



Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

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

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Part 1 of Ailsa Stubbs-Brown's autobiography

Ian Munro, the Clan Munro webmaster has sent me an article from the 1986 Clan Munro Magazine. It is by Mrs Munro of Foulis and is a nice follow up to the item on Foulis Castle in this month's Newsletter.

A Visit to Foulis

A Munro wedding in South Australia.

In this month's Can We Help? Section Warren Turner is looking for Isabella Munro. He actually sent in her story but I did not have room to print it, so maybe next time

And, hopefully, there will be more!

Don

Another year has just about finished and what a year it has been – especially at Foulis. In the last eighteen months they have had the wedding of Finnian and Ohma; the wedding of Finnian's sister Isabella and Henry; the visit of Prince Charles to the Storehouse and the great news of the birth of wee Hector to Finnian and Ohma – our chief Hector and Sarah's first grandson and of course, Mrs Timmy Munro's first great grandchild. ***I hope the harvest was good at Foulis this year!!*** There is a little about each of these events in the newsletter.

This month is an all North of Scotland issue featuring Foulis Castle and Lemlair House as well as the stories of two of our families memorable visits to Foulis.

Another success story in the genealogy section. Angeline Phillips read the story of Colin Munro III in our newsletter while looking for Mary Neill Young who just happened to be the wife of Colin Munro. Angeline emailed me to ask for help in contacting descendants. Too easy – we have three members from that family as members, Gail Munro, Ken Besley & Neil Munro, so information is flying back and fore across the ether. What a pity another member of that family, Ailsa Stubbs-Brown, is not here to see this connection.

Having mentioned Ailsa – I was going to start her story in this issue but have had to hold it back until the next one

Another success without even using the "Can You Help" section. I found a letter in the Clan Munro Scotland "Looking for your Roots" section from Caroline Ellinson looking for relatives of Alexander MacGregor Munro from Elgin. This rang a bell & I found that Helen Munro had been in contact with me in 2003 about what seemed to be the same man and indeed it turned out to be the case. Now two South Australian families who had lost contact over the years are now back in touch & happily sharing information.

Ian Munro, the Clan Munro's webmaster, tells me that it was decided at the meeting on 2 Oct. 2010 to postpone the International Gathering at Foulis till 2014, the actual date will be decided next year. The reason for the delay is that the Olympics are in London in 2012 at the same time as we would be having our gathering. In 2014 we have the Commonwealth games in Scotland and it will be 700 years since The Battle of Bannockburn so it seemed a good year to have our gathering.

Welcome To Our New Members

Unfortunately none this month

News From Foulis

Hector Anthony John Munro of Foulis



Usually we send congratulations to our members who are the proud grandparents of their newly arrived grandchildren and so it is with this new arrival but with a difference, in that this is Hector Anthony John Munro of Foulis. So we send our congratulations not only to the proud parents, Finnian Munro the Younger of Foulis and Ohma but to the Grandparents, our Chief Hector Munro of Foulis and Sarah and Great Grandmother, the lovely Mrs Timmy Munro of Foulis. As you can see from the pictures Hector is a bonny wee boy.

Finnian & Ohma were planning a visit to Australia for Christmas but have decided that Hector is too young for such a long journey. Hopefully we will see them out here next year.

The Wedding of Isabella Munro of Foulis and Henry Duncan Blake



On 10th July 2010, Isabella Munro of Foulis was married to Henry Duncan Blake. The Rev Alan Carr delivered a wonderful ceremony in the Foulis Castle courtyard with 140 guests in attendance. Afterwards, the congregation, led by a piper, walked up to Foulis Mains to enjoy a dinner and ceilidh reception in a marquee. The following day, the couple left for an adventurous honeymoon in the Italian Dolomites.



Foulis Castle

Many of us have had the privilege of visiting the seat of our clan, the home of the Munros. This short description of Foulis Castle has been taken from the Clan Munro website where you can find many very interesting information sheets. Check them out at www.clanmunro.org.uk/ following this item are some stories by our members of their visit to the Castle and to the site of the tree planting project.

