



Volume 46, Number 1

Sgurr Uaran

CLAN MACRAE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA
PO Box 2145, Palestine, TX 75802-2145

April 2022



Online at www.macrae.org
or find us on Facebook!

**We pray for all MacRaes worldwide to
be safe and sound in body and spirit!**

The President's Letter

Bruce W. McRae, President

PO Box 2145
Palestine, TX 75802-2145
brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com

Ebby Darden, Vice-President

213 Bexar Dr
Lewisville, TX 75067
ebbydarden@msn.com

Valerie R. See, Secretary

Sheila Schmidt, Treasurer

9830 N Western Fork Trail
Tucson, AZ 85742-8711
sschmidt99@msn.com

Judy McRae, Membership

PO Box 2145
Palestine, TX 75802-2145
judymcrae777@gmail.com



Greetings Fellow MacRaes,

2022 is already a momentous year for our Clan MacRae Society! The world is opening up once again and our awesome US Scottish festivals have had a fierce start to the new year. As of this writing, we've already hosted Clan MacRae tents at eight festivals and there are 22 more festivals yet to go for 2022! It could be a record-breaking year for Clan MacRae and remember that 2023 will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of our Clan MacRae Society. You could say 2022 is just a rehearsal for our big celebration in 2023!

We are pleased to announce two new Commissioners who will be hosting Clan MacRae tents in their area. They are Paul Jarnagin of Nacogdoches, TX who will be hosting games in East Texas, especially the Houston games this month that Judy and I will be attending. Also, we have Elizabeth Crum-Warner who will be hosting games in Arizona and Utah. See their profiles and pictures later in the newsletter.

We have another opportunity for one of our members to exercise their giftedness! We are once again in need of an Editor for our Clan MacRae Sgurr Uaran newsletter. The volunteer position has become easier in that we now have our Sgurr Scribes writing team who faithfully supply content for our newsletter. So, for you folks who like to write and edit, now is the time to step up and volunteer to be our Editor! It can be very fulfilling for those with creative talents. Just contact me if you are interested.

Normally we announce details in this issue about our Saturday night Clan MacRae Banquet at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, however, we do not have the final details on our banquet ironed out yet. We will provide details once they are finalized.

In closing this spring has been beautiful here in East Texas and I hope it has been for you as well. The daffodils have been exquisite and the red bud trees have been ablaze. Right now all our dog wood trees are blooming with both white and pink flowers. Our Japanese Magnolia trees have bloomed for over a month now. This has been the best spring since we moved here especially after the devastating Polar Freeze of last year.

Hope you all enjoy this spring and enjoy some of our awesome festivals coming up this year! Get out and enjoy God's Creation and your fellow MacRaes this year with no regrets.

Sgurr Uaran,
Bruce W. McRae, President

Inside this issue

Notes and Correspondence

2022 Clan MacRae Events
Member Happenings!
Two new Commissioners
New Editor Needed
North American Tartan Fabric

Feature Articles

Mark McCraw's Visit to Korea
Elizabeth McRae/Lees-McRae College
Margaret Fay Shaw/McRae sisters
Mary McRae and "Old Hokonui"

Ceud Mìle Fàilte

Welcome New Members
New Washable Tartan Fabric!

10-11

11
12



Upcoming Clan MacRae Scottish Events!

The Scottish festivals listed below will have a Clan MacRae tent hosted by one of our members. For a list of all Scottish festivals, go to www.hIGHLANDGAMESANDFESTIVALS.com/u-s-events/. If you want to host a Clan MacRae tent at your local festival, please contact Bruce at brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com. We'll help you get started!

April 9, 2022 - Houston Highland Games, Humble, TX www.houstonhighlandgames.com/events-for-2022 Contact Paul Jarnagin at ask4paul2@hotmail.com.

April 9-10, 2022 - Loch Norman Highland Games, Huntersville, NC www.lochnorman.com Contact Leon Folsom at leon.folsom@prodigy.net.

April 9-10, 2022 - Las Vegas Highland Games, Las Vegas, NV www.lasvegascelticsociety.org Contact Patrick MacRae at patrick@patrickmacrae.org.

May 7, 2022 - Savannah Scottish Games, Savannah, GA www.savannahscottishgames.com Contact Dean McCraw at dean_mccraw@bellsouth.net.

May 21-22, 2022 - Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival, Townsend, TN www.smokymountaingames.org Contact Andy McRae at amcrae52@gmail.com.

June 25-26, 2022 - San Diego Scottish Games, San Diego, CA www.sdhighlandgames.org Contact Patrick MacRae at patrick@patrickmacrae.org.

July 7-10, 2022 - Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, Linville, NC www.gmhg.org Contact Frankie McRae at fmcrae@raidontactics.com.

