

MUNRO MATTERS 2013

by Dave Broadhead (Clerk of the List)

This report covers 1 January to 31 December 2013. Before dipping into the correspondence I always like to do a simple analysis, comparing last years figures (in brackets) as follows: number of new Munroists 233 (248); male 81% (79%); resident in Scotland 60% (63%); couples 11% (18%); average age 54 (52); size of Completion party 12 (11); time taken 25 (25); *Golden Munroists* 7 (9). This helps to build up a picture of the average Munroist, if such a being were to exist. Looking back in my jotters containing an old fashioned hard copy record, of the 1583 Munroists I have registered since August 2007, 935 reside in Scotland ie 59%. I also record the place of residence of Munroists, using the old counties abolished in 1975, which divided Scotland into a convenient 33 shires as follows:

<u>County/shire</u>	<u>Number of Munroists</u>	<u>% Scottish total</u>
Mid Lothian (incl. Edinburgh)	156	17
Lanark (incl. Glasgow)	153	16
Aberdeen	104	11
Fife	68	7
Inverness (incl. Harris)	68	7
Perth	64	7
Angus (incl. Dundee)	41	4
Stirling	33	4
Renfrew	31	3
Ross (incl. Lewis)	30	3
Ayr	28	3
West Lothian	26	3
Argyll	19	2
Dunbarton, Moray	17	2
East Lothian	16	2
Dumfries	7	1
Peebles	7	1
Roxburgh	6	1
Selkirk	6	1
Nairn	5	1
Kincardine, Kinross	4	<1
Caithness, Kirkcubright	3	<1
Banff, Berwick, Bute	2	<1
Sutherland, Wigton	1	<1

No Munroists registered by me from Galloway, Orkney or Shetland but otherwise a good spread across the whole of Scotland. This is a suitable opportunity to mention a small oversight from last year's report. Elizabeth Smith (5048) modestly omitted to mention that she is Conservative List MSP for Mid Scotland & Fife. The first Munroist MSP was of course Murray Tosh (2788) and it is always reassuring that we

have some small representation in the corridors of power. Using this geographical theme for a review of the year's most interesting letters, I would also like to highlight the part played by the many local clubs around the country which have helped introduce many of us to the hills and supported hill-goers through their Rounds.

ABERDEEN Sandy Reid (5225) climbed many of his Munros with *Deeside Hillwalking Club*, Compleating on Beinn Sgritheall accompanied by six registered Munroists plus one unregistered. Jack Cooper's (5383) Completion on the Inn Pinn 'aided by some young lads from Portree' was made even more exciting when 'I had the pleasure of seeing Finlay Wild running up the east ridge and virtually stepping off the top and free climbing the west ridge – he made it look so easy – on his way to breaking the 3 hour barrier for the whole Cuillin Ridge.' Kevin Wallace (5326) finished his Munros, Tops and Furths in the same year and reflected 'I consider An Teallach and Liathach to be pre-eminent in the List. Being an Aberdonian I have a soft spot for the Queen of Deeside – Lochnagar. A good hill is a fine day out, irrespective of its height. Sulven for instance beats most Munros hands down!'

ANGUS Michael J. Ellery (5388), having promised to write an article for his club journal, sent me a list of questions but no mention of the name of his club!

AYRSHIRE *Golden Munroist* Ian A Young (5368) (51 years) finished musing over his Round thus: 'The Munro journey has been a long one, punctuated by periods when I could not easily get to the hills or was tempted away from walking by the excitements of climbing, skiing and other outdoor pursuits. I was asked if I had finished: I think I have actually just started. I don't know a mountain when I have just reached its summit. As Eliot put it; 'in my end is my beginning'.

BUTE Caroline Shaw (5406) 'decided to climb all the Munros within 3 years to raise funds for Multiple Sclerosis Scotland and raised approximately £5,300.' A fantastic achievement, living on an island with a full time job.

DUMFRIES John C. T. Rigby (5391) is 'now hoping my grandsons will follow in my footsteps as I have started taking them ages 5 & 6 up some of our local hills and hope to encourage them further and higher.'

