

Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

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Chat

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Don

Congratulations to Wendy Borchers for being awarded Order of Australia Medal (AM) in the New Years Honours List. I found this dedication on the internet.

"A film archivist and researcher from Tuncurry has been awarded a Member of the Order of Australia Medal (AM) for her work preserving Indigenous heritage, through TV and radio. Wendy Borchers mainly worked with the ABC in her 40-year career, including the early days of programs like 'This Day Tonight'.

But Ms Borchers said she takes greatest pride in her work collecting rare historical film and sound for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies."

"There is such a lot of material there, I knew it was a daunting task," she said. "But it was so immersing, so interesting it pretty much changed my life, I think I can say."

I send our newsletter to New Zealand, Scotland, Canada and the USA as well as Australia and I often wonder "do these people read it?" Take our Chief for example. He must receive so much "stuff", that something from Australia might at best, warrant a brief scan through. But that is not the case, for in response to Newsletter No 37 I received no less two Items from Chief Hector. The first was a follow up item to Jillian Oppenheimer's story of Donald Munro and Margaret Macpherson where she mentioned the "meal riots." You can read that on page 5. The second was in response to our "Can You Help" which in this case mentioned one of Hector's ancestors so he sent me a family tree of that ancestor to be passed on to John Collins whose query it was. So maybe it is read!!

Interestingly John Collins mentioned in his query that he had been in touch with Enrique Munro, who lives in Chile. Interesting because when I last looked at my DNA matches in Family Search I see that Enrique Munro has been added as a match to me – a genetic distance of 7 which is a long way back - quite a coincidence. So if you have been thinking about getting your DNA tested let me know and I will tell you how to go about it, you never know who you will find!!

Our newest member, Colin Kemp, was introduced by Ian (Darby) Munro. Thank you so much Ian, we rely to a large amount on word of mouth introductions, so why don't you do as Ian did and pass your newsletter to anyone with Munro connection who might be interested.

Welcome to Our New Members

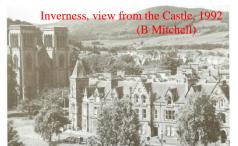
One new member to welcome this month, Colin James Munro Kemp. Colin was born in Texas Queensland but now lives in Brisbane and can trace his family back to Donald Munro and Margaret McPherson whose story we featured in Newsletter 37. How's that for another coincidence!! Colin is descended from Donald and Margaret's eldest son, Alexander George Forbes Munro and joins quite a few other members who are descended from Donald and Margaret.

Alexander Munro 1814 - 1889

As we said at the end of our last extract from Jillian Oppenheimer's "Munro's Luck," Alexander Munro is the next link in this family's chain. We have seen a couple of extracts from Alexander's story before but not a complete story. He is the first convict ancestor I have written about and he is certainly the most successful one we have heard of so far. What is interesting to me, apart from what follows, is that my Johnstone ancestors are also from Ardersier and also married into the Main family - I have not yet managed to find a link between my family and Alexander's yet but you never know.

Alexander Munro, the first link in the chain of Munro migration, was born in Campbelltown (also known as Ardersier) near Fort George on the Moray Firth north-east of Inverness on 18 July 1814. His parents were George Munro and Isobel Main. The Main family seems to have lived for some time at Ardersier and continued to live

there through the nineteenth century. They were mostly fishermen resident in the town who sailed out from its sheltered wharves to fish



in the estuary of the Moray Firth and North Sea to the east. There were also Munros living at Ardersier who combined fishing with crofting. George



Munro's family may have come from Ferrintosh on the Black Isle as his son, Alexander Munro, is said to have had a year's schooling at Ferrintosh. There is the family tradition that he was a 'kinsman' or distant cousin of Donald Munro. As earlier noted, although Ardersier and Ferrintosh seem distant by

land miles they are relatively close across the Firth, so that contact between the two places across the water by boat would not be difficult. Other Munros, Hugh and his brother James, who later benefited from Alexander Munro's assistance in New South Wales were probably more closely connected as they, too, were born in Ardersier. John Munro was another kinsman who, with his son John, were beneficiaries at a later date from Donald Munro's estate and may also have been assisted with passages paid to Australia.



