

CLANN NA ASKETILL  
Descendants of Asketil  
The MacAskill Sept Society



Summer 2020  
Newsletter



## MacAskill Happenings

### COVID-19 Postpones the 2020 Gathering

The Coronavirus caused the MacAskill Sept Society board to make the hard decision to postpone the 2020 Summer Gathering in Cape Breton. This was the first summer gathering that the Sept Society was set to have. The board will be working hard to plan future gatherings. We will keep the membership updated via email, Facebook, our website, and the newsletter. Please stay safe!



Anthony Miles Scott, communications officer, got married on April 25, 2020 to Stephanie Nicole Mayle.

Please check out our website: <https://www.macaskillseptsociety.org>

# Mayle- Scott

Miss Stephanie Nicole Mayle of Sumter and Mr. Anthony Miles Scott of Rembert were united in marriage at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 25, 2020, at Mileston at the Pond.



The bride is the daughter of Cheryl Elizabeth Mayle of Lakeland, Florida, and Mr. Dayton Lee Mayle of Weaverville, North Carolina, and the granddaughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Brantly Simmons of West Palm Beach, Florida, and the late Mr. and Mrs. Hartsel Lee Mayle of Grafton, West Virginia. She graduated from George Jenkins High School, Florida Gulf Coast University and Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine. She is a resident physician with Prisma Health-Midlands.

The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Ray Scott of Sumter and the grandson of Mrs. June McCaskill Miles and the late Mr. Jackson "Jack" Miles of Rembert and Mr. Ray Scott and the late Mrs. Sylvia Brunson Scott of Sumter. He graduated from Sumter High School, the University of South Carolina and Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is a resident physician with Prisma Health-Midlands.

Vernon "Beau" Bradberry, lead pastor of Willow Ridge Church, officiated at the ceremony.

Music was provided by Kipper Edens Ackerman, harpist.

Escorted by her father, the bride wore a chic-sleeved gown adorned with lace motifs over tulle and featuring a fit-and-flare skirt and an illusion V-back completed with covered buttons. She carried a softly cascading bouquet of David Austin Patience garden roses, peonies in white and palest blush, elegance white ranunculus, ivory vendela roses, white sweet peas, salas, Italian ruscus and gathered garden greenery.

The reception was held at Mileston at the Pond in the gardens. A private tour of the Scottish Highlands including Isle of the Skye followed by an Adriatic and Italian Cruise is planned. The Doctors Scott will reside in Columbia.



# Cape Fear Scottish Immigration Memorial Fund

Provided by Lloyd MacAskill, President

Members of the Scottish Society of Wilmington, NC have formed a new organization that has been working on building a memorial to recognize the Scottish settlers who came into the Carolinas beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Cape Fear Scottish Immigration Memorial Fund has been doing design work, developing public support, and raising money to provide for the construction of the memorial.

Officers and board members have been meeting via Zoom technology, but the pace of the project has still been slowed somewhat by the unusual circumstances of this pandemic year. More details are available on the project website, <https://www.capefearscottishimmigrationmemorialfund.org> and the architect's conception of the memorial can be seen below.



Most McCaskills in the US are descended from families who settled in the Carolinas after arriving from Skye, Scotland, beginning in 1770. Unfortunately, the McCaskill History prepared by Andy and Dixie McCaskill does not give the names of ships that they traveled on, nor where those ships might have landed. However, the research being done for the Memorial project will be examining surviving port records, passenger lists, and other historical documents to develop a broader, more complete picture of this immigration period.

In support of the Memorial project, the MacAskill Sept Society might want to consider at some point a contribution to its efforts. Construction costs have yet to be estimated, so it is hard to say how much more will be needed. Individual contributions can always be made through the Donations page on the web site or the mailing address provided there.

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## **MARGARET MACLEOD AND THE MACASKILL CONNECTION**

**Provided by Norman MacLeod**

In 1706, according to “The MacLeods – the Genealogy of a Clan” by Donald MacKinnon and Alick Morrison, Margaret MacLeod (1685-1735) daughter and ninth child of the most famous Laird of Berneray, Sir Norman MacLeod (1614-1705), signed an obligation of marriage with the family tutor, Neil Beaton, by whom she was supposedly about to bear a child. It appears that the family took a dim view of this arrangement. The marriage did not take place, and Neil Beaton was obliged to flee Berneray and indeed Scotland, in fear of his life. The bairn was fostered with Roderick MacNeil of Barra, the husband of Margaret's sister, Isabel. Upon attaining adulthood, the boy returned to Berneray, took his father's first name, Neil, but took his mother's surname. As Neil MacLeod (1706-1765) he was accepted by the people of Berneray. As is so often the case, firm documentary evidence for this event is sparse, but MacKinnon and Morrison state that “there seems to be good reason to believe that this tradition is correct”.

