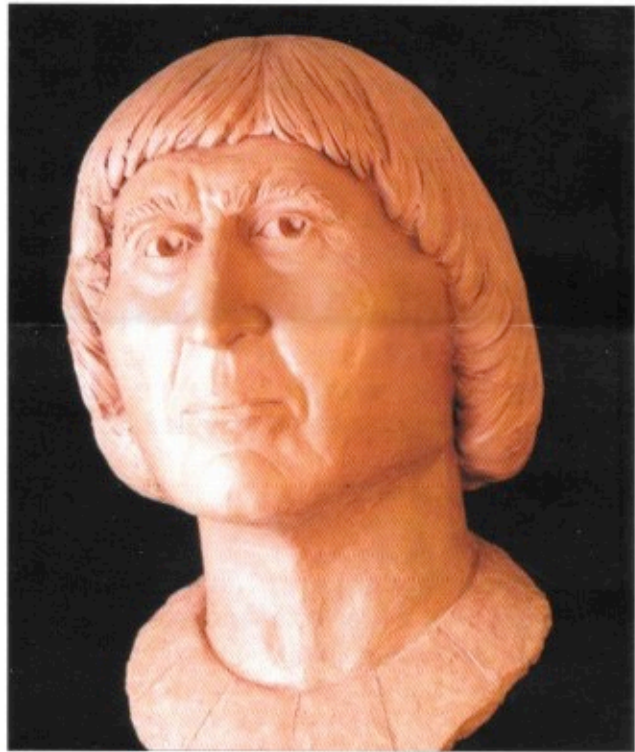




THE DOWNUNDER

Journal of the
Macfie Clan Society of Australia

Issue 136
July 2017



For the story see page 11

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

President's Message



In the last issue of *The Downunder*, I posed a question on page 10 about Jock McPhee who was mentioned in the book *Kings in Grass Castles*. It was pleasing to receive two written responses to that question, both from Victoria. Past President and Society historian Bernie McPhee sent in a wonderfully detailed article under the title "Finding Robert C Scarlett McPhee" which is reproduced on pages 7,8 and 9. John McPhee from Toolamba in Victoria also sent in a detailed response, which also raised a question about 'Whisky McPhee' who lived in the Whittlesea area of Victoria. I have reproduced his letter on page 5. Sometimes I wonder if anybody actually reads the journal, so it was heartening to hear from both Bernie and John - thank you both.

Since its inception 23 years ago, our Society has been a member of a NSW based organisation known as Scottish House. Run by interested volunteers, Scottish House assisted clan societies in various ways, particularly by keeping them informed of all related Scottish events. Through them, our Society was also able to take out liability insurance at a reasonable cost. In recent months, the organisation was advised it could no longer use its council premises to operate. On top of that, it could not find volunteers to carry out administrative duties to replace those no longer available. As a consequence Scottish House has now been wound up.

Scottish House used to own three tents which they used when attending Scottish Gatherings. One of the tents was offered free to any clan society member on a first come first served basis. I put my hand up early in the piece, and duly secured one for our Society. As Scottish Houses' last gathering was at Berry on the NSW south coast, I attended the gathering, and while there, collected a tent. It is now in the care of our Vice-President Morris McPhee, who was able to use it at the Aberdeen Highland Gathering on 1st July. Morris' report is on page 6.

Our Society is also a member of the NSW based Scottish Australian Heritage Council (SAHC). Thankfully they have agreed to take on responsibility for issuing public liability insurance to clan societies like ours. Hopefully they will also generally fill the gap left by Scottish House. On behalf of our Society, I will endeavour to give them as much support as possible.

Open Invitation to readers

As President and editor of *The Downunder*, I would like to encourage you to consider letting me know of the life experiences or achievements of your children or grandchildren (who may not necessarily be a Society member). They will not do this themselves and this is not something I can do. Nor should it be left to a few executive members to take up the challenge. It's up to you as a member.

It may be work related, it may be sport related or it may be community related, but whatever it is, I would like to see our Society embrace, encourage and recognise our young people. I firmly believe some of our younger members would love to read about some of their peers. All members are invited to submit photos or articles on any topic of interest for publication.

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Front cover: The image on the left is a Victorian era depiction of Robert the Bruce. On the right is a clay bust of Robert the Bruce commissioned by the Bruce family, based on evidence from a cast of the King's skull.

GENERAL NEWS

New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members:



W17-1097	Alexander Holds	Wonthella	WA
Q17-1098	John & Leny Gaffney	Bell	QLD
V83-527	Elizabeth Bates	Munro	VIC

It is heartening to note that Alexander & Elizabeth have joined the Society to continue the heritage connection so prized by their mothers (now deceased). For that reason also, Elizabeth requested her mother's membership number as her own.

So often a connection to our Society is lost merely because a clan surname is not carried by a daughter after marriage. It is a pity, because as far as our heritage is concerned, the female line is no different to that of the male one.

The subject of surnames from a different perspective is provided in the story about the Celtic race on page 12.

Donations

Many thanks to the following members for their generous donation made to the Society and the Clan. Those donations, received as at the end of July 2017, are greatly appreciated.

