



Cameron

The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc.

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Guests being piped into our Annual dinner at the historic Hawkes Bay Club by our official Clan Cameron New Zealand pipers Rob Cameron and Nick Cameron and members of the Napier Pipe Band. The replica of the Lockiet Culloden banner, gifted by Clan Cameron Scotland to Clan Cameron NZ flies on the flagpole of the Hawkes Bay Club.

“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

We have just returned from a very successful Annual Gathering in Napier, hosted by the Canterbury branch. It was very special to be able to gather together, hear about what's been happening and acknowledging the service of our people.

Three particular highlights deserve special mention. Firstly, Neil Cameron was appointed Patron of Clan Cameron New Zealand. Neil has made an amazing contribution to our society, resurrecting the Auckland Branch, being our President in Auckland for many years, serving as Commissioner and President of Clan Cameron, holding the first ever International Gathering of Clan Cameron outside of Scotland in Auckland creating the so many issues of the wonderful Cameron newsletter. Neil has been previously awarded a life membership of our society and continues serving as Newsletter Editor and Treasurer of the Auckland branch. Congratulations Neil and thank you for everything you have done.

Secondly, we awarded a life membership to Tanya Cameron. Tanya has been an extraordinary supporter of our society, being our national secretary for over a decade. Tanya also worked hard as our Bay of Plenty President. Special congratulations Tanya.

Thirdly we were thrilled to farewell our latest First Lighter Lochiel Nielsen. Lochiel has recently graduated with a degree in early childhood teaching from UCOL in Palmerston North. She was able to speak to our annual dinner where members wished her all the very best for her travels.

Our annual meeting was also able to approve our new constitution as required by the Incorporated Societies Act. Thank you to Scott Turner, Rob Cameron and Russell Cameron for your hard work on this project.

A special part of the annual dinner was Rob Cameron playing the Blenheim pipes, such a special aspect of our Cameron heritage. Bruce Cameron also had some heritage pipes a 200 year old set made by John Cameron in Edinburgh. These pipes, also played on the evening have been recently restored by Finlay Cameron. What a rich heritage we have.

Thank you to all of our members who work to support Clan Cameron New Zealand.

Aonaibh ri Cheile

Dale Cameron Bailey



Something very special at the weekend. My wonderful cousin Bruce Alex Cameron presented me with his composition 'Dale Cameron Bailey MNZM' at the Clan Cameron NZ annual dinner. This new tune is played on Bruce's 200 year old bagpipes made by a John Cameron of Edinburgh and restored recently by Finlay Cameron.



The Hawkes Bay Club, Napier.

Next Magazine Deadline is 15 July 2025

Printed By

Welcome to the following Members who have recently joined us:

Auckland Branch: Angela Edgington
Jane Hailwood
Christina Ward
Hawkes Bay Branch: Andrew Cameron

St Heliers, Auckland
Te Rapa, Hamilton.
Napier
Porangahau HB

*Ceud Mìle Fáilte One
Hundred Thousand
Welcomes*

David Ian Cameron 1933 – 2025

by Murray Cameron (Auckland Branch).

David Cameron died recently after a long illness, aged 91. His unique and interesting life was celebrated at Northcote with a large turnout of family and friends. He was unanimously acclaimed by all speakers as a gentle, kind man with a great sense of humour, loved by all – this in spite of his life time passion for boxing and wrestling!

David was one of 7 boys being second born after Neil Cameron, the Patron designate of Clan Cameron New Zealand. Whilst David did not participate too much in Clan activities, he was always an avid reader of the NZ Clan Cameron magazine and a proud Cameron.

The Cameron boys were the sons of a Presbyterian minister who spent his early years as a Home Missionary. This meant that life was not easy for the family, with only a modest stipend necessitating a reliance on the home garden and gifts of produce from the congregation. It also meant the family moved often through both the South and the North Islands.

Dave showed an early interest in collecting. In Arrowtown, when his Mum ran out of preserving jars, he arrived home with a box of jars. Turns out he had collected them from the local cemetery after emptying out the flowers. He was sent to put them back by his horrified Mum!

