

**Journal of the Sydney Society
for Scottish History**



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COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY ELECTED FOR 1993

- President: Malcolm D. Broun QC, BA, LLB, University of Sydney on whom the Celtic Council of Australia has conferred the honour of "Cyfaill y Celtaidd" (Friend of the Celts)
- Vice-Presidents: Elizabeth Ann Bonner Ph.D. University of Sydney, Paper Convenor and Co-editor
Peter Fitzhardinge-Seton, a Scottish Armiger
- Hon. Secretary: Neil Morrison BA, LLB. Commissioner of the Clan Morrison in Australia
- Hon. Treasurer: Iain MacLulich, Major retired, a Scottish Armiger
- Editor: Gwynne F. T. Jones, D.Phil. Oxford MA New Zealand.
- Committee Member: Cecile Ramsay-Sharp

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INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

It is said of the Celts generally that they have a long memory. Scots are no exception. Clan feuds dating back hundreds of years are still to be found, maintained half seriously and half jokingly among Australian citizens who were themselves born and reared on the other side of the world from Scotland. The heroes of Scotland's past are remembered and spoken of with respect or even reverence by Scotland's children in all corners of the globe. Events that are perceived as great national tragedies, such as the Highland clearances, are still spoken of in terms of bitterness and regret by the descendants of the emigrants who had been dead for a generation before those descendants were born. However, notwithstanding these long memories and long held inherited feelings, it is often found on examination that those holding those beliefs really know relatively little about the facts.

The Sydney Society for Scottish History was therefore formed primarily by people born in Australia of Scottish ancestry who wanted to stimulate themselves into finding out more of the history which still formed part of their thinking and beliefs both by giving an opportunity for those more learned than them to expound and to provide stimulation to their own researches. We first met in mid-1985. Our first two papers by members were on the early kings of Scotland and the Scottish Reformation. In November 1985 we had our first international speaker who was visiting Sydney for Scottish Week: the Much Honoured Colonel Sir William Jardine of Applegirth, Baronet of Nova Scotia, Chief of the Clan Jardine. From that time on the progress of the Society, in the number attending regularly, and the quality of the papers delivered and the fame and standing of those who have spoken to the Society has steadily continued upwards. Our Society now meets normally eleven times a year; the number attending varies between 30 and 70 at each meeting; and in most years the number of papers from professional or published historians exceeds those by the ordinary members.

The Society has been specially helped by the support of the Department of History at the University of Sydney which has, since the formation of Sydney University, had a close association with Scotland, but our paper speakers have included members of the Departments of History of many other Australian universities. Very early in the history of the Society the late Professor Gordon Donaldson, who was also The Queen's Historiographer for Scotland, became our patron. It is, therefore, with great regret that the announcement of his death, on 16 March 1993 in his 80th year, is being published in the first issue and at the birth of the Society's journal. According to the obituary in *The Times of London*, the contribution by Professor Donaldson, CBE, to Scottish historiography was extensive.

'It ranged from magisterial works of scholarship such as his editorship of four volumes of the *Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland* (1957-66) and his own Volume III, [*James V - James VII*],

(1965) in *The Edinburgh History of Scotland* (of which he was general editor) to lighter, popular history in which there was no betrayal of standards. Among such books were *Shetland Life under Earl Patrick* (1958), *The Scots Overseas* (1966) and *All the Queen's Men* (1983). Scottish church history was very much his speciality as he demonstrated in his *The Making of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637* (1954), [and *The Scottish Reformation*, (1960) as well as numerous articles in learned journals]. It was a minefield through which Donaldson moved with ease both as a writer and a teacher, and those who arrived at his lectures with strong Presbyterian or Episcopalian leanings were presented with unbiased and scrupulously fair instruction. In some small way he may be said to have contributed to a reduction of the religious bigotry still to be found in Scotland a generation ago'.

