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THE DOWNUNDER

Newsbulletin of the Macfie Clan Society of Australia

Issue 98
July 2004



From the Clan Society President

In this issue of The Downunder Jan Harper concludes her article about **Colonsay and Oronsay**. This is the third and last part of the excellent talk which Jan gave to a group of Victorian Macfie Clan Society members last year, organized by Maggie Mulherin. I love especially in Jan Harper's article the way Jan speaks of Colonsay in poetry and legend, as well as in history.

We are privileged to publish in this issue an article about **Sgt Charles McPhee** by Gwen Jarvis and Jan Harper, and with the extraordinary photos Gwen and Jan have provided. Gwen's father, Sgt Charles McPhee was taken prisoner by the Germans in the Great War. In this plight, Charles provided a saving and comforting ministry to his fellow prisoners. One can only admire Charles McPhee's strength of character, his lively Christian faith and the wonderful personal gifts he brought to this ministry in and after that terrible conflict.

Clan Commander AC Sandy McPhie has some good news of the re-establishment of the **Clan Macfie Home Page**. Sandy's son Scot McPhie is making this possible. So, in his regular presentation in The Downunder, Sandy gives us details of the new Australian address of the Macfie Home Page. Many thanks to Sandy and Scot for getting us back on the air, or the ether, or the great remote computer out there, or whatever it is.

Readers will find Sandy McPhie's account of the **DNA Testing Project** very interesting too. This project is making use of the extraordinary scientific technology available to us today. You will read of the involvement of Mr Rod McDuff of Western Australia in this project.

In an article entitled "Clan/Family Histories - Cameron Clan/Family", Glen McPhee has provided short portrait of the **Cameron Clan**, and I have added to this a few observations, working from the starting point of the historical work of Earle Douglas McPhee, our first Commander.

All correspondence should
be sent to:

The President, Macfie Clan
Society of Australia

30 Wilson Street Oakleigh

Victoria 3166

Australia

Telephone 03 9503 9907

Email

berniesmcphee@hotmail.com

Macfie Clan Society of
Australia is a Member
Society of Clan Macfie.

The Macfie Clan
Commander,

A.C. (Sandy) McPhie

76 Linderman Avenue

Heatley QLD 4814

Australia

Telephone/Fax: (07) 4779

6328

Email:

macfie@austarnet.com.au

Macfie web address:

<http://>

www.orishanet.com/

[klanmacfie/Macfie](http://www.orishanet.com/klanmacfie/Macfie)

From the Clan Society President, continued



President Bernie with niece Margaret Booth at the BGM Dinner at the Canberra Yacht Club

I should like to thank **AC Sandy McPhee** our Clan Commander for the warm words of welcome he has expressed to me upon my accepting the position of President of our Macfie Clan Society before the group of Clan Society members gathered for the Biennial Meeting in Canberra in late May. And I thank the outgoing President Brian McPhee of Adelaide for the hopes he has also expressed in my regard as I undertake the President's role.

Our immediate past President **Brian McPhee** spoke of the era of 'compassion' under my guidance. I was very pleased by this, and I will make every endeavour to live up to these expectations hopes expressed in my regard. I only hope that I can do a good job like Brian has done, and I told him this. To help and support me, I have my niece Margaret Booth and my nephew Anthony Gartland, and in Melbourne, I have the help and frequent contact with the Clan Society office-holders Maggie Mulherin and Jan Harper and Peter McPhee, always helpful and

generous in their Clan Society involvement.

I am pleased to announce that **Bob McPhee** of Laidley in Queensland has accepted the role of Vice President for the Macfie Clan Society of Australia, in spite of other and pressing demands on his time and energy. Thank you Bob, and I am looking forward to our good time of cooperation for the Clan Society and its members.

And I am able to announce also that there are two other new faces on the Society's Executive: **Ian McPhee**, Vice-President for New South Wales and **Susan Spinks**, Vice-President for Queensland. A warm welcome to Ian and Susan, who join Glen McPhee for ACT, Maggie Mulherin for Victoria, Judith Moore for South Australia and Bertel Sundstrup for Tasmania. I hope to sit down with each Vice President before the year is out.

Trevor Phee remains our Chief Historian. Trevor gave a report at the BGM in Canberra. What good work he is doing, and we look forward to his working towards a publication for members about the Australian families and their shipping records. Perhaps in the time of my own presidency of the Macfie Clan Society of Australia there will be an emphasis on the history of families, of groups of families, (eg: the 'Lochaber' families), and of the Clan as a whole in its beginnings and its diaspora. I love the discovery of the richness of our Clan and its heritage, and towards this, I would love to have comprehensive records for our Australian families take further shape. Thanks to seminal historical work already done by Trevor, and by Norah McPhee, Helen McPhie, Clyde Smythe, and Jan Harper. And thanks to **Glen McPhee** of Canberra for his most important work getting out this journal: 'The Downunder', which he so generously and efficiently edits.

I must say, in conclusion, that I was very honoured to be asked to read the New Testament passage in Canberra's very beautiful St Andrews Presbyterian Church, on the weekend of the 2004 BGM, at the Kirkin o' the Tartan service. My thanks to Glen McPhee and Bob McCaffrey. In my mouth they put the Gospel words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you".

Bernie McPhee

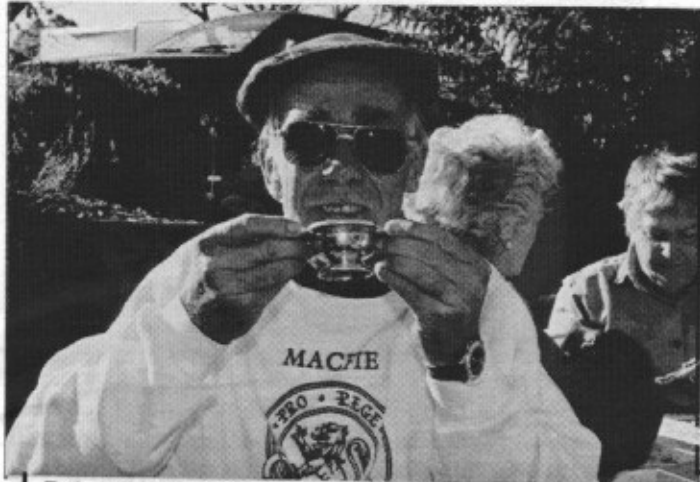


Ruby and Bill McVie at the BGM dinner at the Canberra Yacht club.



