

BE PREPARED TO GIVE ACCOUNT: Answering questions about the Family of Bruce, our organization, & our Scottish/American Heritage:

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(Prepared for use by tent/event hosts & member representatives.)

Those of us who have hosted tents at various Scottish events have had the usually enjoyable, but sometimes unenviable, task of fielding questions and responding to assertions from both members and the general public, this in regard to our family and to Scottish history, heritage and culture in general. Because I sometimes wear traditional Scottish dress to other events such as concerts, church services, weddings, etc., I am often a subject of interest to members of the public with no Scottish connection, and have occasionally been approached by complete strangers with questions, usually relating to my attire. Most often this occurs in a neutral and/or friendly context and I find it an opportunity to provide some education. Negative contacts are rare, and simply ignoring them is usually the best policy

Having said all of the above, I believe it is appropriate to be prepared to give answer when someone engages us in conversation. The following is a list of questions and topics I have from time to time been asked to respond to along with responses appropriate for me. In many cases, the answers could be, and possibly should be, more elaborate than the ones I have given. However, it has been my experience that most people are not prepared for elaboration and detail. Rather, they want simple and concise answers that they can repeat to others and that may, at some future point, initiate further questions. In some instances, rather than provide a direct answer, I have pointed the questioner to sources that are far more able to provide information than what I am able to do. In yet other cases I have provided a format for giving a personalized response by answering from my own experience (and which you can use by substituting your own information). Each of us needs to respond with what is appropriate for us. Do at least some of the following questions/topics seem familiar to you?

1. **Where and how did the BRUCE name originate?** In Scandinavia and later in France (Normandy), with the actual spelling of the name undergoing several permutations over the centuries.
2. **I am a BRUCE. How am I related to King Robert I? Grandma/Uncle Duncan told me we are “direct descendants” of Robert The Bruce. Can that be true?** This question and others similar to it are asked/claimed by persons at virtually every event we attend. There is no easy answer. Unfortunately, well meaning relatives who are usually not very well informed themselves, often perpetuate notions that have little basis in reality. The idea that one is a direct descendant of King Robert is one of these notions. Although King Robert had a number of legitimate children, no male child, including King David II, produced an heir. However, Roberts’s eldest daughter, Princess Marjorie who married the High Steward of Scotland, did indeed produce offspring resulting in the founding of the House of Stewart, the House of the Stuart kings. Therefore, if you are a Stuart, you could possibly be a descendant. There are other conceivable scenarios, but a great deal of genealogical research and just plain luck would be needed to provide a legitimate claim.
3. **How is it that we call ourselves a family rather than a clan?** We are all blood kin – therefore family. The Bruces who exist today all trace their ancestry to the first Lord of Clackmannan and are, therefore, blood kin, however distant. Today that link means that all Bruces are in some way kin to our Chief, Lord Elgin. That reinforces the idea of family. A translation of the Gaelic word for clan offers the word “family”. However, the contemporary idea of clan has come to include a much broader concept and may include persons who are linked by service, tradition, region, etc.
4. **Do we have any tartans that belong to us?** Yes – for all practical purposes there are only two, but there are several more you may encounter. The most commonly seen/worn is the “Bruce Modern”. We also often see the “Bruce Ancient”. It is called ancient not because of having been around longer than the other, but because its colors are more muted in the style of the older vegetable dyes. The pattern (set) is identical to the modern. These are the only two which you are likely to find woven into fabric which you can actually purchase. There are other tartans linked to the Bruce name, but I would be astonished if you were to find them available from ordinary commercial vendors. Reference sources sometimes include a “Bruce Personal”, a “Bruce Hunting”, a “Bruce Of Kinnaird”, and possibly others, few of which I have ever seen offered in woven fabric. I have seen fabric in “Bruce Of Kinnaird”, both regular and dress versions, and find the dress version particularly attractive.
5. **What tartan can I wear?** Here in the USA the answer is anyone you choose. There is no law preventing your own choice, however, custom and propriety should guide that choice. If you are a Bruce I recommend either the Bruce Modern or Bruce Ancient tartans, as they are the ones most commonly woven, sold and worn, and therefore

the ones that will most likely be available and at reasonable prices. There are other Bruce related tartans you may find interesting. Also, there are tartans designed to be used by anyone, such as the Black Watch, Scottish National & Pride of Scotland. There are also tartans for each branch of military service, a number of professions, and for many US states and Canadian provinces. Just “Google” the “Scottish Tartans Authority” to find examples of what might be the best choices for you.

