



# Clan Munro (Association) Australia

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Have you visited our Website at <http://geocities.com/clanmunroau/index>



Chat

It's hard to believe that Christmas is almost upon us again. Bet & I wish you the very best Christmas and the happiest New Year. I thank you for letters you have sent and for your support in making the year such a successful one.

I may have caused a bit of confusion by having two Ron Munro items when they are by different people. The war reminiscences are by Ron F Munro from Bendigo and the genealogy section is by Ron D Munro from Elizabeth! Apologies for that folks.

Ron F Munro has volunteered to contact all of the Munros in his area telephone book and we thank you for that, Ron. To this end, he has asked for a letter about the Clan Munro to photocopy and send out. If anyone else would like a copy, please let me know and I will send you one.

We had immediate successes with our Genealogy "Can You Help" section in newsletter No 6. Two of the people who contacted me are in the same family tree as two of our members. In fact one of these was not even published, as I knew the names from other information sent to me and, if I was really on the ball, I should have been able to pick the other as well!

Ron D Munro suggested that we have a birthday/anniversary book for special birthdays and anniversaries, so if you would like let me know when these are due I will try and remember to publish them. I will not even attempt to do all birthdays & anniversaries.

A Sydney Munro Family group has regular meetings and I have included a short report from their last meeting later. Not all of us are so fortunate to have a large enough family to allow us have Munro Family meetings but if any member would like to form a group to have Clan Munro meetings in their area just let me know and I will send you details to allow you make contact with other nearby clan members.

You will notice in Ron's genealogy column that he wants to start a Munro chat room for members' children and grandchildren (grownups are welcome as well). Get in touch with Ron so that he can get things up and running – I don't understand it but I am sure the youngsters will!

This month we have reports of two Munro family reunions and would you believe, both families are from the bonnie Isle of Skye and both from about the same time – there has got to be a connection!! Possibly, the only way of proving this would be for some of the male members to join the Munro DNA project. Both items are beautifully written, as are so many of the articles I have received and when I have to stop producing this newsletter there are quite a few who could take over with no loss of standard.

I put an item in the "Can You Help" section of the West Australian Newsletter and had a very positive response and found Munros from Carnarvon to Esperance. Fourteen replies in all and none of them members - one was from the producer of a radio program wanting to interview me about the Munros in WA – that went well but no follow up on that one. I found a cousin of one member and I also had replies from cousins of Lily Sims. Others were from Colleen McAllister's family and one went to that gathering.

In our next newsletter we will be continuing Ron F Munro's war experiences and we have had a positive response to that one! We also have an article by Lachie Munro on a suggestion that Sir Walter Scott may have been responsible in some way for the American Civil War. Not only that, the article also suggests a Scottish connection to the Ku Klux Klan!

Many thanks to the life members who sent in their levy payment; these payments, together with some generous donations mean that everyone will continue to receive the newsletter. Not that I would allowed the alternative happen anyway!

## Flying Officer Ron F Munro's War in the Pacific 1941-1945 – Part 2

In Newsletter No 6 we told of Ron's early experiences and how this month we would start with The Flying Fortresses. In an American website I found the following description of the plane. *"The Flying Fortress is one of the most famous aeroplanes ever built. The B-17 prototype first flew on July 28, 1935. Few B-17s were in service on December 7, 1941, but production quickly accelerated. The aircraft served in every WW II combat zone, but is best known for daylight strategic bombing of German industrial targets. Production ended in May 1945 and totalled 12,726."* So let us continue without too much from me.

The arrival of one hundred of these huge flying fortresses was a spectacular sight. When they landed we went to the briefing room to be told the targets, weather expectations etc. An American officer was in charge and he told us that the prime targets were Japanese camps, the radio mast at Salamaua and shipping including a large ammunition ship in Lae Harbour. He concluded his briefing by saying that there the Australians were anxious to take part in the operation as they had seven Australian Beauforts at the strip ***"which were just like trainer planes!!"*** He told the Australians that they could not take off until the fortresses had gone an hour, as by the time the Beauforts reached the target area the place would be devastated and there would be little opposition. This gave the American airmen a good laugh and Sam and Smoky were fuming with humiliation.



The Fortresses eventually took off - 50 to go to each target and we were held back for an hour. Sam was to lead four Beauforts to Lae and Smoky to lead the other three to Salamaua. We were airborne at about 2000 hours. The Owen Stanleys are 13,000 feet high and when we got up there we ran into a violent electrical storm. I got quite a shock when I saw huge fireballs about three feet high running along the wing towards me. It was St Elmo's fire, caused by a build up of static electricity - harmless but very scary!

About an hour later Doug, the navigator said that we would be over Salamaua in two minutes. Smoky said, "You can't be right Doug, I can't see any fires." Doug's response was that he could see the Isthmus now, so perhaps the place has been wiped out. Smoky said "OK, we will go down to a few hundred feet and give them hell." Max and I had scrounged a point 3 machine gun from a wrecked American aircraft but could get only .303 belts of ammunition for it. As we flew down the main street of the Isthmus, Max raked the camp from his turret and I fired the point 3 from the side gun mount. The recoil was terrific - the .303 bullets were too big but it kept firing. We had also taken a number of beer bottles with a razor blade stuck in the neck, which we threw out as they made a whistling sound like a bomb.

