

# THE TEVIOTDALE HERALD



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
CLAN KERR OF THE UNITED STATES & NORTH AMERICA

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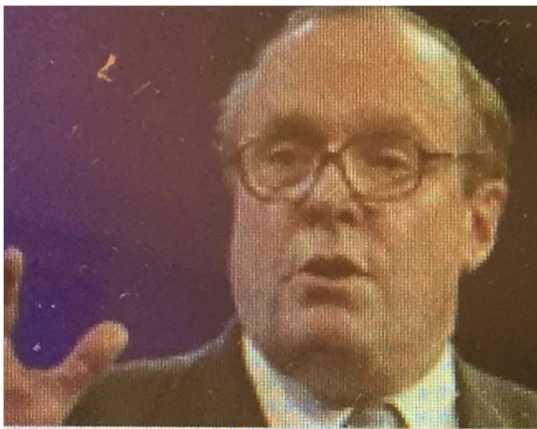
## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

What a year? What an experience ... challenging young and old alike. For myself, my 'Honey Do List,' no longer exists, aside from "please get some milk next time you are out, dear." Therefore, I will not trouble you with recent definitions of "Cabin Fever." This year has been an unprecedented challenge worldwide as Covid-19 tests economic and social systems around the world. We here in America are blessed with a system which will endure beyond this pandemic.

For Clan Kerr, the Covid-19 experience has been a fascinating time since more and more of us have had the time to look into our heritage questions, while at the same time American economic and political life has been strained unlike any experience in memory. Despite all these challenges our country continues as a united people. We should all be proud!



We should take pride in other Scots, who in challenging times in Scotland's history, stood before their leaders in 1320 and created the Arbroath Document. Four-hundred and fifty-six years later other Scots in the American Colonies crafted our Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights, both patterned on Scotland's earlier 1320 Treaty of Arbroath.



On behalf of Lord Lothian in Scotland, I wish all of you good health and happiness as we progress into the forthcoming 2020 holiday season. Let us all bow our heads for a moment and pray for better times soon.

In closing, I would also like to point out that Clan Kerr participated in a small Highland Games in Mountain Home, Idaho, on the weekend of October 17th & 18th, 2020. Hundreds attended for the athletics and piping, and Clan Kerr had a tent on the field manned by Ian Scott Kerr, Convener for Idaho. Many thanks, Ian and

also thanks to his Mom, Laurie MacKenzie-Kerr for helping to make it happen!

Ceud Mile Failte Dhut! (100,000 welcomes to you!)

*Bob Miller*



## AMERICA'S FIRST 2020 COVID-19 HIGHLAND GAMES IN NINE MONTHS

### CLAN KERR HELPS SUPPORT OCTOBER 2020 GAMES IN MOUNTAIN HOME, IDAHO



Congratulations to Ian Kerr in Idaho for being one of the five Clans to support the two-day Mountain Home Highland Games in early October. Despite the Covid-19 mask requirement and the social distancing, some 700 attended and enjoyed two days of piping and athletics.

Ian Scott Kerr, the local Convener for Clan Kerr, reports that everyone had a great time. Three new Clan Kerr members were signed up. Athletics were the highlight of the weekend, with amateur athletes on Saturday and the professionals on Sunday. Competitors participated in five events: the caber-toss, the stone-put, hammer-throw, sheaf-toss and weight-over-the-bar. Ian also reports that it was a windy weekend and several tents blew down. Luckily, the Kerr tent wasn't one of them! Congratulations, Ian and thanks go to his Mom, Laurie Mackenzie-Kerr, for all of her help in making our Clan's presence possible. To get in touch with the Idaho Kerrs please email them at: [Kerrfamily25@gmail.com](mailto:Kerrfamily25@gmail.com).