6. **How are tartans identified and what criteria are used to distinguish between them?** For those who wish to know more about tartans, the best source is what is known as “The Scottish Tartans Authority”. This organization catalogs all known tartans and give “official” approval to new ones. They have a website www.tartansauthority.com . You should know that in addition to clan/family tartans, there are state, provincial, regional, national, professional, military and personal tartans.
7. **Since I am a BRUCE, can my wife/husband wear the BRUCE tartan?** Yes. Many of us are married to persons of another ethnicity. In my own case, my ethnic “Swedish” wife wears the Bruce tartan with pride, and sometimes the Minnesota tartan as well. She is an accomplished Scottish country dancer and in many ways has become just as much of a Scot as I am.
8. **I am a (Carlisle, Caruthers, Crosby, Randolph, Stenhouse) and I want to know how I am related to the Bruces and whether or not I belong with you?** If you carry one of the five names above, you are indeed related to us, primarily by marriage. Each of these five is considered to be a “sept” (related family) of Bruce. According to both tradition and the by-laws of our family organization, you are indeed one of us and eligible for full participation in Family Of Bruce International.
9. **I am a Stuart and I have heard that we are related to the Bruces. How so?** Through Princess Marjorie, King Robert’s daughter. See answer in #2 above.
10. **Who is this “Chief” of the family and as a BRUCE what is my relationship to him?** The 11th Earl of Elgin & 15th Earl of Kincardine (Lord Elgin), Sir Andrew Bruce. He is the 37th in a long line of hereditary chiefs of the family and a member of the Scottish “Council of Chiefs”. He is a “Knight of the Thistle”, the highest order of chivalry in Scotland. As of this year (2019) he is 95 years of age, with great dignity and deserving of our respect and loyalty.
11. **Where in Scotland do we come from?** Several places – I will show you on a map. (Have such prepared.) The packet provided to new members contains a map of Scotland where places of Bruce interest are identified.
12. **Do I have BRUCE relatives in Scotland? How do I find out?** There are many people in Scotland who carry the Bruce surname. Because we are all blood kin and therefore family, you do indeed have relatives in Scotland. However, unless you can show otherwise (through genealogical investigation), the relationship is likely quite distant and it will be very difficult to nail down specific connections.
13. **What is this organization (FOBII or FOBI) and should I be a member?** Family Of Bruce International Incorporated. Generally yes. For many years, there were two Bruce organizations in the United States, which was at best an awkward and contradictory situation. In 2005, both organizations dissolved and a new Bruce organization was created – FAMILY OF BRUCE INTERNATIONAL INC. - . If your surname is Bruce or that of one of our septs, or if your mother or grandmother carried one of those names, you should be a member.
14. **I saw the movie “Braveheart”. Is it real history?** I too have seen the film and I must admit that from one point of view it is a fun action film, very entertaining stuff. Even Mel Gibson, whatever you may think of him, did bring a certain “panache” to the screen. As to its historicity, I am afraid it falls flat on its face. It is a prime example of Hollywood hype – both misinformation and disinformation. For example, blue face paint had not been used by Celts for at least 500 years prior to the time period the film attempts to portray – if indeed it ever was, and the type of kilt used in the film to distinguish between the English and the Scots had not yet been invented. There was a William Wallace, and he is considered to be one of the “heroes of Scottish Independence”. However, the movie portrayal and the accurate historic role of this individual simply do not match. Clan Wallace does a fine job portraying the “real braveheart” in materials they have produced and distribute.
15. **Do you play the bagpipes?** No, although I love the sound of them. The great highland pipes, like most musical instruments, vary in quality in both construction and performance. I really believe that those who say they cannot stand to hear them have never heard a high quality set of pipes played by a gifted musician. One of the most nearly transcendent experiences of my life was a visit to Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness on a heavily overcast day, and watching/hearing a lone piper perched on the stone walls with his music echoing over the loch. There is a rich history relating to the development of the Great Highland Pipes and the other variations of the instrument. Their use in military engagements as an instrument of intimidation is an example. Beyond this I would refer any additional questions you may have to an experienced piper.
16. **I see a lot of flags at Scottish Fairs. Could/should I fly one?** One of the two most commonly flown flags at Scottish events is the “saltire” (also known as the St. Andrew Cross) and is the Scottish National flag. It is the one with the white X across a field of blue. It can be flown here in the USA by anyone, so long as it is done with respect and in deference to the “Stars & Stripes”. The other one commonly seen (crimson on gold) is known as the “Rampant Lion”, and technically is flown only to indicate the presence of the monarch. The current monarch has indicated that she has no problem with its display as long as it is done with respect. My own take on this is that as