The Japanese opened up with very heavy machine gun and AA fire but we still did several runs along the Isthmus. At the end we saw the radio tower so Smoky doubled back and dropped our bombs right on it and at the same time released a flare which enabled Doug to take a photo of the masts toppling over. We turned for home elated at our success and landed about three hours later at Jackson's Field. Only two of our three aircraft got back, the one flown by S/L Sage did not return although I picked up a radio signal from them asking for a bearing from Port Moresby. Forty five

years later in January 1987 the aircraft was found crashed in the jungle with the remains of S/L leader Sage, Pilot, Joe Wormold, Nav, Doug Desmond and Charles Patterson the two WAGS still inside. This was the first of many losses and really saddened us. The four Beauforts that went to Lae returned about 30 minutes later, one was badly damaged and crashed on landing but the other three although, damaged landed safely. Apparently on reaching the target Sam had bombed the ammunition ship and the others following him in at low altitude were damaged when the ship exploded.

The Americans came over to ask where we had been. When we replied "bombing the allotted target." they laughed, saying that we could not have reached the targets as all the fortresses had turned back due to the severe storm and were now on their way to Townsville. ***However, when we produced photos of the targets being destroyed the laugh was on them and the Aussies gained a lot more respect for their efforts!***

The American Fortresses were based at Townsville and Mareeba and, to avoid being destroyed on the ground, only landed at Port Moresby to refuel. They then flew on to bomb Rabaul, the major Japanese base in the South Pacific. The reception over Rabaul was so hostile from Ack Ack and fighters, that the fortresses were inclined to drop their bombs short of the target and head for home. RAAF aircrew were asked to fly on some of these missions as observers so that they could be independently interrogated on return to Port Moresby and give an account of the operation and say whether the planes dropped their bombs before reaching the target.

I volunteered for one such flight and the American pilot was told that I was to go along for the experience and to bring back intelligence as to the number of ships in Rabaul Harbour. A couple of hours after we took off for Rabaul I observed a single Zero about 5 miles away at 11 o'clock high and warned the pilot that he was coming in to attack. The pilot got no response on the intercom. I ran back and found all the gunners sitting down playing cards and when I gave the warning they quickly manned their guns and had no difficulty getting the Zero to break off the engagement as the Fortresses packed tremendous fire power.

The playing cards incident would never have happened in one of our planes. When we flew with Sam Balmer or Smoky we never left our stations, never used the intercom unless it was absolutely essential and never took our eyes off the surrounding air space or sea. When we reached Rabaul it was broad daylight and we got a hot reception from the huge number of warships there. We dropped our bombs in the vicinity of the ships so at least I was able to report this on my return.

On the 16th August 1942, the Squadron flew to Nowra for our first torpedo-dropping course. No torps were available at first so we used concrete ones. Several times each day we

***".....they laughed and said that we could not have reached the targets....."***

made dummy runs at an old Manly ferry and dropped our torps at about 150 knots 1200 yards and from 50 feet. If you misjudged your height at that altitude the tips of the props touched the water and the aircraft would either crash into the sea or vibrate badly - but most made it back to Nowra, which was only about 10 minutes away. We also made dummy runs at shipping going up the coast. The course only lasted two weeks and in the last week we used real torps without an explosive head but which was filled with air. The torps were set to run at a depth greater than the ferry and when they ran out of compressed air would surface about two miles away in the bay and were recovered.

Dropping torpedoes was a risky business as three planes normally went in wing tip to wing tip to have the maximum chance of hitting the target. The training course that followed ours had a terrible accident. At the conclusion of their two weeks training it was decided to invite their wives and sweethearts to watch and they were taken on board the target ferry. Three aircraft came in at 50 feet wing tip to wing tip. With one fatal error of judgement, the planes wings touched and the three planes crashed into the sea just in front of the target vessel and the three crews were killed to the horror of the families and friends watching. This incident was hushed up until after the war but is recorded on video.

***“The training course that followed ours had a terrible accident.”***

After our training, we returned to Laverton and resumed convoy escorts and anti sub patrols from Bairnsdale and Mallacoota but on 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1942, we got an urgent recall from Mallacoota. On landing at Laverton we were told to refuel, top up our armaments, etc and take off as soon as possible for Nowra. From there we would go to Milne Bay where the Japanese had landed a large force. We had no time to collect any of our belongings or tropical gear so we took off in our blue serge woollen uniforms. On landing

at Nowra to pick up our aerial torpedoes, we were told that none were available and we had to load American ships torpedoes. These were very much bigger and heavier than aerial torps and we struggled to get them into the bomb bay. In fact, they were so big that the bomb bay doors would not close and the torp hung about 12 inches below the aircraft. On top of that, they were well over our weight limit, which of course had the effect of reducing our speed and manoeuvrability

At 0705 hours the following morning, we took off and after refuelling on the way, arrived at Townsville that night. We took on additional supplies and equipment and spent most of the night checking the gear - radio, guns, etc.

.....Next, *The Battle of Milne Bay*

## Genealogy from Ron's Desk

### GENEALOGY ... Love Ya Kids .... YOU Created Them!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Genealogy is basically tracing all the children the parents seem to have (God bless all the Mothers). Or it is tracing the parents the children are born to. This little bit is for the children & grandchildren of our Clan Munro in Australia. About time we give them a thought or seven! First to the parents; on the internet there is a chat program called MIRC that I would like to make use of.... ask your (computer literate) kids or grand kids - they know the one. With the parents' permission, I am proposing a Clan Munro of Australia chat room so that our 'little treasures' can chat there in safety among themselves (and me) and get to know others in our CMA Family. Of course 'grown ups' are welcome too.... it is surprising how much we can learn from our children. Heck, only the other day my last remaining daughter at home told me I was a grumpy old man ..... Gee, if she has asked me what I thought I was, I would have replied 'a lovable sort of a bloke'. Anyway parents pass this to the next generation (if agreeable) and get anyone interested to email me and get this chat room rolling.

