



# Murray Clan Society of NSW

## Newsletter – December 2011

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### Greetings to our Members and Friends

Welcome to our third newsletter for 2011. Generally we produce only two per year, but we wanted to let members know as early as possible about the arrangements for next year so that you can set aside the dates. As you will read below, as a result of further negotiations with the Bonnie Wingham Committee and their expressed desire for us to join in with them next year, our annual general meeting has decided that we will hold our annual function during the Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival in 2012. That means that the date of our function will be **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June**.

We hope you enjoy reading the Newsletter. As usual, much of the content relates to the Manning River Murrays, but I would like to think that all members would see the Newsletter as an opportunity to contribute. If anyone has interesting stories, points of interest or historical bits and pieces relating to Murrays in general, please feel free to send them to me.

We wish all of our members and friends a satisfying and restful Christmas and New Year.

Ross

### The 2011 Gathering

We had a good roll-up for our annual dinner on 24<sup>th</sup> September. As previously advised, we had a country theme this year. It was an experimental change involving local performers, and was in part an acknowledgment of the late Fred Murray of Gloucester who in past years addressed the haggis and entertained us in song at many a dinner. We thank all members and friends who supported this function.

Responses from those who attended have been very positive. Some would have preferred more opportunity to dance and we will keep this in mind for future dinners. We are always open to feedback from members.

### Heritage Tour

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September a small group of enthusiasts took part in a heritage tour of selected sites associated with the early Manning Murrays. The tour was organised by Alex Murray with support from Warwick. Sites inspected included the old Lobban property at The Bight (across the river from Wingham), The Bight cemetery, Tinonee, Pampoolah, Redbank cemetery, Krumbach, two farms at Kimbriki and of course Camphouse at Killawarra. We stopped for lunch (prepared by Warwick) at the picturesque war memorial park in Krumbach. Of the nine surviving children of Isabella Murray, we visited places connected with six of them: John, Hugh, Agnes, Thomas, George and Veitch. Alexander Lobban was the father-in-law of George Murray.

One of the participants in the tour emailed:

“... a sincere thank you for the wonderful tour of homes of our ancestors that you arranged for our visit during the Murray Reunion. We both had a most enjoyable time with you all on the Saturday. It was a day made in heaven for me - all my life I've wanted to learn more about my Murray heritage, and I can't thank you enough for that magnificent day. . . We thoroughly enjoyed the lovely food too, and how magnificently Warwick organised it all, not least the plate of sandwiches for the bus ride when we were all so hungry.”

We hope to be able to arrange similar events in the future, when we can perhaps include different historical places linked to the early Murrays. I think that one of our most important roles as a Clan Society is to help members find and appreciate their family heritage. Special thanks to Alex and Warwick for doing the hard work.



1. Looking across the river towards Wingham from "Parkhaugh", first owned by Alexander Lobban.

2. The site of the old Pampoolah School, where Oliver Murray (son of George) was a teacher. The school site adjoins "Pigeon Grove", George Murray's property on the bank of the Manning River. Warwick Murray, pictured, was once the teacher at this school. It is a site full of Murray history. As far as we know, George Murray's home at Pampoolah is the only original Murray homestead still in use as a dwelling.



3. On an open hillside behind Krumbach, along Paterson's Lane, lies a small cemetery where William and Agnes Paterson (nee Murray) lie buried. Pictured is Alex Murray beside Agnes' grave. Agnes was 19 when she migrated to Australia with four of her brothers in 1848.



4. Kimbriki. This was the country settled by Hugh Murray, and by his brother Veitch before he moved to Queensland. Isabella Murray lived with Veitch during her final illness of six months, so would have looked out on a scene like this.

5. The homestead at Camphouse, property of the original Thomas Murray. This was not the original homestead. It was in fact moved here in the 1920s from Allan Bank, the original property of George and Jessie Weatherly which adjoined Camphouse and which was later amalgamated with it. Jessie Weatherly was Isabella Murray's sister. Jessie's daughter Agnes married Isabella's son Thomas.



