



The Clan Matheson Society Australia Newsletter

From the (acting) Editor....

PLEASE NOTE We plan to hold our Annual General Meeting next Sunday 14 August 2022, via Zoom, 2.00pm. If you would like to attend, please let me know by email if possible, so I can send you the link to attend by return email. To attend, just click on the link I send you and follow any prompts that appear. It is possible to attend just by phone — there will be phone numbers to all on the invitation I send.

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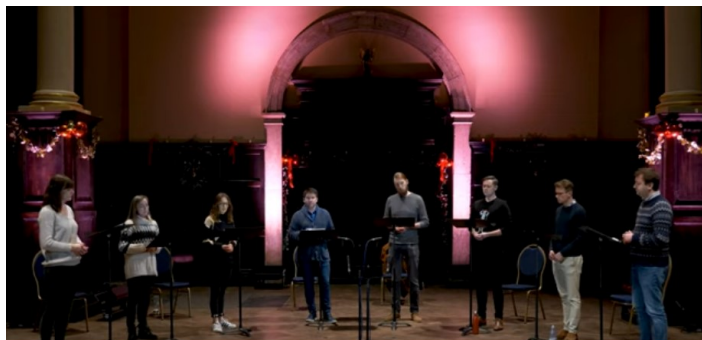
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Ruth Pearce sent me a link (<https://youtu.be/7E5nBJeuMIs>) to a beautiful YouTube rendition by a group called Voces8 of a piece by C. Rand Matheson. Voces8 themselves are a truly fantastic singing group and do a very moving performance of the work. The piece is a new arrangement of the Sibelius tune 'Finlandia' composed in 1899-1900 and the words were written by Katharina von Schlegel in 1752. C. Rand Matheson composed the arrangement of Sibelius' tune (with acknowledgement). Finlandia is sometimes described as Finland's unofficial national anthem.

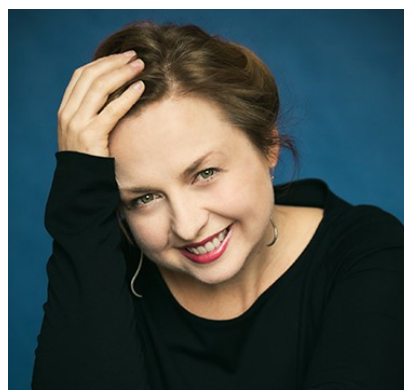
C. Rand Matheson (b. 2003) is a high school senior at St. Michael-Albertville High School in St. Michael, Minnesota USA. At STMA Rand has been very active in the music department and is entering his third year as a member of the renowned STMA Concert Choir, a group known throughout the US Midwest for their consistently engaging performances and high quality of musical output. He also serves as the current president of the choir and has been the tenor 2 section leader for the past two

years. He currently studies both private voice and composition with Brandon Berger and plans to pursue a degree in music after graduating high school.

Have a listen...



Voces 8 sing 'Be still, my Soul' by C. Rand Matheson



Holly Mathieson, Orchestral Conductor

On another musical note, Mary & I were listening to ABC FM last Sunday morning and heard some Schumann being played by an orchestra conducted by Holly Mathieson. I had never heard of her before, but a Google search (doesn't Dr Google know everything!) showed that she is a young conductor from NZ, a graduate of the Universities of Otago and Melbourne. Her first job was as a shop assistant in the lingerie department – which shows you can get to greatness from anywhere! She now lives in Glasgow and has conducted most of the major BBC orchestras, London Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra, so she's a real musical star worth keeping an eye (or ear) out for.

CLAN MATHESON

Clan meeting held by Zoom on Saturday 2 July 2022

Previous Minutes: Accepted by all present.

Matters Arising, Action Items and General Discussion:

Genevieve to submit Society's annual financial statements to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Brad advised he had revised his document outlining his research on the migrant ship Ticonderoga. **Brad** will provide this latest version to Colin for inclusion in a Clan newsletter. Roma said she had also researched the ship on which her ancestors (not necessarily Mathesons) had arrived in Australia, and queried whether this research might be of interest to other Clan members – Colin believed such information would be of interest to others in the Clan doing their own genealogical research. He asked **Roma** to submit this for a newsletter. Roma noted that she had also undertaken quite a bit of genealogical research in Utah, USA, in the past.

Colin included Euan's merchandise PDF in the last newsletter.