## **FUTURE HIGHLAND GAMES FOR 2021**

Covid-19 has wrought chaos with future Games scheduled for 2021 and beyond. Clan Kerr will continue to monitor the national games schedule as we move into 2021. Coordination with some other Clans indicates most Games across the United States, once the Covid-19 pandemic is history, will continue along the annual schedules from 2019 and earlier. The only Games we are aware of at the moment will be in Sarasota, Florida. They currently indicate that their Games will still be held in early February 2021.

## **POTPOURRI**

**Armigerous Clans:** Today some 100 Scottish Clan names are recognized by Scotland's Lord Lyon. However, there are 500 to 600 armigerous names of large families who existed within the purview of each of the 100 recognized Clans. There are hundreds of armigerous clans who would be recognized by the Lord Lyon were these groups to make their entitlement case. Most often time and a lot of money are involved discouraging most from trying.

**Clan Buchanan's 357 years in the wilderness:** Clan Buchanan lost its chief in 1681, when he died without a male heir. Fifteen years ago, John Baillie-Hamilton Buchanan thought he might be eligible to inherit the Chief's title for Clan Buchanan. He hired private genealogists who spent a lot of time and money trying to close the gap of 16 generations since 1681. The research was presented to the Lord Lyon in Scotland, who finally approved the project. Today, Clan Buchanan followers here in the United States finally have a chief.

**The Border Reiver Society of North America:** Now only four years old, located near Atlanta, Georgia, the Border Reiver Society was recognized recently by Clan Anderson in Scotland for its incredible DNA research now evolving, which will hopefully tie interested American Scots to a specific Clan progenitor hundreds of years ago in Scotland.

**The Scottish Banner:** Scotland's largest Clan newspaper, in its issue of January 2020, had a full page of listings of over sixty forthcoming Highland Games across the United States through mid-2020. Weeks later all had been cancelled because of Covid-19. The largest Games of 2020 ended up being the first two cancelled, which were the one in mid-January in Central Florida and three weeks later at the Queen Mary Liner in Long Beach, California.





**The Feast of Samhain:** This feast is celebrated at the end of Scotland's fall harvest. With everyone soon going indoors, thoughts of spirits in the shadows emerged. Empty chairs existed in most homes at which a small plate of food was left to please evil spirits that might arrive.

**Witchcraft:** Bonfires are seen all over Scotland around Halloween (All Souls Day). Most have been in the same places for scores of years, some even for centuries, recalling horrible events which took place there, most of them relating to witches burned at the stake. Scotland had one of the highest rates of witch-burning per capita in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Bogeyman:** Our "boogie man" expression is of Scottish origin. Originally it was about men in the shadows who stared at young women and made them nervous. It later moved to the shadows in dark bedrooms, from which a child's only escape was to cover his or her head beneath a blanket while asleep.

**The Corona Complex:** A "corona" is a colored circle often seen around, and close to, a luminous body caused by diffraction, produced by suspended particles of dust. The latest plague worldwide started among scores of other virus' around the corona virus already known. Like naming a new born child, the medical community decided to simplify the latest one to: **COVID-19**.

### **Our Genealogist's Corner**

In the following section, members struggle and Clan Kerr continues to try to help members match their research with lost gaps and dead-end branches in their family trees. Unlike only a few decades ago, when most of us spent days, even months, in dusty archives looking for lost relatives, today's researchers have a treasure trove of information available at their finger-tips in the public realm. All you need to do is to start looking. Some new valuable research opportunities for Scots looking back into their history might want to visit the following websites:

The Olive Tree Genealogy contains ship passenger lists of Scottish immigrants to America.

- The Scottish Emigration Data Base has records of some 21,000 passengers at Glasgow and Greenock heading for other ports between 1890 to 1960.
- The Scottish Emigration Blog is all about Scots in the diaspora.
- The Scots Abroad.
- Emigration and passenger lists.
- Then there are some 35 detailed Category Indexes for everything from wills and probates, births, marriages and deaths to cemeteries and immigration records.



