



MACMILLAN

CREST BADGE: A dexter and
A sinister hand brandishing a two-
Handed sword, proper.

MOTTO: Miseris succurre disc
(I learn to succour the distressed)

Gaelic Name:
Mhaolain

CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUST)

Newsletter No 57. November 2002

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CMSA President's Report for 2002

The 19th Annual Meeting of Clan MacMillan Society was held on 13th October. As you know it was started by Don MacMillan in 1983, ably assisted by his first wife, Geva, who unfortunately died of cancer. I knew her at University. Don is now living at Red Hill with his wife Meg and they send their best wishes to the Society members. Their interest is the environment and in particular the preservation of the indigenous habitat on the Mornington Peninsula.

At the AGM we were intrigued to see what Trish Sinclair had brought in a big box. Eventually she revealed 2 lovely gowns worn by her great grandmother in the 1860's. One was a soft pink silk afternoon dress with open neckline, boned bodice, and hand made flowers around the hem of the skirt. The other was an evening gown of cream lace and net with fitted bodice and skirt in layers. This relation lived in Gippsland in Stratford. Trish is donating the garments to the Historical Museum there. Thank you Trish for showing them to us.

Our speaker, Susan McLean, who was born in New Zealand of Scottish ancestry, has been interested in genealogy for 30 years and active in the affairs of the Genealogical Society of Victoria. She spoke to us about the customs associated with death in Scotland after the Covenant. Her very interesting talk is printed in this newsletter.

Everyone is aware of the increase in premiums of public liability insurance following the September 11 disaster. We now have to pay a premium of \$5.00 per member. At the AGM it was decided that our subscription remain at \$15.00 but that a donation of \$5.00 from each member would be much appreciated. Also, because of the policy terms that we are liable for the first \$1000.00 of any claim, we will be unable to send a donation to the Clan MacMillan International at Finlaystone. This is a pity because they are in need of finances to maintain and update the Centre.

This has been a big year for Clan MacMillan International in that THE GREAT RETURN 2002 took place in June and July. This was a celebration to recognise the emigration of 300 MacMillans and other clans to Canada in 1802 in 3 hired vessels.

Despite the September 11 disaster, nearly 200 people participated in events such as walking, rowing, dancing and tours to Mull, Iona, Knapdale, Castle Sween Glen Garry, Murlagen Loch Ness, Culloden, dinners and even a march through Fort William. The Investiture of 9 new members into Clan MacMillan's Community of the Tonsured Servant took place at the Iona Abbey led by our Chief George Gordon MacMillan and Blanche Marshall McMillan, Abbot of the Community of the Tonsured Servant from Ontario, Canada.

Graeme McKenzie, the Clan Genealogist, organised The Great Return with the help of Pauline Simpson and we are indebted to them that they put so much time and effort to promote the Clan MacMillan's name.

Recently two of the Tonsured servants have visited Melbourne. Firstly, Margaret Pool from New Zealand who, with her husband Peter, was visiting relatives, and secondly, Blanche McMillan, who after seeing her student son in Sydney came to see "beautiful" Victoria. It was a great pleasure to meet these women who have done so much for the Clan.

I want to thank Kaye O'Reilly for the work she has done on the website. She has a lot of information available and it will enable members to trace their families. She has a page in this newsletter about your family history which will help us all to organise the family tree if it needs to be updated.

As you know June Senior produces the Newsletter which always has plenty of interesting information. She loves hearing from members and we appreciate the time and effort she gives to it. Thank you June !

Following on the success of our picnic at Geelong earlier this year, we are planning another of the same on Saturday 8th February 2003; details elsewhere. You do not have to live in Geelong to come; all interested parties will be welcomed.

Looking forward to seeing you soon,
June Danks.

Overseas Clan Visitors

Max and I enjoyed having Margaret and Peter Pool stay overnight when passing through Melbourne in August. Margaret started the MacMillan Clan Society in New Zealand 10 years ago. It was good to meet Margaret after exchanging newsletters and letters for that time.