July 16-17, 2022 Arizona Highland Celtic Festival, Flagstaff, AZ www.flagstaffarizona.org/events/festivals/celtic-festival Contact Elizabeth Crum-Warner at angeleiss6@gmail.com.

August 6-7, 2022 - Colorado Scottish Festival, Edgewater, CO www.scottishgames.org Contact Bruce McRae at brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com.

September 3-4, 2022 - Caledonian Club Scottish Highland Games, Pleasanton, CA www.thescottishgames.com Contact James MacRae at macraejames9333@gmail.com.

September 9-11, 2022 - Longs Peak Scottish Irish Highland Festival, Estes Park, CO www.scotfest.com Contact Bruce McRae at brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com.

September 10-11, 2022 - Middle Tennessee Highland Games, Hendersonville, TN www.midtenngames.com Contact Andy McRae at amcrae52@gmail.com.

September 10-11, 2022 - Columbus Scottish Festival, Columbus, IN www.scottishfestival.org Contact Ray White at channaray@protonmail.com.

September 24-25, 2022 Prescott Highland Games Prescott Valley, AZ www.prescottareacelticsociety.com Contact Elizabeth Crum-Warner at angeleiss6@gmail.com.

October 14-16, 2022 - Stone Mountain Highland Games, Atlanta, GA www.smhg.org Contact David Ray at dh-ray@charter.net.

October ? 2022 - Scotland County Highland Games, Laurinburg, NC www.carolina-highlandgames.com Contact Frankie McRae at fmcrae@raidontactics.com.

October 14-16, 2022 Scots on the Rocks Moab, UT www.scotsontherocksmoab.org Contact Elizabeth Crum-Warner at angeleiss6@gmail.com.

October 21-23, 2022 - Oklahoma Highland Gathering, Choctaw, OK [www.https://unitedscotsok.com/scottish-festival/](https://unitedscotsok.com/scottish-festival/) Contact Mark McCraw at quickdraw_m@yahoo.com.

October 22, 2022 - Tyler Scottish Festival, Tyler, TX www.tylerscotfest.org Contact Paul Jarnagin at ask4paul2@hotmail.com.

November 5, 2022 - Charleston Scottish Games, Mount Pleasant, SC www.charlestonscottishgames.com Contact Dean McCraw at dean_mccraw@bellsouth.net.

November 4-6, 2022 - Tucson Highland Games, Tucson, AZ www.tucsoncelticfestival.org Contact Sheila Schmidt at sschmidt99@msn.com.

November 11-13, 2022 - Salado Scottish Festival, Salado, TX www.saladoscottishfestival.com Contact Ebby Darden at ebbydarden@msn.com.



Member Happenings! Send Us Your News and Pictures!



Left: Commissioner John Wayne McRae leads the parade at NE Florida Scottish Games & Festival

Right: Commissioner John Wayne McRae's first Great Grand Child born on November 16th, 2021. Claire Breann Etheridge is the 8th generation born in America.



Below: New member Mel McRee and his two daughters with Gene Teakell at the Clan MacRae tent at the North Texas Irish Festival in March.

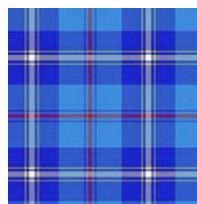
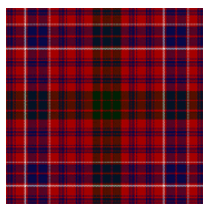


Right: Commissioner Elizabeth Crum-Warner and her family hosted a Clan MacRae tent at the Phoenix Games in March!



Hebridean Cure for Stomach Ache:

When a patient is in desperation, put a rope around his feet and hang him by the heels from the rafters. Repeat at reasonable intervals: "This will undo the knot in the guts."



Hebridean Proverb about life:

Every peat has its own smoke,
And every person his own sorrow.

Hebridean Proverb about marriage:

The first year, year of the kisses,
The second year, year of the fists.



Left: Clan MacRae team at San Antonio games, from left, Bruce and Judy McRae, Paul and Cheryl Jarnagin and Ronald Crowe.

Right: Sarah Crowe competed in Scottish Dance at the San Antonio Games and won 1st in Flora, 2nd in both Sword and Seann Triubhas and 3rd in the Fling. Congratulations Sarah!



A big *WELCOME* to our new Commissioners!

