



Clan Matheson Society

NEWSLETTER NO 34 OCTOBER 1981

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Chief of the Clan:

Major Sir Torquil Matheson of Matheson,
Baronet of Lochalsh.

Price £1.00 to non-members

THE CHIEF'S MESSAGE

Standerwick, September, 1981

In my message of welcome in the Gathering Programme I made the point that we are now very much involved with Clan history, reuniting dispersed families and finding the home-stead sites of our forebears long ago. As the years go by we are experiencing increased success as clansfolk manage to tap the sources of information available and begin to share their findings with Janet Dorn and other interested persons. One or two remarkable family records have been put together, complete with photographs and individual achievements in life. These latter points, to my mind, are very important, for a family tree or pedigree is enhanced by them. During the aftermath of the Gathering several Mathesons from abroad went searching for the old homes with varied success – here the house itself, there the ruins up the glen. And, sadly, the ruins up the glen are going to become harder to find with the increase in coniferous planting.

We all have our pipe-dreams. As a boy I used to contemplate a march of the Clan somewhere in Lochalsh, possibly over the brae from Balmacara to Achaid-na-h-inich or elsewhere associated with Clan history. I certainly never expected it to happen! Luck was on our side when the Highland Regional Council allowed us to use Duncraig. Luck was also on our side in that we had six historical sites on the 5½ mile circuit from the castle – for that was the length of our march. It would have been fun to have been a distant bystander, and to have seen this international company of Mathesons, with pipes playing and standard flying, marching through such magnificent scenery to the Clan gathering place – Dail Achada-thearnaidh, the Field of the Two Descents – at the head of Loch Achaid-na-h-inich.

Only three hours earlier we had attended that most moving service conducted by Dr James Matheson in Lochalsh Church in Kirkton, itself in the very centre of another historic area. Around the church are the graves, many still identifiable, of our kith and kin. My mind went back, two years to the day, when some of us attended a similar service in the church at South Haven in Cape Breton. There were minor differences, but the Message was the same, as were some of the faces present – Rand and grandson Andrew, Leslie, Wanda and Carolyn, Charles and Florence Otstot, Jean and Sage

Guyton, John of Geelong, Janet, Loretta, Serena and Edmond.

Other events are covered elsewhere in this newsletter. It was wonderful to see so many people appear. 'King Crannog' emerged from his pike-infested kingdom; J.D. Macrae, recently restored to health, was leaping around the dance hall like a young roebuck; Duncan 'Stalker's' display as a walking-stick maker and carver was brilliant! In retrospect, we had a really happy family party with old friendships renewed and new ones made.

I would like once again to thank all those who put in so much time to make the Gathering possible – Highland Regional Council; Rev John Greig for allowing us to use Lochalsh Church; the Rev Dr James Matheson; Dr Mary Macrae and her committee; Pipers Duncan Matheson, Kenneth Mackay and John Mackenzie; the Kenraeson Band; Mrs Madden and her brilliant cast, including the Strath Choir; Mrs Lexy Mackay for organising the museum, and all those who lent their treasures; Farquhar Matheson who is indefatigable in showing visiting Mathesons around Lochalsh; and Mr Ferguson McGhie and his staff at Duncraig.

My final word is a message to those of you who could not make the trip this time. We thought of you all. Be sure you come next time! Torquhil Matheson of Matheson

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THE INTERNATIONAL GATHERING EDINBURGH 1981

'Where have all the tourists gone?'

As mentioned in the last issue of the *Newsletter* the Chief requested Major-General John Matheson to represent him at the Edinburgh Gathering. We very much appreciated the visit which Lady Matheson made for a day and her assistance at the Clan Booth.

The Booth was manned continuously by Allan and Molly, William the Historian, the General and Edmond. Business was negligible in sharp contrast to the overwhelming throng in 1977.

The Clan Banquet held on 27 May at the University Staff Club with the General in the chair was an outstanding success.

The only overseas members present were Bill and Mrs Matthews. Bill presented a Clan Shield similar to those which he had donated to the US Branch and the Cape Bretoners. We were also pleased to have with us two visitors from Ottawa, Mr and Mrs Haggart, friends of Judge John.

