



CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUST)

Newsletter No. 61 March 2004

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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CMSA President's Report March 2004

2004 has started well for us, CMSA, with a picnic above Eastern Beach, Geelong. It was a sunny day with a light breeze and we welcomed some new faces which stimulated our conversations and made us think about our ancestors who succeeded in making new lives for themselves and their progeny in Australia and also contributed to their local communities in so many ways.

The next opportunity to meet together will be at the Ringwood Games where we will have a tent, kindly erected by the Scouts. This is on Sunday 28th March at Jubilee Park. The Opening Ceremony is usually at 1pm and we will walk in the Procession behind our Banner. We would welcome as many as possible to join us. Best wishes to Ken MacMillan for success with his drums when he takes part in the Pipe & Band Competitions at the Geelong Games, also on in March.

A very important piece of news is that Russell Harrison has submitted his resignation as a Trustee of the Clan MacMillan International Centre to Chief George for family reasons and this has been accepted. He has been a Trustee for over 10 years and was able to be present at some of the meetings at Finlaystone. He contributed ideas for uniting the various branches of the clan around the world and now there is a model constitution and code of conduct for all affiliated groups, plus a web-site and newsletters amongst other things. Project MAOL [Macmillan Ancestry On Line] continues with the work of our genealogist, Graeme McKenzie. Russell suggests that his replacement should have leadership and computer skills. The committee and I want to thank Russell for the time and work that he has given as representative of CMSA. His assistance has been very much appreciated by CMIC. We wish him and his family well in their new surroundings.

Season's Greetings have been received from Chief George and his wife Jane. During 2003 they had a trip to Galapagos Islands to see birds and animals at close range and then on to Peru and of course Machupichu which incidentally was built about the same time as Finlaystone [15th century]. Then in August they were in New York for a gathering of the North American Clan MacMillan Society. Also, I had a lovely newsletter from Blanche McMillan, the Abbot of the 'Community of the Tonsured Servant', who, with her husband, John, were honoured at a dinner by the Halton Children's Aid Society for their 25 years as Foster Parents. During that time they have taken into their home a total of 90 babies, mainly newborns, for up to 2 years. This is truly a wonderful contribution to their fellow citizens.

Please do not hesitate to share your ideas and matters of interest to the committee. We cannot function without you.

Best wishes to all,
June Danks.

Advent 2003

'Dull would he be of soul' who has not agonised over questions of war and peace in this past year. Our friends being no dullards, there's no need for us to pile on the agony.

For us this has been an exciting year - two trips abroad and marvellous summer at home.

On the eve of Burn's birthday we flew with Michael (Jane's brother) to the Galapagos Islands, where we cruised around in a yacht that held twelve people very comfortably. The company was good, the guide outstanding, and the crew attentive and good-humoured. We saw lots of astonishing animals and birds at close range: Michael's encounter with a male sea-lion, duly recorded on his video, was a bit too close for comfort; but only his dignity was dented.

While in the neighbourhood, we felt it silly not to visit Peru, where we were joined by Michael's Hilary and their grand-daughter, Sarah. Her command of Spanish proved extremely useful. At about 11,000 ft.; Cusco can give travellers some discomfort: Head-aches, breathlessness and dizziness are all possibilities. Here we got our first sight of Inca stone-work. It came in two forms, both equally astounding -gigantic uncut boulders fitted together to form a smooth faced wall, or smaller stones so accurately dressed that no mortar was required. We found the same at Machupichu, which is perched spectacularly on a mountain, thirteen hairpin bends above a tributary of the Amazon. Some people reach this remote religious capital on foot, using Inca routes. We took a comfortable tourist train, which covered the sixty miles of British-made track from Cusco in a leisurely four hours. That gave us plenty of time to admire the precipitous river valley through which much of the journey took us. A bus helped us with the final hairpins. We spent the best part of two days exploring and admiring the ruins of a city built about the same time as Finlaystone (15th century).

