



Cameron

The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc.



Highland dancers perform in front of the massed pipe bands at the Auckland Games

Photo: Editor



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The tranquil scene at Harcourt Park, during the Upper Hutt Highland Gathering

Inset: Rob and Graeme Cameron with the Cameron tent.

Photos: Graeme Cameron

A message from our President

To all Clan members



It is time to wish all our members and overseas friends a **Merry Xmas and Happy New Year**. May you all, wherever you may be over this period, remember to keep yourself safe. I hope that you can enjoy family and friends activities, whether you meet at home, or away.

In New Zealand we will wish for some sunshine, while in Scotland (as Tristan remembers) it is most likely to be a white

venture.

Now to our efforts in N.Z. it was a pleasure to meet at Turangi with a very strong muster of the Executive - the discussions were good with suitable results. Due to the good numbers in attendance the room was a little crowded. The kitchen ladies must be thanked once again for their efforts in preparing the lunch - apart from the small hiccup to get the oven working.

It was a pleasure to see John Grant and his wife in attendance as reps from the Taranaki/Wanganui branch. It brought back memories of days gone past, Also the attendance of Rob and Catherine from the Wellington/Wairarapa branch - this allowed members the opportunity to thank Catherine for her short period as Clan Secretary. Elaine was pleased to receive on my behalf the box of Clan Cameron records, which Tanya our Secretary assured me were for my safekeeping.

The programme as set out for the Annual General meeting in Auckland for 2013 has been approved with the council meeting being held on Friday evening as usual.

Tanya has requested group photos of the Clan Cameron Annual Meetings, as well as Turangi meetings. These should be named and will be laminated for the records.

Fraser

By Editor: I will dig out and supply group photos of meetings (when taken) over the last ten years or so. If anyone has earlier photos in their personal or branch records please send a copy, named where possible, to Secretary Tanya.



Some of the lovely ladies who prepared the lunch at the EC meeting: Valmar, Ruth, Joy and Elaine (all Camerons)

"Cameron"

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

published on or near the 1st day of every even month of the year.

Deadlines for articles are on the 15th of the month before publication. Items of urgency or importance may be accepted up to 10 days later.

Articles about Camerons, branch activities with photographs, and advice of coming events are especially welcome.

Deadline for the February issue:

15 January 2013

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Clan Cameron New Zealand website
<http://www.camclan.orconhosting.net.nz>

(This has links to other Clan Cameron sites)

Welcome to the following Members who have recently joined us:



Wellington / Wairarapa Branch

Alex Cameron and Family Wainuiomata

Peter Barker and Family Lower Hutt

Auckland Branch

Daniel Mellamphy Waiheke Island
Janene Sutton Birkenhead
Teresa Crowe Royal Oak
Nadine Martin and family Buckland's Beach

Davis Clarke Torbay
Dorothy Costar Royal Oak
Martin Clark Ponsonby

Ceud Mile Fáilte One Hundred Thousand Welcomes

Coming Events

Saturday 8 December 2012. Jenny Mair Square Day

The Square, Palmerston North. Watch for the haggis sandwiches and sausages. This is Clan Cameron Manawatu's 25th year of participation. Enquiries to John Cameron 06 358 0417

Tuesday 1 January 2013. Waipu Highland Games

Events open with the formal Clan March at 9.30am. Come and visit the Cameron tent and give us your support. Details: www.waipugames.co.nz

Saturday 26 January 2013. Turakina Highland Games

Public Domain, Cameron Road, Turakina. Come and support the Clan. The Cameron tent will be there. Details: www.turakinahighlandgames.co.nz

Saturday 9 February 2013

Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo

Paeroa Domain from 9am. Join us for the Clans March to the town centre at 11am. Cameron tent will be there. Tattoo at 6.30pm. Details: www.paeroahighlandgames.co.nz

Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 March 2013

The 63rd Hawke's Bay Easter Highland Games

Lindisfarne College, Pakowai Rd, Hastings. Come and soak up the Scottish atmosphere at this annual event. You will be sure of a great welcome in the Cameron tent. Enquiries to Mike Topham 06 879 8215

48th Annual Gathering and AGM

Auckland 19—21 April 2013

To facilitate planning and bookings, the following early details of the 2013 Gathering are repeated:

The Gathering and AGM will be held in the Quality Hotel (formerly Barrycourt), 10-20 Gladstone Road, Parnell.

This is within walking distance of Newmarket shopping, Parnell Village, Cathedral, War Memorial Museum and the Rose Garden.

The AGM, lunch and banquet will be held in the hotel on the Saturday. A 'Meet and Greet' barbecue will be enjoyed at the Parnell Cricket Club, together with the EC Meeting, on the Friday evening. On Sunday a 10am church service is programmed at the Naval Base Chapel, Devonport, followed by morning tea / lunch at the Navy Museum.

Please arrange your own accommodation with the hotel, quoting Clan Cameron Gathering. Prices vary but there is a discounted advance purchase rate and a Gold Card discount on checkout.

Quality Hotel.

Freephone: 0800 50 44 66 Web: www.theparnell.co.nz

E-mail: reservations@theparnell.co.nz

Further details and registration form in later newsletters

Note name change and web site change

A Registration Form will be with the next (Feb) magazine

History Corner *by Fiona Cameron*

Highland Games

The Hororata Highland Games are back again this year and took place on the 10 November in the small Canterbury town. The games were traditional with a unique Kiwi twist.

Highlights included: highland dancing, solo piping and drumming, pipe bands, heavy (strongmen/women) events including caber tossing, hammer throw, sheep shearing demonstrations, scurry racing, a dedicated children's glen, and the very popular tug-o-war. The Taste of Scotland section was a new edition to the games and included traditional Scottish fare, cooking demonstrations, whisky tasting and much more.