Commissioner Paul Jarnagin



We welcome Paul Jarnagin as a new Commissioner in our Clan MacRae Society! Paul and his wife Cheryl live in Nacogdoches, Texas which is known as the oldest city in Texas. Paul is originally from California and his ancestors immigrated to the US in 1900 from the Inverness area. Both Paul and Cheryl are involved in all things Scottish for Cheryl is Vice-President of Clan Thompson. In addition to representing Clan MacRae at both the Houston and Tyler TX Scottish festivals, Paul has also created the East Texas Scottish Irish Fellowship for all those with Celtic blood to join. Paul also has a vision for a Scottish games in Nacogdoches and has set up the Texas Caledonians Heavy Throwers Academy where athletes can train in a



local Nacogdoches park in six events including the caber toss, stone throw and tug of war. In his normal job, Paul works as a General Contractor and past pursuits include racing motorcycles, mountain biking, weight training and body building.

Commissioner Elizabeth Crum-Warner

We welcome Elizabeth Crum-Warner as a new Commissioner in our Clan MacRae Society! Elizabeth and her husband Joseph live in Tucson, Arizona and have six children from 9 to 22 years old. Elizabeth is currently President of the Tucson Celtic Festival Association which runs the Tucson Scottish Highland and Celtic Festival Games in November. It was actually her mother who started the Tucson Celtic Festival Association 36 years ago, so we know all things Scottish are in Elizabeth's blood! Her Great-uncle Lewis McCray was very involved with Clan MacRae many years ago in Alabama. Elizabeth just hosted the Clan MacRae tent in Phoenix and hopes to host a Clan MacRae tent at the Flagstaff and Prescott games in Arizona and also at the games in Moab, Utah. As an Army veteran, Elizabeth is also active in the Scottish American Military Society. She works from home and considers herself a "crafter" at heart.



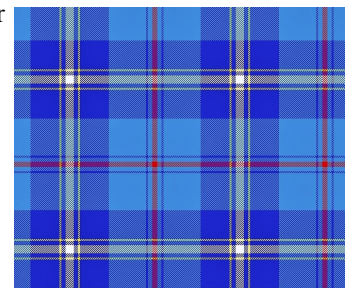
Newsletter Editor Needed

We are in need of an Editor for our awesome Sgurr Uaran newsletter. The exact duties change with each issue, but we basically publish 3-4 issues a year of relevant content and news for our members. We currently use Publisher to assemble the newsletter, however we are open to change! For each issue, articles and news and photos come from multiple sources, but as Editor, you can creatively add content that you know our membership will enjoy! Our Membership Director provides accurate mailing lists for each issue and the print shop does the rest. We are looking for someone who enjoys working as a team and we will do everything in our power to make sure you are a great success as the next Editor of the Sgurr Uaran newsletter! Anyone interested should contact our President, Bruce McRae at brucewaynemcrae@gmail.com or at 720-793-7530.

Taking orders for our Clan MacRae North American Tartan Fabric!

It's official! We have submitted another order and the weavers are now weaving 45 yards of our Clan MacRae North American tartan fabric. As a reminder, our tartan has symbolic meaning:

"In our Society Tartan, the MacRae "Sett" is used, of course, as the basis of construction. The colours used were not randomly chosen, but have significance, viz.: The Base colour is the light blue with a white stripe as in the Saltire Flag. There is a somewhat darker blue/grey that symbolizes the Ocean crossed by "The scattered children of Kintail". Then we have the Stronger blue that, in combination with the Red and White stripes, symbolizes the colours of "The Stars and Stripes" of our American Flag. Finally, the White Stripe is supported on each side by a lining of Gold. This represents the "Golden Opportunity" that this country has represented to its vast number of immigrants who came seeking a better and more prosperous life."



The 13-ounce worsted wool is double width at 59", so only 4 yards are needed for a kilt. The fabric costs \$70 a yard plus a small shipping cost (no tax). You may order any length which makes it ideal for scarves, crafts, etc. There are also professional kilt-makers who can make you a kilt or a scarf, etc. If you are interested in ordering our tartan fabric or having something made, please contact Judy at judymcrae777@gmail.com.

Mark McCraw participates in US Veterans visit to Korea

Contributed by Judy McCrae



Nine U.S. veterans, who served in Korea following the 1953 armistice ending the Korean War, recently revisited the country Nov. 29-Dec. 4, 2021. Among those revisiting was our own Commissioner Mark McCraw and his wife who are from Oklahoma. Mark was the only Air Force veteran to take part in the tour. This program, the first of its kind by the Korea Defense Veterans Association and the Korea-US Alliance Foundation, was sponsored by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. Our US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin was in attendance at the Korea-US Alliance Foundation dinner.

This tour was for veterans who served on the Korean peninsula from the 1950s to the 1990s. "I served from 1986-1987 with the 51st security police squadron in Osan, and I worked with the ROK military on the gates at the airbase," said McCraw. "I have had many people who have served in the military. My wife was in the navy, and my grandfathers were in the Korean War, so I am really excited to be here for the revisit tour."

