

In The House!

National Newsletter of the House of Gordon USA

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

DECEMBER 2012

Goodbye 2012, HELLO 2013!

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This has been a year of change. In June, Lynne Gordon resigned as Vice President, just 7 months into the two year term. Shortly after this her husband Woody also resigned as Convener of the Southwest Division as they retired and moved to Colorado, leaving a large gap in the SW leadership.

Morris Gordon retired as the Mid-Atlantic Commissioner after many years of service and David Todd was made East Coast Commissioner.

Patrick and Jody Gordon have retired as the Arizona Conveners, leaving yet another gap in the SW leadership.

Tom & Sarah Gardenhire have retired as the North Carolina Conveners.

And, now Roger Mills has resigned as the President of the House of Gordon USA. Hence the lateness of this newsletter, for which we profusely apologize.

A lot of change for one year! Thank goodness that the Aztec Calendar did not after all portend the end of the world, nor the end of the House! 2013 has dawned and we now have the chance to rebuild, renew, and re-energize the House. We are looking for volunteers and we are hoping that some of our younger members will be enthusiastic enough to volunteer a bit of their time to help us out with IT solu-

tions, news articles, set-up and take-down at the festivals, and maybe even taking on convening a game or the challenge of office!

Building the House is simple, it is all about having fun and strengthening our family. That is what we are after all, as a clan society we are a family organization. Together there isn't anything that we cannot accomplish. It is vitally important that we each take on a little bit of the responsibility of making the Gordon tent THE place to be at the games. Whether it is a simple smiling welcome to a newcomer or visitor, or a contribution of a covered dish to the pot luck lunch, or sharing of a musical talent to get the party started, it all adds up to having fun with family and friends.

Now to the nitty-gritty... our nominating committee is still looking for people interested in taking on the following offices: Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary. In addition to these offices, we are looking for people interested in volunteering to submit articles on the events in their area and other articles of interest to the newsletter, as well as people who may have IT solutions to help the House continue to improve and move forward with today's most innovative technologies. If you are interested in volunteering a little or a lot, please contact our Nominating Committee Chair, John Gordon of Illinois at:

johng@houseofgordonusa.org

Thank You House of Gordon!

Dear House of Gordon

Thank you again for awarding me with the Charles O. Gordon Memorial Scholarship this past year. It enabled me to attend the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's (RSCDS) Summer School in St Andrews this past July. Because of this trip I have not only improved my dancing quite a bit, but also by touring Scotland I was introduced to its unique culture and history.

When I arrived at Summer School, I had no idea what to expect. This was my first visit to Great Britain, and I was still getting over a mild case of culture shock. However, I quickly grew accustomed to wearing a kilt around the rainy St Andrews and dancing my legs off. I had two Scottish Country Dance classes early in the morning at different local halls. Throughout the week I, along with the entire Advanced Dancers class, worked on improving footwork, timing, formations, and sociability. The teachers introduced me to the finer points of Scottish Country Dancing and the live pianists, accordianists, and fiddlers were a treat. Each night, I attended a large social dance at a local dance hall and practiced the dance tips I had learned the previous days. In addition to learning more about Scottish Country Dancing, I was introduced to Highland Dance in an afternoon class. Throughout the week, I had a wonderful time while I learned a great deal about these two traditional dance forms.

Following my week in the quaint St Andrews, I toured throughout Scotland. I was amazed by the grandeur of the green, craggy mountains, and the deep, blue Lochs of the Scottish Highlands. I climbed the steps of the William Wallace Monument dizzyingly high above the city of Stirling and crouched through the stooped doorway of the local museum in historic Glencoe. The quaint fishing villages almost seemed from another time. I crossed over the waters to the isles of Arran, Mull, Iona, and Skye, and

toured the majestic castles of Brodick, Stirling, and Edinburgh. When in Edinburgh, I even attended the world-renowned Edinburgh Tattoo. All the while I learned more and more about the many kings and queens of Scotland, ancient traditions, and the roots of my Scottish heritage. Also, meeting true Scots in the different locales of Scotland brought me an appreciation Scotland's unique culture, arts, and legacy.

“Each night,

After my travels I returned home to North Carolina with stories, pictures, and deepened knowledge and admiration of Scotland, their arts, and particularly Scottish Country Dancing. I continue to dance with the Charlotte Scottish Country Dance Society under the instruction of Jack Pressley. Also, I have recently demonstrated with my group at the Reel Scottish Weekend, Historic Rural Hill Farm's First Footin', and the Charlotte Folk Society's Young Talent Showcase. Additionally, I achieved the RSCDS' Level 5 Medal with Distinction for youth in Scottish Country Dance. For summer 2013, I have been awarded the John Duckett Scholarship from the RSCDS and am currently planning to attend Summer School this July.

