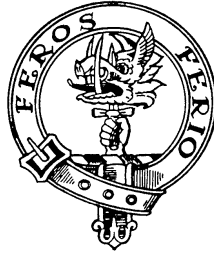
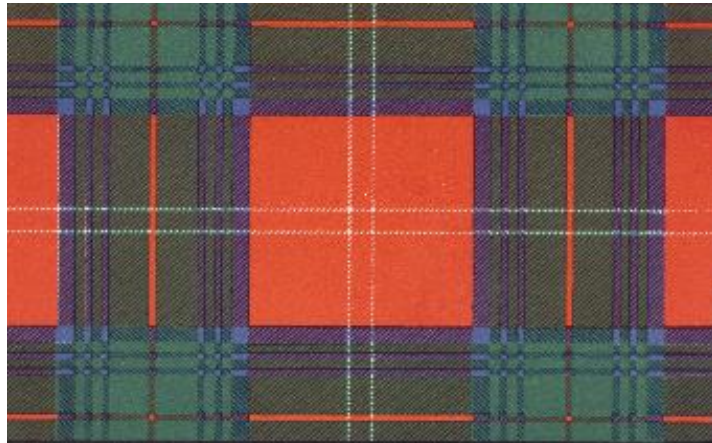


**CLAN CHISHOLM SOCIETY  
UK BRANCH**



An Cirean  
Cean Cinnidh



## Welcome to Issue No 75 -UK Branch Newsletter

Dear UK Branch members.

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and new year – it seems a very long time ago now. I thank all those who sent greetings cards, these are very welcome, it is good to hear folks news. Thank you also to those who pay subscription annually who have sent in their fees to cover 2024. Some members pay by standing order each year which is a good way not to forget, however we do have one or two members still paying at a very old rate of £6 per annum for over 60 subscription. Reminders have been sent but unfortunately we cannot continue to supply the annual Journal to these members. The cost of publishing the journal as well as postage costs continue to increase each year. The annual subscription for over 60 membership changed ten years ago to a still very modest £9.00.

Since the last newsletter I have been busy working on the plans for our July International Gathering. There have been lots of emails and telephone calls as well as visits to Inverness. The plans are nearly finalised with just a couple of details to confirm. I enclose the outline of the week with this newsletter together with a booking form for those wishing to join us. The booking form and gathering schedule has also been emailed to all members who have elected to receive information by that method. We have kept the cost of the gathering as low as possible and hope that many members will feel this is good value. I am pleased to report that many Chisholm's from around the world have already booked their flights and will be joining us in July. We very much look forward to greeting old friends from previous gatherings and meeting new. Your international Clan Chisholm Society held a Clan Council meeting in January to establish each branch representative on council as well as determine how many copies they require of the Annual Journal. Also determined is the branch assessment for each branch – this covers the total cost of running your International Society and includes the webhosting costs for our website and genealogy database as well as the on-line forum. The total of membership (households) submitted for 2024 was 441 with the UK having 112 households to support. Our contribution to the running costs of £260.00 is therefore just over £66.00. We have ordered 150 journals at £3.50 per copy which covers our requirements in respect of membership with some spares for the gathering and the highland games. Martin our Journal editor has produced another excellent volume this year which is due to go to print shortly. We are lucky to have so many well qualified volunteers within our Society. Don't forget if you have ideas for articles for the Journal or for our branch newsletter then please do send them in. Many members have interesting family history stories which it would be great to share.

Clan Council will sit again on 16<sup>th</sup> March to confirm details and approve the audited accounts for the Society. We send thanks to Mr Michael Sayers for his work on auditing these accounts both for the Society and for the UK Branch. The financial statements will be circulated in the Annual Report for the Society which will also be presented at the International AGM on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July in Inverness. The audited accounts for our UK branch are included in this newsletter. Publishing and posting the Annual Clan Chisholm Journal remains our largest expenditure although in 2023 we also reprinted two of our popular publications - Erchless Castle a Building History and Strathglass, Home of the Clan Chisholm both written by Dr Jean Munro.

