



Clan Munro (Association) Australia

Volume 2 Issue 1

January 2004

Editorial

We are one month into 2004 already, I can hardly believe it. I hope you all had a very happy holiday. A year has passed, so what have been the highlights?

For me, the way I have been accepted, has been a highlight and I thank all of you who have written to me, it means a lot.

The manner in which you have accepted the newsletter is another highlight and it is only made possible by the stories you send in to me – they are just wonderful.

I have enough to keep me going for a few more issues but will need more for the future. They don't all have to be stories of our ancestors – Jim Hyslop and Jamie Munro Aitken's stories are good examples of that. I am working on a story from one of our members from WW2 for a future issue, so you see what I mean. I would also love to hear about those interesting hobbies and businesses that you must have.

In the next issue we will feature one of Australia's greatest jockeys, Darby Munro. We will also be telling a story from one of our Queensland members called "The Munros of Stuckghoy & Barnaline to Sawmillers & Fat Lamb Producers." I hope that has got you interested!

The genealogy section has been a hit, so keep your questions coming and keep Ron Munro our genealogist, on his toes.

Once again, many thanks for your support in the past year and let's hope that this year will be just as successful.

See you at the Gathering!

Don Munro

Clan Gathering

Two months to go until the Gathering and the momentum has continued. Quite a number have already booked but we would love to see more of you. Margaret has posted invitations to all Munros in the Sydney phone directory so we may get an influx from that. A good turnout will make all of Margaret's hard work worth while and ensure the success of future events. If you have not booked yet, please do so as soon as possible so that the catering, etc. can be finalised.

Also, swot up on your Munro and general Scottish history as there will be a quiz and a prize to be won. There will also be a music quiz with another prize for the winners.

Ron Fane Munro has suggested that those with family trees drawn up bring them along to try and find out how many common ancestors we have out there. A great idea, so please support it.

If you are still looking for accommodation for the Gathering, check out Alice Gruzman's offer in the feedback section on page 5.

I had just finished the Newsletter when I had a letter from Alistair Munro in the UK asking if I was interested in a Munro DNA Project which started in America and is now spreading world wide. I have added a separate page with details of the project. You can decide yourself if you want to take part.

Welcome To Our New Members

Nolene Woolcott from Gladesville NSW traces her family back to Elgin in Scotland, just as one of our other new members does. Her great great grandfather, David Dewar Munro and his Uncle James Thompson Munro arrived in Melbourne on the Scottish Maid in 1853. We have five other members descended from these two gentlemen.

Garth Eather's Grandmother was Alexander Munro's eldest Grand Daughter and we have already heard quite a lot about Alexander Munro – see newsletters 1 and 3. So great was his influence that his name will surely pop up again in future issues.

Agnes Munro from Woolloowin Queensland traces her Munro roots back to Fodderty in Scotland in 1869.

Rescue of MV Island Gas from Saumarez Reef

Our feature stories are usually set in the past but this one by Jim Hyslop from Queensland is set in the time of living memory. Jim tells a fascinating true story that highlights the dangers faced by these courageous men.

Ship towing in Australia has always been a hazardous business as it is anywhere but made more dangerous as shipowners are reluctant to keep a tug on station dedicated solely to salvage work. This means that the tugs available for salvage work are also used for harbour work. They do not carry the specialised equipment needed nor do they carry enough fuel, stores and crew. However when a ship is in distress and calls for aid then it is sometimes necessary to use these tugs to go to its aid.

Some years ago now, in the early eighties, I was a tugmaster at Gladstone in Queensland. The weather was bad and getting worse. There was a cyclone somewhere off the coast to which the weather office had given the name Chloe. A message came through to our agent that a small coastal gas tanker had broken down and was sheltering behind Saumarez Reef and calling for a tug to help her get into a sheltered port. Saumarez is one of the outer reefs and is about 150 miles from Gladstone. I was ordered to go to the aid of the stricken ship and to bring her back to Gladstone if possible.

