

Hunters' Halloo

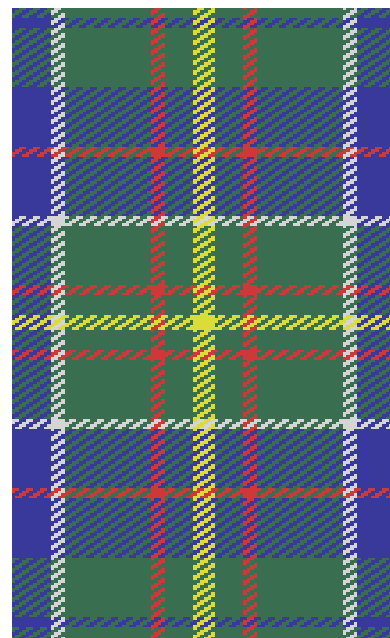
From the Editors

Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! It has been a very quiet winter so far around here which has been very welcome. The snow held off in Southwestern Ontario so we were able to attend all of our functions and do all of our shopping without having to contend with icy roads and slippery sidewalks.

I often look back at the newsletter from the previous year to see what kinds of things I wrote about or included. Looking back at Winter 2023, I made a comment about life getting "back to normal" after several years of covid. It's interesting this year to reflect on what the "new normal" looks like now. Last year, I was encouraging people to continue finding ways to connect with friends and family, and to avoid letting "busy" take over again. My family has definitely continued to focus on connecting. My parents have weekly Skype calls with all of their siblings in Scotland which is just lovely. Unfortunately this year, a lot of illness has also reared its ugly head. In our family, none of it seems to be testing positive for covid, but it is hitting hard. But even there, I'm sensing a difference. While no one wants to be sick, there is a certain acceptance of it now that wasn't there before. Instead of fighting against being ill, trying to continue on, and probably spreading the illness to innumerable other people, the people around me seem to have a new approach to being ill. Society seems to be more accepting of people "calling in sick" to meetings and social functions, preferring to miss the person and catch up later, than to encounter the germs and pass on the illness, thus allowing and in fact encouraging the sick person to take the time to allow themselves to recover. I'm happy to see this change in attitude.

I hope you are all managing to keep well, or to take the time necessary to recover. We've already passed the longest night of the year and we're headed towards spring!

Lynn & Lizz



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Clan Hunter Association, Canada

This newsletter is for members and friends of Clan Hunter Association, Canada. If you have an important event in your family's life that you'd like to share, please send us a photo or two and a brief explanation of what you are celebrating. Graduations, new babies, birthdays, retirements, if you're celebrating, we'd like to know!

From the Clan Officer, Dale Hill

Let me begin by sharing wishes for a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year with all of our Clan members in Canada. I can barely believe how quickly 2023 seemed to pass by and here we are at the start of 2024. I'm not sure how many of you might have made (and possibly already broken) a resolution, but my plans for this year are heavily travel based - including a trip to Scotland to attend the International Gathering at Hunterston Castle in late July. If you're thinking about joining in the festivities, please visit <https://www.clanhunterscotland.com/clan-international-gathering/>.

Closer to home, we are pleased to share with our members that the Dr. Nadine Hunter Youth Heritage Fund, established to assist young people in pursuing activities that support their Scottish heritage, has a revised application timeline and disbursement requirements. If you are a member of Clan Hunter Canada (paid and in good standing for at least 2 years) and have a child/ward/grandchild that is 20 years of age or younger involved in activities anchored in Scottish heritage (e.g. highland dancing, piping, among many others) you will want to check out the fund description and conditions outlined in this newsletter. For more information or to receive an application form, please contact me by e-mail.

Given that I will be traveling during the summer, I cannot commit to attending as many festivals in Canada. We will certainly have representation at Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games August 9 to 11. If you are disappointed that we may not be represented at a festival local to you, please consider hosting a Clan Hunter tent and sharing our history and heritage with others. This is a great way to meet fellow Hunters, members of other Clans, as well as folks who are attending the festival that may be interested in learning more about their own connections to a clan and/or Scotland. We can help you prepare for hosting a tent for the first time, provide electronic resources to be viewed/handed out and share a banner or flag (when available). If you are interested in taking on this important role for a specific festival or would like to hear more, please connect with me. It would be great to add you to our team!

