



Clan Munro (Association) Australia

Volume 1 Issue 2

August 2005

Editorial

In his excellent message at the start of our last newsletter, our Chief, Hector Munro of Foulis, pointed out the bond and friendship that exists between members of our Clan and I have now experienced that for myself. The letters that you have written to me have been as if written to a family member, full of warmth and that feeling you get having known someone for a long time. I feel privileged to be experiencing it and I thank you.

I know that the genealogy section will continue as a number of you have sent in your family trees. I have heard from two separate families whose ancestors came out on the same boat, the "James Moran" in 1839 – quite remarkable! I wonder if there are any others?

This month's newsletter features stories sent in by our members. One of the writers thought that his story was not worth printing but I disagreed, as the majority of our ancestors were battlers who carved a good life from a harsh and unyielding country, and we want to hear about them. One of our members is descended from convicts who came out with the First Fleet and is justifiably proud of the success they made of their lives! Are there any other "First Fleeters" out there?

Don Munro

Welcome To Our New Members

Our existing members are our backbone but it is so good to welcome new members. So far we have six to welcome into our family.

The first two are Mr & Mrs George & Ann Munro from Timaru in New Zealand. George's grandfather was born in Kinlochbervie in 1885. They also have names going back to 1674 and they hope to confirm these on a planned visit to Scotland later this year.

Mrs Kathryn Ann Brain and her husband Greg are from Queensland and Kathryn's Munro connection is through her Great Great Grandfather William Livingstone Munro who was born in Glasgow about 1811 and married Barbara McKenzie Berry in Sydney in 1848. Kathryn has had more success on Barbara Berry's side, getting back to 1765 when John Berry married Elspeth Kinnear.

A week after I received Kathryn's application, came one from Mrs Mary Lidbetter. Mary is the cousin of another of our members and she lives in Berry. Mary's Munro connection goes back to James Munro from Lairg in Scotland sometime before 1765 when his son Donald was born. James's grandson, William Munro decided that Australia was a better place to live in than Scotland so William, his wife Ann MacKay and their seven children set sail on the James Moran and arrived in Sydney on 11th February, 1839. Their eldest son Donald was married and his wife Jessie MacPherson travelled with them

Some of Mary's ancestors feature in this month's newsletter.

About this time Mrs Andrea Biddolph could be saying "Well how about that" for her grandfather Alexander Munro and his brothers also arrived in Sydney on the James Moran in 1839.

You may remember that I advertised a Munro family gathering in our last newsletter. This was for another of our new members, Mrs Lily Sims who is organising a reunion of the descendants of Donald Munro & Catherine MacGillivray who arrived in Australia in 1853 on the Hercules. I will give you more information on that reunion as the time gets closer.

Our newest member is Mrs Susan Reakes from Victoria who traces her family back to Henry Munro(w) born in 1833 in either Scotland or Ireland. Susan is still trying to break through that brick wall. Don't I know that very frustrating feeling!

This story is part of a truly amazing family tree sent to me by Mrs Mary Lidbetter and is only a very small part of this family tree that covered 190 A4 pages when last printed out in 2000!! Please read and enjoy. Mary's information has come from family members who have been very active in researching and sharing their information

The Shoalhaven Munros

Mary's tree starts with James Munro who was born in Lairg, Scotland and all we know about him is that he had a son, Donald born in 1764. Donald married Catherine Ross and their son, William, was born abt 1787 in Lairg. He married Ann McKay in 1812 in Farr - William was a farmer and Ann a dairymaid. They had seven children all born in Sutherland between 1814 and 1830 and when the youngest was eight years old, the family decided to migrate to Australia. They arrived in Sydney on February 11, 1839 on board the ship James Moran.

They had come out to Australia under a government scheme that enabled colonists to bring out emigrants whose services they needed, the government paying a bounty equal to the cost of the passage money out of the proceeds of land sales. On arrival, William was employed by Mr Glanville of St Vincent NSW for 25 pounds per year, plus rations.