The games were set up by the Hororata Community Trust to help support community activities and rebuild the town after the September 2010 Christchurch earthquake. Find out more.

The Highland Games are said to predate the Greek Olympics and to have originated in Ireland around 2000 BC. The games crossed the water to Scotland with the fourth and fifth century migrations of the Scotti into Dalriada (Argyll) and beyond.

In their current form, the games are a unique mixture of cultural, social and sporting events. In those early days though the gatherings were essentially 'war games' designed to select the best warriors in each family tribe or clan.

The 11th century saw the first Games in Scotland organized and designated as a sporting event. Games were held throughout Scotland and grew in popularity and in number until the Battle of Culloden in 1746. After Bonnie Prince Charlie's defeat by the English, the 'Act of Proscription' banned the playing of the bagpipe, wearing of the kilt, gathering together of the people, and the carrying of arms under the penalty of deportation or death. The act was in force for almost 40 years and was detrimental to not only the games but also the Scottish clan structure. After its repeal, the games started to revive and the fortunes of the national customs were given a tremendous boost with the visit to Scotland in 1822 of King George IV. The King appeared in Edinburgh in full Highland dress and received an ecstatic welcome and is commemorated to this day in two famous Edinburgh landmarks – George Street and George IV Bridge.

In the latter part of the 18th century, Highland Societies began forming, and in 1781 the first society Gathering was held at Falkirk. This successful venture led to the Gathering of the Clans and the Highland Games as we know them today. By the end of the 1820s, games were once again being held throughout Scotland. The Scottish Highland Games Association (SHGA), established in 1947, is the governing body of Traditional Highland Games in Scotland. It represents over 60 Highland Games in Scotland with several associate members overseas. Highland Games are held in many countries around the world including in New Zealand and Australia.

Reprinted from 'Heritage et al' blog at Auckland Libraries with the kind permission of David Verran and Natasha Barrat

From the Branches....

Wellington / Wairarapa by Rob Cameron

The Wellington Wairarapa Branch of Clan Cameron held their AGM on Saturday 15th September at the Gladstone Inn, Gladstone, Wairarapa. This was attended by members from both the Wellington and Wairarapa areas, and as usual, concern was expressed about our aging membership and how to encourage more younger people to become involved in our Clan and activities. The only change to our committee was that Ken Cameron stood down after a productive and busy time as our Branch President over the last few years and was replaced by Rob Cameron who is serving his second term as President.

After the meeting we had an enjoyable lunch and then spent time catching up with everyone. At the same venue as our meeting the lower North Island farriers were holding a competition day so we had the chance of seeing horses shod. Although none of our members came by horse, if they had, and their horse had thrown a shoe on route, I am sure the problem would have been fixed very quickly!!

We had a tent at the Upper Hutt Highland Gathering – a report on this is elsewhere in the newsletter. I was concerned to see one of our members taking the opportunity to man the Clan Campbell tent, and appear very comfortable doing so. This person will be censured at our next meeting.

We are holding our Christmas get together on Saturday 8th December. Notification will be out to members shortly. All in all an active couple of months with Clans folk enjoying a number of activities.

On Saturday 10th November Wellington Wairarapa branch of Clan Cameron attended the Upper Hutt Highland Gathering at Harcourt Park. We set up and manned a Clan Cameron tent. Graeme, Don, Sonja and Rob - all Cameron's - spent time at the tent. We had quite a lot of interest and gained two new members, plus had the opportunity to talk to the other clans about running some combined Clans events.

The Gathering was held in beautiful weather at a magnificent venue. Piping, dancing, and drumming competitions were held along with clan tents, a medieval sword fighting display, and a Celtic folk band. It was well attended and numbers and interest is building each year.

Hawke's Bay by Trish Topham

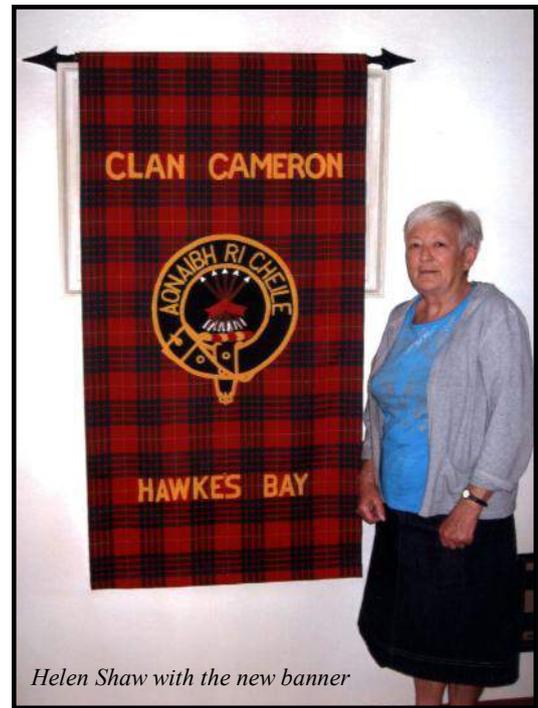
Hawke's Bay Branch Banner

At the Executive Council Meeting at Turangi on Saturday, 27th October, Helen Shaw announced that the Clan Cameron Banner for our Hawke's Bay Branch has been completed. After enquiries at two local professional stitcheries, which didn't prove to be satisfactory, Helen decided to take on the daunting task herself. The result is a very professional banner showing the Cameron Crest on a Cameron tartan background with the words Hawke's Bay proudly displayed beneath the crest.