Mark further shares, "As part of our tour, we toured the military bases - Camp Humphries, Camp Casey, Camp Bonifas, Demilitarized Zone, Joint Security Area, and Osan Air Base Korea. We honored Korean War



Veterans from many states and countries who participated in the Korean War by laying a flower as a memorial at the Korean War Memorial and Wall of Remembrance to those who were deceased. Our group participated in Korean culture events to include wearing the traditional Hanbok (Korean clothing), tasting Korean food, shopping, and meeting new Korean friends."



Mark continues, "On a personal note, it was one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had. It was an honor to have been selected in the group of 10 first Korea Defense Veterans and their spouses. I love the Korean people. They have progressed so much since I served in Korea in 1986-1987 at Osan Air Base. I was honored to have served in Korea, for the defense of Korea."



Elizabeth McRae and Her Role in Lees-McRae College

By Robert McCrie

*Lifetime member Robert McCrie is a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.
Photos courtesy Lees-McRae College.*

The skirl of the bagpipes, the beat of the snare drums, the majestic verdant hills rolling like giant green waves: few places in North America have quite the soul of the Highlands, and of Clan MacRae for that matter, as the area around Linville, North Carolina.

For Scots and Scots aficionados, the exuberant Grandfather Mountain Highland Games each July, draw tens of thousands, perhaps the most widely attended Scottish games of all. For Clan MacRae, mementos abound in the area. For example, MacRae Meadows is the epicenter of GMHG. Then there is the MacRae monument dedicated to those of the Clan whose lives were lost in world wars. And several commercial businesses in the area attest to various congeners of the name MacRae.

Also not far away in Banner Elk, a short distance from Grandfather Mountain itself, is Lees-McRae College. This Blue Ridge Mountain-infused liberal arts college enrolls about 1,000 students. Two pioneer women are celebrated in its name—Susan Preston Walker Lees and Elizabeth Anne McRae. Who was Elizabeth and how did her and Susan's names become associated with this southern Appalachian liberal arts college?

Some context on the early history of the area is required. In the last quarter of the 19th century, western North Carolina was populated but undeveloped. Year-round passable

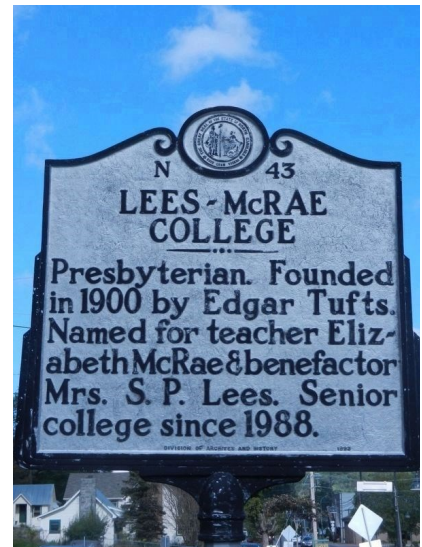
roads were yet to be constructed. Public services were rudimentary. Public schools didn't exist anywhere nearby. No hospital had been established; even enticing a community doctor to the community was a challenge. No homes for orphans or the elderly existed anywhere.

The lingering effects of the Civil War were palpable throughout the South including here. Yet, this was a land of great beauty for people with grit. It provided opportunity for families to be self-sufficient in their pursuit of personal freedom and economic independence through the American dream. Grass-roots churches existed throughout the region. They provided the social and spiritual needs of the community.

Much of Elizabeth's life seems to have experienced periods of pleasure but also of times that could overwhelm anyone. She endured circumstances stoically, supported by her religious faith. Elizabeth Anne Harllee was born in Marion County, S.C. in 1825. She married a physician, Neill McNair, in 1842, and they had a son, David. Dr. Harllee and David served the Confederate army, but both died from illnesses from the conflict. During this time, according to Elizabeth's obituary, she "suffered much at the hands of the Henry Berry Lowry gang."

Elizabeth Anne McRae (also spelled MacRae), the namesake of Lees-McRae College, was the organizer of missionary societies in western North Carolina. She also taught girls academic and Biblical studies. Her good works were recognized in naming the institute after her which today has become a coed liberal arts college.