Gwen	Hubert	ACT
William & Rebecca	McVie	ACT
Robyn	Hancox	NSW
Marie	Tatam	NSW
Joyce M	Morris	NSW
Ian R	McPhee	NSW
Marelle	Lee	NSW
Gary J	McPhee	NSW
Ross	McPhee	NSW
Rosemary & Andrew	Szente	NSW
Beryl	McPhie	NSW
Russell	Mattocks	NSW
Lyndsay	Armstrong	NSW
Mairi	Peterson	NSW
Ashley S	McPhee	NSW
Karen A	Law	NSW
Greg	McPhee	NSW
Marion	McPhee	NSW
Ross & Joyce	McPhee	NSW

Barbara	Smythe	NSW
Mrs. Trish	McPhee	NSW
Barbara K.	McPhee	NSW
Michael & Mary	McPhee	NSW
Andrew	Pardoe	NSW
Andrew J.	McPhee	NSW
Stuart	McWilliam	NSW
Margaret	Barnes	NSW
Dr. Kerr	Chatfield	NSW
Margaret C	MacDougall	NSW
Bruce & Dorothy	Taylor	NSW
Glen	McPhee	NZ
Darlene	Jones	NZ
Erina	Wood	NZ
Jenny M	Hutchins	QLD
Robyn M	Young	QLD
Jean	Rushbrooke	QLD
Janet R	Mackay	QLD
Kenneth E	McGuffie	QLD
Kevin A	McPhee	QLD
Dorothy	Murphy	QLD
Roger S	McPhee	QLD
Sharron	Benett	QLD
Robert	Lansdowne	QLD
J Duncan	McPhee	QLD
Lorraine	McPhee	QLD
Keith A	McPhee	QLD
Neville J	McPhee	QLD
Lyndal	Wallace	QLD
Dale & Rachel	McPhie	QLD
Mary A	Goodall	QLD
Heather	Knowles	QLD
Dr Ewen	McPhee	QLD
Nigel	McPhee	SA
Ian L	McPhee	SA
Ann	Leask	SA
Bruce	McFee	Thailand
Gwen	Jarvis	VIC
Gary John	McPhee	VIC
David M	McPhee	VIC
Ian A	McPhee	VIC
John W	McPhee	VIC
Hadyn M	McPhee	VIC
Fr. Mathew	McPhee	VIC
Jan	Harper	VIC
Anthony	Gartland	VIC
Marie Joyce	Jackson-Nation	VIC
Dr Ian	McPhee	VIC
Julie	Peters	VIC
Simon	McPhee	VIC
Ian R	McPhee	VIC
Meg	Davis	VIC
Kim	McDuffie	VIC
Keith & Ann	McPhee	VIC
Trevor & Rhonda	McPhee	WA
Dr Kelly	Ross	WA

Letter from John McPhee

In response to the obituary for Nancy Helen Holds and the article on her father "John Cameron McPhee, Early Premier of Tasmania", in the last issue of *The Downunder*, the following letter was received from John McPhee of Toolamba, Victoria:

"When *The Downunder* arrived, I was reading the novel, by Mrs Aeneas Gunn "We of the Never-Never" so the question about Jock McPhie made me look up Google, I found several items about Jock McPhee, Tam O'Shanter, two are enclosed, in the book he is just called Tam.

The vale of Nancy Holds, made me think how my father always told me about his cousin Sir John. I was born in the house next to his store where Sir John was born. My grandfather bought the Yan Yean Store from his Uncle Donald, after my grandfather's death. My Grandfather ran the store for the next 30 years. The Yan Yean Store was in the McPhee family for 80 years. I was the Captain of the Fire Brigade when the store burnt down in 1964.

Another McPhee that I cannot find anything about is in a story in a book "Early Settlers of Arthurs Creek", a copy is enclosed."

Who is "Whisky" McPhee?

The above letter from John McPhee at Toolamba, refers to the following story of "Whisky" McPhee as printed in "Early Settlers of Arthurs Creek":

"An old identity known as "Whisky" McPhee had an illicit still on a creek beyond Strathewen. He was taking a keg to Whittlesea one night and reached a very bad part of the road on Deep Creek, about a quarter of a mile above Morrisons Bridge at the crossroads. The creek ran very near the road and it was a difficult stretch to negotiate. The cart overturned, rolled into the creek with the horse, and McPhee was killed. Someone coming home from Whittlesea found him and called several of the locals. It was decided that Mr. Brennan ride to Whittlesea for the police while the rest kept watch. The night was very cold and the keg was finally irresistible. When the police arrived the watchers were all singing heartily around the barrel, so McPhee departed this life with a good wake."

A McPhee In the News

There has been considerable controversy recently about the leadership of CPA Australia, the accounting body in Australia, with over 150,000 members. Founded in 1886, CPA Australia is one of the world's largest accounting bodies. A prominent McPhee is investigating the organisation. The following is part of an article printed in the *Australian Financial Review* on 21st July:

"I know there is a level of frustration. None of us like the circumstances," said panel head and former Commonwealth Auditor-General Ian McPhee.

He told the *Australian Financial Review* the focus for the preliminary report, due by mid-September, would be on issues "critical" to members' daily working lives, such as the impending loss of the legal shield from multimillion-dollar lawsuits.

Mr. McPhee would not directly comment on an on-going push by 16 past CPA leaders to replace the remaining board but emphasised it was important for the CPA to have continuity of leadership.

Members have criticised the slow pace of the panel, which has met twice in the more than two weeks since its terms of reference were released ... "As you'll appreciate there is fair bit to be done, the panel is not a full time panel.".... McPhee said.

2017 Clan Gathering Update & News of the Commander

I received the following email on 15th June from Lorraine and Finlay McFee in Scotland. Due to Clan Commander Iain's ill health, they are organising the 4 yearly Gathering to be held in September this year.

"Registrations are now picking up and we have about 40 fixed so far and I know of about another 10 who have not yet submitted forms. We are planning to go over to Stirling soon to finalise the arrangements and will then be able to notify attendees of costs for Registration, Commander's Reception and the Clan Dinner for those not staying at the hotel.

The Agenda is also currently being put together. We have to get to see Iain to discuss lots of "stuff". Iain is currently in a nursing home in Newtonmore but we have heard he is possibly moving back to the one in Kingussie. It is difficult to communicate with him by email as he has difficulty using technology at the moment. He is still determined to be in Stirling.

We'll be in touch when we have further details. Look forward to seeing you in September."

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we report the passing of the following:

In 2015, Society member Gwen Jarvis (nee McPhee), member no. V83-527 aged 84.

On 22nd June, former Society member Margaret Dawes aged 96. Margaret is the mother of Sydney members Rosemary and Andrew Szente.

