

## **OUR MUNRO ANCESTORS**

What follows are all stories that have been published in our newsletter. The introductions and comments by our editor, Don Munro have been left in.

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## Major Donald Munro MC Seaforth Highlanders

*This is a brief history of Don Munro's Grandfather, Major Donald Munro who was born in 1879/1880 and died in 1932.*

Major Donald was born in Roskeen in Ross-shire as were his father and Grandfather before him and probably further back than that but I cannot go back further than his Grandfather. He was of humble stock; his Grandfather was a farm labourer and his father a farm labourer/ stone mason depending on the record you are viewing.



Major Donald Munro MC

Early in his youth, Donald moved to Dingwall and worked for a time with the firm of Mr William Paterson, corn and coal merchant. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 1898 he joined the Seaforth Highlanders at Fort George and two days later was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in Dover – he did not get much chance to change his mind! I can only presume that he received his basic training in Dover as from there he went with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion to the South African War. He served throughout that campaign, was at Wittenbergen and took part in the guerrilla warfare in Transvaal and Cape Colony

The Battalion left Durban on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1903 on the Lake Manitoba bound for Ireland. From a rough diary of his, I know that he was on Ireland in May and August 1903 and there is mention of Dublin and Neane Barracks, Curragh. He was in Edinburgh Castle in 1909 when his son, Donald (my father) was born.

He served through WW1 and here are a few of the entries from his diary for the first year of the war to show the horror of what he and the other soldiers went through and also to show the lighter side and the character of the man.

### ***How they got there. This is the first entry in the diary:***

1914

Aug 23. Arrived Southampton 1 pm. Embarked XXXX (Cattle boat Johnstone line). Sailed at 9 pm

### ***The horror of war - less than a month later***

Sept 14      Marched all last night with the convoy: survived a circle of shellfire, first to come through safe, though at present it looks blue; slightly quiet now. 10 am commenced again heavier than ever. News just came through that the Colonel was killed two hours ago. Can scarcely realise it but unfortunately it is true.

12 noon. Fearful fighting and we are helpless where we are with the convoy. The din of large guns, m. guns & rifle fire is terrific, although up to the present they are apparently holding out. Darkness setting in and the guns are quiet. The Colonel, Lieutenant Williamson and Lieutenant Murray of the Gordons & 7 men buried at 8.30.

### ***Three days later:***

Sept 17      We are still holding the same position. Fighting only on left front. Convoy Park shelled considerably. H. artillery. Enemy's battery of Long Toms bombarding convoy. 90 pounder shells dropping everywhere. We couldn't get cover anywhere. Houses coming down and breaking into flames. I can't describe the awful scene; men, horses and wagons smashed up and shells finding us always.

3 pm. After short lull the shells are dropping worse than ever and the scene is indescribable. A man came out of a house with awful wounds in head and legs and another man and I carried him away and dressed him. On the way back a shell struck a house about a yard from me and one of the falling stones knocked me down. My arm and shoulder seemed dead and I was stunned for the moment. Those who witnessed it reported me blown to pieces. Houses falling everywhere and breaking into flames. I'm wondering how we lived through it. After the firing ceased, I saw sights which I hope to God I shall never see again. In one shed I saw six men absolutely smashed to pieces, heads, arms and legs in one awful heap. I helped to get their identity disks from the bodies and seem to have lost all feeling. The village is now one mass of ruins and flames, with wounded and dead being carried to temporary hospital.

6 pm. All quiet and I can scarcely believe that I'm alive. Considering the awful shellfire, the casualties are very few.

### ***His Commission:***

Oct 5 9am. Just finished breakfast and orderly came to tell me that I had been granted a commission. Wonder what the new life will be like.

Found Officers very nice and all were very kind and helped to fix up kit. Marched to Hartennes.

### ***Being Quartermaster did not mean that he was out of the firing line:***

Oct 13 Drove enemy from position at Fletre. Casualties in Battalion 90 k&w. Bayonet charge – led Platoon in action for first time.

Oct 20 General attack on enemy's lines. Battalion cleared them out with the bayonet. Very gallant stand by the Germans. Captain Methven killed.

***In the trenches:***

Oct 26 Enemy have brought up a mortar and started shelling us. I've cleared us out. My house blown to pieces. Whole Battalion took up new position. "C" Company in ditch, up to knees in mud from 9 am to 6.30 pm. Worst predicament I have ever been in

Oct 29 Still raining and the place is a proper mud hole. Mackie of No 1 section killed by a sniper. No night attack.

***Scottish understatement:***

Nov 24 Quiet night but very cold and had small showers of rain. Nothing unusual – my hut burnt down. News of birth of Baby. (That would be my Auntie Aisne – named after the battle of the same name)

***St Andrews Night:***

Nov 30 What a change from St A. of last year. Makes on wish to be home with their dear ones. Hepburn killed.

***A lighter side:***

Dec 5 Had our St A dinner in billet last night. Pipers McLean & McMillan played during dinner. Made one forget for the moment that we are only a few miles from the firing line.

Dec 6 Back in our old billet at farm. Mr Yeomans held service in barn and I enjoyed it very much. Had a shoot after service. Bag – 1 hare, 3 rabbits and 2 pheasants.

The diary finished on Dec 15, only 4 months after it started and what a huge amount happened in that time. Grandfather would surely have kept diaries if the rest of the war and I would dearly like to read them but this one is, to my knowledge, the only one to survive.

Without a doubt, his saddest moment of the war was having to take the body of Captain Charles Seymour Munro MC, from the battlefield just before the end of the war. Captain Munro was, of course, the son of the then Munro Chief, Sir Hector Munro of Foulis. Grandfather brought Captain Munro's belongings home to Sir Hector and was given a cigarette case by him in gratitude. That cigarette case has a place of honour in my home along with Grandfather's spurs, sgean dubh, medals and bonnet. A bonnet, not that one, figures in a postscript at the end of this article.

For his services Major Donald Munro was awarded the Military Cross, the 1914 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

After the war he was posted to India and he was then posted from Meerut, India to the Depot (presumably Fort George) in December 1921.

He died of pneumonia on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1932 in his 53<sup>rd</sup> year.

It is that sad that he had served through the Boer War, WW1, Ireland and India only to die at such a young age of a non military cause. One of my greatest regrets is that I did not know him for he died before I was born. In fact my maternal Grandfather Johnstone died within a month of Grandfather Munro, so I did not get to know either of them.

Postscript to the above. At the Clan Gathering, I mentioned to Chief Hector that my Grandfather had brought Captain Munro's belongings back home to Sir Hector and he sent me the following extract from his father's diary.

*"On June 5<sup>th</sup> 1940 'C' Company, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Seaforth Highlanders part of the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division reached the village of Limeaux in Northern France during its retreat from the Somme. With the enemy very close, Captain Patrick Munro of Foulis, their Company commander had the badly mauled remnants of 'B' Company (which included their only surviving officer, his youngest brother Hector Gascoigne) attached to his Company. Having just lost his driver, Captain Munro put his brother Hector in charge of his truck with orders to withdraw by road whilst he himself led the Company across country. The withdrawal took place without incident and they reached the village of Ramburelles at about 5 a.m. but Hector failed to arrive. Just as they set off to search for him he turned up on foot with a long face and explained that try as he might he couldn't get the truck to start. He knew the Germans were very close and having his own equipment to carry he had no alternative but to abandon everything else in the truck, little realising that it contained all his elder brother possessed except for the clothes he stood up in. One of Captain Munro's greatest losses was his late Uncle \*Hector's badge in his Glengarry bonnet, which had been all through WW1." (\*Captain Hector C. S. Munro yr. of Foulis MC was killed near Cambrai, N. France on 22 October 1918 aged 23 years. Coincidentally his nephew Hector Gascoigne was exactly the same age in June 1940).*

## Alexander Munro

*I searched the Internet for Australian Pioneers with the name of Munro and came across Alexander Munro who well and truly falls into this category*

Alexander Munro, from Ardersier in Inverness-shire, Scotland, was one of the pioneers of the Hunter Valley wine industry. In the mid 1800's, he established the 'Bebeah' vineyard on the outskirts of Singleton, NSW. At one stage Munro was the largest wine producer in New South Wales claiming to hold 125,000 gallons of mature wine in stock. He is also reported to have won over 2000 Trophies, medals and awards including 511 champion and first prizes.

Alexander's early story is not such a successful one for we find that by the time he was fourteen, his father was dead, the family had moved from Ardersier to Inverness and was in dire straits. Alexander roamed the streets and with two others, broke into a grocer's shop, was caught and came before the magistrate. Although it was a first offence, he was sentenced to transportation – an extremely harsh sentence for one so young. As we know he made good in Australia and he spent much of his life trying to atone for his early mistake. This paragraph from "Munro's Luck" puts Alexander Munro's life and achievements in a nutshell.

"Alexander Munro died in his home, Ardersier House at Singleton on 26 January 1889. He was described as a vigneron, 'a prominent philanthropist and one of nature's gentlemen' and 'the father of Singleton,' in the lengthy obituaries published in the Maitland Mercury and Singleton Argus. The funeral cortege, which stretched for half a mile, was led by Masons and Oddfellows in their regalia and wound through the streets of Singleton before his burial in the Glenridding cemetery which he had donated to the town. A tall but simple granite column, which Alexander Munro himself had purchased and imported from Scotland, was erected in his memory, to his wife Sophia, who died later in the same year and to the family of his adopted daughter Harriet. The inscription on the memorial states: 'After life's fitful fever, they sleep well'. Was the reference to 'life's fitful fever' an allusion to their conviction and transportation?"

One cannot help but wonder what would have happened to Alexander Munro and so many others like him if they had not been transported to Australia and given a chance that they would never have had in their native Scotland.

## The Shoalhaven Munros

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

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

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

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

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

William Munro came from the Shoalhaven by sailing ship to Iluka at the mouth of the Clarence River in April 1866 at the age of 19. He hired an aborigine and walked along the beach to Iron Gates at the entrance of the Evans River where he swam across and went on to Ballina. He worked at various jobs all round Ballina and was

supposed to have built the first Presbyterian Church there. He worked on the road to Lismore up the Ballina Cutting and in tin mines at Soferino and Stanthorpe. He selected land at Steve King's Plain and married Emmie de Sonter at Ballina in 1877. Emmie was born in 1852 in Parramatta, Sydney.

Three successive floods made William look for higher ground. While earlier working on the telegraph line from Lismore to the Tweed River out through Dunoon and over the Nightcap Range, he had noted the good country, so he and his Uncle, Sandy McPherson, took up land there. William selected 150 acres and subsequently took up 309 acres. When other members of the Munro family came up from the Shoalhaven, he handed over the Steve King's Plain land to Alex (*I assume that was his brother*) and moved to Dunoon in 1889. William went ahead of his family and erected a four-roomed slab and shingle house on the property before his wife and 8 children arrived. Three more children were born there.

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

Leaving Dunoon before dawn, Emmie would go into Lismore (16 kms) in a spring cart, taking honey, eggs, butter, etc to help supplement the income of the farm. In those days butter was not weighed and wrapped in a factory but was sold over the counter in pats in weights to suit the customer. William always kept 80 acres of standing timber and from this he supplied, by his own axemanship, palings by the thousands to enclose his cultivation, calf pens, etc. from the ravages of bush animals. Dingoes would come right inside - one time they got away with a batch of dough that had been left by the fire to rise.

