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# CLAN MACPHERSON ASSOCIATION AFRICA BRANCH NEWSLETTER

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## Some Ramblings from the African Chair

As 2015 rapidly draws to a close I would like to take the opportunity to wish all Clan Macpherson Association Africa Branch members a fabulous festive season and may 2016 be a fine and prosperous year for everyone!

In my new role as Chairman of the Africa Branch of CMA I have had a lot to learn in the last year. I have simply tried to absorb as much as possible and make contact with as many members as possible providing you with information on a periodic basis. I owe a vote of thanks to Annie Le Roy-Lewis (Hon. Vice President), Jan (Registrar) and Bill (Vice Chairman) Macpherson of Glenfarg and out-going Chairman and Secretary John and Iris Macpherson for an accelerated education of Clan matters. Jean Macpherson Duffy was inaugurated as CMA Chairman in August 2016 and has been extremely supportive of our branch. There is a short message from her included in this newsletter below.

I think that the most significant change that has occurred for the Africa Branch of the Association in 2015 is its transition from the South Africa Branch to the Africa Branch of CMA. This decision was ratified on the 31st of July 2015 at the Council meeting at the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie. This brings into the fold members who reside on the continent north of the Limpopo River. Given that our numbers are low at the moment it is my hope this incorporation will help generate enthusiasm for our Association.

The history of CMA dates back to 1946 when “a group of clansmen in Scotland gathered together and discussed the forming of an association to keep alive the principles of the Scottish Clan system, with its heritage of mutual support and kinship. From that meeting the Clan Macpherson Association was born and has now grown to have a worldwide membership of over 2000, from New Zealand to Sweden, from the United States of America to Borneo, with its traditional heartland being Badenoch in Scotland.” (From the CMA Website.) Today CMA aims at promoting and fostering the Clan spirit, keeping Clansfolk in touch with one another in all parts of the world and encouraging the study and preservation of the history, folk-lore, literature, music, treasures and traditions of the Clan Macpherson.

To meet the social aspect of these objectives the Association has an excellent website, a vibrant Facebook page and a busy social calendar of gatherings, both formal and informal, across the

globe. It is my perception that it is these personal meetings that provide the lifeblood of CMA. Donna 'Dee Mcpherson' Rucks describes the last joint US and Canada gathering in the following words "Clan Macpherson came to town! We sang, we danced, we listened to great music, we ate great food, we had a Pig Roast, we went to a Ceilidh, we went a Kirkin', we toured around, we drank whisky, we told stories, we took pictures, we saw old friends, we made new friends and we had a splendid time together!" A more personal view of a Macpherson gathering is provided by Francesca and Luigi Pasiani in the last edition of Creag Dhubh. They are newly joined members from Italy and attended their first Badenoch Rally in 2015. They described the Gathering using the words "honour", "pride" and "harmony". If I were to choose a single word to describe our Chief, our Clan and our Association it would be "inclusive". I believe it is this quality that sets CMA apart from many other organisations.

The Clan Macpherson Museum, situated in Newtonmore, functions as a receptacle for tangible Macpherson history holding a wealth of information concerning our clansmen both past and present. In our history we have the illustrious, the obscure and the villainous. The museum celebrates them all! As such, it is an asset of enormous value to all Macphersons. The museum is run by a dedicated group of Trustees and advisory members on a very meagre budget. It is my observation that Mrs. Catherine MD Macpherson and Ewen SL MacPherson play leading and prominent roles in the upkeep of the Museum. One way of contributing to this important aspect of Clan life is to become a *Dionadairean* or Guardian of the Museum. For more information I refer you to page 64 of the most recent publication of the Clan Annual.

In 2016 the Clan Macpherson Association turns 70 years old. To mark this event a much larger than usual Rally is planned for August next year. It has been dubbed "The Platinum Dhubh". A commemorative badge has been designed for the event (top left above) by Gordon Macpherson of Burlington - *Niagara Herald Extraordinary* (Canada Branch). Creag Dhubh, has been published early this year. You should have received your copy by now (if not please let me know and I will remedy the matter). The expanded agenda for the Platinum Dhubh Gathering is printed in the annual. Full information is also provided on the website: <http://www.clan-macpherson.org>. It promises to be a spectacular event. Tickets will be available to purchase from the 1st of January 2016. It would be wonderful to see you there! As the Africa Branch, we are going to contribute to the contents of a "welcome bag" which will be given to each person attending the Platinum Dhubh at registration on Friday 5th of August. It has been decided that a keyring made from indigenous hardwood in the shape of an elephant or other African symbol will be our contribution. It is anticipated that around 350 people will be attending the Rally. We estimate a cost of 700 US dollars for this contribution. If anyone would like to help with this expense please let me know.

