

The following is a response to an unauthorized posting by Jim McAfee a member of the Council of Presidents Representing the Surnames MacPhee, MacDuffie, Macfie, MacAfee, MacCuish (Including versions with Mc)

First, three important facts:

- No one is “trying to change the name”. This is an opportunity for the Clan as a whole to demonstrate the necessary consensus in supporting one name.
- This is not an initiative of any one person, a Society or any clique. It comes from seven Societies represented by a Council of elected Presidents who also act on behalf of the entire Clan.
- The impetus has come from the Lord Lyon’s stipulation that the Clan as a whole show consensus and demonstrate unity over a Clan name. Otherwise, a Family Convention to choose a Commander may not take place and in fact may trigger a 5–10-year penalty before a Petition may be presented again.

As President of the Macfie Clan Society of America, Jim McAfee was one of the seven members of the Council of Presidents representing individual Societies worldwide over whose signatures the Petition was made to the Lord Lyon to hold a Family Convention to nominate a Commander for consideration by the Court.

As part of the process, all seven Council members agreed to abide to a set of rules, statements and practices which included:

- no individual postings on social media (other than announcements that the process was open and a link to the web page where information and engagement forms were available) ;
- that each of the Council had no intention to stand as a Commander candidate;
- not to unduly influence or solicit specific input from members of their individual Societies;
- communications would be coordinated by the Council for accuracy, consistency and transparency

Jim McAfee has now made several claims on Facebook which are spurious, and/or factually incorrect, or which are damaging to the process. He has also made various *ad hominem* comments about people involved in the process, which are neither polite nor accurate nor welcome.

A. Jim McAfee states:

During the process of finding a new Clan Commander the subject of our Clan name has become another place of contention. Our Clan Name, Macfie, was established in 1981 and that has been our name for 43 years (and if you look at history it has been the name for several centuries).

This refers to the appointment of the first Commander in 1981 – Earle Douglas MacPhee.

It is often claimed that “the then Lord Lyon announced that we were Clan Macfie” or words to that effect. This completely misrepresents both the 1981 occasion and the role of the Lord Lyon. Lyon has no authority to direct what a Clan or Family may call itself but is willing to recognise a Commander (and a Chief) as representing that Name. The 1981 event happened at a time when it was possible for an *ad hoc derbhfine* to be convened consisting of “landed and armigerous gentlemen”. Recent Lyons have recognised this as less than egalitarian and have insisted that the Clan or Family as a whole has an opportunity to voice its preference. This has resulted in the Family Convention system, through which Lyon offers its facilities and authority to help Clans and Families come to a decision as to the choice of Commander, Chief, etc. Lyon appoints one of the Officers of Arms to act as Supervising Officer and to report back to Lyon as to whether the process has been conducted fairly,

openly, transparently, etc. On the basis of that Report, Lyon may choose to recognise a Commander, Chief, etc. This has a real-world application, and if Lyon is not persuaded that the choice was not made in the approved manner, Lyon may not grant undifferentiated Arms to a Chief claimant, and may not take seriously any other proposals made (such as choice of a Commander).

The reference to “our history” relies on a five-volume work written by the said Dr Earle Douglas MacPhee (1894 - 1982) entitled *“The mythology, traditions and history of MacDhubhsith — MacDuffie Clan (McAfie, McDuffie, MacFie, MacPhee, Duffy, etc.)”* from 1975.

It is immediately noticeable that Dr MacPhee regarded the Clan as being “MacDhubhsith — MacDuffie” with MacFie etc. as Names within the Clan. Throughout his work he refers to “our Clan” rather than to one cognate of the stem name, except when quoting the writings of others. He also makes several spurious claims, inter alia:

1. *“The clan is registered as Clan MacFie. (or Clan Macfie).”*

* There is no mechanism for such a thing, and nowhere that a Clan name could be so “registered”. He refers there to a book written by Frank Adam entitled *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands* (Johnston and Bacon. Edinburgh and London. 8th edition, 1970.) This is in no way an official text, and was originally composed by Mr Adam while living in Malaya ca. 1900. It also contains much debatable material, such as “Sept Lists” (see below) which Lord Lyon Innes of Learney, when issuing an updated edition ca. 1954, called “a wonderful effort of the imagination” (see below re. “septs”).

2. *No other name of the clan has made application to be armigerous.*

* Since 1975 there have been numerous grants of Arms to individuals surnamed M(a)cPhee, M(a)cAffee, M(a)cDuffee, etc.

3. *The Armorial bearings of the Clan MacFie was given to MacFie of Dreghorn, not as a Chief but as an important Chieftain (Lyon Register VII, 89) P. 502.*

* It is not a Clan that is armigerous but an individual, and there are no “Armorial bearings of the Clan”. The reference is to Arms granted to Robert Macfie of Langhouse on 18/11/1864 (vol. 7 record 3) followed soon by a grant to his slightly older cousin Robert Andrew MacFie of Dreghorn on 16/3/1867 (vol. 7 record 59). There is no reference in either of these to any status as “an important Chieftain” or anything else – and the bearing of Arms in Scotland does not depend on or confer any such status, as Arms are available to anyone “virtuous and well-deserving” without regard to rank. Furthermore, there is no record of any previous Macfie (etc.) holding Arms in the Public Register (established in 1672) or in any pre-existing Armorial.

