



# Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

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## Blether

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Bet and I wish you all a very happy Christmas.

Having said that, our hearts go out to those who are suffering from the bushfires and the drought. This is a wonderful country but we do face many challenges.

In our previous newsletter, we published Ray Munro's take on the Clan Munro Gathering. Heather Elsa Green also sent me a report and you can read all about it on Page 2.

I had an interesting email from Ivo Stewart Munro who is making a list of all Shoalhaven Munros who served in WW1. Read about that on page 6 and get in touch if you fall into this category.

I have been making a list of what I call "Ship Arrivals" from our membership forms but that, of course, is only since I took on this job. I would like the list to be as complete as possible, so could you send me where your ancestors came from; where they embarked; what ship they came on; where they landed; dates, etc. If you are not sure if I have got your details, contact me and ask and I will let you know. I will let you know when it is complete.

Remember, I need your story for the newsletter.

If you are thinking about visiting Foulis Castle here is an update about what you must do. Tours of the castle are conducted on Tuesdays and could you give at least three weeks notice of your intended visit. Times are either 10.30am or 3.00pm. There is no charge for your visit but a donation put in the Clan Munro Association box for the castle restoration fund is appreciated. An appointment to visit the outside and the grounds is not required but please let the Castle when you intend to visit.

Contact our webmaster Ian Munro at [info@clanmunro.org.uk](mailto:info@clanmunro.org.uk) and he will arrange your visit.

Visit the clan Munro website at [www.clanmunro.org.uk](http://www.clanmunro.org.uk) where you will find lots of interesting information about the happenings at Foulis.

## The Unknown Warrior

*Remembrance day was held last month, so it is appropriate that I publish the story of the Unknown Warrior. This is the one in Westminster Abbey and so is a British soldier but he could just as well have been from Australia or New Zealand.*

On November 7th, 1920, in strictest secrecy, four unidentified British bodies were exhumed from temporary battlefield cemeteries at Ypres, Arras, the Asine and the Somme. None of the soldiers who did the digging were told why.



The bodies were taken by field ambulance to GHQ at St-Pol-Sur-Ter Noise. Once there, the bodies were draped with the union flag, Sentries were posted and Brigadier-General Wyatt and a Colonel Gell selected one body at random. The other three were reburied. A French Honour Guard was selected and stood by the coffin of the chosen soldier overnight.

On the morning of the 8th November, a specially designed coffin made of oak from the grounds of Hampton Court arrived and the Unknown Warrior was placed inside.

On top was placed a crusaders sword and a shield on which was inscribed:

"A British Warrior who fell in the GREAT WAR 1914-1918 for King and Country".

On the 9th of November, the Unknown Warrior was taken by horse-drawn carriage through Guards of Honour and the sound of tolling bells and bugle calls to the quayside.

There, he was saluted by Marechal Foch and loaded onto HMS Vernon bound for Dover. The coffin stood on the deck covered in wreaths, surrounded by the French Honour Guard.

Upon arrival at Dover, the Unknown Warrior was met with a nineteen gun salute - something that was normally only reserved for Field Marshals.

A special train had been arranged and he was then conveyed to Victoria Station, London.

He remained there overnight, and, on the morning of the 11th of November, he was finally taken to Westminster Abbey.

The idea of the unknown warrior was thought of by a Padre called David Railton who had served on the front line during the Great War the union flag he had used as an altar cloth whilst at the front, was the one that had been draped over the coffin.

It was his intention that all of the relatives of the 517,773 combatants whose bodies had not been identified could believe that the Unknown Warrior could very well be their lost husband, father, brother or son...

THIS is the reason we wear poppies.

We do not glorify war.

We remember - with humility - the great and the ultimate sacrifices that were made, not just in this war, but in every war and conflict where our service personnel have fought - to ensure the liberty and freedoms that we now take for granted.

Every year, on the 11th of November, we remember the Unknown Warrior.

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them...



## ***The 2019 Clan Munro Gathering***

*In our previous newsletter we had Ray Munro's report and this month we have A glimpse of the 11th International Clan Munro Gathering (Friday 09 to Sunday 11 August 2019) from Heather Elsa Green (nee Munro), Queensland member of our Clan*

After much planning and preparation, it was with great excitement that my husband, Christopher and myself attended our 2nd Clan Munro Gathering in Scotland. The programme for the 11th Gathering was quite different from the previous Gathering that we attended in 2014 and for this reason we made the decision to go again.