I hastily made arrangements to pick up extra crew, stores and fuel and this being done, set out for the outer reef a few hours after receiving the distress call. As soon as we cleared Gladstone harbour we knew we were in for a very uncomfortable time. The weather was horrific and continued to get worse as we ploughed towards the stricken vessel. The normal procedure in bad weather is to slow down to allow the ship ride the seas easier but in this case time was of the essence. I had to keep the tug going at full speed, as the situation of the distressed ship was becoming desperate due to worsening weather and her proximity to the dangerous coral reef.

On the morning of the day after we left port the huge seas were breaking over the tug and about eleven in the morning a particularly large wave smashed up over the bow. The noise as it struck the front of the bridge was like a great clap of thunder and the 500 ton tug stopped in its tracks as if a giant hand was pushing against it. For a few seconds it was as if time was standing still and then the powerful tug engine overcame the elements and the tug tore down into the trough of the next big wave. It has always intrigued me to see the damage that can be caused by water on the move. In this case the bridge front which was constructed of ½ inch steel plates had assumed a concave shape instead its usual convex appearance.

Reports from the ship by radio indicated their anxiety so I pushed on as hard as the weather would allow and about dusk I made out through the gloom of the foul night the stark shape of a ship high and dry on the reef. This was an American Liberty ship which had been wrecked on this reef many years before and which provided a good landmark. I cautiously skirted the reef and found the entrance using radar and soon came up on the tanker – it was fully loaded and deep in the water, with an anchor down and perilously close to the

dangerous coral. Even inside the reef the seas were frighteningly high and the noise from the waves crashing on the coral close by did nothing for our peace of mind. The cyclone was by now very close and we were receiving its full effect.

Then began a very long night. Both the tug and the ship were rising and falling at least 20 feet. Sometimes I found myself looking down on the tanker and sometimes I was looking up at her. I had to get a line to the ship's bow. The ship had no power to their windlass so this meant they had to pull in the line by hand. Time and again I manoeuvred close to

the ship's bow for my crew, working up to their waists in water, to pass a light line to the ship only to find myself flung away from the bow by heavy

seas. The hours passed without success. Attempt after attempt failed. Somewhere in the middle of the night a great rogue wave roared up over the tug and filled the wheelhouse. The water poured out through the open doors and then SILENCE! The main switchboard had shorted out and the engine had stopped. Thank God for ships' engineers – they surely are a special breed! It seemed like my heart had stopped with the engine and I am sure I aged several years in those few moments. The tug was crashing back quickly to the bow of the ship when suddenly there was a roar as our engine came back to life and lights re-appeared. The quick action of the Chief Engineer in restarting the engine prevented a disaster and proved once again the great value of teamwork.

Many hours later we had a line to the ship. I would normally have used a 5 inch circumference wire to connect to the bow of the tanker but the crew just could not raise it so I passed a 7 inch polypropylene rope. During the operation of passing the big rope the line drifted back towards the stern of the tanker and when I took up the slack I found that the stern of the ship was swinging round towards me. With horror I realised that my towline had been caught round the propeller of the tanker. I had to get it free before I could start the tow, but how was I to do this?

The only way to clear it was to steam around the stern. If I steamed the wrong way around I would have two turns of rope around the prop. I decided to go from starboard to port around the tanker's stern and to my great relief as I took the weight on the port bow I saw the rope come free and lead out from the ship's bow, someone up there was watching over us.

The voyage home proved to be uncomfortable but uneventful. However, when we recovered our towline at the entrance to Gladstone harbour, I found that the polypropylene line, which was caught around the tanker's propeller, had been cut almost halfway through by the sharp edges of the prop. Hard to believe but we had towed the ship home on this damaged line without even knowing about it.

At least that was one less worry on the way back to port!