Helen has made a superb job of this banner, which we know has taken many hours to complete (with serious lack of sleep at times) – resulting in something not only Hawke's Bay Branch can be extremely proud of, but Clan Cameron in general. With Helen being the first President of the Hawke's Bay Branch and the creator of our Banner, her name will go down in history in our archives.

So thank you most sincerely Helen from your fellow Branch Members for an excellent job and labour of love which will be displayed at every opportunity. You have done us proud - right down to the all important apostrophe in Hawke's Bay!

We would also like to thank John Pryce and Shane East for their contribution of materials towards the banner.



Helen Shaw with the new banner

A Piece of History

Helen Shaw and John Pryce had not met until they joined the Hawke's Bay Branch of Clan Cameron in 2007.

However, we are sure their forebears knew each other as Helen is the Great, Great Granddaughter of John 'Mor' Cameron (1781 – 1881) who came to New Zealand on The Blenheim in 1840 and settled at "Glenmore" Turakina, whilst John is the Great Grandson of John Cameron (1817 – 1892) who also came to New Zealand on the same voyage of The Blenheim and settled at "Marangai" – which is approximately 12 km. north of Turakina.

Taranaki / Wanganui by Neville Wallace

Taranaki/Wanganui Branch held their Xmas function on the 11.11.12 at the Hawera Club. We started with local piper Bill Colville piping in the Haggis with Robert Colville delivering a spirited address to it. This was followed by a luncheon prepared by our own Alan Drake. This of course being of his usual high

standard. A good attendance of members with seven visitors from Manawatu being welcomed along with some prospective new members. Apologies were received from Fraser and Don Cameron. Don is holidaying with family in Australia and having a great time. Our next



Photo: Shona Wallace

Robert Colville addresses the haggis, watched by John Grant, Alan Drake and Neville Wallace

outing will be to the Turakina Highland Games in January where we hope to have a good turnout. Merry Christmas to all and "Lang may yer lum reek".

(translated as 'Long may your chimney smoke' - Ed)

We have had a busy couple of weeks. Firstly we had the Annual General Meeting, this was held at the home of Pat Tarbotton in Ashburton, there were no changes to the committee. Then we all went to Robbies Restaurant for a relaxing lunch. The next Saturday was much busier. Highland dancing, pipe bands, caber tossing, longswords, tug-of-war, mace flourishing and haggis tasting, were some of the events at the Hororata Highland Games. Not forgetting all the tartan kilts and even some tartan trousers. The weather was perfect, and huge crowds of people turned up. There was something for everyone. Lots of stalls, plenty to eat, lots to see. Did I mention the tartan kilts - I love them! Several Clans were there but we were the only ones giving away tastings of haggis, so our tent was very popular. As well we had a display of Cameron books and the Cameron jigsaws. Most of all there were lots of Scottish accents - lovely! Did I mention the kilts, mmm? Whisky tasting, food displays, it was all fun, and the cream freeze I had was delicious. The proceeds of the games are to go to rebuilding Hororata, which was badly damaged by the September 2010 earthquake. As I walked around the event, someone complimented me on my name badge - the Clan Cameron badge with tartan in the background. We had membership forms available, lots of information about the Clan Cameron was given away, so we are hoping to gain some new members, people were certainly interested. Oh yes, did I mention the kilts - I love them. It was a wonderful day, but rather exhausting.



The Cameron tent at Hororata. Rae Magson talking about books

Bay of Plenty by Denis and Joy Cameron

The festive season is almost upon us once again. As we prepare for the annual influx of family and friends to our wonderful region we hope that the weather will be kind to us all with much kinship, laughter, joy and good health. Our shores are beautiful again - although the remnants of the Rena can still be seen in the distance on a clear sunny day protruding from the swell of the ocean.

We are endeavouring to encourage the youth of Clan Cameron to take a more active part in our organisation. They will have new ideas, enthusiasm and energy - today's youth are tomorrow's leaders.

As 2012 comes to a close, let's remain positive and hope that 2013 may become 'a year of wonders.'

Annus Mirabilis - a 'year of wonders'

May beautiful moments and happy memories

surround you and yours with joy this Christmas.

May the day until Christmas be full of sweet pleasure,
and your holidays create joyful memories to treasure.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Since the last newsletter report our branch has been a little quiet. We had a small hiccup when we unfortunately had to cancel our midwinter Christmas dinner due to lack of patronage and our Spark Competition has been put back until early next year. But we are back with new enthusiasm and have had a couple or so meetings to organise a few events for the rest of the year, Jenny Mair the chief of the Manawatu Scottish Society in a discussion with Joy Cameron suggested that our branch donate a cup or plaque for one of the many competitions at square day in recognition of Clan Cameron.

It will be Manawatu's 25 years of participation at square day, so after much discussion we decided to donate a cup to the winner of the novice solo tenor drummer competition. Square day is the next event on our list, organising is on going so we will all ready for our one and only fundraising event, selling the usual sausages and very popular haggis sandwiches. It can be a very profitable day.

Last Sunday 11th November a number of our clan attended the Wanganui/Taranaki clan lunch at the Hawera Club - a wonderful afternoon and a great lunch by Alan Drake, with a lot of talking and fellowship. Their new members enjoyed the occasion, they also agreed to help us at the Turakina Highland games with our tent and display. The Wanganui/Taranaki branch is moving on quite nicely under the leadership of Neville & Shona Wallace.

On Monday 12th November we had the sad occasion of the funeral of Colin Heggie in Feilding. Colin and Barbara have been staunch branch members for some years. Colin was very proud of his Cameron heritage and this was shown by the red & green Cameron scarf draped over his casket. Colin also had other strings to his bow. He and was a well-known Manawatu builder and in the last couple of years he was an enthusiastic volunteer shuttle driver for St Johns. We will surely miss his sharp wit and his quirky sense of humour, his willingness to help and his valuable contribution to everything we did.