Clan Commander Sandy McPhie addressing the BGM

Some thoughts from your Immediate Past President



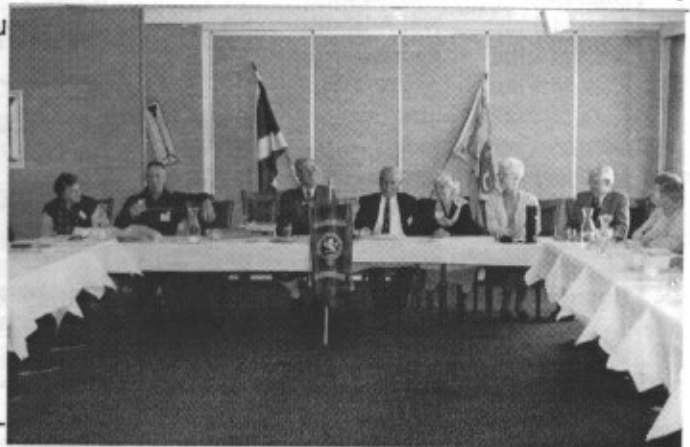
Brian McPhee enjoying a drink from a quaich presented to him at the BGM BBQ

Glen and Glenda McPhee did a grand job organizing the weekend which was a particularly friendly one and finished with a fun barbecue at their home on Sunday. Glen also piped for us, first to open the BGM and then at the Kirkin' o' the Tartan at St Andrews on Sunday morning. Thank you for the support I received during my 6 years as President.

Thank you also to all those members who have given donations to our Clan and to our Society. Due to your generosity our Society's finances are now in good enough nick to enable the Executive to do more to carry out the aims and objectives of our Society.

What a great gathering it was we had in Canberra for our recent Biennial General Meeting at the end of May when Bernie McPhee was elected as President. Bernie is just right for this job. He knows so much about our Clan's history and knows so many McPhees personally; mind you many are relatives as he comes from such a large family he gets off to a great start.

He has already roped in Margaret, a niece, to help him with the data base of our Society and a nephew Tony, to assist with financial matters, so everything is looking up and up for the future.



The top table at BGM Southern Cross Club



To the right : Bonnie Fraser (Daughter of Joanna Moore) and Hugh Johnson enjoyed the BGM Dinner and then BBQ on Sunday. They escape from the adult talk and check out the swings

In conclusion a big thank you to Ceann-Cath Sandy McPhie, who besides looking after the Clan matters world wide, makes a huge contribution to our Society which he founded some 30 years ago. At that time he was assured by some that it may not survive; but when he saw the 40 or so who gathered in Canberra having a ball he knew how wrong they were, and justifiably how proud he was,

**Yours in Clanship
Brian**

Donations

It is with very much pleasure that we wish to acknowledge the kind support and generosity of our Macfie Clan Society Members. Your donations help the clan Society to contribute to many worthwhile projects including the Clan/Commanders T Travel Fund, and the Macfie Standing Stone Maintenance Fund

Members who kindly donated in the recent past:

Bruce Taylor	Yagoona	NSW
Joyce McPhee	Gunnedah	NSW
Clyde Smythe	Turrumurra	NSW
Neville McPhee	Caloundra	QLD
Bill Smith	Fountain Gate	VIC
John McPhie	Nth Adelaide	SA
Nancy Collie	East Bentleigh	VIC
Ross McPhee	Arthur's Seat	VIC
Ruth McPhee	Kew	VIC
Glen McPhee	Evatt	ACT
Darlene Jones	Drury	NZ
Ian McPhee	Toowoomba	QLD
Ian McPhee	Rosanna	VIC
Margaret McPhee	Nedlands	WA
Barbara Knowles	McPhee Brunkerville	NSW
Ann Leask	McLaren Vale	SA
Kathleen Hubert	Pearce	ACT
Robyn Hancox	Wollstonecraft	NSW
Kevin McPhee	Port Douglas	QLD
Meg Davis	Cowes	VIC
Roger Hughes	Traralgon	VIC
Russell Mattocks	Balgowlah Heights	NSW
Peter McPhee	Abbotsford	VIC
Lynette Mok	Auckland	NZ
Nella Rutledge	Burwood	VIC
Dene Rutledge	East Doncaster	VIC
Sally McPhee	Wooloowin	QLD
Zillah Scott	Yamba	NSW
Ian McPhee	Brookvale	NSW
John McPhie	Glenmore Pk	NSW
Donald McPhee	Banora Point	NSW
Shirley Dickson	Naracoorte	SA
Robert McPhee	Laidley	QLD
Margaret MacDougall	Aberdeen	NSW
William D McPhee	Seaforth	NSW
Flora Barnes	Drummoyne	NSW
Beryl McPhie	Nowra	NSW
John MacPhee	Carseldine	QLD
Alex McPhie	Fairfiled Gdns	QLD
Dorothy Murphy	Currumbin	QLD
Father A McPhee	Wyndham	WA
Geoff McPhee	Lugarno	NSW
Bonnie Bush	Sans Souci	NSW

Obituary

It is with sadness we report the passing of three of our members;

Reverend Les McPhee of Gunnedah NSW passed away on the 15 August 2003.

Aileen Tucker of Ashmore QLD passed away in June 2004

Grace Flora Barnes of Drummoyne NSW passed away on 11 May 2004.

A very big welcome to our New Members

Margaret Barnes 210/5 Cary St Drummoyne NSW 2047

Betty Lyons 4 Slee St Euora Victoria 3666

Roderick A Mac Duff 50 Kingsall Road Attadale WA 6156

BIG RAFFLE WINNERS

At the BGM and Dinner a raffle was conducted with prizes being a Macfie tartan sash and second prize a bottle of scotch .

The grateful winners below are Judy Moore SA VP with the winning sash and Angus Cameron with the scotch.

Actually a friend of Judy's won the sash and kindly presented it to Judy who was delighted.





Historian Trevor Phee and Suzanne Phee at the BGM dinner. Trevor does a lot of work for the Clan Society on genealogy matters and Suzanne still thinks that she is the boss.. Trevor and Suzanne travelled from Newcastle for the BGM.

From our Historian: Trevor Phee

To all who attended the BGM in Canberra. It was good to see so many of you who I first met in Sydney two years ago, and it was good to see new faces as well. To those who gave me photos and other items of interest, I thank you and to those who said that they would send me information on their families and shipping records, I look forward to receiving the said information.

On the WW2 Nominal Roll of McPhee's there is an **A. J. McPhee [Army] service number N161795A** listed. This is all the information that is available on this soldier. Is there anyone out there who can supply me with some more information on this soldier, even a photo would help

I am trying document McPhee's who were soldiers, from Culloden to Vietnam.

