



CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (Victoria)

Newsletter No 11, June 1987

MACMILLAN

CREST BADGE : *A dexter and a sinister hand brandishing a two-handed sword, proper.*
MOTTO : *Miseris succurrere disco*
(I learn to succour the distressed).
GAELIC NAME : *MacGhille-Mhaolain.*

Office Bearers:

- President -** Donald Macmillan c/- Scotch College, Hawthorn, 3122. 818 2859
- Secretary -** Steven McMillan 126 Morack Rd, Vermont Sth, 3133. 221 5223
- Treasurer -** John T. Macmillan 7 Annesley Crt, Mt Waverley, 3149. 277 6158
- Archivist & Editor -** Bob McMillan—Kay 37 Trafalgar St, Ferntree Gully, 3156. 758 5823

Committee Members:

- June Senior 41 Lincoln Ave., Glen Waverley, 3150. 560 8746
- John Ronald Macmillan 2 Trafalgar Rd., Camberwell, 3124. 82 5365



SCOTTISH CLAN GATHERING AT KRYAL CASTLE, BALLARAT

It was a cold wind and a rainy day, just like you would expect in Scotland, but really it was at Kryal Castle, Ballarat when I attended the 1st Festival of Scottish Heritage on the 8th of March.

Although the weather dampened proceedings and robbed the gathering of some colour it did not dampen the warmth and enthusiasm of the gathering.

The castle setting I found was perfect for the occasion, also the country dancing teams of Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo and Flinders Shire, put on an excellent display under very trying conditions.

As usual the massed pipe bands added the colour and atmosphere needed for a Highland Gathering. Over 20 clans were represented at the festival and it was a colourful sight to see all the clans in their individual tartans.

The festival ran for two days, the first day being mainly Highland Games material plus family events.

Jim McMillan
Committee Member
(Deceased)



HIGHLAND DANCING

When you see all those bonnie lassies competing in Highland Dancing Competitions, it is interesting to note that until 1900 only men entered for Highland Dancing Competitions. That was until a young lass called Jenny Douglas came on the scene and struck the first blow for sexual equality. She entered for the competition and was accepted. Over the years the number of girls competing continued to grow and today girls outnumber men 100 to 1.

If we look at the origin of the three Highland Dances it is easy to see why these dances were performed by men only.

1. THE HIGHLAND FLING

The oldest dance of the three, considered to be based on a stag 'in season', the arms of the dancer held aloft representing antlers, in other words a male fertility dance.

2. THE SWORD DANCE

Malcolm Canmore, King of Scots is credited with the Sword Dance, after slaying a foe in a pitched battle, and having only recently been converted to Christianity, he placed his sword and that of his enemy in the form of a cross, and danced in triumph over them.

3. SEANN TRUIBHAI

After Culloden when wearing the kilt was forbidden, Highlanders were forced to wear trousers, their distaste for this garment is shown in Seann Truibhais (which loosely translated from the Gaelic means ugly or unwanted trousers) the shake down of the dancers leg, being an attempt to shake off the dreaded garment. Remember it was unheard of in those days for girls to wear trousers.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor



SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Country Dancing? Lets take this fallacy first — Scottish Country Dancing is entirely different from Highland Dancing. Country Dancing is by its nature a group of dance form, consisting mainly of strathspeys and reels in which sets of two, three and four couples — or even more perform the steps together. The movements are few and simple to learn, the beauty and enjoyment being in the design woven by the dance. It has nothing to do with the country or rural scene, being a corruption of the French CONTRE-DANSE — meaning dancing opposite one another. A wealth of wonderful music has been composed for this type of dancing and its popularity is world wide.

CLAN SOCIETY OBITUARIES

Sadly, it seems to be becoming a regular item of late to include death notices in our newsletters. This time it is my unfortunate duty to inform the society of the deaths of three of our members.

Firstly, James (Jim) Good McMillan (committee member) who died suddenly on 6 April, An article by Jim is included in this newsletter, which I received from him only a week before his death.

