

Clan Matheson International Newsletter 2019



Welcome to the 2019 edition of our newsletter. I attach great importance to it. Together with our website, it is the lifeblood of our Society and is the means by which we communicate and share our experiences. I am enormously grateful to Tim Speed for taking on its editorship from Donald, who has produced it since 2016.

Katharine and I have had a busy year, dominated for the first 5 months by the wedding of our daughter, Louisa. She had been working for 2 years in Kenya, and there met Archie Montagu-Pollock who had just completed 6 years trading coffee in Uganda. They were married at our home on 26th May 2018. My son Andrew and nephew Edmund piped them from the church.

By now you should have already heard about our next International Clan Gathering. I have been invited to be Chief of the 2020 Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, near Linville, North Carolina, USA, which will take place Thursday 9 - Sunday 12 July 2020, and we are going to make it the springboard for our next international gathering. GMHG is the largest Gathering of Scottish Clan and Family Societies in the world. In 2018 there were 118 Clan and Family Societies and approximately 30,000 people attended. We will be the 'honoured Clan' which is a tremendous chance for members of our Clan Society to meet, have a thoroughly enjoyable time, get some excellent publicity and hopefully gain many new members in the USA and elsewhere. Take a look at <http://www.gmhg.org/homepage.shtml> which will give you an idea of what to expect. I very much hope that you will wish to go too. Our US Branch will come up with more details of this in due course.

Once again I want to thank all those who voluntarily give their time to support our Clan Society. None of our activities would take place without their effort and dynamism. For those who are not yet involved, please do consider whether or not you could help; your participation would be greatly valued.

I wish all our members a happy and prosperous 2019.

Alexander

Lieutenant Colonel Sir Alexander Matheson of Matheson, Bt. LVO

28th Chief



Pipers are, from L to R, Edmund Kendall (nephew), Andrew Matheson (elder son) and Alistair Budge (friend of Louisa's)

Normally the editor does not often have the opportunity to have a page in our Clan's International Newsletter but I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself as I do not have Matheson as my surname. I was delighted to be asked to take over from Donald in New Zealand as this shows the confidence the Chief has to entrust me with editing our Clan's international newsletter as our family joined the UK branch only a couple of years ago. Donald decided it was time to pass on the editorship after pulling the newsletter together during the last two years.

I have always been aware of my Scottish ancestry being a mixture of both Highland and Lowland clans, with Clans Graham, MacMillan and Stuart on one side and Clan Matheson on the other I found in recent years the urge to join one of the Clan Societies. In trying to decide which clan to join the decision was helped by having a Matheson aunt (not quite an aunt, Auntie Jean is my father's late cousin's wife, but to us she's Auntie Jean) so we chose Clan Matheson as the clan society to join just in case we needed a living relative to prove the bloodline to the Clan. We filled in the forms, paid our dues and only a few years on I find myself writing this message.

Clan Matheson has proved to be the right choice in several ways. Not only have the members been a welcoming bunch but at our first AGM some coincidences soon came to light. During the day while chatting to people we found out from Bella Craven that she lived near Nairobi in Kenya at the same time that my wife Renuka was born in Nairobi Hospital and Bella lived in a village called Nanyuki which was the same village that Renuka also lived in for 6 years before coming to England. Later, over lunch, we found out that Margaret in the UK branch has a Matheson relative who married a Speed which is the same combination of surnames when my paternal grandmother Marjorie Matheson married my grandfather, Chester Speed, hence our claim to be Mathesons.

Although I work in print management, editing this newsletter has become a family endeavour. I decided to appoint my daughter Emily to the position of creative editor to draw on her artistic skills to give advice when I was unsure which design option to choose and my son Sam and Renuka have been drafted in as proofreaders.

I now have an email for contributions for the annual international newsletter to help in organising the many messages that are involved in pulling such a publication together; using subfolders with contact names as well as their country was the only way I found to keep track of the many files sent to me - there have been over 100 emails involved in producing this newsletter.

I want to thank my predecessor Donald Matheson in New Zealand for his kind words of support, suggestions and words of wisdom of what to try to avoid while putting this issue together.

Hopefully I will make a good job of it and be asked to edit next year's newsletter and enjoy many years of pulling our international clan newsletter together.

Tim Speed

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Contents

Front cover image of Carol Matheson, mother of Chuck Matheson, Chief's Lieutenant for Canada who was 85 on 5th February 2019 pictured with the Clan Chief Alexander Matheson in Edinburgh 2017.

2	The Chief's Message	3	Editor's message
4 - 8	USA	9	Canada
10 - 11	Australia	12 - 13	New Zealand
14	Don from New Zealand	15	UK
16 - 17	Norway	18	Genealogy Corner
19	2020 Gathering		

Back cover image of Lake Matheson in New Zealand sent in by Andrew Matheson, Chief's Lieutenant for New Zealand.

