

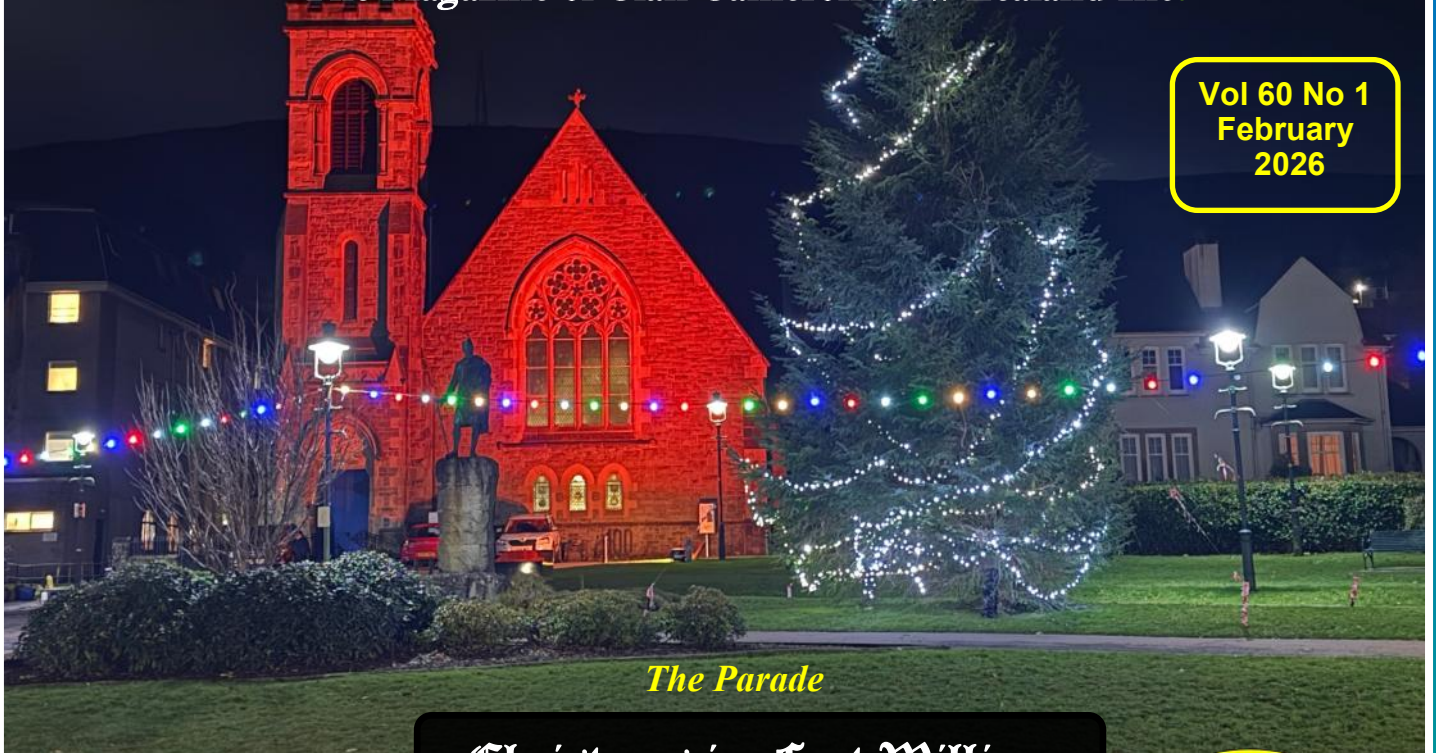


Cameron



The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc

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The Parade

Christmas in Fort William

Cameron Square



Photos: Bill Cameron

“Cameron”

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A Message from our Commissioner....



Nga mihi nui, failte, greetings.

Wishing you all the very best for New Year, the 90th Anniversary of Clan Cameron New Zealand. Over the decades our members have continued to celebrate the unique legacy of being a Cameron on Aotearoa New Zealand. Our families journeyed to the absolute furthest land away from their homeland. Many of those who left Scotland did it because they had little choice, making a new life for themselves and their descendants on the other side of the planet. May I take a moment to acknowledge the work over the nine decades to promote our heritage and identity.