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Thank you, House of Gordon, again, so much for awarding me the Charles O. Gordon Memorial Scholarship and thus enabling me to go to Summer School and further continue in my love of Scottish Arts, particularly Scottish Country Dancing. I look forward to possibly seeing you at the Grandfather Highland games some time in the future.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Wolff

AGM 2012 Minutes

House of Gordon USA Annual General Meeting

Meadow Highland Games & Celtic Festival at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, Linville, NC

July 14, 2012

5:00 p.m.

Federal IRS EIN # 26-0285250

Call to Order:

The annual House of Gordon meeting (AGM) was called to order at 5:05 p.m., by Roger J. Mills, President. In his opening remarks the President informed the Membership that the Secretary, Laura Whiteside was unable to attend the AGM. Barbara Gordon Wray, Past Secretary offered to fulfill the duties of Secretary and started the sign-in sheet for members. The President appointed her Secretary for that meeting per Bylaws Article 3, Section 5.

Roll Call of Council Members:

The President called the Roll of the Council Members. The President was the sole Officer present. Directors John Lowry and Lucretia Gordon, Lois Todd, Communications Chair, and John C. Gordon, Quartermaster, were present.

Quorum:

The President informed the Membership that from an earlier discussion with the Treasurer, 116 members were paid as of the June 2012 deadline, making a quorum (20%) 23 needed attendees. This number was questioned by Lois Todd and Bonnie Linse, as the numbers did not correspond to the treasurer's report which had been circulated to those present. The Sign-in sheet was returned to the President who reviewed it and noted 16 members present.

The President declared that there was not a Quor-

um and notified the Membership that no official business could be conducted. He further indicated that he intended to proceed with the Agenda as an "informational session" for the Good of the Order so the various reports could be collected and any inquiries from those present could be addressed. He noted that those Reports would be forwarded to the Communications Chair for Website publication.

New Members:

New member Jeffrey and Michelle Kuso had found out 8 years ago that he was a Gordon after meeting his biological mother. He had been adopted as a baby. He was encouraged write an article on his experience for Lois Todd to use in a future newsletter.

Announcements:

No Valle Crucis picnic will be held this evening. The President had talked to David Todd and found that the camping Gordons were planning a pot luck dinner in the camp grounds with other campers for that evening.

Chief's Message:

There was no Chief's message available for this meeting.

Reading and Approval of the 2011 AGM

Minutes: Barbara Wray read the Minutes of the 2011 AGM. With no quorum, the Minutes could not be approved.

Discussion of the Minutes: Lois Todd indicated she had questions regarding the minutes. She indicated that she was told the \$6000 referred to in the minutes was never mentioned by Kim Gordon regarding pricing for a viable software option that the board was considering to purchase for use. The top figure she recalled from the board meetings discussions was \$4000 for a full membership program while it was in

the exploratory phase only and it was never an option that the board considered. John Lowry concurred that those figures were not viable options as discussed by the board.

Lois Todd also had questions about the Membership numbers, as reported in the minutes. The figure reported as active for determining the quorum did not sync with the membership records or the treasurer's report of membership dues paid. The number of votes recorded was also questioned as were the number of proxy votes counted. It was pointed out that each family membership is one vote, and that proxies must be received by the secretary at least 10 days prior to the AGM according to the Bylaws.

Reports:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Roger Mills gave his Report. John Lowry commented that sadly the House of Gordon USA donation check for the Gordon Highlanders Museum had not been delivered do to illness of the person who was to have hand delivered it. John has it back and will be mailing it.

TREASURER'S REPORT: John Lowry reviewed Nellie Lowry's Report in her absence. There was a question on the clarity on the membership amount of \$3150. What actual membership and what time frame does it reflect? Treasurer's report attached.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Arlene Adams' report as of June 2012 indicated 403 paid from July 2011 thru June 2012.

Discussion on Membership: Roger Mills noted that the membership records have historically been done on personal computers. But we want it to be on line so that the state conveners and others can access the information on members they were responsible for. He said that his goal was that conveners should have this access so that they can contact their members to verify in-

formation such as email changes and remind them with they need to pay their dues.

John C. Gordon said he just got his 2012 card. Lu Gordon said we had 5 new members today that wanted to know when they would receive their membership cards. Lois also indicated that she paid for all three of her sons, writing one check, but was told that they had not paid. Bonnie Linse indicated the membership form should have a date indicating a start date to end date; i.e. July 1st to June 30th. It should be something that is clearly marked for the fiscal year. All states should be consistent as written in the by-laws.