Greetings. We are delighted to report another active year. I would like to extend my gratitude to our able officers here in the United States for their continued enthusiastic representation of the Clan Matheson Society. Roger Mathison, our Deputy Chief's Lieutenant for the USA West remains quite active as you will see below, and he has able State Commissioners under him in Shawn Matheson for Utah, William Mathis for Colorado, and Roland Matheson for Arizona. In the East, John Aakesson serves as Deputy Chief's Lieutenant USA East and has hosted our presence in Virginia for decades.

In the 2017 Newsletter, I laid out (overly) ambitious goals for the USA Branch as I assumed leadership. With the sharp design eye of Denny Ryus (husband of Heather Matheson Ryus in Hamilton, MA), we did update the USA Clan Application and have it available electronically as a pdf document. If you have extended family members that you would like to recommend membership to, please let me know and we can email the document. Also, we were able to collect some dues (now \$30 for individual and \$75 for family), but with 250 or so USA members, most are (regrettably) holding back. Others are quite responsive, supportive and generous – thank you! 2019 and 2020 will be years for which we will need financial support as you will learn in this newsletter and the announcement being made by the Chief for our 2020 plans. Our goal to update and modernize the USA Branch website (www.clanmathesonusa.org) is in process, albeit not at the pace we would like. We plan to accelerate this in the coming months. Stay tuned. Lastly, as part of the web upgrade, we will be digitizing our membership management, which hopefully will create a more flexible platform for addresses, billing, communications, and creating a digital community. We will also be looking to unify the brand and our presentation at highland games. We encourage any Matheson Clan member who is so inclined to volunteer as a Convener for your local highland games. Please keep us updated on family news as well!

Here is a report from Roger Mathison and the western state Commissioners concerning their very active year:

Early March 2018 found Clan Matheson West at the Phoenix Highland Games, an event in which the Clan has been participating for the past five years. The celebration has usually flushed-out closeted Mathesons and this year was no exception. We welcome to the society Cynthia Welfringer of Phoenix, Amy Matheson Foley of Scottsdale who renewed her membership after a five-year separation, and Jesse Sierra Matthew Hutchison from Fountain Hills, Arizona. Especially helpful in managing the tent and extending hospitality to all was Barbara Matteson, wife of Roland the Commissioner of Clan Matheson Society for the State of Arizona. We are fortunate to still have the services of Roland following his serious road accident en route to join Roger at the Las Vegas Celtic Gathering and Highland Games during April in North Las Vegas.

Surprisingly there was no wind in an area accustomed to fierce wind storms – last year four tents were said to have blown away and ended-up near the Grand Canyon! Two new members were recruited into the Clan and promptly paid their 2018 dues: Roy Matheson of Henderson, Nevada, whose sporting talents include tossing the caber, throwing the hammer, putting the shot, and tossing the sheaf; and Kelly Matthews with his wife Maria from Bakersfield, California, who were with their two talented teenage musicians, Marjorie and her twin brother Athan – both kilted in Black Watch plaid. Also, in April, Clan Matheson accepted the invitation of Clan Logan to attend Tartan Day in Balboa Park, San Diego, California presented by the House of Scotland.

In late May, the Orange County Fair and Event Center in Costa Mesa, California, was the venue for Scottish Fest USA 2018, the 86th Annual Highland Gathering and Games. This annual event held on Memorial Day honors the service and sacrifice of all branches of the U.S. military. Clan Matheson Society West gained one recruit at Scottish Fest: Dustin Martin and his family from the Mojave Desert town of Lancaster, California; and member Neal Mathisen of South Pasadena with his wife Brandi and children (Sloane and Brooke) renewed his family's membership.

The month of June witnessed a flurry of activity by Clan Matheson West starting with the 44th Utah Scottish Festival and Highland Games, held at the Utah State Fairgrounds in Salt Lake City sponsored by the Utah Scottish Association. This year, the Utah Scottish Association sponsored its first Kirkin' o' the Tartans, or blessing of the clans, a tradition that started in the United States and is now celebrated throughout the world.



William Mathis at the Pike's Peak Celtic Games
Colorado Springs, June 2018

From the crossroads of the west in Salt Lake City, Utah, to Olympic City Colorado Springs, Clan Matheson West celebrated Scottish traditions at the Pikes Peak Celtic Fest in mid-June. William Mathis, Commissioner for Colorado, together with his wife Mallory, son Allen, and daughter Sora, and their handsome Airedale terrier Brian welcomed the Deputy Chief's Lieutenant who had flown-in from California in support of the Commissioner. A fresh recruit was welcomed into the Society: Shauna Burney.

Returning to the Golden State without unpacking his suitcase, Roger headed for the San Diego Games in Vista, California in late June. This was the 45th Annual Scottish Highland Games and 51 clans and societies participated in the event at Brengle Terrace Park to feast on an extravaganza of highland piping and drumming; a sheepdog trials event; Highland country dancing; Scottish country dancing; and Scottish heavy athletics.

