CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

Bulletin

No. 19 APRIL 1988

A. G. M.

SATURDAY, 4th JUNE 1988

at 1.00 p.m. in

KILFINAN HOTEL, KILFINAN, ARGYLL

FOR ROUTES TO

OTTER FERRY & CASTLE EWEN RUINS

SEE PAGES 200/201

THE SCATTERED SCOTS

Peter MacEwen

We Scots are scattered across the world in groups and colonies and also as individuals. Those of you who read this furth of Scotland will know what I mean. Like iron filings react to a magnet, so the Scot far away from home, reacts to the sound of another Scottish voice. The two of them gravitate towards each other and the inevitable conversation takes place. "Hullo, Jock! Where are you from? Come and have a pint." And within a few months, depending on numbers, there will probably be a St. Andrew's Society with all the trappings . . . . Kilt, Haggis, the lot.

I heard of one such group of Scattered Scots accidentally one sunny day in Gibraltar. I used to fly a St. Andrew's Flag on the bonnet of my car and being stopped for some reason or another, heard a voice outside saying: "Look, there's a Greek Flag. Expect it's the Consul." That was too much, so I stuck my head out of the window and said indignantly: "Sorry! But that's the flag of Scotland.' Back came the voice: "Jings, I ought to ken, I come from Glasgow."

The Voice turned out to be one John Potts who, with his wife and daughter were on holiday from Spain. That little incident opened up a whole new line of work and friendship and great interest.

John was the Administrative Manager of the Mines of Tharsis – a spot away in the hills of South West Spain near Huelva on the Portuguese Border. Hearing that I was the Minister of the Rock, he said I would have to come up and save their souls as they hadn't seen a Minister there for 45 years! Tharsis was and is a fascinating place. Originally worked by the Romans for its vast deposits of Copper and Gold, it was then as now, being worked for its Iron Pyrites. The work force was, of course, Spanish, but the company was as Scottish as they come with a Head Office in West George Street in Glasgow. There were about twenty managers, engineers, etc. there with their wives and families and I used to go up once or twice a year and have a Service, which was held in their Club. My pulpit was the Bar from which all bottles had been removed and draped most patriotically with a fair St. Andrew's Flag. It was all good clean fun. We linked them up with the congregation on the Rock and many great friendships resulted.

We found another bunch of (retired) Scots along the Costa del Sol and I'm quite sure if I had nipped across the Straits of Gibraltar to Tangier I could have rustled up yet another lot of Scattered Scots, but there's a limit; Gibraltar was a busy job.

All in all – for all our ghastly faults – we Scots are very clannish, but clannish with a good purpose: to welcome folk in-bye, no matter where we might be on this planet. In that respect, you Scots-MacEwens or what have you – do much good.

It's the welcome that is so heart warming – and I've had it on many occasions here and there:-

'Hullo, Jock. How nice to see you, come away in.'

EDITOR'S NOTES

A few years ago I received a telephone call from Edinburgh from Brian and Gwen Wall, Aitkenvale, Australia. Gwen's maternal grandparents were Scots from the Coatbridge area and Gwen was trying to trace her 'roots'. She asked did I know or had I heard of a place in this area called Gartsherrie – I was able to tell Gwen that I knew Gartsherrie very well as I had been born and brought up there. We invited the Walls to spend the Sunday with us and, in the few days between, after telephoning numerous friends – a Registrar, Gartsherrie Church Elder, and an older man who had spent all his life in Gartsherrie, not only were we able to give Brian and Gwen some interesting facts, we also had gleaned some ourselves.

I tell this story to all our readers from abroad who are interested in their 'roots' and don't know where to start. How about making a 'phone call'!

Towards the end of December, Miss Williamson received the wrappings of a fairly large parcel posted in the U.K., stamp value over £2.00. This parcel was addressed to a Mr. McEwen, Cove, Helensburgh. Unfortunately contents were lost in transit and all Miss Williamson's endeavours to try and find contents or sender have been to no avail – can anyone help?

STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES *Rennie McOwan*

We can all rejoice when the MacEwans have a prominent role and that's what the North American contingent certainly had at the 15th annual Scottish Festival and Stone Mountain Highland Games in Atlanta, Georgia, in Ocotber.

