



Clan Macpherson Association

(Australian Branch)



Website www.clan-macpherson.org

April 2020 Newsletter

As the impact of the Covid-19 virus seems to be approaching signs of possible control, we cannot forget the impact of the drought, bushfires and floods that preceded the pandemic.

Some Macphersons in the Manning River area (NSW) suffered loss in the fires; others in nearby locations in northern NSW escaped the fury; as did some on the NSW South Coast.

I wish to acknowledge messages of support received from our overseas cousins at that time. They were appreciated greatly.

The advent of the Covid-19 virus caused most Scottish activities planned for 2020 in Australia to be cancelled. Many were simply deferred to 2021, while a few have been postponed to late 2020. Only time will tell if they go ahead.

Activities in September/October et seq, remain on the calendar at present.

Included in those postponed is the *Bonnie Wingham Festival* at which Clan Macpherson remains the Clan of Honour. The intention, given satisfactory health conditions, is to hold the Festival on the last weekend (25/26th) in September.

Details of some events, likely to be held later in the year are shown in the Activities List but check each as shown in the List.

In the midst of this weird season, our Chief Cluny, celebrated yet another birthday on 1st April. He responded collectively on the CMA website thanking his cousins around the world for their good wishes from his home in Blairgowrie where he is, like all Scots, in isolation!

CMA Annual Gathering It should be no surprise that this year's CMA Gathering has been cancelled. The Clan Chattan Association AGM and Dinner which usually precedes the Gathering, has also been cancelled.

At the recent CMA Council meeting, and after lengthy discussion, it was resolved that the following statement be issued to members; '*... the Gathering is cancelled and there will be consideration given to holding a smaller event,*

taking into account the need to hold the AGM if at all possible. A decision on this will be made on 1st June in the light of predictions available then.'

A notice will be sent by the CMA Secretary to those who have booked. A full refund will be offered to all those who wish to cancel immediately, and a letter will be available for those who wish to make an insurance claim. ...'

Macphersons of the Manse Work has commenced on the 'Macphersons of the Manse' exhibition; the last one to be curated by Ewen MacPherson (Talla Shee). Information about any relevant Australian subjects that could be included is now sought. Open to all Christian faiths, the display was described in the 2019 issue of Creag Dhubh, (Number 71), in an article titled 'Museum Special Exhibitions'. The latter half of the article, para 3, said.

'McPherson/MacPherson/Macpherson or collectively Mac a' Phearsain means literally 'Son of the Parson', so we have an ancestral connection to the church. With this in mind the Museum Advisory Committee has approved a special exhibition 'Macphersons of the Manse' for 2021 and 2022, and this will run for two seasons. A Manse is a house provided for a minister of certain Christian churches, especially the Scottish Presbyterian Church. It is emphasised, however, that the exhibition will include any minister, priest, vicar, pastor etc., of the Christian faith. Please send to Ewen MacPherson at ewenie@yahoo.co.uk details of any Clan person, past or present, you would like to have included in the exhibition. Details should include two or three paragraphs and a picture of the person, and/or another relevant picture such as a church.

Cricket's in the Family



On March 8th, 2020 in front of 86,174 people at the Melbourne Cricket Ground Alyssa Healy and her Australian teammates won the Women's (T20) Cricket World Cup. It was an absolutely awesome night to be a spectator especially for her proud Mum, CMA member Sandy (nee Macpherson) and Dad! Alyssa's very proud grandad Frederick Alexander McPherson (born 7/2/1925 - 31/12/2006) would have been cheering from his front row seat in Heaven.

Alyssa Healy was born on the Gold Coast Queensland on 24/3/90. She started playing Milo cricket in Sydney when she was 6 years old, and her love of the game took her from playing with

the boys at Carlingford Cricket Club to the Representative Boys competition at Northern Districts.

She was the only female player in the team, and was the wicketkeeper, sharing the position with her now husband, Australian Test player, Mitchell Starc.

She played with this team for 4 years until it was time to move across to the Sydney Cricket Club.

At Balmain Cricket Club she played alongside famous Australian and New South Wales Women cricketers Christina Matthews, Lisa Keightly, Leonie Coleman, Tamara Roach, Julie Hayes, Martha Winch and Michelle Gosko. These girls helped and encouraged Alyssa every step of the way. They could see that she was a young and upcoming player. She won many Grand Finals playing for her beloved Sydney Cricket Club.