It was also our great pleasure to have Blanche McMillan from Burlington, Toronto Canada, stay with us when she had a brief visit to Melbourne in September. Blanche is Abbot of the Community of the Tonsured Servant, and wife of John B. McMillan, who has been Editor of the Clan MacMillan Society of North America's newsletter since 1968.

10TH Australian Congress on Genealogy & Heraldry

To be held at the Melbourne Convention Centre from April 23rd to April 27th in 2003.

Please direct enquires to the Congress Secretariat:
bev@conferenceconsultants.com.au or telephone 03 9698 7400

The program is packed with interesting lectures, dinners and tours: too complex to be included in this newsletter.



Subscriptions

As our President June Danks has mentioned, our Insurance has greatly increased this year. However our subscription will remain at \$15.00 for 2002-2003. If members feel like giving a donation of \$5.00 it will be greatly appreciated.

Subscriptions are now due and can be sent to me: Mrs J. Senior,
41 Lincoln Ave, Glen Waverley, Vic 3150.

Insert in Newsletter

Kaye O'Reilly has kindly printed the enclosed insert. Because of the PRIVACY ACT we now need to have a member's permission to put their name or photo in our newsletter.

If you could kindly complete the form – putting as much family history as you have – with the other information and return to me at the address above.

You may like to send the form with your subscription.

Clan MacMillan Picnic at Geelong

It has been decided to hold another Picnic at Eastern Park (next to the Geelong Botanical Gardens) Geelong on Saturday 8 February 2003. It is a B.Y.O. picnic so bring your lunch and beverages, and anything else you may need.

In Melway Directory prior to No 27 see page 228B R4

In Melway Directory after No 27 see page 402 R4

We will meet at the Picnic Shelter and b.b.q. area as shown on maps. If anyone has a query about the above information please contact one of the committee shown on page 1 either by phone, fax or email. All members are welcome and we hope to see YOU there.

Antique Dresses

I asked Trish Sinclair if she would write about the 2 ball gowns she brought to the A.G.M. They were greatly admired by those present.

Trish writes: " My Father's cousin, Colina McLeod, gave me nearly seventy years ago two gowns belonging to her Grandmother (my Great Grandmother) Margaret McMillan of "Strathavon" Stratford, and told me if I allowed the lace of the ball gown to be cut up she would come back to haunt me!

The 5 yard wide skirt of the ball gown is of pale antique lace gathered into a 24" waist, with layers of the lace in bands around the skirt, and with it she wore a tight cream satin bodice covered with the same lace, tightly laced at the back, an open neckline and tiny puffed sleeves. A simple short lace Jacket completed the outfit. 'Lina told me Margaret wore it to a Ball in Melbourne after they arrived from North America in January 1856.

The second gown is of dull pink-striped silk, a tight 23" waist, a graceful full length skirt ornamented above the hem with rows of 3-petalled flowers made of the same fabric. It has a wide square neckline and long puffed sleeves gathered into tight six inch cuffs. This gown may have been worn by Margaret's daughters, Christina, Isabella or Joanna.

'Lina would have appreciated the careful examination of the detail of the dresses by Clan members at our Annual meeting in October.

I haven't cut it up! Thank you Trish for sharing these heirlooms with our members.

Coming Events

Saturday	February 8	2003	Clan MacMillan Picnic at Geelong.
Sunday	March 16	2003	Geelong Highland Games, Queens Park, Geelong.
Sunday	March 30	2003	Ringwood Highland Games, Jubilee Park, Ringwood.
Sunday	April 6	2003	Scottish Settlers Day, Gulf Station, Yarra Glen.



"THE LOW ROAD"

SCOTTISH RITUALS & CUSTOMS RELATING TO DEATH AND BURIALS

Our thanks to Susan McLean, of the Genealogical Society of Victoria, for this presentation at our Annual General Meeting on 13 October 2002. Those present thoroughly enjoyed Susan's informative talk, and we thank her for giving permission for this material to be published in our newsletter.

