

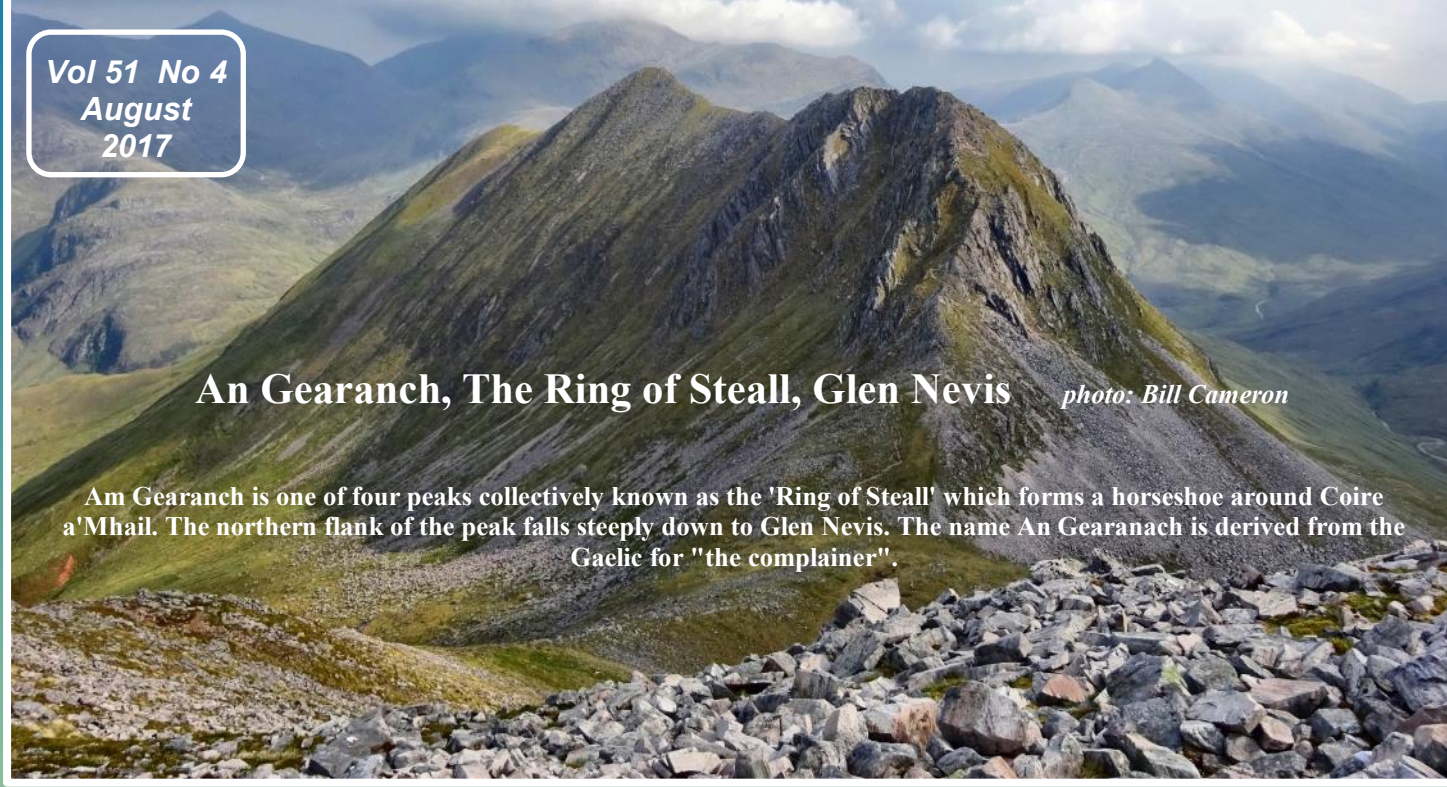


Cameron



The Magazine of Clan Cameron New Zealand Inc.

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An Gearanch, The Ring of Steall, Glen Nevis *photo: Bill Cameron*

Am Gearanch is one of four peaks collectively known as the 'Ring of Steall' which forms a horseshoe around Coire a'Mhail. The northern flank of the peak falls steeply down to Glen Nevis. The name An Gearanach is derived from the Gaelic for "the complainer".



Estancia Lochiel, Patagonia. see page 10 and 11. *photos: Heather Cameron*

“Cameron”

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

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A Message from our Commissioner...

Dear Clansfolk,

The weather in the last few months for us in the South Island has been great until recently when we have been hit by a snow storm which has slowed down some of our outside activities a little. During the snow period when we were laboratory bound I was asked by a young piper (Cameron Sinclair) whom I employ if I knew of the tune “Hector the Hero”, which we had played some years ago with the pipe band as a slow air. The tune was composed as a tribute to Sir Hector MacDonald who was born in 1853. His parents were crofters near Dingwall, Scotland (the home of my great grandfather). I was intrigued to discover that Hector had risen to the rank of Major General in the British army and one of only a few British Army generals who rose from the ranks on his own merit and professionalism. He turned down a Victoria Cross award for bravery to accept a commission in his regiment. The tune was composed by a Scottish composer and fiddler James Scott Skinner in 1903. For those that might be interested - a great version of this tune can be listened to in the middle of the medley of the Inveraray & District Pipe Band competing in the “Worlds” in 2015 on You Tube.

