



Clan Munro Australia

Newsletter of the Clan Munro (Association) Australia

AUSTRALIA

Website at <http://clanmunroassociation.org.au>

Our new



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This Month

Bet & I wish you all a merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

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Blether

webmaster, Allan Munro, tells me that our new website will be live around mid December. He is just waiting for a few bits of information to complete.

Here is the update for the process of switching over to the members having logins to the website and being able to renew online via a credit card:

To view and download the current Newsletter and all archived newsletters, as well as manage and pay for your membership you will now login to the website with your own account based on your email address.

We are going to manually add logins for all members by email address and then send you a password via email. (Can anyone who has recently changed their email address or does not have one please email munro.ray@hotmail.com) or get in touch with Ray Munro at the address on this page

This will trigger automated emails to you from no-reply@clanmunroassociation.org.au which is an unmonitored email address. All membership related emails will now come from this email address, so it would be a great idea to add it to your email safe senders list or if you don't receive anything by the 15th January, please make sure that you check your Junk and Spam mail folders.

One Year Memberships

All One Year Memberships will expire on January the 15th 2024. Prior to this date, you will receive a series of automated emails welcoming you to the Clan Munro Association Australia & New Zealand. Leading up to the 15th of January, you will receive a renewal email with a link to login to the website and renew your membership with a credit card. If your membership would normally need to be renewed between now and mid January, your renewal date will be extended out to the 15th January.

Three Year Memberships

All Three year memberships will receive a welcome email but your renewal date will be set as the current renewal date that we have on file for you. At that time you will get an automated email with a link to login to the website and renew with your credit card. If your membership would normally need to be renewed between now and mid January, your renewal date will be extended out to the 15th January.

Lifetime Memberships

Can all Lifetime Members please email munro.ray@hotmail.com and advise him of your current email address.

Spouse and Child Memberships

As above for One and Three Years Memberships but if you are on one of these we will add in a discount code your account to adjust your membership to the correct amount for renewals.

Website Security

None of your credit card details will be stored by the website, nor will that information ever be seen by us. All payments through the website are handled by Stripe and your card details will be stored with them via secure means. Stripe has been audited by a PCI-certified auditor and is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1. This is the most stringent level of certification available in the

payments industry. This audit includes both Stripe's Card Data Vault (CDV) and the secure software development of their integration code.

The only details stored by our website will be your name, email address and state, which will only be used in relation to your membership and communication from the Association. Your details will never be passed on by us and will be secured by 2 Factor logins for admins as well as an SSL certificate and firewall software.

Welcome

No new members to welcome this month

From the Eagles Nest

Now that Christmas is upon us once again my thoughts turned to wondering how Christmas is celebrated in Scotland and the results were rather surprising. Not nowadays but what happened in the past centuries. To start with the Protestant Reformation in Europe left the Scottish Church suspicious of all things connected to Roman Catholicism. A law in 1640 made it illegal for Yule celebration. Christmas did not become a public holiday in Scotland until 1958! To-day, in Australia, we basically observe Christmas as they do in Scotland.

Going back to Celtic times in Scotland many traditions have been performed over the centuries. One such tradition was that to clear any bad blood in the family or with friends is the burning of a Rowan Twig. Another festive event, particularly in Shetland because of their Scandinavian heritage and in other parts of Scotland, was in the partaking of strange festive beverages. The one in Shetland is called Whipkull and consists of rum, sugar, fresh cream and egg yolk served after breakfast with a side of shortbread.

The end of Christmas festivities was celebrated as the 12th. Night of Christmas with plays and pageants and called "Üpholieday". In 1563 Mary Queen of Scots enjoyed an "Üpholieday" party at Holyrood house in Edinburgh. On the other hand the children of Islay, if they hadn't been behaving during the festive season, would/will receive a visit from the dark Christmas spirit (Crom Dubh na Nollaig). A terrifying creature howling down the chimney.

A time was when Scots would light candles in their front windows to welcome strangers and guide the Holy family on their journey. Meantime, the King of Scotland, James VI, Commemorated Christmas by firing the cannons at Edinburgh Castle. Ironically, nowadays the guns are fired most days at one o'clock but not on Christmas day.

