

# CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY ( Victoria )

## Newsletter No 14, March 1988



### 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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### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all in this our first Newsletter in our Bi-Centennial year. While we look back as a nation to 1788 it is interesting for each of us to reflect on our Scottish ancestors, when they arrived in Australia and to contemplate what life was like for them.

I received a letter from our Clan Chief, George MacMillan at Christmas who sent his good wishes to all in 1988. His letter, which is shown below in this Newsletter, invites any Australians who will be in Scotland in June to join them in their annual gathering.

If anyone is travelling to Britain please read the dates carefully - I am sure you will have a memorable time:

We are having our own gathering at Ferntree Gully on Sunday 20th March. (details in this Newsletter) We do hope you can come and join in the very friendly gathering of the MacMillan Clan.

Very Sincerely  
June Senior  
President

#### Copy of the letter from the Clan Chief

I'm writing to you partly to publicise the fact that this year, instead of our usual party here in midsummer, the small group that initiates things here in the Clan has decided to migrate to a rather nice hotel in the Knapdale area (Argyll), the Stonafield Castle Hotel for the night of ~~11/12~~ 11/12 June. For fullest advantage we need to fill all 59 beds - which may prove too difficult. We're doing this mainly to make it easier for the Campbelltown MacMillans to be with us. But we hope that, if any Australian MacMillans happen to be in the U.K. around that time, they will fit their holiday round that date and place. We hope to get a discount for a block booking. But, of course, the draw-back is that after late April we'd have to pay a cancellation fee for any beds not taken up. So, if anyone wants to be with us, could they let us know for sure before mid-April at the very latest? We will then book for them.

Exactly what the programme will be is not fixed. There will probably be some sort of dinner-dance on the Saturday, with, possibly, a pilgrimage to Kilmorie on Sunday morning. It's a beautiful part of the world. At that time of year it won't be dark till about midnight. So we'd get the full benefit of the day.

Please pass on very best wishes to all.



**Readers' Pictures From The Past**

**FROM MY ALBUM**

Courthill Smithy in Dumfries-shire was the scene in May 1946 of this happy celebration (above) marking the centenary of the bicycle's invention here by Kirkpatrick MacMillan. The festivities should have taken place in 1939, but were postponed because of the war. The girl on the hobby horse is a descendant of MacMillan. J. J. Millar of Hamilton sent the print.

★ ★ ★

**MCMILLAN/MACMILLAN CEMETERY RECORDS**

While talking to one of our new committee members, Don Jinnette at our AGM, I found that he was doing a considerable amount of research on his family tree, which includes McMillan's. During his research Don obtained a computer printout of all the McMillan/MacMillan's buried at Fawkner Cemetery. I found this of interest as both my grandmother and great grandmother are buried there.

At our last meeting the committee decided to purchase similar records from two of the main cemeteries in Melbourne, namely; the Melbourne Cemetery (or Carlton Cemetery as is often called) and the Springvale Cemetery. I received the printouts recently and consider them to be a very useful product should anyone wish to try and trace a deceased relative. This is especially the case with the Melbourne Cemetery as it dates back to the 1800's.

As a result of browsing through the Springvale printout I found the details of what appeared to be a lost McMillan relative of mine, someone I have had no success in tracing for several years. After some detective work I managed to locate a descendant of that deceased relative, who as it turned out is a distant half-cousin.

Previously with my own family history research I obtained McMillan records from several cemeteries in North East Victoria and elsewhere, including Scotland. If the demand requires it the committee may purchase other cemetery records for our own archives to be available to members who wish to trace their ancestors by that source.

