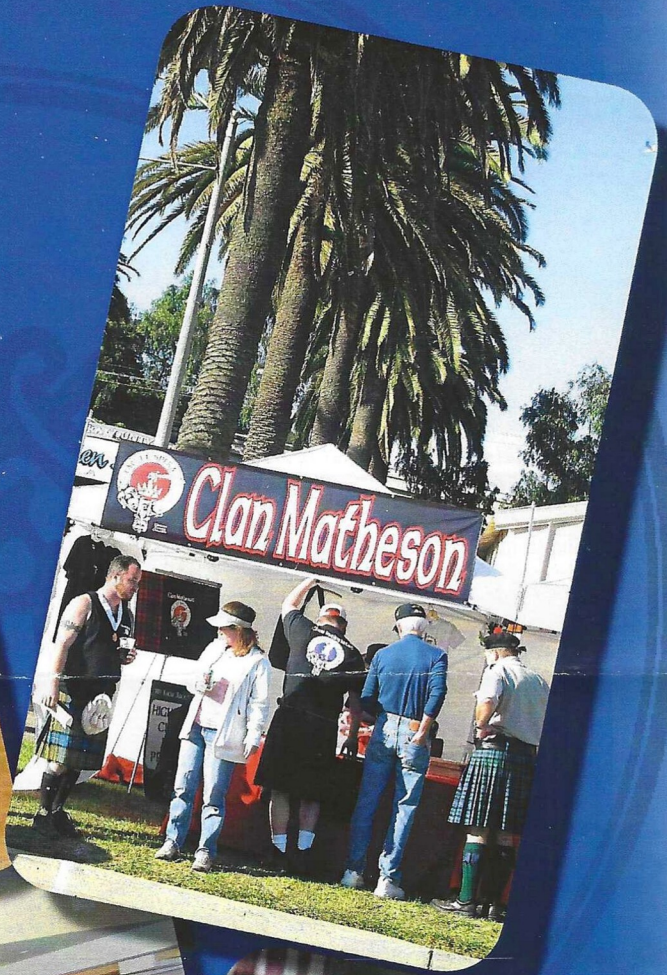
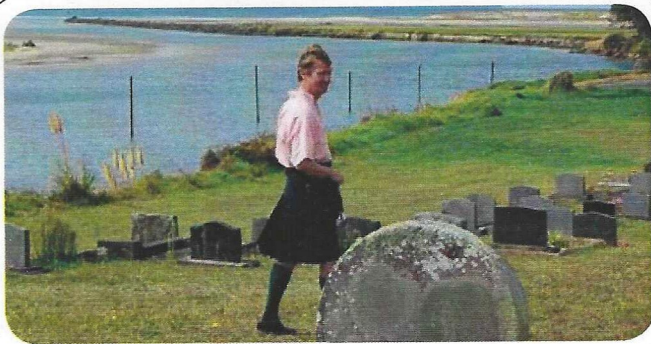


The Clan Matheson Society



Newsletter 2009



Alexander at the cemetery by the sea



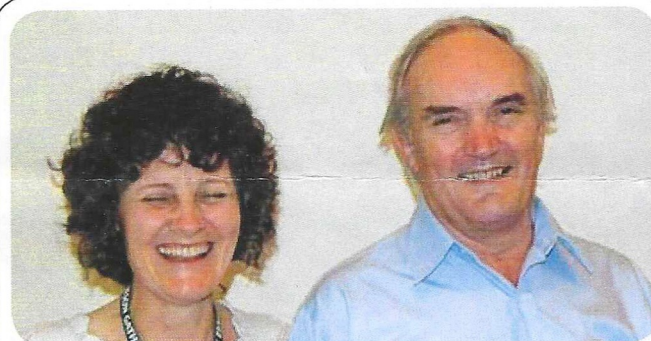
Gordon and Ailsa receive honorary life membership, NZ



Ian Mathieson speaking at Brisbane mini-gathering



Lady Audrey mother Colin Matheson



Dr and Mrs Colin Matheson



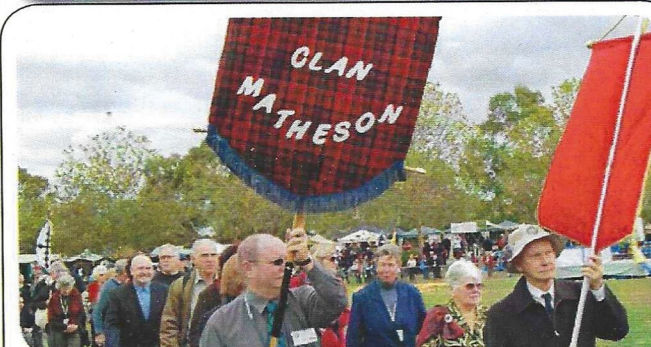
New Zealand Mathesons at All Clans Dinner



Party in New Zealand



Some of the group in Queenstown



The parade New Zealand



Warren Matheson piping at Kooyong Aus

THE CHIEF'S MESSAGE

On being asked to write a few words for the Clan newsletter, my first thought was how thankful I am to Margaret Williams for taking over as Editor. Then knowing the difficulties, I must not delay her going to press!

2008 began with final preparations for the Clan Gathering in the Antipodes, the first of its kind and a memorable occasion. The event seemed to come and go in a flash, probably because I was not present. The decision I had to make was an agonising one, resulting in missing the opportunity of visiting Australia, renewing friendships from past gatherings and the disappointment of missing a second visit to New Zealand. Fortunately for me Alexander and Katharine attended in my place and the reports that they brought back and letters from others tell of wonderful organisation and outstanding enjoyment. I feel sure it will be well documented elsewhere. As a Clan we are very much on the map thanks to the sterling work of the officers of the all the Branches of the Society who organise our welfare and maintain contact. An enormous amount of preparation goes into a gathering and, whether one was there or not, the thanks of the Clan go to all who gave their time and helped arrange such interesting programmes.

