



Reviresco
We will rise again

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Vice Chair: Ross McEwen

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Canada: Maggie McEwan

Committee Members:

Duncan McEwan

Herma Goosens

Clan MacEwen Society Newsletter

Commander's Message



"As well as untold volumes of misery, this peculiar pandemic has brought some unexpected benefits. It is surely a good thing that the work done by nurses, shop-workers, delivery drivers, rubbish collectors and so on is respected more than ever, that problems such as homelessness are now known to be solvable and that - perhaps - it is accepted that world leaders with two 'X' chromosomes deal with medical crises better than the other lot. But it might be that the most important and longest-lasting gain to emerge from the crisis will prove to be a general re-acquaintance with nature, with her rhythms and everyday delights, with the wonders of birdsong, with slowness and colour, the land and community. Our Clan is of course inextricable from the natural world and we honour nature in all our doings. Although by now a worldwide Clan, we belong to Loch Fyne, we belong to the land. We pay official respect to our woodland friends, the oak and the yew, and our tartan is like an abstract painting of the hills we call home. "We shall rise again" is the translation of our motto that I was always taught, and so we shall, like the blasted oak, like the flowers of the meadow waiting under snow for springtime. Our patience - waiting more than 500 years to recognise a successor to Swene MacEwen, our most recent Chief - will deserve to be held up as an example to other Clans, to Scotland and the world - it is never too late to right a wrong. We know we are doing the right thing, restoring the Chiefship, because we know that our ancestors felt as we do; we are all one with nature: indeed, we belong to Loch Fyne."

Chairman's Message

Greetings to All,

Life in Kilfinan is slowly returning back to a "New Normal", and while we have not had the chance to get together as a Clan, I know that everyone has been keeping in contact with kin as much as possible and I look forward to welcoming each and everyone back to our beloved homeland. The efforts of the Key Workers throughout the world have really made a huge impact and we should remember their contributions not only during times of hardship but also during times of prosperity.

Our Motto "Reviresco" still rings true, and we as a clan will "Rise Again" and "Grow Stronger" during the coming months and years. Our endeavor to regain our Chief is progressing in a positive direction and we will once again be seated at the table. As new information becomes available, I will surely be posting the news. I am truly thankful of all the members and your support to the Clan and Society over the years, as I know this has been a very arduous process.

The coming months for the Clan and Society will be one of continued growth and prosperity. May the ancestors smile on us as we continue to nurture the flame.

Reviresco!

Sean McCuin

Seannachie to Sir John McEwen, Commander of Clan MacEwen



From the Editors

Ewan and Pauline Rowland

Hello, we are the new editors and hope that we can match the high standard already set by Sean and Sandra McCuin. We now live on the Rosneath Peninsula, Argyll and Bute on the western side of the country. This brings us closer to where our son lives, in Helensburgh. He and his sister are now paid up members of the Society. We, in fact, gifted them their membership, which for those thinking ahead for ideas for Christmas or Birthday presents can get them from the online shop. Each Membership comes with a stunning certificate.

My mother, Janet MacEwan was one of eleven children living in a small town south of Glasgow, called Strathaven. She qualified as a nurse and joined the Queen Alexandra Nurses and served on the frontline in the North Africa Campaign as a theatre sister. Following the war, she and her husband (also serving with the RAF in N. Africa) ended up on the Isle of Man where I was brought up with my older sister. My mother, a proud Scot, never forgot her heritage and I accompanied her on many occasions when she returned to Scotland to meet up with her family. I have vivid memories of being kitted out by her in a kilt, sporran, and jacket whenever we went to special places. It is funny how things come round again, as I am now proud to own and wear the Clan Tartan whenever the opportunity arises.



I was encouraged by my father to become involved in music and I taught myself to play the flute. This led me into playing in a folk band - fond memories!! I use my music today not to entertain others but to amuse myself. My passion now includes playing the Scottish Small Pipes, a softer and more mellow version of the Highland Bagpipes. My other passion is sailing, and I am looking forward to getting back on the water when circumstances allow.

Hi, I'm Pauline and a Lancashire Lass. I was born and grew up in Warrington and left home to be trained as a primary school teacher in Nottingham, where I met Ewan. After marrying in the early 70s, we secured our first teaching posts in the Blackburn area of Lancashire. Throughout our careers we have been involved in some form of education. Our two grown up children, Thea and Adam, were born in the 80s, by which time we were living in Rossendale, a rural and hilly part of Lancashire. I became a deputy head teacher and by the late 90s was in an advisory post with a local education authority. By the early noughties I secured a position in a NW of England university as a senior education lecturer, but the daily commute became too much, so because of this I decided to work nearer to home. I accepted a post as a Higher Education tutor, supporting mature students, who were undertaking part time degrees. From here I took early retirement in 2011 and have since become a lady of leisure developing interests in watercolour and acrylic painting, Pilates, family history and the delights of Scotland!

We are delighted to be involved with and support the Clan MacEwen Society and being part of the evolving history and culture of Scotland and the wider diaspora of the MacEwens. We look forward again to meeting up with you in the not too distant future.

The newsletter helps to bring us all together and we sincerely hope that you all have a chance to input to its content with stories about your families past and present. We also would like to highlight those MacEwens who have made contributions to our lives through either, the arts, science, literature, medicine, and military events. Of course, we should never forget those who made a massive contribution to all our lives, the service men and women of the armed forces.

We look forward to your contributions!

Looking ahead....

Family Tree: we are in the process of exploring ideas to compile an online Family Tree. We are hoping that individual contributions from Clan members will be collated and be able to be accessed through the website. If you have any suggestions on how this can be achieved, please contact info@ClanMacEwen.com.

