



Clan Matheson Society

NEWSLETTER No. 53

Autumn 1998

Chief of the Clan:

Major Sir Fergus Matheson of Matheson,
Baronet of Lochalsh.

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Editor (temp.): The Chief of the Clan

CLAN GATHERING, WESTER ROSS - JULY 1998

The Clan Gathering in Lochalsh last July was well supported and was a memorable occasion. Numbers far exceeded expectations, many having travelled vast distances to be present. At the request of many, the names of all who signed the register on arrival are listed on pages 10 & 11. If any names have been omitted, I am sorry, I could only go by the book. The programme was designed to benefit those from afar to witness the land their forebears had known. To view, as they had done, the spectacular sights such as Eilean Donan Castle in the commanding position where Lochs Alsh, Duich and Long meet, the Church and Churchyard at Kirkton, the villages, the gathering place by the Fort, the Cuillins on Skye and the Applecross hills. It seemed appropriate that we should end with the dinner at Strathcarron (198 sat down, 200 was the limit), following the Lochcarron Games, to which we were so grateful to be welcomed by Mr and Mrs Euan Macpherson of Attadale and the organiser Major Douglas Gunn and his Committee. In hindsight, another day, unrushed, would have allowed for more conversation and meeting, a point which can be remembered should the Gathering be repeated 5 years on in 2003. The helpers were too many to mention all by name. My sincere thanks go to Dr. Mary Macrae, Balmacara, and those who assisted her for providing a welcoming tea for early arrivals the first afternoon. Also to the Chief's Lieutenants; Hon. Secretaries and Committee members who helped to co-ordinate groups and relay information. Also the caterers who supplied meals; those who provided accommodation and last but not least my family who were a constant support. One thing I have learnt is, the vast amount that is done for Clan members by those who organise similar Gatherings in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States.

On the afternoon of the first day we gathered at Ardelve to meet and register our names, moving on to visit Eilean Donan Castle. Supper in Dornie Village Hall followed. The second day began with a Church Service in Lochalsh Parish Church at Kirkton conducted by The Reverend Donald Beaton, Minister for Glenelg and Kintail. Lessons were read by Douglas Matheson, New Zealand and Malcolm Matheson III, United States. The address was given by The Very Reverend James Matheson. Then came lunch at Plockton High School followed by the Clan Parliament. Later we visited Duncraig Castle and from there walked to the old Gathering place beside the Fort at the head of Loch Achnahinich. On Friday some went by coach to Skye visiting among other places Dunvegan Castle, home of the Chiefs of MacLeod, others visited Applecross by way of Shieldaig, Kinlochewe, Achnasheen and Ledgowan. A few rested after the previous days exertions or found their own amusements. Saturday was the day of the Lochcarron Games at Attadale. We entered the arena as a Clan, led by a Pipe Band and despite slight rain, it was a most enjoyable afternoon to be remembered for years to come.

Fergus Matheson of Matheson

THE HUMAN CLAN

The address given by the Very Reverend James Matheson at Lochalsh Parish Church - 17th July 1998

The word "clann" in Gaelic originally meant the children in a family. But it has been enlarged in meaning to include all who belong to the family, coming from the same sources, bearing the same name, part of the same story. You may have noticed - those of you, that is, who do notice things - that the two Bible lessons in our service came, one from the very beginning of the Bible and the other from the very end. The reason for that is that the Bible, as a whole, is a story. It is the story of a clan. We may call it the Clan MacAdam. The Bible is quite realistic about the human clan. It tells of the divisions, the jealousies, the murderous hates, and also the things that bond us together, like humour and sharing and sympathy for one another.

I should like to underline two remarkable figures in the telling of the story. The first is the idea that Eve the woman, was made out of a rib taken from the side of the man. I read recently a theological tome which tried to make out that these early stories in the Bible were written by a woman. I don't think so. I can't imagine a woman

inventing the figure of a woman coming out of a man, when every woman knows that in fact the man comes out from the woman. But that is by the way. The story wants to say that the man and the woman belong together. They need one another. They are not complete in themselves.

There is another fascinating phrase in the story which says that Adam and Eve, human beings, were "made in the image of God". What on earth does that mean? God is the origin and fount of all existence. Infinite in Power, Eternal in Being, the unchangeable source of all goodness. How can we possibly say man is made in God's image?

