



CLAN EWEN SOCIETY
Bulletin

No. 28

NOVEMBER 1992

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Saturday, 12th JUNE 1993
at 11.30 a.m. till 12.30 p.m.*

**In the Kilfinan Hotel,
Kilfinan, Argyll
Walk to Cairn - 2.00 p.m.**

**Old and New Members
all welcome!**

McEWENS IN THE NEWS

The death occurred, during the third week of September this year, of John McEwen. He died within two days of his 105th birthday.

John McEwen's lasting memorial is the epic work "Who Owns Scotland?" - the nearest thing to an accessible register of estate ownership since Lord Derby instructed a similar survey almost 100 years earlier.

John was born in Fortingail, Perthshire but moved to Argyll at the age of seven. His father was an estate worker whose treatment by landowning employers conditioned John's outlook on life.

This conditioning was influenced by one of his earliest memories. "Losing my pal when I was a wee boy of eight," he recalled some 80 years later. His friend's father was Smith on the estate of MacLachlan of MacLachlan on Loch Fyneside, the northern neighbour of Otter. A pheasant was caught in one of his snares, and MacLachlan ordered him out.

John McEwen was better able than most to cut through the drivel about benign lairds who did not mind "one for the pot". He recalled "MacLachlan was a horrible man; a writer to the signet and poor as a church mouse in some ways, but he had power."

Throughout his life on the land, John came across many more horrible men with power, none of whom could gainsay his abilities as a forester.

At first he eschewed private estates for jobs in the Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh, Parks Department in Glasgow, and the timber trade.

In 1919 the Forestry Commission was formed with Lord Lovat as first Chairman. He organised the whole show along military lines with little opportunity for working foresters to break through the ranks of retired colonels, majors, captains, etc. John was an exception, who later became the first working forester to hold the Presidency of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society.

He next played a prominent role in organising forestry in the Irish Free State.

When his wife's ill health brought them home to Scotland in the early thirties, Lovat refused to take him back because of his "interest in Politics" and he spent the toughest years of his life establishing a nursery in Stirlingshire.

War-time took him back into forestry production and he was then asked to participate in the Census of Woodlands in 1947-48.

Thereafter he worked as a forestry consultant, his services being keenly sought by the landowners whom he disliked.

It wasn't until he was 90 that he embarked upon his epic work - "Who Owns Scotland?"

Alan Ewing

I have had a letter from Terry McEwan, of Bognor Regis, thanking all members who attended the A.G.M. this year for their endeavours, monetary and otherwise, in support of his, and his team's effort during their run from John O'Groats to Land's End, on behalf of Cancer Research. I understand contributions totalled over £5,000

Alan Ewing

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The A.G.M. of Clan Ewen was held on Saturday, June 6, 1992 at the Bridgend House Hotel, Callander.

This was a new venue for the A.G.M. and proved an excellent choice.

The Clan members were made very welcome, the day was glorious and everyone enjoyed the amenities and pleasant surroundings of the hotel. The Chairman, Alan Ewing, welcomed the members and a special greeting was given to Byron and Deanne from Arizona and Jean and Douglas from Ipswich. Congratulations were extended to Charles Matt on the occasion of their golden wedding.

In his opening remarks, Alan explained about the "Run for Life", which one of our members - Terry McEwan - had completed in May for Cancer Research. Terry was supported on his route by some of the Clan members.

Treasurer's and Secretary's reports were read and approved. The Membership Secretary reported on current numbers. An important item of business was the question of Associate Membership and after discussion it was agreed that the Society would accept Associate Membership at the same rate. i.e. £5.00 and that the constitution would be altered accordingly. It was also agreed that the subscription should be continued at the present rates but a cut-off date of two years be sent out to unpaid members by the Membership Secretary.

The Genealogist gave a brief report and there being no further business the meeting continued with the election of Office-bearers.

The present Office-bearers were re-elected. Discussion took place on the date of the next A.G.M. and it was agreed to meet at Kilfinan on Saturday, June 12, 1993 at 11.30 a.m. with a walk to the Memorial Cairn planned for the afternoon.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the Committee, followed by tea.

E. M. McEwan Williamson



A.G.M. at Callander. Welcome to Byron and Deanne McKeown and Dr. Douglas and Jean McEwan

THE TURF HOUSE

The Turf House (Site A) measured 34ft x 26ft and lay on an axis NNE by N-SSW by S, the measurements being taken from the crests of the walls. It was oval rather than rectangular in plan. The remaining walls, 2ft 6in - 3ft thick, were built on turf. The separate turf layers showed clearly, especially in the section at the SW corner where seven could be counted. There were no post-holes associated with the Turf House. The doorway on the E was 6ft wide and had fine pebble cobbling at the entrance extending 2ft inside. The cobbling was firmly and carefully laid and paving stones lay at the threshold. Opposite this doorway, in the W wall, was a narrow opening 1ft 6in wide which had two layers of turf across it. The turves in the wall had been laid sloping down to the sides of the opening thus showing that it was an original feature. No holes for door-posts were found at either doorway.

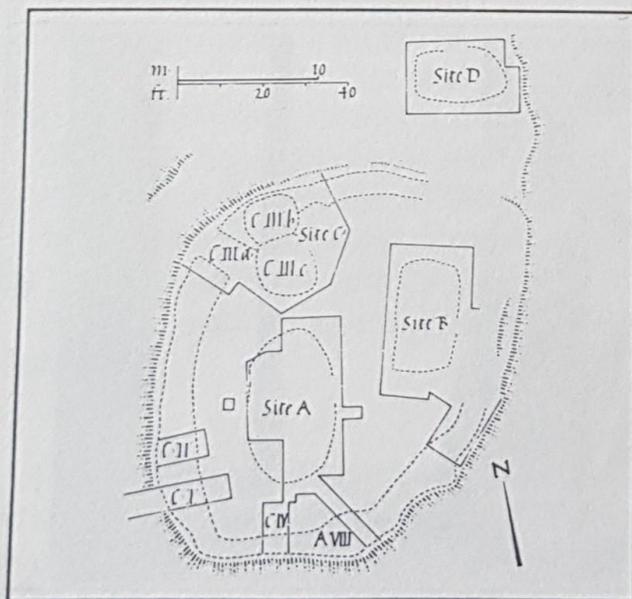
Two layers of turf were uncovered set against the inside of the wall at the N end. As these were set on the floor level and were overlaid by slip from the wall it seems as if there had been a narrow turf bench in that part of the house.

