



# THE DOWNUNDER

Journal of the  
Macfie Clan Society of Australia

Issue 129  
March 2015



Colonsay



*Ancestral home  
of Clan Macfie*

Oronsay

The Macfie Clan Society of Australia  
was founded at Richmond,  
New South Wales in 1974.

[www.clanmacfie.co.uk](http://www.clanmacfie.co.uk)



## President's Message



It is a real pleasure to once again be in a position to resume some responsibilities for our Society, not to mention enjoy the privilege of being associated with members keen to share out Scottish heritage.

I must thank Morris McPhee who took over all my duties last year for doing such a wonderful job in keeping the wheels of the Society turning. In particular Morris did an outstanding job not only helping to organise the 20th Biennial General Meeting (BGM), but the visit to Australia by Clan Commander Iain McFie and his wife Fiona. The Commander's visit to Australia was to mark the 40th anniversary of our Society. It was fortuitous the Society was able to schedule the BGM to coincide with his visit in November. Former Society President Brian McPhee and his wife Merilyn did a great job hosting the Adelaide meeting at their home, and organising all aspects of the BGM weekend.

A big thank you must go to a number of people who helped look after Iain and Fiona in Australia. They include NSW Vice President and Vice President Morris McPhee and his wife Robyn. It was a difficult time for Robyn as she was still recovering from an unforeseen operation prior to the Clan Commander's visit. ACT Vice President Heather Grove, Brian and Merilyn McPhee (SA), Anne and Ian Leask (SA) and my wife Judith, who despite a difficult medical problem at the time, took wonderful care of Iain and Fiona while they stayed with us in Sydney. While I am not a great fan of detailing members general travel experiences, a full report of the Clan Commander's visit to Australia can be seen in my report on page 5.

The Commander's visit to Australia was a great plus for our Society. The camaraderie shown by all those involved with Iain and Fiona's visit and who were able to attend the Adelaide meeting was memorable. Perhaps most gratifying to me was the fact that a number of members who attended the BGM stepped up to volunteer their time and expertise to assist the Society. Just to mention a few, and apologies to anyone not included,; Bev Knowles (VIC) historian duties and Facebook setup, Ian McCathie (QLD) and Trevor McPhee (WA) with treasury and Peter McPhee (VIC) the next BGM.

As for the future, hopefully the Executive Committee can harness the enthusiasm shown during the Commander's visit to take the Society forward. Maintaining the high standard of our journal for members will continue to be a priority. Thankfully, several members have committed to write at least one article for each issue this year. On the subject of publications, an updated version of the Society's constitution, which has been out of print for some years, has been produced. The Society is also looking to purchase or produce some 'Macfie Clan' note pads for members. There are a number of other issues I would like to mention but as space is running out, they will have to await the next issue. One matter I should mention before signing off is the Treasurer's Report. The financial report presented at the BGM has been held over until the next issue of *The Downunder*.

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## Beating the Retreat

'In the seventeenth century the drummers would go on to the city walls and beat a retreat to give notice to those outside that the gates were about to close. This would be at sunset and the gates closed a quarter of an hour later. It later also required that no soldier would fire his musket unless he was a sentry and challenged; retreat was then also called 'Setting the Watch'. (ref. Souvenir Programme of The Red Hackle Association, 1986).

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Cover: Those attending the 2015 BGM in the courtyard at the home of Brian and Merilyn McPhee, North Adelaide

## MEMBER IN PROFILE

**NSW member:** Dr. Kerr Chatfield (N74-008)

**Migrant forebears:** George Macfie 48, wife Elizabeth Hutcheson 30 & their 2 children Susannah Smith aged 3 and Mary Sinclair 3 months old

**Occupation** School teacher & Presbyterian minister

**Home in Scotland:** Glasgow. Forebears from the Isle of Bute

**Emigrant ship:** *Portland* left Liverpool on 24th July 1837

**Arrived Australia:** Sydney, 3rd December 1837

**Pioneer forebears:** William Thomas Poole and Mary Sinclair Macfie

### Member's story in brief:

This story from Kerr

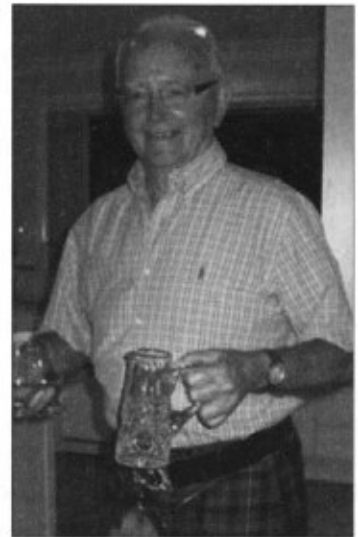
"One's life and knowledge of family is often enhanced by having an aged relative and I was fortunate in my maternal grandmother born Mary Macleay Poole in 1873 in Kempsey, NSW. She lived into her 100th year and was an influential part of my life until, at 32, I left Scotland to come to Australia. Her grandfather was the Reverend George Macfie whose life has been commemorated in a recent book called *Reverend George Macfie Australian Pioneer Clergyman (1789-1869)* which is reviewed in this edition of the Journal.

I was born in Glasgow on 5 May 1936, elder son of Richard Charles Chatfield and Mary Macfie Robertson. Father was an insurance broker and a well known citizen of the city from his teenage days as a champion swimmer. Grandfather Robertson, in the great days of heavy engineering and shipbuilding on the Clyde, owned a machine parts business. Grandmother Mary Poole had gone from Sydney to visit Hutcheson and Macfie relations in Scotland on the death of her parents in 1904, met grandfather, a second cousin, married him and lived the last two thirds of her life in dark, damp but friendly Glasgow. She had a fund of anecdotes of her life in Australia. Her father had come out in 1851. She talked of the Great Flood of 1867 on the Hawkesbury; of holidays at "Glenmore," Hunter Valley with Aunt McDonald; father's contracts for the Zig Zag railway at Lapstone; his membership of the Legislative Assembly and his marriage to Mary Macfie daughter of the minister at Ebenezer.