During our absence, Billy Miller, the Estate Handyman, had been building a 30 foot long galleon in the woods. We're convinced that sunshine, the galleon, and some excellent events put on by the rangers have broken all our records for visitors. So we've bought a new mowing machine, and we hope to plant lots of trees.

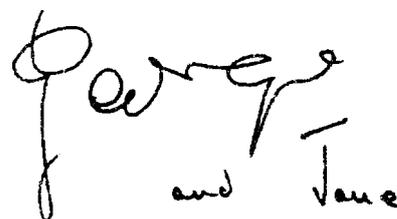
Over the year, Robin and Judy have helped us to enjoy a glimpse of many old friends and relations by inviting them and us to a series of parties in celebration of their forty-year old marriage.

In August we flew to New York for a gathering of the North American Clan MacMillan Society. For the sixty or so who attended it was a wonderfully interesting experience. The social side always an important ingredient - was unexpectedly enhanced by a power cut which blacked out most of north-eastern North America. It seems that, to paralyse the most powerful nation on earth, one has only to fell a tree on some remote power line in Ohio. While New Yorkers drained on the streets from uninhabitable sky-scrappers, we sat comfortably in our bus, with its radio, its air-conditioning and its toilet facilities, as it crawled through pedestrian-choked streets. Enterprising citizens, standing in for defunct traffic lights, waved their arms in vain.

All five grandchildren flourish. Their parents are all very busy. Arthur and Malcolm, who both felt lucky to get jobs in Glasgow, now find themselves working increasingly away from home. Arthur can import components from China more cheaply than he could make them in Glasgow - a very serious situation. Malcolm's change of job within Scottish Media Group means he spends two days a week in London. In spite of that, he finds the new job more rewarding.

We hope this year has been good for you and next year will surpass it.

Meanwhile Happy Christmas

Handwritten signature in black ink, reading "George and Jane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SUBSCRIPTIONS



Thank you to members who have already paid their Subs. Subscriptions will remain at \$15.00 for 2003-2004. If members could please forward their Subscriptions to: Mrs. J. Senior, 41 Lincoln Ave, Glen Waverley, Vic 3150.

Also, if you would like to receive this Newsletter by E-mail (a saving on postage costs), could you please include your E-mail address with your Subscription.

CLAN MACMILLAN PICNIC AT GEELONG



It was another interesting "Picnic at Eastern Park", at Geelong. Attendees included June & Max Senior; June Danks; Shirley Etheridge; Myrna Robertson with Robert (the) Bruce; Eileen & Ken McMillan (Geelong); Ian McMillan with bairns, Hugh, Hannah, & Molly (good to see you there Kids); Carmel Harris dropped in for a chat (see her article later in this newsletter); Mick & Mary-Anne; a couple of new members, Ian McMillan from Geelong and Debra Vaughan, of Albert Park (both pictured at left).

It was great to catch up with everybody and I trust an enjoyable time was had by all.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence has been received to date:

- Another card from Judie MacMillan currently of Singapore. *Thanks Judie – we caught up with all the latest news from your mum at the "Picnic", and,*
- A letter from Enid Green from South Australia, including an interesting tale of an 1839 Gaelic Psalm Book. (See article later in the newsletter). *Thanks for sharing your story with us Enid.*
- A letter from the 'Victorian Highland Pipe Band Association Inc.', seeking assistance (*unfortunately the letter arrived too late for any assistance*). However, the Museum of Victoria, is mounting a display in collaboration with the VHPBA, from March 10 to May 23, 2004, at the Immigration Museum, 400 Flinders St, Melbourne.

SCOTTISH COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

A follow up to our article in the last Newsletter.

Our new member, Debra Vaughan went for a walk one day to check out the 'Resource Centre', and sent me the following E-mail:

Dear Mick

As editor of the newsletter, I thought the findings from my 'investigation' might be useful. I choofed off in my lunch hour today, to investigate the fascinating new centre as outlined below. (actually as mentioned in last newsletter). I did find the hotel at 320 Queen St, which is level one, but one of the managers told me after a few enquiries that they were undergoing renovations, so any resources will be locked away at least until September, but probably the end of the year.

