Murray Clan Society

of NSW

Newsletter – May 2024

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Welcome

Greetings members and friends of the Murray Clan Society.
As previously advised, the Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival will be held on **Saturday 1 June**.
The Murrays will have a tent set up and we would love to see you there.
The day's program can be seen here: https://www.bonniewingham.com/program
Entry fee is a $2 coin per adult.

There will also be a concert on **Sunday 2 June** at the Wingham Presbyterian Church, 32 Moon St, Wingham from 2.00pm until 4.00pm**.** Entry is $10 for adults, school age children free. Afternoon tea will be provided.

Our tent will be a bit smaller this year. The increasing number of groups applying for sites has meant that Clans are being allocated a standard 4 X 4 site (3 X 3 tent). Nevertheless, you will be made to feel very welcome.

We are required by our Constituton to hold an **Annual General Meeting**. We recognise that the tent is far from being an ideal venue but we have found it impossible to organise such a meeting outside the Festival program. The AGM is scheduled for **2.00pm**.

Another important notification is that we have decided not to renew our **Post Office Box** in Wingham. The cost of $159 a year was simply not value for money when we receive virtually no correspondence at all through the mail system. If you have sent us a letter over the past few months and it has been returned to you, please accept our apologies.

If you need to correspond by mail, please use my home address, **10 Banksia Parade, Tuncurry 2428**.

Family News

Dane Tuiqereqere appointed to Fiji High Court

Dane Tuiqereqere is the son of longtime Clan members Margaret and Leke Tuiqereqere. Leke is originally from Fiji and has very close ties with the community there. On 20 November 2023, Dane was officially sworn in as a Puisne Judge of the Fijian High Court in the presence of His Excellency the President, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere.

Media outlet Fiji Live reports that Tuiqereqere founded a law firm Pasifika Law Limited and as its Director "dedicated himself to enhancing access to justice within a community that often faced challenges in securing legal representation." The article goes on to say that "He championed cases with novel and significant legal implications in the courts … With a career spanning over 30 years as a litigation lawyer in both Fiji and NZ, Tuiqereqere has demonstrated expertise in civil and criminal law … His wealth of experience encompasses the entire legal process, from preparing court documents for proceedings to handling trial hearings, interlocutors and appeals … Throughout his career he has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the pursuit of justice and legal excellence … He hails from the village of Naisisili on Nacula Island in Yasawa, is married with four children, and is a proud grandfather of two."

The Swearing in Ceremony

Tuiqereqere with the President of Fiji, His Excellency President Ratu Wiliame Katonivere.

Front row: Leke, Dane and Margaret at the Swearing in Ceremony

To read more, go to https://fijilive.com/tuiqereqere-added-to-fijis-judiciary/

For a snippet of the swearing in ceremony go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmv1zod3kNA

Departed Members

Since our last Newsletter we have lost a number of very committed and longstanding members.

Paul Inwood passed away on 20 February 2024. Paul was for some years Secretary of the Clan Society. Although he could often not travel to gatherings, he regularly represented the Clan at Scottish festivals across the State, setting up his tent, answering questions and enrolling new members. He loved being part if the Clan and did an enormous amount to make us known.

John Murray passed away on 11 November 2023. A resident of Brighton, Victoria, but with strong ties to the Manning from his early life, he was very loyal to the Clan. At 86 years of age he made the effort to fly from Melbourne for the 2015 Wingham gathering. John was involved in the Clan in its early days in the 1980s. As a young engineer, he once worked in the Wallamba River area south of Taree planning the extension of electric power to farms and settlements there.

Our next Newsletter will include more complete tributes to these two fine gentlemen.

Brigadier Mary Murray OBE of the Salvation Army

In my biography of Isabella Murray, I made a brief mention of Mary Murray. Isabella's husband John had a younger brother James, and his grand-daughter Mary had a profound influence in the very early years of the Salvation Army. I recently came across a new article about her, written by Alastair M Redpath. I noticed the article on a Facebook site called "Project Hawick", but it had been previously published in "The Hawick Paper" in May 2020.