As we move into a new year and in an attempt to include more people in Africa Branch CMA activities, if there is anyone who would be willing to help me promote the interests of the Association on this vast continent I would really appreciate the offer. Clearly, running an Association (or branch thereof) across large distances and many international borders makes personal meetings difficult and expensive to arrange. However we have other ways to communicate and share our interest in our rich heritage. Specifically I would like help in the form of an African representative for the CMA Website and Facebook Page (my personal skills in cyber-space being more destructive than constructive!) and a Branch secretary. A treasurer would be a superfluous function at this time because all subscriptions should be paid directly to

the parent Association coffers. The annual renewal is not a large sum and can be paid online with a credit / debit card. I hope that mention of this serves as a reminder to annual members to pay subscriptions. I thank you in advance for any and all assistance rendered!

## Message from the Association Chair

Dear African members:

I am delighted to wish you Happy New Year as we start our countdown towards the Platinum Dhubh! That is the name of our celebration commemorating 70 years as a Clan Association.

I have a wonderful team working on the week-long festivities beginning in Edinburgh on Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. I hope that you will access our website and see for yourself all the great activities on offer. As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, you may sign up for each event. Don't delay as we expect they will sell out quite soon.

I am honored to be the new Chairman of the Clan. I have been a life member since 1964 and been traveling to Scotland each year since 1985.

If you are new to the Association you will find a warm and immediate welcome. We truly are a family and it is such fun to learn how far and wide our Macpherson connections take us.

Hoping to meet you personally this summer,

Jean Macpherson Duffy

## Macphersons in Africa

So the story goes, many moons ago, in the days when South Africa was young a certain "Big Mac" McPherson was courting a lady who owned a pub in Pilgrim's Rest, Eastern Transvaal as it was then known. One day he discovered he had a rival. Without delay or hesitation he waded into him and virtually wrecked the hostel. When two policemen reluctantly tried to handcuff him, he ran to the grocery store, grabbed a long-handled spade, and jumped on a barrel of apples, from where he kept all at bay.

Clearly lying latent (or not!) in our genes lies that particular character that gave rise to our clan motto of "Touch not the cat bot a glove"! Notwithstanding the more colourful members of our extended family / ancestry many of us have interesting stories. I made a request for information on how our various families arrived in Africa and received the following responses.

### From Trelida (nee Macpherson) and Ed Ostrosky

You asked for some information regarding ourselves and our family. I'm afraid I can give you very little about the Macphersons as my grandfather, Norman Alan Wallace Macpherson, and father, Gordon Crosby Macpherson, both died in 1968. Both had cancer and died within three months of each other! My dad was only 45. As a young person one doesn't always inquire about one's history and now its too late to ask. My paternal grandmother died a year or so later. I think my grandfather came out from Scotland as a young child.

I grew up on a farm at Cato Ridge and went to high school in Pietermaritzburg. I married Roger Grafton in 1969 and had two children Shannon and Brad. I divorced after some years and

remarried, Edward Ostrosky in 1985. Ed is an American but after serving in Vietnam, worked in Rhodesian Parks and then in Natal Parks, where I met him. We spent many years in Tembe Elephant Park in northern Zululand. Ed was instrumental in getting Tembe proclaimed having done all the negotiations with the local chief. Being involved from the start with all the fence erection, animal reintroductions etc was a real privilege. Ed was also in charge of Ndumo and Mkhuze Game Reserves. Then he was transferred to the Midmar training section where he was in charge of all the law enforcement and firearms training for the conservation organisation. He retired in November last year (2014). We now live in Howick but still yearn for the bush! When we first moved to Midmar we were lucky enough to host Sheila and Cluny for a night in our very modest little house. We had a very special evening together.

Shannon owns the African Bird of Prey Sanctuary outside Pietermaritzburg where she does educational talks on birds of prey and also flies birds during the daily shows. Brad is a helicopter pilot, ten years with the SA Airforce, quite a few with the SA Police Air Wing and now is contract flying with various companies in Tanzania and Sudan.

### From Stuart and Jane Macpherson

As a young single man I arrived in Cape Town on 31st May 1972, having been transferred by the Provincial Insurance Company, as it was then. I used to live in Bishopbriggs, near Glasgow. Initially my plan was to come out for 3 years.