My brother and I were educated at the Glasgow Academy and without any medical family background, both graduated in medicine from the University of Glasgow in 1960 and 1963. I had met Barbara Leechman, a nurse in my teaching hospital and we were married in 1961. My brother and I went on to specialise in ophthalmology for me and obstetrics and gynaecology for Rob. The future in the National Health Service did not appeal and while many of my colleagues emigrated to Canada, my Australian heritage made us think of this country and I answered an advertisement for an assistant in a private eye practice in the growing town of Penrith, a western suburb of Sydney. In 1969 we came out with our two daughters Laura and Deirdre aged 3 and 1. Colin, our son, was born here in 1971. Paradoxically, the only Australian-born of the family now lives in the United States. We bought a house on the Nepean River and we still live in the area. I retired in 2012. A Scots friend played the pipes in the St Marys Pipes and Drums, then A-grade champions. I made it to their No. 2 band but work and family commitments became overpowering and the bagpipes were retired.

Through a a cousin of my Mother's, Eve Mason, I was contacted by Sandy McPhee and was present at the inaugural meeting of the Clan Macfie Society at RAAF Richmond in 1974. My own interest was stimulated by a letter to my grandmother, written by Robert Hill, her cousin and a grandson of Catherine Macfie, sister of the Reverend George. The subject was the story of the "extinction" of the Clan Macfie. It was full of inaccuracies of time and fact but, combined with my chance proximity to Ebenezer Church where George Macfie had served, I resolved to investigate our Macfies further.

The encounter with Windsor historian Carol Carruthers at the 150th anniversary of the founding of Pitt Town Presbyterian church in 2012 by several of our family, lead to the publishing of the life of the Reverend George Macfie, Australian Pioneer Clergyman in 2014. Genealogy can be endlessly fascinating as well as fun and it is good to observe that a new generation is excited by a study of our ancestors."



# GENERAL NEWS

## Clan Honours Former Commander

Former Ceann Cath Sandy McPhie was presented with an Appreciation Plaque recognizing his tenure and exemplary service to the Clan Macfie on 4th November, by James McPhee, New Zealand Clan Commissioner. Unfortunately, current Ceann Cath, Iain McFie, was unable to travel to Toowoomba in Queensland to make the presentation himself.

As luck would have it, James and his wife Mary were going to Queensland for 7 days following the culmination of the New Zealand Society's 30th Anniversary celebrations, which were attended by the Commander and Lady Fiona. They were also attending the Australian Society's 40th Anniversary celebration so James had all his Macfie Highland Tartan attire with him and was able to look the part for the presentation.

James stated, "It was with great pleasure that I made the presentation, and it was well deserved and well received. I can only state that Sandy was very surprised and very humbled at receiving such a gift and proclamation. It was a very happy day."



Unfortunately Sandy became seriously ill towards the end of last year and was taken to hospital on 29th December. After a prolonged stay in hospital, he was able to return home in early February to be cared for by his wife Helen.

Helen passed on the following news about Sandy's recovery and return home: "Sandy will come under the umbrella of the community transitional care programme which means that we will have the support that he may need in normal day to day activities that I can't provide. I think this support will be minimal as he has improved so much in the last week that we will be able to manage very well. He still has some effects from the "mini" stroke with his sight and, occasionally, his speech – especially if he is tired – but all in all he, apart from being somewhat frail, is the Sandy we all know and love."

Sandy turned 86 in early February. All members of the Society hope Sandy's health continues to improve and look forward to learning of his continuing recovery.

## New Arrival

Society members Ashley and Jane McPhee from Balgowlah, NSW, celebrated the birth in August last year of their first child, a son they called Cameron John. Ashley is the elder son of the Society's President.

## Sandy and Norah's anniversary

Society member Barbara McPhee from Kurri Kurri, notified *The Downunder* that her parents, Sandy and Norah McPhee from Mt. Vincent recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on Friday 20th March.

As Barbara wrote: "This is quite an event as very few couples ever get there. As you can understand we left it until the last moment to tell people because they have had bouts of illness recently and we didn't know if it was actually going to happen. As they are getting very frail and not up to a lot of serious partying we decided to have an afternoon tea at their place for family, friends and neighbours on Saturday 21 March."

Both Sandy & Norah are founding members and life members of the Society.

## Commander's flooded house

Prior to his visit to Australia, Commander Iain's home was flooded. He expected repairs to be made while he was overseas, but it was not to be. He and Fiona returned home to find their house was not habitable. They were forced to move into rented premises, which they are still forced to occupy.

## In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Norman R Chambers (Q91-764) of Underwood in Queensland.



# Clan Commander to Visit Australia in 2014

From President Ian McPhee

## Introduction

A visit by Clan Commander Iain Macfie and his wife Fiona to New Zealand last year was initiated and organised by New Zealand Clan Commissioner James McPhee, for the Zealand Clan Society's 30th anniversary celebration. As coincidence would have it, 2014 was the 40th anniversary of the Clan Society of Australia, so it was a wonderful chance to have Iain and Fiona also visit Australia for the Australian Society's celebration. James is to be congratulated for the great job he did in facilitating Iain and Fiona's visit to both countries.