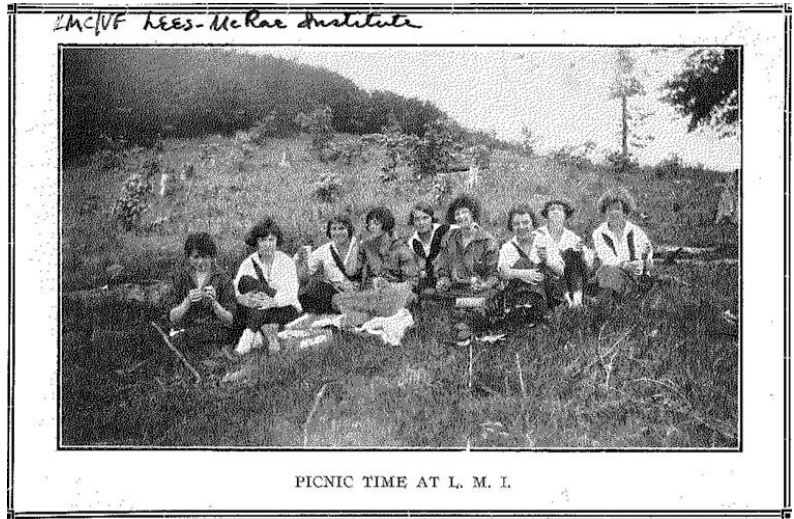
As the Civil War approached its end, the Lowry Gang aligned with Union soldiers who had escaped Confederate prison camps and conducted guerrilla warfare against the defeated Confederacy. The gang committed many robberies throughout North Carolina, perhaps including Elizabeth McRae's household, as the obituary suggests.



(Continued from page 6)

Elizabeth married Alexander MacRae (also spelled McRae) shortly thereafter. He died in 1881. Childless and wanting to serve others, this began Elizabeth's extraordinary period of domestic missionary work. Encouraged by her minister, she began establishing missionary societies for women of the Fayetteville Presbytery. Initially, she faced resistance, but traveling by horse and open buggy her Missionary Union grew involving perhaps 60 churches. After this success she founded a school for poor mountain girls. She taught academic subjects during the week and the Bible on Sunday. Students paid what they could, according to Margaret Tufts Neal's history *And Set Aglow a Sacred Flame*.

Edgar Tufts, an enterprising Presbyterian minister, had a passion for regional betterment. In his career he established an orphanage, a home for the elderly, a hospital, and new churches. He also founded a girl's school in Banner Elk and named it the Elizabeth McRae Institute to exemplify her reputation. Tufts had met McRae, according to Michael Joslin, emeritus English professor and Lees-McRae historian, though she never taught in Banner Elk and perhaps never visited it. Classes formally began in 1900. The Appalachian school attracted the admiration and support of Susan Preston Walker Lees, a wealthy heiress who supported educational endeavors in the South, including the McRae school. Subsequently, it was renamed the Lees-McRae Institute, dedicated to educating girls for modest fees.



Lees-McRae was chartered by the state in 1907, the year in which Elizabeth died, and became co-educational two decades later. In 1931, the high school was closed due to the opening of a local public high school. Lees-McRae then transformed into a junior college. In 1990, it became a four-year baccalaureate-granting institution. A master's in teaching and secondary education is now also available.

Today the college boasts that it is situated at the highest altitude of any post-secondary institution east of the Mississippi. Based in an expansive 450-acre woodsy campus between Beech and Sugar Mountains, academic offerings include majors that take advantage of the terrain. Such majors include Outdoor Recreation Management, Sport Management, and Wilderness Medicine. Academic offerings include majors in four schools: Arts, Humanities, and Education; Business and Management; Natural and Behavioral Sciences; and Nursing and Health Sciences.



Lees-McRae bears the proud names of two pioneer women: one an indomitable wilderness missionary and educator, the other a generous benefactor. It also recognizes the immense contribution of the Rev. Edgar Tufts and his descendants. For those attending GMHG, a sojourn to Lees-McRae College provides an attractive and recommended sojourn at another embodiment of the clan's proud name.

An aerial view of Lees-McRae College. The campus extends over 450 acres and emphasizes subjects that takes advantages of its mountainous terrain. These include natural sciences and wildlife biology as well as liberal arts, business, and health sciences.

Margaret Fay Shaw and sisters Peigi and Mairi MacRae

By Larry McRae

Margaret Fay Shaw was born near Pittsburgh in 1903, the youngest of five sisters. She seems to have been a tomboy, having great fun bounding about the woods and creek near the family estate called Glenshaw, an idyllic childhood that came to much too early an end with her parents' deaths, her mother when she was only seven and her father when she was eleven. The family was forced to leave their valley, and young Margaret seems to have become unmoored. Sent to a boarding school in her early teens, she proved an indifferent student, although with a talent for music and the piano. No one knew quite what to do with her, but a family friend suggested she be sent to school in Scotland at St. Bride's school not far from Glasgow. Now 18 years old, Margaret still was an indifferent student and failed all her courses but, largely by accident, heard the bagpipes played for the first time and got a whiff of the Gaelic language and of ancient Scottish songs.

