



Reviresco

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Clan MacEwen Society Bulletin

Commander's Message Sir John McEwen

"As the date of our forthcoming Family Convention - June 8th - looms ever closer, I need to put out final appeals for anyone out there to come forward if they believe that they can prove descent from our last Chief, Swene McEwen, who is last known to have been alive in 1432. (It used to be believed that he died in the 1490s but given that he was in dire straits when he made his unhappy arrangement with the Campbells in 1432, it is highly unlikely that he lived for another 60 years.) If no one comes forward, if all goes according to plan, as Commander I will be recognised as Chief. A prospect which fills me with humility and awe at our great history and gratitude for all the work done by Clansfolk and Clan supporters over many years. The Clan officers are known to most. Perhaps less well known are the two great Clan supporters from Continental Europe, Herma Goosens (who knows more about our Clan than anyone alive) and our Pipe Major, Achim Fuchs. Thank you, Herma and Achim! We would never have reached this stage without you. We know that you are Dutch and German but we also know that there is no one more Scottish! Thank you. And thank you also to Dena J. Burch for reasons that only she might understand. Reviresco!"



Chairman's Message Sean McCuin GySgt. USMC Ret.

Greetings from Kilfinan!
Hello to all!

These next few months will be quite exciting for the Clan and Society. The Society has really outdone itself by attending a record number of Highland Games and Gatherings globally! This is all due to the outstanding contributions and commitment of our Commissioners and Conveners all over the world. If you have a chance, try and get to the Highland Games in your area and show your support for our great Clan. If your local games do not have MacEwen representation, and you would like to help out, contact your Country Commissioner to volunteer. Every member of the Clan and Society are an integral part of this great machine.



We will soon have our Family Convention and Society AGM here in Otter Ferry and I truly look forward to welcoming all Kinsmen and Women who can attend this historic event. We will be setting the pace for other Clans to follow and taking our rightful place at the front of the pack when it comes to Clan Organizations around the world. We would not be in this position without each and every one of you and it is truly humbling to be able to serve this great Society and Clan! **Reviresco! Co' mhla!**

From The Editors

The UK's meteorological office announced that Spring officially started on March 1st, but no one informed the weather, especially here in Scotland. As I write this, I'm looking out onto a grey Gare Loch with grey laden skies. Canada is also firmly in the grip of winter as shown by photographs in Maggie McEwan's report. So, it's not surprising that our thoughts are focussed on Summer and the gathering at Otter Ferry. Last year the event was blessed with warm, still, and sunny days. But, whatever the weather (and remember this is Scotland), there will be a warm welcome to all who attend. If it is your first time visiting the home land of the Clan, we have included a feature on Loch Fyne alongside which, stands the site and cairn of the MacEwen Castle. Standing at the cairn you will be looking out onto a scene which was seen by generations of MacEwens over 400 years ago and you will therefore be stepping back in time. The Loch Fyne area remains an inspiration for artists and poets, and we were delighted to have been given permission by Don McIver, a Canadian Poet, to reproduce his poem about the Loch, which encapsulates the area. So, by being part of our Clan gathering you will also be continuing a tradition that goes back thousands of years. No gathering in Scotland would be complete without the accompaniment of bagpipes and JR Ewen explains what the pipes mean to him. Also, we have another insight into the correspondence of members of Sir John's family, as they go about their lives in the mid 1800's.



Loch Fyne awaits.

See you there!

Reviresco!



Inside This Issue

	page
Commander Sir John McEwen	Cover
Chairman Sean McCuin	
From The Editors	
Ewan and Pauline Rowland.....	2
Canada Commissioner Report	
Maggie McEwan.....	4
USA Commissioners Report	
Carol and Bob Owens.....	5
Loch Fyne, History and Culture by Ewan Rowland	6
Hamlet Upon Loch Fyne by Don MacIver	9
Pipe Major JR Ewen—'Squeezing the Goose' A Lifetime of Playing Pipes by JR Ewen	11
The McEwen Letters - by Lady Rachel McEwan.....	13
Spotlight on a MacEwen - Lord Robin Gilmour McEwan by Ewan Rowland and Ross McEwen	28
A History of Gathering by Ewan Rowland	29

	page
A Gathering To Remember Bonnie Prince Charles at The Royal Oak by Ross McEwen	32
Learning to Speak Gaelic Lesson 2	35
'Slow Dance' a poem by Abigail McCuen	39
Lemon Curd Rolls by Michelle McEwen	40
Family Convention.....	41



Canada Commissioner Report by Maggie McEwan

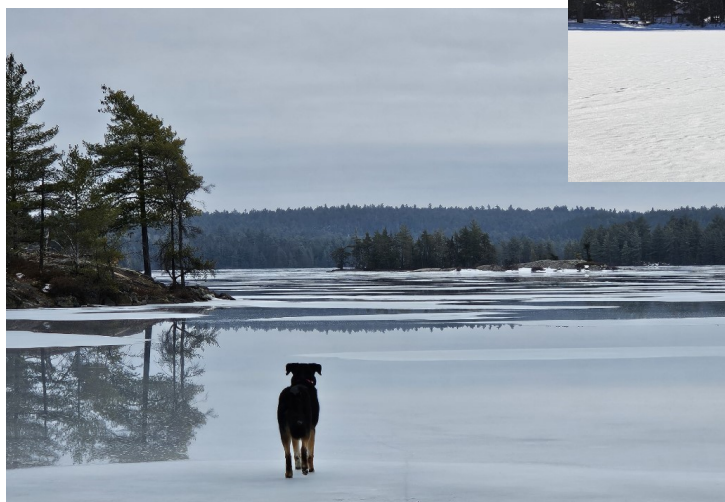
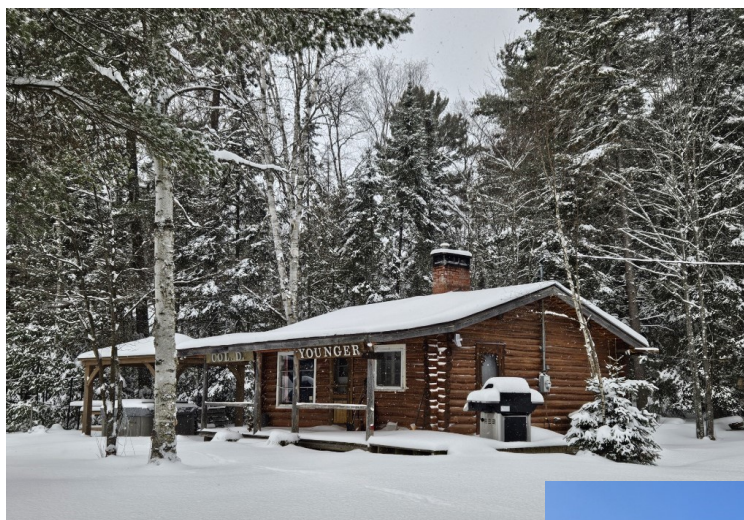


Greetings from Ontario, Canada

Clan MacEwen is registered for a return to Cambridge Highland Games, July 19/20 and we have applied to register at Fergus Highland Games, August 9 - 11. I have been assured that we will be accepted.

I would like to add other Highland Games to our schedule. If you are able to host a booth, please contact me and we can work out a plan to spread Clan MacEwen information to other parts of Canada.

We are still enjoying snow and winter sports in many areas of the country. These recent photos, courtesy of Debbie Younger, are Lake Kukagami in Ontario.



USA Commissioner Report by Bob and Carol Owens



Greetings Fellow MacEwens!

As this publication goes to press, our US conveners have just completed a busy 2024 first quarter, with multiple events in Arizona and Florida. To say the hard work and terrific promotional efforts of our dedicated conveners is outstanding would be an understatement.

I am proud to have the pleasure of working alongside these fine folks, as we look toward the many Spring events across the US. Keep an eye on Facebook or visit us online to see where we'll be!

If you would like information about how you can share in the fun of representing Clan MacEwen, please let me know. We are always looking for folks who are excited about sharing the story of the Clan MacEwen! Our best chapters are ahead!



Top Left & Right Images From Florida Highland



Images from Arizona Highland Games

Loch Fyne, History and Culture

Standing on the shores of Loch Fyne looking west, we can imagine seeing the same things our ancestors saw. So, for the uninitiated this is where the MacEwens settled. The area is steeped in history with archaeological finds dating back to the Bronze Age, with notable carins or burial mounds close to the summit of *Creag Evanachan*.