Alyssa moved through the NSW State age groups and made her debut for the Senior New South Wales team (NSW Breakers) in 2007-2008, for whom she still plays, but now as the captain.

Alyssa was named in the 1st XI Cricket team at Barker College in 2006, playing in this prestigious team with the boys for 2 years, culminating in a Grand Final win. This selection was a very controversial one at the time, resulting in the story being on the front page of the newspapers, Australia wide!

Alyssa is the opening bat and wicketkeeper for the Australian Women's Cricket teams in the ODI, T20 format and the Australian Women's Test team, in which she made her debut in 2010. She also plays for the Sydney Sixers in the Women's Big Bash League. This team has won 2 Grand Finals.

Her trophy cabinet is filled with 6 World Cup trophies, 1 x ODI and 5 x T20's and 3 Ashes wins against England.

Alyssa was named International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's T20 Cricketer of the Year in 2018 & 2019, and Belinda Clark Award winner 2019.



Highland Games Season falls to Covid 19 The Strathspey and Badenoch Herald has reported that 'This summer's Highland gatherings in and around the strath has been devastated by the lockdown. Organisers of the Newtonmore Highland Games confirmed that their event was the latest casualty of the coronavirus outbreak.

It means none of the popular games will be hosted in the strath this year. The Abernethy Highland Games were cancelled very recently while the Grantown games did not take place and are in abeyance.

"It was a very tough decision," said Newtonmore Highland Games committee chairman Tom Robertson, "and we have been contacting all our loyal sponsors to break the news.



Newtonmore Games and famous Creag Dhubh hill race will miss 2020

"They have stayed true for some 60 years and it's very sad that we have to call off the 2020 games, in line with so many others.

"The Scottish Highland Games Association's website is full of call-offs now but obviously it's for the best in the circumstances."

Some 60 other games events have been cancelled across the Highlands and beyond including those at Tomintoul. For years, the celebrations on the Eilan have sparked the strath's games season with their prestigious Creag Dhubh hill race and spectacular Clan Macpherson Rally."

New members

Annual: Sarah Taylor (Wingham NSW), Matthew Campbell-Ellis (Forster NSW), Greg J MacPherson (Belmont Qld), Greg McLeish (Minmi NSW)

Upgrade Junior to Life: Angie Sarah Millin (nee Gillies) (Crows Nest NSW), Liam Foxe (Maudsland Qld),

Museum Convenor's Report

At the March 2020 CMA Council meeting held on Skype, Convenor Angus Macpherson reported:

A busy winter on many fronts:

- visits from Newtonmore Primary School for a project on the second World War and the Newtonmore Business Association held their Annual General Meeting in the Drumochter Room.
- Ewen MacPherson, assisted by Kathryn Morrow, has been striving diligently to prepare for the next exhibition, "Macphersons of the Manse".
- George has been preparing for our next Quality Assurance visit.
- Mary Mackenzie has been attending meetings to agree the Museum's participation in the Badenoch Festival in September.
- Bill, the Association Chairman(!), has produced USB sticks containing the DVD welcoming film at the Museum. They can now be bought at the shop.
- an additional Trustees meeting to consider the tenders for the roof replacement.

A contractor Mark Copper has been appointed with the project starting in October 2020. The delay was on two grounds: An unwillingness to start in February with the prospect of the project over-running and delaying the opening of the Museum. In hindsight an irrelevant concern.

A shortfall of funds. An additional £50,000.00 is required to cover the costs. We need to start the project by 20 December 2020, otherwise our planning permission lapses. The architect will be putting on a presentation of what is planned during the rally.

- fund raising continues, thank you to all those that have contributed to date, as does seeking funds from public and other sources outwith the Clan. We are exploring borrowing money. There is precedence. During the last extension a mortgage was taken out. Also investigating issuing a charitable bond which for UK taxpayers would have tax advantages as well. Getting a Government loan for environmental improvement for the insulation and possibly replacing the boiler, which was not in our original project plan but has now become an issue of greater urgency. There is currently a 15% cashback with it.