No sooner was the Australian, New Zealand Gathering on the drawing board than the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs announced a Gathering of all The Clans in Edinburgh in July 2009. This is to be a terrific affair held in Holyrood Park in which Clan Matheson will be taking part. With the pound sterling on the floor, it will be an excellent time to pay us a visit. Many have warned in already and those who have not, but want to know more, should look at our Clan web site.

I cannot close without saying a word about my dear wife who died on Armistice Day 2008. As her health deteriorated I had to devote more and more time to her wellbeing and less time to Clan matters. Those of you who were at the 2004 Gathering will have realised her health was declining; it has been on a downward slope ever since. I was most touched by the kindness of those Clan members who wrote to me, all of whom I have replied to either by e or surface mail.

To any Clan member who has had a similar experience I send my deepest sympathy and condolences at such a difficult time.

Best wishes to you all and I hope to meet many of you in Edinburgh in July.

Fergus Matheson of Matheson

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING OF CLANS

The International Gathering of Clans is to be held on 25th and 26th July 2009 in Edinburgh's Holyrood Park which will host a magnificent Highland Games over two days. On Saturday evening Clan members will parade up the historic Royal Mile and take their seats on the castle esplanade for a spectacular Clan Pageant. We will have a Matheson tent in Holyrood Park and look forward to welcoming existing and prospective Clan Society members. If you intend to take part in the Parade of Clans on 25th July, you need to book tickets as soon as possible. Those intending to go should let Ron Lowry (Secretary of the UK branch, whose address appears elsewhere) have your contact details so that we can be sure to meet up, at our tent or our own social events that weekend. Please see the Gathering's own website; it has full details of all activities. <http://www.clangathering.org/>

GENEALOGY CORNER

The last eight or nine months have been most rewarding, both in getting to grips with, and exploiting, Don Scott's extensive legacy, and in harvesting much interesting and useful information from the many enquiries submitted from all regions. Sometimes a forbear can be placed within a notable event, such as a township resettlement. Occasionally, a hitherto neglected clan site comes into focus, such as an ancient lakeside settlement in Sutherland. Most helpful for the genealogical mission however is the steady stream of information building a fuller picture of less well recorded areas of Matheson settlement, such as Sutherland and Skye.

Historical research continues to improve our understanding of the early middle ages, when the Matheson Clan made its first mark on the historical record. And recent work on the even earlier period of tradition based history has stressed the enduring impact of the Picts long after their supposed subjugation by the Gaels. Such work has also cast doubt on the earliest generations shown in many traditional genealogies of clans, including the Mathesons. Alice Fairhurst's reports in previous Newsletters have shown that such conclusions are supported by findings of recent Clan DNA studies.

John Faid
Do contact me.

johnlfaid@hotmail.co.uk
Clan Genealogist



AN CIREAN
CEANN CINNISH

THE CLAN MATHESON SOCIETY

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Major Sir Fergus Matheson of Matheson
Baronet of Lochalsh

Convenor:

Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Matheson
of Matheson yr

Treasurer:

William G Craven

Genealogist:

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Cover Photos

Alexander being welcomed to
New Zealand

The Clan Matheson tent under
southern Californian palms

Merle Nelson on her
100th birthday

The opening dinner of the 2008
Clan Gathering in Melbourne

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- Committee: Keith Matheson, Shirley Matheson,
Douglas Matheson, Anne Matheson,
Lois Ahlquist, Chris Binns,
Joan Harbour, Joy Weeds

The major highlight of our Clan year was the planning and preparation for the International Clan Gathering held in Australia and New Zealand. It was hard but enjoyable work for our Chief's Lieutenant Douglas and Chairman Donald with great assistance from a sub-committee: Graeme Matheson, Registrar, Andrew Matheson, Anne Matheson, Blair Matheson, Keith and Shirley Matheson, Robyn Matheson, Lois Ahlquist, Christ Binns, Dianne Chisholm, Joan Harbour and Joy Weeds. All who attended spoke highly of the success of the Gathering. Sadly, because of the ill health of Lady Jean, the Chief was unable to attend but his son Alexander and his wife Katharine were able to act as his representative. It was our pleasure to have them and several other overseas visitors with us on this auspicious occasion.

At our AGM held in July Ailsa, our Secretary, and Gordon, our Treasurer, retired after almost 20 years of service. Besides being foundation members of the NZ Branch, Ailsa had been Secretary since inauguration, while Gordon had been our first Chairman for many years before becoming Treasurer. During the meeting Douglas read out many tributes received from all over the world thanking them and expressing appreciation of their work for the Clan as a whole. They were presented with life membership certificates for their dedication to the Society. Ailsa had also been Editor of our bi-monthly newsletter, producing 91 most informative issues which kept us informed of the activities of Clan Members. The newsletters have been described as the glue which sticks us together. Donald our Chairman has taken over as editor, endeavouring to continue in the pattern perfected by Ailsa. Sadly we have not yet been able to find a replacement for the office of Secretary. Graeme Matheson has kindly become Treasurer.

On Saturday 13th September the All Clans Association Auckland District held their third All Clans Annual Dinner. Nine Clan Matheson members attended. This represented about ten percent of the Gathering and our support was appreciated by the President of the Association. It was a most enjoyable evening. Chairman Donald was invited to propose the Toast to Scotland.

We held a Ceilidh during November when we were entertained by the delightful Scottish songstress Dianne Turley. Norman our Piper entertained with renditions on two types of pipes, one the normal Highland pipes and the other the Border pipes, also explaining the difference. During the evening Douglas called for a minute's silence in memory of the late Lady Jean, and Norman played a lament.

