

## Newsletter

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Issue - Martinmas 2017

#### Note from the Editor – Duncan Beaton

Welcome to the 3rd issue of your Friends' Newsletter. In this issue we feature our hard-working archivist in our Pen Picture section, introduce a volunteer from the other side of the world, and resurrect a tale from a century ago. We depend massively on the support of you, our Friends, for your voluntary efforts, your financial donations and your gifts of time, expertise and enthusiasm. In particular, we should mention the recent very generous donations from Betsee Parker, which will enable us to buy a specialised volume and document scanner, and from Kathy Kendrick, which will enable us to conserve some of our most fragile charters and their seals. Thank you all very much.

So, as ever, read on and enjoy!

#### Events Held to Date

A third Open Day was held at the Argyll Papers on Saturday 23 September as part of the national Doors Open Day initiative. We offered guided tours of the archives (bookable in advance), a display of documents, and an opportunity to try your hand at transcription of Secretary Hand, in common use until the end of the 17th century. We had a number of bookings for the tours but no interest in the workshop. Those who attended on the day were very enthusiastic about the archives and their potential research value. It would be nice to have welcomed more across the threshold so we will need to think about what we offer and how we advertise next year.

The Friends also had a stall at Inveraray Games on Tuesday 18 July and in the heritage tent at the Oban Gathering on Thursday 24 August. We enjoyed meeting members of Clan Campbell from North

America in Inveraray. There was less interest from visitors at Oban, but we enjoyed networking with the other heritage providers in the tent and look forward to working with some of them in the near future.

Our first annual Friends' Visit was held on Saturday 16 September. We visited Ardkinglas House and Cairndow Kirk, enjoyed an excellent illustrated talk on the various Ardkinglas houses inhabited since 1396, and lunch at the local Stagecoach Inn. An experience enjoyed by the 20 who were able to attend, meeting old and making new Friends.



Friends enjoying coffee and biscuits at Ardkinglas House before the tour began. Photo courtesy of Ann Galliard.

#### History Corner

##### God Bless the Duke of Argyll

Our committee member Ann Galliard has found this card, originally produced during the First World War which, although more folklore than history, deserves to be included here.

The esteemed 8<sup>th</sup> Duke raised cattle and sheep on his estates and took a great interest in the welfare and wellbeing of all livestock. It was possibly personal experience of the midges and clegs around his home that led to him pressing for the creation of a law which said that any field used for pasturing cattle, if it did not have trees, should have scratching posts so that the animals could have some relief. Whether or not a law was actually passed is uncertain, but the Duke became known for the posts he erected in his own pastures to ease the itching caused by insects. No doubt the people tending the cattle were also affected by the same

biting insects, or carried lice and they gratefully used the posts. It became commonplace for the gratefully relieved people to cry "God Bless the Duke of Argyll!", and the term slipped into common use in Scotland, helped by the appearance of cartoons.

Another version of the story of posts appearing in the Duke's fields was that they were for the new telegraph system, and yet another version maintains that they were for marking tracks so that they could be found when the ground was covered by snow.



### Research in the Argyll Papers

With so much attention being paid to the year 1947, and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of events around the partition of India as the British withdrew, it is perhaps opportune to note that there are about 100 bundles of India-related documents in the Argyll Papers.

George Douglas Campbell, 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll, served as Secretary of State for India in Liberal Government during the years 1868-1874. The papers mentioned above consist of the letters, reports and memoranda he received while holding that important office. We read of the threat of famine, combatting the East African slave trade, the problems of Afghanistan (yes, it will sound familiar), and the construction of the Indian railways. There are the famous political names of the High Victorian

period: Gladstone, Disraeli, Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Richard Temple and so on.

A particularly chilling letter is from Richard Bourke, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Mayo, Viceroy and Governor General, written shortly before his assassination in 1872, where he expresses his anger at the 'great and unnecessary cruelty' in the hideous execution, without trial, of forty nine 'Kooka' rebel prisoners. The erection of statues of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort in Bombay is another topic discussed. Her Majesty was soon, in 1876, to be declared Empress of India – though she never managed to visit the sub-continent.

Murdo MacDonald – Committee Chair & Volunteer

### Volunteer Tasks



Elizabeth Kraus has traced her Mackellar ancestors back to Stuckscardan in Glen Shira.

You too can assist from afar!

Having Argyll ancestry I have been lucky with support over many years, helping to unravel my McKellar/Mackellar family history around Loch Awe, Glen Shira and Inveraray. I had also heard much about the Argyll Archives from various sources, so early in 2017 I decided to join the Friends. As a new member, I felt that I would like to contribute in some way towards any ongoing projects. It was my way of giving back, and assisting others in the future with their own research.

Over the past few months Alison Diamond has sent me digitized images of documents, which I have then transcribed in my own time, and emailed back accordingly. During this time I have been

transcribing tales from Hector Maclean's translations of the Dewar Manuscripts; a collection of seven volumes of Gaelic folklore. From 1862 to 1872 John Dewar collected traditional and historical tales, poems and songs, and genealogies for the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll. Then, between 1879 and 1881 Hector Maclean translated these from the Gaelic to English, into just six volumes.