Can anyone help with the following family?

John McPhee and Helen [Ellen] Ritchie were married at

Blairgowrie, Perth, Scotland on 15 of May 1854. Shortly after they came to Victoria where he had seven children. There are no shipping records showing this families arrival. Does anyone have this information?.

1. **Margaret McPhee** b. Emerald Hill, Victoria 1855, and married James Wallace in 1885.
2. **Mary Ann McPhee** b. Collingwood, Victoria in 1856, and married John Ewing in 1883.
3. **Alexander McPhee** b. Albion, Victoria in 1859.
4. **Catherine Ellen McPhee** b. Mt Alexander, Victoria in 1860 and married Alexander Crilly in 1883.
5. **John Philip McPhee** b. Somerton, Victoria 1865 and died that same year.
6. **John Duncan McPhee** b. Pentridge, Victoria in 1867.
7. **Thomas McPhee** b. Campbell's Creek, Victoria in 1870.

If anyone can help with any of the above please contact me

Trevor Phee at t.phee@bigpond.com or at
24 Bibby Street Hamilton 2303.

SEEKING DESCEDANTS OF WILLIAM MCPHEE (1856- 1903)

Letter from Lyn Luscombe Bates
643 Montgomerie Street
Lakes Creek
Rockhampton 4701

Dear Trevor

I recently found the Macfie Clan Society and believe you may be able to help me. I am seeking descendants of William McPhee (1856-1903) and his wife Grace Anderson (1 863 - 1947). They were both born in Glasgow, Scotland and died in Newcastle, New South Wales.

They had three sons, James born 1890, William Peter Anderson born 1894 and Robert b.1900. Their only daughter Catherine b.1891. married a William Hiles. The name Halliday may also be connected.

William Peter Anderson McPhee (1894) married Mary Wright, the daughter of Thomas Wright and Sarah Jeffery (1866-1914). William and Mary had one child, Grace Marjorie Sarah McPhee (1926-1963) and she married Clive Oliver Bates (1925-1989).

Grace and Clive had no children and I married Clive in 1974.

I have some personal items and photographs which I would like to return to genuine descendants. For a family historian these will be an exciting find. Thank you so much for your time and I hope to hear from you in the future.

Yours Faithfully
Lyn Luscombe Bates

**A GERMAN PRISON CAMP IN WORLD WAR 1:
EXPERIENCES OF SGT. CHARLES CAREY
McPHEE (father of Gwen Jarvis). The article below has
been put together by Gwen Jarvis and Jan Harper**

April 5th, 1918 – Heavy bombardment. Taken prisoner at 9 a.m. Marched to Suzarn, 16 K. Billeted in house on floor for night. No food. No blankets.

April 6th 1918 – Shovelling and scraping mud off road till 1.30 pm Then marched with party of 14, 22 K to Moislaine to hospital. Arrived 7 pm. Had some tea, first food for 48 hours. Lodged in barracks. Two blankets.



SGT Charles McPhee

So began Sgt. Charles McPhee a third-generation Victorian, in the diary which described his 31 weeks in prison camps behind the German lines in France during the First World War.

Charles was a Machine Gunner with the 24th Machine Gun Company in France, and was taken prisoner at the Battle of Dernancourt near Amiens.

Reminiscent of the famous Scottish massacre at Glencoe, the Germans had been hiding in cellars, and emerged early one morning under cover of heavy fog, catching the Allies by surprise.

After those miserable first days of prison, Charles worked for four weeks in the cookhouse at Moislaine. Then began constant moves south – from Erincourt to Fins, to Cambrai, on and on, until they arrived in Peronne on May 13th. They had been moved to six different locations, each move involving a long march or overnight by train in a goods wagon. Often there was little or no food all day and no bed. It was like a feast day when, after a week in Peronne, they were issued with soup and two loaves of bread to be shared between five men, and this feast was repeated for six days. But they were marched out of Peronne and on to Marchepot, and the semi-starvation began again. Even if there was food available, illness, particularly "trench fever", meant they were unable to eat it.

By the end of June Charles's position improved when the Germans appointed him a Pastor. A few years before the War he had become involved with the Alexander Chapman Mission and became a Home Missionary with the Methodist Church. This served him well for the Pastor role. He normally conducted services at three far-flung prison camps – Brie, Peronne and Marchepot – involving a twelve-hour day with extensive travelling on Sundays. These services were each attended by over 200 men, and seem to have been well received.

The appointment as Pastor meant some respite from the heavy manual work required of most prisoners. He still had some tasks, such as cutting wood for the cook house, and it was on such an assignment that a photo of the task-group was taken, a photo which included three German guards. But over time his days came to be spent more and more at "study" and "reading" as he was permitted to prepare for his services on the following Sunday. His duties also included the making of coffins, screwing them down, supervising the digging of the graves and finally officiated at the funerals.

Charles was a fine singer, and for a Methodist a service was not a service without hymns. So in the absence of hymn books Charles proceeded to write his own. He was obviously excited when hymn books did eventually arrive at the beginning of September, and the congregation of prisoners were able to enjoy some "good singing".



Prisoners and 3 German guards at Marchepot. Sgt Charles McPhee third for left

The usual prison-camp dramas and activities went on around him. Five men escaped one night in August, bombs were dropped from Allied aeroplanes, they were all issued with a pair of clogs, concerts were held, 12 loaves of bread were stolen and one afternoon they made elderberry jam. Then in September they were all moved again, this time up towards the Belgian border:

September 5th, 1918 – Heavy bombardment at night. Morning raining. Brie party left us to go to another place 12 K away at 7 am. All the rest of the troops went out to work. Returned at 3 pm. Had dinner. Received orders to be ready, full marching order, at 5 pm, when we started out for Landrecies. Rained some of the way very heavy. Pretty scenery along road. Passed through large forest partly destroyed by 'hun'. At 8 pm we reached Landrecies after a march of 12 K. Billeted in lager (a military encampment). Raining all the time we were waiting to get into lager. French civilians brought us coffee.

The move may have unsettled the prisoners, because only a day or two later he wrote:

The men refused to go to work on 400 grams of bread, which was supposed to be the ration, but we only received 350 grams. Went to work after dinner with the promise of more bread.