Jim was a jovial and enthusiastic Scot who was eager to help out on the committee. Our thoughts go to his wife, Phyllis and their family. Phyllis, by the way, attended all the committee meetings with Jim.

I also received notices of the deaths of Mrs Joyce Robison of Berwick, date of death not known, and Ronald William McMillan of Ringwood East, who died on 24 March. The committee extends sympathy to both families and our thanks for informing us of their losses.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor



JOHN McMILLAN OF EARLY WAVERLEY — by Steven McMillan

"I was glancing through the history of Waverley when I noticed a reference to one of the early settlers in that area, namely John McMillan. I thought it would be of interest to relate the story of his settlement in the area now known as Waverley".

John McMillan was among the 229 passengers, mostly impoverished, Scottish tenant farmers on the 'David Clark', the first of only 2 government sponsored immigrant ships to come to Port Phillip. She arrived from Greenock on 28th October 1839.

John McMillan was 46 when he landed, his wife was 43 and his 4 eldest children; namely, Archibald, John, Catherine and Margaret were aged 14 to 21 were able to obtain work immediately whilst Alexander, Flora and Jane aged between 7 and 14 remained with their parents.

John and Mary and Margaret went to work for a Captain Brown on his Darebin Creek farm and Catherine went as a dairymaid to John MacDonalds Floraville farm at Keelbundoora (near the present City of Heidelberg).

Meanwhile, Archibald and his father looked round for land they could claim for themselves and they found it in the last few weeks of 1839. He was able to obtain 5 square miles of country which was centred around a creek which became known as Scotchman's Creek. It was fed by a number of minor creeks and drained eventually into Gardiners Creek.

A few hundred yards north of the main stream was a sandy tributary, whose northern bank rose up sharply to form a natural boundary. South from Scotchman's Creek he claimed one and three-quarter miles of rolling country with 'good pasture', moderately timbered with gum and box. From east to west his claim measured three miles, including some good stringy-bark forest in the east.

A track leading to the Dandenong run of Dr. McCrae and beyond that to Westernport passed close to the western edge of his claim and there seems to be a rough correspondence between some of the modern highways and the boundaries of the Scotchman's Creek run.

On to his Scotchman's Creek run John McMillan brought some cattle. His camp site was noted by T. H. Nutt when he surveyed the creek in 1840. But in 1841, when a Port Phillip census was taken, John McMillan was the householder who completed the form for Cuthbert and Gardiners Leasehold at Moonee Ponds.

It is likely that he too had to work for a season to gain the time and capital needed to build the family house and to stock the Scotchman's Creek run, while his older sons could have camped on the creek to look after the spread. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1841, the family were probably all settled into their new home, for in November 1843, John was at pains to point out to Commissioner Airey that; 'I went for two seasons with my cattle to the Dandenong Creek for the scarcity of water.'

Although Scotchman's Creek may have not provided an adequate water supply for McMillan's whole herd during the summer months, it was nevertheless probably the run's most attractive feature. Though narrow and in places steeply banked, it was shaded by gums and ti-tree with ferns and flowering shrubs and wildflowers in the undergrowth.

McMILLAN. — James Good, (suddenly) passed away peacefully on Apr. 6, 1967. Beloved husband of Phyllis, devoted father of Jamie and Tom, father-in-law of Julie and Kerrie and adored Grandpa of Kylie, Emma and Ashley. Rest peacefully. Till we meet again, our thoughts and love will always be with you.

Death Notice:

James (Jim) Good McMillan



In spite of dry summers and the depression in prices from 1841 to 1843 which ruined many of the larger Port Phillip stockholders, the McMillan's seemed to have prospered moderately. They were close enough to the fresh meat market of Melbourne to find some profit even at low prices.