William and Ann's eldest son, Donald, married Jessie MacPherson in 1838, just before they left Scotland. Donald was a shepherd and Jessie a housemaid. When Donald and Jessie arrived in Australia, they were employed by Richard Scougall of Dalkeith in the Hunter Valley NSW and had moved to the Shoalhaven by 1842.

Donald & Jessie had ten children - Donald (Danny), Annie, Mary Jane, William, Marion, George (Geordie), Alexander, Helen, Jessie Margaret and Georgina Catherine. What follows is a little bit about the life of their son William Munro.

William Munro came from the Shoalhaven by sailing ship to Iluka at the mouth of the Clarence River in April 1866 at the age of 19. He hired an aborigine and walked along the beach to Iron Gates at the entrance of the Evans River where he swam across and went on to Ballina. He worked at various jobs all round Ballina and was supposed to have built the first Presbyterian Church there. He worked on the road to Lismore up the Ballina Cutting and in tin mines at Soferino and Stanthorpe. He selected land at Steve King's Plain and married Emmie de Sonter at Ballina in 1877. Emmie was born in 1852 in Parramatta, Sydney.

Three successive floods made William look for higher ground. While earlier working on the telegraph line from Lismore to the Tweed River out through Dunoon and over the Nightcap Range, he had noted the good country, so he and his Uncle, Sandy McPherson, took up land there. William selected 150 acres and subsequently took up 309 acres. When other members of the Munro family came up from the

Shoalhaven, he handed over the Steve King's Plain land to Alex (*I assume that was his brother*) and moved to Dunoon in 1889. William went ahead of his family and erected a four-roomed slab and shingle house on the property before his wife and 8 children arrived. Three more children were born there.

The family moved in a spring cart, as did all the furniture and personal belongings. Up until 1904 Emmie always cooked on two camp ovens, then she had the pleasure of cooking her first meal in a fuel stove. Fruit trees were soon planted around the home, oranges, guavas, pears, and grapes, plus a vegetable garden. Jams, pickles and preserves all came as a result of the home garden. Fish from Rocky Creek were plentiful, and game also helped to supplement the menu. William also bred horses and he played the accordion.

Leaving Dunoon before dawn, Emmie would go into Lismore (16 kms) in a spring cart, taking honey, eggs, butter, etc to help supplement the income of the farm. In those days butter was not weighed and wrapped in



a factory but was sold over the counter in pats in weights to suit the customer. William always kept 80 acres of standing timber and from this he supplied, by his own axemanship, palings by the thousands to enclose his cultivation, calf pens, etc. from the ravages of bush animals. Dingoes would come right inside - one time they got away with a batch of dough that had been left by the fire to rise.

A new home was built at the rear of the selection in 1908. In 1911 William held a sub-division sale of 20 allotments at an average price of £50 each. William and Emmie had 11 children, most of whom had quite distinctive nicknames - Jessie, Claude (Barney"), Amy ("Blackie"), William, Austin ("Natus"), Catherine (Kit" or "Nell") Donald ("spanker"), Vida ("Dick"), Allan ("Brassy"), Norman, and Raymond ("The Kid"). Three sons served in World War 1, one son, Norman being killed.

William was born in 1847 and died in 1934

Ed's Note: *There is no mention of the reason for the family leaving Scotland but this was the time of the Clearances and nowhere was this worse than in Sutherland. For the year 1836, the book "The Highland Clearances" tells us that there was a famine (not the great famine of ten years later) but bad enough for thousands to die throughout the north of Scotland. It was also the height of the clearances and by 1839, the Sutherland clearances were particularly bad.*

Hobbies/ Businesses – The interesting things our members do

Our Chief goes to Church with the Mackenzie Chief and Kathryn Brain (nee Munro), one of our new members, makes Jacobite/Culloden shirts. It is good that time really does heal!