Fort George, with Clan Munro visitors, 1997 [B Mitchell]

Whatever the relationship between the families of Donald and Alexander Munro, there was certainly some contact through the years and clan members would have been aware of the vicissitudes in the life of Alexander Munro. By 1829 he was living in High street Inverness with his mother, then a

widow. With the proximity of Ardersier to Fort George where there was a large establishment of the Black Watch regiment, it is possible that his father may have been one of the numerous Scots enlisted to fight in the Napoleonic wars. Perhaps he was one of the war casualties. Or he may have been one of the many fishermen drowned in one of the numerous accidents at sea. Whatever his end, it is certain that by 1829 Isobel Munro, a widow, was struggling to support herself and her young son as best she could, living as lodgers in a tenement in Inverness and earning a living with domestic or other casual work. Young Alexander, aged fourteen, and describing himself as a fanner's boy, spent time roaming the streets of Inverness with a gang of young friends.

In times of hardship and poverty in the depression which followed the wars, there was considerable petty crime. The Inverness court Baillie or magistrate described the situation, saying that 'shop breaking and theft....I am sorry to say [are] of rather frequent occurrence here of late.'

Alexander Munro was to become a criminal at fourteen years and a transported convict to New South Wales. The incident leading to his conviction which gave him the opportunity to use his energy and thrift to become a wealthy and respected citizen in the young colony is well documented in the Inverness court records. In the spring of 1829, at about 1pm on the evening of Saturday 2 May, Alexander Munro with Simon Mackenzie, aged about fifteen, and Kenneth McLennan, a thirteen year old, broke into the grocery shop of Alexander Cameron in Bridge Street Inverness. They took sixteen shillings and threepence in coppers from the till, two pieces of cheese, a pound of snuff, some raisins and sugar candy. As Alexander Munro was the smallest, he was able to squeeze through the bars or stenchels of the cellar window to gain entry and then opened the back door into the grocery shop from the close at the back of the building. All three boys participated in taking food and money from the shop. Copper coins from the till in the desk were put into Alexander Munro's

bonnet and divided up between the boys after they left the shop. Later, on the Sunday evening when the robbery had been discovered, young McLennan confessed to the police and was subsequently released and let off the charge. It seems that the two other boys were taken that night to be locked up in the Tollbooth.

Isobel Munro, having discovered a stocking of coppers under the mat beside her son's bed, took it to William Ross, a Burgh officer, at seven in the morning before he had got out of bed. She told him that her son had taken it from Cameron's grocery shop. Mackenzie had been before the court four years previously, with three other lads, and admonished for stealing money from one of the churches in the town. It was Munro's first offence, however, and although he admitted his part in the robbery, William Ross, the Inverness Baillie, said that he considered Mackenzie and Munro to be very bad characters and Mackenzie 'to be in the habit of associating with persons of very suspicious character'. At their Indictment in September 1829 it was stated that Mackenzie and Munro 'ought to be punished with the pains of law, to deter others from committing the like crimes in all time coming'. The judge, Lord Gillies, agreed and the two boys, aged fourteen and fifteen years were sentenced 'to be transported beyond seas for the period of seven years'. They were sent to the Inverness Tollbooth until they were removed for transportation to New South Wales.

It was to be more than a year before Alexander Munro left Scotland for his new home. He sailed on the York from Liverpool in 1830, arriving in Sydney on 7 February 1831. There had been 200 convicts on board, two of whom had died on the voyage. He was described in the convict indent as being five feet three and a half inches in height, with brown hair, blueish - grey eyes and a ruddy freckled complexion. He was noted as being able to read and write, although for legal reasons apparently, his court record in Inverness had said that he could not write. His religion was Presbyterian and he had no previous convictions. His accomplice in the crime of housebreaking, Simon Mackenzie, was not on the same ship to Australia. Munro's record notes that he was assigned at once to John Browne of Macquarie Place and he went straight to Patrick's Plains, where he began work for John Browne at Singleton.