On the subject of heros – my Uncle John Cameron receives the Medal of “Knight of the French Legion of Honor” this month which most of my immediate family will attend in Wellington, while my brother Andrew Cameron has had a book published about his activities working for the Red Cross in areas such as Sierra Leon during the Ebola disaster to war zones such as Afghanistan following his distinguished alumni award from Massey University. The book is entitled : “A Nurse on the Edge of the Desert : From Birdsville to Kandahar: The Art of Extreme Nursing”. The book is published by Massey University Press and is due for release on 28th August 2017.

Julie and I are looking forward to our forthcoming visits to the Auckland and Palmerston North branch events in the 3rd week of August. If they are even half as well done as last year – these nights should be well worth attending. I would encourage Cameron’s who are involved in interesting activities to write an article about what they are doing for Neil (our newsletter editor). It might be something like “why I am an A2 milk producer”, or “why I made a film about Avatars”, or “why we use and market Merino and Opposum fibre in the McKenzie country”, or in Neil Cameron’s (not the editor) case – “why I am currently on Mount Everest and not currently minding my farm in the Wairarapa!!.

Keep warm. Cheers,

Nick.



2018 Australian Clan Gathering on the Gold Coast

John Cameron of Operatunity Travel (and a member of Clan Cameron NZ), who organised the tour to Scotland for the 2009 Gathering, has put together a package for folk that wish to attend this gathering on 20—23 April 2018.

A brochure and registration form has been sent to all members, and both have been placed on our web site. **Please support this ‘no worries’ travel as a group**

**Clan Cameron New Zealand
Website**

www.clanameronnz.co.nz



Next Magazine Deadline is 15 Sept.

Printed By

Close call earns Robbie's first title

By Adyn Ogle

Kickboxer Robbie Cameron-Henry is getting used to being hit and now has a title. Less than two years into the sport, 16-year-old Robbie claimed the Central North Island Middleweight Thai Kickboxing Championship on Saturday. He beat 19-year-old Rotorua fighter Renata Hurae at the Next Generation Muay Thai tournament held in Waihi. Robbie gave away weight, height and experience to the older fighter and beat Hurae after a split-points decision. It was the third time the two had fought after splitting the previous bouts. "Being hit takes some getting used to, I was really covering up when I started. But I have become more confident in the ring." Robbie said he became interested in the sport after watching a friend fight in the annual Mortal Combat Fight Night held in Whakatane. Robbie, who represents Whakatane Fight Club, is planning



Robbie Cameron-Henry with his Central North Island Middleweight Thai Kickboxing Championship and his coach Carl Cowley. Photo Adyn Ogle

to fight in this year's Fight Night on November 11. Whakatane Fight Club head coach Carl Cowley, a former boxing, kickboxing and Muay Thai champion, said Robbie finished the fight well. "Going into the last minute of the last round it was still too close to call, but Robbie showed signs of maturity and composure to close out the round with strong and accurate combinations." Cowley told Robbie the hardest part of being a good champion is not winning the title, it is defending the title. As the fight was so close, Cowley said Robbie's first title

defence will be against Hurae at November's Fight Night. "The pressure of retaining his title and performing well at home in front of a large crowd with many family and friends will be good for his overall development as there is now interest in Robbie to join the national age-group kickboxing team going to Thailand next March."

Robbie is the son of Bay of Plenty President Tanya Cameron

With thanks to Adyn Ogle and the Whakatane Beacon

First Marathon on St. Kilda

It has been uninhabited for more than 80 years and is 41 miles from the nearest land. But a teacher has become the first person to complete a marathon on the remote archipelago of St. Kilda.

Bill Cameron, from Fort William, undertook the 26.2 mile challenge by running two-and-a-half circuits around the island.

His route took him dangerously near treacherous cliffs and up gradients thousands of feet high as he pounded over the rocky terrain. He also had to fend off angry seabirds who were dive-bombing him.

The Lochaber High School teacher plotted his route carefully and left bottles of water, energy bars and apples at strategic points along the way. Mr Cameron said "I ran a half marathon there in 2015, when I went to St. Kilda for a day visit, but I really wanted to challenge myself and do the full 26.2 miles

"I have checked and, as far as I know, I'm the first person to run a marathon there.

"I set off at sunrise which was 3.30am and it took me seven hours altogether. It was very hard-going and I was relieved to finish.

"I realised during the run that I was daft to leave out

the snacks on the route as they would probably be eaten by the sheep or the famous St. Kilda mouse, but I was lucky and they were still there.

"I was also dive-bombing by seabirds who were protecting their young. Fortunately, I managed to find a stick and piece of rope, so I tied the two together and whirled this around my head as I ran to keep them off."

It was the 43-year-old's fifth marathon and he was determined to complete it to commemorate Lochaber's connections with the last of the islanders.

A World Heritage Site, St. Kilda lies 41 miles west of Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides. It's last 36 human residents were evacuated to the mainland in 1930.

Many of these settled in Lochaline on the

Ardnamurchan peninsula.

"They only spoke Gaelic and didn't understand a word of English. Also it was the first time anyone had seen a tree when they arrived in Lochaber, but ironically some of the men went to work with the Forestry Commission."

(With thanks to Martha Vaughan, The Herald, and The Press and Journal)

By Editor: Bill is well known to us as a First Lighter and regular contributor to this magazine. Look forward to his article on Highland Dress, to be published in the next issue.



Photo by: Marcus McAdam.

From the Branches....

The views expressed in these reports are those of the writers. Some have been lightly edited.