Americans, we should not use/fly it except as part of an educational exhibit/display on some aspect of the monarchy, past or present. Flying the Stars & Stripes and your own state or provincial flag is just fine at an American/Scottish event. I often display the provincial flag of Nova Scotia, just because I like it, and I have friends who are native Nova Scotians.

17. **About banners and flags.** At events at which I am the host, I will display the Scottish National Flag (St. Andrew Cross), the Lion Rampant Flag (Royal Flag of Scotland – carefully displayed in an appropriate context), Bruce tartan banners in both ancient & Modern, a Minnesota tartan banner, the Stars & Stripes (American Flag), and whatever other flag or banner may be appropriate. I have displayed a banner relating to the 700th anniversary of the Battle at Bannockburn and others as suggested by the commemoration of historical events. A guest with their own “armorial” banner will be honored by having that flown on site. Sometimes state and/or provincial flags will be appropriate. I will show both the Minnesota state flag and the Nova Scotia provincial flag. The Nova Scotia flag is the St. Andrew Cross with the colors reversed and a red/gold shield upon which the Lion Rampant is imposed at the center. Protocols can vary in interpretation, so I am very careful about correct display/placement.
18. **What about the Bruce Coat of Arms?** In Scottish terms, there are no such things as a Family Coat of Arms. The main Armorial Bearings (components) of our Chief are the basis of all the other Arms of people bearing the name of Bruce, but his Armorial Bearings are his alone, and can only be used by him. If you desire to use Armorial Bearings yourself you must acquire your own personal set. That can be quite an undertaking and would require the approval of the Lyon Court for full recognition.
19. **Have you been to Scotland?** Yes – four times, and I will go again at first opportunity. On my first visit I was struck by the very strong impression that I was home from a long journey, that here was another place where I belong. That impression has not changed. In fact, with further travel and study, it has become all the more deeply imprinted on my personality and character. Although I am an American, and proud of the fact, there is a bit of my heart and mind that will always be in Scotland. Scotland is a great place to visit, learn and recreate.
20. **Why do you do this (host an event tent)?** I plead a combination of pride and insanity. Having said that, I do it because I love it, and because I love it I want to share it with others. Meeting and getting to know Bruces and others who are part of the various Scottish communities around the United States (and elsewhere) has been a very great pleasure, and I have been able to make many new friends in the process. Getting to know my Scottish family and learning the history, heritage and culture of Scotland has had profound effect on my sense of identity. Simply said, I love it and the family which connects me to it.
21. **About the heavy games/events.** In this case I merely describe the various events and if more information is required I refer the questioner to participants. I think it best to suggest that the questioner watch the athletes compete in the various events and learn what the rules are for each one, and how the events are scored. The athletes themselves, both the professionals and amateurs, are the best source for information. Although they may look intimidating to some, they are (for the most part) fine Scottish gentlemen.
22. **About Scottish dancing, both country and highland.** In this case I usually describe my own appreciation for this activity in which I have absolutely no skill but have very high regard for those who do. If more information is required, I refer the questioner to the local highland dance schools/performers and/or the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Very often, especially at games and fairs, the public is invited to “give it a try”. Take them up on the invitation. You will not be sorry.
23. **What is haggis? (and then) Do you really eat that stuff?** Traditionally, haggis was made with what was left of a sheep after the English were done with it. Seriously, the “sweetmeats” (heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, brain) were ground up and mixed with oatmeal, salt, pepper and herbs. This mixture was stuffed into a sheep’s stomach and boiled till “done”. It was VERY high in both fat and cholesterol. More recently, haggis has been made with ground lamb substituting for the sweetmeats. It is one of those foods that when it is badly made is very bad indeed, but when properly prepared can be a very tasty entrée. Today it is often served at “Burns Night” suppers and other special events. I enjoy it with neeps (mashed rutabaga) and tatties (mashed potatoes), usually taking a bit of each on my fork.
24. **What should I read to get started learning something of Scottish history?** “*The Story Of Scotland*” by Nigel Tranter. Tranter has often been called Scotland’s “storyteller”. Although he is best known for his historical fiction, he is considered to be an astute historian as well. This book takes advantage of Tranter’s considerable literary skills to tell “*The Story Of Scotland*” in a very accurate and readable fashion, palatable to just about every reader. It is a sound basis for further reading and study. Last I heard it was still in print and should be available through Amazon or either your local bookstore or library.
25. **Do we Bruces have a motto?** Yes we do, or at least that is how it is usually referred to. It is the Latin word “fuius” which is translated into English as “we have been”. However, I like the extended version we have come to use which is “fuius, sumus, erimus”, which is translated as “we have been, we are, we shall be”. I also like the further extension which my professor & Latin scholar son suggested which is “clunem calcitramus” & translated as “we kick butt”. That last part is very unofficial.

