goodies collected over the summer. It brought a bit of home and a big morale boost to a lot of very deserving Marines and Sailors. God Bless them for their service.

I am, happy to say that both of our Scholarship recipients this year have Gordon heritage, and I am excited that these young ladies will be sharing their talent with young dancers coming along behind them. It is a blessing to be able to assist them in their goals. We have taken The Epic Project under our umbrella in order to assist Susan Gordon Rose in her efforts to pass along blessings to young pipers and drummers in the WUSPBA.

I am very happy that the House is growing and that we are seeing more of our younger members stepping up into leadership positions. We can look forward to the House of Gordon remaining a strong vibrant group for the upcoming generations! Thanks to all those who volunteer their time to make our Gordon Tents welcoming engaging gathering places. No matter how much hard work we put into all that we do, it is a labor of love. I also want to thank all who come out and bring the party with them! After all what is a Gordon tent without the Ceilidh? It is the fun, food, family, friends and fellowship that make our tents the heart of each highland games!

# What's Happening In The House!



**Hello from Florida!** We've been very busy down here since the first of the year. As usual we started out at the Central Florida Scottish Games the third weekend in January and had a great turnout. Longtime member Jean Gordon comes by the tent every year to make sure I keep up her strong traditions and I try not to disappoint! We had two tents at these games thanks to Margaret Hussey, her family had a reunion at these games and let us use their tent alongside the House of Gordon. It was a lot of fun having them with us and they marched with us in the Parade of Tartans. We hope they come and join us again next year! As usual we had a great crowd marching for the House of Gordon and it's one of the highlights of the games.



I worked hard on the Wall of Honor this year and finally got it up! I got a lot of great feedback and interest. And now I need to redo it because all the moisture this year didn't work well with the materials I used. But I have all summer long to make it perfect for next year!



The next games we went to were the NE Florida Scottish Highland Games up near

Jacksonville. It was pretty chilly that day, made it nice! We could finally wear our sweaters! And we had a couple of athletes in the



Gordon kilts, this is Michael Adkins who is a usual participant in these games.

Richard and Kate Gordon were there with Fyvie their Gordon Setter and Torin their Westie. And of course Al and Mary Border of Aunt MJ's Creations, from whom I special ordered a sporan for my son Sean's birthday that he loved and proudly wore to the Dunedin Games. Sean says that slowly but surely he's getting his ideal Scottish getup!

The Dunedin Highland Games were April 2<sup>nd</sup> and this was the set-up till about 11 and then the storms hit. Looked good for a while there! We had members show up and we still managed to have a good time! I was talking to people as it was starting to rain and the tarps were going up and then we hunkered down with some friends who were supposed to march in the Dog Parade!



On April 8<sup>th</sup> the House of Gordon tent travelled to Titusville for a small Celtic Crazy Nights on their main street. We have quite a few Gordons who come to the Central Florida Games that live in Titusville so it was nice to see them in their hometown! Lee McLamb came out after work sporting a nice Modern Gordon tie and the Sisson family always a fun group! Our last games will be a weekend at Ormond Beach Celtic Festival April 16 & 17, then we'll be watching our fellow Gordons at their festivals during the summer. Hope you all have as much fun as we did! Bydand! Cynthia



**California has new leadership** in Clint Waugh who was elected to head up the division at their AGM last fall. Ken Gardner will be convening in Northern California and Tom Adams will take on a few games as well. We think that this strong leadership will help keep this group vital and going strong!

## **Myrtle Beach Highland Games and Heritage Festival**

I was excited when I heard about the new inaugural games being held in Myrtle Beach, SC when I was at Grandfather Mountain back In July of 2015. Todd Cartner, the director of the games, approached me to ask if I would be willing to come to the games and man a tent for the House of Gordon next March 2016. Of course, I said "yes"!

The games were held at the perfect venue at the Grand Park Recreational Complex at Market Common in Myrtle Beach, SC. The field was nicely planned out. We had 22 Clans represented. Not bad for a first game! The turnout was overwhelmingly positive. And our friends, "The Scottish Cottage" were there to feed the masses!

We had several visitors at our tent and I was able to sign up 2 new members, Gary Gordon from Myrtle Beach, SC and Krista (Aitken) Ayscue from Raleigh, NC. We also had a longtime friend and member from West Virginia, Lisa Farance, who was vacationing in Myrtle Beach come by. We first met Lisa several years ago at the Ligonier games in PA. It was great to see her again.

The Gordon's will be there next year, March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017. So mark your calendar! This is one not to miss. I believe these games are only going to grow bigger!

We will have a tent at the Greenville Scottish Games in Greenville, SC on Memorial Day weekend. Don't forget the Great Scott Parade on Friday night down on Main Street, downtown Greenville. It starts at 6:00pm, and is a great parade. Come march with the Gordon's!

**Bydand! Barbara Gordon Wray, Convener, House of Gordon, SC**





**Kaine Aitken, Convener for Michigan**, will be doing a weapons demonstration at the Alma and St Andrews (Livonia) events! Said demonstration will cover arms and tactics used by the Scots in the 18th century. This picture will be featured in the Alma Games brochure. Looking good there Kaine in a Red Gordon feileadh mor!

Congrats to **Dustin Vandenberg**, son of Jerry and Anne, of Reston, Virginia on completing his Masters at UNC Winston-Salem,



School of Design and Production! Congratulations also on his upcoming wedding, and welcome to the Gordon Clan to his bride, Danielle!



**Kenn Gordon has gotten off to a good start at the Minden Louisiana and Arkansas Scottish Games** Pictured right, Kenn and Kathy Baker Kinslow at Lyon College at the Arkansas Games.



Kenn says the tent set-up is still a work in progress and that he

got to Arkansas to find some parts for his banner frame had been left at home in Louisiana. Being of wily Scots heritage, he made it work even if it wasn't the prettiest banner frame out there it got the message across! Way to go Kenn.



**Congratulations are in order to Kenn and family on the adoption of son Silas Benjamin Gordon!** Silas is looking quite dapper in his first Gordon kilt, but then look at Daddy and big brothers... he has a lot to keep up with in them! Welcome to the Clan!

**And speaking of NEW Gordons... from our new convener for Kentucky and Tennessee:**

I have had another grandchild born in Tennessee on 12/30/2015. He arrived early and weighed 3 lbs 15oz. His name is **Mark Holden Dodd**. Mom Dad and Holden are all home and doing fine.

In February, I also had a great visit from my granddaughter Orianna Sue Arris Sword. Mom, Dad and little Ori came all the way from Edinburgh to visit.

There will be a House of Gordon tent at the Glasgow Kentucky and Middle Tennessee games this year. The 2016 Glasgow Highland Game will be held June 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> [www.glasgowhighlandgames.com/](http://www.glasgowhighlandgames.com/)



Check it out at <http://www.glasgowhighlandgames.com/>

The Middle Tennessee Highland Games will be held September 10<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 7:00PM at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage in Nashville Tennessee. <http://www.midtengames.com/>

**Cheers, Mark E. Dodd**



**Katy Richards** was out at the **San Antonio Highland Games** with the Gordon Tent and we can look good on what she called a perfect weather day!

**Sheila Mills Bedsole**, pictured below with **Jen Mills Martin**, hosted her first **Gordon**



**Tent at the Southeast Alabama Highland Games** in Dothan March 19th and WOW she did a fabulous job creating a welcoming and engaging tent display. Congrats on a great gathering Sheila!

### FAREWELL TO PETER RUPY RUPLINAS



It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Peter Ruplenas member of the Mid-Atlantic Division and Veteran of 3 Wars on 4/16/16. His life was a true inspiration to us all and we all benefited from knowing him. Our prayers are with his family.

