

A silhouette of a man standing in a field with cows at sunset, overlaid with a grid pattern.

From Strathlea to Lochaven

A hundred years
and counting

This book acknowledges the McNab family's custodianship of this land over the past 100 years. It is also a gift for future residents, enriching their connection to the land that they too will come to know as home, and where they too will create stories and memories to be treasured.


The land on which Lochaven is built belonged to three generations of the McNab family before siblings Laurie and Val chose to sell to Dacland in 2014 to create a residential community for over 500 families.

At first, the McNabs worked the land for crops, and then diversified over the years into dairy and cattle farming. They ran a successful Guernsey cattle stud farm for around 35 years, and enjoyed success at Melbourne and country agricultural shows. More recently the farm has been home to premium Angus stock.

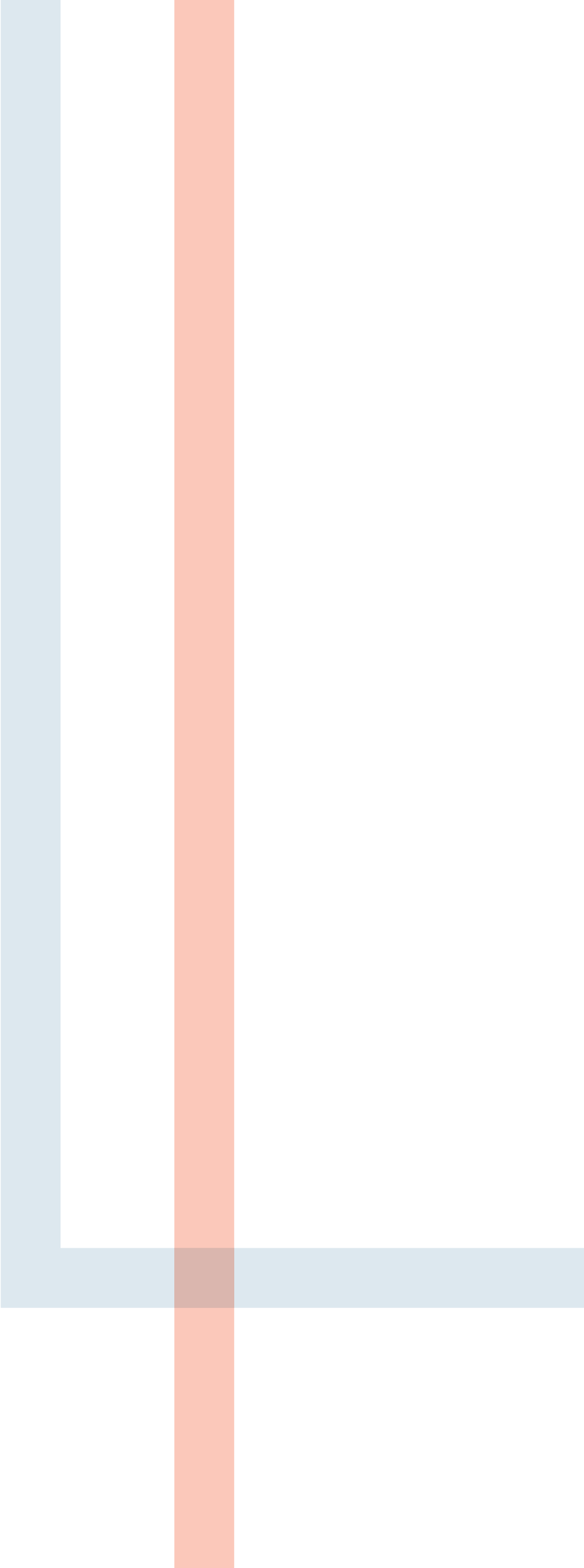
As the land transitions from its farming heritage to a new residential community, Dacland has come to know Laurie and Val, and we have enjoyed and valued their many stories and memories of growing up on the land. As with all our communities, we listen to the history of the land and work with its natural features to create a legacy for future generations. Homes are more than bricks and mortar; they create a sense of place, somewhere to belong.

We have compiled this collection of photos and memories as a mark of respect to honour the McNab family history, the land and its heritage.

