



Cameron

The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc.



Vol 57 No 4
August
2023



Reflection of the Glenfinnan Monument on Loch Shiel

Photo: Bill Cameron



Addressing the Haggis at the Clan Donald Dinner.

Photo: Bryan Haggitt

“Cameron”

is the magazine of the
Clan Cameron Association of New Zealand Inc.

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A Message from our Commissioner...

Naumai haere Mai, Failte, Welcome

When our Scottish ancestors came to live here they brought with the love and celebration of the New Year. Hogmanay is what the Scots call New Year's Eve - 31 December - the big night that marks the arrival of the new year. According to Visit Scotland, its origins reach back to the celebration of the winter solstice among the Vikings with wild parties in late December. We even get two public holidays in January to start the calendar year!

We have just passed the winter solstice in the Southern Hemisphere and we are celebrating Matariki, which is also commemorates the start of the journey out of winter. It's a time for great reflection and appreciation, to think of what we have inherited from those who have gone before and what we will pass on as our legacy.

We are very lucky to enjoy our Scottish Heritage. Recently it was great to join Clan Cameron Manawatu at their very enjoyable annual dinner. Special thanks to Russell and team for creating such a good evening. The following weekend a table of Camerons attended the Clan Donald dinner in Auckland, enjoying the hospitality and friendship of one of the great Highland clans. In the following morning the Kirkin' of the Tartan was held at St Andrews First Presbyterian Church on Constitution Hill in Auckland. Here the Clans gathered to celebrate the tartan and energy of Scotland. Most recently, I was able to attend a history talk on General Duncan Cameron at the Papakura Museum. In all of these events people were gathering to spend time together, celebrate our customs and learn of our heritage. They were also and celebrating our hopes and aspirations for our future. Special thanks to you all for your interest and support of Clan Cameron.

We have much to celebrate and be proud of. Special greetings to you and your family at this time of New Year.

Mānawatia a Matariki

To honour, acknowledge and welcome Matariki.

Aonaibh ri Cheile

Dale Cameron Bailey

Clan Cameron Gathering. Achnacarry, Scotland.

August 1st/4th 2024

Accommodation is often difficult in Fort William at that time of the year so early booking is essential. It would be nice to have a strong representation from NZ.



Next Magazine Deadline is 15 Sept 2023

Printed By

Group Travel to Scotland for the 2024 Gathering *by Dale Bailey*

I have been in liaison with a recommended travel agent in Auckland about providing travel support to Scotland next year. He has advised if we are to get 10 or more travellers, leaving on the same day out of Auckland we can get a group deal. People are able to travel back on their own route and timetable, allowing people to do their own thing.

It is likely for the group to work you will need to be able to leave ex Auckland on or about Thursday 25th July 2024.

This will allow the group to get to Fort William ahead of the 1st August start date to the reunion.

The agent is also available to organise individual bookings if you don't want to travel in the group. I will need to know who is interested by the end of the month. Our agent is indicating return economy airfares should be within the \$3500 to \$5000 range. Advantages of a group booking are a good price and delayed payment.

Here are the details of the agent I have been speaking with, he comes highly recommended.

Antony Myers

Worldwide Travel Broker

021 759 555 <http://thetravelbrokers.co.nz/antonymyers/>

Please let me know if you want to be part of the group arrangement.

Dale

Let Dale know, also, if you are going to the Gathering independently. We may be asked to provide an item for the ceilidh and it would be nice to have your ideas for a suitable Kiwi item. We would be able to have a few rehearsals before departure.

The Highlands: So Much to See and Enjoy *by Sandi Cameron.*

Visitscotland.com is an excellent resource to use if you plan to travel to Scotland for the Clan Cameron International Gathering August 1st to 4th, 2024.

The site has a wealth of information related to "things to see." For instance, when showcasing the Highlands, they begin, "Explore the mysterious Loch Ness, pass through the Cairngorms National Park, marvel at iconic castles on the Isle of Skye, witness dolphins frolicking off the Moray Speyside coast, walk up Britain's highest peak, Ben Nevis, in Lochaber, or explore the rugged coastline of Caithness."

You can explore facilities for over-night accommodations, tourist information, restaurants, historic and cultural exploration, geographical wonders, and so much more.

For instance, if you're interested in Living History Museums, you can find information about the Skye Museum of Island Life. Situated on the dramatic hilltop by Uig, let this museum "take you back in time with its authentic thatched cottages and old tools. The museum offers visitors a unique experience of what island life was like 100 years ago for 19th century crofters."

Another site worth visiting, not far from Achnacarry, is the Inverness Museum and Art Gallery.

"First opened in 1826, this museum provides a stimulating insight into the culture and history of the Scottish

Scapa Flow, Orkney *by Geoff Tyler*

By Editor: I have been to Scapa Flow in a Royal Navy ship and thought this email to me might be of interest to anyone going to Scotland.

This email is coming to you while on a train traveling south from Thurso at the northern tip of Scotland, to Inverness and then Perth and Glasgow. I'm travelling with my brother and yesterday and the day before were spent on Orkney Isle. We took a ferry to the island of Hoy and spent a few hours in the refurbished museum Scapa Flow at Lyness.