"Hallo sibh fhein!" (Hello you yourselves!)
Culloden/Jacobite shirts made to order to the 1700's style. As a casual alternative to the Prince Charlie rig, they are ideal for men to wear with their kilts for the less formal occasions. Kathryn makes them of either cream 100% cotton seeded calico, great for the warmer months; or, for the wintry months, a non-iron faux suede that she can source in various shades from bone through tans to black, a deep mossy green or a deep mulberry purple. Kathryn can further discuss these colours with individual enquirers.

The collar, 'v' of the neckline, hem and double buttoned cuffs are top-stitched and there is a range of decorative, themed or plain buttons from which you can choose, depending on the desired look or the occasion. The necklines of the shirts are uniquely embroidered below the 'v' with a Celtic knot work design approximately 3-4cm square. Again, Kathryn has several designs for you to choose from and the necklines are laced up with a co-ordinating tan, dark brown or black Kangaroo leather lace for that distinctive Australian touch.

As these shirts are individually hand made, you should allow 21-28 days from the date of ordering to the finished item. In other words, please plan ahead for that special occasion. Kathryn charges a market rate (depending on the buttons chosen) of \$90-\$95 for the calico shirt, and \$130-\$140 for the faux suede. These shirts are distinctly different from the poly cotton shirts commercially available at similar prices.

Kathryn and her husband Gregg are also learning Gaelic. From what I read, it is a very difficult language to pick up but this they are doing - slowly but surely. They are keen to encourage the learning of Gaelic in Australia and are happy to hear from others with a similar interest.

Kathryn and Gregg live in Flagstone in Queensland and if you are interested in her shirts or in Gaelic, they can be contacted by telephone, 07 5547 7140, e-mail at brainstorm@myaccess.com.au or by mail, "Gaidheal Thall Thairis", 102-106 Bushman Drive, Flagstone, Qld, 4280.

By the way the house name means Highlanders Abroad – good choice!

Glebe Public School's Museum

From the following article, it looks as if Kathryn Brain had a budding artist among her Ancestors. I wonder if there are any others? If you are from the Glebe area, this will be of special interest.

My Grandfather, John Henry Munro had an older brother "Bill". We were sent a copy of a newspaper article, date unknown, about one William Munro, boy artist. My Great Grandfather, Benjamin Berry Munro was born in Derwent Street, Glebe, where a school museum was to be. In short, the article begins "In the 1870's, the drawings of a Glebe Primary School student, William Munro, were greatly admired by

teachers and fellow pupils. Munro was persuaded to enter his works in a competition held in the great Sydney International Exhibition at the glass Crystal Palace-like Exhibition building in Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens. He won first prize in 1879. Munro's beautifully designed certificate is now a proud exhibit at Glebe Public School's museum in Derwent Street (Glebe)."



Kathryn Brain

That Newsletter Levy – Your Support is Essential

Many thanks to those life members who have responded to my plea for the \$5.00 per year levy to cover the cost of posting the newsletter and all of those other letters that I send out in reply to those of you who have written to me.

Thanks to the pressure I put on my son-in-law, we do not have the considerable cost of printing. I use their copier & print it myself, so the only cost is the paper. If the \$5.00 is too much, stamped addressed envelopes would be appreciated.

If you do not want to receive the newsletter, please write and let me know. Please send the levy to cover one or as many years as you feel comfortable with.

Those Annual members who have not yet renewed their subscriptions, could you please do so as soon as possible. New or renewed annual members have already paid the levy, as the \$5.00 is included in the new fee structure.

Vale

One of the saddest parts of this job is having Life Members mail returned as "No Longer at This Address" and finding that they have passed away. We send our sincere condolences to the family members whose dear ones have passed away

AUL0027 Mrs Jessie Ruth Hamon of Fig Tree Pocket in Queensland. Mrs Hamon had the lowest Australian Membership Number and so was the longest serving Life Member of the Clan Munro (Association) in Australia

AUL0879 Mr Maxwell Taylor Munro from Turramurra in New South Wales
AUL3085 Mrs Millicent Fraser Allen from Hawthorn in Victoria.