The Cowal Peninsula on the eastern side of the Loch Fyne has been subjected to invasions from around 500 AD. The most notable invaders were from Ireland and the Kingdom of Dal Riata. It is believed that this invasion was the beginning of the first King in Argyllshire. The time line in this article attempts to explain the significance of those settlers from Ireland. The Norse invaders also left their mark on the area.

A kin group, the *Cenél Cowgail* controlled the peninsula. Incidentally, their name evolved into the Cowal. The area was once part of the *Pictish* kingdom of *Fortriu*.

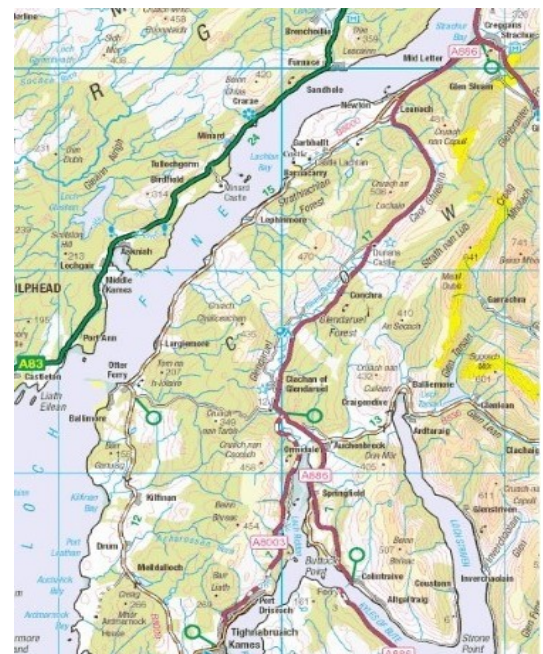
Much of the Cowal was once held by the *Lamonts*. Their name originates from Langman which is old Norse for law speaker. They lost their lands to the Campbells in 1646 when 200 men of their clan were killed at the battle of Dunoon. *Campbel's* castle is still prominent at Inverary at the top of the Loch . Unfortunately, the MacEwen castle or Clan Ewen of Otter (13th century), which was originally built on the site of an iron age dun, also fell into the hands of the Campbells. However, due to the ravages of time and displacement of the MacEwen clan, the site of the castle is now only marked by a cairn. Ballimore which was three miles northeast of Kilfinan was also held by the MacEwens of Otter and was lost at the same time as Castle MacEwen. However, Clan Ewen once controlled the area around Kilfinan. Other clan castles along Loch Fyne included MacNeil of Argyll – Castle Sween; Clan MacLachlan (Clan Lachlan) castle all of which also date from the 13th century. On the opposite eastern side of the Loch lies Tarbet, which was once a thriving fishing port, has the site of Tarbet Castle built in the 13th century, which was strengthened in the 1320s by Robert the Bruce. It was the last of a succession of castles mostly built as a defence against the Vikings. It has commanding views down Loch Fyne and along Inver Clyde. However, in an attempt to curtail the Viking warriors, King Edgar agreed with King Magnus Barefoot to cease their disputes between the Scots and Vikings by agreeing that the Scots would have the mainland and the Vikings the islands. After a few skirmishes the castle was seized in 1687 by Walter Campbell of Skipness Castle and made into a stronghold for Archibald Campbell the 9th Earl of Argyll.



Tarbet Castle at the northern end of Kintyre



Old Lachlan Castle



High Kings of Ireland



Kings of Ailech



Ánrothán uí Néill

(d 1080)



Aodh (meaning 'fire')

(d 1200)



Suibhne (d 1200)



Duncan (d1240)



Sween MacEwen



Broken Clan

Date back to 1500 BC. The Anglo-Norman invasion in 1198 brought an end to the Irish kingships.

This is a province in the north of Ireland in Donegal. The stone fort was built by Uí Néill and was the seat of the Irish Kings



Grianan Aileach - Green Fort from the 6th or 7th century.

It is said that several Scottish families may have descended from this dynasty. Ánrothán an Irish prince married Cineal Comngall, the daughter of the King of Scotland from whom *Cowal* gets its name. **MacEwens** (by legend) are descended from the Kings who ruled the area known as 'Otter'.

He was the son of Ánrothán and Aodh's son Dunshéibhe (d.1160) was Lord of Knapdale, he is believed to be the ancestor of the Lamonts and **MacEwens**.

Suibhne founded and gave his name to Castle Sween Loch Sween and is also considered to be the founder of **Clan MacEwen**. By the time the castle was built the MachLachlan, Lamont and **MacEwen** cousins had control of the greater part of the Cowal. The Sween was replaced as Lord of Knapdale and Arran in 1262 by the Stewart Earls of Menteith.



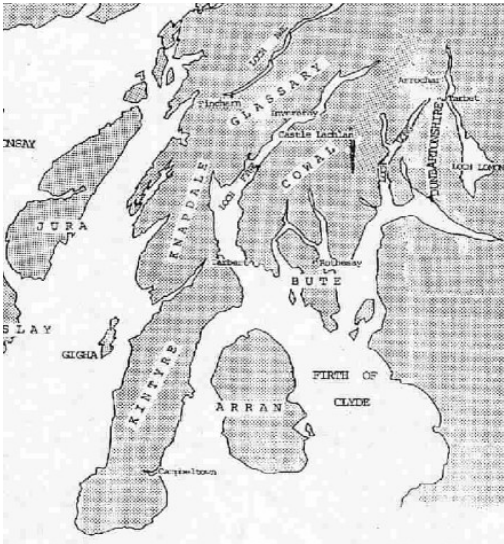
Castle Sween on Loch Sween

Duncan the son of Suibhne had a son called Eoghan or **Ewen** who lived in the mid 1200s. His name translates from Gaelic as 'Born of the Yew Tree'. According to sources, myths point to **Ewen** as founding the clan MacEwen. It was around this time that he was able to set up a holding of his own at Otter where he built a castle as his grandfather had done. Castle MacEwen was located on a rocky point on Loch Fyne at Ardghaddan about a mile below Kilfinan, now marked by a cairn. Ewen was probably the first MacEwen of Otter. There is a mound close to Otter House near the site of the castle called *Dùn Mhic Eoghainn* which is believed to have been the original site of the baron courts.



9th and last of Otter (last clan chief). In 1432 the lands of Otter were granted to Duncan Campbell of Lochow in repayment for overdue loans and Sween resigned the Barony of Otter to King James 1.

Without land, many MacEwens settled in the lands of their cousins and neighbours e.g. MacLachlans. A large number settled in Lenox County others went to Lochaber, Perth, Sky and the Lowlands including Galloway. Others went to Loch Lomond and some remained as hereditary bards and sennachies to the Campbell chiefs.



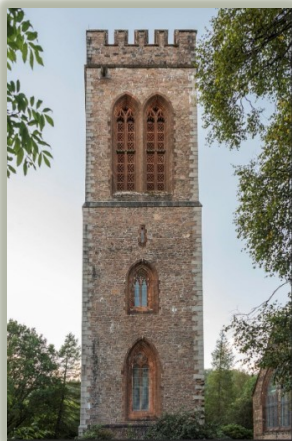
Loch Fyne translates to the Loch of the vine/wine but there is no evidence that grapes were ever grown there*. The Loch is 40 miles (65km) in from the Sound of Bute and is the longest sea Loch in Scotland. It is surrounded by impressive landscape with the Arrochar Alps to the north and Knapdale extending from the north end of the Loch down to Kintyre in the south on its eastern shore. The western shore runs down from Cairndow at the head of the Loch down to Ardlamont Point marking the western gateway to the Kyles of Bute. From this point there are vistas out to Bute, Arran, Mull of Kintyre and Inchmarnoch. Kintyre is the longest peninsula in Britain with steep and remote cliffs as far as Skipness. In more recent times, during WW2, the Loch was used to train landing craft technique. Today however, it is better known for the sea food landed and destined for restaurants across Scotland and beyond. The *Loch Fyne Oysters* were once locally owned but now exist in brand name only, having been sold in 2023. The Loch Fyne Restaurants have also been sold but still operate. More information can be found on this at www.lochfyne.com

In the 1833 the Loch was the centre of a battle between the traditional drift net fishermen and the new trawl net fishermen who sprang up around Tarbert and Campbeltown. Tarbert remains an important fishing port and contributor to the local economy.

