

NEWS

Angus McMillan was once lauded as a founding father of Australia but has now been removed from the electoral map of the country

Julia Horton

A Scotsman long lauded as a founding father of Australia, who was later revealed to have led massacres of Aboriginal people, has finally had his name erased from the nation's electoral map.

Angus McMillan's achievements as a pioneer in the 19th century colonisation of Australia were recognised in 1949 in the eponymous naming of the McMillan constituency in the southern Australian state of Victoria.

But the electoral division's name has now been changed following a growing campaign fuelled after one of McMillan's Scots descendants found that he was also the "Butcher of Gippsland", a name the Gunaikurnai people gave him because of his killing sprees in the region.

Journalist and author Cal Flynn wrote a book entitled *Thicker than Water*, describing a quest to find out how her Presbyterian ancestor came to flee Scotland after the Highland Clearances only to carry out brutal clearances of indigenous communities in Victoria.

McMillan was at the heart of the Gippsland massacres between 1840 and 1843. The most notorious was the massacre at Warrigal Creek in which up to 200 indigenous people were slaughtered in July 1843 in revenge for the murder of a single white settler.

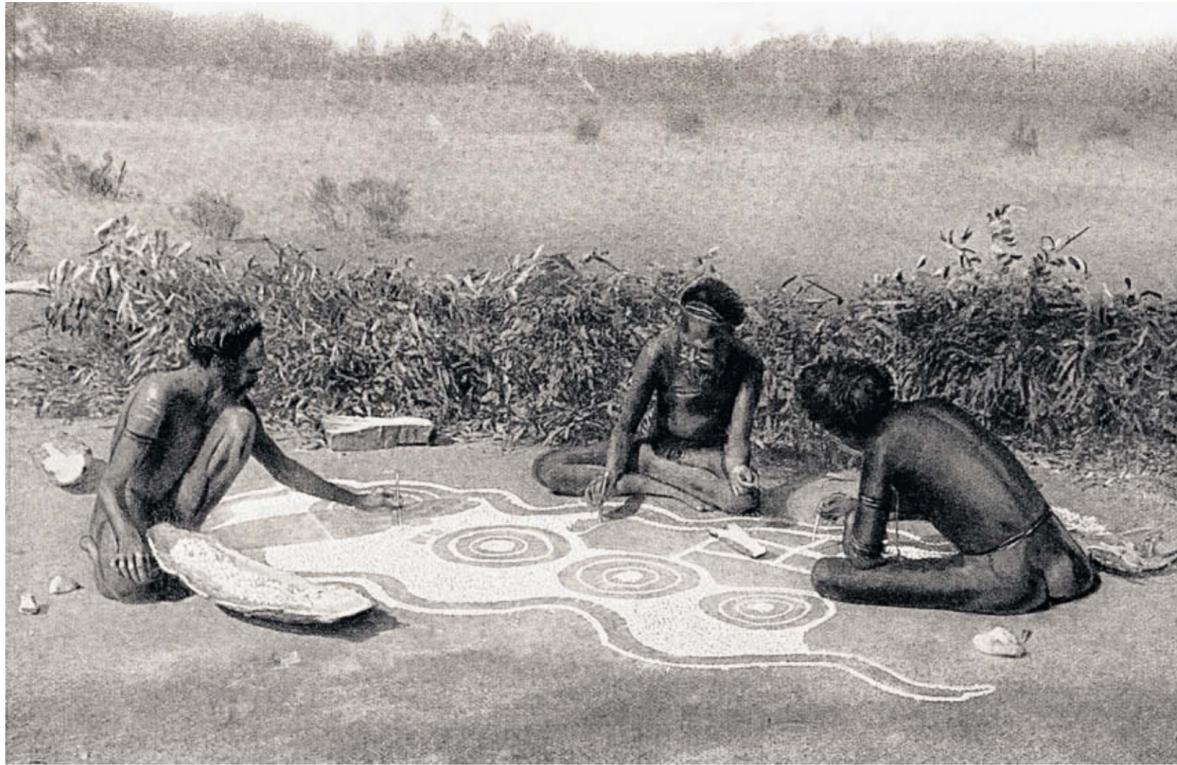
Reacting to the Australian authorities decision to drop his name, Flynn voiced hopes that the decision signifies better treatment of Aboriginal people today.