You may have visited Scapa Flow while in the Navy and as well you may have visited while on holiday. The exhibition was excellent, having been refurbished in 2022 and the huge diagrams illustrating the way the base was utilised both at sea and on land were fascinating. As well there were large display posters telling us about the fortunes of individual ships and events occurring mainly during WW1. The Vanguard blew up while at anchor and the Hampshire hit a mine outside the Western entrance to Scapa Flow. There was also a complete outline of the events recorded in hours and minutes of the engagement between Jellicoe and Beatty's combined forces with the Scheer of the German navy.

The museum is housed in buildings containing the boilers and pumps used for the refuelling of tankers.

The extensive defence batteries employed what was called a firing barrage when bombers were approaching. This was effective and after losses suffered by the Germans, bombing raids were ceased.

We spent the next day viewing the neolithic remains at Skara Brae and Ness of Brodgar. Quite mind-blowing to see the relative sophistication of life 3500 years ago. They lived in plentiful times and painted the interior walls, created unique styles of pottery, and carved friezes on to shelf faces.

Highlands. From geology and archaeology to the dramatic story of the Jacobites, the museum is full of interesting exhibitions, displays, workshops and recitals."

Many inexpensive or "free" attractions can be enjoyed. Go to <https://www.visitscotland.com/things-to-do/attractions/> free, to discover the choices you have to cut costs, but still quite enjoy your holiday.

You'll have a full three days at the Gathering, but should enjoy many other aspects of the Highlands, as well.

Sandi Cameron, who has served as Rocky Mountain Branch (USA)'s President for two decades, is stepping down to make way for the next generation of leadership. Sandi has also been newsletter editor of the Rocky Mountain Piper for longer still.

"I wish to thank each of you for your commitment to our Rocky Mountain region and for giving me the privilege of serving as your president. I am confident that our region will remain strong and united in the upcoming years as its members continue to share Clan Cameron's dynamic history, our fascinating cultural heritage, close bonds with one another and interest in all things Scottish."

If you travel to Scotland, you will know the value of our greatly admired clan, as the mention of it brings a smile to many whom you meet! Certainly, if you attend the 2024 CC International Gathering, it will be obvious how very, very special our clan is. I trust that you and your families will continually celebrate your Cameron (and septs) Scottish heritage now and always.

Aonaibh ri Cheile!

Sandi Cameron"

From the Branches....

Auckland by Rob Cameron

The first event I should discuss is the Executive AGM. I travelled down to Masterton taking Bryan and Jenny Haggitt and we stayed in Carterton. It was great to catch up with everyone over the weekend topped off by a great dinner on Saturday evening. Thanks has to go to Rob and Graeme setting up a brilliant evening. It was great to see the Blenheim artifacts all together in one place. It amazes me that most of these items are in excellent condition after 180 years. I also got to have a quick play of the Blenheim pipes after Greg Wilson reconditioned the chanter reed staples back to playing condition.

My Parents travelled up from Blenheim, my father was born in Masterton and his grandfather had farmed in the area. My Aunt Sally Cameron (last surviving sister of my grandfather), travelled down from Waipukurau and as a family group, she showed us where the old family farms were in Te Ore Ore and Rangitumau. The Rangitumau farm has changed quite a bit and it looks the old woolshed that was shared between 2 farms is no longer there.

The Te Ore Ore farmhouse is still there and looks much the same as when it was occupied by my great great grandparents. The house is not far from the Te Ore Ore Marae, where one of the Māori chiefs named my great grandfather Ronald Stewart Cameron's sister Hinehaone Coralie Cameron when she was born in 1904.

Our trip back ended up going through Hastings due to flooding around Marton which ended up being a bit longer than expected.

I helped Dale take down the Cameron information slides and artifacts at the closing of the John Kinder House Scots Wha Hae exhibition. This was a good exhibit as it had many people during the month it was scheduled for then was extended for a few more weeks.

Auckland branch member Gina Cameron and I performed with City of Sails Pipe Band at the Last Night of the Proms with the Auckland Symphony Orchestra at the Bruce Mason Centre over June 24th and 25th. It was new experience for me being stand in Pipe Major plus my first performance with an orchestra.

The Scottish Clans Association also set up Kirkin' o' the Tartan service at St Andrews Church on June 25th which had several Auckland Cameron's attend including Dale, and Bryan Haggitt who gave a reading.

As part of the Scottish Clans Association I have been working with Lena Orum and Roger Matheson to organise a Clan Alley at next year's Pipe band Nationals competition on behalf of the RNZPBA Auckland Centre. This is something that our Auckland branch will be participating in, hopefully we can get a reasonable collection of clan tents to participate over the 2 day competition.

Recently, Dale and I attended a discussion on Sir Duncan Cameron held by Iain Wakefield who currently lives in Cameron's old house in Drury. Iain has put several years into researching and is the world's leading authority in Sir Duncan Cameron. Iain's discussion went into Duncan's upbringing in a military family, plus his military successes prior to his arrival in New Zealand. Duncan Cameron is a controversial character during the New Zealand Wars on the side of the Crown, however it was interesting learning of his part in history.

Bryan Haggitt is pursuing the next steps for First Light. We have Sarah McQueen confirmed as the next candidate to take up the exchange. Now we know she can take this commitment, we will have to work quickly as she will be looking at travelling in October (see Bryan's First Light Report).

