Membership Eligibility

You automatically become a member of Clan MacLaren by birth, marriage, or adoption. Membership in the CMSNA will enable you to fully participate in Clan activities and celebration. To become a member of the Society, simply visit our tent at one of the many Highland Games or Scottish festivals held each year across the US and Canada, write the Membership Secretary, or go to the website: www.clanmaclarenna.org

Clan MacLaren Names

MacLaren  McLaren  MacLaurin
McLaurin  MacLaren  McLaren
MacLarin  McClarin  MacLaran
McLaran  McClaran  MacLarion
MacLaurie  McLaurie  Laurence
Lawrence  Law  Lawson
Low  Lowe  Lawrie
Laurie  Lowery  Lowry
Patterson  Paterson  Peterson
MacPater  Patrick  MacPatrick
MacRory  McRory  MacGory
MacRuari  Rorie  Rorison
Wright

and many other spelling variations

Membership Classes

FAMILY  Parents and all children under 18 years old. One vote per family membership.
Annual dues: $25.00

INDIVIDUAL  Individuals or organizations. One vote per individual membership.
Annual dues: $25.00

WOOD BADGE  Any scout leader awarded the wood badge. Membership is non-voting.
Annual dues: $15.00
Wood Badge Life dues: $150.00

LIFE  Lifetime membership. One vote per life membership.
One time dues: $250.00

Clan MacLaren

Chief  Donald MacLaren of MacLaren
Kirkton Farm, Balquhidder,
Lockearnhead, Perthshire FK19 8PA
UK

Chieftains  Dr. Iain F. MacLaren
3 Minto Street
Edinburgh, EH9 1RG
UK
James W H MacLaren
‘Struthill’, Prieston Road
Bridge of Weir, UK
PA11 3AN

Officers of CMSNA

President  Mark A. McLaren, FSA Scot
61 Indian Home Rd
Danville, CA 94526
925-838-8175
boarsrock@earthlink.net

Secretary  Dave Elkin
Treasurer  Donna Stalter
Membership Secretary  Steven Lowery
115 Smoky View Lane
Madisonville, TN 37354
(423) 442-6571
cmsna2015@salsoft.com

Editor  Ruth McFadden
Asst Sec/Treas  Open

www.ClanMacLarenNA.org

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Clan History

Clan MacLaren has occupied the lands in Balquhidder and Strathearn since the 12th Century, where, along with MacGregor, Ferguson, and MacNab, they were the predominant clan. The name derived from Labhran (Laurin) of Ardveche who was hereditary Abbot of Achtus in Balquhidder in the 13th Century. The MacLarens were a warlike clan with strong ties to the Stewarts of Appin. The Clan fought at Flodden in 1513, and suffered severely at Culloden on the Prince’s side in 1746. Sir Walter Scott visited Balquhidder on legal business, which he describes in the introduction to “Rob Roy”. In “Redgauntlet” he describes the escape of MacLaren of Invernenty after Culloden.

In 1672, after many official records were lost an Act of Parliament ordained that all nobility and gentry in Scotland register their armorial bearings with the Lord Lyon. Because of the earlier loss of the legal title to Clan lands, the then chiefly head of the Clan Labhran, and his successors, did not trouble to register his arms. The result was that the Clan became officially landless pending the chief’s compliance with the Act.
Of course the Clan continued to recognize its own chiefs, and during the Jacobite rising came out as a Clan. In 1957, Donald MacLaren (father of the current Chief) finally complied with the Act by recording the ancient Arms in the Lord Lyon Register. The Chief also acquired title to a small part of the traditional Clan lands (including the ancient gathering site of Creag an Tuirc) and the stigma of “chiefless and landless” was removed.

The heartland of the Clan MacLaren lies in and around the parish of Balquhidder, and the hills that slope north from Loch Voil and Loch Doine, which are known as the famous Braes o’ Balquhidder. The parish is 18 miles long and 7 miles wide, and includes the west end of Loch Earn and most of Loch Lubnaig. The ruined Kirk of the village is dated 1631, and lies near the site of an even earlier church. The present church was built in 1855. Graves in the Kirk yard date from 1685 and include that of Rob Roy MacGregor.