Some re-construction of the wall had taken place. In the trench cut on the S side a rebuild could be seen in the form of fresh turves set on top of collapsed ones. On the W wall to the S of the doorway stones had been set among the turves on the top of the wall. This was the only part where stones were found to be used in the wall. A platform of stones placed on a base of turves against the W wall may have served as a sleeping or working bench. A scatter of stones on the other side of the house may have served a similar purpose.

There was a hearth area between the bench and W wall; it had grey ashy material with red burnt clay and some charcoal, was edged by small stones to the N, but was substantially built. The floor which lay 9in - 1ft 2in below the present ground level was unexpectedly nebulous. There was some cobbling, some tramped earth, some flecking with charcoal. The cobbling did not extend S of the bench. It was on this level that nails, a fragment of copper, stone discs, perforated stones and chips of bone were found.

A plotting of the find shows that there must have been a difference in the use of the two ends of the house. There were more nails and fragments of metal to the N and more fragments of bone and charcoal to the S.

On the floor level to the N and E of the main doorway a patch of loose pebbles, similar in size and shape to those used in the doorway, was noted. There is no real explanation for this feature, but perhaps they had been collected to extend or repair the entrance. A James I Fleur de lis groat found while clearing down to occupation level is dated to the first half of the 15th century. Unstratified finds found during the initial clearing of the turf



General plan of the site and excavated areas

walls included fragments of glass bottles and a 12th century *crucifix* 4.5in long.

Finds: 12th century *crucifix* unstratified. Fleur de lis *groat of James I and II:* unstratified. Five pieces of green and amber *glass bottles*. *Iron knife blade* fragment 8 in long, broken. 12 Fragments *iron nails and nail heads* and one large nail, all very much corroded. Two *perforated stones*, perhaps spindle whorls, from the floor level. Three *chuckie stones* found together on floor level. Three small *shale discs or counters*, from 1.2 to 0.9in in diameter: from the floor level. Two *schist discs* 3in and 4in diameter from the floor level: One fragment of lignite, possibly part of a disc. Two flint scrapers with secondary working. One *flint blade* fragment with secondary working. Three *flint flakes* and chips. One *quartz flake*, possibly used as a scraper.

The Stone House

Examination of the ground to the S of the Stone House (Site B) showed that the rampart had gone out of use before the house was built. In front of the E wall of the house the remains of the rampart had been flattened with a rough paving laid over it to provide a level space between the wall and the edge of the cliff. Bedrock just below the present ground level must have made it a difficult site to build on.

The Stone House lay on an axis NNW-SSE (for the sake of brevity the end walls are referred to here as N and S and the long walls as E and W). It measured 24ft x 12ft within the walls which were on average 2ft wide; they now stand 2-4 courses high. Some of the bedrock appears to have been flattened to accommodate the corners of the house. Tumble filled the interior of the building and spread outside the walls, though outside the N wall there were fewer stones. Specially large stones had been chosen to make the outside corners. No dressed stones were used in the build. At the N end the inside corners were rounded giving a slightly bowed appearance to that end. The bottom course of the wall appears to have been faced with clay, inside and out. The walls were set on a bottoming of small stones which served to level up the irregularities where the wall was built on bedrock. A doorway 2ft wide was towards the S end of the E wall. The entrance had been laid with firm paving over which was a pebble cobbling partially tramped in among the paving. Over this was a later, looser paving. The doorway had been blocked so firmly that it was difficult at first to locate it. No other entrance was found. Just to the N outside the doorway was a platform of small stones, probably a butt stance.

A rough paving lay all round the outside of the walls, close to the one on the S, less well laid at the N. A half quern was used in this paving on the E side, 4ft N of the door. This quern is 2ft in diameter and has moulding round the central hole. On the other side is a recessed square.

Bedrock was very close to the surface everywhere inside the house. The charcoal-flecked soil of the early occupation associated with the post-holes and huts had levelled this up somewhat. There were two concentrations of black soil of this period, one in a hollow of bedrock which ran under the wall at the NW corner. The floor associated with the Stone House, made of hard packed pebbles and extending over the whole floor, was less firm towards the S end. Two levels of cobbling could be distinguished in places, with more charcoal-flecking among the

lower cobbles. Rough benches were built against both ends of the house, the one to the S being better built with flat stones set above smaller ones which levelled up the bedrock. A half quern was incorporated in the one at the S end. In the centre of the house a complete quern stone had been laid among the cobbling. This quern, 3ft in diameter and larger than the usual hand mill, is probably from a click mill (a small mill set across a stream using a horizontal wheel). It had been used as the base of a hearth and was made of extremely friable stone which disintegrated after being uncovered. Quern stones are a feature of this house, three other fragments being found there.

An area of firm clean clay lay against the E wall obscuring the doorway and spreading fan-wise into the house. At the centre of the patch against the wall it was 9in thick, it ran 7ft along the wall and reached 5ft into the house. Clay was also found against the W wall opposite the door.

