



Murray Clan Society of NSW

**Newsletter
December 2018**



PO Box 407
WINGHAM NSW 2429

www.murray-clan-nsw.net

02 6555 9818

murrayclansocietynsw@hotmail.com

Welcome

Welcome to the latest Murray Clan Newsletter. We trust that there will be something in it for everyone.

It was good to meet so many people at the Wingham gathering in June, especially those who joined us for the first time. It was a very pleasant day. We had a strong contingent in the Festival Parade, after which members were able to wander around the exhibits at the Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival and watch the various band, dance and medieval combat displays, while also having the opportunity to relax at the Murray tent and enjoy refreshments and lunch.



The Murray contingent in the Festival parade



*Jessica Murray, Margaret Tuiqereqere and Lorraine Murray wearing their Murray Clan tartans in the parade
Photos: Kylie Murray*

40th Anniversary Clan Gathering 2019

The 2019 gathering will be held on **Saturday 1st June** and will be the most significant for some time. The Clan Society will have been operating for 40 years next year, and the Committee has decided on a program that will be a little different.

The current Committee ends its three-year period in office at the next Annual General Meeting and all positions will be open for election.

There will be more details (including the cost) in the next Newsletter, but the basic plan for the day will be as follows:

1. During the day we will have a marquee at the festival, but a smaller one than in the past two years. We will not be providing lunch, but there will be sit-down refreshments available all day for Murray Clan members and friends.
2. In the evening, we will hold a dinner in the Wingham Showground Tea Room, with a three-course meal including haggis. The AGM will be held at 6.00pm and the dinner will follow (6.30 for 7.00).
3. A program including some excellent musical entertainment is being arranged.

We commend this gathering to you and hope that as many of you as possible will join us.

Manning Valley Tour – Your thoughts please

On the Sunday after the gathering this year, a group of enthusiastic members spent the day in a convoy of three cars visiting interesting parts of the Manning Valley, in particular places associated with the early history of the Murray family.

It was a delightful day, and we would like to know whether there would be sufficient interest in running a similar tour in 2019. We realise that many members do not live in the Manning area and may be interested in where their ancestors chose to live. Unfortunately, hiring a minibus makes the cost quite expensive, but with enough notice we can arrange sufficient cars to transport any who might wish to participate.

This year the tour started at Wingham, then proceeded to Kimbriki where we looked over the country where Veitch Murray and his mother Isabella lived until her death. The tour included the Camphouse cemetery at Killawarra, the Bight cemetery outside Wingham, the historic *Gowan Brae* property at Burrell Creek, the site of John Murray's Ferry Inn at Tinonee, the Redbank cemetery on Old Bar road, Oxley Island and Pampoolah, as well as look-outs at Mondrook and Bays Hill. Depending on how late in the day people were prepared to travel, we could possibly include Bunyah as well, or perhaps Krambach. We would be happy to receive requests to include other sites.

There is quite a bit of organising involved, so we would love to hear from members who might be interested in this proposal. Feel free to email me at murrayr46@gmail.com. Here are some photos from the 2018 tour, courtesy of Tom Kealy, one of the participants:



Brushy Cutting Lookout



Alexander Lobban grave, The Bight, Wingham



Murray Family Cemetery, Killawarra



Pampoolah



Historic Gowan Brae, Burrell Creek



The Manning from Bays Hill, Taree

Manning River at Tinonee



*Redbank Cemetery, resting place
of members of the George Murray
branch of the family*



Members of the Ditchfield / Kealy family who did the tour

Year-round Scotland

Blair Atholl Castle in Perthshire, Scotland, seat of the Dukes of Atholl, has a Facebook page. Recently they posted a series of photos of the castle in different contexts. Here are four of them:



Congratulations Cayley

Although I have been retired now for 14 years, I still enjoy doing relief teaching from time to time at St Clare's Catholic High School in Taree. I was delighted recently to see one of our extended family members, Cayley Cribb, elected as girl school captain for 2019.

Cayley is a fine young woman in every way and I know from experience that she will provide outstanding leadership in this position.