Auckland by Norman Cameron

The Kirkin' O' the Tartan was held at St Andrews Church, Symond Street, on the 25th of June. Clan Cameron was represented by Brian & Pam Cameron, Norman Cameron, Bryan & Jenny Haggitt, with Bryan Haggitt carrying the Clan Cameron Banner. The other clans who had banners were Clan Davidson, Clan Campbell, Clan Stewart, Clan Donald and Clan Matheson with Malcolm Campbell being the piper. After the service we retired to the supper room, where coffee & tea were served, Haggis with buns and butter was on the tables.

We are counting down to our Mid-Winter Dinner on Saturday the 12th of August and I hope we can get a good attendance. The guest speaker is Brian Cameron who is talking about his sword collection, Rex Garland is arranging the music which is usually very good. We have some interesting prizes for the raffle that Jill and I purchased in Scotland.

Clan Cameron Auckland Branch has given a donation towards the St Kentigern Pipes & Drums current trip to the Basle Tattoo.

On Sunday the 16th of July the Auckland Branch of Clan Cameron had a luncheon at the Northcote Tavern in the Scottish Room. This room has a lot of Scottish memorabilia with every Clan having their crest on the wall, very impressive. Eleven Clansmen and friends had a very enjoyable meal. A special mention must be made of Dorothy Cameron-Gavin who had her son James and her granddaughter Chloe with her.

Bay of Plenty by Tanya Cameron

Since the last magazine, we have done little to further our Clan. Our Committee met in May to discuss the upcoming AGM and we were surprised by the resignation of Ray Crafts from his positions held in the branch. As Ray was not going to be present at the AGM, it was timely that he was able to let us know in advance.

We held our Annual General Meeting on the 11th of June and this was attended by a small number of our members at Denis & Joy Cameron's home. All Officers and Committee members were returned to office unopposed except unfortunately we had to accept the resignation of Ray Crafts from his positions of Piper/Bard/Haggis addressee. Rex and Harold thanked Ray for the many years he has been involved in Clan Cameron in the above positions and he has also been a vice president and on the entertainment committee for a number of years. The AGM was followed by afternoon tea. We were happy to be hosting out of town visitors Trish and Mike Topham at our AGM and hope they enjoyed themselves. At our AGM we noted that subscriptions would stand at \$25.00 and these are now due. We are lucky with our members that subscriptions are mostly paid promptly.

There is a Rotorua Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists DNA Seminar on Saturday 29th July 2017 at The Rotorua Bridge Club (Neil Hunt Park off Tarawera Road, Rotorua) from 9.am to 4pm. I am still deciding about getting



my DNA done but know others that have and I am interested in finding out more and I am looking forward to attending. I know when I head down to the Manawatu dinner in August there will be several people I can discuss this with also.

Representing the Clan Cameron BOP Branch I will be attending the Auckland and Manawatu dinners in August, and I am looking forward to catching up with everyone at both. When I come through to the Auckland dinner, there is an interesting looking event I will be attending that I hope to gain a lot of information from. The Auckland Family History Expo 2017 at the Fickling Convention Centre - 546 Mt Albert Road, Three Kings, Auckland is on all weekend from Friday Evening, and all day Saturday and Sunday.

Our Clan Cameron BOP Branch is looking to host their Christmas function late October early November so we hope to see some of you there and will let you know the dates in the next magazine for those that would like to join us.

Safe travels and Good Health

Unfortunately as the Clan Cameron Magazine was going to print, we were advised of the sad passing of our BOP Branch Patron Harold Cameron. Harold died on Sunday 16th July 2017 with the funeral being held at The Orchards 475 seat auditorium in Te Puke on Wednesday 19th July 2017 followed by a bountiful send off at the Te Puke Golf Club. I was among a great many that had turned out to farewell Harold, including Denis and Joy Cameron, Fraser, Elaine and Mary-Anne Cameron, Pat and Rex Cameron, Ray and Janet Crafts and Neil Cameron our beloved magazine editor. These were only the Clan Cameron members I saw - not necessarily the only ones there. The stories were many and varied and there was a photo projector running with photos of a wonderful family enjoying their years together.

We are very sad with his passing and know that Betty and Harold's family will always have their memories and that we will still see them at our gatherings.

Canterbury by Rae Magson

Late in May we held an executive meeting to discuss the Clan Cameron NZ Gathering and AGM to be held in this area in April 2017. Date will be advised in the next newsletter. We hope lots of members will be able to attend. It may be cold at the present time but it is not always like this.

Otherwise we have been living quietly, but we were delighted to read in the newspaper how well the son of one of our members has done in the national AgriKids competition in the Manawatu. Angus Wallace is aged 13 years and the son of Clan Cameron member, Sharon Wallace. With two other youngsters Angus took out the event for 8 to 13 years in Feilding last week, defeating 20 other teams in the process. The competition involved a wide range of events, including writing an essay, completing practical modules such as mixing fertiliser and tractor safety checks and an observation section where contestants were shown things briefly before answering questions about what they had seen. All three plan to work in the agricultural sector after they finish school. They worked hard to raise money needed for the trip. The Geraldine community helped them reach the fund-raising target.

Well done, Angus, we are proud of you.

Hawke's Bay by Helen Shaw

In June Trish and Mike attended the Bay of Plenty Branch A.G.M. They enjoyed their



Welcome to the following Members who have recently joined us:

Canterbury Branch:

Simon Cameron

Twizel

Auckland Branch:

Allan and Morea Cameron

Blenheim

Ceud Mile Fáilte

One Hundred

Thousand Welcomes

hospitality and meeting other members of the branch. Members also attended the Clan Donald Scottish Dinner held at Havelock North on 1st July where an excellent evening with Scottish music and dancing was enjoyed by all who attended.

