

THE MACBRAIR FAMILY ASSOCIATION
McBRAYER/BRIER/MAKBRAR



IN DEFIANCE

Volume 4, No. 2

April, 1993

FROM THE CHIEF

Time seems to pass by rapidly and it's time to greet you once again. I have been encouraged by the responses I have received from many of you in response to something I said in previous correspondence and thank all who took the time to write. I wish more would do likewise. One of those responses will appear under the title of "Coincidences" elsewhere in this newsletter.

We must not let conflicts of society, changes of political actions, expanse of crime, drugs, and conflict of groups in all nations allow us to overlook the values of family life, and that includes organizations like ours. We propose to include more news of the past as well as the present in our newsletter. That requires the cooperation of more of you to keep us aware of happenings in your area such as reunions, family events, gripes, comments and the like. Ethel has a great number of items about the past of our family and will be presenting them regularly. We believe these to be of interest to everyone.

It is with regret that Charles finds it necessary to resign as the editor of *In Defiance*. We will miss his contribution to our family and thank him for all he has done and will continue to do in other ways. We will replace him as soon as possible and assure you we will continue the newsletter regularly.

Please keep your comments and news coming in. At present send them to me or Ethel Koller. May God be with you all. Ben McBrayer

FROM THE EDITOR

Time has come to share the editorship with others. We notified Ben several months ago that the April issue would be our last as editors.

It has been interesting to hear from you and we have made a sincere effort to improve the newsletter. However, three years is enough. This is a national publication, but we feel we have not received enough news that truly represented everyone. This newsletter is an outgrowth of Ethel Koller's *Heritage News*. We want to express grateful appreciation to her for the magnificent way she has continued to send in news. Thanks, Ethel!

From the Chief through the Council and Board to each member communication must be maintained so everyone may share the great heritage that is ours.

Thanks again for the three years as editors. We will always participate in any way possible to help strengthen the organization.

Charles and Phillelle McBrayer

LOST FRIEND: 1945-1946

I am trying to locate Betty McBrayer, maiden name could be Lewis, cousin of Charles E. Lewis, U. S. Navy; worked at F&R Lazarus, Columbus, Ohio. Please contact:

Edna McBrayer Nelson
775 W. Rogers Road #213
Tucson, AZ 85705

COINCIDENCES

In January a letter came to me from John Roy McBrayer which reads in part: "In July there was a reunion of the descendants of JOHN LEWIS MCBRAYER at the home of his great granddaughter Roxanne McBrayer Rentenberg." That immediately caught my eye since my father was also John Lewis McBrayer.

I began to check and found the following: There are two John Lewis McBrayers, both descendants of the William line; down through James; my grandfather Henry Freeland McBrayer, 5th generation; my father John Lewis, 6th generation. The other John Lewis is a 7th generation just as I am. Another coincidence is that both John Lewises were coal miners.

Ben McBrayer

FAMILY COOKBOOK

Linda McBrayer Froschauer prepared a booklet with a collection of recipes kitchen-tested by descendants of Seneca McBrayer. The intent of this booklet is to generate interest in the possible development of a MacBriar Family Association cookbook. We seek your help in making this possible by sending your favorite recipes with comments and your family descendency. At least 150 recipes will be needed to make this project possible. Send your contributions, comments and questions to:

Linda Froschauer
11 Marion Road
Westport, CT 06880

OLD CASTLE SITE - CAERLAVEROCK

The old castle site at Caerlaverock (the castle of the Lark) lies some 200 feet southwest of the present castle that we as a family are familiar with.

In July of 1969 I flew in a small plane from London to Carlisle, England. Knowing that there was an American among the half dozen passengers, the Captain sent back word to me "Look out the window and below you will see an unusual site. We are in drought; the grass is so dry that we can see the Roman roads down there below us, like a small glimpse into the past!"