Regards
Debra

Thanks for the information Debra. Obviously further investigation is needed, so we'll keep you informed.

COMING EVENTS

Sunday March	28	Ringwood Highland Games, Jubilee Park, Ringwood.
Sunday July	4	'Kirkin of the Tartan', Scots Church, Melbourne, 11:00am

FULFILLING A PROMISE

How a small book measuring 5 1/2 inches by 3 1/2 inches took me on three journeys to Scotland in an attempt to carry out the wishes of my Grandmother Paterson (nee MacMillan) that it be returned to that country. The book in question was the 144 page Gaelic Psalm Book (1839) and with it came the 36 page "Chum Gaelic Albannaich".

In 1939, I was with my Aunty Ann Alexander (nee Paterson), Aunty Min (Isabella Gordon Paterson) and Helen Casey (nee Paterson) when unexpectedly the Gaelic Psalm Book was produced and I was entrusted with the responsibility of returning it to a museum (or similar place) in Scotland. I was told that this was the wish of my late Grandmother Paterson. I had no knowledge of this particular book, nor why I was chosen for the task, but as Aunty Min and my mother (not to mention my deceased grandmother) were all very psychic, perhaps they saw something in the future that I could not. At this time, World War II had not started and I was engaged to be married to Ronald Lindsay Green. By the time we married on Christmas Eve 1940 in Scots Church (North Terrace, Adelaide), Lins was in uniform.

The years slipped away, and the Psalm Book remained safely in my keeping. In 1970, I began to trace the Family Tree but only had folklore stories about the MacMillans arriving in Melbourne. Most of these stories were later found to be only partially correct. At the back of my mind was an awareness of the promise I had made to try and get that small book back to the land of its origin. Lins and I had already made several overseas trips and we decided that our next visit would be to Scotland. More specifically, we would visit Fort William - the MacMillans migrated from Blairmafoldich which is about 13 miles from Fort William.

Lins had many connections through the 2nd A.I.F., Freemasons Lodge, Golf Club, and his work as Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Taxation (South Australia). The Gaelic Psalm Book was the subject of much discussion and advice, and eventually the story came to the attention of the Department of Administrative Services. A Departmental representative came to our home to inspect the book, took photographs of the two of us with the Psalm Book, and this culminated in an article about our planned visit appearing in the Oban newspaper (Northern Scotland).

In 1977, we set out on our journey to Scotland, visiting other places along the way. I had previously corresponded with people in Fort William in an attempt to get information about the Family Tree, but little did I know when we arrived at the Presbyterian Church one Sunday morning that for the first time I had a contact. When we arrived at the Church door a lady took us through the Church, and outside was a staircase accessing the Church office on the roof. The Minister told me that he had a letter for me from my cousin but I would have to return to the Church in the afternoon to collect it. I was nonplussed that the Minister could know one of my cousins, but the letter turned out to be from Henry MacMillan and I was overjoyed to receive it.

Having come so far, we were disappointed that we could not meet Henry who lived at Fearnan near Aberfeldy. Our conducted tour with its strict timetable made it impossible for us to alter our schedule. Nevertheless, Henry and I began to correspond and in 1980 Lins and I returned to Scotland and met Henry, his wife Christina and their family. Henry was able to give me information regarding his side of the family and told me that he had always wondered about his Uncle Alan MacMillan (my great grandfather) who had migrated to Australia in the eighteenth century and had never been heard from again. So, after about 117 years, the family had been reconnected.

The day we arrived in Fearnan to meet Henry, I went down to the Loch and stood on the landing to look around. Suddenly, I heard the sound of bagpipes coming down the glen. It seems we were expected, and we felt honoured to be welcomed with 'Scotland The Brave.' In 1983, we were invited to attend the 1984 Golden Fiddle Awards in the Aberdeen Town Hall. To my surprise and amazement, when the function was about to start I was given a standing ovation for having travelled so far to attend. Henry and his son John were both fiddlers, and John, to this day, plays the fiddle at the Cehilas to raise money for cancer research.