The 'tower and fortalice' of Foulis is mentioned in 1587, and documents were being signed there long before that date (e.g. 1491, 1511).

Fragments of an older building and massive foundations were found during the 20th century restoration of the present castle, and a barrel-vaulted chamber in one of the courtyard buildings, with 'inverted keyhole'

gun-ports giving a defensive field of fire date from the 15/16th century.

For some idea of what Foulis was like when it formed a rallying-place for the clan in times of trouble we have only a Mackenzie diatribe in which it figures as 'caisteal biorach, nead na h-iolair' (castle gaunt-peaked, the eagle's nest), in allusion to the chief's heraldic emblem.

Finding his home a semi-ruin after the '45, Sir Harry Munro set about rebuilding. A window in the central tower overlooking the courtyard bears the date 1754, while on the other side, facing the Cromarty Firth, a large Georgian mansion house became the main feature of the castle, with a heraldic panel dated 1777 above the new entrance doorway.



After his father's death in 1781 the work was carried on by young Sir Hugh, but after his young wife was drowned while bathing in the Cromarty Firth (1803) he spent little time in the North. The castle and grounds were neglected and the contents dispersed, and under the 1776 entail the castle passed in 1849 to a distant and quarrelsome cousin, 'Munro of Culrain. There had been a costly litigation, and Foulis was only gradually rescued from its derelict state, but by the time he inherited in the 1880s, Sir Hector Munro had made it once more a family home.

With the complete restoration which his grandson, Captain Patrick Munro, and his wife were able to carry out in 1957-59 and 1977-79, Foulis now stands much as it did when it took its present form two centuries ago. *(Next month we will have a description of that restoration – Ed)*

Ian (Darby) and Patty Munro's visit to Foulis Castle

With an introduction from Don and prior phone call to Sarah Munro we arrived at Foulis Castle in the afternoon on Wednesday 9th June on a variable but generally fine day. Having confused myself as to the directions to find Sarah we stopped in front of Foulis to ask directions from a lady who was gardening. I was told about the trouble with the rabbits and the requirement for the foliage of the bulbs to die before clearing such that the nutrients from the plants return to the ground and bulb before clearing the dead foliage away. I was then given directions to go to the house behind the castle. I then realised this was Hector's mother enjoying her garden.

We traveled along the avenue of trees planted between the castle and the house (Foulis Mains). All trees are mature and doing exceptionally well. Some of these trees had been donated by the Australian branch of the Clan.

We met Sarah at Foulis Mains and we were invited in for a cup of tea and biscuits and introduced to her daughter in law Omah who was expecting a child and grandchild for Hector and Sarah. We were then invited into Hector's office to meet Hector in farming mode and view the "Book of Trees" which is under production. The book gives the precise history of the trees planted on the Foulis Estate from donations received for dedications and commemorations and will be an excellent and well produced record.

Then we drove with Sarah to the higher ground behind the castle to see the planted birch trees. These trees are planted as a long grove and a swath across the side of a high ridge giving spectacular views south and east along the Cromarty Firth all the way to the Moray Firth and beyond to the sea. This is an incredibly beautiful place chosen for dedicated and commemorative acknowledgement. This place is quite spiritual and moving and a fine selection for its purpose. Thanks to Sarah and all others involved with



Sarah with Darby at the tree planting site

the selection. Every tree is recorded and we were shown the two trees we had dedicated to family members.

The thoughtfulness and effort gone into selecting and planting this site was above our expectations and we left humbled with our spirits lifted from our experience.