Brad sent information to Euan about the quotes he obtained from T-shirt makers. He said the T-shirts can be produced on an as-needs basis, rather than stockpiling in bulk.

Margaret sent her speaking notes from her public address at the Melbourne Tartan Festival. These will be included in a future newsletter.

Warren to send information, photos of his daughter's new baby – for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Rob and Helen to send information, pictures of the Matheson church and fire station at Glen Innes, NSW – for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Rob to research information about change of the village name 'Mathiesons' to 'Moura' near Rushworth, Vic – for inclusion in a future newsletter.

President's Report:

Discussion centred mainly about the above items. Colin also initiated some discussion about the NZ Society's changed model of operation; namely dropping membership fees altogether, and instead proposing to run on sponsorship and paid website advertising alone. There was some discussion about waiting and watching to see how this model might work – to be discussed further at a future meeting with greater attendance.

Treasurer's Report:

Colin assumed no payments had been made since our last March meeting.

Next meeting: AGM Sunday 14 August 2022, via Zoom, 2.00pm **PLEASE NOTE IN YOUR DIARIES**

Meeting closed: 4.35pm

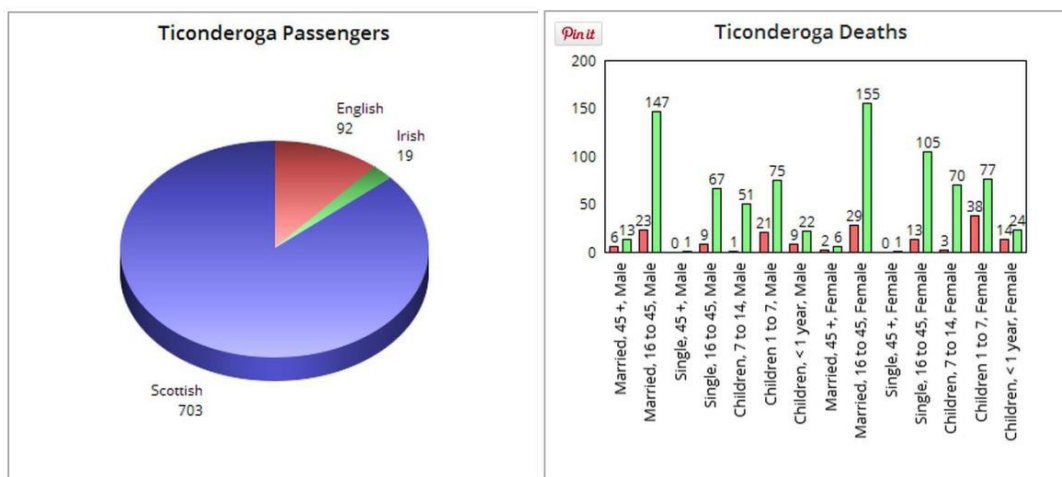
Mary Molan (secretary)

John Matheson and the voyage to Australia on the “hell ship” Ticonderoga 1852

by Brad Matheson

John Matheson was a young man when he embarked upon a journey that both imperilled his life and led him to the other side of the world to establish himself and his future family in what was then the Colony of Victoria. The son of crofters, John and Rachael Matheson (nee McDonald), born in 1831, he was raised along with his brothers and sister (Christy, Duncan and Flora) in Toll and Upper Breakish on the Isle of Skye (the largest island in the Inner Hebrides archipelago) in the Parish of Inverness. In 1851, he decided to follow other family members who had journeyed out to Australia, no doubt lured by the prospect of a better life than the probability of being displaced by the highland clearances. He took advantage of an assisted passage scheme of the day to take up the role of overseer, managing a farm owned by Victorian colonial MP Hugh MacVean on the outskirts of Colac at Stony Rises in south west Victoria.

He had booked his passage on the Ticonderoga. In June of 1852, the Government Emigration Commissioners chartered the double deck American clipper ship, Ticonderoga to take emigrants to Australia. She had previously been a merchant ship carrying cotton along the American trade routes. Registered at 1100 tons to the Black Star line, the Ticonderoga was captained by Thomas Boyle. On 4 August, 1852, she left Liverpool, bound for Melbourne, Australia with 814 emigrants on board, most of them Scottish agricultural workers. The official start of the journey for the highland Scots was when they made their own way to the emigration office at Glasgow. From there they were transported over 350 km along the UK west coast by packet steamer to the port of Liverpool. A ferry then took them across the Mersey River to the emigration depot at Birkenhead. The voyage then took them down the west coast of Africa, rounding the Cape and generally east to Victoria. But rather than travel due east, they followed the 'Great Circle' route through the Great Southern Ocean.



