



# Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

Volume 17 Issue 2

September 2019

## Blether

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Don

The 2019 Gathering is over and as predicted was very special, you can read Ray Munro's report in the newsletter. When I got Ray's report I was surprised to see the the village of Beaulieu featured in the Gathering. Beaulieu is famous for its ruined Valliscaulian monastery known as the Beaulieu Priory but did you Outlander fans know when you visited Beaulieu, that the priory featured in that popular series. Beaulieu was owned by Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat and grand uncle of Jamie Fraser in the series. Ray was going there but took a wrong turn and ended up in the Priory Hotel instead but was very impressed with the facilities there!!

As reported in our previous newsletter, Margaret Delane has completed a photo book about g g-grandfather, James Angus Munro, who was a successful manufacturer and businessman in Melbourne who died in 1947.

Margaret has prepared a scaled down version for the newsletter and you can read it on Page 4

There are quite a few member reports and stories in this newsletter and I would encourage you all to send me in your family, work or hobby stories. They are what makes the newsletter interesting and they are a big help to me in preparing it.

We have had a success in finding the relations of Joseph Edward Munro and returning his Commemorative Plaque to them See Page 6

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.

## Welcome

One new member this month, Merryl Ann Munro a Certified Practising Accountant who was born and grew up in Townsville. At the age of 8, Merryl started highland dancing and is now a Teacher, SDAA Examiner and SOBHD Judge. Merryl opened a highland dancing school in 2014 and currently has two students who compete and some adults who come for fitness and she has recently started Scottish Country Dancing for something different. Merryl is descended from Daniel Munro from Greenock who came out to Queensland and settled in Townsville. Daniel's father was Alexander Munro, who farmed near Tain in the north of Scotland before 1840. Merryl actually joined a year ago when Bet & I were in Scotland but I lost her application form when we got back & we have just recently reconnected.

## THE MUNRO GLAN GATHERING 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019

This very full account of the Gathering is by Ray Munro, so many thanks to Ray for his excellent report.

### DAY ONE.

Peering out the window on Friday, the first day of the Gathering, I shuddered at the sight of the weather which was anything but ideal for what lay ahead for our outdoor activities. However, I took heart in that the tenacity of the Scots and in particular the Munro Clan would not let a bit of rough weather get in the way of a good time.

The meeting point on the first morning was close by the River Ness. Most attendees were staying in Inverness so for us it was a short walk to board the buses for the start of the day's activities. My family, consisting of three generations of Munro males, namely my eldest son, grandson and myself, together with my wife and daughter-in-law met Michele and Ashley Morley, fellow Aussies, for the first time whilst boarding the bus. Our bus consisted of a mixture of Americans, Canadians, English, French, Swiss and of course us Aussies.

Once underway we left Inverness and travelled along Loch Ness to Dornie and District Community Hall situated at Kintail, Wester Ross. Here, whilst having lunch, we were given the history of the Battle of Glenshiel by members of Historic Scotland, including the Archaeologist who has carried out extensive work on the battle site. The talk was accompanied by an array of artifacts such as ammunition and mortar fragments found at the site as well as a large wall map and literature relative to the battle. Our clansman, Brigadier General (Ret) Hugh Monro then gave us a rundown of the actual battle in an exuberant and animated manner. He emphasized the fact that the Munro's were on the winning side.



Meanwhile, on a rotational basis each bus load of attendees journeyed to Eilean Donan Castle, which in 1719 acted as the Jacobites base. This castle was destroyed by the British Navy in the same year. In 1932 it was restored by the McRaes. Latterly the castle is best known by being featured in many movies such as a James Bond and the "Highlander".



A short ride in our buses then took us to the site of the Battle of Glenshiel which was fought almost to the day 300 years ago. Here, at the side of the road where the memorial now stands, our Chief, Hector laid a wreath in honour of those Munros who fought in the battle. The Brigadier, whilst cursing the weather, gave another spirited speech pointing out how and where the battle was fought. Many of our fittest members, led by Finian the Chief's son holding the Munro flag crest proceeded to climb the steep slope from the Conical Hill (where the memorial is) while the rain continued to fall.

Following our return to Inverness we rested and prepared for the official reception that evening at the Inverness Town House hosted by the Lord Provost of Inverness, Helen Carmichael. We enjoyed the food, drink and of course the company of our fellow Clan members in what can only be described as an exceptional building. During the evening we met up with the remaining Aussies, Heather Elsa and Chris Green.