While I lack a documentary connection back to Neil myself, I have established very strong DNA connections with three distant MacLeod cousins, all of whom have documentary evidence, through confirmed family trees, and through Bill Lawson's Croft Histories of Berneray, to link them firmly back to Neil. In view of the strength of the DNA links, with Family Tree DNA, I am also claiming a link to Neil for my own family. When examining those DNA results, however, it becomes apparent that all of us cousins also have very strong MacAskill connections, and no Beaton connections, so, of course, the question must arise as to whether Neil Beaton was, in fact, the father of Neil MacLeod.

Nowadays, in the event of any dispute over paternity, the immediate recourse would be to administer a DNA test. In 1706, of course, no such resource was available, and poor old Neil Beaton got the blame. The DNA evidence which we now possess, however, indicates strongly that Neil's father must have been a MacAskill. The large problem then arises of determining who this gentleman might have been. It is probable that he had been, like Neil Beaton, a member of Sir Norman's staff, but an enquiry with Comunn Eachdraidh Bhearnaigh (Berneray Historical Society) established that they have no information on Sir Norman's personnel. My own genealogical research has, however suggested a prime suspect.

One of the MacAskills to whom I, and my MacLeod cousins, are shown as having a strong DNA link, gives his oldest known ancestor as Neil Mor MacAskill, born in Pabbay, an island in the Sound of Harris close to Berneray, in 1730. There was a great deal of interaction between the two neighbouring islands ; for example, the Pabaich were famous for the quality of their whisky, despite the fact (and even perhaps because of the fact) that it was illicitly distilled. The Pabaich particularly valued the quality of the water obtained from a spring in Berneray, and, every now and then, they would arrive with a boatload of water barrels, for which their Berneray friends would arrange transport to the spring and back. It is said that their success at whisky distilling was one of the reasons why Pabbay was cleared in the 1840s. There are, of course, many MacAskills in Berneray, and Neil Mor was related to many of them, including being the great-grandfather of Angus Mor MacAskill (1825-1863), the famous Cape Breton Giant, born in Berneray of a Pabbay family, who later emigrated to Canada. Berneray also claims him, and there is a fine memorial to Angus erected at his birthplace in the Berneray district of Siabaidh by Comunn Eachdraidh Bhearnaigh (Berneray Historical Society). Neil Mor's father was Padruig MacAskill, born in Pabbay in 1705, and Padruig's father was Donald MacAskill (1680-1735) also a Pabbay man. Donald's dates put him in exactly the right age-group to have had a dalliance with Margaret, and I suggest that the DNA connecting the MacLeod and MacAskill families is Donald MacAskill's YDNA.

The question still remains as to why Margaret signed the obligation of marriage with Neil Beaton. There seem to be two possibilities. It may be that Margaret, being a fun-loving girl, was having so much fun that she didn't know which of her lovers was the father of her child. It seems more likely to me, though, that, when we remember that Donald MacAskill was apparently a married man who had just fathered a baby boy (Padruig) in 1705. Margaret may have calculated that she would be in less trouble with her family for having an illegitimate child with a bachelor than with a married man with a bairn. And, of course, if she had been having fun with both boys, Neil could have been the father. With the state of medical knowledge in those days, who would be able to tell?

Anyway, this is all simply conjecture, and we shall probably never know the truth, but it does make an interesting family tale, I think.

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## Blast from The Past

We will revive articles from previous newsletters in this section.

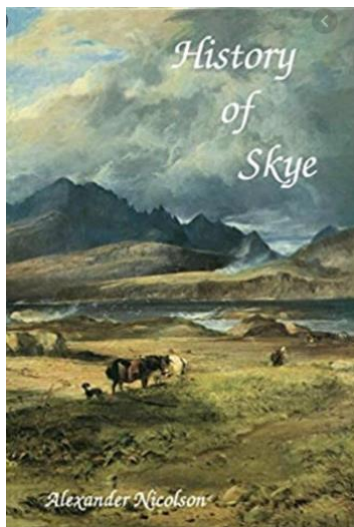
### *The Book Nook*

*By Olive MacAskill Bell*

### “History of Skye”

*by Alexander Nicholson, MA*

*Originally published by Alex  
MacLaren and Sons of Glasgow,  
1930.*



This is a book everyone interested in the Inner Hebrides should read at least once. It is an essential reference in serious study of any of the Island's families, including ours.

Long out of print, it can now be found on several “storefronts” on the Internet, as a soft cover reprint (MacLean Press, 358 pages). I warn you; it will be pricy -- but well worth having.

