



Clan Matheson Society

NEWSLETTER No. 46 Nov 1991

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Chief of the Clan :

Major Sir Torquhil Matheson of Matheson,
Baronet of Lochalsh, D.L.

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THE CHIEF'S MESSAGE.

Standerwick, November 1991.

The 1991 International Gathering in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island was absolutely splendid, with its wide variety of interesting and amusing events which were arranged by the various Committes. This was the fourth Gathering, yet 1979 seems but yesterday. The friendly, or should I say family, atmosphere was tremendous, and Serena and I can not thank you all enough for looking after us so well. And I am sure that I speak for those of you "from away" who attended, from the States and New Zealand.

A lot has been said about mailing potential members who have been identified in directories, but this is costly and gets little return. I am sure that the personal approach is the best, and for those of you on my mailing list I am enclosing an application form, in the hopes that each one of you will try and sign on a new member. Please do all you can to achieve this, especially among the young. Perhaps the other branches could follow this lead.

One point which emerged during the Gathering is that not all members are getting a copy of this Newsletter, which, by its international content, is the link between us all. Please could branches rectify this?

Elsewhere in the Newsletter are details of the Montreal Gathering in August 1992. It will be a splendid affair, so do, please as many of you as possible try to attend. Serena and I look forward to seeing you there.

Meanwhile, thank you once again to the Maritimes for a wonderful time last August; and, worldwide, Serena and I wish you all

"Nollaig Chridheil agus Bliadhna Mhath Ur".

Torquhil Matheson of Matheson.

A ONE WAY PASSAGE.

by Glen Matheson, Debert, N.S.

This story pertains to a lady by the name of Eliza Matheson and her tragic pursuit of a happy marriage. She was the daughter of a well-to-do Glasgow merchant, David Matheson, whose father and siblings left Rogart in Sutherlandshire in 1818 to settle in Earltown, Nova Scotia.

Although the Mathesons of Glasgow and Earltown were an ocean apart, contact was maintained between the cousins during the 19th century. Included in the occasional correspondence were photographs of various young ladies and gentlemen as they reached maturity. A prized possession in the homes of Earltown was the picture of Eliza Matheson of Glasgow who was judged to be a fair looking lass. So fair was the picture that it captivated the attention of one David MacDonald in Earltown.

David, or Davie, was a young bachelor who marched to the beat of a different drummer. One of many unmarried siblings, he apparently lived a somewhat wild life in the woods, hunting and trapping. It was not unusual for Davie to go to the woods for days on end without returning or letting the family know where he was. One might say that he was more than a bit eccentric. His mother was a Matheson and an aunt of the Reverend George and Eliza. It was not unusual or socially unacceptable to fancy one's cousin as a mate, therefore Davie proceeded to make plans to propose marriage to his fair cousin in Glasgow.

It is doubtful whether Davie had the necessary education or command of the English to write to Eliza on his own. However a letter was duly composed and sent to distant Eliza. Eliza, whose prospects in Scotland may have been dim or who was hungry for adventure, gave serious consideration to the proposal with its promise of a comfortable and happy life in the highlands of Earltown. To be safe Eliza wrote back and requested a photograph of the would-be groom.

This request put Davie in an awkward situation. Tradition has it that Davie was not privy to the good looks of the Matheson Clan. In fact, the term homely would be a compliment. Davie took his problem to the lads of Earltown who suggested that he send her the picture of John Matheson of North Earltown as a reasonable facsimile. She would surely understand when she arrived and became aware of Davie's other qualities.

What the lads considered a harmless prank soon became a deceitful situation. Eliza fell for the handsome picture of John Matheson and accepted Davie's proposal. Plans were made to sail to Halifax and meet Davie in Truro. We are not sure whether Eliza's parents were still alive to see this episode. However, her

siblings must have had some doubts as Eliza packed all her worldly possessions and sailed from Glasgow never to return.

On the appointed day in Truro, Eliza was sitting on a bench when a rough looking man approached her and began a conversation. After a fashionable amount of small talk, the stranger announced he was none other than her fiancé, David MacDonald. Eliza was taken aback and refused to believe him. She quickly produced the picture of dear sweet Davie whom she intended to marry. The awful truth was then known and Eliza had no choice but to accompany Davie to Earltown to seek help from her cousins.

Understandably, the couple never married. Sadly neither of them ever married. Davie continued his eccentric lifestyle in the woods while Eliza was taken in by various of her cousins. Without money or face to return to the comparative luxury of Glasgow, Eliza spent the remainder of her days weaving and housekeeping in the Earltown area in exchange for room and board.

Eliza passed away a spinster in 1900 and was laid to rest in a quiet cemetery at The Falls.

NOVA SCOTIA MAINLAND.

Hon Sec: Mrs Ena Matheson,
PO Box 24, Falmouth, N.S. BOP 1LD.

The Clan's 1991 Gathering began July 31st with the arrival of The Chief and Serena at the Halifax International Airport. They were welcomed by Canadian Secretary Joel, "Mainland" Chairman Al, Beverly, Don and Kathy and family. Joel drove our guests to the Sheraton Hotel for their two night stay in Halifax.

The following day our guests were taken on a tour of the Annapolis Valley by Doug and Ena, visiting Windsor, Grand Pre, Cape Blomidon and Kentville. On August 2nd, Joel and Ruth drove our guests to Truro for an evening reception at the Colchester Historical Museum. Of particular interest was the display of Matheson memorabilia, part of the five Highland and five Lowland Scots exhibits at the museum this summer. Genealogist Glen welcomed all those present, especially those who had "come from away". From Truro it was a pleasant drive to Pictou where our guests stayed at the Consulate Inn for three nights.

Roger took over as "tour guide" on the 3rd, making a short stop at Balmoral Mills on Matheson Brook, on the road to The Falls Community Hall for an informal lunch. The Chief presented, on behalf of the Clan Matheson Society of Nova Scotia, the John J. Matheson Memorial Bursary to Truman E. Matheson. The award is to assist Trueman in his studies at St Anne's College in Cape Breton. At 1 pm, the Gathering proceeded to Earltown to the Pipers' Picnic, where we paraded in the pouring rain to our Clan Tent. Under the dripping canvas we

found Art from Charlottetown and Judge Lew and his son Angus from Sydney. Due to the very poor weather we purchased take-out suppers and moved back to The Falls Hall, after which Roger took our guests to the museum at Tatamagouche.