Manawatu by Anne Walker

Clan Cameron Manawatu are preparing for their Annual mid-winter dinner, which will be held on Saturday August 19th.

The venue for the dinner this year will be the historic Caccia Birch House, 130 Te Awe Awe Street, Palmerston North, an Historic Place's Grade 1 Listed Property. Caccia Birch is one of the oldest homesteads in Palmerston North, built in 1895. It became a temporary residence for Governor Lord Plunkett in 1908 – 1910, and was gifted to the city in 1940.

All Clan Cameron Manawatu members are looking forward to hosting Clan Cameron New Zealand President Nick Cameron and guests from other Clan branches. Dale Bailey, a long time Clan Cameron member now employed as the Director, Strategy and Collections at Te Papa, Museum of New Zealand, will be our Guest Speaker for the night. Dale has taken a keen interest in Te Papa's Scottish collections and future planned exhibitions and will speak on this topic.

All Clan Members are warmly invites to join us for this event. For more information please email - Clan Cameron Manawatu Secretary Anne Walker akwalker@xtra.co.nz, or phone 027 415 4105

Iar by Shona Wallace

A very quiet time for Clan Cameron Iar at the moment. Some members have had nasty colds that hang on so everyone is laying low. We did have a meeting in early June which was held in Waverley. That being a midway point for all. Very well attended apart from the President and Secretary. I was pretty ill at the time and Neville stayed to



look after me. Sadly it has delayed my hip operation for a while.

We have a new member who originally comes from the East Coast so we are very happy to welcome Felicity Cameron to our midst. We will meet again in late September.

Saint Kentigern College Ceilidh. by Bryan Haggitt

The College's Annual Ceilidh was the usual outstanding success. Despite the weather, Elliott Hall was filled, an excellent Dinner, The Saint Kentigern College Pipes and Drums performed with distinction and Wee Jock's Ceilidh Band had even the geriatrics dancing.

The evening was also a fund raiser for the Pipes and Drums about to take part in the Military Tattoo in Basle, Switzerland. Having performed outstandingly 18 months ago at the Edinburgh Tattoo held in Wellington, the Pipes and Drums were invited to Basle, the World's second largest Military Tattoo – an enormous honour! Clan Cameron NZ, Auckland Branch, has donated \$250 to the cause.

A superb evening musically – the massed Pipes and Drums, a Drumming demonstration and solo Piping. John Hawthorn, Clan Donald stalwart and leader of Wee Jock's Band, waxes lyrical about the standard of music at the College. Wee Jock's Band takes aboard several student musicians for the evening – fiddlers, a drummer and a pianist.

The Clan Cameron connections – MC was Duncan McQueen, Head of Middle School, as always full of humour, Glenn Rogers, Pipes and Drums' Drumming Tutor and Heather Laird – fiddler with Wee Jock's Band. There will have been others - Jenny and I attended thanks to Duncan squeezing us in and we were seated with the Prefects who were excellent company. A bit of mirth when school numbers were compared – my 89 to my neighbour's 14137!

A delightful evening, extremely well organised, ended with Pipers playing from the balcony – a very moving conclusion. We wish the College Pipes and Drums every success in Basle.



Coming Events:

Further events and details on our web site

Saturday 12 August 2017

Auckland Branch Annual Dinner.

At the Quality Hotel, Parnell 6pm for 6.30pm. Ticket price \$60 This will be the 30th anniversary of the 1st dinner of the present Auckland branch. Enquiries to Norman or Neil Cameron.

11-13 August

Auckland Family History Expo 2017

Fickling Convention Centre - 546 Mt Albert Road, Three Kings, Auckland.

Saturday 19 August 2017

Manawatu Branch Annual Dinner

Dale Bailey, from Te Papa, will be the guest speaker.

Enquiries to Anne Walker akwalker@xtra.co.nz.

See website for brochure

Saturday 16 September 2017

Executive Council Meeting.

Parklands Motor Lodge Conference Room, 25 Arahori Street, Turangi.

The motel will provide the conference room at no charge if some of the delegates stay there. Room \$125 a night.

Ph: 0800 456 284

info@parklandsmotorlodge.co.nz

Sunday 8th October 2017

Kirkin O' the Tartan Service

at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Turakina 2pm.

Come and enjoy a Scottish service Enquiries: Roz Grant 06 327 3655

tullochgorum@xtra.co.nz

20-23 April 2018

Clan Cameron Gathering 2018 -

Australia

Gold Coast, Queensland.

Information on Gathering facebook page

Date of Clan Cameron NZ Gathering in Ashburton will be advised.

The Massed Bands at the Tartan Day Tattoo - North Shore Event Centre. Photo: Ed.



At the AgriKids competition in the Manawatu: *The winning team from South Canterbury included Angus Wallace, son of Canterbury Clan Cameron member Sharon Wallace. Left: William Wilson, Jess Furrer and Angus Wallace. Centre: William Wilson, Angus Wallace, Te Radar (host) and Jess Furrer. Right: The winning team with their certificates.* Photos: Sharon Wallace



Photo: Elizabeth Shearer



Photo: Elizabeth Shearer

Cameron family group before Harold's funeral: L-R: Neil Penman next to his partner Ann Cameron (H&B's daughter), then Sylvia, Kelly, John, Betty & Lisa Cameron.