The UK Branch AGM will be held electronically later in the year as although many of our members will be together in July we will be very busy with the gathering as well as the International annual general meeting. We were able to hold a physical meeting last year in Beaulieu and hope to do so again next year. Our next newsletter will be produced in May and before then I will be able to send out the 2024 Clan Chisholm Journal No. 67. Additionally the Annual Report for the Society for 2023 will be circulated once compiled. This contains reports for each branch as well as updates of projects and key activities of the Society eg Genealogy, history research, DNA etc.

Yours in clanship,  
Susan

## STRUY CHURCH – TO CLOSE

*Images from Strathglass Heritage Association*

Recently I was contacted regarding the proposed closure of this Church of Scotland building. Substantial financial cutbacks were being made in the Church of Scotland and many buildings were to be sold.

The enquirer was looking for the deeds to the property and wondered if there was a Chisholm or Fraser of Lovat link as most of the land in Struy would have belonged to these two families. The Church of Scotland Head Quarters in Edinburgh could not find the deeds, however after further consultation and enquiries a letter was found from the Church HQ dated 1981 where they confirmed they had the deeds. This prompted a further search in Edinburgh and they were found!



*Opening of Free Church at Struy on 1st September 1897*

The first pastor was the Rev. Colin MacKenzie (see also Fasnakyle Free Church) who carried on following the union that led to the building becoming part of the United Free Church in 1900. He was minister until his death in 1907.

September 3, 1897

THE

## OPENING OF NEW FREE CHURCH AT STRUY.

PROFESSOR BLAIKIE ON CHURCH  
ARCHITECTURE.

The new Free Church at Struy, Strathglass, was opened on Wednesday by Professor Blaikie, LL.D., and Rev. Murdo Mackenzie, Inverness. The church, which is one of three preaching stations, of which the Rev. Colin Mackenzie is the pastor—Fasnakyle and Guisachan being the others—was built in place of the old church at Mauld. The Mauld church was built shortly after the Disruption. Not only is it in a damp and unsuitable condition for public worship, but its situation is not nearly so central as the site of the church at Struy. The new church, designed by Messrs Ross & Macbeth, architects, Inverness, is a beautiful little building, seated to hold some 250 people. A pretty porch faces the road. On either side of the door is a handsome turret, and the whole is surmounted by a belfry. The interior is spacious and comfortable, with stained glass windows, handsome woodwork roof, and beautiful pulpit and seatings. The contractors were:—Joiner—William Macdonald, Struy; plasterer—G. Munro, Dingwall; plumber—Tolmie & Mackenzie, Dingwall; and painter and glazier—John Macdonald, Beaully. The church cost about £850, the site being provided by Lord Lovat. Mrs Blaikie was present at the opening service, and the ministers present were—Rev. Colin Mackenzie, pastor; Rev. D. Connell, clerk of the Presbytery; Rev. Murdo Mackenzie, Free North Church, Inverness; Rev. D. Gillies, Redcastle; Rev. Mr Bentinck, Kirkhill; Rev. Mr Fraser, E.C. minister of Erchless; Rev. Hector Mackenzie, Kiltarlity; Rev. J. R. Macrae, Beaully; Rev. Mr Connell, Regent Square, London; and Rev. Mr Mackay, Manchester. Apologies for absence were received from Rev. Allan Cameron, Inverness; Rev. A. Beaton, Urray; Rev. Mr Mackintosh, Rogart; and Rev. Mr Mackay, Glen-Urquhart. The church was well filled in every part. Mr and Mrs Grant, Erchless, and many others from all parts of the district were present.

Professor Blaikie took for his text the third verse of the ninth chapter of 1st Kings—“And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.” Professor Blaikie said that if the question were asked wherein lay the glory of a place of worship two answers might be given.