Tragically, less than a week into the voyage, disease broke out aboard the ship and by the 12th August, the first passenger died. In the weeks that followed, more and more passengers became ill, due at least in part, to poor ventilation, overcrowding and increasingly unsanitary conditions. The surgeon superintendent, Dr J C Sanger, and his assistant surgeon, Dr James William Henry Veitch soon began running out of medical supplies. More passengers died.

Ticonderoga continued....

After ninety hellish days at sea, the Ticonderoga limped into Port Phillip Bay flying the yellow quarantine flag. The Argus newspaper, being the major journal in the Colony, reported on 5th November 1852 that when the vessel arrived "all provisions, medicine and medical comforts had been consumed" and that the Government immediately sent the schooner Empire and the harbour master (Captain Ferguson) with supplies of fresh meat, livestock, vegetables, porter, wine, spirits, and medicine. Dr Taylor, of the ship Otillia, who had had great experience with the fever, was dispatched to assist with the sick. A further report on November 9 stated that there were in all 300 patients suffering from fever.

"Intelligence was brought to Williamstown, on Wednesday evening last, by Captain Wylie, of the brig Champion, from Adelaide, that a large ship, named the Ticonderoga, ninety days out from Liverpool, with upwards of 900 government emigrants on board, had anchored at the Heads. A great amount of sickness had occurred among the passengers, more than a hundred deaths having taken place, and almost a similar number of cases (typhus fever) being still on board. Nor was this all. The doctor's health was so precarious that he was not expected to survive, and the whole of the medicines, medical comforts, &c, had been consumed. The authorities in Williamstown, immediately furnished the government schooner Empire, with the necessary supplies of livestock, beef, mutton, milk, vegetables, porter, wine, spirits, and a medicine chest, and Dr. Taylor, of the Otillia, a gentleman of much practical experience, went down in her to the Ticonderoga yesterday, to take charge, accompanied by Captain Ferguson, the Harbour Master. The Lysander, has also been taken up by Government as a Quarantine Hulk, and proceeds to her destination at the Heads this day, having on board stores sufficient for all hands for three months, when further, arrangements will be made, which we trust will ameliorate the fearful state of things on board. The foregoing are the only particulars known to our reporter at present, but, at all events, this case clearly exhibits the cruelty and ill-judged policy of crowding such a number of people on board a single ship, no matter her size, for a lengthened voyage."