Craig Carter & Robyn Nettleton's visit to Foulis Castle

In Sept and Oct 2009, my wife Robyn Nettleton and I travelled through Germany, Scotland and England, principally to visit family and friends. In Scotland, we met up with Joan Couper, my father's cousin, (nee Munro and spitting image of my now deceased grandmother, Jesse Simpson Carter nee Munro) and her two daughters, Deborah Lawson and Alison Ross, all of whom I had not seen since 1976/77. Deborah and Alison and their families showed us unbelievable hospitality during our stay at their lovely homes in Edinburgh and near Perth. We hired a car to travel up to Inverness from Edinburgh where we could launch our visit to Foulis Castle and Munro country. Don and Bet Munro had given us good advice on what to see and also where to stay there – his nephew's Craigside Lodge Guesthouse. Ewan and Amy made us feel very welcome and Amy made the best porridge I've tasted. After we arrived, I initially sent an email to the Munros at Foulis Castle, but next morning after porridge and black pudding, I phoned the Clan Chief's number and spoke to his wife who put me in contact with Mrs Munro, her mother-in-law. Mrs Munro said that she was going out for lunch, but if we drive up from Inverness now she could show us over the Castle. (Normally she likes at least 48 hours notice, so we were lucky and appreciative that she could accommodate us).

Arriving at the Castle about 30 minutes later, Mrs Munro greeted us at the front door and took us into her 'lived in' contemporary living room, where she made us Australians feel very welcome. After a 'get to know each other' chat, Mrs Munro lead us through the more formal but still inviting rooms and corridors within the Castle. In the formal lounge, there was a magnificent floor rug, which Mrs Munro used as an example of the generosity that clan members have displayed in helping to maintain the Castle. A generous donation by an American Clan member made this possible. It was hand stiched in Portugal and took a team of women a year to complete (*I will give you the full story of that in our next newsletter - Don*). An acoustic phonograph sat in one corner, which had been kindly restored by another supporter. The walls throughout the castle were adorned with paintings of ancestral family members and memorabilia such as the interesting clock near the bottom of the staircase.

One of the highlights of the tour was the visit downstairs to the original kitchen/bakehouse - a very spacious room full of old world implements for preparing and cooking. It was the Queen Mother's favourite room 'downstairs', when she visited. Mrs Munro showed us through to the courtyard that allows access to farm stay accommodation and some remaining parts of an earlier 'fortress type' castle that had been destroyed by fire (rival clan to blame) after the rising of 1745. I was interested to hear that the current guests were German engineers, who (like me) are involved in building wind farms.



At the end of the tour, Mrs Munro showed us amongst other publications, some past issues of the bi-annual Munro Clan Magazine. The back page of one edition had a photo of the Queen Mother with the Munro family at the Castle. Being an admirer of the Queen Mother, I decided to purchase this back issue. This prompted Mrs Munro to tell us the story of how the Queen Mother had written to the family about forty years before she died to ask if she could picnic on the Munro estate on her travels through to land that she had recently acquired. Mrs Munro responded by saying "better still come for lunch". This she did on an annual basis for the next forty years, the last visit for lunch being when she was 101 years old. Mrs Munro felt very privileged to have known the Queen Mother as a personal friend over so many years.

The seat of the Munro Clan, Foulis Castle, differs from others we visited, being a lived-in castle with a warm welcoming feeling and not a lifeless museum and the centre piece of a working farm which provides a tranquil and scenic setting.

On our return, we stopped at the Storehouse of Foulis on the edge of Cromarty Firth, which does accommodate an interesting museum depicting the history of the Munro Clan and the local environment. There were many subtle variations of the Munro tartan on display, as there had been at Foulis Castle. The Storehouse is apparently the best remaining example of a 'rent house', where farmers once paid 'rent' to store and dispatch their produce. We had a lovely lunch at the adjacent restaurant, which according to Mrs Munro, had been doing a more consistent and vibrant trade since a new lessee started offering well priced meals and a farm shop with local produce that has appealed to the local community and not just seasonal tourists.

This visit was to be one of the most memorable events on our six week holiday. Our time in the UK ended with a visit to Poole to stay with another of my father's cousins – Jimmy Munro and his wife Marjorie, who both visited us in Perth (WA) around ten years prior. They made us most welcome and showed us around their adopted corner of England.