Hogmanay 2020: We are hoping that circumstances will allow us to hold a 'Clan Hogmanay Celebration' at the Kilfinan Hall on December 31st. Please let us know your thoughts on this and if you would be interested in attending, via info@ClanMacEwen.com. Further details of this proposed event will be posted on the website in the forthcoming weeks, all of which will be subject to Government COVID 19 restrictions and guidelines.

Meet The Chiefs: Ross is undertaking interviews with other Clan Chiefs to gain an insight into their chieftainships and related histories. We look forward to this becoming a regular feature in future editions.

USA



On behalf of every Clan MacEwen Society member in the USA, we bring you greetings and best wishes...Slainte'!

For many, 2020 has been a year of change. January saw the U.S. arm of the Society kick off the new year with our participation in the Central Florida Highland Games. In past years we would by now be in the very midst of the Highland Games and Festivals season, enjoying the chance to gather as fellow Scots, greeting old and making new friends, and immersing ourselves in the myriad opportunities for fun, fellowship and cultural learning these events offer. Unfortunately, this year has seen many gatherings cancelled, but we remain optimistic that 2021 will bring a new and even more enthusiastic offering of events, and we will continue to update members as to where and when these events will be taking place. In the meantime, you can find out the status of your many of your favourite Games and Festivals online at www.asgf.org/games-by-date and the site is updated regularly. A few of the upcoming events in which Clan MacEwen had planned to participate but which now have been postponed to 2021 include: Virginia Scottish Games & Festival, Middle Tennessee Highland Games, Swamp Fox Highland Games & Festival, Dandridge Scots-Irish Festival and the Charleston Highland Games.

Still determined to have some Highland fun? Want to introduce your children to the spirit of the Highland Games? Have your own socially distanced "event" at home! Here are some fun ideas to incorporate the feeling of the Games for your family and a few friends:

1. The "Caber-noodle" toss – using plastic tie wraps, bundle four to six foam swim noodles together. This is your caber! Appoint an unbiased "judge" let participants toss the caber! (If your family is super competitive rules for judging the quality of the toss may be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caber_toss) Remember, the idea is to have fun, so gentle judging is encouraged especially for younger participants.
 2. The "Pillowcase sheaf" toss – stuff a pillowcase with loose foam (easy to find in the craft departments of Walmart, Michael's, Jo-Ann's, etc.). Tie the pillowcase at the top. Using one of the caber-noodles, have two adults rest each end of the noodle on one hand to create the "bar." Height of the bar can be determined by the size and age of participants...the younger the participant the lower the bar. The object is to toss the "sheaf" over the bar without knocking the bar off. The highest successful toss wins, and each round the bar is raised slightly higher. Since arming your family and friends with pitchforks may be ill advised (especially those who may have enjoyed a wee bit of the highland nectar before or during these games), we recommend using a snow shovel. For those of you in the sunny South who may not own such a thing, you can also play using a double handed underhand toss starting below the knee and ending at the waist.
 3. The "Kilted" three-legged race – is a good way to burn off energy and work up an appetite for the Backyard Highland Games picnic. Using a bedsheet, bath towel, or any sufficient length of fabric create a kilt by pleating and tying the "kilt" around participants' waist. (You can also wear your tartan kilt for this event, but grass stains aren't always easy to remove!) With participant teams standing side by side at the race starting line, loosely tie their two middle legs together. When the judge yells start, have the teams race toward the finish line with the first to cross the line declared the winner. This is particularly humorous for spectators when the teams include persons of disparate height...when this is an adult and child, remember to pace your strides to the smallest team member. Not enough family members for teams? You can do this race for time, repeating it as often as you wish (and energy allows) for your best time.
 4. The post Games picnic – pick a shady "après Games" spot and enjoy a post-Games picnic. Favourite games food (at least in the South) include such tried-and-true yummys as fried chicken, Scotch or deviled eggs, chips or veggies and dip, crackers and cheese, and of course brownies, lemon bars or cookies...all of which are eaten with the fingers!
- Whatever you choose for fun in the coming months, enjoy the spirit of the Clan and know that we MacEwens remain strong and vigilant and will grow and gather again! **Reviresco!**

CANADA



Welcome to our newest member – Colin McEwan from our West Coast.

Fergus Highland Games in August of 2019 was our only venture into Highland Games participation last year and this year we intended to repeat our presence at Fergus plus 3 or 4 smaller Games. We all know what happened.

The Fergus management decided to show a Wee Digital Ceilidh ...and I quote – ‘an extraordinary festival for an extraordinary time’. We were delighted to be invited by the organisers to participate in a video message featuring several other clans that have presence in Canada. Our UK-based Vice-Chairman Ross M. McEwen recorded his greeting video on behalf of Clan MacEwen, expressing our sincere regret that so many events had to be cancelled. His short message also included recognition of the love, care and effort around the world which is put into ensuring Scottish heritage and Clan culture continues to live as healthy a life as possible.

The Wee Digital Ceilidh itself was, indeed, an extraordinary festival. It encompassed the 3 days that would normally be the 3 Festival days. Friday’s video, which was dedicated to lives lost to COVID-19, showed the ancient ceremony The Lighting of the Hearth and was followed by a welcome from Festival President Dave Radley. It was set in the natural gorge in Fergus where the Grand River flows through the centre of town and provided scenic splendour to this ageless ceremony.

Saturday’s video included a spirited performance by Albannach...the band that was scheduled to appear in the beer tent. There were five categories to choose from - each one showing performances and most including a teaching segment. HEAVIES PIPES AND DRUMS HERITAGE DANCE and PERFORMANCES.