6. The back section of Camphouse was constructed using materials from an earlier homestead on the site.

## Annual Gathering 2012

As I mentioned above, our annual dinner next year will coincide with the Bonnie Wingham Festival. Our function will take place at the same time as the ball on the night of **Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June**. The decision was made after a great deal of discussion, and largely reverts to an earlier AGM decision to combine with Bonnie Wingham for some of our gatherings. It also reflects a change in the position of the Bonnie Wingham Committee who are now quite keen for us to hold our function during the Festival. We will, of course, seek as much feedback as we can after the function before a decision is made in regard to 2013.

There are many details that remain to be confirmed and these will be provided in our next Newsletter, but we can say that the dinner will be held at the Wingham Bowling Club. We are expecting to have a more Scottish theme next year, with bagpipe and other entertainment. We also expect to be able to confirm our guest speaker by the time of the next Newsletter.

Below is a programme for the Festival. We would encourage members to visit the Festival on the Saturday, meet us at the Murray tent, and perhaps march in the procession at 9.30am that day. We look forward to another great weekend.

All members will be invited to an informal BYO picnic lunch on the Sunday, but again more details will follow. The next Newsletter will have all the details, including the cost. Next year we will be especially requesting members to pay with their booking in order to relieve pressure on our treasurer on the night.

## Bonnie Wingham Programme

### Friday, June 1:

7:00 am – Braveheart Poets' Breakfast

10:30 am – CWA Shortbread Baking Contest: CWA Rooms, Isabella St and judging of shop window displays

5:30 pm – Mayoral Reception: Wingham Library

7:30 pm – Single Malt Whisky Night: Wingham Services Club

### Saturday, June 2:

9:00 pm – Market & Clan Information stalls open

9:30 am – Street parade commences followed by opening ceremony, Highland Games and Fair with closing ceremony at 3 pm.

6:30 pm – Wee Dram Cocktail Party: Wingham Services Club

7:30 pm – Grand Scottish Ball

Sunday, June 3:

7:30 am – Thanksgiving Service and Blessing of the Banners: River Reserve

8:00 am – Barbecue Breakfast: River Reserve

10:00 am – Colloquium of Clan and Celtic Association Leaders, Tellers Restaurant

2:00 pm – Scottish Concert: Wingham Town Hall.

Contact: Warwick Murray: (02) 6553 2582

## **Clan Society Treasurer**

At the Annual General Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September, our Treasurer Colin Murray tendered his resignation. This was accepted with regret, as Colin has been an outstanding Treasurer for a very long period. Colin has not been in the best of health for much of the last year, but has greatly improved lately.

The Annual Meeting also conferred Life Membership on Colin in recognition of his distinguished service to the Clan Society.

Timalee Murray, one of our younger members, has agreed to take on the position. We are extremely grateful to Timalee for accepting this responsibility. The address for the Clan Society will still be 9 Lambert Street, Wingham 2429, as Colin's wife Dorothy remains Secretary.

## **Wedding Congratulations**

In October our longstanding Committee member Jan Murray announced her engagement to Jack Weeks. We are delighted for Jan and wish her and Jack every happiness. The wedding is planned for 1st Jan 2012.

## **Passing of Eileen Mary Murray**

A link with the past has been severed with the death of Eileen Murray on 19<sup>th</sup> November, aged 91. Eileen was the wife of Logan Murray, the only surviving child of Thomas and Lavinia Murray of Bunyah. Although not a member of the Clan Society Eileen was well-known and respected by all in the Clan who knew her, and we extend our good wishes to Logan and family.

## **Vacancy on the Committee**

The passing of dedicated committee member Max Hand earlier in the year has created a vacancy on the committee. If any of our readers would like to join the committee and contribute to the running of the Clan Society, we would love to hear from you. A few of us are getting on a bit and we would appreciate some fresh ideas at our meetings. We also need to ensure that we have the widest possible representation of our membership. Do think about it.