Firstly a discussion via email, [rdm5108@hotmail.com](mailto:rdm5108@hotmail.com) or [dad\\_sewf@hotmail.com](mailto:dad_sewf@hotmail.com) - to decide what we want to call our MIRC Dalnet Chatroom and nominate some 'operators' to moderate and control the content of the chatters.

If anyone is online in dalnet I can be found at #speakeasy as @southaussie. Drop in and say hello and introduce yourselves.

At the moment here in South Australia I am in full swing looking after the genealogy on my mother's side. Her German ancestors came to South Australia in Sept 1849 and every two and a half years we have a reunion. It's that time again this year and we are meeting on 10th October in South Australia's lovely Barossa Valley where this family first settled. So please forgive me if I am short on the better Clan Munro Genealogy side of things. I have been compiling this side of the family for over 20 years for the committee and one of its longest members.

.....Ron D Munro

### WHAT COUNTY DO THEY COME FROM

This month we are looking at Lieutenant Hugh Munro c. 1760-1837 and Jane Davis. They are the ancestors of John Locke Munro Hull from Tasmania. It is likely that Hugh Munro came from Ross-shire, as he began his army service with Lord McLeod's Highlanders (2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 73<sup>rd</sup> Regt. of Foot, Later 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment) which was raised in 1778 and recruited much of its strength in the old Ross-shire estates of the Mackenzies of Cromartie. Hugh served with this regiment for six years and was wounded in the leg during the siege of Gibraltar, 1782-83. He then served for 13 years with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of foot guards from which he was appointed Quartermaster of the Light Infantry Bn. Foot Guards. He then served with Captain Henry Bowen's Company of Invalids on Sicily, returned to London where he served with the 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Veteran Bn and is believed to have been an officer of the guard at the tower of London.

Hugh married Jane Davis at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster in 1786. They had a son Thomas in 1787, at least two children who died in Sicily and a daughter Anna born in 1800. Thomas was commissioned in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of

Foot (The Black Watch), served in the Peninsular War and was wounded at Talavera and Toulouse. There was a Captain Thomas Munro living in McGregor's Close, Dingwall in 1835 but we don't know if this was him. His Sister Anna married George Hull and they emigrated to Tasmania with their two children in 1819 and the rest, as they say, is history. If any of the above rings a bell, just contact me (Don Munro) and I will put you in touch with John Locke Munro Hull

## Coincidencz or Highland Magic

*This is a follow up on the coincidence/highland magic story in our last newsletter and it comes from Caroline Merrylees who featured in that article. If you have a similar story, please send it to me.*



When our granddaughter Heather was six, we took a nice photo of her wearing a scarf of Merrylees tartan. We had it made into a stamp and ordered some to use with Christmas cards in 1999. My mother (born Millicent Munro) was by that time very frail and needed to go into a nursing home, where she had, on her bedside table, a larger version of Heather's photo. It so happened that the director of maintenance in Blue Cross Nursing Homes was in my mother's room attending to something, and spotted the photo. His name was John Merrylees, and he had received a

Christmas card from us with the Heather stamp on it! He asked my mother about Heather, and learned that her daughter was the Caroline Merrylees he had been corresponding with. Not only do we share the same name, Merrylees, but John is on our family tree, and he and Ian share the same ancestor, Alexander Merrylees of Paisley. We had never met at that stage, and had no idea he worked at Mum's nursing home. We met up there by chance soon after that, and several times again, ***always by coincidence!***

*It does not finish there - what about this one from John Munro in South Australia? John is originally from Caithness and I reckon that reminiscing would have made this the longest painting job on record!!*

Yes Don, the old Scottish magic must be have been alive and well 15 years ago when I was asked to give a lady a quote for the painting of her house. On hearing her speak, I realised she came from the north of Scotland. To cut a long story short, on the first day, I sat down to have morning tea with her and her husband to be told that they had come to Australia in 1954 from Caithness. They had a farm in Dounreay that they sold before leaving. I asked Ann where she was born and she and she replied "in the old mill house in Lyth." You could have knocked me over with

a feather, for this is an old cottage about a mile from the main road and over fields. ***It was the same house in which I was born just four years later!!***

Next morning we started to talk a bit more only to find out that her grandparents and mine shared the same stair to their houses in Wick and Ann would have been in Wick on school holidays at the same time as I was there but we don't remember talking. We almost certainly would have made contact all those years ago only to meet again in South Australia.

