



Cameron

The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc.



A Memorable AGM and Gathering

Photo: Editor



From Left: Janet Crafts, Karen Carmichael, Phil and Helen Renner, Betty Kearney, Lee and Blair Gardiner



From Left: Rex and Erina Wood, Lorraine and Warren Cameron, Catherine and Rob Cameron

***The Clan Cameron
Museum Achnacarry***

- 25 years old

***Vol 48 No 3
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2014***

Photo: Warren Cameron

“Cameron”

is the magazine of the
Clan Cameron Association of New Zealand (Inc)

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(This has links to other Clan Cameron sites)

A message from our President.....

Dear Clan members and friends,

Welcome to the newsletter again with thanks to our editor - it is past the date promised but there is good news as the fl.me email has been updated and is now working this day. The other good news is Bill Cameron is to visit the country later in the year.

Email update this day we have received the Clan Cameron Australia newsletter 10 pages of good news along with Bill Cameron's photos of Scotland. I must apologise to Neil as I was speaking to him last week and promised my contribution on time, but due to this coming retirement the days have many delays and hold ups.

Tristan and his partner are at present in Australia on a harvesting venture, apparently enjoying the life - one works one shift then the other one takes over for the next shift. What one would say is a good-day, good-bye lifestyle, so one would not have time to argue. Yes!

We enjoyed the Annual General meeting in Tauranga and now have to deal with the minutes before the next council meeting in September in Turangi. This will be as usual with the standing arrangements.

My thanks to Neil for his earlier photo of a meeting for you all to submit the names of those present, trusting you have given consideration to this matter.

Must close as the newsletter may have already sailed for publication.

Regards to all from

Fraser Cameron



Coming Events:

Sunday 15 June 2014

Bay of Plenty Branch AGM

At 8 Kokomo Key, Papamoa. 2pm.

This will be followed by afternoon tea.

Enquiries to Joy Cameron 07 575 4659.

Saturday 26 July 2014

Manawatu Branch Mid-winter Dinner

Coachman Hotel, Fitzherbert Avenue,
Palmerston North. 6pm. Cost: \$40.

Enquiries to Russell Cameron,
027-601-4410 or camfamily@clear.net.nz
(see enclosure for Manawatu members)

Saturday 2 August 2014

Auckland Branch Mid-winter Dinner

At the Quality Inn, Parnell, Auckland.
6pm. Cost: \$55

Guest speaker will be Bill Cameron from Lochaber. Bill is known to all of you as an ex First Lighter and regular contributor to this magazine. He will talk about his present work and pursuits, Lochiel and the Estate and what is happening in Lochaber.

Visitors welcome. We would love to see members from other branches.

Enquiries to Neil Cameron, 09 446 1177 or kncam@xtra.co.nz

(see enclosure for Auckland members)

Sunday 12 October 2014

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church,
Turakina at 2pm.**

A celebration of 150 years of worship in their second church. All those with connection with Turakina are very welcome to attend.

contact Ewen Grant 06 327 3861

tullochgorum@xtra.co.nz

Clan Cameron NZ is now on Facebook



www.facebook.com/ClanCameronNZ

Names of the members who attended the 2014 AGM are pictured in the group photo on the front cover:

From Left: Neil Cameron, John Cameron, Hazel Cameron, John Annabell, Jessie Annabell, Phil Renner, Elaine Cameron, Ruth Cameron, Jill Cameron, Helen Renner, Norman Cameron, Jessie Scott, Tanya Cameron, Jean Barker, Nick Cameron, Ray Crafts, Alison Jordan, Harold Cameron, Warren Cameron, Betty Cameron, Rex Cameron, Lorraine Cameron, Patricia Cameron, Rex Wood, Fraser Cameron, Betty Kearney, Catherine Cameron, Joy Cameron, Erina Wood, Rob Cameron, Denis Cameron.
(Absent from photo: Lyndsay Cameron)

Next Magazine Deadline is 15 July

Printed By

Welcome to the following Members who have recently joined us:

Auckland Branch:

Penny Strang and Ewen Anderson

Auckland

Taranaki/Wanganui Branch:

Athol Byers

Colleen Farr

Hawera

Waverley



Bay of Plenty Branch:

Judith Stewart

Te Puke

Ceud Mìle Fàilte One Hundred Thousand Welcomes

Falling into the Pitfalls of Family History

History Corner *by Fiona Cameron*

A recent conversation about the pitfalls of finding mistakes or misconceptions in published family histories (thank you to Mike Topham!) got me thinking about how accurate (or inaccurate) my own research might be.