## Charles O Gordon Scholarship!



Destiny Swainston is a 15-year-old Highland Dancer from Dunedin, Florida. She and her sister live with their grandmother, Ruth Gordan Alber, who makes all of her dance outfits! She started dancing in 7th grade as Highland Dance is offered at her middle school. She says, "Dancing for me isn't simply about competing or even being the best. I dance because it truly is my passion. I enjoy every moment of it." She has been honing her skill with lessons and competitions and will be moving up to Premiere competition this summer. Costs have added up and if it weren't for Ruth's skills as a seamstress it would be nearly impossible. We have awarded her a \$500.00 grant to attend a dance workshop, and wish her the best of luck in her competition year!

Isabel Friedrichs, is a 15-year-old Highland Dancer from Escondido, California who has garnered inspiration from family stories of her Great-grandmother Mary Laing's strong character and determination when she came to the USA from Scotland. That same determination has her setting the goal of competing in the World Highland Dance Championships in Scotland this year. It also shows in the fact that she has achieved a 4.0 GPA, and is an accomplished violinist with the Youth Philharmonic Symphony and being named to the California Scholarship Association and also Student of the Year at The Classical Academy of Escondido! We have awarded Isabel with a \$400.00 grant toward her goals.



# The Epic Project!

We brought you the story of The Epic Project in our December newsletter, and now The House of Gordon USA Board of Directors is proud to announce that The Epic Project has been brought under our 501(c)(3) umbrella! We have set up an ad-hoc committee to oversee the project which is headed up by Susan Gordon Rose, who is, as we all know, a very talented kilt maker. Susan has been joined by fellow House of Gordon members Clint Waugh, Nancy Craig, Susan's son, Mark Rose, Piper Richard King and Bagpipe maker, Murray Huggins.

The Epic Project Seeks to Encourage promising young Pipers and Drummers who might not be able to afford Highland Attire or high-quality Instruments to continue their Celtic musical careers.



The Epic Project, 2016 Recipient will be Linda Snoddy of Bakersfield College in Bakersfield, CA. Linda not only has had numerous Piping Awards and maintains a high GPA, but gives generously of her talents in representing of the Scottish the Community at Large.

Linda pipes at Garden of Innocence Unclaimed Baby Funerals of Kern County, at the Wounded Heroes Fund of Kern County, and at The National Cemetery. This is above and beyond piping at numerous Police and Fire Events plus Highland Game Competitions.

The Epic Project announcement of the 2016 Recipient says, "Linda Snoddy truly honors the Scottish Community through these acts, and in turn we wish to honor her dedication by making her this year's The Epic Project Recipient."

Linda will be outfitted by Susan Rose, owner of My Kiltmaker in Clan Campbell Tartan, the same Tartan worn by the Duke of Argyll; Clan Campbell USA was the first Major Donor to the 2016 Epic Project. The Epic Project has been joined by Murray Huggins, owner of Colin Kyo Bagpipes, who will provide Bagpipes for Linda and future Recipients. The Leather Tinker owner Billy Lang will be providing a Custom Sporrans as well.

The presentation of Highland Dress and Set of Pipes will take place at the Seaside Highland Games in Ventura, California, the second weekend of October 2016.

Directed donations may be made with your membership renewals!

## *A Year of Achievement and Thanks*

Last Spring, Sgt. Joseph Aaron Todd, USMC, attended the Advanced Infantryman Course at Camp Pendleton where he was named Honor Graduate and also received the Gung-Ho Award, an award voted on by the course participants. The Advanced Infantryman, Machine Gunner, Mortarman, Assaultman and Anti-Tank Missileman leadership courses "give them the necessary tools to lead and more gainfully employ their Marines in the operating forces," said SSgt Cody Waldroup, Chief Instructor for the Advanced Assaultman Course and Advanced Antitank Course, Infantry Unit Leaders Training Company, Advanced Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry-West. "They learn and refine advanced tactics, navigation, close air support and weapons systems."

Following his return from the AIC, Sgt Todd's Squad was picked to represent the 1st Battalion 7th Regiment in the first Super Squad Competition the 1st Marine Division has held in 15 years.

The grueling 48-hour event held last June at Camp Pendleton, California, pitted nine squads from battalions across the 1st Marine Division against each other in a test of basic maneuver warfare skills.

"It's a competition to highlight the best squads in the Division, between 1st Marine Regiment, 5th Marine Regiment, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion and 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion," said Master Sgt. Charles Vasseur, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the 1st Marine Division schools.

The head of the winning squad from Charley Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, (Suicide Charley) said it was an opportunity to test their mettle when facing off against the division's other top Marines.

"Especially in the job we do, everybody is always trying to push to be better than the next guy," said Sgt. Joseph Todd, the leader of Charley Company's winning squad. "Having the ability to compete against fellow Marines from other battalions lets us see where we stand against each other and makes us hungry to be better at our jobs."

The squads underwent a nonstop, grueling test of endurance, occupational intelligence and cohesion to prove they had what it takes to claim the title of super squad.



Sgt. Todd (front left ) and 1st Squad Co. “C.” (Suicide Charley) of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment’s ‘super squad’ display the Mitchell Cup outside of their headquarters building at Twentynine Palms MCAGCC

“The Marines started off with a gear inspection, went immediately into a combat fitness test then directly did a 100-question written test which covered basic infantry skills,” said Vasseur. “Afterward, they were issued their operation order for a patrol to conduct daylight patrolling,” through rugged terrain in which squads found six checkpoints and called for fire from supporting mortars.

Coming straight out of the patrol, they shifted into a defensive posture for the next portion of the competition.

“They set into the defense, got attacked and the next day started a timed nine-mile movement to Range 408,” explained Vasseur. “They conducted a live-fire attack and moved into another three-mile movement completing an unknown distance range as a marksmanship test for the last part of the competition.”

“It is what every infantryman should be able to do — offense, defense, patrolling, basic O3 infantry knowledge [and] physical fitness,” Todd said. “There were no curve balls. It comes down to how proficient you are and showing that you have the ability and tenacity to push through adversity.”

Just because it was straightforward didn't mean it wasn't challenging, though. That hardship built unit cohesion, said Staff Sgt. Matthew Kohler, who helped coordinate the competition as the operations chief for 1st Marine Division Schools.

"The camaraderie it built between squads was immense, even for the guys that didn't win," he said.

The squad didn't conduct extra training to prepare for the competitions, Todd said, but was ready because of its pre-deployment workup as the Marines prepared to deploy to the Middle East with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command.

The toughest challenges the squad had to overcome were the differences in terrain, elevation and humidity between Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twenty-nine Palms, where 1/7 is based, and Camp Pendleton, where the competition was held.

Those who win the division competitions can count themselves among an elite few as they earn the right to wear the gold-plated Annual Rifle Squad Combat Practice Competition Badge alongside marksmanship badges. After Major Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, 1st Marine Division Commanding General, addressed all of the squads, 'First Team' received the Mitchell Cup, named after Navy Cross recipient from the Battle of Fallujah, Cpl. Robert Mitchell.

Sgt. Todd was named as the NCO of the Quarter for the 7th Regiment.

The Battalion is now home from their deployment CONGRATULATIONS Aaron on a great year of achievement and WELCOME HOME!

### **HoGUSA CHRISTMAS CARE PACKAGES WELL RECEIVED**

The 1/7 deployed last fall and the House of Gordon USA sent them Christmas in a Box to bring a bit of home and holiday cheer to the Marines and Sailors of the Battalion.



Pictured above the 6 ft. tree and some of the packages we sent—I am told Christmas balls were found in many places and used in many ways! We received thanks from the leadership of Sgt Todd's Company.

Friends of "Suicide Charley", Although we remain deployed over the holidays, time is flying by! A few more weeks will bring on the New Year and another milestone closer to coming home. In the meantime, your Marines and Sailors continue to perform their duties admirably as we, Crisis Response Company, remain ready for any contingency across the entire Central Command Area of Operations. Your care packages help improve morale while being away during the holidays.