John and his two elder sons were all the stockmen the run needed, and even the young Alexander was growing to become the lithe daring horseman which he remained for the rest of his life. The family began some plots of cultivation (probably oats and hay for the horses and potatoes and other vegetables for themselves). In a directory of the period, John senior and junior, Archibald and Alexander are all described as 'agriculturalists'. Horses, saddlery and extra horse feed were probably their main expenses, for a cattle run relied heavily on its mounted stockmen and by April 1845 the McMillan's had a herd of about 400 beasts.

The boundaries to the areas covered by a pasturing or 'Squatters Licence' were generally obscure. Often the only precise definition was a creek frontage or some other water supply which was vital to the survival of both settlers and their stock. Those licencees who occupied runs when the land was being surveyed prior to sale had a right to buy a certain proportion of it a fixed price before the rest was publicly auctioned.

These pre-emptive blocks were almost inevitably sites around a run's water supply. John McMillan had plenty of neighbourly pressures over boundaries and access to water. He heard news of a special survey being allotted to a James Atkinson. He found it very enticing.

Atkinson was able to offer for leasing quite extensive farms with well defined boundaries, and in September 1845, McMillan gave notice that he was removing some of his stock from Scotchman's Creek to another district. After a few months, Archibald and young John were left to run the Port Fairy farm, while their parents and 16 year old Alexander struck out northwards for Lake Leaghur on the Loddon River. Their Leaghur licence was for 28,000 acres and the final ties with Scotchman's Creek were cut when the rest of the stock and rights were transferred to John McKean, a neighbour on 31-12-1846 as 'agriculturalists'.

Steven McMillan
Secretary



THE INVENTIVE SCOTS

You may recall that our President, Donald Macmillan mentioned in his message of our April newsletter of the inventiveness of the Scot. He asked if anyone had any information about the successes of the MacMillans, Macmillans and McMillans in particular, to pass it on to us.

Well, as yet nothing has been forthcoming on the Mac's, but June Senior (Committee member) provided me with an article she had on the Scots in general. This is included as an insert in this newsletter and I'm sure that you will be surprised at what the Scots have invented.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor



ANGUS McMILLAN - PATHFINDER (Continued)

Angus knew that the success of his proposed venture depended on adequate preparation and organisation. With winter approaching it was necessary to act quickly.

He discussed the trip with McFarlane who pointed out that a strong party was necessary. Both agreed that the work of the station required all men available and that none could be spared. The risk of death from attacks by the natives or perishing in the unknown mountains would discourage volunteers.

McMillan was young and inexperienced and yet to prove his qualities of leadership. McFarlane might have found companions, but who would be willing to trust themselves to the untried overseer. He must be able to prove that he could guide a party in country where no white man had journeyed. (Continued on Page 4)

* Please note the change of Telephone Number for the House of Scotland.



**McMILLAN
HOLIDAY VILLAGE**

Telephone (051) 56 2283. P.O. Box 56, Metung, Victoria, 3904.

Telephone (03) 817 5151

House of Scotland

**FINEST SCOTTISH PRODUCTS
AUTHENTIC CLAN KILTS**

- * KILTS
- * TWEEDS
- * POTTERY
- * PIPE BAND EQUIPMENT
- * AUTHENTIC CLAN TARTANS
- * DANCERS ACCESSORIES
- * JEWELLERY
- * CLAN PLAQUES
- * SCOTTISH CRAFTS RECORDS

115 WHITEHORSE ROAD,
BALWYN/DEEPDENE, 3103, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

ANGUS McMILLAN - PATHFINDER (Continued)

McMillan accepted the situation in a philosophical fashion. He had unbounded self confidence in his ability as a bushman. His upbringing in the Hebrides and his year in the colony had given him a robust constitution. He recorded his resolution to go ahead:- "Nothing daunted, I determined to start with my friend Jimmy Gibber who was king of the tribe and who appeared to be one of the most intelligent among them".