A unique element of this Digital Ceilidh was a special message from The Lord Lyon, King of Arms who presided at the opening ceremony of the 2019 Fergus Festival. This year he sent a special message of congratulation and encouragement for organizing this Digital Ceilidh and thus sustaining the spirit and celebration of this traditional event.

The Wee Digital Ceilidh may be seen on YouTube

Join us on August 13 – 15, 2021 when Fergus Highland Games will be celebrating its delayed 75th anniversary. It will be lovely to have an even larger MacEwen presence than in 2019.

With optimism for the Clan’s future in Canada.

Maggie McEwan



AUSTRALIA



"It's been a very quiet quarter for the clan society here in Australia. COVID19 has ground all of our regular activities and festivals to a halt and like the rest of the world we are waiting with baited breath for a vaccine or for a way to carry on with life in this new "normal." While, as a country, we were doing well about a month ago, a second wave has now started in Victoria and seems to be spreading all the way up the East Coast into NSW and Queensland as well. As far as we can tell all events are cancelled this year and postponed indefinitely for the foreseeable future.

On a personal note my wife and I have had the great privilege to welcome our second son Caedan into this crazy world just a couple of days ago. Mum and bub are both doing really well and it is a joy to see our little branch of the Clan grow!"



CONGRATULATIONS on behalf of the MacEwen Clan to Chris and Marilee on their new addition to the Clan Family!!



“Lest We Forget”

In the last edition of the newsletter reference was made to the VE Day celebrations and as we approach Armistice Day on November 11th, we would like to highlight the bravery of the MacEwens’ who served in WW1 and WW2. To this end we call on the Clan to send in accounts of family members, who were involved in those wars, along with photographs, if available, to info@ClanMacEwen.com. If there is a good response we will print these biographies in the future quarterly editions of the newsletter. My mother, Janet MacEwan, was one of those who volunteered whom I referenced in the editorial.



Our research showed that 690,000 Scots served during WW1, 65% of those Scots volunteered between 1914-16 compared with 52% in the rest of the UK. It was estimated that between 75,000 and 182,000 Scots died across the whole of the war. (source: Ewen Cameron, Prof of Scottish History at the University of Edinburgh).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission list over 200 MacEwens who were killed in action. They left their homes in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK to fight in the ‘war to end all wars’. At a time when the Clan is re-building to take its rightful place among Scotland’s unique cultural heritage, we should also pause a while to remember those who fought to protect and maintain its future.

Although our focus is about the MacEwens, we **must also remember** the **unknown** soldiers in a ‘foreign field’.

SGT Eion MacEwen 5th Scottish Parachute Regiment – WW2

We start our ‘roll of honour’ with an account of the part Eion played in WW2. Listen to the podcast of his heroic involvement starting off by enlisting with the Black Watch 3rd Regiment before joining the Parachute Regiment. Listen to the rest this fascinating account of his exploits from training to engaging with the enemy in a podcast which can be accessed in the Members area of the Clan MacEwen website (by kind permission of Paul Cheal).

He served in France, Greece, Singapore and Indonesia. The podcast reveals some revelations about the war. You’ll hear about how he encountered the Greek resistance fighters. A fascinating account.



Eion (left) in his para uniform and (right) the late Eion with the Legion D’honneur and other medals.



'Neil McEwen's Story' by Sara



Neil often entertained his daughters and friends with army ditties; heading out the door & patting himself while rhyming ...spectacles, testicles, watch and wallet. And singing marching songs, ...Aunty Mary had a canary, up the leg of her drawers.... In the late 1960s, I recall Dad happy in military conversation at the kitchen table of our Vancouver apartment with my boyfriend of the time who was training to be a soldier. Behind them my mother, silently fuming, banged the pots & pans. The scene is a memorable childhood recollection of my parents, both who rarely shared actual events of World War II as citizens of a country that was at war with Germany & Russia from 1939 to 1945. Betty recovered from the war holding her experiences close to her chest; bombings in Birmingham, separation and widowhood from her first marriage & raising a baby alone.

50 years later in 2013, I waited with the patient anticipation of a genealogist for my Dad's war services record. Having paid my 30 pounds to the British Army War Records Office, I waxed curious about what little I knew of Dad's time as a British soldier. His handwritten lifetime address list includes exotic locations from his time in the military. What had he been doing in Algiers, North Africa in 1943? How did he end up in Arnhem,

Netherlands? How did he become a glider pilot?

Described in enlistment records as a fit 25 year old Scottish agricultural student from his parental home on Marchmont Road in Ayr, Neil joined up in May 1940. He was in trim shape, 5'7", 142 lbs. So, the British Army assigned him initially, with a fitness designation of class "A", to the 25th Medium & Heavy Training Regiment (Royal Air Force).

As Neil, now Army number 983111, was in his early training in the regiment in England, another significant event was taking place in nearby, Northampton. Betty Maravan-Williams gave birth to daughter Felicity Anne Elizabeth on December 27, 1940. Fate & luck would bring them all together before the war's end.

Internet accounts suggest that there was a tussle between the Army & the Airforce for the men assigned to the gliding role. Eventually the army assumed responsibility for thorough training in all aspects of war, while the airforce trained the airmen. Neil appears to have spent the first 3 years of service at various English military bases. In that time, he qualified as a C/M Radio Mech. III. & served in Royal Army Ordnance Corps, Army Air Corps.

Still in class A fitness shape, in July 1942 he was posted to the 1st Glider Pilot Regiment training course #8. Neil trained in & flew a variety of aircraft; DH 82A, Magister, Hotspur II and Horsa gliders. Night flights, aerobatics, local and instrument flights, & formation flying are meticulously recorded entries in his own hand in his flight record book.

