

In The House!

National Newsletter of the House of Gordon USA

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1

DECEMBER 2011

AGM VOTES IN NEW OFFICERS

The House of Gordon USA held its Annual General Meeting at the Seaside Highland Games in Ventura, CA on October 8, 2011. The first AGM held on the west coast was full of surprises for all who attended -- especially as attendees voted for a slate of officers nominated from the floor!

The following officers were voted into office at the AGM:

President: Roger J. Mills of Illinois
VP: Lynne Gordon of Nevada
Secretary: Laura Whiteside of Illinois
Treasurer: Nellie Lowry of California

At an Board meeting conference call on Friday, November 4th, Lu Gordon swore the four officers into office, who then appointed John Lowry of California and Lu Gordon of Tennessee as Members at Large for the two year period and they were sworn into office. The appointments were necessitated because their election was overlooked in the heated debate during the election process.

Arlene Adams of California will continue as Membership Secretary. Lois Todd of Virginia continues as Chair for Communications and Scholarship, Genealogist, DNA Project Liaison and on

various committees. John Gordon of Illinois will continue to act as QM.



Pictured left to right: Lynne Gordon, Nellie Lowry, Roger Mills, Laura Whiteside.

Roger chose to realign the duties of his fellow officers to better suit their talents. Lynne Gordon will focus on merchandising and marketing, while John Lowry will take on duties of Coordinator of Conveners and

Commissioners. Membership records will move to a secure online database as previously proposed, to enhance the ability of the Commissioners, Conveners, and committee chairs to do their job. A committee of Roger, Lois, Arlene and Laura will continue work on this project.

Roger has sent out the clarion call of "ONE HOUSE!", and is enthusiastic about leading the house for the next two years and will draw on his professional career experience as an association executive.

There are many volunteer opportunities on all levels to get involved in the House of Gordon and we welcome all willing to help in any capacity! The House is only as strong as its foundation and our volunteers are that foundation!

Meanwhile, Arlene reports that 141 members have paid dues since July 1st, with 39 of them being new members!

Inside this issue:

Chief's Message 2

President's Message 3

Scholarship 4

Jeff Gordon 4
NASCAR Illustrated Person of the Year!

News From Around the House 5

CHIEF'S MESSAGE



"I love the strong following for all things Scottish and I hope you all continue to give your precious time and energy in the celebration of our wonderful culture."

Dear Gordons and close family,

As many of you will know I have been in America. I was invited by the towering figure of John Lowry to attend his games in Ventura. He is a giant of a man in every

sense - I think he looks much more like a traditional Scottish chief than I do. Perhaps we should swap over and I should enjoy some Californian sun leaving him to cope with the Aberdeenshire Winter. He would make a good chief and instil fear into the other clans - something the Gordons have managed to do, with suitable finesse, for centuries!

I have so much to thank you for but perhaps uppermost is the reception I was kindly given by all those I met in Ventura. It was wonderful to see many old friends but I met some real characters whom I shall never forget - and hope to meet again one day! I love the strong following for all things Scottish and I hope you all continue to give your precious time and energy in the celebration of our wonderful culture - there are no other countries in the world who can compete. We are unique!

When I was at Ventura a lady tackled me in the lift lobby following a speech I gave to the dinner for the House of Gordon on the Saturday evening. What I had said at the dinner was that whether or not we elect in Scotland to become independent we must only do so after fully understanding the issues. We, the citizens of Scotland, need a couple of sheets of A4 with the facts spelt out. We need to know what the benefits and drawbacks will be. These need to be set out by an independent assessor with no axe to grind.

IN THE HOUSE!

Every action we take in this world has a consequence and there will be a case for independence just as there will be a case against it. All I pleaded in Ventura was that the decision must be taken after careful consideration by an enlightened electorate. I was not popular - at least not with her!

"Listen to the people" she pleaded, "listen to the people"

Well - she's right in one sense - we must listen to the people - but only after we know the facts and figures. Then we can take responsibility for our actions and no blame can ever be levelled at us for having voted with our hearts and not with our heads. We will have made our bed and we must lie in it - however bumpy the mattress and however thin the blankets protecting us from the chill winds of economic reality.