Here is the article with minor amendments. It is longer than articles we usually publish, but in this case the story is so remarkable that we've printed virtually all of it. The original article can be found at: https://www.facebook.com/ProjectHawick/photos/sally-army-pairt-yin-mary-murray-obethe-salvation-army-sa-began-on-the-streets-o/305833764235439/?paipv=0&eav=AfZIA5wRIXsa3waIC3NRBcbBfydJ2S1RbNHwk6MBeZY9jEHiFC0bgrqL_FDKyHCwoN4&_rdr

The Salvation Army began on the streets of East London in 1865 when Methodists William and Catherine Booth abandoned the traditional concept of a church pulpit to preach directly to the people. The couple lived and breathed the doctrine of practical Christianity – soup, soap and salvation – to transform the lives of society's most vulnerable and marginalised people.

The work of their East London Christian Mission included setting up homeless shelters, a family tracing service, running soup kitchens, and establishing rescue homes for women fleeing domestic abuse and prostitution. The couple also oversaw the world's first free labour exchange and campaigned to improve working conditions in Victorian Britain.

The name 'Salvation Army' came from an incident in May 1878 when William Booth was dictating a letter to his secretary, George Scott Railton, and said "We are a volunteer army". Bramwell Booth overheard his father and retorted "Volunteer! I'm no volunteer, I'm a regular!" Railton was instructed to cross out the word 'volunteer' and substitute it for 'salvation'. The organisation thereafter modelled itself after the military, with its own flag, hymns and songs, often with words set to popular folk tunes sung in the pubs. Booth and the other soldiers in 'God's Army' would wear uniforms for meetings and ministry work. He became the general and his other ministers were given appropriate ranks as officers, with no distinction being drawn between men and women as to rank, authority, and duties.

One such soldier, who worked her way through the ranks to become Brigadier and a legendary figure was Mary Stewart Murray, of Teviotdale.

Born on October 2, 1863, she grew up in a devoutly religious family setting. Her paternal grandfather James Murray was a Denholm-born third cousin of James A.H. Murray of Oxford English Dictionary fame, and descended from the Murrays of Spittal-on-Rule.

He studied to be a minister, but due to a speech impediment had to give up his ambition and instead ran a private school in Hawick for several years before being appointed master of Hawick Grammar School in 1821. James was appointed as Session Clerk in 1821, and was the last to carry on the practice of reading the scriptures in church between the morning and evening services. He was thereafter the first teacher at the new United Schools, when the Parish and Grammar Schools merged in 1825, and remained as headmaster right up until his death in 1853.

Her father, General Sir John Irvine Murray, was born in Hawick, and joined the East India Company at the age of sixteen and was sent out to Calcutta in 1842. He was appointed to the 71st Native Infantry later that year, and rose through the ranks of the Bengal Army, eventually becoming commander of the (British) Indian Army during the First War of Independence, also serving in campaigns in Afghanistan and Bhutan. He was based in northern India and there established the 14th Murray Jat Lancers (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/14th_Murray%27s_Jat_Lancers).

For generations there had been warriors in the family. An uncle, who was Admiral of the Fleet, is buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, and one forebear was appointed Napoleon's guardian at St. Helena. Mary's mother Wilhelmina was the daughter of Colonel Duncan Archibald Malcolm.

Mary was raised in the British cantonment in northern India, well used to military life. In her teens she spent some time in Belgium, where her schooling was continued, returning to India a tall and learned girl. Her father decided, like all good Borderers, that she must learn to ride. With some trepidation she mounted a horse, but the animal bolted and onlookers expected disaster. Mary, however, held on and regained control of the frightened animal, and soon she was riding with her father at the head of his regiment on military parades.

Upon returning to Britain, Mary, aged seventeen, was spiritually awoken during a church service and was so shaken by the experience that she walked out. Sometime later she sat on the battered benches of a SA hall, engrossed by the story of one man's battles with alcohol; the man had sold his children's shoes and blankets from their beds to buy more drink, and had been dismissed from his work. However, she took hope from hearing that he had turned his life around since facing his demons, and wished to learn more about the organisation – asking a policeman where the nearest recruiting office was.

A few weeks later she was summoned to SA headquarters for an interview, and qualified as an officer out of Southsea Corps in 1892. Her initial social work calling mainly involved rescue and midnight cases, police court and prison work, and a ministry service to sailors and soldiers, before being appointed assistant secretary to the SA's Naval and Military League (NML) in 1898.

By the end of the 19th century the NML was communicating with Salvationist sailors and soldiers while providing naval and military homes in such places as Calcutta, Gibraltar, Malta, and Portsmouth. In 1899 this work was greatly extended when the SA supported and served with British forces in the Boer War (1899 – 1902).

