



Clan Macpherson Association

(Australian Branch)



Website www.clan-macpherson.org

March 2023 Newsletter

2023 Annual Gathering and AGM

Planning is complete for the 2023 Annual Gathering. The programme, costs and a registration form are at the back of Creagh Dhubh No 75. (See pages 79-84)

Note also that the Clan Chattan AGM and Dinner on Thursday 3rd August 2023 will be held at a new venue, The Kingsmills Hotel in Inverness. Confirmation details will be posted on the Clan Chattan website www.clanchattan.org.uk

The Corporate Structure of the 'Australian' Branch.

A recent update of the NSW Association Incorporation Regulation 2022 prompted a need for the Branch to establish wider corporate governance following the disruptive impact of COVID.

During COVID the NSW Branch Committee continued to ensure we conformed with NSW Office of Fair Trading (OFT) procedures for Annual Returns and Financial Reports to 30th June 2022. In addition, our Branch annual reports, published in Creagh Dhubh, financial remits to Scotland were submitted and a bi-annual Newsletter continued to be issued to members.

Just before COVID, a decision was made to prepare a new 'Australian Branch' constitution, however action stalled. In short, the intention was to adopt a new constitution with a concurrent wish to involve a wider (Australian) number of members in the conduct of Branch affairs.

The NSW Regulation update, and advice from the OFT indicated that the current 'NSW Branch' constitution could be renamed 'Australian Branch' to satisfy the situation whereby the term is accepted for general use within Australia, and by the CMA Council and international branches of the CMA. Scotland has always regarded the current officers and committee as the 'Australian' Branch. Put simply; we do not need a new constitution.

So, to return to pre COVID normality, the 2022 AGM of the NSW Branch was held by ZOOM on Wednesday 28th December at 10.30am to conduct the usual AGM business, plus a resolution; that;

- 1. the formal title of the Clan Macpherson (NSW Branch) as registered with the NSW OFT be changed to the Clan Macpherson (Australian Branch),*
- 2. the name of the Westpac bank account be changed accordingly,*
- 3. the NSW OFT be notified vide the appropriate Form A7, and*
- 4. the appropriate fee (\$111) be paid.*

The resolution was passed, and the necessary administrative action completed.

Given the approval of the resolution above, the 'committee' agreed to call a Special General Meeting of the 'new' Branch to facilitate the inclusion of all members in the affairs of the 'new' Branch, including the election of officers and committee members from other than NSW.

For those not aware of the history, the name 'NSW Branch' was adopted originally for administrative and banking simplicity, and an expectation that branches would be formed in other states. At that time, 1998/99, the NSW Act required all officers and the Public Officer to reside in NSW. Now, only the Public Officer is required to reside in NSW, and there is a practical realisation by OFT that officers and members can live elsewhere, and act accordingly. Local state branches were not formed, while intra-state communication has been performed by state representatives.

Advice of the proposed 'Australian Branch' Special General Meeting will be sent to members electronically, or by post.

The Clan Macpherson Museum

(A report by Convenor of Trustees, Bruce J S Macpherson)

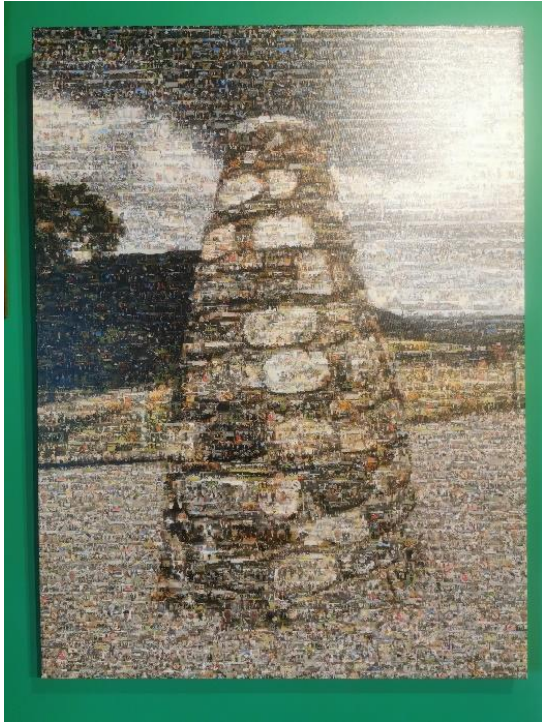
“As the days get perceptibly longer and we relish the arrival of the Spring here in Scotland, so too we look to the April opening of the Museum with optimism and anticipation.

