



Cromartie Family Association

2017 Reunion News

Wilmington, North Carolina USA

1 Sep 2017

www.cromartiefamilyassociation.com

President's Corner

Greetings Cromartie Family!

I sincerely wish you will join us for the 87th Cromartie Family Reunion!

Those with sharp eyes will note that last year's Reunion was originally going to be our 87th. Hurricane Matthew had other plans – submerging nearby Lumberton and other area towns, and forcing our Reunion's cancellation for the first time in modern memory. But it takes more than 24 inches of rain in 24 hours to shake a Cromartie. We simply dried ourselves out and starting planning for what we hope will be our best Reunion yet!

This year's Program will be a little different. Scott Cromartie will present the history of our beloved meeting place, the South River Presbyterian Church. Then we will take a moment to share the results of a survey we will be conducting online (via Survey Monkey) and on Page 7 in this newsletter. We will also be seeking feedback directly from our Reunion attendees to "Plot the future of the Cromartie Family Association." We look forward to drawing from everyone's unique experience.

If you are unable to attend the Reunion or to do the online survey, but still have suggestions to share, please review the survey questions on Page 7 and provide your feedback to Fred Butler, 910.617.2048, fbutler@ec.rr.com.

Thank you!

Bryan Butler, President

Reunion Plans

SATURDAY, 7 OCT 2017, 1:00 P.M.

Driving Tour.

Bladen County Public Library, 111 North Cypress Street, Elizabethtown, NC 28337.

We will conduct a driving tour of Cromartie Heritage Sites in the vicinity of Elizabethtown. We will gather in the parking lot of the Library by one o'clock and conclude by four o'clock. Please contact Amanda Gilbert, 936.671.9680, 936.637.3303, aacook@consolidated.net, so she can be properly prepared.

SATURDAY, 7 OCT 2017, 6:00 P.M.

Gathering and Dinner.

Elizabethtown Inn, 105 Cromartie Road, Elizabethtown, NC 28337.

Please RSVP by Friday, 29 Sep, to Fred Butler, 910.617.2048, fbutler@ec.rr.com. Limited to 22 people -- first come, first serve.

SUNDAY, 8 OCT 2017, 10:00 A.M.

Reunion, Business Meeting, Program and Lunch.

South River Presbyterian Church, Highway 210, Harrells, NC 28444 (see Page 8 for directions).

Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.

Program begins at 11:00 a.m., followed by a catered lunch.

Reunion "Save the Date" postcards will be sent in early September to remind you. Please RSVP by Friday, 29 Sep, to Ann Butler, 910.617.0199, fbutler@ec.rr.com, so we can estimate our catered-lunch needs.

Tracing Cromartie Footsteps: Vacation Notes from Scotland

By James Reed Campbell Jr.

“They drive on the wrong side of the road! You need subtitles to understand them! They actually deep-fry their pizzas!” How would my family and I survive our vacation among the Scottish this July?

Well, we need not have worried. Scottish accents (and people) proved charming and readily comprehensible. Scottish food was perfectly fine, little different than what we might have expected in the U.S. And driving in the left lanes (with my steering wheel on the right) came fairly quickly, although I had to keep repeating, “Stay left...stay left,” to avoid fender-benders or worse.

For six days of our two-week trip to Scotland, we were on a mission to trace the footsteps of my mother’s Cromartie ancestors. We would spend three days in the Scottish highlands, from where John O’Cromarty emigrated around 1450; and then three more days in the remote Orkney Islands, from where William Cromartie emigrated in 1758. What would we see? What would we learn? How would we “Yanks” be received by our far-distant cousins?

Our first destination was the famous Urquhart Castle on the shores of Loch Ness, where the mythic “Nessie” monster is reputed to swim. (Note: Cromartie/Cromarty is an officially recognized sept, or family division, of Clan Urquhart.) This is the third most-visited tourist attraction in all of Scotland. Even though we went on an off-day and got there early, we were still elbow-to-elbow with day-trippers and charter tours. The setting certainly is worthy of all this company. Picture one of the larger Finger Lakes of upstate New York, with its green-forested ridges rising steeply from the banks. Urquhart Castle juts out from a knob of land, lending views up or down the lake’s full length of 23 miles.

