

Newsletter no. 1 -- January 2013

Scotland and the Flemish People

During the summer of 2012 we publicized the start of the project on *Scotland and the Flemish People* in various fora and since that time we have been heartened by the many expressions of interest and support that we have received. This Newsletter is the first of a number that we will be sending out during the four year duration of the project. It is being sent to those of you who have asked to be kept in touch with the project's progress. In this Newsletter we will tell you more about who we are, what our goals are, and what we have done during the first few months of the project.

The Project Team

The project is centered at the University of St. Andrews' Institute of Scottish Historical Research ("the Institute") and is led there by Professor Roger Mason. Two other staff members in the Institute are involved in the work: Dr. Katie Stevenson and Dr. Michael Brown. One PhD student, Amy Eberlin, is beginning research in the field and a second will be recruited for the start of the September 2013 semester.

John Irvine, currently Chairman of the Scottish Local History Forum in Scotland (www.slhf.org) and a professional genealogist, is also working on the project. Finally, Alex Fleming, who instigated the work and is an international economist by training (now retired), is helping administer part of the project and is undertaking some of the research.

Project Goals

The goals of the project are to raise awareness of the role played by the Flemish people in Scotland since they first arrived around the 11th and 12th centuries. This will be achieved by undertaking new research on the Flemish, making more widely available the results of existing research, and hosting workshops and conferences on relevant issues from time to time. In due course one or more publications will be prepared containing the results of the work.

Progress so far

The publicizing of the project on the *Scotland's People* website led to responses from over 100 people from around the world. The communications we received from you all led to:

- The preparation of a list of possible names with Flemish roots (see the attachment)
- The opening of a dialogue with a number of eminent researchers in the field of the genealogy and history of the Flemish

- The offer of much genealogical information on Flemish families in Scotland. Links to such information will in due course be provided on a project website that is being constructed at the moment and will be fully functional by the end of winter 2013.
- The donation of personal historical research in the field by several people (for which we are very grateful)
- The offer of help in undertaking new research (including in Flanders itself).

In addition, the following work has been undertaken:

- We have begun a pilot study of the influence of the Flemish in Fife and the Firth of Forth areas and are grateful for the support furnished by various local Historical Societies and individuals.
- We are looking into the possibility of working with the administrator of the Scottish DNA project who has offered to set up and run a Y-DNA study in parallel to our historical work. Potentially it could help confirm whether certain families have Flemish origins.
- Discussion has begun with representatives of the Lindsay clan on the drafting of a family case study that would gauge its impact on the Scottish economy and society
- Research within the Institute itself is at an early stage. It is examining existing materials relating to the Flemish involvement in Scotland and is looking at immigrants in the medieval period with a view to understanding the role they played and the societal relationships they developed.

Contacting us

We can be contacted by Email at the following addresses where we would be happy to receive any questions or comments:

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