In May, Margaret E McPhee (V77-360) of Claremont WA.

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Out & About

Received the following email last month from Brian and Cass McHaffie who have been on an overseas holiday:

"We were watching the train journeys programme and this particular segment visited Sweden. When the series visited Gothenburg it appears that a strong ship building business was started there by a Scot who imported many Scots to work for him. They showed a square rigged sailing ship in the harbour and Scottish dancing was performed and I am sure one of the elderly dancers had a McPhee kilt. I have for years wondered where the connection with Sweden was and this explained the Hagman McPhees."

On the Mend

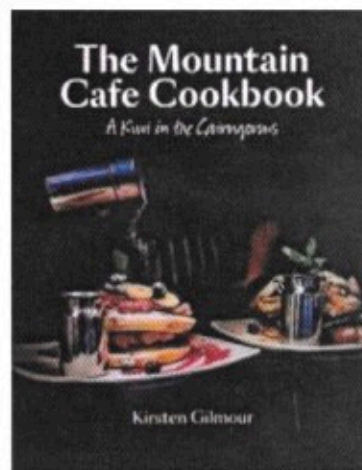
After becoming ill, society member Heather Knowles was taken to St Andrew's Hospital Emergency in central Brisbane on 16th June. Her daughter Bev Knowles and husband Roger were able to return Heather to her home at Albany Creek on Sunday, 24 June. Bev reports her mother "is not quite as vigorous as her old self but, at 94, is still sharp of mind and determined to cook extra veges to supplement the village meals! At last she is wearing her emergency button on a lanyard, something I've never previously been able to convince her to do, and is using a walker to get about." Heather receives lots of care and attention from Bev and Roger who live in Victoria and from her son Donald and his wife Carol who live in Yeppoon.

A Kiwi in the Cairngorms

A Kiwi, Kirsten Gilmour from Temuka, has been running the Mountain Cafe in Aviemore since 2004. Aviemore is a mere 13 km up the road from the Clan Commander Iain McFie's house. Kirsten's skills and abilities are well known in Scotland as the cafe has won "The Scottish Baking Awards 2014" for *Best Cafe in Scotland* and "Highlands and Islands Tourism Awards 2015" for *Best Informal Eating Experience*.

Kirsten has just released her cookbook, *The Mountain Cafe Cookbook: A Kiwi in the Cairngorms*, with over 130 tasty recipes straight from the kitchen.

Well known Kiwi chef Peter Gordon writes: "Kirsten has been serving her Kiwi-inspired food for many years, and here she shares her secrets for those delicious breakfasts, meals, cakes and drinks. As a fellow New Zealander, I'm proud of her achievements." (Sourced from: <http://www.stuff.co.nz> and <http://www.strathspey-herald.co.uk>)



Heidelberg District Pipes and Drums from Germany performing on Burns' Night. Band members are wearing the beautiful muted form of the Macfie Clan tartan.

Highland Gathering, Aberdeen NSW

Saturday 1st July 2017

Report from Vice President Morris McPhee

I attended the Highland Gathering with my wife Robyn, daughter Joanne, and our spoodle Wyllie. We set up the Clan's newly acquired gazebo on Friday afternoon and returned to the oval at 08:00 and set up the Clan Name Banner, the pull up banners and the Clan Gonfalon on stand, set up our table in the gazebo and set out Clan information. The temperature was 0 degrees at this time and frost remained on the ground, hat and gloves were de rigeur.

At 09:00 I marched with Clan Gonfalon behind the Pipe Major and in front of the Scone Pipe Band, which wears the MacFie Clan tartan, and leads the massed bands entry onto the oval. About 20 other clan banner bearers marched in with the bands and assembled at the rear of the bands. We all marched through the massed bands and lined up in front of the official stand. Following introductions, the singing of the National Anthem and O Flower of Scotland, the Chieftain of the day, the Pipe Major and the President of the Gathering Committee inspected the clan banner bearers and the bands. The Chieftain addressed the group and visitors, and officially opened the gathering. Banner bearers and bands then dispersed. The sun had come out, there was a cloudless sky and no wind; a perfect highland day which reached 14 degrees.

We were kept busy most of the day, helping people interested in all things Scottish, assisting those who thought they had links to clans and others just interested in what the gathering was all about. It was evident that for many of the enquirers it was their first visit to a Highland Gathering. The Australian Defence Force Academy Precision Drill Team's display of marching and weapon handling added interest and noise too, when rifles were fired in unison. A stilted lady wandering through crowds created many photo ops, the tug of war and pet competition also added to a great family day out. Most importantly, we met several McPhees, some who were not yet Clan Society members, and handed out four membership application forms which we trust will be completed and returned soon. The caber tossing, pitching of the hay sheaths and lifting of the stones drew big crowds around the arena, being 5 or 6 deep. We kept the stall 'manned' at all times.

When able to leave the gazebo, we enjoyed visiting other clan stands, listening to the band competitions and watching the dancing, the caber tossing, the lifting of the stones, and other competitions. We lunched on take away Haggis with tatties and neaps, washed down with an IRN BRU. There was a variety of hot take away foods and coffee vans available.

Sheep stealing among the clans was re-enacted among the clan groups, whereby a small handmade sheep was given to each clan for display. Clansmen were encouraged to "steal" these from each other. The winner was the clan with the most sheep at end of day. The McPhees were most upset when a Macrae laddie grabbed ours from Robyn's hand and ran off with it. They displayed their ill-gotten gains in a glass topped, locked box for all to see. We didn't hear who won, but I'm guessing it was the Macraes. 2018 plans to avenge our loss are underway.

Everyone we spoke to agreed it was a very successful day. The finale was at 4 pm with the very stirring massed bands parade, the awarding of prizes and the official closing of the gathering and invitation to return next year.

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A thrifty Scot

A Scottish woman went to the local newspaper office to publish the obituary for her recently deceased husband.

The obituary editor informed her that there was a charge of 50 cents per word.