- 26. Do we Bruces have a war/battle cry?** Not really, though our “peaceful personal nature and history” is instructive in this regard, but since we are often asked at games or other events to give one I would suggest the following. **“For Scotland & Saint Andrew – A Bruce, A Bruce”.**
- 27. Can a woman wear a kilt?** Well now, it does not happen often, and traditionally only men wear kilts, but I have seen a fair number of women doing so. Typically, a woman wears a kilted skirt. The structure of the kilted skirt is more tapered and has less yardage of tartan in comparison to the structure of a man’s kilt which is straight down from the waste and shows the full set of the tartan in the stitched down area through the hip. My wife has a kilted skirt in the Bruce Modern, a standard long skirt in the Bruce Ancient, a wrap around skirt in the Minnesota Tartan and another in Black Watch. **How about footwear?** For formal/dress occasions I wear black leather “Ghillies”. They are something like ordinary leather dress shoes but without a tongue, are low cut, and sport long laces which tie around the ankles. At games and other outdoor events I wear a simple pair of black all purpose sport shoes. I have sometimes worn high leather dress boots, and have recently purchased a pair of soft suede boots which travel well. Wear what you have and don’t worry about it. As to kilt hose, traditionally only pipers wear white. However, virtually any color is OK. Most people try to match a color in their own tartan. I usually wear a dark green, similar to the green in the Bruce tartan.
- 28. What about a sporran – there seem to be so many choices?** Again, it depends on what captures your fancy. I have an understated seal skin sporran for formal occasions and a simple cow hide one for all else. Some of the new soft leather pouches which substitute for the traditional sporran have a lot more room and are quite practical. You should not wear a piper’s sporran, unless, of course, you are a piper. Recently I have seen people wearing huge “animal pelt with head” obscenities as sporrans, and I have to say that I find them in very bad taste, garish and, frankly, offensive. (I have raised rescue Shetland Sheepdogs – understand?)
- 29. About kilts, sporrans, - clothing for both men and woman.** I am frequently asked what it is like to wear a kilt and how such a garment came about. (There are literally whole books that have been prepared on this subject.) I will often start with a description of the “great kilt” and how it is folded and worn, and how that was reflected in the life of a highlander in years past. We Bruces, being lowland Scots of Norman extraction have (as so many others) adopted quite a number of the specifics of traditional highland dress. I own and wear two kilts, both of which were personally and professionally fitted and tailored for me and were made in Scotland. One is a formal kilt (8 yards of heavy wool) in the modern Bruce tartan and used primarily for indoor events and in cold weather. The other is a casual kilt (6 yards of medium weight wool) in the ancient Bruce tartan and used primarily for outdoor events in mild weather. Many also ask about the sporran to which I usually respond by reminding them that a kilt has no pockets (without going into the history) and that usually satisfies them. Other items are described as requested.
- 30. I have seen many people with tartan material worn over the shoulder. Why do they do that?** It is reminiscent of a much older style of dress where a large piece of material was pleated, folded and draped to form a single piece all purpose garment. Today it is merely a form of style. Tradition suggests that men wear their “plaid” over the left shoulder and women wear their sash or shawl over the right. Women who are Chiefs, wives of Chiefs, and some female military personnel wear their sash over the left shoulder. Tradition also suggests that it be held in place by some form of broach, pin, or other jewelry. Again, it is merely an adaptation of historic tradition to modern practice.
- 31. I have decided to purchase a kilt. What should I order, what is a reasonable price, and from whom should I buy it?** Usually your best all around choice is a modern tailored kilt in your own clan’s tartan. Best practice would be to have yourself measured for it by a professional kilt maker in Scotland and custom fitted to your own personal size and shape. The best looking and longest wearing kilts are made of wool and are made in this fashion. My first kilt, and what is still my formal use kilt, was made to measure in Scotland from heavyweight 16 ounce wool tartan fabric – eight square yards of it. It is very heavy and took some getting used to. My second kilt was measured by an experienced person here in the states and the measurements sent to Scotland where it was made. It is six square yards of medium weight wool and is very comfortable, even in very warm weather. Both of mine are pleated to set, and that seems to be the preferred way to do it. Mind you, kilts made as I have described tend to be very expensive. Several dealers here in the US, and I assume elsewhere as well, have imported tartan kilts made from polyester/wool blends in third world countries in “stock sizes”, and you order only by waist/hip and length. I have seen many that are badly made, have poor color accuracy, and look shabby. Others seem to be well made with very good color accuracy and they would appear to be quite a bargain. If you can fit into a stock size it could work out OK for you, as long as you don’t expect it to last a lifetime like the wool kilts usually do. I am also seeing more men wearing what has come to be known as the “utilikilt”, originally designed and made by a company out of Seattle. It is usually made in a course/tough utilitarian fabric and with pockets so a sporran is not needed. It is not traditional in any sense of the word, but if you like it, it is a very affordable alternative. FOBII has a list of vendors with whom we have had a successful relationship. You will find the list on our website and it is published from time to time in the Blue Lion. They will be your best source for current pricing.
- 32. What do you wear under your kilt? A truly insolent question.** This is a question asked all too often by people who should know better, but it happens nonetheless. I make a quick attempt to ascertain if the questioner