The sun shone, the Stone Mountain National Park was a beautiful site for a Highland Games, and over 35,000 people attended the Games, the evening Tattoo and other events. It was a remarkable sight, hundreds of pipers and drummers and tartan-clad clan society members and their friends, the red Georgia dust rising as the day went on and the huge, friendly crowds.

I was in Atlanta as one of two representatives of the Scottish Tartans' Society and thanks to the generosity of British Caledonia who flew us there, we shared a prominent stand with them at the Games. American members of the Tartans' Society organised the stand and together we dealt with a host of inquiries about all aspects of Scottish heritage although most, understandably, were about tartan and ancestry.

Americans are a courteous people and this was plainly evident to me. Three members of the Clan MacEwan Association of North America gave me a warm welcome at an evening reception held on a paddle-vessel in the Stone Mountain park, when we were all the guests of the Games' committee and pipers played in the cool Georgia evening.

At the Games itself, when I dropped in at the Clan Ewen stand, I was offered in turn, a warm welcome, a can or two of beer, a Clan Ewen T-shirt, a Clan badge and an invitation to march with them in the procession of Clan Societies.

The only snag for me was that jet-lag seemed to linger over-long, and I sometimes found myself 'switching off' when I wanted to be at one's most social: if anyone has a cure for this malady, please holler! The Clan Ewen office-bearers were all delightful people and it was a privilege to march with them. Just in case I might forget, they sent the son of one of them over to the Scottish Tartans' Society stand to remind me.

I found the procession deeply moving, thousands of tartan-clad figures and their banners marching past the saluting platform and I found the whole week, the pleasant and hospitable people, their love of their Scottish heritage, the splendidly run Games, the attractive dancing and the whole 'feel' of it all, a deeply moving experience and I can't get the sights and sounds of it out of my mind yet.

I met one young man in the Games procession who had an ancestor who came from Scotland and who had been a stone mason and had worked on the Statue of Liberty. He had heard about the Games on the radio and attended for the first time. He investigated the various Clan society stands and felt his roots lay with Clan Ewen. Such was the warm welcome they gave him that he joined them for the march. One of the office-bearers made him a tartan sash and he made a last-minute entry to some of the athletic events and entered the prize lists. He certainly had a nice day, as the saying goes, but it was the MacEwan welcome which made it possible.

As a visitor from Scotland, I can only express profound gratitude to these friendly American MacEwans and feel a strong sense of pleasure over the distances they travel and the hours they put in to advance the Clan society and to promote their Scottish heritage.

There is a strong case for ever closer links between the Clan associations in Scotland and in North America. The Stone Mountain Games are a delight, and we can take pleasure in the fact that the Treasurer is a McEwan — Kathleen McEwen Garrett. Hundreds of volunteers work for nothing, except the gut feeling that they are doing it for Georgia and Scotland, and - in my view - will eventually make this Festival and Games the world's largest such event.

On a personal note, on the list of names given as Clan names in the North American literature, my own family name might be added. McOwan is an odd spelling, but on researching the male line we found that it was often spelt McEwan in the past and we had ancestors working as tartan weavers in Comrie, Perthshire, in the 18th century and where the Tartans' Society now has its award-winning museum. There were little colonies of McEwans (and similar spellings) around Loch Tay-side, and Crieff and Comrie — some as early as the 16th century — and they probably moved there under the influence of the Breadalbane Campbells. Some of them who were weavers later settled in the Hillfoots villages, in Clackmannanshire, along the foot of the Ochil Hills.

I'd go back to Atlanta like a shot, and hope to be back next October and if that comes to pass then it will be a privilege once again to join our North American McEwans at their stand and in the procession. Reviresco!

* IMPORTANT *

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT BULLETIN TO BE IN THE HANDS OF THE EDITOR BY SATURDAY, 1st OCTOBER, 1988.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Margaret Struthers, 255 Mayer Road, Apt. 330 Mayer Haus, Frankenmuth, Michigan 48734, U.S.A.

(Hope you had a nice birthday on February 29th)

Mr. Bruce E. McEwan, 2029 Nuuanu Avenue, # 1608, Honolulu, HI. 96817, U.S.A.