An amazing feature of the Banquet was the rapport which was rapidly established among the feasters. All seem to have known all, or close relatives, in some earlier period – 'hardly believable, forty years on!'

Edmond J. Matheson

THE GATHERING IN LOCHALSH

On Monday 3 August, members of Clan Matheson from around the world began arriving at Duncraig Castle near Plockton for their 1981 Gathering. They came from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, West Germany and Norway as well as from Scotland and England, to be reunited in a region associated with Matheson ancestral history. Duncraig Castle was built by the grandfather of our present Chief and is now used by the Highland Regional Educational Authority as a cooking school for girls.

Monday afternoon was spent renewing acquaintances from previous activities and in meeting for the first time many



'King Crannog', Farquhar Macrae arrives!

other members of the Clan. One room of the castle was turned into a museum containing interesting articles and memorabilia relating to Mathesons, past and present. Most of the items were provided by local people of the Lochalsh region.

Another room was used to display as many of the genealogies of members as could be obtained. This provided an opportunity for people trying to find ties to other members of the family.

A church service on Tuesday morning at the Lochalsh Parish Church in Kirkton provided a fitting theme for the gathering. The Rev Dr James Matheson from the Isle of Skye presented an inspiring sermon on the strength of the family.

In the afternoon the Chief led his band of hardy followers on a hike through some of the area associated with Clan history. The first stop was at the remains of a fortified structure set high up on a hillside. The historical significance of the fort is



At the Fort above Loch Achaid-na-h-inich. The 'Field of Two Descents' can be seen at this end of the Loch.

unknown but it occupies a commanding position in the area and could have been the fortification of a Matheson chieftain.

Then the group proceeded to a large open field beside Loch Achaid-na-h-inich where early Clan gatherings took place. Nearby in the loch is the remains of a *crannog*, or man-made island, which was once the site of an island fort. On one occasion while the fort was occupied by MacDonald of Glen-garry, MacDonald picked a quarrel with his friend Dugald Roy, chief of the Mathesons. A fight ensued and Dugald Roy was taken prisoner to Invergarry Castle on Loch Ness where he died.

The Chief pointed out the location of a spring known as the Matheson Wishing Well, which is up on the side of a rocky crag. The site of the wishing well was lost for many years but recently searchers located and marked its position. A few adventuresome souls returned later to hike to the site.

Next the Chief identified two stones along the road as mounting stones used by Mary, daughter of Kenneth Grum-



Leslie II; Fergus; Wanda; John 'Brisbane' with standard; Chief; Torquil 'Alberta'; Duncan 'Piper'.

ach MacMathon, for mounting her horse. This was used during the reign of Alexander II which started in 1214.

The group then retired to prepare for the Clan dinner. All the food for the dinner and other meals during the gathering was ably prepared by Mr McGhie, Headmaster at Duncraig School, and his staff.

Wednesday morning's activities began with a Clan Society business meeting. After a few opening remarks by the Chief, the business session was convened by Mr Edmond Matheson. Edmond relinquished his position as editor of the newsletter. The officers of the society were then re-elected to all previously held positions. The Chief will assume responsibility for the Clan newsletter.

Mr Rand Matheson read a report submitted by the United States Secretary, Mrs Jean Fries, who was unable to attend. Rand then gave his own report on activities in Canada.

The group voted to keep the dues for the UK members the same as they had been. A motion was made by Rand that dues for the US and Canadian members be increased. After much discussion, the group agreed on dues for the US and Canada to be \$5.00 for annual memberships and \$50.00 for lifetime membership.

On Wednesday afternoon some films of scenes around Scotland were shown using films provided by the Bank of Scotland. Also Mr Derek Matheson of Beauville showed interesting slide presentations of wild flowers and the changing seasons in the region.

The programme for Wednesday evening was a Ceilidh. An outstanding programme of singing, dancing, piping and other music presented by local talent was of professional quality. The calibre of the performers made for a very entertaining and enjoyable evening.

On Thursday morning the group reassembled for some fun and games and one last round of picture taking before going their own ways. Some returned home immediately, some went on to more genealogical searches, while others toured

the country before returning home.