Last year was a stellar year for the Museum - the appointment of Aila, our first-ever professional Curator; the Museum’s full emergence from lock-down with the entire collection refurbished and re-presented to the evident delight of visitors; Cluny’s stirring words at the ‘re-opening’ of the Museum last August when he described the home of the Clan Macpherson’s treasures as ‘a Jewel in the Crown of Scotland.’

In his speech, Cluny paid tribute to, ‘the countless numbers of people who have been and are involved in creating and maintaining the Museum we have today: funding bodies and government agencies from whom we have received grants, Friends and Guardians of the Museum, generous visitors, people from afar who have raised money for us, office bearers and committee members. And not just Macphersons - members of the local community and people from much further afield.’

I too offer my sincere thanks and would appeal to all who might read this to continue to give generously of your time, your passion, your talents and your energies. If any of you would like to contribute towards the life of the Museum in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me. We’re not just looking for financial support but for the involvement of members of the Association and friends of the clan in our committee structures and in the very exhibition itself; we’re looking for people who might champion the Museum across the branches.

Last year, the Museum played host to over thirty events, some ‘live’ in-person at the Museum and others online. We also have the capacity to hold special exhibitions, as we plan to do this year. If you have ideas for an exhibition or can think of someone who might be interested in doing an online talk on something of interest to our members, friends and supporters, please let me know.



Likewise, if you are a member of or know of like-minded bodies with which the Museum could form some form of association, I would love to hear from you. The bonds of Clan Chattan strengthened the arm of the Macphersons in the past and these days, if we can utilise others to help blow our chanter, we have the chance to amplify our voice and tell even more people of our unique collection of treasures.

I was fortunate to serve on the committee that organised the 1996

Jubilee Gathering when our late Chief unveiled the Jubilee Cairn dedicated to the memory of Ewan of the '45. The Cairn is made up of stones sent by clansmen and women from across the world and symbolises their return to a place from which they came and which many regard as sacred. In the Museum, a 'Book of Gold' records the origins of the stones and, all too often, the reason why individuals and families felt moved to send 'their' stones home to Scotland.

When the museum was redesigned in 2021 we were keen to celebrate the Cairn and the community it represents, and it forms the focus of the 'Clan and Community' gallery, where we have a large picture of the cairn composed of over 500 images sent by clan members. Perhaps you sent one in?

Like the Cairn, the Museum is a living entity, and we all have the opportunity to continue to nurture it and grow in so many different ways in the future. On behalf of the Trustees, I thank you for your support.

Any thoughts, ideas or suggestions we will always welcome:

convenor.museum@clan-macpherson.org

Australia Day Honours

Maree McPherson, wife of CMA member Warren McPherson, of Traralgon (Victoria); business woman, executive, leader and author, received a Medal in the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2023 Australia Day Honours. Philip Hopkins, writing in the *Latrobe Valley*



Express said that Maree, 57, had a plethora of roles in the Traralgon and Gippsland community and deserved her award for service to the community through a range of organisations. These included leadership positions to senior executive roles in local and Gippsland government, and the Rotary Club of Traralgon Central, often with an emphasis on helping women.

Maree said she was obviously happy to receive the award, but when told of it, “I was so stunned”. “I’ve spent a lot of time nominating other women for awards,” she said – but this time it was her turn.

Maree said her emphasis on supporting women in different ways had its beginnings in her first job as a young welfare worker. “I worked with young mums and learnt about the different way to do things and work with other women,” she said.

Maree grew up in Traralgon, attending Kosciuszko Street Primary School and the then Traralgon High School, before doing welfare studies at the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education (“Now you know how old I am!”). She later did a graduate business diploma in labour and management relations at Monash University, and post-graduate studies at Swinburne University in organisational development and coaching.

