



Clan Macpherson Association (Australian Branch)



Website www.clan-macpherson.org

March 2021 Newsletter

The 28th Chief of Clan Macpherson

James Brodie Macpherson of Cluny

Jamie is the 28th hereditary chief of the Clan Macpherson of Cluny (Cluny-Macpherson). Born on 5th June 1972, he was educated at Summer Fields, Oxford; before going to Fettes College, Edinburgh; and then on to Guilford College, in Greensboro, North Carolina where he obtained a BSc in Sports Management and Business.

On his return to Scotland, after working with Whitbread plc in London, he joined Ben Sayers Golf Company as a Commercial Manager before going into property and thereafter he set up his own property business in Melrose, aptly named Macpherson Property.

In 2002 Jamie married Annie Alexandra Macpherson, a company director and a daughter of The Lord and Lady Macpherson of Drumochter, who was co-incidentally the son of one of the co-founders of the Clan Macpherson Association in 1947. Jamie and Annie have three children: William Thomas (younger of Cluny), Lucy Catherine, and Angus James.

Hugely passionate about all things Scottish, Jamie also has a great interest in the outdoors which include golf, rugby and fishing.

The family home is Newton Castle, Blairgowrie, Perthshire, which has been the home of the Macphersons since 1787. Currently, Jamie and Annie live in Melrose in the Scottish Borders, the home of Rugby 7's.



Museum Roof

Funding to complete the internal renovations to the Museum is still required. The graphic below demonstrates recent progress, but more is still required.



Fundraising progress

Pictures of progress in re-roofing the building can be seen at page 75 of Creag Dhubh A photo of the finished roof is below, and a photo of internal refurbishment now underway.

And you can read the Convenor's update as at 20th January 2021 on page 21. The Project Budget and Expenditure as at 29th October 2020 is on page 20. ***Anyone in Australia wishing to donate should contact the Aust Branch Treasurer. To minimise bank transfer fees, local***

donations are held until an annual remittance to Scotland is made.

An update on the refurbishment is expected at the forthcoming CMA Council meeting on 28th March.



Refurbishment looking south

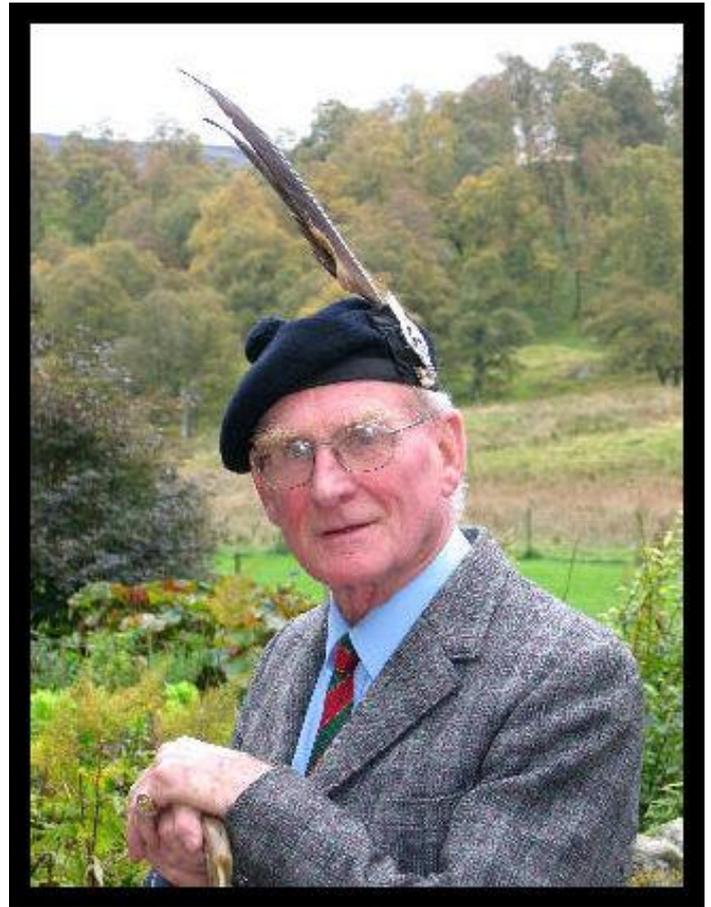


New roof from car park

Vale Cluny – 27th Chief of Clan Macpherson

In the early morning of 15th February 2021, the Chairman of the CMA sent the following message to Branch Chairmen.