In 1943 he was shipped out to North Africa and spent 4 months there in a Prison Camp, Olive Grove, Kairouan & Stadium, Algiers. A single handwritten scrap of memory of his return by boat to England was in his final effects.

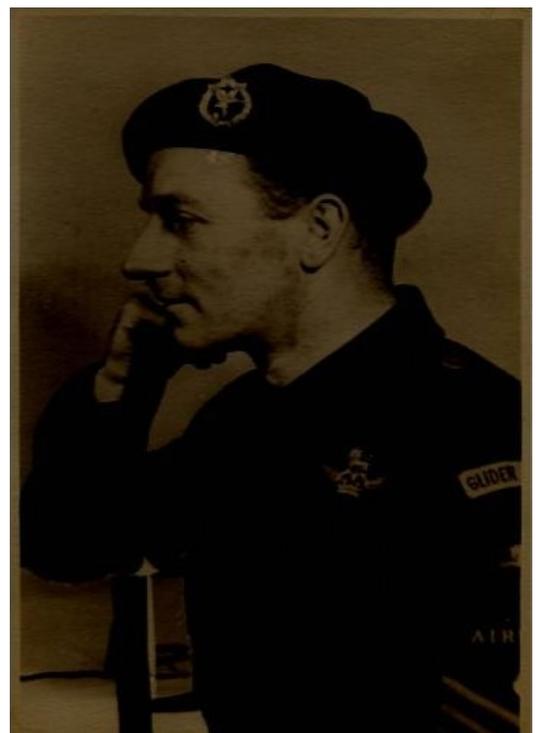
"Coming back from North Africa in (December) '43 we were rammed by an escort ship and had to put back to Gibraltar for repairs. Can't remember what ship I was on, but I think the...might have been the Bedford rings a bell. Tho' this could be the ramblings of a senior."

Coincidentally, forty years earlier Neil's father Hugh had sailed to South Africa and taught there. I like to speculate that Neil's inclination to see the world through the military might have been inspired to some degree by his father's journey.

Neil rose steadily through the ranks of non-commissioned soldiers; private to corporal to sergeant in early 1943. Neil was promoted to Staff Sergeant as a senior pilot in his glider squadron in 1944.

Neil's final wartime engagement was the Battle of Arnhem, Operation Market Garden, a disastrous failed attempt by the British Liberation Army to free Holland from German occupation. He airlifted out on September 18, 1944 and landed near Arnhem, Holland. Wounded (some say by crash landing, some say gunshot), he was taken in by a Dutch family, and evaded capture for 11 days before being one of the last soldiers evacuated to England. During this time, he is credited with heroically saving the life of his co-pilot and regimental friend, Walter Langham. The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945.

From a fit class A start in the military, Neil, almost 30 years old, was discharged in August 1945, declared unfit for any form of future military service. No doubt, this was due to the physical and psychological toll of his battle experience. Family lore describes Neil as, mentally in shaky condition as he convalesced at Sandford Military Auxiliary Red Cross Hospital in Birmingham, England an annex to Peripheral Nerve Injuries Unit of Queen Elizabeth Hospital.



Neil's Story-Continued

In addition to the baldly described nature of his military discharge, there's an important notation of the quality of Neil's time defending his country. Neil's military character in discharge was rated Exemplary. He had been diagnosed with brachialplexus lesion of the spine and carried permanent wartime wounds. Despite surgeries & treatments he suffered lifelong chronic pain.

However, Neil surely had luck on his side; survival of rammings and crashes and gunfire, an evacuee rather than prisoner of the Germans, and in his last year as a soldier, a wartime romance. While convalescing at the hospital, he met and fell in love with his physiotherapist, Betty Maraven-Williams. He said that after meeting her, he never looked at another woman in his life. In hospitals run by the Red Cross, physiotherapy was considered important for recovering soldiers. Widowed from her first unhappy marriage, Betty married Neil in July 1946 in Birmingham. Felicity was flower girl at the wedding. Neil became a step-father and fathered two children, Sara and Mary. The couple remained together for more than 50 years.

Plucky Dad survived 5 years of dutiful military service, culminating in a battle so fierce that thousands of compatriots were wounded, died or taken prisoner. Small wonder he was always ready to take a chance, betting on anything that moved, dogs, footballers and horses as leisure pursuits.

Luck had served him well.

His childhood village Minishant in the heart of an agricultural region was the scene of the Foal and Horse Shows for many years. Neil remained devoted to the horse races all his life. Minishant school was close to the village racing stable and I can't help but surmising that a different form of schooling might have occurred there for him in what was a well known local meeting place for men and boys.

Neil, after service to his country in WW2 returned to Auchincruve and completed his training in dairying. Leading to employment with Scottish Milk Records Association in Ayrshire.

Though angry that he had missed the chance to serve at D-Day in June 1944, Dad, recalled that his war service was the time in his life when he felt the most alive. He formed long distance, abiding camaraderie's with surviving soldiers and pilots. While sharing little of his actual experiences, he maintained an active lifelong membership in the Canadian Legion. Encouraged by his daughters he sent for his war service medals and wore them with pride at Remembrance Day ceremonies at the Vancouver Cenotaph, before retiring to his local Legion to swap tales over beers with comrades. He never flew a plane again.

The father I knew continued his exemplary life in peacetime dedicated to his spouse and family, church, community, and country after the war. I believe that service to others was one of his best ways of showing love.