In wider Gippsland, Maree has been chair of Gippsland Regional Partnership, 2016-20; a regional manager at GippsDairy; a regional manager for Gippsland Anglicare; and has had senior roles with the Gippsland Community Leadership Program and the Gippsland Area Consultative Committee.

She is currently ambassador for Gippslandia and author of two

publications – *Cutting Through the Glass Ceiling – Women Creating Possibility in Regional Australia* (2017) and *Worthy* (2021). A professional certified coach and member of the International Coach Federation, Maree has run her own leadership consultancy since 2014, and is an approved provider for Femeconomy, where she has been a member since 2017.

Other executive roles include being a member of the Community and Further Education Board Victoria, and a regional coordinator with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

Chief Executive of the Victorian Local Governance Association from 2009-2013, Maree's other managerial roles include being a Fellow of the Australian New Zealand Institute of Managers and Leaders; and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Institute of Public Administration Australia. In her home base, Maree has been a member of the Rotary Club of Traralgon Central since 2006; was the first woman president from 2009-2010, also serving as club president in 2016-17 and 2019-20; and is a Double-Sapphire Paul Harris Fellow.

Maree said it would be 'business as usual' for a few years. "I'm committed to continue doing volunteer work with Rotary," she said.

Maree's husband Warren said, "I'm being biased, but Maree has done some amazing work during her working life and carried the McPherson name with pride.'

Electronic Version of Creagh Dhubh

In view of rising costs of printing and timely distribution of Creagh Dhubh, and the widening use of electronic communication, the Council is considering the introduction of an electronic version of Creagh Dhubh using one of the available software options such as FlipBook.

However, Council is very well aware that some members are not connected via the Internet, and/or might continue to prefer the hard copy version.

A trial using the 2022 issue of Creagh Dhubh is being planned of which all members will be given due notice.

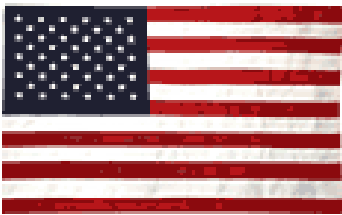
Canadian Branch Gathering



This year's Annual Canadian Gathering will take place on Saturday June 17 and Sunday June 18 in Cobourg, Ontario in conjunction with the Cobourg Highland Games.

Booking for our rooms will be made directly with the Best Western. A block of rooms has been set aside and the link is posted on the Canadian Branch website page. The Gathering this year is only 2 days instead of the usual 3 to keep costs down. For more details contact Branch Chairman Denise Lagundzin at Canada.chair@clan-macpherson.org

US Branch AGM and Gathering



The U.S. Branch AGM and Gathering will be held in October at the Hilton Garden Inn, Oklahoma City Airport. The Registration page is at <http://clan-macpherson.org/us/agm/index.html>

If you have any questions about the Gathering, contact Branch Chairman Robert T. McPherson at UnitedStates.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org, John Bierens at bierens@sbcglobal.net or Bruce Sterba at sterbabah@gmail.com

Hotel reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly.

Hilton Garden Inn Oklahoma City Airport

801 S. Meridian Ave.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73108

Phone: (405) 942-1400

Be sure to identify yourself as part of Clan Macpherson US Annual Gathering.

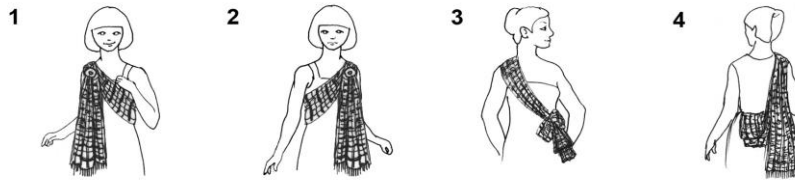
Australian Branch Contacts

Chairman: John L Macpherson 0409 122 141
Australian.Chairman@clan-macpherson.org

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adamdetotth@netspeed.com.au

Wearing of Sashes by Ladies



The manner of wearing tartan sashes has had customary significance since the 18th century. The different ways to wear a sash is based upon a careful study of old portraits, prints and traditional practice. The wearing of a sash in any particular manner has no legal significance, hence the sash is worn as respect for tradition and is consistent with custom.

1. Style worn by Clan women: The sash is worn over the right shoulder across the breast and is secured by a pin or small brooch on the right shoulder.