Our Chief, Hector half way through the proceedings announced that he had received a call from his friend, the Earl of Cromarty that he, being the sponsor of the Strathpeffer Highland Games was forced to cancel the same owing to the shocking state of the grounds because of the heavy rains. The first time that this has ever happened in the Game's history. Hector told us that he and his team would consider what they could arrange as alternatives overnight. We all returned to our abodes at about 2100 hours.



## DAY TWO.

After arriving at our departure point we boarded the buses and proceeded to Strathpeffer where we would base ourselves at the Victorian Strathpeffer Pavilion. Upon arrival Hector advised that because there would be no Games and no visit to Castle Leod Gardens he had arranged for us to visit the town of Beaully in the afternoon.



The Eagle Stone

As a surprise the Strathpeffer and District Pipe Band, who would have been at the Games, agreed to play for us outside the Pavilion. Following this performance we enjoyed lunch whilst watching the Highland Dancers, who also would have been at the Games, perform for us. Immediately after lunch some of us visited the Eagle Stone which may have marked the burial place of Munros killed by a fight with the McKenzies. The stone is also associated with the Prophecies of the Brahan Seer.

We were then taken to the town of Beaully where luck prevailed in that they were holding their yearly fair. The folk of Beaully must have been surprised by the sudden appearance of so many visitors but happy for the extra income that we would generate. At about 1700 hours we returned to the Strathpeffer Pavilion for a sumptuous buffet dinner, drinks and of course accompanying highland entertainment.

Because of the cancellation of the Highland Games and visit to the Castle Leod Gardens, the Earl of Cromartie, accompanied by his son and heir, graciously accepted Hector's invitation to dine with us. The Earl gave an eloquent speech detailing the history of his family's castle and their place in the highlands.



Beaully Priory

## DAY THREE.



Arriving at Foulis Castle right on noon we were greeted by the traditional pipe band welcome. From the start I realized that this visit would be all go as there were several items on the agenda that I must attend. Hector made his welcoming speech on the steps of the Georgian Castle and introduced the members of his family, both new and old. He made special mention of the passing of his mother late last year; a woman most loved and respected within and outside the Clan.

First stop for me, after the official part of the afternoon, was a visit to the Highland Wildlife Photo Exhibition which proved to be first rate and presented in spectacular vivid colours. At 1330 hours we joined the Local Archaeological talk held in the basement of the Castle. This involved a talk by Susan Kruse of ARCH (Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands) on the survey carried out on the Graveyard at Kiltearn Old Kirk. The survey received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Kiltearn Community Council, Archaeology Scotland and the Clan Munro Association. Susan outlined the findings of the survey and some of the history of the Kirk which may be summarized as follows:

- The Kirk itself was constructed in 1790/91 for the sum of between 700 and 750 pounds.
- Seven hundred people could be accommodated for daily services in the church and for the important members of the Parish there were two Lair's Lofts situated inside for their comfort.
- The survey revealed that there are over 400 head stones in the church yard. The earliest stone is dated 1670.
- There are 196 Munro head stones and two Foulis Wall Enclosures.
- The standing building survey of the ruined Kirk was carried out by Lynne McKeggie who is also an archaeologist.
- During the survey it became apparent that moss and particularly lichen were affecting the integrity of the head stones and other stonework and that Yew trees were causing havoc in the grounds.

- An interesting character associated with the Kirk was the Reverend Thomas Hogg. The Reverend, who was the Rector in 1654, was deposed as a Protester and forced out. Many years later in 1690 he was reinstated. He died in 1692.
- After construction of the Kirk it was declared that no person could be buried within the church confines. It is believed, however, that many well-to-do persons used their influence to by-pass this rule and are buried inside the Kirk.
- Susan advised that following a request to those responsible for the care of the ruined Kirk that permission would be granted so that the floor may be excavated.

Immediately following the archaeological talk we stayed on for the Munro DNA Project update. Mark Monroe and Colin Munro who are researchers for the Project explained in detail what DNA testing would achieve. The types of testing may be categorized as follows:

- YDNA which tests the male line and is a male only test.
- Mitochondrial DNA for the maternal line and can be carried out by both males and females.
- Autosomal DNA male or female and matches could be on paternal or maternal side.

