

CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (Victoria)

Newsletter No 12, September 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.*

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

I think it is time for me to step down as President of the Society - it is good for any society to have changes in leadership with new ideas and energy that this engenders.

I have enjoyed my time as President - and have particularly enjoyed the opportunity to be the agent through which the typical generous hospitality of the Scots has been extended to us by Scotch College.

I am retiring from Scotch at the end of 1987 - after 29 years on the staff. Meg and I will be living at Red Hill South and we hope that you will all be able to join us for at least one clan function next year. At this stage we suggest a Barbecue at the AGM and perhaps an introduction to Scottish Dancing after lunch. When things become clearer we shall notify you of details. Please come - it is a lovely area, and we would love to show it to you.

Thank you for all your support during my term of office. You are all delightful, wonderfully warm friends with whom we wish to maintain our contacts.

Good luck
Donald Macmillan
President

Further to Don's message, I personally would like to thank Don for his valuable and devoted contribution to the Society which he helped create in the first place. As well as being our President, Don provided the committee with a venue for meetings at School House in Scotch College and also the venue for the AGM and Barbecue each year on the banks of the Yarra in the Scotch College grounds.

I would therefore like to see as many of our members and their friends to come along and wish Don farewell, not only from the Presidency, but also his position as House Master at Scotch College.

This brings me to another point. As Don is resigning we naturally require a new President. The job does not involve much work apart from presiding over the three or four committee meetings that we have each year. Last year Don was going to resign as President, but as nobody came forward to replace him, he stayed on for another year - not so this year. So we would like you all to think of nominating someone suitable, which can be yourself if you wish. Let's not leave it all to the same few as usually happens with this type of thing.

As for Don and Meg's suggestion of a Barbeque at their home at Red Hill South, I think that is a great idea as an outing for all members and their families able to make it on the day.

The AGM and Barbecue by the way is on October 11th at Scotch College on the banks of the Yarra River. Don has ordered a sunny day again. Bring your own food and drinks. Tables and chairs will be provided, as will the barbecue for those who wish to cook their own. Entrance is by the double gates in Morrison Street, via Callantina Road. (see map on bottom of insert, which you can cut off. Commencing 12.00 approx. Bring along your family and friends.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor



SCOTLAND REVISITED

Once again we have had a most informative evening about a Scottish tour, this time from John and Helen Macmillan.

You will have noticed in the previous newsletter the insert with a brief description and photos of John and Helens trip overseas last year, in particular their tour of Scotland. Well on June 4th as planned, John and Helen presented an informal talk about their overseas trip, which included Britain, Scandinavia and the Continent. The trip was well planned and obviously busy, which included many countries and cities.

The talk was moved from the original venue to School House, the residence of Donald and Meg Macmillan and family. John and Helen presented the talk in a most professional yet informal manner, often referring to maps of the routes taken and at times to their diary to read excerpts from their notes. They gave us their impressions of the people, the country and recalled some of the unusual and funny occurrences during their months of touring.

The highlight of their trip was of course, Scotland, where they had the opportunity to go to the Military Tattoo, The Commonwealth Games and to also call in our our Clan Chief, George MacMillan and his wife, Jane. As usual they were greeted with the normal Scottish hospitality there and although their stay was short they still had a lovely time.

In addition to the talk John and Helen brought along many photographs for us to see, in particular those from Edinburgh and Finlaystone. There were also ample brochures and maps to browse through, including a book about the MacMillan Clan Heritage which Bill Gibson of the 'House of Scotland' is trying to get for me for our library, as well as a few spare copies.

In conclusion, I found it a very informative and relaxing evening. It was a pity that more members could not join us on the night.

MACMILLAN CLAN TARTANS

As a result of having read the booklet that John and Helen brought back from Scotland I was surprised to see that it seems there are actually six MacMillan Clan Tartans instead of three as I originally thought.

The three that I was aware of are the: Ancient Dress, Modern Old and Modern Hunting Tartans. The other three are the: Weathered Old, Ancient Old and Ancient Hunting. It is a pity I can't include them in a newsletter for all to see.

Also included in the book were a number of interesting facts about the Clan MacMillan, some of which I found difficult to understand, not having any knowledge of the history of Scotland. Some information which I'm sure most people are unaware of is the fact that the Clan MacMillan has several associated Sept names, which include: Bell, Baxter, Brown and Walker. For everyone's general information I have included the details of those associated Sept names on page 3 of this newsletter.

CLAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

We feel that it's again time to recruit some more members for our society. In order that everyone can help in some way I have included one copy of a handout in the newsletter. You may know of a person or family who may be a MacMillan, McMillan, Macmillan (or variant spelling), a descendant of same, or even someone of the Sept names mentioned above. Tell them about our society by giving them the handout enclosed. In this way you will inform them of our existence and if we all succeed in recruiting one new member we will effectively double our membership.

Should anyone require additional copies of the handout, please don't hesitate to ring or write. Your assistance in this recruiting drive will be greatly appreciated and will ensure that our annual fees remain at the present \$5.00.

While on the subject of fees, there are still some members who are unfinancial. So could they please make the effort to forward on their fees to the treasurer as soon as possible.

CORRESPONDENCE

Firstly, two letters for assistance for McMillan connections. One is published in the newsletter, the other was from a non-member but the lack of any details provided made any assistance almost impossible.

Don Macmillan received a letter from George and Jane MacMillan enclosing a copy of a booklet produced by the Clan MacMillan Society of North America. It is about the Clan MacMillan Heritage and written by Rev. Chris McMullen. I have made some copies of it for our Clan Society Library.

Our Secretary, Steven McMillan found an article in a book about the Macmillan's of Metung, which I have also copied for our library.

And while in the Gippsland neighbourhood, I was sent a newspaper article about Angus McMillan the Gippsland explorer which appeared in the local paper in Maffra. I saw it at a friend's house some month's ago and she kindly sent it on to me.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor

ANCESTRAL HELP NEEDED

“Looking for McMillan’s from Fort William, Invernesshire, Scotland”:

In particular, the line of Angus McMillan and Isabella (McMillan) who possibly had a small farm in the area, and their family. Isabella, son John McMillan, born c. 1835, another son and two daughters came to Australia probably in about 1854 or 1855 and probably farmed around Purnim and Mortlake in the 1860’s. John then moved to Deniliquin.

Anyone with any leads on this family please contact Keith Roberts, 9 Lightcliff Avenue, Lindfield 2070, New South Wales Tel.(02) 467 1513.

SOME ASSOCIATED NAMES

Associated names have a hazy history. Sometimes they had more than one origin; also clouding the precise location of a particular surname might be that name’s proscription or of course a migrant population. Even the spelling of surnames was subject to great variations. shifting from usually Latin or Gaelic and heeding rarely to consistent spelling.

In early records there can be several spellings of the same name. Undoubtedly contributing to this inconsistency is the handwriting in official records, which was often open to more than one spelling interpretation. There is no official registered list of sept names but the names listed have clan association.

With regard to the ‘Mac’ prefix, this was, of course, from the Gaelic meaning, son of. It wasn’t long before it was abbreviated to ‘Mc’ or ‘M’, until we have reached the position now where there are more ‘Mc’s’ than ‘Mac’s’.

Baxter MacMillan origins explained in clan history. Other Baxters have Angus and English connection. John MacBaxter tenant of the lands of Ardinslet, Argyllshire. John MacVaxter was a landholder in Islay in 1686.

Bell Those of this name in the Borders and England, with origins there, will have no Macmillan connection. Bell has been adopted from the MacMillan branch called ‘Na Belaich’, who lived in Glen Aray and Glen Shira. The name is still common in the Inveraray district. In Islay there is little difference in Gaelic between MacMillan (MacMhaolain) and Bell (Mac’illemhaoil).

Brown The Lamonts also claim Brown but Kintyre origin means a MacMillan sept. Originaly spelt Broun or Broune. The progenitor was from the Carradale MacMillans. In 1692 Fergr Broune’s name is fisted in the fencibles for Argyll.

Walker From the Gaelic ‘Mac an fhucadair’ meaning son of the fuller (cloth). The Scots equivalent is ‘Waulker’ which has been Anglicized to ‘Walker’. As with all those who have been designated after a trade the name is found in many regions. However those of Argyllshire, particularly Knapdale, were associated with MacMillan’s. In the first records the name appears in its Scots equivalent of ‘MacNucator’ with its innumerable variations, during a period of inconsistent spelling. Patrick McNowcatter in 1665 was the Argyll procurator-fiscal. The same officeholder in 1667 was Martine McNaucater.

*Taken from the book: Your Clan Heritage - Clan MacMillan

VALE McMILLAN


The committee wishes to advise the members of the society of the sudden death of Arthur Erskine McMillan on July 15 1987. Arthur was the father of Neil Erskine McMillan, who is also a member of our society. Our sympathy goes to all of his family.