Our faithful band reassembled on the morning of 4th August at the Log Church at Loch Broom. The Reverend Glen led us in a very moving service and "Kirkin' of the Tartan", after which we enjoyed a delicious brunch at the Heather Motel in Stellarton. Sunday afternoon found us back in the little town of Pictou to tour the Hector Centre, the Waterfront Development Centre and view the reconstruction of the good ship "Hector". The pilots for this day were Loudelle and Allister, who included a visit to the new coal mine and other interesting places. By supper hour the cosy diningroom of the Consulate Inn was invaded by kilted Mathesons. Practical jokes and laughter abounded, to the amusement of other patrons. (As one visitor from south-of-the-border noted, "You made our Trip!") Later in the evening we gathered in the Inn's Ambassador's Room for a "farewell" before our guests crossed the Canso Causeway the next morning for the Cape Breton part of the Gathering.

Al Matheson.

CAPE BRETON.

Hon Sec: Brenda Matheson Cochrane,
56 Birch Street, Port Morien, N.S. B0A 1T0.

Our visitors, once again, were delivered to Bute-Arran, Baddeck by Verna Matheson, as she had done in 1987. That afternoon we attended the opening ceremony of the Gaelic Mod at St Anne's at which the Chief was hi-jacked to say a few words. That they were in English, seemed not to matter, as judging by the appreciative nods of some of the audience, he seemed to be making the right noises. The programme for the next five days was as varied as it was exciting and interesting. The trip down the coal mine at North Shore was quite an experience to say the least, and made one appreciate the appalling struggle that takes place to hew the coal that we like to see burning in our hearths.

Other visits included the original Marconi base, now a museum, and the wonderful Canadian Coast Guard College at Westmount. It must be one of the most comprehensive maritime colleges in the world. On another day, driven by the brothers Don and Alister the Chief and Serena were taken round the Canso Quarry, that vast hollow in the ground; and later went on to Sherbrooke Village with its beautifully restored buildings and saw-mill.

One of the most poignant places visited was the church and burial ground at Grand River, with the stones of those who left Lochalsh in 1820. (See elsewhere in this NL. Ed). Three parties were held on different days:

a Pot Luck Supper in the South Haven Community Hall, a picnic lunch at Point Michaud Beach, and a lobster and steak supper hosted by George and Annie Matheson at their summer cottage on the coast at Mira Gut. All these were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

The visit terminated with a service in St George's Church, Sydney, the old Garrison Church, at which Martin Matheson, George and Annie's son who is a Lay Reader, took part. After a final lunch in the Church Hall, Arnold, Laddie and their son Aaron, who had driven our guests hundreds of miles and who had introduced them to "lunches" at all hours of the day, delivered them to the airport en route to Charlottetown.

At most of the events mentioned above we were pleased to have the company of Doug and Anne Matheson from New Zealand, also Dan Sylvester and his Aunt from Milwaukee, U.S.A.

Throughout the year meetings have been taking place regularly with good attendances.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Hon. Sec. Arthur Matheson,

131 Norwood Road, Charlottetown, C1A 8P6.

Clan Matheson Gathering, 11th to 14th August 1991.
by Linda (Matheson) Harding.

On Sunday 11th August, Arthur Matheson met the Chief and Serena at the Charlottetown Airport and took them to their temporary home from home, the Dundee Arms Inn. They then attended the Zion Presbyterian Church for a service at 7 p.m. where the Reverend Gordon Matheson, assisted by the Reverend Gael Matheson from Murray Harbour North Pastoral Charge, gave a most enjoyable service. The choir was made up of Mathesons, and Brenda (Johnson) Matheson sang a lovely Gaelic solo "Coinnich Mi" (Meet Me There). Marlene (Bolger) Matheson also sang a lovely solo "Amazing Grace". Gael gave an historical background to the Mathesons in Scotland, and Linda Harding gave an outline of the Mathesons on Prince Edward Island (recorded below). Eileen Best was guest organist from St Andrew's Presbyterian Church and we send a special "thank you" to her.

After the service which was well attended, everyone was invited to a social hour downstairs in the Coles Hall when the Chief and Serena had a reunion with many friends made four years previously. The Reverend Gael then took our guests for the night to her manse at Murray Harbour.

The morning of the following day was spent with Gael and her brothers and nieces on a fishing boat on the Murray River, seeing seals and all sorts of sea birds. A very happy morning. In the afternoon the Clan gathered

at George and Brenda (Johnson) Matheson's farm at Albion Cross, where we had a very relaxed time with music and song provided by Brenda's mother, a barbecue, and a viewing of George's superb pedigree Hereford cattle. George's great-grandfather, Malcolm Matheson, emigrated from the Isle of Skye in the mid-1800s and established the farm in those days. With Miles and Claude Matheson and their father Norman, a visit to Dundas United Church, dating from 1859 and serving as the place of worship for many Matheson families over the years, rounded off a most enjoyable afternoon.

That evening Art Matheson and Linda Harding took our guests to "Anne of Green Gables", a memorable and very enjoyable production; and a visit back-stage after the show was over, when the Chief and Serena shook hands with the whole cast. "Anne" was played by Glynnis Ranney.

Tuesday saw our guests on the road with Art to Summerside to the College of Piping where the Director, Scott MacAulay of Lewis stock, showed them around the impressive purpose-built set-up. Scott was shortly due to depart for Inverness to take part in the Northern Meeting Piping Competitions. In the evening there was a well attended gathering at Holland College for a pot-luck supper and ceilidh involving piping, dancing, singing and music generally; and a slide show by Gael of her recent visit to Lochalsh. Mark Buell, who played the pipes, was made an honorary member of the Clan in appreciation of his efforts. I would like to thank the committee of Art and Miles Matheson; also Gladys MacMillan and Ann Matheson for helping with details of organisation; Russell and Elinor Matheson for helping at the door, and Gael and Brenda Matheson for the music.

The following is the talk given by Linda (Matheson) Harding at the Zion Church:

The Reverend Gordon Matheson asked me to speak on the background of the Mathesons on Prince Edward Island. I agreed. Then he said that I would have about 2 to 3 minutes. That was the hard part. How was I going to so much in that space of time?

My Mathesons were three brothers; their father John married three times, each time to a Mary Matheson, and I feel each Mary had a son.

