SOME OTHER FAMOUS DUTHIES

While we all can consider ourselves as famous for one thing or another, there are some Duthies more famous than others!! Here are a few notes on the very famous shipbuilders. The family line came from near Stonehaven. The writer, Fred #1, had the good fortune to link up, by chance, with Ian Duthie, a direct descendant of the Duthie shipbuilder line, in Osaka, Japan about 1991.

Duthie Shipyards, Aberdeen, Scotland

Parts of the following were taken from "The Duthies: Ship Building and Dynasty-Building in the 19th Century, Aberdeen" – by J. L. Duthie. In the course of the 19th Century, William, Alexander and John Duthie of Stonehaven, followed by John’s sons and grandsons, established a business dynasty whose interests covered the broadest range of harbour-side activity in Aberdeen. Either continuously, or at one time or another, the Duthies were involved in wooden and iron ship building, ship owning, whale fishing, coastal and trans-oceanic trading, rope and yarn manufacture, sail, hemp and wire making, herring curing, company directorships and steam trawler construction.

In less than five decades, members of the Duthie family had moved house from the hugger-mugger of Footdee to the tree-lined quiet of Albyn Terrace. In 1811, William Duthie was earning four shillings and six pence (less than two dollars per day in 1997 costs) per day. When he died at age 72, in October, 1861 he left the sum of 70,000 pounds sterling, most of which was used to buy Cairnbulg Castle and the landed estate. The senior, male member of the Duthie family, John, now bore the title “of Cairnbulg” after his name and one of William’s grandnephews became “Sir John Duthie of Cairnbulg”.
The 13th century castle of Philorth, now known as Cairnbulg Castle, property of the Comyns, came into the hands of the Frasers in 1375. Additions and changes in the 15th and 16th centuries gave the castle much of today’s look. In 1863 the ruin was bought by John Duthie. In 1896, his nephew Sir John Duthie, restored the castle using granite which was his wife’s tocher (dowry) from her father who was a stone merchant. Their initials and motto are over the present front door. Sir John died in 1923 and, in 1934 the late Lord Saltoun, 11th from the 8th Laird, bought it back and modernised it. This fairy-tale type castle is currently the home of the Saltoun family and open to the public by appointment only. Ann and Freddie had a tour of the castle and introduced to Lady Saltoun in August 1997.

The shipbuilding firm had a house flag and a family crest for their vessels. On the flag’s blue base was a white shield with a clenched hand holding a sword aloft. They also had a family motto “Dat a fata secutus”. It’s meaning, “Follow the fate that is given”, was at odds with the family’s thrusting, business entrepreneurship.

The motto and crest is to be seen carved into the stone above the entrance to Cairnbulg Castle.
The names entwined are those of Sir Duthie and his wife L. Fyfe.

William and Alexander never married and were to die without issue. John had six sons and three daughters. John was born in 1817, and William in 1822, Alexander in 1824, Robert in 1831, James in 1835 and George in 1838. The daughters were called Ann, Helen and Mary. In 1880, “Old John” died. His sons, William, James and Alexander pooled some of their capital to have a large, ship-rigged, iron vessel built. The “Port Jackson” was 303’ long and listed as 2,132 tons gross.

To cheat the tonnage laws in 1839 by decreasing the register tonnage, William Hall of Aberdeen, developed the raked hull. This form which became know as the *Aberdeen Bow*, also improved sailing characteristics. Eventually, the term “clipper” was described to describe the ship design.

Here are but a few of the ships built by the Duthies. In April of 1848, Alexander Duthie & Company launched the clipper, *Countess of Seafield*, for Henry Adamson of Aberdeen. She measure 140.2’ x 25.0 x 18.2’. Her short life, spent entirely in the China trade, came to an end on 21 March 1855, when she stranded on the Pratas Shoal, China Sea. She was refloated and later sold to Cantonese owners.

The *Ballerat* was built in 1852. Her first two voyages were made to Australia during the gold rush but thereafter were in the China trade.
A very fast ship was the *British Merchant*. Her master, Captain Alexander Duthie in 1859-60 was bound for Sidney, Australia. On board was a Miss Rowland, a young woman whose fiancé was waiting to marry her in Australia. Before the ship reached Australia, Captain Duthie had married Miss Rowland. On board was a missionary who married the couple. It is interesting to note that in the LDS records there is mention of an Alexander Duthie married to a Christian Hogg Rowland having a daughter Ann on 10th November 1864 in Aberdeen. They had a William on 17th May 1867 and a Christian on 22nd December 1869.

Some other ships built by the yard included: *Beautiful Star* 1861, *Cissy*, 1859, *City of Aberdeen* 1862, and *Dunkeld* 1863.

Alexander Duthie died in 1863 and the business was taken over by his brother, John. The yard, now named John Duthie, Sons and Co., produced the *Peter Denny*, which was largely used to transport immigrants to Australia. In the mid 1860s, the yard built several ships including the *John Duthie* 1864, *Australian* 1866, *Agnes Rose* 1867, and *Ann Duthie* 1868.