On Clan Matheson's docket for July were two venues, both not insignificant for recruitment purposes: the Payson Games in Utah and the 21st Northern Arizona Celtic Festival in Flagstaff a presentation of the Northern Arizona Celtic Heritage Society. The arrival of the seasonal monsoon in mountainous Flagstaff (the elevation of the city is 6910') scarcely put a dent in the visitors' enjoyment of the varied activities.

At the Payson Utah Games in July, Clan Matheson West set-up a tent manned by Shawn Matheson, Clan Matheson Society Commissioner for Utah, and assisted by Dallas Matheson Griffiths. The Payson Games event was a significant improvement over the Salt Lake City games in June with new and renewing members: Shawn's sister Christine Matheson, Dallas's wife Christine with their children Cora 5, Ruby 3 and Lucy 2; and Ken Matheson with his children Marty, McKay and Marc (Shawn's cousins). Josh Matheson drove the 180-mile round trip from Tooele to savor Scottish culture.

During September in California, the nascent group of Mathesons with Mexican heritage under the leadership of Diana Satele from Sunnyvale, California, is performing yeoman's work in representing Clan Matheson in the Bay Area (San Francisco) of Northern California at the Pleasanton Game. She is the great granddaughter of Dr. James McLean Matheson who was born 1859 in Dundee, Scotland. He emigrated to the United States and was educated at the University of California where he received his medical degree in 1882. For unknown reasons, he emigrated to the state of Sonora, Mexico, where he met Francisca Valenzuela and together the couple established a medical practice. Dr. Matheson had one son and five daughters born between 1893 and 1905: Maria Rosa, Carolina, Santiago, Frances Enriqueta, and Sara. The doctor succumbed to tuberculosis in 1905, in Oakland, California, where he is buried.



Left to Right: Dallas and Alison Griffiths, Ken Matheson, Christine Matheson, Marty Matheson, Christine Wilcox Matheson, Marc Matheson, Shawn Matheson.
Utah Scottish Festival, Payson, July 2019

A grand turnout of 38 clans made its appearance at the 4th Annual Middle Tennessee Highland Games (MTHG) and Celtic Festival at the Andrew Jackson Hermitage in Nashville, Tennessee, in early September. Robert Mathison Hooker from Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, tarried for a few hours at the Matheson tent telling stories of his childhood in a Matheson family from Skipperville, Alabama. Also, in attendance was Dr. Ian Mathison of Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

The week following, Clan Matheson West returned to the Grand Canyon State to attend the 14th Annual Prescott (Arizona) Highland Games and Celtic Faire. This was a poorly attended but enjoyable event. Similarly, the Tucson Highland Games in Arizona in November had a low turnout of both clans and attendees.

Despite a spot of inclement weather, the Seaside Games in Ventura, California, went off without a hitch in mid-October. Kelly Matthews, a member of the society from the Las Vegas Games, with his wife Maria, and their two children Athan and Marjorie, drove over from Bakersfield to the Games and dropped in to say hello. Diana Satele with her husband flew in to Los Angeles from San Jose to celebrate the Scottish festivities with a Mexican flavor.

Thank you, Roger, for the energy and amount of activity you and your Commissioners create in the West – it creates a high bar for us in the rest of the country. I hope that our members will take note of the various games and their dates and try to join you in 2019. Now, for the East, I wish we could report a similar level of activity:

In Georgia, Terri Norburg was our Convener at the Savannah Scottish Games in May 2018. While a flu bug kept her from the Stone Mountain Highland Games in late October, we did have a wonderful time together at the July 2018 Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in Linville, North Carolina—about 2 hours north of Charlotte in the North Carolina Highlands. Mary Ellen and I flew down to attend the Grandfather Mountain games to also join Ed and Cindy Matheson (Poquoson, Virginia), who with their son Branson Matheson and his family have 8 years of attending what is certainly the pre-eminent clan gathering in the United States. Ed and his extended family are quite the fixture having carved out “Matheson Corner” at the campgrounds right there at MacRae Meadows. For Mary Ellen and me, this was an initial “reconnaissance mission” in support of the plan of our Chief, Lt. Col. Alexander Matheson – who will report in this newsletter our plans to gather the Clan in 2020 at Grandfather Mountain. Thank you, Ed and Branson, for also serving as Conveners for the upcoming July 11-14, 2019 games!



Ed and Cindy Matheson at the Matheson Corner at Grandfather Mountain Highland Games campground. July 2018



From Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in July 2018.

From left to right:
 Patrick, Carter and Cathy Massie Keough
 Colvin Matheson (Chief's Lieutenant USA)
 Cindy Matheson (Ed's wife)
 Macrae Robeson (in front)
 Mary Ellen Matheson (Colvin's wife)
 Terry Norburg
 Marion Matheson Robeson
 Edward Matheson
 Matheson (Matty) Robeson

During Labor Day Weekend, John Aakesson, Deputy Chief's Lieutenant USA-East, and his brother Alex hosted our tent at the Virginia Scottish Games in The Plains, Virginia (west of Washington, DC) as they have for decades. With them were Georgia Lawson Mayer, Marion MacRae, and Alex's wife Ashley and daughter Elizabeth. Malcolm Matheson III was accompanied by Nancy West. My brother, Malcolm Matheson IV, is ever present at the Virginia Games. My wife, Mary Ellen, and our twin daughters, Emma and Margot also braved the blazing hot weather. Cousin Murdoch Matheson drove his motorcycle up from Charlottesville – without a kilt! Ed and Cindy Matheson joined us as well.