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

William was born in 1847 and died in 1934

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

## THE JR MUNRO FAMILY GROUP

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

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

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

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

### **James Robertson Munro.**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Donald Munro & Catherine MacGillivray**

*This is a brief history of one of our Skye Munro families as told by one of our members, Lily Sims.*

Donald Munro & Catherine MacGillivray arrived in Port Melbourne on board the "Hercules" on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1853. With them were their five children, Donald MacGillivray aged 10, Allan 8, Mary 4, another Donald 1 and Alexander infant. A Mr Marr of Timboon employed them as shepherd & hut keeper. Family folklore has it that they travelled to Timboon by bullock wagon where they were able to acclimatise themselves to life in Australia, so different from whence they had come.

They lived & worked there for a few years and then moved to Mortlake Victoria where they had acquired a property of their own. Sadly, after only 12 years in Australia, Donald died of pneumonia before their twelfth child was born. By this time their eldest child Donald MacGillivray Munro was 23, Allan 21 and Mary 16. The family farmed there for a few years and then moved on up to Laen in the Wimmera. From there, Catherine and the 4 youngest sons and 3 daughters moved to NSW. In the next 10 to 15 years they were mostly all married.

My Grandmother Mary married Hugh MacDonald in 1872 and they had twelve children – 6 boys & 6 girls. The eldest was my father, Norman, born in 1873. Mary's Brother Allan married Margaret MacBeth & also had 12 children, 9 boys and 3 girls. They nearly all stayed in Victoria as did the eldest Donald and Margaret, who married Simon MacDonald. The second Donald did not marry, nor did Flora, the youngest daughter.

Of the rest of the family, Catherine & Christine married and stayed in NSW; Alexander, his wife Jessie MacRae & children moved to Bunbury, WA and they had 7 children. Lachlan married Elizabeth Cameron and also moved to Bunbury; Duncan married Margaret Calow and moved to Perth WA. Recently I had a photo & newspaper cutting sent to me from WA of "Mopsy" Isabel Munro who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in April 2003.

Catherine (MacGillivray) Munro died at Tenterfield in 1917 aged 93. When my daughter and I visited Skye in 1900, we took photos of the croft that they had left in 1852. She must have been a dear hardy soul to have experienced and lived through so many sad experiences in her life from her infant days on. A story told to me by my grandmother (who lived to be four months short of 100) was that in the early days they had frequent visits from the aborigines with whom they were on good terms. One mother brought in her young baby and laid it in the crib near great grandmother's baby and stood back, clapped her hands and laughed.

My great grandmother had nine grandsons and daughters serving overseas – in Gallipoli, Egypt & France during WW1. Three paid the Supreme Sacrifice. My father, Norman aged 42 sailed away in May 1915 leaving my mother with three young children aged from two to six. Fortunately he returned in 1919 but suffered from the effect of the gas in later life.

Of our grandparents fifty grandchildren, forty of us were reared on Mallee farms in Victoria and have taken our place in the world in many different walks of life.

## Rescue of MV Island Gas from Saumarez Reef

*Our feature stories are usually set in the past but this one by Jim Hyslop from Queensland is set in the time of living memory. Jim tells a fascinating true story that highlights the dangers faced by these courageous men.*

Ship towing in Australia has always been a hazardous business as it is anywhere but made more dangerous as shipowners are reluctant to keep a tug on station dedicated solely to salvage work. This means that the tugs available for salvage work are also used for harbour work. They do not carry the specialised equipment needed nor do they carry enough fuel, stores and crew. However when a ship is in distress and calls for aid then it is sometimes necessary to use these tugs to go to its aid.

Some years ago now, in the early eighties, I was a tugmaster at Gladstone in Queensland. The weather was bad and getting worse. There was a cyclone somewhere off the coast to which the weather office had given the name Chloe. A message came through to our agent that a small coastal gas tanker had broken down and was sheltering behind Saumarez Reef and calling for a tug to help her get into a sheltered port. Saumarez is one of the outer reefs and is about 150 miles from Gladstone. I was ordered to go to the aid of the stricken ship and to bring her back to Gladstone if possible.

I hastily made arrangements to pick up extra crew, stores and fuel and this being done, set out for the outer reef a few hours after receiving the distress call. As soon as we cleared Gladstone harbour we knew we were in for a very uncomfortable time. The weather was horrific and continued to get worse as we ploughed towards the stricken vessel. The normal procedure in bad weather is to slow down to allow the ship ride the seas easier but in this case time was of the essence. I had to keep the tug going at full speed, as the situation of the distressed ship was becoming desperate due to worsening weather and her proximity to the dangerous coral reef.

On the morning of the day after we left port the huge seas were breaking over the tug and about eleven in the morning a particularly large wave smashed up over the bow. The noise as it struck the front of the bridge was like a great clap of thunder and the 500 ton tug stopped in its tracks as if a giant hand was pushing against it. For a few seconds it was as if time was standing still and then the powerful tug engine overcame the elements and the tug tore down into the trough of the next big wave. It has always intrigued me to see the damage that can be caused by water on the move. In this case the bridge front which was constructed of ½ inch steel plates had assumed a concave shape instead its usual convex appearance.

Reports from the ship by radio indicated their anxiety so I pushed on as hard as the weather would allow and about dusk I made out through the gloom of the foul night the stark shape of a ship high and dry on the reef. This was an American Liberty ship which had been wrecked on this reef many years before and which provided a good landmark. I cautiously skirted the reef and found the entrance using radar and soon came up on the tanker – it was fully loaded and deep in the water, with an anchor down and perilously close to the dangerous coral. Even inside the reef the seas were frighteningly high and the noise from the waves crashing on the coral close by did nothing for our peace of mind. The cyclone was by now very close and we were receiving its full effect.

Then began a very long night. Both the tug and the ship were rising and falling at least 20 feet. Sometimes I found myself looking down on the tanker and sometimes I was looking up at her. I had to get a line to the ship's bow. The ship had no power to their windlass so this meant they had to pull in the line by hand. Time and again I manoeuvred close to the ship's bow for my crew, working up to their waists in water, to pass a light line to the ship only to find myself flung away from the bow by heavy seas. The hours passed without success. Attempt after attempt failed. Somewhere in the middle of the night a great rogue wave roared up over the tug and filled the wheelhouse. The water poured out through the open doors and then SILENCE! The main switchboard had shorted out and the engine had stopped. Thank God for ships' engineers – they surely are a special breed! It seemed like my heart had stopped with the engine and I am sure I aged several years in those few moments. The tug was crashing back quickly to the bow of the ship when suddenly there was a roar as our engine came back to life and lights re-appeared. The quick action of the Chief Engineer in restarting the engine prevented a disaster and proved once again the great value of teamwork.

Many hours later we had a line to the ship. I would normally have used a 5 inch circumference wire to connect to the bow of the tanker but the crew just could not raise it so I passed a 7 inch polypropylene rope. During the operation of passing the big rope the line drifted back towards the stern of the tanker and when I took up the slack I found that the stern of the ship was swinging round towards me. With horror I realised that my towline had been caught round the propeller of the tanker. I had to get it free before I could start the tow, but how was I to do this?

The only way to clear it was to steam around the stern. If I steamed the wrong way around I would have two turns of rope around the prop. I decided to go from starboard to port around the tanker's stern and to my great relief as I took the weight on the port bow I saw the rope come free and lead out from the ship's bow, someone up there was watching over us.

The voyage home proved to be uncomfortable but uneventful. However, when we recovered our towline at the entrance to Gladstone harbour, I found that the polypropylene line, which was caught around the tanker's propeller, had been cut almost halfway through by the sharp edges of the prop. Hard to believe but we had towed the ship home on this damaged line without even knowing about it.

At least that was one less worry on the way back to port! *Jim Hyslop*

## Lydia Munro Our First Fleeter

*I had a letter from one of our Tasmanian members telling me that she was descended from two "First Fleeters," Lydia Munro & her husband Andrew Goodwin but that she did not know much about Lydia's parents or where they were from. I immediately searched the Internet and found that there was indeed quite a bit about them in Australia, mainly due to the efforts of Irene Schaffer and Thelma McKay and their book "Exiled Three Times Over!" I found exactly what I was looking for in a website for Ormiston House, a high class guesthouse in Strahan. As I always do in such a case, I emailed the owners, Mike Fry and Carolyn Nissen, who were only too happy for me to use the information on their website.*

*It is with great pride that Australians of today can trace their ancestral links to that of the First or Second Fleets. Not so in Victorian times when there was a stigma associated with being descended from any convict - First Fleet or any 'chained arrival' for that matter. This was an attitude that prevailed until earlier this century when society in Australia realised the contribution that the convict system had made in the formation of this nation. We must remember that the transportation of petty criminals was a method by which the British legal system attempted to purge their communities of so called 'riff-raff'. In a class orientated society, such as it was, the commonwealth regarded these unfortunate, mainly poverty-stricken families, as being totally undesirable and to be 'got rid of.'*

*Initially the punishment was transportation but the up and coming wealthy landowners of the new colony could see the potential of free labour. The Government of the day could also see the building of infrastructure costing much less with the unpaid labour of the transported convicts. This was at a time when the prison system in England was overloaded and the prison hulks in the Thames at bursting point.*

So it was that two convicts, Andrew Goodwin and Lydia (Letitia) Munro became victims of the oppressive judicial system and embarked on a journey that would culminate in a marriage to the wealthiest and most affluent man on the West Coast of Tasmania. Lydia was born in 1767 in London. Her parents were Alexander Monro and Sarah?? All we know about them is that they were born before 1751. We are fortunate that these two 'First Fleeters' have been the subject of much historical research by Irene Schaffer and Thelma McKay in their book "Exiled Three Times Over!"

On 7<sup>th</sup> July 1784, Andrew Goodwin and William Butler were tried at the Old Bailey for the theft of £200 worth of lead from a building. They were sentenced to transportation for seven years with Andrew being held on the prison hulk Censor until transportation three years later on 4th February 1787, aboard the Scarborough bound for Botany Bay.

Lydia Munro, in company with Ann Forbes, was convicted of stealing ten yards of printed cotton, valued at 20 shillings and both were sentenced to be hanged. There was a reprieve and the sentence was commuted to seven years transportation aboard the Prince of Wales. After arrival in the new land (Tasmania) a daughter, Mary, was born to Lydia and baptised on the 19th July 1789. Andrew Goodwin was named as the father and they were married in 1790. Two days after their marriage they were sent to Norfolk Island aboard the Sirius. (*Ed's note: Like me, you may be wondering how baby Mary was possible when Lydia & Andrew sailed on different ships. I checked and found that the Fleet had arrived first at Botany Bay where they stayed for only about a week and then sailed for Port Jackson where they landed on January 26, 1788, a year before Mary was born. I assume that this is where Lydia & Andrew met before landing in Tasmania. You Australian history buffs will have already worked that out!*)

After a productive period on Norfolk Island their term had expired and they left for Port Jackson. Lydia went first with baby son John in November 1794 and Andrew followed with their two daughters Mary and Sarah in March 1795. But



within a short period of time they returned to Norfolk Island as free settlers and by 1807 Andrew had a farm valued at £80 with a house and 23 acres. Despite this productivity they once again moved when the authorities enforced five evacuations from Norfolk Island to the infant penal colony on the banks of the Derwent River.

The Goodwin family arrived in Van Dieman's Land aboard the Porpoise on 17th January 1808 with seven of their children. Their last daughter Letitia was born in Tasmania. Andrew died in 1835 and Lydia in 1856 and they were both buried at St. David's Cemetery, Hobart Town.

Sarah Goodwin married Benjamin Briscoe in 1808 at the age of 16. Benjamin had arrived as a convict on the Calcutta in 1804 and in 1807 had received 300 lashes for absconding from the colony. After being granted land at Clarence Plains, Benjamin was accidentally drowned in 1819. The next year Sarah married Mark Ashby Bunker, a convict who was transported for sheep stealing and who arrived on the Castlereagh in 1818.

