

Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

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Blether

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Don

Most important thing affecting all our lives at the moment is, of course, the Coronavirus pandemic and all I can do is hope that you all keep safe and healthy.

This is my last newsletter as our Chief Hector's Representative in Australia and I thank you for your support over the past, would you believe, eighteen years. Ray Munro will be taking over from January and I hope you will give him all the support he needs. I will be continuing with the newsletter for now but if any of you feel like taking over, just let me know.

Back in Newsletter 46, I told the story of John De Burross Munro, an amazing Scotsman who came out to Australia as a convict, settled in Esperance WA and married an Aboriginal lady, Ngamelum. They had six children & when John died, Ngamelum went back to her own people, two of the children stayed in Esperance and four were sent to the Vasse Mission School near Busselton and that was all I knew about the family. However, in October, I had an email from April C who told me that, while researching her family tree, she came across our Newsletter 46 and that John & Ngamelum are her three time great grandparents. April asked if I had any more information about the family. Of course I had none but most of what I had came from a very helpful gentleman on the Esperance Shire Council. I contacted him and he immediately sent me a bundle of information to send on to April, among which was a letter from another lady researching the same family, so at the very least, we have found a cousin for April. He also has a lot more information, too much to email, which he was happy to put on a USB and send to April.

I am so interested to hear the end of this story but April is a busy universary student and cannot give a lot of time to further research at the moment. At least, we have given her a load of information to further her research. Another genealogical success!!

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 and he will arrange your visit.

Visit the clan Munro website at www.clanmunro.org.uk where you will find lots of interesting information about the happenings at Foulis and the Clan in general.

James Donald Sutherland 'Don' Munro AIF, RCF

This magazine article by Duncan Curtis was sent to me by our member from Queensland, Donald Munro AM and is the story of his Uncle, James Donald Sutherland 'Don,' during WW1.



Born in London on 21 July 1892, James Donald Sutherland Munro was the son of Charles Munro and Mary Stocks Sutherland. Charles and Mary, Scottish by birth, had run away to London to escape the disapproval of their parents and married there during 1888.

From early life, James was known as 'Don' and, on 27 November 1895, began his education at Hackney's Tottenham Road School, along with his sister Violet Olive. Their father, Charles, had been a joiner at the time of his marriage but, by the time of James' birth, had joined London's Metropolitan Police, initially as a constable. By 1895, the family were living at 120 Tottenham Road.

Don was a keen swimmer and earned a medal in 1908, for winning a mile race at an as-yet unknown London swimming championship. He was later educated at Ackmar Road School in Fulham at a time when his father was moving up through the ranks of the police force, such that, by 1911, he was an inspector.

However, Don apparently shunned a life in the constabulary and, by the age of 18, had become a catering clerk. However, his life took turn in 1911, when, at the invitation of his brother William, he sailed for Australia. Initially Don Munro settled in Victoria, subsequently moving to New South Wales, where he farmed for a while.

At the outbreak of war in 1914, Don was living in Brisbane and working as a shorthand typist but, within a month, he had joined the army. He enlisted as a Gunner in the 1st Battery, First Field Artillery

Probably taken around the time of his flight training, Don posed for the photographers Curzon Studios in Richmond. He wore the standard RFC "maternity jacket" and breeches: via author Brigade of the Australian Imperial Force, at Brisbane, on 23 August 1914. He was 22 at the time of his attestation, he stood 5ft 6in tall, with dark brown hair and blue eyes. His complexion was listed as 'dark', which seems notable, bearing in mind his Scottish ancestry. He joined his unit at the Sydney Show Ground barracks and then boarded the HMAS *Argyllshire*,

which embarked for a long sea voyage to the Mediterranean on 1 November 1914. Meanwhile, his parents had also emigrated to Australia and their ship passed Don's somewhere in the Indian Ocean, as they sailed, unseen, in opposite directions. The *Argyllshire* made a stop at Aden before arriving in Alexandria on 5 December and the Brigade then settled into Mena Camp, ten miles east of Cairo.