The Argus, Melbourne, November 5, 1852



Ticonderoga

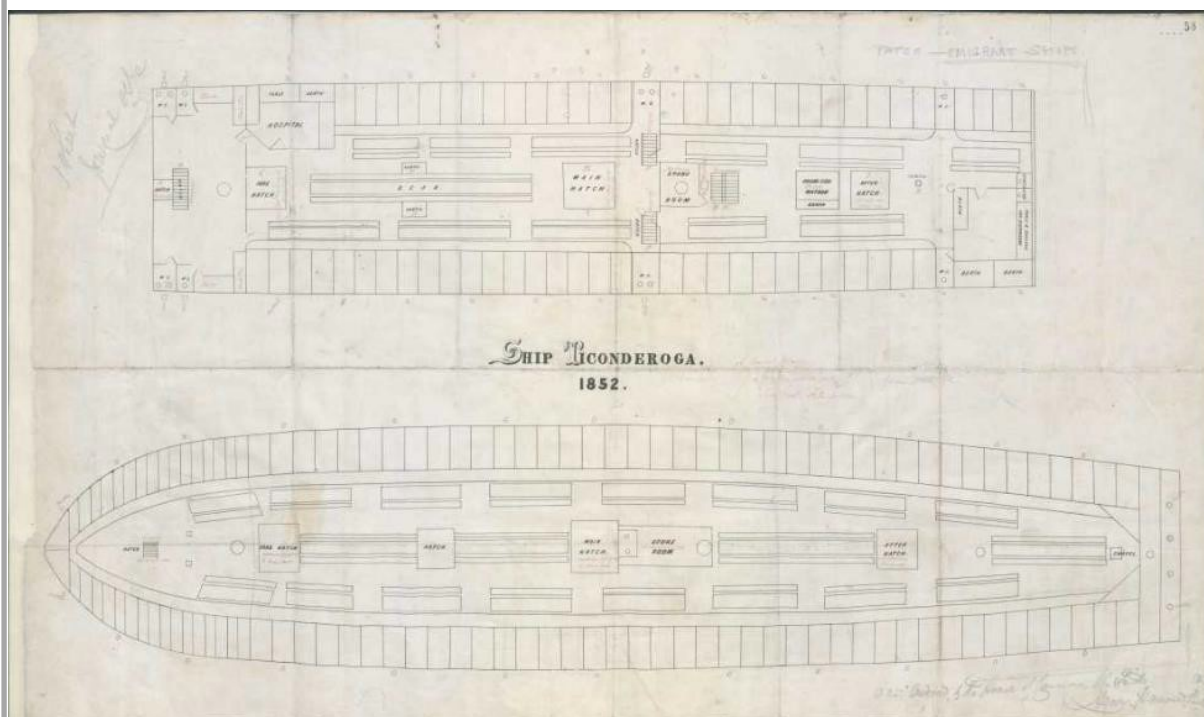


Captain Charles Ferguson - Harbour Master

Ticonderoga continued....

As the weeks of quarantine wore on, debate was intense in the Melbourne newspapers about whether or not overcrowding aboard the Ticonderoga contributed to the outbreak of disease. One anonymous letter, written to the Argus at the end of 1852 claimed that the surviving passengers appeared emaciated. It described the ship as being unclean and further charged that unconscionable haste and little care had been taken when the sick were transferred to the land-based quarantine station from the ship. A few days later, Dr. Sanger, the Surgeon Superintendent from the Ticonderoga responded in a letter of protest to the Editor of the Argus.

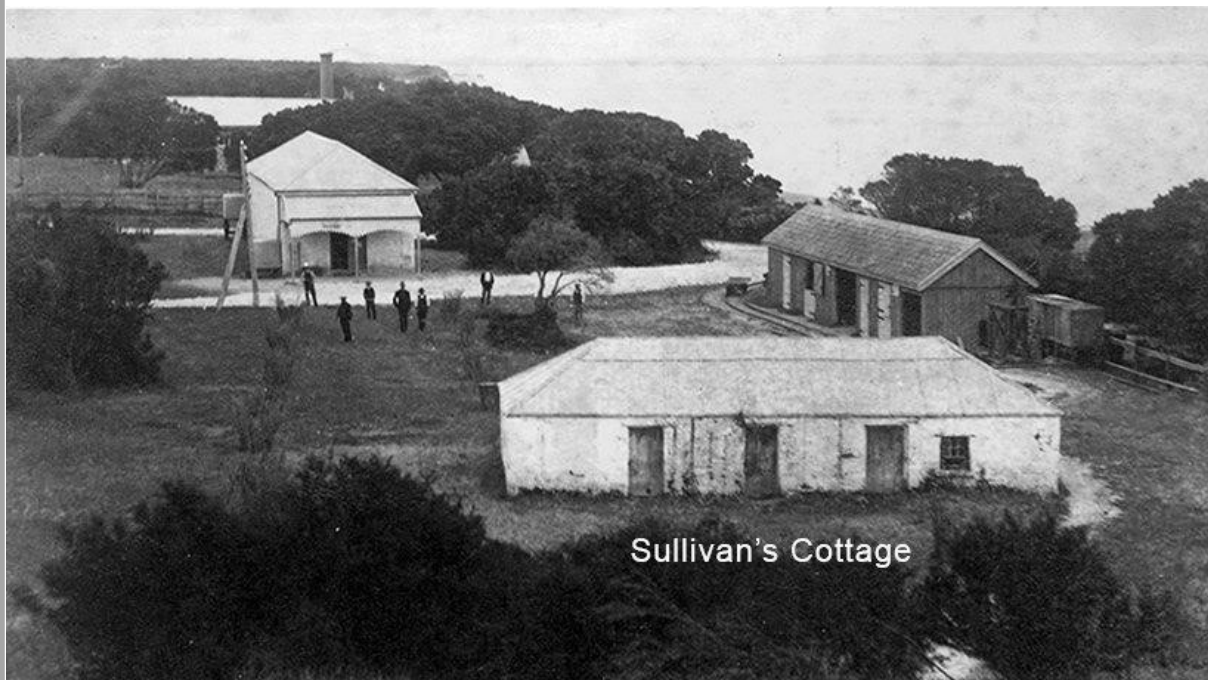
"Sirs – A garbled and false representation respecting the state of the ship Ticonderoga having appeared in the Argus of Friday last, written by a person who signs himself" Observer." I beg you will allow me the space of a few lines to disabuse the public on that subject, more particularly as that statement unjustly reflects on the conduct of the Captain and Officers of the vessel, those gentlemen having evinced the most hearty desire for the welfare of the emigrants throughout the whole of her disastrous voyage. So far from the generality of the people being in an emaciated condition, as" Observer" seems to imply, the fact is, that out of nearly 600 only two were sent to the hospital, about a dozen were suffering more or less from diarrhoea or debility, none severely: the rest were in perfect health. The apparently unseemly haste with which the passengers were hurried over the side was caused by the impatience of the captain of the steamer, who would not wait a moment even to allow the husband of the mother of the seven-week's infant to join his wife with the child. When the people were re-embarked from the Sanitary Station on the Monday previous, the ship was perfectly clean: but it having been necessary to take down the berths and destroy them for the purpose of thoroughly purifying the vessel, the passengers were obliged for the few days they remained on board to lie on the decks, thus causing an untidy appearance, and a difficulty of attending minutely to cleanliness. As regards the Government officials, I can testify that the greatest pains were taken to thoroughly eradicate the disease before granting the ship pratique, and not a single case of infectious disease existed at the time the vessel left Point Nepean. – I am, Sir, Your most obt. servt, J. C. SANGER, M.D., Surgeon Superintendent ship Ticonderoga."