2. Style worn by wives of Clan Chiefs and by wives of Colonels of Scottish Regiments: The sash, which may be fuller in size, is worn over the left shoulder and secured with a brooch on the left shoulder.

3. Style worn by ladies who have married out of their clans, but who still wish to use their original clan tartan. The sash is usually longer than style 1, is worn over the right shoulder, secured there with a pin, and fastened in a large bow on the left hip.

4. Style worn by country dancers or where any lady desires to keep the front of the dress clear of the sash. Perhaps to wear a sash of some chivalric order or any orders and decorations. The style is similar to the belted plaid and is really a small arisaid. It is buttoned on at the back of the waist, or is held by a small belt, and is secured at the right shoulder by a pin or small brooch, so that the ends fall backwards from the right shoulder and swing at the back of the right.

2023 Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival

Clan Macpherson tent

Saturday 3rd June @ Central Park Wingham

For more details go to <https://www.bonniewingham.com>

The Golden Eagle

(Reproduced from the Clan Chattan Magazine 2023)

The majestic Golden Eagle soars over the straths, glens and mountains of Scotland, and particularly Clan Chattan territory. These incredible raptors have wingspans of over 2 metres, can reach speeds of 120 mph and dive at speeds of 150 mph as they catch their prey with their talons. A Golden Eagle can live for 40 years and pairs for life.

In Gaelic, the Golden Eagle is commonly called *iolaire bhuidhe*, but older Gaelic names celebrated its beauty, power and supposed supernatural abilities, and included *fireun*, 'the true bird'. The wild beauty, strength and courage of the Golden Eagle makes it an ideal choice to be the Scottish National Bird and explain why it's the most popular candidate. In 2017, the French Army trained Golden Eagles to catch drones.

There is a legend that in Scottish Highland culture, a chief was expected to prove his courage and strength by climbing to the top of a mountain to pluck a feather from the nest of a Golden Eagle. The feather would then be placed in the Chief's cap as a symbol of his bravery and leadership.

The origin of the Scottish custom of displaying a Golden Eagle feather or feathers is not clear. However, the Court of the Lord Lyon provides guidelines for entitlement to display one or more Golden Eagle feather (s) and in Scotland this protocol is respected. Real Golden Eagle feathers are displayed, with the feather's quill tucked behind the crest badge on a Balmoral or Glengarry cap. The long feather projects above the badge as a distinctive mark of rank in a clan. The tradition for clan chiefs to wear 3 Golden Eagle feathers seems to date as early as circa 1660. Subsidiary chiefs, chieftains, heirs apparent or presumptive are entitled aware two feathers. Scots armigers (those were the right to bear personal arms) may wear a single feather. This is traditional convention and not Scottish law.

New Members

Annual

Robert HG Scott (Leopold Vic)

Ann-Louise Dooley (Buderim Qld)

VALE

Caroline J Ansell (Karana Downs Qld)

Shelagh Macpherson-Noble's Long Tour



Former CMA Chairman Shelagh Macpherson-Noble and her husband Alistair have returned to Scotland after a lengthy holiday in Australia and New Zealand. During the trip they stayed with their son Euan who had just become an Australian citizen.



In addition, visits were made to relatives in Tasmania and local CMA members in Sydney, Canberra and New Zealand. While driving down the east coast from Queensland the tourists revisited Maclean, the town with tartan power poles, and a very obvious Scottish Shop where the duty volunteer on the day was Bob Macpherson, recently retired secretary of the famed Maclean Highland Gathering, now in its 118th year.

Pics L to R,
Shelagh Macpherson-Noble with Bob Macpherson in Maclean
Euan Noble holding his Australian Citizenship Certificate

Bundanoon is Brigadoon



The new Bundanoon Pipe Band



Typical Scottish, cool and drizzly weather greeted visitors to Bundanoon on 1st April for the return of the 43rd Bundanoon is Brigadoon Gathering following a 3-year break caused by COVID and severe rains. Estimates suggest some 9000 people attended to watch 25 pipe bands mass for the opening and closing ceremonies and visit 28 Clan tents. After a quiet start the Clan Macpherson tent attracted 10 potential member and a collection of current members who travelled from Canberra and metropolitan Sydney. Chieftain of the day was Simon Abney-Hastings, an Australian Earl who is the current holder of one of the oldest Scottish noble titles, Earl of Loudoun, named after Loudoun in Ayrshire Scotland. The Title is

one of the oldest Scottish noble titles and it carries with it the right to carry the Golden Spurs (the emblems of knighthood and chivalry) at the Coronation of a British Monarch.