Gunner Munro was transferred to the General Staff of Divisional Headquarters on 1 January 1915 with the Corps Number 82 and he embarked by sea from Alexandria (probably aboard the transport *Minnewaska*) on 3 April 1915, bound for Gallipoli.

Don took part in the Gallipoli landings on 25 April 1915 and was promoted to Staff Sergeant, there, on 1 May. A subsequent entry in his service record shows an admission to No 2 Station Hospital, on the Greek island of Mudros, on 21 June 1915 for natural causes, but this would have been a short-term break from the desperation of the campaign.

Staff Sergeant Munro then returned to Egypt, this time aboard the steamer *Kingstonian*, arriving in Alexandria on 6, August 1915. But, just four days later, he was bound for Gallipoli again, this time embarking on the SS *Cawdor Castle*. A month into his second tour in the Dardanelles, Staff Sergeant Munro was admitted to the 1st Casualty Clearing Station on the Gallipoli Peninsula, suffering from influenza, and was then transferred to the hospital ship HMHT *Dunluce Castle* on 26 September, bound for Malta. He arrived there the following day but his illness upon admission to the St Andrews hospital was now classed a s *dysentery/paratyphoid*.

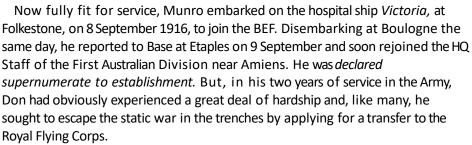
His condition had now become more serious and, on 8 October 1915, Munro was further embarked home to England, aboard the Hospital Ship *Panama*, and, upon arrival, was admitted to the 1st Southern General Hospital in Birmingham on 16 October.

But life was about to take one of its more positive turns. Whilst in hospital, Don met his future wife, a nurse named Clara Latham, and they were married in Fulham during March 1916. Continuing his recovery, Staff Sergeant Munro was sent first to Abbey Wood near Bristol and then, on May 1916, he was transferred to Monte Video Camp, near Weymouth, on England's south coast. Monte Video Camp had been established the previous year as a convalescent establishment for ANZAC troops and, generally, those expected to be out of action for six months or more.

In the summer of 1916 Don was declared fit and he began the transition back to active service on 6 July, when he marched into Perham Downs camp at Tidworth, and the following month to nearby Bhurtpore Barracks, HQ of the AIF in England.



An apprehensive looking JDS Munro aboard a Maurice Farman Shorthorn at RS, Gosport, circa March 1917. It seems likely that this photograph was taken to record the occasion of his first solo. Via the author



He was next declared on command at the RFC Officers Cadet Battalion in England on 8 November 1916 and he initially trained at No.1 Officer Cadet Wing, Denham before commencing



In late April 1917, Munro moved to 16RS at Beaulieu. The aircraft is a Curtis JN4 B1926 of that unit: via the

the occasion of his first solo. Via the author

A further view of B1926

theoretical education with the School of Military Aeronautics at Oxford's Exeter College from January to March 1917. Discharged from AIF on 16 March and receiving his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant (on probation) in the RFC the following day, Don was Gazetted as such on 11 April 1917.

Now began his flight training, first with a posting to 27 Reserve Squadron at Gosport on 19 March, where he completed his first sorties in Maurice Farman Se.11 Shorthorn and SE.7 Longhorn aircraft.

On 16 April he moved to 1 Reserve Squadron, still at Gosport, where it would seem that he was being groomed as a scout pilot, since the squadron was then equipped with Bristol Scout and Avro 504.



13 TS, which Munro joined at Yatesbury, was receiving AMD DH6s to replace its Avro 504s.

But it would appear that, at this time, his prospects then took a marked change in direction, for a posting to 16 Reserve Squadron at Beaulieu on 29 April 1917 meant that he would now be training on BE2c and Curtiss JN3/4 aircraft, the BE2c, particularly, being noted as an Artillery machine.