The following is a summary of Iain and Fiona's itinerary during their 2 week stay in Australia:

- 4 nights in Sydney staying with Society President Ian McPhee.
- 2 nights in Sydney staying at the Best Westin Hotel, 1 Martin Place, Sydney.
- 3 nights in Adelaide staying at the Quality Hotel, North Adelaide.
- 3 nights in Canberra staying with ACT Vice President Heather Grove.
- 2 nights in Sydney staying with Society President Ian McPhee.

## Thursday 30/10/14

Iain & Fiona were met at Sydney airport by myself, acting President & NSW VP Morris McPhee and his wife Robyn, who presented them with a welcome bouquet of Australian flowers. From the airport it was off to my place where my wife Judith had dinner ready for them.

## Friday 31/10/14

Was a day touring in the car stopping first at the beautiful Akuna Bay in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, then the short drive to West Head for a glorious view over Pittwater and to inspect a group of aboriginal rock carvings. From the National Park we drove to spectacular Palm Beach for a seafood lunch beside Pittwater. While there they were shown where Home and Away is filmed and some of the mansion houses in the area. From Palm Beach it was a drive back south along the northern beaches of Sydney and some views of Sydney Harbour.

## Saturday 1/11/14

Acting President and NSW VP Morris McPhee accompanied Iain and Fiona on a trip to the Blue Mountains. Morris relates:

"To the west of the Greater Sydney Metropolitan area lie the "Blue Mountains", which have long been a destination for locals, interstate visitors and overseas visitors to visit for day trips or longer holidays. We drove to Katoomba, which is the main town and where the Three Sisters is located. As well as a close up view of the Three Sisters, the viewing point also has magnificent 180 degree views of a number of valleys and mountain ranges.

The area is also famous for the Scenic Railway, which descends over 300 metres at an incline of 52 degrees, passing through a tunnel in the cliff to the floor of the Jamison valley. It is the steepest passenger railway in the world. Also operating from the same location is the Scenic Skyway, a cable car ride suspended 270 metres above the Jamison Valley. The Skyway provides views of the Three Sisters, Katoomba Falls and the Jamison Valley. To complete the Scenic Rides there is also the Scenic Cableway, a 545 metre gondola ride down into the valley. Iain and Fiona insisted on going on all three of these and seemed to enjoy all three experiences. After a relaxing afternoon tea in one of the local parks we drove back to Sydney."

## Sunday 2/11/14

In the morning, our visitors from Scotland were taken to Manly for a short visit before returning to Allambie Heights for a luncheon for Society members.

In the afternoon, Iain and Fiona were guests of honour at a luncheon for Society members at my home, where all those who attended enjoyed a luxurious meal prepared by my wife Judith, and a talk from Iain. Dressed in a pair of trews, he was also able to clarify and show everyone several different types of Macfie Tartan which included modern, ancient and muted or weathered colours.

In the late afternoon our Scottish guests were treated to a special experience. My wife is a member of WIRES, a voluntary wildlife rescue service whose members help rescue and look after orphaned and injured Australian animals and birds. Robyn, one of Judith's friends, had a number of orphaned baby wallabies to look after, and agreed to make them available to handle and feed. In addition, Iain and Fiona were able to get a close up view of fruit bats and native birds at Robyn's.

#### Monday 3/11/14

Another day tour in the car to the South Coast of NSW. Again the weather was pleasant as we drove through the Royal National Park to make our first stop at Bald Hill Headland Reserve, at Stanwell Park, for a glorious view along the southern coastline. From there it was down the escarpment and along the coast past numerous beaches and old miners' cottages eventually by-passing Wollongong to reach the Princes Highway. Turning off at Albion Park we drove out through beautiful green rolling hills to the little village of Jamberoo. After Jamberoo, it was then just a few kilometres to our final destination, the seaside town of Kiama. At Kiama we visited the town's famous Blowhole and enjoyed a seafood lunch on Fisherman's Wharf. After a full day it was back home to Judith's who had prepared dinner for us.

#### Tuesday 4/11, Wednesday 5/11/14 & Thursday 6/11/14

On Tuesday, Iain and Fiona were dropped at the Best Westin Hotel in the heart of Sydney. From there they could enjoy the sights of Sydney at their own leisure. Utilizing 'hop on hop off' buses they not only saw much of Sydney but took an excursion out to Bondi Beach.

On Thursday afternoon, Morris collected Iain and Fiona and drove them to Manly for 'fish and chips' overlooking Manly beach. Later that afternoon he dropped them at the airport for their flight to Adelaide. They were met there by Brian and Merylyn McPhee who took them to the Quality Hotel in North Adelaide, where they would stay for the next 3 nights.

#### Friday 7/11

In the morning, Brian and Merylyn picked up Iain & Fiona from their hotel for a tour of the wine growing areas of McLaren Vale. It's a bit of a hoot, but apparently someone forgot to tell Brian and Merylyn that Iain and Fiona are teetotallers! Nevertheless, the guests were fortunate to visit a wine shop and winery owned by relatives of Society member Ann (nee McPhee) Leask and her husband Ian. Ann and Ian were wonderful hosts, treating the party to lunch in one of the local restaurants.

Most of the guests who were to attend the BGM on Saturday had arrived in Adelaide by Friday, many staying at the Quality Hotel. Being thoughtful hosts, Brian and Merylyn had organised drinks and an evening meal for the Society at the Snooty Fox Restaurant, which is within the hotel so that everyone could get acquainted. Also attending the function were New Zealand Commissioner James McPhee and his wife Mary. An enjoyable evening, was enhanced when out of the blue, Judy Moore's daughter Joanna, jumped up and did a stand up comedy skit imitating the voice of former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Judy later remarked to me 'where did that girl come from?' Naturally I left that question unanswered.

#### Saturday 8/11

The BGM was held on Saturday, the details of which are reported elsewhere in *The Downunder*. Equally if not more important at such a time, is the chance to meet and enjoy the company of other Society members, their family and friends. This proved to be the case in Adelaide.

