

Monroe Day Dal recalls Benefactor

by E.L. Heighton

In a day or two you will be celebrating Munro Day. Who was Munro and what did he do that Dalhousie University should honour him in this way?

George Munro was born November 12, 1825 in Millbrook, Pictou County, Nova Scotia. A brief sketch of his life is as follows:

Age 12 he was apprenticed to the Pictou Observer to learn the printing business. He worked there for two years.

Age 14 entered a school in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. Stayed there two years. Lacked funds to continue.

Age 16 taught school for two years.

Age 18 entered Pictou Academy as a student and stayed two years.

Age 20 accepted a position in Halifax, Nova Scotia as a teacher of mathematics at the Free Church Academy. After five years on the staff he became the principal and remained for another six years.

Age 31 he moved to New York City, U.S.A., where he entered the publishing house of Appletons. Eventually he started his own publishing business. It is said that when

he built his own publishing house on Vandewater Street in New York it was the tallest building (eight stories) in the city. By 1879 George Munro was, by the standards of the day, a wealthy man and made his first gift to Dalhousie—endowing a chair—the George Munro chair of Physics. Subsequently, he endowed four additional chairs and provided several Scholarships and Exhibitions. It should also be mentioned that between the years 1880 and 1891 he made possible the five Munro Exhibitions and Bursaries valued at \$5,000 total to Pictou Academy so that they could be offered for competition to students matriculating into the University of Dalhousie. These were given annually up to the time of his death.

"Dalhousie was at this time in desperate financial circumstances. Talk of closing down was heard on every side. Munro saved the situation." Rev. George Munro Grant, Principal then of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, wrote to a friend in Halifax: "You simply take away my breath. I have just read your letter and do not

know what to say first. Munro must be going to die. Evidently he is too good for this world. His first gift saved Dalhousie. His second . . ."

George Munro gave over half a million dollars—an amount probably approaching three million now.

In 1881 women were admitted as students to the University on an equal footing with men. The same year the students petitioned successfully for an annual holiday to be known as George Munro Day.

George Munro has been described as "a man of quite unassuming character, reserved almost to the point of shyness. He had no desire to bask in the sunshine or full recognition. Honorary degrees, complimentary banquets and the like had no appeal for him". He died April 24, 1896.

For more information about George Munro see: Harvey, D.C. **An Introduction to the History of Dalhousie University**, MacPhie, I.P. **Pictonians at Home and Abroad**, or Forrest, W.D. **"Our First Great Benefactor"**—Alumni News, October 1943.

DSU General Meeting

Eight isn't enough

by Tom Regan

Only eight students attended a general meeting of the Student Union last Friday in order to ratify changes in the constitution.

The poor showing marks the second year in a row that less than ten people have showed up for a general meeting for changes to the constitution.

The changes ratified on Friday were to By-laws concerning council organization, and the reduction of the number of members on the council by three. A section concerning the duties of the president and his relationship with the now defunct Atlantic Federation of Students was also deleted.

The real story however was

the lack of students at the meeting. Dick Matthews said the turnout was disappointing but not surprising.

"All the proper measures were taken to notify students about the meeting", said Matthews. "Now this basically means placing notices of meeting on billboards around campus but it is obvious we have to take better measures to notify the students. I would also suggest that if councillors would read the mail in their mail boxes they could tell people that the meeting was going on."

Steve Campbell, the chairman person of the Student Council and one of the eight present at the meeting said something had to be done to

improve the attendance at the meetings.

"I think the meeting was run constitutionally", said Campbell, "but you've got to do something to improve the attendance. They should put something in the Gazette, they should be using CKDU. The use of campus media has to be put to good use."

Matthews said there would probably be a question and answer period with this year's council sometime in the next two weeks but he was not certain of the date or the place. Matthews also said there would be another general meeting about the health plan fee change. He assured the Gazette that this meeting would be better publicized.

CKDU

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the executive next suggested a plebiscite which they thought CKDU had agreed to on Sunday afternoon.

Matthews said council was not having cold feet about the FM proposal but only "acting smart". The proposal would be one of the largest capital expansions in years for CKDU and there is a lot of ground-work which still must be done. Matthews said it would be at least a year before the proposal would be taken to the CRTC and only at this time would it be right to ask

students for their financial support.

In the meantime, a plebiscite would open up discussion and see if there is enough student support to bother working on the proposal, Matthews said.

Matthews defended the challenge of the chair on the order of presentation of the CKDU business, saying he first spoke to Steve Campbell, council chairman, to put CKDU on the agenda.

"He (Campbell) made a mistake in his ruling—I wish Robert's rules of order had been there at the meeting so this could have been shown."

Campbell said he looked at Robert's rules of order after the meeting and still believes his ruling stands.

He said, however, if the agenda had been drawn up to more specifically state Matthews' order of business with CKDU, Matthews would have given a "previous notice of motion" and been allowed to speak first.

Because this problem had never risen before, Campbell said council had not made a habit of making its agendas more specific.

Though this was the first time his ruling had been challenged this school year, Campbell said it is "always right to challenge the chair if you have any doubt at all".

Asked if he agreed with charges Matthews attempted to "railroad" discussion, Campbell said he had no comment.

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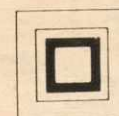
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