The committee is also continuing to plan our Annual Dinner which is to be held on September 16th at The Parnell.



Ticket prices will be \$65 per ticket, and it is gearing up to be a great night of entertainment. We invite anyone who is interested in attending, please let me or Neil know. Flyer enclosed to Auckland members and on the CCNZ website.

Manawatu by Anne Walker

Clan Cameron Manawatu held their annual dinner on Saturday 19th June at Wharerata Conference Centre, Massey University. This year the Branch dinner was attended by more than 40 members, friends and supporters. We also welcomed members from Wellington-Wairarapa and Auckland branches, and all had an enjoyable evening. It was great to catch up with old friends over pre-dinner drinks and dinner, and to hear from Dale Cameron Bailey, our President and Commissioner when he presented highlights from Lochaber.

We enjoyed the piping of our young member, Patrick Coogan. Patrick pipes in the Manawatu Scottish Number 2 Band and has had some success as a solo piper in competitions. This year Patrick is in his final year at Feilding High School, where he had added responsibility as Head Boy. It was great to give Patrick the opportunity to pipe for our dinner. He welcomed guests with piping on arrival, piped the haggis into the room, and entertained us by piping for the first time the Blenheim Pipes after dinner. As a descendent of Donald Cameron, who bought the pipes to New Zealand in 1840, it was a memorable occasion for Patrick.

Although our guest speaker had cancelled at the last moment due to Covid, Bruce Cameron filed the speakers' slot at short notice with an overview of his collection of books about Lochaber, and Scots history in New Zealand. Many of these books are no longer in print, so it was interesting to see such a good private collection.

Clan Cameron Manawatu are planning a Spring event for mid-September, and more details will be available in due course.



Hawke's Bay by Hamish Cameron

Practically everyone in Hawke's Bay is fighting their own battles this winter, resulting in very little interaction as a group.

If the "experts" are correct, then its about now – in the depths of winter – that ones moods are more likely to slide into depressions, but not worth focussing on as its really only a part of the yearly cycle. However, I reckon H.B has become painfully aware that the market for tons of silt and tangled fencing wire has "crashed"..... Maybe the offer of millions of tons of the stuff for free --- "come and help yourself" was the wrong way to "shift it". So I'm enlightened by these "experts" to learn that its "mid-winters" fault, and not enveloping silt and bureaucratic inactivity, that's leading folk into despair.....

I had foolishly believed that the loss of ones home, livelihood, access etc would invariably be a bit of a worry..... But I'm really comforted by the "experts" to know these depressive thoughts are only fleeting I bet the Banks are relieved !!

Enough of reality – now lets focus on our piece of positive news.

As it is Hawke's Bays turn to host the National A.G.M in 2024, our thoughts are turning to where, When, and How this will happen. Luckily, Dale our National President, with his many contacts, has secured the H.B Club in Napier as a venue for May 4th next year.

Sorry about the opening of Duck Shooting. Probably won't matter for H.B though

with our luck of late Saturday will dawn bright and clear with a cloud ceiling of about 2 miles !



Bay of Plenty by Tanya Cameron

Clan Cameron BoP have not been very active this year, other than to attend the Paeroa Highland Games in February, host Finlay Cameron and the National AGM in Masterton in May.

There was a good turnout for the National and my resignation as National Secretary and Facebook Administrator was accepted. I was given some lovely flowers in vases for my 12 years of service. With the weather as it was, it took me 11 hours to get there and 13 hours to return.

The Clan Cameron BoP AGM will be held at 11:00am Sunday 20th August at Classic Flyers, 9 Jean Batten Drive, Mount Maunganui.

We hope to see you there.

Canterbury by Rae Magson

Not much to report from Clan Cameron in this area, just getting through the winter in the best way we can. Guess it will soon be time to be thinking of the Annual General Meeting, we are fortunate to have Nick Cameron to keep us up to date.



First Light News

by Bryan Haggitt—First Light Convenor



Some excellent news – Sarah McQueen's PhD has been confirmed and she will graduate from Otago University on 19 August. Her family – including parents Duncan and Jean and grandfather Neil Cameron – will be travelling to Dunedin for her capping.

This confirms Sarah as our outgoing First Lighter. Sarah is contracted to work for her tutor until 9 October and is very keen to head to Scotland soon after that. She is about to advise the date she would like to leave and we will arrange a flight for her to suit.

There had been a possibility of a full time job for her in New York, something that could have upset the Exchange, but that hasn't materialised. Instead, Sarah now has the opportunity to explore possibilities at Edinburgh, Glasgow or St Andrews Universities - this First Light Exchange could be ideal for her! And, if work becomes available over there, she could well be still in Scotland and able to attend the 2024 Gathering.

Dr Roddy Cameron, the Clan's Commissioner for Scotland has been advised as have Finlay and his dad, Ken.

Regarding Sandy, who we hope the Clan in Scotland sends out next summer, he has sent me his extremely impressive CV. A mechanical engineer, Sandy has indicated that he is very keen to further his engineering knowledge. To this end we are approaching engineering firms to find him employment from early 2024. Anyone having engineering contacts is invited to contact me and I will forward his CV.

Whilst he says engineering furtherance is his main aim, I don't imagine Auckland President Rob and some of the other top pipers here, will allow Sandy to neglect his pipes.