A well-known landmark at the top of the Loch is the Dukes Tower or Inveraray Bell Tower. It was built as a memorial to members of Clan Campbell who died in WW1 and were the 8th Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and stands at a height of 126ft (38m). The tower was completed in early 1920s at a cost of £17,000 (£800,000 in today's money). It has commanding views down Loch Fyne and is said to have the best peal of bells in the whole of Scotland.



Traditional fishing boats on the Loch



Bell Tower and view down Loch Fyne

One of the notable castles on Loch Fyne is the Inveraray Castle, the seat of the Campbell Clan. There has been a castle on the site since 1553 but the current building was built in 1743 by Archibald Campbell, Earl of Ilay. James Lees-Milne an expert in his day on country houses and old building architecture, in 1943 said he was not impressed by the house calling it, "ugly" because of the grey stone making it "grim and forbidding".

Recently a shipwreck was discovered in the Loch by an amateur diver. He discovered an encrusted drinking vessel and a stone anchor. The site of the wreck has been kept secret for now and although there is no certainty as to its origins, experts suggest it was a Cromwellian warship sent to quell an uprising on the west coast of Scotland. The vessel, a Swan type, may have taken shelter in the Loch but the notorious tidal waters could have caused the ship to sink. As recently as January 2018, the Loch claimed the lives of two fishermen who were trawling in 'Nancy Glen' when their vessel capsized in 450ft (137m).



Inveraray Castle

Loch Fyne is visited by tourists from around the world intrigued by its rich cultural and historical background and miles of unspoiled scenery. It has inspired painters, photographers and poets who creatively capture its moods and beauty. One such poet is a Canadian called Don MacIver who penned the 'Hamlet upon Loch Fyne'. Don says, "I am and always shall be, of the lineage of Scotland where the ... Heather and Primrose sway to gentle wind". Don has kindly given his permission for his poem to be reproduced here.

* There are other suggestions about the meaning of Loch Fyne including Irish Gaelic meaning beautiful or it could even have Fingalian origins as it was often written as "Fine".

Hamlet Upon Loch Fyne

In darkness of salten waters be stilled
The clouds o'er Loch Fyne hung low upon hills
Night falls gentle, Heaven by the ocean
Fishermen's boat beneath moon drops anchor

The village at sleep, silent the sheep graze
A shallow wind drifts by our window sill
Morning's fog creeps upon island's meadow
In field surrounds lay thistle and snowdrop

House on the glen Castle Inverary
Majestic in caricature and lore
Wherest Gaelic Scots in fine lordly fashion
Spake proudly the moors and bonnie mountain

The Scotsman praise long of the fair Loch Fyne
As steeped in history, gentleman's word
The beauty of eerie black water remains
Great mystic legend of centuries told

Midst nearby wood ruins of battle cries
Castles MacEwan and Lachlan attest
Drawn swords and gunnery of fishermen
Whose drift and trawl nets combed divided seas

In the air cast chilly a salten mist
The earth and garden Heather and Primrose
Green moor and mountain wondrous backdrop
To waters of glass in silent refrain.

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Kilfinan House



Site of MacEwen Castle



Otter Ferry Spit



Loch Fyne from above Inveraray



Otter Ferry



Kilfinan Bay

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Coastal Scotland - Stuart Fisher

Celebrating the history, heritage and wildlife of Scottish shores

BBC March 2018 - Lifting barge at scene of fishing tragedy in Loch Fyne

Pipe JR Ewen ‘Squeezing the Goose’ A Lifetime of Playing Pipes

In 2021 I met Archie McEwan at the Stirling March for Independence and he invited me to get involved with Clan MacEwen. I wasn't able to help that year but in April 2022 I travelled up to Inverness for the Culloden Memorial to play the pipes for Clan MacEwen. It was a beautiful day and I was very proud to play for the Clan and meet the Commander and committee. In 2023 I went to the Clan Gathering for the first time with my wife Olivia and one year old daughter Cécile and again played some tunes during the weekend. I've been to Otter Ferry a few times and the MacEwen Cairn, but I don't think it's ever been that hot and sunny as it was that weekend. It was a pleasure meeting up with some of this extended family and I'd like to introduce you to one of mine.



JR Ewen



Above and Below
Grandad Alex Ewen

My great grandfather, Alec Ewen of Arnwell, Banchory Devenick, played pipes in the Gordon Highlanders and was the inspiration for me to take up bagpipes when I was about 9 years old. I don't remember but I did meet him when I was a baby in 1979 and growing up I would hear the stories of Alec playing pipes in Shetland when he visited my Grandparents in Unst. His pipes were made by Thow of Dundee around 1900 and he got them as a teenager while living in Forfar. First time I saw them was at my uncle's home with my cousin. The bag was a dried husk so that couldn't be played, but we each took a drone in the mooth and blew together. It was, I think, the spark. From then on, I had a 30-minute lesson from an old army pipe major on a Monday night. Every week the young boy, who had the lesson before me, came oot greetin. I was determined not to be that boy. Sitting at the table my teacher would stab my fingers with a blue biro if I wasn't covering the holes properly on the chanter. Every week my fingers were covered. I progressed from the chanter to the goose and soon after the full highland pipe. My pipes were made by Sandy Robertson of



Peterculter, Aberdeenshire. I both loved them and hated them. Learning pipes is very hard and it's not fun. Practising the chanter, trying to get the embellishments right and memorising a tune was just a chore and when you didn't practise you got shouted at and then came the guilt. The guilt gets worse when you get the full pipes as now there are even more things to try and understand, breathing, squeezing, tuning, reed strength, seasoning, maintenance etc. When you are starting out you have no stamina and worse, no lip strength so by the time you've tried to tune the pipes you're knackered and want to give up. And by this point your family wants you to give up too.

I must have been doing something right as I moved on to join a new Boys Brigade Band, my teacher recommended and then we were soon playing down Union Street and the Beach Boulevard in Aberdeen. Later I switched up and joined the Bucksburn and District Pipe Band. My great grandfather had played with them for a while, so it seemed like the right thing to do. Bucksburn had 2 bands, Novice Juvenile and the Grade 2 band. Now we were off all over Scotland doing competitions every weekend like the Arbroath Highland Games, the Aboyne Highland Games, The Cowal Games and the Worlds at Bellahouston Park.

It's a lot of work, 2 band practices a week, new tunes to learn, a lot of sitting on a bus, standing in the rain. As a young teenager I'm not sure I liked it much. Pipes are bloody hard to play, the travelling and waiting at competitions is boring and can be quite lonely. The guilt that you're not good enough, is always there too. Playing down the High Street at Cowal at night surrounded by thousands of (drunk) supporters, singing along to us playing was pretty good though.

My family moved to Glasgow when I was 15 and I had no plans to join another band. Lots of exams and then onto Art School in Dundee. It was here that I started to enjoy playing pipes. Playing atop a hill after a party at dawn was fun. I made an automatic drone machine with an air compressor for an art installation in my third year. Playing at the pub during the Scotland v Brazil opening match of the 1998 World Cup was amazing, especially Scotland scoring first. It was epic.

I continued on playing solo for weddings, funerals and the like when my cousin was to marry. Now my uncle wanted me to play Alex Ewen's pipes at his daughter's wedding. This was amazing as we got the pipes out and got them fixed up ready to play. This was maybe the first time they had played in 40 years. It was a great honour and they are a cracken set which sound beautiful. They are a very special set of pipes for my family and I've been the custodian ever since.

After the heart-breaking result of the independence referendum the marching started. All Under One Banner started drawing more and more people to their marches around Scotland and then the question was why in a country full of pipers did we not have a band to lead them. In December 2018 Saor Alba Pipes & Drums was formed to lead and play at Scottish independence events. Our first march was Stornoway in 2019, which I was quite nervous about but by the time we got to the next march in Glasgow I found it thrilling. The band was big and the crowds even bigger. 2019 was quite an incredible year playing pipes all the time and enjoying every minute. I now have about 70 new friends. We played on the Royal Mile for the first time with 100,000 other Independence supporters. We even travelled to Catalonia and played in La Diada. Everything was going really well, we were looking forward to our second season and then covid hit and changed everything.



