



# “CÀRN-NA-CUIMHNE!”

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## **Clan Chief**

*Capt. Alwyne Compton Farquharson MC, of  
Invercauld*

## **Australian High Commissioner**

*Mr Bruce Finlay*

## **Chief's Clan Representatives in N.S.W**

*Mr Sydney Finlay, and  
Mr Peter Tranter*

## **Clan Farquharson Association Australia (N.S.W. Branch)**

### **President**

*Mr Peter Tranter*

### **Vice President**

*Mr Bruce Finlay*

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

*Mrs Brenda Finlay*

### **Committee Members**

*Mrs Pauline Finlay (Editor)*

*Mr Sydney Finlay*

*Mr Lindsay Sparkes*

*Mr John Tate*

*Mrs Helen Tranter*

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### **Annual Membership (NSW)**

*Fee: \$15.00*

*Classes of Membership: Individual,  
Family (2 Adults + Children under 18 years or  
who are dependent), and*

*Interested Non-Farquharson (Associate)*

*Application forms are available from the  
Secretary via the above address.*

## **The President's Message**

**Dear Clan Members,**

**So here we are into 2008 already. HAPPY  
NEW YEAR TO ALL.**

**On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Helen and I  
attended the Hunter Valley Scots Club  
Burns Dinner held at Club Macquarie in  
Argenton, a suburb of the City of Lake  
Macquarie. About 200 people attended and  
what an enjoyable night we had.**

**Attending this function reminded me that  
one of the main aims of our Association is  
to promote the Farquharson clan at  
functions formal and informal throughout  
New South Wales. As an extra bonus I also  
realized that this is a wonderful way to meet  
other Australians of Scottish heritage.  
Getting to our local Scottish society is an  
opportunity we all can enjoy and benefit by.**

**It is your Committee's intention to ensure  
that the Farquharson tartan is seen at as  
many as possible formal and informal  
events this year. We would also like to  
catch up with all of our members this year.**

**If any member has an idea for a branch  
activity, wherever, please don't hesitate to  
contact me, or any other member of the  
Committee.**

**I have to advise that Howard Leayr, who  
together with his wife Dorothy (nee  
Farquharson) are original members of our  
NSW Clan Association, has not been  
enjoying the best of health lately. Our  
thoughts and best wishes are extended to  
Howard and Dorothy.**

**Peter Tranter**

**PS: Enclosed are renewal forms for  
Members whose memberships have recently  
expired or will expire in the next couple of  
months. Please use the form, as this will  
avoid unnecessary expense and follow-up  
by the Secretary-Treasurer.**

**NEW MEMBERS**

We extend a warm welcome to new members of the Association:

**Mrs Phyllis KNIGHT of CAMMERAY;**  
**Mr Keith & Mrs Mary Farquhar of Launceston, TASMANIA.**

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**VALE STUART HENDERSON**

We regret to inform Members of the passing away of Stuart Henderson, formerly Treasurer of the Scottish Australian Heritage Council, and longtime High Commissioner for Clan Henderson and President of the Sydney Scottish Society and Burns Club. Stuart was a tireless worker on all things Scottish and a number of Charitable organizations. He was a great friend of our previous High Commissioner, and of our Clan. On behalf of all Members, our sincere condolences are extended to Stuart's wife Winn and Family.

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**About Town and Other Places**

**A WEDDING IS ANNOUNCED!**

We are immensely pleased to pass on the very good news from Committeeman John Tate and his wife Ruth that son Christopher will marry Tracy in August. The family is naturally thrilled with this news. We send our best wishes for the happy couple.

John and Ruth have also told us that daughter Leanne is off to NZ with the Liverpool Catholic Club Southern Cross Pipe Band to contest the NZ Championships. Best of luck Leanne.

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**THOSE ON THE SICK LIST**

As President Peter noted in his Message, Howard Leayr is still unwell, and we are hoping that he will begin to improve as time passes. Helen Tranter is also still on a long road to recovery from major surgery. Lindsay Sparkes is expecting to go into hospital at the end of this month for major surgery. Our thoughts and best wishes will be with all of our people on the "sick list". We hope you will have successful recuperations.

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**EVENTS UP NORTH**

**HUNTER VALLEY SCOTS CLUB BURNS NIGHT**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2008**

Helen and I joined about 200 people who attended this function. They were seated in tables of 8, which was a good number to meet and converse with

others at the table during the night, although we already knew one couple, Graham and Maureen Adams of White Heather Scottish supplies

Dinner was Scotch Broth followed by Haggis wi' Neeps Champit, followed by Beef and Hunter Valley Vegetables, then Topsy Laird (a Scottish trifle delight wi' Drambuie and cream) for dessert, and finished off with tea and coffee.