“I am saddened to have to bear the news that our 27th Chief, Sir William Macpherson of Cluny and Blairgowrie – 'Cluny' to us all - died peacefully at home on the 14 February, surrounded by his family. We were fortunate to have had his guidance, support and leadership for an incredible 50 years and the world will have benefited from his 94 years on this earth. His phrase "first amongst equals" doesn't even start to mark the presence he had. Through his work in law (what better epitaph could someone wish for that the phrase used by an interviewer "He made



Britain a better place for me to live") to his leadership at the after-ceilidh-ceilidh he was a man who left his mark on those he met.

To his son Jamie and daughter Annie, their families and Lady Hilary we offer our condolences and to him thanks for being part of his life. May he rest in peace.”

‘On 18th of June 2019 Sir William passed his 50th year as our Chief, succeeding his father, Brigadier Alan David Macpherson, DSO, MC who served as the 26th Chief for a short period from 1966 to 1969.

Sir William was educated at Summer Fields, Oxford; Wellington College, Berkshire; and Trinity College, Oxford. During the period 1944-1947, he served in the Scots Guards, transferring to the 21st Special Air Service Regiment (Territorial Army) with whom he served until 1965. He has served as the Honorary Colonel of the 21st SAS since 1983.

In 1962 Sir William married Sheila McDonald Brodie. They had three children: Annie, the late Alan Thomas (younger of Cluny) and James Brodie (Tanistair of the House of Cluny-Macpherson). The family's home is Newton Castle, Blairgowrie, Perthshire. Blairgowrie has been the home of the Macphersons since 1787, when it was purchased by James "Ossian" Macpherson as the agent for Cluny's ancestor.

Sir William was a Judge of the High Court of England and Wales (Queen's Bench Division) where he served as Presiding Judge of the Northern Circuit until his retirement in April 1996. Before his appointment as a judge, Sir William was a Queen's Counsel practising in London and abroad.

CMA Chairman Bill Macpherson (Glenfarg) later advised Branches; 'Our 27th Chief, 'Cluny', was given a caring and intimate departure from his family last Friday. I was very grateful to have been invited to join the family to say goodbye to this friend, Chief and President. Because of Covid the law stated the maximum number of attendees allowed was 20, but in fact Cluny had stipulated a small family funeral and no big Memorial service. To the end he was the man we knew, "merely the first amongst equals".

It was possible to have the service in his family church, St Catharine's in Blairgowrie, and all his grandchildren provided moving elements of the service and the eulogy spoken by the priest who had been his priest for many years and knew him well, Very Reverend Kenny Rathburn. As the funeral started in the church it was possible for Cluny to be born out on the shoulders of his family to the waiting hearse, led by Torquil playing 'MacCrimmon's Lament'. The ability to carry one's good friend and loved one on their final journey is moving and, for me, a real privilege.

It was then to the Perth Crematorium for a short committal. His ashes will be buried in the family graveyard alongside his wife Sheila, son Alan and forebears.'

The Blairgowrie Macpherson family has a strong link with Australia in that William Macpherson (1784-1866), accompanied by his wife Jessy (nee Chalmers), came to New South Wales in 1829 to take up the appointment of Collector of Internal Revenue then later as the Clerk of the Executive and the Legislative Council).

In 2000, that link was reinforced when Sir William and Lady Cluny travelled to Australia to attend two Scottish events, the Wild Scotsman Capture Festival at Gin Gin (Qld), and Bundanoon is Brigadoon (NSW). Starting in Perth (Western Australia), then in Brisbane (Queensland) personal visits were made to Mt Abundance (near Roma Qld) and Keera (near Bingara NSW), sites that had been settled by ancestors William and his son Allan in the mid 19th century.

