

The Chief's message June 2006  
& The Chief's message Easter 2007.

**Chief's Message: Easter 2007**

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**9 April 2007**

Dear Clansmen

I am writing this on Easter Monday in the hope that it may be included in the Spring editions of Clan Newsletters.

Diana and I send you our best wishes. We are both well and enjoying what has turned out to be a bright and sunny Easter weekend. In two days time we will have been married for 48 years. In five days time I will be 81, so life goes on!

All our grandchildren seem to be thriving. Geoffrey and his family have been staying with us for Easter. Their sons Finlay (6) and Francis (4) are very taken with Diana's newly acquired puppy aged twelve weeks called Polly. She is a cross between a Jack Russell terrier and a Poodle, a breed known as a "Jackapoo"!

Tomorrow our daughter Virginia arrives with her Alice (17) and Emma (15) to stay for a night. Alice is expecting to go to university when she is nineteen and it is recommended that she visits at least five establishments before she applies. On Wednesday she is to visit St Andrews University, the first on her list.

On the 23rd February Diana and I spent the night on Skye and the following day attended the funeral of my cousin John Macleod of Macleod. He died of leukaemia on Monday 12th February aged 71 after a short illness. As was reported in the Sunday Herald, over 400 mourners came from around the world to attend the funeral held at Duirinish Free Church of Scotland at Dunvegan, with a burial afterwards at the ruined church at Kilmuir. He was buried next to his grandmother Dame Flora Macleod of Macleod. To quote from the Sunday Herald; "mourners spoke of their genuine love for Macleod, a man with a plethora of contradictions but who also possessed empathetic humanity". Obituaries have appeared in various Scottish and English newspapers.

As some of you will know John and I are descended from my great, great, great grandmother Mary, 12th of the thirteen children of John Macleod 9th Laird of Raasay, who entertained Dr Johnson in 1773.

Mary married the Rev. Dr William Campbell, for many years minister at Kilninver in Argyll, whose family originally came from Scalpay in the Western Isles. Their daughter Jane Mary Campbell married my great, great grandfather James Munro Macnabb. One of their daughters, Flora, married as his second wife John Walter of Bearwood, principle proprietor of the Times newspaper. Flora's youngest son Hubert Walter married Dame Flora Macleod of Macleod. They had two daughters; Alice who married her father's 1st cousin Archibald C Macnab of Macnab (defacto: 22nd Chief) and died without issue; and Joan who married Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont and Hallhead in Aberdeenshire. Their oldest son, (also Robert) inherited Esslemont and Hallhead. Their second son John inherited Dunvegan and changed his name to Macleod. His twin son Patrick, who also died of cancer, was at one time an Aberdeenshire Member of Parliament.

For some years I have wondered how it is that there came to be Macnab families well established in Skye. There is even a Macnab Tavern in Portree, which was visited by Prince Charles when he was making his escape after Culloden.

Similarly it is interesting how many Campbell families one can meet in the northern Highlands. A good example is my daughter-in-law Catriona. Her father and his brothers come from a well established Campbell family in Achiltbuie in Wester Ross (her mother was a Macleod, a name which goes with the area).

I hope to go into this further.

Best wishes.

Guneagal.

JAMES Macnab of Macnab

## **Chief's Message - June 2006**

Dear Clansmen,

Diana and I send you greetings.

Good Friday 14th April was my 80th birthday. For my birthday combined with our 47th wedding anniversary our daughter Virginia Fyffe and her husband Rick organised a family gathering at Corsindae, their home in Aberdeenshire. All eighteen of us spent the weekend together. Ages ranged from 80 to 3 with entertainment to suit all. We all had a wonderful time.

Diana was seventy on 16th June. We had a luncheon party here at Leuchars Castle Farmhouse with a tent on the lawn, in which ninety two of us sat down to a delicious meal provided by our local caterer. Apart from our four children, the youngest of whom is now 38, the guests were in the main friends and relations of Diana, many of whom went back fifty years or more. The gentlemen were outnumbered! The sun shone and judging by the noise alone, it too was enjoyed by everyone.

2009 will be our Golden Wedding, which I expect will be the next occasion for celebration! - In the meantime one of the friends, another Diana, has invited us to stay in a villa in Tuscany in July to celebrate her 70th birthday. So life is all go!

Since the death of my step-mother in October 2004 a certain amount of my time has of necessity been diverted to purely family affairs. I am now back on track again. While it has taken me much longer than I originally anticipated, I have made considerable inroads into the collating, listing and filing of the large quantity of family and clan papers I have in my possession. There is still a long way to go. In the last few months things have been further delayed as Sheila, the "freelance executive assistant" who did all my secretarial work, has become seriously ill and unable to work. I have only recently found someone else who is prepared to take me on.