THE LOW ROAD

There is an old belief that when a Scot dies in a foreign land, their spirit returns to the place of birth by an underground fairy way - *The Low Road*. The ballad, "The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond" has the well known chorus: "You'll take the high road, and I'll take the low road, And I'll be in Scotland afore ye....."

This song has its origin in the aftermath of the attempt by Charles Edward Stuart to march into London with his band of Highland supporters in 1745. At Derby, although only 130 miles from their goal, the Prince's advisers urged him not to advance any further and the little army turned about for the long march home. Encountering several skirmishes on the retreat, any stragglers and the wounded were inevitably captured and thrown into prison. The song tells of two Scotsmen in Carlisle Prison, one about to be released and who will soon walk the high road from Carlisle into Scotland and see his loved ones again. The second man has been condemned to death as a traitor and is soon to be executed. He and his true love will never meet again but he knows he too will return to Scotland - he will take the *low road*.

This familiar air is often sung very fast and some people think it is a jolly love song. It should be played softly and slowly, listen carefully to the words and you will understand the true meaning.

SUPERSTITIONS REGARDING DEATH

The Scots retain so much of the ancient lore and customs of their ancestors and no more so than at times of death.

There are many Omens of Death - and they may vary from region to region. Some examples are, the crowing of a cock before midnight, a mirror or picture falling from the wall, furniture "jumping", or unexplained tapping on a window pane. Animals behaving oddly were said to have been spooked by "phantom funerals". People would often claim to have seen a family member or an old friend who lived many miles away, and then later learn that person had passed away at the very hour they had appeared to them.

FUNERAL and BURIAL CUSTOMS

The "Laying Out"

Where death occurred at home, all doors and windows were opened wide to allow the departing spirit to go freely. Clocks were stopped, mirrors & pictures covered or removed. Before the time of undertakers as we know them, the local midwife was often called upon to prepare the deceased by washing and clothing the body prior to it being laid out in the best room of the house, usually on a board which was supported by a chair at each end. The body was covered with a sheet, pennies put over the eyelids. No animals were allowed in that room and no fires lit there. One or two candles were kept alight beside the body. Relations and friends would be invited to take one last look at the departed, whose living relatives felt obliged to offer substantial hospitality in the form of food and drink. Visitors were expected to touch the body. To do so was a sign that one had done nothing in any way to contribute to the death, plus it gave immunity from dreams about the dead.

The "Sitting Up"

During the nights before the deceased was taken to burial, two or more people, often young people or children, sat up with the body. Many considered it an honour to be asked. Refreshments were provided and sitters passed the time telling stories or reading aloud. In earlier times particularly in the Highlands these nights were filled with singing and dancing particularly if an ample supply of whisky had been provided. Such celebrations were later frowned upon by the Church who decreed that all the sitters needed was some bread & cheese, tea, a candle, and the Bible. The Sitting Up continued into the 20th century and like many customs, it was then done without the sitters really knowing why they were doing

it, thinking it was just a mark of respect, but the original belief was that if the body was not watched, the Devil would carry it off!

Hospitality

Preparations for the laying out and burial, would of course vary depending on the social status of the deceased. Wealthy families went to great detail in draping walls with black fabric, sending out formal invitations to the viewing and funeral, wearing elaborate mourning attire as well as dressing the body in specially made clothing. But poor families took great care to do everything right, and most people kept specially made nightshirts and shrouds in anticipation of that one event common to all folk.

Many people spent more than they could afford in an effort not to be disgraced by failing to properly farewell their loved one. And excessive hospitality did have it's problems, with lots of noise and fights breaking out. Some people went to a viewing without knowing the deceased, just to take part in the festivities and a free meal.