Jim Hyslop

“The main switchboard had shorted out and the engine had stopped”



Our First "First Fleeters"

I had a letter from one of our Tasmanian members telling me that she was descended from two "First Fleeters," Lydia Munro & her husband Andrew Goodwin but that she did not know much about Lydia's parents or where they were from. I immediately searched the Internet and found that there was indeed quite a bit about them in Australia, mainly due to the efforts of Irene Schaffer and Thelma McKay and their book "Exiled Three Times Over!" I found exactly what I was looking for in a website for Ormiston House, a high class guesthouse in Strahan. As I always do in such a case, I emailed the owners, Mike Fry and Carolyn Nissen, who were only too happy for me to use the information on their website.

The article below finishes at Ormiston House and its history is extremely interesting up to and including the time when Mike & Carolyn bought it and restored it to its former glory. Ormiston House sounds like a beautiful place to stay while on holiday in the Apple Isle. You can write to Mike & Carolyn at Ormiston House, Strahan, Tasmania or check out their website www.ormistonhouse.com.au You can be sure of a wonderful welcome and just tell them that you are a Munro & Mike will have lots of interesting stuff to show you.

It is with great pride that Australians of today can trace their ancestral links to that of the First or Second Fleets. Not so in Victorian times when there was a stigma associated with being descended from any convict - First Fleet or any 'chained arrival' for that matter. This was an attitude that prevailed until earlier this century when society in Australia realised the contribution that the convict system had made in the formation of this nation. We must remember that the transportation of petty criminals was a method by which the British legal system attempted to purge their communities of so called 'riff-raff'. In a class orientated society, such as it was, the commonwealth regarded these unfortunate, mainly poverty-stricken families, as being totally undesirable and to be 'got rid of.'

Initially the punishment was transportation but the up and coming wealthy landowners of the new colony could see the potential of free labour. The Government of the day could also see the building of infrastructure costing much less with the unpaid labour of the transported convicts. This was at a time when the prison system in England was overloaded and the prison hulks in the Thames at bursting point.

So it was that two convicts, Andrew Goodwin and Lydia (Letitia) Munro became victims of the oppressive judicial system and embarked on a journey that would culminate in a marriage to the wealthiest and most affluent man on the West Coast of Tasmania. Lydia was born in 1767 in London. Her parents were Alexander Monro and Sarah?? All we know about them is that they were born before 1751. We are fortunate that these two 'First Fleeters' have been the subject of much historical research by Irene Schaffer and Thelma McKay in their book "Exiled Three Times Over!"

On 7th July 1784, Andrew Goodwin and William Butler were tried at the Old Bailey for the theft of £200 worth of lead from a building. They were sentenced to transportation for seven years with Andrew being held on the prison hulk Censor until transportation three years later on 4th February 1787, aboard the Scarborough bound for Botany Bay.

Lydia Munro, in company with Ann Forbes, was convicted of stealing ten yards of printed cotton, valued at



20 shillings and were both sentenced to be hanged. There was a reprieve and the sentence was commuted to seven years transportation aboard the Prince of Wales. After arrival in the new land (Tasmania) a daughter, Mary, was born to Lydia and baptised on the 19th July 1789.

Andrew Goodwin was named as the father and they were married in 1790. Two days after their marriage they were sent to Norfolk Island aboard the Sirius. (*Ed's note: Like me, you may be wondering how baby Mary was possible when Lydia & Andrew sailed on different ships. I checked and found that the Fleet had arrived first at Botany Bay where they stayed for only about a week and then sailed for Port Jackson where they landed on January 26, 1788, a year before Mary was born. I assume that this is where Lydia & Andrew met before landing in Tasmania. You Australian history buffs will have already worked that out!*)

After a productive period on Norfolk Island their term had expired and they left for Port Jackson. Lydia went first with baby son John in November 1794 and Andrew followed with their two daughters Mary and Sarah in March 1795. But within a short period of time they returned to Norfolk Island as free settlers and by 1807 Andrew had a farm valued at £80 with a house and 23 acres. Despite this productivity they once again moved when the authorities enforced five evacuations from Norfolk Island to the infant penal colony on the banks of the Derwent River.