EAST LOTHIAN Stephen Ralph (5234) started with the *Scottish Life Hillwalking Club* and gave an interesting analysis of his Round which is probably fairly typical:

<u>Munros by year</u>	<u>Munros by month</u>		<u>Munros per day</u>
2001 = 1	Jan = 4	Jul = 25	7 = 1 (S. Glen Shiel ridge)
2007 = 8	Feb = 6	Aug = 22	6 = 2 (Fisherfield&Grey Corries)
2008 = 24	Mar = 9	Sept = 40	5 = 7
2009 = 94	Apr = 45	Oct = 84 = 18	
2010 = 102	May = 58	Nov = 4	3 = 11
2011 = 42	Jun = 59	Dec = 3	2 = 38
2012 = 12			1 = 48

David A. Scott (5292) reported a very windy Completion on Mount Keen, accompanied by 9 Munroists in the summit party of 36, with 60 family and friends attending the Ceilidh in Edzell afterwards!

FIFE Ten years ago, recovering from breast cancer, Linda Connell (5202) 'decided to swap pub crawling for Munro bagging' and joined the *Ancrum Hillwalking Club*. Andrew Jackson (5379) with family and friends from the *8 Miles High Mountaineering Club* had a nasty surprise while Compleating on Am Faochagach. 'Unfortunately we were called upon to alert the rescue services as we found a walker who had passed away on the hill due to a heart attack. Although a tragic event, our group consensus was that he had died doing the thing he enjoyed.' Neil Young (5274) started as a sixth-former at Bell Baxter High School, joining *Glenrothes Hillwalkers Club* later in life.

INVERNESS Nicole Morschett (5310) 'climbed my first Munro while on holiday. One year later I moved from Germany to Inverness and soon got into hillwalking and backpacking.' She is now on a second Round, including Tops, concluding 'it will certainly never get boring and I will never get enough of the Scottish hills!' It is always interesting for me to hear from old friends and former colleagues who I have not seen for many years such as Jenifer (5339) and *Golden Munroist* Andy Dunn (5340) (50 years) from Kingussie High School and Sarah Atkinson (5375) from the *Inverness Mountaineering Club*. Ross McEwan (5359) remembered re-upholstering my wife's chaise-longue, a family heirloom which still gives good service!

KINCARDINE Alasdair MacPherson (5305) became another *Amazing Octogenerian*, Compleating on Ben Hope with his daughter Fiona MacPherson (5306) after a 17 year Round together. This feat justified an informative feature in The Press and Journal (2 Oct 2013) which revealed that although born at the foot of the Cuillin, Alasdair did not climb the Inaccessible Pinnacle until he was aged 79. Louis Skinner (2710), Robert Waterston (3210) and Pamela E. Wigston (4408) also Completed in their eightieth year and all share the distinction of *Munrosis Venerabilis* (oldest Munroists). As well as an easy to remember number, Robert is also *Munrosis Longus* with the record for the longest Round of 69 years. Alasdair wrote to tell me that he and Robert worked together as vets and that Robert 'was my inspiration as I was only half way through them when he Completed. He will be 90 in April 2014.'

KINROSS Ian Campbell (5363) just missed out on *Golden Munroist* having climbed his first in 1964 'during a month's 'Outward Bound' course at the Moray Sea School, Burghead.'

LANARK A very wee weegie, Daniel M. Smith (5216) took over the mantle of *Youngest Munroist* at the age of 9, having climbed his first Munro aged 6. He now has his sights set on Kilimanjaro, no doubt leaving the Corbetts for his old age, when he becomes a teenager! Isobel Freeman (5207) did most of her Munros with the *Glasgow Glenmore Club* and Completed on Liathach's Mullach an Rathain, 'climbing the final few steps in the Rev. Robertson's boots which a friend had lent me for the

occasion.' Glenn Evans (5208) reported a remarkable *Contiguous Completion* on Ben More (Mull) having 'also completed my final Wainwright and final Welsh 3000s on the same long day, during a solo effort and a bit of fast sleep deprived driving! Starting at 1.30 am in Snowdonia with Elidir Fawr, then on to Black Fell in the Lake District, then to Mull to finish.' *Golden Munroist* David McLennan (5411) (52 years) 'abandoned cycling in favour of climbing in 1963 and Completed in the company of a dozen fellow members of the *Strathaven Mountaineering Club*.'