Semper Fidelis,  
Captain John Dove  
Company Commander

To the House of Gordon:

Thank you for all of the kind cards and decorations that helped to bring a part of home to us on our deployment. They made our Christmas a merry one and brought a little holiday cheer to us while we are away from our homes and loved ones.

Merry Christmas,  
The Marines of 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, "Suicide" Charley, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines



Sgt. Todd wrote:

"Thanks to the Clan for all the love and support you sent to us. Your heartfelt words of encouragement meant a lot to the men in the Battalion and to my company and platoon in particular. Everyone was surprised to see these huge banners with so many signatures. The cards were well received and the trees were the centerpiece of our holiday cheer. The many little gifts sent were put to good use. The Company's morale was greatly boosted by the care sent from home by the Gordons and we all send a hearty THANK YOU!"





Jim Gordon, Project Co-Administrator  
jimgordo1@gmail.com

This year's report is a mix of several subjects which will be of interest to members of the Project and the House of Gordon in general.

### **Project membership**



The Project now stands at 716 members. This is a considerable increase over last year at this time. This includes not only those in the three major branches of the Gordons – The Jock & Tams, The Seton-Gordons and The Sir William Gordons, but also sept members; those not belonging to one of the three major branches; Newly Discovered Gordon branches and the Yet to Classified Gordons. This last group includes small groups of Gordons with documented lineages whose Y-DNA results do not match those of the other Gordon branches.

### **Some misunderstandings about DNA and medical conditions**

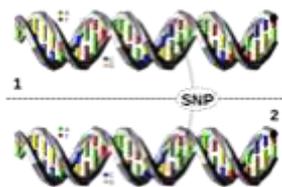
Some people have been reluctant to participate in DNA testing because of misunderstandings about what the tests will reveal and how the test results can be used. Therefore I'd like to clear up some misunderstandings about DNA testing and medical conditions which:

The section of the Y-chromosome used for [genealogical DNA testing](#) is non- coding DNA, in that it does not recombine (mix) or have any known uses other than to fill the spaces in between your genes. However, because this DNA does not mix, and it changes very slowly (mutates) it's beneficial for use in genealogical applications.

With mitochondrial DNA testing, the low-resolution HVR1 and HVR2 tests sequence a portion of the mtDNA genome known as the "Hypervariable Region" (HVR) which, like the Y-chromosome DNA, does not mix and it changes very slowly. Both HVR1 and HVR2 tests which are used for genealogical and deep ancestry purposes, do not reveal any medical conditions. However, a full mitochondrial sequence test may reveal medical conditions, but this information is not analyzed by your testing facility. You would need to seek further analysis from a specialist (for example, the custom mtDNA reports from Dr. Ann Turner see [http://isogg.org/wiki/Custom\\_mtDNA\\_reports](http://isogg.org/wiki/Custom_mtDNA_reports)). The full sequence test results are not public information, nor made available to DNA Project Administrators.

Autosomal DNA tests for genealogical purposes are offered by Family Tree DNA (the Family Finder test) and Ancestry DNA but neither company provides any medical information. However, it is sometimes possible to extract some health and trait information by analyzing the data with one of the autosomal DNA tools such as Promethease. The autosomal DNA test from 23andMe includes health and trait reports. (Taken from the ISOGG website [www.isogg.org](http://www.isogg.org))

### **Reorganization of DNA Haplogroup Identifiers**



Recent information from the International Society of Genetic Genealogists (ISOGG), which advocates for and educates about the use of genetics as a tool for genealogical research while promoting a supportive network for genetic genealogists, has recommended that we stop using the alphanumeric system (I1a, R1b, etc.) for identifying haplogroups in DNA results. Instead, it has encouraged the use of haplogroup/terminal SNP (I-M269). This has come about because the old alphanumeric system was getting too complex as new terminal SNPs were identified, resulting in haplogroup identifications as long as 13 alphanumeric characters. The new system consists of no more than 6 characters, the major haplogroup, a dash and the terminal SNP. (Taken from the ISOGG website [www.isogg.org](http://www.isogg.org))

### **House of Gordon UK Members**



For House of Gordon members in the UK who are interested in testing their DNA: Test kits can now be ordered in £Sterling at discounted project prices and mailed direct from the United Kingdom. For more information Email [alasdair@familytreedna.com](mailto:alasdair@familytreedna.com).

## Ulster-Scots & Y-DNA Haplogroup members



For those of the Jock and Tam, Sir William and other Y-DNA Haplogroup I groups, especially those with ancestors from Maine

and New Hampshire may be interested in visiting the website of the 1718 Migration, also known as the “Five Ships Project” A little background on this Project is in order. From the Introduction on the website: [www.1718migration.org.uk/s\\_home.asp](http://www.1718migration.org.uk/s_home.asp).

“The Philadelphia merchant, Jonathan Dickenson, recorded in 1717 that 'a small vessel from Leverpoole [Liverpool] brought 135... passengers from the North of Ireland' and he added 'they say Considerable Number will follow next summer.'<sup>1</sup> In fact, the summer of 1718 saw nearly 700 Ulster Presbyterians arrive in Boston Harbor on five small ships from the North Ireland.'<sup>2</sup>

During the next two years approximately 2,600 Scots-Irish travelled to New England and over the next half-century an estimated 200,000 to 250,000 of their co-religionists followed them to a New World (at a time when the Presbyterian population of Ulster was probably only half a million).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the small company of men, women, and children who landed in 1718 can be regarded as the Scots-Irish equivalent to the 'Pilgrims Fathers'<sup>4</sup>

The first wave of the 'Great Migration' went to New England though most of those who followed over the next two centuries went to the valleys of Virginia and Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, and the Piedmont of Georgia. This website tells the story of these early Scots-Irish pioneers: starting with their departure from Ulster through to their settlement in the American north-east. In particular, it tells the story of those colonists who left County Londonderry in Ireland to settle what eventually became the town of Londonderry, New Hampshire, in 1723.

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1. *Patrick Griffin, The People with No Name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish, and the creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764 (Princeton, 2001), p. 91*
  2. *Estimates vary, for example, see Samuel Swett Green, The Scotch-Irish in America (reprint, Southern California, 1970), p.8, and Charles K. Bolton, Scotch-Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America (reprint, Baltimore, 1967), p.18.*
  3. *Donald M. MacRaild, Irish Migrants in Modern Britain, 1750–1922 (London, 1999), p. 101.*
  4. *Bolton (1967), p. 132.*

# Scottish Books & You

By Rachel Chase-Noorda

For the past three years, I have been studying Scottish books as a PhD student at the University of Stirling in Scotland. In a previous issue of *In House*, I talked about the scholarship I received from House of Gordon USA to study Gaelic in the Isle of Skye while I was working on my PhD. I have now submitted my PhD thesis and I would like to discuss a little bit about my research and how it affects all of us—people with Scottish ancestry.

Scottish publishers of Scottish books are concerned with finding readers for their products. One of the target markets for Scottish books is the Scottish diaspora: people with Scottish ancestry. Yet marketing and communicating to the diaspora proves more elusive for publishers because the Scottish diaspora is spread throughout the world. My research was to study some of the innovative ways that publishers are attempting to reach the Scottish diaspora as a readership. Two in particular are worth mentioning because if you are interested in finding new (and old) Scottish books to add to your reading list, these tools can help.