Urquhart Castle – essentially a small medieval village housing the central functions of the Clan – was built in the 13th Century, but possibly not by the Urquhart’s, as pamphlets explained. This would be the first of several

instances during our trip where air was let out from our impressionable Cromartie balloons. Clan Grant would inherit the castle in the 16th Century, defend it from repeated attacks from Clan MacDonald; and then partially explode the castle with gunpowder in 1692 to keep it from being occupied by rebellious Jacobite forces. These ruins sat crumbling until they were purchased and maintained by the national Historic Environment Scotland in 1913.

Would I recommend a visit? Yes! But be advised that there are more scenic ventures to be had two hours’ drive southwest along these narrow lakes and fjords. The 3,000-foot “Munros” (i.e., mountains) surrounding Fort William and Glen Coe areas offer especially dramatic landscapes.

Our second destination was the picturesque village of Cromarty, a 40-mile drive on increasingly narrow, two-lane roads along Loch Ness, through the central city of Inverness, and up towards the Cromarty Firth and the North Sea. The Black Isle sounds foreboding, but it is actually a pastoral peninsula extending out from the mainland, similar to parts of coastal Rhode Island. Small-scale farms would give way to modest fishing villages and vice-versa – a perfect progression for compulsive photography. In fact, we had a hard time refraining from snapping shots at most every bend in the road.

Unlike Urquhart Castle, which has a very tenuous and distant connection to our family, the Black Isle boasts a rich Cromartie heritage. There are the ruins of Castle Craig, built in the 16th Century, which Clan Urquhart claims as its hereditary seat. There is Cromarty House, built in the 18th Century with stone and timbers from the demolished Cromarty Castle, which was built in the 13th Century. Sir William Urquhart, Sheriff of Cromarty, had fortified the original castle in 1470, while the notable Sir Thomas Urquhart was born there in 1611. Urquhart’s were prominent on the Black Isle throughout these middle centuries.

But that was then... As we wandered through Cromarty’s cozy streets, we struggled to uncover current connections.

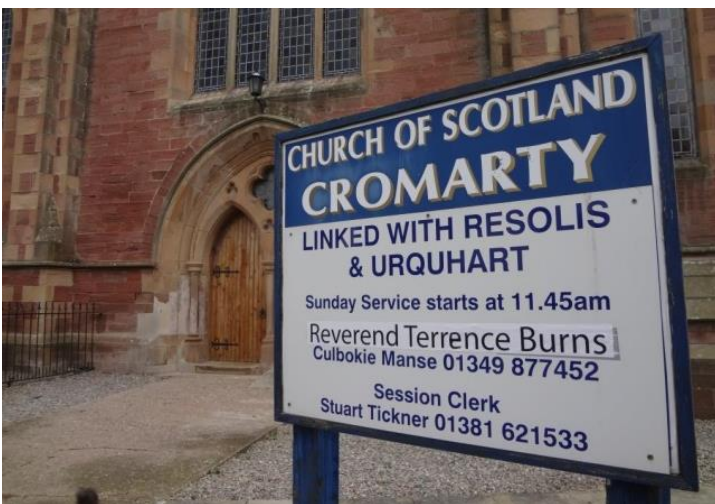


Urquhart Castle, uncrowded



Urquhart Castle, crowded

Tracing Cromartie Footsteps, cont'd



Scenes from Cromarty

We did not see any 20th-Century gravestones with Cromarty surnames in the Parish cemetery. A young adult at the local farmer's market could not recall any Cromarty's among his schoolmates. The curator at the Cromarty Courthouse Museum was surprised that Cromartie was even being used as a surname. Alas, a little more air escaping from our Cromartie balloons. Yet this pleasant hamlet still merits a daytrip. Just make sure to grab your lunch early or late, as the few cafes and bakeries in town fill up right after noontime. These Scots seem punctual for their meals!