In a write up in the Prince Edward Island Magazine, March 1904, on the settlement of Rustico, I quote "the first settlers of British origin to make permanent homes in the district were the Matheson family, who arrived from Ross-shire, Scotland in the year 1806. There were three brothers, Roderick, Murdock and John. They were married and had large families. They purchased their land from the proprietor in Great Britain, paying for it £1 sterling an acre. Each of the three brothers bought two hundred acres, and had the privilege of locating on any part of the estate they pleased".

As far as I can find these Mathesons were the first ones here. In my record book the earliest birth was John born to Murdock and Catherine in 1811. These three brothers built their own ship and sailed it to P.E.I.

Roderick, the eldest of the three brothers, chose his land on the south side of the bay, which was then called Portage. He and his wife lived to be very old, he passed the century mark (103) and his wife reached the age of 96. They were the grandparents of our respected fellow citizens Mr John A. Matheson and Arthur J. Matheson.

John A. was educated at Brackley Point, moved to Alberton and engaged in fishing and general merchandising. In 1881 he was elected to the Provincial Legislature as a representative from the first district of Prince County. Arthur J. was a druggist in O'Leary. In the same family, a great grandson Walter "Bus" Matheson, a mining engineer, and well known and respected in the contracting business on Prince Edward Island.

The 12th Premier of Prince Edward Island, John Alexander Matheson, born in 1863 at Harrington, was Premier from 1911 to 1917; it was he who pressured for the establishment of a service of the ice-breaking ferries to end the winter isolation, this being started in 1917. In that year Mr Matheson resigned to become the first Matheson Chief Justice of Prince Edward Island from 1917 to 1943. John Alexander's aunt Ann was married to Captain John Matheson, son of Roderick and parents of the first John A. mentioned. (*)

Another Matheson who was prominent was Alexander W. Matheson, the 21st Premier, from 1953 to 1959. He was born at Bellevue and to date I can find no connection to my Mathesons. (**)

Murdock, the second son settled at Oyster Bed where he cleared a fine farm. He had a large family and there are many of his descendants on the farms in the vicinity.

John, the youngest, located on the north side of Wheatley River, and his descendants on Prince Edward Island are numerous.

When looking at the Matheson Tree you will see a lot of familiar names of those who settled beside them either because they were related or they were neighbours back in Scotland; names such as Blatch, Ross, Macleod, Macdonald, Macrae, Mackenzie, Craswell, Bulman, Le Page, Clark and Buntain.

The Ross-shire people were Presbyterian and as there was no resident clergyman of any denomination at that time, Bishop MacEachern, whose memory is revered by Roman Catholic and Protestant alike, made occasional visits to the settlement. The Ross-shire people always spoke with loving reverence of the "Good Bishop". The Presbyterian portion of the community were adherents of the Established Church of Scotland, and as there was no minister of that church nearer than Belfast, they were compelled to travel to that place to receive the church ordinance. This seems to be quite an undertaking when

it is remembered that at that time there were no wheeled vehicles of any kind in the settlement.

When you look at the 1881 and 1891 census, you will find these people were farm people, people who could make the land produce, and they worked hard. In the 1881 census there were 115 Matheson families recorded. In the 1891 census there are 117 families. In my Matheson genealogy I have seven Mathesons married to Mathesons, two of these are cousins, the rest were other Matheson lines coming together, lines from places like Cardigan, Argyle Shore, Alexandra, Summerside and Georgetown, to name a few.

As for other Matheson lines, Art tells me that his came in the year 1840, as did that of Miles Matheson. I know that some came in the 1820s. I have done charts on my family lines and they are placed downstairs for you to view. I also have my record book which contains births, marriages, and census records for 1881 and 1891, all of which have been taken from the records at Beaconsfield and the public archives. I have also started recording information from newspapers. I am still working on the Mathesons of P.E.I. and hope some day to have a book on them. With your help that dream will come true.

Ed. (*) Art wrote an appreciation of him in NL 40 p.5.

(**) *ibid*, p.7. He was an uncle to Art.

UNITED STATES.

Hon Sec: Lyman W. Matheson,
12126 Rhett Drive, Houston, Texas, 77024.

In the last US Branch Newsletteer I asked for members to send me the Mathesons listed in their local telephone books. The unexpected volume of names sent was so vast that in no way can the Branch afford to mail them. So I would ask members to try and make local contacts.

In August Phyllis and I, and my sister Jean Matheson Fries, toured England and Scotland, visiting also the Islands of Skye and Lewis and Harris to gather more details of our genealogy. We spent two most enjoyable, as well as informative evenings with Rev Professor William Matheson in Edinburgh. His renowned reputation in the field of Matheson genealogy is well deserved. He is also well known as a singer of Gaelic songs and has in the past years recorded between 300 and 400 Gaelic songs for the BBC.

After visiting the homestead sites of our great great and our great great grandparents at Crowlista, Lewis, (on the very western coast line west of Stornoway) we trained through Scotland and England to the City of Bath where we were met by the Chief, who gave us a tour of the City in his car. Afterwards we went to his home nearby where we were entertained to tea and dinner by Serena. The topic of conversation abounded

with genealogy, the recent gathering in Nova Scotia, and finally, as a result of our probing questions, we were shown a VCR film of the Queen presenting a new Standard to The Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms five years ago, of which he, his brother Fergus, and their cousin Philip Duncombe are members. The following day we were on our way back to Texas.

I am hoping for a large US Branch attendance at the International Cathering of the Clans at Montreal, 17 to 23 August 1993.

EASTERN ZONE.

Hon Sec: John Aakesson,

7312 Leesville Blvd, Springfield, VA 22151.

The Alexandria Scottish Games went well this year. We were graced again with a fiddler, who stayed in our tent for both days. As far as Clan participation, Charles Mathieson Otstot and my brother, Alec, came and helped to hold the fort. Mr and Mrs Malcolm Matheson III came for a visit on Saturday, and Mrs Charles T. Matheson came on Sunday with her son, daughter-in-law and grandchild. They were just in time to join us for the parade of the Clans.

Earlier I had intended to set up the tent at the Capital District Games outside Albany, NY, but their officials were unable to consider clans unlocated in their area. I was not able to attend the games at Williamsburg, VA, at the end of September. Hopefully, by the time you read this, I shall have visited some Clansfolk in New England in mid-October.

WESTERN ZONE.

Hon Sec: Robert W. Matheson,

395 Mariposa, #E, Sierra Madre, CA 91024.

Bob reports that the Clan has lost a great friend in the passing of Norah Matheson of Corona, CA. Norah and her husband, John, have been among the strongest supporters of the Clan in Southern California. He himself attended the Costa Mesa Games; also that, during the recent Gulf War, he was kept busy in his position of Chief of Television for the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. This centre provided round the clock television news and information by satellite to US servicemen and women in Saudi Arabia, as well as the rest of the world. As a result he and his co-workers have been nominated for a Department of Defence Commendation.