Special thanks to Laurie for his generosity in allowing us to use his own photos for this book, and to both Laurie and Val for their time and graciousness in passing these stories on memories to us.



A mark of respect to
honour the McNab
family history, the
land and its heritage.





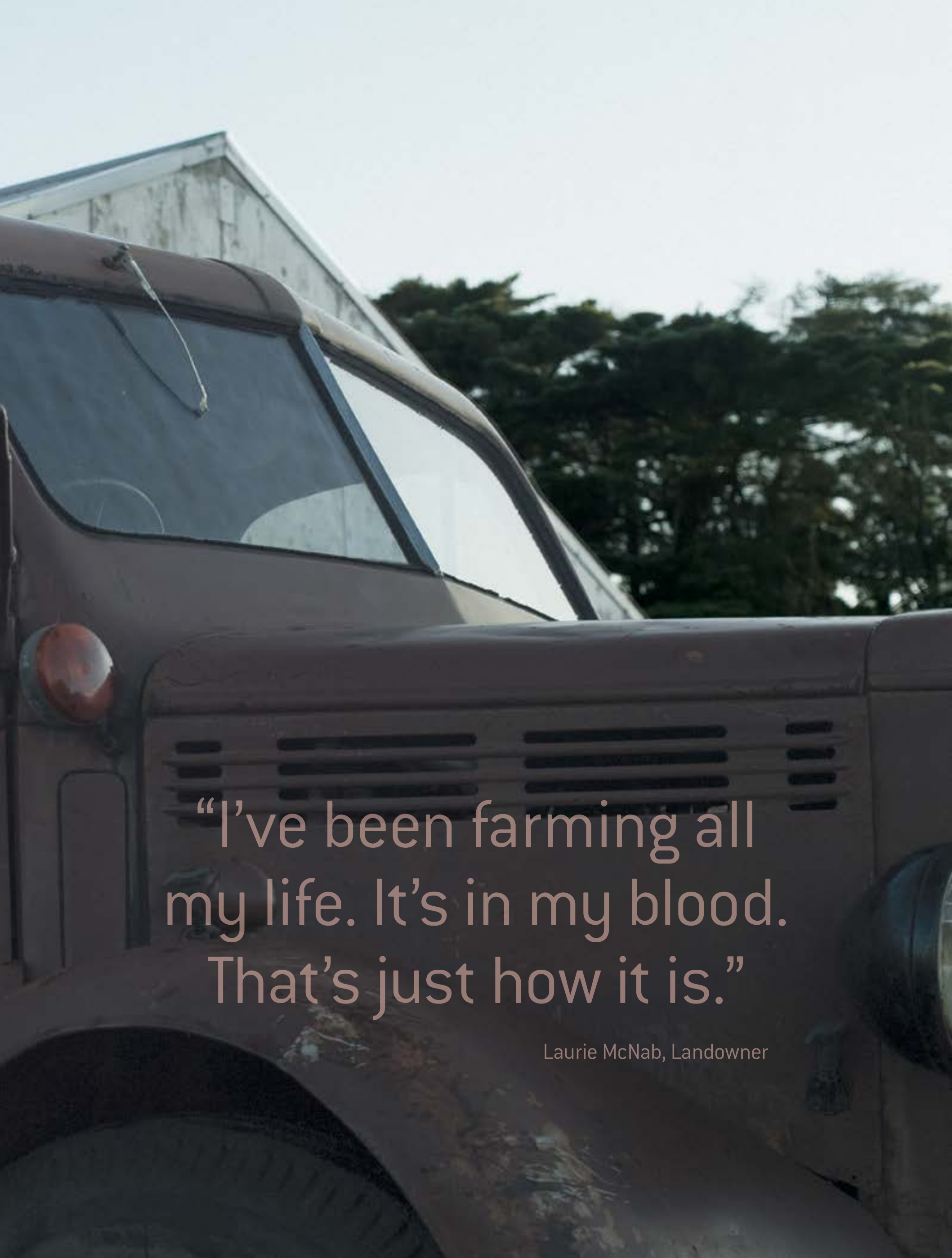
In chatting to Laurie and Val, we have come to know them as genuine and generous people. We learnt of their deep attachment to their family's land, listened to their stories, and enjoyed their childhood memories of growing up in Cranbourne when this semi-rural town evolved into a vibrant community.