During the year we have lost a few good members through ill health, among them Gordon Matheson of Christchurch, Bill Matheson of Rangiora, Alan Mathieson of Invercargill and Jack Broadstreet of Te Awamutu, all sadly missed. However we have gained new members and all are welcomed.

During our meetings the importance DNA testing has been discussed especially after it was discovered that Donald our Chairman and Graeme our Treasurer were linked by DNA. How many more might be linked would be revealed by Clan members taking the simple test. It could supply that missing link in your genealogy search.

In December Mathesons were remembered by the re-enactment of the original Rudder Boat race, staged by the Classic Yachts Association, which took place in Auckland in 1908. 100 years ago two Matheson brothers, Angus and Norman (ancestors of Douglas and piper Norman) made boating history; by building and crewing the 32 foot motor launch Mororo which won the race after twelve gruelling hours. A magnificent cup was donated at the time by the owner of influential US Rudder magazine and this cup, refurbished thanks to Andrew Matheson (grandson of boat builder Norman), was on display as was the log book of the Mororo in Norman Matheson's fine copperplate handwriting. Andrew was also crewing in one of the boats.

We will be holding our Clan picnic on Sunday 22 February at North Shore Long Bay Beach. If you are in the vicinity drop in and be assured of a mighty welcome and maybe a sandwich or two.

Congratulations to:

Dr Andrew Matheson on his appointment as New Zealand's Ambassador to the Philippines.

Alex Matheson on being awarded the QSM in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Brock Matheson at being chosen to represent NZ in the under-19 badminton team.

Lloyd Matheson on being presented with the Destination Fiordland Tourism Personality of the Year award

Norman Matheson, Champion vegetable grower at A & P Wanaka

Gordon Matheson, ex-treasurer on attaining the magnificent age of 80 years.

Evan Matheson for being assigned project manager to the upgrading of the Otago Peninsular Road.

Donald Matheson
Chairman New Zealand Branch

AUSTRALIA

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Vice President: Robert Mathieson
Secretary:
Treasurer: Brett Mathieson
Genealogist: Roma Jorgenson
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Research Officer: Dianne Matheson
Committee: Robert Mathieson, Margaret Fleming,
Janet Blainey, Gordon Marshall,
Len & Lois Langford, Abigail Butler,
Mary Molan, Roma Jorgenson.

All Australian Clan members would like to send our condolences to our much respected Chief on the death of Lady (Jean) Matheson. Many of us remember her hospitality to members of the Clan who visited her and Sir Fergus at their home in Norfolk. In March we hosted the Australian part of the 2008 International Clan Matheson Gathering. Both parts of the Gathering were a great success although we had hoped for better attendance from overseas, but enjoyed very much the company of those who made the long journey. Although Sir Fergus could not be present, Alexander and his wife Katharine represented him and enthusiastically joined in the fun. Our thanks go to Abigail Butler and her team of helpers who did a magnificent job organising and running the Gathering in Australia.

Lady (Audrey) Matheson opened the Gathering by symbolically cutting a ribbon which was tied in a bow and later hung at all functions both in Melbourne and in New Zealand. The Clan Parliament at the Melbourne Immigration Museum presented an opportunity for members to voice their views on relevant subjects. Discussion focused mainly on genealogy and the uses of information gathered on family trees by the Clan. This led into a Genealogy forum where I gave a talk on DNA, genealogy programs were demonstrated and much information was exchanged. Many of us gained new insights into our Scottish heritage in general and our ancient Clan in particular. We were privileged as a Clan to lead in with our Australian and New Zealand banners the march of the Clans at the Ringwood Highland Games, which had been opened in fine style by Alexander.

Avis Matheson, Del Pugh and Faye Briggs organised a really worthwhile mini-Gathering in Brisbane in June where we enjoyed haggis, tatties and neeps, as well as some prizes for courageous blokes. Del's kind hospitality to Mary and me while in Brisbane made the trip even more enjoyable. This year we made a considerable investment in Clan merchandise featuring the Clan Crest. This includes polo shirts, hats, mugs, beanies, stubby holders and water bottles. This merchandise can be viewed on our website and can be ordered through Robert Mathieson or me. We now have available a magnificent Certificate of Membership of the Clan Society for financial members.

At the Annual General Meeting in November I was elected as President, Brett Mathieson as Treasurer and Robert Mathieson as Vice-President, but we were unable to find a Secretary. We are currently searching for an acting Secretary until another election can be held. Other Committee members remain much as before, Roma as Genealogist and Brett as Public Officer. I would like to thank the retiring Committee for their magnificent job organising the Gathering in March.

*Colin Matheson
Chief's Lieutenant Australia*

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Hon Treasurer: Malcolm Matheson, Little Tompsets, Tompsets Bank, Forest Row, Sussex, RH18 5LN. Tel: 01342 824183
Email: Malcolm@matheson-ward.co.uk.
Genealogist: John Faid.
Email: johnlfaid@hotmail.co.uk
Committee: Abigail Butler, Alan Harpham, Hazel Matheson, Tony Matheson.

Our year ended on a very sad note with the death of Jean Matheson of Matheson after a long illness, bravely borne. Our sincere condolences are offered to our Chief and all his family on their loss.

The early part of the year was dominated by the very successful Clan Gathering held in Australia and New Zealand. Although not many UK members were able to go, the organisers are to be congratulated on making their visitors most welcome and showing off their respective countries' traditions and scenery, with, of course, special regard to the part the early Matheson settlers played in their history.

During the year our Committee has continued to address the problems facing the Society and intends to pursue the task of increasing Membership. Considerable progress has been made in collecting archive material with a view to its being incorporated into a Clan Centre based in Inverness. It is expected that this will take place during 2009, in parallel with the earlier plan of maintaining our artefacts in Dun-craig Castle, Plockton.