## **SOME NEW MEMBER INQUIRIES**

Space has not permitted us to include all member inquiries. The following 13 are a few who are enjoying their Clan Kerr association and looking forward to getting involved in future Highland Games activities and heritage pursuits:

1. Christina Olachia of Texas: is connected to the Kerrs through her 6<sup>th</sup> Great grandmother, Mary Kerr, on her father's side. Her father was William Kerr and the daughter was the 8<sup>th</sup> grand daughter of Andrew Kerr, and his wife Agnus Crichton. On Christine's mother's side her 13<sup>th</sup> grandmother was also Margaret Kerr, daughter of Walter and Isobel Kerr.
2. Louis Sellers in Texas: is looking forward to attending Highland Games in the Lone Star State.
3. Leslie Boness in Maine: her family are Kerrs and Milliken's via New Brunswick. Now retired, Leslie is looking into her background.
4. John Kerr of Ohio: has amassed an incredible expanded Kerr family tree going back to Matthew Kerr who was killed in 1791, on Kerr's Island near Marietta, Ohio by man named "Ohio." His eight pages of Kerrs down to the present are valuable reference documents for all Kerrs in and around the Ohio area in the last few hundred years. We speculated that had Matthew Kerr not died on Kerr Island when he did, could the State of Ohio today be State of Kerr?
5. David Tinney of Arizona: has traced his Kerr lineage back to Walter Kerr, born July 1, 1656, in the Parish of Dalserf in Lanarkshire, Scotland. Ninety- two years later Walter died on June 10, 1748, in Freehold, Monmouth, New Jersey.
6. Jill Kerr of Missouri: is hoping to visit Scotland as soon as the virus is vitiated.
7. Ronnie Declue of California has a son who is now looking into their Kerr heritage, following them as they made their way to California since arriving here from Scotland.
8. Carol Karrh of Florida: has Karr history on her father's side and is beginning to look into her heritage.
9. Sandra Paul of Indiana: will keep in touch with us as her Kerr heritage unfolds.
10. Jamie Almon in Alaska: has Kerr ancestry and is interested in becoming a Clan Kerr "Convener" as soon as Covid-19 is history.
11. Scott Kerr Roberts in British Columbia: is looking for his great grandmother in Ontario in the 1950's.
12. Ellora Stanton in Colorado: is searching for her paternal grandmother, Ella Carr Washam Piper (1882-1968): Ellora's father was Thomas J. Carr.
13. Andrew Rich of Northern Illinois: is encouraging his wife, a Kerr, to begin celebrating her heritage through Clan Kerr association.

## COVID-19 IN SCOTLAND

With a population of just over five million, and only ten months since 2020 began, Scotland's infection rate recently stood at about 35,000, or about one in each 142. But only some 20 deaths have been reported as Covid victims so far. Authorities report that most victims are among the immigrant poor who tend to be in entry-level positions where their occupations expose them to the public, such as transportation, food service and shopkeepers. Overcrowding in some Scottish residential areas was also mentioned as a contributor.