The convict system in New South Wales was indeed a lottery. Alexander Munro was fortunate to have as his first and only master a man who was kind and apparently felt sympathy for the youth whom he had taken from the government labour pool. Browne was the son of a convict and one of the Hawkesbury settlers who had come overland to occupy the Hunter River valley as it was being opened up for settlement in the 1820s. His land grant joined that of Benjamin Singleton who had received his grant on the river at the most accessible crossing place. During the 1820s a new group of free settlers with capital, many of them former British army officers had come to the colony and with their backing of capital had received free land grants and the approval to have convicts to work their land and to build their homes. They established themselves in the Hunter valley among the group of 'natives' or colonial born settlers, most of whom were familiar with the climate and conditions of the Australian landscape and who had adapted to its challenges. Alexander Munro found himself among these former Hawkesbury people, many of whom had convict parents and soon learned from them the best ways to work and succeed in the unfamiliar environment. Benjamin Singleton was already a successful businessman when Munro arrived and, with Browne, showed the young man how to work and to struggle towards a successful new life. By 1831 Singleton owned an inn near the crossing place, had a mill and a business carrying goods from the ships at Morpeth to Singleton and a coach to transport people inland. He had herds of cattle grazing over the Liverpool range on the vast and fertile plains beyond. It seemed that he would go on indefinitely to add even greater wealth to his increasing fortunes.

Within five years, by 19 April 1836, Alexander Munro had served his sentence, received his ticket of leave and was allowed to remain in the district of Patrick's Plains. In 8 November 1836 he was given his certificate of freedom. He may not have known that in Scotland there had been concern about him and official enquiries had been made on his behalf. On 26 February Lord Glenelg, parliamentary member representing Inverness in the House of Commons and Secretary of State for the Colonies, had written to Governor Bourke in New South Wales.

I have been requested to draw your attention to the name of Alexander Munro, a young man who was transported from Inverness some time since in order that you might institute an enquiry into his character. If his conduct since his arrival in the colony should prove to have been good, and he should in other respects appear to be deserving of indulgence I should be glad to hear that you have had it in your power to afford him some mark of encouragement.

Bourke investigated the matter and replied that Munro had already received his ticket of leave. It would be interesting to know who initiated this enquiry. Whatever the source it would have surprised them to learn that

although he was only aged twenty-two Alexander Munro had already achieved much since his arrival in the colony.

The Dingwall Meal Riot

After reading Jillian Oppenheimer's story in Newsletter 37 our Chief, Hector, sent me the following item as a follow up. It comes from the 1996 Clan Munro Magazine

The March of the Inhabitants of Dingwall to the Store House of Foulis, 3rd February 1796

The late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries in northern Europe were a time of popular disturbance, and the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 demonstrated the undeniable power of the mob in times of unrest.

Not surprisingly, successive British governments of that era spent a great deal of time worrying about the potential for popular unrest to force some form of radical democracy on the country. The Luddites, in particular, were active in England during the first decade or so of the Nineteenth Century but oddly enough there was little serious trouble in Scotland at this time. This may have been in no small measure due to the suppression of the earlier years of the Eighteenth Century as a result of the constant Jacobite threat, and in the aftermath of Culloden.

Volunteer Companies were raised in various parts of Scotland not only as a home defence force against possible invasion but also as a quasi police force. It was therefore with some alarm that the government of the day viewed the Volunteers' involvement in crowd activity, when from time to time their own personal circumstances conflicted with their role as keepers of the peace and the pressure of family, friends and acquaintances got the better of their consciences.

One such incident occurred exactly two hundred years ago, when after a period of great scarcity of oatmeal during the month of January 1796, the townspeople of Dingwall met on a number of occasions and were of the general opinion that the scarcity was due in great extent to grain dealers and, in particular, a Mr Bertram of Mountrich, who appears to have had the use of the Store House of Foulis.

Feelings ran high, and at one of the meetings it was decided that if a vessel should arrive in the Firth to take away the grain they would go in a body to prevent it from being put on board. On the evening of February 2nd 1796 a rumour went round the town that a ship had indeed arrived and it was agreed the inhabitants should go to the Store House the very next

day.

On the morning of the 3rd, the town was woken in alarm by the beating of the drum, and a little before 8 o'clock upwards of 150 people had gathered including a great many boys and children and among them at least 45 of the Volunteers, including their non Commissioned Officers. They left the town, pipes playing and drums beating, for Mr Bertram's house. No-one apparently took the lead and shortly after leaving the house they became aware that no vessel had arrived but as they were on the road they thought it best to continue to the Store House so" ... that their destitute situation might be known to the Gentlemen of the Country."

When they arrived at Foulis Point, the crowd remained at some distance, fanning out along the wall, more or less where the A9 is now, and a deputation of William Cameron, Duncan Simson, Alexr. Dingwall, Donald Crawford, Alexander Brown, Alexr. Allen, Donald Hugh Munro and John Burgess were sent down to ask for the key of the Store House "... that they might see if it was true as was reported



that he (Mr Bertram) had bought up so much grain and lodged it there."