On 29th December 1973 I married Jane and we are still happily married some 42 years later. We had three children. Our first born, Felicity, was born with Down's Syndrome in June 1979 and after giving us lots of joy and love for over 27 years, she passed away peacefully and is now with the Lord whom she loved. Sandy was born in 1980 and currently lives in Brasilia with his wife Gabi and two children, Calvin (5) and Sofia (3). Andrew was born in 1985 and has a lovely daughter Harper. Sandy is a software developer and Andrew is a Candidate Attorney.

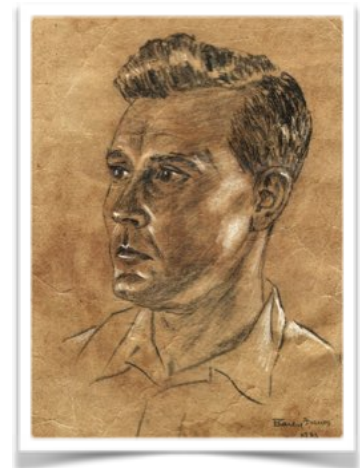
I worked in the insurance industry all my life and started my own business in 1980. I finally retired in 2014 after almost 50 years.

We live in a secure estate among the winelands of Stellenbosch.

Now I am retired I can play golf twice a week at Royal Cape Golf Club and I am happy to be involved in our local church and home groups.

### From Derek Macpherson

In our case our tenure on African soil started with my grandfather David William Kinloch Macpherson. Born in Bankipore, India in May 1900, he was the younger son of William Charles Macpherson and Isabella Mary Kinloch of Blairgowrie. He attended Clifton College, Bristol before graduating from Sandhurst as a Lieutenant in the Highland Light Infantry in 1918. Having spent three years stationed at Malta he served with the Kings African Rifles in Tanganyika (Tanzania) between 1921 and 1926. On his departure for Africa he took with him a .450 double rifle made by Rigby belonging to his brother Alan, by all accounts without permission! One of his principal duties in Tanganyika was to courier ammunition between Kilosa near



David Macpherson in 1933

Dar es Salaam to Songea. His route took him through what is today the Mahenge District which includes the western part of the Selous Game Reserve. It was during this time that David developed some skills in hunting elephants. Shortly after being transferred to India in 1926, we understand that he had a sharp disagreement with his commanding officer of sufficient intensity to cause him to resign his commission. He promptly returned to Africa. On disembarking at Beira, Mozambique he is said to have asked the question "What happens in Beira?" The reply was "Not much, but there are two trains: one goes to Salisbury Rhodesia and the other goes to Limbe Nyasaland." He took the next one which happened to be going to Nyasaland! He spent the years 1927 to 1929 variously working as an estate manager and hunting elephants for ivory in Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) before gaining enough capital to acquire Kanongo Estate, then virgin bush, on the Namitete River.

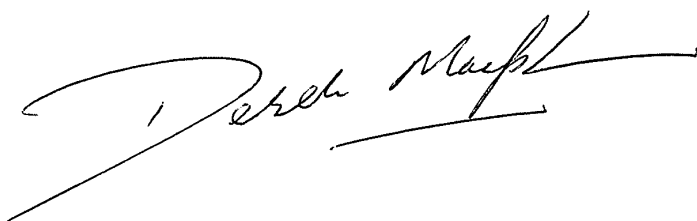
David married Frances McQuire, a midwife, after a whirlwind courtship of a whole ten days! My father, Ewen Francis William Macpherson was born in 1937 on the farm, one of three children and the only son. He grew up with a keen and single-minded ambition to farm. His first season of farming was 1957. My Dad is now 78 years old, energetically in his 58 season of farming and has been the driving force behind the core development of our agricultural enterprise. Married to Jenny, my mother, they produced three children Duncan, Douglas and Derek (me). Mum, a teacher by profession, has played an integral part in the running of the farm for many years. Having joined the business in 1991, Duncan now plays the lead role on the farm developing it with all the vigour of his predecessor. His wife Jennifer plays a vital role both in the office and field where she and Dad run the livestock section. Dunc and Jen have two sons Iain and Craig who attend St Andrews College in Grahamstown. Having spent 18 years in the business Doug emigrated to Australia with his wife Karen and two boys Cameron and Murray in 2010. My wife Shannon and I live on the farm and operate a light aircraft from a grass field providing aerial solutions to the wildlife industry in Malawi. We have two beautiful daughters, Morgan (11) and Meren (8) who are home schooled by Shan.

Not infrequently do we ponder what would have happened to our family if "the next train" had taken David to Salisbury!

If anyone has any information about how your family arrived on African soil and what you are doing now that you would be willing to share in another newsletter please would you pen a few lines and send it to me for the next edition.

In the new year I look forward to being in more regular contact with you.

To safe and happy days ahead in 2016!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Derek Macpherson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Derek Macpherson