

IRWIN • IRVINE • IRVING • IRVIN • ERWIN • ERVIN

The Holly Leaf Chronicle

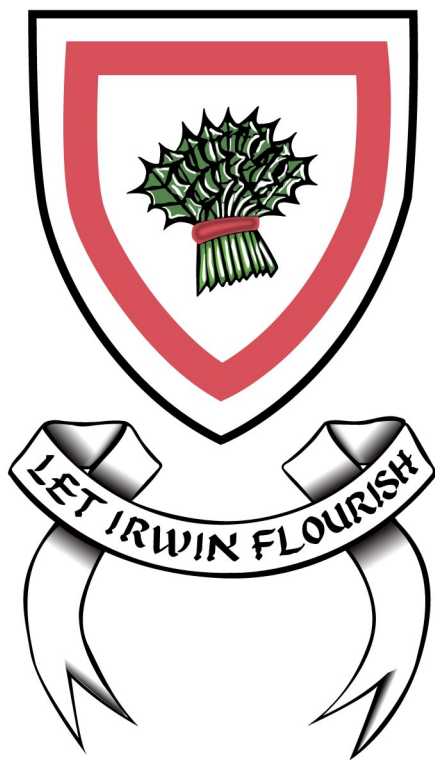
OF THE

Clan Irwin Association

A Non-Profit Corporation

RALPH R. IRWIN, FOUNDING PRESIDENT

Vol. XXXX • 2nd Quarter 2023 • Number 2



WWW.CLANIRWIN.ORG



IRVING OF BONSHAW

HAUD ULLIS LABENTIA VENTIS

Yielding Under No Winds



IRVINE OF DRUM

SUB SOLE SUB UMBRA VIRENS

Flourishing in Sun and Shade

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The deadline for the next HLC (Q3 2023) will be Aug. 27th, 2023

If you'd like to submit an article for the next edition of the HLC,
please send it to hlc@clanirwin.org

Elected Leadership

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Honorary Leadership

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NORTHEAST - ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NJ, NY

Northeast Commissioner– OPEN

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Jacob Briggs **Georgia, State Commissioner**
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CALIFORNIA - CA, HI, AZ

California Regional Commissioner– OPEN

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Myron Proctor **Mississippi Convener**

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Mid-Continent Commissioner– OPEN

ROCKY MOUNTAIN - MT, WY, UT, NV, CO

Rocky Mountain Commissioner– OPEN

PACIFIC NORTHWEST - WA, OR, ID, AK, WESTERN CANADA

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Gregory Martin **Washington, State Commissioner**

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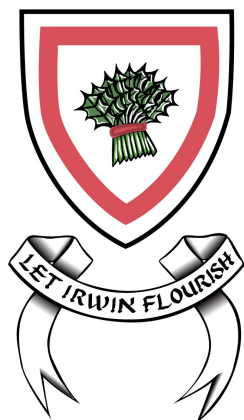
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

Hello, I wanted to write this little note as the Membership Secretary.

Those of you who have 1-year annual membership and anyone else whose membership will expire in July 2023, should have received an email from us. This is just to let you know that your renewal is happening soon and to inform you of the several ways of renewing. The easiest way is to go to our website and renew online (<http://clanirwin.org/join-us>). You can also touch base by emailing me at membership@clanirwin.org, (or john.f.ervin@clanirwin.org if you want to be more personal), and I'll send you the membership form by mail or email. We need the form when you renew so that we can confirm the older information in the database (we like to keep up to date). I've already received many renewals and I want to thank all of you proactive people.

Thanks again,

John F. Ervin, Membership Secretary
membership@clanirwin.org



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

It has been an honor for me to be able to assist the Clan with my services in becoming the Editor for this amazing association. I thought I'd take this first edition to give a little introduction and bio about myself for those that don't know me.

I am proud to call myself a "Florida Native", meaning I was born and raised in Florida (not something most Floridians are able to say). My maternal family has been in Florida for 9 generations and spent the last 5 generations in my hometown of Lakeland. Paternally, we came to America in the late 1700s from England, settling in the New England area and residing in upper state New York until my Grandfather moved to Florida with the Boy Scouts of America where he retired.

I attended high school in my hometown at George Jenkins High School, where my main areas of study were music and leadership education and training. I participated in marching, concert, and jazz bands where I played the trombone. I also played varsity football as right tackle for a lefty quarterback (blindside tackle). In high school I had the pleasure of meeting the Kleinert family who introduced me to Clan Irwin. After graduating in 2013, I spent a short time in college (realizing it wasn't for me) then went straight into the workforce.

My first job was working in food service where I spent a year and a half working in a kitchen and eventually moving into management. In 2015 I moved to Austin, TX where I worked in a print shop running a printing press. I then, got a job with Xerox and was a Field Service Tech servicing copiers and printers for all of the public schools and colleges in Austin. In 2018, I moved back to Florida and transferred to a local branch of Xerox, working there until I was laid off due to COVID layoffs in 2020. I then, moved to my current company where we do managed business systems and solutions. I work on the copier/printer side of the business as the Service Director.


My involvement with the Clan Irwin Association began in 2021 when Craig Kleinert, Jr. introduced me to Phil Irwin and the CIA lifestyle and have been hooked since. My ancestry is mostly Scandinavian and has a few ties to Scotland but absolutely no ties to Irwin or any of the various spellings (that I have found anyway). But CIA has welcomed me with open arms and I am proud and honored to be it's Editor and Georgia State Commissioner.

Highland Games season dies out in the summer months here in the south east. With that, we are in preparations to make the trip to Stone Mountain, GA for the 51st annual Stone Mountain Highland Games in October. This is my first time at the game as Georgia State Commissioner. We have big plans for this season of games and are excited to share Clan Irwin's legacy with anyone who stops by.

- Jacob Briggs, HLC Editor

A WORD FROM

THE CHAIR

reetings members! Do you remember the theme of my last two articles has been “Change?” While the number of changes is slowing, I am happy to report we are still experiencing positive changes. I am pleased to announce that Rachel Donelson has stepped up to become the Virginia State Commissioner. William Owen Irwin is once again a Texas Convener.

Time marches steadily on, whether we accomplish everything on our “To Do List” or not. My list grows daily. As your chair, I continue to be inspired by suggestions from members, those who wish to see our Association become the best clan association in the greater family of clans. Some of these suggestions require consideration, investigation, and discussion with your Executive Committee. This of course takes time from other projects that we want to accomplish on your behalf. At the EC meeting of May 9, I promised the EC that the proposed new project we discussed, would be the last “new” project for this year. Read about this latest project in a separate article. We are asking you to help out in a way that will not take much of your time. If another worthy project is suggested and we agree that it should be implemented, it is not likely we would wait until next year.

Since the last issue of the Holly Leaf Chronicle, your Clan Council met to approve some business matters, and, we held a successful Annual General Meeting. If you did not attend, the meeting was recorded and you can view it by clicking this link:

[AGM 2023 Recording](#)

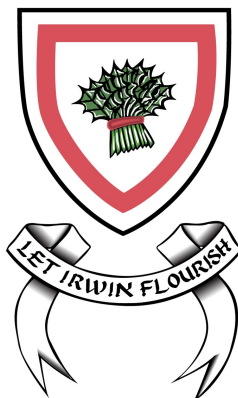
and use this passcode: 1XYWg+y0.

The video is approximately 2 1/2 hours. Please note that all AGMs are now virtual meetings so that all members can “attend.” The date for next year has not been set but it will likely be in the spring, so watch for email communication announcing it after the New Year.

As promised previously, we will be awarding a scholarship in the immediate future. Read the article from the task force elsewhere in this issue. And last, but certainly not least, there are some reports from your Association Conveners in this issue. It is “high season” for Games and Festivals.

As always, if you wish to take a more active role in the Association, please reach out to me, or any officer. There are many volunteer “jobs” that can be filled...some are one time tasks, and others take more time. All members benefit when we work together!

- Mary Erwin, Chairman



EMAIL ADDRESSES & ANCESTRY

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
<u>Ancestor</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Location</u>
Abbott, F. Brent	Valmeyer, IL	babbott314@gmail.com
Edelman, Barbara	Telford, PA	barb3.edelman@gmail.com
<i>Irwin, Joseph T.</i>	<i>4 Oct. 1797</i>	<i>Chester County, PA</i>
Ervin, John F.	Orlando, FL	jfervin@gmail.com
<i>Ervin, Robert</i>	<i>c. 1706</i>	<i>County Down, Ulster Province, Ireland</i>
Ervin, John	Florence, OR	clanervin@yahoo.com
Ervin, Robert (Bob)	Broomall, PA	boberv2yahoo.com
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<i>Irvin, Edward</i>	<i>c. 1770</i>	<i>Westmoreland County, PA</i>
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Irwin, James L. COL Ret.	New Palestine, IN	abn151@sbcglobal.net

EMAIL ADDRESSES & ANCESTRY (CONT.)

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
<i>Ancestor</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>	<i>Location</i>
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Irwin, Ray	Lewisville, TX	ir.winner@verizon.net
<i>Irwin, Robert</i>	<i>c. 1775</i>	<i>Ireland</i>
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<i>Irwin, William</i>	<i>c. 1752</i>	<i>Lurgan Twp., Cumberland Co., PA</i>
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Irwin Rohleder, Julie	Bellefonte, PA	rohlederj2@gmail.com
<i>Irwin, Francis</i>	<i>c. 1805</i>	<i>Ireland</i>



Would you like to have your information appear here?
Please contact John F. Ervin at membership@clanirwin.org

MEET YOUR OFFICERS

Clan Irwin Association is led by your Executive Committee and Clan Council. As there have been some changes since the last election, we would like to introduce them to you. This quarter, we are honored to introduce the remaining three of the six elected officers.

JOHN F. ERVIN

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY



I am a "Native Floridian", in that I was actually born and raised in Florida. South, Central and North Florida at various times (West and East Florida too). My father worked for the State Road Department and that is why I was privileged to live all over the state, large towns and small.

During High School (Godby High School in Tallahassee) from which I graduated in 1971, I worked as a Theater projectionist, a job that extended through College.

I attended Florida State University and received a Bachelor of Science in Biology, and my first post college job was in a lab, testing various drugs (not on or in myself). From this job, I moved into working in statistics and then into programming on computers and systems programming.

I worked for the longest at Convergys Corporation (formerly CBIS) a Cincinnati company that had a Central Florida location. And when they decided to downsize, I worked with computer equipment (Network mostly) and telephone systems until I retired.

My hobbies are divided between playing with computers (like the one I am typing this Bio on), playing trumpet and singing and reading, I love reading fiction. My favorite genre of singing is classical as I spent about 30 years in the Bach Festival Choir here in Central Florida. Because of my time in the Choir, I can read German and Church Latin very well, but I have no idea what I am reading (no comprehension, just how to pronounce the words). I DO speak Spanish somewhat, having studied in High School and College.