So far I've transcribed many lively tales from numbers one, two and six of Hector Maclean's volumes. They are full of conversations and descriptions of events, truly depicting a very different style of life in the Highlands during earlier times! Already, I've learnt much more of clan life and their social mores. An example is the practice of fosterage of male children, whereby the sons of chieftains and landlords were sent to live with the richest of their tenants. Many tales tell of the rivalry between the clans, for instance, there's the tale of 'One-eyed John MacColl', the expert archer, who assists in the return of stolen cattle. 'The gift of Tìree to Maclean of MacDonald of the Isles' was achieved by a little scheming between family members. However, the tale of 'The Castle of the Red-haired Maiden' tells the sad story of the consequences of those who inform on others. 'The Patersons' tale tells of the changing ownership of Glenurchy (Glenorchy) and how it is finally given to the knight of Loch Awe by King Robert the Bruce. Even the rivalry between the Irish and the Scots is considered, as in the story of the Irish mason Goban Soar. Another tale tells of the origins of the Macintyres, which proved fascinating, as I too have Macintyre heritage! I'm now eagerly looking forward to the next batch of images to transcribe.

What then, can you offer? What are your interests? You don't have to live nearby to assist the Argyll Archives. Every little bit helps to make more records available to more researchers and along the way you too may gain useful insight and knowledge ... even something of your own heritage, perhaps?  
Elizabeth Kraus, volunteer, Victoria, Australia

#### **Pen Picture – Alison Diamond – Our Archivist**

Our newsletter will feature pen pictures of our committee members and under the spotlight this time is Mrs Alison Diamond, our Archivist.

Alison was born in Chelmsford, Essex, where her Northamptonshire father and Scottish mother had met at Marconi College. She graduated BD Hons at Aberdeen in 1988 and MA in Archive Administration from the University of London in 1991. An initial temporary contract with the Scottish Records Office, now the National Records of Scotland (NRS), led to a permanent job and many fulfilling years working with the amazing collections and colleagues there, as cataloguer and search room supervisor.

Archival work was interrupted to raise four boys - although being out of the office allowed Alison to participate in the online Access to Mineral Heritage online project as well as working as a childminder and, eventually, working for NRS at home.



Alison and Friend, Ronnie Black, at Ardkinglas House. Photo: courtesy of Ann Galliard.

Returning to full-time work in 2007, Alison led an education project marking the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the union of the parliaments of Scotland and England, working for a consortium of national organisations. From 2008, Alison worked for NRS again, as Education Officer and administrator of the Scottish Register of Tartans. Alison was fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in the Clore Leadership Programme as the National Archives Institutions Fellow in 2014-15, and this gave her the confidence to apply for her current role as Archivist at Inveraray Castle. Alison loves working at Inveraray Castle – she says it's a bit like being on holiday every day, living in a place like Inveraray and working with this most amazing collection!

## Current Committee Members

The current members are:

Mr Murdo MacDonald – Chair

Mrs Alison Diamond – Archivist

Mrs Jean Maskell – Treasurer

Professor Allan Macinnes

Dr Alison Rosie

Dr Ronnie Black

Mrs Ann Galliard

Mr Diarmid A Campbell

Mr Duncan Beaton – Newsletter editor

Mr Jim Brown – Argyll Estates Accountant

Ms Ishbel Mackinnon – Perth County Archivist

Mrs Linda Fryer

## Update on the Written in the Landscape project



With funding secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Argyll Estates, Argyll and Bute Council, the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust, An Iodhlann and the Tìree Windfarm Trust, the Clan Campbell Education Foundation and Inveraray CARS, the *Written in the Landscape* project is at last properly underway. Two project archivists have been appointed – Hannah Baker in Inveraray and Jen Young in Lochgilphead at the LiveArgyll Archives, we have delivered the first of the training sessions in archival skills for community partners and our first exhibition. Mermaids and Muggles: Fantastic Tales and Kintyre Folk, opened in Campbeltown Library on Tuesday 17 October.

The Mermaids and Muggles exhibition explores the connections that may exist between us and our ancestors, both physical characteristics and more intangible connections. The family portraits and documents featured in the exhibition are from the Anne Campbell Collection held by the Argyll Papers. Anne was the wife of Duncan Campbell, Sheriff

Substitute of Kintyre in the early nineteenth century, and an ancestor of the author, JK Rowling. The exhibition features the story of the Corphin mermaid, recorded by Duncan Campbell in his role as Sheriff Substitute, alongside additional fantastical tales from Kintyre held in the LiveArgyll Archives.

The exhibition is in Campbeltown Library ('Aqualibrum'), during usual library opening hours. On Saturday 4 November we will be hosting a drop-in session, (otherwise known as 'Show and Tell'), to which we invite anyone interested to bring their own fantastical tales, oral or documented, and stories of their own Kintyre folk. We are also running workshops for local primary school pupils, in partnership with the Scottish Council on Archives, which will investigate the exhibition content in an interactive and exciting way.

We'll keep you updated on further events and activities organized as part of the Project. Please do get involved!

## Future Dates for your Diary

The Newsletter will be produced twice yearly, at Michaelmas and Whitsunday. Please feel free to submit articles of interest to Friends or suggestions for information that you think we should include.

Our second Annual Meeting will be held on a Saturday in **March 2018** – details of date, programme and venue will be confirmed nearer the time.

The Friends' website is currently undergoing re-development (we've had problems with the software and design theme) so please accept our apologies that the pages are currently out of date. If you're a wiz with websites, please feel free to volunteer your services to help with the re-development! In the meantime, please follow us on Facebook for more frequent updates.

We hope you enjoyed reading this issue. Please email your feedback to: [archives@inveraray-castle.com](mailto:archives@inveraray-castle.com).