After the BGM everyone, about 30 people all told, adjourned for lunch at the Waterfall Gully Restaurant at Waterfall Gully. Perhaps with the exception of James McPhee, who had a few pointed words to say about his underdone chicken, I think everyone enjoyed a lovely meal. At that lunch Iain gave an impromptu address of thanks to everyone and also announced to my surprise, that as Clan Commissioner Sandy McPhie from Toowoomba had resigned due to ill-health, he had appointed me as his representative in Australia i.e. Clan Commissioner. It is honour hopefully I am worthy of.

Saturday Evening was another enjoyable occasion. Nearly everyone who attended the BGM and lunch also attended a Scottish night in a hall at Mt. Barker, run by the Mt. Barker Caledonian Society. Iain and Fiona were guests of honour, seated with other dignitaries on the stage overlooking the floor. Supper was provided as was a wonderful display of Scottish dancing and piping from the local pipe band. Towards the end of the night, everyone had the opportunity to get up and enjoy a dance to the sound of Scottish music. It was a terrific night.



Commander Iain and his wife Fiona each hand feeding a baby wallaby.

That wasn't the end of the night. The bus that took us to Mt Barker returned at the designated time but rather than take us all straight home, took everyone on a late night side trip to a lookout for a view over the lights of Adelaide. It was a cold evening but I think everyone appreciated the drivers thoughtfulness.

#### Sunday 9/11

Sunday was a relaxed affair with the traditional church service (10.30AM) at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 96 Archer Street, North Adelaide. After morning tea with the congregation, those present left for a late lunch at an hotel around the corner. Farewells followed. For Iain and Fiona it was a flight to Canberra via Sydney, to stay with ACT Vice President Heather Grove.

#### Monday 10/11

As Canberra VIP Heather Grove relates:

We drove up Mt Ainslie which is our favourite site for viewing the Parliamentary Triangle, where we were able to appreciate the national buildings and the lake spread before us. I was able to tell them about the creation of the capital and the competition won by Walter Burley Griffin, more than ably assisted by his wife, Marion Mahony Griffin. We later drove around the new Arboretum with its stunning views over Yarralumla, the Governor General's residence, lunched by the lake and visited the National War Memorial which was preparing for Remembrance Day activities the next day.

#### Tuesday 11/11

We visited the National Museum, one of our newer buildings for a taste of everything Australian, and I was particularly pleased to find that an exhibition, highly valued by ACT clan members, was still on display. It comprises several hand worked articles of clothing prepared for her trousseau by Muriel McPhee of Southgate, via Grafton. Sadly, her soldier fiancé was killed and Muriel never used the articles. They were discovered in perfect condition after her death and donated to the museum by Iain and Judy McPhee of the ACT. Iain attended afternoon tea to meet our Scottish visitors that afternoon and was pleased to hear that a guide had told us that it is one of the most popular exhibitions in the museum. Bill and Ruby McVeigh also came for tea and we enjoyed reminiscences of life in both Scotland and Australia, when we were all much younger...





At the luncheon for Society members at Ian McPhee's home: Left to right: Ashley McPhee, Commander Iain, Morris McPhee, Ian McCathie, Fiona McFie. Morris' wife Robyn is sitting opposite Ashley.

#### Wednesday 12/11

Driving Iain and Fiona back to Sydney next day I took the scenic route through the southern highlands and we were all able to see why the first inhabitants compared them to the Scottish scenery they had left behind. We drove through Bundanoon and Bowral, lunching in Berrima with its evocative grey stone buildings and convict built bridges and on through Mittagong to the freeway again. In Sydney we met Ian at Morris' home, unfortunately it was there we learnt Morris' wife Robyn was in hospital. From Morris's I drove back to Canberra, while Iain and Fiona went with Ian to spend their last 2 nights at his place.

#### Thursday 13/11

A relaxed day spent close to home. Iain and Fiona were taken to North Head for a view over Sydney Harbour, to Manly for a some shopping along the Corso and a walk to beautiful Shelly Beach (which unfortunately Fiona was unable to do). After a picnic lunch by the water at spectacular Clontarf, we drove to Mosman, saw Taronga Park Zoo and then on past old military barracks to Middle Head. The day finished with Judith's usual hospitality back at home.

#### Friday 14/11

After fond farewells and a memorable stay, Iain and Fiona were taken to Sydney Airport for their 11.30 am flight home.

Commander Iain McFie giving a talk about Macfie Clan tartan at the luncheon for Society members in Sydney. Watching on is Margaret McCathie





# Report of 20th Biennial General Meeting

At the home of Brian & Marilyn McPhee, 4 Figtree Court, North Adelaide, South Australia, 8th November 2014

## Present:

Ian McPhee NSW, Morris McPhee NSW, Brian McPhee and Marilyn McPhee SA and 3 three sons, Rick NSW, Jamie VIC and Angus NSW, Judy Moore SA, Heather Grove ACT, Ian and Barbara McPhee SA, Beverly Knowles VIC, Trevor and Rhonda McPhee WA, Ann and Ian Leask SA, Ian and Margaret McCathie QLD, Dean Rutledge VIC, Brian and Cass McHaffie NSW, Sharron Bennett QLD, Peter and Barbara McPhee VIC. By Invitation: Iain and Fiona McFie from Scotland and James and Judy McPhee from New Zealand.

## 1. Welcome

President Ian McPhee declared the meeting open at 11 am, welcoming everyone and thanking Brian and Marilyn McPhee for their hospitality. He made special mention of those who travelled from overseas, Clan Commander Iain and Fiona McFie from Scotland and Clan Commissioner James McPhee and his wife Mary from New Zealand. Acting President Morris endorsed Ian's welcome and referenced the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MacFie Clan Society in Australia.