- Mairi Macpherson has taken on the role of Development Officer for the Museum. On 2nd April Museums and Galleries Scotland agreed to provide funds for the 'Macphersonia' project, in which everyone will be asked for Macpherson stories and any photographs to support their stories. These will all be displayed on a website. She is also preparing a grant application to refurbish the interior of the Museum. Not only will this involve a repaint but also a reconsideration of what is displayed in the Museum and how it is displayed. We are hopeful that this should take place after the Museum roof has been replaced in time for the

Association's 75th anniversary in 2021. Mairi will be putting on a presentation about both of her projects at the rally.

- Quotes have been received for putting an Electric Vehicle Charge point in the Car Park. It may also provide an opportunity to sort out a long-standing drainage problem under the car park and expand the car park. Discussions are now on going with the planners and Energy Savings Trust, the funders. As the winter draws to a close, we must decide whether to delay the opening of the Museum due to coronavirus. This is not a simple decision with financial implications for the Trust as well as health implications for the Curator, volunteers and visitors.

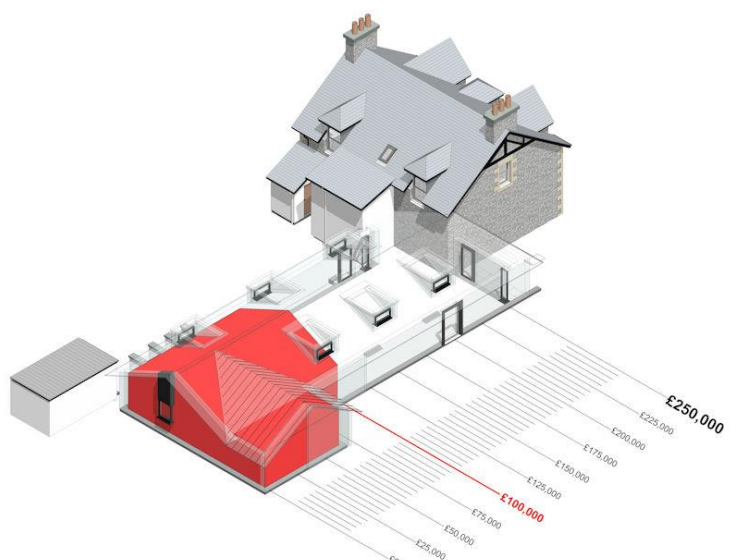
NOTE. Due to a later decision of the UK Government, the Museum will NOT open on 1st April, and will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

The Trustees agreed in April 2018 that they should appoint a consultant and use a PhD student from the University of Highlands and Islands to assist them. In the interim we continue to seek funds to reach our original target.

In addition to his formal report, the Museum Convenor in informing the meeting that the Museum will not open in April, said it will be eligible for compensation packages outlined in Government policy guidelines. This should ensure that projected losses will be covered. The Museum relies on income from investments, which is likely to be significantly less this year and the projection has therefore been marked down 50 per cent. The Convenor went on to mention that a number of rare books had been made available to view on the Museum website, but so far there had been no response.

It was further agreed that the Museum will participate in the Badenoch Festival in September 2020 and is scheduled to give a talk, for which a speaker and theme are being sought. The Convenor noted that Newtonmore is 200 years old this year, and Mary Mackenzie is preparing a presentation to be given on the morning of the day before the S & NI Branch AGM, which is to be held at the Highland Wildlife Park on 26th September. The repairs to the roof continue to present challenges in terms

of additional funding needed (£50,000 to £70,000). The contractor has been asked if he will adhere to the quote given, and he has agreed to guarantee the quote for work, but not the estimated cost of materials. The Convenor outlined sources of funding being considered, as mentioned in his report. In terms of exploring the possibility of direct peer lending by members, this is feasible within the UK, but seeking



loans from overseas requires some investigation. Guidance from Branches on how to approach this and to whom such a package might appeal would be welcome. It was suggested that further communication within the general membership might be useful, particularly the circulation of a progress report for donors.

the Genealogist's Prayer

*Lord help me dig into the past
And sift the sands of time,
That I might find the roots that made
This branching tree of mine.*

*Lord help me find the missing names
From generations past,
That I might search the internet
And fill the gaps at last.*