We feel for Barbara in her sadness after Colin's recent sad passing.

In August this year I ventured up to Auckland to attend the Auckland Branch dinner and thoroughly enjoyed the evening. I thank them for their hospitality and also thank Bryan and Jenny Haggitt for their hospitality on the Sunday.

I wish all the branches and members a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

We hope to see you all at the Highland Games in Turakina in January 2013!



Joy Cameron (centre foreground) waves to Charles and Camilla as the Royal Couple leave Manchester Square, Feilding, on 15 November.

Photo: Elizabeth Shearer

Turakina Presbyterian Church held its 2nd Kirkin O' the Tartan service on Sunday October 14th.

Led by the Rev. John Peill from Wanganui, over 90 from Wanganui, Wellington, Manawatu and Wairarapa gathered to celebrate the wearing of the tartan and all things Scottish.

Dr. Nick Thomson came with seven MacDonald ties to be blessed. The piper was Tom Whittle from Taihape, organists were Heather & Eoin Cameron from Waikanae and Noble Hanley from Wanganui addressed the Haggis. Clan banners were proudly paraded by Clans Cameron, Grant, Keith, & Gordon.

The church was decorated with tartan scarves from Jessie Annabell's collection.

A wonderful occasion enjoyed by young and old, Scottish pride was rekindled.



Piper Tom Whittle leads into church at Turakina

Gisborne

David, Ann and William Cameron would like to wish the Gisborne Clan Cameron members and all Clan Cameron members around New Zealand, a **very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.**

Auckland by Don Cameron

Father Christmas dropped into the annual Auckland Highland Games on the Three Kings reserve in late November. Auckland even managed a rain-free day -- sometimes the kilted carnival is washed out.

Auckland have had an annual Highland games since 1921, lately with reasonable financial backing from the Auckland City Council. That is before the City Fathers decided that the proud event would no longer have council support.

People near and far reached for the acid bottle. They even reckoned that the council had given a racial slant to the affair. Similar ethnic gatherings by groups of Indians, Chinese and Pacific Islands had hefty six-figure help with their annual ceremonies -- and the Scottish folk now had nothing. For once, the council shifted ground, \$8000 was given to the Games organisers.

Some clans who were members of the Auckland Combined Clans Association wanted to develop a junior section for the Games sports events. However, the combined association decided that the junior games were losing venture, and turned down a \$300 request from its sub-committee.

Along came Pub Charities with some financial backing, not lavish but sufficient to keep an interesting project alive. For 20-odd clans who pitch their tents each year the hope is to attract new members. This is easier said than done. The Cameron

clan has a devoted Games leader in Neil Cameron who led the way with a splendidly large new tent filled with Cameron clan history, a smart luggage wagon -- but each year new members were a rarity.

Until last month's Games when in a short period of time Neil and his wife Ruth gathered six new members and their \$20 subs, and two more who promise to pay soon.

Nice to see Santa Claus wearing his new tartan.



Auckland President Don Cameron with two new Auckland members, Dorothy Costar and Teresa Crowe

Postscript from Canterbury

A Bonnie wee Bryan Haggitt! Congratulations



Rev. Bryan has announced that "Rebecca gave birth on 24th November to a baby boy, Bryan David Haggitt. 7 pounds 5 ounces. Mum and Bryan (and Father Bryan) are doing well." Baby Bryan is the grandson of Bryan and Jenny Haggitt of Auckland and Rev Bryan is familiar to us as a very capable 'addresser of the haggis.' This is the sixth generation that the name Bryan has been given to the eldest or only son. - Ed

*May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*

-traditional gaelic blessing

Vivienne McConnell Memorial

Below are excerpts from a letter written to President Fraser by Trish Topham, which was discussed at the EC meeting in Turangi

Re: Vivienne McConnell Memorial

For some time now we have been considering ways in which we can honour Vivienne for the tremendous part she played in Clan Cameron and for her enthusiasm and drive in fostering the Cameron Clan history and heritage.

Ideas re artistic and cultural things have been discussed but as yet, to my knowledge, nothing concrete has been laid down.

I would like to offer a suggestion for Clan Cameron members to consider at the next Executive Meeting at Turangi.

Many will recall the Kiwi with a tartan scarf and tam-o-shanter which was designed by Vivienne and has been used on the Cameron Newsletter for many years. A similar design was used on the cover of Clan Cameron Gisborne's Souvenir Songster which Vivienne compiled in 1989 when they attended the Clan Gathering in Scotland.

My suggestion is that a Banner with this Kiwi embroidered on it be made and this banner be on display at each A.G.M. and Gathering of Clan Cameron N.Z. - and the Branch with the most members attending (more than likely the Host Branch) be presented with the banner which they would hold for one year until the next A.G.M. While the Kiwi design is unique to New Zealand, the banner could be taken to International gatherings as well. The banner could be tartan, but I feel a plain coloured background would actually show the design more clearly as the scarf and tam-o



Trish Topham holding up Vivienne's cover design

-shanter on the kiwi would be in Cameron tartan. Vivienne had such a wonderful warmth and sense of humour that I think this would honour her artistic ability and her memory in an enduring, light hearted, yet very special way.

It will be 5 years on 16th January 2013 since Vivienne's passing.