Sandy graduated MEng from University of Glasgow in June 2020 and is presently employed by an international building engineering firm in Newcastle. His MEng thesis will intrigue fellow pipers – from Sandy's CV:

"A self-initiated investigation was conducted into the contribution of moisture content and stress to the degradation of Highland Bagpipe chanter reeds. A variety of materials testing methods were implemented to characterise the natural fibre material. The overall hypothesis of the project was that woodwind reeds are seen to possess an optimal moisture content at which they perform most effectively."



Some photos of our next First Lighter, Sarah McQueen



Coming Events

Sunday 24 August 2023

Bay of Plenty Branch AGM

Classic Flyers, 9 Jean Batten Drive, Mount Maunganui. 11 am.

Come and support Tanya in a social event in an interesting venue.

Saturday 9 September 2023

Executive Council Meeting

Parklands Motor Lodge Conference Room, Turangi

Saturday 16 September 2023

Clan Cameron Auckland Annual Dinner

The Parnell, 10-20 Gladstone Road, Parnell. 6pm for 6.30pm.

\$65 Great company and great entertainment.

Details in Flyer enclosed for Auckland members, or on CCNZ website, or contact Neil for an emailed Flyer.

Saturday 11 November 2023

Hororata Highland Games

The Cameron tent will be there.
www.hororata.org.nz

Sat / Sun 15/16 March 2024

National Pipe Band Championships

Auckland.
The Cameron Tent will be there.

Further details at a later date.

Saturday 4 May 2024

Clan Cameron NZ Gathering and AGM

Hawkes Bay Club, Napier.

1st to 4th August 2024

Clan Cameron Gathering at Achnacarry

A very full programme is being arranged which will include all the traditional gathering events - plus a lot more.



Anne Walker Long and Nigel Long

Manawatu Branch

Annual Dinner

photos: Dale Bailey



Bruce Cameron speaks on Lochaber



Catherine and Rob Cameron (Masterton)



Graeme Cameron (Wellington) and Patrick Coogan



Elizabeth Mason-Hillier, Dion Birridge, Isabel Mason-Hillier (aka Isabel the Kiltmaker), Ross Cameron, Susan Cameron, and John Annabell



Patrick Coogan plays the Blenheim Pipes



Barbara Barber, Margaret Coogan, Catherine Coogan, and Matthew Coogan



Elaine Bailey sports the Erracht tartan



Gabriella Turner and Bev Morrissey



John Annabell



Patrick Coogan pipes guests into the dinner on arrival

Kirkin' o' the Tartan - St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Auckland



Photo: Hillary Hakaraia



Photos: Dale Bailey

At the St Andrews First Presbyterian Church two commemorative windows celebrate migrant ships in the early days of Auckland. This church is on Constitution Hill site of the Parliament when Auckland was the capital and adjacent to Old Government House.

One of the beautiful windows at St Andrews First Presbyterian Church celebrates the Duchess of Argyll. (Left)

This was the first planned shipment of free UK migrants to Auckland in 1842. Arriving in Auckland harbour, disembarking via ships boats on Mechanics Bay at low tide, the boats could not reach the shore. Passengers had to unload their boxes and bundles and carry them through mud and water to land. They were then crowded into 30 raupo huts along with passengers off the Jane Gifford which arrived the same day.

On board a Cameron family Cameron, Richard 35, Margaret 32 Janet 13 Matthew 8, Ann 2 Died on Board (July 26th 1842)

Full passenger list here:

<https://www.geni.com/.../New-Zealand-Settler-Ships.../30144>

A second ship is commemorated in the windows of St Andrews in Auckland, the clipper City of Auckland, built explicitly for the United Kingdom to Auckland trade. It was built in 1869 and first arrived in New Zealand in 1870. Built of teak it was equipped with a steam driven crane for loading and unloading freight. During the 1870s about a third of immigrants were from Scotland. (Left Below)



A fine display of Clan Tartans

Photo: Dale Bailey

Down Memory Lane with Donald Cameron – Lochaber's first Commando (1923 – 2015)

With thanks to the West Highland Museum, Richard Sidgwick, and Michal McDade for permission to reprint this article.

Donald was one of the first Commandos to train at CBTC Achnacarry during World War II. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth Donald's family has kindly loaned us photographs, his medals, his green beret, and other items for display at the West Highland Museum throughout 2023. His family are rightly very proud of Donald but have noted that he rarely spoke about his war service during his lifetime. The first part of this blog is taken from an interview with Donald in 2013. It is re-published with permission of the author and editor, Richard Sidgwick. The second part of this blog features a poem written by Donald's grandson.



The objects will be displayed in the museum's Commando Exhibition from 24 June 2023 - 31 Dec 2023.

Part I

Donald, tell me of your early life and childhood memories.

I was born on the croft at Swordland, on the north shore of Loch Morar, one of a family of eight – four boys and four girls and I was the third oldest. My father's people came from Roy Bridge and mother belonged to Tarbet – her people have moved there in the 1880s from the head of Loch Nevis, at Finiskaig or thereabouts. The croft was productive – everybody had hens and a house cow beside a few other cows, and the sheep, of course. There was a good garden that gave us potatoes and vegetables and of course there was always fish in the loch. The family have been crofters there since 1905 and they survived an outbreak of TB that killed all but one of a neighbouring family.