Finds: One small *sherd* with black shiny glaze, Staffordshire-type ware, probably mid 18th century. *Schist disc* 4.5in in diameter. Five fragments of *iron nail heads*, much corroded, found under the tumble of stones inside the NE corner. One fragment of a *pitchstone blade*.

Site D

The position of this building seems to indicate that it was constructed when the ramparts were not needed for defence. Shelter from the wind may have been sought as it lies in the lee of the main site. The house lay on an axis WNW-ESE (for brevity referred to as NW and SE in this report). It measured 20ft x 12ft inside. The walls were set on a foundation of small stones. Large, irregularly-shaped boulders were used in the walls along with other more conventionally-shaped stones. Remains of turf found among the tumble showed that stone combined with turf was used in the upper courses. Turf would certainly have been needed to fit into the irregularities of the large stones used. These large stones were more prominent on the NW and NE sides; on the SW side the smaller stones, in places two or three deep, were not built in regular courses. The house had a straight NW wall and a slightly bowed SE end. An entrance at the SE end had been blocked with small stones. Another doorway, one half of which remained, was set in the NE wall. There was a hole for a door post just inside the wall. Bedrock was nowhere far from the surface in the interior.

There was a possible bench at the NW end but this part of the house was not cleared to bedrock. Otherwise the whole area inside the house had a rough cobbled floor in which two periods could be distinguished. Firm cobbling from the door in the NE wall led to an area of hard-packed black earth with small stones. Since this hearth area, 4in deep, overlay cobbles it belonged to the second period of occupation. Outside the NE wall and E of the door another area of burning was uncovered. This patch of red burnt earth with some charcoal ran under the wall so may have belonged to an occupation before the house was built. Outside the NE wall, just E of this burning, the soil was very peaty; this might be the remains of a peat stack.

Finds: Five *iron nail heads*, very much corroded, from tumble at the NW end. *Flint scraper* from inside the NW wall. Two *stone discs* 2in and 1.3in in diameter, from above cobbling.

NEW MEMBERS

The Clan Society warmly welcomes the following new members:

Ruth Metter, 4275 North Moody, Chicago, Illinois, 60637, U.S.A.

June Hildreth, 139 Hacklebarney Road, Chester, New Jersey, 07930, U.S.A.

Mr. and Mrs. J. R. McEowen, 11 West Parkway Place, Holmdel, New Jersey, 07733, U.S.A.

Mr. Harry McEwan, 8 Millers Park, Saddell, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6RA, Scotland.

Mr. and Mrs. M. S. Beevers, "Roshanara", School Road, Wrighton, near Bristol, BS18 7NB, England.

Mr. M. J. MacEwen, 12307 Wilderness Park Drive, Spotsylvania, Virginia 22553, U.S.A.

CLAN CORRESPONDENTS

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Clan Ewen Society representatives as follows:

Paul McEwan, United States of America

Paul was born in Westfield, Massachusetts but after his Navy career opted for the warmer climate of Mississippi. He is interested in all things Scottish and as well as being a life member of Clan Ewen, is also a member of the Highlands and Islands Association of Celtic Gathering in Biloxi.

Bunty Mason, Australia

Bunty has for the past year been our representative at the Scottish Clans Congress of Queensland. She is very active and takes a great interest in the Ethnic Radio Station in her area. She assists in the broadcasting of a Scottish programme every week and would be grateful for any items of interest from her cousins overseas.

SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW

In the last two Clan Ewen Society Bulletins you may have noticed a two-part article contributed by Mr. Paul McEwan of the U.S.A. As the clan and its beginnings are important to each of us in the search for our origins, so, should be, the history of its members to the continuity of the Clan. One such member is Paul McEwan.

Paul was born in Westfield, Massachusetts, a small New England town in the U.S.A. His childhood was spent in a semi-rural setting in which he came to appreciate the beauty and the complexities of nature. The artistic side of his personality was nourished by an attentive mother whose enjoyment of music and appreciation of nature softened the sensibilities of young Paul, just as his very strict but loving father shaped his manhood. He was brought up with stories of his Scottish forefathers.

At a very young age, Paul entered the United States Navy and served his country for 20 years. During this time, he travelled widely, honing his appreciation of other cultures. His understanding of their ancient origins was to hold him in good stead when he began his research into the origin of Clan Ewen.

Upon his retirement from the navy, Paul settled in Gulfport, Mississippi situated



My new favourite as I am photo at Biloxi Highland Games, October 3, 1992

on the Gulf Coast in Southern U.S.A. Its slow-paced life and proximity to the ocean suited his lifestyle. In this atmosphere he was able to pursue his love of reading, voraciously consuming books on a myriad of subjects. When Alex Haley, the internationally acclaimed author, published his book, *Roots*, Paul's long standing interest in his own beginnings brought home to him forcefully his need to find his own personal "roots". It was the age-old questions of "Why am I here? Who am I? Where do I come from?" It was then that he began his search into the genealogy of the Clan. His pride in his heritage had always been strong, but as he read and studied, delving ever deeper into his beginnings, he began to understand from where that pride emanated.

Paul McEwan is a multi-talented person. As a youngster he sang with a Minstrel Show and

still retains a beautiful voice. Throughout his late teen years and beyond, he wrote stories and poetry with a flair, imagination and style sharpened by his life experiences and his joy in living. He sketches, paints and sculpts, paying attention to the most minute detail. He is an avid gardener, can repair almost anything and has even constructed furniture, among which is an exquisite miniature desk made for his daughter. He gives of himself and expects little or nothing in return. Giving is its own satisfaction for him. His potential seems limitless.

Through patient scholarship extending over a period of many years, Paul has learned some of the answers to the questions of his origin. He has also learned that many more questions of importance to Clan history remain to be answered. He continues to search, to learn, to appreciate and to share his knowledge.

