



# Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

Volume 5 Issue 3 December 2008

Have you visited our Website at <http://clanmunroaustralia.org>

## Chat



### This Month

The festive season is on us once again and Bet & I wish you all a very merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.

Chat .....Page 1  
 Welcome .....Page 1  
 Trent Munro..... Page 2  
 HR Munro of Keera.....Page 3  
 A Town Like Alice.....Page 5  
 The Sydney Opera House.....Page 6  
 Bundadoon is Brigadoon....Page 6  
 Kirkin 'O The Tartan.....Page 7  
 Can You Help?.....Page 7

### Next Newsletter

We will have the story of Donald Munro, the father of New Zealand opera.

We hear about James Monro, a policeman and his connection with Jack the Ripper.

We will have the story of the second Clearances Memorial.

There will be an update on Mr Munro the Fiordland penguin.

As usual we will have our "Can You Help?" section

Don

You may remember me writing about Charles Munroe's project to transcribe all of RW Munro's notes into Excel format and to publish them. You will also remember that RW Munro was the Clan Munro historian. That project is now complete and will be included on the CD that Allen Alger produces each year. This is a very exciting addition to Allen's CD and as I worked on the transcription project, I know that it contains a huge amount of Munro information - I will be very surprised if I do not find some sort of match. Charles assures me that there are a number of Australian & New Zealand references included & has urged us to develop a combined Australia/New Zealand database, so we must get that under way. If you would like your tree to be included in Alan Munro's data base just let me know and I will tell how to do that.

As in previous years, I will order the CD for all who would like a copy and distribute them when they arrive. I expect the cost to be about the same as last year, depending of course on postage, packaging & exchange rate ie about \$20.00. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to be included on my order list.

You are all familiar the "Dedicate a Tree" project piloted by Mrs Sarah Munro of Foulis. You will also remember our successful Munro Tree CD project. I suggested to Mrs Munro that we would be happy for the money raised from the CD to be put towards her Tree Project. The finance committee has now agreed to this and our £550.00 contribution together with the individual commitments means that we will have an Australian grove of trees at Foulis and that can only be good.

We have had another couple of genealogy successes. From our website I saw that Emma-Louise Williams was looking for ancestors who turned out to be more of our Shoalhaven Munros, so I have put her in touch with that family's genealogist.

Then I had an email from Sharon Walsh from our last newsletter to tell me that she had made contact with one of our members who told me "Sharon's ancestress Catherine Wenban nee Munro was the eldest sister of my great grandmother." She has given Sharon lots of family information. Don't you just love it?

Later I received this "I recently caught up with my 3rd cousin from Philadelphia whom I'd never met, while we were both having a holiday in Mexico. It was a very pleasant day and great to meet the extended family which may not have occurred without the Clan Munro Assc. So thanks again Don for the link through the newsletter. Greg Long." We must be doing something right!!

## Welcome to Our New Members

Welcome to two new members Donald John Munro and his wife Gayle, from New South Wales. Both can trace their families back to about 1815 in Fife. Interesting to note that Donald can trace back to a clergyman in Fife as can Craig Carter, one of our new members reported in our last newsletter.

## Trent Munro

*Our beaches and surfing conditions are world famous and it is only natural that we should produce some of the world's best surfers and without a doubt there are none better than Trent Munro, Australia's world champion surfer. Trent has happily given me permission to tell you a little about his career. It is a career crammed full of the excitement about which most of us can only dream and it has taken him to some of the most beautiful places in the world. For Trent, there is life after competitive surfing and he says that he can't wait to start the next part of his life – we wish him the very best of luck.*

Trent was born in Sydney but the family moved to Scotts Head, a small village on the New South Wales Mid North Coast when he was 2 years old. Trent started surfing on the inside of Scotts Head Point before he could swim - standing on his Dad's surfboard wearing "floaties!" From the very first time he started surfing he was a natural, showing little fear, enormous drive and a love for surfing. Trent's commitment to the sport of surfing at the age of 6 turned inevitably to competition when a local boardriders' club was formed and the whole family started competing in Scotts Head

After Trent finished his school certificate, he worked at his competitive game for two hard years as a junior and convincingly won the 1997 Australasian Junior Title, blitzing the field by winning no less than four Pro Junior events to go on and join the World Qualifying Series (WQS). Four years was all he needed to get his travel legs around the world on the WQS to qualify for the World Championship Tour (WCT) in 2000, surfing against the likes of Kelly Slater, Andy Irons and Mark Occhilupo.

