

CLAN MACLEAN ASSOCIATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting of the Clan Maclean Association of England and Wales held at the Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, London SW1, at 6.00 pm on Friday, 11th October 2013

Those present: Nicolas Maclean of Pennycross CMG – President
Nigel Alington LVO – Vice-President and Hon. Treasurer (acting)
Helen Bailey – Hon. Secretary
Chris Bailey
Peter Bresnan
Bill Denham
Lorna Denham
Maria Teresa Maclean
David Maclean-Watt
Alison Tottenham – Hon. Secretary designate

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from George Gillon and Mary Wilson.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd November 2012 were approved as a complete and true record of that meeting.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Duart Castle Restoration Appeal.

The Vice-President reported that Historic Scotland had awarded a grant of £500,000 towards the repair of Duart Castle. The total cost of repairs is however currently estimated to be £1,200,000, leaving a considerable balance to be raised by the Clan. Since the 2012 International Gathering there had been extensive debate about whether or not the Appeal could be structured as a charity. Lawyers had been consulted. The charitable route, while being desirable in order to facilitate fund-raising, poses certain problems which so far it has not proved possible to overcome. The Appeal Fund is therefore being established as a non-charitable fund. A Board and an administrator are now being sought.

3.2 Clan Maclean Magazine

The Vice-President reported that progress on launching the new magazine had been slower than had been hoped. It had not proved possible to produce a magazine this year. It is however hoped that a magazine will be issued in 2014.

3.3 Membership eligibility - a proposal to relax the three-generation rule

The Vice-President reported that he had had initial discussions with Allan Maclean of Dochgarroch, the President of the Clan Maclean Association in Scotland. He had been reluctant to change the rule. Further discussions will be held.

4. President's Report

The President in his report raised several issues that were discussed by those present.

4.1 Membership

The President noted that the Association continued to gain and lose members, in roughly equal numbers. He thought that the Associates category was probably growing, but this was not clear.

4.2 2012 Autumn Dinner

The 2012 Annual Dinner, following the AGM, was well-attended. The Chief and his wife were present, as was also our Patron. Lord Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of Oxford University and Chairman of the BBC Trust, was Guest of Honour, representing one of the traditional septs of Clan Maclean. He made a thoughtful and impressive speech and answered many questions.

4.3 2013 Burns Supper

The Burns Night dinner on Friday, 1st February, had gone well. Thanks were noted for the music provided by David Dunham which had been enjoyed by all, as had his Address to the Haggis. It was however noted that there were some aspects of the evening that needed to be addressed in future.

Lord Guthrie, who had proposed the toast to the Immortal Memory, had spoken for longer than planned and the dinner had gone on until after midnight. This meant that it had been difficult for some present to get home, unless they left the dinner early, before the music. We must consider the needs of those who are dependent on public transport, or simply have a long journey, to get home.

It was thought that we should set a finishing time for dinners, and that perhaps 11.00 pm would be appropriate. Speakers could perhaps be kept to time by having a visual warning, e.g. the holding up of a card, at say five minutes before the planned end of their speech. It was also suggested that, for the Johnnie Walker Room, we might need to request a static microphone in order for speakers to be heard adequately at all tables.

4.4 Visit to Sweden

This had been a very successful and enjoyable visit. Four members of the Association (Nicolas, Qamar, Nigel and Alison) had participated, together with Sandra L. McLean, a member of the California Branch. The lunch at Svaneholm Castle and the picnic lunch on Djurgården in Stockholm had both been attended by about 20 Swedish Macleans. We had also seen numerous portraits and other items of Maclean heritage, including the oldest portrait of a Maclean yet found.

4.5 2013 Autumn Dinner

Lord Blencathra, the former Conservative Member of Parliament and Shadow Chief Whip David Maclean, was due to speak at the dinner following this meeting. He had been asked to talk about the political decisions facing Scotland next year.

4.6 Ideas to attract new members

It was thought that less formal dinners and meetings with speakers might prove attractive, especially if the venues were varied and cheaper than the Caledonian Club.

Venues such as a Chinese restaurant or a carvery, where a tasty and filling meal could be procured at a reasonable price, were suggested. Lorna Denham spoke of an evening out at the Boisdale but this was thought to be too expensive. It was suggested that Tim Tottenham's adventures in the Arctic might prove to be a draw for a younger audience. Alison Tottenham (Tim's mother) said that he had been asked and had agreed to do so, as long as he could be given due notice to arrange his workload. It was hoped that he or someone else might come up with a suitable venue. The President will liaise with him.

The President also suggested that reeling evenings, e.g. the Wimbledon Reels, could be advertised more widely among the Association members in London. It was hoped that one of the current attendees will be able to circulate the dates to all. It should be made clear that this activity is open to all, and that Wimbledon is particularly friendly and tolerant of beginners, whom they welcome and gradually teach. Alison Tottenham confirmed that they

are very good. At £5.00 per person for dancing from 7.30 pm until 10.00 pm, drink and a sandwich supper, the price is very reasonable.