The courses of the dinner were interspersed with musical items by Jacarandah Ceilidh, the United Mineworkers of Australia Pipe Band, the Flora Grubb Studio of Highland Dancers, Kathryn Auchterlonie singing and playing the harp, and, of course Burns poems recited by Mike McMullen and Mary Kerr. There were also dances throughout the evening for the assembled company.

During the evening I met Cr Ron Swan, Mayor of the Shire of Port Stephens, and a staunch member of Clan McQueen. Ron is very keen to promote all things Scottish - he is the prime mover behind Clans on the Coast, a Scottish-Celtic Gathering to be held in Nelson Bay on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

**CLANS ON THE COAST**

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

To be held at the Tomaree Sports Field on Nelson Bay Road. Daytime activities will include a Grand Parade as well as Scottish, Welsh, Cornish and Irish entertainment, together with Highland Games, Highland dancing and Celtic school recitals. In the evening there will be a Ceilidh at Nelsons Bay RSL.

*Peter Tranter*  
*Association President*  
*Chief's Clan Representative (Northern NSW)*

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**DOWN SOUTH**

**PREPARATIONS FOR BRIGADOON**

As the season changes to autumn and we start to enjoy crispness in the air, our thoughts turn to another Brigadoon. The 3 months leading into the Bundanoon Highland Gathering is always a busy time for my wife, Brenda, and I, as we perform our duties as Stalls Coordinators for this big event.

**MITTAGONG COMPETITION DAY**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

The Southern Highlands has had an early taste of Scottish culture this year with Mittagong hosting for the first time a Scottish Band and Dancing competition! Held on Sunday 17 February at the picture perfect Mittagong Oval it was a most enjoyable day. The setting was just right with competition areas setup in a manner the general public felt they were as close as you can get to a Pipe Band, all this with a back drop of a densely treed ridge of hills. About 4,000 people attended and the rumour is that the Bands were so impressed with the venue and organisation; they

suggested Mittagong should be the venue for the Australasian Band and Dancing Championships to be held at the end of the year!

**BERRY CELTIC FESTIVAL**

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008**

Another coming event of interest is the Berry Celtic Festival to be held on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May at the Berry Showground. Whilst I haven't attended this Festival as yet I have heard very good reports from reliable sources. So get a taste of the Highlands and see some beautiful country as well...come down and have a peek.

**BOWRAL SCOTTISH ARMS TAVERN**

On the Farquharson front, with a little bit of help from our High Commissioner, Bruce Finlay, the Farquharson Tartan will soon be on display at the Scottish Arms, East Bowral. The Scottish Arms is the tavern that so impressed The Lord Sempill, Vice Convenor, The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, when he visited recently.

Hope to see you 'down south' soon proudly wearing the great Farquharson tartan.

Syd Finlay  
Association Committeeman  
Chief's Clan Representative (Southern NSW)

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**ELSEWHERE – High Commissioner's Diary**

**COMMEMORATING GOVERNOR LACHLAN MACQUARIE**

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008**

On a stormy afternoon, with High Commissioner for Clan Keith, Jean Marshall, we joined other Clan representatives to march down the eastern footpath of Macquarie Street in Sydney to the precinct of the NSW Parliament Buildings. Here there is erected the bronze statue of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, commemorating his governorship from 1810 to 1821. Macquarie's governorship was a watershed in the early history of New South Wales, when the rebellious "Rum Corps" were displaced and orderly government was restored in the colony.

An address was read by Scottish Australian Heritage Council President Val Smith, and floral tributes were laid before the statue. Pipers and Drummers from the 17<sup>th</sup> Australian Battalion, led by Piper Bill Campbell, concluded the ceremony with renditions of "Flower of Scotland" and the Australian National Anthem.

The commemorating party then retired to the aptly named Macquarie Hotel in nearby Wentworth Street, to partake of a dinner in honour of Governor Macquarie's memory. At dinner, the address was given by the Hon Richard Torbay MP, Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. It was a most enlightening and historically meticulous address, and was well received.

History has not been especially kind to Macquarie, probably for political reasons (see article last issue). There are many misconceptions about the historical facts surrounding Governor Macquarie's governorship. It never ceases to amaze the writer that Australians are so ignorant of their own history and, therefore, it was good to see some misconceptions put to rest on this occasion.

All in all, it was an enjoyable night and we even missed the thunder and lightning that hit the city outside while we were eating.