Mary Ellen, Margot, Emma and Colvin Matheson
at Virginia Scottish Games, September 2018

As for the rest of the year, many thanks to Alexander and Katharine for a wonderful dinner and night with them at their home in England upon my visit in September after two days of shooting in the Scottish Borders. Also, many thanks to John and Malcolm III for their sponsorship of my membership to the St. Andrews Society of Washington, DC.



John Aakesson, Malcolm Matheson IV and
Ed Matheson at the Virginia Scottish Games,
The Plains, Virginia, September 2018



Colvin and Alexander after dinner at
Alexander and Katharine's home.
September 2018

My closing note to all our US and International clansmen: we are very excited to be hosting the 2020 Matheson Clan Gathering at Grandfather Mountain. This will be the 65th Anniversary of the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games and the Clan Matheson will be represented by Alexander and Katharine as the host clan chief for the Games. The dates are Thursday-Sunday, July 9-12, 2020. We are thrilled to have Alexander and Katharine supporting our USA Branch and look forward to welcoming not only our US Clansmen, but those from around the world who we hope will embrace this opportunity for fellowship together. Because they are so close, we especially hope our Canadian Branch will invade in large numbers! Please visit the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games website at www.gmhg.org, as it is full of information about the area and what this beautiful part of North Carolina, with a rich Scottish immigrant history, has to offer. Certainly, you followers of the Starz series "Outlander" will have a flavor of this already. We look forward to putting together a wonderful program that will hopefully entice many of you to make the Carolinas your summer family vacation destination! Please feel free to contact me at colvinmatheson@verizon.net and keep an eye out for the new website, which we will use for further details.

Colvin Matheson,
Chief's Lieutenant for the USA and

Roger Mathison,
Deputy Chief's Lieutenant – USA West



The view of Grandfather Mountain



During my 2017 trip to Glasgow, to compete with the Hamilton Police Pipe Band at the World Pipe Band Championships, I eventually met our Clan Chief Alexander Matheson at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. After a short discussion with Alexander, I volunteered to help the Clan revive its Canadian branch.

It is my hope that this newsletter will ignite a series of e-mails that will help me reinvigorate interest in the Clan Matheson in Canada. Find out more about our family history, meet lost or distant family members, retrace, explore and tell your specific branches journey from Scotland.

I would ask any Matheson who has family connections with Canadian family members or they too have a Canadian branch forward the survey link provided below.

The purpose is simple, to discover and create an event that would generate enough interest for the Clan members to attend.

Here is the link to our survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3PT8T5Y>

Please copy and paste this link into your e-mails to other Clan Matheson's, and encourage them to participate.



In the photo from the left to right is Myself, Carol Matheson (my mother) Rachael Dagonas (my daughter) and Angela Duquette (my partner)

Chuck Matheson
Chief's Lieutenant for Canada

A few years ago we changed the timing of our Annual General Meeting from November to August. This was to facilitate the job of Treasurer to more closely align our finances with the Australian Financial Year from July to June (I know it is different in other countries). So this year, in August we elected a new Committee; Margaret Fleming stood down as President and Colin Matheson was elected in her place (again), the Vice-President (our redoubtable piper Warren) was re-elected, Genevieve Ahearne was re-elected as Treasurer and the new Secretary elected was Roma Jorgenson (again). Several others were also elected to the Committee. We have not yet succeeded in finding anyone to look after our attendance at Gatherings around the country to replace Carol Abuid, who stood down mostly due to the poor health of her husband, Khris, and so our attendance at such events has been curtailed.

Last year we reported on our attempts to trace ancestors of Ross Matheson of Ballarat, whose ancestors William and Margaret (nee Munro) Matheson lived in the parish of Logie Easter, south of Tain in the NE of Scotland. They left Liverpool in 1856 on the ship *Arabian*, perhaps to join the Victorian gold rush near Ballarat, with 8 of their 13 children, one of whom, David (b 1844) was Ross Matheson's grandfather. By a slightly roundabout route, we re-established contact with long-standing Queensland members, Rod and Avis Matheson the former of whom is also descended from the same William Matheson and Margaret Munro. Rod's grandfather was Donald Matheson (b 1852), the younger brother of David Matheson (b 1844, above) who turned out to be the grandfather not only of our founding Branch President Ronald (now deceased), but also of member Ross Matheson who started the search. We have tried to push the family tree further back in time, but have proceeded no further than emigrant William's parents, Alexander Matheson and his wife Margaret Wilson, who lived in Tain. We have not been able to trace a birth record for Alexander in Tain, but births in that parish were not recorded between 1727 and 1767 so it is quite likely that none ever existed.

