

CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (Aust)

Newsletter No 56 July 2002



MACMILLAN

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

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President's Report

Since the March newsletter we have received the Clan MacMillan newsletter in which there are more details of the Great Return 2002 taking place 29th June to 9th July. It should be a very exciting event.

In the eighteenth century MacMillan migrants left their country voluntarily because their income came as much from cattle-rustling as from cattle-raising, with rent being paid to Camerons of Lochiel in form of sword-service; so life was far from easy. Three ships were hired to take 300 members of MacMillans and other clans on the 13 week voyage to Canada, departing 3rd July 1802, where they were able to own and work their own farms.

One occasion during the celebrations will be on the island of Iona, namely the Investiture Service of Community of Tonsured Servant when a number of new Companions will be nominated.

Glenn MacMillan, retired Dean of Cornell University, has kindly offered his expertise to assist with fund raising for the Clan Centre, Finlaystone. In the e-mails that have followed, it seems as a first step it would greatly assist the objective if "membership" could be increased.

Hence the plea that if any of our members could introduce a new member to our Society it would be greatly appreciated.

Also, by belonging to our Clan Society, I hope that members may be able to learn more about their forebears by exchanging information. In particular I would like to know more about the gold diggings at Deep Creek in the 1850's and the early days of Stawell. So perhaps you could tell us your story.

Remember our A.G.M. on Sunday 13th October. Please come.

Best wishes to all, June Danks.

Photo taken at Geelong Picnic, February 2002.



Scottish Veterans

The letter below is from Bert Nicholson, who sent us a coloured photo of the new Banner for the Scottish Veterans.

We sent a donation and a piece of MacMillan hunting tartan which has been incorporated in the banner, along with other tartans.

Dear Kinsmen,

First let me thank you once again for your kind donation, and here as promised is a photograph which is printed through the computer. The Banner was opened for all to see on Anzac Day 2002 at the Lilydale early morning stand to, also receiving a few kind words from the R.S.L. Vicar. Then after the early morning, it was taken to Melbourne where it took its place, with pride, and with the Scottish Veterans. It was also recorded on T.V.

I hope you will agree that it is a fine banner and fully surrounded with the different Tartans, with most of the Tartans being donated.

The people and clans that have kindly donated did have their names read out over the broadcasting system at the recent Ringwood Highland Games. Without your help this banner would have never been produced, and all the Scottish Veterans are grateful.

Would it be possible to mention the banner in your clans newsletter, as I am trying to contact all Scottish Veterans within the Victoria area. Also should they have an email address I would be only too pleased to send them a copy, also information about the Scottish Veterans, and all at no cost. The Banner will be kept at my home.

Yours Aye, Bert Nicholson (Leader of the Scottish Veterans, Victoria).

(Ex Seaforth Hldrs. Parachute Regt. & RAMC)

17 English Street,

Seville, Victoria 3139 Australia. Phone:(03) 59643209 email: eltham@alphalink.com.au

Below is black & white photo of the Scottish Veterans Banner.



A.G.M. and Annual Get together

Our A.G.M. will be held on Sunday 13th October 2002 at the E.S.U. and U.K.S.Assn's rooms at 146 West Toorak Road, South Yarra.(reference Melway map 2L D5)It is opposite Fawkner Park. 12.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m. Please bring your lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

We do hope you will be able to come and enjoy a social time with other MacMillans and associated families.

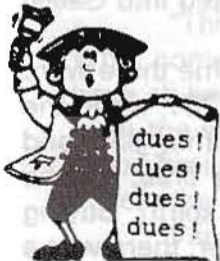
Vale

Our deepest sympathy to Lex and Valmae McMillan of Nandaly, whose 2nd.Son, Geoffrey Leigh McMillan, aged 43, lost his battle with a brain tumor on 25th December 2002.

Our deepest sympathy to Sheila Brown of Croydon, on the loss of her Mother in England.

New Member

We are delighted to welcome Brian Brown to our Clan Society. We trust, Brian, that you will enjoy our kinship and newsletters.



Subscriptions

Thank you to members who have paid their 2001/2002 subscription. This is the last newsletter in the current year. I will put a reminder notice in this newsletter for members who have not yet paid.

Correspondence

Thank you to members who have written when sending their subscriptions. These are always a pleasure to receive, so keep news coming in so we can share with fellow members.

Carmel Harris of Lara said that her Mother, Erna Wright of Dimboola, is home after breaking her femur. We send our love and best wishes Erna. Max and I had the pleasure of meeting Erna a few years ago when passing through Dimboola.

Ken MacMillan of Bowral mentioned he'd had a spell in hospital. We trust you are in good health again Ken.

