



THE HUNTER'S HORN

CLAN NEWSLETTER • ISSUE #10 • FEBRUARY 2015



MEL'S MESSAGE

Thanks to members who donated your time and other resources to Clan Hunter USA, 2014 was a successful year. We sent over \$3,000 to Scotland to help support Hunterston Castle. Many of our members attended the international gathering at Hunterston. We were represented at twelve Scottish festivals throughout the US, and had the privilege of welcoming over seventy new members.

Throughout the history of Scotland, its people have been willing to serve valiantly in defense of their country, including many members of the Hunter Family. In 1263, a contingent of Hunters helped defeat the Norse army that invaded Scotland's Western Isles, and the Ayrshire coast. John Hunter, 14th Laird of Hunterston, was killed at the Battle of Flodden in September, 1513, and his grandson Kentigern (Mungo) Hunter, 16th Laird, was killed at the battle of Pinkie in September, 1547. The 27th Laird, Aylmer Gould Hunter-Weston, a Lieutenant General, had a distinguished military career.

Many members of the Hunter Family have gallantly served in the US military. Clan Hunter member, Ric Hunter, a retired Air Force colonel, and fighter pilot, served our country for 35 years, his father for 30 years, and his daughter, an active member of the Air Force, has 17 years of service. Forty years ago this April, Ric flew air cover for the chaotic evacuation of South Vietnam's capitol, Saigon. His account of that day is included in his Pulitzer nominated novel, *FIREHAMMER*, which is available on Amazon, and in the below article, *Bonfire Saigon*. This article provides an excellent example of what members of our military experience in defense of our nation's interests. Thank you, active members of our military, and veterans, for serving our country!

– Mel Hunter

BONFIRE SAIGON

By Ric Hunter

After 15 years of fighting North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, the US was withdrawing its forces. Within two years the North Vietnamese defeated the Republic of Vietnam forces in the south and were poised to take the capital as the last spoil of war. Planned as an orderly evacuation of Americans, it rapidly became a scene of unimaginable chaos.



Ric Hunter

Ten helicopters, full-burdened with human cargo, desperate, ditched into the sea next to the US amphibious command ship Blue Ridge; there was no more room to land. A single ship, the USNS Greenville Victory picked up 10,000 refugees from fishing boats off the coast of Saigon. South Vietnamese pilots crammed their families into military aircraft, flew west and landed them in Cambodia and Thailand. Vietnamese clung to landing gear of departing transport aircraft and were crushed in its mechanism as gear retracted. American newsmen clawed their way atop the US embassy walls beating back Vietnamese trying to cling to them. Some people held up their children, begging Americans to take them. The loss of three million Vietnamese and more than 58,000 Americans was culminating in a chaotic evacuation of historic magnitude.

Forces in Thailand, some 500 miles away, had the only US fighter aircraft left in Southeast Asia. We had been ready for two weeks. . . . We arose in the dead of night, ate a high protein breakfast and began intelligence and target area briefings shortly after midnight. The target area was Saigon, and my mission would be to strike the North Vietnamese Army with 500-lb bombs.

April 30th, 1975, found me totally asleep after another all night prep to launch. My phone sounded like a claxon and announced a base-wide recall to duty stations. My pulse raced as I realized this could be the day I finally saw combat. Little did I suspect that just like this screwed-up war, this would be the most screwed-up day of my life.

continued on page 2

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www.clanhunterusa.org
1. Click on news and events
2. Click on the newsletter you wish to view

BONFIRE SAIGON *(continued from page 1)*

I had just enough experience in the F-4 Phantom to be dangerous. I wondered if everything had changed with this recall.

Intelligence briefings showed the North Vietnamese continued to ring Saigon with more and more surface to air missiles, or SAMs, and anti-aircraft artillery, which we called "triple A". Saigon had been transformed into another heavily defended "Hanoi" right before our eyes. We had lost this god-forsaken war.