The journey that started with a promise to my aunts enabled me to trace the family tree, build strong friendships with overseas relatives. and gave me memories to treasure forever. As for the Gaelic Psalm Book that began the quest, nobody wanted it and I still have it safely stored away.

By Enid Mary Green (nee Manning)
A granddaughter of Mary Paterson (nee MacMillan).
December 2003

VISE Volunteers for Isolated Students Education.

[by Carmel Harris]

Combined Probus Club of Lara, Vic.

There is a sub group of VISE called Internet to the Outback which aims to help isolated children in senior primary school use the Internet as part of their education. Our aim is to help people in isolated areas become competent on the Internet in their own homes, on their own equipment. Sometimes this was quite straightforward. Usually it was not. Once a rat had eaten the cable and on another occasion lightning had cooked the modem.

Our first posting was to an area near Condobolin then Gulargambone in NSW and the next year Charters Towers in Queensland. The School of Distance Education had hired computers for all its Grade 6 pupils and we were needed to help them use them with confidence. We usually spent between two and four days with each family, who were also responsible for our accommodation and taking us to the next place. It was not practical to take our own car as roads were rough, distances long and we would have been lost half the time, not to mention bogged in the black soil, hit by kangaroos or terrified by huge Brahmin cattle.

In five weeks we worked at 15 different places around Charters. We had been warned that accommodation would vary from the sublime to the cor-blime - and it did, but we found that the people were hospitable and most appreciative of our help. We were sick of eating beef. We had roast beef, corned beef, stewed beef, and not much in the way of fresh vegetables or fruit but this was the outback and people shared what they had.

While my husband, Brian, was working with the parents and their computers, I took on the role of child entertainer and cook. With a background in Primary school art and music we had a fine time. Where there was School of the Air', I helped out as tutor and was immensely impressed at the fine quality of education offered by the distance education lessons. Children needed to develop excellent reading comprehension and independent learning skills. Their studies are backed up by videos, library books and audio tapes and all kinds of appropriate games and activities. As well they had "on air" lessons with their class teachers. However, I was also floored by the degree of dedication, skill and time required of the parents to guide the children through this education. Stations are exciting places to be and there is always something real happening to lure children from their lessons, not to mention all the jobs that need to be done.

The following year we took two postings with VISE and stayed with a family for six weeks. We helped them with their regular correspondence lessons and extended their education where we could. Both postings were near Charters Towers, which we have come to love. The first six weeks was at a station south of Hughenden. There were two boys with reading difficulties who were making hard work of their correspondence lessons, even with what remedial help the school could provide, a prep child who needed lots of one-on-one work, and the cutest three-year-old who wanted to be in everything. Lessons began at 7.30am with the first on-air lesson and finished for the day at 3.30pm.

The parents had gone to extraordinary lengths to help their children. They even made a 37km road through their property and another property so the boys could attend a regular school. However, it just wasn't working and there was all the station duties to carry out as well. Cooking for a family and station hands is no mean feat. There was also poddy calves and pigs to be looked after and washing, dust and insects to be coped with, as well as the station books, garden and isolation. The mothers really do it hard. The children had their chores but it's the mother who does the lion's share

What different country this is. We were out on the plain, surrounded by scrub but they had the foresight to build a 100 acre lake which made it a magic place, frequented by water birds such as black swans, sea eagles, cormorants and moorhen. We were relieved to find out that many of the snake tracks along the road we walked were in fact the marks left by kangaroo tails. We saw echidna, emus and lots of kangaroos, wild pigs and huge wedge-tail eagles. Every morning we watched the sunrise over the lake and each evening we were amazed by the wonderful sunsets.

We could go boating, swimming, fishing or just walk around the lake if we had any energy left after school.

WISE Volunteers for Isolated Students Education (contd).

With both of us working with the children for six weeks we were able to give the mother a little breathing space and help the children catch up on their work. On air lessons can be difficult if they are not up to date. Since our stay, a governess was hired to help the boys who really needed lots of close attention. We hated to leave, as they are lovely kids and we were really making progress, but we were booked to go to Kangaroo Hills.