By this point I was on the committee of the band and trying to rebuild it as the world opened up. Our band is made up of players and assistants all over Scotland, so a weekly practice is just not very practical, however in 2023 we tried to have more in person practices. Some in Glasgow, a practice on the Royal Mile and another in the borders. I really do enjoy it now. I have the yearning to learn the tunes I hear. I want to have more practice and spend more time amongst these musicians. Pipes are still very difficult to play but I love it and thank my father for the push and Alec for the pipes. www.saoralbapd.com



Pipe Band Aid - Edinburgh 2022

If one band wasn't enough, I'm also the secretary and trustee of another band, Pipe Band Aid. Started in 2013, Pipe Band Aid are a group of pipers and drummers from various bands across Scotland, who play together while our bucket shakers collect money for charity. Over the 10 years we have raised £41,000 from public donations. We have about four fundraisers a year and last time out we raised £5000 for Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity. www.pipebandaid.com

To fill up all the other weekends and evenings I've gone and joined a competition band as well. Barrhead and District Pipe Band are in grade 4B and aspiring this year to move up the grades. It's quite a challenge and something I've not done since I was 15. However, I've learned the extra 22 tunes and had more band practice in a month than all of last year. I'm enjoying it, especially getting into the competition set and working on it in detail. New Year, new things. 2024 is going to be

busy. <https://www.facebook.com/barrheadpipeband/>

The McEwen Letters by Lady Rachel McEwen

Researching the McEwen family letters and diaries, Lady Rachel introduced you to members of the family in the September Bulletin, Volume 5 Issue 2. They were copies of original handwritten documents. She now presents you with more insights into the family. These excerpts were typed up in the 1920s by Sir John's grandfather, which makes for easier reading. The personal letters give you a window on how the McEwens were moving on in their lives, in the mid-1800s. The letters also show a style of writing common to those of the period but long since abandoned in favour of cryptic messages sent through the ether.

Robert, the recipient of the letters is at this point the fourth brother and is starting an apprenticeship/employment in Glasgow. It is thought he is still in his late teens. Margaret is the elder sister and lives at home and acts as the gatekeeper to all the local news. David takes on farming, but the extent of this venture is not known at this stage. John has graduated from Glasgow or is about to and is living in Newcastle on the east coast of England. I think he is already embarking on his vocation to Ministerial life. Hugh, the youngest is still at school. James is the only brother not to have written a letter in those few months of Robert's life in Glasgow. Finally, their mother focuses on food and safety in her correspondence.

*"Dux" referred to in one of the letters means 'best pupil'.

1825

(To the same person as before)
(From Margaret McEwen)

Clochranhill 16 July 1825

Dear Robert

I have but very little time to write you tonight. You will credit me when I inform you that I have got on my Sunday's Frock to receive Miss Gray and others of her household, Surgeon John Ronald, his sister etc. etc. Miss McFarlane staid some time in Kilmarnock and delivered the parcel you sent by her the day after we got Mr. Bryden's. She has promised to spend some days with us before going away. She is at present with Miss Bryan at Prestwick-toll.

I read you peice of your letter to David respecting Kate as desired: the phiz immediately lengthened and a smile could not altogether be suppressed. Wee Johnny is like to carry the day there: David says: "Blockhead, he'll better take care he does not get his head broken." I was glad David, even in the heat of passion, did not say he would better take care he did not get his brains blown out. I therefore let my mind rest at ease seeing there was no mention made of firearms. you think the curds and cream will be suffering for it - hush, you rascal, you are almost as bad as Jean Clerk, why we have had several very good suppers of them I assure you, and at which you could very well have joined us I dare say. You rascal you, how dare

-21-

1825

you presume to nickname my favourites? by calling one purblind Lieutenant - horrid stigma - and other smart youths Johnny Raws. I have no patience with you and must "fulminate" a bull against you forthwith. Mrs. Betsy Smith is dead. Mr. John McClyment was introduced to Elizabeth Donaldson sometime about the beginning of the brigade in Symington's: what she was doing there I cannot tell you. Mr. John was quite captivated and gallanted her about most nobly: their late walks have been most notoriously talked about; he was treating her with

wine etc. etc. What think you of this? I am glad you are doing yourself justice in taking your victuals, be sure continue to do so. I do not think for anything I have yet heard, Mr. Ballingall intends leaving Air. Willie is gone to Cumnock to Mr. White, Writer, but it is only till they can get a place for him such as your's, I suppose. Be sure you let us know when you want butter or anything else.

Dr. Auld^o was here visiting, I mean officially; we asked him whether you ought to have a certificate: he said you ought, for if it was asked for afterwards they could only give it up to the time you went away, so we have got one which we shall send you when you think you may require it, but I suppose until you intend becoming a Communicant it will not be of any use to you. Hugh wishes to join at the Sacrament this year and will be examined accordingly. We had a packet of letters from John Mrs. Beith was here from Greenock, that is one of the Maitlands you knew, she has insisted beyond measure that I go to Greenock this summer: if I could get, how I should like to go. I am glad to hear Miss McFarlane has honoured you so far as to make you her escort one night: sure t'was the first lady ever had her arm in yours, but says you - "the ice is now broke, it shall not be the last." Goodbye, I must now be off, a multitude of things call for me: I must put on my best face and be on the tiptoe of etiquette - yea, must I not?

We all join as usual in sending you our truest love.

The two Rastons have joined the debating society here:

I remain, Dear Robert, your's with the utmost affection

Margaret MacEwen.

To Mr. Robert MacEwen

Glasgow.

Prospect Cottage⁰ 2 July 1825

Dear Robert -

I had a letter last week from home which mentioned that you were well and comfortable in your new domicil:- long may you continue so: and to ensure the continuance of which I would recommend you every morning to take a walk into the country, for though by this practice you may increase your shoemaker's bill you will thereby get free of the physician's visits and the apothecary's nostrums, and I now beg leave to qualify some of the recommendations I made you in your diet. My life in Glasgow was sedentary, and much less therefore would support me than you who from breakfast till dinner will be constantly on your legs or at least in a high state of activity and exertion. Let your food be wholesome and nutritive. You will find a constant use of ham for dinner and coffee for tea and breakfast, though cheapest, not the best thing for you. They are of too heating a nature, but I need not give you hints on these things as your own good sense will determine sufficiently well for yrself.

The weather for this some time has been pleasant and everything in this part of the country looks well except the fruit which rather appears to be a defective crop. I daresay it is nearly a month since we had new potatoes and green pease and such delicacies I was down last week at sea-bathing quarter - Tynemouth - about ten miles from our cottage. We had very good lodgings or rather a whole furnished house taken. It was very pleasant. I hope

you still relish your new business. I should doubly regret it if it were otherwise as I might be blamed for saying so much about your going out, but whether it do well or ill the counsel, I do assure you, was given from the purest motives and deep concern for your and the family's welfare.

I believe Wyld has a family and you are an excellent scholar and could teach after your counting-house hours - Or Mr. Baillie (I think that is old Mr. Haffie's son-in-law) - he has boys; perhaps you could give them an hour. I make the suggestion and you will see whether it be practicable or not. It is not improbable that you may have no time to spare for such an employment or other obstacles unknown to me may render it highly improper even to attempt such a thing - but you can make your best of the suggestion. You have got very cheap lodgings (2/6 per week) if they be any way comfortable and an honest landlady, but if you think she is not sterling she will soon make you pay 5/- by her stealth: but I hope all will go smoothly - Keep however a sharp look-out. Recollect you are not at Clochran - but a solitary

bachelor whom everyone will esteem fit subject for petty peculation and piece-meal larceny. You will oblige me by being enabled to acquaint me in your first letter that you have got a reading of Chalmer's Commercial Sermons. I don't wish for an account of my respect for the author or of my admiration for the bold and poetic strain in which

they are written, but simply because I know no one who has written on a subject so nearly allied with your present circumstances, or rather identified with them. It is purely for the important truths and cautions they contain that I am so anxious to hear of you having them. They describe the dangers into which young men from the country are so liable to be ensnared, and when once so easily and naturally led astray ... their return to their father's steps in the good old way is hopeless Above all, dear Robert, never one day or one part of a day absent yourself from church - "when sinners entice, consent not." If you get a seat in St. George's or in Mr. McFarlane's I would cheerfully help you to pay it. What is your success in this world to misery in the next. I hope every one of us may get more concerned than we have ever been concerning the things that belong to our everlasting peace ere they be finally closed from our eyes. I feel myself exceedingly unqualified to give you any admonitions and I know their inefficacy unless the good Spirit of God subdue and rule your heart, but I recollect when I first went to Glasgow the many traps that were laid for my peace and safety although my profession and society did not expose me to the same risk as yours will, and therefore I am concerned for you. I am jealous over you and with reverence and sincerity I hope I may add with a godly jealousy. Let not the laugh of your acquaintances ever entice you to improper society or forbidden pleasures. Never let their

:

entreaties and invitations however frequent or pressing ever retard your feet from the house of prayer or force you to the chambers of impurity or the board of intemperance. I mention these things not from any distrust I have in your virtue but from the combined hosts of adversaries that will everywhere attack you, and you of yourself cannot come off from the combat (safely) unless divine grace and strength assist you.... It is a good comfortable thing for you that you are so near home; you can either get or send word to and fro every twelve hours I am not fixed what I am going to do respecting my present situation. I have resolved to attend college but I fear I wont be able to go to Glasgow as it answers better in some respects that I should go to Edinburgh. For this I am sorry, as I should have had extreme pleasure in messing with you. You will find the Miss McHaffies very plain unassuming girls. I hope that everything in your new situation may be as pleasant as possible.... Whatever be your temporal destiny may your spiritual progress and success be great and increasing, though poor in the world, rich in grace and good works.