I then stepped through the doorway of the squadron and into pandemonium. The operations desk was surrounded by pilots and navigators copying down changes in missions. Shouts echoed down the halls: "Get your stuff together and let's go to war!" I spotted my backseater, in g-suit and survival vest, racing out the door. "The whole thing's changed," he shot. "They paired me with another pilot a few minutes ago and told us to step to the jets. The evacuation decision was supposed to be made during the night so we could be sequenced to get airborne with hundreds of other aircraft in Thailand. However, carefully laid plans went up in smoke as the evacuation decision was delayed too long. Most of the forces stood down from launch status, and now we were scrambling to accomplish the mission anyway. As I signed for my jet, the operations officer said, "You're on a Hunter-killer mission now." "Hunter-killer?" I croaked, "I've been briefing strike for two weeks, and now I'm flying Hunter-killer?" "Here comes your Weasel," The ops "o" said. (The hunter aircraft, or "weasel" marked the enemy surface-to-air missile (SAMs) or anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) sites with a smoke missile and the "Killer" my role was to take it out with cluster-bombs).

"Let's go, we have to step to our jets. I'll brief you enroute to Saigon," the Weasel pilot said. The scream of J-79 engines was deafening on the flight line. Weapons carts loaded with bombs and air-to-air missiles scooted from one protected revetment to the other. Pilots hustled around their jets with a sense of urgency. The kerosene smell of JP-4 exhaust hung everywhere. Walking toward my waiting jet, I had to agree that "Rhino" was a good nickname for this beast. With its wing tips bent up, the horizontal tails bent down and it's nose sloped toward the ground it looked like a rhino ready to charge. It was hung with four mean-looking cluster bomb units (CBUs) that looked like trash cans on steroids. Within each CBU were hundreds of small bomblets that would shred or eviscerate anything or anyone in its path.

We joined in the air with KC-135 tankers and took on fuel near the border between Thailand and Laos. Departing the tanker, we flew straight for Saigon, 375 miles with enemy concentrations scattered along our route.

"Okay, we're crossing the fence, let's green'em up, (arm all weapons)" the Weasel radioed from the lead aircraft. The "fence" was the Mekong River, which meant we were now in bad-guy territory. Flipping the master arm switch to arm made the armament panel "green up" to show our missiles and bombs were poised for combat. Re-checking all armament switches kept my mind off the fact that we were headed directly at the enemy's strongest concentration, Saigon.

Rattlesnakes and red strobes on the threat receiver. I asked my backseater to quit running checks. "We're across the fence now!," I said. "Arghhh," was all he could say. That was enough. The lock-on was real. There should be a SAM in flight tracking us. "Roger!" I said, pushing the nose down, then banking hard left to put the threat strobe at our two o'clock position. Frantically, I searched for telltale SAM smoke while my Phantom quickly passed 500 knots in a dive. I thought, should I jettison these bombs and get ready to engage the missile? Nothing coming, we kept the ordnance figuring the enemy was tricking us.

We continued southeast, and I began to look down at this country that had been the focal point of so much world attention. Nearly every crossroads was on fire from ground action. Smoke and devastation stretched from horizon to horizon as we approached Saigon. I searched north of the city through the pall of smoke to find Bien Hoa Air Base. My father, Lt/Col Cedric Hunter, had spent a year there fighting the Viet Cong. The base was nearly obscured, but I finally spotted it. I could see artillery exchanges between North Vietnamese regulars and what remained of South Vietnamese troops. All the effort to establish and defend the base was clearly for naught. I watched helplessly as it became property of Ho Chi Minh. From our altitude of 21,000 feet, Saigon looked like a vast besieged bastion--a giant bonfire....

The fuel gauge shocked me back to reality. We needed gas! That meant finding our tanker aircraft off the coast of South Vietnam. There would be none--the "fog of war" had made them unreachable. It was a long way back across hostile territory and F-4s like to drink gas. I looked back to the west, the way we'd have to go to get home, only to see a line of thunderstorms that resembled the Great Wall of China.

My first combat mission and we're not going to engage? Circling off the coast of South Vietnam, we rolled out on a northwesterly heading back to Thailand. Our first mistake was retaining the ordnance we should have jettisoned at sea. "We've got fifteen minutes of fuel left and 25 minutes flying time to base," my backseater announced.