Mr Bertram at first refused to hand them the key unless he got a letter of security from a certain Baillie Hays for the safety of the Store House and the grain, but soon realised that the multitude would break-in in any case, so he called the deputation back and told them as long as they promised to do no damage to either the Store House or the grain they could make an inspection accompanied by" ... Walter Spence

and Mr Reid's Grieve" who were on the point of putting barley into the Store House.

On entering the building they found only barley and wheat and although Mr Bertram offered them as much of the barley as they required at the price he paid for it, they refused saying that they "... lived chiefly by oatmeal and they did not mind tho' he should send away all the wheat and barley in the Country provided he left the oats."

It seems, having ascertained the lack of oats, they caused no more trouble and dispersed quietly back to Dingwall. According to the report of the subsequent hearing, the town shortly after received a supply of meal and the situation was eased.

Despite the seriousness of the event, apart from

the inevitable judicial hearing, and the evident sense of shame felt by the Town Council as a result of the action of the inhabitants, the repercussions appear to have been limited to the immediate disbandment of the Volunteer Company on the orders of His Grace, the Duke of Portland, His Majesty's Secretary of State. However, the Councillors' shame did not last long, as by September 10th of that year it is recorded in the Council Minutes, the Provost had been authorised ".... by beat of drum, or otherwise, to raise a Company of Volunteers, to consist of one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Sergeant-Major, three Sergeants, three Corporals, two drummers and sixty privates", to replace the disbanded unit.

Colin James Munro Kemp (Toddy)

This is our newest member Colin (Toddy) Kemp's very brief story. Hopefully in the future we will get a more full one. As Colin is part of the Munros' Luck story it is appropriate that he gets a mention here.

Briefly, AGF Munro was my Great Grandfather, one of his sons Charles Alexander Munro, my Grandfather, took up a property," Arcot" near Silverspur, Texas, in 1907, built a great house, raised a family, 2 sons, Alexander and Donald, 2 daughters Helen and Muriel (Bay). My mother was Bay, who married James Edward Kemp in September, 1939, in Texas. I was born 2nd November 1941,

Dad went to war in New Guinea, returned in 1945, my brother Sandy (Alexander George Munro Kemp] came along, then 4 years later, my sister Sue (Susan Munro Kemp) arrived. We lived at "Barelli", Stanthorpe, and my father was there until he went to live in Warwick around 1989.

In the 1950's, the house block of "Arcot" came under the control of my mother, 5,800 acres in area. It was run in conjunction with "Barelli" and "The Beacon", Texas, Dad's family property, by our family partnership.

As no family had lived in the Arcot house for some years, the house needed some repairs, and my marriage to Barbara Smyth Mant on 28th October, 1967, provided the catalyst for Mum to instigate some repairs, as we were to live there, a perfect place to start our married life. Unfortunately, Mum passed away unexpectedly, just before our wedding, and did not get to see her dream of the repaired home of her childhood become a home for her son and his family. Barb and I had 2 children, James and Philippa, who grew up there, went to Texas State School, then off to boarding school and University

Arcot was our home until August, 2005, when , with great sadness, we sold and moved to Brisbane, where our children had both married and settled, and 2 children each, our 4 Grandchildren, Alexandra and Will Kemp, and Jack and Ben Anderson. So "Arcot", after 97 years, has passed out of the family, very sad we could not at least get to 100! However, we had an offer we could not refuse, and have been very happy nearer our children and grandchildren.

August next year marks 10 years in Brisbane, We still, however, like to go back to the bush where possible, and feel very much for a lot of our friends who are doing it tough with the drought and bad government decisions!

Donald Munro, b. Kiltearn 1825

Colin Munro from Glasgow is trying to find the link between the US President James Munro and the Katewell branch of the Munro family. If you have a link to this Donald Munro, please contact Colin via his email or contact me and I will pass on the information.

Does anyone know of a Donald Munro, christened at Kiltearn, Ross-shire on 6 December 1825? He was the son of Andrew Munro of Bogriach and Esther Munro, daughter of John Munro of Evanton, and hence a descendant of the Katewell branch of the Munro family, from which US President James Monroe is said to come. Donald is said to have married in Glasgow and emigrated to Australia, perhaps about 1850. Please contact munco2015@icloud.com with any information.