Cayley's parents are Robert and Catherine Cribb. Robert's mother Margaret (nee Murray) is the daughter of the late William Elmo Murray, a descendant of the original Hugh Murray who settled on the Manning with his wife Margaret (nee Beattie) after migrating from Scotland in 1848.

The students at St Clare's have made an excellent choice and we wish Cayley well in her leadership role.



Cayley Cribb
(Photo courtesy St Clare's High School Taree)

Wingham, 1910

Here is a photo of Isabella Street, Wingham in 1910. The shop with the awning and posts belonged to David Murray. David was a farrier and coachbuilder, but sold a huge range of merchandise in his store. He was a municipal councillor for many years and served as the Mayor of Wingham for a year. During World War 1 he took his family to Sydney, where he became a prosperous businessman and property developer. He was the son of George Murray of Pampoolah.

For more on David Murray, see *The History of the Australian Murrays from Roxburghshire Scotland*, page 53.

Photo courtesy of Robert Davis, great-grandson of David Murray



Tributes to Departed Friends

Tom Metcalfe



Last Newsletter I omitted to mention the passing of Tom Metcalfe, aged 78, whose funeral took place on 2nd March. My apologies for this omission. Tom was the much loved husband of Robyn. Robyn comes from a well-known family of Murrays in the Manning district, being a grand-daughter of Thomas and Lavinia Murray of Bunyah through their son Logan and his wife Eileen, and has attended our Clan gatherings.

Thomas was a good man and a friendly neighbour (he lived just a few houses up the street from me). We pass on our belated sympathy to Robyn and their children and grandchildren.

Rob Murray



Rob Murray was looking forward to attending the 2018 gathering with his wife Jill. Just two days before the gathering, I received an email from him saying that he had been growing weak and had just been diagnosed with an aggressive form of motor neurone disease. It was a big shock to such an incredibly fit and robustly healthy man, and he expressed his great disappointment that he would miss the gathering.

Rob's decline was rapid; he passed away on 20th June, aged 73.

Rob was a family man. He adored and was adored by his own family (wife Jill and sons Doug and Peter) and their extended families, but he also delighted in the wider Murray Clan and was immensely proud of his Scottish heritage.

I was privileged to attend Rob's memorial service at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club at Newport. Ushered in to the sound of the bagpipes, I learned much about Rob that I did not know. Rob was a self-effacing, humble man and was not given to talking about himself and his achievements. Warwick Murray, our Murray Clan Commissioner and, like me, a second cousin to Rob (our three Murray grandfathers were brothers, sons of George and Margaret Murray of Pampoolah) spoke on Rob's love of his family, its history and Scottish connections, and recited the Robbie Burns poem "My Love is Like a Red, Red, Rose".

Rob played a big part in raising his sons, being a stay-at-home Dad for a time while Jill, a teacher, was the breadwinner. He and his family enjoyed a wide range of outdoor activities: camping, hiking, sailing, bushwalking and skiing (including downhill and cross country skiing as well as being an instructor).

He had a lifetime involvement in Scouting as a leader and trainer, and was a first aid trainer with both the Scouts and St John's Ambulance. He had been a member of the Sydney University Regiment and gave a lifetime of service to the RSL.

Rob was a gentle, gracious and sociable man who was always engaging company. I regard it as an honour to have come to know him through our connection with the Murray Clan Society.

Jean Holman Davis



Jean was born in Sydney in 1925, the first child of Dorothy and Robert Murray. Rob Murray, the son of Wingham businessman and mayor David Murray, was an accountant with the Rural Bank.

Both of Jean's parents were solid countryfolk and Jean enjoyed the interaction with her large extended family on both sides, maintaining a lifelong interest in family history. A proud member of the Murray Clan, she attended reunions in Wingham for as long as she was able.

Always competent at maths, Jean found employment with the Bank of NSW, joining at the age of 16. It was at head office of the bank in Sydney, that Jean met her future husband, John Davis. He served with the RAAF in the islands during World War 2 before they married in 1947.

Jean liked stability and security, but she married a man who relished the new and he led her on an unpredictable journey through life, changing jobs and moving house frequently. They lived in Malaysia for a few years during the 1960s before returning to Sydney, then shifting finally to Alstonville, where they spent their last two decades together in retirement. John died in September 2016 at 91 and Jean followed him in February 2018, just weeks before she would have turned 93. They leave two children, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Thanks to Jean's son Robert for this tribute

Dirndls and Lederhosen ... and Kilts!