Surely it tries to say, once again, as in the "rib" figure, that to be really human is to live for one another in love. In God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there is the fathomless mystery of a love, a harmony, a Divine togetherness, that is perfect and everlasting. The perfect human life is one in which we live not only for ourselves, but also, always, for one another. That is how it was meant to be, young and old, from every family, bonded together for the common good. But the story of the Bible clan tells that the shepherd, Cain, was jealous of his brother Abel, the gardener. And in hatred and jealousy Cain killed his brother Abel. Our Scottish Clans, and all humanity, tell the same story. I live on Loch Dunvegan, looking across the Waternish Peninsula in the Macleod country. There one time, in the Church in Trumpan, the Macleods were at worship. And a fleet of Macdonalds from the Outer Isles sailed in, surrounded the Church, set it on fire and destroyed the whole congregation except for one old woman who managed to get word to the Castle, and the destroyers were destroyed themselves. That's only one story from hundreds like it. Jealousy, greed, envy, pride, destroy the image of God in which we were made.

We read in the Second Lesson, however, a different picture "God shall wipe away all tears. No more death or sorrow or crying, for the former things are passed away". That is the hope that inspires us. That is what the Clan is about. It is the dream, the intention and by God's Grace the realisation of the things that bond us together and make us one. Of all the wonders of Creation, Human life is the most wonderful; in mind and heart and will; in imagination and inventiveness. What the Bible story reminds us of is that we graduate to full humanity in our bonding with others, by God's Grace. No man is an island. We were made for one another. Every one of us is special and distinct. We are ourselves and nobody else. There are no clones in God's Creation. Every one of us has her own and his own part to play. And it is in togetherness that we are our real selves made in the Image of God.

In the Clan, everyone is important. That is the very meaning of the word. We need to share with one another. So let us enjoy each other's company in these days together, and listen to one another, and learn from one another, and be richer in parting than we were in coming. One of the greatest poems in the English language in my view, is Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner". It gives an unforgettable picture of the desolation of being alone "Alone, alone, all alone - Alone on a wide, wide sea". But there is also, in the end of the poem, an equally unforgettable picture of togetherness. "To walk together to the Kirk and all together pray, - While each to his Great Father bends, - Old men, and babes and loving friends - And youths and maidens gay". Let's hope that will be the story of this Clan Gathering. That we will all be for one another. So let's enjoy our togetherness and thank God for it.

EXTRACTS FROM "AN CARRANNACH"

by Felicity Given.

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A very special addition to the Games this year was the Matheson Clan Gathering. 200 or more Mathesons had gathered from Britain, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States and it was a fine sight to see them marching into the Games arena behind their Clan Chief. They had been visiting Clan sites in the Lochalsh area, and staying at Drumbuie, Duirinish and Plockton among other places. It was most appropriate that they should come to our Games as Attadale House was built in 1755 by Donald Matheson, after his father, John 1st of Attadale had bought the estate for him in about 1730. The Mathesons of Attadale were very influential in the area and Sir Fergus told me that his grandfather, Sir Alexander, 1st Baronet of Lochalsh, born in 1805, a Member of Parliament, was instrumental in having the Kyle railway built in order to provide the local crofters with an outlet for their produce to the big markets such as Inverness and even London.

I spoke to several of the Matheson Clan, all of whom were really enjoying the Games. Christian Matheson of Norway told me that the first Mathesons went to Norway about 1600 as part of a group of Scottish mercenaries. Colonel Matheson decided to stay in Trondheim and there have been Mathesons in Norway ever since. Christian who has just finished four years at Edinburgh University is proud of his Scottish connection and wears a kilt for special occasions even in Norway.

Marg and Bob Matheson of Central Otago, New Zealand had tried to trace Bob's great grandfather, a Plockton sea Captain of the early 1800's who became one of the early pioneers of the wild inland country of New Zealand. They were delighted to have found his former house in Bank Street, Plockton and Bob said that he felt

quite humble as he stood there and looked at this concrete evidence of his Scottish roots. They also had a strong awareness of the sense of community in such Scottish villages such as Plockton and Lochcarron.

I am sure that I speak for everyone in Lochcarron in saying that we were delighted to see the Clan Matheson at our Games. We hope they enjoyed their dinner at Strathcarron and that they had a wonderful holiday in Britain and a safe journey home.

THE MINUTES OF THE CLAN PARLIAMENT - PLOCKTON - 16th JULY 1998

The Clan Parliament, at which some 200 Clan Members were present, was held in the School Hall, Plockton High School, Wester Ross 16th July 1998. The Chief of the Clan opened the Parliament by welcoming all present. He was particularly glad that every Country involved with the Clan Society was represented which included Australia and Norway. He thanked them for their support, particularly those who had travelled great distances to attend the Clan Gathering. All, on arrival, should have received copies of the Rules and Regulations of the Clan Society and the Minutes of the last Clan Parliament.