Mr. Donald S. Bird, 97 Prestwick Road, South Oxkey, Watford, Herts., WD1 6EG

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Dr. A. C. McEwen, Apt. 1702, 1401 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3J8, Canada

Mr. J. E. McEwan, 14425 Austin Road, Manchester, Michigan, 48158, U.S.A.

STOP PRESS:

ASSOCIATION OF CLAN & KINDRED SOCIETIES

The Annual Social Gathering will take place in Renfied Street St. Stephens Church, Bath Street, Glasgow on FRIDAY, 29th APRIL 1988 at 7.00 p.m.

Tickets priced at £2.50 includes a Buffet Supper. Mr. Neil MacDonald will present an illustrated talk on Historical Scotland.

I would ask members to give support to the Association by making every endeavour to attend this social evening.

Clan Representative A.C.K.S., CHARLIE EWEN

P.S. Please contact me about tickets on East Kilbride 36375.

CLAN CAMPELL CEILIDH DANCE ON SATURDAY, 19th MARCH, 1988

Clan Ewen were invited to the Ceilidh and there was a splendid gathering of various Clan Members, including twenty-one from Clan Ewen.

Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell, President of Clan Campbell, graciously greeted every individual member and assured us of a delightful evening. "Shian Music" provided for the dancing with excellent tempo, and started off the evening with a lively Barn Dance and continued with more well-known and popular dances.

Mrs. Morrison sang us Scottish songs and we all joined in with the choruses, then followed Strip the Willow, and of course the Waltz, Gay Gordons and several more.

Mr. Seamus Campbell delighted us with Gaelic songs, 'The Road to Mandalay' and 'I'll Walk Beside You'. Finally Miss Mhairi Campbell played a brilliant piano solo, "Scherzo" arranged by Lizt, followed by another song from Mrs. Dixon of Clan Keith, "Charming Chloe".

During refreshments a Raffle of exciting gifts took place and six of our Clan held lucky tickets.

It was a good opportunity to get acquainted with various Clan members. The profits of the evening were donated to The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice, and a splendid evening ended with Auld Lang Syne and Haste Ye Back.

PHYLLIS McEWAN

ROUTES TO OTTER FERRY and CASTLE EWEN

FROM GOUROCK

Western Ferries from McInroy's Point, near Cloch Lighthouse, to Hunters Quay.

Caledonian MacBrayne from Gourock Pier to Dunoon.

FROM HUNTERS QUAY and DUNOON

– Turn right on disembarking from ferry and proceed through Sandbank to the junction, on left, of the Tighnabruaich/Colintraive/Glendaruel road, proceed through Glen Lean to the junction at Stronafian of the Glendaruel/Colintraive

road, thence right turn to the road towards Glendaruel and left at the signpost to Otter Ferry. Otter Ferry is on the shore of Loch Fyne. This is the most direct route although the roads are hilly with passing places. The road is good. From the top of Otter Hill fine views of the hills of Jura and Mull may be had. The mileage from Dunoon to Otter Ferry is roughly 23 miles.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

FROM HUNTERS QUAY or DUNOON

– From Sandbank continue along the shore of Loch Eck to Strachur. Turn left at junction and proceed on the Tighnabruaich/Colintraive road through Glendaruel to Tighnabruaich, Kilfinan, Otter Ferry. The hill road over Otter Hill may be taken from Glendaruel.

A few miles south of Strachur a road runs through Strathlachlan along the shore of Loch Fyne to Otter Ferry.

The only other route is from Loch Lomond to Tarbet through Arrochar and over the Rest and Be Thankful, to the junction of the Tighnabruaich/Colintraive road, thence through Strachur and the choice of the road through Glendaruel or Strathlachlan to Otter Ferry.

The route to Castle Ewen ruins is south from Otter Ferry on the B8000 road and before reaching Kilfinan, turn right onto road leading to Fernoch Farm. The ruin is on a promontory overlooking Kilfinan Bay. *Permission should be requested before crossing the famer's land.*

HISTORY OF CLAN EWEN by R. S. T. MacEWEN

Copies have again been sold out. Miss Williamson has received more requests and when she receives enough will again have a re-print made of the above.

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