Yule logs made of bread and caraway seeds rolled in a log are popular in both Scotland and Australia. The roll represents the sun and the seeds, in Scotland anyway, represent the Winter spirits. Additionally, a real log was burnt to combat darkness and evil spirits and bring fortune for the year ahead. The tradition of burning a Yule log at Christmas was brought to Australia by the early colonists. It was soon abandoned because of our hot weather.

The Canberra Burns Club Highland Gathering.

This Gathering was the first held since 2019 because of two years of Covid and last year being a complete wash out. Helen and I travelled to the site of the Gathering at Kambah south of the Canberra CBD. We stayed at the Kambah Inn on arrival on the eve of the Gathering. Our friends in Canberra advised that the inn was not a great place to stay. Little did they know that it had recently been refurbished and our two nights stay was very pleasant. Additionally, it was reasonably priced and in walking distance of the oval where the Gathering was to be held and the Burns Club was around the corner.

On Saturday, the 7th. October, Helen, outfitted in the Munro modern tartan and me in my preferred hunting tartan headed to the Gathering. After some cold and ordinary weather Canberra turned on a bright and sunny day just for all of us in attendance.

It was obvious from the outset that the calibre of the stalls was both impressive and many in number. I took particular interest in the various Clan stalls which I will endeavour to similarly organise for our clan in the future. Among the other stands were accessory organisations, food and liquor. We reacquainted ourselves with the owner of the Scottish Accessories Shoppe and our contact at the Scottish Banner publication. One of my favourite stands being the re-enactors of 1700's British soldiers who also later paraded and demonstrated their weapons for us visitors.

The opening ceremony commenced with the performance of the Massed Pipes and Drums. During the day we were entertained by the pipe band displays as well as the solo piping and drumming competition. Meanwhile, throughout the day the highland dancing competition was well supported and fiercely fought out by the competitors. In the afternoon the Kilted Warriors Heavy Events competition involving three tasks culminated with the tossing of the caber. Only two competitors managed to successfully throw the caber; the overall winner twice. The Massed Pipes and Drums bided us farewell but the fun continued over at the Burns Club.

We dined at the Burns Club on both nights, the second night with friends. The very reasonable all-you-can-eat buffet, which can accommodate up to 500 people, is highly recommended if you ever visit this area. The only complaint I have with the Club



is that they do not have a Munro Clan Badge among their collection. We will have to rectify this by the next Gathering at Kambah next year.

News from Scotland.

The Scots School Albury Pipe Band have been crowned 2023 World Pipe Band Champions at Glasgow in August. This is a tremendous feat and comes after their 26 performances at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Additionally, before these successes they were awarded the Scottish Pipe Band Champions in category, Grade 4B.

This year marks the 100th. anniversary of the most famous locomotive in the world, the Flying Scotsman. Built in Doncaster for the London and North Eastern Railway it was firstly numbered 1472 then later as 4472. To-day it is owned by the National Railway in York.

The Stone of Destiny has played a part in the Coronation of King Charles III at Westminster Abbey. Prior to the ceremony the Stone was digitally analysed at the Engine Shed, Scotland's conservation centre. The examination revealed previously unrecorded markings on the Stone's surface. These have the appearance of Roman numerals.

Probably the best lightweight boxer to come out of Scotland, Ken Buchanan has passed away at the age of 77. Ken won the World Lightweight Title in 1970. He was born in Leith in 1945.

Merry Christmas all,
Ray.

Daisy Bates

One of the most remarkable figures in Australian history is a small small Irishwoman called Daisy Bates. I put this story together from Wickepedea and an article by George Winkel.

Daisy May Bates, CBE (born Margaret Dwyer) was born on October 16, 1859 and died on April 18, 1951. She was an Irish-Australian journalist, welfare worker and self-taught anthropologist who conducted fieldwork amongst several Indigenous nations in western and southern Australia. She was a lifelong student of Australian Aboriginal culture and society and was the first anthropologist to carry out a detailed study of Australian Aboriginal culture.