There was a happy coincidence this year. Former 27th Chief Sir William of Cluny was born on 1st April and was Chieftain of the Day at Bundanoon on 1st April 2000. (The year the Bundanoon tartan was launched).

The Melbourne Highland Gathering and Celtic Festival



Formerly known as the Ringwood Highland Gathering, about 1,000 attended with 20-25 Clan tents mounted at Eastfield Park, Croydon. The program also included traditional events; Heavy Games, dancing, band competitions and some commercial displays as well as martial arts and Roman Empire and medieval

dress events, and battle dress re-enactments. A Clan Macpherson tent was part of the Clan Display section. CMA member Peter Shine (from Ballarat, pictured) assisted and took part in the Clan March with David J MacPherson (Templestowe). A number of visitors interested in the Clan Macpherson and Associated Families called in seeking information about Clan names, and general knowledge concerning Scotland and Clan Macpherson/Clan Chattan connection. Copies of the latest October 2022 newsletters were handed out to help visitors further research the CMA web site.



Which Badge?

By Norman L Macpherson (Registrar of the CMA in 1951) Creag Dhubh Issue No 2, 1951.

When the world was younger, it was necessary to employ some badge or emblem to distinguish one clan from another and to know friend from foe in the many skirmishes, frays and forays in which our forefathers took such delight, and by which they replenished their granaries and larders. This badge was distinct from the Crest, the sitting cat in our own case, which is now generally recognised as belonging to the Clan, but which in earlier days was the prerogative of the Chief, worn only by himself, his family and immediate retainers.

The badge was usually a plant, bush or tree which grew in some profusion in the district of the clan which chose it, and was worn on the headdress, or fixed in some prominent position to be easily seen and recognised.

Searching through the authorities from whom, it may be thought, a decisive answer would be got the enquirer is amazed at the number of such badges or emblems assigned to one clan, and at the frequency with which one badge is apportioned to several different clans.

In the case of the Macphersons three emblems are given, with the appearance of authority, by those who have evidently taken great pains to assure themselves that they have got the rights of the matter; it is, however, from this multiplicity that the question "Which Badge?" arises.

The three badges associated with Clan Macpherson are:- Red Whortleberry, Boxwood and White Heather.



That the Red Whortleberry was the original Badge of the Clan, there can be little doubt, for as long as Clan Chattan was an entity this plant was the recognised emblem by which that Clan was known, and Clan Macpherson, as the senior member of that confederation and as the branch from which the Chief was drawn, would have a prescriptive right to use

it, but, later, as the alliance was broken up or dissolved the constituent members would also retain it for their own use, so that, today, it is found that several of the old Clan Chattan members still look on the Red Whortleberry as their badge, while others have chosen other Emblems.

That the Red Whortleberry is a plant, indigenous to Badenoch and to other parts of our native land cannot be denied, but this is not so in the case of Boxwood, second on our list. Botanical experts say the Boxwood was introduced to Britain by the Romans and it cannot, therefore be said to be native. Additionally, it requires lime or chalk for its growth and as these elements are noticeably absent from the peat of the soil in which the Red Whortleberry flourishes it can only be found in very scattered areas and very sparse numbers in the Clan Macpherson country.

Boxwood leaves are nearest in appearance to Red Whortleberry and, doubtless, when a raid took place in the country where Boxwood abounded it would be taken and used as “the next best thing”. Some writers who might be considered as authorities, say that Boxwood is the oldest Badge, but a little consideration of the foregoing statement will prove that this can hardly be so.



Turning now to the last of the three plants - White Heather - what it said to be for and against this choice? It is a native of our Scottish hills and grows in our peaty soil; but its scarcity and the infrequency with which it is found must be argued against it, along with the

fact that it is only to be gathered at certain times of the year.