*Lord help me find an ancient book
Or dusty manuscript
That's hidden safely now away
In some forgotten crypt.*

*If it should fill the missing link
That causes me such pain,
I'd would free me from the OPR's
And maybe leave me sane!*

Angus Bethune

Positions Vacant - CMA Webmaster. The association has a pressing need to appoint a webmaster. The position is described as one that is 'not ... onerous' but it does require a certain skill set, most likely to be possessed by the younger set. The incumbent asserts a need for a replacement before he '*falls off the perch*'. He further states 'we are not wedded to Perl; PHP or Java could probably do as well'. But whoever takes over does need some scripting capability. The administration of the whole webhosting package is important as someone must set up and manage email accounts, SSL certificates, security scanning, etc. The webmaster's function is more than just putting up a few pages.

If someone doesn't have the confidence that they can fulfil all the tasks but would be willing to put the time in to learn, they can be trained and given support. In addition, the job description requires membership of the CMA. Initial enquiries can be addressed to John L Macpherson greymac@acenet.com.au or 0409 122 141.

The (Australian) Tartan Show on 2RRR 88.5FM

Christine Southcombe (nee McPherson) advises that The Tartan Show can be heard at 6.30pm to 7.30pm on Tuesday nights. As the broadcast is limited, the

programme can also be streamed online at <https://2rrr.org.au>

Christine took over the reins earlier this year. Send any Scottish news to her at christinesouthcombe@outlook.com



Bendigo Highland Gathering Our only public venture in 2020 pre Covid-19 was to the well attended Highland Gathering ‘Scots Day Out’ in Rosalind Park Bendigo on Saturday 29th February. CMA Victoria rep David J McPherson (Templestowe Vic) manned the Clan tent. He is pictured with George Edmiston (Clan Edmonstone) representing his brother Malcolm, and the Scots Day Out mascot wearing the Bendigo tartan.

New Member Subscriptions

In August 2019 revised classes of membership were decided upon as were revised subscriptions. The new level of subscriptions applies from 1st January 2020 viz.

Junior membership (up to age 18 and child of a CMA member). Onetime fee remains at £5 with no entitlement to Creag Dhubh (CD).

Annual adult (age 25 & upwards) Fee to be raised to £15 (from £10) for the time being.

Young adult (18-25) (new category) Established at 50% of the cost of Annual membership operating at the time of joining. Fee established as £7.50 per annum for the time being. No entitlement to hard copy of CD, but eligible to receive an electronic version, downloaded via a password.

Fixed term (10 years) (new category) Fee established at £150, i.e. 10 times the Annual subscription at the time of joining.

Life membership Fee raised to £500. Compared to the present cost (£100) this substantial rise was proposed to address a long-standing anomaly in how annual subscriptions are subsidising longer time life members.

It was agreed that the level of membership subscriptions will be reviewed annually at future Council meetings.

Members are reminded that under the CMA Constitution, Branches are allowed to charge an additional fee to cover local costs. In Australia, these were set in 1999 and have not increased. Modest increases have been added to apply from 1st January 2020.

Summary (with former and new Australian subscriptions shown).

Class	Old CMA fee	New CMA fee	Old Aust fee	New Aust fee
Junior	£5	£5	\$15	\$15
Young Adult	No fee	50% annual	No fee	\$22.50
Annual	£10	£15	\$40	\$45
10 year Term	No fee	£150	No fee	\$450
Life	£100	£500	\$350	\$1400

Note. Australian rates have regard to current and potential fluctuations in AS/UK exchange rates, international transfers and local operational and admin costs.

DNA

Athol McDonald (Girgarre, Victoria) continues to administer the Macpherson DNA Project; his co-administrator being Beth Frost, a United States Branch member. The project continues to develop, albeit slowly at present. Membership now exceeds 450. There has been increased interest in autosomal tests such as Family Finder which allows female members to become involved in the project. Beth now manages separately a Facebook page based on the project. It has become very popular over the last two years and has reached membership of over 1000.

The primary focus remains the yDNA side of the project, continuing the initiative of the late Professor Alan G. Macpherson. The recently developed Big Y-700 test is a great advance and much is being revealed about how Clan Macpherson evolved. Results are slow to arrive, and it is hoped that a full update will appear in a later issue of Creag Dhubh.