We had to clean the jet off, jettison everything that wasn't needed. I looked under me as I rolled up on one wing; it was a sea of dark green jungle below. I

hit the jettison button and nothing happened. The jet should have jumped with the weight of two Cadillac's shed from its wings. My thought was, this is a screwed up jet, just like this screwed up war! I finally got rid of the ordnance by "bombing" them off as if against the enemy. The thought of being the last prisoners of this war, razor-focused me on the task at hand as I stared at the ever decreasing fuel gauge. Panic began to work its way up my throat.

"Get a grip!", I said aloud, then radioed our distress to the world. We were emergency fuel over the middle of Cambodia, and told our leader we had about six minutes of fuel left. About that time a miracle began to unfold. Tanker aircraft were not supposed to cross the fence, but one did. It flew deep into bad-guy territory to give us fuel. Our thirsty Phantom had very few minutes left when we plugged. As the jet got heavier unloading fuel, I said a silent prayer of thanks to God for allowing me to be his co-pilot.

That night at the Officer's Club, my mind drifted to thoughts of home, my pregnant wife and my folks. They were half-way around the world in Mobile, Alabama. I imagined their day had been typical. None of them knew what kind of day this had been in Southeast Asia. We knew we were witness to the end of an era of traumatic conflict for the Vietnamese and American people. Both countries had expended lives and national wealth beyond imagination.

HUNTERSTON HAPPENINGS

by Donna Hunter

Still available! Mail a check for \$15 each + \$5 (to cover shipping for up to 3 copies) made out to

**Clan Hunter USA
to
Pat Hunter
24370 Bay Forest Drive
Foley, AL 36535-9060**

*You will enjoy this beautifully illustrated book,
and it would make wonderful Christmas gifts!*

*The books have been donated to Clan Hunter USA,
and the organization will retain all the proceeds.*

Thanks again, Donna!

CLAN HUNTER TARTAN IS NOW AVAILABLE! (HUNTER OF HUNTERSTON)

Medium weight, 13 ounce, Clan Hunter Tartan (Hunter of Hunterston) is now available for purchase from the Clan Hunter Shop at Hunterston Castle. The fabric is 57 inches wide and is sold by the meter.

For additional information and ordering, contact the Clan Hunter mail order service at:
clanhunter.org.uk

CLAN HUNTER TARTAN

There have been three tartans associated with the Hunter Family:

1. The Hunter, Russell, Mitchell, Galbraith tartan shared by the four families.
2. The Hunters of Bute tartan. A group of Hunters sought allegiance from the Stewarts at one time. Bute is very close to Hunterston.
3. The Hunters of Peeblesshire tartan. An old branch of the family.

The clan chief decided that we should have our own Clan Tartan, and in 1981 he appointed Capt. T. Stuart Davidson, the original founder of the Scottish Tartan Society, as tartan consultant to Clan Hunter.

After two years of extensive research and study, a new sett was completed. This has been named the "Hunter of Hunterston Sett" to separate it from the other Hunter tartans. It is more commonly known as "The Clan Hunter Tartan."

The sett or design was carefully chosen to incorporate a close relationship with the Clan history: a predominately green hunting ground colour, with narrow gold (Yellow) and red stripes representing colours from our Chief's coat of arms. The yellow stripe indicates the royal appointment as huntman to the king.

The Clan holds an international trade registration patent on the design of the Clan tartan. Proceeds from the sale of the cloth and manufactured items are directed into the Hunterston Castle Fund. The tartan has been registered with the Lord Lyon.

– Former Clan Chief, Neil Aylmer Hunter

Taken from a Clan Hunter Association Publication
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STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES

Clan Hunter, USA was well represented at The 2014 Stone Mountain 42nd annual Highland Games on Oct. 17-19. Greg Slaton and I hosted the Clan Hunter tent on a beautiful fall weekend in the wooded setting at Stone Mountain Park near Atlanta. We had probably our most successful games with over 60 people signing in at our tent. Our US president, Mel Hunter, and his wife, Pat, attended along with many other clan members from Alabama. Past president, Ron Hunter, and his wife, Vi, also attended the event on Saturday. Members from as far away as Michigan and Illinois came to enjoy the events along with us. While we didn't win "Best Tent", we think we had the best-looking tent we've ever had.