The Argus, Melbourne, January 4, 1853

Ticonderoga continued....

The Government had taken over two houses belonging to Messrs Sullivan and Cannon as hospitals, and had also purchased the ship *Lysander* as a quarantine hulk. The sick began to improve on being moved to the shore, where they were sheltered in improvised tents provided by the Government, but none the less, during the next six weeks 82 more passengers died and were buried in an improvised cemetery on Point Nepean next to the new quarantine station. In all 168 souls lost their lives either on the voyage or later during quarantine. Out of the 307 male passengers, 69 died. Out of the 339 female passengers, 99 died. Among the dead were 86 children, of which 23 were infants under a year old. A Janet Matheson and her infant son George were among those who tragically perished at sea.



Sullivan's Cottage

PROCLAMATION.

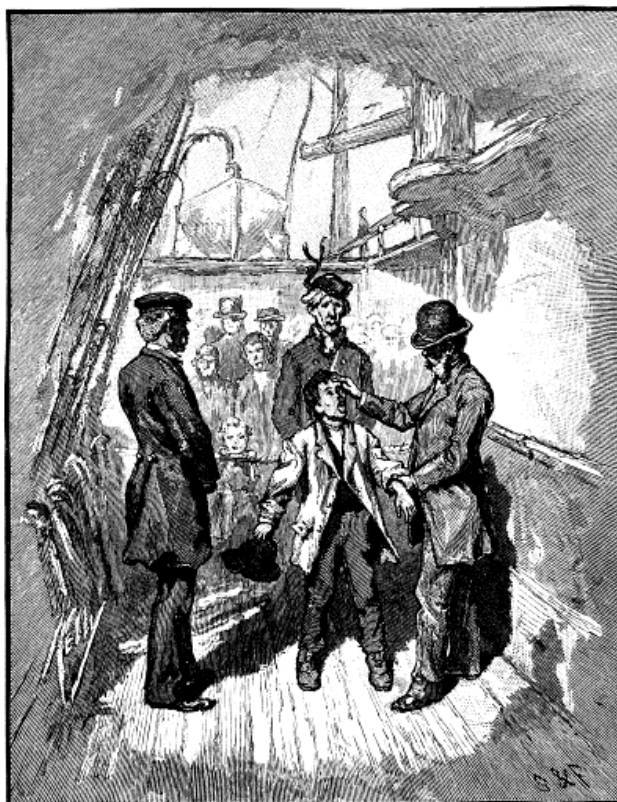
By His Excellency CHARLES JOSEPH LA TROBE, Esq., Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Victoria, and its Dependencies.

