



# CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUST)

## Newsletter No. 78 November 2009

### 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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### President's Report for 26<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 2009

The highlight of this year for me has been my visit to Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Scots had an event called the "Homecoming" on 25 & 26 July which was an invitation to the international clans to return to Edinburgh for a celebration. This commenced at Holyrood Park where a village of all the clan tents was set up with the Games on a huge arena. It was officially opened by the Duke and Duchess of Rothesay (Prince Charles and his wife Camilla) in perfect weather with the background of Arthur's Seat. As well as the overseas visitors, many people of Edinburgh attended. Most of my time was spent near the MacMillan tent chatting to Chief George, Pauline & members of CMIC. John Brown of Vermont was also there. At the end of the day all clans gathered outside the gates where I met up with a MacMillan Group of 8 from Sydney.

At 8pm the clan groups walked up the Royal Mile with the pipe bands, an uphill path but there were some stops. Many cheers and "aussie, aussie, aussie Oi, Oi, Oi" at the sight of the Sydney's banner, which was made from an old clan Macmillan yellow & mauve tartan! The road was lined with people 2 or 3 deep behind barriers. It was quite exciting. I hadn't expected such a warm welcome. We finally arrived at Edinburgh Castle and found our booked seats on the Esplanade.



George's grandson, proudly played his pipes.

Weather was fine again for the Wednesday ferry and bus ride to Isle of Bute to visit famous Mount Stuart house and garden. That evening we enjoyed a Banquet at Tontine Hotel at Greenock. All the events were of great interest and I had a happy time as everyone was so friendly. *[cont'd overleaf ed]*

The performance of "Aisling's Children: Tales of the Homecoming" commenced at 10pm, when it was dark enough for the laser beams, telling the Scottish history from past to present times.

The Gathering of the Clan MacMillan International group started with a BBQ on Monday at Finlaystone, so we could see the lovely gardens and socialize with members, followed on Tuesday with a ferry ride and a long drive to Knapdale where we walked around and in Castle Sween. Then we moved on to Kilmory Chapel for the CTS Investiture conducted by Abbot, Blanche MacMillan and everyone had a part to play. At the entrance and exit pipes were played. Rory,



During the year in Victoria we have had a lunch together at the Docklands, not far from where our ancestors stepped off their ships. In April, our tent was at the Ringwood Highland Games where we had a number of visitors and we took part in the Opening Procession (in a drizzle of rain).

On 30th May, Kaye and I attended the Annual Groups, Meeting of Genealogical Society amongst 40 others. It should be noted that there is a tax deductible gift membership available at GSV. There is an amazing amount of work going on

with these groups using computers and historical records for research, meeting monthly and even fortnightly.

The annual "Kirkin of the Tartan" service was attended by June Senior.

A group of 9 gathered for the annual lunch at Ringwood of the Scottish Clans & Associations on 11th October where we enjoyed a 3 course meal including Haggis.

Our entertainment was provided by a young, very talented, piper, Lincoln Hilton who has won awards in the last 4 years in Edinburgh and about to set off again. After some Scottish country dancing we celebrated with songs of Robbie Burns, finishing with Auld Lang Syne. Special thanks is given to committee members for their work over the past year and Seasons Greetings to all our members.

June Danks.



## SUBSCRIPTIONS



*Subscriptions* are now due and because of increased costs, have been increased to \$20.00 for 2009/2010. We only have 3 opportunities a year to remind members about their subscriptions, so please respond, and make the Treasurer's job that much easier. It would be appreciated if you could forward all monies 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.

## COMING EVENTS

**Maryborough Highland Games      Friday, 1st January, 2010.** Maryborough.

There is a website at <http://www.maryboroughhighlandsociety.com> for further information. Enquiries: Ph. [03] 5461 1480.

At Princes Park, Park Road, Maryborough. First held in 1857, this is the oldest sporting event in Australia. Apart from the athletic events including the Maryborough Gift, there are Highland Games, Street Parade, Pipe Bands, Stalls, plus an evening Concert and Fireworks Display.

**Berwick Highland Games      Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2010.** Akoonah Park, Berwick.

Activities on the day include Pipe Bands Competition, Solo Pipes and Drums Competition, Massed Pipe Bands at Closing Ceremony, Heavy Games, Haggis Throwing, Scottish Highland & Country Dancing, Clan Representation with Stalls and Displays, Black Scottish Terriers & West Highland Whites, Food and Drinks Available, Publicans Booth, Vintage & Classic car display, New Attractions, Flyball Dog Competition, Obedience & Agility Dog Demonstrations.