Many of our customs and traditions continue and this has been so evident in the Highland Games of the new season. Starting in Hororata in Canterbury in November and in Waipu, Northland, on the last day of 2025 thousands of New Zealanders and good number of tourists and visitors attended these events and enjoyed themselves. It was so great to have a strong Cameron presence at both games and I spent all day talking with people who had Cameron ancestry or at least some Scottish blood. In Canterbury, the free taste of haggis offered by the Camerons caused enjoyment and fair bit of amusement. In Waipu we had lots of enquiries about family links and the tartan.

Our displays, newsletters, activities and the First Light exchange are the envy of all the Clans in New Zealand. We get so many compliments and questions about it. Thank you so much to all the members who give so freely of their time and energy.

I am very pleased that we have another First Lighter ready to send to Scotland with Issac Grant set to leave this May for his exchange. Issac we wish you all the very best and are excited to hear of your experiences. Lochiel Nielsen continues her time in Scotland and has had some great travels and experiences.

Included in this newsletter are the details of our annual gathering to be held in May in Auckland. This is open to all interested and please consider joining us. The Auckland team have some excellent plans in place and you can be assured of a very pleasant weekend. I personally extend an invitation to you all to join us.

Later this year I will be travelling to Scotland so it will be very good to reconnect with our family and clan members once again. Hoping to see you at one of our upcoming events.

All the very best for 2026.

Aonaibh ri Cheile

Dale Cameron Bailey



Clan Cameron Auckland President
Rob Cameron plays his pipes on
ascending Rangitoto Island with
President Dale Cameron Bailey on
3rd January 2026



Next Magazine Deadline is 15 Mar 2026

Printed By

Welcome to the following Member who have recently joined us:

Auckland Branch :

Andrew Cameron

Waipu

*Ceud Mìle Fàilte One
Hundred Thousand
Welcomes*

Patron's Corner *by Neil Cameron*

I have just returned from the Waipu Highland Games, held on New Year's Eve. Another great day of Scottish activities that I can highly recommend to you.

I would like to repeat what I wrote in our newsletter following my first visit the Waipu Games on New Year's Day 2002:

"On New Year's Day Ruth and I, for the first time, decided to visit the annual Waipu Highland Games and set up a tent there. It was a rewarding experience to be in historic Waipu and to be able to contribute something to the event and to talk to the many visitors not only from New Zealand but also from Scotland and Canada.

It is 149 (now 173) years since Rev. Norman McLeod led a migration of 800 Scots from Nova Scotia to settle in Waipu and the surrounding district. Most had come to Cape Breton Island in the 1820s from the North Western Highlands and the Hebrides—north of Cameron Country but interesting to me as I have traced my Cameron ancestors to the Inner and Outer Hebrides. Six ships, over a period of several years, sailed from Nova Scotia. The first two initially to Australia but finding that that country, in gold rush times, was not the Promised Land, Norman McLeod led his followers to New Zealand. Later ships sailed to New Zealand direct. One of these was the Spray, a small vessel of only 107 tons, which carried the only Cameron family (of six) I can find recorded. One can imagine the conditions the hardy 82 passengers had to face on their five and a half month journey down the Atlantic, round South Africa and across the Southern Ocean to New Zealand.

The settlers formed a close knit Scottish community who kept their traditional way of life in a pleasant land and retained their kinship and ties with Nova Scotia and Scotland. A hundred years after their arrival it is recorded that the children still spoke the Gaelic language fluently. In the December 2001 newsletter our President, Maisie Earle, talked about the Gaelic language and Gaelic culture in Cape Breton. It is interesting to note that Waipu is twinned with St. Anns / Baddeck, the Cape Breton area from which many of the settlers came and where the Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts, one of whose aims is the revival of the Celtic language, is situated."

Ruth and I had taken it quietly, driving up on New Year's Eve, setting up the tent that day, staying at a B&B that night, manning the tent next day, another night at a B&B, then home. This became an annual visit—I don't think we missed

any year, except for the rare cancellation. Soon we were joined by other Camerons from the Auckland branch. Our tent got bigger over the years—our present one is 6 x 3m and takes 6 people to put up easily. At my present age I'm not much help and am very grateful for your support. We now have a trailer, which avoids overloading my car, including the roof!