Shopping came from the wee shop in Morar or Mallaig; mother sent a note of what we wanted, and we paid at the end of the month. There was no electricity, of course, so we had tilleys and paraffin and peats. Breakfast was porridge and, if you were lucky, an egg or something; we made our own bread and there were always scones or oatcakes and a piece for lunch at school.

I first went to school over the hill at Tarbet, about a mile away. My birthday was in June, but I went to school early Easter; if the numbers fell below three, the school would have closed, so I went early when I was four and, there were two sisters, the Misses MacMillan from Uist who were the teachers. I remember the Mass was once a fortnight in summer and once a month in the winter.

A big treat each year was a children's party in the summer in Morar given by Mrs Shaw Stewart from Traigh; all the children would be asked – from Morar, Bracora, Meoble, Tarbet and all the outlying places – and we had ice cream and cakes and treats. We never really saw much of the Lovat family who were our landlords; they would come over in the summer on holiday and maybe to the hotel on rent day – the rents were low – maybe £2/10 – a half year. The family were always well regarded.

So, Donald, at 14 it was out into the wide world.

Well not really. After leaving school, I worked at Meoble, just across the loch, which was owned then by Sir Berkeley Sheffield. It was mostly deer; there were five stalkers, Sandy MacDonald was head stalker, his brother, John, Ronald MacDonald, Angus Gillies and a man, MacDonell. There were also three boatmen, gardeners, domestic staff and a handyman or two. I stayed there until I was 17 when I joined up – Meoble was taken over by the army – and I joined up on 14th May 1941 in what was called the General Corps and went off to Plymouth for three months basic training – the first time I'd ever been away from Lochaber! After that I was drafted into the 2nd Warwickshire Regt. And I don't think there was another Scotch boy in the whole squad. I had five or six months and at Company Details it came out that they were wanting volunteers for the commandos and the captain said to me 'On you go, you'll be right up in your own part of the country'. Ach well, I thought, nothing ventured, nothing gained, so off I went and found myself at Spean station with a full pack. Eight or nine of us got off the train – all English lads – and they must have known we were coming because there was a man coming to us. The outcome was that we marched in full kit to Achnacarry.

This was the Spring of 1942, and we were the first intake, no Nissen huts yet and we were mostly in tents. I remember the CO. Col. Vaughan and a training officer called Lieutenant Leach; we called him Spider Leach because he could climb anything! We went through the whole two-month training schedule, the assault course, armed and unarmed combat, canoes, opposed landings, endless exercise out on the hills; I can remember walking from Achnacarry through Glen Pean and on to Meoble from where I could see home just across the loch before getting the train back from Inverailort. And of course, there was weapons training with mortars, grenades and small arms and Bren guns. I can remember crossing the river on ropes and more than once seeing a man go in with full pack. After passing out, we went to Inverary to train for D Day; the beaches were more like Normandy and we practised with landing craft; we were stationed briefly at Liberton, outside Edinburgh before heading for Littlehampton and the invasion of Sicily.

We landed in July 1943, in the southeast corner of the island and the plan was to prepare for the invasion of Italy and to knock out the airfields that were attacking shipping in the Med. I was in the 9th Commando – the Germans were good soldiers, and they had much better equipment than us – it was tough. We didn't have much heavy equipment, a few jeeps, Bren gun carriers and some six-pounders.

Donald continues to tell us about his war time experiences.

After Sicily had fallen, we had a spell of recuperation in camp at Keighley in Yorkshire and then off to a farm called Borland, near Dumfries, we didn't have a billet, just tents, training for two months over the winter of '43/'44. We went down to Sevenoaks and in June 1944, we landed on Sword Beach, and we pretty much fought our way to Northwestern Germany at the end of the war, all the way from Arromanches to Petershagen, near Hanover. We had big casualties on D Day, whatever the depth of the water, you couldn't hesitate. A lot of men drowned, imagine having an 80 lb mortar plate on your back plus all your kit and even if the landing craft was in 20 feet of water, you were straight out. You could be talking to a man one minute and, whoof, he was dead. Men were going down in dozens as we fought towards the gun positions, we were to destroy.

Sometime after Arromanches, we were withdrawn and sent for parachute training to Clay Cross and Ringway for the attempt in September 1944 to capture the bridges at Arnhem. I was one of the paratroopers who were dropped in – the boys in gliders had a hell of a time. It was nine days of fighting, and I was one of the lucky ones who survived and managed to withdraw, otherwise I'd have finished up as a POW.

We very near did it and it was the Americans that let us down. We carried on up through Belgium into Holland where I was wounded; we were just battling on, and it was a place called Hocksoff that I was wounded; it was an airburst, shrapnel from a German shell and it went through my tin hat into my head. I was treated in a field hospital and had about two months convalescence behind the lines. I rejoined my unit after about two months off – there was no home leave then – and we pushed on till the end of the war. The winter of '44/'45 was the coldest I can ever remember; life was just as bad for the enemy and civilians suffered awfully.



