



Scottish News

*From the Clan of
Georgia Highlands Association
Royal Order of Scotland*



Presidents News

Sir Knights:

It has been truly stated that Freemasonry has its nexus or focus in Scotland. This statement is also true for Freemasonry in Georgia.

The two feast days of Freemasonry are those of St. John the Baptist, 24 June, and St. John the Evangelist, 27 December. The early English Masonic lodges held their annual Installation Meeting on 27 December, the feast day of St. John the Evangelist. The Grand Lodge of Scotland was founded using the Grand Lodge of England (organized in 1717) as its model. However, when the Grand Lodge of Scotland organized, it chose as its annual installation date, 30 November, the feast day of St. Andrew, Patron Saint of Scotland.

On the first day of August 1734 a group of Scots arrived in the new colony of Georgia. They initially settled near the Great Ogeechee River, and celebrated the first festival of St. Andrew in Georgia the following 30 November. The most prominent member of this group was Dr. Patrick Tailfer, who with his wife Mary soon moved into Savannah itself. There he practiced medicine and became a prominent surgeon. An English resident observed of these new citizens, "Seeing some gentlemen at a distance with laced hatts on, I askt who they were. They told me they were Scotch men; for that no other war laced hatts (but the gentn of that nation) on that bluff."

Talifer and his "cabal" of Scots immediately organized the first St. Andrew's Society in the new town. They continued to celebrate the festival of St. Andrew each 30 November as long as they remained in the colony. At the same time—1734—Tailfer's group organized the first

Masonic lodge in Georgia. Thomas Jones, detailing the activities of the Scots, remarked that they dressed gaily, set up a Freemason's "club," a St. Andrew's club, and other "tippling societies."

Kenneth Coleman wrote of the connection between Freemasonry and the Scots in colonial Georgia as follows:

"A mason's lodge was early organized at Savannah, and the Scots augmented the number of masons in the colony. The masons gave weekly suppers at which thirty to forty were sometimes reported. They had an annual meeting in June with a special church service, fraternal celebrations, and a dinner. In 1737 John Wesley preached a special sermon for the occasion and afterwards dined with the masons. Two years later they marched in a body in their regalia from the church to the public house for their dinner."

Over the next several years the lodge at Savannah initiated more and more of the English colonists as members. In 1739 James Oglethorpe warned the Trustees about "one Talfeur an Apothecary Surgeon who gives Physick and one [Robert] Williams [Dr. Tailfer's father-in-law]..., a Merchant who quitted planting to sell rum."

William Stephens, a close friend of Oglethorpe's and a strong opponent of Tailfer and his Scots, sneered at a 1739 Masonic parade, "the Warden Dr. Tailfer (who likes Pre-eminence as well as any Man) attended by four or five with Wands, and red Ribbands in their Bosoms, as Badges of their several Offices, took Places foremost; but the Train that followed in white Gloves and Aprons, amounted only to about Half a Dozen more; which some, who are apt to burlesque the Order, turned into Ridicule."

Stephens' designation of Dr. Tailfer as the warden of the lodge indicates that the Masonic lodge in Savannah continued to hold to the Scots Masonic tradition as late as June of 1739.

By September of 1739 Tailfer and his Scots brothers had formed the first volunteer militia company in Georgia's history, with Tailfer as captain in command. Called the "Extra Company," this flank or special unit was the origin of what is now the Georgia National Guard. It was also the alter-ego of the Masonic lodge in Savannah, then being carried on the rolls of the Grand Lodge of England as Arms Lodge No. 124 by 1740. In fact, it was a military lodge, one of the first of its kind known in North America. Eventually, this Masonic lodge became a permanent lodge and lost its military character. Consequently, it changed its name by borrowing the name of Solomon's Lodge from a Charleston lodge.

The Scots' push for the abolition of the quaint and unrealistic system of land tenure in colonial Georgia and for the introduction of slavery led to a clash with Oglethorpe, Stephens, and the trustees. As a result Dr. Tailfer and most of the Scots at Savannah moved to Charleston in August of 1740. The Masonic lodge they had founded, of course, continued in existence, as the Scots had initiated a number of the English settlers into membership.