In November 1882, Margaret Dwyer—who by then had changed her first name to Daisy May—emigrated to Australia aboard the RMS *Almora* as part of a Queensland government-assisted immigration scheme. Daisy Dwyer settled first at Townsville, Queensland, staying with friends until she got a job as a governess



on Fanning Downs station. She married poet and horseman Breaker Morant (Harry Morant aka Edwin Murrant) on 13 March 1884 in Charters Towers; the union lasted only a short time. Dwyer reputedly threw Morant out because he failed to pay for the wedding and stole some livestock.^[7] The marriage was not legal as Morant was under age (he said he was twenty-one, but was only nineteen).^{[8][9]} They were never divorced.

After separating from Morant, Dwyer moved to the property "Glenworth" as the governess for James and Robina Wilson's children, James, William and Elizabeth (Bessie). It is said she met John Jack Bates while working with James Wilson's family

and they married on 17 February 1885. Like Morant, he was a bushman and drover. Their only child, Arnold Hamilton Bates, was born on 26 August 1886 in Bathurst, New South Wales.

The Bates marriage was not a happy one as Jack's work kept him away from home for long periods. During those times she sometimes lived in Pyree and "Glenworth" Bellawongarah. In February 1894, Bates returned to England, enrolling her son Arnold in a Catholic boarding school and telling Jack that she would return to Australia only when he had a home established for her. She arrived penniless in England, but found a job working for journalist and social campaigner W. T. Stead. Despite her skeptical views, she worked as an assistant editor on the psychic quarterly *Borderlands*. She developed an active intellectual life among London's well-connected and bohemian literary and political people.

After she left Stead's employment in 1896, it is unclear how she supported herself until 1899. That year she set sail for Western Australia after Jack wrote to say that he was looking for a property there. In addition, she had been intrigued by a letter published that year in *The Times* about the cruelty of West Australian settlers to Aborigines. As Bates was preparing to return to Australia, she wrote to *The Times* offering to investigate the accusations, and report the results to them. Her offer was accepted, and she sailed back to Australia in August 1899.

Bates became interested in the Aboriginal Australians for their own cultures. In the foreword of her book, written by Alan Moorehead, he said, "As far as I can make out she never tried to teach the Australians Aborigines anything or convert them to any faith. She preferred them to stay as they were and live out the last of their days in peace." Moorehead also wrote, "She was not an anthropologist but she knew them better than anyone else who ever lived; and she made them interesting not only to herself but to us as well."^[15]

In all, Bates devoted 40 years of her life to studying Aboriginal life, history, culture, rites, beliefs and customs. She researched and wrote on the subject while living in a tent in small settlements from Western Australia to the edges of the Nullarbor Plain, including at Ooldea in South Australia. She was noted for her strict lifelong adherence to Edwardian fashion, including wearing boots, gloves and a veil while in the bush.

Bates set up camps to feed, clothe and nurse the transient Aboriginal people, drawing on her own income to meet the needs of the aged. She was said to have worn pistols even in her old age and to have been quite prepared to use them to threaten police when she caught them mistreating "her" Aborigines.

A journalist, she arrived in Western Australia in 1899 to investigate allegations of cruelty to the Aborigines. When she arrived she travelled by steamer to Broome and lived for a while in a Trappist mission at Beagle Bay. Despite the heat, the meagre food and the primitive conditions she found much to interest her there. She gained the confidence of the Aborigines in the area by her sincere concern for them, and learned much of their traditions and customs. She tended the sick and gave food and clothes to those who needed them.

This was the beginning of her life with the Aborigines. She stayed with several tribes in the north, caring for them and learning about them. Then the Western Australian government, hearing of her work, asked her to study the tribes around Perth.

By this time Daisy Bates knew some of the Dream Time legends of the Aborigines and understood their complex kinship groups, which few white people did. Because of her knowledge and understanding she was welcomed by the Aborigines of the southwest. She found that they were the remnants of the Bibbulmun tribe which had once been great and prosperous but seventy years of

white occupation had had a devastating effect. The last remnants of the tribe presented a sad picture, a few lonely and bewildered old people surviving on government rations.