Those of us who know Paul and his personal history feel privileged. He has a marvellous sense of humour, a firm belief in God, a zest for life and the knowledge of how much he owes to those who came before him. His sharing of his knowledge is his way of giving something back. I believe he is truly, "SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW". Clan Ewen can be justifiably proud that he is one of them.

FAMILY TREES

Many members have indicated that one of their main interests in the Society is a quest for knowledge of family history. Some of you will have "worked your way back" over many generations to the late 1600s, and possibly even earlier. Others will have only scratched the surface.

With this issue of the *Bulletin* you will find a "blank" family tree form, along with an example of one that has been completed. In future issues of the *Bulletin* we hope to print more forms which have been completed (by you) and sent in.

I hope that many of you will fill in the forms and return them to me. Do, please, try and write as clearly as possible and preferably in black ink / ballpoint. Don't worry at all if you are unable to complete the form. In particular, those named in the furthest back generation will be great great grandparents born, possibly in the 1700s. I will be just as pleased to receive a form which has many "blanks" as I will be to receive a fully complete version.

Copies of all forms which are returned will be kept with other Clan papers / memorabilia held by the Committee. Meanwhile, over to you!

A. G. Murdo McEwan

PEDIGREE CHART

27 Oct 1992

Chart no. 1

300

2 James Mutch EWEN-6-----
 B: 12 Jan 1889
 P: Portobello, Midlothian
 M: 25 Aug 1916 --2
 P: St. Machar, Aberdeen
 D: 13 Jan 1954
 P: Strathaven, Lanarkshire

1 Charles EWEN-1-----
 B: 11 Jul 1921
 P: Strathaven, Lanarkshire
 M: 18 May 1942 --1
 P: Strathaven, Lanarkshire
 D:
 P:

Martha MACLEAN-2-----
 Spouse

3 Edith Alice AUSTIN-7-----
 B: 2 Apr 1887
 P: Aberdeen
 D: 12 Dec 1958
 P: Strathaven, Lanarkshire

301

Name and address of submitter:

MR & MRS C. EWEN
 "SCHIEHALLION"
 3 HAVELOCK PARK
 EAST KILBRIDE
 GLASGOW G75 8QL
 SCOTLAND, U.K.

4 William EWEN-10-----
 B: 12 Jan 1859
 P: Garlogie, Skene
 M: 2 Dec 1881 --3
 P: St Paul ST, Aberdeen
 D: 1 Jun 1924
 P: Banchory, Aberdeenshire

5 Barbara MUTCH-11-----
 B: 4 May 1864
 P: Logie Buchan, Aberdeenshire
 D: Aug 1948
 P: Banchory, Aberdeenshire

6 John AUSTIN-19-----
 B: 30 Sep 1852
 P: Nairn, Nairnshire
 M: 21 Sep 1877 --4
 P: Seamont Place, Aberdeen
 D: 6 Feb 1939
 P: Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen

7 Christina Gordon HORN-36-----
 B: 1 Jul 1856
 P: Fyvie, Aberdeenshire
 D: 2 Jul 1933
 P: Union Grove, Aberdeen

8 William EWEN-20-----
 B: 24 Aug 1820
 P: Echt, Aberdeen
 M: 6 Dec 1845 --5
 P: Old Machar, Aberdeen
 D: 2 Mar 1877
 P: Echt, Aberdeen

9 Catherine Gordon A SMITH-21-----
 B: 1826
 P: Old Machar, A, Scotland
 D:
 P:

10 James MUTCH-49-----
 B: 29 Oct 1839
 P: Undy, Aberdeen
 M: 21 May 1859 --10
 P: Ellon, Aberdeen
 D: 11 Feb 1917
 P: Aberdeen

11 Barbara GREIG-50-----
 B: 12 Jun 1835
 P: Ellon, Aberdeen
 D:
 P:

12 Robert AUSTIN-69-----
 B: 12 Apr 1827
 P: Nairn, Nairnshire
 M: 19 Feb 1847 --35
 P: St. Nicolas, Aberdeen
 D:
 P:

13 Mary FORD-140-----
 C: 7 Mar 1830
 P: Saint Cyrus, Kincardine
 D:
 P:

14 Alexander Gordon HORNE-70-----
 B: 24 Mar 1826
 P: Marchmarr, Aberdeenshire
 M: 8 Jul 1851 --14
 P:
 D: 28 Jan 1894
 P: Fyvie, Aberdeenshire

15 Jane REID-71-----
 B: 19 Apr 1818
 P: Fyvie, Aberdeenshire
 D: 29 May 1910
 P: Fyvie, Aberdeenshire

16 William EWEN-22-----

17 Hope REITH-23-----

18 John SMITH-141-----

19 -----

20 James MUTCH-51-----

21 Margaret KEMP-52-----

22 William GREIG-94-----

23 Elizabeth BOWMAN-95-----

24 Alexander AUSTIN-63-----

25 Margaret FLETCHER-64-----

26 John FORD-135-----

27 Elizabeth FALCONER-136-----

28 William HORN-75-----

29 Helen COOK-76-----

30 Alexander REID-84-----

31 Isobel WELDRUM-91-----

THE SMALL SHIPS

The little *Santa Barbara*, whose people found Port Denison, was typical of a whole fleet of small craft that followed the first settlers up the coral coast and gave them their only contact with the outside world. Their highway was the shallow strip of water lying between the inner reefs and the rocky headlands and mangrove-covered mudflats of the mainland coast. Their skippers came nosing into the new ports and almost unknown rivers and inlets with new settlers and their families, with stores, building materials for the new towns and machinery for sawmills and mines. They tied up to trees on the banks of narrow creeks, got stuck in mangrove mud, bumped over sandbanks, scraped against coral and found rocks no survey captain ever dreamed of. Most of them had been aground and off again so often that they took such accidents as part of a voyage. They raced each other for the good cargoes, and when one of them came to grief there were some who were not above picking the bones of the wreck.