His maiden year saw him win a WCT event in Brazil, crowning him Rookie of the Year and the fastest ever rookie to win a WCT event. Since qualifying for the WCT in 2000, Trent has developed an enormous global profile and fan base. Recognised throughout the surfing world as the world's best backend surfer, he is highly respected by his peers and the industry.

Trent progressively worked his way into the top twenty and then in 2005, into the top ten surfers in the world, finishing sixth! For the most part of the year he was up there at number one. Trent has won eight Association of Surfing Professional (ASP) events, his favourite being the Rip Curl Pro, Bells Beach Australia in 2005 – the most prestigious event on tour. This is how one newspaper reported his win. *"With brilliant form that repeatedly defied comprehension, Aussie power nugget Trent Munro blew all contenders from the Woolamai Beach waves to win today's final of the Rip Curl Pro. Before taking reigning world champion Andy Irons in the 35-minute final, Munro was like a steaming locomotive, racking up nine point rides right throughout the day to end up with not only the revered Bells trophy, but the best wave score and aggregate heat score of the event".* Trent was also part of the largest ever published surf trip when Joel Parkinson, Taj Burrow and Trent went to Kuala Lumpur and surfed the wave pool with a jet ski.

After surfing competitively for approximately twenty years including ten years on the professional tour, Trent now wants to share his experiences, knowledge, drive and love of the surf with surfers young and old. He is an accredited Surfing Instructor and has the Ocean Safety Surf Coach Award, Advanced Resuscitation Certificate and his Senior First Aid Certificate, plus many, many hours of experience over the course of twenty years in the surfing industry. From that you can see that Trent is extremely well qualified to do anything connected to the sea.



Some of Trent's career highlights have been:-  
First place Rio International World Championship Tour (WCT) event, Brazil in 2001  
World Championship Tour (WCT) Rookie of the Year in 2001  
First place 6 star WQS Pacific Motion Nokia, Lacanau Pro, France in 2003  
First place 6 star WQS Rip Curl Pro, Hossegor Beach, France in 2003  
First place WCT Rip Curl Pro event, Bells Beach 2005

Trent now runs the Trent Munro Surf Academy which has locations at Grassy Head just 5 – 10 minutes from Scotts Beach and at Nambucca Valley on the North Coast of NSW, about half way between Sydney & Brisbane. Check out Trent's website at [trentmunrosurfacademy@gmail.com](mailto:trentmunrosurfacademy@gmail.com)

Although he is going to miss all his surfing mates and the wonderful places in which he has competed, Trent says that it is just the right time for him to pack his board bags away and move on. He is really excited about his new venture and is also in the process of organising camps throughout the year for surfers all over Australia at intermediate to elite level. Trent is also hoping to host an annual event and will be

adding activities to the Academy all the time. He says that when he was a junior he and his fellow surfers had loads more training camps and events which were so helpful, so he would like to bring back the opportunities he had as a youngster.

Trent will not be losing touch with the rest of the surfing world for he also has a role in the worlds biggest surf podcasting company, Podsurf.tv, with

which he will continue to work closely, liaising regularly with the world's top surfers.

As Trent says "Life's good, I'm happy with my career and all I have achieved. I've had the best times -- win, lose or draw -- and have some great experiences and stories to tell. I can't wait to start the next part of my life!"

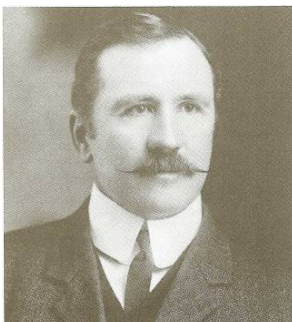
## HR Munro of Keera

*This story comes from Jillian Oppenheimer's Munro's Luck. Jillian is a direct descendant of HR Munro and, of course, is one of our members. Another of our members, Morna Mack Scott is also a member of this family. It is so interesting that this very large and important Australian family is descended from a couple who were sponsored for their move to Australia by Alexander Munro who was sent out from Inverness as a convict at the age of just 14 and who eventually made good in his new land.*

Hugh Robert Munro was born at Keera on 14 February 1862. He was the youngest of Margaret and Donald Munro's ten children; he had the longest life of all his family and the luck to live it to the full, with good health allowing him to ride horses until his last weeks, the good fortune to be blest with wisdom, a sense of humour and a spirit of optimism that carried him through his life.