The story of the adoption of White Heather as the Clan Badge is one of the romantic traditions of Clan Macpherson and will appeal to the Jacobite as well as to the true Clansman. It relates to the events of the '45 or rather to post-Culloden days. The Cluny of the '45 had been sheltering Prince Charlie in the “cage” on Ben Alder. When, after the Prince had made his escape to France, Cluny was being escorted by his clansman on his return to the neighbourhood of Cluny Castle they were overtaken by one of the darkest nights it had ever been their lot to experience. So dark

was it that the clansmen, refusing to go any further that night, insisted on bivouacking where they were in order to ensure the safety of the Chief. After some discussion, for Cluny was desirous of getting as near his home as possible, this course was adopted and Chief and Clansmen slept as and where they were. A watch was set as it was known that Government troops were on the search for Cluny, but, with the exception of one man, all fell sound asleep. During the night that one wakeful man heard the galloping of horses evidently coming towards the bivouac. What was the sentry to do? Should he awaken the others? Should he let them sleep and trust that the horsemen would pass? If he were to awaken the sleeping men would they be sufficiently alert, and will they be able to make their preparations without noise, which would draw the attention of the Royalists? Such was his dilemma. His decision was to let the camp remain asleep and trust to the darkness of the night to hide them.

When Cluny awakened in the morning he was told of his escape. Casting his eyes downwards to where he had lain, he saw that he had been sleeping on a clump of White Heather, and in acknowledgement of and thankfulness for his safety he declared that henceforward the badge of the Clan Macpherson would be White Heather.

This tradition of the Clan, reaching back, as it does, for over 200 years, tells of only one of the many hairbreadth escapes that Cluny of the '45 had thanks to the unflinching loyalty of his clansmen and women, and may be accounted a, reason as good as many other in like circumstances for the adoption of the Clan Badge of "Fraoch Geal" or White Heather.

Clan Websites

Clan Macpherson Association <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/>

Official Clan Macpherson Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/clan.macpherson.association>

Clan Macpherson Museum <http://www.clan-macpherson.org/museum/index.html>

Activities across the Country
(* check the date)

24/30th April, Scots in the Bush, Boondooma (Qld), info www.boondoomahomestead.org.au

4/7th May, Australian Celtic Festival Glenn Innes (NSW). Featuring Year of Scotland
info www.australiancelticfestival.com

***15th May, Redlands Highland Gathering, Wellington Point (Qld).**
Info www.pipebandsqld.com

***21/22nd May, The Gathering, Ipswich (Qld) Turf Club.**
Info www.gatheringfestival.com.au

27th May, Berry (NSW) Celtic Festival, at Berry Showgrounds.
info 02 4403 0300 or www.berryrotary.org.au/celtic-festival

3rd June, Bonnie Wingham (NSW) Scottish Festival Highland Games and Fair.
Info 02 6556 9051 <https://bwsf.zyrosite.com> Clan Donnachaidh (Robertson) will be the Clan of Honour.

Clan Macpherson Tent.

9/12th June, National Celtic Festival, Portarlinton (Vic).
info www.nationalcelticfestival.com

17/18th June, Boonah (Qld), Scenic Rim Clydesdale Spectacular.
info 1300 259 343 or www.clydesdalespectacular.com.au

17/19th June, Townsville (Qld) Tartan weekend.
Info 0413 456 542 or mig7@optusnet.com.au

***18th June, Williamstown (Vic) Highland Gathering.**
info www.melbournehighlandgames.org.au/williamstown-highland-celtic-gathering

23/27th June Scottish Week in Sydney
Info www.scottishaustralianheritagecouncil.com.au

1st July, Aberdeen (NSW) Highland Games.
Info <https://aberdeenhIGHLANDGAMES.COM/programme/>

30th September/1st October, CelticFest, Warwick (Qld)
Info www.celticfestqld.com.au

7th October, Canberra Highland Gathering, Kambah (ACT). info
www.canberrahighlandgathering.com.au

Clan Macpherson Tent.

28th October, Highland Celtic Gathering, Seaworks Williamstown (Vic)
Info <https://melbournehighlandgames.org.au/williamstown-highland-celtic-gathering/>