Assault landing under 'enemy' fire, Commando Basic Training Centre, Achnacarry,

When I was back with my unit, we were to go to Kentucky in America to invade Japan, but the Americans dropped the bombs, and that was it. After that, they sent us out to Palestine; we were supposed to be peace keeping, but I'll tell you this, it wasn't very safe there and it was a relief to be demobbed in 1946. I got a suit in a box, a coat, a hat, a pair of shoes, and that was it. My brother Angus had been in the RAF and John, the oldest was in the Royal Engineers and they were home too. I went to Swordlands, but there wasn't enough work, so I came to Fort William and stayed at Annat, in digs in one of the prefabs and got a job in the Lime Quarry for a while. I also did a season working for Mrs Spence in Oban – she had three pleasure boats for trippers, and I'd used boats all my life.

Donald, for most of the time I've known you, you've been a shepherd. When did that start?

I got a job with Lochiel as a shepherd in 1951. It was what I knew best in civilian life, and I lived at Strathan house in a bothy. There was Jimmy Henderson, Robert Wright, Sandy Kennedy and a man called MacVarish, about 15 shepherds altogether, including Glen Loy and Uachan. Quite a community, the school was still open, and the ex-army ambulance came up the loch each week with supplies. If we were gathering and there was a lot of extra shepherds, Lexie Mackintosh would come up and cook for us all. In those days, the estate had a pedigree Jersey herd, about 12 cows and a bull and a cross highland suckler herd and an Aberdeen Angus bull and they were summered up at Glendessary. Between Caonich and Kinlochmorar there were about 3,000 widders, some cheviots, some blackface; they were great wool producers sold at three years old – big strong sheep.

I married when I was there, in '53; Emma came from East Weymss in Fife and she was a hardy woman, and I met her when I went to St Andrews to see a man called Duncan MacGillivray. He had been at Strathan and had very good dogs but didn't like Lochaber and went to St Andrews and I went to see him because he had an awful good bitch, and I wanted a pup – and that was how I met Emma! We lived at Toloman until 1955, when I moved to Blarachaoruinn which Donald Glen Nevis rented from the Forestry Commission; I was there

for nearly 20 years until most of the hill ground was planted.

We moved to Caol in 1973 and, when Brooks left Mamore there was a lot of sheep left on Achintee and I spent a winter gathering what I could – Steall and places away up to near Spean Bridge and young Donald Glen Nevis – Do-Do, to all of us – and I went into partnership until he moved to Dingwall.

Listen to our podcast if you would like hear Donald speak about his life and wartime experiences.

Part II

The following poem was written by Donald's grandson,

Michael McDade and read at his funeral service. It is reproduced here by kind permission of Michael.

My Granda

My granda, my hero. A hardy old man.
A Shepherd all his days, sometimes needs a hand
Please granda please, can't we wait 'til it's dark
I can't be seen chasing sheep round the high school carpark.

Right you grab your coat and put on these wellies
Get into that pickup, don't care if its smelly.
Now run round over that way, they're going through this gate
Now smile for the camera and wave to your mates.

My Granda the veteran, signed up just 17
Don't think we could imagine the things that he seen
From Sword beach to Arnhem and the river Rhine bridge
He fought in these places still merely a kid.

Commando training at Achnacarry, Toughest training around
Beach landings, rope bridges under live firing rounds
He'd walk Loch Arkaig to Swordlands, with coal in a sack
I'd still be there now getting this on my back.

My granda the shepherd, one of thee best around
We'd be out gathering sheep on the toughest of ground
See that one in the middle, it'll run when were down
Now you stay on that side, don't let it get round.

There are 500 sheep here I'm getting confused
That sheep that he showed me I'm starting to lose
White fleeces, black faces, they all look the same
Its going to get past me and I'll be to blame.

When we got down, boy did that sheep go
Over the burn, up a cliff face, my granda in tow
He'd headed that sheep off in the blink of an eye
That sheep's flight for freedom has just waved goodbye.

My Granda, my hero, till we meet again.

Scottish Heraldry and the Clans

Dr Joseph J Morrow CVO CBE KC LLD FRSE, Rt Hon. Lord
Lyon King of Arms

Re-produced with kind permission of the Lord Lyon.

Introduction

In my view, it is important we start to put some specific and modern structure around Clan life, not only at home (in Scotland) but in the diaspora. The idea of a 'Clan' evokes a myriad of images in folks' minds – particularly those of Scottish descent. Some of them may be positive, others may be negative. I decided that I wanted to start by reflecting on the question "What is a Clan?"

What is a Clan?

Broadly speaking, in Scotland there emerged a tradition of kinship, territorial area and military groupings which formed the structure of Clans, with jurisdictional power within that Clan from a Chief.

The system was abated following the failing of the 1745 Jacobite Rising, but it is clear to me that the Clan understanding serves a key role organisationally between Scotland and the Scottish diaspora. I am sure there will be no secret amongst you that there is a great deal of nonsense spoken about the legal and historic part of Scottish history which the Clans form.

What is a Clan? / What is *not* a Clan?

This comes into focus whenever there is a discussion about what or what is *not* a Clan. For example, can "the Smiths" ever be a Clan? From my point of view, not everyone of Scottish descent is a member of a Clan.

It seems clear to me from history that a Clan is either a Highland or Borders concept. The concept of a "Clan" has no real link with the majority of Scots who are from Lowland Families. Just think of the great House of Bruce – Lord Elgin would never describe his family as a "Clan".