The beauty of the surroundings and the hospitality of the people made this a truly memorable and enjoyable gathering. However, no report of this gathering would be complete without thanking everyone who made it all happen. A very special thanks must go out to Dr and Mrs Farquhar Macrae of Balmacara for all their efforts which made this a most outstanding experience.

Leslie R. Matheson

THE CLAN SERVICE IN KIRKTON CHURCH 4TH AUGUST 1981

After this very moving service was over, dozens of people requested that Dr James Matheson's sermon should be published. Jim very kindly consented, and it is reproduced below.

'The Family Name'

'I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.' (Ephesians 3, v. 14-15)

Highland people love to delve into genealogies. Our folklore is full of it - 'Murdo, son of Ewen, son of Angus, son of Kenneth ...' and so on. Even in ordinary conversation, when someone is mentioned, we like to explore his background, who his father is, where he belongs in the scheme of things. On holiday in Gairloch a Sassanach came across this favourite pastime among his hosts and was a little bored by it. He tried to change the subject. 'Mr MacLeod,' he said, 'what is your opinion of Picasso?' Mr MacLeod pondered the question. Then he said 'Picasso. Now, who would his father be?' At any rate, I expect most of us have come to the Clan Gathering because we are interested in our ancestors, our roots, the stock we have sprung from - as the Bible says 'the rock whence we are hewn, the well from which we are digged'.

You will have noticed that the Bible writers have the same interest in genealogies. For the Bible is the story, not of a collection of individuals, but of a people. From Genesis right up to the Gospels we have a continual tracing of ancestry. 'Joshua the son of Nun'; 'Saul son of Kish'; 'David the son of Jesse'. Often there are pages of names, tracing people back to their roots. When Jesus himself came on the scene Matthew traced him back to Abraham, and Luke goes even further: His genealogy of Jesus ends 'the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God'. The point is that in the Bible way of thinking no one stands on his own. Not even Jesus. We are what we are because we belong to a family, part of a long story, inheriting a way of life from the far past. That, of course, is what a clan is. *Clann* is simply the Gaelic word for family. The blood in our veins is family blood. Its story is our story. The heroic deeds of our people fill us with pride. We also carry the guilt of their crimes. Their enterprises stir our blood. A thousand thousand experiences of struggle and suffering, living and dying, whether we are aware of it or not, have shaped the way we are now, our physique, our attitude to Nature, and to other people, our ways of thinking and feeling, our way of

believing. Our small lives, that might seem to be of no consequence in the vastness of things, are part of a great river of life. We belong to a people, our own people, whose past we inherit, and whose destiny we share.

The Bible always sees our human life this way, but in our text it says more, indeed it says something quite startling. Every human family, it says, every clan, takes its real name, its meaning, its essence, from The Father, that is from God who is the Father of *The Family*. It means that our clans and peoples and groupings are meant to be a microcosm, a small sample, of The Real Family, whose Father is Almighty God, and whose love, in its vast dimensions, holds the whole world in one.

What is it that brings us together as a clan? Why are we here?

Once upon a time a clan had a territorial basis. The members all lived in one area. That is so no longer. We belong territorially to all the continents. My family lived in New Zealand for some years. Shortly after we arrived we were invited by someone of the name Matheson, whom we had never met, to an agricultural show in Middlemarch, in Central Otago. To our delight there was a Pipe Band, in full Highland dress. The tartan was Matheson tartan! The President of the Society was a Matheson, whose farm and homestead was called Attadale! Clansmen, thirteen thousand miles from Lochalsh. The clans, like the Children of Israel, are dispersed worldwide.

Once upon a time the clan had an economic basis. They depended on each other for food and shelter. They shared what they had in good times and bad. That too is gone. There is no economic basis.

Once upon a time the clan had a military purpose. They were committed to their chief and to each other, to defend their homes, or, alas, to ravage other people's homes. That too is no more.

What then is it that brings us together as chief and clansmen? Is it not an instinctive knowledge, hard to put into words, that we know who we are only when we know the people we spring from? Is it not that our personal character, our integrity, our hope and even our faith are rooted in the soil of our people's story. No man is an island. When God made us He set us in families. Our clan is where we belong.

