



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.*

# CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY

## Newsletter No. 85 March 2012

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### President's Report for November, 2012

Once again Sue McLeod organized a great day at the Ringwood Highland Games.



We had the pipe bands including one from Presbyterian Ladies College performing well. There was Highland dancing as well as Scottish Country dancing and many other events. The procession of 23 Clans included some Scottish terriers with their owners. This year, following the practice of last year the clan tents were arranged in a circle to be a Clan Village, which meant there was more interaction between the clans.

As usual there was the AGM of the Scottish Clans & Associations. Unfortunately the news was not good in that Doug McLaughlin said that he no longer continue as President and then Robert Stewart, Secretary, said the same. Both said they had served for a long time

and were not as fit as before. These two men have been exemplary leaders and we should congratulate them for their major contribution to the Clans & Associations. An Extraordinary General Meeting will be held shortly for the election of office-bearers.

Earlier this year the CMSA members met for lunch at a hotel in Lynbrook. (previously we lunched at the Docklands and before that in the gardens of Geelong), apart from the bountiful buffet meal we enjoyed the company.

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July Kirkin o' the Tartan will be celebrated in Scots Church (cnr. Collins & Russell Sts) at 11am (meet in Hall at 10.30am) and followed in the afternoon at 2pm by "Tartan Day" at Federation Square. This should be fun so please come and join in.

Finally I want to thank members for sending in their subscriptions as it has made it easier for our new treasurer, Jan Brooks, to balance the books.

June Danks

## SUBSCRIPTIONS



*Subscriptions* are now due and have been kept to \$20.00 for 2011/2012. 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:

**Ms Janice Brooks, 15 Everest Drive, Cheltenham Vic 3192.**

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

### TARTAN DAY CELEBRATIONS 2012

#### Annual "Kirkin' O' the Tartan"

Hosts: Scottish Clans and Associations Council  
Date: **Sunday 1st July 2012**  
Venue: **Scots Church – Collins Street, Melbourne**  
Service: 11.00am  
Enquiries: Doug McLaughlin (03) 9836 4232

#### 2012 Tartan Day at Federation Square

The Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group is pleased to announce that next year's 'Tartan Day Celebrations' will be held at Federation Square on Sunday 1st July 2012. Representatives from the following groups comprise the 2012 'Planning Committee' and have already had their first meeting:

- Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group (SVCG)
- Scottish Clans and Associations Council
- Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club
- Pipe Bands Victoria
- Robert Burns Club of Melbourne
- Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
- Scottish Gaelic Society of Victoria
- Victorian Scottish Dancing Members Association
- Victorian Scottish Union Highland Dancing

The SVCG would be grateful for any financial assistance that Scottish community groups are able to offer for this event; it is after all a wonderful opportunity for the Scottish community to showcase its vibrant, unique culture to the wider multicultural community in Victoria.

[Contact: Bill Schrank (03) 8361 0282 0400 867 123]

#### Annual General Meeting

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012.** South Yarra.

Our A.G.M. will again be held on Sunday 26th August, at Soroptimist House, 383 Toorak Rd., South Yarra from noon till 4 p.m. So bring your lunch and meet your fellow Clan members. Tea & Coffee will be provided. [Melways ref 2M, B6].

#### Scottish Resource Centre

The Resource Centre is situated on Level 2, Celtic Club – Cnr Queen & La Trobe Streets, Melbourne. The office is staffed by volunteers from the Scottish community between the hours of 10.00 and 12.00 Mon- Fri. Phone: 9670 6766. Contact outside these hours can be made by using the same telephone number.

**Coordinator:** Ian Murdoch

*[The article "Ferryman and Shipbuilders.....from...." on the following pages was in the latest Clan MacMillan International Magazine and I thought it should be shared with the rest of our Australian members of which Morag and her mother Trish are included. Thanks Morag...Trish.....and with permission kindly given by the author Graeme Mackenzie to reproduce, I hope you enjoy. ....Ed]*





*Looking west on Loch Eil, from Blaich near Garvan*

## Ferryman and Shipbuilders ... ... from Loch Eil, Scotland, to Victoria, Australia ... ... via Cape Breton, Canada *by Graeme Mackenzie*

Early this year the Clan Centre received a Project MAOL submission which contained a fascinating account of a McMillan family's emigration from Garvan, on the shores of Loch Eil in Lochaber, Scotland, to Port Hastings, on the shores of the Gut of Canso - the straits that separate Cape Breton island from the mainland of Nova Scotia in Canada.

It came from Morag Huggins in Merton, Victoria, the great-great-grand-daughter of John Alexander McMillan, who had made that journey from Scotland to Canada as a one year old child; and who, fifty years later, took his family from Canada to Australia on a ship he had built himself in New Brunswick.