Many of you will be aware that the Gaelic word for "Clan" derives from "children" or "progeny". However, the Scottish concept goes further and involves some understanding of Territorial Area and the fact that Territorial Area and Family come under the Patriarchy of the Chief.

A much-quoted definition is found in Alexander Nisbet's 1722 book, *A System of Heraldry*. He defines a Clan as:

a social group consisting of an aggregate of distinct erected families actually descended, or accepting themselves as descendants of a common ancestor, and which has been received by the Sovereign through its Supreme Officer of Honour, the Lord Lyon, as an honourable community whereof all of the members on establishing right to, or receiving fresh grant of, personal hereditary nobility will be awarded Arms as determinate or indeterminate Cadets both as may be of the Chief Family of the Clan.

There are various debates about the definition of a Clan, and where you lie on the line of that debate will determine what view or strength of expression you offer.

However, this is nothing new, and the first mention of groupings of people who could be regarded as "Clans" is in an Act of the Scottish Parliament dated 1587, stating–

"Held at Edinburgh upon the 29 July 1587 for the

quietening and keeping in obedience of the disorderly persons, inhabitants of the borders, highlands and islands".

It is clear that the strong debate around the subject of what constitutes a Clan is nothing new.

There was a strong push in the 19th century to make sense of this history and, for me, while Heraldry was a much older subject, there was seen to be a role for Heraldry in the recognition of the Clan; and that role was particularly focused on the Office of the Lord Lyon.

Charges, Cadency, Blazoning and Additaments

In Heraldry, from the 12th Century, "Charges" were the means of identification, the charges being woven or sewn into the surcoats of knights to show who they were. This is still the principle today with relation to the Clans – a Chief, being the head of the Clan, has a full range of heraldic additaments in the achievement: a shield, a helmet, mantling, a wreath, a crest and significantly a compartment and supporters and, where appropriate, a coronet; and along with this can go badges, banners and flags. There are also cadency marks of difference which show where a member may be in relation to his or her seniority within a Clan.

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs was founded in 1952 by Diana Hay, 23rd Countess of Erroll, who at the time held the title of Lord High Constable of Scotland. The Council elects at regular intervals a Convener to preside over them.

Blazon: *Azure, three eagle's feathers Or surmounted at the base of a hurt environed of a circlet Or.*

Badge: *Three eagle's feathers Or surmounted at the base of a hurt environed of a circlet Or charged at the option of the Petitioners, with the words "Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs".*

The Council considers matters affecting Scottish Chiefs and the Clans and names which they represent (it should be noted that not all families and Clan names are represented by the Council) and submits views and other matters of interest to Government and other statutory authorities. The Council helps to establish a common ground of understanding amongst Clans and families of Scotland. It also educates the general public in matters connected to the rights, functions and the historical position of Scottish Chiefs, together with the Clans and names they represent. The Council takes any steps they see fit in order to protect the titles, the armorial bearings or other ensigns of Chiefs from exploitation. Several Chiefs at their own request have been removed as members of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs.

Below are the styles of crest badges for Chiefs, Chieftains and Armigers, with one, two or three eagle's feathers:



Chiefs



Chieftains



Armigers

The Ben Bronze Snowball Run.

By Bill Cameron

Driving up Ben Nevis in a Ford Model T back in May 1911 can now be seen as a pioneering example of motor mountaineering, long before television and online adverts ever existed.

This motoring adventure undertaken by twenty four year old Henry Alexander, the son of a garage owner from Edinburgh was in every sense a product testing and marketing campaign all rolled into one, and played out in front of the press of the day on the slopes of Britain's highest mountain.

The thinking behind it being, if the Model T could take on the rugged terrain of Ben Nevis, then it could deal with anything. And it did. History shows us that not only did Ford cars sell very well across the world, but closer to home, Alexander's Garage in Edinburgh sold many more cars as a result of this successful publicity stunt.

Turn the clock forward one hundred years to May 2011 and eighty eight enthusiastic volunteers would rally once again at the foot of Ben Nevis. This time a Ford Model T would be carried up in parts, then resembled on the summit to commemorate the centenary of Henry Alexander's automotive adventures on Ben Nevis.

I was lucky to be one of those eighty eight volunteers who carried parts of the car up the winding path onto a very cold, blustery and snowy summit. Some amongst the group were lucky enough to have a light item. Myself and three others were saddled with a heavy wooden chassis structure all the way to the summit.

A great deal of comradery was formed on the ascent and descent of the mountain, with members of the group coming from near and far, as well as relatives of Henry Alexander in the form of Mike Munro, Henry's grandson who, himself now a grandfather would help carry parts of the car up on to the summit of Ben Nevis and sit in the reconstructed Model T car with his grandson alongside him at the wheel on the same spot where his own grandfather had sat back in 1911.

With the photographs taken and a small dram to fight off the cold, the car was then taken apart and carried back down the mountain.

Not long after this commemorative carry up the Ben and through a series of coincidences with the redevelopment of Cameron Square. A group of Lochaber people formed what became known as the Ben Bronze Model T group in Fort William. They would meet regularly over the next seven years to organise fund raising activities and generally increase the public awareness of this historical event. The aim of group was

to realise a full size bronze replica of a Ford Model T car at the entrance to Cameron Square, near to where the 1911 event started and finished.