I suppose I should mention that my family came to America and settled in and around Kingstree, South Carolina in about 1732 and my branch of the family moved to Florida right after the Civil War in about 1867.

- John F. Ervin, Membership Secretary

MEET YOUR OFFICERS

CRAIG KLEINERT JR

FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN

Currently, I am the warehouse manager for an industrial plastic piping company. I started at entry level in the warehouse with no industry experience. After 4 years of working and learning about the industry, I was recently promoted to my current position. I am still adapting to being in the office but I have a great team to support me.

My current goal for the Association is to boost its membership count so we can extend our current connections with each other and bolster the resources needed to meet our members' needs and wants.

In high school, my main areas of study were music and leadership education and training. I participated in marching and concert bands and had heavy involvement in the school's JROTC program. After graduating in 2012, I attended the University of South Florida. While at USF I was a member of the "Heard of Thunder" (USF's marching band) where I played and marched a Sousaphone. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in business in 2016.

In 2020, I got married to my high school sweetheart and love of my life Allison. Allison was a member of the color guard in the marching band in high school and we attended USF together. She came out on top with her nursing degree and she currently works for the second busiest hospital in the world as an RN. Just recently, we were able to purchase our first home just outside of my hometown of Lakeland, FL.

Some of my hobbies include: going to the gym, working on things around the house, attending highland games with my friends and experiencing personal growth.



- Craig Kleinert Jr., First Vice Chairman

MEET YOUR OFFICERS

MARY ERWIN

CHAIRMAN



My childhood years were spent in West Carroll Parish, Louisiana. I was the 6th of 7 children in the family, and the youngest daughter of 4 girls. I always thought I was my father's favorite daughter until he passed away in 1974 when I learned all my sisters had the same idea! I feel very fortunate to have grown up in this agricultural area at the time I did, and with top notch educators. Many of my high school classmates have accomplished great things even though we attended a small town school, and, many of us have remained close all these years.

In 1965 my parents and the children who were still at home, moved to Kansas City, MO, for better employment opportunities for my parents. One of my sisters had moved there with her husband a few years earlier. It was there I met and married the love of my life, Ron Erwin. Children were not meant for us and so we loved all the nieces and nephews.

I began working for a State Farm agent in 1969 and never looked back as far as the insurance world was concerned. After 2 years there, I moved into an Independent Insurance Agency, the kind that represents multiple insurance companies. After managing two agencies for others, I started one for myself, from scratch and sold it nearly 20 years later. During this time, Ron left his job as an Electrical Designer to join me in our business. While owning this business, I worked hard for multiple designations that indicated a certain level of education, integrity, and professionalism. I was the recipient of many awards and chaired several committees for the State Association of Independent Insurance Agents including the Budget & Finance Committee, a \$5 million budget; and the Legislative Committee for 2 years, lobbying for legislation to benefit consumers and insurance agents at the State and Federal level. As I was too young to retire when selling the business, I returned to the work force as a Marketing Representative for a company that provides a service to Independent Insurance Agents. My territory was all of Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska. Every little town has an insurance agent! I retired from that job in 2009 and moved back to Louisiana in 2011.

My interest in genealogy goes back more than 30 years. Both my parents are from large families, 7 siblings and 11 siblings. After selling our business, I worked for 2 years going to the Mid-Continent Genealogy Library in Independence, MO, 4 or 5 days each week, and staying 8 - 10 hours each day. They claim to be the largest (in square footage) publicly owned genealogy library, and they quickly point out that the Mormon library in Utah is not publicly owned. With the Erwin line, we hit the proverbial brick wall with Ron's great, great grandfather; however, the BigY700 DNA test shows his ancestry is from the Borders Region in Scotland. We have been blessed to make two trips to Scotland in recent years and will return this year to celebrate the 700th anniversary of Drum and 10,000 acres of the Royal Forest being granted to William de Irwyn by King Robert the Bruce.

I consider it a privilege to be the chairman of Clan Irwin Association and treasure all the personal relationships that have developed and will continue to do so. If we had an office building, I would say, "My door is always open." So, please feel free to reach out to me anytime.

- Mary Erwin, Chairman

SHARING MEMBER'S INFORMATION

It has long been the practice of Clan Irwin Association not to share contact information of our members with anyone, other than select officers and specific lists to your regional commissioners, for their contact with you, or conveners whenever we were hosting a tent for Game or Festivals in your area. We are still not going to share your information with anyone outside Clan Irwin Association, except as needed by chosen vendors, such as our printer for the Holly Leaf Chronicle or planning tours to Scotland.

When the issue first came up, one of the officers asked if we could get a legal opinion as to whether we could do this. The attorney who drafted our Privacy Statement stated we could, and reminded us the Privacy Statement includes a sentence, "Member interaction is important to programs such as genealogy and is encouraged."

Your Executive Committee voted at a recent meeting that we would indeed share your name, email address (if you have one), and your telephone number with conveners or other chosen members, for the purpose of planning social gatherings. This could be virtual or in-person events, such as Burns Night Suppers, or Whisky tastings, or picnics, or other similar events.

For many years we have been asked to share this minimal contact information but, we believe it is important to foster the feeling of belonging to a family or at least a community of people with the same name, no matter how it is spelled. Sharing the list, when requested, would be approved only by the Chairman.

If you prefer not to have your name shared in this manner, you may opt-out. Please send a written notice and we will not share your name and contact information in this manner. A record will be maintained.

Cheers,

Craig Kleinert Jr., First Vice Chairman

CLAN IRWIN ASSOCIATION'S

COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES, & WORKING GROUPS

(These will change as a task force or working group completes their assignment. A task force could become a committee.)

Holly Leaf Chronicle Committee

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John F. Ervin
Mary Erwin

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Membership Committee

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Cheryl Garner
Peter B. Irvine
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Administrator Clan Irvine Autosomal DNA Project

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Administrator Clan Irwin Surname DNA Study

Scholarship Task Force

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Ian Irving
Leslie Smeathers
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Financial & Fund Raising Committee

Ken Erwin, Treasurer
Mary Erwin, Chairman

treasurer@clanirwin.org
mary.erwin@clanirwin.org

(Others to be added)

Policy & Procedures Task Force

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Craig Kleinert, Jr.
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REGIONAL REPORTS

SOUTHWEST REGION - LA, MS, NM, OK, TX

Scottish Tartan Festival - Minden, LA - Apr 22, 2023

This year's Scottish Tartan Festival was held in downtown Miller Quarters Park, Minden, Louisiana, which was a new venue for the festival. The weather was gorgeous which resulted in a fantastic turnout. This being the inaugural games for the festival the number of contestants was small but still greatly entertaining for the crowd.

The estimated crowd was around 1,700, with 13 Clans represented. As everyone had to walk by the clan tents to enter the festival, the number of people stopping and visiting our tent was too numerous to count. As usual, Ron Erwin's map "Scotland of Olde" was a huge crowd stopper. We signed up one new member, Kaye Crichlow, and sent information home with one prospective member.



The Scottish Tartan Festival always has top notch musicians and dancers, and this year did not disappoint. Some of the entertainment included: Highland Reign; Emerald Accent; Cleghorn; Storyteller, Jeff Stewart; Jackson Irish Dancers; Harpist, Kristen Tilbury; and Thistle Dancers and Pipers to name a few.

After the Grand March of the Clans, our very own Chairman, Mary Erwin, participated in the Kirking of the Tartan. This was my first experience with the ceremony, and I found it very solemn and poignant.

The estimated date for next year's festival is April 21, 2023. We will keep you updated of any changes.

- Myron Proctor, Convenor



REGIONAL REPORTS *(CONT.)*

MID-SOUTH REGION - KY, TN, MO, KS, AR

Smoky Mountain Games - Townsend, TN - May 20 - 21, 2023



Paula Erwin and I convened a tent at the Smoky Mountain Games that were held in Townsend Tennessee May 20 & 21. Aside from a light rain late Saturday afternoon, we had perfect weather and the games were very well attended.

We were joined by Susan Irvine McRae and her husband Andy who hosted a tent adjacent to us. We did enroll a new member and were visited by a member who had let his membership lapse years ago. I encouraged him to visit our website and I am following up with him.

- Kyle Erwin, Mid-South Regional Commissioner

REGIONAL REPORTS *(CONT.)*

CANADA REGION - MB, SK, NORTHWEST ON

Cobourg Scottish Festival - Cobourg, ON - June 16—17, 2023



- Ian Irving, Canada Region Commissioner



REGIONAL REPORTS *(CONT.)*

SOUTHEAST REGION - FL, GA, AL

Ormond Beach Celtic Festival - Ormond Beach, FL - Apr 15—16, 2023



As I blazed a trail across Florida to the Ormond Beach Celtic Festival, this year I was reminded of past games doing them alone surely blessed having the new regime on board to help. Thank you guys! CJ Kleinert, Zack and Briggs, Tyler. A terrible drive of 5hrs (should've took 3+) I arrived welcomed and had a great spot in the center of clan village. Found a great hotel very reasonably on the beach 2 miles down from games. These games are set on the river there so beautiful spot at Rockefeller Gardens the casement, I was pleasantly surprised to see our good friend Jerry Irvin Trout show up and spend some quality time with me. He gifted the clan a spectacular sword I shall cherish it! All in all a lovely weekend like old times great eateries and reasonably rated hotels fabulous setting and extremely clan oriented with a gazebo on site in the clan area for complimentary snacks and sodas etc. for both days. Highly recommended if in Florida and you have never been. In the past, we have won "clan of the day"/honored clan and have held an A.G.M there with a great turnout.

Yours aye,

- Phil Irwin, Southeast Regional Commissioner

Savannah Highland Games - Savannah, GA - May 6, 2023

As Dr Rae Turner (my new found lady) and I made the trek across Florida into Georgia to the Savannah Highland Games, we were greeted with open arms by a very well organized venue indeed. Friendly and helpful volunteers guided us to our spot around the main arena where we able to watch the games, pipers, parade and other clans from our vantage spot. Our tent was very busy with a lot of visitors. I would estimate around 3,000 people attended the games. It was a very nice, secured location at the Bethesda academy grounds. Dr. Rae found herself plunged into a roll she took upon herself to endure, stamping the kiddies little books so they can present and receive prizes. Vendors, both food and merchandise were plentiful. Reenactments were being carried out during the day. It was only my second time going to this event. Weather was 10 degrees cooler slightly overcast. Kinda perfect! The evenings were cool which made it comfortable for walking around the old town. High on my list of games to visit. Before and after games there is plenty to do in Old Savannah. The river walk is a must, especially at night. It comes alive with the feeling of cargo ships and pirating to its ultimate. Great tour trolleys and ghost hunts aplenty. For me another second to none catered for clans event.



Yours aye,

19 - Phil Irwin, Southeast Regional Commissioner

REGIONAL REPORTS (CONT.)