And from Vivienne's husband Bob:

"I like the ideas for the banner. "Cameron's on the move!" although Vivienne always thought they ought to

move faster, but that was her. She liked to have things done yesterday. Every time I go into her "office" I marvel at how well organized she was and how disorderly I am. She kept every scrap of information that came into her hands. The hundreds and hundreds of photos to do with Te Araroa are going to be a great resource when eventually we have a museum here. . .our aim in restoring the Gaiety Hall in our main street. Thank you for what you are doing for Vivienne.

Much aroha, Bob"

Executive Council Decision

The Council unanimously decided to go ahead with a banner as proposed by Trish above, incorporating Vivienne's Kiwi icon.

We would like someone to make this banner for us or arrange for it to be made. Reasonable costs will be covered by the Association.

If you would like to be involved in this project please contact Trish and talk over ideas with her. A final design, with anticipated costs, will then be passed by Trish to the council members by e-mail for approval

Trish Topham. Trish T <trishtopham@xtra.co.nz>
Phone: 06 879 8215

(Vivienne's design is in colour on the back page)

Can you help with this?



A nostalgic picture. Vivienne leading the singing from her song book at the 1989 Gathering Ceilidh. You may recognise a few faces. My arm is one of those holding up the flag. Ed

By Editor:

2013 AGM & Gathering - Visit to the Naval Base.

I hope to arrange a church service in the historic Naval Chapel at 10am on 21 April for members attending the Gathering, followed by a walk around the Naval Base, and then a visit to the Navy Museum for lunch. To enable liaison with the Navy, I would be grateful if you would give me early notice, separate to the registration, if you might wish to participate. This is not a firm commitment but will give me an idea of numbers. A quick e-mail would be fine.

2014 Homecoming

There are conflicting reports about the International Gathering of the Clans in Stirling but I believe a firm programme will be out next year. The 700th anniversary of the battle of Bannockburn will take place 23-29 June, Commonwealth Games in Glasgow 23 July-3 August, and the Ryder Cup in Gleneagles in September. Also An Tilleadh 2014 - the Homecoming in Lochaber - will centre around the Arisaig Highland Games in July. Unfortunately there will be no Cameron Gathering this year. The following Web Sites will keep you up to date:
www.homecomingscotland.com
www.arisaighighlandgames.co.uk

The Clan Cameron

by the Editor

This talk, which I gave to the Scottish Interest Group of the Society of Genealogists in a modified form, is re-produced here as a reminder of our history. Sources are 'The Camerons' by John Stewart, 'The Clan Cameron' by C I Fraser and 'Cameron Online' - Ed

“The March of the Cameron Men”

This rousing tune, composed by Mary Campbell in 1829, commemorates 19 August 1745, that fateful day on which Prince Charles Edward Stuart raised his standard at Glenfinnan. Few clansmen had rallied to the standard by late in the day and the worried Prince was delighted when, with pipes playing and banners waving, some 800 Camerons approached, followed by 300 MacDonalds. It is certain that without the support of Lochiel, an influential chief with a large following, there would have been no rising, and the subsequent history of the Highlands would be quite different.

Who are the Camerons?

The origins of Clan Cameron are lost in the mists of time but it is fairly certain they were from ancient Caledonian or Celtic stock. There are several theories as to the origin of the name Cameron, several of which are fanciful but the most likely and popular theory is that the name was given to an early chief who had a large crooked nose, this description passed on to his descendants. The Gaelic *Cam-shron* means crooked nose, with the “sh” and “o” silent when pronounced. This is the theory I like and I am proud of my Cameron nose, which seems to be a dominant gene. It is easy to see the true Camerons at a Cameron gathering!

Another possible theory is that it came from the Gaelic *Cambrun*, meaning “crooked hill”. This name was popular in Fife and if not categorically connected with the Camerons of the Highlands, may be the source of some “Lowland” Cameron surnames.

Although legendary chiefs of the Clan go back to the 11th century and are probably fictitious, the first authenticated chief, numbered the 11th, dates back to the beginning of the 15th century. It is about this time that the name Cameron first appeared in written Scots.

The tribes that formed the clan, such as the MacGillonies, MacMartins and the MacSorlies, adopted the surname Cameron, but this did not become common usage until the 17th century. Other tribes who lived in Cameron country, such as the MacMillans and MacPhees, who were followers of Lochiel, never fully adopted the name.

Cameron Country

Cameron country lies in Lochaber. It is very hilly with most of it over 1000 feet. The soil is poor but the lochs abound with salmon and trout and there are plenty of deer and game in the hills. Remnants of the old Caledonian forest still exist. Before General Wade built his roads in the early 18th century it was very isolated with nothing more than bridle tracks to get around on.

Crest

The “Five Arrows” represent the five branches of the clan under the leadership of Lochiel during the early/mid-eighteenth century, namely:

MacMartins or Camerons of Letterfinlay
Camerons or MacSorlies of Glen Nevis
Camerons of Callart and Lundavra
Camerons of Erracht
Camerons of Clunes

The motto means “unite” and shows the unity of the families making up the clan.



History

It has been said that no Clan, with the exception of Clan Gregor, trod a more troubled path, or was so harassed from without. It was adversity, not choice, that made them warriors. Strife with the MacIntoshes over territory continued for 360 years, only to be settled in 1665. The clan were infamous for their ‘lifting’ of cattle, often from as far away as Moray. Fiercely Royalist, the most famous chief

was Sir Ewen, who was a thorn in the side of Cromwell’s troops. To keep the Camerons in check a large force was sent to Inverlochy by sea and a fort eventually called Fort William was built. The garrison came under attack by Sir Ewen’s Camerons and on one occasion he is credited with biting out his opponent’s throat in close combat. Ewen was the last chief to submit to Cromwell, and only then on very favourable terms, with the clan being allowed to keep their arms.