Hugh says he is very willing to be a farmer and to go up and work at Penvallie. I do not know whether he should be encouraged or dissuaded from such views. Difficult as it is to get into warehouses the difficulty of coming forward by farming unless you have capital is much greater or rather, impossible now, as no credit is to be had as was formerly. If you thought you could in any way procure him an opening you might at least let him know as perhaps his

mind may be driven to that employment because he thinks the probability of finding a place is extremely small. I think Hugh, though often unaccountably stupid, is a material that would shine by polishing and hard rubbing: though naturally rough, rude and rugged he is capable by proper management and discipline of doing something:- an agent for instance or a rider, as they are called; some of whom have as good as 4 or 5 hundred a year, would suit him properly.

The markets here are still high and no prospect but of continuance. It is a good thing that poor people have as much work as they can set their hands to, with (quite) considerable wages; and they do live here at a (high) rate. If you only saw their markets, what fat beef and mutton is displayed, and the poorer the people are, the richer and fatter have they their food. The pitmen wont look on a piece of meat if it should have the least part of it lean - if it (be) not fine white fat in toto it wont find market with them or the Keelmen. If you have an opportunity to send a letter to Ayr before August Margaret will get it conveyed to me As I am in a hurry you must excuse my proceeding further in the mean time and as I dont know when I will have another opportunity of writing you again I will bid you, ^à ~~ad~~ uno pectore, farewell; - perhaps my next ^{AB} communication will be expressed to you tête à tête. My best love to you and be assured that I ever am
 My dear Robert, your very affectionate brother
 John McEwen.

Write where your lodgings are; if you have any person as fellow; what new companions you have got; into what families you have been introduced; who recommended the lodgings to you.

(Letter to Robert from his sister, Margaret)

Clochranhill: 1 June 1825.

My dear Robert

By your letter to my Mother I am happy to see you are safely arrived in Glasgow. I observe with much pleasure Mr. McHaffie's attention in assisting you to look out for lodgings. I think surely it is not high, 4/- per week. I should like to know your room is respectably furnished, and if your landlady is able to arrange the Dishes on the table in mathematical order. Also let us know the distance from the warehouse, and if on trial you are not satisfied with your landlady you know by giving her proper warning you are at liberty to remove. Further what kind of Boys are in the warehouse, and if the partners are pleasant, and what kind of employment you have. With this is sent an "empty Bag" with meal and a Ham in the midst of the meal, now observe I say 'tis in the midst of the meal, as can be attested by witnesses. As to the Ham, it is of exquisite quality, make your landlady ready it, and you had better just take fork and knife yourself and slice it as you eat it, by so doing it will last longest, and it is very customary also. Sir D^o is provided in a tutor who enters

about this time recommended by Mr. Brunton, one of the ministers of Edin^r - now I am no whit disappointed, - so be it. Now try to get some private opportunity to let me have a long epistle from you, fraught with much intelligence. Mr. Thomas Young was here on Friday evening, who excited us to much "risibility" of course. There is some butter nicely powdered for you today, it will be ready to send per carrier on Monday. We join in sending you our kindest affection. Goodbye my very dear brother, may all that is good attend you is the sincere wish of your truly affectionate sister
Margaret MacEwen.

To Mr. MacEwen
at Mrs. McGregor's Lodgings
Park's Place
foot of Stockwell St.
Glasgow.

Clochranhill, Thursday morning (June 2)

My dear Robert,

In the hurry of your going away that day I am afraid you forgot to say farewell to Willie, which I dare say he would expect, if so you ought to send compts. to him in some of your letters and say that you were sorry you had forgot as I suppose you meant to do it and therefor can say so consistant with truth. You must take care to get the meal set on a dry place where neither rats nor mice will get at the bag. And do not borrow nor lend your meal for you will not get it so good, I mean from your landlady. With kindest love to you I remain my dear Robert,

your affectionate Mother J. McEwen.

Glochranhill 7 June 1825.

My dear Robert,

AS I understand Mr. Bryden's people are sending a bundle into Glasgow, I shall embrace the opportunity of scrawling you a few lines, not that I have anything particular to say, but merely as a commencement to that correspondence, which I hope shall continue, amid all the fluctuations and changes of this life and last till death shall break the tie that binds us to this world; - and be assured that ever and anon I shall pester you with letters.

My Mother went to town one day last week and called upon Miss Hamilton in expectation of seeing Mr. Hamilton there, but he did not come in when she was there: however it was of little consequence for Miss Hamilton informed my Mother that Sir David had got a Tutor to his family who was recommended by Dr. Brunton; so this place which we had looked to is filled; however I must say that I am not much mortified at the disappointment, though the prospect some time hence would have been better, yet he is much happier than what he could be at Sir David's: we have not got any word from John since the letter was sent him respecting the place but I think that it will soon come.

On the Saturday after you left us I went up to the far-famed Kirk-damdy fair. I breakfasted that morning at South Balloch and afterwards went down to the fair to which the people were flocking in all directions. The day was very fine and on that account the girls were all dressed in their gayest attire: some of them were seen walking upon their stumps, some moving at a slow jog on horseback, while others resorted to the fair in Dung-carts, shandry-dans, cars and gigs. Amongst the profanum vulgus was seen wee Jonny Girdwood repairing thither riding upon that bedeviled animal with which you were tormented one morning in your pilgrimage to Penvallie. I believe there was little bullying and fighting, everything went off pretty quietly. Glenhoise was at the fair and came up to Penvallie and stopped till Monday morning when both he and I took our respective roads homewards. I believe poor Ballingale has lost his case in the Court of Session and is going to carry it before the house of Lords. Margaret's eyes are rather on the way of recovery. We all join best respects to you and I remain

Your's mo. sincerely

Da. McEwen.

P.S. You did not mention in your last at what hour you left the warehouse in the evening. Do you feel much inconvenience from the want of a watch.

Clochranhill 7 June 1825.

Dear Robert,

I expected a letter from you as soon as possible after the receipt of mine, but having not written me, I'm now convinced upon reflection that you have not got sufficient time. I'm sure it can never proceed from laziness, or neglect, and am also certain your inexhaustible fund of logic is not run dry. The weather has been very temperate for this some time and every thing around us has a flourishing appearance. I hope you have enjoyed good health since you went to Glasgow and (are) quite happy amongst your few acquaintances. How is Mr. J. Bⁿ? Are you far from the ware-house? The houses between Mr. McCorⁿ and McMurray's the innkeepers are a-demolishing and mighty are the improvements going on in this populous and flourishing town. Give our best respects to Mr. McFarlane's people. We all join in best love to you, and I remain
your most loving frère

Hugh McEwen.

Write by first opportunity?!?

~~(From Margaret)~~

(Clochranhill) August 1825.