We are proud that Laurie and Val chose Dacland as caretakers of their land into the future.



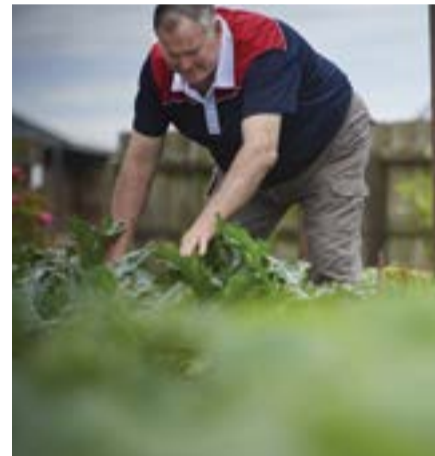


C. McNAB
FARMER
CRANBOURNE

A close-up, low-angle shot of the front of a vintage car, likely a 1930s model, showing the hood, windshield, and side mirror. The car is dark-colored and has a classic grille with horizontal slats. In the background, a white building with a gabled roof and some trees are visible under a bright sky. The overall tone is nostalgic and rustic.

“I’ve been farming all
my life. It’s in my blood.
That’s just how it is.”

Laurie McNab, Landowner





“At Dacland, we walk every inch of the land, absorbing its history and understanding its natural characteristics. We work with the rise and fall of the land, its waterways and native vegetation to create a community where people love to live.”

John C Dwyer,
Managing Director, Dacland



Laurie has enjoyed a lifelong interest in photography and has been a member of local camera clubs for the past 40 years. His uncle was also a keen photographer, and was one of the few people in town who owned a camera. This image of a New Holland Honeyeater was taken by Laurie recently at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.







The Cranbourne McNabs hail from Killin in Scotland. Angus and Mary McNab left Scotland in 1838 and sailed to Melbourne. They were among the first agricultural settlers in Victoria. In 1918 their grandson William purchased 245 acres on both sides of Hall Road from Frederick Hall. To the south was the homestead Ercildourne (now Alarah), and to the north was Strathlea (now Lochaven).



Getting to know the McNabs has added a real richness to the project. The very name Lochaven references the McNab's pride in their Scottish heritage. Loch is a Scottish word meaning body of water, which fits nicely with the waterway that Lochaven will feature. And haven reflects the design of this community to provide everything needed to create a real sense of belonging, a sense of home.



William McNab
[1865 – 1930]

Mary Elizabeth
Maud Miller
[1875 – 1957]

When William died in 1930, the land passed to his five children. When Charles married Mabel in 1938 he took over Strathlea. Their children, Laurie, Val and Isobel have lived here ever since, although Isobel moved away when she married 50 years ago. Laurie's house was originally built for Charles and Mabel in 1938 and has always been the family home, and a second home was built on the land when Val married Bruce Peterson in 1971.

Looking to downsize to more manageable properties, Laurie and Val sold their land to Dacland in 2014. When Laurie leaves his property in 2018, this will mark the end of 100 years of McNab custodianship of this land.

Donald McNab
[1900 – 1979]

Charles McNab
[1904 – 1991]

Mabel (McLellan)
McNab
[1910 – 2009]

Henrietta McNab

[1898 – 1998]

Annie McNab

[1901 – 1995]

Muriel McNab
[1910 – 1935]

Laurie McNab
[1939]