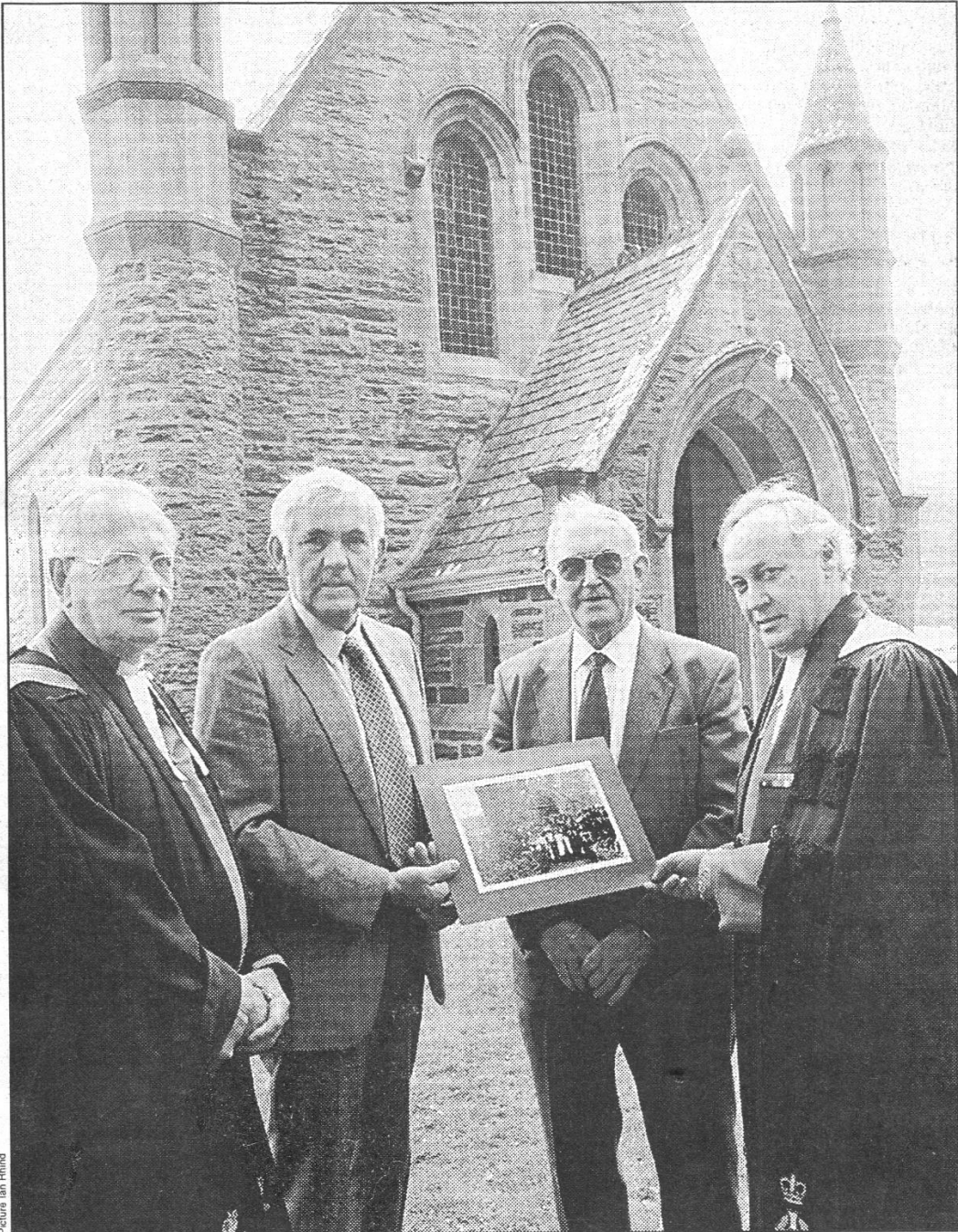
*The newspaper cutting shown left from the opening of the Church states that Lord Lovat donated the site.*

Since its opening in 1897 the building designed by Ross & MacBeth, Inverness, has served as a body of the Free Church of Scotland (1897-1900), the United Free Church of Scotland (1900-1929) and Church of Scotland (1929 – present).

It was initially built as a replacement for the Free Church at Mauld a short distance away on the opposite side of the River Glass. The Mauld church dated from just after the Disruption and was damp, in need of much repair, difficult to reach at times due to flooding and generally not regarded as a good location.