Bebeah Wines

Bebeah wines were the wines produced by Alexander Munro of Singleton and Ardersier. Received the email below from our member Garth Eather from Meerea Park wines. "Bebeah" is the name of the original Alexander Munro wines. Garth is descended from Alexander's adopted daughter

I am after some help from the Australian descendants of Alexander Munro (Ardersier) please? We are in the process of having some new labels designed for a range of 'Bebeah' wines and were trying to base it on what his old Bebeah labels looked like.

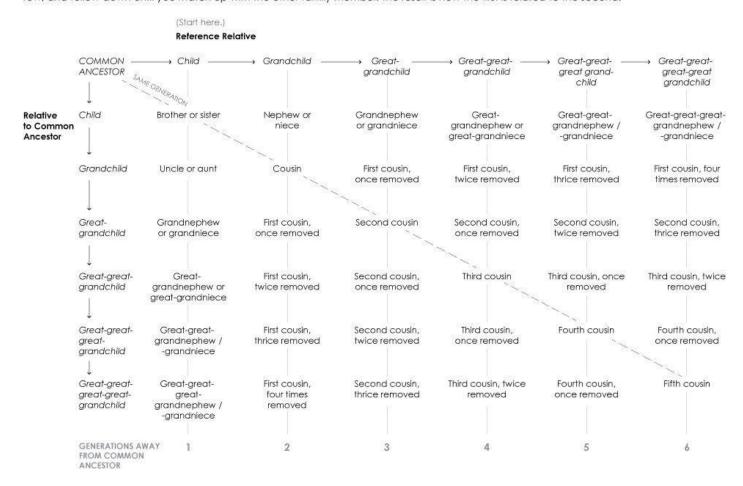
I wonder if there is anyone that has either label copies, illustrations or photographs of his labels?

Ancestry Relationships

I found this chart by Nathan Jau on Facebook and asked him if I could use it in our Newsletter. He said yes, so thank you Nathan and here it is - relationships within your family should be a mystery no more!! Check Nathan's website http://shop.flowingdata.com/contact

How They Are Related

Figure out the common ancestor between two family members. Then pick the first relationship to that ancestor on the top row, and follow down until you match up with the other family member. The result is how the first is related to the second.



This is what Nathan says:

I have a big family, and it seems at every get-together there are new additions and more kids running around. At some point, I lost track of how I was related to everyone else. I mean, I know that some people are my cousins and I can trace everyone back to a common ancestor, but I'm not sure what to call everyone.

So after the latest get-together, I figured I'd chart it out. It turns out there are a lot of charts and explainers available (not surprising), but they were kind of hard to read. Hopefully the revised chart above makes it a bit easier.

Here's how it works. Figure out the common ancestor between two relatives. Then select the relationship of the first relative to the common ancestor in the top row. Move down to the row that corresponds to the relationship of the second person to the common ancestor. The result is the relationship of the second person to the first. For example, say the first person is the grandchild of the common ancestor, and the second person is a great-grandchild. Therefore, the second person is the first cousin once removed from the first.

There is of course a pattern to all of this. Wikipedia explains:

There is a mathematical way to identify the degree of cousinship shared by two individuals. In the description of each individual's relationship to the most recent common ancestor, each "great" or "grand" has a numerical value of 1. The following examples demonstrate how this is applied.

Example: If person one's great-great-great-grandfather is person two's grandfather, then person one's "number" is 4 (great + great + great + grand = 4) and person two's "number" is 1 (grand = 1). The smaller of the two numbers is the degree of cousinship. The two people in this example are first cousins. The difference between the two people's "numbers" is the degree of removal. In this case, the two people are thrice (4 - 1 = 3) removed, making them first cousins three times removed.

Now I don't have to think about it all now, and can just say "Hi, first cousin once removed." What a load off of my shoulders.

By Nathan Yau http://shop.flowingdata.com/contact

Vale Morna Mack Scott

I received the following letter from Ian Scott, the husband of one of one of our long time members, Morna Mack Scott. Morna and I have been in touch many times over the years.

Dear Don, I was very pleased to read in your magazine that you are re-printing parts of Jillian Oppenheimer's family history of Donald and Margaret Munro of Keera, and their descendants. This reminded me to advise you that one of their great granddaughters, my wife Morna, died just one year ago. I thought you might like this excerpt from her obituary, written by me for memorial services at St. Marys Bundarra and St. Michaels Vaucluse.