Governor Stirling wanted to live in peace and friendship with the Aborigines but the two cultures could not co-exist, and harmony could only be achieved if one gave way to the other.

Lack of knowledge about Aboriginal society caused the white people to make terrible mistakes. They did not understand that some tribes and totems were traditionally enemies, and sometimes brought them into contact which had to result in death. The whites attempted to 'civilise' the Aborigines, to make them like themselves; but people who had lived for hundreds of generations without buildings could not adapt to mission-built houses, schoolrooms and hospital wards. Worst of all, the government attempted at one time to isolate seriously ill Aborigines on two islands off the coast where they could not spread infection. The Aborigines believed that if they died away from their home ground their souls would never find rest; deprived of family and friends, forced to eat and sleep next to hereditary enemies, many of them died on the islands.

The white people affected the Aborigines in more ways than they realised. There was the inevitable clash of justice when acts regarded as crimes by one race were acceptable to the other. But there were other destructive factors at work. Eating unfamiliar food sometimes caused illness among the Aborigines, and alcohol produced many problems. Diseases such as tuberculosis and influenza, to which the Aborigines had no immunity, killed many of them.

The disruption caused by white settlement in many cases made it impossible for the tribes to observe their

religious ceremonies. Their sacred grounds were taken as farmland and they were denied access to them. The authority of their leaders was undermined; the young people refused to obey the elders, preferring the blankets and flour of the whites to the traditional hunting and food-gathering skills of their own people. Customs were forgotten or defied, and the Aborigines began to break their own laws, until there was a total collapse of tradition.

In this sad scene of a society in crisis Daisy Bates was a powerful figure. She was created Protector of the Aborigines by the government but the blacks themselves gave her a more friendly title: they called her Kabbarli, which means grandmother. They regarded her as a blood relation, tied to them by all the bonds of kinship. Their trust in her was absolute and she was admitted to their most sacred ceremonies, even the men's ceremonies which were forbidden to women. She came to know all their traditions and customs and was scrupulous in her observance of them. Often, she was able to cheer a lonely black who had strayed far from his homeland by greeting him in his own tongue, and giving news of his relations.

Daisy Bates lived and travelled with the Aborigines for more than forty years, caring for the old, the sick and the very young. She nursed many of them through illness, and tells amusingly of her failure as a cook when she tried to make gruel for some of her patients. She spent all her money to buy food and clothes for them, and sold her cattle station to raise more funds. Many times she went without food herself to see the little ones with full bellies.

Daisy Bates endured conditions which most ladies of her back-ground would have found intolerable. The temperature often reached 50° C, and there were sometimes dust storms, thunder storms and bush fires. Her only shelter was a small tent in which she kept all her possessions. When she was

in her seventies she was walking a kilometre and a half every day to get water for herself and several invalids. She suffered from sandy blight so badly that sometimes she was almost blind. She endured a monotonous and scanty diet, the lack of companions of her own kind, the discomforts of primitive living.

Through it all she dressed as a lady was expected to. She always wore corsets, though the Aboriginal women roared with laughter to see her lace them up. No matter what the heat she wore a high-necked blouse, a coat and long skirt, and covered it all with a long dustcoat. Her high-heeled buttoned boots must have made walking difficult, but her straw hat and fly veil were well-suited to the conditions. She always wore this costume, though by the time of her death in 1951, it was very old-fashioned.

Despite the severe conditions she found compensations in plenty. There was her love of the Aborigines and her consuming interest in their life and customs. They taught her to love and understand the landscape, the plants and the animals. She knew the history of every landmark, the legends and events connected with each particular spot. She knew the names and habits of the birds who were welcome visitors to her tent, and she valued the plants as medicines and foods. She writes of her joy at rising each morning in the clear desert air, and her pleasure in stargazing at night.

For eight years she lived at Eucla on the Great Australian Bight, near the South Australian border. Then at the request of the South Australian government she moved to Ooldea to study the people there. The new Transcontinental Railway had completely disrupted the lives of the tribes along its route and her presence was greatly needed.