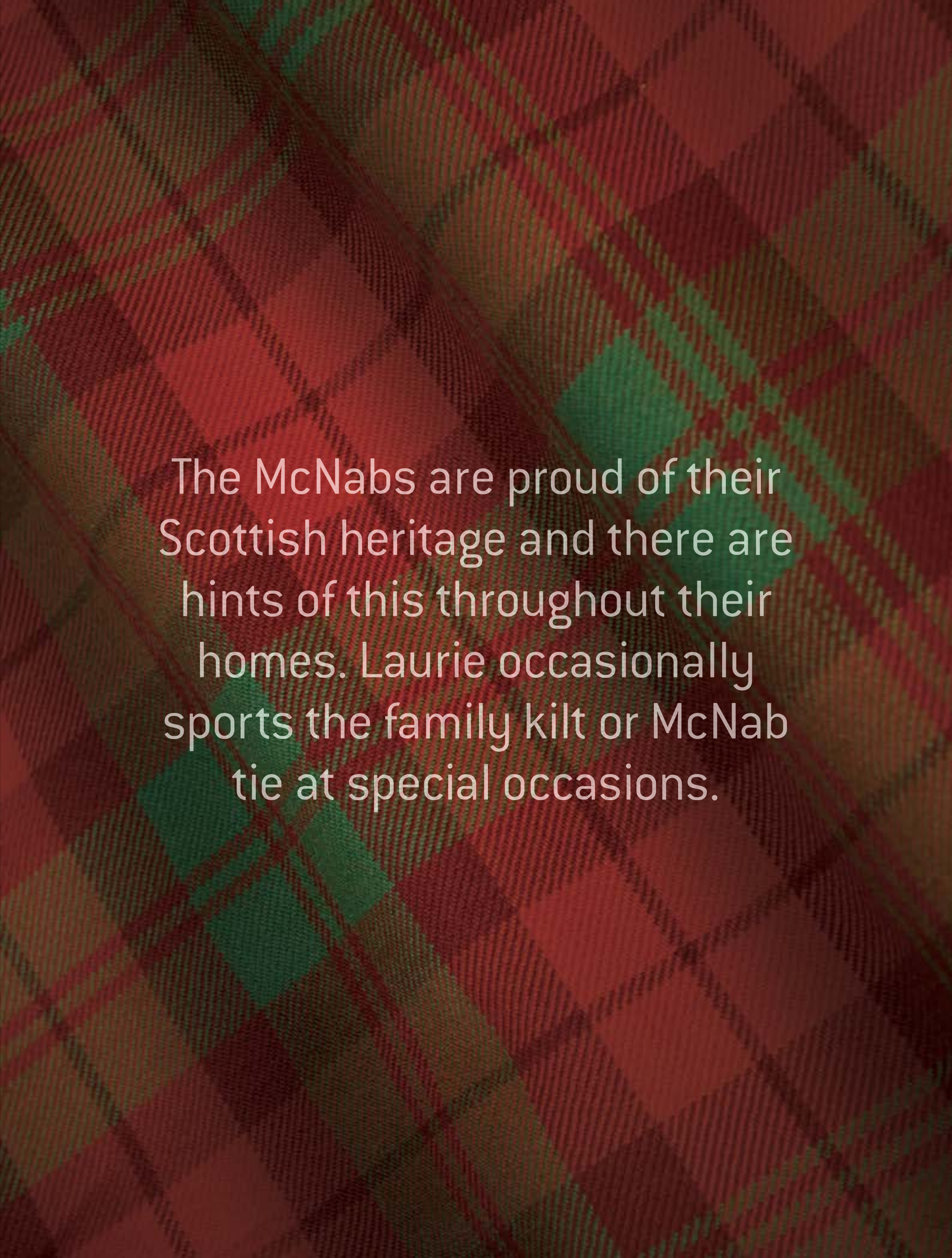
Val (McNab) Peterson
[1942]

Isobel (McNab) Benham
[1943]



When he was around ten years old, Laurie's parents lost him at the Berwick show when he snuck off to watch Scottish dancing on the back of a truck. The appeal of Scottish dancing stayed with Laurie for years to come and he took it up at age 40, enjoying what he describes as "the best time of my life".

To acknowledge and honour the McNab family's Scottish beginnings, Dacland has incorporated the family tartan into the design of Lochaven, in its streetscapes and parks. The tartan is referenced in the Lochaven logo and branding and family history will be incorporated in Lochaven's street names and landmarks.



The McNabs are proud of their Scottish heritage and there are hints of this throughout their homes. Laurie occasionally sports the family kilt or McNab tie at special occasions.



“Laurie, Isobel and I used to ride our bikes to school in Cranbourne and back home again at night. Only on a really wet day, Dad would put the trailer on the car and pick us up.”

Val Peterson, Landowner



Laurie, Val and Isobel have fond memories of growing up on this land, and their lives are closely linked to it.

Both Laurie and Val have spent their entire lives on this property and Isobel retained a strong connection with farming when she married and moved away.