Morna was buried in the Munro family section of the Bingara Cemetery on 30th December 2013. Although we are all sorry to lose Morna, she did have 75 years of a very fulfilling life, 47 of which were with me.

Morna shared that same "Love of Country" that indigenous people have. Her "Country" was Keera, and the Bingara district, where she grew up, and later extended to our property WillyWilly near Bundarra, which was part of her family's holdings. I believe that the happiest time of her life was at WillyWilly, where we lived after I retired in 2002, and where she became very involved in the Bundarra community and loved having her children, and grandchildren to stay, and enjoy it with her.

Her earliest memories were of Keera, as part of a loving family, with her mother Charmian (Mack) and father Gordon, her sister Virginia and her brother Hugh, and also her grandfather Hugh Robert Munro. She loved riding and mustering with the various stockmen on the place, and sometimes with her grandfather who she loved. She was also very proud of her Scottish heritage. When her parents separated, she spent the school terms in Sydney with her mother, and went to Ascham. It was at Ascham where she made many of her lifelong friends and several of these are here today. Later, when her mother married Jim Litchfield, at Cooma, she regularly stayed with them, as did I after we were married.

She had great affection for her brother Hugh and her sister Virginia and their families, .and for her step-mother Helen, and her half-sisters Keera, Flora and Anna and their families, and that affection remained until the day she died. She loved all her other Munro and Mack relations, young and older, and always kept in touch with them.

When I began courting her, she was working at stock and station agents Pitt Son and Badgery (now part of Elders), and used to answer the 'phone with 'Good morning - Fat stock'!

We were married on 27th May 1965. I was an architect, and we lived at 99 Dover Road, Rose Bay, where we brought up our children. Through our daughters Jean and Frances we learned how to help the intellectually handicapped, and became very involved in, and a great supporter of the Lorna Hodgkinson Sunshine Home.

Sadly our elder daughter Jean died in 2011. Morna was so proud of Frances, who lives independently in a group home, with drop-in help, and has a permanent clerical job at the Sanitarium Hospital at Wahroonga.

When the boys, James and Ranald, were at Rose Bay Public School, she was active in the Mothers Club, both as secretary and in running the Chess group; later, she took on canteen duty at Scots' with many other mothers, and enjoyed their company. Through the boys' school and sporting activities she made other lifelong friends. The tremendous support we have had from our two sons, was due a lot to Morna's influence on them, their loyalty and consideration for others, and their determination to succeed, Morna and I were so proud of them and their families.

Morna has always loved WillyWilly, even when we were there only for holidays, and the place was managed by Robert Turner. The boys went to Pony Camp, and we all helped with the mustering - Robert was too polite to tell us that we sometimes got in the way rather than helped - but we depended so much on him in those days. But Morna loved it even more when we lived there permanently after I retired, and we have worked together in improving the property and her beloved Angus cattle. Morna loved her books

- she was a great reader, the dog, the garden, the birds, looking over her cattle in the paddocks and yards, and picnics in the paddocks. I will really miss seeing the look in her eyes when she was pleased with something. She loved seeing her sons and grandchildren developing a love for the place, as she had done at Keera.

I remember saying at our 40th wedding anniversary that the reason we had had no fights was that we tolerated each others eccentricities. If Morna was with us she could tell you about mine! She was stubborn – I believe that is a Munro trait - but she was usually right in the end.

I sometimes referred to Morna's "heavy baggage" This meant the heaviness of her suitcases, carried by me, whenever we came to Sydney, but more seriously, it was the enormous number of Christmas cards she sent (and received) every year. But this really signified how many friends she made, and kept. She was such a warm, loving, and loyal person, and made, and kept, so many friends wherever she was."

This was my tribute to a much loved member of the clan.

Vale Mabel Margery Munro

It is with much sadness that I inform you of the passing of Mabel Margery Munro at the age of 102 years. Mabel is the much loved mother of our member Natalie Gretton and is missed by by her family and friends. I will tell you Mabel's interesting story in the next newsletter.

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

Clan Munro (Association) Australia Newsletter

Sender

Don Munro 18 Salter Road Mt Nasura WA 6112 Phone 08 9390 7643 donmunro36@hotmail.com

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.