Though only destined to be at Beaulieu for six weeks or so, Don and his wife rented a cottage in the New Forest, close by the aerodrome. Brother Chris, at that time serving at Larkhill in an army training battalion, visited

them there and wrote to his mother that, "I know he was as happy as the days were long. He and Clare seemed to suit each other

perfectly and everything seemed to go smoothly. The two days I spent there were the happiest I ever enjoyed."

Don Munro was confirmed in his rank as 2nd Lieutenant on 12 July 1917. Four days later he was posted to 13 Training Squadron at Yatesbury on appointment as a Flying Officer."

13 TS had only been at Yatesbury for two weeks when Don arrived there: the squadron had previously been stationed at Dover and was designated as a Higher Training unit, comprising a mixed fleet of BE2c/e, DH6, Avro 504A and RE8

aircraft. The squadron was based on Yatesbury's No 2 Aerodrome.

2Lt Munro moved into lodgings at the Wagon and Horses pub, in nearby Beckhampton, along with Clara. He had been at the Wiltshire camp for less than a month when he suffered his first flying accident. On 11 July 1917, he was aboard RE8 A3182, which dived to earth from about 700 feet, apparently on take-off. The machine came to rest, inverted, in a field just south of



the London Road, where at least one other RE8 crashed; it would seem that on performing a left-hand circuit with the wind from the west, any engine malfunction or tightening of a turn would take the unsuspecting aviator to the same scene of the accident. Munro survived this crash, but according to his brother Christian, he was not the same man afterwards, "Ever since the crash, Don did not look the same. He had a sort of instinctive nervousness though he said nothing. How far this influenced his fatal accident I cannot say. Anyhow I know that he did not like flying very much afterwards. He always welcomed a rainy day because no flying could be done on those days."

From the above statement, it would seem that an amount of time passed until Don's next accident: in fact, it was just six days. In the early afternoon of 17 July, just four days shy of his 25th birthday, he was detailed for a cross-country flight to Upavon aboard RE8 A3413. His brother, Chris, again stated matter-of-factly in a contemporary letter that, "...while doing a cross country flight from Yatesbury, preparing to descend. Engine throttled down and left hand turn to spiral. Got into spinning nose dive and struck Jenner's Furze (Jenner's Firs) before he could recover. Died from fracture of base of skull."



At Beaulieu, Don received a visit from his younger brother, Chris

"Although the accident occurred only a mile from the sheds, no one knew where the aeroplane was and nearly an hour elapsed before Don was found. Several machines went up but of course they could not find the smash as it was in the trees. I had a talk with the mechanic that found the smash first. He said he had to walk twice round the wreckage before he could find a way in. "



Another view of the crash on 11 july 1917

The name Jenner's Firs is, nowadays, missing from maps, but it still exists as a small clump of mature trees about a mile east of Upavon airfield. On 28 July 1917, Chris Munro, along with a third brother Edward (both were at the time serving with the AIF in Europe), visited Yatesbury to settle Don's affairs and, whilst there, took the opportunity to

visit the crash site. Chris wrote to the family that,

"We saw where the plane crashed through the trees, making a big round hole, and, in the tops of the trees, were the right and left wing tips. The rest of the body [fuselage] and engine had been removed or burnt. There was a slight indentation where the engine struck."

2Lt J.D.S. Munro was buried in plot CC.7 at North Sheen Cemetery in west London on 21 July 1917, on what would

have been his 25th birthday. Perhaps appropriately, but not by intention, his

grave lies



This piece of wreckage is all that survives of the wreckage of REB A3413, the aircraft in which 2Lt Munro died on 17 July, 1917. It was recovered from Jenner's Firs by Don's brothers Chris & Edward in the days following the accident.

Don's fateful accident.