Her interest in piano was curtailed by an early form of arthritis that made playing painful and difficult. Between her year at St. Bride's and her mid-twenties, Margaret had a number of adventures, including a couple of years in New York studying piano, a so-



Margaret in the doorway of the MacRae's croft house

anything about music notation, Margaret herself had to listen, reflect and carefully write the songs and the musical notation.

The customs of the island ranged from unfamiliar to a shock to Margaret. Describing the childrens' schooling, for example: "They would cross over the hill even when there would be ice on the ponds and the grass, running in bare feet the two miles and more to the school. When I expressed my horror and wondered how I could find money for shoes, Mairi said no: if they came in wet boots to sit in the school all day, they would then catch their death. Far better their bare feet to dry."

Margaret had taken up photography, almost as a hobby, but began making a bit of money out of it by selling photos to British newspapers. Her camera was a ten-pound Graflex, quite an apparatus to lug around, but she made a photographic record of a now-vanished way of life. But the prod-

uct of her time on

South Uist *Màiri Macrae holding a cod fish outside Taigh Màiri* that brought *Anndra (her croft house) in North Glendale, South Uist.* attention and some welcome money was her compilation of songs, recipes, stories, photos and folklore. It also led to her introduction to John Lorne Campbell, a Scottish folklorist to whom she was married in 1935. While Margaret leaves the impression of an energetic and charming woman, John Campbell in her telling was a bit of a strange duck. A few years after their marriage, John purchased the small island of Canna with the intention of making it a going farm and preserving Hebridean customs. The couple lived there, quite happy and involved and with frequent visitors, the rest of their lives and left it to the National Trust for Scotland.



Margaret Fay Shaw in her beloved Hebrides.

(Continued from page 8)

Margaret's autobiography, as she styled it, is brief, only 150 pages. The reader may be left wishing she'd written more, but she left us a delightful tale of adventures and a self-portrait of a confident and accomplished woman. A physical copy does not seem to be available, but the Kindle edition can be purchased from Amazon. *Folk Songs and Folklore* is readily available as a trade paperback. The bulk of it is music, reflecting Margaret's long interest and talent, but it also has an engaging introduction, numerous photos of South Uist and its inhabitants and some sections that are just fun to browse.

It may be overworking the term, but these books are a delight and well worth the investment of money and time for anyone interested in the culture or history of the Highlands and Islands, and the MacRae connection makes them especially interesting. Other resources are below:

Margaret Fay Shaw, *From the Alleghenies to the Hebrides* (Amazon Kindle edition, \$12.99. The only physical copies available are used and expensive.)

Margaret Fay Shaw, *Folk Songs and Folklore of South Uist* (Amazon paperback, \$6.14 plus shipping)



Pèigi and Màiri with Folksongs and Folklore book

Fiona Mackenzie re-recorded the introduction to *Folk Songs and Folklore*, following an original recording by Ms. Shaw herself. On YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQ7mMOyT8Gs>

Fiona J Mackenzie, *Stories, songs and starlings* On the 50th anniversary of Pèigi MacRae's death, Fiona Mackenzie published this article taking a closer look at Pèigi's life and that of her sister Màiri including all their known genealogical family history. <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/stories-songs-and-starlings?fbclid=IwAR0YruTIOVBGk7jZDdLY3WyEp5rgciHNEkJMaTKLGA2uaYHJxpVI5Kn1PPY>



Pèigi and Màiri walking their dogs on South Uist

Stories, Songs & Starlings - The lives of Peigi and Mairi MacRae and their influence on Margaret Fay Shaw can now be viewed on Youtube at <https://youtu.be/VpX0zK5khoc>

Margaret Fay Shaw, *Eilean: The Photography of Margaret Fay Shaw* is available from Blackwell's. Go to blackwells.co.uk/bookshop and search for Margaret Fay Shaw.

Music Scotland offers the DVD movie *Solas* by Fiona MacKenzie that profiles the life and work of Ms. Shaw, about \$30 with shipping. musicscotland.com/products/margaret-fay-shaw-solas-through-the-lens

The *Isle of Canna* is one of the sites that the *National Trust for Scotland* maintains: nts.org.uk/visit/places/canna

The *National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA's 2022 Gala A Celebration of Scotland's Treasures* in New York City on April 14, 2022 will celebrate the Trust's work on the Isle of Canna, including the conservation of Canna House and their remarkable collection of Gaelic language and folklore.

<https://ntsusa.org/about-us/celebration-gala/>

If you find Ms. Shaw's work as charming as I did, for a donation of \$200 you will receive a digital copy of the movie *Solas*. Donate at <https://ntsusa.org/protect/annual-appeal/>

As a reminder, our Clan MacRae Society of North America has partnered with the *National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA* in their *Clan Partner* program and we heartily support the work they do in supporting the *National Trust for Scotland* in preserving Scotland's great historical and scenic treasures.