From Charleston in May of 1741, Tailfer published a devastating blast against Oglethorpe and the Georgia trustees, which "hurt the victim (Oglethorpe) intensely." Tailfer's publication was entitled *A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia in America*, a masterpiece of "inspired invective and savage irony" long since praised by cultural historians. The "Tailfer Book," as it came to be known, was "brilliant satire." It is the only record of a Masonic founder forgotten in Georgia history.

Doctor Tailfer died in Charleston in December of 1745.

The Royal Order of Scotland, which bases its traditions on Robert the Bruce, does not require one to be a Scot as a prerequisite for membership. Instead, one must be a Freemason and a Christian. Nevertheless, we revere our Scots fraternal heritage—in the origin of the Royal Order of Scotland and in the origin of the first Masonic

lodge in Georgia.

I urge all Sir Knights to remember our origins and our purposes.

Yours Aye,

Sir Knight Gordon Burns Smith

President, Ga. Highlands Assoc., R.O.S.

Chaplains Corner

Some Thoughts About Biblical Literalism
by (Rev.) James C. Bryant, Ph.D., Chaplain

The Scriptures require common sense and study for valid interpretation. Without it, we would be like those whom Jesus chided for trying to obey the "letter of the law" while missing its spirit.

The inspired writers expressed their thoughts out of the context of the times in which they lived. They condemned what their culture condemned, and among the "abominations" were religious practices of their heathen neighbors in Canaan, Egypt, and Syria, and later in Greece and Rome. When Hebrew culture thought of the world as square and flat, the writers spoke of the "four corners" of the earth. A literal interpretation would be hard pressed to reconcile that notion with what we know about the world today. In Jesus' day they explained mental illness and epilepsy as "demon possession."

We know more about the human psyche now than ever before, and human nature is complicated at best. Dealing with problems in human psychology and behavior is not as easy as telling Adam not to eat of the fruit in the Garden of Eden.

The more we learn about ourselves the less likely are our problems to be resolved in terms of black and white interpretations of what Moses said or Paul or others who spoke on the basis of their own limited understanding of God and the universe. Serious emotional and psychological and neural and congenital problems today are not likely to be resolved with simplistic explanations and dictums. The end of humankind is always the same, regardless of the condition in which we at last find ourselves. We have to discover who we are and what we *are and use the best we have to glorify God*.

What glorifies God is not a blind insistence upon

literal interpretations of the Bible and trying to recreate ancient societal norms but a practical application of its spirit to contemporary life. The Bible is authoritative, but it is never an end unto itself; its end is always God. And it must always be interpreted with the common sense God gave us. The Bible is not a stop light; it is an arrow pointing beyond itself to the love of God and God's ultimate concern for all humankind. The purpose of Scripture is to reveal God's love and God's relationship to creation. The Bible is not the object of worship, God is. The ministry and teaching of Jesus was reconciliation with God, whom he called "Father.

God loves each person as much as he loves the most revered saint in history. We are all flawed and have all fallen short of God's ideal for humankind: we are just flawed in different ways. It is the love of God that gives us value; it is the grace of God that sustains us. *Amen*

Dr. Jim Bryant

Screening Committee

Sir Knights, we should have our letters by now informing all of the meetings scheduled for 2008. I urge all, that have someone that they would like to nominate, to get their application to me as soon as possible with the appropriate fee, and the class that they prefer, so I can get their approval ready.

Fraternally
Carl Hyde,
Screening Committee Chairman

Scottish Trivia

Famous Quote: "If all else fails, I will retreat up the valley of Virginia, plant my flag on the Blue Ridge, rally around the Scotch-Irish of that region and make my last stand for liberty amongst a people who will never submit to British tyranny whilst there is a man left to draw a trigger." George Washington, Valley Forge.

Scottish Freemasonry is now officially recognized as being the oldest in the world and is now recorded as a Guinness World Record.

"Memorial"

Sir Knights all, this is a Memorial issue of our

Newsletter in honor of Dr. Rev. James C. Bryant. I just spoke with Jim a few days ago and we talked about several things. Among those was his article for this newsletter, of which you have read above. Dr. Bryant was a fine man, a dedicated Mason, and I am honored to have called him "my friend". He will be missed. Please keep Marion and Jim's family in your prayers as they go thru this difficult time. We have lost four good Brothers and Sir Knights from our mist. Sir Knight Tommy Patterson, Sir Knight Grady Bozeman, Sir Knight Kerry Buchan, and now Sir Knight Jim Bryant.