Clan Cameron’s part in the rising of 1745 is well known and they took part in every battle. The result for the old way of life was disastrous. Donald Cameron – The Gentle Lochiel – had been an enlightened chief. He was a true patriarch and was very concerned with the welfare of his clansfolk. He tried to wean them off their lawless ways of the past. He had supported Charles against all his instincts but his loyalty to the one he regarded as his rightful king won out. While the menfolk were away serving with Lochiel, the Royal Navy, assisted by Government troops, had laid waste to Cameron land at Morvern and burnt 400 houses. This caused Lochiel considerable grief but was a taste of things to come.

After Culloden, the Government determined to break the clan system so as to ensure that never again would powerful, independent chiefs be able to raise armies of fighting men against the Crown. It set about its task with merciless efficiency.

The chiefs such as Lochiel who had been “out in the ‘45” were removed from influence by execution, exile or imprisonment and lesser chiefs and tacksmen suffered the same fate. Government soldiers burnt the houses of the clansmen and destroyed their stock and crops. The lands of the attainted chiefs were forfeited to the Crown. Acts were passed making it illegal for Highlanders to wear the kilt or to carry arms. The people were left desolate, directionless, cultureless and starving.

Lochiel himself was outlawed and escaped to France. The Cameron lands were forfeited to the Crown. Other influential clansmen were forced into hiding or exile. The Government troops ravaged Lochaber killing the black cattle, burning and destroying crops and homes.

The Government did not only rely on the military and judiciary to destroy the clan system. It set up a board to run the estates forfeited to the Crown, its main purpose being to change the social conditions of the Highlanders and to remove the need for a clan-based society. The lot of the Highlanders was to be improved by new agricultural techniques, new industries and education. The holding of land in exchange for arms was abolished. No lease of over three years was allowed and, as leases expired, tenants loyal to the Stuarts were removed and replaced by those loyal to King George.

In 1784 the General Act of Indemnity was passed. Donald Cameron, 22nd Chief, was able to re-possess the estate on payment of a large fine. But nearly forty years had passed and times had changed. The young Lochiel had been brought up in France and England and his knowledge of his clan was slight. A clan chief no longer required men at his back and a sword in his hand and with the old clan system obsolete it was unnecessary to hold the clan lands for the common good.

The Gentle Lochiel had left Lochaber the father and protector of his people. His grandson returned as a landlord. Clan structures and patriarchal responsibility had been swept away in 1745 and the old system of land tenure called ‘kindness’ had been destroyed. During the thirty-eight years in which the Forfeited Estates were administered by the government, no steps were taken to replace it. A growing population and the introduction of sheep farming by landowners wishing to supplement their income added to social and economic upheaval.

It was impossible for Donald Cameron 22nd Chief to re-create the old order, however much his remaining clansmen might wish it. In 1790, when he was still a minor, his guardians made him hand over the Estate to a Trust which for thirty years held the purse strings and administered the Estate. The Trust was dissolved in 1819 with a huge accumulated debt of £30,000. Unlike many others, the Lochiel Estate escaped sale to alien owners, but, to survive, it had to conform to the land utilisation practices of the time. Lochiel finally paid off the last of this debt in 1945.

Some clansmen saw little point in staying in a country that no longer required or recognised them and many began to emigrate.

Emigration had been going on long before the '45. Relatives had kept in touch from across the Atlantic and stories of the rich and plentiful land in America induced many Highlanders to go and join their kinsmen. This was a voluntary exodus in response to the destruction of the clan society.

Nor did the Lochiel Estate escape The Clearances. Of those evicted some went to work on the Caledonian canal, others were given land at Corpach, some drifted to the cities, and some emigrated, assisted by Lochiel.

Recent History

Achnacarry House was rebuilt starting in 1802 but not finished until 1837 by the 23rd chief, who took up residence there. Subsequent chiefs have continued to make Achnacarry their permanent home. All have carried out their duties of running the estate in a caring way. To ensure the financial security of the estate the most recent Lochiels have been involved with the commercial world. The present Lochiel is the fourth generation Lochiel to represent the sovereign as Lord Lieutenant of Inverness-shire. All have been and are highly respected in Lochaber and have earned the respect and love of Camerons at home and abroad. Recent Lochiels have served with distinction in the Highland regiments.

During the Second World War Achnacarry was commandeered as a Commando Training Base. Lochiel moved out – but just down the road – with some trepidation, remembering what happened last time the English had occupied Achnacarry!

All was well apart from a few casualties (they used live ammunition for training), a fire in the house, a major fire which destroyed part of the ancient forest, and the liberation of some of Lochiel's salmon with a well-placed grenade. It took some time to put things right afterwards.

Altogether some 25,000 commandos from 27 countries trained at Achnacarry during the War. They are commemorated by the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge by the turn off to Achnacarry.

The Queens Own Cameron Highlanders

I have to mention the regiment associated with the Camerons. The 79th Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. This was raised by Alan Cameron of Erracht in 1793 and had a long and glorious history. In the 2nd World War, they are reputed to be the last Highland Regiment to wear the kilt in battle, as it is said that the order to wear trousers was deliberately not passed on. Ex members of the Regiment are honorary Camerons. Unfortunately the Regiment has now faded into history.

The Clan Society

As the Camerons no longer lived together as a close-knit organisation, but were spread throughout the globe, it was decided to form a Clan Society called Clan Cameron to bring the clan together and to protect and preserve its records and heritage. A society was formed in Scotland in 1891 and a New Zealand Branch in 1935. Successive Lochiels have taken a keen interest, attending their functions, visiting branches abroad, and welcoming visitors to Achnacarry – the symbolic home of the clan. Clan Gatherings have been held there at regular intervals where the Lochiel of the time has been a gracious host. These are eagerly awaited by members of the clan who have an inborn pride in their ancestry and are able to visit so many places of historic interest.