Oh well - interesting times ahead. Meanwhile warmest greetings and a happy New Year to you all.

HUNTLY



President's Message



My personal *Salutations* to the Members of House of Gordon USA as we find ourselves amid the Holiday Season festivities.

It was just two short years ago when I left office as Vice President for what I thought was going to

be a long and grand retirement - enjoying travel generally and highland games specifically as an observer! But now I've been asked to lead the House for the next two years as President – a trust I will pursue with enthusiasm! Part of that enthusiasm is based on valued personal time I enjoyed with our Lord Huntly at the Seaside Highland Games – the site of our 2011 AGM. Discussing the simple - but important – fine tuning ideas to add to our tent image, watching him enjoy the veracity of our American approach to being Scottish and generally feeling the depth of our passion was a rewarding experience!

Highland Games – the friendships, camaraderie and the general joy we get from talking to people about our heritage, showing them what it means to be a Scot is the ‘product’ we sell – it’s easy because it’s US! I’ve personally seen it at Richmond when the ‘kettle kings’ Dave Todd & Geof Baker cook up wondrous dishes; the fellowship at Grandfather Mountain with a ‘grazing tent’ full of goodies handmade by Gordon’s from near & far; and the same for the hospitality at Stone Mountain by the Georgia Gordon’s ... the Illinois St. Andrew “Chicago” Games and ... Seaside with tartan surf boards is not soon forgotten! But more importantly ... those “on-lookers” – those who think they might be Scottish too THEY see it. As the Highland Games represents our message, our life blood is our Membership and the marriage of the two is the success we

produce. I spent a career as a lobbyist “pressing the flesh” getting my message out – you’ve done it with your local club or church group ... the fellowship is seen ... the fellowship attracts attention ... it brings new members. We live in a world with astonishing technical support ... but people join to be with people ... I’ve yet to observe ‘esprit de corps’ in a mouse pad! Who can complain when “having fun” is your job! My goal for my term is seeing that *esprit de corps* unify us as HOUSE of GORDON USA.

Also – and I won’t mention names – I would be remiss if I didn’t shout a “hats off” to all the members of our Southwest Region for the manner in which they prepared for, honored and entertained our Chief during his visit to California. A job well done!

Final comment – “The Clan Spirit Award”. My first presidential privilege was to accept this Award from the Clan Graham for House of Gordon. More about the Award in this issue but we will display it at Games in the southwest this spring and fall and I will carry it to Games in Maryville TN May 18-20, Chicago June 15-16 and to Grandfather Mountain July 12-15, where we will have our AGM 2012.

Please join me in an eventful and fun-filled year making **BYDAND** a HOUSE-hold exclamation!

“Highland Games – the friendships, camaraderie and the general joy we get from talking to people about our heritage, showing them what it means to be a Scot is the ‘product’ we sell – it’s easy because it’s US! . “



Charles O. Gordon Scholarship

The House of Gordon USA is now accepting applications for the Charles O. Gordon Memorial Scholarship with a **deadline for consideration of March 24, 2012**. The announcement of recipients will be posted no later than April 2nd so that we may honor the recipients at the House of Gordon tents in their local areas beginning with the Tartan Week festivities. We will have posters for display in your tent as well as Big Check Template available for your use to honor a recipient from your local area!

All applicants of at least ten years of age who are involved in learning a Scottish art are welcome to apply, and awards are made based on the need and commitment of the applicant. Two scholarships will be awarded in addition to the annual scholarship awarded to the Grade 4 Junior Piper of the Day at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games where Charles was president.

If you know a talented young person in need in your area, give them an application and send it in as their sponsor!

Jeff Gordon Named NASCAR Illustrated's 2011 Person of the Year

We all know Jeff Gordon is a winner! Earlier this year the four-time NASCAR Cup Series Champion scored his 85th win and moved into sole ownership of the third-most winning position in NASCAR history! This year NASCAR Illustrated has named Jeff Gordon as its 2011 Person of the Year making him the first three-time recipient of this award!