Nanette Watts of Somerville called to see me when in Melbourne recently and it was great to catch up on her news.

I missed John and Sheila Brown calling to say hello at the Ringwood Games this year. John wrote to say they were in Britain to see Sheila's Mother, who sadly passed away while they were there. As John wrote: "There was one silver lining as my Mother was to celebrate her 90th Birthday and we had a meal with her a week before her Birthday.

When Max and I were in Swan Hill recently I rang Lex and Valmae McMillan of Nandaly (about 85kms west of Swan Hill) They suggested coming to Swan Hill so we had dinner one evening. It was lovely to meet them and have some time together.

Photo taken at Ringwood Highland Games. From left: Ken MacMillan, Mick McMillan, and President June Danks.



That's the Spirit – By James Gracie

The following article appeared in "The Scots Magazine" March 1999

I was on the CalMac ferry, approaching Brodick, and I could feel the excitement mount, as it always does when I visit Arran, my favourite Island. The scenery is magnificent, especially the view of Brodick Castle you get from the ferry, with the bulk of Goatfell towering behind it. But it was not scenery or history that was taking me there. I was about to find out about Scotch whisky. At Lochranza, in the north of the island, Scotland's newest distillery, the Isle of Arran Distillery, has been established.

As I headed north out of Brodick, I pondered on our national drink. What was its history? How and why did we come to invent one of the world's most popular alcoholic beverages? The answer is that we don't know. Not only that – we didn't invent the stuff. Legend tells us that St. Patrick brought the secrets of distilling from Europe to Argyllshire in the 4th century. However it was probably introduced by Scottish knights returning from the Crusades in the 12th century. No doubt they had seen Arabs distilling from grain, and noted the restorative effects of the resultant spirit. For this reason they called it 'aqua vitae' which is Latin for "water of life". When the fiery spirit caught on in Scotland, this was translated into Gaelic as uisge beatha, from which the word whisky derives.

Excise duty was first imposed by the Scots Parliament in 1644. By this time there were hundreds of people distilling their own spirit, a situation which continued until 1781, when the London government banned private stills. This heralded the romantic era of smuggling and illicit distilling. Maturing the whisky in used barrels may have started at this time, for the simple reason that illicit still owners had a problem. How could they store their spirit? Buying casks and barrels on the open market would attract too much attention. However, there was a plentiful supply of cheap used sherry casks from the smuggling trade, so these were used.

The last legal distillery in Arran closed 160 years ago, so why choose this island for Scotland's first built-from-scratch distillery in many years? Harold Currie, Isle of Arran Distillery chairman, was the man to ask.

"I had a friend who had a holiday home on Arran" Harold began, "He invited me to a dinner in Glasgow five or six years ago where the main speaker talked about the history of the place. He mentioned that when whisky was last made legally on Arran, it was said to be the best in Scotland. Later he asked me if I would be interested in establishing a new distillery there. My immediate reaction was to say 'not really'." But Harold was intrigued by the thought of a new distillery on Arran. The island seemed to have something special going for it, and the fact that it used to have a distillery would make such a venture interesting. Besides, Harold had always wanted to own a distillery which made a good single malt, so he decided to investigate the island further.

"The distillery which existed 160 years ago was at Lagg, in the south of the island" he said, "but it wouldn't be suitable nowadays, as the water comes out of fertilised land. We looked at eight different sites, and the one we chose, because the water by far the best, was Lochranza".

Harold applied for planning permission early in 1994, Approval from Customs & Excise was sought and granted, and in 1995 the distillery began manufacturing whisky. When it came to designing the actual distilling processes, Harold approached Forsyths, one of the two remaining Scottish still makers.

"I am a great believer in small stills, and the ones at Lochranza are smaller than average. Our distillery manager, Gordon Mitchell, came on the scene at that time, and he was involved in the design work as well".

The total investment, including the visitors' centre, was about two and a half million pounds. To finance the initial whisky production a "Bond" scheme was organized. In 1995, people were invited to buy 420 pounds worth of bonds. This entitled them to five cases of blended whisky (containing 5% Isle of Arran single malt) in 1998, and five cases of six-year-old single malt in the year 2001.

Having only three ingredients – water, malted barley and yeast – whisky was a simple enough thing to make, right? Wrong. While distilling itself is a simple process, there are many

That's the Spirit – By James Gracie Cont'd

Intangibles about which we know very little. And it's these intangibles that make the difference between a good single malt and a great one.