*Morag Huggins on the steps of the old McMillan homestead at Port Hastings*

Since Chief George and I were in Nova Scotia in June, we called in at the Gut of Canso Museum in Port Hastings to see what more we could discover about these remarkable McMillans. This enabled us to add a little more detail to the history sent us by Morag Huggins, which forms the basis of the account that follows.

The family claim descent from a Donald McMillan and his wife Ann Dallas, about whom nothing has so far been found in Scotland - though there is a gravestone in the old burial ground at Kilmallie commemorating the death of a Donald MacMillan at Garvan in 1792, who could very well be the man in question. The two sons of Donald and Ann who emigrated to Nova Scotia in the early 1800s are the only children of the couple known at the present time.

The younger son John is said by the historian of Inverness County, Nova Scotia (J. L. Macdougall), to have married "A lady of considerable refinement" - though it's not known whether the match was made in Scotland or Canada. In 1817, as we discovered in the local archives at Port Hastings, John applied for land on the Gut of Canso, saying that he had lived in Cape Breton for four years, was

aged 30, and married with one child. His application was granted, and he named his new home "Garvan" after the family farm back in Lochaber. Later John settled in Harbour au Bouche, Tracadie, Antigonish, which is on the mainland of Nova Scotia, though not far from the Gut. Three of his children are said to have gone to Gloucester, Massachusetts, in the USA. Three of his other children were apparently buried in the Port Hastings cemetery - though there are no stones extant for them - including the eldest Donald (c.1821-1877) who worked on the ferry.

Donald's uncle is recorded in Canada and the family histories both as Ewen and as Hugh, which means that the name by which he would have been known in Scotland was *Eoghan*. He was married in about 1803 to Christiana Cumming, and in his account in "Bygone Lochaber" of the Cummings of Achdaliu, Somerled MacMillan quotes a letter of 1st July 1803 from Allan Cameron of Meoble to Archibald MacMillan of Murlagan who had recently settled in Montreal:

*"What think you, your friend John (Ewen) McMillan at Garvan went off with Miss Cumming and got married at Callander; the father has not countenanced them as yet."*





**The Canso Causeway at McMillan's Point**

This account of the runaway marriage was not handed down in the family, and came as news to Morag when I told her about it in response to her initial MAOL submission. It's interesting not only as a titbit of transatlantic gossip, but also as illustrating further the confusion surrounding the Gaelic names *Eoghan* (Ewen or Hugh) and *Eoin* (Ewen or John).

Though there's no record of the birth or baptism of Eoghan and Christiana's eldest son Donald, their second son's birth is recorded in the Kilmallie Old Parish Register for 23rd November 1805 at Garvan. He was baptised John on the 8th of December, with his father being recorded then as Ewen McMillan. The following year the young family set sail for Canada, where they soon made their mark - as recalled by the local historian in the 1920s:

*"One of the leading pioneers at the Strait of Canso in the early days was Hugh MacMillan..... He soon established at MacMillan's Point the largest business at the Strait of Canso. To give profitable employment to many of the people and to help his own business at the same time he undertook to do some shipbuilding. Without much delay he built and equipped a respectable schooner. A government ferry between the Point and Auld's Cove was secured for the benefit of the public as well as his own, and was operated by the MacMillans for some eighty years."*

The ferry was replaced by a road and rail causeway in the 1950s, which comes ashore on Cape Breton Island at the bottom of the hill on which stood the old MacMillan homestead.

The family were still occupying it 1922, and the building itself survived into the 1970s - though only the steps up to it now remain (Morag is sitting on them in the picture on the bottom left of page eleven). The pioneer died in 1833 and his death was noted in the local newspaper:

*"Suddenly, on the 4th inst. at Judique, near Port Hood, after a few minutes illness, Hugh McMillan, Esq. of Gut of Canso. He has left a large family and a numerous circle of friends to deplore his loss."*

Hugh/Ewen McMillan and Christiana Cumming had four sons and two daughters. Their son Donald married another MacMillan (Jennie) who was a Roman Catholic from the island of Barra, and they had at least three children - one of whom (Hugh) drowned in the Straits. Their daughter Jane and her husband George Nicolson are known to have lived at McMillan's Point, and to have raised a large family in the Catholic faith.

Hugh/Ewen's youngest son Alexander was running the ferry ("from McMillan's Cove to Auld's Cove") in 1843, when he applied for an increase in the government grant "to enable him to keep suitable boats...". He married Ann McDonald from Little Mabou, and most of their children seem to have stayed in the Port Hastings area. Their daughter Christina married a John Chisholm, and they ran a private hotel in the building now known as "Hastings House" (pictured below with Morag in 2006).