I wish we knew more about our forefathers. The histories, I am afraid, concentrate on the great names, the chiefs, the generals, the battles, the evil spiral of retaliation and counter-retaliation. We do not hear much of the real people, how they lived and what they taught their children. We read of the Matheson chief, leader of two thousand fighting men, who was hauled before King James I at Inverness, and that the King, 'to terrify others, caused him to be hanged'. Poor man! 'God rest his soul.' But what a pity that we know only that the two thousand were 'fighting men'. Were they good workmen, gentle with their wives and kind to the kids? Had they a sense of humour? Did they worship God and love all his creatures?

Sadly all we know is that they were 'fighting men'. The old stories in the main are grim ones, about plots and murders and revenge for wrongs. In this very Church, or rather in the Church on this very site, after a skirmish with some MacLeods, a dreadful deed was done. When the defeated enemy sought sanctuary in the Church, one Duncan Matheson set fire to it and destroyed it and them with neither reverence nor pity. 'Duncan the Church' they called him! But we believe there were also Christian men and women who knew how to forgive because God in Christ had forgiven them. Indeed there were.

Like you, I have spent many hours searching out my progenitors. Mine lived in Kilmaluag in Trotternish. In the first census there were over thirty Matheson families living in the Parish. Mostly their holdings were of five acres. In nearly every household there were six to ten persons; parents, grandparents and children. Their life must have been terribly hard, and poor and colourless. Yet, when they met for a ceilidh, or at the peat-cutting, or at harvest-time, and especially in Church on the Sabbath, they knew that their brief obscure lives had a meaning. They were one with their own people in joy and sorrow. When they sang the Psalms and heard the Bible story they were one with a far greater family, with Abraham and Moses, David and the Prophets, the Apostles and the Saints – 'Built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone'. So they had their own place in the great Divine Purpose. There was dignity and blessing in their hard lives, for they belonged to the family. That is what it is to be a clan. It is to belong together, to accept each other, queer as we are, to forgive each other, to share what we have, to learn the lessons of love. For every family takes its meaning from The Father, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named.

Today in Britain we are perplexed and troubled for our country. We are divided more deeply than anyone of my age can remember. What has happened these last weeks in Bristol and Brixton and Toxteth has shown us, in case we didn't know it, the rage and frustration and bitterness that lie underneath the skin of our civilized society. There are divisions of class and wealth, education and culture. There are young and old people who feel they belong nowhere and have no loyalties. Of course that is not the whole story. The immense excitement and pleasure of the Royal Wedding was an experience reminding us that at heart, and in our deepest hopes, we are one people. It was a family occasion we celebrated. But don't let us deceive ourselves. Our present troubles go deep. There is no hope of real healing in purely economic terms – U-turns or whatever. We have to find again the secret of being a family. We have to learn to accept our brothers and sisters even though they irritate us. We must practice the hard work of forgiveness. We must stick together for better for worse. Our pattern and our hope is to be found in a common faith, in the Father from whom every family is named, whose love is boundless in its dimensions.

So we who are a small part of the great human clan meet to celebrate our belonging together. We are proud of our past, grateful to God for the blood that flows in us, the traditions we inherit, the long story that is our story. We pray for God's blessing on the future of our Clan. We pray that it will make its own contribution to the Family of God, made in his image, for whom Christ died, who will at last inherit his Kingdom as their own ancestral home.

Editor's Note: Readers will be interested to know that Miss Helen Matheson of Attadale Farm, Otago, was in the congregation.

TELEGRAMS

The following telegrams were received and read out at the Gathering. Each was received with applause.

'All in Jardine Matheson wish you a very successful Clan Gathering 3rd to the 6th August and we can assure you that the Company set up by Sir James Matheson which celebrates its 150th anniversary next year is still going from strength to strength. David Newbigging, Chairman Jardine Matheson & Co Ltd, Hong Kong.'

