

THE CLAN EWEN SOCIETY *Bulletin*

No.4 — October 1980

This is the first Bulletin that has appeared for the combined Clan Ewen Societies of the British Isles and North America. I say British Isles, in case we have some members in the Republic of Ireland; actually we also have a few outside these territories, in Australia, New Zealand and the Continent of Europe; so the Society is really a World one.

Aspiring members in North America are asked to send their subscriptions to William MacEwen (address on last page), who will also deal with enquiries in that continent; they may also, of course, write directly to me if they wish. Willie has been assiduous in replying to enquirers, of whom there have been several, and our thanks are due to him.

Might I point out once again, especially to our North American subscribers, that I am attempting to keep the format of this Bulletin uniform, so that all your issues may eventually be bound? So do try and keep them, and remember we still have extra copies of the early issues (if you ask for them, enclose something to cover costs).

Keep us Informed!

May I appeal once again to any of our readers who might have news of any activities of interest to the Clan Ewen, to send me either a letter or a newspaper cutting. Such items can include family news, if you would like to see this included.

Also, I am exceedingly anxious to have any news regarding Ewen and McEwen ancestry in all countries of the world. There is no need to present this in a formal manner - you can simply write in a chatty letter with any items which have come to your attention. Such items for instance as emigration of a particular family to the New World or to Australia, and origins in Scotland of overseas families and families resident in the U.K.

Important Item

You will notice elsewhere in this Bulletin an announcement regarding the Scottish Gathering which is to take place in Edinburgh from 23rd to 30th May 1981.

This is a very important event and the Clan Ewen intends to have a stall at which various memorabilia relating to the Clan will be on sale - such things as Clan badges, Clan ties (in both old and new tartan), Clan crests and the regrettably long delayed reprint of R.S.T. MacEwen's 'History of Clan Ewen', bound I hope in Old McEwen Tartan.

We do very much want to have a good turnout at this event, especially by members of the Clan overseas, so will you kindly take note if it now and make your plans for a visit in good time.

Douglas M.C. MacEwan,

THE CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

Meeting of members will be held in the
Ewington Hotel, 132 Queens Drive, Glasgow,
on Saturday, 25th October, 1980
2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

A Clan Centre?

I think the extract below will be of interest to our readers. There has been no reply to my suggestion in the last Bulletin regarding a possible property near Otter Ferry, and this is not surprising because the amount involved in buying a property would be fairly high.

However, recently my wife and I were shopping around for a caravan to be sited on the Welsh border (rather nearer to us than Scotland), and we were rather surprised to find that we were able to get a very nice, 22ft caravan for £350 (\$840), and a site to put it on at a little over £80 (\$200) per year. It seems to me this could be an excellent way of

making a very modest start with a Clan property in the region of Otter Ferry, and as you see the amount involved could, in fact, be quite small.

From the (London) Times 7th April 1980

Clan collects its history under one roof

From Ronald Faux
Armadale, Skye

The seat of the clan Macdonald at Armadale Castle on Skye is a minor embarrassment to probably the oldest, largest and most famous of all Scottish clans.

For when Macdonalds arrive at Armadale from the four corners of the world in search of their roots, they are confronted by a decrepit pseudo-Gothic ruin which looks as though it is about to fall down.

Attached to it is a smaller and much older building which has been neatly restored as the Clan Donald Centre, where exhibitions and literature about clan history are on show.

A clan official admitted that most people were disappointed to see their clan seat, as it were, in tatters.

The castle was built in 1311 and restored after a fire in 1855. It had since fallen into disrepair.

There are 15,000 acres of clan Donald land around Armadale on Skye saved from sale on the open market after an appeal to clansmen all over the world raised £200,000. The oldest part of the castle was restored through the generosity of American Macdonalds and converted into the clan centre.

Mr Robert McDonald Parker, director of the centre, had emigrated from Glasgow to America

more than 20 years ago and returned recently.

"I hear there are three million Macdonalds around the world. The usual pattern is that the further a Scot moves from home the more conscious he is of being Scottish. I was certainly impressed that Scots overseas knew more about their country, their clan or their history than Scots at home", he said.

The clan had united to save the last remaining acres of clan Donald land which used to extend over a vast tract of Skye. The estate would be preserved and the buildings on it restored to create a museum, a clan library and a study centre.

A Book of Famous MacEwens/Ewens?

I think it would be very interesting for all our members to have a book devoted to members of the Clan who have distinguished themselves in various fields — the professions, the sciences, business, politics, the Armed Forces, etc. As I am a publisher, I could easily produce such a book.

May I ask for your help? First of all, if you have — or had — in your family anyone who achieved distinction, will you let me have particulars? You may possibly have a biography available from some source, e.g. a Times obituary, or the obituaries which are published by the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh (and, I believe, by several similar societies in Canada and Australia).

You may be willing to complete such a biography by adding to it your own recollections

or family traditions; or in fact to write a complete biography yourself. But kindly do not spend time doing so before writing. I would prefer that you should write to me first, and let me know about the person you have in mind.

I do not propose to fix any narrow limits on the length of biographies. Anything between 20 and 40 pages (say 10,000-20,000 words) will be acceptable. If, when I receive a biography, I feel it could be cut somewhat, without serious loss, I will edit it and refer back to the sender; similarly, if I feel it could be amplified, I will let the sender know.

I am interested of course, both in Clan members now living, and in those of previous generations. It may be possible to produce separate books for those two categories. In order to judge of these possibilities, it is important that I have as many names as possible now, even if biographies are not immediately available.