Struy Church can seat up to 250 people. Estimated building costs were between £500 and £600 but due to the adoption of more ‘artistic’ plans by the Building Committee the final cost was £800 14s 6p.

## Family ties feature in kirk centenary



Picture Ian Rhind

□ Looking back 100 years with a photograph of the opening of Struy Church are (left to right) Rev Ayton Fairweather, brothers John and William Gordon, and the Very Reverend James Harkness.

STRUY Kirk in Strathglass celebrated its 100th birthday yesterday, but the centenary service was held one day early when the Very Reverend James Harkness, former moderator of the Church of Scotland and chaplain general to the Army, took to the pulpit.

Making way for the day was usual minister Rev Ayton Fairweather, whose Kilmorack and Erchless

parish includes two other churches at Beauly and Cannich.

The church came into being thanks to a gift of land from the Chisholm family who owned an estate at Struy and replaced the nearby United Free church which had fallen into disrepair.

Although Struy Church now only holds services every other

Sunday, some members still have family ties with that first congregation of 100 years ago, including William and John Gordon, whose grandfather John was involved in the building of the church.

Other events to mark the centenary have included a flower show and a special service for people who were married or baptised in Struy Church.

*This newspaper article from 100 years later states the land was gifted by the Chisholm estate!*



*Map showing old Free Church and school at Mauld*

In 1929 the United Free Church reunited with the Church of Scotland at Erchless to form Erchless Church of Scotland. In 1979 the parish was combined with that of Kilmorack and became Kilmorack & Erchless Church of Scotland.



*Centenary service 1997*

The centenary of the church in 1997 was conducted by former Moderator of the Church of Scotland Reverend James Harkness together with the local minister Reverend Ayton Fairweather also responsible for the churches in Beauly and Cannich.

## BRITAINS BEST TOWN CRIER HANGS UP HIS BELL

*From various sources including BBC News and Daily Telegraph a story about Clan Chisholm Society member Alistair Chisholm of Dorchester*

### **A town is on the hunt for a replacement for its award-winning crier.**

Alistair Chisholm hung up his bell on New Year's Eve, having retired after spending 27 years in the role in Dorchester.



In his final cry, Mr Chisholm launched the search for his replacement, with Dorchester Town Council leading the recruitment.

Candidates need to write and perform their own cries, as well as attend all major civic events in the town.

The role of town crier dates back to medieval times when they would announce news and royal proclamations to a largely illiterate population.

A spokesperson for Dorchester Town Council said: "It is a nationally renowned position that serves an important function both in terms of promoting the town and its heritage. Many towns have lost this role, but Dorchester are keen to keep the wonderful tradition going."

People have been invited to apply with a letter to Dorchester Council explaining why they are suitable for the prestigious role by 12th February 2024.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to perform in a nearby public location before the successor is chosen.

The council spokesperson added that any candidates should have a good knowledge of local history, or be "prepared to learn".

Any new crier has big-shoes to fill, with Mr Chisholm winning the National Town Crier Championships on multiple occasions. In 2021 he was crowned national champion a record-equalling 11th time. In 1999 he came second in the Town Crier World Championships in Vancouver, Canada against 100 criers.

During his 27 years in the traditional role, he announced events such as the Coronation of Charles III and the 2012 Olympic torch relay.

On his retirement, he said it had been a "fun thing to do" and described how "wind" was the most important thing to achieve a good cry.

## CALEDONIAN PINE FORESTS

From BBC News Scotland and Trees For Life

### The search for Scotland's lost ice age pine woods



A new project is seeking out the locations of 'lost' last stands of Scotland's ancient native pine woods. Fragments of the once vast Caledonian forest are dotted across parts of Argyll, Highlands and Aberdeenshire.

Some of the Scots pines are descendants of trees that appeared at the end of the last ice age in Scotland about 11,000 years ago.

Trees for Life and Woodland Trust Scotland hopes the areas of trees they find could be saved and the woodlands restored.

Scots pine once formed a vast forest over much of Scotland 5,000 years ago. Competition for habitat from non-native tree species and overgrazing by deer and other animals are among today's threats to Scotland's native trees. The two charities said less than 2% of Caledonian forest survived, and 25-year-old records suggested there were about 80 places where the woodland existed.