She paused, reflected, and then said, "Well then, let it read, "Angus MacPherson died."

Amused at the woman's thrift, the editor told her there was also a seven word minimum for all obituaries.

She thought it over and in a few seconds said, "In that case, let it read,

"Angus MacPherson died. Golf clubs for sale."

Kings in Grass Castles Question Answered

Kings in Grass Castles is a 1959 book written by Mary Durack (1913-1994). It is the story of Durack's pioneering family establishing its pastoral interests in the Australian outback during the 1800s. It concerns Irish immigrant Patrick Durack, an overlander who brought cattle on hoof to the tropical north. The book was notable for its portrayal of the role of women and families in the pastoral industry and collaboration and respect between the pastoralists and local Aborigines.

In the last issue of *The Downunder* I posed the question: Is any member of the Society related to or has any information about the Jock McPhee who was mentioned in Kings in Grass Castles?

The following informative article is from Past President and Society Historian Bernie McPhee, who has responded to my question. But Is Robert C Scarlett McPhee, Jock McPhee?

Finding Robert C Scarlett McPhee

"No history of the goldfields would be complete without reference to McPhee": A D Edwards, 1896

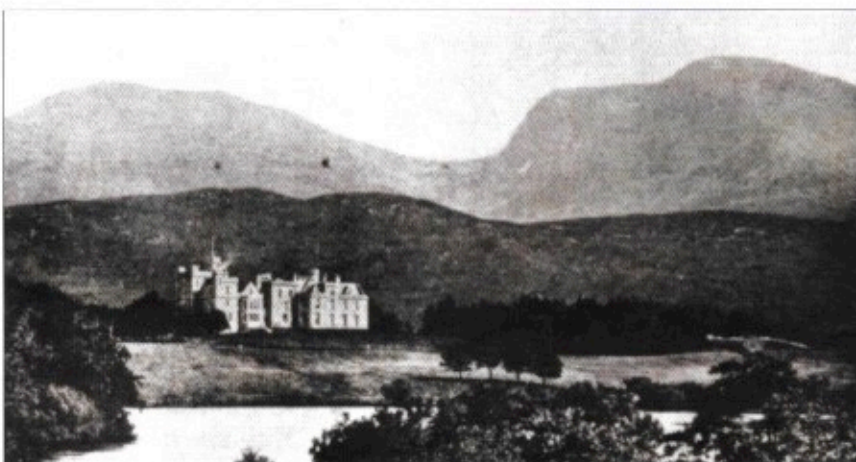
Bernie McPhee shares the story of this beloved historical figure.

All I knew about Robert McPhee by 1976 was that he was my grandfather's brother. I had followed the advice of Margaret Phee of the Macfie Clan Society to look up the Shipping Records, which in those days were maintained in great big hand-written ledgers in the Public Records Office located in Spring Street, Melbourne.

Little Robert McPhee was twelve years old when, in 1853, he stepped off the "Childe Harold" at Geelong. John, his older brother and my future grandfather was already twenty years old. They had come to Australia with their father John McPhee (1796 to 1867) from Inverness, Scotland.

It was not until 1985 that I had the chance to visit the Register House in Edinburgh. And here I found Robert McPhee's name, and the names of his siblings Margaret, John, Isabella, Archibald, Alexander and Anne in the Old Parish Records. Also the record of the wedding of his parents John McPhee and Charlotte MacArthur in 1826. But there was an unusual layout and character of the entry for Robert McPhee I was looking at the original handwriting which recorded Robert's birth, which read: "Robert C. Scarlett McPhee". This was a new element surely, this 'Scarlett'.

So, two weeks later I was in Spean Bridge, near Killiechonate where our folks came from, on a Sunday morning. After Mass celebrated by Monsignor Hendry, the local Pastor, I said to a small group of people standing around afterwards: "Does the name 'Scarlett' mean anything around here?" "Yes, yes, and yes certainly", they said, almost with one voice.



Inverloch Estate Castle of Lord Abinger

I must point out here that the Inverloch Estate, where we stood on that Sunday morning had previously been the domain from 1420 onwards of the MacDonells of Kepoch who had married the daughter of McPhee of Glen Spean, until in 1500 AD the King sent the Marquis of Huntly, the Gordons, to take over that Estate. That is, until 1836, until the whole Estate was sold to the Lord Abinger, family name Scarlett.

Continued overleaf

The first Lord Abinger, an English judge and eminent and wealthy jurist and Parliamentarian, had called first son called: "Robert Campbell Scarlett", after whom I think I can presume that "Robert C Scarlett McPhee" was named. I can't give any reason for this.

Anyway, from now on, I knew I was looking for the very distinct footprint of: 'Robert C Scarlett McPhee'. After I came back to Australia, several people helped me greatly in this search: Norah McPhee of Mt Vincent sent me information about the marriage of Robert C Scarlett McPhee to Mary Jane Riley of a well known Rockhampton Qld. family, and the sad history of the death of both Mary Jane and their child within two years of marriage.