We could not fault the organisation of the Gathering, a detailed schedule of the activities and associated logistics had been received via emails from the team organising the Gathering. There were 3 locations for pick-ups; Inverness, Dingwall and Strathpeffer. This involved 4 coaches; red for Dingwall and Strathpeffer people, then yellow, blue and green for those in Inverness. All locations had designated pick up/drop off locations. We were fortunate as our pick-up was outside the Dingwall Railway Station a 2-minute walk away. In addition each coach had a volunteer "guide"

and helpers to make the time on the coach more enjoyable. The red coach had 2 drivers over the period, John and JT, both excellent drivers as well as friendly and obliging. The red coach "guide" was George Munro, also the Clan's Treasurer. George was outstanding in his role, knowledgeable and very welcoming, such a character sharing many amusing stories along the way. George's off-sider was Anne-Marie Munro who was delightful and looked after us all so well.

Day 1 (Friday), as we boarded the coach we were handed an envelope with our lanyards and entry tickets for the week-end activities. Unfortunately, the weather was not so kind to us that first day, it was a wet coach trip to the West coast to visit the iconic Eilean Donan Castle. Our walk along the causeway to the castle was a test to our stamina with wind and rain aplenty! However, the walk through the castle itself was amazing and worth the effort. At the Dornie Community Hall there were talks presented by battle archaeologist, Derek Alexander and retired Brigadier Hugh Munro. The hot and hearty lunch served in the Hall was very welcome. Then it was back on the coaches to visit the Battle of Glenshiel site for the wreath laying ceremony to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle, 10th June 1719, the last time the Clan Munro fought as a military unit. After Hector laid the wreath, those inclined followed the banner-holders up the hill in the rain, not for the faint hearted!



The evening excursion at the newly refurbished Inverness Town House was wonderful, the glistening candelabras and everyone dressed for the occasion made the evening magical. Much to our dismay, we were told that the Strathpeffer Highland Games were cancelled for Saturday, due to the heavy rain earlier in the week which now made the location unsuitable for the crowds expected. This was the first time the Games have been cancelled since 1918. We were re-assured by Chief Hector that alternate activities would be arranged and still be ready to go to Strathpeffer as scheduled. I believe that a very late night would have been had by our Chief Hector, the Clan family and the organising team to come up with alternate last minute arrangements for the large group.



Day 2 (Saturday), we duly arrived in Strathpeffer in the morning for the day's activities. There we were advised of the alternate arrangements; there would be entertainment provided by the Strathpeffer Highland Band and Dingwall Highland dancers, followed by light lunch in the Pavilion and a brief talk from The Earl of Cromartie, John Mackenzie from Castle Leod, before leaving 2pm for the nearby village of Beaulieu where we could wander around, see the ruined abbey and have a "look in" at the craft fair in the village hall. A pleasant afternoon indeed before returning to the pavilion for more entertainment. This time the Celtic folk music group led by Alpha, Hector's wife and then a delicious smorgasbord dinner.



Day 3 (Sunday), a later start to the day; an open afternoon from midday at Foulis Castle. The weather was cool with some light rain at times though it did not dampen our spirits. After the official Ardross Pipe Band welcome, Chief Hector with the family gave his welcome from the front balcony, then the afternoon activities commenced. We had a busy afternoon partaking in some of the many activities; looking at the archive display of early Munro documents in the Drawing Room, chatting to the ladies doing spinning in the Basement, browsing the craft stalls and Clan Munro items for sale, attending the very informative local archaeology talk on the Kiltearn Church and Graveyard Project, listening to the wonderfully talented Eildih Mackenzie with her son and daughter singing Gaelic songs in Foulis Ballroom, treated to a tasty and filling BBQ lunch while enjoying the entertainment of the Dunnottar Ceilidh band and Aileen Wilson Highland dancers in the marquee. Other activities included the DNA presentation and whisky demonstration and tastings, these both were very popular. In fact, one would have been hard pressed to see everything and go to all the activities. At 4pm it was time to say our "Good-byes" and take the respective coaches back to our drop-off points.

In summary, although the weather had not been the best example of summer weather, it was still a very successful Gathering with loads to do and experience, along with such warmth shown from our Chieftain and all the extended

Clan family and the many other volunteers. The numbers were down from the previous Gathering, I believe 167 in total, coming from as far as field as USA, Canada, France and of course, Australia. What may have been lacking in numbers was certainly made up for by the spirit and friendliness of all at the Gathering. We had a most enjoyable time and have many fond memories.