In 1989, with some assistance from the world-wide clan, a clan museum was opened at Achnacarry. A visit to this, coupled with a visit to the West Highland Museum in Cameron Square, Fort William, gives a wonderful insight into Cameron and Lochaber history.

We, in New Zealand held our own International Cameron Gathering in 2005, which attracted 400 Camerons from world-wide. The most recent gathering at Achnacarry was in 2009.

First Light

As a millennium project in 2000, Professor Maisie Earle, nee Cameron, at that time president of Clan Cameron New Zealand, instituted an exchange scheme known as First Light. This scheme is for the exchange of young Camerons, aged 18 to 30, between New Zealand and Lochaber (since extended to all Scotland). Exchangees learn about their history and culture and visit the places their forbears

came from or where Camerons made a new home. They are usually billeted with Camerons and experience some local work.

10 exchanges have now taken place and have been most successful. The bonds between Camerons of both countries have certainly been strengthened. I experienced this at first hand when I went to Lochaber for the last Chief's funeral. I was met by a former First Lighter, stayed with the family of another, and was accompanied during part of my stay by two First Lighters. Families of First Lighters have also visited each other's countries and made further friends.

Conclusion

The Clan Cameron, though not a large clan, is held in high regard in the Highlands and the Cameron name and blood are now found in every quarter of the world and in every profession, vocation and pursuit.

Lochaber is now prosperous through industry and tourism but is steeped in history. If you visit Lochaber take the opportunity to visit the Cameron museum and if you meet the Chief, say you are from New Zealand – you will be sure of a great welcome.



The first First Lighters: Shona Cameron (NZ) 2001 and Astie Cameron (Scotland) 2000, taken at the 2001 Clan Gathering

What our First Lighters are doing

Following on from Robert's story last issue, we plan further updates on all the First Lighters in the next two magazines.

Kimberley Walker (Manawatu) 2007

Initially working at the Clan Cameron Museum at Achnacarry, Kim was able to absorb lots of Clan information in-between visiting coach parties. Kim also worked with a local outdoor pursuits company and Lochaber College.

“It's scary to think it has been five years since I went to Fort William on the First Light Exchange... I was 22 years old, just finished my masters, never travelled alone and not quite sure what I was going to do in the future. I had an amazing time – it did almost feel like a home away from home and everyone was incredibly welcoming and kind. I'll never forget how amazingly kind Margaret was to me also!

The First Light Exchange was great – it pushed me completely out of my comfort zone and challenged me in a range of ways including meeting new people, public speaking, as well as learning more about my Scottish 'family' and myself at the same time. I've kept up to date with other First Lighter experiences and news via the newsletter and my granny Mary Barber which has been great!

Fast forward five years (actually almost to the day that I returned from the UK) and I'm now living in Melbourne. I recently finished 4 years working on a strategic change programme and leading my own projects at Immigration New Zealand in Wellington. This was a really interesting time to be involved and I worked with a range of people all around the world from a range of agencies.

I finished up at Immigration in March and travelled around Thailand and Malaysia, as well as staying with my sister in Singapore before moving to Australia. It was an amazing trip!

I'm now working for Westpac as a Senior Project Manager implementing banking products to some of Australia's largest companies. It is a very interesting (and busy) role, and I'm learning so much every day. Melbourne is great - there is always something interesting to see and do (and I must admit I don't miss the Wellington wind either).

The First Light exchange was wonderful and something that I thoroughly enjoyed. People have always found it fascinating and extremely interesting that I was lucky enough to do this. I'll always be grateful to all the members of the Clan Cameron (both in NZ and Fort William) for their support and allowing me to have such an amazing opportunity.”

Shona Cameron (Lochaber) 2006

The youngest Cameron to undertake the First-Light scheme, Shona was employed within a large University Library during her exchange in New Zealand

“Well it's been a busy time since my first visit to New Zealand on the First Light Exchange 6 years ago. From the picture you're probably able to see I've become an Aunty to two lovely boys, amongst many other things!

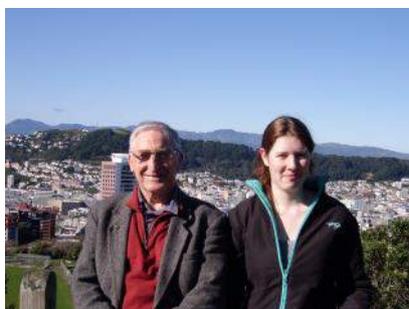
After the exchange I moved to Glasgow for 4 years to study Physiology, Sports Science and Nutrition at the University of Glasgow. Upon graduating I moved back to the Lochaber area where I worked part time in the local High School as an Active Schools Co-ordinator - trying to encourage pupils to participate in sport and exercise which sometimes isn't an easy task with the weather!

Although I found the Active Schools work interesting the part time nature of the post, plus an increasing awareness of the Highland Council budget restrictions made me think about re-training. So I'm now training to be a nurse in Sheffield and have been living down in Yorkshire for the past year. I'm on post graduate diploma course in Adult Nursing which I'm thoroughly enjoying. It's a small course with only 18 of us on it but we thankfully all get along really well. For my clinical placements I am in a town called Barnsley where there is a remarkable number of people with Cameron and/or Lochaber connections!

Although the course keeps me busy (cramming the standard 3 years training into 2 years) I am also able to work at weekends as a swimming teacher in the local leisure centres. Whenever I get the chance, I enjoy escaping from the city to explore the surrounding countryside in the Peak District; it's the next best thing to the hills of Lochaber!

