

Changes in the membership renewal process to July 1 date

Since the Clan MacInnes Society was re-formed and incorporated in 2001 as the International Association of Clan MacInnes, we have witnessed numerous changes in our operations. Changes to improve communications, membership services, educational activities and especially, to fully embrace the truly international scope of our mission. Changes will continue as we grow. Most exciting has been the evolution of our web site and the access it provides for creating a world-wide “gathering” of kinsman. “International” is more than just a word for us. It is our new mission.

As part of the Clan’s evolution, we have found that much of what we once did in the early years is again a good way to do things. Some might call that “devolution” but with today’s technology, we have to revisit everything. At our meeting of the Board in July 2003, we discussed membership growth at length and determined it appropriate to return to a single renewal date for all members in the United States and Canada. This begins in 2004. Renewal notices will be sent in May for a July 1 due date.

Our effort at new member recruitment, we concluded, must be met with energetic retention activities or the Association will not grow. Leaving renewal to a chance reading of a memo in the *Thistle & Bee* was not working well. The cost of repeated reminder cards (and the month after month task this required) seemed ineffective. We’ve all become accustomed to getting statements for utilities, subscriptions, etc. and paying them in some structured way using return envelopes. Experience supports the value of sending renewal statements and we are now able to prepare and send annual invoices with ease.

We faced the task of pro-rata billing to accomplish the transition and were concerned about unfairly billing some members or sacrificing needed dues to support our work. The amount on the individual invoices reflects a reasonable and balanced approach to the problem. Again, technology makes it simple.

In the end, all of us will learn to expect renewal on a basis consistent with when most of us first joined – the summer “games” season. As new members join, they will pay for a full year - \$25 US. We will then invoice them for renewal at the amount needed to get them to the July annual renewal date.

Thank you for prompt renewal and for keeping us updated when you change your particulars. Nothing is more frustrating than losing you for lack of a valid address.

John McInnis. LT.- Member Services