But the conservationists said older documents - including maps from the 1500s - along with anecdotal reports pointed to the possibility of areas where there could be fragments of "forgotten" ancient woodland.

Trees for Life and Woodland Trust Scotland have created the Wild Pine Project to seek out and protect these areas. See [www.treesforlife.org.uk](http://www.treesforlife.org.uk)

#### Gaelic clues

Gaelic place-names offer clues to where the woodland could potentially be found.

Trees for Life said the Gaelic word for pine is 'giuthas', and the word could be found in the English language names for Kingussie and Dalguise.

The charity said historical Gaelic records could also provide key information.

One example of this is a description of Glenmoriston, where some fragments of Caledonian forest survives, as "the gentle Glenmoriston, where the dogs don't eat the candles". The reference relates to resin from Scots pine trees resin being used for making candles in preference to using animal fat.





*Left – a very old pine. Right – A dead wild Scots pine in an area of harvested commercial forestry*

The project has started its search in the western Highlands. Wild Pine Project officer Jane Sayers said: "Lost pinewoods are at particular risk because they are unrecognised and undocumented. We want to find them, assess their condition, and revive them before they are lost forever. Finding these pinewoods requires a lot of detective work. They are often small and remote, hidden in ravines safe from deer." She added: "Pines, or their remains, are often found scattered among birchwood too."

### **Granny pines**

The Caledonian Forest covered huge swathes of Scotland, and even reached the Western Isles and Shetland 5,000 years ago.

A change to a cooler and wetter climate, along with human activity, led to a decline in the forest's coverage. By the 1900s about 5% of Scotland's land area had woodland, according to Scottish government agency NatureScot. Scots pines can live for at least 500 years.

Trees more than 300 years old are known as "granny pines", and often have lots of dead wood that provides habitat for rare insects.



*An area of surviving Caledonian pinewood in the Highlands*

## OBITUARY NOTICES

*From various sources including Inverness Courier and Press & Journal*

### Alexandra (Aldra) Chisholm - Kirkhill

19.04.1941 – 05.01.2024



Peacefully at Raigmore Hospital on Friday, 5th January 2024 Alexandra Chisholm 'Aldra', née Mackenzie, Fernlea, Kirkhill, aged 82 years. Dearly loved wife of Archie, much-loved mum, mother-in-law, granny and a dear sister. Funeral service on Thursday, 18th January at 11.00am in the funeral home of William T Fraser and Son, Culduthel Road, Inverness; thereafter to Kilmorack Cemetery. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please. Donations, if so desired, for Dementia UK

Aldra with husband Archie joined the Clan Chisholm Society on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2003 although they had been along to Clan events for many years before that. Archie was born at Mullardoch in Glen Cannich. Archie and Aldra's son Duncan is the famous award winning fiddler who we have written about in our newsletters on many occasions.

Messages of sympathy have been sent to the family. Duncan Chisholm, Inverness past President of the Clan Chisholm Society who has known the family for many years attended the funeral service for Aldra who we hear was in the same class with him at school.



CHISHOLM - Peacefully, at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, on 15th December, 2023, Hazel Ann Scott Chisholm (nee Riddoch), aged 87 years, Stonehaven, late of Munloch.

Beloved wife of Archie Chisholm, a loving mum, nana, great-nana, sister, aunt and mother-in-law. The funeral service was held on Friday, 5th January, 2024.

## OBITUARY NOTICES – CONTINUED

FRASER - Peacefully, on Monday, 25th December, 2023, after one day at the Highland Hospice, Alastair Fraser (Addie), Inchully Cottage, Cannich, aged 67 years. Gamekeeper and Water Bailiff. Much-loved husband of Morag, adored father to Steven and Greg, grandfather to Charlie and Isla. A sad miss to so many good friends. Funeral service on Wednesday, 10th January, 2024, at 11.30am, in the funeral home of William T. Fraser and Son, Culduthel Road, Inverness; thereafter to Eskadale Burial Ground. A warm invitation to all, tweeds, kilts, casual dress preferred.