Our Clan Chief adds an interesting personal footnote to the Macquarie story. *"I much enjoyed the historical article on Governor Macquarie [last newsletter]. I am familiar with his background because of our family home at Torloisk, Mull, which I handed over to my nephew Richard Compton. The Comptons married into the Macleans of Torloisk early 1800's, who were next door neighbours to Ulva where Macquarie was born. Indeed, there is some inter-relationship back in our family pedigrees!"*

**WARRINGAH SCOTTISH BURNS NIGHT**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008**

Pauline and I once again joined other members of Warringah Scottish to enjoy a night of Haggis, entertainment, dancing and revelry to celebrate the 249<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous Bard's birthday. It was a humid night but this did not deter the willingness of some 85 people in attendance – it may even have stirred them on!

MC Sid Bowers was experimenting with some new musical arrangements, but once he had that sorted we settled down to some serious entertainment and dancing. An ambitious opening bracket had everyone working hard. This was followed by more relaxed numbers. In the meantime we had the pleasure of meeting 2 ex Sydney Thistle band members on our table – we recognized them by the Farquharson tartan they wore – and a clanswoman who was a Finlay before she married.

In due course the Haggis was piped in by David Bowers, the Haggis Party led by Sword bearer Andrew McGregor. Sid Bowers gave the Address to the Haggis, and we all had a goodly share of excellent fare. Following several more dance numbers, we were entertained by a full band complement of the Manly Warringah Pipe Band, replete with four dancers. The band and dancers gave an outstanding performance and are clearly lifting for their coming overseas tour.

Piper David Bowers was also in fine form and gave a lengthy rendition of many old favourites, greatly appreciated by everyone. The night ended just before midnight with the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

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**....in SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND****NEWS FROM THE CHIEF****January 2008**

Early in January High Commissioner Bruce Finlay received some interesting news from Clan Chief Captain Alwyne Compton Farquharson MC of Invercauld. As many members may know work has been going on for some time to relocate and rebuild the Visitors' Centre at the Culloden Battlefield site on Drumossie Moor in north-eastern Scotland. This is one of the most visited tourist sites in the whole of Scotland – the need for the present work arises partly because archeologists have found that the existing centre encroaches on the actual battlefield site and battle-line positions.

The Chief has written that a Clan Stone for our Clan, which played a prominent part in this tragic episode of Scottish history, is to be dedicated and placed in an appropriate point where Farquharsons fell on the battlefield. I quote the Chief's own moving words:

*"As for Culloden, we now have [a] Clan Stone which will be set up on the Culloden Walk of the Battlefield. For inscription it has the Clan Crest within Belt and Buckle with the surrounding Motto: 'FIDE ET FORTITUDINE', and below this: 'CÀRN NA CUIMHNE CLAN FARQUHARSON'.*

*It is an imposing stone of granite and will be a most fitting memorial to our clan at this historic site now owned by the National Trust for Scotland. There is an article about it in 'The Lion's Face' [Newsletter for Clan Farquharson UK] – and I hope it will feature as a memorial which binds us together and rekindles the flame of clan spirit amongst countless kith and kin who may visit the site now and in generations to come."*

I am sure any of our Clan Association members who in future travel to the Culloden Battlefield will look upon this handsome new memorial with great pride and not a little emotion and sadness at the sacrifices of our forebears.

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**A Little Bit of History****THE HONOURS OF SCOTLAND**

In previous issues we have looked at the importance of Scone Palace and the Stone of Destiny to the establishment of the Kings of Scotland. We now look at the other symbols of sovereignty, the crown, the sword and the sceptre, collectively known as the Honours of Scotland or the Scottish Regalia.

In 574 AD, St Columba, Abbot of Iona laid his hands on the head of Aedan and declared him King and his future descendants to be Kings of Scotland. Successive Kings realised that a crown would provide them with a more symbolic representation of their power. In the Middle Ages with the

changing ideas of nationhood and the spread of Christianity, the importance of additional symbols of a King's power became apparent. This led to the introduction of the Sword and the Sceptre. The Sword became a symbol of earthly power, meaning that its holder had a duty to dispense justice and to protect his subjects. The Sceptre represented the sacred nature of sovereignty, giving an authority to rule with sincerity and discretion as opposed to tyranny and partiality. Unfortunately, none of these early symbols of power have survived.

From 13<sup>th</sup> century the significance of a king-making ceremony became more apparent and in particular the need for the blessing of the ceremony by the Pope as this indicated the recognition of a true European nation. However, of course, this is where political considerations started to become important. King Alexander II (1214-1249) made several appeals to the Pope for recognition. King Henry III of England did not want to allow the extension of the authority of the Scottish King and successfully appealed to Pope Innocent IV to prevent this. Alexander III (1249-1286) tried again. This time the Pope refused Henry's submission that English agreement had to be obtained before a King of Scotland could be anointed and crowned. It was to be a further 78 years before full Papal recognition was to be given to Scotland.