Although he spent an energetic lifetime of active work, unlike his older brothers and sisters, Hugh did not suffer the severe hardships of the pioneering generation. The Keera he first knew was an established property managed by experienced men. The pattern of successful stock management had been set in place before he was born and it became his task to build on the foundations begun by the Macphersons, his father and his brothers. There were to be periods of drought and depression, which is the reality of rural Australia and these would bring times of difficulty and decision. However the second half of the nineteenth century in Australia was a time of general optimism, good economic returns in business and, under the protection of the British Empire, there were no international threats to the safety or security of the growing young nation.

Hugh's attitude of optimism, his humour, his gentle manner and deliberate speech, his generosity of character and strength produced a wisdom, which over his long life made him many friends and few enemies. He had a code of honour and determination which guided all his actions. His natural authority discouraged others who might try to change his resolve, although he was always



Hugh Robert Munro

willing to hear another point of view. Born on St.Valentine's day 1862, he was to die 96 years later, also on St.Valentine's day.

Hugh Munro grew up in the quiet remoteness of the Gwydir valley at Keera, learning to ride a horse as soon as he could walk, exploring the bush and the river near his home, and developing a love of the land and its animals which was to be the mainstay of his life. He was never without a dog, or a pack of dogs sitting at his feet on the verandah. His eye for a horse of quality or a beast 'square as a brick', or a peach, perfectly ripe straight from

the tree, or a pretty young girl, were to be essential values in his life. He was not pretentious, and did not tolerate it in others but simple honesty and integrity of purpose were important to him. Even at the end of his life his boyish chuckle and ability to find pleasure in simple things touched others.

His schooling began at home with his family and a tutor who lived at Keera. By the time he was ready for secondary schooling, like his brothers he left home. By 1872 the railway had been extended to Murrurundi and, with one of the station hands as a companion, he would ride there from Keera, a journey of several days, to catch the train to boarding school. This would take him to Newcastle to board the steamer to Sydney, where he went to school at Newington College. He had finished his schooling by 1880 and returned to help run the property.

By then his elder brother Alick was established at Weebollabolla and William Ross was in charge at Keera. The next five years were busy with the daily direction of the men's work. It was probably at this time that, with his boundless energy, Hugh began the pattern of his lifetime to 'rise and shine' early each morning and to be on his way soon after daylight to check the men at work on a distant property, to follow a mob of cattle being driven through the miles of stock routes of the north-west, to inspect a mob of sheep or cattle for sale, or to attend a land office to transact business at one of the northern towns. The telegraph had arrived and was well used between the brothers and their managers to transmit news of rainfall, to order railway trucks, to notify stock prices and movements between properties. By 1901 telegrams were aided by the telephone to facilitate these communication links.

When negotiations for the partnership formation were completed between the Munro family and Thomas Cook on 11 July 1887, Hugh had been sole manager of Keera for two years and was then aged twenty-five. He was made manager of the Partnership properties on an annual salary of £150, which was a good income considering that the station store supplied most groceries, the house retained its furniture and any maintenance was paid by the Partnership.

Hugh Munro had learnt from his brothers the value of judging the seasons and markets and their variations in different parts of the country. Through the practice used by his father and older brothers over the past thirty years he had learnt that the wide stock routes and generous stock reserves could be used almost continuously to feed large mobs of cattle with the payment of a small droving fee. He always made good use of 'the long paddock' as it

was termed. Now that he had access to capital through the Cook partnership he was able to set up a number of agents who bought and sold stock at a special commission rate. He also had several trusted drovers, who were given charge of purchased stock that he supervised as they moved along the maze of stock routes in the north-west.

It was his lifelong practice to travel continuously north towards Queensland inspecting stock for sale, observing the condition of the country and, while attending shows or race meetings, to learn the country news and anticipate potential business deals. While most of his business was transacted with bank cheques, Hugh also used the system of PNs, or promissory notes, to guarantee the purchase of stock which he might hold for a few weeks or months before selling at a profit to another pastoralist. At that time the general practice of many property owners on the New England tableland was to buy western bred sheep, which they shored and then sold. It was widely believed that the cold climate districts were not successful sheep breeding areas.