Much of the information on my Cameron line has stemmed from an oral history from my g-g-grandfather Ewen Alexander Cameron. Hollywood producer Samuel Goldwyn allegedly said "A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on" and quite possibly the same could be said about a verbal history.

How accurate was Ewen's information? Did he embellish certain aspects of the history e.g. tracing our direct line back to a Scottish chief in the 14th century? In the same regard, he may well have been vague or incorrect about exact dates or even omitted or glossed over undesirable parts of the family's past.

Despite this, many of the family (myself included!) have treated this history as true and used it as the framework and basis for our research. At least it gives us a 'jumping off' point to start with and allows us to trawl the official records to confirm the information.

But even events that do appear in official records can throw up more conundrums and contradictions.

According to the oral history and his death record, my g-g-grandfather Ewen Cameron was born in 1800. If I stick with actual records, Ewen's first appearance is in the 1841 Scottish census. Ewen is living in Fort William and lists his age as 35. Given that ages were often rounded up or down for the census at this time, this gives him a birthdate anywhere between 1800 and 1810. In 1859 the family travelled to Australia on the *Prince of the Seas*. In the passenger list, Ewen is 52 so he was born around 1807? Four years later in 1863, Ewen sailed to New Zealand on the *Souchays*. So he would have been aged anywhere between 56 and 63 – except the passenger list says he was 50.

All this variation makes it rather difficult to pin down Ewen's actual birthdate. Given that birth registrations did not exist at this time, the only possible avenue is locating his baptism. His baptism record may well still exist somewhere – but so far it has eluded capture. My dear departed family seem to have drawn from a very small pool of names along with most Camerons in the area. So searching for the correct baptism of my John Cameron's son Ewen somewhere around 1800 (or 1807) somewhere around Fort William (or the surrounding area) may prove to be an insurmountable task.

So for now, Ewen Cameron's birth is recorded in my family history as 1800. Oral history or not, it's somewhere to start.



First Light Exchange Update

By Bryan Haggitt, First Light Convenor, CCNZ.

In March, at the Clan's AGM, I was elected to the position of Convenor of a Committee to bring about the restoration of the First Light Exchange.

Very sadly, there have been no exchanges either from or to Scotland for some time.

More importantly, more than a year ago, both Bill Cameron and Astie Cameron had stepped down from their roles as administrators. Early First Lighters themselves, Bill and Astie had done tremendous work in the past hosting and arranging hosting and work for New Zealand First Lighters in Lochaber plus finding, and sending out to us, some marvellous young Scots.

They rightly felt that First Light should be extended Scotland wide and this view was endorsed by Lochiel when my wife Jenny and I visited Achnacarry almost 12 months ago.

Lochiel gave Warren and Lorraine Cameron the same message when they stayed in the new visitor accommodation at Achnacarry a couple of months later.

Last October, at the Clan's Scottish AGM, past Commissioners Alan Cameron and David Cameron were charged with reviving First Light and we hope some real progress will soon be made.

Here in New Zealand we are extremely keen for a revival – First Light is the envy of other Clans, it is a wonderful link back to Scotland and gives great opportunities for our youngsters wanting to explore the haunts of their ancestors.

For young Scots, they should consider the opportunity to explore the other side of the world - sport and educational opportunities abound. Rugby clubs would welcome young Scots and there are the opportunities to see first hand our farming

methods and our forestry and fishing industries - including mussel and salmon farming. We believe we lead the world in many of these practices – many set up in the first place by Scotsmen! New generation Scots should come to New Zealand, with the assistance of First Light, to see what is happening outside their own insular world!