His collecting interests included stamps, butterflies (his Dad paid him a penny each for crop destroying white butterfly he caught), then birds eggs, autographs, signed sports photos etc. But a farrier in Gisborne, Frank Hollis, was to set the future course of Dave's life. Frank taught boxing to local kids and the Cameron boys joined in, often matched against a rival local family, the Wilsons. Dave was entranced with the sport and later, even more so, with wrestling. He travelled the country to watch both, always adding to his collection of magazines, programmes and signed photos. He began corresponding with not only wrestlers and boxers but all sportsmen who replied, fans and journalists. He would later become a journalist himself as well as the author of the definitive book on New Zealand wrestling called "70 Years at Ringside Part 1." Part 2 never got written though a speaker at his funeral noted that Part 2 is encapsulated in his massive collection of magazines, albums and photographs. When Dave moved to a retirement village this vast collection was accepted

by the Auckland Library where it will remain as a great reference resource in perpetuity.

It should be noted that Dave was not just a wrestling writer but a competitor as well both as an amateur in New Zealand and a professional in the UK.

A brother speaking at the funeral described Dave as "funny, cheeky and a little dangerous to be with". Another brother recalled how Dave had learned the infamous and dangerous "Octopus Clamp" from its inventor and great NZ wrestler, Lofty Blomfield. So risky was this hold that a newspaper article in the 1950's warned against anyone trying it.

This was after a Wellington imitator tied up a friend and needed police help to release him. Dave had obviously not read that story and relentlessly practised the hold on his next youngest brother. Graeme Cameron, of Wellington Clan Cameron, still remembers the pain.

David Ian Cameron. A lovely human being.

Dave is survived by his wife of 63 years, Shirley, son Paul and grandchildren Isla and Greer.



***Congratulations to
Tanya Cameron
on being made a Life
Member of
Clan Cameron New
Zealand.***

***It is a great honour
and is richly deserved***



From the Branches....

Auckland by Rob Cameron

The committee has not met over the last two months. This is because of busy schedules for our committee. We had no points of interest or concerns to take to the National AGM. We are also continuing to organise our Annual Dinner which is set for August 16th at the Parnell Hotel and Conference Centre. The dinner flyer is enclosed with this newsletter. Please get in touch if you would like to secure seats.

For pipers or pipe band members, an important date on the Calendar is ANZAC day. This year I continued to join City of Auckland with their commitments playing for the Newmarket Parade and service, then playing for the Henderson Service. Auckland branch member, Gina Cameron, played with City of Sails at the Te Atatu and Birkenhead services. On 17th May, Auckland members Dale, Hillary, Bryan and myself travelled to Hawkes Bay for the Canterbury hosted AGM and Gathering. Important points to come from the meeting were the new constitution adopted by Clan Cameron society, life member appointment of Tanya Cameron, well deserved for her many years as National Secretary and Bay of Plenty Branch, and the appointment of Neil Cameron as Patron for Clan Cameron NZ.

Neil, unfortunately, was unable to travel to the AGM due to recent illness. It is a rare occurrence for Neil to miss an AGM which was reflected in the meeting and the following dinner. His appointment is well deserved from my perspective. Having revived the Auckland branch back in 1986, was the branch president for 15 years up until the Auckland Branch became incorporated when he became New Zealand Commissioner and President for 5 years from 2001. Without Neil's work and dedication to this branch it would not be as successful at it is now. Neil is highly respected by all who know him inside and outside the Clan.

I took the Blenheim Pipes with me to Napier which were on display during the AGM and dinner. I also played them during the dinner with a small set of recognizable tunes. Bruce Cameron (Hunterville) brought another set of Antique pipes made by John Cameron from Aberdeen and were about 200 years old. They are made from Lignae Viburnum and bone which is quite a bit different from the modern materials pipes are made from. Bruce also wrote a tune for Dale Bailey on his Honours list appointment in which he played on the bagpipes. On our way back home Bryan and I were able to see Lochiel Nielsen off with her parents at Auckland Airport. It is great to see history unfold as Lochiel follows in the footsteps of Finlay Cameron and Sarah McQueen as the latest First Lighter.

Manawatu by Anne Walker Long

Our local Committee is very active and busy organizing our calendar of events.

