

A Landmark for Clan MacAulay

30 May 2001 and the Honourable Clan MacAulay was on countdown to the first " Ad Hoc Derbhfine" in over two and a half centuries.

Some two hundred and fifty years ago their profligate Chief died leaving the Clan Dormant. Without an heir, landless and penniless, the Clan scattered around the world taking their Name and History with them. In the intervening years no direct descendant has come forward, and no Clan member had sought the responsibility of revitalizing the Clan restoring it to good heart and good fortune. That is until 25th. April 1998 when Iain MacMillan MacAulay M.B.E. commissioned Commander of the Honourable Clan called it to its first meeting in Perth.

Twenty MacAulays stepped out of the past and with loyalty and hard work Clan MacAulay started the long journey back to rehabilitation.

The first Task was to search for a bloodline to the deceased Chief and to find the Undifferenced Arms, a formidable task after such a long silence. By writing, broadcasting and advertising, and by World travel and through the World Wide Web the search was on.

The Lord Lyon ruled that one Clan member who had long sought his bloodline back to the ancient Chief should be given a year and a day to prove his claim with a deadline of January 2001.

The Clan honoured the agreement but the deadline came and went and after extensive genealogical research the claim was not substantiated.

The way was now clear to hold an " Ad Hoc Derbhfine".

In this truly ancient patriarchal Celtic court tradition and democracy are united. The Elders of the Clan, Armigers and Landowners, are allowed to select one from their ranks to be presented to Lyon as their choice for Chiefship Through the Acclamation the Armigers and landowners are given a clear idea who the Clan favours and by Acclamation the Clan rallies to its Chief.

This system has developed over centuries.

The Legal and Historical nuances of the Derbhfine could not overshadow a joyful occasion when Clan MacAulay retrieved the unity so long lost.

The Ceremony was supervised by Charles Burnett, Ross Herald of Arms, representing the Lyon Court and ensuring the Laws of the Court are observed. This took place on 3rd. August 2001 at Tulloch castle Dingwall Scotland when the Clan gathered from around the world to select and acclaim a Chief and had a wonderful time doing it!