At present we have in our archives the following cemetery records:

- |                     |                 |                                |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Old Mytleford ..... | as at Dec. 1980 | Melbourne .....                | as at Feb. 1987 |
| Queenscliffe .....  | as at Aug. 1982 | Springvale .....               | as at June 1987 |
| Beechworth .....    | as at Feb. 1981 | Isle of Arran (Scotland) ..... |                 |
| Fawkner .....       | as at Aug. 1987 |                                |                 |

Also 33 Microfiche pages of Births, Deaths and Marriages of MacMillan/Macmillan/McMillan's in Scotland as at Oct. 1981.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Our President, June Senior received a letter from George and Jane MacMillan to inform us of a MacMillan Clan gathering with them at a hotel in Argyll on 11-12 June 1988. The Chief has extended his invitation to any society member who may happen to be in the UK about that time. Anyone interested may contact me for further details.

Phyllis McMillan from Rosebud passed on to me a copy of the 'Magazine of the Clan MacLean Association of Australia' which she received recently.

I received a letter from the Clan Chief late in January. George was amazed at the attendance at the McMillan reunion at Bendigo last year and as usual expressed interest in our newsletter.

**GENERAL INTEREST**

The article on the left was in a booklet sent to June Senior recently from a friend in Scotland. I thought this might be of interest to the members as it is about the inventor of the bicycle, Kirkpatrick MacMillan.



NOTE: Should any member have an item of interest similar to this which could be of interest to others and would like it included in our newsletter at any time, please send a copy to me.

With thanks  
Bob McMillan-Kay

## ANCESTRAL LINKS

As mentioned on the previous page, June Senior received a booklet from a friend in Scotland which was sent because it included an article about the MacMillans of the Cock of Arran. Although not connected directly to the ancestors of myself and June, I was interested in the article because it was about the Isle of Arran. I was hoping to include the article in this newsletter but space does not allow it unfortunately.

Having read the article I wrote to the editor to hopefully contact the author and establish what information she had on my McMillan ancestors who came from the west coast of Arran. Thankfully my letter was passed on by the author to a Margaret Kerr (Nee Hendry) who, judging from her letter, seems to know a bit about the McMillans in that area. She may in fact be a distant relative, as she comes from the same area and her maiden name was Hendry. Margaret Hendry was my Great Great Grandmother's name.

Margaret Kerr and a friend said that they would look up some information for me about my McMillan ancestors during 'the festive season'. I sincerely hope that they have some success, but whatever they find will be of interest to me and will most certainly be included in my next book which I hope to publish early in 1989.

## CLAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Enclosed as an inset in this newsletter is a copy of our Clan MacMillan Society membership, as at January 1988.

## SOCIETY ANCESTRAL RECORDS

Some members will find enclosed with their newsletter a request from me to complete details of their ancestry. This has been done previously with limited success, but I hope this time will be different. The idea is to update our society records and collate the ancestral records of all our members.

Those who have not done so in the past, as well as new members, will receive a form to complete to the best of their knowledge to be returned to me.

Your assistance in this project will be greatly appreciated and a copy of the updated records will be included in a later newsletter.

Bob McMillan-Kay  
Archivist/Editor/Treasurer

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## ANGUS McMILLAN — PATHFINDER (continued)

They eventually reached Omeo and spent 12 days there recovering from the harsh conditions. It was necessary to do some cattle mustering in the area between Currawong and Omeo. McMillan was frustrated with the delay. Finally on the 10th December 1839, all the cattle were driven to Ensay and McMillan was free to commence his preparation.

His plan was to journey south from Mt McLeod to the lakes he had previously seen. They left Ensay 20th December 1839 spending their first night on the Tambo River. Next day the party travelled downstream when without warning they were confronted by one of the tribes of aborigines. Angus made kind gestures of friendship, but they fled into the bush. An almost impenetrable scrubby range impeded their progress and they were forced to cut a way through. From the top the other side of the Tambo River appeared to allow easier going. The stream was deep and it was necessary to float provisions on a hollow log, leading the horses across with a rope.