On Saturday June 28th the Manawatu Branch will host their annual Mid-winter Clan Cameron Manawatu dinner at Whararata Function Centre on the Massey University Campus. All Clan Members, friends and family are very welcome. President and Commissioner, Dale Bailey, will be in present and able to update us all on latest Clan news.

The evening will follow the usual format with a haggis ceremony, and piping. This year, we will honour the exceptional Manawatu Scottish Pipe Band with whom Clan Cameron has had a long association, and who are celebrating their centenary year. Band members will be present to pipe us, and Stewart McKenzie, Pipe Major, will share a little of the Band history.



The evening commences at 6pm with pre-dinner drinks. The cost for the three-course meal is \$65 per head. Cash bar will operate.

RSVPs please to clancameronmanawatu@gmail.com, or text 027 41541105 asap please.

In early April a few of the local Branch gathered for a light meal, and to farewell Lochiel Nielsen. Lochiel joined us via Facetime and updated us on her plans for the First Light Exchange she has now embarked upon. We wish her all the very best for her time in Scotland.

The Branch was represented at the CCNZ AGM but in small numbers, due to a combination of travel, business and family commitment that kept the rest of us at home. Watching the Facebook posts however, it was apparent that the meeting was successful and most enjoyable.

Hawke's Bay by Hamish Cameron

The agonising involved with the decision to not participate in this years Hastings Highland Games was slightly eased with the arrival of an unusually cold and overcast Easter weekend.

Moving indoors was imperative! !
Cancelling out would have been classed a monumental disaster if H.B. had delivered brilliant warm sunshine to an outdoor event that weekendBut it didn't - and the decision looked logical. Hawkes Bay hasn't been spared, weather wise, from the miserable and unpredictable fare experienced all over the whole country recently.

However, the event we next looked forward to held no apprehension as its a totally appropriate indoor function. The National A.G.M., hosted by the Canterbury Branch, at which the new constitution was up for scrutiny / ratification.

Fortunately, the Editor has relaxed the normal printing deadline so as to allow comment on this A.G.M. This means I can now confirm that there was an enthusiastic acceptance to the draft constitution presented by our new national secretary, Scott Turner. Scott has done an amazing amount of research to eventually compress pages of rules and exceptions into a condensed document that meets both the legal and intended functions of the Clan. I think the clever part of his work is how it is future proofed in its wording allowing for different directions for the Clan should it so desire. To most, all of this is the boring bit of an AGM, and the real highlight of the occasion is the Dinner

Canterbury, whether by design or good fortune, really produced some memorable moments. Firstly – there was the introduction of Lochiel Nielsen, our latest “First Lighter”, who left the very next day for her pilgrimage to Scotland - complete with her parting gift from the Clan. Even the after-dinner speaker produced by Canterbury had a unique and usually inaccessible story to tell. Andrew Cameron, brother to Nick, is a highly decorated international Red Cross nurse whose career has moved him into practically every war-zone and disaster area in the world over the past two and a bit decades. A summary of his talk-slide show would involve space I don't have here.....Definitely a highlight!

Highlights seemed to be a recurring theme that night, as Tanya Cameron was recognised with a “Life Membership Certificate” for her commitment to Clan Cameron as National Secretary over a ten year period. Not a sinecure of a position, and to manage this over a decade certainly makes this award highly warranted. Congratulations and thankyou Tanya.

Personally, the highlight of the evening was the announcement that Neil Cameron – of Auckland- had acceded to requests to become Patron of Clan Cameron N.Z. For Neil this would have to be the pinnacle to a service that has encompassed practically every position in the Clan Cameron organisation. It is impossible not to find his input or influence somewhere in Clan Cameron N.Z.'s modern history. The often



quoted “been there done that” is usually uttered without fear of validationNot so in Neil’s case !

Congratulations Neilto an honour we all absolutely applaud.!!

Canterbury *by Nick Cameron*

The Canterbury Branch was the host branch of the National AGM this year and the historic Hawkes Bay Club was arguably the perfect site to host this event. The AGM was well run by Dale with great discussions looking to the future of the Clan. What was evident to me was the positivity of the members and the comment was made that we are the envy of the other clans in New Zealand. This is certainly helped by having forward thinking leaders and our First Light Scheme.