A formal welcome was afforded the travellers in the NSW Legislative Council; Hansard extract follows; **The PRESIDENT:** I wish to draw to the attention of the House the presence in the gallery of Sir William Macpherson of Cluny and Blairgowrie and his wife, Lady Sheila Macpherson. Sir William is the twenty-

seventh hereditary chief of the clan Macpherson. His great-great-grandfather, William Macpherson, was Clerk of the New South Wales Legislative Council from 1837 until 1842 and then from 1848 until 1856. With the establishment of a bicameral Parliament in New South Wales, he became Clerk of the Legislative Council from 1856 until 1859.

In St Andrew's Cathedral Sydney, a beautiful stained glass is installed commemorating the memory of William Macpherson (1784-1866).

The issue of *Creag Dhubh* 2001, No 53 gives a very good account of the visit to Australia. While the Wild Scotsman Capture Festival at Gin Gin has ceased to function, the NSW Southern Highlands village of Bundanoon continues to become Brigadoon in April each year (except 2020 and 2021). Brigadoon regulars continue to recall Cluny's war cry challenge, his exhortation to 'call me Bill', and his unaccompanied rendition of "Gu 'M A Slan Do Na Fearaibh",¹ followed by the Parachute Regiment song and 'I belong to Glasgow' brought the house down.

Numerous obituaries about our late Chief have been published. In the main they have concentrated on a very distinguished legal career in the UK and overseas. I commend that in *The Scotsman* which, however, joins his legal career with several observations about a Clan Chief who was 'first among equals', one with a great sense of humour, and greatly admired by members of the Clan, at home and abroad. <https://www.scotsman.com/news/people/obituary-sir-william-macpherson-of-cluny-clan-chief-and-judge-3151655>



Cluny, Lady Cluny and John L Macpherson at Bundanoon is Brigadoon, April 2000

¹ Written when a large group of Macphersons and others left Kingussie for Australia in 1838, departing from Oban aboard the *St George*.

Books About Badenoch

Two books, one published and one yet to be published will be of interest to the Scottish diaspora: particularly those with Macpherson ancestry in Badenoch and surrounding areas. The books will also appeal to descendants of passengers who came to Australia on the *St George* in 1838.

This book covers the environmental, historical and cultural changes to the land and inhabitants of a little valley in the Highlands of Scotland, Badenoch, stretching from pre-history to the cessation of World War 1. Bounded by the Monadhliath and Grampian ranges, with the River Spey flowing through to the sea, the topography, environment and climate dictated the number of people the valley could support. Control over land and resources was fundamental in maintaining social relationships and the folk from Badenoch did it well. Australia and New Zealand provided an opportunity and a lifestyle that they could only dream of in far-off Badenoch. Land was the key. Some returned to Badenoch, having made their fortune, whilst others settled into their new homes; this book tells their stories and the story of the land they left behind.

The Spirit of Badenoch

The Spirit of Badenoch

Judy McCutcheon

Judy McCutcheon

PROOF

CMA member Judy McCutcheon (Mowbray Tas) has advised that her forthcoming book, *The Spirit of Badenoch* was the subject of a lecture presentation, through Eventbrite, on Thursday 11th March. She understands that the presentation will be re-presented on a later date.

Judy said, *The lecture was a short grab of the book, 'The Spirit of Badenoch' which, the publishers have promised ..., will be out sometime in March. I was asked to do the presentation and thought it too good an opportunity to miss.*

There is no cost, but because it is electronic, they ask that you book.'

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-journey-through-time-discovering-the-spirit-of-badenoch-tickets-139695477935>

The tome includes many of our Badenoch Macpherson family. Her research covers countries all over the world, but because of size and eventual cost, it had to be condensed to Australia and New Zealand, with a sprinkling of Canadian. There is an extensive bibliography and appendices. There will be a soft cover

version and an E-book available. A firm date from the publisher is expected soon. 'all they've told me is it will be in March!

Judy adds that she is happy to pass on any research, official documents, etc. to any family connected and to answer any queries wherever possible.'

A synopsis follows.

'A journey ... , following the path of the men and women of Badenoch from the last Ice Age until the silent guns marked the end of the First World War. Their home in the upper reaches of the Spey has always been, ... relatively isolated; topography, environment and climate dictating the number of people the valley could support.

Other factors that had a huge impact on the valley, such as the arrival of sheep farming on an industrial scale. Tacksman or crofter, many were pushed or pulled to emigrate ... to the far ends of the earth.