As Dale says, the Games are a wonderful way to show our Scottish customs and traditions I hope we see more of you in the future. We have enjoyed Hororata and Waipu so far this season and Turakina will have passed by the time you receive this newsletter. That leaves Paeroa on February 14th.

The Paeroa Highland Games are held in the Paeroa Domain and run from 9am to 9pm, ending with a tattoo. Special guests this year are *Boom Boom Deluxe* and *Te Puna o Te Pito Mata* and there will be a special Tattoo performance from the Hamilton Caledonian Pipe Band.

See the website for a full programme.
paeroahighlandgames.co.nz

We look forward to seeing you there.

2026 AGM and Annual Gathering

On behalf of the national executive and the Auckland branch you are warmly invited to attend the 2026 annual gathering of Clan Cameron New Zealand. It's going to be held in Parnell, Auckland's oldest suburb, from **Friday 15th May to Sunday 17th May 2026**.

This is a gathering for all Clan members and friends, not just for the committee members. There is no danger of being elected onto any committee, so do not let that put you off. Rather it's a time for friendly experiences with Clan Cameron people from all walks of life and across the country.

The local team have an opening barbecue event planned for Friday evening, the AGM on Saturday morning and our wonderful annual dinner in the evening. We are planning an excursion to an Auckland treasure on the Saturday afternoon.

There will be some great food, customs and traditions to participate in. You can be assured of a very warm and friendly welcome. On the Sunday morning we will have a church service at St Andrews to round the weekend out.

The cost of all these events is being kept to \$150 for the entire weekend, including two dinners, lunch and morning tea. There is a registration flyer enclosed with this newsletter. So mark up your calendars for a great weekend in Auckland Tamaki Makaurau.

Dale.

Coming Events

14 February 2026
33rd Paeroa Highland Games
Paeroa Domain

Join us in our tent. Enjoy the piping and Tattoo.
<https://paeroahighlandgames.co.nz>

Friday/Saturday 20/21 March 2026
NZ Pipe Band Championships

TET Stadium and Events Centre,
1 Elliot Street, Inglewood, Taranaki.

Friday-Sunday 15-17 May 2026
National Clan Cameron AGM and Gathering.

The Parnell Hotel and Conference Centre, 10/20 Gladstone Rd, Parnell.
Flyer enclosed with this newsletter.

From the Branches....

Auckland by Rob Cameron

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year. I spent the Christmas week in the Marlborough Sounds at our family batch. I came back to Auckland to attend the Northcote Invitational and the Waipu Highland Games including the Helen Macgregor Memorial.



The Northcote Invitational, held on December 29th at the Northcote tavern was held indoors due to the rough winds and possible rain. The piping quality was still very high and congratulations to Liam Kernighan for winning. The Helen Macgregor Competition was light this year with only 5 competitors. The quality was still very high and congratulations to Piers Dover for the win.

The Waipu Highland Games went very well for us. Our tent was next to the Scottish Food stall selling pork pies and haggis burgers. The weather held out for most of the day, attendance for the games appeared to be up from last year, and the tent had a lot of attention during the day. I was able to get a quick look at the piping competition. Unfortunately, still no drumming competition again this year. Thanks to Neil, Jean, Duncan, Sarah, Hillary, Cass and Dale for helping out during the day.

We will be at the Paeroa Highland Games on February 14th. Another big day for me as I will also be competing with the band.

We will also be at the Pipe Band nationals over 20th and 21st of March at Inglewood near New Plymouth. We are hoping to rent a tent at the venue, much like last year in Invercargill. Hopefully the weather is better this year. I want to say good luck to all the Clan members who will be playing at the Nationals.

We have been planning our Branch AGM set for Sunday 29th March at the Carlton Cornwall Bowling Club with a social Barbeque scheduled after. The Secretary position will become available and if anyone is interested in picking up this role on our committee, please let me know.

Planning continues for the National AGM and Gathering over 15th to 17th of May. Basic programme should be out with this newsletter.