On this topic of great leaders...It was my privilege at the AGM to help propose Neil as our Patron who has edited and provided us with at least 119 copies .. which by my maths means nearly 20 years! He also has served us with providing clan tents, trailers, long days at Highland Games, organizing AGM’s, Branch Presidency and was our commissioner from 2002 to 2006. He has even provided us with a very able granddaughter.. First lighter Sarah McQueen who is now in Dunedin studying to become a medical doctor.

It was great to see Tanya Cameron presented with a life membership certificate... I know in my time as your commissioner how much effort she put into making sure we were all well organized. It is an honour highly deserved.

The Clan Dinner was particularly special for me as I had asked my brother Andrew to provide a talk on his work over the last 39 years with the Red Cross in a range of War Zones. Several weeks before the AGM he rang to say he was off to Gaza and might not be able to do this... in the event he was able to do this because the Israelis had closed off any medical help to the Palestinians. As a backup to Andrew’s non-appearance I had asked Rob Cameron (the elder) to provide a talk on his time in Pitt Island... we should make sure we have this talk presented at a future gathering.

My sister Fiona Cameron introduced Andrew at the Gathering and he presented a slide show of some of his medical adventures....hopefully the younger members were not too disturbed with some of the more graphic war injuries.

We were once again entertained by the Napier Pipe Band ... with Dr Richard Loan piping in the haggis and Bruce Cameron providing a great rendition of the Burns ode to a haggis. Rob Cameron (the younger) played a number of tunes on the 150 year old Blenheim pipes, and we were treated to a new tune composed by Bruce called “Dale Cameron Bailey M.N.Z.M. “ played on pipes over 200 years old made by a John Cameron from the N.E. area of Scotland and recently re-stored by our First Lighter Finlay Cameron.

Thank you to Hamish and Joan Cameron for providing a great welcoming display at the entrance to the club... it was a nice touch for my sister Fiona to see our uncle John included in the display as one of Churchill’s Pirates as part of that entrance!.



Cameron the Weaver who came to New Zealand on the “Blenheim” in 1840.

Both Rob Camerons, Wairarapa and Auckland, also trace back to Donald the Weaver and our Auckland President tells me that Donald hailed from the village of Ockle on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula, Lochaber. I imagine that Kiel, at some stage, will want to visit Ockle.

I understand that our previous First Lighter, Finlay Cameron, met Kiel on arrival and, after seeing a little of Glasgow and Edinburgh, will head to Lochaber to be hosted by Finlay’s parents, Ken and Rhona. Then, after about a fortnight, Kiel will take up employment at the Glen Garry Castle Hotel.

Thanks indeed Finlay, Ken and Rhona, your hosting is hugely appreciated and essential to the success of First Light Exchanges.

And finally, a hope that Clan Cameron Scotland is able to send out to New Zealand a young Scottish First Lighter this coming summer.

(You can follow Lochiel’s progress on her Facebook page ‘Seven Generations Later’)



Bon Voyage (Turas math dhut!)



Lochiel and her mother Malissa with Dale at the Gathering Dinner in Napier. Lochiel flew out to Scotland next day.



The Glengarry Castle Hotel

First Light News

by Bryan Haggitt—First Light Convenor



Sunday evening, 18th May, Lochiel (Keil) Nielsen departed on Emirates for her First Light Exchange.

This should be a life changing experience for Kiel – a wonderful opportunity for her to learn more of her Scottish roots. Whilst Kiel’s Dad, Garry, has Scandinavian heritage, through her Mum, Malissa, Kiel traces back to Donald



Lochaber Panorama by Bill Cameron. Taken from Meall an T-Suidhe (an outer shoulder of Ben Nevis) looking down into Glen Nevis, with Loch Linnhe, Loch Eil and Fort William in the distance.



Joan and Hamish Cameron



More Photos from the Gathering

Dining at the Napier RSA on Friday evening. From Left: Lena, Dale, Bryan, Julie, Joan and Hamish, Tanya, Nick, Rhys and Mary-Anne, Hillary, Graeme and Hazel, Christina and David Ward.



Rhys Fenton and Mary-Anne Cameron



Cameron Squires and Allan Cameron



Hillary Hakaraia, Rob Cameron and Graeme Cameron at the evening meal at the Napier RSA.