The Bundanoon Highland Gathering is held every year in April at Bundanoon, about 100km SW of Sydney, and is advertised as the largest Highland Gathering in the Southern Hemisphere. We were able to attend in 2017 and Carol Abuid, Warren Matheson, Mary Molan and I manned a tent there. Warren is our Clan piper and did a sterling job attracting curious onlookers from far and wide (nothing to do with our raffle of a superior bottle of Glenmorangie whisky of course – do you remember who founded that distillery?). Warren would have liked to pipe the Clan Pipe Tune, if there had been one, but none of us knew whether there was one or not. We checked with the Chief, who did not know of one, but challenged us to either find it (if there was one) or come up with one if not. Warren spent considerable time searching for a tune associated with Mathesons and found none, although he did find tunes associated with other clans such as MacRaes, MacDonalds, Macleods, Campbells and others. However, in one of his searches through his old boxes of pipe music he came across a tune hand-written by his old pipe tutor, never otherwise published. Since it was very unlikely to be anyone else's tune, Warren took the original, changed a few notes and timing and re-named the tune '*The March of the Mathesons*'. We sent this off to our Chief, Alexander, who decided it was suitable and charged us to make it known around the world. Here it is:

March of the Mathesons

March

Composed by Neil Innes
Arranged by Warren Matheson



Warren played it at our annual picnic last February (2018) in Melbourne. It is now on YouTube <https://youtu.be/swz4EdDM8no> and it is also still in my Dropbox account www.dropbox.com/sh/uk85cufiu3ihrep/AACZ5earfEg8UiznUvVVErXya?dl=0 Please feel free to use it at your own functions (with attribution to Warren).

Pictured are Piper Warren Matheson discussing the March of The Mathesons with Rob Mathieson (l), Colin Matheson and Ross Matheson (seated r) at the Clan Picnic in Melbourne in February 2018.





The Scots of Victoria Association holds a Tartan Festival for a week every July in Melbourne. Our then President, Margaret Fleming, and Janet Blainey attended the Gala Dinner and enjoyed themselves at the Ball.



Warren Matheson (3rd from left) standing next to his daughter, Kathryn, at her wedding in Melbourne.

We are sad to report the death of Merle Matheson in February 2018. Merle was the much-loved wife of our founding President, Ron, and attended many Clan events both before and after his death in 2002.

In our November Australian Clan Newsletter, to commemorate the end of hostilities in WW1, we published a list of all 200 Mathesons (including Mathiesons, Matheisons, Mathersons, Mathisons, Mathewsons and Matthewsons) we could find in the Archives who enlisted or tried to enlist in the all-volunteer Australian military forces serving overseas during that conflict. Some (like Frank Matheson of Hambleton in Queensland) tried to enlist but were under age. Others (like Farquhar George Matheson of Wycheproof in Victoria) were medically unfit. Service records show that our Mathesons were as good and as bad as anyone else at the time. A few deserted, some became medically unfit because of venereal disease contracted either before or during their service and some were under age; one was discharged seemingly due to bad language! Others were killed in action or died of wounds or disease or suffered all their lives from wounds both physical and mental. Some received awards for gallantry. But all are deserving of our honour for their voluntary service or intention to serve in that most brutal conflict.

Colin Matheson
Chief's Lieutenant for Australia

On the eve of its 30th anniversary, the New Zealand branch of the Clan Matheson Society looks to the future with confidence but is aware of the work needed to consolidate and foster interest in Matheson family heritage.

There was a significant changing of the guard during 2018, and two stalwarts of the branch since its inception were recognised with life membership. There have still been only six life memberships given in the New Zealand branch, so the awards do acknowledge the extraordinary contributions these two have made.



Doug Matheson

Douglas Matheson, known universally as Doug, stepped down after serving more than 20 years as the first Chief's Lieutenant for New Zealand. Doug was also on the branch committee for a similar time, including five years as chairman. Supported by his late wife Anne, Doug was active in supporting the branch and travelled around New Zealand and internationally to Clan Matheson events.

Donald Matheson joined the inaugural committee of the branch in 1989 and stepped down in 2018. This is a record for New Zealand, and possibly any branch worldwide. Donald was chairman for 17 years and branch newsletter editor for 10, and also edited two editions of the international newsletter. He was also particularly active in representing Clan Matheson in Scottish societies in Auckland.



Donald Matheson with his life membership certificate

The branch's annual meeting in mid-2018 saw other changes. Blair Matheson accepted the position of chairman, and we are pleased to have someone with his background of working in business and not-for-profit organisations. Blair, son of Doug and the late Anne Matheson, has been involved in the branch and other Clan Matheson activities for many years, and has attended clan gatherings in Canada and Scotland.