NEW ZEALAND.

Hon Sec: Mrs Gordon (Ailsa) Matheson.

Continuing the seafaring Matheson story of those

who ventured forth from Leigh, (v. NL 45, p.5) we link Captain D.K. Matheson with Gordon Matheson's uncle, Captain Alex Matheson. Both were associated with the sailing ship trade, especially on board the HULA.

Alex grew up in Bluff, but spent all his life on the Transtasman shipping routes, on board the PIRI, the MIRO, the HUIA and, finally, the TARANUI. Now, of special family interest, are the family-held movie films he took in the late 1940's of life under sail.

On 6 Feb 1947, 120 miles west of Cape Reinga, the HUIA, bound from Auckland to Melbourne, spoke to the schooner TAGUA bound from Queensland to Auckland. Perhaps never again will there be an occasion for two schooners to speak to each other in the Tasman.

It was fitting that the captains of both vessels should bear the name Matheson which has been associated with ships on the New Zealand coast since the early days of colonisation - Captain Alexander J. Matheson of the HULA, and Captain D.K. Matheson of the TAGUA.

A goodly number attended the Gathering at the Manurewa Botanic Gardens on 7 Apr 91, when Norman Matheson played his pipes, Lewis told about his recent visit to his family in Lewis, and John Kidd supplied information on his recent researches. Ailsa spoke about the book on the life of Dr Farquhar Matheson of Dornie, who spent most of his life looking after the people of Tonga.

Another Gathering was held at St George's Hall Takapuna on 12 Oct 91 when everyone was able to hear about the world trip of Doug and Ann Matheson.

INTERNATIONAL CLAN GATHERING, MONTREAL, 13 TO 23 AUGUST 1992.

The World Scottish Festival is being held to mark the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, and to honour the Auld Alliance, the historic association which has existed between Scotland and France for seven centuries. The programme, outlined below, promises to be a real winner. CLAN MATHESON IS GOING TO PARTICIPATE, and our programme is being co-ordinated by Joel Matheson whose address is elsewhere in this Newsletter. He will be assisted by a local co-ordinator, yet to be appointed. We will be running a Clan Booth which will need volunteers to man it. The organisers have done massive block bookings in all classes of accommodation, and have been negotiating favourable air fares, etc.

Serena and I will be there the whole period, and I hope that as many of you as possible will attend. At the present moment we hope to be able to book accommodation on a Clan basis, all together, which will facilitate our having a Clan Parliament and other events. We could also pool transport to the main events.

The Calendar of main events is:-

Thu 13. Scottish Trade Exposition, le Vieux Port, 13th-23rd.

Masonic Memorial Temple Tours, 13th-23rd.

Scottish Gathering Centre, le Vieux Port, 13th-23rd

Fri 14. Golf Tournament.

Sat 15. Auld Alliance Family Day, Ile Ste-Helene.

Auld Alliance Tartan Ball, Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

Sun 16. Ecumenical Church Service.

Black Watch Freedom of the City Parade.

Mon 17. Festival of Festivals opens.

Tue 18. Film, Music, Theatre, Food & Drink Festivals and Concerts.

Auld Alliance Scottish Seminars, McGill University.

Wed 19. Scottish Variety Show, Pollack Hall, McGill

University. Thu 20. Scottish Variety Show, Pollack Hall, McGill University. Curling Bonspiel.

Fri 21. Auld Alliance Scottish Tattoo a la Montreal.

Sat 22. Auld Alliance Highland Games, Ile Ste-Helene.

Auld Alliance Grand Ceilidh Night.

Sun 23. Auld Alliance Festival Parade, March of the Clans.

For those of you who wish to make direct contact with the organisers, the address is:-

Gary David Fullerton, Secretariat,
World Scottish Festival, Montreal 92,
P.O.Box 142, N.G.D.Station,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H4A 3P5.
Tel: (514) 484-9599. Fax: (514) 485-1375.

On an historical note it is worth remembering that Mathesons served in the army under General Wolfe, and at least one, my great, great grand uncle Lieutenant Kenneth Matheson (of Attadale and Fernaig), H.M.'s 47th Regiment, was killed in action in a skirmish at the Falls of Montmorency on 31 July 1759.

WHETHER YOU WORK THROUGH THE CLAN ORGANISATION OR NOT, PLEASE KEEP JOEL INFORMED OF YOUR ATTENDANCE.

FOR THOSE OF YOU IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WHO INTEND TO GO, PLEASE INFORM ME, SO THAT I CAN KEEP YOU IN THE PICTURE.

TO SAVE POSTAGE, NO FURTHER COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE SENT UNLESS YOU TELL ME OF YOUR INTENTION TO ATTEND.

* Flora Matheson-England, a PhD student at the University of Toronto, was awarded the honour of giving a presentation to the 26th annual meeting of the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association. The meetings were held 1-4 June 91 at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. The title of her presentation was "A Breakdown in Strategy in Mixed-Sex Groups: Gender Differences as a Casual Factor". Flora is the daughter of Miles and Bertha Matheson of Morell, P.E.I.

* Malcolm Loban, Editor of the Clan MacLennan Newsletter, 55 Cook Road, Balloch, Dunbartonshire, G83 8DJ, has written to ask that if any of our genealogists, or any clan member for that matter, comes across any MacLennan information, could they please pass it on to him. The MacLennans will do the same for the Mathesons.

* Charles Mathieson Otsot has written that he visited the site of the Battle of South Mountain on the 14th September 1991, the anniversary of the battle where Colonel Roderick Matheson was mortally wounded (v. NL 45 pp.1-3). Charles and a friend walked the route which the 32nd New York Regiment marched up the side of the mountain and saw the place where Matheson was wounded: thence to the farm house which acted as a field hospital, where he died. The area has changed very little since 1862; perhaps more trees, but not many more dwellings.

