



Clan Sutherland Society in Australia Inc.

Newsletter

January 2024



Whether you say Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy Christmas or Bah Humbug, I do hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well.

On behalf of the committee here at CSSA, I would like to extend our hope you had an enjoyable festive season.

Lunch date

Saturday 2nd December, I met Kaye Amel and Anne Carstens for lunch at the Fox and Hound in Wongawallan (Mount Tamborine). It was lovely to sit and chat in the purpose built old English pub. The owners have set up each room in a different theme and you can see by the photos, it is littered with memorabilia. The room we were in was set up in the old English style with fireplace and old bed warmers hanging from the stonework, while other rooms are set up with Irish or Scottish memorabilia.

I highly recommend anyone that may visit the area, pop in for a pint or a meal, or just to have a sticky beak!



New Upcoming event in Queensland

Kaye and I have decided the Fox and Hound would be a lovely location for a Clan event. With this, we have booked the Scottish Room for 25-30 people for a Christmas in July event on the Saturday 13th July and hope to get as many of you as possible to join us. One thing I have learned this year, is how nice it is to get to know my fellow Clan members and talk about our Sutherland heritage with likeminded people. What better way than to join us in a meal at the Fox and Hound, Wongawallen, QLD.

(This event will **not** be replacing our annual SE QLD Luncheon hosted by our lovely Mona Black).

Mount Tamborine is a lovely location with beautiful waterfalls, botanical gardens, shops and rainforest walks for those who love to be active. For those less able like myself, it is a great place to go and enjoy the views of Brisbane and the Gold coast and relax and unwind.

Located only 30 minutes from the Gold Coast, and 1 hour from Brisbane, it would make for a great holiday destination. Guests are spoilt for choice when it comes to accommodation in the area with many hotels, motels, and BNBs in the area. (Why not make a weekend of it!)



RSVP is important for numbers so please let us know ASAP if you are able to attend.



YOU'RE INVITED

**CLAN SUTHERLAND
SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA'S
1ST CHRISTMAS
IN JULY LUNCH**

SATURDAY 13TH JULY 2024

FROM 11:30AM

AT FOX & HOUND

**7 ELEVATION DRIVE, WONGAWALLAN, QLD
(MOUNT TAMBORINE)**

\$40PP PAYABLE TO MICHELLE WILLIAMS, SECRETARY

RSVP AND PAYMENT BY 7TH JULY 2024

2 COURSE MENU

MAIN

**DUO OF ROAST TURKEY AND ROAST BEEF SERVED WITH ROAST POTATOES, PUMPKIN, PEAS AND
CARROTS.**

DESSERT - SERVED ALTERNATE DROP

TRADITIONAL XMAS PUDDING WITH CUSTARD

PAVLOVA SERVED WITH MIXED BERRIES AND COULIS

Calendar of events 2024

Subject to change, please visit the websites and Facebook pages for up-to-date information.

Events for February

- 16 February to 18 February 2024 The National Multicultural Festival, Canberra ACT

Events for March

- 24 March 2024 Melbourne Highland Games & Celtic Festival, VIC

Events for April

- 6th April 2024 Bundanoon Highland Gathering, Brigadoon, NSW
- 29 to 30 March 2024 Maclean Highland Gathering, Maclean NSW
- 26 April ANZAC Day laying of wreath ceremony, Sydney NSW
- 29th April 2024 Meeting of two Cultures Kurnell, Sydney

Events for May

- 2nd - 5th May 2024 Australian Celtic Festival Glen Innes NSW (Year of Ireland & Isle of Man)
- TBA May 2024 The Gathering Ipswich QLD
- TBA May 2024 Berry Celtic Festival Berry, NSW Australia

Events for June

- 1 June 2024 Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival
- 7 to 10 JUNE 2024 National Celtic Festival, Portarlington, Vic
- 15th & 16th June 2024 The Scenic Rim Clydesdale Spectacular Calling of the Clans Boonah QLD
- 21-23 JUNE 2024 Robert Burns Celtic Festival Camperdown, Vic.
- 21-25 June 2024 Scottish Week Sydney 2024 - Sydney, NSW (events TBC):
- 21st June 2024 (TBC) Burn's night dinner with SAHC as part of Scottish Week Sydney NSW

Events for July

- TBA July 2024 Aberdeen Highland Games - Aberdeen, NSW Australia.
- 1st July to 1st August Melbourne Tartan Festival
- 16th July CSSA Christmas in July Fox and Hound, Mount Tamborine QLD

Events for August

- TBA August Scots in the Bush festival Boondooma Homestead, Qld

Events for September

- 7th or 14th September (TBC) Clan Sutherland Southeast QLD Luncheon
- TBA September Clans on the Coast Celtic Festival Nelson Bay NSW

Events for October

- 6th October 2024 Warwick Celtic Festival, QLD
- 26 October 2024 Williamstown Highland Games & Celtic Festival, VIC
- 12 October 2024 Canberra Highland Gathering ACT

Events for November

- 23rd November 2024 (TBC) St Andrews Day Kirkin' of the Tartan Services
 - Sydney, 10am at St Stephen's Uniting Church, Macquarie St, Sydney CBD
 - Canberra, 9.30am at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Forrest, ACT
 - Toukley, 9.30am at St David's Presbyterian Church, Toukley, NSW.
 - Adelaide, 10.00am Wesley Uniting Church, Kent Town, S.A.