Left: Here, at the Gathering, our latest First Lighter Lochiel Nielsen talks about her heritage and hopes for her experience in Scotland, against a backdrop of past First Lighters Bill Cameron, Sarah McQueen, Finlay Cameron, Shona Shirley and Astie Cameron on the big screen. That photo was taken at the Clan Cameron International gathering at Achnacarry last August.

Lochiel left for the other side of the World the next day. Members of our Society watch on, wishing her well. We gave her some pounamu to keep her safe and bring her home. The First Light programme is a major achievement of our Association and renewed the links between New Zealand and Scotland since 2000. Thanks to the wonderful efforts, hosting and fundraising over the last 25 years. Many of our families emigrated from Scotland in the middle of the 19th Century so building up the links is so important in the 21st Century.



The Palace of Holyroodhouse

By the Editor

At the foot of the Royal Mile in Edinburgh we find the Palace of Holyroodhouse, known as Holyrood Palace, the official residence of the Monarch in Scotland. At the time of our visit the King was not in residence so we were able to visit. It is used by the Royal Family for ceremonial and state occasions.

The palace plays an important part in Scotland's history. It was the home of the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots and is where she had many verbal encounters with John Knox, the Protestant reformer based in St. Giles, just up the Royal Mile. Knox condemned the Queen for hearing mass, dancing and wearing bright clothing.

This is also where, in 1745, Bonnie Prince Charlie took up residence for six weeks after taking Edinburgh and before continuing South in an endeavour to secure the throne in the name of his father.



Palace sentry box



The Presence Chamber. This is used for receptions and audiences. There are four magnificent tapestries in the room which came from Buckingham Palace in the 1850s.



The forecourt is dominated by a magnificent fountain installed by Queen Victoria in 1859.



Showing part of the ruined Abbey, on which the palace is based



The palace is built round a central quadrangle, laid out like a cloister, reflecting the monastic origins of the palace.

The site began as an abbey in the 12th century, dedicated to the Holy Rood. The palace grew out of and gradually encroached upon and displaced the abbey. After a checkered history the palace has regained its place as a royal residence.

The Palace of Holyroodhouse is Edinburgh's Royal Palace, it is His Majesty The King's official residence in Scotland and is used by The King and members of the Royal Family for State ceremonies and official entertaining. With 900 years of Scottish royal history, the Palace of Holyroodhouse stands at the foot of the Royal Mile against the spectacular backdrop of Arthur's Seat. A visit to the Palace includes the Historic Apartments of Mary, Queen of Scots, which were the setting for many dramatic episodes in her short and turbulent reign, including the brutal murder of her Italian secretary, David Rizzio, by her husband, Lord Darnley. Her Bedchamber has been described as 'the most famous room in Scotland.'



Back view, with my friend Catherine, showing the nave of Holyrood Abbey



Immediately across the road from Holyrood House is the new Scottish Parliament, a very modern building which looks quite out of place among the historic buildings in the Royal Mile.

Culloden 2025

Text and photos by Chris Doak

The Annual Memorial Service at the Culloden Battlefield took place on Saturday 19th. April. Organised by The Gaelic Society of Inverness, as many as 1000 marched and gathered in a bit wee dreich and drizzle.

The Guest Speaker at the Ceremony was Kate Forbes, Deputy First Minister of the Scottish Parliament - and herself fluent in Gaelic.

The Clan Cameron was led to the Memorial by Lochiel - and our Piper, Finlay Cameron from Inverlair. Caroline McCarthy laid our wreath at the Cairn, and smaller floral tributes were laid by ourselves at the Cameron Grave, and the Battle Marker of the Camerons out on the Field.



Floral tributes at the cairn



Lochiel at the Cameron Marker - out on the edge of the Battlefield.



Out at the Marker: Lochiel, Gordon MacMillan with our flag, and our Piper - Finlay Cameron.



The Clan Cameron wreath - laid on our behalf by Caroline McCarthy.



Gathering for the march to the Cairn.



Casual dinner a few of the Manawatu Branch members enjoyed in April. From left, Jessie Annabell, John Annabell, Virginia Ashby, Steve Ashby, Russell Cameron, Anne Walker, Shelley Turner, Scott Turner.

