

## Dr Neil Gordon Munro



The late Japanese senator Shigeru Kayano made a pilgrimage to the Highlands to pay tribute to a doctor who spent a lifetime administering medicine to an ancient Japanese people.

Shigeru Kayano visited the home of the Chief of the Munros, Foulis Castle, near Evanton.

As part of the Japan 2001 Festival, the National Museums of Scotland is presenting a fascinating display of the collection of Dr Neil Gordon Munro who lived in Japan for 50 years and built a collection of important artefacts which otherwise might have been lost.

Dr Munro, who died in 1942, was a champion of the Ainu, an ancient people from Hokkaido, the northern part of Japan.

Shigeru Kayano, an Ainu himself, made his pilgrimage to the castle, the home of the clan chief of the Munros, Hector Munro, to perform

an Ainu ritual to thank the spirit of Dr Munro for his support in helping the Ainu to survive against all the odds.

When he arrived at the castle, Mr. Kayano said: "Dr. Munro's house was built between the hills and the river. Seeing Hector Munro's house, I am immediately reminded of Dr Munro's house."

"I now understand why Dr Munro chose to live in Nibutani, my home town, as the beauty of the Highlands reminds me of my roots."



The ceremony was filmed for the Japanese equivalent of the BBC and Casia Zajac of the Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board hopes that the story will help attract Japanese visitors to the Highlands.

She commented: "The Japanese market is important to Scotland, including the 30,000 Japanese who live in London. This fascinating story will raise awareness of the Highlands and hopefully encourage more of our Japanese friends to come to the North of Scotland"