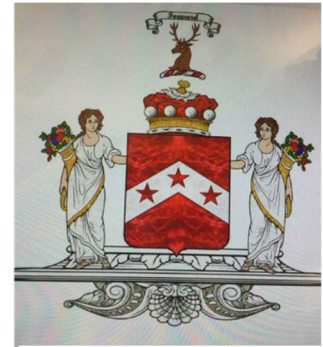
## SOME KERR CRESTS THROUGH HISTORY



*Marquesses of Lothian*



*The Earls of Ancrum*



*The First Lord Jedburgh*



*Barons Teviot*



*The Earl of Somerset*



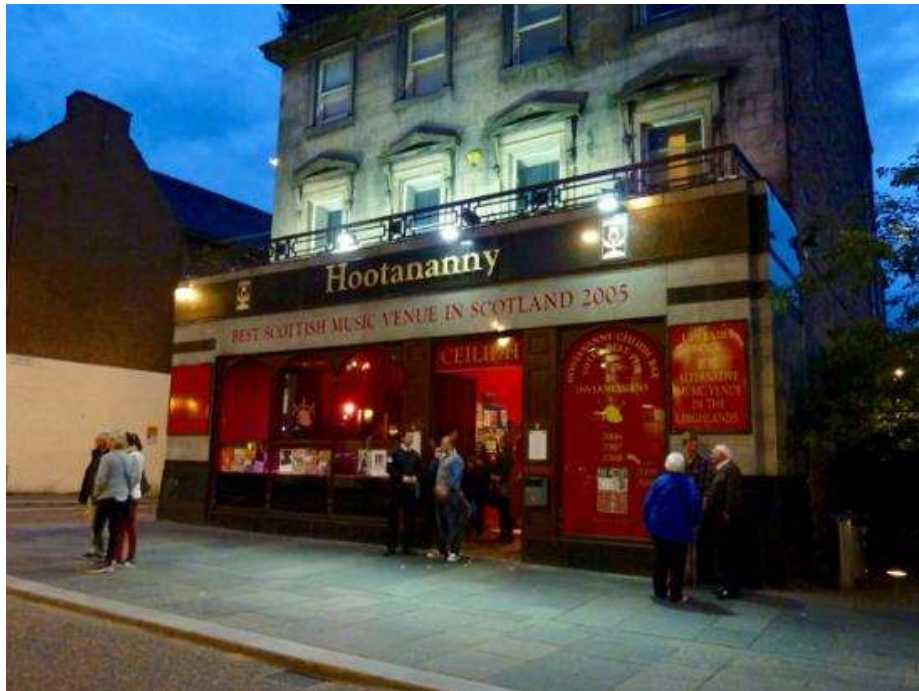
## BE A CLAN KERR “CONVENER”

Any of our members who are interested in being a Convener for your state or area please refer to our Kerr Clan website: [www.clankerrus.com](http://www.clankerrus.com).

## LEARNING SCOTTISH?

Some 22,000 words are thought to exist in the old Scottish vocabulary. For those of us who are homesick and want to speak the words of our forefathers, consider the following: ***“I let fung at his lug an geed it a gweed doosht.”*** Some other useful words, if you plan to visit Scotland and impress the natives, could be.

Trintlet	small ball of sheep’s dung
Hame-drauchtit	I’m homesick
Dorbie	delicate
Croot	a puny child
Jeelie	to bleed
Skink	drink liquor
Laid	as much liquor as one can hold at one sitting
Inki pinki	a weak beer
Futtle	a useless instrument
Mismay	trouble



## NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA



Despite last year's fires, widespread immigrant problems and an ageing population, we are glad to hear that members of Clan Kerr "Down Under," are well, and not seriously challenged by Covid-19 so far this year. Walter Kerr, the Clan Chief in New South Wales (NSW), one of Australia's largest states, sent along their best wishes this August and hopes that we may meet here or there for a reunion sometime in the near future.

Walter informed us, that when arriving in NSW, one should look for their "Kerr Cairn" in their local park! As many of you might know, a **cairn** is a man-made

pile (or stack) of stones. While the word's origin is Gaelic for karn or kairn, the meaning is the same world-wide, usually demarking property, borders or distances.

Walter Kerr's Cairn is some eighteen feet high, six feet across, and consists of 1,800 stones and boulders cemented together. On its top is a twenty-foot flag pole with a ten-foot cross piece ... from which both the Australian and Scotland's Saltire are proudly flown. Walter and his wife Margaret, and clan Kerr volunteers in Roseland, spent most of 1999 building their cairn.



Walter Kerr wondered if he might find a Kerr Cairn here in the States if he visits one day? Looking at pictures of Walter's Kerr Cairn, we shall be hard pressed to erect one as beautiful as his in Australia.

The first two pictures below are forgotten cairns in the forests of Vermont, while the last with a lake in the background is at Fort Ann in New York, commemorating a Kerr military encounter with the British there in 1788.



