

CLAN MACLEAN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

2012 CLAN CONGRESS 'The Future of the Clan Maclean'

Formal presentations were given as follows:

1. *Tomorrow's World*,
by Nigel Alington, President-elect, Clan Maclean International Association
2. *Clan Maclean Associations in a Networked World*
by Alasdair White, President, MacleanNet
3. *Providing Value-Added Opportunities to Clan Membership*
by Bob McLean, Vice-President-elect, Clan Maclean International Association
4. *The Future of Duart Castle*
by the Chief

In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

Membership

Alasdair White said that research had indicated that the three things most commonly sought by members of Maclean Associations were:

- accurate historical information
- genealogical information
- contacts with people having a common interest

Allan Maclean of Dochgarroch took issue with a suggestion made by Alasdair in his formal presentation, to the effect that people were only members of organisations if they derived some value or benefit from membership. Allan felt that Clan members also joined Associations to express their loyalty to the Clan.

Bob McLean mentioned that Clan Gillean lose 60% of their new members at the end of their first year.

Malcolm Maclean, Yr of Duart and Morvern, suggested from the floor that we should not "beat ourselves up" about the difficulty of attracting members and volunteers. He felt that there were natural stages in people's lives when they took an interest in the Clan and others when they did not. People might be interested when they were young; they may lack the time for the Clan when they are building their careers and bringing up a family; and their interest may revive when they are older, the family has flown the nest and they have more time available. [Nigel Alington made a similar point in his presentation, when he talked about keeping the door open for such people.]

Alison Tottenham (England and Wales) suggested that the three-generation rule should be relaxed.

Attracting the young

Bob McLean suggested allocating part of maclean.org for use by young Clan members.

He also suggested that Associations should appoint 'Youth Ambassadors' who would be tasked with attracting young members into the Association.

In addition, he suggested arranging international exchanges for young members.

Someone suggested that there should be a residential 'Maclean University' on Mull, which could provide courses in Maclean history and culture. [This need not be restricted to young students.]

The Chief and Beverly McLean (England and Wales) both suggested that there should be a Junior Organising Committee for future Gatherings [although there were several junior members among the Gathering Week Committee for this Gathering].

Duart Castle

The Chief in his presentation acknowledged that at some stage his family would need to ask the Clan to assist in meeting the cost of the preservation and maintenance of Duart Castle. He saw this as a partnership between the family and the Clan. He could not predict when this would happen.

He also said that the feedback that he received was that the Clan likes the Castle to be owned and occupied by the family. If confirmed, this would appear to rule out suggestions from the floor that donors could "buy" bits of the Castle. It would also seem to rule out transferring the Castle into a Trust, in an effort to make contributions towards the upkeep tax-deductible.

Gordon McLean (Australia) suggested that the Castle could be run as a cooperative, which supported the idea of a partnership.

One person suggested that there should be a button on the maclean.org website through which donations to the Castle could be made. Nigel Alington suggested that it was necessary to determine the structure of the support mechanism before putting in place the mechanics for this.

The simple solution was to set up a maintenance fund. Advice would however need to be taken in order to ensure that this was done in the most tax-efficient way, for both donors and beneficiaries. It was not immediately obvious how such a fund could be established as a charity, when the money would go to a family-owned building.

It was left to the Chief and his family to decide when and how they wanted to take this forward.

Genealogy

Rewa Feenaghty (Australia) asked for an update on the DNA project. Alasdair White undertook to provide this.

History

Nicolas Maclean of Pennycross (England and Wales) suggested that the Clan should devote effort to preserving the oral history of the Clan.

Piping

David Maclean-Watt (England and Wales) suggested that the Clan should do more to promote piping and support pipe bands.

Note: the foregoing are informal notes prepared by Nigel Alington. They are not an official record of the Congress