The Munro DNA Project has identified three large groups and many smaller groups. One of the larger groups is the Munro of Foulis family line. The Munro Clan consists of many different male lines.

Margaret Bardin, one of the administrators of the Project, gave all present a rundown of how to join and order a DNA test within the Munro Project. Hopefully more members of the Clan will take this up so that further data may be forthcoming.

I have been part of the Project for many years and receive regular reports of people with whom I have a common ancestor. Currently I am on a Y-DNA37 marker and intend to upgrade to Y-DNA67 in the near future to hopefully increase the detail of my line.

After a quick BBQ lunch on the Castle's lawn whilst listening to the entertainment in the marquee I rushed to the Whisky Tasting held in the Dining Room of the Castle. An event I could not miss. As with the previous Gathering, the tasting was sponsored and conducted by the Glenmorangie Distillery. This has become my favorite single malt whisky and at this tasting we sampled three different single malts, all excellent.



The Whisky Tasting was a very popular event on the itinerary. So much so that there were three sittings all of which were at capacity. It must be mentioned that most of the award winning barley produced at Foulis by the Chief ends up at the Glenmorangie Distillery.

After the Whisky Tasting it was sadly time to say goodbye to old and new friends until the next Gathering God willing in 2024.

### *Munros on Wheels*

*This is the scaled down version of Margaret Delane's story of her ancestor James Angus Munro of Edinburgh and Melbourne.*

Most people who are familiar with Melbourne will know the Queen Victoria Markets on Elizabeth Street. But possibly of greater interest to Clan Munro members is the large city block adjoining the markets, which was in the Munro family for over 100 years before being sold to the Melbourne City Council (MCC) in 2014 for the grand sum of \$76 million.

Known as the *Munro site*, this 6462sq metre lot on the corner of Queen and Therry Streets, is currently being redeveloped by the MCC into a large-scale residential and community hub alongside a renewal of the entire Queen Victoria Market Precinct.



The facade of the original Mercat Cross Hotel, built on one corner of the site by the Munro family, is being incorporated into the redevelopment and will continue to be known as *Munro's Corner*. A newly created *Munro Lane* is also to be included, as a tribute to the historic legacy of the Munro family.

### The story behind the *Munro site*

In 1890 Edinburgh-born James Angus Munro arrived in Melbourne with his new wife, Florence, and immediately established his own importing, retail and manufacturing business, Jas. A. Munro & Co. His early premises included a sawmill and factory for the manufacture of wire mattresses and bedding.



In 1909, with the business quickly expanding, James purchased the current *Munro site* from McEwen's Hardware Co. for 19,000 pounds. This original landholding covered 2.5 acres and included a frontage along 493-503 Elizabeth St. (The Elizabeth Street corner building was sold in the 1950s and is now a McDonald's fast food store).

By 1910, taking advantage of the surge of interest in motor vehicles, James began assembling and selling the popular Clement-Bayard cars, which he imported from France. James' brother Robert lived in Paris and was a key connection in the process. Other luxury cars imported from Europe included the French *MORS*, the Belgian *Imperia*, the Italian *S.C.A.T.*

**THE NEAT AND NATTY**  
**FRENCH BAYONET CAR**

The 10/12 h.p. Bayonet.  
 At the recent Hill Climbing Contest the little 8/9 h.p. Model was **THIRD** in the Open Event against Cars of All Powers.  
 At the recent Petrol Consumption Test the 10/12 h.p. Model ran **33 MILES** on a SINGLE GALLON of Benzine.

AGENTS—**James A. Munro & Co.**  
 493-503 Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

ALSO—  
 The Victorious Crossley, Exclusive Mors. Self-starting S.C.A.T.,  
 Simple Clement-Bayard, Speedy Imperia, and N.B. Cars.

*Jas. A. Munro and Co advertisement. Punch Melbourne, Dec 1913 (Source: www.trove.nla.gov.au)*

and the British *Crossley*. In 1912, James exhibited cars at the Victorian Motor Exhibition in Melbourne and he was a regular exhibitor at the Royal

Society Show Grounds each year, continuing even throughout the First World War when some makes of cars became impossible to procure.