CONVENER COORDINATOR REPORT: John Lowry indicated that we have a new commissioner for the Mid-Atlantic Region, David Todd. He indicated that Morris Gordon had resigned and he wanted to thank Morris for his past service. We also recently lost Lynn and Woody Gordon from the Southwest region. They are moving to Colorado. At this time, there are only 2 people in Colorado doing 5 to 6 festivals in that state. We have a new lady in Oregon. Turpin Ballard is convener in Georgia.

DNA PROJECT REPORT: Lois Todd provided the DNA Project Report. She indicated that the project currently has 437 members participating up 139% over last year's numbers. Report will also be available on line.

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Lois Todd indicated that the process for the Scholarship application was moved to open on November 1st annually with submissions closing on March 24th this year. The GMHG Grade 4 Junior Piper of the Day received a \$250.00 grant and a trophy, which was awarded earlier today. Jonathan and Hannah Wolff of

Minutes Continued.

Huntersville, NC are joint recipients of a \$500.00 award. They are brother and sister ages 16 and 18 and are dancers with the Charlotte Scottish Country Dance Society and members of the Royal Scottish Dance Society. Isabelle Young of Waxhaw, NC is the recipient of a \$500.00 award. She is a 17 year old Scottish and Irish Fiddler with the Ceilidh Players and started violin lessons at age 11 and has applied her classical training to her studies in Celtic music. She will be attending Berklee College of Music in Boston. Azure Davis of Richmond, VA is the recipient of a \$250.00 award in dance.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT: Lois Todd indicated that the last Annual version of the newsletter was smaller in size bringing the cost reduction to \$1.24 each or 50% of previous edition. The President applauded the new format and noted that it was similar to the Scotland Gordon Journal that is no longer produced. The House of Gordon USA Facebook Group currently has 548 Facebook members. And a new House of Gordon USA Facebook Page was launched. She encourages YouTube submissions from all. Our website currently has over 9000 visits per month. Lois indicated that a new data base will help with membership numbers as emails are a problem.

Standing Business Agenda

DISCUSSION OF AN AGM SITE for 2013: There was discussion about the sequencing of AGM locations. It has been practice to hold the AGM at Grandfather Mountain every other year but alternate around the country the sites that were not Grandfather Mountain years. It is the "off Grandfather" year that has held the Election of Officers and Directors. The question was asked what the Bylaws really required. Upon review, the Bylaws states: "To the extent practicable, the annual meeting location will be rotated among major Highland Games and Gathering sites." Those in the discussion agreed there

was flexibility in setting AGM locations not withstanding whether it was a designated election year or not. Lois Todd suggested the 2013 AGM be during the 2013 GMHG. The Members present agreed but without a quorum present the President accepted the consensus as a recommendation.

GOALS FOR 2013: Roger Mills indicated that we need to get membership on line and make sure it is accurate and available to conveners, commissioners and all board members.

New Business

John Lowry indicated that the Ann Forbes book could be bought by the clan starting with 50 copies to be sold at various Games. Lois Todd indicated that there is a link for her book on the House of Gordon USA website.

Barbara Wray has obtained a very nice silk/wool blend Gordon Dress men's jacket, size 39 Reg. She indicated that it is available at the Gordon Clan Tent to be let to the 'highest bidder' with the proceeds going toward the Charles O. Gordon Scholarship Fund.

Adjournment

The House of Gordon USA Bylaws places the protocol and conduct of Meetings under Robert's Rules of Order. To that end, the Membership attending the 2012 AGM conducted one of the few business options permitted without a quorum and adjourned the meeting.

Bonnie Linse made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jenny Gordon seconded. All voted. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Gordon Wray
Acting Secretary

SW HoG Member, Doc LaMar, and Operation Caregiver

Operation Caregiver was established by Michael G. "Doc" LaMar, MD, USN-Ret, in 2004. It began in response to an email to his friend Sgt Major Mark O'Loughlin (USMC-Ret. 2012) who was deployed to the Syrian border in Iraq asking what he needed. The first request was for homemade cookies for his company (250 men). It grew to include 15 items of comfort and hygiene that the troops tell us they need and want.