is hostile, ignorant, foolish, or merely misguided, and I respond based on that judgment. Over the years I have acquired quite a repertoire of answers, not all of them entirely appropriate for use by a gentleman and scholar. I do my best to respond gently, but it is often difficult. I find it best to be obscure and leave it to the imagination of the questioner as to what the truth is. ON THE OTHER HAND – if a person who is new to wearing highland dress asks the question and it is clear that they really need to know, I provide them with “suitable details”.

33. **Does FOBII have any particular political or religious points of view?** No, we do not. We are neither a political or religious organization, and do not make pronouncements or take positions in either of these areas. We are classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) not for profit charitable organization. Our members are thoughtful and intelligent persons who take their political, social and religious beliefs and responsibilities very seriously. However, in my experience, they are always respectful of the opinions and beliefs of others. Once again, let me emphasize, that we are neither a political or religious organization, and although we take no organizational positions in these areas, neither do we refrain from learning about and dealing with them as part of our cultural/historical heritage as Americans of Scottish decent. We are an American branch of a historically significant Scottish family, and as such we do not involve ourselves in issues which the Scots themselves are processing, such as the debate over devolution or any other issue of purely Scottish political interest.
34. **How can I keep up to date on what is happening with FOBII around the country, and how can I get more questions answered as they come up?** As I am sure you have heard, we publish an “E-Magazine” four times a year to respond to just that need. It also contains instructive articles in the areas of history, culture, heraldry, and much more. Our website www.familyofbruce.org is a treasure trove of FOBII information – and has a special “members only” section. As a new member, you have received a “*New Member Packet*” to get you started learning what FOBII USA is all about. All of your board members have listed e-mail and US mail addresses and invite you to use them to contact us with your questions.
35. **Is my membership in FOBII USA just for me alone? What does it cover?** All of our memberships are essentially family memberships. A membership may cover just one person, or the primary member, their spouse, and any children (natural or adopted) under the age of 18. The primary member, male or female, must have been born a Bruce (or one of our sept families), or be first or second generation offspring of same. We are essentially egalitarian in that both male and female members share exactly the same rights and responsibilities in membership. Associate membership is available for all others who share our goals and interests.
36. **How is FOBII governed?** We have a very detailed set of by-laws along with a number of organizational policies which guide how we operate. We have a board of directors, and a set of organizational officers, elected by the membership, who take care of the regular business of FOBII USA. In October of each year we have our AGM (Annual General Membership Meeting). Since the original formation of our organization it has been held in conjunction with the Stone Mountain Highland Games, at Stone Mountain State Park, in Stone Mountain, Georgia – not far from Atlanta – each October. All FOBII members are encouraged to attend. This event is possibly the largest annual gathering of persons of Scots heritage in the United States, and the very best venue in which to get to know the FOBII USA leadership. (The by-laws are located on the www.familyofbruce.org members only page.)
37. **How do we define ourselves in relation to the larger Scottish Community?** This is a challenging question and requires a careful answer. We call ourselves a “family” as opposed to a “clan”. The reason we do so is twofold. First, virtually all persons born with the Bruce surname are, in fact, blood kin (although most quite distantly), and therefore family. Second, this is the usage preferred by our chief. As a practical matter, we operate in much the same way as most clan organizations do here in the United States. Many Americans of Scots heritage cherish the notion that all Scots are “highlanders” and are descended from “Celtic” stock. Few things could be further from the truth. Early tribal groups other than the Celts, as well as Scandinavians, French and others contributed to the Scottish stock. Historically, most Scottish Bruces are “lowlanders”, having chosen to live south of the so called “Highland Line”. This is not to say that highland and Celtic influences have not been part of our history. For example, King Robert’s mother was a Celtic Scot and we have every reason to believe that he could and did occasionally use the “old tongue” when consorting with his Highland allies. Our surname came to us with a progenitor known as “de Bruis”, who arrived in what today is the UK with William the Conqueror from Normandy in France in the year 1066. King Robert’s great grandfather married into the Scottish royal family in approximately 1219, and through this marriage the Bruces were joined in the lineage of the succession to the Scottish throne. We are listed among the 120 plus Scottish clans and families recognized by the Lyon Court and we are as unquestionably Scottish as any could possibly be. Our chief is Sir Andrew Bruce, the 11th Earl of Elgin, the 15th Earl of Kincardine, a Knight of the Thistle, and the 37th hereditary chief of the Name & Family of Bruce. As part of the Scottish diaspora, we American Bruces have become a very diverse lot, and we number among our membership persons with Hispanic, Native, and African twists to their Bruce heritage as well as those of primarily European heritage.
38. **Can you help us with our genealogical searches?** Genealogical study is not a primary focus of our organization. However, many of our members are significantly involved in such studies. Our web site offers much that genealogists, both professional and amateur, have and do use to help expand and validate their searches. One

prime focus of many of our members is Bruce history, and that has often been an enlightening avenue for those with genealogical interest.

