



Western States Clan MacLaren Society

SPRING 2020
Volume 5, Issue 2



The Scottish Thistle

PLANS CHANGE

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Western States Clan MacLaren Society was to be held in June, in conjunction with the McMinnville Scottish Festival, McMinnville, Oregon. But that festival, like many other Scottish events throughout the world, has been cancelled for this year.

Read our president's message about the changes. Further details on where we will meet will at some point be posted on the website or in the next issue.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's message....	2
News of note.....	4-6
Membership form.....	7
Contacts.....	8



Norm English



President's Message

Hello WSCMS Members and Friends:

We are all, certainly, living in challenging times these days, as we are forced to live largely under 'Stay Home – Stay Safe' orders from our respective governors that direct us to do so, no matter where we live.

As we've all been finding out over these past 30 days, it is extremely difficult for most of us to endure this situation on a day-to-day basis. Many of us are used to personally interacting with family, friends, neighbors, ministers and others on a daily basis, and staying home sort of 'goes against the grain.'

And, of course, when we are able to get out of the house for whatever reason, we are told to wear masks or some type of facial covering and keep an acceptable 'social distance' between ourselves and others.

These 'new rules of engagement' require us to be 'tough-minded' and diligent about our responsibilities and work towards an acceptable and safe method to meet our needs during this time. That 'toughmindedness' quality also reminded me of the wording in our society's information flyer that we provide to tent visitors. As a couple of the paragraphs in the Clan MacLaren history point out, some of that 'toughness in times of adversity' that was required of our ancestors in really difficult times was simply in their nature:

“Staunch Jacobites, the MacLarens fought in support of the Stewarts in all the rebellions and actions against the English, and with Prince Charlie at Culloden. The men were also known for their extraordinary size, courage and their fighting skills. MacLarens are noted for their exceptional stubbornness.”

I believe that these latest challenges and alterations to what we've considered normal in the past will eventually be overcome, in so much as it's possible to do so. After all, that is the 'MacLaren way', and our ancestral family has shown that we are indeed a determined bunch of Scots.

Since the McMinnville Scottish Festival scheduled for June 13th and 14th has now been officially cancelled for this year, WSCMS will need to plan for an annual meeting in which we can handle all our

(Continued on page 3)

President's Message continued...

(Continued from page 2)

required business through some other venue. The meeting does not need to be held in conjunction with a Scottish festival gathering, it just has worked well to do so in our short past. So, hopefully we can soon schedule a meeting – still likely by long-distance – to fulfill the requirement to meet annually. We'll let you know when we get something scheduled, hopefully by late summer.

Members and supporters of WSCMS, please continue to stay safe and stay healthy. And, I'm wishing the best to all of you!!

Norm

Boosting membership growth

It is great to have new members join us from the states and provinces in the region covered by WSCMS. Perhaps you would like to share information about this organization with other MacLarens you may know, (or Pattersons, or Lowrys, or so on...).

Included with the emailing of this issue of the newsletter is a copy of our two-sided membership brochure as well as a membership application. The application is also included on a following page.

You can pass along the documents,, either by printing them and handing them out or by emailing them to others. The brochures can be printed two-sided and then folded to fit in a business-size envelope. You are welcome to share the newsletter as well. Let us know if you have any suggestions on how to spread the word. We don't want to spread anything else, just good words about the MacLarens in this time of closure of games and festivals.

If you have any trouble opening or forwarding the documents, contact President Norm English or membership chair Tim McLaren. They will try to trouble-shoot the problem for you or find an alternate way of providing you with the information.

Please share the word about WSCMS

Website: www.maclarenclan.org

Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/maclarensofidafo/>



Scottish festival changes

While the Annual General Meeting for the WSCMS has been affected by the cancelling of the McMinnville festival, it is not the only event in such a predicament. The Portland Highland Games were also cancelled for this year, as were the Seattle games. However, organizers for the Kelso Highland Festival in Washington, scheduled for September 12 and 13 say it is going on as planned unless conditions do not improve as expected.

In Scotland, and in the rest of the US, the reports are mixed.

Scotland

The effects of the pandemic have been felt worldwide. On April 1st, word came from the Edinburgh Tattoo that it would be cancelled this year for the first time in its history. It was slated to celebrate its 70th anniversary this year.

This was their announcement made on Twitter: "In these unprecedented times we've been working to do what's best for our charity and our people. In light of the latest Government guidance, we have made the difficult decision to cancel our Edinburgh show this year."

The Balquidder, Lochearnhead, and Strathyre Highland Games and Gathering, to have been held Saturday, July 25, has been cancelled. These are the traditional games for the Clan MacLaren in Scotland.