In Scotland, an old Gaelic Funeral Prayer says this:

"God saw you getting tired and a cure was not to be. So He put His arms around you and whispered *come to me*. With tearful eyes we watched you, and saw you pass away. Although we loved you dearly, we could not make you stay. A golden heart stopped beating, hard working hands at rest. God broke our hearts to prove to us, He only takes the best."

Urnaigh an Tighearna:

Ar n-Athair a tha air nèamh, gu naomhaichear d'ainm.

Thigeadh do riochachd. Dèanar do thoil air an talamh, mar a nìthear air nèamh.

Tabhair dhuinn an-diugh ar n-aran làitheil. Agus maith dhuinn ar fiachan, amhail a mhaitheas sinne dar luchd-fiach.

Agus na leig ann am buaireadh sinn; ach saor sinn o olc;

oir is leatsa an rioghachd, agus an cumhachd, agus a' ghlòir, gu sìorraidh

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer, in Scottish Gaelic

From the Secretary

Brethren and Sir Knights all, being as we will not get another newsletter before April, I wish to include this article in this issue of our newsletter. It is of great importance to those of us of Celtic/Gaelic heritage. In the month of April, break out your Tartan and show it with pride of your heritage.

In the Senate of the United States, November 10, 1997 Trent Lott submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the

Committee on the Judiciary.

A Resolution Designating April 6 of each year as "National Tartan Day" to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States.

Whereas April 6 has a special significance for all Americans, and especially those Americans of Scottish descent, because the Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence, was signed on April 6, 1320 and the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on that inspirational document;

Whereas this resolution honors the major role that Scottish Americans played in the founding of this Nation, such as the fact that almost half of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Scottish descent, the Governors in 9 of the original 13 States were of Scottish ancestry, Scottish Americans successfully helped shape this country in its formative years and guided this Nation through its most troubled times;

Whereas this resolution recognizes the monumental achievements and invaluable contributions made by Scottish Americans that have led to America's preeminence in the fields of science, technology, medicine, government, politics, economics, architecture, literature, media, and visual and performing arts;

Whereas this resolution commends the more than 200 organizations throughout the United States that honor Scottish heritage, tradition, and culture, representing the hundreds of thousands of Americans of Scottish descent, residing in every State, who already have made the observance of Tartan Day on April 6 a success; and

Whereas these numerous individuals, clans, societies, clubs, and fraternal organizations do not let the great contributions of the Scottish people go unnoticed:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate designates April 6th of each year as

"National Tartan Day".

(recognized on April 6th of each year in the USA and Canada. The rest of the world recognizes this day on July 1st.)

Sir Knights all, we are working on coming up with a Tartan especially for our Ga. Highland Clan. We are looking at different patterns and one that will be recognized by the Grand Lodge of Scotland and registered in Edinburgh in our name. If you have any suggestions please mail them to me at;

Rick Conn

2683 Brocklin Drive

Grayson, Ga. 30017-1432

or you can email me at;

rickconn@bellsouth.net

We are also working presently on getting a separate page on our new website for the archives of our newsletters, so all can read them online. Our Webmaster (Sir Knight Richard Gibson) and I are working to make our website very user friendly and one that will have the opportunity for all in our clan to have their own email address with the Ga Highland Clan domain name. Brother Richard has done a terrific job on our website. He has been sick lately so all keep him in your prayers also.

I would like for all of our members who have email address's (the ones that I do not have) to please email me with their address so I can add them to our group email for clan information only. It is a useful tool in contacting all members quickly.

We will be having another meeting for the planning of our Banquet this coming December in Macon, sometime in July. The time and place will be announced later and any who wish to attend please come and join us. Your input is welcome in planning our Banquet.

I hope all have a very Happy "St Paddy's Day" next month. And all celebrate our Gaelic Celtic heritage. "Eire go Brach"

God Bless our troops who are in Harms way and help them in our fight against the Islamic Extremists. **God Bless the USA**

Until next issue, may God Bless each and every one of you.

Rick Conn, Secretary/Treasurer
Ga. Highland Assoc, ROS