McMillan may have been mistaken in his belief about this. Chieftainship was normally unknown among the Australian Tribes whose affairs were directed by a Council of Elders. However, Jimmy Gibber must have appealed to Angus as an outstanding aboriginal in whose ability to act as a guide and companion he had utmost confidence. He told Jimmy about his compass. As an added inducement, McMillan offered Jimmy a gun and some blankets. Jimmy sought assent of his tribe which was obtained by gifts of tobacco and pipes.

McMillan had told the natives that he intended to create a station himself and, with the thought of more to follow from the friendly Scot, they assured him that, when it was selected, the whole tribe would follow him. Jimmy received detailed instructions from the warriors as to the route he should follow, particularly places where rivers could be crossed. The tribe considered the proposal for a week.

Their greatest fear was the wild Warrigals who were much stronger and more numerous. Before they were permitted to leave they were given a tribal farewell.

The start was made on 28-5-1839. It was memorial departure which he later recounted in letters home and to many of his Australian friends. By that evening they had covered fifteen miles to Tubbutt near where the present town of Tubbutt stands south west of Currawong. By eight the next morning the pair were on their way through open forest with kangaroo grass. Evening found them at the Snowy River, which they negotiated safely with the horses after travelling ten miles through open forest surrounded by high hills.

The next day they reached the hills and the weather became colder. After 16 miles they stopped for the night, Jimmy lit a large fire and erected a breakwind in his native fashion. During the night the horses wandered, but Jimmy had no difficulty tracking them to a warm gully. That night the frost was keen and mountain air struck cold reminding McMillan of his native Scotland.

On June 1 McMillan awoke to find a surly native in place of the usually cheerful Jimmy. During the day he claimed he was lost and cast doubts on McMillan's compass. The two hacked their way through dense scrub and made only 8 miles. Jimmy showed increased anxiety and expressed a desire to return to his tribe.

Angus placated him by promises to go back by way of Omeo after they had seen the country. Jimmy replied he wished to go home through Buchan which was familiar territory. Next day Jimmy showed signs of fear and kept an anxious eye open for wild blacks. McMillan's compass course was south-west and his goal became Mount McLeod, named by him from which he hoped to see the lakes and plains towards the south. McMillan sensed that Jimmy was seeking for an opportunity to escape. The Scot told him that it was his intention that both should climb the mountain. Reluctantly Jimmy mounted his horse and they proceeded; the native kept a sharp watch for blacks.

The steep forest country made the going slow and arduous and again they only covered eight miles. They then found a clearing and lit a fire. Despite it being a cold night Jimmy only built a small fire because he was afraid of the Warrigals. McMillan told him the wild blacks were many days south. The native continued to talk excitedly in a subdued voice and complained that he was tired of travelling over rough country. He wished to return to the tribe.

That night, McMillan was almost asleep when in an instant he awoke. Standing above him was Jimmy holding a spear and waddy ready to strike. In an instant McMillan rolled away and was able to grab his pistol. Jimmy was taller, but the Scot stood his ground and Jimmy dropped the waddy and spear and begging McMillan not to fire. McMillan had not said anything but his tough attitude made the native invent an excuse.

During the remainder of the cold night McMillan stayed awake replenishing his fire as it died low. At 5 a.m. Jimmy appeared to be asleep. By seven, the two were on their feet preparing for the day's journey. It was a situation not without danger. The two were in unknown country, the native was anxious to return and would seize any opportunity which presented itself to slip away through the bush. He might even attempt murder again, but the Scot did not think this likely.

The only solution was a compromise. McMillan felt bitter disappointment that his journey was to prove a failure. While he was disposed to forgive the treachery, he was resentful that the native's fear and lack of responsibility should cause him to abandon his goal and go back. As a precaution while Jimmy slept Angus had taken the aborigine's waddy, spear and stone tomahawk and had hidden them behind a tree a short distance into the forest.

As they ate breakfast, the native cowered near the fire and said little; he made no attempt to retrieve the missing weapons. By 2 p.m. in the afternoon they had ascended the steep hill and were rewarded by a splendid view of the low country to the south. The shimmer of the sea gladdened McMillan's heart and more than compensated for the incident of the night.