During September and October Philippa and I spent five delightful weeks in Austria and Croatia. For two of those weeks we had a house stay with a lovely Austrian couple who had stayed with us in Tuncurry the previous year. We have done many of these house exchanges throughout the world and have found them a wonderful way to have holidays.

We stayed in the village of Eberstein in the southern Austrian region of Carinthia, about 20 minutes' drive outside the regional capital city of Klagenfurt. It is a stunningly beautiful area of the southern Austrian Alps, and one to which few tourists go. Much of the region is dual language German and Slovenian, and very few people are able to speak English.

While we were there, there was a huge festival called "Wiesenmarkt" in the nearby town of St Veit. Tens of thousands of people from surrounding districts gather in their traditional dress, as they have done for over 600 years, for ten days of celebrations, feasts, a huge street parade and markets. Various kinds of traditional bands as well as small groups of musicians and singers provide wonderful entertainment. The range and colour of traditional dress styles for both men and women (especially the hats) from the various regions are truly spectacular, and everyone in the family gets involved.

As well as watching the parade, we were able to participate with our hosts in other activities including an enormous open-air feast on a farm.

What we found interesting was that as well as the leather shorts and dirndls that the vast majority of locals were wearing, quite a few men were wearing tartan kilts (complete with sporrans) and women were wearing tartan dresses. On enquiry, we learned that wearing kilts as part of traditional costume has become trendy in Austria. I have no idea why a form of dress so associated with Scotland has taken root in Austria of all places. Can you imagine *The Sound of Music* with Christopher Plummer in a kilt?

Here is one gentleman (right) we met at the farm celebration. Through an interpreter (he had no English and we have minimal German) we obtained his permission to take his photo.

We also learned that there are two specialist kilt manufacturers in the area, including Thomas Rettl (www.rettl.com) who has outlets in Klagenfurt and two other centres. They claim proudly that Scottish actor Sean Connery wears their kilts.

Here are two photos from their catalogue:



Certainly these garments do not mimic the traditional Scottish style in every detail, but the debt to Scotland is fairly apparent. You learn some interesting things when you travel; I would never have expected to see men wearing kilts in the Southern Alps of Austria, where the languages are German and Slovenian. (I'm sure that even the few people with a smattering of English would have trouble understanding the language as it is spoken north of the Tweed.)

New Book Tells Remarkable Story

Why was Perth given that name? Why was the Murray River so called?

The answers to these and many other questions are found in an important new book ***Next to Wellington: General Sir George Murray***, subtitled “The story of a Scottish Soldier and Statesman, Wellington’s Quartermaster General.”

This comprehensive biography is the work of John Harding-Edgar, a four greats nephew of Murray, on his mother’s side. What follows is a slightly adapted account of the book, sent to us by the author.

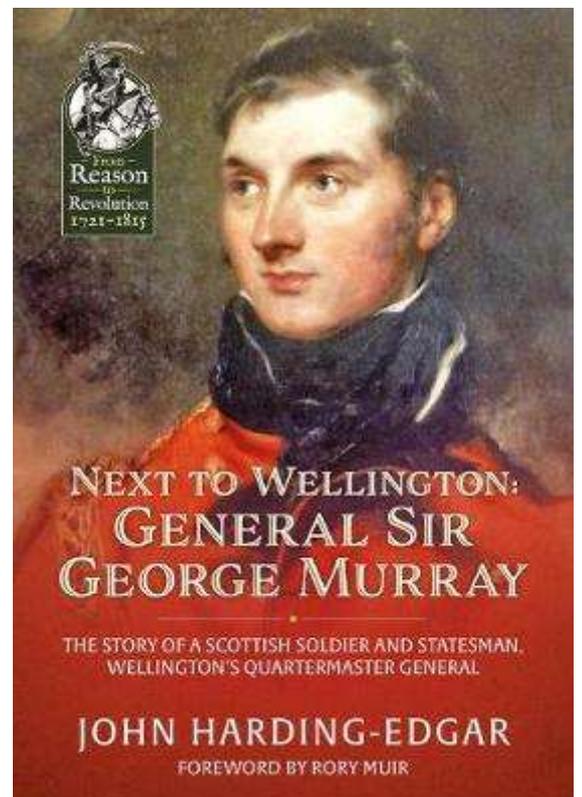
Sir George Murray was a younger son of the branch of the Tullibardine Murrays who had owned Ochtertyre in Perthshire for generations. They were thus cousins of the Dukes of Atholl.