In addition to the motor vehicles, James continued his bedding manufacturing business on the site. Jas. A. Munro & Co. also operated a company called Brown Springs, and later constructed a row of red brick shops along the Therry St frontage of the site, which were leased out to a variety of traders for many decades.

During the 1920s, James extended his car-trading business to Sydney, where he had a showroom on Castlereagh St.

James' sons Alex and Archie Munro were heavily involved in the family business even after the death of their father in 1947. Archie's son and grandsons eventually took over the site and kept it in the family until its sale in 2014.

### The Scottish connection



*Alexander Munro's nephew and grandsons performing their cycling tricks on one of his velocipedes, about 1868 (Source: Barbara Neill, UK)*

James Angus Munro was the son of Alexander Munro, a prominent master coach-builder at the Broughton Market in Edinburgh for many decades from about 1842 onwards. Alexander also had a cab business in connection with the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway.

Alexander was something of an inventor, and in the late 1860s he became one of the first people in Scotland to manufacture the Parisian bicycle, known as the velocipede or "boneshaker". At one stage he had about 30 employees making velocipedes at his Broughton



*James Angus Munro showing his bicycle-riding skills to son Archie, 1899 (Source: Bob Munro, Melbourne)*

Market site, selling them in Scotland and overseas. Alexander also ran a "training school in the art of driving the Parisian bicycle". Young James Angus Munro grew up in this environment of coach and bicycle building. He and his cousins became expert trick cyclists and

racers from a young age, occasionally performing at local music halls and theatres. No doubt his knowledge of these early modes of transport fuelled his later interest in motor vehicles.

## Remembering Jas. A. Munro & Co.

In 1973, the Victorian Government commissioned artist Harold Freedman to paint a huge mural on the wall of Melbourne's Spencer St Station (now Southern Cross Station). It depicts 100 years of transport in Melbourne from 1835 to 1935. Included amongst the vehicles is a car with Jas. A. Munro painted on the side. This mural has now been somewhat overlaid by factory outlet shops at the station, but can be found at the back of a shop called T-K-Max.

A Melbourne-based vintage car enthusiast is currently conducting further research into the history of Jas. A. Munro & Co. with a view to ultimately writing a book about his significant contribution to the development of the motor car in Melbourne.

*Author: Margaret Delane (Perth, WA) great granddaughter of James Angus Munro*

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*For further info about the development of the Munro site: [www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/Munro](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/Munro)*

**NOTE:** James and Alexander Munro were descendants of William Munro and Jean/Janet (nee Leslie). They were living in Sutherlandshire in about 1790 and then in the Invergordon area of Ross-shire from about 1795 to at least 1806. If any readers can throw any light on this branch of the Munros, it would be much appreciated

### ***Joseph Edward Munro Memorial Plaque***

In a Newsletter in 1917, I told of how I had been sent information about a Memorial Plaque in the name Joseph Edward Munro, together with a request that we find his descendants and pass the plaque to them. Steve Wallis from Tasmania had sent me the information.

This plaque (also called the dead man's penny) was issued to the family of all soldiers who had been killed in WW1. In response to this, two of our members, Natalie Gretton and Elizabeth Bell, searched for and uncovered a lot about Joseph but did not find any relatives. Steve sent me the plaque for safe keeping in April this year, so I searched again and found the same information as Natalie & Elizabeth but was lucky enough to also find relatives through Ancestry.com.



I confirmed that I had the correct family and have now sent the plaque to Bruce Munro whose grandfather, Henry Percy Munro, was Joseph Edward Munro's youngest brother. The catalyst for this was Bruce's wife, Angela, the genealogist in their family. It is interesting to note that Bruce and Angela's youngest daughter, Kate, had been in the army and is now a Major in the reserves.

We are so pleased that we have had a successful outcome and that the medal, together with a letter from Buckingham Palace with the King's signature, has gone to the correct family and to a family steeped in army history. Of course, our thanks must go Natalie and Elizabeth for their research and to Steve Wallis in Tasmania who decided that the plaque should be returned to the relatives of Joseph Edward Munro. The connection there being that Steve's wife, who was off Joseph's family, had died some time previously, they had no children and he had no contact with any of the family.

This is what Angela & Bruce sent to me.