What many forget about Jeff is his deep compassion and commitment to true charity – the unselfish love of one's fellow man. Through his work with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (beginning in 1992), the Make a Wish Foundation, and his own Jeff Gordon Children's Foundation, Jeff has contributed to or sponsored countless charity events both at the track and away raising money to fight pediatric cancer. Jay Pfeifer, Editor of NASCAR Illustrated, said in his announcement, "We are thrilled to name Jeff Gordon the 2011 NASCAR Illustrated Person of the Year. In addition to scoring his 85th win, third-most in NASCAR history, he took his philanthropy to a new level. By expanding his fight against pediatric cancer to Africa, Gordon showed that compassion can extend across borders and around the world. We salute Jeff for his incredible achievements."

"It's very rewarding to be named the 2011 Person of the Year, and I am just so thankful for all the oppor-

tunities I have been given," said Gordon. "The Jeff Gordon Children's Foundation has been able to accomplish a lot since its inception in 1999 in the battle against pediatric cancer, but that battle continues nationally and globally." In May the Jeff Gordon Children's Foundation announced a new initiative to make cancer treatment accessible to children in Rwanda and has committed to raising \$1.5 million over the next three years for that purpose.

Teaming with sponsor AARP's Drive to End Hunger , making its appearance on the #24 hood this year, Jeff has contributed to feeding millions of elderly Americans. This program garnered over \$12 million in donations and provided over 3.7 million meals to senior Americans struggling with hunger. Jeff said, "It's been an eye-opening experience learning about the more than 9 million older Americans with hunger issues. We've been able to make an impact this year with the help of the NASCAR community and fans, but that battle continues, as well." The #24 Car's three trips to victory lane this season culminated in NASCAR's 38th off-week with a weekend trip around the world to the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the Clinton Global Initiative, Bill Clinton's program to improve the lives of 43 million internally displaced persons and refugees around the world.

Thank you from the House, Jeff, for holding up the standard of service to our community and fellow man!

News From Around The House!

Southwest Wins the Duke of Montrose Award!

This Trophy was the “brain-child” of Clan Graham, who originally named it “The Clan Spirit Award”. According to the House of Gordon resident Graham – Nellie Graham Lowry and Clan Graham’s President Elect Jim Nethery, the trophy originated from a donation by a gentleman from Southern California in 2004 of some art objects to the clan, including a French bronze sculpture. It was decided to make a trophy out of the sculpture to present annually at the Seaside Highland Games to a participating clan “based on the quality of the clan tent and the hospitality of the clan members” as observed by Clan Graham!

After the award was started under the name “The Clan Spirit Award”, Clan Graham members requested and received permission to name it after His Grace, The Duke of Montrose, Chief of Clan Graham.

Since 2006 the Trophy has been awarded to several clans, each of which gets their names added to

the trophy base. The award succession is: Clan Henderson, Clan Elliot, Clan Hall, Clan Hamilton, Clan MacLeod and House of Gordon. An interesting side note is that it is growing! Each clan recipient has added to it; the Elliot’s added a carrying case and each clan has added their clan badge!



(Pictured left: Jim Nethery holding the trophy)

The prestige for the House of Gordon as the current recipient is that we will display the Trophy at the Maryville Tennessee Games where the Duke of Montrose will see “his” Trophy for the first time!

The trophy will be on display at the Gordon tent at the Games in the Southwest, at the Maryville Games May 18-20, Chicago June 15-16 and Grandfather Mountain July 12-15.

House Member Gains SAFD Certification

Dustin Vandenberg, a senior in technical theater at Greensboro College, NC and son of West Virginia Convener Jerry Vandenberg, has completed the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) training program and is certified has an Advanced Actor Combatant in all eight of the SAFD's areas of stage combat weapon disciplines (four of them at the higher 'Recommended Pass' level). He is also certificated in stage firearms safety and has completed basic stuntman training.

His college has made him a technical theater teaching assistant and he will be their fight choreographer for their upcoming productions. In addition to his work at Greensboro College, he is also working with other schools in the Greensboro area on fight choreographer, special effects lighting, specialty props, and set design. In January he will be one of two stage combat instructors at the National Thespian Society's workshop for high school students in Washington, D.C.