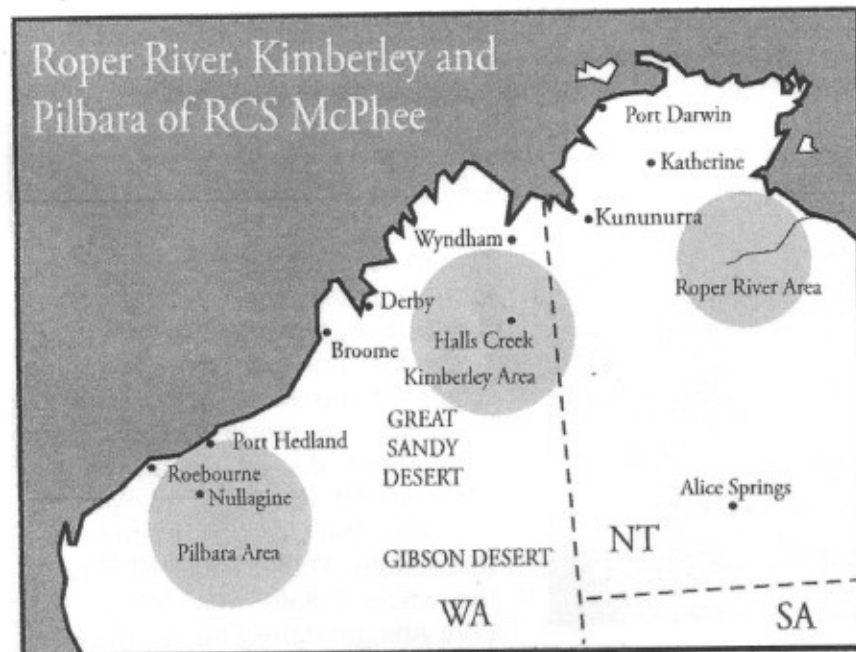
Bob Stewart, a cousin from Levin, New Zealand, sent me a copy of the death certificate of RCS McPhee, who had died at Nullagine, WA in 1892. Bob Stewart also told me that he had seen a portrait of RCS McPhee, the explorer, in the foyer of a public building in Canberra.

To this time, I had seen no other picture of Robert C S McPhee, so this became a lost lead. Professor Frost of South Australia posted to me many details of the life and journeys, the pioneering work and business work and interests of Robert in the north of Australia, starting with his being part of a pioneering drive across the top of Australia taking hundreds of horses from the Rockhampton area across the Roper River to the Kimberley.

I had some good luck before 1982, the year in which I edited a collection of family stories and records, with multiple contributors. Many old family photos came to the surface while I was working on this project. Mary McPhee Kelly, my first cousin, allowed me to take photographs, in the natural light of her back verandah at Woomelang in the Victorian Mallee. With barely concealed excitement I copied the photos of Robert C Scarlett McPhee and his wife Mary Jane Riley, both clearly identified, with "RCS McPhee" written on the back, and "Robert's wife" on the back of the other.

In 1990 I decided to follow some of Robert's more accessible footsteps in the north of Australia, starting in the Kimberley where my brother Pat had already been working for many years with an Aboriginal community.

Then to Port Hedland, where the local library was a fertile resource with material about Robert C Scarlett McPhee. For instance, Burdett, in his book: "The Odyssey of a Digger", on Page 130, says of RCS McPhee:



Mary Jane Riley McPhee, wife of RCS McPhee

"With Mr Price was a patriarchal looking old chap. This man was MacPhee, one of the original twenty four who had journeyed all the way across Australia from East to West".

And on Page 132, Burdett says:

"The courage of these twenty four pioneers was tremendous, and now, one of the friendliest and wisest of them was right in front of me. Poor old Mac, now weak and frail he was as I helped him out of the boat".

Another author, De Haviland, whom I consulted in the Port Hedland Library, in his book, "Gold and Ghosts" says of RCS McPhee:

"MacPhee, the discoverer of the gold bearing creek named after him, left the area for Nullagine, still chasing the rainbow's end. Before he died, he and his two blacks Thursday and Friday, found two rich patches of gold. One gave up three thousand ounces within a few days, the other slightly more. All the gold was on the surface."

And Burdett also says on Page 213 of his book:

"Dear old McPhee, possible the greatest of them all, died in the Nullagine district".

So I visited this district, following devoutly and perhaps sentimentally, the one hundred year old foot-steps of my great uncle, out to the twenty three mile post from Nullagine where RCS McPhee died.

My father Hector Alexander McPhee was four years old when his uncle died. Robert's obituary is found in the *North West Times and Northern Advocate* 23 March 1892. I could find no marker, no gravestone, no cairn although I understood his fellows had erected some memorial in this loneliest place on earth.



WA member Father Anscar (Pat) McPhee OSB at the Kimberley Creek named after his grand uncle.



Killiechonate House near Spean Bridge in Scotland, which is located on the property where Robert C Scarlett McPhee was born.

Notes:

Cathie Clement, a professional historian, published an article about Robert C Scarlett MacPhee in the BOAB Bulletin: the article contains wonderful references for anyone wishing to follow up Robert's life.

'McPhee' and 'MacPhee' are interchangeable. Cathie Clement believes that the McPhee spoken of in the book 'Kings in Grass Castles' is in fact RCS McPhee who: "apparently piloted the Durack cattle drive over a difficult pinch across the difficult Victoria-Ord River divide".

There is a full report of RCS McPhee's government sponsored August 1888 expedition inland from Roebourne on the WA coast, published in instalments in the Western Mail of that same year 1888.

Clan Macfie News No 78

from Clan Commander (Ceann Cath) Iain McFie

Clan News Editor

Clan News is edited by Linda McFee Gilcrest, shown in the photo wearing the beanie. The images, captions and layout are done by her husband Jim Gilcrest. Linda's sister Vicki McFee shown on Linda's right in the photo, organises the mail out.

Linda and Jim live in the small oceanside county of Santa Cruz, California. They are on the coast about 50 miles south of San Francisco, and 20 miles inland is the famous high-tech centre known as Silicon Valley. Santa Cruz is considered a "bedroom community" for Silicon Valley. Vicki McFee lives in the well-known city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, which is in the northern part of the U.S. midwest



News of the Commander and 2017 Gathering

from Linda McFee Gilcrest:

"I had a wonderful conversation with Commander Iain last weekend. He sounded great, like his old healthy self. They had recently moved him from the rehabilitation facilities at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow to the rehab unit at Kingussie Hospital, which is very close to his home and is a short drive away.

He was somewhat disappointed in his progress because he felt he had been making great progress in his rehab until he spilled scalding tea on his leg a few weeks ago. The burn was so bad that he wasn't able to participate in his normal rehab routine for some time. However, he feels his left leg is now reacting normally, and his left arm is also greatly improved, although his right leg and arm are still proving quite stubborn, though they, too, have greatly improved over time.