MID LOTHIAN Summiting Beinn Fhionnlaidh from Loch Mullardoch with the help of Angus the boatman, David Alexander (508) finished his third Round and is not far off his 1000th Munro. Accompanied by Ian Mackintosh (2937), finishing his second Round and Steve Langton (5264) his first, this is possibly the first 1-2-3 *Simultaneous Completion*. Terence Johnstone (5293) started his Munros with *Heriot Watt University Mountaineering Club*. Three years ago, with 50 still left to climb, he was diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's Disease and wrote that 'the discipline of continuing with them has had a huge boost to both my morale and my health.' Leigh-Ann Plenderleith (5337) explained her late start on Munros, aged 28, because 'I grew up on a hill farm and was a competitive highland dancer so I was occupied with other hills and highlands until then'.

Euan Ballantyne (5376) finished an interesting summary of his Round with a rather dubious claim. 'I lived for 7 years in Australia and am a full citizen – do you think I can claim to be the first Aussie to Compleat?' Harry Bach (5405) climbed his last Munro 'in the company of good friends from the *Edinburgh Mountaineering Club*.'

MORAY Gordon Eccleston (5258) of the *Moray Mountaineering Club* is relieved 'to be able to start going on the monthly bus meets without the burden of looking for a Munro to do.' Roger Boston (5344) reported "all have been climbed solo, including the In Pin on a beautiful summer evening that I had to reverse, as I had no rope. The last 51 were climbed after having both knees replaced in 2010."

PERTH Fiona Priestley (5361) and Stuart Clark (5362) 'topped out together on Stob Dearg after climbing up Curved Ridge and standing on top of Crowberry Tower. We met through the *Walkhighlands* website on a group walk in Glenshee and were living together 6 months later. On our final Munro summit, surrounded by friends from this website, Stuart surprised Fiona by proposing on bended knee at the summit cairn!' Back in 2009, Beverly Bain (5393) did not think her Completion on Mullach Fraoch-choire with friends from *Perth JMCS* was important. Unfortunately 'a full hip replacement followed 2 years later & following a problematic recovery, I find myself back out on my beloved hills and now feel I would like to mark the occasion.'

RENFREW Alastair Ewen (5316) Completed on Beinn Sgritheall 'a great day with family and friends. My brother played the pipes for me at the summit. My first Munro was Schiehallion, aged 15, with my brother who was 11 at the time – it was just the two of us, no adults!' Alistair Dickson (5367) was part of a well coordinated *Coincident Completion* on Beinn na Lap along with Larry Watson (5366), George Johnson (5365) and Patrick Salisbury (5364). Like myself, they had all recently qualified for their bus passes and 'were piped to the summit to the

cheers and applause of our families and friends. The celebrations continued that evening with a fine dinner, singsong and telling of tales at the excellent restaurant at Corroun station.' Alistair reminded me we had last met at the renovation of Ollisdale bothy in Skye in 1985!

ROSS Margaret Clair Bale (5318) 'had been encouraged by someone to 'keep an eye' on Corbetts while Munroing' so was able to report Completion of both in the same year, with less than 20 Grahams still to climb. Another of my neighbours, Lorraine Shepherd (5325) Completed on Ben Sgulaire which makes me think that we must have one of the highest resident densities of Munroists? Our member Alastair Mathewson (5402) reported views from the summit on 78% of his hill days. He also remembered his best day as 'a winter Cuillin traverse achieved in 1994. Blue skies, perfect conditions, the ridge smothered in neve and a bivi under the Inaccessible Pinnacle; two days spent in a dreamlike trance. Munro bagging never felt more Alpine.'

STIRLING Hugh McNeilage (5218) 'took up walking as a hobby to try and get fit after standing at a bar for many a year.' When he finally got around to writing he reported 4 Munro Rounds plus Tops and Furths. He is presently 'trying to do another Round in memory of my son who we lost in September 2012.'