## **Hugh Murray**

I was perusing some old Murray documents in the Wingham Museum recently and came across an old newspaper clipping from about 1895 describing the celebration of the golden wedding of the original Hugh Murray and his wife Margaret (Beattie). Part of it reads:

“Kimbriki House”, the residence of Mr Hugh Murray, was the scene of a very interesting event on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November, when Mr and Mrs Hugh Murray celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their wedded life...

Mr Murray... was for some years in the service of the AA Company. After leaving the company's service, Mr Murray formed a station at Gangat, where he resided for a number of years. He next came to the Manning, where he commenced farming and storekeeping at Kimbriki, where he still resides. Relatives and friends to the number of about 150 assembled to do honour to them on the auspicious occasion. Punctually at 4pm the guests sat down to a sumptuous dinner to which all did ample justice. At about 7pm, the guests adjourned to the dancing hall, which was tastefully decorated for the occasion.

Mr and Mrs Murray then opened the dance with a Scotch reel, which was loudly applauded. The young people then tripped the light fantastic till the wee sma [sic] hours of the morning. During the night, refreshments were provided on a most liberal scale. Excellent music was supplied by Messrs Murray and Allan (violin), and Mr Harcourt, and the Misses Allan, and Murray (piano). Mr C Kennedy made a very efficient MC. During the night songs etc were indulged in. After spending a most enjoyable night, the company repaired to the dining-room, where a most tempting breakfast was provided, which all heartily enjoyed. The company then sang "Auld Lang Syne" after which three cheers were given for Mr and Mrs Murray, and thus terminated one of the most enjoyable nights ever spent at Kimbriki.

Mr and Mrs Murray are deservedly esteemed by all who have the pleasure of their acquaintance, and their kindness and hospitality have won for them the good wishes of all who know them.

The clipping is typical of much of the information we have about the early Murrays. It reflects the high regard in which they were held, their love of music and their Scottish traditions, their close-knit family life and their general enjoyment of life. Kimbriki is a stunningly beautiful area, with its wide alluvial flats stretching across from the river to the hills. The perfect spot for an all-night celebration.

### **Alexander Lobban – Ancestor of many of the Manning Murrays**

The Manning River Murrays who are descended from the original George Murray are also descended from a remarkable pioneer named Alexander Lobban. George married Margaret, the daughter of Alexander Lobban. His story is fascinating and is certainly worth telling. Even those Murrays who belong to other branches of the family, or indeed those who are unrelated, will, I am sure, find some interest in Lobban's story. I hope so.

Lobban was born at Portsoy, a pretty coastal village in Banffshire, Scotland on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1803. He moved to Cabrach where in 1827 he married Margaret McLennan from Gairloch, a fishing village in Rossshire. The marriage was conducted by Rev James Gordon, Parish Minister of Cabrach, in the home of a David Scott of Aldunie. In 1829 a son, Thomas, was born.

A number of Lobban's relatives led a life of crime. They lived in a remote and isolated village in the area of Parkhaugh, near Glass, in Scotland, in the vicinity of Cabrach. An uncle who was twelve years older than Alexander, as well as two cousins who were very much younger, were career criminals who have been referred to in a Scottish newspaper as "the lawless Lobbans of Glass". It seems that Alexander followed in his uncle's footsteps, and he was found guilty of forging a bill for the amount of forty pounds. He was sentenced to seven years' transportation to Australia, arriving on the *Burrell* in 1830. He had been married just under two years when he committed his crime and, sadly, had to leave his wife Margaret and infant son Thomas in Scotland. We know little of the circumstances of the family, or what factors induced them into crime.