STRATHLEA NADINE.




Reserve Champion Guernsey Cow Melbourne Royal Show, 1975.
Sire : Strathlea Justice. Dam : Gonyah Benefactor Nanette.
exhibited and owned by L.M. and B.G. McNab.





The McNab dairy farm housed up to 90 cows at a time and they were hand milked by all the family, mostly before and after school. Around 1942, milking machines were purchased for use on the farm.



The land has been good to the McNab family, who have enjoyed both public and private success. The cattle from Strathlea consistently won prizes at the Royal Melbourne Show and other agricultural shows around Gippsland and further afield.

There are so many ribbons won at agricultural shows, they've been sewn together into prizewinning flag by family friend Leonie Maher.

101. AGRICULTURE

— CHAMPION —

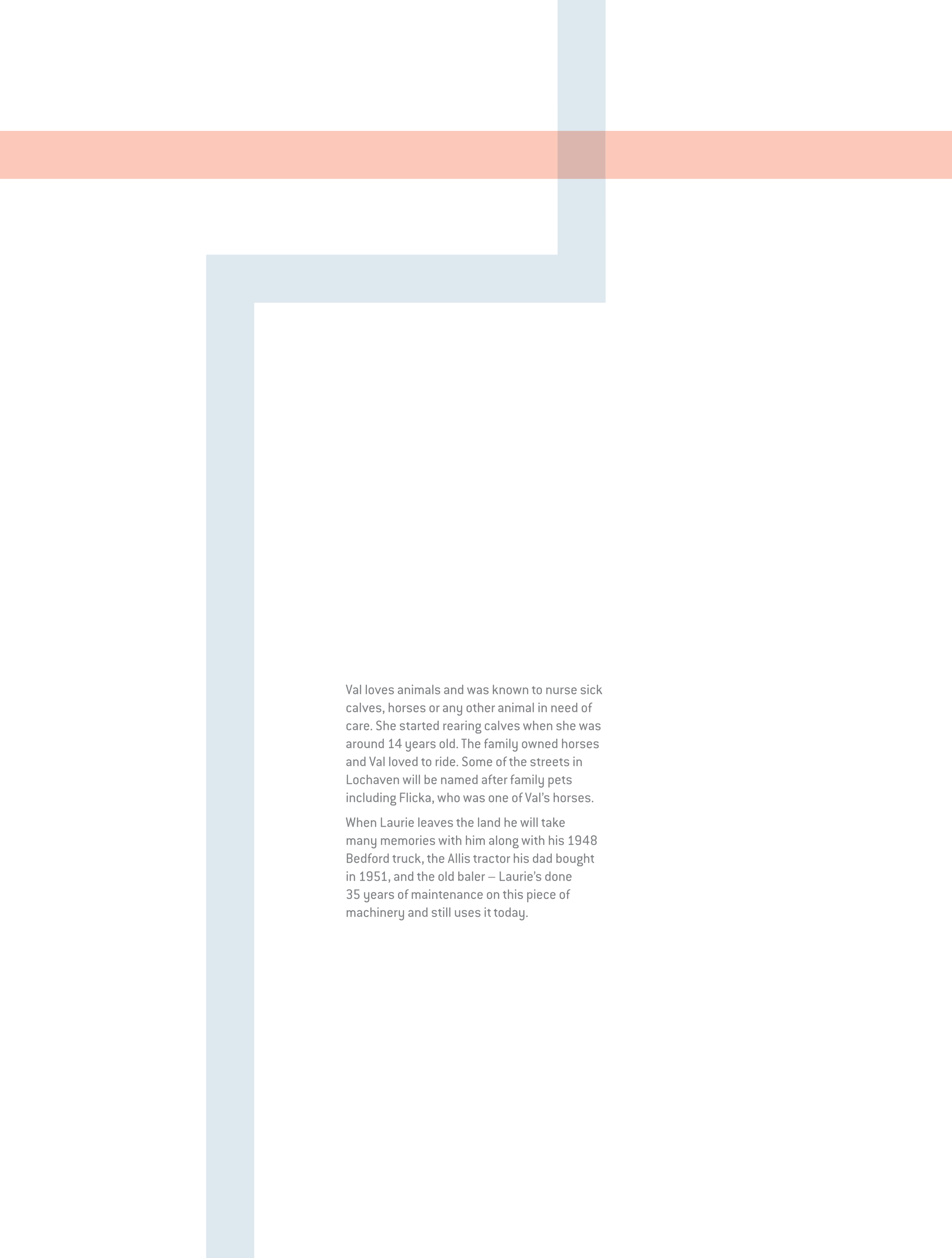
GUERNSEY BULL

LANG P. A. & H. SOCIETY 196

— Champion —

GUERNSEY


URRA SH



Val loves animals and was known to nurse sick calves, horses or any other animal in need of care. She started rearing calves when she was around 14 years old. The family owned horses and Val loved to ride. Some of the streets in Lochaven will be named after family pets including Flicka, who was one of Val's horses.

When Laurie leaves the land he will take many memories with him along with his 1948 Bedford truck, the Allis tractor his dad bought in 1951, and the old baler – Laurie's done 35 years of maintenance on this piece of machinery and still uses it today.





“I wasn’t much of a one
for school – I always just