Dear Brother,

With sisterly solicitude I desire to enquire of thee how thou farest, for it is long since thy pen hath addressed any of thy epistles to thy maternal dwelling. David thy brother had once the intent of surprising thee with his bodily presence, for he once intended sending forward a cargo of potatoes and he professed himself going into thy city of Glasgow, of great extent to dispose of them. The advice of a friend hath made him to abandon the idea for the present, but mayhap thou shalt see him upon the same mission at some future period. I believe Hugh wrote you of James's having the small-pox; we have had no further accounts of him since. One night not long since Jean^o thought proper to stay out all night: in the morning my Mother could not find her and enquired at Helen where she was; her reply was: "Its a God's truth she has been out a' night, she's really a debushed (for debauched)

lassie," which answer has given rise to some "giddiness, levity and risibility" amongst us Mr. Ridley's marriage has furnished the gossips in town with ample provision for some time - he speaks very pomposly, he says

he could have a thousand in Air, and so they have got it written on the doors by which he passes that the morning on which he is married 9 hundred and 99 young ladies shall be set adrift Miss Elizabeth Donaldson's list of admirers is rapidly increasing; she was telling McCracken lately he was 77th on the list I must now wish you goodbye.... We all join in our kindest affection to you. I remain, Dear Robert, thine most truly

Marg^t MacEwen.

Hugh is Dux in the composition. Did you get my last letter? It contained lots of nonsense; I hope it has not fallen into any person's hand.

Spotlight on a MacEwen

Lord Robin Gilmour McEwan Obituary

The Honourable Lord McEwan passed away on December 31st 2023 at the age of 80 years old. We offer our sincerest condolences to Lord McEwan's family.

Robin McEwan was born in Paisley, Renfrewshire on 12th December 1943. From Paisley Grammar School he entered Glasgow University and the School of Law and graduated with a First in Law. From there he embarked on an illustrious career in Law. He held the Faulds Fellowship in Law at the University from 1965– 1968, having been admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1967. In 1969 he undertook a Ph.D. entitled *The rights and liabilities of the undisclosed principal in the law of agency*.

In 1974-76 McEwan was Standing Junior Counsel to the Department of Energy, and was appointed Advocate Depute in 1976 until 1979. This role means that the holder has the ultimate prosecution of crime and the investigation of deaths in Scotland and legal advisor to the Scottish Government. In 1981 he “took silk” a meritocratic award to the Queen’s Council (QC) as in McEwan’s case but KCs for the current monarch King Charles III. During this time he became the Chairman of the Industrial Tribunals, leaving the position in 1982 to become the Sheriff of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway and then on to Ayr in 1988. A sheriff is a judge who presides over the sheriff court, the principal local civil and criminal court in Scotland. From 1989—1996 McEwan was a member of the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

In 1991, Robin McEwan became a temporary judge of the Court of Session and High Court of Judiciary, Scotland’s supreme courts. Nine years on he was appointed a permanent Senator of the College of Justice, taking the title Lord McEwan. The College is set of legal institutions involved in the administration of justice in Scotland and its members have an honorific role. He was also Deputy Chairman of the Boundary Commission for Scotland as well as a member of the Scottish Civil Courts Review from 2007-2009 . He retired in 2008.

In his busy professional life he found time to publish in 1980 a textbook on *Pleading in Court* and also co-authored with Ann Paton, Lady Paton *A Casebook of Damages in Scotland*. They were appointed to the bench in the same year. He also contributed to the *Stair Memorial Encyclopaedia* and encyclopaedia of law in Scotland.

Lord McEwan was married in 1973 to Sheena McIntyre and had two daughters. He was a keen golfer and a member of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers and Prestwich Gold Club and the New Club, Edinburgh.

Lord Robin McEwan QC

born 12th December 1943,
died 31st December 2003



A spokesperson from the Judicial Office for Scotland said,

“He will be sadly missed by those who knew him personally and professionally”.

References:

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Ross MacEwen

A History of Gathering

We are looking forward to our gathering or Family Convention in June when our clan once more comes together at Otter Ferry drawing people from around the world.

Have you ever considered why people are prepared to travel over long distances to meet with others?

Prya Parker stated that a *gathering is described as the common bringing together of people for a reason – it shapes the way we think, feel and make sense of the world.* (Why Do People Gather?).

Well, it won't surprise you perhaps, to know that gatherings go back 1.8 million years ago, started by Homo erectus and then 200,000 years ago by us, the Homo sapiens. The term, 'we are stronger together', heard in recent political campaigns, was most applicable to groups of hunter-gatherers back then. Throughout human history people have always sought out others to come together for common benefit and interest at particular times. Stonehenge is one example where people gathered in large numbers to celebrate the winter and summer solstice. The henge is probably the world's most awe-inspiring stone circle, the origins of which are believed to date back some 9000 years. It was a place of worship, a coming together of 'world views', languages, customs and traditions. (*The British Museum and English Heritage*).



Stone henge and gathering at the winter solstice.

Just over 700 miles north of Stonehenge is another site of importance believed to have attracted people from miles around. The Ness of Brodgar in Orkney is in size and sophistication comparable to Stonehenge and the monuments of Ancient Egypt and predates them all. It is thought to be a ceremonial centre and was built by Neolithic people. Archaeology suggests that gatherings of large groups would feast, exchange ideas and objects. The site may also have been important for "political" and celestial events for the surrounding vibrant societies. (*Sites in Orkney – Orkney Archaeological Society*).



Ness of Brodgar—Orkney

Today, we see a gathering as an opportunity to have "fun", the common denominator with this and all gatherings is food, drink, accompanied by music and dancing. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors also enjoyed themselves at gatherings, but the one difference was that they needed the group to survive. Being a member of a group helped to satisfy the need to belong, gain and share information and understanding. Perhaps more importantly being a member of a group helped individuals to define their identity. Throughout time, when people gathered in groups, they were better able to achieve a goal unachievable by the individual. Being in a group is a fundamental part of who we are, helping us to forge new friendships and reinforce old ones.

Research has shown that exclusion from a group leads to heightened levels of stress and depression and confused thinking. So, by coming together in a group provides us with reassurance and support and a sense of self-worth. (*NUBA The Psychology of Group*). Perhaps as a ‘broken clan’, MacEwens have been affected in some way by being excluded from its family group. This may have encouraged some to seek out other clans for support, guidance and protection, whilst others settled in small family groups in other places away from their ancestral home.

Clans in Scotland go back to the time of the Celts, Norman-French and Norse traditions. The term clan is a derivative of the Gaelic ‘*clann*’ meaning a close-knit group of relatives. However, you could be a clan member and yet not a member of that family. All you had to do was pledge allegiance to the head or chief of that family clan. As we’ve seen in the article above ‘Loch Fyne’, Scottish clans go back to 1100 AD. The clans were constantly battling amongst themselves for territory, power and food. Therefore, safety in numbers, group and self-identity were all important. Consequently, the best way to identify a member of the group was through the way they dressed i.e. tartan. Each clan developed their own colours woven into everyday dress. By the 11th and 12th centuries clans were well established and underpinning them was the idea of *Dùthchas*, an ancient belief that people are connected to the land on which they are born, creating a sense of belonging.

Under *Dùthchas* clan chiefs were elected through a system of *tanistry*, a Gaelic word for passing on titles and land. Rather than inherit the title, the role of the chief went to the best person for the job. (*The Birth of Scottish Clan Culture*). The chief’s role was to act in the best interest of the clan and in return clan members worked the land and fought in battles.

Gatherings aren’t just a group of disparate people meeting up in a given place at a given time. There needs to be a purpose, a structure and a set of guiding principles or rules. Rituals can create this focus by bringing people together to celebrate important milestones. Events not only provide the time and place in which to gather but as already mentioned it encourages people to review their bonds with friends and family. Ritual gatherings also help people to remember and store huge amounts of cultural information and ensure this is passed down orally over long periods of time as was the case with preliterate civilisations.

Highland Games are an example of a ritual where there is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words or actions. The Games were thought to have been introduced to Scotland from Ireland in the 4th or 5th centuries. The first Highland Games which was the forerunner of the modern Games was introduced by King Malcolm III between 1057 – 1093.

The purpose was for the clan chief to find the fastest runner and strongest clan member. The best musicians and dancers were also sought as they added prestige to the clan. The events were an expression of Scottishness. (*The Scotsman*). Today, typical activities include tossing the caber, a pole the size of a telegraph pole, an iron ball on the end of a chain called a hammer and the infamous tug of war. All these signify the potential muscle power of the clan and a clear message, ‘don’t mess with us’. In addition to the athletic events, many Highland Games also feature cultural categories such as food and craft stalls, demonstrations of traditional Scottish sports such as shinty, and performances by bagpipers and drummers. These events help to celebrate Scotland’s rich cultural heritage and provide a platform for people to showcase their skills and enjoy the traditions of Scotland.