The book covers the tribulations the family had suffered as a result of their part in the Jacobite rebellion in 1745 in support of “Bonnie Prince Charlie”. Murray’s mother, the daughter of the Earl of Cromarty, was born in the Tower of London, where her father was under sentence of death for his part in the rebellion (he was later spared). By the time Murray was born in 1772, however, the Ochtertyre Murrays were firm supporters of the Hanoverian monarchy (at that time George III).

As a younger son, as was common at the time, George entered the army. This was the era of the great Napoleonic Wars, and George’s fields of service included the Low Countries, Egypt, Ireland, West Indies, Denmark and Sweden, where in every case he gained the confidence of military and political leaders.

During this period, Murray developed a close working relationship with Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington. Wellington chose him to be his Quartermaster General in the 6 year long Peninsular War, where Britain fought alongside Portugal to resist Napoleon’s expansion into the Spanish Peninsula. He was recognised as the only man to enjoy the complete confidence of his commander, and became irreplaceable. His skill in moving vast numbers of allied troops over difficult terrain and his ability to anticipate and interpret Wellington’s thinking in the planning and course of major battles was greatly admired and valued. By the end of the war he was the most decorated soldier of his generation next to Wellington himself.

Much to Wellington’s dismay Murray missed the Battle of Waterloo as he was acting Commander in Chief and temporary Governor General in Canada. On his return, he again worked closely with Wellington, as Chief of Staff of the 150,000 strong army of Occupation in France, during which time he had an affair with Lady Louisa Paget, the married sister of Wellington’s famous



cavalry general, culminating in scandalous divorce proceedings and ostracism from polite London Society.

Of particular interest to Australian readers, Murray served as Colonial Secretary from 1828 to 1830 in Wellington's Tory Government, a tumultuous time in British politics. He had to deal with the poisonous relationship between Governor Darling and Thomas Mitchell, NSW's surveyor general, who had served on Murray's staff in the Peninsula. Murray also claimed the Swan River Colony for Britain, installing James Stirling as its first Governor. Perth was named in Murray's honour, recognising his service as Member of Parliament for Perth in Scotland. The Murray River was also later to be named after him, following Sturt's 1829/1830 expedition. Appropriately, a large portrait of Murray adorns the City Hall in Perth WA.

The book is based on primary sources, largely the Murray Papers in the National Library of Scotland which contain Murray's military papers and numerous volumes of personal and official letters. Most engaging is his regular correspondence with his brother Patrick, an MP and politician, the 6th Baronet, and his sister Augusta who frequented the drawing rooms of London and Argyll. Beautifully and thoughtfully written, they provide an insight into the real day to day life and views of a politically aware senior officer serving in the most horrific war against Napoleon, and the subsequent difficult adjustment to a political life, against a backdrop of a love life and marriage which added to his personal challenges. The detail in the papers allows the reader a privileged view of an extraordinary life, lived in dangerous times, for forty years alongside Wellington, as his most trusted military and political colleague and friend.

Note on the Author:

I have already noted the author's family connection with Sir George Murray. On retiring from a career that took him from London to Sydney and Melbourne, then to Edinburgh as a Corporate Lawyer, John Harding-Edgar set about testing the family story that Murray was 'Wellington's best mate'. After four years of research it became clear that there was ample evidence for this. He was encouraged to publish by Rory Muir, Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Adelaide, author of the two definitive works on Wellington *The Path to Victory* and *Waterloo and the Fortunes of Peace*. Muir has kindly written the Foreword to the book.

John lives in Edinburgh with his wife Jennifer. He has three grown up daughters.