This place was surrounded by the beautiful rain forested mountains inland from Ingham and the road there is so rough and winding that the children get carsick in the one-and-a-half hour journey to town. It's a valley on the tableland surrounded by the 'Kangaroo Hills'.

The family are cut off for several months of the year when the Burdekin floods and the creeks are up. The children were keen horse riders and loved to help with mustering and go on camp drafts. When school was out they'd erupt out the door and be off with the dogs and horses. We helped feed the poddy calves and put out cattle licks. We watched four road trains being loaded with Brahmin cattle for market. At \$650 to \$700 per beast, you would hope they got there safely. We were enchanted by a pair of brolgas. They often visited their young one which lived around the home paddock. It was quite wild but its parents had deemed it independent and would visit it, but wouldn't let it fly off with them. It would "peep peep" miserably for a bit, then go back to digging in cow pats for dung beetles. He was just growing his pink adult plumage when we left. The kangaroo rats dug up the garden nightly and the wild pigs used to raid the molasses. I learned not to be too scared of the horses and cattle that would come to see what we were doing when we went walking, but the bulls were big!

Again, they were lovely people who made us most welcome and really appreciated our efforts with helping their children's education. We felt really privileged to share in their lives for a little while.

Outback Australia is often called the last frontier. While this might sound romantic, the reality is that it is a harsh place to live. Temperatures can range from 10 to 50 degrees plus. Few people realise just how cold the nights can be and the daytime temperatures can be debilitating.

Information is available on the Internet for anyone interested in giving their time to VISE. Volunteers are usually retired teachers and others with relevant experience who would like to help isolated students.

The Genealogist Psalm

Genealogy is my pastime, I shall not stray.

It maketh me to lie down and examine half-buried tombstones.

It leadeth me into still courthouses;

It restoreth my ancestral knowledge.

It leadeth me in the paths of census record and ships' passenger lists for my surname namesake.

Yea, though I walk through the shadows of research libraries and microfilm readers,

I shall fear no discouragement.

For a strong urge is within me;

The curiosity and motivation they comfort me.

It demandeth preparation of storage space for the acquisition of countless documents.

It annointeth my head with burning mid-night oil;

My family group sheets runneth over.

Surely birth, marriage, and death dates shall follow me all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of a family history seeker forever.

- author unknown - it has a bit of truth in it.

Regards,

Russell Harrison

Sunny Sydney

VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA 1851 - 1852

Diary of Alexander Campbell McMillan 1852 (contd).

20th The Storm Ceased to day and the wind changed, the swell rolling as fearfully, we are going nicely at the rate of nine or ten Knotts an hour. Nothing has happened of any consequence to day....

21st This morning Came in very Cold, the x has taken some sun. ten o'clock and it is now a nice day. I have a story to pen to day for which I am very sorry it is the Death of Poor John Grey, the Aberdeen Lad. He died about 12 Noon to day much regretted by the young men, I should say by the Scotch young men, who attended him in the kindest manner, since he was unable to do any thing for himself, his Corpse is taken up on the top of the long boat....

The funeral took place about 5 P.M. The Doctor ordered all the young to be present, As he Said to pay Poor John their last respects, all gathered. Some Irish excepted, every Countenance showed the feeling of the heart, And the Doctor himself (hard hearted as I thought he was) shed tears, And was unable to read the funeral service for a few seconds. Poor Grey has no Friends on board, this leaves his Case more distressing, by some letter found among his effects which he wrote to a Cousin before his illness, in hopes of sending it home by some homeward bound vessel as we all did write but these lay beside us yet. He mentions that his Father and Mother are coming after him, for he says that his Parents will likely be away before he can get this letter....

The under Steward in the Cabin was reported dead to night, but to the great happiness of all it turned out a falsehood.