His brother Bobby tells me he is bright and cheerful, as usual, and seems quite happy where he is. His middle son, Ronnie and wife Sheila with their boys, live nearby and had just visited him when I talked to him and he was very happy about that. He tells me the food is excellent. They have a chef and four assistants who prepare excellent meals for twenty patients...so that is a plus. He continues to be very thankful for all the cards, calls and Facebook good wishes he is receiving from Clan members everywhere.

Iain is very enthusiastic about the upcoming Gathering and Parliament in September and asked me to encourage everyone to try and attend. It has been his goal for the past year to be there! The Parliament will be in a beautiful area with Stirling Castle a short walk away, and the William Wallace (Braveheart) statue in sight from the campus grounds. We also have much to talk about at the Gathering since there are some exciting prospects afoot for the Clan that should garner active discussion.

Lorraine and Finlay McFee are coordinating the Gathering and Parliament activities and reservations. It would be very helpful for them to have an idea of how many Clan members will be attending. Will you please reply back to me or Lorraine and let us know if you are planning on coming. Even if you're not certain, we'd like to know that, too, so please let us know. We'd also like to know if you're considering on continuing on to Colonsay after the Parliament with many other Clan members. Even better, you can send a note to Lorraine at:

http://www.clanmacfie.co.uk/clanhome/gathering_2017.php.

Additionally, there is a preliminary Registration Form included in this Clan News."

20th International Gathering & 12th Parliament of Clan Macfie

September 6th through September 9th, 2017

Preliminary Programme

Wednesday 6th September:	Arrival of delegates. Commander's Reception
Thursday 7th September:	Opening of 12th Parliament; Clan Session, half day outing (probably to the smallest whisky distillery in Scotland) or time on your own.
Friday 8th September:	Day tour or your own plans. Clan Dinner.
Saturday 9th September:	Clan Society Session. Half day tour on your own.
Sunday 10th September:	Depart for Colonsay, returning Wednesday 13th
Wednesday 13th Sept.:	Depart Colonsay

For details of the Clan Macfie Parliament and Clan Society Gathering 6-10 Sept 2017, please consult the Clan Macfie website http://www.clanmacfie.co.uk/clanhome/gathering_2017.php Any questions or suggestions can be emailed to gathering2017@clanmacfie.co.uk

Robert the Bruce No Leper

A Western University bio-archaeologist and a Western-trained forensic sculptor have laid to rest a pernicious 700-year-old rumour: Scottish warrior-king Robert the Bruce did not have leprosy. The suggestion their national hero may have had the disfiguring, contagious disease has long been a burr in Scotland's thistle. Leprosy in more recent years has lost much of its stigma and is curable with medications. But it was a different story in the 1300s: "In those days, if you wanted to come up with the worst thing you could say to someone, it was, 'you leper,'" Western anthropology Prof. Andrew Nelson says. "With just that word, you could besmirch a person and his legacy."

But in the first examination authorized by the Bruce family descendants, Nelson has determined King Robert I did not show the telltale suite of signs of the disease. Nelson examined a plaster cast of a skull the family had lent to sculptor Christian Corbet, as the Bruce family for the first time commissioned a bust of the hero king. Corbet needed to know whether previous depictions of King Robert that showed him disfigured by leprosy were based on forensic evidence or were based merely on centuries-old rivals' rumours. Legendary Robert the Bruce, who fought for a Scotland independent of England, died in 1329 after 23 years as king. His remains were accidentally exhumed in 1818 and, before the king's remains were re-interred forever in thick tar, officials made a plaster cast of his skull.

Nelson notes that the bone around the nose area, the anterior nasal spine, is teardrop-shaped as it would be in a healthy person. In someone with leprosy, that bone would have eroded to a more circular shape. He also examined images of a metatarsal bone, which should have been pencil-shaped at one end if Robert the Bruce suffered from leprosy. It was normal. Some analysts have speculated that four missing front teeth as shown in the cast would suggest a deformation that was common in leprosy. But contemporary reports say the exhumed skull, even 490 years after his death, was whole and as healthy-looking as anyone's. Nelson believes the plaster-casting process broke teeth already decayed by periodontal disease. "That 'leprosy' diagnosis was made on the basis of something that wasn't there during his life," Nelson says.

The analysis has enabled Corbet to shape a bust that shows King Robert as a fierce and battle-scarred warrior, one without the skin lesions common in leprosy. That bust, on a plinth made of an oak believed to have been planted by Robert the Bruce himself, will be unveiled at the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum in Central Scotland on March 23 — near where the small forces of Robert the Bruce routed the larger and better-equipped English army at Bannockburn in 1314. (In historical legend, even if not in the Hollywood movie version that celebrated freedom-fighter William Wallace, the term "Braveheart" was a battle cry uttered in later years to evoke the memory of Robert the Bruce.) (Western Researcher 16/2/2017)

GENEALOGY

The Celtic Race and David Livingstone

from President Ian McPhee

Over the past month I have been reading a book first published in 1887 called *Scotland As It Was and As It Is*, written by George Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll (1823-1900). In addition to extensive estates on mainland Scotland, the Duke of Argyll managed extensive properties on the Islands of Mull and Tiree. My interest is centred on his estate on the Ross of Mull.

The book is particularly interesting on several counts. Firstly, it covered the period known as the Highland Clearances, when thousands of families like my own were evicted from their croft and forced to emigrate. Secondly, it was written by a proprietor responsible for evicting many families from his estates, mine being one of them. Thirdly, it is written by an aristocrat who describes traditional Highland life from his standpoint and who had a less than romantic view of the clan system than some other writers.