Enquiries: Contact: -Simon Hall: [03] 8768 9444 or mob: 0400 010 686, or, e-mail: - [kassieman2003@yahoo.com.au](mailto:kassieman2003@yahoo.com.au)

**Geelong Highland Games      Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2010.** Fyansford Common, Newtown, Geelong.

There is a website at [www.geelonghighlandgathering.org.au](http://www.geelonghighlandgathering.org.au) for further information. Enquiries: Ph. [03] 9513 9301.

Music, Pipe Bands, Scottish Folk Bands & Singers, Haggis Hurling, Wood Chopping, Children's Farmyard Nursery, Stalls, & Clan Tents. And much more. [Melways Map 451/A3]

**Ringwood Highland Games      Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2010.** Jubilee Park, Ringwood

There is a website at [www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org.au](http://www.ringwoodhighlandgames.org.au) for further information. Enquiries: Ph. [03] 9876 4140, or e-mail: - sue.m.mcleod@hotmail.com

Highland Dancing Competitions, Pipe Bands [massed Bands Display], Stalls, & Clan Tents. [Free bus from & back to Ringwood Station].

**Edinburgh Military Tattoo      4,5,6,7 February 2010,** Sydney football Stadium, Sydney

The world's most famous spectacular, The Edinburgh Military Tattoo is returning to Sydney to celebrate 60 Years of Valour, Mateship and Glory. With over 1500 performers from around the world, including Massed Pipes and Drums, Highland Dancers and the stirring Lone Piper, this is set to be the biggest Edinburgh Military Tattoo ever staged.

This will only be the third time the Tattoo has ventured outside of Edinburgh, and the second time it has come to Sydney.

There is a website at [www.edinburghtattooinaustralia.com.au](http://www.edinburghtattooinaustralia.com.au) for further information.

## ***Meet the Chief - Clan MacMillan***

*[The Scottish Banner is pleased to be running a series to help readers get to know their Clan Chief and quite literally put a face behind the name. Scottish Banner readers will be “meeting” a variety of Clan Chiefs over the months to learn about the person who connects Scots around the world.]*

**THIS MONTH WE WELCOME GEORGE GORDON MACMILLAN OF MACMILLAN & KNAP MA, CHIEF OF CLAN MACMILLAN.**

**SB:** Can we begin by you telling us a brief bit about yourself and when you took on the role of Clan Chief? Do you have a role outside the Clan itself?

**GM:** *Until I was about nineteen I had no idea that my father was a direct descendant of a man who had been recognised as Chief of the name in or about 1742. My father became aware of it only when, as Governor of Edinburgh Castle (a sinecure that went automatically with his job as G.O.C. Scotland) he needed a flag to fly from the ramparts. The Lord Lyon of the time was keen to sell him a new coat of arms; but the Rev. Somerled Macmillan, who had written a Clan history, convinced him that my father was entitled to the arms registered by Duncan MacMillan of Dunmore in 1742. It then emerged that Duncan had been recognised as Chief.*

*I retired from teaching in 1974 to help my parents look after a property which my maternal grandmother had left me in trust some years earlier. My wife and I developed its tourist potential.*

*I succeeded my father as Chief in 1986.*

**SB:** Many people are fascinated by the Clan ancestral home? Where is the official Clan residence and do you in fact live and run the property? Also can the general public visit?



*Taken at the Gathering 2009 in Edinburgh in July with The Chief and the first two visitors to the Clan MacMillan tent moments after the gates opened at 9am! The two ladies are Marion McMillan Pearce, Kelso NSW and Elizabeth Millan Evans, Bathurst NSW, Australia.*

**GM:** *This question is fairly well answered above. But it's worth pointing out that this is not an ancestral MacMillan property. The MacMillan Clan as a whole has traditionally been highly mobile; and my branch is no exception. My father's great-grandfather was a Marine officer under Nelson. His son migrated briefly to Australia. His son (my father's father) spent the bulk of his life planting coffee in India, where my father was born. He returned to Britain when my father needed to be educated. My father, being an army officer, seldom spent more than two years in any given place. His marriage to my mother provided me with a substantial 'residence'. As a consequence, this chief of a highland clan inhabits a large house not ten miles from Glasgow airport.*

**SB:** Do you get to meet many international Clan members and if so how/where? And if not how do you best communicate with the international Clan membership?

**GM:** *Again, the answer to the last question is part of the answer to this one. I get to meet almost every clansperson who looks in at the Clan Centre set up by my late wife here. In addition, seldom a year passes without my attending a clan gathering, whether in Scotland or overseas. I also find e-mail a useful means of communication between myself and the various clan branches round the world.*

**SB:** For those readers who are not part of your Clan, is there a favourite piece of Clan history or information that you find interesting or that may not be general knowledge?