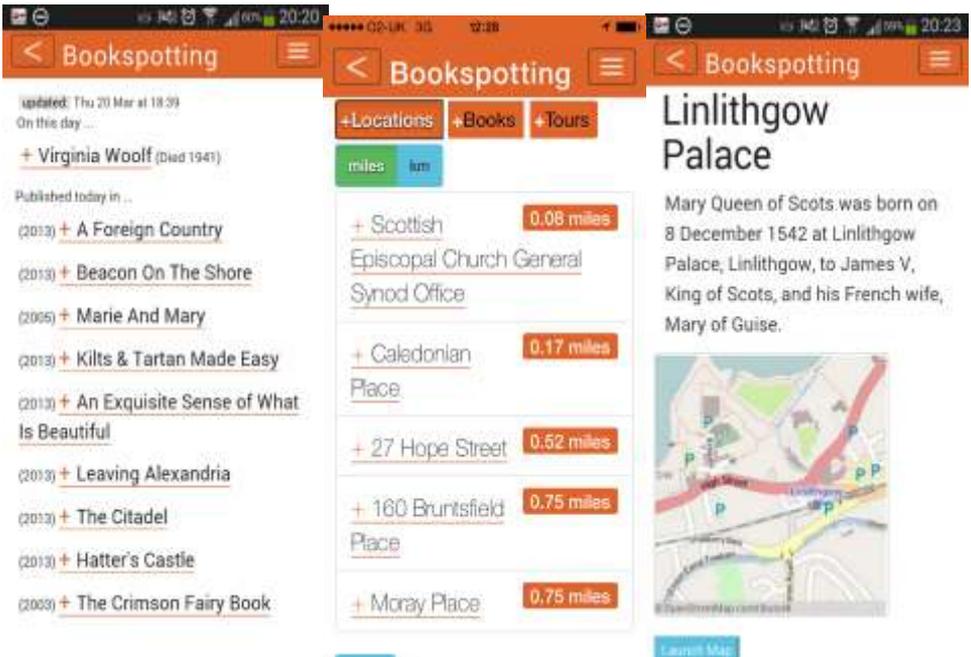
## BooksfromScotland.com

BooksfromScotland.com is a website managed by the group Publishing Scotland. Here you will find information, articles and reviews about Scottish publishers and the books they produce. Until 2015 it was also a place for buying those books, but the purpose of Books from Scotland

has since been changed to be a news site for hearing about books, and then you can go on Amazon or the publisher's websites to buy the books if you wish. You can browse books from Scotland by genre of book if there is a particular genre you are partial to. There are also articles on the website highlighting certain publishers, authors, and new titles.

### The Bookspotting App

In March 2014, Publishing Scotland released an app called Bookspotting, available for free on Apple and Android. The app was funded by a £54,000 grant from the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland in conjunction with Creative Scotland. It was created via a partnership between the Glasgow based independent publisher Saraband Books, Publishing Scotland, the app development company Spot Specific, and the library metadata service Bibliographic Data Services. With the app, users can discover Scottish books by pulling up characters from Scottish literature, find books and authors close to a postcode, locate a map for a book-inspired tour, receive updates each day for 'Today in Scottish literature' or use 'Categories' by genre or 'Collections' of book lists to discover new books. While you can use it in the States to discover new Scottish books, this app is especially great to use while traveling in Scotland because you can search locations to find places in some of your favourite Scottish books. A Scottish literary tour!



## *Abergeldie a history worth saving*

The Christmas vacation storms brought power outages and flooding across much of Scotland, and for Abergeldie Castle, the floods spelled imminent danger of collapse of the castle as a 250 foot width section along about a 500 yard stretch of the river bank and several large trees alongside the castle were swept away by the overflowing swift current of the River Dee. Abergeldie was just inches and a 12 foot drop from toppling into the Dee. Castle owner, John Seton Howard Gordon 21st Laird of the Barony of Abergeldie, and his wife were forced to flee in the middle of the night on December 30<sup>th</sup> at the height of the flooding and take refuge with their neighbor Gordon Fraser.

A local councilor provided some information via William Gordon (son of Andrew & Lucy) "John Gordon and his wife moved out in a hurry on 30th when the flood took away first the suspension bridge and then the adjacent trees and garden wall. The castle was in immediate danger of being undermined." A neighbor was quoted in *The Guardian* on the situation at the time saying, "The castle is in imminent danger and John is at his wits' end. It's not only a home. It's the heritage, the history. Nothing can be done while the river is in spate like it is. It's just thundering down. It





swept away and smashed the mature trees at the back of the house like matchsticks. It also took 250ft of the bank away and all the ground at the back. The river is right at the back door.” Across the river a section of the A93 was washed out and the situation was dire.





Pre-flood aerial photo showing the mature trees along the riverbank and the suspension bridge

Abergeldie has a long and enviable history – too long to go in depth in this small publication. John Malcolm Bulloch wrote extensively on the family and spent much time at Abergeldie. Had it not been for his love of Abergeldie, his great work on *The House of Gordon* would never have been conceived, much less realized. Edward Gordon of Cairnfield continued Dr. Bulloch's work and published twenty-eight volumes on the Gordon genealogy. Dr. Peter J. Gordon has written much on Abergeldie and the family in his book *Deeside Tales*. All interesting works, and all far more information than we can possibly cover here.

The name is Pictish in origin and means confluence of the Geldie Burn. A large standing-stone monolith on the riverside lawns, now lost in the overgrowth of ornamental shrubbery and trees, is clearly visible in early photos of Abergeldie and testifies to the antiquity of the site as a place held in esteem by men from time immemorial. According to research by Dr. Peter Gordon as early as 1378 Abergeldie, part of what had been the old Mormaerdom of Strathdee, was described as one of the Aberdeenshire castles '*of most respect*' and with its moat and the river, was situated like an island. Its position had long been the fording-point in the river Dee, southwards to the hills of Angus and was a strong strategic

point. The Abergeldie estate has been in the Gordon family since 1449 when the 1st Earl of Huntly was given it by the King for his services in suppressing the rebellion headed by the Earl of Douglas. On December 26, 1482 it was formally granted by James III in a deed of gift to Sir Alexander Gordon of Midmar, eldest son of the 1st Earl of Huntly. Abergeldie holds the record as the longest single family stewardship in Scotland. The Abergeldie at one time extended on the south to the White Mounth (Lochnagar), eastwards to Glenmuick, where it included Strathgirnoc and Stering or Birkhall, and west and south-westward, to Glencallater. The current castle, an A-listed Tower House with 4 foot thick walls in the shadow of Craig nam Ban, was built about 1550 by the 4th laird of this line, Alexander, better known as Black Alister. In 1592 the castle successfully resisted a raid by the Mackintoshes and other western clans known as the Great Spulzie (great plunder). In the 1640s the Covenanters took control of Deeside and as Alexander, 7th laird, was an ardent Royalist, ordered the destruction of Abergeldie; miraculously the order was not executed. 1686, during the tenure of the 8th Laird, Alexander Gordon, Abergeldie Castle was used as a mustering point by John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, when he was raising a Highland army against William III. The castle was captured and garrisoned by General Mackay but it was soon blockaded by the Farquharsons and in 1690 Mackay had to come to its relief. He reported that it would have had to surrender within three more days if the garrison had not been "timely succoured".

It was garrisoned by government troops in the 1715 Jacobite Rising, and again in the short 1719 Rising, when it was briefly garrisoned by Spanish troops.

Abergeldie also has a resident ghost. Some call her French Kate a French maid named Kate Rankie or Frankie but locals say her name was Ciotaidh NicFhraing or Kitty Rankin who had grown up across the Dee from the castle. Her father died when she was young and her mother who had the second sight went insane, but not before teaching Kitty about nature, and the healing arts. Kitty like her mother had the second sight. She found work at the Castle and one day while the Laird was away overseas, the lady of the castle came to Kitty saying she knew she had the second sight, and could Kitty give her news of her husband. Kitty unwisely took a basin of water and used it to scry his doings and let the lady know her husband was unfaithful. She was so unhappy she asked Kitty to raise a storm at sea to punish him. Kitty could not do that and said as much, but a storm did come up and sank the ship drowning all aboard. The Lady of Abergeldie accused Kitty of being a witch. Kitty was imprisoned in the dungeons, tried and burned at the stake atop

Crag nam Ban. You can still hear her shrieks atop the hill and in the Castle dungeon. She was supposedly burned in 1603—so was the Laird & Lady in question Alexander 5th of Abergeldie (died 1601) and his wife Margaret MacIntosh?

