



CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (Australia)

NEWSLETTER NO 24, NOVEMBER 1991

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

Our annual General Meeting and picnic was held at Scotch College grounds on Sunday 6th. October. Although not a big attendance, numbers were increased from the previous year and we were able to hold our annual meeting. I would like to welcome John McMillan of Geelong as Vice-President, Bruce McMillan as Treasurer, Joy McMillan of Geelong and Elizabeth Petras to the Committee. A special thank you to these members for accepting these positions and supporting the Clan in such a positive way. To all members I wish you a very Happy Christmas and good health in 1992. I know there are several members not well and to you I send my very best wishes and hope 1992 will be a happier and healthier year for you

Kindest regards, June Senior.

President's Report (As presented at the A.G.M.)

I would like to present a short report on the year 1990-1991. In December 1990 Bob McMillan-Kay resigned from the committee as he was moving Interstate. I would like to record my deep appreciation for all Bob has done for the Clan-as Newsletter Editor and Archivist since 1984 and Treasurer since 1987.

My thanks also to Steven our Secretary and to Committeeman Bruce who has been very supportive- especially at the Ringwood Games and for his help drawing up our Constitution.

We attended the Ringwood Games and our display generated a great deal of interest and made the day very worthwhile.

We were saddened to learn of Lady MacMillan's death in April and our deepest sympathy has been sent to her family at Finlaystone.

The Committee has drawn up a Constitution and this is available to members. We are a member, along with 28 other Clans, of the Council of Clans who promote our Scottish Heritage. We have also joined the Victorian Scottish Union.

From members letters it is pleasing to know that the Newsletter is enjoyed.

June Senior - President.

Max & I were delighted to have lunch with Bob & Louise McMillan-Kay when we were in Queensland in August. They were both well and enjoying life in Maleny. They sent best wishes to all Clan members. We were sorry to learn shortly afterwards of the very bad bushfires in their area and we hope that the drought stricken areas in N.S.W. & Queensland will soon have welcome rain.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following members since our last Newsletter. We sincerely hope they enjoy our kinship and Newsletters:

Robert McMillan Boort, Victoria
Kaelene Blake (nee McMillan) Melton South, Victoria

GATHERING OF THE CLAN AT FINLAYSTONE

I was delighted to hear from Noel McMillan of Chatswood N.S.W. Noel wrote: Many thanks for your most welcome letter of September 1991. By now your annual picnic will be over. I do hope you were able to increase the attendance on recent years. I would have loved to attend but was unable to get away at that time. I would love to attend another time, maybe next year. We had a lovely time at Finlaystone during the Clan Gathering in June. We met such a lot of MacMillans from all over the world, including Switzerland, a large contingent from Canada and the U.S.A. and were just beaten for those coming the farthest distance by a lady from New Zealand. We were the only ones from Australia however. A really nice, friendly group of people from all walks of life, some in dress tartans and other traditional dress, complete with dirk!

There was a most interesting pageant on the lawn at Finlaystone, depicting the origins of the MacMillans through the centuries to the present day, mentioning various famous MacMillans and their accomplishments through the ages, including various fierce looking warlike warriors, complete with huge claymores!

The Friday night Banquet was first class, the menu including one Scottish smoked salmon of most generous proportions to each table, plus delicious salads, followed by strawberries and cream and a wee dram!

After dinner we were entertained by a girl harpist with a lovely voice who sang in both English and Gaelic. I bought 2 tickets in the raffle and much to my amazement won a bottle of Royal Stirling Whisky wich I bore home in triumph.

There was a barbeque on Saturday followed by a Ceilidh but we were unable to attend as we had to get back to our Hotel in Biggar some fifty miles away. However we re-appeared on Sunday in time for a delicious lunch and later in the day partook of afternoon tea from trestle tables groaning under the weight of tempting scones jam & cream.

Altogether a most enjoyable time was had by all, and yes, I would go to all the travel and expense of going again to the next one"

Noel also mentioned that he took an acetate L.P. record which he had cut from a tape made at his Grandfather's 100th Birthday, and gave it to our Clan Chief George, who said that he will add it to the MacMillan archives at the Clan Centre.

Thank you very much Noel for sharing this exciting gathering with us. As far as I know it is the first time one of our Clan members has visited Finlaystone at the time that a gathering has been held. June Senior-Editor.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

As our year commences in October, this is a reminder that fees for the year 1991/1992 are now due and may be forwarded to Treasurer Bruce at the address shown at the top of this Newsletter.



VALE McMILLAN

Mrs. Betty Garrett (nee McMillan) a foundation member of the Clan passed away in March. Betty took a keen interest in the history of the Clan and looked forward to receiving the Newsletter. We extend our deepest sympathy to her family.

Lindsay Gordon McRae died on 10th. October. Lindsay was a foundation member of the Clan and attended many of our gatherings until ill health curtailed his activities. Our deepest sympathy to Keith and Christina Mc.Rae.

CORRESPONDENCE

A big thank you to members who have written a letter when forwarding their subscriptions. We always enjoy hearing from our members, so keep up the good work. Frank & Pauline McMillan from S.A. were unable to attend our picnic as they were moving house, but they hope to see us in 1992. We hope they will be very happy in their new home.