The first written description of the Honours of Scotland dates from the ill-fated short reign of John Balliol (1292-1296). Edward I removed Balliol from the throne and took the Honours back to England. These are no longer in existence. 1306 saw Robert the Bruce seize the Scottish throne and a crown was hastily made for him. About 3 months later Bruce fled from the armies of Edward and this crown fell into the hands of the English. An unsubstantiated legend has gold from this crown becoming part of the current Scottish crown; however, it is more probable that Bruce's crown was not returned by the English. Following the significant Battle of Bannockburn, Robert the Bruce had another crown made. But it was Robert the Bruce's son, King David, in 1331, who became the first Scottish king to be appointed by a Papal Bull. This confirmed Scotland's status as a truly independent nation with her sovereignty answerable to no one except the Pope. The symbols of power used in this coronation and further coronations up to that of James IV in 1488 again have been lost.

The current Honours of Scotland date from sometime during the reign of James IV (1488-1513) and his son James V (1513-1542). It is though the silver -gilt sceptre was a gift from Pope Alexander IV and the sword and a scabbard made by Domenico da Sutri, a gift from Pope Julius II. Since then the crown, sceptre and sword have undergone repair due to breakage, alterations and additions as deemed necessary by each monarch. Some of this work was done in Europe and some by local

craftsmen such as Thomas Wood, John Mosman and Thomas Arthur.

The Honours were used in 1633 for the Coronation of Charles 1 at Holyrood Palace. However, with the rise to power of Oliver Cromwell it was decided to remove the Honours to a safe location so that they would not fall into the hands of the English. Dunnottar Castle, a coastal fortress, was selected as the most secure location. The location was eventually discovered and the minister's wife, Mrs Grainger, is credited with helping to smuggle the Regalia away from the castle. The most widely accepted story of their removal has Mrs Grainger, transporting bales of flax from the castle with the Crown and Sword hidden under her apron and the sceptre made to look like a staff that holds bunches of flax. The Rev. Grainger hid the pieces under the pulpit of his church until the 1651 coronation of Charles 11 at Scone Palace. The Honours were then stored in Edinburgh Castle.

The 1707 Treaty of Unity with England included a statement that the Honours of Scotland must never be removed from the borders of Scotland. So the Honours were locked up and sealed behind masonry walls in Edinburgh Castle. Over time the exact location became uncertain and these symbols seemed lost. However, Sir Walter Scott, the author and noted antiquarian was certain that he knew their exact location. His plea to the then Prince Regent (later George IV) resulted in an issue of a Royal Warrant which permitted Scott to remove these masonry walls. On February 4<sup>th</sup> 1818 in the distinguished company of the Lord President of the Court of Sessions, the Lord Justice Clerk, the Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Scott oversaw the removal of masonry from a doorway. Behind this doorway there was a great iron-bound oak chest. However, there was a general feeling of the company that this chest was empty.

Sir Walter Scott describes what happens next as follows: "The chest seemed to return a hollow and empty sound to the strokes of the hammer. And even those whose expectations had been most sanguine felt as the moment the probability of disappointment... The joy was therefore extreme when, the ponderous lid of the chest being forced open, the Regalia were discovered lying at the bottom covered with linen cloths, exactly as they had been left in the year 1707. The reliques were passed from hand to hand, and greeted with the affectionate reverence which emblems so venerable, restored to the public view after a slumber of more than a hundred years were so peculiarly calculated to excite. The discovery was instantly communicated to the public by the display of the Royal Standard. And was greeted by shouts of soldiers in the garrison, and a vast multitude assembled on the Castle Hill: indeed the rejoicing was so general and sincere as plainly to show that, however altered in other respects, the people of

Scotland had lost nothing of that national grief for the loss of these emblematic Honours, and now was expressed in joy for their recovery".

So the story of the Honours of Scotland from the Dark Ages through medieval history to the current day is complete. A visit to the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle is a must. Not only will you see the magnificent Crown, Sword and Sceptre, you will relive the extraordinary history of these symbols of Scottish sovereignty.

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### ***Ancient Scottish Accoutrements and Arms***

#### **LINDSAY'S COLLECTABLES**

Inspired by his visit to the Culloden Battlefield, Committeeman Lindsay Sparkes developed a strong interest in the dress and arms that Scots used to wear and carry in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A little research brought to light that many excellent copies of things like Targes, and Broadwords are actually still forged and made both in Scotland and elsewhere, even here in Australia. Being an Arms and Armour enthusiast, he decided to acquire his own. On the back page are photographs of recent purchases, and a description of these items is below.