Photographer Hinemoa Ransom-Boyd



By Bill Cameron: The Ben Bronze Model T Snowball run, 2025. Celebrating eight years since the unveiling of the Ben Bronze Model T in Cameron Square. A lovely run up the Ben this morning to gather snow from the summit and run back down to the car in Cameron Square. A lovely celebratory dram with summit snow (shaken, not stirred) in Cameron Square. Thanks to Chris, Debbie and Sam for their support.

Annual Gathering 2025

By Dale Cameron Bailey

Some 25 members gathered for our annual general meeting held in the historic Hawkes Bay Club, with 40 at the annual dinner that evening. We had representatives from the each of our branches.

We were to hear of some amazing progress across the last year. A similar number of Kiwi Camerons attended the International Gathering at Achnacarry in Scotland in August last year.

We held Clan Cameron dinners in Auckland, Napier and Palmerston North. There were Clan tents at the Hororata, Waipu, Turakina and Paeroa Highland Games. A tent was also at the Royal New Zealand Pipe Band Championships in Invercargill. A number of local social events have been held around New Zealand.

First Lighter Sarah McQueen returned to New Zealand after her exchange and has returned to Otago University to study medicine. And we were very pleased to be able to select Lochiel Nielsen as our next First Lighter. There has been excellent fundraising to support the First Light Exchange, with the Manawatu branch's project producing an excellent calendar of the most wonderful Scottish photographs.

We have amazing outreach through our excellent newsletter and very active Facebook pages (New Zealand, Auckland and Manawatu). Our historical research and genealogy continues to develop and many of our members are active in Pipe Bands across the country. Commissioner Dale said at the annual meeting we have much to be proud of, and are very active.

We were able to note that the society had reached its 90th anniversary since its founding and the executive council has commenced planning to celebrate this next year.

A special moment was the election of our new patron Neil Cameron. Past President Nick Cameron proposed that Neil assume the role, which the executive council had requested permission from our Chief Lord Cameron of Lochiel. Lochiel said

"Please can I make special mention of Neil Cameron who I was delighted to approve as a Patron of the New Zealand Association after many years of dedicated service to the clan both at home and abroad. It was lovely seeing Neil again at Achnacarry last year when he was part of the fantastic group of Kiwis who attended the international gathering"

Our second honouring was for Tanya Cameron as a life membership of the association. Lochiel noted that, ***'Tanya has been an incredible stalwart of the clan and has been national secretary for over 10 years, and also ran the Bay of Plenty branch for many years too.'***

Next year's annual gathering will be in Auckland and in 2027 it will be hosted by the Manawatu branch.

After much drafting we were able to approve and adopt a new constitution for our society as required by the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. This modernises our rules and makes us compliant ahead of the deadline next year. A summary will be in the next newsletter.

We continue to face the challenge of increasing our membership, so it was great to have some new members present in Napier.

Our annual dinner was also a great success. Held at the wonderful Hawkes Bay Club we were treated to a wonderful setting for the occasion. The heritage building creates such a great atmosphere for getting together. Hamish and Joan Cameron created a great display of Clan Cameron in the foyer. Our official pipes Nick Cameron and Rob Cameron joined with members of the Napier Pipe Band to welcome people to the evening. Their piping attracted a small crowd of

bystanders.

On the flagpole we were able to fly the replica Lochiel banner flown at Culloden, a gift of Clan Cameron Scotland. Allan Cameron commenced the evening off with the Selkirk Grace, and Bruce Cameron lead the Haggis Party. Our guest speaker Andrew Cameron told us about his amazing career as nurse in war torn parts of the globe, including Sudan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Yemen and Ukraine serving with the International Red Cross. Members were so impressed by his humility and service when dealing with such challenging circumstances. Tanya Cameron's life membership was celebrated with gifts, and Neil Cameron's appointment as our Patron.

It takes many people to make it such a great evening, with special thanks to our hosts at the Hawkes Bay Club, manager and President Russell and the wonderful chef Andrew. Your teams made everyone feel very welcome.



Guest Speaker and new member, Andrew Cameron with his sister Fiona and brother Nick, president of Clan Cameron Canterbury.



Investiture 20th May 2025

Mr Dale Bailey, MNZM, of Auckland, for services to education.