*"Thanks Don the plaque and letter from you have both arrived and thank you very much for sending them both. I have made contact with Steve also to thank him. Will use the information you sent to extend the family tree and hopefully find where we are all connected. Many thanks Angela & Bruce Munro."*

### ***Glen Innes Australian Celtic Festival***

*Patricia and Ken Cotter and John Munro represented us at this year's Glen Innes Australian Festival – this is John's report.*

It had been two years since the call of the Glen beckoned me up the New England Highway to attend the Australian Celtic Festival, an annual event held in Glen Innes, New South Wales. This was its 27th year and had Scotland, one of the eight Celtic regions, as its theme.

The opening ceremony got things underway on the Friday but it was the next day that the real action began with a mammoth street parade. For a while there were concerned looks on the faces of the organisers as it was pouring with rain. However, with just fifteen minutes to go before the scheduled start, the onslaught had become but a drizzle. The parade was made up of many bands dispersed at intervals between clusters of dancers, Celtic groups and clan representatives, each holding their banners. The highest of all were the two Munro standards; one



carried by Patricia Cotter and the other, provided by my aunt, Marjorie Rowlands, by myself. An organised item involving all the pipe bands playing in front of the town hall had to be curtailed due to a persistent sprinkle.

Most of the daytime action takes place in parklands above the town known as the Standing Stones. These are a circle of forty impressive granite monoliths, 3.7 metres from ground level with an average weight of seventeen tonnes. They are based on the Ring of Brodgar, a two thousand B.C. stone circle found on the main island of the Orkney group. A weekend

pass allows access to the site and entry to all events and shows. These include Highland and Celtic dancers, pipe bands, strongmen competitions, tug of war championships and many talented musical performances by groups and individuals held in three large marquees.

A very fine Sunday mirrored the previous day as far as the entertainment went on the hill. This allowed the crowd to attend repeat performances or catch up with items missed on the previous day. It is also when a number of official ceremonies are undertaken. These include separate recognition of Wales, Ireland, Cornwall and Scotland at a flagged area above the main site then later, among the Stones, the moving Kirking of the Tartan where a blessing of the emblems of the clans takes place.



When there was spare time there were many food outlets, stalls and clan tents to visit. Patricia Cotter was on hand in one of the clan tents for anyone seeking information about Munro matters.

For those wishing to party into the night, then it's back to the main street where pubs and clubs cater for the thirsty, hungry and those wishing to be entertained and continue their toe tapping.

Next year's festival will be held from the 30th April to 3rd May and will celebrate Ireland and the Isle of Man. See you in Glen Innes. (Chì sinn thu ann an Gleann Innes.) ..... John Munro (Iain Rothach)

## Anzac Day Sydney 2019

*As usual the Gates family were our representatives at the 2019 Anzac Day Ceremony and Graham Gates again sent his report. We thank Simon Munro Gates for taking over the wreath laying duty this year and doesn't he look smart.*



In accordance with the long standing tradition the enactment of the ceremony, The Scottish Act of Remembrance, was carried out again at the Cenotaph in Martin Place, Sydney on Anzac Day. The ceremony is planned to follow on from the main march of the war veterans through the streets of the city during the morning.

The wreath laying party representing their individual clans, were twenty in number and were accompanied by members of the City of Sydney Pipe Band who then progress to the cenotaph in Martin Place, followed by family and friends, to lay their wreaths. The lament "Mountain Mist" was played by the pipe band during this time. On this occasion Clan Munro Association was



represented by Mr Simon Munro Gates. Sydney experienced perfect weather conditions on the day with the wreath laying ceremony taking place around midday.

***Kirking of the Tartan Perth 2019***



As usual the Kirking of the Tartan Ceremony in Western Australia was held at the Scots Presbyterian Church in Fremantle on June 30. As the day was wet and cold, it was not very well attended but as usual was very moving. The service was conducted by the Moderator of PCWA, Mr William (Bill) MacRae and the bible reading in Gaelic was by Mrs Morag Lowe. Morag also told the moving story of her ancestors as part of the Highland Clearances. We were piped in with our banners, by our Honorary Piper Viv Riley. Shirley Oliver, the event organiser was not able to attend as she was in hospital and we wish Shirley a speedy recovery. Bet was not there either as she had just had a knee replacement. My friend, Greg Smith, came along to give me moral support. The afternoon tea afterwards was up to its usual high standard.

***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

*Clan Munro (Association) Australia  
Newsletter*

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