Family lore tells of three destinations Neil and Betty considered for post war emigration in 1952: New Zealand, Tanganyika, and Canada. I gratefully speculate that Neil might have chosen Canada as the most peaceful option following his turbulent, wartime life. He remained a responsible, humble, peaceful man, occasionally lucky at the horses and lotteries and Legion meat draws until his death at 83 years in 1997.

"No man's life can be encompassed in one telling. There is no way to give each year its allotted weight, to include each event, each person who helped to shape a lifetime. What can be done is to be faithful in spirit to the record and try to find one's way to the heart of the man."

Mahatma Gandhi

Sara E McEwen (Canadian Society Member) December 12, 2015, updated June 2020.



Kilfinan Egg

The Kilfinan Egg – the personal recollections of a child who met Mountbatten briefly in 1942.

During the war years, Sheena Simpson lived with her parents Jean and Adam Campbell, at Kilfinan Hotel in the little parish of Kilfinan near Tighnabruaich on the shore of Loch Fyne. She now lives in Canada with her family but reminisces about a VIP guest, who arrived at the hotel in February 1942.

It was early in the month and her mother had just had a visit from Major Harrap and another officer informing her that the hotel was to be commandeered for about 10 days, while a Combined Operations exercise took place. She was also told that, on the final days of the exercise, they would be receiving, for breakfast, a VIP guest with his equerry. Mother almost fainted. She was so sure it was going to be King George. 'Only royalty have equeries!' she gasped, to which I replied: 'No mother, I think it will be Lord Louis Mountbatten.' This made sense to me as it was to be a Combined Operations exercise and Mountbatten was the top man.

There was quite a buzz in the hotel that week with MPs guarding the doors and lots of saluting and stamping of feet every time an officer went past. It was like something out of a British movie. Lord Mountbatten arrived in a jeep type vehicle and wore regular naval uniform, whereas most of the other officers were in battle dress with warm sheepskin jerkins on. The weather that February was very cold. Other VIPs that met at the hotel on that final day of the exercise with Mountbatten were General Alexander, General Festing, Air Marshall Harris and also the War Minister at that time, Sir James Grigg. The hotel didn't need too much preparation for our visitors but the dining room was rearranged to accommodate everyone for the final breakfast. There were two sittings, first the lesser ranking officials and then approximately 20 to 30 top brass. I was very impressed with the concern and courtesy shown to mother and myself by the big wigs. We were provided with help for serving from General Festing's servant and he was just super at his job.

The hotel had been issued with extra rations, so we were able to make bacon and eggs for everyone, much to Lord Mountbatten's delight. Later on that afternoon, Mountbatten and his equerry came back on their own, looking for a very quick cup of tea. As the kettle was going to take too long to boil, Lord Mountbatten decided to have a small ginger ale instead. This I got from the bar. Mother was getting in a flap having this handsome, charming, courteous man, in a naval uniform, with all the gold braid of an Admiral, actually in her kitchen. It was all getting too much for her. Mountbatten's equerry asked how much was owed for the ginger ale. Mother laughed and coyly said 'Oh nothing, nothing at all.' To me all of 17 years, this seemed unfair and I piped up politely, 'I think it's thruppence ha'penny.' This said, Mountbatten's aide produced the exact change.



Caption Lord Louis Mountbatten addressing men of No. 6 Commando before the Adour Estuary raid, Apr

At this point they asked if we had any eggs which they could buy – there was only one! The egg was produced, this time no charge, and was carried away by Lord Mountbatten in his leather gloved hand. All this constitutes a picture, which is clearly etched on my memory and I often wonder if the Kilfinan Hotel egg made it back whole to the destroyer anchored out on Loch Fyne. We were all worn out by the end of the week and everything seemed so quiet. Later that year was the raid on Dieppe with Mountbatten in charge. I wonder if that week's exercise had all been part of the training.

Why was Kilfinan Hotel used for such a VIP gathering? Maybe because it was out of the way, yet at the heart of Combined Operations Training Area and not far from the Loch. Many VIPs visited Argyll during the period to watch newly developed amphibious landing training methods.

The No 1 Combined Training Centre at Inveraray, specialised in amphibious assault techniques and the army base at Ardlamont, Loch Fyne, received over a quarter of a million servicemen and women for training during the early to mid 1940s. Many of them returned to Argyll over the years to honour the memory of their comrades who did not return from the field of conflict.

From an article spotted by Maggie McEwen of Canada and committee member, called, 'Mountbatten – The early Years' – Chief of the Combined Operations Command 1941 -1943.

Permission to use this extract was given by Geoff Slee from the COMBINED OPERATIONS website.

Netherlands

The Dutch Famine



“De Hongerwinter” 1944-1945

The Netherlands suffered a great famine in the winter of 1944-1945 also known as “*De Hongerwinter*.” It was the result of the lost Battle of Arnhem (1944), when allied forces failed to liberate the northern provinces of the country. A German blockade cut off food and fuel shipments and especially the densely populated western provinces north of the great rivers suffered greatly during the very harsh winter. Thousands of Dutch citizens starved or froze to death. Tulip growers had not planted tulip bulbs that year. They were stocked on farms throughout the country. The Dutch authorities decided to use these stocks as food for the starving populations. The old, dry tulip bulbs were sold in grocery stores and the recipes were published in the newspapers. The tulip bulbs were nutritious and relatively easy to cook, so less fuel was needed. However the war bulbs were old and dry and did not taste like fresh tulips. A fresh tulip bulb has a sweet, milky flavour that is actually not very bad. The war bulbs had a very bitter and dry taste instead. But real hunger makes you eat everything you can get, even old, dry tulip bulbs. Many affected people survived thanks to soup kitchens and later in winter the Red Cross, Operation Manna and Chowhound came to our aid with the help of the US Army Air Force. The Dutch Famine ended in 1945 with the liberation by the Allies. Before that the occupying Germans allowed coordinated air drops of food over occupied Dutch territory by the Royal Airforce, and the Royal Canadian Air Force .
Additional information provided by Wikipedia.