Lemlair House

This is the story of the restoration of Lemlair House by an Inverness businessman. It was published in the Press & Journal by Susan Welsh and I have been given permission to use it. Check out their website at www.pressandjournal.co.uk The house was on sale recently for £1.2 million so if you would like a summer residence in Scotland, this could be for you!!



Taking on an older property is always a challenge, but the prospect of taking on a home steeped in Highland history and restoring it to better-than-new condition is not a challenge many would accept. But it is one Inverness businessman Mike McAllister accepted when he bought Lemlair House, a superb Victorian mansion on the banks of the Cromarty Firth, about two miles from Dingwall, as the home for his partner and four children. The original mansion was built for the chief of the Munro clan in 1643. The house which stands today was built in 1876 and is thought to have been designed by architect W.C. Joass. The design was unusual as, unlike some Victorian properties which can be dark, the house is very bright thanks to the numerous rooms which have either bay or dual-aspect windows. Set in more than five acres of majestic gardens, Lemlair – the name is thought to come from the Gaelic for "a bare place suitable for grazing horses" – has a long an interesting history. In 1859, it was bought from Sir

Charles Munro of Foulis by "Red John" Munro, and it was his grandson, another John, who built the present mansion, which boasts numerous Munro eagles – the clan symbol. He moved into the house in 1879, and it has had only a handful of owners since, although it has had numerous interesting guests. During World War II, Lemlair became an open house for recreation leave for US, Canadian and Polish troops. And two house guests were rather well known. "The dining-room has a superb ornate wooden fireplace which features a spectacular carved Munro eagle and two lions 'heads,'" said Mike. "I'm told it was hand-made by Andrew Carnegie, son of the billionaire Scottish-American industrialist, who spent time here with the family, hunting, shooting, and so on.



"The fireplace was his way of saying thank you for having him as a guest." The dining-room, a splendid room with ornate ceiling plasterwork, looks like the perfect place for a dinner party, but it didn't look quite as good when Mike first saw it. The plasterwork, which resembles twisted Scottish thistles, had been damaged by water in two corners. "Originally, ornate plasterwork was made using horse hair covered in plaster," said Mike. "We were keen to restore the house properly using as many original items and methods as possible so got a specialist firm from Edinburgh in to restore it the old-fashioned way."

The sitting room, a lovely bright room in Arts and Craft style with bay and dual-aspect windows, features a gift said to be from another guest, a superb fireplace and surround by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. "Some of the stained-glass panels were broken, but these were remade by an artist from Ardersier who spent three weeks with us replacing and restoring the stained-glass windows in the house," said Mike. "She did a fantastic job and it's impossible to tell which are originals and which are new." It's this attention to detail, and a willingness to spend two years upgrading from top to bottom, that makes the house spectacular. Original features have been lovingly restored, while new features such as bathrooms and shower-rooms are luxurious, and the electrics, plumbing and central-heating system are all state-of-the-art. The accommodation, which is spread across three floors, begins with a large, open-fronted veranda with a tiled floor which leads to the front door and ensures that callers stay dry on wet days. The ground floor has a grand reception hall with exposed oak flooring and a sweeping staircase.

Accommodation includes a superb drawing room with panoramic views across the gardens and towards the Cromarty Firth; sitting room; dining-room, and superb family kitchen with a stunning Christian kitchen with a central island, numerous wall and floor units, polished granite worktops, a custom-made glazed-pine dresser and an Aga. There's also a large, practical utility room; office with broadband; steam shower-room; boiler room with twin oil-fired boilers, and an enclosed staircase which leads to a family games room. A dramatic large stained-glass

window adorned with symbols of the Munro clan lets plenty of light flood the hall and broad staircase.

The first floor has six large room bedrooms, many with dual-aspect windows and numerous period features, including fireplaces, high ceilings, deep skirtings and ornate plasterwork, as well as a luxurious cloakroom, bathroom and en-suite shower-room. Bedroom six has a pretty stained and leaded window opening to the roof over the veranda. The second floor has three large bedrooms and a stunning library with built-in mahogany bookcases, a period fireplace and two large dual-aspect windows offering spectacular views.