*There must be loads of these out there, so keep them coming folks, I love them!*

## The Bonnie Black Isle

*When I used the little piece about Audrey Bailey's ancestors in the last newsletter I said that Audrey had also prepared a piece about the Black Isle that I found quite fascinating. Please note that this piece was prepared for a family gathering of the descendants of Donald and Ann Cameron and is therefore as delivered and relevant to that gathering.*

Donald & Ann Munro were natives of Findon, a tiny village in the Ferintosh area of the Parish of Urquhart & Logie Wester, so our roots lie in this small corner of The Black Isle. The name is somewhat confusing, as it is not an island but rather a peninsula lying between the Cromarty Firth to the North and Beaulie & Moray Firths to the South, with the gentle slopes of the Milbuie Ridge between. In former times, this was the source of peats and wood for the inhabitants but now much of this is covered with some of the many forestry plantations planted throughout Scotland. In general, the scenery composed of mountain, sea, farmland and forest is very pleasant but the view from the southern shore of the Cromarty Firth is one of exceptional beauty. Here is an excerpt from Elizabeth Marshall's booklet "The Black Isle – Portrait of the Past"

***".... The area it occupied was an irregular opening in the middle of the village, broken by ruts, dung hills and heaps of stone....."***

*"From almost any part of the Parish, look up and hold your breath. There in the foreground lies the Cromarty Firth, a sheet of glass on a calm day that reflects the splendour of what lies beyond. In the middle distance there is Dingwall and an elegance of stately homes including Tulloch Castle, Mountgerald House, Foulis Castle and Novar House. To the west you can see the Strathpeffer Glen with Knockfarrel crouched like a cat's back. Beyond, the Urray Hills give way to mountains piled in majestic profusion as far as the eye can see. East lie the Ardross Hills, with Sir Hector Munro's dramatic replica of the gates of Negapatam crowning Cnoc Fyris. And above all towers Ben Wyvis, cloud wreathed and snow creviced, changeless and yet never the same in the changing light"*

The history of the Black Isle goes far back into the mists of time. There are about sixty prehistoric sites, all



of them in a ruinous condition due to farm building over the centuries. Following Neolithic man came the Druids, the Picts, the Celtic monks to spread the Gospel and the bloodthirsty Danes, one of whom murdered St Maelrubha, a Celtic monk, on the site of the old Urquhart Parish Church in 722 A.D.

An oak chapel was erected on this spot on the shore and was replaced later by a stone building thatched with heather. It was repaired and added to over the centuries, rebuilt for the last time about 1750 and forty years later struck by lightning and burnt to the ground. It is now an ivy covered ruin, surrounded by the old graveyard where many Camerons lie sleeping, among them the Rev Murdo Cameron who married Donald and Ann in 1830. The present church stands about half a mile inland from the old site beside the firth and this is where Donald was baptised by the Rev Charles Calder.

A mile or so away is the Free Church and manse, built during the ministry of the Rev Dr MacDonald, "The Apostle of the North" as he was known, who left the parish church at the time of The Disruption in 1843, along with most of his congregation. They worshipped in the open field beside the Ferintosh burn until the church was built. This building was repaired and reduced in size earlier this century, due to a dwindling population. The manse is a gracious home, across the road from the church and approached along a long avenue of trees, glorious in glowing autumn colours when we saw them. From a room in this manse was written the letter of introduction for Donald and Ann when they left for Van Diemen's Land.

A glimpse of life in the district can be obtained from the following account by Hugh Miller, of the nearby Merkat or fair of 1760. These fairs were held as often as four times a year and would be as familiar to Donald and Ann as this one was to their grandparents.

*"Their holds early in November a famous cattle market in the ancient Barony of Ferintosh and Thomsen set out to attend it. He reached about midday the little straggling village at which the market holds. Thomsen had never before attended a thoroughly highland market and the scene now presented was wholly new to him. The area it occupied was an irregular opening in the middle of the village, broken by ruts, dung hills and heaps of stone. In front of the little turf houses on either side, there was a row of booths, constructed partly of poles and blankets, in which much whisky and a few of the simpler articles of merchandise were sold. In the middle of the open space there were carts and benches, laden with the crude manufactures of the country - Highland brogues and blankets; bowls and platters of beech; bundles of split fir for lathes and torches; and hair tackle and nets for fishermen. Nearly seven thousand persons male and female thronged the area, bustling and busy and in continual motion like the tides and eddies of two rivers in their confluence. There were country women with their shaggy little horses laden with cheese and butter; highlanders from the far hills with droves of sheep and cattle; shoemakers and weavers from the neighbouring villages with bales of webs and wallets of shoes; farmers and fishermen engaged, as it chanced, in*

*buying and selling; bevvies of bonny lassies attired in their gayest; ploughmen and mechanics; drovers, butchers and herd boys. Whisky flowed abundantly, whether bargain makers bought or sold, or friends met or parted and as the day wore later the confusion and bustle of the crowd increased. A highland tryst, even in the present day, rarely passes without witnessing a fray and the highlanders, seventy years ago, were of a more combatative disposition than they are now."*

On our visit we were fortunate enough to contact Professor James MacIntosh whose mother was a Cameron and who lived in his grandfather's croft at Ferintosh during the summer and early autumn. The names of the Munro children were familiar family names to him and he felt quite sure that Ann belonged to his family. The Black Isle is not Cameron territory and here is the story of how they came to be there.

Long, long ago, Lochell's daughter was to marry The McKenzie of Redcastle in the Black Isle, so he sent his kinsman, whose Gaelic name meant black and bald headed, as her chaperone and protector of her interests – a very necessary precaution in those wild days. Together they journeyed from their home at Loch Eil near Fort William, to Redcastle at the south western corner of the Black Isle. Here he was granted a meal mill for his living but, after three generations, the McKenzie of the day cast envious eyes on the prosperity derived from the mill and evicted the Camerons so that he could reap the profits for himself. One branch of the family went to Leannach and became landowners, while the other branch settled in Mulquhaich and prospered by trade.

