



Professor David Munro (right) who was Director of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) from 1996 to 2008, is congratulated on his “excellent and stimulating” presentation to Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society, entitled **Into the maelstrom**: in search of the world’s largest whirlpools, by fellow geographer Murray Dickie, the society’s field work project leader, on Jan 23, 2017. Prof Munro explained what causes a whirlpool, and showed how the Norwegian whirlpools compare with similar phenomena in other parts of the world, including the famous Scottish whirlpool in the Gulf of Corryvreckan between the islands of Scarba and Jura

### **Into the Maelstrom: In search of the world’s largest whirlpools**

Prompted by an invitation to be a guest lecturer on this summer’s National Trust for Scotland cruise along the coast of Norway, geographer David Munro put together a presentation on the Maelstrom, a legendary whirlpool located at the southern end of the Lofoten Islands.

This talk was aired for the first time at a meeting in Alloa Town Hall of the Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society on Monday, January 23 2017.

What causes a whirlpool, what does the name Maelstrom mean and how does the Norwegian whirlpool compare with similar phenomena in other parts of the world, including the famous Scottish whirlpool in the Gulf of Corryvreckan between the islands of Scarba and Jura ?

These questions were explored before he went on to show how the word Maelstrom, a Dutch rather than Norwegian word, found its way into the English language and popular culture through the works of writers, artists and musicians including Edgar Allan Poe, Jules Verne and Herman Melville.

Professor David Munro, who was Director of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) from 1996 to 2008, has a special interest in landscape studies inspired since boyhood when he began exploring the Lomond Hills from his home in the Kinross-shire village of Kinnesswood.

In later years he went on to explore further afield, from the Arctic to the Antarctic and places in between including the tropical forests to Central America.

An RSGS medallist, David Munro was awarded an Honorary Professorship of the University of Dundee in 2007 and an MBE in 2008 for services to the community and the environment in Perth and Kinross.

More recently, in 2015, he was made a Knight Officer of the Order of St Charles of Monaco for his services to the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation.

The mighty Maelstrom off the Lofoten Islands, northern Norway