## 2. Apologies:

Glen and Glenda McPhee, NZ, Robyn McPhee NSW, Trevor Phee NSW, Geoff and Ruth McPhee NSW, Gwen Hubert ACT, Sandy (Clan armiger) and Norah McPhee NSW, Margaret Barnes NSW, Rosemary Szente NSW, Susan Spinks QLD, Alison Flavel SA, Bernie McPhee VIC, Ross McPhie VIC and Suzie McPhee WA. Apologies were also received from Clan Commissioner Sandy McPhie and his email of greeting was shared by Morris.

## 3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> BGM

The minutes were circulated and accepted by all who attended both meetings. Moved: Brian McPhee, Seconded: Ian McPhee

## 4. Business arising from 19th BGM:

Morris reported gonfalons were purchased, displayed and are to be made available for use by members. Stands and bags will be available for all three. Reference was made to possible purchase of clan merchandise, and availability of such items at All Things Tartan, a Queensland firm. Some research has been done but nothing decided as yet.

The possibility of a website for the clan to be continued in general business for this meeting.

## 5. President's Report:

Morris McPhee gave a short overview of the year's planning for this event and expressed satisfaction that following Ian's recovery from illness, he would be able to undertake the presidential role again.

## 6. Treasurer's Report:

Also delivered by Morris McPhee. Due to illness, Treasurer Geoff McPhee had relinquished this role. In summary, although subscriptions are down this year the society is still in a comfortable financial position. Donations to the Society have increased. Funds were spent on supporting the Commander's visit, the purchase of the gonfalons and printing and postage of clan mail-outs including newsletters.

Questions arising from the Treasurer's Report: Why do we need funds? Answered by Morris and Ian. In summary, communication with members, promotion of clan society in the hope of reinvigoration and the possibility of purchase of merchandise. Would it not be easier/cheaper to email all communication? In summary, desirable but not practical given age of current membership. Morris would certainly welcome email addresses for all members for the society's data base. Discussion to be carried over to general business for this meeting. The report was accepted. Moved: Brian McHaffie Seconded: Ian McPhee

## 7. Membership Report:

Ian McPhee gave recognition to the 3 retiring office bearers, Society Chief Clan Historian, Trevor Phee, Society Treasurer, Geoff McPhee and Society Vice President Margaret Barnes. With thanks for their services, President Ian remains happy to accept nominations for any vacant positions.

## 8. Election of Executive Members for 2014 -2016:

The following executive members for 2015 - 2016 were nominated and elected unopposed:

President	Ian McPhee	QLD V.P.	Susan Spinks
Vice President	Morris McPhee	SA V.P.	Judith Moore
Treasurer	vacant	TAS V.P.	Robyn McPhee
ACT V.P.	Heather Grove	VIC V.P.	Ross McPhie
NSW V.P.	Morris McPhee	WA V.P.	Trevor McPhee

## 9. General Business:

1. A lively discussion took place concerning the possibilities of Website and Facebook pages featuring the Clan Society. It was generally agreed that efforts to attract a younger membership would need to feature digital communication strategies. Several members expressed interest and expertise in this area and Bev Knowles agreed to form a group to research and attempt establishment of a Facebook presence for the society.

2. No venue was nominated by the Executive for the next meeting in two years time. Peter McPhee (Vic) Victoria, offered to organise the next BGM in Victoria and his offer was accepted by the meeting.

## 10. Address by Clan Commander.

Commander Iain provided a potted history of the Macfie Clan, beginning in 1292 and ending in 2014.

The clan featured in history as treasurers to the Lords of the Isles, a position which led eventually to treason, attack and displacement from their ancestral lands and saw them become a broken clan with no chief. With other Scots many of them emigrated.

In the late nineteenth century two influential Macfies applied for their personal coats of arms. No major result was evident except personal rivalry, although the Coat of Arms often attributed to the Clan Macfie is that of Macfie of Dreghorn, one of these gentlemen.

In 1971, a Canadian, Dr Earle Macfie, who had a fervent interest in clan history resulting in his publication of pamphlets devoted to same, attended an international clan gathering where he was disappointed to find no Macfies represented. Taking his concerns to the Lord Lyon he was advised that given no obvious line of succession, interested parties could apply for their own coats of arms, becoming armigers. Dr Earle contacted Macfies all over the world, sharing this information and in 1981, he was voted Clan Commander from within the ranks of those who applied to be armigers. Following his death, our own Sandy McPhee from Queensland assumed the role from which he retired in 2008 when Iain became Commander. Iain explained his own Coat of Arms displayed at the meeting.

The Commander spoke to some points of interest previously identified as society issues including the clan's legal status, responsibilities for debts and assets etc. To share responsibility, in 2013 five trustees were appointed from all over the world. The Clan Society is funded from members all around the world. Ideas for use of funds includes scholarships for Gaelic or piping courses.

Macfie tartans were discussed. Usually two are identified, ancient and modern but a third, muted or weathered has appeared. The Macfie standing stone on Colonsay, a magnet for travelling Macfies, has become increasingly difficult to access. It is sited on the Colonsay Estate owned by Lord Strathcona. Clan parliaments are held every four years. The next will be in Skye in 2017 and will include a trip to Colonsay.

Commander Iain introduced Commissioner James McPhee from New Zealand who shared the news that he had just delivered a plaque of international appreciation to Sandy McPhee, the retired Commander in Queensland. Everyone agreed that a replica plaque should be placed in a suitable site significant to Macfies, in Scotland, when identified.

Acting President Morris declared the meeting closed at 12.35 pm.