From the Clan Macfie News March 2004

Clan Macfie News

FROM: CLAN COMMANDER A. C. (SANDY) MCPHIE
CLAN MACFIE SECRETARIAT

76 LINDEMAN AVENUE, HEATLEY, TOWNSVILLE. Q. 4814 AUSTRALIA

TELEPHONE: 61 7 4779 6328 FAX: 61 7 4728 1716

EMAIL: macfie@austarnet.com.au

Clan Macfie Homepage. As this is being written the Clan Macfie Homepage is being re-established at <http://home.austarnet.com.au/macfie/macfie.htm>. This is an Australian address. The new Webmaster for the Clan Homepage is Mr. Scot McPhie of Fairfield, an inner city suburb in Brisbane, Queensland. Scot is the son of Clan Commander Sandy and Helen McPhie. Development of the Homepage will continue and it is hoped to greatly enhance the presentation and information during the year. Any queries, or contributions for the Homepage should be forwarded to The Clan Macfie Secretariat at 76 Lindeman Avenue, Heatley, Q'ld, 4814, Australia, or emailed to macfie@austarnet.com.au.

This move of the Homepage was necessitated by a complete loss of contact with our previous Webmaster, Mr. Cameron Howard in Seattle, WA, U.S.A. and the disappearance of our then Homepage in the middle of last year. Despite attempts by a number of means to re-establish contact with Cameron, all were unsuccessful. His contribution over many years is warmly acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

DNA Testing. Some members may have been contacted by now, or know of a proposal, by a Mr. Rod McDuff of Perth in Western Australia for Clan Macfie members to join a DNA register oriented towards Clan Genealogy.

Mr. McDuff was born in Glasgow in 1955 and graduated from Glasgow University in 1972 with a degree in Electronic Engineering. He later gained an Open University BA in Humanities (History and English) while working in London. He migrated to Australia 15 years ago and now runs his own company which designs and manufactures HF radio systems. He has traced his family tree back ten generations to Argyllshire with at least five pieces of evidence pointing to McDuffie origins rather than McDuff ones.

Mr. McDuff's proposal is for a Y Chromosome DNA Surname Project to be established seeking to collect DNA samples from males bearing a Clan Macfie name and using distinctive "markers" on the Y Chromosome which are passed from father to son and can be used to determine a degree of relatedness or otherwise of different persons with the same surname. The Project is for genealogical research purposes only and the anonymity of those providing the DNA is preserved. Participants each pay for their own tests.

To have an understanding of how some other Clans have organised similar projects, Mr. McDuff suggests a visit to the following websites could be of interest:

<http://www.familytreedna.com/> - <http://www.clangregor.org/macgregor/dna.html> - <http://www.waltier.com/dna.htm>

He is also establishing his own website for the project at: <http://www.mcduffiedna.com.au>

While the Clan Commander is unwilling to take this proposal on board as a Clan Macfie project, he does, however, commend it to all Clan members for their consideration and personal follow-up action by those interested.

Mr. McDuff can be contacted by interested members at:

Email: rodmac@swiftdsl.com.au

Postal Address: 50 Kingsall Road, Attadale, W.A. 6156 Australia Tel: (08) 9330 7514

More Milestones. A number of birthdays and anniversaries merit acknowledgement. Clan Commander Sandy McPhie turned 75 on 10th February would you believe? (He doesn't). He and Helen celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary on 21st March. Well ahead of them however, were Ann and Glen Parker of Shelton, WA, U.S.A., who logged 50 years of wedded bliss last year. Another pair of forty years married are Wayne and Le McAfee of Custer, SD, U.S.A. – theirs in September last year. The Clan Macfie Commissioner Downunder, the other Sandy McPhee, celebrated his 80th birthday on 5th January while Ian MacFee Rogers, President of the Macfie Clan Society in Canada followed suit on 20th March. Congratulations and good wishes to all concerned

THE ISLANDS OF COLONSAY AND ORONSAY

This is the third part of the talk by Jan Harper to the Victorian clan Members in August 2003, see previous Issues 96 and 97

The advertisement I have chosen to introduce the rule of the clan chiefs and lairds of Colonsay is dated 1975, and placed by the current laird:

- *For sale: two islands and their communities, steeped in Highland history, forming part of the Inner Hebrides, set against one of the most spectacular backcloths of the Western Islands. Excellent rough shooting, trout lochs and sea fishing, protected yacht anchorages, and two airstrips*
- *Colonsay 9,700 acres. Colonsay House, Colonsay Hotel, 7 Holiday Houses, 5 let Farms, Estate Cottages and 10 Crofts.*
- *Oronsay 1,350 acres. House, 1 let Farm, 3 Cottages, Priory Ruins.*

I understand the asking price was £750,000, well in excess of what could be returned as income. The laird, Lord Strathcona, put it on the market because the two Islands were draining the resources of the Strathconas and Lord Strathcona had called it a noose around his neck. There was no successful sale at the time. However a few years later the Island of Oronsay was sold for £100,000 and has since been re-sold to an American.

The history of the chiefs and lairds on the two Islands is a long one. The Western Isles broke with Norway and were ceded to Scotland in 1263, from which time began the burgeoning power of the Lords of the Isles. The Lordship was held by the chief of the MacDonald clan on Islay, and chiefs from each of the Isles were represented on the council. Certain chiefs had particular responsibilities, a bit like ministers of the state do today, except that the responsibilities were hereditary. The MacBeths were physicians to the Lord, the Macarthurs were pipers, the MacKinnons were keepers of correct weights and measures, and the Macfies of Colonsay became well established as Keepers of the Records. The Macfie chiefs themselves would not have kept the records, the task being devolved on the clergy from the Priory, as they were the only people literate enough to manage revenues and keep records and accounts. Unfortunately, no archives have survived.

The Macfies of Colonsay played an important role in the Battle of Bannockburn in 1307, described by Sir Walter Scott, in his long poem, *Lord of the Isles*. Scott captured the vicious, fierce and bloody nature of fighting by the Scottish war lords, who supported Robert the Bruce as he asserted his claim to the throne. (*1)

(*1). **The battle cry went up:**
Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
Who press'd the chase with gory sword,
He rode with spear in rest,
And through his bloody tartans bored,
And through his gallant breast,
Nail'd top the earth, the mountaineer
Yet writhed him up against the spear,
And swung his broadsword round!
Stirrup, steel-boot and cuish gave way,
Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
The blood gush'd from the wound;
And the grim Lord of Colonsay
Hath turn'd him on the ground,
And laugh'd in death-pang, that his blade

The Macfies are remembered in a number of legends. One was immortalised in verse by John Leyden at the beginning of the 19th century. A young chief is sailing home to his lover in Colonsay, the ruby ring she had given him on his finger. (*2)

A mermaid woos him with song and visions of a sapphire ocean, coral groves and foamy crests, and bars his way to Colonsay. He awakes from the spell and finds the mermaid, though of faultless beauty, to be cold and passionless compared with the maid of Colonsay. (*3)

Finally he strikes a bargain with the mermaid, giving her his ruby ring in return for bearing him across the main and home to Colonsay. Each year hereafter, the mermaid creates a disturbance at sea. The poem finishes: (*4)

(*2). The lonely deck he paces o'er
Impatient for the rising day,
And echoing far o'er Crinan's shore,
Resounds the song of Colonsay.