In 1848 Queen Victoria rented Abergeldie for her mother, the Duchess of Kent—Prince Albert had just acquired the lease of Balmoral from Lord Aberdeen (another Gordon). In 1849 Prince Albert acquired a 40 year lease on Abergeldie. In 1852 Prince Albert purchased Balmoral and at the same time purchased Birkhall with 6,500 acres from the Gordons of Abergeldie—although it has long been rumored that the Laird of Abergeldie lost Birkhall to Prince Albert in a card game.

Albert gave Abergeldie over to his son Albert Edward, then the Prince of Wales (and future Edward VII). However, Queen Victoria claimed it back in 1885. She was not amused by his dissolute life style. The Royals added an extensive West Wing to the castle.



Abergeldie circa 1870 during the Royal tenancy.

When the current Laird inherited Abergeldie he refused to renew the lease to the royals. He found the West Wing was riddled with dry-rot and the cost of repair far beyond his means, had the wing demolished in 1967. A restoration of the tower house was undertaken and he and his wife moved into the castle in 1972. In 2000 the hunting & shooting rights lease on Abergeldie with the Royal family was up for renewal. Originally negotiated during Queen Victoria's reign it gave the royals virtual free use of the land. He was prepared to fight for a fair rent. Gates were erected on access roads used by shooting parties from Balmoral to his estate,



Abergeldie's idyllic setting was captured in James Giles' painting at Haddo House.

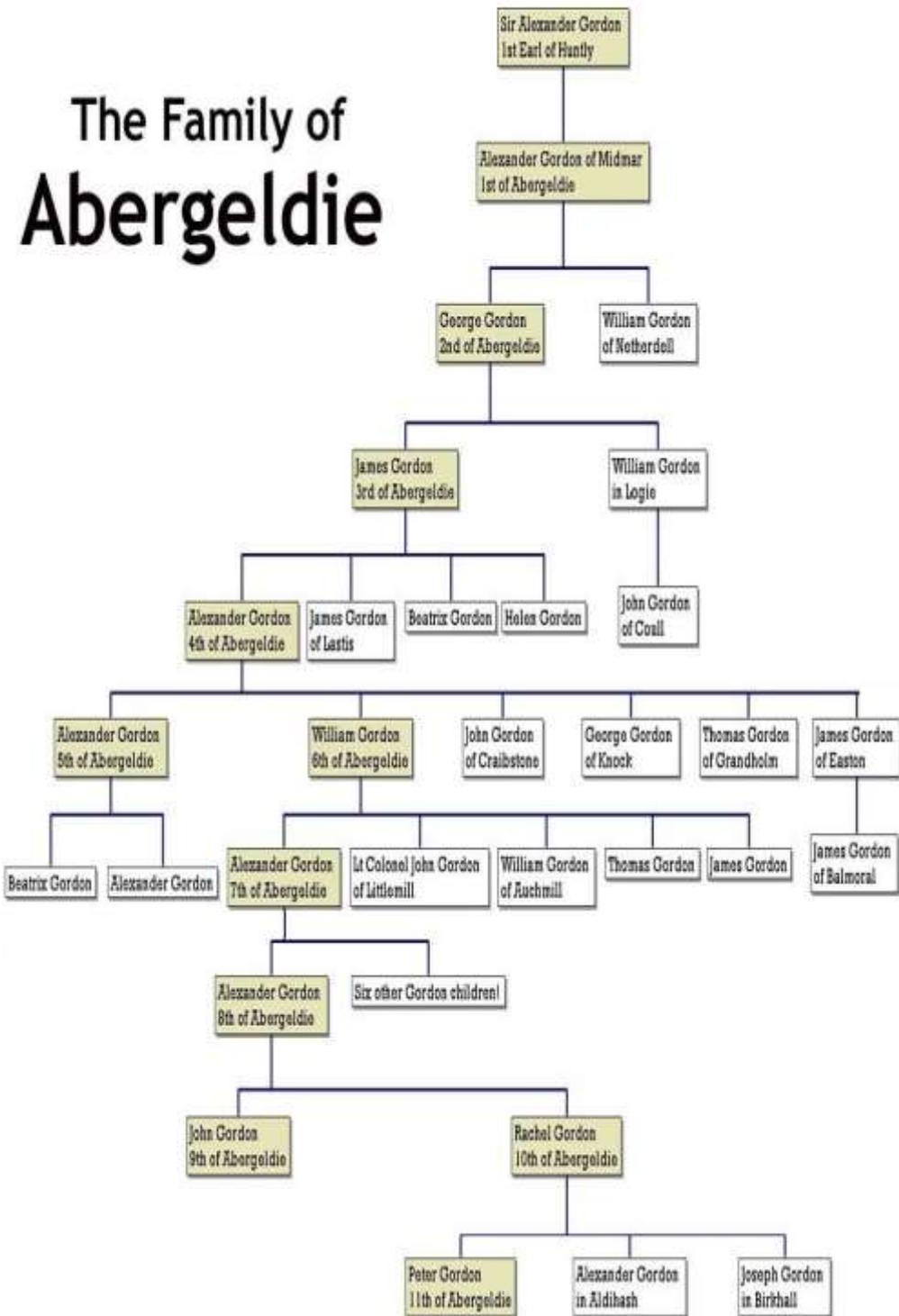
and he even barred a road from the royal estate to Birkhall, at that time the Queen Mother's residence, which would have forced Royal Family members to make a 10-mile drive on public roads to visit the Queen Mother. Prince Charles would have had a 20-mile drive to visit his favorite spot, Lochnagar, and the Duke of Edinburgh would have been denied access to his favorite fishing loch. And the Royal Family would have lost the right to shoot grouse and deer on the Abergeldie estate. A new lease was signed that was amicable to both.

But, what do most of us know of Abergeldie? We have all heard of the Gordon of Abergeldie Tartan – how the sett was reconstructed in 1953 when the Lord Lyon visited and took an approximate thread count and color description from the tartan scarf in the Alexander 1723 portrait of Rachel Gordon, 10<sup>th</sup> Laird of Abergeldie.

Few have seen the portrait, that to this day hangs over the fireplace in the great hall alongside her husband's portrait and fewer know her story.



# The Family of Abergeldie





Rachel's father was Alexander, 8th Laird of Abergeldie, her mother Euphemia Graham. She had one elder brother, John the 9th Laird.

She married Captain Charles Gordon of Pitchaise, son of Peter Gordon of Minmore (a descendant of Jock of Scurdargue) and Janet Gordon of Cluny sometime before or around March 1690 when she signed a charter of resignation by her as his spouse of the land of Abergeldie, likely her expected rightful share of the estate as her father & brother were still living. The date of her father's death is in question, J M Bulloch believed that he was alive as late as 1692, and that he was the Laird at Abergeldie during the rising against William of Orange. Dr. Peter Gordon believes it was John Gordon, 9th Laird who held the estate at this time. We do know

that this sequence of events began during the tenure of Rachel's father.

Major-General Hugh MacKay was tasked with putting down the civil unrest being stirred up by John Graham of Claverhouse, and set out to arrest Dundee. Dundee escaped to Glen Ogilvy then to Braemar where he was protected by "The Black Colonel," John Farquharson of Inverey. From there Dundee moved to Abergeldie which he used as a mustering point for his forces, and then moved on again. Dundee died in July 1689 at the Battle of Killiecrankie, and with him all hope of putting James the II & VII back on the throne. "By November, 1689 General Mackay's troops had over-run the area around Braemar and Abergeldie burning the land for twelve miles around including a large number of crofts on the estates, the official estimate being one thousand four hundred dwellings. General Mackay garrisoned seventy two of his soldiers in Abergeldie Castle to keep watch on the activities of the Farquharson Clan." The man put in charge of the garrison at Abergeldie was none other than Rachel's husband, Capt. Charles Gordon of Pitchaise. General MacKay left ten orders for Capt. Gordon to follow during his occupation of Abergeldie which have been preserved in the Abergeldie Charter Chest.