wanted to leave and come
home to the farm.”


Laurie McNab, Landowner

With the exception of sport and woodwork, Laurie wasn’t that keen on school and his heart was always on the land. Getting up at 5.30am never bothered him, and he left school at 15 years old to work the farm with his dad, who worked the land until 1990, just a year before his death.

C. MCNAB

FARMER

CRANBOURNE



“It was hard work but it
got me through a really
tough time in my life.”

Laurie McNab, Landowner





Laurie knows every inch of the land, and there is plentiful evidence of his labours throughout the property. He says there was always something to do around the farm, or something that needed repair.


“There were over 100 gates throughout the property. Wooden ones – my dad and I made those. When we first got the stud I painted every one of them white. The place just looked so smart!”

Many years later, Laurie bought a welder and handcrafted over 100 steel gates to replace the ageing wooden ones.


“It was hard work but it got me through a really tough time in my life. And these ones would last forever. Yep, I’ve spent a lot of time out there.”



Laurie and Val's Guernsey called Mahara Hara Daffy won Reserve Champion at the Royal Melbourne Show in 1961.



Farming is hard yakka and Laurie's efforts on his family farm and surrounding properties were rewarded when he was given his first heifer at 15 years old. The Guernsey heifer named Joyeuse was the start of a successful stud farm that ran for over thirty years.