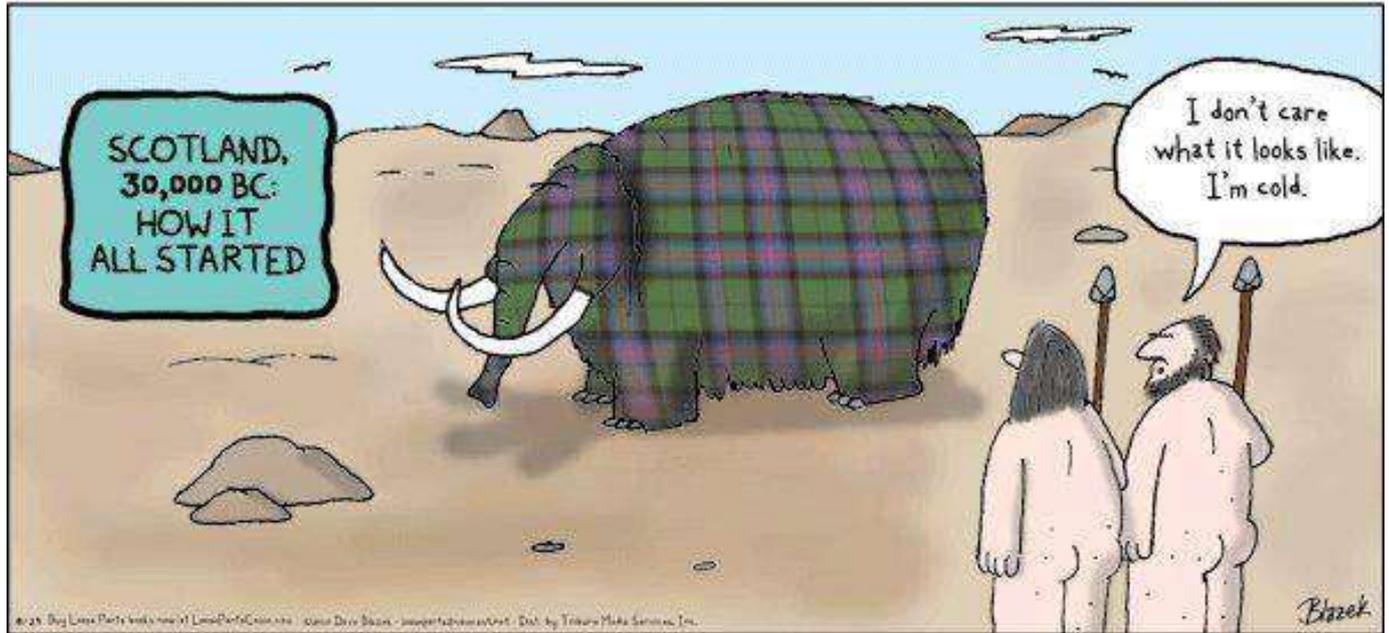
The book is published by Helion. The recommended retail price in Australia (eg from Dymocks) is \$89.99, but it can be ordered from the Book Depository in England (with free delivery) for \$57.17 or Amazon Australia for \$42.23.

For further information, visit <https://www.bookdepository.com/Next-Wellington-General-Sir-George-Murray-John-Harding-edgar/9781912390137>

Any Scholars out there?

The University of Aberdeen has contacted us about a Master of Letters (MLitt) degree that is being offered online. The degree is part coursework and part thesis, and is designed to appeal to the "Scottish diaspora" (people like us). Here is the link to it for anyone who might be interested. The coursework is based on Scottish history.

<https://www.postgraduatesearch.com/university-of-aberdeen/56844518/postgraduate-course.htm>



Courtesy Ancient History Encyclopedia: <https://www.ancient.eu/>

The Bagpiper

I recently read this moving story by a bagpiper:

Time is like a river. You cannot touch the water twice, because the flow that has passed will never pass again. Enjoy every moment of life. As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Nova Scotia back country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost and, being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologised to the men for being late.

I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play. The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before, for this homeless man. And as I played "Amazing Grace", the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head was hung low, my heart was full. As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen anything like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years." Apparently, I'm still lost ... it's a man thing.

We wish all our members a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Ross Murray
President