

Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

Volume 11 Issue 1

April 2014

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

Chat

This Month

For those of you who receive the newsletter in the new format, I have not abandoned it. He reason for this one is that Chief Hector's article can only be used in the A4 format.

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Next Newsletter

A report on the Clan gathering

A Convict family story

Pauline Munro – a Pioneer Lady

And, hopefully, there will be more!

Our next newsletter will be late in getting to you as Bet & I will not be back from the Gathering until the end of September and unfortunately will miss the Armadale Gathering over here in the West by one day.

Don

Our first article his month is a welcome to the 2014 Gathering by our Chief, Hector Munro of Foulis, which also includes some nice first family information.

The second item is also by our Chief and was prepared for the opening of he new Museum at Fort George. It shows the proud heritage of service his family has in the Seaforth Highlanders and associated regiments. You might need a magnifying glass to read the small print but it is well worth he effort.

It was interesting for me to note that Major General Sir John Laurie, Bt., CBE, DSO is shown, as he was the officer who presented my grandfather's diary of his first year in WW1to the museum. I would love to know where the others are!!

George Munro is not only the clan treasurer but also is a highly recommended tour operator, so if you are looking for someone to drive you round when you are at Foulis contact George at www.munrohighlandtours.co.uk / or www.multwhiskytours.com/ but you had better be quick as George's trips fill up very fast.

Welcome To Our New Members

I am happy to say that we have three new members since our previous newsletter. First we have Margaret Delane from Western Australia whose great grandfather, James Angus Munro & G Grandmother, Florence Smith came out on the "Oroya" to Melbourne in October 1891. Margaret can trace back to her 4 x G Grandfather, William Munro, whose son Donald was born in Kincardine or Invergordon in 1792/3.

Diana Joycelyn Maclean, lives in New Zealand but is originally from Brisbane. Diana traces her family back to her great great grandfather, Donald Munro who was born in 1819 in Knockbain on the Bonnie Black Isle. Diana's family has a long association with the Clan munro

Colin Munro lives in New South Wales and is the son of Colin Munro, the much loved country radio personality and was one of our stalwart members. Colin traces his family on the Munro side to Colin Patrick Munro from Aberdeen who married Margaret Peden whose father was Sir John Peden, son of Magnus Jackson Peden, an original member of the Sydney Stock Exchange and also mayor of Bega and Randwick. He was born in 1834 and his father was David Peden.

A Message from our Chief

Dear Clansmen and Clanswomen,

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you all at Foulis over the Gathering weekend of 26/27th July this year when we plan to have a full and varied programme for you and we hope you will all put aside extra time to explore and enjoy all that Scotland has to offer both before and after our event.

This summer promises to be an interesting and auspicious year for Scotland with the recent announcement by the Scotlish Government that they intend to hold a referendum on Thursday 18th September 2014 for the purpose of deciding whether we become an independent nation again, 411 years since the Union of the Crowns of Scotland & England and 307 years since the Union of the Parliaments. With six months to go there are so many unanswered questions, that at this point in time, I defy anyone to be able to make an informed decision, it is just not possible and until answers are forthcoming, my own perhaps simplistic view is 'If it ain't bust why fix it'! No doubt when you are here in July with less than two months to go you will be able to gauge for yourselves how Scotland will vote.

Following the second year of the archaeological dig in the Castle grounds, both geophysical survey evidence and radio carbon dating, point to a much earlier date for human activity of around 2000 years ago, both for the manmade mound (thought by some in the past to be possibly the original site of the first castle) and the immediate surrounding area. It is a little disappointing that it has proved not to be a 'motte', the name for these early defensive structures but on the other hand as the Munros by contemporary evidence only acquired Foulis in the middle of C14th, it would not have necessarily been occupied by our ancestors anyway. We hope in future that funds may be found to excavate further but in the meantime the grounds have returned to normal.

We now have four delightful grandchildren, three living within easy walking distance and our youngest daughter Aline, her partner Tom who is a surgeon and their adorable daughter Lillah are moving to Sheffield. My wife Alpha continues her invaluable work for traditional Scottish music inspiring youngsters to excel at fiddle playing. Alpha will finish her degree course in Scottish Cultural Studies, with the University of the Highlands & Islands in 2014 and we celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary too. Recently, my mother was awarded an MBE (Member of the order of the British Empire) in the Queen's birthday honours for her work for charities, which we were all thrilled about.