MacAskill (the spelling he used consistently) references include: the killing – by murder or by accident -- of MacAskill of Eboist by his brother-in-law, MacLeod of Gesto; the MacAskill tack of Ru 'n Dunain; and a very garbled and inaccurate account of Askil's activities and MacAskill's presence on Skye.

<https://www.amazon.com/History-of-Skye/dp/0951602276>

## Visit Scotland

If you are interested in a Trip to Scotland with other members of the MacAskill Sept Society, please contact Bob McCaskill @ [westiedoc@windstream.net](mailto:westiedoc@windstream.net) . Bob is one of our newest members and is from North Carolina.

See his message here: If you would like me to assist in organizing a tour of Scotland in 2021 let me know. We have been traveling with Smithsonian Journeys for about the last 4 years. They offer a tour service that will allow you to make your own schedule. And with all of their journeys they provide not only a professional guide but also an "Expert" in the form of usually an academic professor. Cost = probably about 4000/person. - Robert McCaskill, DVM, MPH, DACVPM

## In Memory

### Katherine "Kay" Shaw Nelson

Katherine (Kay) Shaw Nelson died peacefully on June 20<sup>th</sup> in her home of more than sixty years outside of Washington, DC. She was 93.

A native of Lebanon, New Hampshire, Kay was a CIA intelligence officer and an American author on a variety of current and historical topics relating to food and travel. She wrote 21 books and hundreds of articles for national publications such as the *Washington Post*, *Gourmet*, *Woman's Day*, and *Family Circle*.

Kay graduated from Lebanon High School in 1944 where she was valedictorian. During high school, she wrote for the local newspaper and later was a reporter for the *Manchester Union Leader*.

She was one of the first Russian majors in the country at Syracuse University and was recruited into the Central Intelligence Agency which she joined as an analyst in 1948.

Beginning in 1951, she and her husband Wayne, (an Office of Strategic Services veteran and a CIA intelligence officer), spent many years abroad in the Middle East, the Far East, Europe, Africa, North and South America, and the Caribbean.

In 1997 she wrote an introduction entitled "How to Go from Spies to Pies: Operation Gastronomy" for the best-selling cookbook *Spies, Black Ties, & Mango Pies: Stories and Recipes from CIA Families All Over the World*.

Her 21st book was *The Cloak and Dagger Cook: A CIA Memoir* (Pelican Press). In the words of one reviewer, it is " an absolutely delightful account of a woman who, in 1948, joined the newly created CIA out of a yen for international travel. ... The result is a book that provides a great deal of entertaining reading as she recalls her life spent in the course of major events, extraordinary corners of the world, and the pursuit of everything that tastes really good."



**Katherine "Kay"  
Shaw Nelson**

We regret to inform everyone that one of our first members, Kay Shaw Nelson died last June 20, 2019. She was 93. She attended many Gathering until recently. She was a featured speaker at the 2007 Gathering in Hampton NH. She spoke about her time with the CIA and her many cookbooks about foods in parts of the world where she and her husband were stationed. She leaves a daughter, Rae Nelson.



Please contact President Lloyd  
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**if you would like to  
purchase some MacAskill  
Tartan**

**Follow us on Facebook!**

Click on the following link to join “The  
MacAskill Sept Society” Facebook page.



We would like members to  
share pictures,  
experiences, and useful  
resources on this page.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/458130997638435/>

**We would like to welcome our newest  
members and those who have rejoined:**

Jimmy Lee & Earthrel McKaskle - AZ , Mary  
Dixon - TX , Traci Brennon – OK, Terry  
MacAskill – MA , John Aldredge – VA ,  
Linda Robinson – TX , Finley & Cathy  
McCaskill – SC , Amy Loomis – ID , Von  
McCaskill – SC , Malcolm Gourlie – CT ,  
Colin Gourlie – CT , Robert McCaskill – NC ,  
Don Morrison – MI , Claudia Libis – NH ,  
Baron & Robbie McCaskill – SC , Don  
McCaskill – SC , Jim & Shirley McCaskill -  
NC

**We offer our condolences to the family and  
friends of:**

Katherine "Kay" Shaw Nelson

**Join the Society or  
Renew your Membership**

We encourage you to invite

your MacAskill relatives to join the society!!

Please click the following link to access the  
**Membership Application or  
Renewal Form:**

<https://goo.gl/forms/LFu6FeQo51Gab1ty2>

If you would like to contribute to the “MacAskill Sept Society Newsletter”, please email the communications officer, Miles Scott, at [ascott@vcom.edu](mailto:ascott@vcom.edu).