* Visitors to Lochalsh: The Reverend Gael Matheson, Prince Edward Island, last Spring. Gael stayed with Cathie Matheson, Kyle of Lochalsh and took some magnificent photographs of the area. She later stayed at Standerwick and attended the Royal Bath and West of England Agricultural Show. Dr Bob Mathieson, Sydney, N.S. arrived in the Fall and had a conducted tour around some of the more accessible historic places in Lochalsh. Doug and Anne Matheson, New Zealand, arrived in the late Summer, taking in Lewis, Skye and Wester Ross and working their way south to Standerwick. Thence home, completing their circumnavigation of the globe. Also visiting Standerwick were Jean Matheson Fries and her brother Lyman Matheson, with wife Phyllis on completion of their ancestor hunt in Lewis.

* 'Canada' weekend at Standerwick in June saw Mrs Phyllis Matheson, Victoria, B.C. and her sister Mrs Sheila Parsons, Montreal, visiting together with Major Roderick Matheson. Duncan and Brenda Matheson, Brora, Sutherland visited in the autumn.

* Ross Matheson, of Glasgow, aged 21, is an up and coming tennis star. He has been training in America for the past three years, and is planning to turn professional in May 92. Will we have a champion at Wimbledon and elsewhere? Good luck to him.

* The Chief and Serena visited the Reverend William Matheson in Edinburgh in October and had a very interesting conversation about the Clan in historic times.

BOOK REVIEW.

"A Pinch of Salt - Characters of the Highest Order".

by Alexis Ball.

ISBN 0 9517104 0 0 Pbk.

Price £8.50 plus postage. 158 pages.

This book is a collection of stories of highland folk as told by thirty sons or daughters of Skye and South West Ross. It is all in English but some of the stories would have sounded better in the native tongue and would have been retold time and again in the old ceilidh houses. Stories always lose some of their subtleties in the translation. Those of you who read this Newsletter and have your roots in the district will thoroughly enjoy them. You will also find a number of your friends therein, and you will be able to relish their recollections...with a pinch of salt! Some Mathesons contribute, amongst whom are Duncan "Stalker" of Camusluinie, Lexy Mackay, sister to Dr Iain Matheson, late of Rhudamore, Plockton and Alasdair Matheson of the Forestry. And if Ross MacKay of Bedford, Nova Scotia reads this he will find his friend Johan MacInnes of Duirinish also telling her wide ranging tales. All in all, this book gives a wonderful insight to the past and present. Three children also relate their experiences.

It is a ideal present, and a copy has found its way to 10 Downing Street, where it has been received and read with pleasure.

Obtainable from the author, Alexis Ball, Achnahinich, Plockton, Ross-shire, IV52 8 TY.

OBITUARIES.

We regret to announce the following deaths, and wish to express our sincere sympathy to their relatives:

* Scott Matheson, former Governor of Utah (1977-85), in October 1990.

* Mrs Lucy Matheson, widow of Farquhar Matheson of Kyle of Lochalsh, on 28 Oct 1990. Lucy will be remembered for the lavish hospitality she bestowed on those visiting her home.

* Jason Glenn Matheson, on 17 Oct 1990, as a result of a motorcycle accident at Tucson, Arizona. He was aged 18, and was a grandson of Loretta Matheson.

* Ronald McCulloch Matheson, L.V.O., R.D., F.C.A. on 1 Jan 1991. He was the brother of Edmond, the

Convener and Honorary Secretary of the Society, was a Chartered Accountant, amongst whose work was the auditing of the accounts of Ascot Race Course, a task he performed for a great number of years. When he retired The Queen made him a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order. Before the war he joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and was eventually awarded the Reserve Decoration. His war service took him all over the world from Greenland to the China Sea serving in aircraft carriers, battleships and cruisers. He was lucky not to have been taken prisoner at the fall of Singapore. He was an original member of the Society, and was Convener at the time when it spread over the world. He was also an occasional contributor to the Newsletter.

* The Reverend Roy Keith Matheson on 28 Jan 91. He was born in Auckland, NZ, in 1923. Roy was skilled in the woodworking and building trades and loved building and sailing boats. He served in the RNZAF during World War II, and later entered the Church of England Ministry, working in the towns of Te Aroha, Morrisville, Mangakino and Hamilton. After leaving the full time ministry he worked for the NZ Government and continued to give a very worthwhile and acceptable contribution as a part-time priest. Roy was the promoter and foundation member of the NZ Clan Matheson Society, and with his wife, Joan, had visited the Clan Matheson Societies in GB, USA, and Canada, joining in the Nova Scotia Gatherings of 1987. His forebear, Angus Matheson was a teacher who moved from Stoer, Sutherland, to Uig in Lewis. He was married to Catherine, sister to Rev Norman MacLeod, with whom they emigrated to Nova Scotia, and later to New Zealand.

* The Reverend Parker Matheson, recently, in Amherst, N.S.. He was a retired United Church of Canada Minister and a native of Brookfield, N.S. His forebears emigrated from Sutherland to Pictou in 1803.

* Mrs Eleanor (Matheson) Harvey of Claygate, Surrey in her 100th year on 17 Feb 91. Nell was the last surviving child of Sir Alexander Matheson, 3rd Bt. She served as a V.A.D. nurse in the Great War, and in the A.R.P. in the Second World War. A large portion of her childhood was spent in Western Australia where her father was a Senator.

* Doctor Farquhar A. Macrae, M.B.E., M.C. on 4 Oct 91, of Colliemore, Balmacarra, Kyle of Lochalsh. He was a great great grandson of Ruairidh n'Iomaire through his mother, Joan Alexandrina Mary Matheson. Having finished his medical training early in the war, he joined the 5th (Sutherland) Battalion, The Seaforth Highlanders, in the Western Desert and served with them as Medical Officer from El Alamein to Tunis; in

Sicily; and in the invasion of Normandy, through to the Baltic. At Alamein his selfless devotion to his duties tending the wounded and dying on the battlefield, which included, at one point, being taken prisoner and then capturing his captors, resulted in his being awarded an immediate Military Cross. The citation was countersigned by Generals Alexander and Montgomery. He had similar experiences at Mareth and Wadi Akarit. After the war he returned to Lochalsh and succeeded his father Dr Duncan Macrae who had held the vast rural practice of Lochalsh, Kintail and Glenshiel since 1907. He retired in 1981 having given of himself selflessly to the welfare of the people of the district at all hours of the day and night, in all weathers, whether in their homes or in mountain rescues. He was awarded the M.B.E. for his life's work. There can have been no better loved son of Lochalsh in all its long history.

* Thomas Alastair Sutherland Ogilvy Mathieson, on 12 Oct 91 at the Carlton, Vichy 03200, France, aged 83.