SUTHERLAND Chris Warwick (5351) Completed with fellow members of the *Oban Mountaineering Club*.

WEST LOTHIAN Margaret Young (5267) Completed on Ben Klibreck accompanied by a party of 20 ranging in age from 13 to 82 and reported that 'we all stayed at the Altnaharra Hotel who provided us with a magnificent celebratory meal afterwards.' Alexander Edgar (5404) described how he 'put a pound in a piggy bank every time I bagged a Munro so at the end I had £284 and bought all my friends and some family some drinks.'

ENGLAND & WALES County of residence information will have to wait for a future report. Jacqueline Payne (5384) started her Round with 'Slioch closely followed by Beinn Alligin and An Teallach. Definitely a baptism of fire for a beginner.' Her Completion on Ben Lomond sounded no less dramatic. 'Accompanied by my family and 24 other walkers - 13 of whom are also Compleatists. We started in low cloud and drizzle and summited in sunshine, with a cloud inversion and several Brocken Spectres. It was magnificent.' Ali Welsh (5210) 'had walked up about 70 when I decided to run up the remaining Munros, taking advantage of early retirement....I Completed on Slioch during the Slioch Horseshoe hill race.' He is now running round the Corbetts, 'finding them much harder than the Munros.' R. G. Stephenson (5213) 'made the annual pilgrimage to Scotland with *Keswick Athletic Club*' until aged 67, deciding not to waste any more time, he used a campervan to make 'a concentrated attack' on his remaining 167 summits. Now he is busy on Bill Birkett's *Lakeland Fell Almanac* of 541 tops over 1,000 feet and the Nuttalls 335 *Tarns of Lakeland*. James B. Hoyle (5224) notes that 'with respect to plans for the future, my wife is currently devising my next challenge - 282 things which need attention around the home.' Tony Thornley (5245) 'managed to wear the same anorak for the

first and last mountains which may be a record for 45 years (double ventile – still windproof and highly absorbent).’ He was accompanied by *Golden Munroist* David Furness (5247) (56 years) who noted that he had ‘accompanied my father Eric L. Furness (340) on a significant portion of his Munros’. Not all sons are so dutiful – Jonathan Hanson (5250) was joined by his wife and daughter but reported ‘my 16 year old son preferred to stay at home under the guise of revising for his GCSEs. It became clear he had organized a party when we were phoned by our next door neighbour!’ Peter Arnold (5248) was accompanied by ‘thirteen other members of the *Christian Walking Club*’, Susan Watts (5254) by twenty six other members of the *Ibex Mountain and Hillwalking Club* and Ian G. Hargreaves (5392) by 18 family, friends and members of the *Gritstone Club*. Patrick Revell (5314) reported ‘over the course of 9 years I made 14 backpacking expeditions, each concentrating on Munros in different parts of the Highlands, using public transport to travel up from Southampton and get around Scotland.’ For more details see www.munros.patrickrevell.me.uk. Vera Wealleans (5278) explained the 17 year delay in reporting her Completion thus ‘I decided to register after having had a job interview. The interviewer said the panel were all intrigued and wanted to know what Munro and Corbett bashing was! I spent a good part of the allotted time explaining the finer points of this pastime and got the job.’ I often receive copies of hill logs, diaries, spread-sheets etc all of which go into the National Library of Scotland archive along with the letters. There is a PhD there for someone, sometime. Richard H. Thomas (5330) condensed details of his entire 38 year Round, including hills and companions on to a handwritten card including a striking summit silhouette on the cover entitled “THE MUNROS This is my round”. Fantastic draftsmanship and a real work of art. Andy Clifford (5263) gave a very neat summary of the appeal of the Munros, explaining ‘my mountaineering and canoeing expeditions have taken me all over the globe several times, with the exception of Antarctica. There is nowhere else on the planet that equals the Scottish Highlands for beauty, impact, geology, geography, history, culture and.... Fun! It has been a privilege to enjoy the Highlands, share them with family and friends and meet so many great people.’ Graham Bell (5403) explained that he gives ‘an illustrated talk on ‘Munro bagging’ which I call ‘Eyes to the Hills’, so far on more than 20 occasions and any fee I receive I donate to the John Muir Trust.’ Edwin J. Ludlow (5410) reported something of an epic while Completing with a winter traverse of the Aonach Eagach when both his companions broke their crampons and he dropped his ice axe. Clearly not lacking in experience, he mentioned also having climbed Island Peak, Pumori, Mustagh Ata and had reached 7900m on the North side of Everest. Godfrey Bancroft (5311) became another *Golden Munroist* (50 years) and similarly Gordon Macnair (5428), to my knowledge the first club member to become a *Golden Munroist*, having stretched his Round to 50 years. Many of his companions on the way were able to join him to celebrate Completion on Ben More (Mull) for which a former President composed *A Ballad*, including the stanza ‘*Others have been here before/Gordon is number 5 thousand one hundred and 74*’. Gordon was a bit slow in writing in, so I had to change this to ‘*Others have been here, so by fate/Gordon is number 5 thousand 4 hundred and 28*’.