THE J.R. MUNRO FAMILY GROUP

This story was sent to me by one of our members who was born in New Zealand but now lives in Queensland

As far as I know, it was in the late fifties that some very keen and dedicated members of the "family" formed a committee and subsequently organised a big reunion to celebrate the centenary of J.R. Munro's arrival in New Zealand. This reunion was held on the 28th December 1962, at Anderson Park just north of Invercargill, where approximately 300 people gathered.

This committee kept the clan spirit alive for a number of years with social gatherings of some sort and at the same time they produced a Family Tree booklet. Activity then lapsed until 1997, when a new committee was formed to evaluate support and organise, if possible, another reunion.

A very successful event eventuated and this was held in January 1998 at Invercargill, coinciding with the Southland and Otago 150 year celebrations. An update of the "Family Tree" was also carried out at this time and booklets reprinted.

James Robertson Munro.

James was born on September 5 1841, recorded at Paisley Abbey, Renfrew, Scotland and was the third youngest from a family of 3 girls and 4 boys. (Later information suggests there were two elder children, maybe they died at a very young age.) His parents were William Munro and Christian Leitch, who were married on June 15, 1829 at Gorbals, Lanark, Scotland.

"Both he and his wife worked very hard, often toiling far into the night"

James Munro, together with his youngest brother, Richard, travelled out to New Zealand on the ship "Lady Egidia" landing in Dunedin on May 7, 1862. He made his way to Central Otago to make his fortune in the Gold Diggings, but having no worthwhile luck, decided to come south and work on the land of which he knew something about.

In 1867 he married Margaret Grant Leith, eldest daughter of Mr & Mrs Alexander Leith, one of the first settlers in the Oteramika district, approximately 20km south east of Invercargill. After their marriage, Mr & Mrs James Munro took up residence at "New Field", a 337 acre farm in the same area.



This was all a wilderness of native tussock, flax and bush. Both he and his wife worked very hard, often toiling far into the night cutting chaff on a hand machine, flailing corn, or some such necessary task, all after a long days work in the fields. Not only did they carve out a splendid farm from the native state, but also reared a healthy family of seven sons and six daughters, all of whom were present at their parents Golden Wedding in 1917. James Munro passed away a few years later, aged 79, with his wife following in 1927.

As one can imagine, with a family of thirteen, twelve of whom married, there are now a very great number of descendants of James and Margaret Munro. These Munro's, like many pioneering families, have now moved all over New Zealand and in fact, all over the world.

Granny Munro's Oatcakes (That's My Mum)

Bet & I brought this recipe with us when we came to Australia forty years ago. You might have to substitute something for the roast dripping and maybe cut down on the salt! I love them with stovies and if you don't know what that is, just let me know and I will give you the recipe, it's another great economical Scottish dish.

50 gms plain flour
100 gms medium oatmeal
1 level teaspoon sugar
1 level teaspoon bicarb of soda
2 teaspoons salt
100 gms roast dripping melted in a mug of boiling water

Put all dry ingredients into a bowl and quickly add the hot liquid, mixing with a knife. Flatten out the meal mixture, dust well with flour and roll quickly.

Bake in hot oven – 450. Watch carefully and change the cakes round on the tray.

The Oldest Munro?

Happy birthday and many happy returns to Harold Munro. His son, Ian Munro from Queensland, wrote to tell me that Harold was born in Glasgow and was 96 on July 10. Ian wondered if Harold could be the oldest living Munro in Australia. Let me know if you know of anyone older than that.



Ian also sent the details of Harold's trip out to Australia with his Mother in 1912. It is so interesting that such records have survived. Unfortunately, I did not have the space to include it in this newsletter but it will be in the next one.