Navigation aids were unknown and though these "mud skippers" and "rock hoppers", as they were often called, claimed to know every rock and sandbank in their own stretch of reef waters, some had trouble in finding the newly established settlements. The *Port Denison Times* of December 31, 1864 reported:

We have been favoured by Captain Macbeath of the schooner *Three Friends* with the following: "I arrived in Cleveland Bay on Saturday 17th inst. at 5.00 a.m. Ran down the south-east coast of the bay in search of the settlement; came to anchor at the south-east bight of the bay, and proceeded towards an opening in the mangroves with the boat. Found it to be a salt water river with very little water on the bar, and a junction a little way from the mouth, and branches apparently running in three different directions. I followed the largest stream about five or six miles and found nothing but mangroves and swamps. I then returned to the junction and followed up river number two; it was almost a counterpart of the first. Returned to the schooner and proceeded to the western end of the bay. On approaching a remarkable red bluff I discovered a hut on shore, came to anchor, and proceeded towards the shore in the boat. I observed a man waving the boat towards the east end of the bay. I followed his directions and soon found a small, but deep river with eight to ten feet of water on the bar, in which the settlement is formed."

Macbeath became one of the best known mud skippers on the coast and in due course, like many of his kind, fell victim to its hazards. Macbeath was skipper of the little schooner *Eva* when she was caught in a terrible cyclone that almost destroyed both Townsville and Bowen on March 3 and 4, 1867. At the height of the storm some people saw Macbeath's little *Eva* out in Cleveland Bay. When they looked again she was gone. It was learned later that Macbeath had sailed from Cardwell late on March 1 with six people on board including a woman passenger. He had apparently been unable to get into the shelter of Ross Creek before the full force of the cyclone hit him and had run north for Hinchinbrook Channel between Hinchinbrook Island and the mainland. Macbeath's fellow captains continued the search for months, but nothing was heard of the *Eva* until, in October, Captain Major, in the little paddlewheel steamer *Black Prince*, returned from a run to Normanton in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Major reported that on his run out of Townsville a few days after the cyclone he had seen on Hinchinbrook Island what he believed to be white men among a mob of about 200 armed blacks. He said he could not land to help them because he had a crew of only three. He knew the pilot steamer *Ethel* was following him with Native Police on board and he assumed they would see the people on the beach and investigate. Search parties on Hinchinbrook eventually found the remains of a rough shelter, which Native Police troopers insisted had been made by white men. They also found parts of a blanket, a woman's shoe and veil and some wisps of long hair. An islander the searchers captured said a ship had sunk off the island. Nothing else was learned of the loss of the *Eva*.

The *Black Prince* herself, then commanded by Captain Thomas Forsyth McEwen, was wrecked in February 1870 in a cyclone that devastated a large part of the coral coast. There were no cyclone warnings in those days, and with no suspicion of the force behind the storm that was even then roaring in from the Coral Sea McEwen steamed out of Ross Creek, Townsville, at 8.00 p.m. on Thursday, February 24 into the teeth of a blustery south-easter and anchored for the night under the shelter of Cape Cleveland. Early on Friday, still not realising what was coming, he got up the anchor and headed out to sea but was driven back by gale-force winds and mounting seas to the shelter of the cape. All that day and the next the wind rose and the heavy swell tugged at the straining anchor chains. At 10.00 a.m. on Sunday a second anchor was let go. As the little ship bucked and groaned in the screaming gale and thunderous seas the barometer plummeted to 28 inches, one of the lowest readings ever recorded in an Australian cyclone. The fires were swamped, the engine room awash.

About noon the eye of the cyclone came over them and the wind momentarily dropped. Knowing it would return from the opposite direction, leaving them no shelter, McEwen ordered up the large anchor and, the engines being useless, got a staysail on the ship preparatory to making a run across the bay to the shelter of Ross Creek. It was no sooner done than the wind hit them again, this time from the north, and slammed aboard a huge cross sea that nearly carried the ship under by the weight of water alone. The remaining anchor cable was slipped and the bows pointed towards Ross Creek. For a while it looked as if they might make it. Then the steering chains parted and the ship wallowed helplessly in churning cross seas.

With the starboard bulwarks smashed, the galley washed away, and the decks a shambles, the crew battled all that afternoon with pumps and buckets to keep the ship afloat. Uncontrollable and sinking, she was carried towards the strand north of Ross Creek, and at 7.30 that night she struck and held fast. Huge seas began to pound her to pieces. Two of the crew got ashore and made a hawser fast to a tree. By 8.00 p.m. all had landed safely on a beach already littered with wreckage.

Captain McEwen was probably the most experienced small craft skipper on the coast. He had begun his apprenticeship at the age of 13 in the sailing ship *Emily* out of Halifax in Nova Scotia, and his first command had been the schooner *Ariel* out of Sydney in 1856. In the 20 ton ketch *Ben Bolt* he ran the first mail contract from Rockhampton to Bowen. His fellow skippers later presented him with a pennant and nominated him "Commodore of the Northern Fleet of Coasters". He was shipwrecked in reef waters three times but lost not one of his crew.

Like most small ships captains in those days, McEwen never qualified for his master's ticket. Until the passing of Queensland's Navigation Act of 1876, anybody who had learnt to handle a vessel could take her out of a Queensland port. When the new act came into force, coastal skippers who had learnt their job from practical experience would probably have had trouble in passing a formal examination, so the difficulty was overcome by having the Marine Board issue them with a certificate of Service as Master of a Coaster.