Manawatu by Anne Walker Long

Members of Clan Cameron Manawatu extend our best wishes to all for a happy and successful 2026. We trust all have enjoyed a super Christmas and New Year. We are very mindful that a few of our precious Clan members are battling ill health. We are thinking of you and wish you well.



We look forward to seeing Clan Cameron members and supporters at the Turakina Highland Games on Saturday 31st January 2026. These games are a highlight of the region's celebration of all things Scottish. We hope we will enjoy a great summer's day out and remind all to visit our Clan Cameron tent in the Clan Alley. The Turakina Highland Games are always a highlight of our annual calendar. We hope to see as many as possible there.

We are pleased to advise that the Clan Cameron Manawatu 2026 calendar was a 'sell out', and we will be able to make another donation to the First Light Trust Fund shortly. Thank you to those Clan members who have once again supported this fundraiser.

A diary note for those who are keen to join us for our Clan Cameron mid-winter dinner. This will be held on Saturday June 13th 2026. More information will be available in due course.

Hawke's Bay by Hamish Cameron

What the summer season for most conjures up is the promise of time to pursue one's own version of relaxation ---- doing what you couldn't justify doing during the year. That feeling of...."well if I don't do it today--- there's always tomorrow " is the exact purpose of this period in the year. Combine that with the expectations of the gifting season...brilliant outdoor living weather (usually !) and a discernible lack of purpose in the populations movements ...all add up to the "seasons" lasting memories .



However, for those of us involved with the horticultural industries ,this great season of relaxation is but an illusion....The unfortunate truth is that Christmas is the harbinger of what is to come over the following months. Dawn to dusk dedication to hopefully a better harvest than last year...Not only is this an exhausting time (36degrees the other day) it leaves little enthusiasm for the seasons traditional festivities----and definitely no space for travel.

Although it doesn't sound very appealing to those living a predictably regimented existence, it has its own unique excitement and memories that ultimately calls for more.

All of the afore-said prattle is only a long-winded way of explaining why H.B. doesn't indulge in group gatherings very often. Certainly not on regimented or pre-ordained dates ...and guess what.....there is nothing to report at this time *either*.....

Canterbury by Nick Cameron

We have not yet managed to organise a suitable time for a meeting of our branch. Our farming members are always very busy during the summer period.



My brother Andrew has returned from Gaza after working with an American Medical group. He said conditions there were very bad. He is currently enrolled in a PhD programme with Massey University with an office in the Wellington campus.

Andrew's eldest daughter Emily Cameron and her partner Ludwig are currently staying with us in Kimberley and we have been able to show them some of our seed breeding activities. They own and operate an intensive cropping farm on the out skirts of Regensburg city in Germany. Ludwig is a skilled farmer and mechanical and electrical engineer. He has built his own seed cleaning and seed drying operation. I think he and Hamish Cameron from Hastings have more than a little in common. Emily helps runs the power grid for Regensburg.

Our combined Caledonian pipe bands were asked to play at Hanmer springs for a Xmas parade which turned out to be an extremely hot day with some our members feeling the heat!

The next round of pipe band contests for our pipe bands include:

Ashburton- Sunday 15th Feb – held in the botanic gardens,

Dunedin -27th & 28th February - the Saturday contest is held in the Octagon Square and the Sunday contest in the North Park rugby groundsthis could be a good time for our Southern most members to have a catch up.

Canterbury Centre – 7th & 8th March ... St Andrews College,

Nationals Taranaki – 20th & 21st March.



Robert Burns 1759—1796

On January 25th each year, Scots throughout the world celebrate the birth of Robert Burns, Scotland's greatest poet.

Robert Burns wrote his first poem when he was just 15. It was a song called 'O Once I Lov'd A Bonnie Lass' to impress a girl called Nellie. He died aged just 37 from rheumatic fever on 21 July 1796, but in his short life, he composed over 716 works. Composed in Scots, standard English and Scots dialect, these works have been enjoyed and shared around the world.



Statue of Robert Burns in Camperdown, Australia

Robert's First Poem:

O, Once I Lov'd A Bonnie Lass

*O, once I lov'd a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still!
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.*

*As bonnie lasses I hae seen,
And monie full as braw,
But for a modest gracefu' mien
The like I never saw.*

*A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the e'e;
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.*

*But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
And, what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete
And fair without a flaw.*

*She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gait
Gars onie dress look weel.*

*A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart.*

*'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without controul.*



And then, O what a glorious sight, Warm-reekin', rich!