Our third destination, South Ronaldsay in the Orkney Islands, proved epic. There was an epic, four-hour drive up Scotland's northeastern coast, reminiscent of the Big Sur in California. There was an epic, one-hour ferry ride from Thurso at the tip of the Scottish mainland into the cavernous Scapa Flow, where the British Navy parked its fleet, largely out of harm's way, during both World Wars. Our sea route snaked past rugged, blackened coastline thick with birds. In the distance were islands of irregular shapes and mountainous heights – Hoy Island on our port side rose up 1,600 feet. Panoramic cloudscapes raced by in the wind just over our heads. We felt like we were approaching the top of the world!



We disembarked in the pretty, postage stamp-sized harbor town of St. Margaret's Hope. And the first thing we saw there was ... a Cromarty Hall in the middle of a Cromarty Square! Would we now be able to re-inflate our Cromartie balloons a bit? The short answer turned out to be: yes and no.

For example: We paid a short visit to the Orkney Family Historical Society, situated within the Orkney Library and Archive in the town of Kirkwall. Among the volunteers, we met with an actual Cromarty cousin, Mary (Cromarty) Cursiter, in her 70s. We showed her the genealogy chart posted on our Cromarty Family Association website; and she expressed that her own family tree contained much of this same lineage. She also reiterated local consensus that John O'Cromarty had arrived in South Ronaldsay around 1450 and lived on lands named Cara.

However, Cursiter drew out a current map that showed Cara to be a mere few acres on the northern tip of the island. We did see an area named South Cara a mile or two southeast. Could John O'Cromarty's lands have stretched across both Cara's? How much was the ancient unit of measure, "1 mk"? Cursiter chuckled, "Probably not much," explaining how life through the centuries on South Ronaldsay

Tracing Cromartie Footsteps, cont'd

had been pretty hardscrabble – certainly without much pretense of landed gentry. Our Cromartie balloons were deflating a bit, especially when we learned that John O’Cromarty had arrived when the Orkney Islands were still part of Norway. Indeed, they were not annexed by Scotland until 1472, only seven years before we understood that John O’Cromarty had purchased Cara and presumably its titles granted by Scottish royalty.

Regardless, it felt great to encounter this living link to Cromartie ancestry; and to confirm key aspects of family lore. Into the 20th Century, Cursiter noted that Cromartie was the most common surname on South Ronaldsay, although she understood that the last living Cromartie there had recently passed away. She also shared how Cromarty’s had emigrated worldwide, with many ending up in Canada. (Note per Wikipedia: “In the 17th century, Orcadians formed the overwhelming majority of employees of the Hudson’s Bay Company in Canada. The harsh climate of Orkney and the Orcadian reputation for sobriety and their boat-handling skills made them ideal candidates for the rigors of the Canadian north.”)

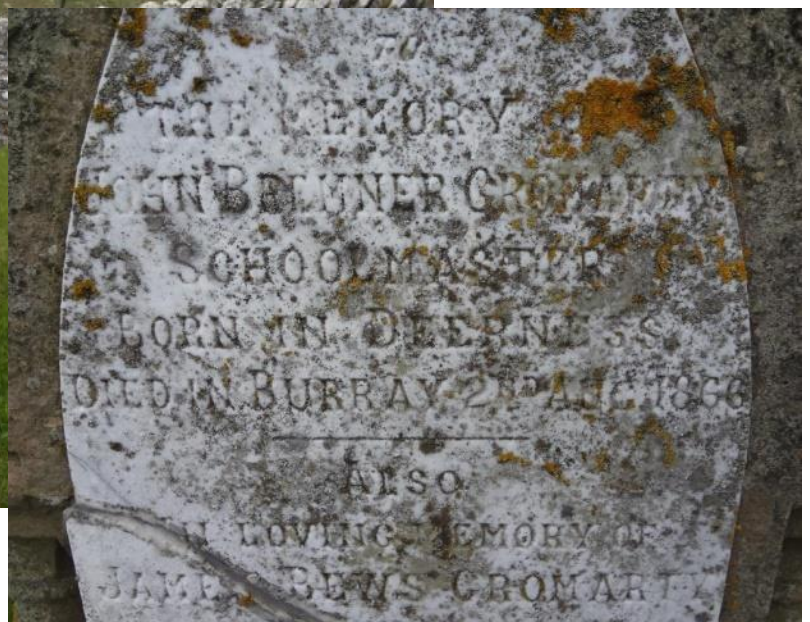
We spent another day in South Ronaldsay scouring three historic cemeteries: St. Lawrence’s, St. Peter’s and St. Mary’s.