Most of these old schooner men regarded the coming of the big steamers with scorn and claimed it meant the end of real seamanship. Timber was a regular cargo among the coasters, and loading it was an art. It had to be stowed, not only so it would not affect the sailing of the ship but so it could be jettisoned quickly in bad weather. With a steamer, stowage was less critical. "These days," the old timers were heard to say, "they just dump the whole bloody lot into the hold with steam winches."

The Aborigines, who had learnt from the beche-de-mer men and their kind to distrust all white men in small ships, had also learnt the value of plunder and were still a vigorous force in those days. On August 28, 1861 the 14 ton ketch *Ellida*, with a crew of four, anchored in a little bay on Shaw Island at the southern end of Whitsunday Passage and was visited by a number of Aborigines who appeared to be friendly. Late in the afternoon three men went ashore in the boat and were at once surrounded by a mob of yelling blacks. Two were battered to death. The third escaped back to the ship, where he and the remaining man slipped the cable and got her under sail just ahead of the pursuing canoes.

About six months later the master of the ketch *Dundas*, in search of a safe anchorage for the night, saw some Aborigines building up a large fire on a nearby beach. He took the fire to mean that they wanted him to anchor there, which was correct; he also assumed they were friendly, which was not. That night they boarded the *Dundas* and killed all but the captain, who managed to drive them off with gunfire and navigate the ketch back to Bowen.

The last recorded attack by Whitsunday Islanders was on the 30 ton schooner *Louisa Maria* which anchored off Whitsunday Island on April 3, 1878. The captain sent all the crew except the Chinese cook ashore in the boat to look for water, and then lay down on this bunk for a sleep. He was awakened by a scream from the cook and dashed on deck to find the Chinaman battered to death and the ship swarming with Aborigines. He dived over the side, swam ashore to the boat and, while the Aborigines were looting and setting fire to the schooner, he and the crew made sail for Bowen. The burning of the *Louisa Maria* was followed by a punitive expedition by Native Police and many of the Islanders were shot.

Among the men who came to the coral coast seeking their fortunes in the 1860s was a young Scottish sailor named John Mackay. He was born at Inverness and he ran away to sea while still a boy. At the age of 15, he left his ship in Melbourne in 1854 to try his luck in the Australian gold rushes. Five years later he had still not made his fortune and was working at the Rocky River diggings near Armidale in New South Wales when rumours reached the field of rich grazing lands being opened on the far north-eastern coast. Mackay and some other young men formed a party to go north and investigate on behalf of one of the local graziers.



Marine Board of Queensland.

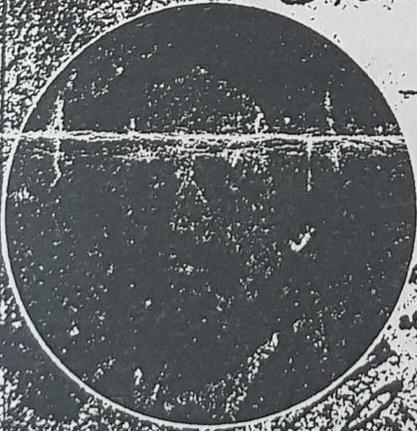
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

MASTER OF A COASTER.

Thomas Forsyth M. Ewen

having been employed in the capacity of Master of a Coaster prior to the first day of January, 1876, this Certificate is issued to him under the provisions of the Navigation Act of 1876."

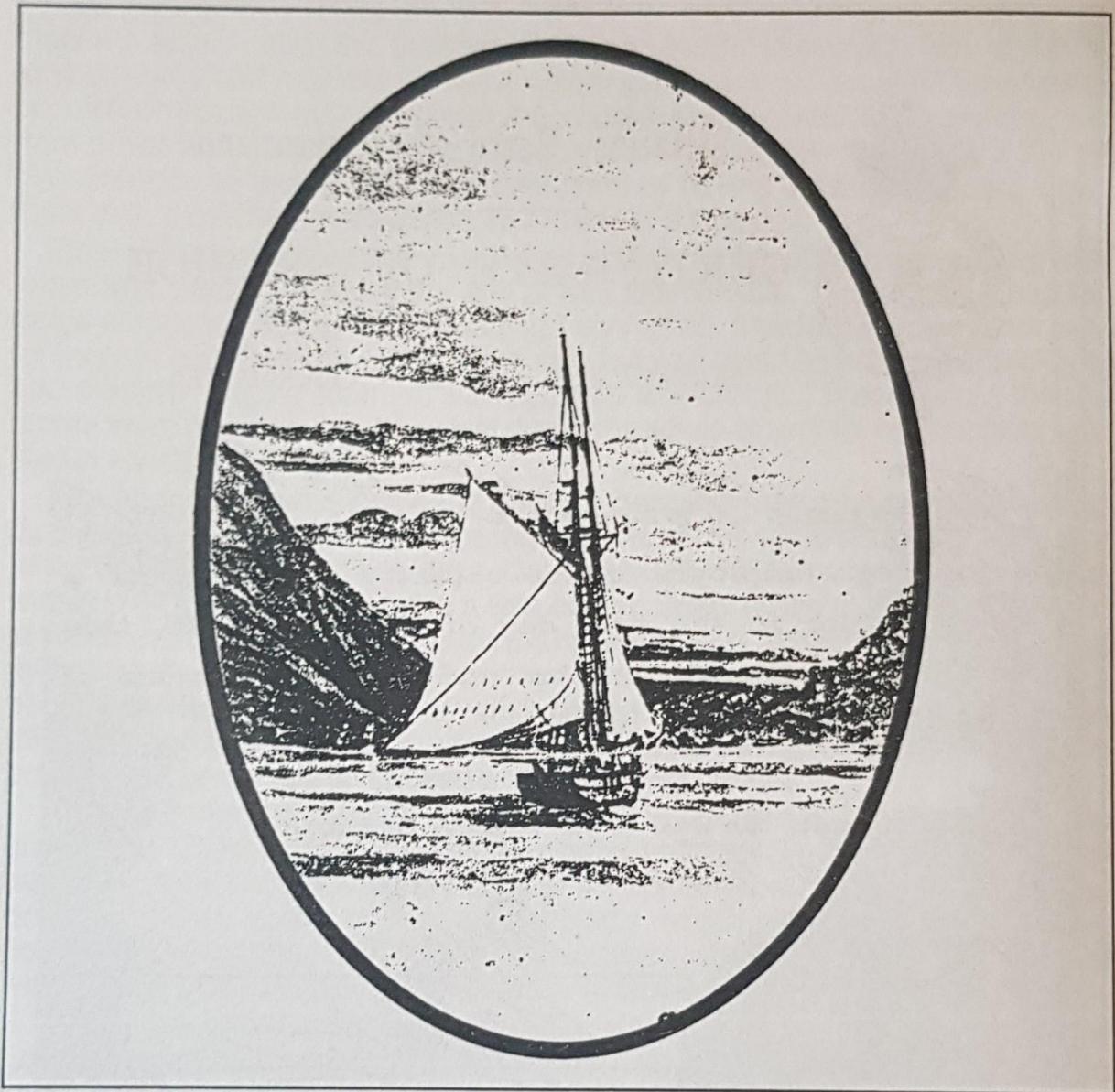
Given under the Seal of the Marine Board, this day of *February* 187*6*.