4. *The Clan MacFie has four Septs: Duffie, Duffy, MacGuffie, Machaffie (p. 557).*

* Septs are a late-Victorian invention promoted by tartan-sellers to increase their revenue, and have no historical basis. Nor are MacGuffie and Machaffie derived from MacDhubhsith, MacDuffie, MacFie etc. but surnames of completely separate origin. Earle Douglas MacPhee seems to ignore this evidence in the most important work on Scottish surnames to which he referred (Black, George F.; *Surnames of Scotland* first published by New York Public Library in 1946)

B. Jim McAfee states:

However, there have been several groups of people from one of our Societies, that have approached the Lord Lyon several times and have tried to change the name to MacDuffie. Each time the Lyon has said NO. The name has been examined several times and proven to be Macfie, yet, the fact remains, we still have people trying to get it changed.

If Jim McAfee has any actual documentary evidence of this, he should present it. But even if individuals, groups or even a Society had attempted such a thing, Lyon would have not accepted it. Lyon would insist that there be an expression of will on behalf of the whole of the Name, not some self-selected group.

Further, no-one is “trying to get it changed”. Lyon has made it clear that unless the Clan can show overwhelming support for one surname variant over all others, the name remains undecided by the Clan itself, and the Family Convention cannot go ahead. The current exercise in canvassing the wider Clan membership for their preference of a Clan name is a genuine attempt to achieve what Lyon calls “overwhelming consensus”. This is not a vote.

C. The remainder of Jim McAfee’s Facebook posting is an open attempt to drive the preferences by members in one direction and as such contravenes both the spirit of the Council of Presidents and Jim McAfee’s own agreement not to do any such thing.

As it stands, this blatant attempt to drive one outcome may have three related effects:

1. it may persuade those who were not overly concerned to take an opposition stance and split the consensus versus an informed preference;
2. it may have contravened the transparency and fair-dealing of the overall process, and bring the Family Convention and Commander Search procedure to a grinding halt, with the Lord Lyon withdrawing permission;
3. Lord Lyon will likely then say that he will entertain no further Petitions for a Family Convention until the Clan can show the required degree of unity, and impose a penalty for a period of at least 5 or 10 years before renewing the process again.

Please send comments to the Council of Presidents at
clannameandcommandersearch@mail.com

Jim McAfee’s Facebook posting addressing his Society and Clan members follows.



The Family Clan Group

Ginger McAfee · 36m · 🌐



From the President's Pen: Dr. Jim McAfee, President, the Macfie Clan Society of America

Dear fellow Society and Clan members,

I know there has been a lot of confusion in the past few months about the Clan Name and Clan Commander search. I will try to clear up some of the confusion and misinformation that has been floating about.

Due to his illness, Iain Morris Macfie, has been unable to perform the duties of Clan Commander for several years. After a lot of conversation and discussion the Lord Lyon finally received his letter of resignation as Clan Commander. The process of finding and installing a new Clan Commander has proven to be a long and arduous one. Hopefully that will culminate in May 2025.

During the process of finding a new Clan Commander the subject of our Clan name has become another place of contention. Our Clan Name, Macfie, was established in 1981 and that has been our name for 43 years (and if you look at history it has been the name for several centuries). However, there have been several groups of people from one of our Societies, that have approached the Lord Lyon several times and have tried to change the name to MacDuffie. Each time the Lyon has said NO. The name has been examined several times and proven to be Macfie, yet, the fact remains, we still have people trying to get it changed. Therefore, the Lord Lyon has said we must settle this name. He, the Lyon, has appointed a supervisor from his office to guide us through the entire process. Which brings us to the following process; in the following paragraph I have given instruction how to share with the Presidents Council and ultimately the Lord Lyon what you preference is for our Clan name. If your last name is a derivative of "Macfie" please, please go to this website and fill out the form with your preference. It is very important and MUST be submitted by midnight est on 15 September 2024.

Go to the following website: www.clannameandcommandersearch.com

Scroll down to: 3 Critical tasks need to be completed to participate in this process

Go to number 1. Click on "input Form" this will bring up the form

Down load this form to your computer.

Fill out the 2nd page of this form entirely (check all boxes)


After you fill it out, save it to your computer

Start an email to clannameandcommandersearch@mail.com

Attach your filled our form to this email and send it.

You will receive a notification and a number when it is received. (If you have not received a confirmation number within 3 days you may need to send an email and ask if it has been received or, fill out another form.)

Folks this is very, very important that you so this immediately. If there is something wrong with the form you send in, you will receive a notice and what needs to be done to correct it.

 MAIL.COM
Free email accounts with mail.com | Log in here or register today
The right email address for you ✓ Secure ✓ 100+ domain names ✓ Up to

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