1. Furnish the garrison with corn, cattle and sheep to be taken without 'tack' or payment and terrify the country with parties while the enemy were about.

2. Burn the houses and crops of such as would not come in and give up arms and houses where arms might be found.

3. Protect those that delivered up their arms and took the oath of allegiance.

4. Correspond with the master of Forbes, taking direction from him and advising him of what he might need.

5. Take the nearest corn from those in rebellion to repair what damage his mother-in-law had received and destroy and burn the rest unless submission was made.

6. So behave only in the influence of the service that no accusation could be brought against him in following any relation on the opposite side.

7. Burn the district of Braemar, but wait until he could do safely.

8. Do his best to capture or kill Farquharson of Inverey in which event the General would intrude for the interest of the latter's children, nephews of

Charles, and would lead to Charles own preferment.

9. Obtain witnesses against the Laird of Abergeldie to prove that he had joined the rebels in Arms which case Abergeldie would be secured for John's sister, wife of Charles.

10. Treat Farquharson of Monaltrie and his tenants with the same rigour as the rest, it being apparent that the tenants have been in arms and Monaltrie a hypocritical loaming conniving of their perjury and rebellion.

The garrisoning of Abergeldie nearly destroyed the estate, and Rachel's brother was cited for his Jacobite leanings, but managed to survive. In 1694 he married Elizabeth (Bettie) Rose of Kilravock. Four years later he was dead leaving no issue. Rachel became the 10th Lady of Abergeldie. She and Charles set about righting the wrongs done while he had been in charge of the garrison that caused so much damage to the surrounding area. They brought in tenants, laborers, craftsmen, tradesmen primarily from Strathdon. They re-established the estate farms, and built Birkhall. Most importantly Rachel refurbished Abergeldie Castle and they brought several Gordon cadets to the area helping to make the Deeside a stronghold for the clan. Rachel & Charles were the saviors of Abergeldie, bringing life and vitality back to Abergeldie and the entire district for generations to come.

Now Abergeldie is getting help from the district she has served well over the centuries. *The Daily Record* reported, "Aberdeenshire Council confirmed contractors supported by their structural engineers were on site after funding of £100,000 was secured from Scottish Business in the Community." The councilor gave further information :

"In the following days a rescue package was put together to protect the castle from further erosion, the appropriate consents were obtained and over the next 2 weeks many tons of rock were tipped over the river bank to create a more stable platform round the castle platform.

"The river was dredged to create a channel to divert the main stream of the Dee away from the castle this appears to have been successful although only time and future floods will tell if its worked"

Work continued day and night racing against the current— our hope is that the efforts will prove successful.



## *AA Milne & Winnie-the-Pooh*



Many have wondered why Winnie-the-Pooh is the Gordon tent mascot. Some have even criticized saying—but AA Milne was an English author. Yes, Alan Alexander Milne was born in London on 18 January 1882. He grew up at Henley House School where his father, John Vine Milne, was the school master. But his heritage is definitely one of the House of Gordon.

John Vine Milne and his twin sister, Janet Newell Milne were born on 4 March 1845 in Clarendon Parish, Jamaica to Scottish Missionary William Milne and his wife Harriet Newell Barrett Milne. Janet didn't live very long,

though I have found no record of her death, she is not with the family in the 1851 census. John was joined in the family by several siblings, Robert Andrew born 25 June 1848 in Trethevy, Cornwall, Jamaica, and following the family move to Hertfordshire, England Alexander who was born in 1851, Maud in 1852, Jane in 1855 and William in 1859. By 1861 his father was a school master in Tottenham, Middlesex, England. While we know William was born in 1816 in Scotland from several records, I have not located documentation of his lineage. There are several William Milne babies born that year in Aberdeenshire, Banff and Moray and even in Kincardine—ALL Gordon territory. One leading candidate for the parents of William are Alexander Milne and Jean Alan (Allan) of Aberdeen, but more research needs to be done to establish the lineage. Any family members out there who might know? We'd love to hear from you!

John followed in his father's footsteps and became the school master of Henley House School in London where he employed H.G. Wells as the school's Science and Assistant Master, and the editor of the school's paper. He married Sarah Marie Heginbotham and they had three sons, David Barrett Milne (1879) called Barry, Kenneth John Milne (1880) and Alan Alexander Milne (1882). The boys initially attended school at Henley House. It was an stimulating atmosphere to grow up in and Alan said that "in Papa's house it was natural to be interested; it was easy to be clever." He had a happy childhood, enjoyed playing cricket and was a star in the sport. He also enjoyed going for walks and on adventures with Ken, loved butterflies, hated anything to do with killing animals, and was an enthusiastic student. He showed an early affinity for writing, excelled in mathematics and pretty much every subject except French. Alan went on to the

Westminster School from 1893 to 1900 and then on to Trinity College at Cambridge University where he studied on a mathematics scholarship, and received his degree in mathematics in 1903.

Ken had encouraged Alan to attend Cambridge primarily because of the school magazine *Granta* which well suited his writing style, and Alan decided to go for it with the goal of becoming the editor of *Granta* in mind; a goal he achieved. He co-wrote several articles with his brother Kenneth which appeared in *Granta* under the initials AKM (Alan & Kenneth Milne). These came to the attention of the editor at *Punch*, the leading humor magazine in Britain who asked him to write for them. He wrote in his autobiography "I had proved that I could earn a living by writing. I would be editor of *Punch* one day. I was the happiest man in London,"

It was during this time that HG Wells introduced him to J. M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan* (and also a *Gordon*) with whom he became life-long friends. He joined Barrie's cricket team, the *Allahakbarries*, and became great friends with many other notables on the team such as P.G. Wodehouse, author of the *Jeeves and Wooster* stories and AA Milne's favorite author, Author Conon Doyle, author of *Sherlock Holmes*, Rudyard Kipling, author of the *Jungle Book*, and many more. They weren't a very good team and played more for the fun of the game than the results.

After three years as a freelance writer he was hired as an assistant editor at *Punch*. While at *Punch* he made a name for himself through both his light verse and his humorous sketches. He also reviewed books and plays. The characteristic mixture of fact and fancy in his work earned him the reputation for being able to say much about nothing at all and make fun of at the same time. A collection of his articles was published in 1910 under the name *The Day's Play*.

That year after reading Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion* Alan committed himself to pacifism. It really wasn't a big stretch from his childhood leanings as expressed in his feelings about killing animals. He had a natural abhorrence of violence and both a natural and imposed (in his upbringing, after all his grandfather had been a missionary) Puritanism which had already been expressed in his writings and would further influence his works. In 1913 he married Dorothy De Selincourt who ironically had much the same sense of humor and much in common with one of his more famous characters to that time, Myra Rabbit. The Rabbits were a popular serial well known for the verbal tennis matches between the male and female characters with Dahlia and Myra more often than not coming out on top. Maybe he invented the perfect mate for himself long before meeting her—it may be the way he was able to recognize his own match!

As Assistant Editor at *Punch* Alan was responsible for two weekly articles which he found to be an onerous task. He felt hard pressed to produce on command, and even though his humorous verses and essays were quite

popular, the job at Punch became a dilemma he profoundly wished to escape. He wanted time to write plays and serious novels, and that just wasn't going to happen when all his time and energy went into producing two humorous productions on demand each week. The outbreak of WWI was an unlikely solution to the dilemma, but his patriotism outweighed his pacifism and he joined the Army.