Since its inception, Operation Caregiver has been run with NO overhead. Along the way, many amazing volunteers have contributed their time, talent or treasure to this cause. It is now a nationwide program operated under the Victory Fund of the Nice Guys (an U.S. Federal IRS tax-exempt 501(c)3 public charity) to supply relief to our troops at the "tip-of-the-spear", shipping battalion-sized (1000+ men) shipments. Everything goes to the Command Sgt. Major to dispense as he sees fit. The target is the troops far from the flag-pole where there is no access to Mobile PX goodies and where you can go for months without a shower.

In addition to the Caregiver Kits, the organization send Christmas presents. Ladies around the world are knitting hats, scarves and booties for US combat troops. We package these knit goods with candy and a Christmas card and ship them on Veteran's Day.

The troops send thank you notes, sometimes on the flap of a used MRE (meal ready to eat) used as a post card.

Something that takes so little for us to give, makes a huge impact to these

young men on the front. This is quite evident in this thank you note that was forwarded by OC to a middle school student that sent a caregiver package.

Dear Ms. J.N.,

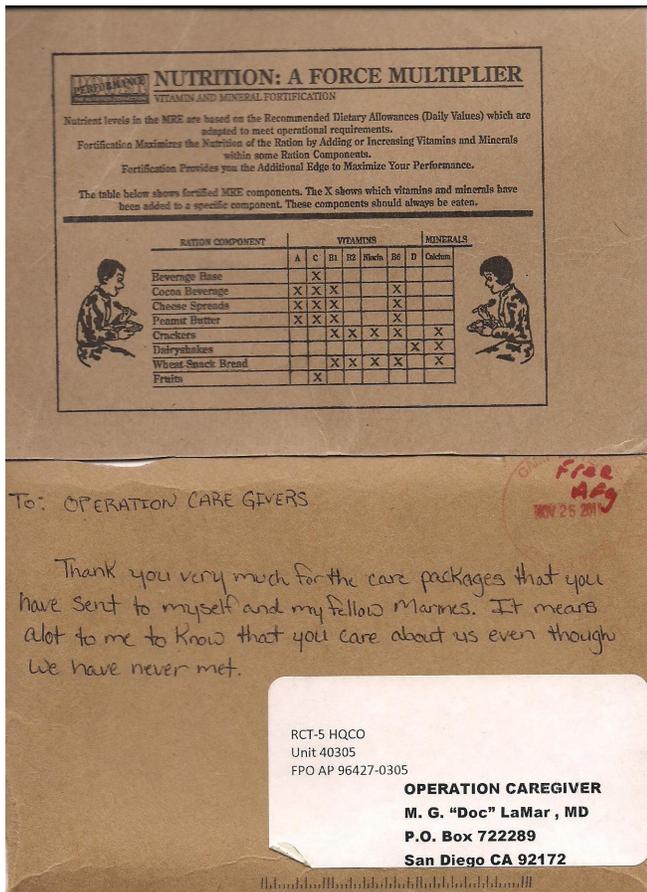
I am a staff Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps and I received your letter in a Ziploc container with some Nutter Butter cookies- a care package given to us by our Sergeant Major. We are currently serving in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Thank you for the letter and the items that you sent us. The good thing about pop stars and football players is that they keep the Marines happy when we hear their music or find out that our team won a game. Your thoughts also make us happy and keep us motivated. I served two years with a Staff Sergeant named K.N.- is he any relation to you? To answer your questions, my name is Staff Sergeant B.B. and I am from Colorado (stationed in California) and I have been in the Marine Corps for nine years on January 20. Military Service is sort of a higher calling and a way of life for me. Aside from the Corps I like to do distance running and skydiving and scuba diving. I don't know if I can really say that I have any "heroes" but I do have a lot of admiration for the Marines who have fought before me throughout history. I can only pray that we live up to their honor and carry on their legacy during our time. Once again, thank you for the letter. In an environment of acronyms and military jargon it is good to hear the language of a normal American kid.

Semper Fidelis,

B.B., SSGT, USMC

Doc LaMar says "we plan to continue this effort until they all come home. As long as they are fighting there we are packing here."

If you would like to learn more go to the website: operationcaregiver.org



News From Around The House!

2013 AGM to be at Grandfather

The 2013 AGM will be held at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games on Saturday July 13th with fun for all at the four day festival. Grandfather is the largest gathering of the clans in the world and we guarantee a good time!

Our new tent display will be on hand, and we will be giving out the Piper of the Day Award to the Grade 4 Junior champion. Please plan to attend or send in your proxy for the election. We will be having a pot-luck picnic in the campground at Gordonville (near the entrance just look for the Gordon Banner!) and all Gordons are invited to attend. More info coming in May!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to **Corporal Aaron Todd** of Virginia on being named the NCO of the Quarter for his Marine Corps Battalion.