In 1828, at the age of 35, Sarah applied for the land granted to her late husband. Sarah and Mark had eight children. Their seventh born was Hannah Amelia on 3rd April 1833 at Clarence Plains. Hannah married William Lewis in April 1851 at Colebrook, Tasmania. They had ten children, the seventh born being Mary Alice who with other members of her family moved to Strahan. Frederick Ormiston Henry and Mary Alice Lewis were married at Port Sorrell in 1887.

Frederick Ormiston or FO as he was known, was a trader. His first shop was a tent, which was quickly replaced by a timber shack. The fledgling township of Strahan grew up around his store and he began trading with the miners, prospectors and new townsmen. His trading brought him shares in a mine & he eventually became the biggest shareholder in the Mt Lyell mine and when the shares reached over £16, he sold out and became one of the most affluent men on the West Coast of Tasmania.

By this stage F.O. had stores scattered around the mining areas of the West Coast at Strahan, Queenstown, Gormanston, Linda and Pillinger at Kelly's Basin. Times may have been tough in the early days but F.O. had established himself as the most successful businessman in the area. Following the sale of his Mt Lyell shares in 1897, Frederick Ormiston Henry set about building a fine mansion, "Ormiston House," today regarded as one of Australia's finest examples of Federation architecture.

One can only wonder what convicts Lydia & Andrew would have thought had they known their great grand daughter would marry the man who was to become one of the richest and successful men in Tasmania.

## From the Munros of Stuckghoy & Barnaline to Sawmillers & Fat Lamb Producers

*This story is compiled from extracts of an article by J.M.M & R.W.M. in the Clan Munro Magazine No 8, p 41-46 and from newspaper cuttings sent to me by **Barry Munro** from Hodgsonvale in Queensland. The extracts are reproduced by courtesy of The Clan Munro in Scotland: and in Toowoomba - The Chronicle, Geoff Harding and Peter Krammerer*

Barry can trace his family tree to Donald Munro of Stuckghoy, the first of that line in Argyle. No date of birth but he was a member of an assize at Inveraray in 1664 when his name appears in the record as "Donald McNorovich." The Munros in Argyle were formerly called by that name, which is supposedly a corruption of the Gaelic form of the name Mac an Rothaich. These Munros were supporters of the Covenanter Earls of Argyle as can be seen from the following story.

The Earl of Argyle was convicted of treason in 1682 and escaped to Holland. He invaded Scotland in the following year and was captured and executed in 1665. Tradition tells that while the Argyle estates were forfeited, Archibald the young Earl stayed with Munro of Stuckghoy and to avoid a search party of Athollmen who came to Glenshira, he hid nearby in a spot called "Leabaidh-an-Iarla." When the place was discovered, the Earl went to the Munro's house, a long "black house" situated in the bottom of the glen, some way below the rock. Munro put on Argyle's cloak and led away the pursuers, later accompanying him in his wanderings in the mountains.

A few generations later, we come to the brothers Archibald and Duncan Munro who came to Australia from Argyle in 1871. They were the sons of Duncan Munro (VIII) of Barnaline and when their brother Hugh (IX) died in

1901, Archibald succeeded to the entailed estate to become Archibald (X) but after obtaining approval for an instrument of disentail, he sold the lands of Barnaline & Altacaberry in 1902.

The brothers set up their first Geham "Argyle" timber mill on the banks of Geham Creek in 1874 and used bullock teams to haul the timber to the mill on a tramway they built using wooden rails. In 1898 they extended their tramway to Hampton and replaced the wooden rails with steel rails purchased second hand from the Queensland Railways.

In 1903, they decided to introduce steam locomotives and Duncan Munro went to the USA where he purchased a Shay engine made by the Lima Locomotive Company in Ohio. The engine was shipped to Australia in pieces and reassembled at the Perseverance Mill by local blacksmith Ernie Shum and mill worker Olaf Olsen. So satisfactory was this locomotive that they bought a second one and together they worked the line from the forests to Hampton for almost 30 years.

By the turn of the century a self contained little township had grown up around Munro's mill, with about 20 small mill houses for the employees – timbergetters and bullockies (the company owned 8 teams) and the millworkers. Munro's store supplied most of their needs and there was a butcher's shop.

In 1901 a school was opened with 21 children in the mill grounds. As there was already a Perseverance Creek School some 5 miles away, a new name had to be found for the school. When the district inspector had first come to the area to report on the need for the school, he had noted "beautiful palms" along the creek, so "Palm Tree" was the name the name adopted for the school and then for the locality.

Today, Palm Tree presents a very different picture. In 1935 the mill closed and was dismantled along with the railway. The mill houses were old and sold for removal and today, a handful of farming properties nestle in the cleared areas against a backdrop of forest covered hills. The school, which closed in 1960, has also vanished and the row of pine trees remains to show where it once stood. What have survived are the splendid palm trees that still flourish just as they did when the first timbergetters came into the district more than 100 years ago.

Almost 40 years later, in 1974, the remains of the old locomotives were taken to the Illawarra Light Railway Museum near Sydney where one has been restored.

But what of Archibald & Duncan?

In 1894, at the age of 59, Archibald married Catherine Black in 1894. He was very active in the community and was Mayor of Toowoomba in 1894. He was also a council alderman for eight years between 1890 and 1900. Archibald retired from his sawmilling business in 1888 and died in Toowoomba in 1912 at the age of 78.

Duncan married Matilda Crawford on August 25, 1870 and they had 10 children. In 1881, he built the imposing "Argyle" homestead and the family lived there for 33 years. It is thought that the house with its steep pitched roof is based on Canadian lines, probably as a result of his trips overseas. Duncan built two other houses exhibiting this Canadian influence – "Bunya" and "Haddington" in Toowoomba. Duncan was born in 1844 died in 1926

Barry Munro's grandfather was William, one of Duncan's sons. His father, KC (Pat) Munro was a fat lamb producer with his brother Alan at Barnaline until the property was split in two. Pat's new property was called Dalkeith Cambooya just outside Toowoomba and to say that he was a successful fat lamb producer would be an understatement. Just look at the following –

Brisbane - 13 championships, 2 reserve championships & 7 champion carcasses: Smithfield London - 4 championships. Toowoomba - 8 championships & 2 champion carcasses: Pittsworth & Dalby - 1 championship in each: and Warwick - 1 champion carcass.

Pat also judged fat lambs and sheep at the shows.

Now that is a record to write home about!

## Darby Munro

*When I came to Australia in 1963 and being a Munro, I was often asked if I was any relation to Darby Munro. Of course I did not know who they were talking about but soon found out that Darby was one of Australia's greatest jockeys. He is a natural for the newsletter so started looking for anything I could find about him. Luckily, I found a letter on our website from Lizzi Bell who is descended from that family and she very kindly sent me the following article thus saving me a lot of work.*

Darby Munro's Scottish roots can be found in a small coastal village of Golspie in Golspie Parish, Sutherland. Culmaily was the ancient name for the parish and in the 1790s it measured 6 miles long by 6 miles at its widest point, and had a population of 1,700. Earl Gower and Lady Sutherland owned most of the land.

When Darby's great grandfather John MUNRO was born in Golspie around 1795 the Highland clearances had begun. Over the next 100 years the Highland estates were systematically cleared of crofters and cattle to make way for sheep, which gave a better return. Golspie Village the Duchess of Sutherland made, including the removal of her small tenants and their scattered groups of old "black houses" from the higher spots were left to fend for themselves. Thus Golspie village came into being around 1800 due to changes around Golspie to the seashore, where they began to develop with retail shops etc.

In this climate John, a shoemaker, married Eliza children, all born on the Duke of Sutherland's estate at Golspie village. They were Catharine 1816-1895, John 1825, Jean 1828, Joseph 1829-1864, and Jane 1833-1903.



SUTHERLAND. John and Eliza had seven Drummuie, a couple of miles south west of 1820-1896, Hugh 1822-1876, James

Catharine remained a spinster and lived at Drummuie until her death in 1895. John became a shoemaker in Golspie village, married Ann SUTHERLAND and produced six children. Hugh (Darby's grandfather) married Christina Mclean in 1852 and followed his brother Joseph to Victoria. Jane married a stonemason, Gilbert MITCHELL and stayed in Golspie, with their five children. Of James and Jean nothing further is known.

Death records for Sutherland began in 1855. Marriage records have many gaps and Golspie births only recorded the father's name. John snr died in 1851. He and his wife Eliza are buried in St Andrews churchyard Golspie with daughter Catharine. A substantial headstone marks their grave.

In 1846 a great potato blight hit Scotland forcing thousands to move to the industrial cities. Emigration grew to over 100,000 a year. In 1851 many Scots went to Victoria, among them were Darby's grandfather Hugh, his wife Christina, and baby John, who arrived in Victoria aboard the 'James Brown' in 1853. The family settled in Bourke Crescent Geelong, where Hugh worked as a shoemaker. Hugh and Christina had nine children. John 1852-1894, James 1854, Flora 1855, Eliza 1857-1866, Catherine 1859, Hugh 1861-1925, Joseph Daniel 1863-1926, Daniel Grant 1864, Charles 1866-1867.

Christina died in 1870 and was followed by her husband Hugh in 1876. Both are buried at Eastern Cemetery. Darby's father, Hugh, and his uncle Joseph Daniel, became jockeys and then horse trainers. By 1876, Hugh was employed by James Wilson at his St Albans stud Geelong. He went on to train Revenue, the winner of the 1901 Melbourne Cup and had Wakeful, a champion mare, which ran second in the 1903 Cup.

Hugh married Susan Dunn in 1898 and among their seven children were two boys destined to become famous jockeys, James Leslie Munro 1906-1974 and David Hugh (Darby) Munro 1913-1966. Around 1916 the family moved to Randwick in Sydney where James was indentured to his father. At age 15 James had his first ride in the Melbourne Cup. In 1923 he was second on Rivoli but won on Windbag in 1925 and Statesman in 1928. He also won the Sydney Cup on Prince Charles in 1922. In the 1920s he won many races in Sydney and Melbourne on outstanding horses including Phar Lap, Amounis and Valicare.

Increasing weight forced retirement in 1938. He became a trainer and died at Randwick in 1974 survived by his wife Florence and a daughter. Darby attended the Marist Brothers College in Randwick. At age ten he so impressed the punter Eric Connelly with the way he handled horses for his father Hugh, that he took him to Melbourne to help train his string of fifty horses. He became indentured to his father and won his first race at 14. In 1930 he won the Australian Jockey Club Challenge Stakes and Doncaster Handicap on Venetian Lady. In 1933 he won the AJC Derby and Victoria Racing Club Derby on Hall Mark. He won his first Melbourne Cup in 1934 on Peter Pan. He won

the Cup again in 1944 on Sirius and in 1946 on Russia. He also rode three Sydney Cup and one Brisbane Cup winners.

Punters had a love-hate relationship with him and nicknamed him 'The Demon Darb' but by 1939 he was recognised as the best jockey in Australia. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s he had many wins in Melbourne and Sydney, riding nine winners at the 1940 AJC Easter Carnival. After being disqualified for two years in 1948 he rode in California and France. Darby had a constant battle with his weight and retired in 1955 with a trainer's licence.

Darby was five foot two and had a swarthy complexion, which led many to incorrectly believe he was of Aboriginal extraction. He married three times and had two daughters by his second wife. In 1964 his left leg was amputated due to diabetes. He died in Sydney Hospital in 1966 from cerebral haemorrhage and is buried in Randwick Cemetery.

Many descendants of John MUNRO and Eliza SUTHERLAND are living in Australia. Their son Joseph's family is scattered mainly throughout Queensland and New South Wales whilst Hugh's descendants are still living around Geelong, Melbourne and in the High Country of Victoria.