Our AGM was held in July in the Royal Collection Room of St. James's Palace, attended by about 20 Members. The AGM decided to allow for the amalgamation of the England and Scotland Branches of the Society, with the name United Kingdom Branch, initiated from that date. Following the Meeting a sociable lunch was enjoyed before Members proceeded to visit the Royal Mews next to Buckingham Palace. The Coronation Coach must be seen at close quarters!

The Committee is very much involved in planning for the Edinburgh Gathering of all Clans in July 2009. To assist the Committee, we have enlisted the help of Abigail Butler, a member of the Australian team who master-minded their Gathering. We will share a tent with Clan Macrae to show something of our history and offer genealogical information, as well as having some Clan merchandise for sale. There will be a Clan march to the Castle from Holyrood, followed by an evening's entertainment on the Castle Esplanade. It is very much hoped that Clan members will join in this unique event. A warm welcome awaits you in Edinburgh. The Branch Website is a very good way of finding information about events and the Clan.

It will not have escaped your notice that after many years our Chief has relinquished the task of editing the Newsletter and that Margaret Williams has taken over from him. We take this opportunity to wish her well in this task. So I conclude with greetings to you all and very best wishes for 2009.

*Ron Lowry
Hon Secretary United Kingdom*



JEAN, LADY MATHESON OF MATHESON

Jean Elizabeth Mary Matheson died at her home in Norfolk on 11 November 2008. She was born at Birdsall House near Malton, Yorkshire, younger daughter of the 11th Lord Middleton.

Jean had an idyllic life as a child in the heart of the Middleton Hunt country. She became a proficient horsewoman, and when not accompanying her father in the hunting field, would be found with her younger brother Christopher on horseback with their lurchers Gipsy and Paddy on the Wolds.

In 1952 she married Fergus Matheson, a Subaltern in the Coldstream Guards, son of General Sir Torquhil Matheson of Matheson who had had a distinguished military career in the Great War and later in India. He was the youngest son of Sir Alexander Matheson of Ardross and Lochalsh, an early partner in Jardine Matheson & Co.

Jean readily adjusted to army life and when after the army they settled in Norfolk, where her husband was to work, Jean soon created the perfect home to bring up her family. She undertook voluntary work in Norwich and her caring nature was early in evidence. She served on the Norwich Bench for 29 years, but unknown to most people she was also a Samaritan for 30 years. She often volunteered for duty at night, leaving home late in the evening to help distressed people, reappearing for breakfast and concealing the fact from her children. In her later years, when ill, she realised she could not continue as a magistrate and although much distressed, decided to resign.

At first few knew of her troubles. She never complained but was always grateful to the loving carers who nursed her and helped her to enjoy the much of the music she had recorded earlier and loved listening to. Her going, though a release for her, was devastating for Fergus, their three children and the eight grandchildren she left behind.

When Fergus succeeded his elder brother as Chief of Clan Matheson in 1993 Jean's support for him and enthusiasm on their travels to meet far-flung members of the clan earned her the greatest affection in all parts of the world. The slight, but always neat, figure at his side will be much missed by many Mathesons the world over and their sympathy goes to our Chief and his family. On 22 January 2009 a large number of family, friends, colleagues and Clan members attended a moving memorial service for Jean in Norwich.

THE St PAULS CATHEDRAL TEXTILE PROJECT

I have been fortunate this year to have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make a very small contribution to history. A few months ago I met a fellow Australian, Athalie Kolquhoun, who is a member of a team working on a project to create a full matching set of ecclesiastical vestments for St Pauls Cathedral, in the city of London. Apparently until now the Cathedral has been using a variety of garments of different ages.

A competition for the design of these robes was held in June 2005 at Saint Martins College of Art and Design. Part of the crypt under the Cathedral was partitioned off to form a workshop, and there, in a cramped, subterranean world, a team of dedicated women volunteers have been putting in hundreds of hours of work over the last three years, to bring the designs to life. Often the delicate and detailed nature of their work has required them to work by the light of desk lamps and magnifying lens mounted on frames.

They have produced several dozen copes with shawls, stoles and other accessories, altar frontals, and even mitres for the Bishop. A number of embroidery techniques and stitches have been employed which are quite rare these days. Fine gold wire has been attached with tiny stitches to outline parts of the design, key motifs have been given emphasis by building up the shapes in 3D with layers of stitching or the use of solid gold tape or spangles. Gold fringe and braid have also been sewn on to the garments by hand, to add to the sumptuous effect. When I visited the team in the crypt

to view the work in progress, I was invited to help Athalie sew crystals on the Bishops cope. Several hundred of these small crystals, each about ¼ inch across, have been added randomly to the centre of the flowers which form the background pattern of the cope. As the Bishop moves during a service, these crystals will catch and reflect the surrounding light.

The heavy damask fabric for all the vestments was woven especially for the project by the Gainsborough Silk Weaving Company. The garments incorporate a variety of symbols, among which are the phoenix surrounded by flame-like shapes, to represent the survival of the Cathedral from the Great Fire of London, and the crossed swords, the Cathedral's own emblem. There are four sets of robes and altar frontals in liturgical colours.

I was delighted to attend the service of consecration of the work on the evening of 30th September 2008. At close quarters in the workshop, under the bare fluorescent tube lighting, the colours of some of the fabrics had appeared very strong, even garish. In the vast space of the Cathedral upstairs, the colours were muted against the large expanse of neutral stone, and instead provided a visual focus to the officiating ministers in the service, and reflected the colours of the stained glass windows.

These vestments and altar furnishings will contribute further beauty and dignity to the services of worship in this Cathedral, and the team must be very proud of the work they have done, and pleased to know that their handiwork will be used and admired for many years, possibly even centuries, to come.