"Softly blow, thou western breeze,
Softly rustle through the sail,
Sooth to rest the furrowy seas,
Before my love sweet western gale."

So melting sot the music fell;
It seems to sooth the fluttering spray –
"Say, heard'st thou not these wild
notes swell?
Ah! 'tis the Song of Colonsay."

(*3) These sparkling eyes so wild and gay,
They swim not in the light of love;
The gentle maid of Colonsay
Her eyes are milder than the dove.

(*4) And when the circling year
returns,
The sailor knows that fated day,
For sadly still the Mermaid mourns

Another legend, told to me by a cousin in Scotland, has a Macfie chief visiting the mainland and seeking shelter from an old woman. He seduces her beautiful daughter with a boast that any son of his would have the strength to uproot a tree as old as himself. When the young woman's son eventually reaches maturity, she asks him to pull out an eighteen-year-old tree, and when he uproots it with one heave, she reveals to him that he is the son of the chief of Colonsay, and sends him on his way to cross the ocean and claim his birthright. On arrival, the Chief refutes his claim and attempts to push the boat of this young man back out to sea. But the young man is able to out-strength him and forces a landing on Colonsay, whereupon the Chief Macfie realizes that here is someone stronger even than he, and admits him as his successor to the Chiefdom.

The power of the Lords of the Isles started to decline at the end of the 15th Century, when the Isles were forfeited to the Crown. The Macfies remained lairds, but the next hundred or so years were difficult times, due to lawlessness, murders and raids from neighbouring clans.

A branch of the Macdonalds came to live on Colonsay and there began intense competition between the chief of the time, Malcolm Macfie and Coll Kitto Macdonald, with many skirmishes. Finally, in 1623, Macfie was hunted down by Macdonald and his followers. In flight, he crossed to Oronsay and swam a dangerous channel to tiny Seal Island, concealing himself among the seaweed. His pursuers thought he had drowned, until a seagull, swooping and screaming, led them to his hiding place. He pleaded for mercy, but Macdonald replied, "None of your mercy. It is little mercy that we would have got from your red whiskers this time yesterday."

Macfie was seized, placed in front of a standing stone and shot. Now known as "Macfie's Standing Stone", it symbolises the end of Clan Macfie as a force to be reckoned with. Numbers of the Macfies fled to the mainland and were given protection by other clans. Some stayed, but they were a broken clan, with no hereditary chief.

The islanders have not forgotten the encounter of nearly 400 years ago between MacDonald and Macfie. When we visited we were met at the wharf by Mrs Titterton, our host at the bed and breakfast. She sat us down for a cup of tea and asked us why we had come to Colonsay. "I'm a McPhee" I replied. "Oh dear", she said, "I hope you don't mind staying in this house. I'm a Macdonald."

After the fall of the Macfies, the Crown took control. Coll Kitto Macdonald was tried and was eventually hanged over the side of a ship and drowned. There followed a period of bloody murders, seizures, and executions. A baby was decapitated in cold blood. A factor was tied to the Macfie Standing Stone and executed. The stories from that time are enough to curdle the blood.

Finally, Malcolm MacNeill procured the Islands of Colonsay and Oronsay in exchange for other lands and the MacNeills continued to be lairds of the Islands for the next 200 years.

They built Colonsay House in the mid-18th century. It stands on 170 acres in the sheltered valley of Kiloran. After subsequent additions it consists of 5 reception rooms, 6 principle bedrooms, 12 secondary bedrooms and 10 bathrooms, much of which is now converted to tourist accommodation. The rhododendron gardens bask in Gulf Stream mildness. There is a 33-acre woodland of ash, birch and oak, which is remarkable in that there are virtually no trees in the rest of the Hebrides, the weather, livestock and wood-gathering crofters having got them centuries ago.

Over the 200 years there were eight MacNeill lairds, many of whom distinguished themselves. One became the Governor of South Carolina, another became Solicitor-General for Scotland and then Lord Justice, another chaired an enquiry into the conditions of the Western Isles, and then chaired the Highland and Island Emigration Society, which sent so many islanders to Australia. Finally a MacNeill purchased the islands from this uncle, borrowing a large part of the purchase price from Lord Strathcona, whom he had known in Canada. On his death in 1904, Colonsay and Oronsay passed to Lord Strathcona, the richest man in Canada, in settlement of the debt.

Strathcona himself had commenced life as plain Donald Smith, and had become a fur trader in Canada. He came to play a big role in the Hudson Bay Company and the Canadian Pacific Railway, and became Chancellor of McGill University. At the time he was said to be the richest man in Canada.

The Island of Colonsay is still held by the Strathconas, currently by the fourth Baron. Now 65, he spends much of the year in London, but remains the pivotal point of the islands. Like most hereditary estate owners in Britain, he finds it difficult to reconcile his responsibilities as a laird with staying afloat financially. However, since he first advertised the islands for sale 25 years ago, he has managed to put Colonsay in the black, largely through tourism.

Many thanks to Jan Harper for this article

Plea for help—New and Old Members

Trevor Phee our clan Society Historian needs your assistance

To help to put together genealogy information Trevor asks that new members as well as long standing members to send in details of their family tree, or to ask for assistance.

This is important to put all the pieces of the jig-saw together

Send information to:

Trevor Phee email t.phee@bigpond.com or to 24 Bibby Street Hamilton 2303.

At the beginning of October they all received a parcel, what Charles described as "a red letter day for prisoners". It contained four packets of biscuits, three beef, one rabbit, two milk, one tea and one cocoa. What a treat!

As Armistice drew near, they were again marched from place to place. One evening they held a concert at which was sung both the French and English National Anthems. By November 11th 1918 they had crossed the border and the Belgian flag was hoisted at Lenzee, with "general cheering"

During all this time he had received no letters and only one of his letters, sent just three weeks before the Armistice, got through to his fiancée in Melbourne.