Branch chair Blair Matheson and secretary Chris Binns

Lara Penman, great-granddaughter of Sarita and Norman Matheson, took up the role of newsletter editor. Her new approach is evident in an A4 colour publication of more than 10 pages, with a focus on people sharing stories about their Matheson connections.



After several years with no piper following Norman Matheson stepping down, the branch has a piper in John-Henry Wilson. He is the grandson of a clan member, and is committed to developing his musical skills and involvement. It was great to have him play at the annual meeting.

We note with sadness the death this year of branch life member Ailsa Matheson. She with her late husband Gordon Matheson was heavily involved in the formation of the branch in 1989, and was both secretary and newsletter editor for 17 years, until 2008. Ailsa continued to support the branch, particularly with newsletter contributions, and just weeks before her unexpected death she had arranged an article by her brother Alex Matheson.



Piper John-Henry Wilson



Andrew Matheson

The Chief appointed Andrew Matheson as his Lieutenant for New Zealand in February 2018, following Doug Matheson standing down. Andrew has been a member of the New Zealand branch of the Clan Matheson Society since its inception in 1989, and is the son of one of its founders, the late Roy Matheson. Andrew is a member of the branch committee, and runs its website and a Clan Matheson New Zealand Facebook group. He has published several books about his Scottish ancestors.

Clan members, particularly Rodger Matheson and our secretary Chris Binns, have been active in participating and representing Clan Matheson in Scottish events including various Highland games and the Scottish Clans Association.



Promoting Clan Matheson at a Highland games

Our branch website www.clanmatheson.org.nz continues to profile Clan Matheson in New Zealand and provide a family history resource. As part of the First World War centenary commemorations it has recorded everyone from New Zealand named Matheson (including spelling variants) who served in New Zealand forces during that conflict. For each of the 103 people listed there is a short summary and a link to their military personnel file, and for about half of them a longer biography has been written. This project was stimulated by a suggestion of the late Sir Fergus Matheson at the beginning of the centenary in 2014.



Lake Matheson, probably New Zealand's most photogenic stretch of water

The website also documents research on Matheson place names in New Zealand. It lists the famous lake, two bays, one mountain and 23 roads named Matheson or Mathieson. Again, it's the stories behind the names that are interesting, and clan members have progressively added photographs and information about the names' origins.

Our webmaster also manages a Clan Matheson New Zealand Facebook group. While not officially a branch activity, this group exists to foster interest in Matheson heritage and connections with New Zealand, and encourage people to join the branch.

Membership organisations of all types are having to adapt. People's leisure time, communication methods and social networks are all changing, and organisations like the Clan Matheson Society must develop new ways of functioning if they are to thrive — and not only survive — into the future. Under our new chair, the New Zealand branch will be focussing on this during 2019.

Andrew Matheson

Chief's Lieutenant for New Zealand

This year the New Zealand Branch of the Clan Matheson Society celebrates its 30th Anniversary. Many members, who were at the inaugural formation of the Branch will, I am sure, remember the day in June 1989 when they gathered together at Saint George's Church in Takapuna. The late Ailsa Matheson, who was a founder member and the first secretary, had placed an item in the local newspaper calling upon all Mathesons to meet at the Church in order to form the Branch. She hoped that 20 or thirty might turn up but was pleasantly surprised to note 120 or more arrived.

Personally I remember the day well, being elected to the Committee during the proceedings that day, and later becoming Chairman and Newsletter Editor for the Branch, remaining in those offices until I retired in 2018. I remember many happy moments our Branch has enjoyed during these past thirty years, no more so, than the International Clan Matheson gathering held in New Zealand, which was so well organised by Douglas Matheson, our Chief's Lieutenant at the time, ably assisted by a very good Committee. My major role was to organise the entertainment for an informal evening. I managed to encourage the Royal New Zealand Navy Pipe Band, together with a Maori Concert party and a team of Scottish Country Dancers to entertain us during a very pleasant evening.

The principal guest was our Chief Sir Alexander Matheson attending for his Father Sir Fergus Matheson who was unable to travel at the time. Both Sir Fergus, who had visited New Zealand earlier, and Sir Alexander indicated their great joy in visiting our lovely country.

A photograph of those who attended the occasion appears below. As you will note, it was a full house and you will need to use a magnifying glass to see yourself as others see you.



The New Zealand Branch led by our Chief's Lieutenant Andrew Matheson & his good Committee is sound and well, continuing its aim to foster the history of Scotland and to bring Mathesons together.

Donald Matheson, New Zealand Branch

During November 2018, the nation acknowledged the one hundredth anniversary of the end of World War 1. Our late Chief Fergus had written some years ago about the tragic loss of all three sons of Sir Alexander Matheson, 3rd Baronet of Lochalsh, which effectively wiped out the male line of his family. And indeed local historians around the country have written about servicemen from all backgrounds who lost their lives in combat, of other great family losses, of subsequent incapacities, and of fulfilled lives that followed. Unfortunately during the Blitz of London during the Second World War, 60% of the Great War military records were destroyed and the rest, which suffered scorching by fire, have become known as the Burnt Documents. Fortunately the basic detail, names of those that served during the Great War, has survived and we can establish that over 3500 Mathesons, Mathiesons and our other Clan related septs undertook military service from these isles including a handful of women non-combatants. We can not establish readily the number of those killed in action or those wounded, but we should assume many hundreds would have died and many more were wounded. The servicemen of the Clan Matheson attained a respectable number of gallantry awards along with more than two dozen Mention in Dispatches.