MID-ATLANTIC - DE, PA, MD, WV, WASHINGTON D.C.

Fair Hill Highland Games - Fair Hill, MD - May 20, 2023

As the week before Fair Hill Games the weather looked a little bleak, but on Saturday morning the weather was good. We did have a few drops early in the morning when setting up the tent. I was very lucky to share our three tents with Ken Annand and the An Còrr Pipes & Drums Band of Wilmington, Delaware. Ken was a big help with setting up the tent display, too. Also, a new member, Shelly Good-Cook and her family arrived to help with set up, manning the Clan Irwin tent and help with cleaning up at the end of the day. Sadly, Barbara Edelman was unable to attend this year, but she made all the arrangements for our clan tents, tables, and chairs. The Clan Village was in a good position at the center of the park location. We had lots of visitors to our Clan Irwin tent, about six members signed into our book. I enjoyed working with Shelly and her daughters and showing them how to help visitors to look up their family tartans and sometimes other clan name information. They were a big help to me. It was fun getting to know Shelly, her husband, John Paul, and their daughters, AC and Alexandra.



The entertainment was good and there was even a parade in Elkton, MD and some of the entertainment performed at a local bar/pub and restaurant in Elkton on Friday evening. I did not attend, but Shelly, John Paul and their daughters did attend and had a wonderful time. Saturday began at 8:00 AM with the playing of our National Anthem, Scotland the Brave, the Canadian National Anthem, and the Games began. There was a main entertainment stage not far from Clan Village, and a stadium setup where the Games took place. There was special place for the Bagpipe and Drum competitions, and the Highland dance competition was held in

a large building a short distance away. As always at noon, the clans lined up and the Pipe and Drum Bands paraded in front of the stands with the Clans parading at their set time. Shelly marched for Clan Irwin Association carrying my Clan Irwin Banner.

We hope to see more members at the 2024 games. Barbara and I are planning to have a Clan Irwin Tent at the Octorara Covenanter Scottish Festival and Highland Games at the Octorara Covenanter Presbyterian Church grounds, Cochranville, PA on Saturday, September 9th, 2023. Also, we will be at the 64th Ligonier Highland Games at Idlewild Park, 2574 US Route 30, Ligonier, PA 15658 on September 16th.



MEMBER FOCUS

WHY DO I WRITE NOVELS?



Why do I write novels? To date I have four on the market and I'm working on my fifth. It isn't the money. Contrary to popular myth, there are only slightly more than a dozen writers who make six figures annually. So, there must be other reasons.

I write as a hobby. I do it for personal entertainment and to free up stories that occupy my mind. It allows me to tell, visualize, and feel what my characters, Peter Romero and Jean Reel, see or experience. I can't help but let a little bit of my own friends' personalities leak into my imaginary characters' souls.

I use the same main character in all my novels. He is a Cochiti Indian who lives halfway between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. He drives a restored Jeep he reclaimed from junk and is employed by the tribe as its only policeman. He's a former Marine like me. He's on his second relationship. His wife divorced him because he spent too much time on the job. His current soul mate is an FBI agent, and she is half Cherokee. I have a great respect and affinity for Native Americans. Have since I was a child.

Why do I write? My wife and I have attended, for the past twenty-five years, an off-campus class on Native Americana and I have stories rattling around in my head I must tell. The many novels of the late Tony Hillerman (Skinwalkers) and the TV series of Craig Johnson (Longmire) had my undivided attention. These authors don't know it, but they look over my shoulder when I write.

Why do I write? I chose novels as the best form to tell my stories. Novels allow me to create characters I dream about. They bring readers closer to reality by taking them away from it. Novels provide a refuge from the frustrating real world around us. When I write novels, I'm taken into a world I created. When I write in my world I'm at peace (and, of course, in complete control).

I like sharing my stories with others and making a difference in their life, if only for a few hours, which makes all the hard parts of writing – multiple drafts, endless revisions, and hours of research – worthwhile. It's fun to think that others will be entertained by my story. The reward is in the comments I receive, mainly those that ask when my next novel is coming out.

Why do I write? Someone on the job once said, "Knop, you can write." A pox on him, (just kidding) but that one comment pointed me in this direction. I feel obligated to use the gift that burns inside me. I am compelled to write stories.

My four novels can be found in digital or paperback form on Amazon and Barnes and Noble, as well as other popular online bookstores. See my webpage at <https://daveknopbooks.com> for details. Go to <https://daveknopbooks.com/posts/> where you will see some interesting non-fiction stories about our troubled frontier past.

- David E. Knop

GENEALOGY CORNER

GENEALOGY INITIATIVE

Dou have seen some limited information in the Holly Berry Bulletin about our Genealogy Initiative that was rolled out at the AGM on April 15. There have even been changes at our website to indicate that your Association is now leading the way toward helping you achieve your personal research goals. In case you have not seen the plan, here are the beginning points:

The Clan Irwin Association (CIA) will continue to support and promote our existing Genealogy Committee. Those sources are too valuable not to have them available to answer questions.

The CIA will promote the Allen County Library (ACL), Fort Wayne, IN as the designated repository for any CIA member who wishes to donate their genealogy work. They already have a lot of donated files.

The CIA will gather Family Stories from members to be published in Google Workspace and in the Members Only section of our website. (This is not Family Trees.) They will also be published in the Holly Leaf Chronicle as space permits. This will be ongoing for years.

The CIA will promote the gathering of Family Trees utilizing WikiTree. There is a separate article about this endeavor.

The CIA will financially support the yDNA Study by offering a \$50 supplement to members who are taking the 37-marker test or upgrading to the BigY700 test at FTDNA, on a first come first served basis. We will limit this to \$500 per year.

The CIA will continue to promote the Autosomal DNA Project.

The CIA will provide training via Zoom meetings that will be recorded and then made available to all members via Workspace or YouTube.

The Task Force is reaching out to non-members whose DNA matches the DNA of a member, encouraging them to join CIA. We hope to expand this item to others who will join in the effort. This could be used with any DNA testing.

The Initiative is not meant to be a fixed endeavor, rather one that expands, and moves of its own accord. In order to be successful, members need to participate and share to keep it fresh and moving forward to benefit current and future members of CIA.

At the AGM on April 15, we had a presentation by Curt Witcher, Manager, The Genealogy Center and Director of Special Collections at the Allen County Public Library. They are happy to assist our members with their personal research. They are the second largest public genealogy library in North America with abundant resources for our use. Check out their website, <https://www.acpl.lib.in.us/> and contact them for further assistance. AND, we had a presentation by Brian Irwin, Coordinator of the Initiative on Wikitree and some of what it can do for us. It was fascinating!

Watch for more articles in this and future issues of The Holly Leaf Chronicle. It is our intention to showcase articles that are relevant to Genealogy in a section called "Genealogy Corner." You will see articles on Definitions, Getting Started, How To Tips, FAQs, DNA Studies, Resources, and ongoing assistance with Wikitree, which is a phenomenal resource for our family trees, as well as other relevant topics. The members of the Task Force are listed elsewhere in this publication. Stay tuned!

- Mary Erwin, Chairman

GENEALOGY CORNER

YOU MEAN THERE ARE BOOKS ON IRWIN ANCESTRY?

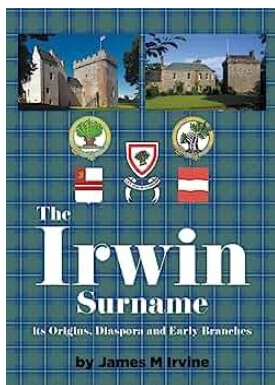
Des, and several of them are fully accessible on the internet. And, the Genealogy Initiative will provide a list of the books we have found. Of course, if you know of books not listed, please let us know so we can add to the lists.

Some have been scanned by a library or other entity and are available online for reading, via .pdf file, front to back. Check out this one at our website,

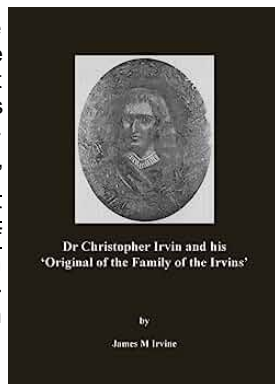
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BG7JRcLwAtuvW9PJvft3k5yvnengAVL-/view?usp=share_link

History of the McDowells, Erwins, Irwins and Connections by the Hon. John Hugh McDowell, 1918: This book is a collection of stories and relationships from all sorts of sources; and includes information from Scotland & Ireland into the US, Canada, and elsewhere in the world.

One caution with the older books: There was no internet then, so a lot of the facts are from someone's memory or from previous publications. Very interesting reading, especially if one can find a connection to their Irwin line.



Newer books typically have not been scanned, but are available for purchase. Most of their content has been well sourced and the facts are therefore more reliable. Two examples are by our own CIA member, James M. Irvine entitled: The Irwin Surname, 2020 and Dr Christopher Irvin and his 'Original of the family of Irvins', 2019. Both are available on Amazon.com. We will list these un-scanned books and provide links on where to obtain them.



Books can be an excellent means of visualizing family trees, collecting facts such as spouses, dates, and locations. The historical commentary can put the facts and connections into context with descriptions of places, dress, relationships, etc.

As with family trees, we would suggest treating the older books [with less reliable sourcing] as strong factual "hints", until fact verification by other sourcing can be obtained.

<https://www.amazon.com/Christopher-Irvin-original-Family-Irvins/dp/178955473X>

https://www.amazon.com/Irwin-Surname-James-M-Irvine/dp/1789558522/ref=pd_lpo_scl_1/138-1062945-4964550?pd_rd_w=dk8TX&content-id=amzn1.sym.116f529c-aa4d-4763-b2b6-4d614ec7dc00&pf_rd_p=116f529c-aa4d-4763-b2b6-4d614ec7dc00&pf_rd_r=QCEXAQRVE2CKA3EYXBNQ&pd_rd_wg=rrHet&pd_rd_r=ad7562df-9936-49c6-94e4-f49bae3df950&pd_rd_i=1789558522&psc=1

ASKING FOR HELP

A LONG REQUESTED SOLUTION

For many years, it has been said over and over, "I wish we could easily search through all those old issues of the Holly Leaf Chronicle."

While it is not practical to develop our very own search engine, especially since most of our issues of the Holly Leaf Chronicle are not digitized, we think developing an index in the format of a spreadsheet is the next best thing. Members of your Executive Committee have collaborated in the design and applicable columns that can be sorted to make your searching easier than ever. We believe the columns will easily identify noteworthy articles and make searching somewhat easier for everyone.