## Vote of Thanks

The above report was compiled by ACT Vice President Heather Grove who volunteered to act as the secretary and official recorder for the meeting. Thank you Heather for the great job you did. A vote of thanks for a great job done, must also go to Morris McPhee who conducted the meeting as the Acting President. Morris was also responsible for taking the Society's two banners and sundry other material to Adelaide for the BGM.



# The BGM Weekend

## The Snooty Fox

Most of the guests who attended the BGM on Saturday had arrived in Adelaide by Friday 7th, many staying at the Quality Hotel. Being thoughtful hosts, Brian and Marilyn had organised drinks and an evening meal for the Society at the Snooty Fox Restaurant, which is within the hotel so that everyone could get acquainted. Also attending the function were Clan Commander Iain McFie, his wife Fiona, New Zealand Commissioner James McPhee and his wife Mary. An enjoyable evening was enhanced when out of the blue, Judy Moor's daughter Joanna, jumped up and did a stand up comedy skit imitating the voice of former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Judy later remarked to me 'where did that girl come from?' Naturally I left that question unanswered.

## BGM Lunch

After the BGM everyone, about 30 people all told, adjourned for lunch at the Waterfall Gully Restaurant at Waterfall Gully. Fortunately there were enough private cars on hand to take everyone to the venue. Perhaps with the exception of James McPhee, who had a few pointed words to say about his underdone chicken, I think everyone enjoyed a lovely meal.

At that lunch Iain gave an impromptu address of thanks to everyone & also announced to my surprise, that as Clan Commissioner Sandy McPhie from Toowoomba had resigned due to ill-health, he had appointed me as his representative in Australia i.e. Clan Commissioner. Hopefully I am worthy of that honour.

## Celtic Night

Saturday Evening was another enjoyable occasion. Nearly everyone who attended the BGM and lunch also attended a Scottish night in a hall at Mt. Barker, run by the Mt. Barker Caledonian Society. Seated with other dignitaries on the stage overlooking the floor Iain and Fiona were guests of honour. Supper was provided as was a wonderful display of Scottish dancing and piping from the local pipe band. Towards the end of the night, everyone had the opportunity to get up and enjoy a dance to the sound of Scottish music. It was a terrific night.

That wasn't the end of the evening. The bus that took us to Mt Barker returned at the designated time, but rather than take us all straight home, took everyone on a late night side trip to a lookout for a view over the lights of Adelaide. It was a cold evening, but I think everyone appreciated the drivers thoughtfulness.



Above: Scottish dancers at the Celtic Night



The Mt. Barker Pipe Band at the Celtic Night  
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## Church on Sunday

The BGM weekend was concluded with a 10.30 AM church service at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 96 Archer St. North Adelaide. South Australian member Alison Flavel missed the BGM but was able to make the church service. After morning tea with the congregation, those present left for a late lunch at an hotel around the corner. Farewells followed. For Iain and Fiona it was a flight to Canberra via Sydney, to stay with ACT Vice President Heather Grove.

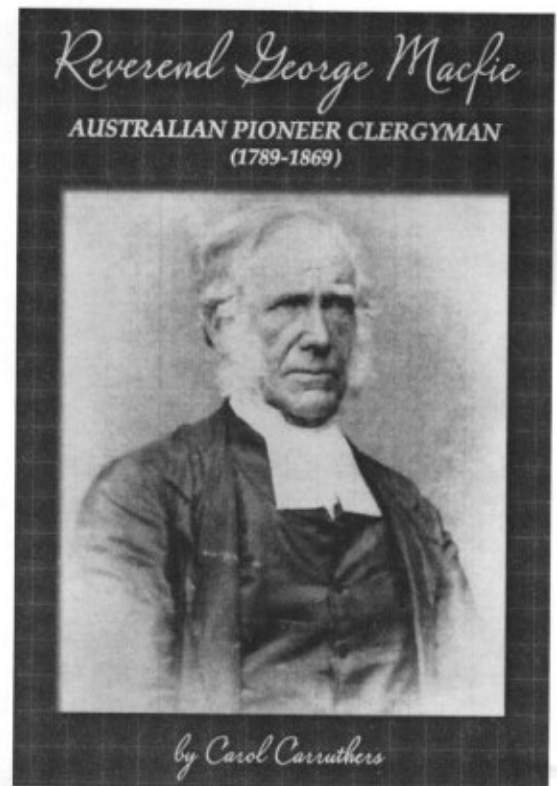
# GENEALOGY

## Reverend George Macfie 1789 - 1869

Carol Carruthers, Hawkesbury Historian, has written a new book on the life of an Australian pioneer clergyman, George Macfie. The book was officially launched on Saturday 1st November 2014 at Macfie's old charge, Ebenezer Church.

Rev. George was born in Scotland in 1789, was educated at the University of Glasgow, taught school and was ordained in the Presbyterian church in 1828. He came to Australia under the auspices of Rev. John Dunmore Lang in 1837 with his wife and two children. Initially they were in Penrith, then based on the South Coast at Moruya until called to Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury in 1841. He served there and at Pitt Town until the Great Flood of 1867 when he retired to Sydney.

Carol Carruthers met descendants of Rev. George at celebrations to mark 150 years of Pitt Town Presbyterian Church in 2012 and with input from Robin Ross, Trish Arrowsmith, Anne McMurray, Lisa Frost-Foster, Kerr Chatfield and others, researched the minister's life further and pooled the information in the new book. Carol is a graduate of the University of New England with a degree in history and has long been involved in the Hawkesbury Historical Society. She sees George Macfie as an historically significant Hawkesbury resident. The book is available to purchase there, at Hawkesbury Regional Museum and Ebenezer shop thereafter.



