



Clan Forsyth

SYDNEY BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

CLAN FORSYTH SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA – SYDNEY BRANCH
PO BOX 396, ROSEVILLE NSW 2069 **OCTOBER 2011 #2**



James Davidson Forsyth III

16.10.1929 – 17. 9. 2011

Jim Forsyth, Clan Commissioner for Forsyth in Australia, passed away on Saturday 17th September 2011 after battling cancer during the last five months.

Jim has been a stalwart of the clan, beginning as Sydney Branch Treasurer, then President. The Clan Chief, Alistair Forsyth, appointed him Australian Commissioner in 2008.

The clan committee, members and friends extend our condolences to Judy, Karen, Vanessa and their families.

Later in this newsletter are eulogies from Jim's funeral, held in the Uniting Church at Castle Hill on Thursday 22nd September.



Hi all,

Welcome to the Spring issue. Here is the photo of the Clan at the AGM in March this year. This was Jim's last appearance with the clan.

I am sure all our thoughts are with Judy, Karen, Vanessa and their families on Jim Forsyth's passing.

It has come to the attention of the Committee that future representation of the Clan at Bundanoon will not be possible without public liability insurance. Sid Finlayson, it was resolved that the Clan would join

the Victorian Scottish Society in order to be covered by their insurance scheme and take out coverage for say 4-5 members attending functions.

We will hold the Forsyth Day this year on Sunday 6th November at Denise Park's unit, 2/24 Forsyth Street, Chatswood from 10am until about 2pm.

We will again buy chicken and salad like last year. People are encouraged to bring a plate to contribute to the catering. Tim Crossley will bring his scanner and people should be encouraged to bring their photos so these can be scanned and loaded to the Clan website.

The Committee said they enjoyed the Annual Church Service at the Chatswood South Uniting Church but expressed concern that the church may close because of a lack of a congregation. Closure of the church raises concerns for these Forsyth graves at the Church and other graves requiring cleaning up in the Sydney region.

Hope this finds you all well.

Bill Forsyth

President of Clan Forsyth, Sydney Branch



Congratulations to Barbara Forsyth and Keith Forsyth

They were each awarded Honorary Life Membership at the AGM for their outstanding contribution to the Clan. Barbara is still Membership Secretary after many years and Keith was Clan Secretary for many years.

Margaret Keys own "Forsyth Saga"

Margaret has supplied the Clan with a story of her Forsyth ancestry. It's an excellent read, but a little lengthy to place into the Clan Newsletter. An easy place to read it is on the Clan Website at... www.clanforyth.org

Sayings of Famous People

- Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year. - **Victor Borge**
- Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint. - **Mark Twain**
- By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere. - **Billy Crystal**
- Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat. - **Alex Levine**
- Money can't buy you happiness, but it does bring you a more pleasant form of misery. - **Spike Milligan**
- Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older, it will avoid you. - **Winston Churchill**
- Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was **SHUT UP**. - **Joe Namath**



MEMORIES OF A VICTORIAN CHILDHOOD - PART 6

A continuing series by Denise Park, a Clan Committee Member

Life at Gordon was defined by the seasons and annual social needs, the Church Fete being a major occasion.

For the preceding months preparations would be made, collecting scraps of material, old chocolate boxes, cutting up and shredding cellophane.

The crafty ladies would knit and crochet baby layettes in creative colours, little doll bags in which naphthalene discs were placed to repel moths, this had the added result in smelling our house for months to come.

Coat hangers were covered with sundry scraps and knitted lace and leftover floral decorations from millinery crafts. Hand towels, face washers and tea cosies added to the crocheted cache. And the aprons in multi colours were lovingly sewn and admired.

The sweet making was always done at 9 Edward Street as we had a very big dining room with a large extending table. Little marble slabs were placed for each maker who would fashion sweets out of royal icing balls, a cherry, walnut or almond would be placed in each or a seeded prune or date would have a sliver of icing added. The completed sweets would then be placed on beds of shredded cellophane in the recycled chocolate boxes which another team of ladies had covered in wallpaper. Some additions were being cooked up in the kitchen such as fudge, marshmallows covered in toasted coconut and toffees.

