



NEWSLETTER 2010

It seems the fame of Clan Munro is being taken to new horizons, thanks to interest from an unexpected quarter. A short while ago, a German television travel programme gave a brief taster of what northern Scotland has to offer holiday-maker. As might be imagined, the programme looked at what would appeal to their German viewers, with features of traditional rural life, shopping with tourist appeal, and perhaps what stands out most of the Scottish culture in foreigners' minds, the clan system.

The rural life was represented by a sheep-farmer, the retailer by the well-known and delightfully traditional outfitters and kiltmakers, Campbell's of Beauly, and the clan by our very own in the person of our Chief, Hector Munro of Foulis. It is understood that the programme is hugely popular in Germany and this particular feature was very well received.

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But the Chief is not the only Munro to be starring on the small screen. The Chief's wife, Alpha, along with her Kiltearn Fiddlers group were among the musicians performing at the Llangollen Eisteddfod which was shown on Welsh television. Welsh viewers will have been quick to notice the Kiltearn Fiddlers' distinctive Munro tartan sashes, which not only reflect their home base in Ferrindonald but also the support given by the Clan Munro (Association).

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Recent visitors to the Clan Munro website will have noticed an intriguing news item announcing the marriage of Finnian Munro, Younger of Foulis, and Ohma Oxley of Sydney, Australia, on 27th December, last. It was a quiet family occasion, and we hope to bring you a fuller report and pictures in the next edition of the Clan Munro Magazine.

Historians and genealogists amongst Munros have long been intrigued by how the Chief's line of descent followed a circuitous route in the mid-1800s, and how the Baronetcy became separated following the First World War death in battle of the last Baronet-Chief's heir almost a century ago. The result being the chiefship of the clan was to follow its natural course, while ancient rules governing the inheritance of Scottish titles of nobility took the baronetcy off in a different direction, and to a distant branch house of Foulis living in England.

Various personal circumstances have prevented the previous Baronets from taking a closer role in the activities of the Clan Munro Association, but the DNA programme, in which many members around the world have already taken part, has proved itself the catalyst that has brought the Baronet back into the fold, so to speak.

For the DNA project to have full value, a representative of the direct male line of the ancient House of Foulis had to take part – and so Sir Ian Munro of Foulis-Obsdale has added his highly valuable contribution to project. Already, many taking part have had suspected family links confirmed, but with Sir Ian's involvement, some are discovering direct blood links with past generations of Munro chiefs – scientific proof supporting the age-old traditions of kinship and clanship.

Sir Ian will be unknown to most members, other than by name. But his enthusiasm for the Association's role in preserving clan traditions and encouraging work in conserving its history and artefacts quickly become obvious to those who meet him. It is hoped that he will soon become a familiar face at clan events, as he has already started to take an active role in clan matters.

The multi-event clan-themed Gathering '09 spectacular in Edinburgh at the end of July saw more than 47,000 people from more than 40 countries taking part, with some 159 clans, families and associations of the 500 or so such organisations from around the world forming part of the attractions.

As many already know, the Edinburgh event was inspired by the Sir Walter Scott stage-managed event which commemorated the royal visit of George IV in 1822, and much of what was put on in the summer was an attempt to recapture some of the splendour of the past. Again there was a Royal presence, this time in the form of HRH Prince Charles Duke of Rothesay

with his Duchess. But the timing and location was unsuitable for many of the northern clans, Clan Munro included, and as it followed so closely our own highly successful Gathering we were unable to take part as a clan organisation.

However, Clan Munro was of course not totally absent, and was appropriately represented in official capacity by historian Jean Munro, known to you all for her informative articles in the Clan Munro Magazine, and Sir Ian Munro who took their rightful places in the march up the Royal Mile to the castle. Watched by some 20,000 people lining the one mile, 107 yard route which climbs 560 feet from Holyrood to the castle, the clans formed up in alphabetical order to march with pipes skirling and banners flying.

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Part of The Gathering programme included the chance to buy and plant a tree as part of the creation of Teaghlach Wood near Comrie in the heart of Scotland – which is an echo of what Clan Munro have been actively doing for more than two years now in the heart of our own home lands around Foulis Castle.

Following the disastrous storms in the autumn of 2007 which brought down many of the mature broadleaf trees around Foulis, there has been a large scale sponsored replanting scheme. Already a good many members have added their bit to the woodland, sometimes in memory of loved ones. With certificates and location maps to mark the position of individual trees, the scheme is proving highly popular - as well as adding to the natural habitat of the area. Details of how to sponsor a tree can be found on the clan website – www.clanmunro.org.uk

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With membership of our Association spread around the globe, it is easy for much of the Association's work to pass unnoticed. But there is a range of tasks regularly taken in hand by members of the council and seen through on your behalf. Negotiation with the Highland Council and local authorities in Inverness regarding the much needed preservation work to the Clachnaharry Monument, and search for a home to house the extensive Munro Collection of historical farming and rural artefacts are just

two of an extensive list currently in hand. And at the recent AGM, this year's donation to worthy causes in Clan region is £150 to St Duthas Special School.

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Another Munro making the news is Hugh Munro, second son of the Member of Parliament Lord Munro, who has recently been appointed to the post of Inspector of Prisons. This is one of the more important positions to hold as close attention is paid by both Government Ministers and the general public alike, as any comments and observations made by the inspector carry great weight for all concerned. We wish him success in his new role.

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It must be remembered that the Clan Council members are all volunteers – most with demanding full-time occupations that make spare time precious. But after many years of greatly appreciated and tireless service, Isma Munro has handed over the role of Treasurer. So it is with a great sense of gratitude that we express our fullest thanks and say farewell to Isma – whilst extending the collective hand of welcome to George Munro of Maryburgh to the post. We shall all come to know him in due course, and we offer our fullest support and encouragement as he settles in.

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As a final note - anyone giving notice of a change of address for their membership should remember to supply both the old *and* the new address along with membership number, as identifying individuals can be near impossible without the full information.

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