She said: "For a long time, McMillan was considered locally – at least, among the white community – as an uncomplicated pioneer hero. But as other aspects of his character, and the story of the settling of Gippsland, have resurfaced, there has been some discomfort about how widely he has been celebrated, and whether doing so inflames tensions with



For a long time he was considered an uncomplicated pioneer hero

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Members of the Warramunga tribe in the Northern Territory, preparing a drawing for a totemic ceremony. In this case the ceremony is connected with the black snake totem



Pioneering Scot shamed by Aboriginal massacres

the Gunaikurnai people who continue to live in the area.

"For many decades the Gunaikurnai community was persecuted or ignored, so if this is a signal of warmer and more compassionate relations between the white and Aboriginal communities, I can only welcome it."

But while she stressed that the name change could be "valuable and symbolic" for the community, she opposed any moves to "scrub away" the names of contentious historical figures like McMillan completely.

Referring to campaigns for the removal of tributes to other controversial leaders, such as Cecil Rhodes, she said they were "flawed humans, as we all are, and products of the colonial era", who represented a "morally complex" period.

Local Gippsland historian Peter Gard-



Calls for the electoral division to be renamed came after Cal Flynn, a descendant of McMillan, right, found he was 'the Butcher of Gippsland'

ner, whose research Flynn paid tribute to, also welcomed the move, which he said followed over a decade of campaigning supported by the constituency MP, Russell Broadbent.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) confirmed that the electoral division had been renamed in July after more than 50 complaints, with "many" people welcoming the change.

A spokesman said the decision followed a "lengthy" public consultation in which concerns were raised over "historical events involving indigenous Australians".

The constituency is now known as Monash, after white Australian and renowned civil engineer Sir John Monash.

The AEC acknowledged that the indigenous community had wanted the new

name to honour an Aboriginal leader, and stressed that would be done in other electoral divisions instead in recognition of "indigenous heritage and hurt".

The decision over McMillan's name comes amid growing debate globally over key figures celebrated for greatness who have emerged to have been forces for ill as well as good.

In Edinburgh campaigners hope a monument to Henry Dundas, the celebrated 18th-century political and military leader, will soon also acknowledge that he delayed plans to abolish slavery.

The Scottish government is considering whether or not to continue funding celebrations of another controversial 19th-century Scots colonial founding father, Sir John Macdonald, after revelations over his savage treatment of indigenous people in Canada.

Race is on to rescue storm-hit solo sailor

Jonathan Leake and John Goodbody

An international rescue effort was under way last night to reach a solo yachtsman lying helpless with a back injury on a dismasted boat in the Southern Ocean as a massive storm approached.

Abhilash Tomy was thrown around his boat when it was capsized and rolled through 360 degrees, in an intense storm with 70mph winds and 40ft waves, 1,900 miles south west of Perth, Australia.

In a satellite text message on Friday night he said: "Can't walk. Might need stretcher." In a second, sent yesterday, he wrote: "Feel numb. Can't eat or drink."

The organisers of the Golden Globe Race said Tomy, a commander in the Indian navy, was "as far from help as you can possibly be".

Yesterday an executive jet took off from Perth to find the yacht and assess its situation. An Australian search-and-rescue aircraft was to follow, while a naval frigate prepared to sail from Perth. A French fisheries patrol vessel, Osiris, was also on its way, with contact expected late today.

The Indian government sent a military plane from Mauritius and also diverted its stealth frigate INS Satpura and the tanker INS Jyoti from exercises off South Africa.

The first help Tomy may receive is from Irishman Gregor McGuckin, a fellow competitor in the 30,000-mile, solo, non-stop race around the world for yachts between 32ft and 36ft long.

McGuckin's boat, which was 90 miles from Tomy's, is also damaged after rolling in the same storm, but he is understood to have jury rigged a mast and started his engine to try to reach Tomy.

Mark Slats, a Dutchman, was saved by a tether after being washed overboard by waves that smashed hatches, flooded the cabin and started a fire in his electrical system. He said he had "never seen such bad conditions".

Call for blanket 20mph limits in residential areas

John Boothman

A speed limit of 20 miles an hour should be imposed on all residential streets, according to a politician who believes road safety in Scotland is a "postcode lottery".