Here is an example:

HOLLY LEAF CHRONICLE INDEX							
YEAR	PAGE NUM BERS	TYPE OF ARTICLE	LOCA- TION	AUTHOR	SUB- JECT MAT- TER	TITLE	NOTES
1976 2Q	5	Miscella- ny	Various	Ralph Irwin	Vari- ous	Miscellany	Collection of notes
1976 2Q	2-4	History	Scotland & Ireland	Ralph Irwin		Irwin Histo- ry & Tradi- tion	9th century AD and forward.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

In order to make this project a success, we need 45 volunteers who are willing to review one year, just 4 issues of the Holly Leaf Chronicle. We will provide you the spreadsheet with an example of how to gather the information, and it is estimated the time commitment should be no more than 15 minutes per issue, nor more than 1 hour total time. If you like helping your association, and wish to review more than one year, that is quite acceptable, in which case we would need fewer volunteers.

If you need assistance in finding the old editions of the Holly Leaf Chronicle, please let us know and we will show you how.

Please send an email with your offer to assist to the chairman, mary.erwin@clanirwin.org . If you prefer, you may call her at 318-557-0048.

This is a project that can involve a portion of our members for the benefit of all. Won't you please join us today!

AN EXPLANATION OF THE CLAN'S RECENT INVESTMENT DECISION TO BUY BRK.B

"In the short run the stock market is a voting machine. In the long run, it's a weighing machine."

- Warren Buffett, who said this sometime during yours-truly's investor education over the past 30 years and I'm pretty sure I've echoed back to you correctly.

"This meeting ([2023 Shareholders Q&A](#)) is an incredible display and there is a real seriousness and sense of purpose about it. What other company do you know that rents out an entire professional basketball arena for its corporate meeting (for four whole days no less!) and where its nearly centenarian founders will sit in one place for seven hours to answer any and all audience questions rapid fire AND that CNBC covers religiously in its entirety ([CNBC Buffett Archive](#))!?! And there's [shopping!](#)"

- Your Intrepid Treasurer trying to convince his uninterested wife and friends to go to Omaha at the beginning of May 2024 and finally cross this trip off of his bucket list while he very nervously prays that the founders do this at least one more time.

"One person said to me, 'I have a list of 300 potentially attractive stocks, and I constantly watch them, waiting for just one of them to become cheap enough to buy.' Well that's a reasonable thing to do. But how many people have that kind of discipline? Not one in 100."

- Charlie Munger, from an old [newsletter](#) I don't subscribe to and probably from something he wrote in his book ([Almanack](#)).
- BTW this newsletter has a much deeper dive into Berkshire than I will attempt here and being a free issue and about a year old is probably worth reading BUT ONLY after you read the rest of my article AND implement the things I ask you to implement at the end of this article.

The first thing that I wanted to do when I became treasurer of our great organization was convince the executive committee (and through that all of you) to move our hard earned investment cushion out of four specific, very risky stocks; and into a very well-diversified portfolio of corporations. From my own personal investing journey over the past thirty years, I knew of two very good options that I figured met our risk profile, the S&P 500 (SPY) and Berkshire Hathaway (BRK.B).

If you want the TLDR about my recommendation, take a look at the chart below, note the very last row titled 'Overall Gain 1964-2022'. Then take a look at 2022 as well. Pretty incredible right? With my thanks for reading this far, feel free to go on your merry way, (source and yes this really is the website of probably the most talked about company in America and one that has a nearly trillion dollar market cap).

If you want to read more about this wonderful company and my thoughts related to it, let's meet back after the chart.

(CONT.)

Berkshire's Performance vs. the S&P 500

Year	Annual Percentage Change	
	in Per-Share Market Value of Berkshire	in S&P 500 with Dividends Included
1965	49.5	10.0
1966	(3.4)	(11.7)
1967	13.3	30.9
1968	77.8	11.0
1969	19.4	(8.4)
1970	(4.6)	3.9
1971	80.5	14.6
1972	8.1	18.9
1973	(2.5)	(14.8)
1974	(48.7)	(26.4)
1975	2.5	37.2
1976	129.3	23.6
1977	46.8	(7.4)
1978	14.5	6.4
1979	102.5	18.2
1980	32.8	32.3
1981	31.8	(5.0)
1982	38.4	21.4
1983	69.0	22.4
1984	(2.7)	6.1
1985	93.7	31.6
1986	14.2	18.6
1987	4.6	5.1
1988	59.3	16.6
1989	84.6	31.7
1990	(23.1)	(3.1)
1991	35.6	30.5
1992	29.8	7.6
1993	38.9	10.1
1994	25.0	1.3
1995	57.4	37.6
1996	6.2	23.0
1997	34.9	33.4
1998	52.2	28.6
1999	(19.9)	21.0
2000	26.6	(9.1)
2001	6.5	(11.9)
2002	(3.8)	(22.1)
2003	15.8	28.7
2004	4.3	10.9
2005	0.8	4.9
2006	24.1	15.8
2007	28.7	5.5
2008	(31.8)	(37.0)
2009	2.7	26.5
2010	21.4	15.1
2011	(4.7)	2.1
2012	16.8	16.0
2013	32.7	32.4
2014	27.0	13.7
2015	(12.5)	1.4
2016	23.4	12.0
2017	21.9	21.8
2018	2.8	(4.4)
2019	11.0	31.5
2020	2.4	18.4
2021	29.6	28.7
2022	4.0	(18.1)
Compounded Annual Gain – 1965-2022	19.8%	9.9%
Overall Gain – 1964-2022	3,787,464%	24,708%

Note: Data are for calendar years with these exceptions: 1965 and 1966, year ended 9/30; 1967, 15 months ended 12/31.

For those of you still here, thanks for staying along for the ride!

(CONT.)

As I was saying, happily for all of us, I was able to make the case for the second option; in which I personally hold most of my investment wealth. I've been following Warren Buffett and Berkshire pretty much since I knew what investing was back when I was 16 in 1991. I'm not nearly as rich today as I could be if 32 years ago I'd have just put everything I had into BRK.B and done nothing. But as the old cliché goes, "better late than never."

"The reason that clichés become clichés is that they are the hammers and screwdrivers in the toolbox of communication."

- Terry Pratchett, some writer I googled and I guess famous or accomplished enough [to come to the top of a google search](#)

So what is Berkshire? I'm going to try and summarize it, and highlight the most important parts of it, as well as some intangibles. If you want a deep dive down the rabbit hole (and trust me there is a lot I'm not covering here here), Berkshire's own [investor letters](#) cover this and my goal is to not repeat them too much.

"The term rabbit hole comes from Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," in which a young girl called Alice falls down a rabbit hole, encounters many strange creatures and has many surreal experiences."

- [Another google search](#)

At its highest definition, Berkshire is a conglomerate ([a company of companies](#)) of 100s of companies that provide goods and services for many of the household names you know and for many that you don't. Most people break Berkshire into seven main areas, including:

- Insurance and Reinsurance (GEICO and Others)
- BNSF, a very large railroad covering the western USA, Canada, and Mexico
- Berkshire Energy, a utility business for gas and electricity
- Manufacturing, Services and Retailing (MSR) Group – hundreds of companies of everyday products
- Investments, which is what you usually hear about [wrt](#) Warren Buffett and the ~~news~~ [narrative](#)
- Cash ([C.R.E.A.M.](#), [Chuck Brown](#), [Pink Floyd](#) [Elvis](#) [Abba](#) [Money for Nothing](#) (please take it easy on me if these videos aren't your particular musical taste– I tried to find something for everyone)
- Intangibles (weird and hard to classify but important)

First there's insurance, the most well-known of this and the one you've probably heard of is called GEICO (Commercials). There are lots of other insurance and reinsurance companies that Berkshire owns but the most important concepts that I want to focus on here are called the "float" and "underwriting." Buffett explains it best from his 2009 letter.

Our property-casualty (P/C) insurance business has been the engine behind Berkshire's growth and will continue to be. It has worked wonders for us. We carry our P/C companies on our books at \$15.5 billion more than their net tangible assets, an amount lodged in our "Goodwill" account. These companies, however, are worth far more than their carrying value – and the following look at the economic model of the P/C industry will tell you why.

(Continued)

Insurers receive premiums upfront and pay claims later. In extreme cases, such as those arising from certain workers' compensation accidents, payments can stretch over decades. This collect-now, pay-later model leaves us holding large sums – money we call “float” – that will eventually go to others. Meanwhile, we get to invest this float for Berkshire's benefit. Though individual policies and claims come and go, the amount of float we hold remains remarkably stable in relation to premium volume. Consequently, as our business grows, so does our float.

If premiums exceed the total of expenses and eventual losses, we register an underwriting profit that adds to the investment income produced from the float. This combination allows us to enjoy the use of free money – and, better yet, get paid for holding it. Alas, the hope of this happy result attracts intense competition, so vigorous in most years as to cause the P/C industry as a whole to operate at a significant underwriting loss. This loss, in effect, is what the industry pays to hold its float. Usually this cost is fairly low, but in some catastrophe-ridden years the cost from underwriting losses more than eats up the income derived from use of float.

In my perhaps biased view, Berkshire has the best large insurance operation in the world. And I will absolutely state that we have the best managers. Our float has grown from \$16 million in 1967, when we entered the business, to \$62 billion at the end of 2009. Moreover, we have now operated at an underwriting profit for seven consecutive years. I believe it likely that we will continue to underwrite profitably in most – though certainly not all – future years. If we do so, our float will be cost-free, much as if someone deposited \$62 billion with us that we could invest for our own benefit without the payment of interest.

Let me emphasize again that cost-free float is not a result to be expected for the P/C industry as a whole: In most years, premiums have been inadequate to cover claims plus expenses. Consequently, the industry's overall return on tangible equity has for many decades fallen far short of that achieved by the S&P 500. Outstanding economics exist at Berkshire only because we have some outstanding managers running some unusual businesses. Our insurance CEOs deserve your thanks, having added many billions of dollars to Berkshire's value. It's a pleasure for me to tell you about these all-stars.

He wrote that in 2009. There are a lot more details about Berkshire's insurance business in the other resources in this article, specifically the Munger quote link has quite a bit of analysis from a person who does this type of analysis work for a living. Next is Burlington Northern Santa Fe, or the railroad. This is a bet on the future of America. Berkshire controls 32,500 track miles of rail, with 23,000 owned, mostly in the western USA, Canada, and Mexico. They accept all cargo (the law requires this) and they make billions of dollars a year from this. There's lots of discussion and financials in the resources provided in other parts of this article but one interesting fact is that they paid \$44.5B for this railroad and it was worth about \$90B at the end of 2021.

“Both of us are enthusiastic about BNSF's future because railroads have major cost and environmental advantages over trucking, their main competitor. Last year, BNSF moved each ton of freight it carried a record 500 miles on a single gallon of diesel fuel. That's three times more fuel-efficient than trucking is, which means our railroad owns an important advantage in operating costs. Concurrently, our country gains because of reduced greenhouse emissions and a much smaller need for imported oil. When traffic travels by rail, society benefits.”