The Clan Gatherings 1978 & 2002

Both Ray Munro & myself were at the 2002 Clan Gathering but unfortunately we did not meet. However, we have been corresponding since then and I asked Ray if he would give me a report on the Gathering for the newsletter. I got more than I bargained for – two for the price of one! Great stuff.

Before reporting on last year's Clan Gathering I would like to elaborate on how a third generation Scot from Australia came to be there. In July 1995 my wife, Helen and I were finishing off a tour of Europe when we ended up in Inverness, which we duly fell in love with.

I had been told of a castle by the name of Foulis or, as I pronounced in good Aussie interpretation, Foul...is which was still occupied by the Munros. After making enquiries at the Tourist Information Office I discovered that indeed there was a Foulis Castle and yes, we could visit it provided we were Munros and made an appointment with Mrs. Munro.

On the same day we made this discovery we visited Dingwall and the burial ground of Kiltearn. To say I was astounded by the number of living and passed on members of the clan would be a gross understatement.

The following day which was the 2nd July and having made arrangements with Mrs. Munro, we headed for the castle. I will always remember our arrival as on the way down to the front of the castle we passed someone on a tractor mowing grass. It turned out to be Mrs. Munro!

We were graciously welcomed into the castle by Mrs. Munro who gave us a brief history of the family and a tour of the castle and grounds. It was just as well my wife was present as I was so excited during the tour that nothing was sinking in. Fortunately Helen was attentive and was able to fill me in later. I do remember, however, stopping in front of a portrait of a small boy about three or four years of age dressed in a smock. Mrs. Munro asked me if the boy reminded me of someone. I replied that my grandfather had a picture with a boy about the same age with the same long blond hair and dressed the same way. I used to say to my grandfather that it was a little girl but in fact it was my father.

The weather we struck during our stay in Scotland was great. I remember saying to Mrs. Munro how come my ancestors left a place with such wonderful weather. Her reply being, "my dear during winter if the 'chooks' haven't been fed by three p.m. forget it, they have already roosted". I now know one of the reasons why.

On our return home we were invited and promptly joined the Munro Clan Association.

During the first half of 1997 we learnt of the Gathering to be held in August of that year. My two grown up sons suggested we three guys attend. Or closer to the truth "conned" me into going. It was a memorable trip as not only did we attend the Gathering but we spent the rest of our trip travelling around Scotland. The boys experienced what I had felt when I first visited the castle.

This was an important Gathering of the clan as it was the 50th anniversary of the Clan Association and Finian's coming of age.

The day started with a visit to Fort George where Hector presented the Commander with a portrait of Colonel Sir Robert Munro a founder of the Black Watch. Incidentally the Black Watch was the last Regiment in Hong Kong before the handover of Hong Kong to China. I was myself in Hong Kong before and after the handover.

During the day of the Gathering we met many Munros from all over the world and particularly enjoyed the night's festivities held in the farm steadings. The night was capped by a spectacular bonfire adjacent to the castle.

Now to the Gathering of 2002. By this time my eldest son had taken up a teaching contract in Essex and was keen to attend the gathering with his Mother and Father. It was a bonus for my wife and me as we could see our son and attend the Gathering in one trip. So the three of us and our son's fiancé headed north in dreadful weather for our ancient "home". Once across the border the weather held up until after the gathering.

We duly arrived at the castle at 10.30 in the morning in readiness for the Chief's welcome in which he outlined the day's activities. We firstly visited the museum in the castle, part of which is in the tower and probably the oldest part of the castle. Son and I then attended the whisky tasting conducted by the Glen Ord distillery. We managed to try seven different whiskies, all of which proved very favourable. It was sad to learn that only the Glen Fiddich distillery is the only one still owned by the Scots. I guess this is an economic fact of international business to day.



Following the tasting we joined the rest of our party on the front lawn to view the two Golden Eagles on display. These birds are a bit smaller than our Wedge Tail Eagles and the Golden Eagle male is only two thirds the weight of the female. So we know who rules the roost. There are only about 360 breeding pairs left in the world; one such pair is on the Foulis property which for obvious reasons is appropriate.

