

*The Clan MacRae Society
of
Australia and New Zealand
Newsletter*



www.clanmacrae.org.au

Volume 36 - September 2021

Message from the Clan MacRae President



This is our last newsletter for the 2021 year, a year again controlled by COVID-19. As I start to put this newsletter together much of Sydney and western New South Wales is in lockdown so numerous members are obviously affected.

Again many Scottish events have been postponed or cancelled this year. Some events managed to go ahead with restricted numbers between border closures, state lockdowns and periods of ongoing quarantine. Hopefully, once we attain good vaccination percentages it will make things easier for everyone. Unfortunately, if the virus keeps

mutating, we may have to have booster jabs every year or so, just like the flu vaccine.

Thank you to those members who phoned in for the Clan's telephone conference in June. I phoned in for a short time but had difficulties with phone connection. I have been having problems for months, it being especially bad when it was wet. My phone would drop out after a few minutes talking and I would have to ring back. The longest call in dry weather was less than 30 minutes.

I had been told that 'the test' says it was all at my end! After being informed it would cost \$250 to the NBN the technician arrived. It took four hours to find a rusted out wire out on the street. The wiring layout supplied to the technician was nothing like the wiring done 40 years ago. I still say NBN – 'No bloody network.' I hope it operates for the next teleconference on Wednesday 20th October.

Lastly, I would like to wish one and all a very Merry Christmas and hope you and your family and relations have a pleasant, healthy and happy New Year. May COVID-19 be brought under some control, though I think it will affect us all for a long time.

Again during the last year several of our members have passed on. Its no fun getting old as many will realise.

Alan McRae. President



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to our new members since our last newsletter:

Lorraine Joy Brothers

Julie MacRae

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IN LOVING MEMORY

We are saddened to hear of the passing of another of our members. Please accept our sincere sympathy to their partners, family and friends.

VALE – FAYE ELIZABETH McRAE



Faye Elizabeth McRae passed on 26th October, 2020, at the Pioneer Memorial Lodge in Numurkah, north of Shepparton in Victoria.

Her Graveside Service at Nathalia Lawn Cemetery was held on Thursday 5th November, 2020. Only forty four people attended due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Faye Elizabeth McRae, née Schmedje, was born on 22nd December, 1930, and married Duncan Kenneth McRae on the 30th August, 1952, at the Presbyterian Church in Echuca. They moved to the soldiers' settlement farm at Nathalia during April 1954. Over the years they had four children:- Sally Anne was

born on the 9th August, 1954, Fiona on the 3rd May, 1956, Donald on the 19th September, 1962 and Keith who was born on the 4th May, 1967.

Duncan and Faye retired to 4 Cope St. Nathalia from the farm in 1994 where sadly Duncan Kenneth McRae passed away on the 30th March, 2014. Faye then moved to Numurkah Pioneer Memorial Lodge in June 2015. Faye had four great grandchildren:- Joel four years, Emmett nearly four years, Xavier two years and Stella two years. MacKenzie was born on 1st May, 2021 with another baby due on the 20th July, 2021. Faye loved her family and she was constantly knitting clothes for the great grandchildren.

Photo L-R - Fiona
Weeding, Faye

Elizabeth McRae and Sally Anne McRae all dressed up for Cup Day 2019

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A photograph of a smiling couple in wedding attire. The man, on the left, is bald with glasses, wearing a black suit and a bright green tie. The woman, on the right, has brown hair styled in an updo, wearing a white lace wedding dress and a necklace. They are standing outdoors with a body of water and a cloudy sky in the background.

Photo - Matt McRae and his beautiful bride Caitlin, nee Holman, on their wedding day that held off for the rain.

The couple were able to celebrate their vows in Sawtell with the ceremony broadcast worldwide, especially to Canada.

Then the guests who were able to attend drove to nearby Coff's

Harbour for the ‘spread out’ wedding reception which went off with flying colours. Matt is the son of Bruce and Alanna McRae of Uralla. *Congratulations to Matt and Caitlin.*

REMINDER – 2021 Membership Due

It would be appreciated if all members could pay their 2021 memberships ASAP. The invoices were sent out with the June newsletter and all memberships NOT paid are now overdue.