The Dutch Resistance Museum in Amsterdam has a folder with another recipe for tulip bulb soup in its possession. That recipe also hammers on the importance of removing the germ before preparing the bulbs. The bulbs are then boiled until done, drained and mashed, and the soup is finished by adding vegetables, salt and (surrogate) spices.
Before eating any plant, please make sure they have not sprayed with chemicals and make sure they are edible and not toxic.

Original WWII Tulip bulb soup

First recipe from the folder issued by the Food Agency in The Hague, published January 1945

1. Cleaning tulip bulbs

Peel the tulip bulbs, cut them in half and remove the yellow germ and hard, bad parts.

2. Ingredients

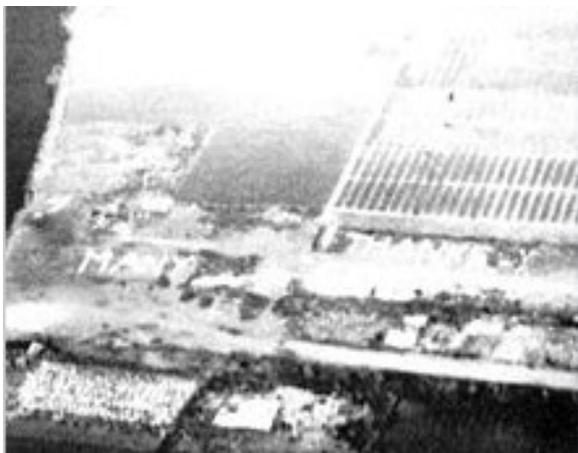
1 liter water, 1 onion, four or five tulip bulbs, aroma, salt, 1 teaspoon oil, surrogate curry powder.

3. Directions

Chop the small onion and fry in oil together with the surrogate curry to a light brown. Add water and aroma. Bring the soup to the boil. Grate the cleaned tulip bulbs above the boiling liquid. Cook a little longer while stirring and finish with some salt.

Do we eat tulip bulb soup nowadays? No, definitely not! This is not easily put on the menu, because of the horrific story behind it. The famine has had a huge impact on Dutch society. Dutch children are still raised with the words: you are not hungry, you only have appetite. Nowadays we definitely prefer to have our national symbol in a vase and not on a plate.

Herma Goosens



Operation Manna - “Many Thanks” written in tulips
May 1945



British Troops serving Dutch children food at a
St Nicholas party 7 December 1944

Netherlands

Dutch Breakfast Cake / peperkoek



There's no need to go out and dig up your tulip bulbs to get an authentic taste of Holland, because Herma Goosens has brought you this delicious recipe to try out.

Dough

100 gr (½ cup) sugar
 275 gr (¾ cup) clear honey
 1¼ dl (½ cup) water
 350 gr rye flour
 ¼ to ½ tsp salt
 3 Tbsp dark castor sugar
 1 Tbsp (15 gr) baking powder
 3½ tsp mixed spices (see below)
spices (everything powdered, together 1 Tbsp plus ½ tsp)
 1 tsp each of [cardamom](#) en kaneel
 ½ tsp ginger
 ¼ tsp each of cloves, nutmeg and black pepper
 ⅛ tsp each of aniseed and coriander seed
And for the top oil or milk



Picture from [chefindisguise.com](#)

1. Put in a mixing bowl: rye flour, spices, baking powder, castor sugar and salt.
2. Put in a sauce pan: sugar, honey and water. Bring to a boil.
3. Mix dry and liquid ingredients with an electric mixer with dough hooks until you have a firm dough. You can't use your hands, because the dough initially will be very hot. Continue mixing (or kneading) for several more minutes.
4. Dress a cake tin with parchment baking paper and fill with the dough. Because that is very firm, start with depositing some dough in the corners of the tin, then add the rest. Smooth the top over with a wet spoon. Cover with cling film and leave to stand for at least twelve hours. You can keep the dough in the refrigerator, but that is not really necessary.

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 340 °F/170 °C. Remove the cling film and coat the surface with oil or milk if you want to. Bake the cake in the middle of the oven for about 60 minutes. Check after 45 minutes, because not every oven works in the same way. You can also bake with a lower heat (300-320 °F/150°C), for a little longer (70 to 90 minutes). Remove the cake from the oven, remove the baking paper and leave the cake to cool on a cake rack. (-160 °C), for a little longer (70 to 90 minutes).

To serve

Thickly spread with creamy butter! The crust is crunchy and firm, I love it that way. Spice cake keep for weeks if kept in an airtight box. Taste and structure will even become better with time. When you buy *peperkoek* in a shop, the crust is always soft. That is because the cake is wrapped tightly immediately after baking, so the moisture can not escape.

Variations

Replace 3½ tablespoons (75 gram) honey with 2½ tablespoons (40 gram) soft butter, and add 3 to 4 tablespoons chopped preserved ginger, hazelnuts, raisins or rock sugar.

These are your people

Clan MacEwen

By D.MacDonnell MacDonald

Part 1

The Otter Spit, a gravel bank that curves out from the eastern shore of Loch Fyne, is not listed among the scenic wonders of Argyll but it should be a mecca for all ancestors seeking MacEwens.

Among the clans of Argyll the MacEwens did little more than make their bow and walk off, but it is in the west that this clan had their place of origin.