- Buffett in 2010, no link but trust me he said this when he bought the company in 2010.

It's worth even more now.

Next the energy company. This is a monopoly protected group of businesses, with a huge generation and distribution for electricity, natural gas, and tax credits. There's a good summary on slides five through seven here. It's worth about \$55B. One small thing I like about this part of the company is that they are working with Bill Gates to build out more Nuclear Energy, which is an area close to the heart of your intrepid author.

Next the huge list of MSR businesses, which contain business that are mostly family owned and run and later sold to Berkshire (with management staying intact). Buffett likes to do these deals with handshakes and has written a lot about them over the years in his investment letters. Have you ever heard of Benjamin Moore Paint? Dairy Queen? Fruit of the Loom? Sees Candies? Forest River RVs? The list goes on and on and includes recent investments in Pilot Flying J and BYD (Tesla of China though he has been selling China recently due to geopolitical concerns). These are companies that were founded by families and managers and that eventually ended up owned wholly or partially by Berkshire. There are dozens of other companies that make everything our society uses but that you probably never thought about (e.g. manufacturing and food services and metalworking and tooling). Here's a partial list from 2021 with employee counts.

MANUFACTURING:

Acme	1,794
Benjamin Moore	2,042
Brooks Sports	1,117
Clayton Homes	20,830
CTB	2,685
Duracell	2,975
Fechheimer	426
Forest River	13,457
Fruit of the Loom	32,591
Garan	3,899
H. H. Brown Shoe Group	1,163
IMC International Metalworking Companies	13,016
Johns Manville	7,748
Larson-Juhl	867
LiquidPower Specialty Products, Inc.	433
Lubrizol	8,368
Marmion ⁽¹⁾	22,835
MiTek Inc.	5,510
Precision Castparts	19,804
Richline Group	2,386
Scott Fetzer Companies	1,823
Shaw Industries	21,482
	<hr/> 187,251

SERVICE AND RETAILING:

Affordable Housing Partners, Inc.	27
Ben Bridge Jeweler	696
Berkshire Hathaway Automotive	9,530
Borsheims	136
Business Wire	415
Charter Brokerage	172
CORT	1,966
Dairy Queen	493
Detlev Louis	1,403
FlightSafety	4,005
Helzberg Diamonds	1,657
Jordan's Furniture	1,040
McLane Company	26,204
Nebraska Furniture Mart	4,407
NetJets	6,616
Oriental Trading	1,278
Pampered Chef	348
R.C. Willey Home Furnishings	2,591
See's Candies	2,546
Star Furniture	426
TTI, Inc.	8,043
WPLG, Inc.	210
XTRA	375
	<hr/> 74,584

Next, there are investments. This is probably what got Warren Buffett to be a household name. The company's biggest holdings are Apple, Bank of America, American Express, Coca Cola (which is why you'll often see him drinking Coke during his public events), and Chevron. He's recently gone bigger into Occidental Petroleum and Capital One Financial and he has a large stake in Kraft Heinz, which was one of the CIA's previous holdings. The other previous CIA holdings, Google, Kinder Morgan, and Region Financial are not represented here though Berkshire does own competitors for all of these. The [table](#) below lists everything he owns that is more than \$300M in value as of March 2023. Finally, there's been a lot of media hype around ongoing investing [Big In Japan](#). I'm not going to repeat all the details here but it's a country they are focusing on as it appears to me they are more and more leaving China, though Munger has said repeatedly that we should be friends with both China and Russia ([Munger on China](#)). Regardless, it's pretty incredible that if you buy a share of BRKB, you get a piece of all of this!

(CONT.)

Company	Ticker	Market value as of 31 March, 2023	Number of shares	% of total portfolio
APPLE INC (COM)	AAPL	150,975,908,000	915,560,382	46.44%
BANK OF AMERICA	BAC	29,539,568,000	1,032,852,006	9.09%
AMERICAN EXPRESS	AXP	25,008,185,000	151,610,700	7.69%
COCA COLA CO (COM)	KO	24,812,002,000	400,000,000	7.63%
CHEVRON CORP (COM)	CVX	21,603,624,000	132,407,595	6.65%
OCCIDENTAL PETROLE- UM (COM)	OXY	13,216,875,000	211,707,119	4.07%
KRAFT HEINZ CO (COM)	KHC	12,592,298,000	325,634,818	3.87%
MOODY'S CORP (COM)	MCO	7,549,445,000	24,669,778	2.32%
ACTIVISION BLIZZARD INC (COM)	ATVI	4,231,550,000	49,439,781	1.30%
HP INC. (COM)	HPQ	3,549,965,000	120,952,818	1.09%
DAVITA HEALTHCARE PARTNERS I (COM)	DVA	2,927,712,000	36,095,570	0.90%
VERISIGN INC (COM)	VRSN	2,708,323,000	12,815,613	0.83%
CITIGROUP INC. (COM)	C	2,590,429,000	55,244,797	0.80%
KROGER CO. (COM)	KR	2,468,500,000	50,000,000	0.76%
PARAMOUNT GLOB-	PARA	2,091,139,000	93,730,975	0.64%

(CONT.)

VISA INC (COM CL A)	V	1,870,745,000	8,297,460	0.58%
GENERAL MTRS CO (COM)	GM	1,467,200,000	40,000,000	0.45%
MASTERCARD INC (CL A)	MA	1,448,788,000	3,986,648	0.45%
AON PLC (COM)	AON	1,366,782,000	4,335,000	0.42%
CHARTER COMMUNICA- TIONS INC N (CL A)	CHTR	1,369,268,000	3,828,941	0.42%
LIBERTY MEDIA CORP DELAWARE (COM C SIRI- USXM)	LSXMK	1,209,400,000	43,208,291	0.37%
AMAZON COM INC (COM)	AMZN	1,089,813,000	10,551,000	0.34%
CELANESE CORP. (COM)	CE	960,302,000	8,819,016	0.30%
CAPITAL ONE FINAN-	COF	954,099,000	9,922,000	0.29%
SNOWFLAKE INC (COM)	SNOW	945,084,000	6,125,376	0.29%
MCKESSON CORP.	MCK	815,306,000	2,289,864	0.25%
ALLY FINANCIAL INC. (COM)	ALLY	739,211,000	29,000,000	0.23%
T-MOBILE US INC (COM)	TMUS	759,251,000	5,242,000	0.23%
GLOBE LIFE INC (COM)	GL	699,037,000	6,353,727	0.22%
MARKEL CORP. (COM)	MKL	602,505,000	471,661	0.19%
LIBERTY MEDIA CORP FORMULA ONE (COM SER C)	FWONK	577,871,000	7,722,451	0.18%

(CONT.)

LIBERTY SIRIUS XM SE- RIES A	LSXMA	567,633,000	20,207,680	0.17%
NU HOLDINGS LTD	NU	509,885,000	107,118,784	0.16%
FLOOR & DECOR HOLD-	FND	469,492,000	4,780,000	0.14%
LOUISIANA-PACIFIC	LPX	381,905,000	7,044,909	0.12%
STONECO LTD (COM CL A)	STNE	102,035,000	10,695,448	0.03%
JOHNSON & JOHN- SON (COM)	JNJ	50,701,000	327,100	0.02%
MARSH & MCLENNAN	MMC	67,438,000	404,911	0.02%
DIAGEO ADR (COM)	DEO	41,264,000	227,750	0.01%
LIBERTY LATIN AMERICA	LILA	21,862,000	2,630,792	0.01%
MONDELEZ INTL INC (CL A)	MDLZ	40,298,000	578,000	0.01%
PROCTER & GAMBLE CO (COM)	PG	46,897,000	315,400	0.01%
JEFFERIES FINANCIAL	JEF	13,761,000	433,558	0.00%
LIBERTY LATIN AMERICA	LILAK	10,606,000	1,284,020	0.00%
SPDR S&P 500 ETF TRUST	SPY	16,130,000	39,400	0.00%
UNITED PARCEL SERVICE	UPS	10,326,000	59,400	0.00%
VANGUARD S&P 500 ETF	VOO	16,171,000	43,000	0.00%

(CONT.)

VITESSE ENERGY INC (CL B)	VTB	971,000	51,026	0.00%
Total market value (\$)		325,108,757,000		

Next, there's the cash and there's a lot of it. Something like \$127B ([2023 Q1 Report](#)). Berkshire's got the ability to cover most insurance risks but also to buy a lot of stuff if it goes on-sale (see the Munger quote at the start of this article).

Finally, there's a long list of intangibles.

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently."
- Warren Buffett

First is the unique combination of entities I've described above that Berkshire presents, many of which have very good moats ([which itself is an intangible](#)). I know of no other company like this in the world. Second is the very high quality of management for the company and their succession planning. Third is the huge float from insurance that allows Berkshire to sit around and wait for businesses and stocks to acquire. Fourth is this large amount of patience that management has in terms of waiting for market "sales" on specific companies and stocks. Fifth, is the special relationship that Berkshire has with the US government (Buffett mentioned this very quickly during the 2023 meeting Q&A). Lastly the company has various other intangibles such as tax credits, ability to move capital quickly, a strong reputation, investment flexibility, and focus.

I guess I can't call this article complete without at least mentioning the risks I foresee in Berkshire. After all no effort worth undertaking is without them. However, these risks have been analyzed and planned for many years. Primarily is the risk of a big insurance related event that would challenge the company. We'd be talking about world changing catastrophes however, so most likely governments would step in. Secondly is the risk of succession. Both Munger and Buffett are nearly 100 years old. While they are still going strong, lack of clarity around succession planning has been a criticism for several years. They have recently discussed more their implementation plans, so this one to me is not a big deal anymore. Perhaps the biggest risk that I see is the possibility of a breakup. While this would endow shareholders with short term gains, I think in the long term it would be disastrous for Berkshire. But we all know how Wall Street is and this is my biggest worry once the founders move on.

"I have yet to see a time when it made sense to make a long-term bet against America. And I doubt very much that any reader of this letter will have a different experience in the future."
- Warren Buffett, 2023

Well my dear reader here we are at the end of the article. If you've stayed with me for this long please accept my thanks. I hope you learned something and found the time invested and the article valuable. I've written a lot but honestly this is just the tip of the iceberg with respect to this company. Berkshire is an incredible company built over decades by two of the world's greatest investors.

It's also fairly easy to get yourself a piece of this incredible company. Just buy one (or some) shares of BRK.B in your brokerage account for about \$325 each. Nowadays online brokerages are fairly easy to open. The CIA uses TD Ameritrade. Having just one share will also get you access to the credentials needed for the annual meeting next May, which I'm going to attend. I think it also gets you 8% off of anything that you buy from GEICO. If you are interested in joining me in attending the meeting, please reach out.