He received a probationary commission in the 4th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment on 17 February 1915 as a second lieutenant, which was confirmed on 20 December 1915. He went on to Weymouth where he attended school to become a signaling officer and then on to France. He briefly served on the Western Front during the Somme Offensive. Soon after arriving on the front-line his best friend, Ernest Pusch, was killed: "just as he was settling down to his tea, a shell came over and blew him to pieces." His brother, Frederick Pusch, had been killed by a German sniper a few days later. On 7 July 1916, On 10th August 1916, Milne and four other men were sent out to run out telephone cable so that during forthcoming attack communications with battalion and brigade headquarters could be maintained. During the operation, the senior Signaling Officer, Kenneth Harrison, suffered a serious head wound from a shell splinter. Milne now took over from Harrison and the following night he laid another telephone line. As he later recalled: "elaborately laddered according to the text books, and guaranteed to withstand any bombardment". The Commanding Officer of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Collison, admitted that the results of the preliminary bombardment: "Not only would it render the trench uninhabitable to our men, should they *succeed* in taking it, but it was plain intimation to the Hun that we contemplated some action against him in the near future."

On 12th August 1916, Milne's infantry platoon left the front-line trenches. The men made their attack behind a barrage that lifted as they went forward. Immediately they came under intense German machine gun fire. None of Milne's men got to within twenty yards of the German trench. The battalion casualties were around sixty killed, and just over a hundred wounded. Of the five officers who led the attack, three were killed and two severely wounded.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Collison wrote a report that claimed his men had died bravely: "I may mention that I saw no man lying otherwise than with his face to the enemy." Milne interpreted these events differently and later claimed that this attack changed his view of the war: "It makes me almost physically sick of that nightmare of mental and moral degradation."

In November 1916 Milne was moved to the much quieter trenches near

Loos. However he contracted trench fever and he was invalided back to England. After his recovery he taught at a newly-established signaling school... or did he? In actuality he was recruited into Military Intelligence to write propaganda articles for MI7b between 1916 and 1918.

MI7b was highly classified and completely unknown to history until just a couple of years ago when Jeremy Arter stumbled upon more than 150 classified documents from the unit among old papers at his aunt's home. The papers had been saved (counter to orders) by Jeremy's uncle, Captain James Price Lloyd. "I looked for Uncle Jim, but I found AA Milne as well. I also found Cecil Street, the author of the Dr. Priestley novels; the frontiersman and author Roger Pocock; the Irish poet Patrick MacGill; and JP Morton of Bystander fame," said Arter. "It was a bit like the Magnificent Seven had ridden into town, except that these were more than 20 or so of the greatest literary men of their day all working for MI7b, along with Uncle Jim. Along with manuscripts and photographs, Arter found a pamphlet entitled *The Green Book*, dated January 1919 and stamped MI7b: "for private circulation". It was a tongue-in-cheek comic created by the MI7b writers when their unit was disbanded at the end of the war. Several poems contributed by AA Milne were included among them the following excerpt:

**"Some Earlier Propagandists**

**(As they would have written, if only they had been properly organised)."**

***Captain William Shakespeare,  
of a Cyclist Battalion***

In M.I.7.B,  
Who loves to lie with me  
About atrocities  
And Hun Corpse Factories.  
Come hither, come hither, come hither,  
Here shall he see  
No enemy,  
But sit all day and blether

***Captain Thomas Campbell,  
of the Border Regiment***

*It was the schooner 'Hesperus'  
Which sailed the wintry seas ...  
And victory must remain with us  
While we have ships like these.*

Alan was discharged on 14 February 1919 and settled in Chelsea. He wrote 18 plays and 3 novels between 1906 and 1925. At one time he was considered the most popular playwright in London and had great success on Broadway as well. He wrote light comedies, such as *Mr. Pim Passes By* (which starred Leslie Howard as Mr. Pim), and *The Ugly Duckling*. His association with Leslie Howard led to him being an early screenwriter for the British film industry writing four *screenplays in 1920; The Bump, Twice Two, Five Pound Reward, and Bookworms* His novel *The Read House Mysteries*, was written in 1922 as a gift for his father

who loved mysteries and has become a classic. It is a locked room mystery with snippets of conversation overheard by servants providing clues, a secret passage and a ghost appearance. It was immediately popular and has gained many notable reviews. Raymond Chandler a noted mystery novelist of such works as *The Big Sleep* and *The Long Goodbye*, and former President of Mystery Writers of America in his 1944 essay *The Simple Art of Murder* called it "an agreeable book, light, amusing in the Punch style, written with a deceptive smoothness that is not as easy as it looks." Alexander Woollcott, American critic for *The New Yorker*, called it "one of the three best mystery stories of all time"

But it was the appearance of the poem "Teddy Bear" in 1924's *When We Were Very Young*, which brought us the character we best remember him for -- a boy's adventures with his teddy bear based on both his own and his son's childhood. One of the illustrations for *Teddy Bear* showed the bear wearing a shirt which was later colored red when reproduced on a recording produced by Stephen Slesinger. Originally Pooh only wore the red shirt in the winter to keep warm. Disney portrayed him always with the red shirt and this is how we have come to see the bear who kept Christopher Robin Milne company on many an adventure! A *Gallery of Children* followed in 1925 and Pooh showed up as himself on Christmas Eve 1925 in the *London Evening News* in the story "The Wrong Sort Of Bees." *Winnie the Pooh* was published in 1926, *Now We are Six* in 1927 and *The House at Pooh Corner* in 1928. These works made A. A. Milne immortal, but not in the way in which he had hoped. He found that following *Winnie the Pooh* he was pegged in the industry as a children's author, and there was little success for him afterwards. One major exception was his play based on *The Wind in the Willows* which has become a Christmas favorite to this day, *Toad of Toad Hall* which was first produced in 1929, although he actually wrote it in 1921. In 1934 he wrote a book entitled *Peace With Honour* which was published in September 1934. Many people hailed it as a great book, but it also had many critics. As WWII began he realized TS Eliot's criticism that some things are worth fighting for had a valid point and he wrote a pamphlet called *War With Honour* explaining his change in viewpoint. People had a hard time seeing him in any other light and consequently he came to see it as the Pooh Curse—and as Christopher Robin grew up so did he to some extent. They each came to grips with the notoriety Pooh Bear gave them in the end, and they will both live on in the imagination of the young at heart throughout time.

Edward Bear was bought at Harrods, a gift to his son for his first birthday. Billy Moon, as he was known in the family, later renamed him Winnie the Pooh from his favorite bear at the London Zoo, Winnie. Lt. Harry Coleburn and the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade had found her as a cub, and Coleburn bought her from the hunter that had killed her mother. The bri-

gade adopted her as their mascot and named her Winnipeg nicknamed Winnie. She came with them to England (they actually smuggled her into the country) during WWI, but they couldn't take her with them when they went to fight in France, so Coleburn loaned her to the zoo. Following the war Coleburn gave her to London Zoo as she had become the most popular animal! She was Billy Moon's favorite animal—amazingly the zoo allowed children to pet her and have their pictures taken with her—something that would NEVER happen today! Pooh was a pet black swan, and so, Billy Moon's bear became Winnie-the-Pooh -- "the" meant that HIS bear was a boy because Winnie was a girl's name and everyone knows that "THE" means it is a boy!