Although Don's brother Edward survived the war, his second sibling in the AIF did not. Younger brother Christian, serving in the Australian Infantry,

beneath one of the approaches to London's Heathrow Airport, where aircraft regularly pass overhead, nearly a hundred years on from

2Lt JDS Munro was laid to rest in North Sheen Cemetry, London. The cross atop the grave (since broken off but placed in front of the grave marker) was marked with the inscription, 'Donnie' – his wife Clara's nickname for him

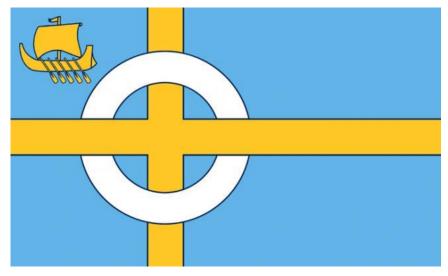
was killed in France on 24 April 1918 and is buried at Franvillers

Communal Cemetery. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank Donald Munro, AM (J.D.S. Munro's nephew and son of Edward) for assistance with this article.

The Isle of Skye Flag

I wonder how many of you know that the Isle of Skye now proudly flies its own flag and that the flag was designed by a Munro? Not only that, a number of our members can boast that their ancestors hail from the lovely Isle of Skye. The article, by Alexander Richards, appeared in the National newspaper and Alexander has kindly given me permission to reproduce it here.



The colours of the Skye flag reflect the isle as a jewel of Scotland'

Constituency MP Ian Blackford has congratulated the 9-year-old designer of Skye's new official flag, saying the young lad had created an "enduring image" of the island.

The blue, yellow, and white flag designed by Skye local Calum Alasdair Munro was unveiled at a ceremony in Portree this afternoon. Munro's design

beat out well over 300 other competitors from all over the world.

The 9-year-old winner, from Kilmuir on Skye, said he has a passion for collecting flags and drew his inspiration from the island's history and heritage. He said: "First, I thought of the Birlinn [a wooden boat used in the Hebrides in the middle ages] and I was thinking about the MacLeods and MacDonalds and the MacKinnons – the first clans

on Skye. I thought about the Celtic Heritage, the Viking heritage and the history of Flora MacDonald. "In my flag, in the Birlinn, there are five oars representing Trotternish, Waternish, Duirinish, Minginish and Sleat. I thought about yellow for the MacLeods and Blue for the MacDonalds or the MacKinnons."



Constituency MP lan Blackford said he was "delighted to see the strength of interest in the competition", adding: "Calum should be very proud of coming up with the winning design.

"His legacy will be the flag which will become an enduring image of Skye."

The search for a flag for Skye began in May last year when the West Highland Free Press joined forces with Highland Council and destination management organisation Skye Connect to petition the court of the Lord Lyon – the body responsible for recording and protecting all heraldry, flags and national symbols in Scotland.

The competition, which was launched last autumn, had 369 designs submitted from all across the globe. A panel of community representatives then drew up a short list of the six flags which they felt best symbolised the island, and the six were then put to a public vote.

Competition organiser Keith Mackenzie – the editor of the West Highland Free Press – said: "It is a tremendous design but the other thing that struck people is what it meant.

"It pulls together so many elements of Skye. There are notes to Christianity, there are notes to our Celtic heritage, to our Nordic heritage, to the Clans. And also, the colours themselves reflect Skye as a jewel of Scotland.

"We thought it was important, right from the outset, to engage as many people locally as we could."

"The people who came up with the idea and launched the competition were from Skye, the vast majority of the entries came from Skye, the voting was from people on Skye or associated with Skye and we have a local winner as well. "People may like or dislike the flag but I don't think anyone can argue against the process of finding the design."

It is hoped that the Skye flag will soon be as well-known and recognised as other regional and island flags such as Shetland, Orkney, Cornwall and Devon.

Hugh Robert Munro

This is another story from Jillian Oppenheimer's excellent book "Munros' Luck" and in the second paragraph you will see that the family went to visit Alexander and Sophia Munro. I wrote about Alexander in newsletters 38 and 39. He was born in Ardersier but when the family moved to Inverness, he broke the law and was sent to Australia as a convict. He made good here and ended up a wealthy and well respected businessman.