Perhaps I'll write more about this topic in a future HLC, but in the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me at treasurer@clanirwin.org if you have questions about what is written above. Otherwise, be happy and treat those around you, even strangers, with kindness

- Kenneth T Erwin, Treasurer

NOTHING SAYS SCOTLAND LIKE BAGPIPES



To further this haunting but lovely sound, Clan Irwin Association (CIA) is pleased to announce its first Clan Irwin Association Scholarship (CIAS). It will be presented to a deserving student in time for the next summer school session.

During the January 21, 2023 meeting of the Clan Council, CIA's 2023 budget was approved. Included in the budget was a line item of \$500 for a scholarship. Soon after the Clan Council meeting the Chairman assigned a task force, and we were off and running. Rather than have our volunteers take applications and "qualify" the applicants, then "qualify the schools", the decision was made to

choose a school that has an active scholarship program and let them choose a recipient on our behalf. The task force conferred several times. After contacting multiple schools in the United States and Canada regarding their Scottish heritage programs, the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association (EUSPBA) was chosen.

The principal aim of the CIAS will be to offer financial support to students involved in the preservation of Scottish heritage and traditions. With this in mind, it was decided by the Task Force that this scholarship may be used toward tuition, fees, classes, lessons and/or registration for workshops.

A requirement for the recipient of our scholarship will be to write an article outlining their experiences, and how they can use these experiences going forward with their studies. Their article will be published in the Holly Leaf Chronicle and hopefully will increase and promote interest in the CIAS. It is the hope of the Task Force that donations will follow. With these extra donations, the CIAS would then be able to expand its scholarship amount in the coming years and benefit more students, whether piping, dance, fiddle, or singing. Our membership is open to anyone who is interested in promoting the Scottish culture and heritage. Perhaps the recipient(s) of our scholarships will one day join Clan Irwin Association.

- Submitted on behalf of the Task Force, comprised of:

Susan Irvine McRae, Ian Irving, Leslie Smeathers, and Teresa Tucker

MUSIC AND THE CLAN IRWIN ASSOCIATION

LADY IRWIN

For this issue of the Holly Leaf Chronicle, I am so pleased to be able to be able to present a tune written by one of our own Clan Irwin Association members. This lovely Pipe Tune was written by Dr. David F. Irwin, who is one of our Canadian members. He is the Pipe Major of the Ontario District Masonic Pipe Band and is a licensed Professional Engineer. He also holds the Canadian Armed Forces Decoration.

The story behind this tune, very poignant, in Peter's own words, "I was overseas with the Special Operations Forces, under fire and 'dancing' with the Taliban. The thought occurred to me that I wished that I was dancing with my then-girlfriend, now-fiancé Diana. There was rapid fire, followed by an interval of nothing, then more rapid fire, and for a few moments it sounded almost like a waltz timing. The tune (alternating between more staccato notes followed by the 3 rd beat pause) suggested itself to me and I named it for my sweetheart. I called it 'Lady Irwin, Cushla ma Chree', the latter part of which translates to 'pulse of my heart'."

"Lady Irwin" will be included in The Irwins Musical Museum, which is almost ready to be sent to the printer. The original score was handwritten so my super score writer Jamie Laval has reset it for better clarity. Having members contribute to the CIA Music Project is a vital part in assuring that it will continue to grow as our Association grows. I hope to see more in the future.

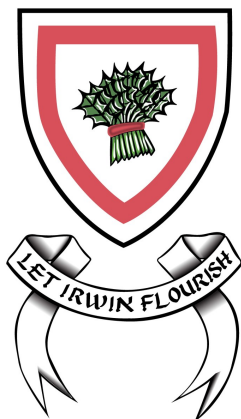
Let Irwin Flourish with Music!

- Susan Irvine McRae, Administrator, Music Project

Lady Irwin (Cushla Ma Chree)

P/A Dr. Peter F. Irwin

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff also begins with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The fourth staff is marked with a '1' and a bracket, indicating a first ending. The fifth staff is marked with a '2' and a bracket, indicating a second ending. The melody is characterized by a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and a final cadence on the fifth staff.



REFERENCE INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Non Profit Status

We are registered as a charitable, non-profit organization under USIRS Regulation 501(c)(3). Donations may be tax deductible in the US.

Submissions

Persons wishing to submit articles or photos of interest to The Holly Leaf Chronicle's newsletter may contact the Editor at:
hlc@clanirwin.org

Remuneration

No Association Officer receives monetary compensation or other benefits, for their services.

Membership Eligibility

Membership is open to all persons who support the Scottish Clan Irwin and the many spellings of the name.

W W W . C L A N I R W I N . O R G

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- * **Have you stopped your landline phone in the last 5 years?**
- * **Did you tell us to remove it from your record?**
- * **Do you have a cell number we can add to your record?**
- * **Are there any other changes in your contact information?**

**If so, please let us know at
membership@clanirwin.org**

**Even if you aren't sure, we'll be happy to verify
any changes you wish to mention.**

Thanks.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CALIFORNIA REGION

- * July 15 - 16, 2023 • Monterey Scottish Games • Monterey, CA
- * Sept 2 - 3, 2023 • Caledonian Club Scottish Highland Games • Pleasanton, CA
- * Sept 16, 2023 • Fresno Highland Games & Gathering • Fresno, CA
- * Sept 23 - 24, 2023 • Prescott Highland Games & Faire • Prescott, AZ

CANADA REGION

- * July 15 - 16, 2023 • Cambridge Scottish Festival • Cambridge, ON
- * July 22 - 23, 2023 • Sherwood Park Highland Games • Sherwood Park, AB
- * July 23, 2023 • Uxbridge Scottish Festival • Uxbridge, ON
- * Aug 5, 2023 • Glengarry Highland Games • Maxville, ON
- * Aug 11 - 13, 2023 • Fergus Scottish Festival • Fergus, ON
- * Aug 11 - 13, 2023 • Goderich Celtic Roots Festival • Goderich, ON
- * Aug 18 - 20, 2023 • Miramichi Scottish Festival • Miramichi, NB
- * Aug 26, 2023 • North Lanark Highland Games • Almonte, ON
- * Sept 2 - 3, 2023 • Canmore Highland Games • Canmore, AB

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

- * Sept 9, 2023 • Covenanter Scottish Festival • Quarryville, PA
- * Sept 16, 2023 • Ligonier Highland Games • Ligonier, PA
- * Sept. 22 - 24, 2023 • Celtic Classic Highland Games & Festival • Bethlehem, PA

MID-CONTINENT REGION

- * Aug 5 - 7, 2023 • Iowa Irish Fest • Waterloo, IA
- * Sept 1 - 3, 2023 • Wisconsin Highland Games • Waukesha, WI

MID-SOUTH REGION

- * Aug 17 - 20, 2023 • Berea Celtic Festival • Berea, KY
- * Sept 8 - 9, 2023 • SW Missouri Celtic Heritage Festival & Highland Games • Buffalo, MO
- * Sept 9 - 10, 2023 • Middle Tennessee Games • Hendersonville, TN
- * Sept 16 - 17, 2023 Central Kentucky CeltFest & Highland Games • Eminence, KY
- * Sept 30, 2023 • Dandridge Scots-Irish Festival • Dandridge, TN

MID-WEST REGION

- * Aug 4 - 5, 2023 • St. Andrew's Society of Detroit Highland Games • Livonia, MI
- * Sept 9, 2023 • Kalamazoo Scottish Festival & Highland Games • Kalamazoo, MI
- * Sept 9 - 10, 2023 • Columbus Scottish Festival • Columbus, IN

UPCOMING EVENTS *(CONT.)*

NORTHEAST REGION

- * July 15, 2023 • Glasgow Lands Scottish Festival • Florence, MA
- * July 21 - 23, 2023 • Maine Celtic Celebration • Belfast, ME
- * Aug 12, 2023 • CNY Scottish Games & Celtic Festival • Syracuse, NY
- * Aug 18, 2023 • Maine Highland Games & Scottish Festival • Brunswick, ME
- * Aug 26, 2023 • Quechee Scottish Highland Games & Festival • Hartfield, VT
- * Sept 2, 2023 • Capital District Scottish Games • Altamont, NY
- * Sept 15 - 17, 2023 • New Hampshire Highland Games & Celtic Festival • Lincoln, NH
- * Sept. 16 - 17, 2023 • Niagara Celtic Heritage Fest & Highland Games • Lockport, NY
- * Oct 8, 2023 • Scotland Highland Festival and Games • Scotland, CT

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION

- * July 8 - 9, 2023 • Skagit Valley Highland Games • Mount Vernon, WA
- * July 22 - 23, 2023 • Scottish Highland Games and Gathering • Seattle, WA
- * July 29, 2023 • Tartan Tourney • Palmer, AK
- * Aug 5, 2023 • Scottish Highland Games • Spokane, WA
- * Sept 9 - 10, 2023 • Kelso Highlander Festival • Kelso, WA
- * Oct 7 - 8, 2023 • McMinnville Scottish Festival • McMinnville, OR

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

- * July 7 - 8, 2023 • Payson Scottish Festival & Highland Games • Payson, CO
- * Aug 19 - 20, 2023 • Bitterroot Celtic Games & Gathering • Hamilton, MT
- * Sept 8 - 9, 2023 • Flathead Celtic Festival • Kalispell, MT
- * Sept 8 - 10, 2023 • Long's Peak Scottish-Irish Highland Festival • Estes Park, CO

SOUTHEAST REGION

- * Sept 23, 2023 • South East Alabama Highland Games • Daleville, AL
- * Oct 20 - 22, 2023 • Stone Mountain Highland Games • Stone Mountain, GA

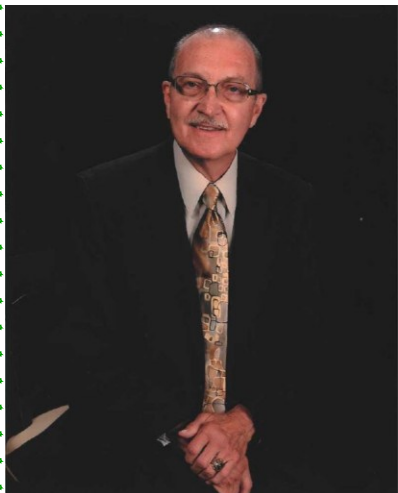
SOUTHWEST REGION

- * Oct 13 - 14, 2023 • CelticFest on the Rez • Brandon, MS
- * Nov 11 - 12, 2023 • Highland & Islands Games & Celtic Music Festival • Gulfport, MS

TIDEWATER REGION

- * July 6 - 9, 2023 • Grandfather Mountain Highland Games • Linville, NC
- * Sept 2 - 3, 2023 • Virginia Scottish Games & Festival • The Plains, VA
- * Oct 7, 2023 • Scotland County Highland Games • Laurinburg, NC
- * Oct 13 - 15 • Central Virginia Celtic Festival & Highland Games • Chesapeake, VA
- * Oct 21, 2023 • Crystal Coast Highland Games • Beaufort, NC
- * Nov 1, 2023 • Richmond Highland Games • Richmond, VA

Flowers of the Forest



RONALD A. IRWIN

1948 ~ 2023

Ronald (Ron) A. Irwin passed away on March 15, 2023, in Melbourne FL. Ron was born to Francis D. and Julia Allees Irwin on October 1, 1948, in Ellenville, NY. Ron was a lifetime resident of Napanoch, NY, and, more recently, Melbourne, FL. He graduated from Ellenville high school in 1966 and later taught there, retiring in 2005.