Just before Christmas 2012, Foulis Castle featured as one of ten houses and castles in a lavish 'coffee table' book entitled *The Scottish Country House* by James Knox and published by Thames & Hudson which has led to follow up articles in both Scottish Life and The Scottish Field. We have also just produced a new colour guide book for visitors.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Foulis in July.



The Seaforth Highlanders – A Family Record

By Hector Munro of Foulis

The picture has been composed around an earlier one with 14 related individuals, put together in about 1935 presumably by a then family member. This extended version, now with 27 photographs, was completed to coincide with an appeal for help with renovation of The Highlanders Museum at Fort George.

The Seaforth or 78th and later the 72nd Highlanders were first raised by Kenneth Mackenzie, Earl of Seaforth, in 1778. The regiment was amalgamated with the Cameron Highlanders in 1961 to form the Queen's Own Highlanders, and with the Gordon Highlanders in 1994 to form The Highlanders (Seaforths, Gordons and Camerons). Finally in 2006 The Highlanders became the 4th Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland or 4 SCOTS. The picture includes all those in the extended family who can be traced and who served in the Seaforths or its allied militia regiments and who have served or are serving in the successor regiments.

This note explains in broad terms the relationships between the different family names of those who appear. An asterisk* in the text denotes that the person is shown in the picture.

Nearly all are descended from Major Sir Charles Munro*, 10th Bt of Foulis (1824-1888), John Stirling of Fairburn (1820-1907), and Lt Col Clifton Gascoigne (1835-1903). The key to understanding the links between names is to be found in the marriages listed below:

John <u>Stirling</u> of Fairburn (see above) m. Marion Hartley. They were parents of Major William Stirling of Fairburn*, James Stirling of Laurieston*, and Major A Stirling*; grandparents of Captain WE Stirling* and Brigadier JE Stirling*; and great grandparents of Captain Roderick Stirling of Fairburn*.

Colonel Sir Hector <u>Munro</u> of Foulis*, son of Sir Charles above, m. Margaret Violet <u>Stirling</u>, daughter of John Stirling of Fairburn above. They were parents of Captain HCS Munro* and Eva Marion Munro (see below).

Marion Isabel Stirling, dau of John Stirling of Fairburn above, m. Sir Wilfred Emilius <u>Laurie</u> Bt of Maxwelton. They were parents of Maj Gen Sir JE Laurie Bt* and grandparents of Captain (now Sir) Bayley Laurie*.

Eva Marion Munro (see above) m. Lt Col CH <u>Gascoigne</u>*, son of Lt Col Clifton Gascoigne (see above). They were parents of Captain Patrick Munro of Foulis*, Major RC Gascoigne* and Captain CAH Gascoigne*; grandparents of AED Chamier* and DA Gordon-Ingram*; and great grandparents of Captain JB Gordon*.

Sir John Stirling of Fairburn (son of William above) m. Marjory Kythe <u>Mackenzie</u>:. They were grandparents of JA Mackenzie Yr of Gairloch*.

Charlotte Eva Munro, daughter of Captain Patrick Munro* (see above) m. firstly Captain JWB <u>Donaldson</u>*. They were parents of Captain Robert Donaldson*. She m. 2dly Colonel RCV <u>Hunt</u>*, son of General Sir Peter Hunt*.

Of the names not so far mentioned, General Charles Gascoigne* is believed to have been a first cousin twice removed of Lt Col CH Gascoigne*; Captain CCO Gascoigne* was the latter's elder brother; Maj Gen GGA <u>Egerton</u>* was the stepson of Maj Gen Julius Gascoigne, brother of Clifton (see above); and Maj Gen IA <u>Robertson</u>* married Marjorie, granddaughter of Colonel Sir Hector Munro (see above).

The new picture was assembled in 2012 by Hector Munro of Foulis (elder son of the late Captain Patrick Munro of Foulis*) with the help of his daughter Isabella Blake and his cousin.

The Seaforth Highlanders-A Family Record























































All those shown are either blood relatives or related by marriage and served in The Seaforth Highlanders or its precursor and successor regiments.