It is hard to imagine more authentic and timeless places to spend eternity. The rustic plots of these cemeteries surrounded small stone churches that were set right in the middle of rolling farmland, hugging raw and rocky coasts. No trees and few houses to obscure the endless vistas. Only the mooing of cows and the cawing of seagulls punctuated the windy silence. The gravestones themselves were models of Victorian typography and most would have yielded rubbings suitable for framing, once cleansed of their encrusted moss. Yet for all the Cromarty markers we encountered at St. Peter’s, we struggled to find many from the 18th or 20th Centuries that would tie us either to William Cromartie’s era or to more current generations.

In the end, our inflating and deflating Cromartie balloons proved irrelevant. We were simply enchanted with the Orkneys and proud to be rooted in such a remarkably historic, rustic and scenic locale. These islands had soul. My mother, rarely given to sentimentality, declared over breakfast that she felt like she had “come home.” We pledged to return someday soon to revel in this ancient land-and-seascape of her Cromartie ancestors.



St. Lawrence Cemetery, Burray.



“To the Memory of John Bremner Cromarty, Schoolmaster.”

Ancestor Profile: Hezekiah Doane Jr. (1712-1772)

By James Reed Campbell Jr.

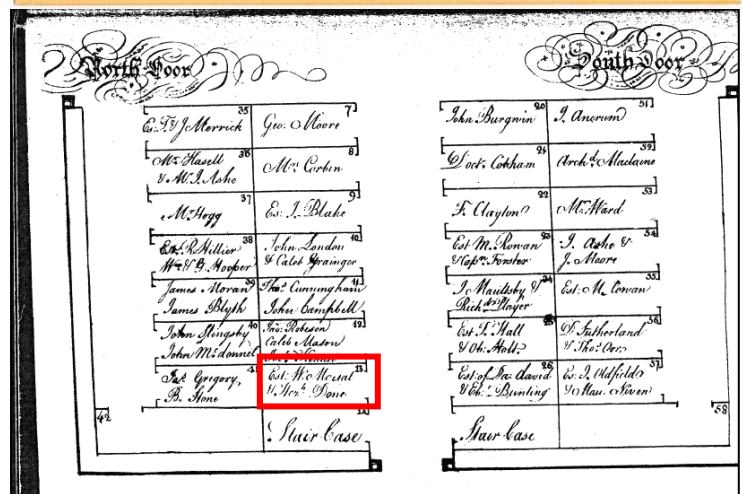
Hezekiah Doane Jr. was the father of Ruhamah “Rhenny” (Doane) Cromartie (1745-1812). He was baptized on 30 Mar 1712 in Truro, Massachusetts and there married Thankful Bickford on 7 Oct 1731.¹ Nothing further is known of their presence ... until 4 Sep 1748, when Hezekiah Jr. surfaces in Wilmington, North Carolina. He served in a militia under Capt. John Sampson, defending against what was called “the Alarm,” when two Spanish ships entered Wilmington’s harbor and began attacking.² (The Alarm was part of “King George’s War” [1744–1748], the name given to the military operations in North America that formed part of the War of the Austrian Succession [1740–1748]. It was the third of the four French and Indian Wars.)