IN accordance with the provisions of the Acts of the Governor and Council of New South Wales, 3rd William 4th., No. 1, and 5th Victoria, No. 12, I, by this Proclamation, declare and order that the Quarantine Station, at Point Nepean, shall be that portion of the County of Mornington, in the said Colony of Victoria, commencing at the Flagstaff, on Observatory Point, about one and a half miles east of Point Nepean, which Flagstaff bears from the Lighthouse at Shortland's Bluff, south thirty-four degrees east; and bounded on the north by the shores of Port Phillip Bay, eastward, to a Flagstaff, bearing from the Lighthouse, south forty-eight degrees east, Flat Island being south forty degrees west; on the east by a line south to the Sea Coast; on the south by Bass' Straits westerly; and on the west by a line bearing north to the commencing point: And I do hereby strictly prohibit all persons not being themselves under Quarantine, or duly authorized for the purpose of necessary communication with persons under Quarantine, or the Quarantine Station, from going, under any pretence whatever, within the limits hereinbefore described, when any persons, goods, wares, or merchandize, are undergoing Quarantine within the said limits, under the pains and penalties prescribed by Law.

Given under my Hand and Seal, at the Government Office, Melbourne, this twenty-third day of November, One thousand eight hundred and fifty-two.

(L. s.) C J LA TROBE,
By His Excellency's Command,
W. LONSDALE.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!



INSPECTION AT QUARANTINE.

Ticonderoga continued....



The monument erected by descendants in the Point Nepean Cemetery on the 8th November 1992 in memory of Ticonderoga victims. The Point Nepean Cemetery was established in 1854 and replaced the earlier quarantine station burial ground which became unsuitable when beach erosion unearthed the burials of 1852

Ticonderoga continued....

John Matheson was a survivor of the voyage who went on to manage the farm at Stony Rises and later purchased 211 acres of farm land at nearby Irriwillipe which he named Hybury Vale. He became a highly respected farmer and local leader of the south west Victorian Scottish expatriate community, fiercely proud of his heritage and first language being Scots Gaelic. He went on to become a founding member of the Presbyterian Church, holding services in his house before the consecration of the St Andrews Church in Colac. Along with other Scottish immigrant farmers he built many of the dry stone walls so prevalent in the south west and reminiscent of the dry walls on his native Skye. He married Mary Ann Danger, (who was born in 1838 and had migrated from London), in 1864, and they had a son and two daughters, (John Jnr, Rebecca and Rachel Christina), all of whom married into the local Scottish community (the Allan and Townsend families). John passed away in 1898 at his property and his wife Mary Ann followed him in 1920. Both are interred in the Colac Cemetery.



Grave of John and Mary Ann Matheson – Colac Cemetery

*Brad Matheson
Great Great Grandson of John and Mary Ann Matheson
June 2022*

*Reference Sources;
Hell Ship by Michael Veitch (2018)
The Ticonderoga 1852 - Nepean Historical Society
Monuments Australia
Colac Historical Society
Highland and Island Emigration Society
State Library of Victoria*



Clan Matheson Merchandise 2021



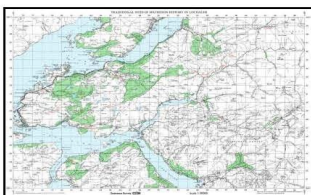
Ladies Polo Shirt
 Sizes 12, 14, 16
 White, beige \$25



Men's Polo Shirt
 Sizes M – XXXL
 Navy, Maroon \$25



Caps Black, Sand \$15 One Size Fits All - Knitted Beanie Navy, Black \$15 One Size Fits All
 Bucket Hats, Sand \$15 Sizes S/M or L/XL - Polar Fleece Beanie Navy, Black \$15 One Size Fits All



Maps of Matheson sites-
 Based on Ordnance Survey
 With place-names booklet
 Small \$5 Laminated \$15
 Large \$10 Laminated \$20



Sew on Clan Crest
 Patches, Blue, Green
 \$5 each



BBQ Apron
 Black /green \$25



Mugs, white, \$10 each
 Drink Bottle, white, \$5
 Stubby Holder, Black, \$5

To order:
 Contact Euan McGillivray
euanmcgillivray51@gmail.com
 0438 133770

Postage not included



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