The Goodwin family arrived in Van Dieman's Land aboard the Porpoise on 17th January 1808 with seven of their children. Their last daughter Letitia was born in Tasmania. Andrew died in 1835 and Lydia in 1856 and they were both buried at St. David's Cemetery, Hobart Town.

Sarah Goodwin married Benjamin Briscoe in 1808 at the age of 16. Benjamin had arrived as a convict on the Calcutta in 1804 and in 1807 had received 300 lashes for absconding from the colony. After being granted land at Clarence Plains, Benjamin was accidentally drowned in 1819. The next year Sarah married Mark Ashby Bunker, a convict who was transported for sheep stealing and who arrived on the Castlereagh in 1818.

"...and both were sentenced to be hanged."

In 1828, at the age of 35, Sarah applied for the land granted to her late husband. Sarah and Mark had eight children. Their seventh born was Hannah Amelia on 3rd April 1833 at Clarence Plains. Hannah married William Lewis in April 1851 at Colebrook, Tasmania. They had ten children, the seventh born being Mary Alice who with other members of her family moved to Strahan. Frederick Ormiston Henry and Mary Alice Lewis were married at Port Sorrell in 1887.

Frederick Ormiston or FO as he was known, was a trader. His first shop was a tent, which was quickly replaced by a timber shack. The fledgling township of Strahan grew up around his store and he began trading with the miners, prospectors and new townfolk. His trading brought him shares in a mine & he eventually became the biggest shareholder in the Mt Lyell mine and when the shares reached over £16, he sold



out and became one of the most affluent men on the West Coast of Tasmania.

By this stage F.O. had stores scattered around the mining areas of the West Coast at Strahan, Queenstown, Gormanston, Linda and Pillinger at Kelly's Basin. Times may have been tough in the early days but F.O. had established himself as the most successful businessman in the area. Following the sale of his Mt Lyell shares in 1897, Frederick Ormiston Henry set about building a fine mansion, "Ormiston House," today regarded as one of Australia's finest examples of Federation architecture.

One can only wonder what convicts Lydia & Andrew would have thought had they known their great grand daughter would marry the man who was to become one of the richest and successful men in Tasmania.

GENEALOGY from Ron's Desk

Just a few Hints No. 2.

This Australian Web Site <http://www.shoalhaven.net.au/~cathyd/austmenu.html> has a Genealogy Course that can be studied over the web. I haven't done the course but had made reference to it in my notes ... a case of "one day you never know" I just might need it or something it refers to. One can never have too much information stored when doing genealogy.

I have an old suitcase, small in size, which I dump all my bits and pieces that I know I don't need now but one day could come in handy. I read lots of magazines and newspapers and often I come across some item of information that I sense or feel 'might come in handy one day'. So I cut it out (after conferring with the rest of the family as they too like to ready the news paper but tell me they HATE reading a news paper with holes in it!!) and store into my case. Often I have come across a problem that rings a tiny bell of being touched on before some time ago and its off to my case and shift all through those pieces of paper I have collected. Pieces of information from web sites usually can be cut and pasted onto note pad and saved somewhere where it will not be deleted at a later date. (PS. Don't leave the pieces of paper lying around as Cleaning Ladies don't see any value in pieces of paper!!)

My computer is set up with two hard drives. The C Drive is for all programs that I use to do anything with eg

genealogy and computer Games. The second drive, normally D Drive, is only for saving information and files on I have down loaded from the net. My CD drive is also a CD writer. All my files (when I remember) are backed up on to a CD (well labelled) and stored away in my library shelving along with other files and notes I have collected.

Programs to download free.