At our Clan Cameron dinners, we enjoy three of his greatest works, the Selkirk Grace, the Address to a Haggis, and Auld Lang Syne.

On May 16th, to celebrate the 90th year of Clan Cameron New Zealand, we will be hosting a National Clan Dinner in Auckland (flyer with this newsletter) at which the Rev. Bryan Haggitt will present his memorable 'Address to a Haggis'.

We hope we will see you there

With Lochiel in Scotland

Lochiel Nielsen

Hello everyone! January update
Over the past few months, I've been lucky enough to enjoy a series of little trips around the UK. In December, I visited Edinburgh and explored some museums I hadn't seen on my previous visit, including the Surgeons' Hall Museum, which was absolutely fascinating. I also spent time wandering through the Christmas markets—they were amazing and really set the festive mood.

From there, I took the overnight Caledonian Sleeper train down to London, where I caught up with my cousins who are currently living there. While in the city, I went to see Cabaret at the Kit Kat Club in the West End—an incredible show that I would definitely recommend. I also explored Camden Market, Borough Market, and visited several museums, making the most of everything London has to offer. Next, I headed north to York to wander along the famous Shambles and enjoy the Christmas markets, before spending a night in Glasgow. There, I stayed with Finlay Cameron and went to see Hamilton, which was absolutely phenomenal.

After returning to Inverlair for a few weeks, I took a short trip to Bath. The city is stunning, and the Roman Baths were full of fascinating history. Christmas was spent with Ken, Rhona, Sandy, his fiancée Eireann, Finlay, and his girlfriend Morven. It was such a lovely celebration, filled with great company and delicious food. It was my first winter Christmas, and it truly felt festive with the cold weather—although sadly, there was no snow at the time!

New Year's was shot in by Ken, which was amazing to witness, followed by a celebratory glass of wine to welcome the



year ahead. Shortly after, we were treated to a spectacular start to 2026 with heavy snowfall. We measured up to 20 cm of snow during the first week of January—it was absolutely magical.

I was also incredibly lucky to have the opportunity to help feed the stags one morning at Achnacarry Estate with Megan, who

works there. One stag in particular—named Lockie—even came right up to the window, and I was able to feed him carrots by hand. It was such an amazing experience and one I will never forget.

I'm currently still in Inverlair, and the snow has now thawed. However, I've just received exciting news: I've been offered a job at an early childhood centre in Newhaven, Edinburgh! I'm now in the process of securing a nearby flat, and I'm very much looking forward to what's ahead.

Waipu Highland Games

Photos: Neil, Jean, Duncan, Dale and Waipu Highland Games



First Lighter Sarah McQueen



Rob discussing all things Scottish with a visitor to our tent at Waipu



The Clan Matheson tent (Waipu Highland games photo)



The band leading the street march (Waipu Highland games photo)



Many hands make light work—erecting the Cameron tent.



In the middle of the field during the opening ceremony



Rob, Hillary, and Dale ready for the street march



The host clan, Clan Davidson. (Waipu Highland games photo)



The Street March (Waipu Highland games photo)

Waipu Highland Games
Sarah's photos of events



Tossing the Caper



Tug O' War



Clan March



Watching the Opening—under threatening skies.



Dancing at the Opening Ceremony. Waipu Highland Games Photo.



Judging the piping



The band plays on completion of the opening march.



A busy Clan Cameron tent.