Highland Games are also held outside Scotland, particularly in countries with large Scottish diaspora communities, such as Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. These games often feature similar athletic and cultural events as those held in Scotland, and they serve as a way for people to connect with their Scottish heritage and celebrate their cultural traditions.



Michael Canmore later to be King Malcom (or big head as it translates from Gaelic - the founding father of modern Scotland.

So next time you gather with family and friends in a place of special significance remember you are part of something that has been going on for thousands of years, and long may it last. We look forward to seeing you at the Clan's gathering in June to build on what has gone before by celebrating past achievements and looking forward to the MacEwens taking their rightful place once again among the ancient and honourable clans of Scotland.

Cò mhla!!



A Gathering To Remember 'Bonnie Prince Charles' at The Royal Oak Dinner by Ross McEwen

16 December 2023, on a cold wintry night in Scotland's Ancient Capital City of Edinburgh, saw the wholly successful return of a Jacobite dinner which had not taken place for a staggering 236-years, The Royal Oak Dinner.

The Royal Oak Dinner was, historically, a small 18th century dinner club composed of Scottish Gentlemen of the day, who met in secret in Edinburgh on 31 December each year to celebrate the birth date of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, better known to history as Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Jacobite claimant to the British Throne(s). The final dinner took place on 31 December 1787 where the guest speaker was one Robbie Burns. The Prince's death the following month at the age of 67, spelled the conclusion of the Royal Oak Dinner and the silencing of the Jacobite community for some considerable time.

The 2023 Royal Oak Dinner therefore, represented a wonderful opportunity to reconvene this historic dining club, 236-years after the most recent event, and to bring together the Royal Stuart community from across Scotland, and the rest of the United Kingdom. The event, which would sell out in a matter of a few weeks, took place in the beautiful wood-panelled dining room at The New Club in the centre of Edinburgh, and represented the first formal collaboration between The Royal Stuart Society and The 1745 Association, a project proposal which was first discussed at the Battle of Culloden Commemoration in April 2023, where representatives of both organisations were present, and the decision was made that Ross McEwen was to organise the event.

Aiming high, McEwen was able to secure as the guest speaker for the 2023 event, The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Cromartie, Chief of the Name and Arms of Mackenzie, who spoke to his family's key role in the 1745/46 Jacobite campaign, and in particular – the bloody and tragic Battle of Littleferry which took place on 15/16 April 1746, hours prior to the Battle of Culloden, and the collapse of the 1745 Jacobite campaign.

The evening began with a drinks reception overlooking the festive looking Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh Christmas market and Edinburgh Castle lurking above. The drinks reception enabled members of both organisations and their guests to meet and exchange pleasantries, after which the top table were piped into the dining room by Piper Struan McCall and a formal welcome was made by Royal Stuart Society Council Member Ross McEwen, who remarked upon the history of the Royal Oak Dinner, the special opportunity the evening presented to bring together the community from across the United Kingdom and beyond, as well as representing the first Royal Stuart Society event to take place in Scotland in several decades.

Grace was said by The Very Rev'd Father Ian Evans, Retired Assistant Chaplain General to the British Army. Later in the evening former Chairman of the 1745 Association Michael Nevin spoke to the history of the Royal Oak Dinner, then the current Chair of the 1745 Association Maureen Lipscomb detailed the history and work of the Association, and the penultimate remarks were made by Ross McEwen, who gave an account of the history of the Royal Stuart Society and its aims and objectives. The Loyal Toast was proposed by Colin C. Russell, Falkland Pursuivant Extraordinary to The Court of the Lord Lyon.

Lord Cromartie was then invited to address the dinner and delivered a fascinating and eloquently presented account of the Battle of Littleferry, which regrettably remains as one of the lesser-known battles which took place during the 1746 campaign. Lord Cromartie made frequent mention of a book recently published by the Golspie Heritage Society 'The Battle of Littleferry: A History & Trail Guide' written by Major General PC Marriott, His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Sutherland, which comes highly recommended. The evening concluded with drinks in the bar, where the firm consensus of the night, and subsequently, has been that evening was a complete success, and represented a welcome 'return' for The Royal Stuart Society holding events north of the border as it approaches its 100th anniversary in 2026.

Notable guests included James Macnab of Macnab, 24th Chief of Macnab.

Ross McEwen was joined on the evening by his wife Victoria, Mother Mariei, and Father Colin. The subsequent feedback from the evening continues to be wholly positive and the question left remaining is....when and where will the next meeting of The Royal Oak Dinner be?....



Top: Guest Speaker the Earl of Cromartie

Above: Ross McEwen making his address

Middle Right: Victoria McEwen

Bottom Right: Colin McEwen in conversation with Tim Atkinson, Banner Bearer to Lord Strathspey, Chief of Grant

Guests at the Royal Oak Event



Countess of Cromartie and Lord Cromartie



Colin C Russell, Falklands
Pursuivant Extraordinary at the Court
of the Lord Lyon



The Very Rev. Father Ian Evans
Saying Grace



Piper Stuart McCall

Learning to Speak Gaelic

Lesson 2

In the previous edition of the Bulletin, December Volume 5, Issue 4, you were introduced to the first lesson .

So in placing these two words one after the other to begin a sentence, we have:

tha mi

[lit. am me ie I am]

In order to give you something to say about yourself and not just leave you stuck with *I am* which hardly says much(!), let's give you a simple adjective to get you started:

blàth

[warm]

This word has a couple of silent consonants at the end, but don't worry about those; most languages do have the odd silent letter here and there. For instance, consider the English words *though* or *monologue* for just two examples!

So let's form our first sentence:

tha mi blàth

[lit. am me warm ie I am warm]

Now I bet you're wondering how we might go about switching that over to *you are warm* instead of *I am warm*. In English, you'd need to change two elements of the sentence, *I* and *am*, keeping just the adjective the same. In Gaelic, it's a simple case of removing *I* and replacing it with *you*, and you're done. What's even more attractive is the fact that we get to use the English word as our starting point, simply removing a couple of letters (how economical is this language?) and hey presto! you've got

your new word, and in Argyleshire dialect, it couldn't be simpler to say and spell. So, taking the *y* and *o* away from the English word, we're left with *you*

u

[you]

Now in the standard language, you'll see this word written **thu**, as if the word were sounded almost identically to **tha** give or take a vowel. In Central Argyle however, we don't spell this word using the **th** as it's confusing; we spell it exactly as it sounds!

So with your new word, let's form that sentence:

tha u blàth

[*lit.* are you warm *ie* you are warm]

It's just as easy to learn the words for *he/him* and *she/her*. Here are your instructions!

he

1. remove the *h*
2. pronounce the letter that's left as it looks, eg in English *get*

e

[he, him]

she

1. remove the *sh*
 2. keep the sound that's left /ee/ but employ sensible Gaelic spelling!
-

What do you think the word is going to be? That's right, it's exactly the same sound you already know from **mi** except without the **m**!

i

[she, her]

What's more – as you can see – we don't need two separate words for each concept. Gaelic does the job with just the one. Now that's not to say that there isn't complex stuff on the way – every language has its intricacies! – but at the very beginning, Gaelic is extremely straightforward and will continue so for a while yet, you'll be pleased to hear!

What required ten words in English (*am, are, is, I, me, you, he, him, she, her*) required only five in Gaelic so far: **tha, mi, u, e, i**. Double the pleasure, half the work!

So let's kit you out with some more words to help you begin to express something about what's going on around you:

sinn [we]

- The **s** is “soft” when placed next to an **e** or **i** meaning that you pronounce it as English /sh/
- The double **n** when placed next to an **e** or an **i** gives us something approximating the Spanish *ñ* eg *mañana* meaning that this word is a bit like the English noun *sheen* except with a Spanish *ñ* at the end!

sibh [yous, y'all & you formal *ie* to older people]

- Once again, the **s** is “soft” as Gaelic is nothing if not regular with its spelling.
- Final **bh** is unpronounced, leaving us able to re-employ our English word *she* as an approximate sound, although the Gaelic word is shorter, more clipped: /she!/
- You will also find this word pronounced almost like /shooy/ with some speakers, so keep an ear out for that. It is the same word though!

ead [they, them]

- Take the English word *bet*, shave off the *b*, and there you have it!
-

tha mi blàth [I am warm]

- The timing is like saying the English words *hammy* and *blab* as *blab blab blab!*

tha u blàth [you are warm]

- **tha** and **u** run together as one

tha e blàth [he is warm]

- **e** is actually unpronounced after the **a** in **tha** in our dialect

tha i blàth [she is warm]

- Like saying *hi* then *blab!*

tha sinn blàth [we are warm]

- The timing is like saying the English words *bashing* and *blab*

tha sibh blàth [yous are warm]

- The timing is like saying the English words *hasby* and *blab*

tha ead blàth [they are warm]

- The vowels in **ead** are unpronounced after the **a** in **tha**, as if saying *bat blab!*

tha Seumas blàth [James is warm]

- Just like in **sinn** and **sibh**, the **S** of **Seumas** is “soft” so the word sounds like the English *shame* with the extra /uss/ at the end and the “A” sound in the middle extended a little. As you can see, putting a name in here changes nothing about the grammar of the sentence – always a relief!

tha Móràg blàth [Sarah is warm]

- Like saying the English name *Moe* and the word *ruck* quickly one after the other, making sure to hang on the accented vowel. Although we translate **Móràg** as *Sarab*, the two names are etymologically distinct and the translation is therefore not a direct one.