The book, *The Tea Clippers*, by David R. MacGregor, reports that a Robert Duthie built a ship called *Robert Henderson* in 1857. She had a good life in the tea trade and was condemned in 1881-82. According to the book, ships by Alexander Duthie were very handsome although not very spectacular with the exception of *Ballarat* and *Ben Avon*.

Numerous ships bore the Duthie name. It is told that a Royal Navy ship was heading home when it encountered the *Alexander Duthie* outward bound asking to be reported “all well”. Later, the naval commander spoke to another ship, which also asked to be reported “all well” and gave the name *John Duthie*. Next day, another vessel was spotted, which turned out to be the *Ann Duthie*. The navy man burst out: “Good God, is the sea full of Duthies?”
For more information on the Duthie shipbuilders check out:
http://www.aagm.co.uk/listduthie.html
http://www.caledoniancastles.co.uk/castles/grampian/cairnbulg.htm

Duthie Park, Aberdeen, Scotland
Elizabeth Crombie Duthie, a daughter of one of the shipbuilding family, presented the 42-acre park to the City of Aberdeen. It was opened by H.R.H. Princess Beatrice on 27th September, 1883. At the top of the monument, is the figure of Hygeria (Goddess of Health).
Of great interest that in the Winter Garden of the park there is a wheelbarrow, which has a plaque, bearing the words “Used at First Turf Cutting by Miss E. C. Duthie and the Earl of Aberdeen”. On the inside of the barrow is a crest with the motto and a raised arm holding what looks like a scimitar. This is not the typical weapon used in the Duthie arms:
At the Maritime Museum in Aberdeen there is a deckhouse from one of the Duthie ships. The following picture from the Leopard Magazine shows this very deckhouse being used as a shed at the home of the Duthie girls in Cults.

*Members of the Duthie family in their garden at Cults in the 1920s. In the background is the Duthie Deckhouse which was part of an Aberdeen clipper ship owned by the family.*
Duthie Shipyards - Portland, OR and Seattle, WA

In overalls as a boy of 16 — a millionaire at 44. John Frederick Duthie was born in Liverpool, England in 1875/76. His father was John Duthie of Aberdeen, Scotland. His mother from Cornwall, England.

John moved to America with his family in 1888 and settled in Bristol, RI in the following year. He subsequently worked at the Herreshoff ship building yard. In 1896 he moved to Portland, OR where he worked with Wolff and Zwicker as foreman of ship construction.

In 1911, at age 36, Mr. Duthie decided to go into business for himself and moved to Seattle and incorporated the firm of J. F. Duthie & Co. Less than thirty days from the organization of his company, Mr. Duthie obtained the contract to build steel steam whalers for the North Pacific Sea Products Company. In 1916 his firm built a twenty-acre yard on Harbor Island.

The firm help build racing yachts to defend the America Cup, torpedo boats, big fighting machines, steel whalers, cannery tenders, ferryboats, and great steamships for ocean transportation.

John Frederick was one of the finest tenors in Seattle. He was also an accomplished pianist.

A town named Duthie
In Idaho there is a ghost town named Duthie. It is located along the western slopes of the Bitterroot Mountains, which form the Montana/Idaho border. It is northeast of the present-day towns of Mullan and Wallace, which are located along Interstate 90. The town is situated along Tributary Creek where it conjoins
the East Fork of Eagle Creek. The town was named for J. F. Duthie, a mining engineer who hailed from Seattle, WA. The town had its heyday in the late 20s and early 30s with a mining boom of lead and silver. The mine was so remote that it was inaccessible during the winter months. Therefore, Mr. Duthie established the town to provide the miners and their families the necessities, schools, medical services and entertainment.

And, this may be another mystery – here is an advert of 14th April, 1928 in the Engineering and Mining Journal. Could each item be about the same J. F. Duthie?
The Honorable Mr. Sloan, Minister of Mines for British Columbia, says in his recent report on operations during 1927.

"The Duthie Mines Mill was designed to treat a medium-grade silver ore, carrying also some lead and zinc, by straight selective flotation. The results have been very satisfactory, a surprisingly high extraction being obtained, with the production of a lead concentrate carrying most of the silver and a satisfactory grade of zinc concentrate. This Mill, which has a capacity of fifty tons a day, shows the possibilities of effective, economical milling on a small scale."

Southwestern Factory Built Mills (of which the Duthie Mill is an example) are efficient, mechanically and metallurgically correct plants. Built in 25-50 and 100 ton units.

Time and money are saved by this method of standardized construction.
Maggie Duthie’s Hoosie

Maggie’s Hoosie (historic fisher cottage), 26 Shore St., Inverallochy, near Fraserburgh, Scotland. The Hoosie is now a museum and open to the public.
Maggie’s Mother, Elizabeth Duthie (Maiden name Ritchie) (“Bett Oram’). Born 1828 – Died 18th February, 1923 age 95. Married 10th October 1850 to Charles Duthie (‘Charlie Laud’) who died 1st October, 1874 age 49.
The last occupant was Maggie Duthie who died on 9th July, 1950 age 83.