### ***Alexander Munro - Shoalhaven***

*This is another of those excellent stories of the Shoalhaven Munros compiled by Mary Lidbetter. Unfortunately Mary passed away in 1916 but as the Shoalhaven Munros genealogist, she left a legacy in the form of a very detailed family tree complete with stories that we are able to draw on. They bring to life the stories of our ancestors and the joys and suffering they went through.*

Alexander Munro was born on the Shoalhaven in 1853 and lived there until 1869 when, aged 16, the family moved to the Richmond. Alexander left the Shoalhaven in July 1869 and travelled overland to Sydney with his brother Donald, William Ballantyne and Peter McLaren. They left Sydney by the S.S. Grafton landing at Lawrence the main port on the Clarence River, then rode overland to Myrtle Creek (now Rappville) arriving at Corakin on 8th August, 1869. The Rev Thom rowed them across the river in his boat and they stayed overnight with the McPhersons at "Gairloch", Swan Bay. His father Donald, grandfather William, and three sisters arrived at Ballina about a week later by maiden voyage of S.S. Waimea. This vessel was owned by John Manning, commanded by Capt. Turner, and was wrecked on the Richmond Bar 1872.

In 1881 Alexander married Sarah Munro (1851-1935) at Woodford Dale, Clarence River, and they had five children, Florence, Charles, Victor, Donald and Grace. Sarah was from a well known Clarence River family of no relationship. Alexander, like his brother George, left some lengthy memoirs written 1939 which are worth quoting. What follows is from his memoirs.

"My brother William travelled from the Shoalhaven River and on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1866 took up the first selection at Steve King's Plain where I still reside. In 1867 my father came to the river on a visit bringing horses with him, but it was not till 1869 that we finally arrived on the Richmond to live. "There was fairly dense scrub all along the river, except for occasional clear patches. Habitation was mainly along the banks and houses were fairly frequent, as most land from Woodburn up had been selected by the time of my arrival. There had been an influx of settlers to the river in and after 1866. A great many of these people came from the Shoalhaven district.

"Rowing boats being the chief mode of travel, hospitality was freely dispensed by those living on the bank, so that a house or light was always a welcome sight. A stretch of river, about 1 1/2 miles in length between Coraki and Tuckurimba, was known as "The Street" on account of the number of house lights showing at night.

"Maize growing was the chief means of revenue, sugar cane not being grown until a few years later. Floods proved disastrous to crops at that time, and in 1870 at least 50,000 acres of corn must have been ruined.

"My brother had grown sugar-cane before my arrival but it was not till a few years later that it was grown in marketable quantities. Many small sugar mills were put into operation, and in 1881 C.S.R. established their mill at Broadwater. Wyrallah was at this time a busy industrial centre due to the operation of Wyrallah Sawmill owned by Breckenbrige Bros. with Jas. Breckenridge as manger. This mill, established in 1865, was the first large timber mill on the river and was for many years the largest, it being situated in the midst of a rich pine scrub. I should say about 30 men were employed in the mill but many more were engaged in timber cutting in the district.

"Cedar grew largely about Tucki, and beech, teak, tulip, tallow-wood and gum also grew in this locality and were treated at the mill though it was mainly a pine mill. When the pine cut out in this district, it was brought from elsewhere.

"Many sailing vessels traded to the river and were towed by rowing boat up and downstream when conditions would not allow for sails. In July 1874 the first vessels arrived after a six-week period without any, due to unfavourable winds. They were very welcome as supplies were running short and flour was unprocurable. However, there was no famine as cattle were available for meat, also bacon, eggs and vegetables. When not convenient to kill our meat, we used to procure casks of corned meat from Sydney by boat.

"Mail was received in Lismore from Sydney travelling by boat to Clarence Heads, then by horse along the beach beyond Jerusalem Creek and across country via the Gap to Woodburn. All mails were sorted at Woodburn, bags being made up for various river towns as well as Lismore. The mailman delivered a direct bag to Wyrallah on his trip through to Lismore by horse. Later river boat services replaced the horse.

" During construction of the Telegraph line I rode out to my brother with some important mail. Arriving late in the afternoon, I intended staying the night but my horse became restless and fearing that she may injure herself, I decided to return home. I set out at 10pm, my brother giving me a large knife in case the horse and I became entangled in vines, for in the tall dense scrub you could see nothing. However, my trusty steed and I arrived home in the early hours of the morning without having "bumped" anything en route.