4.7 Future priorities

Jim Naughtie has been confirmed as the speaker at the 2014 autumn dinner. Future speakers have also been identified, namely Rupert Everett, who had agreed in principle, and Hugh Grant. After these, it is hoped that Professor Maclean of Exeter University and Rory MacLean, the travel writer, can be persuaded to speak at one of the future dinners.

4.8 Invitees

The subject of inviting other clans or groups to Association dinners was discussed. Options include continuing to invite the Stewarts and inviting other clans such as the McDougalls or the Macdonalds. The President noted that Strachan McDonald, a UKIP Parliamentary candidate, was attending the dinner later.

5. Hon. Secretary's report

Helen Bailey reported as follows:

5.1 Membership

In the past year two members had joined, namely Colin I P Maclean and Malcolm Maclean, Younger of Duart and Morvern.

Roseann McVey and Marion Hart had sadly passed away this year. Marion's widower Nick is expected to continue with membership.

Helen had decided not to join a Facebook group herself but recognised that this could be a useful way of identifying potential members and communicating with existing members. This is something that her successor could do.

5.2 DPA/PECR Consents

No progress had been made in this regard.

This being Helen's last report as Secretary, she took the opportunity to say how much she had enjoyed getting to know Lady Maclean, Sir Lachlan Maclean, Malcolm Maclean Younger of Duart and Morvern, President Nicolas Maclean of Pennycross, Vice President Nigel Alington and the many other members she had met.

She mentioned that she had telephoned every member for whom she did not have an email address and had succeeded in contacting most. This had been a useful exercise, re-establishing contacts with some members with whom we had had no contact for some time.

Helen expressed concern at what appeared to her to be an ever-increasing gap between our older senior members and those of the younger generation. She hoped to see this gap bridged by means of actual events rather than exchanges online.

She thanked Alison Tottenham for taking over as Secretary and wished her many years of pleasure in carrying out these duties.

The President thanked Helen for continuing to function in what had become difficult times for her, and thanked Chris Bailey for his valuable support that had made it possible for her to do so.

6. Treasurer's report

The Vice President, as acting Treasurer, presented for approval the draft accounts for the year ended 31st July 2013.

A small surplus had been achieved on the 2012 autumn dinner and a larger one on this year's Burns Supper. Expenses had been small and a surplus of £811 overall had been achieved, leaving about £2,500 in the bank.

No donations had been given during the year, after donations of £300 to the Heritage Trust and £325 to the Duart Castle Gates Appeal the year before. The Vice-President proposed that this year the Association should donate £250 to the Heritage Trust and £250 to the Duart Castle Restoration Fund. This was approved by all.

Asked if the accounts had been audited, the Treasurer advised that they had not.

The President proposed that the accounts should be approved and they were approved unanimously by those present.

7. Election of Officers

The President and Vice-President both confirmed that they were willing to continue in these roles for a further 12 months. The Vice-President also confirmed that he was willing to continue as acting Treasurer.

Helen Bailey, the Hon. Secretary, had previously announced her intention to retire at this AGM. Alison Tottenham had kindly offered to take her place.

The continuation of the appointments of the President and the Vice-President and the appointment of Alison Tottenham as the new Secretary were proposed by David Maclean-Watt and unanimously agreed by all present.

It was also agreed that the President would continue in his current role for two extra years, beyond the expiry of his five-year term in October 2014. This should allow other candidates to come forward.

8. Future events

8.1 Burns Supper 2014 (7th February 2014)

Judy Brown, a clarsach player, wanted to charge around £100. It was hoped that we might get her for the 2014 dinner, for the price of her dinner, plus a smaller sum of perhaps £50.

8.2 Aubigny-sur-Nère (13th/14th July 2014)

This town, in the centre of France, was a stronghold of the Stuarts for 400 years. A Franco-Écossaise festival is held there every year. CMA France is due to attend the 2014 event with the Hay and Mackenzie clans. It was proposed that this should be the destination for the Association's overseas visit next year.

8.3 Ashbourne Highland Gathering (20th July 2014)

Another attempt is to be made to have a stand at this event. It was suggested that this could be combined with some sort of meeting of the Maclean attendees.

8.4 Scotland 2014

The Vice President mentioned the following events due to take place in Scotland during the summer of 2014:

28th – 30th June 2014 700th Anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn, near Stirling (see <http://www.battleofbannockburn.com/tickets/bannockburn-live>)

19th July 2014 Inverness Games – there will be a Maclean stall in the Clan tent organised by the Association of Highland Clans and Societies

24th July 2014	Tobermory Games ("the Maclean Games")
25th or 26th July 2014	One-day Gathering at Duart Castle
30th July 2014	Arisaig Games - there will be a Maclean tent
12th September 2014	Inverness - Torchlight Procession of Highland Clans to be followed by a cèilidh (part of Homecoming Scotland 2014)

9. Any other business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.00 pm.