At that time Ferintosh was a busy trading centre, as can be seen by the above anecdote by Hugh Miller, the distinguished geologist and writer who lived at Cromarty, about ten miles to the east and at about the

same time as Donald. Whisky, as he mentions, flowed abundantly and this was due to the Ferintosh "Gift" – a privilege granted by a grateful government to Duncan Forbes of Culloden, the owner of

the Ferintosh Estate. This was in recompense for his quashing a religious rebellion in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the subsequent devastation of his lands and distilleries as retribution. The privilege allowed the grain grown on the estate to be distilled free of excise duty and was worth a fortune. As a result, whisky flowed like water from this area, so much so that the name of Ferintosh became synonymous with the drink. The high density of crofts in the surrounding neighbourhood was as a result of this free home distilling. The privilege was bought back by the government in 1785 for the large sum of 21,580 pounds, which resulted in a somewhat more sober population. At that time, this small parish was densely populated and included 34 masons, 16 carpenters, 29 weavers, 29 tailors, 18 shoemakers and 17 smiths. The advent of cloth mills and shoe factories in the south, where goods could be mass produced more cheaply, diminished local trade to such an extent that many left for the south to find work. Although the effect of the Highland Clearances was not as horrific as elsewhere in Scotland, this too led to a decrease in population as people emigrated to the Colonies in great numbers. In 1885, the Munro family joined them and sailed for Tasmania

.....**Audrey Bailey**

## Can You Help?

If you have any information on the following requests and don't have email, just contact me and I will pass your message on.

Edgar Munro from Ballina is looking for descendants of Alexander Munro and Ann Gray from Dornoch. They were married in Tongue before their departure to Australia. Alexander's parents were John Munro and Janet Cunningham also from Dornoch. Alexander and Ann's children were Joan Mcnee Munro and William Campbell Munro and the family lived at Gundary NSW (*later known as Moruya*). Contact Edgar at 37 Antrim Street, East Ballina, NSW 2478 if you have any links to this family.

This from John Munro from Port Noarlunga; My great grandfather Hugh Munro was born in Keiss, Sutherland in 1840 and died 1916. He married Christina Manson born in 1851 and died 1920. Their children were Angus 1870 – 1872; George born 1872 died 1916 in Sydney, he was married but no info on his wife; John (my grandfather) born 1874 died 1946, married Kate McAulay born 1879; Jessie born 1877 died 1878; Esther born 1879 died 1899; Hugh born 1882 married Jessie Sutherland no date of death; Alexander born 1885 died 1933 in Canada; James born 1885 married Maggie Devlin West Calder; Angus born 1886 died in Canada; Murdoch born 1889 died 1952 in Edinburgh; William born 1893. All of the children were born in Caithness. If you are descended from George who went to Sydney, please contact John at 149 Commercial Road, Port Noarlunga, SA 5167 or [pajom@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pajom@optusnet.com.au)

Mavis Pellow would love to hear from anyone descended from James Munro and Joan White. Her father John Whyte Munro was born in Kinloss, Scotland in 1899. Contact me (Don Munro) if you can help.

This one from Maree Reghazani from Queensland; I am looking for siblings of my grandfather Ronald Ross Munro who married Greta Freada Minna Kurkowski. His birthplace is Rockhampton Queensland where he worked as a railway porter. His father a farmer and married Ada Jane Eddy. He married his bride 1st March 1932 at Mt. Larcom at the age of 22. His residential address then was 100 West Street Rockhampton. My grandfather Ronald Ross Munro has known siblings Cedric and Bill. Bill was a taxi driver in Mackay and died many years ago. Looking forward to any info to pass onto my mother, Freda Beryl Simmonds nee Munro. You can contact Maree at [reghenzani@dodo.com.au](mailto:reghenzani@dodo.com.au)

Diane Morrison is looking for information about Archibald Munro, a seaman who was born in Greenock and died on June 28, 1875 in Newcastle NSW. He is buried in the Presbyterian Burial Ground, Newcastle. Contact Diane on [gorthy.drum@ntlworld.com](mailto:gorthy.drum@ntlworld.com)

Margaret MUNRO born approx 1815; her parents were Alexander MONRO and Jane HAMILTON. Margaret married Archibald YOUNG on 18 June 1833 at Middle Church in Paisley Renfrew Scotland. If anyone has information about these Munros, please contact Leanne Baulch at [lea.dave@cairns.net.au](mailto:lea.dave@cairns.net.au)

Linda Jones is looking for descendants of James Munro, born in Aberdeen in 1905. His parents were Frank and Elizabeth Munro & he was brought up in Spittle with his three sisters Elizabeth, Matilda, & Margaret. The information I have is that he emigrated to Australia at the age of 18, going with the Sister's from St Margaret's Church. As far as I know when he went out there he was working on a fruit farm, but no idea where. I have a letter he sent to my mother, address "NEW ROMSEY". He married a lady called Isobelle, and as far as I know had one daughter called Judith & this is all the information I have. Please contact Linda on [robandlinjones@btopenworld.com](mailto:robandlinjones@btopenworld.com) Ed's Note: I found two "New Romseys" – one in SA & one in WA but SA is probably the one.

## No Easy Voyage

*Many of our ancestors had to put up with unbelievable hardships on their journey to their new homes in Australia. This report from Lizzi Bell gives us an indication of what they went through to get here.*

My Joseph Munro came to Australia with a large contingent of young single men and a few families from Sutherland, Scotland. He sailed from Liverpool on the 'Bourneuf' on 26th May 1852 with 754 passengers. Also on the ship were many others from Scotland, some Irish and some English passengers. Joseph came out "on his own account". When the ship reached Geelong over three months later on 3rd September, 88 passengers had died of measles, diarrhoea, scarletina and marasmus. Most of the deaths were amongst the Scottish children under seven years old.

