

There has been some controversy and speculation on the succession to Chief John MacLeod. Recent ACMS correspondence has provided helpful information for which we are grateful.

Peter (NSW) published a letter from Ruari H-M, which was written for the ACMS meeting Feb. However it contained some distracting errors, which I hope have been amended here. I have included an edited & corrected summary.

**Guy MacLeod of Talisker.** (Saga condensed)

Upon the death in 2007, of Chief John MacLeod of MacLeod, Guy MacLeod of Talisker was reported as stating he wished to make known his claim as MacLeod of MacLeod, but on advice decided not to proceed.

Talisker is the senior cadet branch of the MacLeods of Harris and Dunvegan. Evan Guy 13<sup>th</sup> of Talisker is descended directly through the male line from Sir Roderick of Talisker second son of Sir Rory Mor MacLeod, 15<sup>th</sup> Chief of MacLeods of Harris & Dunvegan (d. 1626).

25<sup>th</sup> Chief, Norman MacLeod (d.1895) made an entail on the estate in 1866, that in the event of no male heirs, the estate would pass to the eldest daughter of the last surviving male heir of the chiefly line. His wisdom was prophetic with his 4 sons providing no surviving male heirs, and in 1935 Sir Reginald the 27<sup>th</sup> Chief died, so the entail came into effect, and the estate passed to his eldest daughter, Flora. She petitioned the Lyon Court for, and was granted, the undifferenced Arms of MacLeod of MacLeod. Flora reverted to her maiden name of MacLeod of MacLeod.

The Clan MacLeod Society ratified the conclusion. Chief Flora's youngest daughter had sons, the first, Robert Wolridge-Gordon exclusively inherited the Gordon estate Esslelmount, while second son (and first of twins), John, was named as Chief Flora's heir to Dunvegan. He changed his surname to MacLeod of MacLeod, that of his grandmother (Flora, and Great Grandfather Reginald). On the death of Dame Flora in 1976 John was granted the Arms and estate of MacLeod of MacLeod. His succession was not challenged by Ian MacLeod 12<sup>th</sup> of Talisker

February 2007, Chief John died, and the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies Management Council passed a resolution to recognise, acknowledge, acclaim and welcome Hugh MacLeod of MacLeod as 30<sup>th</sup> Chief of the Clan MacLeod and of the whole name.

Guy MacLeod 13<sup>th</sup> of Talisker let it be known that he was "more interested in the bloodline than taking over a ruined castle, or hitting the headlines. I am keen that the bloodline shouldn't be lost." He would have to petition the Lord Lyon to be granted Arms of MacLeod of MacLeod.

He has not pursued this. Some barrackers had made some noise about his lineage, and recognition within the clan.

The Lyon Court has indicated that such petition would be unlikely to succeed because Hugh Magnus is the legitimate heir to John MacLeod of MacLeod who was granted Arms. A Talisker claim could have been made in 1935, and 1976, but none had been initiated.

In the long ago when Clans were potent forces minding their territory, the Chiefship was not necessarily a simple succession of the eldest son. There are instances of the *duine uasals* (leading men of the clan) choosing a successor. In this modern age the ACMS does not represent all the clan, but many in it, and especially those interested in clan affairs.

The Lyon Clerk summarises some issues as:-

The ACMS has no basis for recognising chiefs or heads of families.

The chiefs and heads of families pursue their own taking of Armorial bearings, and it is a matter for the families to assert who they are. Talisker can bear Arms of Talisker on apparenacy even though he has not matriculated the Arms since Ian MacLeod 12<sup>th</sup> of Talisker.

President of ACMS, Malcolm MacLeod communicates, "there is and has never been any doubt in ACMS that you are who you are, namely the Representor of MacLeod of Talisker, and to confirm that it is not ACMS's business to do or say anything else."

*We have welcomed this clarification of the issue, from the Lyon Court, ACMS President Malcolm MacLeod, Scotland's Ruari Halford MacLeod; and add that should Guy MacLeod as an Australian, wish to join our Society we would welcome him.*

*Other sources:- The MacLeods, A History of a Clan (1956), Grant; and The Chiefs of Clan MacLeod, (1986?), A.Morrison.*