DEATHS
McMILLAN. — Arthur E. Passed away (suddenly) July 15, 1987. Aged 97 years. Loving husband of Frances (Dec.). Loved father of Mavis and Neil.
Rest in peace
For funeral arrangements see Friday’s paper.

Death Notice for
Arthur Erskine McMillan
Thursday 16th July



Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor



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ANGUS McMILLAN - PATHFINDER (Continued)

P.S. It must be noted that this series about Angus McMillan is prepared in a precis form by Steven McMillan.

Almost due South lay the future town of Orbost, and to the South East was the settlement of Marlo. To the South West the commencement of the lake system broke the horizon.

From their position a sea of gums appeared to be an impenetrable barrier to their progress. Angus tried to search for any breach in the heavy forest.

He saw that Flinders had marked on his charts that the mountains were too close to the coast. The work of clearing a way through the forest over steep mountains for the passage of wagons and cattle would be long and arduous.

According to Flinders' chart, an inlet with a safe anchorage lay to the east of Wilson's Promontory to which an opening must exist. For all he knew, the lakes he could see in the distance might have an outlet to the sea and provide a site for a port. Little did he realise that although it seemed so close, it would be nearly two years of exploration before he could put his feet in the Southern Ocean.

At that moment however, McMillan was satisfied the tribes had been right in their description of the land to the south. He carefully recorded his bearings. He named Mount McLeod as a tribute to the clan of his mother and her soldier brother. Mount McLeod became the landmark from which he would soon make a determined dash to the coast.

McMillan turned to his more pressing problem. The closest settlement was Omeo to the North West near the Bowen Mountains. He told Jimmy they would make straight for Omeo thence back to Currawong. Jimmy immediately became elated and much more friendly.

The nature of the country made it impossible to travel in a straight line. It was impossible to ride the horses so they had to be led all the way, as they sought a route which would roughly keep themselves on a course towards Omeo. They travelled only six miles and camped for a night on the Buchan River, a tributary of the Snowy River.

The next day they made for a thickly timbered range. Jimmy was now in high spirits. The country was now familiar to him. He showed McMillan the hill which was the source of the Native-Dog River. Feed for the horses was becoming a problem so they descended to the lower country. The horses were suffering from severe frosts. He and Jimmy could keep warm with blankets and fires, but they could not do much for the animals. The Cobberas Mountains towers over 6000 feet and they struggled through deep snow. They crossed the Limestone Creek, the source of the Murray River. They were almost due east of Omeo.

On the 11th June 1839 after 14 days of constant travel over rough country they reached McFarlane's Omeo run, where McMillan was relieved to find a white party headed by George McKillop, in a fertile plain between the mountains. Here the drought conditions became evident; the cattle were forced to walk six miles for water over brittle dry stalks of grass.

Angus gave himself two days at Omeo to allow himself and Jimmy and the horses to recover. On the 13th June they started for Currawong, encountering snow 10 inches deep on the track. McMillan became concerned for the native, who felt the cold, may not reach home. The native walked barefoot.

Crossing the Snowy River delayed the journey, the river bed was so rocky that they could not ride. They crossed the river with the assistance of a wooden pole. Their spirits arose at the sight of a stockman's hut where the occupiers, a Mr and Mrs Dover welcomed them warmly and fed them on beef and damper.

McMillan enjoyed a warm bed, his first for 16 days. Jimmy was unable to restrain himself any longer and left camp. McMillan reached Currawong alone, tired but satisfied that he had taken the first step in unravelling the secret of a forbidding part of the continent, and, that within a short time he would be driving cattle to the green pastures in the south.

(To be continued)

Steven McMillan
Secretary

CLAN SOCIETY LIBRARY

It is probably of interest to some members of the society as to the contents of our library. Although it is small at this stage it is slowly expanding, taking into account that we are limited to books about or by the MacMillan Clan. The following is a list of our publications:

1. The McMillan and McKibbin Families and their descendants 1863-1983 by Robert McMillan-Kay
2. Angus McMillan Pathfinder by Kenneth Cox
3. Records of the Clan 1901 by George A Macmillan
4. Our Clan MacMillan by Rev. Chris McMullen, June 1987 (Photocopy)
5. The Macmillan's of Metung (Photocopy)

Also in our library is a cassette tape of the Clan MacMillan. Another book on the Clan MacMillan is also on order from Scotland by Bill Gibson of the House of Scotland.

Bob McMillan-Kay
Archivist and Editor