**THE STORY OF JOHN AND DONALD, SONS OF
ALISTAIR MacRUARI,
WHO WAS BEHEADED BY KING JAMES I IN 1427**
by Serena Matheson of Matheson.
A story for the next generation.

It is terrible to lose a father. It was even worse in those days, because everyone else would have tried to get hold of their lands. John and Donald's mother was appointed 'tutrix' to the estate, and did her best to hold onto it. But it was difficult for a woman, and she agreed to marry a son of MacLeod of Lewis, called Angus, who she thought would help her and keep it going for the boys. This was a big mistake, as he turned out to be a very wicked man who only wanted to get hold of Lochalsh for himself.

The boys soon realised that he meant to get rid of them, probably to murder them secretly. So they planned to go away and return again when they were grown up. They decided it was better to go to different people in case MacLeod followed them. John went to his Grandfather MacIntosh and Donald to the Earl of Caithness, whose family had always hated the Earls of Sutherland, and was pleased that Donald's father had won the battle against them. They were both made very welcome and brought up and educated as one of the family.

I will tell you about Donald first, although he was younger than John. The Earl of Caithness had a daughter who was a splendid girl, very pretty and with real guts. She and Donald fell in love. Her parents were not at all pleased, as I expect they wanted her to marry someone much grander, and Donald had to go away. But the girl, whose name we don't know, was expecting his baby. So she set off, all alone, to walk to Lochalsh, and to avoid

anyone stopping her she went all along the north and down the west coast. It must have been a great ordeal, but she did arrive in Lochalsh in time for the baby to be born there. It was a son and they called him Ian after Donald's brother John. He was always known as Ian Gallach which means Ian of Caithness. We know exactly where he was born, beside the road between Balmacara and Erbusaig near a small loch which is still called after him. Ian had a lot of descendants, many of which went back to Sutherland and became the Mathesons of Shiness.

Now we will go back to John. When he grew up, he had a talk with his Grandfather MacIntosh about getting back his lands in Lochalsh. His grandfather promised to help, but told John that he had better go there first to find out what the people of Lochalsh felt about it. So he went there secretly and contacted all his most loyal followers and friends who were, of course, delighted to see him. Then he dressed up as a travelling salesman and went to the house where his Mother and her MacLeod husband were living. He told the servants that he had some lovely red wool for sale. When his Mother heard this, she sent for him and recognised him at once. John asked her if she would like to see Lochalsh returned to him and if she would help him. She said yes, definitely, to both and they made a plan.

But MacLeod had always been suspicious that something like this would happen. So he had taken all the drifters and bad men in the area onto his payroll and put one to live in each household at the people's expense. These were his spies and had to be got rid of first of all. It all took very careful planning and very exact timing.

John brought some MacIntosh supporters and hid them in a hollow between Reraig and Kirkton called Glai na Fear. That night each family fell on the spy that was billeted on them and killed him. One spy escaped, a man called MacKecharna, or MacEachern, who slipped out of the house and ran to warn MacLeod. Luckily someone noticed him crawling along and he was surrounded and caught.

John and his followers then went to MacLeod's house, surrounded it and set it on fire. John himself stood at the door to make sure that his mother got out safely. In those days women wore long, very full, usually yellow, dresses, made of a lot of heavy material, pinned on the shoulder and gathered into a beautiful silver belt. This garment was called an arisaid. Now John's mother was a tall woman and Angus MacLeod was a short little man and she hid him under her arisaid when she left the house, and nobody noticed. She couldn't bear to think of his being burnt to death even though she knew what a wicked man he was. MacLeod stayed hidden until they were clear of John's men, then he got out and ran all the way to a place called Doire Damph near Duirinish. There was a man living there with a boat but no land. MacLeod

promised him that if he would take him all the way to the Island of Lewis, he would be given some land of his own. They got there safely but, when they landed, MacLeod's father was so angry that his son had been turned out of Lochalsh that he made a gallows from the oars and hung the boatman from it. They joked cruelly that, when he was buried at the foot of the gallows, Angus' promise would be kept and he would have land of his own for ever more.

MacLeod of Lewis then fitted his son out with boats and a strong party of men, and encouraged him to go back and recapture Lochalsh. They landed at Ardhill. John was quite prepared for this and they fought a battle at Kirkton which John won decisively. One of his followers was a very good shot with a bow and arrow and famous for his strength and valour. His name was Ian Ciar MacMhuichidh mhic Tomais and he quickly organised the Mathesons to get between the defeated MacLeods and their boats to prevent their escape. The MacLeods all took refuge in the Church, where they thought they would be safe. They weren't, though, because one of the Mathesons, Donald, set fire to it and most of the MacLeods were burnt alive. He was ever afterwards nicknamed Donnachadh an Teampuill, and so were some of his descendants, several of whom became Ministers!

Unfortunately, Angus MacLeod himself had managed to escape again and he, with a few followers, managed to reach the boats and get away back to Lewis. There he raised yet another army and returned with it, this time landing at Fernaig. There was another battle and in it Angus MacLeod was killed. He and some of his followers were buried in a field near the present road. And that was the end of him!

John took over all the Matheson lands in Lochalsh. He became very respectable and MacKenzie of Kintail made him Constable of Eilean Donan Castle.

THE ROCKET TROOP, ROYAL ARTILLERY.

Major Roderick Matheson, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, son of Judge John Matheson of Rideau Ferry, Ontario, is presently commanding O Battery (The Rocket Troop) in the 2nd Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, in Germany. He is very conscious of the great honour of commanding the Troop, and has contributed this brief vignette of its history.

"In 1811, a detachment of Royal Horse Artillery under the command of Captain Richard Bogue was placed at the disposal of Colonel William Congreve at Woolwich to trial his new rocket system, latterly known as the "Congreve Rocket". In June 1813 the RHQ detachment was officially designated "The Rocket Brigade", and in August, armed with only Congreve Rockets, they embarked to join the Army of the North under the command of Crown Prince Bernadotte of Sweden.

"In October 1813 they took part in the Battle of Leipsig against Napoleon. Later the Rocket Brigade was presented with various individual awards for gallantry and the Swedish King granted the right to wear the title "Leipsig" and the Swedish Royal Colours on their guns and accoutrements.

"Annual greetings are exchanged on 18 October with the King of Sweden, whom the Battery toasts at all formal dinners. This year is particularly special due to the "Options for Change" in the British Army, by which the Battery may be disbanded. If this is so, I will write to the King of Sweden and request that we be granted the right to stand guard at the Swedish Royal Palace for a week so that we can officially close the history of O Battery in the correct fashion, i.e. originally in the service of the King, and now in the end, once again in his service as HIS loyal British Gunners".