#### **SCOTTISH BROADSWORD**

I purchased this Hanwei reproduction of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish broadsword from a Melbourne company, Global Gear, who import these and many other items. The quality is excellent for a very reasonable price. I am surprised at how heavy the sword is. This particular variant is in the "antiqued" finish but they do have ones in the bare metal finish. I was very impressed with the service I received from Global Gear (ph 03 9761 5999) and the quality of this sword. Price details and information on their products are to be found at <http://www.globalgear.com.au> (Photo 1).

#### **SCOTTISH BACKSWORD**

Another purchase from Global Gear, this time a reproduction 18<sup>th</sup> century backsword (made again by Hanwei). Different from a broadsword, lighter, more elegant blade. Same excellent service from Global Gear and outstanding quality of product. (Photo 2).

#### **TARGE**

Another purchase from Global Gear, they must love it when I phone. The original targes were made of ox hide stretched over a heavy wooden base. My purchase: a reproduction of a Highland targe. Impressive quality, even includes the fearsome metal spike in its holder. (Photo 3).

#### **JACOBITE BLUE BONNET**

I found this reproduction of a Jacobite blue bonnet on ebay and bought it using the Buy It Now option. Including postage it came to around AU \$70 which I

found quite reasonable for such a significant item. The quality is excellent. The bonnet does include the adjusting tapes and white cockade. When you order off their website ([www.mossiecroft.co.uk](http://www.mossiecroft.co.uk)) you include your headsize (circumference in inches) and they make it to size.

**JACOBITE "ROB ROY" DAY SPORRAN**

I was looking for a nice, simple daywear sporrان to wear to the gatherings and I found this one on eBay. All up, including postage from the UK, a very reasonable \$70. Excellent quality. It does come with a sporrان chain strap so off to my saddler for a leather strap. The company has a lot of products on sale at <http://stores.ebay.com.au/CARSE-OF-GOWRIE-Kilts-and-Kiltmaker>

Enough money spent by now. I still have a dirk and Jacobite waistcoat on the way so time to give the visa a slight break.

*Lindsay Sparkes  
Association Committeeman*

**THE CROMACH – WORKING TOOL and SYMBOL OF OFFICE**

The cromach, once a rarity in Australia, is becoming more widely seen in Australian Scottish circles and so it's time that we looked at what it is and more importantly what it has come to represent.

A cromach was originally a traditional Scottish shepherd's crook — the counterpart to the same implement that can be traced back to Biblical times and beyond. It is different to a walking stick as it is longer, standing about chest high with a distinctive curved handle.

Its original purpose was to help Scottish shepherds tend and move their sheep safely. Unlike Australian conditions with the larger sheep stations that use horses, dogs and, today, motorized equipment to move sheep, Scottish properties tend to be much smaller, probably more rugged and subject to greater weather extremes than here, although the last point is probably open to argument. So in Scotland there was more use of shepherds to look after the sheep. The longer stick was an aid for the shepherd to get around the land and the curved hook was useful to get the sheep out of difficult or dangerous places. The hook could be put around the sheep's neck or legs to extricate a trapped animal, or draw them back into line.

The idea for the original cromachs no doubt came from picking up or cutting suitably shaped sticks, much as you might do when you pick up a stick to help on a bush walk. The addition of the handle made the cromach a significant working tool. However, the curved handle meant that a woodworking craftsman would need to fashion the handle and to attach the handle to the shaft of the stick.

Wood being such a beautiful material that comes naturally in beautiful shapes and colours meant that

the cromach, in particular, the handle could be carved into different designs. Today the wood used includes Hazelwood and Blackthorn, and in Australia, Mountain Ash, Mulga, Jarrah and Sassafras. Hazel is a lighter but extremely strong timber, which has a mottled bark that has a glow when treated with oil.

The handles are often made out of ram's horn. It is important that the ram's horns are mature to get a good quality. Modern farming practice of not allowing rams to fully mature has led to the increased use of Indian Water Buffalo horn, which allows for handles of jet black, green, grey, butterscotch and white. The handles of cromachs are often carved into elaborate design.

In Australia there are a few cromach makers and some wood-working craftsman working on making cromachs. Different woods have been used. The Editor talked recently to a bandsman who had straight growing cedar striplings on his property and who was experimenting with this timber to make cromachs. Hopefully we will meet up again at the next gathering in his area to check on progress.

Cromachs are still used today on farms throughout the Lowlands, Highlands and Islands of Scotland. However, they have also become highly prized collector's items with their uniquely carved handles.