Douglas McMillan, a grandson of Alexander and Ann McDonald, ran both the Shipping Pier at Port Hastings and the Railway Station at Inverness in the 1920s. The latter is now a very interesting museum, which George and I and Chris McMullen visited during our trip to Cape Breton.

Alexander's third son Angus is said to have had descendants in Moncton, New Brunswick, in 1922, but nothing further is known of them. New Brunswick however was also the initial home of Hugh/Ewen's second son John, who later in life took the additional forename Alexander.

John Alexander McMillan followed his father into the boat-building business; but went further and started constructing ocean-going ships. In the early 1830s he built a vessel that he named the "Greenock" which he took command of himself to cross the Atlantic on a visit to Scotland. Whether he had set out in search of a bride we don't know, but when he returned to New Brunswick it was with a wife who belonged - like his mother - to another important Lochaber clan; in this case the MacLachlans, who were the hereditary standard-bearers to the Camerons of Lochiel.

The marriage took place in Lochaber on 26 April 1834. The parties were named thus in the Ardgour Old Parish Register: "Mr. John McMillan, N. America, and Miss Margaret McLachlan, Ardgour"; and once home in Buctouche, NB, they raised a family of eight (4 sons and 4 daughters).



In 1855 John A. McMillan (who's pictured above) decided to uproot himself and his whole family, and take them halfway round the world to Australia. Why?

The family's own accounts provide no definitive answer to this question; but stories about the severity of the winters in New Brunswick, in letters written in the 1930s by his grand-daughter Colina MacLeod (daughter of Joanna J. McMillan) to Morag's mother Trish (Patricia C. McMillan), suggest one possible motive. Another must have been the Gold Rush in Victoria, which had recently made the fortune of John's nephew Donald Cameron - the son of his wife's sister Jane McLachlan and Allan Cameron of Clunes. Apparently other members of the MacLachlan family had also settled in Australia, and Colina's letters mention in particular her grandmother's sister Hughina and her favourite brother Captain Dugald McLachlan of the Rifle Brigade. Sadly Captain Dugald died shortly before Margaret and her

family arrived in Australia, and Hughina died on board ship whilst returning to Scotland with her nephew Donald Cameron (whose gold allowed the fortunes of the Clunes family to be re-established back in their native land). Captain Dugald however left a considerable legacy to his nephews and nieces, and the McMillan children used their share to build their new home at Stratford in Gippsland, Victoria. They called it Strathavon, and it's pictured below, as painted in the 19th century (left) & photographed in the early 21st century (right).

Initially the McMillans lived in Melbourne, with the boys attending "Scotch College"; and the story in the family is that they chose to live in Gippsland (to the east of Melbourne) rather than in the vicinity of Clunes (to the west of Melbourne) which had been founded by their cousin, because of advice from another Cameron who had been with Angus McMillan when he had opened up Gippsland. The family account states that they were not related to the explorer Angus; but the names in the family, and the marriage of John's elder brother Donald to a McMillan from Barra - the island on which Angus's father Eoghan died - might suggest otherwise. There is however absolutely no firm evidence on the matter either way.

Though John A. McMillan no longer sailed the high seas after he settled at Stratford, he did keep a yacht on the local lakes on which he would disappear for weeks at a time - coming home with plentiful supplies of fat mullet to feed the many guests who always filled the house. "Captain McMillan", as he was known in Gippsland, eventually died in 1882 after his remarkable life on three continents



*Morag Huggins with her mother Trish and their cousin John Campbell McMillan, standing beneath a portrait at Strathavon of John A. McMillan as a young man*

In 2006 Morag retraced her great-great-grandfather's journey back to Nova Scotia, and was disappointed to find only one descendant of his siblings still living in Port Hastings - who turned out to be totally uninterested in the history of the family. Unfortunately George and I fared no better on our visit in that respect, though we were told that the well known CBC News anchor Carole McNeil was a descendant. Maybe some others will see this article and get in touch.

Thanks in the meantime to Morag for the story and for most of the photographs used to illustrate it.



## Angus McMillan - Pathfinder by K. Cox [cont'd] [Cont'd from Newsletter 84]



Mr. Login immediately proceeded to North Gippsland. His first place of call was Bushy Park, where McMillan welcomed him, after the Minister had become hopelessly lost in the bush for thirty hours. A short service was held in a hut on the station on 22 January 1854.

Mr. Login built a Manse for his family on a twenty-acre site in Sale east of Guthridge Parade and south of Foster Street. Heading the subscription list in April 1854, for a Presbyterian Clergyman to reside in the upper district to Gippsland, was Angus McMillan of Bushy Park. Also subscribing were the following who were either working for McMillan or residing at Bushy Park at the time: N. R. Nicholson, James 'mark my word' Lawrence, Donald McDonald, Peter McIntyre, Norman Cameron, Alexander Nicholson, John McKinnon, John Morrison, Lachlan Morrison, Mrs Latham, Mrs Fraser, John Swany, Dugald Cameron, and Michael Bradley. The amounts subscribed are not recorded.