The Clan lost two stalwart Society members last year in the Spring, Elizabeth Brackenbury of Holme Pierrepont Hall, and Colonel Alastair Mathieson MC; our condolences are with their families. The Clan Society met at the Craven's for a hearty lunch and the AGM in April. The Committee thank Will and Bella Craven for hosting the AGM at their home near Peterborough, and we look forward to take up Bella's invitation again this year. Just to reiterate, the AGM is open to all members of the UK Branch and all are most welcome to attend the next event. In 2018 we were pleased to welcome to the Clan Society, Lord Stevenson of Balmacara, Stephen Prudence, Ton Jensen, Paul Maddison, Ian Matheson and Shanie Wright.

Congratulations are in order to Louisa Matheson, daughter of Alexander, 28th and present Chief, who married Archer Montagu-Pollock last year, and to Matt Bennett and Frances, grand-daughter of Torquhil, 26th Chief, who were engaged this year. And congratulations too to Dr Robert Mathieson who attained a PhD in Engineering last year, he has secured investment for commercializing his research involving the use of lasers to process glass.

David Mathieson



Dr Robert Mathieson PhD



Matt Bennett and Frances Craven

We do not have any clan society in Norway because we are all related to each other in a big family. (And I guess that the interest of family-relation is not that big yet.)

The first Matheson we know of in Norway is colonel Jacob Fredrik Matheson and here are the "chain" of the Norwegian Mathesons.

1. Jacob (Fredrik) Matheson (ca. 1639 - 17.07.1724)

He had a long and successful carrier in the military in Norway, and he became in his old days colonel/brigadier at Kongsvinger fort on the border to Sweden.

Jacob had 9 children and his son Jacob is number 7. (We don't know where he was born and came from.)

2. Jacob Matheson (ca. 1682/83 - 11.03.1749)

He had also a long military carrier both in Norway and Denmark (which ruled Norway at that time). He became colonel and chief of the National Northern Dragon Regiment.

Jacob had 3 children and Statius is number 3.



3. Statius Jacob Matheson (26.03.1718 - 26.10.1770)

He was born in Hamburg and started already at an age of 13 his military carrier.

Statius had 8 children and Jacob Bolcke was number 5.



4. Jacob Bolcke Matheson (10.07.1761 - 26.12.1857)

He had also a military carrier, and he also started early, at an age of 14.
Jacob Bolcke had 14 children and number 2 was Ove Christian.

5. Ove Christian Matheson (19.12.1794 - 18.11.1857)

(He did not have a military carrier).

He was a successful merchant in the Trondheim-district in the middle of Norway. He traded the coast north with many boats and Jacob Paul was his first born.

6. Jacob Paul Seierskjold Matheson (21.11.1826 - 10.03.1897)

Jacob Paul started together with his two years younger brother Christian in 1852 a special store for ready-made clothes in Trondheim (with good help from both his brothers and sisters).

He build a large store-building, known as the Matheson-house in Trondheim. This building is still there with its characteristic dome and is a landmark in the city.

Jacob Paul had 11 children in two marriages and Bernhard, my grandfather, is number 5.

7. Bernhard Ditlef Matheson (15.10.1869 - 24.09.1921)

He was a doctor of medicine both in Ringebu (in the valley of Gudbrandsdalen), and in Trondheim.

He died young, and Fredrik my father was only 13 years old when he passed away.

Fredrik was number 3 out of 6 children.

8. Fredrik Collin Elster Bødtker Matheson (26.03.1908 - 01.12.1999)

He was an artist and a professor at the National Artist School in Oslo. His speciality was book illustrations.

Fredrik had 3 children and I, Einar is number 2.

9. Einar Christian Matheson (25.04.1944 -)

Einar has two sons and Christian is number 1.

10. Christian Matheson (28.05.1973 -)

Christian has one daughter.

11. Nora Matheson (03.06.2005 -)

We are still working with "How we came to Norway"

Einar Christian Matheson



Three generations Norwegian Matheson on the estate of Duncraig Castle 2014.

Number 9 - Einar Christian Matheson

Number 10 - Christian Matheson

Number 11 - Nora Matheson

The range of questions raised by members in recent years has been rewarding for the Clan Genealogist. A Netherlands member was interested in their 18th century Matheson military heritage, including involvement in the War of the Austrian Succession, and his earlier Scottish antecedents. Another new member has been the first for many years to probe the ancient Gaelic MS of 1467 with its Clan genealogies, and the Clan's possible links with ancient Irish princely stock. And many others have sought further information on the social and historical background of their Highland forbears'.