The following extract from the Duke of Argyll's book concerns the practice of Highlanders adopting a new name. It was not unusual in times past, for clansmen to adopt the clan name of superiors whose protection they lived under. As the Duke writes:



George Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll

"There is, however one fruitful branch of the national life of Scotland to which I cannot now direct any adequate attention, but to which I must shortly refer in closing. This fruitful branch is that which consists in the life and labours of men of the Celtic race, who have moved out from their native hills and glens, and have given the benefit of high culture, or of a rich and imaginative character, to their country and to the world. Two examples of this kind are impressed upon my memory

"A curious habit of the Highland people serves to conceal sometimes the part they have played in the highest walks of human enterprise. This is the habit of changing their name - dropping one and assuming another. During the military ages they did so perpetually, as we have seen, when they enlisted under some new chief, and joined some other clan. In assuming the name of their associates they kept up that theory and flavour of blood-relationship which in nine cases out of ten had no other foundation whatever.

Sir Walter Scott tells us that one of his friends, shooting in the north, had a native guide assigned to him under the name Gordon. But he recognised the man as having served him in a similar capacity some years before in another place under the name of MacPherson. On asking the man whether he was not the same, and whether his name had not then been MacPherson, the composed reply was, 'Yes, but that was when I lived on the other side of the hill.'

It is less well known, however, that this habit has always been very general when Highlanders leave the hills and settle in the Low Country. The native Celtic name is dropped, and some Lowland form is adopted which is supposed to be a translation or equivalent. It was thus that during the scarcities and distress which afflicted the Hebrides during the last years of the last century - about 1792 - a family of the name of MacLeay migrated from the Islet of Ulva, one of the broken fragments of the volcanic Island of Mull, and settled at Blantyre, near Glasgow. The name they took was Livingstone, and their illustrious grandchild was the great African Traveller and Missionary.

The purity of the true old Celtic race cannot be safely determined by name or language. Long centuries of foreign dominion, and of intercourse and inter-marriage, leave it very doubtful where we can find, even in the Hebrides, anything like an unmixed descent. But having had the honour of a somewhat intimate friendship with David Livingstone, I always regarded him as an example of the purest Celtic type. Rather

below the medium stature, broad, sturdy, and with an evident capacity for great endurance, the special feature which attracted notice was very dark hazel eye - an eye so dark as almost to suggest a Southern or an Eastern origin. Great self-possession and dignity of manner were blended with a curious mixture of gentleness and determination. Nothing in nature escaped his observation; and shortly before his death I alluding to a peculiarity of growth un a tree at Inveraray which I had not before noticed, but which he must have noticed in silence when we were together. He was another instance of a man like General Gordon, with a special gift and a special inspiration, which in all human probability would never have been developed if he had been born in the life passed by the old Sub-tenants un Ulva. Burning a little Kelp, digging a few Potatoes, or even herding Cattle in the summer Shealings which looked down on

*"all the group of Islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round" **

In a life which it is difficult to rank at its proper level as compared with that which he actually led - a life in which he became to millions of the human race the first Pioneer of Civilisation, and the first Harbinger of the Gospel.

The blood and the race which in our own day have produced two such men - one from the class of Chiefs, and another from the class of ordinary Clansmen, - must have the very best stuff of human nature in it. But that blood and race is not confined to those who still retain the Gaelic speech. The larger and more cultivated part of it is spread over the wide Dominions of the British Crown. It is one of the many sources of our Imperial strength and wealth. The Low country of Scotland is full of it. The Colonies are full of it. The Indian Services have always been full of it. The Army and the Navy have had abundant reason to be proud of it. It was trusted by The Bruce in the thickest of the Fights he fought. But its whole pride, and aim, and object must continue to those which that great King promoted - the object of living and working in harmony with the other elements which have built up the Scottish Nation, and in obedience to those Natural and Moral Laws which are the only solid foundation of all Human Institutions.

The progress that Scotland made after union with England, was a progress without a parallel in any of the older nations of the world. Yet that progress was not due to anything she derived from England in the way of Laws and Institutions. These were her own. She kept them at the Union, and guarded them, with a noble, because a grateful, care. We were jealous about them, not from any narrow or provincial feeling, - but because our fathers had told us of the noble works done in their days, and in the old times before them.

The one great benefit Scotland did owe to the last and happiest of her many unions, was nothing more than access to larger fields of exercise - to wider openings of opportunity. She rose to the immense prospects of this new horizon because of the mind and character which had been developed under the long discipline, and through the fiery trials of her own stormy history.

The wonderful start she made in the race of intellectual and industrial Life, was due to that history - to the older unions effected during it - to the doctrines it had embodied - to the great principles of Jurisprudence which had worked under the sanctions, and with the authority, of Law. Scotland therefore, at the Union, did not break it, and cherished it, as the richest contribution she could make to the growth of One Great Empire, and to the Polity of One United Kingdom. Let her keep it still - and always in the same spirit, and with the same great end in view." (ref: pages 479-483 from *Scotland as it Was and As it Is* by the Duke of Argyll)

Editor's Notes

* Is a quote from The Lord of the Isles, Fourth Canto, x. It refers to all the islands around the Hebridean Island of Staffa, which is located close to the Isle of Mull.

Shealings: are crude huts built to watch Highland cattle while grazing summer pasture.

Kelp: Seaweed, also known as kelp, was gathered and also cut from the shoreline at low tide. It was then dried and burnt in crude seaside kilns to produce a product also known as kelp. It was then shipped to a major town like Glasgow where it was used in the manufacture of glass and other products.

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Scotland News

Restoration of Lews Castle

Historic Lews Castle built by a Scots opium baron has made it through to the final of the Great British Buildings Restoration. Lews Castle on the Isle of Lewis beat off stiff competition to be named a joint winner of the Victorian category in the competition. The castle was built in the years 1847-57 as a country house for Sir James Matheson, who had bought the whole island a few years previously with his fortune from the Chinese opium trade. In 1918, the Lewis Estate, including the castle was bought by industrialist Lord Leverhulme from the Matheson family. He gifted the castle, to the people of Stornoway parish in 1923. During WW II the castle was taken over as accommodation for air and ground crew of British forces. After the war, the castle was also used for accommodation for students of Lews Castle College, which is located in the grounds. The restored castle had suffered for decades with the harsh Hebridean weather but now stands proud again.