Abigail Butler

SERENA, LADY MATHESON OF MATHESON

Serena, widow of Major Sir Torquhil Matheson of Matheson who died on 21 April 2008 at Trees Farm, Standerwick after a long illness will be remembered with thanks and affection by clan members the world over for her friendship, kindness and hospitality. As consort to the Clan Chief until Torquhil died in 1993, she played a crucial role in the organisation of the Clan Matheson Society and together they visited the International Gathering of the Clans in Canada in 1979. With daughters Nell and Bella, she was also instrumental in running the first Clan Matheson Gathering in Lochalsh in 1981. She was a most generous hostess to many clansmen passing through Somerset and Lochalsh, the embodiment of highland hospitality.

Serena was the only daughter of Lt. Col. Sir Michael and Lady Peto, of Iford Manor on the Wiltshire/Somerset border though as a child her father acquired the Dundonell Estate on the shores of Little Loch Broom. This determined the course of her life and, though English by birth, she became intoxicated with every aspect of the Highlands. Her love of the West Coast remained very precious to her throughout her life. Having married Torquhil in 1954, army duties at home and abroad in Kenya, and later a second career in dairy farming in Somerset, together with bringing up a young family, meant that it was not until the late 1970s they were able to spend any length of time at Duirinish in Lochalsh – the place they really regarded as home.

Serena was well-read and knowledgeable on the history of the West Coast and the different branches of the Matheson family back to the 13th Century and was always delighted to share this information with visiting clansmen eager to find out more about their own forebears.

It is sad that after such a life of hard work she was not able to enjoy a longer period of active retirement in Lochalsh but the way in which she bravely faced her increasing immobility without complaint was an example to us all. On the afternoon of Lammass Day, the first day of August 2008, her ashes were buried alongside those of Torquhil in the old Matheson burial ground in Kirkton, Lochalsh. A wonderful setting, steeped in clan history and a place so loved by them both. She is greatly missed.



DNA NEWS

Presently 62 Matheson/Mathieson/Mathison men from Australia, Canada, England, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Scotland, and the USA have DNA test results. We have found 31 different ancestral lines in our clan so far. 43 of our testers have been able to find and contact cousins whose DNA belongs to the same progenitor. Our two largest identified groups are the 12 men whose ancestry goes back to the Viking family of Murchadh Buidhe Matheson who was chief of the clan in Lochalsh, Ross-shire in the 1500's and the 10 men whose ancestry goes back to the Pict family of Col George Matheson, who was chieftain of the Shiness branch in Sutherland in the 1600's. We found a MacKenzie from Caithness and a Matheson from Sutherland, who fit the Lochalsh signature. Their locations are found in Alexander MacKenzie's History of the Mathesons.

Our latest surprise was a Matheson who turned out to be a Sleat MacDonald and the Clan Donald genealogist told him where he belongs on that family tree.

Only three men have tested who can trace their lines back to William Matheson's Genealogies of the Mathesons. Rev. William Matheson thought that a group from the Isle of Lewis was descended from Murchadh Buidhe. Two of the men are known kin and have the Isles DNA which is very old in the Hebrides. The third man has Celtic DNA and now three other men that know they come from the Isle of Lewis match him. We need more Isle of Lewis testers and more who can trace their lines back to Rev. William's book to straighten this puzzle out.

In 1539 Murchadh Buidhe was fighting for possession of Eilean Donan castle for Donald Gorm MacDonald against his cousin Iain Matheson, chief of the clan, who was holding the castle for the MacKenzies. Iain Matheson was killed and later Murchadh Buidhe took over as chief of the clan. He chased Iain's supporters to the Isle of Skye. We have one Shiness Matheson who traces to Skye and two Celtic men in Group E who also trace to Skye. Can we find any Lochalsh DNA signatures from Skye?

Those curious about the Matheson early history, may enjoy looking at the charts at:
<http://www.clanmathesonusa.org/MathesonCharts.html>

Males, are you curious to see if you have Viking, Celtic, Pictish (in Scotland prior to 800), Scotland I, or Isles ancestry? Would you like to find some unknown cousins? DNA testing is simple and easy - just cheek swabs. The prices are now less than they were in early 2008. Y-DNA37 marker tests cost \$149, and Y-DNA67 marker tests cost \$249 (US dollars). Please DO NOT order 12 or 25 marker tests because you'll match too many other surnames. Females can test mtDNA for \$99 or mtDNA Plus for \$149 to follow their straight maternal line migration path over the eons.

To inquire about DNA testing, email, write, or call Alice M. Fairhurst, alicefairhurst@gmail.com

313 E. Hurst St., Covina, CA 91723, (626) 331-4791. To order a DNA kit, go to <http://www.familytreedna.com/> Type name Matheson, Mathieson, or Mathison in the Search box. Click on the name Matheson to get the order form for our project. You save money when you order directly from our project. To see results of the test results, go to <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/Matheson> Please note that the testers' names are kept confidential.

Alice M. Fairhurst
Clan Matheson DNA Project Administrator

UNITED STATES

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This past year was active for the US Branch thanks to the Herculean efforts of our West Coast Deputy Chief's Lieutenant, Robert W Matheson, and our Branch Genealogist and DNA project leader, Alice Fairhurst. Their activities are reported below. Deputy Chief's Lieutenant (East Coast) John Aakesson kept our tent open at the Virginia Scottish Games again this year at Sky Meadow in Deleplane, Virginia.

The US Branch welcomed 18 new members in 2008: Robert Dale Fairhurst, Glenn Colin Matthews, Gwennie Ann Miller White, Scott Wade Matheson, Arley Jay Matheson, Malcolm Lewis Matheson, Jack Norman Matheson, Shawn Wesley Matheson, Steve Matheson, Kenneth William Matheson, Wesley Arthur Matheson, Larry Matheson, Jeffrey Earl Matheson, Montgomery MacArthur Matheson, Clyde Edward Mathison, Thomas S "Tim" Clark, Glen A Smith, Russell Matheson. Unfortunately our dues payers slipped to less than 50%! 39 of those were life members, many of whom paid from \$25-100 carrying the weight of non-paying members. To those high level donors we offer our hearty thanks.