Now that you know how to form sentences about anyone or anything in the present tense, why don't we add a few more adjectives to make things interesting?

fuair [cold] sounds just as it looks

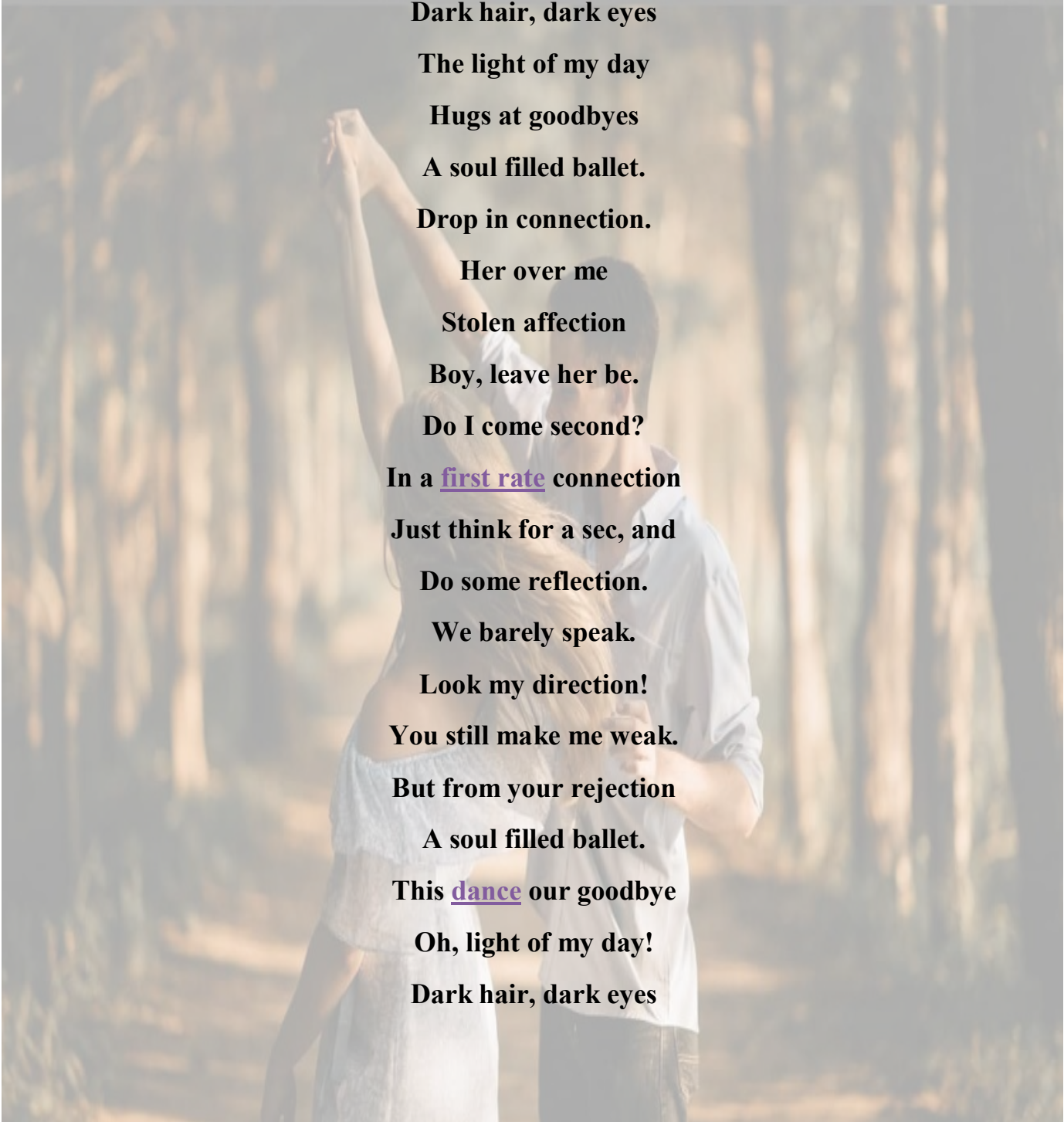
fiuch [wet] as above, although admittedly this is a challenging one to get just right!

tiuram [dry] remember the **t** is “soft” here making the sound like [ca]tch

briagh [lovely] lovely it is as it's completely phonetic save the last couple of letters!

Slow Dance
By
Abigail McCune

Clan MacEwen member Joshua McCune is the proud parent whose teenage daughter's poem was selected to be published by The Amercia Library of Poetry. She gracefully allowed us to publish her poem here:

A young couple is dancing in a forest at sunset. The woman is wearing a white top and a light-colored skirt, and the man is wearing a light blue shirt and dark pants. They are holding hands and looking at each other. The background is a soft, golden light filtering through the trees.

Dark hair, dark eyes
The light of my day
Hugs at goodbyes
A soul filled ballet.
Drop in connection.
Her over me
Stolen affection
Boy, leave her be.
Do I come second?
In a first rate connection
Just think for a sec, and
Do some reflection.
We barely speak.
Look my direction!
You still make me weak.
But from your rejection
A soul filled ballet.
This dance our goodbye
Oh, light of my day!
Dark hair, dark eyes

Lemon Curd Rolls by Michelle McEwen

These rolls are perfect for Springtime! They are lighter in taste than traditional Cinnamon Rolls. If you don't want to make your own lemon curd, then you can always buy it. If you do make lemon curd, I suggest to make it the day before so it can set up before you use it.

Lemon Curd Ingredients:

6tbs Butter
 2/3 cup Sugar
 4 Eggs
 1/2 cup Lemon juice
 6tbs Lemon zest
 1/4teas Salt

Cream Cheese Glaze:

8oz Cream Cheese
 1/2cup Powder Sugar
 1teas Lemon Juice

Roll Dough:

4cups Flour
 1/2teas Salt
 2 1/4teas dry active yeast
 1cup Milk, warmed
 1/3cup Sugar
 1/3cup Butter, melted
 2 Eggs, lightly beaten



To make the Dough:

1. Warm milk to about 90 degrees and add the sugar and yeast and stir together and let sit for a few minutes
2. In a Kitchen Stand, with the dough hook, add the flour and salt and mix. You don't want the salt touching the yeast
3. Add the milk mixture to the flour follow with the butter and eggs
4. Knead the dough for about 4-5 minutes
5. Spray a bowl with baking spray and place dough in the bowl and cover with plastic wrap.
6. Let dough sit for about a hour or until double in size. The time depends on how warm your kitchen is
7. When dough is ready, roll it out into a rectangle and spread out the lemon curd
8. Roll the dough up to make a log and cut into 12 pieces
9. Place rolls into a sprayed pan and cover. Allow to rise for another 45 minutes or until doubled again
10. Bake in a 375 degree oven for about 30 mins

To make the Lemon Curd:

1. In a pot warm up the Lemon juice and sugar together.
2. In a bowl, beat the eggs and slowly add the hot liquid
3. Return the mixture to the heat and whisk until thick
4. Take off the heat and add the butter and salt
5. Strain the mixture into a bowl and fold in the lemon zest
6. Put plastic wrap directly on the curd and refrigerate

Cream Cheese Glaze:

1. Warm the cream cheese in the microwave for about a minute
2. Add the powdered sugar and lemon juice and stir until smooth and all the lumps are gone
3. When rolls are cool you can place the glaze on top and enjoy

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2024
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