"For many years after our arrival on the river, all government business had to be transacted at Casino Land Court, District Court, Quarter Sessions - my father and I were both jurymen on different occasions at Casino, and I was a juror on the first case held in Lismore.

"In after years, my brother William acquired property at Dunoon and did much pioneering work in that district. Later my brother George went to the Tweed and he, as well as my two sisters, Mesdames Huggins and Marshall and their husbands, acquired and pioneered properties in the Uki district. There being no educational facilities available, my sisters started classes for their own children and the neighbours, in the barn.

"No script of mine would be complete without paying tribute to the services of the river - the rowing boats which provided transport, delivered supplies, provided means of business and social contact; the sailing vessels and an occasional steam boat which gave inestimable services in the early years of pioneering; then the all-steam ocean boats of large tonnage carried on a service of wonderful reliability and efficiency. Never forget, it was the river and the boats which had a major part in the establishment of the Richmond."

This was written in 1939. Alexander lived all his adult life at "Riverston," Steve King's Plain and died on the 22nd of August, 1943.

## 2019 Armadale Highland Gathering & Kilt Run



This year the Gathering was held on Sunday, October 6 and a crowd of 18,000 enjoyed the sunshine and all that the day had to offer - and there was plenty to keep them interested. This is the largest Highland Gathering in Western Australia. The Mayor's parade, consisting of representatives from each of the events led by pipers and drummers, marched to the stage for the opening of the games.

The Clan Village was down in numbers this year because of illness but was still very popular. Although we did not gain any new members, Bet and I were kept very busy letting visitors know their Scottish origins and surprising quite a few by letting them know that their name was a sept of a Scottish clan. The Chanel 10 cameras were there and snippets of the Gathering were shown including a very short interview with myself. Check the photo above!!



The heavy events were very popular with all the events that you would see in a highland games in Scotland – tossing the caber, putting the the heavy bar, etc. The greet dogs



display and making friends with everyone highland dancing attracted big crowds. quite a few of the WA bands competing. market stalls to browse through.



shot, throwing weight over the Scottie meet and were a great hit as usual, putting on a as they wandered through the crowd. The The pipe bands were there, of course, with There was live music on stage and Scottish



Something I haven't seen in a Highland Gathering in Scotland is the medieval fair where contestants in armour beat the whatsit out of each other – highly recommended if you want to loose weight as they must have sweated litres in the sun in armour. Artisans, blacksmiths, knights and ladies all awaited a visit into the Medieval Fair as you are transported back in time and into this hive of activity.



Unique to the Armadale Gathering is the Perth Kilt Run. It is the only fun run in Australia that's done in a kilt!

Contestants can purchase their very own kilts when they register prior to the event and take part in the 2.5km Classic or the 5km Warrior run. Six members of the



Military Brotherhood bikers took part for the first time this year – to the left is Don with a couple of them Greg and Danny. This event began

in Perth, Canada to celebrate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Perth in Scotland. They challenged Perth, Scotland to take part and then Perth, Australia. The Canadian holds the Guinness Book record with 3,670 runners. It will take us a while to break that record!!

### *Shoalhaven Munros*

The Shoalhaven Munros are descendants of William Munro and Ann MacKay who came to Australia from Lairg in Sutherland, Scotland in 1839 on the "James Moran" and by 1842 had moved to the Shoalhaven. In October I received an email from Ivo Stewart Munro from Queensland wanting confirmation that he was a Shoalhaven Munro, which we were able to give him. Ivo has prepared a list of descendants of William and Ann who took part in WW1. I know a few of our members who are Shoalhaven Munros and have contacted to see if they know if any of their ancestors were in WW1 and if so, to pass on details to Ivo. If any of you fall into this category and I have not contacted you could you send any details you have to Ivo on [ivo.m@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ivo.m@bigpond.net.au). Could you also send details to me.

### *Membership*

Annual:	\$25.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years	\$8.00
Three Years:	\$55.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years	\$20.00
Ten Years:	\$160.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years	\$70.00
Life Membership is calculated according to age as follows: -			
Up to Age 40:	3 X 10 Year Dues		\$480.00
Age 40 to 50:	2 X 10 Year Dues		\$320.00
Age 50 to 60:	1½ X 10 Year Dues		\$240.00
Age 60 and over:	Same as 10 Year Dues		\$160.00
Age 80 and over:	Half Ten Year Dues		\$80.00

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