The new lands were often alien to what they had known. Many emigrants spoke very little English, yet they survived and mostly prospered, because of social cohesion; clanship survived and prospered. Control over land and resources enabled the maintenance of social relationships (done) ... well. Australia and New Zealand provided an opportunity and a lifestyle that they could only dream of. Land was the key.

The majority put down roots, raised their families and passed on more than what they had on arrival, whilst their Badenoch friends generally prospered in an economy that changed from sheep to health and tourism. Their children and grandchildren prospered. War would tear them apart; in particular, the mechanization and industrialization of war that commenced with the Boer War, where it was widely reported that Badenoch was a "splendid nursery for military men." That war could not prepare them for the carnage of the First World War, the impact of which, if they survived, would change their lives forever. Their footprint was gentle, yet their impression immense.'

Clan Museum Advisory Committee member Mary Mackenzie has written about Newtonmore and its creation and is now in its second print run.

How did the fledgling village of NEWTONMORE survived traumatic times in its infancy? Poverty, famine, threat of being by-passed, underemployment, turbulent weather were some of the adversities faced by the pioneer population. Did the hard work of your Cattanach, Macpherson, Kennedy, Macdonald, McIntosh, Cameron, Rose, Forbes, Stewart or Sellar ancestors contribute to the flourishing of NEWTONMORE despite adversity?

The book aims to answer the question and present an overview of the emergence of NEWTONMORE, the struggle for survival and endeavours of the village

leaders to build a thriving community. Until now very little was known about the early development of the village.

THE NEW TOWNIES OF THE MOOR

NEWTONMORE –
ADVENT AND ADVANCEMENT, 1820 to 1913.



'AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF NEWTONMORE HALL
IN 1913.'

MARY MACKENZIE

The author has drawn upon a wide range of sources to reconstruct the milestones in the village's early history.

Published to mark Newtonmore's bicentenary, *The New Townies of the Moor* is a fascinating and perceptive account of the origins and growth of the village.

Extensive research of government records, estate papers, maps, newspapers, photographs and oral testimony has created a colourful and intimate history of village life from its origins in 1820 through to the eve of the First World War.

From an exploration of pre-village society, the book describes how James Macpherson of Belleville (now Balavil) founded the new village. But the lack of any coherent economic plan plagued the village for years to come. The book traces the difficult path through the nineteenth century, covering major issues like the dreadful hunger crises that swept the Highlands in the late 1830s and 1840s, the creation of the Free Church and the coming of the railway in the early 1860s with its hope of better times.

The author explores Newtonmore's growth and expansion in the later nineteenth century: new and better houses, school, churches; the establishment of numerous social and sporting clubs and societies that reveal growing community spirit. The

book finishes on an optimistic note as the tourist boom of the early 1900s brought a new and sustained level of prosperity, encouraging the villagers to tackle their most ambitious project – the new village hall.

Much more than just a straightforward history, Mary has skillfully interwoven the lives and stories of the families – Macphersons, McIntoshes, Cattanachs, Kennedys et al – that had made Newtonmore their home.

The author weaves stories of Beltane bannocks, the annual sojourn to the Lowlands for harvest work, the life of the railway navvies, the open-air church services, the Temperance movement, and, far beyond the bounds of Newtonmore, the tribulations of life during the Boer War. Other episodes show the villagers – in a sign of growing confidence – fighting to protect their rights securing more land for their crops, taking the laird to court to protect St Bride's cemetery, and blocking a wealthy shooting tenant's attempt to close off Glen Banchor.

New Townies is an excellent study of village history that will, for its intimate and warm depiction of life through such momentous times, be treasured by all those with Newtonmore connections. ... this book will also prove of interest and value to all with an interest in the region's cultural heritage.

The New Townies of the Moor is being marketed by Badenoch Heritage and distributed through several on-line outlets. Clan members can order through the Museum, but details of postage etc. to overseas buyers is being looked into to minimise costs.

Details of availability, price and postage of *The Spirit of Badenoch* will be sent to members separately once the authors are informed by their respective publishers.

Bundanoon is Brigadoon – Postponed to 2nd April 2022

Regrettably, the NSW COVID19 restrictions on large gatherings has caused the Organising Committee to postpone this year's Gathering to 2nd April 2022.