There is a further thing you can do which will be very helpful to me. If in your reading, you see a reference to a Clan member who has distinguished himself in some way, please let me have particulars. This may be, for instance, a reference in your local paper, in which case I would appreciate a cutting (if you don't want to cut it, you can usually get a photocopy made very cheaply).

Alternatively, it may be a passing reference in a book, something like "... an operation developed by the famous Glasgow brain surgeon, Sir William Macewen in 1895 ...". In this case, get down the name and dates of the person referred to, his profession, and the actual book reference (if possible with publisher — in this form: A History of Surgery, by J.B. Matlock, Allen & Unwin, 1947, p.139) All this is very easy to do, and will enable me to follow up the reference. Alternatively, just send a photocopy of

the page, with particulars of the book from which it is taken.

I think a collection of biographies of this sort (and maybe eventually several collections) will be a great source of interest and inspiration for all our members.

The MacEwens, by the way, after being ousted from their clan lands, became seannachies, or bards, to the Campbells, and several of them have composed Gaelic verses (they are mentioned in Prof. Derick Thomson's book on Gaelic poetry). Family traditions are very persistent, and I get the impression that many MacEwens have devoted themselves to intellectual pursuits with a moderate degree of distinction. I don't know whether this impression could be supported statistically! On the whole, fewer seem to have distinguished themselves in business or in the armed forces. Now try and prove me wrong!

D.M.C.M.

Family Happenings

I think it would be interesting to all our members to publish a column on family happenings affecting Clan members. May I ask for your collaboration? If you see any announcement — birth, marriage or death — in your local newspaper affecting a Ewen/MacEwen, will you cut it out and send it to me, adding the name and date of the paper? You needn't send a letter with it — it may then be sent as 2nd class/airmail or surface mail, at reduced cost.

You may also send your own (brief) announcements regarding members of your own family. All these announcements will constitute a useful source of information for future generations, if the Clan Ewen Bulletin eventually (as I hope) ends up as a bound volume.

D.M.C.M.

Meeting of 6th October 1979

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Black Bull Hotel, Killearn and attracted a good attendance of Members. A satisfactory Financial Report was submitted and approved. Colin McEwan was invited to fill the office of Seannachie which we are happy to report was accepted.

Meeting of 31st May 1980

At the Half-yearly Meeting held in Killearn, a sub-Committee was appointed to deal with all the arrangements for the 1981 International Gathering of the Clans to be held in Edinburgh during the last week of May 1981. Arrangements have been made to share a booth with the recently formed Clan McLachlan Society.

An invitation was accepted from David McEwan, Principal of the Glasgow College of Building and Printing to see a demonstration in the College on 1st October.

A.M.



International Gathering Scotland 1981

This is the first important general international event in Scotland since 1977 (that word excludes the music festivals). The Clan Ewen intends to be represented at it with a stall at which various Clan emblems and other items will be on sale (see the Editor's introduction).

The International Gathering Scotland 1981 will open with an International Burns Supper in January and will close with an International St. Andrew's Day Dinner in November. From Saturday, May 23rd and until Saturday, May 30th it will be based in Edinburgh. From June 1st to June 6th the visitors will

disperse to every corner of Scotland for further reunions throughout clan, family and home territories. Normally the Chiefs and Heads of Families are at home and pleased to welcome visitors of their original clan or family during the year. The Scottish Women's Rural Institutes are arranging for information contacts among their members throughout the country.

Overseas visitors will be given opportunities to share in the industrial, commercial and cultural achievements of 20th Century Scotland.

The underlying success of the 1977 International Gathering stemmed from the family atmosphere of the Ceilidhs, Dinners and Dances. The International Gathering Scotland 1981 will be based mainly on supporting what the appropriate organisations propose by way of functions for their visitors.

Although the central fortnight will make a strong appeal, there will be visitors for whom the attraction will be the annual and ongoing events taking place elsewhere at other times.

The full programme will provide a guide to other appropriate activities throughout Scotland during the whole of the season.

We especially ask our members and sympathisers overseas to make an effort to attend this rally. The stall will be open in Edinburgh from 23rd to 30th May, but we may organise a Clan excursion in early June if enough support is forthcoming.

In addition, there will be events through Scotland during the year. For the programme write now to the organisers: Scottish International Gathering Trust Ltd., 2 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K. Kindly mention the Clan Ewen Society when writing to the Trust.

And please write to us if you intend to make a visit during the year (write in the first place to the Secretaries).

D.M.C.M.

To our Readers in North America

We are now in the habit of announcing forthcoming meetings of the Clan Society on this side of the Atlantic in the Bulletin.

Will you please send us particulars of any forthcoming meetings on your side of the Atlantic so that we can announce them.

We intend to maintain a schedule of 4 issues per annum, but have not yet decided on the best dates. To some extent these dates could be adjusted to suit forthcoming meetings.

Recollections of Daniel McEwen

We are not able to continue this account in the present Bulletin because we have too much material to include. We hope it will be possible to continue it in the next issue.

OFFICE BEARERS

- Chairman: Dr. Douglas M.C. MacEwan, 52 Ormonde Rd., Hythe, Kent. (Tel. 0303 69465)
- Vice-Chairman: Rev. Peter J. MacEwen, Lindsaylands Cott., Biggar.
- Secretaries: Mrs. W.E.J.H. Williamson and Miss E. Williamson, Bellcairn Cottage, Cove, by Helensburgh. (Tel. 043 684 2352)
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- Seanachie: Colin McEwan, 7 Fearnach, Achnamara, Lochgilphead, Argyll.
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- (N. America)
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