

Peter McPhee AM

PRESIDENTS REPORT Clan Macfie Society of Australia May 27 2023

I present this report on the activities of the Clan Society in Australia.

This is the second time in my life I have had the title of National President, a unique honour granted to few.

We usually have a meeting every two years where members from around the nation can gather for Clan business, Scottish fellowship and general fun. The retched appearance of the Covid Virus has totally disrupted our meeting schedule, as well as many others. This virus also meant that a number of Highland Games were cancelled, deferred, or suspended or all of these.

The publication of our Magazine “**Downunder**” is the main link with our members and the content has been general rather than specific to a family whilst still having a focus on Macfie matters and people.

The resignation of our Ceann Cath was the subject of doubt and consternation for the last twelve months. “Did he resign, Or Not?” Recently his resignation has been located removing this doubt.

We now must find a worthwhile replacement. There are several people who claim a direct decendency from our last heredity Chief Malcolm. Others doubt the efficacy of these claims. Regardless we need to replace him.

A number of Pretenders (to coin a word from the past) to the role have emerged. There are also several members with the best of intentions offering various methods of selection of a Commander.

The Presidents of the Clan Societies around the world have formed a “Council of Presidents” to regulate and legitimise the process in accordance with Scottish law and tradition.

I set out the latest message from the Chairman this group:

Our objective was to not focus on researching a Chiefly line. The conclusion was that documents to support this effort are simply unavailable and that expenses incurred may not be well spent. Notwithstanding the potential for possible claimants and duration of their claim we collectively discussed engaging an outside expert to guide us through the proper process of

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identifying a Commander for the Clan given that we have new Guidelines promulgated in December 2021 and the Family Convention Requirements. The former Commander selection process is no longer acceptable to the Lord Lyon. You asked that I request a quote from Dr Durie and that we have an estimate for the expense of a Supervising Officer (SO) from the Court and any other required expenses. The estimate for the SO has already been shared and is estimated at 450-550£/day or part thereof dependent on negotiations with the individual SO assigned.

Dr Durie has suggested that we appoint a Bailie in hac parte (meaning in this behalf; on this side) which, it is recommended, would be his role. He would act as our agent creating a single point of contact with the Court and be responsible for reporting to a designated person on the Council. This, however, would not be binding in the event we decided to change tack except for the fee or part thereof.

PHASE 1) The Bailie would: 1.) Secure access to the files at the Lyon Office and pull together relevant documents including a copy of the Resignation Letter for our file, 2.) Be the point of contact with the Lyon Office to assure transparency and accurate communication, 3.) Get the Council to the point where the Lord Lyon could be petitioned for a Family Convention and then construct that Petition. This fee was quoted at £1000 GBP or about £143 GBP per Society which seems reasonable.

There was a suggestion (thank you Vanessa) to ask Dr Durie to be the Keynote Speaker at our Clan Dinner in September. He has been asked and has graciously accepted with no additional fee if we proceed with this contract for service. He would however have reasonable travel/lodging expenses and dinner. He proposed that the topic be about Dr Earle MacPhee's Treatise.

PHASE 2) Commander Process: The Bailie would then guide the clan through the necessary steps to advise regarding the required advertising, information needs, collecting responses of applicants and lead the Council through the necessary process for the Commander's selection. Dr Durie could attend the Family Convention and provide guidance for the Council/Clan at the Convention and coordinate directly with the SO. He would advise regarding the current commander applicants' status. This would be a second fee to be determined by

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trustees or others failing to lodge the appropriate documents with the Authorities. I feel this matter is strategic in the continued history of the Clan.

Membership. Our membership is declining mainly due to the aging population and the lack of opportunities to promote at Highland Games. I am not offay with social media but this should be one of our aims for promotion

Website One of our members has upgraded our website and I extend thanks to her. If you need a website contact Echo. Her details are in Downunder

Records The Clan Society has an enviable collection of records and books available for members.

Tartan Purchase; Prior to Covid we were arranging to purchase some Macfie tartan. With the formation of the Council of Presidents and forthcoming Parliament there is the opportunity to expand the purchase, and get a cheaper price for quantity, by inviting the other Clan Societies to participate in the purchase.

THANKS. I would like to thank all who supported me during my term as president, especially Morris and Robyn McPhee. The comments and letters I received in support of our collective efforts have been heart warming. I wish my successor and the Society all the best for the future and am available to assist whenever required

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President Macfie Clan Society of Australia