As shown below, the Clan had more than one stronghold in the Kilfinan area. (Provided by Chris McEwen).

Cnoc Mhic Eoghainn

Most MacEwens are aware of the existence of Caisteal Mhic Eoghainn (Castle MacEwen) on the shores of Loch Fyne near the village of Kilfinan, however a great deal fewer are aware of the Clan's Northern Stronghold, Cnoc Mhic Eoghainn, situated on the Ballimore Estate, a former holding of the MacEwens of Otter and the seat of the Campbells of Otter (*Castles of the clans: the strongholds and seats of 750 Scottish families and clans*, Martin Coventry, Musselburgh, Scotland : Goblinshead, 2008).



The remnants of a medieval motte and bailey style castle This site is also on the shores of Loch Fyne a mere 20min walk from the Oiter (Sandbar) from which The MacEwens of Otter drew their name.

A motte and bailey was a fortification which “consisted of a wooden keep that was placed on a raised earthwork called a motte, overlooking an enclosed courtyard called the bailey.” (<https://www.castlesworld.com/tools/motte-and-bailey-castles.php> accessed 15/9/19). They were quick and relatively cheap to build and did not require the highly skilled labour that later stone castles required. This being said the constant upkeep required for a timber structure that

would inevitably rot away was such that, by the Middle Ages, the Motte and Bailey was falling out of use in favour for more permanent stone structures.

Cnoc Mhic Eoghainn is the remnants of one of these style castles. On maps the shape of the Motte and Bailey can be seen however when there in person it is the Motte which stands out the most. About 10m high, even now it is covered in forest, it has a commanding view of the Loch below. In its heyday the surrounding land would have been cleared of vegetation and it would have had a good view of the surrounding countryside as well.

Atop the motte there are now two stone structures. Obviously not original these structures date from the 19th Century and are the burial ground for the Campbells of Otter. There seems to be no evidence that any archaeological investigations have ever been undertaken at the site and it would be interesting to see what might be left in the earthworks.

References:

<https://canmore.org.uk/site/39967/cnoc-mhic-eoghainn>

<http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/SM3504>



Plaque above bricked up doorway.



Campbell of Otter building containing Gravestones.

These are your people
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One of the earliest families of incomers to push their way east from the seaboard became in time the Clan Ewen or Ewen of Otter. Eoghan nah- Oitreach. Like the Lamonts, MacLachlans and MacNeils, the Mac Ewens trace their descent from the kings of Ireland and claim a common ancestor, a 11th century prince Anradan Dunslebhe, who, according to the historians, was the youngest son of Oadha Alain, whose death is recorded in 1017, had two sons, Ferchard, ancestor of the main Lamontline, and Ewen, ancestor of the MacEwens.

We do not know if these forebears of the MacEwens had to fight their way ashore on the gravel beaches of Cowal to secure a footing to across Loch Fyne, but, certainly, they were following a well-trodden path, for this district is studded with the relics of earlier inhabitants: cairns, duns and standing stones.

At any rate, by the time the history of Scotland began to be written, they had taken root on a strip of the country along Loch Fyne, between the lands of the Lamonts to the south and those of the MacClachlans to the north where the terraced slopes look down on the Otter Spit. The Otter Spit beacon at the tip of the crescent of gravel, where the current scours a deep channel, is a landmark not only to those who sail these waters but also to those who travel by road. The ferry which once operated there is but a memory, and now the two shores at Otter Ferry are linked only by submarine power cables.

It is said that the MacEwens supported Sumerled in his stand against the Scottish crown's ambition to secure the western seaboard, and that they suffered severely when Alexander II mounted his expedition against Argyll in 1222.

The earliest chief of the clan on record was Ewen, who lived about 1200. Whether or not he too was a "young warrior" as his name suggests there is no knowing, but it is significant that he was succeeded about 1222 by Severan II, so he may have been killed fighting against the Scottish king's force. The names of the next two chiefs, or details of the troubles which beset their clansmen, are lost.

Gillespie, V of Otter, was chief about 1315, but once again there is no tradition to tell us if, like the chief of the Campbells, he supported Bruce or threw in his lot with the MacDougalls in opposition to the bitter end. He was followed by Ewen, John and Walter.

Then came Swene MacEwen, IX and last chief of the clan to hold the barony of Otter. In 1431-32 Swene granted a charter of Otter to Duncan son of Alexander Campbell and resigned his barony to James I but received it again from that king with remainder to Celistine Campbell, son and heir of Duncan Campbell of Lochow. Six years later, in 1493, after Swene's death, the king confirmed the grant to Archibald Earl of Argyll, and in 1513 the barony of Otter was confirmed to Colin, Earl of Argyll by James V. Thereafter the Loch Fyne lands are part of the history of the Campbells.

To Be Continued In The Next Edition

(This article was found amongst Ross's Grandfather's papers and was in the form of a cutting from the Highlander magazine and dates from 1983. Permission to reproduce the entire article was given by the Editor of the magazine).

Reviresco
We will rise again !

MacEwen Spotlight: 'Hullabaloo'

Those of you who are old enough and/or enjoy Scottish folk music will recognise the names Rory and Alex McEwen. Together, made their name on the folk music scene as a guitar and singing duo in the late 1950s and 60s. They were in fact, the first folk singers to visit and perform across the US. You knew you had made it when asked to appear on the Ed Sullivan Show, but to do it on consecutive nights was a rare accomplishment for any artists. It is said that Rory and Alex introduced Scottish Songs and Ballads to America and produced four record albums and EPs (for younger readers EPs are extended play vinyl records with usually 4-6 songs).