22nd This morning was very cold also the winds is piercing, the wind has Changed last night, and to day we are far off our course. It is to be hoped it Shall not be so. Cooke the under Steward is a great deal better to day all the rest of our Fever Cases are greatly better also. We had divine Service to day in the usual way. Poor McKenzie's youngest daughter is very ill this few days back, poor man he no sooner is out of one trouble then he is into another.

23rd This morning is rather wet with a good breeze more favourable than yesterday, by 12 o'clock it has risen very high again, we have come to reef Top Sails. At night it was very stormy. The weather is very changeable here, we are 4600 miles from Port Philip to day.

24th The morning Came in with heavy rain, the wind blowing very Strong, about 10 o'clock all of a Sudden the wind changed and come on the opposite of us like a shot which placed the ship in a very dangerous position, the Man at the helm was thrown by the wheel right over and Struck on the side of the Ship, within an inch breadth of being over board, the Captain first mate and a Sailor being on the Poop at the time flew to the wheel, which took them three to study. She took in no water and we are safe yet, in the evening it came a perfect calm, about 6 P.M. a English woman had a miscarriage. She is doing well yet, the rolling of the Ship is supposed to be the Cause of it.

25th To day we have got fair wind and has got our Stem Sails up again in the evening these large Fishes Called "Finback" was seen along the Ship side, we got a fine sight of them, I suppose they are 10 or 12 feet long, they have a white spot on their back, say about the size of a Common hankerchief.....

26th We are going nicely to day with these westerly wind which is said to blow in this quarter of the Globe for nine months in each year not at one but mixed.....

We saw a large whale to day the water he spouted from him, reached the clouds, I thought. The weather is turning warmer again, it is expected that three weeks from to day will anckor us at Geelong.

27th We are going very well to day, it is a pleasant sunny day. Nothing has happened among our Fever Cases are all of out bed to day but poor Hind.

28th The wind is very slack to day, our Main Royal is up again, And all Stun Sails. Our allowance of water is reduced to day, on account of the Master being afraid that we might run short one third is Kept of us, none for Infants who are allowed a quart each....

Porpoises was seen under the Bows in the glooming.

VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA 1851 - 1852

Diary of Alexander Campbell McMillan 1852 (contd).

29th The morning I have to pen the Death of a Child. A nice Lassie about two year of age, from Theething the name is Ritchie from about Arbroath. We had divine Service at the usual hour. Immediately after the funeral of the child took place, the poor thing was Committed to the deep, we have a new Case of Fever to day, it is an Englishman that sleeps in the Berth under us, he is taken to the Hospital. This night is beautiful the sky looks uncommon pretty

March 1st This morning the young Men's Compartment was a little confused by two Scotch Lads trying a game at pugilism, the Cause partly for women and partly for meat. This is the first of the Kind that happened among the Scotts. The day is getting rather shorted. About 12 noon it rained And looked very bad all round the horison..... At 7 P.M. we got another Irish Stranger, a Boy, the Parents are the Hinds, the Father was up today for the first. The Mother is a poor looking figure.

2nd The child was laid beside its Mother last night, and this morning when looked for was found dead, it is said she wanted sometime a month of her time..... We are buisy to day fishing albatrosses 7 was caught, I caught two they measure some twelve feet, from the extremity of the one wing to the other some ten and nine feet. No use was made of the Carcasses. The Birds are noble beasts to see them flying about, a person would not take them to be half the size they are, it is very calm to day, we are only going one Knott an hour. The little corpse was slipped over at 10 P.M.-

3rd We have a good breeze to day going nine Knotts, the wind is very Cold blowing from the South. Porpoises are swimming about us today.

4th This morning is very course the waves are very high. It is said that we passed the Island Called St Pauls last night, this island is said to be 3002 miles from our destination. This statement is not correct for we passed St Pauls Island by 12 O'clock at least it came in sight then we did not pass close to it. We merely saw it in the horison. There is another Island here called Amsterdam we did not see it, we passed between it and St Pauls, about 10 P.M. a waterspout large enough to rock the ship up was seen quite close, it is a pretty sight in the day time.....

5th This morning is very stormy, at least we would call it stormy at home but this ship does not think much of it. This day has Kept course through out.....