Ed. This famous Troop was present at Waterloo, 1815, and has taken part in almost every major conflict since, including The Gulf 1991. Much to his chagrin, Rod took over command on their return, having missed the short campaign. Its weapons have, of course changed with the times. One can only hope that common sense will prevail and that the Rocket Troop will not follow other famous Batteries with "Honour Titles" into oblivion.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

* Andrew and Fiona (Matheson) Kendall on the birth of their son Edmund on 19 Jan 91.

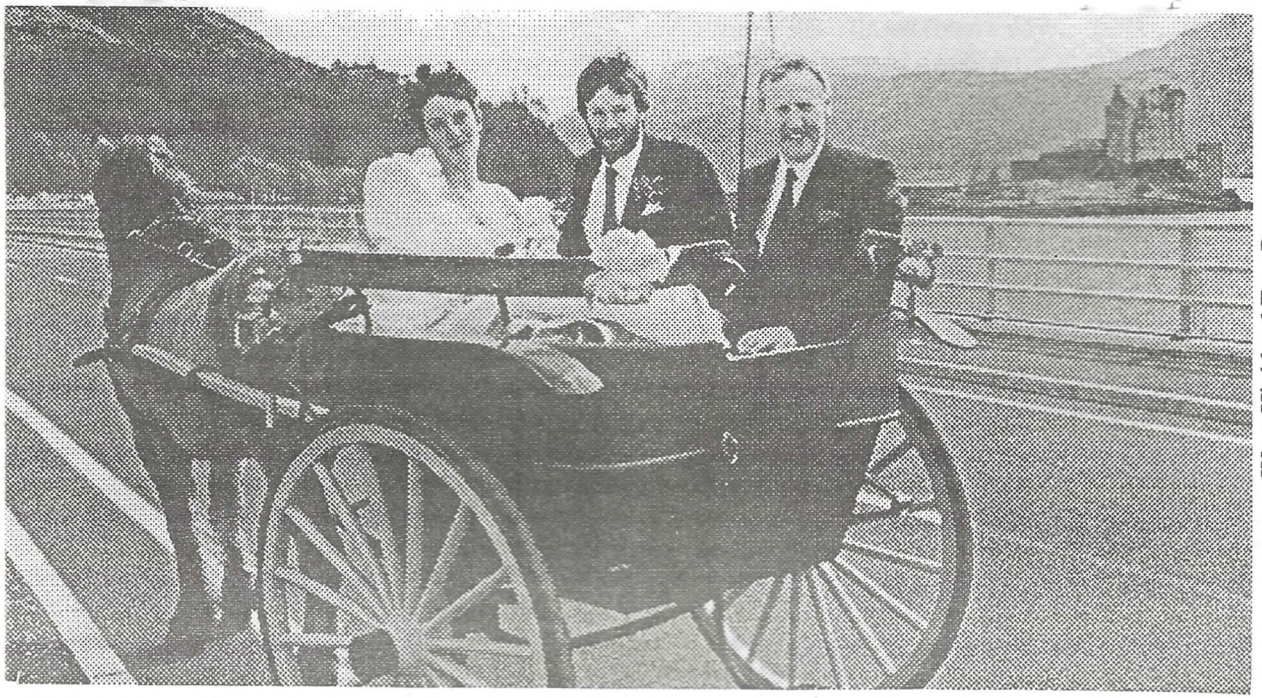
* A sister and two brothers on their Golden Weddings, all of Sydney or Glace Bay, Cape Breton Island.: Winona (Matheson) and William Hillier, 4 Sep 90. George and Annie Matheson, 14 Feb 91. Donald and Juanita Matheson, 14 Apr 91.

* Lieutenant Angus George Matheson, son of Judge Lewis Matheson, Sydney, on his commissioning into the Canadian Army. He is with 3rd Bn, The Royal Canadian Regiment in Germany.

* Major Roderick Matheson, R.C.H.A., on being appointed to the command of The Rocket Troop, Royal Artillery. A brief sketch of his command appears in this Newsletter.

* Major Alexander Matheson, Coldstream Guards, on his appointment as Chief of Staff in Belize.

* Russel and Elinor (Munn) Matheson of Charlottetown, P.E.I., on the celebration of their 54th wedding anniversary on 18 Jun 91.



* John Matheson, Camusluinie, and Tracy Bentley on their marriage at Dornie in April 91. They were the first to cross the new Dornie Bridge, the end of their marriage service coinciding with the opening of the bridge by Lord James Douglas Hamilton, a Government Minister for Scotland, who travelled with them (see illustration).

* Steven Albert Matheson, of Lower Sackville, N.S., on receiving his Degree of Master of Science (Computing Science) at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia on 20 Oct 90. He is now employed with the Department of Oceanography at the University.

* Steven and Judy Matheson on the birth of their daughter Kathleen on 24 Oct 91.

AN UNEXPECTED CONNECTION. by Torquhil Matheson of Matheson.

On a visit to Nova Scotia in August 1991 to take part in the International Gathering of the Clans, Serena and I were taken to many places of interest to the Mathesons. Amongst them was Grand River on Cape Breton Island. The sight of the name "Kemp, a native of Lochalsh" and of Urquhart on gravestones amongst a number of Mathesons and Finlaysons, also "natives of Lochalsh", and "Hector Downie Kemp" on a genealogical tree, made me think of the event related below, in a note book to be found among some of my Grandfather Sir Alexander Matheson's papers. (Astonishingly, he was born at Attadale on 16 January 1805, two days before the incident).

The event is to be found in a note book kept by the Factor of Mr Hugh Innes, the proprietor of Lochalsh in those days, and is reproduced verbatim, with acknowledgement to Northamptonshire Record Office, U.K..

"RERAIG". Inclosure of Woods.

18 January 1805. This morning Duncan Sinclair Ground Officer according to his orders pounded 27 cattle belonging to the Rev Alexdr Downie trespassing therein (inclosure) - was bringing them to Balmacara Poundfold, when John McCarlich Mr Downie's herd forcibly prevented him - D.S. got Kenneth McLenan residenter in Reraig as witnefs of these proceedings. It will be prudent to stop prosecuting Mr Downie & his herd for this illegal conduct, till we see how the present litigations regarding this inclosure ends.