The "Kisting"

Another ritual which continued into recent times was the placing of the body into the coffin. With only family and close friends present, it was a quiet, reflective time and a final opportunity to farewell a loved one, especially for the womenfolk who would not be accompanying the body to the graveyard. Early coffins were made of rough timber and would be covered with a *Mortcloth*, usually black velvet edged in heavy fringing. Some people made their own mortcloths but they were usually hired from the parish church. This custom gradually died out with the improvement and embellishment of coffins.

The Burial Party

Notice of burial time and place was sent about the area by special messenger - a young lad or the local sexton who rang a hand bell inviting villagers to the funeral. If the deceased was someone of substance, written invitations were issued. The burial party set out for the graveyard, carrying the coffin supported on cross pieces carried by four men from a much larger group who could take turns to carry the load. The procession may be preceded by the bell-ringer or a piper, or the steeple bells of the church would toll. A horse and cart might carry the coffin if there was some distance to cover. Regardless of the mode of transport, the body was to make it's way to the burial site by the same route along which the deceased had walked to church on the Sabbath.

The burial party carried whisky with them, the deceased often stipulating in his/her will the amount of whisky to be provided. There are many recorded instances of the men having too much whisky and arguing for instance, about the correct road to take, and a fight breaking out. The funeral procession of Flora MacDonald in Skye had to travel 16 miles to the burial place, it is said that 300 gallons of whisky was consumed on the journey!

DEATH and the KIRK

In the earlier paragraphs which describe customs surrounding death and burial, you may wonder about the lack of religious references. Also one of the most frequently asked questions I am asked by newcomers to Scottish genealogy is, "why can't I find any deaths in the Parish Records?" The answer is complex but it is important to understand that it's origin lies in the decree of the early Presbyterian Church that a body was to be interred without any ceremony. Written in the 1640's, the decree acknowledged the need for the living to be consoled and prayed for in their time of sorrow, but *".....the custom of kneeling down and praying by or towards the dead corpse in the place where it lies before it be carried to burial, are superstitious; and for praying, reading and singing, both in going to and at the grave, have been grossly abused, are no way beneficial to the dead, and have proved many ways hurtful to the living; therefore, let all such things be laid aside."*

The Book of Common Order instructed all ministers not to attend the grave-side, but if asked by the relatives to participate in some way, to go only to the church *"and make some comfortable exhortation"* These comfortable exhortations with the addition of Scripture readings became the modern burial service similar to that we have today, but this did not come in until the middle of the Nineteenth century and the minister who conducted the first recorded burial service, scandalized the whole district, with all his elders leaving him declaring that he was on a direct path to Rome! However it gradually become accepted in all communities.

Long before this, there was a form of religious service which took place in the deceased's home. It evolved from the Burial in Scots Linen Act of 1686. In order to promote a domestic industry and going on the notion that death affects everyone at one time or another, the Act forbade any material other than linen prepared and spun in Scotland to be used for shrouds. Before a body was placed in the coffin, an elder or deacon had to verify the shroud. This was one decree that the people generally obeyed because the financial penalty was severe. As the years went by it became common for the local



minister, rather than an elder to attend, and this visit developed into a kisting service with prayers said for both the living and the dead.

Although the Reformers forbade funeral services, they did attempt to collect annual lists of death from each parish. Few bothered to comply. By the mid 1700's about a third only of all parishes were keeping records, however the church had other responsibilities and functions to do with the dead and these were an important source of income for the poor box. Fees were collected for digging the grave; ringing the bells, mortcloth hire and some parishes hired out a horse drawn hearse as well as mourning clothes, black ribbons and plumes. There was also a fee to place a headstone at a grave, although markers were not encouraged by the Church.

Those of you who are researching your Scottish Ancestors before the introduction of Civil Registration in 1855, are advised to check if there is a Kirk Session Register available for your parish. This is where for accounting purposes, the parish clerk will have noted names and dates against mortcloth hire or bell ringing.

Other sources of death information are Testament and Probate Records, and Monumental Inscriptions. If there are no headstones for your ancestors, you can often write the relevant District Council in Scotland and request a search in the graveyard burial registers.