*Ed's note: Darby's swarthy appearance is very easily explained. When the English fleet defeated the Spanish Armada, the ships fled north, round the top of Scotland, back down the west coast and past Ireland to try and make their way back to Spain. Many of ships were wrecked on the wild Scottish & Irish coasts and the Spaniards who survived, integrated with the local people and their dark genes live on. There are many dark skinned Scots and Irish.*

## 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"

*"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 Ardrross Hills, with Sir Hector Munro's dramatic replica of the gates of Negapatam crowning Cnoc Fyrish. 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 stragglng 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; be vies 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, Locheil'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**

## No Easy Journey

*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 McKeivitt 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!!!

## Grace Emily Munro

*We have had stories of the pioneer men of the Munro clan but at last I have found one of our lady pioneers who was their equal! This story is a combination of articles taken from the Internet together with some extracts from Jillian Oppenheimer's excellent book "Munro's Luck." Jillian is descended from Grace and Hugh Munro as is another of our members, Morna Scott and her family and there are a quite a few cousins out there as well - my thanks to Jillian for editing this story.*

Although not a household name, Grace Emily Munro was a women's activist and the founder and first president of the Country Women's Association.

Grace was the second daughter of George and Eliza Gordon of Gragin, Warialda and was born on the property in 1879. In 1898 she married Hugh Munro, a grazier from the Bingara district and eighteen years her senior. Hugh at that time was managing the Keera property and Grace's influence soon became apparent as she ordered new curtain materials, furniture, food and in time, tennis and cricket equipment and materials for the new tennis court. Under her influence Sundays, which had previously been devoted to church and bible reading, were livened up with cricket and tennis matches played by all the Keera families.

Grace was a strong and dynamic personality, just as determined and energetic as her husband. She had been brought up, with her six sisters and one brother, to ride, to shoot, to drive a buggy skilfully. Yet she could change from an active country life to a ladylike city lifestyle when the family visited Sydney to live in their city home, Kamilaroi in Darling Point Road. Throughout her life Grace moved between her city homes, which, at different times, included Wyaga in Bellevue Hill, Minarua and 14 Dalley Avenue in Vaucluse, two units in Macleay Regis, Potts Point and her country properties, Middle Brook Farm at Scone and Rhynie near Bundarra.

After her family was complete, Grace travelled throughout the Pacific and the East, including China, Japan and India. She also travelled to Britain and Europe and later in life to South Africa.

Going back to her earlier life, we find that Grace became increasingly aware of the difficulties of living conditions in rural Australia. Grace and Hugh had four children and, with the death of her youngest son in 1911, she was

determined to improve medical services in the bush. She trained as a sister of St John of Jerusalem and worked with the Red Cross during the First World War.

After the war, Grace lectured for the St John order and organised first aid classes in country areas. She became the first woman to serve on a hospital board in rural New South Wales.

The magazine, *Farmer and Settler*, examined conditions for country women in 1921 and in 1922, Grace organised a three day conference held during the week of the Royal Easter Show in Sydney. The CWA was formed at the conference, with Grace Munro as the first President. Non-sectarian and non-political, the association took its inspiration from the Women's Institutes established in Canada and Britain in the 1890's. Its aims were to improve living conditions and provide amenities and health care facilities for women and children in rural areas. After her appointment, Grace travelled extensively in New South Wales and Queensland forming new branches of the Association. She established the first CWA rest room in Bingara in 1924 and, in the following year, helped to found the first country baby health centre at Moree further to the west.

By 1923, there were sixty eight branches and seventeen Rest Rooms for mothers and children in country towns. The Association appointed bush nurses and established seaside homes at Coffs Harbour and Dee Why in New South Wales, where mothers with their children could escape to the coast for a change from the sometimes-harsh inland climate. Grace campaigned actively for maternity wards in hospitals and separate railway carriages for mothers and children, badgering and cajoling Cabinet ministers to consider women in all forms of government planning. By 1926, when Grace stepped down from the presidency, the CWA had a membership of 4,500 in 100 branches.

Awarded the MBE in 1935, Grace Munro died in Sydney on 23 July 1964, nearly thirty years later. By that time she had seen the CWA spread throughout all States of Australia and into Papua New Guinea, with branches in cities as well as country districts

## **William and Mary Anne Munro**

*This is the story of William and Mary Anne Munro as remembered by their grandson Charlie Munro and granddaughters Jean Carrington, Mabel Morgan and Flo Staunton and updated from existing records by Cynthia Mooney.*

William and Mary Anne Munro were married in Lochie Luff on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 1875 just before coming to Australia. They departed London soon after, for a journey that was to take them 5 months. They arrived in Rockhampton on the ship "Sepia", on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 1875. The ship's Captain was a Munro and there was a William Munro who was very prominent in the business community, in Rockhampton when they arrived. This William Munro was one of the trio of businessmen who won the tender to construct the first bridge over the Fitzroy, the abutments for which were hewn by Grandfather William. We don't know if this is purely coincidence, or whether the ship and/or the destination were chosen because of some connection.

Grandma was a great singer. She sang on the ship coming over, raising funds to add to what we presume were meagre resources. She won a singing competition held on board and the prize was 10 shillings – a considerable sum at the time. A lovely singing voice, or at least a love of music has been passed down the generations. Grandma was still singing beautifully up to the time she passed away.

Grandma Mary Ann has said that when they arrived, the only way across the Fitzroy River was by jumping from stone to stone at low tide. Having said that, research would indicate that there was a punt or barge that crossed the Fitzroy River in operation during the years our Munro's lived in Rockhampton. However, there was a toll for everyone except school children to cross on the barge. So maybe Grandma meant that there was no "free" way to cross the river at that time. Could this have been her Scots blood showing through?

The township was mainly timber and there was no work at that time for a stonemason but a Mr William Black gave William work at the lime kilns at Glenmore and he worked there for 6 months. For the following 12 months, he worked on the bridge at Alligator Creek, Yaamba. Then a bridge over the Fitzroy was begun, so he and another man, a Mr Kennedy hewed the stone for the abutments. After that, he got similar work on the construction of the North Street Goal, which at that time was a mile from the town.

By the time his younger brother John had joined them from Scotland arriving on the ship "Strathern", on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1876, William was working on the construction of the western railway. John joined him, but sadly he was killed in an accident at Comet (6/11/1878), and William was injured so badly that he spent the next 3 months in hospital. In spite of these events, they must have written favourably about their new home for it appears that the rest of the family emigrated as well. In 1881, Alexander and Isabella Munro, with their children Ann, Catherine and Isabella, along with Alexander and Margery Findlay (Mary Ann's parents), Alexander, Duncan and James (her brothers), with Jessie, and a child Margaret Findlay, all came out to Rockhampton on the "Famenoth". The "Famenoth" berthed in Rockhampton on 30/7/1881. We presume they then went on to Emerald as Alexander, William's father, died there on 6/4/1909 and Isabella, his mother, died in Rockhampton on 23/3/1916. Alexander Findlay, Mary Ann's father, died in Springsure, aged 76 on 2/7/1908 and her mother, Margery, in Emerald in 1887. It seems that the Ann, recorded as an immigrant on the ship "Famenoth" is thereafter known as Mary Ann, went on to marry a Hargreaves. Mary Ann, the daughter of William and Mary Ann married a Kirby. Isabella, the sister of the immigrant William, married a Fred Walker, and they lived in Maryborough.

When he recovered from his accident, William returned to working on the construction of the Western Line and was put on "light duties" – shovelling coal! He continued working with the railway until it reached Emerald. His wife joined him there; he was the fireman and she was a passenger on the first train to cross the Nogoa River. Grandfather, with a mate, had to work on the train to Bluff, change trains to return on the Emerald train, so that the whole family was on the first passenger train into Emerald.

By this time, they had two children, Isabella Marjeri (born 14/10/1875) and Alexander (born 8/8/1878). Sadly, Isabella Marjeri died on 15/10/1881, so when William and Mary Anne's next child was a girl, born 3/1/1882, she was also named Isabella Marjery. She is believed to have been the second white child born in Emerald. She is also believed to be the first born to a resident, the other child being born to drovers moving through. They went on to have Jane, William (born 11/9/1886 and died 15/10/1888) Mary Anne, William (the second), John and Lillie Bethel. All these children were born and raised in Emerald.

In the Nogoa River, the area known as "the Big Hole" was where the railway put their large steam engine, to pump water for the trains. Grandfather William was offered the job of running the engines for the pumps as he had a steam ticket but told the Railways that he wanted to continue on west with the rail line. He was given the job of pumper as a "temporary" measure until a suitable replacement could be found. He retired from his position of pumper about forty years later! Some time after he retired, he and his wife moved to Park Avenue, Rockhampton. Later, they returned to Gindie and lived with their daughter Mabel Daniels, until their deaths - hers in 1935, and his in 1941.

Grandfather William was always on good terms with the aboriginals in the area, and at that time there were at least three tribes based around what became the township of Emerald. He was in the habit of allowing the men to visit him at the pump station, even allowing them inside. Considering the heat generated by the big pumps, he was particularly favoured with their company in winter. It is believed that he was the only one who was this friendly with the natives, and no one else would allow them close, let alone inside the pump house. It was probably just as well that he was on such good terms with them, as his duties required him to walk a couple of kilometres from home to the pump in the river each day. This walk was usually through grass higher than he was.

At one time, when he was relieving another pumper at some other station, there was a relief pumper filling in for him in Emerald. This man evidently didn't have such a good relationship with the aboriginals in the area. On returning to his own pump duties, William was walking along early one morning, in this very high dense grass, when something caught his attention and he turned sharply around. Behind him, about to clobber him with a nulla nulla was a native man of the area. On realising it was Grandfather, the native apologised and indicated that he thought he was the relieving pumper. As the nulla nullas of the time were studded with things like rusty nails and pieces of broken glass, there is a good chance that the relieving man just escaped some fatal attention from the locals.

There is another yarn involving natives in the area. At another time, the local police had had enough from the local natives and were going to pull them into line. During the day, they told the whites not to worry if they heard some shooting down river at the Blacks camp, as the police were going to shoot over the camp to scare them. Grandma acted as the local midwife to a lot of confinements but for her own, Grandfather William stepped into the breach. Grandma went into labour this day (with Mary Ann) and Grandfather was engaged in the preparations for delivery. Later that evening, when he was in the kitchen, he heard some noise and on investigating, found a young black woman, in labour, under their table. She had been in the camp when the police were shooting and fear had brought on her labour, but she was too afraid to stay in camp and have the native women attend her. On this occasion, Grandfather delivered two babies. Many years later, the native baby who was born that night, spied Grandma Mary Ann with her daughter Jean, sitting on the front steps of Jean's house (near what is now the Plaza



Shopping Centre) and made herself known by asking "You no remember me, Missy Munro? How old is your Mary Ann? I be same age your Mary Ann".

At one stage, Grandfather William and a mate took up a large parcel of land, south/east of Emerald towards Yamala. It would appear they took up the land simply by right of use at the time, with no deeds and no improvements done. They ran cattle, which they'd muster once or twice a year and bring into Emerald. They'd brand the cleanskins and send all the fats off to Lakes Creek. What was left were taken back across the river and let go. All the cattle would be back along Sandhurst Creek in no time. About 1901, all this land was surveyed into 2,500 acre blocks and then, in a drought in 1902, all the water dried up. With no way of getting water to their stock, all the stock died and that put an end to Grandfather's grazing exploits.

Grandfather William continued to be "the pumper" and Grandmother Mary Ann was midwife to many, delivering all but one of her daughter Mabel's children. They continued to live in Emerald and raise their family. Though they may not have been a very dramatic family, nor particularly successful if measured in monetary terms, they did raise a large, close family of good citizens and appear to have lived a life of peace and respect. That is no mean epitaph for anyone.