Kath McMillan wrote to let us know her Aunt, Mrs Betty Garrett passed away. Thank you for your letter Kath and it was nice to talk to you later by phone. Robert McMillan of Boort sent us the following letter:

"I am keen to obtain a copy of the story of the Clan and to join the Society. My Great Grandfather John McMillan sailed from Greenock in Scotland in 1839. The boat was named the David Clarke and landed in Port Phillip in October 1839. To the best of my knowledge he lived near Tarbet in Argyleshire. After a few hard years on a property near Melbourne he had acquired enough stock in the way of horses and cattle to stock a property near Boort in Victoria.

I am President of the Boort Historical Society and interested in our history generally".

Thank you for your letter Robert and welcome to the Clan.

CEILIDH

Max & I had a lovely evening in July as guests of the MacFarlane Clan at their winter Ceilidh. We particularly enjoyed the entertainment including slides Ronald & Lesley Robb showed of the Arrochar area, where the MacFarlane Clan came from and the lovely views around the Isle of Arran, a very lovely island, rightly called "Scotland in Miniature".

NEWSLETTERS

Thank you to the following Clans for their Newsletters. It is great to read their news and interesting stories. MacFarlane & Morrison Clans and the V.S.U.

COUNCIL OF CLANS LUNCHEON

The 5th. Annual luncheon of the Council of Clans was held on the 13th. October. The venue was the Green Acres Golf Club and Max and I had a very enjoyable time meeting members of the other Clans present.

DATES TO REMEMBER

St Andrews Day Remembrance Service at the Shrine Sunday 24 November at 2 p.m.

Daylesford Highland Games Saturday 7th December, Victoria Park, Daylesford.

Berwick Highland Gathering Sunday 16th February 1992, Sports Oval Magid Drive, Fountain Gate.

Geelong Highland Games on Sunday 15th March 1992.

Ringwood Highland Games on Sunday 29th March 1992.

The Scottish Terrier

They once called me the "Aberdeen"

Aye, my coat is wiry and my eye is keen.

I'm proud as punch and really should be,

For I'm the terrier as good as could be.

If you like scotch, and you like to be thrifty,

I'm the package for you - short, black and nifty!

Originals by Maria.



Angus resolved that at his first opportunity he would temporarily set aside his employer's interests and inquire whether he could be given some assurance from the authorities of security of tenure in the new land. Given this assurance McMillan determined to approach merchants from whom he could borrow to pay for stock.

He thought that cattle would fatten on the area between the rivers he had discovered. The road to the coast was merely a matter of time and the way would be open for a new life, free from Macalister and the presence of upstarts such as Lieutenant Ross.

At the moment, with the bush surrounding him, quiet and foreboding, McMillan felt bitterly that his dreams were far away. The problems of the present almost overwhelmed him and he returned to the camp to organize the return to Ensay.

As he had estimated, fourteen days were spent in the return journey, edging the cattle forward and keeping a watchful eye for stragglers, heaving and pulling on the dray when it became bogged in deep ruts, crossing the creeks, crawling to the top of the hills and braking down the other side - it was demanding exhausting work in which he noted that Ross took no part. The two scarcely spoke. Ross remained aloof and arrogant, making it clear by his attitude that he was the real leader.

Apart from Ross, McMillan was accompanied by Colin McLaren, Matthew Macalister, Edward Bath, Cobone Johnny and the black boy Friday. Gone were the cheerful evenings around the camp fire. Matthew Macalister appeared embarrassed and was unsure whether to maintain his friendship with Angus. His attitude to Ross was one of deference as though the uniform of the naval officer placed him above the settler.

Finally in desperation, McMillan could not stand the atmosphere any longer and on July 18 he informed Ross that, from then on, he was to lead the expedition and that the others would obey him.

Ross accepted this with an air of disdain, as though the decision had been made already by Lachlan Macalister and that McMillan was not bestowing any favour. Ross chose to ignore completely the hardship experienced by McMillan on his previous journey and value of his bushmanship and wide experience. No packhorses were available; the stores were loaded on the riding horses and all walked except Ross who, mounted his favourite horse "Clifton" and lead the way over McMillan's tracks to the ford on the Macalister with relative ease, on until the Thompson River was reached above the junction of the La Trobe. They crossed the plains to the Glengarry River and Snake Ridge. Here Ross decided that the River was too high for the horses to cross safely. McMillan pointed out that if they proceeded up the river a ford would be found. Ross refused to discuss the position, announcing that he required to be in Sydney within a certain time, that he was the leader and that his decision, which none had any right to challenge, was to return.

McMillan was extremely disappointed. By the time they reached Ensay in three weeks, Ross McMillan and Macalister were barely civil to each other. It was with an air of relief that McMillan saw Ross depart for Sydney.

Steven McMillan..to be continued.