For comment or suggestions please contact Bryan on:

Phone: 09 524 5254 Email: bchecho@xtra.co.nz

By Editor:

Our thoughts and prayers this week go to two of our hardest working members who have recently spent some time in hospital. Trish Topham, after a traumatic time on the waiting list, now has a new hip replacement and is doing well. Denis Cameron has been in hospital with an urinary infection and is now home and recovering. We send them our best wishes and the hope of a speedy recovery.

It is 25 years since the Clan Cameron Museum at Achnacarry was opened, on 1 May 1989, by Sir Fitzroy Maclean. Our present Chief, then Donald the Younger of Lochiel, said at the time; "It has been a very personal involvement for my wife, my parents and myself and it is tremendously exciting to have succeeded in creating a Museum which tells the story of one of the most remarkable clans in Scotland."

The Clan worldwide, friends of the family and many others contributed to the cost of construction. It was recorded at the 1989 NZ AGM that \$4696.26 had been contributed to the appeal by New Zealand Camerons.

Those of us who visited the Museum during the 1989 Gathering considered that our contributions had been well used.

From the Branches....

Auckland by Norman Cameron

As the new President of the Auckland Branch of Clan Cameron, my wife Jill and I attended the National Annual Gathering and AGM of the Clan at Tauranga as did Neil and Ruth Cameron. The gathering was well planned and organised and I am looking forward to next year's gathering to be run by the Manawatu Branch starting on the 17th of April. This will be the fiftieth AGM of Clan Cameron.

The Branch held its first Committee meeting on the 4th of May at the residence Elaine Ebbett. Elaine has just joined the Committee and straight away volunteered to be the Secretary of the Branch. She has already suggested a lot of new ideas. Another new member on the Committee is David Cameron who was a First Lighter from Lochaber in 2003 and I am looking forward to a lot of input from David.

At the meeting it was decided to have our Annual Winter Dinner on the 2nd of August at the Quality Hotel, Parnell. Bill Cameron, another First Lighter from Lochaber will be the guest speaker. Over the years Bill has written many articles for Neil Cameron's bulletin and he also published the "Cameron Memorial Inscriptions in Lochaber" in 2005.

I hope we can get the same turn out as we had last year. The Committee decided to have a pot lunch on Sunday June the 22nd at Elaine Ebbetts house.

Penny Strang and her partner Ewen Anderson have joined the Clan, Penny's mother is my sister and Ewen's grandmother was a Cameron from the Manawatu.

As long as I have been a Member of the Auckland Branch Don Cameron has been the President and he and his wife Val have done a sterling job over many years. We will miss his guiding hand but he and Val are staying on the Committee.

Canterbury by Rae Magson

It has been a quiet time in the last two months. Our President Nick Cameron has been in Scotland visiting an elderly relative who was having a birthday party.

Tartan Day is organised for all clans by the Scottish Heritage Council, and is a lot of fun. Good food, good company and some items. This year it is to be on Sunday 6 July at Robbies in Elmwood, Christchurch. There is usually a large attendance of Clan Cameron members.

Hawke's Bay by Helen Shaw

Owing to exceptionally wet weather pre Easter the annual Hastings Highland games were held indoors at Lindisfarne College. All available space was occupied by Pipers, Dancers and stall holders. Clan Cameron and Clan Johnston were the only Clans represented. Shane, Mike and Helen were at a trestle table in the Atrium. Naturally public numbers were down but we showed the "flag". We didn't attract any new members but managed to sell all the Raffle Tickets. Clan visitors to our stand were Nick Cameron, John & Val Grant and Jean & Duncan McQueen.

It is hoped that next year that the rain will stay away and we can be outside again.

Vale: June Armstrong by Helen Shaw

Hawkes Bay member June passed away on 9 May 2014. June was an enthusiastic member from the beginning of the formation our branch and until she went into a retirement home, attending all our events. She was equally proud of both her Armstrong and Cameron Heritage.

June was born in Greymouth in 1921, a Great Granddaughter of Allan Cameron from Loch Linnhe and Elizabeth Cameron, both born in Scotland, who arrived in Lyttelton with four children on the *Rakaia* on 3 September 1882.