Interestingly, the humble cromach has also become a symbol of office and indeed of pastoral care. By direct analogy to a Bishop's crozier, which has identical historical roots, as a shepherd's crook, Clan Chiefs have their own, often elaborately carved, cromachs, which are passed down from one Chief to the next symbolising their duty of pastoral care for their flocks – the Clansmen who have sworn allegiance.

In Australia, although we are usually not people who set great store by ceremony and symbolism, the Scottish Australian Heritage Council has introduced the practice of presenting a cromach to a newly installed High Commissioner or Commissioner at the Glen Innes Celtic Festival during the ceremony of Recognition. It is seen as a continuing symbol of the Clan Chief's pastoral duty, and hence the responsibility of his appointed representative in Australia for the pastoral care of his Clanspeople in Australia.

As High Commissioner for Clan Farquharson in Australia, Bruce Finlay has acquired a handsome cromach with a rustic hazelwood shaft and well-shaped handle, for the purposes of the ceremony at Glen Innes this year. All Clan members are invited to inspect this cromach at Glen Innes or at any other Gatherings that are held in Australia.

By way of footnote he has asked me to add that he has no intention of using the cromach as a working tool (– much to everyone's relief!)

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## STICKS 'N BAG

Welcome back to the column about Pipe Band work. The theme for this newsletter is Snare Drum Sticks.

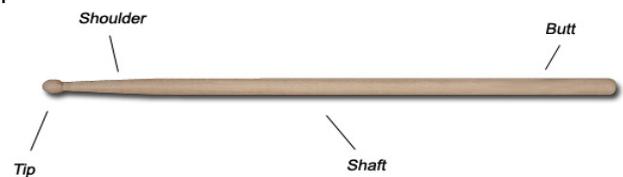
Why write about Drum sticks you ask? Would you believe that there are hundreds of different styles and types of Snare Drum Sticks available around the world? Snare Drum Sticks have been of much the same design for decades. The earliest drumsticks were simply pieces of wood, generally straight, that were about 18 inches or 45 cm long. Some had rounded heads on them and were not very easy to play.

There are a hundred or more companies that manufacture drum sticks in the world, but not all make Pipe Band Snare Drum Sticks. For many years, Pipe Band Snare Drum Sticks were made by a number of different companies. As the demand was small due to a small market, eventually many of these companies stopped manufacture of Pipe Band Snare Drum Sticks. As a result for years since, many Snare Sticks have been produced by just a small number of factories. Recently, one company decided that this part of their operation was not profitable enough and they sold the machines that made the sticks. Other companies bought these machines, which has spread the design and manufacturing load over a larger number of different companies. What impact this will have on stick design, supply and pricing remains to be seen.

There are hundreds of different Drum Sticks used by Kit Drummers in Rock and Pop bands as well as orchestras. In the main, these Drum Sticks have small tips of about 6 to 10mm or  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch diameter, with thin shafts and they can break easily. They are made to suit different drummers and also different styles of Kit Drumming. Some of the tips are made of Plastic or Polycarbonate or similar materials glued to wooden shafts. These sticks don't need to be any bigger as the Kit Drums are not tensioned as tightly as Pipe band Snare Drums. The playing style also determines the type of stick used. If loud drumming is required as in a "Heavy Metal" band, then the sticks are more robust in design. Drum sticks can cost anywhere from about \$20 to \$50 a pair and some Kit Drummers have twenty or more different pairs of sticks. There is one person who has a collection of thousands of pairs of sticks and is noted in the Guinness Book of Records for this unusual hobby.

Pipe Band Snare Drum Sticks are similar in design, but generally have thicker shafts with tips that are about 15 mm or  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch diameter. These sticks are a bit heavier and much stronger than Kit Drum Sticks. The sticks have to be stronger due to the much tighter tension of the Pipe Band Snare drum "Batter" head. (It's called a "Batter" head because the drummer batters it with the sticks. Pretty obvious I guess!)

The material used for making sticks is generally hard Maple, Hickory or Oak. Some specialty sticks are made from types of plastic or carbon synthetic material. There are four parts to the sticks - the butt, the shaft, the shoulder and the tip. See the picture below.



The tip is usually a tapered bean shape, but may also be ball shaped. The shape influences the way the sticks bounce on the drum and the ease of playing.

Various famous Pipe Band Drummers such as Jim Kilpatrick and Alex Duthart have designed sticks and had them made to suit their needs with the style generally being named after the drummer. Many other drummers follow on, as they find improvements in the design can make a difference to the sound and the ease of playing. The age of technology has made some difference to the designs over the years, but the general design is much the same.