The deaths were the subject of an investigation by the Victorian Health Officer.

This report from "Who's Master Who's Man?: Australia in the Victorian Age, Michael Cannon (1971) pp 159-160" gives us further indication of what they went through.

"Five women had died of consumption, puerperal fever,

or been lost overboard. Of the 180 children under seven years of age who embarked, nearly half died of diarrhoea, measles, and other complaints....

Arrangements for hygiene were primitive or non-existent. The main deck leaked, so that the two migrant decks were usually damp. The water-closets were 'of inferior construction and leaky'...

The upper immigrant deck had a 'disagreeable smell' while the lower deck was dark and 'difficult to ventilate'. There was insufficient hospital accommodation or spare bedding, so that infected mattresses had to be used again. The matron was almost useless 'owing to physical want of activity or energy', while Surgeon McKeit was accused by the passengers of being 'so grossly intoxicated that he could not attend to his duty'....

Ed: I think we get the picture!!!

## Rodeo



Bet & I went to the rodeo at our local Kelmscott Show and who should we see but our own cowgirl member, Pauline Allen performing with the best of them. Pauline is quite a character and I will have to get some of her stories. Mind you, I might have to rope and tie her down to get them as she does not stay in the one spot too long!

## Kedgeree

*Kedgeree was always a favourite in our house back in Scotland, so here is the recipe for you to try. You might be surprised to see curry powder in a traditional Scottish recipe but yes, apparently it was a Scottish regiment serving in India that married local curry with smoked fish. "Finnan haddies" (smoked haddock from Glen Finnan in Scotland) are the best but most smoked fish is satisfactory.*

Ingredients (to serve four people):

2 fillets of smoked haddock, bones and skin removed  
2 hard boiled eggs, shelled and chopped finely (some people add more than 2 eggs)  
350g long grain basmati rice (or brown rice)  
300ml of milk to poach the fish  
50g of butter  
750ml chicken stock  
Small onion, peeled and finely chopped  
One bay leaf  
One teaspoon curry powder (or to your own taste!)  
Half teaspoon grated nutmeg  
Ground pepper (to taste)

### Method:

Pre-heat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas Mark 4. Cook the onion gently in the butter and add the rice, stirring to coat the rice in butter. Add the stock and bring to the boil. Add the bay leaf, cover and cook in the oven for about 20 minutes or until the rice has absorbed the stock. Remove the bay leaf at the end of cooking. Poach the fish in hot milk for five minutes and drain just before the rice is ready. Flake the fish. When the rice is ready, stir in the flaked fish, chopped eggs, curry powder, nutmeg and pepper, use a fork to stir the flaked fish (to prevent the rice from breaking up). Kedgeree is often served with softly scrambled eggs but you may prefer mashed potatoes

## Donald & Catherine Munro from the Isle of Skye

*In Newsletter No 3, I printed the story of Donald Munro and Catherine MacGillivray who came here from the Isle of Skye in 1853. I also advertised the very successful gathering of their descendants in March this year. At the Gathering, the family decided to erect a plaque to mark the unmarked burial place of Donald and to get together again in September and dedicate the plaque. This they did and Lily Sims once again wrote to me to tell the story and I have reproduced her wonderful letter below.*

Dear Don, I am writing to tell you of our recent gathering at Mortlake on Sept 18<sup>th</sup>. Forty or so descendants of Donald Munro gathered firstly at St Andrews Uniting Church Hall for lunch, which was provided by the Church ladies. At 2.30PM we drove to the cemetery where a Scottish piper playing "Over the Sea to Skye" and "The Misty Mountains," led us from the gateway to the grave site of Donald Munro (my great grandfather) whose body was interred there in 1865. Donald & his wife Catherine (nee MacGillivray) had only been in Australia 12 years when Donald died aged fifty years and just 3 weeks before their twelfth child was born. At that time of course there was no money for a tombstone and his grave had been unmarked until now, different family members visiting there didn't know where it was. We decided at our Bendigo meeting in March to do something about it, money was collected and allocated that day and arrangements made to have a bronze plaque erected on his grave site. When that had been done, Rev Jeff

*".....a Scottish piper playing Over the Sea to Skye and The Misty Mountains, led us..... to the grave site...."*

Gray, Uniting Church Minister kindly arranged a dedication service which we all appreciated.

There are no Munro relatives living in the vicinity now and many travelled quite a distance some even

from interstate to attend and renew acquaintances with relatives they had met in March. After returning to the hall for more refreshments, we were given a guided tour (led by Rev Jeff Gray, research officer and Craig Proctor, secretary of the

Mortlake Historical Society) of the historical blue stone buildings in that part of town. This group of people have been most co-operative in all our early research into our family's early days in Mortlake and we were very grateful.

Great grandfather Donald Munro's funeral service had been conducted in that large bluestone St Andrews Presbyterian Church (as it was in those days) built and opened in 1862. The eldest son Donald MacGillivray Munro & his wife, Catherine McKinnon were married there in 1870 and their older children baptised there. My grandparents, Mary Munro and Hugh McDonald were married there in August 1872

and my father Norman, their eldest son, was baptised there in June 1873. So the seeds of our family's early Australian history were sewn there and we felt the nearness of kindred as we walked the aisles and pathways on that day – similarly so when we return to the Isle of Skye.