As a general rule this surname project is open to males and females born with the surname Macpherson/McPherson, or fairly recent Macpherson ancestry. Please provide the project administrators with a brief description of your Macpherson connections with your request to join this project. There are exceptions to this rule of course and all enquiries are welcome regardless of your name. It is best to become a member of the Macpherson project before ordering a DNA test because group members receive a discount. The join link is listed below, please copy and paste to your browser to order a kit at the discounted price.

<https://www.familytreedna.com/group-join.aspx?group=McPherson&code=H18973>

Activities across the Country

2020

23rd May, Berry (NSW) Celtic Festival, at Berry Showgrounds, info 02 4403 0300 or www.berryrotary.org.au/celtic-festival **Cancelled**

23/24th May, The Gathering, Ipswich (Qld), at Ipswich Turf Club, info www.gatheringfestival.com.au **Cancelled**

5/8th June International Celtic Festival, Portarlington, VIC. A long weekend of Celtic music, relax and experience the depth of Celtic culture through the festival's culturally diverse arts program.

6th June – 4th July Scottish Week in Sydney and surrounds. **Cancelled**

4th July Aberdeen Highland Games. <http://www.aberdeenhighlandgames.com/> **Cancelled**

11th July The Melbourne Tartan Festival, Melbourne (Vic) **In abeyance**

A diverse range of Scottish events across Melbourne including: Ceilidh Dance, Gala Dinner (**Carried forward to 2021**) CAR, Genealogy Day, Pipe Bands and more. Info: 0417 125 013 **Check.**

***15th July Townsville Celtic Festival. QLD** Celebrating the cultural diversity of the seven Celtic nations of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Isle of Man, Brittany and Galicia at Jezzine Barracks. Info:

www.townsvillecelticfestival.org.au **Check**

21st July Annual Tartan Day, Brisbane, QLD. At King George Square with Scottish entertainment, stalls, pipe bands. A free event presented by the Australian Scottish Community (Qld) Inc. Info: Ian Campbell 07 3359 8195 or

www.aussie-scots.org.au **Cancelled**

27th – 30th July, International Highland Dancing Festival of Australia, Gosford NSW. A spectacular 4 day event on the NSW Central Coast. Champion Challenges, Pre-Champs, 10 age Championships. Info: 0437 677 166 or

www.cchdi.org.au. **Check**

11th August Winter Ball, Hobart, TAS. A night of Scottish country dancing and musicians at Hobart Town Hall, Macquarie St. Info: 03 6231 6585 or ord.sally@gmail.com **Check**

12th August Richmond Picnic, TAS. A day of food, fun and dance at Richmond Village Green. Scottish fiddle and piano. Info: 03 6231 6585 or ord.sally@gmail.com **Check**

13th – 16th August, Scots in the Bush, Boondooma, QLD. Celebrating the contribution of the Scottish people in opening up much of Australia at Boondooma Homestead. Info: 07 4168 0159 or

www.boondoomahomestead.org.au **Check**

9th September Highland Gathering and Kilt Run, Armadale, WA. WA's largest Scottish event which features pipe bands, Scottish dancers, Clans, stalls and the Perth Kilt Run, a free community event at Minnowarra Park presented by the City of Armadale. Info: 08 9394 5000, www.armadale.wa.gov.au or www.perthkiltrun.com.au **Check**

15th September Clans on the Coast, Nelson Bay, NSW. Scottish pipe bands, Celtic band, Celtic stalls, caber toss, Celtic dancers & Choir and more at Tomaree Sports Complex, No. 1 Oval. **In abeyance**

Info: Ron Swan on 0418 495 336 or www.clansonthecoast.com

Postponed to 25/16th September 2020 Bonnie Wingham (NSW) Scottish Festival Highland Games and Fair, info 02 6556 9051 or www.manninghistorical.org **Clan Macpherson Tent.**

4th October Armadale Highland Gathering and Perth Kilt Run, Minnowarra Park, Armadale, WA, info www.armadale.wa.gov.au/events/highland-gathering-and-perth-kilt-run

10th October Canberra Burns Club Highland Gathering, Kambah ACT. **Clan Macpherson Tent**

1st November Central Coast Scottish Spectacular, The Entertainment Grounds, Gosford, NSW www.scottishspectacular.com