In the 1890s Hugh Munro, probably through his partnership with Thomas Cook, became interested in the processing and exporting of beef. He was following Cook's Dangar family connections, who from the 1840s had not only imported quality livestock but had developed a shipping business and exported Australian rural products, including tinned beef. They had developed the Dangar, Gedye Company, which was also closely associated with the supply of shearing machinery throughout the Australian wool industry. As the process of chilling beef was developed, Hugh Munro took initiatives and became the chairman of directors of the Australian Chilling and Freezing Company at Aberdeen, which had operated the Aberdeen Chilling, Freezing and Meat Preserving works from 1891. He was also a director of Dark's Ice and Cold Storage Company at Newcastle, a position to which his son Douglas was appointed later. Hugh realised that the increasing beef production in Australia needed to find overseas markets and, once meat could be successfully chilled to travel the distance to England, new opportunities for export marketing would result.

On 14 July 1898 when Hugh Munro was thirty-six he married Grace Emily Gordon, second daughter of George and Eliza Gordon of Gragin, Warialda, a property of about 108,000 acres. Grace was eighteen years younger than her husband and was to bring a new and "modern" lifestyle to Keera. When their engagement was announced she referred to her fiancé as 'Mr Munro', even to her own young friends. (I used Grace's story in Newsletter No 8 - Don)

Hugh Munro continued to manage the Thomas Cook company business and the Partnership agreement was extended throughout the lifetime of the senior partner. On 13 July 1912 Thomas Cook died at Turanville, and in the following months his executors began the complicated business of winding up his estate. As had been agreed in 1887, Hugh Munro was given the option to purchase the properties of his choice from the estate. At that time he decided to keep Keera, Wyaga, Oakhurst, Gundibri, and part of Turanville land, but the homestead block, had been separately bequeathed to the family of John Cook, Thomas Cook's older brother.

All the Munro men had a particular skill in recognising quality livestock. Hugh was an astute judge of cattle and on his first visit to Scotland in 1925, with his daughter

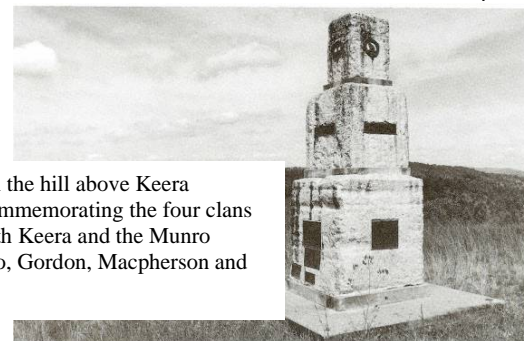
Nancy and son Douglas he visited the top shorthorn studs in Inverness-shire. He bought stud cows which he imported to improve the Keera cattle. He also went to New Zealand in 1910, probably his only overseas trip with Grace, and was impressed with the Aberdeen Angus cattle there. He purchased and imported several cows. He was particularly keen on the Shorthorn and Angus cross to produce the best quality steers for market. He founded poll Shorthorn studs at Gundibri and Oakhurst and a horned Shorthorn stud at Wyaga, as well as a merino stud at Wyaga and polled merino stud at Oakhurst. He encouraged Gordon to begin the Booroomooka Angus stud and they travelled again to New Zealand in the 1930s to buy more stud Angus cattle.

Hugh Munro rode horses all his ninety six years and possibly his favourite entertainment was to breed, train and race quality blood horses. He began with some of the horses from Thomas Cook's famous Turanville stud, bred from imported stallions. Through the years Hugh was to have great success with his horses, both racing and breeding winners such as the Thespian strain, which won him the AJC Metropolitan in 1921 with Laddie Blue, and the Doncaster in 1931, with Sir Christopher. But it was in the north that he was best known and a familiar figure on all the country race tracks. He was foundation chairman of the North and Northwest Racing

Association, a position he held for most of his life and patron of most of the northern picnic race clubs.