Ron received his A.A.S. from SUNY at Cobleskill, his B.S. at Central Connecticut State, and his M.S.E.D. at Mount St. Mary College in Newburg, NY.

Ron served his community in many ways, including in his roles as an Ulster County Legislator (District 1), Town of Warwarsing Board Member, Ellenville First Aid and Rescue Squad member, Ulster Sullivan Mediation Board Member and trained Mediator, Christ Lutheran Church Council member and Congregational President and Activity Club member, Ellenville Warwarsing Youth Commission member, Noonday Club member, Ellenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary Board Member and 2012 Auxilian of the Year, Town of Warwarsing Republican Committeeman and Chairman, Ellenville High School SADD Advisor and Advisor to Student Council classes of 1988, 1997, and 2005, AFS Volunteer and host to many foreign exchange students, Shawangunk Senior Center Board Member, Ellenville Central School Retirees Association President and Secretary, D&H Canal Steering Committee member, Napanoch Public Interest Group member, Town of Warwarsing Environmental Conservation Commission member, Gamma Delta Iota Fraternity brother.

Ron is survived by brothers Dennis F. Irwin and his wife Esther, and Kirk Irwin and his wife Kristy; nieces Sara Deppe and her husband Kevin, Taylor Irwin, and Mary Esther Ellenburg and her husband Paul; nephews Dennis A. Irwin and his wife Amanda, and George Rodriguez and his wife Mayra; great nieces Julia and Gracy; and great nephews Braeden and Chase. Also many cousins who loved him dearly. Ron was preceded in death by his parents, Francis and Julia Irwin.

Ron has always been proud of his Irwin heritage and planned many Irwin family reunions.

Submitted by:

Denise A Lewis, CIA Life Member

Flowers of the Forest

ROBERT BOGDAN

1950 ~ 2023

It is with deep sadness that the Scottish Castles Association announces the sudden, unexpected death of our chairman, Robert Bogdan, on Wednesday 22 March 2023.

Schooled in Morayshire, Robert read Medieval History and Geography at St Andrews University representing Scottish Universities at hockey. He followed this up with a PGCE at Cambridge where he earned a hockey blue, on the strength of which he was offered a job at Charterhouse school to run the hockey activities and teach geography. His plan to try this for just one year continued to his eventual retirement from the school – many, many years later in 2015.



We first met Robert when we visited Barra Castle, his mother's old family home, in September 2007 just before he handed over the keys to the new owner. His late brother Nick had been involved in many archaeological adventures, and was also working with the late Ian Bryce to update MacGibbon & Ross' great five-volume tomes. Since his retirement from teaching in December 2015, Robert set himself a challenge to visit as many castles as possible, sometimes in his vintage Riley. Some of these trips have been shared with us in his regular Chairman's round-ups in our newsletters and in our Journal.

Robert's hope for the future of the Scottish Castles Association was to promote the aspirations of the association and further the knowledge of individual sites, connecting with those with specialist

Flowers of the Forest

knowledge of clan history and families, and linking up with other bodies with similar interests in the heritage of Scotland. His own family connections to the Burnett, Forbes and Irvine families in Aberdeenshire, and of course their castles, gave him a great starting point in pursuing his aims.



Since we persuaded Robert to take on the role of chairing the Scottish Castles Association, he worked tirelessly to keep in touch with members, not an easy task through the recent pandemic, and was keen to get us “back on the road again” as soon as we reasonably could. He was finalising our forthcoming Spring Tour to the Borders at the time of his death. For those members who have registered to attend this tour, we can confirm it will go ahead as planned, thanks to his efforts. It would be a fitting tribute to Robert for us to come together during this tour and show appreciation for the times we have shared together over the years.

Robert's knowledge and cheery personality shone through to everyone who met him, and the hole he leaves in the Scottish Castles Association will be a difficult one to fill. Our sincerest condolences go to his partner Diana, to his extended family, and to his wide, wide circle of friends and former pupils who regularly tracked him down via our website.

Reprinted with permission from Scottish Castles Association

Flowers of the Forest

CAROLINE (CARO) IRVINE

LADY DRUM

1939 ~ 2023



Carolyn (Caro), the Lady Drum, died peacefully, aged 83 on April 8, 2023, at Tor Na Dee, Milltimber, Aberdeen. Devoted daughter of the late Capt. William Colbeck RNR and Phyllis, sister of the late Jennifer and the late Richard. Beloved wife of the late David and much-loved mum of Alexander, Charles and Katherine. Adored mother-in-law of Zulfa, Mary and Claire and devoted grandmother to Thomas, Roma, Shoba, Carolyn, Georgie, David and Isaac. Funeral service at St. Ternan's Episcopal Church, Banchory on Friday April 28 at 1:30pm to which all friends are respectfully invited, black tie optional, pinks and purples encouraged. followed by private family service at Baldarroch Crematorium.

Donations to the Forget-Me-Not Club, Bennet House, Banchory AB31 5XA in lieu of flowers.

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE

I was trying to remember when I first saw Caro. I think it was in the late '90s. A caravan of members found their way to Barra Castle. Caro was in the kitchen helping to get refreshments ready for our crowd. She was smiling and calling out cheery greetings as she worked. In the years that followed, she always seemed to have a smile and encouraging greetings for everyone. I can't say I had any lengthy conversations with her for many years, but I always felt that it was a possibility because she had an air of friendliness about her and seemed quite approachable.

It wasn't until my time as Chairman of the Association that I really had a chance to get to know Caro at all. It was a byproduct of keeping in touch with Chief David. When I telephoned, Caro usually answered the call. We just started chatting (and it usually went on for some time). Once, David asked if this was a social call or business!! The interesting thing is that these calls were not all that frequent, but the conversations were always spontaneous and just picked up where we left off, as if we had been lifetime girlfriends. She was always interested in the Clan goings on and loved hearing about people she had met through the years.

I miss this sweet soul. I know she is at peace and at rest with her loved ones. I will remember you, Caro.

- Barbara Edelman

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

Carolyn, Caro, Mum, Grandma.

Arkela, Mrs Irvine, Mrs Irv, Mama Irv, friend. Wife. Daughter. Sister. Mother in Law. Auntie.



A beautiful person with many roles throughout her life. But one thing that binds all these roles was love. Kindness. Thoughtfulness. She was exciting, genuine, interested, determined, stubborn, independent, dependable, warm. Capable, tenacious, loyal. Authentic. Honest. Creative. She was a force of nature. She was a Legend.

Carolyn Colbeck was born in Liverpool in 1939. 15 days before her birth, war was declared. Mum liked this fact. Her father, Captain William Robinson Colbeck and her mother, Phyllis Georgina Colbeck had already had Jennifer, mum's big sister, affectionally known by the family as J. After mum came Richard, who mum adored and called Ricky when they were young, then Ric as he became known. The family lived in Liverpool during the war years. During this time, mum watched as her mum made the best of rationing. The legendary tale of the Colbecks was our grandmother receiving a care package from Australia, her home country, and the bag of cocoa powder splitting over a ball of blue wool.

Our grandmother painstakingly sat shaking out the precious cocoa powder all evening on to the table, resulting in hot chocolate with a side order of wool particles. This is absolutely where mum got her ability to make something out of nothing, to save absolutely everything that passed through her hands. Those of you who spent time at Holly Leaf Cottage with mum and dad will recognize this trait in mum. Everything got a second, or third, or fourth use. Deodorant can lids became pots for some random item. Utterly Butterly tubs became the new Tupperware.

In 1945, the Colbeck family moved to Birkenhead and she attended Birkenhead High School for Girls. She studied as a Physiotherapist at the Liverpool School of Physiotherapy and then worked at Walton Hospital. Mum would relish in recounting tales of working at Walton Hospital and treating the "dockers" as she called them. This is where mum developed a knack to do a really good scouse accent, but she often put this to use to embarrass us as we were growing up, putting on her thickest scouse accent when we brought friends home!

For three years mum was the Physiotherapist on the Cunard liner, RMS

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

Queen Mary. It was during this time that she met Dad. Mum and Dad fell in love during this time in their lives. They sailed every two weeks from Southampton to New York. After Dad died, we found a set of photos in his desk drawer, a photo shoot in New York that they did, Dad as the camera man, mum as his model. Their love shines bright out of these photos.

Mum and Dad married in Birkenhead in October 1964. One of the tops on the honeymoon was Aberdeenshire. Mum recalled that Dad had mentioned something about a castle in Scotland, and presumed this was a pile of old stones, so she was quite taken aback when Dad turned the car onto the main drive at Drum!

Mum's relationship with Drum continued with several holidays in the following years. After Drum was handed over to the National Trust for Scotland in 1976, mum continued to visit Drum with Dad, meeting visiting clans folk from America right up until late 2019.

A gracious and friendly Lady Drum to all, supportive of the work done by NTS.

While mum was proud to support Dad in her role as the Lady Drum, she was quite probably, if not more proud of her illustrious father and grandfather who were Antarctic explorers and both holders of the Polar Medals.

Once on Deeside, mum regularly gave talks in the local community about her father and grandfather's Antarctic expeditions in 1929 and 1902 respectively, and regularly visited the museum in Dundee dedicated to RRS Discovery and related Antarctic history.

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In 1970, they moved from Birkenhead to Cheshire where they settled until their move to Aberdeenshire in 1999.

Mum was a huge part of the community as we grew up. She was always involved in clubs, charities, volunteering, church, church choir, scouting. The list is endless.

There is one story however of Bowdon life that mum may have kept close to her chest. She worked for a while at the local Post Office. The owner of the business next door frequently tried to convince mum to come work "front of house" in his massage centre. Mum politely declined, simply because she felt such loyalty to the Post Office man and liked working there. She thought it could have been an appropriate place to work given her training in physio.

To quote mum ; "It was only later on that we heard that the massage centre in question had attracted the attention of the local constabulary for reasons best left to the imagination...needless to say mum loved the story!"

St Mary's Church, Bowdon was one of the intrinsic parts of mum's life as

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT).

we grew up. She joined the choir, then suggested we did too. But she wasn't just a member of the choir. True to form, she was involved in all aspects of choir life. From washing and ironing choir tabards, to helping arrange choir camps, to keeping all the young ones in check! Joining the choir here at St Ternan's was equally as important to her.