Please welcome new members who joined at the games, Martin & Tanya Hunter, Michael & Maureen Hunter from Georgia, and Jill Stephen, from Alabama.

Our group of 15 members looked sharp as we marched in The Parade of Tartans on Sunday.

At the games, several members told me that they had DNA testing with success. If you want to take genealogy tracing to the next level, consider DNA testing at familyreedna.com.

Greg and I hope to see you this year on the 3rd weekend of Oct. (Oct. 16-18) at the Stone Mountain Games. Come and help us celebrate our family heritage, and bring your children with you! We always have chairs, snacks, & drinks at the tent to share.

– Brad Hunter, Treasurer, Clan Hunter USA

THREE WESTERN NEW YORK CELTIC FESTIVALS

The 1st festival I hosted in 2014 was the 2nd annual Allegany Celtic Festival on June 1 at the old Belmont Central School athletic field in Belmont, NY. We were one of only 4 clans represented.



Bill And Contingent Of Hunters Are Battle Ready

Second came the 9th annual Jamestown Regional Celtic Festival at the Mayville town park on the shore of Chatauqua Lake. Helping me represent Clan Hunter were my son, Bill, his wife, Miranda, and their children, Ellie & Liam, daughter, Kathy, with her sons Lane, Cody, Tyler, & Mason, son, David, his wife Monique, along with Jay Hunter Bradway.

Lastly was the 14th annual Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival held at Krull Park, Olcott Beach on the shore of Lake Ontario. My son and daughter-in-law, Bill & Monique represented Clan Hunter USA.

A two-volume history of the Highlands, Highland Clans and Regiments published in Edinburgh in 1875, and brought to America by my grandfather, William Hunter, generated a great deal of interest from many of the clan representatives.

– Bill Hunter



Ready to March



Parade of Tartans



**Henry and
George Hunter**



**Sophia and
Anneliese Stephen**



CHARLESTON SCOTTISH GAMES



Carl Hunter, Jill & Scott Powell

We were excited to host the Clan Hunter tent again at the Boone Hall Plantation for the annual games in Mt. Pleasant, SC, on Sept. 20, 2014. It was an unusually mild day for Charleston. It had rained

buckets the day before, and a small cold front moved through to make it a most beautiful and tolerable day. We have experienced temps in the 90s before, so a day with highs in the 70s in Sept. was wonderful!

The crowd was brisk, and the athletic games most enjoyable. We also appreciated the friendship forged with Clan MacFarlane again as we have been situated beside them for the past several years. However, we were disappointed not to have any Hunters stop by the tent this year. Last year we had several stop by, and two of them were from Scotland!

All in all, the games were wonderful, and it was a great time to enjoy the traditions of our beloved Scotland!

We would love to have you join us this Sept. at Boone Hall!

– **Jill Hunter Powell**

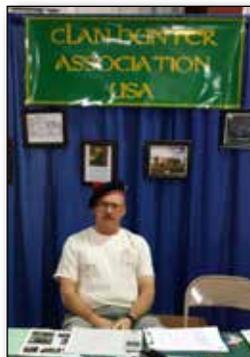
THE ABERDEEN CELTIC FAIRE

The Celtic Faire in Aberdeen, SD, on Sept. 20-21, 2014, was a very fun event! I got to meet a lot of good people visiting the event, and some very helpful folks from other clans who had booths set up there as well. There were more than a few people asking if I could help them find their clan. I tried to help them as much as I could and explained that we weren't hunters of clans, but a family group of people with the last name of Hunter. I enjoyed watching the athletic contests held on the grounds as well as seeing the livestock from Celtic regions that was on display.

I look forward to hosting the event again this Sept. 19-20, and am trying to get information about the Celtic Festival in Fargo, ND, sometime this spring. I was able to get membership applications to a couple of people and sold one of Donna Hunter's books, *Hunterston Happenings*.