June's Grandmother Janet/Jessie Cameron married Robert Baird Armstrong and they had a family of 6 boys and 6 girls. June's Father Alexander was their 7th child. They moved from Waddington to Kokiri, a saw milling town near Greymouth, about 1890/91. Robert Armstrong worked for the Midland Railway Company which was building the railway from the West Coast to Canterbury. June was a school teacher specialising in Music. (June's father played the Bagpipes) She taught in Hokitika, Greymouth, Timaru, Palmerston, Taupo, Glasgow and London. In later years she taught here in Napier. June had a Ladies Choir and was an organist at the Cathedral, and more lately, the Ormond Chapel on Napier Hill.

Her funeral was held at The Cathedral of St John on Friday the 16th May.

Digging, delving and discovery at Achnacarry

By Margaret Sargent - 'The Braes Newsletter', May 2014

A BBC film unit recently visited the archaeological dig currently underway at Achnacarry Castle and the dig was featured on the BBC Scottish News. Guest on the programme was Donald Cameron of Lochelishide, one of the first Commandos sent to train at Achnacarry, who told of his experiences at the camp in a Down Memory Lane article in The Braes last year. The news item featured members of Lochaber Archaeological Society at work on the dig and also showed interesting footage of the Commandos in training. In a recent update on the findings, David MacFarlane, a member of the excavation team, spoke to The Braes about the success they were having using metal detectors. A hand grenade has been uncovered that was found to be live. So after a preliminary visit by the police, the Bomb Disposal Unit came and exploded it - the Unit's second visit to the Braes in a matter of weeks!

The area under examination is the large field in front of the castle where the camp was set up. In a corner where much unarmed combat took place, other exciting finds have come to light. A tin helmet, made in 1942, was dug up, its padding gone but in remarkably good shape. A cap badge was found, as well as empty shell cases. To the left hand side of the driveway, lying in the rhododendrons - webbing, a wallet and other personal items were discovered. David spoke enthusiastically of results so far and explained: "All the finds will be bagged up and cleaned and then, when the project finishes at the end of August, there will be a display of everything in the West Highland Museum."



The Tin Helmut



A live grenade

The archaeological dig, which has had the full support of Lochiel, promises to reveal more secrets and artefacts from the Commandos' Training ground in the weeks to come. Meanwhile, there is a DVD on sale at the W H Museum, "The Royal Marines at War" that features the Commandos leaving Spean Bridge Station on their 7 mile march to Achnacarry, their training at the camp and the river behind the Castle, which the Commandos had to cross on ropes with a full pack on their backs.

Annual Gathering 2014

by Joy and Denis Cameron

The Bay of Plenty Branch of Clan Cameron were honoured to host the 49th gathering of Clan Cameron in Tauranga. A small committee worked hard to achieve a successful week-end and were ably supported by other members of the branch who were always willing to assist.

On Friday evening the 28th March the Executive met at the Tauranga on the Waterfront Motel for a coffee and hot scones which was followed by the meeting.

Saturday morning, the 29th March, members attending the AGM met at "Daniels in the Park" for registration, followed by an excellent morning tea. As an extra, one of our members, Helen Renner, supplied the lovely shortbread. President Denis Cameron welcomed everyone and then Fraser Cameron, our New Zealand President, chaired the meeting.

Reports from all branches throughout New Zealand were presented and it was interesting to hear what had been happening around the country. The general feeling appeared to be that we need to encourage more younger people to join and participate in the Clan activities. This is a challenge for all branches!

Neil Cameron also presented his Newsletter report which is always received with great acclamation. The newsletter is the envy of many other Clans throughout New Zealand and overseas. What a great job he always does and we all look forward to the two monthly edition.

The First Light appears to be in good hands and we look forward to hosting a representative from Scotland when they have someone available.

Alison Jordan presented her financial report and we are in an excellent position financially.

President, Fraser Cameron, Secretary, Tanya Cameron, and Treasurer, Alison Jordan were all returned to office. All other Officers were returned with Bryan Haggitt now the First Light Convenor.