Within a few years, Hezekiah Jr. is recorded for a series of land transactions. In 1752, he purchased 200 acres with an Alexander McDougal. One year later, he purchased two more parcels totaling 400 acres, with one of these parcels purchased from a Robert Knowles.³ Then in 1754 Hezekiah Jr. purchased an additional 164 acres, with all of his parcels being along the Black River.⁴ Certainly, tracts this large would have been difficult to obtain on the more settled confines of Cape Cod, from where he migrated.

Hezekiah Jr. went on to lead a productive life in his new environs. In 1754, he was appointed as Commissioner when a separate Southwest District was created within New Hanover County in proximity of his Black River land holdings. His responsibility was to “make, mend, and repair all Roads, Bridges, Cuts, and Water-Courses.”⁵ He appears again in county census records for 1755, 1763, and 1767⁶; and on county tax rolls for 1763, 1767, and 1769.⁷ Hezekiah Jr. appears in county court minutes as having served on petit juries in 1760, 1765, 1767, 1768, and 1769; and on a Grand Jury in 1761. He was qualified as a Justice in 1764 and 1767; and then is recorded as presiding over various court proceedings, being listed as an “Esqr.” Hezekiah Jr. even served twice as a Magistrate, having “returned the list of taxables taken in [his] district for the present year.”⁸

In Sep 1765, Hezekiah Jr. is listed as a “new subscriber,” renting one of 24 pews in the newly-constructed St. James Episcopal Church in Wilmington. He shared pew number 13 with William Moust.⁹ On 8 Jan 1772, Hezekiah Jr. is recorded as exchanging property with his son-in-law, William Cromartie.¹⁰ This is the last time Hezekiah Jr. appears in New Hanover County records—thus 1772 is assumed to be the year of his death.

¹ Doane, Alfred Alder. *The Doane Family, Volume II*. Salem, MA: Printed for the Author by Salem Press, 1975. 59. Print.
² Clark, Murtie June. *Colonial Soldiers of the South, 1732-1774*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983. 849. Print.



Pew rentals in the back half of St. James Episcopal Church, Wilmington, NC, ca 1765.

³ Pruitt, A. B. *Abstracts of Deeds, New Hanover County, NC, Books C, D, & E*. 2002. 76. Print.

⁴ Graves, Mae Blake. *Land Grants of New Hanover County*. 1980. 71. Print.

⁵ Clark, Walter. *The State Records of North Carolina, Volume XXV*. Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1906. 264. Print.

⁶ Siniard, Diane. “New Hanover County Early Census Indexes.” *New Hanover County North Carolina Genweb*. March, 2007.

<<http://www.genweb.us/newhanover/early.html>> Web.

⁷ Ratcliff, Clarence E. *North Carolina Taxpayers, 1701-1786*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1984. 57. Print.

⁸ Walker, Alexander McDonald. *New Hanover County Court Minutes, 1738-1769*. Bethesda, MD: 1958. 39, 44, 57, 62, 64, 70, 73, 75, 78, 80, 81, 82, 87, 98. Print.

⁹ Kellam, Ida Brooks and McKoy, Elizabeth Francensis. *St. James Church, Wilmington, North Carolina Historical Records, 1737-1852*. Wilmington, NC: 1965. 4, 8, 24, 27. Print.

¹⁰ Walker, Alexander McDonald. *New Hanover County Court Minutes, Part 2, 1771-1785*. Bethesda, MD: 1959. 9. Print.

Society News

By James Reed Campbell Jr.