Sue Muir (Pipe Major & Band Leader) and two members of the Te Puke Pipe Band



Photo: Elizabeth Shearer



Photo: Editor

At Harold Cameron's Funeral

Left: Owen Shearer, Neil, Denis, Joy, Patricia and Rex Cameron

Above: Elaine, Tanya, Joy, Denis and Fraser Cameron

Right: The Editor and Denis in a contemplative mood



Photo: Tanya

Another picture from the past -



Lochiel and Lady Margaret at Casa Loma, Lower Hutt, home of John and Shirley Cameron, in March 1986. The piper is the late Rodney Cameron. *Photo from Rodney's grandson, Rob Cameron, now a committee member of the Auckland Branch.*



The home farm buildings, Estancia Lochiel, Patagonia



The manager's house at Estancia Lochiel



The Globe Tavern, Port Stanley, Falkland Islands



John Cameron propping up the bar in the Globe Tavern

A Mighty Tōtara Has Fallen

Matthew Harold CAMERON MBE, JP

15 March 1932 - 16 July 2017

Around 500 mourners gathered in Te Puke on July 19 to farewell Harold Cameron, a past Clan Cameron New Zealand President, who had passed away on July 16, aged 85.

Matthew Harold Cameron was born in Te Puke in 1932 to Matthew (Matt) Cameron and Ethel, a 4th generation member of the Cuff family and also from Te Puke. Harold's brother, James Barry Cameron, was born in 1934.

Matt was from West Gilston Mains farm, near Largo in the East Neuk of Fife. In 1924, at the age of 17, he migrated to New Zealand under a farm cadet settlement scheme.

While growing up in the Otamarakau Valley, near Te Puke, Harold was a pupil at the local primary school. He delighted in being one of the oldest pupils attending the Otamarakau School centenary in June 2016. From 1945-47, Harold attended New Plymouth High School as a boarder.

In 1948, Harold returned to help his father Matt (along with Barry) on the family farm at Otamarakau. During the same year, Harold met Betty McKenzie at a nearby tennis party.

After travelling south to Wellington on the last passenger train before the Tangiwai rail disaster on Christmas Eve 1953, Harold left by ship for 4 months in Scotland with brother Barry and their second cousin, Ian Cameron MacNiven. Ian had arrived in 1949 from St Andrews in Scotland and lived with the Cameron family while working in the Te Puke area. Back in Fife, the boys spent time with Matt's family and the extended Cameron family.

Harold married Betty in February 1957 and dairy farmed at Otamarakau Valley and Pongakawa. They brought up three children - John, Allan (killed in a tractor accident in 1983) and Ann. Harold and Betty have two granddaughters.

As a keen sportsman, Harold participated over the years in tennis, golf, trout and salmon fishing, rugby, badminton, table tennis and shooting. His desire to get rid of magpies and rabbits on his farm was legendary, and so were his results. Harold and Betty were great supporters of local and regional rugby and travelled widely in doing so.

Harold actively took part in numerous community activities in the Western Bay of Plenty district. These included the local Young Farmer's Club, School Committee, Parent Teacher Association, Domain Board, and Federated

Farmers, plus the Tauranga Acclimatisation Society, Tauranga Highland Games Committee and the Te Puke Rotary Club (32 years). Harold was also a trustee of the Tauranga Energy Consumer Trust. He was a JP from 1983, and in 2010, he was the inaugural Te Puke District Citizen of the Year.

From 1971-1982, Harold was a Tauranga County Council representative then served as its Chairman from 1983-1989. His years of community service and local government involvement were rewarded with an MBE in 1993.

Together with Betty, Harold was a staunch and long time supporter of Clan Cameron. They hosted Sir Donald and Lady Margaret Cameron of Lochiel in 1986. Harold served as the President of the Clan Cameron New Zealand from 1991-1997, and during his term, the organisation's constitution was updated. He also served as the Bay of Plenty Branch President from 1996-2000. For his services to the organisation, Harold was awarded Life Membership of the Bay of Plenty Branch in 2001 and Life Membership of Clan Cameron New Zealand in 2002.

Harold and Betty attended a number of Clan Cameron gatherings at Achnacarry Castle in the 1990s. Harold was a descendant of Camerons who have been traced back as far as the 1620s to the parishes of Galston and Loudoun, where they farmed for over 300 years in the Irvine Valley. From an oral family recording, it was claimed that these Camerons originally came from Glengarry in the Highlands to Ayrshire and that they were Covenanter Camerons.

In 1878, Harold's great grandfather, Matthew Cameron, and his wife Helen Paterson and family moved to East Fife. In 2005, Harold and Betty took part in an international gathering of the Fife Cameron descendants at Cameron Hall, in the parish of Cameron, near St Andrews.

Kith and kin were very important to Harold and while he suffered a stroke in 2009, his interest in people, the Western Bay of Plenty, local iwi, CCNZ and sport didn't diminish. Betty was always lovingly supportive and caring of her husband.

They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in February of this year with their entire wedding party. Harold's granddaughters, Lisa and Kelly Cameron, remembered him as being humble, wise, generous, supportive, and with a great sense of humour. He was prepared to listen to all points of view, never complained and applied common sense to all issues.

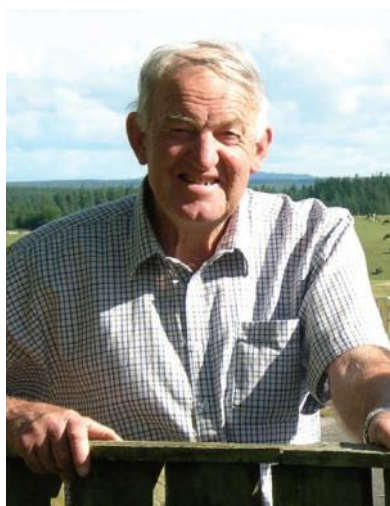
As a member of the local Otamarakau iwi said at Harold's funeral, a mighty tōtara has fallen in the forest. Harold will be much missed by kith and kin, the community and our clan.