It is with profound regret that I must report the deaths of my parents, Mr and Mrs Malcolm Matheson Jr. Emma Tompkins Matheson, "Big Pink" as she was fondly called by all, died December 14 2007, and she was followed by her husband Malcolm Matheson Jr, "Big Malc" on December 21 2007. They were both 94 years old and died peacefully in their home at Ferry Point, Mt Vernon, Virginia where they had lived happily since 1939—they had been married for 72 years and were inseparable for longer. They

are survived by six children, 20 grandchildren and 39 great grandchildren.

The Society's sincerest condolences are also extended to Robert W Matheson, Deputy Chief's Lieutenant, on the loss of his mother on January 18 2008 at the age of 91; to the family of Jennifer Ballard Koch (48) who died in an automobile accident on January 29 2008; to the family of Leslie Kieth Matheson who died on January 27 2008 at the tender age of 98; to the family of longtime Life Member Don P Matheson (81) who succumbed to cancer on February 5 2008 at his home in Ocean Ridge, Florida.

Our special condolences go out to the family of Serena, Lady Matheson of Matheson, widow of Torquhil, 26th Chief of Clan Matheson who died on 21 April 2008.

With great sadness I offer my sincerest personal condolences and those of this branch of the Clan Society to Sir Fergus, our Chief, whose beloved wife, Lady Jean, passed away peacefully at home on 11 November 2008. Our sympathies are extended to her children and 8 grandchildren.

Congratulations to:

Mrs Lida Matheson Stifel and her husband, Rick Stifel, on the birth of their 3rd grandchild, Finlay, born September 5 2008. The lucky parents are Sassie and Chris Jacobs who have made this column three years running now!

Richard P Stifel III (son of Lida and Rick Stifel) on his marriage to Shannon Michelle Droczy, on February 2 2008.

Torrey Matheson Stifel and Bryan William Kist on their full Scottish wedding on October 4 2008 in Savannah, Georgia. Torrey's mother, Lida Stifel, is a Matheson and Bryan's mother, Pamela Kist, is a McLeod so the kilted ceremony was a natural considering their mutual Scottish heritage.

Malcolm Matheson III
Chief's Lieutenant United States

THE USA BRANCH WEST COAST

This section remained hyperactive in 2008 and participated in nine regional Highland Games and Festivals. Clan Genealogist Alice Fairhurst joined the Chief's Deputy Lieutenant in criss-crossing three western States. The season started in February in Long Beach, California aboard the Queen Mary for its annual Scottish Festival and Games. Bob and Alice introduced many of those of Scottish heritage to DNA testing, and Gordon Matheson brought his son Tim Matheson and his friend John Ewing. The following weekend our Clan tent was in Phoenix, for the Arizona Highland Games. We greeted Mac C. Matheson of Mesa and his grandson Monty Matheson (now in Iraq), Fred, John G. and Garrett Matheson, as well as Isabel Crump, Roland Matteson, Don Randolph, Doug Vance and Michelle West. Late March and early April were devoted to our International Gathering. In May, we were one of 31 Clans at the wee Livermore Games in Northern California where Bob met Peter Matheson of Livermore and his son. A week later, we joined more than 50 Clans at the United Scottish Society's Games in Costa Mesa in Southern California. Bob and Alice enjoyed the company of Sally and Bret Mathison, both drummers in the Nicholson Pipe Band (which won First Place), Ray Tilton, Jennifer Birney, David Mathison, Sage Guyton, Harold Matheson, Stacy Brightman, Rob Matheson, Doug and Donna Lock, Josh and Kim Mathieson, Christy Mathieson-Tercero, Carrie Mathieson, David Blackwood, Betty Ferrier, Steve Mathison, and Jonathan Stewart Mathieson. Gordon Matheson's son, John Matheson, wife Lisa and

granddaughters Melissa and Emily joined us. Josh competed in the Heavy Athletics and won two medals, including second place in the Light Scottish Hammer. In June we set up our tents at the San Diego Highland Games in Vista. Long-time members Don and Carol Matheson welcomed Gordon Matheson and his brother Alan from Winnipeg. Alice was joined by son Richard, wife Lisa and children Alex, David, and Elizabeth. Joshua Mathieson and his wife Kim were back. Josh again won two medals, including second place in the Heavy Scottish Hammer. Drummers Sally and Bret helped the Nicholson Pipe Band tie for first place. The highlight of the season was in July with our Clan Society's first venture into Utah to participate in the Payson Highland Games (south of Salt Lake City). The late Scott Matheson was the former Governor of Utah, and his son James is currently a U.S. Congressman. A number of local Matheson families showed up at our Clan tent: Jeff Matheson and his son and Wesley Matheson who was quickly joined by brothers Kenneth, and Larry (all three brothers look like Bob!), their sons Shawn, Marc and (by telephone) Steve. Their wonderful wives came too. We learned there were two different branches of Mathesons in Utah--the Shiness group that had come to Embro, Ontario, and the Isle of Lewis Mathesons who had emigrated to Nova Scotia. In August Bob attended a picnic of the branch of the Clan Matheson Society in Nova Scotia, then back to Northern California for the Caledonian Club of San Francisco's 143rd Highland Games in Pleasanton. Yes...these Games started 143 years ago!