Plan to come and enjoy the festival with me in September.

– **Randy Knight**



Randy Knight

THE 2014 CHRISTMAS WALK

A cold, rainy forecast literally dampened the parade, but damp weather never stopped a Scot from marching! The Annual Christmas Walk was held on December 5th, and Clan Hunter members were on hand to celebrate.

We began the day at a memorial service for William Hunter, the founder of the St. Andrew Society of Alexandria. This was an opportunity to feel a part of history at the Presbyterian Meeting House where so many of Virginia's founders worshipped.



John & Bill Hunter in Background, Michelle Hyson, Bob Bouchard, Andrea Kennedy, Matthew Hyson & Ed Kennedy

We then took to the streets with other clans, dog lovers, reenactors, pipe bands, and Santa. Thankfully, the rain held off until the parade was over and we were rolling up the Clan Flag.

Next year, we hope you will join our ranks. With Scotch tasting, breakfast with Santa for the children, a tour of Alexandria's most beautiful homes bedecked for Christmas, and a general air of anticipation and excitement, it's the perfect way to begin a holiday you will always remember.

– **Virginia Hunter Bouchard**

CELTIC HOLIDAY DINNER

Bruce And Debbie Hunter represented Clan Hunter at the Celtic Holiday Dinner at the Children's Museum of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The dinner was a fund raiser for the museum. There was music by the Knoxville Pipes and Drums, the Good Thymes Ceilidh Band, and dancing. Dinner was prepared and served by the Scottish Cottage, a caterer from Ashville, North Carolina, that specializes in Scottish food.



Debbie & Bruce Hunter

– **Debbie Hunter**

CLAN HUNTER COMING EVENTS!



OHIO SCOTTISH GAMES

Wellington, OH
June 26 – 27, 2015
Host: Dave Brest
www.ohioscottishgames.com

UTAH SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

Lehi, Utah
June 12 – 13, 2015
Hosts: Jonathan & Karlie Alldredge
www.utahscots.org

PAYSON SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

Payson, Utah
July 10 – 11, 2015
Hosts: Jonathan & Karlie Alldredge
www.paysonscottishfestival.org

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES

Linville, NC
July 9 – 12, 2015
Host: Greg Slaton
www.GMHG.org

LONGS PEAK SCOTTISH/IRISH FESTIVAL

Estes Park, CO
Sept. 10 – 13, 2015
Host: Dr. Denis Hunter
www.scotfest.com

NIAGARA CELTIC FESTIVAL & HIGHLAND GAMES

Krull Park; Olcott Beach, NY
Sept. 19 – 20, 2015
Host: William Hunter
www.niagaraceltic.com

CELTIC FAIRE AND GAMES

Aberdeen, SD
Sept. 19 – 20, 2015
Host: Randy Knight
www.nesdcelticfaire.com

CHARLESTON SCOTTISH GAMES

Boone Hall Plantation
Sept. 19, 2015
Hosts: Jill & Scott Powell & Carl Hunter
www.charlestonscots.org

LIGONIER HIGHLAND GAMES

Ligonier, Pennsylvania
Sept. 26, 2015
Hostess: Virginia Hunter Bouchard
www.ligonierhighlandgames.org

STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES

Stone Mtn., GA (Atlanta area)
Oct. 16 – 18, 2015
Hosts: Brad Hunter & Greg Slaton
www.smhg.org

ALEXANDRIA SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS WALK

Alexandria, VA
Dec. 4 – 5, 2015
Host: Virginia Hunter Bouchard
www.scottishchristmaswalk.org