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/brothers_keeper/download.htm

Brother's Keeper is the first of three free genealogy programs I have downloaded. The other two are PAF (or Personal Ancestry File) and Legacy. PAF is a totally free program somewhere on the Church of Latter-day Saints website www.familysearch.org. This web site also houses the IGI site that all struggling collectors of their family tree should visit. The IGI is the International Genealogical Index. Local LDS Church Family History Centres should have a complete set of microfiche of IGI for the world. Copies are sometimes available at local libraries. Legacy and Brothers Keeper are programs that can be down loaded for free but have a key to unlock the full potential of the program. Legacy is available from www.LegacyFamilyTree.com. I do use all three as each has a printout section and prints various charts that come from all three programs and not available in just the one.

Regards – Ron Munro, in Salisbury, South Australia.

Email address - munro5112@primus.com.au

Ayrshire – Pauline Allen has done a lot of work researching her Ayrshire ancestors and has lots of web sites in the area as well as some snail mail places to go. Pauline has kindly given me the list, so if that is your area of research drop me a line and I will pass the information to you.

Remember, if you have reached that brick wall in your research (and haven't we all?) send your queries to Ron and we will publish them. Our own members could be your best line of research.

Harold Munro

In Newsletter 3, I printed details of Harold's voyage to Australia with his mother in 1912. His son Ian has told me that Harold has had major surgery and is now recovering from that. We send Harold our best wishes and hope that his recovery is a speedy one

Multicultural Munros

Margaret Neyle from New South Wales sent me this nice little story.

My Munro links go back to the early days of the colony, 1842 to be exact when they landed from the ship "Margaret" in Sydney Cove.

As a child I spent a lot of time with my great aunts, who always told me that I looked like my Great Great Grandmother Munro. I have very dark brown eyes and apparently so had she. This awakened an interest in this mysterious ancestress long before I thought of doing Family History. Now that I am a grandmother myself, I have time to trace my Munro blood.

Of course my Great Grandmother Munro wasn't a Munro at all, she was actually a Thomson from the Isle of Bute married to a George Munro. When they came to Australia George was 35 and could read and write. The shipping records give his place of birth as Edinburgh Scotland (which I have verified); his parents who were both deceased were Daniel Munro (Soldier) and Jane Graham. George had a contract to be paid 30 pound a year with a contract for 1 year and rations provided. They went to live at Bowenfels, which is just outside Lithgow where my great grandmother was born the following year.

Ed's Note: I searched for running stationer and the nearest I could get was Stationer – one who deals in paper, inks, etc with a variant being running stationer but no explanation of the running part. Obviously it is part of the same profession but if any of you can enlighten us further, I would love to hear from you.

George and Mary were married in Glasgow and as yet I have no idea how these two came together. For that matter even though I have found George's birth, I have not found a marriage for his parents or any other children in the register that I found his birth so maybe they weren't always in Edinburgh either.

On the parish records for the birth of Jean Graham I was amused that her father's occupation is given as "Running Stationer."

The daughter born to George Munro in Australia married an Irishman from the North of Ireland. Their daughter married an Englishman from Devon; their daughter married and Australian of English descent; their daughter (me) married and Australian of mixed Scottish, English and German descent and one of our daughters has married a Finn. I am sure that Scot stepping off the boat in Sydney Cove in 1842 would never have dreamt that so many different nationalities would flow in his descendant's veins.

*Margaret Neyle
Great Great Granddaughter of George Munro*

Feed Back

We had a wonderful Christmas letter from Mrs Ailsa Stubbs Brown detailing events during the year - ranging from burst plumbing pipes to visits to from old friends from overseas & Australia. All great stuff and so well written.

Mack & Judy Munro have returned from a very enjoyable trip to Scotland. They visited Foulis Castle and were shown round by Mrs Munro and just like everyone else I know who has visited the castle, Mack said what a wonderful lady Mrs Munro is and so steeped in Munro History. They loved the Black Isle and I know just what he means.

Ian Lawson tells me that his grandmother, Margaret Howat Walker Munro travelled to Brisbane, Queensland on the Steam Ship "Perthshire" of 5377 tons, which left the Port of London on October 11, 1911. Ian still has her ticket No 227 for berth 312 in the women's quarters. She paid full steerage of £12.10 and was allowed 15 cubic feet of luggage. The rations provided were very similar to those we published in the previous issue for Harold Munro.