"The water we use comes from local Lochranza springs" Gordon Mitchell said, "it's peaty water-lovely, clear and pure. That's the best kind to use. It flavours the whisky. We do nothing to it – it comes straight from the spring into the distillery. Malt is just barley which has germinated. To achieve this, the barley's steeped in water for two or three days. Then it is drained off and the barley is spread out in kilns, where little shoots start growing on it. This is then stopped, and the germinating barley is dried. What you have then is malt. We average about 410 litres of spirit for every tonne of malt we use. The distillery then takes delivery of the malt, which comes in one tonne bags. It is then mixed with water in the mash tun like a thick porridge. This is where the distiller's expertise comes into play. The finer the grind, the more alcohol you get. But if it is ground too fine, the liquid won't drain. And the temperature is crucial. Gordon wouldn't tell me the temperature within the mash tun at Lochranza. Each distillery has its own temperature which it reckons is best. In Gordon's office, he took two bottles down from a shelf. In one was clear spirit, and in the other was a recognisable whisky – golden and warm looking.

"This spirit, the clear liquid, is put into barrels and remains there for over three years. What comes out is this golden liquid-whisky at about 60% alcohol by volume. These barrels have all been used before, most for sherry and bourbon. The spirit absorbs its golden colour from the wood". It also absorbs the subtle flavours of the sherry and bourbon. And as the wood breathes, air gets inside the barrel and flavours the spirit as well. Salt air, if the distillery is near the coast, can have an effect on the flavours of the final whisky.

Vapours from the spirit can also pass out. Lochranza distillery loses about 2% per annum of its final product within the barrels in this way. This lost whisky is what is famously called the "angel's share" though on Arran they call it the "holy spirit."

Legally, Scotch whisky is only Scotch whisky if it has been made in Scotland and is over three years old. So, when a maturing spirit is three years and one day old, it can be bottled and sold as whisky.

Of course, there's a further stage in the production of whisky. Eventually it has to be bottled. This is where the alcohol content is reduced to about 40% by adding water. The first batch of Isle of Arran became whisky in July 1998. One thousand bottles were specially produced to celebrate the event, and each one was snapped up. I put one last question to Gordon, "What should I mix with my whisky?" "Water or Ice" he replied.

I asked Jim Murray, an expert on Scotch, and who has written the definitive book about it what he thought about Isle of Arran Whisky. "The better barrels coming out of the distillery are going to be absolute crackers" he said. "When it first came from the still, it was very spicy, though this has died down a bit. But it's very fulsome and rich. For a spirit of that age – it wasn't even whisky when I tasted it – it really was showing enormous character. I've got high hopes for it".

There's more to the Lochranza distillery than making whisky. There's a visitor centre and restaurant, as well as guided tours. There's also one of the best audio-visual displays I've ever seen, housed in a reconstruction of an 18th century Inn.

Counting seasonal staff, the centre and distillery employ about 30 people so it's an important part of the island economy, and has boosted its tourism.

Most Scots are proud of their national drink and according to Gordon, the true connoisseurs among them are able to tell one single malt or blend from another. However, not many people know how it is made. If you're one of them, then a trip to the Isle of Arran Distillers should put you right.

WEB NEWS

The Clan MacMillan Society of Australia

<http://clanmacmillanaus.freesevers.com>

I would like to thank the president and committee of the Society for awarding me a Certificate of Appreciation for the work I have put into the web site. It sits with pride on my desk top. Kaye

On your next visit to the Web Site please **refresh** the HOME PAGE. At the bottom of the page you should now see the 'Bravenet' Password Gate. This allows **members only** entry to that page. Please e-mail macore@i-o.net.au with your membership details and I will give you the User Name and Password. You will then be able to read the latest News Letter and view the 50plus M'Millan B.D.M. certificates we are currently holding. Please consider sending me the ones you hold for inclusion.

Do you have a "Sixth Schedule" birth certificate in your collection? These are adoption certificates.

The Index to McMillan Deaths in Victoria, Australia. 1921-1985 is now complete at <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~kayemac/>

As well as a great resource tool for any one researching the M'Millan name I am hopeful it will help to connect families. If you have anyone in the index (or any of our Index's) and would like to place a link to your e-mail address please contact Kaye with the details. If you see a name on any page that is underlined just click on it for a connection to another researcher.

The Melbourne General Cemetery & The Necropolis now has an e-mail address where you can request a look up for someone buried there. Their service is free but only send one or two queries at a time. To see if you might have someone buried in either of these places check the Index's at: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~kayemac/>

E-mail the cemetery at mgc@necropolis.com.au

Help Wanted *Posted through the web site*

"Looking for Ms Cotton"

A distant MacMillan "cousin" of mine resides somewhere in Australia. So far all my attempts to make contact with her have been unsuccessful. Mrs Cotton is the grand daughter of **Alexander MacMillan** son of **Michael Mor** MacMillan son of Alexander of Balivanich, while I am the grandson of **Marion** MacMillan daughter of **Michael Beg** MacMillan son of Alexander of Balivanich. We share a common great great grandfather -hence my interest in making contact. My purpose in writing is to ask whether, if you know or know off Ms Cotton you might pass on to her my name and e-mail address in the hope that she might contact me with a view to exchanging some information regarding Michael Mor and his son Alexander, and of course the wider MacMillan family descended from the elder Alexander.