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## Bute & The Macfies

Bute also known as the **Isle of Bute**, is an island in the Firth of Clyde. The island is 24 km long by about 6 km wide comprising an area of 122 square kilometres. As the crow flies, it is only 53 km from Glasgow. Once a constituent island of the larger County of Bute, it is now part of the council area of Argyll and Bute. Villages on the island include Kilchattan Bay, Kingarth and Port Bannatyne with Rothesay as the only town on the island which is linked by ferry to the mainland.

Bute is divided into highland and lowland areas by the Highland Boundary Fault. North of the fault the island is hilly and largely uncultivated with extensive areas of forestry. The highest hill is Kames Hill at 267 metres. To the south of the fault the terrain is smoother and highly cultivated although in the far south is to be found the island's most rugged terrain around Glen Callum. Loch Fad is Bute's largest body of freshwater and runs along the fault line.

In the book about Reverend George Macfie, there are some interesting points about Bute and the Macfies: "... When Dr Earle Douglas MacPhee published his "Mythology, Traditions and History of MacDhubhsith - MacDuffie Clan" in 1972, he omitted the island of Bute as one of the homes of the ancestors. He corrected this in volume VI and studies have shown that George Macfie's family was from Bute. .... We cannot be certain when the Macfies first appeared in Bute. They may have come from Islay or Colonsay but are many by the 18th century. The name does not appear before 1500, nor as landholders in the period 1580 to 1780. James McFie married Bessie McKeachan in 1701 in Rothesay. Both were from Bute and had a son, John, in January 1704 in Rothesay. John and Mary McIntyre married in 1722 and had only one child, Donald, in Chapleton, Rothesay about 1723. Donald married Mary McConachy and they had six children, Alexander, the fourth was born on 1 October 1755 .... in Rothesay. He was the father of George Macfie."

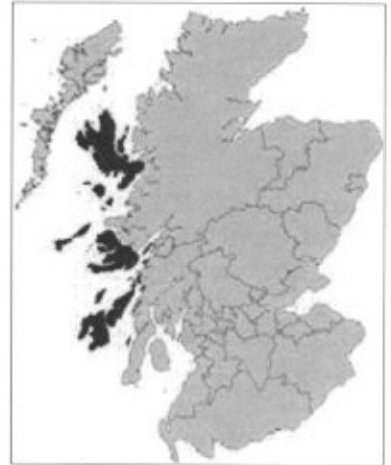
**NB** Commander Iain McFie's family came from Bute. Perhaps his family is related to the one above.



## St. Columba & Iona

### from Rosemary Szente

Saint Columba (Irish: Colm Cille, 'church dove') was born on the 7th December 521 to Fedlimid and Eithne of the Cenel Conaill in Gartan, near Lough Gartan, in modern County Donegal, Ulster in the north of Ireland. In 563 he was banished to Scotland where he established a monastery on Iona, a small island in the *Inner Hebrides* off the Ross of Mull on the western coast of Scotland. The Ross of Mull (Scottish Gaelic *An ros Mhuileach*) is the largest peninsula of the island of Mull and is about 28 kilometres long and makes up the south-western part of the island. Mull is the second largest island of the Inner Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland. Columba is credited with spreading Christianity in present-day Scotland.



The Inner Hebrides

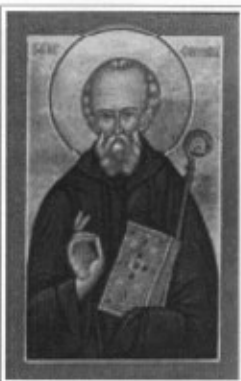
**Early Life:** Columba entered the monastic school of Movilla, at Newtownards, under St. Finnian a Christian Missionary. He was about twenty, and a deacon when, having completed his training at Movilla, he travelled southwards into Leinster, where he became a pupil of an aged bard named Gemman. On leaving him, Columba entered the monastery of Clonard, governed at that time by Finnian, noted for sanctity and learning. Here he imbibed the traditions of the Welsh Church, for Finnian had been trained in the schools of St. David.

Around 560, he became involved in a quarrel with St. Finnian over a psalter. Columba copied the manuscript at the scriptorium under St. Finnian, intending to keep the copy. St. Finnian disputed his right to keep the copy. The dispute eventually led to the pitched Battle of Cúl Dreimhne in Cairbre Drom Cliabh (now in Co. Sligo) in 561, during which many men were killed. A second grievance that led him to induce the clan Neill to rise and engage in battle against King Diarmait at Cooldevny had to do with defiance of the rights of sanctuary. The battle was fought over Diarmait's killing of Diarmait of Curnán, son of Áed mac Echach (d.575), the King of Connacht who was under Columba's protection.

A synod of clerics and scholars threatened to excommunicate him as he was held responsible for the many deaths, but St. Brendan of Birr spoke on his behalf with the result that he was allowed to go into exile instead. Columba's own conscience was uneasy, and on the advice of an aged hermit, Molaise, he resolved to expiate his offence by going into exile and win for Christ as many souls as had perished in the terrible battle of Cúl Dreimhne. He left Ireland, to return only once, many years later.

Columba's abbey on Iona became a dominant religious and political institution in the region for centuries. He was highly regarded by both the Gaels and the Picts. Historically, the Scots emerged from an amalgamation of these two Celtic peoples. It was the Picts and Gaels who founded the Kingdom of Scotland (or Alba) in the 9th century.

In 563, Columba travelled to Scotland with twelve companions (said to include Odran of Iona) in a wicker coracle (Welsh lightweight boat) covered with leather. According to legend he first landed on the Kintyre Peninsula, near Southend. However, being still in sight of his native land, he moved farther north up the west coast of Scotland. The island of Iona was made over to him by his kinsman, Conall mac Comgaill King of Dál Riata. Aside from the services he provided guiding the only centre of literacy in the region, his reputation as a holy man led to his role as a diplomat among the tribes.