His patronage was significant in establishing the credentials of the Society to invite prominent speakers. As merely one example it was our established contact with Professor Gordon Donaldson which enabled us to persuade the late Professor Ian B. Cowan of Glasgow University to address our Society during his lecture tour to Australia and New Zealand in July 1990; the year of his premature and sad death. The Society's early association with the Departments of Scottish History at Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities has provided our new patron, Dr. Michael Lynch, Professor elect (October 1993) to the Sir William Fraser Chair of Scottish History and Palaeography at Edinburgh University, who has kindly accepted the Society's invitation to fill that position. Dr. Lynch's historiographical output has also been impressive, most notably, a seminal study on the Church and State, *Edinburgh and the Reformation*, (1981) and the magisterial, *Scotland. A New History*, (1991) already in its 2nd edition, as well as numerous essays and articles in learned journals. The Society looks forward to welcoming him to Sydney as soon as his busy schedule will allow.

The Society has also taken the opportunity of encouraging postgraduate and B. A. Honours students to develop their interest in Scottish history by providing them with a forum to deliver a part of their dissertation or thesis as a lecture and in some cases providing the forum for the first public lecture of top students. One thing that has been obvious in the Society is that limiting ourselves to the special area of Scotland and Scots in the rest of the world, does not in any way limit the historical problems with which we deal. Many of the great debates of history are to be seen in stark relief in Scotland. Many of the great cultural, political and economic movements that have shaped the world are to be seen clearly in Scottish history - sometimes because the movement arrived later in Scotland than elsewhere, for example the European agricultural revolution; sometimes because the players were fewer in number and the results more dramatic and complete, for example the Reformation; sometimes because the smaller country being overwhelmed by the culture of a larger country gives a clearer picture of the consequences of empire than

could ever be seen from the centre of the empire - for example, the decline of the Gaelic language; and, of course, a smaller poorer country tends to have more of the past lying around as ruins or archaeological sites than in a country where everything has been dug up for freeways or for vast cities; perhaps most of all in proportion to its size Scotland has an unusually large amount of material to work on because of the relatively high degree of literacy to be found in Scotland, perhaps throughout its history but certainly from the 17th century on.

The publication of a journal is one of the ways in which a society devoted to history can pass on to other historians and amateurs what we have done and what we have found interesting. The papers in this journal have been edited and prepared for publication by our editors, Dr. Gwynne Jones formerly of the Department of History at Sydney University, and Dr. Elizabeth Bonner, latterly of the same institution. Nonetheless, it is to be hoped that in the years to come this journal may feature not only works of scholarship such as are found in the present issue, but also some of the thoughtful, discursive pieces and even, in an appropriate length, some of the lighter pieces which our members have enjoyed over the years.

One of our most important driving forces of this Society has been our Vice President, Dr. Elizabeth Bonner. She first delivered a paper to us in 1986 when she was then a Ph. D. student. Her personal studies and work in the field of Scottish history has put us in touch with many scholars, and in particular she has brought to us the participation of many members of the Department of History at Sydney University. She had delivered a major paper of original scholarship and research to us each year since 1986. The publication of this journal is mainly the result of her enthusiasm and persistence. This Society owes her a great debt.

I should like, as our present President, to express my thanks particularly to: our first President, the distinguished Australian artist, Mr. Robert Dickerson; our longterm Secretary, Mr. Neil Morrison, barrister, singer, poet and Commissioner of Clan Morrison in Australia; and to that considerable number of enthusiastic Australians of Scottish heritage whose attendance at meetings and whose genuine interest and enthusiasm is the basis of the Society's success, among whom I would particularly refer to Iain MacLulich, Robyn and Paul Gregor, Flora and Duncan MacLeod, Jean and Ray Bell, Wyn and Stuart Henderson, Ethel McKirdy-Walker, Dr. Robert Cameron, Alan Duncan, Irene Alexander, Barbara Forsyth, Angela Lind, Cecile Ramsay-Sharp, Peter Fitzhardinge-Seton and Colonel Donald Ramsay.

I am personally most honoured that the Society has decided to use my arms as its cover.

Malcolm D. Broun
Sydney, June 1993