The \$20 membership can be paid directly into the Clan Society Bank account or via cheque/money order posted to the Treasurer (address on back page). If you have any concerns about your membership payment, please contact the Treasurer (contact details on back page).

To those members who have paid their 2021 membership, thank you!

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2021 UPCOMING EVENTS – AUSTRALIA

2nd October, 2021, Saturday, Aberdeen Highland Games at Aberdeen, NSW. The Games commence with a spectacular parade of bands, Clan representatives and others which leads into the Massed Band Salute and Chieftain's Address that officially opens the day. The event offers fun for the whole family, including Highland and country dancing and music, Pipe Band displays, Strong man events with the Tartan Warriors, stalls and more. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are not available at the gate on the day. Info: www.aberdeenhighlandgames.com

3rd October, 2021, Sunday - Melbourne Highland Games Celtic Festival at Eastfield Park, 119 Eastfield Road at Croydon when they will hold their postponed earlier 2021 Games. They will be the first Games to be performed in Victoria for over two years due to the pandemic. Now, they are really looking forward to bringing you face to face with those wonderful pipers, dancers and athletes you haven't seen for two years. Taste Scottish and Celtic delicacies, browse the Scottish and Celtic memorabilia, tap into your heritage and, for the first time in Melbourne, watch women competing in the Heavy Games! Kids will be able to once again pat Erica, Erica's Hielan Coo and compete in the Mini Highland Games. It will be a great day out. See Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MelbourneHighlandGames/?fref=tag>
Further information - mcinnes210@ozemail.com.au Mob: 0418 370 051

NOTE - The Canberra Burns Club Highland Gathering for 2021 has been cancelled, however they aim, hopefully, to hold the Gathering next year on Saturday the 10th October, 2022.

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We also have calico bags with the MacRae crest - \$10, Origins of the MacRae's booklet - \$10, and "My Heart is MacRae" stickers - \$6. Postage extra on all items. Please contact the Secretary for details.



CLAN MACRAE MONUMENT

The tall granite Clan MacRae War Memorial was constructed above the ruined church and churchyard at Clachan Duich in Kintail, the church is an ancient burial site of the MacRaes of Kintail. It shows a kilted Highland soldier, with his head bowed, stepping out of a carved granite block. When the memorial was unveiled Colonel John McCrae did a recitation of his famous poem ‘In Flanders Fields’.

Left - The late Molly Akers (Life Member) sitting with Sue Tregoweths’s mother-in-law Shirley Tregoweth, on a visit to Scotland. Molly passed away on the 7th August, 2020, during the second New Zealand COVID-19 lockdown.

The memorial came about when it was decided to commemorate the MacRae members who fell during World War One. It is thought that the same craftsmen who were working on the

restoration of Eilean Donan at the time did the carving. They would have been subcontracted to Messrs R. Gray and Co who were the sculptors. It was unveiled on the 15th July, 1922.

The inscription reads – *“ERECTED BY THE CLAN MACRAE AND FRIENDS IN MEMORY OF THE MACRAES AND RELATIVES AT HOME AND ABROAD WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1918.”*

“GUS AM BRIS AN LA” - Gaelic for ‘Until The Day Breaks.’

A number of MacRaes were in attendance these being Sir Colin G. Macrae; Mr. Peter Macrae, Hon. Secretary; Thomas McCrae, Canada; Dr. F. Macrae, Edenbane and Mr. John C. Macrae, President of the committee who organised the statue memorial.

The figure of the soldier is on a pedestal with a rough hewn stone slab behind him. The whole lot is on a stone base. The inscriptions are in raised lettering on the front of the plinth. The Clan Macrae badge is carved in relief at the top of the pedestal. The Memorial was enclosed by a wrought iron railing fence when built.

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FLODDEN 1513

King James IV of Scotland had ideas of taking over England. As England's King Henry was away conducting his invasion into France, it appeared to be the ideal time to make a move. His Scottish Army was all prepared and armed with pikes, axes and cannons.

Some 50,000 troops of King James IV crossed the border into Northumberland in August 1513. Initially his men gained some ground including the small castles at Werk and Norham. The Earl of Surrey, Thomas Howard, took the initiative and had an army of around 20,000 march north to meet the confident Scottish troops. The Earl found King James at Flodden near Branxton in Northumberland.