2015 will see the Clan Cameron assemble in Manawatu for the 50th Annual General Meeting.

The afternoon was free for sightseeing, catching up with friends, or just relaxing.

The evening function was also at "Daniels in the Park" and we were overwhelmed at the transformation from the daytime meeting to the wonderful venue for the dinner and entertainment.

Nick Cameron, Canterbury Branch President, piped in all Presidents and representatives from other branches, then Denis Cameron BOP President welcomed everyone. We all stood and sang "The Flower of Scotland" which was led by our Bard, Ray Crafts, who was our MC for the evening.

The Haggis ceremony followed, piped in by Nick Cameron,

Canterbury, Blair Gardiner, Bay of Plenty, carried the Haggis, Rob Cameron, Wellington/Wairarapa was in charge of the Knife and Pin, Rex Cameron, Bay of Plenty, carried the whisky, and John Cameron, Manawatu was the Sword Bearer. Ray Crafts said the Selkirk Grace, then gave an inspiring and enthusiastic address to the Haggis which was followed by the Toast.

We were entertained throughout the evening by Margaret Harper playing a wonderful variety of Celtic music on the harp and towards the end of the evening Margaret sang two lovely songs. We were very fortunate to have such a talented artist perform for us.

The beautiful main course was served from the buffet and I am sure everyone had an enjoyable and sumptuous meal.

Denis proposed the Toast to Lochiel and Bay of Plenty Patron, Harold Cameron proposed the Toast to the Clan Cameron which were received with great acclamation.

Tina Peet School of Dance then presented a mini concert of Scottish and Celtic dances for half an hour. The girls, aged from 5 years to 18 years danced non-stop. It was truly amazing and our Clan Cameron members stood and applauded their performance.

Dessert, coffee and tea was served from the buffet, followed by the raffle draws, then we all joined hands around the room and sang Auld Lang Syne. It was a great occasion and wonderful to catch up with old friends and foster new kinships.

A number of members met at St Peters in the City on Cameron Road for their morning service. Ray Crafts led our group in to the service with his bagpipes, followed by Denis Cameron carrying our Bay of Plenty Banner. We enjoyed morning tea of shortbread and haggis on crackers with the parishioners who had joined in the Scottish theme with their tartans.



Clan Cameron Merchandise

- by Joy Cameron

The Bay of Plenty Branch have for sale Clan Cameron merchandise
Fridge magnets in the red Cameron tartan with the Clan Crest
- \$2.00 each (plus postage if required)

Pens - black and silver with the name Clan Cameron and Clan Crest
- \$2.00 each (plus postage if required)

Coffee mugs in the red Cameron tartan with the Clan Crest
- \$10.00 each (plus postage if required) (limited quantity)

All members who attended the Gathering in Tauranga received a fridge magnet and pen in their pack - I hope you have all found the magnet at the back of your name badge and now have it proudly displayed at home.

These items are pictured in colour on the back page.

They may be obtained from Joy Cameron,
07 575 4659 or camisky@kinect.co.nz



Turakina



Cemetery

150th. Anniversary Highland Games 2014

**We stood upon this sacred ground,
And listened to the piper sound,
A lament to those who had gone before
Who gave us this and so much more.
The lament had ceased, a prayer was said,
The sun it shone on every head,
No sound was heard, the air was still,
As we stood atop this "Hallowed Hill"**

John S. Grant January 2014

This is a corrected version of John's poem, which was printed in our last issue with a line missing.

Continuing an interview with

Lt.-Col. Charles Cameron
for 'The Braes of Lochaber'

Tell us about the management of the Achnacarry estate?

Well, as I said, James Weir managed the farms and father did much of the

estate management himself. I remember when he died, Allan and I were left a Jersey cow each which I swapped with your father for our father's guns- I got the best end of the bargain!