Alongside church life, mum became involved with volunteering at 4th Bowdon, St Mary's' cub scout pack. Mum started off helping when the boys were cubs, but, unsurprisingly, took on the role of Arkela when her good friend Noreen Brew left to move back to her home of Bute. "Dib Dib Dib, Arkela we will do our best" - she'd give us into trouble for our cheek as kids if we said that to her!!

Mum's life in Scouting was one of the biggest representations of who our dear mum, our dear Caro was at heart. She would do anything, for anyone, in a heartbeat.

We've just heard from her MAGIC friends about mum's services to, and love of scouting.

In complete symmetry, as she moved her choir life to St Ternan's, she equally moved her scouting life to Aberdeenshire and loved being part of the scouting life at Linn Moor School. Dad said he'd hoped she would retire from scouting, but I think he knew this wouldn't happen

One part of mum's life in Bowdon that I was reminded of in a beautiful letter I received from one of her oldest friends can't be overlooked today. Mum had a very good friend called Lisa in Bowdon. Lisa's daughter Rosie sadly died aged 5 years in 1991.

"The loss of your mum feels like the end of an era. Caro was so much a part of the community in Bowdon. Arkela to probably thousands, singing in the choir, and a good and valued friend to many. I have particularly cherished memories. When Rosie was in the last weeks of her life, most people found it difficult to come and visit her, but your mum came round and played and talked to her as if it was all normal. Unforgettable kindness. Rosie adored her. And then, when we set up our charity Friends of Rosie, Caro took on the role of Honorary Treasure. She was brilliant, dependable, the safest of hands. Friends of Rosie is now well established, thanks in no small part to the support and loyalty of your mum."

Lisa went on to say that Caro would be remembered always as the kindest, and best of friends.

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

I think we can all recognize this in mum.

In recent weeks I've heard so many lovely words from many people who knew and loved mum.

The running theme throughout these words is mum's generosity of spirit, her ability to connect with any children around her, and do anything she could to help anyone.

Moving onto family life. Mum and Dad's love story created their beloved family, the 3 of us and the ongoing arrivals each and every time of their grandchildren. Mum absolutely adored the new lease of life she got with being Grandma to Thomas, Roma, Shoba, Carolyn, Georgie, David and Isaac. She has more grandchildren to come, of that I can be certain. And let's not forget all her extended family, including her nephews Mark & Julian. She is cherished and adored by us all, and by Claire, Zulfa and Mary too, her daughters-in-law.

Mum and Dad created such a wonderful family home at Holly Leaf Cottage. Not only a wonderful home, but the most beautiful garden. They were so happy pottering in the garden, crafting, creating, planning and getting stuck right in! Mum never stopped in the garden, right up to the very end of her time living in Holly Leaf Cottage. She was a strong and determined gardener, stubbornly crawling under all fours to scrape out weeds from under the Rhododendrons, or dangerously climbing up wobbly step ladders to trim branches, despite all our please to take it a bit slower!

Although we weren't raised there, I think it's safe to say, her grandchildren feel they were raised there. Never was mum happier than when she had them to stay, and create so many memorable adventures and memories for them. That's the Arkela in her and I know that Holly Leaf Cottage and Grandma and Grandpa hold a very special place in the hearts of her grandchildren. I asked mum's grandchildren for some "I love you Grandma because .." words, which we also did for Dad for his 80th. These are some of their thoughts and words:

SECURITY, COMFORT, MAKING EVERYONE FEEL SPECIAL, LOVED AND CARED FOR, GENUINELY INTERESTED IN OUR LIVES, FUN, TEACHING US TO BE SILLY, TO MAKE FIRES, TO BAKE, TO COOK, TO NURTURE AN APPRECIATION FOR RADIO 2, HOW YOU WORKED HARD TO GIVE US HAPPY MEMORIES, GIVING US A SECOND HOME TO GROW UP IN, TO BE OUR CONSTANT THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, MAKING OUR CHILDHOOD SUMMERS MAGICAL, YOUR CHEEKY SMILE, AND BEING AN INSPIRATION AND A WISE AND INCREDIBLY LOVING WOMAN.

Mum and Dad both carved out such full lives when they moved to Banchory. They had a better social life than me. The friendships they forged were so special and important to them.

Mum was also incredibly proud to be a "stitcher" for The Great Tapestry

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

Scotland a number of years ago. She developed a wonderful talent and love for Tapestry from her mother. The Tapestry is now on permanent display in Galashiels and it's comforting to know that a part of mum will always be there.

There are so many stories I could share with you all about mum and I'm sure some of these will be told later when we can relax over a cup of tea. Just ask me about the time mum got stuck in the loft

But to end this tribute to mum, my brothers and I want to thank each and everyone of you who have shown Caro so much care and love over her life, but especially in the years since she lost Dad. I've been humbled to see such tenderness from her friends in the last couple of years.

Mum wasn't just mum, she wasn't just Grandma. She was also a loved friend to many.

We know that Mum wanted "what Dad was having" when it came to today. But one thing she also told us many years ago, was that she wanted a very special piece of music played at her funeral. This is from our days in the choir at St Mary's Bowdon. It's her oldest Hugh, and Sasha Manning, who was in the choir and remains a very active choral singer in Manchester. It is a recording from the 1908's of The Lord is My Shepherd.

- Katherine Irvine

WORDS FROM CARO'S MAGIC GROUP

Lady Carolyn of Drum, always Caro to our group - MAGIC - from our surnames Morrison, Allen, Glegg, Irvine & Corbett.....a magical Hogmanay Party in 2004 is when the MAGIC group was formed out of our friendship and pleasure in Scottish Country Dancing, but our story starts before that. The Scout Association contacted Phil Allen who was a Leader of Banchory Scouts to inform him a Cub Leader had moved into the area, of course it was our dear Caro who politely told Phil when he visited her to welcome her to the area, that she and David had moved North to retire, however in his usual persuasive style he left "Holly Leaf Cottage" with Caro agreeing to join him on the Training Team and she provided, not only quality training but she encouraged new Leaders and supported them in so many ways.

I was Area Commissioner at that time and I was keen to start a Scout Troop at Linn Moor Residential School for children with special needs, Caro was delighted to be involved and both she and Ruth Glegg ensured the Scouts at Linn Moor had a fun and meaningful experience with the highlight of a visit from the UK's Chief Scout which Caro organized in her thoughtful & meticulous style. Around this time David became Area Scout Treasurer.

The Forget Me Not Dementia Charity was in its early stages and Caro became a wonderful volunteer, she drove up to Aboyne every Tuesday to enable

WORDS FROM CARO'S MAGIC GROUP (CONT)

the club to grow and develop, her kindness and friendship was valued by everyone especially the carers. She frequently would support them out with the regular meetings, she would drive them to appointments, sit with the person with dementia to allow the carer time off and countless other acts of support - a heart of gold.

Caro and David took great pleasure in enabling Forget Me Not to hold a Birthday celebration at Drum. Caro did tours of the garden, David did tours of the castle, we had music in the chapel with pony and trap rides down the drive - a wonderful event made possible by their outstanding support

Back to MAGIC - the friendship developed over the years is held in our hearts, we recall the annual Hogmanay parties, the opportunities to celebrate each other's birthdays and anniversaries at places like Pitlochry and the Murder Mystery nights which enabled us to indulge in our love of crazy fancy dress. In 2010 both Caro & Phil were awarded their Silver Acorns for services to Scouting, so after the formal visit to the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh we had a mini camp in the Forest of Birse, cooking sausages, singing campfire songs until our little tent got picked up by the wind and blew off down the valley! A magic trick dinner started with a bang as Anne and Peter Corbett who had moved away, magically appeared from behind a screen!

Caro & David's Golden Wedding Anniversary was celebrated with an activity afternoon at Deeside Activity Centre where we enjoyed time on the rifle range, whilst we all slowly got frozen! The unrivalled fun we all had at our Magic conker championship!

In 2020 we all had to get used to life with Covid so we, like many started to get together with Zoom, so our fun & friendship continued with a virtual Burns Supper, Murder Mystery, Cheese & Wine tasting night - to name but a few and then the joy of returning to "face to face" with tea in the garden ensuring Caro didn't feel isolated as life became more difficult. Her move to Tor Na Dee during Covid was traumatic for everyone but many visits were made, cards & calls kept us in touch but without Caro and David more than the "I" is missing from MAGIC - thank you for being an extraordinary, amazing and kind friend.

- Heather Morrison, on behalf of MAGIC

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

Where to begin to tell you about the wonderful friend and special lady Carolyn Irvine was and will always be in our hearts and memories. Carolyn is known to family and friends as Caro. I first met Caro at the Glasgow Highland Games in Kentucky when she and David came over to the US and he was Chief of the Games in 1998. This was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Caro showed me how to make a rosette with my clan sash and told me it should be worn on my right shoulder, not the left because only the Chief's wife

REMEMBERING CAROLYN IRVINE (CONT)

could wear it on the left. It was a joy to have her as my friend and Joe and I spent many occasions with her and David. In 2002, the year of the Peace Treaty signing with Clan Keith, Joe and I had the privilege of staying with David and Caro at Holly Leaf Cottage for five days. She and I went shopping for all the special treats that she liked to serve at the Clan Irvine Tent for the Aboyne Highland Games, like cheese breads and assorted Scottish Cheeses and crackers.

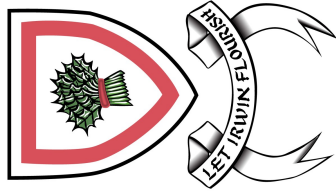
I remember helping her clean up around her house the day we moved over to the B&B in Banchory for the remainder of our stay when their son, Alexander (Hugh) and his family came to stay. This was when I learned the term "hovering" for vacuuming the carpet. She and David always had a lovely garden and a vegetable garden where David would go out and dig up potatoes and carrots for dinner. On that visit she told me about being a physiotherapist on the Queen Mary and how she met David when he was also serving on the ship.

Caro was a gracious and friendly lady and I saw her in public at Drum Castle on our association tour was 2019. David's cousin, Robert Bogdan had brought her to Drum for that visit. Sadly, Robert passed away before Caro this year. Robert was a retired professor and president of The Scottish Castles Association and very well versed in the history of Drum Castle.

I remember visiting Barra Castle when on a clan trip and Caro had worked hard with Mhari Bogdan to prepare tea for all our members in the large kitchen at Barra.

On our last clan trip in 2022, I was blessed to visit Caro at the retirement community where she had been living when in home care was no longer possible for her. Alexander kindly took me over to visit her. She was so pleased to see me, and I had brought her some wonderful biscuits (cookies) for her to enjoy with her tea. We reminisced about all the wonderful times we had together. Caro was the sweet and welcoming friend and gracious Lady Drum I will always remember. I will miss her, as I do David when on our visits to Drum Castle. Rest in peace dear friend and know you will always be in our memory.

- Sherrie Irwin



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