'Un coup de chapeau à tous. John Matheson.' [Judge John was on legal business in Belgium]

'Greetings to all Mathesons and old friends assembled in Lochalsh. Elizabeth Matheson.' [Mother of Torquhil and Fergus]

'I am sending my greetings to the Clan Matheson Gathering at Duncraig Castle and hope you all will have some fine days together. Yours aye Rolf Hofseth.' [Rolf is married to Einar Matheson's cousin in Norway]

THE CLAN PARLIAMENT

The Parliament assembled at Duncraig Castle on 5 August, 1981, by direction of the Chief, with the Convener as Speaker.

The first business was to approve reports from the Honorary Secretaries, the Treasurer and the Editor of the *Newsletter*. Jean Matheson Fries, the Honorary Secretary (USA) being unfortunately unable to be present, her report was read to the Members by Rand Matheson, the Canadian Honorary Secretary: the report outlined the vigorous manner in which Jean had conducted affairs: twenty-nine recruits had been obtained during the year from no less than twelve different states: the Clan had been represented at Gatherings at Grandfather Mountain, Dunedin and Norfolk, Virginia and Janet Dorn continued her diligent research in genealogy. Rand then read his very full report on Canadian activities, and of the Cape Breton Branch in particular. On a motion being put to the House, the Speaker was charged unanimously to record the members' appreciation of both Jean's and Rand's services to the Society.

After the Chief had addressed the House on genealogy and

complimented Janet Dorn on her work, the members proceeded to debate other business.

1. The existing officers having expressed their willingness to continue to serve were re-elected.

2. Subscriptions are to remain as existing in the UK and overseas except in North America where the rates are to be increased to \$50.00 and \$5.00 for Life and Annual Members respectively.

3. The North American Honorary Secretaries are to make arrangements for a procedure for Clan finances' being handled separately in Canada and the USA independently of the Treasurer in Scotland. Each country will remit to the Treasurer the share of the costs of production of the *Newsletter* in the UK.

4. A sub-committee of officers under the Chief was elected to draft a constitution for the Society on the lines suggested by Jean and Armand Fries.

5. The previous arrangement, having fallen into disuse, was confirmed whereby the spouse of a member was herself or himself ipso facto deemed a member without further subscription.

On the completion of Parliamentary business the Speaker thanked the Chief and Lady Matheson of Matheson for arranging the wonderful time which members had enjoyed at Duncraig. It was true, as the Chief had said at the dinner, that invaluable help had been received from Mathesons living in the area, but the inspiration for the Gathering, amounted to genius, and the leadership was that of the Chief and Serena alone; they had travelled from England on several occasions to supervise the organisation and negotiate the hire of the Castle. The outburst of spontaneous and sustained applause which greeted these remarks was ample evidence of the members' appreciation.

In proroguing the Parliament the Chief thanked the Officers and others for their assistance throughout the year. He said that since Serena and he would be undertaking the editing of the *Newsletter* in future he would welcome news from branches.

Footnote: The Constitutional Sub-committee met that very afternoon, and a draft has now been sent to all the Society's Officers for comment.

THE SOCIETY REPORT FOR CANADA

In May 1978, the membership in the Clan Matheson Society in Canada numbered sixteen 'Annuals' and forty-five 'Life' for a total of seventy-one. In December 1980, the membership consisted of 125 'Annuals' and sixty-seven 'Life' and 'Honorary' members.

The membership count as of 5 August 1981 was twenty-six 'Annuals' and seventy-one 'Life' and 'Honorary'.

The substantial drop in annual membership is due mostly to non-renewals of quite a number of registrants at the Gathering in Nova Scotia in 1979. The term of annual memberships registered at that time, was until 31 December 1980.

The Cape Breton Division at a meeting on 21 May 1981, passed a resolution to combine their local fees with the Society's effective on 1 January 1982. The local membership fees are presently \$3.00 individual and \$5.00 family.

A membership campaign is to be launched this autumn with the co-operation of members located in areas where the number of potential members warrants such an undertaking. The objective is not only to increase the Clan presence at the growing number of games, gatherings, ceilidhs and various Scottish related cultural functions throughout Canada, but also to form Clan links for the development and participation both of a social and cultural nature. To that end, suggestions are invited.