I have the following to report:

### **1 The Balquhider, Lochearnhead and Strathyre Highland Games**

These games were started in 1848 and were originally the only Highland Games in West Perthshire. Now both Callander and Killin have their own games.

I have decided that I should resign from my position as Senior Honorary President of the Games, which I have held for several years. I have also been Chieftain of the games on five occasions. I shall continue to be a Patron and supporter of the Games.

### **2 McNab Township - Arnprior - Ontario, Canada**

I have previously recommended those interested in Clan History to try and get a copy of the History of McNab Township written by Peter Hessel entitled "McNab - The Township". This contains the most balanced account I know of how Archibald McNab (17th Chief) founded the Township in 1823.

In 1881 my great great uncle Sir Donald Macnabb KCIE visited the Township, where he met Miss Mary Ann Yuill, granddaughter of the 17th Chief. She gave him a green wax seal taken from an envelope. This shows Archibald's coat of arms. In 2005 I rediscovered this seal among my Uncle's papers and had it photographed and put on a CD (a copy accompanies this message). This version of the "Chiefs" Arms is similar to the version in "Keltie" published in 1885 without the helmet above the shield but with the same two kilted highlanders as supporters. These supporters do not appear in The Lord Lyon's Register nor are any supporters included in the Arms matriculation by John (15th Chief) in 1765, or those of Sir Allan MacNab of Dundurn matriculated in 1856, although both of these have a helmet above the shield. Francis (16th Chief) would have inherited his father's Arms; there is no record of his nephew having matriculated Arms. So it appears this is a version of the Coat of Arms thought up by Archibald himself.

In September 2005 I presented the seal to the Arnprior and District Archives, where it is to be displayed in the Waba Cottage museum. On the 29th September Robin McNab Jones, great grandson of Archibald (17th Chief) and a Trustee of the Macnab Memorial Trust, visited the Waba Cottage Museum in the Township with his wife, daughter and son-in-law. There they received a very warm welcome by members of the local council and the McNab/Braeside Committee

### **3 The Macnab Memorial Trust**

On the 1 June 2006 the funds available to the Trustees were £8441.64 (sterling). I hope that I will be able indirectly to make a further donation to the Trust of £1,250 in the near future, which would bring the total up to £9,691.64. At the present time these funds are held in an interest bearing Treasurer's Account with the Bank of Scotland. Included in these figures are the proceeds of the sale of "an outline of the History of Clan Macnab and its lands" published in 2003. At last count these amounted to £2,681 (sterling). Sales remain steady.

The Trustees are faced with the necessity of some restoration and maintenance to the Burial enclosure on the island of Inchbuie. For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the history of the Trust, it was set up in 1987 and I gifted the ownership of "Inchbuie" and the neighbouring island "Garb Innes" upstream in the Falls of Dochart to the Trust. Thus it is my hope that "Inchbuie", the ancient Macnab burial island, will remain in Macnab hands for posterity.

The Burial Enclosure together with the Screen Wall Arch and the Stone Pillars at the entrance on to the island off the Dochart Bridge are all listed by Historic Scotland. The listing category is category "B".

The centre of the island contains the remains of two forts of prehistory date surviving as a series of earthworks. In 2002 Historic Scotland requested that certain scrub trees, the roots of which were in danger of disturbing these earthworks, be cut down and their roots poisoned. A 100% grant was given to cover the cost of this work. In 2003 and 2004 the Trust approached Historic Scotland with a request for grant towards the cost of restoration and maintenance of the burial enclosure, the screen wall entrance and the Pillars at an estimated cost of around £7,500 phased over a number of years. Historic Scotland required that an accredited architect be employed.

His fee was £500 and his estimate for the work envisaged is £44,384, 47% of which is for prelims, contingency and fees (ie. for architect/engineer/quantity surveyor). To qualify for a 33.3% grant the work would have had to be completed within five years.

This has caused me, as Managing Trustee, to put the whole idea on to the back-burner for the time-being. In the meantime Killin has been included in the new Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. While this may be good for Killin, for the Trust it is an added complication. Any work, how ever minor, on any of the Listed Buildings now requires Planning Permission from the National Park Authority. The Authority have told me verbally that they would welcome, subject to conditions, any proposal the Trustees may care to submit however small. When I have the estimates to hand I shall be seeking my fellow Trustee's approval for some limited essential maintenance to the enclosure. In the longer term the Trustees will need to consider ways and means of raising funds.

In conclusion let me remind you that the Trust owns various items of Clan memorabilia. Most of these are part of the Clan Macnab display in the Folklore and Tourist Centre in the old mill at Killin. These items have recently been valued for insurance purposes at £13,300. The display, although small and a little cramped for space, is well worth a visit.

Our best wishes to you all.

Guneagle.

(J C Macnab of Macnab)