Alps to the Ocean cycle trail

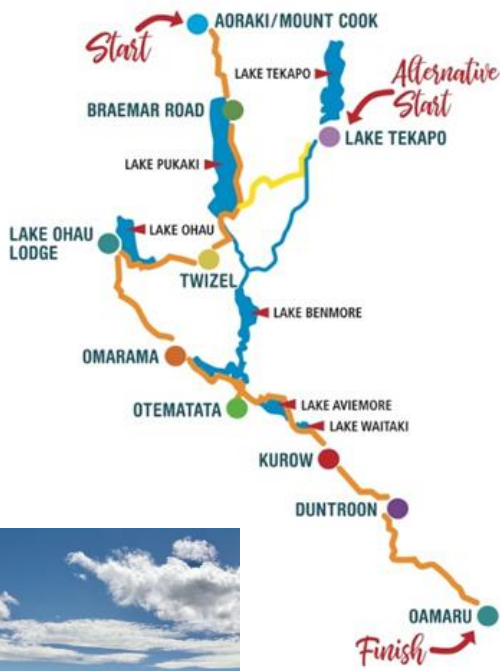
By Dale Cameron Bailey

Day 2. Mt Cook to Twizel (75km)

On day 2, we began at Mt Cook village and enjoyed clear views of Aoraki Mt Cook and Mt Tasman. Tourist helicopters were busy, including the one that ferried us and our bikes across the Tasman River for a brief but scenic flight before we cycled along Lake Pukaki. The rough road left us thirsty and resulted in our first puncture. We stayed in Twizel's former single men's quarters, once used



Dale and Lindsay after being ferried by helicopter across the Tasman River, Mt Cook in the background



Dale and his hired e bike about to start the trail in Lake Tekapo. Southern alps in the background

Following the Hororata Games in November last year I took a week to cycle the Alps to the Ocean cycle way from Mt Cook to Oamaru with some good friends. This trip is an amazing journey through the South Island and is part of the network of great New Zealand rides. Like many of us I grew up with cycles at home, boarding school and at University and Training College. Many years later with the advent of electric cycles I have been able to rediscover cycling and been lucky enough to cycle some great multi day trails. While purists insist on purely people power the e bike allows a much broader range of people to enjoy the trail.



The stunning view across Lake Pukaki towards the Southern Alps

by hydro scheme workers and now serving tourists.

Day 3. Twizel to Lake Ohau 38km

Our third day was an easy ride round Lake Ohau to stay at the lovely Lake Ohau Lodge. Great views and cheerful hospitality ahead of a very big riding day the next day. The area has largely recovered from the devastating fires. It's a lovely lakeside ride with stunning views of the alps.



Loch Cameron was created out of a gravel pit near Twizel which was used to build the canals from Lake Pukaki to Lake Ohau. Now a recreation reserve



Dale takes a selfie along the canals

Day 1. Lake Tekapo to Twizel (55km)

This trail offers two starting points, both of which we completed. Beginning at Lake Tekapo, we cycled along the canals constructed as part of the Pukaki power scheme. The impressive

landscapes, shaped by the Ministry of Works, now form the foundation of the hydroelectric infrastructure that has significantly contributed to the nation's development. Along the route, one can observe notable feats of engineering, encounter native bird species, and view local salmon farms.

Day 4. Lake Ohau to Omarama to Otematata 78km



Pausing for a photo and a rest after a very steady 11km of incline to the highest point on the route out of Lake Ohau, even with the e-assist it's a bit of hard work as you can see on my face.

The climb out of Lake Ohau is a 11km climb across some quite rough track, but a sense of achievement at the summit 900m above sea level. A very pleasant ride down into Omarama, where we were able to recharge the batteries thanks to a very helpful café owner and a long lunch. This next stage skirts the hydro dam Lake Benmore, New Zealand's largest artificial lake first filled in 1964. This long journey was a big day for us all, so the big dinner at the hotel was much appreciated.



Looking over Lake Benmore to Otematata

Day 5. Otematata to Duntroon (71km)

Passing Lakes Aviemore and Waitaki provides a comprehensive perspective on the scale and significance of the Waitaki power scheme. The route gradually opens up, offering enjoyable cycling along limestone pathways through scenic countryside. At the newly refurbished Duntroon Hotel, we meet a local farmer who permitted the trail to cross his private land. He explains that the trail has revitalized small rural communities, with pubs, cafes, and restaurants serving both trail riders and local residents. He expresses strong support for the investment and development of the trail within the community. Upon entering Kurow, I experienced a mechanical issue when my bike pedal detached; however, the rental company responded promptly by supplying a replacement bicycle, allowing us to continue to Duntroon without significant delay. This segment of the journey is characterized by gentle terrain, traversing picturesque farmland and featuring a predominantly downhill route.