## **THE KERR'S HERITAGE CORNER**

### **WHY ARE THERE SO MANY KERRS OF SCOTS-IRISH DESCENT IN AMERICA?**

#### ***It's the "The Ulster Syndrome"!***

Our Summer issue of 2020, addressed a troubled era of 403 years along Scotland's border with England. Like the Romans earlier, the English also had trouble pacifying the unruly Scottish border area. In 1457, England decided to hold border area chiefs responsible for the behavior of their wild and unruly clansmen. England created a system known as the "Lords of the Marches." These were five individual Scots from prominent families just north and south of the border. During the 403 years the system existed, nine prominent Kerrs were appointed Lords of the March in the area today known as Lothian. The Kerrs who served spanned a cumulative 63 years, while other border area Clan leaders nearby served the rest of the time. Who these Kerrs were, and the years of their service, was provided on page 11 of our summer 2020 newsletter.

Further complicating these Lords of the Marches' service was the never-ending British military armies that invaded Scotland and fanned the hatred of the Borderland Clans against both the British and their local Clan chiefs who enforced British law. The last Kerr who was "Lord of the March" for seven years through 1591, was Sir Thomas Ker of Ferniehirst. Shortly after he left office, the English were finally losing patience with their rebellious Scottish neighbors.

The system was disbanded when King James VI of Scotland became the first King of both England and Scotland. In 1603, when he immediately acquired some eight thousand square miles of Northern Ireland's district known as Ulster. James then ordered all of Ulster's Roman Catholics to be sent to southern Ireland. Ulster was declared a 'Great Plantation,' for newly arriving borderland Scots, most of whom were crofters, who did not own any land and lived as tenant farmers. They could acquire parcels of 1,000 or 1,500 to 2,000 acres in Ulster. However, they had to remain on the land and work it and pay rental fees. They could not marry Catholics from the south, they could not adopt Irish customs, and they could not employ Catholics to help work their lands. For these Scottish refugees, Scotland's Lion Rampant and Saltire meant little.

In the following decades, England deported tens of thousands of troublesome Scottish borderland clansmen to Ulster, and Kerrs were among the early arrivals. The name is still common today in Ulster's districts of Dawn, Antrim and Armagh. Most new arrivals, penniless and without hope, too often resorted to their old Border Reiver traditions and left for North America. With the onset of the "Jacobite" problem in Scotland in 1688, and later during the "Land Clearances" that followed, Borderlanders and Highlanders fleeing Scotland through nearby Ulster reached epidemic proportions.



## **THE SYMBOLS OF ALBA**

### **SCOTLAND'S LION RAMPANT FLAG – THE ROYAL STANDARD**

“Nemo me impune Lacessit,” or, “no one attacks me with impunity.” History records that King William ruled Scotland for some 50 years between 1165 to 1214, and was known as “William the Lion.” In that era, Scots had no clear national banner which they used in battle. William adopted the heraldic device we see everywhere in Scotland today, a red lion on a yellow background with three of its four feet raised.



### **THE SALTIRE**



In the year 832, an army of Picts and Scots, then commanded by King Alba, also known as Angus mac Fergus, led his army into the area around Edinburgh, then known as Lothian. Alba's army was surrounded by a larger army of Angles and Saxons and was about to be defeated. Alba prayed for deliverance and a divine sign. In the clear blue sky above a white cross like that of Saint Andrew appeared. King Alba swore Saint Andrew would

become the patron Saint of Scotland if Alba prevailed. He did prevail and the Saltire became Scotland's national flag.

### **SCOTLAND'S THISTLE**

Legend is that a group of Kerr warriors were encamped one night near the coast south of Edinburgh around the year 980. A Viking war party landed nearby and were approaching the Kerr's encampment in the dark when one of the Vikings stepped on a thistle and cried out in pain. Forewarned, the Vikings were defeated and the Kerrs decided to call this plant their “Guardian Thistle.” Today it is still a national symbol of Scotland.