Outside, substantial wrought-iron gates with sandstone pillars lead from the public road to a drive which meanders through the grounds to a gravel parking area to the front of the house.



The grounds are impressive and, in the past, a team of 19 gardeners looked after them. "We have a photograph of the house and grounds taken during the Victorian era which shows a large kitchen garden," said Mike. "The small trees in the photographs are now majestic and mature specimens." The peaceful and well-maintained grounds feature a great variety of plants, including azaleas, rhododendrons and flowering shrubs. A wooden deck and pergola on the lower lawn is the ideal place to soak up the stunning views.

Prince Charles at Foulis

When Hector told me that Prince Charles had visited the Storehouse, I asked what was the reason for the visit and below was his reply. The full story of his visit including the close relationship between the Queen Mother and Foulis can be read on the Clan Munro Scotland website at http://www.clanmunro.org.uk/prince_charles.htm

The reason Prince Charles, or the Duke of Rothesay as he likes to be known in Scotland, came was that on the death of his grandmother he inherited the Castle of Mey, near Dunnett in Caithness and with that came a desire to try to help in some way the relatively isolated area comprising the three northern counties, Ross, Sutherland & Caithness.

HRH has been instrumental in setting up 'Mey Selections' highlighting the quality of the food and drink from the area, 'North Highland Initiatives' and 'North Highland Tourism'. The Storehouse was chosen as an exemplar gateway site for these initiatives and in February, Clan Munro Heritage Ltd the body that has a 99 year lease of the site, sublet the offices I used for the past 10 years in the upstairs of The Old Renthouse or Storehouse to North Highland Tourism. Prince Charles agreed to visit on his way up to Castle of Mey to meet the various people working in these organisations as a way of helping to promote and encourage the whole concept of the good things about the Northern Highlands.

All very commendable. Let's just hope it brings more awareness of what is a fairly deprived & remote area based on a fragile rural economy.

Congratulations



Bruce & Lindsay Munro are over the moon at the birth of Hamish Bruce, courtesy of their son Lachlan Harold and his wife Sara Sedgley. Hamish is Bruce & Lindsay's ninth grandchild but would you believe, only their second grandson and that is just one reason why he is so special.



Ben Wyvis

This is an email I received from Bill Munro from Sydney on his return from Holiday. Bill is originally from Forres and is an avid hill walker and says that he has been lucky enough to have tramped over 2,000 kilometres in the mountains of the South Island New Zealand and has had some wonderful experiences there. However, what follows is all Scotland and in fact Ben Wyvis. If you are a hill walker & would like some advice, Bill is happy to help.

I came across your newsletter on the web site; I am recently returned from a holiday in my native Scotland and wondered if any of my fellow clansmen would like to share the view from our clan mountain Ben Wyvis.



Bill on the summit

I made the climb to 'say farewell' to an old great friend, Donald Matthew Munro from Ardgay Ross-shire, who sadly died much too young a couple of years ago. A dram of Glen Morangie was had at the summit to his memory, taken from his grandfathers silver hip flask supplied by my old mate's cousin and my climbing partner Hugh Mackay.



Ben Wyvis at Sunset

I will subscribe to your newsletter and would be happy to offer advice to any clansmen who wish to do some hill walking in Scotland (I have done a fair bit of it and crossed the Highlands from West to East about six years ago). All the very best, Dread God. Bill Munro

Vale Isabel Mary (Mopsy) Munro

We lost a wonderful lady, Isabel Mary Munro, when she died earlier this year at the age of 107 years. Mopsy, as she was known to her family & friends, was remarkable in that she had been sickly as a young lady but struggled through her ill health to become a photo re-toucher, doctor's receptionist, a very fine needleworker and, during the war, she sewed & packed silk parachutes. Mopsy is sadly missed by her family and many friends.

News from the West

Quite a lot has been happening over in the West. On October 17 we had the Clan Donald's first annual lunch. A very pleasant afternoon with MacDonald guests from Adelaide and representatives from the West Australian Clans. We were entertained by an excellent team of highland dancers with the star being a wee lad of about three years old.