With less than a year of training left and all the changes in our health service, I'm beginning to think about employment opportunities out of the UK. The happy memories and the many friends made during my time as a First Lighter, may well see my application forms winging their way to New Zealand”

Left: a recent photo of Kimberley
Right: Shona with sister Linda and nephews Ciaran and Rhuaraidh
Centre Top: Kimberley with Bill on top of Ben Nevis 2007.
Centre bottom: Shona with Graeme in Wellington 2006.



With Bill's background in design, he was employed as a tutor at Massey University, Wellington, during his period of exchange. Bill came back to NZ for the International Gathering in 2005. He is a great correspondent who contributes regularly to this magazine with interesting articles and wonderful photographs.

Ten years on.

“As we head towards the end of 2012, it is almost a decade since David and myself visited New Zealand as "youngish" First Lighters from Lochaber. I think we both look back on our First Light exchange with many fond memories and are still very thankful to the many Cameron's who made our time in the land of the long white cloud so memorable.

Teaching at Lochaber High continues to keep me busy during term time. It's great to see so many young people progress through the school and go on to achieve great success in their further studies and into professions.

Over the past year I have been fortunate in travelling to a number of European countries during the summer months, as well as a few large cycle trips across Scotland, including another visit to the St. Kildan archipelago. I hope to undertake some restoration work on this remote Scottish island next summer, involving the preservation of the vernacular architecture left behind when the community left in 1930.

I continue to develop a keen interest in our clans shared history. At the moment I am in the process of researching and recording some of the ancient head stones located within the Cameron graveyards found in remote parts of Lochaber. The first Gaelic inscribed stone dates from 1820 and is discussed further in this edition of the newsletter.

I look forward to helping the First Light scheme continue in both New Zealand and Lochaber in the years ahead.”



Bill holding up Cameron Jigsaw in front of Achnacarry 2004



First Lighters at Lochiel's funeral 2004. Bill, Florence (David's mum), David, the editor and Astie

In many parts of the Highlands and Islands people still go and wander quietly amongst 'the stones'. The stones are of course headstones. The rock inscribed epitaphs to departed family, friends, long deceased ancestors and members of the local community.

Over the past few years I have visited many rural sites in Lochaber where both simple and ornate Cameron headstones date back to the 17th century and beyond. There are of course countless anonymous stones, offering no record of a life lived, only a boulder as a marker upon the earth.

One stone in the old Cameron graveyard in Glen Nevis offers an interesting insight into life in Lochaber in the 1820's. The graveyard is known in Gaelic as Tom-eas-an-t' slinean. Translated in to English as the knoll of the waterfall of the shoulder.

The stone is inscribed Gaelic. It reads in English as 'In memorium to Alasdair Cameron, who lived in the red house in Ballachulish. Died on the second day of the first month of autumn (August) 1820. Aged three twenty years and twelve.

It is quite unusual to see a solely Gaelic inscribed stone in Lochaber, as many only include a short Gaelic blessing at the bottom of the stone. Also, the way in which Alasdair's passing is recorded within the context of the seasons gives us an insight as to how the community lived in tune with nature's passage of time.

Reading the stone we can only imagine who Alasdair, or Alexander as he might have been called was? We can surmise that his first language would have been Gaelic. Born in 1758, not long after the 1745 Jacobite Rising at near by Glenfinnan. He would no doubt have witnessed great change in Lochaber with the demise of the traditional clan system that had existed for centuries, to a new, and possibly uncertain way of life.

We don't know why Alasdair was laid to rest in Glen Nevis, particularly as he resided in Ballachulish some twenty plus miles away? It could be that he, like many of the other Camerons within this almost hidden enclosure beneath Ben Nevis had long established connections with Glen Nevis.



Alasdair Cameron's gravestone

An unbroken connection continues right up to the present day with Camerons still living in the Glen.

Still Standing

In memory of the old Cameron stones of Lochaber.

“Generations have gathered up there now, our own folk beneath the Ben, there you'll find them waiting still standing in the glen.

A few remain still standing, their names read proud and tall, while others are now mossy, nameless blank and small.

Yet what about the unnamed, the unknown still standing there, they are in fact our own folk, no cairn or cross to bear.

Clothed in autumn blankets, laid down from up above, snow capped in mid winter, kept warm in lichen glove.

Still standing there together, quietly gathered in the glen, all those stones are our folk, Cameron kin and men.”

(This poem by Bill was published in 'Camerons Remember' 2004)



Aonaibh ri Cheile The Back Page



A Happy Christmas and New Year to you all



The EC meeting in Turangi

Denis C, Colin C, Don C, Alison J, Valmar C, Jean B, Helen S, Joy C, Tanya C, Trish T, Joy C, Valerie G, Elaine C, John G, Ruth C, Mike T, John C, Nick C, Rob C, Fraser C and Neil C. (inset - taking photo - Catherine Cameron)



Hororata Games. Rex Tarbotton, Ngaire Power, Rae Magson, Rowan Cameron & Pat Tarbotton

Photo: Graeme Cameron



At the Turakina Kirkin O' the Tartan
Top: Noble Hanley addresses the haggis
Below: Isaac Grant admires the banners.

Photos: Tracey Grant



Photo: Shona Wallace

Robert Colville addresses the haggis at Hawera



Don and Rob Cameron at Upper Hutt



(Vivienne McConnell Memorial)



(See page 7)



The morning after the EC meeting in Turangi



New members Nadine and Wade Martin and son Trent (5) at the Auckland Games



Tossing the caber