James F. ...
H. ...
William ...

at the Office

Early coastal skippers qualified by experience and many never passed an exam. Captain Thomas McEwen, seen here with his Certificate of Service was shipwrecked in reef waters three times, but never lost a member of his crew. E. McEwen, Brisbane



The 20 ton ketch Ben Bolt, typical of small craft which brought northern settlers' supplies through reef waters during the 1860s and 1870s.

E. McEwen, Brisbane

OBITUARY

We were saddened to learn of the death, on September 3, 1992, of Miss Dorothy Nairn Marshall, M.B.E., J.P., F.S.A., F.S.A., SCOT, at the age of 92.

There must be few people alive today who have contributed so much to the work of amateur archaeology. McEwens are particularly indebted to her for her deliberations as a result of her "dig" at McEwen's Castle. We will remember her with affection.

Alan Ewing

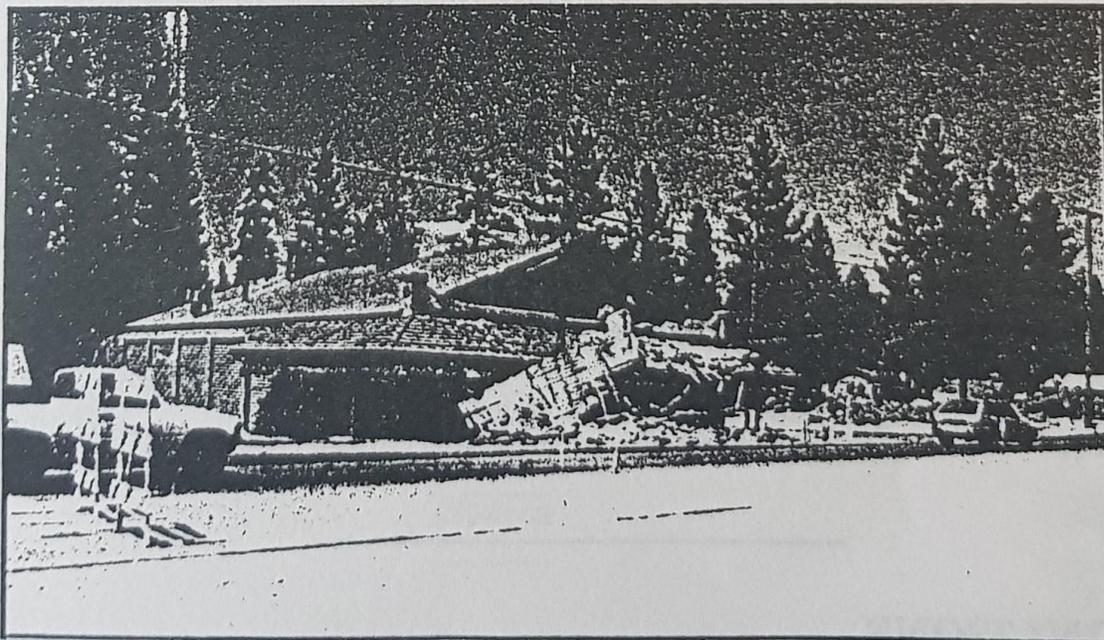
ROCKIN' AND ROLLIN' AT BIG BEAR

Big Bear 1992 . . . a weekend that Southwestern U.S. Scotsmen and women (and non-Scots as well) will remember for a long, long time.

The Big Bear Scottish Games and Festival was meant to be a two-day gathering over the June 27-28 weekend at the Bear Mountain Ski Resort in the San Bernadino Mountains in Southern California. Clan MacLachlan of the Southwest clansmen and women were among dozens of clan societies, pipers, drummers, athletes and vendors on hand to greet the 3000-plus visitors who travelled up the mountains to the Games site.

Some 19 MacLachlans, Gilchrists and MacEwens accepted our offer to join us for a "sip and a sit-down" at our hospitality tent. Elsewhere on the festival grounds, under a bright sunny sky, Alex Beaton and Ed Miller alternated with vocal entertainment, bagpipe bands played, and burly athletes demonstrated their skills throughout the day. It was a "fun" day in all respects, and we looked forward to a repeat on Sunday. But it was not meant to be.