While still a convict, in October 1834, he petitioned Governor Bourke to bring his wife and son to Australia. His employer, Charles Boydell, of Paterson's Plains, supported this petition with a strong recommendation as to Lobban's character and his ability to support his family. Lobban received a ticket-of-leave in Dec 1834, allowing him to work for himself, so he was apparently of good behaviour and a good worker. Margaret and Thomas joined him, and during the late 1830s and 1840s he rented various farms on the Paterson and Allyn Rivers, before arriving on his own farm, "Parkhaugh", on the Manning River on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1851.

In the meantime, Margaret had given birth to David (1837), Isabella (1839), Margaret (1841), Alexander Jr (1843) and Janet (1845). Another daughter died six days after her birth in 1847.

It was not uncommon for ex-convicts to carve out a life of prosperity and respectability in response to the new opportunities available to them in Australia, but the major factor that appears to have turned Lobban's life around was his Christian conversion. In 1838, a Gaelic-speaking clergyman, Rev William Ross, established the first Presbyterian congregation at the township of Paterson, and it appears that it was through him that Lobban became a Christian. Lobban does not appear to have had any significant church connection up to that point. Ross baptised all the Australian-born Lobban children.

Lobban's new-found faith became the motivating force for everything that he did. When he settled on "Parkhaugh" (named after his home district in Scotland) at The Bight, directly across the river from the present township of Wingham, the land had not been surveyed and there were no other settlers within four miles. Soon afterwards, however, government surveyors marked out portions of the unpurchased land and opened it up for sale and settlement, resulting in a new influx of people, mainly Scots. Lobban was determined to establish congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia in the area, and it was he who was instrumental in bringing to the district the Rev Allan McIntyre, who lived with the Lobbans until permanent accommodation could be provided for him. The first PCEA service was held in Lobban's slab barn, and Lobban was a key figure in the development of Presbyterianism on the Manning.

A significant social development in Australia and New Zealand, one that originated in Britain, was the formation of Mutual Improvement Societies. These tended to be founded by Christians and were an important means of adult education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is no surprise that Alexander Lobban was President of the Mutual Improvement Society that met weekly in the original school room that was built in response to the urging of Rev Allan McIntyre. Andrew Thomson, the first school teacher, was the Secretary. Activities included lectures, the reading of essays and recitations by members, and a public debate once a month.

Lobban was also a strong advocate for the establishment of a township at Wingham.

I have in my possession a copy of the book "History of the Work of Redemption" by the great American reformer and theologian Jonathan Edwards. It is fairly solid reading. It was owned by Alexander and Margaret Lobban, and is inscribed by both of them. It was so well-read when I inherited it that I had to have it completely re-stitched and re-bound. Its very existence testifies to the kinds of people the Lobbans were.

Lobban's grand tombstone in The Bight cemetery, now collapsed and broken but still readable, is justly inscribed:

In memory of Alexander Lobban, native of Banffshire, Scotland, who departed this life at Parkhaugh, 30<sup>th</sup> January 1876 aged 73 years, and who for 26 years was a resident of the Manning district, the interests of which he always strove to promote, and for most of that time as an elder of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. He performed the duties of that office with a zeal guided by intelligence and sanctified by divine grace. Strong in faith, he was called to his rest leaving an example worthy of imitation as a loving husband, a tender father, a wise counsellor, a faithful friend, a sincere Christian, and in all the transactions of life an honourable man.

What is probably more significant than these words, however, is the open Bible carved into the top of the stone, with the inscription: "Rom 5:1 Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This quotation appears to provide the explanation for the dramatic change in Lobban's life. He had found peace with God through his faith in Jesus Christ. For Lobban, it was more than just a case of taking advantage of the opportunities available to him in Australia. It was rather a living out his new-found beliefs, in particular by developing the kind of Christian home life that produced children of character and calibre who made enormous contributions to their communities. One of those children was Margaret, wife of George Murray, my great-grandmother.

A published tribute after his death recorded that "it was his custom to hold family worship in his house, and regularly every Sabbath to instruct his children in the Holy Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism ... In his church connection he manifested uniform and cordial kindness towards those who were in the ministry ... This faithful servant of God ... has gone to rest ... but his memory will be long cherished amongst those with whom he was associated, and with whom he so long walked to the house of God."