IRELAND Kathleen Monteverde (5302) reported requiring 'exactly 40 trips from Northern Ireland' explaining 'in 2001 I climbed Kilimanjaro where I met my future husband, Mervyn Picken (4570) who had 60 Munros done. I had heard of them but needed someone to do them with so Munros brought us together and we married in 2006.' David Spence (5377) from County Down originated from Kilmarnock. A former member of the *Glasgow JMCS*, he was joined for his Completion on Liathach's Mullach an Rathain by number of old friends who have progressed into the senior Club. Jim Martin (5378) from County Dublin is also 'currently walking the Camino de Santiago over three stages.'

OVERSEAS Jesper Jorgensen (5214) is the first Danish national Munroist, though he lives and works in Britain. Theo J. M. Beunen (5313), a Dutchman from The Hague, Completed on An Teallach with Graham Rebecca (5421) and five friends from *Deeside Hillwalking Club*. Having climbed 223 Munros alone, Theo wrote that 'this party was very special for me with champagne and whisky at the top.' Also living in Holland for the past 16 years, Alan J. Stewart (5317) started his Munros while working in Dulnain Bridge. Pavel Hubacek (5394) from the Czech Republic lives in Glasgow and became the first Czech Munroist when he Completed on Sgurr na Banachdich. He wrote 'I have already started my second Round. Nowadays I walk sometime with some Czechs and Slovaks living in Scotland that I found on Facebook. My special thanks belong to Steve Fallon. I followed most of his routes as he described them on his website.' Now living in France, *Golden Munroist* Alastair D. Wood (5398) (54 years) explained his long Round because 'I have been living and working outside Scotland since 1967 when I had only 18 Munros left to climb. My next was climbed in 2010 when I was informed that due to revisions in the Tables I still had 28 to do, not the 18 I had anticipated!' Although living in Clackmannanshire, Frank Schyvens (5415) is the first Belgian Munroist. His Round got off to a poor start on the Aonach Eagach when he and another Belgian friend had to be rescued by the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team.

AMENDMENTS This year I received 82 amendments, compared with 89 in 2012. One interesting issue carried over from last year concerns a letter from John Farrow (1526) reporting his Corbett Completion. He also commented 'I am currently Secretary of the *Rucksac Club* of which J. Rooke Corbett was an active founder member. We work on the assumption that he completed the Round in 1939.' The years of Corbett's first Corbett Round Completion has always been uncertain, with 1943 being favoured by some authorities, so I immediately emailed asking for evidence to back up this interesting claim. My query was passed on to Gordon Adshead (590) and Roger Booth (462) who have a detailed knowledge of the achievements of *Rucksac Club* members. Unfortunately neither has been able to shed any more light on the matter, so the mystery continues.