The **NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY** (NGS) held its annual Family History Conference in Raleigh, NC on May 10-13, 2017. Several thousand genealogists and enthusiasts from around the world gathered for 175 presentations, with many offering expert guidance in researching North Carolina ancestors. This year's 84 exhibitors included Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, MyHeritage.com, Daughters of the American Revolution, and FamilyTreeDNA. Local interest was covered by the **NORTH CAROLINA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**, the **NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS**, and the **NORTH CAROLINA PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**, among many others. NGS' next conference, themed, "Paths to Your Past," will be held in Grand Rapids, MI from May 2-5, 2018. To learn more and register, visit: <http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org>.



from the Jenney Museum, Path of the Pilgrims on Cape Cod, Breakfast Buffet at Plimouth Plantation, Ghost Lantern Tour, Pilgrim Belle Sunset Harbor Cruise, Hyannis Boat Cruise, and Boston/Lexington/Concord – are now sold out. You are best advised to visit the GSMD website several months in advance of next year's Congress: www.themayflowersociety.org.

However, you still may be able to join the **PILGRIM HOPKINS HERITAGE SOCIETY'S** (PHHS) concurrent Triennial Meeting, taking place in the Mayflower Room, Hotel 1620, 180 Water St, Plymouth, MA 02360 on September 8, 2017, starting at 6:00 p.m. A "Pilgrim Buffet" at \$36.00 per person will be followed by a Business Meeting at 7:00 p.m.; and then a Program at 8:00 p.m. with the actor currently performing as Stephen Hopkins at Plimouth Plantation, plus Hopkins scholar, Caleb Johnson. For details and reservations, contact PHHS Corresponding Secretary Kenneth Whittemore through the Society's website: <http://home.pilgrimhopkins.com>.

Also by the time you read this, **CLAN URQUHART FOUNDATION'S** (CUF) Annual Meeting will have passed. It was held at the Ramada Inn in Lewiston, ME on Friday, August 18, 2017, starting at 1:00 p.m., and featured a presentation by Dr. Connie Rodriguez on Castle Craig, hereditary seat of the Clan on the Black Isle in Scotland. Participants then traveled to a Ceilidh at the Topsham Fair in Topsham, ME, from 7:00-10:00 p.m., which included a bonfire, music, dancing, storytelling, camp stew, and fresh bread made onsite. Saturday followed with the Maine Highland Games, hosted by **ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY OF MAINE**, back at the Topsham Fair, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. To learn more about future CUF events, visit: www.clanurquhart.com.



The **JAMESTOWNE SOCIETY** introduced a new feature on its website: "Revolutionary War Era People with Jamestowne Society Lineages." Volunteers have combed through the lineages of its

approved member applications to identify Revolutionary War era people, who are themselves descendants of Jamestowne Society Qualifying Ancestors or whose spouse is a descendant. The purpose is to alert those performing internet searches for these ancestors of their potential to qualify for Jamestowne Society membership. Our own ancestor appears on this list as follows:

- "Cromartie, William (1731 - 1807) married Ruhamah Doane (1745 - 1813) – QA Stephen Hopkins A9441."

You may purchase a copy of this approved lineage paper, A9441, which now may be substituted in Jamestowne Society applications for original references (or "proofs") for all matching generations. To gain instructions for purchasing and applying, visit: www.jamestowne.org/revolutionary-war-era-people.html.

By the time you read this, opportunities for participating in the **GENERAL SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER**



DESCENDANTS' (GSMD) 41st Congress in Plymouth, MA on September 8-13, 2017 will have passed. Deadlines for registering for the two days of Business Meetings expired on August 12, while all of the Tours – including Whale Watch



City of Albany Pipe Band, Maine Highland Games, Topsham, ME

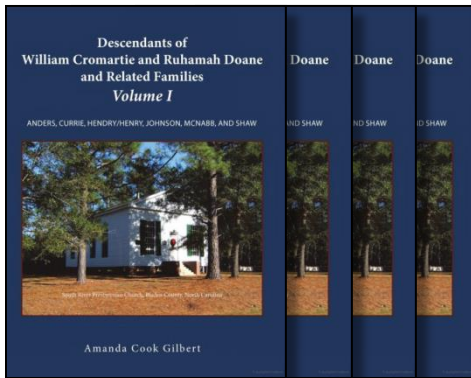
Sharing Family Events

During our Reunion program, we announce notable family events: births, marriages, military service, and deaths of loved ones. As our family members are scattered across the U.S. and around the world, it is hard to know of these events without your help. If you have news to share, please contact Taylor Cromartie at tecromartie@gmail.com.