Bob visited with Eric Close, Glen Smith, Charles Massey, Herschel Booth, Ken Edgecombe, Ken Edgecombe Jr, Stephen Zecher, and Paul Matheson, Ian Matthew, Ken Matteson, Steve Matthews, Suzanna Handall, Brian White, Joshua Mathieson, and Michael Powell. October sees the annual, and delightful Seaside Highland Games along the Pacific Ocean in Ventura, California, home of the kilted surfing contest. Bob, Gordon, and Alice were joined by Sage Guyton, Russ and Barbara Matheson, Douglas Matheson, Joshua Matheson, Garrick Matheson and son, Sally and Bret Mathison, Elizabeth Armour, Rebecca Caviness, and Shawn Cotton. Once again Bob entered the Haggis Toss, but fared no better than last year. Josh again brought back medals from the Heavy Athletic competition, coming in third in the caber toss. Finally, the last event of the season found Alice and Gordon back in Arizona in November for the Tuscon Celtic Festival and Highland Games. They greeted Russ and Barbara Matheson, Mike and J.C. Mathis, Roland Ridgeway Matheson, and Scott A. Matthews on a sweltering hot day. Ill-health prevented Larry Vance from attending.

In addition throughout the year Clan Matheson is represented in activities of the St. Andrew Society of Southern California and the Scottish-American Military Society. Alice gives talks on Scottish heritage and genealogical DNA testing, including to the Southern California Genealogical Society and the LA Archives event held at the University of Southern California.

We'll try to do more in 2009, getting the Clan Matheson Society tent, banners and sign in front of as many Scottish Games and Festivals as possible. Our visibility is the key to our viability.

Robert W Matheson

Deputy Chief's Lieutenant West Coast United States

CANADA

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As can be seen from the Mainland Branch report, we have had an active year in Nova Scotia. Al Matheson, Deputy Chief's Lieutenant, has again led the Branch to a successful year involved in many functions, and has maintained our Clan presence at many Scottish events. In addition, our Clan Society Canada has continued to receive financial support from the Mainland Branch. On behalf of all Society members I extend to them our sincere thanks for their dedicated assistance.

We end the year with our membership remaining at last year's level, and our financial position improved over last year. I thank all members who have kept their dues up to date, and those who have made special donations. Over the last few months we have been receiving new membership enquiries. Hopefully, these will turn into new members. In the hope of establishing new Branches, numerous requests have gone out to other areas but no one has taken up the challenge. In keeping with "Fac et Spera" we have faith and hope that a positive response will be received in 2009.

We have all been saddened this year by the passing of Serena, Lady Matheson, widow of Sir Torquhil Matheson of Matheson, and Lady Jean Matheson, wife of our Clan Chief, Major Sir Fergus Matheson of Matheson Bt. Our sympathies and prayers go out to all their families.

On behalf of all members I extend congratulations to:

Louelle Matheson who celebrated her 90th birthday on 13 April, 2008.

Laurie Matheson who celebrated his 90th birthday on 20 April, 2008.

Merle Nelson (mother of Donna Matheson) who celebrated her 100th birthday 29 November, 2008.

Frank and Penny (Matheson) Caldwell on the birth of their daughter Olivia born 11 July, 2008: granddaughter of Bob and Pat Matheson.

Andrew Matheson (son of David and Dianne Matheson) Toronto on his being named to Lexpert's prestigious list of "Rising Stars" in Canada as one of its "Leading Lawyers Under 40".

Sgt. Tim Dougherty and Nicole Lacourse who were married 13 September 2008 in Montreal. Tim is the son of the Clan's first North American Convenor, the late Isobel Matheson Dougherty, and he is a piper in the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment).

In closing, I send greetings and best wishes for 2009, to all Clan members worldwide. Also, I extend my congratulations to the Australian and New Zealand Societies on their successful International Gathering. Unfortunately, a previous travel commitment precluded me from sharing in their wonderful program, and seeing their beautiful countries.

Joel Matheson QC
Chief's Lieutenant Canada

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- Chaplain: The Reverend Doctor Glen Matheson

This Branch of the Clan Matheson had a very successful year having fun, meeting old friends and making new ones. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend any of the Highland Games in this area but I can say that family health problems are now behind us and we are looking forward to 2009.

Since my last report Beverly and I attended a Celtic Concert on 20 November 2007 at the Citadel High School in Halifax, a wonderful evening of Celtic music and singing. On 16 December 2007 we attended the Celtic Christmas Eve Service at Port Wallis United Church, Dartmouth. Celtic Christian celebrations are derived from the phases of the moon. There are alternative dates for both Easter and Christmas. For Christmas, the Celts believed that Christ comes to us in the darkest times of our lives. Since no one knew the exact date of his birth, they believed that he must have been born in the darkest month (December an Dubhlachd: lit: black fare) on the darkest night of the month (the night of the New Moon closest to the solstice). The 16th being the darkest night in the darkest month is considered Christmas Eve.

In April 2008 we attended the Tartan Day Celebrations at Province House in Halifax followed by a Tartan Day Dinner hosted by the Clan Stewart/Stuart Association of Nova Scotia. On 13 April our members gathered in Stellarton to celebrate Loudelle Matheson's 90th birthday and on the 20 of April we gathered again to celebrate Laurie Matheson's 90th birthday. These are two beautiful and popular people as indicated by the crowd attending both celebrations. Congratulations to both of you and may you have many more. On 26 May we held our first business meeting of the year in Brookfield to plan our summer events. In July Beverly and I presented our Tartan at the Kirking O The Tartan at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Dartmouth. We were very disappointed that the Pipers Picnic was not held this year. We always held our AGM that same day and went on to the picnic. This year our AGM was held at the Bears Den in Glengarry on August 2 with fifteen attending.

On 17 August 39 attended our 21st Annual Clan Pot Luck Picnic and Auction in Brookfield. We were pleased to have Bob Matheson, the Chiefs Deputy Lieutenant, from California at this event. This is always a great day of socializing, fun and good food.