Although he enjoyed racing it was for the thrill of seeing his own horse win, rather than the gamble and stakes offered by bookmakers. He was known not to place more than £10 on any horse in a race, even if he was sure that it could not be beaten. He enjoyed telling the story of riding his horse, Turret, and winning at an early Inverell Picnic Race meeting, when he was disqualified for incorrect costume. This was because his horse had been severely handicapped and would have had to carry fourteen and a half stone in the mile race so he decided to ride it himself. He was a large and heavy man and could not fit into his small jockey's racing silks, so was penalised for his irregular and unbuttoned attire. His racing colours were similar to those of Thomas Cook, pink and black stripes, and on Cook's death he took over his partner's racing colours, so that the two sets of black and pink stripes, with a pink or black cap, were used by Hugh and his son Gordon

The Munros of Keera were a classic example of the



Monument on the hill above Keera homestead commemorating the four clans associated with Keera and the Munro family: Munro, Gordon, Macpherson and Macdonald

establishment, progress and power of the feudal system in Australia. They originated in Scotland and never

relinquished the bonds that held them to their mother country. Even the Keera paddocks and outstations bore names like Cromarty, Braemar, Strathyre and Dingwall.

One of the jackeroos, John Noble, who was at Keera from 1949 to 1951, went on to be a rural broadcaster for the A.B.C. He had recently returned to Australia, having been brought up in England during the war. His reminiscences are of an older H.R. Munro in his eighties, who "still possessed of a well built body and an acute mind. He was a chuckler and loved to get people in a happy mood"

Soon after his arrival at Keera, John Noble was given the job of looking after the Keera cars and driving Hugh

Munro, whom he described in detail: "The old man, dressed in riding breeches and boots, shirt and tie topped with a waistcoat, across the front of which was his gold watch and chain, and on his head his pith helmet which he favoured when out and about on the station ... As we went along the old man began to point out features of the country. He talked about the early days, the floods, the droughts, the characters who had come and gone. Never was he anything but interesting, and he liked to be asked questions which set him off again ... He carried a fund of information in his mind. What a pity more of what he talked about was not written down at the time."

## *A Town like Alice*

Two of our members have a strong connection to Nevil Shute's classic Australian tale *A Town like Alice*. The book's hero, Joe Harman, was based on the exploits of Jim "Ringer" Edwards, the husband of Pauline Edwards and father of Pauline Allen. He was born in Fremantle, Western Australia in 1913 and left home before the age of 12 to join a droving team. He spent many years droving and horse-breaking in the Pilbara before moving to Queensland in the mid 1930s.

When war was declared he joined the ill fated 2/26th Battalion which was formed in Queensland and saw active service in the defence of Malaya and Singapore in 1941/42. The personnel of the "The Gallopers," as the 2/26th was nicknamed because of a weekly cross-country training run, were A.I.F. volunteers, not conscripts. The battalion was first camped near Changi village on the south-eastern tip of the island and later moved to Johore, on the western side of the peninsula. They conducted a fighting withdrawal to Yong Peng, Ayer Hitam, and a number of other locations as Westforce withdrew towards Singapore Island. Between 26 and 27 January they held the Simpang Rengam crossroads at 46-mile post, where they were shelled by Japanese artillery and strafed by Japanese aircraft. They proved to be particularly successful in fighting these rearguard actions and morale was high. But the inevitable happened and those of the 2/26th who were not killed during the war were taken prisoner at the surrender of Singapore. They were to spend the next 3 ½ years in deplorable conditions.

The battalion was concentrated in Changi goal, where they were used as labour for various work parties. Jim was one of the prisoners who, along with many others was forced by the Japanese to work on the notorious Burma-Thailand railway. Edwards' bush skills came to the fore and with starvation racking the camp, he was renowned for castrating bulls in nearby paddocks to help feed the sick and injured.

When he was recaptured after an escape attempt, he was effectively crucified by being tied up to a tree with wire and beaten with a baseball bat. After 60 hours he was considered finished and was allowed to be cut down by his mates who eventually nursed him back to health. His two mates who were crucified along with him did not survive. On another occasion he was sentenced to death but released when his last meal request of beer and chicken was unobtainable.

A POW friend of Mr. Edwards, N.S.W. businessman Mr. Peter Larsen had vivid memories of "Ringer" sitting crossed-legged in a hut in Burma, chanting in an Aboriginal dialect and pointing a bone at the Japs. "I used to wonder whether he did that to cheer us up or whether he really believed in the bloody thing," he said.