Ordering Cromartie Books

Our four-volume family history is available on Amazon.com. Visit www.amazon.com and conduct a search for "Amanda Cook Gilbert" or "Descendants of William Cromartie and Ruhamah Doane." You may also order the books directly from Westbow Press, a Division of Thomas Nelson, 1663 Liberty Drive, Bloomington, IN 47403 – online via www.westbowpress.com, or by phone: 866.928.1240.

Note: If you do not wish to order all four volumes, Amanda recommends that you order Volume I (with William Cromartie and Ruhamah Doane's genealogy) AND the particular volume pertaining to your family. There are several families appearing in more than one volume.



Viewing Our Websites

Check out all the information about our Association at www.cromartiefamilyassociation.com. Not a member? Join in a family proud of its heritage!

Our Snapfish "The William Cromartie Family" group room is at: <http://thewilliamcromartiefamily.snapfish.com>. Our Snapfish Room code is "1929reunion." Share your photos and leave a message!

You may also wish to visit the blog of Dr. Sam Cromartie for his notes and interactions on researching Cromartie ancestors: <http://samcromartie.com/geneology>.

Reunion Survey

Every year, we strive to make improvements to our Reunion. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts on how we might better meet your needs. Please return your Survey responses to Fred Butler, 910.617.2048, fbutler@ec.rr.com. Or take the Survey: www.surveymonkey.com/r/QNMD279.

- Should we continue to schedule our Reunion in October?**
(Please check one.)
 Yes No
If "No," which other month(s) would you prefer?

- Should we schedule our Reunion for Saturday, Sunday, and/or an Other Day?** (Please check all that apply.)
 Saturday Sunday Other Day
If "Other Day," which other day(s) would you prefer?:

- When should we begin our Reunion registration?**
(Please check one.)
 10:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.
- On a scale of 1-to-5, with 1 being "Very Satisfied" and 5 being "Very Dissatisfied," how would rate your satisfaction with our Reunion location at South River Presbyterian Church?**
(Please check one.)
 1 2 3 4 5
What other locations, if any, might you prefer?

- Do you have suggestions for future Programs, Speakers and/or Activities?**

- How did you hear about this year's Reunion?**
(Please check all that apply.)
 Email Postcard Website
 Word-of-Mouth Other
How/when would you prefer to hear?

- From which State did you travel to attend this year's Reunion?**

- Will you be staying overnight?** No Yes
If "Yes," will you stay at a hotel? No Yes
- On a scale of 1-to-5, with 1 being "Very Satisfied" and 5 being "Very Dissatisfied," how would rate your overall satisfaction with our Reunion?** (Please check one.)
 1 2 3 4 5
- What other comments/suggestions do you have?**

Reunion Location



86th Cromartie Family Reunion, 1 Oct 2015

The South River Presbyterian Church
Built in 1857

Located between Elizabethtown and Garland, North Carolina
on the north side of State Highway 210,
approximately one-and-a-half miles southeast of
the intersection of U.S. Highway 701 and State Highway 210

Membership Information

Membership in the Cromartie Family Association is open to all persons related to the family of Scotsman, William Cromartie, who left Orkney in his early 20's and settled up the Cape Fear River in Bladen County, North Carolina in 1758. The annual membership fee is \$25.00 per family (including children under 18 years). Lifetime membership is \$100.00 per adult. Dues are tax deductible. You can submit your membership application electronically or print the membership application and mail it with your payment to the Cromartie Family Association, Inc., P.O Box 7793, Wilmington, NC 28406. The Membership Form is located at:

www.cromartiefamilyassociation.com/membership.html

If you don't have internet access, please write us and we will mail you the form.

Membership Dues for The Cromartie Family Association are due to the Association annually by January 31st; however, you may pay your dues at the Reunion.