Burning the Woods - of Witnefses & Mr Downie's servants -of Effects of Cattle & the Fire - Ardintoul's Ideas of its Appearance.

Dugald McKenzie son of Alexr McKenzie in Plockton a boy about 14 years of age was herd to Mr Downie in Spring last, and was present at the burning of the wood on Kirkton along with Alexr Urquhart the Bowman of Mr Downie. D.McK heard Mr D. tell the Bowman of Mr Downie to burn heather wherever he found it - heard nothing about the wood. Donald Kemp & John Matheson were both servants & are so still to Mr Downie - Ardintoul & I believe most of his family saw the Wood on fire. This day 21 Janry I examined the wood burnt.

Many shoots from the natural stool of oak would undoubtedly have forced their way on in spite of the Cattle, which have had the liberty of pasturing among them. As a proof of this, trees of Oak ten years old & upwards are standing on the very ground where the conflagration was, and many of these have been killed by the fire - those which were quite burned to the ground have put forth shoots of between 4 & 5 feet long since last Spring. This shows, what these trees would have done, had they been preserved from Cattle and the fire. Mr Macra told me soon after the burning took place that he had, when he saw it, strong apprehensions that the fire had caught hold of the wood within Reraig inclosure, & was near sending me notice to Balmacara from Ardintoul - 21 Janry 1805"

Present at this visit was Ross MacKay, 30 Wardour Street, Bedford, Nova Scotia, B4A 2H9 who is a descendant on his mother's side of Matheson-Kemp-Finlayson marriages and is well known to Duncan "Stalker" Matheson, Camusluinie, and Johan MacInnes, Duirinish. He has an amazing genealogical archive. Also present was Anna McKenzie, Grand River, who is a descendant of Alexander Urquhart.

I was told that Donald Kemp and Alexander Urquhart were originally from Gairloch and worked for Mr Downie at Achmadarrach. Both, with their families and a large number of Lochalsh-born Mathesons and Finlaysons, emigrated to Grand River, Cape Breton Island in 1821, probably from Plockton in the Brigs "St Nicholas" or "Vine" (one gravestone records "in the Brig 'Pallas'"), where they settled and where their graves are well kept to this day, in sharp contrast to the Reverend Mr Downie's at Kirkton.

Mr MacBeth, nearing his 101st birthday, told me that, when the Church at Grand River was built, two doors were made, one for the "Aillseach" (people of Lochalsh) and one for the "others". The word he used sounded like "Ericach", but no one could elucidate. It seemed to refer to people from elsewhere, perhaps the Outer Isles. He could also recall various incidents between the two factions in the days of his youth.

Amongst the emigrant Mathesons was John Matheson (4.d. John on p.79, History of the Mathesons, 1900) and his family, who are descended from Duncan MacIain Og (v.p.78 et seq).

Ardintoul is situated on the southern shore of Loch Alsh opposite Reraig. Mr Macra was tacksman of Ardintoul and was certainly a kinsman of the late Dr Farquhar Macrae, M.B.E., M.C., Colliemore.

"Bowman" seems to be a compound Anglo-Gaelic word for cattleman which I have seen used in family correspondence fifty years earlier.

Finally, if there was ever a call to unite spiritually the Old Scotland with the New, Lochalsh with Grand River would present a splendid opportunity.

CLAN MATHESON SOCIETY Balance Sheet as at 30 June 1991

Assets

Balance at Bank	£276.12
Deposit with Abbey National Bldg Soc.	666.06
Stock of Christmas Cards	1.45 £943.63

Represented by:-

Reserve Fund - Life Members Subscriptions	
Total as at 30 June 1991	£880.00
Received during year	£ 20.00
Transfer to Ord Ac	£ 20.00

Surplus as at 30 June 1990	£ 105.78
Deficit as at 30 June 1991	<u>42.15</u>
Surplus per Balance sheet	£ 63.63 63.63 £943.63

Income & Expenditure Account

Annual Members Subscriptions	£ 20.00
Life Members Subscriptions	20.00
U.S. Share of Newsletter	102.22
Canadian do	83.74
Donations	4.50
Building Society Interest	<u>51.70</u> £282.16

Less:-

Cost of Printing Newsletter	£172
Postage of Newsletter & Sundries	<u>152.31</u> <u>324.31</u>
	<u>£42.15</u>

N.A. Matheson, Hon. Treasurer

Audited & Found Correct Jas. Moncrieff, 9 July 1991

MISSING MEMBERS.

NL 45 was returned to the Editor, undelivered for the undernamed. Please inform the Editor if you know of their relocation or death.

AUSTRALIA.

Donald Matheson, 22 Harding St, Corio, Geelong, Victoria, 3214.

Gordon J. Matheson, 78 Rose Ave, Norlane, Geelong, Victoria, 3214.

Ian Matheson, 2 Mel Avenue, Blackheath, N.S.W.

Nigel H. Matheson, 27 Waratan Avenue, Burwood, Victoria, 3125.

Robert Matheson, Leawarra Way, Clifton Springs, Drysdale, Victoria, 3222.

Roderick S. Matheson, 28 Campion Ave, Rainworth, Brisbane, Queensland, 4065.

W.E. Matheson, c/o Commercial Bank of Sydney, Melbourne, Victoria.

Ian H. Matheson, 2 Mel Ave, Blackheath, N.S.W. 2785.

SCOTLAND.

Angus Matheson, 69 Barnton Avenue, Edinburgh, EH6 4ES.

Major J.A. Matheson, Churchill Cottage, Duddingston, Edinburgh 15.

SOUTH AFRICA.

S. Matheson, 69 Southern Life Buildings, P.O. Box 524, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership of the Society is restricted to persons spelling their name Matheson or Mathieson or whose parents or one of their 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 and New Zealand), the annual subscription is £2 or £15 for life membership; applications for membership should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer at Dunkeld with the appropriate sterling cheque.

Applications for membership from persons living in New Zealand, Canada or the USA should be made to the Hon. Secretary in the country in which they live. The subscription rates are \$7.50 for annual membership and \$75 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.

NEWS, INFORMATION, PHOTOGRAPHS FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER TO EDITOR BY 1 SEPTEMBER 1992.

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

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Clan Genealogist, Mrs Janet Matheson Dom,
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Georgia 30236, USA.

(Members are invited to send their family histories to Janet with any queries they may have.)

Hon Secretaries Emeriti,

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Montreal, PG H3E 1C8.

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Steven Matheson, Nova Scotia
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