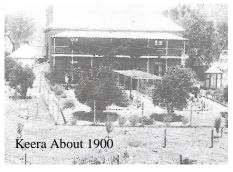
Hugh Robert Munro (1862-1958), pastoralist, was born on 14 February 1862 at Keera, Bingara, New South Wales, youngest of ten children of Donald Munro (d.1866), and his wife Margaret, née McPherson. Donald Munro and his family of four children emigrated from Scotland in 1848 to Tariaro, near Narrabri. From there they moved to Moree and then to Keera, which property they purchased in 1858. Six more children were born in Australia. In 1864, as a result of a big flood, the family was taken to Ardullie, near Tamworth, where they resided while the new two-storied brick homestead was erected out of flood reach at Keera. About that time Donald Munro built a flour mill, believed to be the first in the Tamworth district.

Soon after Hugh's birth, during the autumn of 1862, Donald and Margaret decided to take the family for a holiday to Singleton to visit Alexander and Sophia Munro at Ness House. This would have been the first time that all the young children had ever been to a large town and the first time Margaret had been there since her arrival in Australia sixteen years earlier. They left Alick, then aged



Hugh Robert Munro

nineteen, in charge of Keera and, with the other nine children, setoff in their old English carriage w th the two big carriage horses driven by Donald. The Chinaman cook drove a spring cart with two horses in an outrigger carrying the supplies and luggage for the 450 km journey from Keera via Barraba, Manilla, Tamworth, Murrurundi, Scone, Aberdeen and Muswellbrook to Singleton. They camped out every night, except for the short stay with their friends the Brodies at Murrurundi. They spent six weeks at Singleton and during this time it was decided to leave William Ross, then aged twelve, to go to school at the West Maitland High School where Alick had also been a pupil. The children had had a tutor living at home with them since they were at Moree so their primary schooling had not been neglected



After being tutored at home, Hugh was educated at Newington College, Sydney. At 19 he was managing Keera while his elder brothers developed their own pastoral partnership. Hugh Robert Munro was born at Keera on 14 February 1862. He was the only child of Margaret and Donald Munro to be born at the home for which they had been working so hard ever since they arrived in Australia fourteen years earlier. His was the longest life of all his family and he had the luck to live it to the full, with good health allowing him to ride horses until his last weeks, the good fortune to be blest with wisdom, a sense of humour and a spirit of

optimism that carried him through his life.

Although he spent an energetic lifetime of active work, unlike his older brothers and sisters, Hugh did not

suffer the severe hardships of the pioneering generation. The Keera he first knew was an established property managed by experienced men. The pattern of successful stock management had been set in place before he was born and it became his task to build on the foundations begun by the Macphersons, his father and his brothers. There were to be periods of drought and depression, which is the reality of rural Australia, and these would bring times of difficulty and decision. However the second half of the nineteenth century in Australia was a time of general optimism, good economic returns in business and under the protection of the British Empire, there were no international threats to the safety or security of the growing young nation.

Hugh' s attitude of optimism, his humour, his gentle manner and deliberate speech, his generosity of character and strength produced a wisdom which, over his long life made him many friends and few enemies. He had a code of honour and determination which guided all his actions. His natural authority discouraged others who might try to change his resolve, although he was always willing to hear another point of view. Born on St Valentine's day 1862, he was to die 96 years later, also on St Valentine's day.



The Booroomooka Angus team at the Sydney Easter Show

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

straight from the tree, or a pretty young girl, were to be essential values in his life. He was not pretentious and did not tolerate it in others but simple honesty

and integrity of purpose was important to him. Even at the end of his life his boyish chuckle and ability to find pleasure in simple things touched others.