Immediately after his release, Charles got busy organising a temporary hospital at a convent at Fleurus in Belgium, where



Makeshift hospital at Fleurus which Charles McPhee helped to set up.

he stayed for two weeks. On his return to England he visited the relations of soldiers who had died while they were prisoners of the Germans, many of whom he had buried. On the voyage back to Australia he gave a series of lectures describing his life as a prisoner of war. His promotion had come through while he fought in the Battle of Dernancourt and all through his ordeal in prison both he and the Germans believed him to have the rank of Sergeant. For the duration of the voyage he was granted the rank of honorary Lieutenant.

Thanks to Gwen Jarvis and Jan Harper

SCOTTISH HOUSE

The Scottish House has a new email address it is scothse@tpg.com.au

For those members who are related to the Rev George McPhee of Ebenezer. I am not sure exactly when he retired [as such], but he was still conducting marriages in 1867, when he married a Sarah Hulbert & Alfred Case in the Presbyterian Church at Ebenezer, Portland Head on 30 January 1867.

This couple went on to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Sarah is a distant relative on my grandmother's side

Trevor Phee

Story of Heather

When God created the world, he looked at the bare hillsides and decided that a plan was needed to beautify the slopes.

He asked the giant Oak, strongest of all trees, but he declined saying that the soil was too shallow for him to take root and flourish.

God then approached the yellow flowered Honey-suckle to see if she would spread her beauty and fragrance throughout the hills. She too refused because there was nothing in the inhospitable terrain against which she could grow ...

The Rose, sweetest of all flowers, was God's next choice. However, she explained that she would not be able to survive the hillsides' bitter wind and driving rain.

Disappointed, God turned away and chanced upon a small low-lying green shrub with tiny petals, some purple and some white.

It was HEATHER! God asked the Heather, "Will you grow upon the hillsides and make them more beautiful?" The Heather reflected on the poor soil and harsh climate and was not sure whether she could do the job but to God's delight, replied that if He wanted her to try, she would do her best. God was so pleased with the Heather that He decided to bestow three gifts on her ' The strength of the Oak - The bark of the Heather is stronger than that of any other tree or shrub.

The fragrance of the Honey-suckle - the Heather's gentle fragrance is used to perfume soaps, pot pourri and cosmetics.

The sweetness of the Rose - The sweetness of the Heather makes it one of the bees' favourite flowers. And to this day, Heather is renowned for these three God-given gifts as she fulfills her God-given task.

Thanks to McPhee Clan Society of NZ and toClan Ross



LETTER FROM DOROTHY MURPHY

My great grandparents **John and Helen McPhee** arrived in Australia sometime after their marriage on the 15th May 1854 at Blairgowrie, Perth, Scotland. Lawson's, either first or second cousins of the Ritchie family came to Australia with them. One of the Lawson's sons moved to Sydney to live and I understand he became a Professor of English at Sydney University. Other cousins elder Smith Shipping Agents of Adelaide and the Howard Smith family are also believed to have arrived in Australia at that time.

John and Helen McPhee settled in Collingwood, Victoria which at that time was a wide open expanse of paddocks. They were known to have lived on the Mount Alexander Goldfields, Avenel, Somerton, and Mickleham where my grandfather John Duncan McPhee was born where the remains of the old bluestone Cobb&Co stables are still visible. In

Extracts from the book 'The lights of Cobb & co, (K.A Austen) he refers to "one of the fastest schemes operated by Cobb & Co was that for the Melbourne to Bendigo run, which was broken up into very short stages. On August 4, 1857 the Mount Alexander mail reported that Cobb & Co coach with 16-20 passengers aboard performed the run from Sandhurst (Bendigo) to Melbourne in 10 hours at an average speed of over 10 miles an hour.

In 1872 Vines & McPhee applied for mail contracts for the deliveries in the northern mining areas. Vines & McPhee in 1890 held mail contracts worth £10,478 but by 1902 their names had vanished from the Post Office lists of tenders for mail contracts - no doubt due to the rapid expansion of the railway system.

I would be pleased to make contact with any descendants and to share what information I have been able to gather. I believe the Wallace branch of the family, Margaret being the eldest daughter could have more reliable information.

**I can be contacted at:
Mrs Dorothy M. Murphy
30A Panorama Drive
Currumbin Qld. 4223**

Tel: 07 55 982443

From North Melbourne Presbyterian section 25 north

John McPhee Died 27-6-1908 (92 years)
From North Melbourne. Methodist but buried Presbyterian 25 north

Children of John McPhee at the time of his death (1908)

- Margaret B. 1866 52 years (Mrs Maggie Wallace) North Melbourne Vic.
- Mary B. 1858 50 years (Mrs Ewing) Avenel Vic. Died aged 84 years
- Alexander 1868 40 years (Batchelor)
- **Catherine Ellen** 1860 (Dec.) (Mrs Crilly) Richmond Vic.
- John Phillip (Dec)
- John Duncan 1865 43 years (Dorothy Murphy's grandfather) Died 84 years 1949
- Thomas 1872 36 years (Batchelor) Died 1948? At Campbell's Creek (near Castlemaine)

This information is shown on the death certificate of John McPhee Snr.

Catherine Ellen was married to Alexander Crilly on 17-11-1883. She was born at Mt Alexander in 1860. Died 11-9-1903. She was the mother of

- Ethel Mary Crilly (Mrs Colson) Died 78 years
- Eric
- Mary Ellen Died 6 months
- Victor Thomas Died 1 year
- Ruby (Mrs Bell)
- Catherine and Douglas (twins) Died 5 weeks
- Florence
- Violet Died at 16 Years
- Eva Died at 19 years Diphtheria

**More information available from
Dorothy Murphy**

Clan/Family Histories - Cameron Clan/Family



Clan Motto:
Aonaibh Ri Chéile,"

The name is thought to be derived the Gaelic "cam-shron" meaning "crooked nose" but the earliest records show the name as "Cambron" which may indicate that it originated in Camberone (from the Gaelic "cam brun" meaning "crooked hill" - now Cameron parish) in Fife. However, there is also a Cameron placename in the outskirts of Edinburgh and in Lennox. To add to the confusion, there is a Cambron in Flanders and the Cameron coat of arms differ only in colouring from those of the family of Oudenarde, nobles in Flanders.

There is a record of a John Cameron in the Carse of Gowrie (on the other side of the river Tay from Fife) and Hugh Cambron was sheriff of Forfar and John Cambron was sheriff of Perth. A hundred years later the name appeared in Lochaber in the far west.

Often described as "fiercer than fierceness itself" the Camerons originally consisted of three branches in Lochaber - McMartins of Letterfinlay, McGillionies of Strone and McSorlies of Glen Nevis. The first chief of the combined families was Donald Dubh (born around 1400) who was descended from the McGillionies of Strone but through marriage with the McMartins brought the federation together. Donald Dubh and his successors were known as captains of Clan Cameron until the early 16th century when the lands of Lochiel were united by charter into the barony of Lochiel by Allan Cameron, the 12th chief.