CHISHOLM - Suddenly but peacefully, at Raigmore Hospital, on Saturday, 25th November, 2023, Christine Ann Chisholm (nee Bagley), 62 Carnarc Crescent, Inverness, aged 70 years. Active patron of the community. Dearly loved mum of Robert, Charlene and Neil, very devoted gran of eleven, a dear sister and mother-in-law. Funeral service on Tuesday, 12th December, at 12 noon, at Inverness Crematorium.



CHISHOLM - Eric Hugh aged 101 years after a short illness. Born 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1922 – died 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Eric had a long career as an NHS Dental Surgeon. He was proud to help his community and served as a local Magistrate for many years. Son of John and Nellie Chisholm, he was the beloved husband of the late Gladys Chisholm, Father of Anne and David, Grandad to Lauren, Jonny, James, Peter and Kirsty. He was much loved also by his son-in-law and grandson-in-law, Bob and Adam, his sister in law Joan Price and his nephews and nieces: Philip, Steven, Christine, Gill and Andy. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends who are thankful for his long and happy life. Funeral Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Middleton Crematorium, Manchester.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – UK BRANCH

1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

### PROFIT & LOSS

#### Income

Membership subscriptions	433.00
Life Member Journal Contributions	101.00
Sales	15.00
Donations	748.00
	<b>£1,297.00</b>

#### Expenditure

UK Branch – International Assessment	59.37
UK Branch – Clan Chisholm Journals	490.00
Postage & Stationery	361.30
Literature purchase/reprints	563.00
AGM/ Gathering/ Highland Games	188.75
Membership AHCS /Table at Highland Games	25.00
	<b>£1,687.42</b>

Income less Expenditure - £390.42

### BALANCE SHEET

Current Assets		Totals	
Bank – Natwest Current Account		<b>£11,622.78</b>	
Bank balance at 31 Dec 2022	12,013.20	Expenditure 2023	1,687.42
Income 2023	<u>1,297.00</u>	Bank balance 31 Dec 2023	<u>11,622.78</u>
	13,310.20		13,310.20
<b>Balance at 31 December 2022</b>			<b>£12,013.20</b>
<b>Income less expenditure</b>			<b>- £390.42</b>
<b>Balance at 31 December 2023</b>			<b>£11,622.78</b>

SCC 16/01/2024

Audited - Michael Sayers, 16th February 2024

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*A reminder that Annual Subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> January each year. Thank you to all who continue to support the Society with their regular subscriptions and a huge thank you to members who add a donation to funds – you are helping to ensure that our Society and all it stands for continues.*

***Please Note:** If your payment is by standing order with your bank could you please **check that the amount is correct.** Some of these arrangements were set up some years ago and are now too little to cover our costs.*

*Current subscription rates are shown below and are usually found in our branch newsletters. NB. Subscription rates have not been raised since 2013.*

Payment by cheque (or PO) to:- 'Clan Chisholm Society - UK Branch'

and sent to Hon Secretary/Treasurer, Susan Chisholm

Or a bank transfer may be made to our bank - Natwest, Bury St Edmunds –  
sort code 60-04-16, a/c 30250633. (IBAN GB55 NWBK 6004 1630 2506 33)

If you elect to pay by bank transfer please let me (Susan) know.

For **Life Members** who wish to continue to receive the Annual Clan Chisholm Journal - a payment of **£5.00** per annum is requested to help cover the cost of publication and postage. NB. Life membership ceased to be offered after 1996.

*There is no charge for branch newsletters which are produced 3 - 4 times a year.*

Annual membership - £12.00

Annual over 60 - £9.00

10 year membership - £65.00

10 year Family membership - £74.00

I try to send a reminder if a member is overdue in subscription payment. If you are unsure, then the year last covered by a subscription payment is usually shown on the address label with newsletters and other mail which I send to some members. For those receiving information electronically please do email me. If you have any other queries please do get in touch.

*Susan*

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Visit the clan society website at [www.ClanChisholmSociety.org](http://www.ClanChisholmSociety.org)