Until about 1935, the only way to Kinlocharkaig, other than on foot, was by the steam yacht, 'The Rifle.' Apart from the stalking parties, it took all the supplies and the shepherds to Strathan and brought all the wool back. Sheep were all handled in the fank there and livestock for sale was all walked down the lochside. The road to Kinlocharkaig was opened by Hore Belisha, the Minister of Transport in 1935 and the road from Banavie to Gairloch was tarred in 1931 when the Duke of York came to open the new operating theatre at the Belford Hospital. When the Duke of York was due to arrive, the stalkers had been posted to ensure that traffic flowed smoothly as there were bound to be sightseers; as a car approached one of the stalkers, he waved it down and said 'Good morning, are you one of Lochiel's guests?' The reply was 'Yes, I hope so; I'm the Duke of York'.

We always called it the Duke of York's road. The Queen Mother couldn't come as she was expecting Princess Margaret. When he was here, he was taken out in *The Rifle* for a fishing trip and, just after he transferred to a smaller boat, he said "Oh, I want my macintosh and, as I was about to throw it to him, I was told you can't do that, and somebody had to climb down with it.

After the lochside road was built, *The Rifle* was obsolete and my father sold it in the late '30's; unfortunately, the breakers who bought it knocked a hole in the hull when they were taking the boiler out, and she sank.

Like all communities in those days, we were very self-contained and local people all joined in with whatever was going on; there were parties in the Recreation Hall (the Hall) at Christmas and New Year and the yacht

would bring all the shepherds and their families from Glendessary.

And of sport on the estate?

Well, of course, the stalking was always very good and most of it was let. Davie Cameron lived first at the head of Glenmaillie and then moved down to Invermallie-he lived with his sister Katie. Alex Macdonald was on the north forest and always enjoyed getting his rifle close in to stags; one of his tricks was to get close in to the stag, settle down, strike a match and light a cigarette just to show that the stag was unaware of his presence and that there was no hurry!

During April and May, there was always a great run to the telephone when the letting agent might call to say he had a tenant; the agent was Percy Wallace, Frank's brother, and Father used to wait for the phone to ring and there was great excitement if the news was good. The Spencer-Nairns took it quite a bit and one year when it didn't let, we

had paying guests; one was an ex ambassador and another High Sheriff of Lincoln--Allan and I behaved terribly badly, throwing slippers down from the top of the stairs. They always had to have the most comfortable chairs and we had to behave terribly well so it wasn't much of a success.

Actually, I spent more time at Clunes as a boy. It was much warmer than Achnacarry in the winter and we spent Christmas and Easter there; my parents moved back to Achnacarry at the beginning of the summer but by the time I was nine or so, I went off to school. If the

place was let, we summered at Achdalu or Nairn. The latter was always great fun; after I went to live there, I was surprised to see the size of the houses we took-they are all hotels or nursing homes now-but we took staff as well. We got to know other families who holidayed there and played golf and tennis.

And family relations were always good ?

Oh yes, we all got on well. My mother was very gentle and, although Father was quite stern, he was a very kind man. He carried a lot on his shoulders quite apart from his war experience; continual money worries, his responsibilities as chief of the clan and his role as Convenor of the County Council all preoccupied him.

As you know, the whole estate was for sale in 1923 and, in 1938, negotiations were going on to sell it to the Clan; the Chairman of the Association and of the Glasgow Branch

was behind it but money would have come from overseas as well. Actually we were saved by the war. The price of sheep and wool went up and the claim for loss of trees from the forest fire was substantial; I think much of the money was spent on the house.

Marion married Ronald Orr-Ewing in 1938 - Ronald being in the Guards, wasn't allowed to marry until he was 27.

Allan and I were always close, just 3 years between us and we did a lot together, always outside, and Angus spent a lot of time with us.

I have very happy memories of childhood. I last saw Allan at the Northern Meeting in 1938; after the beginning of the war, he went first to India and then to North Africa where he became a POW in 1942. He was sent to a camp in Italy and escaped when the Italians gave up, but was captured again and sent to a camp in Germany. Ronald O-E was in the same place and they fell out and didn't speak for a year!

☆

(To be continued - with thanks to 'The Braes of Lochaber'.)