He thanked Mrs Pearson of the Plockton Hotel and her staff for the splendid lunch she had just provided and also for her support and enthusiasm from the outset. He then read messages of greetings and good wishes sent to all Clan Members attending the Lochalsh Gathering from Ailsa Matheson and Clan Members in New Zealand also from Ron Matheson and members in Australia. He much regretted that Gordon & Ailsa Matheson, New Zealand both of whom do so much for the Clan Society and both of whose families came from Plockton, were unable to be present.

He displayed the set of bagpipes, played by his grandson, Andrew Matheson, outside the Church that morning which had belonged to his brother Sir Torquhil Matheson, the last Chief and now bore the new Pipe Banner, a gift from Nova Scotia in memory of Sir Torquhil. He thanked the Members of Nova Scotia for their kind thought.

The Chief concluded by thanking the Hon. Secretaries for bringing reports of their Branch activities which would be included in the next Newsletter. He then invited Lt. Colonel Alexander Matheson, younger of Matheson, Convener of the England Branch to take over as Convener for the Clan Parliament.

The Convener welcomed all who were attending the Gathering. The following points were on the Agenda.

1. Minutes: The Minutes of the the last Clan Parliament held on 8th July 1995 at St. Ann's, Nova Scotia having been circulated in advance were taken as read. It was proposed by Linda Matheson (Canada), seconded by Lyman Matheson (United States) that they were a true record and should be adopted. This was approved by those who had been present at the St. Ann's Parliament, Nova Scotia.

2. Merchandise: Ties and postcards with the correct crest and tartan and approved by the Chief were now available for purchase and would also be on sale at the Lochcarron Games.

3. Life Membership: Charles Matheson Snr (United States) proposed, John Matheson (Scotland) seconded, that Life Membership should be discontinued as the Life Membership subscription no longer covering annual costs. This was not voted on as it was pointed out the decision had already been put into practise in order that Branches should remain solvent. It was hoped more and more former Life Members would see their way to making an annual donation, equivalent to the current annual subscription rates in whichever country they reside which could best be done by a standing order with the bank.

4. The Internet: Discussion on this wide subject highlighted its disadvantages as well as the advantages, it being appreciated that it appears any single person or organisation can create a web site and seem to speak with authority on any chosen subject regardless of accuracy. Alan Matheson (Australia), who it seemed was speaking for many present, suggested that only web sites approved by the Clan should operate and that as a Clan we should be seen to speak with one voice. It was appreciated that there are a number of Clan Members with a great deal of historical knowledge who might wish to record their version of past events. Our Clan can best be served if somehow they get together to agree on a common version of what should be displayed and the manner in which it is done. In the first instance this could be done by discussion with the Chief's Lieutenant or in his absence the Branch Secretary of the Country concerned who in turn would liaise with the Chief of the Clan. Slowly a board of experts would develop, prepared to listen to others and an approved version of our Clan history would evolve, one historical web site being sufficient for the Clan. A Clan web site, > www.matheson.org < has been established and at the moment is operated by the Chief.

5. Secretary for Scottish Branch: The Convener asked for a volunteer to come forward, now or after the Gathering, to take on the work of Branch Secretary to administer Clan Members in Scotland. At present this task is being done by the Chief. (The position is still vacant. Editor)

6. Any Other Business

(a) It was suggested that some approved Clan mementos such as crests, tartans etc should be made available. The Chief said he would make a start to draw up an approved list and at the suggestion of Colonel Leslie Matheson (United States) would put the approved list on the web site. He warned Members to look carefully before buying some items on sale, for instance the crest on a plaque, key ring, postcards, miniature whisky bottles etc should

have an eastern crown with five points, not three, the arm holding the scimitar should be central and upright not at an angle. The Clan Crest to be seen on the web site or at the head of the newsletter is correct. Any variation is incorrect except for anyone fortunate enough to own a very old version of the crest before the eastern crown was adopted as the Clan Crest (in the 1980's) in which case the crest is the same without the crown.

(b) The Convener suggested that Branches should finance the manufacture and sale of their own particular items of merchandise, after approval from the Chief, as central ordering meant that money from one Branch was tied up and there might be difficulty in publicising and posting items.

(c) Kate & Ron Lowry (England) asked for orders for Matheson Gathering Golf Umbrellas and polo and sweat shirts before the end of the Gathering. (There are still 2 umbrellas for sale Editor)

(d) Dr. Iain Matheson, 28 Harbour Street, Plockton asked to hear of any occurrence of the female name Mearon in Matheson families. He also asked for information on Matheson family lines originating from an ancestor other than Murdoch Buidhe living in the middle of the 16th century. He also requested genealogical information from Sir Torquhil Matheson's researches. Nell Matheson (Sir T's daughter) said she was still editing and proof reading his work and hoped to have it ready for circulation in 1999. She would produce a printed copy. Charles Matheson Snr (United States) asked for this information eventually to be available for purchase on computer disk.