Lobban made his will "acknowledging with gratitude the goodness and mercy of Almighty God and the longsuffering forbearance manifested towards me...". He wrote that he wanted his house cared for because "it is associated in my mind with many days of Spiritual privileges and enjoyments...".

The group of Clan members who took part in the tour of historic sites associated with the Manning Murrays on the day of the September gathering, visited the Lobban property and were made welcome by the current owners. The property still bears the name "Parkhaugh", and the road leading out of Wingham to the bridge is called Lobban Road. Part of the original property, now on the other side of the road to the current Parkhaugh, is called "Lobban Lodge".

I understand that there is a substantial collection of Lobban papers and records at the Australian Society of Genealogists. I hope to peruse them some time to find out more about this remarkable man.



Lobban Lodge

## David Murray

I was doing some research in the Taree Library a few months ago and decided to peruse some of the minutes of the old Wingham Municipal Council. I knew that David Lobban Murray, son of the original George, had served as Mayor of Wingham, and I was interested in his work as an alderman. Like many of the early Murrays, he was anxious to contribute to and improve the society in which he lived. He was first voted on to the Council in 1904, at the age of 32, and attended his first meeting on 8th February that year. On 11th February 1907 he was unanimously elected Mayor by the other Aldermen. A year

later, on 10th February 1908, after council elections, he moved that Alderman Skinner be elected Mayor. Skinner was Mayor for several years at different times. There is no indication as to why David Murray did not seek re-election as Mayor - he continued to serve as an Alderman until February 1911, when he was not re-elected. He had served seven years on the Council.

At the Council meeting on 25th March 1907, the minutes record "The Mayor's Minute", a statement of his main intentions for the Mayoral year. It read:

"During the present Municipal year I would like to have the utmost support of this Council in advancing any project that will tend to the advancement of the town. I think that the streets should be put in first class order while there are funds available and that they be handed over at the end of the year in a creditable condition. I think the rates should be all collected by the end of December without having resort to law, and I trust that ratepayers will take notice of this intimation, also, that the deeds of the site for Council Chambers be in possession of the Council, and lastly that no opportunity be lost in urging that a new Court House and Police Station be erected."

David had a business in Wingham as a farrier and coach-builder, but around 1914 he sold up and took his wife Mary (nee Moore) and six children to Sydney where he became a highly successful businessman. He was keen for his children to have the best possible education and they all succeeded. Of his four sons, one became a banker, one a surveyor / property developer, and two became engineers. Both his daughters married professional men, so the move to Sydney achieved its goals. He did, however, maintain close relationships with his Manning family.

### **Subscriptions**

The Murray Clan Society operates on a financial year basis, which means that subscriptions fall due on 1<sup>st</sup> July each year (\$15 individual / \$25 family). As you know, we don't stop communicating with people who aren't financial, but we do need to cover our running expenses. Our insurance costs are about \$300 a year alone, and there are quite a few incidentals along the way. We aim to cover our costs for our annual dinners but not to make a profit from them. Although our financial position is sound, we need membership subscriptions to keep it that way. There is a return slip at the end of the Newsletter for anyone who would like to renew at this time.

### **Final Remarks**

Thank you to all members for your support during the year. There are many who really look forward to our gatherings each year to catch up with family and friends and enjoy a night of food and entertainment. Do get back to us with ideas and suggestions.

If you are receiving this by post and you have an email address, please let me know. Emailed Newsletters have colour photos and cost nothing to send.

Remember, contributions to this Newsletter are very welcome.

See you next year in June.

Ross Murray

President

.....  
The Treasurer  
Murray Clan Society of NSW  
9 Lambert Street  
Wingham NSW 2429

Enclosed is my membership subscription for the Murray Clan Society for 2011-12.

(\$15 individual / \$25 family)

Name(s):.....

Signature.....

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