C.A.Cameron, January 1953



The steam yacht "The Rifle"

Dr. Archie Cameron

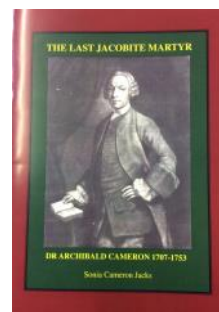
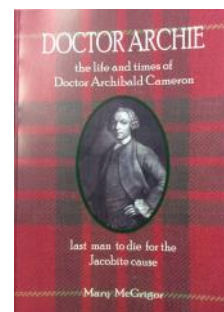
Two books were launched within the West Highland Museum in Cameron Square on Sunday the 19th of May.

Both titles cover the life of Doctor Archie Cameron, the last Jacobite Martyr to be killed for supporting the Stuart cause.

Authors Sonia Cameron Jacks and Mary McGrigor signed copies of their books following a very interesting overview of Doctor Archie's life presented by Sonia Cameron Jacks.



Sonia Cameron Jacks and Mary McGrigor with copies of their books



Books may be obtained from:

Printed by
For The Right Reasons
60 Grant St, Inverness, IV38BS
fortherightreasons@rocketmail.com
Tel: 01463 718844 or 07717457247

The Last Cameron Seanachaidh

Part.2 (continued from February)

by Bill Cameron

The small croft house at Bunalteachan where Alasdair Cameron (North Argyll) lived is still occupied to the present day. Taking its name from the small burn that runs alongside it, this remote dwelling looks out over the dark waters of Loch Sunart in West Lochaber. Although it has long since been extended to allow for more living space, you can still make out the outline of the original house from its modern day extension.

Alasdair lived all his life in this small croft house with his family. Life of course was lived at a much slower pace than today, and people's wants were no doubt fewer than in today's disposable society. Back then, no cars would be parked outside the house to take Alasdair to the shops some miles away, or indeed to work. No, Alasdair's mode of transport was either on foot, or by bicycle – unless he got a lift.

His daily routines were dictated by the seasons and the necessary jobs to be carried out on the croft. His early life was very much connected to the land and the little produce that could be grown from it – as well as tending to a small amount of livestock. All the while, he would have had to endure the ever-changing wet and windy west coast climate. Some things never change!

In the seven years of education he received at the nearby school in Salen, Alasdair was taught in English, with Gaelic generally kept for home time or used amongst his school friends.

In his youth, learning in the Gaelic language was deemed by the educational establishment as not being the proper thing for the up and coming generation. A far cry from today's educational experts, who have found that children taught in a bilingual context perform much better in school, than those taught in a monolingual context such as English.

Naively, it was very much seen in the early twentieth century as the language of the croft, not necessary for a modern developing society. Fortunately for those interested in the history and landscape of Lochaber – which is so interrelated with the Gaelic language and culture; Alasdair Cameron spent most of his life preserving a great deal of it.

Not only would he continue to speak in his native language, he would go on to amass a great repository of folklore and Gaelic place names of the area – translating their meaning and in some cases having them added to ordinance survey maps. Had it not been for his lifelong interest in the Gaelic language, its cultural references to places and the people that have lived on the land for many generations, then a rich stream of cultural understanding would have been lost forever.

A number of extensive voice recordings were made of Alasdair talking on a wide range of subjects, from local Gaelic place names, to the history of tenancy in Morvern. These recordings can be accessed online at www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/person/4165. They were made by a researcher from the School of Scottish studies at Edinburgh University, whilst Alasdair, then seventy two, was in a patient at Dalintart hospital near Oban.

Over six decades, Alasdair had built up an extensive global network of correspondents, amongst them many Camerons from around the world and other people of Scottish ancestry who wanted to find out about their genealogical ties with Lochaber. Correspondents were directed to write to him mainly through word of mouth, as well as from the many articles and letters he had published in the Oban Times newspaper. The extensive knowledge and the library of information he held on families going back many generations in Lochaber were so varied, that it would be near on impossible to condense into a book.

Most of the knowledge, family connections and folklore had been gathered through informal ceilidhs since his youth, or gradually handed

down through the oral tradition from the elders in this remote part of Lochaber.

As well the many letters and articles he penned under his literary pseudonym 'North Argyll' in The Oban Times newspaper, Alasdair also published a series of short books amongst them: St. Finnan's Isle, The Floating Church of Strontian, Loch Sunartside Memories, Annals and recollections of Sunart and John Cameron (Corrychoille) – The Lochaber Drover.