Other donors were Commissioner C. J. Tyers, William Pearson of Kilmany Park, W. Odell Raymond of Strathfieldsaye, S. M. Macalister of Bruthen, William Montgomery of The Heart, W. H. Disher of Tarraville, Doctor Arbuckle of Sale, David Turnbull of Port Albert, M. Macalister of Omeo, James McFarlane of Heyfield and Phipps Turnbull, Melbourne.

McMillan also encouraged the establishment of schools, which were entirely lacking. National schools were commenced under Government control to which parents paid One Shilling weekly for each child, with a reduction for more than one in the family. Bark and slab school buildings were first opened at Tarraville, Port Albert and Alberton and later, with McMillan's help, at Sale, Stratford and Bairnsdale.

The absence of reliable news was keenly felt. A gap was filled by the commencement in August 1855, of *The Gippsland Guardian*. It was published weekly at Port Albert by Jacob Ferris and John Ferres, two migrants from Bath in England who were not related. John Ferres subsequently became Government Printer for Victoria; Jacob Ferris was also Postmaster at Port Albert.

*The Guardian* was of a high standard both in the quality of printing and in the news coverage, items of overseas and national interest being included as well as local happenings.

In Sale the short-lived *Independent* commenced in 1859 and the present *Gippsland Times* in 1861. McMillan contributed to the *Times* articles dealing with his exploration journeys.

McMillan spoke with a voice of authority in the Colony of Victoria and beyond. In his writings and speeches he was restrained and modest, making no claims, which he could not substantiate, and setting out the facts with precision.

Charles Joseph La Trobe, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Victoria, wrote to early settlers requesting them to give an account of the Aborigines and details of their experiences with the natives.

In response to this request, McMillan wrote to La Trobe on 25 August 1853, from Bushy Park a 'Memorandum of a trip from the Monaro district in the year 1839 to the south-west of that district towards the sea coast in search of new country'.....To Be Continued.....



### Correspondence 1

[Both of the following e-mails are being attended to. Ed]

Dear Mick,

I met you at the Highland Games in Ringwood, and you were kind enough to offer help with my family tree (Fathers side). I'm afraid this is the only information I have & I hope it is enough. They were residents of Wycheproof. [Sheep Farmers].

My Grandparents were John Alexander McMillan & Margaret McCracken, they had 5 boys - Les, Stuart, Don, Hector & Colin [my father][no middle name], married my Mother Emma Ina Birmingham, 30th April 1926, Presbyterian Church, Wycheproof.

They also had 5 children - Doris Ina, June Lorraine, Audrey Elaine, Colin Maxwell & Margaret Rosalie (myself). My nickname is Midge, which was bestowed upon me by my Father at a very early age.

I was married and became Margaret Smith, when I divorced I reverted back to my Maiden name, and remain Margaret Rosalie McMillan.

Hope this is of some help to you. I will appreciate any help you can give.

Yours sincerely

Midge McMillan.

## **Correspondence 2**

*For the kind attention of Mick McMillan,*

*Dear Mr. McMillan,*

*I am currently researching my MacMillan roots and in particular I am trying to trace, if possible, the family of an Uncle, Duncan MacMillan, who emigrated to South Australia some time around the early to mid 1930's.*

*As part of my search I came across the Clan MacMillan Australia website and saw your name, hence this e-mail in the hope that you may be able to assist.*

*Would it be possible to use your Newsletter to 'reach out' and possibly locate some of my family members?*

*Duncan was born on 5th November 1887 in Gillen (near to Tarskavaig) in the Sleat area of the Isle of Skye. His parents were Donald MacMillan and Marion Macleod or MacMillan. I believe that Duncan was a sea captain and according to family 'legend' he settled in Australia. I have a family photograph taken by the Dellow Studio in Semaphore, SA which shows Duncan (and his fiancé/wife?). There is a handwritten 'note' on the reverse of the photo indicating that it was taken in 1937. I am aware that there is a South Australian politician who shares the same name however my e-mails to him remain unanswered.*

*I do hope that you can help me trace any family members.*

*Kindest regards*

*Laura (MacMillan) Penny*

*[For those that wish to make contact with June Senior her new telephone number is 03 9803 9307. Ed]*

**If unclaimed, please return to:**

**CLAN MACMILLAN SOCIETY (AUSTRALIA)**

**P.O.Box 350, Belgrave Vic 3160**