We gathered again on 20 September at Ed and Dyans home in South Victoria for a day of socializing, good food and a boat tour of the South Victoria lake where along the way

we picked up two mermaids who turned out to be a couple of entertaining ladies. On 24 October we held our closing dinner at the Stonehouse Restaurant in Truro with nineteen members and two guests, Calvin and Shirley Austin from Guelph, Ontario attending. This was a wonderful evening. We had Carrie Matheson, who made the quilt for our raffle, drawing the winning ticket (Connie MacKay of Falmouth, N.S.). Again we thank Carrie for her donation of the quilt and her gracious donation of another to raffle in 2009. Congratulations to Melissa Dawn Murray who received the Clan Matheson Society of Nova Scotia Bursary for 2008.

It was with great sadness that we received the news this year of the passing of Lady Serena in April and Lady Jean in November. These were two wonderful ladies for whom we had great respect and love. We will cherish our many happy memories of our time spent with them. To their families we extend our deepest sympathy.

On a happier note, on 29 November 2008 we attended the 100th birthday of our Den Mother Merle Nelson, mother of Donna Matheson. Merle is an inspiration to us with her happy and outgoing personality. May she continue to inspire us for many years. As 2008 comes to an end, it will be 2009 by the time you receive this, it is our hope that all Mathesons and their families had a wonderful Christmas and will have good health and happiness in 2009.

Al Matheson
President Mainland Nova Scotia

MATHESON CLAN GATHERING 2008

IN BRIEF . . . (see the website for the full story)

Well, what a fantastic gathering! Despite the disappointment that so few of us came from afar, the 'down-under' Mathesons came out in force and put on a great show.

We were welcomed in Melbourne by Dr Colin Matheson, Chief's Lieutenant for Australia, and Doug Matheson, Chief's Lieutenant for New Zealand, before the opening dinner, and the next day, formally, by Alexander. Colin gave a fascinating talk on the Matheson DNA Project. On Saturday we dined formally at the Kooyong Tennis Club, Melbourne, complete with a lone piper. At the Melbourne Highland Games Alexander took the salute at the march past of the Clans. We looked good lining up behind our banner!

In Auckland we went to the horses (not the dogs) as we were based at the Race Track. We met friends from Melbourne and new ones from Auckland, where some 140 attended the formal dinner. Next we went north to Waipu, where Mathesons had landed from Nova Scotia, and saw what is probably the most beautiful cemetery in the world, where several Mathesons are buried. Further down the coast we visited Matheson Bay where some Matheson brothers had settled and built boats.

At the formal dinner we had Scottish Country dancing as well as a Maori group who danced and sang. Alexander rubbed noses with the Maoris, and we heard some beautiful piping by the NZ Matheson piper.

Some of us went south to Queenstown for yet more fun and met more Mathesons who had not ventured to Auckland. Our final dinner was a huge buffet at the top of the mountain overlooking QT where a very social evening was had by all. This concluded the formal gathering and with sadness Di and I headed home.

Alan & Di Harpham



Al, Joel & Bob Matheson



Laurie Matheson's 90 birthday



Brookfield Matheson's family picnic 08



Mathesons at South Victoria NS



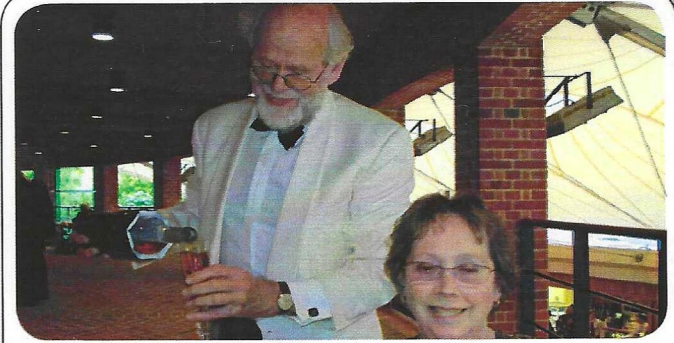
Capt Ed and Clan crew at South Victoria



NS Branches closing dinner



England AGM 2008



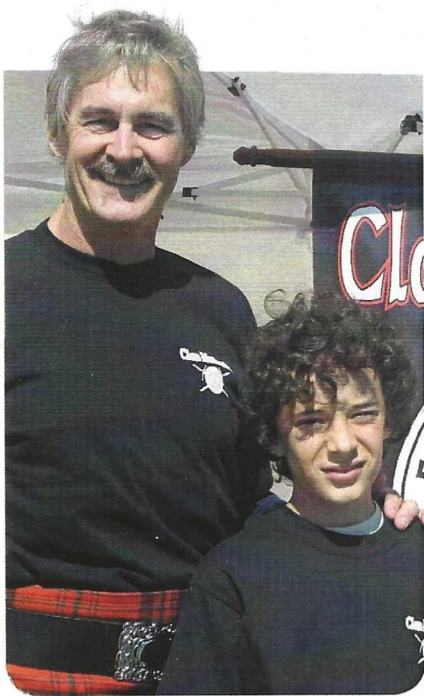
The Lowrys at Glyndebourne



Loudelle Matheson's 90 birthday



Tim Dougherty and Nicole Lacourse married 13.9.08



*Garrick Matheson
and son Alec*



*Gail & Malcolm Matheson III at the
wedding of his niece*



*Joshua Matheson wins two medals at his
first games*



Bob Matheson, and Michael R. MacFarlane



Members Don Randolph, Alice Fairhurst and Doug Vance



David Fairhurst and Don Matheson



some of the Matheson group at Ventura California



Larry, Shawn & father Wesley, Kenneth & son Marc, Phoenix



Wedding of Torrey Matheson Stifel and Bryan William Kist