Major General John Matheson, Convener of the Clan Society, closed the Parliament by thanking the Chief and his family for all their hard work in bringing so many Clan Members together and said that he was sure that they would all look forward to the next Gathering.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND

Convenor: Lt. Colonel Alexander Matheson yr. of Matheson
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1998 began with the annual dinner in January attended by 19 members in the impressive and convenient surroundings of the Officers' Mess, Wellington Barracks, London. It was a most enjoyable evening and we were delighted to have the Chief and his wife with us. After dinner we were entertained by a Scots Guards piper which rounded the evening off perfectly. The Annual General Meeting was held in May, followed by informal drinks and eats, when we were able to discuss a variety of Clan and Branch topics of interest to all. At that time several of us were looking forward to attending the Clan Gathering in Lochalsh in July. This proved to be as successful as we had anticipated. Those who were there will already know how much we all enjoyed the excellent programme arranged by our Chief and how many friendships and kinships were discovered in those four days, blessed by lovely weather and in beautiful surroundings. We are already looking forward to the next Gathering.

By contrast, we took to the River Cam in August for our annual family picnic. For the second year this was beautifully organised by Patricia Mathieson in the form of a punting party, amazing to spectators, no doubt, was the thought that the forty people in some eight punts were members of a Scottish Clan! In a very wet summer the weather was especially kind and some even decided to take a dip in the river (or were they pushed?). About two hours hard punting took us to Grantchester Meadows where we eat our picnics and played games with some fairly flexible rules. I have no doubt that there will be a repeat next year.

The next annual dinner is to be held on Monday 25th January 1999 at the Army & Navy Club, St. James's Square, London, all are welcome. We are sorry to be centred on London or in the case of punting, near London. It is hoped that other members might be persuaded to think of arranging some form of get-together in other parts of England in which other members might participate.

Margaret Williams

NORWAY

As has been well known, there are many Mathesons living in Norway. Mrs Ellen Matheson Hallan who with her family and cousins attended the Gathering, has undertaken to form a new Branch of the Clan Society and to act as Hon. Secretary. Her address is Frits Kjaers Vei 2, 0383 Oslo, Norway. Tel: 22503496.

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Hon. Secretary: Mrs Brenda (Matheson) Cochrane
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Hon. Treasurer: George Matheson

The past year, highlighted by the Clan Gathering in Scotland, has been an exciting one. We had 18 in attendance representing many of our Provinces. The months leading up to the July Gathering were busy as we responded to many inquiries respecting our participation. Indeed, it was a memorable sight to see our Clan members worldwide leading the parade into the Lochcarron Highland Games. We all enjoyed the many events culminated by the closing dinner at Strathcarron where nearly 200 Mathesons joined in the festivities. Also this year we continued our efforts to establish Branches in other Provinces, particularly P.E.I. where there are many Matheson descendants. We will continue these efforts as our strength lies in having Branch societies throughout the country. Although our mailing costs in respect to the Gathering depleted our finances our request for special contributions met with success. Our membership and Branch support has enabled our Society to maintain a continuous connection across Canada.

Both our Mainland N.S. Society and our Cape Breton Branch were most active during 1998. These two Branches kept the Matheson Clan at the forefront in Gatherings throughout the Province. The Mainland Society held their regular executive meetings and pot luck supper. In addition they held a Spring dinner meeting in Truro, N.S. Our Clan tent was visible at Highland Gatherings at Antigonish, New Glasgow, Earltown and Pictou. The Pictou celebrations commemorated the 225th anniversary of the landing of Scottish settlers from the ship Hector, Verna Matheson being director of the Hector celebrations. On Tartan Day in Halifax our Clan had an information table set up in a local shopping centre. Also, the Annual General Meeting was held in conjunction with the Piper's Picnic in Earltown. A report on the International Clan Matheson Gathering in Scotland was given by the 6 members from Nova Scotia who attended.

The Clan Matheson Bursary for piping was awarded to Mark Churchill, a Piping student. Also, the Lenten Season, members of our Clan read passages of the Bible as part of a two week event entitled "Proclamation" organised by the Canadian Piping Society. It was held at the First Presbyterian Church in Stellarton. The complete Bible was read aloud from the lection during the period. The Mainland Society's summer activities concluded with a fund raising auction and family supper at Brookfield, N.S. Another year of many activities.

The Cape Breton Branch was also most active and had many get-togethers including a Lobster Supper in July at George and Anne Matheson's cottage in Mira Gut. In September a meeting was held in South Haven, C.B. as well and was followed up in November by a Pot-luck supper. Our new President is Mae Buchanan.