The ancient rallying place of the Clan was Creag an Tuirc (The Boar’s Rock), which is on a small hill overlooking the Kirk, and can be approached by a fairly steep path. In 1987 the Clan Society erected a cairn to commemorate the founding of the Society.

Another branch of the Clan was connected with Tiree and included the distinguished mathematician Professor Colin MacLaren. This branch is now dormant.

Chief of Clan MacLaren

The current Chief of Clan Labhran is Donald MacLaren of MacLaren. Donald, who is a retired member of the British Foreign Service, succeeded his father as Chief in 1966. Donald and Maida have five children, and they live at Kirkton Farm in Balquhidder.

The coat of arms of MacLaren of MacLaren and Achleskine is reserved solely for the use of the Chief. The Clan Badge is for the use of members of the Clan for brooches, cap badges, writing paper, etc. It has a crowned lion with leaves of laurel, and a buckled belt with the slogan “CREAG AN TUIRC”.

Clan MacLaren Society of North America

Donald MacLaren, father of the current chief, conceived the idea of a Clan MacLaren Society. The Clan MacLaren Society was organized in Scotland in 1962. As interest in Clan MacLaren spread, the Clan MacLaren Society USA was chartered in Texas in 1967.

The Clan MacLaren Society USA was strictly focused on genealogy, and they compiled a vast amount of information. The Society dissolved in 1979, having met the original goal of assembling a storehouse of MacLaren genealogy.

The Clan MacLaren Society of North America was chartered in GA in 1981. The CMSNA set broad goals in support of the Clan MacLaren and the Scottish community in general. The CMSNA has a multifaceted purpose: 1) to support, promote, and publicize the Clan MacLaren in the US and Canada; 2) to promote celebration of family heritage of MacLarens; 3) to inform members and others about the history, traditions, and accomplishments of Clan MacLaren; 4) to provide a vehicle for interaction and a common bond among North American MacLarens; and 5) to promote education.

Genealogy continues to be a major focus, with the original Society USA records expanded many times over. The entire MacLaren Genealogy repository can be viewed at the Ellen Odom Payne Library in Moultrie, GA.

CMSNA Structure

Officers of CMSNA consist of an elected President and Vice-President. A Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, Liaison Officer, Quartermaster, Editor, and Legal Council are appointed. A Clan Council composed of the officers and Regional Representatives from the geographic areas of the US and Canada is responsible for governing the Society. Society business is conducted at an Annual General Meeting or at such times as other meetings are called. Mail ballots can also be utilized. In addition, other Society activities are handled by various standing or special committees.

CMSNA also offers the opportunity for membership in the Clan MacLaren Society of Scotland. Annual or life dues for the Scottish Society may be paid through the CMSNA.

Newsletter

The CMSNA publishes a newsletter, the MacLaren Standard, four times each year for the purpose of informing the Society membership of Clan activities, as well as to feature articles on history, culture, genealogy, etc. A copy of each newsletter is provided to all members.

Highland Games

The Clan MacLaren Society of North America is a fixture at most of the major Highland Games held in the US and Canada. A list of upcoming events is published in the Standard.

The Scottish Society maintains a tent at the Lochearnhead Games in Scotland, and are always delighted to welcome clansfolk from all over world. The Games normally are held on the third Saturday of July each year. Lochearnhead has become a famous watersports center and excellent accommodations are available in the area.

The Scouting Connection

Gilwell Park in Essex is the principal training ground for British scout leaders. The Park was gifted by William F. de Bois MacLaren in 1919, and, in his memory, a scouter who has gained his wood badge wears a patch of MacLaren tartan on his neckerchief. The CMSNA has established a special membership and any scouter who has earned the Wood Badge may join the Society.