Lake Benmore near Lake Otematata, a bit of a rocky and windy climb up but some stunning viewpoints and narrow pathways.

Day 6. Duntroon to Oamaru (54km)

After a week of fine weather and wind on our backs we are looking forward to our ride to the ocean. The landscape has opened up into open rolling countryside and along a former railway line. We enjoy the countryside, but as we approach Oamaru some dark clouds roll in from the sea and we are pelted with hailstones, thunder and lightning. A dramatic end to a stunning week. We absolutely enjoyed the experience and were a little bit chuffed to complete it.



The finish point in a very cold Oamaru after riding the last 5 kms in a hailstorm. Dale, David Ward and Lindsay Esler cycling companions.



A celebratory glass of champagne at the Riverstone restaurant near Oamaru after nearly 400 kms of cycling over six days.

Story-time—Life in Retirement

By Beatrice Hale—Dunedin.

Member of Clan Cameron Auckland.

Giddy! (from New Zealand of course) or 'Fit like?' (the usual query from an Aberdonian).

And of course, 'Happy New Year' to everyone.

My background

I am a Cameron by allegiance, which is my reason for wanting to belong to this group. I was born a Clark, in Torry, Aberdeen, many years ago! My father, David Clark, swore allegiance to the Cameron Clan, since Clarks are a sept of this great clan. My mother was a Watson, of the Buchanan Clan, from Fife. I have therefore a great ancestry, with loyalty to the land and loyalty to the sea.

Maybe I should show some of my Scottish loyalty by writing this in the Doric? There's muckle tae spik aboot, but ah weel, ye ken, mebbe it's a wee bittie difficult. Ah'd better stick tae English.

So though a loyal Scot, what am I doing in sunny Dunedin? We came here more than fifty years ago for my husband's job, our children are New Zealanders and I have to say we love it! Dunedin is a beaut place to be, with great people. But I do remember my background vividly, and I've always wanted to make sure that my family knew something about their Scottish ancestry.

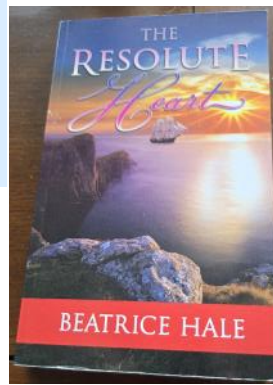
Retirement activities

And on retirement with a bit more time to spare I decided to write down some memories. These grew considerably as I delved into my past, checked with family in Aberdeen who provided more stories, and discussed with friends here, many of whom were also involved with reminiscence work. Eventually it seemed to me that some of my family stories and various memories could be good material for books. I had always wanted to write and in my younger years I wrote about my interest in herbs and herb gardening. And also I wrote on my work, as a social worker with sick older people. But this was a different kind of writing. This was creative, imaginative and exciting. I could see stories emerging as I delved further into my family's history.

The first story was a children's book, *Ice Escape*, telling the story of my grandfather. Skipper Tom Watson, and his incredible crew, of *The Lord Talbot*, a long-line fishing boat. They not only did some fantastic fishing in the deepest northern waters, but they rescued the American Flying Family, pioneer fliers, off the coast of Greenland, when their Sikorsky plane crashed in September 1932. To get to the survivors entailed sailing the boat from the Greenland fishing grounds through Iceberg Alley. A terrifying experience, I imagine. And the weather was beginning to deteriorate, with some fearful possibilities. I spoke to one of the Flying Family survivors some years ago, and she told me 'If it hadn't been for your grandfather, honey, we all woulda died.' Food diminishing, weather worsening, colder and colder. Little chance of survival there!

My grandfather rarely spoke of this rescue, but it was well known round Torry. And I wanted to make it more widely known, as the action of some very great people such as the vision of the Flying Family and the courage and skills of the fishermen.

Then I came across another Watson ancestor, this time from Fife. And information from the Anstruther Museum was very helpful here. My many-greats uncle from Cellardyke was



lieutenant under Nelson.

And he is immensely successful.

I put these stories up on Amazon, and to my surprise and delight they were spotted by the Kellas Cat Press in Aberdeen, resulting in an offer to publish and a request for more, especially featuring the Cameron as hero.