In 2018 the aim was realised with a full size Bronze Model T car being cast at Powderhall foundry in Edinburgh along with a replica of Henry Alexander at the steering wheel.

At six am on the morning of the unveiling back in 2018, I would run from Fort William, up onto the summit of Ben Nevis, and gather a flask full of snow and run back down for the unveiling at eleven o'clock where the snow was scattered on the bonnet to celebrate the event and make the historical connections of the sculpture with the mountain in the the present day.

Every year since the unveiling in May 2018, I have continued to commemorate the anniversary of the Ben Bronze Model T's unveiling in Cameron Square by running up on to the Ben Nevis on the 19th of May and gather a flask full of snow and run back down to scatter the snow on the bonnet of the Ben Bronze Model T. In so doing I hope to keep the historical connection between Henry Alexander's pioneering motor mountaineering on Ben Nevis and the sculpture of the Ben Bronze Model T in Cameron Square.



(More photos on the back page)

Book Review 'Southern Celts'

By Jessie Annabell (Manawatu)

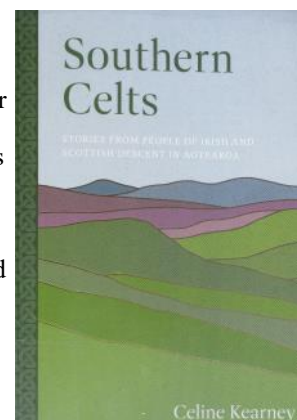
Kearney, Celine, *Southern Celts: Stories from People of Irish and Scottish Descent in Aotearoa*, Mary Egan Publishing, New Zealand, 2023.

When people ask me "Are you Irish?" my stock reply is "Oh, about a few hundred years ago". And they are usually puzzled. Here, the author is the New Zealand granddaughter of three Irish-born grandparents and a PhD recipient for research relating in part to her book, which is largely a transcript of oral history interviews, with only minimal comment and analysis by the author. Those interviewed all have Irish or Scottish connections, and the interviews are arranged under various headings such as business, speaking Gaelic, performing arts,

writing, religion, playing sport, and others.

The ambit of the book is quite broad, it aims to bring together the common heritage and origins of Scots Highlanders and Irish. This is something we Highlanders are all aware of but it's also something we don't pay enough attention to. While I personally was disappointed to find little that was familiar, I am pleased that the comparison of such a vast and important relationship has been attempted.

The other thing about this book that makes me glad is that the author has provided a place for these personal stories to be recorded. Is it time for us to do the same?

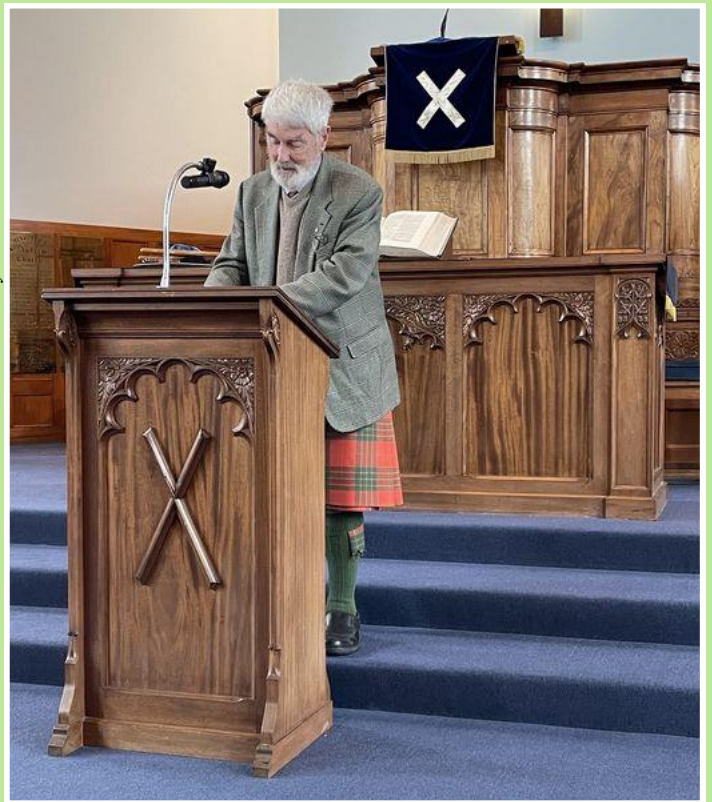




1. Snow gathered from Ben Nevis, May 2023, and placed on the bonnet of the Ben Bronze Model T - connecting the mountain with the history of the Model T advent back in 1911.
2. Freshly gathered snow from Ben Nevis stored in a flask to be taken down to the Model T.
3. The T shirt and flask used every year since the inaugural snowball run up Ben Nevis .
4. Mike Munro, the grandson of Henry Alexander, delivering his address to the assembled crowd after unveiling the sculpture honouring his grandfathers ascent of Ben Nevis in a Ford Model T back in 1911.
5. Members of the Ben Bronze Model T on the morning of the unveiling back in May 2018.



Photos: Dale Bailey



At The Kirkin' o' the Tartan. Left: Dale Bailey, Bryan Haggitt, Cass and Hillary Hakaraia. Right: Bryan reads the lesson.