Among the outstanding success stories emanating from the 1979 International Gathering has been the continuation of the Cape Breton Matheson organization as a dynamic division. Their meetings, picnics, ceilidhs and other events since 1979 are a manifestation of the true clan family concept and augurs well for the future – including the 1983 International Gathering.

The Society is continuing its membership in the Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada. Our local representative is Mrs Catherine M. Cluley, 1 Royal Orchard Blvd, Thornhill, Ontario L3T 3C2. Members or potential members in that area of Ontario are asked to keep in touch with Catherine regarding future events.

The Clan Matheson Society account in the Bank of Montreal showed a credit balance on 31 July 1981 of \$411.59.

Further to the resolution passed at the Clan Parliament at Duncraig, the Canadian account of the Society will be administered in Canada. All payments will continue to be made payable to the Clan Matheson Society.

Rand H. Matheson

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA REPORT

On 8 August Jean and Armand Fries sponsored and manned a Clan tent at the Rocky Mountain Highland Games, held at Golden, Colorado. Among those visiting the tent were Dr and Mrs Lorne A. Matheson; their son, Lorne D. Matheson with his wife and son; Arthur J. Matheson and his wife and small daughter; Valencia Matheson and friend – she is a daughter of the Arthur Mathesons. Jean and Armand felt that the effort was well worth while and they especially enjoyed meeting and visiting with those loyal Colorado members.

While in Colorado, Jean and Armand heard that John Matheson, originally from Matheson, Colorado but living the last few years at a nursing home in Colorado Springs had recently died aged eighty-nine years. He was the person who provided Kitty Holt with the information for her book *The Rise and Fall of a Town Named Matheson*.

Janet Dorn, our Clan Genealogist, urges that *complete* information be sent – dates of birth, marriage, and death; spouses' names and dates; children's names, dates; names of siblings; place names in every instance, etc. Sometimes



Mr and Mrs J. Matheson and daughter, Denver; Mr and Mrs Lorne D. Matheson and son, Boulder; Mrs Jean Fries, St Louis; at The Highland Games, Golden, Colorado, August 1981.

what appears to be insignificant information is extremely important.

Several US members have taken out memberships for other members of their family. We feel this is a wonderful gift and an expression of the pride these people have in their heritage, and their desire to perpetuate it.

Edward Branson Matheson, Jr, of Poquoson, Virginia, with his family represented the Clan at the Scottish Walk at Norfolk, Virginia, last spring.

Mrs Jean Guyton of Denver, Colorado, wrote a beautiful account of the Gathering at Plockton. Her letter captured the feeling of warmth, friendliness, and Clan 'family' togetherness which prevailed at the Gathering.

Arthur Matheson of Denver, Colorado, has generously offered to sponsor a tent at a gathering in 1982. Also Mrs James Gudger has offered to do the same at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Others have kindly sent extra donations for postage. We are very grateful for these generous gestures.

Jean Fries

CAPE BRETON REPORT

Under the leadership of Judge Lewis Matheson the Cape Breton Mathesons have had an active summer. The Scroll referred to in *Newsletter* No 33 has now been presented to the Ephriam Scott Presbyterian Church, South Haven at an impressive service. The Scroll will be displayed at St Anne's Gaelic College during the summer.

A successful picnic was held in the beautiful setting of Highland Village, Iona on 18 July 1981, and a Ceilidh and Milling Frolic took place in the Baddeck Arena on 14 August. This was attended by members of a number of other Clans and visitors from many Canadian Provinces and American States. The highlight was the Milling Frolic with various Gae-

lic singers. Many talented performers presented a first class programme of piping, step dancing, fiddling and accordion music, and a square dance.

Mary Matheson proposed that the Cape Breton Mathesons should have their own distinctive song, to be sung at the start and end of their meetings. Judge Lewis Matheson offered a prize of \$25 for a song, the entries to be judged at the end of 1981. This was agreed.

Officers: President, Judge Lewis Matheson, QC, Sydney; Vice-President, Gus Matheson, Sydney Mines; Hon Secretary, Ella Matheson, Marion Bridge; Hon Treasurer, Donald Matheson, Little Narrows.