More stories

But before I got on to another Cameron story, other stories were tugging at my mind. So I wrote more about Torry in Aberdeen where I grew up. I wrote about my favourite saint, Fittick, a 7th century monk from Ireland via France, who landed in Nigg Bay and established himself there. *Fittick, Fisher of Men*, tells the imagined story of his early days on the shores of Aberdeen, and then came *Fittick's Farewell*, a series of short stories, with many Torry based reminiscences. Fun to write, but sometimes sad. Stories such as the delight of watching returned servicemen march down the streets, coming back from the war but also with the huge sadness of knowing that some would not come back. And as a child during the war years running down to school holding hands with my best friend while hearing sirens begin. Playing ball or skipping in the streets, (very little traffic then!), playing in the backie or backyard, playing by the river with a splendid playground of swings, seesaw and sandpit. All playgrounds at that time were overseen by old men, known as Grandas. They mended broken equipment and generally kept an eye on things, especially the children playing. No bullying allowed. 'Nae fechtin'. So we didn't dare fight. My goodness, the memories that were called up.

But then back to Cameron! My second book starring Cameron is *The Black Thistle* where he is sent to Paris. He's there to keep an eye on Napoleon who has designs on Scotland becoming independent from England and becoming a closer ally of France. The Auld Alliance still existed in one sense, but there was no intention on the Scottish side at least, to get closer to France than this somewhat emotional link. Certainly for myself I refused to link Scotland with France against England and the rest of Britain. So in the story, Cameron, who shared my views, went to check on Napoleon and if possible, stop Nap's predatory hands from trying to annex Scotland and link it to France. And there is a slight mix-up with whisky smuggling, as well as a possible evolving romantic interest.

Of course Cameron succeeds in keeping Napoleon's hands off Scotland and reports all the doings to his spymasters.

Then we come to the next Cameron book. He has returned home to Edinburgh, where he sees some child kidnapping incidents. The book will deal with his fight against child kidnapping, still rife in the early nineteenth century. Some children are sent off to the colonies and to the Caribbean sugar plantations. Others are sent to the mines, or apprenticed to chimney sweeps. But I'm only half way through this, and it remains a tale to be told. Will he succeed, with others, in putting an end to kidnapping? Will there be a growth in the

romance? What exciting discoveries will he make.
And hopefully, there will be more Cameron stories.

Fun!

So in retirement I am having fun, learning more of my own background and nationality, creating fun stories from these, and finding out all sorts of intriguing things. My world is full of a fascinating past. One example - a slight deviation from Cameron here - while researching the Net for articles on child abductions, I came across Indian Peter, who was kidnapped from Aberdeen in mid-eighteenth century, transported to the

colonies, badly treated, escaped...And so on. He eventually returned to Edinburgh where he wrote about his experiences. The Advocates Library in the Edinburgh Faculty of Advocates has the details, and his manuscript.

We are never too old to learn, to discover, to enjoy!

The books, by the way, are available from Amazon, and I think it's US dollars. *Ice escape* is \$10.79, *The Resolute Heart* is \$11.59, and *Fittick Fisher of Men* is \$10.79 and *Fittick's Farewell* is \$9.99.



Lochiel—winter at Inverlair

Inverlair Lodge in the snow



Bothy is enjoying the snow



Carn Dearg and the North Face of Ben Nevis at sunrise.



Lochiel outside the Natural history museum in London



Inverness Castle.



Achnacarry Castle in Winter Photo: Achnacarry



The North Face, Ben Nevis



Bill Cameron's Images of Scotland taken while running.



The band leads the Street March into the park.



Our banner party getting ready, Iona Cameron , Jean McQueen, Sarah McQueen, Dale, and Duncan McQueen. Iona's granddaughter watches on.

Waipu Highland Games

Photos: Neil, Jean, Duncan, Dale



Rob, Hillary and Dale in the march



Ready for business. Duncan, Neil, Cass, Sarah, Hillary, Dale and Rob.



Duncan, Hillary and Jean.



First Lighter Sarah, Noel Armstrong, Duncan and Jean ready for the opening parade.