The kettle was on and many cups of tea consumed, this was considered fun and although run like a military operation was never short of volunteers. On another day jams, chutneys and lemon cheese were made and bottled, labelled and priced for the 'sale table'. These were regularly made as Aunt Alice Forsyth Walker was president of the Methodist Overseas Missions for 30 years and had their 'sale table' to stock.

On the day of the fete, which was inevitably wet the menfolk would retrieve the trestle tables from under the church, set up and fetch and carry while the women would take dominion over their stalls. When the rain and gale force winds were predicted everything had to be moved into the Sunday school hall. This was rather cosy and the evocative smell of the musty white elephant stall mingled with the sweet and tangy afternoon tea section, along with the 4711 perfume of the ladies still stays in my memories.

I wonder now how much of a profit was made? The amount of work was enormous. I think the camaraderie and sense of belonging was the really important issue.

Jim Forsyth's Eulogy by Stuart Esler

My name is Stuart Esler. Jim was my uncle and I also had the great honour to be Best Man at his wedding to Judy. On behalf of his family, I would like to welcome everyone here today and especially those who have travelled long distances to be with us, and to thank all those who made contact to offer support during Jim's illness. Jim will be sadly missed by all.

James Davidson Forsyth was born on the 16th of October, 1929, in Sandringham, a suburb of Melbourne. His father, and grandfather, also carried the name James Davidson Forsyth and his mother was Sylvia Myrtle Olive Wood. Jim always said that he was born during the Depression and that the world seems to have been in depression ever since!

As Jim was the third generation of James Davidson Forsyth, he became known to his family as 'Boy', and this nickname stayed with him in his childhood years. His sister Moira, my mother, is eight years older than Jim and unfortunately is too infirm to travel up from Melbourne today.

Jim's father worked in the furniture industry before beginning a career operating corner shops in several Melbourne suburbs. This meant that Jim moved quite frequently, and he attended several primary schools. When he reached secondary school, he attended Scotch College in Hawthorn. Quite a few years later, I also went to Scotch College. One of my teachers remembered Jim, so he must have created a lasting impression!

In 1947, Jim completed his schooling and started work with the National Bank, now the NAB. His career in the Bank spanned many years and was a major influence on his life. Initially, Jim worked in Victoria but was then moved to the Riverina. When the administration of the Riverina area transferred to Sydney, Jim relocated to Coffs Harbour and he then spent the rest of his life working and living in NSW. During his time in the Riverina, Jim joined the Presbyterian Fellowship Association and this led to him travelling extensively around the world, which he greatly enjoyed. Later, he became a Church Elder at Croydon Park and at Ryde, and taught Sunday School.

After his time in Coffs Harbour, Jim moved to Sydney, where some of the most important events of his life took place. He met Judith, who was also working at the bank in York Street, and they married on 26 January 1963 at the Church of Christ, Lane Cove.

Jim and Judy moved to their house at 29 Anzac Avenue, Ryde and remained there for the next 46 years. During this time, their address changed to Denistone East, then to Denistone, but I can assure you, they didn't actually change house! Early in their married life, they went swimming at Phegan's Bay and Jim somehow managed to lose his wedding ring. As their decades together have proven, this was NOT an omen.

It was at Anzac Avenue that Jim and Judy began their family. Sadly, their first daughter lived for only a short time but then Karen was born in 1967 and Vanessa in 1969. Anzac Avenue was their home for much of their lives. They attended schools in Ryde, and Vanessa was married from the house. When the time came for Jim and Judy to move to Castle Hill in 2009, there was a huge cleanout of 46 years of accumulation, but it still took 4 removal vans to move the remainder!