Next stop was the Clan Centre where lunch was served in the adjoining marquee. At lunch we met two interesting chaps who used to work on the Estate. They had nothing but praise for Hector and all his family.

Following lunch we toured the Clan Centre which depicts a typical Scottish Clan using our Clan as the subject. The Centre has very well done displays and an excellent video presentation. We made some purchases in the Clan shop but had to place on order some items not available as we found out that the American Munros were there the day before and nearly wiped the shop out of stock!

Disappearing for a couple of hours we made ourselves ready for the night's festivities. Dinner was held in the marquee where we were seated with Clan members from all over the world. After dinner the dancing commenced. It is just as well the

Chief knows all the steps as they seem awfully complicated to me. Finally we were treated to a magnificent fireworks display over the Cromarty Firth at mid-night. Fittingly it started to rain almost on the stroke of twelve epitomising our sorrow of the end to another great gathering.



Each time I have come away from a gathering I set to wonder what were the circumstances that prompted not only my ancestors but everyone at the gathering's ancestors to leave for some destination in the "New World". There must be a story in every case. The challenge is trying to find out the reasons why.

R.J.Munro.

Genealogy Section – Can You Help

If you can help with any of the following, Please get in touch with the contributors directly, or write to me and I will pass your message on. You will remember that I included the address of a researcher in Scotland in last month's issue. His ad was placed on the basis of him paying for it after it was placed but I have not heard from him since – you can draw your own conclusions from that! It was my first unsuccessful attempt at trying to get some money from outside to offset costs but perhaps the poor man is ill.

Andrea Biddolph is searching for marriage of Finlay MUNRO to Alexandrina ROSS in Parish of Kincardine. Her great grandfather Alexander MUNRO was their eldest child and was born in 1810 so marriage probably about this time. Finlay was a schoolmaster in Culrain and died before the family came to NSW in 1839. Any reference to his death also appreciated. Contact Andrea at andreab@ozemail.com.au

Lizzi Bell is researching John MUNRO and Eliza SUTHERLAND from Golspie Sutherland-shire m.c. 1815. Sons Joseph and Hugh settled in Victoria in 1850s. Darby MUNRO was descended from John & Eliza. Contact Lizzi at lizzibell@bigpond.com.au

Pauline Allen's GG Grandparents, Daniel MUNRO & Jean ROBB were married at Barony, Lanark in 1836 and came to Australia in 1869 on the Loch Katrine. According to shipping lists there was another Munro on the same boat & Pauline is trying to establish if this was another family member. So, if any of your Munros came out on the Loch Katrine in 1869, or if you think you are related to Daniel & Jean, get in touch with Pauline on pblake50@hotmail.com

Great excitement! I sent a copy of the first newsletter to Pauline and she has just emailed me to let me know that in the genealogy section, the people that Janet Schnabel from the USA is looking for are the Daniel & Jean mentioned above. I wonder if there are any others out there?

Philip Munro(e). Ron F Munro is looking for information on this elusive ancestor. He is believed to have been born in Montreal Canada in 1831 & arrived in Sydney in 1857. He married Isabella COLLINS from Bristol, England at St Lukes, Liverpool, NSW on 8/11/1858. Philip's parents left Cromarty Firth, Scotland for Canada at the time of the clearances. Ron is looking for information on the birth certificate of Philip; the marriage of his father, Philip (John Francis) & birth of siblings. He would also like to know the ship on which Philip (Senior) departed from Scotland and the boat on which Philip (Junior) arrived in Sydney. If you have any information that would help please contact Ron Munro, 7 Allott Court, Bendigo, Vic 3550 Tel 5443 2080 or Email rmunro@netcon.net.au

Clan Munro (Association) Australia Newsletter

Sender

Don Munro
18 Salter Road
Mt Nasura WA 6112
Phone 08 9390 7643