## Illawambra

*This is a short history of Illawambra, the former family property of Colin and Finlay Munro.*

Illawambra was one of the original farms in the Cobargo area on the South coast on New South Wales and was first settled around middle last century by a gentleman named Whitehead. About 1900 it was acquired by Colin & Jock's Gt Gt Grandfather, Magnus Jackson Peden, an original member of the Sydney Stock Exchange who and acquired large parcels of land in the Bega area. Peden Street in Bega is named after him. The main farm house on Illawambra dates to about 1860 and is constructed of vertical slabs hand hewn from hardwood grown on the property. The oldest of the farm outbuildings, a two-story feed shed, was constructed in a similar manner and it also has a hewn slab upper floor.

The original dairy of pole construction with a flagstone floor was demolished in the 1940's and a concrete walk-through dairy built on the same site. Originally cheese was made and transported to Sydney but later, when the Cobargo Co-operative was formed, cream was separated and sent by cart to Cobargo where butter was produced for the Sydney Market. Pigs became the main sideline on Illawambra and these were also shipped to Sydney from Bermagui. Concrete silos and feed sheds were built to enhance this sideline.

In the twenties the property passed to Magnus's son, Hon Sir John Peden K.C.M.G., K.C., Challis Professor of Law & Dean of the Faculty of Law, Sydney University. He was also MLC President of the Legislative Council NSW. There is a bust of him in Macquarie Street on a wooden plinth taken from Illawambra. Sir John loved Illawambra and was a very modest man and despite his honours and positions, when travelling in Australia and overseas and asked to sign visitors' books, simply put J B Peden Farmer Cobargo NSW. The Pedens did not farm the property but had a series of share farmers managing Illawambra. With the advent of the motor vehicle Sir John added the holiday cottage, which he called Bunnerong. Previously the Pedens had travelled by steamer to Bermagui and thence to Cobargo and Illawambra.

A local, Bill Henry was employed to build the cottage. Bill was already living at Illawambra in some quarters that he had built which went on to become the shearers' quarters and now the bunkhouse. His job was to look after the Peden interests and care for the walnut trees and other plantings. More than sixty 80 year old walnut trees are still on the property today. Sir John had a close connection with the Department of Agriculture so apart from a range of exotic cypresses, experiments were done on pasture. Illawambra is the first farm on the south coast to plant Kikuyu and it is from here that other farms took their cuttings.

With the death of Sir John Peden the farm passed to his daughters Margaret and Barbara who continued to run it as a share farm (dairy) bringing their children down to Bunnerong Cottage during school holidays. Interestingly, Margaret was captain of the first ladies cricket team to tour overseas and Barbara was also a member. There is a slab of concrete on the farm's old tennis court on which they used to practice.

Both Margaret and Barbara had distinguished sons. Margaret's son John Peden became the youngest Professor of Law in Australian history at the University of NSW, sadly he died suddenly at the age of 48. Barbara's eldest son is Colin Munro and her other son is Finlay (Jock) who manages his family's medical practice at Narooma, north of Cobargo.

In 1980 the farm was sold to Jim and Ruth Walker, friends of Colin, who operated a beef cattle enterprise up until 2001. They had printing interests and so a number of Croft Press books for collectors were printed at Illawambra. The Croft Press is represented in the rare book collections of the National and most State Libraries. The Press was one of the few letterpress printing operations functioning in Australia at the time. In 2002 the property sold to its present owners, Jenny and Paul Stock, who breed palomino warm blood horses.

*Footnote: Colin tells me that David Samuel Peden, the first of their family to own Illawambra, arrived in Sydney from Scotland in 1832 and opened a bookshop in Hunter Street. Sir John Peden's wife was the Gt Granddaughter of Ellen Amos who arrived on the East coast of Tasmania from Scotland in 1824. The Amos family still holds its original farming country at Swansea, Tasmania.*

## Colin Munro of Drynie

*Ailsa Stubbs-Brown from Queensland, Gail Munro from SA, Neil Munro from Queensland & Ken Besley from New South Wales are all descended from Colin Munro of Grenada, British West Indies and Inverness, Scotland. Refer to The Clan Munro Magazine No 22, pages 10 & 11 for reference to Colin Munro of Granada and his house in Inverness. It is interesting to note that Alpha Munro has taught the fiddle to students in the Highland House of Music which was the blue house owned by Colin Munro and described in the article. This is the first of three stories about that family.*

This is the story of Colin Munro III (1834-1918) whose father Colin Munro II (1798-1868) was a master mariner and the 4<sup>th</sup> child of Colin Munro I (1756-1823) of Granada & Inverness & his wife Sarah Chisholm, the daughter of Dr William Chisholm, Provost of Inverness. From now on we will refer to Colin Munro III as Munro to try & avoid confusion. Munro's father was born in Inverness & died in Mile End, London where Munro was born. His mother was Elizabeth Gilbert.

Not much is known about Munro's early life but we do know that he was well educated and very good with figures and could tot up three columns of figures (pounds, shillings & pence) simultaneously. The thought is that he must have worked as a ledger keeper or something similar after leaving school. The first we know of him is in 1850 on the barque Salsetta of 422 tons. On February 24, 1850, the Salsetta sailed from Falmouth for Port Jackson, arriving between July & September. The ship carried merchandise & general cargo, the Master was Colin Munro & carried 3 passengers – Mrs Munro, son & servant. That would have been an exciting trip for the 16 year old Munro

We now fast forward to 1854, the year that Munro arrived in Australia for the second time and although there is no record of his arrival on the official records it is reasonable to assume that he arrived on his father's ship, the Luma/Luna. Letters show that Munro was not on good terms with his father and the parting at dockside might have been a mutually satisfying event! The family believes that Munro gained his knowledge of the sugar industry in the British West Indies.

Once again there is a gap in our knowledge of Munro's doings but we do know that he returned to London in 1862 to marry Mary Neill Young, the daughter of the Rev John Young DD. Until 1867 Munro was involved in land deals mainly on the Albert River and in 1869 the Courier gave a full report about the sugar mill erected by Munro at Fisherfield on the Albert River near Brisbane. *"His mill was powered by horses who walked around a six meter circle to drive the machinery. The two horses were worked hard and the system was a copy of mills in Jamaica and the horse method was working well there. The mill was cheap, costing only £150.00 for machinery."*

While at Fisherfield, Munro took an interest in other matters around him and was active in the Presbyterian community. A report in the Queenslander of August 17, 1872 stated *"Members of the Presbyterian body followed up a move by the C of E to erect a church and Mr Colin Munro, who had taken a great interest in the matter, has met with success in obtaining contributions and it will not be long before the Presbyterian body will have a church of their own."* During their time at Fisherfield, their children were born; Colin, John Young, Charles Gilbert, William Albert, a boy who died, Eliza Waugh, Alexander Waugh, and Archibald Chisholm.

This first venture into sugar cane farming was not really successful and during this period he also lost £15,000.00 when his bank (probably the Bank of Glasgow) failed. The 1870s were troublesome times for the sugar industry in that area. Most of the varieties of cane chosen were unsuitable because of lack of rust resistance and frost intolerance and there were considerable losses due to both causes and it took time to obtain new, more

suitable varieties. All of this coupled with the rapidly advancing sugar technology seriously disadvantaged the less modern operators – and Munro would have fallen into this category. He saw the writing on the wall and by 1900 he had sold up and moved to Sheep Station Creek, a tributary of the Burdekin River, near Ayr in North Queensland.

Munro called his new property Drynie. He had about 200 acres under sugar cane and employed 18 Kanakas and 5 white men. Munro had used Kanakas at Fisherfield and also did so at Drynie but there he went one step further. Together with a few others, he formed the Townsville Shipping Co. Ltd. and operated a schooner, the Ceara, to recruit Kanaka labourers – “blackbirding.” Munro must have treated his Kanakas well for EW Docker in his book “The Blackbirders” says *again but were put off unpopular. William Brisbane district in work for such began to call off some George Raff of*



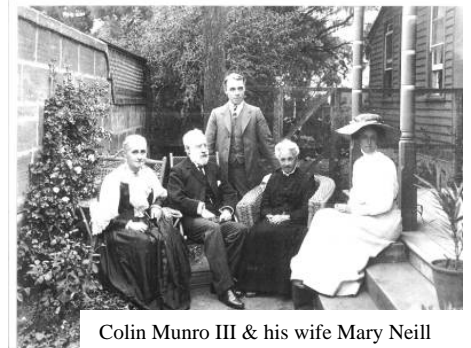
“Former labourers would genuinely wish to enlist because the Queensland destinations were so Matson F.A. of the May Queen, recruiting for the 1874, found one group of islanders willing to employers as Davy, Goodin and Munro as he names but emphatically not for Louis Hope or Caboolture.” When it came time for the Kanakas

to return to their island, most elected to stay at Drynie. The Kanakas were generally of a happy nature with a fondness for children. We will see an example of that another issue in AC Munro’s story.

At Drynie, Munro also ran cattle and established a factory that is thought to be the first to manufacture condensed milk in Australia. But things now took a turn for the worse – a bovine disease then called “redwater” struck the cattle. It was a problem caused by a blood stream parasite carried by the cattle tick that had been introduced on water buffalo brought in from the Netherland Indies. Cattle in Australia, having had no previous exposure, were entirely without immunity and the results were disastrous. By the time treatment and control measures had been devised, Munro’s herd had been reduced to one beast. The factory was taken over by Nestles.

At the same time, Australia suffered a horrendous depression. Before recovery, the Australian banking system was in tatters. Instead of the seventy odd, well established banks before the depression, there remained only about fourteen by 1900. Munro had weathered one bank failure but this was all too much. He struggled on until the end of 1900, when the mortgagees sold Drynie.

In 1901 the family dispersed. Archibald went to prospect for gold around Charters Towers. William, who had earlier fallen out with his father, had taken a job splitting railway sleepers and later became a sugar boiler. Later still, he was employed in a survey crew and studied surveying while so employed. Colin obtained a small farm at Cardwell but could not keep it. Elizabeth took employment as a governess and later trained as a nurse and Aunt Alice also was trained in nursing.



Colin Munro III & his wife Mary Neill Young in the centre with son William behind

Further south, McConnel of Cressbrook had subdivided his substantial holdings into farms suitable for dairying but of course a market for the dairy produce was essential. For this reason, he decided to set up a milk condensery and approached Munro to manage the project but it was not successful initially. Although Munro had succeeded in manufacturing condensed milk in North Queensland, here he encountered problems that were not within his experience and the early output was a failure. McConnel temporarily closed down the factory and sent Munro’s son William Albert overseas to learn the latest manufacturing techniques. On his return, he was appointed manager and, with the new methods he introduced, the venture was successful.

His grandson, Colin, from whose writings the above story has been condensed, had only vague childhood memories of Munro. *“My own recollection did not, could not, tally with the imaginary figure which loomed large in family legend. All I remember was, as a very small boy, no more than 5 years of age, if that, walking with my father up the front stairs of a house in Brisbane to be met at the head of the stairs by an old man, broad shouldered, white bearded and wearing a dark green velvet skull fitting cap, then known as a smoking cap. At that point my mental image fades. I cannot recall more.”*

Colin Munro III of Drynie died at his residence in Doris Street, West End, Brisbane on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1918 having lived a very full and eventful life as a pioneer of the Australian sugar and condensed milk industries. Colin Munro tells us that Munro’s son, William Albert has given us Munro’s most fitting epitaph when he said *“He was a clever man – he would try anything.”* That surely expresses the spirit of the men who set out to tame this new land – to make it a country for us, their descendants.