SAFD requires a minimum of 30 contact hours per weapon style to train before a student can be tested. The eight disciplines are: Rapier and dagger; Single sword (this may be anything from saber, to single rapier); Broadsword (specifically a hand and a half broadsword); Sword and shield (specifically a one handed broadsword and shield); Quarterstaff; Unarmed; Smallsword; Knife. Congratulations Dustin!

The Gordons will display the trophy to the Duke of Montrose!

Southwest Hosts Chief and First AGM In West!

Southwest hosted the 1st ever AGM in the West and the Chief was the honored guest at the Seaside Highland Games in October. Ventura was hopping with Gordons and excitement. A formal dinner, fashion show, whiskey tasting, ball and more were on the agenda for the weekend visit.

The Chief gave a humorous and loudly applauded speech at the opening ceremonies declaring the games officially open. He led the parade of tartans, followed by Bydand Forever, and (below left) The House of Gordon!



Lisa Gordon and Adam Bredt with the Marquis of Huntly at the ball.



The Chief was out and about at the festival visiting at all the clan tents, surprising event officials by parting from their usual expectations leaving behind the official piper and entourage to walk about informally and enjoy the company at each clan tent and a few of the events. He even showed off a bit of his Highland dance skills! His friendliness, charm, wit and graciousness highlighted the blessings the House of Gordon has with such an active and involved chief — one the other clans envied, many making comments on their desires

that their chiefs would be as approachable and friendly! But then as the saying goes... "From the Tweed to the Tay, from Cape Wrath to the Forth, there's none can compare with the Cock O' the North!"



Mid-Atlantic Reports a Winning Year!

Virginia reports a good year, even through a bit of difficulty ... swamp fires, earthquakes, hurricanes and tornados all within one month! We began the festival season in April with a new venue



sponsored by the FMWR at Fort Lee in Colonial Heights, home of the QM Corps and new home of the Transportation Corps. Our Wall of Honor was a smash

hit! This was a family friendly fun time with the Gordons at the center of it all with the Kid Zone to our left and behind and the main stage right in front of us; and again the Gordon men took home the trophy for best legs in a kilt (and the event was featured on army.mil!)

Southern MD followed with the Gordon tent front and center and lots of visitors, especially since we were right next to the pub tent and stage! David and Jerry hosted a tent at Front Royal Celtic Festival where our member Michael Turner is on the board. This was a small but fun event ! Morris Gordon and Barbara Wray hosted the tent at the Virginia Scottish following in Hurricane Irene's wake.

The House of Gordon Tents and Grill were again out in community service at the Relay for Life for the fifth year supporting the local MCJROTC in their efforts as the event support team. Combining USMC and Gordon ideals and principals to enrich



these teen's lives allows the House to make a real difference in our youth!

The Gordons were honored clan at Williamsburg and had a wonderful turn out for that in October. Our honored guest was Lu Gordon who did us proud with her long history

of involvement with the clan and various Highland Games around the USA. We also hosted our scholarship recipient, Azure Davis, at the tent honoring her for her dedication and hard work.



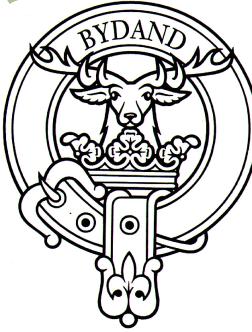
The Gordon women (above) upheld the clan honor winning the Haggis Hurl.

Richmond was beset with a cold driving rain on Saturday with only the diehard showing up ... and they were all at the Gordon tent where the Gordon Grill was pumping out coffee, cocoa, and spiced cider

with all the fixings Sunday was dry, clear & beautiful! **David Gauthier brought home both the Bonnie Knees trophy and the Clan Pumpkin Chunkin' win to the Gordon Tent again this year!**

Congratulations to Stephen Todd on his marriage to Ashley Holmes, and his new son Dawson. **Welcome to the House Ashley and Dawson!**





House of Gordon USA

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Minnesota Looking Good!

Julie Bowman and Michael Hilden, co-conveners for Minnesota, hosted the Gordon tent at the Minnesota Scottish Fair and Highland Games with a good number of visitors and fun for all!

The tent was festooned with ivy and featured a Barbary ape playing the bagpipes, Gordon Highlander memorabilia, and the House of Gordon Wall of Honor! It was definitely a stand-out on Clan Row!