### **SCOTLAND'S PHILABEG**



Scotland's Philabeg was an earlier term which preceded the era of Kilts. These were long pieces of cloth which were draped around the body. The latin word for Scotia appears in Roman histories of Britain in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and referred mainly to "Gael" (Gaelic-speaking people) who resided north of Hadrian's Wall. These Scotia leaders wore philabeg materials with colored bands to emphasize their rank and leadership. Their simplistic color variations continued for the next thousand years in Scotland, increasingly more colored variations appearing as time passed.

### **SCOTLAND'S BREACAN**

The Breacan, meaning partially colored or speckled, were patterns or setts used to identify a family, Clan, or regiment with which the individual was associated.

### **WHAT IS A "HOGMANAY"?**

Most will agree that it's a Scottish tradition of giving gifts and celebrating on the last day of the year. Its probable origin is from French for "Homme est ne," or "Man is born." But no true Scotsman would agree! Other derivations are a Scandinavian feast "Hoggo nott," or maybe Flemish for "Hoog min dag," for a big love day. It could also be an Anglo-Saxon word for "Haleg monath," and finally it just might be Gaelic for "Oge maiden." Take your pick! The Scottish Hogmanay tradition is the Eve of the New Year when celebrants wander through the streets crying "Hagmane" in loud voices. And when visiting with friends or neighbors you celebrate the arrival of a New Year with good food and the best whiskey.



Lord Lothian (pictured with his nephew, Johnnie, and members of the Priory of The Temple Church) is welcomed as an Associate Knight Templar of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (SMOTJ).

Non Nobis Domine Non Nobis

## **SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL ANTHEM**

The “Flower of Scotland,” its anthem, is a reminder to all people, who while fighting endlessly against oppression and cruel alternatives, only wanted to be left alone to exist peacefully on their small pieces of land, but could only do so by fighting for it. Centuries later it still has meaning for us here in America.

*“O flower of Scotland  
When will we see  
Your like again  
That fought and died for  
Your wee bit of Hill and Glen  
And stood against him.  
Proud Edward's Army  
And sent him homeward  
To think again.”*



## **REWRITING HISTORY?**

In the last issue some thought was given to the origins of the name “Kerr.” Earlier newsletters speculated about similar sounding words in other languages throughout history. The origins of language today are making tremendous strides. Krr in Hattic, for instance, with origins several thousand years ago in the area today known as Anatolia, meant dignity. Other Hattic words Kar precede other meanings: Kir-kheni is a fortress and Kar-kha is a siege. The encyclopedia of Islam also lists a host of location names from around the time of the Crusades in Syria, such as Ker-Bela, Kir-kuk, Ker-ch, Ker-ri ... and even Ker-man in nearby Persia. The search for the definitive origin of “Kerr” continues.