Cynthia Munro's Trip to Foulis

I had started three months of back packing around Britain. On this day, my guide and I went first to Fort George then found our way to Evanton and Foulis Castle. I had called the day before and made an appointment to visit as is required. Mrs Munro, our Chief's mother, had answered and made the arrangements herself. She had given directions to my couch-surfer hostess, Frances. Frances was so generous and was taking me around in her car. She was acting as my guide and I'm very pleased she did – I would never have got there though I'm not bad with a map. I'd not have been able to follow the map as well as drive on those extra narrow winding country roads where you can't see where you're going!

The Castle is such an imposing building, even in this country that screams history with an elegant stone

building at every corner. But you could never mistake it for a commercial building. You still get the sense that someone lives here.

We knocked on the door, right on the hour appointed. The front door is up a flight of stairs. It was opened by Mrs Munro herself. She invited us in and apologised for the rowdy attendance of her greatgrandson whom she was babysitting. Young Hector was two and playing with toy trucks in the hallway. He was a charmer, said hello to us both then returned to the important business of ploughing the carpet.



Mrs Munro, widow of the previous Clan Chief and mother of our current Chief was very welcoming and gracious. We went first into the lounge room - a very large and beautiful room in the front left of castle. We sat here for some time while Mrs Munro shared some history of the Clan and some more personal history. She also talked about the building itself. She mentioned that just after the Jacobite rebellion the McKenzies burnt down Foulis. The Clan is actually grateful for that because the Government offered compensation to rebuild. Because of the rebuild in 'the modern era', the current building, built in the Georgian manner is now far more comfortable than they could have been in the original. There have been many more renovations and improvements made over the years. Mrs Munro proudly informed us 'The current Foulis has double doors, double glazing and even insulation in the roof'. In fact, funding from later Governments to maintain and repair have included conditions that the property remains available to public viewing. Mrs Munro explained that the Foulis property itself has been handed over to a Trust. A standard condition is that she is allowed to continue to live there, however young Hector, when an adult, will never be allowed to reside there. Currently, Mrs Munro lives in the front part of the house; her grandson, Finnian the Younger and his Sydney born wife, Ohma, live in the rear of the building with young Hector and his younger sibling. A condition of the Trust is that they must all pay commercial rent. Mrs Munro further explained that she will retire soon and move away. Her role will be taken over by her grand-daughterin-law, Ohma! Yay Aussies!



We were given a tour of the lounge and many of the pieces in the room explained. Even the carpet itself has a story. It is a huge single carpet piece, hand woven in Portugal. It was designed by this Mrs Munro and her

husband. It gave work to 12 women for a year. Even so, it was much cheaper than to buy a local hand embroidered carpet. The size is extraordinary. She did explain that where ever possible local craftsmen have been used when any work is done on the Castle.

The lounge room contained lots of furniture

and it is a functioning lounge for the family. For balls and other major occasions, this is the room used. They must simply shift the furniture to storage, or line it up against the walls.



The dining room was large and elegant. I enjoyed seeing the cutlery service in the big timber

keepers. They look a bit like a large winner's cup but made from timber, or large jewellery boxes. Inside, there are cavities to hold the cutlery. Mrs Munro told us stories of children dropping teaspoons into the wrong sections and the drama to get them back from the bottom of the stands, if even possible.

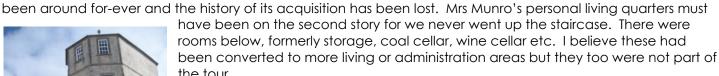
We also went into the kitchen which was huge by modern standards. It had been the working kitchen until 1949 when Mrs Munro was first being

courted and was first the young hostess; it was the kitchen she cooked in. It is now a museum and many pieces that would normally be away in a cupboard are out on view. There were so many interesting pieces. I recognised many items and even a few surprises. The tea brick was one - compressed tea into a solid brick –

the forerunner of the tea bag! You would simply break a piece off the corner, pop it into the teapot and add hot water. Because it was so compressed it was almost preserved and would simply sit on a bench or in a tin for very extended periods.

There were blue glass bottles. They were obviously not drink bottles, but when I asked about them I was surprised to learn they were for fighting fires. They are designed to be filled with water, then thrown at the fires -the reverse of Molotov cocktails.