Events for December

- TBA December 2024 Daylesford Highland Gathering Victoria Park Daylesford VIC

(TBA – To be Announced, TBC – To be confirmed)

Yule in Scotland

A forbidden celebration

In 1583 the Glasgow Kirk at St Mungo's Cathedral (also known as Glasgow Cathedral) ordered the excommunication of those who celebrated Yule, whilst elsewhere in Scotland, even singing a Christmas carol was considered a serious crime. After years of build-up, finally in 1640 an Act of Parliament of Scotland made the celebration of Yule illegal. This ban was officially repealed in 1712, but the Church continued to frown upon the festive celebrations. Punishments for celebrating Yule were harsh, and there was no public holiday for the Scottish people on Christmas Day. The banishment of Christmas meant that the Scots would focus their celebration on New Year's Eve (Hogmanay) and the two days that followed, making Hogmanay the large and exciting festival we know it as today.

However, in my research for my new book, I found there were those that still celebrated Yule with a festival on Orkney Island.

Yule Eve. The night before Yule, they would prepare bread, oatcakes and Yule Cakes. These cakes would be decorated with pinch marks and a hole cut in the centre. They would be shaped like the sun to symbolise the rebirth of the sun. They were also common throughout northern Europe where variants were also prepared mid summer. Families would prepare for Yule by cleaning their homes ensuring they were clean and tidy to prevent a visit from the trows and hogboons (Undead). Preparing for the arrival of mortal visitors and ensuring to tempt back the spirits of family ancestors. On Orkney, they believed that after death a person's spirit continued to live on, or near, the family farm. To ensure these spirits did not stay, each member of the household was required to wash themselves thoroughly on Yule Eve. They would then dress in a new garment (if they could afford one). After the house-cleaning had been completed and all the dirty water safely thrown away, the locks were opened and an iron blade placed beside the door. Four more obvious preparations to appease, and protect against, any visiting spirit. Then, before retiring for the night, the family would light a lamp or candle which was then left burning in the window throughout the long winter night.

Yule Day. Families would rise before the sun. Given the time of year, the sun was slow to rise, this made rising before the sun both easy and difficult. Sometimes, sounds of travelling fiddlers would be heard throughout the neighbourhood, waking the householders. Once out of bed, they would tend to the livestock carrying the lamp or candle that had burnt all night. He would then use this flame to singe the hair of the animals to ensure the animals would thrive over the coming years. They would then be fed and watered with a generous extra portion of food. Returning to the house, the man would offer whisky to all the household for luck for the coming year. Even the youngest would receive a taste.

Yule Morning, the youngsters of the house would bring out the treasures of harded leftover bits of candle they had gathered throughout the year and they would light up the room while the family ate yule breakfast together. As well as eating pork, sheep were also slaughtered for Yule. The mutton was boiled and eaten on Yule morning. At this meal it was also customary for an extra place to be laid at the table for the spirits of the ancestors who were welcome to return to the land of the living for the occasion. Bonfires were lit on the highest hilltops to dispell evil and return fertility to the fields, and the young men of the villagers would partake in a rough game of Ba (a kind of football that would be played in the streets of the village). .

Hogmanay in Scotland

Only one nation in the world can celebrate the New Year or Hogmanay with such revelry and passion – **the Scots!**

The origins of the word Hogmanay are debated, with some arguing it has Gaelic routes and others suggesting it's derived from the French language. But what is certain is Hogmanay is the official word for the Scots language, meaning the last day of the year.

The history of celebrating the last day of the year takes us back all the way to the Vikings, or perhaps even further to pagan times. As with a lot of Scottish celebrations and culture, Hogmanay is thought to have been based around Winter Solstice. Once the shortest day and night of the year has passed and the harvest was completed, celebrations including feasting, resting, and partaking in traditional rituals would be carried out over the festive season until New Year.

First footing is arguably the most common and is known as visiting friends and family immediately after midnight. Traditionally the first visitor of the home in the new year should be a dark-haired male to bring good luck. It is custom that the first footer bring with him a lump of coal, gifts of salt, black bun, freshly baked bread, and a wee dram of whisky, so that the house doesn't go hungry and is kept warm in the New Year and for the rest of the winter.