Condensed from Minutes of Meetings.

A MATHESON TARTAN FLAG FOR CANADA

Rand now holds a red tartan flag with the golden lion with blue tongue and claws superimposed, as is seen on the Chief's coat-of-arms. It is suitable for 'Parades of the Tartan' or 'Kirkin o' the Tartan' ceremonies. Those borrowing it must provide their own flagpole, and, of course, return the flag after use. The flag was made by Nell, the Editor's daughter, who also made the Clan flag which flew above Duncraig and stood up well to the high winds and rain!

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S WEDDING

The Clan was well represented in St Paul's Cathedral on 29 July. Mrs Margaret Shaw, daughter of Ronald and niece of Edmond, and one time Hon Treasurer of the Society, was a guest with her husband. Both the Chief and his brother Fergus were on duty with Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms. Also on duty with the Honourable Corps was Sir Philip Duncombe, a great-grandson of Sir Alexander, 1st Baronet of Lochalsh.

CONGRATULATIONS

★ To Roderick Hugh Matheson on receiving a direct Commission into the Royal Canadian Artillery on 11 September 1981. He had previously served in the Governor General's Foot Guards of Canada, which distinguished regiment is allied to the Coldstream Guards. Roderick is now following in the footsteps of his father Judge John, so grievously wounded as a Forward Observation Officer in Italy.

★ To Mrs Eleanor Harvey, daughter of the late Sir Alexander Matheson, 3rd Baronet of Lochalsh, on her 90th birthday.

★ To Miss Kay Matheson on being adopted as the SNP candidate for Ross and Cromarty in the next General Election.

POINTS FROM LETTERS

Iain Matheson, Balvraid, Dornoch, wishes to know whether the Clan had a distinctive Targe. Can anyone help him with information? Iain and his family, en route to the Gathering, met with a ghastly accident near New Kelso. His wife received a broken leg, which necessitates three months in

hospital. Our commiserations and best wishes are extended to them.

Charles and Flo Otstot of Arlington, Virginia, during their tour of Scotland after the Gathering, saw many interesting places. At Melrose Abbey they found that 'in the far south-west corner of the Abbey graveyard is a very large stone commemorating the life of one Peter Matheson. The inscription reads: "Peter Matheson, coachman to Sir Walter Scott, Bart., died at Abbotsford 1852 aged 84 years. Of a Pious Mind and Gentle Manner, He was the Humble and Devoted Servant of a Great Master."'

Can anyone throw any light on Peter?

An enjoyable correspondence with Gwen Matheson Smith of Bribie Island, Queensland, who was trying to identify her lineage, culminated in success. Not only did she discover that she is a descendant of Dugald Og, but she was able to attend the Gathering with her cousin, John from Brisbane, and to visit the old family house in Erbusaig.

Monica (née Matheson) and John Kidd of 12 Atkinson Avenue, Papatoetoe, Auckland, New Zealand, have sent extracts of a number of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Parish Rolls of Dornoch relating to Mathesons, copies of which are now with Janet Dorn. They long for any Mathesons living in the Dornoch area to contact them. John was a sergeant in the Lanarkshire Police for thirty-one years before going to New Zealand in 1975.

TRADITIONAL SITES OF MATHESON HISTORY IN LOCHALSH

This is the title of a booklet specially produced for those attending the Gathering based on the *History of the Mathesons* by MacKenzie and MacBain, long since out of print.



Clach-na-Baintighearna, 'The Lady's Stone'.

In it are recorded the Gaelic placenames mentioned in the *History* with map references and a brief sketch of events which occurred at each location. There are five photographs.

The booklet is accompanied by an Ordnance Survey map in black and white (scale 1:50,000) specially prepared for the Clan Society. The cost is £1 for both, plus 20p postage for those in the UK, from the Chief.

For those in Canada and the United States, Rand and Jean have ample supplies. For Australia and New Zealand Mrs Gwen Smith, Jarrah Cottage, 71 Sylvan Beach Esp, Bellara, Bribie Island, Queensland has a stock. Please apply to them for price and postage equivalents.

All proceeds go to the Clan Matheson Gathering Account in the UK.