**GM:** *Am I allowed two 'favourites'?*

*One, if not known, ought to be. Kirkpatrick MacMillan is generally regarded as the creator of the first bicycle. In or about 1839 he fitted pedals and a crank to a previously-existing scooter (or 'hobby horse'), and was thereby enabled to sever all connection with the earth's surface. He used this 'velocipede' to ride the seventy or so miles to Glasgow to visit his brother, the Rector of Glasgow High School. For many years his achievement was forgotten, perhaps because, as a result of knocking down a Glasgow child, Kirkpatrick lost heart and interest in his invention and turned his attention to tricycles.*

*My other 'favourite' is the person who adopted our Latin motto ('Miseris succurrere disco'). We know where he found it – Virgil Aeneid Book I, line 630. But I would love to know who he was and when he lived. Douglas Macmillan, founder of Macmillan Cancer Relief, took it very appropriately as the motto of his charity. To my mind it is peculiarly well suited to a clan that has suffered much, but has produced many sons and daughters with an altruistic streak. According to Book I of the Aeneid, Queen Dido of Carthage finds a somewhat bedraggled Aeneas, who, after much wandering, has eventually been washed up on her shore. She takes him to her palace and gives him a long talk on her own misfortunes, beginning with her being booted out of Tyre by her wicked brother Pygmalion. Her punch line is 'Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco'. That, of course, means (roughly) 'So my own misfortunes are teaching me to help those in distress'.*

*If anyone can tell me who chose this motto for Clan MacMillan, I shall be truly grateful.*

**SB:** If it's possible to describe what would you say is the most rewarding aspect of being a Clan chief?

**GM:** *I'm very lucky to have a ready-made network of intelligent friends throughout the English-speaking world, and even beyond it. We have just discovered some Norwegian MacMillans; and I know of some in South America. I also derive a lot of pleasure from spending time with clanspeople visiting Scotland, a country which they have sometimes waited for many years to see. I remember a powerful Canadian trade union boss standing on the lawn at the back of our house during a gathering and saying with great emotion 'If only my father could see me now!'*

**SB:** What future projects or goals do you have planned for the Clan? Is there anything specific you wish to accomplish whilst Clan Chief?

**GM:** *I'm afraid I'm more a responder than an initiator. I like the idea of responding to the needs of MacMillans world-wide. For some the prime need is for some kind of 'base' in Scotland to touch. For others it may be genealogy. We try to help with both of these. I shall be happy if I can secure enough financial support for our genealogical and historical research – no easy task.*

**SB:** Genealogy is gaining more popularity all the time. What is the importance you feel of belonging to a Clan and the modern day Clan system as we know it?

**GM:** *Again, I've started to answer this question above. I'm not sure that 'system' is a very appropriate word to apply to any Scottish clan. It is, after all, not an organisation but a vast extended family. Paradoxically, the more research one does on one's family, the more 'inclusive' one becomes. There are MacMillans of every conceivable skin colour. Besides, we can't but be humbled by the fortitude of our ancestors in dealing with every kind of hardship. Who can grumble about a late aeroplane when he recalls how his forebears crossed the Atlantic?*

**SB:** What message do you have to both your international Clan members and our Scottish readership in general?

**GM:** 'Keep in touch'.

*[We have Sean Carney of The Scottish Banner to thank for the above article which is as appeared in the November 2009 Scottish Banner newspaper, [www.scottishbanner.com](http://www.scottishbanner.com). Ed]*



### Angus McMillan - Pathfinder by K. Cox [cont'd]

The ladies at the social gatherings with whom he cracked jokes in his broad Scotch accent, and the girls who danced with him in the Lancers, the Alberts and Highland Reels, did not guess that behind the smiling face with its fringe of white whiskers was a lonely, worried man.

At weddings he was invariably asked to propose a toast. The guests, some of whom had travelled up to one hundred miles to attend, loved the stocky figure as he rose with his glass of whisky or wine, and in his fascinating brogue had them in fits of laughter with his anecdotes. Even when slightly affected by whisky, toast-masters knew that anything McMillan said would never bring a blush to a young girl's cheek. When the bride cut the cake, McMillan would leave his chair and the guests would watch the ceremony in which the kilted figure, who gained such obvious enjoyment from the proceedings, led the singing. It was McMillan also who supervised the passing of tiny pieces of cake through the wedding ring and who organised the throwing of slippers as the happy couple departed.

He invariably accompanied the newly-weds for a mile or so with a party of bucks who indulged in a final toast with the bride and bridegroom before riding back in gay spirits to participate in the high tea and all-night dancing.