Dale Bailey was Head of Geography, Curriculum Coordinator and a Teacher Librarian at Awatapu College. At the Education Review Office, he was a Review Officer, Senior Review Officer, National Manager for Review Services and Northern Deputy Chief Review Officer. He was Area Manager for the Northern region with Careers New Zealand. As the Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive of the Springboard Trust, he has focused on equity in education, and the relationship between education and social and economic development. He is Chair of SPELD New Zealand, supporting people with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. Mr Bailey formed Capable Auckland to link organisations in the education and employment space.

Letters and News at the Loch Side

by Vanessa Martin

Curator Manager West Highland Museum.

This is the fascinating story of a Victorian oil painting that was bequeathed to the West Highland Museum in 1999, but an object that has never been inside the museum building. Letters and News at the Loch Side was given as a wedding gift to Gertrude Astley (1849 – 1920) from her sisters, Constance (1851 – 1935) and Beatrice (1858 – 1923) when she married in 1883. Painted by the English artist Henry Tanworth Wells (1828–1903), it is unusual as in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Wells is described as a “miniature and portrait painter”; the painting it is neither of these things! The oil on canvas is enormous and measures 120 cm in height by 282 cm in width and depicts a Highland landscape scene with locally known figures in the foreground.

The painting depicts a scene, purportedly to be at the

replaced. Shortly afterwards the house was requisitioned by the War Office and from 1939–46 was utilised for Special Operations Executive (SOE) training. In 1955, the estate was passed into the possession of Miss M. J. Becher who lived at Arisaig House until the late 1970s when she sold the house and moved to a smaller property nearby; the painting remained at the house and under Miss Becher’s ownership. When she died, the painting was gifted to the West Highland Museum.

The painting was on long-term loan to and on public display at Arisaig House Hotel until 2022 when the property was sold and became a private residence. The museum loaned the painting to the new owner, with the agreement the painting would remain accessible to the public when no alternative location for public display could be identified. Although the painting was available for public view during this period, sadly no requests to view the painting were received before the painting was removed from display by the owner, and the painting remained unseen for two years.

In 2024, Glenfinnan House Hotel asked the museum if they could display the painting in Glenfinnan. The museum’s Board carefully considered the request and concluded that the

move to Glenfinnan would be beneficial as it would ensure better environmental conditions for the painting and allow the community access to view this magnificent painting once more. The Glenfinnan House Hotel reopened after refurbishment in May 2024 and the oil painting has taken pride of place in their new reception area.



Henry Tanworth Wells, Oil on canvas. Letters and News at the Loch Side; West Highland collection

end of Loch Eilt which depicts the postman, Donald MacDonald of Achraig, delivering mail to two boats on the shore, where the river Ailort flows to the sea. Others in the painting include Duncan McCrae (the boy in the painting), F. D. P. Astley (Gertrude’s father), Sir John Millais (a famous English painter), John MacDonald, (the boat captain): Donald MacDonald, a MacRae, Sir Henry Halford, Angus MacDonald (the water bailiff of Arienskill, and father of the yacht captain), and Mr Henry Evans.

Tanworth Wells was a great friend of Gertrude’s father, Francis Dunkinfield Palmer Astley (1825 – 1868), a wealthy industrialist from the Midlands in England who had purchased the Arisaig estate in 1850. The artist visit Arisaig House during his friendship with Astley and his sketch books show that he was a regular visitor to the estate. In 1863 Astley commissioned English architect Philip Webb (1831 – 1915. one of the most original designers from the Arts and Crafts movement to design a new house for him. The project completed in just one year. When Astley died in 1868 he was succeeded by his only son, Francis Dukinfield Astley, a lieutenant in the Scots Fusilier Guards. In 1880, Francis died unmarried, so the estate passed to his eldest sister, Gertrude Susan Astley. When she married Sir Arthur Nicholson the *Letters and News at the Lochside* painting was commissioned by Gertrude’s sisters as a wedding present and was hung in Arisaig House around 1883.

