

Clan MacLaren Society of North America (CMSNA)

Clan History



Clan MacLaren (Clan Labhran) is an ancient clan having occupied the lands in Balquhiddy and Strathearn since well before the 12th Century, where they were the predominant clan. The MacLarens were strong supporters of the Celtic Earls of Strathearn, and as such, were tenants of that very significant Earldom until it was forfeited to the Crown in 1344. Subsequently, the MacLarens became tenants of the Crown without actual ownership of the land.

Clan MacLaren took the name Labhran from Laurin, the hereditary Abbot of Achtness in Balquhiddy in the 13th Century. The MacLarens signed the Ragman's Roll in 1296.

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 Balquhiddy 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 (grandfather of the current Chief) finally complied with the Lyon King of Arms Act 1672 by recording the ancient Arms in the Lord Lyon Register. This former Chief also acquired title to a small part of the traditional Clan lands and the stigma of "chiefless and landless" was removed.

The acquired land included the Clan's ancient rallying site of 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 Maclaurin.

Chief of Clan MacLaren

The current Chief of Clan Labhran is Florian MacLaren of MacLaren, succeeding his late father as Chief in 2026. Florian studied Classics at St. Andrews University and trained as an arborist at the Royal Botanic Gardens in

Edinburgh. He has worked in arboriculture ever since and currently runs a tree company in London. Florian and his wife Romilly have two children, William Wolf and Flora. The Chief's family holds property in the village of Balquhiddy that includes Creag an Tuirc, the hill overlooking the village. This was the ancient rallying point of the Clan.

Though usage of the coat of arms of MacLaren of MacLaren is subject to restrictions, the Clan Badge can be used by 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, grandfather 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 (CMSNA) was chartered in Georgia in 1981. The CMSNA set broad goals in support of Clan MacLaren and the Scottish community in general. The CMSNA has a multifaceted purpose: 1) to support, promote, and publicize Clan MacLaren in the US and Canada; 2) to promote celebration of the family heritage of the 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 of the CMSNA, with the original Society USA records having expanded many times over.

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.

Structure

Officers of the CMSNA are an elected President and Vice-President, and the Immediate Past President. The officer positions of Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, Liaison Officer, Quartermaster, Editor, Genealogist, and Legal Counsel 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. In addition, other Society activities are handled by various standing or special committees.

Newsletter

The CMSNA publishes a quarterly digital newsletter, "The MacLaren Standard". The newsletter provides the membership with information on Clan activities, as well as featuring articles on such topics as history, culture, and genealogy.

Highland Games

The CMSNA is a fixture at most of the major Highland games held in the US and Canada. The Clan MacLaren Society of Scotland maintains a tent at the Lochearnhead Games in Scotland, and are always delighted to welcome clans-folk from all over the world. The Games are generally held on the third Saturday of July each year. Lochearnhead has become a famous water sports center and excellent accommodations are available in the area.

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 celebrations. 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.clanmaclarennna.org

Some of the Clan MacLaren Surnames

MacLaren	McLaren	MacLaurin
McLaurin	MacLauren	McLauren
MacLarin	McClarín	MacLaran
McLaran	McClaran	MacLeran
MacLaurie	Laurence	Lawrence
Law	Lawson	Low
Lowe	Lawrie	Laurie
Lowery	Lowrey	Lowry
Paterson	Patterson	Peterson
MacPater	Patrick	MacPatrick
MacRory	MacGory	MacRuari
Rorie	Rorison	Wright

There are many other spelling variations.

Membership Classes

INDIVIDUAL Individuals or organizations. One vote per individual membership.

FAMILY Parents and all children under 18 years old. One vote per family membership.

LIFE Lifetime membership. One vote per life membership.

WOOD BADGE Any scout awarded the wood badge. This membership is non-voting.

WOOD BADGE LIFE Non-voting lifetime membership to any scout awarded the wood badge.

Please see the Membership Application for current pricing and additional information.

Clan MacLaren Leadership

Chief: Florian MacLaren of MacLaren

Chieftain: James W. H. MacLaren

Current Officers of the CMSNA

President – Cathy Botkin Galloway

Email: cathy.bg.cmsna@gmail.com

Vice-President – Dave Elkin

Immediate Past President – Mark A. McLaren

Secretary – G. Alan Lowrey

Treasurer – Justis McLaren

Membership Secretary – Debbie Patterson

Email: membership@clanmaclarennna.org

Assistant Secretary/Treasurer – open

Quartermaster – open

Liaison Officer – Steve Quillin

Newsletter Editor – Ruth McFadden

Genealogist – Art Lowe

www.clanmaclarennna.org

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