McMillan's fondness of horses betrayed itself in the size of his stable. His horses were the talk of the province, and the rivalry between his breed and William Pearson's of Kilmany Park was legendary. Despite its expense, McMillan threw himself into breeding and racing horses with tremendous energy and enthusiasm. He attended race meetings, no matter how great the distance, frequently rode himself, but did not bet. At times he joined in the hunt at Kilmany Park but loved racing in preference to other sporting activities. A hoof from his stud Arab horse Clifton was preserved in the new Melbourne museum.

The majority of squatters were Scottish born, and it was not long before a Caledonian society was flourishing, with regular meetings at which the whisky passed from hand to hand and the Scottish tongue was heard above the laughter and revelry. McMillan was installed as President, a position which he enjoyed immensely, and little encouragement was needed to persuade him to sing a Gaelic song or recite a poem of Robbie Burns. Such nights compensated for the anxiety and struggle to make his stations pay, and from them he returned home befuddled but happy to dream of his old home in the Hebrides.

McMillan actively encouraged the spread of the Church to Gippsland. A year after he had settled at Bushy Park, an Anglican Minister, Reverend E. G. Pryce, visited him from Monaro, followed by Reverend Francis Hales in 1848. The Clergy were unused to the rough life, but put up with conditions which would have deterred men less dedicated. Particularly at Tarraville and Port Albert, where a lawless and drunken



Part of McMillan's' Bushy Park homestead re-erected at the Moe Folk Museum

element existed, the going was difficult, but most of the population welcomed the arrival of the Church with enthusiasm, although less zealous to contribute to the inevitable expense.

Services were held in homes and wool sheds and even hotels; children were baptised and couples married, many of the latter having lived together because no Clergymen were available to legalise their union.

Mr. Hales wrote that, at Neilson's Royal Hotel at Tarraville, he referred to

drunkenness and sins in plain language. After writing in his diary in 1848 of Tarraville as

‘.....a miserable little place with not more than ten or twelve cottages, a few stores for selling wares of every description and two inns.....’

he travelled to North Gippsland, where he met McMillan. He described him as

‘ a well-disposed and steady man, religiously brought up and I trust a servant of God, though not possessing much knowledge in the deep things of life. McMillan was to me most hospitable and kind. I feel towards him more than to any other I have met. I can converse with him with more freedom on religious subjects. Mr. Raymond listens like a gentleman but does not seem to hear what I say and makes no reply.....’



More affectionately remembered than the earnest and temperamental Mr. Hales, was 'Parson Bean'. Reverend Willoughby Bean came to Port Albert in 1849, having disembarked from the ship Colina at Williamstown after a rough voyage during which they were almost shipwrecked.

Journeying north, Mr. Bean called at Bushy Park, where McMillan gave him hospitality on more than one occasion. Unlike his predecessor, Reverend Bean withheld his judgment on the explorer.

The first Church in Gippsland, Christ Church, was opened for services on 9 June, 1856. Built on the bank of the Tarra River in a picturesque setting, the building was of sawn timber with slotted uprights and mortised cross-beams and plates; as a result no nails were necessary in the slabs.

*[.....to be continued..... Ed]*

*Cairn at Iguana Creek showing the memorial inscription to McMillan*

## Correspondence Request

From: "George MacMillan" [chief@clanmacmillan.org](mailto:chief@clanmacmillan.org)

Subject: Exiting New Development

*I'm writing to draw your attention to what I believe to be an exciting new development, which could boost our clan finances and also give MacMillans an edge over other clans.*

*It's been suggested to me by Andres Linholm. Andres has recently become a member of the clan by adoption (a procedure that's in line with ancient custom). He's travelled widely, and obviously has a flair for enterprise. His idea was "What about tartan sneakers?" I thought it was a brainwave. They won't be expensive. They'll be colourful and comfortable. I thought they would be a great gift for my grandchildren, who keep growing out of clothes-which makes things like kilts quite a drain on the finances. But they will be in grown-up sizes too.*

*The first batch is in the "Ancient" tartan. Details will be on his website [www.tartansneakers.com](http://www.tartansneakers.com) which has a link with [www.clanmacmillan.org](http://www.clanmacmillan.org) from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009. Shoes will be available from 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.*

*.....If you like this idea please spread the news by any means you can (Website, Newsletter, word of mouth etc.,) because it's in our interests to do so.....*

*George*

*[If you have any questions please contact a member of the committee. Thank You. Ed]*

If unclaimed, please return to:

CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUSTRALIA)  
41 Lincoln Ave, Glen Waverley Vic. 3150



May the Joy and Peace  
that Christmas brings  
be with you throughout the New Year