BODY SNATCHERS

To end my talk today, I thought I would mention a phenomenon pertaining to death that has a very Scottish setting and once gripped the whole nation. From the early 1700's, Edinburgh became famous as a centre for medical teaching. Students of anatomy required fresh corpses and the only legal supply was a small number of executed prisoners. Demand soon outstripped supply and someone, somewhere, had the idea of digging up newly interred bodies, under the cover of darkness. The grisly practice was aided by the medical schools who paid cash for the cadavers, adopting a "no questions asked" policy. Orders went out that graves be dug deeper and graveyard walls built higher. Grave watchers were appointed, but they were open to bribery. Some churchyards built stone watch houses where local men armed with sticks or guns, took turns to watch over the graves at night, especially in the first few days after a burial. All these precautions failed to stamp out the practice of Body Snatching. By the 1820's a marked increase in demand for medical education in Scotland meant a peak in demand for corpses. There was an outbreak of national hysteria. Robert Louis Stevenson published a fictional short story titled *The Body Snatcher* which only fueled the public's imagination. Those who could afford it had iron cages (*mortsafes*) placed over the coffin in the ground and relatives guarded new graves for several days after internment. But the poor, who protected their bodies? Matters came to a head with the notorious affair of Burke and Hare. They began by robbing graves but progressed on to serial murder, seeking out poor and lonely victims as a source for their corpses for sale. In 1828 they were arrested and brought to trial in Edinburgh. Hare turned King's evidence against Burke and was relocated to England where it is believed he died a pauper some thirty years later. William Burke was found guilty, executed by public hanging, and ironically his body was then "donated" for medical dissection.

Clan MacMillan Newsletters from around the World

Our Secretary Myrna recently received a letter from Lorna McMillan, Secretary of Clan MacMillan Society(Scotland) enclosing their newsletter "Clan Call" Summer 2002.

Lorna said they would like to hear from Australia and I will send her a copy of this n'letter when completed. We currently receive newsletters from New Zealand, California U.S.A. and North America. These newsletters are in my file. If any member would like to read them at any time they can contact me. J. Senior.

Gathering at Strathalbyn, South Australia

The Chief of the Strathalbyn Caledonian Society, James Wallace, wrote to us about a Family Fun Day they had organized in the historic grounds of "Glenbarr" near Strathalbyn on the Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia. I replied regretting we were unable to attend, but sent our last two newsletters and information sheet for their interest.



WEB NEWS

The Clan MacMillan Society of Australia <http://clanmacmillanaus.freesevers.com>

Over 3020 visitors since May 2001

Tips to protecting your computer on the web.

With so many Virus's out there 'in the wild' I have listed a few tips to *help* protect your computer. Up-to-date anti-virus protection is especially important. If you don't already have an anti virus program installed you can go to <http://housecall.trendmicro.com/> and scan your computer *online*. Trend Micro's **free online virus scanner** allows you to scan your computer any time you like, just log on and follow the prompts. The first time I used this one it took about an hour,(less since) the time would depend greatly on how much you have on your system. I registered as a user and receive regular updates on virus alerts.

These are the 10 most prevalent viruses, as listed by Trend, for November 2002.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. WORM_BUGBEAR.A | 2. WORM_KLEZ.H | 3. JS_EXCEPTION.GEN |
| 4. JS_TRAFFICHBAR.A | 5. JS_NOCLOSE.E | 6. WORM_OPASERV.A |
| 7. HTML_IFRMEXP.GEN | 8. JS_NOCLOSE.A | 9. JOKE_RUSS.A |
| 10. JS_SEEKER.EI | | |

E-mail protection: "Are you tired of getting forwarded e-mails with large attachments that take ages to download? Are you scared of getting an email virus? Why not delete the email directly off the server so you don't have to download it."