Columba subsequently played a major role in the politics of the country. He was also very energetic in his work as a missionary, and, in addition to founding several churches in the Hebrides, he worked to turn his monastery at Iona into a school for missionaries. He was a renowned man of letters, having written several hymns and being credited with having transcribed 300 books. Columba died on Iona (9<sup>th</sup> June 597) and was buried by his monks in the abbey on Iona. Columba is credited as being a leading figure in the revitalisation of monasticism. Clan MacCallum and Clan Malcolm are descended from the original followers of Columba. Clan Robertson are also said to be his heirs. Clan MacKinnon may also have some claim to being spiritual descendants of St. Columba as the MacKinnons were the abbots of the Church for centuries. Columba is remembered today as a Christian Saint.

# Scotland News

## Most Popular Names in 2014

Jack and Emily were the most popular first forenames for babies whose births were registered in 2014, Jack was the top boys' name for a seventh consecutive year, and Emily rose from third to replace Sophie as the most popular girls' name.

James was the second most popular boys' name for the second year running, Lewis remained third and Oliver fourth. Logan, Daniel, Noah, Charlie, Lucas and Alexander make up the rest of the boys' Top Ten. Noah was the only new entrant to the boys' Top Ten; Harry was the only name to drop out of it. The fastest climbers within the boys' Top Twenty were Noah, Max (up 6 places to 13th) and Adam (up 6 places to 14th). There were two new entrants to the boys' Top Twenty: Aaron (up 8 places to 17th) and Cameron (up 4 places to 19th); Alfie and Riley dropped out.

Sophie was the second most popular girls' name, after being top for the previous nine years. Olivia dropped from second to third, and Isla remained in fourth place. Jessica, Ava, Amelia, Lucy, Lily, Ella and Sophia made up the rest of the girls' Top Ten. Lily and Sophia were the only new entrants to the girls' Top Ten; Millie was the only name to drop out of it (Note: there is an 'extra' new entrant to the Top Ten because two names were joint tenth). The fastest climbers within the girls' Top Twenty were Grace (up 5 places to 13th) and Freya (up 4 places to 14th). There were two new entrants to the girls' Top Twenty: Eilidh (up 4 places to 19th) and Anna (up 5 places to 20th); Erin and Eva dropped out.

National Records of Scotland registered the births of almost 26,900 boys and over 25,600 girls in the first 11 months of 2014. The top fifty boys' first names accounted for 41 per cent of all those registered and the top fifty girls' first names accounted for 39 per cent of the registrations. Jack was the first name of only 2.0 per cent of the boys, and Emily was the first name of just 2.1 per cent of the girls. For the second year in a row, Muhammad was the most popular boy's name in Glasgow. (ref. National Records of Scotland)

## Dr Joe Morrow, New Lord Lyon

On 25 February this year, the new Lord Lyon was sworn in by the Lord President of the Court of Session in the Supreme Court building in Edinburgh. He took the Traditional Oath of Allegiance and the Judicial Oath before a large Bench of Judges and a full court of spectators. Dr Joe Morrow is the 35th holder of this historic Office, which had the first named Officer in 1399. He comes to the Lyon Office with a range of skills, including judicial experience, knowledge of ceremonial and a 30 year interest in and study of heraldry. His interest in heraldry came through his involvement with the Scottish Episcopal Church, and as a boy and young man he studied the many Coats of Arms contained in the Church buildings he attended.

The Lyon Office grants new Coats of Arms on a regular basis to individuals and to bodies such as schools, colleges and companies. The Lyon Office also contains the heraldic records of Scotland and holds invaluable information about the people of Scotland and their social history. These records are unique and are a significant source of information for those who wish to understand Scotland and its people. Lyon Morrow is by profession a lawyer and is a member of the Faculty of Advocates, but by nature he is approachable and deals with matters in a commonsense and straightforward manner. He brings wide experience and strong leadership skills to his new role and looks forward to further promoting the work of the Lyon Office and expanding public access to the records and facilities held there.

Lyon Morrow is committed to making heraldry and the resources of the Lyon Office relevant to the 21st century, and stresses that any Scotsman or Scotswoman can approach the Lord Lyon for a grant of Arms. The post of Lord Lyon is constituted by Royal Warrant. (ref. Scots Connection March 2015, No 53)





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**\* Denotes Macfie Clan Society of Australia Executive member**

### EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

March 29	Ringwood Highland Games, Ringwood VIC
April 3-4	Maclean Highland Gathering, Maclean NSW
April 11	Bundanoon Highland Gathering, Bundanoon NSW
April 25	Scottish Act of Remembrance, Martin Place, Sydney NSW
May 1-3	Glen Innes Celtic Festival, Glen Innes, NSW
May 23	Berry Celtic Festival, Berry, NSW
May 30-31	Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival, Wingham NSW
July 1	Tartan Day, Australia wide
July 4	Aberdeen Highland Games, Aberdeen NSW

#### Disclaimer & Note

The Downunder is produced solely for the information and enjoyment of the Macfie Clan Society of Australia members. It has been compiled with care and in good faith from a variety of sources. Any views expressed in the journal are not necessarily those of the Society. All contributions to The Downunder are subject to alteration & editing.



SA Vice President Judy Moore at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, North Adelaide



The 5 'Ians' at the BGM. L. to R. Commander Iain McFie, Ian McPhee SA, President Ian McPhee NSW, Ian Leask SA and Ian McCathie QLD



The flooded home of Iain and Fiona McFie at Kingussie in Scotland. For details see page 4



Helen and Sandy McPhee with Sandy's plaque



BGM hosts Brian and Merilyn McPhee



Queensland Society member Sharron Benett at the BGM