Rory (1932 – 1982) and Alex (1935 – 2008) were the fourth and fifth (respectively) of seven children of Sir Jock Helias Finnie McEwen (Gran-father to Sir John McEwen, Commander of Clan McEwen) and lady Bridget Mary McEwen and were brought up at the family home, Marchmont in the Borders. Rory and Alex's passion for music was influenced by their father, who loved Scottish songs. At the time Sir Jock was under-secretary of state for Scotland. Before embarking on their musical careers both young men enlisted as officers with the Cameron Highlanders, where Alex showed little regard for his own safety when defusing live bombs.



▲ Alex McEwen was the 6th Laird of Bardochat in Carrick and enjoyed a successful career as a folk singer in the 1950s and early 1960s. Photograph: Public Domain

At the end of their US concert tour Rory stayed with a family friend in New York, where he met his future wife, Romana who was the daughter of Alice Astor, a socialite. He and Romana were married in April 1958 and later had four children. Following their success in America Rory returned to the UK and Alex stayed on to take guitar lessons from the Revd 'Blind' Gary Davis, a blues and gospel singer and finger-picking-style guitarist. Back in the UK their career took off. In the mid-1950s the brothers performed in concerts across the UK, including three sell out concerts at the Edinburgh Festival, the Royal Festival Hall, and numerous folk clubs. Their performing CV also included the London Folk Club and TV shows. Between 1959 to 1963, Rory and Alex hosted a TV series called 'Hullabaloo', a mixture of folk and blues for a commercial TV company. Among their guests was the jazz singer George Melly, Dave Swarbrick (later of Fairport Convention), Bob Davenport and the Americans Dick Farina and

Carolyn Hester. On the back of the brothers' TV show success, Alex was given his own Scottish television show called 'Awhile', a showcase for blues, calypso and traditional Scottish ballads and folk songs. With the rise of pop music in the early 1960s, the brothers largely gave up performing in pursuit of other artistic passions.

Five years after his marriage in 1960 to the Countess Cecilia Weikersheim, Alex retired from performing and joined the John Menzies newspaper company, commuting from his home in the Borders to Edinburgh. Here he rose through the ranks to become personnel director. He retired at the age of 50 and moved from the Borders, to settle on the West Coast of Scotland, where he became a successful art dealer. After studying at an agricultural college, he also took up farming, first at Whiteside, on the Marchmont estate and then at Bardochat, Ayrshire and finally at Colmonel in Ayrshire. In December 2008 Alex died of a heart attack.



Rory has been described as a "polymath", since he was not only an accomplished musician but also a TV presenter, poet, sculptor, and painter. He also inspired young hopefuls such as Billy Connolly and Van Morrison with his guitar playing. He may best be remembered today for his amazingly beautiful paintings of flowers. He has been described as the greatest botanical painter of the 20th Century. Hundreds of his illustrations have been brought together to celebrate his work in a book called, 'Rory McEwen – The Colours of Reality'.

Martyn Rix (British botanical author) commented that,

"Rory McEwen's unique talent was to combine accuracy, elegance and superb technique in the same painting:



Rory explained, "I paint flowers as a way of getting as close as possible to what I perceive as the truth, my truth of the time in which I live."

In 1982 Rory, aged 50, was diagnosed with terminal cancer with two brain tumours, one of which pressed on his optic nerve causing him to see double. This led Rory to take his own life by throwing himself under a London underground train. From that time on, Alex never performed folk music again.

This snapshot of Rory and Alex was compiled from the following sources: Oxford Dictionary of National Biography 2005-2008; Wikipedia -Rory McEwen (artist);Telegraph 8th January 2009; BBC Introducing Arts – Folk superstar and truth-seeking artist: The real Rory McEwen;The Balladeers – Biographical; IMDb- Rory McEwen;The Guardian- A Scottish pioneer, art dealer and laird, he caused a stir in the US and

Christabel Holland (Rory's Daughter)– Rory McEwen Estate.

You can listen to their music by going to Youtube and typing in 'Alex and Rory McEwen songs'.



Membership Information

Since the Clan MacEwen Society was founded in 1977 (originally as the Clan Ewen Society) it has worked to bring together people in the name of shared heritage, history, culture as well as the curiosity over what happened to Clan MacEwen, where did it go, and when will 'it' return'. In the last 10 years the Society has grown beyond all recognition, now with a global membership appearing at Games and Events all across the world, an ever-increasing online following and at its head a fully engaged and active Executive Committee with representation from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Sir John McEwen is the Clan's first Commander in over half a millennia, and we are now seeing the Clan's long-awaited, and long-overdue return to Clan culture in a way I'm sure our ancestors never had imagined.

The Clan Society's ability to grow, create a platform for the Clan to thrive and expand, to attend events all over the world and to further support the pathway to Chiefship is enabled purely by its Membership. As the Clan Society has now evolved into a much more efficient and fast paced organisation, we want the same values of kinship, heritage, fun and progress to be reflected in our Membership. This is why after many months of discussion and work behind the scenes we are thrilled to be announcing some changes to how Society Membership will function.

These changes will bring the Society's Membership more into line with other Clan Societies and will not only help push the Society to achieve ever greater feats, but also we believe will bring us all together in a much more meaningful way and help continue to build our flourishing Clan MacEwen community.

In our next Clan MacEwen Society Newsletter we will lay out exactly how our Membership will function and over time we will add to it and work further with our Members to ensure the sky is the limit with what the Society can achieve.

We are a Clan, we are a family - together there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

Thank you for reading this latest Society Newsletter, we sincerely hope you enjoyed it and that you and your families are safe and healthy wherever you are.