Other games have yet to make any changes. The Ballater games on August 13 and the Stirling games on August 15 were still on as of this writing. The Crieff Highland Gathering hosts the Scottish Professional Heavyweight Championship, attracting heavyweight competitors from around the world to compete. Their event is set for August 16, and has yet to be cancelled.

The Braemar Gathering (in Braemar, Scotland) has been attended regularly by the reigning monarch and members of the Royal Family since 1848. which has helped to make it a major games. Organizers are monitoring Scotland's guidelines on virus concerns to determine whether to proceed with the event planned for September 5th.

United States

Organizers of the larger games in the U.S. are still watching developments. The Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, set for July 9 to 12, will go on as planned, for now.

Other major festivals have the advantage of being held in the fall. The Highland Games and Gathering in Pleasanton, California is still planned for September 5 and 6. The Longs Peak festival in Colorado is going on as planned on September 11 to 13, as is Stone Mountain Highland Games, set for October 16 to 18 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Other events in the region

Rio Grande Celtic Highland Festival cancelled the 2020 games set for May 2 and 3 at Rotary Park in Bernallillo, New Mexico. The association running the games is selling "Save the Festival" t-shirts.

Alaskan Scottish Club Board of Directors cancelled the 2020 Alaska Scottish Highland Games, previously planned for June 27th at the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer.

Skagit Valley Highland Games in Mount Vernon, Washington, set for July 11 and 12, are cancelled for 2020.

The Arizona Highland Celtic Festival is still planned for July 18 and 19 at Fort Tuthill County Park, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Bitterroot Celtic Games and Gathering, Montana's biggest athletic competition in Montana, is still planned for August 5 in Hamilton, Montana.

Victoria Highland Games, set for May 18 and 19 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, are postponed to later in the summer, with a date and details still to be announced.

The Treasure Valley Highland Games and Festival has not changed plans for their September event in Boise, Idaho.

MacLaren Athletes

Challenge caber waits for a turn



Some MacLarens may remember the year accomplished Scottish athlete Ray Mabey hand-crafted the MacLaren Challenge Caber. It was quite a feat in 2012.

The caber continues to instill awe in Scottish athletes and audience members alike. It was featured in a post about the McMinnville Scottish Festival, where it would have been brought out for professional athletes to attempt to throw. But like so many other athletic events, it will have to wait for next year for one of those pros to possibly turn it.

The caber is 18 feet, 5 inches long and weighs 135 pounds. The idea for crafting it came out of a conversation Ray and fellow athlete (and fellow MacLaren) Kevin

Halsey had years ago. Kevin offered some of the tall, straight, Lodgepole pines that were on his property in Montana. Ray sanded and varnished and sanded and varnished again, until the caber was ready to be introduced at the new Highland Games in Newport eight years ago, the precursor to the McMinnville games.

Turning this storied caber, while difficult, is not impossible. It has been turned three times since its debut year.

Now, several years have passed since it was turned. The prize increases if not awarded, pushing it up to \$325 when next it is turned.

{Photo with permission by Ray Mabey showing detail of MacLaren crest}

Olympian is a Patterson

It wasn't going to be her first Olympics, but it likely will still be her last.

Kara Patterson Winger was working on qualifying to compete in the javelin in the Tokyo Olympics in July of this year. But, like so many other events, the Olympics were cancelled for this year.

Kara qualified for the Olympics in 2008, 2012, and 2016. Her best finish was 13th at the 2016 games. She is an eight-time national winner in javelin and is still the American record holder in the event.

She had planned to enter the qualifying meet and get to the Olympics for the fourth time. After that, she planned to go to the World Track and Field



Kara Patterson Winger

Championships in Eugene, Oregon, and then retire from competition. With the changes in schedule, now it is reported that she will try for the 2021 Tokyo Olympics as her last. Her ultimate goal still is to compete in the 2022 Worlds in Eugene before she retires from competition. It was in Eugene in 2010 where she won her third national title in javelin and broke the women's javelin record, so the place is meaningful to her.

Kara is the daughter of Rona and Bruce Patterson and grew up in Vancouver, Washington. She is married to track and field athlete Russ Winger, and they live and train in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



The 150-year legacy of Golden Gate Park and John McLaren

As Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, California, celebrates its 150th anniversary this year, one name that is most linked with its history is John McLaren. His greatest role was as the superintendent of the park for 53 years, beginning in 1886.

Golden Gate Park was established in 1870. City leaders designated land on the outskirts of the city as a park, similar to Central Park that was also taking shape in New York City. At 1,017 acres it is one of the largest public parks in the world. It is 20 percent larger than Central Park and the third most visited park in the U.S.

The first superintendent was William Hammond Hall. John McLaren became Hall's assistant, and both men developed the plan and planting of the park.