Our goal in 2024 is to host at least one in person get together in Southern Ontario as well as an online event our members from across Canada would be able to participate in. If you have a suggestion to help bring our membership closer together, reach out to share it with me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Please enjoy this latest collection of news compiled by our dedicated Newsletter Editors, Lizz and Lynn. If you have any great stories or news to share with your fellow Clan members, please connect with Lynn or Lizz to find out more about submission deadlines for upcoming editions. I know they would love to include your contributions.

Take care,

Dale

clanhunter.ca@gmail.com



CLAN
HUNTER



From the Membership Secretary—Christine Hunter

Membership Report—Winter 2024

We have had 4 new members join us since our last Newsletter was printed. Here is a little bit of information about them. If you meet any of our new members at the Highland Games next summer, make sure you make them welcome. It's amazing how much a kind word can make a new member feel part of the Hunter family.

Debra Rajczak joined us in September, and hails from Grimsby, Ontario

Stephanie Lecocq Heathcote became a member in October and lives in Stoney Creek, also Ontario. Stephanie's family are long time members of the Association, so we now welcome Stephanie to the clan.

John Fearnall hails from Kitchener, Ontario and joined the Association in November.

Our final new member (so far) in 2023 is **Justin Rawlinson**. Justin resides in Toronto. Justin joined us in December,

NOTE – all from Ontario!

Let me add another two new members who have joined us within the past few day, and actually after I had written my report.

Karen Berteau lives in Addison, Texas, but originally hailed from right here in Ontario Canada. Karen joined us right at the end of 2023, in late December.

We are also pleased to welcome: **Dorothy MacDonald** who resides in Delta, British Columbia. Dorothy is our first new member in this new year. January 2024!

Please join me in welcoming all of these new members to our Clan Hunter Canada, and wishing them well as they research their roots, and get to know some of their fellow Hunters.

We look forward to hopefully being able to greet many of these new members at the Fergus Highland Games in August 2024. That is a convenient venue for most of our new members, and we surely do hope they can come out and let us get to know them better.

I would like to thank all those who have paid their yearly dues for the current year – July 2023 to June 2024. We are still a little short in that around 40 members are still in arrears. I will send a gentle reminder to those people once the holiday season is passed – and please consider catching up. The dues help us to have a presence at more Highland Games, and thus get the Hunter Clan more commonly recognized across the whole of our wonderful country.

Blessings at this most wonderful time of the year.

Christine Hunter, Membership Secretary

Great Scottish Traditions

The 'First Foot'

The tradition of the First Foot is practised in the act of being the first person to cross the threshold of your door in the new year, especially shortly after the bells of the New Year have rung out.

It is considered a great honour to be someone's 'First Foot' and particularly if one is first-footed by a tall, dark handsome male! The 'First Foot' should bear a gift, traditionally a lump of coal for the fireplace, although with the advent of modern heating, this has given way to the gift of a party snack or a new calendar.

One should however always come prepared with a bottle, never consider it the householder's duty to ply you with drink! That said, it is customary for householders to have a pot of hot soup or "stovies" or perhaps some oatcakes and cheese at the ready for those coming in on a cold mid-winter's night!



"Redding the house" for Hogmanay

It was traditionally believed to be bad luck to enter into a new year with a messy home. So a simple Scottish tradition, and one many of us keep to this day is "redding the house" for the coming year. This involves a thorough clean and declutter of your home, paying off any outstanding debts and clearing any old ashes out from the fire place before laying it fresh again... all to be completed before the bells ring at midnight.

The purpose is to clear out the remnants of the old year and welcome in a new year with a fresh, clean slate.

Genealogy

There's an old joke about a new prisoner having his first lunch after being checked into the prison. He sat down at one of the long tables to eat. After a few minutes, one of the other prisoners called out "12". The whole room broke up into uproarious laughter. Soon, another man called out "78", and again all the prisoners roared with laughter. After a while, a third man called out "143", and again everyone broke out in laughter.

"What's going on?", the new prisoner asked his neighbour.

"We've got a joke book," his neighbour said, "and everyone knows it so well that all we have to do is call out the numbers and everyone remembers the joke."

The new prisoner asked for a copy of the jokebook, riffled through the pages, stood up and called out "23". Not a sound. Everyone looked away. He sat down and asked his neighbour why they weren't laughing.

"It must be the way you told the joke."

Bare with me here, because it's a bit of a stretch, but this joke is a little like genealogy. Imagine how amazing your family tree would be if each name was simply a reminder of all the great stories and memories associated with that person. While it might be impossible to collect stories about people long past, but what could you do this year to start a genealogical story for future generations? What kinds of stories would you like to pass on? How could you start such an incredible treasure?