"A well respected gentleman within the community & Clan Cameron NZ"

~ Elizabeth H Shearer (nee MacNiven) with additional information from John Cameron and Denis Cameron.



Harold and Betty at Cameron Hall, Fife, 2005



Harold on the farm 2006

Vale

Jean CAMERON (née McLagan)

Jean Cameron, loved wife of Ewen Cameron for almost 66 years, mother of Alistair and Neil Cameron and Elizabeth Cheetham, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away in Masterton on 30 June 2017.

Jean was born in Dannevirke. Her father had come from Scotland after WW1 following his discharge from the Kings Own Scottish Borderers and her connections with Scotland and strong sense of Scottish values and traditions remained with her always. She trained as a teacher and taught at several schools in Masterton before her marriage and spent most of the rest of her life supporting the family farm at Mauriceville.

Jean had a broad range of skills and interests including agriculture, music (playing violin in the Masterton Orchestra as well as the piano), creative arts (painting, quilting and producing



exquisite embroideries including a section of the magnificent wall hangings donated by the New Zealand Embroidery Guild to the new Globe Theatre in London) and actively participating in many community activities ranging from Country Womens Institute, Masterton Ranfurly Club, golf and Probus to IT (being an early tutor of Senior Net classes).

Interested in her Scottish heritage and traditions, Jean actively supported Clan Cameron in many areas including visits by Lochiel when Ewen was appointed Lochiel's Honorary Piper in New Zealand. She visited Scotland and the ancestral lands of both the Camerons and her maternal forebears (McLagans, Pringles and Robertsons).

Jean always insisted that women should be independent and strong, and was a shining example of this herself. She encouraged her family, children and grandchildren to pursue a love of learning, honesty and kindness. Jean had a very full life, a very well-lived life and was a very well-loved friend to us all. It was standing room only at her large funeral service in Masterton, an indication of the high regard in which Jean was held by family and friends throughout the Wairarapa.

by Elizabeth Cheetham and Alastair Cameron

Family Stories versus Official Records - Part 1

By David Weston—Clan Genealogist

Recent articles by Roger Cameron (Clan Cameron member from New South Wales) in our Magazine and subsequent contact with him has got me thinking about how we go about tracing our ancestors. Roger and I are both descended from John Cameron and Janet McGregor from the Morvern area of Scotland who settled in Turakina.

Among those who have researched this family there has always been debate about their age and parentage as official records are sparse. They were supposedly around 100 years when they died late 1880 and early 1881 although their age when they migrated to New Zealand given as 49 and 44 makes them some 10 years younger. Their respective parents according to family tradition were given as Angus Cameron and Anne McIntyre for John, and John McGregor and Anne St Clair for Janet. John Cameron was also meant to various family members who fought at Preston Pans, Culloden and the Napoleonic Wars.

Attempts to trace their parents and the various soldier relations through official records have so far been unable to verify the details. There are two possible reactions to this:

1. The family stories are wrong
2. Official records are incomplete

The first approach tries to find other records which will fit in with what we do know about John and Janet, and given the popularity of the names Janet and John in the time period 1700 to 1850 it is possible to find official records that will match to some extent. None though can produce a John, son of Angus Cameron and Anne McIntyre or a Janet daughter of John McGregor and Anne St Clair. There is also no clarity around baptism records of John and Janet's children as ages and names do not tally with the ones that came to New



Zealand. If you consider the other approach there is support from the rider given on the web site Scotland's People, www.scotlandspire.gov.uk. In their guide to the Baptism Records is the following comment:

“The Old Parish Registers (OPRs) comprise the records of births and baptisms, banns and marriages and deaths and burials kept by individual parishes of the Established Church (Church of Scotland) before the introduction of civil registration in 1855. The parish minister or the session clerk usually assumed responsibility for maintaining the registers, but since there was no standard format employed, record keeping varied enormously from parish to parish and also from year to year. As a result, the information may be sparse, unreliable and difficult to read. The oldest register dates from 1553 (baptisms and banns from Errol, Perthshire), but although there was a requirement from 1552 that parishes record baptisms and marriages, many did not commence until much later, and some more remote areas only have registers from the early 19th century. Some registers have been lost or destroyed and the condition of the surviving 3500 is variable. The National Records of Scotland holds the surviving original registers. Registration in the Church of Scotland's registers was costly and unpopular, so many people did not bother to register events at all. Although details of some non-conformists can be found in Established Church registers, many members of other religious denominations chose to have events registered in their own churches. In addition, rapid urbanisation during the 19th century contributed to the diminishing influence of the Church and a decrease in registration in these areas. It was estimated at the time that as few as 30% of events actually occurring were being recorded for some urban parishes.”

Thus the owners of the records themselves acknowledge that the records are not complete.

By Editor: Due to shortage of space this article will be continued in the next issue

A Cameron story to the end of the earth.

Oh, to have asked more questions and listened harder

By Heather Cameron

Our forebears came from a tiny village known as Cille Mhaire (now Kilmarie) in the Parish of Strath. It borders on Loch Slapin on the south of the Isle of Skye, where now little but the remnants of the graveyard remain.