In November that year, William Booth sent Murray and party of ten welfare officers to Cape Town to administer "comfort and practical aid" to all sides in the conflict. Mary's orders were to find out:

(1) What the SA could do for troops at the front; (2) what part women could play in such work; and (3) how to organise the work efficiently and economically. When they arrived, Cape Town was relatively remote from the front lines and this surprised a battle-ready Mary.

It was felt that spiritual care should be provided for Salvationists who were serving. It was also seen as an opportunity for missionary work. Mary's soldiers were to join the army units, moving with the troops to assist the sick and wounded whilst caring for their mental wellbeing, and she continued on to Estcourt, which had become the front. The SA officers visited hundreds of hospitals and camps, assisting troops in letter-writing and informing families of their whereabouts.

With a growing awareness of the needs of the soldiers at Estcourt, the SA provided tents, which became known as The Soldiers' Home, where soldiers could read, write, and get good cheap food. There were also rudimentary recreational facilities, free winter clothing, endless supplies of stationery, a letter-writing service and round-the-clock visitations. The first tent had not been up an hour before a row of sleeping men was stretched across the floor, men who had been uncomfortably cramped in their bell tents. Others were writing at the solitary table or enjoying the rare luxury of sitting in a chair!

Day after day the tents were filled with men. At half-past seven each evening Mary would rap gently on the table, which meant pipes out, caps off, and bums on seats – ready for that night's meeting. The men were very ready to obey, but often the crowd was so great that even the Salvationist leader had barely room to stand. She conducted many a meeting with one arm round the tent pole, to keep her upright in the crush. The average nightly attendance was soon over five-hundred. Old hymns rang out from this great choir, and when the Last Post sounded, goodnights were said, and the tent emptied. As the days grew colder, officers came by for morning porridge.

But this was no fairy tale undertaking. Mary and her fellow officers worked under shellfire and the sound of guns. Sometimes, just when they had made themselves comfortable in one place and cow-dunged the floor of their tent, they would hear the camp being struck, and so hurriedly moved on again. Their tent might have to be pitched in long grass, and before they could sleep the women would kneel on the ground and try to reduce the vegetation with table knives.

Washing was done by river; each article being folded, damped and tied in a blanket; then the bundle was laid in the doorway so that everyone who entered had to walk on it – a novel method of ironing. Salvationists would leave the camp at night to assist in burials, and would pray with the men in the trenches.

In due course Mary followed the troops over the border into the Transvaal. Volksrust was but a handful of houses on the veldt, a stone railway station and a tiny church and chapel. All around them were trenches and soldiers, though the Dutch inhabitants were carrying on as usual, children playing, cured meat hanging from the rafters, and women were baking in the open. Here Mary secured the use of a small corrugated iron house, which a military officer christened 'Salvation Cottage'. Every night meetings were held, and in a few days the little room was packed once more.

In the Transvaal the officers of the NML hardly rested. A typical day's work was described by Mary thus: "Rise at six, prayers, fetch water from the station, light fire and get breakfast. Bible reading and prayer. Fetch goods from village three miles away. Personal dealing with men on the way. Light fire and get lunch, prayer, fetch more water, wash linen. Prayer. Visit camp hospital. Each tent holds six men. Visit eighteen, read Bible in twelve tents, pray in sixteen. Fire, tea, prayer. Visit seven tents twelve men in each. Turn in, ready for early call."

Her writings on the war and the experiences of both herself and her colleagues are full of gentle humour, relieving the grimness and reality of the situation. Her approach was said to be motherly,

sympathetic, concerned, and forthright – never straying far from Salvationist doctrine.

Following ten months on the front, Mary was welcomed home on October 3, 1900, before a capacity crowd at London's Regent Hall. SA founder William Booth sent a letter to be read at the meeting. He commended Murray's work, expressed an expectation that the war would end soon, and shared a vision of the NML extending a hand to every regiment and ship in the Queen's forces. Mary was promptly promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

Her mission was far from over, however, as her war memoirs were published to raise funds for the SA's ongoing work in South Africa. Although this proved successful, the cover of the book was criticised for its placing of the Royal Arms of England next to the Salvation Army crest. There was also no mention of her work with Boer soldiers and civilians, as this may have lessened the impact of the fundraising back in Britain.