6th This morning is much the same as yesterday, last night an Irish woman had another mifcarriage. She is very poorly. The sea is fully as rough as it was in the morning, we have great splashes of see on deck ocaionally since this gale commenced.

7th this morning is nothing better, about 11am, we have another death among us, it was poor Mrs Hind, who had the Baby on the 1st instant, Hind himself is but very weak yet, And it was pityful to See him poor man, as the corpse was carried up stairs, he lying in his berth. She has left a silly Boy about 12 years old And two hardy Girls younger than the Boy. The funeral took place in the evening them being Roman Catholics, they were alowed to go through their own form of funeral service. We had no divine service to day, owing to the coarseness of the weather.

8th This morning came more favourable the wind greatly lowered, And the swell down also, we got all sails up, And some Stunsails by 10A.m. about 12 a great number of Porpoises was playing under the Bows, And a harpoon was got in order, and thrown several times but of no effect, the salmon spear used at home would be the very thing of them. To day our Pickles and Treacle is done we now get Sugar and Vinegar in Stead of them. The Ship was clear of Fever, till to day. Mansfiels only daughter was taken to the Hospital.

9th We have a fine fair breeze to day going about 7 Knotts an hour. Our Boatswan had some words with one of the Boys (Sailors) And lashed him most unmerciful, this Boy is a native of Glasgow, his name is McBeath, he was brought in the Duke of York's school, the Boatswain is a most cruel man, And swears even on. Our Captain is a fine man, I may give the names of our Officers, Captain Hammock, Chief Mate Portman Second Mate Downing third Mate Birch. These four persons are amiable Characters better could not meet together in one ship. They are very attentive and obliging, in fact they do all in their power for our Comfort. Our Dr's name is Wilkinson, he is no great shakes? I will say no more about him..