The actual kickoff event for this year's 150th anniversary celebration was scheduled for April 4. But like so many other events, all the activities for the park have unfortunately been postponed until conditions improve for protecting the health of the public.

One activity that could continue was a photo contest. Dave Christiansen, curator for the photo project had this to say: "The City of San Francisco owes an endless debt of gratitude to John McLaren

and William Hammond Hall, who had the foresight to create this haven for all of us to enjoy. Little did our city forefathers know how important this park would become for all of us as a community."

John McLaren was born in Bannockburn, Scotland. He was first a dairyman, and then studied horticulture at the Edinburgh Royal Botanical Gardens, working there as an apprentice gardener helper.

He emigrated to the United States in 1870 and became an estate gardener, working on the George Howard estate in San Mateo and the Leland Stanford estate in Palo Alto. When John was appointed superintendent, he stipulated that there be no "keep off the grass" signs and that the park be kept natural. He particularly disliked statuary, although his statue is in the park (which he had hidden among trees). There is also a park statue of Robert Burns.

When he was in Scotland, John planted grasses along the Firth of Forth to anchor the beach dunes. He followed a similar course at the Golden Gate Park where he planted grass seed to transform the sandy land, and then followed that with 700 new types of trees in the span of a year. He asked the street department to send all the sweepings from the streets for fertilizer.

For more than 20 years, he piled branches, clippings and lath on the shore at the west end of the park to stabilize sand that was shifted by winds onto park land. That eventually became a berm now called the Great Highway.

At the age of 70, he was given lifetime tenure of the park, until his death at age 96 in 1943.

His legacy is found elsewhere, too. The town of Ashland, Oregon commissioned John in 1914 to design its famous Lithia Park. The park has two ponds, a Japanese garden, a band shell, and miles of hiking trails. John also helped design the San Jose Botanic Garden.

A street near the Golden Gate Park is named for John. There is a park named after him, the second largest park in San Francisco, but it is a study in contrasts. While Golden Gate Park is flat, John McLaren Park is steep, and where Golden Gate has 24 million visitors annually, McLaren Park has almost no visitors. Gunfire erupts regularly from the Sunnydale housing project next to the park, and several murders were committed there. People mostly stay away.

If spring weather has you longing to get out and garden, perhaps a bit of the Scottish blood of one of the west's most famous horticulturist runs in your veins, too.

Western States Clan MacLaren Society, Inc.

A non-stock, non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho



Application for Membership

Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____
Please Print

Address: _____ **Preferred Phone #:** _____

City: _____ **State & Zip Code:** _____

E-mail Address: _____ **Spouse Name:** _____

Children's Names (Please Print)

Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Dues Structure of Western States Clan MacLaren Society, Inc.

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>*Family</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Enclosed</u>
Regular	_____	_____	\$10.00**	\$_____

*Includes spouse & children under 18, provides one (1) vote on Society matters

**Membership year is January 1st through December 31st

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Send completed form & check payable to: **Western States Clan MacLaren Society**
Tim McLaren, Membership Secretary
11314 NE 36th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98686

WSCMS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Thanks for being a member of WSCMS. We hope you will share information about this group with others who want to get together with MacLarens in the western parts of the U.S. and Canada.

Please contact Tim McLaren, via the contact information at right, if you would like him to send information to a prospective member, or if you have any questions. Dues are \$10 per year.

Have you changed any of your contact information? Email, phone number, address? If so, please send your changes to Tim McLaren, membership, at the contact information listed.



Western States Clan MacLaren Society
c/o Tim McLaren
11314 NE 36th Avenue
Vancouver, Washington 98686
drtmclaren@msn.com
360-546-2271

Western States Clan MacLaren Society, Inc. Officers/Board Members 2020

President

Norm English
(503) 874-8101
normengl@msn.com

Secretary

Karen Woodall
(360) 576-4969
starcars8@comcast.net

Board Member

Pete Woodall
(360) 576-4969
starcars8@comcast.net

Web Manager

Tracey Martin
(208) 764-2882
Traceymartin88@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor

Penny McLaren
(360) 546-2271
ampmcomm@msn.com

Vice President

Nina Garcia
nina.clanmaclaren@gmail.com

Treasurer

Kris Martin
208-358-2978
kristopheramartin58@outlook.com

Board Member

Margaret English
(503) 874-8101
mdeng59@live.com

Board Member

Tim McLaren
(360) 546-2271
drtmclaren@msn.com

Membership

Tim McLaren
(360) 546-2271
drtmclaren@msn.com

***Western States
Clan MacLaren
Society, Inc.,***

***WSCMS, is a duly
registered non-
stock, non-profit
organization incor-
porated in 2015 un-
der the laws of the
State of Idaho.***

***The Scottish Thistle
is a quarterly
publication written
expressly for
WSCMS members.***