On a sadder note, two of our key supporters in Nova Scotia passed away during the year. They were Judge Lewis Matheson, Chairman of the Cape Breton Branch and Roger Matheson from the Mainland. Over the years both Lew and Roger were most active in Clan events and in establishing their respective Branches. They will be missed by all their many friends.

On August 9th a special Memorial Service for all departed Cape Breton Members was held at the Ephraim Scot Presbyterian Church, South Haven. A reception at the Community Centre followed at which a memorial in memory of departed members was presented. The Reverend Gordon Matheson was guest speaker.

In closing, I extend my thanks to all Clan members and Branches who have been most supportive throughout the year. Also, I congratulate Sir Fergus, Lady Matheson and all their family for the excellent job done in making our Clan Gathering in Scotland a most memorable event. It was a great time to renew old friendships and make many new ones. Meeting again with Serena, Lady Matheson and her daughters Nell and Bella brought back many fond memories of our Gatherings in Nova Scotia. We can look forward to more happy times together. All the Best for 1999 to all the Clan !

Joel Matheson

AUSTRALIA

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Committee: Mrs Margaret Fleming, Mrs Angie Lewis, Colin Matheson and Lance Matheson

We have completed our first year successfully, although it has been a learning process for most of the Committee Members, including myself. We are full of enthusiasm and anticipation for the year ahead and hopefully will be able to sign up some more new members and attend quite a few more events. The Ringwood Highland Games were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by the members. The weather for that event was perfect, not so the Celtic Folk Festival where gale force winds and heavy rain sent some tents into the brink. In July Ron and Merle, Alan and myself attended the Kirkin of The Tartan held at Scots Church, Melbourne.

This was a very moving event and there was a get-together after the Service for a cuppa and a chat with other Clans. Our Genealogist, Colin Lewis, is having a rather busy time installing information on computer but it will be well worth the effort when completed.

May Matheson

NEW ZEALAND

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Piper Norman Matheson
Chaplain Rev. Stuart McKenzie
Committee Lois Ahlquist, Anne Matheson, Donald Matheson,
Norman Matheson, Rita Matheson, Val Stern, Joy Weeds

We have had a good year and a large number of members have enjoyed and benefited from, the fellowship meetings and newsletters which form such a large part of our activities. Membership has increased by 26, and as we confirm our three new branch committees, we anticipate that the current year will also show a good increase.

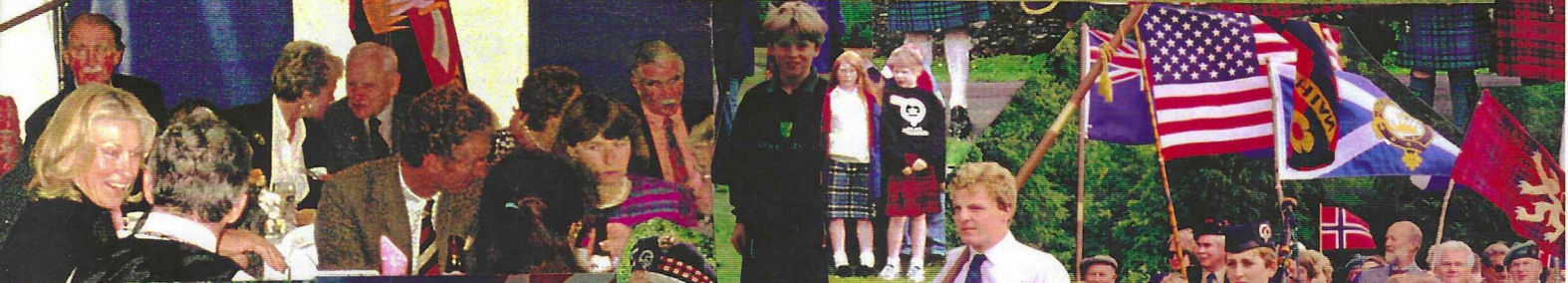
We were pleased to have 30 of our members attend the wonderful Lochalsh Gathering, and all enjoyed this event very much and had holidays as well in Britain and other places. Our grateful thanks to Sir Fergus and Lady Matheson, Alexander and all who planned and organised this outstanding event.

There is no doubt that local meetings are the ideal way to meet people and enjoy each other and we have had gatherings throughout the country. At Alexandra for Otago and Southland members. A picnic at Long Bay Auckland, in the summer for northern members. A lunch and chat at Tauranga for Waikato and Bay of Plenty. The Church Parade, Kirkin 'O' the Tartan, and Annual Meeting at the Chairman's Church in Howick, Auckland. An afternoon meeting for post - Lochalsh reports at the Auckland Botanical Gardens. As well, Graeme Matheson carried the Clan Banner at the Combined Clans Service and Kirkin' in Christchurch. There have also been a number of smaller groups getting together in different parts of the country, and we support these as they are all Clan activities.