The clan assisted Donald, Lord of the Isles at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411. A chief of the clan, Ewen of Lochiel, was born in 1629 and was a supporter of King Charles II. He was knighted in 1682 and fought at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689. Oddly, there were Camerons fighting on the other side - Camerons from Fife who supported the Protestant cause.

Ewen of Lochiel was too old to fight in the 1715 Jacobite Uprising but sent his son and the clan to assist the Earl of Mar. Sir Ewen's grandson was known as "the gentle Lochiel" and is regarded as one of the noblest of all the Highland chiefs. He was persuaded, through loyalty to the crown and the persuasive words of Prince Charles Edward Stewart, to support the 1745 Jacobite Uprising. It is said that if Cameron of Lochiel had not agreed to participate, the rising might never have got off the ground, such was his influence. During the Jacobite retreat, Lochiel prevented the Highlanders from sacking Glasgow and to this day when Cameron of Lochiel enters the city, the bells of the churches are rung in his honour. The Gentle Lochiel survived Culloden and was exiled to France. Following the General Act of Amnesty of 1784 the Cameron lands were restored and Gentle Lochiel's grandson, Donald, became the 22nd chief.

In 1793 Allan Cameron maintained the fighting tradition of the clan by raising the 79th Regiment which, in 1881, became the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. The 25th chief, who died in 1905, was a Member of Parliament and his son raised four new battalions of the Cameron Highlanders on the outbreak of the First World War.

Cameron was the 35th most frequent surname at the General Register Office in 1995.

The motto of the Camerons is "Aonaibh ri chéile" ("Unite"). Septs (sub-branch) of the clan Cameron include Clark, Clarke, Clerk, Clarkson, Macolonie, MacChlery, MacGillonie, MacKail, MacLerie, MacMartin, MacSorley, Martin, Paul and Sorley.

Earle Douglas MacPhee and the Camerons of Lochaber

By Bernie McPhee

Readers of 'The Downunder' will enjoy the article on the previous page on the Camerons. You might remember that Earle Douglas MacPhee in Volume One of his 'Mythology History and Traditions' of the Clan quotes two authorities: Rev. Somerled McMillan's "Bygone Lochaber" and his personal correspondence with the author, and Alistair Cameron's "The Lochaber Drover - Corrychoille", where he makes reference to the Camerons and the McPhees (in this instance, the outlaw Ewan MacPhee).

Quoting McMillan in 'Bygone Lochaber' as his source, wherein he reports the activities of 'John Cameron, alias McPhee' in Glendessary in 1717, Earle Douglas MacPhee almost hints at a connection between the Glendessary McPhees and the great Lochaber John Cameron of a century later, the Cameron known as 'Corrychoillie', although he speaks of Corrychoille only by way of introducing the sheep stealing Ewan MacPhee.

It transpires that Corrychoille Cameron was a 'McMartin' Cameron, one of the three branches of Lochaber Camerons as mentioned above. The same article mentions the Cameron branch called the 'McGillonies' of Strone, and these two branches, the McMartins and the McGillonies, ultimately united.

The reason for mentioning all this is that, there is an opinion from a very reputable historian that the once important 'McGillonies' are conjectured to have been originally 'MacPhee'.

Where does this opinion come from? Rev. Somerled McMillan, (whom Earle Douglas MacPhee mostly relies upon for his understanding of the history of the Lochaber McPhees) says that the historian Fraser McIntosh (MP and factor for McIntosh of McIntosh) thought that the McGillonies were once McPhees, and were forced to change their names to the McGillonie Cameron name. So, a 'McPhee - McGillonie - Cameron' union was in existence long before the ascendancy of Locheil, Rev. Somerled McMillan says.

Of course, in good time, Locheil became captain of Clan Cameron with the title of 'Chief', but some say not from hereditary right so much, as by the tenacity and ability of the successive heirs of Locheil. (I got that last phrase from an article in the proceedings of 'The Gaelic Society of Inverness', Vol 17 1890-1891).

One last point about the McGillonie and the Cameron tradition: a key piece of evidence in this McPhee - McGillonie - Cameron conjecture came to light when engineers and workers were digging for the Caledonian Canal, and they found the remnants and evidence of an old house, Crannoch House it was named, which Rev. Somerled McMillan and others thought was a primitive residence of the McGillonie Camerons. This discovery was made at the West end of Loch Oich.

Recently however, Charlie McFarlane of Glenfinnin informs us that the owner of that Crannoch House was not a McGillonie Cameron at all, but was a Donald MacWilkin, a man who would not change his name to Cameron, and who died for this refusal.

When Earle Douglas MacPhee was contemplating this Lochaber part of Scottish history he was relying mainly on Rev. Somerled McMillan's history. But it appears that McMillan had an anti - Cameron bias, according to Ann MacDonell of Spean Bridge Scotland and according to the author William T Kilgour, in his book: "Lochaber in War and Peace". It is somewhat ironic that Earle Douglas MacPhee only mentions Corrychoillie Cameron in his 'Myths, Traditions and History' because he has to hand the book about Cameron which mentions Ewan MacPhee the outlaw, but he could well have mentioned Corrychoillie Cameron for his own sake, for his connection with the McMartin and therefore the McGillonie Camerons, and therefore to the earlier McPhees, some of whom had been in the Glendessary area at least for two hundred years before 1623 (says McMillan).

Kirkin o' the Tartan Church Service

As part of the 2004 BGM a Kirkin o' the Tartan church service was held at the St Andrew Presbyterian Church on Sunday 30th May 2004. The parade of banners entering the church service during the first hymn was an inspiring moment. The Church service was organised by local Clan Society member Bob McCaffrey

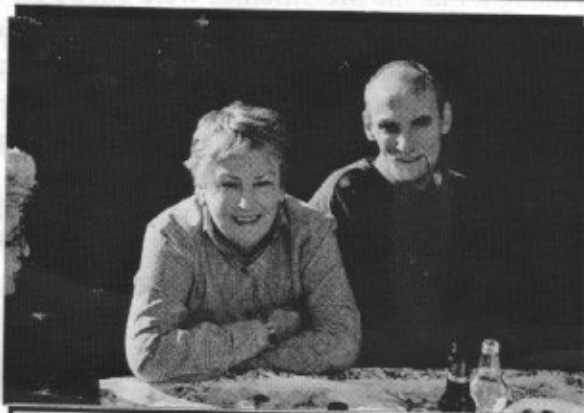
The service was lead by the Rev Joy Bartholomew with scripture readings by Brian McPhee and Bernie McPhee. Rev Bartholomew made the Macfies most welcome and dedicated a large portion of the service to explain the history and significance of the service. The Clan Commander, Sandy McPhie read the Kirkin Prayer below:

KIRKIN'PRAYER

Almighty and Eternal God, we praise and thank you for your goodness to us **in** our Scottish heritage. We dedicate to you our tartans - the symbols of the unwavering loyalty, steadfast hope and great achievements of our Scottish forbears. We praise and thank you today for the rugged individualism ' respect for law and order, the hate of cant and hypocrisy, the regard for human personality and the belief in the equality of all men and women before you that was so important in the lives of our forbears. Today we pray that we, their descendants in Australia may remain always true to these great ideals.