23rd November St Andrew's Night - Port Adelaide Caledonian Society, 189 Semaphore Road, Exeter, SA www.facebook.com/portadelaidescots or www.facebook.com/ccscotsspec

Contact Details - Branch Committee

Chairman John L Macpherson 16/25 Retford Rd Bowral NSW 2576	0409 122 141	australian.chairman@clan-macpherson.org
Secretary/Registrar Ailsa McPherson 17/7-11 Stornaway Rd Queanbeyan NSW 2620	0425 809 965	ailsamcpherson77@gmail.com
Treasurer Adam de Toth 50 Sidaway St Chapman ACT 2611	02 6288 1441	adamdetoth@netspeed.com.au
ACT Pam Rhemrev	ph 02 6288 1750	rhemrev@pcug.org.au
David B Macpherson	0490 354 234	davidbmacpherson@gmail.com
Ian MacPherson	ph 02 9487 8044	ijmacpherson@bigpond.com
Brian Bailey	0404 353 556	brianmarybailey@yahoo.com
David Gillies	0412 4123 194	david@gillies.net.au
Webmaster Jane Foxe	ph 07 5529 8692	janefoxe@bigpond.com
Queensland Neil A McPherson	ph 07 5537 1990	mcpcomp@winshop.com.au
South Australia Ken D McPherson	ph 08 8344 5483	kendana38@gmail.com
Victoria and Facebook David J McPherson	ph 03 9841 7661	djandsmcperson@bigpond.com
Western Australia Ian P MacPherson	ph 08 9524 2054	ianmacp@inet.net.au

From the Scotland and Northern Ireland Branch April Newsletter

While these are difficult times, the kinship of your Clan Macpherson has echoed across the centuries in song and verse and will continue to do so.

From James Macpherson, the clan's very own senior bard who inspired US President Thomas Jefferson, Emperor Napoleon and Felix Mendelssohn, bringing us the tales of Fingal, in which Ossian reflecting on difficult times still found hope: 'When shall Ossian's youth return, or his ear delight in the sound of arms? When shall I, like Oscar, travel in the light of my steel? – Come, with your streams, ye hills of, and listen to the voice of Ossian! The song rises, like the sun, in my soul; and my heart feels the joys of other times.'

Through to Mary MacPherson (Mary of the Songs) who despite many challenges qualified as a nurse in the 1870's, sang at the first ever Mòd, and of whose verse brought hope to so many, Sorley Maclean described "Its greatness consists of the

fusion of social and private passion.....with extra-ordinary vitality and “ joie de vivre”.

To more recent times, our late supporter William Wylie MacPherson (Bill Martin), winner of 3 Ivor Novello's originally from Govan. The only songwriter with Number 1's in every country in the world, winner of the Eurovision Song Contest with “Puppet on a String” and who wrote for everyone from Elvis to Cilla Black. The Clan Macpherson's song and verse reaches across the ages and even at this difficult time, as we clap for carers and shop for our neighbours, let us look forward to future Badenoch Gatherings and our future songs of Macpherson kinship and joy. Rory McPherson, Chair, Scotland and NI Branch

Have a Smile!!!

Doric Coronavirus (Covid19) Advice

Fit ye need to dee:

- ▶ **Bide at hame.**
Stay at home.
- ▶ **Dinna be clarty, wash yer hans.**
Wash your hands for 20 seconds as soon as you get home.
- ▶ **Dinna touch yer fizog, een, neb or moo.**
Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth.
- ▶ **Only ging oot for yer messages, meds or te stretch yer shanks.**
Only go outside for food or health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home).
- ▶ **Bide 2 metres (6ft) awa fe folk at aa times. Dinna meet up wi ither folk, even freens, neebors or yer ain kin.**
If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times. Do not meet others, even friends, neighbours or family.
- ▶ **If ye feel bilin' het, or hae a dry kinkin' hoast, dinna ging te yer GP or hospital.**
If you have a high temperature or a new, continuous cough, do not go to the doctor or hospital. Ring 111 or if it is life-threatening, dial 999.
- ▶ **Ye can smit aabody wi the virus even if ye dinna look peely-wally.**
You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.
- ▶ **Ca canny aabody!** Be careful everyone!

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