Lastly, *Taigh Mairi Anndra* is now a self-catering cottage that you can stay in! <https://www.southuist.com/accommodation.php?action=view&id=173>



**The National Trust
for Scotland Foundation USA**

ALL for the love of Scotland!

Mary McRae and the tale of “Old Hokonui”

by Ralph White

Back as far as recorded history, our Scottish fore-bearers brewed alcoholic drinks for shrugging off the persistent cold and rain of the Highlands. They also traded what they brewed for things they needed such as manual labor, weapons, grain, meats, leather, fur or cloth. Mostly, these were raw and harsh liquors that left a lot to be desired. Tales of the more epic drinks live on, some made by our ancestors James Hamish Dhu MacRae, his father Alister Mhor and Mary McRae. This missive centers on the tale of Mary and the whisky celebrated as “Old Hokonui”. Hokonui is a small town near Gore, South Island, New Zealand ... the setting of our tale.



The English had regulated and profited from the making of whisky with the 1725 Malt Tax that drove most Scottish distilleries underground. Soon, even tiny private-use stills were being aggressively hunted and destroyed by royal tax agents. In 1790 Parliament made it illegal to pay wages in liquor, trying to hamstring the popular bartering system. In 1823, England tried to end “Moonshining” with a law that gave Scottish distilleries an option to legalize by paying an impossibly huge licensing fee.

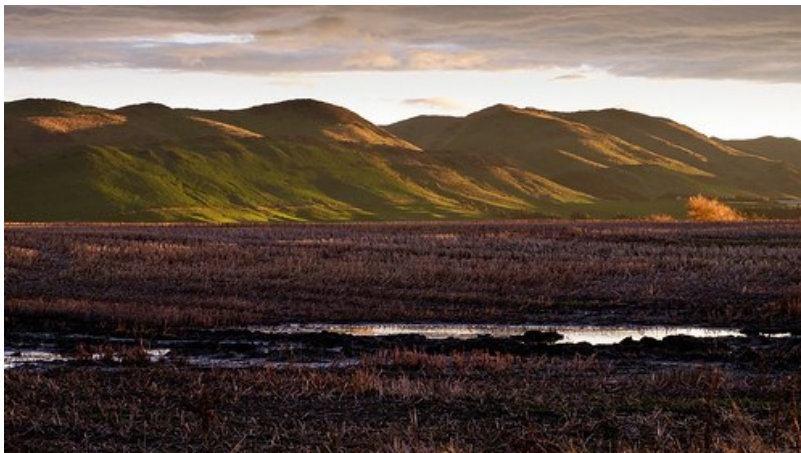
In 1871, Mary’s son Duncan was arrested for “Bootlegging”. A crushing 800 pounds fine was levied on the family. Unable to pay, the family fled. Mary’s family had already suffered financially as she was widowed the year before. And it was also the dark time of the “Highland Clearances”. Families were forced off their land to make way for sheep. The 1747 ‘Heritable Jurisdictions Act’ stated that anyone who did not submit to English rule forfeited their land. Basically, Kneel or Get Out. The migration numbers of Highlanders were staggering. The ones who stayed entertained misery. Mary was 45 when she

sailed in 1872 to the remote island of Southland, New Zealand. Recently widowed, she took her four sons and three daughters. She also took a wooden box marked “Household Goods” that unknowingly contained her future, her trusty whisky still.

Mary’s family settled in an area populated by Kintail Highlander Scots. They felt a comfort in hearing Gaelic and seeing familiar customs so far from home. The citizens drank when they could, but it was an expensive luxury. Watered down imported whisky was nigh undrinkable. The only local brew was a cheap, noxious drink produced from a palm tree called the Cabbage Tree. It was a rum-like elixir and shoddy substitute for civilized drink. Mary and her sons set up her still, and began producing decent whisky. Afraid of trouble with authorities, they quietly sold and bartered it to support themselves. They sold only to small circles of “professionals” like



doctors and lawyers, who were not a risk of informing on them.



A popular demand soon followed, as word spread. The unlabelled whisky, delivered in re-purposed bottles, cans and milk bottles, became known simply as “Old Hokonui”. The bottles started showing up at sporting events. At some point, a name and label was added that featured the cheeky slogan “Guaranteed Free of Poisons. Passed all tests except police”. Mary McRae’s brew was processed the way she had done it in Kintail putting it through more than one distillation. This made the quality quite good compared to competitors.

In the Southland frontier, the royal tax authorities waged war on the bootleggers. The agents were British outsiders who were immediately spotted and distrusted. The Scots would speak Gaelic frustrating the Brits. One time officers came to search Mary’s place and she cleverly sat on the only whisky barrel covering it with her skirt. She remained seated until they left empty-handed and angry.