Mary took charge of the NML, a forerunner of the SA's Red Shield Services, and was awarded the South African War Medal in 1913. Very soon her experience and expertise was needed again. Eleven days after the outbreak of the First World War, the now Brigadier Mary Murray, together with Staff Captain John Aspinall and Ensign May Whittaker, formed a small detachment to accompany the British Expeditionary Force to France and Belgium – to see what help could be given to the men. The result of this was a service which eventually provided forty camp centres on the Western Front, and later a war graves visitation service for bereaved relatives, initially under the direction of another woman officer, Adjutant Mary Booth, granddaughter of the SA's founder.

Present at several field hospitals, Mary provided hot food and drink, letter-writing services, sermons and prayer, chit-chat and informal song-songs. It was she who first suggested the formation of a unit to carry wounded men from the scene of battle to hospitals in the rear. In the autumn of 1914, bandsmen working under her charge formed their own ambulance unit – The White Brigade – working alongside the British Red Cross at their garages in Boulogne. They acquired this name due to their abstinence from "drink, loose talk, gambling, smoking, and other things we need not mention." The unit would be led by Bandmaster Captain Bramwell Taylor. Mary wrote of the experience: "On Sunday night, we had a singing service in the garage. The big guns were booming and so on. We starting singing Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet and one or two fellows joined us; the crowd gradually grew until we must have had between thirty or forty drivers joining in." Within weeks, over twenty-thousand song sheets had been distributed across the camps.

In August, she crossed to Belgium and watched as the Germans marched into Brussels, but having got themselves this far the SA found it somewhat difficult to reach the British Army which was by then involved in the retreat from Mons. Mary ensured that their German counterparts would not be forgotten and sent the bilingual Captain Sidney Carvosso Gauntlett to visit prisoners of war; he eventually travelled 17,000 miles, addressing over 50,000 men.

The SA presented five motor ambulances to the British Red Cross in November 1914, the first to be used by the army. Gradually more were added until finally there were thirty SA vehicles and a complete section of drivers. Mary's camp centres were thrown open to servicemen of any rank or religion, later reaching the shores of the Mediterranean. A Relatives War Graves Visitation Department was established to enable grieving families to visit graves, and took photographs for those unable to make the journey. Mary knew this grief all too well after her sister Agnes' son (i.e. nephew) – Second Lieutenant Charles Stephenson Woollcombe – was killed in action on October 12, 1914, while serving with the King's Own Scottish Borderers at the Battle of La Bassée.

When Mary eventually returned to Britain, she was awarded the Mons Star in recognition of her extraordinary efforts, and continued to support servicemen and women in peace as in war, being appointed OBE in 1921. She would spend her last years in a modest flat in Hurlingham, London,

close to the River Thames. During the Munich Crisis of September 1938, when the looming spectre of another war hung over Britain, Mary (being over seventy and almost blind) was asked to evacuate the city but refused to go; she would be needed, she declared, to look after the soldiers! She would soldier on till her death on October 27, 1938. Two months later, rifle shots rang out in salute, and the Last Post was sounded for her.

Fondly remembered in military circles and revered by Salvationists, Mary Murray is a sadly neglected and forgotten figure in her native borderland.

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Redpath acknowledges the following sources:

A Hawick Word Book (2020 ed.),

Professor Douglas Scott; The Army of Alba: A History of The Salvation Army in Scotland (2017),

David Armistead; Mary Murray OBE (2011),

David Miller; Allan Wilson

Adjutant Murray and Lieutenant Hurley with soldiers outside a Salvation Army welfare tent on the South African veldt [from SA newspaper "War Cry"]

Interesting Photos

As well as reading the Mary Murray article, I noticed the following two photographs on the Project Hawick Facebook site. I suspect that the Murrays mentioned would be distant relatives of our Manning River family, but unless some interested members have a great deal more time on their hands than I do, we can just enjoy the pictures.

Murray Brothers, Lillico's and Clinty's all present in this fabulous shot of Tower Knowe, Hawick.

Cracking auld pic of John Murray & Sons butcher's shop at Dovemount, Hawick

I recently dealt with an enquiry regarding the securing of a piper to play at a funeral in the Sydney area. The group “Pipers of Distinction” were very helpful. Although based in Sydney they travel to country areas. If anyone needs a piper for an occasion in that region, it might be worth giving them a try. Their website is https://www.pipersofdistinction.com/

The Changing Nature of the Clan – Some Personal Thoughts

For most of the 45 years since the Clan was established, long before the internet, activity centred around the Annual Gathering, a formal dinner with a guest speaker, toasts, entertainment, dancing, and of course the haggis ceremony.

Most of the participants lived in the Manning District but each year a toast was proposed to our “distant travellers”.