Our Genealogist, Don Scott, continues to do a magnificent job entering all our information on a computer and is currently liaising with other Clan genealogists in other places with the aim of getting the world wide Matheson genealogy on the Internet.

Douglas Matheson





UNITED STATES

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By far and away the most exciting event this past year was the Clan Gathering held in Lochalsh, Ross-shire Scotland. Orchestrated by Chief Fergus with, I'm sure, considerable help from his son, Alexander, and the rest of his wonderful family the "Gathering" came off without a hitch and was truly a magnificent and most successful event.

The following will give you a quick synopsis of the frenetic pace that my wife, Gail, and I set (with 2 grand children) in keeping up with the Chief's and our own schedule after arriving July 13th at our rented cottage at Achnadarroch near Duirinish, Kyle of Lochalsh:

Tuesday, 14th July

1. Drive to Lochcarron and found great-great-great-grandfather John Matheson's grave in old cemetery.
2. Sir Fergus and I drive to Dornie to check preparation for sign-in, cocktail party and dinner for the next evening.
3. Dinner at Serena, Lady Matheson's in Duirinish with her daughters, Nell and Bella (and Bella's husband Will Craven), and many other distinguished guests from the U.S. (Lyman and Phyllis Matheson, Charley and Bonnie Matheson, son - Colvin Matheson - and our Grandsons, Angus and Duncan); Canada (Joel and Ruth Matheson, Al and Beverly Matheson); New Zealand (Doug and Ann Matheson); Australia (Gwendolyn Matheson Smith).

Wednesday, 15th July - (Late afternoon)

1. Sign in all attendees at Dornie Village Hall and dispense function tickets to U.S. participants.
2. Tour Eilean Donan Castle.
3. Return to Dornie Hall for cocktails, dinner and entertainment.

Thursday 16th July

1. 10:30 a.m. Clan Church Service in Lochalsh Parish Church, Kirkton where the Chief pressed upon me the duty of reading the 2nd lesson.
2. 2:00 P.M. - Clan Parliament
3. Late P.M. - Hike - led by the Chief, his son, and his grandson, Andrew, as Piper - from Duncraig Castle (built by Sir Fergus's, Grandfather) past the old Fort overlooking and onto DAIL-ACHA-DA-THEARNAIDH ("The Field Between Two Descents"), the historic Clan Gathering place at the head of Loch Achaid-na-h-inich, which just happened to be but a "stones throw" from Gail's and my cottage at Achnadarroch where several hikers and family members stopped for a wee dram!
4. Dinner with Sir Fergus and Lady Jean and their entire family plus all of the other Chief's Lieutenants from the other countries representing the Clan - a truly warm affair welcoming us all as a family to the Highlands!

Friday 17th July

1. The U.S. contingent and many others took two Coaches from Kyle of Lochalsh on a tour of the Isle of Skye with a shopping stop in the town of Portree and then on to a tour of Dunvegan Castle where we were warmly welcomed by its' owner and Chief of the MacLeod Clan, John MacLeod of MacLeod. This was most interesting and the Ladies especially loved his beautiful gardens.
2. Dinner that night was free - in more ways than one as 19 (of the 27) of my "direct" family attending the gathering ate out at a dinner arranged in-absentia by my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Matheson, Jr.

Saturday 18th July

1. 11:00 a.m. - Gather for Lochcarron Highland Games on the grounds of Attadale House built in 1755 by Donald Matheson and now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Euan MacPherson who kindly let us roam their most fabulous gardens during the event part of the games.
2. Clan Matheson grand parade led by the Chief and Flag and Banner Bearers to start the Games.
3. Rain dampened some spirits but as far as my grandsons were concerned the Helicopter ride which they badgered me into letting them do was the highlight of the entire trip (along with a trip to "Lego Land" upon our arrival at Heathrow a week earlier).
4. 7:00 P.M. - Clan Dinner at Strathcarron Hotel - a most festive affair with a grand display of Matheson Tartans in kilts, skirts and sashes. My wife, Gail, and I were seated at the head table - Gail next to Lt. Col. Alexander Matheson, younger of Matheson (the Chief's son) and I next to Alexander's wife, Katherine, and Sir Fergus's own Lady, Jean. We both felt quite honoured so at the end of the evening my only humble offering to the Chief and his family for their superb hospitality was to sing the Scottish National Anthem - "Just A Wee Deoech 'n Doris" - with a thundering assist at the chorus from all of my family and 200 other enthusiastic guests!