Ironically, James IV allowed the English troops to cross over the narrow Twizel Bridge unimpeded and form up in readiness for the battle. The Scottish King had his troops drawn up on salient ground which was bordered by the River Till. He had a good view of the situation.



The Earl of Surrey ignored the Scottish guns trained on the bridge and proceeded to form up his soldiers into two large divisions ready for the fight. During the afternoon the Scottish troops commenced the battle. It was on 9th September, 1513, and conditions were quite wet and slippery. The English fired off a volley of guns to their advantage when the Scottish gunners realised that they couldn't depress their cannon muzzles low enough, thus effecting their accuracy. The English also had cavalry troops.

The English troops had more accurate artillery as well as archers who proved to be every precise. Before long the Scottish soldiers began to be ripped apart.

Maiden on 2nd June, 1581.

The unit, which was used in the High Cross off the High Street in Edinburgh in Scotland, was some 13 feet in height and was quite portable thus allowing it to be relocated to another town or area if need be. The local magistrates considered the guillotine as a humane device. The Maiden is known to have been used in Castlehill and Grassmarket. It was used for almost 150 years in which time some 150 people were executed, about one a year. Prior to its introduction the sword was used in the beheading spectacles in Scotland.



Condemned prisoners would be brought by soldiers from all districts of Scotland into Edinburgh for their public execution. The Scottish Justiciary Court, their criminal court, could condemn people for robbery, treason, adultery,

murder, forgery, incest, robbery and other misdemeanours.

The instrument was used for the affluent classes as well as the workers and peasants. One such case was James Douglas, the 4th Earl of Morton, who was one of the regents of Scotland, and who governed Scotland while James VI was an infant. The Earl had the job from 1572 to 1578. James was incriminated in the murder of Mary, Queen of Scots' second husband, Lord Darnley, with the Scottish Justiciary ordering his execution.

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SCOTTISH CONCERTS POPULAR

A Scottish concert was given on Wednesday 14th March, 1888, in the School of Arts Hall in connection with the Bathurst Branch of the Highland Society of New South Wales. The attendance was limited as to numbers. The program consisted wholly of Scottish music and had been arranged for the purpose of giving the pupils the opportunity of hearing Mr. David McAndrew, whose reputation as the vocalist was pretty well known. His considerable ability was appreciated as he rendered his act, which was thoroughly humorous in all his renderings. He sang "Battle of Shirramuir", "March of the Cameron Men", "Jennie's Bawbee", "The Laird of Cockpen", "Auld Tam Trew", "Umph", "Larry O'Toole" and "Baudie Buchanan". Mrs. Innes also sang.

Later in the year there was a very well attended adult concert put on by the Caledonian Society in the same venue. Mr. McGregor, with his melodious tone, gave pleasing renditions of Schubert's "Ave Maria." During the evening the Highland fling was danced by a group of four young ladies resplendent in their kilted dress. The audience's response to the display saw the dance repeated. Mr. McGregor, Messrs G.B. McRae and D. McAndrew with Mrs. Rae as the accompaniment saw a beautiful result.

Some of the songs in the concert were – "Annie Laurie", "I'm Owèr Young to Marry Yet", "I'll Come Tae Ye Ma Lad", "For You Alone", "Comin' Through-the Rye", "Angus McDonald", "Song of Long Ago", "The Bonnie Bank of Loch Lomond", "Bonnie Mary of Argyle" and "Scotland Yet".



Above - The School of Arts in Bathurst, which was constructed in stages, had its progress and activities regularly recorded in the local Bathurst newspapers of the day. Land for a building, such as for a School of Arts, was selected as early as 1844 but it seems the first location didn't please the committee and land on the corner of Howick and William Streets was sought and later gazetted.

The building got underway on 12th June, 1855, with Dr. Busby becoming President. Imagine how proud Dr. Busby was at the Annual General Meeting in February, 1862, to report to the gathering that the Bathurst School of Arts now had their own building, this being for their permanent library of purchased and donated books.

OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 2021

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Membership is due in January

Cost is \$20 per annum – Payable to the Treasurer

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