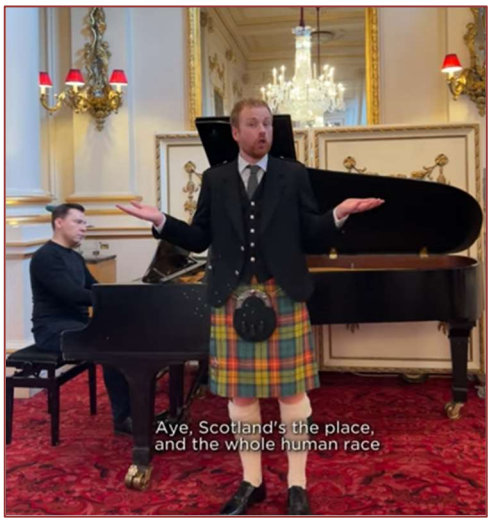
Most of our members now live a long way from the Manning, some interstate, even a few overseas. There is still a lot of interest in the Clan. Each time we send out a Newsletter we get lovely responses from people far and wide who just enjoy being able to keep in touch. After the pandemic years when our finances were somewhat uncertain, I was quite moved by the number of people who expressed their support for the Clan by sending donations which enabled us to meet our insurance costs (our biggest financial responsibility) and renew our website (due each ten years). Most of these people had never attended a function yet still obviously feel a sense of belonging to the Clan.

Though my interest in the Clan remains undiminished, I am finding that I need to reduce my commitments. There are two years to go before the next election and after 19 years (by then) in the job I have made the decision not to offer myself for re-election.

My personal opinion is that the Clan will become more internet based. Many organisations involving people with a common interest have set up online groups which are free to join, have no organisational or insurance costs, where distance is no object, and which can be accessed at any time. Instead of one person having to assemble material for a Newsletter, members can upload photos, stories, jokes and cartoons, links to interesting stories and articles any time they like. Those who live in a particular region can arrange get-togethers any time they like. Obviously we would need to make provision for people without internet access.

All it would need is a person keen for the Clan to continue, and with the ability to administer such a site. There would be no need to be based in the Manning area. I think that a move in this direction is inevitable. Younger members tend not to join committees and go to meetings. Our website, incidentally, is secured until September 2032 and is the main way in which people searching for their families make contact with us. If there is anyone out there who might be interested in discussing this further (we send out about 120 Newsletters) please feel free to get in touch with me. There is no urgency, but I would like to be able to make a submission to the Committee before I relinquish my role in 2026. Incidentally, in the 45 years of the Murray Clan Society, there have been only three Presidents, Harry Murray (pictured, 1980-1991), Alex Murray (1991-2007) and myself.

Just for Fun

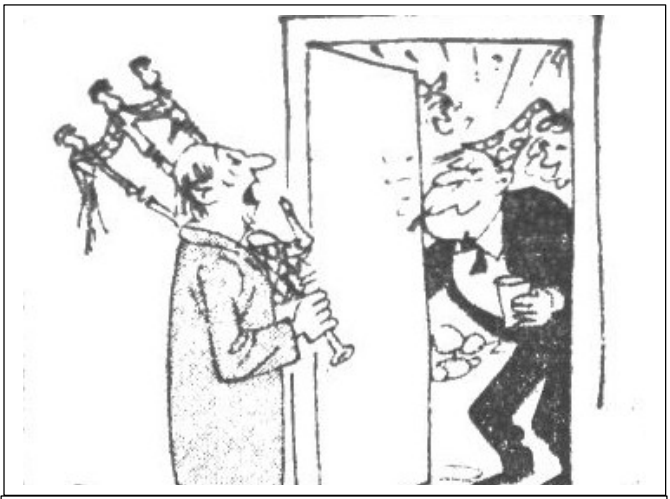


Midges

For a few minutes of very enjoyable entertainment, listen to Michael Gordon sing about one of his least favourite insects: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8VplO4by7d8

Why can't you just sit and nag like other wives?

A Scotsman and his wife walked past a swanky new restaurant.
"Did you smell that food?" she asked. "It smells absolutely incredible!"
Being a kind-hearted Scotsman, he thought, "What the heck. I'll treat her."
So they walked past it again.



I'm from next door. I've come to negotiate.

I've come to fix your pipes

And shortly I'll serve refreshments at very reasonable prices.

Think carefully madam. Did your husband have any enemies in the neighbourhood?

Warm regards to all

Ross Murray
President