The rest of the original Pooh toys, Kanga, Roo, Piglet, Eeyore, and Tigger were received as gifts between 1920-1928 and were well loved and played with by the family dog as well as Christopher Robin. Eeyore's neck lost its stiffening and so his head hangs down making him look sad. Roo was lost in an orchard in the 1930's. Piglet is the smallest at only 4.5 inches high, and Eeyore is the biggest at 25 inches. Owl and Rabbit were inspired by real animals at Crotchford Farm where the Milnes lived - it and the Ashdown Forrest near the farm make up the real Hundred Acre Woods! It was a magical time between the wars,. Christopher later wrote:

"It is difficult to say which came first. Did I do something and did my father then write a story around it? Or was it the other way about, and did the story come first? Certainly my father was on the look-out for ideas; but so too was I. He wanted ideas for his stories, I wanted them for my games, and each looked towards the other for inspiration. But in the end it was all the same: the stories became a part of our lives; we lived them, thought them, spoke them. And so, possibly before, but certainly after that particular story, we used to stand on Pooh-sticks Bridge throwing sticks into the water and watching them float away out of sight until they re-emerged on the other side." (*The Enchanted Places*, 58)

He and Alan vacationed with Ken's widow, Maude and her family every sum-

mer from 1934-1937 off the Dorset coast. Christopher was between 14-17 and Alan between 52 and 55. Daphne went on separate vacations to New York which seemed to suit them all well. Christopher wrote of the vacations:

“And then, quite naturally, quite unself-consciously, we slipped back through the years to our schooldays. I would put our age at around twelve. Five twelve-year-olds playing happily together. I don't for a moment think that this was done deliberately in order to level out our assorted ages. Nor do I think that it was my father who led us back. I think it just happened because we were all Milnes and this is a thing that Milnes can do... For us, to whom our childhood has meant so much, the journey back is short, the coming and going easy.” (*The Enchanted Places*, 161)

Christopher grew up, followed in his fathers footsteps to Cambridge on a mathematics scholarship only to find he had lost his love of mathematics 8 months along. He left college and joined the Army deciding that his love of carpentry would come in handy for a Sapper and determined to join the Royal Engineers. Alan wrote to the under-secretary of War to ensure his son would be placed with the Sappers and not Infantry.

When WWII began, Alan again stepped up to do his patriotic duty and served as a Captain in the Home Guard in Hartfield & Forest Row. But he insisted on being plain 'Mr. Milne' to the members of his platoon! Sadly his good friend P. G. Wodehouse was living in La Touquet, France when the Nazis captured it and he was sent to an interment camp—that is until they figured out how big a fish they had capture. Wodehouse was then housed in a luxury hotel in Berlin where he agreed to record a series of radio broadcasts on his internment. Alan, being the propagandist himself, knew what a danger this posed and wrote to the *Daily Telegraph*: “Irresponsibility in what the papers call ‘a licensed humorist’ can be carried too far; naïveté can be carried too far. Wodehouse has been given a good deal of licence in the past, but I fancy that now his licence will be withdrawn.” Indeed the British populace was outraged and at the end of the war he was an outcast. His books were removed from British libraries, his works banned by the BBC, and his name ranked alongside the nation's most reviled traitors. The friendship was at an end, never to be revived.

Following the war Christopher returned to Cambridge and took a degree in English Literature, and then the relationship between father and son shifted drastically Christopher wrote:

“..in 1947 all this changed. Up to then we had run neck and neck. He had been the better cricketeer but I had been the better mathematician. We had both done equally bad at Cambridge, but I—with a six-year break for the war—could offer the better excuse. We had both been equally indifferent soldiers, but I had at least started from the ranks; and a wound in the head was surely more glorious than trench fever. We had been companions, but now our ways were to part... In pessimistic moments, when I was trudging London in search of an employer wanting to make use of such

talents as I could offer, it seemed to me, almost, that my father had got to where he was by climbing upon my infant shoulders, that he had filched from me my good name and had left me with nothing but the empty fame of being his son.”

Sadly that is all that many see, a son and father at odds stricken with the curse of Pooh. But when you read Christopher's autobiography a very different picture emerges. This was a much more complex story than most short bios and articles lead one to believe, but then life is always more complicated than the surface appearance, isn't it?

Christopher married his cousin Lesley de Selincourt. Together they opened a book store in Dartmouth, Harbour Bookshop. It took time and a lot of hard work to build up their business, and he took a lot of pride in making a go of it on their own. Alan had a stroke in 1952 and underwent brain surgery which left him confined to a wheelchair until his death.

“In 1956 my father died. In a sense, however, he was already dead; for the operations that had given him an extra year of life had made him a different person. It had made my mother a different person too. And it had made Cotchford a different place...

“Selfishly I was glad that I lived in Devon and had a bookshop that I could not easily leave. Children drift away from their parents as they grow up, and it is right that they should. I had been very close to mine, especially my father, for rather longer than is usual, and so the drifting when it came was perhaps a little farther than is usual. I saw my father on two occasions during his illness, my mother and Cotchford on three. On his death I never saw Cotchford again. And although my mother survived him by fifteen years I saw her only once.” (*The Path Through the Trees*, 257)



Pooh Bear, Eeyore, Kanga, and Piglet now live at the New York City Public Library. They first came to America on tour in 1947 and Milne provided a birth certificate to travel with them! His American publishers insured them for \$50,000 which in today's dollars would be over a half a million dollars! They stayed at Dutton Publishers until they made a brief trip home VIP on a Concorde Jet in 1969. Then in 1987 they left Dutton Publishers to make their home at New York City Public Library's Donnell Branch in the Central Children's Room.

The rights to A. A. Milne's Pooh books were left to four beneficiaries: his family, the Royal Literary Fund, Westminster School and the Garrick Club. After Milne's death in 1956, one week and six days after his 74th birthday, his widow sold her rights to the Pooh characters to Stephen Slesinger, whose widow sold the rights after Slesinger's death to the Walt Disney Company. Christopher was extremely upset with his mother when he found out she had sold his father's manuscripts.

"When I first learned what my mother had done I felt only a sudden surge of anger and a stab of sorrow. My poor father, that she should have treated him like this! And so started the train of emotions that led in the end to my writing *The Enchanted Places*.

"It was I suppose a feeling of guilt, a guilt which my mother and I had shared. We had both in our different ways failed him. And I owed it to him to make amends." (*The Path Through the Trees*, 260)

Many assumed that Christopher lived off the royalties, but he never received any until after his mother's death in 1971.

"For twenty-one years Lesley and I lived on the profits of our shop and the bulk of this came from bookselling. We had no other source of income. I say this loudly and proudly. Loudly, because a number of people seem to have suspected that all the while Pooh's earnings were keeping my pockets comfortably lined. Proudly, because it is not easy to survive as a bookseller—in fact as well as name—in a town whose population is under 7,000." (*The Path Through the Trees*, 166)

In 2001, the other beneficiaries sold their interest in the estate to the Disney Corporation for \$350m. Previously Disney had been paying twice-yearly royalties to these beneficiaries. The estate of E. H. Shepard, Alan's friend and co-worker from Punch who was the original illustrator, also benefited under this agreement.

My favorite roll for Pooh Bear is as an ambassador for the Gordon Clan welcoming the young and young at heart into the Gordon Tent at the Highland Games. AA Milne and Pooh have given us one very important clue to our clan's success over the centuries in this one quote: "Promise me you'll always remember: You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." Never underestimate the power of staying young in mind and soul, and always look for the hidden depths, even in a bear of very little brain.

# AGM Agenda

- Call to Order
- Reading of the Chief's Greeting
- Reading and approval of the 2015 AGM Minutes
- Reports:
  - President's Report by Lois Todd
  - Treasurer's Report on the funds received, paid-out and financial state of the organization.
  - Membership Report
  - Convener's Chair Report by Geof Baker
  - Communications Chair Report
  - Scholarship Report
  - Epic Project Report
  - DNA Project Report
- Items of Business:
  - Discussion of Scottish Charity
  - Discussion of AGM 2017, & plans for Honored Clan Status at Grandfather Mountain and Chief's Visit .
  - Discussion of Goals for 2017
  - Call for any other new business to be discussed and motions to their disposition as it may pertain.
- Meeting Adjourned.

# Officers

## Board of Directors:

President -	Lois M. Todd	president@houseofgordonusa.org
Vice President-	Evan Rose	vp@houseofgordonusa.org
Secretary-	David Gauthier	secretary@houseofgordonusa.org
Treasurer-	Bonnie G. Linse	treasurer@houseofgordonusa.org
Directors at Large-		
	Geof Baker	geof@houseofgordonusa.org
	Lisa Gordon	lisa@houseofgordonusa.org

## Commissioners:

East Coast	David Todd	info@houseofgordonva,.com
Southwest	Tom Adams	taadams.scotland@sbcglobal.net

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