We were shown a lot of the front of the building and given an explanation of or history of some pieces of furniture. However, as would happen with a family seat of over 800 years, some pieces have simply



We were shown other rooms in the front section of the Castle, including a small room in 'the tower' that housed some very old pieces and historically significant pieces. This was the only time we were given an opportunity to purchase anything. There were a couple of small books on the history of the area and postcards available. Obviously the selling of souvenirs is not a part of their maintenance plan. Purchase was via an honour system with a timber box you drop your purchase money into. Mrs Munro didn't even come into the room. The room was small and I couldn't get any photos – the light was too bad for my camera.

We did go out a back door into the courtyard. It had been snowing so all I could see was a blanket of white snow over everything. Normally there would be

attractive gardens, including a kitchen garden but today, white snow and more white snow. But Mrs Munro wanted us to see the very oldest part of the building. She was very concerned that we walk very carefully on

the snow. What she showed us was almost all that remained of the original castle destroyed by fire in 1745. We crossed a part of the courtyard and she unlocked what appeared to be a cellar door. Inside was a small room, with massive thick walls and low roof. The first thing I thought of was her previous comment about how they were so much more comfortable now because the castle had been burnt down after the Rebellion. The beautiful lounge room we'd been in earlier did seem an incredible improvement on what would have been the case had this castle survived. Talk about cold and inhospitable! All the old dungeon scenes in old movies came to mind.





If you stored food in there I can imagine it all freezing in winter. It probably was not meant as any form of living quarters but the impression of rough stone walls, very thick walls with arched and low ceilings gave me mental images of what the accommodations would have been. Comfortable is not a word that would have been used. The openings in the wall to allow firing through made it clear that these massive walls were for protection, not just to create a barrier to the elements.

The lounge room runs the full depth of the front section of the Castle so these wonderful great buildings are designed to give an impression of a larger building than they are – and are very successful at it. I learned later, that it was a feature of Georgian homes that the windows are built smaller in each successive floor

(usually four stories) to make the whole building appear taller. As you drive up to Foulis, you have an impression of a massive house – and it certainly isn't small but it isn't as huge as you would expect, once you actually get inside. What appears to be Castle from the distance is a false impression. There are separate living and storage areas within the walls and what we'd call 'the Castle' is actually a group of buildings tied together with a large unifying wall around a central courtyard. The only multi-story building was the magnificent Georgian building across the front and 'the tower' behind that.

Don't misunderstand me. I don't want to give the impression in any way that it was a disappointment. Everything about my visit there was wonderful. I whole heartedly recommend visiting to all. I'm only trying to describe as accurately as I can what I saw. It was certainly a great day. It was a special experience wandering around in the home of our Clan Chief. It made me realise that I do hold the Clan Chief in special regard and do offer some filial allegiance. Probably not best to test how far it holds though – wouldn't have appreciated being asked for a big entrance fee. On the other hand, I consider a donation to go towards the upkeep very reasonable. Without the assistance of public funds, I realise it would no longer be there to see. Either it would have been abandoned due to high costs and probably by now be demolished or at least a ruin, or been sold to some foreigner with bags of money and no local heritage. My advice – go see it if you get any opportunity.

The Armadale WA Highland Gathering



Bet and Don Munro once again sat at the Munro table at this, the biggest Highland Gathering in the West. Normally the Gathering features the Armadale Classic Cycle Race but that was moved to another date this year. What took its place was the inaugural City of Perth WA Kilt Run. To explain, in 2011 the City of Perth in Scotland celebrated its 800th anniversary and the town of Perth in Ontario, Canada decided to celebrate this by holding a Kilt Run to see how many participants in killts they could muster. 1089 took part thus entering the Guiness Book of Records for the most runners in a 5km kilt fun run.

The following year they challenged the City of Perth in Scotland to organise a Kilt Run an they took up the challenge but could not

beat the number who competed in the Canadian kilt run earlier that year. This year they challenged the City of Perth WA to compete, they hand balled the run for the City of Armadale to organise a kilt run in conjunction with our Highland Gathering. To their credit, in only three weeks they organised our kilt run which was very successful without going close to breaking the record.

The Run/Walk started at 8.30 AM and Don took part, walking the course in one hour and was recognised as the oldest competitor in the race. He can't wait to take part again next year!!

The Armadale Gathering was once again successfull with the crowds enjoying the pipe bands, highland dancing, highland games, medaeval games and Scottish food including haggin buns!! We spoke to many of the people as they passed through but unfortunately, none of them were Munros!!