His POW treatment received much media attention when he was repatriated to Australia after the war. He returned to Queensland where he met and married Pauline Munro who was a matron at Normanton Hospital.

In the UK, author Nevil Shute heard of Edwards' wartime exploits and flew to North Queensland to speak with the former POW. They met in 1948 at Glenmore Station, about 20km from Normanton where Jim was the station manager. It is quite a coincidence that Jim married a nurse for Nevil Shute wrote *A Town Like Alice* based on the true story of a Dutch nurse he had met and greatly admired, mixing her wartime tale with Jim Edwards's anecdotes. He took the two stories and combined them to create his famous story. He found part of *A Town like Alice* in Kuala Selangor, another part of it at Kota Bharu, and a great hunk of it at Palembang in Sumatra. Most of the rest of it was found at Normanton in the Gulf country of North Queensland; the prototype for Willstown was a little place called Burketown.

As you will know, the book was turned into a film and television series. Jim watched the TV series and enjoyed it but he said that he wouldn't be jogging on a horse with "his ass in the air" like Brian Brown did. "He can't ride," said Jim.

Jim "Ringer" Edwards later returned to Gingin, WA where, acknowledged as the legendary bushman of the Pilbara, he died in 2000.

Our two Paulines accepted an invitation to attend the Nevil Shute Society conference in Alice Springs in 2007.



## *The Sydney Opera House*

Before our website was up and running, Bob Munro had a temporary site on the Web to show that our site was under construction. On it he featured the Sydney Opera House and I received this interesting comment from Margaret Weeden, my opposite number in New Zealand, when she had a look at it.

"I was delighted to see the splendid photo of the Sydney Opera House! I consider I am related to the Opera House! Back in the early 1970s, my husband Ed was one of the experts and consultants who were called in to solve some of the many problems in the building of the Opera House. Ed's particular expertise is (or was) in timber technology... ie identifying timbers, knowing their uses, etc. In this case, the problem was what to use for the large beams that hold up the roof of the Opera House and to hold up the "sails" with all the tiles. Ed was located in Sydney at the time and spent much time going back and forth to Melbourne to the DSIRO. After trials, it was decided to use a native Australian timber. Ed wrote the manual explaining how to do this and the Opera House still stands there with his beams holding it up! The timber used is a Queensland Rainforest hardwood tree called *Tristania Conferta*. It was previously in use for axe handles! It is also a popular choice for street trees in Sydney. It does not grow as tall in southern areas as in warmer areas of Queensland. We have some small, polished left over pieces of these beams in our home as well as the manual that Ed wrote."



I then asked Margaret what Ed's profession was exactly and this is her equally interesting reply.

"I have always had trouble explaining what my husband actually did for a living! In a few words, he is a graduate of Berkeley University California, U.S.A. in Forestry, which includes forestry, wood technology and wood science. Ed's interest in forests started from when, as a young lad, he worked during school vacations as a forest fire fighter. Living as he did among the Californian Redwoods, he had a first hand introduction to forestry. His studies plus later business experience enabled him to tackle just about any question about forests and timber that came up. Looking back, I never knew quite what to expect would be next on Ed's programme. He had an interesting and challenging career, working in countries all over the world. He had many adventures and loved to talk about his experiences.

Until only recently, he kept in close touch with his friends at Berkeley, many of whom have visited with us over the years. Sadly these days are almost gone now. However, we do know that in the world of Forestry, there are many fine young people to carry on this work.

In summary, I can't say Ed was an engineer exactly; maybe he is best described as a man who has had a lifetime of deep and successful interest in several aspects of his favourite subject. I am glad he was there to help with the complications of the building of the Sydney Opera House.

I hope this explains a little about Ed Weeden."

## *Bundadoon is Brigadoon*

Janet Moore wrote this little piece about the Highland games called "Bundadoon is Brigadoon" in the Southern Highlands of NSW. Sounds as if it was a wonderful day but what a pity our Clan did not take part.



Just to show that the Munros & Camerons are no longer enemies, here are the Camerons looking very relaxed at the Gathering

The setting for the games was the sports oval, situated on the other side of the railway line from the main shopping strip and surrounded by trees which serve everyone very well during the games and adds to the beauty of the venue. The railway line is an important part of the story as, being so close, one can enjoy the arrival of the steam train from Sydney which is an important part of the proceedings, bringing many people to the games. It gives atmosphere to the day as you hear it hissing & steaming as it breaks through the cutting and the joyful sound of the whistle as it heralds its arrival, takes one back to another era.