The castle had fallen into disrepair and sat empty for decades until its re-birth as an innovative heritage and hospitality destination. The £19.5 million regeneration project was led by Western Isles Council with financial support coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Government, European Regional Development Fund and Bord na Gaidhlig. (The Scotsman, 31/3/2017)

Reintroduction of Beavers

With the Scottish Government due to decide on whether Eurasian beavers will be allowed to live freely in Scotland after an absence of some 500 years, Trees for Life is urging ministers to fully recognise the beaver as a resident, native species. It is nine months since Scottish Natural Heritage reported on the Scottish Beaver Trial – a five-year trial reintroduction of beavers in Argyll's Knapdale Forest. "Allowing this native species to return would offer Scotland huge benefits. Beavers are superb ecosystem engineers and could transform and greatly improve the health of our rivers and forest ecosystems, help restore our depleted wetlands and reduce flooding – while substantially boosting wildlife tourism," said Alan Watson Featherstone, Trees for Life's founder. We also have an ethical responsibility to allow the beaver to return at last, having caused its extinction in Scotland. Scotland has more than 250 wild beavers estimated to be in the River Tay catchment, following breeding by beavers that escaped their captivity. (Trees for Life newsletter May 2017)

Bardic Family to Elect a Commander

In August 2017, members of the Currie/Curry/Currey family anciently MacMhuirich, ("MacVurich") once influential poets and historians to the MacDonald Lords of the Isles and other prominent families and clans, will gather in Scotland to take part in two special events. They will hold a Family Convention to select their first Commander and later join, at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, with other honoured families and clans to celebrate the Scottish Diaspora as part of the Tattoo's "Splash of Tartan" celebration.

In a process regulated by Dr. Joseph Morrow, WC, Lord Lyon King of Arms, family members will meet at The Trades Hall of Glasgow on 15 August 2017 for a Family Convention to select a Commander who would act as Head of Family in the anticipation of a later selection of a Chief of the name and Arms of Currie. As part of the procedure to find that person, the family has conducted an international search for Representatives.

The Court of the Lord Lyon, which has jurisdiction in such matters, said there are a number of reasons why a family might hold a Family Convention. Most appropriately for the Curries, it's "Where neither blood link to a past chief nor Representer of a cadet line can be identified but it is wished to propose a particular person of the surname as Commander." The proceedings in Glasgow will be overseen by Liam Devlin, Unicorn Pursuivant, as the appointed Presiding Officer.

Will this family, descended from the 13th century Irish bard, Muireadhach O' Dalaigh (O'Daly), ever be considered a clan? Well known genealogist, heraldist and historian Dr. Bruce Durie said, "Historically there never was a Clan Currie or Clan MacMhuirich, with territories and a quasi-military structure. The term 'family' is probably inappropriate for Currie, as it indicates the Lowlands. The MacMhuirichs, however, were proud Highlanders, and hereditary bards to a number of clans. They were truly a 'learned kindred', which may be the best designation for Currie." (Scottish Banner vol 40 May 2017)

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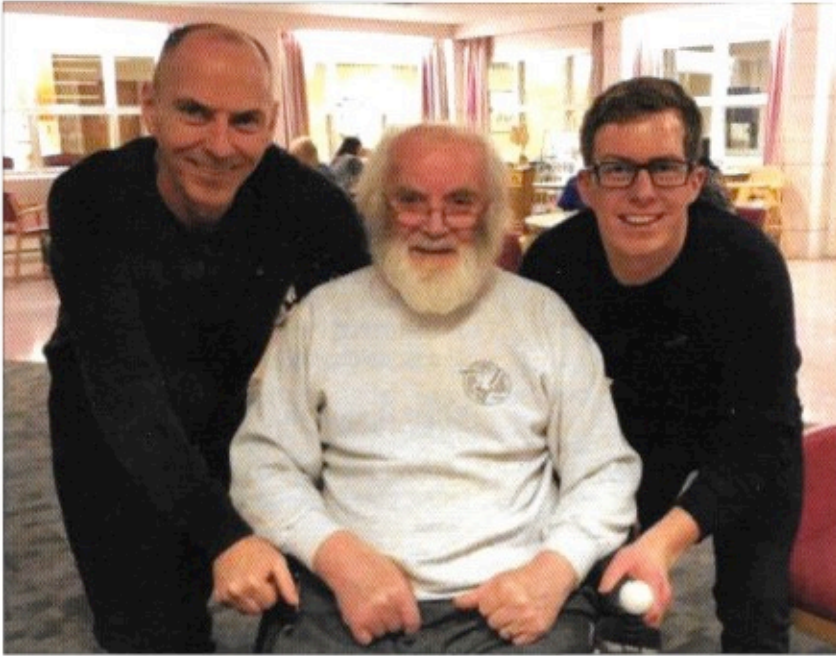
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EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

September 10	Armadale Highland Gathering & Kilt Run, WA
September 16	Clans on the Coast, Nelsons Bay, NSW
October 2	Adelaide Pipers Gathering, SA
October 7	Canberra Highland Gathering & Scottish Fair ACT
October 15	Illawarra Scottish Fair, Kanahooka, NSW
November 5	Central Coast Spectacular, Gosford, NSW
December 2	Daylesford Highland Gathering, VIC

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.



Clan Commander Iain McFie in the wheelchair at his rehabilitation facility. He is pictured with Donald McPhee from Germany on his left, and right, his son Christopher.



Below, four generations. From left James Goodwin, his mother Society historian Bev Knowles holding 1 year old Imogen, with great-grandmother 94 year old QLD member Heather Knowles.



A happy little McPhee! Sydney residents Ashley and Jane McPhee's 8 month old son James, who is also the President's grandson.



The recently acquired clan tent and the Society's banners at the Aberdeen Highland Gathering. The tent was manned by Morris McPhee, his wife Robyn and daughter Joanne. See story page 6