Such enquiries lead to the steady expansion of the Clan Society's collective historical memory, and are particularly useful when they can draw on advances in historical studies. Discussion on their researches with other Highland Genealogists, notably those of Clan Mackenzie and Clan Macleod, whose histories overlap our own, continue to improve our knowledge and understanding, with emerging insights into medieval chiefly succession, for example. Gaelic studies continue to advance under scholars such as Professor Ron Black of Edinburgh, master of the MS 1467 website, whose work follows impressive earlier efforts from our own late Rev William (Willy) Matheson, notable Gaelic scholar and genealogist. Grappling with our medieval genealogies, clan traditions and relations with other Highland clans also means grappling with – I don't say fully understanding! – Gaelic. One earnestly hopes that younger Mathesons will take up both challenges!

Our Norse and Viking heritage also remains vitally important. Here, keen members might note that the journal, Northern Studies, continues to provide informative and very accessible articles bearing on Norse and Viking influences on the islands and northern counties – and Clan Matheson – influences which lasted well into the 15th century.

Advances in wider historical studies are also important in setting the context for much of our Clan history and providing members with potential telling detail on their own ancestors' circumstances. This bi-centenary year of the Strathnaver and Kildonan clearances reminds us of the Clan's experiences of clearances, notably in Sutherland, Lochalsh and Lewis, memories of which are often sharper amongst our friends overseas in Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. One very important influence here has remained Professor Tom Devine. His book *The Highland Famine* [of the 1840s] uncovered some of the complex and acute financial pressures behind the later clearances of tenants from Highland estates (Do I recall a Browns' Bank in Edinburgh as a player?). He has now produced *The Scottish Clearances* - which I shall buy at the earliest opportunity - acclaimed by reviewers as a magisterial account embracing clearances on a much wider span of time and geography than previously done, and said to paint a nuanced picture of causes and consequences.

Some Matheson traditions recall landlords' paternal concerns in the evictions of the west coast. It remains to be seen how far – if at all – this book challenges the impressions left by graphic passages in *Memorabilia Domestica* by John Matheson of Attadale's cousin, the Reverend Donald Sage, of the Sutherland Factor's fire engines at work in Strathnaver and Kildonan in May 1819.

I look forward to further correspondence with members on their ancestral and historical quests.

John Faid,
Clan Genealogist

Clan Matheson International Gathering 2020

Plans are starting to come together and it would be good to let you all have early notice of our next International Clan Gathering. Alexander has been invited to be Chief of the 2020 Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, near Linville, North Carolina, USA, which will take place on

Thursday 9 - Sunday 12 July 2020.

GMHG is the largest Gathering of Scottish Clan and Family Societies in the world. In 2018 there were 118 Clan and Family Societies and approximately 30,000 people attended. We would be the 'honoured Clan' because of this invitation. It is a tremendous chance for members of our Clan Society to meet, have a thoroughly enjoyable time, get some excellent publicity and hopefully gain many new members, in the USA and elsewhere.

Take a look at <http://www.gmhg.org/homepage.shtml> which currently shows information about the 2019 Games but it will give a good idea of what to expect in 2020.

Many details are yet to emerge, but the basic outline is:

Thursday evening. Hill Climb called "The Bear" and a torchlight Opening Ceremony at which all the participating clans are invited to declare themselves present at the Gathering.

Friday - Sunday. Traditional events like foot races, highland athletics, highland dancing, piping competitions, etc but a big emphasis is placed on allowing the clans which gather each year to conduct their own business as well as participating in the Gathering.

Saturday, probably in the afternoon and evening, Clan Matheson activities may include a Parliament and meal together, probably a dinner or a BBQ.

Sunday midday approx. Parade of Tartans, after which the Gathering closes.

The GMHG take place on a park called MacRae Meadows. Clan Matheson will have a decent sized tent there which will be our base for the Games. Our programme and participation will be orchestrated by Colvin Matheson, Chief's Lieutenant for the USA, and he will be advising the branches in due course on a host of detail, including how to find suitable accommodation.

The branches will have a main Point of Contact, most likely your Branch secretary, who will receive updates to distribute to their branch members. In due course Colvin will also make suggestions for other activities/places before, during and after the Games if people wish to make a good holiday during their time in the Carolinas.

Katharine will be going with Alexander, who hopes that as many as possible of their family will be able to go too; it sounds like a really enjoyable event and well worth the effort of getting there. It is hoped that many of the members, especially the younger generation, will think so too.

James Matheson, who looks after our international website, has put up an announcement on the Clan Matheson Society website <http://clanmatheson.org/> and Louisa Montagu-Pollock has done the same on Facebook. Both mention gathering2020@clanmatheson.org as the email address to contact Colvin Matheson. Please add your branch or country in the subject line of your email to help route your email to the right person.

Please look at the dates for this Gathering when making your holiday plans for the summer of 2020.

gathering2020@clanmatheson.org