"A Scottish farmer at Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre fools tourists into believing that her flock produce tartan wool with the help of some harmless sheep marking spray. The visitors were told that the animals were being raised on a diet of Irn Bru and shortbread."



Ecclefechan Tarts—do not make if you can't pronounce the name!

Ingredients

For the filling

- 60g unsalted butter, melted, plus extra to grease
- 100g soft dark brown sugar
- 1 medium free-range egg, beaten
- Finely grated zest 1 orange, plus 1 tbsp juice
- 3 tbsp scotch whisky
- 150g mixed dried fruit
- 50g walnuts, roughly chopped

For the pastry

- 200g plain flour, plus extra to dust
- 65g unsalted butter, cubed
- 75g caster sugar
- Finely grated zest 1 orange
- 1 large free-range egg yolk
- 2½ tbsp ice-cold water (and a little more if needed)

You'll also need

- 6-hole tart tray
- Fluted cookie cutter (3cm larger than the tart holes)



Method

1. To make the filling, put all the ingredients in a bowl, mix and set aside for 1 hour.
2. To make the pastry, rub the flour and butter together in a bowl with your fingers until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Mix in the sugar and orange zest, then add the egg yolk and ice-cold water. Bring together with your hands to form a dough, adding a little more cold water if needed. Roll into a ball, wrap and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Lightly grease the tart tray holes with butter. Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface to 3mm thick, then use the cookie cutter to stamp out 6 circles of pastry. Press the pastry circles into the holes and prick the bases with a fork. Put the tray in the fridge for 30 minutes. Meanwhile heat the oven to 160°C fan/gas 4. 4 Spoon the filling into the chilled pastry cases and bake in the oven for 15 minutes until golden. Leave the tarts to cool in the tray for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool further. Enjoy them warm or at room temperature.

Tips & Notes

If you don't have a 6-hole tart tray you can use a yorkshire pudding tin, muffin tin or similar. You can also use a cup or bowl as a guide to cut out pastry discs if you don't have a suitable cutter.

“The Gaelic name for the village of Ecclefechan in Dumfries and Galloway is Eaglais Fhèichin, with eaglais Gaelic for church. Named after the village, the tarts create a heavenly, house-filling aroma – perfect for after church.” Coinneach MacLeod

Dr. Nadine Hunter Scottish Youth Heritage Fund

Revised 2023

Purpose

The purpose of the Dr. Nadine Hunter Youth Heritage Fund is to assist young people in pursuing activities that support their Scottish heritage. Activities may include, but are not limited to, dance or music lessons or competitions, travel expenses to activity, entrance fees for activity, or supporting the purchase of appropriate attire for performances or competitions.

Administration

The fund is administered by the Youth Heritage Fund Committee of Clan Hunter Canada. The Committee (Graham Hunter, Kathryn Lecocq and Dale Hill) will be established at the AGM and have the ability to make decisions on behalf of the membership. Decisions regarding the disbursement of bursaries will be made twice per year, in the Spring and Fall. The names of successful applicants will be acknowledged at the AGM and published in the Spring or Fall newsletter.

Conditions of Disbursement

- Each year, up to three (3) bursaries of \$100 each may be awarded to successful applicants (Spring and Fall disbursements combined).
- Applicants must be 20 years of age or younger.
- Applicants must be the child/ward/grandchild of a Clan Hunter member paid and in good standing for at least 2 years.
- Preference will be given to first-time applicants.
- Applications must be received by the Committee prior to March 1st of the current year to be considered for the Spring disbursement and August 1st of the current year to be considered for the Fall disbursement. The Committee will endeavour to notify candidates of their decisions within 25 days of the application deadline.

Requirements After Receiving a Grant

Photographs and a written summary of the activity/use of funds will be submitted to Clan Hunter Canada in a timely manner. This enables your story to be shared with the Clan in an upcoming newsletter.

Send your request for an application form to

Dale Hill, Clan Officer

clanhunter.ca@gmail.com

Clan Hunter International Gathering 2024

We are delighted to announce the dates of our next Clan Hunter International Gathering!
Friday 26th July 2024 – Sunday 28th July 2024.
Book early to make use of our new early-bird special offer.

Madam Pauline and our team of tour guides look forward to welcoming you to your ancestral home at Hunterston Castle.



For more information, including programme and menus, visit www.clanhunterscotland.com/klan-international-gathering/