We pray that we may be true to the faith handed down by those who have gone before us. Faith which has played such a great part in the building of our country, Australia. May we, and our fellow clansmen and women everywhere, help to bring peace, goodwill, equality and justice to our world.

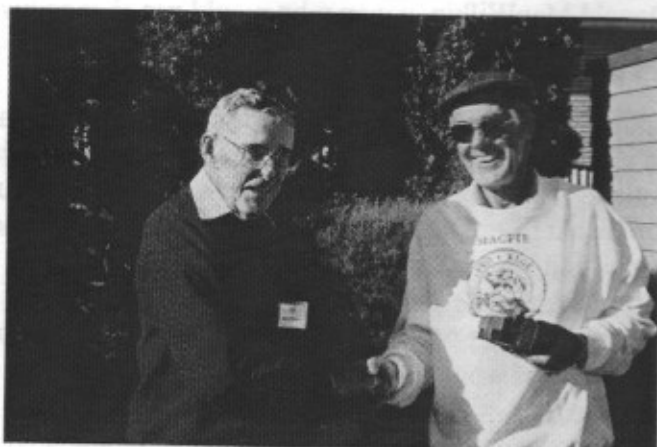
We praise you, O God, for all your faithful servants in every age, and we pray that we, with all who have died in the faith of Christ may be brought to a joyful resurrection and the fulfilment of your eternal kingdom. **AMEN.**



Pam and Bill Tidmarsh from Baulkham NSW enjoying the warm weather at the BGM BBQ



Gwen Hubert from Canberra at the BGM Dinner at the Canberra Yacht Club



Sandy McPhee presenting Brian McPhee with a gift for his outstanding work as President of the Australian Macfie Clan Society for the past six years.

THE MACFIE CLAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

EXECUTIVE AND OFFICE BEARERS - from May 29, 2004

Clan Commander (Caenn-Cath) A.C.(Sandy) McPhee,
76 Linderman Ave Heatley Qld 4814
(07) 4779 6328
Email: macfie@austarnet.com.au

Armigerous Member A.L. (Sandy) McPhee
10 Rodney Road Mt Vincent, NSW 2323
(02) 4938 0350
Email: sandymcpee@rockingm.com.au

Immediate Past President Brian McPhee
4 Figtree Court North Adelaide SA 5006
(08) 8239 0038
Email: bmmcpee@bettanet.net.au

EXECUTIVE

President Bernie McPhee
30 Wilson Street Oakleigh Vic 3166
(03) 9503 9907
Email: berniepmcpee@hotmail.com

Vice President Bob McPhee
Box 323 Laidley Qld 4341
(07) 5465 5385

STATE VICE PRESIDENTS

ACT Glen McPhee
88 William Webb Drive Evatt ACT 2617
(02) 6258 6058
Email: glenmcpee@webone.com.au

New South Wales Ian McPhee
PO Box 237 Brookvale NSW 2100
(02) 9938 4628

Victoria Maggie Mulherin
5/28 Station Road Williamstown Vic 3016
(03) 9399 8283
Email: mgmulherin@dodo.com

Queensland Susan Spinks
"Chertsey" N/S 212 Oakley Qld 4401
(07) 4691 6206

South Australia Judith Moore
34 Lakeside Crescent Highbury SA 5089
(08) 8264 1739

Tasmania Bertul Sundstrup
1337 Pipers Brook Rd Pipers Brook Tas 7254
(03) 6382 7222

OFFICE BEARERS

Chief Historian Trevor Phee
24 Bibby Street Hamilton NSW 2303
(02) 4962 2672
Email: t.phee@bigpond.com

Historians Norah McPhee
10 Rodney Road Mt Vincent NSW 2323
(02) 4938 0350
Email: sandymcpee@rockingm.com.au

Clyde Smythe
80 Avoca Road Turramurra NSW 2074
(02) 9144 7486

Jan Harper
62 Relowe Crescent Box Hill North Vic 3129
(02) 9890 5834
Email: bandjharper@netspace.net.au

Helen McPhee
76 Lindeman Ave Wheatley Qld 4814
(07) 4779 6328
Email: macfie@austarnet.com.au

Trustee Judith Moore
34 Lakeside Crescent Highbury SA 5089
(08) 8264 1739

Clan Society Piper Bob McPhee
Box 323 Laidley Qld 4341
(07) 5465 5385

Editor of 'Downunder' Glen McPhee
88 William Webb Drive, Evatt ACT 2617
(02) 6258 6058
Email: glenmcpee@webone.com.au

President's Secretary Margaret Booth
30 Wilson St Oakleigh Vic 3166
(03) 9503 9907
Email: mbooth@sjbrnia.melb.catholic.edu.au

Treasurer Anthony Gartland
30 Wilson Street Oakleigh Vic 3166
(03) 9503 9907

Subscriptions Note: Change of Treasurer

Welcome and many thanks to Anthony Gartland for taking on important task of treasurer of the Clan Society of Australia

You should have recently received your subscription notice for 2004. Following up members who overlook payment is time consuming and costly so, if you have not already done so, please send payment today.

You will not receive a receipt unless you specifically request one as it saves postage and is in accordance with current commercial practice.

Those members who have paid in advance will not receive a notice.

Subscription rates are:

- Single membership \$10
- Family membership \$15
- Under 18 or over 75 years of age Nil

If you are over 75 and don't wish to pay a membership subscription which we keep sending you because we don't know you are over 75 just drop our Treasurer a note telling him and it will be recorded.

All payments are to be sent to:

Treasurer of Macfie Clan Society of Australia

Anthony Gartland
30 Wilson Street
Oakleigh
Victoria 3166

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President Macfie Clan Society

30 Wilson Street
Oakleigh Victoria 3166
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63 Park Road
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