"By around 81 A. D. the Romans came to our area, planting their forts planned like little Hellenistic cities, over our area (far closer than we had thought until aerial photography discoveries in the summer of 1984) linking the cities with roads, one of which, coming along the Warlaw ridge...from the Roman harbour at Caerlaverock, runs down through the town of Dumfries." (*History of Dumfries*, addenda by A. E. Truckell)

In August of 1969 I walked down the burn of the old Castle site below Caerlaverock with my long-time friend, an archaeologist interested in Romans and their activities. It is almost commonplace in archaeology he told me, that medieval castles had been erected on Roman sites and, indeed, this particular old site lies some 200 yards southwest of the medieval castle that you, our family, are familiar with. The old site here was

excavated before 1868, but no record has survived. In recent years the surveyors of a Royal Commission re-opened the previous excavation. The site is roughly 100x80 feet, and there were brought to light the masonry foundations of a tower of medieval character in the northernmost corner. To everything else the surveyors of the Commission turned a blind eye. (*Dumfries and Galloway transactions* 1946, page 67, by R. C. Reid) They paid no attention to the very much larger enclosure on the west side, nor to the conspicuous mound that runs in a straight line due south from the southwest end of the moat, where a burn runs to the sea.

We walked down this burn, hoping to locate the original sea level as a starting point. When we reached the spot where the burn turns west, my friend called my attention to the line of the high mount. Here there might have been a dock in which ships of the period might have laid--the great enclosure in the Castle Wood. The bank surrounding enclosure was a sea wall, still visible in places if one takes time to search for it, the flat surface of the enclosure, well above the earlier level. Tradition relates that the outer moat of the castle was filled by the sea at high tide.

It is well known that the coasts of these islands have been slowly but steadily rising since Roman times. The theory of a fairly rapid recession of the sea, such as caused the 'raised beaches' of 25 feet or more, is now accepted by geologists.

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It is known that Roman London, now all built-over and brought to light again by German bombs, is presently nine feet above the corresponding level of Roman times. We could therefore expect the sea level at Caerlaverock to have receded accordingly.

Sea levels are always expressed in terms of the mean sea level at Liverpool. It is a constant factor from which all surveying derives. The height of the present tide levels at Caerlaverock, according to my friend, is definitely established at 14 to 17 feet above Liverpool mean sea level, the higher figure representing an abnormality of spring tides.

Incidentally, if you decide to look for a possible port site on one of your side trips to Caerlaverock, you should take walking shoes. Sometimes access is impossible because of water in the burn, but the walk is well worth the effort.

In the next newsletter we will attempt to figure out the location of the birthplace of King Arthur; it is recorded as being Caerlaverock Castle, but accounts don't seem to favor either of the two above-mentioned sites. We will continue to probe this issue.

If you know of anyone who is going to Scotland in the not too distant future, someone who wouldn't mind taking an additional small ride past Caerlaverock, would you please send notice of your

anticipated visit to Ben? Perhaps we can add an extra link to our story. We need your help.

Ethel Koller

SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

Some time last fall I saw in our church bulletin that a McBrayer had moved into our parish. Since I am one of the welcomers to the parish, I went into the office and requested the address of this family, although this was not in my locality. I stopped by to see the family, but was not prepared to have a black woman come to the door. Yes, she was Mrs. Cecil McBrayer. I told her what I was there for and she invited me in for a visit.

Later a long article appeared in our paper highlighting Cecil McBrayer, a park ranger who enjoys working with children. He is commissioned by the Springfield Park Board to make arrests and write tickets and he's armed, but one of the most important things is his visibility. Parks Director Dan Kinney said "We had a particular problem recently at a park. Cecil took the youth home, counseled with his dad and the word got out pretty quick." To children at Springfield's parks McBrayer is a father figure. One pair of twins, now 15, adopted him as their uncle when they were little boys.

Samantha Kimbell, 18, a lifeguard at a park pool, says "He's really friendly to everybody. He cares a lot. He's the best."

Joyce Spencer