Congratulations to SW member, **Matt Sconce**, on the release of his new movie, [The Firefall](#). The movie is a family adventure following a group of travelers who descend on Yosemite to witness one last Firefall. Yes there are Gordon kilts in the movie! Check it out at: firefallthemovie.com

Anne Forbes' Book Available

"Trials and Triumphs: The Gordons of Huntly in 16th Century Scotland" was in part underwritten by House of Gordon USA and House of Gordon Scotland, and is the culmination of 30 years of research on one of Scotland's most historically important clans -- US! We have copies available to be purchased. The cost is \$35.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping. Contact John

Lowry at john@houseofgordonusa.org if you are interested in obtaining a copy!

HOUSE OF GORDON GULF STATES HONORED AT GULFPORT

The House of Gordon was proud to be Honored Clan at the 2012 Highlands and Islands Festival in Gulfport, MS, November 10 and 11, 2012. It was a beautiful weekend for a festival with clear skies and the temperature in the high 60's.

The festival was held at the Harrison County Fairgrounds. When we arrived on Saturday morning, a beautiful banner was waiting for us with the Gordon tartan in the background and noting our status as Honored Clan for the weekend. We displayed it proudly.

We had an eventful day at the tent after setting up with the help of one of our Mid-Atlantic House of Gordon members from Delaware, Rob Todd, who was food vending at the festival with the Scottish Cottage. His Scottish BBQ pork butt was to die for! He kept us well fed!

Below: Rob Todd, Marcia, Mark Ferguson & a bottle of the Cock!



Later on Saturday morning our House of Gordon National President, Roger Mills, came to share in the festivities. It was an honor to me to have him present at my first "Honored Clan" presentation. Saturday afternoon after the opening ceremonies and the march of the clans, we were presented the beautiful granite trophy/plaque for being Honored Clan by Carl Campbell and Tommy Chambers of the Highlands and Islands Association of Celtic Gatherings, Inc.



The highlight of the weekend for the festival goers was the jousting by the Knights of Valor, as well as Scottish Clydesdale rides between jousting matches!



On Sunday we were pleasantly surprised to be presented with the Best Clan Tent award by

Carl Campbell and Joe Adams, which was also a beautiful granite trophy/plaque.



Despite this festival being rather small, it packs a big punch with sanctioned athletic games, food vendors, jousting, vendors of Celtic wares, Ceilidh, Veterans Day Parade on Sunday, five pipe bands, dog show, Kirking of the Tartan Ceremony, 4 dance groups, dance workshops, Celtic wrestling, sheep herding and border collie demonstrations, blacksmith demonstrations, a genealogist, and a renaissance village. The performers this year were Red McWilliams, Blaggard, Kracker Dan, and Strathspey & Reel Society.

On Sunday, I assisted with judging the dog show as I had the previous year. We awarded the Bassett Hound Best in Show and a Teacup Chihuahua as Best Costume for her lovely kilted dress. All in all it was a very successful festival and we look forward to attending again next year!



Marcia McLaurin, Gulf States Commissioner, House of Gordon

MID-ATLANTIC HAVING FUN!

2012 was just a fun year for the Virginia/Mid-Atlantic District. With all the changes coming down the pike, festivals going under and new ones taking their place VMA just decided to have fun! The Gordon Grill was putting out massive amounts of food at the events, and Pooh bear joined the Kid's corner taking his rightful place as a Gordon and was an instant favorite. As always the Gordon tent was the photo-op tent of choice at the various events.



Grandfather Mountain saw a core group camping out for the entire week, and the Todds celebrated their 30th anniversary on the mountain. It was a cool rainy week, but tarp city was built at Gordonville, Angus the rock oven was built and we found you can fit a lot of people in one great kilt!



Our Kilted Relay Team won the Relay bringing glory to the clan!



And we ate like kings the whole week, culminating in the annual Saturday night pot luck that fed over 150 people this year! Yum! Smoked meat right out of the rock oven! Plus a boat-load of other wonderful dishes to choose from!



The Gordon Goddess shirt made it's debut!





House of Gordon USA

House of Gordon USA

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Our Haggis Hurlers won again at Williamsburg !



We weren't sure what was going to happen when early in the year it was announced that the Virginia State Fair organization was bankrupt and the Richmond Games were gone with them. Fortunately a new group was formed and the Central Virginia Highland Games were born! It was the best event of the year for Virginia Mid-Atlantic with a good turn-out, fabulous music, tons of food, fun and mayhem as only the Gordons can! And OH! Those bonnie knees!