Then there is the procession through the High Street which winds its way to the rhythm of the pipes and drums. Throughout the day there was a variety of

highland games events; massed Scottish country display; Highland dancing; kilted dash; lifting the Bundadoon Stones of Manhood, etc.

What we have all come to see and hear is the massed band display and this year no less than 25 bands took part. What a truly wonderful feast of sound and colour. We are very blessed to enjoy this treat at the close of day and as always, the lone piper closed the proceedings.

The band of the day was the Drones & Sticks pipe band from New Zealand

There were 31 clans present but unfortunately not the Clan Munro! The weather was perfect and as always, the spectators who range from babes in arms to great grandparents were all in beautifully behaved family groups, there to enjoy a day of sight, sound & security in the presence of like minded friends.

## *Kirkin' O' the Tartan*

Pauline Edwards, Robin Nettleton, Craig Carter, Bet & I attended the Kirkin' O' The Tartan at the RAAF Association Centre in Bull Creek, WA on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June. What a lovely day it was and for once there was no rain as we marched



Bet, Robin, Craig & Don

behind the City of Cockburn Pipe band and the Clan banners. The Church service was very moving and the singing of the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm in Gaelic by Shirley Oliver was beautiful. After the service we marched back behind the pipe band to the dining room where we enjoyed an excellent three course meal followed by good Scottish entertainment. First the pipe band to get our blood stirring and this was followed by the Royal



Australian Scottish Country dancers who captivated us with their grace & lightness of foot – they had to come back for an encore! After a break in which the raffles were drawn – Bet won a box of oatcakes & I won a bottle of wine – we were entertained to a medley of Scottish songs by the Lintes Singers who were just wonderful. From the applause you would think they could have won the battle of the choirs!! After a compulsory encore, their pianist treated us to a bracket of Scottish tunes that we all knew and enjoyed so much. All in all it was just a lovely and enjoyable day.

I had never heard of the Kirking of the Tartan before coming to Australia 45 years ago, so I thought I had better find out just what it represents. From what I can gather, it is mainly a USA and Canadian phenomenon and this is a Canadian explanation of the legend. *"When the wearing of tartan was banned after the defeat of the Jacobites at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, on one Sunday a year, the populace went to church wearing a concealed piece of the tartan and, at a certain moment set aside in the service, the tartan was touched while the minister pronounced a blessing on all tartans and the Scots once more pledged their loyalty and respect for their old traditions."* A very nice story and although I am quite sure that this is not based on fact but it does sound good & sits nicely with what you might expect to be true!

I have read that what has become known as "Kirking of the Tartan" was introduced in the United States by the Rev. Peter Marshall in April 27, 1941 at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. Dr. Marshall was a Scottish immigrant who arrived in the U.S. in 1927 at age 24, was the pastor of NYAPC until his death in 1949 and served as Chaplain of the U.S. Senate from 1947-1949. I do remember seeing an excellent film about his life "A Man Called Peter" starring Richard Todd, many years ago.

I will probably be black banned for being so bold as to suggest that the Kirking of the Tartan is just a legend with no factual basis, but it certainly is an excellent excuse for wearing the kilt and having a great day out with so many like minded people of Scottish descent. We will be back next year.

## *Vale Margaret Missen*

*It is with sadness that I tell you of the passing of Margaret Missen. This little piece was sent to me by her cousin Judith Munro.*

I had caught up with Margaret at our last family reunion in April 2007 - which of course she always attended - and did so accompanied by her oxygen bottle which went everywhere with her!

She was courageous and uncomplaining in dealing with her ill health and got on with enjoying life to the full - nothing stopped her from also being an active community member, contributing her many skills, time and energy with passion and much humour.

She was a lively lady who dearly loved her own family and grandchildren, friends and of course, her extended Munro clan whose history she expertly documented and updated for family.

Margaret was so organised and caring that she produced her own Order of Service for her funeral - "To my loving family and friends" - and in a few of her own words to them - "I was only small in stature but gigantic when it came to loving all of you. I was so very proud of every one of you".