Another widely popular New Years tradition in Scotland is to sing "**Auld Lang Syne**" immediately at midnight, locking hands with loved ones. You'll find this sang at most Scottish Hogmanay parties and pubs, with the song being used to bring in the New Year since the 1700s.

*"Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot and auld lang syne
For auld lang syne, my dear, for auld lang syne,
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet, for auld lang syne."*

Traditional custom also saw households deep clean their homes, ensuring all debt, bad blood and issues were left in the old year and discarded for the new one. This of course, is always to be encouraged!

The traditional New Year ceremony would involve people dressing up in the hides of cattle and running around the village whilst being hit by sticks. The festivities would also include the lighting of bonfires and tossing torches. Animal hide wrapped around sticks and ignited produced a smoke that was believed to be very effective in warding off evil spirits: this smoking stick was also known as a Hogmanay.

Many of these customs continue today, especially in the older communities of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. On the Isle of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides, the young men and boys form themselves into opposing bands; the leader of each wears a sheep skin, while another member carries a sack. The bands move through the village from house to house reciting a Gaelic rhyme. The boys are given bannocks (fruit buns) for their sack before moving on to the next house.

One of the most spectacular fire ceremonies takes place in Stonehaven, south of Aberdeen on the northeast coast. Giant fireballs are swung around on long metal poles each requiring many men to carry them as they are paraded up and down the High Street. Again, the origin is believed to be linked to the Winter Solstice with the swinging fireballs signifying the power of the sun, purifying the world by consuming evil spirits.

Christmas Recipes Christmas Plum Pudding

As seen in the 2021 Christmas newsletter by Marie Hodgkinson.

You will need:

- 365g mixed peel,
- 225g currants;
- 225g seedless raisins;
- 225g sultanas;
- 1 cup brandy;
- 115g plain flour plus extra for dusting;
- pinch of the following
 - ground cinnamon;
 - freshly grated nutmeg;
 - ground ginger;
 - mace;
 - sea salt;
- 225g unsalted butter;
- 225g breadcrumbs;
- grated zest of 2 lemons;
- 2 granny smith, peeled & grated;
- 75g flaked or slithered almonds,
- 3 large eggs.



What to do

1. Combine the mixed peel currants, raisins, sultanas, and brandy and mixing thoroughly. Marinate for 24 hours, stirring a few times.
2. Sift the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, mace and 1 teaspoon of salt into a large bowl. Then add the coarsely grated butter.
3. Stir in the breadcrumbs and add the lemon zest, apple, almonds, and fruit mixture.
4. Whisk the eggs until light and frothy and stir through the pudding mixture until well combined.
5. Dust a 60cm square of calico with a little extra flour, then spoon the pudding mixture into the middle.
6. Gather up the cloth and tie it securely with kitchen string at the top to enclose the pudding.
7. Steam the pudding in a large double steamer over boiling water or boil in a large saucepan for 6 hours, replenishing the water every 30 minutes or as necessary.
8. Suspend the boiled pudding in a cool, airy place to mature before serving.
9. Warm the pudding in the microwave on a low heat, make sure it is well covered.
10. Serve the pudding with brandy custard.

Note: Christmas puddings certainly mature with standing, but the main issues are having the right balance of flavours in the first place and ensuring a long cooking time.

Some housekeeping

For regular updates of the events, we attend as they unfold be sure to follow our Facebook page. Feel free to email me at any time, I am happy to forward emails to other committee members or members at your request as well.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/clansutherlandocietyinaustralia>

Michelle Williams Secretary clansutherlandaustralia@hotmail.com

Our website <https://goldenvale.wixsite.com/clansutherlandaus>

Postage address

All clan mail to be sent to my home address **44-58 Old Pub Lane, Greenbank, QLD, 4124.**

Request for newsletter items

Do you have something interesting your fellow Clan Members might like to read about? Or perhaps there's a topic you would like us to research and include. Send your ideas and additions for the newsletter to Michelle Williams (Secretary).

Membership Fees

Membership fees are due 1st April each year. However, we are happy to receive them any time. Please contact me (Michelle) If you have any difficulties.

Individual: **\$15.00** Family (spouse/partner or household members): **\$20.00**

Our bank details:

For those doing it in person at a bank, it is a Westpac Bank account.

Account name: Clan Sutherland Society in Australia,

BSB: 032-008,

Account number: 222050

Please include your Clan ID number as a reference if you recall it, otherwise your name is sufficient.

Clan Sutherland Australia Lapel Pins available!

These superb lapel pins are still in stock. This is the same pin that was presented to Lady Rachel on behalf of her father The Earl of Sutherland.

If you would like to purchase a pin for you or a loved one for \$10 (including postage), These can be added to your membership fee payments. Please contact Michelle Williams (Secretary) for how to order.