2021 CMA Annual Gathering A decision about this year's Gathering is expected to be made on 28th March. The UK COVID19 restrictions extant will determine the outcome. The Gathering might go ahead mirroring the limited activities of last year. Should the current UK restrictions be eased, a more extensive Gathering could occur. To cover the possibility of full programme, details and a registration form are included in this year's 2021 Creag Dhubh (No 73) pp 68-71.

The Clan Chattan Association AGM and Dinner which usually precedes the Gathering, has been cancelled.

Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival (BWSF) – Saturday 5th June 2021

Having regard to NSW COVID19 restrictions, planning continues. **Clan Macpherson is the Clan of Honour for the day.** The draft programme includes a shortened march inside Central Park Wingham then the Official Opening at 9.30am. the Day's events include performances by five bands, highland dancers, tugs-o-war, kilted dashes and hurling the haggis. Newcastle based Highland Rose Jacobite Re-enactment Group will perform, and the best dressed Scottish dog will be chosen. The Festival will close at 3.30pm

Controlled admission will be a registration system and purchase of a wristband. There will be a Clan Macpherson tent; volunteers needed. Contact David B Macpherson mob 0409 354 234.

BWSF website is at <https://bwsf.zyrosite.com/>

Macphersoniana - Digital Exhibition of Objects and Their Stories from Around the World

By press release from Newtonmore, 'We are delighted to announce that *Macphersoniana* - our digital exhibition of Macpherson-related objects and stories - is now open, and you can visit it at <https://macphersoniana.org>.

It complements the new permanent exhibition that we're putting together at the Clan Museum in Newtonmore and tells the stories of what it means to be a Macpherson - so far, we have had contributions from Scotland, England, Germany, Australia and the US.

If you have an object related to Clan Macpherson or one that tells the story of your connection with the Clan, we would like to hear from you. The object can be anything, from a cherished piece of tartan, to a pebble from a visit to the Clan's homeland in Badenoch, or a family object that isn't valuable to anyone else but means a lot to you. What we're really interested in is the story behind the object, the memories it inspires for you, and what it says about your connection with the Clan.

To share your object and story please get in touch with Dr Mairi MacPherson on museum.development@clan-macpherson.org, who will discuss further details with you - or visit <https://macphersoniana.org/contact/>.

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

Activities across the Country

2021

At the time of printing some Gatherings and Festival websites do not indicate whether the events listed will proceed. If in doubt CHECK!!!

28th March, Ringwood Highland Games, **Postponed to October 2021**

2/3rd April, Maclean Highland Gathering, info 0429 842 472,

www.macleanhIGHLANDGATHERING.COM.AU

10/11th April, Australian Pipe Band Championships, Maryborough Vic, info 03 5461 1480

Cancelled

17th April, Bundanoon is Brigadoon, info <https://brigadoon.org.au/> **Postponed to 2nd April 2022**

1/2nd May, Australian Celtic Festival, Glen Innes, info www.australiANCelticFestival.COM

21st May, A night in Scotland, Southport Yacht Club, info ph 0400 657 372,

sjhough@onthenet.com.au

22nd May, Berry (NSW) Celtic Festival, at Berry Showgrounds, info 02 4403 0300 or

www.berryrotary.org.au/celtic-festival

23rd May, The Gathering, Ipswich (Qld), at Ipswich Turf Club, info

www.gatheringfestival.com.au

5th June Bonnie Wingham (NSW) Scottish Festival Highland Games and Fair, info 02 6556 9051 or <https://bwsf.zyrosite.com/> **Clan Macpherson Tent.**

4/7th June International Celtic Festival, Portarlinton, VIC. A long weekend of Celtic music, relax and experience the depth of Celtic culture through the festival's culturally diverse arts program. **Announcement to be made** <https://www.nationalcelticfestival.com/2021>

1st July, Tartan Day

3rd July Aberdeen Highland Games. <http://www.aberdeenhIGHLANDGAMES.COM/>

Announcement to be made

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

19/22nd 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

9th October Canberra Highland Gathering, Kambah ACT <http://canberragathering.com.au>

Clan Macpherson Tent. Announcement to be made

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The incredibly rare Scottish Hummingbird.