## Archibald Chisholm Munro

*This is the second in our series of pioneer Queensland families sent to me by Mrs Ailsa Stubbs-Brown. By coincidence, Inverness, the heritage listed house mentioned in the article and in which Ailsa was born, came up for auction at the end of May.*

Archibald Chisholm Munro was born 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1879, Brisbane and died on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1934 in Lowood. He was known to his friends and contemporaries as "A.C." and to family and intimates as "Roey". In this epistle shall be named "A.C."

A.C. was the eighth and youngest child of Colin III and wife Mary Neill Young. Records show older siblings born at Fisherfield, Albert River, from 1869 – 1871, and then in Brisbane 1873. It would seem that from 1873 – 1879 the family was living in Brisbane (elsewhere stated to be at Twine Street, Wickham Terrace). It is known that A.C.'s growing up mostly took place on his father's property, Drynie, near Home Hill in North Queensland, where his father had cattle and sugar interests. The property was largely staffed by Kanakas (South Sea Islanders). The Kanakas are generally people with a happy nature and a great fondness for children.

When quite a small boy A.C. was playing with matches and accidentally set the cane alight, resulting in considerable damage to, and loss of, cane. This happened at a time when Colin III was plagued by severe economic problems and could ill afford this significant loss. Thinking the Kanakas were responsible, Colin III flew into a rage sufficient to reignite the fire (he operated on a short fuse) and withdrew several weeks' of their tobacco ration! Not a soul gave away the secret, the punishment was accepted without a murmur, and the little chap escaped punishment.

So, one can imagine a happy childhood, growing up in what then was virgin country surrounded by affection on all sides, and with numerous siblings spaced over a fifteen years age difference; growing up to develop a lifelong love of the country, and, too, learning to be ready to turn his hand to most things. He made our beds, a table, a swing, and joy of joys a rowing boat. This latter was taken to the Brisbane River where it ran through Uncle Will's property, and moored there. It gave us much enjoyment – fishing from it, or skylarking! The boat was moored at a spot near our favourite picnic spot called "Maggie's Delight" - who Maggie was, nobody knows! For me, my father's crowning handiwork was a birthday present (sixth, I think) of a two-storey doll's house, made from a packing crate (guess it was left over from our return journey from Warnambool). I could enter and sit down in it!

He even turned his hand to architecture. In the late 1920's the Scottish community in Toogoolawah wished to build a Presbyterian church so A.C. set to work at night, with his set square and drafting board, drawing up plans for it. I remember watching until I was sent off to bed – and I also remember the stump capping ceremony which finally took place.

A.C.'s mother had grown up with a bevy of brothers and was educated along with them by private tutors as was the custom then amongst the gentry (for the boys anyway). Indeed they were educated up to university entrance standard – not necessarily very usual at that time. This gave her an abiding respect for education, but indulging it in pioneering times in North Queensland was not easy, it became largely a catch as catch can business. So a tutor would be employed, and when he moved on another was found to take his place. This led to some innovative adjustments to historical facts.

I think it must have been when A.C. was in his early teens his mother received a small annuity so she used this to send him to boarding school (Brisbane Boys Grammar School). This new turn of events found A.C. very homesick and after a relatively short stay he ran away and made his way home. Family legend also has it he ran away to Charters Towers where there was a new gold strike, but I do not know the timing of this. He did not make his fortune, and he always came home. A.C. was beginning to know the world around him, and what an exciting one it was in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I remember hearing A.C. tell of his favourite exploit, "swimming the Burdekin in flood".

Meantime Colin III's fortune was taking a downturn. He had been involved in working with milk products and to this end had joined forces with McConnell of Cressbrook. As mentioned in Newsletter No 11, Colin Munro III was the founder of the condensed milk industry in Queensland, the first factory being in Drynie in 1886. A few years later, the factory was shifted to Toogoolawah and was the foundation of the "Cressbrook" brand.

About 1901, Charles Sealy and Bruce Malcolm set up a milk condensery at Wilson's Plains (in the Fassifern district) producing condensed milk under the "Eagle" brand, and about 1905 this condensery was bought out by the

Cressbrook Dairy Company (involving McConnel and Colin III). A.C. was appointed manager at Wilson's Plains. While there, A.C. would undoubtedly have met the four daughters of local farmer Walter Brown whose property was close by Wilson's Plains. His eye lit upon Jessie Mabel (my mother) and they were married in Harrisville on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

At around this time, the Nestlé Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk Company was buying freehold land in the area and finally by 1909 had gained control of the Cressbrook Dairy Company.

In 1910 Nestlé closed the Wilson's Plains condensery, moving part of the plant to the Toogoolawah factory where Nestlé had bought out Colin III and McConnel. A.C. was transferred to Toogoolawah as manager. Thus was produced the well-known "Cressbrook" brand.

With the outbreak of war in 1914 Nestlé saw the implication of a need of milk in the trenches etc. so they set about the manufacture of condensed milk, cocoa, coffee etc. to send to the troops. About this time Uncle Will (brother to A.C.) had been sent overseas to study the manufacture of milk products etc. and was the manager of Nestlé at Dennington, Victoria.



Inverness

A.C. was popular with the staff and in the community generally. Toogoolawah reflected the prosperity that the Nestlé factory brought. A new manager's home was built and residence there was taken up in 1920 – it was called "Inverness" after the area in Scotland from which the family had come. In 1924 Uncle Will (still manager at Dennington, Victoria) and my father exchanged positions for twelve months. It really was to accommodate Uncle Will who wished to build his home on his property "Braemore" five miles outside Toogoolawah– with his eventual retirement in mind. I can remember the excitement of the trip to Victoria, and living there, and the difference in climate! And what the cousins had done to our toys when we returned! Soon after this

the economic downturn became obvious and finally the Great Depression was raging – unemployed men tramping through the district! Nestlé closed the factory. A.C. was offered the managership at Dennington, but he turned it down.

We left the district and A.C. decided to set up a milk product factory (owing to a bond with Nestlé not to produce condensed milk he was obliged to manufacture other products). He moved to Lowood where he established a butter factory. Working through the winter when milk and cream supply is not so great, it was absorbed by the butter production. In summer when the supply was considerably increased the surplus was used for the manufacture of concentrated milk from which ice cream was made.

Meantime my brother Colin IV finished school and joined his father in constructing the adjustments to the factory building. Later he studied and obtained his qualification for the making of concentrated milk. This became his area of expertise. Meantime my mother, sister Jean, and I moved to Brisbane, we rented a house in Stephen Street, Annerley, about fifty yards from the Junction Park State School. This was for the benefit of my education which was taking a battering!

The men lived very "rough". A.C. had gathered some of the Toogoolawah Nestlé staff – Charlie Peel, the engineer, and Jack and Bill Young – and what stalwarts they were, and as loyal as anyone could wish. They gave wonderful support – and that is an indication of A.C.'s character and personality too. My brother Neil who by now had obtained his pharmacy qualification and had fairly constant employment; joined forces and took over the office section and administration.

This was about 1931. My father was in his early fifties and working harder than most men at twenty. He was just beginning to make financial headway when a law requiring private enterprises pay for a license to operate was enacted. It is believed that at this time A.C. was the only independent manufacturer of butter in Queensland. A.C. considered this an infringement of his right to make a living.

A.C.'s health was beginning to falter under the strain of these last few years. About March/April 1934 he took time off and holidayed in North Queensland visiting his old haunts and family still living. Looking back it is clear to me he had warnings of heart failure and was having some enforced rest. Finally in September he developed pneumonia. There were no drugs then to combat the disease, and although he survived the crisis, his heart gave out and A.C. died on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1934.

A.C. was a fun loving man, devoted family man, had a tremendous sense of humour, with a great respect for the rights of the individual, and was a wonderful father.

*A. Stubbs-Brown 12-01-2006*

## Colin Munro

*This is the third in our stories of one of our Queensland Munro families. Colin, an extremely gifted man, was taken from us while much too young. This short story of his life is by his sister, Gail Munro, who lives in South Australia*

Colin was born at Townsville, Queensland in 1949 and travelled with his family to Tasmania in 1957 when his father, who worked for the radio branch in the PMG, was transferred. Colin graduated with honours in Economics from the University of Tasmania in 1971.

After completing his university studies, Colin won a position as an economist in the Defence Department of the Treasury in Canberra. On the election of the Labor Government under Gough Whitlam, Colin joined the newly created Department of Northern Development and was the youngest member of the team that went to Geneva in 1974 to re-negotiate the International Sugar Agreement. This was a very personal experience for him as his grandfather had been a cane farmer, a sugar chemist and the manager of the Queensland experimental sugar farm at Proserpine. His father and uncles were also brought up on a cane farm.

One of Colin's passions was sailing and in 1978 he resigned from the Public Service to study at the Plymouth Polytechnic in the United Kingdom for a Masters Degree in International Shipping, specialising in shipping economics. He graduated in 1980. The course attracted students from around the world, and most were master mariners or technical people involved with shipping. Colin was the first member of the course to have had experience in government and to hold an Economics degree.

After graduating from Plymouth Polytechnic, Colin moved to the Netherlands in 1981 to establish a company called Dynamar with a Dutch fellow student he had met on the course, Jan Meijer, a former master mariner. Originally, Dynamar provided credit and marketing reports for the maritime sector. However, a second arm of the company, Dynamar Consultancy, was formed and it specialised in the shipping, port, transport and logistics sectors of the maritime industry. The early years after the establishment of the company were a struggle financially for Colin and Jan but today the company has offices and agents located around the world.

Colin's major role in the company was as a shipping consultant and he travelled the world in this capacity, working with organisations such as Ministries of Transport, Port Authorities, the World Bank and the European Commission. He spent a considerable time in Russia consulting on the development of a grain terminal for the Port of St Petersburg. In 1995 he was one of the major contributors to the international shipping and intermodal masterclass for the Baltic States, Central and Eastern Europe, held in Tallinn, Estonia. Dynamar now has a permanent office in St Petersburg and Moscow.

Colin Munro died of cancer on 6th September 1996. He was 47 years old.

## John & Sarah Munro

*This family story was sent to me by Ian Munro who farms at Rankin's Springs in New South Wales and the photo shows three generations of the family. This family is related to Neil Munro the writer – I did a story about him in one of the earlier newsletters and in fact, Ian was part of a DNA testing program which showed that all of the Loch Fyne Munros have a common ancestor and it looks as if they are descended from a Munro survivor of the battle of Flodden. Duncan Beaton, A cousin of Ian, has traced the family back to 1650 in Argyle (and I am green with envy).*

This is a photo taken at "Auchenrea", Bundalong, Victoria on the Golden Wedding anniversary of John and Sarah Munro on August 8, 1928.

The family photograph includes all of the offspring of John and Sarah except for the families of two of the sons Archibald and Robert Alexander, who had both purchased land in the Rankin's Springs area.

John and Sarah Munro (nee McEwen) from the shores of Loch Fyne, Argyll-shire, Scotland boarded the 1089 ton "Alice Platt" at Liverpool on second of September 1878 and arrived in Melbourne 3 months later on 4th December, 1878. They had married on the 28th August, 1878 just days prior to their departure.

On their marriage certificate John has declared his occupation as a ship's carpenter and his father as a boat builder. Sarah McEwen's father Hugh is recorded as a Fisherman.



These pursuits are in keeping with the main industry of the Loch Fyne area at the time i.e. fishing. Having been raised in the Western Highlands, John and Sarah spoke Gaelic fluently. They settled on the Bundalong property they named "Auchenrea" where they farmed and John continued his trade as a carpenter in the local district. He built several churches including the first Presbyterian building at Bundalong.

They raised eight children, 5 boys and 3 girls - Jane Campbell, Annie Carmichael, John, Hugh, Archibald, Donald, Robert Alexander and Sarah Elizabeth. All of the immediate offspring were involved in their own properties mostly in the Bundalong, Yarrowonga, Mulwala, Corowa and Daysdale. As mentioned previously two sons moved further north to Rankin's Springs in NSW.