Since reading an article in **G.U.M.** (Genealogists Using Microcomputers) I have been using 'MAILWASHER'. I can thoroughly recommend it. It's a powerful e-mail checker with very effective spam elimination. I found it very easy to set up and use, *once I had my SMTP and POP3 server details*. To get these go to the 'Tools' menu while in your mail program, go to accounts, click on the 'Mail' tab, click 'properties', click 'servers', note your pop3 and SMTP server details and your account name. You will need these to fill out the details at <http://www.mailwasher.com>

I have found this program especially use full as I regularly receive up to 16 of the same virus every day. I do run an anti-virus program but while it picks up the virus and alerts me to its existence deleting it was time consuming. Deleting, using Mailwasher takes literally seconds. Unsolicited e-mails can be bounced back to the sender making them think you no longer exist. A friend who was using the program wasn't having the same success as I was but after discussing the problem we found she was *double bouncing*. If you get a message screen popping up and informing you, you have already bounced a message, "do you want to do it again?" Say "NO". She has since passed on Mailwasher's praises to her friends.

I found this tip for **protecting your address book** in 'Origins', The Newsletter of the Cairns FHS.

Aileen Park suggests you add a 'New Contact' to your address book. Type AAAAAAA in the name field and WormAlert@somewhere.com in the e-mail address field.

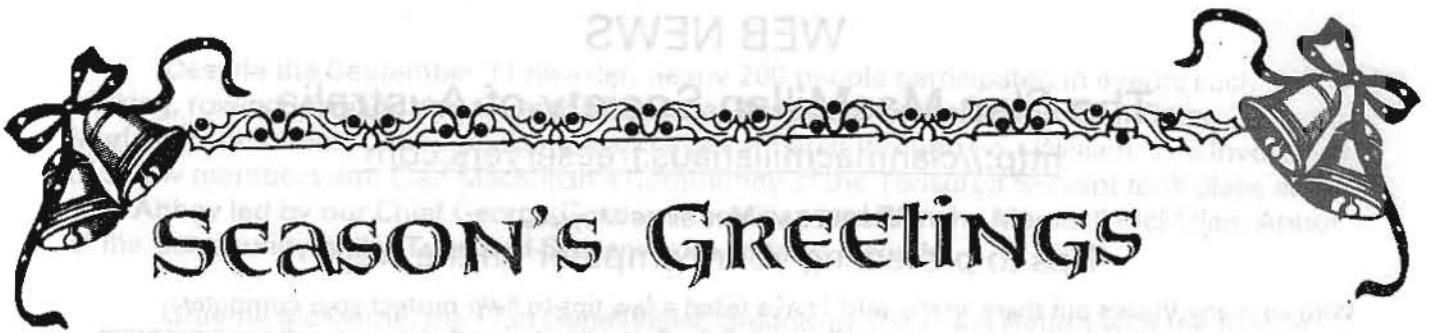
Aileen's theory is "The name AAAAAAA will be placed at the top of your address book as entry #1. This will be where a worm will start in an effort to send itself to all your friends. When it tries to send itself to AAAAAAA, it will be undelivered because of the phoney e-mail address you entered.

(WormAlert@somewhere.com) If the first attempt fails (which it will because of the phoney address) the worm goes no further and your friends will not be infected." The second advantage to this is "If an e-mail cannot be delivered, you will be notified of this in your inbox almost immediately. Hence, if you ever get an e-mail addressed to WormAlert@somewhere.com and it is undelivered, you will know right away you have the worm virus in your system. You can take steps to get rid of it."

(*I tried this and for some reason the address went to third place in my address book. The theory however is sound and well worth the small effort it takes to put into place.*)

My e-mail rules: I *never open* any attachment that I am not expecting, I *never send* an attachment without notifying the recipient. I *never open* an attachment when there is nothing in the message box. Using Mailwasher I *never download* mail that has no sender address or subject line. If I have deleted a suspect message I always *empty the Deleted Items folder, immediately*.

Kaye O'Reilly



SEASON'S GREETINGS

If unclaimed, please return to:
CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUSTRALIA)
41 Lincoln Ave, Glen Waverley Vic.3150



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