Sunday 19th July

Departed Lochalsh for four more days of touring from the Isle of Mull to Edinburgh. I personally would like to thank:

1st Chief Fergus and Lady Jean and their family for the Herculean effort they put into the superb orchestration of the Gathering for all of those U.S. Members attending.

2nd My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Matheson, Jr. though unable to attend personally, for their true support in helping all six of their children (including me) with spouses, ten of their (20) grandchildren plus one spouse and four of their (20) great-grandchildren (27 total) in supporting my efforts to make the Gathering a success.

3rd All of my family and the thirty other U.S. Members who joined me in this memorable occasion to make the U.S. contingent the largest group attending - a HARDY WELL DONE !

As usual brothers John and Alexander Aakesson did yeoman service in keeping the Clan Matheson's presence at several local Scottish festivals - The Potomac Celtic Festival at Morven Park, Leesburg, Va., the Virginia Scottish Games at Episcopal High School, Alexandria, Va. and the Scottish Heritage Fair at Fort Ward Park, Alexandria, Va. In addition J. Kurt Matheson kept our tent open at the Loch Norman Games in North Carolina and has mentioned an interest in attending the Grandfather Mountain Games next year. Kurt and his wife Holly also attended the Clan Gathering in Scotland as did Charlie and Florence Otstot who always help with the tent at the Virginia Scottish Games. All of their enthusiastic support in all of these events is greatly appreciated.

A note of Thanks - Again to those Life members who made greatly welcomed voluntary contributions this past year: Mr. & Mrs. Lyman W. Matheson, Bruce J. Matheson, Don P. Matheson, Carolyn M. Loeffler, Elmer C. Mathews, Malcolm W. Matheson, Richard L. Matheson, Helen M. Downs, Dr. John D. Matheson, Robert K. Matheson, Thelma M. Ryan, Mr. & Mrs. James T. Mathieson, and to annual member Mark Matheson for his special contribution. A Warm Welcome to our New Members who have joined the Clan Society since December 1, 1997 - a total of 2 so far this year (and four of them are directly related to the triple Great Grandfather whose grave my brother, Charles and I found in Lochcarron this past July at the Clan Gathering):

NEW MEMBERS

Frederick Alan Mathison (Mobile, Alabama)	Nicholas Matheson Minorsky (Redmond, Washington)
Nannette LaDue Granrath (West Allis, Wisconsin)	Mary Helen Nagel (Capitola, California) CHECK
Carol L. Cowin (Kingsburg, California)	Cynthia Rene Matheson Klopp (Jupiter, Florida)
Donald MacGregor Matheson (Wind Lake, Wisconsin)	Matthew T. Guilford (Herndon, Virginia)
Barbara Ann Roberts (Grand Junction, Colorado)	Patricia Mathieson McDaniel (Holly Springs, North Carolina)
Steven Craig Matheson (Tampa, Florida)	Reba Frances Shell Akers (Citrus Heights, California)
Jennifer Ballard Koch (Manassas, Virginia)	Diane Mathewson Wheaton (New London, New Hampshire)
Robert Redd Matheson (The Plains, Virginia)	Douglas Charles Vance (Phoenix, Arizona)
Gail Matheson Werntz (Concord, Massachusetts)	John Matheson Kelman (Sewickley, Pennsylvania)
Ethel Claire Armbruster (Temecula, California)	John G. Matheson (Bellevue, Nebraska)
The Rev. James W. Mathieson (Danville, Virginia)	David Alexander Gray Mathieson, Jr (Decatur, Georgia)

CONDOLENCES TO

The family of Raymond G. Matheson who died May 17, 1998 at the age of 91. Our sincerest sympathies are especially extended to his daughter Thelma M. Ryan. The family of David J. Mathewson, Sr. who passed away this past July 1998 and especially to his son, David, Jr. and granddaughter, Heather.
Malcolm Matheson III

CONGRATULATIONS TO

THE GATHERING

* Lieut. Colonel Leslie Matheson, U.S. Air Force, and Andrew Matheson (the Chief's grandson) for providing pipe music during the trek to the gathering site and on other occasions.

* Olav Hallam (Norway), Christian Matheson (Norway), Pip Matheson (New Zealand), for taking part in the hill race . and Charlie Thompson (also a grandson of the Chief) 3rd in the 100 metres.

UNITED STATES

* Douglas Matheson, North Carolina on his marriage to Astrid Helen Khayat on October 11, 1997 in Washington, DC. Along with the attendants, family, and wedding guests, they were led from the Cathedral to the Mayflower Renaissance Hotel into the reception room by Pipers dressed in kilts. It was quite a site to see traffic in Washington, DC stop and pedestrians taking pictures.