5 couples reported together, compared with 6 in 2012. Brother and sister Lindsay D. Munro (997) and Roderick C. Munro (998) reported finishing a third Munro Round together, all ending on Ben Wyvis. On Completion of his second Munro Round on Mount Keen, Ian T. Stalker (399) was presented with a belated Completion Certificate by his daughter Kirstin, 28 years after finishing his first Round. I do not issue certificates in advance or for subsequent Rounds, but am always happy to

register rounds or issue a first Munro or Corbett certificate no matter how long after the event. Tony Baker (1757) reported during his second Munro Round 'whilst staying at the Camas Lunie bunkhouse in Glen Elchaig I had the pleasure and privilege of staying for two nights with Miles Hutchinson (23) who at 87 is the earliest and eldest living Munroist. He is currently working his way through the Marilyns and was an absolute inspiration.' Regular correspondent Hazel Strachan (3438) Completed a 5th Munro Round on Glas Maol and wrote 'I think this Round has been my favorite Round. Lots of great days out, especially in winter. Highlight was a two day traverse of the Cuillin in June when the cloudy weather cleared to expansive views.'

Roger Stonebridge (382) added the Tops finishing on Little Pap, Lochnagar, and sent me a photocopy of a personal handwritten letter from the then Clerk of the List, Bill Brooker, acknowledging his original Munro Round in 1985. Changed days with the advent of word processing! Max Landsberg (5009) added the Furths when he climbed Galtymore. He also included an interesting analysis of our completion data available on his blog at www.callofthemountains.blogspot.co.uk where I learned that he has also written a book *Call of the Mountains* describing his Munro Round and launched at Waterstones in London in October. Colin Lees (3987) finished his Furths on Scafell with *Dunfermline Walking Club*. Michael B. Slater (358) celebrated his new hip with a fourth Round of Furths, finishing on Knocknapeasta.

Corbetteer Catherine B. Waddell (3873) started hill-walking with *Paisley Ramblers Association*. Robert F. Gibson (707) reported his last Corbett, Ben Lair and noted he had lived near Muir of Ord many years before, recounting 'I once went out with the *Inverness Mountaineering Club* but I find club types keep stopping all the time.' John S. Dickson (1915) finished his Corbetts on Beinn Tarsuinn on Arran and remembered his first was Ben Ledi, climbed in 1962 by steam train to Callender on the Edinburgh-Oban Line. Dave Liddle (2556) finished his Corbetts on Creag nan Gabhar accompanied by a number of friends from *Turriff Hillwalking Club*, while Alan Duncan (2641) did likewise on Streat on a *Moray Mountaineering Club* weekend. Peter D. Cotham (3141) finished his Corbetts with The Cobbler, accompanied by 17 others, including 9 Corbetteers and 8 Grahamists who managed to get through a bottle and a half of Oban Malt on the summit! Springbank was the celebratory dram enjoyed by Martin Cole (2261) and party of 8 plus dog finishing his Donalds on Molls Cleuch Dod. 'Yes, the dog does like whisky! Margaret Squires (3211) finished her Grahams on Stac Pollaidh and let slip that her Marilyn total currently stands at an impressive 1258.

Full House is achieved by completing all six of the lists recorded on the website. Bert Barnett (3112) reported a second Round of Donalds, finishing on King's Seat, making him only the second person, after Ken P. Whyte (319) to achieve an amazing second *Full House*. Meanwhile the indefatigable Hamish M. Brown (62) became only the second SMC *Full House* after Mike Dixon (959). He wrote, on a characteristic postcard of Jbel Toubkal, 4167m, summit of the Atlas, 'At long last I can record completing the Grahams on Beinn Mhor (Loch Eck). Not an easy doing once they resurfaced as a possibility (I'm into my 80th year) but it helps to be a bloody minded Fifer!' Also achieving *Full House*, Alan L. Brook (225) finished his Grahams on Carn

nan Tri-tighearnan, followed a few days later by Michael Earnshaw (4305) who finished his Tops on Sron na Lairige. The last one in 2013 and the 28th recorded so far was achieved by Hugh F. Barron (256) who finished his Grahams on Beinn na Muice, accompanied by his mother, aged 80 and his youngest son, aged 12. SMCJ Editor Noel Williams was also present but apparently 'had to dash off to Glencoe to attend an SMC meeting at Lagangarbh.'

Showing similar dedication to my Club duties I am always very pleased to hear from anyone who would like their achievements added to our six lists.

Enjoy your hills.

Dave Broadhead, Clerk of the List