John Macmillan
Obituary taken from the Morwell Advertiser, 21 April 1899

By the death of Mr. John Macmillan of Hazelwood (Morwell) who died on Monday last, one of the few remaining of the old colonists who arrived in Victoria in the forties has passed away. Mr. Macmillan was born in Kintail, Rosshire, Scotland, and after the failures of the crops in the old country he determined to try his fortunes in Australia and in the year 1848 landed in Victoria with a few other friends from their Scottish homes. It will be seen that he is a colonist of some 51 years standing and has seen Victoria and the other colonies progress to an extent that is surprising. When he landed in Melbourne that place was then of very small dimensions. Mr. Macmillan was wont to tell in graphic description, the different vicissitudes of fortunes which he went through. Being accustomed to stock he took his first situation on a place to where Buninyong is now located. After being there for a while he was appointed to the charge of one of the stations belong to the Clyde Company, a Scottish company which had large tracts of land for pastoral purposes. Mr. Macmillan has often described the terrible ravages of the destructive bushfires of black Thursday which devastated the most of the colony at that period. After severing his connection with that company the gold rush took place and Mr. Macmillan tried his fortunes at Ballarat, with varying vicissitudes of fortune. Being more adapted to cattle business he soon turned his attention to the purchasing of drafts of fat stock, and used to make regular incursions into the rich and fertile plains of New South Wales and to the Lachlan, where before the time of railways and the telegraph, a journey up to those parts was a long and tedious one. Mr. Macmillan followed this occupation for some years and was one of the few who were successful in that line. The markets in these times were very fluctuating, and the deceased gentleman used to love to relate to his family and old friends his experiences in droving and traveling with the stock and the means that had to be used and the different strategies that had to be undertaken so that he might be the first to get his stock into the cattle sale yard, which used then to be at the top end of Elizabeth. It meant pounds to the owners of fat stock who were lucky enough to secure the first sale. But Mr. Macmillan was always very shrewd and energetic and often used to circumvent his confreres in the business, and by marching and counter marching, used to get his fat beeves safely landed in the market place. After trying farming on the Merri Creek with varying successes, he turned his attention to the then far of land of Gippsland, and in 1859 he purchased the run at Hazelwood, where he resided until the time of his death. Mr. Macmillan was very proud of having good cattle and went in for short horns, and having purchased at that time some of the best shorthorn cows to be had and by judiciously mating with sires of the very best blood procurable he formed the nucleus of a shorthorn herd, which is spoken highly of throughout the colonies as being the finest to be seen on any property in Victoria, and their strains are to be found in many of the best herds in Victoria and New South Wales. The well known qualities of the rich flats owned by the deceased gentleman are known throughout Victoria, and their splendid fattening qualifications have enabled the cattle forwarded to the Melbourne and Ballarat markets to invariably command the top prices. As everyone knows Mr. Macmillan was a man of sterling integrity and of great foresight and business qualifications, and although he lived to the advanced age of 81 years, he had enjoyed very good health until about 12 months ago, when he was attacked by the terrible affliction of Cancer in the throat. The growth made rapid strides, and the throat closing up he had to undergo an operation in Melbourne, and for the past 9 months he had to be fed through a tube inserted in his stomach. Although afflicted with such a terrible complaint he bore it with great fortitude; and although he wasted away from the splendid specimen of manhood he used to be, to a mere shadow, he never complained of his long, wearing and lingering illness, but bore up with indomitable spirit and courage to the last. He was quite conscious to the end and passed away in the presence of his family, at 8 o'clock on the morning of Monday last at the ripe age of 81. Many people have and will, miss he genial figure in Morwell, where he used to go every day for the past 10 years. He was a man of very kindly disposition and had a good word for everybody. Notwithstanding the short notice of the funeral, the very high esteem in which he was held was testified to by the very large concourse of people who followed his remains to their final resting place in the Hazelwood cemetery. There were 52 carriages in the funeral cortege. The pall bearers were old friends of the family, viz., Messrs. S Vary, J.P., Whittakers, Sergeant, Shaw, Applegate and Hudson (Melbourne), the later gentleman having assisted many years ago on a much more happier occasion when he stood as best man to his deceased friend. Lengthy and impressive remarks were made at the grave over the coffin, which was borne to its last resting place on the shoulders of his three stalwart sons. The ceremony at the grave, preformed by the revs. A McDonald and J. G. Wilson (Traralgon) was very impressive, and they testified to the many good qualities of the deceased. The funeral arrangements were ably carried out by Mr. W. Tulloch, of Morwell.

As a member of the Mid Gippsland Family History Society I was fortunate to take part in a 'Walk' at Hazelwood Cemetery, this cemetery is located just outside the township of Churchill and rests between Morwell's open cut mine and Hazelwood Pondage. We were escorted on the tour by one of our members Clair Wood. Clair is a regular visitor to the cemetery and has taken a keen interest in its inhabitants. Although the Macmillan's weren't on her agenda for the February walk she kindly pointed out their graves to me. Situated at the lower end of the cemetery, Donald and Catherine reside in a well kept grave right next to the road with the family plot housing John and Isabella, their daughters Grace Bruce & Flora Horne and son John Lachlan just down the row. Hazelwood Cemetery is located just outside the township of Churchill and rests between Morwell's open cut mine and Hazelwood Pondage. In Clair's folder was this obituary of John Macmillan. I hope you find it as interesting as I did – [Kaye O'Reilly](#)

We would like to thank the Morrison Clan Society of Aust. Inc.,

An old chap lived alone in the family home. He was a keen gardener and he was keen to get his back garden dug up in readiness to plant the vegetables. But age and infirmity made the task very difficult. His only son, who usually helped dig the garden, was in prison. He wrote a letter to the son and told him that he was depressed because it looked as though the vegetable garden would not be planted this year. I'm getting too old, but I know if you were here you'd help me dig the garden.

The son replied a few days later and said "For goodness sake don't dig that garden - that's where I buried the bodies".

At 4a.m. the next morning, the CIB and police arrived with a search warrant and dug up the entire area, but they didn't find any bodies. They apologized and left.

Later the same day the old man received another letter from his son, "Go ahead and plant your vegies now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances!

If unclaimed, please return to:
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