Can You Help?

Ellane Garside is looking for any information on Ensign Finlay Munro who died Nov 1803 in Ardersier. Inverness-shire aged 45, (born c 1758). The Battalion was of Scots veterans, so I am assuming he was born Scotland. His widow in applying for LOA said he was "of the parish St Giles in the Fields Middlesex" (central London) There are no Munro records at that church 1750-1760 but there is a family of Dr John Munro who lived in that parish and worked at Bethlehem Hospital London who may be a connection. Dr John was the son of Dr James, who was born Wemys 1680, a son of Alexander Munro Principal of Edinburgh University. Contact Ellane at ellanemg27@gmail.com

Coming Events

Here are a few of the events that are taking place in the next few month. If you are interested in representing the Clan munro at any of them, please let me know – I would love to hear from you.

Bundanoon is Brigadoon Highland Gathering Sat 5th April - Information stalls. Come and under the canopy. Entry adults \$20, child \$10, concession \$18.

A Family, Social & Local History Expo on Sat 12th April 10am to 4pm free entry. Held by the Kiama Family History Centre at Kiama Pavilion Bong Bong Street Kiama. Research groups and Guest speakers to assist you with your research. This event would be well worth a visit for those trying to trace their roots, not necessary those of Scottish decent.

Website: http://www.kiama.com.au/events/event/81545-kiama-family-history-25th-anniversary-family-local-and-social-expo

Act of Remembrance ANZAC March Mon 25th April. Scots meet at Town Hall cnr Bathurst & George Streets near St Andrews to march to the cenotaph after the main march has finished.

Warringah Scottish Society Inc Tartan Night Sat 3rd May 8pm-11pm Collaroy Masonic Hall, Pittwater Rd, Collaroy Beach. Scottish, Old Time, Ballroom and modern dancing with Manly Warringah Pipe Band and highland dancers. Light supper and tea and coffee provided. BYO drinks and other food desired. Raffle and "Lucky Door" prizes. Spot prizes during the Barn Dance. Scottish set dancing to the sound of our Honorary Piper, David Bowers. Members \$6, Members of Scottish Organizations \$6, Non-Members \$12, Invited guests who received written invitations to attend free, Children free.

Genealogy Interest Group Day. Saturday 17th May, from 1-3.30pm at Scottish House Australia, 62 Railway Pde, Granville. Genealogists will show you how to research your family tree, both manually and via the internet using the new WiFi. Afternoon tea will be provided with bottomless tea and coffee. There are only 15 spaces left to fill, so be quick as bookings are essential. All for just \$10pp. Enquiries: Moyna-Ph: 02 4232 1912 Email: moyna34@tadaust.org.au

Gathering O' the Clans – Sat 24th May. "Aunty Molly" is Toni Stevens who entertained us so wonderfully at our Anniversary Lunch last November. She is proud to welcome you to a celebration of Scottish traditions including the pipes, the haggis and, of course, Robert Burns famous "Address to the Haggis" at The Olde Bakehouse Restaurant, Bakehouse Lane, Morisset a short walk from the station, near the Railway Bridge. Commencing at 11am with Morning Tea/Coffee followed by a delicious Caledonian style two course lunch. Tender Highland Whisky Braised Beef with mashed potatoes and traditional vegetables and a wee taste o' the haggis, followed by Apple Shortbread Crumble with cream. \$39.50 pp includes entertainment. To book ring: 4970 5105. A deposit of \$5.00pp is required to confirm you reservation and balance due by 1st May 2014.

Berry Celtic Festival Sat 24th May 9.30am - 4pm. Clans get under Scottish House canopy only \$25! Meet old friends make some new friends. Limited space is available for clans. Contact Carol 9389 1440 or edbudlong@bigpond.com

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Sydney Branch Ball- Sat 31st May. Drinks. 6:30pm for dinner 7:00pm Parramatta Town Hall, 182 Church Street, Parramatta. Music by Chris Duncan, Catherine Strutt and Jennifer Strutt Tickets \$50, students under 18 \$25. Includes all drinks, nibbles, dinner and supper. Contact Pat Charlton 9520 9075 or Jeanette Stephan 9771 5619 email: sydney@rscds.org.au Numbers required for catering by 15th May 2014

Membership

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

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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.