## **THE WEBMASTER'S CORNER**

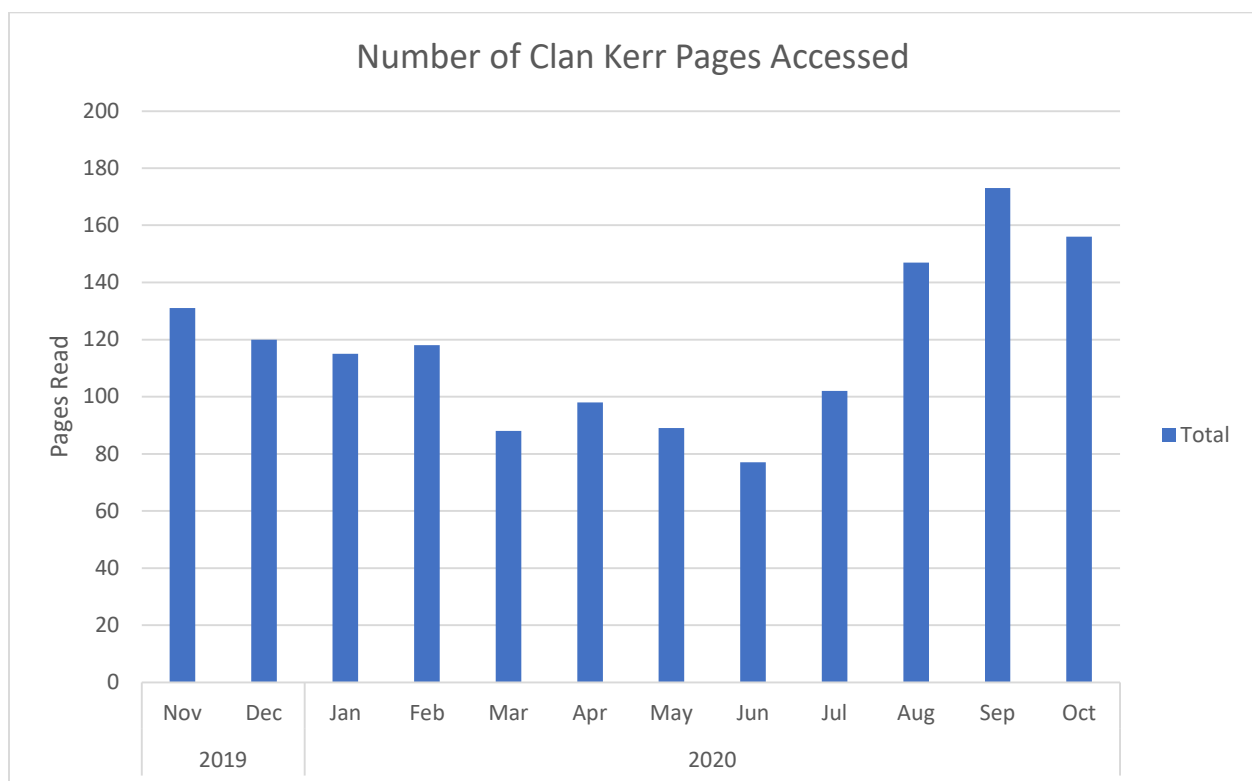
Well, we're still staying close to home and not being able to do the things that we love to do on a normal basis. We just had members of the Clan finally able to attend Highlands Games in Idaho! We're looking forward to next year and we will be updating the website when we get information of Games that are going to be held in 2021. We already know that one of the largest games held in January in the Orlando area is already cancelled for 2021. That is where the largest number of Kerrs come to have an enjoyable weekend celebrating our ancestors and our roots!



Thankfully, we have our computers and our internet access so we are able to find things to do to help pass the time. People have been using the time to look up their ancestry! In August, the Clan website was the 6<sup>th</sup> most popular family heritage site in the U.S! In the past year we have been in the top 20 search results for family heritage sites with over 1400 pages have been read by people going to the site!

Let's look at an analysis of hits on our website, [www.clankerr.org](http://www.clankerr.org). The data indicates that Clan Kerr has been one of the most active family heritage sites in the last few years.

Here are the page reads over the past year. It is interesting to note, that during the initial wave of COVID-19, from March to July activity was quieter than the other months. For some reason we have increased activity in the past three months!



And where are the people coming from that access our site and what terms are people using that end up finding the Clan website?

It is no coincidence most hits come from the United States where over 80% of the page accesses came from. It is interesting to note that the United Kingdom came in second, ahead of Canada.

I also included are the terms people enter into Google when they wish to find out more information about their heritage

Country	Pages
United States	1173
United Kingdom	97
Canada	72
Australia	36
New Zealand	14
Germany	6
South Africa	4
France	3
Denmark	3
India	2
Spain	2
Philippines	2
Netherlands	2
United Arab Emirates	2
Ireland	2
Singapore	2
Belgium	2
Switzerland	2

Search Terms	Pages
clan kerr	65
kerr clan	52
carr tartan	47
sero sed serio	24
clan kerr society	19
kerr family forum	18
clan carr	15
kerr hunting tartan	14
carr family tartan	14
kerr tartan	12
clan kerr tartan	12
kerr clan scotland	8
famous kerr	7
kerr family crest	7

*Slainte!*

*Bob Shepard*

*Clan Kerr Webmaster*