Mark Ruskell, a Green MSP, will introduce a bill that aims to curb the number of deaths and serious injuries from traffic accidents. It would also make streets safer for pedestrians, cyclists and help to reduce air pollution.

At present, 20mph speed limits are set at the discretion of local authorities and are most commonly used around schools and in built-up residential areas. Ruskell described it as a patchwork approach. "Children and the elderly are being put at

unnecessary risk of injury and death by our failure to deliver consistent speed reduction where people live. The pace of change is too slow, legislation is needed," he said.

The move faces resistance from other opposition politicians and motoring bodies. The Institute of Advanced Motorists has questioned the benefits of blanket 20mph zones.

"This is a complex issue requiring more than simply changing road signs," said Rodney Kumar, a spokesman for the body. "More research into this is needed. These decisions are at the discretion of local authorities which understand local conditions and we see no reason for that to change."

A recent study by the

Glasgow Centre for Population Health suggested that reducing the speed limit in Scotland could result in up to 755 fewer injuries a year – with savings of almost £40m.

Research for the Department for Transport in 2010 found that the risk of fatal injury to pedestrians rose from less than 1% at a speed of 20 mph to 5.5% at 30 mph.

It was announced in July that a speed limit of 20mph would be imposed on all central London roads managed by Transport for London by 2020.

Jamie Greene, the Conservative transport spokesman, is in favour of retaining the status quo. "The current targeted approach means you can tackle accident black spots

and areas such as school gates, and ensure that they are policed properly," he said.

"Adopting blanket 20mph zones is a ham-fisted approach to the problem and is difficult to enforce. In addition, it causes problems for traffic flow and increased CO₂ emissions."

A Transport Scotland spokesman also expressed reservations. "We are clear that 20 mile-per-hour speed limits are a good idea when implemented in the right environment."

"Given the varied nature of Scotland's urban road network and the number of factors that need to be considered when setting appropriate limits, we believe these decisions are best taken at local authority level," he said.

Loo-twin charity is movement for good

James Gillespie

It is not a typical fundraising initiative, but "toilet-twinning" is certainly immensely practical.

The idea is that a one-off payment of £60 helps to build a lavatory for a family in countries that have poor sanitation, ranging from Afghanistan to Zambia. In return, the donor receives a certificate "twinning" their lavatory to the one abroad plus GPS co-ordinates to look up the twin on Google Maps.

This month the charity behind the initiative, Toilet Twinning, celebrated the 100,000th time that it has linked a lavatory in the West to one in the developing world.

Many of the recipients are delighted and one man in Nepal held an open day for the whole village to admire his new lavatory.

"We tend to work in the hardest-to-reach places," said

Seren Boyd of Toilet Twinning. "We are twinning in Afghanistan, Zambia, Guatemala. People are really proud of their loo and are thrilled when we take a picture of them with it."

The charity works in more than 25 countries and the money is used not only to build lavatories but also to improve water sanitation and hygiene. "We work with local



Schoolgirls with a new lavatory in Ivory Coast

partners on the ground: it is really important culturally that people understand why they need the toilet," said Boyd.

"They are easy to build but you will see them all over the world – latrines that have been built but not used. Local partners can often do the work of convincing people as to why they need it."

About 2.3bn people do not have somewhere safe to go to the lavatory, according to Toilet Twinning.

Schools, churches, community groups and bars have all helped the charity. Becca Walton is co-owner of the Twelve Taps in Whitstable, Kent, and the bar's lavatory is twinned with one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A former member of staff arranged it as a leaving gift.

Walton said: "We were in the process of getting quotes for the refurbishment of our toilets and some of them were

pretty astounding. I had also recently read an article about the struggles people face in the developing world when it comes to sanitation. Those figures were far more shocking."

The certificates have prompted conversations in the bar. "We're privileged not to have to think about it. It's nice to challenge that in our own small way," Walton said.

In Hulme, Manchester, the Loreto sixth-form college has been closely involved with the charity. Helen Gettings, senior tutor, said: "I thought the twinning had a different twist to it from other fundraising. Our students are extremely diverse."

"I tend to choose countries where they have some sort of connection such as Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It does seem to strike a chord with the students." @jrgillespie2000

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