The families all departed from Mortlake in the next decade or so, to the Wimmera where some established themselves on new settlements, farming and some went on to the Mallee. Catherine and her younger sons and daughters moved through to Tenterfield NSW where she lived the last 20 years of her life with her daughter Catherine, Mrs David Ballard. She lived to be 93 years of age and is interred in the

Tenterfield cemetery with a good substantial headstone on her grave, also a marble plaque commemorating her husband who had predeceased her by some 52 years.

It was from that Northern NSW area that her three younger sons went to Western Australia. Alexander and Lachlan to the Busselton, Bunbury areas and Duncan to Perth where he died in 1959 aged 92. His youngest daughter Isabel Mary (Mopsy) still lives in Perth and was 101 last April. Two of Duncan's granddaughters came to our Bendigo gathering in March. Lachlan only had 2 daughters and I don't know if they married, he died in 1925. I don't have any details of Alexander..... **Lily Sims**

*Ed's Note: I know that our lady ancestors had the short end of the stick and it looks as if Donald and Mary had 12 children in 12 years! But if you look at Newsletter No 3, you will see that the first 5 children were born in Skye before they came to Australia. Mind you 7 in 12 years was bad enough!*

### I'm Dead

Sandy and Jessie were getting on in years and were lying in bed one morning, having just awakened from a good night's sleep. Sandy lovingly took his wife's hand but Jessie immediately said: "Don't touch me." Surprised, Sandy asked: "Why not?" Jessie answered: "Because I'm dead." Even more surprised, Sandy said: "What are you talking about? We're both lying here in bed together and talking to one another." Jessie slowly shook her head and said: "No, I'm definitely dead." Sandy insisted: "You're not dead. What in the world makes you think you're dead?" "Because I woke up this morning and nothing hurts!!!"

### The James Thomson Munro & Finlay Munro Family Group

*I had a letter from Meg Cooney who is a member of a Munro Family group that meets regularly in the Sydney area. Not all are members of our Clan Munro (Association) but the association is very well represented. One thing they have suggested is that I include the fees for the various grades of membership each newsletter and this I have done. Meg very kindly sent me a donation to help with newsletter costs and we are very grateful for that.*

This family group have been meeting together for many years and what follows is a short report of their last meeting. The group meets at least once a year to keep in touch with the family members, to plan a get together with the younger members of the family and to try and keep the Munro name alive. Quite a few of the family attended the Clan Munro Gathering at Clovelly Bowling Club and thoroughly enjoyed it – especially meeting other clan members and seeing the swirl of the tartans as we got into the swing of the dancing! They visited Rockwood to see their great grandfather's grave and as well as attending the Clan Munro Gathering, a few of the family attended the Highland Games at Brigadoon and had a great day out. One of the family, Susan Crawford, has received the Order of Australia Medal for her long service to various charity organisations, particularly Legacy and for her work in the mental health field. They are very proud of her and rightly so. It looks as if they are planning to visit the Edinburgh Tattoo when it comes to Homebush in February 2005. That would be well worth a visit.

### Visitors from the East

There must be something in the spring air that gets the Queenslanders travelling. We had a most pleasant visit from Ailsa Stubbs-Brown for a few days at the beginning of October. Ailsa is a very young 84 year old who came across on the Indian Pacific flew home via Adelaide where she visited a cousin we managed to find for her among our members - then on to Sydney to visit a nephew before returning to Nambour. Next Judy & Mack Munro visited us on their free day on a Wildflower Tour of the West. It was lovely to see them all again and reminisce – although we had corresponded often, we met for the first time at the gathering and on our holiday in Queensland. There were a couple of wet days during their holiday but I am sure they will forgive us for that as the whole country needed a lot more of that precious stuff at that time.



## The Walking Wounded

Spoke to Marjorie Rowlands and found that she went into hospital recently expecting an overnight stay. Five operations later she is well on the road to recovery. We all wish you well and a speedy recovery Marjorie.

## Holidays

Some of our members have been lucky enough to make the trip back to Scotland to research and get the feel of the country their ancestors left. Our two New Zealand members, Ann & George Munro went back to look round Kinlochbervie where George's ancestors hailed from. The scenery is beautiful and rugged but as Ann said "One wonders how folk made a living years ago from that rugged country." They also had a wonderful reception from Mrs Munro at Foulis Castle and although a bit hesitant about declaring Ann's Cameron ancestry, Mrs Munro soon put them at ease by saying "We are all friends now!" They were getting on famously until George made the faux pas of calling the Castle Foulis House, to which Mrs Munro replied "It's not a chook house, you know!" They all had a good laugh over that. As I have said before Mrs Munro is a wonderful lady with a great sense of humour.



This is a photo of Ron F Munro & daughter Ann on a recent trip to China – looks as dangerous as one of his war time missions!! They had a great time.

Colleen & Bill McAllister returned to Skye and breathed in the atmosphere of Colleen's ancestors. They met one of Colleen's cousins and visited the house from which their ancestors emigrated. All magic stuff and not enough time to do all that they would have liked to have done but since coming back, Colleen has had time to help organise a

family gathering and a report on that event follows.