After lunch they walked to the top of a steep rise which they called Disappointment Hill. The horses scrambled to the summit, but the packhorse slipped and it rolled to the bottom of the slope. They eventually got the horse to its feet, but it cast a damper on the spirits of the party. The men continued their trek keeping close to the river, but the condition of the pack horse became worse. (continued on Page 4)



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Despite its poor condition and wounds McMillan decided that they could not abandon the animal. Reluctantly the party decided to return to Ensay which they reached on Christmas Day. Angus was disappointed. He had hoped to spend Christmas on the banks of the lake. The packhorse began to recover. They found that the horse had been wounded by a spear so McMillan decided that they should have some shooting practice. He requested some more stores from Omeo whilst they were stopped at Ensay. Prior to leaving again Angus laid down certain rules to be followed. He had proved his exploration talents and the party obeyed him without question.

Cameron noted that during the day Angus was stubborn and determined, but at night he enjoyed jokes and even some songs. He felt that McMillan was a riddle; that the leader was driven by an inner fire. Cameron guessed that he might want to branch out on his own account. Angus spoke little of his parents and nothing of Margaret. He had no unguarded moments when he bared his soul. Cameron was puzzled by what he saw.

On 11-1-1840 the party set out from Ensay, South along the Tambo and then South-South West towards the Lake System. Passing their former camp on the river, they kept Disappointment Hill to the east and came to a stream which McMillan named Shady Creek. It came from the hills which rose abruptly on both sides. Thick scrub prevented the sun from reaching the water which was refreshingly cool. After much labour the stream was crossed.

They found another stream which they called Monkey Creek. They climbed the range and were rewarded by a magnificent view of the lakes. Descending, they reached a flat which Cobone Johnny recognised as a site of a wild battle with the Warrigals. The number of skulls lying about verified his account of the slaughter.

By January 15th they had left the ranges and reached Bruden Flats (named by Cobone Johnny after the native name Bruden), west of the present site of Bruthen. Cobone Johnny was convinced that they should cross the Tambo, bear east, and reach the fertile plains he had encountered. McMillan overruled him, believing from his previous observations that the proper course was to the west of the Tambo, almost due South.

The trees were Stringy Bark and Box. Here the forest extended to the Tambo where the river swung westward. Grass was three feet high and the river was fifteen feet deep. He reasoned that if an entrance to the Lake System could be discovered, steam boats could negotiate the river within thirty years, bringing supplies to the farmers settled along the banks.

On January 16th McMillan was thrilled with the beauty of the country and the prospect of a successful culmination of his labours. He cut his name and date on a large Stringy Bark Tree near the river. By six o'clock they had reached the shores of the lake. He wrote:

"What a glorious sight! Extending to the west further than I could see and to the east to a point that shut it from my view which I called Tambo Bluff, as the noble stream emptied itself into the lake between our camp and it. This magnificent sheet of water was quite alive with pelicans, swans and several kinds of ducks. I saw two sea swallows which did not stop long any distance from the sea. This lake I named 'Victoria' after Her Most Gracious Majesty. The party wanted it to be called after me, but I would not hear of it."

McMillan recorded with justifiable pride that he was the first European ever to taste its water, although it was rather salt and brackish. Prosperity would have applauded the name Lake McMillan as a fitting commemoration of the deeds as an explorer.

Today, McMillan's Landing on Lake Victoria and McMillan Strait, between Raymond Island and Paynesville, are the only physical links with its discoverer. **(to be continued)**

Steven McMillan  
Secretary



LOCALITY MAP



### CLAN SOCIETY GATHERING

Don't forget our gathering on Sunday 20 March 1988 at the 1st & 3rd Ferntree Gully Scout Group Hall, opposite St Josephs Regional College, Lysterfield Road, Ferntree Gully. Melway map 74 Ref. C5. Commencing from 12.00 noon.

Tables and chairs will be provided, unless we get an unexpected surge of people. Toilets and a kitchen area are available inside the hall. (see locality map at left)

Bring along your family, friends, new members and family memorabilia if you wish. And don't let the prospect of unpleasant weather deter you as the hall is big enough for all of us. The hall adjoins an oval and a community centre with swings etc for the children.

Remember BYO everything. (Tea and Coffee will be provided) A small donation of 50 cents per adult will be required to cover the cost of the hall hire and Tea and Coffee.