## *Vale Pearl Tibbett*

We were very sad to learn of the passing of Pearl Tibbett in October. Pearl was the much loved wife of Peter Tibbett our past Clan Munro Representative and the webmaster of our previous website. Pearl is sadly missed.

## *Armada WA Highland Gathering*

The largest Highland Gathering in Western Australia was held on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November. The weather was perfect and the Gathering was very well attended and extremely well organised by the City of Armadale who also provided the clans with a tent free of charge and insurance which was much appreciated by all concerned.

Sharing the tent with us were the Clans Keith, McKay and Donnachaidh (Robertson) as well as the other Scottish organisations.

Just next to us we had the pipe band competition; on the main stage there everything Scottish from piping to an address to the haggis; the highland dancing was very popular



as were the Grey Company Gaelic Battle; the Knight School Class and the Black Watch display. We had all of the heavy events from tossing the caber to putting the stone. The annual Armadale Classic state race was spectacular as were the other cycling events.

Until now our Western Australian branch did not have a banner to display but this is no longer the case as, due to the generosity of new member Malcolm Munro and his wife Margaret, we now have a banner to identify us when ever we are at Clan Gatherings, etc. I was proud to march behind our new banner along with the other clans. The picture shows it well and if you would like to make one I can send you the dimensions. I can have the centre tartan with crest printed over here for \$20.00 including postage, so if you are interested just let me know.

### *Can You Help?*

I received this from Paul Draper & as there are a lot of "possibles" & "maybe's" it maybe difficult to get a result.

"Hi Don, I spotted your website re the Munro family history mag in Australia and wondered if you could track down my grandfather who is believed to have lived in Australia after leaving NZ in the mid to late 1920s."

His name was John Munro, he emigrated to NZ in 1912 from Glasgow, and his wife's name was Lucy Noble. He had 5 children, Margaret, John, Vera, Harold and Ines.

He lived in Argentina as a teenager and had a sister in Canada possibly named Ines or Isobel and a brother in Scotland called either David or possibly Duncan, his fathers name may have been James.

He worked as a grocer in Scotland and NZ and may have done the same in Australia.

Any help would be appreciated as we don't know what happened to him, I am Vera's son. You can contact Paul on [sales@firepelkidd.co.nz](mailto:sales@firepelkidd.co.nz)

Isabella Munro nee Jennings was born in India died in Australia. Isabella was born 26 Dec 1837 in Maharashtra, Bombay, India and christened on 14 Jan 1838 according to her birth certificate. Her father George Jennings was a Gunner Artillery (presumably in the Indian or British armies, I am not sure which) and her mother was Catherine. Isabella married Alexander Andrew Munro aka Palmer (29 Sep 1826 - 13 Nov 1901) on 28 Apr 1853 - St. Andrew Church, Bombay, India. Alexander was born in Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland. They had 12 Children: Blanche Angelina Louisa Munro (1857-1920); James Palmer Munro (1858-1920); Ruth Isabelle Munro (1860- ); Andrew George Munro (1861-1958); Mary Ann (Minnie?) Munro (1863-1945); Caroline Munro (1864-1968); Margaret Jane (Maggie) Munro (1866-1895); Catherine Eva Munro (1869-1950); Francis William (Frank) Munro (1871-1960); Samuel Jennings Munro (1873-1945); Isabel Mary "May" Munro (1876-1943); Phoebe Munro (1878-Bef 1938).

The first 8 of the children were born in India & the last four were born in Australia.

Isabella died Nov 1938 - 8 Greeves Street, Fitzroy, Victoria and was buried on the 14 Nov 1938 - Melbourne General Cemetery, College Crescent, Parkville, Victoria at the age of 104. Sandra is interested in making contact with fellow researchers and family. Contact Sandra on [smwilliamson@optushome.com.au](mailto:smwilliamson@optushome.com.au)

### *Membership*

As requested, I have included our membership fees in case you would like to upgrade or perhaps give a prospective member an indication of our fees. This is not a request for fees; I will contact you when yours are due.

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

### *Clan Munro (Association) Australia Newsletter*

#### **Sender**

Don Munro  
18 Salter Road  
Mt Nasura WA 6112  
Phone 08 9390 7643  
[dmun1249@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dmun1249@bigpond.net.au)

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.