* Rachel Cooke (John P & Torrey Matheson Cooke's daughter) on her marriage on 12th September 1998 to Christopher T. Mills.

Charles T. and Mia Matheson, on the birth of their 2nd daughter, Eve - born December 24, 1997 (Charles and Bonnie Matheson's 8th Grandchild)

CANADA

* Judge John Matheson of Rideau Ferry, Ontario on celebrating his 53rd wedding anniversary in a spectacular way on August 4 by making his first skydive at the age of 80. Accompanied by a qualified jump instructor. Judge John completed a jump from 3,300 metres in Gananoque, Ontario. Before his jump, Judge John said, "I'm going aloft. I always wanted some experience in the air but I never did it." Judge John served in Parliament for four terms beginning in 1963, of these, two years as Parliamentary Secretary to the late Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson. He is also notable as having been instrumental in the design and adoption of Canada's national flag.

NEW ZEALAND

The following Members of the Clan Society on their new appointments :-

- * John Matheson, Invercargill - Chairman of Southland Regional Council
- * Paul Matheson, Nelson - Mayor of Nelson City Council
- * Brick Matheson, Stratford - Counsellor for Stratford District Council
- * Alex Matheson, Inglewood - Counsellor for New Plymouth District Council

NOTICES

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CLAN SOCIETY

Membership is restricted to persons spelling their name Matheson, Mathieson or whose parents or one of their grandparents spelled their name similarly. Matheisons, Mathisons or Matthewsons will be considered for membership if they can establish the Highland origin of their family.

The late Reverend William Matheson of the Department of Celtic Studies, Edinburgh University dealt with this subject, the gist of which was:- Membership of a Clan is determined by ancestry and not by name. In our case the members are those whose ancestors had the surname MacMathain, before the Anglicised version came in the seventeenth century in an increasingly English-speaking environment. A reasonably reliable test is a geographical one. If one's ancestors came from anywhere North of the Caledonian Canal and one bears the surname Matheson, spelt thus or similarly, it is very probable that those ancestors (in the male line) belonged to the Clan; always allowing for the fact that keepers of records, for example Ministers compiling their registers of baptisms and marriages, made mistakes especially in attempting to translate from Gaelic to English.

MATHESON TARTAN RUG

Mrs May Matheson has recently crocheted a Matheson tartan rug. She will be delighted to send a copy of the pattern to any Matheson who would like to try their hand at making a tartan rug too. Please apply to:-

Mrs May Matheson 38 Hourigan Road, Morwell 3840, Victoria; e-mail <matho@net-tech.com.au>

PROPOSAL FOR A YOUTH EXCHANGE BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND SCOTLAND

The aim is to develop and maintain two way links between Scotland and New Zealand Clan members. To invest in our young people and increase membership. To give our young Clan members an experience in their heritage and our Clan development throughout the world.

Visits to last three months. Ages 18 - 28 years. Those taking part must be motivated and capable young people. The host country to accommodate exchanges, provide counselling, guidance, and some subsidy for cost. Exchangee to be involved in development of the Clan and their own personal and professional development.

A Trust fund to be set up. Here in New Zealand we will form a committee of three to investigate this idea in all its aspects and we shall keep you informed. Will all those who are interested in this excellent scheme please get in touch with:-

Douglas Matheson, 33 Mellons Bay Road, Howick 1705, Auckland, New Zealand.

Tel: 09 534 9477: e-mail: >djmaclan@lycosmail.com<

CLAN MERCHANDISE

At the Clan Parliament, the Chief was asked to give accurate and heraldically correct guidance about purchasing such items as badges, tartan etc. A start has been made to enable Clansmen to purchase by mail order from the "Clan Collection", details of which are set out below. In due course an entry will appear on the web site www.matheson.org

THE CLAN COLLECTION

I have noticed that it is difficult to find high quality and historically accurate Matheson goods. As a result I have put together a fabulous collection of articles. Each item has the personal approval of my father, the Chief of the Clan, so that you can guarantee its authenticity. These include a selection of tartans for every occasion, a range of handbags and luggage, badges and kilt pins.

Luckily I have been able to find a great variety of the highest quality silver items all of which can be engraved with the Clan Crest provided it is encircled with the motto "Fac et Spera". These are very special and come highly recommended.

This is just the beginning! I would love to hear any ideas you have. Please contact me to find out how I can help and how to place an order.

FIONA KENDALL

Henstead Old Rectory, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 7LA, England.

Tel: 01502 476 251 * Fax: 01502 476 540 * e-mail: mail@matheson.org

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