Most Pipe Band Snare Drum Sticks weigh about 40 to 50 grams, which is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounces. The heavier the sticks, the more effort is required to play the drum. Therefore, it is a compromise between ease of playing and the sound that we are trying to achieve. Different sticks can make the same drum sound different; so most Pipe Band Drum Corps settle on one brand and style and stick to it. (Sorry for the pun). The sticks should always roll evenly on a flat surface. If they don't then they won't play as well as straight sticks. Some drummers select sticks and match the natural sound of the stick when struck on a block of wood. These drummers will compare over a hundred sticks to get pairs that match in natural sound. There is some justification for this as the closer the natural resonance of the sticks, then the closer the weight, weight distribution and feel of the sticks and, ultimately the sound on the drum.

Most drums manufacturers can supply sticks that are felt to best match the sound of the drums. These sticks generally carry the brand of the drum.

How long do the sticks last in Pipe Bands? I guess they will last as long as the drummer can make them play without difficulty. The sticks do get damaged from accidental or deliberate contact with the rim of the drum (rimshots) and if they are damaged too much, they simply get thrown away. There is no way to repair drum sticks. Any attempts to repair them will result in sticks that don't bounce as well as they should and they will not be straight after repairs.

Where and how the sticks are held can make a difference to the sound produced on the drum. If the sticks are held in the wrong place, they will be

hard to play and will cause jarring of the hands. There is a "sweet spot" that lets the drummer play with the sticks able to bounce due to their natural characteristic pivot point. The small differences in design often make the sticks easier to play with on the drum. The weight distribution between the back or thicker end and the thin, or tip end of the stick, determines where the natural pivot point is and where the drummer holds the stick. If the sticks are too light, then there is often not enough power in the sound and conversely, if the sticks are too heavy, the drummer will not be able to play as fast as they need to with the accuracy required to make the Pipes sound good. Remember, that's why we Drummers are in the Pipe Band!!

So, have you learnt a bit about Snare Drum Sticks? I trust so.

Remember, if you have or know of a set of Bagpipes or some old drums stored away that you or someone else used to play and will never play again, please dig them out and offer them via this column to a Pipe Band. Not just my band, any Pipe Band. Bagpipes and drums deserve to be heard, not left stored away, half forgotten in some dusty cupboard, roof, cellar or garage. Bands will pay for the pipes and drums, so keep a look out, please!

Pipe Bands relish the chance to rejuvenate old pipes and drums and honour the historical aspect of those who owned them and where they were played. Maybe even in some battles. Who knows?

Your comments and feedback are most welcome. If there is anything you want explained or wish me to discuss, you can email me at the address below or write to the Editor of this Newsletter.

*John Tate  
Drum Sergeant,  
Castle Hill R.S.L. Pipe Band.  
jdtate@bigpond.com*

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### THE GATHERING EDINBURGH 2009

Below is an update on this special event due to take place on 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2009. You can get the most recent updates by regularly checking the Gathering website at [www.thegathering2009.com](http://www.thegathering2009.com). There are now links that will tell you about all sorts of details including accommodation, events and Gathering Passport.

As we mentioned last issue Bruce Finlay and Pauline Finlay plan to go with Immediate Past President Syd Finlay and Brenda Finlay. We are looking to travel onto the Clan Chattan 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Band of Union and Moy Hall Sports and Field Day at Inverness, a few days after The Edinburgh Gathering, and possibly also the Clan Farquharson UK AGM and Ballater Games

around 15<sup>th</sup> August. In between, a quick tour of Ireland is an attractive proposition also.

At this stage we are waiting for confirmation of our accommodation, and we understand the Gathering Passports are about to be allocated. We have also learned from the website (confirmed by Sharon Farley in US) that Clan Farquharson has applied to have its own Tent at the Gathering – a big plus if it can be done.

Let us know if you are interested – contact Brenda by Email [finlaysb@bigpond.com](mailto:finlaysb@bigpond.com) or Pauline by Email [finlay\\_crmr@bigpond.com](mailto:finlay_crmr@bigpond.com).

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### OUR AUTUMN/WINTER PROGRAMME

As Members would be aware we try to get to as many Gatherings and events as we can, to fly the Clans' Banners and set up our Tent. As you will see from the Calendar of Events below there is a heavy event program this year, and there are a number of clashes – indeed the program for Scottish Week, which is being moved from November, has not even been decided.

Bruce and Pauline plan to be at Ringwood (Vic), Bundanoon, Anzac Day, Glen Innes, Bonnie Wingham, and Aberdeen. We'll be at Scottish Week events too when we know what they are.

Syd and Brenda, and Peter and Helen will also be at the majority of these events, and Peter expects also to go to Clans on the Coast at Nelson Bay to check out the lay of the land.

So if you're planning to visit some of these events look out for the familiar Clan Farquharson Banner – that's where we'll be.