Jim was a dedicated father and family man, but he was no handyman. When things needed fixing, he got someone in to do it. He did enjoy walking, which he did extensively. Sometimes, he was forced to run, mainly to catch one of their dogs who didn't want a bath. One day in 1991, he fell over a dog and injured his elbow, the first real illness he had suffered. When he entered hospital on April 6 this year however, it was to be a long stay. From that date until Jim passed away on 17 September, he was only able to go home for a total of six weeks. While in hospital, Jim showed enormous patience with the nursing staff, something he did not always show at home.

Over the years, Jim and Judy travelled a lot, sometimes with their family and sometimes just together. They visited Britain four times. The last of these trips in 2010 was mainly concerned with following up family history. As always, this unearthed some unexpected facts. Perhaps the most memorable part, though, was when they stayed with the Clans genealogist in Scotland, who gave Jim a glass of fine Scotch whisky every evening. Jim was not a drinker, but like most of Scottish descent didn't mind the wee dram.

He loved watching all sports, especially the Olympics and Commonwealth Games, and also loved football. While he enjoyed the rugby codes, as a born-and-bred Victorian, he always continued to follow the AFL. He enjoyed crosswords and was a great doodler, covering newspapers with drawings. When he attended a charcoal drawing class later in his life, he showed real ability. Jim had a long association with the Liberal Party, especially in the late 1970's, and was the treasurer of the Denistone Branch. A highlight was the time when John Howard, visiting the Branch, told them 'in confidence', that he was about to be announced as federal treasurer. Jim was also a blood donor extraordinaire. He received awards for the number of donations, which we believe was around 175 in total.

One of the great passions of Jim's life was his Scottish heritage, of which he was extremely proud. He loved Scottish music, but was not known as a fan of Heavy Metal and he believed country music should stay in the country. Jim was a great supporter of Clan Forsyth, and I will now hand you over to hear more details of his time with the Clan.

Thank you.

Jim's Eulogy by Sydney Branch President, Bill Forsyth

You could say the Clan and all things Scottish was Jim's main focus in retirement. That's after Judith, the children and grandchildren. He loved Scottish music and he derived a great deal of pleasure out of it. Jim joined at the inauguration of the Clan Society in 1978/9 – (Sydney began almost the same time as Scotland did). Soon after the inauguration Jim became treasurer using his banking background and remained in that position for many years. Jim then served as President several times.

He was invested as Clan Commissioner in 2008, probably one of the proudest days of his life with friends and family near and far attending. Jim liaised with Alistair Forsyth, of that ilk, Baron of Ethie, Scottish Chief of Clan Forsyth. His contact details were listed on many internet sites and Jim was in contact with Clan in NSW, QLD, Victoria and Western Australia as well as the clan in Scotland and USA and Canada.

Jim and Judy travelled extensively on behalf of the Clan visiting Scottish festivals and Clan members in Glen Innes and travelled to Queensland Branch for their Annual dinners about three times during the time he was Commissioner and always enjoyed those visits.

He loved all the Scottish outings at various venues and Represented the Clan, manning our information tent at Brigadoon in Bundanoon, Castle Hill Highland Games - Glen Innes - Wentworth Park, Drummoyne then Castle Hill.

He was the Clan representative to other Scottish organisations - Combined Scottish Society, Scottish Australian Heritage Council and volunteer at Scottish House at Guildford once a month until illness put a stop to that.

He will be sorely missed by all.

Henry Ian Wheat

20.2.1936 – 3.9.2011

Known as Ian, the husband of Ruth Wheat (nee Forsyth) passed away in early September. Ruth is a committee member of the Sydney branch of the clan. The clan extends our condolences to Ruth and her family on their sad loss.

Newsletter Contributions: Please email your story, anecdotes, articles and photos to the Editor, Chris Lee on cwlee@optusnet.com.au

Key Committee Member's phone numbers:

Bill Forsyth (President) 0428 234 070, Barbara Forsyth (Membership) 9560 9759