New members may be interested to know that the above article is from Kenneth Cox's book "Angus McMillan-Pathfinder". On the back cover of the book it says: "This story of one man's battle against natural obstacles which made the fortress of Gippsland a grim reality provides an insight into the difficulties that met the early explorers and settlers in Australia. Angus McMillan undertook this exploration work with little fanfare or of thought to public reward or acclaim. In setting out to find a track from the Australian Alps to the seacoast of South-eastern Victoria, he had to prove to himself that such an undertaking was possible. He succeeded and opened a new way through mountains, thick bush, lakes and riverlands to a rich, untapped province. The young Highlander gained recognition for courage and selfless enterprise, but little material reward came to him. This very human story records sympathetically McMillan's triumphs and his failures. It shows the man a big figure in the story of those who sought out pathways into untouched land that is now a prosperous province".

CLAN INFORMATION

I recently received a letter from Mrs. Olive Moore who had been contacted by the St. Andrew's Day Remembrance Committee to organize a Clan Information table to be part of a Scottish Display at David Jones (Bourke St. Melbourne) from Nov. 18-23rd. Mrs. Moore wrote:

"The idea is to have information available for people wanting to trace their Scottish ancestry and perhaps link up with a Clan Society. To do this I propose to compile a folio of information on the Clans to assist the folk on the stall. I plan to approach people with experience in genealogical research to man the table, but it would be useful for them to be assisted by Clan members.

If you wish your Clan to be promoted would you please complete an information sheet on your Clan, forward a copy of a Newsletter and indicate if you have any advertising material you would like distributed".

I think the idea of the Clan Information table a very good idea and I have forwarded Mrs. Moore all the relevant MacMillan material and offered to help on the stall on Friday 22nd. November if required. I will let you know next Newsletter if we are successful in finding any new members as a result of this venture.

Mrs. Moore also wrote: "Following a letter from the Scottish Ancestry group of the Genealogical Society of Victoria to the Council of Clans it was suggested that a Scottish Festival Day be Organized.

It was decided to investigate the feasibility of holding a Scottish Week - March 22nd to 29th, 1992 culminating with the Ringwood Highland Gathering. It is envisaged asking permission from five large shopping complexes around Melbourne for stalls from the Clans and other Scottish organisations to be set up. Each Clan would be responsible for its own display, records, merchandise etc. If you wish your Clan to be involved please let me know".

Once again I advised Mrs. Moore that we would be interested. I will let you know in our next Newsletter if this idea is to go ahead next March.

TOP AWARD TO CLAN MEMBERS

Bob McMillan-Kay sent me the photo below. Bob wrote:

"John and Kay McMillan have won this award many times. Having spent a week at their McMillan Holiday Village a few years ago I know that they certainly deserve the award". Thank you for the photo Bob and our congratulations to John and Kay.



WITH Victorian Tourism Awards presented at the Hyatt on Collins last week are Gippsland tourism operators, from left, Michelle Fugsley and Martin van Ooyen of Powerscourt Country House, Maffra, Mr Trevor Gordon, VEDA and Mr and Mrs John McMillan of McMillan's of Metung.

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

When new member Myrna Robertson mentioned that her husband Harry was President of the RSCDS I asked her if they could give us some information for the Newsletter. Myrna and Harry kindly sent me the following:

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society was formed in 1923.

Its main objectives were

1. To practise and preserve Country Dances as danced in Scotland.
2. To collect old books and pictures illustrating Scottish Dances.
3. To publish descriptions of Country Dances with diagrams and music in a simple form.

The reason for its formation is not hard to see. The delightful dances of Scotland were either being forgotten or performed in such an incorrect manner as to lose all their natural characteristics.

At first dances were collected chiefly from living sources, then old manuscripts were loaned to the Society and described in the light of the knowledge gained from living sources.

The fact that Scottish Country Dancing has not died is due to the social pattern of Scotland.

In England Wales and Ireland, although like Scotland, the country dance was a ballroom dance, it became unfashionable and gradually was practically forgotten.

In Scotland this did not occur. Here the clan system ruled. Whatever the Clan chief did, so did his followers and their families.

Thus Scottish Country Dancing belonged to all grades of society and does so to this day. Even when John Knox forbade dancing and reproved Mary Queen of Scots, she let her nobles snap their fingers at his authority, the people looked to their chieftain almost as a God and they followed his/her lead. The Society, formed in Glasgow in 1923, quickly spread throughout Scotland, England and overseas.

Scots all over the world were beginning to hear of the wonderful revival of one of Scotland's most delightful heritages, for as the dances became known, so also did the national music.

Here in Melbourne one has the choice of attending classes any week night and having the choice of several dances (known locally as socials) on any Saturday night.

There are 19 groups spread throughout Melbourne with others in rural centres and the Mornington peninsula. The dancing season generally runs from March through to November, and all groups welcome beginners, particularly at the beginning of each year.

The cost is very reasonable - a dollar or two per class - the company very friendly with excellent teachers.

If you would like more information give our secretary Margaret Greer a ring on 890 8285 or call Harry or Myrna Robertson on 543 5429".

Thank you Harry and Myrna for giving us this background on Scottish Country Dancing. I know several people who enjoy the dancing and fellowship each week.

June Senior Editor.



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