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### GETTING THE NEWSLETTER BY E.MAIL

Some of our Members have told us they would prefer to receive the Newsletter by Email rather than by Snail mail.

We have the capacity to send it by Email. So if this suits you better please contact me by Email on [finlay\\_crmr@bigpond.com](mailto:finlay_crmr@bigpond.com), or by phone on (02) 9982-6229, and this will be arranged for the next issue.

*Pauline Finlay  
Editor*

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**ASSOCIATION NAME BAR BADGES**

The Association has arranged with a local supplier the making of individualized Clan Farquharson Association name bar badges

The Badges cost \$18.00 to Members for the individualized badge.

To order your badge telephone Syd Finlay on (02) 4883-6703 or contact him by Email to [finlaysb@bigpond.com](mailto:finlaysb@bigpond.com).

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**TO HIRE SCOTTISH DRESS - Contact:**

Mrs Janet Maxwell  
 "Scottish Hire Hoose"  
 2 Gibbons Street  
 DUNDAS NSW 2117  
 Telephone: (02) 9630-1263

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**KILTS MADE TO PRIVATE ORDER  
 (You supply the Cloth)**

Contact: Mrs Joan Vogels  
 11 Settlers Court  
 PAKENHAM VIC 3810  
 Telephone: (03) 5940-1926

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**CLAN JEWELLERY MADE TO  
 ORDER in Silver & Gold**

Contact: JEFF OKELL  
 Telephone: (02) 9638-6661

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**ARTICLES FOR – "CÀRN NA CUIMHNE"**

Contact: Pauline Finlay  
 Telephone/Fax: (02) 9982-6229  
 Email [finlay\\_crmr@bigpond.com](mailto:finlay_crmr@bigpond.com).

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**EVENTS CALENDAR to JULY 2008**

Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	GEELONG HIGHLAND GATHERING – Geelong VIC.
Easter 22 <sup>nd</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2008	MACLEAN HIGHLAND GATHERING – Maclean NSW.
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	RINGWOOD HIGHLAND GAMES Jubilee Park, Ringwood VIC.
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2008	BUNDANOON HIGHLAND GATHERING Bundanoon NSW.
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2008	CULLODEN COMMEMORATION Balmain Presbyterian Church.
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> April 2008	ANZAC DAY SCOTTISH ACT OF REMEMBRANCE Sydney NSW.
Thur 1 <sup>st</sup> to Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2008	GLEN INNES CELTIC FESTIVAL Glen Innes NSW.
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2008	WARRINGAH CLAN NIGHT Collaroy NSW - Ph 02 9981 1673.
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> to Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2008	CLANS on the COAST CELTIC GATHERING Nelson Bay NSW.
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2008	AUTUMN IN THE MANOR Old Govt H'se Parramatta NSW.
Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2008	BONNIE WINGHAM SCOTTISH FESTIVAL Wingham NSW.
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2008	BERRY CELTIC GATHERING Rotary Club Berry NSW.
Tues 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2008	BANNOCKBURN LUNCHEON Scottish House Guildford NSW.
Tues 24 <sup>th</sup> June - Tues 1 <sup>st</sup> Jly 2008	SCOTTISH WEEK – Full details yet to be received.
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2008	ABERDEEN HIGHLAND GAMES Aberdeen NSW.

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**RECOGNITION CEREMONY for HIGH  
 COMMISSIONER BRUCE FINLAY  
 GLEN INNES CELTIC FESTIVAL 2008**

The Glen Innes Celtic Festival in May 2008 will be the occasion when Bruce Finlay's appointment as High Commissioner for the Clan in Australia will be publicly proclaimed. The ceremony is programmed to take place on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May.

This is a great Celtic and Scottish weekend and Clan supporters will be most welcome. If you decide to go you should start making arrangements ASAP as accommodation is hard to get.

You can get more info by Phone 02 9982-6229 or Email [finlay\\_crmr@bigpond.com](mailto:finlay_crmr@bigpond.com).

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**Left – Association President Peter Tranter meets Mayor of Port Stephens Ron Swan at the Hunter Valley Scots Club Burns Night.**

**Below Left – The Royal Honours of Scotland - the Crown, the Sceptre and the Sword with scabbard.**

**Below Right – The Cromach maker’s work bench – in the foreground a completed hazelwood cromach with a carved ram’s horn crook; further back ram’s horn crooks in various colours and stages of preparation.**



**Above (Photo1) Reproduction (Hanwei) Scottish Broadsword.**



**Above (Photo 2) Reproduction (Hanwei) Scottish Backsword.**



**Above (Photo 3) Reproduction Scottish Targe.**