T-SHIRTS, TIES, ETC

T-shirts and sweat shirts made for the Gathering are all finished. There are still some ties in dress and hunting tartan at £3 each; also fine wool sashes in dress, dark green and 'ancient' green at £9 each. Please add 50p to each order if required to be sent by air; otherwise postage and packing included. Apply to Serena at Standerwick Court.

There are also a number of souvenir programmes left over, 25p each, postage free.

THE NEWSLETTER

Edmond has relinquished the Editorship of the *Newsletter*, which he assumed in 1975. Everyone realises the amount of work that Edmond has contributed to the affairs of the Society and he departs from the editorial scene weighed down with the gratitude of his readers. We can rejoice that he is continuing in the joint office of Convener and Honorary Secretary.

The new Editor, wearing his other bonnet, has already asked that members themselves contribute articles of interest for ensuing *Newsletters*. Everyone has something of interest to contribute, to pass on for other people to read about, whether it be their family history, clan territory or an event that has taken place. So, those of you who read this, please put pen to paper – and do not be so much blotting paper!

Preferably send glossy photographs for publication, in black and white, in sharp focus. Articles should be typed, but please do not let this requirement put off a budding author. Two of the Editor's fingers will cope!

Copy for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the Editor by 1 April 1982.

DEATHS

We regret to record the following deaths which occurred earlier this year, and wish to express our sincere sympathy to their relatives.

Mr John Matheson, Balmacara, aged 75 years. Born in Kirkton, he served in the Seaforth Highlanders as a CQMS in France, India and Burma. He was Mentioned in Despatches. He is survived by his wife Maggie, sons Colin and Ian, daughter Joan, and brother John Angus.

Miss Lorna Matheson, Balmacara, aged 18 months. She was the daughter of Mr and Mrs M.D. Matheson.

Mrs Margaret Matheson, Inverasdale, after a long illness. She was the mother of Miss Kay Matheson who nursed her throughout, and Donald who is in the Middle East. She had done much to further the interests of crofting in the West Highlands by her example in giving one part of her croft for the development of a small tool factory and for fishery research. Her cheerful and generous hospitality in spite of great suffering in recent years, made her a very well known and much loved figure throughout the Highlands.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Convener and Hon Secretary, Edmond J. M. Matheson, 1 Braehead Drive, Carnoustie DD7 7SX.

Hon Treasurer, Norman S. Matheson, 15 Atholl Gardens, Dunkeld PH8 0AY.

Hon Secretary (Canada), Rand H. Matheson, 200 Elgar Park, Apt 306, Nun's Island, Montreal, Quebec H3E 1C8.

Hon Secretary (USA), Mrs Jean Matheson Fries, 11 West Guyer Lane, St Louis, Missouri, 63131.

Clan Genealogist, Mrs Janet Matheson Dorn, 515 Empress Avenue, Eugene, Oregon, 97405. (Members are invited to send their family histories to Janet with any queries they may have.)

Editor, The Chief, Standerwick Court, Frome, Somerset BA11 2PP.

Clan Pipers, Duncan Matheson, Brora and Mrs Linda Matheson Munroe, Cape Breton.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership of the Society is restricted to persons spelling their name Matheson or Mathieson or whose parents or one set of grandparents spelled their name similarly. Persons who spell their name Matheison, Mathison or Matthewson will be considered for membership if they can establish the Highland origin of their family.

For members living in the UK or overseas (excluding North America) the annual subscription is £1 or £10 for life membership: applications for membership should be sent to the Hon Treasurer at Dunkeld with the appropriate sterling cheque. Annual members are requested to amend their banker's order from the old rate of 50p to £1 forthwith.

Applications for membership from persons living in Canada or the USA should be made to the Hon Secretary in the country in which they live. The subscription rates are \$5 for annual membership and \$50 for life membership in both currencies concerned.

Annual subscriptions will become due on the first of January each year but members joining after 30 June in any year will not become liable for a further subscription until the end of the following year.

Any person whose annual subscription is eighteen months in arrears will be deemed to have resigned from the Society. If he or she wishes to rejoin application for membership will have to be made afresh.