In 1935 Arisaig House burnt down, only the south-east kitchen wing remained untouched by the fire, but miraculously the painting survived. The House was rebuilt to the designs of I. B. M. Hamilton in 1936–7. Although it incorporated much of the original fabric, the design was altered, and the interiors



Gertrude pictured sitting in the drawing room at Arisaig House



Arisaig House in 1880

West Highland Museum Friends Scheme 2025

The West Highland Museum was overwhelmed by the interest and support shown at its recent event to showcase its work and launch its new Friends Scheme on 16 April 2025. The hugely successful event took place in the Highland Cinema and the museum team delivered a compelling presentation on what they do now, their redevelopment plans and screened a short film on a project called 'Our Lochaber' where the museum education team worked with local primary schools during 2024. The audience clearly enjoyed the informative update on the future of the museum and how much it is striving to work within the community and with education in Lochaber.

The Friends scheme is a separate programme designed to bring together supporters and enthusiasts of the museum's rich heritage and cultural offerings, to foster a closer relationship between the museum, the community and individuals further afield who want to support and be a part of our plans. Membership to the Friends Scheme can be purchased by anyone, or gifted to loved ones, and will offer a range of benefits as part of the package. All funds raised through the scheme will directly support the museum's educational programmes, community events, conservation efforts, future exhibitions, plus the museum's all important redevelopment plans.

"We are thrilled to introduce our Friends Scheme as a way to engage more deeply with visitors and supporters," said Ian Peter MacDonald, Director of the West Highland Museum.



"This initiative will help us continue to preserve and share the unique history and culture of the West Highlands."

We want to encourage individuals and organisations to get in touch and learn more about what we have planned. It's the beginning of very exciting times for the museum and you could join us on our journey making the West Highland Museum bigger and better through the next stage of our history.

For more information on how to join the Friends Scheme or to find out more about what we do, visit our website at www.westhighlandmuseum.org.uk or contact friends@westhighlandmuseum.org.uk You can also find us on social media, plus we have a YouTube channel search West Highland Museum Trust.



Left: Auckland members Gina Cameron and Rob Cameron (and supporter Anton Hodson) are with the City of Sails Pipe Band at the Monastery for Buddha's birthday. Dignitaries, including the Prime Minister, were piped in. Centre: Gina Cameron plays in an Anzac Parade with the City of Sails Pipe Band. Right Rob Cameron plays in the Newmarket Anzac Parade with the City of Auckland Pipe Band.

Coming Events

Saturday 28 June 2025
Manawatu Branch Annual Dinner
Wharerata, Massey University.
See Manawatu Report. Page 4

Saturday 16 August 2025
Auckland Branch Annual Dinner
The Parnell, Gladstone Rd, Parnell.
Flyer to Auckland members enclosed with this newsletter.
Flyer also on CCNZ website.



By Neil Cameron

Thank you very much for granting me a great honour by electing me as your patron.

I feel very humble and hope I will be able to continue to work for the Clan.

It is a long time since I was asked to revive the Auckland Branch in 1986 by Donald Cameron, NZ President, and Lochiel, who was visiting NZ at the time. In 1987 we held our first Branch dinner at Sir Johns, Cornwall Park. This dinner has been an annual event at various venues every year since, apart from Covid.



Annual AGM and Gathering

Photos by Dale, Rob, Bryan and Nick



Hamish Cameron from Hawkes Bay speaks at our Annual General Meeting



Nick Cameron speaks at the AGM



Auckland President Rob Cameron plays the Blenheim pipes brought to New Zealand with early migrants to New Zealand arriving on 27 December 1840 in Wellington. Rob is a descendant of the original owner and currently custodian of the pipes which were donated to Clan Cameron New Zealand last year by member Ewen Grant



Fiona Cameron, Andrew Cameron and Lena Orum. Andrew was our guest speaker at the dinner and talked about his incredible career serving as a nurse for the Red Cross in many areas of the World in conflict including South Sudan, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Yemen. Lena is the national chairperson of Clan Matheson



Shelley Turner and Nick Cameron



Bryan Haggitt, Hillary Hakaraia and Cath Cameron at our Annual Dinner



Scott Turner National Secretary of Clan Cameron NZ and Tanya Cameron Life Member of Clan Cameron NZ.



Christina Ward, Annette Treader, Sally Cameron and Jane Hailwood enjoy a pre dinner drink



Bruce Cameron from Manawatu addresses the haggis.