News of Daisy Bates travelled fast along the Aborigines' trade routes. People who were sick or in need of advice

would walk hundreds of kilometres to see her, risking their lives through the lands of hostile tribes. One woman travelled 1500 kilometres with her crippled son, carrying him most of the way on her back.

Unfailingly Daisy Bates offered all she had, both of material goods and of herself. She cared for the Aborigines passionately, she loved their life and helped them whatever their need. She nursed them in sickness and eased their dying. She assisted at initiations and became the guardian of some of their sacred totems. She interceded with governments for them and tried to improve their conditions. In every way she tried to protect them and reduce the fatal impact of white civilisation.

Daisy Bates served Aboriginal culture in another way, one that is only beginning to be appreciated. She took notes constantly, studying and recording customs and traditions. She became fluent in over a hundred Aboriginal languages. She pieced together legends from scraps of information, and described ceremonies and dances. Now, when many of the traditional ways have been forgotten, her notebooks provide us with an absorbing picture of a unique society, and are a rich source for scientists who study primitive cultures.

Daisy Bates continued to live among Aborigines until she was more than eighty years old. Her concern for the Aborigines and her work among them is honoured by both blacks and whites.

Munro Slave Traders

Did you know that Highland Scots were involved in the slave trade and Munros were part of it.

George Munro Esq of Berbice was born in 1776 and died at Falmouth on 22 July 1824, in his 58th year [Edinburgh Advertiser 1 July 1825]. An advertisement indicating his intention to leave the colony appeared in the *Berbice Royal Gazette* 28 April 1824 indicating his intention to leave the colony.

A George Munro was named as executor of the will of John Sinclair in Berbice in 1801 and he acted as attorney for his cousin, Dr William Munro, the following year.

Munro was the owner of plantation *Alness* on the Corentyne coast and was a signatory of an address presented to Thomas Cuming in 1812, but he was not in the colony in 1817, when the return of slaves was made by his attorney David Millar. The plantation had over 300 slaves.

In 1816 he was described by Governor Bentinck as both the richest and the most impertinent member of the Council of the colony. [CO 111/84 Beard to Bathurst, 12 Aug 1816]

According to Eirene O'Jon [*Slave Society in Early Nineteenth Century Berbice*, University of Guyana, 1992] plantation *Alness* was notorious for its harsh discipline, so extreme that a number of managers were poisoned by the cook and another, McWatt, was drowned by some of the slaves.

In his will [Prob11/1712/f474] he left £100 to the poor of each of the parish of Alness and Kiltearn in Ross-shire; gave legacies to the children of Matthew Munro, his 'dear cousin and friend Dr William Munro of Berbice', and his sister Christian Munro in Edinburgh; and made provision for the support of the 'coloured family' of Amelia and her three daughters, Susannah, Charlotte and Diana. In 1817 39-year-old Amelia was a slave on plantation *Alness*, described as 'coloured', a seamstress, born in Berbice; Susannah was aged 20 and Diana, 18, while 15-year-old Charlotte, a domestic slave, was the property of the plantation manager, David

Millar, with whom she had a son, John. They were still enslaved in 1819 [Berbice Slave Returns].

George Munro's children with Susannah were George, born 30 Oct 1808; John born 8 July 1810; and William born 1 May 1812. All three attended Marischal College, Aberdeen: George from 1824, John from 1825, and William from 1826. Only John graduated, with the degree of Master of Arts in 1829.

Susannah Munro's will [Prob11/2176/f30, date 1853, which she signed with her mark] makes it clear that she was the mother of George and John, who had pre-deceased her, and she was probably also the mother of William, who was presumably still alive. She claimed George and John's inheritance. Susannah can only have been aged 11 when she bore her first child.

George Munro left his property to be divided between these children and his nephews - William and Hugh Munro, the children of his sister Christian Munro and Alexander Munro, and Robert Robertson, son of his sister Esther Munro and John Robertson, late of Inverness. He made provision for his estate to be sold after 10 years and his executors claimed compensation of £19,212 18s 8d at emancipation, at which date the only named beneficiary appears to have been Robert Robertson [LBS Claim 8225].

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	

*Clan Munro (Association) Australia
Newsletter*

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