We were jolted awake at 5.00 a.m. by a powerful magnitude 7.4 earthquake. The ground trembled and rolled for what seemed an eternity, but we later agreed it was pretty close to a full minute (long enough, thank you!). Once we regained our bearings, my son Greg and I joined our fellow clansmen and women for breakfast; a dram or two of single malt would have been welcome (purely for medicinal purposes), but better judgement prevailed. Instead, we drove to Bear Mountain to begin setting up our Clan MacLachlan hospitality tent for a second day's activity.



This was one of Big Bear's better restaurants. The debris on the ground was its second story frontage. There was extensive damage inside too.

Photo by G. Bruce McLachlan, KTJ

The job was nearly complete when, at 8.00 a.m., we were literally knocked off our feet by a second major earthquake. Greg was airborne, and he was inside his pickup truck. (All four wheels left the ground!) Buildings rocked on their foundations, walls cracked, chairlift cables wobbled like cooked spaghetti, and a three-foot-wide fissure sliced some 100 yards across a major ski run just yards from our tent.

Within minutes, Games Chieftain Doug "Scotty" Gordon told us that two of the three main buildings at Bear Mountain were destroyed. He cancelled the second day of the Games, and directed us to evacuate the area A.S.A.P.

He didn't have to tell us twice; we set a new speed record in dismantling and reloading our gear!

(An aside: it was personally gratifying to see - and be a part of - the co-operative effort evidenced, with clan helping clan in this time of common distress.)

While we were packing up, we learned that the epicentre of this 6.5 quake was less than a mile from the Games site.

Even though the Games were cancelled, it was a toss-up as to whether we should try to make our way out of the Big Bear area on Sunday. A check with the Sheriff's office told us that one road was totally blocked by rockslides; many of the boulders were the size of cars, and would have to be blasted. The alternative route, while re-opened was "iffy" at best, since aftershocks were occurring on a regular basis.

Several cabins housing visiting Scotsmen and women had been damaged in one or both of the quakes, but Greg and I were lodged on the far side of town, and were thus spared. We chose to stay an extra night and hope for the best.

We were able to leave on Monday, and after a bacon-and-egg breakfast (scrambled, of course), we made our careful way homeward. On the way down the mountain, we found the sides of the narrow roadway strewn with large pine cones and boulders.

For such a major earthquake, we were fortunate indeed; none of our Clan MacLachlan artifacts were damaged. But of far greater importance, there were no injuries at the Games site. Sadly, in other parts of Big Bear, there were injuries reported, and property damage was extensive (later reported in the millions).

While the Big Bear '92 Scottish Festival was a memorable experience, it is not one that we hope to repeat anytime soon.

*G. Bruce McLachlan, KTJ
Clan MacLachlan of the Southwest*

DONATIONS

The Treasurer wishes to thank those members who have made donations to the Clan Society.

CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

Financial Statement 4th June 1991 to 3rd June 1992

INCOME

Subscriptions			
Year Single	(47 @ £5.00)	235.00	
Year Family	(23 @ £7.00)	161.00	
Life Single	(4 @ £50.00)	200.00	
Life Family	(1 @ £75.00)	75.00	
Life Family	(1 @ £46.20 part payment	46.20	
Late Subscriptions		27.80	
Early subscriptions		5.00	
Donations (includes Cairn Donations and Postage)		121.42	
Sale of Clan Items		162.00	
Interest on Treasurer's Account		136.38	£1169.80

EXPENDITURE

Printing (Two Bulletins)		330.50	
Postage		169.32	
Purchase of 12 Books		145.20	
Tartan for Books		28.57	
Purchase of Three Scarves and One Tie		22.50	
Association Membership of Scottish Tartans Society		25.00	
Membership of Glasgow Archaeological Society		8.00	
Donation to Cowal Archaeological Society		25.00	
Sundries		17.16	
Income over Expenditure		398.55	£1169.80

TRADING ACCOUNT

Opening Stock	154.93	Closing Stock	224.90
Purchases	196.27	Sales	162.00
Profit	35.70		
	<u>£386.90</u>		<u>£386.90</u>

Assets at 3rd June 1992

Closing Stock	224.90
Treasurer's Account	1774.12
	<u>£1999.02</u>

Assets at 4th June 1991

Closing Stock	154.93
Treasurer's Account	1375.57
	<u>£1530.50</u>

The foregoing Accounts of the Society have been examined by me and found to be correct and properly vouched.

Ian McEwan, Auditor

OFFICE BEARERS

- Chairman: Lt. Col. Alan Ewing, T.D., Balgowan, Garngaber Avenue, Lenzie, G66 3AW, Scotland.
TEL: 041 776 3525
- Treasurer & Vice-Chairman: Mr. C. Ewen, 3 Havelock Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G75 8QL, Scotland.
TEL: 035 52 36375
- Secretary: Miss E. Williamson, Bellcairn Cottage, Cove by Helensburgh, G84 0NX, Scotland.
TEL: 043 684 2352
- Bulletin Editor: Mrs. E. McEwen, 1 Blantyre Place, Coatbridge, ML5 5JL, Scotland
TEL: 0236 422638
- Genealogist: Mr. A. G. M. McEwan, 6 Magdala Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 5BE, Scotland.
TEL: 031 337 0922
- Membership Secretary Mrs. G. McEwan Joyce, "Ballaig", By Comrie, Crieff, PH7 4JY, Scotland
TEL: 0764 70261
- Canadian Correspondent: Mr. W. H. MacEwen, P.O. Box 3, St. Peters, Nova Scotia, BOE 3BO, Canada.
- U.S.A. Correspondent Mr. Paul W. McEwan, 3500 9th Street, Gulfport, Mississippi, 39501, U.S.A.
- Australian Correspondent Mrs. Evelyn Jean Forsyth Mason, J.P. 88 Laura Street, Tarragindi, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Printed by Fast Printing, 17 Thorn Brae, Johnstone

Tel: Johnstone (0505) 21074