Then on November 7, Bet & I once again represented the Munros at a lunch to help the Clan Maclean celebrate the arrival of their Chief, Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart on the first stage of his visit to Australia & New Zealand. This was again an excellent afternoon with a good speech by Sir Lachlan about the clan family and entertainment in the form of the very professional Clan MacLean pipes and drums.

Bet & Don with Sir Lachlan





Start of the march

On November 13. Bet and I had our usual table in the Clan Tent at the annual Armadale Highland Gathering, the largest of it's kind in Western Australia and a very well organised event. There were some excellent performances on the stage and the heavy events drew a large crowd as did the the pipe band competition. The gathering incorporates the annual cycle



Don with two of his lovely granddaughters

classic which is always watched by a large crowd. The most popular event would have to be the the march of the massed pipe bands and the Clan representatives with their banners,

Mark Munro sent this one. My great Grandfather Wallacetown NSW in 1878 and died at Barellan in they lived in Moomboodool for many years. Hector and Marcella had 8 children. It appears that his birth was not registered. His father was Alexander William and mother Louisa Munro (Heyden?). I am looking for any information and family members of Alexander and Louisa. There are references to these two in NSW births, deaths records however I cant be exactly sure if its them. I can be contacted on email: tcinvestigations@inet.net.au

Can You Help ?

Hector Munro was born in 1944. His wife was Marcella Parsell and registered. It appears that his birth was not registered. I am looking for any information and family members of Alexander and Louisa. There are references to these two in NSW births, deaths records however I cant be exactly sure if its them. I can be contacted on email: tcinvestigations@inet.net.au

Arthur Ventham is looking for Mathew Munro who married Susannah Jones in St Stephens Church Newtown on 14th May 1884. Susannah's maiden name was Wilson and she married Mathew after death of first husband. Mathew Munro was born in 1856 to parents John and Margaret Munro & he died on 11th August 1927 age 69 yrs.

Mathew and Susanna had 2 daughters and four sons: Ivy Agnes Bessie Munro (my wife's Grandmother) born 1892 – died 1959 age approx 67 yrs old. Married to Edward Henry Brown; Irene Munro died in 1953. Married to Harold Cliff; Archibald Munro; William Munro died in 1949 aged 62; Albert Munro died 1951 aged 62; Jack Munro died 1963 aged 65. Contact Arthur on arthur.ventham@gmail.com

Warren Turner is looking for descendants of Isabella Munro from Fodderty, Ross & Cromarty. Isabella's parents were Donald Munro & Isabella/Betty Cameron. She married Kenneth MacLennan, a tailor, in 1839 & they moved with their family to Victoria on the "Australia" in 1853. Two of their children were William & Isabella, William's great, great, grandmother, who married John Harvey McKerrow. They moved to Ellesmere in NE Tasmania leaving the rest of the family Forrest Creek (now Mount Alexander). After the Black Monday fires they moved to Ellesmere (now Scottsdale). Isabella's husband died in 1877 & she died in 1888 leaving a large family. If this family rings a bell, contact Warren at tadhgh50@hotmail.com

Membership

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

Annual Membership:	\$25.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years	\$8.00**
Three Years:	\$55.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years (3 years)	\$20.00**
Ten Years:	\$160.00	Spouse or children of member under 18 years (10 years)	\$70.00**

Life Membership is calculated according to age as follows: -

Up to Age 40:	3 X 10 Year Dues	\$480.00
Age 40 to 50:	2 X 10 Year Dues	\$320.00
Age 50 to 60:	1½ X 10 Year Dues	\$240.00
Age 60 and over:	Same as 10 Year Dues	\$160.00
Age 80 and over:	Half Ten Year Dues	\$80.00

* The fees charged include membership of our parent organisation in Scotland

** Correspondence from Clan Munro (Association) Australia will only be sent to the full member

**Clan Munro (Association) Australia
Newsletter**

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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.