Joy Hewett has paid a visit to Singleton and was determined to find the Alexander Munro Fountain. She eventually located it in the park near the museum. Inside the museum was a photo of him in his mayoral robes also a bust. Joy emailed me some photos and the garden setting for the fountain is just lovely.

In response to my note on Lydia Munro, Daphne Grinberg and John Hull Munro have sent me some information about Lydia as well as another "First Fleeter" John Munroe alias Nurse aged 14 years who was convicted along with others and transported on the "Scarborough." Anyone out there know anything of John Munroe/Nurse?

For those of you still looking for accommodation for the Gathering, Alice Gruzman runs the function centre at the Coogee Bay Hotel and is negotiating special rates for members. Rates have not yet been finalised but quote the name 'Alice Gruzman' when booking and this should warrant the discounted rate. Please call 9315 6050 or 9665 0000.

Central Reservations free call number is: 1800 221 805

Normal rates are - Pub Style Accommodation (Heritage)-starting at \$130 per night for twin share, which Alice should be able to negotiate. Boutique Accommodation rack rates are from \$210-\$250 per night.

Everest Conquered - In a Kilt

The following is from the Rampant Scotland Newsletter No 343. If you would like a copy of this free newsletter, just send an email to Scottie@RampantScotland.com with "Subscribe" in the subject line

A local councillor from Perthshire has climbed to the summit of Mount Everest wearing a lightweight Macpherson tartan kilt to raise money for charity. But the Nepalese Sherpas were concerned that Bob Ellis might suffer from frostbite as, in traditional fashion, he wore nothing under his kilt. He said the weather was warm - but he had to be careful when he sat down in order to save the blushes of the local population. He met three other Scots who had been climbing on the world's highest mountain and they were surprised and delighted to see someone there in Scotland's national dress. Out of respect for Nepalese culture he did not wear the kilt in Katmandu but wore it every day on the mountain.

Wine Update

Wines from Meerea Park, the vineyard of one of our newest members, Garth Eather & his brother, continue to impress. On December 14, Stuart Gregor from the Sunday Telegraph reported that Meerea Park has two great Semillons – the 2002 Epoch semillon and the Alexander Munro semillon. He also found two terrific reds – the 2002 Shiraz Viognier and the 2001 The Aunts shiraz. The December Winewise magazine also reported the 1999 Alexander Munro Semillon as being an outstanding classic semillon. This wine will be released during 2004.

Vale

In our last newsletter I asked if anyone had information on some of our life members whose newsletters had been returned. I have had a reply from Mrs Ailsa Stubbs- Brown and Ken Besley regarding Mrs Patience Toulouse who died a few years ago. Patience was the daughter of Ailsa's Uncle William and was Ken's mother's first cousin. Noel Gates brought me up to date on three other of our members.

Patience Toulouse (nee Munro) was born 6 Feb 1913, at Braemore, Toogoolawah, Qld, and was the only daughter of William Albert Munro (b. 1 Mar 1869 at Fisherfield, Albert River Qld - d. 10 Jan 1937, Braemore, Toogoolawah, Qld and Elizabeth Waugh Angus (daughter of John and Helen Angus [nee Young] and sister of Mary Neill Young).

Patience married John Toulouse, Lt. Commander RN and RAN (d. Good Friday 1982). Immediately prior to his retirement, John was the Naval Harbour Master of Sydney Harbour. After his retirement they moved from Waverton in Sydney to Exeter in the Southern Highlands of NSW.

Patience is survived by their adopted daughter Suzanne

Noel Gates has also written to tell me that two other members for whom I had asked for information have passed away - Mrs Jean Lord in 1999 and Mrs Margaret Duncan Thompson in 2000. We send belated condolences to family and friends. Noel also gave me a new address for another of our missing members.

My thanks to all for taking the time send me the above information.

Clan Munro (Association) Australia Newsletter

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