39. **How do we presently relate to the other clans, families and houses identified by the Lyon Court?** Our local Scottish communities provide us with ample opportunity to get to know and associate with members of the other clans and families to a significant degree. Inclusive organizations such as the various Saint Andrew Societies are good examples. Special interest groups such as the Royal Scottish Country Dance Association, function to bring some of us together. On a national level, groups such as COSCA (Council of Scottish Clans & Associations) of which we are a member, serve to link our leadership with the leadership of other clans and families. On a more personal level, we enjoy the relationships we have built over the years with other Scots at Scottish games, fairs and other ethnic specific activities. One of the things I most love to do is “meet, greet & teach” other Scots, and the general public as well, who are drawn to our tents and displays.
40. **I understand that FOBII is a 501c3 organization. Just what does that mean for members?** That is our designation under federal tax code, and we are considered a tax exempt not for profit educational and charitable organization. That means we may accept donations from persons who wish to be able to deduct those donations on their tax returns. It also means that in most cases we are exempt from paying tax on purchases we make for doing the business of the organization. Further, we have an obligation to use a significant portion of our income for educational and charitable purposes. Our scholarship program in which we provide funds for members to do academic work, particularly if it relates to Scottish history and culture, is a major way in which we do this. Other grants & awards may be available for special member projects via application to the FOBII board.
41. **Where does the leadership of FOBII come from?** We are an all-volunteer organization. We have no paid staff. All of our business is taken care of by members who volunteer/contribute their time and skills to make FOBII work. For example, should we have a need for legal counsel, there are professional attorney members who have provided this for us on a “pro bono” basis, such as maintaining our tax status, our corporate status, and insuring copyright on materials we may publish. Further, many within our organizational leadership cadre have contributed substantial quantities of their personal resources – money, time, professional skills, etc. – to serve the needs of FOBII and its members. They do this because they are committed to our organizational goals and find a great deal of personal satisfaction and non-monetary reward by being involved in being Scottish and a Bruce.
42. **How can I become involved with and contribute to FOBII?** First of all, become a member. Fill out an applications form and send it in to our national secretary along with our quite modest membership fee. You will receive an extensive new member packet along with our E-Magazine, the “Blue Lion” and an invitation to involve yourself in FOBII activities. Second, make yourself known to the leadership. Your local games host and regional commissioner will be good people to get started with. Come and participate with us at our annual general membership meeting and introduce yourself to our national leadership at that event. Third, volunteer your interest and skills. We will make use of them.
43. **Have you seen the movie “OUTLAW KING” about “The Bruce”? Is it good history? How accurate is it?** This film is a made for television production by Netflix. There is considerable difference of opinion about its content and the following is my take on it. The scenery is wonderful. All scenes were shot on location in some of the best countryside Scotland has to offer. The technical and artistic cinematography is very well done. Most of the cast are well known UK, and in particular Scots, performers and I was quite impressed by their skill. My reservations are based on the fact that this film is based on just a short period in the life of King Robert and is inevitably prone to being “out of context”. I would likely be misled in a number of instances if I did not already know the whole of the historic context. I fear that many movie goers will get a distorted image of the “hero king” as a result. Further, it seems to me that many of the scenes are too limited in scope, minimizing their size and impact. That being said, the costuming, weapons, locations and staging seem accurate and the acting quite well done. All in all it is worth viewing, possibly more than once, as I have done. One would hope that it would inspire the viewer to discover a more complete image of King Robert and his place in Scottish history.