Retiring at sixty-five, having worked as a county roads man in charge of the road he had walked along since boyhood. Alasdair had worked outside in all weathers since he was fourteen years of age. After many decades of toiling out in wet and windy conditions, this would evidently take its toll on his health, resulting in rheumatics in his legs and dwindling eyesight.

In retirement Alasdair continued to write, research and welcome people from near and far to his small croft house at Bunalteachan.

Many who visited the house recall the vast amounts of stacked correspondence from around the world, early copies of the Oban Times and many books. By modern standards we would probably refer to this as an archive.

Remarkably, Alasdair would carry out all his reading and writing by paraffin lamp, as electricity was still to arrive in this part of Lochaber.

His eyesight gradually worsened over the years, to the stage in his late sixties when his sight went in both eyes. This must have been a devastating blow for a man who had been so keen on reading and writing all his life.

In his late sixties he would leave Bunalteachan for the last time. Out of necessity, due to his failing health he would live out his remaining years in a care home, then later in a hospital in Oban.

Not to be daunted by the loss of his sight, and his life long love of gathering and sharing knowledge. Alasdair managed to have his thoughts transcribed from his hospital bed, from where they were then taken as notes to the Oban Times office for publication.

Having gathered and shared so much of his collection over the years, Alasdair was made an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (FSA) in 1950. In 1969 he was conferred with an Honorary Masters of Arts degree from Edinburgh University for a lifetimes work in preserving various aspects of the history, language and folklore of Lochaber. Alongside these honors, Alasdair was also a member of the Royal Celtic Society, The Gaelic Society of Inverness and was a founding member of the Ardnamurchan Gaelic Mod.

In 1973, Alasdair passed away at the age of seventy-seven in Dalintart Hospital in Oban. Having cycled the eight miles to Strontian Parish Church for many years, until his health failed. Alasdair's funeral service took place at this small Church. A well-known figure in the Kirk and local community at large, his funeral was attended by many people who wanted to pay their respects to a local man who was so passionate about the

community in which he lived, and the people who lived on it.

To the rear of the church a simple granite stone marks the resting place of North Argyll:-

**Remembering North Argyll
Alexander Cameron
Hon.M.A., F.S.A (Scot) 1896 -1973**

Finally, in researching the life and work of North Argyll, I have been inspired by the quiet continuity of this Highland gentleman's scholarly research and the body of work he had built up over many years.

I had always wondered what became of his extensive archive? Having tried to make contact with any living relatives in the local press, I was unable to find out.

Sadly, the only recollection I managed to gather from a local source, was that a large amount of Alasdair's papers and correspondence were taken outside the house and burnt.



A last photo of Alasdair



Alasdair's home on Loch Sunart



Aonaibh ri Cheile

The Back Page



John and Jessie Annabell, Jill and Norman Cameron and Ruth Cameron



Alison Jordan, Jean Barker, Jessie Scott, Patricia Duncan, Ray Crafts (standing), Sheryl Hickey, Judith Bean and Angela Bean.



Vivienne Cameron, Paul Dudley, Lance Potaka, Bridgette Potaka, Robin Cameron-Henry, Tanya Cameron

Cameron Merchandise (see page 5)



The Annual Gathering - Tauranga



Fraser Cameron, Logan Cameron, Hazel Cameron, Rex and Patricia Cameron, Rhys Fenton and Elaine Cameron.



Betty and Harold Cameron, Denis and Joy Cameron

Photo: Duncan McQueen



A combined St Kentigern Student and Old Collegian Pipe Band plays at the Anzac Day parade in Howick. The editor and Ruth were very proud that all three of their McQueen grandchildren were playing in this band (Andrew and Sarah piping, Matthew drumming.)



Betty and Harold Cameron celebrated Betty's 80th birthday last month. Betty is cutting the cake



Harold's very Cameron birthday cake from his 80th birthday in 2012

Photos: Elizabeth Shearer

All uncredited photos by Editor