Skye was no stranger to the injustice and brutality of The Scottish Clearances. By removing uneconomical tenants, landlords made room for more profitable use of the land, particularly sheep farming but also deer forests and tourism even back in the 1800s. Although tenants were generally treated according to due process of law – served with notices of eviction and given time (typically three months) to vacate – those who refused were treated harshly. Many were sent to the colonies. Ironically these forcibly evicted people often found themselves becoming shepherds and later sheep farmers in countries such as New Zealand and Australia. It was slightly different with my family.

It appears that my great-grandfather saw the writing on the wall and left Skye sometime during 1844-46, before eviction in that area was enforced. The family moved to the mainland and modestly prospered. Of his four sons, Norman served in the British Army in India, where he subsequently died, Murdoch went to Canada, where he drowned, while Alexander remained in Scotland. And Keith, my great-uncle, a gamekeeper, went to the Falkland Islands as an employee of the Falklands Islands Company in 1867, aged 27. He wrote to his brother, my great-grandfather Norman, about his life:

April 1868

I still continue to like this place well enough. There is not much society. There are about 12 wooden houses in the settlement of which I occupy one and the shepherds' houses are scattered up and down the camp...I very often take a turn out into the camp, of course on horseback. No one thinks of walking here. At first I was a very poor equestrian, but now I can ride like a gaucho...it is a very healthy country. I have not had a day's illness since I came.

He prospered and established himself in the trading and farming industries. When he took up land in Port San Carlos (the first landing place of the British forces during the 1982 Falklands War), he had sheep farming in mind. He was involved with the innovation of freezing works on the Islands and on trading ships.

It is presumed that Keith invited his nephew, Jock, my

grandfather in 1891 to work with him. He was aged 27 and also a gamekeeper. It was here that Jock met my grandmother, Fran, who came from a local entrepreneurial trading family. They married and Jock became the manager of the sheep farm at Port San Carlos – the opportunity of a life time. They raised eight children, my father, Ian, being the fifth child. The family travelled constantly and widely to Patagonia, Santiago, Buenos Aires, the UK, The West Indies, USA and Europe, before moving to the south of England in the 1920s.

My grandparents died circa 1940. The farm remains in Keith's family.

I was raised on the mythology of the family's beginnings in the Falkland Islands. Tales of children being ferried around in donkey panniers, of herbal recipes in lieu of medical help, the harsh climate and ever-blowing wind, driving across the frozen sea at Punta Arenas, a man whose severed leg was bandaged in place and froze, subsequently healed, tonsils (or teeth) being extracted without anesthetics by

the patient being strapped to a chair. I was told that sheepskins were worn to keep warm in winter, covering yourself with extra layers at night. Bathing was out of the question. Conditions were primitive, there were no services and travel was on horseback.

I was drawn to discover more. After retiring, I asked my brother, John, if he would be interested in going on a trip to the bottom of the world (almost), to see for ourselves places where our father had lived.

We set off in February 2013. First stop was Santiago, where we were able to see what was left of Jock and Fran's house. A cruise took us through the Chilean fjords, and around Cape Horn. It was in Punta Arenas in Southern Patagonia, a thriving town with wonderful Victorian architecture that we realised how well established our family had been in that part of the

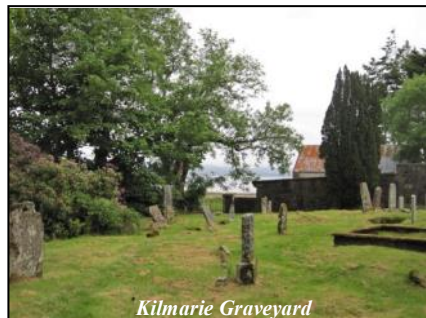
world. We visited the family mausoleum in the rather grand city cemetery and read memorials (often tragic, such as death by drowning, accidental shooting, tuberculosis) to a distinguished family who contributed to the development of sheep farming, trading, banking and beyond in Patagonia, true entrepreneurs.

At an Estancia outside Punta Arenas we saw a handwritten letter of offer that might have sparked young men to go to the Falklands:

15 July 1884

Your application in reply to my advertisement in the 'People's Journal' for shepherds to the Falkland Islands.... The engagement is for five years and the wages for that period have now been considerably increased being at the rate of £45 for the first year £55 for the second year and £60 each for the third, fourth and fifth years

with a free railway ticket to the port of embarkation and a free passage out by steamer. After 5 years' satisfactory service,



Kilmarie Graveyard



Walking beside Loch Slapin



Braun Mendez Palace (1906) Museum, Puntas Arenas

should those who are engaged care for remaining on the Islands, remuneration at the rate of £5/10- per month will be given and after 10 years' service £6 per month.

A preference will be given to young men under 30 years of age who have been accustomed to hill pasture.

The men engaged will sail by the steamer Memes leaving Dartmouth on 15th September next...return the enclosed form at once along with certificates of character and ability for at least five years back...

In addition to the above wages the shepherds engaged will be allowed lodgings and 2 lbs of meat daily free.

Port Stanley in the Falklands (pop 1899: 1,800, now 2,800) is like an English village. In March 2013, just prior to the Referendum on the Islanders support, or not, for the continuation of being an Overseas Territory of the UK, it was obvious from the display of Union Jacks wherever you went, that the people were Anglo-centric.

Keith and Jock are remembered and referred to as KC and JG to this day. A guide at the Falkland Islands War Museum was the daughter of the Camerons' nanny at Port San Carlos in the 1950s and spoke affectionately of them. Visiting the gravestones of my great-grandmother and members of my family at the simple cemetery overlooking the entrance to Port Stanley was powerfully moving.