44. **I have noticed that many who are listed on the Blue Lion’s leadership page have the letters “FSA Scot” after their names. What is that all about?** These letters are an academic designation and stand for “Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland”. This is an old, respected and honored academic society which promotes research and study into the archeology and anthropology of Scotland. One must be nominated for membership by a current member and be later elected to membership by membership vote. I have had the honor to nominate several individuals for membership, and before I do that I require that the person hold at least one post graduate degree (Masters or Doctorate) and have demonstrated significant personal involvement in the studies the society promotes. Others may have more lenient standards. Membership dues are used to provide research grants, and the academic papers which result are published each year in a hard bound edition called “PROCEEDINGS”.
45. **Several of the FOBII members I have encountered wear a simple wooden heart attached around the neck with a rawhide cord. What is that all about?** These are persons who have been honored for significant long term service to the name and family of Bruce through membership in “The Forty Bowmen of

Saint Sebastian” through the organization “Strathleven Artizans” located in Scotland. Contact the FOBII secretary or BLUE LION editor for more information about this honorary designation.

From time to time you will be asked questions that no one could possibly anticipate, and others on topics for which special expertise is needed. As an historian and teacher, I relish getting into complex historical questions. However, if someone should ask about “The Water Of Life”, otherwise known as Scotch Whisky, I would be at a loss to do other than refer them to an expert on that subject (and there are many who have worked very hard to make themselves expert on that particular subject). Referral is something we should not hesitate to do. If someone asks a question we cannot answer adequately or at all, we should simply state “I do not know, but I will find out”. We are fortunate in the Family of Bruce organization, to have all manner of experts who can help field the difficult questions. Pass them on to the Blue Lion editor or to me and we will find the right person to answer. Interacting with the public can be a lot of fun. I enjoy meeting and talking with young people, especially those with “counter-culture” tendencies, visiting scholars and dignitaries. I have little doubt that you will find your own favorites and that fielding questions will become one of the most enjoyable ways you can contribute to our family. We all can do it. I often have all sorts of people, particularly newer FOBII members, and those visiting us at Scottish events, ask me questions about things “Scottish”. The listing above are some of those questions and the answers I typically give. In January of 2008, I wrote a series of answers to many of these questions which have been published in the Blue Lion and distributed to many guests at Scottish events ever since. The above should be considered a revision and update to that earlier document, with some new things added. I wish to caution the reader that at least some of these are my own answers/opinions and not all of them should be considered as “official FOBII positions”. For many of you these questions and answers will seem very elementary, but persons new to our Scottish and Bruce communities need to learn these things, and for others it should be a good “refresher”.

I wish to acknowledge the cooperation of Deborah Bruce Gottlieb and Thomas Allen Bruce, who both contributed significantly to this document, and also Don Bruce and Rod Bruce who did the “proofing”.

Digital “E” copies of this document can be had by contacting the FOBII USA secretary.

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