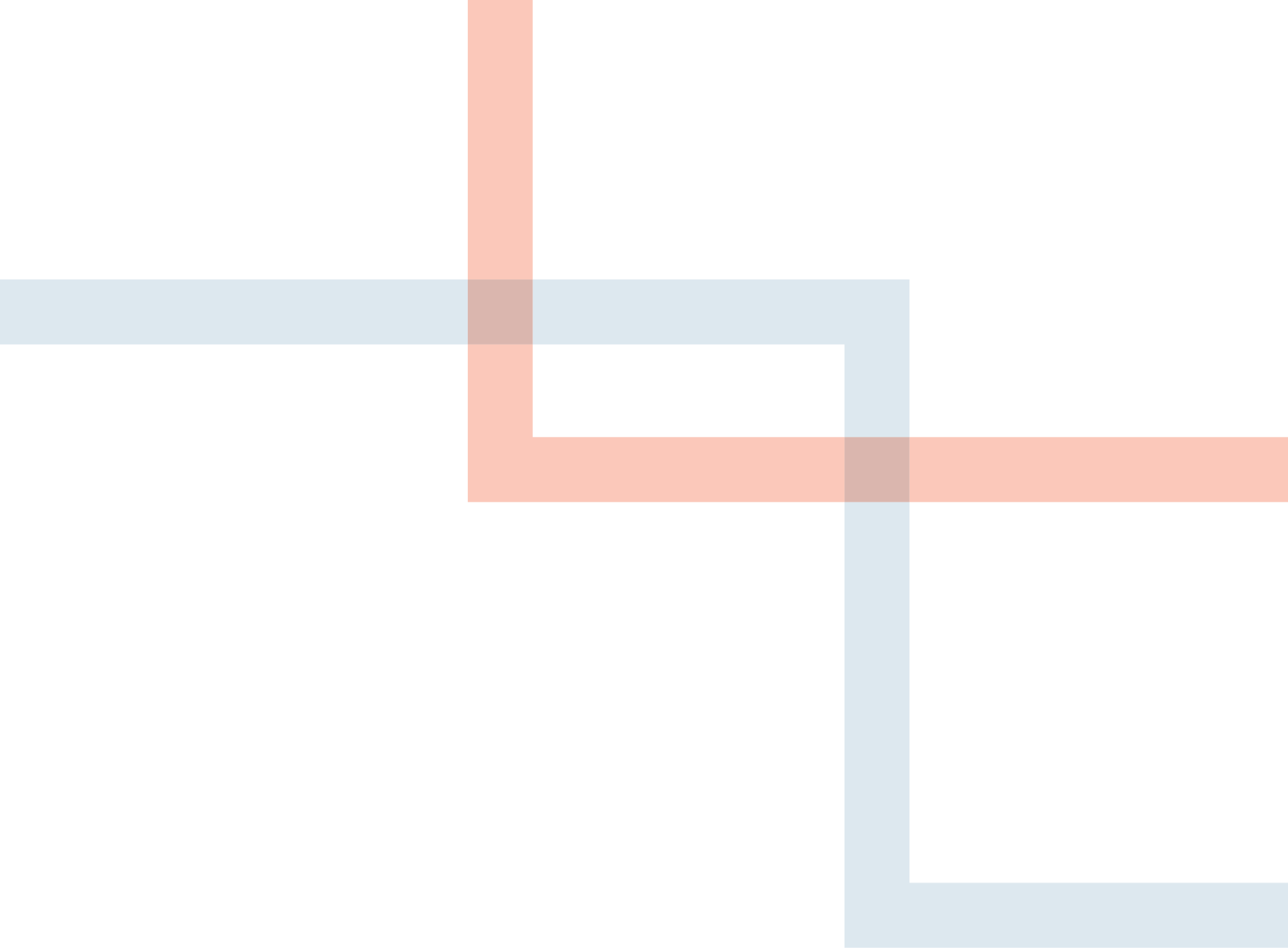
Laurie, Val and Isobel on the farm around 1964.



When you're a kid, there's nothing like having a big back yard, and a farm provides all that and more.


The chook shed made a brilliant backstop for family cricket and there was no shortage of space for the three McNab kids who loved to roam and ride.







When he was very little Laurie was known to use a chair to open the front door, before crossing Hall Road to his grandparents' property to join them for breakfast. His mother worried about the road and put an end to his meandering.

A scenic landscape featuring a large, dense green hedge on the right side. A road or path runs along the base of the hedge, leading towards a white fence in the distance. The foreground is a grassy field, and the background shows more trees and a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

“I moved my little chair into the field and sat looking across the road dreaming of the freshly baked bread and homemade butter.”

Laurie McNab, Landowner



“We chose Dacland because it felt right. It’s been interesting sitting with them and sharing their plans for the land. It’s been appreciated.”

Val Peterson, Landowner



“One of my favourite moments coming out here was bringing my father and the two old farmers sat down and had a bit of chat about what stock he was running and those sort of things. Dad bought Laurie closer to Dacland and made him feel comfortable that the people who were going to take carriage of the land were people he could trust.”



“We both share a love of the land and Dacland has walked every inch of Lochaven before preparing our design. The McNabs and Dacland understand that community building starts with a family, and that’s a shared vision as we work through the development.”

John C Dwyer,
Managing Director, Dacland



“We were attracted
to Dacland because
they’re a family group.”

Laurie McNab, Landowner



“One of the really great things about the McNab property and one of the things that drew us to it immediately is that this parcel of land has everything a community living in the twenty-first century in Melbourne needs. This land will soon become a community of around 500 homes. Laurie McNab and his sister Val have lived here all their lives, and their family owned the land for 100 years. As we’ve shared our future plans, they’ve shared their memories with us. This has given us an extraordinary opportunity to take one family’s generational ownership of this land and translate that history into the development of this community for the future. The McNab story serves to deepen the sense of place that future Lochaven residents will feel as they too come to call this land home, and where they too will create family histories to be treasured and shared.”

John C Dwyer,
Managing Director, Dacland