Port San Carlos is 108 km from Port Stanley. On a good day it takes about three hours on the rugged gravel roads. The moor-like terrain is not unlike Skye. The Falklands climate is harsh, the wind blows hard constantly so that the few trees are bent. Sheep can tolerate the weather, as can penguins and kelp – and the Scots!

The family company later took up land and started estancias (farms) in Eastern Patagonia, using sheep from the Falklands farm. They were called Guankenaike, Gueraike, Killikaike, Cancha Distante in the Santa Cruz Province, and Lochiel (after the Clan Chief) slightly further north in the Chubut province.

Here the climate is also harsh, dry, windy and cold, with occasional snow during the winter. It is perhaps one of the windiest places on earth (av 50kph daily, 100kph exceptional). Winter temperatures average -2° to 5°C, but can sink to -20°C. Summers are extremely windy and cloudy, an average of 7° - 19°C. Not much sunshine.

The terrain is pampas: flat, tussocky, darkish green and grey, no trees, with long

gradual hills (the Andes foothills) to the west.



On Estancia Lochiel, typical Patagonian terrain

We decided to drive from Comodoro Rivadavia in Patagonia to visit Lochiel, 265km. The road was straight and isolated. We saw as many guanacos (an animal between a llama and an alpaca) as sheep, cars, towns or buildings.

The Lochiel Sheep Farming Company was established in 1897 by Keith and Jock who took up land in the vicinity of Camarones Bay and named it Estancia Lochiel. We were amazed to discover that this was the birth place of the Argentinian President Juan Peron 1895-1974). It is 147,000 hectares and

runs 47,000 sheep (nowadays Corriedales). Normally there are eight workers with one dog per man, including gauchos, a cook and a boss. A team of 23 workers comes in for shearing (10 shearers plus assistants and a cook). It takes about 4–5 weeks, with one man shearing roughly 130 sheep a day.

The estancia is rustic, homely and cared for. Food growing is necessary, but difficult, having to be protected from the wind all year round. Although rainfall is low, low-lying water is plentiful and windmills are a familiar sight. Survival in the early

days meant being resourceful, and the Scottish Highlands' people must have contributed greatly to this.

On the property itself you see many guanacos (protected) and wild horses, some of which are caught, broken in and trained by the gauchos, as sheep are still mustered on horseback.

Nowadays estancias have become popular as game resorts. How the past repeats itself. The Isle of Skye was popular with the gentry, the rich and the famous throughout the world in the 1800s with its game lodges for hunting and fishing.

When researching the trip, it was hard to find Lochiel even on Google Maps. It was not until we actually visited that we discovered it had been expropriated by the Argentine Generals during the Falkland Islands War (1982) when it was renamed Estancia Argentina and used as an army barracks for reserve troops. It has reverted, but the two name signs are both visible. Lochiel remained in the family until the late 1970s. It was wonderful to stand outside this place called Lochiel 13,000 km from Skye, in the cold, fresh air and vast, open isolation to think about what it would have been like 120 years ago when it all began.

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Heather is the sister of Auckland Branch committee member John Cameron.



A view of the Falkland Islands



Sheep mustering



Keith Cameron in full Highland Dress



Aonaibh ri Cheile The Back Page



Photo: Norman Cameron



Photo: St Kentigern College

Above: St. Kentigern Ceilidh: Duncan, Jean and Andrew McQueen, Jenny and Bryan Haggitt.

Below: Kirkin' O' the Tartan at St. Andrew's Church, Auckland.



Photo: Ed

Above: At the Auckland Luncheon at the Northcote Tavern

Dorothy Cameron-Gavin with her son James and granddaughter Chloe.

Elaine Ebbett, Colin Cameron and Jill Cameron.

Left: Dorothy Cameron-Gavin with her great grand-daughter. Dane Riley Trass Congratulations, Dorothy.



Photo: Lauren



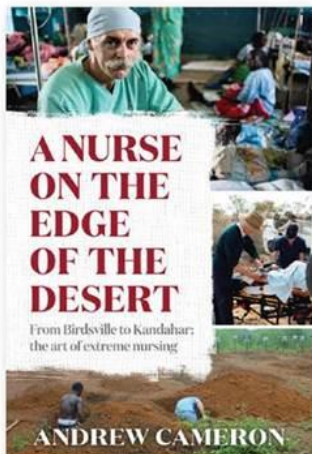
Photo: Norman Cameron



Photo: Duncan McQueen

Massed bands at the Basle Tattoo in Switzerland. St. Kentigern Pipes and Drums second left. Other bands: RAF, The Highlanders and Scots Guards Association.

This will be well worth a read for Cameron folk. Andrew Cameron is a kiwi who has an amazing story to tell through his humanitarian work in war zones throughout the world as well as the ebola outbreak. He is also the brother of Nick Cameron!
- Glen Rodgers



Massey University Press invites you to the launch of

A Nurse on the Edge of the Desert by Andrew Cameron

Theatrette, Block 10, Old Museum Building,
Massey University, Wellington
Monday, August 7 2017
Please be seated by 5.30pm

The author will be in conversation with John McCrystal, followed by questions from the audience. Book signing, tea and coffee to follow the launch. Parking available at venue.

Andrew's book will be available for sale.
RSVP at: www.massey.ac.nz/nurse/ by August 3 2017



Photo: St Kentigern College

Heather Laird plays at the St. Kentigern Ceilidh