## Duncan & Katrina Munro from the Isle of Skye

*The following is Colleen McAllister's well crafted report on her family's recent gathering in Portland, Victoria. They arrived just one year after the Donald & Catherine Munro & it is difficult to imagine that the families did not know each other back home in Skye*

Representatives of our Munro family met at Portland, Victoria for the weekend of November 20/21st, 2004 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Duncan and Katrina Munro from the Isle of Skye to Portland in 1854 aboard the ship the "Arabian". Duncan's brother Donald Munro and his wife Mary arrived in Portland the previous year aboard the ship the "New Zealander". They were definitely two pioneering families. They were Presbyterians and played a very active role in the local church and incredibly, we were able to obtain the original Presbyterian Hall in the area for our gathering which added to the atmosphere for the day. Several displays had been set up showing various braches and activities of the family, as well as an incredible colour coded family tree display - one each for Duncan's descendants and Donald's.

Attendees were issued with name tags colour coded to match the branches of the family tree to which they belonged and were issued with a program outlining the itinerary for the weekend.

Our M.C. for the day, Jim Munro, opened the proceedings by welcoming us all and outlined the procedure for the day. Another Jim Munro, one of the weekend's organisers, then addressed us and reminded us of the historical circumstances around which we were meeting. He introduced the various family branches of the family and the significance of the colour name tags.

He pointed out the great difficulties under which such families had lived in Skye with no future hope, and the long arduous journey they had undertaken to come to an unknown land so far away. Both families had travelled with children and both women gave birth during the voyage. Duncan and Katrina lost a one year old child about a quarter way into the trip and had to endure the agony of burying her at sea. Jim also pointed out the many difficulties young families faced trying to establish themselves in such a new land far from what they were accustomed to.

Lunch was provided by the ladies of the Portland Presbyterian Church during which much discussion took place. After lunch Jim Munro gave an address on the subject of the genealogy of the Munro family then a piper led a procession of Munro's to a newly erected Pioneer Wall where a commemorative plaque to the original Munro settlers had been placed

Following this we then visited Duncan and Katrina's grave in the Portland Cemetery. Jim again said a few words and laid a bouquet of flowers on the grave and two sheaths of flowers were laid on the graves of some of the family. The flowers were arranged in red and yellow, a most striking combination of the Munro tartan along with the green of the leaves. This thoughtful gesture was provided by Lola Anderson another of the Munro descendants who was also a foremost organiser

***"The flowers were arranged in red and yellow a most striking combination of the Munro tartan along with the green of the leaves"***

of the day. Our piper played some haunting tunes while we solemnly considered those who had chosen Australia to be their home and who had now been laid to rest.

Back at the hall we heard another address, this time by Lola Anderson, a descendant of Duncan and Katrina. She outlined her many happy childhood holidays in the Munro's Portland cottage, travelling from Melbourne every year with her mother and sister. Her lament was that the home had been sold and demolished and how upsetting it was to think such a lovely pioneer home should be lost. Judy Mark then outlined the story and descendants of Donald and Mary who had only stayed in Portland for a short time before moving elsewhere. I then gave an address revolving around research into the family tree and the discoveries which had been made, especially reuniting lost relatives and a particular "family skeleton", the

story of which will hopefully appear in this newsletter at some later date.

The next morning being Sunday, some family members attended the Presbyterian Church service which was particularly moving for Lola as she used to come to the same church with her great aunts long ago. She even sat in the same seat where she used to sit long ago. The memories that came back to her were all pleasurable.

Altogether the weekend went well and our thanks have to go to Jim and Lola for their untiring efforts. Many a new acquaintance was made and much information and addresses were exchanged

..... **Colleen McAllister**

#### **STOP PRESS: Have just managed to squeeze this one in from Allison Munro**

My husband and I are farming near Inverell in northern NSW. Munro was my maiden name and I grew up in Warren, western NSW. I am vague about the family history but I think my father's family came to the Warren district as graziers in the late 1800's. from Jerilderie (Riverina, NSW). My grandfather, Hector Oswald Munro was one of 14 children. His parents (I am unsure of their names) owned a farm near Warren called "Woodside" and later owned "Merriwee". My grandfather married Elizabeth Williamson Russ (also from the Warren district) in the 1930's. They had only one child, my father Clive who is now deceased. I would like to know if you have any contacts who may be connected in any way, especially the descendants of any of my grandfathers brothers or sisters. You can contact Allison on [allisonmunro@hotmail.com](mailto:allisonmunro@hotmail.com) or contact me (Don Munro) & I will pass the message on.

### **Membership**

As requested, I have included our membership fees in case you would like to upgrade (Annual Members only) or perhaps give a prospective member an indication of our fees. Please note that this is not a request for fees, it is for information only as I will contact you when yours are due. I would point out that for annual members in the 60 & over age bracket, the life membership fee represents particularly good value at the same as a 10 year membership. In fact it is less than 6 ½ times the annual fee and anyone with an ounce of Scottish blood can see a great bargain there! Existing life members can ignore all of that as they have nothing to pay except the \$5.00 annual levy.

Annual Membership:	\$25.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years	\$8.00**
Three Years:	\$55.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years (3 years)	\$20.00**
Ten Years:	\$160.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years (10 years)	\$70.00**

Life Membership is calculated according to age as follows: -

Up to Age 40:	3 X 10 Year Dues	\$480.00
Age 40 to 50:	2 X 10 Year Dues	\$320.00
Age 50 to 60:	1½ X 10 Year Dues	\$240.00
Age 60 and over:	Same as 10 Year Dues	\$160.00
Age 80 and over	Half Ten Year Dues	\$80.00

\* The fees charged include membership of our parent organisation in Scotland

\*\* Correspondence from Clan Munro (Association) Australia will only be sent to the full member

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The stories printed in this newsletter are as presented by the writers and are accepted by the editor on that basis. Where necessary they have been abridged to fit the newsletter.

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