Sarah predeceased John by 12 years, having succumbed to pneumonia soon after the photo was taken on 13th October, 1928. John had the following Gaelic message inscribed on her headstone in the Yarrowonga cemetery- MO BHEANNACHD, LEAT, MOHR - which in English would read "My best/greatest blessings be with you."

Many of John and Sarah's descendants still farm in the areas mentioned and in new localities including Queensland and Northern NSW. Some have branched into other occupations including Science, Education and Medicine. Names of Families that can be traced to this photo include: - Williams, McPhail, McCurdy, Bower, Cameron, Skewes, Cameron, Nunn, Bowles, Ferguson, Lanyon, Rich, and Houston.

## Lieutenant Hugh Munro & Catherine Campbell

*We have had a few stories of the hardships our ancestors faced as they made their new life in Australia. This story is from Jack Kerwin from Nova Scotia in Canada and tells how Hugh Munro from Foulis and his wife, Catherine, emigrated to America only to find himself at the start of another rebellion. Like many others, Hugh remained loyal to the British government but this time the Munros were on the losing side and had to flee to Canada and start a new life there.*

This is a short sketch of Hugh Munro and his wife Catherine Campbell, who left Scotland in 1773 and finally located in Glengarry County, Ontario, in 1784.

Quite a large number of Scottish settlers migrated to America between 1760 and 1774 and settled in what was then Tryon County, now changed to Fulton County, north of the Mohawk Valley, New York State. Among the number was Hugh Munro of Foulis, Parish of Dingwall, Ross-shire, Scotland. He located some eight or ten miles northeast of the present town of Johnstown.

These Scottish settlers were influenced to come by Sir Wm. Johnson, who was at that time one of the most prominent men among the American Colonies and was one of the largest single landowners in what is now the U.S.A. He was the British Indian Commissioner for years and was able to exercise great influence among the different tribes and for this reason was granted extensive tracts of wild lands.

Hugh Munro was, as near as I can ascertain at this date, born about the year 1748 or 1750 and was quite a young man when he left Scotland. Before leaving he married Catherine Campbell and they left home with a number of their neighbours in the summer of 1773. After sailing for some time on the ocean, their ship was disabled in some way and they had to return to the west coast of Ireland, where he and his fellow passengers were obliged to remain for the winter and until the following year. The consequence was that they did not reach America until 1774. During their stay in Ireland, their eldest son, John, was born.

Sir Wm. Johnson died in 1774, about the time of the arrival of the new settlers. He was succeeded by his only son, Sir John Johnson, who was then a young man of about twenty-six.

When Hugh Munro and his family arrived at their new home, they found the country on the eve of a rebellion. The grievances between Great Britain and her American Colonies, which had steadily been growing for several years, had become most acute at that time. A great many of the settlers in that vicinity had recently come from Scotland and when the rebellion broke out, most of them were Loyal to the British Crown and in consequence of which they suffered severely, financially and otherwise, to such an extent, that they were obliged to abandon their homes and property and move to Canada. Several attempts were made to force the settlement to join the American cause, but failed. Colonel Dayton from the American army with a part of his regiment, was sent to capture Sir John but as he had warning of this, Sir John and his followers immediately took to the woods, by the way of the Sacondoga heading for Montreal.

After nineteen days of severe hardship the Baronet and his Partisans arrived in Montreal in a pitiable condition having encountered all of the suffering that it seemed possible for a man to endure.

Sir John was immediately commissioned as Colonel in the British Service and raised a command of two battalions composed of those who accompanied him in his flight and other American Loyalists who subsequently followed their example. The regiment was called "The King's Royal Regiment of New York" or "Royal Greens". In the month of January 1777 he found his way into New York and then in possession of the British forces. From that period he became not only one of the most active, but one of the bitterest foes of his own countrymen, of any who were engaged in that contest and repeatedly the scourge of his own neighbours. He was unquestionably a Loyalist from principle, else he would scarcely have hazarded, as he did, and ultimately lost domains larger and fairer, than probably ever belonged to a single proprietor in America, William Penn only, excepted."

Most of the people who settled along the front of the country and along the Black River formed part of those who left with Sir John Johnson and who enlisted in his first battalion a short time after their arrival. The McDonalds, Grants, Urquharts, Rosses, Munroes, McIntoshes and Camerons are names quite common. Hugh Munro served 6 ½ years in the first battalion and got his discharge as first Lieutenant when his regiment was disbanded in December 1783. The following year he settled on Lot 22, in the First Concession, south of the River Raisin, one mile south of Martintown, in the Township of Charlottenburg. Donald McKay was his neighbour on the west and William Urquhart on the east.



He remained there for some eighteen years, then moved to Lot 19 in the 9th Concession of Charlottenburg, where he lived with his family until his death on December 24th, 1821. His wife died in 1838 having lived seventeen years after her husband's death. Both were buried in St. Andrew's Church Cemetery, Williamstown. His son Murdock and his wife Isabella McKay are also buried in the same plot.

How many came over to Canada with Sir John Johnson in May 1776 is not exactly known, but the number must have been considerable. However, I do know that Hugh Munro was one of them. The settlers who left America abandoned everything and lost all, their property being confiscated by the state. Most of them did not possess very much being but a few years' residents of the country. Hugh Munro in his evidence to the commissioners afterwards appointed, stated that he had a farm of 120 acres, 3 sows, 3 oxen, some sheep, some farming implements and had nineteen acres cleared, but lost it all. From the evidence taken later his neighbours possessed about the same, perhaps not considered much now, but a serious loss to them.

After the new settlement started the British Government furnished them with provisions for two years and a few necessary articles and seed grain needed to start anew, in what was then a heavily timbered bush country, with no roads or means of getting in and out except by the Raisin River or the St. Lawrence River.

The settlement made rapid progress, even under great difficulties, judging from a report made by Mr. Pemberton, before he left, in which he said: "These people have been settled since the peace in the upper part of Canada, beginning 50 miles above Montreal and extending to Niagara. They find the soil excellent and the climate good, so much so that they have been able to supply the Kings Posts with bread and very soon they will be a good saving to Great Britain."

When Hugh Munro moved to Charlottenburgh in 1797, his two youngest sons accompanied him but the eldest son John, remained on the east part of his old farm and his great-grandson thrice removed, is now living on it. Murdock lived on Lot 19 in the 9th Concession of Charlottenburgh, the remainder of his life and Philip on Lot 19 in the 8th Concession (Earl Munro's farm Glenroy). Both were out on active service in the War of 1812. Philip was wounded in the arm, in the engagement at Hoople's Creek, near where the Battle of Crysler's Farm was fought, in November 1813.

*The above information was accumulated by Hugh Munro M.L.A. 1911-1919 for Glengarry*

## **Snowy Munro**

*One of our members, Jean Munro, told me that the following story was on the Internet. I contacted the writer, David Halford, asking his permission to use his article, which he did and so I am able to bring you this story of a Munro, famous in the sport of cycling.*

The early chapters of Australian cycle racing history tell of the adventures and exploits of some remarkable riders - few of whom have equalled the commitment and foresight shown by one of Coburg's life-long members, Iddo "Snowy" Munro.

Of his long list of successes between 1906 and 1909, none stand out quite like his great ride in the 'Warnambool', when he put up a then world record for 165 miles (264km) and became the 1909 Australasian Road Champion. Thousands of spectators had lined Flemington Road in Melbourne to see how many of the record 548 entries would make it to the finish. First home was W.Knaggs with the 21 year old Munro riding his 88 inch fixed gear (52x16) Coburg-built 'Thistle', fastest time in 7hr.12min.51sec. After the finish of the race Sir Albert Spicer greeted Munro with the following words, 'You have beaten a world record. You have learned to keep your body in subjection. You have shown pluck, nerve and endurance. I hope that those good qualities, which you have cultivated so early will benefit you in life, and that yours will be a prosperous life.'

It was "Snowy's" desire to further the status of Australian cycling overseas that led to the formation of Australia's first team for the Tour de France in 1914. He captained that team, which included Don Kirkham, Charlie Snell, George Bell, and Charlie Piercey - the latter two being club mates at the Coburg Cycling Club. Initially riding as a professionals for the Paris-based Gladiator Cycles & Clement Tyre team, their first major Classic was Milan-San Remo where Munro finished 26th, finishing 10 minutes after the winner Agostini. One week later in April, Munro and the team were hitting the pave in Paris-Roubaix, Piercey breaking a wheel, Kirkham breaking his bike and "Snowy" finishing in 37th place, 7 minutes behind the 1914 winner Crubelandt. Barely two weeks later, their Tour de France preparation continued with a start in the two-week Tour of Belgium, followed by Paris-Bruxelles and Paris-Nancy.

Of the Australians that left looking for Tour glory, only "Snowy" and Don Kirkham gained selection for a Tour team (Phebus-Dunlop). The 1914 event, the last to be held before 1919, consisted of 143 starters riding 5,380km over fifteen stages. Both riders putting up a very respectable showing with their best stage finishes being Perpignan-Marseilles where they finished 4th and 5th respectively. "Snowy" went on to cross the finish line of the last stage into Paris in 10th position. In the Overall Classification Munro finished 20th with Kirkham three places better in 17th - a very creditable and honourable attempt at the big event, reported the promoting newspaper L'Auto. Incidentally, the winner was Phillipe Thys, winner also in 1913 and again in 1920.

Even when his riding career over and he was busy founding and running his successful taxi business (Embassy Taxis), "Snowy" always stayed in close contact with his club and the bikes. He was a keen advocate for the official introduction of derailleur gears and one of the movers and shakers behind the introduction of the Herald Sun Tour. "Snowy" dedicated his life to the progress of cycling, and over the years his influence is reflected in the long-term success of cycling in Australia. Compiled by [David Halford](#) ref: The Australian Cyclist Sept. 1949

## Mary Jane Munro & Imlay McLaren

*In Newsletter No 2, I gave you the story of William Munro & Ann MacKay who came to Australia on the James Moran in 1839. This was by courtesy of Mary Lidbetter who has done such a good job of collecting the Shoalhaven Munro's family history. This time we have the story of William & Anne's Granddaughter Mary Jane Munro who married (Peter) Imlay McLaren in 1866 in Bolong, Shoalhaven. And they had thirteen children. The first part of the story is about Imlay McLaren followed by the memories of the family by their Granddaughter Jean Bryson & was written in 1983 and she "tells it as it is"*

Imlay McLaren left Shoalhaven in 1869 and travelled with Alexander and Donald Munro and William Ballantyne by SS Grafton from Sydney to Lawrence on Clarence River, thence overland to Coraki. He took up a selection near Coraki. Imlay later entered the Education Department, taught first at Coraki, then Lower Southgate, Wombah, Palmer's Channel, Woodford Leigh and Broadwater. He retired to Lismore. Imlay McLaren was a teacher at Palmers Channel School (then known as Taloumbi) Jan 1890 to April 1891 and at the Woodford Leigh Public School, Clarence River, in 1891. Imlay's grave is in Tucki cemetery near Lismore bearing the inscription "Imlay, beloved husband of M.J. McLaren, born 6 June 1839 died 1 January 1924."

*Now we have Jean Bryson's memories of the family.*

"I probably knew Imlay and Mary Jane better than most of the grandchildren. My Uncle Walter had two daughters, Jessie and Kate, who were much older than myself and were young adults, so I never really knew them. However I was the eldest of all the other grandchildren. Grandfather had retired to Lismore and lived in a pleasant weatherboard house in Molesworth Street - away from all the shops.