In 1885 Hugh joined Thomas Cook of Turanville, Scone, as junior partner and general manager of T. Cook & Co. To Cook's 380,000 acres (153,782 ha) he added the 250,000 acres (101,172 ha) of Keera. For more efficient breeding and fattening of cattle on a large scale, they sold five stations and bought Oakhurst near Boggabilla, Gundibri near Merriwa, and Moogoon and Wyaga near Goondiwindi, in Queensland. Munro actively encouraged the export of chilled beef to Britain: he was chairman of the Australian Chilling & Freezing Co. Ltd at Aberdeen and a director of Pitt, Son & Badgery



Grace Munro, an interesting lady in her things, she established the Country Women's Association throughout New South Wales and was its first president. I earlier Newsletter

Ltd in Sydney. When Cook died in 1912 Munro bought Oakhurst, Wyaga and Gundibri from his estate. Although he di d not own it, he had retained Keera as his home and on Cook's death, he own right. Amongst other exercised his option to purchase it b ack from the estate. He had married Grace Emily Gordon on 14 July 1898 at Warialda. With his sons he later formed the Gundibri Estate Co. Pty Ltd, the Dingwall Pastoral Co. and the Keera Pastoral Co.

An authority on breeding beef-cattle and horses, Munro imported published her story in an Shorthorn and Aberdeen Angus cattle from the United States of

America, Scotland and New Zealand and used the Angus-Shorthorn cross to produce high-quality steers for market, winning numerous prizes at livestock shows. He founded the Wyaga merino sheep and Oakhurst poll merino studs; he also bred Canadian Berkshire pigs. He was for many years, chairman of the Warialda Pastures Protection Board and a council member of the Graziers' Association of New South Wales.

Chairman of the Northern and North Western Racing Association and a member of the Australian Jockey Club, Munro imported the stallion, Thespian, from New Zealand and successfully bred and raced horses throughout New South Wales and Queensland for seventy-six years. His biggest wins were the A.J.C. Metropolitan in 1921 with Laddie Blue and the Doncaster in 1931 with Sir Chrystopher. As a young man he rode his own horses at picnic race meetings: later such famous jockeys as Myles Connell and Jim Munro rode for him. He was patron of many country and picnic race-clubs as well as the Inverell Polo Club.

Hugh Munro was a staunch Presbyterian: he financially supported churches at Bingara and Canberra, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital in Brisbane, and

HR Munro at the races

Rev. John Flynn's Aerial Medical Service. After World War I he made part of Keera available for soldier settlement and after World War II part of Gundibri and all of Cubbaroo.

He was tall, with twinkling blue eyes and waxed moustache and often wore a topee and leggings. He loved Scottish literature, especially the works of Scott and Burns and their Australian counterparts A. L. Gordon and A. B. Paterson. Rarely at home at Keera for more than a few days, he travelled constantly—and, although a member of the Australian and Royal Sydney Golf clubs, used the Australia Hotel as his Sydney base.

Survived by his wife, daughter and two sons, Munro died on 14 February 1958, his ninety-sixth birthday, at his daughter's home at Walcha, where he had flown to attend a race meeting at which his horse won. He was buried in the Presbyterian section of Bingara cemetery. A portrait of Munro by Gundars Eglentals is held by his family.

Vale Bruce Munro

Bruce Harvey Munro passed away on the 24th June this year after some time in hospital.

He was the son of David Frank Aubrey Munro and Alice Munro, (nee Harvey) and younger brother of Marjorie Rowlands. Bruce had a wonderful life with his wife Joan (deceased), son John and daughter, Sue Scott. Sue cared for him for the last five years in her home in Kingston, Victoria.

He was very proud of his family name and his Scottish heritage. The funeral celebrated this with the tartan and crest on full show and a piper performing during the ceremony.

Bruce lived in Sydney until his move down south. During this time Marjorie, Bruce and some of their cousins formed a group to maintain the gravesites of Munros departed. They also met regularly to research the family tree. Marjorie was the main mover and motivator but she was ably backed by Bruce, Joan and Marj's husband, Rol. One highlight was the gathering of the tribe's generations in 1988 to celebrate the arrival in Australia (Victoria) of their ancestors James Thomson Munro and his wife, Elspet.

In 2007 a call went out from the castle at Foulis to dedicate a tree to be planted on the estate. Bruce was very proud to be able to respond to the request. A Beech stands on the hillside dedicated to Joan but now also as a means of his linking up with his Munro roots in Scotland.

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 80 and over:	Half Ten Year Dues	\$80.00

Clan Munro (Association) Australia Newsletter

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