(Continued from page 10)

Mary McRae died in 1911 at the ripe old age of 92. She attributed her long life to daily samplings of her creation. The “Great War” and the following economic depression only increased demand. In Southland the number of stills grew, but the best of them remained “Old Hokonui” which eventually became the name for all bootleg whiskey. Following WW1, the area became more “civilized” and the excise agents earnestly pursued the “Moonshiners”. More than five decades of legacy was to suffer in the name of New Zealand prohibition.

In 1924, Mary’s original still was producing. By 1928, time and circumstance had brought the still into the hands of large scale bootlegger named Duncan Stuart. He was caught, tried, and convicted, but somehow the still was saved. Years later, government agents found the still, which a man named John McRae had set up just outside his farm on Maori Reservation land. For the police record he stated, “If it is outside my boundaries, I would not know anything about it.” Charged with bootlegging, the case was dismissed, due to lack of evidence. As was customary of the era, the authorities scrapped the captured old still, temporarily ending more than sixty years of McRae tradition, and the fabled Hokonui blend. Fifty years later, after the end of prohibition, the forbidden drink was back, in legal production. The recipe was the subject of a series of bitter and expensive lawsuits over licensing between local brewers. Old Hokonui still sports its famous old fashioned black and white label... complete with skull and crossbones and taunting message.

The colorful history of the bootleggers of Southland was collected and published by William Stuart. If you can find a copy of his rare 1982 book *Satyr of Southland*, the read is colorful and interesting. Stuart's research laid the groundwork for the Hokonui Whisky Centre of Southland, a museum that memorializes the illegal distillers. The area's legendary bootlegging leads back to one family: the MacRaes. After a century as hunted criminals, Southland's famous whisky producers have emerged as folk heroes. There is a local one-day whisky event at Gore, Southland, NZ called the Hokonui Moonshiners Festival. There are food booths to provide unique Southland cuisine, and popular musicians to provide entertainment.



Ceud Mile Fáilte: 100,000 Welcomes to Our New Members!

We warmly welcome our new members to the Clan MacRae Society of North America!
We are all the more richer to have you as members! *Bruce W. McRae, President*

#1665 Denise Moyle Apache Junction, AZ	#1674 Frances Nicolais Tujunga, CA	#1683 Spencer Patterson Chimacum, WA	#1688 Mel McRee Lubbock, TX
#1666 Michael Rettig Saginaw, TX	#1675 Sherman Mcrae Houston, TX	#1684 Morgan McGraw Orono, ME	#1689 Russell J Easter Jetersville, VA
#1667 Kenny McRae Wichita Falls, TX	#1676 Adam Gimbel New York, NY	#1685 Judith Dresbach Groveland, FL	#1690 Lady Chantaille Buczynski Kingston, Ontario Canada
#1668 David R MacRae Grand Rapids, MI	#1677 Duncan A Toale Gahanna, OH	#1686 Connie Jo Sychowski Columbia City, OR	#1691 Nelson Peters Floral City, FL
#1669 William K Anderson Edwardsville, IL	#1678 Kristy Chandler Ephraim, UT	#1687 Samantha Rea Tarzana, CA	#1692 Helen Wallbank New Lebanon, NY
#1670 Jodi Allen Salisbury, NC	#1679 Scott Ramsey San Diego, CA	Notice: Moving soon or recently moved? Changed your email address recently? Please email change of address to judymcrae777@gmail.com or mail to Clan MacRae Society of North America PO Box 2145 Palestine, TX 75802-2145	
#1671 Steven Stephens Mill Valley, CA	#1680 Tamara Mackenthun Mountain Home, ID		
#1672 William Hoehn Annandale, VA	#1681 Kathy Masters Happy Valley, OR		
#1673 Scott Bakeeff Casselberry, FL	#1682 John K Garrett Van Nuys, CA		

New Clan MacRae Ancient Hunting and Dress White tartan fabric!

We've had many requests from our ladies for a lightweight MacRae fabric that can be made into skirts, shawls, etc. We have put in the order and the weavers are now weaving 60 yards of a new washable poly-viscose fabric - 30 yards in MacRae Ancient Hunting tartan and 30 yards in MacRae Dress White tartan.

Men have worn their clan's tartan kilts for centuries, but women have also worn their clan tartan as evidenced below



So, what project do you have in mind for these two new fabrics? Here are a few suggestions:



This fabric will be available only to our members and sells for \$60 a yard. More details later, but if you are interested, please contact Judy at judymcrae777@gmail.com.



Corgi butt or bread?



Aye! Another braw pebble to show me mum.