There a spare paddock beside the house where Creamy the pony could graze. I remember the grandparents best when I visited at the age of about seven, and stayed for several weeks. Aunt Vi had taken me over from my other grand mother's place on the Clarence River. We crossed over on the punt at Maclean and had a thrilling ride to the rail-head at Lawrence on what I am certain was a Cobb & Co. coach. From there we picked up a train to Lismore. I adored all my aunts and uncles on both sides of the family and I was never homesick whilst in the wider family.

The McLarens remained friendly with the Camerons. Grandmother Mary Jane was over 70 at that stage (1913) but she was still a very active housekeeper, serving up the meals and running the home. Aunt Vi worked in Malean's store, among other things demonstrating a knitting machine.

Aunt Gladys also worked at Maclean's, in the toy department I think. These two used to take me down to the river to swim, in a wired-in pool. I fancy it was near the bacon factory. A North Coast Steamer was tied up there. One morning a dead pig floated down the river. "Quick, let's get out of here" Vi said. Aunt Olive also lived at home and did dressmaking in a big spare room at the end of a big verandah. Grandmother helped her with all the finishing steps - pulling out tacking, oversewing and putting on fasteners, etc.

When the war came and teachers were in short supply, Aunt Olive was employed in the kindergarten at South Lismore and loved it. Uncle Sid, a bachelor also, lived at home. He worked in Brown and Jolley's timber mills, where later he lost several fingers in an accident. Uncle Sid took me to the pictures and was generous with sixpenny and

threepenny bits - greatly prized by me who had been given only pennies before that. Grandfather was busy around the place, and always well supplied with clean white shirts - no coloured or aloha shirts for the gentlemen then. He had good book shelves but I can remember them saying he was fond of reading sermons, some of the by a Dr. Witt, I think. At night someone would strum a few tunes on the piano, a Broadwood, and there'd be some singing.

Imlay was even tempered and always amiable to me. He gave me a book, My Cat and Dog Book, inscribed "This is for my bonny Jean" Once we went out 12 miles in the sulky to Dunoon to the marriage of Grandmother's niece Amy Munro to Ross Tindall. The wedding seemed very beautiful to me and a beautiful banquet followed. On the way home Grandfather let me hold the reins all the way. Of course the pony knew the road, no traffic hazards then, but at least that showed Grandfather in a very kindly mood, free from fuss and understanding a child's aspirations and ability.

That is about all I genuinely remember except that one morning, probably not long after that wedding, we noticed Creamy the pony lingering near the fence in the one spot. When, after a little while, Grandfather went over to look at him, he found poor old Creamy was dead and only standing supported by the fence.

Grandmother was just a little more strict, scolding me when I picked a lot of trumpet lilies and floated them in the bath! Again she didn't want me to play with a little girl named Honey because Honey had wrung the neck of one of Gran's treasured French Hens. We sailed back to Sydney on the ORARA from Byron Bay Jetty.

Earlier memories had come to me from my mother, born Christina Cameron at Palmer's Channel, Clarence River, who first met my father at school. Grandfather had been teacher in charge from January 1890 to April 1891. He taught the pupils well and truly and often had breaks for music lessons, singing from Tonic-Sol-Fa and tuning in with the tuning fork on the edge of the blackboard. He had lots of cricket for the boys.

The family lived in the school-house and one of the younger children, Aunt Vi then small, would wander in unannounced. Grandfather had a hobby of making violins. They were very good, marked Stradivarius Copy Imlay McLaren fecit anno-- There was one in my family but when my sister's house was flooded (in Croydon, Sydney, no less) the violin was dampened and fell to pieces, most regrettably. Some of the other nephews and nieces may still possess one. Grandfather had a band organised whilst in the Maclean area and all the family and friends took part. My Dad could play the euphonium and also a little silvery-toned flute called the piccolo. Stanley played the fiddle and later used it when he was a country schoolmaster.

It must have been difficult to raise a family of twelve. They said that Grandmother Mary Jane planted fruit trees everywhere she went and the family always had a good vegetable garden; the sons kept up this practice even in Sydney suburbs like Stanmore where we lived. At Palmer's Channel school and at many other schools, Grandmother came over once a week to teach the girls sewing. My mother said Mrs. McLaren would hurry over, often looking hot in her black dress fastened to the neck. Anyway the lessons must have been good as my mother continued to sew all her life.

My dad Fred and Sid his brother were free to roam the scrub after school, trapping birds, rabbits and fishing. Dad always loved the wild things and the staghorns, ferns and birds-nest ferns. When working on the railway fixing signalling up Dorrigo-Glenreagh way, he would bring us home a few finds for our little fernery at Stanmore. Later whilst working at Broken Hill, he posted me home a box of Sturt's Desert Pea - packed in damp moss. It was a sensation when I took it to my botany teacher at Petersham Inter. High School. Grandmother visited us several times in Stanmore. She used to ask my young brother Freddy "what shall I bake for you?" He would say "Bunloaf and wedges (oranges).

Grandmother came to Sydney for good some time after Grandfather died in 1917. They always went to camp at Byron Bay around Christmas time. One morning Grandpa got up early, went and sat in a deck-chair outside the tent, gave a groan and dropped dead of a heart attack. He was buried in Tucki cemetery. 1919 was the year of the influenza epidemic. The soldiers returned from the war and Gladys Marion McLaren was married to Arthur Slatyer of AIF Light Horse. Gran was very happy when a son was born, Alan Imlay Francis Slatyer. One day in winter 1920 I think, Gran was sitting by the fire at Gladys's home in Croydon, I think baby Alan was in his pram and that Gladys had gone shopping. Granny dozed, fell asleep and slumped forward into the fire. She was burned, perhaps not terribly seriously but she was taken to Western Suburbs Hospital where she died from shock. When my parents visited her, she said "I've come through the droughts and the floods - only to meet the fire" So that was a sad end to a very fine person. (Written in 1983)

## Hellen Munro

*This short story is about Hellen Munro, one of the ancestors of Peter Tibbet.*

Hellen's parents were George Munro and Elizabeth Munro. Hellen told Edith (now Mrs. Aylward) that her Grandfather could trace his family back to the Stuart Kings.



George Munro was a Crofter (joint tenant of Scottish farm) they were married at Kiltearn on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1815. Hellen was born at Assynt, Ross & Cromarty in 1838.

As a little girl living in Inverness-shire she had cousins, Leslies living in Ross & Cromarty. They left Scotland for Australia while Hellen was still young and they were the ones who did the exploring of the Darling Downs. Patrick Leslie (25 September 1815-1881) was born at Warhill, Aberdeenshire, the 2nd son of William Leslie (9th Laird of Warhill {estate known as Wartle} and 8th of Folla) and Jane Davidson (sister of W.S. Davidson).

Patrick and his brothers Walter and George were at their Uncle Davidson's property on the Krui River at Collaroi in 1836. The Leslies were first on the Downs in 1840 and took up "North Toolburra" for Patrick on 2 July 1840 and 'Canning Downs' for Walter on the 7th July 1840. North Toolburra today is still a unique property and includes the districts' most desirable country which was acquired by early selection and has extensive Condamine River frontage. Some 1,000 acres of prime alluvial Condamine River flats as well as grazing country, is watered by a large lagoon, bores and dams.

Hellen Munro's sister was married to a horse trader in New South Wales who travelled around buying horses for the forces in India. She had a number of miscarriages and Hellen was coming out to be with her for a birth. But her fiancé, James Fraser did not want her to go (wouldn't let her) so they got married at Alness on the 25th August 1864. The ship they came to Australia on was "The Charlie Palmer". They struck severe storms in the Bay of Biscay where the boat heaved and tossed over a period of several weeks.

They eventually reached Brisbane in January 1865 and the Frasers travelled to the Darling Downs to stay with Hellen's cousins the Leslie's. James & Hellen came to settle in Gympie two months after gold was found there. James came not to engage in mining, but to transport supplies from Maryborough to the new goldfield by horse and dray. With their young family they settled on a property at the Two Mile at the beginning of 1873 and soon acquired adjoining blocks to accommodate their teams of horses.

From an article in the Gympie Times, Saturday, April 15, by Stuart Doggrell we have a talk with Mrs. E. M. Aylward (nee Leslie) who as a young girl resided with James and Hellen, and others. She told the story of when Hellen Fraser was on the ship coming to Australia she discovered not long after they sailed, that she had lost her gold watch, which had been presented to her and engraved in the back.

Years later in Gympie, when her eldest son George Fraser had grown up, he went in for a raffle and won a gold watch. When he showed it to his mother she cried, "OH! MY WATCH! MY WATCH!" George laughed and said, "It couldn't be, I won it today in a raffle at a hotel". His mother said, "Open the back up and see if it's engraved with my name", and the engraving reads - From a Friend to Miss Jessie Munro 5 April 1878. It was Hellen's watch - Jessie is Hellen's nickname. The watch has been passed down to Gwen Chambers (now Mrs. Muhlbacher).

## William Munro

*Andrea Biddolph sent me the following extract from the book "Farewell to the Heather" by James Donaldson. The brothers William, Alexander and James Munro were all carpenters when they arrived in 1839. Alexander was the great grandfather of Andrea, Marcia James & David Munro. It is interesting to speculate that, as William built a church in Singleton, he might have known Alexander Munro, the convict from Ardersier who became a pioneer in the wine industry and was the first mayor of Singleton.*

*This is the extract.* "One of the most surprising successes to have been achieved by an emigrant from the "James Moran" was William Munro who came as a 26-year-old carpenter. He was engaged on his arrival by a builder in Liverpool, Mr Henry Scope, for whom he worked, before setting himself up as a carpenter in his own business in Liverpool. Wonderfully successful, he then tendered to build for the Anglicans' Holy Trinity; the Gothic designed church of Edmund Blacket, the famous colonial architect, at Berrima at a tender of 900 pounds.

The Sydney Morning Herald of June 12th 1849 described the consecration by the Archbishop, William Broughton, in which he made special mention of William Munro's part in creating one "of the best and handsomest churches in the Diocese" Although himself a Presbyterian, he became the contractor to build the Catholic Church in Berrima, when the foundation stone was laid by Bishop Polding in 1847. Obviously his work impressed the Bishop, as he later was appointed Clerk of Works to extend St Mary's Cathedral, where he was given an office on the site. This patronage from Bishop Polding gave Munro the opportunity to develop as an architect, where he designed churches in many country places including Singleton, Camden, Raymond Terrace and Nimmitabel.



Catholic Church, Berrima

Later he designed St Andrew's College at the University of Sydney in 1873, like so many Presbyterian Colleges an adaptation of one in Aberdeen, Scotland. Later Munro was the architect for the tower of St Peter's Presbyterian Church in North Sydney and the Minister's Manse. Married to Caroline Marsh, the daughter of a wealthy builder at Christ Church St Lawrence, Sydney on July 10th 1852, they raised a family of two daughters and a son, each baptised in the Anglican Church. William is a wonderful illustration of a talented, creative man, who with the encouragement and patronage of others, made a significant contribution to the architectural life of New South Wales."

## Jane Lines Munro

*Ronda Finnegan sent me this little snippet and photo of her great grandmother*

Jane Munro, my great grandmother, came to Australia in 1855. She married John Lines in 1861. Before their marriage



John was a sheep overseer on a property "Carrabah" near Taroom in Queensland. Jane was Lady Companion to the manager's wife.

John and Jane had 3 children born there before shifting to Roma. They were among the early settlers in the area. They grew the first crop of any extent of wheat in the district and won a prize for some of it at the Royal Melbourne Show in 1880/81.

Jane spoke Gaelic and enjoyed a conversation with anyone else who could speak it. My grandfather, Alexander Munro Lines (1867-1932), and father Malcolm Strafford Munro Lines (1898-1932) were born in Roma and family descendants including myself still live here.

Our daughter, Meryl, has offered to take me to Scotland next year on a tour and we also plan to visit Jane's home town, Saltburn, Invergordon.