Regards

Donald Maclean

donald.maclean@virgin.net

in Edinburgh, Scotland

Happy Surfing, *Your Webmaster*, Kaye O'Reilly nee McMillan.

Taken from a history of the Aeschlimann family compiled by
Ed Hawkes
(with permission)

"MARGARET McMILLAN"

1841 - 1929

Scotland - Australia

Margaret was born near Coatbridge, in the Parish of Newmunkland, County of Lanark, Scotland on the 22nd January 1841. She was the second child of Michael McMillan and Jane Ballantyne.

Michael was the son of Eneas McMillan and Mary Ann Murry.

Her siblings were Eneas, John, Michael, Mary Jane, Neal, and William.

While originally from Ireland, Margaret's parents moved to Scotland, possibly with or to be near the families of her fathers two brothers, John and Neil. The families moved to Tranent in the County of Haddingtonshire near Pencaitland, possibly on an estate or in a village known as New Winton. After her fathers death in 1869, the rest of Margaret's family moved to America.

In 1864 the ship "Matilda Atherling" recorded the passage of Margaret McMillan, age 21, Presbyterian, able to read and write, who was engaged for 3 years to be a cook at a wage of 20 pound 3 shillings for Mr Beckingham at Murgheboluc near Geelong in Victoria, Australia. She stayed with this family till her marriage.

Margaret married Charles Louis Aeschlimann on the 5th May 1866 at Geelong, A native of Switzerland, Charles was born in 1824 at St Blaise. The son of Christian Aeschlimann and Marie Anne Bersot he was the 7th child of 11.

The couple settled on property in the Barrabool Hills, near to the Barwon River where Swiss emigrants were establishing a wine growing industry. Their children Charles, Adeline, Alice, Emily, Louis, Margaret and Ernest were all born there. The youngest, Ernie was just 2 when his father died in 1879 after a fall from his horse.

Hit hard by the 1880 flood and the grape virus, (an interesting story in the Geelong Advertiser tell how "the widow, seven children and a maid were duly bought to safety"), by 1886 Margaret had moved, with her children to Penny Royal Creek, near Deans Marsh, south of Geelong. After realising over 60 pound from her husband's estates overseas she then moved to Arawata, in South Gippsland. She purchased a property of 360 acres on the headwaters of Ruby Creek, which she named Ruby Park. Once the land was cleared the family ran a dairy. In 1904 Margaret divided the land for use by Charles, Louis and Ernest. The property still remains in the family.

In her youth, Maggie was known as "a blooming comely young woman, full of spirit and independence". She is remembered in later life as having a forceful personality, epitomised by her ability to overcome adversity. She had a lot of influence in her children's lives, and was respected for her religious conviction. It was a common occurrence for the family to gather on a Sunday night and sings hymns around the organ.

"I pay tribute to that lady who withstood the difficulties of marriage as a young girl to a much older and domineering male; who fought the ravages of disease to the family grapevines; who survived the flood that almost destroyed the family orchard; who left the burnt out remains of her Pennyroyal home; and who trekked with her young family into the wilds of the great South Gippsland forests - and won. I salute her and thank her for her spirit and her contribution.

I give you - Margaret Aeschlimann. *Ed Hawkes*

Crinan Canal, Argyll, Scotland

Before the Crinan Canal was built, ships travelling from the Clyde to the west coast and the Hebrides had to travel an extra 130 miles around the dangerous long finger of the Kintyre peninsula. The waterway runs between Ardrishaig and Crinan and is nine miles long, rising by locks to a maximum height of 64ft. It opened in 1801 and was used not just for transporting commercial goods but also by fishing boats and a daily passenger service. A special steamer was built to carry passengers from one end of the canal to the other – though it travelled so slowly many passengers walked alongside instead. Today the canal is used by private yachts and launches.

Scottish Humour

Caught for not having a TV licence, Hughie duly purchased one, which was just as well because as he was going down the path from his house he met the inspector again. "I'm in a hurry, but dad's in the house. Tell him the licence is behind the clock on the mantelpiece". The inspector does as was told, to the astonishment of Hugh's dad. "That's some detector van ye've got that knows where the licence is kept!"

If unclaimed, please return to:
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