**NEW MEMBERS
SEPT., 2014 - JAN., 2015**

**CEUD MILE FAILTE
(100,000 WELCOMES)**

James & Emily Hunter
Montrose, AL

Ronald Hunter
Hay Springs, NE

Jill Stephen
Vestavia Hills, AL

Michael & Maureen Hunter
Acworth, GA

Martin & Tanya Hunter
Atlanta, GA

Ron & Vi Hunter
Winder, GA

Ellen Hunter Dudley
Seaford, VA

Melinda Cravens
Carmel, IN

Martha St. Clair
Greenwood, IN

Jeffrey & Susan Bugbee
San Diego, CA

Estalee Branson
Gillham, AR

James Branson
Casscoe, AR

Virginia Kinsinger
Summit, MS

Suzanne Satterfield
Taylorsville, UT

Larry & Pamela Hill
Beaulaville, NC

Lorna Podvin
Rochester, MN

Kent & Amy Hunter
Carrollton, GA

CORRECTION:

Aidan Jeffrey
Brunswick, OH

Aidan's name was incorrectly spelled and his home state was incorrect in the last issue. Our sincere apologies!



Richard Killam, husband of member, Sheri Killam, and resident of Jackson, GA, died in March 2014. We were so sorry to learn of his death, and offer our sincere condolences to his family.

Elizabeth Hunter, wife of **Robert Douglas Hunter**, informed us of his death on August 14th of last year. She says that he enjoyed reading *The Hunters Horn*. We are thinking of his family as they mourn his passing.

Paul Albert Hunter of Newport News died on September 10, 2014. He was an airplane pilot, a sailor in the Langley Yatch Club, and an accomplished musician. He is survived by his daughters, Ellen Hunter Dudley, Louisa Harrison Coons, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. This very lively and accomplished man will be missed by his family and friends.

Those of you who have stayed at Whittlieburn Farm B&B in Largs, Ayrshire, during the gatherings at Hunterston will be saddened to learn of **Tom Watson's** passing last December. Tom was a sheep farmer and a wonderful host assisting his wife, Mary, in her operation of the B&B.

Tom was a kind and gentle man, and he will be sorely missed.



CLAN HUNTER USA TREASURER REPORT

Beginning Balance 06/30/2014..... \$ 22,023

Cash Receipts 1,072

Cash Disbursements:

Hunterston Castle Preservation.....(3,173)

Newsletters, Postage, New

Member Packets, Supplies.....(1,663)

Highland Games.....(715)

Website(279)

Ending Balance 12/31/2014..... \$ 17,265

For those representing Clan Hunter USA at Highland Games, you can deduct all of your out-of-pocket expenses such as meals, lodging, travel, and sponsorship fees on your tax return as charitable contributions since Clan Hunter USA is a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization.

Please send in your 2015 annual dues of \$25 if you haven't already. You can also pay online at clanhunterusa.org. Many members are no longer receiving newsletters because they haven't paid their annual dues in several years.

Please email me at bradhuntercpa@gmail.com if you have any suggestions for improvements on the Clan Hunter website at clanhunterusa.org.

NEW ADDRESS?

If your mailing address changes, **please** make it a priority to inform us so that you won't miss an issue of *The Hunter's Horn!* If you are SNOWBIRDS, please notify us of your winter and summer addresses. When contacting us about address changes, please give us your old and new addresses. Sometimes there are several members with the same name! Just email us at melandpat@gulftel.com or call us at 251-971-2881, and we will change your address (es) on our roll. It will only take a few minutes, and we will be able to keep our roster current.

Thanks so much!

Pat Hunter, Secretary, Clan Hunter USA



FUTURE NEW MEMBER

Jonathan & Karlie Alldredge are the proud parents of their first baby, **Clara Margaret Hunter Alldredge**, who was born on November 22, 2014. You can tell by her smile that she so happy to be a part of the family! Johnathan and Karlie represent Clan Hunter at two Scottish festivals in Utah. We appreciate them so much!



IN HONOR OF BURN'S NIGHT

Queen Elizabeth is touring a new Scottish hospital and approaches the bedside of a patient. She asks him "What are you in hospital for?" and he says "Fair fa your honest sonsie face, great chieftain o' the puddin' race."

Puzzled, she moves on to the next bed. "And what brings you to the hospital?" Patient answers, "My love is like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June."

Finally the Queen goes to a third patient, who says "Wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie, oh what a panic's in thy breastie."

Completely lost, she turns to a doctor asks "Is this the psychiatric ward?"

"No, it's the Burns unit."